

RAÍCES

Becca Martinez

BFA Exhibition

APSU Department of Art + Design | Spring 2021

Updated Artist Statement

Raíces is a collaborative series of multi-media, embroidered portraits of my family and a self-portrait, stylistically influenced by traditional and indigenous Mexican textiles and their processes. With this body of work, I want to share my roots and open the doors to my household by introducing each person and telling our story. It is necessary for me to communicate how important these individuals are to me, how vital their presence is in my life, and how strongly they have influenced every fiber of my being and my work and process as an artist. My parent's background, rich culture, and deep-rooted traditions heavily influence my creative practice and motivate me to dig deeper into my Mexican heritage; while my siblings allow me to not feel so alone while growing up between races and communities. My on-going pursuit of my identity is greatly inspired and affected by each of their life experiences, trials, and achievements. It is crucial for this to be the first large body of work I put out into the world as it is the beginning of me. This is my origin, my family, my story. Estas son mis *raíces*. These are my *roots*.

Thesis Proposal/Current Process

The project is structured as a series of 7 large scale, mixed media textile portraits of my family: my parents, my four siblings, and myself. Each portrait is on unprimed canvas; my process consisted of measuring and cutting the fabric to different sizes and dyeing the canvas a specific color depending on the person. I embroidered the individuals outline in thread and as I worked, I experimented and explored different avenues and processes to individualize each person more.

Summarized, written introductions of each person will be incorporated into each work. I hope to fill the space, so that when a viewer walks into the gallery, they feel almost like they are walking into a home, into a household conversation among a family; I want individuals to feel consumed by the presence of these large works. I plan to display them unstretched, hung up on the wall, with some material "spilling out" from the canvas, unapologetically invading the observers' space.

Artist Bio

Becca Martinez is Mexican American, multi-media, textile artist based in Nashville, Tennessee. She is currently working towards her BFA in Studio Art at the Department of Art + Design at Austin Peay State University. Her work explores the complexity of Mexican culture and households as well as her family and her identity. Her main media are fabric, thread, yarn, and a variety of textiles and materials. Her process incorporates embroidery on drawn, painted or dyed fabrics and surfaces in the style and vivid colors heavily influenced by conventional Mexican textiles and folkloric and indigenous clothing and patterns.

Her work has been shown in exhibitions and galleries in Clarksville, Tennessee: *Wonder*, The Living Gallery Exhibition Space, *FLUX Student Painting Exhibition*, Barbara Beach Gallery, *The Living Gallery Student Showcase*, and the *Art + Design Open House Show*. She has been the recipient of The Living Gallery Juried Residency Program at Austin Peay State University for five consecutive semesters while simultaneously being a part of the Art + Design Student Engagement Committee.

BECCA MARTINEZ

CONTACT INFO

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https://www.instagram.com/becca_lisette/

EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

Sales Associate and Cashier | Estetica Unisex Alex and Alex Straps & More | 2012-present

Fluently bilingual (Spanish/English). Self-employed, family business: cashier, sales associate, customer service, experience in hair salon/barber tasks, planning schedules, filing, spreadsheets, in-person verbal and document translating, experience in a factory/workshop setting/environment, experience with most hand tools, experience with an ultrasonic welder, assembly and packaging.

4+ years experience in home renovation and remodeling, demolition, flooring, interior painting, and design.

EDUCATION

BFA Studio Art | 12/2021 | Austin Peay State University

Pursuing a BFA in Studio Art with an anticipated graduation date in December 2021

Upcoming Senior Exhibition Raíces May 2020

BIO

Becca is a Mexican American, multi-media, fiber artist based in Nashville, Tennessee. She is currently working towards her BFA in Studio Art at the Department of Art + Design at Austin Peay State University. Her work explores the concepts of beauty, the complexity of Mexican culture and households as well as her family and close relationships. Her main media are fabric, thread, yarn, and a variety of textiles. Her process incorporates traditional embroidery on drawn, painted or dyed fabrics depicting large scale portraits of her family in the style and vivid colors conventionally seen in Mexican textiles and folkloric and indigenous clothing and patterns.

