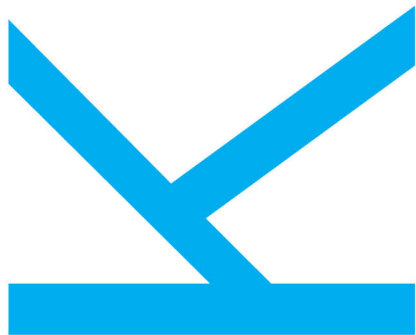
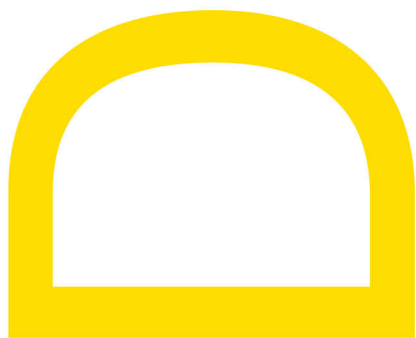


WHITNEY

NO EXISTE
UN MUNDO
POSHURACÁN
ACTIVITY
GUIDE



WELCOME!

no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria brings together twenty artists from Puerto Rico or from the diaspora, which means that their families have roots in Puerto Rico but that they live elsewhere—places like New York, Chicago, and Berlin. All of the work you'll see in the show has been made in the past five years, in the time since Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico. Maria was a strong category 4 storm, the strongest to hit the archipelago in a lifetime.

Take a moment to think about the exhibition's title. The phrase “no existe un mundo poshuracán”—“a post hurricane world doesn't exist”— is borrowed from a poem by the Puerto Rican poet Raquel Salas Rivera. Of course Salas Rivera didn't mean that literally! It's more that Puerto Ricans are still living with the consequences of the storm. They are also still living with poor management of services by the government, which began before the storm and worsened its effects. And Salas Rivera's phrase also suggests that we are all still living in a world shaped partly by climate change, which makes hurricanes and other kinds of weather more extreme. At the same time, the title can also be interpreted as “we don't want a future defined by catastrophe,” suggesting optimism.

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The exhibition is part of the Whitney's emerging artists program, sponsored by

NORDSTROM

Generous support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Judy Hart Angelo, the Elaine Graham Weitzen Foundation for Fine Arts, and the Whitney's National Committee.

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None of the works of art you'll see here simply picture the storm. Instead, they look at the larger context that made Hurricane Maria so difficult for Puerto Ricans and try to imagine a future where those challenges can be overcome. For the artists in this show, continuing to work and create art points the way forward.

This Kids activity guide is designed to introduce you to the artists and their artworks and encourage you to explore your own creativity! Use this guide to investigate the exhibition and experiment with your own ideas! We hope it inspires the artist in you, too!

Note for grownups

There are works in the exhibition that address themes including suicide and trauma, though without graphic imagery. Open conversations about these difficult topics can be very rewarding for some families.

Check out whitney.org/Families for a full list of our Family Programs.

Ask Questions!

As you explore the galleries keep track of the questions that might come up. Many of the artworks you will see started from a question!

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OBJECTS WITH A MESSAGE



Installation view of no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art In The Wake Of Hurricane María (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 23, 2022-April 23, 2023), Gabriella Torres Ferrer, *Untitled (Valora tu mentira americana)* (*Untitled [Value Your American Lie]*). Photograph by Ryan Lowry

Gabriella Torres Ferrer
Untitled (Valora tu mentira americana)
(Untitled [Value your American Lie]), 2018

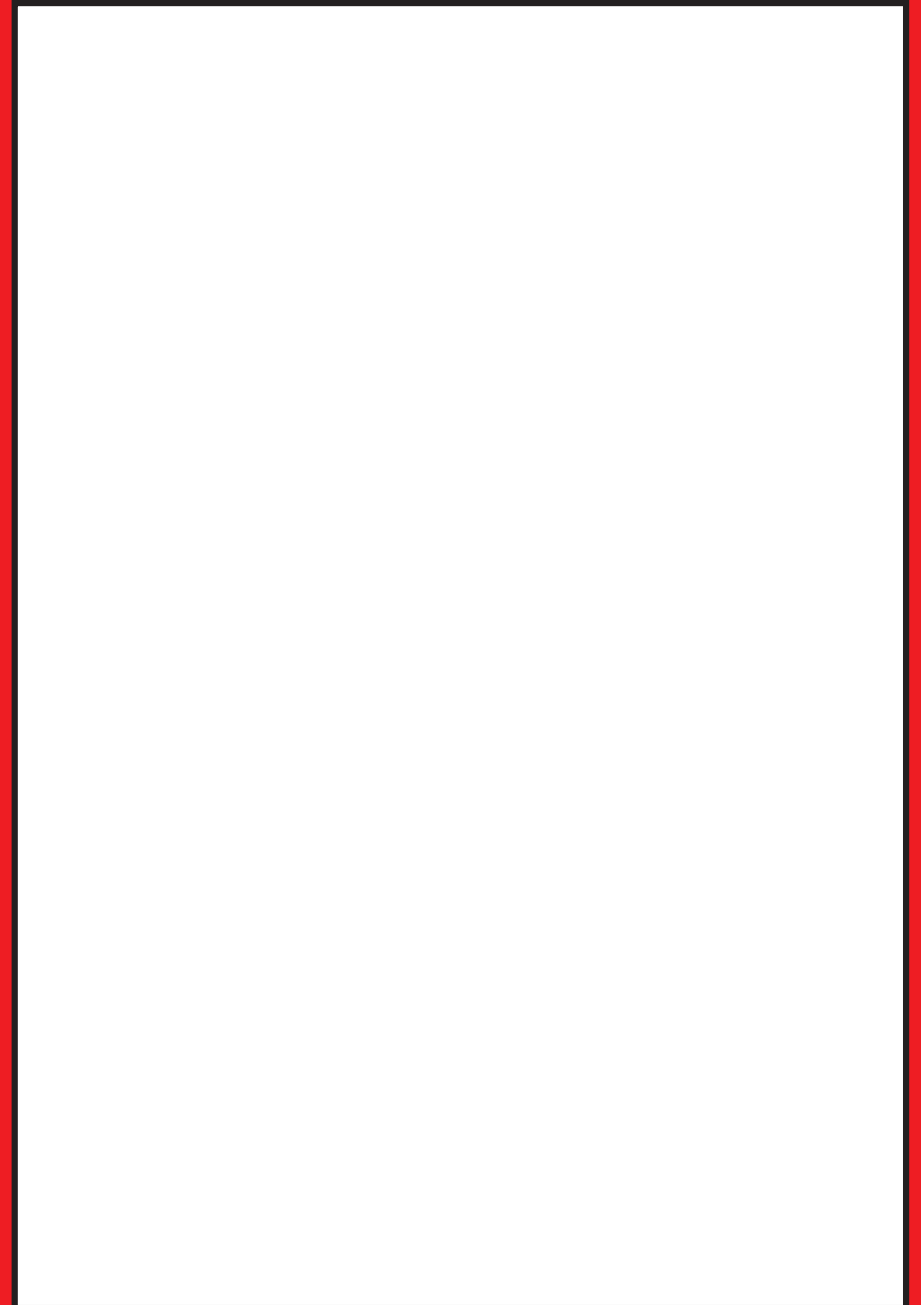
Gabriella Torres Ferrer's artwork is a broken piece of a wooden lamppost destroyed by Hurricane Maria. After the hurricane, many people in Puerto Rico didn't have electricity for over a year, and there have been frequent blackouts ever since. The electrical system on the archipelago is still very vulnerable to hurricanes. Two weeks after Hurricane Fiona hit in September of 2022 (on the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Maria), more than 120,000 Puerto Ricans still had no power.

