

Copyright
by
Cary Cordova
2005

**The Dissertation Committee for Cary Cordova Certifies that this is the approved
version of the following dissertation:**

**THE HEART OF THE MISSION:
LATINO ART AND IDENTITY
IN SAN FRANCISCO**

Committee:

Steven D. Hoelscher, Co-Supervisor

Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Co-Supervisor

Janet Davis

David Montejano

Deborah Paredez

Shirley Thompson

**THE HEART OF THE MISSION:
LATINO ART AND IDENTITY
IN SAN FRANCISCO**

by

Cary Cordova, B.A., M.A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Austin
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

**The University of Texas at Austin
December, 2005**

Dedication

To my parents, Jennifer Feeley and Solomon Cordova,
and to our beloved San Francisco family of “beatnik” and “avant-garde” friends,
Nancy Eichler, Ed and Anna Everett, Ellen Kernigan, and José Ramón Lerma.

Acknowledgements

For as long as I can remember, my most meaningful encounters with history emerged from first-hand accounts – autobiographies, diaries, articles, oral histories, scratchy recordings, and scraps of paper. This dissertation is a product of my encounters with many people, who made history a constant presence in my life. I am grateful to an expansive community of people who have assisted me with this project.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the many people who sat down with me for countless hours to record their oral histories: Cesar Ascarrunz, Francisco Camplis, Luis Cervantes, Susan Cervantes, Maruja Cid, Carlos Cordova, Daniel del Solar, Martha Estrella, Juan Fuentes, Rupert Garcia, Yolanda Garfias Woo, Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de Gonzalez, Juan Gonzales, José Ramón Lerma, Andres Lopez, Yolanda Lopez, Carlos Loarca, Alejandro Murguía, Michael Nolan, Patricia Rodriguez, Peter Rodriguez, Nina Serrano, and René Yañez. I especially am indebted to Francisco Camplís, Susan Cervantes, Carlos Loarca, Michael Nolan, Don Santina, and René Yañez, since they also gave me access to their personal archives. Juana Alicia also granted me the privilege of auditing her class at San Francisco State College and allowed me to record a meaningful discussion of her work. Maria Tello Carty assisted me via email. Mia Gonzalez, Yolanda Lopez, Michael Nolan, and Isabel Barraza helped me in more ways than I can count. Many of the people I mention here welcomed me into their homes, and through recordings and informal conversations, they have played a pivotal role in my personal education.

I also must note the scholars who have served as my guides, my teachers, and my friends. Pursuing a graduate degree is not an easy task, but my dissertation committee provided enormous support along the way. From our first meeting, Shelley Fisher Fishkin opened doors for me and proved an ardent supporter of my work. Her enthusiasm gave me the stamina I needed for graduate school. My dissertation co-chair Steven Hoelscher played an instrumental role in guiding and editing this work. The academic standard he modeled for me made this dissertation a far more valuable contribution and made me a better scholar. Janet Davis indelibly shaped my understanding of American Studies and taught me what great teaching looks like. David Montejano trained me in the history of the Borderlands and helped me disassemble traditional boundaries and perspectives. Shirley Thompson posed provocative questions and challenged my notions of race and culture. And the fabulous Deborah Paredez inspired me with her energy, flair, and intellectual savvy.

Many other scholars directly and indirectly gave me the motivation I needed to complete this dissertation. I will continue to emulate the grace and fortitude of my mentor in public history, Martha Norkunas. Suzanne Oboler showed immediate support for my scholarship, and through her position with the *Latino Studies* journal, facilitated my efforts to publish a portion of my research. From afar, the writings of Eva Cockcroft, Holly Barnet-Sánchez, Shifra Goldman, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Chon Noriega, and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, served as critical role models in processing my ideas.

This dissertation also reflects hours spent in the archives, supported by some of the most helpful people I know – the archivists: Liza Kirwin, Cynthia Mills, and Joan

Lord at the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, made me feel at home during my summer Latino Studies Fellowship in Washington, D.C. Liza Kirwin's additional sponsorship of my work as an oral historian for the Archives of American Art proved invaluable. Salvador Güereña at the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archive at UC Santa Barbara always went beyond the call of duty and responded to my many inquiries with speed and kindness.

I am consistently amazed by the fabulous scholars I have come to know as friends through my time in graduate school: Alicia Barber and I shared many painfully funny road trips that forever shaped my meditations on place. John McKiernan-Gonzalez suffered countless calls on his expertise and deserves an award for the number of times he read this manuscript. Kimberly Nettles proved to be the best writing partner in the world, and together at Mishka's in "The People's Republic of Davis," we both wrote our hearts out. Joel Dinerstein and Kim Hewitt almost made graduate school fun with their biting wit and wisdom. Carolyn de la Peña welcomed me to Davis and proved an unflappable source of good humor. I also am grateful to Joanna Brooks and David Kamper; Bill Bush; Adam Golub; Christina Cogdell; Frank Guridy; Caroline Herring and Joe Crespino; Richard Kim; Nhi Lieu; Fred Nadis; Virginia Raymond; Alex Rogers; Sheree Scarborough; Julie Sze; Grace Wang; Jennifer Wilks; and Siva Vaidyanathan.

In addition, Yvonne Guu, Marina Parerra Small, Stephanie Schipper, Christine Tam, Ellen Will, and John Wu saw me through the rigors of graduate school from "the outside" and kept me grounded. Dan Boepple and Jane Burkhardt saw me through a winter in Vermont and kept me social.

Finally, my family knows first-hand the rollercoaster adventure of crafting this dissertation. Without them, I would have gone insane a long time ago. My parents, Jennifer Feeley and Solomon Cordova, aided and inspired me at every turn on this journey. Though this dissertation is not about my parents, it is inextricably the result of their worlds colliding through me. Our families also helped me steer my way: Marcelina Cordova; Helen Wheelwright; Buddy and Helen Cordova; Gillian Feeley-Harnik and Alan Harnik; Vanessa Harnik and Leon Powell; Paul Harnik and Morgan Elmore; Luke and Paula Cordova; and Yvonne Gordon. In particular, I must recognize the “housing fellowships” granted by my cousins Vanessa and Leon and my grandmother Mom Helen. These informal family grants gave me the time I needed to write. And lastly, I would like to extend my love and appreciation to our honorary San Francisco family: Nancy Eichler, Ed and Anna Everett, Ellen Kernigan, and José Ramón Lerma. Perhaps I owe a special note of thanks to Nancy and José for introducing my parents. That was a good idea. At least I would like to think so.

**THE HEART OF THE MISSION:
LATINO ART AND IDENTITY
IN SAN FRANCISCO**

Publication No. _____

Cary Cordova, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2005

Co-Supervisor: Steven D. Hoelscher

Co-Supervisor: Shelley Fisher Fishkin

In this dissertation, I investigate the changing art and identities of Latino artists in twentieth-century San Francisco. Drawing on oral histories, visual culture, and archival research, I demonstrate how cultural geography and social movements have cultivated and complicated new art forms. I also show the tandem evolution of a Latino arts movement with the politics of a global Left. In chapter one, I juxtapose the cultivation of a Latin nightlife in North Beach in the post-World War II period with the physical displacement of Latinos from the area then known as the Latin Quarter. In chapter two, I argue for the importance of a 1950s Beat, or bohemian, culture in stimulating the creative interests of many Latinos in San Francisco, in spite of their marginalized position as participants. Chapter three traces the beginnings of a Latino arts enclave in San Francisco's Mission District and the initial institutions and ad hoc groups that facilitated its growth. In chapter four, I use the experience of three Chicano artists – Yolanda

Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes – to contextualize the significance of the 1968 Third World Strike in shaping their political consciousness and their art. Chapter five elaborates on the gender divisions permeating neighborhood arts activism through a study of two community murals, “Homage to Siquieros,” and “Latinoamerica,” each crafted by a team of male and female muralists, respectively. I conclude with chapter six, a study of Día de los Muertos and how its traditional expressions of mourning became more politically oriented with the impact of AIDS and the civil wars in Central America. The subsequent commodification of Día de los Muertos and the rising property values of the Mission District bring this work full circle back to a discussion of consumption, avant-garde politics, and physical and cultural displacement.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations	xii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 Real Life and the Nightlife in San Francisco's Latin Quarter	17
Chapter 2 Freedom in the Beats: Latino Artists and the 1950s Counterculture	64
Chapter 3 La Raza Unida: Pan-Latino Art and Culture in 1960s San Francisco	123
Chapter 4 The Third World Strike and the Globalization of Chicano Art: Or, the Education of Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes	190
Chapter 5 Hombres y Mujeres Muralistas on a Mission: Painting Latino Identities in 1970s San Francisco	269
Chapter 6 The Politics of Día de los Muertos: Mourning, Art, and Activism.....	325
Bibliography	397
Vita.....	434

List of Illustrations

Illustration 1.1: Map of San Francisco, c. 1940.....	17
Illustration 1.2: Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Church, 1924.....	26
Illustration 1.3: Map of the Latin Quarter, c. 1940.....	27
Illustration 1.4: Entertainment at the Casino Pan-American, 1942.....	42
Illustration 1.5: Exterior of the Copacabana Nightclub, 1964.....	46
Illustration 1.6: Perez Prado poster, c. 1951.....	53
Illustration 2.1: Luis Cervantes, "Fired Clay," c. 1962.....	64
Illustration 2.2: Sketch by Dimitri Grachis of locations of galleries adjacent to the Spatsa Gallery, 1958-1961	89
Illustration 2.3: Ernie Palomino, "Mrs. Go," c. 1962.....	96
Illustration 2.4: Ernie Palomino, "George Go," c. 1964	97
Illustration 2.5: Ernie Palomino and friend in front of sculpture, c. 1964	98
Illustration 2.6: José Ramón Lerma, "Yellow Landscape," 1959.....	102
Illustration 2.7: José Ramón Lerma, "The Sea," c. 1964	103
Illustration 2.8: José Ramón Lerma, "America, America," c. 1961	104
Illustration 2.9: José Ramón Lerma, "Happy Birthday to José," 1990	105
Illustration 2.10: Luis Cervantes, "Sunrise Over Palenque," 2003.....	112
Illustration 2.11: Luis Cervantes, Untitled, c. 1984	113
Illustration 2.12: Luis Cervantes painting a mural, mid-1990s	117
Illustration 3.1: Ralph Maradiaga, newspaper graphic, 1970.....	123
Illustration 3.2: "Fiesta," poster, Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, c. 1968	138
Illustration 3.3: "Flamenco," poster, Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, 1969	139

Illustration 3.4	Casa Hispana performance of Alejandro Casona play, 1967	141
Illustration 3.5:	Carlos Loarca, "El Hombre Multiple," 1965	145
Illustration 3.6:	"New Symbols for la Nueva Raza," poster, Mexican American Liberation Art Front, 1968	158
Illustration 3.7:	Francisco Camplís, Chicano Moratorium photograph, 1970	160
Illustration 3.8:	Francisco Camplís, Chicana recruitment poster, early 1970s	161
Illustration 3.9:	Francisco Camplís, from the "Mi Linda Raza" series, early 1970s	161
Illustration 3.10:	"René Yañez" poster, La Causa, c. 1968	164
Illustration 3.11:	Artes 6 poster, Neighborhood Arts Program, 1970.....	173
Illustration 3.12:	Rolando Castellón with "Danza Allegorica," 1971.....	176
Illustration 3.13:	"Artistas Latinoamericanos," 1970.....	177
Illustration 3.14:	"Por Chile" poster, 1973	183
Illustration 3.15:	Peter Rodriguez, "Language of April," c. 1970.....	185
Illustration 3.16:	Gustavo Rivera, Untitled, 1970.....	186
Illustration 4.1:	Juan Fuentes, newspaper graphic, 1976	190
Illustration 4.2:	Yolanda Lopez, "Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe," painting, 1978	210
Illustration 4.3:	Yolanda Lopez installation photograph, "Things I Never Told My Son About Being a Mexican," in "Cactus Hearts / Barbed Wire Dreams," 1988.....	211

Illustration 4.4: Yolanda Lopez installation photograph, figurines, "Cactus Hearts / Barbed Wire Dreams," 1988.....	211
Illustration 4.5: Emory Douglas, "All Power To the People," newspaper graphic, 1969	219
Illustration 4.6: Emory Douglas, "My Suffering, My Bitterness, My Loneliness," newspaper graphic, c. 1969.....	219
Illustration 4.7: Yolanda Lopez, "Free Los Siete," newspaper graphic, 1969 ..	221
Illustration 4.8: Protester with Yolanda Lopez "Free Los Siete," poster, c. 1969.....	221
Illustration 4.9: Yolanda Lopez, "Libertad Para Los Siete," newspaper graphic, 1970	223
Illustration 4.10: Yolanda Lopez, "Quitándose y Poniéndose: Unión Con Las Mujeres de Centroamérica," mid-1980s.....	226
Illustration 4.11: Rupert Garcia, "Right On!" poster, 1968.....	230
Illustration 4.12: Rupert Garcia, "¡Fuera de Indochina!" poster, 1970	233
Illustration 4.13: Rupert Garcia, "Mexico, Chile, Soweto..." poster, 1977	235
Illustration 4.14: Rupert Garcia, "¡Libertad Para Los Prisoneros Políticas," poster, 1970.....	237
Illustration 4.15: Rupert Garcia, "DDT," poster, 1969	239
Illustration 4.16: Rupert Garcia, "Down with the Whiteness," poster, 1969.....	242
Illustration 4.17: Juan Fuentes, "Poetry for the Nicaraguan Resistance," poster, 1976.....	251
Illustration 4.18: Juan Fuentes, "Many Mandelas," poster, 1986	252
Illustration 4.19: Juan Fuentes, "World Women's Conference," poster, 1985 ...	253
Illustration 4.20: Juan Fuentes, "Viva Vietnam," newspaper graphic, 1975.....	259

Illustration 4.21: Juan Fuentes, "El 26 de Julio," newspaper graphic, 1976.....	259
Illustration 4.22: Juan Fuentes and Regina Mouton, "The Last Supper," painting, 1982.....	263
Illustration 5.1: Las Mujeres Muralistas, "Latino America," mural, 1974.....	269
Illustration 5.2: Jesus "Chuy" Campusano, Michael Rios, and Luis Cortazar, "Homage to Siqueiros," mural, 1974.....	273
Illustration 5.3: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	284
Illustration 5.4: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	284
Illustration 5.5: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	289
Illustration 5.6: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	289
Illustration 5.7: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	290
Illustration 5.8: "Homage to Siqueiros," mural detail.....	290
Illustration 5.9: "Latino America," mural detail.....	298
Illustration 5.10: "Latino America," mural detail.....	298
Illustration 5.11: "Latino America," mural detail.....	299
Illustration 5.12: "Latino America," mural detail.....	299
Illustration 5.13: "Latino America," mural detail.....	300
Illustration 5.14: "Latino America," mural detail.....	301
Illustration 5.15: Las Mujeres Muralistas, Balmy Alley mural, 1972.....	315
Illustration 5.16: Miranda Bergman and O'Brien Thiele, "Culture Contains the Seeds of Resistance which Blossoms into Liberation," mural, 1984.....	319
Illustration 5.17: Juana Alicia, "Te Oimos Guatemala," 1985.....	320
Illustration 5.18: Juana Alicia, "Alto al Fuego / Ceasefire," mural, 1988.....	321
Illustration 6.1: Yolanda Garfias Woo, altar, mid-1970s.....	325

Illustration 6.2: René Castro, "Burn, Baby Burn: When You Reach My Age You Don't Need To Be Walking Around Burning Flags," altar, 1989	331
Illustration 6.3: "Día de las Animas," poster, Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, 1971	335
Illustration 6.4: René Yañez, "Homenaje a Frida Kahlo," altar, 1978.....	348
Illustration 6.5: Ester Hernandez, "Sun Mad," poster, 1982	355
Illustration 6.6: Ester Hernandez, "Weaving of the Disappeared," 1984.....	357
Illustration 6.7: Enrique Chagoya, "Monument to the Missing Gods," mixed media, 1987	360
Illustration 6.8: Juan Pablo Gutierrez, "AIDS/SIDA" altar, 1984.....	364
Illustration 6.9: Día de los Muertos, Outdoor Performance, photograph, 1984.....	364
Illustration 6.10: Amelia "Mia" Galaviz de Gonzalez, "Homage to Ana [Mendieta] II," altar, 1995	368
Illustration 6.11: "Contando los Muertos," <i>El Californiano</i> , 2004.....	377
Illustration 6.12: Día de los Muertos, San Francisco, 2005	379
Illustration 7.1: Clarion Alley Mural Project (CAMP), 2002 Block Party	382
Illustration 7.2: Chuy Campusano, Clarion Alley mural, 1994.....	383
Illustration 7.3: Isis Rodriguez, "Keepin' the Faith," 2002	383
Illustration 7.4: John Leños, Jaime Cortez, René Garcia, Gerardo Perez, & Praba Pilar, "Ese, Last of His Tribe," billboard, 2000	392
Illustration 7.5: Praba Pilar, performance still, <i>Computers are a Girl's Best Friend</i> , 2004-2005	394

Introduction

This dissertation began as a meditation on a place, a place that was changing. In the 1990s, San Francisco's Mission District appeared to go from working class Latino barrio to hipster bohemian enclave. Within just a few years, commercial real estate prices increased more than fifty percent and rental prices skyrocketed. The situation spurred the evictions of hundreds of low-income people and forced widespread displacement.¹ At the time, I was living in Austin, Texas, but as a native San Franciscan, I paid close attention to the many articles describing the area's rapid gentrification. I walked and drove through the neighborhood during periodic visits home to see my family. Above all, I struggled with my own sense of loss and nostalgia.

Why did the Mission evoke such significance for me, a person who had never lived inside its physical boundaries? In some intangible way, the answer seemed to lie with the many people, places, and spaces that gave life to the Mission. I needed to know the specifics of what had happened in this neighborhood's past, and why, part of my understanding of myself as a Latina felt so wrapped up in the history of this place.

¹ The extensive series of responses to gentrification is most visible in newspaper coverage. Examples include, Lynda Gorov, "Classes Clashing: San Francisco Quarter Feels Squeeze," *Boston Globe*, July 13, 1999, A1; A. Clay Thompson, "Evicting Art: From Arts Mecca to Silicon Valley Suburb," *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, September 29, 1999; Joel P. Engardio, "Mission Implacable," *SF Weekly*, July 5, 2000; David R. Baker, "15 Arrested as Protesters Occupy Offices of Internet Firm in Mission," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 22, 2000, A22; John M. Glionna, "Dot-Com Boom Makes S.F. a War Zone," *Los Angeles Times*, October 3, 2000, A1; Neva Chonin and Dan Levy, "No Room for the Arts," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 2000, A1; Rose George, "Mission Undesirable," *The Independent* (London), November 5, 2000, 37; Bill Hayes, "Artists vs. Dot-Coms: Fighting San Francisco's Gold Rush," *New York Times*, December 14, 2000, F7; Paulina Borsook, "How the Internet Ruined San Francisco," *Salon.com*, October 27, 1999. Also see, Rebecca Solnit, *Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (New York: Verso, 2000); Simon Velasquez Alejandrino, "Gentrification in San

The impact of gentrification launched me on a quest to understand the Mission's past and its symbolic meaning. I sought to learn more about the history of Latinos in San Francisco and to unlock the ways that the Mission District has served as a site for constructing and representing Latino identities. While the Mission District exists as a physical place, with zoned borders and zip codes, the meaning of the place, like many places in the world, has more fluid dimensions. In the case of the Mission, as Laurie Kay Sommers states, "rather than being a static, clearly bounded geographic area, the Mission is an expanding and contracting entity which retains its symbolic role as the *corazón* [heart] of San Francisco's Latino community..."²

The pervasive description of the Mission District as "the heart" of the city's Latino community offers a double meaning: While the Mission is the physical heart of the community, the Mission also serves as the spiritual center of Latino cultures. Through the people, churches, restaurants, taquerías, nightclubs, and galleries, the Mission projects complex and contradictory visions of Latino culture. The area represents an oasis of pan-Latino food, art, and culture apart from the rest of the city.

The multi-ethnic diversity of San Francisco's Latino population has played a critical role in mapping the heart of this community's identity. Unlike in most other areas of California, the Mexican population has not dominated San Francisco's demographics. In fact, the strength of its Central American populations has consistently propelled organizing around a pan-Latino, or Raza identity, as opposed to a Mexican American, or

Francisco's Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations," Master's thesis, City Planning, University of California, Berkeley, 2000.

² Laurie Kay Sommers, "Alegria in the Street: Latino Cultural Performance in San Francisco," Ph.D. diss., Department of Folklore, Indiana University, 1986, 5.

Chicano identity. In cultivating a pan-ethnic identity, Latino communities have sought to subsume national differences for the sake of more political and cultural power as a whole.³

However, the Mission did not always project this Latino identity. Formerly known as a predominantly Irish, or ethnic, working-class enclave, the Latinization of the Mission emerged in the 1960s for a variety of reasons I will discuss, including the displacement of other communities, immigration, and segregation. From the 1960s to the 1990s, the area served as home to the poor and the disenfranchised, while also serving as the “heart” of Latino cultures. The neighborhood’s battle with poverty is an important component of its trajectory.

As a struggling barrio, the Mission District also became the focus for civil rights activists and artists of the 1960s to work locally for social justice and cultural affirmation. Conscious of these efforts, I set out to learn the stories of these cultural workers and ended up recording hours of oral histories. Through these interviews and archival research, I garnered an education. In pursuing my study of the Mission, I began to understand the ways that activists, artists, and writers had played an integral role in shaping the Mission’s identity, using the arts to reinforce the public image of the Mission as a site of Chicano, pan-Latino, and Third World identities. Their efforts, grounded in a long history of social movements, reflected a committed desire to affirm and invigorate the Latino community. Ultimately, I determined that what ever happens to the Mission,

³ *Ibid*, 55. Sommers notes, “Differences in politics, religion, class, race, urban / rural background, and language proficiency interface with ethnic origin and generational differences to create a staggering array of intra-group boundaries.” Also see, Ed Morales, *Living in Spanglish: The Search for Latino Identity in*

the area's historic significance as a site of community organizing and Latino arts activism is undeniable.

With this dissertation, I seek to demonstrate that the Mission District of San Francisco has served as an important geographical intersection for an influential and largely undocumented arts movement from the 1960s to the present. Recollecting his first visit to the neighborhood in the 1970s, writer Alejandro Murguía states, "I was sure there wasn't a place in the world I'd rather be, not Paris or New York. At that moment it seemed to me that I was standing in the artistic center of the universe. ... It wasn't so much San Francisco that I fell in love with; it was the Mission, La Misión."⁴ The neighborhood's history of cultural production, coupled with its political activism, not only has been instrumental in the formation of a local community identity, but has provided a crucial voice in the Chicano Civil Rights movement and has influenced the direction of a widespread Latino cultural renaissance.

In pursuing this investigation, my project expanded to acknowledge an earlier history of Latino artists and musicians in San Francisco during the 1940s and 1950s. The 1940s boom in Latin nightclubs in San Francisco's North Beach reflected the new visibility of Latinos in national popular culture. As Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez points out, "in the 1930s and 1940s, 'Latin' rhythm swept America. Rumba and conga produced a dance craze that no one could escape..."⁵ The rise of celebrities, such as Carmen

America (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), 24-25; Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition: The Power of a People* (1995; reprint, New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2001).

⁴ Alejandro Murguía, *The Medicine of Memory: A Mexica Clan in California* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 120.

⁵ Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez, *José, Can You See? Latinos On and Off Broadway* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 31.

Miranda and Desi Arnaz put Latin Americans in the global spotlight. While the cultivation of this entertainment propelled a rich music scene, it also staged Latinos apart from mainstream American culture.

Similarly, in my investigation of Latino artists working in San Francisco's 1950s Beat culture, I discuss how their desire to be American artists conflicted with their marginalized position as Latinos in the counterculture. San Francisco's bohemian reputation has been instrumental in drawing Latino artists to the city, but little recognition of their participation in this aspect of the city's history exists. In foregrounding this earlier period, I also wish to emphasize the long-rooted presence of Latinos in San Francisco, prior to the emergence of the Mission District.

This longer history also makes more visible a complex tension facing American ethnic groups, as they are caught in the delicate balance between constructing an identity in order to retain a cultural history and performing an identity to entertain and exoticize their difference. Popular consumption of Latino cultures historically has served as a means of depoliticizing and "othering" the cultures, much in the vein of Edward Said's "orientalism." As Frances Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman observe, "the etymological correlative within the Latino context [to Said's "orientalism"] would be 'tropicalism,' the system of ideological fictions with which the dominant (Anglo and European) cultures trope Latin American and U.S. Latino/a identities and cultures."⁶ Bearing this in mind, the Mission's identity as a Latino barrio also has served as a signifier of foreignness, difference, and bohemianism apart from American art and

⁶ Frances R. Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman, *Tropicalizations: Transcultural Representations of Latinidad* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997), 1.

culture. People from both within and outside the community have represented the Mission as a localized vision of Latin America, or a “tropicalized” borderland, physically and culturally indicative of Latino identity.⁷

Latino markets, murals, and galleries conveyed the culture of a foreign land for people seeking an alternative lifestyle within the United States. By locating in the Mission District, some Anglo Americans have sought nonconformity. As Ann Powers recalls, “I had to find the bohemia that was still forming, as I was. In the 1980s, that meant moving to the Mission District, a bilingual neighborhood where kids with fresh tattoos lived across the hall from Latin American political refugees.”⁸ Similarly, *New York Times* reporter John Kirch illustrates this vision in his 1989 remark, “I am a refugee in reverse – fleeing the benefits of the Promised Land for the immigrant hothouse and global miscellany that is San Francisco's Mission District.”⁹ More recently, Kevin Keating states, “Unfortunately, people like me who want to get as far away from the mainstream as we can without actually leaving the United States altogether end up gravitating to neighborhoods like Manhattan’s Lower East Side, Alphabet City, and San Francisco’s Mission District and then we end up initiating the whole process of gentrification...”¹⁰ These remarks by Powers, Kirch, and Keating underscore how the

⁷ *Ibid*; Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City* (New York: Verso, 2000); Frances R. Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman, *Tropicalizations: Transcultural Representations of Latinidad* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997).

⁸ Ann Powers, *Weird Like Us: My Bohemian America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 40.

⁹ John Kirch, “San Francisco’s Real Mission,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 1989, Section 6, 28.

¹⁰ Keating spearheaded the “Yuppie Eradication Project,” a fringe grassroots effort to expel the influx of affluent, Anglo residents, though he also recognizes his complicit participation. Quoted in Solnit, *Hollow City*, 128.

cultivation of “foreignness” within American culture has been part of the Mission District’s appeal.

Over time, the Mission has represented many contested visions of “Latinidad.” As Agustín Lao writes, “Latinidad is both a category deployed within a variety of dominant spaces and institutions (state, corporate, academic) to label populations as well as a form of self-identification used by individuals, movements, and organizations to articulate a sense of community.”¹¹ In other words, Latinidad is constantly in flux and reflects the contestation of multiple voices, both from within and outside the Latino community. The construction and consumption of Latinidad in the mainstream culture is integral in the creation of stereotypes and tropicalism and a critical factor in how Latinos view themselves. However, as David Levering Lewis points out in his discussion of the Harlem Renaissance, “the mainstream scenarios of power and co-optation should not obscure or minimize the parallel yet independent objectives and strategies of the African-American activists in the Renaissance. For above all else, the story of the Renaissance is one of the manipulated manipulating, the subordinated subverting, and of the politically and economically impuissant attempting to acquire political and economic advantage by other means.”¹² Thus, this work centers more on the self-definition of Latino artists and activists, while still paying heed to the representations of Latinos that permeate popular culture.

¹¹ Agustín Laó-Montes, “Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York City,” in *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York*, eds., Agustín Laó-Montes and Arlene Davila (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 7-8.

¹² David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (1979; reprint, New York: Penguin Books, 1997), xxiii.

In emphasizing the activist role of Latino artists in shaping the Mission District, I implicitly argue for the importance of art in articulating the meaning of Latino identities. Art offers a language to grapple with cultural borders, both via its content and in the context of its creation. As Guillermo Gomez-Peña declares, he makes “art about the misunderstandings that take place at the border zone. But for me, the border is no longer located at any fixed geopolitical site. I carry the border with me, and I find new borders wherever I go.”¹³ Artists often seek to persuade, provoke new perspectives, and challenge the status quo. The impact of art, whether it is music, the visual arts, performance, or literature, may not be obvious, but reading art serves as a critical lens for understanding culture. Mary Romero and Michelle Habell-Pallán write, “Formats such as art performance, music, and local sports organizations are crucial because they open spaces, counter-sites, and conditions of possibility where Latinas and Latinos can publicly imagine new ways of constructing racial, ethnic, gendered, and economic identities. In the construction of new subjects for political identification, new movements for social equality can be articulated.”¹⁴ Art is never neutral, and its origins map cultural shifts and the dynamics of power. At the same time, artist Rupert Garcia declares, “Art plays many roles in the struggle, but art is not going to win: art and culture never overcome repression. People do that, but art can contribute and can be very helpful.”¹⁵

¹³ Guillermo Gomez-Peña, *The New World Border: Prophecies, Poems & Loqueras for the End of the Century* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1996), 5.

¹⁴ Mary Romero and Michelle Habell-Pallán, *Latino/a Popular Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 7.

¹⁵ Quoted in, “The Soaring Spirit of Chicano Arts,” a sidebar to Jonathan Kirsch’s “Chicano Power: There is one inevitable fact. By 1990, California will become America’s first Third World state,” *New West*, September 11, 1978, 35-40.

Looking at the lives of Latino artists in San Francisco in the post-World War II period provides a meaningful model for considering the transformations and expressions of Latino identities through place and in relation to changing social movements. Only after much research did I realize that in documenting the role of Latino artists in San Francisco, I also tangentially was following the history of the Left, not just in the United States, but around the globe. Since the late 1960s, community organizing in the neighborhood not only affirmed a shared Latinidad, but also in many ways intersected with the values of a global Left. In proffering this description, I do not wish to suggest that all residents of the Mission have been Latino and Leftist, but I do wish to emphasize the importance of this perspective in community organizing and arts production.

In using the term “global Left,” I wish to highlight the transnational perspective that this label implies. Thus, I do not mean the standardized two-party system in the United States, but rather, a broader, international, and slightly more intangible vision of liberation from oppression, or what Michael Denning labels a “liberation movement.”¹⁶ Admittedly amorphous, I define the global Left as an amalgamation of social theories to overturn oppression, infused with the ideals of the Cuban Revolution, the international student movements of 1968, the Chilean socialism of Salvador Allende, and the Sandinista politics of Nicaragua. Marxist in spirit, an over-arching concern for human rights is perhaps the most definitive characteristic. As George Katsiaficas argues, “As a

¹⁶ Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York and London: Verso, 2004), 42.

global movement, the New Left contested the structures of power on both sides of the ‘iron curtain.’”¹⁷

In this dissertation, I show how the global Left consciousness of artists and activists in the Mission shaped the cultural production of the neighborhood since the late 1960s. My discussion of the Third World Strike and its impact on Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes in chapter four is integral to this discussion. As cultural workers, each sought to affirm a Latino community, as well as empower and politicize the poor and disenfranchised.

The efforts to affirm a pan-Latino identity among diverse cultures not only sought to unify the community, but also meant to fortify the borders and protect the neighborhood from gentrification. As Arlene Davila argues in her study of El Barrio in New York, “attempts at promoting El Barrio’s past and present as a Puerto Rican and Latino area constitute an important response to the area’s gentrification. Even if they are unable to challenge the policies expediting transformations in El Barrio, these cultural practices help to at least confront the de-ethnicization of the area and the erasure of Puerto Ricans’ memory that accompany these processes.”¹⁸ Thus, as Davila points out, “the discourses of Latinidad can be central to both processes of gentrification and to local resistance to these forces.”¹⁹ In the context of ongoing displacement, cultural production in the Mission assumed a resistant edge.

¹⁷ George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987), 19. I avoid the term “New Left” because it tends to frame the conversation in nationalist, as opposed to global terms.

¹⁸ Arlene Davila, *Barrio Dreams* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 61.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 35.

In generating a parallel between El Barrio of New York and the Mission, I also wish to underscore the ways in which this study is informed by other regional studies. The dynamics of Latino, Chicano, Puertorriqueño, Central American, and Cubano identity formation in such places as Los Angeles, New York, Miami, and Washington, D.C., show how local demographics and cultural context participate in the fluid dimensions of Latino identities.²⁰

This work can not pretend to chronicle all the events and include all of the people who have contributed to the making of the Mission. But what I do intend to show is how the Mission became a space for Latino activists and artists to mobilize as a community and organize for and against issues that impacted that community, both on a local and global level. They came together in a shared sense of identity and politics in order to amass power and retain a cultural history.

I ground this mobilization in an earlier history of Latinos in the city. I wish to show how Latino identities have changed over time and in relation to place, and how the larger political and popular cultures have catalyzed new perspectives and responsibilities. Romero and Habel-Pallán write, “the term ‘Latino’ is politically charged and has been

²⁰ Laó-Montes, Davila, *Mambo Montage*; Miguel "Mickey" Melendez, *We Took the Streets: Fighting for Latino Rights with the Young Lords* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003); Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island & in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Maria Cristina Garcia, *Havana USA: Cuban exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Gustavo Perez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994); Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993); Olivia Cadaval, *Creating a Latino identity in the Nation's Capital: the Latino Festival* (New York: Garland Pub., 1998); George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

²⁰ Chicano activists produced “El Plan de Aztlán” at the National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado in 1969. This high-profile manifesto for activism uses the term, “La Raza de Bronze [sic]” in *Documents of the Chicano Struggle* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 4-6 (6).

defined by various communities in diverse geographical locations and at different moments in U.S. history in order to achieve a variety of objectives.”²¹ Ultimately, acknowledging the history of local communities in the larger national landscape is imperative for understanding the inclusions and exclusions that have played out in forming a national pan-Latino identity.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

In chapter one, I highlight the meaningful disconnect between “Real Life and the Nightlife.” I provide an early history of Latinos in San Francisco and a discussion of the many physical spaces that came to represent Latinidad prior to the Mission District. At that time, the Latin Quarter, North Beach, South of Market area, and other pocket communities served as early spaces for Latino settlement and as significant sites for the construction of local Latino identities. However, increasing property values spurred the displacement of many low- and middle-income Latino residents. Simultaneously, popular representations of Latinos in film and on stage were emerging more visibly in American mass culture and in local entertainment venues. In San Francisco, the Latin nightclub scene propelled a strong and creative music culture, although often directed toward Anglo audiences. This staging of Latino identities in the Latin Quarter nightclubs

²¹ Romero and Habel-Pallán, *Latino/a Popular Culture*, 3-4; Also see, Suzanne Oboler, *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives: Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); and Clara E. Rodriguez, *Changing Race: Latinos, The Census, and The History of Ethnicity in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

of the 1940s and 1950s masked the physical displacement of Latinos from the very same neighborhood.

In chapter two, I examine the marginalized participation of Latino artists in the San Francisco Beat culture of the 1950s and early 1960s. Many Latinos participated in, or were drawn to the city by the counterculture, although historical literature on their involvement is lacking. In this chapter, I focus on the experiences of three Mexican American artists – José Ramón Lerma, Luis Cervantes, and Ernie Palomino – to document the aesthetic and political interests of Latino artists in San Francisco at that time. In general, the expression of ethnic identity was a low priority, but still a significant factor in the trajectory of these three artists. As Chon Noriega argues, this “early work is worth considering, not for its failure to articulate a *Chicano* avant-garde practice, but for the ways in which it critically engages and participates in the *unmarked* avant-garde of its time.”²² The stories of Lerma, Cervantes, and Palomino also show how the impact of returning veterans to San Francisco propelled the physical desegregation of the arts, if not the cultural desegregation.

In chapter three, I document the experience of Latinos in San Francisco at the height of the Chicano Movement and convey the ways in which San Francisco translated the politics of “El Movimiento” to its regional concerns. Inspired by the national civil rights movement, activists and artists of the 1960s rallied together to preserve neighborhoods, prevent displacement, and unite in a common history. Nationwide, artists formed coalitions and built multiple cultural organizations. The creation of a Latino arts

²² Chon Noriega, “Why Chicanos Could Not Be Beat,” *Aztlán* 24 (Fall 1999), 1-11 (3).

enclave in San Francisco's Mission District was both unique and emblematic within this national mobilization. In San Francisco, the stories behind the creation of Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, Artes 6, and the Galería de la Raza reveal multiple tensions and shared agendas. As a whole, the movement in San Francisco reflected the over-arching desire to create a "Raza movement" and "Raza art" – a culture and art reflective of pan-Latino identities in the United States – as opposed to the Mexican American orientation of the Chicano movement.

In chapter four, I stress the importance of the 1968 Third World Student Strike at San Francisco State College as a mobilizing force for community organizing in San Francisco's Mission District. The Third World Strike was instrumental in establishing Ethnic Studies in colleges and universities across the nation. I argue that the event also was instrumental in sparking a transnational political consciousness for many people at a time of heightening globalization. The chapter uses the experience of three Chicano artists – Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes – to contextualize the significance of the Third World Strike in shaping their political consciousness and their art. Though the Chicano Movement is often described as a nationalist, Mexican American movement, the art of Lopez, Garcia, and Fuentes reflects how the concerns of the Chicano movement generated a globally conscious art.

Chapter five examines the history of the community mural movement in the mid-1970s Mission District. I show the importance of murals as cultural texts, consciously formed to entertain, influence, and solidify local and transnational communities, by focusing on two key works of the period. In "Homage to Siqueiros," a trio of male muralists claimed the mantle of the "Mexican Masters" and painted a legendary mural

that indicted conditions across the Americas as well as their patron, the Bank of America. In "Latino America," the female muralists rejected the Chicano Movement's emphasis on Mexican masters and declared a new feminist, collaborative iconography. Though the murals and mural process were dissimilar in terms of gender, approach, and aesthetics, the muralists were joined in their desire to unite the local Latino community through their depictions of a shared homeland, or an imagined Latin America. The murals also sought to mark the landscape and prevent gentrification.

In chapter six, I show the cultural impact of AIDS and the wars in Central America through the history of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. While the late 1960s and early 1970s represented a period of hope for cultural workers in the Mission District, the 1980s signaled a darker outlook for a Left oriented social movement. The election of Ronald Reagan, the appearance of AIDS, the heightened violence in Central America, and the threat of nuclear war all challenged the idealism of the early seventies. As Día de los Muertos provided an emotional outlet for mourning, it also became a public event and political tool to speak out against the Reagan administration's policies on AIDS and Central America. The subsequent commodification of Día de los Muertos and the rising property values of the Mission District also bring this work full circle, back to a discussion of consumption and physical and cultural displacement.

In time, this work moves from the 1930s to the 1990s, but many of the issues remain the same. The dramatic displacement of Latinos out of the Mission District in the 1990s has not been that different from the discrete displacement of Latinos out of the Latin Quarter in the 1950s. In both instances, the mainstream culture romanticized Latin

culture while also displacing the originators.²³ However, while historical parallels may exist with the contemporary situation, the story of Latino artists in San Francisco also illustrates the formation of a formidable, diverse, complex, politicized artist community, well trained to fight displacement. The fact that the displacement of Latinos out of the Mission District generated such intense publicity and concern is a testament to the neighborhood's history of community organizing and arts activism.

²³ This is yet another example of "Love and Theft," as Eric Lott has argued in *Love and Theft: Blackface and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). More specifically, the "cross-over" success of Jennifer Lopez and Ricky Martin is not altogether different from the appeal of their predecessors, Carmen Miranda and Desi Arnaz, while the United States continues to militarize its borders and limit immigration. Magdalena Barrera, "Hottentot 2000: Jennifer Lopez and Her Butt," in *Sexualities in History*, eds., Kim M. Phillips and Barry Reay (New York: Routledge, 2002), 407-417; Frances Negrón-Mutaner, "Jennifer's Butt: Valorizing the Puerto Rican Racialized Female Body" and "Ricky's Hips: The Queerness of Puerto Rican 'White' Culture," in *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latinization of American Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 228-272. Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodriguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995); Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S. - Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home* (Austin, TX: The Center for Mexican American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, 1996); Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Chapter One

Real Life and the Nightlife in San Francisco's Latin Quarter

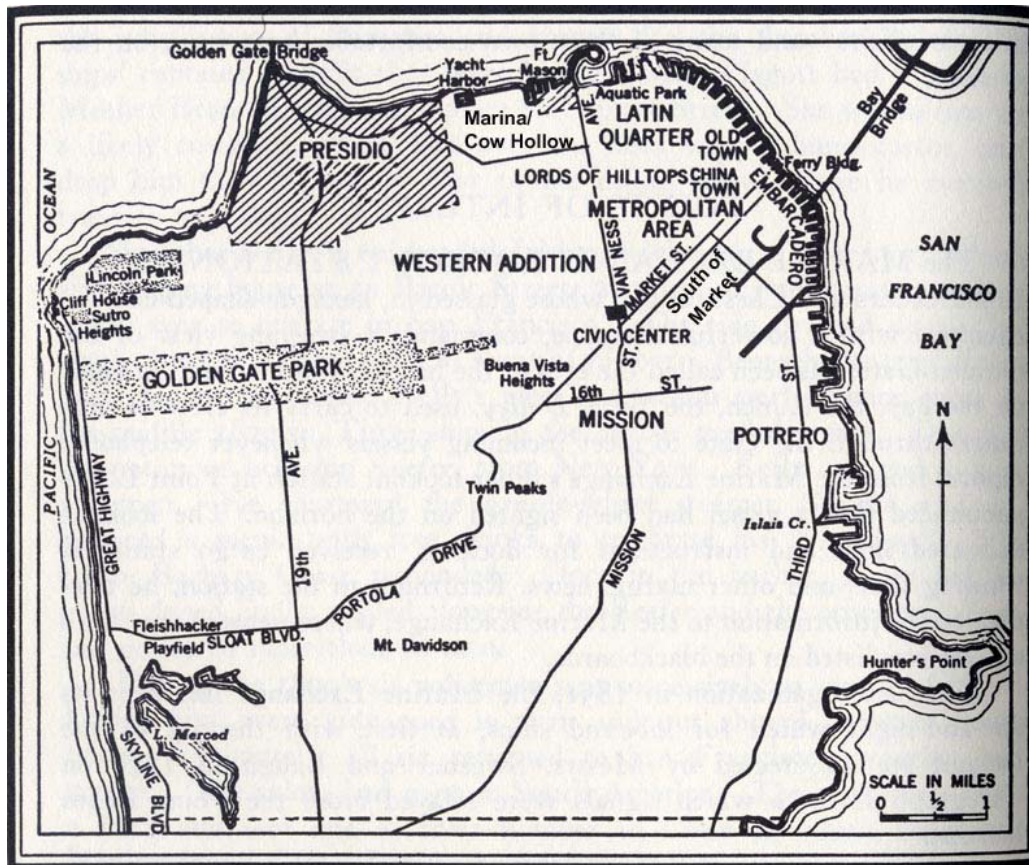


Fig. 1.1: Map of San Francisco, c. 1940, showing the Latin Quarter and the Mission. The Latin Quarter is now dispersed into North Beach, Chinatown, and Russian Hill. Many Latino families also lived in the South of Market area, with the Bay Bridge and Market Street as boundaries. The line of the Bay Bridge curling in to the South of Market area gives some indication of how its 1930s construction forced many people to move further south to the Mission. To the northwest is the Marina / Cow Hollow neighborhood, which became a popular enclave for the visual arts. Original map copied from *San Francisco: A Guide to the Bay and Its Cities*, ed., Gladys Hansen, originally compiled by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for Northern California (New York: Hastings House, 1973 (1940)), 250. Text labels for the South of Market Area and the Marina/Cow Hollow neighborhood are mine.

In his celebratory book *Around the World in San Francisco* (1940), Leonard Austin described where various ethnic groups could find themselves most at home in 1930s San Francisco. Austin pointed to the best places to shop, eat, and enjoy the exotic qualities of other cultures, without ever having to leave the city. He individually chronicled the cultural geography of various nations, including the physical spaces where Mexicans and other Latinos were residing at that time:

North Beach has been since the early days the Mexican quarter. Recent immigrants have settled in other parts of the city; notably, Hayes Valley, along Fillmore Street, along Folsom and Howard Streets from Tenth to Sixteenth Streets [in the South of Market area], in the vicinity of Treat Avenue and Twenty-second Street [in the Mission District] and in Butchertown [now Bayview] – but North Beach still remains the center of the Mexican population. Along Broadway and Powell Streets are the little shops and the cantinas, always gay and noisy. One can spend a whole day strolling along these streets, shopping in the little stores with their counters piled high with goods made in Mexico.²⁴

Anyone familiar with the city today is well aware that North Beach is no longer even remotely considered the Mexican quarter. Yet, according to Austin, the area, then also known as the Latin Quarter, was home to a variety of Latin American folk art stores, cafes, and restaurants, along with two Spanish language bookstores, and the Verdi Theatre (Teatro Verdi) on Broadway, which showed Mexican films. He also pointed to lesser known Mexicano or Latino neighborhoods on Fillmore Street, in the South of Market, in the Mission, and in Butchertown, now known as Bayview. Ultimately, he documented the presence of multiple thriving Mexican and Latin American communities,

²⁴ Leonard Austin, *Around the World in San Francisco* (Palo Alto, CA: James Ladd Delkin, Stanford University, 1940) 104-107.

which today are mostly, or entirely, forgotten in official histories of the city and largely absent from public history markers on the contemporary landscape.

This chapter foregrounds the importance of such Latino communities in San Francisco prior to the emergence of a Latino Mission District. Before the 1960s, the Latin Quarter, North Beach, South of Market area, and other pocket communities served as early spaces for Latino settlement and as significant factors in the construction of local Latino identities. The post-World War II development of the Mission District into a site associated with Latino identity has, in many respects, obscured the long rooted presence of Latinos in the larger city, as well as the tandem co-existence and cross-cultural influences across communities.

The importance of the Latin Quarter, the Mission, and, by extension, other barrio communities across the country needs to be understood from two vantage points: from one side, Latinos experienced a long history of physical and social segregation that limited their mobility and cultural expression; simultaneously, they had to defend that space in the context of a long history of cultural and physical erasure. In other words, Latinos were redlined, out-priced, or displaced from more upscale communities; but alternatively, many Latinos also appreciated a place where they could cultivate traditions, including buying certain foods, attending religious services in Spanish, and interacting with people of similar cultural backgrounds. Social barriers developed from both sides, but class and de facto segregation were the most profound.²⁵

²⁵ For a discussion of segregation applied to Mexican Americans, see: David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 135; and David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987). For a broad critique of segregation, see: Douglas S.

The history of continuous displacement of Latinos in San Francisco is little recognized or understood, yet this instability is also a critical factor in the subsequent politics and ideologies of many long-time Latino residents of the city.²⁶ A variety of economic and social pressures drove Latinos out of these neighborhoods, and many of the displaced ended up in the Mission District. These residents, along with an influx of immigration in the post-World War II period, contributed significantly to the Latinization of the Mission District. The change in physical location tends to create a split in the narrative, or lack of continuity, in Latino history in the city.

In looking at the early history of Latinos in the city, this chapter juxtaposes the physical presence of Latinos in the city with the increasing “visibility” of Latinos in U.S. popular culture. More specifically, this chapter contrasts their physical displacement against the cultivation of a Latin nightlife in North Beach in the post-World War II period. In the 1930s and ‘40s, Hollywood and Broadway had propelled celebrities such as Desi Arnaz and Carmen Miranda to stardom, Arthur Murray Dance Studios taught the

Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). Massey and Denton are helpful in discussing the roots and implications of black and white segregation, though they tend to dismiss the relevance of desirable segregation within ethnic communities.

²⁶ Brian J. Godfrey documents multiple demographic shifts and displacements in *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988); also see, Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1983). Rebecca Solnit records the most recent series of displacements in *Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (New York: Verso, 2000). In other cities, certain displacements have achieved widespread notoriety for their emotional and political significance, as is the case with Chavez Ravine in Los Angeles, or Barrio Logan in San Diego. Don Normark's photographs have memorialized Chavez Ravine in *Chavez Ravine, 1949: A Los Angeles Story* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 1999). Eric Avila discusses the construction of Dodger Stadium in the place of Chavez Ravine in *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 145-184. For a discussion of social tensions and the creation of Chicano Park in Barrio Logan, or Logan Heights, see: Eva Cockcroft, “The Story of Chicano Park,” *Aztlan* 15(1) (1984): 79-103; *Chicano Park*, Marilyn Milford, producer, Marilyn Milford and Mario Barrera, directors, 58 min.,

nation the rumba and the conga, and dinner clubs in Havana, New York, and San Francisco created an imaginary Latin America, where dancing, music, food, and atmosphere celebrated a tropical paradise.²⁷ Around the globe, Latino identities and histories were jumbled together in places like the Mocambo in Hollywood, the Copacabana Club in New York, Havana, and San Francisco, and la Cabaña Cubana in Paris, where Latino musicians and singers from diverse Latin cultures came together and performed. In fact, the proliferation of Latin nightclubs in popular culture, combined with such prominent depictions as Desi Arnaz playing a Cuban bandleader for the Tropicana Club on *I Love Lucy*, intimately linked Latino identities with a celebratory nightlife.

In the first half of the twentieth century, nightclubs were a focal point for entertainment, both in the United States and abroad.²⁸ Many differentiated themselves by cultivating or fantasizing “exotic” cultures, and therefore became a site for staging the superficial dimensions of those cultures. The impact often “Othered” the cultures placed on display, but also provided sites of creative experimentation. As John Fiske argues, “Popular culture is deeply contradictory in societies where power is unequally distributed

Red Bird Films, 1988, videocassette; Kevin Delgado, “A Turning Point: The Conception and Realization of Chicano Park,” *Journal of San Diego History* 44(1) (1998): 48-61.

²⁷ Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez discusses the impact of Hollywood and Broadway in, *José, Can You See? Latinos On and Off Broadway* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999); Raúl Fernandez discusses the dance crazes and clubs in, *Latin Jazz: La Combinación Perfecta* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2001), 33-34; and Anthony Macias provides a discussion of the Latin jazz scene in Los Angeles, “From Pachuco Boogie to Latin Jazz: Mexican Americans, Popular Music, and Urban Culture in Los Angeles, 1940-1965,” Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2001, 250-331.

²⁸ Lewis Erenberg documents the rise of the nightclub in American life in *Steppin’ Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981). He then follows up the period with *Swingin’ the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998). Also see, Joel Dinerstein, *Swinging the Machine: Modernity, Technology, and African American Culture between the World Wars* (Amherst, MA:

along axes of class, gender, race, and the other categories that we use to make sense of our social differences.”²⁹

In San Francisco, the city’s nightlife and Beat culture were important in establishing the roots of a creative Latino community, well before its now famous Mission District. Musicians gravitated to the many opportunities to play their music along San Francisco’s Broadway strip of nightclubs, while writers and visual artists were drawn to the North Beach cafes and Marina / Cow Hollow galleries. This chapter and the next explore the presence of Latino identities in these two neighborhoods through music and the visual arts. My “archeological” project in this chapter is to document the many spaces for Latin music in 1950s and ‘60s San Francisco, per Agustín Laó-Montes’ call for understanding the “archaeologies of latinidad and genealogies of latinization.” Though Latinidad most commonly refers to “an ethnic or panethnic category ... the language of nationhood, or as a racial formation,” the creation of latinidad is never neutral. As Laó-Montes notes, “Latinidad is shaped and defined by racial discourses, processes of racialization, and racisms. Latinized people(s) are subject/ed to (and engage in) several systems of racial classification and racist inequality.”³⁰ Understanding the forces of Latinidad is just as contradictory as understanding the dynamics of popular culture.

University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). Isabelle Leymarie discusses Latin clubs around the world in *Cuban Fire: The Story of Salsa and Latin Jazz* (London, New York: Continuum, 2002), 329-340.

²⁹ John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (1989; reprint, New York: Routledge, 2001), 3.

³⁰ Agustín Laó-Montes, “Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York City,” in *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York*, eds., Agustín Laó-Montes and Arlene Davila (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 5-9.

In this chapter, I contrast the history of settlement and displacement in the Latin Quarter and South of Market area with the configuration of commodified “Latinized” identities in the marketplace during the 1940s and ‘50s, specifically through the rise of Latin nightclubs and music venues. Ironically, just as Latino residents encountered increasing economic pressures that were dismantling their traditionally segregated neighborhoods, Latino musicians were fomenting the sound and public image of a pan-Latino identity in integrated public spaces for popular consumption.

This disconnect between the appreciation of Latino culture for consumption and the disregard for the Latino population has served as an effective cultural border: in other words, while Latino foods, festivals, and music are easily enjoyed en masse, public policies, such as the repatriation effort of the 1930s, Operation Wetback of the 1950s, and NAFTA of the 1990s, clearly designate the physical spaces for Latinos as south of the U.S. border.³¹ The phenomenon is akin to Carey McWilliams’ descriptions of the “Spanish fantasy heritage” of Los Angeles, where a “lady from Des Moines can have lunch, see a Spanish or Mexican folk play, hear Mexican music, and purchase a ‘Mexican’ gift from the Studio Gift Shop.... these attempts to prettify the legend contrast most harshly with the actual behavior of the community toward persons of Mexican

³¹ Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodriguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995). Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York: Routledge, 1992); David Bacon, *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Wars on the U.S. / Mexican Border* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); Gary Gereffi, David Spener, and Jennifer Bair, eds., *Free Trade and Uneven Development: The North American Apparel Industry after NAFTA* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002); Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S. - Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home* (Austin, TX: The Center for Mexican American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, 1996); Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Leo R. Chavez, *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*

descent.”³² Such practices applied to immigrant or marginalized communities successfully “other” the population and thereby disempower their political and economic interests.

Ultimately, part of understanding the formation of a Latino community in the Mission District requires recognizing the power of these earlier communities. In fact, the contemporary story of the Mission District is made more meaningful by understanding the longer view and by recognizing that many of the people who experienced earlier displacements were keenly aware of the past destabilizations and erasures of the contributions of people of color and the working class. Similarly, many Latino artists, who had been practicing their art in the city for years, found new inspiration and a new community in the context of the civil rights movements of the 1960s.

In chronicling a portion of this earlier history here, my intent is to emphasize the importance of place, community, and identity in a historical continuum of persistence and change, as well as to point to how easily communities can “disappear” in the dominant narratives of the city. Latinos in San Francisco formed a variety of social networks throughout the city and contributed substantially to the cosmopolitan growth of the city, though their presence and contributions are still most commonly associated with the post-war growth of the Mission District.

(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001); Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

³² Carey McWilliams, *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*, New Edition, updated by Matt S. Meier (1948; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 47.

'REAL LIFE' IN SAN FRANCISCO'S LATINO COMMUNITIES: A SHORT HISTORY OF SETTLEMENT AND MIGRATION

As one of the few remaining physical markers of the Latino community in North Beach, the sizable Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe) church provides a physical indication of the many parishioners who stepped through its doors to attend regular Spanish services [Fig.1.2 and 1.3]. The congregation, first formed in 1876, built the first church in 1880, and subsequently rebuilt it by 1912, after the first was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake. The church still stands today, though it is hidden behind the 1950s construction of the Broadway tunnel, a major thoroughfare through the base of Russian Hill.

The “Our Lady of Guadalupe” title was significant: in its name the church paid homage to the indigenous Mexican representation of the Virgin Mary, thereby speaking directly to the religious beliefs of its Mexican parishioners. In fact, the yearly celebration of the virgin on December twelfth may stand as the longest running and least acknowledged Mexican celebration in the Bay Area, though the first celebration is hard to pinpoint.³³ By providing services in Spanish, the church attracted diverse immigrants of Spanish-speaking countries. The head of the church, Monsignor Antonio M. Santandreu, who had ministered to the Spanish-speaking people of San Francisco from

³³ The event was composed of a three day service followed by a procession through the neighborhood. For an overview history of the church, see Tomas Sandoval, “*Mission Stories, Latino Lives: The Making of San Francisco's Latino Identity, 1945-1970*” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002). In chapter three, Sandoval uses the church to discuss the religious history of Latinos in San Francisco in the immediate post-War period. He also provides a description of the feast celebration.



Fig. 1.2: Above, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, or Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, August 12, 1924. The class outside is about to attend “forty hours devotional service” in Spanish. Permission to use this image obtained from the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

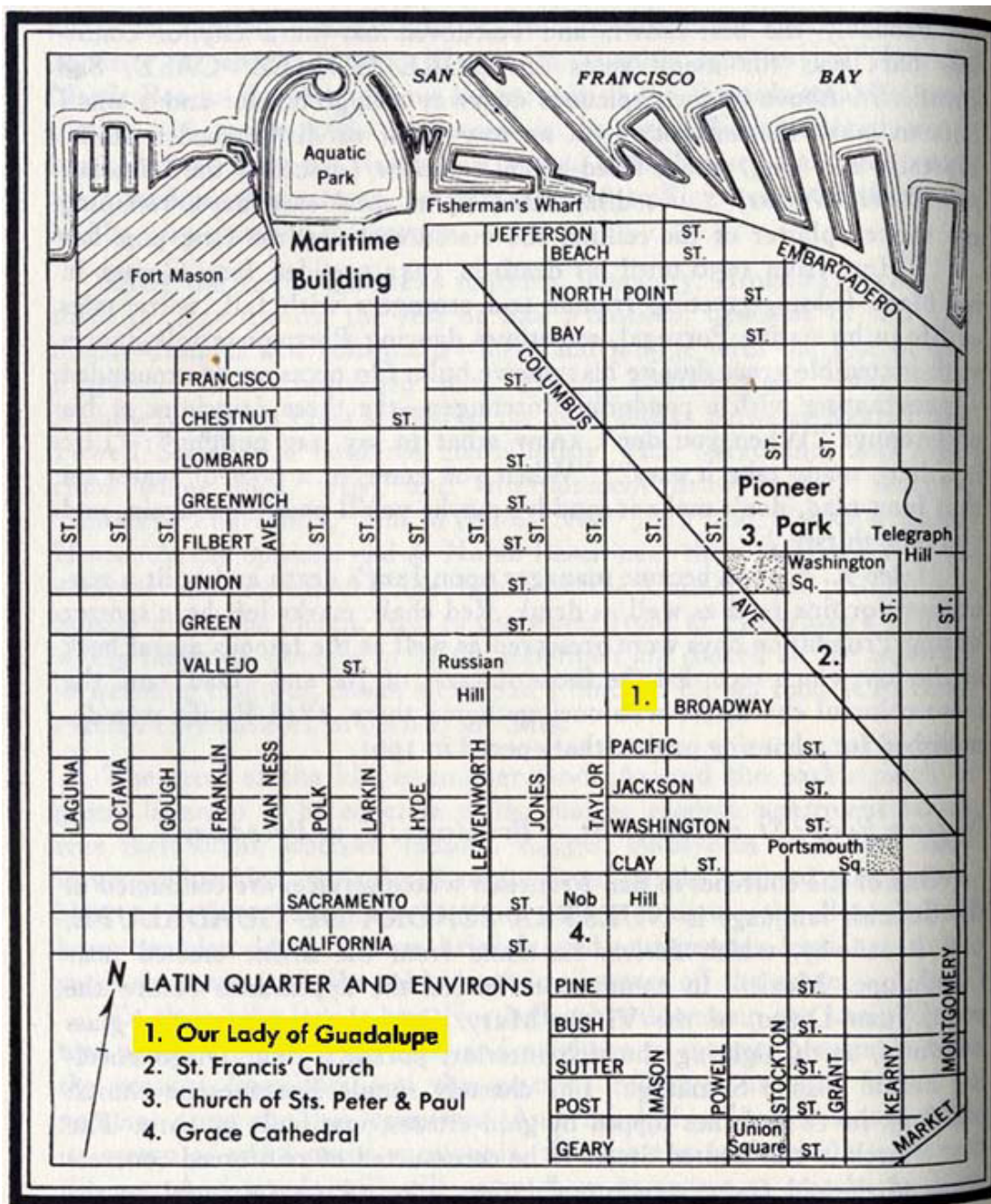


Fig. 1.3: A map of the Latin Quarter showing the location of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Broadway, the area's major thoroughfare, copied from: Hansen, ed., *San Francisco*, 250.

1876 to 1944, was from Barcelona and could speak directly to the needs of his many Basque and Spanish parishioners.³⁴

Though people of Mexican origin had a strong presence in the city, they did not easily dominate the Latin American population. According to one guidebook, “San Francisco had in 1940 only about 8,700 Mexicans, of whom approximately 7,000 were native born. Other scattered Spanish-speaking groups brought the total Latin American minority to about 14,000.” The guidebook argued that the result of this demographic was a tight-knit Spanish speaking population, which kept itself apart from the Italians: “The Mexicans and other Latin Americans maintain a separate life and a separate culture that clings to customs of their homelands.”³⁵ Similarly, Leonard Austin wrote, “There are no distinct colonies of South Americans. They settle in the neighborhoods where they can find the Spanish language spoken in shops and restaurants operated for the Spaniard and the Mexican. Thus we find them living in North Beach, in the Mission and about Fillmore Street.”³⁶ This propensity for viewing Spanish-speakers as an indistinct group has contributed to its pan-Latino consolidation in San Francisco and throughout the United States.

Settlement in San Francisco during the mid-1800s had created the Latin Quarter as a site of convergence for populations of Italian, Spanish, and Latin American descent. Such ethnic divisions fulfilled the city’s (and the nation’s) proclivity for residential segregation, but also promoted the cultivation of these cultures as an amalgamation of

³⁴ Leonard Austin provided the initial date and ethnicity for Monseigneur Santandreu and Tomas Sandoval provided the date of his death in 1944: Austin, *Around the World*, 93; Sandoval, “Mission Stories,” 69.

³⁵ Hansen, *San Francisco*, 227-8.

³⁶ Austin, *Around the World*, 99.

“Latin” identities. The conglomeration of a single Latin identity built community networks among diverse groups, though ethnic animosities persisted. Reportedly, “once an ill-concealed and profound antagonism existed between [Spanish-speakers] and their Italian neighbors.”³⁷ Though Latin Americans were linked verbally with their “Latin” counterparts in Europe, this did not eliminate cultural tensions and exclusions, either across the Atlantic, or within the Americas.

Nevertheless, the emphasis on a harmonious grouping of Latin cultures, as designated by the “Latin Quarter” appellation, also served to de-emphasize the less prestigious Mexican American community. California and the entire Southwest bear a long history of alternating between suppressing and romanticizing the region’s Mexican heritage.³⁸ The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo initiated a long period of subjugation of Mexican residents, many of whom, through physical, economic, and cultural force, lost their land and experienced various forms of disenfranchisement from their U.S. citizenship.³⁹ In *The Annals of San Francisco*, the classic 1855 account of San Francisco’s Gold Rush, laden with ethnic stereotypes, the authors declare that “Hispano-Americans, as a class, rank far beneath the French and Germans. They are ignorant and lazy, and are consequently poor. ... The Mexicans seem the most inferior of the race. ... The most inferior class of all, the proper ‘greaser,’ is on par with the common Chinese

³⁷ Hansen, *San Francisco*, 227.

³⁸ William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); James Oles, *South of the Border: Mexico in the American Imagination: 1914-1947* (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993). Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997); McWilliams, *North From Mexico*.

³⁹ See Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: The Chicanos Struggle Toward Liberation* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972); Martha Menchaca, *The Mexican Outsiders: A Community History of*

and the African; while many Negroes far excel the first-named in all moral, intellectual and physical respects.”⁴⁰ In a similar vein, one bordello, the Municipal Crib, charged the least for Mexican women – twenty-five cents – compared to fifty cents for Anglos and African Americans.⁴¹ Stereotypes of Mexicans and Mexican Americans framed them as undesirable and among the lowest class of Latin Americans. Thus, identifying as Latin (or Spanish) also became a tool to evade these stereotypes and facilitate upward mobility. As Carey McWilliams notes, “the Spanish heritage is now enshrined throughout the Southwest. It has become the sacred or templar tradition of which the Mexican-Indian inheritance is the secular or profane counterpart.”⁴²

The subsequent migration of Mexicans fleeing the Revolution during the 1910s contributed to negative public representations of Mexicans and Mexican Americans; these new immigrants, tending to have little cultural capital in terms of U.S. education, economics, and English language skills, were delegated the least attractive jobs and lowest social status. In the words of David Gutiérrez, “in the years after 1910 southwestern economic interests exploited Americans’ traditional perceptions of Mexicans as an inherently backward, slow, docile, indolent, and tractable people. By the mid-1910s southwestern employers argued that these characteristics constituted the very virtues that made Mexicans an ideal (and cheap) labor force.”⁴³

Marginalization and Discrimination in California (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995); Juan Gonzales, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (New York: Penguin, 2001).

⁴⁰ Frank Soulé, John H. Gihon, and James Nisbet, *The Annals of San Francisco* (1855; reprint, Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hills Books, 1999), 472.

⁴¹ Tom Stoddard, *Jazz on the Barbary Coast* (1982; reprint, Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 1998), 165.

⁴² McWilliams, *North From Mexico*, 29.

⁴³ Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 46.

Over the course of the 1920s and early '30s, Mexican migration into the United States continued to increase, spurred by the Cristeros movement. In 1926, the Cristeros, as self-labeled “followers of Christ,” rebelled from the government’s increasing repression of the authority of the Catholic Church. The ensuing execution of priests and other pious Catholics horrified people around the world and spurred acts of solidarity.⁴⁴ Though Leonard Austin did not refer to the Cristeros by name, he did describe the recent settlement of many Catholics in San Francisco as a product of discrimination in Mexico.⁴⁵ The long-standing Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe served as the most welcoming place in San Francisco for these religious refugees.

These large-scale migrations in the wake of social revolutions proved relevant in facilitating community expansion. New immigrants formed communities that then offered assistance to friends and family members in terms of acculturation and employment. As Mike Davis notes, “the basic building blocks of Spanish-speaking urban neighborhoods are not only individuals and households, but entire transnationalized communities.”⁴⁶ Many people did not relinquish their ties to their home nation, but maintained close personal and political ties. The impact of these transnational communities has had repercussions for both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Leonard Austin declared, “Every revolutionary upheaval south of the border has thrown into this country the leaders of the losing side and many came to San Francisco to be regarded here with not a little awe.” Somewhat hyperbolically, but perhaps not without basis,

⁴⁴ For more detailed history of the Cristero Rebellion see: David C. Bailey, *¡Viva Cristo Rey! The Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974).

⁴⁵ Austin, *Around the World*, 104-107.

⁴⁶ Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. Cities* (New York: Verso, 2000), 93.

Austin added, “Visitors to the Mexican cafes in North Beach would be accustomed to seeing distinguished and mysterious gentlemen murmuring over their chocolate or wine, then suddenly one night they would be gone, never to be seen again. A few days later we would read of a revolution in Mexico.”⁴⁷ Austin’s description of Mexican revolution planned in San Francisco cafes may ring with poetic exaggeration, but, in a very real way, the city has served as an American base for various revolutionaries in Latin America – from William Walker, to the Sandinistas, to the Zapatistas.⁴⁸

The romanticization of revolutionaries largely stood in contrast to the more common everyday experience of Mexican and Mexican American citizens. The perpetual backwards-forwards movement and settlement of Mexicans into the United States illustrated the low social status afforded this ethnic group.⁴⁹ In the 1930s, the U.S. repatriation program sent thousands of Mexican and Mexican American citizens to Mexico in order to remove the threat of these workers taking jobs from “American” citizens.⁵⁰ Alternatively, in the 1940s, the demand for war-time labor prompted the United States to initiate the Bracero Program: within five years, the program provided the

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Born in Nashville, Tennessee, William Walker came to San Francisco in the 1850s and famously led armed invasions of Baja California and Nicaragua, even declaring himself president of Nicaragua in 1856. He was executed in 1860 in Honduras. See: Albert H.Z. Carr, *The World and William Walker* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975); In the 1930s, many Nicaraguan Sandinista supporters relocated to San Francisco following the establishment of the Somoza dictatorship. In the 1970s, the Mission District formed a Sandinista headquarters, which is discussed in a later chapter; more recently, the Mission District/San Francisco has served as a base for Zapatista organizing. See: Elaine Katzenberger, Ed., *First World, Ha Ha Ha! The Zapatista Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 1995).

⁴⁹Rafael Alarcón, “From Servants to Engineers: Mexican Immigration and Labor Markets in the San Francisco Bay Area,” CLPP Working Paper, California Policy Seminar, Volume 4, Number 3 (Berkeley: Department of City and Regional Planning, University of California, Berkeley, January 1997); Wayne Cornelius, “From Sojourners to Settlers: The Changing Profile of Mexican Migration to the United States,” in *U.S.-Mexico Relations: Labor Market Interdependence*, eds., Jorge Bustamante, Raul Hinojosa, and Clark Reynolds (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

⁵⁰ Balderrama and Rodriguez, *Decade of Betrayal*.

United States with nearly 220,000 Mexican workers, 57 percent of whom worked in California.⁵¹ While the U.S. government and agricultural industries found these Mexican workers desirable for their labor, they were not desirable as citizens. Artist Luis Cervantes remembered his father's struggle to obtain a job in South San Francisco during the Depression. Cervantes said, "There was a prejudice against Mexicans in reference to who should get a job and who shouldn't. Non-citizens, get at the end of the line."⁵² Public representations of Mexicans as undesirable citizens, combined with representations of young Mexican Americans as knife-wielding pachucos, or gang members, contributed to local and national efforts to physically and socially isolate Mexicans and Mexican Americans.⁵³ In general, Mexican migrants and Mexican American natives, like other marginalized ethnic groups, learned to suppress their cultural heritage in order to advance in the schools and in public life.

Any distinctiveness of a Mexican American identity in the context of a generalized "Latin" identity also was complicated by the strong Central American population. As a shipping center, San Francisco maintained a long history of close ties with the west coast of Central America. Over the course of the late 1800s, San Francisco became a headquarters for the coffee industry, including Folger's, Hills Brothers, and

⁵¹ Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirror*, 135.

⁵² Luis Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, April 2, 2003.

⁵³ Arnoldo De Leon, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1983); Mauricio Mazon, *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1984); Edward Duran Ayres, "Edward Duran Ayres Report," reprinted in *Readings on La Raza: The Twentieth Century*, eds., Matt S. Meier and Feliciano Rivera (1942; reprint, New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 127-133; Arthur G. Pettit, *Images of the Mexican American in Fiction and Film* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980); Charles Ramirez Berg, *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, & Resistance* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002); Alfred Charles Richard Jr., *Contemporary Hollywood's Negative Hispanic Image* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995).

MJB. The coffee import business assured a continuous economic relationship with strong coffee-producing countries, such as Guatemala and El Salvador. In addition, in the 1920s and '30s, the large multinational United Fruit Company developed a frequent line of exchange between the two coasts.⁵⁴ The growth of direct shipping routes between San Francisco and Central America assured continuous cultural, economic, and migratory exchanges.

The shipyards, canneries, and factories that grew along San Francisco's Waterfront drew a large labor pool to the city. Many of the Central American and Mexican workers set up residence in the nearby Latin Quarter and South of Market Area. Subsequently, the demand for labor during World War II precipitated an increase in Latin American immigration. In 1950, the city counted 5,600 Mexican-born (4.6 percent of the foreign-born) and 6,855 Central and South American born (5.6 percent of the foreign born).⁵⁵ The numbers are slightly deceptive in that they do not count the many American-born descendents that participated in these communities.⁵⁶

However, even prior to World War II, economic and political pressures were destabilizing the Latino communities in the Latin Quarter and South of Market Area. One of the end results was the creation of reconstituted Latino communities further inland, most notably in the Mission District. Typically, the Latinization of the Mission is presented as a post-World-War-II phenomenon, though roots of the demographic

⁵⁴ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 139.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 140.

⁵⁶ David Gutiérrez points out that "a majority of the resident ethnic Mexican population in 1940 were U.S. citizens, but at least 60 percent of this population were either unnaturalized Mexican nationals or were the first U.S.-born generation of Mexican immigrant parents." His remark illustrates the difficulty of using only "foreign-born" numbers to understand the scope of a population. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 118.

transition from its initially Irish and Italian concentration to its present Latino identity can be traced to the 1920s and '30s. Prior to the war, Leonard Austin described the presence of small Hispanic “colonies” in the Mission as a result of displacement from the city’s increasingly expensive Latin Quarter.⁵⁷ Later, as the larger North Beach area emerged as the hangout of the Beats and the center of nightclub life during the 1940s and '50s, property values and displacement increased even more.

By the mid-1950s, the demographic shift in the Latin Quarter was well underway. When artist José Ramon Lerma returned to San Francisco from Korea in 1954, he found an apartment in North Beach near the Our Lady of Guadalupe church: “they called it ‘Mexican Town,’” he recalled. “And there were a number of old Mexicans, who would have been my father’s generation, who were seamen, and had lived there for a while.”⁵⁸ The ensuing destruction of “Mexican Town” was aided by the disruptive construction of the Broadway tunnel through the base of Russian Hill in 1950 and new demands on real estate – particularly the pressures of a growing Chinatown.⁵⁹ Gradually, the history of

⁵⁷ Leonard Austin describes pre-WWII ethnic neighborhoods in San Francisco, including the visible presence of Latinos in the Mission District. The Latin Quarter is now more often recognized as North Beach or Little Italy. Austin, *Around the World*. In addition, scholar Ricardo Romo points to the failure of scholars to acknowledge demographic concentrations of Latinos in urban centers during the migration of 1900-1930 as a result of focusing more on rural migration and invalid census figures. Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: The History of a Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 3-13.

⁵⁸ José Ramon Lerma, interview by author, Oakland, CA, January 5, 2001. It is worth noting that Lerma was attending the nearby California School of Fine Arts, later known as the San Francisco Art Institute, which atmospherically seemed to reflect the local Mexican culture. The Mediterranean architecture of the building led artist Ad Reinhardt to remark disparagingly, “In the 1940s the building was usually dirty and almost always damp. A foggy bit of little old Mexico on a hill in San Francisco, close to the artists’ section of North Beach—close to the Bay so that from the street corner by the mail box an occasional ship could be seen passing by at the bottom of the hill.” Quoted in, “An Interview with Fred Martin” by Jan Butterfield, in *Reflections: Alumni Exhibitions, San Francisco Art Institute, January 1981* (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute Alumni Association, 1982), 26. The Art Institute also is home to a Diego Rivera mural, *The Making of a Fresco [Making a Fresco] Showing the Building of a City* (1931).

⁵⁹ Tomas Sandoval points to the new pressure of Chinatown, particularly in proximity to the Church. Sandoval, “*Mission Stories*,” 57.

“Mexican Town” vanished in the city’s physical and cultural representations. More specifically, the all-encompassing Latin Quarter transitioned to a definitive Italian-American North Beach. Aided by the increasing demographic of Italians and Italian Americans, the result was the erasure of historic Spanish, especially Basque, and Latin American communities in North Beach.

While economic and social pressures were redefining the Latin Quarter, city redevelopment projects were reshaping the South of Market Area. The construction of the Bay Bridge and adjoining freeways in the 1930s helped displace many Mexican American residents from their waterfront community, though little or no scholarship documents this phenomenon.⁶⁰ Impetus for the Bay Bridge and Golden Gate Bridge had existed for many years, but it was the economic and social circumstances of the Depression that made the bridges a reality. Completed in 1936 and 1937, respectively, the bridges provided much needed employment and, in terms of their massiveness and strength, redefined the possibilities of civil engineering.

However, while the Golden Gate Bridge spanned a less populated area, the foot of the Bay Bridge cut directly into the homes of South of Market residents. Community activist and artist Francisco Camplis recalled, “Then the bridge came – the Bay Bridge, as well as the Golden Gate – and they razed all the homes around there, and threw all that community out. And they kind of dispersed. ... And what that did was of course break up

⁶⁰ The Bay Bridge started construction in 1933 and was completed in November 1936. See, Richard Dillon, *High Steel: Building the Bridges across San Francisco Bay* (Millbrae, CA: Celestial Arts, 1979); Peter Stackpole, *The Bridge Builders: Photographs and Documents of the Raising of the San Francisco Bay Bridge, 1934-1936* (Corte Madera, CA: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1984).

the families first, and then friends, and then networks that they had of support.”⁶¹

Similarly, another former South of Market resident recalled, “la casa donde viviamos, la vendieron a Bay Bridge.” (They sold the house where we were living to the Bay Bridge.)⁶² Many renting tenants found their homes had been sold out from under them and had little choice but to move elsewhere. While numbers are elusive, oral histories suggest several residents moved inland toward the Mission, where a Spanish-language community already was in existence.⁶³

Tomas Sandoval also has argued for the impact of World War II as a driving force in changing the dynamics of the South of Market community. As a port of trade and shipping during wartime, the area drew a diverse and expansive population of workers, thereby also disrupting the former intimacy of the Mexican American community’s dwelling area: “Both the [Our Lady of] Guadalupe barrio and the South of Market barrio would disintegrate in the post-World War Two era as development and demographic changes altered their economic and ethnic compositions.”⁶⁴ Little to no official recognition of these barrio communities exists in general histories of San Francisco or in the physical markers of public history, but the residents who experienced this

⁶¹ Francisco Camplis, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 12, 2003. Camplis also has spent significant energy researching the history of this community, as visible in his two short films, *Unmined Treasures* (2000) and *The Mexican Presence in San Francisco, 1930-1950* (2001), which he graciously provided to me. As a sidenote, many artists in the community had family rooted in the South of Market Area, including Ralph Maradiaga and Amelia “Mia” Galavíz de González. Far more scholarship needs to be done to indicate the impact of the Bay Bridge on the South of Market community. Helpful are, Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de González, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 5, 2003; Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*; and Sandoval, “Mission Stories.”

⁶² Unnamed resident, interview by filmmakers, *The Mexican Presence in San Francisco, 1930-1950*, dir., Francisco Camplis, San Francisco, 2001.

⁶³ *Ibid*; Camplis interview, March 12, 2003; Galavíz de Gonzalez interview, February 5, 2003.

displacement carried the memory in oral histories and were more conscious of how easily their communities could be dislodged.

THE LIVELY LATIN NIGHTLIFE: STAGING LATINO IDENTITIES

While Leonard Austin's *Traveling Around the World in San Francisco* is not well known, it was reflective of a larger trend in American urban life over the course of the twentieth century: the desire to experience American cities and towns as global villages for cosmopolitan consumption. Multiple texts on San Francisco echo the "Around the World in San Francisco" phrase.⁶⁵ Similarly, texts on New York and other cities around the country promoted this vision of traveling around the world within a single urban center or state. As the introduction to the short film *Around the World in New York* declared, "New York is where the Latin rumba shares a jukebox with a beer-barrel polka. Manhattan's lower east side is a living example of America's melting pot in action and has become a new world version of the old world bazaar."⁶⁶ The phenomenon

⁶⁴ Sandoval, "Mission Stories," 31-32. Marilyn Johnson has explored the social impact of World War II on the Bay Area in *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).

⁶⁵ "Around the World in San Francisco" is the third chapter heading for *San Francisco: A Guide to the Bay and Its Cities*, ed., Gladys Hansen, originally compiled by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for Northern California (1940; reprint, New York: Hastings House, 1973), 154; Many tour books declare phrases akin to, "Are you inclined toward a German, Danish or Armenian, a Mexican, Neapolitan or tropical French cuisine? Take your pick—for you can dine around the world in San Francisco, where food is famous and chefs are honored." From *The Chapter in Your Life entitled San Francisco, 1940* (San Francisco: Californians, Inc., 1940). Prob. Produced in conjunction with the New Golden Gate International Exposition. May 25 to Sept. 29, 1940, 20; also see the brochure, *Eating Around the World in San Francisco*, 1948, collected with the former in the San Francisco guides collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

⁶⁶ From introduction to *Around the World in New York*, Dir., Larry Kostroff, 13 min., Victor Kayfetz Productions, 1940, film. Also see, Konrad Bercovici, *Around the World in New York* (New York, London: The Century Co., 1924); *Around the World in New York: A Guide To the City's Nationality Groups*,

exemplified what Steven Hoelscher has called, “provincial cosmopolitanism,” whereby “ethnic place” becomes “*tourist place*.”⁶⁷

In San Francisco and elsewhere, maintaining these physical and cultural borders gave the city its “global” charm. Who wouldn’t like to travel around the world, bopping from place to place in a carnival-like ride around the city, all the while retaining all the amenities of home? Of course, the problem with Austin’s outlook, which echoed many of the perspectives of tour books across the nation, then and now, was that it objectified cultures for consumption, while minimizing or ignoring the de facto and institutional borders that spurred the formation of segregated and disenfranchised communities.

Ironically, or perhaps predictably, as the economic displacement of “Latin” low- and middle-income residents in the North Beach and South of Market Area escalated, neighborhood merchants and city officials continued to capitalize on the all-encompassing “Latin” ethnic identity. The phenomenon was not unlike the romanticization of the vanishing Native American that proliferated the literature and culture of the nineteenth century. As Philip Deloria has argued, “This is, of course, the familiar contradiction we have come to label noble savagery, a term that both juxtaposes and conflates an urge to idealize and desire Indians and a need to despise and dispossess

prepared by the Caroline Zachary Institute of Human Development and the Common Council for American Unity (New York: Common Council for American Unity, 1950); Alice L. Sickels, *Around the World in St. Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1945); Fred L. Holmes, *Old World Wisconsin: Around Europe in the Badger State* (Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale, 1944). Walter del Mar, *Around the World Through Japan* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1902).

⁶⁷ Steven Hoelscher, “Conversing Diversity: Provincial Cosmopolitanism and America’s Multicultural Past,” in *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*, eds., Paul C. Adams, Steven Hoelscher, and Karen E. Till (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 375-402 (378; 383). The creation of ethnic tourism or “heritage tourism” has also contributed to this penchant for selling a place as a microcosm of a national or cultural identity. Also see: Hoelscher, *The Invention of Ethnic Place in America’s Little Switzerland* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

them.”⁶⁸ Similarly, Coco Fusco has written, “the original body, or the physical and visual presence of the cultural Other, must be fetishized, silenced, subjugated, or otherwise controlled to be ‘appreciated.’”⁶⁹

As Latinos were being displaced and dispossessed, their presence in mass culture entertainment was on the rise, both locally and nationally. Aided by a national diplomatic turn to the “Good Neighbor Policy,” the United States was now welcoming cheerful visions of Latin America to make up for the grimness of European relations. Nevertheless, the policy masked fears about U.S. – Latin American relations. In particular, World War I had showed the devastation that bordering nations could enact upon each other. On March 4, 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt launched his “Good Neighbor Policy,” which sought to minimize historical and colonialist tensions between the United States and Latin America by redefining Latin America as a “friendly neighbor,” who could do Americans no harm. In the 1940s, World War II gave the policy more momentum, as the war on two fronts also raised concerns about U.S. relations with those closest to its borders.⁷⁰

The “Good Neighbor Policy” filtered throughout American life, attempting to reframe how Americans thought about Latin America (and how Latin Americans thought about the United States), but, in the process, depicted Latin America as subject to U.S. fantasy and conquest. Hollywood and Broadway theatre were instrumental in

⁶⁸ Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 4; Also see, Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996).

