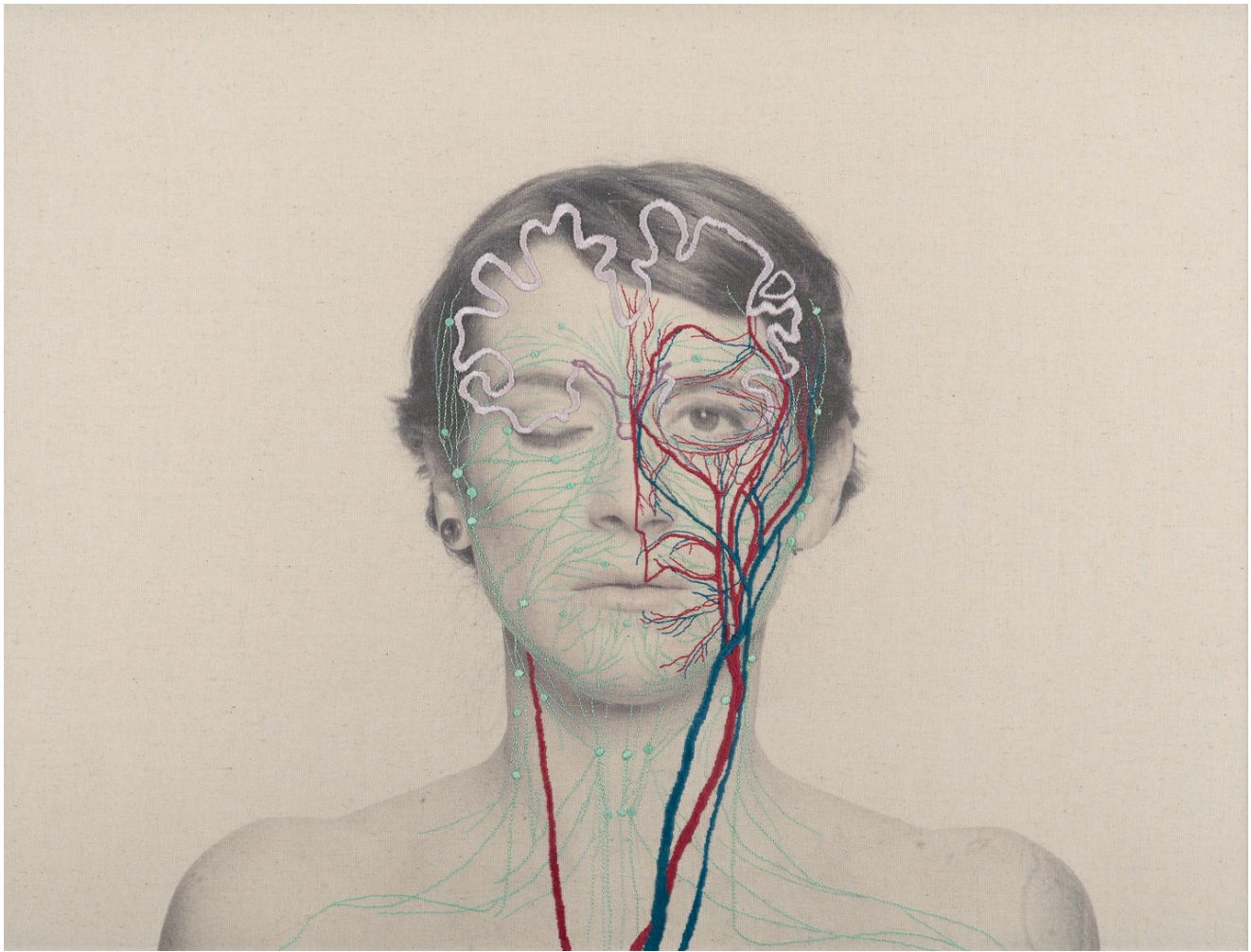


Intricately Embroidered Self-Portraits Explore Anatomy and Physics

creators.vice.com/en_au/article/yp5kvm/juana-gomez-constructal-embroidered-self-portraits

