

National Gallery of Art

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

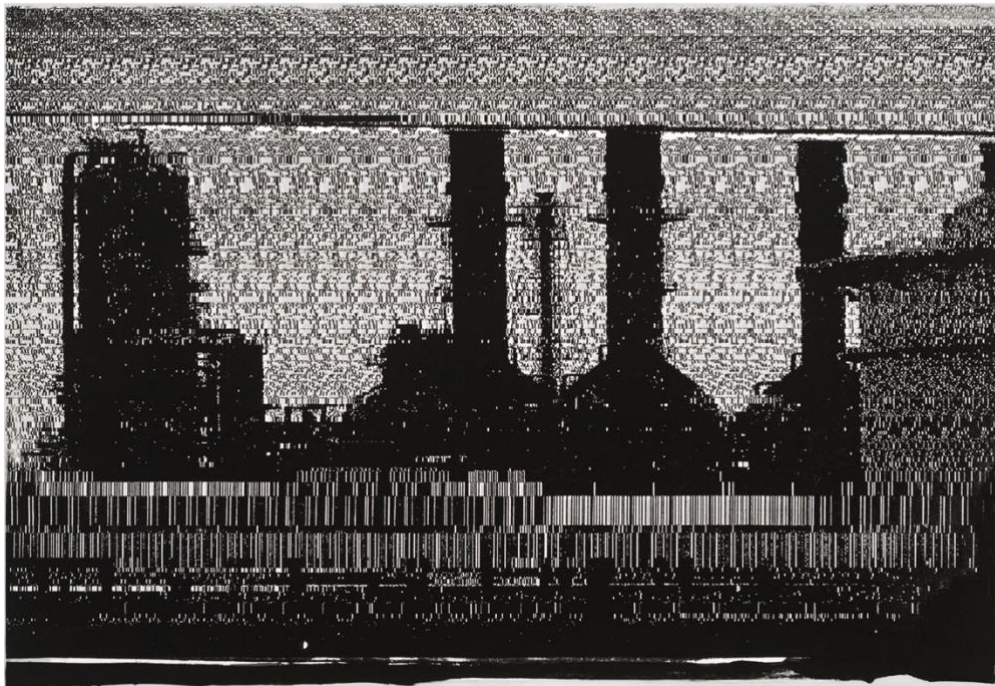
9 Latinx Artists to Know

The styles of these artists are as diverse as their heritages. They work in performance, printmaking, photography, painting, and more. Their art pushes boundaries and challenges norms.

Working across the United States over the past 100 or so years, these artists experiment with materials and speak to issues including migration, identity, and the environment. They address difficult histories, celebrate Indigenous heritage, and advocate for human rights.

Discover nine artists in our collection to get just a taste of the contributions Latinx artists have made in the United States.

