

# "WE ARE YOU PROJECT INTERNATIONAL's "CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION"

by Dr. José Rodeiro, Art Editor, *Ragazine CC* (images provided by Sacha Webley and/or Sergio Villamizar)

*"Our history has been laced with the constant pull of having freedom, preserving freedom, losing it and getting it back. Like some Surrealistic poetic fiction, our lives swing as a pendulum from respect and praise to utter contempt; or from honoring Latinos' and Latinas' accomplishments to perceiving us as suspicious terrorists, or even worse "an immigration problem," instead of human-beings! Unhappily, I believe that at this sad time, the pendulum is swinging toward extreme madness."*

----- Marta Sanchez, Chicana Artist.

## ART INSPIRED BY US-IMMIGRATION POLICY & "LATINIZATION:"

Between Friday, August 2 and Saturday, August 31, 2013, the renowned Latino art and culture initiative known as the *We Are You Project International* ("WAYPI") will present at the Joyce Gordon Gallery (406 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakland, 94612 (via 12<sup>th</sup> St. Bart Exit)) a series of pro-Hispanic art and culture events, revealing the current state of US-*Latinization*.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, at the same time as WAYPI's "*California Exhibition*" will occur Oakland's "10<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Festival" titled *Art and Soul!* (featuring live music, arts & crafts vendors, food, fun, and fireworks, etc.). This internationally recognized "*Oaktown*" cultural event will take place (literally just around the corner from JGG) on August 2, coinciding with WAYPI's star-spangled opening reception. This momentous conjunction of these two mammoth art events has prompted acclaimed Irish art critic Tara Dervla to describe WAYPI's "*California Exhibition*," as, "The world's most important Latino/Latina transcultural art event of 2013." Hence, this landmark Oakland pro-Hispanic art and poetry event<sup>2</sup> is "The *We Are You Project International's* "*CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION*," an art show designed (by the *WAY-Project*) to reexamine and reinterpret US perceptions regarding *today's* *Hispanic-transcultural* ascendancy toward a potential ("possible") 51% Latino majority in the USA by perhaps 2070 CE. Such a goal is feasible if three sociological conditions occur: 1). if current Latino birthrates persist at the same rate, 2). coupled with attenuation of non-Latino birth-rates, along with 3). maintaining a steady influx of Latin American émigrés. This potential ("possible") demographic probability is unfortunately spurring (at the present moment) an outbreak of hyper-conservative ethno-racist paranoid hysteria, regarding pending congressional US "Latin American" immigration policies, especially the rash, (fiscally wasteful, cruel and inhuman) "border-surge" proposal, which would deploy over-20,000 new US-Border Patrol agents along the US's Southwest boundary-line, doubling the current force; while in tandem instituting a lengthier "waiting-period," along with adding layers of bureaucratic red-tape; consequently, thwarting any "genuine" clear-cut paths to citizenship for millions of undocumented illegal immigrant that have already dwelled countless decades in "El Norte;" and what's more, the current US Congressional S.744 bill authorizes the costly construction of higher, longer, "deadlier," unattractive and ecologically disastrous border-fence ("The Wall").



Hugo Xavier Bastidas *Study for "The Gift"* Oil on canvas (2009)

Several artists exhibiting at the Joyce Gordon Gallery are directly addressing the brutality of the current "border surge;" e.g., the Ecuadorian-born WAYPI painter, Hugo Xavier Bastidas's masterful oil *Study for "The Gift"* (2009), imaginatively illustrates the human-consequence(s) of such ill-conceived government policies, by depicting, in dark-sepia, a discarded teddy bear inadvertently dropped by a child upon a patch of cactus in the inhospitable Sonora Desert, while fleeing US Border Patrol agents. This work denotes the allegorical significance of that lost beloved toy, which functions as an *Amnesia* metaphor (3b) signifying the innumerable injustices that Latino illegal émigrés face daily; a detailed iconological analysis of Bastidas's penetrating image is available both in film and in prose within the *We Are You Project's* Website: (<http://www.weareyouproject.org/6201.html>). Thus, thanks to art works of this caliber, as well as the high-quality of those WAYPI images described below," the *We Are You Project International's* August 2013 "*CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION*" within the Joyce Gordon Gallery (JGG) stands as an artistic and aesthetic antidote to the current wave of anti-Latino US-government's actions endeavoring to curb the swell of Latino-population in the USA and its concomitant *Latinization*.<sup>1</sup>

For example, fresh from his exhibition at Wirydarz Gallery, Lublin, Poland; another world-class Ecuadorian artist, Pablo Caviades presents an epic "3-D" mix-media painting titled *On the Map* (2013), which patently describes the fact that the United States is at its core a nation of immi-

grants, a fact that has, by-and-large, been forgotten by 21<sup>st</sup> Century rightwing fanatics. Historically, from before the American Revolution, wave-after-wave of Immigrants built the wealth and the power of "this" nation, although the South (the region below the Mason-Dixon line to the Gulf of Mexico) additionally benefitted from African slave labor for several hundred years until 1863. Thus, in Caviades's opinion, the USA's true national identity is that of an immigrant! For that reason, Caviades uses his

own sideways frontal portrait encrusted with peculiar Amerindian designs (utilizing strong *tenebroso* throughout the face) topographically placing his countenance in a 3-D manner upon the surface-map of the continental United States of America. In this, his image of himself, proudly symbolizes all immigrants, while ingeniously reflecting the USA's true identity: "*an immigrant*."

In a similar conceptualization as that of Caviedes's *On the Map*, Ricardo Fonseca (the Ibero-American Neo-NeoPop artist) designed a clever mixed media creation titled *S.744*, which ingeniously replicates the organic shape of the continental US-map. Fonseca's *S.744* (1b) is an artistic-exploration of the current bill S.744 (*Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013*) currently in the House of Representatives; which is forlornly plagued by an array of problems, including even more red tape, unhappily reflecting the same-old inadequacies as the current obsolete immigration system of the United States, which the "new" bill merely reinforces or parrots. Fonseca's masterful *S.744* art work is an interactive "3-D" assemblage-installation, which adroitly provides viewers an opportunity to pick up the "Key to America" (or supposed "key" to "The American Dream") that is afforded by the S.744 bill. Hence, the attached key permits viewers to cut-through the "red tape," which is sadly bogging-



Ricardo Fonseca *S.744* mixed media (2013)

down the present immigration system of the United States. The attached key provides viewers direct access to the USA, by unlocking the thick chains of US Immigration & Nationalization Service's labyrinthine bureaucracy. However, much like the US-House's S.744 bill, the key also falls short of reaching its optimal target in a manner reminiscent of Marcel Duchamp's "*What a Drip Operation*" in *The Large Glass*, which ultimately fails to disrobe the bride. In addition, the chain around the USA, in a way, metaphorically suggests the current *Tea Partyists'* anti-foreigner idea ("ideal") of a "walled-America" completely isolated from the world: a veritable ethno-racist fortress-America — cut-off and alone.

Another *WAYPI* artist caught in the throes of US-Latinization/US-Immigration Policy matrix is Colombian-American artist Sergio Villamizar, who like Caviedes is grappling with contemporary Latino identity. For example, In his 2006, duende-filled(7) digital print piece titled, "*Before and Happily Ever After*," Villamizar juxtaposes double frontal self-portrait mug-shots (or passport-photos), wherein he uncompromisingly confronts himself (his actual facial features), his "being," depicting one self-portrait with swarthy complexion and a moustache, the other with bleached skin and no moustache. Since so much, of what negatively confronts Latinos, pertains to US-immigration policies, the ambivalent and humorous irony in Villamizar's photographic self-portraits affords little distinction between his photos' potential paradoxical *uses* as "portraits," "mug-shots," or "passport-photos."



