



Alejandro Díaz: Rooms and Places



Ruiz-Healy Art, San Antonio  
201-A East Olmos Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78212  
San Antonio, Texas 78212  
(210) 804-2219

Ruiz-Healy Art, New York  
74 East 79th Street 2D  
New York, New York 10075  
(212) 510-7873

Book design: Lauren Kim





# Alejandro Díaz

## *Rooms and Places*

San Antonio - January 21 – February 28

New York - Feb. 5 – March 20

Ruiz-Healy Art



# Table of Contents

6

*What I See in Alejandro's Paintings*

Jimmy LeFlore

9

*Color Plates*

91

*Observations and Insights*

Jimmy LeFlore

# *What I See in Alejandro's Paintings*

Jimmy LeFlore

For several years now I have enjoyed sharing and discussing various in-progress artworks via texts and emails with Alejandro Diaz, often including our friend in common Henry Estrada. Although I've known Alejandro for a long time, we made a special connection over his new painting series. Thankfully, he recognized and appreciated hearing about wherever my concentration landed in reaction to viewing each new painting that he sent. It is quite an honor that he welcomes my impromptu insights and my unique turns of phrases - as if they held some magic. We value being able to communicate while still in the process of art making. It is a rare exchange and an opportunity to be as open with Alejandro as a viewer of his art, as he is being open with me as a painter. When he asked me if he could integrate some of my snippets and commentary as part of a book he was developing I was delighted, mainly because it created an opportunity to preserve and share our openness.

It should go without saying that these paintings resonate with my personal affection for artworks and artists. Through looking at his paintings, Alejandro has helped me to appreciate the very act of painting and the eloquent relativity that paintings can possess. It feels very good to be reminded that new art can still be of great consequence.

The operative nature of art is the extraordinary communion between an artist's ability to be inspired, and an artist's ability to transmit that conscious awareness into a new work of art. Alejandro has tapped into how paintings can comprehend themselves and then transcend their own physical presence and become something greater when truly seen. His paintings are insightful, and Alejandro is too (but reread the start of this sentence).

At maybe the most simple level, any and all artworks that are viewed consciously will inevitably get a reaction, and I believe its humankind's inherent ability to respond to life by creating artworks that gives life its meaning and vitality. I think art making is the clearest proof that humanity is part of nature's intrinsic beauty. Alejandro paints what makes his heart beat, as he explores all the rhythms and mysteries of his life experiences. He paints paintings that wonder and wander.

Whether in detail or in gesture, he approaches representation and subject as points of intersection, aware of all that's full and/or empty, near and/or far, elementary and/or vast. It is in this vein that his paintings evoke great poetry, but also come across like casual conversations. He redefines crude by refining the ordinary into art. He paints images that are beautiful and psychologically powerful; the tonality, the iconography, the contrasts, the stillness - all united in service to Alejandro's artistic intention.

As a comprehensive series, viewers see an interlocking visual narrative that emerges and orients the viewer towards examining life's passages and portals, its daybreaks and nightfalls, its storms and silences. A moon is painted and it establishes space, location, mood, time, emotion, pattern, weight, symmetry, counterbalance, light and reflection, and darkness; and so does a painted sun, or the contents of a room or farm. His images are not simple, but rendered gently with a poetic voice. His painting is free, but not childlike. These paintings are meditations that leave monotony and verbiage behind. Alejandro's profound reverence for, and references to art history made me tell him once that "these paintings behave like a Stretch Armstrong doll, extending out to hold on to today while grabbing at the greatness of long ago".

By the end of 2025, Alejandro had sent me images of nearly all the new paintings, and if I could put my reaction into words, I did. I told him that if he wanted to share our conversation in the book that I would prefer to not necessarily amend my words as if I was trying to describe the paintings to someone I didn't know, but rather preserve the nature of our artists' dialogue. A pure channeling of words that express what I see and feel - just me, no filter - free-range and cage-free. Knowing that I'm untrained as an "art writer", it is far more cathartic to use my natural voice and articulation to describe what I've seen and thereby express my purest admiration.

