



CENTRAL
to the
Community

Exhibition Prospectus

Exhibit Title: Puzzle Out: 9 Across

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Participating Visual Artists: Tracy Carrera, Juan Franco, Gabriel Marquez, Rene Julio, Ettie Wahl, Ulises Mariscal, Xavier Lopez, Hugo Moro, Kristen T. Ramirez

To “puzzle out” is to find a solution, understand the meaning of, or work out a problem. Just like clues to a crossword puzzle, the nine artists in this program help resolve the galvanizing language and racist rhetoric that mark the historic election of 2016 and its aftermath. By celebrating the contributions of Latino/a/x creatives, this exhibit challenges racial stereotypes that deny just how vital to our thought leadership and cultural landscape is the varied voice of the Hispanic community. The divergent thinking, aesthetic interventions, and activism present in **Puzzle Out: 9 Across** demonstrate a cultural agency that reaches far beyond the Latino/a/x demographic.

As tenured faculty at Highline College, Chicana painter Tracy Carrera believes she has the best career in the world. In her pedagogy and studio practice, Carrera’s places perception, heritage, and identity front and center. Flexibility, adaptability, and a reflective sense of gratitude imbue her work with sensuous joy. The double portrait *I Miss You* honors the artist’s father, who was a curandero/shaman to many in the community. “He encouraged me to explore traditional healing with herbs and plants,” recounts Carrera who maintains a keen awareness of the power of nature imbedded in culture.

Born in Bogota, Colombia, Juan Franco moved to Seattle at a young age. A graduate of Cornish College of Arts, the multi-disciplinary artist was the recipient of a prestigious Bill Bendiner and Doug Morgenson & Visual Arts Scholarship and New York Residency. Franco maintains an individual studio practice in

which identity, experience, and the body merge as material form and conceptual content. Their work explores concepts of queerness, gender, and sexuality through the personal made visual. The artist also works collaboratively as the dramaturg for Modern Recollections where they produce research and texts that promote the company's cultural context.

At first glance, Gabriel Marquez's intuitive fine arts might be seen as the antithesis of his work for the Boeing Company. Applying his knowledge of art and design, the artist originates graphics, textures, and textiles for the world's largest aerospace company and America's largest manufacturing exporter. Upon further consideration we can see that Marquez's flights of imagination demonstrate the kind of innovation and precision the company most values. In the Prizma on Bristol board drawing *Eclipse the Moon*, whirling forms stretch towards the moon in a complement of contrasts that pull the eyes upwards like a sky compass. "My work explores general themes of motion, stillness, progression and digression," explains the artist.

Known for his murals and dedication to maintaining the fine art of tapete (sand painting), Rene Julio draws on the artistic traditions of his ancestors. Demonstrating the philosophical and aesthetic importance of tapetes to Mexican and Mexican-American people, the artist shares his legacy in a wide variety of educational and civic venues, including The Seattle Center, The M. Rosetta Hunter Art Gallery, and the Tacoma Art Museum. In his studio and at the easel, the artist continues to explore the mythic significance of symbols through his drawings and paintings. For example, in the large charcoal *Death In Love With Life*, Julio depicts arch-angels/skeletons picking flowers and sheltering a butterfly, a symbol of rebirth and transformation in both Aztec and Catholic religions.

Granddaughter of the acclaimed Mexican muralist and political cartoonist, Armando Campero, Ettie Wahl's restless interdisciplinary practice finds expression in a wide variety of formats. Whether painting, directing films, photographing, writing, or performing, Wahl's bold expressions give voice to women's issues, while proving that the personal is the universal. When not in the studio or on tour, the young artist runs a not for profit organization in the greater Seattle area. Known as "Off the Wall Artist Collective" the non-profit serves as a safe creative space where artists help one another create and present works through project based, group oriented structures. Wahl's moving mixed media paintings reflect a desire to share the her own brushes with death and rebirth through commemorative portraiture and symbolic autobiography.

Although the youngest artist in the exhibit, Ulises Mariscal is anything but a neophyte. Beginning his art career at the tender age of ten, the artist maintains the fervor and idealism that first brought him to painting. His painted stencils seek social justice and speak directly to the people about the issues they care about the most. "I place my dreams and feelings onto the canvas the very moment they occur," says the artist. The strategy has paid off. Moving to Seattle two years ago, the Mexican-born Mariscal has already made a splash in the Seattle street art scene. His work caught the eye of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture which last year commissioned the artist to create a series of art interruptions in the Rainier neighborhood.