9. SOLEDAD SALAMÉ

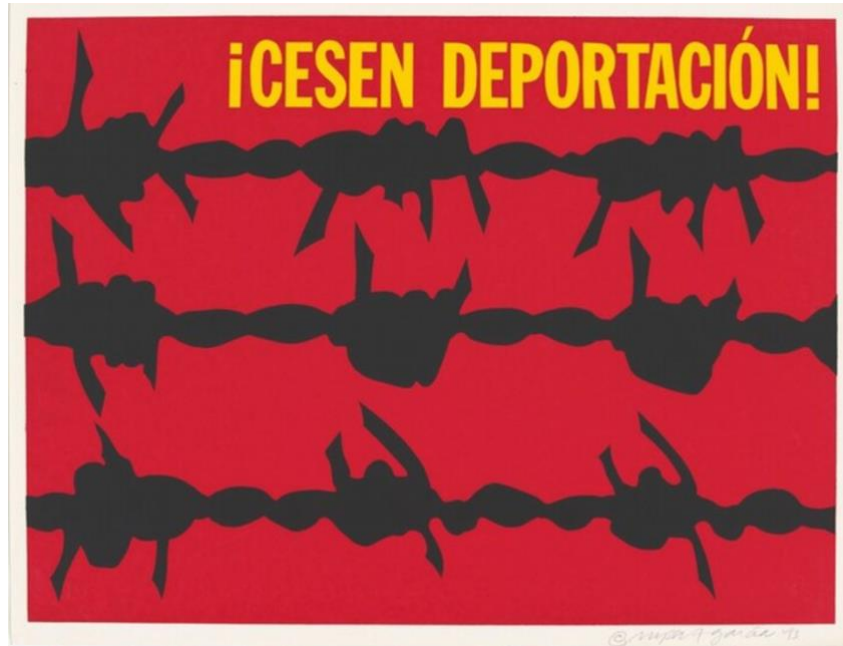


Soledad Salamé, *Gulf Distortion XII*, 2011, color screenprint with interference pigments on plastic film, Gift of Bob Stana and Tom Judy, 2016.148.46

The Chilean-born, Baltimore-based artist Soledad Salamé traveled to Louisiana in 2010. Salamé went to document the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the largest marine oil spill in history.

To make her *Gulf Distortion* series, Salamé faxed photographs she had taken in Louisiana to herself. She then distorted the images, making them look eerie and pixelated. Salamé printed the work on mylar plastic film with an ink that shimmers like oil on water.

8. RUPERT GARCÍA



Rupert García, *¡Cesen Deportación!*, 1973, color screenprint on wove paper, Corcoran Collection (Museum Purchase, Gift of Richard Rodriguez), 2015.19.3031

Chicano artist Rupert García makes political and boldly graphic prints. In 1968, he participated in the student strike that helped establish the field of ethnic studies at San Francisco State College. Since then, García has been making art about people across the world fighting for social justice and civil rights.

Among the subjects of García's prints are Che Guevara, a leader of the Cuban Revolution; American activist, professor, and author Angela Davis; and South African activist and president Nelson Mandela. Works like *¡Cesen Deportación!* (*Stop Deportation!*) speak directly to American history and issues like migration, racism, and colonialism.

7. DINO ARANDA



Dino Aranda, *Three Figures*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, Gift of Werth V. Zuver, 2019.101.1

Three Figures (Tres Figuras) depicts three abstracted human bodies contained in coffin- or cage-like forms stacked atop one another. It is part of a haunting series of works Dino Aranda in response to the murder of students during the dictatorship of the Somoza family, who ruled Nicaragua from 1936 to 1979.

Aranda played a key role in establishing Managua, the capital of his native Nicaragua, as a center of Latin American art in the 1960s. After moving to Washington, DC, in 1965 to study at the Corcoran School of Art, Aranda cofounded Fondo del Sol Visual Arts Center. The gallery presented the work of Latin American and Latinx artists, organizing traveling exhibitions across the United States and Mexico.

6. ANA MENDIETA



Ana Mendieta, Untitled, 1979, gelatin silver print, Gift of the Collectors Committee, 2007.2.3

The groundbreaking works of Cuban American artist Ana Mendieta blend performance, photography, video, and more. Mendieta explored our connection to the environment and to our place in the universe. “My art is grounded on the belief in one universal energy which runs through all being and matter, all space and time,” she said.

The artist sought to reconnect with essential natural elements through her art. For the *Silueta* series (Silhouette series), Mendieta took photographs of her body in landscapes. In some images, she is covered in natural materials. Others show the outline her body left on the terrain.

5. MAURICIO LASANSKY



Mauricio Lasansky, Self-Portrait, 1957, color intaglio print on wove paper, Gift of John and Mary Pappajohn, 1999.85.1

Mauricio Lasansky learned the art of printmaking from his father, who was a printer. Lasansky also studied the medium in his native Argentina before moving to the United States in 1943. Soon after, he established the printmaking department at the University of Iowa, where he inspired a new generation of artists to pick up this art form. TIME magazine once called Lasansky “the nation’s most influential printmaker.”

