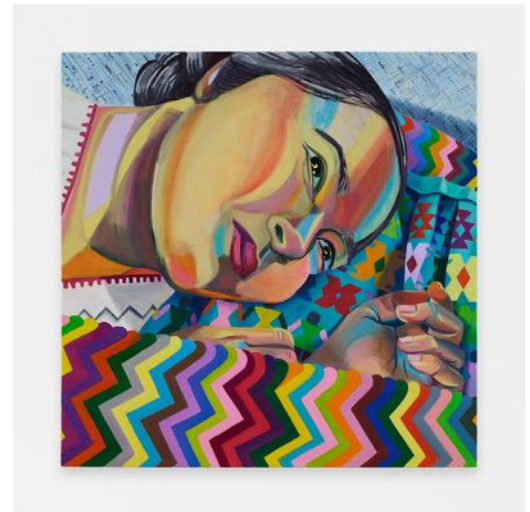


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ALIZA NISENBAUM
EXPO CHICAGO 2026
April 9–12, 2026

Presented by Anton Kern Gallery and Regen Projects
Stand 403
Panel discussion: Thursday, April 9, 5–7 pm

Anton Kern Gallery and Regen Projects are pleased to bring a joint presentation of works by **Aliza Nisenbaum** at EXPO CHICAGO 2026. Exemplifying the artist's singular approach to portraiture and community engagement, the paintings on view presage Nisenbaum's large-scale mural, to be unveiled at the Obama Presidential Center's opening in June of 2026.



Aliza Nisenbaum. *Huipil*, 2026.

Born in Mexico City and based in New York, Nisenbaum develops her ebullient paintings through a form of participatory observation that involves forging relationships with her subjects, often from diasporic and immigrant communities, and their environments. Originally commissioned for her solo exhibition at the Queens Museum, the monumental diptych *El Taller (The Workshop)* (2023) demonstrates this element of her practice, depicting a bilingual painting workshop Nisenbaum taught to volunteers from the Queens Museum's La Jornada food pantry.

Nisenbaum's sweeping mural created for the Obama Center, entitled *Reading Circles/ Weaving Dreams/ Seeding Futures* (2026), celebrates the vital role of the public library through a composition of community members reading, creating, learning, and gathering. The mural foregrounds the artist's engagement with fabrics, patterns, and visual layering, notably the vibrant hand-embroidery of Mexican Otomi textiles—a nod to her own heritage—and kanga cloths—a tribute to former President Barack Obama's Kenyan ancestry.

A suite of smaller portraits created for EXPO CHICAGO 2026 focuses on individuals that Nisenbaum has painted throughout her career, including some of the sitters represented in the mural. These intimate paintings further develop the layering technique featured in the commission, incorporating elements from Mexican handmade fabrics and Tree of Life ceramics—a form of folk art that brings together religious and cultural iconography in intricate arrangements. Other points of formal and personal inspiration are Henri Matisse's *Woman before an Aquarium* (1921–23) and *Laurette with a Cup of Coffee* (1916–17), which the artist encountered during her time as a student at the Art Institute of Chicago. In celebration of her return to the city, Nisenbaum initiates a direct dialogue with these paintings; studying Matisse's stylistic fluidity and his use of decorative pattern to emphasize the complex inner world of a contemplative female subject. Intertwining these varied aesthetic traditions into her paintings, Nisenbaum describes her process as a kind of weaving, in which geometric forms and visual richness coalesce into a symbolic and beautiful gesture.

On Thursday, April 9, 5–7 pm, Aliza Nisenbaum will participate in a panel discussion alongside Nekisha Durrett and Norman Teague hosted by EXPO CHICAGO and moderated by Virginia Shore, Curator of Commissions for the Obama Presidential Center.

Aliza Nisenbaum (b. 1977) earned a BFA from School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 2001, and an MFA from the same institution in 2005.

Selected solo and two-person exhibitions include the Des Moines Art Center (2025–2026); The Metropolitan Opera, New York (2023–2024); Queens Museum, New York (2023); Delta Air Lines x Queens Museum at LaGuardia Airport, New York (2022); Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City (2022); Tate Liverpool (2020); Minneapolis Institute of Art (2017–2018); and University Galleries at Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, Illinois State University (2007).

Nisenbaum's work is held in the permanent collections of museums and public institutions worldwide including Aïshti Foundation, Beirut; Allentown Art Museum; Arts Council, Dublin; Art, Design & Architecture Museum at the University of California, Santa Barbara; The Art Institute of Chicago; Cleveland Museum of Art; Des Moines Art Center; The FLAG Art Foundation, New York; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C.; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; KRC Collection, Voorschoten, Netherlands; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Minneapolis Institute of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; Museum Sander Darmstadt; Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery; The Perimeter, London; Queens Museum; Tate, UK; Toledo Museum of Art; University of Chicago Booth School of Business Art Collection; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Nisenbaum is the recipient of a Creative Capital Award (2024); and has been a Gala Honoree of the Hirshhorn Museum (2021) and The Phillips Collection (2019). She is a Tate Americas foundation honoree (2019), the recipient of a Provost's Junior Faculty Diversity Development Award from Columbia University (2017), a Fellowship for Immigrant Women Leaders and Women's Cabinet from the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (2015), and a Rema Hort Mann Emerging Artist Grant (2013).

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