



## Press Kit

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Boom Oaxaca: Conversaciones de Campo a Campo

March 4th, 2022-August 14, 2022

Opening Reception  
Saturday, March 5th, 2022  
5:00-7:00 P.M.  
Calenda begins at 5:30 P.M.

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## Introduction

*Boom Oaxaca* is an invitation to participate in local and transnational conversations around food sovereignty and Indigenous sovereignty as issues that uniquely converge in the Central Valley's Oaxaqueño community. *Boom Oaxaca* is guided by the work of Narsiso Martinez and Tlacolulokos, who use self-representation and visibility as an act of political rebellion, and as an autonomous approach to an ownership of culture. Grounded in the context of both Oaxaca and California, these artists create images of often invisibilized spaces, and in turn demand attention and humanize the experiences of their community. This exhibition is not just about representation, but about acknowledging communities that are reimagining their own futures, through art and cultural practices which are deeply rooted in the preservation of history and culture.

*Boom Oaxaca* brings together newly commissioned works created through conversations with local community members in diverse media that demonstrate an

approach to artmaking that is rooted in social and community-based art practices. Narsiso Martinez presents portraits that humanize farmworkers and the food that “magically” reaches our plate or grocery store—giving glimpses into intimate moments of mealtimes in the fields among family, and in community. Drawing from Social Realism and his experiences as a farmworker, Martinez’s portraits in charcoal on reclaimed produce boxes channel the materiality of working in the fields. Building on the Mexican muralist tradition in what is termed a new “Neo-Muralism” movement in México, Tlacolulokos is known for their large scale public art that draws our attention to the effects transnationalism, migration, and tourism has had on people, culture, and style, through portraits of Indigenous Oaxaqueños juxtaposing traditional garments with US Cholo culture. Accompanying these artists are printmaking collectives whose practices grew out of student uprisings in 2006 including Subterráneos, Taller Bambú, Gabinete Gráfico, and women-centered printmaking collective Hoja Santa. This convergence of socially engaged approaches to artmaking—which have developed inside and outside of gallery and artworld spaces—highlight how Indigenous communities are not living in the traditional past but growing and adapting through their own culture.

This exhibition centers the experience, knowledge systems, and cultural production of Indigenous artists and community members who have often been erased from mainstream narratives and from within Latinidad. Through this exhibition, we have a unique role and responsibility within our community to delve deeper into a collective understanding of Indigeneity, nationalism, and racism. We hope to create a comfortable space to have uncomfortable conversations.

## About the Artists

### Narsiso Martinez

**Narsiso Martinez** (b. 1977, Santa Cruz Papalutla, Oaxaca, Mexico) migrated to the US when he was 20 years old and worked for 9 years in the apple orchards of Eastern Washington to finance his education. In 2018, he received a Master of Fine Arts degree in drawing and painting from California State University Long Beach, and was awarded the prestigious Dedalus Foundation MFA Fellowship in Painting and Sculpture. Martinez lives and works in Long Beach.

Narsiso Martinez’s drawings and mixed media installations include individual portraits and multi-figure compositions of farm laborers set against the agricultural landscapes and brand designs of grocery store produce boxes. Drawn from his own experience as a farmworker, Martinez’s work focuses on the people performing the

labors that are the foundation of our food systems—filling produce sections and restaurant kitchens around the country. Martinez’s portraits of farmworkers build on the materiality of working in the fields with earth-like charcoal drawn across reclaimed boxes.

Martinez combines portrait and landscape, moving away from traditional American landscapes of vast land ownership or of the settler’s fantasy West, instead creating *Critical Landscapes* that prompt unsettling questions about ownership, asking the viewer to think about the relationship between land, labor, and power. In the tradition of Social Realism, his images reframe power in the hands of the workers. The subjects of his portraits are the main characters, upfront in a single portrait or in the foreground of a larger landscape focusing on the humanity of farmworkers and daily life working in the fields.

In this exhibition we see artwork that spans eight years of Martinez’s art production from 2014 to 2022, with two new commissioned works created from a residency visiting communities in the Central Valley.

## Tlacolulokos

**Tlacolulokos** (e. 2006)—Dario Canul (b. 1986, Tlacolula, Oaxaca, Mexico) and Cosijoesa Cernas (b. 1992, Tlacolula, Oaxaca, Mexico). Tlacolulokos is a collective of self-taught artists that formed during the uprisings of 2006 in Oaxaca. Tlacolulokos have shown internationally, including exhibitions in Lille, France, the LA Public Library, and MOLAA Long Beach. They currently live and work in Tlacolula.