The power grid is a kind of infrastructure, one of the basic systems that society needs to function, like roads, clean water, the fire department, and even sewers. People rely on the government to make sure the infrastructure keeps going in a crisis. Puerto Rico is governed by the United States as an "unincorporated territory," or colony. The island has a heavy, complex, and extensive colonial history, it belonged to Spain until 1898, when it passed to the U.S. It isn't a state or an independent country. When the artist found the storm-torn lamppost, it still had a political sign debating Puerto Rico's future. It reads, "Value your American citizenship! Guarantee it, vote statehood!" In Puerto Rico, feelings are pretty divided about the United States. Some believe that if the US Congress made Puerto Rico a state, the stronger relationship would improve life on the archipelago. Other Puerto Ricans think the US government has done more harm than good and prefer to remain a territory, or want to gain independence. The artist plays with the poster's language in the title of this work, which translates as "Value your American lie." What stories does this object tell you? What questions do you have?

OBJECTS WITH A MESSAGE TRY THIS!

Objects can speak to us! Torres Ferrer uses a powerful object to represent ideas important to them. By placing this object in a gallery space, they use its symbolism to raise questions about the government. What are some flaws you see in the government of your town, city, state, or country? What do you wish your government did better? What objects could you use to express these ideas? How would you arrange them? How could you alter them to better communicate your message? Create an object artwork!

Make a drawing of your object sculpture below!
Where would you display your object sculpture?
How does your choice of location impact the meaning?



SHIELDING ACTIONS



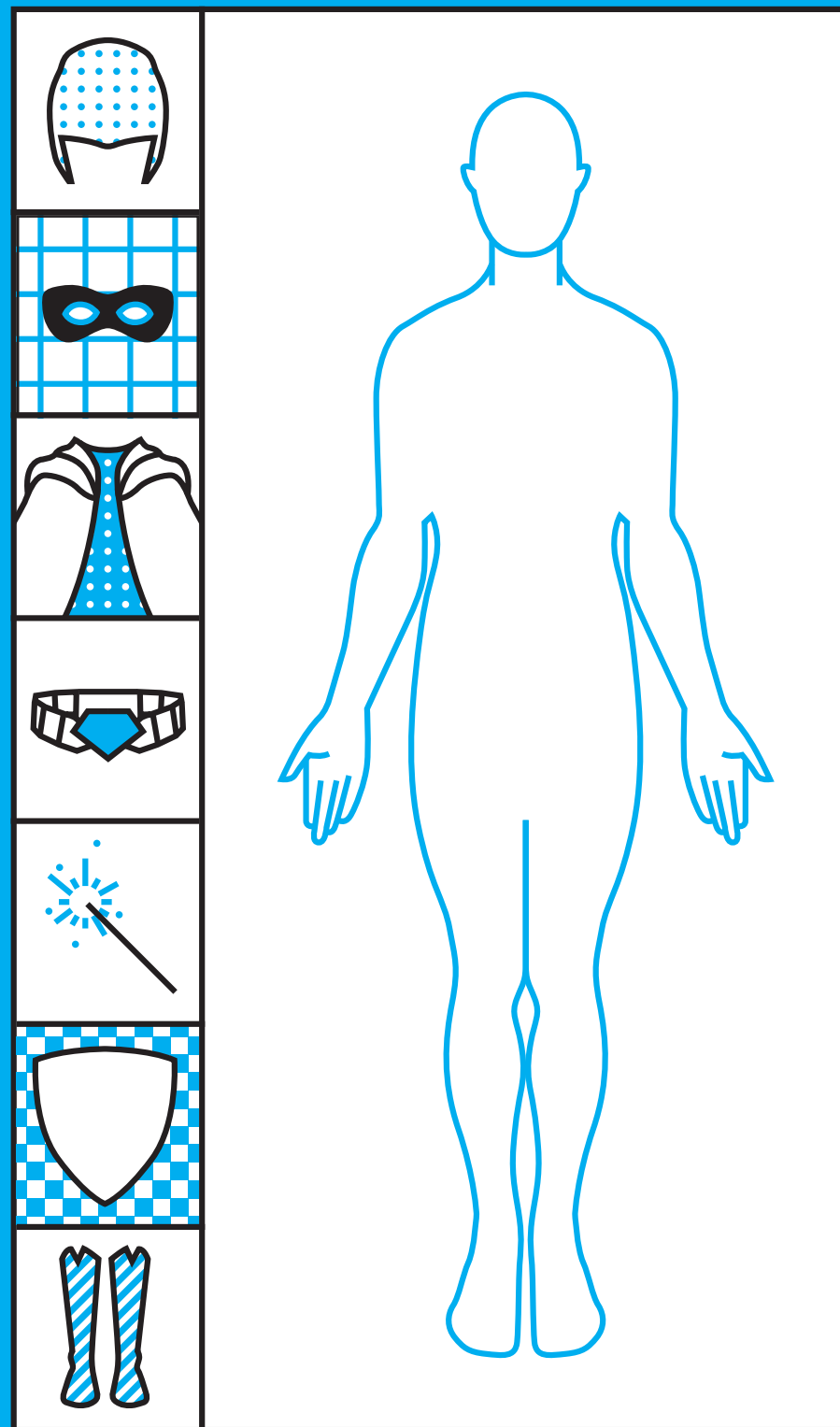
Miguel Luciano
Shields / Escudos, 2020

In recent years, hundreds of schools in Puerto Rico have closed because of government policies that massively cut spending on social needs like education. Many Puerto Ricans have found these policies punishing and unfair. Miguel Luciano made this multipart installation from pieces of school buses, many of which were abandoned when so many schools closed. The artist sawed, drilled, sanded and painted the metal pieces to construct ten shields! He attached two handles on the back of each shield. He spray-painted them with a symbol of resistance to colonialism that is widely used in public protests: a black and white Puerto Rican flag that rejects the red, white, and blue colors that the Puerto Rican flag shares with the United States flag.