Pablo Caviedes *On the Map* 3D mix-media painting (2013)

Like Bastidas's depiction (above), which tragically reveals the human-costs of pursuing, incarcerating, and deporting undocumented émigrés for their surreptitious ingresses into "*El Norte*," Mexican American artist, Ana Laura Rivera's highly perceptive lithograph titled *Tlacuilo Link* (2013) uses a representation of a seated-figure (wearing an American flag *poncho*) squatting down patiently waiting on the floor. The image alludes to a late-16<sup>th</sup> Century Meso-Ameridian colonial codex titled *The Boturini Codex*, which was painted by an unknown Aztec artist about a dozen years after the Spanish conquest. In her image, Rivera designed the piece to expose the sinister world of 21<sup>st</sup> Century human trafficking across the US-Mexican border, involving devious

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Sergio Villamizar *Before and Happily Ever After* Digital Print (2013)



and iniquitous “coyotes” (the slang term for untrustworthy “guides,” who are hired to plot illicit ways to cross the Southwest border into the USA). “Coyotes” use the pretext of US entry to lead unsuspecting illegal immigrants into numerous criminal acts, i.e., the sex-trade, drug-smuggling, enslavement or other unlawful activities.

## **AWAKENING THE HISPANO-ZEITGEIST IN OAKLAND (VIA VISUAL ART & POETRY):**

The previously described initial group of five Ibero-American art-works (above) in addition to another twenty-seven images (listed below) on display throughout August 2013 at the Joyce Gordon Gallery (“JGG”) attest to an emerging Hispano-*zeitgeist* fostering a new US and global spirit, which insists on art and poetry promulgating *the* 21<sup>st</sup> Century’s Latino socio-cultural ascendancy, which, in 2004, Cuban *WAYPI* artist Raul Villarreal theoretically identified as something radically new, dynamic, and inventive, which he dubbed “Neo-Latino, (3a),” a philosophically “New-Hispanic” way of being that in 2005, the flamboyant and brilliant Brazilian painter, poet, and filmmaker Duda Penteadó perceptively characterized as a socio-cultural and transcultural concept, which he named: “*WE ARE YOU.*” Anyone interested in knowing more about the exact chronological history of the 2005 *WAY Project’s* founding by the three Founders (Duda Penteadó, Mario Tapia, and Dr. Carlos Hernandez), each step is fully described in the below URL in the section titled: “*The We Are You International Traveling Show*”(“*WAY IT’S*”): <http://www.weareyouproject.org/6201.html#our-history/c4eg>. As a result, of all this smart “cultural-artistic” *WAY Project* inventiveness, a late-summer 2013 *Hispano-epiphany* is manifesting in Oakland’s Joyce Gordon Gallery, complete with an ample, refreshing, and FREE to the public **opening reception** on Friday, August 2, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM marked by a stimulating “WAY Artist’s Talk” starting at 7:00 PM, led by significant and passionate pro-Latino voices, including Ms Lillian Hernandez (The Director of The *We Are You Project*); as well as several acclaimed “*WAYPI*” visual artists in attendance, i.e., Cuban painter Raul Villarreal, and Bay Area Mexican American painter-poet Gabriel Navar; Peruvian-born grandmaster Carlos Chavez, and Cuban-American NEA Visual Artist Fellow, Dr. José Rodeiro [(author of this essay)]. Also, adding to the excitement are two additional Northern California Mexican-American members of the *We Are You Project*, Elizabeth Jiménez Montelongo and Efren Alvarez — furthermore, other WAY Project members will be on hand. In addition, graciously hosting the event will be Ms Joyce Gordon, Oakland’s celebrated art-trailblazer and visionary Director of the Joyce Gordon Gallery, and Mr. Eric Murphy, the eminent JGG Curator.



Ana Laura Rivera *Tlacuilo Link* lithographic print (2013)

Moreover, on the next day, Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> starting at 2:00 PM, there will be a WE ARE YOU Project **poetry reading**,<sup>2</sup> featuring a member of the *We Are You Poetry Project*, Gabriel Navar and a member of the WE ARE YOU Poetry Project Committee (Rodeiro), along with readings by a notable California Latino artists, including: WAY Project’s Elizabeth Jiménez Montelongo, with additional support from other Bay Area poets: Umbelina Guzman and Susannah Israel, who will be reading poems by several *We Are You Poetry Project* poets [(CHECK this URL (below) curated and edited by acclaimed US poet, Alan Britt, the Editor-in-Chief and Chair of WAY’s Poetry Project in collaboration with WAY Project Webmaster, Sergio Villamizar ( <http://www.weareyouproject.org/6201.html#poets/cmc3> ))]. The recital will include: painter, Montelongo reading works by the following We Are You Poetry Project authors: Michael Foldes’s “We Are You Triptych;” Pablo Caviades’s “On the Map;” Alex Lima’s “Jornaleros,” and Livia Soto’s “White.” Poet-painter, Gabriel Navar will be reading his poems from the WAY Project’s Website. Rodeiro will be reading works by Alan Britt, Duda Penteadó, and Raphael Montañez Ortiz. Bay Area Artist, Umbelina Guzman will be reading David Ray’s “The Sleepers” and Steve Barfield’s “Borders.” Susannah Israel will be reading Nilda Cepero’s poems and those of Bina Sarkar Ellias. Please, note that all the WAY Poetry Project poems are freely available at the above listed URL. Plus, past recitals can be viewed on YouTube at this URL: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmqlYn\\_0teQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmqlYn_0teQ).

The forces in Oakland generating this innovative and rare 21<sup>st</sup> Century collaboration, allying “poetry” and “visual arts” are Ms Joyce Gordon and Mr. Eric Murphy, who value, the kindred nature of “poetry” and “visual arts,” as an adjoined artistic fusion, which *once* routinely occurred throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century,<sup>2</sup> and which the *We Are You Project* is valiantly trying to revive in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century (4) thanks to the leadership shown since 2005 by the three original Founders of *WAY*: Duda Penteadó, Mario Tapia, and Carlos Hernandez. For your edification, online is a detailed history of the 2005 *WAY Project* founding in the below URL under the heading “The We Are You International Traveling Show”(“*WAY IT’S*”): <http://www.weareyouproject.org/6201.html#our-history/c4eg>.

## **“WAYPI” NEO-NEOEXPRESSIONISM: THE EMOTIVE HEART OF LATINO-ASCENDENCY:**

As mentioned above, WAY Project’s Founder, Brazilian-born artist, Duda Penteadó is a dynamic creative-force, whose extremely expressive works are universally acclaimed. In his new mixed media image titled *All Faces – All Colors* (2013); in this bright-hued and vivacious piece, Penteadó affirms several inherent **WAY Project** tenants, by aesthetically exploring through his extraordinary Neo-Neoexpressionistic style, in reference to the changing ethnic make-up of the United States of America’s population, with respect to Pan-Latino identity, **Latinization**, and transcultural-diversity. Seeing in the emerging Hispanic ascendancy, an invigorated synthesis of Ibero-American values, ideas, races, creeds and aspirations. As Penteadó (in his below visionary and shamanic forecast) contemplates the state of the USA’s Latino population by 2050 CE, stating, *“Our country is rapidly changing. As we approach the year 2050, our nation will be increasingly more diverse, and Latinos will be one of the forces driving this demographic change. According to 2010 U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, there are roughly 50.5 million Hispanics representing about 16 percent of the U.S. population. By 2050, demographers tell us that there will be no racial or ethnic majority among the general population of the United States, it is projected that the Latino population will double to 30 percent by 2050. Consequently, the role of Latinos in shaping our country’s political and economic climate is becoming more and more significant.”*



