

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contacts:

For MACLA: Alyssarhay Graciano
gallery@maclaarte.org
(408) 998 - 2783

For Montalvo Arts Center: Pallavi Nemali
pnemali@montalvoarts.org
(408) 961 - 5804

MACLA/Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana and Montalvo Arts Center jointly present ***From Their Hands to Ours***, an exhibition on view from December 5, 2025 - March 8, 2026. This exhibition is co-curated by MACLA's Visual Arts Curator, Alyssarhay Graciano and Montalvo Arts Center's Marcus Curatorial Fellow, Olivia Esparza. Debuting new work by Estefania Ajcip, Miguel Arzabe, rafa esparza, Edra Soto, and Arleene Correa Valencia, the exhibition weaves together stories of tradition, trauma, and growth through painting, sculpture, textile art, and video. The exhibition is in MACLA's gallery at 510 S. First St., San Jose, CA 95113.

From Their Hands to Ours invites visitors to explore the deep and persistent connections between childhood experiences and creative expression. Featuring the work of Estefania Ajcip, Miguel Arzabe, rafa esparza, Edra Soto, and Arleene Correa Valencia, the exhibition honors the narratives embedded in our early lives, showcasing how knowledge, stories, and traditions passed down by parents, elders, and ancestors are reflected in the artworks. These inherited stories shape the artists' identities and influence how they navigate the world, from the intimacy of personal relationships to the broader political climate.

Each artist weaves personal narrative into their work, using familiar materials to form new expressions and reimagining traditional crafts. Some draw direct inspiration from their childhood environments, while others challenge or reinterpret inherited legacies. Every artwork becomes a dialogue between past and present. **Estefania Ajcip** draws from her Guatemalan upbringing, touching upon her relationship with her father, to trace a journey of longing, migration, and resilience. **Miguel Arzabe** deconstructs paintings and reweaves them into new compositions that are inspired by Bolivian textile practice; he reflects on ancestry and memory through space and time. **rafa esparza** channels his Chicano heritage through adobe, as a nod to his relationship with his father, exploring the themes of family, labor, and home through adobe brick-making. **Edra Soto**'s practice examines diasporic identity and colonial histories that stem from her Puerto Rican childhood and current Chicago community. **Arleene Correa Valencia** reflects the experience of migration and displacement, transforming her immigrant narrative into visual explorations of belonging and identity.

Through a wide variety of materials and techniques, the artists in this exhibition reflect on tradition, trauma, and resilience. They grapple with essential questions that are reflected in their works: How do our personal histories bind us to our heritage? How do artists honor their elders while forging pathways for future generations? By linking the intimate experiences of childhood with the broader cultural and political narratives, ***From Their Hands to Ours*** demonstrates through its featured artworks how early life, memory, and inherited knowledge continue to shape contemporary artistic practice.

Exhibition Programs & Events

- **Exhibition Dates** | MACLA | Free Admission
MACLA: 510 S 1st St, San Jose, CA 95113 | Wednesday - Sunday 12 - 5 PM
Tuesday by special appointment, email: gallery@maclaarte.org
- **Artist Lecture** | SJSU's Tuesday Night Lecture Series | Free Admission
San José State University | Art Building Room 133 | 1 Washington Sq, San Jose, CA 95192 | Tuesday, December 2, 2025 from 5 - 6 PM
As part of SJSU's Tuesday Night Lecture Series, artist **Edra Soto** will give a talk co-presented by MACLA and Montalvo Arts Center.
- **Opening Reception** | South First Friday Artwalk | Free Admission
MACLA, Downtown San José | Friday, December 5, 2025
Celebrate the opening of ***From Their Hands to Ours*** during SoFA First Friday festivities.
- **MACLA South First Fridays** | 2026 | Free Admission
MACLA will welcome the public during San José's South First Fridays on February 6 and March 6, 2026, from 5-9:30 pm.

