



THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

LEADERSHIP
EDUCATION
SUCCESS



Dr. Jeffrey Ward
Dean of the College of Fine Arts

Dr. Katherine Moore McAllen
Director of the Center for Latin American Arts



2024
2025

PROJECT OVERVIEW 2024-2025



SENDING OUR APPRECIATION AND THANK YOU

The Center for Latin American Arts (CLAA) advances scholarship, performances, and the exhibition of the arts in the popular, folk, and academic traditions from the United States and Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries. Based in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, the Center facilitates the exchange of ideas among students, artists, and scholars, who are united by common interests to bring performances and knowledge of these arts to the Rio Grande Valley community and beyond. The core values of the CLAA are a dedication to community engagement, excellence in scholarship, robust programming in art education and performance, and a focus on student success by providing unique learning opportunities on and off campus.

The Center for Latin American Arts has served more than 10,000 students of all disciplines from the fine arts, medicine, education, and engineering. Over 2,500 public school students have benefited from workshops and clinics provided by the CLAA and its UTRGV faculty and students this year. Scholars, playwrights, artists, dancers, writers, ethnomusicologists, and music performers have presented their talents and research to members of our community in the past year with generous funding from our winning grants.

In 2024-2025, the CLAA was awarded grants to support new exhibitions in local museums, new research, faculty and student travel opportunities, workshops and roundtables, music concerts, dance and theatre performances, and invitations to visiting artists and scholars to visit our campus. These winning grants include funding from the Rea Charitable Trust at Wells Fargo (\$50,000) and the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation (\$7,500), which demonstrate the CLAA's dedication to community engagement and multidisciplinary academic projects. The Center has achieved its goals this year because of the generosity of these institutions and private donors, who are friends in our community and supporters of the Center for Latin American Arts. We are forever thankful for your support, and we hope you enjoy this overview of our events from the 2024-2025 academic year.



CENTER FOR

LATIN AMERICAN ARTS



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GRANTS AWARDED TO THE CLAA 2024-2025

THE REA CHARITABLE TRUST AT WELLS FARGO (\$50,000)
THE ALICE KLEBERG REYNOLDS FOUNDATION (\$7,500)



ALICE KLEBERG REYNOLDS
FOUNDATION

**WELLS
FARGO**

The Center for Latin American Arts has received grants from these organizations to make our research and programming possible:

The Rea Charitable Trust at Wells Fargo (\$50,000)

The Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation (\$7,500)

In addition to The Rea Charitable Trust grant at Wells Fargo and the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation grant this year, The Center for Latin American Arts has won previous grants with The Raul Tijerina, Jr. Foundation (\$20,000 for 2019-2020 and \$15,000 for 2020-2021), The Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation (\$10,000 for 2020-2021 and \$10,000 for 2022-2023), The Hollyfield Foundation (\$5,000), The Brown Foundation (\$7,000), and H-E-B (\$6,000).

We are thankful to be recognized for our successful dedication to community outreach projects that educate students at UTRGV and K-12 teachers and students to help collaborate with our community and enjoy unique learning opportunities in music, dance, theatre, and art. By focusing our innovative programs on the creative disciplines for young people in the Rio Grande Valley, we aim to support today's students and involve them in meaningful research and creative activities, so they can connect and study art that resonates with our culture through strong ties with Latin America.

Through the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation, the CLAA received funding and financial support for more than 150 K-12 students to attend dance workshops led by UTRGV dance majors and Professor Sonia Chapa Gomez at the Edinburg Municipal Auditorium with Spanish dancers Nerea Carrasco and Daniel Caballero.

These dance workshops in November 2024 helped UTRGV student mentors visit high school dance students and collaborate with dance teachers in the Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District and the Pharr San Juan Alamo School District. Sonia Chapa Gómez and the invited master artists from Madrid also helped our UTRGV students research the history of Flamenco dance, exhibit their skills, and share their knowledge in public performances in the Rio Grande Valley.

With the generous funding from the Rea Charitable Trust grant with Wells Fargo, the CLAA was able to host a groundbreaking exhibition of the Thoma Foundation Collection of Early Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art. Hosted at the International Museum of Art & Science, a Smithsonian affiliate museum, the Thoma Exhibition attracted more than 12,000 visitors in 2025. With this grant funding and UTRGV's Marialice Shary Shivers endowment, the CLAA organized a scholarly roundtable, a student research roundtable and 4 lectures with world renowned scholars Dr. Verónica Muñoz Nájjar of the Thoma Foundation, Dr. Tom Cummins of

Harvard University, Dr. Rosario Granados of UT's Blanton Museum of Art, Kristopher Driggers of the San Antonio Museum of Art, and Carmen Fernández-Salvador of the Universidad from Quito, Ecuador. The roundtables and events can be viewed on the CLAA YouTube channel.

These and other opportunities presented in this annual portfolio demonstrate how the CLAA has helped our students and faculty enjoy the value of a well-rounded education in the arts, often advancing their own research in their fields of expertise through travel and networking with scholars and artists. When students feel acknowledged, supported, and involved in their creative practice, they become lifelong learners and educators, and they are more likely to be academically successful, finish college, and receive their degrees.

The CLAA is honored to help support our students and faculty, and we are forever thankful for the generous grant and university funding that makes this research and arts programming possible.

CLAA YOUTUBE CHANNEL



The Center for Latin American Arts continues to offer recordings of all our events, which are later uploaded on our YouTube Channel under the name Center for Latin American Arts. Our channel features all Center performances, lectures, roundtables, exhibitions, and a series of visits to artists' studios entitled Visita Mi Estudio (Visit My Studio).

The Center for Latin American Arts YouTube Channel can be accessed on the application and any other internet platforms as the hyperlinks are interconnected on the official CLAA website and Linktree on Instagram. Viewers can safely access recorded events at their leisure on cellular devices, smart televisions, laptops, desktops, and tablets.