February 29, 2016

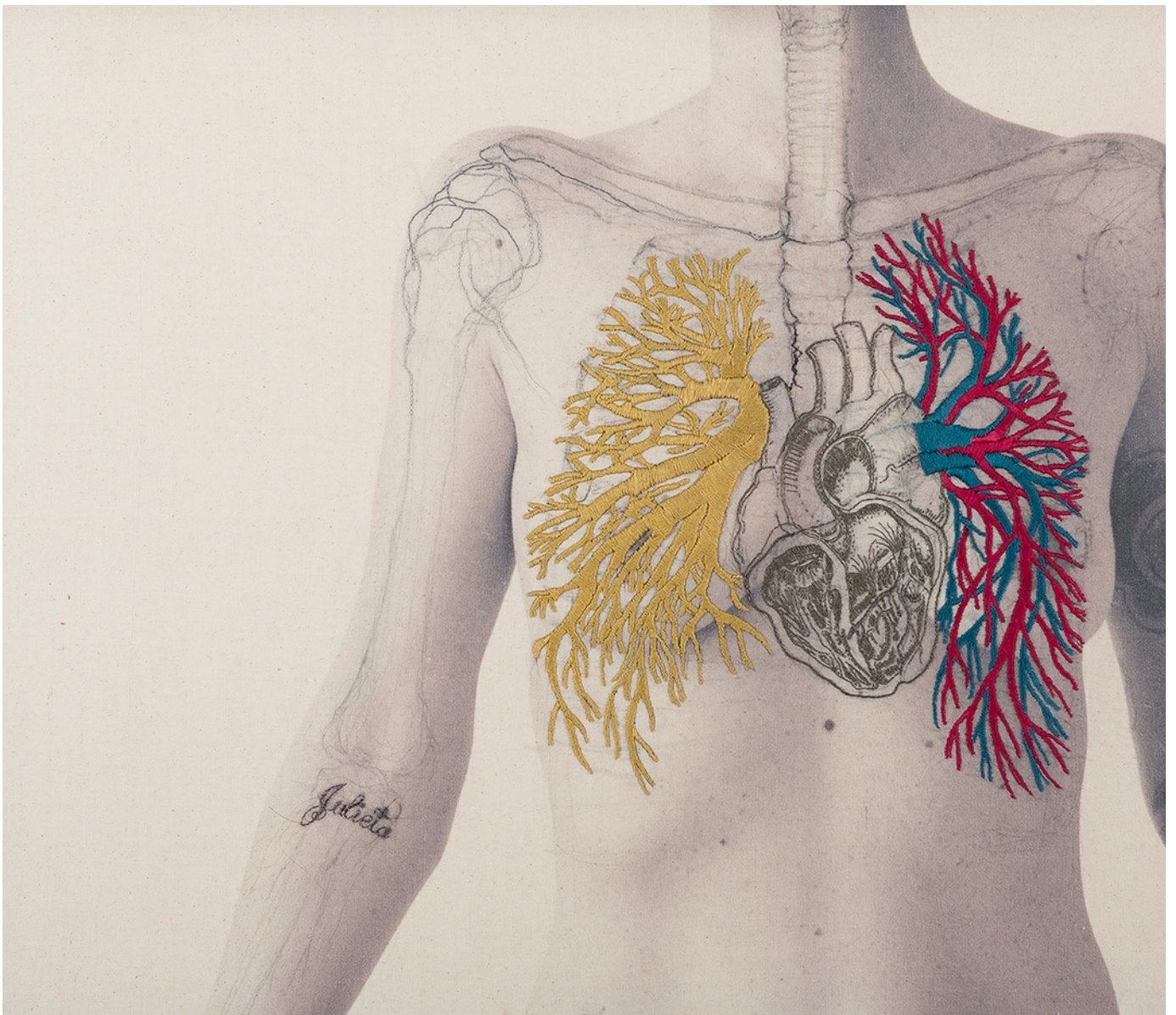


All images courtesy the artist

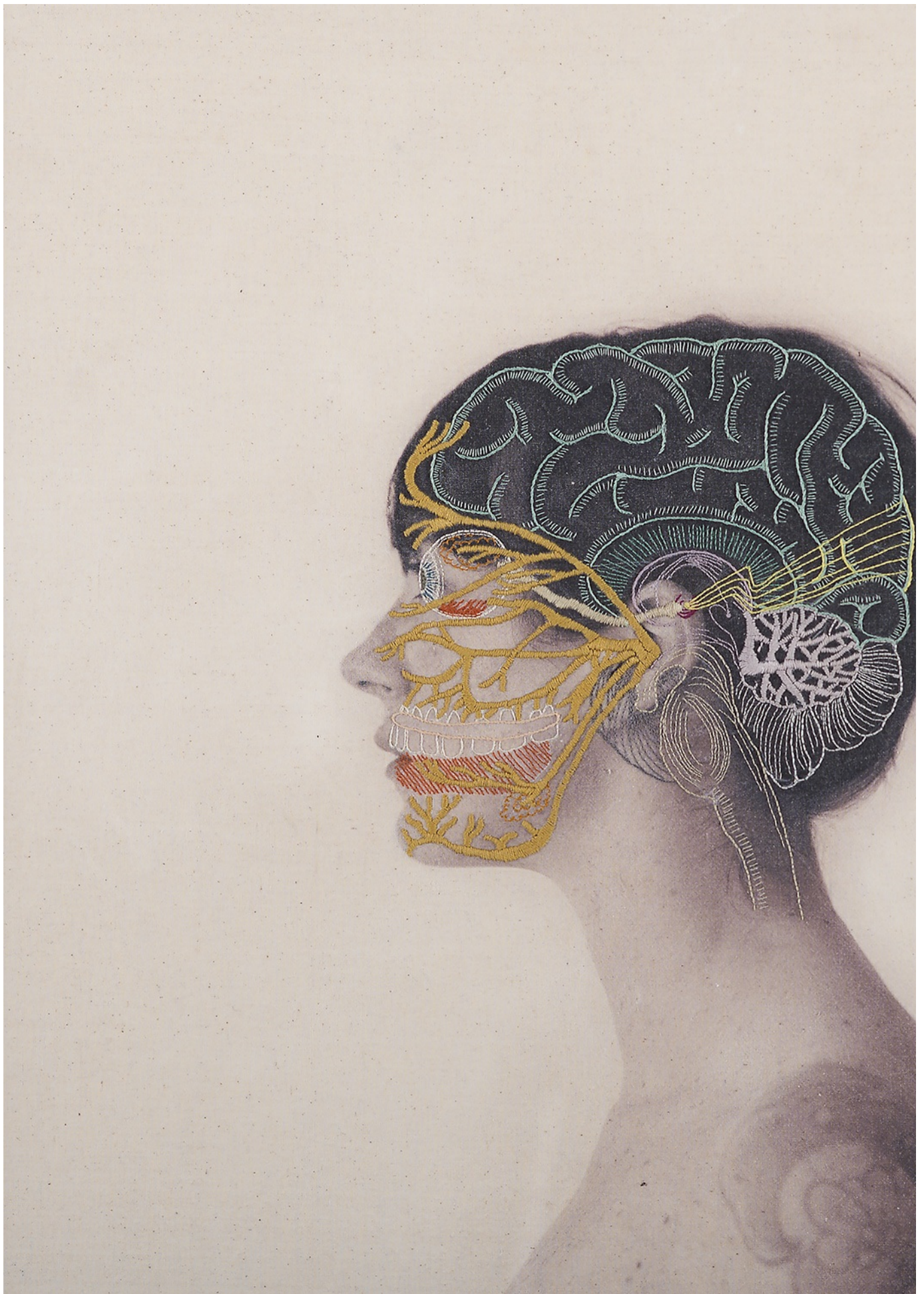
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Humans are constantly thinking about our place in the universe. Between wondering if other life forms exist and whether our world will soon come to an end, these thoughts can seem daunting. But artist [Juana Gómez](#) instead focuses on the ways that the body and nature connect through common patterns. In her *Constructal* series, she takes inspiration from [Professor Adrian Bejan](#) and his constructal law of physics, a law that “accounts for the phenomenon of evolution of organisation (configuration, form, design) throughout nature, inanimate flow systems and animate systems together,” as explained by [Duke University](#).

