

22 de Junio de 2025



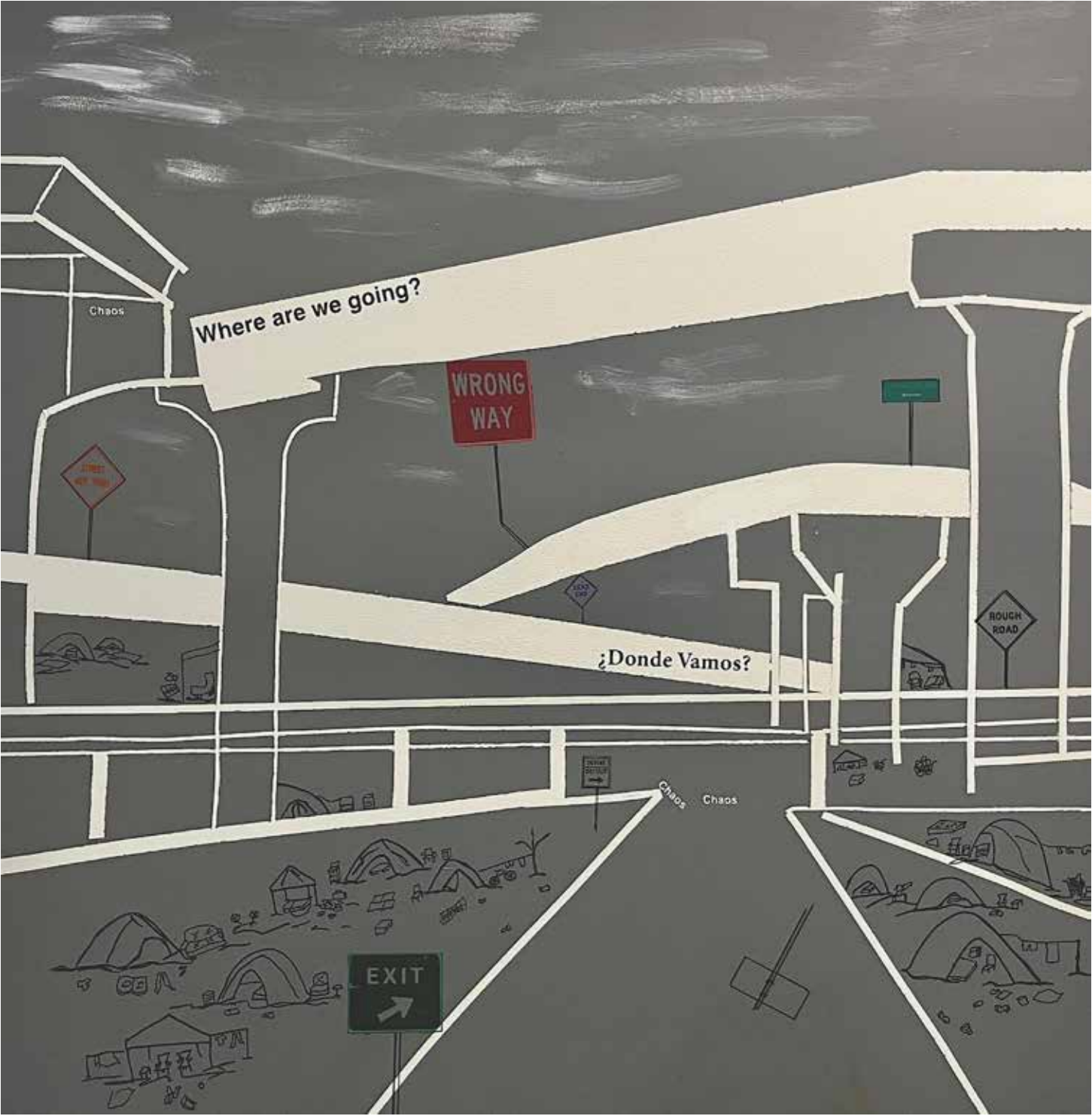
About the Cover Artist: Ethel Shipton

Courtesy of
Ruiz-Healy Art

Ethel Shipton was born and raised in Laredo, Texas. She received a BFA from the University of Texas at Austin in 1989. Ethel worked for the Texas House of Representatives as a photographer for more than eight years. She lived and worked in Mexico City in 1990 and 1992, and then returned to Texas, settling down in San Antonio.

A strong conceptual base informs Ethel Shipton’s practice and encompasses a variety of expressions. Through painting, installation, photography, and text, Shipton spotlights instants of clarity that flit by in the comings and goings of daily life. Past works have centered on ideas of urban scenes, language, and attempts to process information. Time is an essential issue of her oeuvre. “Space and time, movement and place I see going hand and hand. These two elements continue to be groundwork for my artwork. We all continue to move between time and space on a moment-by-moment basis.” – Ethel Shipton.

