

# YEN OSPINA



I have always been an artist. But it wasn't until 2020 during the lockdown that I finally allowed myself to truly become one. What was stopping me before then? What stifled my expression? Why didn't I believe I could do this sooner? These questions and sensations, the process of confronting myself and the truth of my being in this life are what I have sought to explore and address in this series. The title Fluida Vida (Fluid Life) reflects the constant shifts and changes that we experience in life.

My hope is that this deeply personal exploration that takes place in abstract mixed media allows you, the viewer, to connect on a visceral level - beyond the words we have, in the field of emotions that have no name; that can only be felt in those secret spaces of the soul.

Through a series of abstract mixed media paint collages on canvas, I bring pieces of self that feel disparate into a unified whole. For me, this relates to the impact of the "American Dream" being internalized by my immigrant parents and the expectations placed on me as a child. Before I was ever conceived, it was their fierce love for the idea of me and their dreams for what their children could be in the United States that pulled my parents across borders to a strange land of possibility. I admire their tenacity deeply.

Everything I am, and all that I will become began with their love and bravery to face the unknown. Growing up, I felt pulled in what felt like two different directions. Being caught between two worlds, two ways of being, Colombian, American, never enough of

one and always too much of the other - in a way this creates an unresolvable impasse, in another way: I am forged as something new.

It became my purpose to live as my full and authentic self. This has meant becoming an artist in spite of the expectations of my parents, and overall unlearning of their fears, inhibitions, and beliefs that are not my own. Breaking generational trauma as a first generation Latinx American has allowed me to embody who I am and become the woman of my dreams. I can think of no better way to offer my story than through my art.

I have used a combination of oil paint, rubbing alcohol, acrylic paint, calligraphy ink, and mod podge on several canvases to express the internal journey of growth, perseverance and acceptance I have undergone while belonging to two distinct cultures. Each canvas is representative of a large moment of my life: acceptance, vulnerability, manipulation, abuse, expectation, defeat, valor, empathy, rage, and devotion. I chose each color, tone and hue to represent the embodiment of my experiences. By creating layers of lush color in abstract blooms of pigment, I aim to convey a universal experience of welling emotions for which words are inadequate. While I am describing my personal evolution, these pieces are completed by the unique internal landscape of each viewer; our silent dialogue. It is my hope that by showing up vulnerably, you will feel not only that you better know me, but also that you will receive the invitation to be vulnerable yourself.

My own battles may well continue, but I've turned the tide of progress to my favor, and that feels very aligned and worth celebrating! Thank you for being here and supporting my journey as an artist and as a fully realized human being.

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