YouTube: Center for Latin American Arts



VISIT OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Center for Latin American Arts





Center for Latin American Arts
@centerforlatinamericanarts 76 subscribers 36 videos
The Center for Latin American Arts advances scholarship, performances, a...

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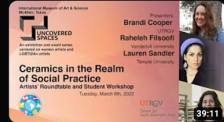
A la Musica / INFLUENCIAS 2023
204 views • 3 months ago



The Latin American Art Song / A Mirror of Identity
59 views • 6 months ago



Virtual Artist Talk with Uncovered Spaces
36 views • 11 months ago



Ceramics in the Realm of Social Practice
30 views • 11 months ago



Daisy Patton / A Painting Workshop
80 views • 1 year ago



Uncovered Spaces Roundtable
43 views • 1 year ago



Artist Talk / Jana Harper / Uncovered Spaces
63 views • 1 year ago



CLAA Artist Summit and Workshop / Day 1 / Part 1
67 views • 1 year ago



utrgv.edu/claa

FOLLOW US ON YOUTUBE AND SUBSCRIBE

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5

LATIN AMERICAN OPERA

VISIT TO THE OPERA SAN ANTONIO'S PRODUCTION OF CRUZAR LA CARA DE LA LUNA & THE NAT HONORS VOICE RECITAL WITH SCHOOL OF MUSIC STUDENTS SAN ANTONIO, OCTOBER 3-5, 2024

In October, Dr. Katherine McAllen attended the Opera San Antonio's production of *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* with School of Music students and faculty as well as their voice recital at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio.

The UTRGV students and faculty attending this trip also participated in a Spanish Language Workshop hosted by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México San Antonio, featuring guest speakers Gerardo Kleinburg and Claudia Chapa. This bilingual workshop on Friday night, October 4th offered an in-depth study of opera in Latin America, the history of mariachi, and the blending of traditions that inspired the creation of this remarkable opera. At this workshop and lecture, Opera San Antonio and UNAM had the opportunity to spend time with our UTRGV students, who are bilingual and educated in these subjects. It was an honor for the Shary Shivers Chair, via the Center for Latin American Arts, to provide the financial support for our students to contribute to these events and network at this open in the renowned Tobin Center venue.

These UTRGV students and faculty were also invited to attend a backstage tour of the Tobin Center before the performance on Saturday evening. UTRGV Students and their faculty mentors were able to meet the stage managers and learn about the logistics and the professional role of organizing the set design, curtains, and props. Our

students also enjoyed networking with the opera singers before the performance backstage.

Six of the UTRGV voice students attending were also performing at the NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) meeting and recital in San Antonio on October 5th. These students were top winners in the NATS auditions in the spring and traveled to perform in the honors recital at the University of the Incarnate Word under the mentorship and leadership of Professors Rebecca Coberly, Dan Hunter Holly, and Sean Taylor. Opera San Antonio Staff came to their performance to consider our students for future opera employment. It was an exciting professional development trip!

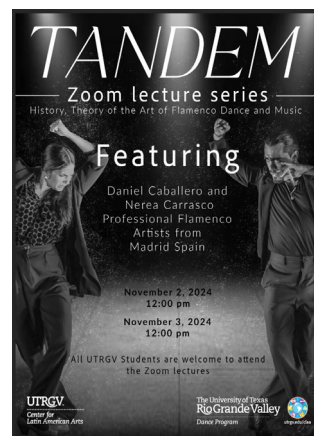


TÀNDEM FLAMENCO DANCE PERFORMANCE

CONCERT AND STUDENT WORKSHOPS WITH
DANIEL CABALLERO AND NEREA CARRASCO
FROM MADRID, SPAIN
NOVEMBER 8, 2024

The CLAA hosted the TANDEM Flamenco dance concert and workshop in collaboration with Sonia Chapa Gomez in the Department of Dance on Friday, November 8th. Tándem Concert featured Flamenco artists Daniel Caballero and Nerea Carrasco from Madrid, Spain, in a performance with UTRGV Students.

This free event was a community collaboration with the City of Edinburg and will be held at the Edinburg Municipal Auditorium, presenting the vibrant art of Flamenco. This event included dance workshops taught by Caballero and Carrasco for UTRGV Dance majors and K-12 students in the ECISD and PSJA public school districts. These two rising stars from the Madrid tablaos provided to our community through these teaching events organized through the CLAA; this included dance clinics at the Edinburg auditorium and an online lecture series on the history of Flamenco. The culmination of this dance research and performance concluded with the stunning concert Tándem on November 8th in collaboration with accompanying UTRGV dance students.



THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS & THE DANCE DEPARTMENT PRESENT

TÁNDEM

FEATURING FLAMENCO ARTISTS FROM MADRID
Daniel Caballero & Nerea Carrasco
Friday, November 8th
Concert
12:00 p.m.
Edinburg Auditorium
200 North Seventh Avenue,
Edinburg, Tx, 78539
This concert series is free for all audiences

Logos at the bottom: THE CITY OF Edinburg, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Dance Program, UTRGV Center for Latin American Arts, ALICE KLEBERG REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, and utrgv.edu/claa.

NAVIDAD LATINOAMERICANA EN CONCIERTO:

**CHRISTMAS CONCERTS IN EDINBURG AND
BROWNSVILLE PRESENTING LATIN AMERICAN
MUSIC TRADITIONS
DECEMBER 2-3, 2024**

Celebrating the Holidays: The Center for Latin American Arts was honored to collaborate with Assistant Professor Nicaulis Alliey-Rodrigue to support Navidad Latinoamericana en Concierto, offering traditional Latin American Christmas Music in an exciting concert series over a weekend in December.