Duda Penteadó *All Faces—All Colors* acrylic & mixed-media on canvas (2013)

Along with Penteadó, other WAYPI artists pursue emotive Neo-Neoexpressionist aesthetic-tendencies, e.g., Josephine Barreiro, José Acosta, Hugo Morales, Patriocio Moreno Toro, Fernando Goldoni and Marta Sanchez. For example, reminiscent of Vincent Van Gogh’s *Sorrow*, (an 1882 work by the visionary Dutch master, depicting his mistress Sien Hoornik pregnant), legendary Newark Ironbound Ibero-American Neo-Neoexpressionist painter, Josephine Barreiro creates an eye-grabbing and powerful *duende*-filled (7) acrylic and mixed-media work titled *Alone*, which expressionistically emanates a gush of raw-emotion. Barreiro’s image conveys the tragic exhaustion and frustration preoccupying US-Latinos, who each day face increased socio-political repression, hopelessness, economic despair and alienation. And, as a consequence, Barreiro’s heartbreaking-image, *Alone*, expresses deep-emotions, effecting all compassionate, empathetic, and concerned Latinos, regarding their ever-growing political awareness of the plight of other US-Ibero-Americans, because, at this sad time, millions of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Latinos dwell under the heel of existing brutal and unconstitutional “rightwing-generated” ethno-racist laws, which unfairly profile and target Hispanics in Arizona, Alabama, in addition to several other equally inhospitable states with perfidious anti-Latino laws; and at present, this cruel and “legalistic” ethno-racist plague is spreading to both Houses of Congress (Washington, DC) in the guise of the **S.744 Bill** (aka *The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013*).



Josephine Barreiro *Alone* acrylic and mixed-media (2010)

Another highly expressive **WAYPI** shamanic spiritual artist, who focuses on socio-cultural concerns, is Elizabeth Jiménez Montelongo, a Northern California Chicana, whose innovative acrylic and mixed media on wood image titled *Reclaiming Autonomy* synesthetically intuitively spiritual voices that surface channeled from ancient Amerindian ancestors. These ancient ancestral voices are ceaselessly reverberating and consequently providing an intrinsic and eternal *Quetzalcoatl* derived “precious wisdom,” which is today enlightening many Americans, as well as universally affording the possibility of enlightenment worldwide. Hence, Montelongo sees many ripe possibilities, as contemporary humanity emerges from the obligatory atavistic search for ancient wisdom; manifesting first, as thoughts evolving into words, secondly, thoughts transforming into *praxis* (or “thought as action;” permitting the possibility of Political movement(s) or social change). As Jürgen Habermas, (the German Neo-Marxist, Frankfurt School social-linguistic philosopher) argued “words” are able to free the oppressed and create new possibilities for future generations by linguistically breaking the cycle of injustice by replacing terms of inequality with



Elizabeth Jiménez Montelongo *Reclaiming Autonomy* acrylic and mixed-media on wood (2013)



the possibility of peace, along with an ongoing search for *Quetzalcoatl* derived wisdom. Another artist attuned to indigenous shamanic culture is Puerto Rican-American artist, Gerardo Castro, e.g., in his 2010 oil-on-canvas/mixed-media triptych titled “*I Miss You*”/“*Te Extraño*,” he précis what all immigrants share — in common, which is: homesickness and alienation, ranging from mild nostalgia to outright feelings of utter despair, loss, and grief. Castro’s triptych affirms his abiding faith and veneration of ancient indigenous divinities, relics, images, symbols, rituals, magic and myths, unifying the eternal brotherhood and sisterhood of all indigenous people, throughout Mesoamerica, Central America, the Caribbean, South America, as well as all other Latino cultures everywhere, including that “once-&-future” Latino place: “North America.”



Gerardo Castro “*I Miss You*”/ “*Te Extraño*” oil-on-canvas/ mixed-media (2010)

In this revealing light, Castro’s “*I Miss You*”/ “*Te Extraño*” is a visual poem, hungering for those missing faraway people that we yearn for, whether they are departed or in a distant “space” or “time.” Bolivian poet and art theorist, Dr. Nicomedes Suárez Araúz describes these artistic and creative confrontations with what is forgotten, as being *Amnesis*.(3b) Suarez argues that the vast lacuna of what is forgotten is the true source of artistic creative inspiration as well as the often concealed or overlooked *modus operandi* of all art. Castro’s work exposes a melancholic bittersweet nostalgia for *lost objects*, lost beings, and lost moments. Especially important to him are those human beings that have moved on to the other side or those that we have left behind in distant lands. Yet, for Castro, hope is ever-present: “Quien con la esperanza vive, alegre muere,” which translates: “He who lives with hope dies happy.”



Jose Acosta *La Musica* acrylic on canvas (2013)

Another *WAYPI* shaman is Cuban visual-dynamo José Acosta; a gifted artist imbued with virtuoso talent for thick textural paint-applications; indicative of a raw-surface passion, which his art exudes within each inch of his spectacular imagery. Acosta concurrently combines in his art two divergent and contradictory art historical styles, which are those of Marc Chagall and Vincent Van Gogh. For instance, in his 2013 acrylic on canvas work titled *La Musica*, Acosta creates, using his Dutch/Russian imaginative admixture of Van Gogh-Chagall, an image generating a terpsichorean *jaleo* reminiscent of several imaginative works within Joan Miro’s *Dutch Interiors’ Series* with their vibrant *horror vacui* activating the entire surface with dancing shapes, floating forms, and brightly colored abstract figural elements caught in uproarious-revelry, illustrating the festive elation, which hip-shaking Salsa Music generates; signifying (for Acosta) a major aesthetic influence upon his visual art. Hence, at full volume, he affirms that, “*The energy in Caribbean music lifts my spirit and brings me great joy. It is crucial to understanding my art that viewers grasp that the things that I enjoy most about my Hispanic Heritage are Family, Friends, Music, as well as all the Arts and Cuban Food.*”

## 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY TRANSCULTURAL LATINO VISUAL ART CONFRONTING ETHNO-RACISM:

The Joyce Gordon Gallery’s *WAYPI* exhibit is comprised of prominent contemporary Hispanic masters, whose transcultural pan-Latino-heritages derive from over-a-dozen diverse Ibero-American nations (including Mexico, Puerto-Rico, Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Spain and Portugal). Most importantly, each of these artists or their families have experienced the distinction of being an immigrant, a refugee, a migrant, an expatriate, or a nomad, who gratefully found a “new” home or residence in the United States often fraught with struggle, risk, peril, hardship and opportunities. Among the *WAY Project* visual artists displaying their art-works at “JGG” are: José Acosta, Efen Álvarez, Nelson Álvarez, Willie Baez, Hugo X. Bastidas, Josephine Barreiro, Monica S. Camin, Jacqui Casale, Gerardo Castro, Carlos Chavez, Pablo Caviedes, Williams Coronado, Olga Cruz, Laura L. Cuevas, Maritza Davila, Rosario D’Rivera, Ricardo Fonseca, Fernando Goldoni, Roberto Marquez, Elizabeth Jimenez Montelongo, Hugo Morales, Lisette Morel, Patricio Moreno Toro, Gabriel Navar, Julio Nazario, Duda Penteado, Marta Sanchez, Mel Ramos, Ana Rivera, Jesus Rivera, José Rodeiro, Rolando Reyna, Sergio Villamizar and Raúl Villarreal. This entire cohort consist of prominent Latino and Latina artists (spanning from