⁶⁹ Coco Fusco, *English is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 45.

disseminating these positive, colonialist images of a tropical Latin American playground for American consumers. Films such as *Down Argentine Way* (1940), *The Gang's All Here* (1943), *The Three Caballeros* (1944), *Gilda* (1946) and *Holiday in Havana* (1949), were part of a string of films selling Latin America as an American haven for fun and sex. On Broadway, such musicals as *Panama Hattie* (1940) and *Too Many Girls* (1939) affirmed the depiction of Latin America as a desirable female. Stars, such as Carmen Miranda, Desi Arnaz, Xavier Cugat, and Rita Hayworth, re-presented the friendly, sexy Latin America, often through song and dance.⁷¹ As Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez notes, “in the 1930s and 1940s, Latin America became a postcard, a photograph, a tourist attraction, a night club, a type of theme park where fantasy and fun were guaranteed and escapism assured while U.S. national security interests were guarded.”⁷² Though the films supposedly portrayed Latin America as an ally of the United States, they also depicted Latin America as an object for American exploitation.

Like Hollywood and Broadway, San Francisco’s club scene was wedded to this “Good Neighbor” nationalist agenda, but notably, each also provided an important intersection for Latino artists and musicians to perform [Fig. 1.4]. The rise of 1940s celebratory nightclubs, such as the Copacabana, Casino Pan-American, El Cid, and Casa Madrid, all along San Francisco’s Broadway strip in North Beach, turned Hispanic

⁷⁰ Frederick B. Pike, *FDR's Good Neighbor Policy: Sixty Years of Generally Gentle Chaos* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995).

⁷¹ Pennee Lenore Bender, “Film as an instrument of the Good Neighbor Policy, 1930s--1950s,” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2002); Berg, *Latino Images in Film*, 31-32.

⁷² Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez, *José, Can You See?* 24.



Fig. 1.4: Photograph of the entertainment at the Casino Pan-American nightclub, 1942. The original caption states, "Chico & Juanita entertaining guests at the Casino Pan-American nightclub," July 22, 1942. Accompanying newscopy: "Chico & Juanita, strolling serenaders at Casino Pan-America, 831 Broadway, charm the guests with their guitar and marimba music. Here they are entertaining two dinner parties, the members of which seem to enjoy the mellow Latin-America tunes that this versatile pair is offering for approval." Permission to use this image obtained from the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

identities into entertainment for enthusiastic consumers.⁷³ Of course, these clubs drew inspiration from popular Latin clubs in New York, Havana, Rio, and elsewhere, both in name and aura, and perhaps gained authenticity by their location “on Broadway.” Here, tourists and residents could enjoy “Spicy Mexican food and spicy rumba music” at Julian’s Xochimilco, the “fiery floor shows” at Casa Madrid, or the menu of “Chef Rogelio Torres, who once cooked for the King of Spain,” at The House That Jack Built.⁷⁴ While Latin music was not limited to the Broadway strip, the locale was unquestionably center stage for most Latin musicians and performers in the city.⁷⁵

Moreover, tour book authors drew on the famed history of the Latin Quarter in Paris to declare the bohemianism of San Francisco’s sister enclave:

The Latin Quarter is bohemian. Long have artists had homes and studios on Telegraph and Russian hills and in vicinity of Columbus Ave. and Montgomery St. Here also are the California School of Fine Arts and the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design. ...For five blocks, between

⁷³ Other examples of San Francisco’s nightlife as a means for staging the “Other” included Charlie Low’s *Forbidden City*, a Chinese nightclub for predominantly white audiences. See: Anthony W. Lee, *Picturing Chinatown: Art and Orientalism in San Francisco* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001) 237-285; Also see the documentary film, *Forbidden City USA*, dir., Arthur Dong, Deep Focus Productions, 1989; and the fictional play/musical, *Flower Drum Song*, dir., Henry Koster, 1961. More broadly, see Erenberg, *Steppin’ Out* and *Swingin’ The Dream*; Eric Lott discusses the staged minstrelsy performances of the nineteenth century in *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Susan Waggoner has a coffee table book that reproduces many of the club promotional materials in *Nightclub Nights: Art, Legend, and Style, 1920-1960* (New York: Rizzoli, 2001).

⁷⁴ Ted Friend, *Ted Friend’s Guide to San Francisco* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Press, 1950); *The 1960-61 Mark Hopkins Hotel Edition, Guest Informant* (Los Angeles, CA: Pacific Hotel Publications, 1960); Helen M. Abrahamsen, *What to Do See Eat in San Francisco* (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books 1952).

⁷⁵ Two significant downtown nightclubs were Luz Garcia’s Sinaloa and the Papagayo Room in the Fairmont Hotel. Friend, *Ted Friends Guide; The 1960-61 Mark Hopkins Hotel Edition*. Delia Martinez, “The Cuban Bombshell” performed regularly at the Sinaloa. Jesse Varela, “Desde La Bahia,” *Latin Beat Magazine*, February 2004. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FXV/is_1_14/ai_113600303, accessed on July 5, 2005. Another female group at the Sinaloa was Los Caramelos Cubanos (the Cuban Lollipops), which featured Yolanda Macias, who later married Benny Velarde: Jesse Varela, “Viva Velarde: San Francisco Bay Area Salsa pioneer Benny Velarde celebrates the release of a landmark tribute album reflecting a 50-plus year career,” *Latin Beat Magazine*, December 2002. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FXV/is_10_12/ai_95844135, accessed on July 6, 2005.

Montgomery and Mason Sts., it is crowded with restaurants and night spots—not all expensive. Elsewhere in quarter are other good restaurants, continental cafes, [and] interesting night clubs.⁷⁶

Similarly, another San Francisco writer declared, “like Latin Quarters everywhere, the district came in the end to be the traditional haunt of bohemia.”⁷⁷ Naturally, Henri Murger’s famed 1849 novel, *The Bohemians of the Latin Quarter*, which became a successful play and opera (Puccini’s “La Boheme”), had solidified the idea of the Latin Quarter as the artist’s garret – an exotic place for the marginalized, but creative poor and intellectual outcasts.⁷⁸ In part, it was this global stereotype that helped transition San Francisco’s Latin Quarter into the home of the North Beach counterculture during the 1950s. As the location of the California School of Fine Arts and as the home of “Latin” culture, North Beach was perfectly positioned to become one of the many American doppelgangers of the old Parisian haunts. Similar to Greenwich Village in New York, the French Quarter in New Orleans, and Ybor City in Tampa, Florida, American bohemianism and the ethnic “Other” were intimately connected.⁷⁹ As Howard Campbell

⁷⁶ “Your Guide to San Francisco and its nearby Vacationlands,” Californians, Inc., 1950. San Francisco guides collection, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

⁷⁷ Hansen, *San Francisco*, 224.

⁷⁸ Henri Murger, *The Bohemians of the Latin Quarter*, Trans. by Ellen Marriage and John Selwyn (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Albert Parry, *Garrets and Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America* (1933; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1960); Elizabeth Wilson, *Bohemians: The Glamorous Outcasts* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000); Joanna Dale Levin, “American Bohemias: 1858-1912: a Literary and Cultural Geography” (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2001); Nancy J. Peters, “The Beat Generation and San Francisco’s Culture of Dissent,” in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, eds., James Brook, Chris Carlsson, and Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 199-215; Francis Rigney, “Creativity in Bohemia,” in *San Francisco Underground Art in Celebration: 1945-1968* (San Francisco, CA: Intersection, Center for Religion and the Arts, Second Edition, 1976), 12-14; Francis Rigney and L. Douglas Smith, *The Real Bohemia* (New York: Basic Books, 1961).

⁷⁹ Susan D. Greenbaum, “Marketing Ybor City: Race, Ethnicity, and Historic Preservation in the Sunbelt,” *City and Society* 4 (1) (1990): 58-76; Gerald W. McFarland, *Inside Greenwich Village: A New York City*

argues, “Bohemia and anthropology are two of the main cultural projects through which Western culture has encountered its ‘Others.’”⁸⁰

With the promotion of Latino identities in San Francisco, and in the “Good Neighbor Policy” more broadly, an emphasis on elite Spanish and South American cultures dominated, with a noticeable absence of the less prestigious Mexican and Central American cultures [Fig. 1.5]. In San Francisco, a strong Flamenco entertainment sector grew at various North Beach restaurants, including the Old Spaghetti Factory, La Bodega, and Casa Madrid.⁸¹ El Matador became one of the most popular nightclubs of the late 1950s, with its reputation heightened by its charismatic proprietor Barnaby Conrad, whose prolific writing on Spanish bullfighting authenticated the club. The place became a celebrity hotspot, where one source reported, “The last time we were there John Steinbeck was carrying on a spirited literary discussion with Barnaby, while Jane Russell, an ardent aficionada, came in to lay a rose at the feet of the Manolete painting. José Ferrer was sipping a specialty concoction known as a Picador, next to Henry Fonda and

Neighborhood, 1898-1918 (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (Metropolitan Press, 2000).

⁸⁰ Howard Campbell, “Beat Mexico: Bohemia, Anthropology and ‘the Other,’” *Critique of Anthropology* 23 (2): 209-230 (2009).

⁸¹ Leonard Austin recorded the popularity of flamenco in 1940: “One time in the year when one can see the true Spaniard is at their celebration honoring the discoverer of America, Christopher Columbus, or as they call him Cristóbal Colón. The whole colony comes to watch the singers and dancers of their race and encourage them with shouters of ‘olé, olé, niña;’ and tremendous applause. Northern Spaniards dance their jota and Andalusians sing and dance the thrilling flamenco, and the ‘cante Jondo,’ or deep song. This is the most popular of the foreign folk festivals in San Francisco and brings out all the vividness and emotion of Spanish life.” Austin, *Around the World*, 93. Various advertisements and tourist books also confirm the popularity of flamenco, as does my interview of Maruja Cid, conducted on October 22, 2004. Also see, *The 1960-61 Mark Hopkins Hotel Edition; San Francisco Hotel Greeters Guide* (Frentrup Publishing Company, August 1963).



Fig. 1.5: Exterior of the Copacabana Nightclub, 831 Broadway, June 18, 1964. The Spanish flag and flamenco guitar are in keeping with the “Spanish-identified” entertainment. Photograph by Alan J. Canterbury. Image obtained from the San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Deborah Kerr.”⁸² This collection of Spanish restaurants and nightclubs produced an imaginary Spain where residents and tourists could experience the fantasy of elite Mediterranean life and culture.

Flamenco was not new to North Beach, but growing interest in producing flamenco as spectacle for tourists heightened its visibility and also tended to package the event as Latino / “Other” performances for white audiences, rather than directed at Spanish-speaking audiences. The popularity of flamenco in the 1950s was a bit of a global phenomenon, for as Michelle Heffner points out, during Franco’s totalitarian regime in Spain, “the version of flamenco tailored to ‘tourist’ performances emphasized a charming but nonthreatening portrait of Spain. These productions toured the United States and were recorded in several Hollywood films.” Perceptively, Heffner also emphasized racial tensions in Spain as instrumental in the rise of flamenco during the 1950s: “Franco’s shrewd manipulation of the flamenco stereotype simultaneously generated a lucrative tourist industry and served to reiterate an internal order of power that placed gypsies and Andalusians at the lowest rungs of the social ladder.”⁸³ In the immediate post-War period, widespread interest in flamenco peaked, and the local impact was visible on North Beach’s Broadway strip.

While flamenco increasingly relied on tourism, its popularity also provided greater economic opportunities and more venues for performers. Widely recognized dancers, such as Isa Mura, Cruz Luna, Ernesto Hernandez, Adela Clara, and Miguel

⁸² *The 1960-61 Mark Hopkins Hotel Edition*. Also see, Barnaby Conrad, *Name Dropping: Tales from My Barbary Coast Saloon* (New York: Harpercollins, 1994).

⁸³ Michelle C. Heffner, “Bailando la Historia / Flamenco Bodies in History and Film” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, March 1998), 20-21.

Santos, were a few of the artists who popularized the flamenco tradition locally and who maintained strong cross-pollinating networks with Spain, and elsewhere around the globe. Though Spanish culture dominated Latin Quarter entertainment, Luna's background gives an indication of the multiplicity of cultures shaping flamenco in San Francisco: Born in Spain, Luna moved to San Antonio, Texas, when he was four, studied flamenco in Mexico City when he was fourteen, and came to the Bay Area when he was fifteen. In 1960, Cruz Luna opened Casa Madrid, where he served as a featured performer and brought flamenco dancers from around the world.⁸⁴

Simultaneously, San Francisco was establishing a strong jazz culture. The scene had gained strength with the number of African American musicians who migrated to the shipyards in San Francisco and Oakland during World War II. In the 1950s and 60s:

Small clubs were flourishing all over the city, including the Blackhawk [Tenderloin District], where Art Tatum played one of his last residencies; the Jazz Workshop [North Beach], where Cannonball Adderley recorded with his quintet; the Club Hangover [Downtown], where Earl Hines performed; Earthquake McGoon's [Downtown / North Beach], where Turk Murphy's trad-jazz band played for 20 years; and Bop City [The Fillmore], where Dexter Gordon and Sonny Criss once played.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Isa Mura, who later taught flamenco in the Mission, was the mother of Yaelisa Mura, who is now a popular flamenco dancer in the Bay Area, and whose dancing pays tribute to her mother. Maruja Cid, interview by author, telephone recording, October 22, 2004; also see, <http://www.sfflamenco.com/features/lamiri.html>. Accessed on July 1, 2005. Cid also called Ernesto Hernandez "one of the best flamenco dancers from the Mission." Ricardo Diaz has stated, "without a doubt Ernesto Hernandez who in my eyes is a Flamenco legend in San Francisco going back 40 years." More information on Cruz Luna is available at this site, accessed on November 24, 2004: <http://www.artistswithaids.org/artforms/dance/catalogue/luna.html> <http://www.sfflamenco.com/features/ricardodiaz.html>. Adela Clara founded the Theatre Flamenco in San Francisco in 1966, with Miguel Santos as a principal dancer and choreographer: <http://www.theatreflamenco.org/>; <http://adelaclaraflamenco.com/pages/bio.htm>. At present, scholarship on the Bay Area flamenco scene is lacking.

⁸⁵ Christiane Bird, *The Da Capo Jazz and Blues Lover's Guide to the U.S.: Completely Revised and Updated*, 3rd Edition (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2001), 419; A sizable mural at Columbus and Broadway visually documents the many jazz clubs that graced North Beach. The Say When and Fack's

North Beach, with its many small clubs and restaurants, including the Jazz Workshop, Club Fugazi, and Enrico's, was instrumental in creating a prominent space for jazz outside of predominantly African American neighborhoods. The area served as a zone for white audiences to come into contact with African American music, without the anxiety of entering the Fillmore or the Tenderloin, but still with the aura of non-white bohemian adventure.

Latino musicians moved in and out of Latin, Anglo, and African American spaces, often in accordance with the way they were racialized in the United States. Afro-Cuban conga player Armando Peraza first came to New York in the late 1940s, where he played with Machito, Dizzy Gillespie, and Charlie Parker. In the early 1950s, he came to San Francisco and started working with African American vocalist Slim Gaillard at the Blackhawk and Bop City. Though Peraza barely spoke any English at that time, he managed to integrate into American life through music. However, he also found himself racially barred from establishments that lighter-skinned Latinos could enter. He recalled a trip to see the orchestra of Mexican bandleader Merced Gallegos at the Palomar Ballroom downtown: "As I was going inside, the security guard stopped me and told me I couldn't go in. I was told black people weren't allowed. But there was this guy by the door named Noel García, who was playing conga in the band. He said: 'That's Armando

also served as popular jazz joints. Ted Gioia, *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 65. However, Tom Stoddard has documented the presence of a strong, but small jazz community prior to World War I in Stoddard, *Jazz on the Barbary Coast*. In fact, Stoddard, through his interviews of Sid LeProtti, located many of the "Negro dance clubs" (Purcell's, Charlie Coster's, Sam King's, The So Different Saloon, and Louie Gomez's, also known as the West Indian Club) on Pacific and Broadway Streets, in an area later consolidated with North Beach. The Barbary Coast jazz scene ended with a religious crusade against the dancehalls, 1915-1917.

Peraza and invited me in. I sat in with the band.”⁸⁶ The tendency to categorize Afro-Latinos as black not only impinged on their social mobility, but also incorrectly promoted the vision of Latinos as of a single olive-skinned hue.⁸⁷

Nevertheless, Peraza also moved in music circles more closely identified as “Latin.” In part, Peraza benefited from covert and overt efforts to desegregate the music world. For example, Merced Gallegos, at the behest of events manager Jesse Carlos, hired Peraza to play in his “Tardeadas” (Mexican afternoon jams) at Sweets Ballroom in Oakland, but had to arrange payments under the table to avoid backlash from his union. Gallegos and other musicians also reserved “after hours” as a time to subvert the culture of segregation, such as the times Gallegos and Duke Ellington played together at the Sinaloa Club.⁸⁸ While segregation scripted everyday life, music was multicultural, and musicians like Peraza floated in racialized spaces according to access and desire. Peraza actively sought opportunities to play with other Latin musicians. When Peraza formed his own band, the Afro-Cubans, he included Cuban vocalist Israel del Pino, Mexican American brothers Manuel and Carlos Duran (piano and bass, respectively), and Juanita Silva, “the first woman to play hand percussion in California.” In regular performances at downtown’s Cable Car Village, the band played an amalgamation of Cuban and Mexican music with great flair. Always the consummate performer, Peraza recalled, “I

⁸⁶ Jesse Varela, “Sonaremó el Tambo: The Life and Times of Armando Peraza: Part Two,” *Latin Beat Magazine*, May 2004. http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FXV/is_4_14/ai_n6151066, accessed on July 4, 2005.

⁸⁷ The autobiographical writings of Piri Thomas also reflect this conflict between skin color and identity, as a Puerto Rican in New York: *Down These Mean Streets* (1967; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1997). Also see: Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis, *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self* (Harry N. Abrams, 2003); and Fusco, *English is Broken Here*.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* Ted Gioia notes that San Francisco was “one of the last major cities to perpetuate segregated musicians’ unions, not merging Local 6 and Local 669 until April 1960.” *West Coast Jazz*, 62.

used to paint my fingers with fluorescent paint, put fluorescent paint on my congas... and when I played it looked like the whole thing was on fire.”⁸⁹

Peraza’s movements in San Francisco give some indication of the mobility of Latin musicians, although North Beach’s reputation still prevailed as the center of “Latin” music. The experience of Benny Velarde, a Panamanian raised in San Francisco since he was a young teen, supports the importance of the North Beach scene over the course of the 1950s. Velarde played bongos with the Alonzo Palio Quartet at the Jai Alai Club in North Beach in the early 1950s, then joined Cal Tjader at the Macumba Club in Chinatown, and in the late 1950s or early ‘60s, Velarde formed his own band and played four nights a week at the Copacabana Club on Broadway for nearly a decade. Velarde’s experience is an interesting counterpart to Peraza’s, since the majority of Velarde’s venues had a more patently “Latin” orientation.⁹⁰

The Broadway club scene served as an important presence in developing the West Coast Latin music scene, though it represented a steadily “disappearing” population. As the popularity of the clubs and cafes popularized the area, it became increasingly unaffordable for its oldest residents. However, in giving a location for musicians to come

⁸⁹ Fernandez, *Latin Jazz*, 68. Varela and Yanow put Peraza in San Francisco in 1950-51: Varela, “Sonaremó el Tambo”; Yanow, *Afro-Cuban Jazz*.

⁹⁰ “Benny Velarde: Bay Area Latin Jazz Master,” <http://www.salsacrazy.com/salsaroots/bennyvelarde.htm>, accessed on July 4, 2005. According to Jesse Varela, Velarde played at the Copacabana from 1960-1969, where he also booked a number of high profile entertainers, including Tito Puente, Tito Rodriguez, and Charlie Palmieri: Varela, “Viva Velarde.” However, Velarde also played with his group The Panamanians in the early 1950s at the California Hotel in Oakland, “which catered to a largely African American clientele.” Varela, “Desde la Bahia,” *Latin Beat Magazine*, November 2003, http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FXV/is_9_13/ai_111401984, accessed on July 6, 2005. According to John Storm Roberts, Tjader played for six months at the Macumba Club, *Latin Jazz: The First of the Fusions, 1880s to Today* (New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1999), 97. The club inspired Tjader’s “Mambo Macumba.”

together and jam, the scene bubbled with creative energy and gave strong roots for the music that followed.

Across the nation, Latin music drew life from the 1950s mambo dance craze. Musicologist John Storm Roberts has stated, “The great era of the New York mambo can be said to date from 1952, when the Palladium Dance Hall switched to an all-mambo policy featuring the big bands of Puente, Rodriguez, and Machito.” San Francisco proved no exception to the nation’s love of mambo, as indicated by the popularity of a Pérez Prado concert, which drew 3,500 people in 1951 [Fig. 1.6].⁹¹ Prado’s release of “Que Rico El Mambo” and “Mambo No. 5,” in 1949 helped him earn the title, “King of Mambo.” The dance craze, a follow up to the rumba of the 1930s and the samba and conga of the 1940s, firmly established Latin music in popular culture, and by 1954, “the mambo’s audience was the entire country.”⁹² For Conga player Peraza, the impact was highly visible. “All these people from the Arthur Murray Studios used to come out and dance to our music. We also had stars like Rita Hayworth, Ricardo Montalbán and José Ferrer from Hollywood who would stop by.”⁹³ The liveliness of the scene attracted audiences and musicians alike and contributed to the creative energy.

⁹¹ Roberts, *Latin Tinge*, 127-128. Raúl Fernandez reproduced a poster for Pérez Prado playing the San Francisco Civic Auditorium in his book *Latin Jazz*, 59, which may be for the event Roberts described, though Fernandez did not supply the year. Fernandez also discusses the “mambo mania.”

⁹² *Ibid*, 130. Sandoval-Sanchez, *José, Can You See?* 31.

⁹³ Varela, “Sonaremo el Tambo.”

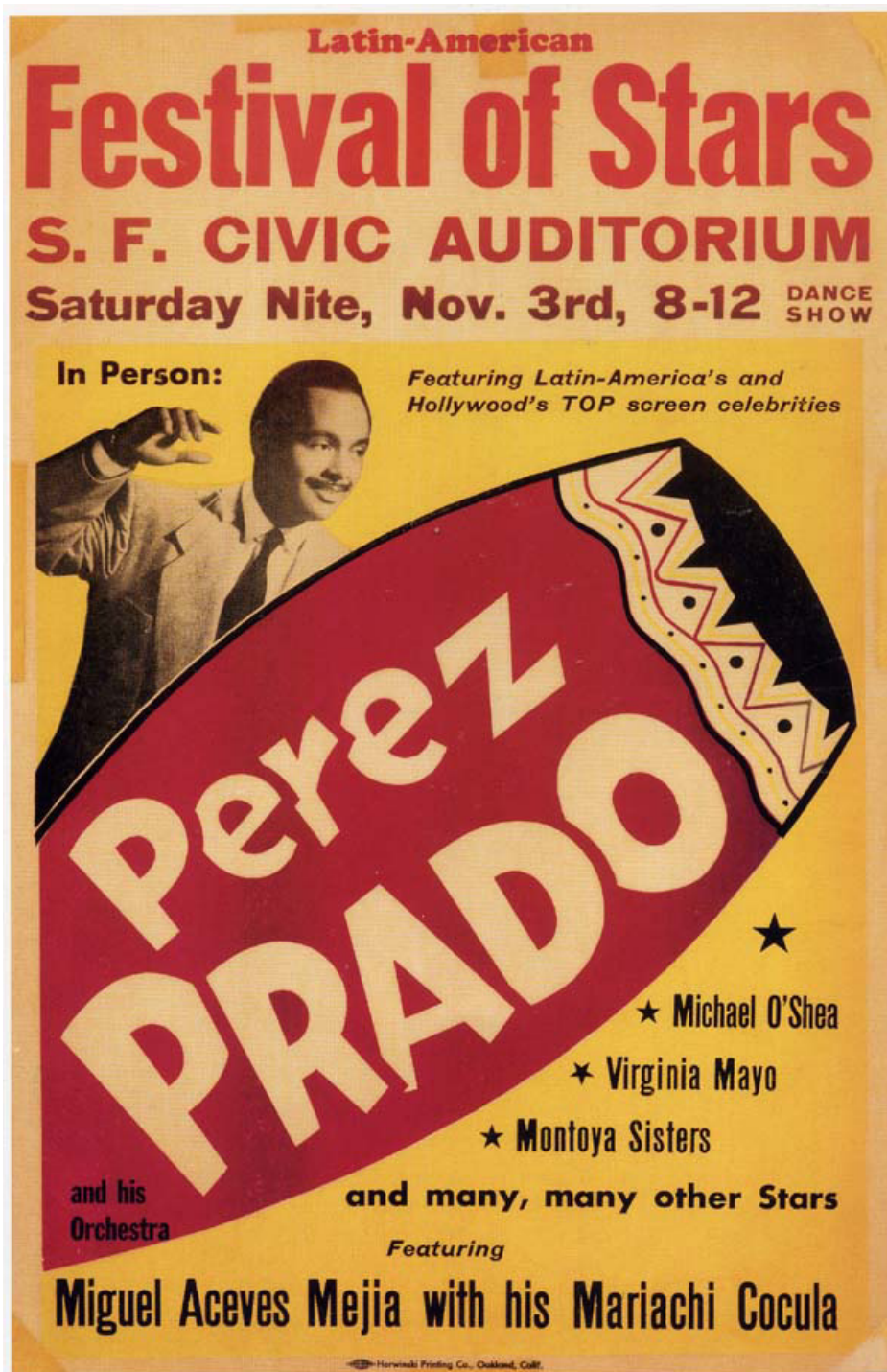


Fig. 1.6: Perez Prado and his orchestra poster, c. 1951. Image from Fernández, *Latin Jazz*, 59.

Just as New York musicians Mario Bauza, Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodriguez were producing a radical new mix of Latin sounds all along the East Coast, reflective of their own global transmigrations, a similar fusion was occurring along the West Coast.⁹⁴ Latin music in San Francisco started transmitting its own “West Coast” sound. According to Roberts, “one of the major developments of the 1960s, in fact, was the emergence of California as a most important crossover center. Herb Alpert was *sui generis*, but in jazz Cal Tjader and in rock Carlos Santana were only the best known of a floating group of musicians who were together to make San Francisco the focus of a further blending of rock, jazz, black, and Latin elements during the 1970s.”⁹⁵ Though Santana and Malo put California’s Latin sound on the music map in the 1970s, the roots for this evolution were firmly planted before the 1960s.

Instrumental in this regard was Cal Tjader, a Swedish American musician raised in the Bay Area by vaudevillian parents. Tjader had studied jazz as a teen, later worked with Dave Brubeck, and found his entrée into Latin music when he began working with British pianist George Shearing. Both Shearing and Tjader described their encounters with Latin musicians in New York as inspirational.⁹⁶ Shearing’s appreciation of the Latin

⁹⁴ Many more sources detail the East Coast music scene, with the Palladium Ballroom, which opened in 1942, as the heart of a new American rhythm. See, Max Salazar, *Mambo Kingdom: Latin Music in New York* (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2002); John Storm Roberts, *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States* (1979; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Frances R. Aparicio, Candida Jaquez, with Maria Elena Cepeda, editors, *Musical Migrations: Transnationalism and Cultural Hybridity in Latin/o America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Leonardo Padura Fuentes, *Faces of Salsa: A Spoken History of the Music*, trans. by Stephen J. Clark (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003); Ed Morales, *The Latin Beat: The Rhythms and Roots of Latin Music from Bossa Nova To Salsa and Beyond* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2003). Useful sources for the West Coast include: Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Fernandez, *Latin Jazz*.

⁹⁵ Roberts, *Latin Tinge*, 184.

⁹⁶ Roberts, *Latin Jazz*, 80, 97.

sound in New York led him to form a quintet with Tjader on the vibraphone, and backed by legendary percussionists Willie Bobo on timbales, Mongo Santamaría on conga, and Armando Peraza on the bongo. The Shearing quintet of 1954-55 is widely regarded as the launching pad for West Coast Latin Jazz.⁹⁷ Loosely defined, West Coast Latin Jazz was a product of smaller combos playing jazz standards with Latin percussion and syncopation.⁹⁸

The emphasis on percussion in West Coast Latin jazz was indicative of life in San Francisco at that time. Members of the “Beat generation” had taken to playing congas and bongos in the city streets.⁹⁹ Musicians such as Armando Peraza, Mongo Santamaría, Willie Bobo, and Francisco Aguabella showed how it was done, though literature on the period has yet to call these Latino musicians “Beats.” In fact, Beat literature, with little exception, has failed to connect the “Latin” identities and personalities of North Beach with Beat culture, in spite of the bohemian area’s instrumental role in cultivating that culture.¹⁰⁰

The creative energy in the clubs and on the streets gave San Francisco a higher profile in the world. Frequent tours led musicians to share their San Francisco sound

⁹⁷ Morales, *Latin Beat*, 58, 175; Fernandez, *Latin Jazz*, 76, 78; Roberts, *Latin Tinge*, 143, 200; Scott Yanow, *Afro-Cuban Jazz*, 139; Gioia, *West Coast Jazz*, 100-104.

⁹⁸ “Benny Velarde.”

⁹⁹ Fernandez, *Latin Jazz*, 75.

¹⁰⁰ This lack of inclusion will be discussed in the next chapter. However, scholarship has connected Beats with Mexican culture in terms of travels to Mexico and/or interactions with Mexican women. As Manuel Luis Martinez writes, “The Beats appropriate (some more cynically than others) the figure of the Mexican and the African American because the ethnic subaltern represents a liminality,” *Countering the Counterculture: Rereading Postwar American Dissent from Jack Kerouac to Tomás Rivera* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 28. Also see Campbell’s “Beat Mexico” and John Lardas, *The Bop Apocalypse: The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 180-185: “During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Mexico held a special place in the

around the world, as well as bring new influences to the city. Similarly, Beat writers and artists recast San Francisco as a bohemian city and desirable destination for anyone who felt on the fringe of the mainstream. The city's reputation acted as a magnet for creative people of all backgrounds. Many of these newcomers and home grown artists would prove quite forceful in shaping the "travel around the world" cultures of the city in the years to come.

'LISTENING OUTSIDE': A NEW GENERATION TAKING HEED AND TAKING ROOT

The reputation of North Beach as a center for Latin music was still strong in the late 1960s, but not for long. Around that time, John Santos, later to become a famous musician and music scholar, recalled "I used to stand outside Andre's on Broadway and other North Beach clubs. I was too young to get in! To hear [Luis Gasca] and other great groups in that era."¹⁰¹ Arguably, listening at the door was part of Santos' musical education.

However, new economic and social pressures were changing the dynamics of the North Beach community. In part, the nightclub era was coming to an end, at least in its traditional format. Television encouraged people to stay at home, so entertainment-based

Beats' imagination. It was a place for introspection and decadence, where myth and reality converged in stifling heat and the haze of marijuana smoke" (180).

¹⁰¹ John Santos, "Salsa and Latin Jazz: A Native Son's Perspective," http://www.jazzwest.com/archive/articles/archives/santos_1.html, accessed on July 5, 2005. Of Gasca, Fernandez writes, "During his career, Chicano trumpeter Luis Gasca played Latin jazz with Cal Tjader and Mongo Santamaría, straight-ahead jazz with noted bandleader and vibraphonist Lionel Hapton, Cuban music for Pérez Prado's mambo orchestra, and rock and roll for Van Morrison and Janice Joplin. He was also one of the founders of the Latin rock group MALO and is credited with introducing Carlos Santana to jazz, making Gasca an important figure in Chicano musical history." *Latin Jazz*, 110.

businesses had to think of new ways to attract audiences.¹⁰² In North Beach, the approach was to turn the area into a “Red Light District.” Steadily, a sea of topless clubs and nude dance shows displaced the dinner clubs of the past.¹⁰³

By the 1970s, the Mission District served as the primary point of relocation for much of the North Beach Latin music scene. A case in point was Cesar’s Latin Palace. Local music impresario Cesar Ascarrunz, a native of Bolivia, had adapted quickly to the Bay Area scene. Ascarrunz toured his “Los Locos del Ritmo,” all around the Bay Area in the early 1960s, playing at Zack’s in Sausalito, Lucky Pierre’s on Broadway, and at the Circulo Pan-Americano in the Mission District. According to “Los Locos” congas player Dennis “Califa” Reed, the band never rehearsed, just improvised out of a shared knowledge of Latin music, much of which included the tunes of New York musicians.¹⁰⁴ “Los Locos” was a springboard for the savvy entrepreneur, who was to become an important figure in San Francisco’s Latin music scene. After briefly forming another band at El Cid, Ascarrunz created his own nightclub, Cesar’s Latin Palace, in North Beach. However, Cesar’s was not destined to stay in North Beach, and its move to the Mission District in the late 1970s was an affirmation of the demographic and cultural shift that had transpired in these two neighborhoods.

Without fanfare, the term “Latin Quarter” disappeared from contemporary use. North Beach, the neighborhood that Leonard Austin once called the Mexican quarter,

¹⁰² Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

¹⁰³ On a historical plaque, San Francisco designated June 19, 1964 as the launch date for the Red Light district – the day that Carol Doda threw off her bra in the Condor Club (without pasties!). Harry F. Waters with Mark Starr, Richard Sandza, and Tony Clifton, “The Squeeze on Sleeze,” *Newsweek*, February 1, 1988.

garnered an entirely Italian American identity through tourism. As Nancy Peters notes, “the North Beach Chamber of Commerce modified its logo [from just ‘Little Italy’] to ‘Little Italy and the Home of the Beat Generation. ... [but] a steady exodus of Italians from North Beach to the Marina, the Mission, and the Excelsior has been going on since the 1906 earthquake, making ‘Little Italy’ a misnomer today.”¹⁰⁵ In the most recent past, North Beach’s reputation has stood somewhere amidst its Italian American heritage, its Beat counterculture bohemianism, and its Red Light District appeal. Rarely have these popular depictions incorporated the Latin Quarter history.

Simultaneously, however, the Mission District had transitioned to become the principal site of Latino settlement in San Francisco. Latin music was not new to the Mission District, although the settings historically reflected a more intimate, familial atmosphere than the North Beach clubs. El Club Puertorriqueño, where John Santos’s grandfather Julio Rivera used to play, was established at Mission and Valencia in 1912. In addition, Latin dances were held at multi-use venues, such as the Polish Hall and St. Peter’s Church.¹⁰⁶ Mariachi Don José Santana, the father of Carlos Santana, came with his family from Mexico in the early 1960s and found work downtown at the Sinaloa Club and in the Mission at the Mariachi Club and the Centro Social Obrero, a labor hiring hall

¹⁰⁴ Dennis Reed has documented his experience with “Los Locos del Ritmo” in a website, accessed on November 19, 2004: <http://www.dmreed.com/1960s.htm>

¹⁰⁵ Peters, “The Beat Generation and San Francisco’s Culture of Dissent,” 211. North Beach is barely holding on to its Italian American identity. *Sunset Magazine* states, “The Italian imprint is still immediately apparent in the old-time family businesses that line the streets, though these too are now disappearing. Faced with stiff rent increases, many long-established shops are being forced to close.” Peter Christensen, “There’s Still Some Italy Left in North Beach,” *Sunset*, November 1986, 12-16 (12)

¹⁰⁶ John Santos, “Salsa and Latin Jazz.”

and dance hall.¹⁰⁷ Both John Santos and artist Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de González separately remember dance parties at their family homes in the Mission in the 1950s and ‘60s. According to Galaviz de González, “It was like a little nightclub in the house, downstairs in the basement ... it was a total dress-up – high heels, flippy skirts, mambo, cha-cha-cha, drinking our own mambo club.”¹⁰⁸ Though the music scene in the Mission existed on a smaller scale than in North Beach, change was at hand. Thus, Pete Gallergos states that “on any given Saturday night you could walk within a ten-block distance and hear any Latin [music] you wanted during the late sixties and early seventies.”¹⁰⁹ Places such as Club Elegante, El Señorial, and El Tenampa added to the Latinization of the Mission.

Perhaps the most impressive addition to the Mission District music scene was the relocation of Fantasy Records. Founded downtown in 1949 as Circle Records, Fantasy was originally a small record press geared toward engineering improvements in the manufacturing of plastic. However, with its release of the first Dave Brubeck albums, the newly christened “Fantasy Records” label emerged as one of the premiere jazz recording studios on the West Coast.¹¹⁰ Jazz scholar Ted Gioia goes so far as to say, “if San Francisco could ever lay claim to a truly indigenous jazz style, it sprang from the *sui generis* modernism fostered by the Blackhawk and Fantasy Records.”¹¹¹ By the early

¹⁰⁷ Jim McCarthy, with Ron Sansoe, *Voices of Latin Rock: The People and Events that Created this Sound* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2004), 28.

¹⁰⁸ Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de González, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 5, 2003.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in, McCarthy, *Voices of Latin Rock*, 50.

¹¹⁰ Al Young, “Behind the Fantasy Label.” *California Living: The Magazine of the San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, June 29, 1975. Also see, Gioia, *West Coast Jazz*, 63-65.

¹¹¹ Gioia, *West Coast Jazz*, 65.

1960s, Fantasy Records had moved to the Mission District (855 Treat Avenue, between 21st and 22nd Streets), perhaps to take advantage of lower rents.

The recording tastes of Fantasy Records were geared to the eclectic, perhaps in part a product of its history as a custom press for a vast array of music, including Chinese, Hawaiian, and Dixieland sounds. Founders and brothers Max and Sol Weiss poked fun at their success. In 1956, Max declared, “We have the golden touch. Our *Jazz at the Black Hawk* LP, in which we conscientiously tried to pick the worst Brubeck sides possible, has outsold anything we have this year. Cal Tjader is selling thousands of LPs a month even though we recorded him only because we knew the mambo craze was over.”¹¹² Regardless of the Weiss’ business savvy, Fantasy Records was “The” recording studio for jazz and Latin jazz artists in the Bay Area. As Fantasy Records made its home in the Mission, it made the neighborhood familiar to its musicians, and it introduced local residents to its imaginative sounds.

Poet Juan Felipe Herrera, in a way akin to John Santos standing outside the North Beach clubs, remembers standing outside Fantasy Records and listening to the rehearsals of legendary musicians playing just steps away from his home.¹¹³ Echoing into the streets of the Mission was the music of Mongo Santamaría, Francisco Aguabella, Willie Bobo, Ray Barretto, Pete and Sheila Escovedo, and Cal Tjader, amongst a vast collection

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ I owe this recollection to Juana Alicia, who allowed me to record her class, “Art History of La Raza,” at San Francisco State University on October 21, 2002. Arguably, the experience contributed to the rhythms one encounters in Herrera’s poetry. Juana Alicia later did a mural on the 855 Treat Avenue building in its reincarnation as the home of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Among the various images, her mural paid homage to the former presence of Fantasy Records, now located in the East Bay.

of jazz greats.¹¹⁴ Their musical stylings set the stage for the evolution of strong Afro-Cuban rhythms in the Bay Area, both amongst themselves, and for the next generation that stood listening outside, ready to launch its own arts revolution.

CONCLUSION

In the late 1960s, the Mission District served as center stage for the “Latin rock explosion.” Patricia Rodriguez recalls, “In every corner in the Mission in the seventies Santana was playing, Malo was playing, whoever was playing in the street.”¹¹⁵ Bands such as Santana, Malo, Azteca, and Sapo sounded the spirit of Latino arts and activism through their music. Jim McCarthy declares, “The blending of cultures that characterized the Mission district and the highly charged political consciousness and activism of the late 1960s and early ‘70s established a robust platform upon which the music known as Latin rock was launched.”¹¹⁶ As a place, the Mission not only shaped the sound of Latin rock, but also served as the site of engagement. The music flowed into the streets and beckoned the attention of a wider audience. In the context of the national civil rights

¹¹⁴ Scott Yanow provides overviews of some of the recordings done for Fantasy Records in his book, *Afro-Cuban Jazz: The Third Ear – The Essential Listening Companion* (San Francisco, CA: Miller Freeman Books, 2000). The little studio continued to prove it was a major player in its jazz recordings of Gerry Mulligan, Chet Baker, and Cal Tjader, as well as in other genres of gospel, blues, and poetry: additional artists included Odetta, Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Allen Ginsberg, and comedian Lenny Bruce. Fantasy Inc. provides a helpful chronology of its music acquisitions on its website, <http://www.fantasyjazz.com/html/about.html>, accessed on November 28, 2004. In 1967, music executive Saul Zaentz engineered a buyout of the Weiss brothers, and in 1968, he hit gold with the success of its Creedence Clearwater Revival recordings. The company’s mission to expand its catalogues continuously led to its acquisitions of an impressive archive of jazz, soul, gospel, and rhythm and blues recordings. See Gioia, *West Coast Jazz*, 62. The company later moved to the East Bay, but was an integral component of the (Latin) music scene in San Francisco, and in the Bay Area as a whole.

¹¹⁵ Patricia Rodriguez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 27, 2003.

movement, the music served as a rallying cry for action and an emblem of a shared, local, pan-Latino culture.

While Latin rock delivered an undeniably new sound, fusing rock, jazz, soul, and Latin music, it did not emerge from thin air. The many Latin nightclubs in the city, especially in the Latin Quarter, served as pivotal sites for generating Latin music and creating a Latino community in the city. The musicians integrated the new sounds of their cosmopolitan experience. The uniqueness of the sound, both in the Latin Quarter and in the Mission, reflected the confluence of cultures in the city. Thus, McCarthy notes, “the music coming out of the Mission was as relevant in conveying a regional attitude to the rest of the world as were the Merseybeat bands that shaped the Liverpool sound, the psychedelic music of San Francisco’s Haight Ashbury, or the soul music of Detroit’s Motown records.”¹¹⁷

However, the spaces for playing music also incorporated a long history of segregation. The nightlife in the Latin Quarter was framed as another, fantastical world apart from mainstream American life. The staging of this tropicalized world blanketed over the displacement of Latino people. The easy physical displacement and subsequent cultural displacement of Latinos from the area was emblematic of their disenfranchisement. The closure of Latin Quarter nightclubs, or their transition to new formats, cast the final shroud over the history of Latinos in the area.

As the Mission District grew much larger than the Latin Quarter, both in scale and in reputation, its largesse as the Latino barrio of San Francisco also turned attention away

¹¹⁶ McCarthy, *Voices of Latin Rock*, 4.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 5.

from the presence of Latino communities in other areas of the city, particularly prior to the 1960s. Grounding these earlier communities is critical in recognizing the long history of Latinos in San Francisco and in understanding the haunting lack of stability.

Chapter Two

Freedom in the Beats: Latino Artists and the 1950s Counterculture

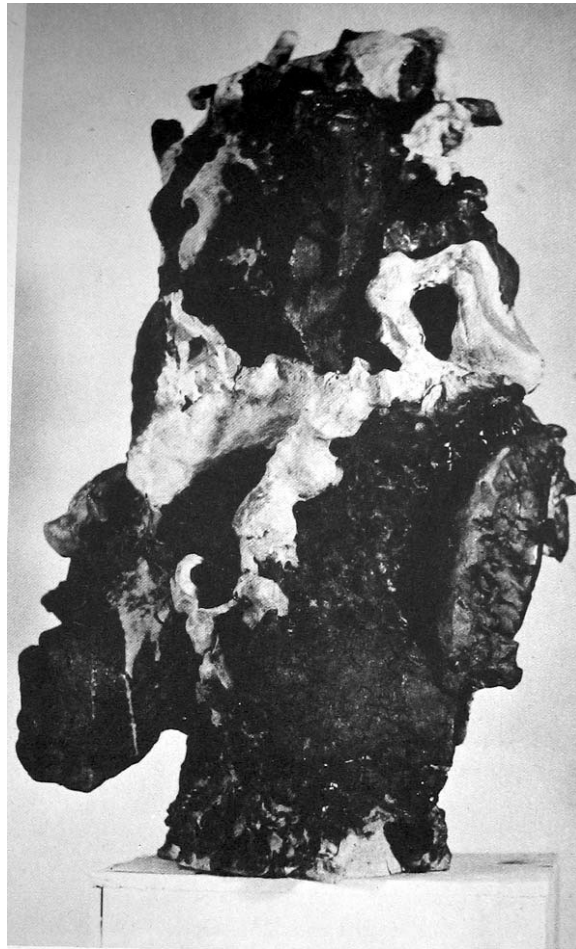


Fig. 2.1: Luis Cervantes, "Fired Clay," c. 1962.
Image from *Artforum* I:5, 43, October 1962.

Luis Cervantes, a Mexican American veteran of World War II, studied art part-time at San Francisco State and the College of Marin, while working full-time as a mattress upholster.¹¹⁸ When sculptor and teacher Seymour Lock asked Cervantes to help hang a show at the San Francisco Art Institute, he opened a new world to Cervantes: “I hadn’t heard of the Art Institute. And when I walked into that place and walked around the campus, I said, ‘this is the place I want to go.’ And the reason why was the sense of freedom, of liberation.”¹¹⁹

Cervantes quickly adapted to the spirit of his new school. Fellow artist Ernie Palomino witnessed the expression of some of Cervantes’s new-found freedom with dismay: “he had a whole show of ceramic pieces in San Francisco in a gallery [similar to Fig. 2.1], and one of his pieces fell to the floor and broke into a million pieces. Then after that he started throwing his pieces around the room and breaking all of them ... people in there didn’t know what to think about the whole thing that was taking place ... I didn’t know what to think. I just was shocked...”¹²⁰ While Cervantes shocked his friend, his willingness to destroy his art echoed the avant-garde Destructivism of the period, a movement to test the definition of art and trouble traditional norms. The act of breaking or destroying art was a way of rejecting commodification and turning art work into a performance or “happening.”¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Luis Cervantes worked for the McRoskey Airflex Mattress Company until 1992, when he retired. Cicero A. Estrella, “Luis Cervantes – muralist who inspired generations of artists,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 2, 2005, B3.

¹¹⁹ Luis Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, April 2, 2003.

¹²⁰ Ernie Palomino, interview, Fresno, CA, October 8, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #146-150, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 5, 13, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

¹²¹ According to Thomas Albright, participants at the Six Gallery, after a 1957 reading by Ginsberg and Kerouac, “destroyed a piano and many of the art works on display.” The action also mimicked the

As Luis Cervantes' story demonstrates, Latino artists and musicians in 1950s San Francisco were not necessarily seeking to become part of a pan-Latino arts community, but part of the avant-garde milieu of the Bay Area. An important facet of arts activity in San Francisco over the course of the late 1940s and through the early 1960s was the evolving construction of a counterculture bohemianism, perhaps most notably embodied in "Beat" and jazz cultures. The term "Beat" was multi-dimensional in meaning, evoking the beaten or alienated spirit of a nuclear age, but also linked to bebop rhythms in jazz and the spiritually-inspired "beatific."¹²² While some responded affirmatively to the "Beat" or "beatnik" label, others objected strongly, even if they were deeply entrenched in the scene. Nancy Peters describes how poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti "never considered himself a beat writer," but "saw the group as part of a larger, international, dissident ferment."¹²³ For San Francisco art critic Thomas Albright, "The art that grew from this ferment did not form a coherent or even incoherent 'school' or 'style' ... what these artists shared was a loose constellation of attitudes and ideas – almost just a mood...."¹²⁴

increasing spontaneity of jazz. Thomas Albright, "The California School of Fine Arts, c. 1945-1960," in *Reflections: Alumni Exhibitions, San Francisco Art Institute, January 1981* (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute Alumni Association, 1982), 22. In addition, Raphael "Ralph" Ortiz (1934-), a Mexican American avant-garde artist in New York, gained fame for his performances in the Destructive arts movement, particularly for his "Piano Destruction Concert" televised on the BBC, ABC, and NBC, in 1966. In 1969, he founded El Museo del Barrio: Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 99-101; Michael Kimmelman, "The Return of the Well-Trampled Clavier," *The New York Times*, January 3, 1997, B30.

¹²² Steven Watson provides the etymology of the term "beat" in *The Birth of the Beat Generation: Visionaries, Rebels, and Hipsters, 1944-1960* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995), 3-4. The scholarship on the Beats is massive. The following are a few useful texts on the subject: Ann Charters, *Beat Down To Your Soul: What Was the Beat Generation?*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2001); Michael Davidson, *The San Francisco Renaissance: Poetics and Community at Mid-Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and the exhibit catalogue, Lisa Phillips, *Beat Culture and the New America, 1950-1965* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1995).

¹²³ Nancy J. Peters, "The Beat Generation and San Francisco's Culture of Dissent," in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, eds., James Brook, Chris Carlsson, and Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 212.

¹²⁴ Albright, *Reflections*, 21.

Not everyone agreed on the adequacy of the term, but “Beat” still was useful in reflecting the spirited arts movement evolving in the city.

In this chapter, I argue for the importance of a “Beat” or bohemian culture in stimulating the creative interests of many Latinos in San Francisco, in spite of their marginalized position as participants. The popular images of North Beach cafes and nightlife attracted many hopeful Latino writers, musicians, radicals, and visual artists, although their ability to integrate fully into the scene was limited. As Chon Noriega states, “The connection between the Beat and Chicano art movements, one that can still be heard, for example, in any poem by José Montoya ... never made it into the history books, as scholars of each movement articulated self-contained and *sui generis* borders.”¹²⁵ The failure to read the cross-over has been evidence of a form of academic segregation and myopia. Noriega attributes part of the failure to the overpowering impact of later history. He states that by the mid-1960s, “Chicano writers would reject Beat disengagement and postwar avant-garde aesthetics in favor of the Chicano civil rights movement and an aesthetics rooted in cultural nationalism.”¹²⁶ The narrowness of both Beat and Chicano Movement histories has contributed to the absence of Latinos in 1950s American (art) history.

¹²⁵ Chon Noriega, “From Beats to Borders: An Alternative History of Chicano Art in California,” in *Reading California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900-2000*, eds., Stephanie Barron, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene Susan Fort, Exhibition Catalogue, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 355; Also see, Noriega, “Why Chicanos Could Not Be Beat,” *Aztlán* 24 (2), Fall 1999, 1-11. The position of Latinos in and outside the Beat movement is a thread that scholars are only beginning to address. Also helpful are: A. Robert Lee, “Chicanismo’s Beat Outrider? The Texts and Contexts of Oscar Zeta Acosta,” in *The Beat Generation: Critical Essays*, ed., Kostas Myrsiades (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 263; and, Manuel Luis Martinez, *Countering the Counterculture: Rereading Postwar American Dissent from Jack Kerouac to Tomás Rivera* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

Even so, the 1950s, particularly with the influx of veterans into the city, was a profound moment of desegregation within the life and arts of the city. Veterans of color, conscious of their abilities and determined not to be belittled after having served their country, ventured into the city with a new confidence. Susan Landauer cites 1953 as a significant year for the city's prestigious California School of Fine Arts (renamed the San Francisco Art Institute in 1961): "The Korean War brought a second wave of veterans in 1953, when the institution was accredited, and in 1956, with the appointment of Gordon Woods as director, the school experienced something of a renaissance."¹²⁷ Mexican American veterans, such as Luis Cervantes, José Ramón Lerma, and Ernie Palomino, turned to the school to pursue their desire to be artists. Their academic training centered on the dominant aesthetic of the time: abstract art and Bay Area figurative abstraction.¹²⁸

This chapter subsequently focuses on the stories of Luis Cervantes (1923-2005), José Ramón Lerma (1930-), and Ernie Palomino (1933-) to show how the influx of World War II and Korean veterans was a critical, if male-dominated, force in initiating the desegregation of San Francisco's art institutions, particularly at the California School of Fine Arts. As Mexican American abstract artists, however, they never quite fit the Anglo-centric expectations of the art world and Beat culture, or the political interests of the Chicano movement. Their desire to be artists was instrumental in opening doors to art institutions, yet gradually, in the context of the Chicano and Third World movement,

¹²⁷ Susan Landauer, *The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), 124; Albright writes, "The GI Bill brought in a new breed of students, mostly men in their middle or later twenties, of a maturity—sometimes hardened by experiences in the war—that was largely without precedent among such a large number of art students," in *Reflections*, 14.

¹²⁸ For more on the figurative art movement, see: Caroline A. Jones, *Bay Area Figurative Art: 1950-1965* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990). Numerous monographs on Richard Diebenkorn,

these institutions became the hallmark of colonialist elitism and avant-garde euro-centrism. Though these artists were breaking new ground and tangentially integrating into the Beat culture of the city, their efforts as Mexican American artists tend to be overlooked because they received little institutional support at the time, because their paintings evoked an alienating elitism for the next generation, and because they subsequently seemed more assimilative than revolutionary. This chapter documents the experiences of these and other Latino artists in and outside the San Francisco avant-garde, and in and outside the Chicano movement, as a way of reckoning with the historical categories that have shaped their art and lives.

'BEAT MIGRATIONS': LOOKING FOR COMMUNITY IN THE COUNTERCULTURE

Though the Beats gave visibility to San Francisco's counterculture scene, they were not single-handedly responsible for its growth. As Landauer notes, "The best-known figures, Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, were an after-fact for most West Coast artists."¹²⁹ San Francisco already had a reputation as a place where "anything goes," beginning as far back as the Gold-Rush era of the 1850s, with the rise of the ill-reputed Barbary Coast district. Over the course of the first half of the twentieth century, the city

Elmer Bischoff, Manuel Neri, Nathan Oliveira, Theophilus Brown, Joan Brown, etc., also illuminate this important Bay Area movement.

¹²⁹ Susan Landauer, "Beat Assemblage," speech written for the Natsoulas Conference, in Jack Foley, "Live at the Natsoulas Gallery, Davis, CA," *The Alsop Review*, October 10, 2003, <http://www.alsopreview.com/foley/natsoulas.html>, accessed on November 20, 2004.

steadily earned a reputation for tolerance of the queer, the avant-garde, and the transgressive.¹³⁰ Many soldiers stayed in the city after World War II because it served as a more liberated space to pursue gay relationships, unlike their places of origin.¹³¹ Its history as a strong town for union labor also drew people sympathetic to working class struggles.¹³² Popular representations of a bohemian San Francisco inspired the migrations of many liberal-minded people from various cultural backgrounds over an extended period of time. Like many other cities, San Francisco was not free of racism and homophobia – the history of segregated spaces and police raids of gay bars testify to this – but at the same time, the city cultivated an image of tolerance, creative energy, and physical beauty, which, along with employment opportunities, drew people to the place.

The popular culture of the 1950s heightened San Francisco's bohemian reputation. A variety of films and books on Beat culture put a spotlight on San Francisco as an ideal location to connect with the counterculture. In fact, Hollywood quickly co-opted the lifestyle of the Beats for mass consumption, turning the Beats into misguided

¹³⁰ Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 25-29.

¹³¹ Alan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Plume, 1991). Susan Stryker and Jim Van Buskirk, *Gay By the Bay: A History of Queer Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996); Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 2003, includes a chapter on José Sarria.

¹³² Between 1953 and 1966, San Francisco lost 9,000 manufacturing jobs, or fourteen percent of the total. Businesses that left cited the lack of space, high rents, high taxes, and parking problems, as well as the "character of the labor force." Presumably, this last remark reflected a general antipathy among manufacturers in regards to the strength of labor organizing in the city, often framed as communist or radical. The statistic is from Marjorie Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property: The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1972), 25. Heins cites the City Planning Department's report, "San Francisco Industrial Trends," October 1968. The city's 1934 General Strike of laborers, planned in the Mission's American Federation of Labor Building, affirmed the representations of the city as a stronghold for labor unions, and likely contributed to the movement of heavy industry away from the city. For more on the "character of the labor force," see: Bruce Nelson, *Workers on the Waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930s* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988); David F. Selvin, *A Terrible Anger: The 1934 Waterfront and General Strikes in San Francisco* (Detroit, MI: Wayne

juvenile delinquents for the amusement of American middle-class audiences. Films such as *The Beat Generation* (1959), *The Beatniks* (1960), *The Subterraneans* (1960), and the television program *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis* (1959-63) ridiculed Beat culture, while they simultaneously depicted a lifestyle that attracted widespread interest.¹³³

Though simplistically stereotyped by black clothing, berets, bongos, and bad poetry, Beat culture also became a semiotic for rejecting Cold War conformity. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's declaration that America's three greatest enemies were Communists, Eggheads, and Beatniks anointed the culture with counterculture authority.¹³⁴ The popular culture depictions of non-traditional lifestyles spurred a "Beat migration" of hopeful writers, artists, musicians, poets, and gays to San Francisco, all of whom were looking for that "sense of freedom, of liberation" that Luis Cervantes felt at the San Francisco Art Institute.¹³⁵

"Beat migrants" René Yañez and Nina Serrano share similar stories of their desire to come to the Bay Area. Yañez was magnetically drawn to the scene from San Diego: "I was very attracted by the Beat thing when I was growing up – the beatniks – and I had seen some movies ... I came up one time and I loved San Francisco. At that time, North Beach was like a little village ... Italian restaurants and coffee houses, and it was very European, very hip, and I thought this is for me, and then I got drafted!"¹³⁶ After serving

State University Press, 1996). Richard Edward DeLeon, *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992).

¹³³ David Sterritt, *Mad To Be Saved: The Beats, The 50s, and Film* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998).

¹³⁴ Peters, "The Beat Generation and San Francisco's Culture of Dissent," 209.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, 210: "Press coverage finally brought young people to North Beach from all over the country; they dressed as hipsters and tried to be beats; they were followed by tourists who came to see beatniks; and finally, commodities were created to sell to both beatniks and tourists."

¹³⁶ René Yañez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 18, 2003.

in Vietnam, Yañez returned to San Francisco and played a seminal role in the Latino arts movement of the 1970s as co-curator of Galería de la Raza, but it was his desire for the Beat lifestyle that initially drew him to the city.

While beatnik films inspired Yañez's migration, it was a book that launched Nina Serrano's move from Madison, Wisconsin, to San Francisco: Jerry Stoll's 1961 coffee-table book, *I Am A Lover*.¹³⁷ The Latina theatre activist and poet stated in 2003, "Even today if you saw this book, you would love it! It's a book of gorgeous photographs of the Beat movement in San Francisco and all their cafes, and it was interspersed with gorgeous poetry... I saw pictures and poetry, and I said, 'Oh I have to have that!'"¹³⁸ The draw of the Beats was the promise of a glamorous intellectual lifestyle, living in cafes, exchanging ideas, and finding a community of artists where one could develop his or her art. Unfortunately, Serrano's fantasies were rudely awakened by the realities of North Beach in the early 1960s. In her poem, "Poets in San Francisco," she wrote, "There is a place where poets meet and love each other / Once I thought it was San Francisco / but when I got there their coffeehouses / turned into dress stores."¹³⁹ The commodification of North Beach led Serrano to turn her attention elsewhere. The result was that Serrano made her home in the Mission, where she participated in an artist community that drew inspiration from the Beats, but also from the Chicano civil rights movement and radical theatre.

¹³⁷ Jerry Stoll, *I Am a Lover* (Sausalito, CA: Angel Island Publications, 1961).

¹³⁸ Nina Serrano, interview by author, Oakland, CA, April 16, 2003.

¹³⁹ Nina Serrano, *Heartsongs: The Collected Poems of Nina Serrano, 1969-1979* (San Francisco, CA: Editorial Pocho-Che, 1980), 56.

The influence of the Beats reverberated in the writings of Bay Area Chicano writers. José Montoya, reflecting on the moment later wrote, “The Beat poets emerged about that time, and that really blew it wide open for me. And being in the Bay Area where I could see those guys. Me los apuntaban, ‘That’s Alan Ginsberg, that’s Ferlinghetti, that’s Kerouac.’ So then dije, ‘Chale with the short story.’” (rough translation for the Spanish slang: “They gave me direction,” and “so then I said to hell with the short story.”)¹⁴⁰ Subsequently, Montoya transferred his attention away from the staidness of the short story and toward the provocative rhythms of poetry. Montoya’s 1972 work, *El Sol y Los De Abajo* is laced with reverberations of the Beats, as well as powerfully influenced by the late 1960s bilingual poetry of Alurista. Similarly, poet Raul Salinas was deeply influenced by the Beats in his travels through San Francisco. Tomas Ybarra-Frausto has noted how Salinas’s early poems “show influences from two distinctly American sources: the music of jazz and the literature of the Beats.”¹⁴¹ Many Chicano poets embraced the stylistics of Beat writers, easily re-appropriating the bongo rhythms of Afro-Cuban jazz that had inspired the Beat writers and translating them into new bilingual forms.

The Beat movement facilitated the ability to express a shared alienation for the expanding youth culture of the 1950s, both nationally and internationally. According to artist Rupert Garcia, “I think I started really thinking about existentialism probably when the beatniks were out . . . It was kind of like floating around, that sense of alienation and

¹⁴⁰ José Montoya, “Russian Cowboys, Early Berkeley and Sunstruck Critics: On Being a Chicano Writer,” *Metamorfosis*, Spring/Summer 1980, 50.

¹⁴¹ Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, introduction to Raul Salinas’ *Un Trip Through the Mind Jail Y Otras Excursions* (Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 1999).

the sense of rebelliousness ... Even in Stockton it was kind of like hovering about, and so it was kind of fashionable, in a way.”¹⁴² While scholars have linked the Beat movement to specific places, such as Greenwich Village and San Francisco, its cultural impact radiated around the nation, even reaching unlikely towns like Stockton, California. Moreover, Beats not only traveled around the world, most notably to Paris, Mexico City, and Tangiers, but their ideas cross-pollinated and reverberated with other writers, musicians, and artists on an international scale, including with Londoner playwright John Osborne, Dutch poet Simon Vinkenoog, and Russian writer Andrei Voznesensky.¹⁴³ In their ability to reflect the disheartened but still hopeful and creative spirits of an alienated youth in a nuclear age, the Beats both shaped and reflected the minds of many people coming of age after World War II.

Though Beat culture appealed to many people, the over-arching master narrative of the Beats has been dominated by the story of Anglo American males. While more recent scholarship has integrated the strong presence of African Americans, Native Americans, and women, the movement is still more commonly signified by the names Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, and Neal Cassady.¹⁴⁴ In fact, if

¹⁴² Rupert Garcia, interview by Paul J. Karlstrom, Oakland, CA, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (From here on, AAA), September and November 1995 and June 1996.

¹⁴³ Lee, “Chicanismo’s Beat Outrider?”, 263-265.

¹⁴⁴ It is important to note that Allen Ginsberg’s participation also gave prominence to a bisexual Jewish American male in Beat culture, though not entirely without conflict. On Ginsberg’s Jewishness, see Jonathan Gill, “The Promised Land Blues: Allen Ginsberg and LeRoi Jones / Amiri Baraka,” *European Contributions to American Studies* 42 (1999), 241-249. However, more broadly, white masculinity is a trope of the movement. When one opens William Lawlor’s *The Beat Generation: A Bibliographical Teaching Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998), three chapters focus individually on William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac, while the mention of anyone else is consolidated in “Other Beats,” and the overwhelming majority are Anglo American males. James Campbell’s work begins in 1944 with the “coming together of three principal characters,” Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs, in *This is the Beat Generation: New York – San Francisco – Paris* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1999), ix. However, much has changed in literature on the Beats, particularly in recognizing the dependency of the

defined in larger terms, Beat culture in 1950s San Francisco was remarkably diverse. Steve Watson points to the arbitrary borders of Beat culture in his remark, “by the strictest definition, the Beat Generation consists of only William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Neal Cassady, and Herbert Huncke, with the slightly later addition of Gregory Corso and Peter Orlovsky. By the most sweeping usage, the term includes most of the innovative poets associated with San Francisco, Black Mountain College, and New York’s downtown scene.”¹⁴⁵ Arguably, in this more sweeping definition, other genres, such as painting and music, deserve inclusion, since they also integrated and shaped the avant-garde culture.

In many ways, Beat culture emerged by emulating the outsider status of Mexican American, African American, and Filipino pachucos and zootsuits of the 1930s and ‘40s, but with the advantage of Anglo social privileges that drew attention to their alienation.¹⁴⁶ As the Beat culture attained notoriety, they also cultivated a following from the marginalized groups that had served as sources for the counterculture. The situation was a “Catch-22” for Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans, as these groups could never be full participants in a culture rooted in the privileged rebellion of white youth. While Beats actively sought to rebel and disengage from the society that

movement on African American culture: Lorenzo Thomas, “The Beats found fuel for their intensity in jazz music, experimentation with drugs, and an imitation of what they thought was a Black lifestyle.” In “‘Communicating by Horns’: Jazz and Redemption in the Poetry of the Beats and the Black Arts Movement,” *African American Review* 26 (2), June 1, 1992, 291-298. Lee also discusses the expanded dimensions of beat scholarship: Lee, “Chicanismo’s Beat Outrider?”

¹⁴⁵ Watson, *The Birth of the Beat Generation*, 5.

¹⁴⁶ As Eric Lott writes, “Zoot-suits grew in the mid-1940s into hipsters. Encouraged by the ostentatious usages of some bebop originators, black and white working-class bohemia made attitude and appetite signify opposition to routine inequity, and routine generally.” Lott adds “in the postwar cultural formation beboppers were a black intelligentsia—the other New York intellectuals—with only passing relation to a

advocated conformity, Latinos were rebelling against a society that rarely sought their inclusion.

Power and race perpetuated a physical and cultural segregation within San Francisco's bohemia that was difficult to resolve. San Francisco's expansive counterculture reflected a diverse range of participants, but people of color did not necessarily see correlations between their lives and the popular mythologies that embodied Beat culture. Neither Cervantes nor José Ramón Lerma considered themselves Beats, though others did.¹⁴⁷ Lerma saw Beats as privileged in a way that could not be reconciled with his experience: their use of heavy drugs and their leisure time to sit in cafés did not accord with his working class background. For someone like Lerma, who had grown up in a large Mexican American family of farmers in Hollister, California, his decision to pursue abstract art in San Francisco was counterculture enough.¹⁴⁸

Cervantes also felt outside the Beat milieu, but for separate reasons. Initially intrigued, Cervantes read Kierkegaard and Camus in order to understand the underriding existentialism of the movement. He felt a kinship with the Beats, evident when he described the impact of the atomic bomb: "The scions of Japanese cities evaporating before our eyes created a doom and gloom to our Beat spirits that left our ashes glowing

myopic left. *Partisan Review*'s commitment to modernism didn't extend to black music..." Eric Lott, "Double V, Double-Time: Bebop's Politics of Style," *Callaloo* 36 (Summer, 1988), 597-605 (598, 603).

¹⁴⁷ *Chicano Beat: An Interview with José Lerma*, film, dir. and interviewer Ana Montano, 1996. Various Beat shows have included Lerma's work in their exhibitions and discussions. Nathan Oliveira states, "José Lerma embodied what the 50's and the Beat Generation were about." Quoted in, "José Ramón Lerma, Paintings, Collages & Constructions, A Retrospective: 1954-2000," Exhibition pamphlet, Intersection for the Arts, June 14-July 22, 2000, 2. In an interview with the author, Luis Cervantes found art reviewer John Coplans application of the term "beatnik" condescending.

¹⁴⁸ José Ramón Lerma, interview by author, Oakland, CA, December 29, 2000.

hot.”¹⁴⁹ Gradually, however, Cervantes said he came to see himself as less concerned with angst, and more interested in the luminescence of life. He said, “I was beyond the politics of that. Although I was on the artists’ sides ...I wasn’t Beat.”¹⁵⁰ Ultimately, Cervantes’s ability simultaneously to identify with and reject Beat culture reflects a general ambivalence that many people felt.

For multiple reasons, then, the presence of Latino artists in a Beat culture milieu has failed to materialize, perhaps with good reason; calling for painters such as Cervantes and Lerma to be included in the Beat canon is not in keeping with their personal sensibilities, or the historical Anglo-centrism of Beat historiography. However, whether their position was self-imposed, socially constructed, or some confluence of both, their experiences on the margins of Beat culture are evidence of a much larger creative vanguard in the city and the nation than the strictest definitions of Beat culture convey. Both Cervantes and Lerma, and many other artists, were intellectually and aesthetically inspired by the opportunity to participate in an arts scene where one could create and break their art at whim, encounter like-minded artists, live fairly cheaply, and benefit from the local galleries and art schools.

Latino artists were drawn to the counterculture spirit of the Beats, but remained invisible in the popular culture and scholarly discussions of Beat culture. Gradually, scholarship has recognized how Beat writers appropriated the work of African American writers and musicians, but most scholarship that recognizes any participation or influence

¹⁴⁹ Luis Cervantes, note to author, 2005.

¹⁵⁰ Luis Cervantes, interview by author, April 2, 2003.

of Mexicans or Latinos is dedicated to their experiences south of the border.¹⁵¹ Any evidence of Latinos or Latino culture engaging or integrating with Beat culture within the United States has attained little notice, in spite of the importance of the North Beach, or Latin Quarter, location. This continuing blindness led Juan Felipe Herrera to demand attention in his poem, “Ferlinghetti on the North Side of San Francisco,” (c. 1980), in which he called for Ferlinghetti to start “looking south” and recognizing the new generation of writers emerging in San Francisco’s Mission District. Herrera writes to Ferlinghetti, “still no one has seen you taking your beat to the *mission*.taking your rap on alienation & your sketch pad half-full of mex landscapes.& nights ...” to the place where “one thousand fingers tear out from silent flesh & shoot red verses through the walls.flying.across grant street.unlocking the syllables of the moon.”¹⁵² The annoyed tone of the poem expresses the frustration, not just at Ferlinghetti, but at the larger American culture’s ability to pictorially romanticize Mexico, while disregarding the people shaping the Latino landscapes closer to home.

This segregation has managed to disguise any cross-pollination or cultural appropriation on both sides, in Beat culture and Latino arts, as well as more widely dismiss the participation of Latinos in the construction of American culture and identity in the 1950s. In the words of Manuel Luis Martinez, “much can be learned from

¹⁵¹ Howard Campbell, “Beat Mexico: Bohemia, Anthropology and ‘the Other,’” *Critique of Anthropology* 23 (2): 209-230 (209); John Lardas, *The Bop Apocalypse: The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 180-185: “During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Mexico held a special place in the Beats’ imagination. It was a place for introspection and decadence, where myth and reality converged in stifling heat and the haze of marijuana smoke” (180). As Manuel Luis Martinez writes, “The Beats appropriate (some more cynically than others) the figure of the Mexican and the African American because the ethnic subaltern represents a liminality,” *Countering the Counterculture*, 28.

juxtaposing the work of the Beats and their fellow-travelers with the work of postwar Mexican Americans, not merely as opposing cultural productions, but as participating equally, fully, sometimes in complicity, at other times at odds, in the production of an ‘American’ discourse.”¹⁵³ The absence of Latinos in Beat culture is part of a larger problem of “invisibility” in American culture and underscores the segregated spaces of Latinos within a national arena. While Latinos are able to “fiesta” or “siesta” in accordance with national stereotypes, they largely have been kept in the shadows of national discussions of American politics, economics, media, and art. As Ed Morales states, “Latinos are made invisible through negation.”¹⁵⁴

José Montoya, Raul Salinas, René Yañez, Francisco Camplis, Nina Serrano, Maruja Cid, Juan Felipe Herrera, José Sarría, Armando Peraza, Benny Velarde, Rupert Garcia, José Ramón Lerma, Ernie Palomino, and Luis Cervantes are just a few of the

¹⁵² Juan Felipe Herrera, “Ferlinghetti on the North Side of San Francisco Poem,” *Metamorphosis* III/IV, 1980/1981, 35.

¹⁵³ Martinez, *Countering the Counterculture*, 4. Also see José Limon, *American Encounters: Greater Mexico, the United States, and the Erotics of Culture* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998); and, Américo Paredes, *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border*, ed., Richard Bauman (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, Center for Mexican American Studies, 1993).

¹⁵⁴ Ed Morales, *Living in Spanglish: The Search for Latino Identity in America* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2002), 24-25; George J. Sanchez discusses Chicanos as the “invisible minority” in *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 225-226: “Mexicans were to be assigned a place in the mythic past of Los Angeles—one that could be relegated to a quaint section of a city destined to delight tourists and antiquarians. Real Mexicans were out of sight and increasingly out of mind.” Ilan Stavans points to the absences in the development of Latino literature: “The assumption of an ‘absent’ Latino readership is based on the belief that we, the Latino population, are mostly young, poor, and uneducated, which is almost a distortion. Although the incomes of a large number of Latinos are, sadly, under the poverty level, another important segment is rapidly emerging as newcomers to the middle class. They eat, sleep, make love, dance, vote, and read books.” *The Hispanic Condition: The Power of a People* (1995; reprint, New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2001), 233.

A variety of texts discuss the absence of Latinos in the media: Lisa Navarrete and Charles Kamasaki, *Out of the Picture: Hispanics in the Media: The State of Hispanic America, 1994* (Washington, DC: Policy Analysis Center, Office of Research Advocacy and Legislation, National Council of La Raza, 1994); *Network Brownout: The Portrayal of Latinos in Network Television News* (Washington, DC: National

writers, poets, performers, musicians, and visual artists who were inspired by the spirit of Beat culture in the city. In fact, the welcoming nonconformist spirit of San Francisco's nightlife and café culture was instrumental in acculturating and attracting people of all ethnic backgrounds. As a whole, people did not form a social movement, but the liberal culture still served as a significant force on various aspects of city life.

Though Beat scholars tend to end the movement in 1960, the ramifications of Beat culture did not stop there.¹⁵⁵ Many people of color who participated in the Beat environs continued to develop their art, but were no longer, or ever, perceived as part of, or inspired by, Beat culture. The absence perpetuates an understanding of Chicano and Latino art as only emerging alongside the civil rights movement of the late 1960s, as opposed to recognizing the long ferment of many Chicanos and Latinos seeking to become great American artists. In San Francisco, artists such as Manuel Neri, Peter Rodriguez, Jorge Castillo, Louis Gutiérrez, Ricardo Gomez, Victor Moscoso, Alex Gonzales, Juan Sandoval, Anthony Prieto, and Rolando Castellón, all contributed to the expanding arts scene of the 1950s.¹⁵⁶ Elsewhere, the experiences of artists such as

Association of Hispanic Journalists, 2003); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995).

¹⁵⁵ Watson, *The Birth of the Beat Generation*, 4: "The fad had already begun to wane by the early 1960s, and a few years later, beatniks were considered quaintly nostalgic artifacts; their moment had peaked quickly"; Peters, "The Beat Generation and San Francisco's Culture of Dissent," 211: "although a bohemian community established itself in North Beach, with coffee houses, galleries, and the City Lights Bookstore as pivot points, the brief period of close collaboration of beat writers and artists was over by 1956, when Ginsberg, Burroughs, Kerouac, and others left San Francisco, just as North Beach was moving center stage in the public mind."

¹⁵⁶ Manuel Neri, a Mexican American, was born in Sanger, California in 1930. He studied at San Francisco City College, served in Korea, then returned to study at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland and the California School of Fine Arts. Many sources discuss Neri's work. For a sampling, see: Jacinto Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists* (Austin, TX: University of Texas at Austin, 1973), 87-92; George W. Neubert, *Manuel Neri, Sculptor* (Oakland, CA: Oakland Museum, exhibition, September 21 to November 28, 1976); Jack Cowart, *Manuel Neri: Early Work, 1953-1978* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, exhibition, January 31-May 5, 1997). Peter Rodriguez was born in Stockton, California in

Raphael Ortiz in New York, Mel Casas and Alberto Mijangos in San Antonio, Mauricio Lasansky in Iowa City, and Ed Carrillo, Louis Lunetta, and Roberto Chavez in Los

1926 to Mexican parents. In the 1950s, Rodriguez was showing his work in the Central Valley (the Skylight Gallery, the Haggin Museum, and the Crocker Art Museum), San Francisco (Lucien Labaudt Gallery, Gumps Gallery, De Young Museum, and the California Legion of Honor), and Guadalajara, Mexico (Museo del Estado). See, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, et al., *A Life in Color: The Art of Peter Rodriguez, A Fifty Year Retrospective Exhibition* (Stockton, CA: The Haggin Museum, Exhibition, November 15, 1992-January 24, 1993); Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 75-78; and, Thomas Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area: 1945-1980, an Illustrated History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985). Louis Gutiérrez, also Mexican American, was born in Pittsburgh, California in 1933. One reviewer described Gutiérrez's work as "elegant collages in blacks, purples and greys, pitted and scraped but glossy, as if they had been rubbed smooth through ancient generations." Both Gutiérrez and Jorge Castillo showed at the Fredric Hobbs Gallery in the Marina / Cow Hollow corridor. *Artforum* I:1 June 1962, 4; *Artforum* I:7, December 1962, 46; *Artforum* I:12, June 1963, 50; and, Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 92-96. Jorge Castillo was born in Spain, raised mostly in Argentina, and later became a resident of New York. Ricardo Gomez (1942-) studied at the San Francisco Art Institute in the early 1960s. *Artforum* II:2, August 1963, 22. Victor Moscoso was born in Spain, came to San Francisco in 1959, made his home near North Beach, and shortly thereafter attended the Art Institute. In the late 1960s, he found his calling with Rock and Roll posters and comic book art. See *Artforum* I:9, March 1963, 15; Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 171-172 and 300; and "Victor Moscoso Biography": http://americanart.si.edu/search/artist_bio.cfm?StartRow=1&ID=18206, accessed on July 26, 2005. Alex Gonzales was born in Superior, Arizona in 1927 and studied at the San Francisco Art Institute, Oakland's College of Arts and Crafts, and at San Francisco State University. He moved to Monterey, California in 1962, where he joined the Carmel Art Association. "Alex Gonzales biography," submitted by Gary Stanley from the Carmel Art Association Archives, <http://www.askart.com/biography.asp?ID=110281>, accessed on July 27, 2005. According to Harriette von Breton, "it is said that Mark Tobey has selected Gonzales as one of the most creative artists of the Monterey Peninsula." *Artforum* I:8, February 1963, 44. Also see, *Artforum* II:5, November 1963, 51; and, *Artforum* I:11, May 1963, 16. Little published information exists on Juan Sandoval. Originally from New Mexico, he received an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1962. See, *The Spatsa Gallery*, 27; and, "Juan Sandoval Biography from David J. Carlson of the Carlson Gallery, <http://www.askart.com/biography.asp?ID=127519>, accessed on July 27, 2005. Anthony Prieto (1913-1967) came to San Francisco from Spain in the early 1940s. According to Albright, "he was an important force behind the growth, if not the direction, of the Bay Area ceramics movement, two of whose most influential figures, Robert Arneson and Charles McKee, studied under him." Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 306. Rolando Castellón was born in Managua, Nicaragua in 1937 and came to California in 1956. "His early paintings on paper contained ghost-like images of pyramids, suns, and moons, and were built in transparent, overlapping pastel colors to suggest the layered surfaces of old walls." From Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 267. Some artists have names that suggest a Latino identity, though more research needs to be done. Sacramento-based artist Archie Gonzales showed at the Hobbs Gallery and San Francisco Art Center. *Artforum* I:12, June 1963, 50; *Artforum* II:7, January 1964, 15; *Artforum* II:9, March 1964, 4. On Archie Gonzales' work, one of the reviews stated, "Gonzales traces simple forms with gradations of faint greys and whites on white, creating fragile poetry with minimal means." Alternatively, other names give no indication of ethnicity. Henry Brandon was born in Cuenca, Ecuador in 1934, attended CCAC in the late 1950s and early '60s, and developed his painting in the figurative style. Ann Adair was born in Coscosolo, Panama in 1936, attended UC Berkeley and the San Francisco Art Institute, developed a series of ceramic alligators, and married Peter Voukos: Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 264, 257.

Angeles, attest to the growing presence of Latino artists in a national context.¹⁵⁷ In fact, people of all ethnic backgrounds were participating in the booming arts scene, in San Francisco and across the country, inspired by the artist's lifestyle, creativity, and increasing economic opportunities.¹⁵⁸ As Thomas Albright notes, "In the Beat period, basically a mere five years between 1955 and 1960, an immense wave of anti-establishment energy crested and broke in a dozen different directions."¹⁵⁹ Latino, Asian American, and African American artists were participating in this cresting wave of radical energy, though they rarely if ever signaled or organized themselves by their ethnicity.

Unquestionably, male artists had greater access and opportunity than female artists. The lack of women, much less women of color, attaining public recognition as

¹⁵⁷ For a survey of Latino art in the United States, see Luis Cancel, et al., *The Latin American Spirit: Art and Artists in the United States, 1920-1970* (New York: The Bronx Museum of the Arts in association with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1988). On Raphael "Ralph" Ortiz, see, Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 99-101; and Michael Kimmelman, "The Return of the Well-Trampled Clavier," *The New York Times*, January 3, 1997, B30. Mel Casas, born in 1929 in El Paso, Texas, studied at the University of the Americas in Mexico City, attained a teaching position at San Antonio College, and participated in the Con Safo arts group. Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 80-85. Alberto Mijangos was born in Mexico City in 1925, studied art in Mexico, and immigrated to the United States as a young man. See, Alberto Mijangos interview by Cary Cordova, in San Antonio, Texas, for the AAA, December 5 and 12, 2003, <http://archivesofamericanart.si.edu/oralhist/mijang03.htm>, accessed on July 27, 2005. Mauricio Lasansky was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1914 and came to the United States in the early 1940s via a Guggenheim fellowship. Over the course of the 1950s, he established his prestigious printmaking studio at the University of Iowa. See, Cancel, et al, *The Latin American Spirit*, 202-206; *Intaglios: The Work of Mauricio Lasansky and Other Printmakers, Who Studied with him at the State University of Iowa* (U.S. Information Service, 1959); and, *Mauricio Lasansky: A Retrospective Exhibition* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, 1982). Eduardo Carrillo was born in Santa Monica in 1937, studied art in Los Angeles and Madrid, Spain. Carrillo, Chavez, and Lunetta formed the Ceeje Gallery with Charles Garabedian in Los Angeles in 1962. Upon the opening, the *Artforum* reviewer stated, "this ensemble makes up the most exciting, fiercest, most vital debut of any art gallery opening here within recent memory." See, Quirate, *Mexican American Artists*, 102-108; *Artforum* I:2, August 1962, 3; *Artforum* I:3, August 1962, 6; *Artforum* I:8, February 1963, 17.