The group of guest musicians visiting UTRGV was from countries across Latin America, and Professor Nicaulis Alliey-Rodriguez arranged their visit to UTRGV to perform in Edinburg on Saturday, December 2nd and in Brownsville on Sunday, December 3rd. All concerts were free and open to the public and the UTRGV community. These concerts also served as an inspiring collaboration with public schools in the Upper and Lower Rio Grande Valley, including the Brownsville Independent School District where the performance was held.



NAVIDAD Latinoamericana en Concierto

Dec 2 5 pm	Edinburg TX UTRGV Performing Arts Center	Dec 3 4 pm	Brownsville TX BISD Administration Building Auditorium
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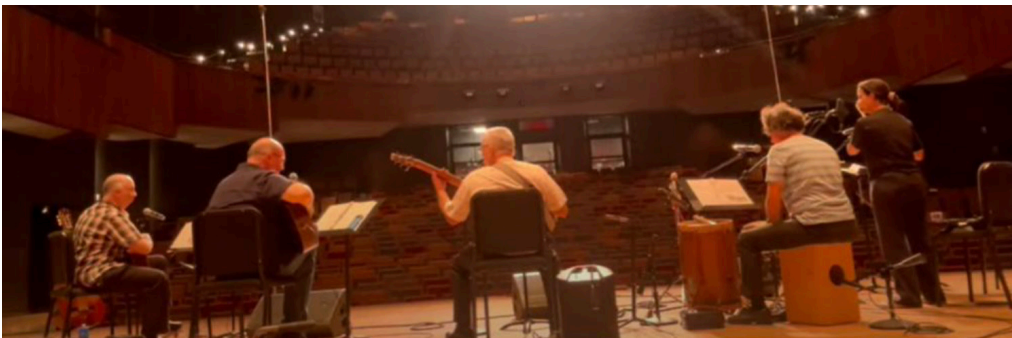
ARTISTS

Francy Acosta (voice)	Miguel González (bass)
Jose Luis Posada (guitar)	Ney Alliey (guitar/cuatro)
Javier Saume (percussion)	Nicaulis Alliey-Escalona (flute)

Free Admission



UTRGV School of Music The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Bilingualism, Biculturalism & Biliteracy (B3) Institute UTRGV Center for Latin American Arts UTRGV



PAINTINGS FROM SPANISH AMERICA FROM THE THOMA COLLECTION

AT THE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART & SCIENCE

MCALLEN, FEBRUARY 8, 2025 - MAY 25, 2025

The CLAA hosted an exhibition at the IMAS as part of the Center's efforts to organize UTRGV-led community art events, including the exhibition titled Paintings from Spanish America (1600-1800). This show presented works from the Thoma Foundation Collection including viceregal artworks from colonial Venezuela, Colombia, Perú, Bolivia, and Cuba as well as contemporary digital artworks by Latin American artists including Daniel Canogar and Rafael Lozano Hemmer. More than 12,000 visitors viewed the exhibition from February to May 2025, and this attendance reveals the meaningful impact of the show and educational events for audiences in the Rio Grande Valley community.



paintings from SPANISH

ART HISTORY AND ART ROUNDTABLE

Tom Cummins,
Director of Dumbarton Oaks and
Professor, Harvard University

Kristopher Driggers,
Curator of Latin American Art, San
Antonio Museum of Art

**Carmen
Fernández-Salvador,**
Professor, Universidad San Francisco
de Quito, Ecuador

Rosario Granados,
Marilynn Thoma Curator, Blanton
Museum of Art, The University of
Texas at Austin

Carlos Limas,
Department Chair, South Texas
College



To Watch
This
Roundtable
on the CLAA
Youtube
Channel
Scan Here!

Moderated by

Katherine Moore McAllen
Director of the Center for
Latin American Arts, UTRGV

Veronica Muñoz Nájara
Curator, Art of the Spanish
Americas, Thoma Foundation

SUPPORTED BY

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IMAS International Museum
of Art & Science

1900 W NOLANA AVE, MCALLEN TX
956.681.2800 | THEIMASONLINE.ORG
@IMASMUSEUM @IMASMCALLEN

AMERICA

(1600-1800) FROM THE THOMA COLLECTION

AT THE
INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART & SCIENCE



ON EXHIBIT | FEB 8, 2025 — MAY 25, 2025

OVER 12,000 VISITORS ATTENDED THE EXHIBITION
MUSEUM EVENTS INCLUDED

FEB 6 | 5-7 PM: Opening Reception at the IMAS

FEB 21 | 11AM: Student Research Roundtable and Workshop at UTRGV:
The Center for Latin American Arts, University Library, Edinburg ELIBR 2.114

FEBRUARY 21 | 3-5 PM: Art History and Art Roundtable at the IMAS:
Dialogues of Collecting and Display: Art of the Spanish Americas at the IMAS
museum in the Rio Grande Valley

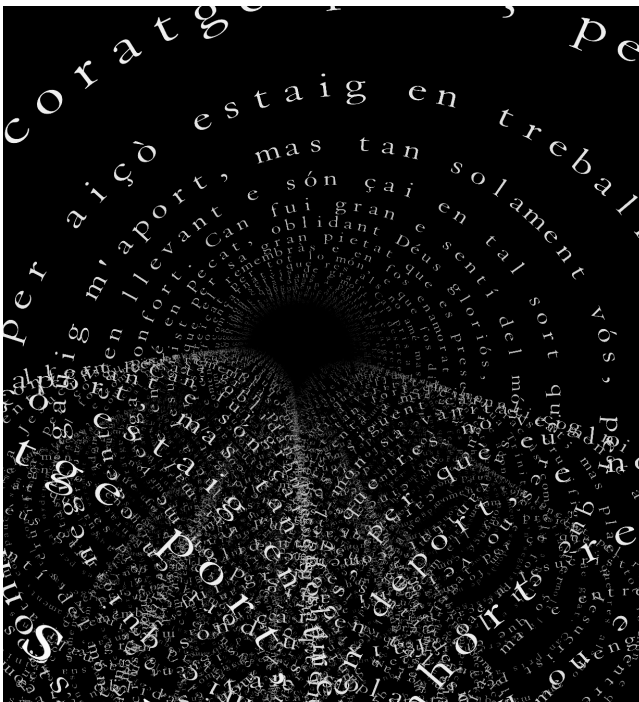
APRIL 26 | 10AM - 3PM: Community Day at the IMAS