Tlacolulokos collective are self-taught artists with a do-it-yourself attitude deeply seeded in a tradition of political rebellion and anarchy. Their work takes place on the street and within traditional art spaces, combining different styles from street art to graffiti, photography, screen printing, and other media. Through their work, Tlacolulokos offers a reflection of local reality, and the problems and challenges of their place of origin as well as the influences of migration and deportation. They often juxtapose the experience of Indigeneity, living between “traditional” and “contemporary.” Filled with references to pre-colonial Mesoamerican iconography, Tlacolulokos develops an extensive visual language that speaks to the people in what is termed “barrio logos,” or sharing didactic socio-political, historical, and religious references.

The style of their work is connected to Mexico’s contemporary Neo-muralist style that breaks from the Mexican Muralist tradition, often utilizing singular or few figures rather than densely populated murals. In this way, Neo-muralism style takes on an anarchist critique of the monolithic Mexican Muralist Movement and their tie-ins with official government processes, and instead takes back public space with the influence of quick graffiti styles and direct actions.

In this exhibition, Tlacolulokos worked with local community members to develop images and iconography that reflects Fresno and the Central Valley. You will see iconic

phrases like “The Best Little City in the USA“ as well as the bold use of the color red as a nod to local gang culture.

### Accompanying artists:

Hoja Santa (A graphic art workshop run by women)  
 Taller Bambú (Visual artist collective specializing in printmaking)  
 Gabinete Gráfico (Printmaking collective open to all artistic creators)  
 Subterráneos (Printmaking collective with a socio-political emphasis)  
 Adán Avalos (Filmmaker–“El Espíritu de la Danza”)  
 Yolanda Cruz (Filmmaker–“Tlacolulokos”)  
 Anthony Puente (Filmmaker–“Farm Fresh”)  
 Saraí Ramos Gonzalez (Cultural Steward and Land Steward Storytelling Map)  
 Adrianna Sorondo (Youth Gallery Botanical Illustrations)

### Artist Residency:

Narsiso Martinez will complete the second part of his month-long residency from January 26th-February 12th.

## Public Programs

For specific times and dates please visit “Events” calendar at BoomOaxaca.com

**March 5, 2022 - Opening Reception w/ Centro Binacional Para El Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño**

**April 2- August 6- Art & Culture Workshops**

From April to August, workshops will be held every 1st Saturday of the month. Stay tuned for more information about dates/times, and fees.

**\*Kids Maize Planting Workshop**

In this bilingual workshop, children will plant their own corn native to Oaxaca. In the spirit of Indigenous practices from La Mixteca Region in Oaxaca, they will sing a fun song, listen to a story, and learn about the earth elements needed to grow corn. They'll plant seeds to take home where they can watch the maize grow.

**\*Language Workshop**

Featuring guest lecturer and Mixtec language scholar Miguel Villegas. Workshop will be an exploration of the Mixteco language and culture and will introduce the process of preservation and practice of this Indigenous language.

**Bordado & Huipil**

The beautiful and intricate embroidered flowers and grecas are traditions spanning generations. A guest artisan will guide participants in basic embroidery styles and techniques. Participants will also learn the basics needed to make their own huipil, a traditional style of blouse. Two day workshop. Registration required.

**\*Dance/Movement Workshop**

The Fresno area is a hotbed for Mexican Folklorico and Mexico's southern Oaxaca region is full of a variety of folk and indigenous dances. Local Indigenous dancers will guide a day-long workshop sharing choreography as well as historical and cultural context of dances from the Oaxaca region.

**\*Printmaking Workshop**

Master class taught by a special guest print maker. This workshop is designed for those interested in honing their craft, artists, art students and others.

**April 9 - Tianguis**

This open-air market will be held in the plaza at Arte Américas and will feature local musicians such as Miguel Villegas, a trilingual rapper, local food and art vendors and family art-making workshops related to the exhibition. The tianguis is an opportunity to bring together a community of Oaxacan artists from varied disciplines to sell their artwork, artesanía, and other goods. This event will be hosted in conjunction with our partner Dulce Upfront, a local arts collective known for their multi-generational, multimedia arts & culture events.

**May 28 - Foodways Panel**

In both Oaxaca state and the California Central Valley agriculture plays a pivotal role for Oaxacan and Indigenous communities. With many Indigenous families making a livelihood in California's agricultural industry this conversation will highlight the realities and challenges this community faces. All panelists have unique experiences working within the various realms of food production, advocacy and policy making around food sovereignty.

**June 18- Curator Tour #1 w/ CBDIO**

These guided tours will be designed to give guests a deeper dive into the multiple and complex themes present in the featured works.