the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Coast), who, as a group, demand an answer to one burning question: “Where is the US-Congress’s extant legislative proposal for an enormous barbed-wire-topped fence running along the entire US-border with Canada?” These above-listed Hispanic artists ask “*this*” reasonable question, because for generations millions of ambitious and resourceful Canadians have entered the USA to work, many are “undocumented,” and they inexorably take jobs away from US-born Americans, yet, no multibillion-dollar fence is being conjured-up by rightwing fanatics (especially “*Tea Partyistas*”), who should be logically “also” insisting on thousands-of-miles of impenetrable fencing straddling from Boundary Bay, Washington State to Passamaquoddy Bay, Maine. However, these above-named Ibero-American *WAYPI* artists genuinely worry, wonder, and query, “WHY” is there such a manifest need in 2013 for an ill-conceived, excessive, and discriminatory Immigration Reform bill, authorizing a cruel, deadly, exorbitant and ecologically harmful, larger and longer fence (“WALL”) along Southwest border; while forgetting to build one (as large and as harsh) along the 48° parallel? WHY? Answering “why” exposes the real reasons behind all this pointless fence-building and anti-Hispanic rhetoric, which is nurturing the tide of Latino cultural-estrangement; a theme that preoccupies the work of Mexican-American *WAYPI* “poet-painter” Gabriel Navar. For instance, in Navar’s 2012; alienation-based diptych, derived from his *WAY* Poetry Project poem *a walk with Carmen*, the mostly slime-green section of the diptych is titled *app 4 reemergence*” (acrylic, pencils, ink & oil on board); while the other section of the joint- image is pinkish-red and titled *app 2 zap aliens*”(acrylic, pencils, ink & oil on paper).



Gabriel Navar “*app 4 reemergence*”/“*app 2 zap aliens*”

In his “*app-pieces*,” Navar’s bold saturated complementary colors metaphorically reflect the harsh disparity and discrimination that, sadly, continues to plague our society, nurturing feelings among *all* Latinos and various enlightened non-Latinos of societal estrangement, disaffection, and isolation, which are all symptomatic of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Hispanic **alienation**. Navar’s diptych chronicles our Post-Industrial digital-information crazed “Dark Age”(4) (revealing our addiction and dependence concerning electronic technology for doing just about everything), consequently, Navar crafts Hitchcockian milieus imbued with alienation, fear, and distrust . . . where cold and mindless technology dominates both circuitously or openly, preventing any possibility of truly living, feeling, and enjoying anything; metamorphosing humanity into a cohort of involuntary mechanical voyeurs armed with the hottest (most up to date) and “*coolest*” handheld devices or smart-phones, documenting, filming, and photographing everything and placing it on FACEBOOK, or on texts-messages, or on LinkedIn, etc. But also, of note, in Navar’s art, is the ubiquitous Twitter® logo... (the fat *Blue Birdie*).



William Coronado *The Forgotten Fight* ink, pencil, and marker on canvas (2012)

Along with Navar, another artist consumed by the daily-struggle that confronts Latinos in 21<sup>st</sup> Century America; is the Dominican artist, Williams Coronado, whose mysterious and powerful *duende*-haunted (7) image *The Forgotten Fight* (ink, pencil, and marker on canvas) conveys a sense of struggle, which metaphorically and symbolically connotes the day-after-day battle to survive as well as feed their family, which many Latinos face; both in North America — as well as in their nations of origin. Another evocative piece in the show is that of Monica S. Camin; an Argentine-born painter, who furnishes a full-standing likeness of the first Argentine Pope: Fr. Jorge Mario Bergoglio, SJ, in her oil-on-canvas work: *Pope Francis* (2013) . Camin’s penetrating portrait conveys a white ghostlike (supernatural) spirituality, which she assigns to this current Latin American leader of the global Roman Catholic Church; although, the hem of his red-hued garment (surrounding his feet) suggests a pool of blood.



Monica S. Camin *Pope Francis* oil-on-canvas (2013)





The image utilizes severe black-&-white tenebrism, as if to indicate that predominantly, The Holy Father sees human existence [(as primarily being either good or evil)] in “Black” & “White.”

The dehumanizing effects of ethno-racism permeate the work of Mexican-American artist, Efrén Álvarez. In his work, *Manoseo* (2013), watercolor and gouache, he examines the propaganda-arm of both US political parties, specifically investigating how both political parties address immigration reform. The term “*manoseo*” is a Castilian word, which means to provocatively touch someone without their permission. In Álvarez’s dramatic, satirical, and sardonic image, two oversexed men flirt with a chaste young girl. Álvarez explains, “Two perverse men (signifying “Democrats” and “Republicans”) try to seduce an innocent girl (who symbolizes or represent all Latin American illegal aliens).”

Efrén Álvarez *Manoseo* watercolor and gouache (2013)

## 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY GLOBAL POPULAR CULTURE CAUGHT IN THE WAKE OF WAYPI

### “NEO-NEOPOP ART:”

The portrayal of Latinos or Latinas as helpless victim is challenged by legendary Bay Area visual-genius Mel Ramos in his daring Neo-Baroque (“Bernini-esque”) *Catwoman* image, where the Pop master alludes to the 1940s’ Bob Kane and Bill Finger DC Comic character “Selina Kyle” (allegedly an Irish-Hispanic young woman), who was portrayed in the comics as a powerful whip carrying *femme-fatal* jewel-thief involved in a *love-hate* relationship with Batman. The key issue, for Ramos, is that this type of DC Comic character was nearly censored out of existence in 1954, because these types of images were deemed to be too erotic. Heroically, by often championing throughout his oeuvre a host of brazen feline-vixens possessing independent cat-like *feminine-mystiques*, Ramos played a key (and gallant) role in helping to reinstate such subjects into the visual-lexicon of American Pop iconology, which after the 1960’s sexual revolution finally allowed such characters as “Catwoman/Selina Kyle” to reemerge and reappear in a variety of Hollywood cattish portrayals (Julie Newmar, Lee Meriwether, Ertha Kitt, Michelle Pfeiffer, Halle Barry and Anne Hathaway) reaffirming this unique and iconic symbol of American womanhood, and in the specific case of “Catwoman/Selina Kyle,” championing an indomitable US *Celto-Latina*; who, in her free-spirit, prowess, and resilience, epitomized female-liberation.



Mel Ramos *Catwoman* lithograph (2010)



Hugo W. Morales “*ICE'd*” digital print (2012)

The Neo-NeoPop group within *WAYPI* includes: Mel Ramos (who is one of the original US Pop masters), Ricardo Fonseca, Lisette Morel, Fernando Goldoni, Julio Nazario and Hugo Morales. Ecuadorian contemporary artist, Hugo W. Morales’s Neo-NeoPop digital print image “*ICE'd*” provides two black-&-white” double standing-portraits of ubiquitous Latino Pop superstar “Dora the Explorer” floating or caught within (or surrounded by) rectangular chunks of ice. This “ice” metaphor illustrates the constant postponement and deferment of all Latino socio-political, socio-cultural, and socio-economic concerns dominating today’s Ibero-American 21<sup>st</sup> Century political agenda. In urban slang, the term “ice’d” means to be ostracized or cut-out of something: “unable to join in.” The term (in urban slang) can also connote great wealth, to be *iced* is to be covered in diamonds or “*bling*.” Also, keep in mind, that ice is formed when water reaches the freezing-point of 32° Fahrenheit, and sadly (with Dora the Explorer on “Ice”) “around” 32% might very well indicate the sum total of Latino population growth in the USA by 2050 CE, which if true would make most of *We Are You Project* perfunctory. Morales’s whimsical and

ironic capacity for joking-around springs from his deep-rooted hilarious propensity for comic Pop Art, i.e., Warhol’s 1961 *Nancy* images or the cartoon-inspired works of Archie Rand, Ronnie Cutrone, Juan Ugalde, and others. “Iconologically, the use of “ICE” in Morales’s “*ICE'd*” is a pun on “US Immigration & Customs Enforcement,” as Sergio Villamizar pointed out.