The Art and Art History Roundtable at the IMAS on February 21st: Dialogues of Collecting and Display



Visiting the THOMA Exhibition with Students and Staff



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Recurrent Lull*, Digital Art, 2019



Tom Cummins, Rosario Granados, Marilynn Thoma, Veronica Munõz-Najár, and Carmen Fernández-Salvador

COMMUNITY VOICES

BILINGUAL WALL LABELS FROM THE THOMA EXHIBITION AT THE IMAS

Hannah Piñon

UTRGV Graduate Student in the School of Art & Design

What first catches my eye is the painted frame around the Lady of Rosary, which appears as delicate and elegant as lace. The next thing I am drawn to is the rosary in both the mother's and child's hands. I wonder if the red color represents the blood of Christ and His sacrifice, or the relation of the red rose that is also related to the Virgin Mary. My eye is drawn to the other object in their hands, a flower. Not just any flower, but a Ranunculus because of its layers of petals. I can't help but notice her sparkly veil covering her hair with little facets of gems. Her single ear popping out in front of her hair says, "I am here to listen." The two saints that look at the Virgin Mary are quite interesting. I interpret their balanced position as representing life and death. Life being represented with the flowering branch on the right and death represented on the bottom left with the skull. I interpret this as they will follow Mary in life and in death. Spanish fashion and garments must have greatly influenced this painting.

Lo primero que me llama la atención es el marco pintado alrededor de la Virgen del Rosario, que parece tan delicado y elegante como un encaje. Lo siguiente que me atrae es el rosario en las manos de la Madre y del Niño. Me pregunto si el color rojo representa la sangre de Cristo y su sacrificio, o la relación de la rosa roja con la Virgen María. Me llama la atención el otro objeto que tienen en las manos: una flor. No es una flor cualquiera, sino un Ranunculus por sus capas de pétalos. No puedo evitar fijarme en su velo brillante que cubre su pelo con pequeñas gemas. Su única oreja asomando por delante del pelo nos dice: «Estoy aquí para escuchar». Los dos santos que miran a la Virgen María son bastante interesantes. Interpreto que su posición equilibrada representa la vida y la muerte. La vida representada en la rama florecida a la derecha y la muerte representada abajo a la izquierda con la calavera. Interpreto esto como que seguirán a María en la vida y en la muerte. La moda y la indumentaria españolas influyeron mucho en este cuadro.



Unidentified Artist, *Our Lady of the Rosary of the Rosemary of the Dominican Monastery of Brazil*, 18th Century Oil on Canvas

EVENTS HOSTED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS

CHICANA ART! ARTIST TALK WITH SANTA BARRAZA & ART HISTORY PANELISTS

COLLABORATION WITH THE CENTER FOR MEXICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES AT UTRGV
EDINBURG, MARCH 27-28, 2025

The Center for Latin American Arts in collaboration with The Center for Mexican American Studies presented an opportunity for Students and Faculty to participate in an extraordinary event featuring the Legendary Santa Barraza, a pioneering figure in Chicano Art, whose work has been Instrumental in shaping the visual narrative of South Texas and Beyond.

This event included a panel discussion with esteemed art historians Dr. Constance Cortez from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and Dr. Karen Mary Davalos from the University of Minnesota that took place at the Education Complex at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

To follow up with the Artist talk with Santa Barraza. A luncheon with special guests who had the opportunity to attend the artist talk was held on Friday, March 28th 2025. The Center provided catering and space for Latin American Arts.

Together, they provided critical insights into the significance of Chicana art within artistic and academic frameworks.



Join us for an extraordinary event featuring the legendary Santa Barraza, a pioneering figure in Chicano art whose work has been instrumental in shaping the visual narrative of South Texas and beyond.

This event will also include a panel discussion with esteemed art historians Dr. Constance Cortez from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and Dr. Karen Mary Davalos from the University of Minnesota. Together, they will provide critical insights into the significance of Chicana art within broader artistic and academic frameworks.

Date: Thursday, March 27

Location: EEDUC 2.216

1 - 2pm - Chicana Art Presentation by Dr. Karen Mary Davalos

2:30-3:30pm - Artist Talk with Santa Barraza

4-5pm - Panel discussion with Santa Barraza, Dr. Cortez, & Dr. Davalos

5- 6pm - Reception in the Center for Mexican American Studies, EEDUC 2.216

UTRGV

Center for
Mexican American
Studies

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School of Interdisciplinary
Programs & Community
Engagement



MFA SHOWCASE FOR THE CREATIVE WRITING DEPARTMENT

A SHOWCASE FOR THE MFA STUDENTS
AT THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS
EDINBURG, DECEMBER 12, 2024

The Center for Latin American Arts hosted the Department of Creative Writing Master of Fine Arts Showcase featuring Daniela Gonzalez, Silas Quintanilla, Dwayne Vega, and J. Villanueva on December 12th 2024.

The MFA Showcase presented an opening reading by Mariana Moreno of Valley View High School, winner of the Youth Creative Writing contest hosted by the Valley View Independent School District in collaboration with Beyond Borders Books.

The Showcase was followed up with an Open Mic for Students and Alumni. Catering and space were provided by the Center for Latin American Arts.



