

The Mexican American Museum of Texas Presents

ARTE DE TEJAS: A Nascent Collection of Mexican American Artists



July 26 - August 23, 2025, Dallas, Texas



"Los Olvidados" – Installation: Life & Death on the Border 1910-1920 – fabric, rope, glass bulbs (2024)

Mexican American art in Texas encompasses a vibrant and diverse range of artistic expressions, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and historical experiences of Mexican Americans in the state. This artistic landscape includes everything from traditional folk arts and crafts to contemporary art forms, with a strong emphasis on community engagement and social commentary.

Key Aspects of Mexican American Art in Texas:

Chicano Mural Movement: A significant part of this artistic expression is the Chicano mural movement, which emerged in the 1960s & 70s. Artists used public spaces like walls of buildings, schools, and community centers to depict Mexican American culture, history, and political struggles. These murals served as a powerful form of visual communication and a means of reclaiming cultural identity.

Folk Arts and Crafts: Mexican American communities in Texas have long cultivated vibrant traditions of folk arts and crafts, including pottery, metalwork, leatherwork, weaving, and woodworking. These crafts often reflect a blend of indigenous, Spanish, and Mexican influences, and they play a crucial role in maintaining cultural traditions and community identity.

Contemporary Art: Mexican American artists in Texas are also actively engaged in contemporary art practices, exploring a wide range of themes and mediums. Their work often reflects on issues of identity, social justice, borderlands, and the complexities of living between two cultures.

Influence of the Chicano Movement: The Chicano movement of the 1960s & 70s significantly impacted Mexican American art in Texas, inspiring artists to create work that was both politically charged and culturally relevant. This movement emphasized cultural pride, self-determination, and social justice.

Community Engagement: A strong emphasis on community engagement is a hallmark of Mexican American art in Texas. Artists often work collaboratively with communities, creating art that reflects the values, experiences, and aspirations of the people.



Manuel G. Acosta
(1921–1989, Juan Aldama, Mx/El Paso, Texas)

Chicano Modern Beach

oil on board (1948)

Born in Aldama, Chihuahua, Mexico, and raised in El Paso, Texas, Manuel G. Acosta was a painter and muralist best known for his portraits that celebrate Mexican American identity and cultural heritage. His work gained national attention when one of his portraits of César Chávez was featured on the cover of Time magazine in 1969. Acosta studied at Texas Western College (now the University of Texas at El Paso) and the Chouinard Art Institute. His expressive use of light and realism reflects his admiration for Mexican muralism and classical portraiture. Acosta's legacy is closely tied to his contributions to Chicano cultural visibility in the Southwest.



Tomás Bustos
(b.1952, Dallas, Texas)

Pacal *cast wall sculpture (2023)*

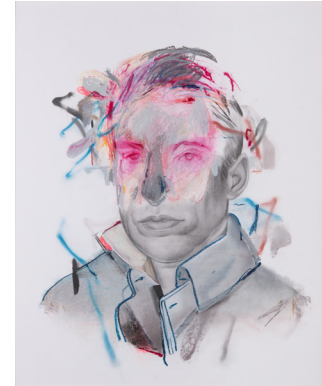
Tomás Bustos studied under renowned sculptor Octavio Medellín, mastering wood and stone carving, bronze casting, welding, drawing, and painting. An influential and respected Dallas artist, Bustos continues Medellín's legacy by teaching across institutions like the Creative Arts Center of Dallas and in community workshops, especially for veterans and the visually impaired. Tomás is also known for his mechanically animated sculptures featured in places such as Scottish Rite Children's Hospital in Dallas and the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston. He founded Masterpiece Relief for the Blind, recreating famous artworks like The Mona Lisa and Starry Night in 3D form for the visually impaired. Tomás' large-scale public sculptures include El Vaquero in the Fort Worth Stockyards and Amite Flamme in Chateauroux, France. Bustos has been featured on NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt and is the 2025 recipient of the Dallas Historical Society's Award for Excellence in Community Service in Creative Arts.



