

# BORDERS BLEEDS MARGINS and GUTTERS



CURATED BY GABE GARCIA  
and MICAH BORNSTEIN

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CURATED BY GABE GARCIA  
*and* MICAH BORNSTEIN



ARTS &  
CULTURE





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This publication accompanies the exhibition *Borders, Bleeds, Margins and Gutters*, curated by Gabe Garcia & Micah Bornstein and presented by the City of San Antonio Department of Arts & Culture at Centro de Artes, San Antonio, Texas, March 27 – August 17, 2025.

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Opposite Page: Jonathan Hill, Booger Lizek't, From *Tales of a Seventh-Grade Lizard Boy* (Walker Books US, a division of Candlewick Press), 2022. Courtesy the Artist.

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# CONTENTS

6

## FOREWORD

**Krystal Jones, Executive Director**  
City of San Antonio  
Department of Arts & Culture

**Yadhira Lozano, Chair**  
Centro de Artes Committee

8

## CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Gabe Garcia & Micah Bornstein

10

## INTRODUCTION

Frederick Luis Aldama

16

## ARTISTS AND SELECTED WORKS

32

## THE EXHIBITION

34

## ABOUT CENTRO DE ARTES





# FOREWORD

Captivating stories and characters from comic books were brought to life in *Borders, Bleeds, Margins & Gutters* – an exhibition hosted by the City of San Antonio’s Department of Arts & Culture. The exhibit was curated by Gabe Garcia and Micah Bornstein, and its title refers to the terms used in a comic book’s layout and design. The first floor of Centro de Artes Gallery displayed pieces from eight artists across the U.S., and included artwork from comics that range in setting, theme, and narrative. Characters from rural America, Science-Fiction creatures, and cartoon animals were found throughout the exhibit – all with stories to tell about the shared realities of our lived experiences. There were also interactive components, including an installation that offered viewers the opportunity to write, illustrate and display their own comic book panel – welcoming their creations to become part of the exhibition. The Department of Arts & Culture took great care in presenting an exhibit that invited individuals of all ages to push the boundaries of conventional storytelling in search of new, impactful, and lasting narratives.

A deep expression of gratitude is extended toward Gabe Garcia and Micah Bornstein for curating pieces from thought-provoking comic books and graphic novels, and to our Cultural Events & Exhibits team and exhibition partners for their hard work in making this exhibit a reality.

## Krystal Jones

Executive Director

City of San Antonio Department of Arts & Culture

Dear Arts Patrons,

I am delighted to showcase this imaginative exhibition to the public and share the wonderful world of comics and zines. This form of short, illustrated, storytelling is truly engaging for people of all ages. The level of skill displayed to tell a story in a few sentences and limited number of images is a testament to the artist’s talent and thoughtful consideration of their message. Each artist is different with a unique perspective. Who resonates with you?

Please explore and enjoy this exhibition. Think about how you can incorporate this form of storytelling in your own artwork, career, and daily life. Can your doodle be turned into a short tale of adventure or contemplation? Can you draw your thoughts? I hope this exhibition inspires you to be creative in your daily life. Allow it to encourage you to write in the margins, draw colorful borders, and bring your story to life.

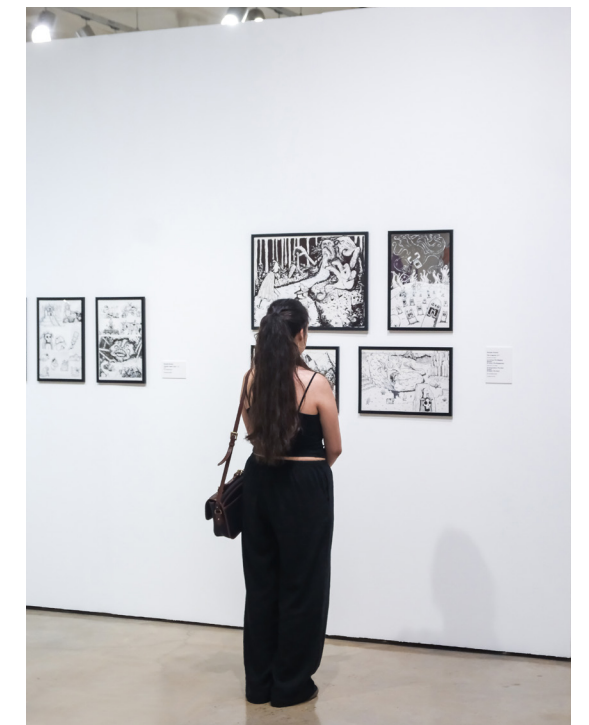
Warm Regards,

## Yadhira Lozano

Chair, Centro de Artes Committee

San Antonio Arts Commission

City Council District 3 Representative





# CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Gabe Garcia and Micah Bornstein

Welcome to *Borders, Bleeds, Margins & Gutters*, an exhibition showcasing the work of eight incredible contemporary comics creators. Our exhibition includes large-scale reproductions of comic pages, original work and objects (e.g. sketches, notebooks, manuscripts, original pages, self-published mini-comics, etc.), and an opportunity for gallery visitors to make and share comics. Our hope is that visitors to the exhibition and readers of this catalogue will walk away with not only an appreciation for the talent evident in the finished works on display, but also an understanding of the layered processes involved in developing these narratives—from preliminary sketches and planning to the finished comic pages.

By showing these comics at Centro de Artes, we intend to introduce people who are not typical readers of comics to the work of comic creators who are using comics to engage complex, sophisticated themes. As readers of comics, we also want the experience of viewing the exhibition to be something worthwhile and exciting for both the comics creators in the exhibition and people who are already readers of comics. By isolating moments in a particular narrative and using those elements to transform a physical space, we attempt to create a new immersive reading experience that communicates something essential about the story the comic is telling.