 UTRGV DEPARTMENT OF
CREATIVE WRITING PRESENTS:

MFA SHOWCASE

DANIELA GONZALEZ
SILAS QUINTANILLA
DWAYNE VEGA
J. VILLANUEVA

opening reading by Mariano Moreno of Valley View High School, winner of the Youth Creative Writing Contest hosted by Valley View ISD and Beyond Borders Books

Open mic for UTRGV students & alumni
to follow the MFA Showcase!

DEC. 12, 2024 6PM
UTRGV LIBRARY, 2ND FLOOR
EDINBURG
(in the Center for Latin American Arts)

food, refreshments, and celebration

Open to the public! Please contact emmy.perez@utrgv.edu for accommodations and/or for community members, a printable parking pass

UTRGV Creative Writing

6TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL LATINO THEATRE FESTIVAL

PERFORMANCES, PANEL DISCUSSIONS, AND
PRESENTATIONS IN THE ALBERT L. JEFFERS
AND THE MARIAN F. MONTA STUDIO THEATRE
EDINBURG, MAY 2-3, 2025

CLAA supports projects in the College of Fine Arts such as The 6th Annual International Latino Theatre Festival, which was held at the Edinburg Campus May 2-3, 2025, with performances, panel discussions, and presentations in the Albert L. Jeffers Theatre and the Marian F. Monta Studio Theatre. Three professional theatre companies from Reynosa, Monterrey, and Torreon, Mexico, presented original plays, all of which were World or United States premieres. In addition, a free, three-hour acting workshop, attended by 18 UTRGV students, was offered at the festival by Jose Silveti, one of the visiting artists.

UTRGV students were able to spend time with the visiting professional theatre artists from Mexico and conduct research on Mexican theatre. One of the students, Elyza Roldan, has followed up with members of Gorguz Teatro (based in Monterrey) to arrange an internship in costuming following graduation in May 2025. Another student plans to pursue acting opportunities with the same company. For UTRGV students with strong ties to Mexico, this festival provided unique learning opportunities to speak with Mexican theatre artists and network with their production companies into the future, professional invaluable collaborations.



COMPAÑÍA GORGUZ TEATRO • GUAJIRO TEATRO
JOSE SELVETI / TROPA CACHIVACHES • LATINO
THEATRE INITIATIVES • NEIXA RODRIGUEZ
RULY'S Y BETOCLES • TEATROMORFOSIS

UTRGV ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE IN GUATEMALA

PERFORMANCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN CARLOS IN GUATEMALA CITY AND A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA JUNE 17-18 2025

With the Shary Shivers endowment, the CLAA was able to support Professor Norman Gamboa, Director of the UTRGV Orchestra, to travel with the student orchestra to Guatemala City and Antigua, Guatemala in Summer 2025. UTRGV's string orchestra presented two performances, one at the College of Fine Arts at San Carlos in Guatemala City and a second in the city of Antigua at a UNESCO World Heritage Site, both hosted by the University of San Carlos and the Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Antigua.

Also, the UTRGV string orchestra was able to perform the works by Costa Rican composer Benjamin Gutierrez, whose early composition studies took place at the National Conservatory of Music of Guatemala. This gave UTRGV the unique opportunity to perform select pieces from this renowned composer in Guatemala for the first time.

The students were originally accepted to present this performance under the direction of Dr. Gamboa at the Palm Beach Hispanic Heritage Festival in Florida, but due to a hurricane, they were forced to change their plans. They pivoted, and instead coordinated this research and performance opportunity with Igor Sarmientos, Dean of Fine Arts at the University of San Carlos, so they could

perform this world premiere in Guatemala. Dr. Gamboa and the UTRGV students also collaborated with Dr. Mezraq Ramli, UTRGV Assistant Professor of Music, who performed as a soloist in Gutierrez's *Bosquejos para Oboe y Cuerdas*.

This performance is an exemplary project that demonstrates how the Shary Shivers Chair is helping realize the vision and mission for the Center for Latin American Arts to aid students and their faculty mentors to create and facilitate new research and creative works in art genres of Latin American countries and cultures.



INTERNATIONAL TUBA EUPHONIUM CONFERENCE

**UTRGV STUDENTS AND FACULTY ATTEND
THE INTERNATIONAL TUBA EUPHONIUM
CONFERENCE IN VALENCIA, SPAIN
JUNE 2025**

In late June of 2025, 16 students from UTRGV travelled to Valencia, Spain, to perform in the 2025 International Tuba Euphonium Conference under the leadership of Music faculty mentor, Professor Scott Roeder.

The UTRGV Tuba Euphonium Ensemble performed a stirring concert of Latin-inspired music to an international audience in the Jose Iturbi Hall at the Palau de la Música in the heart of the city of Valencia. The students utilized the rest of their week by attending concerts, recitals, and lectures at the conference while also visiting the city.

A highlight for the students was seeing their professor, Dr. Scott Roeder, awarded the ITEA Roger Bobo Award for Recording Excellence for his latest solo album.

It was a wonderful experience for the students to network and learn while performing internationally, and with the support of the Marialice Shary Shivers Chair, these students and their faculty mentors are poised to create new performances and collaborations with new artists and educators.





STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

I am beyond grateful for CLAA and Sonia Chapa's contribution in giving me the opportunity to study Flamenco in Madrid, Spain. Knowing we were taking classes every day from the best world-renowned Spanish dance artists such as Concha Jareño, Daniel Caballero, Nerea Carrasco, and Yoel Vargas was an experience at its own level. All while being able to bring back choreography to perform at our UTRGV dance concerts.

