

SAN DIEGO VISUAL ARTS NETWORK

soft power:

**ON COLOR,
TIME, AND RESISTANCE**



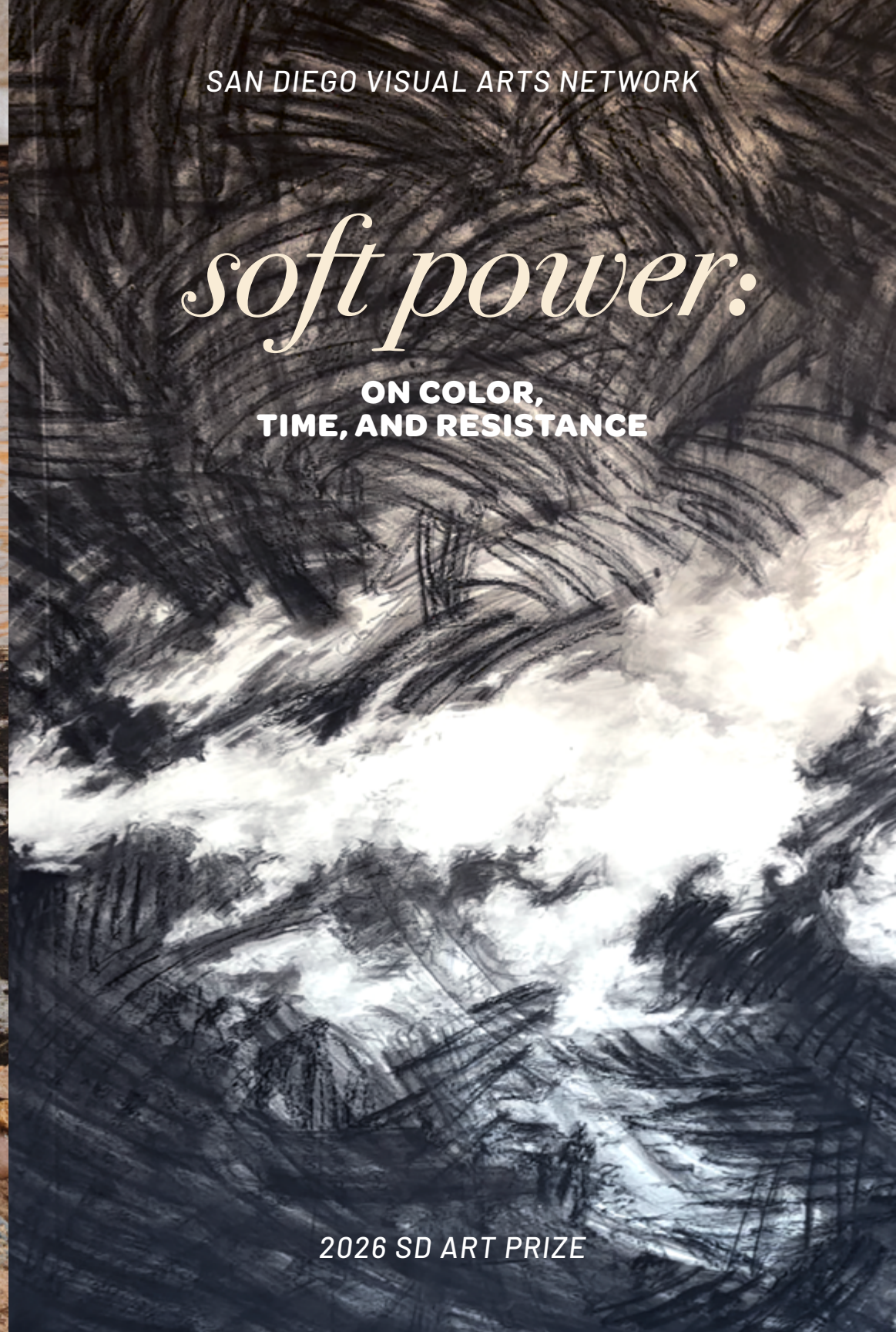
2026 SD ART PRIZE



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OCEANSIDE MUSEUM OF ART

[San Diego Visual Arts Network](#) is excited to have Oceanside Museum of Art host the annual San Diego Art Prize exhibition, *Soft Power: On Color, Time, and Resistance*, featuring this year's recipients: [Danielle Dean](#), [Ingrid Hernández](#), and [Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#). ([Listen to the Art Prize Winners on KPBS](#).)

Soft Power invites viewers to critically consider dominant narratives and elements of daily life, focusing on loss, sublimated identity, and the personal and ecological impacts of our actions and belief systems beyond embodied experience.

Founded by the San Diego Visual Arts Network, the [San Diego Art Prize](#) celebrates exceptional artistic expression across the cross-border region from Fallbrook to Ensenada, Mexico. The Prize encourages dialogue, reflection, and engagement with the region's artistic and cultural life. Curated by [Lara Bullock, Ph.D.](#), this year's exhibition features three artists selected through an international process.

[Oceanside Museum of Art \(OMA\)](#) is a non-profit organization that began providing exhibitions and public programs in 1995 as part of their mission to bring people together to explore the art and stories of Southern California artists. OMA's exhibition program is dynamic and robust, surprising visitors with a fresh and exciting visual experience nearly every visit. In addition to these boundary-pushing contemporary art exhibitions, OMA's programming includes youth education programs, adult art classes, concerts, films, and creative community parties and events that appeal to locals and tourists alike. The OMA experience stimulates imagination, presents new ideas, and challenges the familiar in a welcoming environment for those new to art, longtime museumgoers, artists, art students, or simply the curious. For more information on Oceanside Museum of Art, visit www.oma-online.org



SOFT POWER:

ON COLOR, TIME, AND RESISTANCE

*Compared to clouds,
life rests on solid ground,
practically permanent, almost eternal.*

WISŁAWA SZYMBORSKA

THE ENIGMATIC NATURE OF CLOUDS IS PERHAPS THEIR MOST INTRINSIC FEATURE. THEY ARE THE CLOSEST THING WE HAVE TO PALPABLE DEITIES. HUMANS DEDICATE THEIR PROFESSIONAL LIVES TO PREDICTING THEIR FORMATIONS, MOVEMENTS, AND EXISTENTIAL POTENTIALITY. YET, ONE ULTIMATELY NEVER KNOWS THEIR TRUE FORM UNTIL THEY WALK OUTSIDE AND LOOK UPWARDS.

~ LARA BULLOCK, PH.D. ~

The term cloud encompasses everything amorphous, illusive, and ominous, from the nebulous infrastructure of modern technology, an obscure mass, a foggy brain, or the literal mist in the sky. In any form, clouds are temporal, ambient bodies we can never truly reach. Ghostlike, they are formless, only felt as cool whispers substantiating faith in their existence. Clouds drift through this exhibition as both image and metaphor. They are impermanent, ephemeral, and at times, forceful. They obscure, reveal, transform, and reshape. They are soft, but powerful.