Writer, gallery owner, performer, sculptor, muralist, community builder, public artist—Xavier Lopez is a multi-talented provocateur. The artist reaches out to audiences anywhere—in the alley or on the steps of SAM. But for all that populist impulse, don't expect his work to be easy. Trained by the heady UC Davis graduate program, Lopez's work discloses a rigorous conceptual nature. Even his Sub Neo-Pop visual art productions harbor so many layers of narrative, they're closer to Jorge Luis Borges than Diego Rivera. The deceptively casual sculptural interventions *Ghosts* are a case in point, and underline their ephemeral nature by the informal documentary photographs in this show.

Like Lopez, Hugo Moro is also an inter-disciplinary artist with a conceptual twist. A recent transplant to Seattle, the Cuban-born Moro is no stranger to working with whatever art materials and contexts are

available. The artist who has exhibited in some of the hottest contemporary art spaces on the East Coast, such as Art Center South Florida and Young AT Art Museum, has also stretched his canvas beyond US borders. A participant in more than one Havana Biennial, Moro has also shown work at the Australian Center for Contemporary Art. In his print entitled *Captain of Industry* the artist's exquisite drawing of shoes comment on social class with both an ironic and tender voice. The long voyage alluded to by the well-worn shoes disclose a hustle less prompted by privilege than the title of the series suggests.

One of the hallmarks of the dedicated creative is a willingness to give from the heart. Kristen T. Ramirez doesn't hold back her multiple talents. As an artist-in-residence at the Fremont Bridge, she brought her unique perspectives in language, communication, and spectacle to the surrounding community through art interventions, performances, and discreet art works. She was equally engaged in her artist residency at the Tacoma Museum of Glass. A recipient of numerous grants for her printmaking and painting, including 4Culture Individual Artist Grants, Artist Trust GAP Grants, Ramirez also has a brisk career in public art. One look at her silkscreens *The New Black* and we understand why. Her work disguises layers of social commentary in colorful codes and communicable language. Ramirez also curates and collaborates with other artists on special projects. Somehow the artist also finds a way to be a brilliant educator— she has trained countless emerging talents for their life of service in the arts at Cornish College of the Arts and the Pratt Fine Arts Center.

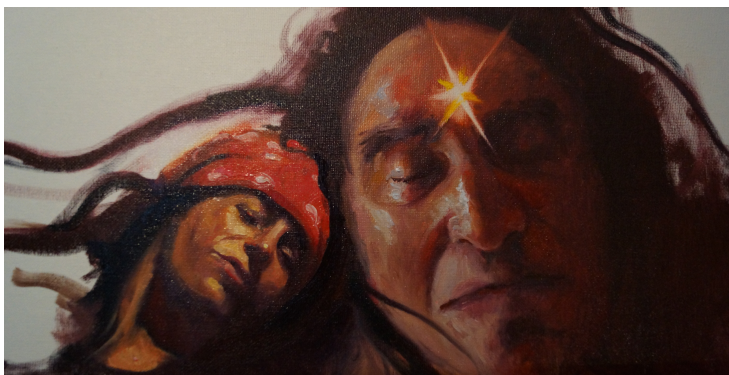
In a city with a mere 6.6% Hispanic or Latino ethnic presence, the robust cultural contributions of these talented painters, graphic artists, sculptors, photographers, performers, and public artists far exceed their small number. These Latino/a/x artists reach across borders and lines with their work in the studio, the gallery, the academy, municipal office, and corporate world. They invite us to discover an art world that reaches audiences with open hands and hearts. **Puzzle Out: 9 Across** reminds us that the best the human spirit offers can never be confined by racial stereotypes.

—By Prof. Tatiana Garmendia, SCC Fine and Performing Arts Program

Short Bio w Contact/Thumbnails

Tracy Carrera
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Tracy Carrera contributes to our cultural legacy in a number of ways. As a teaching artist, a painter, and as the bearer of shamanic wisdom. The artist was raised by a strong and loving father who was also a curandero to many in the community. “He taught us a keen awareness of the power of nature and the spirit world connected to nature and our culture, acknowledges the artist. Her oil paintings attest to a sensuous joy, as if the act of painting were a celebration.



