



# **OUR EDUCATION: LEARNING AND UNLEARNING**



**PRESENTED BY  
THE SIMMERING SPICES  
ART COLLECTIVE**

July 12-16, 2024

## Opening Hours

**JULY 12-16, 2024**

FRI 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

SAT 11 AM–5 PM

SUN 11 AM–5 PM

MON 11 AM–5 PM

TUE 11 AM–3 PM

## Location

**Mi Centro, Centro Cultural**

1060 Bedford Ave

Brooklyn, NY 11238

## Schedule of Events

### Gallery Opening

Friday 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

### Keynote Panel with Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz & The Simmering Spices

Saturday 2:00 PM– 3:30 PM

### Mural Workshop with Sanjana (for ages 6 & up)

Saturday 3:45 PM – 5:00 PM

### Flower Pot Painting with Mikayla (for ages 10 & up)

Sunday 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### Bracelet Making with Aliana (for ages 8 & up)

Sunday 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

### Self Portraits with Leah (for all ages)

Monday 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

### Zine Making with Blanca (for ages 10 & up)

Monday 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

## Simmering Spices Socials

Instagram: @simmeringspicesart

Website: [simmeringspicesart.education.uconn.edu](http://simmeringspicesart.education.uconn.edu)

# OUR EDUCATION

## LEARNING AND UNLEARNING

*Our Education: Learning and Unlearning* is an art exhibition curated by the Simmering Spices Art Collective to reimagine what education looks like in our communities, girlhoods, and informal learning settings. The exhibition will feature works from girl and femme of color artists who use the materials around them to display how education follows them wherever they venture. In this multimedia art exhibition, the Simmering Spices invite artists along with visitors to think about the central question: **What does educational justice look and feel like?**

While many other conversations about education focus on learning in school, *Our Education* emphasizes how Girls and Femmes of Color understand that education can manifest itself in different ways, whether that be through our relationships, family history, and hope for the future. Each artist uses different mediums to display the impact education has had on their lives, and also reclaim their narratives in the process. As some reflect on the education system's weaknesses, others highlight how their family and friends acted as their most insightful teachers. In their pieces, artists center their childhoods, showing how their identities are shaped by their learning experiences. Doing so, they locate how their unique and intersecting identities also influence the ways they experience and view learning today.

The exhibition represents a story told by the many artists that have chosen to display their art. Each piece works together to tell a community-based narrative of girls and femmes of color in education, while still holding their own individuality across specific stories and mediums. The result is an onion-like and layered demonstration of the need for children, teens, and young adults to be seen and heard so that we can change and unlearn the ideas that have been imprinted in our minds.

By working to reimagine the systems of education in our world, and dreaming for justice in the future, *Our Education* invites visitors to think about their own communities and areas in which they learn the most. Additionally, we envision visitors will take away areas in their own life where they can unlearn ideas, and open their minds to a new world of education. The Simmering Spices will prepare workshops and interactive activities for visitors throughout the week of the gallery, along with Keynote speakers, including Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, where artists and visitors can make connections with a new community. What results is a beautiful collection of artworks that tell the stories of those who have been silenced across time, making their memories and stories known and valid.

# THE SIMMERING SPICES ART COLLECTIVE STATEMENT



## Who We Are

We are the Simmering Spices, a collective run by girls and nonbinary femmes of color (GFOC). We all come from different backgrounds, backstories, cultures, and identities, cultivating a rich range of perspectives. We are inspired by the open mindedness, thoughtfulness, intelligence, observance, and curiosity of girls, who each have their own roles in community and narratives. We are vibrant and bold, just like spices, coming together to foster a complex and one of a kind community. We are the authors and publishers of our own narratives, and we are also the teachers, leaders, listeners, and learners of the future. We simmer with a passion to stand up and demand the attention and respect we deserve. We all value the power that art holds to showcase the unique stories of girlhood and educational justice to our communities and families, and across generations.





## What We Believe

Simmering Spices believes in reimagining what both The School and The Gallery can look like. We wish to push back against the idea that our personal experiences do not matter. In doing so, we ask, "What happens when communities of color's stories, and specifically GFOC's stories are given instead of stolen?" "What happens when in thinking about schools, we don't think about the experiences of all Young People, but the experiences of each young person?" We see curation as a conversation grounded in storytelling, where a story's importance can be found just as much in its emotional sides as it can be its logical sides. Most of all, we believe that GFOC are knowledge-makers just as much as any other group.

## What We Do

We curate spaces that are designed to house beautiful works of art crafted by diverse groups of GFOC. We are a gallery that engineers new and innovative concepts that invite inclusivity, unity, and creative thinking. As curators, we each bring our individual experiences to our collective work, and understand the importance and implications of storytelling. Sometimes storytelling is loud and vibrant. In some instances it can be painful and silent. Maybe silence is the story itself.



Doing our work can look like many different things: having discussions about certain topics; eating and sharing memories together; learning more from our own environments, experts, and local galleries; writing powerfully; collecting art for our gallery; and even catching up with one another on any drama we have. Our work builds the flavor and richness of every spice within us to make the end result a simmering pot of wonderful, intricate, and complex experiences. In all of its complexity, we embrace the silence, the loudness, the untold, and the underrepresented in our art spaces.

## **Why This Work Matters**

We want to create a powerful space for our fellow GFOC to have their voices heard since our work isn't always brought up to the eyes of many people. We have the power to speak up on issues we have been facing for many generations and new issues that really impact us as GFOC in the education system. We demand our presence to be known, just like the powerful aromas of delicious simmering spices in a pot attract attention. Through our work we hope to form strong connections that allow us to bond and share not only our pains, but our strengths as well—strengths that come with our background and history. Through this project, people who might not understand us but are willing to try to learn to connect might start to understand us.

Embracing the simmering warmth and complexity that comes with the rich broth of each spice we use in our work. Empathy and a passion to learn allows us to connect with others and spread our impact. We truly work towards connecting with our fellow spices and allowing our stories and experiences to simmer and stand in unison, making a one of a kind experience that can connect us all.

# A NOTE FROM GRACE

The Simmering Spices Art Collective formed in the late summer of 2023. The five members responded to a call I put out to form a curatorial collective aimed at creating an artspace exploring Girl and Femme of Color educational freedom. This call emerged after I received a Spencer Foundation Racial Equity Grant to fund a project born of my own prior work with Girls of Color, my conversations with our curatorial advisor, Dr. Tricia Kim, and my desires to find ways and spaces to bring the arts to the center of research and teaching with Girls and Femmes of Color.

