

# RUIZ-HEALY ART

Latinx, Latin America, & Texas Contemporary Art

Ruiz-Healy Art presents *Nicolás Leiva: Realms of Rebirth*, a solo exhibition by Argentine-born, Miami-based artist Nicolás Leiva. The exhibition will be on view in New York City from March 20 to May 9, 2025, with an opening reception on March 20 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, attended by the artist. This marks Leiva's third solo show with Ruiz-Healy Art and his first in a New York gallery.

Leiva's work explores themes of life, transformation, and spirituality through vibrant ceramics that blend natural and cultural influences. Inspired by his father's work as the founder and director of a nature reserve in Argentina, Nicolás Leiva creates fantastical ecosystems where flora and fauna merge into imaginative ceramic figures. Leiva's sublime creations also owe their decadence to the beauty and craftsmanship of Italian art. Having spent several years working at the Bottega Gatti in Faenza, Italy, the artist absorbed *Faentina* ceramics techniques, which incorporate lusters of gold, platinum, ruby, and mother of pearl. *Realms of Rebirth* suggests a symbolic exploration of integration, transfiguration, and unseen forces that shape our world and alternate realms of existence. Just as pollinators sustain life, Leiva metaphorically draws from his diverse influences to create works between the corporeal and the mystical.

The exhibition includes new works such as *Sopera*, a richly decorated soup tureen symbolizing the communal ritual of people sitting, eating, and living in the lust of creation. *Realms of Rebirth* also features the work *Sea Flora*, sourced from the artist's installation project, *El Diluvio Prometido (The Promised Flood)* which encouraged the artist to go beyond the four walls of his studio, taking him to the ocean, where ceramic pieces were placed on the shoreline, awaiting the slow and steady power of waves engulfing them. *Sea Flora* hybridizes bio-organic forms worthy of its own mythology, coming alive with a curved tail and tentacle-like symbols. "Leiva imagines at an accelerated topographical speed, folding onto one another the different metonymic processes that evoke transformation, death, and rebirth," explains Cuban American poet and art critic Ricardo Pau-Llosa in his book, *Parallel Currents*.

For Leiva, his art does not exist in just one world. Instead, it is a labyrinth of opulent structures, patterns, and ornaments. This is especially true for his *Barcas series* in which Leiva incorporates figures reminiscent of sea creatures and presents them, his protagonists, as spheres, spikes, and

surrealist characters. In *Arbol de los Sueños (Tree of Dreams)*, the artist utilizes aesthetics and utilitarianism to create a scene that echoes a tree of life, symbolizing the cyclical nature of existence. “My world is adjacent to the world of psychoanalysis; these are my worlds of what is to come; these are my visions of the future,” says the artist.

### **About Nicolás Leiva**

Nicolás Leiva was born in Tucumán, Argentina, in 1958. He graduated from the Universidad Nacional de Tucumán arts faculty in 1983 and continued his studies in Buenos Aires before moving to Miami in 1990. Working solely as a painter until 1996, he now lives part-time in Faenza, Italy, where he works in the ceramics workshop at the Bottega Gatti. Leiva has had many important solo and group exhibitions in the US and internationally. His works are featured in the collections of the Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA); The Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana; the Berardo Collection in Lisbon, Portugal; the Gollinelli Collection in Bologna, Italy and the collection of the Museum of Art of Fort Lauderdale in Florida. Leiva’s accolades include the Miami Individual Artist Grant (2023) and distinctions from his hometown of Tucumán, underscoring his global and local impact. Today, he divides his time between Miami, Italy, and Argentina, participating in numerous art fairs like the Dallas Art Fair and Art Miami, among others worldwide.

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

Founded in San Antonio, Texas, in 2006, Ruiz-Healy Art represents an international roster of artists, emphasizing Latino/a and Latin American creators and prominent Texas-based artists. Biculturalism and discussions of identity are important aspects for several artists we work 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.