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**Lehman Art 2021  
Thesis Exhibition**

**MFA  
MIA  
BFA  
THESIS**

This catalog is published on the occasion of the online exhibition Lehman Art: 2021 Thesis Exhibition at Lehman College/ CUNY, June 15, 2021.

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## LEHMAN COLLEGE ART DEPARTMENT

The Lehman College Art Department's mission is to offer students from the Bronx and surrounding regions the unique opportunity to study in high-quality art and art history programs in which both traditional studio and digital art practice share common goals

Lehman College Art Department  
250 Bedford Park Boulevard West  
Bronx, New York, 10468  
[www.lehman.edu/art](http://www.lehman.edu/art)

## LEHMAN COLLEGE ART GALLERY

Always free to the public, Lehman College Art Gallery has been serving the interests of our diverse audience from the Bronx and greater New York City since 1984. The gallery specializes in thematic group exhibitions that bring together famous artists with emerging talents. Education is an integral component of the Gallery's programming and provides the basis of community outreach—from young students to senior citizens.

Lehman College Art Gallery  
250 Bedford Park Boulevard West  
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE LEHMAN COLLEGE ART DEPARTMENT

The Lehman College Art Department is pleased to present the 2021 Annual Thesis Exhibition for graduating students receiving the degrees of Master of Fine Arts, Master of Arts, and Bachelor of Fine Arts. In normal years, the thesis exhibition would have opened this May at the Lehman College Art Gallery. But as we know, this academic year has been far from normal. After the sudden disruptions of last year led to a necessary online thesis presentation in the Spring of 2020, for a second year our students have been called upon to show great strength of character, completing their work in a largely online environment. But like all innovative artists, they have successfully adapted their work to meet the needs of the medium.

A strong group of 15 artists come together to form this motivated graduating class, members of which have successfully and creatively adapted their thesis works across a range of different media in unexpected and unprecedented ways, with a wide range that includes painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, and digital technologies.

The artistic and conceptual concerns of our graduating students vary widely—from considering the reverberating calls for social justice in the wake of the protests of the Summer of 2020, to the ongoing effects of the Coronavirus crisis, a full 15 months after the pandemic began. Many of our students have engaged in considerations of identity, filtered through lenses of sexuality, gender, race, immigrant experience, and class, and how each of those prisms profoundly effects our view of the world.

The 2020-2021 school year proved definitely that creativity can thrive online. Society and the academic experience transformed, first with shocking suddenness, and then with longer-term changes that increasingly appear to represent permanent structural shifts in education.

For the class of 2021, these challenges issues are not simply theoretical ideas, but real-world

challenges that are facing the cultural organizations with which they will now be engaging as professional artists. Certainly, the lingering effects of the pandemic—isolation, loss, fear, and economic challenges will leave their mark on artistic responses and production in the years to come in ways that we cannot yet begin to imagine.

As always, the world needs artists to help us understand our current moment as we move through and beyond the pandemic, and the host of issues that will present themselves to society in the coming years.

This online exhibition represents both the fruition of a strong liberal arts education and the invaluable experiences available in the Lehman College Art Department provided by a dedicated faculty working in concert with promising students. This work has demanded both flexibility and creativity throughout a year of challenges. Through a range of degrees and concentrations at both undergraduate and graduate levels, the Art Department continues to offer students the unique opportunity to study in a rigorous art program in which both traditional studio and digital art practices share common goals in helping students build a strong foundation to advance their careers.

We invite you to view this exhibition showcasing the work and voices of a fine group of emerging artists and reflect on how art may function as a vehicle for both depicting and understanding one's place in the world. Our newest graduate artists join a proud group of artistic alumni who will be called upon to add their voices to a world of unbelievable complexity.

We have confidence in their ability to help illuminate our world and to understand its joys, pressures, laments, and hopes. Please join us in congratulating the 2021 graduating class on succeeding in their mission to create compelling and interesting new work that signals their entrance onto New York's rapidly re-awakening artistic stage.





**MFA**

**MASTER OF**

**FINE ARTS**

## Yi Chen Wu

In the modern world, the internet is an indispensable necessity. We explore the world and communicate through one window after another. Especially in 2020. We were forced to stay at home and communicate only through internet windows, one opening onto another. Internet windows inevitably flattened our world. I make paintings that collage these flat, decentralized windows that I travel through while exploring the internet.