Soft Power: On Color, Time and Resistance borrows the term coined by political scientist Joseph Nye during the late twentieth century to describe a form of influence that decenters coercion as synonymous with power, specifically, political power, in favor of attraction, persuasion, and leading by example in the shaping of cultural values. The concept emerged alongside the global expansion of neoliberal ideology and American self-assertions of global dominance in the aftermath of the Cold War. The work in this exhibition examines how systems of dominance become embedded in everyday life through literal landscapes, bodies, institutions, and images. Rather than depicting power as fixed or singular, the works in the exhibition resist this notion and reveal it as diffuse, relational, and often invisible until carefully observed. ([Listen to the KPBS interview here](#)).

This exhibition arrives at yet another moment when questions of authority, bodily autonomy, and social control have once again become intensely visible. Through distinct yet resonant practices, the works by artists Danielle Dean, Ingrid Hernández, and Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio open up alternate understandings of “soft power”; one grounded not in geopolitical dominance, but in the quiet yet transformative capacities of art, ideas, and the agency of the individual to reshape perception, foster solidarity, and imagine alternate futures. Rather than conceptualizing power as something that radiates outward from a single center, they reveal multiple centers, overlapping histories, and competing temporalities. They pose the question of how power can be wielded within versus imposed from above.

[Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#)’s work considers time as a tenuous, existential condition. Her work explores time’s relationship to memory, our lived experience, and the assumption that it necessarily moves toward progress. Rather than treating time as an abstraction, she reveals its intimate and often visceral relationship to the body and mind. There are two bodies of work featured in the exhibition that are linked through a conceptual bridge: her iconic cloud paintings and a more recent series that investigates the concept of *crip-time* through her experience as both caregiver and mother. Ortiz-Rubio approaches *crip-time* not as a sociological category to

be observed from a distance, but as a lived framework that challenges able-bodied assumptions about productivity, linearity, and compliance. Her work embodies a daring possibility of freedom from temporal constraints that many take for granted, foregrounding forms of embodied time that resist standardization. The color blue in her work functions not merely as a visual element but as a conceptual field through which questions of duration, perception, memory, and existence unfold. Here, clouds become shifting horizons where spirituality and biology are no longer opposing terms but deeply intertwined ways of understanding what it means to live, to remember, and to change.

[Danielle Dean](#)'s *White* examines the dairy industry as a commodity and the cultural narratives that sustain it by tracing connections between New Zealand's Taranaki Dairy Farm, British colonial histories, and constructions of whiteness. Inspired by a 1930s Typhoo Tea card celebrating the New Zealand dairy industry's importance to the British Empire, the film combines advertising aesthetics and speculative imagery to reveal how ideals of purity, health, and progress become embedded within everyday consumption. At a certain moment in the film, eerie, glugging, white clouds suddenly and violently pour across the verdant landscape of Aotearoa (the indigenous Māori term for New Zealand), evoking both bomb smoke and a literal whitewashing of the land. At once alluring and unsettling, the clouds function less as fixed symbols than as unstable signs that evoke the ways economic systems and colonial legacies can appear natural or inevitable while masking processes of extraction and transformation. The film's repetitive, almost assembly-line choreography echoes the industrial logic of commodity production, while the cyclical rhythms of the landscape suggest that nature continually exceeds attempts to dominate it. In *White*, whiteness emerges not only as a color but also as a cultural construct, a commodity, and a mechanism through which social, economic, and racial hierarchies are reproduced.

[Ingrid Hernández](#)'s *Sedimentations* offers another understanding of time altogether. The project examines informal settlements, or *asentamientos*, that have emerged over decades throughout Tijuana. Beautifully framed and formally composed, the photographs contain no people. Instead, the homes themselves are the protagonists. Hernández invites viewers to consider a modern indigeneity in which belonging is not granted through official recognition, but instead accumulated slowly through habitation, labor, and time. Hernández uses the language of geology to describe these communities, drawing attention to their gradual formation and material permanence. Like sedimentary rock, the structures are built layer by layer over generations. What first appears as quiet, minimalist landscapes gradually



[Danielle Dean](#)



[Ingrid Hernández](#)



[Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#)

reveal subtle nuances: an advertisement, a pattern in a garage door, the repetition of cinder blocks or corrugated metal. These fragments expose the economic interdependence of Tijuana and San Diego while quietly resisting narratives that might describe these settlements as temporary or incomplete. Neighborhoods record histories of persistence, adaptation, and resilience within the land itself. Their formal precision slows the viewer's gaze, allowing the landscape to disclose its accumulated histories over time rather than all at once. In Hernández's work, resistance is neither dramatic nor declarative; it is embedded within the patient acts of remaining and evolution.

Taken together, the works in *Soft Power* propose an alternative understanding of resistance. Rather than relying on spectacle or confrontation, they operate through acts of revelation. They make visible what already exists but often remains unnoticed: the ideological structures embedded in a glass of milk, the temporal assumptions governing bodies and institutions, the histories encoded within a hillside settlement. In doing so, they invite viewers to reconsider the narratives through which power is organized and maintained.

If "soft power" traditionally describes the subtle mechanisms through which influence is exercised, this exhibition proposes another possibility: a quiet power rooted in attention, itself. To notice, to question, to remember, and to imagine otherwise may be among the most consequential acts available to us.

I invite you to delve into the work of these three artists and the scholarly insights that follow. I hope they empower you to perceive subtle currents of "soft power" and to imagine your own alternate futures.

THE SAN DIEGO VISUAL ARTS NETWORK & SD ART PRIZE

PATRICIA FRISCHER
FOUNDER

I spent 30 years in London and witnessed firsthand what the Tate Prize did for the UK. I wanted something similar for San Diego—an initiative that would highlight the excellence of visual artists in our region and elevate their work to a wider audience. [San Diego Visual Arts Network \(SDVAN\)](#) was established to encourage artists to connect, create, and shine.

Over the years, the diverse collection of [San Diego Art Prize](#) recipients has been a continual source of inspiration, celebrating the artists shaping our future. Fine art has the power to quiet our personal worries and shift how we see the world. That transformative quality is at the heart of everything we do.

The SD Art Prize, a cash prize with exhibition opportunities, spotlights established San Diego artists each season whose outstanding achievements in the field of Visual Arts merit the recognition. The SD Art Prize is not something artists “win.” It is a recognition received after a sustained career in the arts, ideally when an artist is at the top of their game. Selectors focus on work completed within the past three years. Our long-term intention remains to recognize local artists consistently. The San Diego Art Prize turns local talent into lasting impact.