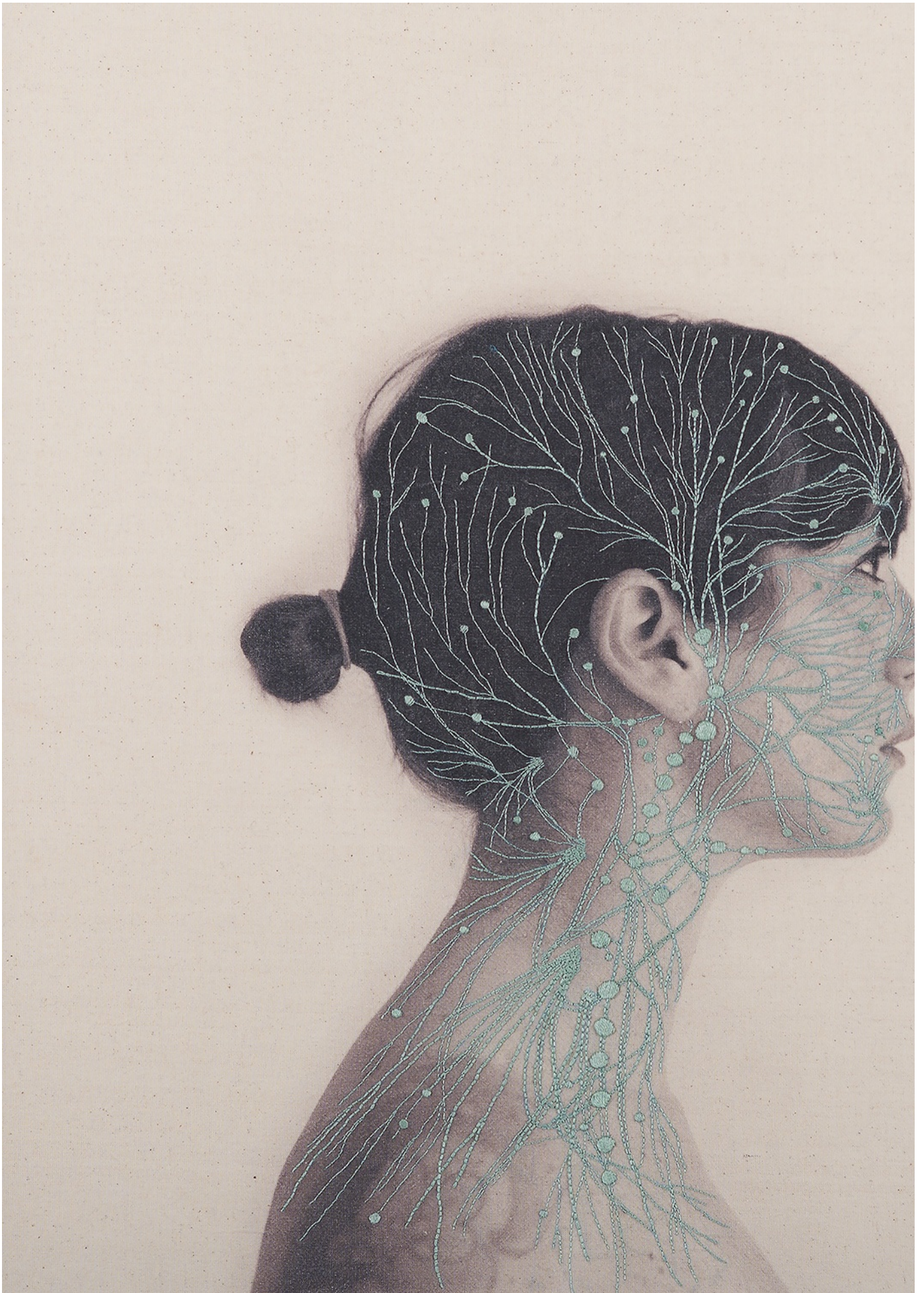
Gómez found herself attracted to the branching, tree-like figures that can be seen everywhere, from electrical signals to arteries. In her series, she takes self-portraits and prints them large-scale onto fabric before embroidering them with these tree-like patterns. She collects photos of patterns taken from outer space, manuals and old textbooks.



