

Letras Urbanas Interview

1. Full Name

Anastasia Carpio Sabater

2. Date of Birth

May 25th, 1966

Name of the person who inspired you to be what you like, or from whom you think you inherited that passion

The inspiration came with me, an unspoken part of my DNA. Since childhood, art has been a constant in my life, and I've been surrounded by beauty in every sense of the word. I come from a family of artists. My beloved father, Oscar, was an architect by profession, but a stained-glass artist, sculptor, and painter by passion. My mother, Graciela, was a drafter, a natural apprentice, and an illustrator. While I admire many artists, I find my deepest inspiration in the simple beauty of everyday life.

At what age did you realize you liked what you do now?

As I mentioned earlier, art has been a constant presence in my life since I was a child. I grew up in a one-of-a-kind home with a blend of eclectic and refined tastes. It was a house rich with the flavors and smells of good food, surrounded by paintings and sculptures, and often filled with the presence of painters and all sorts of artists.

Explain how you realized you had the talent to do what you do.

I've never really asked myself if I have talent; I've always believed that I do what I do out of pure passion. Because of that, I'm still not sure if "talented" is the right word to describe me. I've always said that what truly defines me is good taste. Everything I do comes from passion, and without it, I don't think I would be able to do what I do at all.

As an artist, besides the genre you work in, what other things do you enjoy?

I am inspired by and enjoy all types of art. For me, life is already art, as long as it starts from good taste.

Who was the important part that helped you achieve one of your biggest dreams, if anyone supported you financially or personally?

My greatest support has always been my perseverance. When I focus on a goal—what I want to build and do—I achieve it, sometimes without even knowing how. It's been difficult for me to secure funding, and I'm not sure why.

Do you have a pseudonym or do you use your birth name to represent your work? If you have a pseudonym, describe the reason for that name.

I always taught my graphic design students in the typography course the importance of being the name behind the brand. I believe great artists have always stood out by using their

birth names. With a name as original and unique as mine, I use my birth name, Anastasia Carpio.

Studies and courses you have taken in your life (dates)

Anastasia Carpio is a Caracas-born visual artist with a distinguished career in graphic design and teaching. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts, *Cum Laude*, from the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. With over 12 years of experience, she has shared her extensive knowledge of typography as a professor at the Digital Design Center Institute and the Caracas Design Institute. In 2020, she founded the design brand "BRAC Designs." Her training as a designer, printmaker, and teacher has profoundly influenced her work, allowing her to move past the functional purpose of materials and objects and explore their potential through a purely "plastic" lens.

Artistic Residency 2022 *Duplex Air, February – March, Lisbon, Portugal*

Artistic Residency 2019 *Alejandro Otero Museum, June-September, Caracas, Venezuela*

Solo Exhibitions 2019 *"Progenie, ayer y hoy" (Progeny, Yesterday and Today), Alejandro Otero Museum, Caracas, Venezuela.* First solo show as a result of the artist residency.

2017 – 2018 *"Una mirada ochenta caracteres" (A Look, Eighty Characters), Carlos Cruz Diez Museum of Printmaking and Design, Caracas, Venezuela.*

Collective Exhibitions 2022 *Contextile 2022 "Contemporary Textile Art Biennial" Guimarães, Portugal*

2022 *Art Connects Women – 5th Edition International Art Exhibition, Dubai, UAE*

2018 *Exhibition/auction "Una obra para Venezuela" (A Work for Venezuela), in alliance with the American Venezuelan Engagement Foundation and Yellow Bench Studio, Miami, Florida*

2017 *"Itinerarios" (Itineraries), Okyo Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela*

2016 *"Arte y ruido" (Art and Noise), a show of lithography, engraving, and photography in CDMX, Mexico. In mid-2016, she completed workshops in lithography, soft sculpture, tapestry weaving, and engraving at the National Autonomous University of Mexico [UNAM], at the old Academia San Carlos. "Tercera Bienal Nacional de Artes Gráficas Venezuela, homenaje al maestro Alirio Palacios" (Third National Biennial of Graphic Arts Venezuela, tribute to master Alirio Palacios), Carlos Cruz Diez Museum of Printmaking and Design, Caracas, Venezuela. "Código XXIII," Lithographic collective, "Huella de piedra" (Stone Print), CDMX, Mexico.*