All of these paintings have so much to say in a visual atmosphere depicting absolute silence. So, what I see in Alejandro's paintings is an art that emerges as inspiration, creation, and existence - becoming inseparable. *Arte es vida!*





## *Color Plates*

*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 11" x 14", 2024



*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 10" x 8", 2024



*Balance*, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", 2025





*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2024



*Justice*, oil on canvas, 48" x 48", 2024





*Untitled*, Acrylic and oil on canvas, 16" x 20", 2024





*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2024



*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 20" x 20", 2025





*A Room in Mexico with Enamel Pink Interior and Red Velvet Furnishings,*  
oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2025

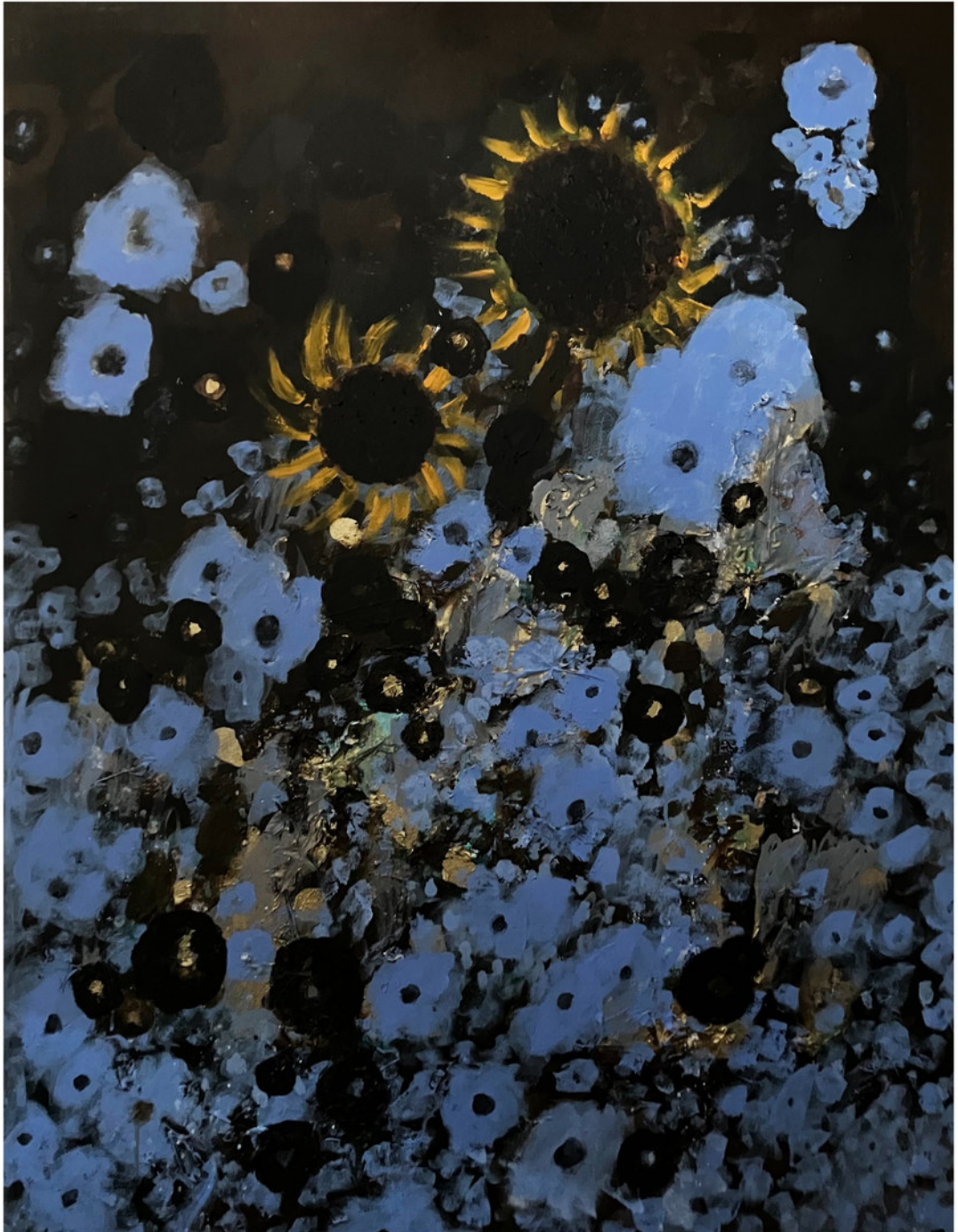




*Early Morning Drive*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025



*Sunflowers*, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, 36" x 48", 2021



