

Art [Reviews](#)

A Photographer's Ode to Suburbia's Teens

Subdivision depicts a uniquely Angeleno experience of adolescence, while also conjuring a shared memory of American suburban childhood.

Rebecca Schiffman 23 hours ago

Share



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes (Theo and Diego) #4" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP) (all images courtesy Gallery Luisotti)

LOS ANGELES — A Los Angeles coming-of-age story consumes Gallery Luisotti's new downtown space in photographer Christina Fernandez's recent series, *Subdivision*. In these works, Fernandez turns the camera toward her teenage son, Diego, and the suburban Southern California landscape in which he grew up. Documenting the mundane suburbs with a dramatic, cinematic flare, the artist celebrates her son's evolution and the place that shaped him.

Subdivision depicts a uniquely Angeleno experience of adolescence, while also conjuring a shared memory of American suburban childhood. Seeing Diego and his friends cruise down a quiet house-lined street in their car reminded me of my own upbringing in New York. Despite living on the opposite coast, the largely beige, uniform suburban landscape is almost exactly the same as the one in which I grew up.



There is something calming, nostalgic, communal, and quintessentially American about these photographs, as Diego hangs with friends, driving around town with nothing else to do, going nowhere in particular. In "Suburban Nightscapes (Max and Diego) #1" (2023), Diego walks toward an open, fluorescent-lit garage while his friend Max sits by a bonfire pit and two lit tiki torches in the middle of the driveway. Both wear hoodies, baseball caps, baggy pants, and sneakers as they move around outside, seemingly in their own worlds, but anchored by the suburban one-floor home that sits in the background. As Fernandez puts it in her artist statement, these works evoke "teen life on the cusp of all those decisions that make or break" — the future immense and full of possibility.



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes (Max and Diego) #9" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP)

Born in 1965 in Los Angeles, Fernandez has made the city her lifelong home. She attended UCLA, continued her education at CalArts, and has been a faculty member at Cerritos College for 30 years. As a Mexican-American woman, she has focused her artistic practice on both showcasing the joys of life as a Chicana in Los Angeles and shedding light on how migration, domestic labor, gender, and their socioeconomic impact the city's Latinx community. Fernandez works in photographic series, and her touring career retrospective *Multiple Exposures* — opening at the Princeton University Art Museum on February 10 — chronicles the narratives that she has captured through her technique and smart storytelling.

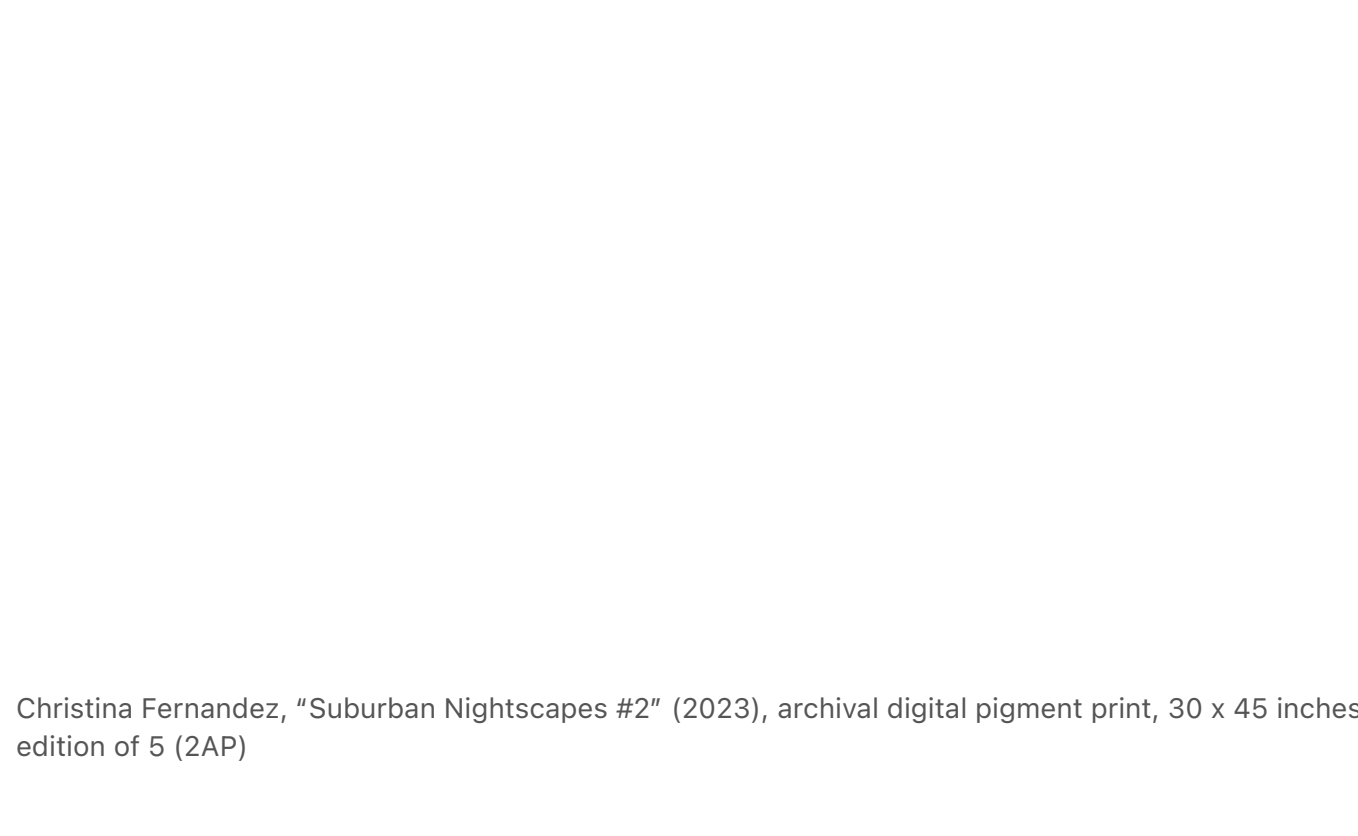
While *Subdivision* draws on Fernandez's past arsenal of commentary and technique, it feels more personal than her previous work. It isn't her focus on a family member — she did that in her 1995–96 series *Maria's Great Expedition*, in which she posed as her Mexican grandmother. Rather, by focusing on her son at the pivotal age of 18, the artist encapsulates at once a heightened level of personal connection and self-discovery.