I Miss You, 2016
Oil on Canvas
12"x 20"

Juan Franco
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Juan Franco is a Colombian-born, Seattle artist and researcher. They hold a BFA from Cornish College of the Arts with an emphasis on Photography and Art History. They have exhibited internationally at the Rose Lipman Building, Tacoma Art Museum, The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, The Venice Biennale for #DieselReboot, among others. Juan was awarded the Jon & Mary Shirley Foundation Endowed Scholarship in 2011, the Greater Seattle Business Association Scholarship in 2012, and the Kindler and Johnson Visual Art Scholarship in 2013. Juan constructs image based works primarily with the aid of film cameras and flatbed scanners. They enjoy the delicacy and proximity of the processes. The content and theme of the work are derived from the erotic, the queer, and the racial, intersecting theory and personal experience.



Sin Web
35mm B/W film
12" x 14"



Orange Study No. 2, 2017
Watercolor on archival inkjet print
16" x 12"



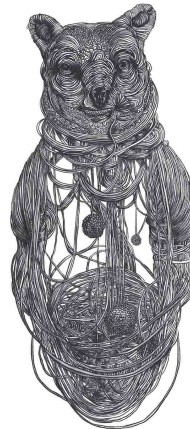
Orange Study No. 1, 2017
Watercolor on archival inkjet print
16" x 12"

Gabriel Marquez
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Gabriel Marquez's was born in El Paso, TX from Mexican parents. The artist moved to Seattle in 2013 and works as a Technical Designer for Boeing in the interior design field for the Aviation industry. His artwork explores general themes of motion, stillness, progression, and digression. Marquez creates a progression of lines that purposefully draw the eye to move continuously throughout the image, in a kind of endless entanglement. Intricately refined, yet bold, each drawing maps a journey that the artist undertakes with ink in hand. "It is an intuitive or subconscious process to start since I'm mostly working freestyle," says the artist, adding "Positive and negative spaces compliment in contrast, thin white lines draw the eyes like a compass."



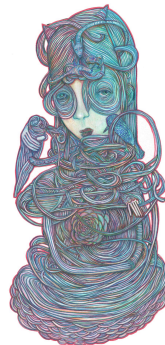
Heavenly Hill, 2016
Charcoal on Bristol board
13" x 22"



Oso Celoso, 2016
Charcoal on Bristol board
14" x 23"



Eclipse the Moon, 2016
Prizma on Bristol Board
14" x 18"



Seed Bearer, 2016
Prizma on Bristol Board
12" x 16"

Rene Julio
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Julio's work for the show includes drawings exploring life and mortality. Julio is a visual artist with more than 20 years of experience in studio work and muralism. With more than 20 murals completed in Seattle, his work synthesizes mythic motifs and the intersection with everyday life throughout the region. Born in Mexico City, the artist has been a Seattle resident for seventeen years. He volunteers at Casa de Artes, and for the last six years has organized the Day of the Dead at Seattle Center.



Wounds, 2016
Watercolor on paper
42" x 30"



Entre La Vida y La Muerte, 2013
Mixed Media Assemblage



Death in Love With Life, 2013
Charcoal on Paper
36" x 60"

Ettie Wahl

offthewallartistcollective.com/artists/ettie-wahl/

singthesaw@gmail.com

Ettie Wahl's emotionally charged self-portrait literally breaks out of the canvas and into the gallery. Tearing her heart open with a painful gesture, a three dimensional version of the artist joins a flock of multi-colored birds and flies out, suddenly free. It's a bold, autobiographical oil painting. The young artist had open-heart surgery as a child, and paints with the emotional urgency of someone who has experienced life's fragility first hand. With the symbolic flight of her creative spirit into our space, Wahl's promise to hold nothing back manifests a willingness to mine mythic imagery in the pursuit of confessional art. The more contemplative double self-portrait presents us a mirror image. Collaged keepsakes of a romantic interest that passed away, the somber earth palette nonetheless offers the promise of new life with the introduction of greening vines and a The World archetype from he tarot cards.



title title, year year
h dimensions x w dimensions
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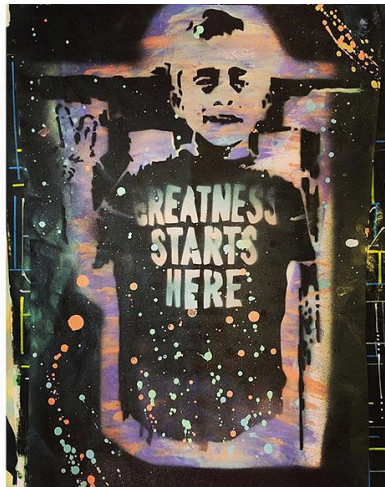
title title, year year
h dimensions x w dimensions
medium