The girls and femmes who joined the collective are an amazing, dedicated, creative, joyful, and smart group who have, over the course of the past 10 months, worked together and with our artist contributors to form a robust and beautiful vision of what education is, can be, and *should be in and beyond schools*. We have spent our time together visiting galleries and museums, meeting with woman and femme of Color experts within the arts world, writing about our collective work, collecting the artworks that you will see in our gallery, analyzing and discussing that work, developing a social media presence, curating and designing the gallery show, enjoying each others company and building relationships, and, importantly, breaking bread with one another. We have found, both through the artwork shared with us and in our time together that education and learning for girls of color is expansive, colorful, rooted in relationships and radical praxis of imagining, playing, and nourishing our minds, bodies, and spirits.

We are so excited for you to engage with this work, participate in this vision, and help us continue to think, imagine, make, and play. The Simmering Spices crafted this brochure as a space for you to learn and to take the work beyond the physical space of the gallery, so your ruminations on educational justice sparked by the gallery can travel with you.

Love,

Grace

# THE SIMMERING SPICES CURATORIAL TEAM



**Blanca Vazquez** (she/they) is a 19 year old artist, writer, and a mentor that was born in Brooklyn, New York. She has been living her whole life in New York City, her current burrough being Queens. She's a Mexican American queer girl who grew up in a very standard Hispanic family. Experiencing generational trauma and alienation from peers at a very young age, she uses her own experience and the experiences of other girls and femmes of color in her own work to bring awareness to the importance of everyone's own words and views of life. She's especially passionate in speaking up on the pain that many Hispanic and Queer children go through in their lives. She also likes to focus on bringing awareness to mental health in communities of color since many communities lack support for young teens and adults. Being diagnosed with severe depression and anxiety at

the age of 13 made her aware that her brain worked and reacted differently to the world than anyone else's. Recently being diagnosed to also have ADHD has answered many of her questions she has had towards herself and her past. Realizing that her mental growth is something not all girls and femmes of color get to go through at such a young age fills her with such determination to spread her own knowledge, support, and mentor teens that also love art and go though many mental challenges as well; taking time to grown and learn from them as well and see things from their own lens.





**Aliana Aviles** is a recent graduate of East Side Community High School in the East Village. During Aliana's high school, she joined her school's Sisterhood group, where she fostered a community of girls and social justice initiatives. Through this experience, her eyes opened to the possibilities of connecting her passion for art with social justice—specifically pertaining to her Latina Caribbean identity. When participating in the Whitney Youth Insights Artists she discovered how Puerto Rican artists used their art to send messages about politics, heritage, gentrification, and so much more. This opportunity further led her to use her

own art as a tool for advocating for change and carrying on her family's traditions through art. She is very excited to be a part of The Simmering Spices and explore themes of education, social justice, and girls of color.

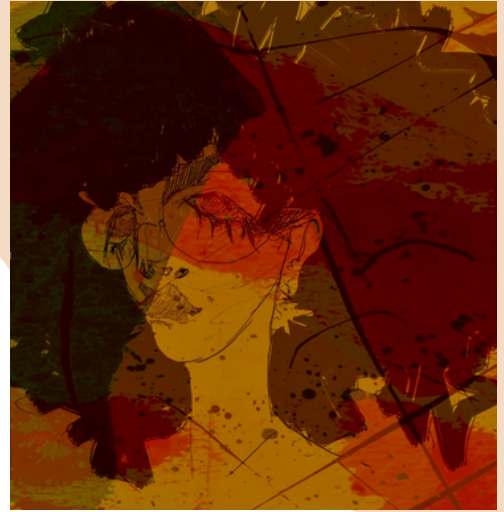


**Sanjana** is a 17 year old high school junior from New Jersey. She is passionate about art and activism, specifically the interconnections between the two. Sanjana began creating art from an early age and she likes to draw experiences of her own life, taking away a few key features to leave it up to interpretation of the audience. Through art, Sanjana reclaims her memories, turning them into concrete experiences she can share with others. She is always curious and looking to grow as an artist by trying new things she learns from her community, family, mentors, and peers. Another identity Sanjana carries is being a South Asian-American girl of color. These "labels" that define her change her worldview and political ideology in different ways.

Sanjana first had her political awakening in the wake of the 2020 elections, where she began to do her own research on American politics and the justice system. This is also the time where Sanjana's art began to change meanings, telling her own stories, rather than showing other narratives. Since 2020, Sanjana's interest in the American government and justice systems have only grown, specifically when it comes to girls' rights and girls of color. Sanjana now knows what the real world looks like, and captures her view of the world through her art.

**Leah Boveda** is a rising senior at Brown University majoring in Africana Studies. In her junior year of high school, she joined the grassroots organization Arizona Coalition for Change (AZC4C).

Experiences in this program continue to inspire her attempts to incorporate her Afro-Latina identity and femininity into her studies rather than erase them. As an AZC4C “Civic Scholar,” she advocated for students of color and policies that would benefit local Black and Latine communities in Phoenix, Arizona. She has since spoken as a youth representative at the African American Policy Forum’s June 2020 “#TruthBeTold” Retreat and has co-written an article about her experiences in youth activism with her mother, a professor at Penn State University. She is very excited to be a part of the Simmering Spices collective and enjoys exploring the intersections between girlhood, racial identity, and self-expression. Much of Leah’s free time is devoted to the arts, and she especially enjoys drawing.



**Mikayla** is a 19 year old visual artist from Brooklyn, NY whose art practice involves exploring surrealist concepts through acrylic and oil mediums. When Mikayla is not painting, she is focusing on her college career where she studies communicative disorders in hopes of one day becoming a speech pathologist. She hopes to combine her love of art with her passion for helping others in which she strongly believes that art is one of the most powerful forms of communication. She aims to fill the gaps where people have been misinformed or not made aware of the living histories and experiences of ethnic minorities. This vision involves curating safe spaces where expressivity is encouraged especially for those who are often underrepresented in

the art world. The journey of helping others also invites room for self-development in which Mikayla is continuously striving to become more vulnerable in her art practice and daily life in general. With these personal aspirations, she also encourages other young, POC women and femmes of color to be unapologetic and unafraid to use their voices, both individually and as a collective. Through her various forms of communicative work, Mikayla hopes to invite conversations around internal and external reflection in order to spark conversations of change; educating oneself about the world that surrounds them while also looking within the self and seeking self-reform.





**GALLERY** **CATALOGUE**  
**RY** **CATALOGUE**  
**CATALOGUE**  
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**CATALOGUE**

# KAI BARRETT

Kai (she/her) is an Afro-Latina, Brooklyn-based artist. Barrett has ties to both African American and Caribbean American culture.