Viola Delgado
(b.1953, Sinton/Dallas, Texas)

Going to Abuelita's *arylic on canvas (2024-5)*

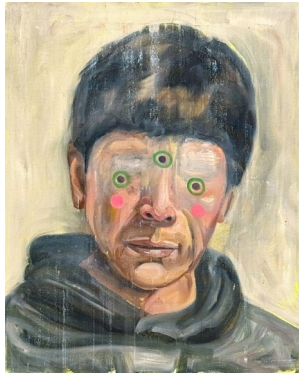
Viola Delgado is a multidisciplinary artist whose career spans over three decades. Based in Dallas, her work has been widely exhibited throughout Texas, including a 30-year retrospective at the Dallas Latino Cultural Center. Nationally and internationally, her art has appeared in New York City, Madrid, Munich, Prague, and Torreón. Delgado's contributions to public art include major commissions for DFW International Airport (Terminal D, Gate 8) and Dallas Area Rapid Transit's Lake June and Rowlett Stations (the latter housing the most extensive art display in the DART system), and Grapevine DART opening in late 2025. Her sculptural installation The Garden is on view at the Dallas Latino Cultural Center. Delgado studied at the Art League School in Alexandria, Virginia, and her work is held in private collections across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Delgado's practice reflects both her formal training and her enduring commitment to community-centered public art.



Alejandro Díaz-Ayala
(b.1984, La Piedad, Michoacan, Mx/Dallas, Texas)

Pawn *pencil, charcoal, pastel on paper (2023)*

Alejandro Díaz-Ayala is a Mexican Postwar and Contemporary artist whose practice has evolved from formal portraiture to a more intuitive and experimental approach to painting. His work engages with diverse techniques and visual languages, often juxtaposing pop culture imagery with echoes of European masterworks. This interplay produces compositions that oscillate between beauty and tension, resisting definitive interpretation. Díaz-Ayala refrains from prescribing meaning to his work, inviting viewers to draw their own conclusions. His canvases may hint at narratives—touching on themes such as social justice, cultural memory, or visual wit—but they remain open-ended. His process is largely unstructured, guided by instinct rather than premeditation. Paintings emerge through a dynamic cycle of layering, overpainting, and revision, in which visual and conceptual contrasts are deliberately explored. His work has been featured in exhibitions at notable venues, including Kirk Hopper Fine Art, reflecting a growing recognition of his distinct visual voice.



Carlos Donjuán
(b.1982, San Luis Potosí, Mx/Dallas, Texas)

Rise *oil on canvas (2025)*

Carlos Donjuán, B.F.A., M.F.A., is a contemporary artist and educator who has lived in Dallas, Texas since early childhood. Introduced to visual culture through comic books, lowrider art, and graffiti, Donjuán developed a unique aesthetic that bridges street art and formal studio practice. He studied under Marilyn Jolly at the University of Texas at Arlington (B.F.A.) and later earned his M.F.A. from the University of Texas at San Antonio, where he was mentored by Ken Little and Ricardo Armendariz. Their guidance deepened his conceptual approach and affirmed his identity as central to his practice. Donjuán's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including in France, Spain, and Italy, and is included in the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture. In addition to his studio work, Donjuán remains active in community mural projects with the Sour Grapes collective, using art as a vehicle for mentorship and cultural affirmation.



Filberto Chapa
(1942–2019, Corpus Christi/Dallas, Texas)

Flamenco Guitarist *ink on paper (2013)*

Filberto Chapa, born in Corpus Christi and based in Dallas, Texas, was a mixed media artist and dedicated educator in the Dallas Independent School District. His style spanned figural and abstract forms, often drawing from the daily experiences of Mexican American life in South Texas and incorporating influences from Pre-Columbian visual culture. Chapa worked across various media, including ink, pastel, oil, and acrylic. As an art teacher at Sunset High School, he played a pivotal role in guiding emerging artists, including members of the Sour Grapes collective, who credit him with helping them transition from street art to fine art. Chapa's influence as a mentor extended widely, and many former students cite his encouragement and insight as foundational to their artistic development. His work was featured in the 10th Anniversary Exhibition of the Latino Cultural Center in Dallas, where he was also honored during the Sour Grapes' 15-year retrospective.



Filberto Chapa
(1942–2019, Corpus Christi/Dallas, Texas)

South Texas Musicians *acrylic on canvas (2004)*





Eliseo García
(b.1947, Dallas, Texas)

Esencia Vital

cordova and lueders limestone (2025)

Eliseo García, B.F.A., is a multidisciplinary sculptor whose practice spans private, commercial, and public art. Working in granite, marble, Texas limestone, steel, and cast bronze, García explores themes of the human condition, nature, spirituality, and conceptual abstraction. His sculptures range from intimate to monumental in scale, often reflecting the cultural narratives and landscapes of Texas. García has completed numerous public commissions across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. His work is also represented in private collections nationally and internationally, including in Japan and the Virgin Islands. Recognized for both artistic excellence and community impact, García has received the VHA Designer and Sculptor Award, the Texas State Visual Artist Award, the North Dallas High School Distinguished Alumni Award, and the Dallas Historical Society's Award for Excellence in Community Service for Creative Arts. His work remains accessible through Eliseo Studios, where he continues to create and exhibit.



