What if I told you that you didn’t need to use a camera to take a photograph? María Martínez-Cañas has been pushing the boundaries of photography since she first picked up a camera at eight years old. Her images utilize layering techniques, fragmented forms and images, mixed media assemblages, photograms, and photomontages to create a diverse body of work that doesn’t fit into the neat definition of photography. This constant creative reimagining of what makes a photograph a photograph has brought forth a body of work that is among the most visually complex images of our time.

Martínez-Cañas’ uses her photographs as an opportunity to express her worldview and personal identity. Raised in Puerto Rico and educated in Chicago and Philadelphia, her family had left Cuba in the aftermath of Fidel Castro’s political revolution. Although raised in a Cuban culture, she lacks any personal memories to associate with her Cuban identity resulting in a sense of displacement, something that is a common theme throughout a large portion of her work. Martínez-Cañas allows herself to explore this theme of displacement from her Cuban homeland which results in the fragmentary, mapping, and mixed media assemblages.

María Martínez-Cañas continues until December 10, 2017 in LUAG Main Gallery, Zoellner Arts Center. Hours are Wednesday 11am-5pm, Thursday 11am-8pm, Friday-Saturday 11am-5pm, and Sunday 1pm-5pm. This exhibition is part of Lehigh Valley Photography Month, November 2017, and the Olympus InVision Photo Festival, November 3–5.