***The Air We Breathe***

18" x 24"

Pen and Marker on Paper

Kai's piece captures one of the days in June last year when wildfire smoke got pushed into NYC, resulting in extremely unhealthy air. Kai's mom, a science teacher, who is depicted, spent a lot of that time warning people about the drop in air quality and the need to practice outside mask-wearing and closing windows. New York City has good air quality most times, but the lack of government response put the job of teaching people about air quality on to local educators and everyday people. Through this collective experience, New Yorkers had to learn about the air we breathe. Ever since, Kai's mom has remained adamant about tracking air quality and teaching others. What we choose to or not do during times of risk and danger will forever leave marks on our body.

# MIKAYLA HINDS

Mikayla Hinds (she/her) is a 20 year old artist from Brooklyn, NY.

A young woman is stiffly sitting up on her bed surrounded by broken down walls that reveal the darkness. Her facial features are undefined and blurred, her face appearing mask-like and expressionless. Carved into the decaying walls is a silhouette of her face. Outside of the ruined walls, lies a bright street light in the distance. This is a study of self-reflection and the unveiling of the ugly truths within ourselves. When we are stripped of our external facade, we actively choose to ignore our own flaws and deceitful tendencies. In the ruins, we must come to terms with our true selves, acknowledging the "bad".



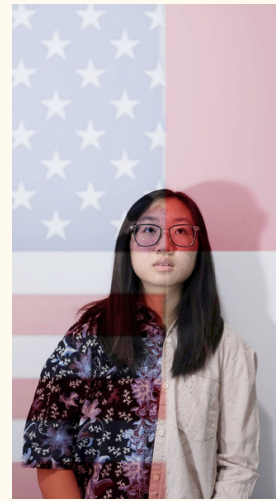
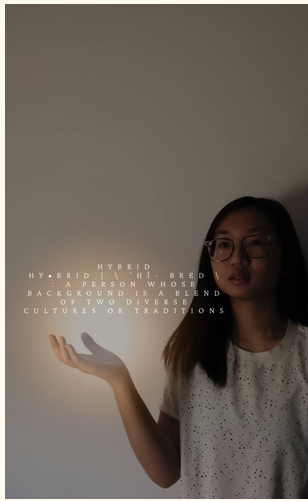
***Defaced***

3' x 3'

Acrylic on Canvas



# JASMINE LIE



**Hybridity**  
11" x 18"  
Photographs

Jasmine (she/her) is an eighteen year old, first generation, Indonesian American photographer from Philadelphia.

Throughout classrooms, Jasmine has felt that her Indonesian culture is separated from her identity as an Asian American. The constant struggle of leading what felt like two identities especially when her classroom name was Andrea whilst outside the school community she went by Jasmine. Finding that hybridity and balance of bringing both cultures within both spaces allowing them to flow together was a light she wishes to see cultivated within classrooms from a young age.

# IRENE PHAM



**Holding the Lotus**  
24" x 36"  
Acrylic on Canvas

Irene (any pronouns) navigates their life as a Vietnamese second-generation immigrant woman raised in a Buddhist family. They identify as genderqueer and bisexual, even if they are perceived as a woman. They also tend to identify this way because they navigate life as a chubby Asian woman as well, and they feel disconnected/alienated from this ethnic-feminine identity.

Irene uses Buddhist and Vietnamese cultural imagery to express the relationship that they have with their mother and the relationship that their mother has with her father. This body of work is dedicated to their family history as Vietnamese refugees, always moving and always transforming. Their paintings speak to the very common tension that immigrant children have with their immigrant parents, so we have to reimagine what forgiveness and personal justice is to us.

# A N A S O F I A R A M I R E Z

Ana Sofia (she/her) is a bilingual Latina woman.

Ana Sofia's piece is representative of the different emotional aspects of her life. Each amorphous shape shows the flexibility and duality of life. Although abstract, its representation and chaos shows her individual experience as being a first generation daughter. She takes influence from Colombian art in terms of shape, patterns, and color. Meanwhile, her American identity peaks through her influence from her education given to her here in the States.



*Pienso en Ti*

3' x 4'

Acrylic on Canvas

# SANJANA THAKUR



*Inherited*

20" x 20"

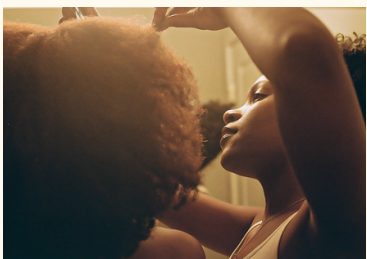
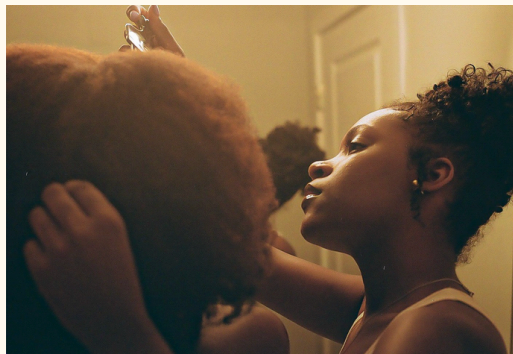
Acrylic on Canvas

Sanjana (she/her) is a 17 year old Asian American girl from the New Jersey area.

This piece follows the path of passing down education and stories through Sanjana's family and the rituals that bind us together. This piece represents her family history, which is a big part of how she learns and forms her opinions. An important part of this piece is that parts of it are hers, parts of it are her mother's. It represents their unique relationship but also the things in each other's lives that they keep and change.



# TIONNE THORNTON



***Sisterhood***  
12" x 18"  
Photographs

Tionne (she/they) is a twenty one year old African American queer artist based in the Philadelphia/DMV area.

This piece focuses on learning in unconventional spaces. As a Black woman the core lessons she learned were not formed in a classroom, but through those around her. Whether it be her elders, sharing stories whilst preparing meals. Or the friends she made at Howard University who have shown her the true meaning of sisterhood through their unwavering support and acts of service shown through this series.

# RISA TIRADO

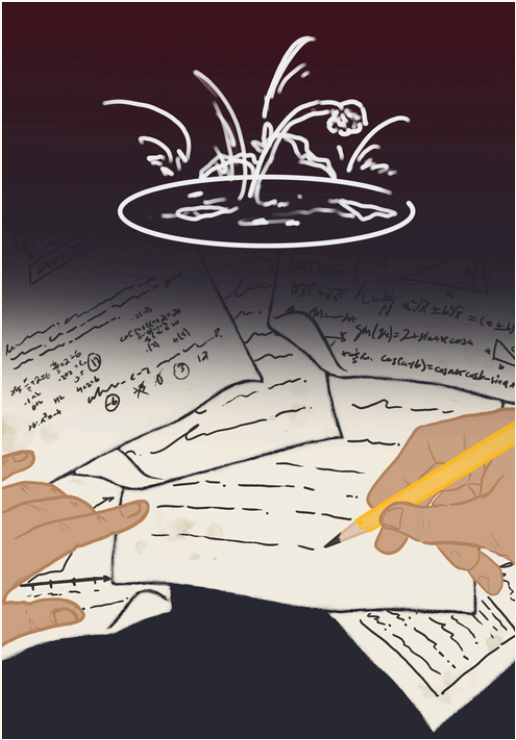
Risa (she/they) is a twenty year old Puerto Rican, neurodivergent artist who has had a unique experience navigating femininity, gender expression, and family.