In the years since Hurricane Maria, there have been frequent protests against the government, and school closures have been one of the big issues causing Puerto Ricans to take to the streets. Luciano says he created the “protest shields to protect those fighting for the future of our children’s education, and for our right to be self-determined and free.”

SHIELDING ACTIONS TRY THIS!

Miguel Luciano transformed school buses into symbols of defense for Puerto Ricans fighting for the right to an education. What is something important to you that you want to defend or protect? Imagine that your chosen cause could have its very own protector, a super guardian! What would they look like? What special powers might they have to help them with their superhero responsibilities? What name will you give them? Design their super outfit! Include symbols to show what they are here to protect!



CASTLES OF SAND

Yiyo Tirado Rivera

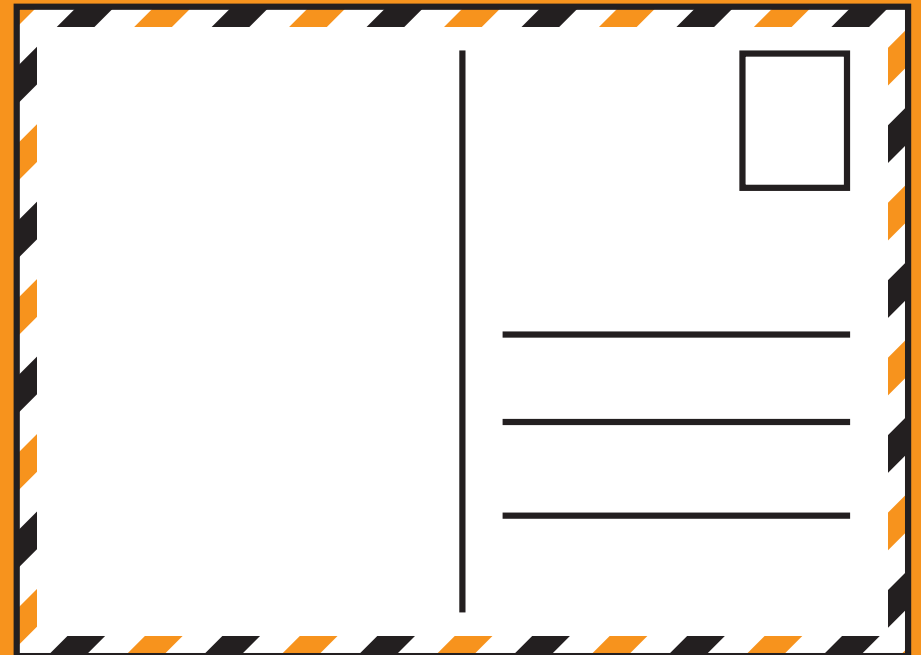
La Concha, 2022 From the series
Castillos de arena (Sandcastles), 2020–

Yiyo Tirado Rivera's sculpture is a sandcastle! The artist builds famous seaside hotels in Puerto Rico. He modeled this one on La Concha Resort. It's named after its ballroom, shaped like a shell (or a concha in Spanish). The sculpture will gradually fall apart during the exhibition! His disintegrating sandcastles highlight the island's coastline erosion caused by storms, rising sea-levels and climate change. The destruction of the coastline is made worse because of poorly planned hotels and luxury properties that are built by the sea. Tirado Rivera explains many of these structures are not "environmentally friendly" and "do not respect the coastal areas."



CASTLES OF SAND TRY THIS!

Yiyo Tirado Rivera's sandcastle sculptures call attention to the serious impacts of climate change on Puerto Rico's coastlines. Global warming affects every community across the world. Different places face different challenges related to the climate crisis. Think of a place that is special to you like a very very old tree in your neighborhood or a lake you visit with a friend. Imagine you could write a postcard to the whole world about YOUR special place. What images would you include? Draw them on the front of the postcard. Write a message to the world asking others to help take care of your place. What ways can people help preserve your place for future generations? Write these instructions on the back of the postcard. Bonus: design your own special stamp!



BIO-DIVERSITY



Javier Orfón

Bientevéo (Iseeyouwell), 2018–22

Javier Orfón's photographs begin with conversations with forest rangers in Puerto Rico. These rangers help to keep track of the various species of plants and animals within the lands they care for. The term biodiversity refers to the wide variety of life in nature. The fact that there are so many different kinds of plants and animals is critical to the health of an ecosystem. Javier Orfón carves parts of these conversations into tropical cupey leaves and then photographs them. Find the leaf that reads 'No reconozco plantas muertas René el guardabosque' These words in Spanish translate to: "I don't recognize dead plants. René the forest ranger." Orfón explained that the forest ranger, José René Román meant that while he has an incredible knowledge of plants in the rainforests, he found them impossible to recognize when they had been taken out of context and dried for study. Biodiversity teaches us that every single species matters! Orfón feels we grow more and more distanced from nature as species become extinct. What inspires you to connect with nature? How might you inspire others?

BIO-DIVERSITY TRY THIS!

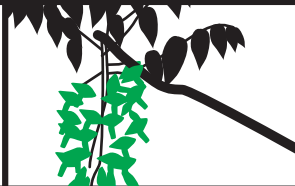

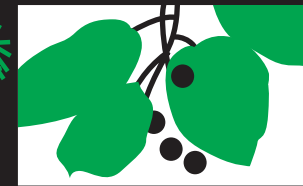

Through these artworks, Orfón focuses on the individual relationship humans can have to nature. How can our relationships with nature help in the global effort to protect and conserve all the species of plants and animals in the environment?

When you leave the Museum, visit our neighbor, The High Line, an elevated freight rail line transformed into a public park filled with all kinds of plants native to New York. See what species you can find! Record your observations in the chart and discuss the experience with your group!