¹⁵⁸ Ruth Asawa (1926-), George Miyasaki (1935-), Arthur Monroe (1935-), Win Ng (1935-), Arthur Okamura (1932-), Carlos Villa (1936-), Leo Valledor (1936-), and Gary Woo (1928-) are just a few of the Asian American and African American artists working in 1950s San Francisco. See, Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 257-323.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 107.

visual artists in the 1950s avant-garde, was profound.¹⁶⁰ Even so, the 1950s and early '60s were showing signs of massive and widespread social change in the arts. This is true, contrary to the dominant historiography of 1950s American art history, which largely details the life and art experiences of Anglo-American males in New York.¹⁶¹ Traditional histories might lead one to believe people of color and women were hardly present in the 1950s art world, but in truth, this was exactly the moment that pressures to desegregate were gaining full speed. While activists sought to dismantle segregation in housing, the military, and the schools, many understandably considered the art world a lesser priority. However, this very reasoning also helped the art world go under the radar of detection. Without watchdogs, the institutions and critics could propound their preference for "quality," which in its vagueness also could disguise racism and propel de

¹⁶⁰ Two female artists have names that suggest a Latina identity, but little information exists on them to date. Estelle Chaves was a featured artist at the Artists' Co-op and the Maxwell Galleries in San Francisco and at the Evans Gallery and Galleria Gianni in Los Angeles. See, *Artforum* I:3, August 1962, 38; *Artforum* I:2, January 1962, 10; and *Artforum* II:4, October 1963, 15; *Artforum* II:7, January 1964, 48. Annita Delano taught for many years at UCLA. One of her last exhibitions was at the CeeJe Gallery. *Artforum* II:6 December 1963, 10-11. Mabel Alvarez was of an earlier generation, born in Oahu, Hawaii in 1891, the daughter of a Spanish businessman who made his living in Hawaii and California. "Mabel Alvarez biography," <http://www.askart.com/biography.asp?ID=8026>, accessed on July 27, 2005. More general sources on women in the Beat movement: Brenda Knight, *Women of the Beat Generation: The Writers, Artists and Muses at the Heart of a Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: Conari Press, 1996); Richard Peabody, ed., *A Different Beat: Writings by Women of the Beat Generation*, (London; New York: Serpent's Tail, 1997); Nancy M. Grace and Ronna C. Johnson, eds., *Breaking the Rule of Cool: Interviewing and Reading Women Beat Writers* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2004); Ronna C. Johnson and Nancy M. Grace, eds., *Girls Who Wore Black: Women Writing the Beat Generation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

¹⁶¹ Irving Sandler, *The Triumph of American Painting* (1970; reprint, New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1976); Dore Ashton, *The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning* (1972; reprint, New York: Penguin Books, 1979); Lisa Phillips, *The American Century: Art & Culture, 1950-2000* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton, 1999). For contemporary discourses that dispute this long-charted dominant narrative, see David Craven, who writes, "post-1945 U.S. art has emerged from an expansive and highly 'impure' process of cultural convergences in which Third World artistic practices ... have been enjoined with the European artistic traditions so ethnocentrically privileged by formalist apologists for U.S. art. Consequently, a sustained critique of Abstract Expressionism will *not* disclose a unified, white 'American' (and ultimately Eurocentric) style leading inevitably to the 'triumph' of U.S. culture." In "Abstract Expressionism and Third World Art: A Post-Colonial Approach to

facto segregation. In illustrating this phenomenon, the next section focuses on the arts education of Ernie Palomino, Luis Cervantes, and José Lerma as Mexican American art students in the 1950s San Francisco avant-garde. By no means were they the only Latino visual artists working in the city, or in the nation, at that time, but their stories give insight into this pivotal moment in time, and the implicit pressures, limitations, and possibilities.

TRAINING AMERICAN ARTISTS: PALOMINO, LERMA, AND CERVANTES IN THE AVANT-GARDE

Artists such as Luis Cervantes (1923-2005), Ernie Palomino (1933-), and José Ramón Lerma (1930-) participated in the West Coast avant-garde of the period. However, none of the three was entirely detached from the Mexican American identity that framed them as outsiders. These and other artists felt and signaled their differences from the mainstream in separate ways. While Lerma and Cervantes continued to generate an art that reflected their liminal position between abstraction and ethnicity, Palomino later rejected the avant-garde training more passionately. All three recognized that their position as Mexican American artists limited their mobility within the art world, but also served as a source of creative inspiration.

In the mid-1950s, the prominence of abstract art was well established. By 1949, *Life* magazine already had published its famous feature on Jackson Pollock, asking mockingly of this emerging talent, “Is he the greatest living painter in the United

‘American’ Art,” *Oxford Art Journal* 14, 1 (1991), 44-66; and, Ann Gibson, *Abstract Expressionism: Other*

States?”¹⁶² On the one hand, Pollock’s image perpetuated an understanding of the alienated Anglo-American male as the only person who could represent the scale and diversity of American art. On the other hand, Pollock democratized the art – his down-to-earth persona and Beat spirit were emotionally and intellectually accessible to many people grappling with the impact of World War II and the atom bomb.¹⁶³ His success served as a model for many generations to emulate and reject.

Palomino, Lerma, and Cervantes, like many artists coming of age in 1950s America, were inspired by the creative possibilities emerging in art in the post-War period. All three attended the California School of Fine Arts (renamed the San Francisco Art Institute in 1961) and were readily open to the experimental aesthetic of “The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism.” Per Susan Landauer, “Although the individual styles of artists varied greatly, by the end of the 1940s a discernible San Francisco look had emerged, the product of mutual influence and a shared sensibility that valued toughness over taste. In general, the painting emphasized rough surfaces and broad areas of color.”¹⁶⁴ This look was substantiated by the teaching presence of Clyfford Still, who had made an indelible impression on the culture of the school in the late 1940s.¹⁶⁵ Over the course of the 1950s, practitioners in the Bay Area figurative movement, including David Park, Elmer Bischoff, Richard Diebenkorn, and Nathan

Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999),

¹⁶² Dorothy Seiberling, “Jackson Pollock: Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?” *Life*, August 8, 1949, 42-5.

¹⁶³ See Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (New York, NY: C. N. Publishers, 1989).

¹⁶⁴ Landauer, *The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism*, 17.

¹⁶⁵ Clyfford Still’s “contradictions contributed to the larger-than-life image that made Still the man-of-the-hour during most of the four years he taught at CSFA, personifying—as did his paintings—just what the times and many of the students demanded.” Albright, *Reflections*, 17.

Oliviera, cultivated a West Coast aesthetic that integrated abstract art with recognizable human figures and landscapes.¹⁶⁶ Alternatively, the funk movement, spearheaded by Peter Voulkos, William T. Wiley, Robert Arneson, and Wayne Thiebaud, produced a vast array of enigmatic, largely ceramic, sculptural assemblages, inspired by Dada, surrealism, and the Beat movement.¹⁶⁷ The arts scene reflected an array of international, national, and regional aesthetics that tended to give the Bay Area art scene a unique feel.

Palomino, Lerma, and Cervantes adopted the aesthetic culture of the city as their own. All three played with the possibilities of “funk” sculptural assemblage, especially Palomino and Cervantes. In addition, Cervantes and Lerma called themselves “third generation abstract painters,” to emphasize their place in an established lineage of American art.¹⁶⁸ This terminology did not so much describe an aesthetic, as reflect the time they were coming into maturity as artists. Lerma was partial, but not limited, to Abstract Expressionism, Palomino was obsessed with bric-a-brac assemblage, and Cervantes was keen on piled-high ceramics and tightly-organized mandala paintings. Stylistically, the three artists shared little aside from a love of art and their experience as Mexican American art students at the California School of Fine Arts.

While none of the three artists were keen on calling themselves Beats, they recognized the era and the associated physical locations as formative in their development. The environs inspired them as artists, and even led to their participation in the founding of separate galleries. From 1959 to 1961, Lerma, Howard Foote, and John

¹⁶⁶ Jones. *Bay Area Figurative Art: 1950-1965*.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*; Peter Selz, *Funk* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkley, University Art Museum exhibition, April 18-May 29, 1967); Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 111-134.

¹⁶⁸ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001; Cervantes note to author, 2005.

Dunlop oversaw the short-lived Russian Hill Gallery, located near the Spatsa Gallery. Cervantes admitted finding inspiration in Lerma's Russian Hill Gallery, which he referred to as a place that "blew me away for showing work that other galleries would not touch. It opened me up."¹⁶⁹ From 1962 to 1964, Luis Cervantes, Ernie Palomino, and Joe White founded the New Mission Gallery. Both galleries lasted only a couple of years, but, most likely, were two of the earliest examples of Mexican American co-owned galleries in the city.

Naturally, these artists drew on the proliferation of provocative, new galleries in the city. The Six Gallery, located near the intersection of Fillmore and Union Streets, had the highest profile as the place where Allen Ginsberg first read his poem "Howl," in October 1955. Union Street was an increasingly important location for up-and-coming visual artists, spurred by the neighborhood's proximity to North Beach and the San Francisco Art Institute, and the increasing need for exhibition space to stage the growing community of Beat artists. Cervantes declared, "At that time on Union Street was the galleries – the Six Gallery – and it was just exciting ... just incredible!"¹⁷⁰ Indeed, the Marina/Cow Hollow corridor provided multiple spaces for local artists to come together, including the Spatsa Gallery, the East-West Gallery, the John Gilmore Gallery, the Green Gallery, the Fredric Hobbs Gallery, the Artist Co-op, the Batman Gallery, and the Rose Labowe Gallery [Fig. 2.2].¹⁷¹ The growth of alternative galleries was representative of the increasing population of visual artists in the city from various backgrounds.

¹⁶⁹ Quoted in, "Lerma Retrospective," *Intersection for the Arts*, 9.

¹⁷⁰ Cervantes interview, April 2, 2003.

¹⁷¹ Seymour Howard, John Natsoulas, Rebecca Solnit, Michael McClure, Bruce Nixon, John Allen Ryan, and Jack Foley, *The Beat Generation: Galleries and Beyond* (Davis, CA: John Natsoulas Press, 1996).

The Marina / Cow Hollow area served as an escape from the high rents and tourist-economy of North Beach. By the early 1950s, North Beach had already become too expensive for many young bohemians (and/or Latinos).¹⁷² As an alternative, a number of students at the California School of Fine Arts, located on Chestnut Street in Russian Hill (bordering North Beach), set up living quarters in the not-too-distant Marina District.¹⁷³ The repositioning propelled the development of an arts enclave in the Marina/Cow Hollow area, which still maintained close ties with the California School of Fine Arts and North Beach. Today, the Marina/Cow Hollow areas are perceived as exclusive and white, which reflects the complete erasure of their multicultural bohemian past.¹⁷⁴

The Marina/Cow Hollow community defined itself in opposition to more commodity-oriented markets, such as New York, and served as an alternative space to the touristic North Beach. Many of the galleries deliberately eschewed the growing commercialism of the art market. For instance, of the Six Gallery, Bruce Nixon states,

¹⁷² A number of important galleries had found a home in North Beach, including The Place, The Anxious Asp, Miss Smith's Tea Room, Vesuvio, the Co-Existence Bagel Shop, and the Dilexi (above the Jazz Workshop). Albright, "The California School of Fine Arts, c. 1945-1960," in *Reflections*, 21.

¹⁷³ The commodification of North Beach bohemianism is the subject of the previous chapter. North Beach is the home of the Beats, according to many: "The Beat generation literary movement formed out of the postwar bohemian communities of Greenwich Village in New York City and North Beach in San Francisco," from Johnson and Grace, *Girls Who Wore Black*. Lawrence Ferlinghetti's creation of City Lights press and bookshop in North Beach also affirmed the area as a literary center: Lee, "Chicanismo's Beat Outrider?" 263. In terms of the popularity of the Marina / Cow Hollow area, see: *The Spatsa Gallery, 1958-1961*, 8; Landauer, *The San Francisco School*, 124.

¹⁷⁴ Chris Swiac, ed., *Fodor's San Francisco 2005* (New York, NY: Fodor's Travel Publications, 2005) 150: "Tony Union Street and the nearby Marina are where you find singles bars that attract well-dressed and well-to-do crowds in their twenties and thirties."

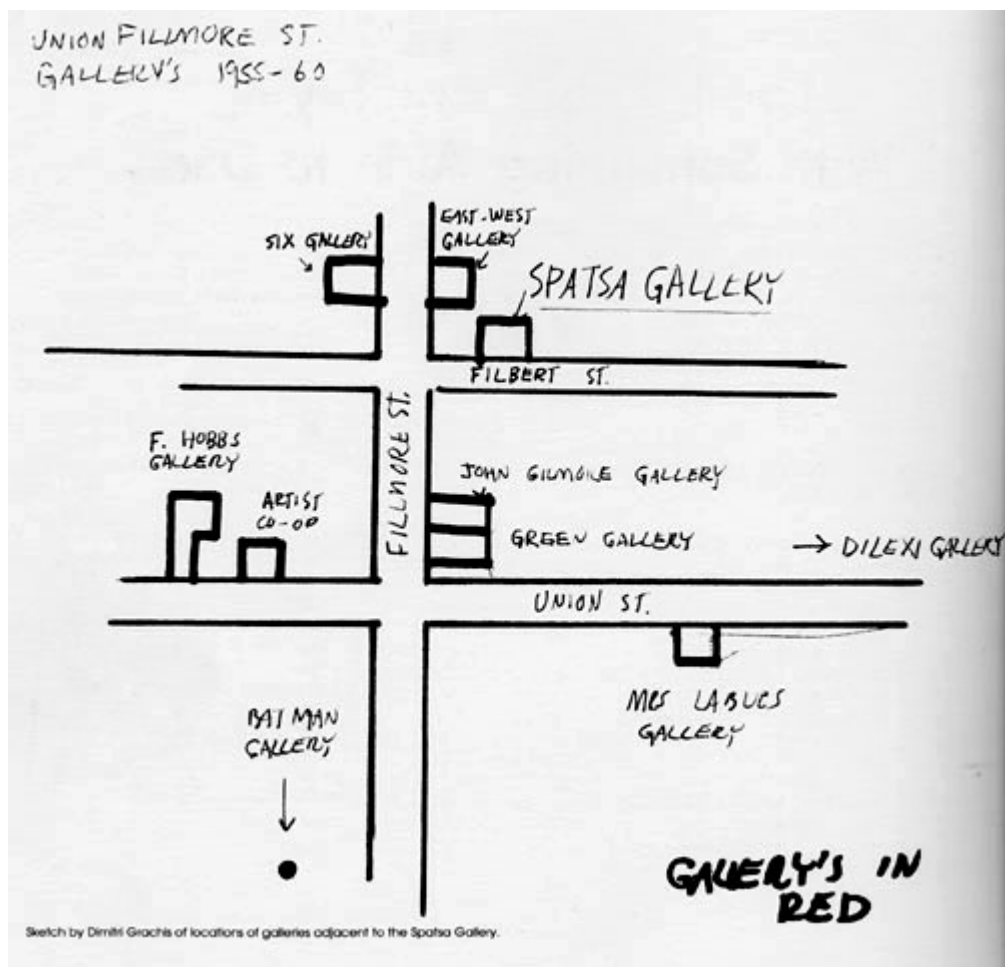


Fig. 2.2: “Sketch by Dimitri Grachis of locations of galleries adjacent to the Spatsa Gallery.” From, John Natsoulas et al, *The Spatsa Gallery, 1958-1961* (Davis, CA: Natsoulas / Novelozo Gallery, 1991), aaa.

“But it wasn’t a commercial venture in any way: no artist made money there, although none of them really seemed to care very much.”¹⁷⁵ Dimitri Grachis, artist and owner of the Spatsa Gallery, recalls, “The Union/Fillmore Street area in the fifties was nothing like it is today. In the fifties the buildings were about 40% full and rents were very reasonable. I was paying \$350.00 a month rent. The reasonable rent attracted many creative and adventurous people to the area – artists, poets, writers, actors, musicians.”¹⁷⁶ Allen Ginsberg, Bruce Conner, and Michael McClure all lived in the neighborhood at one time or another, thereby affirming the area as a space for the counterculture.

Gradually, however, the Marina/Cow Hollow area transitioned into the upscale boutique neighborhood that defines the area today. Even in the late 1950s, the impact of economic change was already rechanneling the young bohemian enclave. The publication of Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* mythologized San Francisco. According to Bruce Nixon, “Bay Area bohemia ... suddenly found itself in a national spotlight; people who had lived and worked and partied together, merrily undisturbed in their pursuit of rebellion, were now the subjects of local Gray Line tours. The scene was devastated by this unexpected and often unwelcome tidal wave of publicity.”¹⁷⁷ Gradually, the Marina / Cow Hollow neighborhood began to feel the pinch of economic pressures that already were impacting North Beach. Galleries could only survive if they became more commercial. Dimitri Grachis closed the Spatsa Gallery in 1961, stating, “My gallery, once an absorbing experience, was now becoming a competitive arena. The younger artists were expecting more, and there was a growing market that, though selective, was

¹⁷⁵ *The Spatsa Gallery*, 8.

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in, *The Spatsa Gallery*, 2. Also see, Landauer, *San Francisco School*.

willing to pay for the visual experience. I was never a competitive person, so I closed the gallery, happy that I still had both my ears, and moved to Burlingame.”¹⁷⁸ The flourishing arts community that once existed in the Union-Fillmore street nexus vanished. More competitive and upscale galleries now exist in the neighborhood, but they bear little to no resemblance to the inventive rebelliousness that characterized earlier art spaces. While some closed up shop and left town, others found new spaces in the city.

The physical location of the New Mission Gallery was a natural result of its founders living in the Mission and turning their home into a studio, but the exhibits were very much a product of the Beat scene in the Marina/Cow Hollow enclave. The New Mission Gallery featured many of the artists that had formed connections at the California School of Fine Arts and at the Union/Fillmore Street galleries: Manuel Neri; Howard Foote; Joan Brown; Eddie Palomino; Wally Hedrick; Seymour Locks, and many others.¹⁷⁹ However, Cervantes bristled at reviewer John Coplans referring to the gallery as a beatnik hangout: “It was condescending.”¹⁸⁰ Though the proprietors emulated the liberated approach of other Beat galleries, they rejected the pejorative “beatnik” label coined by San Francisco columnist Herb Caen. In the early 1960s, they had little desire to represent themselves as “Beats,” when that culture was increasingly the subject of ridicule.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ *The Spatsa Gallery*, 9.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 4

¹⁷⁹ Albright adds that the gallery “displayed work by Ron Davis, William Geis, Carlos Villa, and other emerging artists associated with the SFAI and the North Beach underground.” *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 267.

¹⁸⁰ Cervantes interview, April 2, 2003.

¹⁸¹ Peters, “The Beat Generation and San Francisco’s Culture of Dissent,” 210.

The co-founders of the New Mission Gallery titled their first exhibition “The Panama Canal Anniversary Show” after reviewing a calendar that featured multiple historical anniversaries. The heading had little to do with the content of the show, but reflected the free-form spirit that would define the new space. According to Cervantes, “because it was a group show, it was just tons of people, wall to wall. And so, it just started to snowball, and after about three months, we had our first review in *Artforum*...it drew a lot of people from all over.”¹⁸² San Francisco reviewer John Coplans described the new gallery as, “an important event in the cultural life of San Francisco.” Coplans added, “This gallery frees art to be seen, experienced, and valued as art without the hierarchies of commercial promotion or the restricted ideas of culture of museum curators intervening.”¹⁸³ With these words, Coplans affirmed the gallery’s role as an “alternative” space, free of the strictures of the art-industrial complex.

The New Mission Gallery opened for practical reasons: Palomino and White were studying art at San Francisco State and needed a place to show their work. After Palomino and White showed their work, they were less invested in the space, so Cervantes and his new partner in the arts and in life, Susan Kelk, continued the venture. Under the name Susan Cervantes, she would become a leader in the Mission District community’s mural movement, but in the early 1960s, she was just finding where she fit in the city. Luis Cervantes credited Kelk for cultivating the amount of press the gallery received. According to Kelk, “We were getting reviews all the time about the exhibits,

¹⁸² Cervantes interview, April 2, 2003.

¹⁸³ John Coplans, “Panama Canal Anniversary Exhibition,” *Artforum* I:5, October 1962, 42.

we were getting reviews in *Artforum* all the time, cause *Artforum* was just coming out, and it was recognized as an alternative exhibit space for emerging artists.”¹⁸⁴

Likely, meeting Kelk also sensitized Cervantes to the difficulties women faced in showing their work, and he tried to respond, though his efforts lacked some gravitas. He recalled, “Very few women were involved in the arts. Or they were ignored. And some of them were really good. And so, a few here, there, let’s get them all together, and we’ll call it the ‘All Chick Show.’ The show featured Joan Brown, Nell Sinton, Doreen Chase, and Susan Kelk, among others. However, Deborah Remington refused, stating, “I’m not a chick.”¹⁸⁵ Cervantes’s heart may have been in the right place, but for Remington and others, the use of “chick” undercut the intended feminism. Still, the show was a landmark in featuring only women artists, and the gallery was a signal of the Mission District’s new relevance as a site of avant-garde bohemianism.

The New Mission Gallery was likely the first contemporary visual arts gallery in the Mission, but hardly the last. Even so, the history of the New Mission Gallery was not documented much beyond its *Artforum* reviews. Too far removed physically to be a part of the Beat scene, and too avant-garde to reflect the late ‘60s pan-Latino arts movement of the Mission, the gallery largely fell through the cracks of historical accounts of either movement. Moreover, its founders contributed to maintaining the gallery’s low profile for separate reasons. Cervantes developed a strong distaste for “the art world.” While he

¹⁸⁴ Susan Kelk Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 23, 2003. Also see, Coplans, “Panama Canal Anniversary Exhibition,” 42; “Richard Van Buren: New Mission Gallery,” *Artforum* 1:7, December 1962, 46; “Manuel Neri: New Mission Gallery,” *Artforum* II:3, September 1963, 45; “Seymour Locks: New Mission Gallery,” *Artforum* II:7, January 1964, 9; HG, “Vorpall Gallery,” *Artforum* 11:1, July 1963, 11.

¹⁸⁵ Luis Cervantes interview, April 2, 2003.

continued to paint and participate in various events as a Latino artist residing and painting murals in the Mission, he was reticent about the realities of promoting himself as an artist.¹⁸⁶ Running a gallery was even more demanding, and in Cervantes's mind, less rewarding: "there was something about the art business that I hated. ...The money and then the attitude. So I said to Susan, 'Let's close it down and turn it back into our studio.' And so that's what happened."¹⁸⁷ Alternately, co-founder Palomino was passionate about distancing himself from his experiences in the San Francisco avant-garde.

ERNIE PALOMINO

Palomino has argued that it was the oppressive culture of the California School of Fine Arts that drove him away from the school. Nearly three decades later, he recalled the 1956-57 experience with little enthusiasm: "I had to get rid of my drapes, you know. Sharkskin shirts, one-button rolls, and put on a torn-up jacket that I had bought at the Salvation Army. And put on a corduroy shirt ... and run around with all these beatniks who were roaming around at that time."¹⁸⁸ After only a year of attendance, Palomino returned to Fresno. He found the whole experience repressive to his sensibilities. He

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Palomino interview, *Califas Book 5, 6*. At about the same time, Palomino published a book of his drawings: *In Black and White: Evolution of an Artist* (Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild), 1956. Notably, June Muller's preface states, "Palomino insists his pictures are not a protest of the conditions under which he was born and lived, for 'it would do no good to protest.' Rather, he says, they are a mirror, a reflection of the times."

remarked, “I couldn’t take it anymore. I missed my friends too much and, and I missed the low-riders ... and the people that I used to hang around with, the musicians.”¹⁸⁹

Arguably, the context of Palomino’s remarks, speaking at a conference on Chicano art in the early 1980s, reframed his representations of the experience. His account distances himself from the Eurocentric training of his education, outfits him in the authenticity of pachuco clothing, dismisses any relevance of Beat culture, and obscures his continuing involvement in the avant-garde through the early 1960s. It also blankets over any frustration he might have felt at not having his scholarship renewed, which he ascribed to his inability to fit in with the culture of the school. Palomino sensed school administrators were bothered by “the fact that I hadn’t socialized. Hadn’t really socialized into their clique of students ...”¹⁹⁰

While Palomino did withdraw from the California School of Fine Arts, he continued to participate in the related arts scene. Up until at least 1966, he continued to move back and forth between Fresno and San Francisco, he enrolled in art classes at San Francisco State, he co-founded a contemporary art gallery, he created multiple assemblage sculptures, and he filmed his most avant-garde work, *My Trip in a '52 Ford* (1966). The experimental film, submitted to cap his graduate work at San Francisco State, featured Palomino’s sculptures as characters: his '52 Ford became “Mary Go,” who gave birth to the tractor-like, “George Go,” the bureau-inspired prostitute, “Dorothy

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

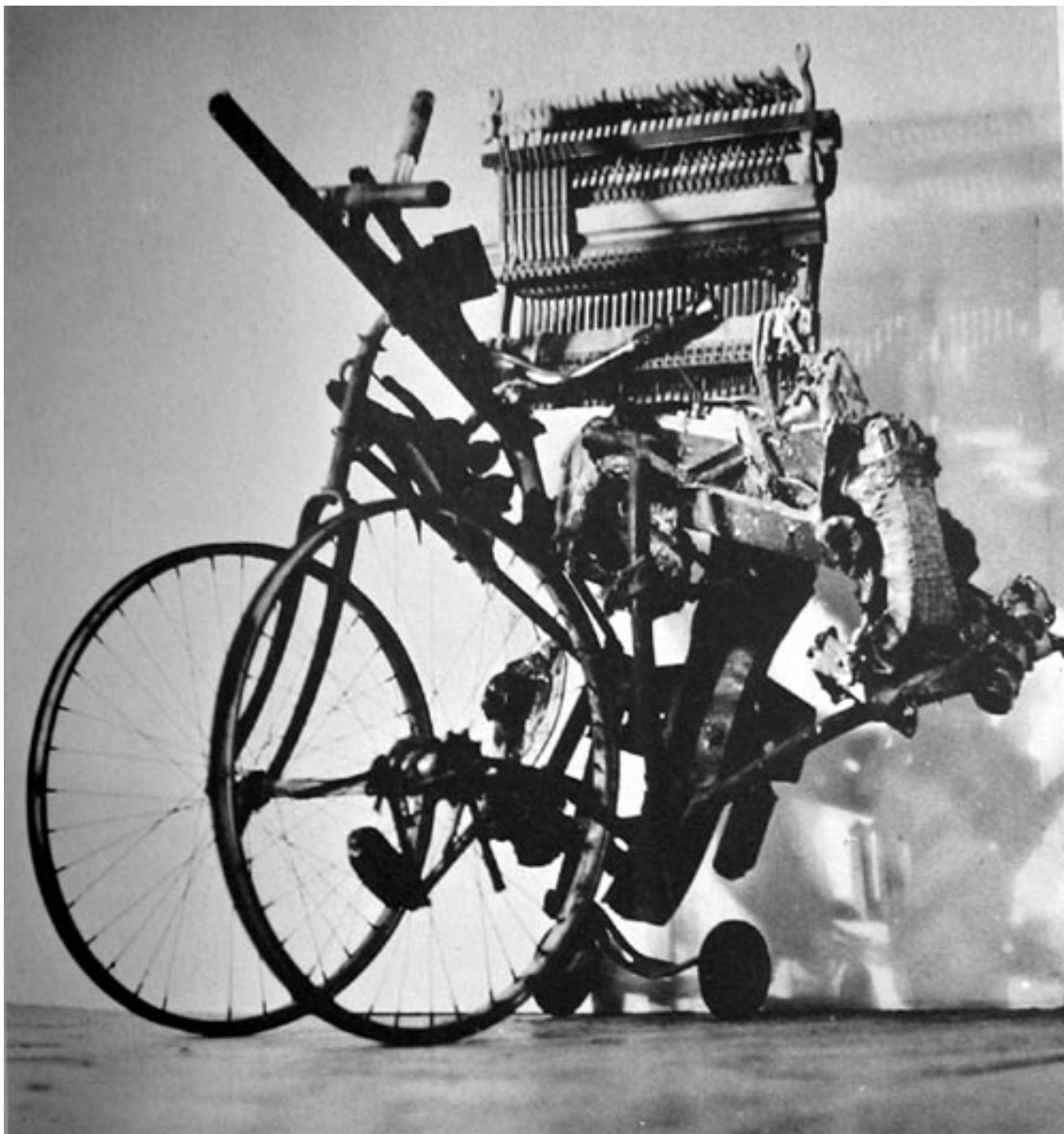


Fig. 2.3: Ernie Palomino, "Mrs. Go," c. 1962. Image and title from *Artforum* I:5, 43, October 1962. On his resume, Palomino referred to the work as "Welded Bicycle." Palomino, "Personal Profile," c. 1980. The title "Mrs. Go" suggests that Palomino's conception of the "Go" family was fermenting for many years, finally caught on film in *My Trip in a '52 Ford* (1966).

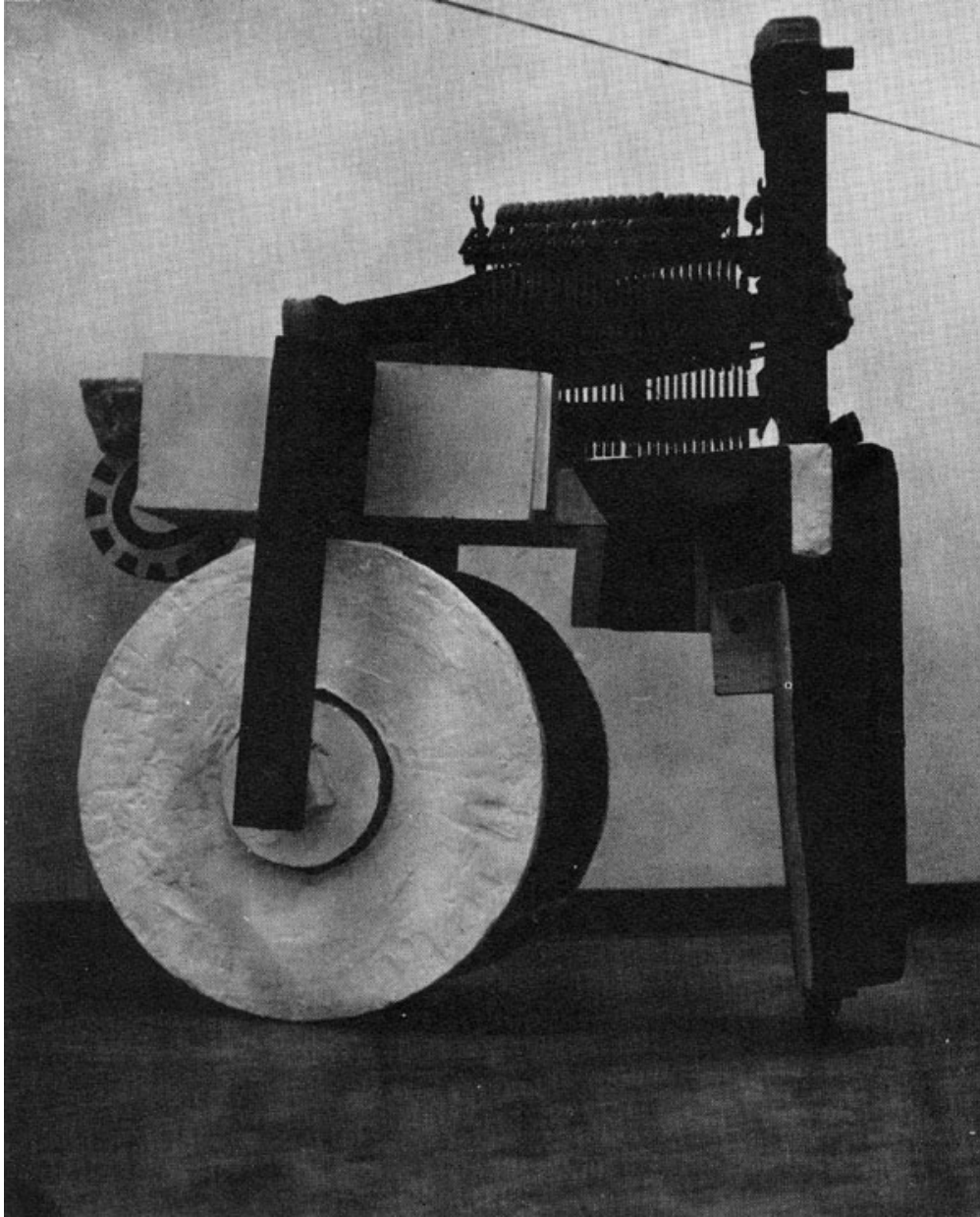


Fig. 2.4: Ernie Palomino, "George Go," assemblage, c. 1964. Photo copied from, Jacinto Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 96.

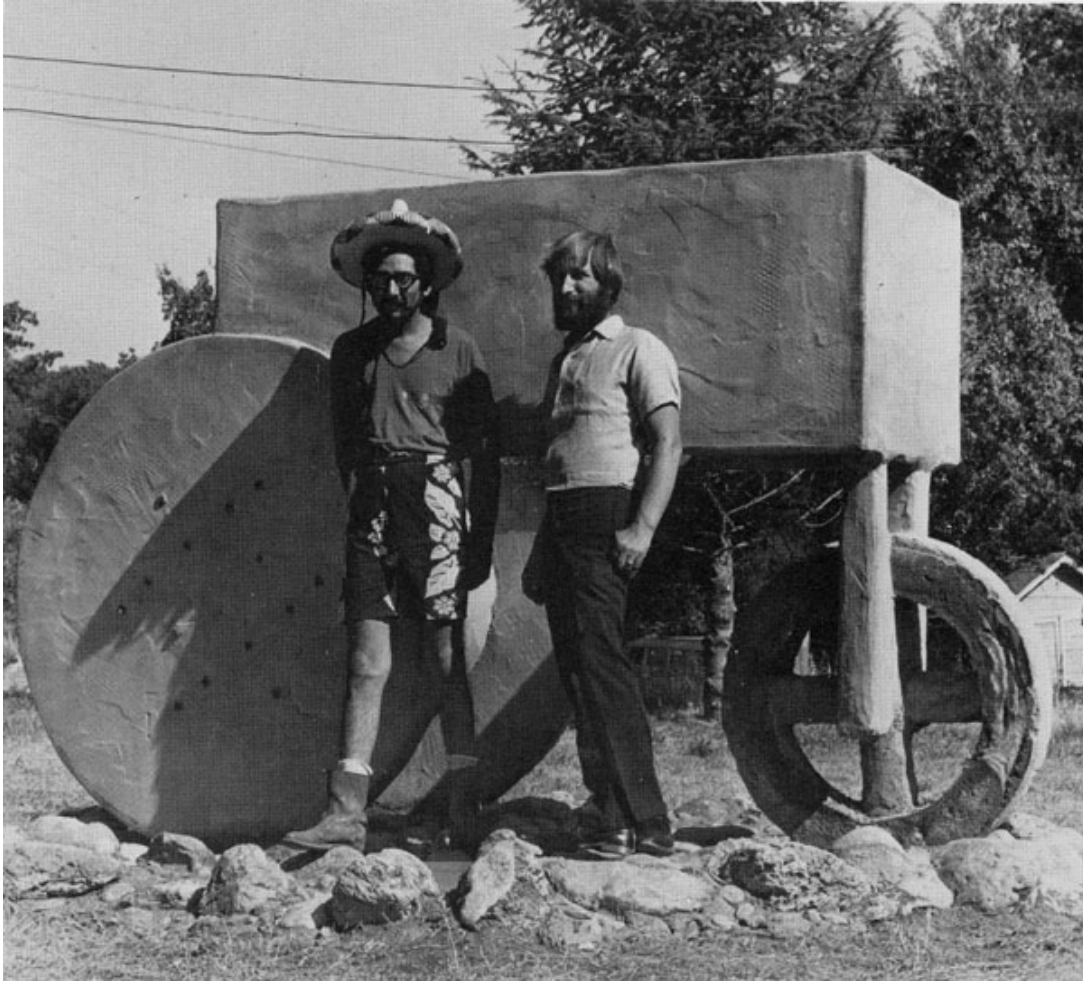


Fig. 2.5: Ernie Palomino in sombrero, with a friend, in front of a Palomino sculpture, c. 1964. Photo copied from, Jacinto Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 99.

Dresser,” and the tall, winged car hood known as “Wild Bird”¹⁹¹ [Fig. 2.3, 2.4, & 2.5] It was after this period that Palomino more vehemently rejected the colonizing impact of his artistic training and chose to diminish its relevance. Palomino later referred to his art work of the 1950s and early ‘60s as “gabacho” art.¹⁹² A negative term for “white,” “gabacho” emphasized the oppressiveness of a vast pantheon of Eurocentric art that many people of color encountered in arts education at the California School of Fine Arts and across the nation. This quality, shared by many of the art institutions of the Bay Area, would become a critical point of tension in the late 1960s, and would help trigger the widespread movement for ethnically separatist arts organizations.

When Palomino went on to become a participant in the Chicano arts movement, a professor of art at California State University in Fresno, and a co-founder of “La Brocha del Valle” (The Brush of the Valley) community mural movement, he also sought to overturn the arts education that had devalued his culture, and all Third World cultures.¹⁹³ Palomino’s attitude is understandable, but also suggests why his work of the 1950s and early 1960s mostly remains unseen, and why the work of other abstract painters, such as

¹⁹¹ In his “Personal Profile,” Palomino refers to “Mrs. Go” as “Welded Bicycle,” suggesting that it was over the process of creating his assemblages that they developed personalities. Ernest Palomino, “Personal Profile,” c. 1980. Tomas Ybarra-Frausto Collection, Box 18/Palomino file, AAA. For brief descriptions of the film, see: Noriega, “From Beats to Borders,” 358-360; Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, 97-98.

¹⁹² Salvador Guarena, “Ernie Palomino,” <http://www.chilipie.com/palomino/aboutme.htm>, accessed on November 23, 2004; Also see Noriega, “From Beats to Borders.” David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 185: “In the idea of Aztlán the young activists presented a quasi-nationalist vision of the Chicano people which extolled a pre-Columbian, native ancestry while diminishing or even rejecting their connection with American culture and society. In so doing they also dismissed traditional notions of Americanization and assimilation as nothing more than *gabacho* (a derisive term for Anglo) attempts to maintain hegemony over Chicanos by destroying their culture.”

¹⁹³ Goldman, in *Signs from the Heart*, 41.

Lerma and Cervantes, largely has gone undocumented in books and uncollected by major museums and institutions.¹⁹⁴

JOSÉ RAMÓN LERMA

While Palomino claimed he walked away from his early training, José Ramón Lerma never did. When Lerma first came from his parent's small farm in Hollister, California, to study at the school in 1950, he was caught off guard by the non-traditional subject matter, or lack of subject matter: "I was very focused on what I was doing at that time as a young man, and well, the whole thing of coming into the Art Institute, or the California School of Fine Arts, and finding non-objective painting ... it kind of blew my mind, but it also kind of left me depressed."¹⁹⁵

Lerma's past training had centered on the European modernism of Pablo Picasso and the social realism of Diego Rivera, which jarred with the work he experienced at the school. In particular, his memorable encounter with a large, tri-color Hassel Smith painting confused him but also intrigued him, and marked a transitional moment in his development as an artist. Increasingly, Lerma gravitated to the new aesthetic, but with his own spin: over time, he played with geometric and organic designs and collages, juxtaposed found objects in bric-a-brac structures, developed miniature abstract paintings to challenge notions of scale, and introduced sand into his painting [Fig. 2.6; Fig. 2.7;

¹⁹⁴ Landauer does not refer to any of the three in her text, *The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism*. Albright mentions only Cervantes and rather fleetingly in *Art of the San Francisco Bay Area*, 267.

¹⁹⁵ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.

Fig. 2.8; Fig. 2.9] In 1956, according to fellow artist William T. Wiley, Lerma “was doing thick paint abstract expressionist type paintings when I first saw his work – very lyrical – calligraphic – and a feeling of landscape, dance, movement, beautiful masterful works.”¹⁹⁶ Over the course of the early 1950s, Lerma had turned the training of the “San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism” into his personal form of aesthetic expression.

Moreover, Lerma’s experience as a soldier in Korea gave him a new level of maturity and intensity that propelled his art. Lerma had first enrolled at the California School of Fine Arts in 1950, but not having enough money to stay in school, he was drafted into Korea in 1951. When he returned in 1953, he had a stronger sense of himself and a more considered response to the art that had earlier confused him. According to Lerma, “I came back from Korea a very different person. First of all, I was angry....[the military] is not good for human beings, although there’s a lot of discipline. ... But they have to do that in order to train you as a killer.”¹⁹⁷ Still grappling with his anger and frustration, he re-enrolled in the California School of Fine Arts and began to investigate the possibilities of art, through paint, collage, and assemblage.

¹⁹⁶ Quoted in, “Lerma Retrospective,” *Intersection for the Arts*, 2.

¹⁹⁷ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.



Fig. 2.6: José Ramón Lerma, "Yellow Landscape," 1959, approx. 40" x 30", collection of Clinton Reilly, San Francisco. Photograph by Cary Cordova, with permission of the artist.



Fig. 2.7: José Ramón Lerma, “The Sea,” c. 1964, collection of the artist. Photograph by Cary Cordova, with permission of the artist.

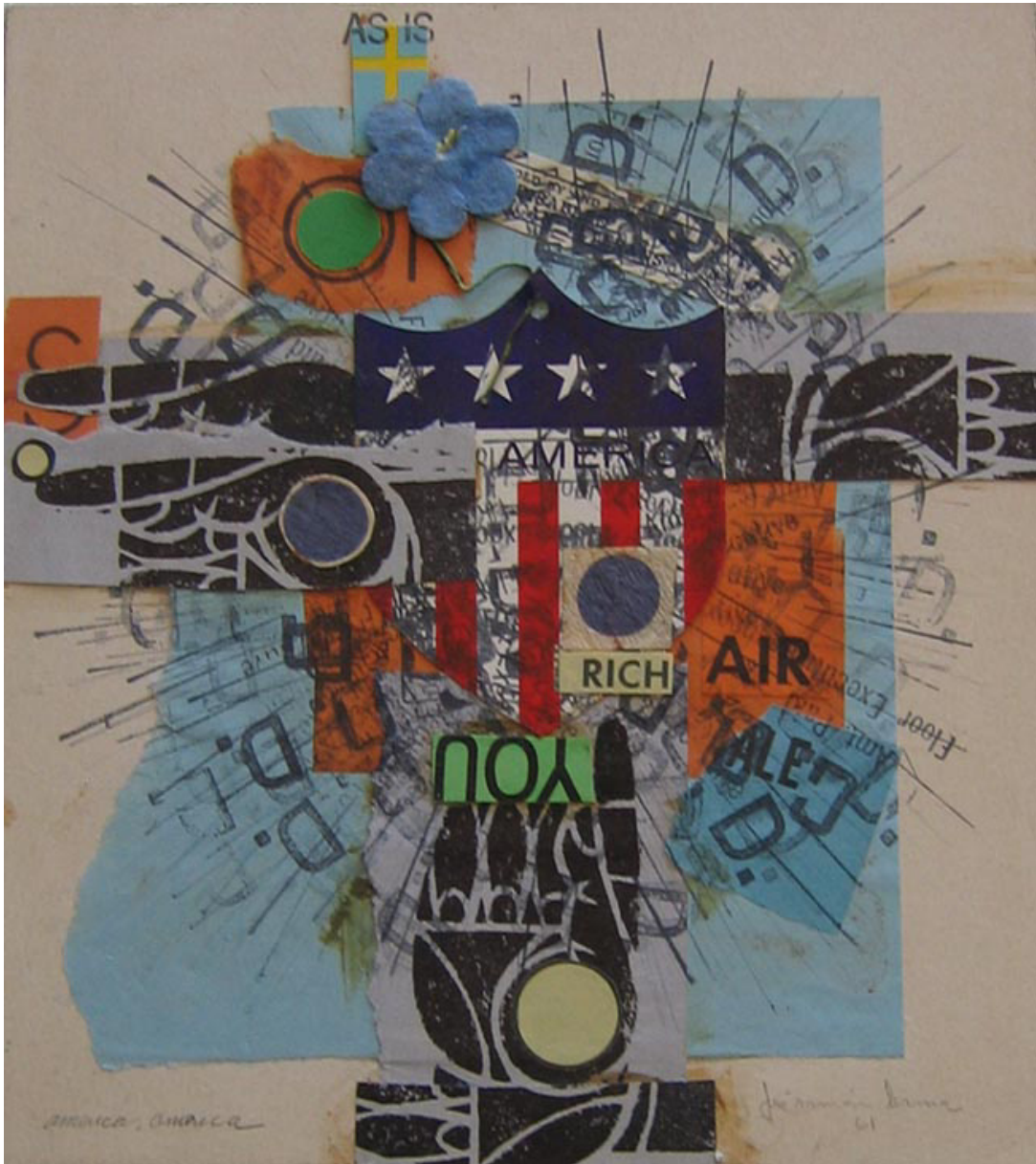


Fig. 2.8: José Ramón Lerma, “America, America,” 1961, collection of the artist. Photograph by Cary Cordova with artist’s permission.



Fig. 2.9: Top right, “Happy Birthday to José,” 1990, collection of the artist. Photograph by Cary Cordova, with permission of artist.

The second time around, the school proved ideal. Lerma's teacher Dorr Bothwell was influential: "She made me see things, and when I started seeing things, then the abstract came very easy in the sense that I was free."¹⁹⁸ Lerma drew on the emotions of his time in Korea to reinvigorate his art: in particular, his heightened sense of mortality inspired him to convey the most dramatic colors of the world.¹⁹⁹ One experience in particular profoundly shaped his psyche. Stationed in an area known as the "Punch Bowl," the U.S. military lit a series of flares to light up the night and better see the enemy. Instead, the act cast a light across the valley where all the U.S. soldiers were stationed. According to Lerma, "I stood there mesmerized by the brilliant green colors lighting up the valley, like the color you see in your dreams. It was so beautiful. It was both funny and sad at the same time."²⁰⁰ As Gilberto Osorio poetically writes, "the flashing landscape became a gigantic expressionist painting, revealing in its core the essence of the teaching of that post war generation of artists at the California School of Fine Arts..."²⁰¹ Lerma turned to color to speak for the vibrancy and value of life, and to reject the dehumanizing experience of the military and war.

Lerma became more conscious of how abstraction was reflecting his personal history, consciously and unconsciously. His abstract paintings also began to evoke landscapes, in image and title, not unlike Richard Diebenkorn and other Bay Area

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ Intersection for the Arts, "Lerma Retrospective," 2.

²⁰¹ Gilberto Osorio, "José Lerma Retrospective Covers a Long and Distinguished Career," *New Mission News*, June 2000, 11.

figurative painters.²⁰² Of special import to the formal structuring of his collages was the memory of his family's tomato fields: "Every year at a certain time of year, my dad would put in the seeds. ... And we had these long beds that were thirty or forty feet long and they were maybe eleven feet wide. ...the soil was worked so beautifully. ...But I realized that it was very formal." It became clear to Lerma that the images he saw in his collages were intimately linked with this memory of working the tomato fields, which he called "one of my best times with my family."²⁰³

Lerma's work also reflected someone grappling with his religious history. Early 1960s paintings titled, "Sacred Heart" and "First Crucifixion" hint at an artist coming to terms with his Catholic upbringing.²⁰⁴ Similarly, another painting of the period, owned by Luis Cervantes, elucidates a cross "on a field of blood red."²⁰⁵ The religious iconography may have been driven by traumatic circumstances within his family. Lerma's mother, a strong, independent woman raised in an intensely Catholic family, suffered a psychological breakdown in the late '50s or early '60s. According to Lerma, "she tried to kill my baby sister."²⁰⁶ The paintings of Catholic imagery at the same time his mother was fighting mental illness take on an intensely personal, and mournful, dimension.

²⁰² Jim Scully described Lerma's "Coast #1" (1961) as a "collage made of wrapping tissue ...a striking example of his ability to render landscape as experience. ...The dizzying outside-inside *feel* of full-bore sun, sand, ambient yellow-orange light and sea light is brought on ... by a motley chorus of black-rimmed solar afterimages appearing and half-appearing in the varying depths of the sky." Jim Scully, "José Ramón Lerma @ Intersection in the Year 2000," *Intersection for the Arts*, April 22, 2000.

²⁰³ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.

²⁰⁴ *Artforum* I:1, June 1962, 41.

²⁰⁵ Quoted in, "Lerma Retrospective," *Intersection for the Arts*, 9.

²⁰⁶ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.

In Lerma's mind, "My abstract art is Mexican and there's nothing I can do about it. And that kept me out of the mainstream abstract because that is a little more detached."²⁰⁷ If true, Lerma's comment also highlights an impossible contradiction for non-white artists to resolve: while abstract art could and should express the alienated self, it could not accommodate those who were so far outside the margins as to be "Other." Ann Gibson writes, "For Abstract Expressionism, a style whose definition was intimately related to the identity of the artist, personal identity linked meaning to power. Prejudice and social sanctions involving sexuality and race were both internal and external. Those who were the most 'different' from the white male norm (black female artists, for instance), had great difficulty establishing their ability to produce what Abstract Expressionist circles would see as meaning of consequence."²⁰⁸

In other words, while Jackson Pollock could represent the "universal" spirit through his appropriation of African and Indigenous imagery, people of color, in representing their indigenous history, only articulated an ethnic art. The introduction of "content," or personal identity, into the painting automatically troubled the detachment of Abstract Expressionism. As Gibson further explains, "Original art was by definition art that put distance between itself and the specificities of immediate cultural influences. In the case of Abstract Expressionism this gap was enhanced by the conviction that art that

²⁰⁷ *Chicano Beat: An Interview with José Lerma*.

²⁰⁸ Gibson, *Abstract Expressionism*, xxi. Gibson in the opening to her corrective book on the presence of African American and women in the field of Abstract Expressionism, recalled, "In the three graduate schools I had attended in the 1970s, I had never seen the work of an African American artist in slides or in an assigned survey book." Arguably, the field has been similarly myopic in its recognition of Latino artists. The limited avenues for African American artists has garnered some significant scholarship, including: Albert Boime, *The Art of Exclusion: Representing Blacks in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990); Robert F. Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984);

addressed such issues as oppression, wages, or the separation of the domestic from the public sphere, or that expressed the (subjective) view of any modern ethnic identity or sexual identity other than the straight and male, was necessarily doomed by its ‘literary’ premises to ‘minor’ status.”²⁰⁹ In this way, the literature on Abstract Expressionism supports Lerma’s view that the content he incorporated into his paintings, consciously and unconsciously, also kept him separate from the period’s strictest definitions of “quality.” Thus, Lerma developed a consciousness of his outsider status, but instead of being deterred, increasingly relied on his Mexican American identity as a source of inspiration.

LUIS CERVANTES

Cervantes experienced a similar trajectory to Lerma. He partly was inspired by a teacher at San Francisco State who said, “Look into your roots, into your blood lines for inspiration.” Though his paintings were abstract, the shapes and the colors began to reflect his indigenous heritage. His mandala paintings mimicked the experience of being at the top and center of ancient pyramids, and the hot colors paid homage to the works of the famed Mexican muralists of the 1930s and ‘40s, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, and Rufino Tamayo [Fig. 2.10; Fig. 2.11].²¹⁰

Arguably, in taking the widespread advice of Abstract Expressionism, to paint one’s

²⁰⁹ Gibson, *Abstract Expressionism*, xxviii; For the classic account of the “triumph” of Abstract Expressionism, see: Sandler, *The Triumph of American Painting*. Also see the writings of Clement Greenberg, including *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961).

²¹⁰ Luis Cervantes, notes to the author, 2005.

inner-self, or most primordial incarnation, required Cervantes to announce an identity that automatically excluded him from “American” art. His mandala paintings reflected his desire to pay homage to his indigenous heritage, and thereby undercut the necessary detachment of Abstract Expressionism.

However, Cervantes’ mandala paintings also corresponded with the psychedelic iconography of the Op Art movement. Albright writes of Cervantes that “he was one of the earliest (c. 1965) to concentrate on the mandala form; in his work, the mandala occupied fields that emphasized repeated geometric patterns in intense Op art colors.”²¹¹ The mandala could easily correspond to indigenous and contemporary aesthetics, and was indicative of Cervantes comfort with both these elements of his painting. Cervantes was inspired by the introduction of light and sound shows to the Bay Area art scene in the mid-1950s, especially through the work of his mentor Seymour Locks. Cervantes recalled a class on “Light movement, space, and color,” in which Locks handed out all sorts of toys and asked the class to explore sound: “Toot, toot, or bang, bang, or whatever. And everybody was just sort of reticent. So he says, ‘okay, I’m going to put the light out.’ And in the dark, we all started to jam.”²¹² Locks then led the class in a similar exercise with light: “we brought in a whole bunch of flashlights, and in the dark, we flashed them around, and then he would put things in front, maybe like a bottle, and it would throw the image on the walls and things like that.”²¹³

Not long thereafter, Cervantes began to connect the art of manufacturing light and sound with the everyday beauty of light and sound in life. A trip to the beach was

²¹¹ Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area*, 267.

²¹² Cervantes interview by author, April 2, 2003.

transformative: “I could feel the sunlight on me. ... And I could feel the weight of my body ... and the waves ... fish jumping out, and the seagulls were floating around.... It was like the illumination of the outside connected with some internal illumination inside and bonded. And from that moment on, it was like I was a different person.”²¹⁴ He associates the “Zen” moment with his gradual transition from amorphic sculptures to his highly formal painting. When financial circumstances forced Cervantes to leave the Art Institute, Cervantes continued to balance these two aesthetics in his art, both by painting and developing “found art” sculptures in the studio he shared with Palomino and Joe White. Gradually, however, his work became far more structured and deeply tied to the resonance of light, or what he called “geometric abstraction.” The term is well-suited to one of his earliest paintings, “A Gift for the Darkness,” which he subsequently exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The luminescence of Cervantes’s paintings also drew energy from his desire to restore the beauty of life, after the trauma of serving in World War II. Like Lerma in Korea, Cervantes was deeply affected by his experience as an American soldier in Europe. In Antwerp, he saw an intersection of cobblestone streets blown apart by a rocket blast: “it had raised the ground up and separated the cobblestones.” The memory left a haunting impression. For Cervantes, “Some of the things that I do are sort of based on those little square things.... It was an art form that was created by this blast. It looked beautiful, but at the same time, it was just this disastrous thing.”²¹⁵ The geometric

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ Cervantes interview, April 2, 2003.



Fig. 2.10: Luis Cervantes, “Sunrise Over Palenque,” 2003. Photograph by Susan Kelk Cervantes, used with permission.

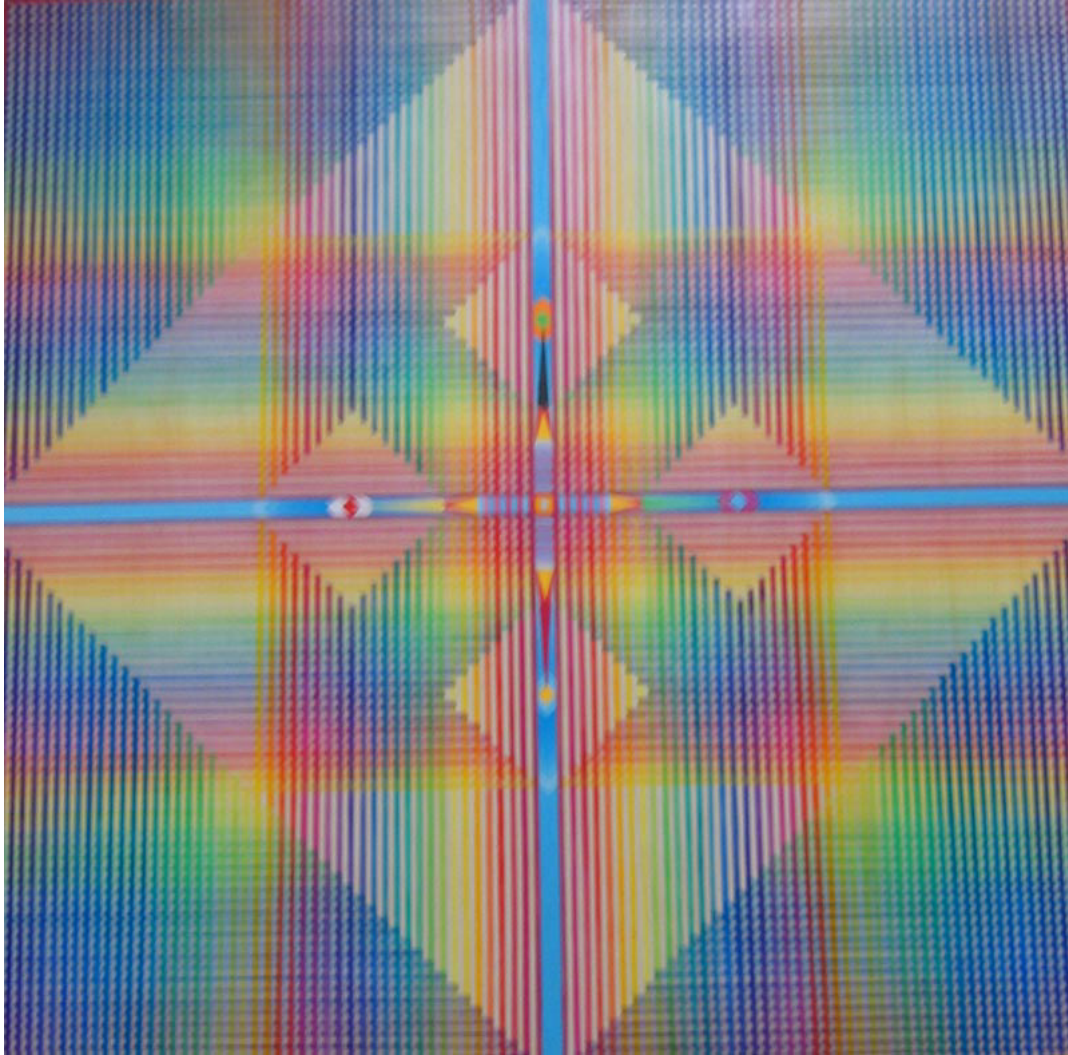


Fig. 2.11: Luis Cervantes, Untitled, c. 1984. Image partly cropped and cocked. Photograph by Cary Cordova.

simplicity of Cervantes's style might be read as minimalist abstraction, but it also resonated with the deeply personal, emotional content of his experience as a soldier. Always aware of their outsider status, both Lerma and Cervantes still cited the freedom they experienced in abstract art as one of its most enticing features, in part because it helped them resolve their emotions as veterans. The experience of war was a driving force behind the subject matter of these and other emerging artists of the period.²¹⁶

TENSIONS AHEAD: ABSTRACT ART AND CHICANO ART

While Lerma and Cervantes flourished in the creative environs of the city, they never quite fit the categories that might give their work higher profile: they were not Beats and they were not Chicano artists, at least not in the strictest definitions. Lerma, Cervantes, and many other Mexican American or Latino painters who gravitated to abstract painting found themselves in opposition to the subsequent political sensibilities of the Chicano movement in the late 1960s.²¹⁷ In particular, the elitism associated with abstract art would become divisive in the later arts movement of the Mission District, where socially-conscious art for the people was the dominant trend.

Many would later argue for “Chicano Art” as a means of voicing the struggles of the poor, the oppressed, and the Left. Chicano artists stridently expressed their concerns

²¹⁶ Landauer, *The San Francisco School*, 124; Albright, *Reflections*, 14.

²¹⁷ Other Latino painters struggled with this tension, including Carlos Loarca, Jerry Concha, and Rolando Castellón. The latter served as curator for *Mano a Mano: Abstraction / Figuration, 16 Mexican-American & Latin-American Painters from the San Francisco Bay Area* (Santa Cruz, CA: The Art Museum of Santa Cruz County and University of California, Santa Cruz, 1988). The goal of the exhibit was “to rectify, at the

about the threat of “bourgeois” or abstract art. In 1980, artists Malaquias Montoya and Leslie Salkowitz-Montoya presented their concerns in a short but influential article entitled, “A Critical Perspective on the State of Chicano Art.” For the Montoyas, a crisis loomed at that time in the co-optation of Chicano art into the mainstream, as they witnessed more “Chicano Art” appearing in museums, galleries, and cultural centers without the necessary political content. The application of terms like “Chicano,” and “Raza” in these venues subsumed the voice of protest into an art contest of individual aesthetic accomplishment, rather than a call for action. According to the Montoyas, “The expression of the struggle of ‘nuestra Raza’ began to dissolve. ... many Chicanos started to emulate Anglo society and thus started to divert the Movement and what was basic to it.” They added critically, “Chicano Art became anything created by persons with a Spanish surname.” While the Montoyas then stated that “a definition of ‘Chicano Art’ was never intended because to have done so would have restricted the artist,” their writing clearly advocated a definition of “Chicano Art” that stood in defiance of elitism.²¹⁸ Mexican American artists who practiced abstract art most assuredly did not fit into the philosophical visions that dominated “Chicano art.”

regional level, the lack of recognition given to existing abstractionist tendencies in Chicano and Latin-American art.” (6)

²¹⁸ Malaquias Montoya And Leslie Salkowitz-Montoya. “A Critical Perspective on the State of Chicano Art.” *Metamorfosis*. 1980, p. 3-7.

CONCLUSION: PERSISTENCE AND CHANGE, THE 1950S AND BEYOND

The life stories of Luis Cervantes, Ernie Palomino, and José Ramón Lerma exemplify a lifetime commitment to art, though the context of their creativity changed over time. In the 1950s and early '60s, each was moving in and out of various Bay Area art schools, including the San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco State College, the College of Marin, and Oakland's College of Arts and Crafts. Taking a cue from the Beat galleries on Union Street, Lerma co-founded the Russian Hill Gallery in 1959, while Cervantes and Palomino co-founded the New Mission Gallery in 1962, the first contemporary art gallery in the neighborhood.²¹⁹ In 1970, Cervantes became a co-founder of the Galería de la Raza, San Francisco's definitive visual arts gallery dedicated to Latino art, while Palomino became a professor of art at California State University, Fresno. Over the course of the 1970s and '80s, both Cervantes and Palomino contributed significantly to the community mural movement – Cervantes, by virtue of his common-law marriage to Susan Kelk Cervantes and her leadership of the Precita Eyes mural center [Fig. 2.12], and Palomino, by virtue of his mural activism in California's Central

²¹⁹ John Natsoulas et al, *The Spatsa Gallery, 1958-1961* (Davis, CA: Natsoulas / Novelozo Gallery, January 11-February 3, 1991), 27.



Fig. 2.12: Luis Cervantes painting a mural, mid-1990s. Photograph by Susan Kelk Cervantes.

Valley.²²⁰ Over those same years, Lerma remained devoted to creating and showing new work in various Bay Area galleries, but preferred to distance himself from the cultural nationalism of the Chicano movement and the Latino-centered arts movement in the Mission. The experiences of these three artists underscore the importance of the 1950s as a springboard for future activity, although they received little support at the time and their efforts subsequently were obscured by the dramatic arts awakening of the late 1960s.

The personal resonance of abstraction led Lerma and Cervantes to persist in their abstract painting, though the opportunities for recognition were limited. Their decision was not an unwitting desire to participate in a colonizing art form, but a struggle to make that art form their own. As David Craven argues, “any visual language in the arts should thus be understood as a locus for competing cultural traditions along with diverse aesthetic concerns and divergent ideological values. Hence, any artwork, regardless of how much it is publicly identified with one class or society, also signifies not only for dominant sectors but also for dominated classes and different class fractions.” Craven develops this argument to complicate the scholarship that reduces the popularity of Abstract Expressionism in Latin America to the acceptance of U.S. cultural nationalism.²²¹ In essence, only seeing Abstract Expressionism as symptomatic of

²²⁰ Estrella, “Luis Cervantes – muralist who inspired generations of artists”; On Palomino, see, Jacinto Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists* (Austin, TX: University of Texas at Austin, 1973), 98; Shifra M. Goldman, “How, Why, Where, and When it All Happened: Chicano Murals of California,” in *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals*, eds., Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 41.

²²¹ David Craven, *Abstract Expressionism as Cultural Critique: Dissent During the McCarthy Period* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 17. Craven is responding to Eva Cockcroft, Serge Guilbaut, T.J. Clark, and Michael Leja’s social histories of art, which he sees as useful, but also diminishing of the individual context and variegated meanings of the genre. Instead, Craven aligns himself with Latin American critics Juan Acha and Marta Traba, who dismiss reading Abstract Expressionism in

American colonialism diminishes the agency of Latin Americans *and* Latinos, who bring their experiences to the form.

Palomino, Lerma, and Cervantes experienced a persistent consciousness of their “outsider” status throughout their time in the avant-garde scene of the 1950s and ‘60s. Perhaps nothing heightened this sensibility more than visits home to working-class families, where studying art was viewed as having little practical application. Never deterred, their art work was a product of all aspects of their lives, including their experiences in Beat culture and their Mexican American identity. In fact, one could argue that their crazy, piled-high, sculptural assemblages were well in character with the Chicano “rasquache” aesthetic of making do with anything and everything that scholar Tomas Ybarra-Frausto famously has defined.²²² Even so, the split between their self-definition and the aesthetic expectations of the Chicano movement produced an insurmountable generation gap, at least for Cervantes and Lerma.

In essence, the Chicano movement forced a new assessment of artistic responsibility for all generations of Latino artists in the United States. While Palomino was gratified to find a community that finally could support his sense of difference, Cervantes and Lerma remained more ambivalent. Cervantes said, “I wasn’t interested in what was happening in painting Pancho Villa and all these kinds of images that are supposedly Mexican or Latino or whatever. And my work was so far off the wall ... I

Latin America only as a form of U.S. cultural ascendancy and dominance. Also see Craven’s article, “Abstract Expressionism and Third World Art,” *Oxford Art Journal*.

²²² Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, “Rasquachismo: A Chicano Sensibility,” in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985*, eds., Richard Griswold del Castillo, et al. (Los Angeles, CA: Wight Art Gallery, University of California Los Angeles, 1991), 155-62.

wanted to create work ... more spiritual in quality.”²²³ While Cervantes maintained relations with younger artists and participated in the founding of Galería de la Raza, he never fully integrated into the new Latino arts movement, or the more mainstream business of the art world. Lerma was even more separatist from the Chicano movement in his emphasis on producing “American” art. He did not deny his background as the son of two Mexican immigrants, but he, too, disliked the emphasis on pictorial representation and blatant political messaging that often defined Chicano art. Moreover, Lerma quibbled with the desire of others to claim him as an early “Chicano” artist: “I personally feel that for me to be called a Chicano artist ... stifles me.”²²⁴

Lerma’s attitude is indicative of why he has proved a difficult artist to categorize. Jim Scully writes diplomatically, “It should be noted, given the revival of identity or tribal politics among many socially oriented artists, that in [Lerma’s] work ‘Latino’ and ‘American’ are not discrete cultures but interwoven strands of a singular cultural complex. He is not an ethnic artist – in the sense of one devoted to memorializing, reconstructing, or asserting an ethnicity – but an artist of the contemporary, *whatever that may involve*.”²²⁵ Though Lerma found aesthetic inspiration in his ethnic heritage, he kept his distance from the ethnic-centered groups that might have given him the greatest visibility. Similarly, these groups were alienated by his arrogance and his aesthetic. These tensions, while extreme, highlight the generational split that gradually emerged between artists who came of age in the 1950s versus those who came of age in the 1960s.

²²³ Cervantes interview by author, April 2, 2003.

²²⁴ Lerma interview by author, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.

²²⁵ Scully, “José Ramón Lerma.”

The Chicano Movement preferred to bury the “colonized” activities of Mexican American artists, while the avant-garde rarely noticed their presence. Perhaps the greatest problem with these cultural borders is the perceived absence of Mexican American artists working in the 1950s. While these artists may not be the icons of “Chicano heroes” overturning the avant-garde, they do reflect a history and presence that challenges the Anglo-centrism of American art and Beat culture in the 1950s. Consciously or not, Latino artists in San Francisco found inspiration in the avant-garde bohemia and alternative galleries of the 1950s. The Latino arts scene in the Mission District simultaneously drew on and rejected this history.

Not only were many Latino artists inspired by the expansive intellectual and aesthetic community of the 1950s and early ‘60s, but some of them, guided by these experiences, would become significant participants in the Mission District arts scene of the late 1960s and ‘70s. Though the influence of the Beats was pervasive on later cultural production throughout the city, this thread of continuity has been recognized more in the context of the Haight-Ashbury’s Anglo-centric hippie culture than in terms of the Third World arts movement.²²⁶ The rise of alternative art galleries in the 1950s provided a model for San Francisco’s ethnically-separatist art galleries in the late 1960s and ‘70s. In fact, one of the first incarnations of Galería de la Raza was called Artes 6

²²⁶ “Back in the mid-‘50’s, everyone was talking about San Francisco as the center of a new Renaissance—of literature, art, and jazz ... Ten years later, the action shifts from Grant Avenue to Haight Street, and history seemingly repeats itself, but more so Almost everyone seems to take for granted a certain link between the ‘Beat’ era of the ‘50s and the ‘Hip’ generation of today, if only for the sake of contrast.” Thomas Albright, “San Francisco’s Rolling Renaissance,” in *San Francisco Underground Art in Celebration: 1945-1968* (San Francisco, CA: Intersection, Center for Religion and the Arts, Second Edition, 1976), 3-10 (3).

(pron. “Seis”), in honor of the famed Six Gallery.²²⁷ Latino artists were as inspired as anyone else by the city’s historic counterculture, but their presence in that counterculture often was subsumed by the various categories they did not fit. In San Francisco, the Beats movement did not spontaneously appear, nor did it just vanish. Likewise, Latino artists did not suddenly just appear in the late 1960s. Latino artists had been working in the United States for generations, but the identity and visibility of Latino artists was about to undergo a massive shift.

²²⁷ Artes 6 is discussed in more detail in a later chapter. The Six Gallery was named for its six founders: visual artists Wally Hedrick, Hayward King, Deborah Remington, David Simpson, and poets John Allen Ryan and Jack Spicer.

Chapter Three

‘La Raza Unida’: Pan-Latino Art and Culture in 1960s San Francisco



Fig. 3.1: Graphic from the Mission District newspaper *El Tecolote*, November 30, 1970, 1. No attribution, but most likely, created by Ralph Maradiaga, who also created the paper’s masthead and developed other images in this vein.

As artist Yolanda Lopez once remarked, “I think that one of the illusions that exists about the sixties is that when we all declared ourselves Chicanos that we were homogeneous in our outlooks, that we all had the same political line, that there was a commonality as to where we were going and how we were going to do it. And that was not so.”²²⁸ The Chicano Movement of the late 1960s linked Mexican Americans across the country in a political struggle. In essence, aligning as Chicanos, or as “La Raza de Bronze,” was the key to political power and cultural capital.²²⁹ However, demographics played a critical role in shaping the movement’s emphasis, since community organizing in locations where Mexican Americans did not dominate the Latino population, including San Francisco, New York, Miami, and Washington, D.C., constantly challenged the

²²⁸ Yolanda Lopez, Conference Session 1, UC Santa Cruz, April 16, 1982, transcript, Califas Book 1, 45, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

²²⁹ Chicano activists produced “El Plan de Aztlán” at the National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado in 1969. This high-profile manifesto for activism uses the term, “La Raza de Bronze [sic]” in *Documents of the Chicano Struggle* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 4-6 (4). On the Chicano movement, see: Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval, eds., *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997); and Peter Matthiessen, *Sal Si Puedes: Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution* (1969; reprint, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); For more on the Raza Unida party, see: Armando Navarro, *A Raza Unida Party: A Chicano Challenge to the U.S. Two-party Dictatorship* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000); and, José Angel Gutierrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant: Lessons from Cristal* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998). For more on the Tierra Amarilla land grant struggle, see: Reies Lopez Tijerina, *They called me ‘King Tiger’: My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, translated by José Angel Gutierrez (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2000). On the Crusade for Justice, see Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, *Message to Aztlan: Selected Writings of Rodolfo ‘Corky’ Gonzales*, compiled by Antonio Esquibel (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2001); and, Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government’s War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999). On the Chicano blowouts, see, Ian F. Haney Lopez, *Racism on Trial: the Chicano Fight for Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003). More general histories include, Francisco Arturo Rosales, *Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1996); Carlos Muñoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London; New York: Verso, 1989); Ignacio Garcia, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997), and Ernesto Chavez, *‘Mi Raza Primero!’ Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles, 1966-1978* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

nationalist perspective of the Chicano Movement with the need for a broader “Latino” or “Raza” orientation.

In this chapter I show how artists in San Francisco sought to create a “Raza movement” and “Raza art,” a culture and art reflective of pan-Latino identities in the United States. In describing San Francisco community organizing, Shifra Goldman notes that it “has been multinational as well as multiracial. The term *raza* (our people) used in northern California refers to the mix of peoples from Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Brazil, as well as Mexicans and Chicanos.”²³⁰ In San Francisco, “Raza” was far more inclusive than the “Raza de Bronze” of the Chicano movement.²³¹ At the same time, as Laurie Kay Sommers points out, “Although San Francisco may represent ‘a mosaic of Latin America’ in terms of population, Mexican dominance elsewhere in the state still influences the cultural dynamics of the Bay Area.”²³² In prioritizing a more inclusive “Raza” identity, San Francisco Latinos facilitated local organizing, but at times, found themselves out of step with the Mexican American perspective of the Chicano movement, both ideologically and aesthetically.²³³

²³⁰ Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 164. Also see, Carlos B. Cordova, “The Mission District: The Ethnic Diversity of the Latin American Enclave in San Francisco, Calif.,” *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989.

²³¹ I have opted to capitalize the term “Raza” in recognition of its significance as an ethnic label akin to Chicano or Latino, except when quoting from others who chose not to.

²³² Laurie Kay Sommers, “Symbol and Style in Cinco de Mayo,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 98 (October 1985), 476-482.

²³³ In major cities such as San Francisco, New York, Miami, and Washington, D.C., community organizing centered more around Central American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Latino or Raza identities. Helpful in outlining their individual struggles are the following texts: on New York, see, Agustin Lao-Montes and Arlene Davila, eds., *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Miguel “Mickey” Melendez, *We Took the Streets: Fighting for Latino Rights with the Young Lords* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2003); and, Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island & in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002). For Florida, see: Maria Cristina Garcia, *Havana USA: Cuban exiles and Cuban Americans in South*

Indeed, the aesthetics of the movement, like the politics, was profoundly influenced by place. Across the nation, the Chicano movement spurred a cultural renaissance of writers, artists, poets, and performers, who sought to identify a shared heritage and chart a future direction. Art was integral to the Chicano movement. According to the Chicano manifesto of 1969, “El Plan de Aztlán,” “we must insure that our writers, poets, musicians, and artists produce literature and art that is appealing to our people and relates to our revolutionary culture.”²³⁴ The period initiated the exploration of a new art form, a “Chicano art” representing “political and ethnic themes.”²³⁵ Inherent in Chicano art was the desire to solidify a collective identity and politically mobilize the community through an accessible iconography. However, San Francisco’s pervasive affinity for abstract and avant-garde art; Latin American and Spanish literature and theatre; and, pan-Latino festivals, signaled a regional “Raza art” slant on a national

Florida, 1959-1994 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Gustavo Perez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994); Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993). The literature on Washington, D.C. is less extensive, but helpful is: Olivia Cadaval, *Creating a Latino identity in the Nation's Capital: the Latino Festival* (New York: Garland Pub., 1998).

²³⁴ Chicano activists produced “El Plan de Aztlán” at the National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado in 1969. This high-profile manifesto for activism uses the term, “La Raza de Bronze [sic]” in *Documents of the Chicano Struggle* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 4-6 (6).

²³⁵ The preface to the 1991 CARA exhibition states, “A distinct art arose from the dynamic interdependent relationship between the Movimiento (the Chicano civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s) and a significant segment of the artistic community of Americans of Mexican descent, and that this art has been identified by its creators and participants as ‘Chicano.’” Also in the catalogue, Shifra M. Goldman and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto loosely define Chicano art as with “political and ethnic themes,” in “The Political and Social Contexts of Chicano Art,” in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985*, 83-95. Also see, Sylvia Gorodesky, *Arte Chicano Como Cultura de Protesta / Chicano Art as Protest Culture* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1993); Manuel Martínez, “The Art of the Chicano Movement and the Movement of Chicano Art,” in *Aztlán: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature*, eds., Luis Valdez and Stan Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 349-353; Alicia Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art: Inside / Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the CARA Exhibition* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998); and, Cheech Marin, *Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 2002).

movement. In fact, the dominant narrative of the Chicano movement in many ways obscures the simultaneous creation of a Latino arts movement.

This chapter traces the beginnings of a Latino arts enclave in San Francisco's Mission District and documents the initial institutions and ad hoc groups that facilitated its growth. Latino cultural organizations had a long history in the United States, but a new ideological and aesthetic orientation emerged in the late 1960s.²³⁶ In San Francisco, a cadre of homegrown and transplanted intellectuals inspired by the United Farm Workers and the Civil Rights movement turned to the Mission District barrio as a place to engage the meaning of being Latino in the United States. Artists created various institutions and cultural organizations to coordinate their efforts: Casa Hispana de Bellas Arts, the Mexican American Liberation Art Front (in Oakland), Arte del Barrio, Artes 6, and the Galería de la Raza. In documenting the history of these efforts, I not only investigate their diverse political and aesthetic orientations, but I also convey the often overlooked regional dynamics of a national movement. Ultimately, taking a cue from Yolanda Lopez, rather than suggest the late 1960s was a period of cohesiveness among Chicanos or Latinos, the period, more accurately, was marked by profound debates and provocative divisions that contributed to the intellectual and aesthetic ferment.

²³⁶ Latino arts organizations in the United States were not new. Cynthia E. Orozco points out, "In the twentieth century numerous Mexican art and culture institutions flourished in the 1910-1930 period when the United States received its largest wave of Mexican immigration." See her article, "Chicano and Latino Art and Culture Institutions in the Southwest: The Politics of Space, Race, and Money" in *Latinos in Museums: A Heritage Reclaimed*, eds., Antonio Ríos-Bustamante and Christine Marin (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1998), 95-107 (96). Orozco notes, "despite the emergence of several thousand Latino art and culture organizations from 1965 to 1995, most have folded." (96) For an extensive list of the many arts groups, cultural centers, and theatrical troupes forming during this period, see the helpful "Appendix: Catalog of Grupos, Centros, and Teatros," featured in the *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation* (CARA) exhibition catalogue, eds., Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa Mckenna, and Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1991).

LATINIZATION OF THE MISSION

Art historian Jacinto Quirarte, a former Mission District resident, described his neighborhood prior to World War II: “The Mission District was not all Latino then. There were very few. I remember meeting a few Central Americans for the first time in my life. A few Hispanic-Americans . . . people who had gone there from New Mexico. But there wasn’t the kind of enormous Latino community that you have in San Francisco now.”²³⁷ The more visible shift emerged with the impact of the post-World War II housing boom, the shuffling effects of other communities, and continuously strong immigration from Latin America.

A variety of factors played a role in changing the dynamics of Mission District demographics. For instance, Mexicans and Mexican Americans displaced from the South of Market and Latin Quarter gravitated to this more inland neighborhood. In addition, a strong Nicaraguan population had settled to the west of the Mission, in Noe Valley and the Castro during the 1930s. According to Carlos Cordova, a large number of Nicaraguans came to the city just prior to, or in the wake of, the 1934 assassination of revolutionary leader Augusto Sandino. Most were sympathetic, or active, supporters of Sandino, and with the ensuing rise to power of right-wing dictator Anastasio Somoza, were unable to return to their home country for the next forty years.²³⁸ These earlier

²³⁷ Jacinto Quirarte, interview by Paul J. Karlstrom, Helotes, TX, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, August 15-16, 1996.

²³⁸ Carlos Cordova, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 5, 2003.

communities were important in establishing strong neighborhood migration networks, composed of family, friends, and even friends of friends.

In the 1960s, the Mission District experienced a heightened “Latinization” process similar to urban communities across the country. The post-World War II increase of immigration from Latin America was an important contribution to the changing dynamics of American cities and suburbs.²³⁹ In 1950, San Francisco counted 51,602 Hispanics, or seven percent of the city’s population. In 1960, the numbers practically doubled to 101,901 Hispanics, or fourteen percent of the city’s population. By 1970, Hispanics comprised forty-five percent of the Mission District population, a dramatic increase that affirmed the neighborhood’s public reputation as “El Corazón,” or the heart, of San Francisco’s Latino community.²⁴⁰

Simultaneously, Majorie Heins observes, “In a short time the Mission district acquired many of the characteristics of a ghetto.” Since the Mission’s real estate market

²³⁹ Carlos Cordova, “The Mission District”; Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco’s Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988); Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1983); Raul Homero Villas, *Barrio-Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000); Laó-Montes and Davila, *Mambo Montage*; Arlene Davila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos and the Neoliberal City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Hector R. Cordero-Guzman, Robert C. Smith, and Ramon Grosfoguel, eds., *Migration, Transnationalization, and Race in a Changing New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Juan Flores, *Divided Borders: Essays on Puerto Rican Identity* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1993); Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*; Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. Cities* (New York: Verso, 2000); Sarah J. Mahler, *Salvadorans in Suburbia: Symbiosis and Conflict* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1995); On Los Angeles, see: George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Robert Alvarez, “Mexican Entrepreneurs and Markets in the City of Los Angeles: The Case of an Immigrant Enclave,” *Urban Anthropology* 19 (1990): 99-125.

