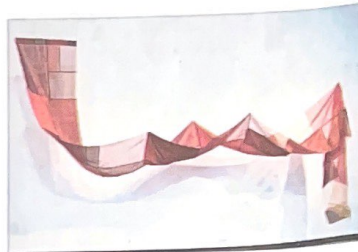


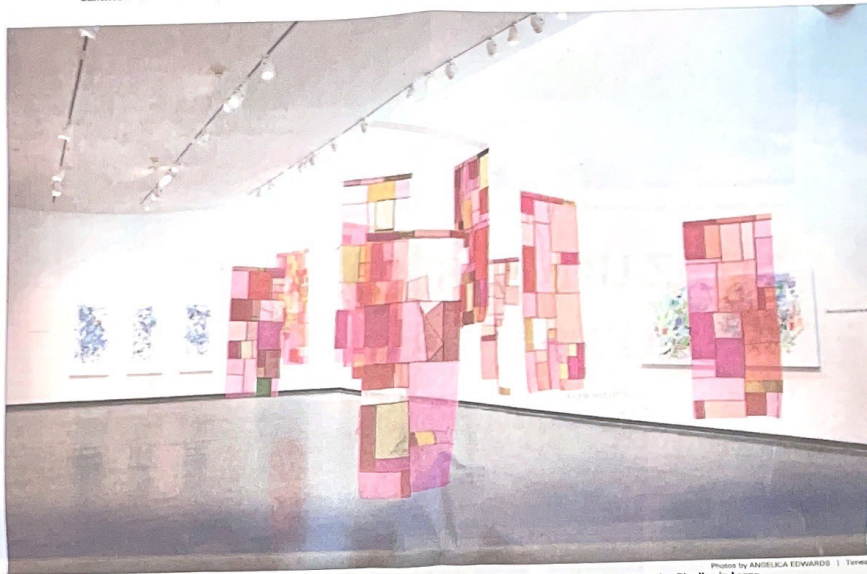
ARTS & CULTURE



Sánchez's "Love Calls You by Your Name" exudes movement.

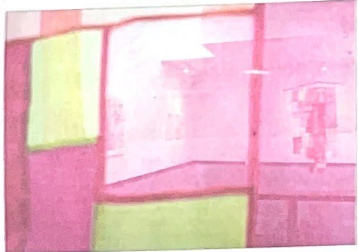


"When the Clouds Fly the Moon Travels" is among Sánchez's paintings.



Photos by ANIELKA EDWARDS | Times

Bojagi constructions are displayed in Yolanda Sánchez's "Out of Eden" exhibition, which runs through April 16 at the Gallery at Creative Pinellas in Largo.



"The Body is a Fiesta" is seen through "Laughter in the Garden."



The textiles on view include "With a Full Heart."

Lose yourself in light and color

Cuban American artist Yolanda Sánchez creates a lovely world of paintings and textiles in "Out of Eden" at Creative Pinellas.

BY MAGGIE DUFFY
Times Staff Writer

LARGO — Oftentimes in life, what the soul really needs is pure, unadulterated beauty. You can find it in the work of Cuban American artist Yolanda Sánchez, on display in the exhibition "Out of Eden" at the Gallery at Creative Pinellas through April 16.

Given that the gallery shares the same Pinewood Park campus with the Florida Botanical Gardens, the beauty of nature is all around and is what Sánchez is responding to in her lush paintings and delicate textiles.

She is based in Miami, so while the gallery's locale wasn't the exact influence, Sánchez's palette is a sumptuous kaleidoscope of the colors of Florida and a mastery of the light here.

Sánchez said that her work in both mediums is about place. Yet this exhibition is the first time the bodies of work have been shown together.

"The relationship really

between the two is color and light and rhythm, if you will, because there's rhythm in the painting and there's rhythm in the textile work," she said during a phone interview.

The effect is that of walking through an ethereal garden, hence the title, "Out of Eden."

Sánchez's process often starts with palette, and she truly never knows where it will end up. She said the works speak to her and the ideas go back and forth, which she likened to a jazz call-and-response.

Coming with the palette of pinks, blues, greens, yellows, reds and oranges, the paintings are alive with gestures that fleet across the canvases, as with "When the Clouds Fly the Moon Travels."

Sánchez has an impressive background. She has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and has practiced and taught psychology for 30 years. Later in life, she earned a masters of fine arts in painting from Yale University. Among her many achievements, she founded MIA Galleries, Miami Inter-

national Airport's arts and exhibitions program.

After taking a workshop from renowned fiber artist Changhie Lee at the Penland School of Craft in North Carolina, Sánchez learned the Korean technique of Bojagi. The centuries-old art form began with the practice of wrapping objects in leftover pieces of fabric, or stitching the pieces together to form something new.

Sánchez took to the aesthetic of transparent fabric (in her case, silk organza) and the stitching technique, and her work was noticed by Lee. She has subsequently shown her work in South Korea on several occasions.

The transparency of the fabrics is a key element of the works, Sánchez said. Some of the panels let so much light through you can see to the other side of the room.

The sense of movement, or rhythm, in the textiles is unleashed by the way they're hung. With "Love Calls You by Your Name," even the shadows on the wall dance.



"Devoted" by Sánchez.

When Sánchez layers fabrics in bunches, it's as if the form is coming to life. One can imagine "With a Full Heart" displayed as if arms are reaching out, suddenly animating to wrap around in an embrace.

Sánchez said she strives to conjure joy and beauty with her work, believing our behavior can be affected by those things. A peaceful afternoon spent in the presence of these works proves she's right.

IF YOU GO
Out of Eden
The exhibition is on view through April 16. Free. The Gallery at Creative Pinellas, 12211 Walsingham Road, Largo. Noon-5 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday. 727-582-2172. creativepinellas.org.

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