SDVAN, which began 25 years ago, is a database of artists, events, and exhibitions focused on promoting San Diego’s arts and culture. SDVAN is dedicated to the Visual Arts as an essential part of our city’s health. Believe it or not, there are over 2600 art resources featured on [sdvisualarts.net](#).



[Patricia Frischer - SDVAN](#)



[Lara Bullock, Ph.D. - SD Art Prize](#)

SDVAN has become one of the main sources for disseminating information, encouraging collaboration, and aiding cross-pollination across all the arts. With its expanding network, SDVAN continues to promote the expanding vision of the visual arts in our region. The SD Art Prize allows us to celebrate artists who inspire all of us in San Diego County.

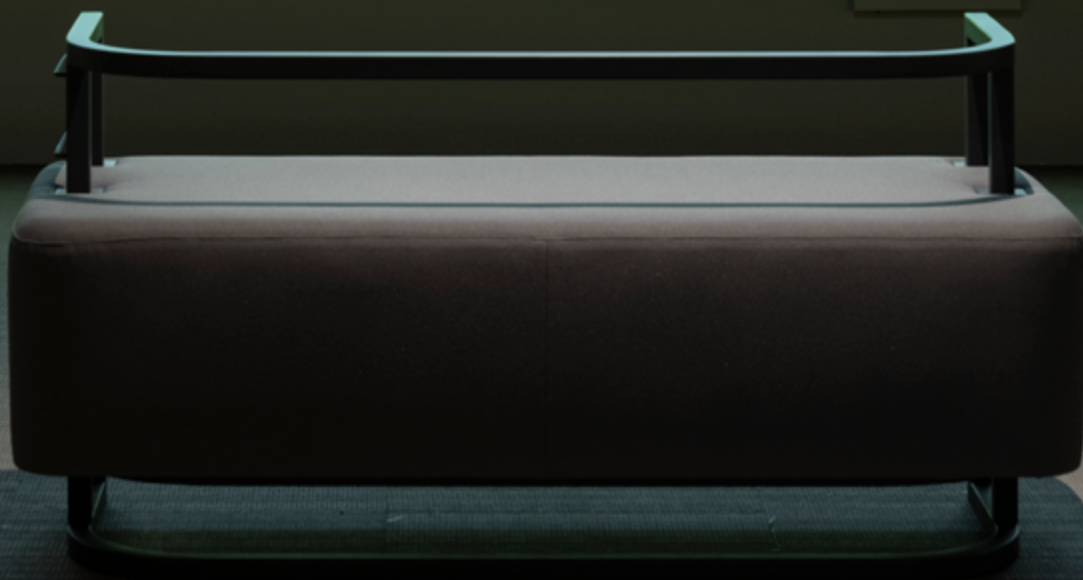
SDVAN and the SD Art Prize are proud to introduce this year’s recipients. Danielle, Ingrid, and Tatiana all bring a special dimension to this year’s Art Prize.

For the first time, all three artists are women with young families—an extraordinary reminder of the pressures artists balance while producing exceptional work. Every artist is dynamic and culturally charged—the Oceanside Museum of Art and curator Dr. Lara Bullock have worked hard to present all three prize winners in an exceptional space that allows us to expand our reach. (Thank you!)

At the [Oceanside Museum of Art](#), this year’s Art Prize presentation will include a panel discussion featuring an artist and a collector. [Educational lesson plans](#) are also available online at SDVAN and the museum.

We firmly believe that Art connects us, and we are proud that SDVAN helps make that happen—that is our legacy. ([Listen to the KPBS interview here](#)).

We are one creative community with bold art and big ideas. Please join our growing community—thank you for supporting the Arts. ([Soft Power Video](#))





DANIELLE DEAN

“*WHITE*”

[Danielle Dean](#)'s art is charged with distinctive energies. Whether moving through one of her immersive installations or witnessing live performances, viewers are drawn into encounters that are at once sensory and critical. Colors and text, textures and sounds, are grounded forces, born of (un)told or hidden histories, collaborations, and on-site engagements. Her work challenges audiences to reckon with their assumptions and sensibilities about the world as it was, as it is, and as it might become, as well as their positionalities shaped by narratives and storytelling. Several of her recent works, from *Bazar* (2018) and *Amazon (Proxy)* (2021) to *White* (2023), confront these tensions by analyzing capitalism and its effects on the lives and lived experiences of humans and the more-than-human.

Dean exposes systems as structures that shape relationships to place and produce uneven realities that are at once familiar and unsettling. In overt and subtle ways, she reveals the pervasiveness of capitalism and its twin, colonialism – not merely as economic systems of property and production, but as forces that profoundly structure class, race, gender, and countless other dimensions of social life. She attends to the granular specifics of place and time while remaining oblique, opening contexts and meanings to broader global and transhistorical resonances. Materials, movements, and dialogues are intricately layered and woven together, creating forms of engagement that root viewers in their lived realities while transporting them toward worlds beyond their immediate confines.



White is an 8-minute-28-second animation directed by Dean and created in collaboration with Marjolaine Lebrasseur, Justin Weber, Taul Katz, and Ngāruahine Iwi (a Māori community with ancestral ties in South Taranaki, North Island, Aotearoa/New Zealand). The animation pans continuously to the right, immersing viewers in the lush greenery of a forest. The forest is not static; it is alive. Light streams down from the sky, highlighting the forest's bright and muted shades of green, brown, blue, and yellow. Perception is disrupted by shifting planes. Distant views of native trees and plants are juxtaposed with close-ups of individual trees and a multitude of plants. Bursts of red foliage and flowering plants with berries begging to be plucked invite viewers into the forest. Glimmering specks of light flash across the visual field; the chirping of birds rings overhead, and a single black bird traverses the landscape.

Just as viewers might imagine reaching out to the surface for the red berries amid the pristine surroundings and soundscapes, white plumes invade the forest. They slowly creep in from the back, their presence seen but not yet felt. Soon, the once-vibrant colors of the forest are violently encased in a white overlay. The leaves of plants turn white, as do the trunks and branches of the trees. The white plumes move into the middle and foreground. They grow in size and scale. Their whiteness shifts from a diaphanous white to a dense white. Their intensity and magnitude become overwhelming, falling from the sky and emanating from the ground below, the soundscape darkening. As the forest morphs and whitewashes, it slowly transitions to grayscale before color returns, illuminating a flat, grassy landscape.



A snow-capped mountain comes into view, and in its shadow, on the flat grasslands below, a human-made structure appears. A one-story Western-style building with a pitched roof and flat façade, accompanied by a smaller barn-like outbuilding, stands as a sparse yet loaded intervention in the landscape. Grazing cows emerge alongside it, their heads bent toward the grass. Ominous bells toll as mountain, architecture, livestock, and open pasture are set against text that names the location and reveals its historical and political weight: Mt. Egmont, North Island, New Zealand.