Date:

Time:

Weather Conditions:

Plant Species	Amethyst Falls American Wisteria	Whitespire Gray Birch	Allegheny Serviceberry	Fringetree
Image				
Drawing				
Leaf Description				
Bark Description				
Animal Species Observed				
Personal Reflection				

MEMORY MAP

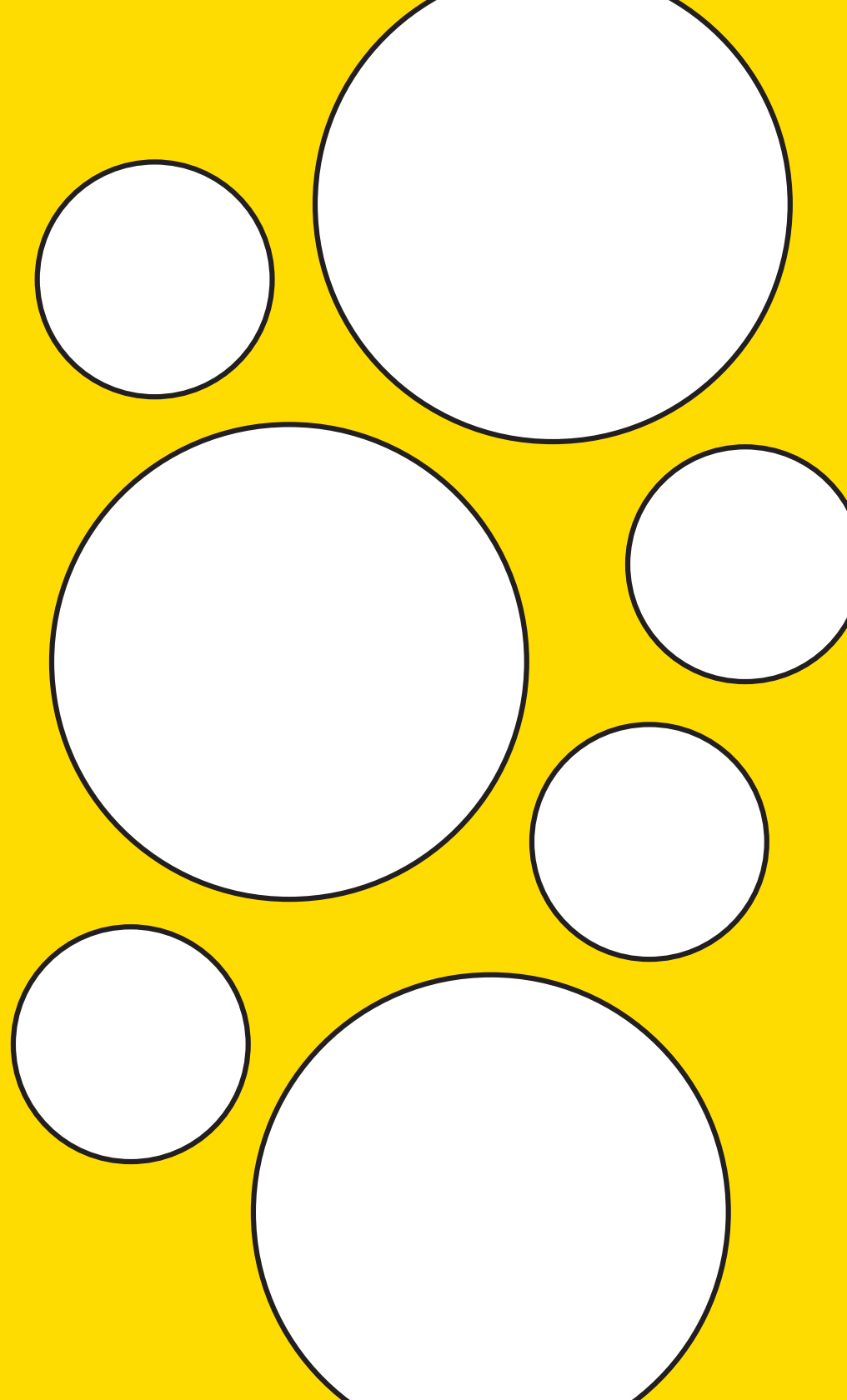
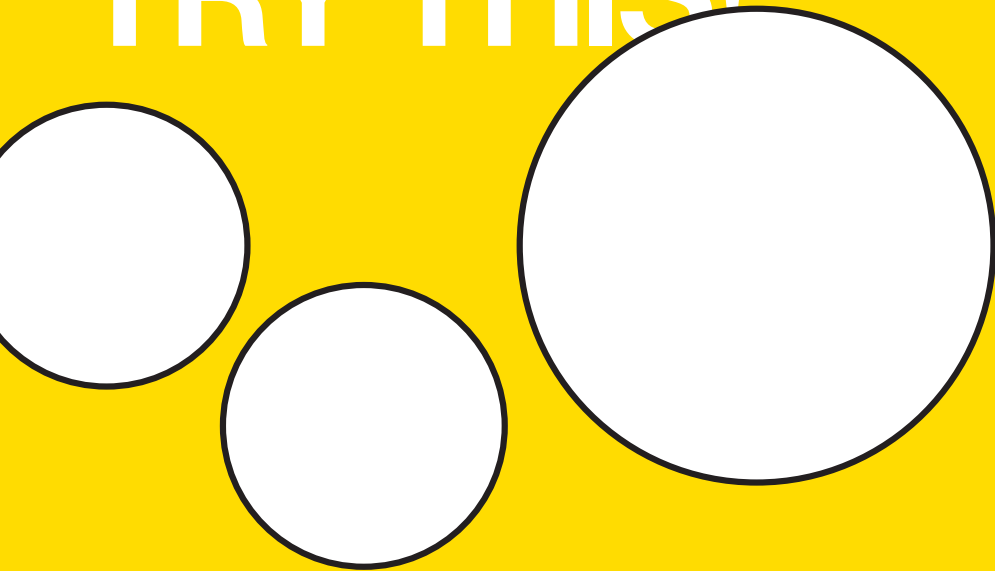
Lulu Varona
Mapa (Map), 2020

Lulu Varona was displaced by Hurricane Maria, and had to move temporarily to New York. While away, she missed her home and began making maps that traced Puerto Rico, of her own feelings and experience. The maps outline places, events, and modes of transportation—they even include self-portraits. Graphic novels inspire her approach to storytelling. Varona made the artwork by cross-stitching with cotton thread on Aida cloth, a fabric traditionally used for embroidery. As a child, Varona spent hours after school and weekends with her grandmother, who cross-stitched. Varona said, “As I’m stitching, I create the stories. That’s how they’re done.” The artist is now learning traditional Puerto Rican lacemaking!