## About the Curators



**Gabe Garcia** is an interdisciplinary artist and curator from Northwest Indiana. He graduated from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Bachelor of Fine Art, 2009). Garcia is the creator of the ongoing comic series *Boney Toe*, self-published through Baby Gibo, his interdisciplinary site, which features original art, artist prints, comics, and zines. Garcia is also part of Too Rad Comics, a curatorial collaborative that exhibits work by self-published and small-press contemporary comic creators. Garcia's work explores the disparities experienced by marginalized groups, particularly as they pertain to inner-city violence and systems of control that exist in communities across the U.S. To learn more about Gabe Garcia's work, please visit [babygibo.com](http://babygibo.com).



**Micah Bornstein** is a curator, furniture maker, and cartoonist from Northwest Indiana. He graduated from Indiana University (Bachelor of Fine Art, 2004) and later attended the Studio Art MFA program at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In collaboration with artist and curator Gabe Garcia, Bornstein leads the curatorial duo known as Too Rad Comics, a curatorial group dedicated to exhibiting contemporary comic artists. Much of his professional career has been spent working in education and with nonprofits. Bornstein was also the staff cartoonist for *Craft Desert*, an academic zine focused on issues related to contemporary craft.

# BORDERS, BLEEDS, MARGINS and GUTTERS

by Frederick Luis Aldama, award-winning author, and the Jacob and Frances Sanger Mossiker Chair in the Humanities at UT Austin

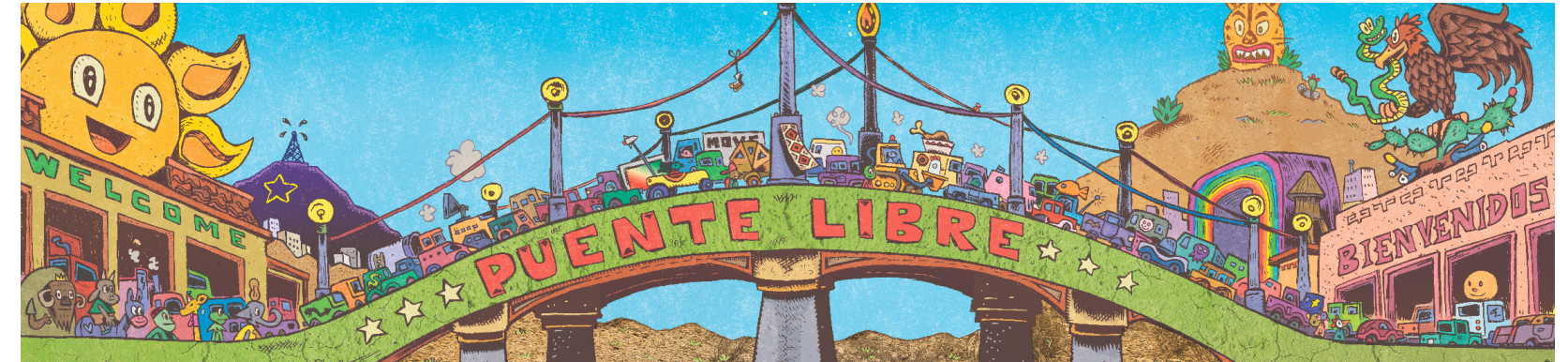
This living, breathing *transfrontera* exhibition celebrates comics by artists who give shape to a rich array of experiences and identities through myriad storytelling modes—ranging from urban and rural set stories to autobiographical and biographical narratives, to those that lean into conventions of sci-fi and realism. For the exhibition’s title, the curators employed terms used to describe the design and layout of a comic page. These terms articulate how space is delineated; they are boundaries. The primary theme in this exhibition is centered on the idea of borders within the context of political boundaries, personal identity, cultural heritage, communities, gender, sexuality, etc. These two ways of looking at the exhibition’s title establish a conceptual framework in which to arrange and view the work of the eight comic artists featured.

Several of the artists in the exhibition—Breena Nuñez, Dave Ortega, Gonzalo Alvarez, and Raúl the Third—identify as Latinx and their work can be viewed within the cultural and historical context of Latinx comics. Because the curators interpret the concept of boundaries (and the politics inherent within) more broadly, other artists were selected for their exploration of gender (Mara Ramirez), rural life on the margins (Melissa Mendes), and the difficulty of maintaining one’s identity and connection to family when you are from two places (Jonathan Hill).

**BORDERS:** a) Lines demarcating political or geographical areas; b) Systems that classify cultural objects valuable (e.g., white, straight, masculinist) or non-valuable (e.g., BIPOC, LGBTQ, feminist, for instance)

In the southwest, every day we live the consequences of lines on maps that separate and wall communities in the U.S. from Mexico. But lines that demarcate and divide exist in other, consequential ways for comics creators, especially those hailing from historically underrepresented groups in the U.S.

The creating, circulation, and consumption of BIPOC comics is a history of encountering borders that become boundaries controlled by xenophobic gatekeepers. It’s also a history of boundary-pushing, threshold crossing, and community creating.



Raúl the Third, Colors by Elaine Bay, From *Let's Cross the Bridge*, 2021, From *World of ¡Vamos!* (Versify, an imprint of HarperCollins). Courtesy the Artist.

This history includes a legacy of foundational figures in Latinx comics who challenged cultural, social, and political barriers and borders and laid the groundwork for the next generation of comic artists. After hitting Juan Crow glass ceilings in the mid-20th century comics and animation industry, Gus Arriola persevered. He managed to “smuggle” the first Latino farmer character, Gordo, into the mainstream imaginary. Arriola understood that to get his Gordo comic strip published, he needed to appeal to two audiences: the dominant, white mainstream all too willing to laugh at a lazy buffoon and a more discerning audience seeking depth and complexity. Arriola launched *Gordo* in November 1941 and through continued hard work, syndicated it in dozens of newspapers across the U.S., which allowed him to earn a modest living. During its 40-year run, he revealed the smart and cosmopolitan qualities he’d envisioned for *Gordo* all along.