2014 *Participation in the framework of "Art Basel" 2014, Miami, Florida. Guest juror at the "Salón Nacional de la Coexistencia" (National Coexistence Salon), Graphic Design Category 2014, 2016, and 2018 of the Espacio Anna Frank Foundation, in Caracas, Venezuela.*

2012 *"I Bienal Lo uno y lo diverso" (First Biennial of The One and The Diverse), confrontation of Art on Paper, Best Graphic Design, Caracas, Venezuela. Recognized in the "Salón Nacional de la Coexistencia" (National Coexistence Salon), Graphic Design Category with the winning poster "Illustration Mention," Caracas, Venezuela.*

2011 *"Exposición-Subasta para el Cáncer de Mamas" (Exhibition-Auction for Breast Cancer), for the benefit of Seno Salud, Caracas, Venezuela.*

Other participations *She is included in the books: "Marcas. Identificadores gráficos en Venezuela" (Brands. Graphic Identifiers in Venezuela), edited by the Carlos Cruz-Diez Museum of Printmaking and Design, Caracas, 2005; and in "Diseño gráfico latinoamericano" (Latin American Graphic Design) by Rómulo Moya Peralta, edited by Trama, Quito, Ecuador, 2006.*

Describe your current achievements, your goals, your way of working, how you can help people through your art, if you help people in the same field, and if it has been very difficult for you to achieve your potential.

I see achievements and goals as something very personal. For me, a great achievement as an artist was being accepted into seven European art residencies in six countries, among almost 1,500 international artists. I was also accepted into an international call that had over 1,300 participants, which literally happened right after I arrived in Lisbon. With that, I already felt like a winner!

While I was at my residency, a fellow artist mentioned a call for the International Textile Art Biennial [Contextile 2022] in Guimarães, Portugal. I only had a week to create the piece I was going to submit. I told Mónica, "If I create something I feel is worthwhile, I'll participate." My goal at that moment was simply to let go and express what was inside me, which was a deep sadness, pain, and anger over the loss of my beloved father. To my surprise, the final result was three pieces made of gauze (a material I've worked with from the beginning) sewn with branches from local pine trees in Lisbon. I decided to submit them, and they were selected for the exhibition.

When I first arrived at the residency, I made a decision: the only thing I would demand of myself was to work every day "without pressure." I chose to trust, let go, and create without any expectations, just hoping the work would flow. The one thing I was clear about was the material I would use: wire. Although I typically work with natural, organic fibers, wire had become a new challenge—to transform a rigid, visually heavy material into something subtle and sublime. It felt like I was going against the material itself.

I enjoyed everything around me; I was "the observer," sharing ideas with the four artists who were there, and taking in the architecture of my new city, my beloved Lisbon. I had been living there since my permanent move from Venezuela. It was there I began to realize my creative process had completely changed in the blink of an eye. The key at that point in my life was to simply trust, and that's what I did. I'm naturally disciplined and methodical, having been a typography professor for over 12 years, a graphic designer, and an advertiser by trade, with a year of experience in fashion design.

I learned not to fight against time but to respect and understand it. I realized that a deadline for a call or exhibition has its own rhythm. I understood that what I do comes from the deep passion I feel when I see a finished piece—something we artists often find fault with! I don't know if I inspire others with my art, but what's important to me is that they connect with what I do. A smile or a gesture from the viewer makes me feel like a winner! My passion is my creative engine.

A person's sense of fulfillment depends on their aspirations. I don't know if I can call this "fulfillment" because what I do isn't a job; it's a passion. Every time I finish a piece, I want to do more, and that drives me to seek further growth. My goals stay in place until I reach them; once I do, I move on to the next one... and so I go! My best advice is to do what you do with passion. That is the core and the driving force that has moved me my entire life.

Where do you currently reside?

In Lisbon, Portugal

And most importantly, describe your dreams, your passion, and what you hope for with that in the future.

For me, dreams are a part of my daily life because of the passion I have for what I do. My dream is to continue my work and have people connect with my art in a way that allows them to identify with a piece, to feel what I want to transmit. My passion is what I do every day, which is why I don't see it as a job but as an extension of who I am.

Describe an inspiring phrase that you identify with.

"My life's engine is fueled by passion."

Describe in your own words your artistic career (it doesn't matter if you are an amateur), your way of thinking, of being, what kind of food you like, what you do to relax and have fun. Things you think people would like to know about you.