-Daniel Alejandro Garcia
Dance Student

The support that the CLAA provided when my colleagues and I got accepted to the CAA conference was significant. The CLAA's financial support allowed this to be a successful trip to Chicago. During our stay, we got the opportunity to network with professors, curators and fellow artists. As well as attending insightful panels and beautifully curated art exhibitions. The result of participating in the CAA conference, besides contributing to my CV, was that it opened doors to further dialogue and connection with other people in the field. Without the CLAA's financial support, the trip wouldn't have gone as smoothly and stress-free as it was.

-Michel Flores Tavizón
MFA Art Student

I have been working on my thesis, specifically on my chapter that analyzes art by Tejana and Chicana artists illustrating food and curanderismo (also known as folk healing). I presented my research in our CAA panel, and I received great questions, comments, and feedback in the Q&A section. This new information was helpful in expanding my research and being more focused. My colleagues and I also attended several panels, and I was introduced to new scholars, theories, methodologies, and artists. My colleagues and I also had the opportunity to visit the National Museum of Mexican Art and The Art Institute of Chicago. I saw a multitude of art and learned about the artists, their inspiration and story behind their work, showing me a new perspective to view and interpret art. After presenting in CAA, I continued shaping my research with this newfound knowledge and recently submitted a short essay for publication with Dra. Christen Sperry-García and other colleagues. I am truly grateful to CLAA for funding my colleagues and I the opportunity to present in CAA, I was fortunate to be among so many scholars and learn from them.

- Kimberly Grimaldo
MFA Art Student

Dear CLAA team and Dr. McAllen, I am writing to extend my deepest gratitude for all the support you have provided for my project, "60% Our Connection to Water." Your guidance and encouragement have been invaluable in bringing this vision to life, and I truly appreciate the time and resources you have dedicated to ensuring its success.

Additionally, I am profoundly grateful for the grant you have awarded me, as it has allowed me to be a part of the artist residency. This experience has enabled me to explore and expand my creative potential in ways I had never imagined. Your faith in my abilities and the chance to grow as an artist in such a nurturing environment mean more to me than words can express. Thank you once again for your unwavering support and for fostering such a positive space for artistic development.

- Regina Cerna Matamoros
Art & Design Student

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

Attending the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts 2025 was a transformative experience that deeply impacted my studio practice, confidence, and academic direction. I attended numerous talks and demonstrations, including Form Building with Slabs, which directly addressed technical challenges I had previously encountered in my sculptural work. As a figurative sculptor, this demonstration provided practical solutions that immediately translated into my practice. Using the methods I learned, I slab-built a figurative sculpture upon returning home, which I will include as visual documentation. I also attended several lectures and discussions, including the Emerging Artist panel.

During this event, I spoke up in front of a large audience to ask a question, allowing me to actively participate in the dialogue. I later viewed the artists' work, spoke with them individually, and connected with them online. One of the artists turned out to be a former mentee of Japheth, my current mentor, and through this connection I also met Japheth's mentor. Witnessing this lineage firsthand—seeing the origin and succession of mentorship within our field—was a powerful and affirming moment that made me feel genuinely included in the ceramics community. Most importantly, I returned home inspired and immediately translated that energy into action. I organized workshops, demonstrations, and community outreach, and shared materials I received at the conference so other students could experience a small part of that excitement.

-- Aubrey Aria Lopez --

This past March, I was fortunate enough to attend NCECA's 2025 Formation Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. This conference was an invaluable experience for me as a Studio Art student with aspirations to develop my understanding, knowledge, and connection to the art of ceramics. This conference allowed me to hear from various artists on different topics in ceramics, such as professional development, specific techniques in ceramics, and community building.

Of the sessions I attended during the conference, some of the ones that stuck out to me were Diego Vallez's talk on Mata Ortiz Ceramics History and Stories, Patty Marfise-Patts' talk on accessibility in studios, and a co-lecture on the Empty Bowls program. Vallez's talk on Mata Ortiz ceramic history ingrained an appreciation in me for the forgotten history of this cultural sector of ceramic arts. Vallez spoke in depth about how integral women are in the foundation of Mata Ortiz pottery, even though many of them are overlooked while men in the field seem to have a much easier time gaining respectability and attention in the field. He gave deep acknowledgement to the women who taught him and built within him his love for the art. Overall, attending NCECA's 2025 Formation conference instilled in me a greater understanding of how to achieve my professional goals, deepened my understanding of ceramic-centred community building.

-- Mikaela Martinez --

Attending NCECA 2025 with UTRGV'S Ceramic Club was such an amazing opportunity. I was exposed to so many people, tools, talks, art, and knowledge. I am so grateful for the chance I was given to go on this trip. During this trip, I was able to attend so many different conferences that related to questions I had at the time during my academic career and even exposed me to solutions I didn't know I needed.

It was so amazing to make connections with so many people and artists during my time at NCECA. These are connections that will stick with me forever, and I can't imagine a better way to get more students to be involved. Not only was I able to go to the NCECA conference, but I was also around other museums that I would have otherwise never been able to see. Anticipation and excitement for this conference had me so motivated and excited to create. Being able to participate in the scavenger hunt and NCECA allowed me to get my art out to random people that also gave me, as an artist, great exposure.

All in all, I will forever be thankful for this amazing and enriching opportunity. It gave me immense motivation to continue my studies, to try harder, to make bigger and better things, and it exposed me to an even bigger ceramic club community. My academic experience definitely wouldn't have been the same without this trip.

-- Michaela Tyler Garza --

FACULTY & COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS

The Alice Kleberg Reynolds grant was used to produce this project, which resulted in an amazing collaboration of artists, UTRGV faculty, staff, its students, community engagement with K-12, workshops, and performances from beginning to end. The AKR grant and McAllen also gave our students and me the opportunity to take our flamenco students (Ballet Español) to Spain to study flamenco, Spanish art, and culture back in August 2023. This year, the Shary Shivers and Dr. McAllen will provide a second consecutive trip to Madrid, Spain this coming August 2024. These opportunities and support are not given often to our students, and they would probably never have the means to take a trip of this magnitude. Our dance majors will be taking an intensive annual workshop called “Veranos Flamencos” at the one and only Spanish Dance Institute “Amor de Dios”.

