

***“DESDE EL CHARCO”***  
**SOLO EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY ISABELLA MELLADO**  
**OPENING IN THE YOUNGARTS GALLERY IN MIAMI**  
**NOVEMBER 9, 2023**

Exhibition will be on view through Miami Art Week



**MIAMI (September 21, 2023)** – On November 9, 2023, *Desde el Charco*, a solo exhibition by visual artist **Isabella Mellado** (2014 YoungArts Winner in Visual Arts), will open at the **YoungArts Gallery** in Miami. A journey of discovery and self-actualization, *Desde el Charco* is comprised of more than 30 works—including new works created specifically for the exhibition—that analyze and redefine the artist’s sense of self and the communities they inhabit, specifically in the nexus of queerness and *latinidad*. Curated by Luisa Múnera, YoungArts Senior Manager, Artistic Programs and Curator, the exhibition will be on view through Miami Art Week, closing on **December 9, 2023**.

The title of the exhibition, *Desde el Charco*, translates to ‘from the puddle,’ a play on a saying derived from Puerto Rican culture that refers to immigrating to the United States, ‘*brincando el charco*’ or ‘jumping the puddle.’ The puddle represents the limbo between Puerto Rico and the United States and is a space occupied by members of many diasporas. Mellado’s autobiographical work explores the concept of the puddle—the feeling of not fully belonging to a local or diasporic Puerto Rican community—while centralizing the queer narrative through use of symbolism from mythology, tarot, and astrology, creating works that are theatrical compositions. Signature characteristics of Mellado’s paintings are intentionally posed, larger-than-life figures placed at the forefront of a shallow space making direct eye contact with the viewer.

“YoungArts is thrilled to provide a platform for Isabella’s incredible body of work in our gallery this fall and to debut works created specifically for this show,” said exhibition curator Luisa Múnera. “*Desde el Charco* serves as a powerful testament to the enduring search for community that is centered on



Isabella’s personal narratives and lived experiences such as being in community, the gender binary, and the sense of duality that is inherent to being part of a diaspora.”

Installed in the two-story YoungArts Gallery, the exhibition features paintings, photographs, papier-mâché masks and modified found objects. Highlights include “Fallen Angel” (2023), “Forward” (2022) and “Hidden Sunshine” (2022), as well as new works created specifically for the exhibition such as “The Wheel of Fortune” (2023).

Mellado will be the second visual artist spotlighted in YoungArts’ recently reformatted fall exhibition, following Mark Fleuridor’s *Sunshine* in 2022. Having hosted various curated group shows since 2017, the exhibition slot was redesigned to provide a solo opportunity to one YoungArts award winner, allowing them to exhibit their body of work at a pivotal moment in their career, and with on-view dates concurrent with Miami Art Week, a high-profile moment for the local and international visual arts community. Exhibitions at the YoungArts Gallery represent one element in a suite of resources YoungArts provides to artists throughout the trajectory of their careers.

### **About Isabella Mellado**

Isabella Mellado is a painter native to San Juan, Puerto Rico. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2018 and her Master of Fine Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2023. Mellado is best known for her magical realist paintings on *latinidad*, queer identity and tarot. She works in a wide range of media including painting, photography, costume design, digital collage and sculpture. Mellado’s work has been featured at The Bronx Museum of the Arts (New York), Swivel Gallery (New York), Kavi Gupta Gallery (Chicago), Walter Otero Contemporary Art (San Juan, PR), PULSE Contemporary Art Fair (Miami), The Ponce Biennial (Ponce, PR) and MECA Art Fair (San Juan, PR) among others. Mellado has also completed residency at Ox-Bow in Saugatuck, MI, the Studios at MASS MoCA in North Adams, MA and the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, VT.

### **About YoungArts**

Established in 1981 by Lin and Ted Arison, YoungArts—the national foundation for the advancement of artists—identifies exceptional young artists, amplifies their potential, and invests in their lifelong creative freedom. YoungArts provides space, funding, mentorship, professional development and community throughout artists’ careers. Entrance into this prestigious organization starts with a highly competitive application for talented artists ages 15–18, or grades 10–12, in the United States that is judged by esteemed discipline-specific panels of artists through a rigorous blind adjudication process.

For more information, visit [youngarts.org](http://youngarts.org), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

### **Support**

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