Shipton’s work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions at venues including the Inaugural Exhibition of Ruby City, San Antonio, TX; Artpace, San Antonio, TX; McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX; McKinney Contemporary Art Center, Dallas, TX; Sala Diaz, San Antonio, TX; The Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. Shipton was



also a 2017 participant in the Berlin Residency Program, Blue Star Contemporary, in partnership with Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany. In 2023, Shipton’s hometown of Laredo, TX, gave her a solo exhibition, Ethel Shipton: Los Dos Laredos y Más, at Laredo

Center for the Arts. Her recent group exhibitions include Regarding Ruscha, McNay Art, San Antonio, TX; Stitch in Time, Women and Their Work, Austin, TX; Piecework, Dallas Center for Contemporary Art, TX; Latinx Art: Transcending Borders, Octavia Art Gallery,

Houston, TX and Analia Segal and Ethel Shipton: Feminizing forms, Finesilver Gallery, San Antonio, TX. Among the museums where her work is part of the permanent collection are El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY; The McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX;

Ruby City, San Antonio, TX; and San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX.

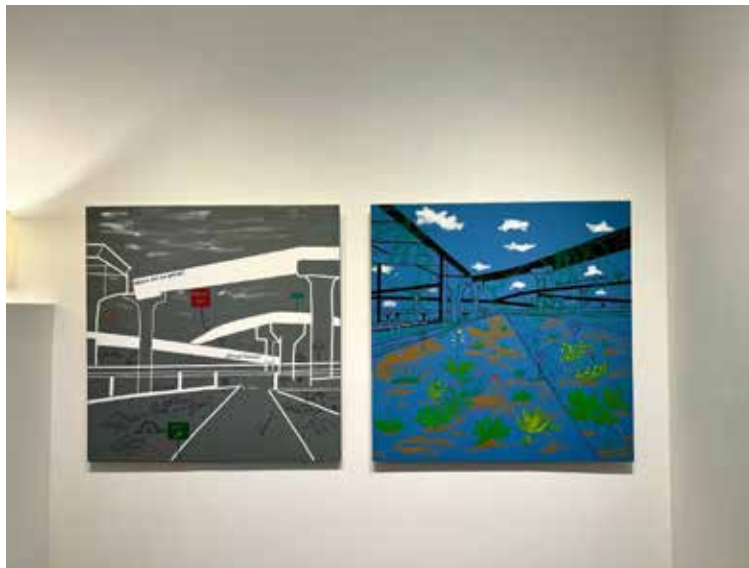
Read more about the artist on page 10.

Latina Artist Ethel Shipton Chronicles Borderland Experience

By Ricardo Romo PhD.

The Ruiz-Healy Art Gallery in New York City is hosting an exhibit *Vast and Varied: Texan Women Painters* that highlights several San Antonio Latina women artists. This overview essay is part two of my review of the exhibit and will focus on Ethel Shipton. The exhibit is on view at the Ruiz-Healy gallery from June 12 to August 15, 2025. *Women Painters* tackles the Latina cultural milieu through themes of cityscapes, motherhood, mementos, and domesticity.

Ethel Shipton grew up in the borderland community of Laredo, Texas during a time when the border was more open, and movement back and forth across the Rio Grande international bridge was more fluid. The border influenced