*Ms. Livingston's Livingroom*, canvas, 24" x 30", 2024







*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 11" x 14", 2025



*Untitled, (Spain)* oil on canvas, 18" x 18", 2025



*Untitled, (Mexico)* oil on canvas, 18" x 18", 2025

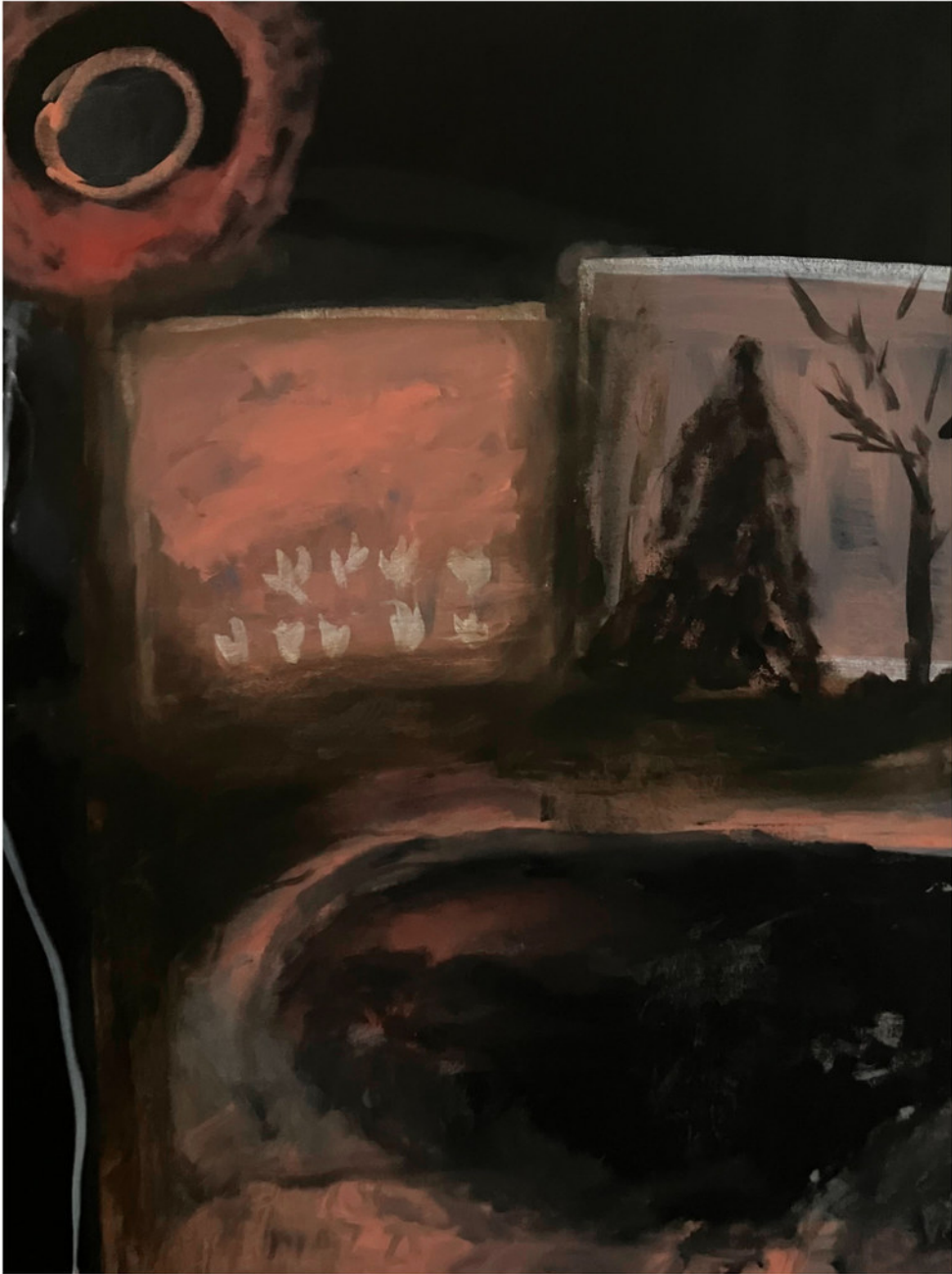


*Untitled, (Texas)* oil on canvas, 18" x 18", 2025





*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2025



*Agave Field*, oil on canvas, 30" x 24", 2024



*Color Field*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025







*Untitled*, acrylic on canvas, 20" x 16", 2024



*El Burrito*, acrylic and oil on Canvas 30" x 40", 2025



*Moon Worshipers*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2024



*Sun Worshippers*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2024





*Another Day*, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2024



*Untitled*, acrylic on plywood, wire, 12" x 12", 2025



*Note to Self*, oil and oil pastel on canvas, 20" x 26" (with frame), 2020





*Interior, canvas, 24" x 30", 2017*



*Hotel Isabella La Catolica* , oil on canvas board, 14" x 18", 2024





*Picasso's Guitar*, oil on canvas, 20" x 24", 2024





*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 24" x 30", 2024



*Maria Guerra's Bedroom*, oil on canvas, 28" x 22", 2009



*Untitled (Goya)*, oil on canvas, 11" x 14", 2025





*The Lavender Hour*, oil on canvas, 16" x 20", 2024



*All Encompassing*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025





*A Calm but Divided Sea*, acrylic and oil on canvas, 24" x 18", 2025





*Fractured Horizon*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025



*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025



*Untitled*, oil on canvas board, 14" x 18", 2024







*Untitled*, oil paint, plastic lid, seashell, 18" x 24", 2024



*Untitled*, oil on canvas, 20" x 16", 2025





# *Observations and Insights*

Jimmy LeFlore

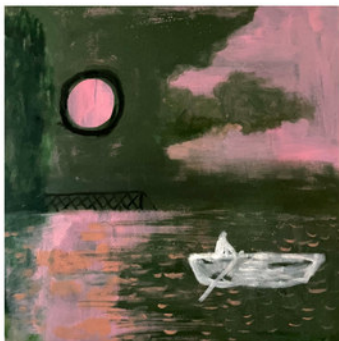




Life's senses are magical, naturally. The senses of sight and insight differ, but not by much; so as for feeling and touch. Give no credence to what's labeled unnatural or supernatural, because all is inevitably natural and magic.



Creators know about live-work spaces. They understand we're all a product of our environment, and that "environment" is all encompassing. Environment is both the drought and the harvest, a combination of fealty and reward. It nurtures the creator via an accumulation of days, years and generations.



