

01 Dec
Fri / 2017

[Inside the MFAH \(/blogs/inside-mfah\)](#)

[Home Is an Intimate Space: Amalia Mesa-Bains & “Transparent Migrations” \(/blogs/inside-mfah/home-is-an-intimate-space-amalia-mesa-bains-transparent-migration\)](#)

By [Sarah Hobson \(/blogs/inside-mfah/author/sarah-hobson\)](#)

[ace%20and%20some%20sort%20of%20meditative%20quality.%E2%80%9D&redirect_uri=https://www.mfah.org/blogs/inside-mfah/home-is-an-intimate-space-amalia-mesa-bains-transparent-migration\)](#)



<https://static.mfah.com/app/images/6679ecf7-d6d6-e711-80d2-0050569125fe.636477572338267866.jpg?maxWidth=1600&maxHeight=1600&format=jpg&quality=90>
<https://static.mfah.com/app/images/2226c32d-d7d6-e711-80d2-0050569125fe.636477573319684031.jpg?maxWidth=1600&maxHeight=1600&format=jpg&quality=90>

[view slideshow](#)

The work of California-based artist Amalia Mesa-Bains is often autobiographical, relating to her Mexican and Catholic heritage. Her installation *Transparent Migrations*, on view in *HOME—So Different. So Appealing* (<http://www.mfah.org/home>), features a mirrored armoire, glass leaves, a gauze dress, a lace mantilla, and assorted crystal miniatures—an assemblage that evokes spiritual concepts such as “reflection,” “illumination,” and “transparency.” The surrounding glass landscape suggests the rugged terrain of Southwestern Mexico, home to plant life that symbolizes sustainability, endurance, and resilience.

Transparent Migrations embodies the idea of “home” through the use of her personal armoire and the most intimate detail: the mantilla, or veil, that she wore to her wedding 51 years ago. I talked with Mesa-Bains about the installation.

What do you hope visitors take away from *Transparent Migrations*?

I think it’s a work that invites contemplation. I want people to find some sense of peace and some sort of meditative quality, but also maybe to wonder what these things stand for even if they don’t have a background in Latino art history. I think the plants and the small dress hanging will give some sense that this is a place where people feel safe, and it’s a place where they can endure.

How does your work speak to the theme of “home”?

Most of my work as an artist has been around the theme of “home.” I am a first-generation Chicano [a person of Mexican origin or descent], and one of the roles I occupied was that of someone who made *ofrendas*—so most of my early work was centered around the home altar. I felt from the very beginning, when I learned of this exhibition, that this was a place for my work, because I had a long history of this theme.

What is significant about having your work on view in Houston?

Of course, Houston is a major venue for art, but it’s also important to me that it’s a city with a large Latino population. I feel very happy to be here among many artists, both from the United States and Latin America, in a city that embodies the Latino presence that is part of America now.

See more in “*HOME—So Different. So Appealing* (<http://www.mfah.org/home>),” on view in the Law Building through January 21.

Filed under: [chicano-art \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/chicano-art\)](#), [amalia-mesa-bains \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/amalia-mesa-bains\)](#), [homemfah \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/homemfah\)](#), [homeso-different-so-appealing \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/homeso-different-so-appealing\)](#)

Comments



Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS (?)

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

Inside the MFAH - Telling Tales out of School

2 comments • 4 years ago



CRAYMAGAZINE — AWESOME

Inside the MFAH - What's Blooming at Bayou Bend? Magnolias!

2 comments • 3 years ago



mfahwebeditor — Hi Carly, thanks for asking! Yes, when you visit Bayou Bend, the gardens are included with admission, which is the ...

Catwalk Stunners Now on View! See Fashion Fusion's Winning Designs

1 comment • 7 months ago



Luisa Fernanda Nadarajah — Than you MFAH for giving us such amazing opportunity! I'm getting ready to launch my ...

