traditional foods, art and *ofrendas*, as well as the opening of *Still Here*, a new exhibition of art by Felicia "Luche" Perez.

Perez, who moved to Reno in 2012 after more than a decade as a high school history teacher in Los Angeles, is the innovation director for the Center for Story-based Strategy-a group that offers training and support to social justice oranziations-and a board member of the Sylvia Rivera Center for Social Justice, which produced Holland's event. She's also an artist and channels her experiences of living with a rare autoimmune disease into her work. With Still Here, Perez tells a narrative about living since 2012 with the disease, which causes tumors to wrap around her optic nerve and brain. And as an a Mexican American with deep ties to the traditions of Dia de Los Muertos, she thought the holiday would make a fitting opening date.

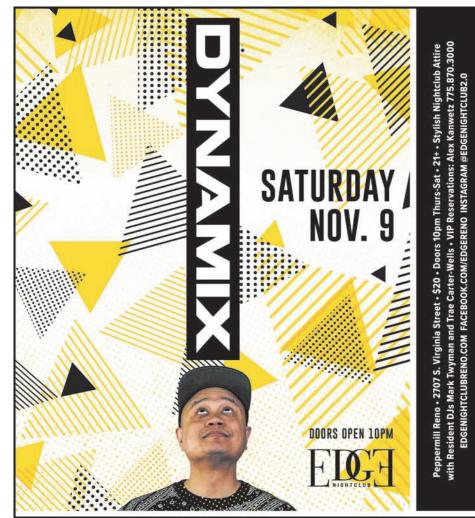
"I was thinking about things and was, like, 'Well, it's All Souls' Day,'" she said. "And All Souls Day is not quite All Saints' Day. It's the day for people who have not yet transitioned into a new life or gone to Heaven or gone onto some other sort of world. ... Some people call it purgatory. Some people call it just this 'waiting moment.' Some people celebrate it with *Dia de los Muertos*, with the two days. It's about how people are still here if we want them to still be here. It's not some sort of punishment. It's about a celebration of someone's life and keeping them in our lives and our community if we can continue to remember them and their stories and what they contributed. So it felt like the perfect sort of moment."

In eight years, Perez has had three tumors, none cancerous but all requiring surgery. She's undergone many rounds of radiation and is on a regular schedule of chemotherapy permanently. The art in her exhibition speaks to the challenges that come with this—bottles and bottles of pills, clothes worn prematurely thin from chemo drugs leaving the body, the cost of health care under a broken and embattled system. One piece is a *luchadore* mask affixed beneath a radiation mask.

"So my familial name is Luche, which in Spanish means 'to struggle,' and a *luchadore* is a wrestler," Perez said. "So, Mexican culture is really into *luchadores* and Mexican wrestling, and my whole life I've just been surrounded by it because of my nickname."

It's a fitting one considering Perez's fight to be resilient in the face of her disease. Resilience, she said, is something she values and sees reflected not just in herself but in the Latinx community at large.

"I feel like Reno's Latinx community this last year has had cultural responses to the hate that has been happening on a national level—to invite people here locally to not have to only think that there's one side to be on ... and that the side of justice of love of humanity is worth it," she said. "We have sweet churros. We have great music. We have sweet churros. We have great music. We have sweet churros. And we ourselves as people are resilient AF—and you can be as resilient with us."



## Peppermill**Nightlife** FREE CONCERT SERIES AT TERRACE LOUNGE

## Virgina monologues



Over the weekend, a series of misprinted street signs gave a fresh identity to Reno's main thoroughfare. First reported on social media by the owner of Craft Wine and Beer, a photo showed a street sign denoting the intersection of Martin and South "Virgina" Street. The Reno Gazette Journal confirmed that the misspelling was the fault of the City of Reno's print shop and happened at two other intersections on St. Lawrence Street and Cheney Street. The signs served as the butt of internet jokes and hashtags like #virginaisforlovers, and even spawned merchandise like hoodies bearing Virgina St. signs. The misprints were quickly taken down, but the typo has been made other places, like this sign at the corner of South Virginia and Pueblo Street. PHOTO/MATT BIEKER



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