The animation transitions once again, this time to the history of imperialism drawn from a 1930s British collectible card. The short, seventeen-line passage is readily legible yet densely informative. It opens: “Important Industries of the British Empire/New Zealand: Dairy Farming.” The text situates us in a specific place and time, identifies its subject, quantifies its scale, and enumerates the commodities



these animals produce. In this context, the white plumes that engulfed the forest a few minutes ago invite associations with milk and the extractive histories of industrial agriculture.

Work. Labor. Exploitation. Together, text and image evoke these logics of imperial capitalism as enduring, entangled systems that shape both the landscape and its representation.

White concludes by returning viewers to a possible future that echoes the work's beginning. The lush forest reappears, reawakened by a chorus of vibrant sights and sounds and liberated from the ominous white that had saturated the landscape. A single leaf drifts slowly downward, signaling both the forest's uncolonized past and its capacity for renewal. Here, Māori presence endures. Māori ancestral relationships with Taranaki Maunga (Mt. Egmont) persist through epistemological and ontological frameworks grounded in ngā whenua (land) and whakapapa (genealogy), relational systems that British colonialism sought, but ultimately failed, to erase. Even New Zealand's 2025 recognition of Taranaki Maunga (Te Kāhui Tupua) as a legal person – an important affirmation of Māori kinship and iwi leadership after generations of dispossession and agricultural extraction – cannot undo these histories or resolve the questions of power and its exigencies explored in *White*. ([Interview featured in the *Soft Power* art film](#)).



A TOUR DE FORCE, *WHITE* LAYS BARE THE ENDURING VIOLENCE OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM WHILE ENVISIONING FUTURES ROOTED IN RECIPROCITY, RELATIONALITY, AND CARE BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND MORE-THAN-HUMAN WORLDS.

~ KELEMA LEE MOSES, PH.D. ~

Above

Installation view of *Amazon*, from the exhibition *Art Now*, (c) Tate Britain, 2022.
Photo: Jai Monghan.

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[Danielle Dean](#), *White*, from the exhibition, *Milk*, Wellcome Collection, 2023.
Photo: Steve Pocock.

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New Zealand Dairy Farms, *Card No. 6*, issued by Typhoo Tea in 1939
as part of the *Important Industries of the British Empire* series.





INGRID HERNÁNDEZ

Over the past two decades, [Ingrid Hernández](#) has developed an extensive visual archive that documents the complex realities of Tijuana. Her images serve as a testament to the city's social, cultural, political, and economic dynamics, offering deep insight into its transformation. In order to understand her work, it is crucial to acknowledge her studies in sociology and photography, which equipped her with methodological tools to build a career in the visual arts in Tijuana. Her work is strongly rooted in site-specific artistic research, meaning her photographs are closely connected to Tijuana's context. The artist does not create in a vacuum; rather, her artwork is intimately tied to her political, geographic, and social perspectives. Hernández approaches territory as methodology: she recognizes her body and subjectivity, engages in dialogues with local memories, and takes ethical responsibility by building ties and seeking feedback from the communities with which she collaborates.

Migration and displacement of people from the central and southern regions of Mexico, as well as from Central and South America, have driven accelerating growth in Tijuana since the 1970s. This population increase unleashed a housing crisis, forcing people to settle on the city's outskirts, where they built homes amid a lack of infrastructure and basic amenities. Hernández began her artistic career with the project titled *Outdoor* in 2003. In this project, she photographed houses on the city's periphery. She conceived this idea by observing the houses around her home and noticing that they were constructed with non-traditional building



materials imported from the United States as second-hand resources, providing an alternative method for development. These homes were constructed with an eclectic mix of materials—recycled wood, steel sheets, garage doors, pallets, tires, and waterproof plastic tarpaulin, among others—demonstrating resourcefulness and adaptability in the face of limited resources. At this point, the artist directed her gaze to capture these self-built informal houses. Her images document the facades by grouping materials, shapes, settings, and colors, thus endowing their spatial disposition with aesthetic qualities. It is important to note that her practice maintains a distance from ethnographic photography, which can exoticize or exploit subjects; in contrast, the artist establishes long-term relationships with the community. For this reason, she chooses to create a visual ethnography that omits the human figure, narrating—through homes and objects—life stories from a place of absence.

More than twenty years have passed, yet her interest remains: self-built informal housing. This year, Ingrid Hernández has been awarded the San Diego Art Prize (2026). Her participation in this edition consists of presenting her most recent project, *Sedimentations* (2023–2025).

In this series, the artist creates an analogy between sedimentation and informal housing settlements. By comparing how self-built homes are established in a territory and how they modify surfaces and the urban landscape, Hernández



distances herself from the conceptual and formal aspects of her earlier work. In previous projects, she photographed the exteriors and interiors of houses in Tijuana, Bogotá, and New York; in this project, she returns to her roots. In a conversation with the artist, I asked her about the differences between her earliest and most recent projects. She pointed out that now she is more conscious of her interests, intentions, and visual approaches.

Sedimentations marks a return to documenting the exteriors and facades of self-built informal houses, now approached under new conditions. Hernández's visual language has evolved, opening new ways to reconsider the image. In addition to the houses' facades, Hernández widens her focus to capture a broader view of the territory, including environmental aspects. This time, her lens is oriented toward the landscape genre; the close-up shots of the past contrast with wide shots that offer a broader perspective of the territory. Including the landscape makes these places easier to recognize, situating viewers in a more familiar part of the city.

Tijuana has shifted: the outskirts are no longer confined to the suburbs but are now integrated into various locations, erasing the traditional sense of boundaries. This series has allowed the artist to experiment with new compositions, lighting, and colors. By using new print materials that deviate from photography standards, she creates new atmospheres and engages in visual storytelling. The images from this series create a dynamic contrast between the landscape and the inhabited.

Hernández's work deserves this recognition for multiple reasons. The images she has created over the course of her career are documents charged with memory and evidence of the asymmetry between Mexico and the United States. Her photographs reveal impermanence, rootlessness, and transient elements that complicate the definition of a city like Tijuana. Through her work, we see self-built informal houses, which serve as pedagogical tools for the community. These constructions are not only acts of edification but are also connected to the formation of both individual and collective identity.

Hernández's photographs portray absent people through their homes; every material, shape, and color tells a story about the residents. Like the city itself, her artwork is "under construction," embodying the concept of something unfinished and in constant flux. ([Interview featured in the *Soft Power* art film](#)).