***Before Wisconsin***  
20" x 25"  
Oil on Canvas

This piece is a painting of Risa and their older cousin Chloe as kids surrounded by different references to their childhood. It symbolizes all she has learned from her cousin about family, honesty, and putting life into a greater perspective. Chloe is 24 now and has recently moved to Wisconsin, which signifies a new chapter in their bond and lives. Now that Risa is 20 and also an adult, they take these lessons with them and communicate them through her art and let them shape who they are now.

# BLANCA VANESSA VAZQUEZ



***Tortured, Withering Flower***  
17" x 24"  
Procreate Digital illustration

Blanca (She/Her They/Them) is a Mexican American artist who is neurodivergent, and queer. They tend to focus on mental health and self growth in most of their pieces.

This piece is an illustration displaying the feelings and emotions that Blanca has had throughout her experience from learning in school. They had very fond memories of always struggling to read, write, and learn things in the usual school setting due to her neurodivergent mind. They struggled in fear of making mistakes and disappointing those she truly cared about. This ended up impacting not only their relationship with learning, but their own self image, believing they were broken and deserved the torture of homework.

# ISABELLA VIERA



***Everything Outside of the Box***  
12.5" x 17"  
Textiles

Isabella (she/her) is a Puerto Rican woman.

Isabella has never been afraid to challenge the limitations of assignments given to her. One of her art teachers told her mom that that she was a very "out-of-the-box thinker" and this was because she was constantly challenging the directions or requirements. Isabella thinks educational institutions need to allow students, and even encourage them to think outside of the box and let their creativity guide them. This would lead to more of our youth being cognitive and creative instead of mindless consumers that never feel comfortable pushing boundaries. She describes her piece as "a corset top that is everything outside of the box."



# M E E R A

Meera (she/her) is a 17 year old American artist whose ethnicity is German and Indian.



Throughout Meera's sophomore year she explored different art styles in her advanced fine arts class. She decided to create a large abstract piece at the end of the year. She began creating the canvas using wood, canvas, a fabric stretcher, and a staple gun. Next, she coated it in gesso and painted a layer of blended pastel colors. Inspired by Fiona Rae, she decided to step outside of her comfort zone by painting dark blobs on top of her perfectly smooth blended pastel piece. Although her classmates and art teacher were skeptical, she knew the piece would turn out well. She used many vibrant colors and brushes to create lines and squiggles across

the canvas. She feels that this piece embodies the theme of the collection since the journey it has taken on has taught her so much. Firstly, she learned to step outside of her comfort zone with a chaotic composition and an almost abstract expressionist mindset by letting her subconscious guide the piece. Secondly, she learned to take inspiration from another artist while also making this work entirely her own. Lastly, she learned to be confident in her work even though it was not her usual medium.

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# THE SIMMERING SPICES' ADULT PARTNERS



**Grace D. Player (she/her), the primary investigator for this project,** is an associate professor at the University of Connecticut. She is a literacy scholar, educator, and artist who has a longstanding commitment to collaborating with communities of Color to work toward educational justice. Following a career of classroom teaching and literacy professional development, she pursued her PhD at the University of Pennsylvania where she developed as a community partner, researcher, and educator. Her work takes on a feminist of Color lens and inquires into how Girls and Women of Color mobilize their raced, gendered, and cultural knowledges and ways of knowing to forge sisterhoods that resist injustice and transform worlds. She received a Spencer Foundation Racial Equity Grant to fund the Simmering Spices' work.



**Patricia Eunji Kim, PhD (she/her), the curatorial advisor,** is an art historian, curator, educator, and assistant professor at New York University. Her work examines visual and material culture to consider dynamics of gender, race, power, and memory in antiquity and the present. Dr. Kim also brings her perspectives as an art historian to bear on the most pressing social, cultural, and political issues that we face today. Among others, she has written about environmental temporalities, transnational memory cultures, and cultural heritage. Committed to public access and engagement, Dr. Kim has experimented with research methods that create open knowledge communities. To that end, she has collaborated with artists, scientists, and experts in civic tech and data to develop public-facing art installations and storytelling initiatives.

## OUR WORKSHOP LEADERS



**Sophia Park**  
she/her  
Curator



**Dina Paola Rodriguez**  
they/them  
Social Media  
Consultant and  
Videographer



**Hannah Traore**  
she/her  
Curator



**Nekisha Durrett**  
she/her  
Artist

## OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Ph.D.** (she/her) is a Professor of English Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. In 2024, she was recognized with the prestigious Dorothy Height Distinguished Alumni Award from New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development. Yolanda is co-editor of five books including the forthcoming *All About Black Girl Love: bell hooks and Pedagogies of Love* (July, 2024), and is co-author of the multiple award-winning book *Advancing Racial Literacies in Teacher Education: Activism for Equity in Digital Spaces* (2021) where she examines her concept of Archeology of Self™ in education. Her first full-length

collection of poetry, *Love from the Vortex & Other Poems*, was published in March 2020. Her sophomore book of poetry, *The Peace Chronicles*, was published in July, 2021. Yolanda opened the 2022 TEDx UPENN conference at the University of Pennsylvania with her TEDx Talk: Truth, Love & Racial Literacy. For three years in a row, Yolanda was named one of EdWeek's EduScholar Influencers -- a list of the Top 1% of educational scholars in the United States - a highly selective group of 200 scholars (chosen from a pool of 20,000). At Teachers College, she is the founder of the Racial Literacy Project @TC, and the Racial Literacy Roundtables Series, where for 15 years, national scholars, teachers, and students facilitate conversations around race and other issues involving diversity. Yolanda appeared in Spike Lee's "2 Fists Up: We Gon' Be Alright" (2016), a documentary about the Black Lives Matter movement and the campus protests at Mizzou, and "Defining Us, Children at the Crossroads of Change", a documentary about supporting and educating the nation's Black and Latinae male youth. Connect with Yolanda on Twitter at @RuizSealey and on Instagram at @yolie\_sealeyruiz.