²⁴⁰ Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*, 97; 150. According to Godfrey, Hispanics were 45 percent of the total Mission District population, but 52 percent of the “Mission District core.” Of course, the Census figures obscure the presence of illegal immigrants who seek not to be noticed or counted. Manuel Castell’s Mission District demographics vary slightly: “Latins” composed 42 percent of the total district, and 55 percent of the “inner Mission.” Castells, *The City and the Grassroots*, 352. Raul Homero Villas

was, and still is, composed primarily of rented apartment space, the post-war “white flight” exodus of long-time residents to buy houses elsewhere contributed to an extended period of economic decline.²⁴¹ Heins reports, “according to the 1960 U.S. census, twenty percent of the Mission’s residents had incomes under \$3,000.” Quality of the housing was poor, unemployment was high, and city concern was low.²⁴² Though poverty was an indelible fact of Mission life in the early 1960s, the representations of “urban blight” also served to “Other” the neighborhood, rather than recognize the ongoing creation of a culturally rich neighborhood.

Though many consciously avoided the Mission, the area’s cheaper rents and the steady increase of goods and services geared to Spanish-speaking immigrants and natives attracted a high concentration of low-income residents in the post-War period. The neighborhood drew together diverse ethnic groups of Mexicans, Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Salvadoreans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Peruvians, Chileans, and their “assimilated” American counterparts. In his essay on the Mission’s Latino populations, Carlos Cordova emphasized the plurality of the community: “Important variances can be observed in the cultural, socioeconomic, historical, environmental, and political factors that determine the different Latin American national identities. This diversity may be observed in their linguistic structure and its popular language usage, ethnic plurality in the population, inter-ethnic relations, socioeconomic structure, as well as historical and

provides a more general description of this process of “barrioization.” See, *Barrio-Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000), 4-5.

²⁴¹ Castells, p. 407n.79: “In 1975, 85 percent of Inner Mission residents were renters.”

²⁴² Majorie Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property: The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1972), 25.

political traditions of the various Latin American regions.”²⁴³ Often, the rest of the city perceived of a homogenous group of “Latinos,” but nothing could have been further from the truth. Unification across cultures did occur, but it was not seamless. At times, nationalism took precedence. At other times, community members sought common ground in the formation of a pan-Latino or Raza identity.

In the 1960s, inspired by the civil rights movement, activists and artists attempted to redefine the economic and cultural status of the Mission District and other low-income communities across the country. In San Francisco, the adoption of a Raza identity united a diverse population, facilitated community organizing, and affirmed the value of Latino cultures. Casa Hispana was one of many such organizations in the nation seeking to revitalize the Mission District community and inspire social uplift, though its history also reflected its San Francisco environs.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ Cordova, “The Mission District.”

²⁴⁴ Various grassroots service organizations began to appear in the Mission, including Mission Rebels in Action (1964-2005); Horizons Unlimited (1965-); Arriba Juntos (1965-); the Mission Coalition Organization (1967-1974); the Mission Hiring Hall (1971-); the Mission Language and Vocational School (1962-); and the Mission Neighborhood Health Center (1970-). A “Community Involvement Program” at San Francisco State also targeted the Mission. See, William Barlow and Peter Shapiro, *An End to Silence: The San Francisco State College Student Movement in the ‘60s* (New York: Pegasus, 1971), 62-75; “Jesse James: October 6, 1928-May 31, 2005,” *El Tecolote*, June 16, 2005, 8; “About Horizons,” <http://horizons-sf.org/english/about.html>; “Welcome to Arriba Juntos,” <http://www.arribajuntos.org/>; on the Mission Coalition Organization see Castells, *The City and the Grassroots*, 109-117; “MLVS: About us,” <http://www.mlvs.org/aboutus.htm>; “Mission Hiring Hall,” <http://www.missionhiringhall.org/about/>; “Mission Neighborhood Health Center,” <http://www.sfccc.org/sfcccclinics/mnhc.htm>, all sites accessed on August 15, 2005.

BELLAS ARTES IN THE MISSION

As Alicia Gaspar de Alba emphasizes, “The artists who affiliated with the Chicano Art Movement did not identify themselves as Mexican Americans, Latinos, or Hispanics, but as *Chicanos* whose work expressed resistance to the hegemonic structures of mainstream America...”²⁴⁵ Given this point, Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes in San Francisco did not fit with the objectives of the Chicano movement, though the organization emerged at the same time and drew on a similar wave of energy. Founded in 1966, Casa Hispana’s mission statement declared the need to represent the richness of “Hispanic” cultures to audiences throughout the Bay Area. Motivated by an interest in Spanish-language theatre, the collective quickly grew to advocate for art in various forms from all parts of Latin America and Spain, including music, dance, visual art, poetry, and drama. Casa Hispana’s name and programs were indicative of a wide appreciation for Hispanic culture and high art (Bellas Artes), which was not in keeping with the nationalist ideology or stereotyped aesthetics of the Chicano movement.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art*, 8

²⁴⁶ The group first went by the name Co-Mission Bellas Artes, according to an anonymous “information sheet,” undated, in the Francisco Camplís collection, California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA), UC Santa Barbara [Here on, noted as CEMA], Box 1/3. On the antagonism produced by celebrating Spanish culture, see, Joseph A. Rodriguez, “Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (Summer, 1998), 165-185. Discussing a festival in San Jose, Rodriguez writes, “Chicano opposition to the fiesta reflected criticism of what is termed the ‘Spanish myth.’ Historically, Anglos used the myth to obscure the Mexican heritage of the Southwest. They myth originated in the 1890s, as southwestern urban boosters, like Los Angeles journalist Charles Fletcher Lummis, celebrated the Spanish colonial era to provide the region with a romantic history appealing to tourists and real estate developers” (167). Also see, Carey McWilliams, *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States* (1948; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1990). On the prevalent (and therefore stereotypical) images in Chicano art, see, Shifra M. Goldman, “The Iconography of Chicano Self-Determination: Race, Ethnicity, and Class,” *College Art Journal* 49 (Summer 1990), 167-173

The Hispanic perspective may explain why so little of Casa Hispana's history has been recorded.²⁴⁷ But as the seed organization for the widely influential Galería de la Raza, described in detail later, Casa Hispana played a critical role in the establishment of Chicano and Latino arts in the Bay Area. Moreover, Casa Hispana launched a Latino Youth Arts Workshop, a bilingual publishing collective (Casa Editorial), and multiple "Hispanic" festivals, including the first public celebration of Día de los Muertos in San Francisco.²⁴⁸ If anything, the lack of documentation on Casa Hispana signals the need to dig deeper into 1960s social movement history and to recognize the stories that might be buried in the not so distant past.

While Casa Hispana lasted nearly two decades (1966-1983), it was less radical than many of its contemporaries and initially had few, if any, Chicano members: Amilcar Lobos, a Guatemalan poet and actor, served as the first director of Casa Hispana, joined by, in alphabetical order, Julio Benitez (Guatemalan); Ester Chioffalo (Argentinean);

²⁴⁷ While Casa Hispana is sometimes noted as a generative force behind Galería de la Raza, little depth has been given to its development in past accounts of Bay Area or Chicano / Latino history. Don Santina writes, "Casa has been lost in the official (such as they are) histories of the period." E-mail to the author, October 7, 2004. His claim does not seem far-fetched. References in secondary sources to Casa Hispana have been scarce. Shifra Goldman makes passing reference to Casa Hispana in "How, Why, Where, and When it all Happened: Chicano Murals of California," in *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals*, eds., Eva Sperling Cockcroft & Holly Barnet-Sánchez, (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), but no reference appears in Goldman's *Dimensions of the Americas*. No reference appears in the CARA exhibition. Most of the research on Casa Hispana in this article is compiled from archival research and oral history interviews. I am indebted to Don Santina for copies of his personal archive of Casa Hispana programs and articles. The primary sources he provided are here on identified as from the Santina archive.

²⁴⁸ "Latino Youth Art Workshop," brochure, c. 1969, Santina archive; Casa Editorial was launched in 1973 and published several books, including: Amilcar Lobos, *Quetzal: Poemas Representabales del Barrio San Francisco*, and Leland Mellott, *Ceremony for a Chicano Community Wedding*, a double volume (San Francisco: Glide Publications / Casa Editorial, 1973); Pilar Sanchez, *Symbols* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1974); Carol Lee Sanchez, *Conversations from the Nightmare* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975); Amilcar Lobos, *Portal a la Californiana: Prosopoeuario* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975); Dorinda Moreno, *La Mujer Es la Tierra: La Tierra da Vida* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975); and Rafael Jesus Gonzalez, *El Hacedor de Juegos / The Maker of Games* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1977).

Domingo Díaz (Dominican); Luis Echegoyen (Salvadoran); Waldo Esteva (Chilean); Carlos Loarca (Guatemalan); Carlos Solorio (Guatemalan); Maria Rosa Tranquilli (Argentinean); José Alberto Velasquez (El Salvador); and José Wigdor (Argentinean). Later, the group included Pedro Cáceres (Mexican); Francisco Camplís (Chicano); Rolando Castellón (Nicaraguan); Maruja Cid (Galician/Spanish American); Zoanne Harris (Anglo American); Leland Mellot (Anglo American); Isa Mura (Spanish Andalusian); Emilio Osta (Spanish Castellano); Tere Osta (Spanish Castellano); Carlos Pérez (Chicano); Carol Lee Sanchez (Native American); Pilar Sanchez (multi-ethnic Latino); Don Santina (Irish American); Maria “China” Tello (Peruvian); and Osvaldo Villazon (Bolivian).²⁴⁹ This list is far from complete, but does reflect the ethnic diversity of its participants and the cultivation of a Latino diaspora community in the Mission. From the beginning, the group catered to a pan-Latino approach, partly inspired by the diversity of its members.

When asked why the initial members selected the Mission as their home base, artist Carlos Loarca said, “Because we all spoke Spanish. We were all from Latin America.”²⁵⁰ For Loarca, the pan-Latino identity of the artists preordained their geographical location in a Latino neighborhood. The group began with regular meetings at the Mission’s popular La Rondalla restaurant, but gradually found more formal accommodations in the Mission Neighborhoods Center at 362 Capp Street. Their space

Galería de la Raza has long claimed responsibility for the first public celebration of Día de los Muertos. The history of this event is discussed in more detail in chapter six.

²⁴⁹ Carlos Loarca, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, April 8, 2003; Don Santina e-mail to author, October 1, 2004; Santina e-mail to author, August 15, 2005; Maria Tello e-mail to author, August 17, 2005; Loarca e-mail to author, August 18, 2005; This list is far from complete, but does reflect the diversity of the membership.

in an office of the Mission Adult Center was acceptable for meetings and classes, but less than ideal for exhibits or public performances. More often, Casa Hispana relied on the outdoor courtyard, or various local institutions, including UC Berkeley, the Julian Neighborhood Theatre, and San Francisco State University.²⁵¹ As a result, community outreach was not limited to the Mission, though the neighborhood provided an important climate for its activities.

Almost immediately, Casa Hispana members began the planning of cultural festivals as a means of affirming a shared Latino identity, showcasing their artistic talents, and connecting with the community. One of the first programs was held in honor of El Día de la Raza on October 12, 1966.²⁵² The celebration is often described as a Latin American Columbus Day, but its name has served as more of a tribute to the people of the “new world,” than a homage to a controversial European explorer.²⁵³ Artist Rolando Castellón has cited the importance of “La Raza” in an international, but indigenous sense, as “a term used to describe The New Race discovered in America by Christopher

²⁵⁰ Loarca interview, April 8, 2003.

²⁵¹ Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes marketing / information materials, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.

²⁵² Rudy Espinosa, “A Glow of Community Spirit Marks El Día de La Raza,” *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, October 31, 1971, 9; According to Laurie Kay Sommers, “Since the late 1960s, San Francisco has witnessed the creation of several Latino festivals that can be seen as a direct response to increasing Latinization of the community” in “Latinismo,” 38.

²⁵³ Rebecca Earle writes, “12 October, the date of Columbus’ 1492 arrival in the West Indies, had by the early twentieth century been declared an official holiday in many Spanish American countries, where it was celebrated as the Día de la Raza, in an implicit assertion that the Spanish American ‘race’ had an Iberian origin.” In “‘Padres de la Patria’ and the ancestral past: commemorations of independence in nineteenth-century Spanish America,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, (November 2002), 775-806. However, Carlos Morton argues, “It is interesting to note that in Latin America October 12, Columbus Day, is celebrated as El Día de la Raza (The Day of the Race), or the day when all of the races started ‘mixing,’ hence the origin of the term, ‘mestizaje.’ We do not honor the elitist ‘conquistador,’ but rather celebrate La Raza (The Family) as a whole.” In “Celebrating 500 Years of *Mestizaje*,” *MELUS* 16 (Fall 1989-1990), 20-22 (20).

Columbus.”²⁵⁴ Casa Hispana’s Día de la Raza grew into a major annual festival – the “Raza / Hispanidad” festival – with multiple associated events, including poetry readings, film viewings, lectures, art exhibits, and theatre.²⁵⁵

The program was significant in its attempt to consolidate the diversity of the community under the rhetoric of “la Raza.” Use of the term “Raza” had a long history in the Bay Area. As Tomas Sandoval points out, the Spanish-language media of the 1930s used the term to speak to the diversity of San Francisco’s population. *El Imparcial*, a local newspaper, was “the weekly paper of la raza, by la raza, and for la raza.” Similarly, radio station KGGC broadcast “La Voz de la Raza” five days a week.²⁵⁶ Raza linked Latinos together – in the Bay Area and elsewhere – in tenuous political and cultural solidarity. Much in the vein of Benedict Andersen’s discussion of a nation as an “imagined community” – a community that becomes real when people agree it is real – Raza served as an imagined community that diminished physical borders.²⁵⁷

From the late 1960s onward, the gradual creation or expansion of several major public festivals in the Mission, including Carnaval, Cinco de Mayo, Día de los Muertos, and Festival de las Americas, emphasized the pan-Latino identity of the neighborhood,

²⁵⁴ Rolando Castellón, “Mano a Mano: Abstraction/Figuration,” in *Mano a Mano: Abstraction/Figuration. 16 Mexican-American & Latin-American Painters from the San Francisco Bay Area*, exhibition catalogue, curator, Rolando Castellón (Santa Cruz, CA: The Art Museum of Santa Cruz County, April 17-June 5, 1988), 14, n.1.

²⁵⁵ Espinosa, “A Glow of Community.” An article announcing the Sixth Annual Raza/Hispanidad festival includes the “Latinamerican Folkloric Festival of Dance, Song, and Poetry,” an “anthropological exhibit from Mexico entitled ‘The Sacred Well of Chichen Itza,’ and ‘Arte del Barrio por Ninos.’” See, “Raza/Hispanidad,” *El Tecolote*, December 8, 1971, 2; “La Raza/Hispanidad Festival,” *City 6* (September 4-17, 1974), 44-45.

²⁵⁶ Tomas Sandoval, “Mission Stories, Latino Lives: The Making of San Francisco’s Latino Identity, 1945-1970,” Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002, 31.

²⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983; reprint, London; New York: Verso, 1991), 6.

even when they initially emerged from the desire to celebrate national origins. For instance, Laurie Kay Sommers discusses how Cinco de Mayo steadily shifted from a Mexican American event to a “Raza” event.²⁵⁸ In keeping with this “Raza” identity, Casa Hispana also established an annual September event to celebrate various Latin American independence days, including Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and El Salvador [Fig. 3.2]. The various events heightened cross-cultural solidarity, but did not necessarily submerge nationalities: traditions were frequently differentiated by country within an event.²⁵⁹

Most of Casa Hispana’s events drew together diverse artistic talent. Programs regularly included actors, dancers, singers, musicians, poets, and painters. The many events and classes featuring flamenco and jaleo (the passionate shouts that accompany flamenco) symbolized Casa Hispana’s interest in Spanish culture, but also reflected the many talented flamenco dancers and singers in the Bay Area [Fig. 3.2 and Fig. 3.3].²⁶⁰ According to artist Carlos Loarca, “We would have the program, for example, with the paintings. ... And then in the theatre come the flamenco to dance. ... And there were a couple of guys that dance tango and sing songs. ... And that’s how it started.”²⁶¹ The cross-pollination of artists in various disciplines was an important aspect of Mission District life. Regardless of specialization, artists could experiment in multiple mediums, and were exposed to a wide array of possibilities.

²⁵⁸ See Sommers, “Symbol and Style in Cinco de Mayo.” She reproduces some of this discussion with more analysis of Carnival and the 24th Street Festival in “Latinismo.”

²⁵⁹ The program for “Día de las Animas,” 1971, Santina archive, is representative of this approach, with separate narrators discussing national customs.

²⁶⁰ See chapter one; Also based on a telephone interview with Maruja Cid by author on October 22, 2004.

²⁶¹ Loarca interview, April 8, 2003.

¡¡ FIESTA!!! ¡¡ FIESTA!!!

☞ casa hispana de bellas
artes

mission adult center

☞ 362 capp

viernes 26 de septiembre

☞ 7-11 p. m.

homenaje a

• BRASIL • CHILE • COSTA
RICA • GUATEMALA • ☞
• HONDURAS • • MÉXICO •
• NICARAGUA • SALVADOR •

☞ POESÍA COMIDA

☞ DANZAS GUITARAS

JALEO ☞ JALEO

Fig. 3.2: Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes “fiesta” poster for an event to celebrate various independence days of Latin America, c. 1968. The event promises poetry, food, dance, guitars, and jaleo – shouts of encouragement (olé!) that accompany flamenco. Poster printed by the Neighborhood Arts Program. Poster provided by Don Santana.



Fig. 3.3: Casa Hispana flamenco classes announcement, Teresita Osta, instructor, c. 1969. Produced by Suzanne Mazurski at the Neighborhood Arts Program. Poster provided by Don Santina.

As part of its initial programs, Casa Hispana staged a series of Spanish-language dramas, including works by Federico Garcia Lorca, Alejandro Casona, and Rubén Darío [Fig. 3.4].²⁶² The selected playwrights are intriguing, perhaps indicative of a preference for Spanish authors and the general emphasis on Spanish culture in Casa Hispana, though the inclusion of the Nicaraguan Darío underscores the pan-Latino approach. In fact, Darío (1867-1916), having lived all over Latin America and written widely about the history of various countries in his poetry, was an ideal fit with the interests of Casa Hispana. As David Whisnant notes, “Most of the critical commentary on Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío has been called forth and shaped by his being a seminal pan-Latin American and an international literary figure.”²⁶³

Part of Lorca’s and Casona’s appeal likely rested in their role as supporters of a theatre for the people. In the early 1930s, with the establishment of the Second Republic in Spain, both Lorca (1898-1936) and Casona (1903-1965) had the opportunity to oversee government-sponsored traveling troupes; Lorca became director of “La Barraca” (The Hut), while Casona became director of “El Teatro del Pueblo” (Theatre of the People). Both playwrights approached difficult topics with an airy humor. They used farce and

²⁶² Casa Hispana information sheet, n.d.; and Casa Hispana newsletter, n.d., both in the Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3. Neither the title of the works by Lorca or Darío is known at this time. By Casona, Casa Hispana performed *Farsa y Justicia del Corregidor* (Farce and Justice of the Magistrate) and *Fablilla del Secreto Bien Guardado* (Fable of the Well Guarded Secret). Both Casona plays can be found in *El Caballero de las Espuelas de Oro; Retablo Jovial*, in Spanish, (1965; reprint, Madrid: Colección Austral, Espasa-Calpe, S.A., 1982).

²⁶³ David Whisnant, “Rubén Darío as a Focal Cultural Figure in Nicaragua: The Ideological Uses of Cultural Capital,” *Latin American Research Review* 27 (1992), 7-49 (7).



Fig. 3.4: Performance of “Tres Farsas de Alejandro Casona,” / “Three Farces by Alejandro Casona,” featuring, from left to right, Raul Colindrez (San Salvador), Ernesto Ferrari (Argentina), Carlos Loarca (Guatemala), Amilcar Lobos (Guatemala), and Julio Benitez (Guatemala). Photograph from *America*, August 25, 1967, 3. Original clipping from the collection of Carlos Loarca.

drama to challenge social norms. These playwrights were champions of bringing theatre to everyday people, which was part of the Casa Hispana mission. In fact, most of Casa Hispana's programs were offered free or for a minimal fee.

The choice of authors also was suggestive of a Left political orientation. As incisive social critics, both Lorca and Casona later became targets of Francisco Franco's totalitarian regime. Lorca was assassinated in 1936 and Casona fled into exile in 1937.²⁶⁴ While Lorca's writings were not always obviously political, his life was intimately connected with the hopes of the Spanish Republic, just as his death was inextricably tied to Franco's rise to power.²⁶⁵ Similarly, Eleanore Maxwell Dial ascribes part of the popularity of Casona's works in Mexico in the 1950s and 1960s to "sympathy for the cause of the Spanish Republic."²⁶⁶ Darío's political reputation was in constant flux, as both the Somoza regime and Sandinista rebels of Nicaragua attempted to co-opt his writings in support of their political agenda.²⁶⁷ However, in the context of the Mission

²⁶⁴ Arturo Barea writes of Lorca, "Though he lived a privileged life in the charmed circle of Spain's aristocracy of letters, though he read his poems and plays to young people coming from his own social caste, and influenced the rising generation through them, though he played with the most esoteric forms of modern art, he became, not the poet of a 'high-brow' set, but a poet of the Spanish people." In Barea, *Lorca: The Poet and His People*, translated by Ilsa Barea (London: Faber and Faber, 1944), 11; Also see, Gwynne Edwards, *Lorca: Living in the Theatre* (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen, 2003). On Alejandro Casona, see Ruth C. Gillespie's "Introduction," for his *La Sirena Varada* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951); and Juan Rodríguez-Castellano's "Nota Biográfica" (in Spanish) for his *La Dama Del Alba* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947).

²⁶⁵ Arturo Barea writes that Lorca's "La Barraca became a political weapon. Those spectators now moved for the first time in their lives by passion filtered through art were the same people who set their hopes on the new Republic, who listened in their village inn to the newly installed radio, who dreamed of a school for their children and believed that in future the soil would nourish instead of starve them." Barea, *Lorca*, 27. As Gwynne Edwards notes, "Lorca was, of course, a supporter of the Left and a famous man, as well as a homosexual – in short, an affront to right-wing values and someone of whom to make an example." Edwards, *Lorca*, 15.

²⁶⁶ Eleanore Maxwell Dial, "Critical Reaction to Buero Vallejo and Casona in Mexico," *Hispania* 54 (September 1971), 553-558 (553).

²⁶⁷ Whisnant writes, "From the mid-1960s onward, the Somoza regime's efforts to co-opt and domesticate Darío's image for its own ends were increasingly at odds with those put forth with growing vigor by the FSLN." In "Rubén Darío as a Focal Cultural Figure," 29.

District's later history, Darío clearly emerged as a voice for the Left: the Sandinista headquarters in San Francisco, Casa Nicaragua, developed a Rubén Darío prize; muralists invoked Darío's image in their anti-capitalist paintings; and activist poets for the Sandinistas read his work at public readings.²⁶⁸ While Casa Hispana may have appeared conservative in terms of identity politics, ideologically, Casa Hispana was indicative of an expanding cadre of Mission District intellectuals supportive of a global Left.²⁶⁹

Over the course of the 1970s, Casa Hispana continued to produce theatrical events that underscored its political/cultural orientation: poetry by the Chilean Pablo Neruda; drama by the Colombian Enrique Buenaventura; screenings of *La Hora de los Hornos* by the Argentinean Fernando Solanas; and sponsored performances of other, similarly-minded California theatre troupes, including San Juan Bautista's El Teatro Campesino, Oakland's Los Topos, and San Francisco's Teatro Ceno.²⁷⁰ Casa Hispana organizers clearly sought, at the very least, to unify, radicalize, and inspire the neighborhood.

²⁶⁸ Francisco Alarcón won the "Rubén Darío" Latin-American Poetry prize from Casa Nicaragua in 1981 for his solidarity poems, Salvador Rodríguez del Pino, "Francisco Xavier Alarcón," *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 122: Chicano Writers, Second Series*, ed., Francisco A. Lomeli (The Gale Group, 1992), 3-7; the image of Ruben Dario in the "Homage to Siqueiros" mural is discussed in chapter five; and Jack Hirschman, Nina Serrano, and Alejandro Murguía honored Rubén Darío's birthday in 1985 with a "Bilingual Reading of Darío's Poetry," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 18, 1985, 74.

²⁶⁹ George Katsiaficas writes, "As a global movement, the New Left contested the structures of power on both sides of the 'iron curtain.'" But "Taken as a whole, the New Left was a global movement which sought to decentralize and redistribute world resources and power at a time when their centralization had never been greater." *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987), 19-20.

²⁷⁰ "Homenaje a Neruda," program, c. 1972, Santina archive; Bernard Weiner, "Julian's Look at Political Suffering in Latin America," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 2, 1988, C6; "La Hora de los Hornos," poster, n.d., c. 1970, Santina archive; Press Release, "Teatro Campesino to Perform in Raza/Hispanidad Festival," October 16, 1973, Santina archive; "Raza/Hispanidad," *City*, 44.

CASA HISPANA, THE VISUAL ARTS, AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS PROGRAM

Though Casa Hispana had started as an events-oriented organization, it quickly showed interest in the visual arts. Carlos Loarca, who had designed stage sets and played guitar, began to pursue possibilities for art exhibitions. His training with established artist Elio Benvenuto provided a key connection when Benvenuto became director of the annual Civic Center Art Festival. Not only did the relationship between Loarca and Benvenuto help open a new door for the artists, but the connection had the backing of the newly formed city-funded Neighborhood Arts Program (N.A.P.).²⁷¹ As its name suggests, the N.A.P. was created to encourage the development of arts programs in San Francisco's neighborhoods and expand access to the arts. Casa Hispana stands out as one of the first organizations to benefit from N.A.P., and these connections likely helped Casa Hispana to feature the work of six of its members at the 1967 San Francisco Art Festival: Carlos Loarca [Fig. 3.5], Julio Benitez, Waldo Esteva, José Luis Leiva, Lazo Radich, and Miguel Roumat.²⁷² Ultimately, Loarca led the way in establishing a regular presence for Casa Hispana visual artists to exhibit their work at the annual Civic Center Art Festivals, one of the preeminent art shows in the city at that time.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Francisco Camplís, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 12, 2003. Camplís describes how the relationship between Loarca and Benvenuto was a catalyst for obtaining exhibition space at the Arts Festival. Their relationship coincided with the creation of the Neighborhood Arts Program.

²⁷² "21st Annual San Francisco Art Festival," poster, September 20-24, 1967, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/10; Martin Snipper, interview by Suzanne B. Riess, in *The Arts and the Community Oral History Project: San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Program*, Berkeley, CA, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1978, 12.

²⁷³ Casa Hispana information sheet, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.



Fig. 3.5: Carlos Loarca, “El Hombre Multiple” / “The Man of Multiples,” 1965. The painting was featured as a Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes contribution in the San Francisco Art Festival of 1967.

The creation of the Neighborhood Arts Program also was symbolic of increasing pressure within the city, and the nation, to recognize art and artists working outside mainstream Eurocentric ideals. The N.A.P. gained support because it was an effective vehicle to counterbalance a controversial local proposal for a Performing Arts Center. Residents in poorer neighborhoods, such as the Fillmore and the Mission, along with other concerned citizens, saw the plans for creating more elite art institutions as a slap in the face to their needs. Funding for adequate social services was a primary concern, but also at stake was the lack of access to art in low-income and/or non-white communities.²⁷⁴ In 1965, after massive protests, voters rejected 2-to-1 a \$29 million “culture bonds” initiative to improve the Opera House, War Memorial, and create a new Performing Art Center. However, the issue did not end there. The San Francisco Art Commission, under the leadership of Harold Zellerbach, continued to push for a Performing Arts Center that would boost San Francisco’s reputation and draw new business to the city.²⁷⁵ Art Commission director Martin Snipper recalled that Zellerbach, “responded [to the N.A.P.] because he thought of it as a way of minimizing the opposition to cultural activities that would result in a more positive response to the

²⁷⁴ The period was rife with expression of inner city frustration, such as the riots in Watts in 1965; Chicago in 1966; and Detroit in 1967. See, Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1997); and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996);

²⁷⁵ The history on the Performing Arts Center debate is culled from multiple sources, including: Nora Gallagher, Ken McEldowney, Michael Singer, and Henry Weinsten, “Art for Harold’s Sake: How Big Business Manipulates the arts in San Francisco,” *The San Francisco Bay Guardian*, November 21, 1975; Ceci Brunazzi, “On the Performing Arts Center,” *The Arts Biweekly*, July 27, 1976, 3-4; and a series of oral history interviews collected by UC Berkeley’s Regional Oral History Office: *The Arts and the Community Oral History Project: San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Program*, 1978. I am indebted to Michael Nolan for the use of his personal archive on this subject, which included a variety of published and unpublished sources. Of particular note was: Kathleen Connolly’s report, “San Francisco Performing Arts Center: Some Reflections on a White Elephant,” (San Francisco: San Francisco Study Center, 1973).

Performing Arts Center.”²⁷⁶ In part, the N.A.P. acted as a shield, or a barricade, to alleviate the pressures of social unrest. Subsequently, the N.A.P. not only received funding from the incipient National Endowment for the Arts (N.E.A.), but led the N.E.A. to fund a pilot project of neighborhood arts programs in fifteen other cities.²⁷⁷

When Casa Hispana was first seeking a home in the Mission, it turned to the San Francisco Art Commission. Martin Snipper remembered their request: “A group of Latinos came to see me about giving assistance to them and starting an art center in the Mission, and I said, ‘The last thing the Mission needs is an art center. But if you created a Latin cultural center, I’d be glad to help you.’”²⁷⁸ Presumably, Snipper did not see an art center as relevant for a neighborhood struggling with so many other social problems, but envisioned a cultural center as more encompassing and socially responsible. His disparaging reaction is indicative of the cynicism the artists faced and the beleaguered status of the community. However, it was through city funding that Casa Hispana was able to survive.²⁷⁹ The Neighborhood Arts Center facilitated that relationship and served as an important communications link for arts groups around the city.

Casa Hispana’s visual arts programming escalated with the addition of Francisco Camplís. Some time in late 1967 or early 1968, Camplís ran across a poster in Potrero Hill advertising drawing classes in the Mission. Though he had been studying painting

²⁷⁶ Snipper interview, 1978, 4.

²⁷⁷ Regina Mouton, “Let a Thousand Flowers Grow: An Interview with June Gutfleisch,” http://temp.sfgov.org/sfac/CAE/about_us/, accessed on September 28, 2004; Alice Goldfarb Marquis chronicles the rise of the National Endowment for the Arts in her book, *Art Lessons: Learning from the Rise and Fall of Public Arts Funding* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).

²⁷⁸ Snipper Interview, 1978, 12.

²⁷⁹ Casa Hispana members link its demise in 1983 to the de-funding of arts programs around the country under President Ronald Reagan. Santana e-mail, October 1, 2004; Tello e-mail, September 25, 2004. Also see, Marquis, *Art Lessons*.

with established realist painter Charles Griffin Farr, he wanted to know more about his cultural heritage as a Chicano. As Camplís recalled, “I was taking classes with this Charles Farr and doing gringo stuff. I really didn’t have a sense of Mexicano stuff, which is I think what I was leaning towards.”²⁸⁰ With high hopes, he went to enroll in his first class at Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, but was disappointed to discover the class was canceled for lack of an art teacher. However, perhaps in a gesture symbolic of the institution’s openness, a Casa Hispana representative convinced Camplís he should teach the class instead. Taking those words to heart, Camplís became a regular drawing instructor at Casa Hispana, and eventually, the Art Director.²⁸¹

Like his colleagues, Camplís wanted to make art more accessible to the community. He saw his job as two-fold: “[I] didn’t see a lot of *exhibits* involving Raza, or where Raza participated, and two, I didn’t see a lot of *art activities* where we were participating. So, I thought, that’s what Casa Hispana had to do.”²⁸² One of his first orders of business was to hold an art competition: “The First Annual Latin American Artists Competition,” held in September of 1968. Ideally, a competition could help Camplís locate artists for future shows, as well as perform community outreach. According to Carlos Loarca, a then unknown East Bay artist took first place: Esteban Villa won for his painting “La Novia.”²⁸³ The event established an important connection with Villa, who at that time was just beginning his role in the formation of the Mexican

²⁸⁰ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ Loarca interview, April 8, 2003; Cid telephone interview, October 22, 2004.

American Liberation Art Front (MALA-F) in Oakland. Delighted with the response, Camplís was inspired to plan more events to integrate Raza into the arts.

Though Casa Hispana was taking on a leadership role for Latino artists in the Mission, Casa Hispana was still a male-dominated institution. Founded mostly by men and usually promoting male work, women had to battle for attention. The 1967 Art Festival was a case in point when all six Casa members included in the program were men. Perhaps change was afoot in 1968, when an exhibit at the Sheraton Palace, co-presented by Casa Hispana and the Mexican American Political Association, included three women among the nine featured artists: Sonia Nevel, Zulema Sanda Di Marco, and Ginger Leonis were shown with Jaime Cortez, Esteban Villa, Raymundo Nevel Zala, Raul Mora, Jose Montoya, and Francisco Camplís.²⁸⁴ However, the show was more of an anomaly than an indicator of things to come. The male-dominated congregations of Casa Hispana, MALA-F, RCAF, and other art groups was representative of the difficulty women faced in gaining entrée.

In hindsight, Camplís has said that among the visual artists, “I would have to say, yeah, we did focus on the men, we did emphasize the men, and probably didn’t take the women seriously. ...If there were some women who had some work, we showed it. And we did show several women. Not a lot.”²⁸⁵ Women did forge positions for themselves at Casa Hispana – Isa Mura and Teresita Osta taught Flamenco, Maruja Cid helped organize exhibits, and in 1975, Maria “China” Tello became executive director. Of Tello, Don Santana writes, “She is one of those treasures of the Latino community: writer for *El*

²⁸⁴ 1968 calendar, Casa Hispana newsletter, n.d., Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.

²⁸⁵ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

Tecolote, activist at Casa Hispana, activist at Centro Legal, immigration consultant; respected by all. Often overlooked because she doesn't blow her own horn."²⁸⁶ In general, women were overlooked because neither they nor the men promoted their role. In one instance, the Casa Hispana newsletter offered a rare accolade to a female painter, urging readers to see Mexican artist Celia Michelina's show at the Artists Cooperative on Union Street: "Visit the gallery and meet her, she is a very talented woman."²⁸⁷ Generally, however, significant acknowledgement and support of women artists was not cultivated anywhere near the degree proffered to male artists.

As Emma Perez writes, "where women are conceptualized as merely a backdrop to men's social and political activities, they are in fact intervening interstitially while sexing the colonial imaginary. In other words, women's activities are unseen, unthought, merely a shadow in the background of the colonial mind. Yet Chicana, Mexicana, India, mestiza actions, words spoken and unspoken, survive and persist whether acknowledged or not."²⁸⁸ Feminist historians seek to reconceptualize the past and reestablish the places and spaces of women in history, however limited that may be, but even their subjects can reject these efforts. While Maruja Cid recalled N.A.P. "meetings and noticing that I was really the only female there," she also stated that she was "not into that female stuff," such as the women's liberation movement.²⁸⁹ A tireless activist in the Mission, Cid rejected any framing of herself as a *female* activist. When asked if she ever felt excluded as a female, she remarked, "No, but I don't. But you see, I automatically don't. We're

²⁸⁶ Don Santina, e-mail to author, October 7, 2004.

²⁸⁷ Casa Hispana newsletter, January 1969, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.

²⁸⁸ Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas Into History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 7.

all here to liberate.”²⁹⁰ Her political vision as part of an organic mass movement to empower the disenfranchised is also part of why Cid and other women have maintained a low profile in historical accounts of the period.

Maruja Cid came into contact with Casa Hispana through her work for the Neighborhood Arts Program. In 1968, N.A.P. director June Dunn hired Roberto Vargas and Maruja Cid as community liaisons for the Mission. Both Vargas and Cid proved to be powerful community advocates. Vargas already had a high local profile as one of the co-founders of Horizons Unlimited, a youth education retention and job training program. In addition, Vargas was a poet who traveled in the same circles as some of the other Casa Hispana poets.²⁹¹ Maruja Cid was more a novice to neighborhood activities, but energetic, perhaps rooted in her training as a dancer. Though she considered herself an amateur, her appreciation for dance carried over into her arts activism and her support for flamenco. Cid recalled in a later interview how well she and Vargas worked together: “Roberto was more interested in the contemporary part of the arts. ...and I worked more in the traditional line through Casa Hispana. But this didn’t mean that we were completely separate; many times we worked together. ...Of course, he brought on the rock groups and I brought on the flamenco.”²⁹²

Vargas and Cid provided a yin and yang support system for the arts in the Mission. Both acted as a conduit between groups, sharing information and strengthening

²⁸⁹ Cid telephone interview, October 22, 2004.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ Francisco Flores, “Roberto Vargas: The Intersection of Personal Growth and Community Activism,” *El Tecolote*, April 2001, 14-15.

local networks, but also representing different choices in terms of the representation of local Latino identities. In fact, Cid recalled how Vargas “at first ... really resisted the flamenco and things like that.”²⁹³ One can only imagine how community members such as Vargas responded to Casa Hispana’s 1971 Día de la Raza celebration, which featured an honorary reading in Spanish of the letters of Christopher Columbus, the ultimate colonizer.²⁹⁴ Cid observed that Vargas changed his antipathy over time, as did others, but Casa Hispana’s willingness to promote cultures of conquest, through Spanish drama, dance, and literature, was alienating for many in the late 1960s and early 1970s.²⁹⁵

As N.A.P. organizers for the Mission, Vargas and Cid also became exporters of “Latino” culture to other parts of the city. Cid remarked, “Though I was a Mission District organizer, I also worked throughout San Francisco, because any of the other neighborhoods that wanted some of the Latino culture in their area, I would provide.”²⁹⁶ Thus, the various forms of artistic activity happening in the Mission became symbolic throughout the city of Latino life and culture.

The Mission District was emerging as a site of Latino identity, but which aspects of a multifaceted pan-ethnic identity would dominate? And how did this translate into

²⁹² Maruja Cid, interview by Suzanne B. Riess, in *The Arts and the Community Oral History Project: San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Program*, Berkeley, CA, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1978, 27.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ Espinosa, “A Glow of Community Spirit Marks El Día de La Raza”; John P. Lerner discusses the shifting image of Columbus in “North American Hero? Christopher Columbus 1702-2002,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 137 (March 1993), 46-63; Also see, Gerald Vizenor, “Christopher Columbus: Lost Havens in the Ruins of Representation,” *American Indian Quarterly* 16 (Autumn 1992), 521-532.

²⁹⁵ Rodriguez, “Becoming Latinos”; McWilliams, *North From Mexico*; William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

the visual arts? At Casa Hispana, the artists united as part of a pan-Latino culture, but were otherwise fairly open to all possible directions in art. In general, the art work of Casa Hispana was an amalgamation of different styles, including variations in abstraction, figuration, and surrealism.²⁹⁷ However, the community they were forming was stirring the need to understand why they related to each other. If an aesthetic was not their unifying characteristic, then what did they share in terms of culture? Were they only united in their experience of segregation? Was the ability to speak Spanish sufficient to unite Guatemalans, Mexicans, and Chileans in the United States? What room could be made for the artists born in the United States, who had been educated not to speak Spanish? The questions became the focus of intense discussions.

Around late 1968, Casa Hispana began a program to consider the relationship between art and national or ethnic identity. Francisco Camplís and Maruja Cid initiated a discussion series in artist homes devoted to “Brown Art,” or “The Latin American Artist in the United States.” The objective was “to explore the American influence on the Latin American artist,” as well as, “the possibility of expressing the Mexican-American and Latin American experience through art, abstract art, art with political themes, ad

²⁹⁶ Cid interview, 1978, 39.

²⁹⁷ Little documentation of art work at Casa Hispana is available to affirm this generalization. However, interviews with Loarca and Camplís and familiarity with later art work of other associated artists suggest this generalization is fair: Loarca interview, April 8, 2003; Camplís interview, March 12, 2003. Loarca has in general shown a proclivity for abstract figuration, and Camplís initially taught figure drawing: Alfred Frankenstein, “Things Artists Don’t Overlook,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 11, 1978, 60; José Jorge Vazquez Tagle, “Gustavo River y Carlos Loarca Reafirman su Calidad Pictórica,” *El Occidental*, May 20, 1980, D1; and, Edgar Sanchez, “Free Art Class Seeks Raza Pupils,” *El Tecolote*, December 8, 1971, 8. Waldo Esteva developed unique figurative ceramics and more recently has developed as a landscape painter: <http://rvf-artmuseum.csusb.edu/PONDFARM/students.html>, accessed on August 11, 2005; Don Santina e-mail to author, July 13, 2005; in addition, Rolando Castellón’s past art work has revolved around the possibilities of abstraction and his curation of exhibits has supported this interest. See, Castellón, *Mano a Mano*.

infinitum.”²⁹⁸ The terms used for prefacing the description are notable: while “Brown,” “Latin American” and “Mexican American,” are used, “Chicano” and “Raza” are absent. The language employed in Casa Hispana’s materials, including its Hispanic- rooted appellation, were indicative of its conservative position in a larger dialogue. Even so, the panel discussion illustrates that more militant or nationalist ideals were having an impact on dialogues at Casa Hispana, notably in the same year as the Third World Strikes, discussed in the following chapter. Part of the impetus also can be attributed to the formation of the Mexican American Liberation Art Front across the Bay in Oakland.

CARNALISMO ACROSS THE BAY: THE MEXICAN AMERICAN LIBERATION ART FRONT

By the end of 1968, Casa Hispana visual artists were establishing important connections with artists across the Bay. In particular, exchanges with the artists of The Mexican American Liberation Art Front, or MALA-F, were integral to political and aesthetic shifts in Casa Hispana. MALA-F started as a group of East Bay artists who intended to overturn the forces of assimilation and oppression that they experienced as Chicanos. Their mission was far more politically charged than Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, as well as more focused on a Chicano perspective. Even their acronym had a touch of acerbic rebelliousness, which when pronounced as “La Mala-efes,” represented the group as “the Bad Fs.”²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ Casa Hispana newsletter, n.d. Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.

²⁹⁹ Rupert Garcia notes that the “Liberation Art Front” was a reference to the “Liberation Front of Vietnam.” Rupert Garcia, interview by Paul J. Karlstrom, oral history collection, Archives of American Art

Similar to Casa Hispana, the group began with informal meetings every Friday to discuss methods to reestablish their history, promote their creativity, and gain greater visibility in their communities. René Yañez recalled the intensity of the initial meetings at his house on Manila Street in Oakland: “We had meetings there for about six months, discussing the Chicano movement and the art and how it should serve, and they were very, very exciting meetings. Lot of debate, lot of discussions, sometimes it was up to 50, to 75 people in these discussions.”³⁰⁰

According to Esteban Villa, the group started with painters, but gradually included poets and other community intellectuals.³⁰¹ An article announcing the group’s formation described their objective as follows: “Now they see the social conditions and needs of the Chicanos and have committed themselves to the struggle for their liberation. ... They are also practicing ‘carnalismo’ in its truest sense by offering any help they can to Chicano artists, writers, and poets. They feel that together La Raza can work for the liberation of their minds.”³⁰² In essence, MALA-F was an ambitious project devoted to overthrowing European colonization across all disciplines.

In fact, MALA-F was applying the ideas of “Carnalismo,” that were pervading the larger Chicano movement. According to Carlos Muñoz, “*Carnalismo* (the brotherhood code of the Mexican American youth gangs) would mold the lives of the students and become a central concept in this proposed nationalist ideology. From the ranks of this

Smithsonian Institution [From here on, AAA], September and November, 1995, & June 1996, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/oralhist/garcia96.htm>, accessed on August 19, 2005.

³⁰⁰ René Yañez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 18, 2003.

³⁰¹ Tomas Ybarra-Frausto [Sic], “The Legacy of La Galería de la Raza / Studio 24,” unpublished manuscript, 1996, Ybarra-Frausto collection, AAA, Box 9/GDLR ’92-95. The misspelling of Ybarra-Frausto’s name and corrections throughout suggests that someone else typed the manuscript.

new breed of youth would come the poets, the writers and the artists necessary for forging the new Chicano identity.”³⁰³ The philosophy heightened the importance of “low culture” and defined the barrio, as the home of carnalismo, as a source of creative inspiration and cultural significance. As Rosa Linda Fregoso points out, the ideology also spurred the proliferation of a male-dominated aesthetic: “In poetry, mural paintings, and theater, Chicano movement cultural workers systematically figured the *pachuco* (urban street youth) the *pinto* (ex-convict), and the Aztec warrior as the new Chicano subjects of the counterdiscourse of Chicano liberation.”³⁰⁴

Francisco Camplís remembers making the trip across the Bay to Valdez’s bookstore one Friday night because he had heard that was, “where the visual artists, musicians, writers and poets and also students and academicians would frequently meet and discuss Chicano movement ideas, ideology, etc.”³⁰⁵ Camplís was struck by the militancy of the group and inspired by the passion. For him, contact with the artists of MALA-F propelled him into dialogues he had never considered. Camplís recalled, “It was like Casa Hispana, but more Chicano and more militant.... In San Francisco, I think we were pretty much naïve, I know I was, about the Chicano art. ...And so we’d have discussions and we’re listening and finding out what’s Chicano art, and how do you define it.”³⁰⁶

³⁰² “Mexican American Liberation Art Front: La Raza Nueva,” *Bronce* 1 (March 1969), 6-7.

³⁰³ Carlos Muñoz, *Youth, Identity and Power*, 76.

³⁰⁴ Rosa Linda Fregoso, “The Representation of Cultural Identity in ‘Zoot Suit’ (1981),” *Theory and Society* 22 (October 1993), 659-674 (662). Fregoso adds “the major ambivalence of the cultural project of nationalism centered on its systemic elision of women as subjects of cultural discourse” (663).

³⁰⁵ Camplís, “Addendum to interview.”

³⁰⁶ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

Camplís started inviting MALA-F to workshops at Casa Hispana and made sure to include MALA-F artists in local exhibits – “we had stuff from Oakland, which were the more militant stuff, and then [in San Francisco] we’d have a vase of flowers and stuff like that.”³⁰⁷ By May of 1969, the Casa Hispana newsletter, perhaps authored by Camplís, was advocating visits to La Causa in support of MALA-F.

Camplís was not the only one to find enlightenment across the Bay. Artist Rupert Garcia remembered seeing an advertisement for a MALA-F exhibition, most likely “New Symbols for La Nueva Raza” [Fig. 3.6] He said, “I remember reading this thing and I just tingled. I said this is amazing. ... I about died, man. I died because I came alive as a consequence of just understanding what this meant. ... It was a cultural statement that said, it seemed to me, that there was a need to create a space to exhibit our perception as manifested in paintings and drawings and sculpture and what else, because other established galleries and such weren’t going to do it.”³⁰⁸ The excitement that Garcia and Camplís expressed in their encounters with MALA-F was indicative of the hunger for knowledge, artistic opportunity, and community. Groups like MALA-F were propelling the desire for similar organizations and physical spaces.

Encounters with MALA-F also were contributing to a new artistic direction for Camplís. The late 1960s signaled a change in the content and medium of his art, from representational still-life or avant-garde paintings to “Raza art.” Around this time,

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ Rupert Garcia, interview, Oakland, CA, October 14, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #155-158, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 5, 12, in Califas conference final report.



Fig. 3.6: Poster for the Mexican American Liberation Art Front's exhibition, "New Symbols for La Nueva Raza." Image courtesy of René Yañez.

Camplís began to experiment with photography, partly inspired by the need to document the Chicano experience [Fig. 3.7]. His photographs intermeshed with his interest in the human figure and led to his series of black and white portraits of Chicanas, entitled “Mi Raza Linda” [Fig 3.8; Fig. 3.9]. He was driven to redefine notions of female beauty, but the gaze of his camera made some uncomfortable, especially after he turned to nude photography. Whether, as one article notes, he was “exploding a taboo in Chicano art,” or exploiting his Chicana sisters became a point of tension.³⁰⁹ However, the period also marked his growing interest in women as the subject of his art.

In 1974, as part of the first generation of Chicano filmmakers, Camplis produced his first short film, *Los Desarraigados/ The Uprooted*. The film depicts the experience of Mexican women workers in a factory during an immigration raid at a time when U.S. immigration was heightening factory sweeps. The film was among the first to criticize the human impact of this policy, particularly in terms of women workers. The next year, Camplís published his seminal essay, “Towards the Development of a Raza Cinema.”³¹⁰ As Rosa Linda Fregoso notes, Camplís “called on filmmakers to create ‘a culture by and for us.’ Inspired by the works of Latin American filmmakers (Fernando Solanas, Jorge Sanjines, Octavio Getino, Glauber Rocha, Walter Achugar), Camplis urged the making of ‘revolutionary,’ ‘decolonizing films,’ as well as the development of a vernacular

³⁰⁹ “The Photography of Francisco Campliz [sic]: Exploding a Taboo in Chicano Art,” *El Tecolote*, May 10, 1972, 8. According to my interview with Camplís, the CARA exhibit committee declined his submission of nude photographs, asking if he had anything else. Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

³¹⁰ Francisco Camplís, “Towards the Development of a Raza Cinema,” in *Chicanos and Film: Representation and Resistance*, ed., Chon Noriega (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 284-302. Originally published in the Mission District’s *Tin Tan 2* (June 1, 1977), 5-7.

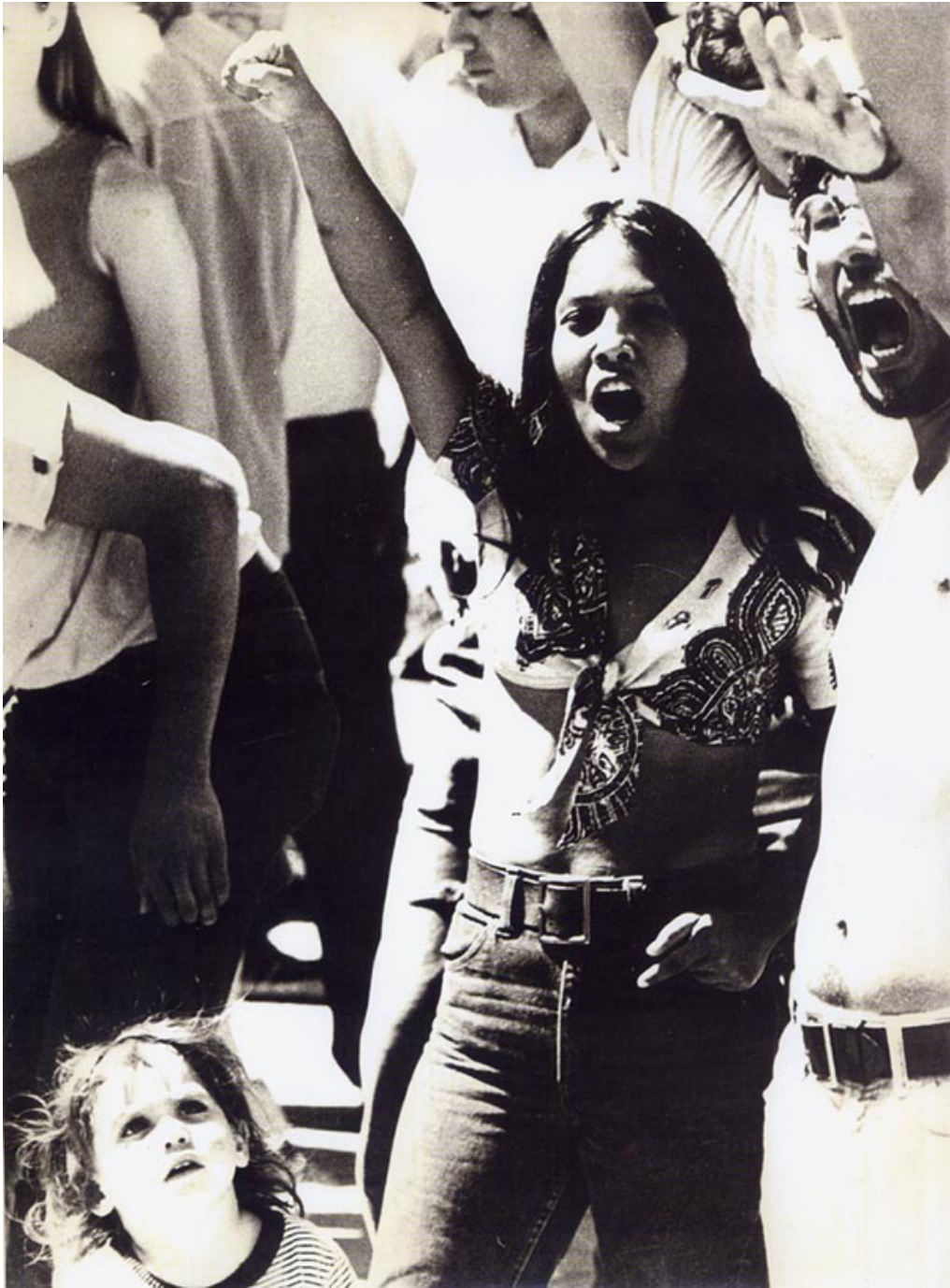


Fig. 3.7: Francisco Camplís, Chicano Moratorium photograph, 1970. Image courtesy of Francisco Camplís.

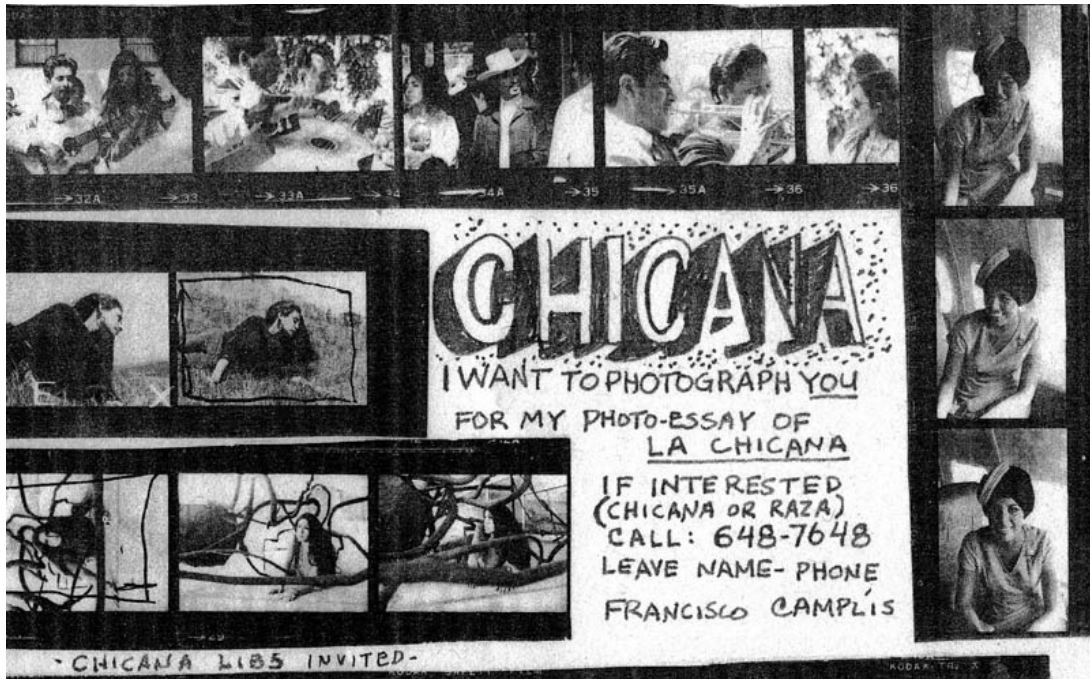


Fig. 3.8: Above, Francisco Camplís recruitment poster for Chicana models. In the text, he added, “Chicana Libs invited.” Image courtesy of Francisco Camplís.

Fig. 3.9: Left, untitled photograph, inspired by the “Mi Linda Raza” series, early 1970s. Image reproduced from *El Tecolote*, June 2, 1971.

aesthetics.”³¹¹ His transition to a socially conscious art focused on a Chicano or Raza identity was complete, not just because of his encounters with MALA-F, or Casa Hispana, but in relation to both.

Los Desarraigados also serves as a unique lens on local Chicana art history. Camplís based the short story on news accounts and on fellow artist Graciela Carrillo’s first-hand experience in a raid in Los Angeles. While Carrillo does not appear in the film, other local Chicana artists do, including Patricia Rodriguez, Irene Perez, Ester Hernandez, and Lorenza Camplís, the wife of Francisco Camplís. Cindy Rodriguez, the daughter of activist-writer Dorinda Moreno, wrote the theme song, “America.”³¹² The film coincides with a time when these women were rejecting the pervasive “carnalismo” of the Chicano movement by forming their own separatist organizations. In 1974, Carrillo, Rodriguez, Perez, and to a lesser degree, Hernandez, formed their own grupo, Las Mujeres Muralistas, while Dorinda Moreno started a women’s theatre group, Las Cucarachas.³¹³ Though the film speaks for the human rights of women, it also unintentionally underscores local gender politics. While an artistic grupo like MALA-F helped radicalize someone like Camplís into creating a film like *Los Desarraigados*, the

³¹¹ Rosa Linda Fregoso, *The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xv.

³¹² Camplís interview, March 12, 2003; *Los Desarraigados/The Uprooted*, dir., Francisco Camplís, San Francisco, CA, 1974. Camplís e-mail to author, August 17, 2005. The film also featured Maria Rios (then wife of artist Mike Rios); Ricardo Diaz (also an artist at that time, and later husband to the aforementioned Maria Rios); Carlotta Jaramillo; Miguel Quiros; Armando Vasquez; Dolores Vasquez, David Martinez, Roger Hollis; Jaime Lopez; and Jack Bourne. Francisco Camplís’s sisters Zenaida Camplís and Josephine Hollis, along with his mother Josephine Petrini, also were part of the cast.

³¹³ Las Mujeres Muralistas is discussed in chapter five. On Dorinda Moreno, see Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, “Female Subject in Chicano Theatre: Sexuality, ‘Race,’ and Class,” *Theatre Journal* 38 (December 1986), 389-407 (397).

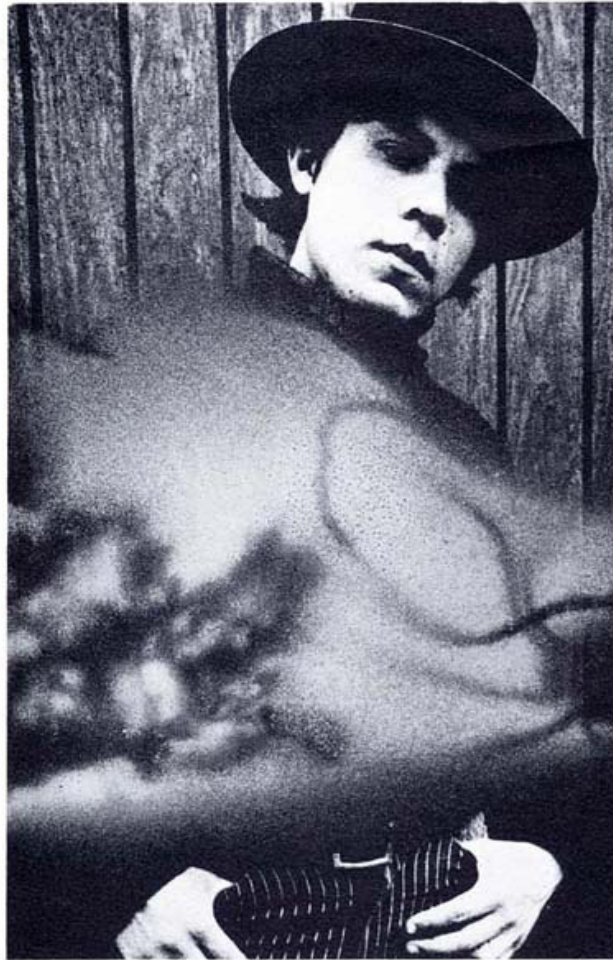
same grupo also helped spur separatist counter-responses from the women who found themselves excluded.

The interactions and counter-reactions among artists was a source of debate and inspiration. Just as the greater militancy of MALA-F had an impact on ideas circulating at Casa Hispana, the pan-Latino inclusiveness of Casa Hispana had an impact on the members of MALA-F. For instance, just as San Francisco's Francisco Camplís found himself attracted to the radicalism of MALA-F, Oakland's René Yañez gravitated to the pan-Latino diversity of the Mission scene.

Growing up in San Diego, Yañez had been attracted to the Bohemian counterculture of the Beats in the Bay Area for years. In 1966, after serving in Vietnam, Yañez made Oakland his home [Fig. 3.10]. The Bay Area was everything he expected and more. While attending Merritt College and the College of Arts and Crafts, Yañez had his first encounters with the Black Panthers: "I was just astonished. I mean, they were advocating armed revolution at the school!" When Yañez learned that free speech leader Mario Savio served drinks at a local bar, he made himself a regular customer so he could hear Savio talk.³¹⁴ Living in Oakland was an education in radical thinking.

MALA-F appealed to Yañez as an opportunity to incorporate the philosophies of separatism and free speech into the amorphous possibilities of Chicano art. Gradually, however, the flourishing debates on the meaning and definition of Chicano art were cultivating aesthetic exclusions. Yañez recalls, "I went through different phases. I did comic books, I did light shows, I did painting, mixed media, and it led to a debate

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*



René Yañez

paintings

la causa

1560, 34th ave.

oakland, calif .

opening- fri. 6:30

may 24 to june 31

Fig. 3.10: René Yañez MALA-F poster, c. 1968. Poster courtesy of René Yañez.

because one time I wanted to do a light show – a Chicano light show – and it led to debate, like, ‘oh, no, no, you can’t do that. You see, it’s got to be painting or silk screening.’³¹⁵ Yañez, as someone always searching for a new approach, opted to break away from MALA-F. According to Yanez, “at a certain point I decided to move to San Francisco, to the Mission District, mainly because I saw a large Chicano, Latino audience that I felt that I wanted to communicate to.”³¹⁶

Yañez’s break from MALA-F was aided by two factors. On the one hand, he was partly drawn away from Oakland via his romantic relationship with Graciela Carrillo, who lived in the Mission, and his desire to attend the San Francisco Art Institute.³¹⁷ On the other hand, MALA-F members Esteban Villa and José Montoya moved to Sacramento, upon finding teaching positions in the art department at Sacramento State in 1969 and 1970, respectively. Together Villa and Montoya spurred the creation of a new group in Sacramento, the Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF). The RCAF gradually represented another wide-ranging group of associates, including Ricardo Favela, Max Garcia, Armando Cid, Juanishi Orozco, Rudy Cuellar, and Louie “The Foot” Gonzalez.³¹⁸ Though the group began with the name Rebel Chicano Art Front, similar to Mexican American Liberation Art Front, the resulting acronym, RCAF, drew amusing parallels to the Royal Canadian Air Force and inspired their humorous Chicano aviator

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ René Yañez, interview, San Francisco, CA, October 29, 1982, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, *Califas Book 2*, 1-2, in *Califas Conference Final Report*.

³¹⁷ Yañez interview, February 18, 2003.

³¹⁸ Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*, 168; Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez, *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals* (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 27.

logo.³¹⁹ With the formation of the RCAF, MALA-F ceased to exist. Nevertheless, its legacy endured in the hearts and minds of many who found inspiration in its passionate agenda.

FROM CASA HISPANA TO GALERÍA DE LA RAZA: ARTE DE LOS BARRIOS, ARTES 6, AND ART FOR THE PEOPLE

In early 1969, a group of Casa Hispana artists decided it was time for a major exhibition of Mexican American art in San Francisco. With Francisco Camplís at the helm, they formed Artistas Latinos Americanos (ALAS) and embarked on the process of producing “Arte de Los Barrios.”³²⁰ The show was partly a response to the lack of available exhibit space for up-and-coming Latino artists. The Mission Adult Center, where Casa Hispana was based, was a limited venue in terms of space and public access. The artists were eager to exhibit their work in almost any place with walls, indicated by the wide range of exhibit spaces used in 1968: *The Sun Reporter* Building, the San Francisco Art Festival, the Redwood City Community Art Auction, the Sheraton Palace Hotel, and the Guarantee Savings and Loan Association.³²¹ The locations were not ideal, and certainly most lacked the cache of prestigious galleries and museums. Camplís remembered hunting for library exhibit spaces – “we hung [paintings] up wherever we could. Sometimes they had the bookshelves and we just laid them on top of the

³¹⁹ Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*, 168.

³²⁰ Tere Romo, “A Spirituality of Resistance: Día de los Muertos and the Galería de la Raza,” in *Chicanos en Mictlán: Día de los Muertos in California*, curator, Tere Romo (San Francisco: The Mexican Museum, October 6 – December 31, 2000), 33; William Wilson, “Art of Barrios in East L.A.,” *The Los Angeles Times*. Part IV, 1 and 7.

bookshelves, leaning. And so that was an exhibit venue.”³²² In part, the exhibit spaces were an indication of how few doors were open to Latino / Latin American artists in San Francisco’s mainstream art institutions.³²³

Camplís was inspired by a show he witnessed in Los Angeles: the “Fiesta de los Barrios” event, held on Cinco de Mayo weekend in Lincoln Heights in 1969. With estimates of 10,000 people attending the event, the show must have made a powerful visual impression. “Fiesta de los Barrios” was a product of the East Los Angeles student strikes, or “Chicano Blowouts,” which had demanded more representation of Chicano history and culture in a school system dominated by Chicano students. The event was a means to gather images of the community and politically assert the wealth of Chicano culture.³²⁴ According to Shifra Goldman, one of the event organizers, the Los Angeles celebration included an art exhibit featuring “a thousand works of art from the public schools, the High Schools, all the way through professional, each organized in categories, granted prizes.” In later years, Goldman stated, “I’ve come across young people who said, ‘That was my beginning. I put my work into the High School division,’ or whatever it was, ‘at the Fiesta de los Barrios, and you gave me a prize ... and that really got me

³²¹ “Listing of Events,” Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3.

³²² Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

³²³ Francisco Camplís, “Conversations with Myself: Art & Racism,” c. 1972, Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA, Box 1/6. In this article, Camplís provides an informal survey of Latinos in San Francisco museums. According to Camplís, as of November 1972, “San Francisco Museum of Art: 40 positions, no Raza; De Young Museum of Art, 68 positions, 1 Raza; Legion of Honor, 28 positions, 1 Raza; San Francisco Art Institute: No full-time Raza faculty; San Francisco Art Commission: 2 Raza members, no full-time Raza employees.

³²⁴ Goldman, “How, Why, Where, and When,” 27.

started.”³²⁵ Increasingly, the opportunities to show works of art was enabling people who otherwise never dreamed of pursuing a life in art.

The creation of “Arte de los Barrios” is indicative of how, despite substantial regional differences, artists in Los Angeles and San Francisco participated in each other’s communities and quickly replicated successful community events. The San Francisco organizers modeled their event on “Festival de los Barrios,” but envisioned a larger geographical scale, even if smaller size. Camplís and Ralph McNeill promoted “Arte de los Barrios” as the first California-wide exhibition of Latino artists. Popular response turned the event into a Western United States exhibition, with works from Texas, Arizona, and Colorado. Held at the Mission Adult Center from October 12-November 12, 1969, the exhibit of approximately one hundred paintings, photographs, and mixed media traveled to Oakland, East Los Angeles, Fresno, and Tulare, Arizona.³²⁶

The curation and organization of such a show proved challenging. Camplís urged the participation of other artists as an opportunity for “wider exposure, recognition of talent, promotion of the visual arts in the San Francisco Spanish-speaking community, and monetary rewards.”³²⁷ His promises bordered on naïve, but were hopeful, which represented the tone of the show. Camplís recalled how several works of art were misplaced, including his own: “It was nonprofessional, it was done more *con the Corazon*

³²⁵ Shifra Goldman, interview, Pasadena, CA, August 9, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #102-105, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 3, 8, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

³²⁶ Recruiting letter from Francisco Camplís, “California Wide Mexican American and Latin American artists exhibition to be held in Bay Area in October [1969],” Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/3. Wilson, “Art of Barrios in East L.A.,”; Thomas Albright, “A Wide Range in Latin Art,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 12, 1970, 33; Confirmation of the exhibition in Fresno and Tulare is documented in a Letter to Francisco Camplís from Mario Montenegro, March 10, 1970, Camplís collection, CEMA.

³²⁷ Camplís, “California Wide Mexican American and Latin American artists exhibition.”

[with the heart]. And it was done without funds.”³²⁸ Nevertheless, the artists delighted in the opportunity to convene and exchange ideas. The show included images of Mexican revolutionaries alongside the abstract works of Luis Cervantes and Rolando Castellón. For Camplís it often boiled down to the militancy of other barrios versus the formal art training of San Francisco – “We could see some strong Chicano stuff. And they saw a vase of flowers...” – but the exchanges were exciting and provocative on all sides.³²⁹

The aesthetic diversity is illustrated in the response of reviewer Thomas Albright, who was confounded by the show at the Oakland Museum: “I wish someone would fill me in on the distinctions that prevail in current usage of these terms [Chicano and Latino], along with Mexican-American, Spanish-speaking [sic], Spanish-surname, barrio and others, all of which sometimes appear simultaneously and without parentheses on a single press release. At any rate, such distinctions may help account for the extreme diversity one finds in the exhibition, which is sometimes colored by ethnic traditions but not at all defined by them, and ranges from hard edge through psychedelic, pop, abstract expressionism and elsewhere.”³³⁰ Similarly, William Wilson of *The Los Angeles Times* vented his frustration: “Suddenly bothered, I went outside to smoke. Sure, this art is about Chicanos but is it Chicano art? Subject matter aside, it is hardly different from a community art association show in Anaheim or Sherman Oaks. If a group of people have a homogenous identity it has a distinctive artistic language, a style. There is nothing homogeneous about the look of ‘Arte de los Barrios.’”³³¹ For Wilson and Albright, the

³²⁸ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*

³³⁰ Albright, “A Wide Range in Latin Art.”

³³¹ William Wilson. “Art of Barrios in East L.A.”

artists could not be culturally united if their aesthetic was radically different. Their reactions indicated the pressure on Chicano artists, and ethnically-identified artists in general, to convey a style and relay a shared political and aesthetic ideology.

Albright and Wilson failed to recognize that, for the contributing artists, the show itself was expressive of “Chicano art” – or rather, that there was no singular definition, that the aesthetics were as diverse as the practitioners. The fact that the artists could join abstract and representational images and feel little compunction in their choices was indicative of their tolerance for multiple forms. The joining together of art of multiple regions was reflective of a conversation in process, as well as an ideological struggle for power across various regions. A negotiation of identity was implicit in the exhibit, but the fact that this identity was unresolved left some dissatisfied.

Increasingly, the nationalism of the Chicano movement and the social pressures to define “Chicano art” would exert greater pressures for sameness, as indicated by Yañez’s sense that a light show was unacceptable to the goals of El Movimiento, or reviewers demanding a uniform style. However, the openness to avant-garde aesthetics and the multiplicity of Latino identities that pervaded Casa Hispana and San Francisco persisted in a way that sometimes jarred with people’s expectations. Symbolic of this openness was the creation of Artes 6, a predecessor of Galería de la Raza, and a humorous homage to San Francisco’s beat culture.

ARTES 6: 'A MEXICAN UPRISING'

The name “Artes 6” (Pronounced, “Artes Seis”) reflected its six original members, but also paid tribute to the famous Beats hangout, the Six Gallery, which had existed from 1954 until 1957 in the Marina District. The artists linked themselves with a certain aspect of local counterculture history, but translated into Spanish to accommodate their ethnic focus. Artes 6 opened in a storefront on Dolores and 18th Street in the Mission on June 14, 1969 with an exhibition of its members: Francisco Camplís, Antonio Gabriel, Rafael McNeill, Manuel Palos, Miguel Ruiz, and Pilar Sanchez.

The Mission District location appealed as a place where the artists “felt they could contribute the most for their people.” The location next to Dolores Park and just steps away from the doors of Mission High School was appealing. Perhaps the art would attract young students and open a dialogue with the next generation. Together, they would provide the preeminent venue for local Latin-American and Mexican-American visual artists. The publicity flyer, entitled “Mexican Up-Rising!” suggested Artes 6 might exert a more pronounced Chicano militancy than its predecessor Casa Hispana. However, the new gallery retained a degree of inclusiveness, if only evidenced in the form of co-founding member Rafael McNeill, a French American painter, whom Camplís called, “our honorary Raza.”³³²

The artists were inspired by the energy flaring in the community. They declared, “Few people are aware of the artistic activities and climate of creativity surfacing in the

³³² Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

Mission.”³³³ Their enthusiasm inspired others. Both neighboring residents and more far-flung Bay Area folks were making increasing contact with events in the Mission. Rupert Garcia learned about Artes 6 when he ran into Francisco Camplís hanging a show at San Francisco State University. The two hit it off, leading Garcia to visit the gallery shortly afterwards: “So I go down to 18th and Dolores and I go to the Artes 6 and we have the meeting and I meet these other artists. And, wow! Wow! I mean, it was beautiful.”³³⁴ The SFSU student quickly found a home at Artes 6, participating in a group show just four months after the gallery opened.³³⁵ Garcia later ascribed the moment he met Francisco as the moment when he became involved in, “a very important cultural milieu out of the Mission District in San Francisco.”³³⁶ The Mission District was not just the physical location of the gallery, but a much more meaningful and influential cultural environment.

In spite of all the enthusiasm, Artes 6 was short lived, lasting about a year – at least from June 1969 to June 1970 [Fig 3.11].³³⁷ The location was only semi-functional, a long narrow space that was less than inviting to an awaiting public. Moreover, Camplís does not remember a single high school student visiting the premises.³³⁸ Artes 6 had remained connected with Casa Hispana, and conversations in both locations began to steer toward accommodating more artists and developing more public outreach. While

³³³ “Mexican Uprising” document, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 2/9.

³³⁴ Garcia interview, AAA.

³³⁵ Artes 6 poster, Camplís files, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/4. Show is also listed on Rupert Garcia exhibit histories, Ybarra-Frausto collection, AAA, Box 10.

³³⁶ Garcia interview, AAA.

³³⁷ “Mexican Up-rising” document, June 1969, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 2/9; Rupert Garcia exhibit poster, June 1970, Camplís collection, CEMA, Box 1/4.

³³⁸ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

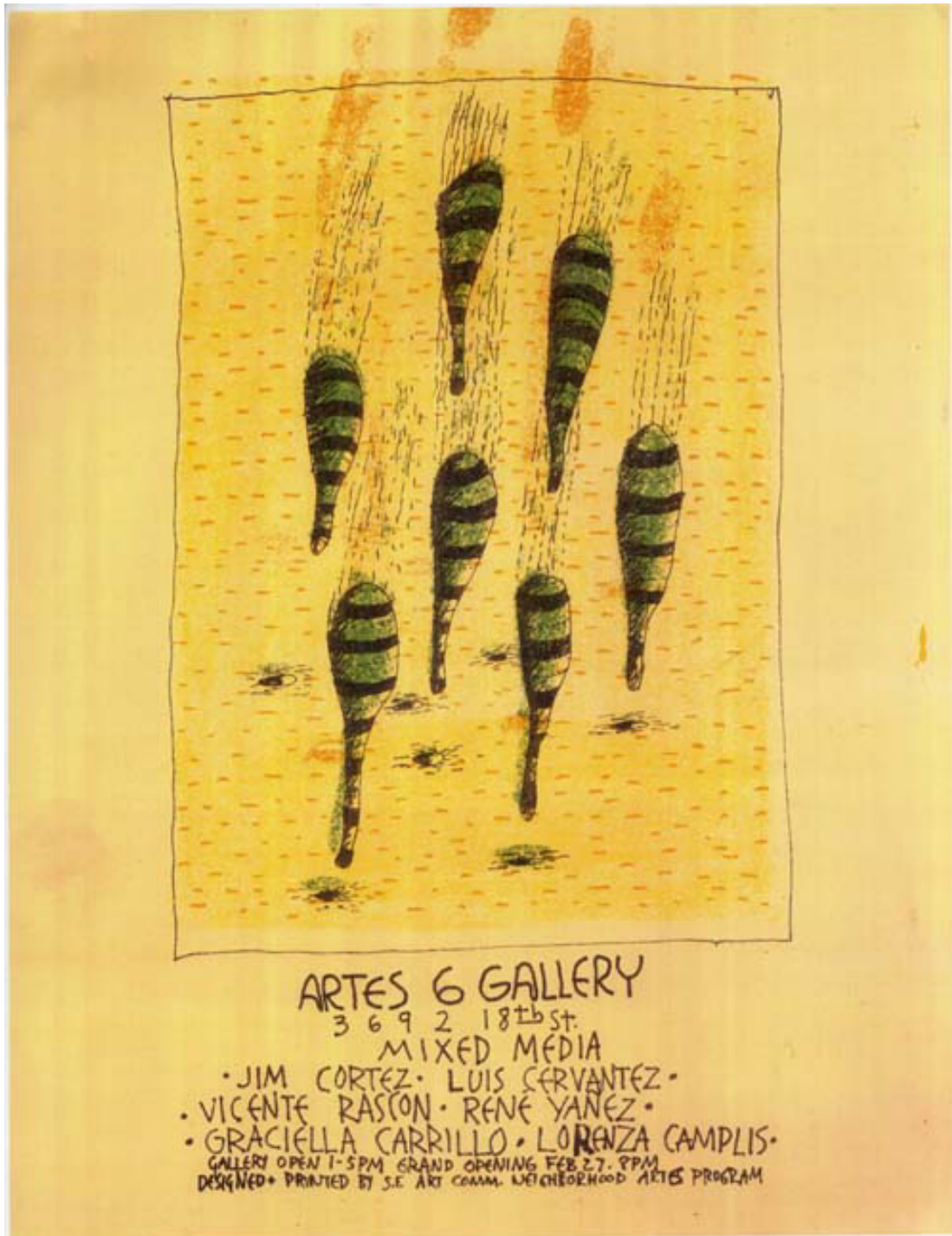


Fig. 3.11: Artes 6 poster, February 1970, designed and printed by the San Francisco Art Commission Neighborhood Arts Program. Artist unknown. Image courtesy of René Yañez.

Camplís had been busy with Artes 6, fellow artist Rolando Castellón had become director of the Visual Arts Board for Casa Hispana. Castellón then took the initiative of finding a space on 14th Street and Valencia.³³⁹ The location was a little out of the way for pedestrian traffic, but the building was already set up as a painting studio. Fredric Hobbs, a local painter, had relocated his Beat gallery from the Marina/Cow Hollow area to the 14th Street location and was willing to rent out his space to the new group of up-and-coming artists. Thus, in a poetically circular transition, Artes 6, named for the Beats, took up residence in a displaced home of the Beats.³⁴⁰ In their new incarnation, the artists christened the building Galería de la Raza.

GALERÍA DE LA RAZA

The sheer number of artists involved in the founding of Galería de la Raza is telling in terms of how the institution was fulfilling a social need. Diverse recollections have acknowledged as many as fifteen to twenty-five artists from the San Francisco Bay Area participated in the creation of the Galería de la Raza. Rolando Castellón was elected the first director [Fig. 3.12], and others – all men – who took part in varying

³³⁹ Rolando Castellón, Jerry Concha, Carlos Loarca, and Gustavo Rivera (group interview), San Francisco, CA, October 16, 1983, uncorrected Transcript from Califas Videotape #158-162, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman. Califas Book 5, 1, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

³⁴⁰ Thomas Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1945-1980: An Illustrated History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 285: “Hobbs organized the San Francisco Art Center, a complex of exhibition and studio space on 14th Street in the Mission district, and directed it through most of the 1960s.” Francisco Camplís recalled that Hobbs was benefiting from the arrangement not just in terms of rent, but as part of a grant to make his space accessible. Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

degrees included, in alphabetical order, Francisco Camplís, Jesus “Chuy” Campusano, Luis Cervantes, Jerry Concha, Rupert Garcia, Robert González, Louis Gutierrez, Carlos Loarca, Ralph Maradiaga, Ralph McNeil, Jay Ojeda, Carlos Pérez, Joe Ramos, José Romero, Mike Rios, Mike Ruiz, Gustavo Ramos Rivera, Peter Rodriguez, Manuel “Spain” Rodriguez, Luis Valsoto, Manuel Villamor, and René Yañez [Fig. 3.13].³⁴¹

The founding of Galería de la Raza was symbolic of the desire to reject the mainstream art institutions that had devalued Latino art and culture. According to René Yañez, “What I found out, taking portfolios around, slides around, people weren’t used to Chicanos or Latinos approaching a gallery. They would go, ‘Wait a minute.’” In another instance, Yañez recalled, “When I worked at the Neighborhood Arts Program one time, I went to a gallery association meeting, and they were very resistant, even to look at slides,

³⁴¹ Most likely, the number of artists involved in the founding of Galería de la Raza will remain murky, if only because the artists maintained varying levels of involvement. Various accounts have acknowledged the participation of a wide array of people. Ralph Maradiaga recalled the involvement of up to twenty-five artists: Maradiaga interview, part two, San Francisco, CA, October 29, 1982, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, *Califas Book 2, 1*, in *Califas Conference Final Report*; Thomas Albright reviewed the first show and referred to the featured work of Esteban Villa, Luis Gutierrez, and Luis Cervantes. See his review, “New Galería de la Raza,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 15, 1970; Another article, published in *El Tecolote* at the end of the year, recognized fourteen participating members: Jay Ojeda, Rene Yañez, Mike Ruiz, Gustavo Rivera, Peter Rodriguez, Ralph McNeil, Carlos Loarca, Ralph Maradiaga, Francisco Camplís, José Romero, Rolando Castellón, Luis Valsoto, and Carlos Perez. See, Anita Martinez, “Raza Art,” *El Tecolote*, November 30, 1970; An e-mail from Carlos Loarca to the author notes that Valsoto was not one of the original founders, August 31, 2005; Tere Romo emphasizes the importance of only six members: René Yañez, Ralph Maradiaga, Rolando Castellón, Francisco Camplís, Rupert Garcia, and Peter Rodriguez. Romo, “A Spirituality of Resistance,” 34; Sal Guereña has given the most extensive listing of names thus far, citing the following members: Rupert García, Peter Rodríguez, Francisco Camplís, Graciela Carrillo, Jerry Concha, Gustavo Ramos Rivera, Carlos Loarca, Manuelo [sic] Villamor, Robert González, Luis Cervantez [sic], Chuy Campusano, Rolando Castellón, Ralph Maradiaga, and René Yañez. See his synopsis for CEMA, “Galería de la Raza Guide to the Archives, 1969-1999: Organizational History,” http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/gdlrarch_org.html, accessed on March 15, 2005; I have not included Graciela Carrillo because most accounts describe the formation of Galería de la Raza as an all-male affair. Instead, the women’s involvement emerged more prominently through the first women’s show, dated as February 5-March 5, 1971, according to *El Tecolote*, February 23, 1971, 2. In my interview with Francisco Camplís, he recalled the steady presence of his brother-in-law, Chuy Campusano, along with Ralph Maradiaga, Mike Rios, and Spain Rodriguez. He also referred to José Ramos as the local “gestettner master.” Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.



