

Fort Worth

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Artist shares the stories of migrants who flee violence

A Fort Worth artist aims to emphasize the challenges and complexities of migration through his piece "Simpatía Sin Compasión." By [Charlene Santiago](#)
Fort Worth

Immigration hits close to home for artist Bernardo Vallarino, who fled violence in Colombia 20 years ago. Now through his art he's shedding light on the stories of those who have recently migrated in search of safe haven.

Through his work, Vallarino aims to emphasize the importance of recognizing people's perception about migration and displacement.



"There's a large apathy, a disconnect that exists between us and our understanding, knowledge or even acknowledgment of the fact that we have refugees," Vallarino said. "There's this almost denial in some sort, so I wanted to bring attention to that."

His most recent work, "Simpatía Sin Compasión"(Sympathy Without Compassion) intends to create awareness about migration and the conversations surrounding this issue. According to Vallarino, it's the sense of plurality that can often undervalue the complexities of migration.

"When we talk about refugees, as a name they all tend to kind of lose value but when we bring the different stories it automatically creates an identity and hopefully it can create a connection," he said.



"There's a large apathy, disconnect that exists between us and our understanding knowledge or even acknowledgment that we have refugees," said Bernardo Vallarino, author of exhibition "Simpatía Sin Compasión" (Sympathy Without Compassion). Charlene Santiago Star-Telegram

Taking Action

Once the issue has been exposed and discussed, Vallarino says more must be done. "It's not only about discussing these issues, it's about acting about (on)them", Vallarino said, referring to the name of the exhibit Sympathy Without Compassion.

“Sympathy is a sharing of a feeling, understanding of a feeling. Compassion requires action, so sympathy without compassion means ‘I feel what you’re feeling, but I’m not doing anything about it.’ ”

Vallarino will host a panel discussion on Saturday at the [Fort Worth Community Arts Center](#) for a conversation about refugee resettlement in Fort Worth and how the community can help.

For this project, Vallarino worked with Refugee Services of Texas, a social-service agency that helps newly arrived migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who have been resettled in Texas.

“I feel that his work is really focused on people who have been forced and displaced due to violence and that is the case for most of our clients and I really think it does embody their experience,” said Ayesha Hassan, volunteer coordinator with Refugee Services of Texas who will participate in the panel discussion on Saturday.

“It really just seems to capture what is going on in the moment with people feeling a little bit exhausted and losing their compassion when it comes to certain issues going on right now,” Hassan added.

On Saturday, July 21, 10 to 14 refugees, asylees, and asylum seekers will talk about their experiences. “They are the spirit of the work,” Vallarino said.

“Simpatía Sin Compasión” will be on display through July 27 at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center.

Vallarino will donate 75 percent of the net sales from this exhibition to the Refugee Services of Texas.

Vallarino is a mix media sculptor and installation artist. He currently serves as the Fort Worth Arts Collective coordinator and teaches at Tarrant County College.

Panel discussion

Saturday, July 14

Fort Worth Community Arts Center, [1300 Gendy St, Fort Worth, TX 76107](#)

Starting at 5 p.m.

Free Admission

Refugee Testimonials

Saturday, July 21

Fort Worth Community Arts Center

Starting at 5 p.m.

\$10 donation suggested