EXHIBITIONS

Her work has been shown in exhibitions and galleries in Clarksville, Tennessee: *Wonder*, The Living Gallery Exhibition Space, *FLUX Student Painting Exhibition*, Barbara Beach Gallery, *The Living Gallery Student Showcase*, and the *Art + Design Open House Show*. She has been the recipient of The Living Gallery Juried Residency Program at Austin Peay State University for four consecutive semesters while simultaneously being a part of the Art + Design Student Engagement Committee.

Raíces

Becca Martinez

The Definition of *Roots*

1. the part of a plant which attaches itself to a support, conveying nourishment to the rest of the plant via numerous branches and *fibers*.
 - the part of a thing *attaching itself to a greater or more fundamental whole*; the end or base
2. *the basic cause, source, or origin of something.*
 - the essential substance or nature of something.
 - *family, ethnic, or cultural origins*, especially as the reasons for one's long-standing *emotional attachment to a place or community*.

Thesis Statement

Raíces is a series of embroidered portraits, representing my Mexican culture and heritage by highlighting individuals in my family who have strongly influenced me and my work. These individuals proudly and beautifully embody the Latin American community and I want to tell each of their stories in small, summarized biographies. In doing this, each person's history will be a "chapter" to what is ultimately my story and autobiography when viewing the exhibition as a whole.

Proposal Statement

The project will be structured as a series of large scale, mixed media and textile/fiber visual renderings. I will be portraying members of my immediate family: my parents, my four siblings, and myself.

Summarized, written biographies of each person will be shown next to each work. I hope to fill the space, so that when a viewer walks into the gallery, they feel consumed by the presence of these giant works.

Research/Influences

Gabriela Munoz and her Leche Portraits

"This ongoing series of portraits depicts *women who nurture their communities...*"



Leslie Holt
Sheila Hicks
El Anatsui
Billie Zangewa

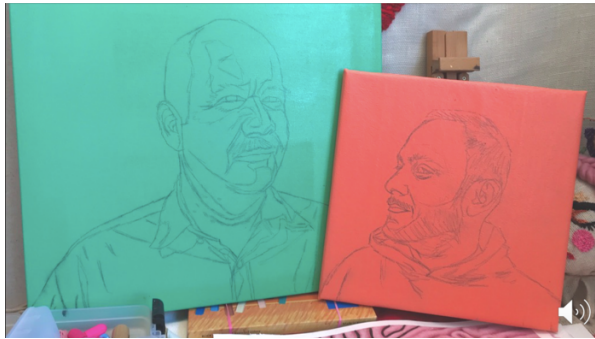
Progress/Sketches

My sketches consist of working from a recurring theme that is present in my past work. I want to refine my approach to this topic and cultivate my skills in textiles/fibers and application of pattern on material/fabric. I am experimenting with different techniques (such as weaving, tufting, dying and printing on fabric, beading....etc.) and materials.



I want to tell my story and the history of my family in order to give context to the work I am currently making. I am "interviewing" and recording conversations I have with my family where they recall memories growing up and life in Mexico as well as life in the U.S.





Timeline/Schedule: (2-week increments)

- Sep. 20 – Oct. 3
Begin photographing individuals. (7)
Edit photos
Fabric dying and drying
- Oct. 4 – 17
Finish editing photos
Project and trace out photos onto canvas
Spray them and set them out to dry
- Oct. 18 – 31
Begin (simultaneously) working on first 2 portraits
- Finish 2 (mother and father)
- Nov. 1 – 14
Begin working on next set of portraits
Finish set (Diana and Luis)
- Nov. 15 – 28
Begin working on next set
Finish set (Paola and Samuel)
- Nov. 29 – 12
Begin last portrait
Finish (self-portrait)
- Nov. 13 – 19
Add embellishments to portraits/finishing touches
Begin thinking/addressing the layout of the pieces in the gallery space
- Jan. 3 – 16
Type up each persons biographies
Finish biographies
- Jan. 17 – 30
◦ Jan. 31 – Feb. 13

Thank you! :)

Raíces

Becca Martinez

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Refocus

The definition of *process*
a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end.
a natural or involuntary series of changes.
a systematic series of mechanized or chemical operations that are performed in order to produce or manufacture something.
a natural appendage or outgrowth on or in an organism, such as a protuberance on a bone.
perform a series of mechanical or chemical operations on (something) in order to change or preserve it.

