

BOTANICAL SENSATIONS

A “family affair” exhibition featuring the work of mother and daughter Carmen Oliver and Daniela Oliver de Portillo. During the pandemic both artists used their studio practice to heal and distill the intense emotions brought on by uncertainty and solitude. Without realizing it or discussing it, both artists—whose work had always been markedly different—turned to the botanical and natural world as inspiration and a point of departure for creating two distinctly unique emotional manifestations. Their simultaneously and unintentional use of plants as subject matter is a reflection on family ties, intuitive connections, and the unbreakable bond between mother’s and daughters.

CARMEN OLIVER

FOR THE LOVE OF FLOWERS



The paintings in Carmen Oliver’s most recent body of work are a nostalgic reflection on the artist’s childhood and home country, Mexico. From a young age, Oliver was overcome with emotion when visiting markets and taking in the bright bold colors of the flowers and produce. Since childhood and through her life, Oliver has had intense love for art and for nature, especially flowers. As a young adult, she owned a successful flower shop with her sister and mother where she created intricate and bright flower arrangements. Oliver’s recent work *For the Love of Flowers*, reflects on the natural world and takes a nostalgic look at the course of the artist’s life. For most 2020, was a year of reflection and introspection, Oliver worked on these paintings as a way to reconnect with her past and celebrate life for what it is.

Carmen Oliver holds a degree in restoration and museography from Manuel del Castillo Negrete National School in Mexico City (1985), and a certificate in painting conservation from the Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City (1990). She credits artist Louise Nishizawa in Toluca Mexico, and Alberto Mijangos from San Antonio as her most influential mentors. Carmen moved

San Antonio in 2002 after studying at the Academia San Carols in Mexico. Five years later she established El Estudio in her home where she currently teaches private lessons in art mixed media

Oliver combines abstract and representational elements in her painting. Her recent works are a depiction of “beauty, strength, and sensibility” engendered in the form of faceless women. Solo exhibitions include: Main Line School in Philadelphia (1996); Universidad Anahuac, Mexico City (1999); Palacio municipal in San Miguel Allende (1990); Group exhibits include Biennale Internazionale d’Arte Contemporanea de Firenze, Italy (1999); Hacienda de los Morales, Mexico City (2000); and the Mexico-Japan Association, Mexico City (2001).

Paintings are: 48x60, 30x40, 36 x 48.

DANIELA OLIVER

INVASIVE SPECIES: A COLLABORATION WITH TODDLERS



The drawings in Oliver de Portillo's *Invasive Species: A Collaboration with Toddlers* is a spontaneous and unassuming collaboration with the artist's preschool children. Born out of an accident where a botanical line drawing was left unattended and scribbled on by Oliver's two year-old son, The series reflects on the difficulty caretakers have in maintaining a sense of self or individuality, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather than resist the invasive and curious nature of young children and their constant desire to participate in the artist's work, Oliver created daily botanical line drawings with journal like entries and left them unattended for her children to explore with diverse art materials. The resulting works from this collaborative exercise is a symbol of the unique symbiosis between young children and their parents, all of which has been heightened by isolation and home-bound nature of the pandemic.

Daniela Oliver de Portillo is an artist living and working in San Antonio, Texas. Originally from Mexico City, Oliver and her family moved to the United States in 2002. She recently returned to a studio practice after a decade-long hiatus, in

her work she reflects on the domestic, child rearing, and self-imposed standards of female perfection influenced by society, social media, and contemporary women. In addition to her work as an artist, Oliver is a public relations and marketing consultant with a focus on non-profit cultural institutions.

All drawings are 11x14 inches.

Image: Daniela Oliver de Portillo, *Invasive Species: A Collaboration with Toddlers. Everything is Just Going on Everywhere. Rodrigo, 2020*. Ink, watercolor, and Crayola on paper. 11 x 14

Click [HERE](#) to see the rest of the series.