

The blanket of work that I constructed over the last two years is sewed together by the theme of challenging preconceived notions. I have addressed themes surrounding femininity, masculinity, tranquility and belonging (home); yet, in every work I have examined the implications of the stereotypes and, or prejudices related to those themes. As humans we administer preconceived notions (stereotypes/prejudices) to gain control; in every scape we lack control but in order allocate it we create social structures. I valued control and direction in life heavily- who I was, what I wanted to do, the type of person I wanted to be. In every instance I wanted to curate the image people saw of me; but I realized that holding onto control, especially of myself, was like trying to grasp sand hoping none of the grains would slip out. Ultimately, I realized grains are **always** going to spill out. I had to come to terms with myself by exploring the preconceived notions that exists in the foundations of myself- my Mexican identity and community.

My work is primarily the medium of painting; this was a conscious choice as it was the first medium in which I truly felt out of control. Painting taught me what it meant to work through growing pains; paintings to start are never aesthetically pleasing and, honestly, never truly feel finished.

The space allotted to me was two white walls with clamp lights to add emphasis to any piece. At the center is the piece *Mujer con Flores*, as it was the first piece where I realized not only the my overarching theme, but the style in which I would link all my pieces through. It was also the first appearance of the motif the Mexican flower, Cempazuchitl. Its bright, cadmium yellow or permission hue is supposed to guide the dead back to the land of the living but I use to symbolize enlightenment, particularly that from our ancestors. This is the beginning of my use of Paul Gauguin's style -simplified forms and a warm color palette - which began to dominate my works. To follow, I presented all my smaller paintings alternating left to right: **¿Sale el Sol? I(right)**, **¿Sale el Sol? II (left)**, **¿WHAT'S LEFT? (right)**, **DIE FOR YOU (left)**. All the pieces to the right are significantly placed as they are self-portraits representing the longing for tranquility and challenging what having peace of mind actually entails. Still they all stare off to the pieces to the left, a significant detail, as those pieces challenge ideas that exist in my Mexican culture regarding femininity and a woman's place. The audience is getting an inside look at my neurotic thoughts and how I am attempting to find balance in my Mexican identity.

Then, alternating from left to right, will be **FROM CONCRETE (left)** and *Casita Saavedra* (right). Both illustration connect to the communities I represent and trying to rectify negative stereotypes surrounding masculinity and simplicity in them; the prior utilizes Milwaukee artist Reginald Baylor as my inspiration and the latter uses Mexican architect Luis Barragan. Afterwards I introduce the following prints: **God is a Woman (left)**, **beautiful little girl (right)**, **FRAGRANCE N°35 (left)**, and **"Calla Lily in Flames" (right)**. This is significant as these all challenge femininity, danitiness and the role of woman, by having them at the ends

they show how women of color and the strength they represent are pillars in society, likewise they hold together my exhibition as a whole.

It is in the presentation of my exhibition that I hope the audience will interpret that cultural traditions can promote a harmful criteria for what a “good” or “valuable” member of society. Through the organizations of my pieces I show coming to terms with lacking control in my identity, relating to disliking aspects of my Mexican culture, but also celebrating the strength that as a women of color I portray and the change we can be in our communities. It is my desire that the audience, whether about their culture, community, or themselves, will learn to not clasp onto the positives in life instead find peace in the implications of life particularly the qualities that make them up (their identity).