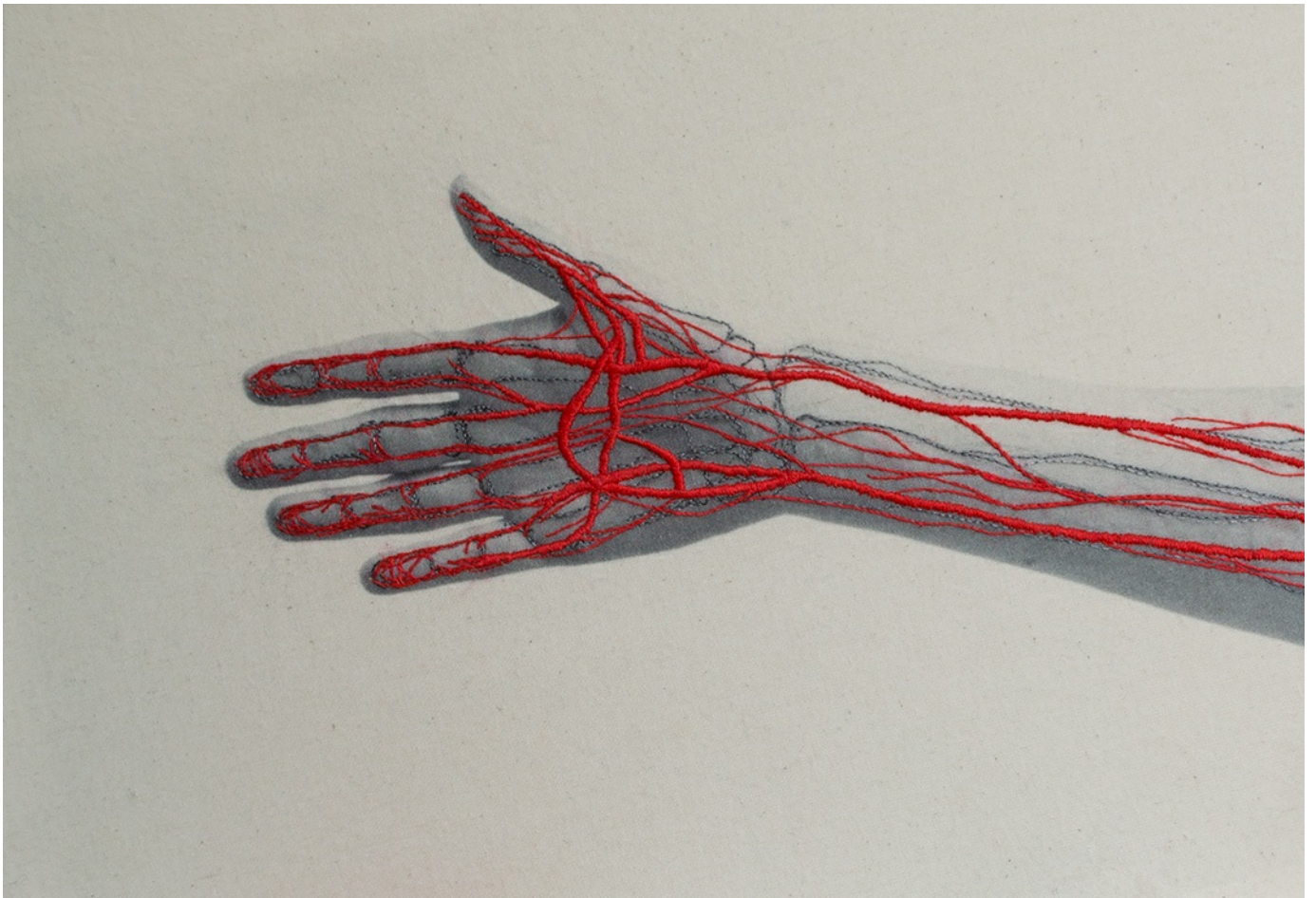
The pieces reflect Gómez's interest in nature, biology and math but also her heritage and personal history. Embroidery has been passed down in her family for three generations.



"We do not only inherit the color of our eyes. We inherit a rich history. My grandmother taught me how to embroider, and now I work with that inheritance, I repeat patterns so as not to forget, I embroider to continue these memory lines that must not be lost," Gómez tells The Creators Project.