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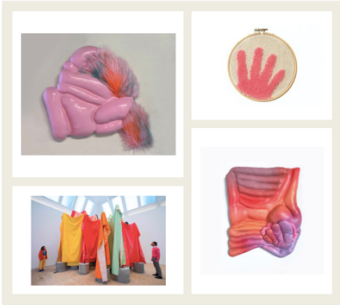
BEIZAR
ARADINI



MARYAM
ASHKANIAN



ELLIE
MADDOCK



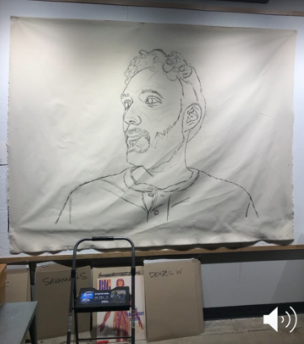
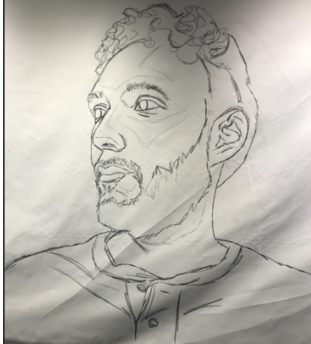
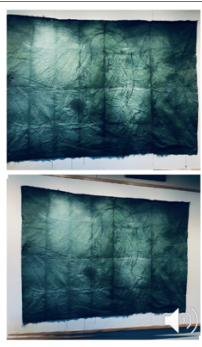
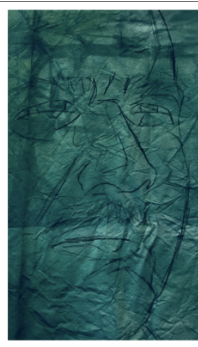
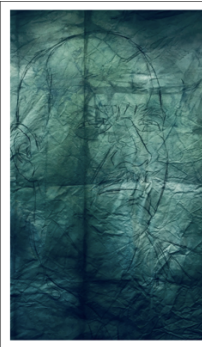
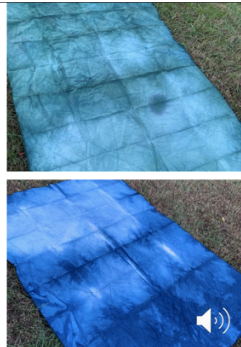
Artists/research

- Pam Marlene Taylor
- Amelia Briggs
- Phyllida Barlow



Current work/progress

and remaining tasks





Timeline/Schedule: (2-week increments)

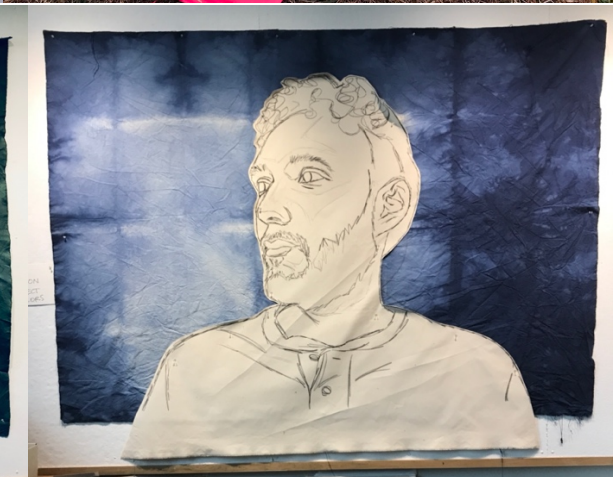
- **Nov. 15 – 28**
Finish backgrounds and embroidery on two portraits (my dad and Samuel)
Begin dying the next two canvases (Luis and my mom)
- **Nov. 29 – Dec. 12**
Finish backgrounds and embroidery on two portraits (Luis and my mom)
Begin dying the next two canvases (Diana and Paola)
- **Dec. 13 – Jan. 2**
Finish backgrounds and embroidery on two portraits (Diana and Paola)
- **Jan. 3 – 16**
embroidery on two portraits (Diana and Paola)
Begin dying last canvas (self-portrait)
Type up each person's biography and begin thinking about how the biographies will be added to the portraits (printed, embroidered...etc.)
Begin thinking/addressing the layout of the pieces in the gallery space
- **Jan. 17 – 30**
Begin adding the text to first two portraits (my dad and Samuel)
Begin adding the text to next set of portraits (Luis and my mom)
- **Jan. 31 – Feb. 13**
Begin adding the text to next set of portraits (Diana and Paola)
- **Feb. 14 – until date of show**
Go back and add any finishing touches on portraits

