

Cisco Jiménez & Margarita Cabrera Exhibitions at Ruiz-Healy Art By Marissa Del Toro, 2018



Cisco Jiménez, *Monsato*, 2011-2016. Collage and drawings

We are at a moment of convergence, where a multitude of [issues](#), [nations](#), and [natural forces](#) are meeting to form new amalgamations of meanings and beings. Our world is constantly changing with new conversations on violence, migration, and memory translated into visual dialogues. The works of [Margarita Cabrera](#) and [Cisco Jiménez](#) are one such convergence of dialogues, presented jointly at the Ruiz Healy gallery as two solo exhibitions. Although the works by both artists share a connection through similar issues and topics and their handmade processes, the aesthetics of their works differ.

In *Sounds from the Archeological Time Machine*, Jiménez works in a chaotic system of drawn mascaras, body parts, and temples amid a collaged collection of clippings, price tags, receipts, and product labels (tea, candy, and beer). Yet, there is a pseudo-archaeological method to the madness. His art invokes and transforms Mesoamerican sculptured figurines and iconography into compilations of boomboxes and record players, which are futuristic, yet also reminiscent of the 1980s. The reference to time is a playfulness that fluctuates between the ancient past (Olmec – 1500 BCE), the recent past (boombox – 1980s), and the modern past (Festival Tamoanchan – 2011). Jiménez' synthesis of culture and time is a rhythmic cohesion of everyday discarded refuse (from both the local and global market) and a Mesoamerican legacy and Mexican context.



Cisco Jiménez, *Mexico 70*, 2014-2016. Collage and drawings.

Francisco Pellizi wrote that Jiménez' work, "interweaves the indigenous past with the global present....reading history from the view of contemporary pop culture." In the collage drawing

Mexico 70, a stereo boom box punctuated with pops of bright colors unfolds into a pyramidal structure with staircases of feathered serpents reaching out from the base. Surrounding the boom box temple are a litany of tags, receipts, and THE label of the childhood novelty noisemaker "POP POP." A nostalgic sensibility runs throughout Jiménez' works, pointing to an undeveloped future where the remnants of culture are being invoked into new utopic articulations of beings and meanings.



Cisco Jiménez, *A Bailar*, 2018. Collage with drawing

The works of Jiménez at the Ruiz-Healy gallery explore the cyclical process of memory through fragments of globalization, history, and culture. His work is a time capsule capturing these pieces and transforming them into a coded visual language of displaced images. This fragmentation of images is wondrously executed in *A Bailar*. The surgical illustration of a dismembered male body is layered over with Mesoamerican mascaras amongst other texts and materials. The title of the painting, “A Bailar,” rests on the underside of a left foot. The repetitiveness of this phrase and the addition of r’s gives the word and work an almost commanding tone and expression – as if Jiménez is trying to infuse the Frankenstein figure, strapped into a pair of string tie stiletto heels, with life to dance.



Margarita Cabrera, *Arbol de la Vida: Voces de Tierra Rendering - 1/3 A*, 2018. Print with hand intervened papel picado.

The second part of the exhibition, *Margarita Cabrera: Collaborative Work* includes a preface to her upcoming public art piece, commissioned by the San Antonio River Foundation, *Arbol de la Vida: Voces de la Tierra*, to be unveiled in October 2018 at a site near Mission Espada in San Antonio, Texas. This project is a collective process that includes up to 700 participants. Cabrera’s *Arbol de la Vida* involves the ceramics traditions of ancient Olmec culture and traditional elements of the arbol de la vida, which is a well-known custom that explains the religious story of The Garden of Eden from Metepec, a region in the state of Mexico.



Margarita Cabrera, *Craft of Resistance (50 Butterflies)*, 2008. Copper.

In a way somewhat similar to Jiménez' work, there is a process of collectivity in Cabrera's, either through the collective practice of creating her art (*Arbol de la Vida: Voces de la Tierra*) or the collectivity of material and objects. Her show includes a selection from her *Craft of Resistance (50 Butterflies)* that was originally displayed during her Spring 2008 International Artist-In-Residence Program at Artpace in San Antonio. The piece "explored the impact of border politics on Mexican craft-making traditions" through the creation of thousands of copper monarch butterflies, a species well known for their lengthy annual migration across North America from Canada to Mexico, as a symbolic representation of "the perilous journey thousands of Mexican immigrants [take] to the United States." Her recent 2018 print *Crafted Flow*, part of her *Butterfly Suite*, presents a colorful range of debossed printed butterflies. However, not all of the imprinted butterflies are shown with color, perhaps as a metaphor that not all of the monarchs who migrate make it, and for the ones who do, they are left a little bit different from the rest.



Margarita Cabrera, *Crafted Flow - Butterfly suite - 3/15*, 2018. Blind debossed print with artist applied watercolor.

Finally, her piece *Time Does Not Forgive (New Landscape)*, which also belongs to her *Butterfly Suite*, is more direct in its connection to immigration and the border. The relief print depicts six lines of butterflies overshadowed by a cactus. The cactus is made from the uniform fabric of a border patrol officer. The presence of the cactus looming over the butterflies presents an eerie feeling that is disconcerting. The cactus is not depicted in its traditional green form but rather a shadow of its former being. It no longer provides the security of shade, medicinal comfort, or nutrient enriched livelihood.



Margarita Cabrera, *Time Does Not Forgive (New Landscape) - Butterfly Suite - 2/15, 2018*.
Relief print with artist applied border patrol uniform fabric and watercolor

Cisco Jiménez' *Sounds from the Archeological Time Machine* and Margarita Cabrera's *Margarita Cabrera: Collaborative Work* are on view until June 30, 2018 at the [Ruiz-Healy Art](#) gallery in San Antonio, Texas.