In this above-described patriotic light, historically Ibero-American youths have been fighting and dying for the USA as soldiers and patriots since 1776 (6) -- and perhaps even earlier, if recent "shocking" archeological finds within Virginia's Cactus Hill excavation and those at Maryland's Tilghman Island's Paw Paw Cove are correct, then long-long before supposedly definitive demarcation known as Asiatic "Clovis Line," Iberian Solutrean people settled the continental United States, somehow arriving (long before The Clovis Line) by sea around or before 20,000 BCE. Hence, the feasible "original" "native" DNA (at least along the Atlantic East Coast) derives from the Iberian Peninsula. Yet, today, Latinos remain marginalized despite the fact that historically, they are recipients of countless US armed forces military metals (during and since World War II) obtained for heroism in combat. And, today, during the "War on Terror," Hispanics comprise a large percentage of the USA's fighting forces. This point is driven home by Puerto Rican WAYPI artist, Julio Nazario in his 2013 mixed-media piece titled, "**Vietnam Service**," an image symbolizing his personal narrative; as well as a broader narrative, pertaining to Latinos and Latinas serving in the U.S. Military. With art historical allusions to Pop Art masters like Billy Al Bengston and Robert Indiana, Nazario adds (unlike them) sublime emotion to his oeuvre. In Nazario's monumental work, the green background represents the central highlands of Vietnam. The four bronze stars in the image of his Vietnam Service Medal represents the four principal combat-operations that the artist was directly involved in --- from 1967-68.



Julio Nazario **Vietnam Service**  
mixed-media (2013)

This narrative is painfully illumined by his well-known Purple Heart piece titled "**The Convoy in Lilacs**" that is found within this *Way Project*'s Webpage URL (<http://www.weareyouproject.org/6201.html#!nazario-julio/c7hn>).



Fernando Goldoni **Where Do We Go From Here?** Acrylic on canvas mixed-media (2013)

In strong accord (with both Morales's and Nazario's above-described Neo-NeoPop pieces) is a highly emotional flag-image by Uruguayan-born *WAYPI* artist Fernando Goldoni, who created an acrylic on canvas mixed media image titled "**Where do we go from here?**" This vibrant red, white, and blue blurred and gestural Neo-Informalist depiction of "Old Glory" alludes to Jasper Johns's mid-1950s Pop Art series of American flag paintings. This image's style is simultaneously both Neo-Neoexpressionistic and Neo-NeoPop Art. However, Goldoni's flag is far more emotional than any of Johns's flags. On each of Goldoni's stripes are written (or scratched with diverse writing-implements) perfect words (often in Spanish) for a Neo-NeoPop Art poem; a veritable *Wittgensteinian* word game: "VISA," "stop no," "System," "Trespassing," "oil petrol power," "Shhh -- NYC's Best Kept Secret," "Iran," "Afghanistan," "Iraq," "Cuba," "Panama," "**You will always be a foreigner**" -- "Laws lie to you,®" (or "Laws speak untruth"®).

This image warns us that the people in power do not care about us, or our needs. In order to either obtain or maintain power, they are entirely capable of saying, as well as doing, anything. The title refers to the present US-Congress's utter failure (year-in and year-out) to achieve fair, just, and appropriate immigration reform.

Another innovative and conceptual *WAYPI* visual-dynamo is Dominican Neo-NeoPop artist, Lisette Morel. Her highly original piece titled "**To:USA, Smooches Dominican Lips**," is an image belonging to her ongoing "*Mapping Series*." Morel's "**To:USA, Smooches Dominican Lips**" directly addresses issues involved in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dominican-American *Latinization*.<sup>1</sup> The extremely animated image was created in 2013 using lipstick that was first placed on the artist's lips and then repeatedly placed as kisses upon a *NYC Subway Map*. This mixed-media piece documents a personal shamanic creative event, a furtive ritual, or the detritus of a performance-piece, which presages the passage of time in that each viewer [(whether an immigrant or not)] confronts his/her own personal place in time. In *The General Theory of Relativity*, Albert Einstein expounded the notion of "*spacetime*" by which time and space are deemed equivalent to each other. Hence, Morel's patterns of kiss-marks serve to map: 1). Particular places, 2). Exact or precise locations, as well as 3). other *Kripkean* worlds.



Lisette Morel **USA, Smooches Dominican Lips** mixed-media (2012)



Rosario D'Rivera **Dolor De Patria**  
mixed-media collage (2013)

Cuban-born *WAYPI* artist, Rosario D'Rivera's mixed-media collage "**Dolor De Patria**," 2013, is a dual painful and heartfelt Neo-NeoPop image, expressing the artist's deep love for her homeland Cuba. Art historically, the image ingeniously references innovative Pop Art *push/pull* composi-





Jacqui Casale *LATINO* mixed-media (combine-piece) (2013)

tions created by Pop pioneer Robert Rauschenberg; especially his early-1960's *Kennedy Series*, involving JFK and RFK, reflecting Rauschenberg's knack for subtle subliminal in-advertent "chance" allusions, e.g., unintentionally in the *Kennedy Series* evoking the notorious Cuban Missile Crisis, which almost ignited World War III. However, unlike Rauschenberg, little in D'Rivera's *"Dolor De Patria"* is left to *chance*, although like Rauschenberg as well as other 1950s and 1960s Pop masters, she is trying mightily (in her collage) to break the *Duchampian* distinction between "art" and "life," by amalgamating ("*collaging*") diverse images, things, words and ideas together into a furtive, yet, decipherable, coded messages, involving, i.e., a broken enormous red heart cracked through the center bleeding irate words; a defiant fist holding the Cuban flag; *balseros* adrift; photo-documentation of Cubans escaping Communism; angry words; images of her famous musical and artistic family; Miami's "Freedom Tower," and the cartoon bearded-face caricature of Cuba's interminable totalitarian and criminal tyrant.

Puerto-Rican-American '*WAYPista*,' Jacqui Casale offers a seminal Neo-Neopop work that sums-up the entire JGG show in a brilliant "all-encompassing" nutshell titled, "*LATINO*," which cleverly says it all! Casale's "*LATINO*" is comprised of six small modules, which when combined together form the word "Latino." Assembled with two modules side-by-side, her work is composed of acrylic paint, text and collage, and indirectly alludes to the text-based Pop Art of Robert Indiana, e.g., his 1968 *Numbers Series*. Each letter module in the word "Latino" consists of dozens of intermingle words that start with one of these specific letters ("L," "A," "T," "I," "N," and "O") to express words that are commonly used by people to stereotypically define Hispanic ethnic qualities and socio-psychological determinant-characteristics most typically identified with a specific ethnic group. In Casale's piece some defining stereotypical terms are pejorative (uncomplimentary and derogatory), others are complimentary and positive. Her work is interesting in that it provides

a wealth of sociological insight into how Latinos are perceived by both non-Latinos and Latinos.