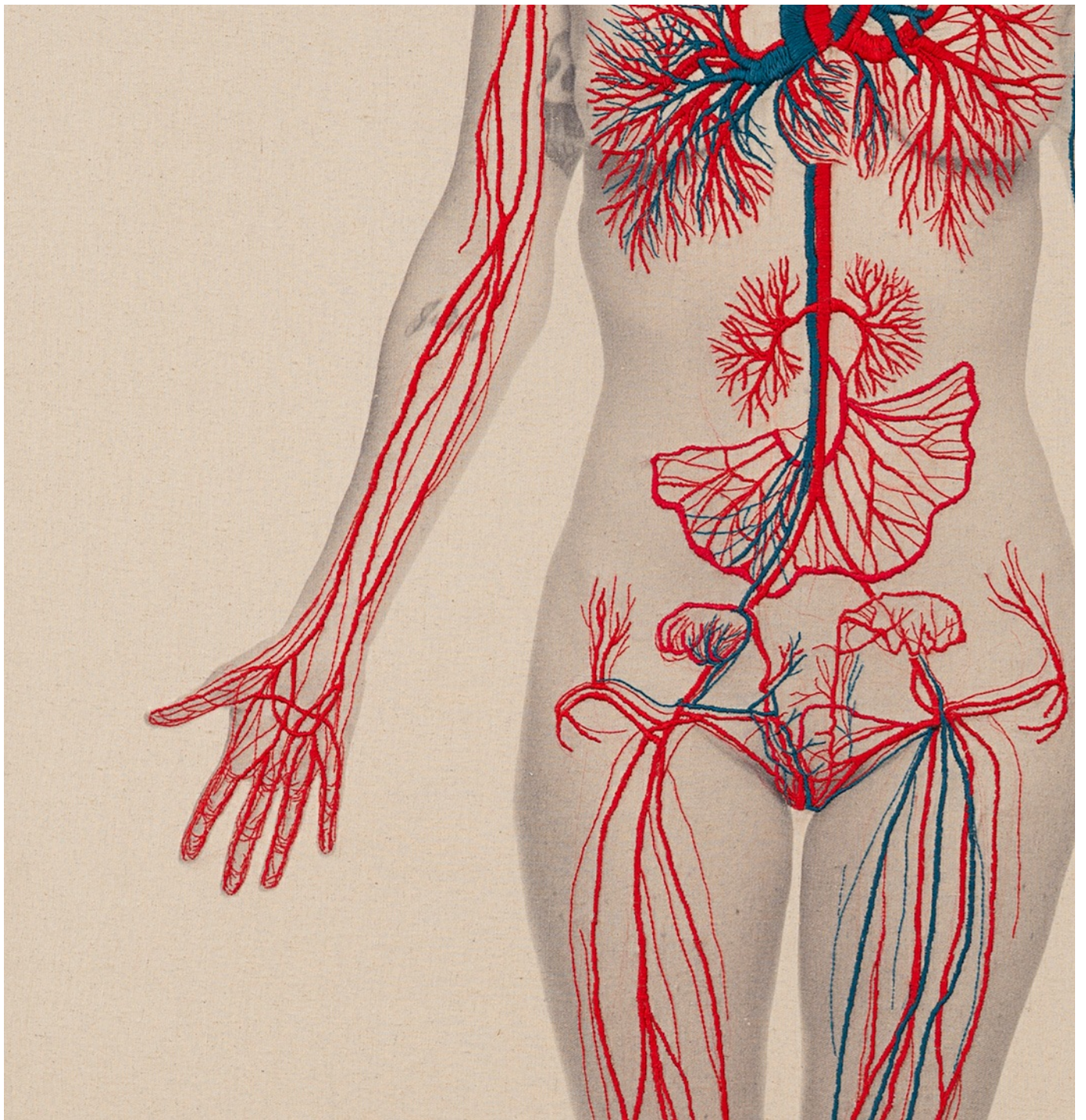


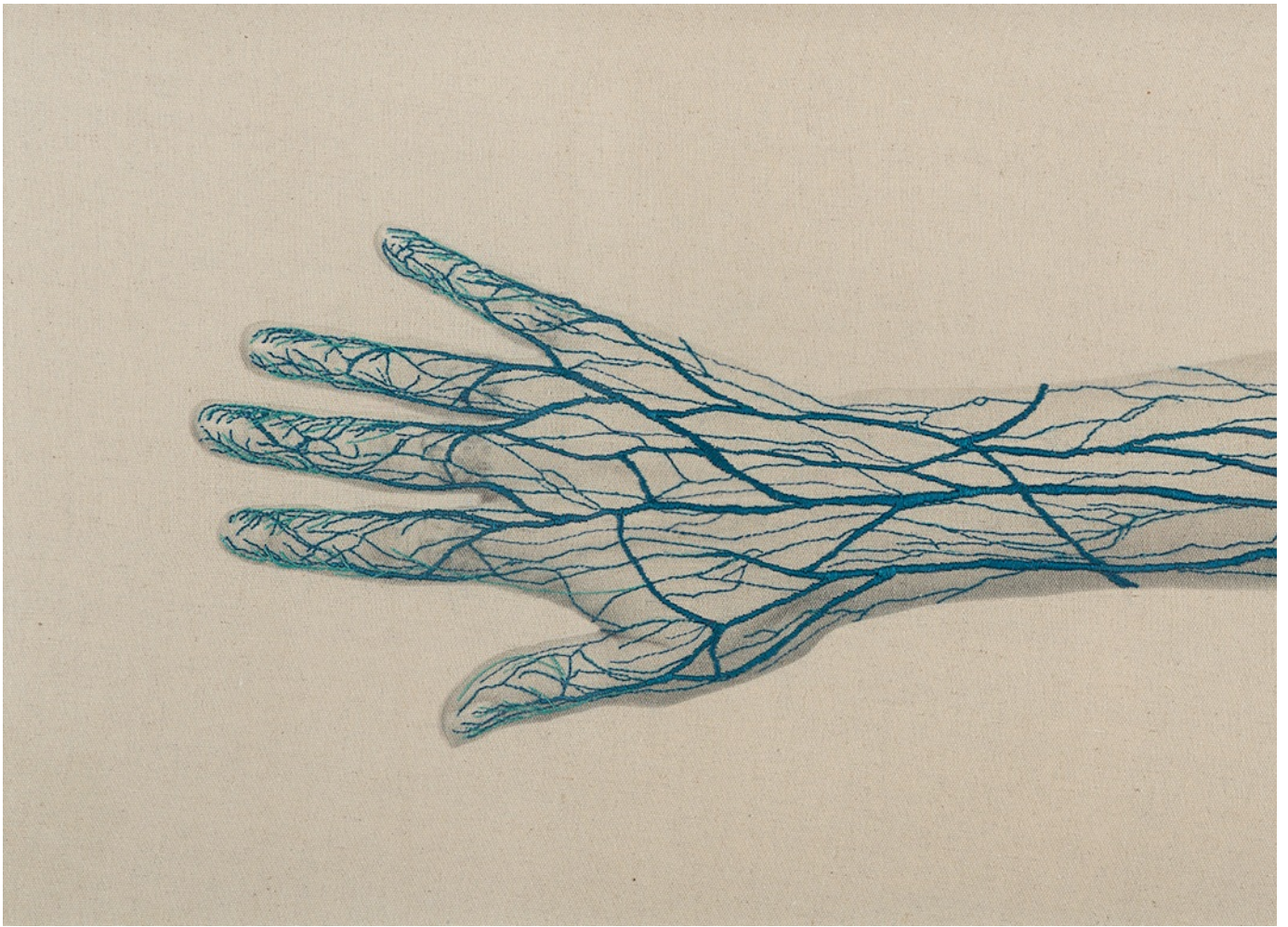
Her pieces merge the human body's interior and exterior, reminding viewers that neither one can really be separate from the other. Constructal 3, for example, shows colorful arteries expanding from the artist's drawn heart, which is enlarged and centered in right down the middle of the body. On her arm, a tattoo reads 'Julieta.' A sleeve of tattooed flowers winds around the other arm.



In focusing on branching veins and arteries, Gómez offers one explanation of our place in the universe— or at least a way to understand how we are connected to nature.







To learn more about Juana Gómez's work, [click here](#).

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