## OUR LOCATION



**Mi Centro BK** is a community center in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, New York. It is a community-led initiative providing pay-what-you-can services for all ages. Our programming is wide-ranging and ever-growing, guided by core values of connection, empowerment through the arts, and the community's right to self-determination. Mi Centro centers community through our Humans in Residence program, wherein neighbors are encouraged to submit proposals for how to use the space. Together we meet community needs, facilitate the exchange of information, ideas, and resources, and foster a network of intergenerational community care. Their mission is to incubate and nurture neighbor-led programming and to enhance quality of life, foster a sense of belonging, and further economic and social development in Bed-Stuy/Clinton Hill through community-led Creative Placemaking.

## OUR VIDEOGRAPHER



**Dina Paola Rodriguez**  
they/them

Social Media Consultant and Videographer

## OUR OPENING NIGHT CHEF



**Elena Yamamoto**  
she/her

Chef at Bessou





# WORD SEARCH: OUR EDUCATION

X V W C Q B Z C T E V V B H K M M G P P M J K C Z  
C F N I O M L L E B A G T N N D T K I R X E S Q J  
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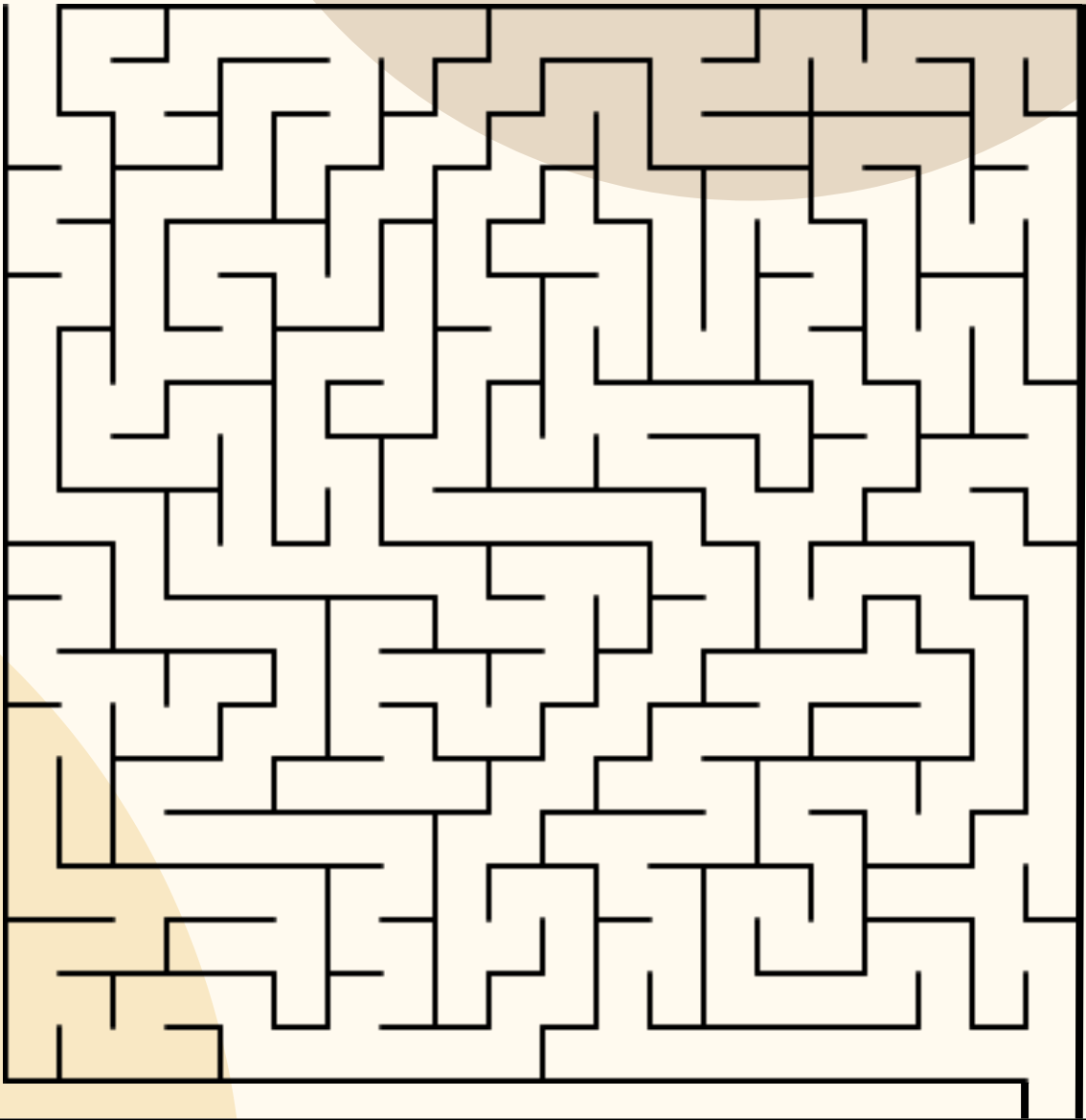
SIMMERINGSPICES	RELATIONSHIPS	OUREDCATION
GENERATION	EXHIBITION	SISTERHOOD
COMMUNITY	REIMAGINE	EDUCATION
MICENTRO	DREAMING	LEARNING
INFORMAL	DRAWING	GIRLHOOD
CURATOR	SCHOOL	GROWING
CHANGE	JUSTICE	HOPE

# MAD LIB: REFLECTIONS

I really do appreciate the people around me. There is \_\_\_\_\_ in my community, a lot of care and  
tenderness. When the going gets \_\_\_\_\_, I have people to \_\_\_\_\_ me up. A lot of the time,  
I find myself \_\_\_\_\_ about what more I can do for the \_\_\_\_\_ that matter so  
much to me. How can I \_\_\_\_\_? What does \_\_\_\_\_ look like? How do I ensure  
my efforts are truly \_\_\_\_\_? I don't know yet. I guess I have to figure it out. What I do know  
is that I'm surrounded by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ me  
to specific \_\_\_\_\_ that matter so much to me. There are lessons that I learned in the  
\_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_, and in the \_\_\_\_\_. There are memories that I will always  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of people who I loved dearly even if we don't \_\_\_\_\_ anymore.  
Even when it's \_\_\_\_\_, I love remembering. Even during my worst \_\_\_\_\_, I've  
\_\_\_\_\_ so much. I love learning. I like having \_\_\_\_\_ files filled with stuff about  
this and stuff about that in my \_\_\_\_\_. I like organizing and reorganizing these \_\_\_\_\_.  
They're \_\_\_\_\_ with do's and don'ts, pros and cons, the good, the bad, and everything in  
between. Faces, names, the back of this person's head, the funny way that person talks. What  
mattered to \_\_\_\_\_, what didn't to \_\_\_\_\_. Emotions, memories, and information  
\_\_\_\_\_ together to form the \_\_\_\_\_ of who I am and what I must do. My community will  
always be at the \_\_\_\_\_ of that. Like I said, I really do \_\_\_\_\_ the people around me.