Fig. 3.12: Rolando Castellón in front of his painting “Danza Allegorica,” winner of the National Grand Prize for Nicaragua. Reproduced in *El Tecolote*, October 27, 1971, 5.



Fig. 3.13: “Artistas Latinoamericanos” / “Latin American Artists.” Artists featured in the “Arte del Barrio” exhibition at Galería de la Raza from October 1 to November 8, 1970. Standing from left to right is Rolando Castellón, Adolfo Riestra, Luis Valsoto, and Peter Rodriguez; Seated from left to right is Gustavo Rivera and Roberto Gonzalez. The painting in the background is “The Sea of the Swans” by Carlos Loarca. The sculpture in the foreground is “Dancing Sailor” by Laurence Martinez. Photograph from *Mundo Hispano*, October 15, 1970, 1. Original clipping from the collection of Carlos Loarca.

look at work, and these instances came up with other people, ‘yeah, I experienced that same thing.’ ... ‘well, why don’t we start our own gallery, instead of knocking on doors and the doors, they’re not even answering.’”³⁴² The formation of Galería de la Raza was a necessary social and physical arrangement for Latino artists to reject the traditional infrastructure that seemingly prevented their entry into the city’s and the nation’s elite institutions.

Though separatist in nature, Galería de la Raza was ultimately not entirely independent of assistance from city programs. As one artist stated, the N.A.P., “acted as a legal liaison to bring Raza artists together, to make them aware of one another’s existence. The Program also helped with funds for the gallery’s founding.”³⁴³ Galería de la Raza fit well with the spirit of the N.A.P. and its mission to sponsor art-making in local communities. Thomas Albright declared that, “The new Galería de la Raza is sponsored by Casa Hispana de Belles Artes, with, of course, the assistance of the San Francisco Art Commission’s Neighborhood Arts Program, which has done more to enrich the cultural fabric of the City than 23 years of outdoor art festivals all put together.”³⁴⁴

The impetus behind Galería de la Raza was passionate enough for it to have formed without city assistance. In fact, initially, the artists each agreed to contribute a set fee, which sufficed for rent and bills for the space. However, as the Galería evolved, and as the cooperative structure proved difficult to manage, it required more sustainable

³⁴² Yañez interview, February 18, 2003.

³⁴³ Anita Martinez, “Raza! Arte! Raza! Arte!” *El Tecolote*, September 7, 1970, 3. The artist is unnamed in the article.

³⁴⁴ Albright, “New Galería de la Raza.”

financial assistance and more top-down leadership.³⁴⁵ The Neighborhood Arts Program and the San Francisco Art Commission were important mechanisms in its growth and long-term survival. Galería de la Raza benefited from the new sources of funding and naturally struggled when this funding was in jeopardy, especially over the course of the 1980s. Mapping this sometimes difficult course fell to Ralph Maradiaga and René Yañez, who gradually assumed the leadership of Galería de la Raza for more than a decade.

Though the Galería maintained a relationship with Casa Hispana in its first few years, the first show reflected the artists desire to break away from Casa Hispana's pervasive emphasis on high art and Spanish culture.³⁴⁶ Indeed, the first exhibit in July 1970 showcased RCAF artist Esteban Villa, who, according to one review, "identifies himself wholly with the Indian and not at all with the Spanish side of the Mexican heritage."³⁴⁷ The show featured Villa's cock series, including "Mythological Gallo I" and "Mythological Gallo II," which served as expressionist archetypes of Mexican manliness. Exhibiting Villa was a means of announcing the Chicano carnalismo of this new space.

In some respects, Galería de la Raza was a more Chicano-oriented space than Casa Hispana, if only owing to the fact that the majority of the founding artists were Chicanos. Moreover, the artists were determined to reject any use of the term "Hispanic," especially in their name. According to Rupert Garcia, "at this time, we were adamantly contra anything European. And of course, Casa Hispana, that killed it. We

³⁴⁵ *Ibid*; Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.

³⁴⁶ Angelina Grimke, "Chicano art finds home in Mission Galería," *People's World*, August 8, 1970.

said no, it had to be something that doesn't so obviously make the connection."³⁴⁸

Nonetheless, like its precursor, Galería de la Raza promoted a "Raza" identity to show solidarity with the Mission District population. As Garcia recalled, "we realized that we couldn't say Chicano. That that did not reflect the multiplicity of Latinos. So we figure, okay, 'la raza,' the people. So 'The Peoples' Gallery' or 'The Gallery of the People.'"³⁴⁹

Tomas Ybarra-Frausto connected the gallery's name with the writings of José Vasconcelos, who argued in his classic 1925 book *La Raza Cosmica* that the intermingling of peoples across Latin America would evolve into a glorious "cosmic race," joined together by a shared culture and history. Per Ybarra-Frausto, "This utopian vision of cultural coherence and predestined greatness found ready acceptance among Bay Area cultural activists who were searching for a point of unity among the diverse Latino communities living in the barrios of the Mission District in San Francisco."³⁵⁰

However, the appeal of a Raza sensibility did not necessarily translate to the politics of the larger Chicano movement. Rupert Garcia and Francisco Camplís encountered intense resistance in their attempt to convey the value of a multi-ethnic Raza political coalition at a meeting in Los Angeles. When Garcia was confronted with explaining why San Franciscans chose the name 'Galería de la Raza,' he said, "They just booed us out. I said, 'Francisco, man, let's get out of this place. All they're talking about

³⁴⁷ Jerome Tarshis, "San Francisco," *Artforum*, October 1970, 82-83.

³⁴⁸ Garcia interview, October 14, 1983, *Califas Book 5*, 16.

³⁴⁹ Garcia interview, AAA.

³⁵⁰ Ybarra-Frausto [Sic], "The Legacy of La Galería de la Raza / Studio 24." José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race: A Bilingual Edition* (1948; reprint, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

it is a 'pure Chicanismo.'"³⁵¹ Garcia's experience shows that the Raza ideology was not without its critics, particularly among supporters of a more nationalist cultural movement, but it also shows how San Francisco cultural workers attempted to cultivate support for Raza ideologies in a much wider sphere. Indeed, recognizing the impact of Raza as an ideology is key to understanding how San Francisco cultural workers attempted to redefine the Chicano Civil Rights Movement into a more encompassing social movement. Street murals, silk screens, poetry, political writing, and theater reverberated with the emerging Raza ideology, emphasizing a shared Latin American past, a celebrated indiginism, and a desire to overturn all oppression, regardless of geographical borders.

Early exhibits at Galería de la Raza reflected an expansive interest in Latin American and Third World cultures, largely through the lens of a global Left, and often in opposition to U.S. policies. The Galería followed-up the Villa exhibition with a show of photographs by Jay Ojeda and Robert Perez-Diaz, and drawings by Gloria Osuna, documenting their experience as volunteers with the Venceremos (We Shall Overcome) Brigade, an organization for Americans to show solidarity with the Cuban Revolution by working in Cuba. The show also featured well-known Cuban artist René Mederos and

³⁵¹ Garcia interview, AAA. Musician Poncho Sanchez had a parallel experience: "Poncho Sanchez, a [Cal] Tjader protégé who now leads one of the finest Latin jazz bands around, recalls that during his own apprenticeship in the music, he was considered insufficiently 'Latin' for the Latin music community, even though he was a Chicano. 'They wouldn't even let me sit in,' Sanchez says of the Cuban musicians in Los Angeles. 'Are you Chicano?' they'd ask. 'Yeah, I'm Chicano and I play congas.' 'Get outta here. Chicanos don't know how to play.'" In Ted Gioia, *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 100, from, Lee Hildebrand, "Drummer Sticks to Latin Jazz," *San Francisco Chronicle Datebook*, July 3, 1988, 36.

his series of posters “that reflect an obvious love for the Vietnamese people.”³⁵² The gallery’s political disposition was not just sympathetic with the social consciousness of communism, but implicitly hopeful in spurring some form of revolution amongst the people of the Mission District. Similarly, a 1971 exhibit of Alejandro Stuart’s photographs of “Murals of New Chile,” and a June 1973 exhibit of silkscreens from Chilean president Salvador Allende’s cultural campaign [Fig. 3.14] reflected the gallery’s sympathies with the socialist revolution in Chile.³⁵³ The ideals of Galería de la Raza, as a people’s gallery, were intimately tied with the ideals of Leftist mass movements for social change around the globe.

In various ways, Galería de la Raza was never just an art gallery, but also a vehicle for expressing political beliefs, both abroad and at home. The gallery explicitly and implicitly critiqued racism in the United States, whether it was through its memorial exhibition to Ruben Salazar, the Chicano journalist shot by Los Angeles police during the Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War, or through the development of its arts programs in the community, which emphatically rejected the Eurocentrism of the San Francisco establishment. Over time, shows included paintings, both representational and abstract, but also less acknowledged mediums, such as posters, food, weavings, newspapers, murals, gestettner copies, photographs, and tortilla art.

Many of the Galería’s exhibits were not overtly political, but they still conveyed the desire to cultivate a broad sensitivity to Latin American and Third World cultures.

³⁵² As the *People’s World* reviewer declared, “see what happens when the artist and the revolution are one and the same ... it’s pretty damned fine.” Grimke, “Chicano art finds home...”

³⁵³ Thomas Albright, “A Powerful Look at Rio’s Barrios,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 15, 1971, 33.

POR CHILE

SILKSCREENS FROM PRESIDENT ALLENDE
CULTURAL CAMPAIGN



JUNE 29 - JULY 14

FIRST U.S. SHOWING
OPENING JUNE 29, 2 P.M.

GALERIA DE LA RAZA
2851 24th ST. S.E., CALIF. PH. 826 8009
OPEN WED - SUN 12 - 8 P.M.

PRINTED FOR THE COMPANY BY THE S.F. ART COMMISSION'S NEIGHBORHOOD ARTS PROGRAM

Fig. 3.14: "Por Chile" Exhibit Poster, Galería de la Raza, June 29-July 14, 1973.

Early shows included the graphics of Argentina, Brazil, and Costa Rica; photographs of the Quechua Indians of Peru; a group show of local Filipino and Samoan artists; yarn paintings of the Huichol Indians of Guadalajara, Mexico, and a benefit for the 1973 earthquake victims of Nicaragua.³⁵⁴

In addition, the Galería continued to show abstract art. Thomas Albright gave favorable reviews to the works of Gustavo Rivera and Peter Rodriguez, whose works were perhaps more akin to Albright's taste than some of the more didactic art [Fig. 3.15; 3.16].³⁵⁵ Francisco Camplís later interpreted of Albright that, "at first [he] was very supportive and he reviewed Chicano and other minority art exhibits – many were favorable. Then after a short period of time, he did an about face and completely ignored minority exhibits, except for a select few, such as, Rupert Garcia, Manuel Neri. Apparently he was chastised by the elite establishment he represented."³⁵⁶ Whether or not this perception was accurate, Camplís's statement underscored the constant tensions framing interactions between cultural organizations in the Mission District and San Francisco's more established forums.

For many of the artists, the ideal was not just making art, but educating the community. Such an approach automatically distinguished the gallery from the elite venues downtown. One *Artforum* reviewer noted, "On the afternoon when I stopped by, one youngster, possibly twelve years old, was drawing under the scrutiny of several

³⁵⁴ *Ibid*; Codex Newsletter, Galería de la Raza, September 1973, 1-2.

³⁵⁵ Albright, "A Wide Range in Latin Art." Thomas Albright, "The Sensual Moods of Nature," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 23, 1971, 34.

³⁵⁶ Camplís interview, March 12, 2003.



Fig. 3.15: Peter Rodriguez, "Language of April," c.1970. Black and white reproduction copied from *Artforum*, April 1971, 94.



Fig. 3.16: Gustavo Rivera, *Untitled*, 54" x 30", 1970, showed at La Galería de la Raza. Black and white reproduction of color painting from *Artforum*, November 1970, 93.

instructors hovering nearby, and another, two or three years older, was having the diaphragm of a camera explained to him.”³⁵⁷ The gallery created an area just for children’s art, developed arts workshops, and offered weekly Sunday celebrations with food.³⁵⁸ According to Rolando Castellón, “Our main interest was to better ourselves and to educate and to get more people into the arts ... whether it is the Galería de la Raza or the Mexican Museum or Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, the main thrust was the education really through the arts. And by association ... we became also a political force.”³⁵⁹

CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS ON AN ARTS REVOLUTION

The Mission District “Raza” movement did not fit with the nationalist interests of the Chicano movement, but the two were inextricably linked. In San Francisco, the Chicano movement was also a Raza movement, which generated a Raza art. This art was never a single style, but rather, implicitly reflective of an ideal, to unify as Latinos and propel social uplift. Ultimately, the story of a Latino arts enclave in the Mission underscores the regional complexity and diversity of the Chicano and Latino arts movement as a whole.

As a cosmopolitan city where artists regularly entertained new ideas and networked, the Mission District emerged as a significant nexus for discussing and defining Chicano and Latino art and politics. Idealistically, the Mission was the artists’

³⁵⁷ Tarshis, “San Francisco,” *Artforum*.

³⁵⁸ Albright, “New Galería de la Raza”; Martinez, “Raza! Arte!”

³⁵⁹ Castellón group interview, October 16, 1983, *Califas Book 5*, 11.

muse – a site for creative inspiration, cultural identity, and contact with other like-minded people. The Mission was also their audience – an audience to uplift and radicalize. If anything created solidarity in the community, it was this tandem effort to pay homage to the Mission as a center of Latino and indigenous cultures and to educate the people about their shared cultural history.

Even if the art was not obviously political, its distribution was. The ideals of street theatre, free galleries and art classes, mural making, and music in the streets was to celebrate multiple cultures, remove the de facto barriers of class and race, inspire future artists, and politicize the community. Regardless of the medium and content, the arts movement was strongly infused with the desire to make art accessible to all. Artist efforts ran counter to their personal experiences with American education and institutions. Frustrated and uninspired by San Francisco’s mainstream art institutions, artists, writers, and performers developed separate galleries, publishing collectives, and theatrical venues. Alternative spaces were a necessary component for critiquing mainstream perceptions of art and culture.

In various ways, Mission artists attempted to cultivate a “Raza” identity that could unite the Latino community, but this was not always successful. Nationally and locally, Latinos who were not Chicanos found themselves both included and excluded according to the shifting permeability of the Chicano Movement. For instance, Alberto Mijangos, a Mexican-born artist who immigrated to San Antonio, Texas in the early 1940s, felt his immigrant status kept him outside the developing Chicano Movement over the course of the late 1960s and early 1970s. When the Chicano art group Con Safos formed in San

Antonio, Mijangos recalled, “I’m not invited and I was very hurt. I was very hurt because a lot of them were my friends and they helped me and we identified so much in our conversations, but politically they felt that I didn’t belong in that group.”³⁶⁰ Likewise, Carlos Loarca, a Guatemalan, felt similar exclusions began to play out in the Mission District of the early 1970s: “And part of the misunderstanding of the politics is that we were Latinos not born here – Chicanos were born in here, so they were first. And they deserved more attention than the ones that were born on the outside. And maybe it makes sense, maybe. But supposedly we were all working together. And we were collaborating.”³⁶¹ The sense of difference between Chicanos and other Latinos was one of many differences that divided Latino communities, but the construction of a Raza identity attempted to glue people together.

Even as lines of exclusion were drawn, the period was marked by local, regional, national, and transnational debates that contributed to the richness of the moment. For many, the opportunity to plan and participate in events involving diverse cross-sections of Chicanos and Latinos became a critical element of developing their art. The situation also created a difficult balance for artists – many felt their allegiances to art tested against their ethnic identity. As Chicanos or Latinos were they meant to generate a uniform image to please reviewers and/or themselves? Finding where lines were drawn, where exceptions and exclusions were made, underscored tensions in the community, but also served as points of inspiration.

³⁶⁰ Alberto Mijangos, interview by author, San Antonio, TX, December 5 and 12, 2003, for the AAA, <http://archivesofamericanart.si.edu/oralhist/mijang03.htm>, accessed on August 19, 2005.

³⁶¹ Loarca interview, April 8, 2003.

Chapter Four

The Third World Strike and the Globalization of Chicano Art, or, the Education of Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes



Fig. 4.1: Juan Fuentes, newspaper graphic, 1976. Image from *El Tecolote*, July 1976, 12.

In November of 1968, after a series of “Shut-it-Down!” events, students at San Francisco State College initiated the longest student strike in American history, known as the Third World Strike. The students, predominantly people of color, called for the immediate creation of an Ethnic Studies Department, the substantive hiring of non-white faculty, and the expansive recruitment of non-white students. From November of 1968 through March of 1969, the “Mama strike” lasted for almost five months and contributed to “Baby strikes” at various other universities, including UC Berkeley, Columbia, and Cornell.³⁶²

The Third World Strike ended on March 20, 1969 when the college relented to some of the student demands: the school of Ethnic Studies, the first such department of its kind in the country, opened in the fall of 1969 and signaled the start of Ethnic Studies

³⁶² San Francisco State College became San Francisco State University in 1974. On the strike, see, William Barlow and Peter Shapiro, *An End to Silence: The San Francisco State College Student Movement in the '60s* (New York, NY: Pegasus, 1971); Helene Whitson, “Introductory Essay,” *The San Francisco State College Strike*, San Francisco State University Archives, <http://www.library.sfsu.edu/strike/>, accessed on August 23, 2005; Jason Michael Ferreira, “All Power To the People: A Comparative History of Third World Radicalism in San Francisco, 1968-1974,” Ph.D. diss., UC Berkeley, 2003. Ferreira prefaces his study on the Third World movement, by writing, “Even though San Francisco served as an epicenter for much of the modern ‘Movement’ there is still a tremendous void in the scholarship on the Sixties in the Bay Area.” (12) Scholarship on the Third World Strikes is small, and Ferreira’s complaint that most overview histories of the Sixties overlook this critical series of events has merit; Angie Y. Chung and Edward Taehan Chang write, “Although it is one of the more neglected areas of research, the ideological and substantive convergence of Black activists with other ‘Third World’ minorities was a critical feature of liberation movements, particularly during the late 1960s.” in “From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics: A Contemporary Approach to Interethnic Coalitions,” *Social Justice* 25 (Fall 1998), 80-100 (86); Other sources on the event include: Kuregiy Hekymara, “The Third World Movement and its History in the San Francisco State College Strike of 1968-1969,” Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1972; Stacey Ann Cook, “Power and Resistance: Berkeley’s Third World Liberation Front Strikes,” Ed.D. diss., University of San Francisco, 2001; Harvey Dong, “The Origins and Trajectory of Asian American Political Activism in the San Francisco Bay Area,” Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002; William Orrick, *Shut it Down! A College in Crisis: San Francisco State College, October 1968-April 1969* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969); Dikran Karaguezian, *Blow it Up! The Black Student Revolt at San Francisco State College and the Emergence of Dr. Hayakawa*

departments across the nation. In addition, administrators guaranteed the enrollment of approximately 500 qualified nonwhite students and 400 non-white “special admittees.” While the number of faculty of color to be appointed was left open, change was at hand and a major victory went to the striking students.³⁶³

The strike marked a formative moment in San Francisco history and led many in the city to align themselves with a global “Third World” identity in their politics and in their art. As artist Juan Fuentes later said, “I think the whole concept of Third World Studies ... was just like an eye opener. Because it just made me see, ‘wait a minute, we’re connected to this whole other sphere of people in the world.’ And it also I think made me very confident. ...as a person of color, it made me feel like, ‘Hey, we belong here. We have a right to this.’”³⁶⁴ Fuentes’ experience as one of the first group of students to gain entry into the college as a result of the strike reframed his understanding of himself and imbued his art with a Third World perspective.

This chapter uses the Third World Strike to trace the political awakening of three Chicano artists: Juan Fuentes (1950-), Yolanda Lopez (1942-), and Rupert Garcia (1941-). While none of the three was a lead organizer, the strike still made an indelible impact on their artistic and political consciousness. Thus, this chapter gives an overview

(Boston: Gambit Incorporated, 1971); and Robert Smith, et al., *By Any Means Necessary: The Revolutionary Struggle at San Francisco State* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970).

³⁶³ *Ibid.* As Johnnetta B. Cole points out, “The beginnings of Black Studies in liberal arts institutions is usually dated with the establishment of an Afro-American Studies Department at San Francisco State College in 1968. However, programs in Afro-American Studies existed at other white institutions before 1968; for example, Cornell University had a functioning program in 1967.” In “Black Studies in Liberal Arts Education,” in *Transforming the Curriculum: Ethnic Studies and Women’s Studies*, Johnella Butler and John Walter, eds. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) 131- 148 (133). Cole’s point is well taken, but the high-profile visibility and momentum of the Third World Strike were critical elements of the expansion of the field of Ethnic Studies across the nation.

³⁶⁴ Juan Fuentes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 13, 2003.

of the history of the strike before expanding on its relevance in their work. Indisputably idealistic, this trio represents an expanding community of “cultural workers” in the Bay Area who sought to affirm a global Left community, cultivate social uplift, and overturn racism through their art. Posters proved to be a critical medium to relay their ideals, and their approach was indicative of the Bay Area’s growing reputation as a center for poster art.³⁶⁵ Neither “cultural workers” nor poster artists were new to the Bay Area, but both communities were revitalized by the late 1960s push to prioritize the role of the artist as an agent for social change.³⁶⁶ Their medium and interests also tended to posit their work outside the traditional sphere of art museums and galleries.

Part of the objective of this chapter is to unlock the relationship of these artists with the multiplicity of international communities that inspired their work. As Chicano artists, Garcia, Fuentes, and Lopez simultaneously identified with diverse concerns of the Chicano movement, the Third World movement, and the Left. All three artists drew on the ideas and iconography of the Black Panthers, the black militant organization, which

³⁶⁵ Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 162-176; Chon Noriega, ed., *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California* (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001); Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun, Contemporary/Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977); and Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa Mckenna, and Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, eds., *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation* (CARA), (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1991).

³⁶⁶ Victor Margolin argues that American posters date back at least to the 1890s with the rise of modern printing techniques. For an overview, see: Margolin, *American Poster Renaissance* (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1975), 19. This excludes the history of less-design-oriented placards and pamphlets, such as Bernard Bailyn discusses in *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1992). In the twentieth century, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the 1930s was instrumental in popularizing poster art across the nation. See Christopher DeNoon, *Posters of the WPA* (Los Angeles, CA: The Wheatley Press, 1987). For a discussion on how the social movements of the 1960s were impacting the purpose of art, see: Thomas Crow, *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972: A Cross-Reference Book of Information on some Esthetic Boundaries* (New York: Praeger, 1973); Suzaan Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the*

historically has served as a symbol of late 1960s ethnic separatism.³⁶⁷ In fact, representations of the 1960s as a moment of ethnic nationalism and reading the work of Chicano artists only within the confines of the Chicano movement often undercuts the complexity and multiplicity of people's identifications. The capacity of people to permeate the multiple definitions of their communities is always more malleable than the terminology. Notably, each of these artists found themselves drawn into San Francisco's Mission District community, a place that both shaped and reflected their political and artistic concerns. In documenting their experience, the intent is to dramatize the reverberations of the strike in visual culture and how the ideologies of the Third World movement have complicated, enriched, and contradicted the dominant narratives of ethnic separatism and contributed to the political and aesthetic heart of the Mission District arts movement.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE THIRD WORLD STRIKE

Landscape of the Sixties (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); and Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*.

³⁶⁷ Erika Doss writes of the Black Panthers, "Their canny attention to visual authority made the Panthers' mode of self-representation *the* image of 1960s radicalism," in her article, "'Revolutionary Art is a Tool for Liberation': Emory Douglas and Protest Aesthetics at the *Black Panther*," in *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, eds., Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas (New York; London: Routledge, 2001), 175-187 (178). Also in that book, Ward Churchill describes "an increasing willingness on the part of black activists to engage in armed self-defense against the various forms of state repression and to develop a capacity to pursue the liberatory struggle by force, if necessary. Shortly, groups emerging within other communities of color – the Puerto Rican Young Lords Organization (YLO), for example, as well as the Chicano Brown Berets and the American Indian Movement (AIM)—had entered into more or less the same trajectory" in "'To Disrupt, Discredit and Destroy': The FBI's Secret War Against the Black Panther Party," 82-83. Also see, Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981; reprint, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

The Third World Strike must be placed in the context of a global chain of events: 1968, known as the year of international student strikes, inspired many youth to consider themselves as part of a global Left community. Protests in Paris, Tokyo, Mexico City, and San Francisco represented a shared sense of international struggle, largely revolving around the desire to overturn authoritarian control and invoke “power to the people.” George Katsiaficas writes: “television, radio, and traveling spokespersons spread the movement around the world as never before, synchronizing its actions and making the political generation of 1968 a truly international one.”³⁶⁸ Simultaneously, repression and violence in connection with the protests intensified: The May student strikes in Paris erupted in “Bloody Monday,” a night of violent clashes between police and protesters; street battles between students and police in Germany ensued after a student leader was violently attacked; and the Mexican military opened fire and killed hundreds of students in the Tlatelolco massacre. In the United States, tensions heightened with the escalation of the Vietnam War; the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy; and the police beating of protesters at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in

³⁶⁸ George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987), 41; Mark Kurlansky, *1968: The Year that Rocked the World* (New York: Random House, 2005); Charles Kaiser, *1968 in America: Music, Politics, Chaos, Counterculture, and the Shaping of a Generation* (New York: Grove Press, 1988); Jules Witcover, *The Year the Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America* (New York: Warner Books, 1997); Donald J. Mabry, *The Mexican University and the State: Students Conflicts, 1910-1971* (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 1982); Daniel Singer, *Prelude to Revolution: France in May 1968*, Updated edition (1970; reprint, Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002). Michael Denning dates the global New Left from 1955-56 on, “from the Khrushchev revelations to the uprising in Budapest, from the battle of Dien Bien Phu to that of Algiers, from the Suez crisis to the Bandung conference, from the Montgomery bus boycott to the Sharpeville massacre, from the CND marches to the Anpo protests, from the independence of Ghana to the charismatic guerilla revolution in Cuba ...” in *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York and London: Verso, 2004), 8.

August. A sense of impending revolution and swift suppression characterized the events of 1968.³⁶⁹

At San Francisco State College, tensions between students and administrators had been building for some time, particularly in response to the college's policy of notifying the Selective Service Office when a student became eligible for the draft. As Helene Whitson notes, the administration's 1967 reinstatement of the policy after considerable student protest "reinforced the feeling that higher education was totally unsympathetic to student ideas and irrelevant to their needs."³⁷⁰ In addition, increasing and sometimes violent conflicts between white and nonwhite students on campus reflected the heightened racial tensions of the nation. A 1967 fight in the student newspaper office between black students and the white editor stemmed from disagreement about the relevance of the Black Students Union and underscored the palpable racial divide on campus.³⁷¹ Over the course of early 1968, concerns about the war abroad and civil rights at home sparked a series of direct actions, including the occupation of campus buildings, sit-ins, and multiple demonstrations. Campus tensions continued to escalate, both as a

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ Whitson, "Introductory essay: The San Francisco State College Strike," <http://www.library.sfsu.edu/strike/>, accessed on August 29, 2005.

³⁷¹ When the white editor of the student newspaper disputed the purpose of the Black Student Union, members of the organization were incensed. As Barlow and Shapiro note, "a group of black students had gone to protest the *Gater's* coverage of BSU activities, but their specific grievances reflected a situation which had been building for over two years." The visit erupted in at least six black students physically attacking the editor. The college's suspension of nine black students photographed in the attack contributed to the fodder of multiple protests in the fall of 1967. Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 112; Helene Whitson, "Chronology of Events: The San Francisco State College Strike," <http://www.library.sfsu.edu/strike/>, accessed on August 29, 2005; and on race relations more generally, see Maurice Isserman, Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

result of specific local concerns, and in the context of a larger global movement of striking students.

In March of 1968, the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) emerged as a loose coalition of student organizations to unite diverse factions on campus. “Third World” organizing counterbalanced the politics of ethnic separatism. Many African Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos saw the potential of organizing collectively and perceived ways in which their unequal status with Anglo Americans paralleled the global divide between “Third World” countries and “First World” superpowers. The term “Third World” was a product of the Cold War. The populaces that fell both economically and politically outside the Euro-American capitalist system or the Soviet communist bloc of nations fell into another camp loosely called the Third World. While the phrase “Third World” designated a lesser status, activists of the 1960s sought to overturn the pejorative meaning and build a coalition among the people who felt stigmatized by the label. Americans choosing to unite as part of a transnational Third World community perpetuated an understanding of their subject position as part of a global system of empire, racism, and inequality.³⁷² Such cross-cultural and transnational unions were imperfect, but the idealism implicit in Third World coalition building had profound repercussions for the culture of the city.

³⁷² Jason Ferreira writes, “activists of color in San Francisco incorporated a distinct political praxis which I refer to as ‘Third Worldist.’ Ideologically, this united “Black, Red, Yellow, and Brown Power movements” in a “Third World” political community for overturning racism and poverty in non-white communities. See, Ferreira, “All Power to the People,” 13. Allan M. Gordon discusses the etymology of the term “Third World” in “On Understanding Third World Art,” in *Other Sources: An American Essay*, curator, Carlos Villa (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute, exhibition catalogue, September 17-November 7, 1976), 17; Chung and Chang provide an overview of Third World activism in “From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics”; Barlow and Shapiro discuss the influence of writings on imperialism by

Ideologically, the TWLF came together as a network of ethnic student groups who rallied together against the Vietnam War and against academic policies that implicitly supported Western imperialism and racism at home and abroad. As Angie Chung and Edward Chang write, “Although the San Francisco State College Strike was for the most part a student-led movement, the objective interests of the organization converged at the crossroads of racial and class liberation such that all forms of human oppression became the basis for resistance.” In practical terms, however, the TWLF focused on the ways that cultural imperialism was incorporated into academic curriculums, admissions, and funding at the college and into consensus histories of the United States.³⁷³

Faculty member Juan Martinez proved instrumental in the formation of the TWLF at San Francisco State, since student concerns about the place of people of color in higher education synthesized with his efforts to recruit more students of color at the college. According to surveys conducted by the college, the student body hovered at twenty percent nonwhite, while the city of San Francisco was more than fifty percent nonwhite, suggesting a significant discrepancy in who was being served by a public institution. Martinez correctly foresaw the TWLF as a means of reaching out to more students of color. The loose alliance of the TWLF included the Black Students Union (BSU); the Philippine American College Endeavor (PACE); the Intercollegiate Chinese for Social

Frantz Fanon in *The End to Silence*, 155; Edward Said provides a broader discussion of cultural imperialism in *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

³⁷³ Chung and Chang, “From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics,” 87. Chung and Chang write, “The TWLF explicitly challenged the fundamental premises of California’s Master Plan for Higher Education, which had been designed in 1960 to restrict admissions to San Francisco State College to ‘quality’ students and to centralize power in the hands of 21 political and corporate leaders” (86); Barlow

Action (ICSA); the Latin American Students Organization (LASO); the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA); the Mexican American Student Confederation (MASC); and later, to a limited extent, the predominantly white Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Each existed as a separate organization, but similar concerns and political interests vitalized their networking together as the Third World Liberation Front.³⁷⁴

As San Francisco State students became increasingly critical of university policies, they also began to formulate more concrete demands for change. The Black Students Union (BSU) emerged as one of the most vocal organizations for issuing demands and leading direct action, often coordinating their efforts with the leadership of the Black Panther Party. As Chung and Chang note “the Black Students Union assumed a greater leadership role due to their unquestionable political experience, larger size and developed consciousness as a racial constituency, and their connections with the larger Black Power movements.”³⁷⁵ In May of 1968, the BSU and TWLF students won some of their demands, including the promise of a program to admit 400 students of color in the fall. In addition, the university established a Black Studies department in September 1968. However, the college’s economic deficit in the fall prevented adequate fulfillment

and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*; “A ‘Master Plan’ that Prevents Colleges from Fighting Racism,” *People’s World*, January 11, 1969, 2.

³⁷⁴ Statistics from Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 76. Information on Martinez and campus organizations from: Orrick, *Shut it Down!*, 100, 104; Chung and Chang, “From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics,” 86; Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 156-159, 167-168, 224; Whitson, “Introductory Essay”; Mitchell Yangson, “The Philippine American Collegiate Endeavor and the San Francisco State College Strike,” <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~runamuck/PACEPAPER.htm>, accessed on August 31, 2005. Both Orrick and Barlow and Shapiro discuss the participation of whites, but as Orrick writes, “Third World student leaders all agree that whites, moderate and radical, have played a large role in visibly supporting the strike and its picket lines, but a negligible one in terms of planning strategy” (104).

³⁷⁵ Chung and Chang, “From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics,” 97, n.6; Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 155; Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 77-90.

of the admissions promise: 100 slots were cut; financial aid for enrolled students was not forthcoming; and the incipient Black Studies Department had little to no funds.³⁷⁶

The peace offerings, such as they were, could not stave off the expression of profound unrest, nor were they substantial enough to resolve the critique of systemic racism and cultural imperialism on a much grander scale. As William Barlow and Peter Shapiro note, “as the strike progressed, it inevitably developed into an attack on the whole direction which mass higher education in California had taken in the past ten years, because it became increasingly clear that the TWLF was not simply taking San Francisco State to task for its various sins, general or specific; it was proposing an alternative philosophy of education.”³⁷⁷ The strike was not just about people of color gaining entry into the college, but also about making a massive overhaul of educational curriculums and hiring practices.

The final catalyst for the strike proved to be the college’s November 1, 1968 suspension of English instructor and Black Panther Minister of Education George Mason Murray, owing to his public advocacy of black militancy and the need to bear arms for protection on campus.³⁷⁸ His removal threw the campus into a tailspin and forced a showdown between students and authorities. The BSU formulated a set of ten demands, including the immediate reinstatement of Murray. [Fig. 4.1] The TWLF then added five more demands to represent a broader spectrum of student concerns. For example, the BSU’s call for twenty faculty members in the Black Studies Department was expanded into a call for fifty faculty members to develop a School of Third World Studies. In

³⁷⁶ Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 196-197.

³⁷⁷ Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, xiv.

addition, the order to reinstate Murray was altered to include a stipulation for self-governance of Third World Studies hiring and firing. Lastly, the TWLF demanded open admissions for all Third World students. Handing their demands to the college president, the students anticipated his refusal and announced a general meeting on November 5 to discuss the merits of a strike. Stokely Carmichael, Prime Minister of the Black Panther Party, delivered the keynote address, which emphasized the importance of a long-term shut down of the college as a means to address widespread institutionalized racism. The next day, on November 6, 1968, the strike began.³⁷⁹

Of course, not all students participated in the strike, but the number of students who did and the guerrilla tactics they employed – hallway chanting, fires in trash cans, classroom invasions, building occupations, office raids – were sufficient to turn the campus upside down. Combat-ready police stationed themselves around the campus, turning the college into a militarized zone. To respond to the crisis, College President Robert Smith closed the college, but was quickly losing any authority in the eyes of trustees, government officials, and faculty. Under pressure from his superiors, Smith reopened the campus on November 20, but also attempted to appease faculty concerns by holding a three-day long, campus-wide convocation to ease tensions.³⁸⁰ However, Smith’s inability or refusal to comply with any of the Third World demands, his unwillingness to cancel classes during the convocation, and the simultaneous receipt of suspension notices for most of the TWLF leadership, undercut the point of the dialogue.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 206-218; Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 34-36.

³⁷⁹ Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 218-221; Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 37-38.

³⁸⁰ Whitson, “Chronology.”

On November 21, the second day of the convocation, TWLF led a morning walkout, Robert Smith resigned, and the strike picked up with full force.³⁸¹

Over the course of the five-month long struggle, hostilities between strikers and authorities intensified and violence erupted from both sides. In particular, the replacement of Robert Smith with S. I. Hayakawa as the new college president turned the situation into a battle of wills. Hayakawa was determined not to relinquish any control and maintained a strong police presence on campus. As a Japanese American who saw himself as living proof of the American dream, he rejected the militancy of the students and criticized their failure to acknowledge the opportunities already in place. He remarked, “self-determination is not given, it is earned ... [It] comes from having enough money to be your own boss or from having the intelligence and creativity so that others are willing to entrust great projects to you.” Hayakawa’s convictions accorded with the sentiments of then Governor Ronald Reagan, who refused to engage student concerns and who supported militarizing the campus to restore order.³⁸²

Despite strong opposition, the student strike continued to expand in unexpected ways. Hayakawa’s arrogance toward faculty helped launch a simultaneous strike on campus by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) union. The AFT strike, initiated on January 6, 1969, a couple of weeks before the end of the fall semester, added to the pervasive campus unrest. In addition, a parallel Third World Strike of students began at UC Berkeley on January 21, 1969. The concerns of the Third World Strike reflected a cultural shift in education that administrators finally had to engage, regardless of their

³⁸¹ Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 242; Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 51-55.

³⁸² Barlow and Shapiro, *An End to Silence*, 256; Also see, Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 55-59.

personal antipathy. As Johnnetta Cole writes, “it was precisely because the traditional departments and curricula failed to deal adequately with issues of racism and sexism, and consistently demonstrated an unwillingness to hire Black or women staff, that a need for Black Studies and Women’s Studies arose.”³⁸³

Alternatively, students could not continue the struggle indefinitely, facing constant demands on their time, the need to deal with arrests and fines, factional bickering, little concrete to show for their college “attendance,” and the sense that “the authorities were determined not to lose this battle no matter what the cost.”³⁸⁴ On March 20, 1969, the college administration and the TWLF signed a compromise agreement to end the strike. While neither George Murray nor Nathan Hare, another vocal faculty member for the strike, were granted the continuation of their employment, the college authorities consented to create a School of Ethnic Studies and implemented new admissions policies to recruit students of color, admitting 4,750 nonwhite students out of a total enrollment of 17,700 in the fall of 1969.³⁸⁵

³⁸³ Cole, “Black Studies in Liberal Arts Education,” in *Transforming the Curriculum*, 140; As the editors of *Multicultural Teaching in the University* state, “Most Women’s Studies, African American Studies, and other ethnic studies programs and departments in universities in the United States emerged because of the lack of this content in other arenas of the university.” David Schoem, Linda Frankel, Ximena Zuniga, Edith A. Lewis, eds., *Multicultural Teaching in the University* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 3; Howard Ball, S. D. Berkowitz, and Mbuelelo Mzamane, *Multicultural Education in Colleges and Universities: A Transdisciplinary Approach* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1998); Cameron McCarthy and Warren Crichlow, *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education* (New York: Routledge, 1993); and Louis Heath, *Red, Brown, and Black Demands for Better Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1972).

³⁸⁴ Smith, Axen and Pentony, *By Any Means Necessary*, 301.

³⁸⁵ Barlow and Shapiro, *The End to Silence*, 247-321; Orrick, 63-70; Smith, Axen and Pentony, *By Any Means Necessary*, 300-316: Smith, Axen, and Pentony, writing in 1970, largely viewed the strike as a failure because it did not achieve all the demands of the students and because the repressive tactics of the administration had such a destructive impact on community organizing. In terms of the expansive hopes of the strikers, their view is accurate.

Some argue that the strike achieved little, and certainly did not live up to the revolutionary ambitions of its organizers. Marjorie Heins states that while “the S.F. State strike was in many ways a culmination of all the political energy and awareness that had been brewing in ghettos and on campuses since the early sixties,” it also “was crushed and ushered in severe repression on California campuses.”³⁸⁶ Indeed, Hayakawa continued to purge academic departments of his political opponents over the next few years.³⁸⁷ Even so, in concrete terms, the Third World Strike helped reframe the curriculum of American universities for a sizable body of students and faculty who believed Ethnic Studies was necessary to de-center Eurocentric, canonical approaches.³⁸⁸ In addition, the creation of Educational Opportunity Programs (E.O.P.) in colleges and art schools around the country facilitated the attendance of students who otherwise had experienced the “track” system, which had precluded the likelihood they would go to college.³⁸⁹

The Third World Strike also had more abstract ramifications: looking at the impact of the event on the consciousness of Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes offers an intimate window onto the more indirect reverberations of the Third

³⁸⁶ Marjorie Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property: The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1972), 123.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 130.

³⁸⁸ Schoem, et al., *Multicultural Teaching in the University*; Butler and Walter, *Transforming the Curriculum*; Ball, et al, *Multicultural Education in Colleges and Universities*; McCarthy and Crichlow, *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education*; Heath, *Red, Brown, and Black Demands for Better Education*.

³⁸⁹ Ruben Donato, *The Other Struggle for Equal Schools: Mexican Americans During the Civil Rights Era* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997); Jeanett Castellanos and Lee Jones, eds., *The Majority in the Minority: Expanding the Representation of Latina/o Faculty, Administrators and Students in Higher Education* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub., 2003); Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991); Charles Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

World Strike in subsequent art and activism. Their experiences convey how the Third World Strike was part of a larger transformation of racially integrating American art and developing a transnational perspective in the construction of Chicano art and identity.³⁹⁰

YOLANDA LOPEZ AND THE COUNTER-IMAGE REVOLUTION

Yolanda Lopez was not a newcomer to political activism or feminism, growing up in an all female home and inspired by her mother's passionate political beliefs. According to Lopez, "my mother was a staunch democrat, so she voted for Adlai Stevenson instead of Eisenhower in a military town." Her mother's willingness to defy the conservative politics of San Diego made an impression on Lopez, as did the memory of her mother taking Lopez and her sisters to stuff envelopes for Jack Kennedy. When Lopez moved to Northern California in the early 1960s to live with her uncle and attend college – first at San Francisco State, and then the College of Marin – she joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and absorbed the ideas of the civil rights movement. Upon graduating from the College of Marin, she returned to San Francisco State to take art classes and found herself in the midst of a massive student movement to change the direction of education.³⁹¹

1976); and Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *'Let All of Them Take Heed': Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1987).

³⁹⁰ Thomas McEvelley, *Art & Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity* (Kingston, NY: Documentext / McPherson, 1992); Michael Archer, *Art Since 1960*, Second Edition, Revised (New York; London: Thames and Hudson, 2002); Gill Perry and Paul Wood, *Themes in Contemporary Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); and Lucy Lippard, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990).

³⁹¹ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

Lopez quickly saw the value of the TWLF demands and was among many who gravitated to the activism outside the classroom to further her education. Lopez states, “To me, the Civil Rights Movement was black and white. And it was through the Third World Strike that I actually began to see that Latinos had a history that ... I had not known anything about. And that we needed to really begin to fight our own fight within the Civil Rights Movement.”³⁹² For Lopez, the Third World Strike facilitated her ability to identify as Latino, even though the ideology of the strike was predicated on a larger global identity. Moreover, her experience in the strike launched her involvement as an artist for “Los Siete de la Raza,” an organization that blended Chicano and Black Panther nationalism with Third World organizing. Lopez’s story reflects how the strike reframed people’s perception of the world and underscores the complexity of people’s political and cultural communities.

Lopez recalls the college’s 1968 convocation as a consciousness-raising session, though it was meant to calm tensions:

I went to the convocation and it was at that point that I realized that it was important to have black people talk about black history, and Latinos talk about Latino history, as opposed to what the school insisted was that ‘we’re teaching black history, but that it’s integrated into the history department.’ ... it’s included in that way and that it’s not different from ‘American’ history, which is of course, nonsense, all the way around.³⁹³

For Lopez, the convocation crystallized the necessity of having people of color in the academy to teach history that otherwise was ignored. Her experience was indicative of how the convocation propelled even more student participation in the strike. Ultimately,

³⁹² *Ibid.*

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

Lopez joined the picket blockade at the main entrance to the campus: “I was out on the picket line ... and just told people not to go to school. We just were out there every single day.”³⁹⁴

Lopez’s move to Northern California and her subsequent participation in the Third World Strike was instrumental in reframing her political outlook in at least three ways: First, Lopez redefined her ethnic community, stating “in Southern California we were Chicanos and in Northern California and in San Francisco we were Latinos...” Second, Lopez became increasingly conscious of the importance of class, attributing to San Francisco a “much more Marxist orientation.” According to Lopez, “Whereas I think in San Francisco ... we recognized class, the differences in class, and the allegiance of class in looking at working class blacks, in looking at working class whites, looking at working class Chinese, so that there were ways of building coalition.” Lastly, Lopez was profoundly influenced by the black power movement – in fact, enamored with one of the Black Student Union leaders, Nesbit Crutchfield – and felt herself a part of “Latinos identifying with the black struggle.” As Lopez recalls, “I had never experienced anyone, man or woman of color, who talked as an equal to the president of the school, or any white person of authority, as if they were equal to them in a matter of fact way in discussing the school.”³⁹⁵

For Lopez, the experience of the strike was intimately tied to her consciousness as an artist. Lopez had wanted to be an artist since elementary school, though her working class background made such a career choice unlikely. A significant role model, however,

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

was her Uncle Mikey (a.k.a. Miguel), who she has called an “artistic genius.” Moreover, according to Lopez, “I’ve always made drawings. In first grade there was a chalk board, and while the boys drew airplanes and bombs, I did little farm kids with straw hats.”³⁹⁶ The strike galvanized her interest in the power of images in everyday life. As a striker, she was under constant police surveillance: “We were being photographed, all the way up and down the line. ... So we were told to bring our own cameras. ... whether they had film or not, just bring it out there and start shooting back because ... if you’re going to take a photograph of me, I’m going to take a photograph of you. ... There was a real recognition that the power of the image was really important.” For Lopez, the experience explicitly dramatized the struggle of who was making the image and who had the power to define the other.³⁹⁷

Much of Lopez’s work as an artist has relied on this dichotomy between the subject of the image and the image maker: Who is making the image? What power relationships does the image reveal in its configuration? What stereotypes or gender roles does the image solicit? Feeling both objectified and empowered by the camera, Lopez was grappling with a theme that would reappear in various new ways over the course of her career as an artist, and what I usually say is that I’m interested in how images function. And I’m interested in how we understand images because ... the images affect our consciousness and they affect our consensus.”³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ Quoted in Betty LaDuke, *Women Artists: Multi-Cultural Visions* (Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1992), 102.

³⁹⁷ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

Lopez has characterized herself as a “provocateur,” using the words and images of everyday life to illustrate the dimensions of power, gender, and race. For example, her well-known 1978 triptych depiction of herself, her mother, and her grandmother as the Virgin of Guadalupe emerged out of that desire to question and redefine the boundaries of a powerful and restrictive cultural icon. In her self portrait, she represents herself as an athlete (at the time, an avid runner), rebelliously baring her long legs and jumping off the pedestal [Fig. 4.2]. The paintings were part of a series that, for Lopez, “represents one of the first systematic efforts on my part to explore the presentation of Raza women as we see ourselves.”³⁹⁹ Similarly, her 1988 exhibition “Cactus Hearts / Barbed Wire Dreams: Media Myths and Mexicans” and accompanying short film, *When You Think of Mexico: Commercial Images of Mexicans* (1986), assembled a series of media images associated with Mexico in order to show their devastating impact in the construction of stereotypes [Figs. 4.3, 4.4]. Lopez at the time advocated, “We need to become visually literate and by extension critical.”⁴⁰⁰ Consistently, her work as an artist and teacher have played on the expectations and stereotypes that shape human interactions, deconstructing visual culture in order to show the dynamics of power. As George Lipsitz notes of Lopez’s work, “Building insurgent consciousness entails speaking back to power, subverting its authority, and inverting its icons as a means of authorizing oppositional thinking and behavior.”⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁹ Yolanda Lopez, “Artist’s Statement,” in “Yolanda M. Lopez, Works: 1975-1978,” exhibit brochure, Mandeville Center for the Arts, La Jolla California, December 1978.

⁴⁰⁰ Yolanda Lopez, “Cactus Hearts / Barbed Wire Dreams: Media Myths and Mexicans,” exhibit brochure, Galería de la Raza, September 6-October 1, 1988.

⁴⁰¹ George Lipsitz, “Not Just Another Social Movement: Poster Art and the Movimiento Chicano,” in *Just Another Poster*, 76.



Fig. 4.2: Yolanda Lopez, "Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe," 1978. Image from *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation (CARA)*, exhibition catalogue, eds., Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa Mckenna, and Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1991), cat. no. 103, 64.



Fig. 4.3 & 4.4: Yolanda Lopez, installation shots from exhibition, “Cactus Hearts/Barbed Wire Dreams,” Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, September 6-October 1, 1988. The exhibition assembled multiple found objects to critique the pervasive stereotypes of Mexican identity in the United States. Images from CEMA, cat. no. 3067-17, above, and cat. no. 12009-4, below.

Lopez's experience as an activist has been an implicit, simultaneous aspect of her development as an artist. Though the Third World Strike ended in March of 1969, her development as a "cultural worker" continued, most immediately in correlation with the 1969-1970 trial of "Los Siete de la Raza," or "The Seven of the People." Yolanda Lopez states, "I mean, all of a sudden, how can I say – beyond the strike, all of a sudden there was an issue for us to actually grab a hold of. ... and so out of that came the development of the organization."⁴⁰² Many Raza activists who had been involved with the Third World Strike at San Francisco State College sought to put their educational convictions to work in the outside world. As TWLF and Los Siete organizer Roger Alvarado states, "Those of us in the Third World who were not black, we had to turn around and orient our thinking to what was happening in our own communities."⁴⁰³

Simultaneously, on May 1, 1969, a critical event gave a concrete purpose for former TWLF/Raza activists to focus on the predominantly Latino Mission District. Police officers Joseph Brodник and Paul McGoran stopped to interview a group of Latinos sitting outside a house with a television set, which the officers presumed stolen. According to Officer McGoran, one of the men knocked him down, stole his gun, and shot and killed Officer Brodник. Subsequently six men were arrested: José Mario Martinez, 16; his brother Rodolfo "Tony" Martinez, 20; Nelson Rodriguez, 19; Danilo "Bebe" Melendez, 18; José Rios, 19; and Gary Lescallet, 18. The seventh suspect, Gio Lopez, remained missing. Not only did the number of arrests seem unjustified, but the story of an officer shot with another officer's gun was enough of a red flag for many to

⁴⁰² Oral History interview with Yolanda Lopez, March 25, 2003.

⁴⁰³ Quoted in, Orrick, *Shut it Down!* 100.

discount the official story. Indeed, the defendants argued that Officer McGoran aimed his gun at one of the suspects and accidentally fired at his partner.⁴⁰⁴ For activist Carlos Cordova and many others, the trial of Los Siete de la Raza, “created a cohesive movement and it became a catalyst for many individuals to become organized and become very vocal.”⁴⁰⁵

The rise of Los Siete de la Raza as an organization to defend the accused is perhaps the local peak of what most resembles the growth of a nationalist, militant Chicano Movement in San Francisco. Members of Los Siete de la Raza were determined to expose the pervasive outright and de facto racism perpetrated against Latinos by the Mission District’s predominantly Irish American police force.⁴⁰⁶ However, since none of

⁴⁰⁴ Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property*.

⁴⁰⁵ Emily Gurnon, “Enduring legacy of ‘Los Siete’; 30 years ago, cop killing, trial unified S.F. Latinos,” *San Francisco Examiner*, April 30, 1999, A-1.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.* Gurnon quotes Oscar Rios, the brother of one of the defendants, “It was very rough [for Latinos] in the Mission ... If you were hanging around, riding around, [the police] would stop you. Whatever they felt like doing to you, they would do it.” Rios later became mayor of Watsonville. Michael Kennedy, a lawyer for one of the defendants, declared, “The Mission was an armed camp at that time. ... It was being run like a police state, every bit as much as the dictatorships of Somoza and Batista. Any Latino on the street was subject to police pressure and harassment.” David McCumber, “Pushing the porn envelope: The Mitchell brothers test the limits of the law,” *San Francisco Examiner*, October 19, 1992. Mission District activists took issue with the media’s willingness to characterize the accused as “hoodlums” and “Latin hippie types,” and the Mayor’s description of the seven men as “a bunch of punks,” while the police were represented as “idealists.” *Basta Ya! The Story of Los Siete de la Raza*, San Francisco, 1970; Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property*; Ferreira, “All Power To the People”; Tomas Sandoval, “Mission Stories, Latino Lives: The Making of San Francisco’s Latino Identity, 1945-1970,” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002); Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition*. The activism that encircled the trial of Los Siete de la Raza also was part of a wave of influential campaigns protesting arbitrary legal authority. Cases such as the trial of Black Panther leader Huey Newton in Oakland and the conspiracy trial of the Chicago Seven provided community organizing examples for rallying public opinion against government authority. See: Huey P. Newton, *War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America* (New York: Harlem River Press, 2000); David Hilliard and Lewis Cole, *This Side of Glory* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993); and Charles Garry and Art Goldberg, *Streetfighter in the Courtroom: The People’s Advocate* (New York: Dutton, 1977). Some general sources on the Chicago Seven (or Eight) trial, include: David J. Langum, *William M. Kunstler: the Most Hated Lawyer in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); James Tracy, *Direct Action: Radical Pacifism from the Union Eight to the Chicago Seven* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Ian F. Haney Lopez covers the impact of the blowout trials on racial identity in East Los Angeles in *Racism on Trial: the Chicano Fight for Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003). The unsubstantiated arrest of seven Latino men for

the defendants were Chicano – all seven were either from El Salvador or Nicaragua – the event necessitated the inclusiveness of using “Raza” as an appellation to amass support across the Latino community. The passion driving the organizing for Los Siete de la Raza echoed many of the sentiments driving contemporary Chicano nationalism, but also blended organizing from the Third World Strike, Raza coalition-building, and the Black Panthers.

In fact, the close alliance with the Black Panthers was the first significant conflict to split would-be Los Siete activists apart. Yolanda Lopez remembered attending a meeting in the Mission shortly after the arrests. While one side advocated working with the Black Panthers, another argued that such support would alienate the conservative Latino families of the Mission. For Lopez, the choice was difficult, but ultimately inescapable:

I decided in the end that it was important to make a moral stance. ...we needed to stand by our friends, the Panthers, because I knew the Panthers at that point, were being totally misrepresented. And I actually had a great admiration for the Panthers. So, I went with Roger [Alvarado] and Donna [James] and became part of Los Siete de la Raza. And then Jimmie [Queen]’s faction became a part of R.A.P., which also became very important in working with the youth in the Mission.⁴⁰⁷

killing a police officer also hearkened to the Sleepy Lagoon Murder Trial of 1942, the archetypical case of unjust authority directed against the Chicano community. Although the Sleepy Lagoon Murder Trial was larger in scale – specifically, when the Los Angeles Police force arrested 300 men and subsequently put twelve Chicanos on trial for the murder of José Diaz – a sense of parallel abuse of authority ensued. An extensive body of literature exists on the Sleepy Lagoon Trial and the related Zoot Suit riots. See, Eduardo Obregon Pagan, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Luis Alberto Alvarez, “The Power of the Zoot: Race, Community, and Resistance in American Youth Culture, 1940-1945,” Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2001; George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). The trial also serves as the basis for Luis Valdez’s play and film, *Zoot Suit*. See his: *Zoot Suit and Other Plays* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1992).

⁴⁰⁷ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

Lopez's remarks are indicative of the many separate pockets of activism forming in and around the Mission, from the Real Alternatives Program (R.A.P), to Los Siete de la Raza, to Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes. However, in aligning with the Black Panthers, Los Siete defined itself as the more militant or radical wing of political organizing in the community.

Close ties with the Black Panthers inspired Los Siete to emulate Panther community organizing tactics. Most obviously, Los Siete expanded its focus to include community issues unrelated to the trial. Similar to the Black Panthers, Los Siete established political education ("P.E.") classes, built up the free breakfast program at St. Peter's Church, and even established a small restaurant, El Basta Ya, across from the Levi-Strauss factory, in hopes of serving and potentially organizing the predominantly Latina garment workers.⁴⁰⁸ As a whole, the community service efforts of Los Siete intended to help people meet their basic needs, so that people then might have the time and financial wherewithal to become politicized. Though Los Siete only lasted a few years, and its programs had varying levels of success, its impact as an organization was a profound example of how the ideological impact of the Third World Strike continued to reverberate.

The new organization's two principle objectives were helping the families of the accused with legal aid and countering the systemic prejudices in the media and the courtrooms. Lopez recalled:

The idea, when I went into Los Siete ... I knew at that point that I needed to make images of Latinos. And it was Latinos, it wasn't Chicanos, it wasn't Mexican Americans. It was Latinos that I had to make – we had to make. I understood then at that point that we, the collective we, had to make our own images ourselves. ... I didn't know what it would be. But I knew that we had to make our own images as our own contemporary selves.⁴⁰⁹

Recognizing that attempting such change from within the system was a limited and long-term operation, the organization sought to create its own media and provided its own forms of public information. The *Basta Ya!* newspaper was fundamental to Los Siete's organizing strategies to reach "the people" (The title roughly meant "Enough of This"). The paper initially emerged as a section of *The Black Panther* newspaper on June 17, 1969, but quickly evolved into an independent unit. The articles were reflective of Los Siete's wide-ranging mission to politicize the Mission District community.

Working on *Basta Ya!* was a formative experience for Lopez. According to Lopez, "what happened is that I knew what I wanted to do as an artist. And I could work as an artist within the organization."⁴¹⁰ Working for Los Siete opened her eyes to how she could establish her political voice *and* use her artistic skills. Pivotal in Lopez's training was observing the work of Black Panther Minister of Culture Emory Douglas.⁴¹¹ Lopez recalled, "We went over to Panther headquarters and saw how the Panthers laid out their newspaper, and I met Emory Douglas who is still one of my heroes." Recounting the visit in more detail, she stated: "...Emory was doing all of this artwork on the front of the Panther paper. ...and there was Elaine Brown, who was actually writing

⁴⁰⁸ Heins, 162-165.

⁴⁰⁹ Lopez Interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

songs and produced an album. And Emory had done the cover. And there was a real incorporation within the arts.”⁴¹² Not only were artists working, but their work was helping to pay for political actions. Albums, posters, and performances brought in an important, if variable, income, in a way that protests and boycotts could not.

The Black Panther newspaper served as a model for *Basta Ya!*, not just in terms of the politics, but in terms of the aesthetics. As the Minister of Culture, Douglas was responsible for creating images that coordinated with the politics of the Black Panthers. In fact, Douglas is especially known for visually redefining the public image of police as “pigs” [Fig. 4.5]. According to Douglas, his pig drawings of the police were inspired by a conversation with Huey Newton. Douglas recalled “We had started calling the police swine because of the nature of their character--they had the most beastly character, dirty and filthy and abusing people and what have you.”⁴¹³ Douglas drew standing pigs in police uniforms in unflattering situations, which were then regularly published in the *Black Panther* newspaper. Douglas recalled, “The cartoons caught on like wildfire, people calling the cops, 'pigs' and saying 'off the pigs,' 'death to the pigs,' 'fight with the pigs,' the whole bit. The first thing they'd want to buy the paper for was the cartoons.”⁴¹⁴ The cartoons gave Douglas a high profile, but were only one aspect of his approach to art.

⁴¹¹ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴¹² Lopez Interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴¹³ David Hilliard and Lewis Cole, *This Side of Glory* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), 151.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.* Erika Doss discusses Douglas’s pig images in her essay, “Revolutionary Art is a Tool for Liberation” in *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, 175-187; Also See, Colette Gaiter, “Visualizing a Revolution: Emory Douglas and the Black Panther Newspaper,” reproduced in *Bad Subjects* 65, January 2004, <http://bad.eserver.org/issues/2004/65/gaiter.html>, and in *Voice: AIGA Journal of Design*, June 8, 2005.

Increasingly, Douglas also was theorizing his belief in “revolutionary art.” His ideas were reflective of the ideological principles of the Black Panthers – serving the people, by depicting the people – and making the ghetto his gallery. As Erika Doss states, “Douglas shaped a protest aesthetic with which the Black Panther Party aspired to revolutionize the black masses.”⁴¹⁵ More specifically, Douglas sought to overturn the lack of images of black Americans, especially poor black Americans, in the media. His layouts for the front and back pages of *The Black Panther* prioritized people who were ordinarily invisible in the mainstream media. Much of his design was based in photography collage, or the integration of drawings with photographs. His image, “My Suffering, My Bitterness, My Loneliness,” [Fig. 4.6] shows a young boy from two perspectives: In the foreground, he walks toward the viewer, while his meditative profile looms larger in the background, pasted in front of a series of prison bars. The viewer is left to make links between the images, recognizing the struggle of this young boy to physically and mentally escape the various forms of prison awaiting many young black Americans. However, the boy is pointed in the right direction, away from the cage, and declaring, “I’m not going to let it get me down, I’m not going to let it turn me around.” Douglas’s photo collages cultivated an imagined realism, juxtaposing multiple images in unreal or symbolic situations to provoke his audience.

⁴¹⁵ Doss, “Revolutionary Art is a Tool for Liberation,” 184.

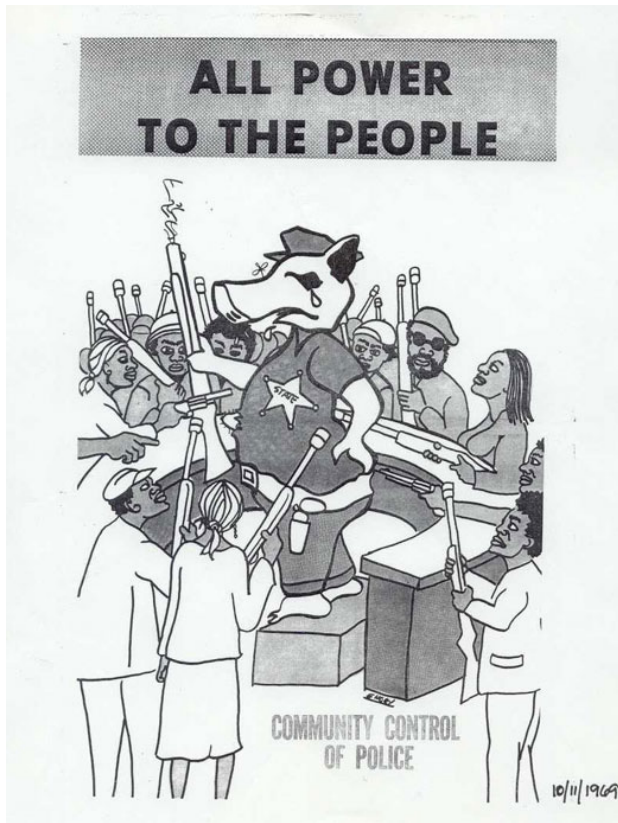


Fig. 4.5, above left: Emory Douglas. "All Power To The People: Community Control of Police." October 11, 1969; Image from http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Emory_Art/images/emory_art_2_2.html, accessed on September 11, 2005.



Fig. 4.6, above right: Emory Douglas. "My Suffering, My Bitterness, My Loneliness. I'm not going to let it get me down, I'm not going to let it turn me around." *The Black Panther*. Image from <http://bad.eserver.org/issues/2004/65/gaiter.html>, accessed on September 11, 2005.

At the very least, Douglas was provoking Yolanda Lopez's interest in the cultural meaning and impact of images. In 1969, Lopez was only beginning to come to terms with this career-defining interest in how images function. Lopez turned to the pages of *Basta Ya!* as a means of pictorially protesting the status quo. One of her first significant front pages for the publication featured the faces of six men behind bars. The "Free Los Siete" image (1969) [Fig. 4.7 and 4.8] is indicative of Lopez's propensity for visual puns, with the prison bars also serving as the stripes of the American flag.⁴¹⁶ Circling the flag is the beginning text of the Pledge of Allegiance with the word "freedom" cut in half. A padlock on the bottom right corner locks the men behind the bars and stars, preventing their access to the rights and privileges of U.S. citizenship. Though Lopez is the first to remark on the roughness of the image, the page is evidence that her artistic tendency to emphasize cultural contradictions is deeply rooted.

The image puts Lopez on the forefront of Chicana printmaking. As Holly Barnet-Sanchez notes, "More Chicana printmakers were working in the 1980s and 1990s than during the earlier, more militant phase of the movement of the late 1960s through the mid-1970s."⁴¹⁷ In fact, Lopez frequently experienced the presumption that her work was produced by a male artist. When Graciela Carrillo recruited Lopez to participate in the first all women's show at Galería de la Raza in 1970, she showed three of her newspaper pages. Lopez recalls, "People were surprised to know that the *Basta Ya!* covers were

⁴¹⁶ Lopez has stated that Emory Douglas picked up the flag as prison iconography from her work in a telephone conversation with the author, February 21, 2005.

⁴¹⁷ Holly Barnet Sanchez, "Where Are the Chicana Printmakers: Presence and Absence in the Work of Chicana Artists of the Movimiento," *Just Another Poster*, 122.



Fig. 4.7, above left: Yolanda Lopez. *Basta Ya!* front page. November/December 1969.



Fig. 4.8, above right: Uncredited photograph of Los Siete activist with Lopez's poster. Image obtained from Marjorie Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property: The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1972), 4.

done by a woman artist.”⁴¹⁸ The assumption she was male was indicative of the gendered expectations of print-making and lends some insight into why Lopez attributes part of her consciousness as a feminist to her time working with Los Siete.⁴¹⁹

Overall, the trajectory of Lopez’s experience gives insight into the close ties between the ideological ambitions of the Third World Strike and the organizing and artistic activity in the Mission. For many of the former TWLF organizers, the disenfranchisement of Los Siete mirrored the disenfranchisement of the Mission District. Both situations echoed the failure of public education to include the poor and people of color. Thus, Lopez’s poster, “Libertad Para Los Siete,” (1970) [Fig. 4.9] not only transmitted a shared identity between Los Siete and the Mission, but also advocated a “revolutionary art” vision for the neighborhood in its aesthetic allusions to Diego Rivera, Che Guevara, and Emory Douglas. For example, Lopez acknowledges that the figure in the bottom left corner pays homage to Diego Rivera’s line-art figures featured in various texts.⁴²⁰ Her colleague, activist and layout artist Donna James, added the “Viva Che” graffiti on the wall of the empty lot to provoke and amuse.⁴²¹ Che Guevara, as a leader of the Cuban Revolution, perhaps had the right idea, and Mission District residents would do well to consider his teachings. A neighborhood like the Mission District could well benefit from a communist, or at the very least, socialist agenda.

⁴¹⁸ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴¹⁹ Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴²⁰ Yolanda Lopez, telephone conversation with author, February 21, 2005.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*



Fig. 4.9: Yolanda Lopez. "Libertad Para Los Siete: Bring the Brothers Back Home To the Mission!" Poster for *Basta Ya!* c. March-July 1970.

Like her other work, the image was published in the pages of *Basta Ya!* Lopez made use of Emory Douglas's collage technique to display a photograph of an empty lot backed up by a line of Mission District houses. The poster's subtitle stated, "Bring the Brothers Back Home to the Mission!" Though the image is indicative of the poverty of the neighborhood – lots do not sit empty in wealthy neighborhoods – the text is indicative of the growing neighborhood pride. The Mission is where Los Siete belonged, and a place that people can call "home." There is no need to translate the headline into English, or to translate the subhead into Spanish, since the two statements are intended to convey the same idea – freedom for "The Seven" meant the formation of community in the Mission.

The struggle for Los Siete de la Raza proved itself to be a model for community organizing, not just in its ongoing service to the community, but in the outcome of the trial. On November 7, 1970, one year and six months after the shooting, the defendants were acquitted of all charges. The announcement sparked cheers and a parade down Mission Street. The case symbolized a vitalized hopefulness for change and a new future for the Mission. Though struggling with a vast bastion of social problems, the success of community organizing through the Third World Strike and Los Siete de la Raza proved how ordinary people could change the system.

Moreover, Los Siete played a significant role in the evolution of poster art in the Mission District. An informal poster workshop started in 1969 when the trial began. In 1970, La Raza Information Center opened next door to Los Siete and started producing silkscreen prints in the back office. As Sal Guerena has noted, "Volunteers flowed

between the La Raza Information Center and the [sic] ‘Los Siete’ Defense Committee; the interior doors between the two storefronts were always open.” Under the leadership of Al Borvice, Oscar Melara, Pete Gallegos, and Tomas Morales, the informal back-office setup eventually evolved into La Raza Graphics Center, which has produced hundreds of posters relating to local, national, and international concerns.⁴²²

Lopez’s experience reflects how a formidable Latino intelligentsia was gathering in the Mission District, one that cultivated a politics antithetical to, or at least highly critical of, the capitalist agenda of the United States. After attending graduate school in San Diego in the late 1970s, she returned to the Mission District and married fellow artist René Yañez. Her 1985 drawing, “Quitándosela y Poniéndosela: Unión Con Las Mujeres de Centroamérica” [Taking it off and Putting it On: Unity with the Women of Central America] [Fig. 4.10] captures some of the ambivalence of her international self at a time when the United States was supporting brutal political regimes in Central America.⁴²³ Depicting a woman holding a mask above her head, the image reflects a woman caught between her identity as an American and as a Third World woman, framed by bombs and guns on one side, and flowers and houses on the other. Unable to step out of her

⁴²² First known as La Raza Silkscreen Center, the organization later changed its name to La Raza Graphics. See, Sal Güereña, et al, “Linda Lucero Collection on La Raza Silkscreen Center / La Raza Graphics,” CEMA, January 14, 2005, <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/Lucero.html>, accessed on September 9, 2005. Also see, “Images of a Community: An Exhibit of Silkscreen Posters and Graphic Works from 1971 to 1979,” exhibition brochure, Galería de la Raza, May 19-June 23, 1979, Galería de la Raza Archive, CEMA, Box 19/12; *Images of an Era: The American Poster, 1945-1975* (Washington, D.C.: National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, 1975).

⁴²³ Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003); *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, eds., John Schoeffel and Peter Mitchell (New Press, 2002); *Chomsky Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1987); Michael Parenti, *Against Empire* (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 1995); Ward Churchill, *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2003); John Perkins, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2004).

American identity, but still wishing to show her solidarity with Central American women, Lopez represents herself as the battleground of dueling forces. The image perfectly captures the irresolvable ambiguity and complexity of her identity as a Chicana, a Latina, an American, and a Third World woman in the context of global events.



Fig. 4.10: Yolanda Lopez, “Quitándosela y Poniéndosela: Unión Con Las Mujeres de Centroamérica,” drawing, 1985. Image from Sylvia Gorodezky’s *Arte Chicano: Como Cultura de Protesta* (Mexico: Centro de Investigaciones Sobre Estados Unidos de America Coordinacion de Humanidades, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, 1992), color plate.

RUPERT GARCIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS, ABROAD AND AT HOME

Initially, Rupert Garcia kept his distance from Third World organizing. Garcia's experience as a soldier in Vietnam was a critical catalyst in his political consciousness, but his veteran status also kept him isolated from many of the other students. Originally born in French Camp in 1941 and raised in nearby Stockton in California's San Joaquin Valley, Garcia enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1962. As art historian Peter Selz has noted, "While in the Air Force in Southeast Asia [Garcia] had thought that he was helping to protect the world from communism. Now in San Francisco he witnessed peace demonstrations and the growing movement of protest."⁴²⁴ Given the anti-war sentiments of most of the students, Garcia kept his experience as a veteran "very, very inside."⁴²⁵

While at San Francisco State College, Garcia embarked on a program of self-education, in order to deconstruct his understanding of himself and the world. As his recollections make clear, his cultural environs made him doubly conscious of how culture was propagated:

When I come back from the military in '66 and go to San Francisco State, that moment of international protest brings clear to me that art and society and politics are not mutually exclusive, but we have been told that they are, and we were told that for political reasons. Political reasons. And that really gets me thinking systematically about looking at society,

⁴²⁴ Peter Selz, "Rupert Garcia," Exhibition catalogue, Harcourts Gallery, September 6 to September 28, 1985. Also reprinted in: Peter Selz. "Rupert Garcia: The Artist as Advocate." *Beyond The Mainstream: Essays on Modern and Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴²⁵ Rupert Garcia, oral history interview by Paul Karlstrom, Oakland, CA, Archives of American Art (AAA), Smithsonian Institution, September and November, 1995 and June 1996, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/oralhist/garcia96.htm>, accessed on September 7, 2005.

looking at culture, looking at history, and the various bodies of knowledge that try to explain human behavior and thought. I began to look at those with a more critical eye, whereas earlier I did not.⁴²⁶

Garcia's remarks reflect the profound impact of his surroundings on his understanding of the world. His new outlook prompted him to respond critically to the classroom art training. His teacher's pervasive emphasis on Western art history and the absence of any recognition of Third World art was increasingly irritating, leading him to rebel:

I stand up and I criticize the instructor, I criticize the material, and I say, 'Here we are talking about this art history and its culture and how important it is and how some of the artists were critical. Outside the door of this art building there are students doing the very same thing about which we are studying. So what do we do? Do we just sit on our asses here? Or do we go out and participate in this important 'decolonial situation'? So I said, 'Let's go!' [laughs] 'Let's get out of here and go out there.' And so some students come and some don't. I have no idea who came and I have no idea who didn't. But I know I went out.⁴²⁷

Rupert Garcia was one of many students who did not belong officially to the TWLF or any other organization associated with the strike, but who incorporated and acted upon the ideals of decolonization in his personal experience.

His art expanded upon this new perspective. Garcia began his silkscreening career during the strike, partly inspired by the success of poster-making for the May 1968 General Strike in France. According to Garcia, "some students and a few faculty became inspired and intensely involved in producing silkscreened posters in support of the student strike. We eventually began selling the many posters made. The money was

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

used as bail for the many people who were jailed during the long struggle at San Francisco State College.”⁴²⁸

As Jean Franco notes of García, “participation in the [Third World] movement was more than a mere episode in his life for it profoundly altered his view of the function of art.”⁴²⁹ The moment was a turning point for García, who felt that “in ‘68 there was this moment, not only in Paris in May, and in Mexico, but also at San Francisco State and other moments in our country, too, on the various campuses. So that ‘68 is the moment that I really began to ... pinpoint what I think I want to do. And to make connections with things that I used to think were separate.”⁴³⁰ García’s perception of his role as an artist was intimately connected with his sense of belonging to an expansive community well beyond the physical boundaries of the United States.

One of García’s earliest posters was an image of Che Guevara – a silkscreen rendering of Alberto Korda’s famous 1960 photograph of the communist revolutionary – with the text “Right On!” printed underneath [Fig. 4.11].⁴³¹ The 1968 poster joins the efforts of student activists at San Francisco State with the ideals of the Cuban Revolution, and is reflective of the way in which students of color were looking for other political models to challenge the status quo of American culture. His depiction of a communist revolutionary as an idealized leader is an obvious statement, but García’s politics were

⁴²⁸ Rupert García, “Rupert García,” *Toward Revolutionary Art 2* (1975), 20.

⁴²⁹ Jean Franco, “Rupert García” in “Juan Fuentes y Rupert García: Posters, Drawings, Prints,” exhibition brochure, Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, CA, May 21-June 15, 1975.

⁴³⁰ García interview, AAA.

⁴³¹ Ramón Favela, *The Art of Rupert García: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 19.



Fig. 4.11: Rupert Garcia, "Right On!" 1968. According to Ramon Favela, this 1968 portrait of Che Guevara was "one of the earliest posters done for the student strike bail fund and among the earliest posters made in this country depicting what would soon become the ubiquitous face of Che." Image from Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 19, 31.

more complex. According to Garcia, “I didn’t necessarily subscribe to a structured ideology. You know, no particular line did I subscribe to. I wasn’t CPUSA [Communist Party USA]. I wasn’t Progressive Labor Party, not an official member of the TWLF. And they were all there. But I was just interested in what’s going on.”⁴³²

Garcia avoided dogma, but over time, his work reflected his politics. As Ramon Favela notes, “By the time he created the brilliant and densely colored pastel portrait “Mao” (1977), his position was obvious.”⁴³³ Some critics automatically labeled Garcia a Marxist, but he would reject such categorization. According to Garcia, “I’m not a Marxist. There are Marxian perspectives that one can have without being a Marxist with a capital ‘M’. So I am molding a point of view that is shared in different ways with other groups.”⁴³⁴ Garcia sifted through the writings of Marx, Mao, Che Guevara, and other socialist and communist revolutionaries in order to establish a more personal vision for his life and art. Garcia recalls first reading Mao’s essay “On Art and Literature” while teaching at San Francisco State in 1969: “I had never before read such an acute analysis of the socio-political responsibility of the artist to society.”⁴³⁵ The article synthesized Garcia’s interest in re-directing his creative energy toward his desire for a better world. Though not declarative of a single political position, Garcia’s images reflected his general advocacy for human rights, his desire to identify and overturn racism, and at the very least, an interest in redistributing wealth.

⁴³² Garcia interview, AAA.

⁴³³ Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia*, 9.

⁴³⁴ Alfred Frankenstein refers to Garcia as a Marxist in “When Politics and Art Do Mix,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 15, 1978, 54; Garcia quote from interview, AAA.

⁴³⁵ Quoted in Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia*, 9.

In 1970, he allowed himself to speak out against the war that he had seen first hand. He created the poster “¡Fuera de Indochina!” [Fig. 4.12] for the Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War in East Los Angeles.⁴³⁶ The close-up of a Vietnamese woman’s face screaming “Get out of Indochina!” against a black background was a forceful image. The poster bears even more weight as the visual testimonial of a Vietnam veteran and marks a complete shift from his sentiments as a soldier.

Garcia was never happy in the military – in fact, he looks back on his enlistment as a mistake – but the dramatic difference in his outlook from Vietnam to San Francisco State is indicative of how a place and a culture can alter perception. When he first learned about the anti-war movement while stationed in Vietnam, Garcia felt, “For my own well-being, how dare somebody question me being here. Having my life on the line twenty four hours a day and some son-of-a-bitch back in the United States drinking coffee, just protesting. . . . I said, ‘You go shoot ‘em. That’ll teach ‘em.’”⁴³⁷ Ultimately, however, as Garcia pursued his education in the milieu of San Francisco State, he felt betrayed: “I learned, ‘Well, God damn, I had been duped into believing all this stuff about the Communist.’ All that stuff comes out and I’m very disappointed, very upset, and very angry about how I, in particular, was led to believe that what I’m doing is the right thing to do—is in fact propaganda. And, man, you know, that’s an eye-opener for a young man who had just come back a few months ago.”⁴³⁸

⁴³⁶ Carol A. Wells, “La Lucha Sigue: From East Los Angeles to the Middle East,” *Just Another Poster*, 175.

⁴³⁷ Garcia interview, AAA.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*

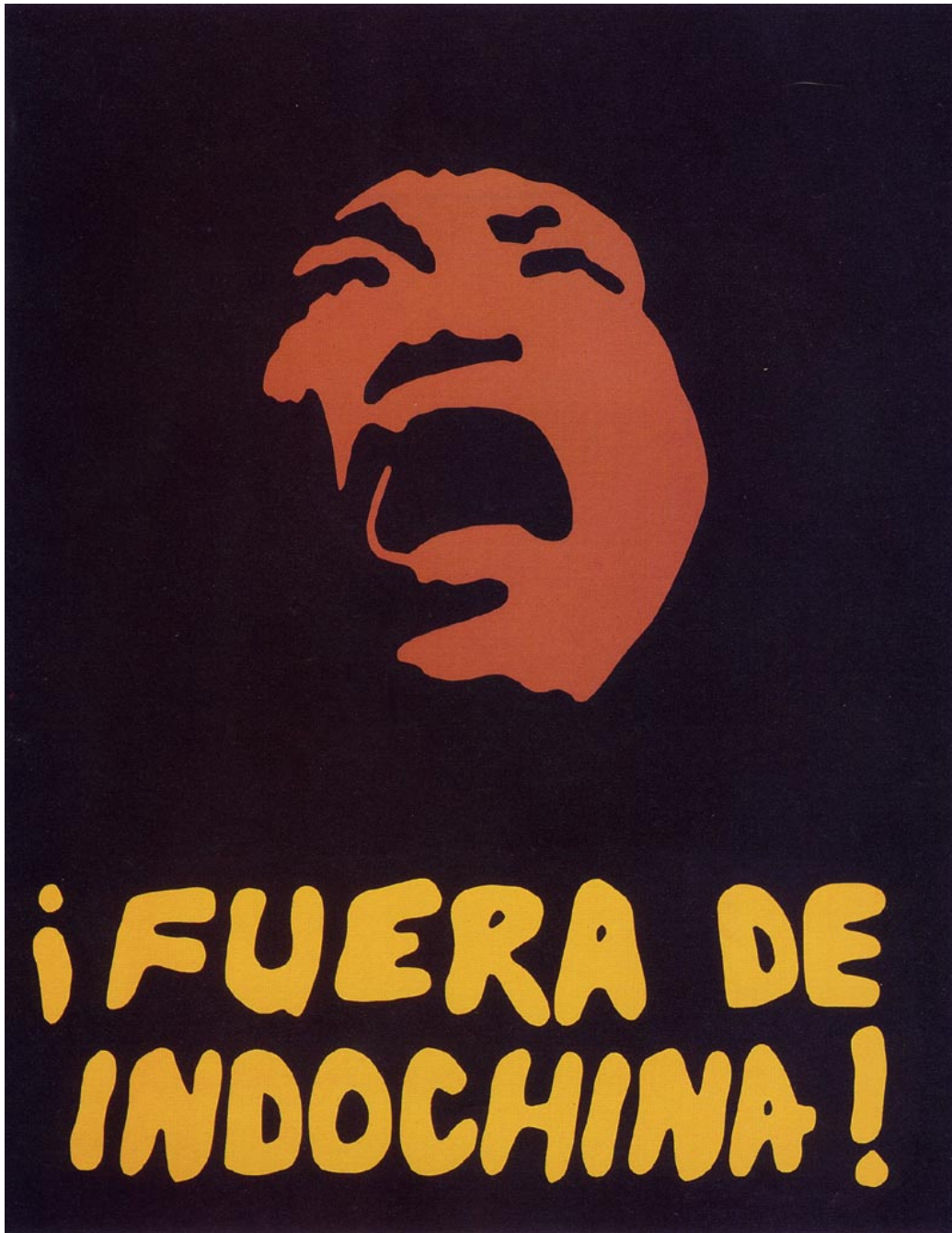


Fig. 4.12: Rupert Garcia, “¡Fuera de Indochina!” silkscreen, 1970. Image from Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 34.