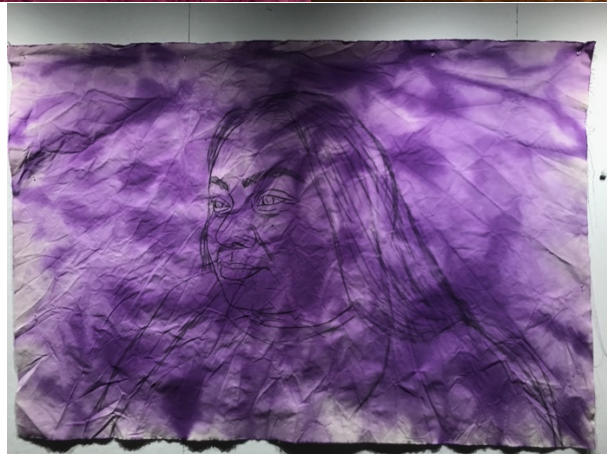
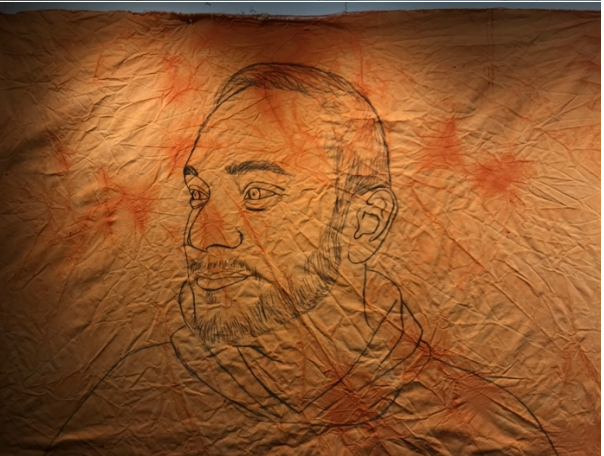
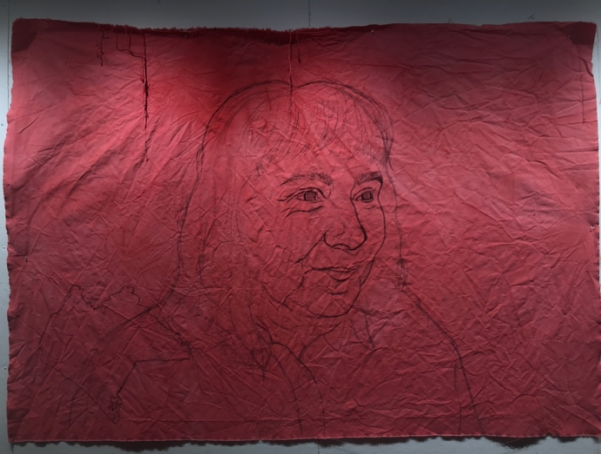


Thank you! :)



















Self-Critique on Thesis Process and Exhibition

I struggled immensely this semester and in the fall in holding myself accountable for completing assignments and projects due to all classes mainly being online. I am slowly realizing that *this* is becoming the new normal, but the transition was a lot more difficult for me then I thought it would be. Having experienced college fully in person since I began, only to abruptly have it shift to virtual my last year and a half was completely unexpected. What I learned throughout the end of last semester and all of this semester is that I really and truly need to clean up my act and start holding myself accountable if I want to finish strong in my college carrier. Not only has an abundance of money and time gone into pursuing this degree, but a lot of positive opportunities have birthed from extremely insightful and helpful conversations with faculty throughout the years, and I absolutely cannot let all that go to waste because of an inconvenience (to me) such as learning virtually. I realize now how pitiful it sounds to be complaining about virtual learning when there are people who wish they even had this to be able to learn.

I guess what I'm saying is my takeaways from this entire process is: pushing forward and being more ridged with myself concerning work ethic, not complaining so much and so often on things that truly aren't as bad as I make them out to be in my head and being grateful for the privilege, I have to even be enrolled in a university in the first place and being able to pursue this degree.