

# Orquidia Violeta - Artist Biography

Orquidia Violeta is a Salvadoran-American textile artist. Growing up in a dirt-floored farmhouse in Central America, she remembers the embroidered pink dress her mother sent her from the US. Orquidia crossed the US border as a six-year-old refugee and went on to earn an Associate of the Arts degree from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. Orquidia co-founded LaborFruit — a prominent artist-cooperative storefront and gallery specializing in clothing as an artform.

At LaborFruit and around Los Angeles, Orquidia created colorful wearable artworks and performances. For the annual *Ofrendas: Calavera Fashion Show and Walking Altars*, her elaborate costumed multi-person performances were featured for eight years. Orquidia sold her work at the Hollywood Farmers Market on a *Boutique on a Bike*. Orquidia moved to Portland Oregon in 2013, advancing her car-free and localized salvage production methods.

Orquidia won Best Cultural Outfit at the first ever Día de Muertos celebration at the Portland Art Museum. She danced in her *Vestido de Calaveras*, a hoop-skirted black gown covered in colorful applique calaveras representing the women who died in the Salvadoran Civil War. In 2019 she won second place in the *SHIFT: House of the Absurd Runway Show* for her *Looming Objects* — A nonsensical process-driven woven sculptural costume of neo-primitive materials.

Last year, Orquidia's *Madrina* was selected for the Small Works Collection of the City of Portland. A portrait of her Godmother, the piece is part of the Social Landscape of Portland on display in the remodeled Portland Building. The City of Seattle acquired a small piece for their Portable Works Collection, and Portland collected Orquidia's *Árbol de la Vida*, a large tapestry depicting a Día de Muertos tree of life.