## WAYPI METAPHORICAL REALISM & THE HOPE OF "NEO-RENAISSANCE:"



Roberto Marquez *The Map of Mexico* oil and encaustic on wood (2013)

Despite the current wave of anti-Latinoism sweeping the country, Hispanics long to be considered 100% American, nowhere is that more evident than in a fascinating transcultural portrait titled *El Hijo del Destino/ The Child of Destiny* (2013, oil on canvas) painted by Laura L. Cuevas; wherein the artist candidly captures the essence of her son, Eduardo Enrique Whittington, which she describes as a fresh, "new," and optimistic *Walt Whitmanesque* portrait of America that integrates an ethno-cultural inheritance comprised of Puerto Rican, Cuban, French Créole and British ancestry. Also, echoed in the image is the fact that her son entered this world on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July during a firework celebration; an activity filled with "*rockets' red glare; and the bombs bursting in air*" marking America's National Anthem: "The Star Spangled Banner," hence, "Old Glory" also appears in Cuevas's image.



Laura L. Cuevas *El Hijo del Destino* oil-on-canvas (2013)

Another growing tendency among *WAYPI* artists is "*Metaphorical Realism*," which derives from several Latin American postmodern styles (i.e., Neo-Romanticism, Neo-Symbolism, Neo-Surrealism, Neo-Ultraism, Neo-Magic Realism, Neo-Supersrealism as well as *Amnesia Art*), many of which *Metaphorical Realism* has refashioned into a unique and emblematic radical Postmodern "narrative" style that includes (in alphabetical order): Hugo X. Bastidas, Laura L. Cuevas, Olga Cruz, Gerardo Castro, Williams Coronado, Roberto Marquez, Gabriel Navar, Raphael Montanez Ortiz, Joe Pena, Jimmy Pena, Jesus Rivera, José Rodeiro, Raúl Villarreal and others.

For example, upon arriving in the US, Mexican-born master Roberto Marquez first dwelled in Arizona, eventually establishing himself in New York City's Metropolitan Area, as well as spending considerable time in Australia. His elegant, imaginative, sensitive, and poetic paintings envision fantastic dream worlds replete with vivid symbolic images. For example, Marquez's encaustic and oil on wood piece titled, "*The Map of Mexico*" is a visionary and iconic image ingeniously depicting a pre-1848 map of Mexico, as it was prior to the Peace Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (near Mexico City), which ended the US War with Mexico (1846-1848), as well as establishing a new boundary-line between the United States and Mexico along the Rio Grande as well as [(before 1853)] the Gila River. Also, the treaty permitted the United States' purchase of over-525,000 square miles of Mexican territory for a mere \$15,000,000 (dollars), thereby attaining Arizona, California, western Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah, and few hectares of Oklahoma, Kansas, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon. In full accord with Henry David Thoreau's vehement opposition to President James K. Polk's notion of "manifest destiny," Marquez's "*The Map of Mexico*" describes a "timeless" Mesoamerican child comprehending (or "grasping") the *Amnesis* (3b) implications of this unfathomable and overwhelming historical and geographical "loss" that forever functions as an invariable gigantic "lost object" — lost within a vast universal collective-*lacuna* that has, in due course, inspired Latino artists from Diego Rivera to Marquez.

Perhaps *WAYPI Metaphorical Realism*, (with its revolutionary return to human *artisanal* methods of creativity, and with its "renewed" emphasis on poetry as a constituent element in visual art, as well as its unfettered utilization of human imagination), might be, a possible means toward the long-awaited "Neo-Renaissance;" which could hopefully end the current "Techno-Dark Age" that has crippled visual art and poetry for several decades. *WAYPI Metaphorical Realism* could be an instrument in the revitalization art-as-"Art" (returning visual art to the visual — both *the visceral* (seeing) and *visionary* (seeing)) by ending, at long last, the unrelenting stranglehold on art attributable to entrenched, ubiquitous, and cynical "*anti-art*" dogmatic *academic* "Neo-Dada Establishmentarianism," which today generally rules most academic art departments, art institutions, art museums, and art publications. Technology nourishes this standardized "Neo-Dada Establishment" (the new "*Academia*") by feeding its minion, which are comprised of myriad and deep-rooted subsidiary Neo-Conceptual offshoots, which perpetually *ad nauseam* regurgitate the dreary Anti-Art Canon of "High Modernism" that originated with Marcel Duchamp and then was successfully proselytized world-wide by Joseph Beuys and George Maciunas. In *The New Criterion*, art critic, Barbara Rose once observed that by their inherent "Outsider" status, minority artists in the USA are generally insulated and protected from the aesthetic dogma of the "ever-conceptual" Anti-Art establishment. For this reason, Latino artist (as well as other minority artists) are free (without restraint) to pursue art as "Art." They are even free to paint using brushes, using their eyes, painting from their heart, mind, soul, guts, etc., because as outsiders, they are free from the chains of the art industry. Latinos can, as a result, exert greater devotion, imagination, love, and passion to their art; consequently doing their art as if it mattered. Thus, Rose perceived in her article that they might be among the only contemporary artists actually doing valuable worthwhile art of any consequence in the USA. The implication of being an "Outsider" plays into the desire within *WAYPI Metaphorical Realism* to engender and foster a "New Renaissance," this ambition is best expressed by a prophecy hidden in the last lines of Federico Garcia Lorca's poem *Ode to Walt Whitman*, where a dark *duende* inspired these prophetic words:

*I long for the strongest wind from the deepest night  
to clear away flowers and words from the arch where you sleep,  
while a black boy warns white gold mongerers  
"At last, arrives the sovereign-reign of a maize-tassel!"*

----- Federico Garcia Lorca

As young children, two Cuban American "*Metaphorical Realist*" *WAYPI* artists, Raúl Villarreal and José Rodeiro admired the *Proto*-Postmodern painters: Salvador Dalí, Rene Magritte, and Mel Ramos. Hence, allusions to Magritte and Dali appear in Villarreal's oil on canvas titled *Am-bos Mundos*, which depicts a shimmering Neo-Romantic seascape that surround a perfectly centered floating picture of a solitary Cuban fishing boat (CHECK the central boat-detail from Villarreal's '*Ambos Mundos*'). The boat also references Villarreal's familial connection to Ernest Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea* [(research the best-selling book *Hemingway's Cuban Son* by Rene Villarreal and Raul Villarreal )]. As a whole, the image commemorates -- as well as memorializes, the over-90,000 Cubans, who (from 1959 until today) died at sea on *balsas* (makeshift *rafts*) seeking "freedom," "justice," and asylum from the Castro



Detail of Raúl Villarreal's  
*Ambos Mundos*





Raúl Villarreal *Ambos Mundos* oil-on-canvas (2013)



José Rodeiro *Aqua Dulce (Oshun Asleep)* oil-on-canvas (2013)

Brothers' perpetual dictatorship, dying while crossing the ninety-mile wide Straits of Florida, desperately and heroically attempting to reach Key West or Miami.

Like Villarreal, Salvador Dalí's *Persistence of Memory* as well as Mel Ramos's numerous reclining figures directly inspired Rodeiro's oil-on-canvas portrait of Oshun, which is titled *Aqua Dulce (Oshun Asleep)*, 2013. This image asserts that contemporary Caribbean art and culture is inherently (at its core) African art and culture. Moreover, this unique *Neo-Negritude* (*Neo-Negrisme*) and *Neo-Tropicália* is an Afro-Caribbean cultural imperative, which syncretistically blends Yoruba's elemental-cosmology with an array of specific Roman Catholic saints. For example, the *orisha* Oshun is explicitly identified as being "Our Lady of Charity," who is also known to Cubans as "Our Lady of El Cobre:" The Patron Saint of Cuba. Hence, many Cuban women invoke Oshun, as their personal divinity. Also, Oshun is celebrated as the goddess of sexuality, eroticism, and sensuality, which are three key or intrinsic or socio-regional qualities or pillars that best define the innate creative genius of Caribbean culture, especially in Cuba. A reality that Cuban master, Raul Villarreal always reassured, saying to Rodeiro, "Think of 'Mother Africa,' . . . consider 'Mother Africa.'"