Another notable example is the late George Pérez, who, during the Bronze Age of superhero comics (1970 – 85), recognized that as a Boricua comics artist trying to break into Marvel, he needed to surpass the talents of his white peers. He dedicated years to perfecting his visual storytelling skills, eventually earning the opportunity to visually create (with writer Marv Wolfman) the character Hector Ayala, aka White Tiger. Pérez broke through comics color-lines to create this influential, socially conscious,

university educated, and street-smart superhero. White Tiger’s legacy continues through smart, feminist super-warriors like his daughter Ava Ayala and niece Angela Ayala.

During this same period of the 1970s, Latina lesbian comics creator Roberta Gregory pushed borders and boundaries, especially within feminist and queer comics. With the publication of *Dynamite Damsels* (1976), Gregory challenged the barriers established by straight white male creators who dominated the underground comics scene. Think: Robert Crumb. Despite these efforts, other color-lines persisted, even within the LGBTQ and feminist comics underground scene. It wasn’t until 1991 that Gregory introduced her first Latina character: Marta Estrella as Bitchy Butch.

These emblematic examples of Latinx comics pioneers confronted different ethnoracially constructed borders and boundaries. Their struggles and hard work are immeasurable.

While borders and walls continue to exclude, creatives like Raúl the Third, with his *¡Vamos!* series, bring to life the everyday experiences that emerge from cultural contact zones. In these spaces, people on both sides of



the border forge new identities, languages, and ways of life. Raúl's characters—anthropomorphized luchador-wolf, Little Lobo, spunky skateboarding cheetah-girl, La Chida, and other magical, hybrid creations—explore markets, libraries, and international bridges connecting both sides of the border. He transcends the boundaries that divide people, languages, art, architecture, colors, landscapes, and showcase a borderland defined by shared joy and celebration.

**BLEEDS:** a) Punctures, ruptures, and wounds causing blood loss; b) Art that extends beyond the boundary of the comic to the edge of the page.

The proximate and distant histories of Latinx and BIPOC peoples are marked by the bloodshed from long hours working in fields, on factory lines and in packing plants, and wielding hammers, shovels, and mops. Our communities bear a multitude of painful legacies: from the flashing red-and-blues of a po-po who shoots first and ask questions later, to sweat-soaked blisters from forced crossings, to pesticide-soaked bodies. These include the unseen wounds of psychological trauma, which contributes to a history stained with crimson reds.

This is the harsh horrific truth faced by Latinx and BIPOC communities. It is a relentless and ongoing truth that pounds hard and constant at the doors of Latinx and BIPOC comics creators in the U.S. This is also why many of us choose to create comics that invite audiences to co-dream wish-fulfilment fantasies, where our characters overcome bullies and vanquish supervillains.

We see these themes in action in this exhibition. For instance, Gonzalo Alvarez's *Polloman* follows Eduardo, the erstwhile bullied protagonist, as he sets off on an epic journey filled with mythological battles and self-discovery. Jonathan Hill's *Lizard Boy* uses the sci-fi genre to give

shape to the story of Booger Lizek't, a lizard boy passing for human to survive. His non-Standard English and secret bug-eating make him a target for the middle school bullies. Booger finds strength in connection with others like Dung and Scarlett, marginalized by race and class. In *The Steampunkera Chronicles*, I use steampunk conventions to revisit mid-19th century Mexico, the Hispanophone Caribbean, and U.S. Southwest. I create a team of mixed-race Latina warriors who use their intellect, tech, and combat skills to fight against slavery, advocate for all women's emancipation, and promote education in the arts, humanities, and sciences.

Myth, fantasy, sci-fi, and steampunk are not the only ways creators in this exhibition choose to shape the physical and psychological trauma from past and present wounds. In *From There to Here*, Breena Nuñez uses the autobiographical form to illuminate her father's wounds as part of a broader El Salvadoran Afro-Latino ancestral legacy. As Nuñez writes, "When your blood comes from a land of volcanoes" (panel 1); "You carry heartache, anxiety, confusion, pain" (panel 2). Through this short comic story, Nuñez demonstrates the power of visual-verbal storytelling to begin to heal blood-filled wounds inflicted by the legacies of Euro-conquest and colonization of African and the Indigenous peoples in the Americas. In *whale fall*, Mara Ramirez explores the mutability of the boundaries that separate bodies from the environment that surrounds them and questions the idea that bodies must be one thing or another. The substance of the natural world bleeding into the corporal self and vice versa is a metaphor that asks the reader to consider viewing the boundaries we perceive as being less absolute and more fluid. This metaphor emphasizes a preference for softness over hardness, the use of erasure, and the way the images extend across and through the borders of panels.

Bleeding exists not only in the content of these stories and others but also in the way we visually shape them. In

comics, the "bleed" also refers to art that extends beyond the boundary of the comic to the edge of the page. With *Lizard Boy* and *The Steampunkera Chronicle* the bleed gives shape to stories in ways that remind audiences that the event and scene continue beyond the edge of the page. It invites audiences to not only engage with the visible panels but also to imagine and contribute. Through a process of co-creation, the author and reader build a much larger universe that extends beyond what it is seen on the page.

Systems of exploitation and oppression continue to wound and bleed our communities. However, our legacies of resistance and resilience run deep in our veins. They fuel our fight both on the streets and on the page—and in images and stories that bleed beyond the page—driving us to a better world tomorrow.

