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MEDIA RELEASE

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Media Contact: Charlie James

Charlie@cjamesgallery.com

213.687.0844

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present the exhibition:

SANDY RODRIGUEZ – *YOU WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN*

JANUARY 25 – MARCH 7, 2020

ARTIST'S RECEPTION SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH 2020 FROM 6-9PM

Charlie James Gallery is delighted to present *You Will Not Be Forgotten*, the first solo exhibition at the gallery by Los Angeles-based artist **Sandy Rodriguez**, opening Saturday, January 25th and running through March 7th, 2020. A limited edition catalog release will coincide with the opening on January 25 from 6-9pm. On February 22, the gallery will host a walkthrough & reading by Project 1521 from 2-5pm.

You Will Not Be Forgotten is an installation of works from Rodriguez's ongoing *Codex Rodriguez-Mondragón* project and is dedicated to the seven Central American child migrants who died in US Customs and Border Protection custody during 2018 and 2019. The twenty works include portraits of the children in life, as well as a large-scale map that marks the incidents in space and time across the US-Mexico border. Among these is a visual recipe for healing "susto," or trauma, as written in the colonial medicinal manuscript *Codex de la Cruz-Badiano*, authored by an indigenous doctor who survived the 1521 conquest and subsequent plague. For example, the map provides the ingredients for a potion and poultice that includes orchid, two types of plumeria, swallow's nest, river water, sea foam, laurel leaves, and other elements. Ix Chel and Tenten In na are the grandmother goddesses from the Mayan and Nahua pantheons, and they flank both sides of the map. Both deities are associated with medicine, medicinal herbs, healers, and midwives, and are summoned to watch over us and these children on their journey to the land of the dead, so that they can return to visit next fall and every fall.

The installation also includes US Customs and Border Protection-infested border landscapes, with 24-karat gold constellations from her medicinal-plant field studies in 2019 across Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah. A group of healers associated with treatments for respiratory illness, heart sickness, and influenza are also included. These images are adapted from a second historic text, the Florentine *Codex*, but are updated with contemporary portraits of scholars who Rodriguez has communicated and collaborated with on the *Codex* series. Each work is created in indigenous color on handmade sacred

and ceremonial paper of las Américas and incorporates iconography from both Mayan and Nahua visual cultures and art histories. Every element is researched and cross-referenced with dozens of texts, scholars, and historians over the course of nine months in 2019. Rodriguez hopes that the exhibition offers a space for us to heal the traumas of the present and the past, and to humanize 70,000 migrant children who are currently caged in the United States.

Sandy Rodriguez is a Los Angeles-based painter. Her work investigates the methods and materials of painting across cultures and histories. Her *Codex Rodriguez-Mondragón* is made up of a collection of maps and paintings about the intersections of history, social memory, contemporary politics, and cultural production. She was raised in San Diego, Tijuana, and Los Angeles. Rodriguez earned her BFA from California Institute of Arts and has exhibited at a number of regional institutions, including the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Art + Practice, Los Angeles; and the Riverside Art Museum. Rodriguez and her work have been featured in the Los Angeles Times, on KCET.org, Spectrum News 1, and on several radio programs, including KCRW's Press Play, CBC's Radio-Canada Hour le Monde, KQED's Statewide Report, and KPCC's Off Ramp.