



Art League Houston
Jimmy Castillo
Director of Exhibitions & Curatorial Projects
jimmy@artleaguehouston.org
713-523-9530

For Immediate Release

Sad Girls

Jasmine Zelaya

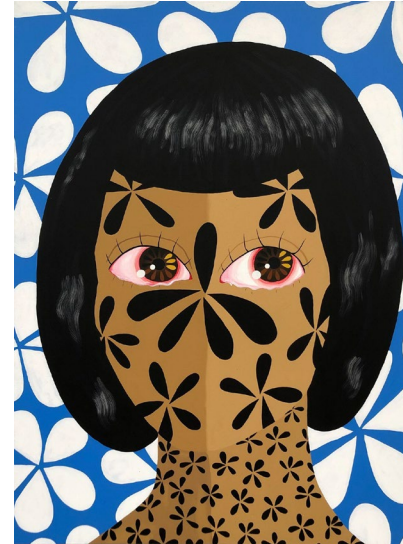
Main Gallery

Exhibition Dates: May 27 – July 23, 2022

Opening Reception: 6 – 8 PM, Friday, May 27, 2022

Artist Talks: 2 PM Saturday, May 28, 2022

(image on right) *Sad Girls* (Panel 3 of 3) 2021, Jasmine Zelaya, enamel and acrylic on stretched canvas, 90" x 66" 2". Image courtesy of the artist.



May 11, 2022, Houston, TX - Art League Houston (ALH) is proud to present the exhibition, *Sad Girls*, an installation of new works by Jasmine Zelaya in the Main Gallery. The title of the exhibition is a reference to Chola culture. The distinctive Chola style is characterized by dark, undulating hair, winged eyeliner, and dark lipstick; achieving a look that is both intimidating and vulnerable. The look and culture encompass a state of mind and a state of being that was welcoming to brown communities, especially one that women and girls could identify with at a time when there weren't many avenues for brown communities and children of immigrants to feel control over their identity.

Zelaya's parents emigrated from Honduras to the U.S. in the 1970's, and her experience of growing up at odds between two cultures has influenced her work. Remembering her sister applying the maroon tube of L'oreal mascara in repeated, careful strokes, Zelaya says, "I was mesmerized by each application, which I eventually came to see as a ritualistic, intentional act. I am still intrigued by the idea that the outward manipulation of one's appearance can transform their state of being."

The artist applies graphic floral patterns over the faces in her paintings and sculptures, masking the tensions that lie beneath the surface of one's appearance, but also offering a kind of personal protection from the world. These floral elements also serve as symbols of not only a familial narrative (the women in her family are all named after flowers), but the contrast of the natural and artificial world, whose rhythmic application reminds the artist of the ritual in which we transform our outward appearance in order to navigate our lives and feel empowered.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jasmine Zelaya is a multi-disciplinary first-generation Honduran-American artist based in Houston, Texas. The daughter of parents who immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1970's, much of the artist's work references the aesthetics of that period. Zelaya's work explores themes of identity, assimilation and the brown body through a familial narrative rich with symbolism. Zelaya received her BFA in Painting in 2006 from the Kansas City Art Institute. Her work has been included in exhibitions at the Blaffer Art Museum (Houston), Project Row Houses (Houston), The Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts (Lubbock), and was recently included in the 2021 Texas Biennial: *A New Landscape, A Possible Horizon*, at the San Antonio Art Museum. Recent public art projects in Houston include *Twins* for Art Blocks at the Main Street Marquee and *Detroit Red* at the Moody Center for the Arts. Her work has been featured on television media and in numerous publications, including as a cover artist for *New American Paintings* (#132).

For more information, visit www.artleaguehouston.org, or contact Jimmy Castillo, Director of Exhibitions and Curatorial Projects, at jimmy@artleaguehouston.org or 713-523-9530.

Art League Houston is funded in part by a grant from the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment, Inc. Brown Foundation, Inc. Texas Commission on the Arts, and National Endowment for the Arts.



Art League Houston acknowledges the following individuals, private foundations, public funders, and corporations for their support this season:

Catherine D. Anspen • Christian Barker & Dr. Grant Hopping • Minnette B. Boesel • Amy Blakemore • Brown Foundation, Inc. • Jereann Chaney • Rania & Jamal Daniel • Talley Dunn Gallery • Field of Study • Michael Golden • Zachary Gresham & Pablo Moreno Harris County Department of Education: CASE for Kids – City Connections • Heights Grocer • Daniel & Aimee Heimbinder • The Heimbinder Family Foundation • Houston Endowment, Inc • Humanities Texas • Jessica & Brian Leeke • The Levant Foundation • Marlene Marker, The Marker Group • Kathrine G. McGovern John P. McGovern Foundation in the name of Kathrine G. McGovern • Janet McNeill • National Endowment for the Arts • National Guild for Community Arts Education • Judy & Scott Nyquist • Crystal & Don Owens • The Powell Foundation • Saint Arnold Brewing Company • SK Foundation • Anita & Gerald Smith • Leigh & Reggie Smith • Scott Sparvero • Jacques Louis Vidal Charitable Fund • Workhorse Printmakers • Wortham Foundation • Lauri & Robert Wray

1953 Montrose Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77006
artleaguehouston.org