My international artistic career began in 2015, following a printmaking workshop at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Caracas. I decided to enroll with a friend I'd convinced to join me. I think I had only taken two workshops in my life, but since I had stopped teaching so many years ago, I wanted to give art a try.

What started with great excitement ended in frustration. Caracas at the time was in political and social chaos, and street protests completely paralyzed the city. So, I gave up. I called my professor, Norma Morales, and told her I couldn't continue. To my surprise, two months later, I received an email from Norma inviting me to join a workshop at the museum with 15 other artists. That's where my hidden passion truly began. Every week, I explored something new, looking for materials that felt aesthetically pleasing and challenging, or simply using whatever was within my reach. I had no idea what I was doing or what the purpose was; I just knew I was enjoying it to the fullest.

After three months immersed in the workshop, I began to explore the possibility of formally studying art. I decided to leave everything behind, take all my savings, and move to Mexico City to study at UNAM. There, I had the privilege of taking courses in **lithography, engraving, tapestry weaving, and soft sculpture**. The eight-month experience was extraordinary and laid the solid foundations for me as an artist today. I made great friends and met talented artists. Sharing with them inspired me and opened me up to new ideas and concepts. I particularly admired the talent of my dear friend Claudia Méndez, a brilliant artist who inspired me every time I walked into the lithography workshop. Thanks to her, I understood what I wanted to do for the rest of my life: be a **Visual Artist**. Being the daughter of an architect and having worked in museums gave me the confidence and tools to understand space. I wanted to think big and create grand works—spaces where the viewer could immerse themselves and create their own story.

When I returned to Caracas, I sought out my friend and colleague Jesús Caviglia, whom I admire and respect. I invited him to my house, where I had already set up my workshop to continue the work I had started with so much passion in Mexico. I showed him everything I had created, hoping to get his perspective on my chances in this new artistic direction. Thanks to him, I was introduced to Rosamelia Herrera's Okyo Gallery in Caracas, which is where my career officially began. I sold my work in collective exhibitions for about two years until my dear friend and colleague Natalia Ponce sent me a submission for an artistic residency at the Alejandro Otero Museum in Caracas. To my surprise, I won.

That three-month residency was where I truly began to understand myself as an artist. I had daily dialogues with myself and with the space, and I understood the importance of what space meant to me. I also realized my creative and working capacity. At the time, I had no idea what I was going to create for an exhibition in a room of almost 100 square meters. But I did it, thanks again to my friend Jesús, who had given me 60 meters of surgical gauze. I decided to use the only material I had, and the result was an extraordinary piece that also incorporated a political statement about the daily life on the streets of Caracas. The rest, as they say, is history—the same story that begins this interview.

There are two things that keep happening to me on this new adventure in life: the materials for my most important works are often given to me as gifts, and a colleague always seems to send me a link for a submission that leads to me being selected as a participating artist. Is it luck or coincidence?

Sometimes people ask me questions like the ones Julia poses here—what I like, what I do for fun, or what kind of food I enjoy. I sometimes answer with the phrase, "there's no accounting for taste." What I mean is that we're not so different from the rest of humanity. What sets us apart is a great sensitivity for things, which leads us to have eclectic, and perhaps for some, strange tastes. My gastronomic tastes are quite varied. For me, food represents family, and it has since I was a child. Dinners and Sunday lunches were always important events in our home, and our after-dinner conversations would last for hours. Because of that, I have a special love for good food. I must confess, now that I live in Lisbon, that I don't like sardines or cod. I don't know if the Portuguese will end up loving me or not! I grew up near the sea, which is one of the many reasons why it's so important for me to be in Lisbon. Being surrounded by water connects me to my childhood in California. The landscape inspires me, as does architecture, the complex structures that generate textures and patterns, and of course, museums.

I am a cheerful person who always looks on the bright side. For me, the glass is always half full, never half empty!

Thank you, dear Claudia, for referring me to Julia! And thank you, Julia, for the opportunity to share a little about my life and to express my passion, hoping others will connect with what I'm sharing.

15. Social Media (IMPORTANT)

I have Facebook and LinkedIn but I don't use them much. IG stories are posted to Facebook. Instagram = @anastasiacarpio Web = www.anastasiacarpio.com