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Interviews Artists

Nicolás Leiva

By **Brainard Carey** May 14, 2025

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courtesy of Ruiz-Healy Art, New York / San Antonio

Nicolás Leiva is renowned for his exuberant sculptures and paintings that capture various expressive personal visions. Vessels, boats, abstract forms, flying carriages are transformed into ceramics in an explosion of lush primary colors embossed with metals like silver and gold. Animals and vegetables commingle in a garden of flowers amidst otherworldly places of shelter, are replicated as box-like reliquaries, and plate-like medallions in miniature close-up show territories transitioned from his works on paper. His imaginative world unfolds in infinite realms like a Möbius strip. Highly gestural, organic, or geometric, Leiva presents a host of archetypes in his emblems of flight, safety, and delight.

Born in 1958 in Tucumán, Argentina, Leiva graduated from the Fine Arts School of the Universidad Nacional de Tucumán. He continued his studies in Buenos Aires and moved to Miami in 1990. In 1996, he extended his practice to sculpture and ceramics. He lives part-time in Faenza, Italy, where he works with a variety of materials at the workshops of Ceramica Gatti. His work is the subject of the 2005 monograph *Nicolas Leiva: The Fire of Self and Multiplication* with scholarly text by Ricardo Pau-Llosa and Mariza Vescovo published by Bandecchi & Vivaldi in Italy. He has had many important solo and group exhibitions in the US and internationally, notably his 2023 solo exhibition, *Historia de un día*, Museo de Bellas Artes Laureano Brizuela, Catamarca, Argentina. Leiva was recently selected for the 2023 Miami Individual Artist (MIA) Grant, Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs in Miami, FL. His works are in the permanent 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 Museum of Art of Fort Lauderdale in Florida. The Civic Museum of Marble, Carrara, Italy; Museo Maria Zambrano, Malaga, Spain; José Luis Cuevas Museum, Mexico City, México; Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, CA; and Fundación Federico García Lorca, Madrid, Spain.



Nicolás Leiva, Sopera, 2015 Signed and dated on the underside Majolica ceramic with gold and platinum lustrous Ceramica Gatti, Italy 17 x 18 x 17 in. courtesy of Ruiz-Healy Art, New York / San Antonio.



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Nicolás Leiva, Sea Flora, 2024 Signed and dated on the underside Majolica ceramic with gold 35 x 15 x 15 in. courtesy of Ruiz-Healy Art, New York / San Antonio.



Nicolás Leiva, *Arbol de los Sueños (Tree of Dreams)*, 2017 Signed and dated on the underside Majolica ceramic with gold and lustrous Ceramica Gatti, Italy 30 in diameter. courtesy of Ruiz-Healy Art, New York / San Antonio.