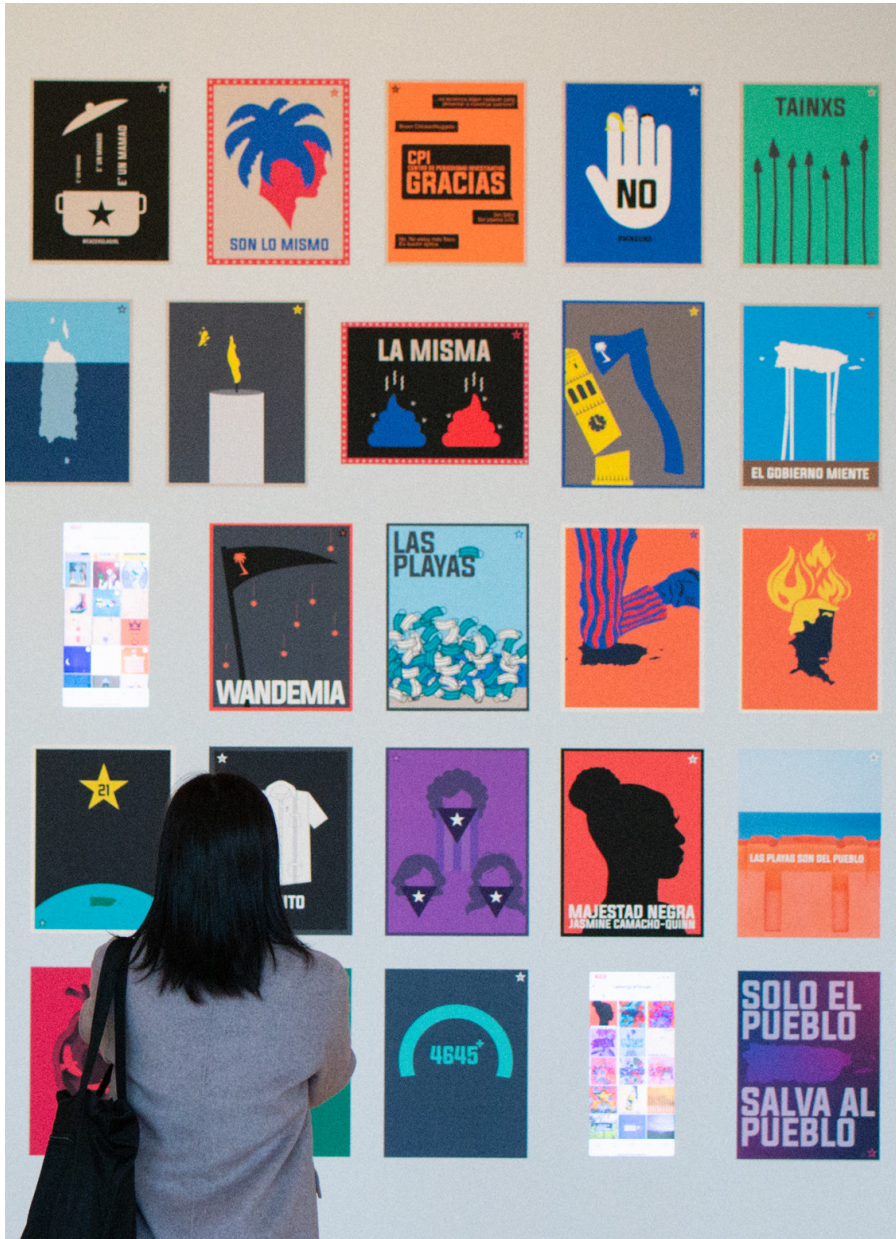


MEMORY MAP TRY THIS!

Look closely at Varona's artwork, what stories can you find in the images? Notice that these stories don't have a clear start or finish. Rather, you could find many narratives within the artwork. Tell your own non-linear story in the bubbles below. What story will you tell? Maybe, your trip to school, a Sunday morning at home, or a day in the park. Make yourself the main character! Depict a series of moments, one in each bubble. Draw lines between the bubbles to indicate which moments could happen in a sequence. How does the story change depending on the order you travel through the moments?