José B. Cisneros
(1910–2009, Villa Ocampo, Mx/El Paso, Texas)

Socorro Mission

limited print on paper (1983)

A prolific illustrator and historian, José B. Cisneros was born in Mexico and spent most of his life in El Paso, Texas. Best known for his historically detailed drawings of horsemen, missions, and colonial life, Cisneros illustrated over 300 books, collaborating with scholars, poets, and publishers across the U.S. and Mexico. Though largely self-taught, he became a respected authority on Spanish colonial and Mexican American iconography. His illustrations—meticulously researched and rendered in pen and ink—serve as enduring visual records of borderlands history. In 2001, he was awarded the National Humanities Medal for his contributions to American cultural understanding.



José B. Cisneros
(1910–2009, Villa Ocampo, Mx/El Paso, Texas)

Apache Lookout - 1870

limited print on paper (1985)





Carmen Lomas Garza
(b.1948, Kingsville, Texas/San Francisco, CA)

Tamalada

Giclée (1990)

Carmen Lomas Garza, M.F.A., is a nationally recognized artist whose work draws deeply from her Mexican American heritage and childhood experiences in South Texas. Known for her vivid, narrative paintings and papel picado, Garza's work centers family, community, and cultural rituals, offering intimate reflections of everyday Chicano life. She earned her B.S. from Texas A&I University, an M.A. from San Francisco State University, and an M.F.A. from the California College of Arts and Crafts. Garza's work has been widely exhibited across the United States, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and is featured in numerous public and private collections. Her illustrated children's books and educational outreach have further solidified her impact on generations of artists and students. With a commitment to cultural affirmation and social justice, Garza's work has become a cornerstone of Chicana/o visual storytelling and an enduring record of Tejano identity and resilience.



Nivia González
(1946–2017, San Antonio, Texas)

Woman at Window

acrylic on canvas (1987)

Nivia González is best known for her iconic cover art for authors Sandra Cisneros and Alice Walker, but her work also appears in settings as varied as the Smithsonian Latino Center and neighborhood restaurants in San Antonio. González often portrayed brown-skinned women with solemn expressions, adorned in vivid colors and radiant gold leaf. At the height of her career in the late 1980s and early 1990s, she received numerous commissions and often enlisted her daughters to help with underpainting. They remember filling canvases with shades of blue while she rested, watching old films from her bedroom. A 1997 car accident left González in a coma and caused lasting brain injury. Though she regained her ability to paint, some technical skills diminished. Still, she continued portraying women—not as idealized figures, but as strong and multifaceted—rejecting stereotypes to affirm their dignity and presence.



Nivia González
(1946–2017, San Antonio, Texas)

Echos of Unrestrained Beauty

serigraph (1997)





Manuel Garza
(b.1949, Hill Country, Texas)

Sunset Hill Country in White

oil on canvas (1972)

Manuel Garza is a self taught landscape and wildlife painter whose oeuvre reflects a lifelong engagement with the Texas Hill Country environment. Working primarily in oil, Garza captures the region's light, terrain, and fauna—ranging from bluebonnets to quail—with realistic detail and vibrant color. Although largely autodidactic, he studied under Charles Normann at the Texas School of Fine Arts and acknowledges influences such as Porfirio Salinas and Robert Wood. His work is rooted in direct observation—through hiking, sketching, and photography—and is included in collections statewide and beyond, including those of Lyndon B. Johnson and John Connally. Garza regularly exhibits in galleries across Texas and New Mexico, and his paintings continue to resonate with audiences who cherish authentic representations of the Texas landscape.



Juan Hernández
(b.1960, Monterrey, Mx/Dallas, Texas)

Cruzando: Two Brothers

ink on paper (2022)

Juan Hernández, B.F.A., is a contemporary visual artist whose work explores themes of cultural identity, urban life, and Chicano heritage. Working across painting, printmaking, and mixed media, Hernández draws on his personal experiences in Dallas to navigate borderland narratives and the aesthetics of street culture. His work often incorporates symbolic references to Mexican American traditions and the complexities of bicultural existence. Hernández has exhibited widely across Texas and is part of a new generation of artists contributing to the evolving visual language of the Texas Chicano experience.