In confronting his experience in Vietnam, Garcia cast a more critical eye upon the world as a whole. Contemplating the manipulations of Cold War politics, the racial segregation of his upbringing in Stockton, and the pervasive acceptance of social inequality and violence around the globe led Garcia to question his past assumptions. Seemingly a contradiction, the world became both more complex and more accessible: “Some mysteries were demystified, and the world became such that I could reach out to it and grab it and do something with it.”⁴³⁹

Since 1968, Garcia’s work has maintained a steady vision of global solidarity for human rights. In 1977, he stated, “the Chicano expression and struggle is not divorced from other art, people or universal conflict. Our fight for freedom and human dignity is part of the struggles for freedom in Africa, Latin America, Indo-China and the Middle East.”⁴⁴⁰ A poster from 1977, “Mexico, Chile, Soweto ...” [Fig. 4.13] perfectly captures his understanding of parallel human struggles around the globe. The image, originally appropriated from a U.S. Spanish-language newspaper, depicts a beaten and bloody civilian corpse next to a standing soldier, represented only by the presence of his combat boots and pant-leg fatigues.⁴⁴¹ The title forces the viewer to contemplate the parallel forms of violence enacted in Mexico, Chile, Soweto, and elsewhere, and admonishes the viewer for the everyday acceptance of these images in our mass media without action.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ Rupert Garcia, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, *The Fifth Sun: Contemporary / Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977), 27-30.

⁴⁴¹ Favela provides the origins of the image, stating “the clippings used for this collage were taken from a black-and-white illustration in *Alero*, a cultural magazine published by the University of San Carlos, Guatemala, and a high-contrast reproduction found in a Spanish language newspaper published in the United States.” Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia*, 13.

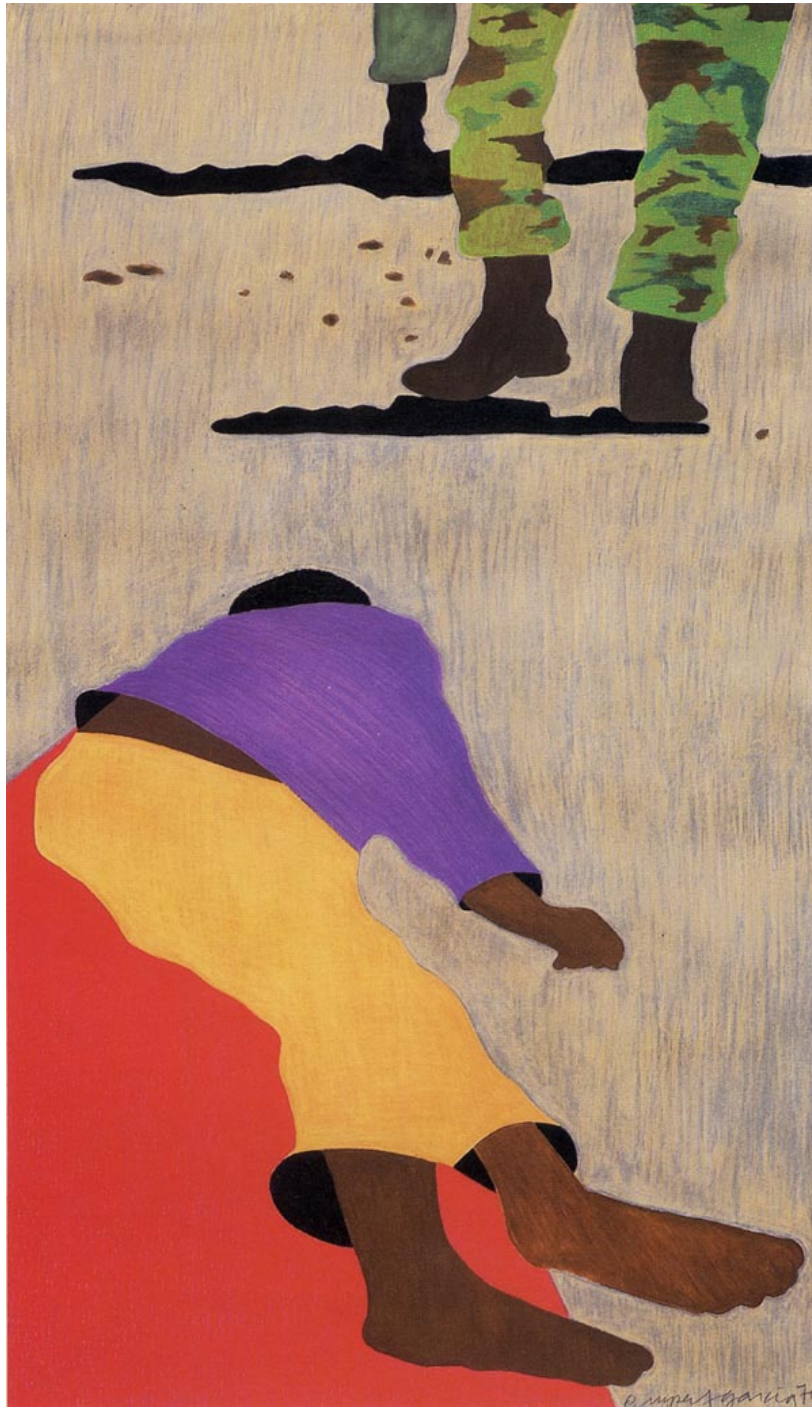


Fig. 4.13: Rupert Garcia, "Mexico, Chile, Soweto ..." 1977. Image from Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 52.

Most of Garcia's images have been culled from published sources. He states, "As far as I can remember, I have always been interested in referring to images that already have built-in to them an audience, be it thousands who look at the photographic reproduction in the *San Francisco Examiner*, be it millions who see it in *Time* magazine."⁴⁴² His poster of Angela Davis [Fig. 4.14] came out his desire to criticize her imprisonment on conspiracy charges for an alleged attempt to free the "Soledad Brothers." Garcia stated, "Being a Chicano, and developing an understanding of the common struggle of Third World and other oppressed peoples, I supported her." He located a photograph of Davis in a newspaper that "seemed to have the quality I wanted." He enlarged and simplified the image to produce his 1970 three-color silkscreen of Davis in brown and sienna, with the Spanish language headline in peacock blue, "¡Libertad Para Los Prisoneros Politicas!" [Freedom for Political Prisoners] Garcia said, "I used Spanish to express international solidarity between Black and Raza peoples, and the solidarity with our struggling comrades in Latin America. At the time, I recall thinking especially of the Cubans and their struggles."⁴⁴³

Rupert Garcia prioritized building a Third World identity through his art. He said, "I didn't feel the necessity to, in a sense, emphasize my Mexican heritage. It was always there and I always felt comfortable with it and so my concern was something other than that. It was more concerned with the situation of Third World people. ... What it means to be a Chicano, in the '60s, was very important for me, philosophically. ... But

⁴⁴² *Ibid*, 7

⁴⁴³ Garcia interview, *The Fifth Sun*, 30.

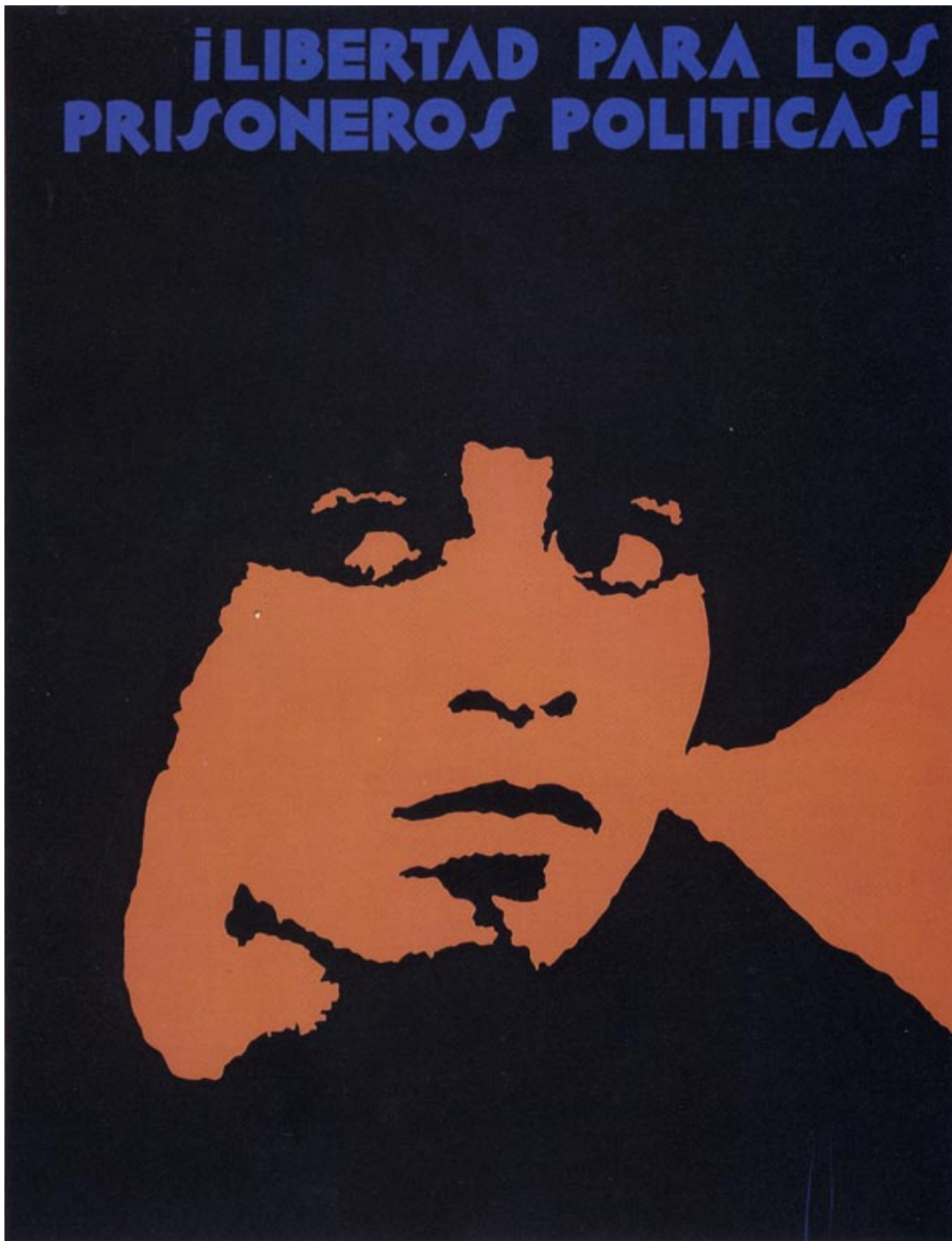


Fig. 4.14: Rupert Garcia, "¡Libertad Para Los Prisoneros Politicas!" 1970. Image from Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 38.

not necessarily the production of the images.”⁴⁴⁴ His 1969 silkscreen “DDT” [Fig. 4.15] is an example of a poster inspired by the concerns of the Chicano Movement, most prominently espoused by the United Farm Workers (UFW), but reckoning with the impact of a chemical that has global repercussions. Below the giant letters DDT is a comparatively small portrait of a woman, who stands with mouth agape in a silent scream, her body deformed without arms. No other text is necessary and no reference to the UFW is necessary. The work is a condemnation of anyone who could support the use of DDT, regardless of political affiliation.⁴⁴⁵ Garcia did not turn away from his Chicano identity, but rather, sought to incorporate the many global identities that disseminated from that consciousness.

⁴⁴⁴ Rupert Garcia, interview, Oakland, CA, October 14, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #155-158, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 5, in Califas conference final report, 10.

⁴⁴⁵ While the United States banned DDT in 1972, ten years after Rachel Carson published her famous book *Silent Spring* indicting the chemical’s impact, use of DDT has persisted in Third World countries up to the current day, commonly advocated as an effective response to prevent malaria. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 40th Anniversary Edition (1962; reprint, New York: Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002); Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval, *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997), 221-247; *The Wrath of Grapes* (film), United Farm Workers of America, Keene, CA, 1986; Fred Setterberg and Lonny Shavelson, *Toxic Nation: The Fight to Save our Communities from Chemical Contamination* (New York: J. Wiley, 1993); Angus Wright, “Rethinking the Circle of Poison: The Politics of Pesticide Poisoning Among Mexican Farm Workers,” *Latin American Perspectives* 51 (Fall 1986), 26-59. In 1986, Wright reported that “the World Health Organization estimates that there are at least 14,000 cases per year worldwide of fatal accidental poisonings, mostly among field workers, and some 750,000 cases of nonfatal poisonings. Most of these poisonings occur in the Third World, and mostly among workers cultivating or harvesting crops destined for export” (26). Despite the evidence of harm, DDT has come into popular favor again. As a reporter for *Forbes* argues in 2004, “a reluctance to use DDT, often justified by reference to the Precautionary Principle, is now having really bad effects in the Third World. DDT may well be the cheapest and most effective way of combating the mosquitoes that cause malaria.” Cass R. Sunstein, “Safe and Sorry,” *Forbes*, July 5, 2004, 48. Similarly, popular novelist Michael Crichton argues “Banning DDT is one of the most disgraceful episodes in the 20th-century history of America,” *U.S.A. Today*, March 2004, 22.



Fig. 4.15: Rupert Garcia. "DDT." 1969. Image from *Rupert Garcia: Prints and Posters, 1967-1990 / Grabados y Afiches, 1967-1990* (San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, exhibition catalogue, December 8, 1990-March 3, 1991), 34.

Garcia's work reflected a consistent integration of the increasingly iconic symbols of Chicano identity – images of Emiliano Zapata, Frida Kahlo, and the maguey plant – with a larger Raza or Third World iconography – including images of Angela Davis, Che Guevara, and political prisoners at home and abroad. Many scholars have noted that the Chicano Movement inspired a visual language of Chicano art, a language that Rupert Garcia knew well. In 1977, Garcia declared, “the images often used by Chicanos are unique to them because of their particular history. We use the calavera [skeleton], the corazón [heart], jalapeños, the Pachuco, the farmworker, low-riders, pintos-pintas [convicts], Virgen de Guadalupe, nopales...”⁴⁴⁶ This iconography was becoming the basic building blocks for Chicano art, and Garcia made ready use of these images in his art. At the same time, Garcia engaged in a constant quest for new sources and felt a deep affinity with the Black Power movement.

Several of his early posters convey his support of the Black Panthers. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's 1968 declaration that the Black Panthers were “the greatest threat to the internal security of the country” tended to fall on deaf ears among artists and activists of color, particularly in the Bay Area where the Black Panthers were based.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁶ Garcia interview, *The Fifth Sun*, 27. On Chicano iconography see: Tomas Ybarra Frausto and Shifra Goldman, “The Political and Social Contexts of Chicano Art,” in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985*, 83-95; Tere Romo, “Points of Convergence: The Iconography of the Chicano Poster,” in *Just Another Poster*, 91-115; Sylvia Gorodesky, *Arte Chicano Como Cultura de Protesta / Chicano Art as Protest Culture* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1993); Manuel Martínez, “The Art of the Chicano Movement and the Movement of Chicano Art,” in *Aztlán: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature*, eds., Luis Valdez and Stan Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 349-353; Alicia Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art: Inside / Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the CARA Exhibition* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998); and, Cheech Marin, *Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 2002).

⁴⁴⁷ Hoover quoted in Akinyele Omowale Umoja, “Repression Breeds Resistance: The Black Liberation Army and the Radical Legacy of the Black Panther Party,” in *Liberation, Imagination and the Black Panther Party*, 8.

In “Down with the Whiteness,” (1969) [Fig. 4.16] Garcia depicted a member of the Black Panther Party with both fists in the air. Few details of the figure are distinguishable beyond the dark glasses, the beret, and the symbolic raising of the arms in a power salute. Counter-balancing the image is the provocative text, “Down with the Whiteness.” The call is not against “whites,” but against “the Whiteness,” a slightly more ambiguous term. The poster is not invoking reverse racism, but demanding an end to institutionalized social hierarchies cultivated through racist practices. That Garcia felt kinship with the Black Panthers is obvious, but his construction of their politics is not an affirmation of militant racial separatism, but a more complex ideological position targeting Whiteness as a power structure to be identified and deconstructed.

Garcia turned toward poster-making as a way of developing his voice through art, but in so doing, he turned away from the most valued medium in art history – painting. For Garcia, the transformation from painting to poster-making was a political necessity. As he later recalled, “I don’t know if I was at the point where I was exposed to the notions of easel painting being bourgeois yet. . . . But painting seemed to be impractical. It seemed to be ineffective at the moment. And so I just stopped painting. . . . Easel painting didn’t seem to be answering the questions being raised. And then the discussion of making posters seemed to be, ‘Oh man that was it.’ That’s how we will address the moment.”⁴⁴⁸ Underlying Garcia’s work was a documentary impulse – a desire to serve as the historical representation of a significant moment. As Garcia points out, “in some instances, the poster is the only document existing as a record that the event took place.

⁴⁴⁸ Garcia interview, AAA.

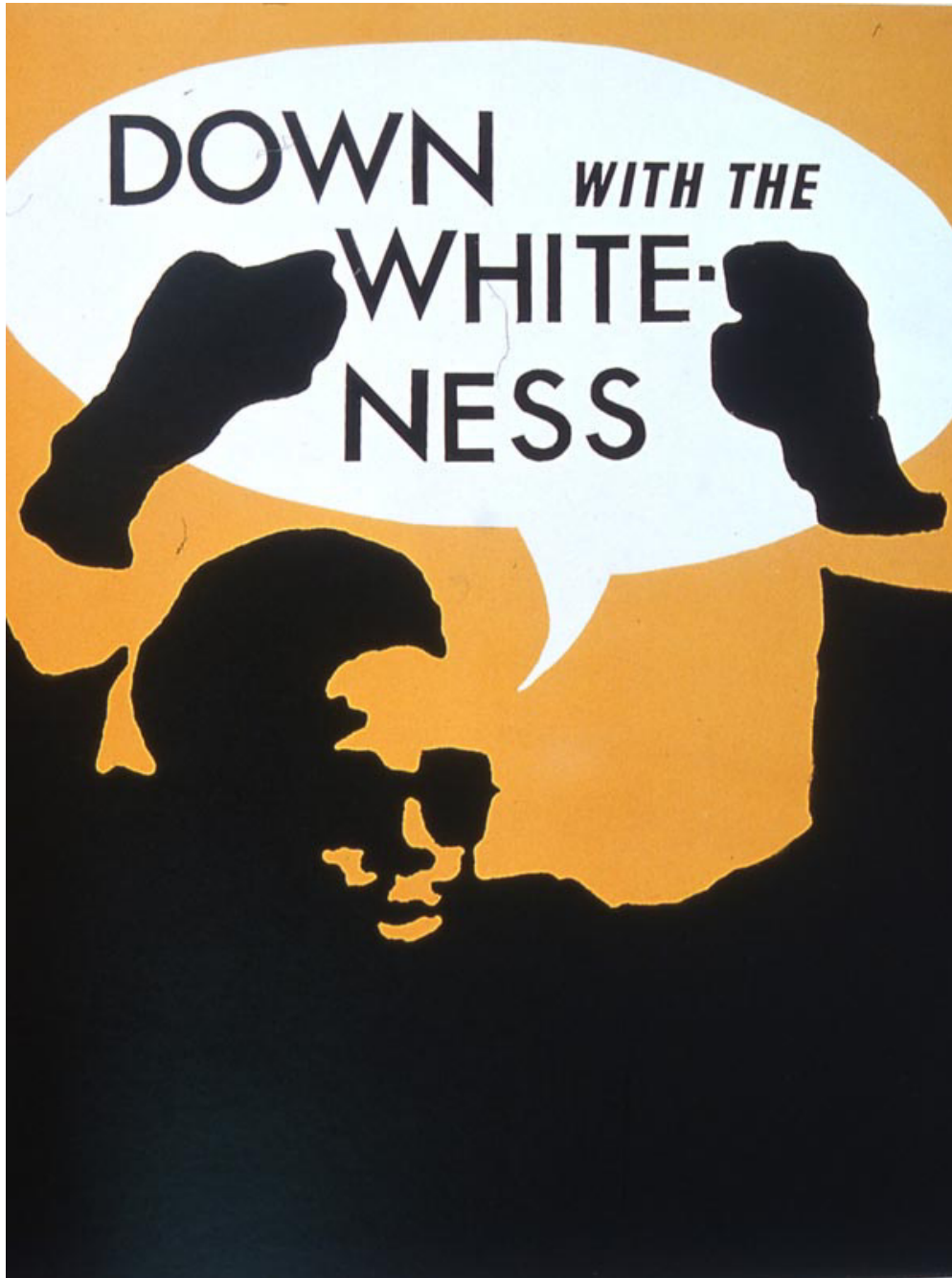


Fig. 4.16: Rupert Garcia. "Down with the Whiteness," 1969. Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986), 33.

When making a poster, I sometimes become conscious of this and am reminded of my responsibility to be accurate.”⁴⁴⁹ The poster served as an instrument to collectivize people and to document a particular history. As Angela Davis has noted, “many who have been historically excluded from portraiture find their place in his work.”⁴⁵⁰

As someone trained in classical art history, Garcia was perfectly aware of the lesser reputation of poster-making and ultimately chose to discard the elitist principles that cultivated such a distinction. As a whole, Garcia’s posters visually dismantled social systems of power, specifically in the context of Third World communities. Under-riding every image, regardless of the depicted ethnic communities, was a call for justice. As an artist, his work was not defined by his Chicano identity, though that consciousness was part of his inspiration. For Garcia, “What began as a moment of artistic expedience in the context of the strike in 1968 becomes a turning point for my sensibility as an artist.”⁴⁵¹

His work found immediate supporters in the Mission District, if not in other institutional frameworks. In June 1970, Artes 6, the initial incarnate of Galería de la Raza, gave Garcia his first one-man show. “I consciously decided to have my master’s show at Artes Seis in 1970. Because I wanted to demonstrate that the art that I made can be shown anywhere ... and I want to show it now in Artes Seis because I want to make a statement. And the statement is that, ‘At this moment I’m working with these artists in the Mission District and what I’m doing is a political gesture. I’m making a statement,

⁴⁴⁹ Garcia interview, *The Fifth Sun*, 28.

⁴⁵⁰ Angela Davis, “On the Art of Rupert Garcia,” in “Rupert Garcia,” MARS Artspace Program, October 5-30, 1987, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, AAA, Box 10.

⁴⁵¹ Garcia interview, AAA.

making a point.”⁴⁵² The exhibit featured all of the posters Garcia had created for the Third World Strike and fulfilled the requirements of his Master’s degree from San Francisco State College, though, according to Garcia, “not one faculty member from the art department came to the show.”⁴⁵³ Garcia’s show was later reconstituted at the Oakland Museum alongside a group show of Raza art. Simultaneously, however, curators at the museum revealed their discomfort with the political content of Garcia’s work: they removed the “Down With The Whiteness” poster from the exhibition. In addition, as a reporter from *El Tecolote* noted, “the directors made it a point to attach a statement with Rupert’s show that said the ‘works are solely the opinions of the artist and not of the museum.’”⁴⁵⁴ Though museum administrators distanced themselves from Garcia’s politics, curators still were drawn to his aesthetics. Upon the 1977 showing of Garcia’s work at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, fellow artist and poet José Montoya wrote with some disgust, “that came about simply because it would prove too embarrassing to deny him access.”⁴⁵⁵

Arguably, Garcia achieved art-world fame not because of his politics, but because his style gelled with the aesthetics of Pop Art. San Francisco art critic Alfred Frankenstein wrote in 1978, “Rupert Garcia may well be the only designer of political posters in the Bay Region whose work deserves exhibition in an art museum.”⁴⁵⁶ The “bright, bold, and flat shapes of unmodulated color” that Garcia says he sought to create

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁴ “Where is Justice,” *El Tecolote*, September 21, 1970, 2.

⁴⁵⁵ José Montoya, “The Source is the Force,” unpublished article, Tomas Ybarra Frausto collection, AAA, Box 10/Rupert Garcia file.

⁴⁵⁶ Frankenstein, “When Politics and Art Do Mix.”

echoed the graphic design of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein.⁴⁵⁷ Garcia admits, “when I did some reading and critiquing of Pop Art I did embrace and enfold into my work some of their issues, and that also determines how my art looks.”⁴⁵⁸ As Peter Selz observes, Garcia “was drawn to the pictorial dislocation in space in the work of R. B. Kitaj and was impressed by the painting of James Rosenquist in particular and pop art in general.”⁴⁵⁹ Moreover, Garcia’s willingness to refer to his use of media images as “readymades” was an effective way of stating his alliance with Marcel Duchamp and delineating his debt to Dadaism.⁴⁶⁰ Garcia’s appreciation for diverse art forms gave him the capacity to contextualize his work in accordance with the theories guarding the interiors of museums and galleries.

Yet, the overt political engagement of Garcia’s art was not in keeping with the chic stylistics of Pop Art. While Warhol proposed that a can of soup could be art and Lichtenstein deconstructed a printed comic as a collection of dots, Garcia crafted images of the United Farm Workers and the Black Panthers, leading San Francisco critic Thomas Albright to categorize Garcia as a “radical political portraitist” as opposed to a “Pop Art poster artist.”⁴⁶¹ Favela notes that Garcia “appropriated the pictorial devices and premises of pop art and subverted them from a Chicano and Third World perspective to serve his aesthetic and ideological ends, which were very different from the cool

⁴⁵⁷ Garcia, *Toward Revolutionary Art*, 20.

⁴⁵⁸ Garcia interview, AAA.

⁴⁵⁹ Peter Selz, “Rupert Garcia: New Pastel Paintings,” exhibition brochure, Galerie Claude Samuel, Paris, March 3-April 4, 1987, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto collection, AAA, Box 10.

⁴⁶⁰ Rupert Garcia, handwritten remarks for a lecture, Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA, Box 1/6.

⁴⁶¹ Thomas Albright, “Rupert Garcia: Radical Political Portraitist,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 28, 1983, 60; Russell Ferguson, ed., *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition, 1955-62* (Los Angeles, CA: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, exhibition catalogue, December 6-1992-March 7, 1993).

detachment and politically disengaged ‘neutrality’ of Anglo-American pop artists and their legacy, the contemporary post-pop ‘image scavengers.’”⁴⁶² In essence, Garcia reapplied contemporary graphic design and aesthetics to his political sensibility, which also has meant that his art is still more likely to appear in a Chicano art exhibition than in a Pop Art exhibition.

In searching for where he and his art belonged, Garcia landed firmly in the Mission District. Garcia began teaching silk-screening at the Artes 6 gallery, where he served as a mentor to his friend Ralph Maradiaga and established strong friendships with many other Mission District artists, including Francisco Camplís and René Yanez. Consequently, he became one of the many founding members of Galería de la Raza. For Garcia, Artes 6 is “the cultural instrument that connects me with not only Camplís, but also many other artists in the Mission District (as well as others), and how we become a part of a cultural force along with Carlos Santana and other musicians and cultural producers. We were all part of this large group. I mean, we were not buddies; we were all part of this contextual moment—which must be seen, by the way, in the light of the Chicano-Latino civil rights and cultural . . . what we called a renaissance.”⁴⁶³

In parallel with Yolanda Lopez, the trajectory of Rupert Garcia shows how the Third World Strike was instrumental in shaping the art and politics of Mission District cultural workers. Together these artists sought to politicize and mobilize the community. Whether they did or not, they laid the groundwork for a cultural renaissance grounded in Third World politics. Rupert Garcia, as one of the first Chicanos hired to teach in San

⁴⁶² Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia*, 11.

⁴⁶³ Garcia interview, AAA.

Francisco State's art department; as an academic who sought to document the history and significance of Chicano art; as a mentor for many in the community, including his student and later roommate Juan Fuentes; and as a prominently recognized artist, has sought to spark in others the critical outlook that first came to him in 1968. His experience as a student forever turned him into an educator.

JUAN FUENTES AND THE NEW LEFT

Juan Fuentes was born in Artesia, New Mexico in 1950. However, he grew up in California's Salinas Valley, where he and his ten siblings worked alongside their parents in the fields.⁴⁶⁴ Gradually, they acquired a sharecropper's house in Watsonville, but their financial situation was always precarious. When the father died in 1958, Fuentes was only eight years old. As Fuentes recalls, "Everybody said it was just asthma. But now, looking back ... it had to have been from all that exposure to all those pesticides and stuff that they were spraying."⁴⁶⁵ The family managed to scrape by with the earnings of his older brothers and sisters.

Upon completing high school in 1969, Fuentes presumed he was bound to work in the canneries, the military, or a trade, such as carpentry or plumbing. As Fuentes recalls, "The high school that I went to – they had this system where they classified students into X, Y, and Z. And unless you were in the Y division, or the X division ... you were not

⁴⁶⁴ "Buscando América," exhibition brochure, Galería Esquina Libertad, La Raza Graphics Center and Mission Gráfica, November 15-December 31, 1986, Tomás Ybarra-Frausto collection, AAA, Box 19.

⁴⁶⁵ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

going to be college bound.”⁴⁶⁶ The possibility of attending college, much less becoming an artist, seemed distant and unlikely, and he was largely unaware of the various social movements that might have accorded him an alternate vision for his future: “I wasn’t really that aware of the importance of the civil rights movement or the Chicano movement or the black power struggle.”⁴⁶⁷

Fuentes’ acceptance at San Francisco State in 1969 as part of the mass recruitment of students of color catalyzed a shift in his consciousness. As he puts it, “I had seen injustices and I had already experienced poverty, and I had lived under it, so it wasn’t really that big of a step for me to figure out, well, wait a minute, who’s the oppressed and who’s the oppressor.”⁴⁶⁸ Fuentes’ experience was critical in spurring his “oppositional consciousness” – what Jane Mansbridge describes as “an empowering mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act to undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of human domination.”⁴⁶⁹ Not only did the Third World Strike indirectly propel Fuentes on a new career path as a student and an artist, but it solidified his determination to speak for others who lacked his opportunity.

While his high school training left him woefully unprepared for college academics, Fuentes worked hard to catch up and gravitated to people who could help him advance, many of whom he located in the new school of Ethnic Studies. Up until that

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁹ Jane Mansbridge further explains that “at a minimum, oppositional consciousness includes the four elements of identifying with members of a subordinate group, identifying injustices done to that group, opposing those injustices, and seeing the group as having a shared interest in ending or diminishing those injustices.” Jane Mansbridge, “The Making of Oppositional Consciousness,” in *Oppositional Consciousness: The Subjective Roots of Social Protest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 4-5.

point, Fuentes had never identified himself as a “Chicano.” He says, “I was just Mexicano – I was always Mexican – that’s how I was raised.” Fuentes recalls:

But there were people that I met there, Chicanos that I met there for the first time ... from Stockton, Sacramento, Salinas, Pittsburg, Visalia – I mean just different places. And it was some of those students that came from those areas that really introduced me to even the Farm Workers struggle, which I wasn’t aware of. Even coming from an agricultural place. ... We just didn’t have any exposure to any of that.⁴⁷⁰

For Fuentes, his time at San Francisco State was an awakening to the institutional structures that had defined his childhood. Encounters with people like himself from all over the state expanded the scope of his personal experience and solidified his decision to identify as a Chicano. He says, “I still basically refer to myself as Chicano because it has political implications in that it also places me in a certain context of Americanism that is connected to a social movement that happened at a particular time in history to Mexican Americans.”⁴⁷¹

However, in San Francisco, he not only came to understand himself as Chicano, but as Latino: “When I came to San Francisco State, even though I was around a lot of my friends at school – the community itself, the San Francisco community was very isolating for me. ... And the Mission was the one place where I actually felt like I had a community and I had a family. And I felt comfortable. And also, it was an education for me because I didn’t know what a Nicaraguan was, or a Salvadorean was, or a Costa Rican, and those flavors and those kind of people.” The experience of living in San

⁴⁷⁰ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

Francisco and attending San Francisco State catalyzed a new consciousness of parallel communities and concerns. As Fuentes says, “It was interesting to me ... to even consider myself a Latino because I didn’t know what a Latino was either. Until I got to the Mission and started to understand what Latino was and what Latin America meant.”⁴⁷²

Spending time in San Francisco and attending San Francisco State launched Fuentes on an educational journey that intimately linked his development as an artist with his understanding of himself as a Chicano, a Latino, a Third World person of color, and a member of the Left. As Fuentes says, “I did posters around the Vietnam War, I did stuff for all the farm workers, I did posters for the Nicaraguan struggle, the Salvadorean struggle, the Native American struggle, [and] South Africa” [Fig. 4.17, 4.18 and 4.19]. For Fuentes, the link overriding these diverse concerns was his advocacy of a globally-oriented, Left-identified political movement. Fuentes states, “It was actually a social movement, a Left social movement, and I was real active in it.”⁴⁷³ Inspired by his education in and outside the classroom, Fuentes channeled his art into his political vision for a just universe, largely in parallel with struggles of an international Left social movement.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*

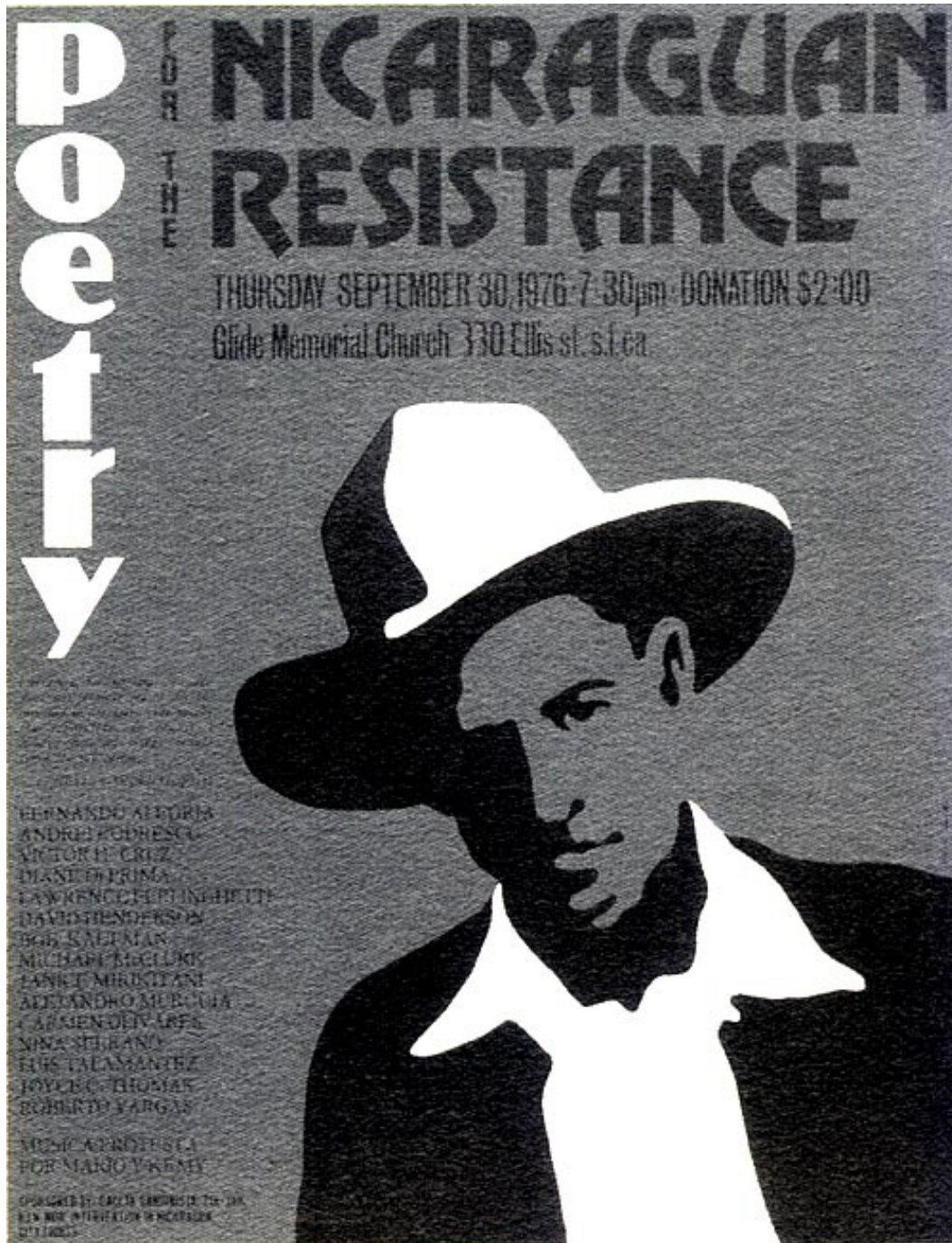


Fig. 4.17: Juan Fuentes, “Poetry for the Nicaraguan Resistance,” offset lithograph, 1976. Image from *Just Another Poster*, 181.



Fig. 4.18: Juan Fuentes, “Many Mandelas,” 1986. As Misha Berson notes, “The V-shaped scarlet ribbon ... is a symbol of the anti-apartheid movement.” See, Misha Berson, “Vibrant Visions: La Raza Showcases Modern Silkscreens,” *Image*, December 14, 1986, 34-35. Image from Smithsonian American Art Museum, http://americanart.si.edu/images/1995/1995.50.20_1b.jpg, accessed on September 9, 2005.

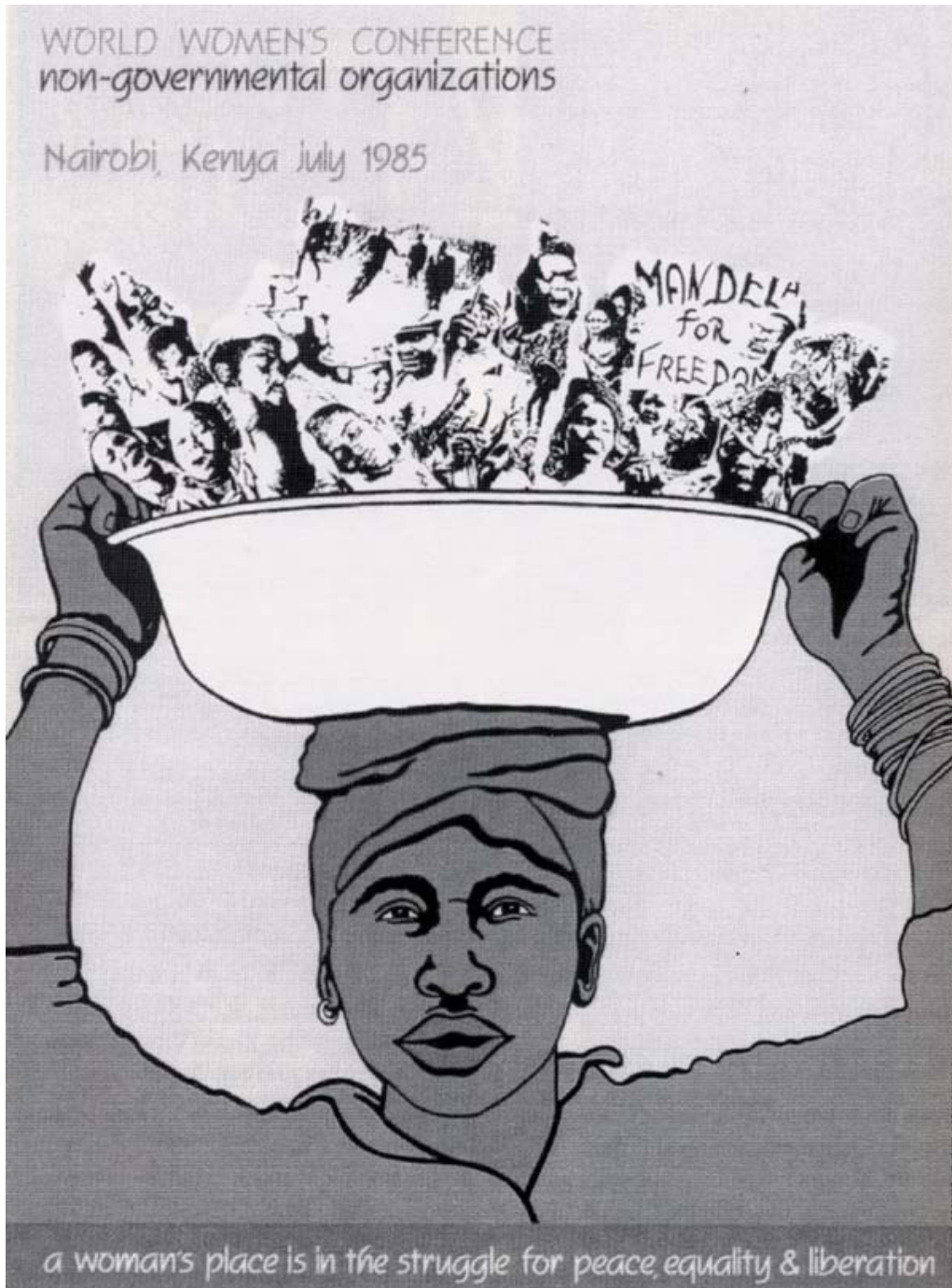


Fig. 4.19: Juan Fuentes, “World Women’s Conference,” 1985. Image from *Voices on Paper: 25 Year Retrospective of Posters and Prints by Mission Gráfica* (Galería Museo, Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, exhibition catalogue, September 13-October 12, 2002), 18.

As an artist, Fuentes sought to challenge the culture that had depoliticized his youth. He says, “I really make a conscious effort to depict people of color in a really positive and I guess empowering or strong manner. Only because it’s not what we see in everyday American society or life.”⁴⁷⁴ Michael Denning writes, “For a generation of New Left thinkers around the globe, the issue of culture was not simply the fact of the existence of the new technologies of mass information and communication, but the reshaping of the everyday lives and struggles of subaltern classes and peoples by those new forms.”⁴⁷⁵ While Denning’s observation posits a view of technology happening to marginalized communities, Fuentes experience indicates the ways in which “the subaltern” could appropriate the printing press and counter mass culture.

However, the act of becoming an artist was not a straightforward matter. Neither his family, nor his education offered encouragement. The high school track system never supported his interest: “The only classes that they would allow me to take were metal shop, auto mechanics, or wood shop. ... So I’m really good with wood working tools.”⁴⁷⁶ Moreover, family, friends, and Fuentes himself had difficulty imagining the relevance of studying art beyond the practical aspects of everyday handicrafts. Well aware that art was not the most promising career choice, he still found himself magnetically drawn to the study of art at San Francisco State. He described his entrée this way:

I walked into the art department one day ... people were print making,
people were painting, people were drawing, people were doing ceramics

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁵ Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left*; Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York and London: Verso, 2004), 5.

⁴⁷⁶ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

... they were making rugs or weavings.... 'Wow, they're making all this stuff by hand.' My mom does this stuff, and my grandmother makes this stuff. So, I took an introductory art class by this professor named Ralph Putzker, and he just totally opened up my mind and eyes to seeing the world in a different way through art.⁴⁷⁷

Entering the art department was both familiar and unfamiliar terrain for Fuentes. Though the experience drew on memories of his childhood, it placed those creative activities in a new context. Putzker, well known for his teaching, helped catapult Fuentes into a field he never could have envisioned open to himself.⁴⁷⁸

Soon thereafter, Fuentes enrolled in more art classes, though not without obstacles. Not immediately declaring himself an art major and with no seniority, he discovered he was either barred or unable to obtain his desired classes:

I knew there were certain classes that I was not going to be able to get. Because the priority was for juniors and seniors ... I wasn't going to get in. So, I went to the front of the line. That's how I got into the classes And it was a result of the liberation struggles that were going on – Chicano Studies, the Chicano Movement, the Black Power Struggle – that I could walk to the front of that line, and none of those white kids were going to tell me anything. And I dared them to tell me anything. And they didn't. And I took my classes. And that's how I was able to do it. Because they were afraid of me, to tell you the truth.⁴⁷⁹

Suddenly confident, and attuned to the fear and power he could invoke as a person of color at San Francisco State, Fuentes used this position to his advantage. His decision to go to the front of the line was indicative of a new sense of self and a willingness to question traditional social controls.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷⁸ Yolanda Lopez also has described Putzker as a helpful teacher. Lopez interview, March 25, 2003.

⁴⁷⁹ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

Fuentes also found two significant role models: Rupert Garcia, as one of his first professors in the San Francisco State art department, and Malaquías Montoya, who was producing posters for the Chicano movement and TWLF at UC Berkeley, provided intellectual and aesthetic inspiration. “They were sort of my mentors in terms of learning how to do the art work and *why* we were doing the art work. It was really connected to trying to advance community issues.”⁴⁸⁰

In addition, a 1973 trip to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade played a formative role in his appreciation for the relationship between social equity and art: “Because at that point ... I really couldn’t quite figure out where my art was going to – how it was going to be used, or how I was going to be able to survive with it. ... But going to Cuba ... I actually saw the work integrated into society in a lot of different ways.”⁴⁸¹ As Carol Wells states, “the importance of Cuban posters in the development of the Chicano poster cannot be overstated.” The experience led Fuentes to co-curate a Cuban poster exhibition at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor and co-produce a television program the following year with Susan Adelman.⁴⁸²

Fuentes graduated from San Francisco State in 1974 with a new sense of purpose. According to Fuentes, “I started doing posters as a way to basically try to give something back to the community.”⁴⁸³ For Fuentes, serving his community was pivotal to his art, and while that community represented a broad spectrum, he found himself physically re-

⁴⁸⁰ On Malaquías Montoya as an artist inspired by the TWLF, see Wells, “La Lucha Sigue,” *Just Another Poster*, 176-186; quote from Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

⁴⁸¹ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

⁴⁸² Wells, “La Lucha Sigue,” *Just Another Poster*, 177-178.

⁴⁸³ “Mindfield interviews Juan Fuentes,” *Mindfield*, November 1997, <http://users.rcn.com/mindfld/fuentes.html>, accessed on March 12, 2003.

oriented toward the Mission District. Over the course of the 1970s and '80s, Fuentes held multiple jobs in the Mission, including working as a volunteer for the local newspaper *El Tecolote*; working for the Mission campus of City College; and working for the community-oriented silkscreen centers La Raza Graphics and Mission Gráfica (in the mid-1980s, Mission Gráfica merged with La Raza Silkscreen Center).⁴⁸⁴

When Fuentes became director of Mission Grafica, his objective was to model the organization along the lines of a Latin American taller, or arts workshop, serving to train future artists and produce work for the community.⁴⁸⁵ The images of Mission Gráfica have reflected the international perspective of its artists in content, exhibitions, and cultural exchange. As Chilean-American artist René Castro points out, “Artists from all over the world have been afforded space at MCCLA – not just Latinos. Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Chileans, Argentineans, Peruvians, Bolivians, Salvadorians, Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Irishmen, Englishmen, Spaniards, Germans, Mexicans, and Oaxacans—all have been especially welcomed by Mission Gráfica, and have left their graphic imprint that adorns the multicolored tapestry of one of the most fascinating portfolios generated in our artistic community.”⁴⁸⁶ Jos Sances adds, “But always our primary allegiance was to the community and political organizations we served. Gráfica had deep connections to liberation struggles throughout the world.”⁴⁸⁷ As a place that has trained hundreds of

⁴⁸⁴ Juan Fuentes discusses the process of cataloguing the archive in his article, “Mission Grafica,” in *Corazon del Barrio*, Mission Cultural Center, February 2003, not paginated.

⁴⁸⁵ Fuentes interview, *Mindfield*.

⁴⁸⁶ René Castro, “Mission Gráfica: Un Taller Humilde en el Barrio de la Mission,” in *Corazon del Barrio*, Mission Cultural Center, February 2003; and in *Voices on Paper: 25 Year Retrospective of Posters and Prints by Mission Gráfica*, Galería Museo, Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, CA, September 13-October 12, 20002, 4.

⁴⁸⁷ Jos Sances, “Mission Gráfica,” in *Voices on Paper*, 6.

artists in the arts of silkscreening, screen printing, etching, mono printing, and wood block printing, Mission Gráfica physically and spiritually maps a complex transnational exchange of visual culture and politics.

As Fuentes explains his trajectory, “there was a concept that came out of San Francisco State and Third World Ethnic Studies that ... was like ‘go into your community and help empower your community by creating resources for it. So be a teacher in your community, be a doctor in your community, be an artist in your community.’ That concept really stuck with me. And that was coming out of San Francisco State.”⁴⁸⁸ Of course, this concept was not only coming out of San Francisco State. Certainly, the 1961 inaugural address of President John F. Kennedy statement, “ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country,” bears some reflexivity of this larger cultural milieu.⁴⁸⁹ However, the difference in Fuentes’ case, and in the case of many other cultural workers, was the focus on Third World communities that sought to transcend national borders, and advocate for global social reform.

Fuentes’ work appropriated many of the dialogues shaping U.S.-Third World politics, most obviously in his support of redistributing wealth, eliminating racism, and empowering people of color. In the 1970s, Fuentes began perfecting his black and white pencil drawings, several of which were reproduced in *El Tecolote*, and which often criticized life in the United States by highlighting alternative political regimes abroad. In the graphic, “Viva Vietnam” (1975) [Fig. 4.20] Fuentes celebrates the military victory of

⁴⁸⁸ Fuentes interview, March 13, 2003.

⁴⁸⁹ Printed in, Shelley Sommer, *John F. Kennedy: His Life and Legacy* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005), 123-127 (127).



Fig. 4.20: Juan Fuentes, "Viva Vietnam," newspaper graphic, 1975. Image from *El Tecolote*, May 28, 1975, 8.



Fig. 4.21: Juan Fuentes, "El 26 de Julio," newspaper graphic, 1976. Image from *El Tecolote*, July 1976, 9.

communism in Vietnam through his cheerful depiction of communist leader Ho Chi Minh and a smiling North Vietnamese soldier. Advocating “Long Life” to the communist government in Vietnam was no doubt controversial in the United States, but for Fuentes, the victory of Vietnam represented the overturning of American cultural and economic imperialism that had made such an impact on his life.⁴⁹⁰

Similarly, his graphic “El 26 de Julio” (1976) [Fig. 4.21] supports the Cuban revolution through its depiction of Fidel Castro’s first failed attempt to overthrow the Cuban government in 1953. The image is divided in two, with the body of a male rebel dead and bleeding on the left, while a female rebel stares out from behind prison bars on the right. The image is meant to secure the sympathies of the viewer for the rebels by documenting the brutality of Fulgencio Batista’s regime: Marifeli Pérez-Stable writes of the July 26 uprising: “Dozens of youths were captured, tortured, and killed, the rest imprisoned. The nation was horrified by the governmental repression and moved by the daring, if reckless, action of the young Cubans.”⁴⁹¹ During his trial, Fidel Castro famously declared, “Condemn me, it does not matter. History will absolve me!” Fuentes’ image captures a turning point in Cuban history, which culminated in the 1959 communist revolution. To emphasize the point, a short article accompanies Fuentes’ image, notably not translated into English, which states, “El 26 de Julio es la fecha historica que señala a America Latina el camino hacia su completa liberación e [sic] independencia del imperialismo Yanqui y el principio de un nuevo mundo fundado en el Socialismo, en una sociedad basada en la dignidad human y el respeto a la vida.” [The

⁴⁹⁰ “Viva Vietnam” appears in *El Tecolote*, May 28, 1975, 8.

26th of July is the historical moment that teaches Latin America the path toward complete liberation and independence from Yankee imperialism and the beginning of a new world founded in socialism, a society based on human dignity and respect for human life.]⁴⁹²

Not coincidentally, Fuentes' controversial homage to the Cuban revolution appeared in *El Tecolote* at the same time that the United States was celebrating its July 1976 bicentennial with considerable pomp and patriotism. In fact, *El Tecolote* editor Juan Gonzales, another Third-World-Strike alum, took the opportunity to write his counterpoint response, "200 years of 'Progress,'" a set of short, critical articles intended to spur participation in a Mission District protest against colonization and oppression. Stating, "What do we have to celebrate about?" Gonzales cited the Mission District's 16% unemployment rate (11% for the city), with 22% of the population living well below federal poverty levels, and less than 12% of Latinos over age 25 having a college education. Moreover, the Mission District was feeling the brunt of U.S. imperialism in Latin America firsthand through the sudden, rapid escalation of Central American immigration, both legal and illegal. As Carlos Cordova notes, "the late 1970s in Central America were characterized by political violence and revolution. These political conditions forced large numbers of Nicaraguans to seek refuge in the Bay Area in the last half of the decade." Soon thereafter, Cordova pinpoints the heightened migration of Salvadoreans and Guatemalans in the wake of similar political violence. Not only did these cultural shifts abroad make Salvadoreans the dominant ethnic community of San

⁴⁹¹ Marifeli Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 53

⁴⁹² Translation mine; "Recordando el 26 de Julio," *El Tecolote*, July 1976, 9.

Francisco's Latino population, but it also determined San Francisco's importance as a base for political sanctuary in the 1980s.⁴⁹³

In fact, the U.S.-supported destabilization of socialist regimes and leaders in Latin America over the course of the 1970s and 1980s propelled the efforts of cultural workers in the Mission District to raise public consciousness and protect their global communities. In 1982, Juan Fuentes and Regina Mouton participated in the Galería de la Raza's "Progress in Process" exhibition, a high-profile program designed to show the Mission District community how artists worked. For their part, Fuentes and Mouton created a painting entitled "The Last Supper" [Fig. 4.22]. The image shows the smiling, well-dressed, military elite of Latin America sitting in front of a banquet of food and drink, while three scantily clad bodies bleed to death before them. Of the painting, Fuentes said that this is "the last supper for this class of people in Latin American and throughout the world. They represent death. The kids are in color because they represent a future culture, even though they are dead." The painting is at once both dark and hopeful. While it attempts to give agency to the victims by presenting them in color, they are nonetheless disempowered by greed. The painting demands a conscientious response

⁴⁹³ "200 Years of 'Progress,'" *El Tecolote*, July 1976, 6-7; Carlos B. Cordova, "The Mission District: The Ethnic Diversity of the Latin American Enclave in San Francisco, Calif.," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989, 21-32 (29); Jean Molesky, "Amnesty for Qualified Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area: The Implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989, 16-20; Robert Tomsho, *The American Sanctuary Movement* (Austin, TX: Texas Monthly Free Press, 1987).



Fig. 4.22: Juan Fuentes and Regina Mouton, “The Last Supper,” 1982. Created as part of the “Progress in Process,” exhibition at the Galería de la Raza, May 4-June 12, 1982. Photograph by Yolanda Lopez. Image obtained from the Cultural Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA), <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/murals01.html>, accessed on September 9, 2005.

from viewers – it is a call to action for the Mission District community to prevent this perpetual violence. As Mouton explained her motives, “This is something people need to see because it is happening.”⁴⁹⁴

Consciousness of social inequality at home and abroad led cultural workers of the Mission District to adopt a transnational perspective on the world. Their political position placed them in a curious position in the United States. As critics of U.S. foreign and domestic policy, their patriotism could be called into question. But their desire to make equality, freedom, and opportunity accessible to a global community was not altogether separate from the basic premises of American culture. As Eric Foner states, “No idea is more fundamental to Americans’ sense of themselves as individuals and as a nation than freedom.”⁴⁹⁵ Ultimately, Mission District cultural workers were locked in a struggle to challenge the U.S. master narratives of equality, freedom, and opportunity, which when left unquestioned, facilitated global inequalities and violence. In large part, this was the heart of the struggle that was politically and aesthetically defining the interests of Mission District cultural workers.

⁴⁹⁴ Quoted in, Tim Drescher, “Progress in Process,” exhibition catalogue, Galería de la Raza, May 4-June 12, 1982. On the U.S. and Latin America, see: Claribel Alegria, *They Won’t Take Me Alive: Salvadorean Women In the Struggle for National Liberation* (London: The Women’s Press, 1990); Charles Clements, *Witness to War: An American Doctor in El Salvador* (New York: Bantam, 1984); Juan Corradi, Patricia Weiss Fagen, and Manuel Antonio Garreton, eds., *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Mark Damner, *The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War* (New York: Vintage, 1994); Nidia Diaz, *I Was Never Alone: A Prison Diary from El Salvador* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1992); Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); Robert S. Kahn, *Other People’s Blood: U.S. Immigration Prisons in the Reagan Decade* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, eds., *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror in Latin America* (London: Zed Books, 1999); Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador’s FMLN and Peru’s Shining Path* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The Third World Strike was hardly the only event contributing to the globalization of Chicano art. Rather, the story of the Third World Strike is emblematic of how many American youth of the 1960s and 1970s were aspiring to understand themselves in a global context. The Third World Strike served as a critical local lens to reframe people's perception of the world and how they defined their political and cultural communities. The personal experiences of Yolanda Lopez, Rupert Garcia, and Juan Fuentes document the impact of this single event in a wide sphere of happenings. Their consciousness of international struggles was magnified because of the Third World Strike, and their art bears the mark of this critical event to this day.

The trio never limited themselves to producing posters, but an understanding of the politics of the form is central to the impulses of their art as a whole. As Carol Wells writes, "Just as the UFW is inseparable from the history of the U.S. and Mexican labor movements and the Chicano moratorium is inseparable from the history of the Viet Nam War, so are Chicano posters inseparable from the diverse struggles mobilized for human rights over the past forty years."⁴⁹⁶ Lopez, Garcia, and Fuentes were drawn to art ever since they were young, but becoming conscious of their lack of privilege also ingrained in them a desire to speak for the oppressed through their art. In recognizing the multiplicity of their personal identity as Chicanos, Latinos, Americans, and Third World

⁴⁹⁵ Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), xiii.

people of color, they formulated a more complex, transnational perspective of the world as a whole.

In reconstituting their understanding of themselves, these artists advocated similar complex thinking from their viewers. They sought to model a new iconography that would challenge the dominant visual culture and spur change. Their intentions support George Lipsitz's point: "Rather than thinking about Chicano poster art as 'community-based art making,' it is more productive to view it as a form of art-based community making." These artists actively sought to share their consciousness through their art. They perhaps share Lipsitz's view that "People cannot enact new social relations unless they can envision them."⁴⁹⁷ In illustrating the communities they cared about, they hoped to make their perspective more accessible and shake people from their acceptance of the status quo.

This chapter shows how each of these three artists separately turned to the Mission District as a place where they could locate people with similar concerns and find support for their politics and their aesthetics. Their individual trajectories provide an intimate look at how the Mission District was becoming a physical base for a globally oriented New Left social movement. While the area by definition is a small geographical urban space, the demographics, the geography, the politics, and the art were turning the neighborhood into a nexus for a Third World intelligentsia. Many other artists contributed to this quest for international solidarity, including René Castro, Ester Hernández, Linda Lucero, Malaquías Montoya, Gilberto Osorio, Jos Sances, and Herbert

⁴⁹⁶ Wells, "La Lucha Sigue," *Just Another Poster*, 173.

Sigüenza, just to name a few. Their art reflects a pervasive effort to raise public awareness of human struggles around the world in order to catalyze change and question the assumptions of nationalist ideology.

In following the development of Lopez, Garcia, and Fuentes, part of their education involved understanding nationalism as an artificial social construction in the global quest for human rights and equality. In fact, the interest of cultural workers in resolving the problems of poverty and racism propelled a Marxist orientation in the community. Over the course of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Che Guevara, Mao Tse Tung, Salvador Allende, Augusto Sandino, and the Black Panthers emerged as alternative models for the cultural workers of the Mission, although these leaders were decidedly anti-heroes in the context of the U.S. government.

In general, San Francisco has reflected a cosmopolitan consciousness for the Left, leading at least one scholar to rename it “Left Coast City.”⁴⁹⁸ The Mission District was part of this public identity, but an identity modeled on Third World politics and aesthetics. In the minds of many artists and activists, the Mission District was emerging as a critical site for Latinos to organize for human rights around the world. These sentiments were not limited to visual culture, but in fact surfaced in all facets of Mission District culture. While the vision of artists and activists cannot speak for all of the people of the Mission District, their work has undeniably made a tremendous impact on the

⁴⁹⁷ George Lipsitz, “Not Just Another Social Movement: Poster Art and the Movimiento Chicano,” in *Just Another Poster*, 85, 84.

⁴⁹⁸ Richard Edward DeLeon, *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992).

community as a whole. Their objective was to educate and radicalize the people of the community through organizing and art, and in the early 1970s, hope was still in the air.

Chapter Five

Hombres y Mujeres Muralistas on a Mission: Painting Latino Identities in 1970s San Francisco



Fig. 5.1: "Latino America," 1974, by "Las Mujeres Muralistas": Graciela Carrillo, Consuelo Mendez, Irene Perez, and Patricia Rodriguez, with assistants, Xochitl Nevel-Guerrero, Ester Hernandez, Miriam Olivas, and Tuti Rodriguez. Mission Street between 25th and 26th Streets, San Francisco. Approx. 25' x 70'. Image copied from *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals*, eds., Eva Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez (Venice, CA: Social and Public Art Resource Center, 1990), 73. The mural no longer exists.

In the mid-1970s, writer Alejandro Murguía recalls how San Francisco’s Mission District, “teemed with painters, muralists, poets, and musicians, even the occasional politico or community organizer who acted beyond the rhetoric and actually accomplished something ... We had no problem being understood because La Mission was a microcosm of Latin America, and the whole barrio seemed in perfect sync.”⁴⁹⁹ Murguía’s words capture that sense of intimate community that pervaded much of the culture, though not everything was in sync.

Like many poor urban neighborhoods during the 1970s, the Mission District was caught in a maelstrom between development and inner city neglect. Neil Smith cites a study that shows, by 1976, nearly half of 260 American cities with more than 50,000 people were experiencing some form of gentrification. In other words, members of the working class were being displaced by a middle-class “gentry” that sought urban development projects to raise property values and produce investment returns. In the Mission District and elsewhere, the pervasive threat of displacement politically mobilized activists and artists on many fronts.⁵⁰⁰

Mission District artists turned to murals as a means of invoking a community identity and literally saving the landscape from outsider interests, local speculators,

⁴⁹⁹ Alejandro Murguía, *The Medicine of Memory: A Mexica Clan in California* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 118. A version of this chapter appears in *Latino Studies* 3, November 2005 (forthcoming).

⁵⁰⁰ Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 37-38. On neighborhood formation and gentrification issues in the Mission, see: Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco’s Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988); Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1983); Rebecca Solnit and Susan Schwartzenberg, *Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (New York; London: Verso, 2000). Other relevant texts include, Arlene Davila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the Neoliberal City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Sharon

crime, and neglect. Since the early 1970s, murals have physically and psychically transformed the Mission District's landscape and have become part of what defines the neighborhood. As in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Detroit, and other major cities across the country, San Francisco's community mural movement flourished in the early 1970s. The roots of the movement are often attributed to the impact of William Walker's "Wall of Respect" mural in Chicago in 1967. Walker and a group of twenty other artists painted the tribute to African American culture in the middle of the blighted South Side. Walker's work only survived five years, finally succumbing to the city's urban renewal efforts; however, the community rallies that prevented at least two earlier demolition attempts, and the success of other murals across the country to incite community activism and visually challenge any intrusion from community outsiders inspired a movement.⁵⁰¹

By 1971, the year marking the first documented exterior mural in the Mission, the form was widely recognized as a powerful political tool. Notably, interior murals already existed in the Mission, at least by 1963 if not earlier.⁵⁰² However, the community mural

Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

⁵⁰¹ Eva Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez, eds., *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals*, (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993); Eva Cockcroft, John Weber, and Jim Cockcroft, eds., *Toward a People's Art: The Contemporary Mural Movement*. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 230; Alan W. Barnett, *Community Murals: The People's Art* (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1984); Timothy Drescher, *San Francisco Murals: Community Creates its Muse, 1914-1994* (Hong Kong: Pogo Press, Inc., 1994); and Daniel D. Arreola, "Mexican American Exterior Murals," *Geographical Review* 74 (October 1984), 409-424.

⁵⁰² Rupert Garcia documents Oscar Caraveo's creation of "Atardecer de un Imperio" (The Interruption of Empire) in El Azteca Restaurant in 1963. Garcia states that Ruben Guzman created the first exterior mural in the summer of 1971, but also notes his participation in a 1967 Latino youth project sponsored by Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes to paint the exterior of a bus. Rupert Garcia, "Chicano-Latino Murals of California, 1963-1970: A Period of Accommodation and Protest," paper submitted for Peter Selz's "Art of the 1960s" class, fall 1979-Winter 1980, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto Collection, AAA, Box 10; Garcia, "Commercial Popular Mural Art of the 1960s: An Enduring Mexican Folklore in California," paper for Chicano Studies and Department of Architecture, UC Berkeley, Ybarra-Frausto Collection, AAA, Box 10. Susan Cervantes also recalls painting a mural inside Coffee Dan's establishment in 1965: Susan Cervantes, interview by author, February 23, 2003. *Community Murals*, 126; Goldman, "How, Why, Where, and

movement moved the paintings into the streets of everyday life.⁵⁰³ Not only did murals pictorially project the interests, ethnicity, and politics of local residents, but also their quality as a work of art protected older neighborhood buildings that might otherwise topple to development interests outside the community, or fall victim to internalized destruction such as graffiti.

By 1975, local poet Roberto Vargas described the Mission as “an implosion / explosion of human colors, of walls being painted by hombres y mujeres muralistas [men and women muralists].”⁵⁰⁴ While a number of artists contributed to this explosion of images, the artists responsible for “Latino America” (1974) [Fig. 5.1] and “Homage to Siqueiros” (1974) [Fig. 5.2] stand out for their close ties to the community, for their continuing influence on the local aesthetic, and for the substantial media coverage their work inspired. In fact, “Latino America” continues to provoke discussion as one of the key works by the influential Mujeres Muralistas, a cooperative of women muralists, while “Homage to Siqueiros” is just as noteworthy for the publicly confrontational, flagrantly anti-capitalist voice of its three male artists.

When It All Happened: Chicano Murals of California,” in *Signs from the Heart*, 36; Rolando Castellón, Jerry Concha, Carlos Loarca, and Gustavo Rivera (group interview), San Francisco, CA, October 16, 1983, uncorrected Transcript from Califas Videotape #158-162, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman. Califas Book 5, 18, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

⁵⁰³ Shifra Goldman points out that Siqueiros’ 1932 mural, “Tropical America” on Olvera Street in Los Angeles also set an earlier precedent for exterior murals. Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 87-100; Shifra Goldman, interview, Pasadena, CA, August 9, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #102-105, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 3 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA, 3.

⁵⁰⁴ Roberto Vargas, NAP Associate Director, in *City Magazine*, November 25, 1975, in Paul Kleyman and Barbara Taylor-Sharp, “The Seeds of Creative Community: A Report on the San Francisco Arts Commission’s Neighborhood Arts Program and its development of the CETA Arts Program as a national model from 1974-1976,” 1976. My appreciation to Paul Kleyman for this report.



Fig. 5.2: "Homage to Siqueiros," 1974. Jesus "Chuy" Campusano, Michael Rios, and Luis Cortazar. Assistants: Jaime Carrillo, Candice Ho, Julio Lopez, Anthony Machado, and Jack Navarez. Interior, Bank of America building, Mission and 23rd Streets, San Francisco. All photographs of "Homage to Siqueiros" by Cary Cordova. Permission to reproduce by Andres Campusano and Sandra Camacho.

Thus, this chapter focuses on the creation of “Homage to Siqueiros” and “Latino America” as significant cultural texts of the period. Various local newspapers produced short articles to announce the completion of these two murals, thereby allowing these two works to attain an uncustomary level of recognition.⁵⁰⁵ The new media attention was partly due to the increasing visibility of murals, the escalating skills of the artists, and the introduction of spectacle-friendly events to celebrate a project’s completion, but these two murals were particularly newsworthy for different reasons. While the artists of “Homage to Siqueiros” created a media spectacle designed to undermine their corporate sponsor, the artists of “Latino America” caught attention as one of the first all-female community mural groups in the nation. Though “Homage to Siqueiros” still exists in the home of its sponsor, the Bank of America, “Latino America” suffered a fate common to many exterior murals: the building owners whitewashed the painting away in the 1980s. The afterlife of these two works underscores the way murals can attain value in interior spaces – “Homage to Siqueiros” is now insured for over a million dollars – but deteriorate in exterior spaces with little public concern.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰⁵ For “Latinoamerica,” see: Victoria Quintero, “A Mural is a Painting on a Wall Done by Human Hands,” *El Tecolote*, September 13, 1974, 6; “Mural Transforms a Wall into a Thing of Beauty,” *Mission District News*, June 13, 1974, 7. For “Homage to Siqueiros”: Rupert Garcia, “This Mural is not for the Bankers, It’s for the People,” *El Tecolote*, June 10, 1974, 11; “In a Monumental Mural Latin Artists Working,” *El Mundo*, June 12, 1974, 1; “Mission Grads Enrich B of A Office,” *Mission District News*, June 13, 1974, 1; “Mission Murals in the Mexican Manner,” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 8, 1974, 5. For both murals: Thomas Albright, “Three Remarkable Latin Murals,” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, June 4, 1974, 48; Ira Kamin, “Come On In, Bring Your Paint,” *Pacific Sun*, May 30-June 5, 1974, 11-12; “Mural Tour of the Mission District in San Francisco,” *Sunset Magazine*, July 1975, 26C. [Insert not in all editions.]

⁵⁰⁶ Lynda Gledhill, “Mission Mural Now a Whitewashed Wall,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 5, 1998, A13

In exploring the motivation behind these two works, the publicity each work generated, and their impact, I seek to outline the historical context of the works and generate a more substantial understanding of the iconographic content and cultural significance. I argue that the process of creating a mural is often just as indicative of community ideologies and tensions as the iconography in the mural. In developing a closer reading of these two murals, both of which are homages to Latin America and critical responses to circumstances in the United States, I deconstruct a variety of transnational visual narratives in order to develop a more complex understanding of the dominant visual and ideological discourses in the mid-1970s Mission District and in the nation as a whole. Both murals were produced in 1974, and while they share many of the same ideas and circumstances, they also reflect differences in terms of aesthetic, ideology, gender, and approach that indicate the complexities of defining an iconography, a neighborhood, and a movement.

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AND THE COMMUNITY MURAL MOVEMENT

In the Mission District in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the urban redevelopment project most symbolic of gentrification was the construction of two Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) subway stations within ten blocks of each other on Mission Street, the area's central thoroughfare. In fact, when the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency released its 1966 BART proposal, it triggered an immediate, passionate response. Manuel Castells states, "The concern of the Mission residents was more than

understandable given the SFRA's record as a major instrument of demolition and displacement, and the future context of increased accessibility to the Mission from the entire Bay Area as a result of the new mass transit system."⁵⁰⁷ BART, a transportation system designed for outlying suburban commuters to swiftly move in and out of the city, had little obvious value for inner-city residents of the Mission. Moreover, city plans to turn the stations into South-American-styled tourist attractions also led Mission District residents to view the new system with considerable distrust.⁵⁰⁸ In fact, the scale of developing two underground stations on Mission at 16th Street and Mission at 24th Street was more likely to disrupt or destroy local businesses. Concerned Mission District activists argued, "the land around the BART stations will become too valuable for poor people to occupy."⁵⁰⁹

While residents battled potentially harmful redevelopment interests, they also faced the opposite problem: criminal negligence and illegal displacement tactics. Within three years of BART's 1974 opening, 133 fires erupted within a three-block radius of the new 16th Street Station. If averaged, this would work out to about one fire every eight days. Authorities declared at least forty-one of the fires to be arson. Presumably, many local businesses and landlords sought to collect insurance on the characteristically shoddy property, than invest in a struggling community. In addition, since the fires eliminated

⁵⁰⁷ Castells, *The City and the Grassroots*, 110.

⁵⁰⁸ Ana Montes, "The Mission Redevelopment Plan," *El Tecolote*, February 28, 1975, 3.

⁵⁰⁹ *Basta Ya! The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (San Francisco, CA, Los Siete de la Raza organization, 1970).

low-income properties, they also facilitated redevelopment projects with greater economic potential.⁵¹⁰

The story of BART illustrates the widespread plight of low-income neighborhoods, caught between gentrification and abandonment. In 1966, the federal government passed the Model Cities Act to eliminate inner city decay. San Francisco adopted the program in 1968, with a focus on the Inner Mission and Hunter's Point. Many residents viewed the Model Cities Act with distrust, concerned that redevelopment was a guise to displace low-income people. Efforts to fight displacement coalesced with the formation of the Mission Coalition Organization (MCO), a powerful grassroots effort to bring residents together and speak out against the harmful effects of redevelopment. Castells describes the MCO as "one of the most successful examples of Alinsky-style community movement, showing a remarkable capacity to combine grassroots organization with institutional social reform."⁵¹¹ Though internal divisions gradually emerged, for many, the MCO exemplified how a community could counter City Hall and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. The pervasive threat of displacement politically mobilized Mission activists on many fronts, in both direct and indirect ways.

In spite of the potentially negative implications of the Model Cities Act, the legislation, combined with the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act, offered important funding opportunities for neighborhood improvement. A few of the programs that benefited from new funding opportunities include: Arriba Juntos; Horizons Unlimited, the Mission Rebels, the Mission Hiring Hall; the Mission Language and Vocational

⁵¹⁰ Juan Cruz and G. Roginsky, "Mission Fires: Urban Renewal Made Simple?" *El Tecolote*, April 1977, 1; Peter Claudius and Chris Collins, "Mission Mourns Victor Miller," *New Mission News*, September 2002, 1.

School; the Mission Community Legal Defense; and the Mission Health Neighborhood Centre.⁵¹² Not only did a variety of non-profit organizations begin to appear in the Mission, but they were drawing volunteers from all areas of the city. Many of these community-based programs turned to the arts as a means of reaching Mission youth. Of the Mission Rebels, scholar Jason Ferreira noted, “in three short years the organization managed to involve over 160 paid and unpaid community volunteers to serve as youth counselors or teach a wide variety of classes, such as drama, painting, woodworking, dress-designing, and music.” Similarly, Horizon’s Unlimited enacted Teatro de la Calle, a street theatre program.⁵¹³

The community mural movement crested on this wave of energy. New funding opportunities through the Model Cities Act, the Supplemental Training and Employment Program (STEP), and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973 provided critical financial support, both directly and indirectly. San Francisco, aided by the efforts of John Kreidler and the San Francisco Art Commission, was the first to propose that CETA employ artists in a vein similar to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the 1930s. The city hired the first 24 CETA artists in December 1974 “after a winnowing down from 400 people who applied. When money was freed for more jobs, the Art Commission offices ... were swamped with 1400 applications. Seventy-seven

⁵¹¹ Castells, *The City and The Grassroots*, 109.

⁵¹² Castells, *The City and The Grassroots*, 117; Tom Wolfe famously chronicled the more negative aspects of this flourishing community service movement in *Radical Chic and Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers* (New York: Bantam Books, 1999 (1970)).

⁵¹³ Jason Michael Ferreira, “All Power To the People: A Comparative History of Third World Radicalism in San Francisco, 1968-1974,” (Ph.D. diss., University of California Berkeley, 2003, 188, 197.

people were picked.”⁵¹⁴ In San Francisco, there was no shortage of artists seeking employment.

In addition, many of the emerging nonprofits proved to be mural patrons. Alan Barnett cites the Horizons Unlimited mural as the first community mural in the Mission, painted by Spain Rodriguez, Jesus “Chuy” Campusano, and Bob Cuff.⁵¹⁵ However, in a 1983 interview, local artists Jerry Concha and Rolando Castellón both recalled producing the Mission Rebels mural with Robert Crumb, Ruben Guzman, and Bob Cuff, prior to the Horizons Unlimited mural.⁵¹⁶ Irregardless of which came first, in 1971, the mural movement catapulted into full speed in San Francisco’s Mission District.

While city and federal funding served a basic need, it did not explain the community mural movement. As Patricia Rodriguez stated at the time, “I’m doing exactly what I was doing before, except I’m getting paid for it.”⁵¹⁷ Community murals were happening apart from the financial incentives, reflecting the desire of artists to work in their communities and bring art to the people.

⁵¹⁴ In an informal conversation, Alejandro Murguía stated that Roberto Vargas also was an important force in the plan to make CETA amenable to artists. On CETA, see, Peter Barnes, “Fringe Benefits of a Depression: Bringing Back the WPA,” *The New Republic*, March 15, 1975, 19-21; “The Public Artist Returns,” *Manpower*, October 1975, 18-21; Michael Nolan provided me a copy of the proposal, composed and typed by J.D. Kreidler, “Proposed Artists in Residence Project,” October 17, 1974. Also see the short film, *Art Works*, dir., Optic Nerve (an eight person collective), 1975.

⁵¹⁵ *Community Murals*, 126. Shifra Goldman, in her expansive overview of the California mural movement, also gave the Horizons Unlimited mural the earliest date of creation: Goldman, “How, Why, Where, and When It All Happened: Chicano Murals of California,” in *Signs from the Heart*, 36.

⁵¹⁶ Rolando Castellón, Jerry Concha, Carlos Loarca, and Gustavo Rivera (group interview), San Francisco, CA, October 16, 1983, uncorrected Transcript from Califas Videotape #158-162, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman. Califas Book 5, 18, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA. Rupert Garcia states that Ruben Guzman created the first exterior mural in the summer of 1971, but also notes his participation in a 1967 Latino youth project sponsored by Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes to paint the exterior of a bus. Rupert Garcia, “Chicano-Latino Murals of California, 1963-1970: A Period of Accommodation and Protest,” paper submitted for Peter Selz’s “Art of the 1960s” class, fall 1979-Winter 1980, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto Collection, AAA, Box 10; Garcia, “Commercial Popular Mural Art of the 1960s: An Enduring Mexican Folklore in California,” paper for Chicano Studies and Department of Architecture, UC Berkeley, Ybarra-Frausto Collection, AAA, Box 10.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEXICAN MASTERS: PAINTING 'HOMAGE TO SIQUEÍROS'

“Homage to Siqueiros” captured local attention not just for its powerful appearance, but for its subversiveness. In 1974, the Bank of America commissioned Jesus “Chuy” Campusano, Luis Cortazar, and Michael Rios to create a mural above the bank teller counter of its 23rd and Mission Street branch, seeking to capitalize on the appeal of the mural movement to the local community. As a marketing approach, murals promised a low-cost way of appealing to local consumers: the bank paid the muralists a total of \$15,000-\$18,000 for all related work and supplies.⁵¹⁸ According to a bank official statement from 1974, “For us, the mural is a symbol of our desire to offer the best financial services in the Mission District.”⁵¹⁹

The private commission did not stop the young muralists from attempting to speak out against their sponsor, a company then undergoing considerable public relations difficulties as a prototypical symbol of corporate greed. In 1970, student protestors famously firebombed the Isla Vista Bank of America near UC Santa Barbara because they linked the institution with heightened U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The May 1970 cover of *Ramparts* magazine declared, “The students who burned the Bank of America may have done more toward saving the environment than all the teach-ins put

⁵¹⁷ Barnes, “Bringing Back the WPA,” 20..

⁵¹⁸ Campusano estimated the total payment in Albright, “Three Remarkable Latin Murals.”

⁵¹⁹ Bank of America Mission-23rd Street Office, “Suggested Format for Press Conference,” June 4, 1974. Emmy Lou Packard Papers, Box 7, Bank of America files, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. At the time, banks commissioned murals as a means of securing a new client population. Rupert Garcia notes the Pan American National Bank’s engagement of Mexican muralist José Reyes Meza to produce the “emblematic and conventional” “Our Past, Our Present, and Our Future” in Los Angeles in

together.”⁵²⁰ The high-profile event was instrumental in radicalizing many students, including future members of the Symbionese Liberation Army.⁵²¹ In addition, César Chávez often had criticized the bank for its anti-union activity. For Chavez, the Bank of America was interchangeable with the grape growers, since Robert Di Giorgio of the Di Giorgio Corporation, the largest grower in the Delano area, was also on the board of directors for the Bank of America.⁵²² And just within San Francisco, the new Bank of America downtown highrise had figured in the displacement of many local residents and dramatically – some would say, unfortunately – altered the city’s historic skyline. In fact, the Berkeley branch near UC Berkeley built a brick façade to prevent protestors from regularly breaking its windows. Thus, by the mid-1970s, the Bank of America sought to fortify its physical presence through “anti-riot architecture,” while simultaneously ingratiating itself to the public through more community-oriented interior spaces.⁵²³

1965. Garcia, “Chicano-Latino Murals of California,” 9-10, citing “Meza to Paint Pan American Nat’l Bank Murals,” *Mexican American Sun*, October 14, 1965.

⁵²⁰ On the Isla Vista Riots, see: Malcolm Gault-Williams, *Don't Bank on Amerika: The History of the Isla Vista Riots of 1970* (Santa Barbara, CA: Gault-Williams, 1987); Robert A. Potter and James J. Sullivan, *The Campus by the Sea Where the Bank Burned Down; a Report on the Disturbances at UCSB and Isla Vista, 1968-1970, Submitted to the President's Commission on Campus Unrest at the Request of Joseph Rhodes, Jr.* (Santa Barbara, CA: Faculty and Clergy Observer's Program, 1970). *Ramparts*, May 1970.

⁵²¹ The bank burning was a formative moment for UCSB students Kathleen Soliah (a.k.a. Sara Jane Olson) and James Kilgore, both of whom later joined the radical Symbionese Liberation Army. According to one report, Soliah’s family “traces the onset of her radicalization” to the bank burning. Twila Decker, “Unbroken: When Sara Jane Olson Was Arrested in 1999, it Seemed Her Conversion from SLA Revolutionary to Soccer Mom Was Complete. Not Quite,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 5, 2001, 16.

⁵²² As a child, Cesar Chavez’s family lost their home in a bank foreclosure. Subsequently, as activists, Cesar and Helen Chavez attempted to circumvent the loan policies of banks that refused to loan to farmworkers, “loaning out more than \$5.5 million to farmworker families by the mid-1980s.” See, Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval, *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997), 75, 117, 253; Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (1939; reprint, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 233, 238; Peter Matthiessen, *Sal Si Puedes: Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution*, (1969; reprint, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000) 20.