Ulises Mariscal
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Ulises Mariscal began his creative career at the tender age of ten. Most of his mixed media designs and street art stencils reflect the injustices of the world we live in. "I place my dreams and feelings onto the canvas the very moment they occur," says the artist, whose social practice exhibits a sense of urgency and deep emotional texture. Mariscal uses almost all kinds of paint in his artwork, from spray paint to acrylic and oil. For his project Greatness Starts Here, 2016, the artist was commissioned by Seattle Office of Arts & Culture to create art interruptions in the Rainier Neighborhood. Mariscal met members of the Seattle neighborhood, took their photos, and created a series of memorable stencil portraits that were posted throughout the CD.



Art Interruptions, 2016



Art Interruptions, 2016



Dust, 2016



Trio, 2016

Stenciled Posters, various sizes, hand-printed and painted with spray enamel and splattered paint

Xavier Lopez
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Xavier Lopez is a writer, muralist, and performance artist who is very active in the Seattle Alternative Art Scene. He is also a co-curator of the Echo Echo Gallery in Greenwood. He is part of a new breed of Latino/a/x artists for whom art-making, while still autobiographical and personal in the broadest sense eschews the obvious tropes of masculinity, race and the overpowering cultural history that haunts many contemporary Hispanic/Latino artists. Instead, he seeks to connect to a broader sense of the post-postmodern, speaking of personal obsessions, desires and issues that are not bogged down by cultural history.



Madonna, 2017
Photomontage
11" x 24"



Ghosts, 2016
Photographic Prints (Street Installations)
11" x 17" each

Hugo Moro
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Cuban born Hugo Moro grew up in New York City. He holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Florida International University. After a successful career in graphic design the artist began working in drawing, mix-media, and installation art. He has exhibited nationally and throughout the Caribbean, and has been living in Seattle since 2014. Richly detailed and abstracted from their use, Moro's meditations in graphite question these status symbols and their indications of economic identity.



Pillar of the Community, 2009
Graphite, Colored pencil
40" x 60"



Perizoma II
Graphite on Paper
42" x 36"



Captain of Industry I
Print
36" x 48"



Captain of Industry II
Print
36" x 48"

Kristen T. Ramirez
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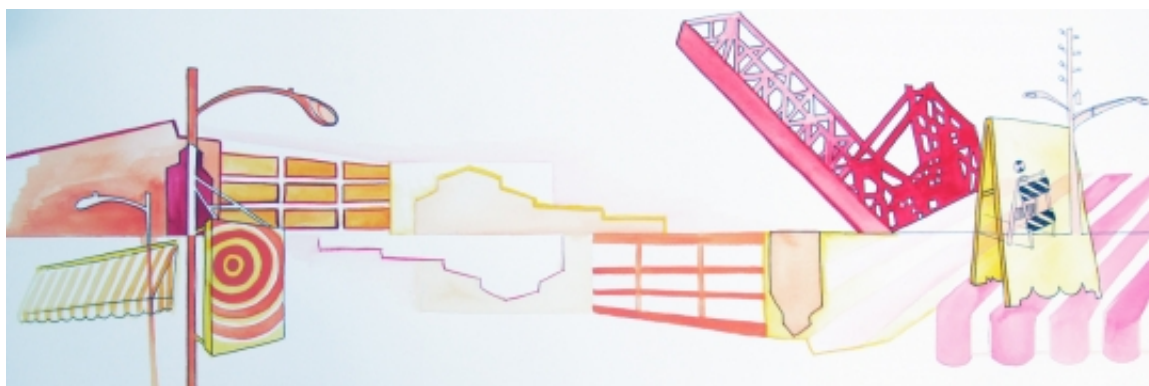
Kristen Ramirez is a studio and public artist who also works managing public art projects for the City of Seattle's Office of Arts & Culture. Originally from San Francisco, Ramirez came to Seattle to earn her MFA from the University of Washington. She also holds a MA in Education from San Francisco State University and a BA from UC Santa Cruz. Prior to her work at the City of Seattle, she has worked as an educator, an artist, and an arts administrator at Pratt Fine Arts Center, Edmonds Community College, and Cornish College of the Arts. Ramirez loves community-engaged projects and regularly teaches with Path with Art, an arts organization that offers art classes to adults in recovery.



Move Fast Stay Still, 2014



The New Black, 2015



Upside Down and Underwater, 2011