#FutureMFAH - Noguchi Was Here

2 comments • 2 years ago



mfahwebeditor — A good question. We do plan to change the camera's zoom and angles as the construction progresses :)

Subscribe Add Disqus to your siteAdd DisqusAdd Privacy

Recent Posts

- [The Idea of "HOME": An Interview with Curator Chon Noriega \(/blogs/inside-mfah/the-idea-of-home-an-interview-with-curator-chon-noriega\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/the-idea-of-home-an-interview-with-curator-chon-noriega)
- [So Chic! Oscar de la Renta Fashions from the MFAH Collection \(/blogs/inside-mfah/so-chic-oscar-de-la-renta-fashions-from-the-mfah-collection\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/so-chic-oscar-de-la-renta-fashions-from-the-mfah-collection)
- [Home Is an Intimate Space: Amalia Mesa-Bains & "Transparent Migrations" \(/blogs/inside-mfah/home-is-an-intimate-space-amalia-mesa-bains-transparent-migration\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/home-is-an-intimate-space-amalia-mesa-bains-transparent-migration)
- [The British Are Coming! A Popular Annual Feature Returns to MFAH Films \(/blogs/inside-mfah/the-british-are-coming-a-popular-annual-mfah-films-feature-returns\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/the-british-are-coming-a-popular-annual-mfah-films-feature-returns)
- [Happy Thanksgiving! Curatorial Picks for the Holiday \(/blogs/inside-mfah/happy-thanksgiving-curatorial-picks-for-the-holiday\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/happy-thanksgiving-curatorial-picks-for-the-holiday)
- [Curator of Food Trucks: Malcolm Daniel on Fine Art + Food Trucks \(/blogs/inside-mfah/curator-of-food-trucks-malcolm-daniel-on-fine-art-food-trucks\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/curator-of-food-trucks-malcolm-daniel-on-fine-art-food-trucks)
- [Something Spooky This Way Comes! MFAH Films Presents a Halloween Weekend of Horror Films \(/blogs/inside-mfah/something-spooky-this-way-comes-halloween-horror-films\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/something-spooky-this-way-comes-halloween-horror-films)
- [Creativity in Your World: Celebrating Student Artists! \(/blogs/inside-mfah/creativity-in-your-world-celebrating-student-artists\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/creativity-in-your-world-celebrating-student-artists)
- [Art Beyond Sight Brings the MFAH to All \(/blogs/inside-mfah/art-beyond-sight-brings-the-mfah-to-all\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/art-beyond-sight-brings-the-mfah-to-all)
- [The Turkish Film Festival Returns! Prepare to Be Inspired \(/blogs/inside-mfah/the-turkish-film-festival-returns-prepare-to-be-inspired\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/the-turkish-film-festival-returns-prepare-to-be-inspired)

Post Archives

- [2017 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/12\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/12)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/11\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/11)
 - [October \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/10\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/10)
 - [September \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/9\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/9)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/8\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/8)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/7\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/7)
 - [June \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/6\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/6)
 - [May \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/5\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/5)
 - [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/4\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/4)
 - [March \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/3\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/3)
 - [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/2\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/2)
 - [January \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/1\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2017/1)
- [2016 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/12\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/12)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/11\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/11)
 - [October \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/10\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/10)
 - [September \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/9\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/9)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/8\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/8)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/7\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/7)
 - [June \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/6\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/6)
 - [May \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/5\)](/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/5)

- [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/4\)](#)
- [March \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/3\)](#)
- [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/2\)](#)
- [January \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2016/1\)](#)
- [2015 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015\)](#)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/12\)](#)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/11\)](#)
 - [October \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/10\)](#)
 - [September \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/9\)](#)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/8\)](#)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/7\)](#)
 - [June \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/6\)](#)
 - [May \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/5\)](#)
 - [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/4\)](#)
 - [March \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/3\)](#)
 - [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/2\)](#)
 - [January \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2015/1\)](#)
- [2014 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014\)](#)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/12\)](#)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/11\)](#)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/8\)](#)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/7\)](#)
 - [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/4\)](#)
 - [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2014/2\)](#)
- [2013 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013\)](#)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/11\)](#)
 - [October \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/10\)](#)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/8\)](#)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/7\)](#)
 - [June \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/6\)](#)
 - [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/4\)](#)
 - [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/2\)](#)
 - [January \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2013/1\)](#)
- [2012 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012\)](#)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/12\)](#)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/11\)](#)
 - [October \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/10\)](#)
 - [September \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/9\)](#)
 - [August \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/8\)](#)
 - [July \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/7\)](#)
 - [June \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/6\)](#)
 - [May \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/5\)](#)
 - [April \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/4\)](#)
 - [February \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2012/2\)](#)
- [2011 \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2011\)](#)
 - [December \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2011/12\)](#)
 - [November \(/blogs/inside-mfah/2011/11\)](#)