**MARGINS:** a) A limit beyond which something is desirable or possible; b) A zone between content and the edge of a page

Latinx and BIPOC comics creators are part of communities that have been systematically pushed to socioeconomic, political, and racialized margins, despite our undeniable and transformative presence in the U.S. This includes the violence of Brown and Black youth who suffer from a push-out and lock-out school system, leading to their disproportionately high incarceration rates. It also includes a cultural gatekeeping system that deems Latinx and BIPOC experiences and identities undesirable. Although Latinos/as make up 19% of the U.S. population (excluding our familia sin papeles), we're represented in less than 3% of storytelling and media formats such as comics, literature, film, and TV. When we are represented, it often involves extreme, undesirable stereotypes: narcos, traffickers, prostitutes, traitors. We're shown only to be bad hombres and sinful mujeres.

Seen as undesirables, we are often pushed to the margins. But we also push back and create within these spaces. I think of boots-on-ground justice work done in K-12 education across the country and the transformative physical spaces we're creating at the so-called margins. For instance, this exhibition at Centro de Artes Gallery is a testament to that effort. Across the country, artists and educators are establishing lasting comics and multimedia arts spaces, such as the Latinx Comics Arts Festival at Modesto Junior College (California), the Latino Comics Expo at the Museum of Latin American Art (Long Beach, CA), the Texas Latino Comic Con at the Dallas Latino Cultural Center, MexAmeriCon at Austin's Mexican American Cultural Center, and my BIPOC PoP at UT Austin. Here and elsewhere, we're pushing back against marginalization by creating transformative opportunities for our communities within these very margins.

**GUTTERS:** a) Living in poor conditions; b) The space between comic panels that connects the contents of one panel to the next.

I don't have to rehash what is painfully evident and already stated: Systems of oppression and exploitation rely on communities of color being kept in a fragile, socioeconomically vulnerable state—in the gutters. This creates large pools of exploitable labor and easy targets for blame. Those in the gutter—the so-called dirty, disposable, and unwanted—are portrayed as the ultimate threat to the idealized, white-picket-fence way of life.

The creators featured in this exhibition use the visual-verbal form of comics storytelling to reveal the complexity, depth, and humanity of life in the so-called gutter. The "gutter" in comics—the blank space between panels—is essential to the medium. This space, usually white, and of varying width, not only separates the story into discrete units of time and



space, but also invites audiences to connect these units into new rhythmic patterns of movement, feeling, thinking, and meaning. Far from being a space of limitation, the gutter represents infinite possibility.

Alvarez's gutters invite audiences to co-create mythical figures from childhood such as el ratón de los dientes, la cucaracha, el chupacabra, la llorona, and el cucuy. Dave Ortega's gutters invite audiences to co-create and build the story world of his abuela, Consuelo's border crossing journey during and after the Revolution in Mexico. Breana Nuñez's gutters invite audiences to co-create her father's journey from El Salvador to the U.S., delve into Afro-Latina histories, and follow her journey of self-discovery. Melissa Mendes's gutters offer audiences a space to co-create a coming-of-age story of a young, poor teen growing up in rural America.

In these and other comics on exhibit, the gutters encourage audiences to step into, co-create, and co-imagine story worlds that complicate and humanize life in the so-called gutter.

As you walk through the exhibition, I encourage you to engage all your senses, feelings, and thoughts. Observe how each creator uses the devices of comics—borders, bleeds, margins, and gutters—to shape and reflect the diverse experiences, both positive and negative, that our communities have experienced in the past and continue to encounter in the present. Open yourself to the many ways these artists invite you to co-create and live in tomorrow's possibilities.