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes (Car Blur) #7" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP)



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes #2" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP)



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes #9 (Riverbed)" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP)



Christina Fernandez, "Suburban Nightscapes #3" (2023), archival digital pigment print, 30 x 45 inches, edition of 5 (2AP)

Christina Fernandez: *Subdivision continues at Gallery Luisotti (818 South Broadway, Fashion District, Los Angeles) through February 17. The exhibition was organized by the gallery.*

Related

- What's Threaded in Vegas, Stays in Vegas January 29, 2023
- Finding the Soul of Orange County October 24, 2023
- 10 Art Shows to See in LA This June June 1, 2023

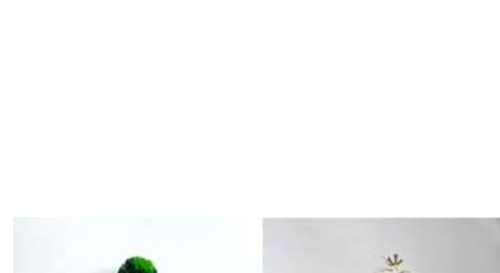
Tagged: [Featured](#) [Los Angeles](#) [Photography](#) [Reviews](#)

Rebecca Schiffman
Rebecca Schiffman (she/her) is a Brooklyn-based writer, editor, and art historian. She is currently working towards her Master's at Hunter College and is the assistant editor at *Art & Object*. [Some...](#) [More by Rebecca Schiffman](#)

- Most Popular**
- Laurie Anderson Loses German Professorship Over Pro-Palestine Letter
 - Artists Protest Museum's Cancellation of Michael Fried-Inspired Show
 - 10 Shows to See in Los Angeles This February
 - Richard Prince Must Pay \$650K+ to Artists for Using Their Work
 - NYU Suspends Palestinian Professor and Activist Amin Husain

The Latest

Are We Really Still Doing White Feminist Shows in 2024?
Though it's teeming with big-name artists like Artemisia Gentileschi and Berthe Morison, Frida Kahlo is the only woman of color in this Madrid exhibition.
[Lauren Moya Ford](#)

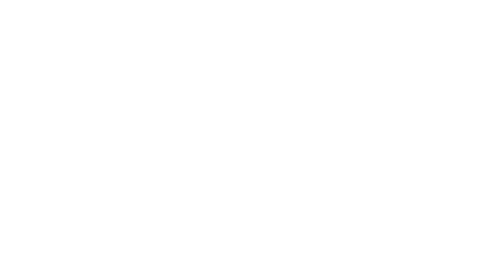


Bid on an Artist's Kite to Aid Gaza
All proceeds for works by Willa Nuanzi, Wilder Allison, Yoo Baranda, and more will go to Gaza Mutual Aid Solidarity.
[Elaine Vele](#)

Study With the Pioneer of Art Business Education at Sotheby's Institute of Art
Discover transformative possibilities for your art career at Sotheby's Open Days in New York and London.

Head of Saudi Arabia's AlUla Cultural Project Arrested for Corruption
Amr bin Saleh Abdulrahman Al Madani, responsible for the development of the archaeological site, is also accused of money laundering.
[Rhea Nayyar](#)

Police Reportedly Fire Tear Gas at Machu Picchu Protesters
Tourism workers are challenging a new ticket policy that could affect the livelihoods of travel guides and other industry workers.
[Elaine Vele](#)



Hungry Is My Favourite Word
A new exhibition aims to create an emotional landscape where there is no one truth, no one answer, and no last word. On view at the Julius Koller Society in Bratislava, Slovakia.



Carey Young's Reflections on the Trappings of Power
In a video installation and photography, Young extends her interrogation of legal institutions and asks viewers to contemplate what lies beyond surface appearances.
[Martha Busiek](#)



The Children's Book Author Who Was Also an Artist
Leo Lionni's wide-ranging practice was kaleidoscopic and rooted in a strong sense of justice.
[Lauren Moya Ford](#)



IPPDA Print Fair Takes Over the Park Avenue Armory
The largest art fair for prints and editions will premiere an editioned Jeffrey Gibson blanket and showcase work by an extraordinary roster of artists. On view in NYC February 15–16.

Richard Prince Must Pay \$650K+ to Artists for Using Their Work
A last-meeting agreement put a price on the artist's appropriation of the works of two photographers.
[Rhea Nayyar](#)



Laurie Anderson Loses German Professorship Over Pro-Palestine Letter
The artist and Folkwang University jointly announced her resignation in light of Anderson's endorsement of a "Letter Against Apartheid" over two years ago.
[Elaine Vele](#)

ADVERTISEMENT