

ARTnews

The Year in Latinx Art: At a Time When Art Seems Impossible, It Is Still Healing

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Works from Studio Lenca's collaborative "Rutas" series, installation view at David Castillo Gallery, Miami. PHOTO MAXIMILÍANO DURÓN/ARTNEWS

The perilousness of the border also appears in the work of **Studio Lenca**, who migrated as a child from El Salvador during the country's civil war to the Bay Area and is now based in Margate, UK. Over the summer, he organized a group exhibition at **Kates-Ferri Projects** in New York featuring contemporary Salvadoran artists whose work looks at the complicated history and present of El Salvador.

For the past several years, Studio Lenca has been collaborating with migrants to the US in workshops to create postcard-size artworks that depict their own migration stories, in whatever way they might interpret that prompt. I first saw this pointed body of work, titled "Rutas"

(Routes), at El Museo del Barrio's La Trienal 2024. Some of them discernably recall circuitous journeys across the border; others are abstract, like faded memories from a time too painful to remember. This year, the artist staged these workshops twice over, ahead of his solo show at **David Castillo Gallery** in Miami and as part of the artist-run platform La Escuela's takeover of **MoMA PS1**'s Homeroom space, with the workshop at the latter venue conducted earlier this month. The David Castillo exhibition also featured Studio Lenca's own paintings, fantastical tableaux of the artist gliding, as if he were dancing, through the landscape. At PS1, the artist painted a rendition of these self-portraits directly onto one of the museum's walls, about a month into the exhibition's run. Taken together, Studio Lenca shows us a kaleidoscopic tapestry of migration stories.