IN THESE IMAGES, WE WITNESS THE POWER OF HER VISUAL LANGUAGE: THE UNFINISHED AS PROMISE. RECEIVING THE AWARD LENDS HER ARTWORK RELEVANCE AND ESTABLISHES ITS IMPORTANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF THIS TRANSBORDER ZONE. IT POSITIONS HER IN A SIGNIFICANT PLACE IN THE ART WORLD, WITH A LEGACY THAT WILL BE INVALUABLE TO THE SAN DIEGO-TIJUANA REGION.

~ EDUARDO LOZANO MURILLO ~

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[Ingrid Hernández](#), *Sedimentations*, (2023–25).

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Ingrid Hernández, *Outdoor*, (2003–04).

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Ingrid Hernández: *Being Here With You/Estando aquí contigo*, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, U.S., (September, 2018).





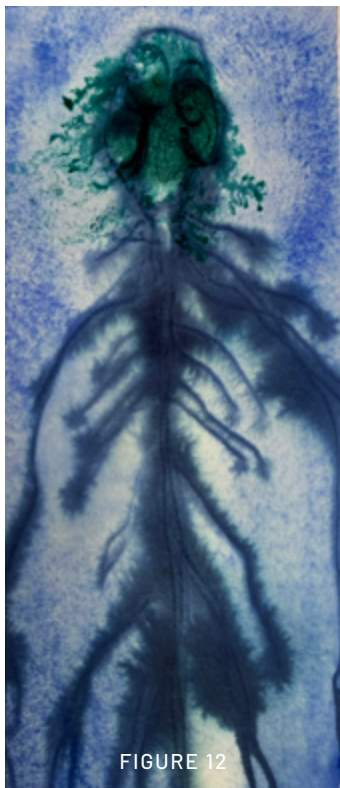


FIGURE 12



FIGURE 02

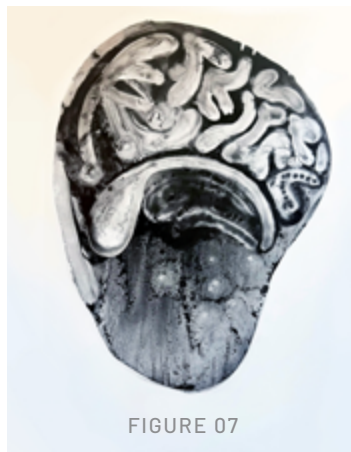


FIGURE 07



FIGURE 03

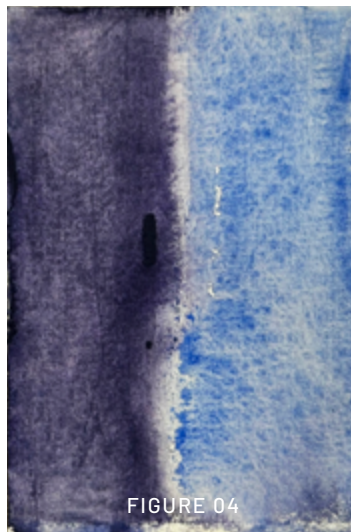


FIGURE 04



FIGURE 05

TATIANA ORTIZ-RUBIO

When I was first introduced to [Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#)'s work, I was intrigued by the electric blues and variety of scale. From the large blue landscape mural that interrupts the logical, precise lines of the Timken's regular gallery space [Fig.1], to several series of smaller papers with unfamiliar shapes that join together in unique and curious series in her studio, I eagerly delved into the journey that Ortiz-Rubio created for her audience. The iterative elements of her work began to form an archive of haunting visuals in my mind's eye. Ortiz-Rubio, who works and creates in San Diego, invites her observers into deeply intimate and often disquieting reflections on time and its affective impacts. Time is taken for granted as an unbending unit of measurement; as the most ordinary measure to mark our days.

Ortiz-Rubio's pieces for San Diego Art Prize's *Soft Power: On Color, Time, and Resistance* center around interrogations of temporality that disrupt our blind conformity to time. Educated at the New York Academy of Art (MFA) and the University of San Diego (BA), where she currently teaches, Mexican-born Ortiz-Rubio brings to *Soft Power* poignant pieces that are inspired by a deep desire to invite viewers to question aspects of ableist existences and to imagine other possibilities, such as crip time.

In disability studies, the notion of crip time posits that mainstream notions of linear, chronological time, which privileges perpetual forward motion towards progress, excludes differently abled bodies. Crip time rejects the discourse of production and progress as a measure of human value. In its most creative and optimistic form, crip time is a time that accommodates bodies that require slower tempos, full stops, backward or sideways movement. It is a non-linear perception of time that refuses to conform. Her beautiful and haunting works invite us to reject the assumption that we are destined to conform to time's linear and rigid structure - a structure that excludes differently abled bodies and minds.

To experience Ortiz-Rubio's contributions to the *Soft Power* exhibition is to bear witness to an unsettling universe in which our eyes are challenged to identify what we perceive in neuroanatomical contours, partially legible scrawls, and explosive colors and forms. Her techniques with ink, dry pigment, and graphite on paper are full of organic shapes that move and resist the tight control that conventional



FIGURE 06 | L

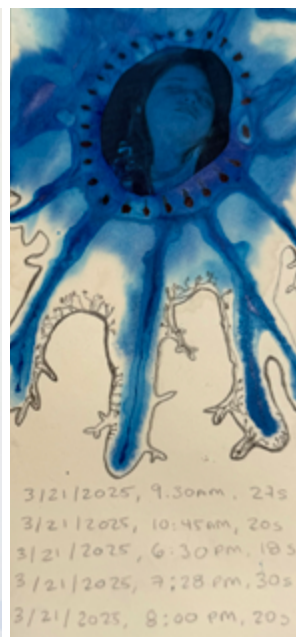


FIGURE 11 | R

illustrations of time tend to demand. Created as multiple series with mediums that are loose and purposefully lacking in structure, each of the works curated for *Soft Power* forms part of an iterative archive of the refusal to comply with ableist, linear constructions of time.

In Ortiz-Rubio's visual reflections lies a temporality that is malleable, that stutters then restarts; that honors noncompliance. Her work urges the viewer to dissent from a normalized concept of time imposed on all of us, as it is designed for only able bodies and minds. Ortiz-Rubio invites the observer to embrace the *Noncompliant*; also the title of her recent solo exhibition at Bread & Salt Gallery in San Diego from Mar 3 to May 23, 2026. To be noncompliant is to act in empowered protest, rebellion, and resistance. It is a refusal to submit and a rejection of docility. The artist's gestures of creative noncompliance reject institutional labels that justify exclusion, explore temporalities that move beyond accommodating, and dare to welcome them.