Juan Hernández
(b.1960, Monterrey, Mx/Dallas, Texas)

Cruzando: Mother and Child

ink on paper (2025)





Luis Guerra
(b.1945, Piedras Negras, Coahuila, Mx/
Austin, Texas)

El Sentido Oculto de la Tierra

lithograph (1992)

Luis Guerra, based in Laredo/Austin, is a multimedia artist whose fifty-year career spans painting, watercolor, and community engagement. His solo exhibition *Naturaleza Viva*—comprised of over 60 works—was featured at the Laredo Center for the Arts and extended through public demand. Guerra led a public watercolor workshop in January 2025, demonstrating his process and mentoring emerging artists. His practice, grounded in an appreciation for nature and creative exploration, engages in educational outreach and civic arts programming. Guerra continues to foster artistic growth within his community, emphasizing both technical skill and cultural vitality.

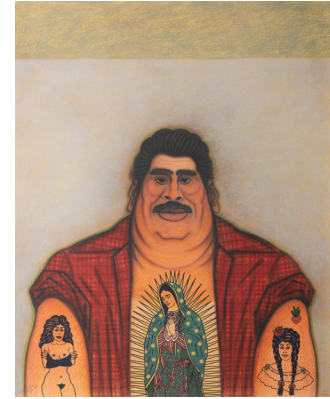


César Martínez
(b.1944, Laredo/San Antonio, Texas)

Red Pachuco

lithograph (1990)

César Martínez is a seminal Chicano artist whose work bridges portraiture, abstraction, and cultural critique. Based in San Antonio, Martínez is best known for his *bato* and *ruca* portraits—stylized depictions of Mexican American figures that draw from vernacular photography, identity politics, and Tejano culture. Influenced by both modernist formalism and the Chicano Movement, Martínez creates work that affirms cultural presence while resisting assimilationist narratives. He is a recipient of numerous awards and has exhibited nationally, with his work featured in key collections including the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture.



Cesar Martínez
(b.1944, Laredo/San Antonio, Texas)

Hombre que le Gustan las Mujeres

digital print (2003)





Tina Medina
(b.1975, Lubbock/Dallas, Texas)

Desde Reynosa Hasta Harlingen

photo/collage (2024)

Tina Medina, B.F.A., M.F.A., is based in Dallas, Texas. She is a visual artist, educator, and curator whose multidisciplinary practice includes working with fibers, painting, video, and audio to reflect U.S. American history from the perspective of the underrepresented voices, such as women, children of color, immigrants, farmworkers, and the undocumented. Medina's work explores identity, migration, and the influence of cultural memory, often incorporating personal symbolism and bilingual text. Medina also serves as a mentor and advocate for Latinx artists, emphasizing the importance of representation in contemporary art spaces. Her work resonates with themes of resilience, spirituality, and the enduring impact of heritage on contemporary life. Medina was accepted in the third cohort of the Dallas Cedars Union studio/artist membership, awarded a Nasher Sculpture Center Artist Grant, and is a past recipient of the Talley Dunn Gallery Equity in the Arts Fellowship.



Jesús Toro Martínez
(b.1966, Laredo/San Antonio, Texas)

Fruits of the Land I

oil on canvas + rubber with trash (2021)

Jesús Toro Martínez, B.F.A., M.F.A., is deeply rooted in his Latino heritage, channeling his soul into every work of art he creates. His work explores universal themes—love, romance, death, and hope—with the aim of bridging cultural, religious, and philosophical divides, ultimately fostering a greater sense of community and human connection. Often incorporating raw, organic materials such as tar and rose petals, Toro emphasizes unity through elements that are familiar and elemental to the shared human experience. Toro's art has been featured in both solo and group exhibitions across Texas and in prominent museums around the world—including in Mexico, New York, California, Finland, and Norway. His paintings are held in private collections throughout the United States and Europe. Currently, his work is represented by Simon Fine Art Gallery in Paris, France; Fredric Art Gallery in Mexico City; and JTM Fine Art Studio, San Antonio, Texas.



