

FLORENCE SOLIS

Toronto, ON

BIOGRAPHY

Florence Solis is a Filipino-Canadian artist practicing in Toronto, Canada. She received her B.Des in Environmental Design from OCAD University in 2012. Her multi-disciplinary background is reflected through the process and aesthetic of her work. As a self-taught artist and professional designer, her work intersects between traditional portraiture and digital design to create dynamic contemporary compositions.

ARTIST STATEMENT

The pieces for Doppelgänger weren't a conscious effort to reflect my own disengagement with my identity as a woman and Filipino. It was more of a realization as I continued to paint these figures and look back on my own journey with why I started painting again. As an immigrant and adolescent trying to navigate a new country, I unconsciously decided to cut ties with my former self to assimilate in a new culture, that included drawing and painting. I focused on creating a counterpart that felt more aligned with what was expected from me, to justify the sacrifices made everyday by a diasporic community seeking a better life.

In many ways, I see the figures in my work as a reflection of myself and the idea of having a doppelgänger; a duplicate of oneself but is never true. As a part of a diasporic community, much of our identity gets lost in transition and we recreate a version of ourselves that we hope to be. This process aims to transform but ultimately, there will always be a core to our being that remains unchanged.

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WALL SPACE GALLERY

358 Richmond Rd, Ottawa, ON, K2A 0E8 | 613.729.0003 | info@wallspacegallery.ca



Exhibition Statement – Doppelgänger

Tiffany April - Curator

Wall Space Gallery is proud to host Florence Solis' debut solo exhibition *Doppelgänger* which expands beyond traditional portraiture to capture the complexities of the self. Solis' paintings point to our existence within multiple realities. As we navigate the social, political, and personal frameworks that tell us who we are 'supposed' to be, we are often confronted with feelings of dissonance as our internal desires collide against the walls of expectation. Through undulating ribbons of colour that fragment and multiply fictitious figures, Solis navigates the balancing act of our internal psyche and our carefully curated external world.

However multiplicitious our personas, all are a part of us. It is the process of puzzling these seemingly incongruous pieces together, to understand them as a balanced whole, that interests Solis. As a Filipino-Canadian, who moved to Canada at the age of 12, Solis experienced years of reinventing herself within a new culture amidst new found pressures to achieve and assimilate. Solis' body of work since 2017 is a chronicle of her journey of rediscovering her doppelgänger – her 12-year-old self, prior to relocating to a new country – within her identity as a woman, artist, and member of the Filipino diaspora.

Solis paints mainly female figures in a desire to present the complexities of the definition of 'woman,' beyond the two-dimensional conceptions of patriarchal and cultural histories. Solis is particularly drawn to the female gaze when choosing her source imagery. The women she uses as inspiration are often pulled from the media – internet, magazines, and fashion photography and from a variety of cultural backgrounds. In her selection process, Solis finds the tellingly subtle expressions in eyes immensely powerful. Often her figures' gazes pierce ours, drawing us into a conversation and confronting us with their own manifold existence.

Working through a process of digital collage translated into acrylic on canvas, Solis brings to light the shallow borders between reality and illusion. Serpentine forms draw us in to contemplate the exchange between suggestions of texture and seamless colour. Though her compositions are intricate, Solis pursues and achieves a sense of harmony. The fracturing of her figures, an act that might suggest discomfort, instead suggests that this is a natural state.

Solis' abstract forms are reminiscent of Photoshop's 'paint' or 'eraser' tools, which in single strokes can create or reveal in a plethora of layers. This act of concealing and revealing speaks to what we choose to reveal about our inner world. Her repetition of forms through multiplicity asks us to consider which layers are real and which are fake. Often times we create internal narratives to define ourselves which do not resonate with our true self – how do we deconstruct this figure and reassemble her into a truer balanced form?

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CV

EDUCATION

2012 OCAD University, Bachelor of Design in Environmental Design

EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 *Doppelgänger*, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2022 (Upcoming) Solo Show, Duran Mashaal Gallery, Montreal, QC
2021 *Begin Again*, Wall Space Gallery, Ottawa, ON
2020 *Mainspring*, Soho House, Toronto, ON
2020 *The Artist Project*, Better Living Centre, Toronto, ON
2020 *Interior Design Show* (Suite 22 Booth), Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON
2019 *Toronto Outdoor Art Fair*, Nathan Philips Square, Toronto, ON
2019 *Howard Park Institute Window Gallery*, Toronto, ON
2019 *The Artist Project*, Better Living Centre, Toronto, ON
2018 *Toronto Artwalk*, (Honourable Mention), Artwalk in the Square, North York, ON
2018 *Pixel & Bristle*, The Drake Underground, Toronto, ON
2018 *VAM Exhibition*, (2nd place), Evergreen Brickworks, Toronto, ON
2017 *REversion*, Superwonder Gallery, Toronto, ON

Collaborations

- The Daniels Corporation
- Earl's Kitchen + Bar
- Fitzrovia Real Estate Inc.
- Collective Arts Brewing
- Asana

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