The artist's rejection of continuity connects observers to how humans perceive traumatic moments in our lives and timelines. In trauma theory, the instant of trauma produces a breach in our experience with the continuity of time. In her *Fulgor de un olvido III* [Fig. 2], Ortiz-Rubio confronts the observer with dark billowing smoke plumes that arise from emphatic, black brushstrokes to insinuate a violent explosion on a background of retina-searing saturated blue. The emotional impact of the imploding brushstrokes evokes sensations of refusal and breach of



continuity that Ortiz-Rubio is drawn to. Similarly, *In Blue Time Series 2 and 3* [Fig. 3 and 4] depict distinct breaches in continuous time with her use of pigments and watercolor washes that resist one another, forming shapes that hint towards surprising disruptions (#2) or irreconcilable fissures (#3).

Her pieces created with charcoal or graphite and water on polypropylene are part of a series whose mediums create some elements that sink deeply while others seem to be in danger of quickly sliding off the non-porous, plastic-like surface. One in *Soft Power* has shapes that echo the implosions from works just discussed [Fig. 5]; another a dark grey cloud-like structure that could be plumes of smoke [Fig. 6]. The movement on the unusual canvases, along with the cracks in the dried mediums, illustrate the brittle push and pull of refusal in captivating ways. The *A tu tiempo* [Fig. 7 and 8] series nods towards a brain-like structure using the same mediums on polypropylene. In *A tu tiempo III*, one might begin to identify the contours of a human brain in the forms created with graphite and water. However, as the viewer makes sense of the elements formed by slick polymer rejecting moisture and attracting graphite, the neuroanatomical shape of its contours refuses any attempt at precise identification.

Ortiz-Rubio creates an iterative neuroanatomical archive of crip time with ink, dry pigment, and graphite on irregular pieces of paper in *Seizure Journal Series* [Fig. 9-12]. Her work rejects the depersonalized tone of an institutional medical archive that conforms to rules of documentation to protect institutional and

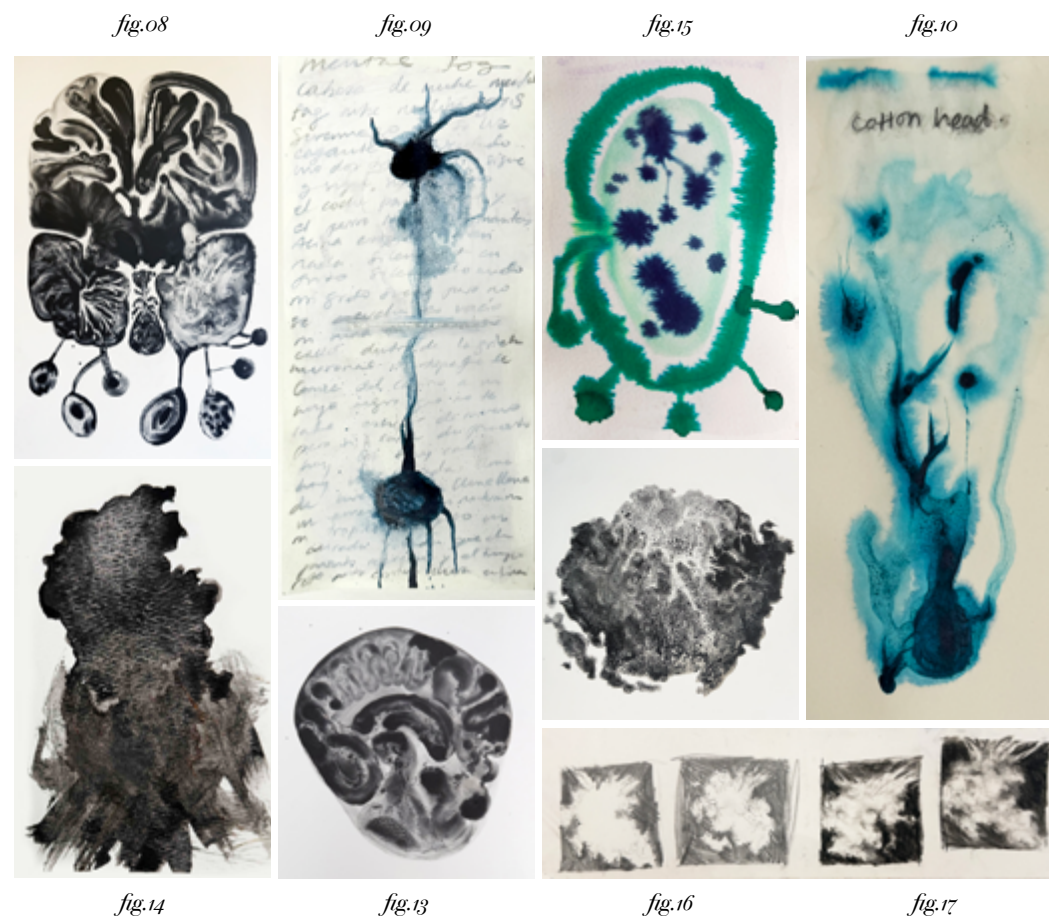
individual legal rights to privacy. Instead, the series constructs an intensely personal and intimate archive of disability and time. In *Seizure Journal Series #7*, a blue sprawling neuron-like shape with her child's face in its nucleus floats above controlled, neat, handwriting. The writing documents the duration in seconds of the precise hour and minute on 3/21/2025 that a seizure occurred. The inclusion of deeply autobiographical elements such as these - a family photograph or logs of her daughters' seizures - eschews the cold clinical tone.

The iterative nature of this series conjures brainstems and disjointed neurons, with bold gestures devised in ink, dry pigments, and watercolors. Phrases like "mental fog," divorced from a precise context or clinical terminology, are scribbled under watercolor in *Seizure Journal Series 2*. The pieces in *Seizure Journal Series* (2025) refuse to comply with the rules of a clinical medical archive that acts as if it were objective. Ortiz-Rubio's dramatic blues and greens create movements that gesture towards neurons in the *Seizure Journal Series 3 and 16* (2025). They warmly invite the viewer to move closer to examine their vibrant shapes. The beautiful, heart wrenching elements welcomes the observer into an intensely personal and experiential archive of crip time.

Visitors to San Diego Art Prize's *Soft Power: On Color, Time, and Resistance* at Oceanside Museum of Art from Sept 5, 2026 to Feb 7, 2027 will be invited to question one of our most ordinary experiences - of time - in ways that will challenge ableist structures that surround us. In discussing crip time with Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Stacey Milbern comments that she is haunted, most of all by the erasure of crip experiences and if crip work and lives will be represented. In other words, Milbern is concerned that the archive of crip time will be forgotten or destroyed. ([Interview featured in the *Soft Power* art film](#)).