Dr. McAllen and the CLAA continue to establish productive relationships with artists of all genres on a global stage including collaborative works with UTRGV Faculty, staff and its students in the upcoming Tándem concert at the Edinburg Cultural Performing Arts Center. Her connection and inclusivity with our RGV community is also commendable, and I am proud to have worked with her on many of these projects and to serve on the Executive Committee for the Center for Latin American Arts.

-Sonia Chapa Gómez
Department of Dance

Thank you to the CLAA for helping me take 16 students from UTRGV to Valencia, Spain to perform in the 2025 International Tuba Euphonium Conference. Our UTRGV Tuba Euphonium Ensemble was able to perform a stirring concert of Latin-inspired music to an enthusiastic audience in Jose Iturbi Hall at the Palau de la Música in the heart of Valencia. The students utilized the rest of their week by attending concerts, recitals, and lectures at the conference while also soaking in the sights of the city. A big highlight for the students was seeing me win the ITEA Roger Bobo Award for Recording Excellence for my latest solo album. It was a wonderful experience for the students, one that they will remember for a long time, and I am thankful to the CLAA for making this travel experience possible.

-Dr. Scott Roeder
School of Music

Thank you to the Center for Latin American Arts for your support helping our students to have such a life altering experience like this. I appreciate your kind help making it possible for our students to travel and perform in Guatemala. The experience was, for everyone involved absolutely unforgettable, and the concerts went very well. Our performance in the City of Antigua was completely sold out!

-Norman Gamboa
Professor, School of Music

Thank you so much for your continued support of my project, Navidad Latinoamericana en Concierto 2024! The UTRGV Center for Latin American Arts has been a key factor in the success of this project that celebrates the colorful Christmas traditions throughout Latin America. With your support, our concert has catalyzed exchanges between guest artists who are specialists in Latin-American traditions (from early music through salsa) and our school community, and has generated a meaningful cultural experience for the RGV audiences. I am truly grateful for your leadership, partnership, and support.

-Dr. Nicaulis Alliey
School of Music

Thank you for bringing your students to OPERA San Antonio. Hearing the performance and attending the backstage tours were crucial for their research and professional development. It was also a pleasure to see UTRGV students at the UNAM-hosted workshop where they articulated their ideas in Spanish and English. I could see their knowledge of the history of mariachi and opera grow, and we are appreciative that you made it possible to bring them this unique learning opportunity. I express my sincere gratitude for Dr. McAllen's efforts to collaborate and for her continued impact on students and the community of South Texas.

- E. Loren Meeker
Executive Director, OPERA San Antonio

CENTER LEADERSHIP

DEAN. COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS



Dr. Jeffrey Ward is the Dean of the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). The College, made up of the School of Art and Design, School of Music, Department of Theatre, Department of Dance, and Department of Creative Writing, is committed to connecting the students of the Rio Grande Valley and beyond to high-quality teaching, research, and creative activity; partnerships with Arts organizations and Industry; and global citizenship rooted in improving communities.

Prior to his role at UTRGV, Dr. Ward served as the Director of the School of Music, Theatre, and Dance, and Professor of Music Education at Kansas State University and as the Associate Dean in the College of Fine Arts and Communication and the Associate Director of the School of Music at East Carolina University in Greenville, NC. Dr. Ward received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Music Education (Conducting) from Shenandoah Conservatory in Winchester, VA; his Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from East Carolina University; and his Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Rollins College in Winter Park, FL.

Dr. Ward's research focuses on assessment, community music, and music teacher education. Dr. Ward is Past Chair of the Assessment Special Research Interest Group of the National Association for Music Education and a reviewer for the International Symposium for Assessment in Music Education. As a conductor, Dr. Ward has served as the Artistic Director of the Manhattan (KS) Masterworks Chorale and the Greenville (NC) Choral Society, as well as in conducting positions at First United Methodist Church of Manhattan, St. James United Methodist Church of Greenville, and Monumental United Methodist Church of Portsmouth (VA).



Dr. Jeffrey Ward
Dean, College of Fine Arts

Fall 2023-Present

CENTER LEADERSHIP

DIRECTOR. CENTER FOR LATIN
AMERICAN ARTS



Dr. Katherine Moore McAllen has been the Director of the Center for Latin American Arts since 2019, and she is an Associate Professor of Art History in the School of Art & Design at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. She received her PhD from Harvard University, her M.A. from the University of Texas, Austin and her B.A. from Trinity University. Her research has been supported by the Fulbright and the Carl and Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation as the 2019-2020 Marilyn Thoma Post-Doctoral Fellow. Her work at the UTRGV Center for Latin American Arts has been supported by the Raul Tijerina, Jr. Foundation, the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation, the Rea Charitable Trust, and the Brown Foundation.

Her publications on the history of art and architecture and cultural exchange in colonial Perú and México include essays in the anthology *The New World in Early Modern Italy, 1492-1750*, the *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, the *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture* journal, and the *Colonial Latin American Review*. Together with Verónica Muñoz-Nájara, she also co-edited a two-volume publication with a collection of essays in Spanish and English titled *The Thoma Dialogues* in the *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture* journal. Her previous curatorial work as Director of the Center for Latin American Arts includes organizing the 2022 exhibition *Uncovered Spaces* with artists including Maria Magdalena Campos Pons, Margarita Cabrera, and Wendy Red Star in a collaboration with Raheleh Filsoofi of Vanderbilt University. All the CLAA events can be seen on the CLAA website and the CLAA YouTube channel.