PROTEST POSTERS



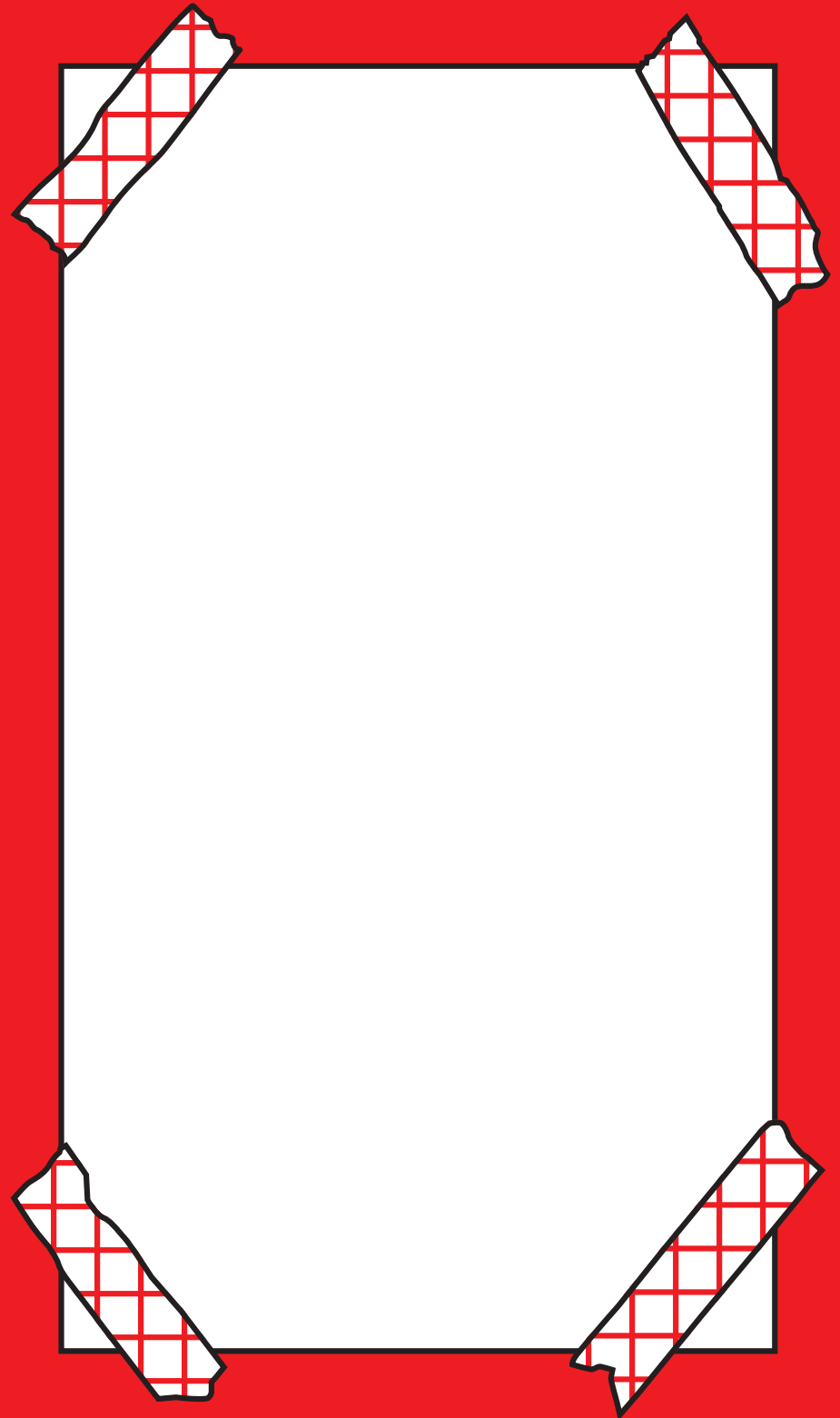
Garvin Sierra

Three monitors and thirty-seven printed works from a series of digital posters posted on Instagram, 2019–22

These 32 posters by Garvin Sierra are just some of the pieces he works on daily—he started in 2016 and is still making them today! He makes them for social media and likes how easily they can be shared through social media or be printed for use in a protest. His posters examine concerns like pollution, natural disasters, unemployment, colonization, and social justice! Find the poster that says **EL GOBIERNO MIENTE**—in Spanish, “**THE GOVERNMENT LIES.**” The shape in the middle of that poster is a map of Puerto Rico. If you look, you’ll see that form reappearing in many other posters. Sierra uses it not just to suggest the place itself but the people who live there and their experiences. Sierra said he makes posters because “I have to inform and communicate.”

PROTEST POSTERS TRY THIS!

Garvin Sierra makes poster art so his ideas can be clearly understood! Design your own poster with a message! Identify something important to you! How could you bring it to everyone's attention? Remember to draw simple, easy-to-read pictures and use bold, eye-catching colors! Choose your words carefully! Sketch your poster below! Where would you hang or post your sign!?



IMAGINING FUTURES



Rogelio Báez Vega

Paraíso Móvil (Mobile Paradise), 2019

Rogelio Báez Vega painted *Paradox of the New Landscape IV* in response to massive school closures in Puerto Rico which started before Hurricane Maria. In response to the overcrowding in classrooms some kids were attending school inside shipping containers. This frustrated Báez Vega! When Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico these conditions only got worse. In *Mobile Paradise* the artist imagined what might happen to these schools if we aren't able to imagine better solutions to Puerto Rico's problems. Báez Vega explained, "I am interested in how we see ourselves in the future and the landscape we build."

IMAGINING FUTURES TRY THIS!

Rogelio Báez Vega imagines what the future might look like if the serious concerns he observes are not addressed. Choose a place you know well, such as your school, corner store, train station, playground, or park. Draw what it looks like today! Include as many details as you can.

Present Day:



Now, imagine two different future paths for this place. In one frame, draw what your place might look like if it does not receive care and falls into disrepair.

Future 1:



In the other frame, draw a future where your place has been cared for and is even improved!

Future 2:



MOMENTS/ MEMORIES

Edra Soto
GRAFT, 2013-ongoing

Edra Soto made her artwork for this exhibition! It's part of a project made up of versions of rejas (wrought iron fences and screens) and quiebrasoles (concrete breeze blocks). They're typical decorative structures in mid-twentieth century Puerto Rican architecture, used in homes to allow airflow while offering privacy. Soto places viewfinders throughout her artwork. They show family photos taken after the hurricane and picture other island architectural details connected to her life. She invites us to interact with the artwork and share her memories, get close to what we see, and imagine the pain of seeing some of it gone. Soto's installation honors her past and highlights how the idea of home is still vulnerable in Puerto Rico today.

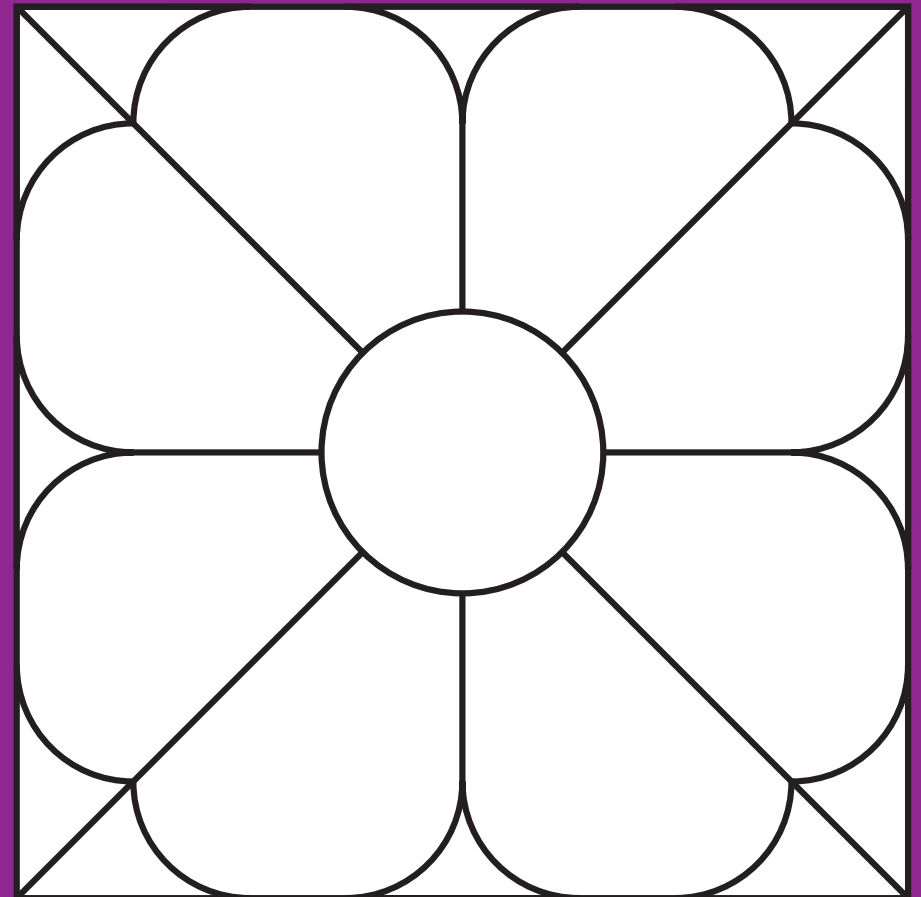


Installation view of no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in The Wake Of Hurricane María (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 23, 2022-April 23, 2023). Edra Soto, *GRAFT*, 2022. Photograph by Ryan Lowry

MOMENTS/ MEMORIES TRY THIS!