⁵²³ On the creation of the Bank of America and the anti-highrise movement in San Francisco, see: Chester Hartman, *City for Sale, The Transformation of San Francisco, revised and expanded* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 293; Brian J. Godfrey, “Urban Development and Redevelopment in

Suffice to say, the muralists sought every opportunity to distance the creation and content of their work from the interests of the bank. To justify painting in such an institution, the three artists likened their situation to the experience of Diego Rivera painting a mural in support of labor in San Francisco's Pacific Stock Exchange. Artist Michael Rios remarked, "As Diego Rivera said, if the mural serves the purpose of nourishment and enlightenment, it's OK even if it's hung in the Bank of America."⁵²⁴ In drawing parallels to Rivera and the tradition of "Los Tres Grandes," or "The Big Three" Mexican muralists of an earlier generation, the young men sought to invoke their artistic lineage and ethnic pride, but also to enable their political voice.

The parallels to "Los Tres Grandes" were built into the mural. By dedicating their work to David Alfaro Siqueiros, the men honored the Mexican master painter in the year of his death, as well as cultivated his political and artistic persona. The trio included a portrait of Siqueiros, notably on the far left of the mural, in the prison garb he wore when arrested for participation in a May Day demonstration, thus capturing a quintessential moment of his life speaking out for his beliefs, regardless of the consequences [Fig. 5.3]. The artists drew their work into a larger sphere of cultural relevance by aligning themselves with Siqueiros and the Mexican mural movement. As

San Francisco," *The Geographical Review* 86, July 1997, 309-334; Bruce Brugmann and Greggar Sletteland, eds., *The Ultimate Highrise: San Francisco's Mad Rush Toward the Sky* (San Francisco: San Francisco Bay Guardian, 1971), 194, 217-218. In Berkeley, the Bank of America had moved into the Berkeley Bank Building, first established in 1908. According to Harvey Helfand, "That brick-faced neoclassical building stood until 1971, when the site was developed for the present Bank of America building." *The Campus Guides: University of California Berkeley* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), 319. As J. William T. Youngs observes, "At the time, the Bank of America was a favorite target, and its tall windows were broken more than once. Finally, the bank replaced the windows with a brick façade." See, <http://www.narhist.ewu.edu/ar/berkeley/photos/test.html>, accessed on July 1, 2005.

⁵²⁴ Jesus Campusano, Michael Rios, and Luis Cortazar, "Tres Muralistas," 1974. [Interview pamphlet given to the public at mural opening. My appreciation to Michael Nolan for a copy of this document.

Desmond Rochfort notes of the mural tradition, “As a public art, one of whose principal aims was to represent a notion of democratic cultural enfranchisement, the murals became a vital part of the patina of Mexican civic and national life for huge sections of the Mexican people.”⁵²⁵ By invoking the grandeur and politics of the Mexican muralists, the American artists asserted their ability to communicate directly with the people, regardless of the commercial interests of their sponsor.

The trio’s public alignment with the tradition of “Los Tres Grandes” helped them skirt the bank’s attempts at censorship. In this regard, they were aided by local resident artist Emmy Lou Packard, who not only gave the group technical and aesthetic advice, based on her experience as an assistant to Diego Rivera, but also had the wherewithal to convince the bank of their right to freedom of expression as artists. Emmy Lou Packard had moved her studio to the Mission from Mendocino, California, the year before, seeking a return to city life. The move led one reporter to remark, “Miss Packard is one

Michael Nolan was the uncredited interviewer of the three muralists. Excerpts also were printed in *El Tecolote*, June 10, 1974.]

⁵²⁵ Desmond Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros* (Mexico City, Mexico: Laurence King Publishing, 1993), 7; Laurence P. Hurlburt, *The Mexican Muralists in the United States* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1989); Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*, 87-117; and Lizetta Lefalle-Collins and Shifra Goldman, *In the Spirit of Resistance: African-American Modernists and the Mexican Muralist School* (New York: American Federation of Arts / Studio Museum in Harlem, 1996).



Fig. 5.3: “Homage to Siqueiros” far left panel detail. Siqueiros is depicted in the pinstripe / prison garb holding the symbol of atomic energy. The children along the right are in line to board school busses.



Fig. 5.4: “Homage to Siqueiros” middle panel detail. The image shows a caged Pancho Villa next to an Andean musician. The building in the background is Mission High School.

of dozens of artists and photographers who are moving to the Mission.”⁵²⁶ Mission artists welcomed Packard as a local conduit to Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo and sought to include her in the community. She recalled, “a group of young Latin American painters came to me because they heard I had worked with Rivera, and they are back into socially conscious painting again ... it’s kind of funny that now the young kids in their 20’s are doing exactly what I was doing in my 30’s!”⁵²⁷ Packard’s involvement served as a direct tie to Rivera and Kahlo. Campusano expressed his gratitude to Emmy Lou Packard publicly, stating, “she argued strongly with the Bank about our civil rights as artists to express what we wanted.”⁵²⁸ The bank expressed its appreciation more privately, in a letter from the bank’s Public Information Officer, who thanked Packard for her “calming influence when unnecessary and illogical strife seemed to be brewing.”⁵²⁹ Packard provided a voice of sophisticated experience that ensured the success of the project.

Packard also represented an ideological link to the progressive activism of an earlier generation, as a long-time peace and First Amendment activist. In 1957, Packard was one of 50 Bay Area artists subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee as a result of her reputation for supporting “radical” causes and producing

⁵²⁶ Eloise Dungan, “Drawn Back to the City,” *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*, April 1, 1973, 6.

⁵²⁷ Joan McKinney, “An Artist with a Mission,” *Oakland Tribune*, clipping, no date, in Emmy Lou Packard papers, Box 8, printed material, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution [AAA].

⁵²⁸ Campusano, et al, “Tres Muralistas”; on Packard, see, Pat Pfeiffer, “Emmy Lou Packard’s Palette of Paints and Politics,” *California Living*, *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, May 2, 1982, 26; and Geri DePaoli, *Emmy Lou Packard, 1914-1998* (Davis, CA: John Natsoulas Gallery, 1998).

⁵²⁹ John W. Wood, Letter to Emmy Lou Packard, July 8, 1974, Emmy Lou Packard papers, Box 7, Bank of America files, AAA.

politically-oriented art work.⁵³⁰ When Packard assisted the trio of Campusano, Rios, and Cortazar with “Homage to Siqueiros,” she not only parlayed her knowledge of the Mexican muralist tradition, but her experience as an organizer of the Left. The project initiated a long-lasting friendship and intellectual exchange between Packard and chief mural designer Campusano, until his unexpected death in 1997 at the age of 52. Packard died the next year just shy of her eighty-fifth birthday. Though a generation apart, the two maintained a close friendship. Packard served as an ardent supporter of Campusano, arranging his introductions to Mexican muralists Juan O’Gorman and Pablo O’Higgins, as well as to César Chávez, whom she knew as a result of her work for the United Farm Workers.⁵³¹ In turn, Campusano invited Packard to participate in the contemporary Mission District scene, leading to her work with local venues like Galería de la Raza and the Mexican Museum.⁵³² Their relationship is indicative of the many ideological links that emanated between the Old Left and the New Left.⁵³³ The appropriation of the Mexican muralist tradition was not simply about ethnic identity, but about the cultivation of a specific set of politics. The work of “Homage to Siqueiros” is only one instance of how cultural workers in San Francisco’s Mission District were not only attempting to

⁵³⁰ Emmy Lou Packard, “KPFA Radio Transcript: Emmy Lou Packard Interview Conducted by Lewis Hill,” June 13, 1957, Emmy Lou Packard Papers, Box 5, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; and Pat Pfeiffer, “Emmy Lou Packard’s Palette of Paints and Politics,” *California Living: San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, May 2, 1982, 26-33.

⁵³¹ Emmy Lou Packard, Letter to Helen O’Gorman, August 12, 1974; and Letter to Pablo and Maria O’Higgins, August 20, 1974, both in the Emmy Lou Packard Papers, Box 5, Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo files (13/80), Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

⁵³² Campusano’s name appeared regularly in Packard’s later calendars, often in relation to Mission District events: Emmy Lou Packard, Notebook/Diaries 12-23, 1983-85, Emmy Lou Packard Papers, Box 4, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

⁵³³ Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front* (New York: Verso, 1998).

generate a shared ethnic identity as Latinos, but also a shared political vision to alter systemic poverty, racism, and blind capitalism.

So for the mural opening, while the bank branch released marketing materials designed to highlight its community involvement, inviting people to the mural's unveiling to win Giants tickets or a trip to Latin America, the muralists responded with their own media campaign, printing a "Tres Muralistas" pamphlet hostile to the bank, refuting any representation of their work as supportive of the institution, and organizing an opening ceremony that would be sure to undermine the wishes of local bank officials. The artists invited their friend Roberto Vargas to read a poem for the opening reception on June 4, 1974. Vargas had a high profile in the community as the director of the Neighborhood Arts Program and as a strident activist for local needs. More diatribe than verse, Vargas entitled his work, "La BoA," which conflated the bank's acronym with the name of a snake and featured bank founder A.P. Giannini as the character "A.P.G.O. Money." Bank officials stepped in and managed to prevent a public reading of "La BoA." Instead, as a compromise, Vargas read "They Blamed it on Reds," an indictment of the San Francisco police for their alleged murder of Vicente Gutierrez, which did not lack in hostility, but at least minimized the evil casting of the bank. Nevertheless, neighborhood residents had an opportunity to read the text of "La BoA" in the local paper, which published the text alongside an article describing the radical antics of the muralists.⁵³⁴

About the bank, artist Chuy Campusano stated, "We all know they support the grape and lettuce growers in California and that they're involved in Latin America. I

didn't do the mural for them. I did it for all those people in the Mission who stand on the long lines in the bank on Friday afternoon."⁵³⁵ Indeed, the central figure of the mural depicts an agricultural worker extending his exaggerated fist at the viewer, as another man opens a text to César Chávez's statement, "Our sweat and our blood have fallen on this land to make other men rich" [Fig. 5.6]. The Bank was not immune to the indictment. Indeed, in the bank's promotional materials, the text was erased. Despite these minor acts of censorship, the bank used the mural to illustrate its exceptional tolerance and support of freedom of expression. One reporter declared that the presence of the mural "is proof in itself that the \$41.8 billion-deposit bank did not attempt to limit the artists' vision or censor the subject matter."⁵³⁶ The bank's posturing is part of the reason the statement has survived intact on the mural to this day. Eva Cockcroft also made the point that the mural has served "as a sort of fire insurance for the branch."⁵³⁷ Ultimately, the muralists and Emmy Lou Packard successfully protected the work from its patron by placing it in a grand tradition of political art.

INVENTING 'LATINO AMERICA'

Simultaneously, just a few blocks down Mission Street, another mural project was underway. The mural "Latino America" drew attention because of the gender of its

⁵³⁴ Roberto Vargas, "La BoA," *El Tecolote*, June 10, 1974, 11.

⁵³⁵ Campusano et al., "Tres Muralistas," 1974.

⁵³⁶ Geoff Brouillette, "Subjects in Mural at BofA Branch Reflect Free Reign Given Spanish-Speaking Artists," *American Banker*, June 7, 1974.

⁵³⁷ Cockcroft, *Toward a People's Art*, 230.



Fig. 5.5: “Homage to Siqueiros” detail shows Mission High School graduates.



Fig. 5.6: “Homage to Siqueiros” center detail. Text in the open book quotes Cesar Chavez’s statement, “Our sweat and our blood have fallen on this land to make other men rich.”



Fig. 5.7: Right panel detail, "Homage to Siqueiros." Ruben Dario sits in a cage in a separate sphere from the birth of an infant.



Fig. 5.8: "Homage to Siqueiros," far right panel detail. A BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) train swoops down from above next to two artists sketching a black and white cartoon with another image of Siqueiros holding the atomic symbol.

artists and the large scale of the work. The mural used the talents of eight women, composed of four lead artists – Patricia Rodriguez, Graciela Carrillo, Consuelo Mendez, and Irene Perez – and four assistants – Tuti Rodriguez, Miriam Olivas, Xochitl Nevel-Guerrero, and Ester Hernandez – to paint a seventy-foot long by twenty-five feet high wall. While many women artists, including the lead artists of this mural, had contributed to various mural projects in the neighborhood, the group was unusual in using *only* women artists, leading to the adoption of their group name, “Las Mujeres Muralistas” (“The Women Muralists”). According to Estér Hernández, “People were really shocked that a group of women were going to do the whole thing, from setting up scaffolds to doing the drawings to doing cartoons.”⁵³⁸ The end result was a stunning mural that disproved the long-standing stereotype that mural painting, especially Chicano mural painting, was a practice best performed by men. Indeed, their success opened doors and inspired many other women to pursue the art form, both locally and nationally. For example, Susan Cervantes, founder of Precita Eyes Mural Arts organization, saw the Mujeres Muralistas paint “Latino America,” and recalls the moment as “an inspiration to me because I saw how they worked – collaborated, together. And I thought that it was a really, really good way to work with a group.”⁵³⁹

The artists held an inauguration party for the mural on May 31, 1974, four days prior to the opening of “Homage to Siqueiros.” A poster invited local residents to enjoy

⁵³⁸ Quoted in, Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 213.

⁵³⁹ Susan Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 23, 2003.

music and food in honor of the work's completion.⁵⁴⁰ Like the men, the women passed out a political statement to contextualize their work, though much briefer. Signed by Graciela Carrillo, Consuelo Mendez, Irene Perez, and Patricia Rodríguez, the statement made clear that the mural was not merely a feminist vision in content, but in creation. They declared, "Throughout history there have been very few women who have figured in art. What you see before your eyes is proof that woman, too, can work at this level. That we can put together scaffolding and climb it." Though this statement was in many ways equally militant to the men's, all of the articles reporting on the new mural dismissed any radicalism and instead focused on their more harmonious emphasis on collective creation. Much quoted or paraphrased was their statement declaring, "We are four women who are working. All the work that you see before your eyes was done collectively. We feel this work is really important because it takes art beyond the level of individualism."⁵⁴¹ The Mujeres Muralistas gravitated to an approach and a public posture that emphasized women's superior collaborative skills.

The emphasis on collaboration is partly to reject their experience working with men. As Patricia Rodriguez recalled, "for the record, it wasn't negative in the sense that the men blocked us or they didn't let us do anything. It's just that they didn't accept us to work with them...." While the men also collaborated on their work, the women felt they did not have a substantial voice, leading the women to seek independent projects and ensure that the artistic visions of *all* participants were integrated equally. For Rodriguez,

⁵⁴⁰ Mujeres Muralistas "Latino America" Inauguration Poster, May 31, 1974. [I am grateful to René Yañez for a copy of this poster.]

⁵⁴¹ Mujeres Muralistas Statement, May 31, 1974, Emmy Lou Packard papers, Box 7, Bank of America files, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

describing the relationship among the four lead artists, “There was no leader; there was no director.”⁵⁴² Not only was this a dramatically different experience from attempting to work with men, but the collaborative technique also helped kindle a different direction in terms of the content and ideologies of their work.

While the men sought to pay homage to the male Mexican muralists of the past, the women argued for an entirely new vision. Rodriguez stated, “We didn’t want to give any more credit to the Mexican painters. We were the new cadres of painters, right after Rivera. We were those people. Therefore, we had to come up with something new. And so, this mural historically is one of the most important in that sense because we break that trend for the first time in history. We say, ‘We live here, we’re two cultures. We’re an American culture and a Latino culture.’”⁵⁴³

This sentiment was partly embodied in the original title of the work, “Latino America,” a title also lost to the past. While the mural’s inaugural poster and statement refer to the work as “Latino America,” scholars of the work never use this title, instead relying on the names “Latinoamérica” or “Panamerica.”⁵⁴⁴ The various labels are not necessarily symbolic of a mass error, but rather, indicative of how alternative names

⁵⁴² Patricia Rodriguez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 27, 2003.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁴ Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez titled a reproduction of the work “Latinoamérica,” alongside an essay by Amalia Mesa-Bains, in *Signs from the Heart*, 73. Shifra Goldman referred to the work as the “Panamerica” mural, (Goldman, 1994, 213), as did the “Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation” (CARA) Exhibition: Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa McKenna, Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, eds., *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985* (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991). Patricia Rodriguez has used the title “Panamerica” in conversation (Rodriguez, interview by author, 2003). Tim Drescher used the name “Latinoamerica” without the accent (Drescher, *San Francisco Murals*, 22), as did María Ochoa; María Ochoa, *Creative Collectives: Chicana Painters Working in Community* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 10; while Terezita Romo used “Latinoamérica”; Terezita Romo, “A Collective History: Las Mujeres Muralistas.” in *Art / Women / California: Parallels and Intersections, 1950-2000*, eds., Diana Burgess Fuller and Daniela Salvioni (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 177-186 (177).

gained more acceptance than the original. The most pervasive title, “Latinoamérica,” is the official Spanish term for Latin America, and, as a result, suggests the painting’s focus is most directed toward depicting the countries comprising Latin America. Alternatively, “Panamerica” suggests more of a hemispheric unity, encompassing North and South America. However, “Latino America” without the accent maximizes the double meaning of the work, suggesting how Latinos in the United States are reinventing America as a nation, as well as articulating a larger kinship to the Américas.

Both “Latino America” and “Homage to Siqueiros” sought to elaborate this bicultural vision, to explore the complexities of multi-ethnic identities, and to elicit some sense of community unity, in the face of larger, crippling socio-economic forces. The forces behind the creation of the murals underscore the struggle of artists to develop both a new and old iconography. For the men crafting “Homage to Siqueiros,” nothing could be more relevant than turning to the Mexican masters of the past. However, for the women painting “Latino America,” nothing was more important than turning away from that past.

Ironically, rejecting patriarchal structures did not register as militancy. While critics recognized the efforts of “Las Mujeres Muralistas” as groundbreaking for women, they also suggested their works did not necessarily serve the political agenda as much as that of their male counterparts.⁵⁴⁵ Undoubtedly, the strident voices of the men, both within the mural and at the opening, had set forth a passionate example. However, the Mujeres Muralistas emphasized their capacity to offer a less violent voice. They stated

⁵⁴⁵ Many sources indicate the works were criticized for being apolitical (i.e., Quintero, “A Mural is a Painting on a Wall”). However, little is printed that actually describes the work as apolitical.

that they “had decided that the men’s murals of the time had too much ‘blood and guts’ and that they wanted a more positive image of their culture.”⁵⁴⁶ As a result, readings of their work have frequently revolved around the same themes, typically describing their work as one that evokes “a pan-American aesthetic where highly visible images of women and emphasis on ceremony, celebration, caretaking, harvest and a continental terrain worked toward the creation of a new mythology.”⁵⁴⁷ While this reading has merit, it is also a somewhat myopic view. The comments track the work of women muralists into traditionally feminine and supposedly apolitical terrain – leaving the political realm to men. In fact, their work was not at all escapist of political content, but grounded in the overriding political discourses that were shaping the community’s identity.

A CLOSER LOOK: ‘LATINO AMERICA’

“Latino America” is a complex collage of ideas, not simply paying tribute to motherhood or indigenous roots, but also invoking ideas about race, gender, and political power. That it is no longer in existence is both a testament to the transitory nature of murals, but also to the public’s failure to recognize a culturally significant historical text. Today, the former home of “Latino America,” which was the Mission Model Cities office, is now a local laundromat with a cream-colored wall that betrays nothing of the hot colors that once flashed on its surface. In contrast, the bank now values “Homage to

⁵⁴⁶ Goldman, “How, Why, Where, and When,” 40.

⁵⁴⁷ Amalia Mesa-Bains, “Quest for Identity: Profile of Two Chicana Muralists, Based on Interviews with Judith F. Baca and Patricia Rodríguez,” in *Signs from the Heart*, 76.

Siqueiros” at well over a million dollars. While the different valuations may stem from the failure to take women’s work seriously, the physical location also was an important factor.

Like any outdoor mural, “Latino America” suffered environmental decay and was prone to the preferences of changing property owners. A similar erasure befell Chuy Campusano’s “Lilli Ann” mural (1982), an abstract montage that alluded to the building’s history as the Lilli Ann garment factory. In 1998, new owners of the Seventeenth and Harrison building did not hesitate in their decision to whitewash the mural, likely unaware of the million-dollar value attributed to Campusano’s Bank of America mural.⁵⁴⁸ Their action is indicative of the widespread presumption that outdoor murals are expendable. However, the destruction of the “Lilli Ann” mural provoked anger in the community and sparked a landmark case for California’s exterior murals: the Campusano family sued the property owners and won \$200,000 in damages under the 1979 California Art Preservation Act.⁵⁴⁹ The “Lilli Ann” suit showed how legislation was available to protect exterior murals, but successful cases required extensive community and financial support. The loss of “Latino America” roused no such attention. Rodriguez later remarked, “It must have been in the late ‘80s. It was just gone. And we couldn’t get anybody in the city to support it.”⁵⁵⁰

In creating “Latino America,” the artists sought to make the wall visually appeal to various segments of the Mission’s Latin American community. Muralists often seek to

⁵⁴⁸ Ray Delgado, “Sprightly Mission Mural Now Just a Wall: ‘Lilli Ann’ Work Whitewashed With No Warning,” *San Francisco Examiner*, August 7, 1998, A6.

⁵⁴⁹ Campusano, Et Al. v. Robert J. Cort Trust. 1998. San Francisco, CA: C-98-3001-MJJ. [“The Lilli Ann Mural Case.”]

include signifiers in their work that evoke special meaning for local residents, but that might otherwise go unnoticed among the general public. In the mural from left to right, the viewer's eyes shift from llamas native to the Andes, Peruvian pipe players [Fig. 5.9], a group of Venezuelan Yare devils [Fig. 5.10], the central holy image of a family in an Indian sun design, a tititui bird native to the Patanal of Brazil [Fig. 5.11], a group of American youth [Fig. 5.12], a Bolivian diablada figure [Fig. 5.13], and an Aztec fifth sun casting its light on a princess and warrior figure [Fig. 5.14]. The bottom of the mural is framed by a host of maguey plants and cornstalks. Patricia Rodriguez explains, "Irene Pérez painted the magueys and the maize. Graciela Carrillo painted Guatemala. Consuelo Mendez painted the center of the mural, which is a family unit, and Venezuela. I painted Bolivia and Peru."⁵⁵¹

The emphasis is entirely on the indigenous or mestizo heritage of Latin America, and as a result, it not only reminds local residents of their homelands, but also celebrates the survival of various cultures in spite of Spanish colonialism. Ultimately, this emphasis creates a parallel between the peasant or Indian classes in Latin America and the inner city poor in America. The parallel is drawn even more distinctly in the area framing local Mission District youth [Fig. 5.12]: the youth appear in color, but the surrounding area is black and white, entirely and purposefully drained of color. The scene is a nod to the stylistics of newsreel footage, as well as an allusion to the popular comics-style of many

⁵⁵⁰ Rodriguez interview by author, March 27, 2003.

⁵⁵¹ Patricia Rodriguez, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun, Contemporary/Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977), 14.



Fig. 5.9: “Latino America” detail showing Andean musicians of Peru. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.



Fig. 5.10: “Latino America” detail showing Venezuelan devils. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.



Fig. 5.11: "Latino America" detail showing Venezuelan devils and family unit framed in a zia sun symbol. The tititui bird is along the bottom edge. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.



Fig. 5.12: "Latino America" detail showing youth of the Mission. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.



Fig. 5.13: “Latino America” detail showing Bolivian supay figure. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.



Fig. 5.14: “Latino America” detail, referencing the Aztecs and the indigenous people of Guatemala. Photograph by Patricia Rodriguez, used with permission.

murals in the Mission at that time.⁵⁵² However, the empty whiteness also suggests the American urban dehumanization Latinos must prevent through the cultivation of their indigenous past. The emphasis on maintaining cultural traditions is part of an overriding dynamic in Mission murals against assimilation. The message is relevant as part of an attempt to form a community identity apart, and even opposed, to the black-and-white “American” life. Moreover, such an image suggests an attempt to break through the traditional black and white binary that has dominated the dialogue of race relations in America. Instead, the multi-ethnic youth depicted in the forefront is more indicative of America’s complexity and more accurately reflective of the Mission’s demographic diversity.

The artists’ attempts to represent a plurality of identities was akin to the actions of community activists, who sought to build solidarity in the Mission by linking diverse groups under the rubric of “Third World” coalitions. The term “Third World” already had an extensive history in San Francisco as the means of generating cross-cultural political action among people of Asian, African, Indigenous, or Latin American descent. From the “Third World Liberation Front,” to the “Third World Strike,” to the “Third World Communications” publishing collective, to the “Other Sources” bicentennial exhibition, the term had become well established in the rhetoric of community organizing.⁵⁵³ That the artists of “Latino America,” sought to depict visually the close

⁵⁵² San Francisco was a center for underground comix in the 1960s (“comix” is used to identify an underground or alternative genre of comics). Local artists, such as Manuel “Spain” Rodriguez, Michael Rios, and Robert Crumb, encouraged murals in the comix style with their influential murals for Horizons Unlimited and the Mission Rebels: Drescher, *San Francisco Murals*, 19; Sepideh Ghadishah, “Strip Shows,” *Métier*, Summer 1987, 7.

⁵⁵³ See chapter four.

ties between Latin American and African culture, abroad and at home, is indicative of their participation in ongoing “Third World” community dialogues. For instance, images of various devil figures link the indigenous and African cultures of Latin America. In particular, the towering red figure wears a snake-adorned devil’s mask and intricate costume traditional to the “supay” figures of carnival in Oruro, Bolivia [Fig. 5.13]. His appearance is indicative of the diablada, or devil’s dance, which scholars most commonly locate emerging out of the culture of enslaved indigenous and African miners, following the Spanish conquest. The devils on the left, with colorfully painted masks and bright red costumes, embody the image of Venezuelan Yare devils, which are part of the yearly Feast of Corpus Christi [Fig. 5.10]. Though Venezuela’s “dancing devils” celebration bears similarly vague origins to Oruro’s diablada, its indebtedness to African culture, in addition to indigenous and Spanish cultures, is widely acknowledged.⁵⁵⁴

Both the Bolivian and Venezuelan devil figures flank the mural’s central family-sun image and serve as representations of a rich, if oppressed, cultural heritage, not just for people of African descent in Latin America, but for all of Latin America and its Diaspora. Similarly, the Aztec figures on the far right and the Peruvian musicians on the far left serve as iconographic references to Latin America’s indigenous roots, as well

⁵⁵⁴ Cynthia Lecount’s article, “Carnival in Bolivia: Devils Dancing for the Virgin,” provides a useful discussion of the history of the diablada in Oruro: *Western Folklore* 58 (3/4), 1999: 231-52. Julia Elena Fortun also discusses the devil dance, as well as argues for the importance of the morenada dance as an expression of African culture in Bolivia. Julia Elena Fortun, *La Danza de los Diablos* (La Paz: Ministerio de Educacion y Bellas Artes, Oficialia Mayor de Cultural Nacional, 1961). For a discussion of the Africanist presence in carnival, the work of Daniel Crowley is helpful: Daniel Crowley, *African Myth and Black Reality in Bahian Carnival* (Los Angeles, CA: Museum of Cultural History, UCLA, 1984). In addition, just prior to his death, Crowley submitted a conference abstract to argue for the importance of African culture in the Bolivian carnival, not just within the Morenada dance, but in the entirety of the event: Daniel Crowley, “The Sacred and the Profane in African and African-derived Carnivals,” *Western Folklore* 58 (3/4), 1999: 223-228. Luis Arturo Dominguez provides a general overview of the celebration:

as lend support to the need for building community organizing between Latinos and Native Americans in the United States. In the 1970s, the Mission was an important site for American Indian community organizing, not just serving as a common residential address, but offering important meeting places, like the American Indian Center and Warren's Bar.⁵⁵⁵ The muralists sought to invoke their diverse indigenous heritage to align themselves with the concerns of American Indians and the larger Third World community. The use of the zia, or Navajo sun/star image, in the center of the mural, was indicative of this linkage.⁵⁵⁶ In representing the African and Indian roots of Latin America, the mural visually articulated the need for recognizing the shared concerns of African American, Native American, and Latino residents in the United States.

Ultimately, the iconography of the painting represents far more than a feminist domesticity, although this element is still pivotal. The center of the painting is a glorified image of a family with a woman holding her children, who is soon to give birth to the fetus image superimposed on her belly. The superior placement of the family in a saint-like frame accords with traditional readings of the work. As a whole, the mural replicates the cycle of life with the sun giving life to the plants, which in turn feed the people, who then give birth to the next generation.⁵⁵⁷ These themes are readily apparent.

However, the work might not be as strictly female oriented as most surface readings suggest. While the mother figure bears the central position of power, she is

Dominguez, *Diablos Danzantes en San Francisco de Yare* (Los Teques, Venezuela: Biblioteca de Autores y Temas Mirandinos, 1984).

⁵⁵⁵ Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: Griffin, 1993), 100.

⁵⁵⁶ Ochoa, *Creative Collectives*, 49.

⁵⁵⁷ Rodriguez interview by author, March 27, 2003.

flanked by the male devil figures.⁵⁵⁸ The red clothing and animal masks distinguish the Venezuelan devils on the left from the ornately costumed Bolivian supay on the right. Along with the prominent placement of male figures, there is a certain heralding of male sexuality, most evocatively suggested by the Bolivian diablada's position next to an exterior red pump that is strikingly phallic [Fig. 5.13]. Patricia Rodriguez has pointed out that she painted the supay figure at the height of the 1970s gas crisis, and in fact, the devil's *trompe l'oeil* emergence out of the gas pump is to convey her criticism of the nation's increasing reliance on oil.⁵⁵⁹ Thus, the mural is just as much an indictment of U.S. consumption, as it is a representation of family and harvest.

The Mujeres Muralistas did not choose to heighten this political aspect of their painting, perhaps in part because street murals often steer away from explicit controversy, so as not to provoke vandals.⁵⁶⁰ In fact, painting in the streets forced the women to produce a less obviously political work than the men painting in a private corporate institution. However, viewers perceived this difference more as a product of gender than physical context.

The women also sought to represent solidarity with their viewers. According to the Mujeres Muralistas, "A lot of people have told us that our work is pretty and colorful, but that it is not political enough. They ask us why we don't represent the starvation and death going on in Latin America or even the oppression of women ... Our interest as

⁵⁵⁸ Alternatively, María Ochoa has argued for the many unintentionally androgynous figures featured in the work, specifically pointing to the figures in the zia and the masked devil figures: Ochoa, *Creative Collectives*, 50.

⁵⁵⁹ Rodriguez interview by author, March 27, 2003; Romo, "A Collective History," 182

⁵⁶⁰ Exterior community murals, like any public art, must accord with the surrounding community, or face possibly destructive consequences. See, Cockcroft, *Toward a People's Art*; Barnett, *Community Murals*.

artists is to put art close to where it needs to be. Close to the children, close to the old people who often wander the streets alone, close to everyone who has to walk or ride the buses to get to places.”⁵⁶¹ Such representations laid claim to positive images as a means of reaching out to the community, but also obscured the many implicit political images of the mural.

Patronage also played an important and entirely ignored role in the subject matter of the *Mujeres Muralistas*. In a 1982 interview, Patricia Rodriguez recalled that it was the director of Mission Model Cities who said, “You can do anything on the wall except we don’t want blood or guts or revolutionary guns.”⁵⁶² The women welcomed the director’s request, since his wishes aligned with their own ideals of expression. However, the decision not to “represent the starvation and death going on in Latin America” was not just based on gendered interests, but on the command of their patron.⁵⁶³

A CLOSER LOOK: ‘HOMAGE TO SIQUEÍROS’

While the women faced the gendered criticism of producing apolitical work, the men walked the line of being too didactic or strident at the expense of an avant-garde aesthetic. Throughout the work, the artists balanced images of terror, greed, and technological destruction with representations of indignism, family, and heroic men.

⁵⁶¹ Quintero, “A Mural is a Painting on a Wall.”

⁵⁶² Patricia Rodriguez, Califas interview: Uncorrected Transcript from Califas Videotape #58-61, Transcribed by Carlos Palado, Califas Conference, Book 2, 1982, 6.

⁵⁶³ Quintero, “A Mural is a Painting on a Wall.”

The painting is undeniably male-centric in its portrayals. However, little exists to convey the more nuanced meaning of their subject matter, or the complexity of their iconography and ideology. A close reading of the mural unveils the many political stances the muralists wished to articulate for the sake of Mission District residents and Third World people everywhere.

In reading the work from left to right, the muralists began with a devilish being, easily suggestive of a capitalist pig, who on one side reaches out his imperialist talons towards a prone, pregnant mother – a likely mother earth. The devil's left arm wraps around the shoulders of another man – Siqueiros, in a suit jacket of black and white convict stripes, who holds Bohr's symbol of atomic energy aloft in his left hand [Fig. 5.3]. For emphasis, the artists duplicated this scene on the far right corner of the mural, by depicting themselves sketching the devil and Siqueiros, again with the atom in hand [Fig. 5.8]. The repetition of the atomic symbol suggests a reference to Siqueiros' mural, "The Resurrection of Cuauhtemoc," painted in 1950 in the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City. The work evolved from a series of murals that Siqueiros designed about Cuauhtemoc, the Aztec prince who led the resistance against the Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortez. Of the painting, Siqueiros stated:

... I presented Cuauhtemoc in armour to signify that Mexico, and in general weak peoples, should take up arms in order to bring down their enslavers and executioners. I employed the centaur ... to symbolize the conquistador as the conqueror and destroyer of cultures. The centaur raises in his hand the symbol of the atomic bomb to represent the form of massacre employed today.⁵⁶⁴

For Campusano, Rios, and Cortazar, the parallel between Cuauhtemoc fighting the conquistadors and themselves fighting American cultural and political imperialism would have proved an easy comparison. The artists inserted Siqueiros as their contemporary hero and spokesperson, dressing him in a business suit, much like Cuauhtemoc appeared in Spanish armor. A touch of humor is implicit in the conflation between the suit's pin stripes or prison stripes, bespeaking the difficulty of differentiating good from evil, or respectability from criminality. Siqueiros holds the atom in his hand as the ultimate power, representing the power to kill, but also the power of restraint. Correspondingly, the devil figure, perhaps an American banker or politico, becomes the contemporary conquistador, sacrificing culture for financial and technological gain.

Though the mural's depictions of technology can be read as celebratory – an effort to please the bank, perhaps – close readers will recognize the mural's ultimately grim view of technology. Moving in from the duplicate scenes of Siqueiros, the artists included an image of schoolchildren boarding a bus on the left hand side counterbalanced by a BART train on the right hand side. Seemingly innocuous, the bus represented the controversial integration of local schools at that time by busing students.⁵⁶⁵ Similarly, while the image of BART, the area's new subway system, can be represented as a technological achievement, the serpent-like representation, about to run over the people of the Mission, is more likely the intent [Fig. 5.8]. One of the artists, Michael Rios, shortly thereafter painted another mural representing BART, showing people forced to carry the burden of the train on their shoulders. As a result, technology, for the Mission

⁵⁶⁴ Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists*, 192; includes partial interview with Siqueiros originally published in *El Tiempo*, Mexico City, August 31, 1951.

District, generally meant an increase in the division between rich and poor, or displacement. While the artists appeared to cater to the tastes of the bank, residents could easily read the more contentious attitudes present in the iconography.

The artists sought not just to be critical, but instructive for their viewers. As part of the counterbalancing in the mural, the artists introduced two larger than life portraits of Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata and Nicaraguan poet Ruben Dario. Through these two portraits, the artists articulated the need for political action and cultural expression to work together in the struggle for human rights. Both men are imprisoned in scaffolding, akin to a 1930s San Francisco Art Institute mural by Diego Rivera, “The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City.” In the Rivera mural, also known as “Workers in Control of Production,” the central figure is an immense male laborer with a red star pinned to his chest. The red star as the symbol of revolution and socialism makes Rivera’s political attitudes obvious, and the trio’s homage to the famous mural then indicates their political stance without having to fight the bank to include a red star. That the trio did encounter some censorship in the content of their mural is indicated by the panel of microscopic images to the right of the portrait of Ruben Dario [Fig. 5.7]. The cells suggest an homage to another Rivera work, since his Detroit and Rockefeller Center murals contained microscopic images with discrete political symbols, including a hammer and sickle.⁵⁶⁶ In “Homage to Siqueiros,” local legend says the top cell originally contained the seven-headed serpent symbol of the Symbionese Liberation Army, a radical

⁵⁶⁵ Barnett, *Community Murals*, 144

⁵⁶⁶ Hurlburt, *The Mexican Muralists in the United States*, 163.

militant organization dedicated to redistributing wealth. Today, however, the top cell is painted white.⁵⁶⁷

Between the Zapata and Dario figures is the most powerful image in the mural, a man holding a book open to César Chávez's statement, "Our sweat and our blood have fallen on this land to make other men rich"⁵⁶⁸ [Fig. 5.6]. The phrase hovers over a Christ figure crucified on the ground, a symbol of the martyrdom of the common people to the wealthy. It is through the image of the crucifixion that the three artists make their most visible homage to David Alfaro Siqueiros, by introducing a blatant allusion to his famously censored mural, "Tropical America." In 1932, Siqueiros was invited to paint a work above Los Angeles's Olvera Street, which his sponsors hoped would echo the paradisaical tropicalization of the landscape they were attempting to create, envisioning a vibrant shopping mecca full of piñatas and maracas. Instead, Siqueiros painted symbols of oppression and colonialism, culminating in his image of a crucified Indian suspended by the talons of an American eagle. While the sponsors attempted to whitewash the work, over the years, the image began to show through, seemingly voicing its resistance to censorship and emerging as a symbol of the continuing struggle. In alluding to the famous image, the men were able to make their homage to Siqueiros complete.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ A conversation with a bank manager tipped me to this story in May 2003, stating he believed the cell originally contained a symbol of the Symbionese Liberation Army. In a telephone conversation with Michael Rios on December 3, 2003, Rios suggested the story might be true, even suggesting that the cell might have contained a "seven-headed serpent" image, but he did not wish to confirm or deny the accuracy of the story one way or the other.

⁵⁶⁸ César Chávez, "Plan of Delano," 1966, cited in: Barnett, *Community Murals*, 141. Full text: *The Words of César Chávez*, eds., Richard J. Jensen and John C. Hammerback (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002) 16-20.

⁵⁶⁹ Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*, 87-100. Conceivably, the muralists also were echoing another painting by Siqueiros, his "Por Una Seguridad Completa Para Todos los Mexicanos" ("For the Complete Security of all Mexicans"), 1952-54, in the Hospital de la Raza. The mural features a man issuing from a

While “Latino America” clearly emerged from a collective feminist consciousness, “Homage to Siqueiros” is the work of three men, one of whom later stated, “I’m sorry we didn’t put more women characters in the mural. We’ve received some criticism from our sisters for that. But we are learning.”⁵⁷⁰ While the work shows men only in social positions of power, from the devil banker to the heroic agricultural worker, women also have visible and relevant, if circumscribed, roles. Just as “Latino America” is not purely feminist – indeed, I would argue it is more humanist, creating images of power for women and men – neither is “Homage to Siqueiros” purely masculinist in scope. Particularly striking in this regard is the image of the naked, pregnant woman, prone to various dangers, on one side of the painting, counterbalanced on the right by the image of a nurse snipping a child’s umbilical cord. Not far from the operating table stand three figures waiting to see the newborn [Fig. 5.7]. The woman with her back to the viewer wears a shawl that suggests her elder status, and in this context, suggests the role of the curandera or abuelita unable to participate in the most basic cultural rite of passage. While one can imagine the muralists representing this scene to their corporate sponsor as symbolic of the technological achievements of medical science, it also represents how medicine has displaced the intimacy of birth from the family and usurped a role of power for women. Ultimately, the traditional critical distinctions of “Homage to Siqueiros” and “Latino America” as emerging out of a

conveyor belt toward the viewer head first, or upside down. My appreciation to Holly Barnet-Sánchez for this example, which suggests the muralists may have been alluding to Siqueiros’ work in an even broader fashion.

⁵⁷⁰ Campusano et al, “Tres Muralistas.”

specifically male or female sensibility has cultivated gendered readings that do not account for the more complex iconography at work.

SHARED VISIONS

In reading these two murals, an obvious parallel exists in the way that both sets of artists use Latin American indigenous images to assert strategies for survival in the United States. Most of the images reflect a pre-conquest purity or mestizo heritage that rejects Spanish colonialism as much as United States imperialism. The two works even share certain touchstone images that might appear visually innocuous to some, but likely would register with local residents. For instance, the maguey or agave plants, native to Mexico, sprout like weeds from the bottom of both murals. The plant not only is the source of tequila and pulque, a traditional beverage, but also a tenacious survivor against powerful American marketing campaigns for beer in Mexico. The propensity of the plant to appear like a weed doggedly rising to the surface bespeaks the ability of inner city residents to maintain traditions and survive American cultural and capitalist imperialism. That the maguey plant already heralded considerable iconographic significance is supported by artist Rupert Garcia's 1972 silkscreen, "Maguey de la Vida." The abstract silhouette of the plant celebrates the physical form and pays homage to its cultural importance. Patricia Rodriguez states, "We did research on the maguey plant and on maize, and learned the historical significance of these crops." Many artists have

continued to replicate the image, recognizing its cultural and now aesthetic history within the Chicano movement.⁵⁷¹

In a statement about their work, Las Mujeres described their intent as “reaching back to what we came from and understanding that what we come from is better than this country, and this country is making our countries like what they are like today.”⁵⁷² Their comment parallels artist Michael Rios’s description of “Homage to Siqueiros” as an effort “to make connections with our past. The primitive consciousness, the way people used to be in harmony with nature.” Indeed, Rios points out the parallel himself, remarking, “All the murals that are being done now in the Mission seem to reflect this feeling: our mural, the one we’re doing in the 24th Street Mini-Park and the one the women are doing at Model Cities [“Latino America”] – all going back to this primitive vision.”⁵⁷³ Rio’s remark and later murals reveal the level of influence and cross-pollination that was transpiring in the Mission murals, in spite of some significant differences. This primitivist iconography continued to appear in many later works, including the 1976 Mission Neighborhood Health Center murals by Michael Rio and Graciela Carrillo. In reading the words and images of the Mujeres Muralistas and Michael Rios, a “primitive” vision appeared to mean a return to the purity of the (Latin American / indigenous) past.

⁵⁷¹ Patricia Rodriguez quoted in Maradiaga, *The Fifth Sun*, 14; On the maguey, also see, Chon A. Noriega and Wendy Laura Belcher, eds., *I am Aztlán: The Personal Essay in Chicano Studies* (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, 2004), 20-21; and María Herrera-Sobek, *Santa Barraza, Artist of the Borderlands* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2001). Ramon Favela notes that Rupert Garcia completed “Maguey de la Vida” shortly after his first trip to Mexico, but the image was based on a photograph by Edward Weston reproduced in Anita Brenner’s *Idols Behind Altars*. Ramon Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition, August 20-October 19, 1986* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, 1986), 18, 43.

⁵⁷² Quintero, “A Mural is a Painting on a Wall.”

In a similar vein, the story of Balmy Alley conveys this idealistic spirit. Amelia “Mia” Galavíz de Gonzalez, orchestrated the first major painting of Balmy Alley as a children’s mural project in 1972. According to Galaviz de Gonzalez, “my dream was to make a safe environment, a cleaner environment, a healthier environment, a place where children and old people could be safe, or feel safe. And I really think the Mexican experience was very supportive to that thinking. It made a big impact on me. On how the lifestyle in Mexico is different, it’s so much more balanced than it was here.”⁵⁷⁴ Galavíz de Gonzalez sought to recreate the Mexican “jardin” (garden) in Balmy Alley, a place “where everybody comes to congregate.” She explains, “my fantasy was to do mosaic on the street, to have a bench where you could sit down, because it’s nice, there’s not a lot of wind there, and the older people could sit down ... and also to help that drug trafficking be lessened, because Garfield Park was at the other end.”⁵⁷⁵ Through children’s art, mosaics, and benches, Galavíz de Gonzalez hoped to cultivate an imaginary Mexico and uplift the Mission District neighborhood. She found support amongst her neighbors. Graciela Carrillo and Patricia Rodriguez of Las Mujeres Muralistas lived on the alley and painted a mural at the same time, aided by a supply of paint from Galavíz de Gonzalez. Their tropical painting of flowers, plants, birds, and fish fit with the joyful landscape that Galavíz de Gonzalez hoped to create [Fig. 5.15].

Examining these murals provides a lens for understanding how community artists looked to an idealized vision of Latin America as a means of constructing, protecting, and

⁵⁷³ Campusano et al., “Tres Muralistas.”

⁵⁷⁴ Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de Gonzalez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 5 and 12, 2003.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*



Fig. 5.15: Las Mujeres Muralistas mural, Balmy Alley, 1972. Image from Drescher, *San Francisco Murals*, 22.

unifying their neighborhood. Upon examination, at least four common themes emerge: first, by generating a visually united image of Latin America, community activists and artists sought to build cultural ties in the United States that otherwise are complicated by diverse geographic, political, historical, and cultural borders. Second, the iconography of Latin America provided a means to visually appropriate the local landscape and subvert urban redevelopment plans likely to displace residents. Third, the use of Latin American imagery countered traditional lines of education and articulated alternatives to mainstream perceptions about history, identity, and culture. And fourth, the synthesis of the local landscape with the problems of Latin America provided a means of criticizing American foreign policy and simultaneously protesting the manifestations of colonialism at home.

Many of the works that emerged out of the Mission District during the late 1960s and early 1970s overtly used representations of Latin America to visualize the idealized past, but in this way, also circumvented grappling with contemporary political upheavals and dissension. Over time, the idealization dissipated, or grew more complicated, since the ability to represent Latin America as a haven from the United States lost its meaning as political strife intensified during the late seventies and eighties. The paintings invoked an iconographic primitivism that was unable to survive the increasingly brutal human rights violations in Latin America that evolved to a crescendo during the Reagan Administration in the United States.⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷⁶ On the U.S. and Latin America, see: Claribel Alegria, *They Won't Take Me Alive: Salvadorean Women In the Struggle for National Liberation* (London: The Women's Press, 1990); Charles Clements, *Witness to War: An American Doctor in El Salvador* (New York: Bantam, 1984); Juan Corradi, Patricia Weiss Fagen, and Manuel Antonio Garretón, eds., *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Mark Damner, *The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of*

For example, 1984 marked the re-painting of Balmy Alley as a mural protest against U.S. involvement in Central America. Spearheaded by an ad hoc organization entitled “Placa,” the artists declared, “PLACA members aim to call attention to the situation that exists today in Central America, as a result of the current Administration’s policies. The situation in El Salvador, the situation in Nicaragua, the situation in Guatemala, the situation in Honduras. PLACA members do not ally themselves with this Administration’s policy that has created death and war and despair, and that threatens more lives daily. We aim to demonstrate in visual/environmental terms, our solidarity, our respect, for the people of Central America.”⁵⁷⁷ Placa drew inspiration from the national “Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America.” First established in 1983 in New York, the “Artists Call” grew to include artists from 23 American cities and 3 other countries. Shifra Goldman remarks, “One tremendous consequence of Artists Call – in addition to its important support for embattled Central American peoples, their artists and their intellectuals – was the alliance built across the United States between hitherto separated North American and Latin American artists, whether these artists lived in their countries of origin, in Europe, or in the U.S.”⁵⁷⁸ The increasingly horrific events produced an international social movement for change, joining activists and artists

the Cold War (New York: Vintage, 1994); Nidia Diaz, *I Was Never Alone: A Prison Diary from El Salvador* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1992); Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); Robert S. Kahn, *Other People's Blood: U.S. Immigration Prisons in the Reagan Decade* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, eds., *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror in Latin America* (London: Zed Books, 1999); Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998).

⁵⁷⁷ “PLACA.” Community Murals Magazine, Fall 1984.

⁵⁷⁸ Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas*, 34.

together in a transnational union. The political orientation of this movement also produced a transformation in the art.

Increasingly, owing to political upheavals and a dramatic influx of refugees and immigrants from Central America, Mission artists introduced new signifiers, so that in the 1980s, the overall iconography shifted away from the “primitivist vision.” Works such as Miranda Bergman and O’Brien Thiele’s “Culture Contains the Seed of Resistance which Blossoms into the Flower of Liberation,” (1984) [Fig. 5.16] and Juana Alicia’s “Te Oimos Guatemala,” (“We Hear You Guatemala”) [Fig. 5.17], or “Alto al Fuego / Ceasefire,” (1988) [Fig. 5.18] depicted the struggle of Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans to survive in the face of threats of military violence and kidnap murders, while they still paid tribute to the beauty of the land. Almost all of the Balmy Alley murals from 1984 convey some aspect of human tragedy in Central America. In “Culture Contains the Seeds of Resistance,” on the right, the work represents the potential bounty and joy of Central America, but on the left, women hold photographs of the desaparecidos in the tradition of Las Madres de la Plaza, or the Mothers of the Plaza Mayor. A hungry child sits holding an empty plate on top of boxes of foodstuffs and supplies only for export. In Juana Alicia’s “Te Oimos Guatemala” (“We Hear You Guatemala”), a woman prostrates herself over a dead body covered by a white sheet. According to Juana Alicia, the mural was inspired by the film, *When the Mountains Tremble*, which includes documentation of a massacre in a small Indian town.



Fig. 5.16: Miranda Bergaman and O'Brien Thiele. "Culture Contains the Seeds of Resistance which Blossoms into Liberation." Balmy Alley, San Francisco, 1984. Photograph by Vincent Leddy. Permission to reproduce by Miranda Bergman.



Fig. 5.17: Juana Alicia, “Te Oímos Guatemala,” / “We Hear You Guatemala,” 1985. Image from Drescher, *San Francisco Murals*, 26.



Fig. 5.18: Juana Alicia, “Alto al Fuego / Ceasefire” mural, 1988. Photograph by Cary Cordova.

All the bodies are laid out in white sheets “and it seems like every women is screaming.”⁵⁷⁹ Ultimately, the transformation of iconography is indicative of a profound transformation in the community’s consciousness and concerns. Politics abroad forced a reconceptualization of Latinidad in the United States.

CONCLUSION

Jorge Mariscal passionately argues against the continuous replication of stereotypes that have portrayed the early Chicano movement as narrowly nationalist, separatist, and riddled with sexism. With his comments in mind, these murals serve as useful lenses for developing a more concrete understanding of the “competing political agendas” and shared ideologies that have characterized the movement and its cultural production.⁵⁸⁰ Though the artists of “Homage to Siqueiros” and “Latino America” were predominantly Chicanos, their iconography was indicative of a far more expansive pan-Latino identity, in keeping with the diversity of Mission District residents. Their work was unquestionably gendered in outlook and content, but also deserving of more considered analysis; specifically, “Homage to Siqueiros” and “Latino America” represented a primitivist idealization of Latin America that characterized Mission District murals of the early 1970s, and perhaps hinted at broader national tendencies. The murals argued against assimilation, against colonialism, and in support of indigenous, pan-

⁵⁷⁹ Juana Alicia, class recording, San Francisco State University, October 21, 2002.

Latino, and Third World coalitions. Overwhelmingly, the representations of Latin America were lessons on how to live in the United States.

By visually representing the history, significance, and cultural influence of Latin America in public spaces, artists and community leaders wrestled for pride, social control, political power, and community identity. Over time, the landscape and cultural production of the Mission District grew to represent, both physically and symbolically, a vast expanse of Latino cultural traditions rooted in the multiple histories of Latin America. Even though the images of Latin America changed over time, the intent stayed the same: muralists hoped to educate, politicize, and build solidarity locally. Ultimately, neighborhood murals conveyed ideologies that the artists consciously and subconsciously presumed central to a pan-Latino identity.

While a number of books and articles on the community mural movement have developed helpful chronological essays, pinpointed appropriate artistic attribution, or cheered the overall accomplishments, the lack of close readings of murals as cultural texts is astonishing. Too often, the low-brow origins of the mural movement as “the people’s art” have rendered their significance only as transparent propaganda or ethnic pride decoration. For instance, Laurance Hurlburt, in his homage to the superiority of the Mexican muralists, declared, “however valid the murals of Third World countries (such as Cuba, the Chile of Allende, Nicaragua) and North American urban ghettos may be as political commentary, they often entirely lack any esthetic concern, and many are painted

⁵⁸⁰ Jorge Mariscal, “Left Turns in the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975,” *Monthly Review* 54 (3), 2002: 59-68 (59).

by ‘artists’ who have no formal artistic training.”⁵⁸¹ Hurlburt’s dismissive attitude conveys how cultural texts such as “Latino America” and “Homage to Siqueiros” are devalued. If nothing else, this chapter calls into question any willingness to take these images at face value.

While the mural movement appeared spontaneously local in growth and regional in concerns, it actually reflected an extensive national network of communications and an expansive political consciousness. A variety of national and international publications circulated to announce new murals and exchange information on technological innovations. In addition, San Francisco benefited from established artists, such as Ray Patlán of Chicago and Susan Greene of New York, relocating to the city, just as other locations benefited from visits by San Francisco artists, such as Patricia Rodriguez’s work in Corpus Christi, Texas, Juana Alicia’s work in Nicaragua, and Susan Cervantes work in Russia. The movement has had profoundly global implications, with muralists traveling all around the world to exchange art and ideas. Ultimately, art is one of the primary methods for creating culture and enabling people to look at the world differently, as well as propel opposition to the mainstream. The importance of investigating how values are transmitted through the visual arts is typically underrated and understudied. Nowhere is this more evident than in our ability to pass by the voices that shout out from our city walls.

⁵⁸¹ Hurlburt, *The Mexican Muralists in the United States*, 11.

Chapter Six

The Politics of Día de los Muertos: Mourning, Art, and Activism



Fig. 6.1: Yolanda Garfias Woo, altar for Día de los Muertos, mid-1970s. Photograph by Sachico. Image reproduced from *The Fifth Sun, Contemporary / Traditional Chicano and Latino Art*, curator, Ralph Maradiaga (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977), 32.

In the 1980s, a culture of mourning permeated everyday life in San Francisco. As essayist Richard Rodriguez declared, “In San Francisco death has become as routine an explanation for disappearance as Mayflower Van Lines.”⁵⁸² Most obviously, AIDS devastated the city. Between 1981 and 1986, San Francisco recorded more than 1,500 AIDS related deaths, and the numbers only continued to rise.⁵⁸³ By 1995, the city cited 22,185 cases of the disease and 14,892 deaths.⁵⁸⁴ Residents sought both private and public ways of coping with the fears and trauma, including candlelight vigils, public memorials, and cultural production. Perhaps less obvious, the city also served as a center of the sanctuary movement for hundreds of refugees escaping the gruesome civil wars of Central America. With a Latino population dominated by Central Americans, many in San Francisco were personally impacted by the thousands of *desaparecidos* in El Salvador and Guatemala.⁵⁸⁵ Others simply sought to articulate their sense of shock, fear, and outrage at the violence abroad.

⁵⁸² Richard Rodriguez, “Late Victorians,” in *Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father* (New York: Viking, 1992), 40.

⁵⁸³ Edward Guthmann, “AIDS Artists Remembered / The Faces Behind the Statistics,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1986.

⁵⁸⁴ Statistics from San Francisco Department of Health Aids Office, Seroepidemiology and Surveillance Branch, “AIDS Cases Reported through October 1995,” *AIDS Surveillance Report*, October 31, 1995, 1, in Michelle Cochrane, *When AIDS Began: San Francisco and the Making of an Epidemic* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 139. Also see, Randy Shilts, *And The Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York: St. Martin’s Press: 1987); Benjamin Heim Shepard, *White Nights and Ascending Shadows: An Oral History of the San Francisco AIDS Epidemic* (London: Cassell, 1997).

⁵⁸⁵ In 1985, while reporting on an effort to halt deportations and prevent prosecutions of participants in the sanctuary movement, Susan Sward and William Carlsen reported that “San Francisco was chosen as the site for the court battle because it is the capital of the nation’s church sanctuary movement sheltering Salvadorans.” According to the report, “the movement, which began with a handful of churches in 1982, now includes 58 Northern California churches that feed, clothe and house Salvadoran refugees. San Francisco alone is home to an estimated 50,000 to 90,000 Salvadorans – many of them living in small apartments in the Mission District. Nationwide there are an estimated 300,000 to 500,000.” Susan Sward, William Carlsen, “Salvadorans in U.S. Live in Fear,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3 1985, 25. For Latino demographics in San Francisco, see Carlos B. Cordova, “The Mission District: The Ethnic Diversity of the Latin American Enclave in San Francisco, Calif.,” *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989; Jean Molesky, “Amnesty for Qualified Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area: The Implementation of

Those grieving for Central America and those grieving for AIDS felt frustrated and helpless, particularly in the context of President Ronald Reagan's administration, whose policies only seemed to aggravate both situations.⁵⁸⁶ A sense of powerlessness was heightened by Cold-War tensions and U.S.-Soviet stockpiling of nuclear weapons, all of which made the threat of nuclear annihilation appear imminent. One survey conducted by NBC and the Associated Press declared that by the end of Reagan's first year in office, "76 percent of the American people believed that nuclear war was 'likely' within a few years, an increase from 57 percent the preceding August."⁵⁸⁷

Mourners from all walks of life sought ways of articulating their concerns and venting their grief, both privately and publicly. Many embraced new forms of expression. The Latino celebration of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) provided a cultural nexus for mourning in 1980s San Francisco. As the celebration transitioned from

the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989, 16-20; Robert Tomsho, *The American Sanctuary Movement* (Austin, TX: Texas Monthly Free Press, 1987); Susan Bibler Coutin, *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the U.S. Sanctuary Movement* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and the Law in Collision* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988); Renny Golden, *Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1986); and Gary MacEoin, *Sanctuary: A Resource Guide for Understanding and Participating in the Central American Refugee's Struggle* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985).

⁵⁸⁶ Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Noam Chomsky, *Chomsky Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1987). Chomsky writes, "the Reagan administration basically pursued and extended the Carter program of support for repression and massacre in El Salvador, while attempting to exploit the tragedy, in the manner of earlier years, for the purposes of their domestic programs of militarization and alms for the wealthy. . . . The Carter-Reagan initiatives in El Salvador succeeded in revitalizing the peace movement, adding to the impetus already provided by Carter's evident turn toward a more militaristic posture in the latter part of his term" (349). Also see, Shilts, *And The Band Played On*; Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk, *From ACT UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization* (New York; London: Verso, 2002); and Sarah Schulman, *My American History: Lesbian and Gay Life in the Reagan and Bush Years* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁵⁸⁷ Study cited in Ronald Powaski, *Return to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1981-1999* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 18; Powaski, *March to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1939 to the Present* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University

intimate, familial event to large-scale public altars and performances, participants increasingly relied on its rituals to speak out against social systems that allowed, facilitated, or produced death locally and around the world. In fact, while each year the political messages grew stronger in content and form, little exists to suggest San Francisco's Día de los Muertos was also a political event, in addition to a religious one. With this chapter, I would like to put politics in the center of the discussion, not to minimize the spiritual aspects of the rituals, but to complicate the tendency to focus on the event only in religious terms.⁵⁸⁸

To understand precisely how Día de los Muertos grew to accommodate the desires for mourning in the 1980s requires an understanding of its origins and historical context. Therefore, this chapter begins with a discussion of the event's history in the United States and delineates its multifaceted meaning for Latinos over the course of the

Press, 1989); and Frances Fitzgerald, *Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).

⁵⁸⁸ Many texts focus on the history and rites of Día de los Muertos: Elizabeth Carmichael and Cholë Sayer, *The Skeleton at the Feast: The Day of the Dead in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991); Rene H. Arceo Frutos, curator, *Día de los Muertos*, (Chicago, IL: Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, 1991); Bobbi Salinas-Norman, *Indo-Hispanic Folk Art Traditions II: A Book of Culturally-based, Year-round Activities with an Emphasis on the Day of the Dead* (Albuquerque, NM: Piñata Publications, 1990). Several texts have a Bay Area focus: *La Ofrenda* (film), dirs., Lourdes Portillo and Susana Muñoz, Xochitl Films, San Francisco, CA, 1989; Suzanne Shumate Morrison, "Mexico's 'Day of the Dead' in San Francisco, California: A Study of Continuity and Change in a Popular Religious Festival," Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 1992; *Chicanos en Mictlán: Día de los Muertos in California*, curator, Tere Romo (San Francisco, California: The Mexican Museum, October 6 – December 31, 2000). In addition, Bay Area residents Zoe Harris and Yolanda Garfias Woo produced a children's book on Day of the Dead informed by Bay Area practices: Zoe Harris and Yolanda Garfias Woo, *Piñatas and Smiling Skeletons: Celebrating Mexican Festivals* (Berkeley, CA: Pacific View Press, 1998). Lara Medina and Gilbert R. Cadena provide a meaningful discussion of the religious significance of the Los Angeles procession: Lara Medina and Gilbert R. Cadena, "Días de los Muertos: Public Ritual, Community Renewal, and Popular Religion," in *Horizons of the Sacred: Mexican Traditions in U.S. Catholicism*, eds., Timothy Matovina and Gary Riebe-Estrella (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2002). The altars especially have provoked analysis in the context of their spiritual resonance: Amalia Mesa-Bains, *Ceremony of Memory: Nature and Memory in Contemporary Latino Art*, (San Francisco, CA: The Mexican Museum, 1993); Kay Turner, *Beautiful Necessity: The Art and Meaning of Women's Altars* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1999). Also see the general bibliography compiled by Salvador Guereña and Raquel Quiroz, with

1970s. By the 1980s, artists in San Francisco and elsewhere in the United States started applying more innovation and generating their own “Americanized” visions of altars, art work, and performance. As Tomás Ybarra-Frausto notes, “The individual aesthetics and skills of trained artists re-interpret the traditional *ofrenda* into fanciful, political, and personal visions.”⁵⁸⁹ Gradually, the event revolved less around its Latin American roots and more around aspects of life in the United States. The result was the formation of a Día de los Muertos art and culture that integrated the spiritual and predominantly Leftist political concerns of Bay Area residents.

While some scholarship exists to recognize the event’s religious syncretism and the new expressions of spirituality, little attention has been devoted to its political content. Though a religious celebration, Día de los Muertos also has a history of enabling pundit free speech to critique the causes of death and the vanity of the living. In particular, famous nineteenth century engraver José Guadalupe Posada embodied this politicization of the event through his calavera, or skeleton, images that annually poked fun at Mexico’s elite, reminding everyone that no matter how wealthy or privileged, no one escaped death.⁵⁹⁰

Inspired by Posada, San Francisco artists used their wit and talent to produce work that expressed loss and critiqued contemporary politics.⁵⁹¹ For instance, René

assistance from Luis Leal in *Día de los Muertos: An Illustrated Essay and Bibliography* (Santa Barbara, CA: Center for Chicano Studies and Colección Tloque Nahuaque University Library, 1983).

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁰ Roberto Berdecio and Stanley Appelbaum, *Posada's Popular Mexican Prints: 273 Cuts* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972); and Patrick Frank, *Posada's Broadshets: Mexican Popular Imagery, 1890-1910* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998).

⁵⁹¹ Not only was Posada’s work in general circulation, but San Francisco’s Galería de la Raza held an important exhibit of his work in 1974 (September 15-27, 1974). “Galería de la Raza,” 1972-1976 schedule, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto collection, Archives of American Art (AAA), Box 9.

Castro's 1989 "Burn, Baby Burn" altar [Fig.6.2] featured a skeleton with an American flag draped over his shoulders and flames licking at his legs. The text written behind him declared, "When you reach my age, you don't need to be walking around burning flags." The caustic *calavera* (skeleton) subtly but humorously conveyed the role the living must play in critiquing American politics, since it is too late for the dead. In this way, San Francisco cultural workers increasingly used the cultural practices of Día de los Muertos to dramatize the necessity for local and global activism. Ultimately, the subsequent mainstreaming and carnivalization of the event over the course of the 1990s have not only complicated the event's religious identity, yet once again submerged its political engagement.

CULTURAL ROOTS AND REGIONAL INFLUENCES

Día de los Muertos varies by region and over time, but one idea remains central: Concha Saucedo states, "Día de los Muertos is the day in which our ancestors visit us and is the day that connects us to our cultural past."⁵⁹² Tomas Ybarra-Frausto elaborates on the event as a "time of recuerdo (remembrance) where the living relate to their dead in direct and familiar ways."⁵⁹³ A series of rituals defines the event, including: the creation of personal and communal altars; overnight trips to the cemetery to visit with the spirits

⁵⁹² Saucedo quoted in Ybarra-Frausto, "Recuerdo, Descubrimiento, Voluntad," 28.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid*, 26.

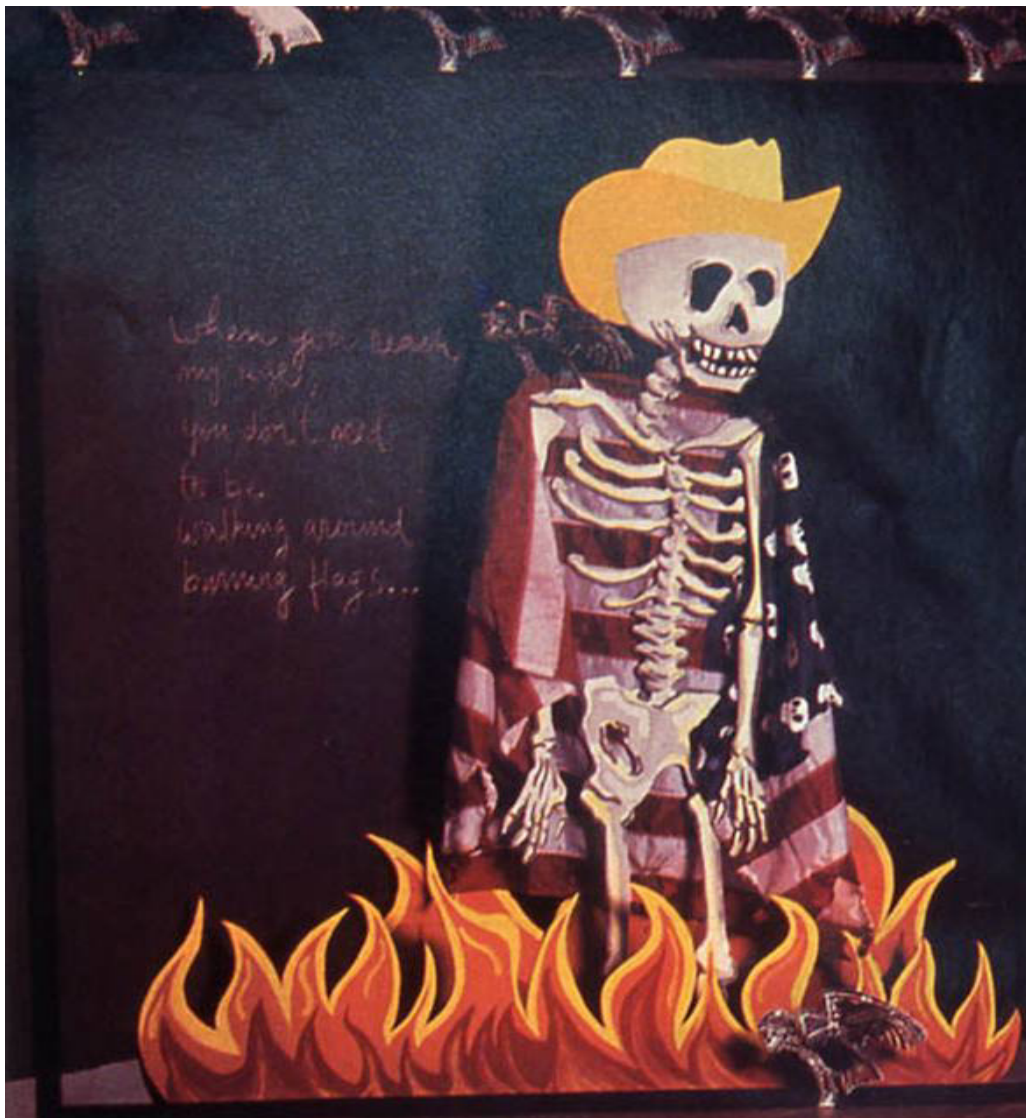


Fig. 6.2: René Castro, “Burn, Baby Burn: When You Reach My Age, You Don’t Need To Be Walking Around Burning Flags.” 1989. Image from *San Francisco Examiner, Image Magazine*, May 20, 1990, 25.

and clean their graves; theatrical reenactments poking fun at death; and the cooking and serving of special foods for the dead. While pre-conquest indigenous cultures performed rituals to recognize the dead throughout the calendar year, colonialism bound all of these practices into the celebration of All Souls Day and All Saints Day on November 1 and 2. These two days became the pivotal moment when the spirits of the dead would visit the living, and when the living would commemorate, celebrate, and meditate on the lives of those who had passed into the spirit world.⁵⁹⁴

The ofrenda is a centerpiece of the event. Though varying by region, an ofrenda is loosely composed of mementos of the dead, religious images, sugar skulls, incense, favorite foods, water, beer, pulque (alcoholic beverage from the maguey plant), atole (corn-mash drink), and cempazuchitl (marigold flowers).⁵⁹⁵ Amalia Mesa-Bains distinguishes between altars and ofrendas as follows: “The difference between an altar and an *ofrenda* is that a home altar is the permanent, ongoing record of the family’s life. So if someone dies in the war their little medals are put there; when babies are born, their booties are put there; when people get married, their corsages are put there. The *ofrenda* is a temporal offering that is only done on the Day of the Dead and only for the remembrance of the soul departed.”⁵⁹⁶ The context Mesa-Bains provides is meaningful,

⁵⁹⁴ Not all Latin American celebrations limit Día de los Muertos to November 1 and 2. Many still follow ancient indigenous calendars.

⁵⁹⁵ These features of the ofrenda have a long-standing history in Mexico, though they also vary by region and individual preference. See, Carmichael and Sayer, *The Skeleton at the Feast*, 18-24.

⁵⁹⁶ Amalia Mesa Bains quoted in, Anne Barclay Morgan, “Interview: Amalia Mesa-Bains,” *Art Papers*, March and April 1995, 24-29.

though many do not make this distinction between altar and ofrenda, and the two terms are often used interchangeably in the United States.⁵⁹⁷

Día de los Muertos went largely undocumented in the United States until the early 1970s, when Chicanos in California began to develop public celebrations to reconnect with their indigenous heritage. As Laurie Kay Sommers notes in her study on Cinco de Mayo, “Mexican-Americans throughout California began to use a newly self-conscious sense of ethnicity as a strategy to achieve group solidarity and social change. Shared cultural forms – such as festivals, dance, music, and foodways – and a shared history as an oppressed internal colony of white America, were the tools employed by Movement leaders to galvanize group emotions and affirm group identity.”⁵⁹⁸ In the context of the national civil rights movement and the growing emphasis on multiculturalism, Día de los Muertos had an immediate attractiveness that bolstered its public reception: rooted in indigenous, Catholic, and pagan practices, the annual November event enabled a spiritual and performative invocation of a mestizo ethnic heritage. Through the creation of ofrendas, processions to the cemetery, and public performances, the event celebrated the presence of the dead among the living and visually heightened the resistance of Chicanos to colonial conquest. People of various cultures and faiths gravitated to the rituals of Día de los Muertos, from altar-making, to candle-light processions, to street theatre, as a means of dealing with the trauma of death. Participants perceived of the event as serving

⁵⁹⁷ Tomas Ybarra-Frausto observes the public/private dimensions of ofrendas in Mexico versus the United States: “the *ofrendas* in Mexico are usually family affairs.... In Mexican/Chicano communities, the *ofrendas* tend to be collective commemorations created by artists in public spaces such as art centers, galleries or museums.” Tomas Ybarra Frausto in “Recuerdo, Descubrimiento, Voluntad: Mexican / Chicano Customs for the Day of the Dead,” in *Día de los Muertos*, Arceo Frutos, curator, 24-30 (28).

a critical hole in “American” culture: mourners dealt with death publicly, openly, and humorously. To mourn was not to accept loss passively, but to celebrate their lives in the afterworld, and thereby to find spiritual fulfillment and political empowerment.

Most references to San Francisco’s Día de los Muertos celebration give credit to artists René Yañez and Ralph Maradiaga at Galería de la Raza for initiating “public” celebrations in 1972. Actually, theirs was not the first public celebration – Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes held a Día de los Muertos event the year prior – but Galería de la Raza was unquestionably the organization responsible for giving local continuity to the public celebration and spurring the visibility of the altars.⁵⁹⁹ By referring to the “public” celebration, scholars differentiate between the development of large-scale exhibitions and processions, and the more intimate tradition of family altars and practices that long existed in the community on a smaller scale. For instance, San Francisco native Yolanda Garfias Woo started celebrating Día de los Muertos as a young adult in the late 1950s, after the death of her father. For Garfias Woo, her father was “a true Mexican in the

⁵⁹⁸ Laurie Kay Sommers discusses the history of Cinco de Mayo in San Francisco and the cultural divisions among its celebrants in, “Symbol and Style in Cinco de Mayo,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 98, October 1985, 476-482 (478).

⁵⁹⁹ For instance, Carolina Ponce de Leon, director of Galería de la Raza, follows tradition in attributing the first public celebration to Galería de la Raza (Carolina Ponce de Leon, “Día de los Muertos y La Misión,” *Chicanos en Mictlán: Día de los Muertos in California* (San Francisco, CA: The Mexican Museum, October 6–December 31, 2000). Most Bay Area newspaper articles on the event have been consistent with this attribution. Others, such as Suzanne Shumate Morrison, have been more hesitant to ascribe credit to Galería de la Raza (Morrison, 1992, 344). Shifra Goldman observes that René Yañez “made his first altar in 1967, and instituted Day of the Dead celebrations by 1972 in the Galería de la Raza.” Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 230.

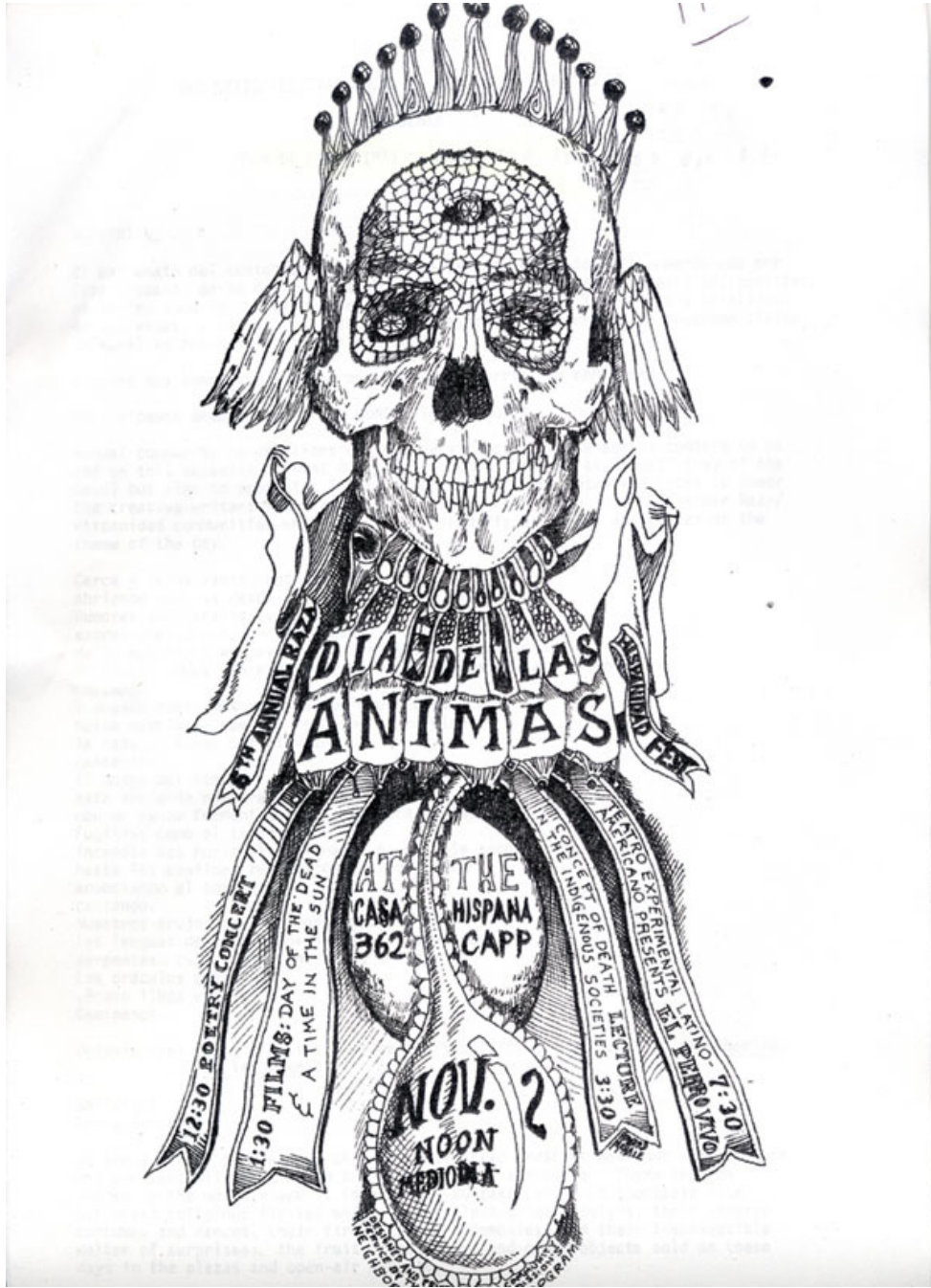


Fig. 6.3: Poster for Casa Hispana's celebration, "Día de las Animas" (Day of the Spirits), 1971. Image provided by Don Santana.

heart. And everybody else ... was trying very hard not to be.”⁶⁰⁰ She turned to Día de los Muertos rituals to mourn her loss, as well as symbolically convey her affinity for her father’s culture.

Many Bay Area residents grew up with intimate memories of their parents and grandparents practicing Muertos-related rituals. Noticeably, a preponderance of those memories came from residents who had lived in Texas or near the U.S./Mexico border. Texas artist Carmen Lomas Garza was inspired by the memories she had of Día de los Muertos with her grandmother, mother, and sisters to produce an academic study of altars in 1971. Upon moving to the Bay Area in the mid-1970s, she was drawn to the Galería because of their celebrations for Día de los Muertos – she perceived the organization was “trying to, sort of create a renaissance of celebrating the Day of the Dead.”⁶⁰¹ Similarly, Bay Area Folklorist Rafaela Castro recalled stories from her mother’s youth in Texas, of trips to the cemetery. “She thought it was great fun, like a picnic of sorts, even though the entire day was spent reciting the rosary.”⁶⁰² Texans such as Carmen Lomas Garza, Rafaela Castro, Juan Pablo Gutierrez, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, and others connected the “private” celebrations of their youth with the emerging “public” celebrations in San Francisco. The event nourished nostalgia for familial intimacy in an urban setting.

⁶⁰⁰ Yolanda Garfias Woo, interview by author, Daly City, CA, May 14, 2003.

⁶⁰¹ Carmen Lomas Garza, interview, San Francisco, CA, October 30, 1982, uncorrected transcript from Califas Videotape #56-58, transcribed by Carlos Palado, Califas Book 2, 1, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

⁶⁰² Rafaela Castro, “The Day of the Dead Celebrates Life in a Multicultural Society,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 31, 1993, A17.

It is also important to point out that a strong consciousness of Día de los Muertos was present in popular culture prior to the project of Chicano reclamation, albeit often from a perspective that presumed its disintegration. In the 1950s and '60s, a wave of anthropological or documentary projects sought to commemorate the meaning and passing history of Día de los Muertos. Many of the projects presumed that technology and progress would soon eliminate such a “primitive” celebration, or at the very least, permanently erode its authenticity. Celebrants were often characterized as a people close to nature and therefore in opposition to progress. Such themes and images of Days of the Dead penetrated the works of Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein, British author Malcolm Lowry, and American designer Alexander Girard. Eisenstein, for example, with the patronage of American author Upton Sinclair, shot extensive footage of the celebration in Mexico in the early 1930s.⁶⁰³ In 1947, Malcolm Lowry published his classic novel *Under the Volcano*, set during Día de los Muertos in Mexico, which contributed to the quixotic othering of the event. In fact, the ritual spectacle easily lended itself to the invocation of many romanticized and primitivist visions of Mexico.

In the 1950s, the contemporary designer Alexander Girard proved himself to be one of the most significant catalysts in the larger social project of Día de los Muertos preservation. Girard not only wished to preserve disappearing art forms, but also sought to use indigenous imagery as inspiration in his contemporary designs. In 1956, he and his colleague Charles Eames directed a documentary film on Día de los Muertos. Soon

⁶⁰³ When Sinclair later withdrew his support, the project folded, but the footage reappeared in a variety of films. Upton Sinclair gave Eisenstein's footage to director Sol Lesser, who produced *Thunder Over Mexico* (1933) and two shorts: *Eisenstein in Mexico* (1934) and *Day of the Dead* (1934). Grigori

thereafter, Girard opened his fashionable New York store of folk art goods from around the world. Though the store did not last, it helped him launch one of the most significant collections of folk art in the world, which is now featured in a wing of the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Girard drew even more attention to the celebration in 1968, when he showed his collection at San Antonio's International Hemisfair exhibition. The display, called "El Encanto de un Pueblo," brought together at least 5,000 of Girard's Latin American toys and miniature objects. The work of Girard and others propelled the American anthropological gaze toward Día de los Muertos.⁶⁰⁴

At the same time that Alexander Girard was collecting Día de los Muertos items to document the past, Octavio Paz was declaring the Mexican perspective on death to be one of the most significant characteristics of Mexican identity. Paz published his influential book *The Labyrinth of Solitude* in 1950. Though eleven years passed before an English translation of Paz's *The Labyrinth of Solitude* was available, the landmark book had an immediate impact, both in Mexico and abroad. In his writing, Paz asserted a Mexican identity on the global stage that appealed to Mexicans but that also affirmed its "othered" position among nations. He wrote,

The word death is not pronounced in New York, in Paris, in London, because it burns the lips. The Mexican, in contrast, is familiar with death, jokes about it, caresses it, sleeps with it, celebrates it; it is one of his favorite toys and his most

Alexandrov later reclaimed film for his friend Eisenstein according to his best recollection of Eisenstein's intent, producing, *Que Viva Mexico* in 1979.