# EACH PATH IN THE MAZE IS A STEP IN OUR LEARNING JOURNEY

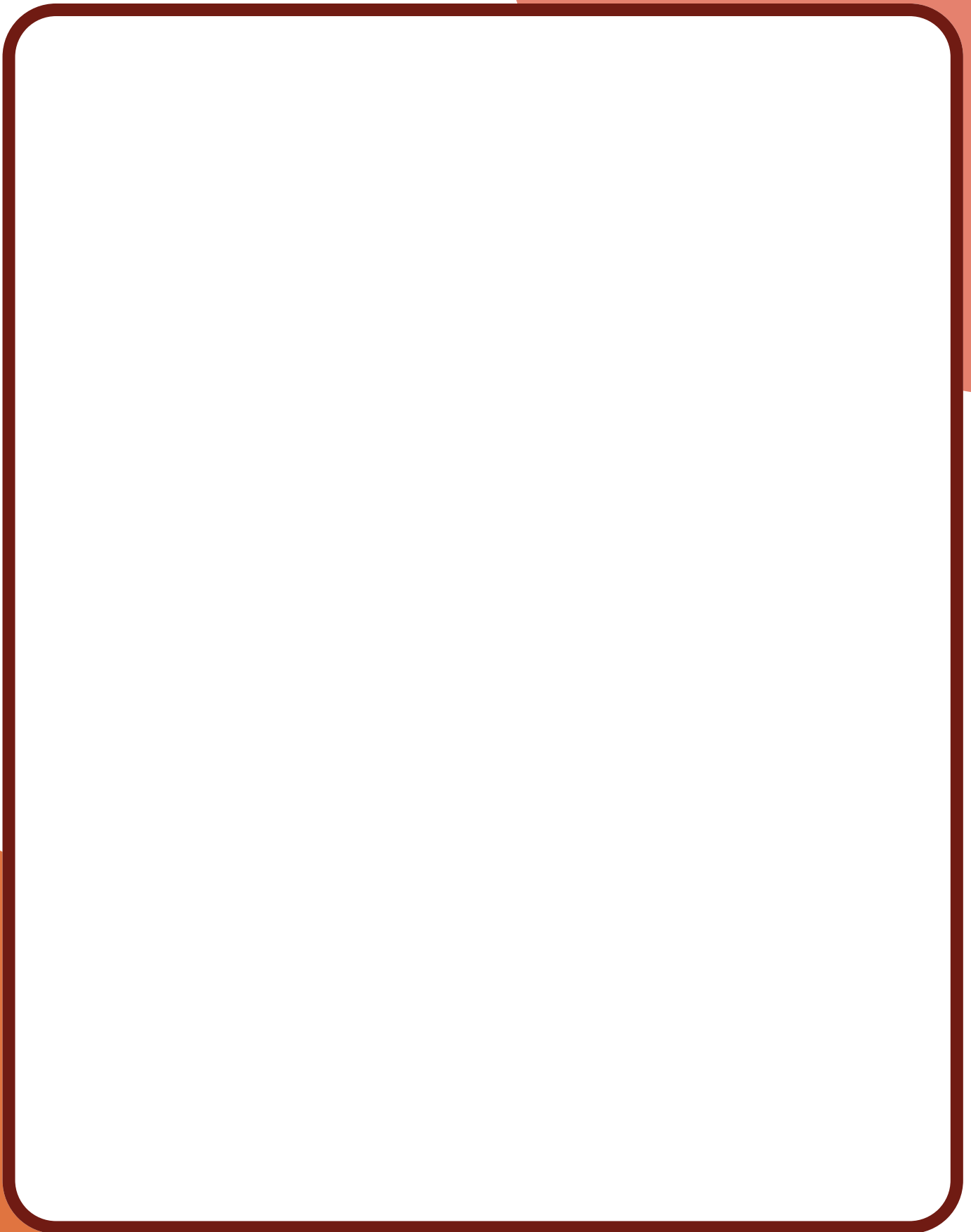


Where is your journey headed?

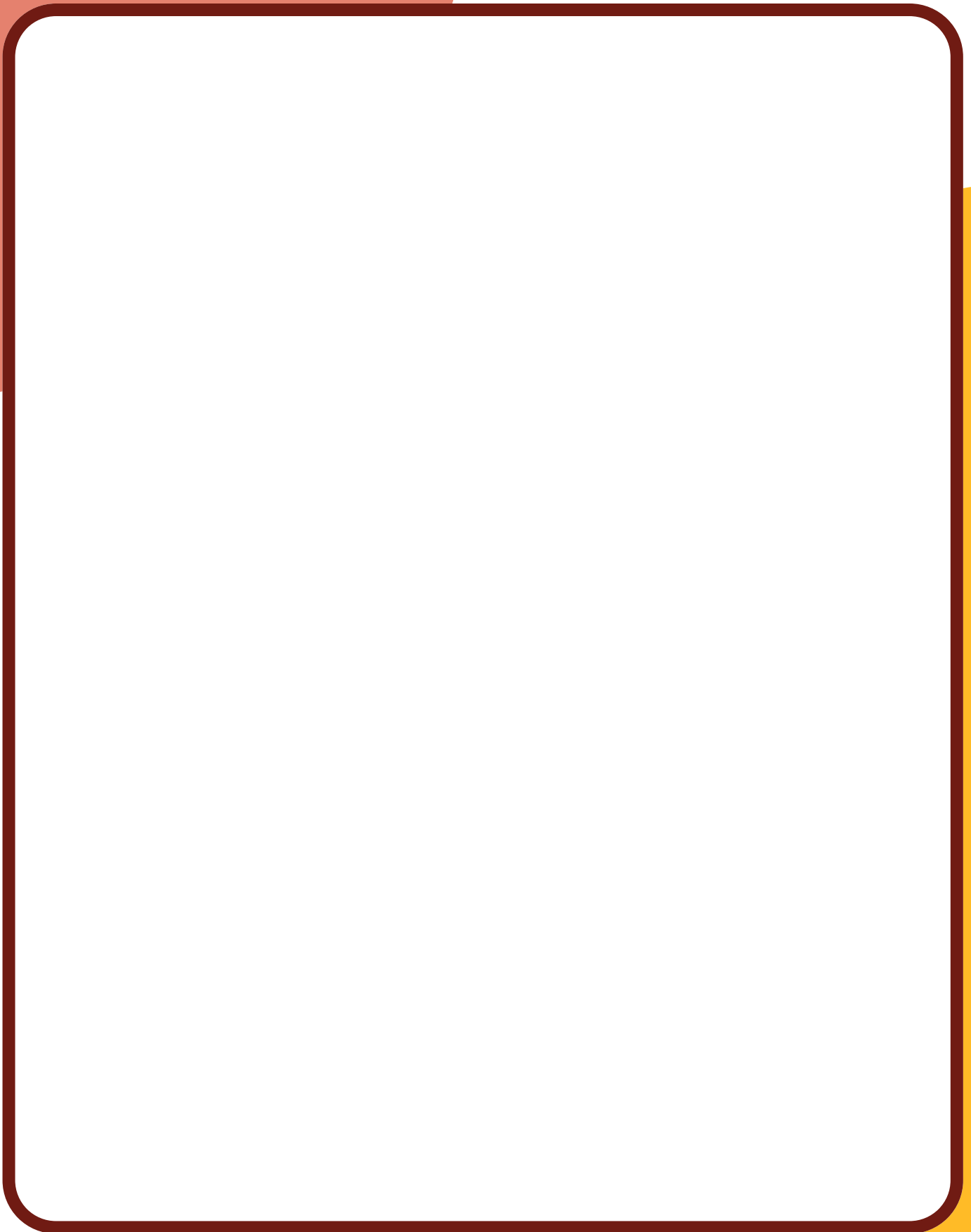
**NOW, IT'S YOUR TURN TO DRAW! HERE YOU CAN TAKE INSPIRATION FROM THE ART IN THE GALLERY, OR ANSWER THE QUESTION; WHAT DOES EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE LOOK LIKE TO YOU?**