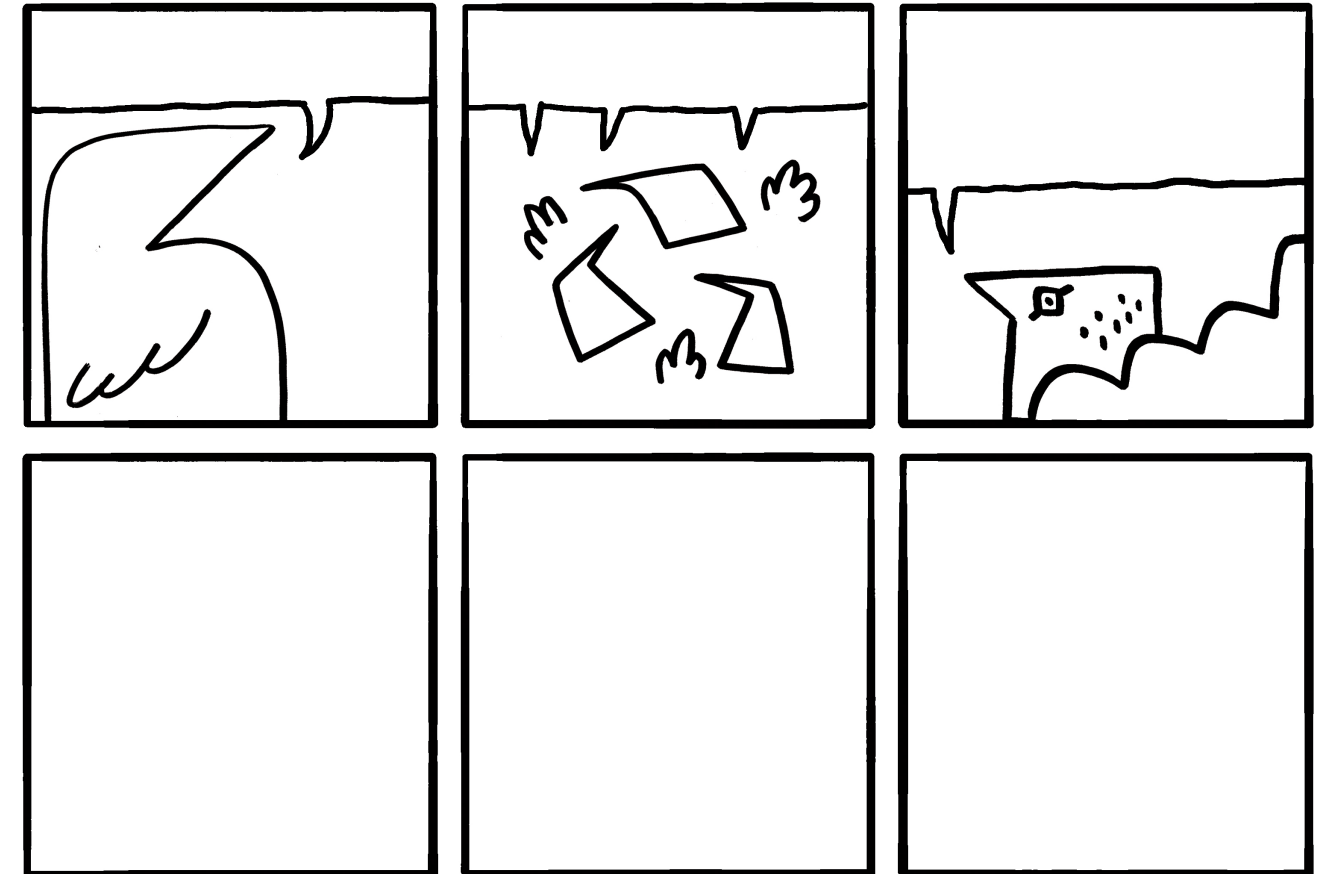


Visitors to the exhibition were invited to create their own comic and display it on the "Share Comics" wall.

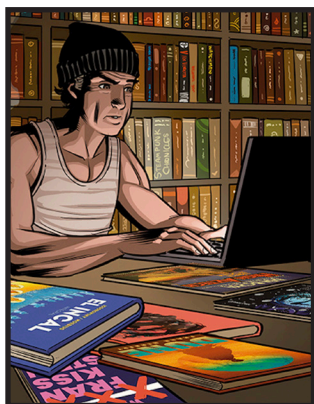
## COMICS AREN'T JUST ABOUT DRAWING

Telling a story through comics requires the creator to think about things like writing and graphic design. No one part is more important than the others. Frequently, comics are a collaborative effort, with the different parts being completed by different people.

On this page, you'll find a template of a sketched-out scenario. Finish the comic by adding sound effects, filling in the speech bubbles, and if you feel like it, by drawing more. Or use the blank template to create your own comic.







# FREDERICK LUIS ALDAMA

Frederick Luis Aldama, born in Mexico to a Guatemalan-Irish American mamá from East LA and a Mexican papá from Mexico City, grew up in north-central California. He earned his BA from UC Berkeley and PhD from Stanford. As the Jacob & Frances Sanger Mossiker Chair in the Humanities at UT Austin, he directs the Latinx Pop Lab, leads BIPOC PoP, and edits *The Latinx Pop Magazine*.

Aldama writes and edits award-winning books, including the Eisner-winning *Latinx Superheroes in Mainstream Comics*. He creates multilingual children's books like *The Adventures of Chupacabra Charlie* (English/Spanish) and *Con Papá / With Papá*. His recent works include *Pyroclast*, the YA graphic fictions *Through Fences* and *Labyrinths Borne*, and the YA novel *The Absolutely (Almost) True Adventures of Max Rodriguez*. He also co-created and produced *Carlitos Chupacabra*, an award-winning animated short that screened at the 2023 Cannes Animation Festival.



Frederick Luis Aldama, Miguel Angel Hernandez (Illustrator), *Steampunkera Chronicles: Issue Five* (Pages 1 and 3), 2025. Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *Steampunkera Chronicles: Issue Five*, 2025, Digital prints, 72 x 100 in.





# GONZALO ALVAREZ

Gonzalo Alvarez is a first-gen Chicano illustrator, writer, and designer from Port Arthur, TX creating Aztec fantasy.

He completed a BFA in Drawing at Lamar University in 2017 where *Borders* debuted, a video game about his parent's immigration story which received international acclaim. Since graduating, he's been creating his Aztec fantasy graphic novel *Polloman* to be published by Harper Collins in 2026.

He founded Studio Tecuanis in 2022, a studio dedicated to creating Aztec projects, and released *NAWALLI: The Aztec Card Game* in 2023.

He has exhibited and conducted panels internationally at Indiecade E3 2017, Worldcon76, Festival Vértice UNAM, and more.



Top: *The 6 Legends: La Llorona*, 2017, Ink on Bristol board, 18 x 24 in.; Bottom: Gonzalo Alvarez, Will Rogers, and Grace Chadwick (Studio Tecuanis), *Nawalli*, 2022, Game Box, cloth mat, guardian card and Temple cardholder. Courtesy the Artist & Too Rad Comics.



Installation view of *The Evolution of Polloman*, 2017–2024, Digital prints, 70 x 214 in., From *The Legend of Polloman* (HarperAlley, an imprint of HarperCollins).





# JONATHAN HILL

Jonathan Hill is an award-winning cartoonist, illustrator, and educator. His work has appeared in The Believer Magazine, Fantagraphics, Powell's City of Books, and the Society of Illustrators. His graphic novel, *Odessa*, was a finalist for the 2021 PNBA Book Awards and won the 2021 Believer Book Award for Graphic Literature. His latest book, *Tales of a Seventh Grade Lizard Boy*, was included on the ALA's Best Graphic Novels for Children Reading List for 2022 and has been named an Oregon Spirit Award Honor Book. Jonathan also serves on the board of directors for Literary Arts.