Hence, in this Cuban-Caribbean work, the viewer miraculously stands on the banks of the River Oshun, Nigeria, while three Cuban yellow butterflies (*Phoebis Avellaneda*) dance like Hesiod's ancient graces: giving, receiving, and returning. Rodeiro depicts the goddess Oshun asleep, dreaming at nightfall under a slender crescent moon that converses with three fixed stars. In the distance is Oshun's sacred *Erin Ijesha Waterfall*. Behind the goddess, strange abstract anonymous sculptures of Oshun and Shango scan the river; these existing 3-D works look like extraterrestrials: aliens (indirectly alluding to the general *WAYPI* immigration-related aesthetic). In the image, water flows all around Oshun and through her, as evening ascends; and everything golden-yellow is ascribed to her.

Another *Metaphorical Realist* depiction of a woman is Tex-Mex master, Joe Peña's oil on panel "*Elenora*," 2013, which is part of a series of images of immigrants and undocumented émigrés, which opens a window into the life and work of Mexican nomadic migrants that routinely pass through Texas heading to diverse destinations throughout "El Norte," like Chicago. Denver, Dover (NJ), etc. The painting of "Elenora" depicts her as a brave and bold young woman, one moment before she crossed the New Mexico border into her "United States destiny" (which could be either "The American Dream" or American nightmare). In *footnote #9* (below) is Joe Peña's compelling account of what transpired.(9)

Another Puerto Rican-American artist disillusioned by both USA's and several states' official policies aimed at Latinos is Puerto Rican visual artist, Olga Cruz. For example, in her image titled *Mi Bella Vieques (My Beautiful Vieques)*, Cruz iconologically investigates historical events on Puerto Rico's little sister Island, Vieques, where between 1941 and 2001, the US Navy and its Marine Corp unilaterally (without permission) used the tiny island's southern peninsula as a massive



Joe Peña *Elenora* oil on panel (2013)

firing range for naval gunnery target practice. Metaphorically, Cruz depicts a grief-stricken Boriquen boy crouching in a prenatal pose unable to “*stand*” nor “*lie*” nor “*sit*,” alluding to T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*’s famous line, which precisely defines the basic characteristic of all “wastelands” as being emotionally unwelcoming bleak places where: “. . . one can neither stand nor lie nor sit.”(8).

Olga Cruz *Mi Bella Vieques (My Beautiful Vieques)*  
watercolor (2012)



## **WAYPI’s POSITIVE & “UP-BEAT” PRO-LATINO OPTIMISM:**



Marta Sanchez *Freedom is a Global Dream*  
oil and enamel on tin (2011)

Yet, despite everything, Hispanic hope endures and prevails, as luck would have it, by means of a dark and ironic optimism evident in the art of five emotively expressive and imaginative *WAYPI* artists: Peruvian-born painter Carlos Chavez; Chilean-born artist Patricio Moreno Toro; Puerto-Rican book-artist, Maritza Davila; Chicana artist, Marta Sanchez, and Puerto-Rican-American artist Willie Baez. Virulent confidence is evident in Sanchez’s highly expressive 2011, oil and enamel on tin painting *Freedom is a Global Dream*, which expresses her abundant hope for the future, stating (in relationship to her Neo-Neoexpressionistic piece), “*As a Chicana living in the 21-century, I have seen and felt my heart rise with pride for what we, as a global Latino community, have contributed to the USA and the entire world. Latinos are united not only as a community within the United States; but, equally as part of the global society. Nevertheless, in the past few years, when the economy faltered, many Latinos felt deflated by cruel acts of discrimination and violence directed at them. I realistically try to walk-the-walk of perseverance and empathy for the sake of all those that continue to fight to keep their God-given rights and their inalienable freedoms, as they defiantly*

*chant-the-chant, “Que si se puede!”*” Paradoxically, Patricio Moreno Toro’s *duende*-filled (7) *Claustrofobia Solemne* (mixed-media on glass) examines the reality of being a Latin American immigrant/refugee attempting to live in the USA. Toro’s image occasions myriad feelings of being isolated, alienated; as well as describing claustrophobic sensation(s) of being caught, caged, displaced, or thrust (without warning) involuntarily into motion at an inexorable speed: a misfortune that converts any immigrant or refugee into a mere shadow of their former-self, forever becoming a little too dignified, or always “in character,” as “Zorro,” “Ricardo Montalban,” “Rachel Welch” or “Shakira,” as well as (like these alien-beings) blindly committed to forging ahead despite countless obstacles. All of this struggle exemplifies the reality of being a stranger in a strange-land, forever being forced to persevere, climb fences, break barriers, and finally, finally obtain some sort of validation. Via an expressive Neo-*informalism*, Toro’s *Claustrofobia Solemne* captures and demarcates Hispano-émigrés as *Amnesis* (3b) caged shadows of former-selves.



Puerto-Rican book-artist, Maritza Davila’s accordion book structure is titled *Bilingual* (2011-2013) is a 15” tall work that opens-up to 46.” The work is a variable edition of two (only), which was created using screen-print, woodcut, as well as lithography collage. The piece iconologically reveals that Latinos are a transcultural ethnicity primarily held together by their utilization of Iberian languages (primarily Spanish and Portuguese, as well as other regional idiosyncratic *Iberian* tongues).

Patricio Moreno Toro *Claustrofobia Solemne*  
mixed-media on glass (2012)



Maritza Davila *Bilingual* screen-  
print, woodcut, lithograph  
collage upon accordion book  
structure





Carlos Chavez *Mi Paijan Querido* oil-on-canvas (2012)

World famous Peruvian Neo-Surrealist *WAYPI* painter Carlos Fortunato Chavez Lopez (aka Carlos Chavez) offers an oil-on-canvas piece titled *Mi Paijan querido* (2012), which critic Millie Redunger has positively evaluated, stating, “Chavez employs a unique blend of forms and colors, in this *Mi Paijan querido* image, wherein we enter a strange world of mysterious places and beings enveloped in enigmatic possibilities that oblige sublime crystallization of the viewer’s attentive contemplation. Soon, by carefully observing the image, the forms coagulate into numerous tiny adobe houses reminiscent of Paijan, Peru, which is Carlos Chavez’s hometown (his “*pueblo*”), where he was born.” Like Chavez, Willie Báez also recalls, in his Joyce Gordon Gallery piece, childhood reveries. One of America’s most exhibited Puerto Rican-American artist, Báez is known for his personal and intimate images. For example, in his “*Hijos de Borinquen*,” an acrylic painting with collage



Willie Báez *Hijos de Borinquen* acrylic & collage on canvas (2012)

elements on canvas, Báez connects dominant memories from his childhood in Manhattan’s East Village, regarding his father and mother and their Latino religious and cultural traditions, stating, “My mother had a “sacred alter” where she lit her candles to honor, venerate, and pray to the seven African powers (“*las siete potencia*”). My father would polish and tune-up his guitars, and then ardently serenade the family with Caribbean folksongs drawn from his long ago childhood in Puerto Rico.”

