

## Art & Social Practice MFA Program

The Art & Social Practice MFA at SHSU, initiated in 2021, is a dynamic and innovative program that combines artistic practice with social engagement. Students in this program are encouraged to explore the intersection of art and society and primarily create artwork that is activated through public interaction and participation. Student projects are developed through embedded self-led residencies in area agencies including nonprofit human service organizations and area businesses. Students also organize public events including open studios, pop-up exhibitions, film screenings, and workshops. It is the only MFA program emphasizing social practice in the state of Texas.





## Social Pharmacy: Huntsville

Collaboration with MFA students at Sam Houston State University

I designed curriculum around my ongoing project, Social Pharmacy, for a course entitled Collaborative Studio and led MFA students through a socially engaged process to design and implement their own iteration of Social Pharmacy for their local community. Students visited with local health care leaders inside and outside traditional medicine and partnered with a retirement community and the Huntsville Public Library.



# A Social Art Project Brings Healthcare Exchange to Huntsville

by [Jessica Fuentes](#) | April 1, 2022



*The logo for Travel Social Pharmacy*

MFA students enrolled in Sam Houston State University's Social Practices in Art program are launching *Traveling Social Pharmacy*, a mobile pharmacy in April and May to serve the Huntsville community.

Social practice, sometimes called socially engaged practice, is an artform that prompts conversation, collaboration, and/or social interaction between individuals or communities. Houston-based [Project Row Houses](#) may be the best-known and longest-running social practice art initiative in Texas. Recently, University of Texas at Dallas professor xtine burrough co-edited the book [Art as Social Practice: Technologies for Change](#) which features a chapter by Houston-based artist and curator (and former Glasstire News Editor) [Christopher Blay](#).

Sam Houston State students Marcelle Cavazos, Magda Macias, Glenda Pivaral, and Patrick Richards were moved by the need for medical support that has been brought into focus by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their response was to collaborate with assistant professor and mentor Jody Wood to activate a traveling pharmacy that will bring home remedies to the public. Ms. Wood has previously produced versions of this project in three towns in Sweden and in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Throughout April and in early May, *Travel Social Pharmacy* will visit libraries and community centers in Huntsville. With the intention of taking a collaborative approach, the artists have been collecting traditional home-remedies from local residents, including from individuals residing in Creekside Retirement, a senior living community in the area. According to a press release announcing the project, some remedies include "the use of a stiff bristle hairbrush to alleviate mild-migraine and repeated encouraging words as a relief to diminish anxiety."

See *Traveling Social Pharmacy's* upcoming stops below.



## Social Mending

Student Work samples from Glenda Pivaral, MFA '24, SHSU

*Social Mending* consists of a mobile mending station that raises issues of fast fashion and labor exploitation and aims to strengthen our fraying social fabric through the tactile act of communal mending. She has activated the project inside the homes of landscape laborers, poverty support agencies, and farmers markets.





**Glenda Pivaral, MFA '24, SHSU**  
Social Mending



*Through the activity of mending handmade fabric in different public settings, my project aims to open conversations about the value of work and the gentrification of handmade labor.*

- Glenda Pivaral

**Human Immigrant Library**  
Student Work samples from Magda Macias, MFA '24, SHSU





## Ofrenda

Marcelle Cavazos  
Community Seminar, SHSU

*Ofrenda* consists of an earth work installed in a public square and concurrent events centered around collective grieving. Taking inspiration from Meso-American temples and the tradition of Dia de los Muertos, the project seeks to restore comfort and care in communal space by memorializing loss through a public landmark.





## **Taste of Heritage**

Kanza Nasir  
Community Seminar, SHSU

*Taste of Heritage* collects traditional recipes from various community members and amalgamates them to bring up discussions about heritage and multiculturalism. The project establishes a roving mobile kitchen and communal meal events allowing community members to cook and share cross-cultural recipes.





**The Bubble Cycle**  
Lilibeth Flores  
Community Seminar, SHSU

The Bubble Cycle explores themes of storytelling and collectivity by creating a collaborative publication within the Bubbles Wash House laundromat. The Bubble Cycle uses the format of a bi-weekly printed newspaper to tell the stories and happenings of the washateria clientele.





## Load Cycles

Lilibeth Flores

Collaborative Studio, SHSU

*Load Cycles* is a performative handwashing station activated in the back yard of the Good Shepherd Mission, a residential homeless shelter and food pantry. The project uses the metaphor of laundry cycles to address intergenerational poverty and trauma, aiming for personal catharsis through inviting participants to share in conversation during the tactical gesture of handwashing laundry.





**Art & Social Practice MFA Program**  
Pop-up public exhibition  
Program Reel: <https://youtu.be/JO9Q7yLbET8>