TATIANA ORTIZ-RUBIO'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOFT POWER REFUSE TO BE ERASED, AND, IN THEIR RESISTANCE, THEY FORM AN ARCHIVE OF CRIP TIME THAT WILL NOT EASILY BE FORGOTTEN BY ITS VIEWERS.

~ AMANDA PETERSEN, PH.D. ~



- Figure 1 [Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, In Blue Time](#) (2024), Timken Museum, July 17, 2024 - Sept 29, 2024, San Diego.
- Figure 2 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Fulgor de un olvido III*, 2026.
- Figure 3 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled: In Blue Time Series 2*, 2024.
- Figure 4 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled, In Blue Time Series 3*, 2024.
- Figure 5 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled*, 2024, charcoal on polypropylene, 40 x 26 in.
- Figure 6 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled (cloud)*, 2022, charcoal on polypropylene.
- Figure 7 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *A tu tiempo*, 2026, graphite and water on polypropylene, 26x40 in.
- Figure 8 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *A tu tiempo III*, 2026, graphite and water on polypropylene, 26x40 in.
- Figure 9 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Seizure Journal Series #2*, 2025, ink, dry pigment and graphite on paper, 9x4 in.
- Figure 10 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Seizure Journal Series #3*, 2025, ink, dry pigment and graphite on paper, 9x4 in.
- Figure 11 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Seizure Journal Series #7*, 2025, ink, dry pigment and graphite on paper, 9x4 in.
- Figure 12 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Seizure Journal Series #16*, 2025, ink, dry pigment and graphite on paper, 9x4 in.
- Figure 13 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled*, 2025, graphite and water on polypropylene paper, 8.5 x 8.5 in.
- Figure 14 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled*, 2025, charcoal on paper.
- Figure 15 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled*, 2025, watercolor and ink on paper, 8 x 5 in.
- Figure 16 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Lunes por la mañana*, 2022, graphite on paper, 9x8 in.
- Figure 17 Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio, *Untitled (aura)*, 2025, graphite on paper, 23.5x 6.5 in.

CURATOR NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES, THE SAN DIEGO ART PRIZE HAS CELEBRATED THE REMARKABLE ARTISTS WHO SHAPE THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE SAN DIEGO-BAJA CALIFORNIA REGION WHILE FOSTERING CONNECTIONS THAT TRANSCEND GEOGRAPHIC AND POLITICAL BOUNDARIES. AS I REFLECT ON THIS YEAR'S EXHIBITION AND CATALOG, I AM REMINDED OF THE EXTRAORDINARY CREATIVE DIALOGUE THAT EMERGES FROM THIS PLACE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERS FOR ARTISTIC INNOVATION AND EXCHANGE. I HOPE THAT THIS EXHIBITION WILL ENCOURAGE CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WORK OF THIS YEAR'S ARTISTS AND INSPIRE CONVERSATIONS THAT EXTEND WELL BEYOND THE GALLERY WALLS.

~ LARA BULLOCK, PH.D. ~

Curating this year's San Diego Art Prize has been extremely special due to the brilliant trio of artists with whom I have been lucky and humbled to meet, and from whom I have learned immensely: Danielle Dean, Ingrid Hernández, and Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio. It has been a joy to watch them develop friendships and to bear witness to each of their brilliant minds throughout our collaboration.

I am profoundly honored and deeply appreciative of the opportunity to curate the nineteenth year of this exhibition, which has documented the remarkable creative production of the San Diego/Baja transborder corridor. Curating the San Diego Art Prize is a passion of mine, not just because of the creative possibilities it offers, but because it allows me to be continuously introduced to new and inspiring work by artists from our region. ([Enjoy Soft Power art film here](#)).

The San Diego Art Prize continues to thrive in a region uniquely defined by its position along a binational border. Far from being a mere geographic reality, this border serves as a creative asset, fostering cross-cultural exchange and collaboration between artists on both sides. The intersection of cultures, identities, and histories in this area offers artists fertile ground to explore complex themes that resonate both locally and globally. This borderland is not merely a site of division but a space of connectivity and creative collaboration. It is through this lens that the San Diego Art Prize functions as a catalyst for fostering relationships that transcend geographical boundaries, encouraging binational dialogue that can expand artistic practices and open new avenues for creative exploration.

One of the hallmarks of the San Diego Art Prize is its expanded selection process in which national and international curators are invited to participate in the selection process. This broader perspective has been vital in bringing greater recognition to the incredible work being produced in San Diego and Baja Norte. Bringing in outside perspectives has sparked fresh critical conversations around our local artists while boosting their visibility on a global scale.

To this end, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the three distinguished curators who participated in this year's selection: Marina Reyes Franco, Independent Curator's International Curatorial Intensive Programs Manager, Independent Curator, and Writer; Rachel Jans, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the San Diego Museum of Art; and Anna Fenia Schneider, Director at DAS MINSK in Potsdam. Their thoughtful consideration and expertise have enriched this process immensely.

I extend my sincere appreciation to this year's catalog contributors: Eduardo Lozano Murillo, Independent Curator and Researcher, Kelema Lee Moses, Assistant Professor, Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the University of California, San Diego, and Amanda Petersen, Associate Dean, Undergraduate

Studies and Professor of Languages, Cultures and Literatures at the University of San Diego. Their depth of knowledge in their respective fields has resulted in critical essays that not only contextualize the work but also provide profound and unexpected insights into each artist's practice.

It's especially meaningful to present this year's exhibition at the [Oceanside Museum of Art](#), an institution whose commitment to artists has made it an important cultural anchor for our region while extending the reach of [San Diego's artistic community to broader audiences](#). My heartfelt thanks go to Maria Mingalone, Executive Director of the Oceanside Museum of Art, for her encouragement and enthusiastic support, and to Exhibitions Manager Katie Dolgov, whose generosity, responsiveness, and thoughtful collaboration have been invaluable throughout this process. Additional thanks go to Dana Edwards, Abigail Goodman, Sarah Cathers, Katelyn Johnson, and Karen Cook for being such a wonderfully collaborative team! And the exhibition would not be possible without the expertise of Facilities Manager and Lead Preparator, Drei Kiel. Each of their dedication has helped realize an exhibition that honors both the rich artistic history and vitality of our region. We are fortunate to collaborate with such an esteemed institution, and their partnership has been instrumental in bringing this exhibition to life.

