Annual Barnsdall “COLA” Exhibit Looks a Little Different This Year

BY LOS FELIZ LEDGER ON AUGUST 15, 2020

Each year, the Los Angeles Dept. of Cultural Affairs awards $10,000 fellowships to a handful of artists to help them develop a new body of work.

While the program, known as “COLA,” typically culminates in a citywide exhibition, including an installation at Barnsdall Park’s Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, this year the coronavirus pandemic has moved it online—and posed new challenges for its artists.

“Due to COVID, I had to shift gears and make a new body of work at home during quarantine,” said one grant recipient, Amir Fallah. “I began experimenting in my home with works on paper. These experiments eventually lead to a whole new body of work that became my contribution to the COLA 2020 exhibit.”

![Michael Alvarez, 2020, by Shizu Saldamando.](image)

Another COLA fellow, Shizu Saldamando, said she was in the middle of creating her new body of work when coronavirus closures threw a wrench into her schedule, but she was eventually able to complete the series.

“Since I am a mom, I was blindsided with schools being closed so all production came to a screeching halt on my end,” said Saldamando. “I was relieved that the city understood the logistical problems with creating work with no childcare or in some cases no access to studios.”

According to Saldamando, her portrait series was inspired by the “goth nights” she grew up attending in the late ’90s at Hollywood-area dance clubs.
“Since so much time has passed, I’m not even sure that any of those goth nights still exist, especially during the pandemic, but I still wanted to honor that history that shaped a large part of my youth,” said Saldamando. “Since Barnsdall Park is right in the middle of all those spots, I thought it would be nice to showcase those scenes.”

View this year’s COLA exhibition online at: cola2020.squarespace.com

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