A boat finds its balance, as does the moon as it rises up from the horizon. We're all coming from somewhere, in order to go somewhere else. The movement is what counts, especially its serenity.



Sometimes it is almost hard to see all the layers within your paintings. Not because of any obvious reason, but because of what isn't obvious. You compose directly and indirectly simultaneously, and that is to say your paintings flash disorientation with nonchalance.



Through a heavy haze, from across an ocean, the sun's light shines upon a full moon.



Looking out upon a horizon reveals life's balance, its weightiness (or lack thereof). A motionless horse bridled to a manned cart that's loaded with harvest creates ground. Beyond is a blue shape that suggests a mountainside, which strengthens the idea that the blue shape overhead might be a cloud or a cloud break. Simplicity in equal parts accuracy and ambiguity, wandering just enough to hold your eyes.



What could a painting look like? From a basic pictorial perspective it may be a view of the inside, or it could be a view from inside looking out. The framing can inform or disguise. Symmetry occurs naturally,...sometimes. A leaf's veins, a trunk's branches, a root system; they are distributors interested in balance. Barren or full, seasonally relative.



Interiors - I like each of them. In all of them the structure is simple and direct and intimate, and that structure reinforces each of the paintings defining figures, color, etc. Because of the architecture and furniture, there's an interesting balance happening in the compositions.



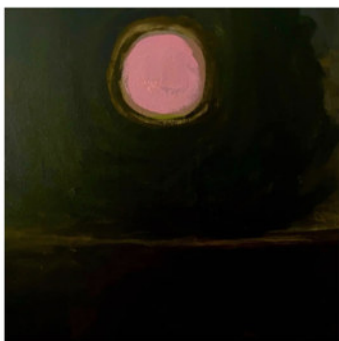
I'm imagining that I am a painting entirely covered in translucent cadmium red light. I'm perched on the wall looking out into my room's interior. I see my makeup table, as I wait and watch for the artist to return.



You're blending abstract with accuracy really well. I like the surfaces and the fogginess. My eye searches for traces of the figure. A great companion to the interiors series, making the memory of various darks and greens return.



A boat finds its balance, as does the moon as it rises up from the horizon. We're all coming from somewhere, in order to go somewhere else. The movement is what counts, especially its serenity.



