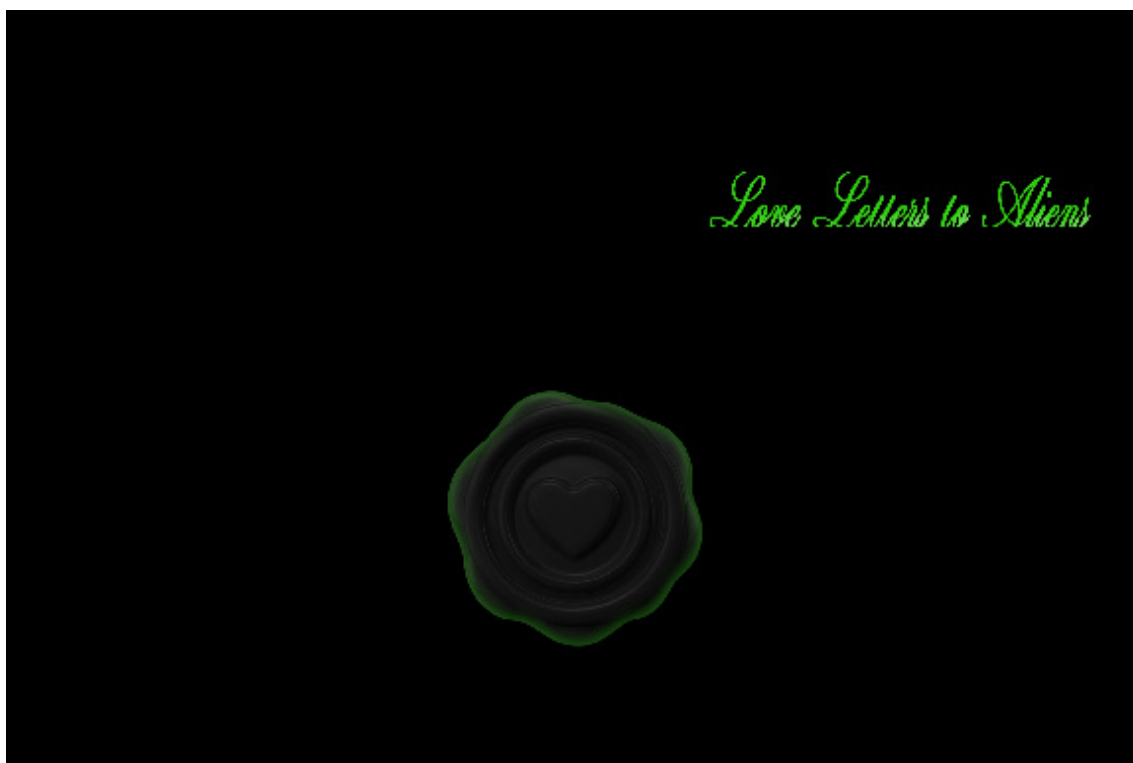


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Design by Sholeh Asgary

EXHIBITION ANNOUNCEMENT: *Love Letters to Aliens*
Group Exhibition Curated by Sholeh Asgary

October 25, 2025 - February 7, 2026

ARTISTS: Rana Hamadeh, Xandra Ibarra, Osvaldo Ramirez Castillo, Maryam Tafakory, Yue Xiang — with performances by Roco Córdova, and a DJ set by Alchemia

Download images [here](#). Visit the exhibition site [here](#).

San Francisco, CA, October 2025 – Southern Exposure is thrilled to present *Love Letters to Aliens* curated by Sholeh Asgary.

Love Letters to Aliens is an exhibition and event series featuring work by Rana Hamadeh, Xandra Ibarra, Osvaldo Ramirez Castillo, Maryam Tafakory, and Yue Xiang, with performances by Roco Córdova. It considers the notion of the alien in its most expansive sense—from the extraterrestrial to the intimate.

The project is framed by the drawn, decomposed, or transgressed borders of bodies, land, and matter. It examines how seduction, repulsion, and obfuscation can function as strategies of survival and acts of celebration in the erosion of entrenched systems.

From counter-archives to material excess and tender address, the artists of *Love Letters to Aliens* incorporate various mediums and methodologies in their works which include sculpture, drawing, performance, video, and grief work. Collectively, these works demonstrate the ways in which archives, affect, and material can render certain lives legible while denying others.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

SHOLEH ASGARY (b. Tehran, Iran) is an artist whose practice engages sound, hybrid art forms, and performance to investigate, memorialize, and express the complexities of joy and survival inherent in diasporic and refugee experiences. Asgary's primary material and deepest conceptual concern is sound. Through site-specific installations, sound sculptures, performances, archival projects, and collective collaborations, her work challenges colonial assumptions about what is heard, proposing new futures.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

RANA HAMADEH is a visual, sound, and performance artist from Lebanon, based in Rotterdam. Drawing on curatorial methodologies within her artistic practice, she develops long-term projects that manifest as large-scale sonic architectures, performances, interactive system-designs, audio-visual installations, and pedagogical frameworks. Her work probes the infrastructures, epistemologies, and technologies of justice, understanding justice through the optics of measure, spectacle, translation, reproduction and machinic standardization.