Participating Artist Biographies

Estefania Ajcip (b. Los Angeles, CA; lives and works in Long Beach, CA) was raised in Guatemala and received her B.F.A. from California State University, Long Beach. Her work explores longing, memory, and migration. Her art has been

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exhibited across the Los Angeles region, including La Plaza de Cultura y Arte and the Santa Barbara Museum. Ajcip has received awards, including First Place at the Consulate of Mexico, L.A., and recognition from the Lakers' In the Paint program. She is currently based in Long Beach, CA.

Miguel Arzabe (b. 1975, St. Louis, MO; lives and works in Oakland, CA) received an M.F.A. from UC Berkeley. Drawing from his Andean heritage, he reweaves deconstructed paintings into compositions that pay homage to traditional Bolivian textile practices. Recent solo shows include Shulamit Nazarian Gallery (Los Angeles, CA) and Johansson Projects (Oakland, CA), while his work is held in public collections such as the de Young Museum in San Francisco and Oakland Museum of California. Arzabe has previously participated in the Lucas Artists Residency Program in 2013/2014 via the Irvine Fellowship.

rafa esparza (b. 1981, Los Angeles, CA; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) received a B.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles. In an effort to mend their relationship after coming out, rafa asked his father to teach him how to make adobe bricks, an activity rooted in tradition and shared labor. rafa continues to explore the intricate themes of Chicano and queer culture, labor issues, racism, and topics of the home. Recent solo/two-person exhibitions include Americas Society (New York) and Commonwealth and Council (Mexico City). esparza has previously participated in the Lucas Artists Residency Program as the Santa Clara University Fellow (MLAP/SCU Fellow) in 2020.

Edra Soto (b. Puerto Rico; lives and works in Chicago, IL) is an educator whose work addresses themes of cultural identity, colonial legacies, and social order, drawing from her Puerto Rican upbringing. Recent solo exhibitions include The Sculpture Center (Cleveland) and Maine College of Art & Design. She has received numerous public commissions, including the Public Art Fund at Central Park (New York) and the Boston Public Art Triennial. Soto has previously participated in the Lucas Artists Residency Program as a 3arts awardee.

Arleene Correa Valencia (b. 1993, Michoacán, Mexico; lives and works in Napa, CA) received her MFA from California College of the Arts. A beneficiary of DACA (Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals), she immigrated with her family from Arteaga, Michoacan, to California's Napa Valley in 1997. Correa Valencia's practice explored themes of migration, belonging, and identity. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, Crocker Art Museum, and Utah Museum of Fine Arts.

About MACLA (maclaarte.org)

MACLA/Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana is an inclusive contemporary arts space grounded in the Latinx experience that incubates new visual, literary and performance art in order to engage people in civic dialogue and community transformation.

About Montalvo Arts Center (montalvoarts.org)

Montalvo Arts Center is a member-supported multidisciplinary nonprofit organization whose mission is to enrich the lives of all people through the arts. Located in Silicon Valley's Saratoga hills, Montalvo occupies a stunning 175 acre public park and is home to the Sally and Don Lucas Artists Program (LAP), the Carriage House Performing Arts Series, and a robust arts education program.

About the Marcus Curatorial Fellowship Montalvo's Sally and Don Lucas Artists Program (LAP) established the Marcus Curatorial Fellowship in 2024 through a generous gift made by the George and Judy Marcus Family Foundation. The fellowship provides emerging Bay Area future thought leaders an opportunity to work with living artists of all disciplines and to create and develop original public programming. Inaugural curatorial fellows, Olivia Esparza and Clara Kamunde have helped foster various programs during their first year and then curated their own project in the second year.

From Their Hands to Ours is a collaboration between Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana (MACLA) and Montalvo Arts Center's Lucas Artists Program. The exhibition is made possible by the George and Judy Marcus Family Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, the Jo and Barry Ariko Fund for Artistic Programs, Heritage Bank, Silicon Valley Creates, and Santa Clara County. It is presented with gratitude and appreciation for the Lucas Artists Program Committee, and the many partners who invest in MACLA and Montalvo Arts Center to ensure the cultural vibrancy of our Bay Area community.