Dr. Katherine Moore McAllen
Director, Center for Latin American Arts and
Associate Professor of Art History

FACULTY LEADERSHIP

AND CLAA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Dr. Andrés Amado is an Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology in the School of Music, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.



Rigoberto Gonzalez is a Lecturer at the School of Art & Design, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.

IN MEMORY OF SONIA CHAPA



Dr. Sonia Chapa was a Professor in the Department of Dance, the Director of the Ballet, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.



Dr. Eric Wiley is a Professor in the Department of Theatre, the Director of the Latino Theatre Initiatives, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.



Miguel Peña is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Dance, Director of the UTRGV Ballet Folklórico program, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.



Dr. Virginia Davis is a Professor of Music Education in the School of Music, as well as a member of the CLAA Executive Committee.

CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS STAFF



Emma Creps-Pena

MFA Candidate, Researcher, and
Assistant to the Director of Center of
Latin American Arts

Emma Creps-Pena is a Current MFA candidate with a concentration in 3D studio practice. Her work explores addiction through puppetry, costuming, and performance. She holds a BFA in Art, a Texas EC-12 art teaching certificate, and a minor in Psychology. Alongside her MFA is pursuing a certification in Chemical Dependency Counseling an area of study that informs her artistic research. Her goal after the MFA program is to apply for a PHD program at Texas Tech.



Noah Melendez

MFA Candidate
Lead Graphic Designer
College of Fine Arts

Noah Melendez is a fashion-based visual artist and designer living in the Rio Grande Valley. His work engages visual art, fashion, graphic design, and performance as critical tools for exploring countercultural narratives and aesthetics. Through his practice, Noah aims to open dialogues within himself and contemporaneity while inviting viewers to engage and reconnect to pieces of themselves they have left behind.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN SUPPORT



Jessica Loreno Treviño

Administrative Coordinator,
Office of the Dean,
College of Fine Arts

Jessica Treviño is the Administrative Coordinator to the Dean's Office at the College of Fine Arts at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Originally from McAllen, Texas, Jessica graduated with a degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Computer Information Systems from the University of Texas Pan American. She brings years of business experience in purchasing, accounting, project management, coordination, finance, analytics, social media, and technology. With excellent communication and leadership abilities, Jessica thrives in cross-functional teams, coordinating resources and ensuring seamless collaboration. Known for problem-solving skills, and ability to mitigate risks, Jessica consistently drive successful project outcomes.

CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ARTS

WHO WE ARE



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Dr. Andrés Amado

Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology

Dr. Virginia Davis

Professor of Music Education

Miguel Peña

Assistant Professor of Dance

Director of the UTRGV Ballet Folklórico

Dr. Eric Wiley

Professor of Theatre

Director of the Latino Theatre Initiatives

Rigoberto Gonzalez

Lecturer of Studio Art with an emphasis
on Painting



THE CENTER IS LED BY:

Dr. Katherine Moore McAllen

Associate Professor of Art History

Director of the Center for Latin American Arts

Dr. Jeffrey Ward

Dean of the College of Fine Arts





Center for
Latin American Arts



WHERE WE ARE

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Edinburg Library on the 2nd Floor: ELIBR
2.114

Brownsville in the UTRGV Music, Science &
Learning Center: BMSLC 2.210



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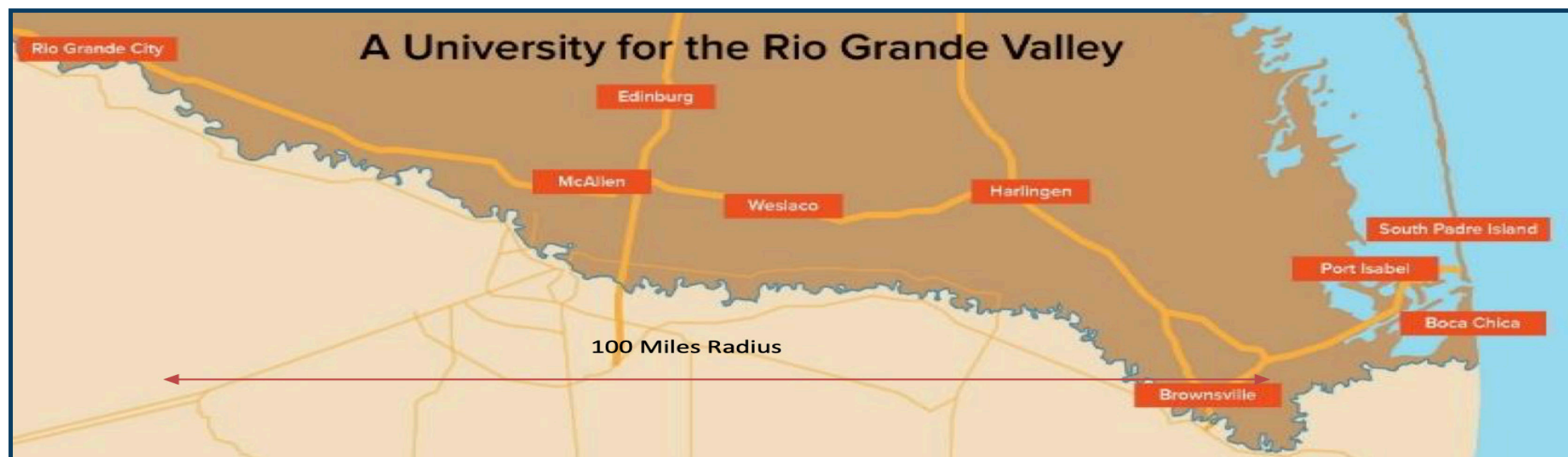
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Detail of *ALEGRIA*

Alegría concerts led by Miguel Peña,
Director of the UTRGV Ballet Folklórico program