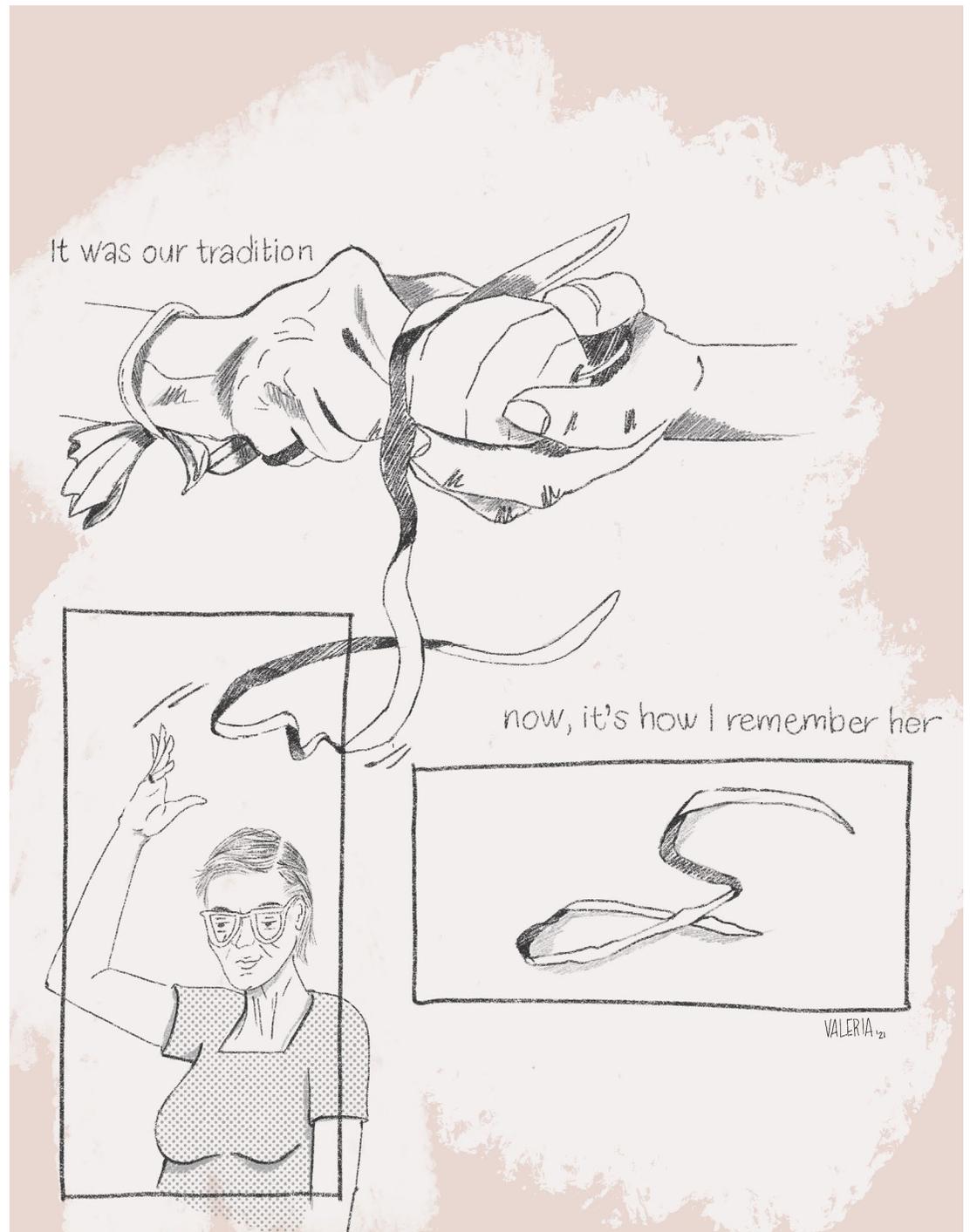


Celebration of One by Valeria Molinari

KEYWORDS

celebration
the mundane
things
loss
remembrance



***Celebration of One* by Valeria Molinari**

Interviewed by Cora Gaebel, Aurélie Godet, Ellen Litwicki, and Isabel Machado

What is *Celebration of One* and how did this project come about?

This project started as an extension of a previous project called “viva la nonna,” which was my grad school thesis, in which I went back to look at how my grandmother as an immigrant woman made a community through food, and how I as an immigrant myself have done a very similar thing without realizing it.

Celebration of One came from that, those little moments that most people take for granted, but they are cause for celebration or remembrance. During the pandemic, I was living by myself and experienced loss, joy, calm, grief, and I wanted to find a way to enjoy and live with those feelings in an intimate way, not your regular big and loud celebration, but a much more personal, acknowledging-the-moment-and-moving-on celebration, so I did. I started to look into all the small details of my day-to-day life, and how sometimes even a simple fragrant cup of tea, in your favorite cup, on the couch, contemplating life, can be a celebration. I hope this project grows into other vignettes or comics that depict just that, the celebration of the mundane.

You experiment a lot with different materials, what can you tell us about that?

Experimentation is definitely one of my favorite parts of my artistic practice, messing around with something new you might not know how to use or giving into the process because you don't know how it's gonna turn out. There's a certain child-like freedom which that moment gives you, and I embrace it. Even if I never end up using that material again in the future, the idea of exploration and wonder is very important to me.

How do you decide on the materials you are working with in general and in this project specifically?

Well, it depends. Sometimes that starts in the sketching process—while I'm sketching, I know what the perfect medium is—but sometimes it takes one, three, or seventeen different experiments of trial and error to get to the right one.

With *Celebration of One*, it was certainly about revisiting digital illustration, as well as choosing a medium that would allow for easy edits, faster turnaround, and quick explorations. It's been a very exciting experience, even if sometimes my hand gravitates to paper, pencil, and gouache.

Tell us about your current/next project (if you are working on something other than *Celebration of One*).

Right now, *Celebration of One* is one of my top priorities, but as per usual, I have my hand in a few different things: teaching some embroidery workshops and revisiting some old projects with a

fresh perspective and the knowledge of new mediums.

ARTIST BIO

Valeria Molinari (she/her) is an artist, illustrator, and art director from Venezuela, with a diverse practice that includes textile work, video installation, editorial illustration, and zines. Molinari likes to experiment with different mediums, which is why it is hard for her to identify with just one artistic label. In the past decade, her work has existed in the cross between art and activism, dealing with the language surrounding rape culture and feminism, as well as gender and queer politics. Using fibers as her base medium, Molinari incorporates calligraphy and hand lettering to display her message. Her practice involves a lot of self-examination and research, trying to remind the viewer about the power of words—the power of concepts, phrases, and lines that have been unquestioned by people for generations perpetuating thoughts and behaviors of gender, class, race, and sexuality. Lately, Molinari has been going back to her multidisciplinary roots while exploring different projects both old and new. She is currently working on a small project called “Celebration of One,” in which she finds a way to find joy and cause for celebration in the mundane. Her work can be found at her website, <https://www.valeriamolinari.com/>.

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