Left to Right: *Tales of a Seventh-Grade Lizard Boy* (Page 124), 2022, (Walker Books US, a division of Candlewick Press); *Odessa* (page 7), 2020, (Oni Press); Detail view of display case with early brainstorming sketches and layouts for *Tales of a Seventh-Grade Lizard Boy*, 2019-2020. Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *Booger Lizk't & Tommy Tomkins*, 2022, Digital prints, 84 x 98 in., From *Tales of a Seventh-Grade Lizard Boy* (Walker Books US, a division of Candlewick Press).





# MELISSA MENDES

Melissa Mendes lives and works in western Massachusetts, where she grew up. She attended Hampshire College from 2002 to 2006, and then the Center For Cartoon Studies from 2008 to 2010, where she received her MFA. In 2010, Mendes received a Xeric Grant to publish her first graphic novel, *Freddy Stories*.

Mendes's current project, *The Weight*, is an epic family saga set in rural New York state, spanning from the 1930s onward. The story is inspired by her late grandfather's life. He was born in 1936, and before he died in February 2014, he wrote a short memoir full of detailed descriptions of his childhood. This piece of writing is invaluable to Mendes, and she is really enjoying transforming it into something new.

*The Weight* will be collected as a book by the publisher Drawn and Quarterly and will be released in September 2025.



Left to Right: *The Weight*: Chapter 10 (Pages 1 & 3), 2021 (Self-Published); Detail view of display case with essay pages with margin notes and original inked drawings. Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *Chapter 10* (Pages 1–9), 2021, Digital prints, 18 x 26 in. each, From *The Weight* (Self-Published).

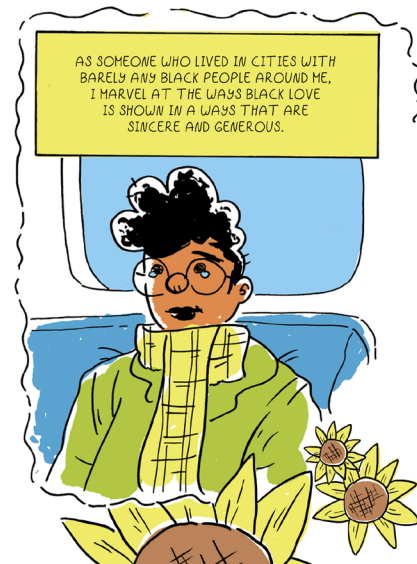
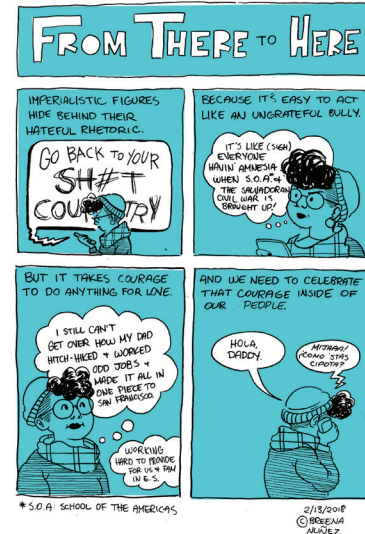




# BREENA NUÑEZ

Breena Nuñez is a Bay Area bred cartoonist and part-time adjunct professor teaching Race & Comics at California College of the Arts. She creates diary comics that often explore themes surrounding the awkwardness of racism, being a queer Afrodescendiente from the Bay Area, and understanding what it means to be Central American from the US. Their hope as a cartoonist & educator is to help BIPOC folks give themselves permission to express their personal stories through the language of comics. Nowadays they are sharing laughs with their baby over a cup o' joe brewed by her spouse (Lawrence Lindell), and writing as many stories for future comic strips about motherhood in our current time and continuing to work on their graphic memoir, *Morena*.

Breena's works are primarily self-published as zines through the family run small press she co-founded, Laneha House. You will also find some comics in other publications such as *The New Yorker: Daily Shouts* and *The Nib*, as well as in anthologies like *Tales From La Vida: A Latinx Comics Anthology*, *Drawing Power* (Eisner Award Winner 2020), *Be Gay, Do Comics!* (Ignatz Award Winner 2020), and *When Language Broke Open*.



Top: *From There to Here*, 2018;  
Bottom: Excerpt from *I Exist*, 2020, Web Comic published by *The Nib*. Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *I Exist*, 2020, Web Comic published by *The Nib*, Display fabricated by Too Rad Comics.





# DAVE ORTEGA

Dave Ortega was born in El Paso, Texas where he began his art education and discovered the passion for narrative storytelling through comics. Currently, he lives and works in Boston, Massachusetts where he teaches comics at Lesley University and in workshops for the Boston Comics Art Foundation.

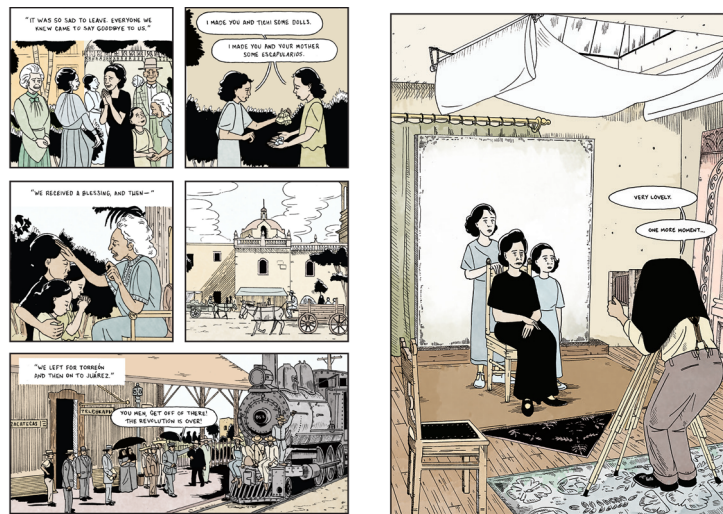
His self-published comic book series *Días de Consuelo* is about the early life of his grandmother who was born during the Mexican Revolution. It was published as a graphic novel by Radiator Comics in March 2022.

