

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz

Biography

Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz was born in 1973 in The Bronx, New York. Born to Puerto Rican immigrants, Raimundi-Ortiz's art reflects her and her family's lived experiences and multiple identities. The themes of intersectionality, trauma, and migration figure prominently in her work.

Education

After graduating from an arts high school, Raimundi-Ortiz attended the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. After graduating with a degree in illustration, she later was artist in residence at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. She earned her MFA in 2008 from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of Art.

Art Work

Raimundi-Ortiz's work reflects her Puerto Rican culture, concerns with contemporary society, and issues of intersectionality.

Her 2019 performance piece, *Exodus/Pilgrimage*, addresses the forced migration of thousands of Puerto Ricans to the United States as a result of Hurricane Maria. In this work, the artist dressed in attire made completely from debris recovered from the island post-hurricane, weaving elements of Puerto Rican music, dance, and culture.

In Raimundi-Ortiz's *Pieta* performance in 2017, she presented herself as Michelangelo's Mary and held 33 members of marginalized communities (people of color and members of the LGBTQ community, specifically) in her arms for three minutes and 33 seconds each, a reference to the age Jesus was when he died. Raimundi-Ortiz worked with designer and fellow UCF professor Kristina Tollefson to create her costume, inspired by the carven robes draped around Michelangelo's Mary, in a "communion of mothers discussing and consoling."

Raimundi-Ortiz is also known for her *Chuleta* video series. According to the artist, Chuleta is "a sassy, no-nonsense Nuyorican art enthusiast. [It] became my way of calling out biases of both the art world as well as my own people by becoming a sort of urban art translator, conduit, culture critic, interceptor and interrogator." Both funny and biting, Chuleta comments on contemporary issues, both in Latinx communities as well as in society at large.

Today

Today, Raimundi-Ortiz is Associate Professor of Art at the University of Central Florida in Orlando.