

VIAJERO DEL TIEMPO TIME TRAVELER

CAROLYN CASTAÑO



NOVEMBER 15, 2025 - FEBRUARY 1, 2026

IN THE PASSAGEWAY
**LAS FOTOS
PROJECT**





REFLECTSPACE

ReflectSpace, established in 2017, is an inclusive exhibition space designed to explore and reflect on major human atrocities, genocides, civil rights violations, and other social justice issues. Immersive in conception, ReflectSpace is a hybrid space that is both experiential and informative, employing art, technology, and interactive media to reflect on the past and present of Glendale's communal fabric and interrogate current-day global human rights issues. ReflectSpace.org

LIBRARY, ARTS & CULTURE

Founded in 1907, the Glendale Library, Arts & Culture Department includes eight neighborhood libraries including the Brand Library & Art Center, a regional visual arts and music library and performance venue housed in the historic 1904 mansion of Glendale pioneer Leslie C. Brand, and the Central Library, a 93,000 square foot center for individuals and groups to convene, collaborate and create. GlendaleLAC.org

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Cover image: *Father Standing Over Hollywood Freeway*, circa 1961, Inkjet reproduction /
Mantel, Mixed media on canvas, dimensions variable, 2020-2022



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NOVEMBER 15, 2025 - FEBRUARY 1, 2026

OPENING RECEPTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2025, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM

ARTIST TALK

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026, 6:30 PM

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OF FATHERS, ARCHIVES AND SIMULTANEITY: A CONVERSATION WITH CAROLYN CASTAÑO

BY ARA OSHAGAN

At first glance, you are immediately struck by Castaño's radiant and bold colors. The reds, greens, blues and gold in a lush landscape, a thick rainforest of color. But they resist immediate recognition. Maybe a sun? A mountainous landscape? A mixed-up tropical paradise? On closer inspection, certain elements become clear, such as mountains, plants, birds and flowers. But it is all very fluid, overlapping and just beyond your reach. Then you notice the materials. Gold foil, appliqué, watercolor, fabrics of all kinds, and grayscale family photographs all intermix, whether on one canvas or stretched over a whole wall. Landscapes and portraits enmesh; materials and textures entangle. She creates a reality that seems like fiction.

Underneath and around this wild paradise is a vast checkered pattern like a gridded sea washing ashore, as if two worlds are meshing together. You sense a certain duality emerging. Castaño's work obscures and reveals simultaneously and lingers on the edge of this duality. Layers of color, materials and textures overlap to mimic a lived experience, specifically an immigrant or diasporic experience. It's a feeling of simultaneity, as Castaño tells us, a feeling of being in two places at once, of being in two cultures, two languages, two ways of life.

Castaño's Viajero del Tiempo/Time Traveler at ReflectSpace is in many ways about this duality, ambiguity and fluidity of identity and experience. By engaging with her father's vast photographic archive, the exhibition is also a familial and personal unfolding for Castaño.

I had a chance to speak with Castaño about her process and specifically about her relationship with her father that is at the core of her exhibition *Viajero del Tiempo/Time Traveler*.

I am interested in your process. Do you have a set process that you follow when you make work, or is it always invented anew? You work in multiple media—how do you choose the medium?

I think of myself primarily as a painter. That's my primary home base. But I also work in other mediums such as photography and video. Those practices often orbit around painting. For instance, I might be drawing or painting a scene, then I may create a sculpture that connects to that series of paintings.

Before I began engaging with my father's photographic archive, I was making drawings and paintings inspired by the Colombian landscape — thinking about the environment and the history of landscape representation, from colonialism to the present. I was interested in how that visual history intersects with environmental and political conflict, and how imagery and symbols from Colombia's Indigenous cultures, those that predate European arrival, have become embedded in national identity. I explored how these cultural symbols relate to depictions of the land itself.

How did you start working with your father's archive?

When I began working with my father's photos, I thought about their relationship to the places where they were taken, in Colombia and in the U.S. I started seeing the landscape as a kind of parallel actor or subtext within the photographs. Many of the images of my father in Los Angeles made me think about that sense of being in two places at once, which reflects the immigrant experience, a kind of simultaneity. The photos seemed almost science fictional, as if they existed in multiple times and spaces, simultaneously projecting into the future and reflecting the past.

My father owned a print shop and photo studio when I was growing up, serving much of the Latino community in MacArthur Park and Echo Park. He also did screen printing. I grew up surrounded by printing equipment and materials. If he'd grown up in different circumstances, I think he would have been an artist himself. He had a very creative impulse.

From a young age, like 9, 10, 11, my friends and I would enlist him to help us screen print. Later, I took a class in screen printing at Los Angeles Trade Technical-College. My father was in Colombia and after he returned, I showed him my prints. He said, "Very interesting, very interesting."