In its review of his ongoing one-person anthology series, *Hacienda*, *The Comic Journal* wrote, “Comic book writing doesn’t get much smarter than this.”

Other self-published comics and zines are about his grandmother’s teenage years living on the Rio Grande (River), battles of the Mexican Revolution (*Battle of Juarez and Zacatecas*), U.S. influence in Central and South American governments (*School of the Americas*), and Latin American sayings (*Dichos*).

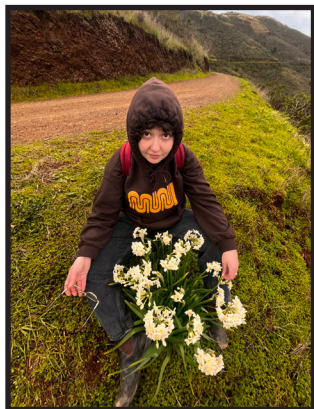


Installation view of *Días de Consuelo*, 2022, Digital prints, 92 x 260 in., (Radiator Comics)



Left to Right: *Días de Consuelo* (Pages 157–158), 2022 (Radiator Comics); Detail view of display case with Moleskine sketchbook dummy for *Días de Consuelo*, 2015. Courtesy the Artist.

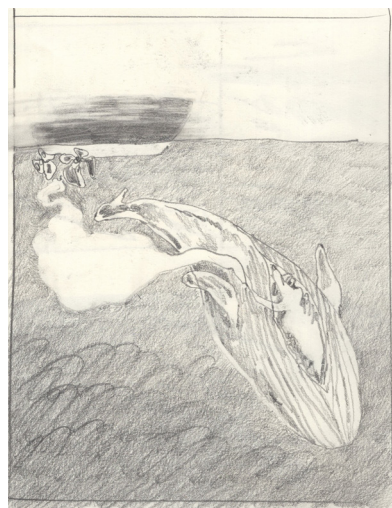




# MARA RAMIREZ

Mara Ramirez (1997) is an Ignatz nominated interdisciplinary artist and educator from the San Francisco Bay Area. Socially led and enthusiastic about their craft, they have been a visiting teaching artist at prestigious institutions including BAMPFA and online through Sequential Artists Workshop. In 2018, they co-founded Freak Comics Collective, and in 2020 they joined efforts to organize Soft Screen: an experimental animation screening series and social practice. Ramirez has a book forthcoming this year from Fieldmouse Press, titled *Flea*.

In their personal studio practice, Ramirez plays with time, abstraction, and the action of mark-making as a means of distorting and clarifying their own experiences through the filter of emotion and memory. The stories they tell range from poetic meditations on gender, to bittersweet character studies in cartoon formats. Employing both comics and animation, they ruminate on humankind and its place in our modern, climate-changed world through metaphor, fantasy, and realism alike. Bending images of biological life and using prose as a guiding force, they contemplate the duality of their experience as a nonbinary person.



Pages 6 and 12 from *whale fall*, 2023, Graphite on paper. Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *whale fall*, 2023, Digital prints, 36 x 48 in. each and 60 x 180 in. (smoke and mold).



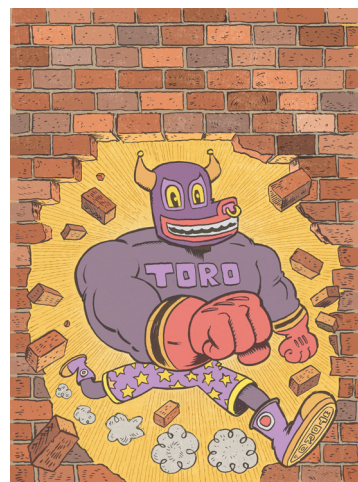


# RAÚL THE THIRD

Raúl The Third is a *New York Times* bestselling and three-time Pura Belpre award-winning illustrator, author, and artist living in Boston. *¡Vamos! Let's Cross the Bridge* was awarded one of the year's Best Illustrated Children's Books of 2021 from the *New York Times* and the New York Public Library. His work centers around the contemporary Mexican-American experience and his memories of growing up in El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

*¡Vamos! Let's Go to The Market!* is Raúl's first authorial project, which he wrote and illustrated (colored by Elaine Bay) and was awarded a Pura Belpre honor by the American Library Association and Reforma.

Raúl the Third and Elaine Bay are currently working on their latest graphic novel series *The Snips* with Little Brown and Company.



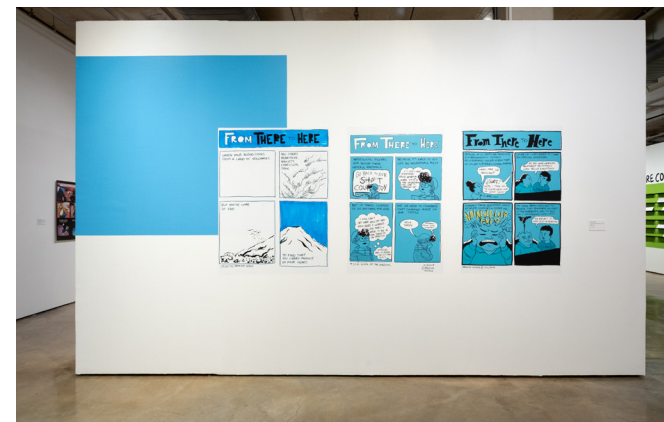
Top: *Training Day: El Toro and Friends* (Cover), 2021, Colors by Elaine Bay, From *World of ¡Vamos!* (Versify, an imprint of HarperCollins); Bottom: *¡Vamos! Let's Go* Boxed Set, Artist's Original Sketchbook, and Coffee Can, Courtesy the Artist.