A Soul Surgery in the Facetime  
2020  
Acrylic on Paper



In the Chatting Room  
2020  
Acrylic and Paper Collage on Canvas



Movie Time in the Chatting Room  
2020  
Acrylic on Canvas

## Robert DeJesus

I am an animator from the Bronx, NY who creates satiric and metaphoric short stories about current events and life experiences. "Race Book", 2020 is an animated short film, which illustrates how social media propaganda is leveraged to emotionally influence people. "Race Book" reflects the climate of the 2020 presidential election and collages video, digital images and puppet animation in a style that exaggerates the hysteria of the polarized political situation. "The Raven" utilizes traditional 2-D animation. "The Survey" uses live action combined with animation and "Fortnite" is a stop-motion short. My goal is to poke fun at and demonstrate what is uncanny and humorous about familiar life situations.



Race Book  
2020  
Digital Animation



The Raven  
2019  
Digital Animation





The Survey  
2017  
Digital video / Animation



**MA**

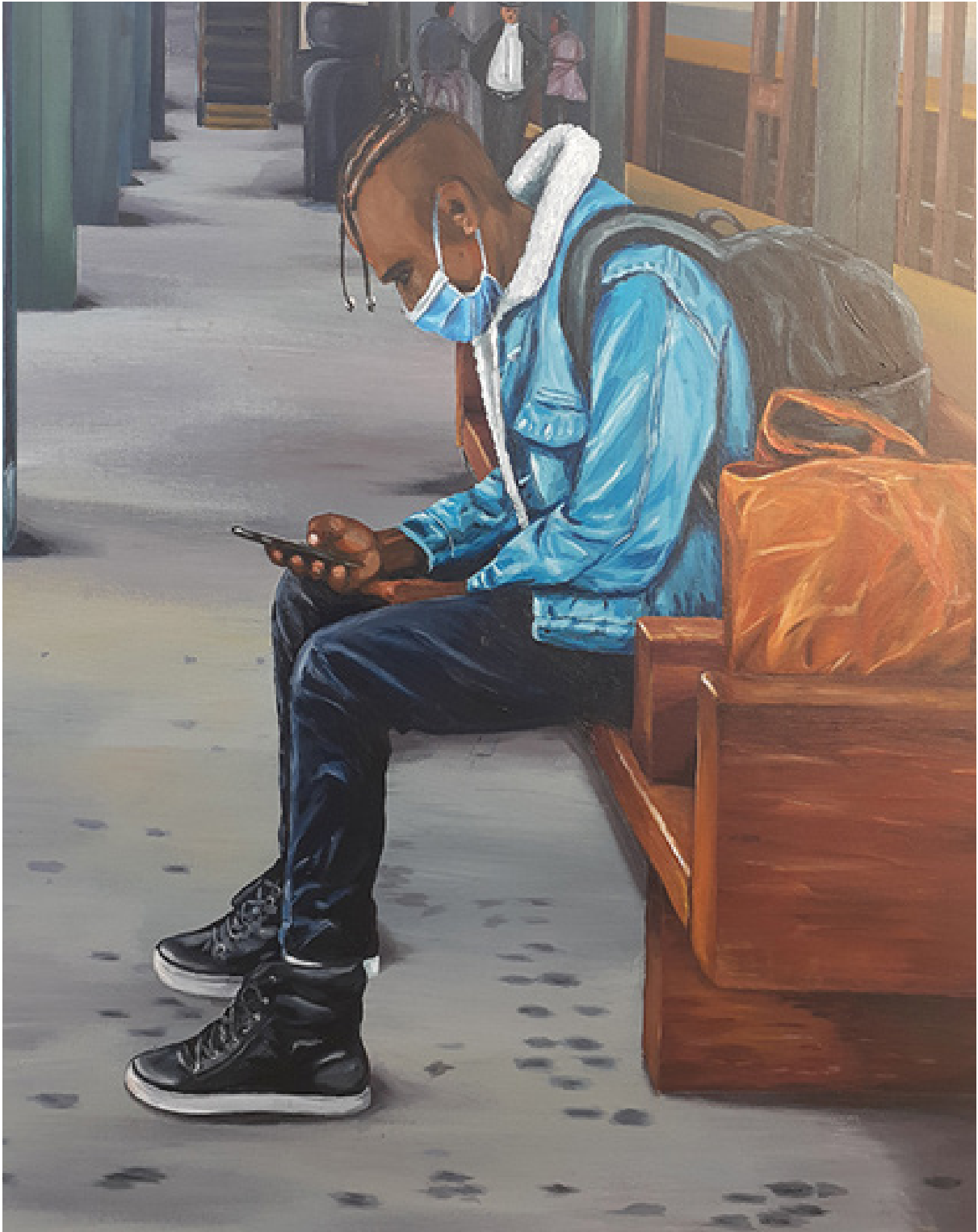
**MASTER**

**OF ARTS**

## Ruben Cuevas

My artistic work illustrates the NYC Subway riding routine in New York City. In my paintings the NYC subway is represented as a cultural meeting place where people of all walks of life converge. I am amazed by the occurrences that take place in the restricted spaces of the NYC subways. But this intertwined riding routine is suddenly transformed into a circumspect commute filled with contemplation.