XANDRA IBARRA is an Oakland-based visual and performance artist who works across performance, video, and sculpture to address abjection and joy and the borders between proper and improper racialized, gendered, and queer subjects. Ibarra's work has been featured at El Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (Bogotá, Colombia), The Broad Museum (LA), ExTeresa Arte Actual (DF, Mexico), The Leslie-Lohman Museum (NYC). She received a Creative Capital award, Queer Art Prize for Recent Work, Art Matters Grant, Eisner Film and Video Prize, and the Franklin Furnace Performance and Variable Media Award. Her work has been featured in *Frieze Magazine*, *Artforum*, and *Art in America* among others

OSVALDO RAMIREZ CASTILLO was born in El Salvador and immigrated to Canada at age 11. He is a graduate of The Ontario College of Art and Design (2001) and obtained his MFA degree at Concordia University in 2008. He has exhibited extensively across Canada and internationally in venues such as The International Print Centre in New York, The Southern Alberta Art Gallery, MAI (Montréal Arts interculturels), Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, MARTE- Museo de Arte Moderno in EL Salvador and La Halle Saint Pierre in Paris among others. He is the recipient of The Artist Studio Award Program by the City of Vancouver (2015-2018), including the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant (2010) and numerous others from The Canada Arts Council. He was shortlisted for the Pierre- Ayot Prize in 2009 for an emerging artist by the City of Montréal. In 2011 Castillo was the winner of the Victor-Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award for a mid-career artist in visual arts in Canada.

MARYAM TAFAKORY, born and raised in Iran, works with film and performance. Solo screenings of her work include MoMA, BOZAR, NGA (Washington, DC), and the Academy Museum, among others. Selected group events include the Tate Modern, Cannes' Directors Fortnight, New York Film Festival, Locarno Film Festival, and Toronto International Film Festival. She was awarded the Gold Hugo at the 58th Chicago Int'l Film Festival, the Tiger Short Award at the 51st IFFR, and Best Experimental and Documentary Film at the 70th and 71st MIFF. She was the 2024 winner of the Film London Jarman Award.

YUE XIANG 项玥 (they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist working across installation, sculpture, video, sound, and performance. Born in Guangzhou, China, they currently reside in San Francisco, having received their MFA from California College of the Arts. Their practice centers on the creation of immersive environments through repetitive, hand-based labor—such as sewing, tearing, cutting, metal bending, and soldering. Engaging deeply with materiality and space-making, Xiang explores the sensorial and emotional possibilities of color, texture, decoration, and sound. Their work is an offering to their ancestors - in particular, to their maternal grandmother, 王淑芬

ROCO CORDOVA was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico and is a vocalist, composer, producer and improviser based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Cordova's music fuses diverse influences with electronic media, chance operations, gradual processes, noise, improvisation, and timbral techniques of composition. Voice is at the core of their practice: they weave together extended techniques like throat singing, overtone singing, falsetto, and vocal percussion into live performances that edge between ritual and happening.

ABOUT THE EVENT PARTNERS

NILOUFAR KHONSARI (she/they) is a Bay Area consultant, facilitator, and former movement lawyer with deep experience supporting groups to build more just, caring, and participatory ways of working together. They co-founded Pangea Legal Services, a worker-led immigrant justice organization, and now lead Bala Rising, advancing organizational development, capacity building, and collective leadership. Their new book, *The Future Is Collective*, offers a practical and visionary guide for transforming how we lead, work, and govern together. Drawing on two

decades of advocacy and real-world experience, it speaks to the challenges leaders face in times of growth and uncertainty, and uplifts practices rooted in clarity, care, and community. Outside of work, Nilou finds joy in dancing, poetry, the outdoors, time with loved ones, and raising her radiant young daughter.

ALCHEMIA is an Iranian DJ, multidisciplinary artist and radio journalist. She fuses her musical influences with her practice of storytelling and archiving when creating mixes. Her monthly show Taste of Cherry airs live every 1st Wednesday of the month on Oakland's Lower Grand Radio.

MEDICINE FOR NIGHTMARES is a bookstore and gallery in the heart of the Mission District, San Francisco.

PROJECT + EVENT INFORMATION

What: Opening Reception & Opening Performance by Roco Córdova,
Things You May Find Hidden In My Ear
Followed with a DJ set by Alchemia

Where: Southern Exposure, 3030 20th Street, San Francisco

When: Saturday, October 25, 2025
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Cost: Free

What: Book Launch & Conversation
The Future is Collective by Niloufar Khonsari

Partners: Medicine for Nightmares

Where: Southern Exposure, 3030 20th Street, San Francisco

When: January 9, 2026

Cost: Free

What: Closing Reception & Closing Performance by Roco Córdova

Where: Southern Exposure, 3030 20th Street, San Francisco

When: February 7, 2026
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Cost: Free

ABOUT SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Southern Exposure (SoEx) is an artist-centered nonprofit organization committed to supporting visual artists. Through our extensive and innovative programming, SoEx strives to experiment, collaborate, and further educate while providing an extraordinary resource center and forum for Bay Area and national artists in our Mission District space and off site, in the public realm. An active presence in the Bay Area since 1974, SoEx is continually evolving in response to the needs of artists and the community while engaging the public in artists' work. Central to our mission is to remain the most accessible space for visual artists to produce and present new work, learn, and connect. SoEx provides visual artists with the tools and resources they need to experiment in an open and supportive environment. We also work to advocate to new, diverse audiences and build an ever-growing community of enthusiasts and supporters of the visual arts.

For more information and images, contact Sholeh Asgary at sholehasgary@gmail.com or Emma Rosenbaum at emma@soex.org.

Southern Exposure is located at 3030 20th Street (at Alabama), San Francisco, CA 94110. Exhibition hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 12:00 to 6:00PM.

Website: <https://soex.org/>

Instagram: [@southernexposuresf](https://www.instagram.com/southernexposuresf)

Southern Exposure is generously supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the California Arts Council, The Fleishhacker Foundation, San Francisco Grants for the Arts, San Francisco Arts Commission Cultural Equity Initiatives, and The Violet World Foundation.

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