

Geraldina Interiano Wise
Artist
1819 Sawyer St, Houston TX 77007

August 27, 2024

City of Houston
901 Bagby, 3rd floor
Houston, Texas 77002

2024 Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Awards

Dear Nominations Committee-

I write in support of the nomination of Gabriela Monterroso for the 2024 Mayor's Hispanic Heritage for Arts in the Community Award. As the 2023 recipient of said award, I recognize in Gabriela the excellence, leadership, generosity and entrepreneurship that it takes to make a difference in the Latino Arts and Culture sector and beyond. Gabriela has demonstrated with her vision and perseverance that anyone, including an immigrant from Guatemala, can not only add to that ecosystem, but excel in it and help shape it.

I've know Gabriela since her days at Glassell School of Art, and was at the same round table of founders of Latin American Women Artist in Houston (LAWAH). We went on to exhibit together in group shows, as she is an artist herself. It was when she gave me the opportunity to craft my first solo exhibit in Houston at Monterroso Gallery that I was able to gauge her extraordinary capacity, appreciation, and commitment for the local art scene.

She continues to open opportunities for local artists, including the newly minted residency program that immerses artists into the workings of the art and gallery world. Her emphasis in community shows that she is helping shape what used to be individual artist career, into community based art careers.

Gabriela is a bridge builder, and has found in Houston artists and audiences that are multi ethnic and curious. She leads cultural exchange tours to her native Guatemala as a means of expanding knowledge of the region's rich crafts and history, but also as an exchange of ideas so that the artisans can continue to grow into contemporary times.

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As a *100 Latinos* initial supporter of ALMAAHH, Gabriela shows her advocacy for authentic representation of Latinos in Houston and the nation. In short, Gabriela is someone who is making a difference in Houston, who is committed to her roots and her fellow Latin Americans in Houston, and who is helping build a better, more diverse & rich Houston ecosystem of Arts & Culture.

Allow me to express my deep appreciation for the work that you do as the Nominations Committee, and for caring deeply about our culture and our people.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Geraldina Wise', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Geraldina Interiano Wise
Artist, Co-Founder & Board Chair ALMAAHH
2023 Mayors Hispanic Heritage Award recipient