[The San Diego Art Prize](#) also benefits from the enduring generosity of the Seth Sprague Educational & Charitable Foundation, whose continued support has been vital to the program's longevity. I am equally grateful to the Synergy Arts Foundation, [San Diego Visual Arts Network](#), and especially its founder, Patricia Frischer, whose vision and dedication have guided the Art Prize since its founding in 2006. Through [SDVAN](#)'s steadfast commitment to elevating artists' visibility throughout our region, the Art Prize has continued to grow as a platform for artistic recognition, critical dialogue, and meaningful cultural exchange. This year's exhibition was strengthened immeasurably by the work of our administrative assistant, Andrea Rodriguez Chamberlin, whose organization, care, and remarkable attention to detail ensured that countless moving parts came together seamlessly. I would also like to recognize my fellow members of the [San Diego Art Prize](#) Committee for their generosity, insight, and unwavering commitment to the arts: Jonathon Glus, Senior Art & Design Fellow in Residence at The Prebys Foundation; Abe Hughes, Commissioner, City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture; Alessandra Moctezuma, Director of the San Diego Mesa College Art Gallery; Debra Poteet, Collector; and Felicia Shaw, Deputy Director of San Diego ART Matters. My sincere thanks also go to Abe Hughes and Diana Girardi Karnas for their generous support of the San Diego Art Prize. ([Thank you to KPBS - listen to the interview](#)).

Finally, I acknowledge **Mark Murphy**, whose thoughtful and [visionary catalog design](#) has given this publication its distinctive visual identity. ([Click for Art videos](#)).

SD ART PRIZE

ART RECIPIENTS OF THE PRIZE

2006-2007

Ernest Silva with May-ling Martinez
Jean Lowe with Iana Quesnell
Raul Guerrero with Yvonne Venegas

2007-2008

Marcos Ramirez ERRE with Allison Wiese
Roman De Salvo with Lael Corbin
Eleanor Antin with Pamela Jaeger

2009

Kim MacConnel with Brian Dick
Richard Allen Morris with Tom Driscoll

2010

Gail Roberts with David Adey
Einar and Jamex de la Torre with Julio Orozco

2011

Rubén Ortiz-Torres with Tristan Shone
Jay S. Johnson with Adam Belt

2012

Arline Fisch with Vincent Robles
Jeffery Laudenslager with Deanne Sabeck

2013

James Hubbell with Brennan Hubbell
Debby and Larry Kline with James Enos

2014

Marianela de la Hoz with Bhavna Mehta
Philipp Scholz Rittermann
with Joseph Huppert

2015

Wendy Maruyama with Peter Scheidt
Roy McMakin with Kevin Inman

2016

Irma Sofia Poeter with Shinpei Takeda
Richard Keely with William Feeney

2017

Cy Kuchenbaker with
Rizzhel Mae Javier
Fu/Rich with Alexander Kohnke

2018

Anne Mudge with Erin Dace Behling
Robert Matheny with Max Robert Daily

2019-2020

Alanna Airitam
Kaori Fukuyama
Griselda Rosas
Melissa Walter

2021

Beliz Iristay
Hugo Crosthwaite
PANCA
Perry Vasquez

2022

Alida Cervantes
Angélica Escoto
Carlos Castro Arias
Cog • nate Collective

2023

Anya Gallaccio
Janelle Iglesias
Joe Yorty
Mely Barragan

2024 (Video)

[Gabriel Boils](#)
[Francisco Eme](#)
[Marisol Rendón](#)

2025-2026 (Video)

[Danielle Dean](#)
[Ingrid Hernández](#)
[Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#)

SD ART PRIZE CURATOR

[Lara Bullock, Ph.D.](#)

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Debra McGinty-Poteet

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Abe Hughes

[Mark Murphy \(Soft Power Video\)](#)

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Andrea Rodriguez Chamberlin

SDVAN LESSON PLANS

Brenda Andrews

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Artwork by [Tatiana Ortiz-Rubio](#)

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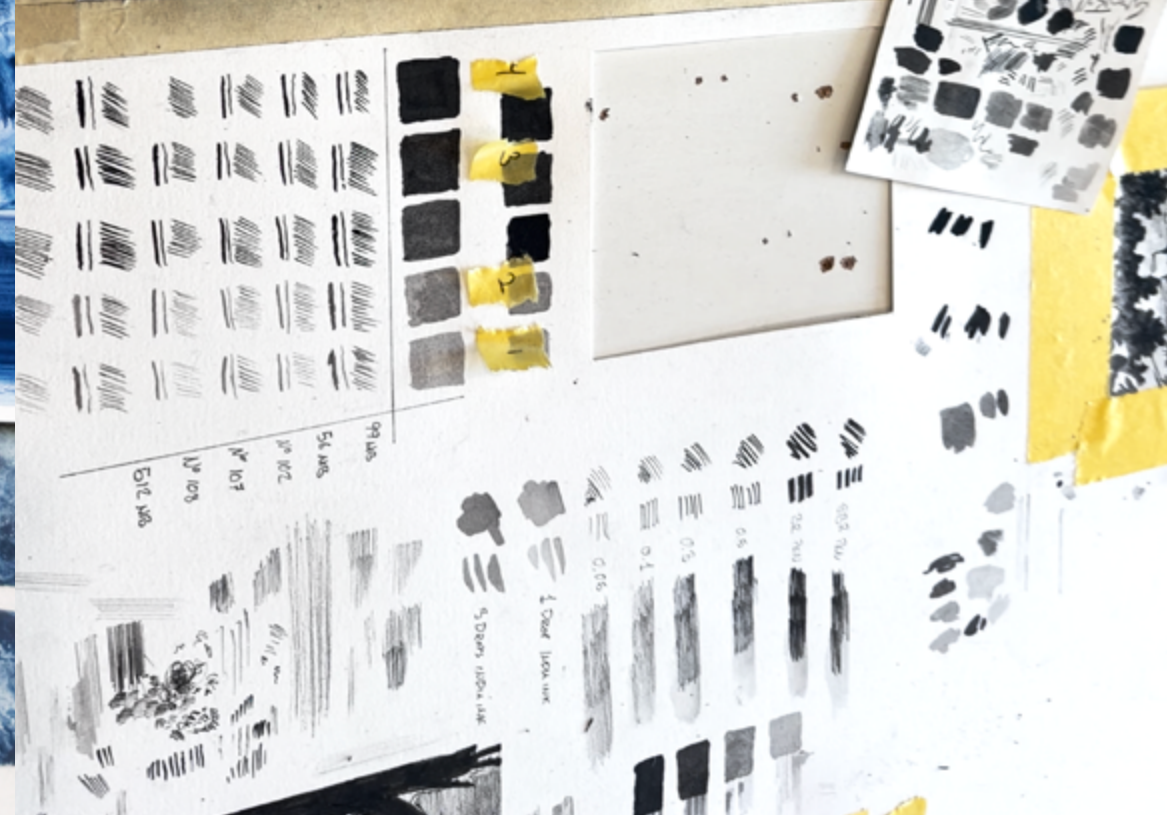
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5B2 PEN



TIME, AND RESISTANCE
ON COLOR

your power

2026 2D ART PRIZE