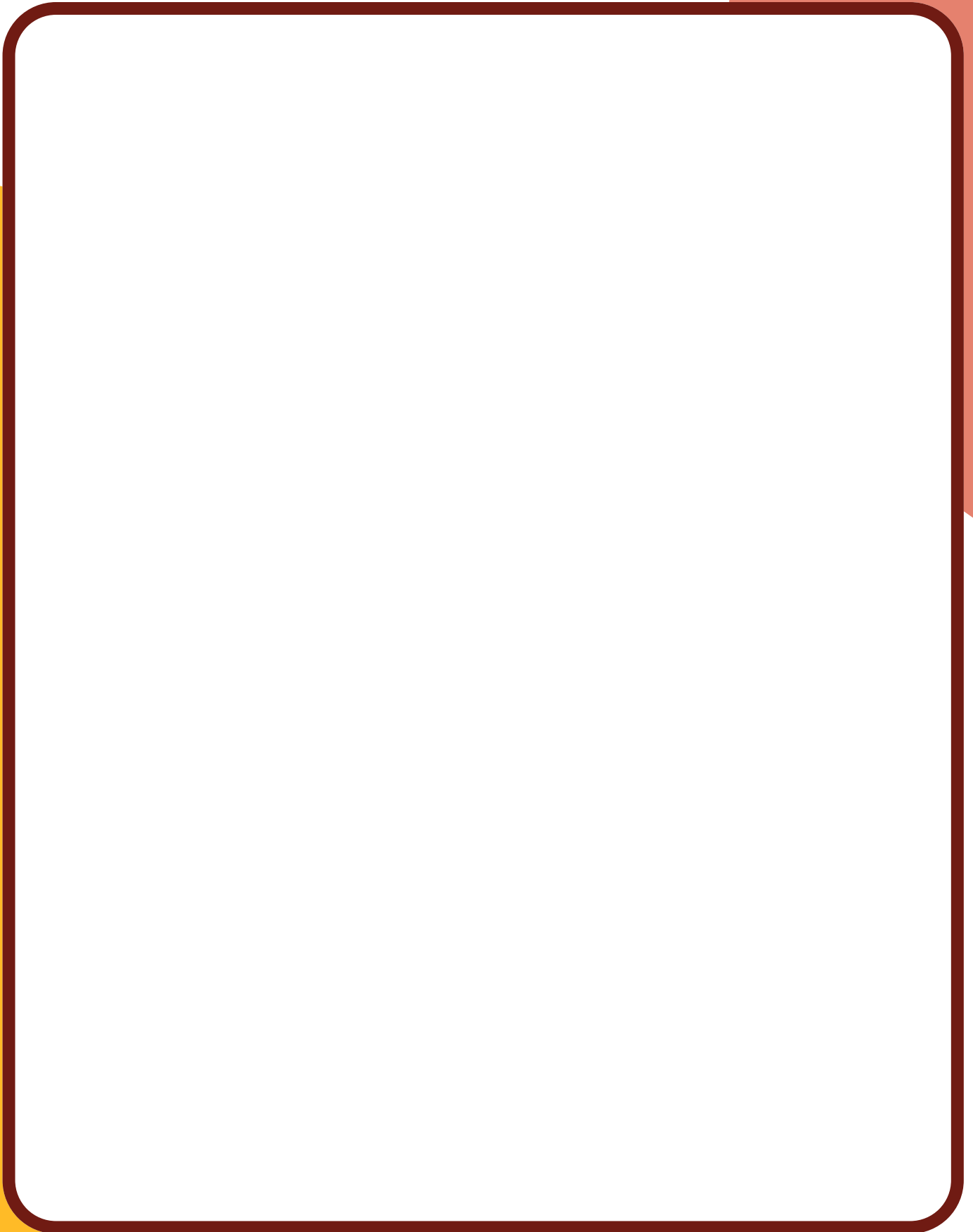
# DRAW YOURSELF LEARNING



**DRAW THE PERSON WHO YOU'RE  
NOT SCARED TO ASK QUESTIONS TO**



**DRAW THE PERSON WHO  
YOU'VE LEARNED FROM MOST**

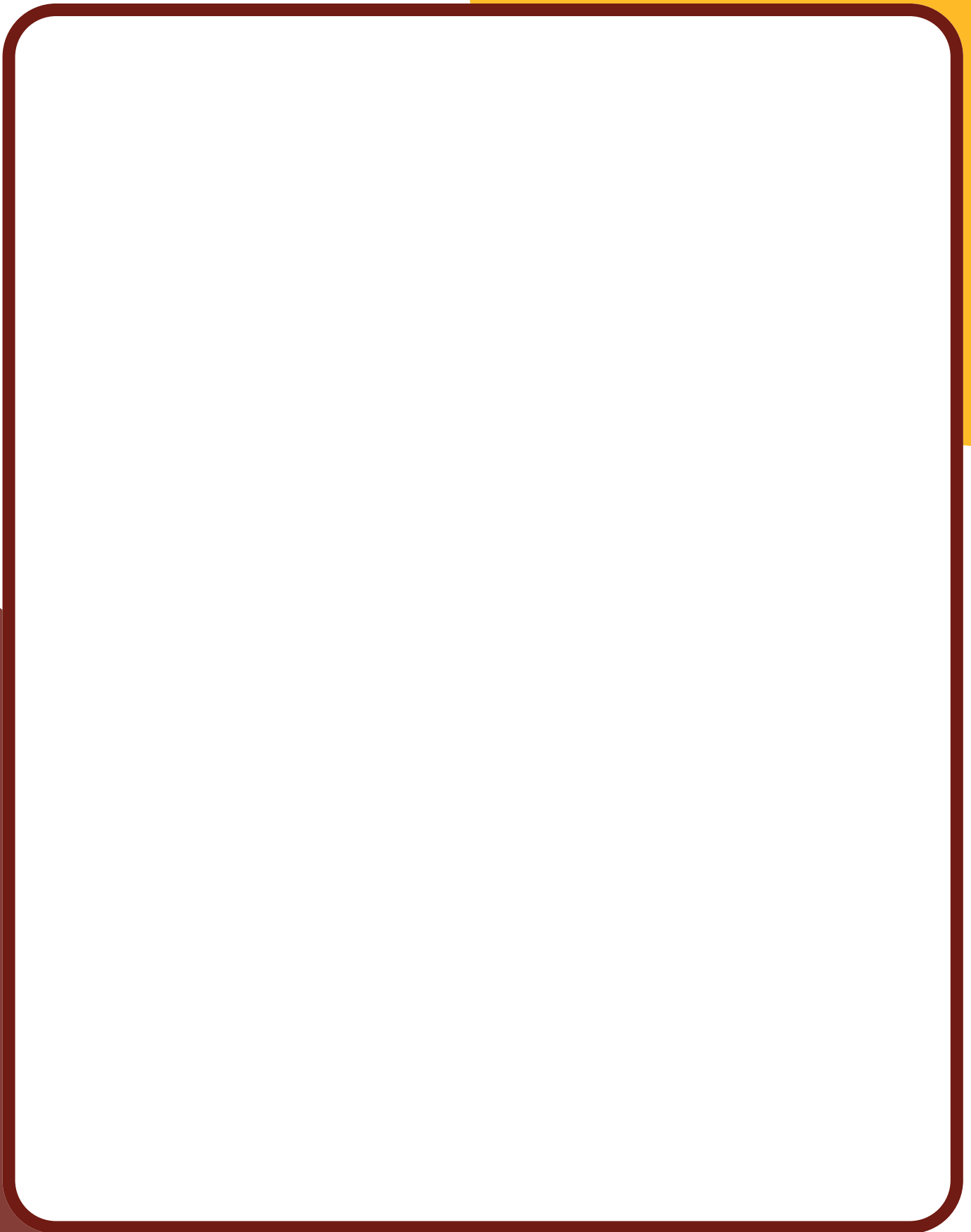


**DRAW YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO LEARN**





# **DRAW THE PERFECT CLASSROOM**



# **Field notes:**

**Look around the room right now and write about a piece that is interesting to you!**

**Before you read the description, write about what do you think it's trying to tell you? Then read the description. What did you learn about the piece?**



A large white rounded rectangle containing 20 horizontal brown lines for writing.

# THANK YOU!

*I would like to thank Leah, Blanca, Aliana, Mikayla, Grace, and Tricia for teaching me so much about GFOC, galleries, art, and more than that, sisterhood. I am so happy that I met all of you and got to create this beautiful collective with you guys. We often talk about places where learning happens outside the classroom, and I think this group is where I have learned the most. I love you guys so much and thank you again for making this seemingly hard process fun and enjoyable!*

*From, Sanjana*

*I want to give a huge thank you to Grace and Tricia for creating this project, especially for guiding us through the ups and downs of research. Also for being a great mentor and for putting us on to the best food places around the city, you've helped me further understand how food further brings people together. Thank you to Leah, Mikayla, Blanca, and Sanjana for putting your all into this project and just overall being amazing and beautifully talented individuals. Lastly, I want to thank my mom and dad for being extremely supportive through this whole journey and giving me the best shoulders to lean on. Dad, thank you for driving me to 90% of the meetings, I really appreciate it.*

*From, Aliana*

*I want to thank everyone who worked on the whole project, especially the main stars of the project. That being Grace, Tricia, Sanjana, Leah, Aliana, and Mikayla, thank you guys for teaching me so much about life. I felt represented as well as seen in all the work I did on this project and it felt so amazing to work with people who understood the struggles of growing up as girls and femmes of color. All the amazing places we went to, ate at, and just discovered in New York City together were such amazing experiences because I didn't feel alienated or estranged as long as we were all together, which made this project feel all the more special. I also want to thank everyone who decided to become involved and learn about our project, whether big or small, you all played a part in bringing spice into the Simmering Spices.*