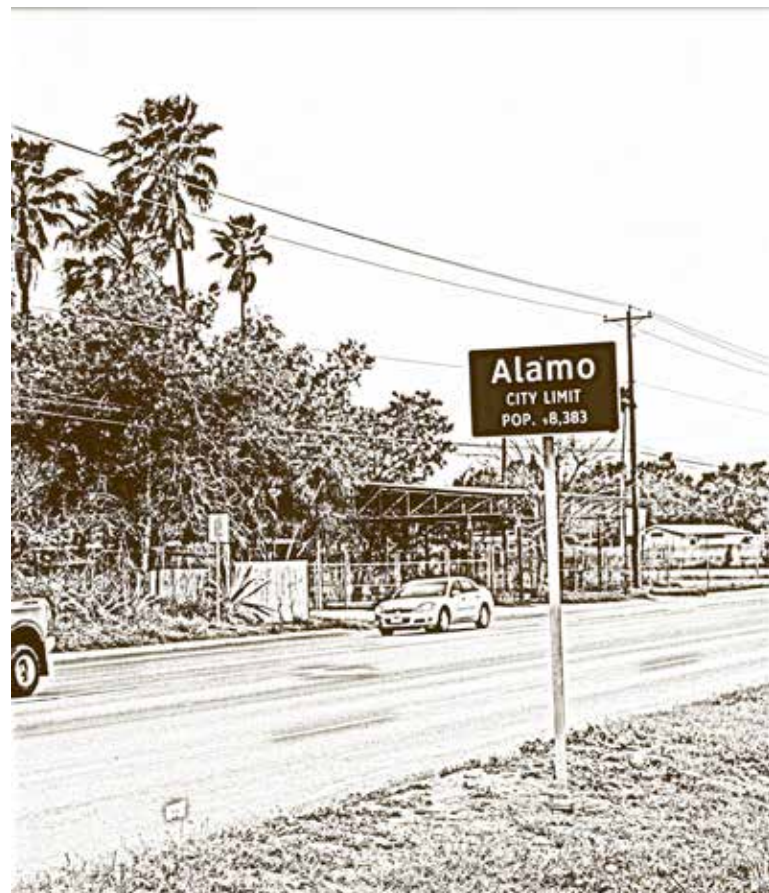


Shipton's interest in artistic endeavors. She told the local art magazine, the *San Antonio Current*, that her first exposure to art in many ways was walking through the markets in Nuevo Laredo looking at all the handmade objects—from metals, to ceramics, to glass works, to textiles—and becoming aware of the changing objects from season to season.

Shipton's stories about growing up in Laredo resonated with me because my grandparents lived in Laredo before

moving to San Antonio at the turn of the nineteenth century. Harriett and I have visited many of the small towns and mercados of both sides of the border.

Shipton left Laredo to attend the University of Texas in Austin where she developed a deeper interest in art. After graduating with a Bachelor of Art degree, she became a full time photographer at the Texas State Capitol. She has fond memories of photographing Texas Governor Ann Richards and Texas Senator and



U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

A move to Mexico City in 1990 sealed Shipton's passion for art. In Mexico City she lived in an art colony in the center of town several blocks from the famed Plaza Major. She stayed in Mexico for two years and returned to Austin in 1992. Harriett and I met her during her photography years after

her return to Austin, but we were not familiar with her art work.

As a Latina artist in Austin, Shipton learned about the excellent work of fellow UT graduate Sylvia Orozco in establishing Mexic-Arte, a Mexican-American gallery and museum on Congress Avenue.

Shipton's art career began to evolve after she



moved to San Antonio in the mid-1990s. She rented a house in the famed “Compound” owned by patron of the arts Mike Casey, near Blue Star, an emerging art complex. She continued her photography work and developed a deep interest in canvas painting. At the Compound, she established a close friendship with well-known San Antonio artist Chuck Ramirez. The greatest features of living in Southtown were its community of artists and its proximity to Blue Star where she rented a studio for \$50 a month.

Ethel Shipton, Installation images. Courtesy of Ruiz-Healy Art. New York City.

Curator and gallery owner Dr. Patricia Ruiz-Healy described Shipton’s conceptual practice as encompassing “a variety of expressions,” including text, and noted that her work centers on “urban scenes, language, and attempts to process information.” A *Glasstire* reviewer explained that Shipton’s obsession with signs and signals—like those found on highways or on city streets—“becomes central to her work, transforming

everyday objects into artistic statements that prompt deeper reflection on meaning and perception.”

The experience of urban environments, specifically those shaped by the fluidity of the U.S.-Mexico border, is a recurring artistic device in Shipton’s work. Her art frequently draws attention to the ways language and information shape our understanding of the world. In her painting in the Ruiz-Healy exhibit with colorful flowers by a freeway interchange titled “Where are we



going?”, Shipton incorporates examples of text, signage, and symbols. One sign reads “Rough Road” while two other signs warn “Street Not Thru” and “Detour.” In addition, Shipton added the words “Donde Vamos?” [Where are We Going] and “Chaos.”

The San Antonio Current further noted that Shipton’s use of text and typography in prints emphasizes her approach as both conceptually driven and rooted in the bare-bones presentation of language. A black and white companion oil painting in the New York exhibit has a similar question “Where are we going?” but below the highway overpass, she places several tents

similar to those used by homeless individuals. The lower highway leads to “Chaos,” a word Shipton repeats three times in the painting. The artist aims to engage viewers and knows that they will have ample questions about the objects and meanings of texts embedded in and near her highway paintings.

The Vast and Varied: Texas Women Painters exhibit introduces East Coast viewers to a complexity of South Texas and Borderland cultures that is definitively vast and varied and very exciting to experience through the eyes of Latina artists.