After my father passed away, I inherited much of his equipment. Some of it worked, some didn't. I kept what I could. I began screen printing his photos onto textiles, creating early "ruana" or poncho pieces that combined photography, painting, and appliqué. The appliqués came from shops in downtown L.A. that he used to take me to as a child, stores that sold patches, sequins, and materials for custom t-shirts and jackets. I loved those places; they were like art stores to me. The ruanas tied together my interest in craft, printing, and immigrant labor, those small, family-run mom-and-pop print shops that are still found in immigrant communities.

I still love working with screen printing because it's so tactile and analog. When you print a photograph that way, the dots and texture give it a cinematic quality, something digital prints tend to lack. There's an aura to it.

Early on, I began using his tools and techniques in my own work. For one project, I created t-shirts for a fictional soccer team using my drawings and the screen printing methods I learned from him. Later, as I worked with his archive, I started thinking about how I could use his photographs as material — not to take ownership, but to continue a dialogue with his work, transforming it through my own practice.

Was your father the main inspiration that led you to become an artist?

Definitely. I didn't realize it for a long time, but looking back, it's clear. Like many immigrant parents, or parents in general, mine hoped I'd be a doctor or lawyer. But I became an artist. My father wasn't judgmental about it though my mother was maybe a little disappointed at first. Just

before he passed away, I told my father: “You know, kids emulate what they see at home. We became artists like you.” He just sort of paused. I think he never had thought about it that way. He didn’t say anything, but I think it was a kind of realization for him.

I still remember being three years old and watching him show us a t-shirt he had printed with Mickey Mouse on it. That early exposure, seeing someone make something out of nothing, felt magical. It’s what art still feels like to me. This exhibition is, in many ways, an homage to him.

It’s an homage on multiple levels: as a person, an artist, and a craftsman.

Yes, absolutely. He passed away in 2011, and the exhibition is both a tribute and a long process of coming to terms with everything he left behind: his tools, his photos, his creative energy. I hired a friend to help me sort through the archive: over 4,000 analog photos spanning decades, from Colombia in the 1950s and ’60s to Los Angeles in later years. It’s an incredible record of our family and of the broader immigrant experience, an American story told through one man’s lens.

The archive contains family photos, portraits, client work, weddings, community events. It captures the social fabric of MacArthur Park’s Latino community. It’s a beautiful and historically significant archive. And it’s a unique and rarely seen perspective: a Colombian photographer chronicling immigrant life in Los Angeles over multiple decades. I hope to share it more widely in the future.

CAROLYN CASTAÑO

ARTIST STATEMENT AND BIOGRAPHY

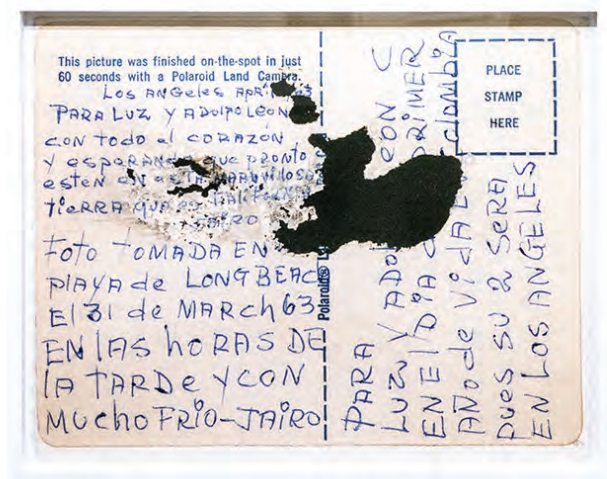
I am a first-generation Colombian-American artist born, raised, and educated in California. My practice considers the geography my immigrant family and I have traversed through the lens of the culture made there and the lasting impacts on that geography of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism. My own making uses a variety of media—painting, drawing, textile work, photography, video, and installation—and a range of formal vocabularies such as landscape painting, botanical illustration, portraiture (particularly of women), and geometric abstraction. I think my work dovetails with my experience as the daughter of immigrants—mobile, border, and boundary crossing, sometimes contingent. As an artist, my goal is to ask how painting might be of continued relevance to thorny questions of history, culture, and the environment.

My work often examines essential tools of 19th-century colonialism, including maps, painted travelogues, and scientific illustrations—all employed in the service of botanical and pharmacological research and scholarship of the era.

I'm particularly interested in the work of botanical explorer, Alexander Von Humboldt (1769–1859), who undertook multiple studies of native birds, flowers, and plants in the Americas, and paintings by Albert Berg (1825–1884) and Frederic E. Church's (1826–1900), such as those depicted in Berg's series of engravings entitled "Physiognomy of the Tropical Vegetation of the Magdalena River Valley", sparked European and American imaginations and fueled the desire and search for resources in the Americas.

In *Viajero del Tiempo/Time Traveler*, I draw on my late father's photographic archive—comprising 4,000 photographs, films, and videos—to consider the fragility and ephemerality of memory

and identity. The pictures in the exhibition are juxtaposed next to drawings of the landscape (inspired by Alexander Von Humboldt's landscapes and botanical studies) to consider how the land figures in the trajectory and memory of the migrant/immigrant.



