

P'Palante

Stories moving
Somerville **Forward**

Our collective immigrant history is based in resilience. This project and exhibition is about the universal strength in each of us.



In exhibition at the Central Library through August, and at East and West Branch Libraries through September.

Questions? Contact Jake Savage at jsavage@somerville.gov

tinyurl.com/PalanteSomerville

Led by

mario**QUIROZ**
[maɪo 'ki roʒ]

In collaboration with

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DEPARTMENT OF
**RACIAL &
SOCIAL JUSTICE**
CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MA



A PHOTO PROJECT BY MARIO QUIROZ



*There is more to be done than to be said.
We make community by being part of it.*



*The road that is left behind becomes smaller
as we walk towards a better tomorrow.*



*If we wait long enough, we will be so glad
to see where it all began.*



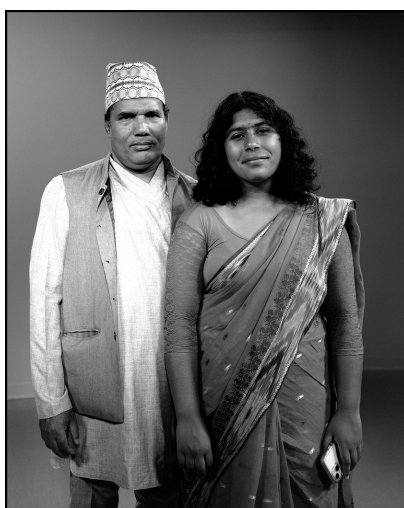
*The cycle of life goes on no matter what.
Love and family are the key ingredients
that make optimism grow.*



It is a sense of togetherness and belonging that gives a true north to our identities.



A little seed can become a great tomorrow. Witnessing its growth is a blessing.



We are a continuation of the past, the same way we are a living future.



If we only could hear the wisdom that comes from experience, our collective future would be brighter.



The strength that has always moved us forward comes from the awareness of a better tomorrow.



We are always building, we are always rebuilding, because that is who we are and what we do.



To view a short film created for this exhibition,
scan this QR code or visit
Tinyurl.com/PalanteSomerville.

CREDITS



Yongchang Liang Ou and GuangQi Si
(Mandarin)
[Song]



Abdulla Awad
From Palestine, in Arabic

My name is Abdulla Awad, Palestinian, living in Somerville, the owner and co-founder of Yafa Bakery.

My name is Abdulla Awad, Palestinian the creator and founder of Yafa Bakery and Cafe here in the heart of Somerville. We are creating that beautiful, wonderful business to flourish the community and the greater city of Boston. We call it Yafa. Yafa means beautiful, to reflect on who we are as Palestinians and to reflect on who we serve, which is our community members. And to reflect on what we serve, is all about beauty. We have a proverb and saying, a wonderful one in Palestine, and we would love to share that with our community. My home is your home, and we are your guests. My home is your home and we are your guests. Being Palestinian is to never forget where you come from. And it is to offer a piece of it to the world.



Sussen Queiroz Miller, Diuen Gazal Queiroz, José Alemán, and Rafic Miller.

From Brazil, El Salvador, and the U.S., in Portuguese

Like all immigrant families, we came to another country and made our home here. And our home is Somerville, it is our home. And like many immigrant families, we are a mix of different cultures and a mix of knowledge, tastes, and languages. Here is my partner José, from El Salvador, and we speak Spanish. Here is my mother, who came from Brazil and has lived with us all these years, working so that our family can stay together, growing, strong. And so we speak Portuguese with my mother, Diuen. And here by my side and behind me, giving me incredible support, is my son Rafic, who is the intersection of all these cultures. Raised in Somerville, in Somerville public schools, Rafic speaks English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Because Somerville is this diversity of colors, of flavors, of the desire for the world to be one and for us to live without borders,

feeling that this city is truly a sanctuary that makes us feel protected. We want to stay here, but in recent years, I've lived here for 15 years, we've been pressured to leave the city. Somerville used to be called "Little Brazil," and people left because rents are expensive and buying a house here is only possible if you can pay over a million for an apartment. So we have to fight and join forces with all the residents' and tenants' associations to ensure social justice, because housing is a human right. And that's why we fight and take to the streets of Somerville to demand social justice and housing justice, as there is already language justice. We are going to stay in Somerville, because rent control will return and housing for the working class will too, because we want to stay in Somerville and we want to stay when we can afford to stay and be happy and use this city like everyone else who lives here. We belong to Somerville and Somerville is better because we exist too.