He was especially skilled at making large-scale prints that required multiple plates and often involved several printmaking techniques. His Self-Portrait is nearly three feet tall. The image emphasizes his head and two of a printmaker’s most important tools—his hands.

4. FELIX GONZALEZ-TORRES



Felix Gonzalez-Torres' work "Untitled" when it was on loan from Miami's de la Cruz Collection

Felix Gonzalez-Torres was born in Cuba and lived in Puerto Rico before coming to New York in 1979 to study at Pratt Institute. A leading artist of his generation, he made conceptual art that often invites audience participation. “Untitled” consists of two stacks of paper. Sheets in one stack are printed with the words “Nowhere better than this place.” The others say, “Somewhere better than this place.” Visitors are welcome to choose between somewhere or nowhere—or to take no sheet at all.

Another one of Gonzalez-Torres’ work, “*Untitled*” (*Ross in L.A.*), consists of a single stack of paper. Visitors are invited to take a sheet. Gonzalez-Torres made this work the same year his partner Ross Laycock (referenced in the title) died from an AIDS-related illness. The dwindling stack (which is periodically refreshed) can be seen as a touching story of love and loss. Gonzalez-Torres also died due to AIDS in 1996.

3. CARMEN HERRERA



Carmen Herrera, *Untitled Estructura (Yellow)*,
1966/2016, Acrylic and aluminum, Gift of Funds
from Glenstone Foundation and David M.
Rubenstein, 2022.18.2

Carmen Herrera studied art and architecture in Havana, Cuba, before moving to New York City in 1939. Living there and in Paris, Herrera developed a distinct style of crisp and vividly colorful paintings. But it wasn’t until she was nearly 90 years old that the art world recognized her vision.

Part of that vision was bringing her color paintings into three dimensions. Herrera conceived her series of *Estructuras* (*Structures*) in the 1960s. *Untitled Estructura (Yellow)* features two triangular wedges hanging next to each other. The wedges are reverses of each other: one narrows at the bottom and the other at the top. The slice of wall between them becomes part of the work. Herrera’s art often makes us question where the medium begins and ends.

2. DANIEL LIND-RAMOS



Daniel Lind-Ramos unveiling *Figura de Poder (Power Figure)*, 2016-2020

Daniel Lind-Ramos works in assemblage, a form of art that is like three-dimensional collage. In *Figura de Poder (Power Figure)*, the artist combines organic materials such as a palm tree trunk with items he finds in his hometown of Loíza, Puerto Rico.

His materials evoke Afro-Puerto Rican cultural practices and history. A tambourine, maraca, and buckets refer to carnival traditions, political protest, and African musical traditions. Three horns at the top of the work suggest characters from folklore: the vejigante. During annual festivals, people dress up as these happy and mischievous figures.

1. MARTINE GUTIERREZ



Martine Gutierrez, *Demons, Yemaya "Goddess of the Living Ocean"*, 2018, chromogenic print in hand-painted artist's frame, Pepita Milmore Memorial Fund, 2022.180.3

Martine Gutierrez's works often imitate mass media, from billboards to music videos. In the case of *Indigenous Woman*, she created a 124-page magazine featuring everything from fake advertisements to full fashion spreads.

Gutierrez made every element. She was her own model, photographer, stylist, makeup artist, writer, and graphic designer. Gutierrez, whose father is from Guatemala, dedicated the project to "the celebration of Mayan Indian heritage, the navigation of contemporary indigeneity and the ever-evolving self-image." Like much of her other work, *Indigenous Woman* challenges typical notions of beauty and identity.

The magazine includes portraits of deities, which Gutierrez made into a series of standalone prints with hand-painted frames. Many of the deities blend male and female characteristics. Gutierrez, who is a nonbinary trans woman, uses these images to challenge the rigid gender binary.

Demons, Yemaya "Goddess of the Living Ocean" shows Gutierrez as Yemaya, the orisha (deity) of motherhood and the sea in the Afro-Caribbean Santería religion and African Yoruba religion.