Geraldina Interiano Wise Biography

Geraldina Interiano Wise was born in 1960 in San Salvador, El Salvador. Interiano Wise's introduction and connection to the art world started at an early age under the tutelage of Violeta Bonilla (1924-1999), a select protégé of the muralist Diego Rivera. Painting plein-air on the San Salvador Volcano, every Saturday morning under the watchful eyes of the children of the ravines, Interiano Wise would develop her connection to mother nature and to her ancestral roots. Keenly aware of societal inequalities and the children's dire living conditions, housing would become a major focus of her architectural design career and environmentalism would influence the direction of her art.

Upon graduating high school (under her family's assumption that Vassar College was a conservative all girls college), Interiano Wise would find herself at Vassar in the epicenter of American liberal ideology. During her time there, Interiano Wise would take intentional excursions to NYC, where she would find herself exposed to the freedom of the abstract expressionist movement. This would prove to be a pivotal and an impactful influence on her long-term practice as an artist. Interiano Wise's train trips to NYC in the late 1970's also informed the direction of her studies at Vassar College where she studied Art and Art History under the influence of American Art Historian Linda Nochlin, who was the national preeminent voice in feminist art history.

Alongside her art and in her quest to solve the issues of sustainable and affordable housing for her fellow Salvadoreans, Interiano Wise also took courses in architecture and urban design with professor Jeh Johnson who would ultimately advise her to transfer to Rice University for an expanded professional degree path, recognizing the symbiosis between her passion for art and art history, and her larger mission to help the people of El Salvador.

Interiano Wise's introduction into Rice University proved to be life changing. In October of 1979, she would find herself displaced: the civil war erupted in El Salvador, one that would define her generation and redefine her country. As a result, Interiano Wise became an "accidental immigrant": she was permanently displaced and would focus on her education. She would go on to complete two degrees in Architecture, Art and Art History at Rice University.

While at Rice University she participated in an archeological dig on the ancient Via Appia in Rome through the Art History department. The hands-on exploration and discovery would prove transformational for her connection to human history, the concept of time, and the planet - themes that would become germane to her art and practice.

Understanding her new culture through the world of architecture proved to be diametrically opposed to her original intent; by the 1980's -starting her career in NYC- the rise of Post Modernism and Signature architects would be in stark contrast to her quest to design for all people. This was a time of Interiano Wise's tremendous exposure to the art world and would prove to be pivotal later on for her choosing art as her platform to explore freedom, environmentalism and to be a voice for her culture.

After working in New York City, San Francisco and San Antonio, Interiano Wise finally settled in Houston in the mid 1980s. Helping support her family became her focus, as she developed for the next 25 years a sustainable residential architectural design firm based on the principles of energy conservation and reduced environmental impact. This work would prove to become the precursor to Interiano Wise's focus of her art practice of using art as a platform for her overarching environmental themes of creating empathy and co-existence with all life on the planet.

Since retiring from her career in Architecture in 2011 Interiano Wise has been solely focused on her career as an artist. She has a robust multifaceted practice; she works in various mediums of painting, assemblage, collage, printmaking, sculpture, performance with wearable art and video and 3D design. Her first-hand experience with archeology, coupled with her background in architecture and her advocacy for the all life on the planet makes her work intentional. Interiano Wise's work is also deeply tied to her ancestral Maya intellectual heritage. As a Latinx artist, her research takes her back to her homeland, where she sources materials of identity and with traceable DNA, bringing her full circle back to where her artistic journey began. By 2021, after being active in the Houston artists community and understanding first-hand the lack of representation of the Latino artists, she used her community leadership to cofound & become the first board chair for ALMAAHH- Advocates for a Latino Museum of Art & Culture in Houston, Harris County, Texas.

Geraldina Interiano Wise currently resides in Houston, Texas with her husband Scott. She has three grown children, Maggie (Austin TX), Gabriella (Houston TX), and Scott (NYC), as well as three grandchildren. Interiano Wise's studio is located at Winter St. Studios in Arts District Houston, which she opens to art projects in the Houston Art Community. The studio also serves as her laboratory of art for her forays in Art, Science and the Brain, as Interiano Wise is the artist in residence at the Brain Center at the Cullen College of Engineering at the University of Houston in Houston, Texas.