Joice Peres Louro, Paulo Louro, Valentina, and Noah
From Brazil, in Portuguese

Hello everyone from the Somerville community. My name is Joice, we are Brazilian, we are the Louro family. I would like to thank the City of Somerville and the community for the opportunities we have had. Through the community, I was able to complete my studies in English, I got into Bunker Hill College, and we are very happy to be here, to be part of this welcoming community that has embraced us and our culture. I would very much like to sing a special song that represents our faith, which is:

[Song]

Thank you!



Shreemila Bajracharya and Maavisha
From Nepal, in Nepali

Namaste, my name is Shreemila and this is my daughter Maavisha. We came from Nepal and we are speaking in our mother tongue (Nepal bhasa). We are very happy to have an opportunity to speak in our native language here. Today, me and my daughter are going to sing a short song. Ready? Ok? So...

[Song]

Thank you!



Nancy Paz and Sara
From Colombia, in Spanish

Hello, my name is Nancy and she is my daughter Sara, we are here today representing our Colombian culture. We are from Colombia, proudly happy to belong to this wonderful country, Colombia, and we would love for all of you to visit at some point so you can experience all of our customs, our diverse cuisine, the flavor of our fruits, our coffee—it is spectacular. We have different regions, each region with its ancestors, its

cultures, its stories, and it is wonderful because you can travel through Colombia, the weather change so easy, from a cold to a mild weather, and in a mile or two miles, you can reach a totally tropical weather, an amazing warm climate. We are surrounded by two great oceans, the Pacific and the Atlantic, where the diversity of seafood is spectacular, the Caribbean culture is a phenomenon, and the interior, with all its culture and all its people, its race, the country is spectacular, and we would love for you to be able to get to know it sometime so that you can also be enriched by everything Colombia offers. Right now we are going to sing a lullaby that I used to sing to Sara to cheer her up when she was very little, and it is called The Iguana, and it goes like this:

[Lullaby]

We would really love for you to get to know Colombia, its culture, the coffee, the flora, the fauna. When you arrive to Colombia you will feel at home. People here do not just shake your hand, they hug you because we believe everyone is equal and we truly cherish the warmth of family, home, and friends. There we enjoy a cup of coffee, aguardiente, food, sharing fruit and everything we want. Welcome to Colombia!



Jessica Luk and Ping Luk
From Hong Kong, in Cantonese

Hello, everyone! I'm Jessica, and this is my dad, Ping. We are residents of Somerville. We come from Hong Kong. Hong Kong is as prosperous and beautiful as the "Pearl of the Orient," so today we are singing "Pearl of the Orient."

[Song]

Thank you!



Arjun Poudel and Arisha
From Nepal, in Nepali

Namaste, my name is Arjun Poudel. By my side, standing is my daughter, younger daughter, Arisha Poudel. We and our family has been living in Somerville, ward 4 near the Foss Park, over nearly the last 20 years. And today, as a brief introduction to the Nepali culture and traditions, we are going to attempt a song that has been sung by Nepali people in the hills of Nepal, and this song warns the city dwellers of not getting enchanted by the softly spoken manners of the country people. And the whispers of the rivers that flow down the hills of the Himalayas. And the echoes of the mountains.

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[Song]



Susy Villeda

From Honduras, in Spanish

Hi, my name is Susy Villeda, and I am from Honduras. I was born in 1991. My whole life has been in the same place, in the same country. I had not moved cities until 2021, when I came to this country, and I was pregnant. I have a daughter named Jaylin McDonald; she is my treasure, my everything, and she makes me happy. Unfortunately, a while back, I went through a very difficult time. I experienced postpartum depression and anxiety, but thank God I feel better today. God sent people to support me who are not even family, and my family supports me too. But I feel especially grateful for the people who have helped me through programs here in Somerville—people who check in to see if I need anything for myself, my daughter, my husband, or my stepson. So, I have a small family: my stepson, my husband, and my daughter. We live here in Somerville. I will tell you a bit about what I enjoy. I really love basketball, and I love soccer (we call it "pelota" back home). From time to time, I volunteer for programs; I like to help people in need because I know what it is like to be in need and sometimes not have anyone to lend a hand when you need it most. For this reason, I want to help people and thank those who have been there for me. I would like to introduce you to my daughter, Jaylin McDonald. She is 3 years old. Come here, my love! Well, I think she is a little shy today, so we will let her stay seated there because she does not want to come over here with me. But yes, that is a little about my life. I am a hairstylist, but I also do whatever is needed. I clean, whatever because it does not matter to me. I am not someone who makes excuses for work or anything, but my main profession is being a hairstylist. So, I am very happy to be here and thank you for giving me this opportunity to share a bit of my life. I hope you are all doing well, and God bless you.

CREDITS