Installation view of *Let's Cross the Bridge: Little Lobo, As the Day Turns to Night*, Cover, Pages 6-11, *Kooky Dooky*, 2021, Digital prints, 312 x 86 in., From *World of ¡Vamos!* (Versify, an imprint of HarperCollins)



# THE EXHIBTION



Installation view of Jonathan Hill *Booger Lizk't* and *Odessa* (top, right); Breana Nuñez, *From There to Here*, 2017-2018; Detail view of pencil and ink sketches from *From There to Here* and *Speak Africanismos*, 2020 (bottom, left to right). Courtesy the Artist.

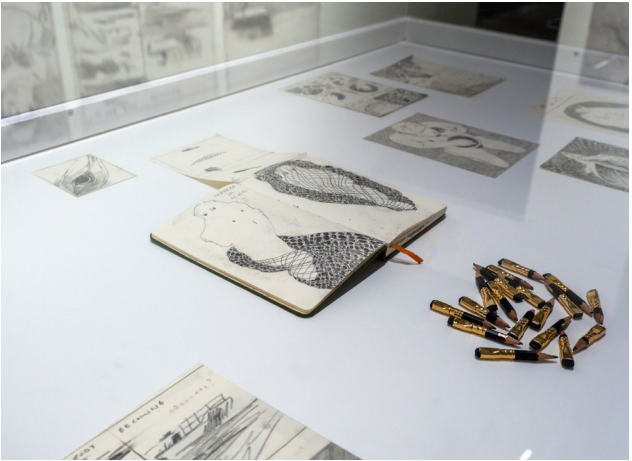




Installation view of Mara Ramirez, *whale fall* (left); Jonathan Hill, *Odessa* (center); Gonzalo Alvarez, *The 6 Legends* (right).



Installation view of Mara Ramirez, *whale fall*; Detail view of Mara Ramirez's original sketches and used pencil nubs from *whale fall* (2023-2024). Courtesy the Artist.



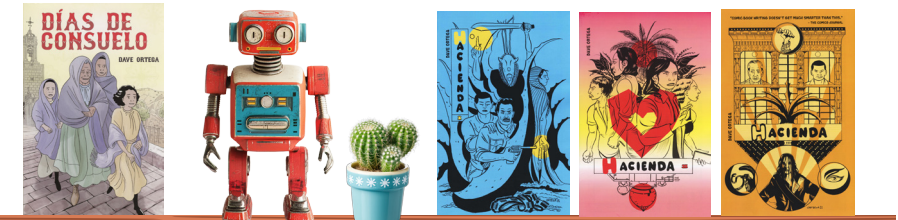
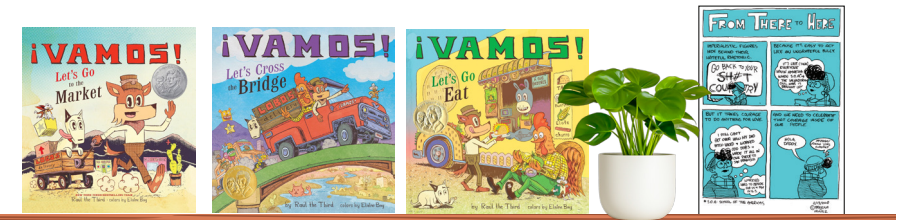
Installation view of Gonzalo Alvarez, *The Legend of Polloman Prologue Codex*, 2017, Artist book, Courtesy the Artist.





Top: Installation view of Dave Ortega, *Hacienda* (left); Raúl The Third, *¡Vamos! Let's Cross the Bridge* (middle); Melissa Mendes, *The Weight* (right).

Bottom: Detail view of Dave Ortega, *Hacienda*, Issue 1, Page 10: Panels 1–11, 2023 (Self-Published). Courtesy the Artist.



Scan the QR Code to explore the books from the exhibition available at the San Antonio Public Library.

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**THE GUADALUPE**  
CULTURAL ARTS CENTER



# ABOUT CENTRO DE ARTES

Centro de Artes gallery is dedicated to showcasing San Antonio and South Texas Latino/a artists. Found in the heart of the Zona Cultural, an officially designated and state-recognized cultural district, Centro de Artes is dedicated to telling the story of the Latino experience with a focus on South Texas through local and regional art, history, and culture. As a space that is free and open to the public, and located in Historic Market Square - one of the most visited cultural venues in Texas – Centro de Artes is at the center of a cultural and historical crossroads, accessible to residents and visitors, alike.

Since October 2016, the Department of Arts & Culture has managed Centro de Artes and showcased the works of more than 500 San Antonio artists. The City of San Antonio continues to support local artists and provide opportunities for them to show their works. Through a robust community-engaged process to develop the Centro de Artes Strategic Plan, overseen by the Centro de Artes Committee, the mission of celebrating and honoring Latino arts and culture, with a priority on showcasing San Antonio and regional artists, continues.

## *Centro de Artes Committee*

Yadhira Lozano, Chair (San Antonio Arts Commission Member, District 3)

Ellen Riojas Clark, Ph.D. (San Antonio Arts Commission Member, District 7)

Mari Sandoval (San Antonio Arts Commission Member, District 5)

Sarah Gould, Ph.D.

Nicole Amri

Gabriella Scott