**July 16 - Artist Talk w/ Tlacolulokos (Virtual Event)**

**August 14 - Exhibition Closes--Curator Tour #2**

These guided tours will be designed to give guests a deeper dive into the multiple and complex themes present in the featured works.

## School Tours

Now booking schools tours on Thursdays for you and your students to view the exhibition with trained docents and artmaking workshops. If you are a local educator and need more

information please contact: **Jesus Pelayo**, Educational Programming Assistant,  
[info.boomoaxaca@gmail.com](mailto:info.boomoaxaca@gmail.com)

# Planning to Visit Boom Oaxaca at Arte Américas

Address: 1630 Van Ness Ave. Fresno, CA 93721  
Phone: (559) 268-6240 Email: [info@arteamericas.org](mailto:info@arteamericas.org)

Hours of Operation: Open from Thursday through Sunday 12pm-5pm.

Arte Américas is centrally located in downtown Fresno with easy access from Highways 99, 41, and 180. We have free parking on site and there is city-owned paid parking directly across the street.

Please note, regular daily admission is \$5 per person and \$3 for children. Children under 5 are free. Free admission for Members. To make art accessible to everyone regardless of socio-economic status, no guest will be turned away for lack of funds. See “Events” at [BoomOaxaca.com](http://BoomOaxaca.com) for additional fees.

## Book

The exhibition catalogue *Boom Oaxaca: Conversaciones de Campo a Campo* including essays by Xochitl Flores-Marcial Professor at Cal State Northridge, Jorge Ramirez Lopez Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Dartmouth College, Sarait Martinez Executive Director at the Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño, Brenda Nicolas Professor at Loyola Marymount University, Rosalba Lopez Ramirez founder of Black Zocalo, and an interview between the artists, will be available for purchase in person and online in April.

## Online Resources

Throughout the run of the exhibition, the museum will release digital resources that allow online visitors to experience the exhibition virtually and learn more about its featured artists and partners. In April, a 360-degree virtual tour of the exhibition will be available online. These resources and more will be available at [BoomOaxaca.com](http://BoomOaxaca.com).

## About Arte Américas

Arte Américas is a multidisciplinary arts center located in Downtown Fresno, California. For the past 35 years, Arte has drawn an annual audience of 25,000+ people and is driven by the support of hundreds of volunteers who give over 10,000 hours of their time per year. In our five galleries, we have mounted over 300 exhibits, both local and touring exhibitions. In our outdoor plaza performance space, we have presented over 400 concerts and multiple community events, including performances by Lila Downs & Tito Puente. We also support a large folklórico dance community of over 30 groups. We host numerous educational and literary workshops and presentations, with classroom spaces and a small library. We also continue to document and expand our understanding of the Latinx experience in California and nationwide by investing in knowledge production and creating exhibitions that focus on local Latinx history. Our programs bring together local scholars, culture bearers, activists, and community members to engage in conversations about key issues affecting the Latinx community of the Central Valley.

## About McClatchy

The McClatchy Fresno Arts Endowment aspires to establish Fresno as a creative and cultural arts hub and elevate the region as an arts destination. By celebrating the diverse Oaxacan communities of the Central Valley, we hope that people see their own struggles and triumphs reflected in the exhibition, and that the public gains a deeper understanding of this community, feels connected, and are transformed.

## About Centro Binacional

The Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO) was created in 1993 by [the Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales \(FIOB\)](#) to serve the indigenous migrant communities from the state of Oaxaca, Mexico that reside in California, United States (US). Each of our communities have its own language and culture that differentiate us from one another, however all indigenous people face similar problems in our hometowns, as well as to the places we have migrated.

Since its foundation as a non-profit entity, CBDIO has been dedicated to implement projects on worker's rights, which provides orientation, education, training, counseling and referrals.

CBDIO works for and with the indigenous communities, to identify the most pressing problems and needs that affect our communities.

# Curatorial Team

Full Bios can be found at [BoomOaxaca.com](http://BoomOaxaca.com) under “About” tab

Tony Carranza // Creative Direction & Gallery Management

Lilia Chavez // Project Oversight & Administration

Veronica Chavez // Education Programming Development

Carissa Garcia // Research & Project Development

Yenedit Mendez Avendaño // Research Specialist

Jesus Pelayo // Lead Docent & Educational Programming Assistant

# Partners & Sponsors



**JAMES B. MCCLATCHY**  
FOUNDATION

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Centro Binacional Para El Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño and the Fresno Arts Council

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Jeffrey Garcia