*From, Blanca*

*I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone involved in this project, including my mentors Grace and Tricia, for their guidance and support in encouraging us to continue to push our creativity further. They not only provided us with their expertise, but they also went above and beyond to ensure our well-being. Thank you for being such amazing mentors and for making this a truly unforgettable experience. A special thanks to my peers Leah, Blanca, Aliana, and Sanjana for all of their kindness, hard work, and brilliance that brought this project to life. We make a fantastic team, and I am overjoyed that we achieved the goals we set from day one. Not only did we create a fun and inviting space for young women and femmes of color, but we also forged a strong bond and sisterhood. I also want to thank my mom for her unwavering support and encouragement. Her wisdom and guidance has greatly supported me throughout both my art and life journey and I am forever grateful. <3  
From, Mikayla*

*I first want to thank Grace and Tricia. You two have been such a solid source of guidance for me and I have learned so much while working on this project. I really appreciated your patience and flexibility throughout our work. I also want to shout out Mikayla, Sanjana, Aliana, and Blanca. It's been a blast getting to know you and I enjoyed working with you. You are brilliant designers, planners, thinkers and of course, curators! I will always treasure the moments we shared and hope that we will keep in touch. Last but not least, I want to thank my mom for letting me know about this opportunity, my dad for his encouragement, and my friend Madi for hosting my longer trips to New York! This is an experience that I will always be grateful for.  
With lots of love, Leah*

*Thank you to the amazing GFOC of the Simmering Spices & the artists who contributed to this show. I am so inspired and moved by the beauty you create, the visions of education you provide, your brilliance, artististry, and love. Thank you to Tricia for being by my side through this project from its inception. Thank you to Dina, Sophia, Hannnah, Yolie, and Nekisha for spending time, creative energy, knowledge, and kindness with us. Thank you to Mi Centro for providing us with such a gorgeous (both physically and spiritually) space. Thank you to Dan for being my life partner, for allowing the Spices to use our home, for your support. Thank you to all my scholar-siblings for believing in me and in this work. Thank you to the Spencer Foundation for funding this project, trusting this work matters in the world!  
From, Grace*



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