In my paintings I present how the highly infectious Corona virus altered the subway commuting routine — Now every passenger wears protective masks and keeps socially distant to protect themselves. I portrayed them with profound honesty, yet my painting will barely construe the uncertainty and pain I sensed in our NYC Subway riders.



Getting Late  
2020  
Linen Canvas / Acrylic



My Home Window  
2021  
Linen Canvas / Acrylic



Faithful Ride  
2021  
Linen Canvas / Acrylic

## Jennifer Figueroa

This Month is based on photographs found in The Atlantic magazine piece 1964: Civil Rights Battles, from social media, and many other news outlets. Each work consists of two pieces—one that shows an event that took place during the civil rights movement of the 1960's, and another that shows a contemporary protest that occurred during the same month.

I'm interested in the complexities of institutional violence and examining class and race-based power struggles. My collages are bold, multilayered images that are imbued with the emotive charge of their subjects. I strip away any references to time, creating parallels between the past and present, providing a pathway for the viewer to reflect on the dynamics of power and question social progress.





July II  
2020  
Colored & Dyed Paper Collage



July  
2020  
Colored & Dyed Paper Collage



June  
2020  
Colored & Dyed Paper Collage

## Stephanie Tierney

I was inspired to create sculptures that bring to life the flat embroidery forms of Irish dancing dresses. The Celtic designs I worked with have birds as their main element. I focused on birds as they fly and move which represents family members of mine who emigrated not so long ago. Immigrants flocked together like birds to a new country and brought with them elements of their culture as they started their journey. In these works, I used wood, wire, and fibers to bring to life the different aspects of Irish dancing.



Celtic Pride Series (Series of Birds and an Irish Dancer)  
2020  
Plywood, Yarn, Acrylic Paint, Spray Paint



Celtic Pride Series  
2020  
Plywood, Yarn, Acrylic Paint, Silver Wire (Center Bird)



Celtic Pride Series  
2020  
Plywood, Yarn, Acrylic Paint

## Janina Martinez-Fields

I am a realistic figurative painter focusing on culture, family, friends and identity. Throughout my life I have found little representation for artists who are women and less for women of color, and emphasized this topic through my art. I incorporated the struggles experienced through this past year's pandemic as an added layer of obstacles for women in the creative industry. I combined two surfaces; wood to represent life and plexiglass to represent how we have protected ourselves through separation.

I use vibrant acrylic colors on both the wood and plexiglass layers to represent the moods, professions and activities of the subjects. Through this series I hope to inspire girls of color to become comfortable in their creative space.





Behind the Plexi; Anjanette

2021

Wood, Plexiglass, Acrylic, Gouache and Gold Leaf, 24"x 30"



Behind the Plexi; Agela

2021

Wood, Plexiglass, Acrylic and Gouache, 24"x 30"



Behind the Plexi; Janina  
2021  
Wood, Plexiglass, Acrylic and Gouache, 24"x 30"



**BFA**  
**BACHELOR**  
**OF FINE ARTS**

## Ashley Barreto

Cosplay is the practice of dressing up as a character from a movie, book, or video game but I am using it to dress as my own original characters and bring them to life. I wrote my own story influenced by Norse mythology, “The Story of Secret Lore”, which depicts two Norse-style deities and their folklore.

I imagined a scenario in which I found a medieval manuscript while visiting the Met Cloisters and using this “imaginary manuscript” I reenacted the folklore of three deities: Runa, Dainn, and Guardian. For the reenactment, I created costumes and props. My favorite thing about this project was seeing my characters coming to life and physically being part of their story.