It's surprising and mesmerizing when you look at it closely. I like it. Cool and warm. Light within dark.





The iron is like the Adoration, the Coca Cola like a statue. The background is messy in a contrasting way to the iron and the bottle, and towards the general precepts of electric safety.



This series subtitled, Texas, Spain and Mexico is interesting to me, as I love to think in comparisons. In particular, I think of how Spain and Mexico are bound by coastlines, and how the majority of Texas is flat, dry, and hot. The soccer goals seen in Spain and Mexico express those countries' joy of sport, competition, athleticism, and pride. An oil rig serves as the goal in the Texas painting. It is a solo machine that works tirelessly, but nonetheless, behaves like a sport to its investors, landowners, its bettors. Places and icons that reveal a sense of their native cultures' aspirations and limitations.





How can some things be everything all at once? In this painting what's lain is with what's standing. What is warm and organic is also with what is cold and desolate. The blocking, shaping and brushwork define a place, but they also are used to invent, leaving an image that slaps representation and imagination into a shared reality. It's ugly, it's wonderful, it's home, it's lost, it's fantasy. The relationships are beautiful.



This painting nearly behaves like an interior, but it explores space so differently. It demonstrates concepts like “near and far” just like Grover from Sesame Street taught us as kids. It's a narrative landscape painting with figures being represented as the grid-makers, agricultural scientists, and laborers. Energy and time seen through an agro-mosaic lens.



I like this painting because it plays with making sense. The arrangement and expressiveness speaks to me like recalling a dream or memory. It's buoyant and tethered, surreal.



I think of the 1902 film, “Trip to the Moon”, as this painting's use of found objects decisively project themselves outside of the picture plain, OG avant-garde. The two objects are integral actors within the painting, but have a higher power because they're now multidimensional. Paintings can transcend stillness and silence, by creating a kind of static energy. Making art is mastery in action; paintings and sculptures are its stills.



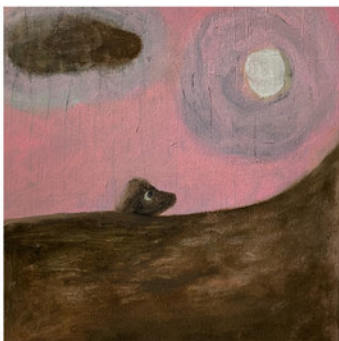
As straightforward as I can identify the items in the painting; they are a room, a quill, a started note, a table, a doorway, a curtained window, and a glove. On second look I see a person with a pink mohawk with head laid down upon the table next to the note. Even with a suggested figure the painting is emptied.



As opposed to how I see into your archetypal interior rooms, you really flip that framework when painting about spaciousness. It is like when eyes begin staring at a bathroom tile and suddenly you're looking at the universe. Perspective meets perception. All these paintings conjure great works from art history, but they're done with heart and soul versus cash and carry.



Absence and scarcity within a historically grand scale.



Rain had started falling amidst a moonlit bubblegum sky.





The traveler is experiencing the lavender hour using all their senses, the passage of time, light, color and place, - breathing it in. The aesthetic describes a journey that will be joyful, if not awe-inspiring. However, the path's course is unknowable, as is the traveler's status. Discerning this painting is rewarding in that it keeps us captivated in an endless moment.



This painting expresses an omnipresent duality, a calm but divided sea.



The rain is just beginning to subside, and the sunshine will soon return - along with the heat. How far and near?



This painting achieves sight within darkness. The dark horizon seems so tremendously far off. The flicks of paint on the ground plane look like they can be seen for just seconds, as if the scarcity of light is too much for the naked eye to make out. The sky hangs on to moonlight, - miles away from an electric bulb. This painting is content in its darkness, its nighttime.



In my own personal work I incorporate woodgrain as a visual element to reveal life's beauty and the passing of time. Like what you are doing in this painting, the more you ease into what nature provides the more you see its depth and vastness. Layers of inheritance and interpretations.



The blues themselves are no mystery. In fact there's equanimity in the blues because the blues are transcendent by nature. What is mysterious about the blues is how we respond as individuals, how it shapes us, how we express it.



What does it mean to be "about" something? Paintings capture the importance of knowing that life's about something. It was about that color, that far, that height. It was about that hot day, that long hour.



