



**EL CORAZÓN/HEART OF HOLYOKE
PLACEMAKING PROJECT
SECOND PHASE ARTIST SELECTION & INSTALLATIONS**

El Corazón /Heart of Holyoke is an exciting placemaking project celebrating the Puerto Rican Cultural Area of Holyoke.

The project supports the creation of a vibrant Main Street with colorful banners, large-scale art works, dynamic lighting, beautiful murals, food trucks and art festivals; a Main Street that reflects the vital culture of the surrounding neighborhoods; a Main Street that supports emerging businesses with safe and walkable streets.

Project artists have been selected, and during Spring 2021, the project will move forward with the following art installation projects along Main Street:

The Large-Scale Photo projects will feature:

- Michelle Falcón Fontáñez, a multimedia Boricua artist and activist from Holyoke, MA. She has created works in photography, film, theater and installation art.
- Emma G Mesa-Melendez, an artist through portraiture, her artwork deals with social and historical subject matters, and celebrates the ability of national heroes to inspire social causes. Her works include art depicting Agueybana II, Emiliano Zapata Salazar, Francisco Pancho Villa, and Ernesto Che Guevara.
- Giselle Guillén-Martinez, a queer bori-peruana activist, DJ, and multimedia artist born and raised in Western Massachusetts.
- Dream Collective, an ever-evolving collective of trans/queer people fighting for liberation for all, particularly Black, Indigenous, trans/queer people of color.

The Panel Mural Project will feature Frankie Borrero, Puerto Rican artist born in New York City. Other projects included working with Centro las Americas in Worcester and Pa'Lante organization and Fresh Pain Springfield.

All selected artists will be working closely through mentorship by Shey Rivera Ríos (pronouns: they/them) an interdisciplinary artist, cultural strategist, and arts administrator based in Providence, RI.

Shey is also curating and creating a Storefront Project alongside local artists:

- Carmen (Yolanda) Gonzalez, Holyoke native and owner of Creativity Events/Art
- Chelvanaya “Naya” Gabriel, a visual activist, multimedia storyteller, resilience facilitator, and ecosocial architect.

Shey is also serving as a mentor to local artists and provide capacity building in the arts along with three local artists for public workshops: Michelle Falcón Fontáñez, The Dream Club Collective and Jason Montgomery, a Chicano/Indigenous Californian writer, painter, and playwright from El Centro, California, who completed a public workshop focusing on Día de los Muertos in October 2020.

The art installations are expected to be complete by this summer.