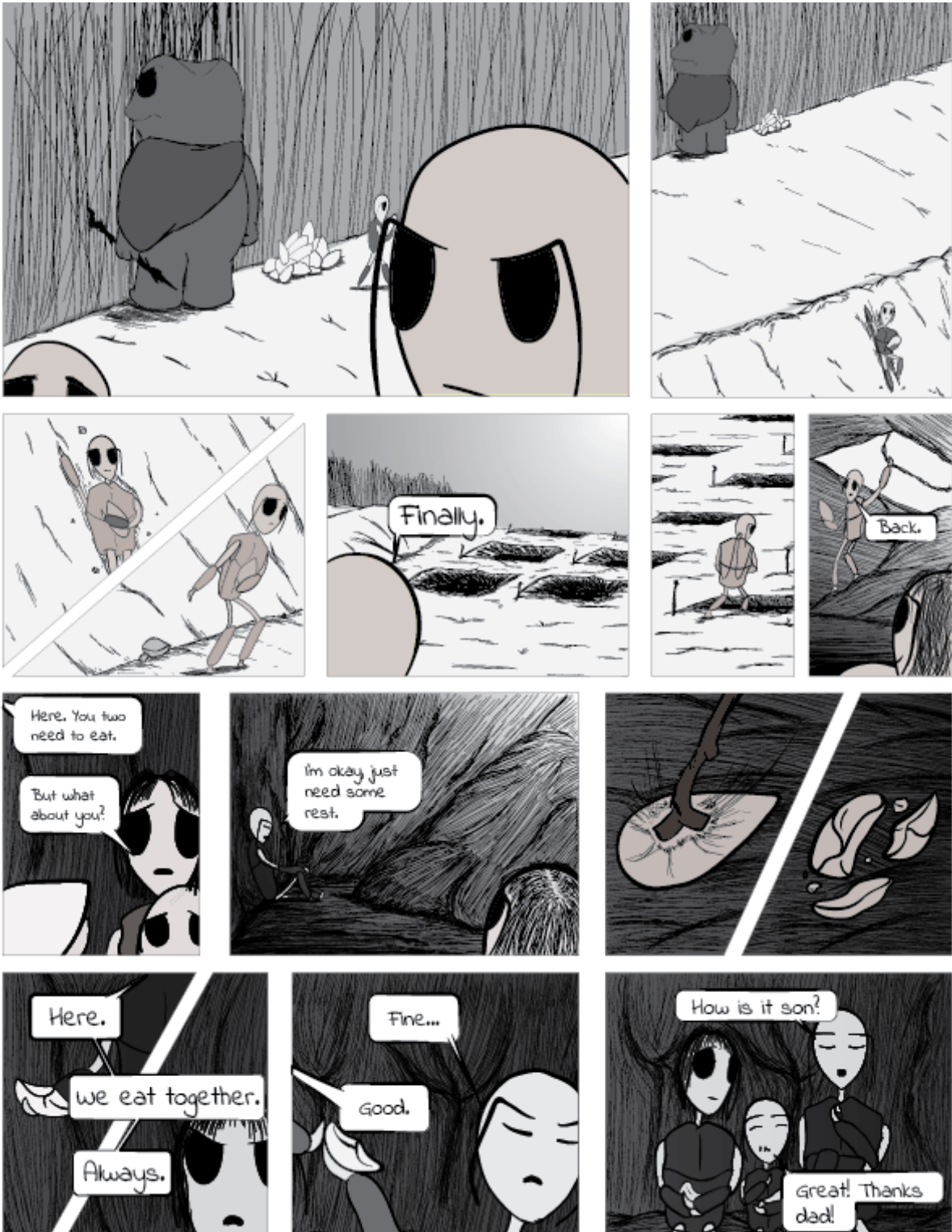
Dáinn in the Forest  
2021  
Digital Photography

## Misael Calderon

I am an artist and designer who has loved drawing ever since learning how. I am driven by imagining a character that is unexpected – that did not exist before. I am motivated to perfect a character based on an idea or a concept. Sharpness and detail are of utmost importance to my style.

My work “Salto’s Journey” is a graphic novel about a cast of insects terrorized by a tyrannical figure. Despite very unfair odds they band together with animals of other species and journeys to find a better civilization for themselves. During this journey, the main characters and their acquaintances have a number of realizations and must make life-changing decisions. This story is based on my real experiences, which in turn helps each character become more relatable. This connection to the audience is important: without it, the characters would appear to have no substance or relevance.





Salto's Journey  
 2021  
 Digital Illustration

## Jessica Fernandez

My animation is titled A Través De La Ventana. It is a short animation that opens a small window to my mind. In this animation, my goal is to graphically express all the emotional tension and stress that I experienced at the beginning of the COVID 19 crisis. An important part of my animation is to represent how our imagination guides us in our darkest moments. A Través De La Ventana is an imaginative perspective with the goal of creatively overcoming the emotional crisis caused by the global COVID19 crisis. In this animation I explore my imagination and try to find the imaginative side of the situation so that I can digest and overcome it. With A Través De La Ventana I open myself to speak and express repressed feelings, a product of the COVID19 crisis.