## JOYCE GORDON GALLERY’s *WAYPI* “CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION:”

Like that melodic voice described by Willie Baez above, the *WAY Project* is a devoted socio-cultural institution that furnishes Latinos (everywhere) a lucid and clear visual artistic and poetic “voice” affirming and proclaiming the power and beauty of the United States of America’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century and forever Ibero-American art & culture. Hence, this unique visual artistic and poetic voice is precisely what the Joyce Gordon Gallery’s “*We Are You Project International’s* “*CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION*” signifies, because ultimately, the *We Are You Project*’s mission is to inform, enlighten, stimulate, and educate the public (both nationally and internationally) concerning the many facets and realities of Latino identity as it has emerged over the past six centuries and continues to evolve in the 21st Century and beyond. Through activities identified in the mission statement within the below-listed URL, which explains that the goal of the *WAY Project*, which is to become a premiere not-for-profit organization that people turn to for the most progressive and stimulating thinking on Ibero-American culture, art, and life. For more information please visit [www.weareyouproject.org](http://www.weareyouproject.org)

Joyce Gordon Gallery is a commercial fine art gallery located in the downtown district of Oakland, California. It exhibits art that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the Bay Area as well as international artists. The aim of the gallery is to respect the creative pursuits of individuals; and accordingly, seeks to make such creative work accessible to a broad audience. Joyce Gordon Gallery is located at 406 14<sup>th</sup> St (12<sup>th</sup> St. Bart Exit) Oakland, Ca. 94612. The Gallery hours: Wed – Fri 11am-5pm and Sat 1-5pm. For more information please contact: Gallery Curator: Eric Murphy – [infojoycegordongallery@gmail.com](mailto:infojoycegordongallery@gmail.com) Gallery: 510.465.8928.

## **NOTES:**

- 1a. *Latinization* is a term invented by Dr. José Rodeiro in 1992 during the USA’s Columbus Quincentenary for an art exhibit and monogram organized by Helen Glazer (the Director of Goucher College’s Rosenberg Gallery, Baltimore, MD), which she titled “*Approaching the Quincentenary: Latino Art 1982-1992*.” The term “Latinization” was first used publicly on Monday, October 12, 1992, at Goucher College, during an art historical lecture by the author of *this* article, using the term “*Latinization*” to denote the inevitable growth and spread of Latino culture throughout the USA, including the expected 21st Century absorption of Latino culture by the US-mainstream (which shortly after 2070 CE will perhaps manifest and mark an unavoidable and “natural” cultural shift when due to population growth and other factors, the USA achieves feasibly perchance a 51% Latino majority) establishing within the USA a Latino (“Hispanic”) pre-dominance, concerning, e.g., Latino values, art, music (dance), food and lifestyle.
- 1b. Fonseca’s *S.744* is inspired by his current and personal experiences with US-immigration red-tape, e.g., the layers of countless Department of Homeland Security immigration forms that he and his family have had to complete, specifically pertaining to the art historical

fact that Fonseca is sponsoring one of his family members in their pursuit of a Resident Alien Card. Also, the colors, are patriotic (red, white, and blue). In his image, the low-relief sculptural effect of the thick “3-D” red chain, padlock, and key, create a unique *push/pull* of subject and object, which can be considered “Neo-NeoPop” in temperament.

2. As the late-20<sup>th</sup> Century merged into the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the long established link existing between Visual Art and Poetry unfortunately eroded. However, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Picasso maintained close contact with a plethora of great writers, i.e., Gertrude Stein, Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Pierre Reverdy, Paul Eluard, Jean Cocteau, Hemingway, and others; as did Dalí with Lorca; furthermore, the Spanish painter Juan Gris roomed in Paris in 1916 with the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro; likewise in Paris, Chilean visual artist Roberto Matta lived with Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda from 1938 to 1939, etc, etcetera. Sadly, during this new techno-driven “Dark Age,” the world is increasingly inundated with *analphabets*; for instance, few people under 50 years-of-age can actually read and comprehend James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*, Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*, or Nicomedes Suárez-Araúz’s *Amnesis Art*, because today, each art form is deemed separate, “specialized,” cut-off and remote from other art forms; hence, wretchedly and lugubriously, the natural innate kinship between poetry and painting is vanishing. Yet, the ancient Greek poet, Simonides of Ceos viewed *painting* as silent poetry and *poetry* as *painting* that speaks,” or as the Roman poet Horace agreed, “*Ut pictura poesis* -- “As is painting so is poetry.”
- 3a. **Neo-Latinoism:** <http://www.njcu.edu/assoc/neolatino/neolatino/history2.htm>  
as well as: [http://www.njcu.edu/assoc/neolatino/neolatino/manifesto\\_2.htm](http://www.njcu.edu/assoc/neolatino/neolatino/manifesto_2.htm)
- 3b. Suárez-Araúz, Nicomedes. *Amnesis Art*, New York City: Lascaux Publishers, 1988.
4. The “**Neo-Renaissance**” aspect of the WE ARE YOU PROJECT: One of the most novel and innovative aspects of the **WE ARE YOU Project** is a desire (a longing for) a Neo-Renaissance. This obsession is marked by the WAY Project insistence on **comparative-artistic** collaboration and alliance with all the arts, which might be “secretly” perhaps an un-envisioned-path out of the current “Techno Dark-Age” marked by over-faith in machines, as the earlier 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Century “Dark Age” likewise was fixated fanatically on faith in God (5). Yet, historically all **Renaissances** only occur when faith is humanistically directed primarily or mainly at **humanity** (“Mankind”), as 17<sup>th</sup> Century French fabulist Jean de La Fontaine declared: “God helps those that help themselves!” Or as the proto-Renaissance genius St. Francis of Assisi instructed, we must be the instruments of God on earth. Yet, at this moment, the current Techno Dark Age is still very-much alive! There is presently no Neo-Renaissance in sight!
5. Dr. Jose Rodeiro’s views on The Dark Ages: <http://ragazine.cc/2012/12/a-gift-of-art-history/>
6. During the American Revolution, Count Gálvez led Spaniards, Mexicans, Cajun-Creoles and Latinos against British forts (i.e., Manchac, Baton Rouge, Natchez, Mobile, and Pensacola), securing large tracks of the Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi River Valley for the newborn infant USA.
7. What is DUENDE? <http://www.duendart.org/#!home/mainPage>
8. Both T. S. Eliot and Olga Cruz reference Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival* with its insightful definition of the wasteland as a “dead land” that surrounds the “**fisher king’s**” magic castle --- wherein lies the Holy Grail, which adds another layer of sublime-meaning to Cruz’s watercolor *Mi Bella Vieques*; due to the Holy Grail’s resurrecting and invigorating power(s) to restore the land, which affirms Cruz’s farsighted faint hope for the Island of Vieques’s distant prospects as a vibrant plush-posh tourist destination. It is interesting that her image was created at the exact same time as director Bruce Robinson’s 2012 film *The Rum Diary* based on an early-1960’s novel by the great Hunter S. Thompson about white-collar criminal Yankee real-estate speculation on Vieques, during Eisenhower’s presidency.
9. Joe Peña’s compelling account, states, “As with my previous work currently in the WAY project Website, I’ve been working on a series of paintings relating to my experience during the summers of my youth; wherein I would unload tile with Mexican immigrants on their way north. During these summers, I would often hear about the grueling treks led by coyote-guides, told by these émigrés friends in order to earn a better living for themselves and ultimately for their family members back home in Mexico. My immigrant portrait-series is a testament to their journeys with some images depicted directly, while others are depicted in a more dramatic fashion harkening back to German, Russian, and Chinese propaganda posters, as well as recruitment posters of the American Red Cross. “Elenora” is an example of the latter with the figure getting ready to cross the New Mexico border with nothing but her hopes and fears for a new and better life.”



Efrén Alvarez *The Game of Hope* “*El Juego de la Esperanza*”

20 feet square

Joyce Gordon Gallery