

# RUIZ-HEALY ART

Latinx, Latin America, & Texas Contemporary Art

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Ruiz-Healy Art is pleased to present *The Pastoral and the Celestial*, opening on Wednesday, March 20th, with an opening reception from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at our San Antonio gallery. *The Pastoral and the Celestial* will be on view through May 18th, 2024. The exhibit brings together Richard 'Ricky' Armendariz, Cecilia Biagini, Graciela Iturbide, Nicolas Leiva, and Cecilia Paredes in a celebration of painting, photography, and ceramics, inviting the viewer into a realm where the boundaries between the tangible and the imagined blur.

In *The Planets* from her *Celestial* series, Cecilia Paredes looks to cultural production across time and space, using images and astronomical frameworks from Ancient Egyptian, Indian, Iranian, and Incan archival material. Paredes engages in a mythological synthesis from these historical documents, combining images of celestial bodies and zoomorphic constellations into a cohesive whole. Analogously, Ricky Armendariz's *Blue Meditations* series turns to the moon to explore physicality, "The Moon is a familiar character in my work, but this time I distill it down to quick gestural expressions in an attempt to concentrate on drawing and painting as a meditation, a form of healing for the body, mind, and spirit," the artist states.

Nicolas Leiva works with a vocabulary of pure fantasy and cosmic inspiration. Bright colors and primal designs are the signature of this artist's expressionistic technique. This is especially true in his *Constellation* series, which encapsulates the artist's craft. Embedded in Leiva's collection of forms and surface designs is a symbolic language that contains the narrative of an ethereal realm, but underlying his tales of paradise is a very real physical practice that is social, as well. "He reflects in the mysteries and immensity of the cosmos," says Patricia Ruiz-Healy about Leiva.

The color blue is employed in various works, with each artist creating their definition. The magnetizing blue tonality used by Biagini in *Agua Viva* invites the viewer to submerge themselves in a deeper analysis of the painting. Biagini draws inspiration from the movement of the body's rhythmic contractions while underwater. She juxtaposes chaos and order using a bold sense of color and line. Meanwhile, Armendariz sees blue as a complete color with elements of introspection and a soothing coolness representative of life's lessons.

In conjunction with the introspection of the human experience, many artists see wildlife, such as animals and landscapes, as a way to interject into the conversation of environmental stewardship. In her work *Armadillo*, Paredes transforms her body into the form of this fabulous animal. The artist is fond of marginal beings and animals often misunderstood and seen as loners. Graciela Iturbide artfully creates juxtapositions of traditional environments with peculiar details. Her photograph *Mujer ángel Desierto de Sonora, México*, is a seemingly contradictory image. A woman in a traditional Seri dress heads down to the empty desert plain holding her boom box—a reminder of the technological and material influence of the United States on Indigenous culture. The title transforms the figure into a celestial being: we cannot see her face, and she appears to be flying into another realm, arms spread and hair blowing in the wind.

*The Pastoral and the Celestial* invites us into a realm where the boundaries between the tangible and the imagined blur. These artists invite us to reflect on our relationship with the environment, culture, and mysticism, revealing our world's myriad forms of beauty.

### **About Ruiz-Healy Art**

Founded in San Antonio, TX, in 2006, Ruiz-Healy Art represents an international roster of artists, emphasizing Latinx and Latin American artists and working with prominent Texas-based artists. Biculturalism and identity discourse are important in several artists we collaborate with. In the spring of 2019, we opened a gallery space in the Upper East Side of New York City that works in tandem with the gallery in San Antonio as a platform to disseminate the artist's work. The continuous investments in these under-represented areas have remained a longstanding signature of the gallery program. The gallery is recognized for its success in placing works by our artists in prestigious museum collections ranging from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the LA County Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, McNay Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and many others.