Life can be filled with beauty and happiness, but everyone experiences moments of pain and difficulty. Edra Soto invites us to look closely at some of her family's difficult memories. Often artists use their work to make sense of life's challenges and express hard feelings like anger and sadness; sometimes, this makes them feel better. Other times it can even help someone else who has experienced something similar.

Use the space below to remember a moment when you went through something hard. Did you experience a big change? Have you lost something or someone special to you? In the center of the flower, draw or write about a challenge you experienced. In each of the surrounding petals, draw or write about the things that help you heal and find comfort. What words, colors, people, animals, or belongings soothe you in challenging moments?



DOUBLE TAKE



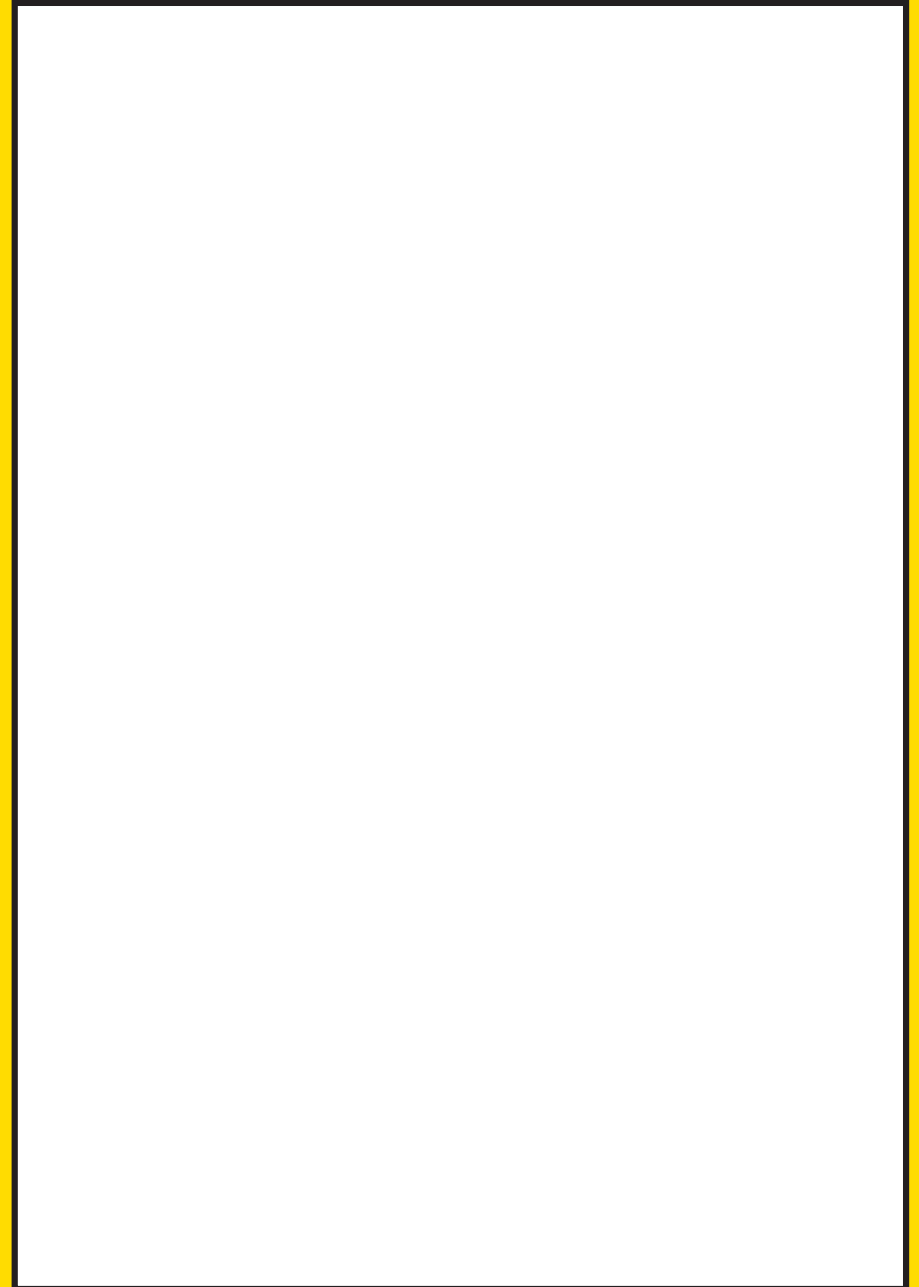
Candida Alvarez

Lomas (Mountains), From the series
Pinturas al aire, 2017-19

Candida Alvarez painted these works using acrylic and ink on flexible plastic mesh typically used for outdoor banners. These particular paintings began as printing proofs that later became the background for the works you see in the galleries. “I enjoy this process of remixing and reusing my past work in a new way!” The artist paints onto the loose weave of the plastic vinyl material, this allows the paint to go through to the other side. For Alvarez, creating an artwork is “an event that happens, a painting event.” It’s as much about exploration and experimentation as it is the final image. Alvarez said “My work generally begins with several ideas/sources that come together to form a painting. Sometimes the titles come while working sometimes later. There are no rules.” This artwork’s title is *Lomas*, which means mountains in Spanish! After she finished it, it reminded her of the mountain range in Puerto Rico near her parents' residence. It’s part of a series she calls *Air Paintings*. Alvarez hangs these artworks from metal frames so they float, air can move around them and, so can we!

DOUBLE TAKE TRY THIS!