Jesús Toro Martínez
(b.1966, Laredo/San Antonio, Texas)

Fruits of the Land II

oil on canvas + rubber with trash (2021)





Gil Rocha
(b.1977, Laredo, Texas)

ADIOS

wall sculpture - wood, wire, paper (2023)

Gil Rocha, B.F.A., M.F.A., is a contemporary artist whose assemblages and installations engage with border politics, material culture, and the socio-economic realities of life in South Texas. Working primarily with found objects, Rocha constructs layered visual narratives that reflect on identity, conflict, and the hybrid nature of the borderland experience. He earned his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has exhibited in major venues across the U.S. and Mexico. In addition to his studio practice, Rocha taught art in public schools for 21 years, fostering creative expression among youth and shaping the next generation of artists. He also plays a key role in cultivating local art communities, particularly in Laredo, where his practice remains rooted in place and community dialogue.



Porfirio Salinas
(1910–1973, Bastrop/San Antonio, Texas)

Bullfighter

oil on canvas (ca. 1950)

Porfirio Salinas was a prominent landscape painter best known for his iconic depictions of the Texas Hill Country, especially its bluebonnet fields. Based in San Antonio, Salinas became the first Mexican American artist to achieve national acclaim for his regionalist paintings, earning the admiration of collectors including President Lyndon B. Johnson. His work reflects both technical mastery and deep reverence for the Texas landscape, serving as a bridge between Mexican American heritage and mainstream American art. Salinas's paintings are held in numerous public and private collections, and he remains a foundational figure in Texas art history.



Jesús Flores Treviño
(b.1950, San Antonio, Texas)

El Indio Viejo

pastel on paper (2020)

Jesús Flores Treviño began developing his artistic talents as a teenager, painting murals in local restaurants across San Antonio. At age 19, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he served in military intelligence and continued producing artwork, creating commissioned pieces for officers throughout Europe. While on active duty, he earned a B.A. from the University of Maryland. Treviño was wounded during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq. Following his military service, he returned to Texas and dedicated himself fully to his art practice. His work reflects a deep engagement with the histories and cultures of the Southwest, drawing inspiration from Texas Western themes, Mexican American heritage, and Indigenous traditions. Treviño's body of work stands as a testament to resilience, cultural memory, and the enduring power of visual storytelling.



Luis Jiménez
(1940–2006, El Paso, Texas/Hondo, New Mexico)

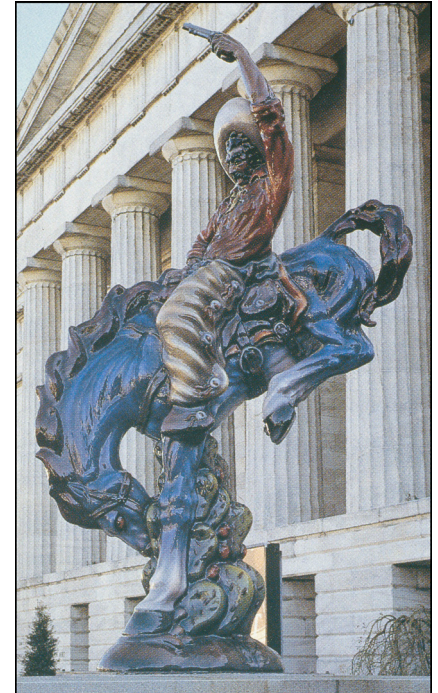
Pieta
lithograph (1999)

Luis Jiménez, B.F.A., was a pioneering sculptor and printmaker known for his dynamic, large-scale fiberglass sculptures that brought working-class, Mexican American subjects into the public art sphere. Merging Pop sensibilities with social commentary, Jiménez's work confronted cultural stereotypes and celebrated everyday heroes of the American Southwest. He earned his B.F.A. from the University of Texas and taught at several universities. His iconic works, including *Vaquero* and *Mustang*, are found in major collections and public spaces across the U.S., cementing his legacy as one of the most influential Latino artists of the 20th century.



Luis Jiménez
(1940–2006, El Paso, Texas/Hondo, New Mexico)

American Fertility
print on vinyl from an original digitized slide (1970-2)



Luis Jiménez
(1940–2006, El Paso, Texas/Hondo, New Mexico)

Vaquero
print on vinyl from an original digitized slide (1990)

Thanks to:

Artists and Collectors

Kirk Hopper & Natasha Wilson - Kirk Hopper Fine Art

Jenna Bradford - Catalog Design

Joe Rodlan - Photography