Jairo Standing at the Beach c. 1960, Back of postcard, Inkjet print, 2021

Carolyn Castaño is a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship 2025 in Fine Arts, the 2013 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant in Painting and Drawing, the 2011 California Community Foundation, Getty Fellow, Mid-Career Grant, and the 2011 C.O.L.A. Individual Artist Fellowship, Los Angeles, CA. Carolyn's work has been featured in Craft Contemporary, Tucson Art Museum, Orange County Museum of Art, 56th Venice Biennial collateral exhibition, LACMA and the Hammer Museum. Carolyn has had solo exhibitions with Walter Maciel, Kontainer, Oolong, and Lombard-Freid galleries.





Ruana & Mantel, 2022, Mixed media and acrylic on canvas, 70x120"





Cumanday: Beautiful Mountain, 2023, Mixed media on canvas, 75x144"



La Gloriosa, 2022, Mixed media on canvas, 20x24"



Mantel, 2022, Mixed media on canvas



Future Ruana Grande Front, Mixed media, 20x30"







Cali es Cali, Installation view, Photographs and mixed media work, 2021, Boone Family Art Gallery, Pasadena City College, Pasadena, California



Dad Standing Over the Hollywood Freeway, circa 1961, Ink jet reproduction, 2021



Family Collage, Ink jet reproductions, 2021

LAS FOTOS PROJECT

Las Fotos Project's mission is to elevate the voices of teenage girls & gender-expansive youth from communities of color through photography and mentoring, empowering them to channel their creativity for the benefit of themselves, their community, and future careers.

Las Fotos Project began as a small workshop series offered to girls through community organizations at locations across L.A.. Over time, we've evolved into an anchor of creativity and community in Boyle Heights creating ripples of impact across Los Angeles. As we celebrate our fifteenth year we're proud to be building something powerful and needed—centering the boundless creativity of young people to reshape our communities and transform the creative sector in Los Angeles and beyond.

www.lasfotosproject.org



JESSICA ANGEL

Age 17

Los Dos Lados Del Espejo, 2025

Los Dos Lados Del Espejo describes the two personalities that I carry within me. It reflects the person I tend to be at home: private, hidden, and reserved. It also reflects the person I show the world: bright, trendy, and confident. The mirrors at home always see both versions: they see me break down but rise back up confidently. With this project, I differentiated who I am as a teenage girl from how I choose to carry myself—both personalities shaping who I am.



DIANA CARBALLO

Age 17

Un pedacito de mi corazón, 2023

My grandma has always been a special individual in my life. Growing up, she spent every waking moment with me. She has always been my second mother, helping to raise me while my mom was working. She never really talked about her life in El Salvador and up until this day I know little to nothing about her life before coming to the U.S. As I get older I hope I can learn more about her story.





ANAHI GARAY

Age 13

Drums and Feathers, 2022

People watch as dancers practice for a ritual called the Grupo Tartalejos on Olvera Street. Olvera Street was founded in 1930 by Christine Stirling, who is also called the "Mother of Olvera Street." When I was younger, my family would always visit during Dia de Los Muertos. It is a place that is filled with history but has also changed a lot.





ESRA NUNEZ

Age 13

Los Angeles (they/them), 2023

Los Angeles comforts me and taunts me at the same time. Sometimes people describe Los Angeles as a woman, but I know better. They have both masculine and feminine traits. They are non-binary. I see an honest reflection of both beauty and decay. I have always felt a freedom inside their limits, walking their streets, and driving through their tunnels. They have taught me I can be me, ever-changing. My city: I am a reflection of you.



SAMANTHA FLORES RAMIREZ

Age 15

SPIRITED, 2023

Cinema, loved ones, and emotion inspire my work immensely as an artist. I love using cinematography to capture the stillness, perspective, and overall colors and vibrance that I come across every day. My photography celebrates my experimentation with texture, lighting, mood, composition, and so much more.



UZURI RAY

Age 16

Breath Out, 2023



I began my relationship with water at the age of 6 when I began swimming competitively. Ever since I've had a deep connection with water and I always loved to be in it. At the beginning of this year I began photographing underwater. I found that through photography I can express the deep love I feel for the water.





XITLALI RAY

Age 16

Nimitztlazohtla, 2025

In this project I wanted to showcase my resilience and my story on living with a chronic illness and feeling out of place around my friends, family and others. I've found strength to move forward and to keep thriving even with an illness that makes me feel weak. I do not allow this disability to define my past, future, or present. Instead I've pushed my way through with my art, creativity, and inner strength.





ARIANA SORIA

Age 17

Somos Más, 2024

This photo challenges harmful stereotypes about the Latinx community often perpetuated in Republican rhetoric. Soria cast her brother as a symbol of strength and resilience, portraying him as both protector and guide. The luchador motif embodies the Latinx spirit of perseverance, while the blue mask contrasts the media's Republican red and encourages Latinx people to keep fighting for their dreams.



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