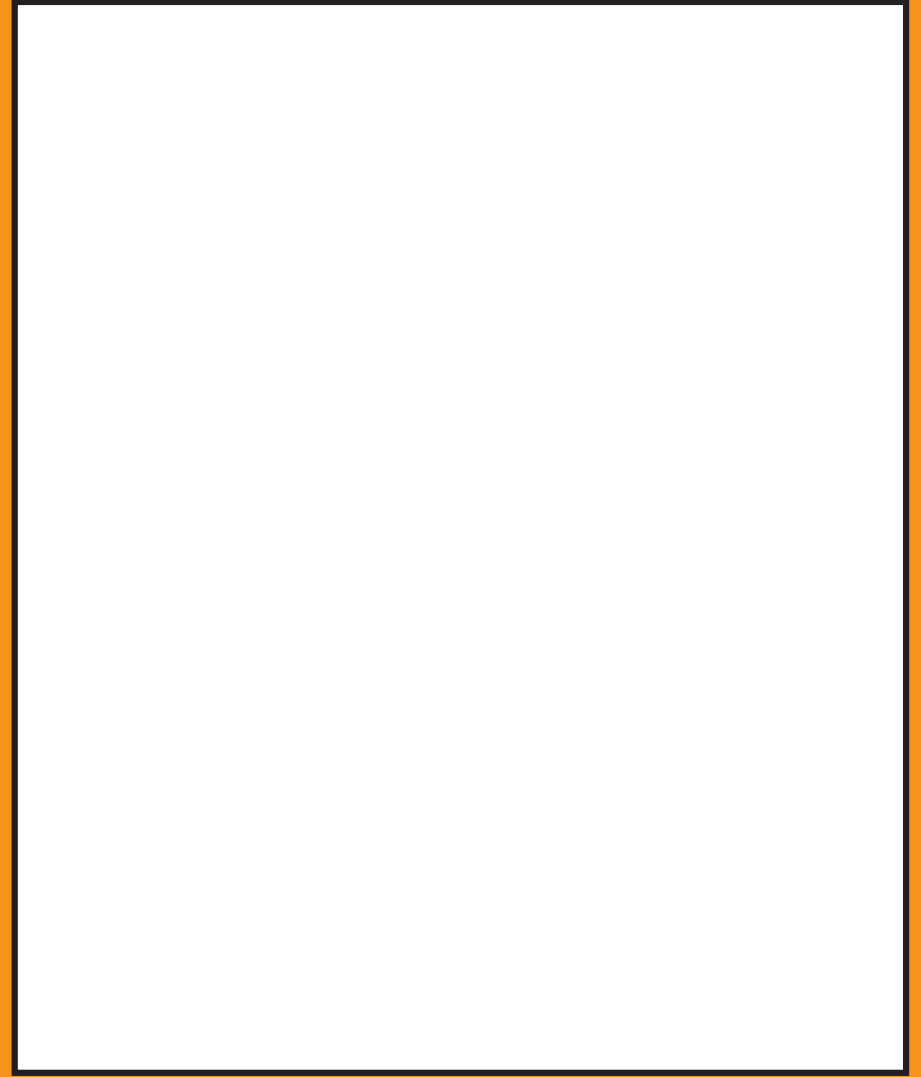
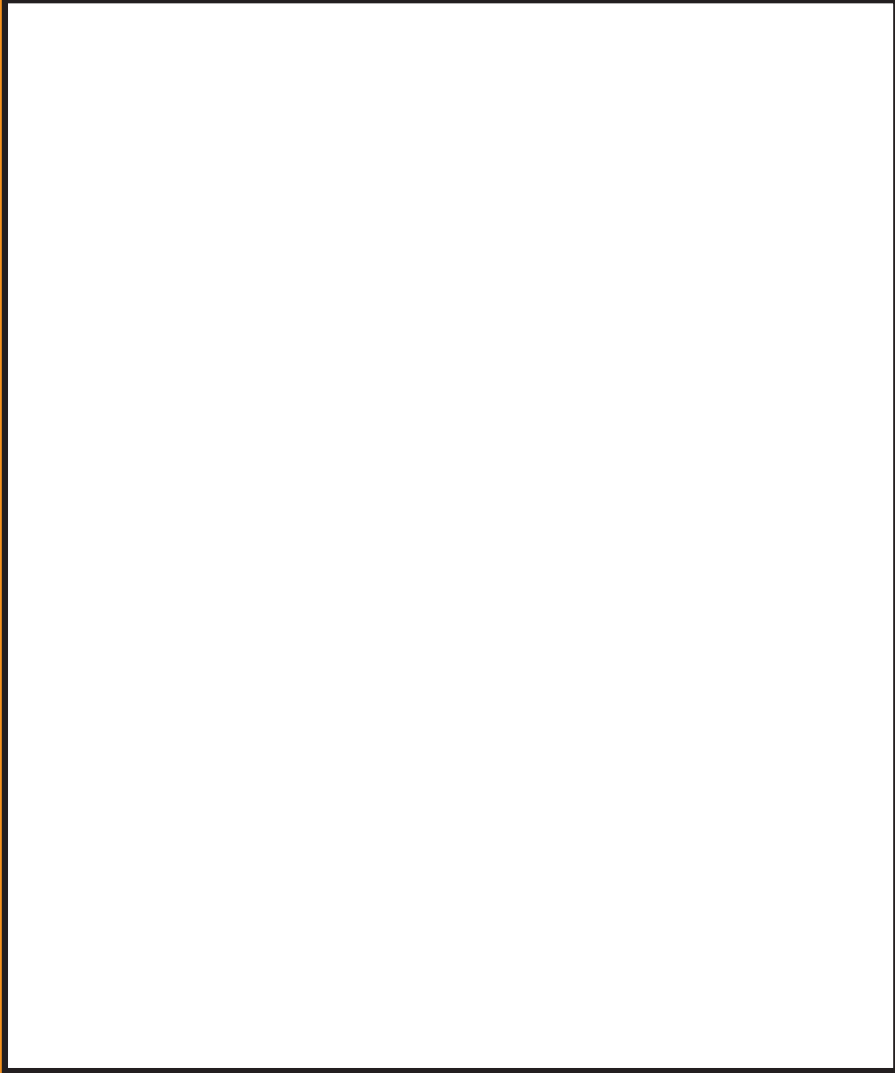
“I don't think of anything while I'm painting, but instead focus on the colors I am using...” Candida Alvarez said, “a gesture might trigger a painting event that might remind you of something you've seen before!” Make a drawing without imagining what it will look like in the end! Experiment with creating different types of marks, lines and shapes! When you've decided your drawing is complete, look carefully at it! What title does your artwork inspire?



Title:

KEEP DRAWING

Continue to explore the neighborhood and Museum.
Draw what you see!



**SIGUE
DIBUJANDO**

Continúa explorando el barrio y el Museo.
!Dibuja lo que ves!