Tag Cloud

[35mm \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/35mm\)](#)
[5womenartists \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/5womenartists\)](#)
[abstract \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/abstract\)](#)
[adolpho \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/adolpho\)](#)
[american \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/american\)](#)
[ancient \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/ancient\)](#)
[and \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/and\)](#)
[animals \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/animals\)](#)
[architecture \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/architecture\)](#)
[art \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/art\)](#)
[art-books \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/art-books\)](#)
[art-of-the-islamic-worlds \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/art-of-the-islamic-worlds\)](#)
[bayou \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/bayou\)](#)
[bayou-bend \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/bayou-bend\)](#)
[bend \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/bend\)](#)
[bible \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/bible\)](#)
[biblical \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/biblical\)](#)
[british \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/british\)](#)
[buffalo-bayou-park-cistern \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/buffalo-bayou-park-cistern\)](#)
[campus \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/campus\)](#)
[christmas \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/christmas\)](#)
[cinema \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/cinema\)](#)
[cisternrain \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/cisternrain\)](#)
[color \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/color\)](#)
[colors-of-the-oasis \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/colors-of-the-oasis\)](#)
[concrete \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/concrete\)](#)
[conservation \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/conservation\)](#)
[contemporary-art \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/contemporary-art\)](#)
[contemporary-arts-museum-houston \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/contemporary-arts-museum-houston\)](#)
[countess \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/countess\)](#)
[curator \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/curator\)](#)
[degas \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/degas\)](#)
[degas-a-new-vision \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/degas-a-new-vision\)](#)
[digital \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/digital\)](#)
[dinner \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/dinner\)](#)
[drawings \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/drawings\)](#)
[dynasty \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/dynasty\)](#)
[electronic \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/electronic\)](#)
[emperor \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/emperor\)](#)
[empress \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/empress\)](#)
[england \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/england\)](#)
[e-records \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/e-records\)](#)
[european \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/european\)](#)
[fashion \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/fashion\)](#)
[festival \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/festival\)](#)
[fiber-arts \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/fiber-arts\)](#)
[field \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/field\)](#)
[film \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/film\)](#)
[flowers \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/flowers\)](#)
[french \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/french\)](#)
[fun \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/fun\)](#)
[future \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/future\)](#)
[futuremfah \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/futuremfah\)](#)
[gainsborough \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/gainsborough\)](#)
[gallery-interpretation \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/gallery-interpretation\)](#)
[garden \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/garden\)](#)
[gardens \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/gardens\)](#)
[glassell \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/glassell\)](#)
[google-art-project \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/google-art-project\)](#)
[habsburg \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/habsburg\)](#)
[halloween \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/halloween\)](#)
[hirsch-library \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/hirsch-library\)](#)
[history \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/history\)](#)
[homemfah \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/homemfah\)](#)
[homeso-different-so-appealing \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/homeso-different-so-appealing\)](#)
[houston \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/houston\)](#)
[howe \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/howe\)](#)
[ikat \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/ikat\)](#)
[impressionism \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/impressionism\)](#)
[interactive \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/interactive\)](#)
[ipads \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/ipads\)](#)
[kenwood \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/kenwood\)](#)
[king \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/king\)](#)
[kodak \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/kodak\)](#)
[latin \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/latin\)](#)
[latin-american-art \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/latin-american-art\)](#)
[mail \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mail\)](#)
[maria-fernanda-cardoso \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/maria-fernanda-cardoso\)](#)
[media \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/media\)](#)
[mexican-film \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mexican-film\)](#)
[mexican-modernism \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mexican-modernism\)](#)
[mfah \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mfah\)](#)
[mfah-films \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mfah-films\)](#)
[mfah-in-the-community \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mfah-in-the-community\)](#)
[modern \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/modern\)](#)
[moneo \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/moneo\)](#)
[movie \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/movie\)](#)
[movies \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/movies\)](#)
[mueck \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mueck\)](#)
[mueckmfah \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/mueckmfah\)](#)
[museum \(/blogs/inside-mfah/tag/museum\)](#)