



Free Event Offers Tips on Finding Success as a Creative

“Real Life Art, Writing and Resistance: How to Make It Work” on April 12 will feature young Latina writers and artists “making it” in L.A.

By Jessica Weber On APRIL 10, 2018



Writer Eva Recinos (left) and artist Star Montana (right) will discuss finding success while doing what you love.

The Department of Creative Writing will be hosting an event featuring Los Angeles-based artist Star Montana and writer Eva Recinos. The event is coordinated by Susan Straight, distinguished professor of creative writing,

and invites students, faculty, and staff to engage in insightful conversation about finding ways to succeed in a creative field.

“Real Life Art, Writing and Resistance: How to Make It Work,” scheduled for Wednesday, April 12 from 2-4 p.m. at the New Media Lab in INTS 1109, will address ways to use language, social media, and art as a means to celebrate women, body, and storytelling, and provide aspiring writers and artists a chance to hear firsthand how they might forge a path in these highly competitive fields from two women who have managed to succeed early in their careers.

Straight organized the event especially for students curious about how they can make a career out of doing what they love when the path to success is rarely clear.

“I wanted to have an event that featured young women in their 20s who were using their narratives and storytelling, and especially image — because our culture is so focused on photography and image — to make a real living as artists and writers.” Straight said.

Straight also wanted to feature creatives who are less represented in mainstream media and homed in on Montana and Recinos, both young Latina women who not only stand out in their field but are reflective of the diverse student community at UCR.



Susan Straight

“I’ve been looking at our student body and the way America sees Latinx women, and there’s this whole range of women in our community and in the nation at large who seem completely overlooked by a larger social structure.” Straight said. “My classes are full of young Latinx women who are striving to tell stories ... about their histories, their mothers, their grandmothers, their bodies, their neighborhoods, their communities, and their futures, and I picked these two young artists because of that.”

Montana is a photographer from the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East Los Angeles, a predominantly Mexican American community which features prominently in her art. Her work addresses class, social environment, and identity and has been shown at Main Museum, Vincent Price Art Museum, and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center. Her poignant imagery has also been featured in the Los Angeles Times.

Recinos is the social media manager at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and a freelance writer. Her work, which primarily features art and artists who are women of color, has appeared in The Guardian, LA Weekly, LA Magazine, Jezebel, Bitch, and Hyperallergic, among others. As a Latina woman, Recinos recognizes the importance of featuring minority artists and contributing her own voice to the conversation.

“Visual culture is so important in shaping how we view our own bodies and identities; seeing Latinx art is a validation,” Recinos said. “I hope to keep putting a spotlight on this work because I know what’s it’s like to seek out art and not see yourself reflected.”

Although featuring writers and artists, Straight emphasized this event is valuable to everyone, as understanding narrative and storytelling is important as a means of better understanding the people you are serving.

“Even if you’re not presenting yourself and your image, how do you look at other peoples’ images and narratives, and look at the community around you and think ‘This person has a story’? How does this person see herself in her community? Image and storytelling are all about that too.”

This event is free and open to the campus community. Seating may be limited. For more information, please call (951) 827-3245 or email performingarts@ucr.edu.

Note: Latinx is a gender-neutral alternative to Latino, Latina of which some individuals prefer to be identified.