A Través De La Ventana (Through the Window)  
2021  
Digital Animation

## Isaac Marizan

There is an old Spanish saying that my father told me: “Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres”(Tell me who your friends are and I’ll tell you who you are). My sculptures are physical representations of that saying. I sculpted a series of busts based on individuals I knew personally and historical figures that had an influence in my life. These portrait sculptures express to the world who I am. This project touches on subjects of morality, philosophy, politics, religion and music. I am influenced by artists such as August Rodin, Emmanuel Villanis, Antoine Bourdelle and Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux.



Luis "Terror" Diaz  
2021  
Water Clay

## Jesus Medina

I'm a mixed media artist whose work attempts to capture raw emotions and give a voice to challenging mental states. Recently I have been concerned with rediscovering myself through self-development in mind and body. In my work, I have established a personal narrative of growth, depicting myself in an exaggerated manner.

My thesis project is entitled "Neurogenesis," a series comprised of air-dried clay, acrylic, oil, on canvas and plywood. When creating these works, I initially planned and sketched the initial designs on canvas, but soon realized that careful planning didn't always yield the most expressive results. Later I explored a more spontaneous process which helped me portray states of depression, mania, and anger. This in turn helped me better enjoy the project while discovering the expressive and diverse properties of the clay. Through this process, I found that this freedom with process allows for my subconscious to better inform the work.



Neurogenesis  
2021  
Acrylic, Oil on Canvas and Plywood

## Anna Nosworthy

This project is about the black experience, womanhood and motherhood from my unique perspective. To Raise a Black Child is a documentary project that demonstrates the love between parent and child transcends color. I am inviting the audience into these spaces.

As a mother, I feel afraid for my son's future because he will grow up to be a black man in a country that sees his skin as a threat. I am creating a project that shows what I see and feel when I look at my son, what other parents of black children see when they look at their children and share that experience.





To Raise a Black Child  
2020-2021  
35mm Color Film

## **Andrea A Reséndiz Gómez**

“ABERRANT DANCE” is a series of sculptures exploring the un-sexualized movement amongst bodies in exaggerated poses. The extended parts of these individual pieces allow the viewer to imagine the movement in a static pose. In this way, the work fluctuates; it is not this-or-that, but rather both-and-neither. The sculpture and techniques of Louise Bourgeois, Henry Moore and Constantin Brâncuși inspire Andrea A Reséndiz Gómez.



Aberrant Dance  
2020  
Clay

## Alina Robles

For my Thesis II portfolio, part of my inspiration came from Jordan Casteel's paintings of people in her community. Another part came from my sister's cat named Shiva. Shiva brought a new kind of love and energy into my family. Moreover, from the challenging Covid19 pandemic circumstances, Shiva's loving energy changed us for the better.

In my portraits, I aimed to capture this same kind of positive energy connection between my loved ones and their feline pets. The sources used were photographs of my loved ones holding their cats. I used acrylic and oil pastel on canvases ranging from 9x12", 11 x14", 14x18", and 18x24". One of my favorites is of my cousin Serith with her cat Shadow.



Serith and Shadow  
2021  
Acrylic and Oil Pastel on Canvas, 18" x 24"

## Efren Vaquero

“A Walk for Life” is a short animation portraying an abstract view on immigration. I use my own experience as an immigrant to bring this animated dream to life. In this Dream, the character, who many immigrants may identify as, is running away and trying to survive in the new world he was brought into. Every time he falls into a new world, he faces something different such as a new scenario or an obstacle. The character falls in a loop where he is constantly falling into a new world that is unknown to him. The loop finally ends when the character falls into a world full of hands that are holding up red spheres. These spheres represent the dreams, goals, and opportunities that everyone has. The dream ends when the character accepts that his dreams, goals, and opportunities are within arm’s reach. I chose the name “A Walk for Life” because I want to show the obstacles such as language barriers, prejudice, racism, deportation, and mental health problems that immigrants may encounter throughout their lives but are yet able to walk forward.



A Walk for Life  
2021  
Digital Animation







## Master of Fine Arts Thesis

Yi Chen  
Robert DeJesus

## Master of Arts Thesis

Ruben Cuevas  
Jennifer Figueroa  
Stephanie Tierney  
Janina Martinez-Fields

## Bachelor of Fine Arts Thesis

Ashley Barreto  
Misael Calderon  
Jessica Fernandez  
Isaac Marizan  
Jesus Medina  
Anna Nosworthy  
Andrea A Reséndiz Gómez  
Alina Robles  
Efren Vaquero

