

# RUIZ-HEALY ART

Latinx, Latin America, & Texas Contemporary Art

Ruiz-Healy Art is pleased to present *For Fran*, a group exhibition of works by Jesse Amado, Ricky Armendariz, Nate Cassie, Bill Davenport, Alejandro Diaz, Constance Lowe, Jack Massing, Katie Pell, Chuck Ramirez, Riley Robinson, Ethel Shipton, and Kate Terrell, curated by Hills Snyder. The exhibition will be on view from February 6 to March 27, 2025, at our San Antonio gallery, with an opening reception on February 6 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. To honor Dr. Frances Colpitt, who was originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Nate Cassie will sing John Moreland's "Hang Me in The Tulsa County Stars" at the opening reception. *For Fran* will run concurrently with Artpace's *Songs for Fran and Donny*, Ruby City's *Synthesis & Subversion Redux*, and UTSA Main Art Gallery *Do you really believe that?*—showcasing Dr. Colpitt's scholarship, pedagogy, and mentorship through selected artworks and ephemera. The exhibitions honor her critical contributions to contemporary art and her profound influence on artists, students, and the Texas art community.

In words by the exhibition curator, Hills Snyder, "As the evening waned at the TCU opening of *Do You Really Believe That?* in Ft. Worth last August, I was treated to a brief, but incisively focused conversation with Sharon Engelstein & Aaron Parazette, in which Aaron revealed to me a most wonderful quote about Fran, in which he paraphrased artist Dennis Hollingsworth: 'She was a modernist hit by a post-modernist meteorite.' The truth in that touched me with a similar impact and you can sense the after-effects in our show, *For Fran*, an exhibition of some of the artists who came into the orbit of Frances Colpitt in San Antonio in the nineties. Colpitt, who passed away in 2022, was an influential art historian, critic, educator, and a close friend. This exhibition exists within a cluster of others honoring Fran which took place in 2024 at TCU, Ft. Worth; Barry Whistler Gallery, Dallas; and concurrently at UTSA, Artpace, and Ruby City in San Antonio. Any list of artists touched by Fran, even every artist included in all these exhibitions, is necessarily incomplete, such was her reach—wide, deep, and lasting. I miss her. We all miss her. This is for Fran."

Dr. Colpitt, born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting in 1974 and her Master in Humanities in 1977 at the University of Tulsa; she received her Ph.D in Art History at the University of Southern California. Colpitt fiercely loved educating and teaching in numerous universities, including Cornell University, the University of Santa Barbara, and the University of Texas San Antonio, where she taught for fifteen years. Dr. Colpitt was the inaugural holder of the Deedie Potter Rose Chair of Art History at Texas Christian University. As a professor, Colpitt is remembered for thought-provoking learning environments, often encouraging her students to challenge their belief systems and solidify them. In the words of artist and friend Constance Lowe, “I often felt as much like Fran’s student as her colleague and friend in the way that she expanded my knowledge. In our discussions, she never lectured or presumed to know more. She seemed to believe that her knowledge was common and shared, not *possessed*, but something she continually gathered from *looking* and reading, then formed according to her interests at that time.”

Colpitt’s artful knowledge knew no bounds, expanding further into the art world by publishing two books, *Abstract Art in the Late Twentieth Century* (2002) and *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective* (1990), curating exhibitions, and writing and editing for *Art in America*. Nate Cassie’s *Gift (the infrathin and a bowl of red)* is a harmonious combination of the academic insight and companionship both Frances Colpitt and her partner Don Walton provided the artist. Cassie took a Marcel Duchamp course by Colpitt, and, in Duchamp fashion, each porcelain bottle is cast in the same mold but have imperfections due to the natural casting process, expressing the idea of “infrathin” which was Duchamp’s playful name for minimal, almost unnoticed differences. The air inside the bottles is from cooking a chili recipe, introduced initially to Cassie by Walton, paying homage to The Walton-Colpitt household, who was known for their get-togethers and home-cooked meals.

The collection of works in *For Fran* reflects an array of interests and influence, featuring artists such as Chuck Ramirez, Jesse Amado, and Alejandro Diaz, for whom Colpitt curated a show in 1996 titled *Synthesis and Subversion*. This exhibition was one of the first of many collaborations between Ramirez and Colpitt, saying the following about his work in 2011, “The tastefulness of Ramirez’s style —ascetic white grounds, decorative restraint, and high production values—elevates his pictures to the level of art and distinguishes them from advertising (as do other practical distinctions, such as the absence of a “product,” other than the work itself, to sell).”

Colpitt also took an interest in the work of Jesse Amado, especially during his inaugural Artpace residency in the spring of 1995. *Take-out April 23* utilizes virgin felt wool and familiar, everyday objects and references - like take-out food containers and other mass-produced items - as metaphors for how society processes, consumes, and packages its identities, desires, and experiences.

### **About Ruiz-Healy Art**

Founded in San Antonio, TX, in 2006, Ruiz-Healy Art represents an international roster of artists, emphasizing Latinx and Latin American artists and working with prominent Texas-based artists. Biculturalism and identity discourse are important in several artists we collaborate with. In the spring of 2019, we opened a gallery space in the Upper East Side of New York City that works in tandem with the gallery in San Antonio as a platform to disseminate the artist's work. The continuous investments in these under-represented areas have remained a longstanding signature of the gallery program. The gallery is recognized for its success in placing works by our artists in prestigious museum collections ranging from the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian Institution, the LA County Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, McNay Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and many others.