Alejandro Diaz

Born: San Antonio, TX 1963

Lives and works in New York City

## Education

MA Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 1999

BFA University of Texas at Austin 1987

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2026 Alejandro Diaz, Rooms and Places, Ruiz-Healy Art, New York, NY & San Antonio, TX
- 2022 Alejandro Diaz, Words for White Walls, Ruiz-Healy Art, New York, NY
- 2019 Alejandro Diaz Sampler, Royale Projects, Los Angeles, CA 2017
- 2017 Alejandro Diaz - Paintings, David Shelton Gallery, Houston TX
- 2014 It Takes a Village, Linda Pace Foundation, San Antonio, TX
- 2012 RISD Business: Sassy Signs and Sculptures by Alejandro Diaz, Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Providence, RI
- 2011 The Townhouse of New York, Royale Projects, Indian Wells, CA
- 2009 Blame it on Mexico, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 2006 A Can for All Seasons, ArtPace, San Antonio, TX
- 2005 A Can for All Seasons, Public Art Fund, New York, NY

## Selected Group Shows

- 2022 Chicanx Art: Dreamers + Change Makers, Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, BC
- 2020 Printing the Revolution: The Rise and Impact of Chicano Graphics 1965 to Now, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC
- Alejandro Diaz & Jesse Amado, Double Pleasure, Ruiz-Healy Art, New York, NY
- 2015 More Than Words: Text Based Artworks, Ruiz-Healy Art, San Antonio, TX
- 2014 Playing with Fire: Political Interventions, Dissident Acts, and Mischievous Actions, El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY
- 2013 Looking Back at Tomorrow: The First 5 years of Royale Projects, Palm Desert, CA
- 2012 Read Into It, Dorfman Projects, New York, NY
- 2011 St. Moritz Art Masters, St. Moritz, Switzerland
- 2009 Seriously Funny, Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, AZ
- 2008 Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA
- A Declaration of Immigration, National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago, IL

- 2007 Ceci n'est pas..., Sara Meltzer Gallery, New York, NY  
 Surge – 798 Dashanzi Art Festival, Beijing, China  
 Light /Art: Mystic, Crystal, Revelation, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, CA  
 Works on Paper Biennial, Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, NC  
 Tres Años, Tres Amigos, Trés Chic, New World Museum, Houston, TX  
 Four Freedoms, Marin Art Gallery, Muhlenburg College, Allentown, PA  
 Apropiaciones, KBK Galleria Contemporanea, Mexico City, DF  
 Never Leaving Atzlan, Museo de Las Americas, Denver, CO  
 2005 Gift: Wrap and Set Boutique, Julia Friedman Gallery, NY  
 Cheap and Chic, Galeria O-Itatti, Mexico City, Mexico  
 The Superfly Effect, Jersey City Museum, NJ
- 2004 Talespinning: Selections Fall '04, The Drawing Center, New York, NY  
 Pequeñas Escenas, Galeria Animal, Santiago, Chile  
 Neo-Queer, Center on Contemporary Art, Seattle, WA  
 Postcards from Cuba: Selections from the 8th Havana Biennial, Heine Onstad Kuntsenter, Oslo, Norway
- 2003 I (Heart) CUBA, Eighth Havana Biennial, Cuba
- 2002 Grotto, Jessica Murray Projects, Brooklyn, NY  
 Queer Visualities, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, NY
- 2000 S-Files, El Museo del Barrio, NY  
 Latino Redux, University of North Texas State, Denton
- 1997 Simply Beautiful, Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, TX
- 1996 Synthesis and Subversion: A Latino Direction in San Antonio Art, University of Texas at San Antonio
- 1991 Material as Message, Glassel School of Art, Houston Museum of Fine Art, TX  
 Las Manos del Artista, Casona - Centro Cultural de la Secretaria, Mexico City,  
 Marcas Registrada, Galleria Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City  
 Extranjeros en Mexico: Francis Alys, Alex Vaness, Alejandro Diaz, Eugenia Vargas, Silvia Grunner, Taller Diaz, Mexico City
- 1989 Blue Star IV, curated by Lucy Lippard, Blue Star ArtSpace, San Antonio, TX

## Collections

Smithsonian Museum of American Art, Washington, DC  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA  
 University of St. Gallen, Switzerland  
 Fundación Colección Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico  
 Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, AZ  
 El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY  
 RISD Museum of Art, Providence, RI  
 National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago, IL  
 Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, CA





Ruiz-Healy Art