



18TH STREET CAMPUS
1639 18TH STREET
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90404

T 310.453.3711 (18TH ST)
T 424.384.5005 (AIRPORT)

AIRPORT CAMPUS
3026 AIRPORT AVENUE
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90405

18THSTREET.ORG

Press Contact:

Jazmyn Beauchan

jbeauchan@18thstreet.org

[Images for Press](#)

**A SURREAL BLEND OF DREAMS AND DAILY LIFE
CONVERGE IN PAINTINGS AND WORKS ON PAPER BY KARLA DIAZ**



Karla Diaz, *Dona Juana* (from *Swap meet series*), 2023. Watercolor and ink on paper. 24 x 18". Courtesy of the artist and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles.

Santa Monica, CA (February 1, 2024) – 18th Street Arts Center (18SAC) is pleased to present **Karla Diaz: Wait 'til Your Mother Gets Home**, the artist's first institutional solo exhibition in the Los Angeles area. The exhibition consists of 37 new and recent works on paper and paintings, along with an installation that commemorates Rubén Salazar, the civil rights activist and *Los Angeles Times* reporter murdered in 1970. The exhibition is on view in the Propeller Gallery at 18SAC's Airport Campus, 3026 Airport Ave., from February 17 - June 22, 2024. In addition, five



18TH STREET CAMPUS
1639 18TH STREET
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90404

T 310.453.3711 (18TH ST)
T 424.384.5005 (AIRPORT)

AIRPORT CAMPUS
3026 AIRPORT AVENUE
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90405

18THSTREET.ORG

self-portraits will be mounted on large-scale banners on 18SAC's Glider Wall, a publicly visible, outdoor, street-facing space. An opening reception will take place on Saturday, February 17 from 5-7 PM with an artist walkthrough at 5:30 PM. [Related public program details may be found here.](#)

The title of the exhibition, “wait ‘til your mother gets home,” is a familiar expression Diaz heard frequently from her aunt, who stayed with her after school as a young girl. The phrase is often an admonition, yet it can also be a pleasurable forecast, a request, or a taunt. Toggling between the domestic sphere and the world at large, the phrase suggests a conflation of past and future that is familiar to Diaz. Her artworks operate simultaneously in multiple worlds, those of her dreams as well as the everyday. Diaz’s vivid, narrative paintings and works on paper depict portraits and landscapes of people and places that inform her memories growing up in Los Angeles and México. ***Karla Diaz: Wait ‘til Your Mother Gets Home*** features recent works on paper and canvas that focus on American Mexican identity from the 1970s to the present, emphasizing a cultural context of social upheaval and justice through the artist’s explorations of recollection and imagination.

The Silver Dollar (2021) is a work on paper that forms the centerpiece of an installation that commemorates Rubén Salazar, the civil rights activist and *Los Angeles Times* reporter murdered on August 29, 1970, the day of the National Chicano Moratorium protest against the Vietnam War. Following the march, Salazar was having a beer at The Silver Dollar, a neighborhood bar in East Los Angeles, when a tear-gas projectile, fired by a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy, struck and killed him instantly. Salazar’s early distinction among journalists in mainstream media stemmed from his unwavering support for the Chicano movement as a Mexican-American, which also earned him an FBI file. Salazar’s activism and tragic death remain an important galvanizing force in Diaz’s community, the greater Los Angeles area, and beyond.

Karla Diaz: Wait ‘til Your Mother Gets Home has been organized by Irene Georgia Tsatsos, artist and Curator-at-Large at 18SAC. Support for this exhibition comes from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, a state agency, and Luis De Jesus Los Angeles.



18TH STREET CAMPUS
1639 18TH STREET
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90404

T 310.453.3711 (18TH ST)
T 424.384.5005 (AIRPORT)

AIRPORT CAMPUS
3026 AIRPORT AVENUE
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90405

18THSTREET.ORG

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Photo by Lluvia Higuera

Karla Diaz is a writer, teacher, and multidisciplinary artist who engages in painting, installation, video, and performance. Using narrative to question identity, institutional power, and explore memory, her socially engaged practice generates exciting collaborations and provokes important dialogue among diverse communities. Notably, she is the co-founder of the socially engaged collective and community artist space Slanguage. Critical discourse is central to her practice as she explores social, subcultural, and marginalized stories.

In her introspection, splashes of color become figures and objects that transform into scenes of domesticity and city life drawn from her upbringing in Mexico and Los Angeles. Personal memories, folklore, familiar iconography of her Mexican heritage, and American pop culture are intertwined in surreal compositions that consider family, loss, and the complexities of the Latinx experience in the United States. As Diaz expresses, “these works reveal meaning in relation to others, to experience, to memory, to story, to dreams and dreamers, to imagination and to the larger context of home.”

Karla Diaz was born in Los Angeles. She received an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia in 2003 and a BA from California State University Los Angeles in 1999. Her works have been exhibited nationally and internationally at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, California State University Los Angeles, and LAXART, all in Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego Pitzer College, Claremont, CA; San Jose Museum of Art, CA; Institute for Contemporary Art, Boston; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit; the Serpentine Gallery, London; and Museo



18TH STREET CAMPUS
1639 18TH STREET
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90404

AIRPORT CAMPUS
3026 AIRPORT AVENUE
SANTA MONICA, CA, 90405

T 310.453.3711 (18TH ST)
T 424.384.5005 (AIRPORT)

18THSTREET.ORG

Case de Cervantes, Madrid. Her work is in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, and Inhotim Museum, Brumadinho, Brazil. Diaz has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards from Art Matters, New York; Tiffany Foundation, New York; City of Los Angeles; Riverside Art Museum, CA; and California Institute of the Arts. Karla Diaz lives and works in Los Angeles. (biography from Luis De Jesus Los Angeles)

<https://www.luisdejesus.com/artists/karla-diaz>

<https://www.instagram.com/karladiatz76/>

ABOUT 18TH STREET ARTS CENTER

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2018-2019, 18th Street Arts Center is the largest residency program in Southern California. Conceived as a radical think tank in the shape of an artist community, 18th Street supports artists from around the globe to imagine, research, and develop significant, meaningful new artworks and share them with the public. We strive to provide artists the space and time to take risks, to foster the ideal environment for artists and the public to directly engage, and to create experiences and partnerships that foster positive social change.

18SAC's gallery and event spaces are fully accessible, with ground level entrances with no steps. Upon requests for assistance, 18SAC will make programmatic aspects of projects available in accessible alternative formats. You may email requests or questions to communications@18thstreet.org.

Gallery hours are Monday, Wednesday-Friday 11 AM-5 PM; Tuesday 2-5 PM; and Saturday 12-5 PM. Walk-ins are welcome.

Additional information : 18thstreet.org

Follow 18th Street on social media:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/18thStreetArts>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/18thStreetArts>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/18thstreetarts>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/18thStreetArts>