⁶⁰⁴ Alexander Girard, *The Magic of a People / El Encanto de un Pueblo: Folk Art and Toys from the Collection of the Girard Foundation* (New York: Studio Books / The Viking Press, 1968); Frank Duane, "Hemisfair '68," Handbook of Texas Online, <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/lkh1.html>> (accessed June 9, 2005); Henry Glassie, *The Spirit of Folk Art: The Girard Collection at the Museum of International Folk Art* (New York: Abrams in association with the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, 1989).

steadfast love. True, there is perhaps as much fear in his attitude as in that of others, but at least death is not hidden away: he looks at it face to face, with impatience, disdain or irony. 'If they are going to kill me tomorrow, let them kill me right away'⁶⁰⁵

Paz's meditations on Mexican identity served as a canonical guide for understanding the Mexican attitude toward death. As Chicanos sought to reify their Mexican heritage in the 1960s and '70s, they also showed greater interest in understanding and cultivating Mexican attitudes toward death in the United States, as outlined by Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, and other Mexican philosophers.⁶⁰⁶

In many ways, Día de los Muertos appealed as a malleable form of spiritual and cultural fulfillment in a time of increasing disillusionment with organized religion.⁶⁰⁷ Garfias Woo began teaching about Día de los Muertos in the early 1960s, soon after she started teaching at the John McLaren School in San Francisco's neglected, predominantly African American Visitation Valley community. Garfias Woo recalled, "The death in that school was very high. These kids were living with death constantly. And no one was talking about it. One boy had seen his mother shot to death by his father, that morning, on his way to school, and they sent him to school! ... And so I started doing Muertos."⁶⁰⁸ For Garfias Woo, the celebration provided a psychological source of healing, regardless of race or culture.

⁶⁰⁵ Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1950; reprint, New York: Grove Press, 1985), 57-58.

⁶⁰⁶ Juanita Garcíagodoy, "Contemporary Attitudes Toward Death," *Digging the Days of the Dead: A Reading of Mexico's Dias de Muertos* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1998), 173-195.

⁶⁰⁷ Richard Cimino and Don Lattin, *Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

⁶⁰⁸ Garfias Woo interview, 2003.

The introduction of Día de los Muertos to the Bay Area was greeted with some distrust: In fact, the reactions were so uninformed as to be humorous. Yolanda Garfias Woo recalled a moment around Halloween time when she began to teach children about the event at the John McLaren School: “the teacher next door to me, who was Irish ... she stood at her door, I’ll never forget, she had this big witch’s hat ... and this long black gown and she said, ‘you know, Yolanda ... that’s witchcraft. You can’t teach that in the schools.’”⁶⁰⁹ Garfias Woo was stunned at the disjuncture in her friend’s response. However, rather than be deterred, Garfias Woo began a teacher training program that sought to dispel such reactions.

Reportedly, the curators of Galería de la Raza experienced similar misunderstandings. René Yañez recalled how difficult it was to plan for the candlelight procession that would become a defining element of the celebration: “It was years before I could get a permit for the procession from the Mission [police] station. ... This captain thought I was part of a Charles Manson cult or something. He said, ‘Day of the what? No way, Man’”⁶¹⁰ The perception that Día de los Muertos was a form of witchcraft alarmed some, but also substantiated the celebration’s counterculture authenticity for Chicanos seeking an indigenous form of expression. In fact, the rituals of Día de los Muertos blended with notions of the counterculture. René Yañez attributes the creation of his first altar at his home in Oakland in 1967 to a visit to Mexico. He recalls, “I invited some of

⁶⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁰ Harriet Swift, “Day of the Dead Rises across the Border,” *The Oakland Tribune*, November 1, 1990, G1-G2.

my friends over, and they thought it was a happening.”⁶¹¹ Thus, Día de los Muertos not only served as a framework to assert ethnic heritage, but also more generally as a means of defining one’s self apart from the mainstream.

‘WE CAN INVENT WHAT IT MEANS TO US’: TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN THE 1970S CELEBRATION

Interest in Día de los Muertos in the United States immediately sparked debate about how traditional customs of Latin America would be upheld or transformed. The flexibility of Día de los Muertos was part of its appeal. As many scholars have noted, “celebrations vary from region to region, as does the timing of events.”⁶¹² Los Angeles artist Gronk recalled attending a meeting in the early 1970s at Self-Help Graphics, the organization largely responsible for initiating the public Día de los Muertos procession in East Los Angeles.⁶¹³ Gronk recalls, “they were talking about Mexico’s Day of the Dead and how they did this kind of skull heads, and they’d showed a movie about the Day of the Dead, and we sat through it. I mean, we were like nice people. So we sat through it but we sort of rolled our eyes like, ‘Are we gonna repeat that?’ Just like, ‘That’s fine for somewhere else, but that’s not for us. Day of the Dead can mean a lot of different of things, and it doesn’t necessarily mean paper cutouts, skull heads. We can invent it, what

⁶¹¹ René Yañez, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun: Contemporary/Traditional Chicano & Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1977), 31-34 (32).

⁶¹² Chloe Sayer, *Mexico: The Day of the Dead, An Anthology* (Boston: Shambhala Redstone Editions, 1993), 10; Carmichael and Sayer, *The Skeleton at the Feast*, 18-24;

⁶¹³ Sybil Venegas, “The Day of the Dead in Aztlán: Chicano Variations on the Theme of Life, Death, and Self-Preservation,” in Romo, *Chicanos in Mictlan*, 42-53.

it means to us.”⁶¹⁴ Like many artists, Gronk immediately rejected the idea that he should be restricted by traditional customs. The idea was to borrow various facets of the Latin American celebration, but also to bring one’s personal and creative energies to bear.

San Francisco artist Mia Galaviz de Gonzalez shared in the experimental approach to the event, though largely because she had no first-hand knowledge of the celebration. Her only guide was her friend and fellow altar-maker Yolanda Garfias Woo, who described what an altar should look like based on her studies of Oaxacan customs. However, Galviz de Gonzalez, having no photographs to guide her, recalled the novelty of building an altar for one Galería de la Raza’s initial shows:

I had a space, and then I asked them to put a pole down for me so I could suspend some curtains. It was actually purple curtains, which is wrong, purple! You don’t do it now, you didn’t do it then, you do it like in Easter time, but who knew! So I had these beautiful deep purple curtains ... so I sewed chiles on the curtains, on the edge of the curtains, so that when they opened up, you had these *cadena de chiles* [chains of chiles] ... and tons of flowers, at levels ... [and] religious things and little food things. Because I did not know what it was. ... And that was my first installation. It was organic materials and ... the virgin and a cross and everything religious that I just threw like a potpourri of kitchen sink things...⁶¹⁵

In hindsight, the altar initiated the artist’s career in installation, though such terminology would not have been applicable at the time. Galavíz de Gonzalez’s memory reflects how easily the worlds of Día de los Muertos and contemporary art blended.

⁶¹⁴ Gronk, interview by Jeffrey Rangel, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, January 20 and 23, 1997, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/oralhist/gronk97.htm>, accessed on October 20, 2004.

⁶¹⁵ Amelia “Mia” Galaviz de González, interview by author, February 5 and 12, 2003.

As the event took root, it also developed regional specificities within the United States. While Southern and Northern California celebrations both started in the early 1970s and reflected a substantial cross-pollination of ideas from Sacramento to San Diego, they also quickly reflected the local characteristics of the cities. In San Francisco, as in most U.S. cities, the Día de los Muertos celebration reflected a predominantly Mexican influence, although the event is pervasive throughout Latin America, including in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Peru. The early exhibitions at Galería de la Raza bore a heavily Chicano or Mexican perspective that gradually evolved into the local mainstream vision of the event during the 1970s. Even prior to the initiation of public celebrations of Día de los Muertos, several Chicano artists were using Posada-like calaveras as subject matter in their work, including José Montoya, Ricardo Fabela, and Francisco Camplis.⁶¹⁶ Also critical in providing a Mexican perspective to the Bay Area was Yolanda Garfias Woo, who, as a result of her bicultural upbringing in the United States and Mexico and her deep interest in Mexican cultural practices, provided a local voice of authority.⁶¹⁷

However, in San Francisco, the celebration did not start as a Mexican-centered event, nor did that later emphasis go uncontested. In fact, the first “public celebration” of Día de los Muertos in San Francisco was an emphatically pan-Latino event, though no published historical accounts pay tribute to its memory. While Galería de la Raza played the most significant role in invoking a sense of tradition in the city’s celebration of Día de los Muertos and in defining its visual culture, at least one public event preceded its 1972

⁶¹⁶ Día de los Muertos program, Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, CA, October 25-November 12, 1983. Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA, Box 16/8.

exhibition. The Galería's sister organization, Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, planned a celebration of Día de los Muertos as part of its October "Mission Arts Festival" in 1971. Members of Casa Hispana – many of whom were associated with Galería de la Raza – recognized the enormous potential of festivals for expanding community outreach and showcasing their work as writers, artists, and performers. By 1971, Casa members had expanded their six-year-old October celebration of Día de la Raza to become a month long Mission Arts Festival, ending with a celebration of Día de los Muertos.⁶¹⁸

The Casa Hispana event is important in representing an alternative and forgotten approach to the celebration of Día de los Muertos in the city. Casa Hispana stated its intent on the 1971 program – "we want not only to honor 'Día de las Animas' [Day of the Spirits] but also to present a literary concert through poetry and prose to honor the creative writers from the Mission District and those from the larger Raza/Hispanidad communities who have written in different times and places on the theme of the day."⁶¹⁹ A diverse group of local poets participated in the event, including Nina Serrano, Carol Lee Sanchez, Jessica Hagedorn, Elias Hruska-Cortes, and Roberto Vargas. Their diverse ethnic backgrounds – Colombian, Native American, Philipina, Mexican, and Nicaraguan, respectively – reflected Casa Hispana's attempt to encompass a wide-range of cultural perspectives. The poets read from or referred to the works of Octavio Paz (Mexican), Pablo Neruda (Chilean), and Roque Dalton (Salvadoran). The program oriented

⁶¹⁷ Ralph Maradiaga credits Garfias Woo with providing "a traditional way of doing a Day of the Dead altar, since we've had these shows" Ralph Maradiaga, Slide Presentation, UC Santa Cruz, April 17, 1982, transcript from tape #6B, Califas Book 1, 108, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

⁶¹⁸ For more on Casa Hispana festivals and the origins of Día de la Raza, see chapter three.

audiences to the many regional forms of Día de los Muertos existing in Mexico, Peru, and Guatemala. The event also featured readings of noted Spanish poets Jorge Manrique and Gustavo Adolfo Becquer. As a whole, the program was a reflection of the desire to assemble a much larger pan-Latino or La Raza identity as opposed to the more Chicano-centered celebrations that tended to define the work at Galería de la Raza. Though the work of Casa Hispana was gradually erased from traditional histories of the event in the city, the pan-Latino approach to the celebration never entirely disappeared, and in fact, gradually resurfaced.⁶²⁰

The 1970s was a period for people to familiarize themselves with the practices of Día de los Muertos; the exhibits provided definitions in their programs and in their displays. Early exhibitions displayed a variety of traditional calavera sculptures, masks, and papel picado (delicately crafted paper cut-outs). The visual culture of Día de los Muertos largely revolved around a wide range of Pre-Colombian imagery and material culture. For instance, Ralph Maradiaga's posters for Día de los Muertos in 1974, 1975, and 1976 all used traditional Mexican calavera (Skeleton) or Aztec imagery.

The Mission Cultural Center opened in the summer of 1977 and held its first exhibit for Día de los Muertos that same year. Salvadoran gallery coordinator Gilberto Osorio recalls, "The idea for the show was presented by a white person, and the whole committee decided to do the show together. People asked, 'What is the traditional

⁶¹⁹ "El Patronato del Sexto Festival Annual de la Raza/Hispanidad 71 Presenta Día de las Animas," poster (San Francisco, CA: Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes, November 2, 1971). Document from the personal papers of Don Santina.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.* On the erasure of Casa Hispana, see chapter three. Moreover, Casa Hispana's willingness to orient much of its programming around the literature and poetry of Spain, the colonizer as opposed to the colonized, tended to give the organization an antiquated aura. This event was no exception in its Hispanic

color—black?’ And we told them, ‘No, orange.’ They asked if there was any artist particularly associated with the holiday, and we told José Guadalupe Posada, a Mexican graphic artist who influenced Siqueiros and Orozco. We all read books and studied together, in order to do the show.” The article adds, “Displays included an Homenaje a los Revolucionarios Inconocidos [Homage to Unknown Revolutionaries]; a 4000 year old mummified foot from a tomb in Peru; and an amazing display, by Carlos Cordova, of the herbs and saints traditionally associated with the day of the dead.”⁶²¹

Educating children was an important principle of the celebrations. In 1976, Maria Piñedo of Galería de la Raza reported that more than 700 children toured the gallery and viewed the Día de los Muertos show. Many, she added, “returned later with their families for a second look.”⁶²² The gallery produced mask workshops, showed films, educated school children, led processions, and created eye-popping exhibits. Their success encouraged other locales to do the same.

Also in the late 1970s, the Galería started a public procession for the event, likely inspired by the success of the Self-Help Graphics procession in Los Angeles. Though the first San Francisco procession only counted a hundred people, the event grew into the thousands over the course of the 1980s. According to Maria Pinedo, ‘Back in the ‘70s the procession started as an art expression. It began with the idea that in Mexico, in the evening, people used to go to the cemeteries and have all night vigils combined with a celebratory event. ... We only had 100 people back then. We made hot chocolate on a hot

representations. Casa Hispana’s emphasis on the Spanish culture had alienating repercussions in a neighborhood that was trying to cultivate its indigenous heritage.

⁶²¹ Osorio is quoted in Scott Riklin, “Galería Museo: Mirror of the Mission,” *The Arts Biweekly*, November – December 1977, 3-4.

plate and served cake afterwards.’ The little group even attempted to create little bonfires, ‘but the fire department stopped us and gave us fines.’⁶²³ Her recollection gives insight into the intimate appeal of the celebration – of modest size, familial, and close-knit.

A breakthrough in locally reconceptualizing Día de los Muertos emerged through the 1978 celebration. Curated by Carmen Lomas Garza, Amalia Mesa Bains, and María Piñedo, the event was dedicated entirely to the memory of Frida Kahlo [Fig. 6.4]. The show was a powerful statement in support of a then little-known Mexican female artist. The show catalogue declared, “This interest in Ms. Kahlo is shared by many for Frida Kahlo ‘speaks’ to and for all of us. She truly is an artist of universal meaning. ... Given the recent widespread interest in Frida Kahlo, it was decided to focus on her for this year’s fiesta honoring the dead.”⁶²⁴ In tandem with the forthcoming publication of works on Kahlo by Hayden Herrera and Raquel Tibol, the moment was a turning point in Frida historiography, bringing Kahlo out from behind her husband Diego Rivera’s shadow.⁶²⁵ In dedicating Día de los Muertos to Frida Kahlo, local artists transitioned a traditionally private offering to friends and loved ones to a profound homage to a public figure.

⁶²² Maria Piñedo, “Galería de la Raza,” *KPFA Folio*, Vol. 28 (2), February 1977.

⁶²³ Marta Sanchez, “DeadCalm: Galería de la Raza Brings Intimacy to Day of the Dead Tradition,” *New Mission News*, October 1993, 11.

⁶²⁴ “Homenaje a Frida Kahlo / Homage to Frida Kahlo,” Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, November 2 – December 17, 1978, Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA. Also see, Ramón Favela, “The Image of Frida Kahlo in Chicano Art,” in *Pasion Por Frida*, eds., Blanca Garduño, José Antonio Rodríguez (Mexico: Museo Estudio Diego Rivera, De Grazia Art and Cultural Foundation, 1992), 185-189. Favela discusses the significant role that Galería de la Raza played in the Frida Kahlo revival.

⁶²⁵ Raquel Tibol, *Frida Kahlo: Cronica, Testimonios y Aproximaciones* (Mexico: Ediciones de Cultura Popular, 1977); Tibol, *Frida Kahlo: Una Vida Abierta* (1983; reprint, Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Oasis, 1987); Hayden Herrera, *Frida, a Biography of Frida Kahlo* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983); Edward Sullivan, “Frida Kahlo in New York,” in *Pasion Por Frida*, 182-184.



Fig. 6.4: René Yanez, Homenaje a Frida Kahlo / Altar to Frida Kahlo, Galería de la Raza, 1978. Photograph by María Pinedo. Image from CEMA, catalog number Cat.3 099(11).

Timothy Drescher writes, “The opening reception was an evening of rare respect and intensity, where people who had known and worked with Frida wore necklaces she had given them, and those who had studied her paintings and recognized an affinity with her wore earrings of hands holding paintbrushes, as Frida had worn.”⁶²⁶ The show proved to be a mobilizing force in the community – an effective method of recovering history, showing solidarity, and establishing power.

LIMITED ENTRÉE: DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS IN THE MUSEUM

By the end of the 1970s, the learning curve for Día de los Muertos had plateaued in the Bay Area. Familiarity with the event dispelled the initial discomfort. In fact, the celebration emerged as a multicultural favorite, with shows at San Francisco State University, the De Young Museum, the Mexican Museum, the Triton Museum, and the Mission Cultural Center. By 1981, Galería de la Raza curator Carmen Lomas Garza stated, “This last year we saw that our annual Day of the Dead / Día de los Muertos exhibition has had an influence on other arts institutions, especially the major ones such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art ... A cultural center in Texas has started the same tradition of Day of the Dead shows after seeing our presentations and doing some research in our Resource Center.”⁶²⁷ In fact, a sense of the celebrations spiraling growth likely motivated the pronounced declarations of Galería authorship. In various ways, San

⁶²⁶ Timothy Drescher, “The Galería de la Raza / Studio 24 Culture and Community,” article draft, no date, Tomas Ybarra-Frausto Collection, Archives of American Art, Box 9.

Francisco's Galería de la Raza sought to lay claim, not entirely unjustly, to this cultural shift that was no longer just a local, but national phenomenon.⁶²⁸

However, neither museums nor altar-makers were entirely comfortable with Día de los Muertos entering the more austere art world. In 1975, the De Young Museum invited Garfias Woo to display her Día de los Muertos collection and to create a traditional Oaxacan altar. Though Garfias Woo was glad to participate in this educational project, she experienced resistance among the staff: "I heard many people say ... this is very cute and everything, but it doesn't belong in a Fine Arts Museum." They viewed the show as "artsy craftsy" and beneath the purview of a major museum.⁶²⁹

Museum staff had to reconsider their dismissive response. Though Garfias Woo had instructed them to leave the altar to her care, staff members took it upon themselves to create her altar. That the staff even considered creating Garfias Woo's altar for her betrayed a certain disregard for the artist's skill. Garfias Woo recalls, "It was very symmetrical, very western, very European, so when I came down after work, I said, 'you know you did a great job guys but, let me fix this a little bit.' And they all stood and they were watching me and they said, 'oh, oh!' because it was so totally different from anything that they had ever done."⁶³⁰ [Fig. 6.1 is a sample of Garfias Woo's work.]

⁶²⁷ Carmen Lomas Garza, "California Arts Council Evaluation Form," San Francisco: Galería de la Raza, 1980-81. Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA, Box 6/2.

⁶²⁸ The 1983 program firmly stated that "Día de los Muertos in San Francisco started with an idea discussed by René Yañez and Ralph Maradiaga in August, 1972" and "Museums and other galleries have created Día de los Muertos exhibitions based on the concept originated by Galería de la Raza in 1972." No mention of Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes appeared in the program. Though only initiating the practice a year prior to Galería de la Raza, the continuing absence of Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes in our historical narratives is indicative of the work that needs to be done to recapture our social histories during the 1960s and 1970s. "Día de los Muertos" program, Galería de la Raza, 1983.

⁶²⁹ Garfias Woo interview, 2003.

⁶³⁰ *Ibid.*

Moreover, the Museum staff quickly learned that this “artsy craftsy” folk art drew major media attention. The day the show opened, a museum representative called Garfias Woo in a panic, stating, “We have channels four, five, and seven here, with full camera crews, and they’re asking all kinds of questions and there’s nobody here who can answer anything.” Not only did Garfias Woo come to their aid, but the experience launched her involvement with a one-hour ABC television special on Día de los Muertos. NBC’s “Alma de Bronce” show also covered the event, as did CBS’s “Somos Vida.” Garfias Woo thinks the experience may have awakened the museum to the larger meaningfulness and popular appeal of her work. She adds with just a touch of self-satisfaction, “I found out afterward that this had always been a sore spot for the museum. They could never get news people to the Museum for the opening of any exhibit. ... And here they had all three channels.”⁶³¹ Though some museum staff may have viewed the skill of altar-making with ambivalence, they could hardly ignore the popularity of their new exhibition.

Garfias Woo’s experience is important in conveying how altar makers were not perceived as artists among contemporary art institutions, though they were steadily gaining *entrée*. The work was “folk art,” or “outsider art,” but not “contemporary art.” Nor did altar-makers necessarily see themselves as artists. Their work was a ritual of daily life and a deeply personal and communal invocation of spiritual desires, not something that many imagined ever to appear in art institutions. In a 1993 interview, Mexican altartist Herminia Romero said of altars, “Es un deber y una costumbre. En él se ve la inspiración de la persona, sus cualidades. Pero allá nunca pensamos que es un arte.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*

Es como escribir a máquina.” (It is a necessity and a custom. In it one sees the inspiration of the individual, their qualities. But there, we never thought of it as an art. It is like writing on a typewriter.)⁶³²

Both altar-makers and taste-makers responded ambivalently to the representation of altar-making as an art form, yet increasingly, the altars were reflecting avant-garde influences and contemporary political visions that eschewed the “folk art” label. In particular, the rise of installation art as an accepted medium in the art world was a significant factor in changing how artists and art-based institutions reconceptualized altar-making.⁶³³ Mia Galavíz de Gonzalez referring to her first altar as her first installation is indicative of the affinity between these two worlds. Similarly, Amalia Mesa-Bains once noted the two threads influencing her creative process: “The making of altars grew out of my early experiences in my family and in the church. My formal training as an artist has affected the form of expression despite it[s] basically spiritual and ceremonial nature. Construed by many to be a folk art form, the altar maintains some traditional elements, yet it is a contemporary medium.”⁶³⁴ For both of these artists, their work was not just a product of their ethnic identity, but of their understanding of themselves as artists. This dual identity was important in stimulating creativity and challenging traditional iconography for a generation of artists wishing to experiment with

⁶³² “Herminia Romero: El Arte de Hacer Altares,” *Segundamano*, November 16-30, 1993, 1 (Translation mine).

⁶³³ Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (New York; London: Routledge, 2005); Hugh M. Davies, et al., *Blurring the Boundaries: Installation Art, 1969-1996* (San Diego, CA: Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, 1997); Nicolas de Oliveira, Nicola Oxley, Michael Petry, *Installation Art in the New Millennium: The Empire of the Senses* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994); and Mark Rosenthal, *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer* (Munich; London: Prestel, 2003).

this new medium. As Kay Turner and Pat Jasper observe of the new altar-making, “some of the treatments are personal, some are political, some are fanciful, but all of them remove the *ofrenda* tradition from its original Mexican folk context by making use of the altar not as a religious and familial site primarily, but as a sculptural form that generates the potential for a multilayered assemblage of images, objects, and meanings.”⁶³⁵ The professionalization of American *ofrendas* would parallel and mirror the growth of installation art and assemblage, and thereby at times obscure the separate political and spiritual implications.

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS AND POLITICAL INSURGENCY

By the early 1980s, the visual culture of Día de los Muertos was branching in all directions. Local artists were connecting the event to a wide range of encounters with death, in the present, in the past, and in the future. In fact, the early 1980s marked a clear transition in the celebration, as the altars and the procession reflected a forceful adaptation of political messages. The works of Ester Hernández provide a brief glimpse into the multi-directionality of the images. For the 1983 show, Ester Hernández submitted at least three works. One was her now famous serigraph “Sun Mad,” (1981) [Fig. 6.5] which clearly pointed the finger at California’s grape growers as agents of death, by displacing the traditional image of the smiling Sun Maid Raisins girl with a

⁶³⁴ Amalia Mesa-Bains, “Altar as an Art Form” statement, n.d. Tomas Ybarra-Frausto collection, AAA, Box 14/Mesa-Bains.

more ominous calavera. Hernandez later stated, “I made the print ‘Sun Mad’ as a very personal reaction to my shock when I discovered that the water in my hometown, Dinuba, California, which is the center of the raisin-producing territory, had been contaminated by pesticides for 25 to 30 years. I realized I had drunk and bathed in this water.”⁶³⁶

Hernández’s depiction undercuts the pleasant marketing imagery with an image that is both humorous and not. As Amalia Mesa-Bains points out, “In the fashion of the Mexican popular arts printer, Posada, Hernández applies the *muertitos* tradition of satire to America’s sweetheart.”⁶³⁷ Though this work in particular has captured tremendous attention as an image representing the concerns of many, it was also a very personal mediation on Hernández’s own mortality.

Hernández’s work has been adept at integrating contemporary signs of death with the traditional iconography of Día de los Muertos. In another work, “Self-Portrait with Tecate, Watermelon and Nuclear Explosion,” Hernandez portrayed herself with an *ofrenda* of beer and watermelon in front of a mushroom cloud.⁶³⁸ The theme of nuclear proliferation was not unique to Hernandez in the exhibit. For instance, Chilean artist René Castro submitted his sardonic, “Nuclear War is a Dangerous Sport.” Similarly, in 1985, Irene Perez exhibited her silkscreen of missiles launching from the Lotería card of

⁶³⁵ Kay Turner and Pat Jasper, “Day of the Dead: The Tex-Mex Tradition,” in *Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life*, ed., Jack Santino (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 133-151.

⁶³⁶ Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, “Turning It Around: Chicana Art Critic Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano Discusses the Insider/Outsider Visions of Ester Hernández and Yolanda López,” *Crossroads*, May 1993, 15.

⁶³⁷ Amalia Mesa-Bains, “The Art of Provocation: Works by Ester Hernández,” Gorman Museum, UC Davis, Davis, CA, October 10-November 17, 1995, 3.

⁶³⁸ Día de los Muertos artist applications for Ester Hernandez; Jack Heyman; Jos Sances and René Castro, 1983. Galería de la Raza collection, CEMA, Box 16/7.

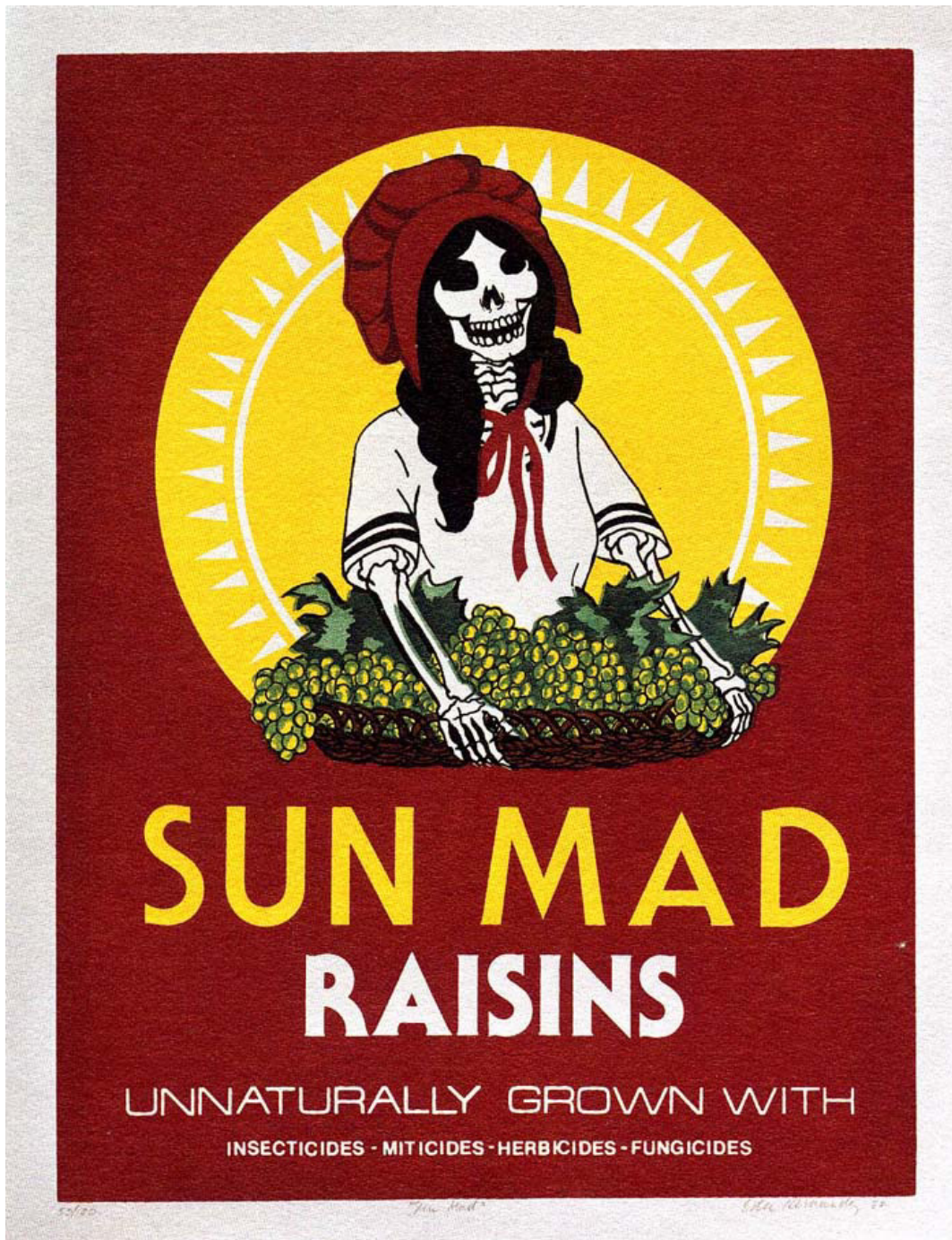


Fig. 6.5: Ester Hernandez, “Sun Mad” 1982. Image copied from *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 61.

death; depicted nearby is the Lotería card for “El Mundo,” or “The World,” but in this instance, the globe is black and the future looks grim. The artists relied on the event’s festive attitude toward death to cope with the greatest imaginable tragedies. The works were intended to critique the nuclear arms race, but also to relate to their Mission District audience in a shared cultural language – the visual and ritual cues of Día de los Muertos.

Though humor continued to resonate in the celebration, the force of human trauma abroad and at home escalated the expression of more serious responses. Multiple artists used the event to take issue with growing violence in Central America. René Castro and Jos Sances produced a work entitled, “We the Disappeared Have a Right To a Shroud,” which featured a full-body skeleton laid out beneath a transparent white veil.⁶³⁹ The work heightened visibility for the rising numbers of “desaparecidos,” but in its title also demanded dignity for the dead. The horrors of death were not simply in the senseless violence, but in the strewn remains of human bodies. Other works reflected growing concerns over issues in Central America. Labor activist Jack Heyman showed two of his documentary photographs from 1983: one called “Mothers of Slain Nicaraguan Soldiers are Honored Guests at Military Rally in Jalapa, Nicaragua,” and the other titled, “Managua Cemetery,” which featured the sister of a slain Sandinista soldier. Both photographs were used to critique the CIA’s covert funding of the Contras in Honduras.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

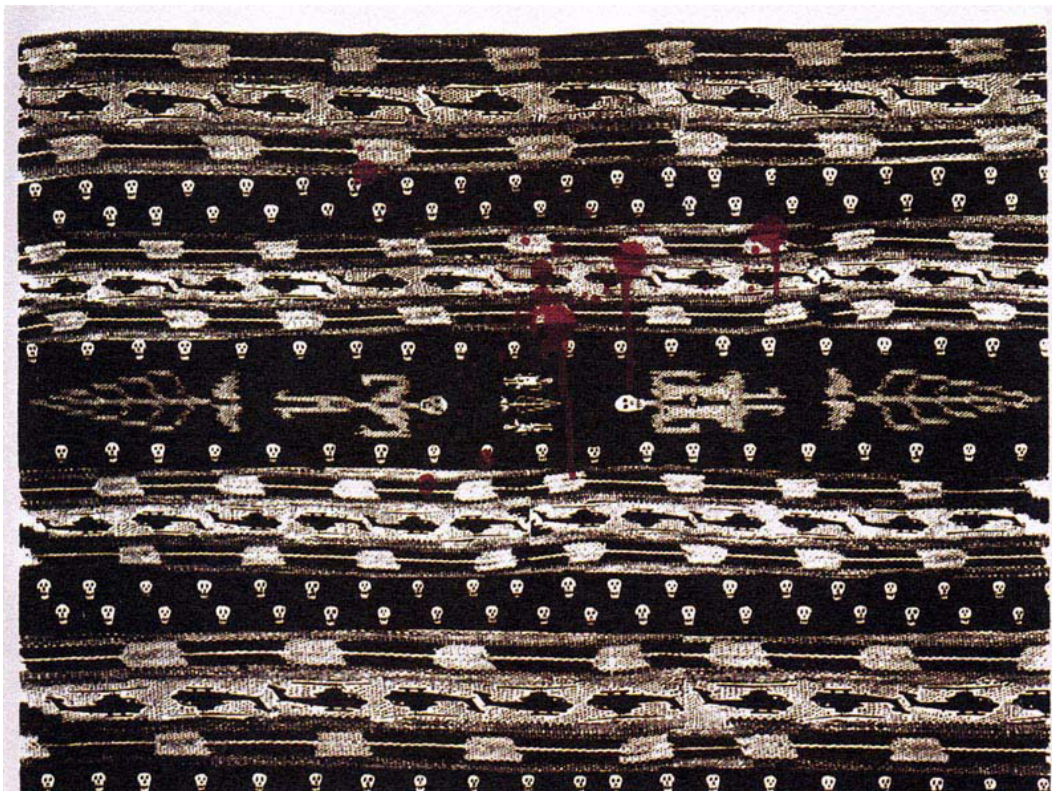


Fig. 6.6: Ester Hernandez, “Weaving of the Disappeared,” 1984. Image copied from *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 51.

Similarly, in 1984, Ester Hernandez showed her “Weaving for the Disappeared,” [Fig. 6.6] an image that resembled the rebozo cloth of Central America, but that was imprinted with signs of violence – helicopters, bodies, skulls, and spilled blood.

Even the San Francisco landscape transitioned to reflect the undercurrent politicization of Día de los Muertos. Like years before, the 1984 procession wound through Balmy Alley towards Garfield Park, but the 1984 march had a profoundly different feel. Significantly, Día de los Muertos takes place right before November elections; thus, the 1984 celebration was particularly tense, with the reelection of President Ronald Reagan hanging in the balance. In protest of President Reagan’s policies in Central America, thirty local artists, many of whom regularly participated in Día de los Muertos, had come together during the summer of 1984, to paint murals along Balmy Alley in protest of U.S. intervention in Central America. As processioners walked alongside the alley, they passed a sea of murals, including Juana Alicia’s “We Hear You Guatemala”; Keith Sklar’s “Para Centro America”; Brooke Fancher’s “My Child Has Never Seen His Father”; Miranda Bergman and O’Brien Thiele’s “Culture Contains the Seeds of Resistance,” [Fig. 5.16] and many more. The procession ended in Garfield Park with the creation of a communal altar and multiple performances. The Reagan years were instrumental in radicalizing San Francisco’s Día de los Muertos celebration into an emotional expression for the Left.

The theme of violence in Central America continued to inspire local artists throughout the 1980s, sometimes with direct statements, and at other times, more abstractly. For instance, processioners delivered a clear indictment of the situation in El

Salvador in 1989 with a banner stating, “We Salvadorans Salute Our Brothers and Sisters and Spit in the Face of the Military that Assassinated them.”⁶⁴¹ Alternatively, and more obliquely, Enrique Chagoya created “Monument to the Missing Gods,” for the 1987 show: Two hanging cigar-box constructions counter-balanced each other on separate black and red backgrounds [Fig. 6.7]. In the black box, Chagoya placed a set of miniature skulls inside and around the edges of the box in homage to the Tzompantlis, or skull racks, of pre-Columbian ruins. However, by placing coke bottles in the red box, Chagoya paralleled the skulls with coke bottles, loosely equating death with Coca Cola. The black and red colors alluded to pre-Columbian knowledge, but also represented the colors of European anarchists, Mexican strikers, and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas.⁶⁴² By featuring the work in a Día de los Muertos exhibition, the piece carried the meaning of an ofrenda and an appeal for the gods to support these Leftist causes. Just as native peoples of the past offered up the skulls of their enemies to the gods, so Chagoya offered up the bottles of Coca Cola. Even so, a sense of hopelessness is implied in his title, “Monument to the Missing Gods.” The piece was emblematic of how the political situation stirred the expression of creativity and grief. Such activity mounted as the impact of AIDS became more prominent in the city and around the world.

⁶⁴¹ Día de los Muertos procession photograph, “El Día de los Muertos 1989” Exhibition, San Francisco: Galería de la Raza, November 2, 1989. [Old ID No. 293(1-75) = Cat.3 023(1-75) New ID No. Cat.3 023(1-75)] Galería de la Raza collection, Center Activities and Programs, CEMA.

⁶⁴² Moira Roth, “Interview by Moira Roth,” in *Enrique Chagoya: When Paradise Arrived* (New York: Alternative Museum, March 11-April 29, 1989) 6.

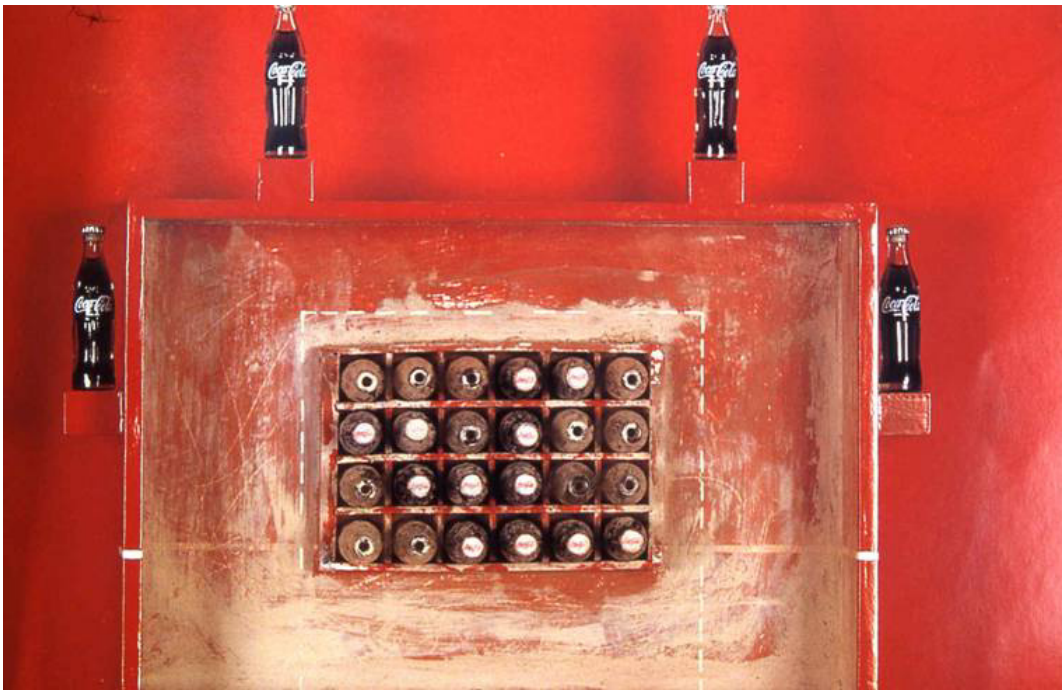


Fig. 6.7: Enrique Chagoya, “Monument to the Missing Gods,” mixed media, 1987. When installed, boxes appear side by side. Image from Amalia Mesa-Bains, *Ceremony of Memory: Nature and Memory in Contemporary Latino Art*, (San Francisco, CA: The Mexican Museum, 1993), 26-27.

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS AND AIDS

Curiously, for all the politically conscious art that appeared in the Galería de la Raza's 1983 exhibition, little evidence remains to suggest that year's show addressed an increasingly urgent local concern: AIDS. In August of 1981, local health reports accounted for eighteen cases of Bay Area gay men battling an unusual immune deficiency.⁶⁴³ By that December, New York's gay newspapers were crowded with stories on a series of new diseases befalling gay men, but the San Francisco press was slower to follow suit. However, by the fall of 1982, just a little over a year after those first 18 cases, a sense of the gravity of San Francisco's situation was sinking in and mobilizing local political forces. In fact, later reports estimated at least 20 percent of San Francisco's gay men were infected with the AIDS virus by the end of 1982. In September of 1982, the city allotted \$450,000 for the Shanti Project to create the world's first AIDS clinic, grief counseling and personal support center. Though the sum was not even half a million dollars, journalist Randy Shilts pointed out that the amount was "nearly 20 percent of the money committed to fighting the AIDS epidemic for the entire United States, including all the science and epidemiology expenditures by the U.S. government."⁶⁴⁴ The fallout of such short-sightedness on the part of the Federal Government would become obvious as high infection rates were to produce the skyrocketing mortality rates of 1986 and 1987.

⁶⁴³ Shilts, *And The Band Played On*, 90.

⁶⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 188; 209.

In an effort to draw attention to this major public health threat, San Francisco activist Gary Walsh led the planning of a candlelight march. Multiple cities joined in on the May 2, 1983 event. He was inspired by the memory of a similar march following former supervisor Dan White's murders of Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor Moscone. The funereal crowd carried photographs and signs commemorating the dead. Many showed signs of their own physical deterioration.⁶⁴⁵ The candlelight march of 1983 was one of the earliest attempts to grapple with the grief of AIDS in a public way.

By 1983, the topic of AIDS was circulating more in the mainstream media, but it still carried multiple social taboos as a perceived "gay disease," or "sex disease." Arguably, Latinos in the Mission were reluctant to respond publicly to a sexually transmitted disease, particularly a disease so closely tied to homosexuality.⁶⁴⁶ A reporter writing about the deaths between 1981 and 1986 (more than 1,500) noted, "Although the AIDS virus is nondiscriminatory - and in fact attacks children, men and women of all sexual orientations - all but three percent of its victims in San Francisco have been gay or bisexual men."⁶⁴⁷ Whether or not this assessment is accurate, the statement tended to give false credibility to the popular perception of AIDS as a "gay disease."

The impact of AIDS was not obvious in the 1983 public celebration of Día de los Muertos, but by 1984, reverberations were apparent. Unavoidably, signs of the disease's impact began to filter into the celebration. Juan Pablo Gutierrez's ofrenda from the 1984

⁶⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 284.

⁶⁴⁶ Silvana Paternostro, *In the Land of God and Man: Confronting Our Sexual Culture* (New York: Dutton, 1998); David Roman, *Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture, and AIDS* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Sander L. Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988); and Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* (New York: Picador USA, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989).

Día de los Muertos show at Galería de la Raza delivered a powerful visual plea [Fig. 6.8]. The free-standing hinged wall display festooned with purple ribbons stood not just to remember the dead, but to critique the living for the failure to take action. In large letters appeared the text, “Mientras la sociedad nos da la espalda, morimos miles, y miles, y miles...” or “while society turns its back, we die by thousands and thousands...” Works such as this show how ofrendas became a powerful medium to mourn, as well as demand activism.

In addition, at least one of the Día de los Muertos performances of 1984 dramatized the impact of AIDS. Photographs document the scene of a man with a pink triangle shirt speaking to the crowd next to “bodies of evidence” – people tagged as dead with their backs facing the audience [Fig. 6.9]. The 1984 celebration was a turning point for Día de los Muertos in San Francisco, affirming the celebration as a means to express the political voice of those disenfranchised by President Reagan’s policy of silence when it came to the AIDS virus. The lack of media coverage, the failure of the federal government to act quickly, and the slowness of health education and blood bank testing all contributed to the high rate of infection. Randy Shilts wrote, “In no place in the Western world was this despondent future more palpable than on Castro Street [in San Francisco] in late 1984,” and notably, “many turned to mysticism.”⁶⁴⁸

Reagan’s reelection on November 6, 1984 contributed to the despondency, but also forced a new insurgency. Shilts saw the Gay Pride Parade of 1985 as marking a

⁶⁴⁷ Guthmann, “AIDS Artists Remembered,” 1986.

⁶⁴⁸ Shilts, 1987, 491-2.



Fig. 6.8: Juan Pablo Gutierrez, “AIDS/SIDA” altar, Galería de la Raza, 1984. Photographer unknown, Assemblage, Galería de la Raza collection, catalogue numbers 7003-1 and 7003-2, CEMA.



Fig. 6.9: Outdoor performance, Día de los Muertos, 1984. Image from the Linda Lucero Collection, Binder #2A, CEMA.

cultural shift: “The depression that had marked the penultimate phase of a community coming to grips with widespread death was beginning to lift.” The moment marked a gradual acceptance of AIDS as a life-changing, culture-changing force, but the time was also a turning point for AIDS activism – a new determination to reverse the odds.⁶⁴⁹

Mourning for AIDS became a prominent public activity over the course of the late 1980s, evidenced by the creation of the AIDS Candlelight vigil in 1983, the AIDS quilt in 1985, Art Against AIDS in 1987, and A Day without Art in 1989. The culture of mourning as activism proliferated throughout public life. The 1980s marked a cultural shift for acceptance of large-scale public mourning in America, relying on grief to mobilize communal concern and generate healing. Additional influences, such as the visual power of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1984) in Washington, D.C., and the high profile mourning of the Mothers of the Plaza Mayor in Argentina, showed the political and emotional relevance of grieving publicly.⁶⁵⁰

In San Francisco, the intersections between Día de los Muertos and AIDS became more prominent. Grace Cathedral, an Episcopal Church, created a Day of the Dead service as part of an “AIDS Day of Remembrance.” Similarly, Yolanda Garfias Woo, an instrumental force in the cultural reclamation of Día de los Muertos in San Francisco, recalled how a Presbyterian church invited her to set up an altar in Oakland. Garfias Woo stated, “I was kind of surprised because there were almost no Hispanics. ...But

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 569.

⁶⁵⁰ Roman, *Acts of Intervention*; Shepard, *White Nights and Ascending Shadows*; Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997); Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997); David Rimaneli, “Time Capsules, 1986-1990 – Chronology,” *ArtForum*, April 2003.

when I went there to do the presentation, they had a huge AIDS quilt out, and they said that so many of their parishioners had died that they really wanted to do an altar in their church for these AIDS victims.”⁶⁵¹ Her experience represents how Día de los Muertos altar-making filtered throughout the city and beyond, largely in response to AIDS.

MOURNING FOR THE WORLD: DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS AND EXPRESSIONS OF TRANSNATIONAL GRIEF

Gradually, Día de los Muertos transitioned to respond to a vast range of spiritual and political desires for mourning. Perhaps one of the most profound changes to San Francisco’s celebration came as a result of René Yañez leaving Galería de la Raza to work as an independent curator. One of his first solo events was to prepare a “Rooms for the Dead” exhibit at the Mission Cultural Center in 1990. Galería de la Raza was a small space, but the Mission Cultural Center was a former department store offering vast possibilities. Yañez split up the top floor into a maze of 29 private rooms, each eight foot by eight foot, and “each containing a universe of creations, memories, and reflections on life and death.”⁶⁵² The labyrinthine setting created many intimate environments for mourning, which taken as a whole, became a powerfully moving reflection of grief in the city.

Yañez not only physically expanded the concept of Día de los Muertos exhibitions, but he culturally expanded the scope. He wanted to build a multicultural

⁶⁵¹ Garfias Woo interview, 2003.

⁶⁵² “Rooms for the Dead” press release, Mission Cultural Center, San Francisco, November 2, 1990. Personal papers of René Yanez.

celebration that encompassed not just Latino artists, but everyone in the city. More than fifty artists participated in the “Rooms for the Dead Exhibit,” with each bringing their personal and political visions to bear. Traveling through the rooms, one encountered altars dedicated to heroes of the Left, such as Chilean president Salvador Allende and Nicaraguan revolutionary Augusto Sandino. Other altars were more abstract: Chicana artist Mia Gonzalez created an altar to Cuban-American artist Ana Mendieta, invoking Mendieta’s abstract style within the altar [Fig. 6.10]; Pilar Olabarria, in “For Whom The Bell Tolls,” represented blood-shed in the Mid-East by hanging tiny bells from thin red ribbons, like lives hanging by a thread; Mauricio Rivera played with the idea of “Lost Souls,” in his montage of shoe soles and other amorphous forms; and Flora Campoy’s room of “Reflexions, Reflections,” grieved for Latinos with AIDS, as well as took issue with the Catholic Church for failing to offer support⁶⁵³ The 1990 show solidified the expression of Leftist political sentiments within the ritual framework of San Francisco’s Día de los Muertos.

The show was a sumptuous visual feast that opened the eyes of many. Reports suggested close to 1,000 people attended the opening night reception and about 5,000 attended the procession. Cultural critic José Antonio Burciaga wrote a short essay on the “Chingonometric” event. He noted how the steady stream of school children who visited the event, turned “abuzz with the bewildering discovery of a Disneyland of death.” In part, he wrote to scold the failure of Bay Area art critics to not write a single article on

⁶⁵³ José Antonio Burciaga, “Rooms for Los Muertos,” n.d. / c.1990. Personal papers of René Yañez; Gary Gach, “Expunging Death: Rooms for the Dead at Galería Museo,” *Artweek*, November 22, 1990, Vol. 21 (39), 13.

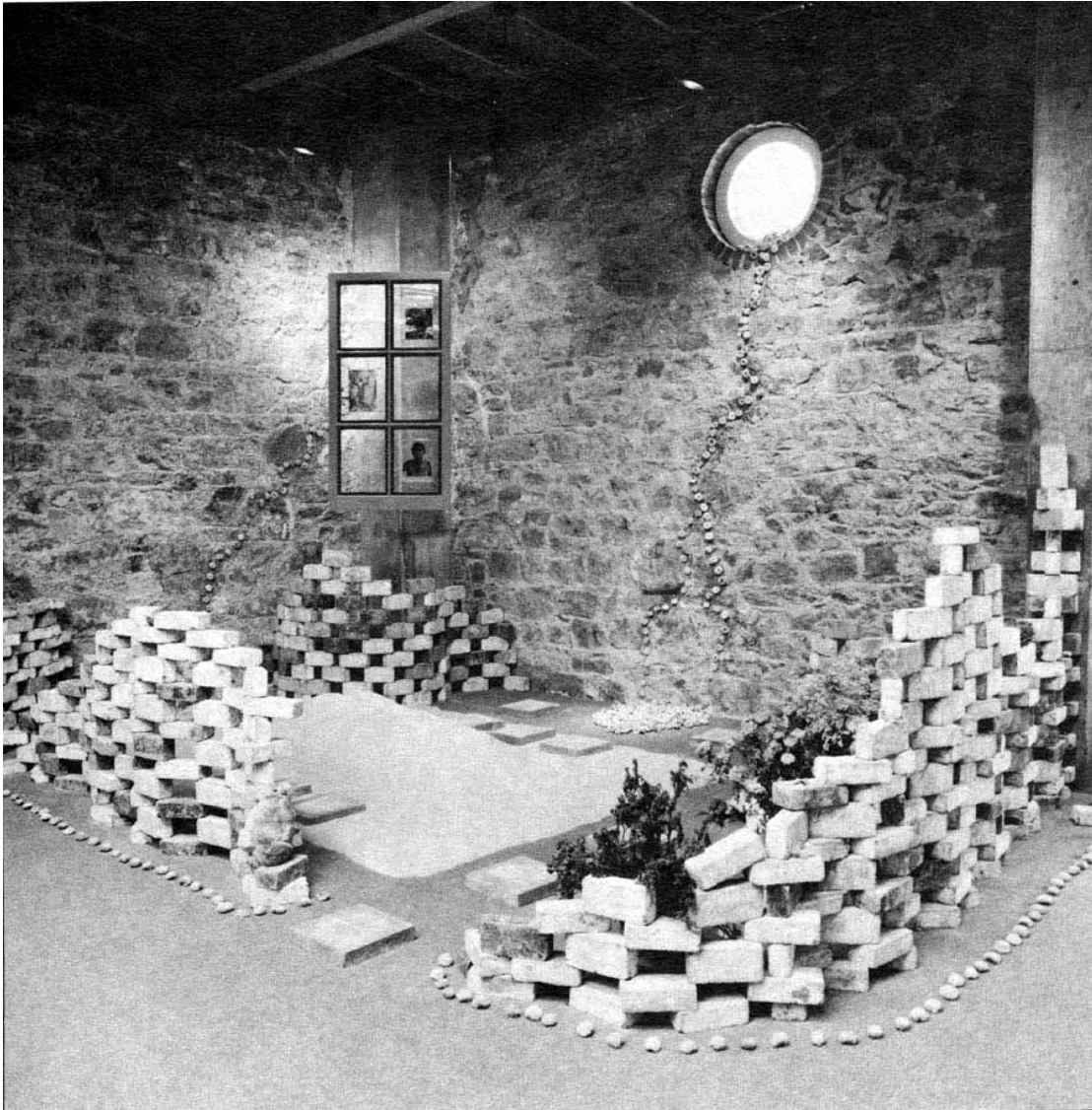


Fig. 6.10: Amelia "Mia" Galaviz de Gonzalez. "Homage to Ana [Mendieta] II," 1995. Image from Stacey Moss, curator, *The Day of the Dead* (San Francisco, CA: Weigand Gallery, 1995), 15.

Day of the Dead.⁶⁵⁴ While shows of the late 1980s had received press, the coverage was gauged entirely on human interest, and not on the art. René Yañez felt that the spirit of the event was too different from the art world's contemporary expectations. In fact, though Día de los Muertos found much inspiration in the growing popularity of installation art, he was searching for work that was less in line with current trends: "I went through a lot of proposals by professional artists who wanted to put in neon and stainless steel, but I was looking for ones with heartfelt expression, with a lot of passion."⁶⁵⁵ Perhaps Burciaga's scolding did not fall on deaf ears; *Artweek* shortly thereafter gave the show an admiring review. Reviewer Gary Gach wrote, "Quite simply, *Rooms* is an intercultural landmark, monumental, universal, diverse."⁶⁵⁶ The elaborate creative works, the high attendance, the new public recognition all suggested that in 1990, San Francisco's Día de los Muertos had entered a new phase. Yañez remarked, "This is an American custom now. I don't know where it's going; it's taken on a life of its own."⁶⁵⁷

CONSUMING DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS: THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTHENTICITY

By the late 1980s, Día de los Muertos celebrations appeared everywhere in San Francisco, as well as around the country. As Kay Turner and Pat Jasper note, "the trend continued to grow—in fact, it exploded—and by the late 1980s, Day of the Dead exhibits

⁶⁵⁴ Burciaga, "Rooms for Los Muertos," n.d.

⁶⁵⁵ Dawn Garcia, "Mexican Day of Dead Revived," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 2, 1990, 4.

⁶⁵⁶ Gach, "Expunging Death," 1990.

were being held in such diverse places as New York City, Chicago, Houston, and Miami.”⁶⁵⁸ Events ranged from museum and gallery exhibits, to musical performances, to theatrical productions, to dances, to art demonstrations. The primary Latino organizational forces in San Francisco were Galería de la Raza, The Mission Cultural Center, La Raza Grafica, and the Mexican Museum. In 1989, *Sunset Magazine* devoted four glossy pages to Day of the Dead in the Mission. The author encouraged readers to visit the Mission and enjoy the exotic other: “Watch a Mexican artist spin a sugar skull or whittle a fantasy afterworld for the Day of the Dead—then shop for colorfully macabre holiday artifacts.” The author also recommended sampling the pastries of calaveras, conchas, and churros, and provided a long list of restaurants to investigate. The mainstream press easily adjusted to selling Día de los Muertos as just another cheerful Mexican-style fiesta to enjoy eating unusual foods and wearing dramatic costumes. The surface coverage of the event submerged its political and social meaning. *Sunset Magazine*’s only reference to the events social issues was in the fleeting reference to processioners “bearing crosses for people killed in Central America, or people who have died from AIDS.”⁶⁵⁹ Few of the articles gave much thought to the meaning of death, who was dying, and who were the people being remembered.

Since 1990, Día de los Muertos has experienced considerable growing pains as a result of its popularity, particularly in terms of the procession, which grew from a hundred people in the 1970s, to several thousand in the early 1990s. While the altars

⁶⁵⁷ Swift, “Day of the Dead Rises Across the Border,” 1990.

⁶⁵⁸ Turner and Jasper, “Day of the Dead: The Tex-Mex Tradition,” in *Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life*, 134.

⁶⁵⁹ “Lively Times in Latino San Francisco,” *Sunset*, October 1989, 32-37.

inside were becoming more experimental, more multicultural, more installation-like, and more dramatic, the procession also was undergoing change. Reporter Lon Daniels described the scene of thousands of people in 1990 as follows: “Costumed participants resembled extras in horror movies. Makeup made some look like emaciated zombies. Giant sculptures of bird and dog skeletons flanked parts of the parade. Human skeletons seemed to dance while visions of death walked on stilts and percussion instruments punctuated the evening with rhythms reminiscent of Carnival celebrations.”⁶⁶⁰ The physical distinctions between Halloween and Día de los Muertos were blurring, and the cultural guardians of Día de los Muertos were beginning to register their concern.

Event organizers were struggling with the popularized simplifications of Día de los Muertos. The malleability that initially culled so much support now threatened the event’s Latino and politically Left orientation. Over the course of the 1970s and ‘80s, not only had Día de los Muertos undergone a cultural awakening, but the same was true for Halloween. In fact, in 1981, San Francisco journalist Warren Hinckle declared, “with the gay explosion in San Francisco in the early ‘70s [Halloween] became the gay national holiday.”⁶⁶¹ The high-profile of New York’s carnivalesque Greenwich Village parade likely contributed to the national “queering” of the event.⁶⁶² In 1982, San Francisco

⁶⁶⁰ Lon Daniels, “The Day of the Dead: Mission District Celebrates Ancient Aztec Festival,” *San Francisco Examiner*, November 3, 1990, A1.

⁶⁶¹ Warren Hinckle, “Halloween ’81 – For Gays, a Night to Stay Home,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 2, 1981, 6. Turner and Jasper discuss the conflation between Día de los Muertos and Halloween in “Day of the Dead: The Tex-Mex Tradition,” *Halloween and Other Festivals of Life and Death*, 135.

⁶⁶² Jack Kugelmaass writes, “Greenwich Village has a long, albeit erratic, history of impromptu Halloween celebrations, and there is undoubtedly a link between the recent emergence of such carnivalesque celebrations and the increasingly public nature of gay culture.” See, Kugelmaass, “Wishes Come True: Designing the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade,” in *Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life*, ed., Jack Santino, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 187-217 (194); Kugelmaass, “Imagining Culture: New York City’s Village Halloween Parade,” in *Feasts and Celebrations in North*

Halloween photographer Bennett Hall declared that “in a few years, Halloween will become to San Francisco what the Mardi Gras is to New Orleans—a kind of city holiday.”⁶⁶³ Just as Día de los Muertos had come to evoke a specific Chicano or Latino identity, Halloween also had grown to celebrate a carnivalesque gay identity.

However, while a celebration like Halloween could embrace death in a ghoulish fashion, it could not take on the seriousness of social and political issues in the way that Día de los Muertos could. Gradually, the cultural practices of Halloween – the ghoulish costumes, parties, and general boisterousness – were intersecting with the more meditative practices of Día de los Muertos. Fear that Halloween would turn Día de los Muertos into nothing more than an Americanized fiesta was spurring concern in the Latino community.

Simultaneously, a movement to cultivate a more authentic Halloween also was challenging the semi-established meaning of Día de los Muertos. In 1979, Starhawk published her influential book *Spiral Dance*, which advocated reclamation of Halloween as a spiritual event – “the overarching purpose was to initiate a large public ritual that melded art, music, ritual and politics, and to bring the Craft out of the broom closet.”⁶⁶⁴ Participants described themselves as part of the Reclaiming Community and advocated black magic as a positive healing agent for society’s ills. In their quest for a more traditional Halloween, or Samhain, practitioners began to implement the rites of Día de

American Ethnic Communities, eds., Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Geneviève Fabre (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 141-157.

⁶⁶³ Cynthia Robins, “The Spirits of San Francisco,” *San Francisco Examiner*, October 31, 1982, Scene/Arts 1.

los Muertos. Strangely enough, cross-pollination between Samhain and Día de los Muertos began with advocacy for public needle exchanges to prevent the spread of AIDS.

Rose May Dance, a member of the Reclaiming Community, recalled:

At the time, the City was officially saying no to needle exchange. Feinstein was mayor. It was pretty bad. Several of us came up with the idea independently that needle exchange had to start. Originally, there were thirteen of us a magical number. We did a lot of magical work, and we realized that Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead) was an extremely important day to begin. The help of the dead was very necessary for what we were doing, both the recently dead from AIDS, and the Mighty Dead of the Craft.⁶⁶⁵

The cross-cultural impact was unavoidable. Just as Día de los Muertos could serve as a vehicle for mourning AIDS, it also could serve as a vehicle for the wild celebrations of Halloween or the black magic of Samhain. In fact, recent co-leaders of the procession, Francisco Alarcon, a gay Latino poet, and Starhawk, a spiritual guide for Samhain, have embodied the celebration's diverse appeal. The issues of cultural appropriation caused consternation for some, but others continued to appreciate its flexibility.

In 1993, Galería de la Raza chose to withdraw from organizing the Día de los Muertos procession in an effort to return to a more authentic celebration. Galería director Liz Lerma explained, "We felt that we have to address the issue of people coming here but not knowing exactly why. It is not a Halloween parade, it is a Día de los Muertos procession, and that is different. It had meaning. Rather than put all our energy in

⁶⁶⁴ Georgie Dennison, "The Beginning of the Spiral Dance: It Was 20 Years Ago....: An interview with Kevyn Lutton, Starhawk, and Diane Baker," 1999, <http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/spiraldance/spiral4.html> (accessed on October 21, 2004).

producing this parade we want something that will attract more families, seniors and children. It will be a day-time event with more stress on the tradition...to educate people, to understand what Día de los Muertos is all about....”⁶⁶⁶ In rebuilding its focus, The Galería sought to institute a new tradition, the “24th Street Community Altars Window Walk.” Artist Sal Garcia led an effort to create altars in all the storefront windows along 24th Street. The displays reflected the diversity of the neighborhood: in the Fong Lam Restaurant was an altar of “dancing skeletons with bowls of rice and tea”; in the Mission Economic and Cultural Center was an ofrenda to Miles Davis and Bob Marley; in the Bank of America branch was an altar to a recently passed away vice president; and in China Books was an altar incorporating stones “arranged in the Korean symbol for rebirth.”⁶⁶⁷ Even in its efforts to kindle a more authentic celebration, Galería de la Raza still represented the event’s inclusivity as a cross-cultural opportunity for everyone to mourn.

Meanwhile, René Yañez has continued curating “Rooms for the Dead” shows, first at the Mission Cultural Center, then at Yerba Buena Gardens, and now at SOMARTS. His shows have become increasingly more spectacular and experimental, with Labyrinth-like environments that make use of every imaginable medium. Many of the altars continue to speak to political issues, though now, it is impossible to chronicle the diversity of political opinions expressed, or the number of Bay Area Día de los Muertos events.

⁶⁶⁵ George Franklin, “Ten Years of Needle Exchange in San Francisco,” *GroundWork*, 1998, <http://www.groundworknews.org/commun/commun-harm.html>, accessed on October 21, 2004.

⁶⁶⁶ “Día de los Muertos,” in “Mission Life,” in the *S.F. Independent*, October 1993, 16.

⁶⁶⁷ Susan Ferriss, “The Mission Celebrates the Dead,” *San Francisco Examiner*, November 1, 1993, A3.

CONCLUSION

When gallery leaders chose to include Día de los Muertos exhibits in their programming, they made a commitment to cultivate the event to invoke a cultural identity, to critique the Eurocentric vision of the art world, and to politically educate the community. An unexpected consequence was the creation of more exotic altars and the event's entry into unexpected cultural spheres. Yolanda Garfias Woo has voiced her concerns about the avant-garde approach to altar-making: "But what bothers me about some of the modern installations is that I'm afraid that so many people who don't really understand what Muertos is are misinterpreting it and the tradition of Muertos can be changed and lost in that process."⁶⁶⁸ In many ways, the public presentation of the event superceded the personal, familial or communal nature of its origins.

Indeed, by the early 1990s, the public celebration of Día de los Muertos in the United States had undergone a dramatic shift from its initial homage to Mexican culture. As Tomás Ybarra-Frausto notes, "If the 1960's and 70's were periods of cultural remembering (*recuerdo*) and discovery (*descubrimiento*), the millennium beyond the 1990's portends a phase of active volition (*voluntad*), a time of Mexican/ Chicano political affiliation with other domestic *Latino* groups, and cultural connection with sub-

⁶⁶⁸ Garfias Woo interview, 2003.

altern groups worldwide.”⁶⁶⁹ Now, the public celebration is widespread and easily incorporates the regional culture of its location; Día de los Muertos is as likely to be celebrated in Brattleboro, Vermont, as it is in San Francisco, or Oaxaca, and while all three locations pay tribute to the rituals, the end results reflect regional and cultural differences.

Arguably, the decision to invoke Día de los Muertos to articulate political sentiments was not a unique expression, but part of a long-standing tradition. Notably, however, the contemporary expression of political sentiments has become more forceful and direct. For example, in November of 2000, people organized a mass Day of the Dead celebration in Mexico City, Los Angeles, and Tijuana, where demonstrators protested the deadly impact of militarizing the U.S.-Mexico border with signs that asked, “Cuantos Mas?” – “How Many More?”⁶⁷⁰ [Fig. 6.11] A similar protest has evolved on the border between New Mexico and Mexico. And more recently, Día de los Muertos has served as a platform to protest the deaths of hundreds of women in Juarez, Mexico.⁶⁷¹

In San Francisco and elsewhere, consciousness of trauma on various fronts in the 1980s heightened the importance of Día de los Muertos. The event provided an important outlet for people to vent their fears of death, to speak for the dead, or for the soon to be dead. The fears of nuclear war, violence in Central America, AIDS, food and

⁶⁶⁹ Ybarra-Frausto, “Recuerdo, Descubrimiento, Voluntad,” 28.

⁶⁷⁰ Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City* (London; New York: Verso, 2000), 41.

⁶⁷¹ “2004 International Caravan for Justice in Chihuahua and Juarez,” Mexico Solidarity Network, <http://www.mexicosolidarity.org/Juarez%20and%20Chihuahua/2004%20International%20Caravan%20for%20Justice%20in%20Juarez%20and%20Chihuahua/>, accessed on November 14, 2005.

Contando los Muertos

Activistas piden un mejor conteo de los inmigrantes muertos en EE.UU.



DEMS FORDY / AP

Protestantes llevan un ataúd a lo largo de una sección de la barda fronteriza EE.UU.- México en Tijuana, el viernes 1o. de octubre, para marcar el 10o. aniversario del programa estadounidense de reforzamiento de la frontera, la Operación Guardián.
Marchers carry a casket along a section of the U.S.-Mexico border fence in Tijuana, Mexico Friday, Oct. 1, to mark the 10th anniversary of the U.S. border enforcement program, Operation Gatekeeper.

Fig. 6.11: “Contando los Muertos,” / “Counting the Dead,” the cover story for *El Californiano*, November 10, 2004. The caption states, “Marchers carry a casket along a section of the U.S.-Mexico border fence in Tijuana, Mexico Friday, Oct. 1, to mark the 10th anniversary of the U.S. border enforcement program, Operation Gatekeeper.”

water poisoning, and many other concerns, became crucial factors in reformulating the event in San Francisco and in the nation as a whole. In his short story, “Ofrenda,”

Alejandro Murguía poetically captures the spirit of Día de los Muertos in the Mission:

The Day of the Dead in La Mission is not exactly a Christian ritual, no reverent high mass, either. Aztec dancers led the procession, swooping and swaying, shuffling and twirling down the middle of 24th Street, pounding leather drums and rattling ankle bells, feathered headdresses bobbing over their braids. A raucous mob of candle-bearing Calaveras followed them, lifting their voices in song and laughter, snaking their way through the heart of the barrio like a luminous serpent. Giant machines, their stilts hidden by baggy pants, danced to a calavera batería playing fast samba riffs on their tambores. Barking dogs trailed the procession, wrought into a frenzy by so many bones. Beautiful brown angel Calaveras with wire wings bore candles for the disappeared in Central America, for those snuffed by gang violence in the barrios, for those ravaged by AIDS, for those murdered by racism, for those strangled by evictions, for the dying planet even, and for all those who don't know how to love, the living dead—the truly forever dead.⁶⁷²

Murguía's description conveys how the event jumbles together multiple visions, hopes, and fears. Above all, the celebration is a spiritual event, but its rituals also have provided a means to grapple with senseless tragedy wrought through human action. Though laced with humor, the ideas can be deadly serious and expressed with great passion. For many people who felt their culture disregarded and their political beliefs discarded, Día de los Muertos came to serve as an important nexus for spiritual and political healing in the United States [Fig. 6.12]. By openly mourning the dead, the event urges greater care for the living, and in this way, it also articulates a political vision for peace.

⁶⁷² Alejandro Murguía, *This War Called Love: 9 Stories* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2002), 62.



Fig. 6.12: Día de los Muertos, San Francisco, 2005. Photograph by Jeff Paterson, used with permission.

Epilogue

If places like the Left Bank and Greenwich Village feel vaguely historical, it's pleasing to note that artistic movements, even under the reign of globalism, can still be traced to neighborhoods, the physical places where artists, writers, and thinkers congregate. Perhaps because San Francisco is so compact, its cultural innovations, more than many other cities, have always been identified with specific, romanticized intersections. Castro and Market, gay liberation. Haight and Ashbury, hippies. Columbus and Broadway, beats. Most recently, 16th Street and Mission has become the locus of a yet to be labeled brand of art that's become one of San Francisco's most notable exports.⁶⁷³

So begins *San Francisco Bay Guardian* reporter Glen Helfand's 2002 cover story on an exciting arts movement in the city that he loosely refers to as "The Mission School." Almost immediately, the term, "Mission School," filtered into the written and verbal dialogues of the elite local and national art institutions. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Biennial, the Commonwealth Club, and a host of galleries and artists found the term useful to describe a vibrant arts scene in San Francisco's Mission District. Questions and commentary abounded: Who were these artists? What aesthetics did they share? How were they related intellectually? The newspaper and journal articles, the panel discussions, and even a documentary film sought to classify this diverse group of artists.⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁷³ Glen Helfand, "San Francisco's Street Artists Deliver Their Neighborhood to the Art World" and sidebar "16th Street and Beyond, Where to Find the 'Mission School,'" *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, April 10-16, 2002, 1, 31; Glen Helfand, "Wheelin' and Dealin,'" *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, February 2-February 8, 2005, 1.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid*; Jamie Berger, "Beyond Books: Adobe is a scrappy bookshop -- and a locus of the Mission's art scene" and sidebar, "Adobe Proved Fertile Ground for 'Mission School' Artist: Chris Johanson's Work Featured in Whitney Biennial," *The San Francisco Chronicle*, April 10, 2003, E11; Blake Gopnik, "The Allure of 'Loser' Culture: How Skateboards Crashed the Gates of the Art World," *Washington Post*, July 10, 2005, N1; Josh Wilson applies the "Mission School" lens to the music scene in, "Music with a Mission: The Late, Great Subterranean Scene is Still Alive," *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, May 21, 2003; Leah

In brief, the “Mission School” identified a talented, hip, multi-ethnic group of artists who came of age in the 1990s, including Barry McGee, Chris Johanson, Margaret Kilgallen, Alicia McCarthy, Rigo, Aaron Noble, Amy Franceschini, Isis Rodriguez, and Andrew Schoultz. Some of these artists participated in the 1994 Clarion Alley Mural Project (CAMP), a spirited effort to revive a disreputable alley through murals, which then became the “Mission School’s” launching pad [Fig. 7.1, 7.2., 7.3].⁶⁷⁵ Aesthetically, their art found inspiration in folk and outsider art, graffiti and street art, cartoon art, music raves, and hip hop. Thematically, several of the artists were critical of the impact of unfettered capitalism.⁶⁷⁶ As a whole, they appeared to represent a new local aesthetic to place San Francisco in the international vanguard.

Modigliani, “Marketing the Mission: Commodifying San Francisco’s Art, The ‘Mission School’ and the Problem of Regionalism,” http://www.stretcher.org/archives/f1_a/2004_09_17_f1_archive.php, accessed on August 2, 2005; and counter-response, Allegra Fortunati, “A Rejoinder to ‘Marketing the Mission,’” http://www.stretcher.org/archives/r6_a/2005_01_17_r6_archive.php, accessed on August 2, 2005; Press Release, “SFMOMA Presents the 2002 SECA Art Award: John Bankston, Andrea Higgins, Chris Johanson and Will Rogan,” <http://www.sfmoma.org/press/pressroom.asp?arch=y&id=148&do=events>, accessed on August 2, 2005; *Spark*, “Fame” episode, KQED Television, 2003, features Janet Bishop, curator, SF MOMA and Jonathon Keats, art critic, on Chris Johanson; Audio Recording, “The New ‘Mission School,’” Commonwealth Club Panel Discussion (Miranda Gill; Nancy Gonchar; Cherri Lakey; Neonski; Sirron Norris; Renny Pritikin; Dave Warnke; Andrew Strickman), San Francisco, June 4, 2003, <http://www.commonwealthclub.org/archive/03/03-06missionSchool-intro.html>, accessed on August 2, 2005. The Commonwealth Club panel was part of an exhibition co-curated by Carrie McAlister and Karine Versace, who were in the process of producing their related documentary film, *Concrete Canvas*; Also see, Aaron Rose and Christian Strike, *Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture* (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 2004), an exhibit catalogue that featured several of the “Mission School” artists; Barbara Pollack, “The New Visionaries,” *ArtNews* 102 December 2003, 92-97.

⁶⁷⁵ Timothy W. Drescher writes on Balmy Alley and CAMP, prior to the “Mission School” nomenclature, in his article, “Street Subversion: The Political Geography of Murals and Graffiti,” in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, eds, James Brook, Chris Carlsson, and Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1998), 231-245. Also see, Drescher, *San Francisco Murals: Community Creates its Muse, 1914-1990* (St. Paul, MN: Pogo Press, 1991).

⁶⁷⁶ Jamie Berger writes of artist Chris Johanson, “Johanson is the latest in a string of artists to rise to art stardom out of what is now referred to as the “Mission School” of San Francisco artists, a group that shares a rough-hewn style and interest in urban themes created with found or recycled materials or often painted directly on walls, graffiti-style.” Berger, “Adobe Proved Fertile Ground for ‘Mission School’ Artist.” The narrator for *Spark* (2003) says, “Like many of the other artists who have gravitated towards the Mission District, Chris [Johanson] was raised in the suburbs on a steady diet of television and pop culture. And much of his art is a direct response to what he considers the excesses of our commercial culture.”



Fig. 7.1: Clarion Alley Mural Project (CAMP), 2002 block party celebration. The mural on the left is by Mats Stromberg and features ghosts flying out of buildings. Photograph by Cary Cordova.



Fig. 7.2: Jesus “Chuy” Campusano mural, Clarion Alley, 1994. The mural pays homage to Picasso’s *Guernica*, but also represents the violence of gentrification. Aaron Noble restored the mural c. 2000. Photograph by Cary Cordova, 2003.



Fig. 7.3: Isis Rodriguez, “Keepin’ the Faith,” 2002, featuring a hipster silhouetted in the image of the Virgin de Guadalupe, from her “Little Miss Attitude” series. Rodriguez painted the mural over another image of the Virgin that she created in 1993. The image of the “pachuco” on the door is by another artist unknown to the author. Photograph by Cary Cordova, 2003.

The most remarkable aspect of all the discussion devoted to the “Mission School” was the pervasive silence about its roots in the Mission, a neighborhood that Latino artists had made their base since the late 1960s. The contemporary art dialogues showed little effort to acknowledge the meaningfulness of the neighborhood’s historic mural movement or the influence of “old school” Mission artists, such as Jesus “Chuy” Campusano [Fig. 0.2], Ray Patlan, and Susan Cervantes of the Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center. If anything, critics and writers sought to differentiate these “generations” more emphatically. Rebecca Solnit describes CAMP as “a mural project whose styles are entirely different from the Mission’s dominant daughter-of-Diego-Rivera style.”⁶⁷⁷ A long history of graffiti, street art, and cartoon art has characterized art in the Mission, but CAMP signaled the avant-garde, while the Mission was configured into the Latin American revolutionary past.

The “Mission School” appellation blanketed over decades of neighborhood history and placed generations of Latino artists outside the bohemian enclave they had created. One *New York Times* reporter erased the Mission’s earlier history in a single sentence: “In the twentieth century, the Mission was a solidly working-class immigrant neighborhood until the early 1970’s, when construction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit

⁶⁷⁷ Rebecca Solnit, *Hollow City: The Seige of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (London: Verso, 2000), 157; At most, the articles and institutional representatives made fleeting references to the Balmy Alley mural project, but more in the context of recent “Mission School” mural contributions, than in terms of Balmy Alley’s long history as an early ‘70s community mural project for local children, or as a 1984 political action to indict U.S. involvement in Central America. See, Drescher, *San Francisco Murals*; Alan Barnett, *Community Murals: The People’s Art* (Philadelphia; New York: Art Alliance Press / Cornwall Books, 1984; Robin J. Dunitz and James Prigoff, *Painting the Towns: Murals of California* (Los Angeles, CA: RJD Enterprises, 1997). Though not contextualized historically, the relevance of the Mission District location is obvious: Chris Johanson states, “I’m really into the ethnic culture blender of San Francisco.” More specifically, Aaron Noble cites the Mission’s Creativity Explored as an influence. The organization, founded in 1983, trains artists with developmental disabilities and gives some context for the

system tore up Mission Street for three years, killing the vibrant Latino neighborhood and turning the area into an urban wasteland.”⁶⁷⁸ In describing this earlier period as an “urban wasteland,” the reporter discards years of community organizing and cultural production. In the same article, the reporter declares how the “Mission School” is emblematic of the neighborhood’s emerging hipness: “Growing out of the concentration of junk stores that once lined Valencia Street, a new wave of design and fashion is doing for the eclectic ‘Mission Thrift’ look what the Mission School did for the area’s graphic arts: bringing it to a wider audience, but also codifying an informal aesthetic.”⁶⁷⁹ In this way, the desire to anoint the Mission School with avant-garde status dismisses a vast cultural and political history. As Coco Fusco notes, the avant-garde bears a long history of “appropriating and fetishizing the primitive and simultaneously erasing the original source.”⁶⁸⁰

While the expression of Latino culture has shaped the Mission District’s public image, and not coincidentally, proved fertile ground for the vanguard, this same element also underscores the ways in which Latino culture is presumed neither modern nor integrated in the United States. Ondine Chavoya describes this “Orphans of Modernism” phenomenon in his analysis of the Chicano arts collective Asco. More specifically, the artists must balance the “value of the avant-garde as a model” versus the “pattern of

“outsider” art influence that critics have noticed in the “Mission School.” Helfand, “The Mission School,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*.

⁶⁷⁸ Gregory Dicum, “San Francisco’s Mission District: Eclectic, Eccentric, Electric,” *The New York Times*, November 20, 2005.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸⁰ Coco Fusco, *English is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 46.

exclusionism in the construction of the Euro-American avant-garde.”⁶⁸¹ In addition, as Fusco notes, “What may be ‘liberating’ and ‘transgressive’ identification for Europeans and Euro-Americans is already a symbol of entrapment within an imposed stereotype for Others.”⁶⁸² Part of the problem with labeling the “Mission School” as a new aesthetic was the simultaneous omission of years of arts production, but this omission was also symptomatic of a deep-rooted cultural segregation.

Arguably, if any group deserves credit for inspiring a neighborhood aesthetic, it is the generations of Latino artists that created Casa Hispana de Bellas Artes; Galería de la Raza; La Raza Grafica; the Mission Cultural Center; community mural projects; the Mexican Museum; Dance Mission; Cesar’s Latin Palace; *El Pocho Che* Editorial; *Tin Tan*; Cine Acción; Teatro Gusto; Teatro de la Esperanza; Culture Clash; Brava! For Women in the Arts; Carnaval; Día de los Muertos, and a vast number of community-based arts programs for children and residents. These and other organizations and programs have played an instrumental role in cultivating an artistic community in the Mission. The situation begs the question, why have these Latino arts organizations never experienced the enthusiasm and cultural cache applied to the “Mission School”? The answer is rooted in a long history of cultural, political, and aesthetic borders, which I have charted in this dissertation.

Though the label “Mission School” had no malicious intent, its facile application was emblematic of the disjuncture between community art in the Mission and the vision

⁶⁸¹ Chavoya, “Orphans of Modernism: The Performance Art of Asco,” in *Corpus Delecti: Performance Art of the Americas*, ed., Coco Fusco (New York: Routledge, 2000), 240-263 (240).

⁶⁸² Fusco, *English is Broken Here*, 46.

of mainstream arts institutions. In discussing his coining of the term “Mission School,” Helfand explains, “The title emerged almost organically from interview subjects, and as a label, it has been received calmly as well as with understandable derision. To give a name to an identity or style is never completely accurate, and it can easily be misused.”⁶⁸³ While some critics debated the adequacy of “Mission School” as an aesthetic term, none suggested that the title also might signal an avant-garde usurpation of another community’s history.⁶⁸⁴

Many of these long-standing Latino organizations in the Mission not only fell outside the vanguard interests of contemporary art institutions, but actually represented separatist efforts to critique the historic elitism and Eurocentrism of these established tastemakers. The proliferation of Latino cultural organizations in the Mission grew from passionate, long-standing efforts to reject institutionalized racism and de facto segregation in mainstream American culture. Integral to these Latino cultural institutions was the desire to affirm an expansive Latino culture and community. This movement spurred the cultivation of an artistic renaissance, but also underscores the presence of persistent cultural borders.

The construction of the “Mission School” as non-derivative of this earlier artistic work in the Mission underscores the ways the dominant culture can simultaneously appropriate and disempower other cultures. The act of cultural displacement echoed the simultaneous physical displacement of Latino residents, which evolved to a crescendo in

⁶⁸³ Glen Helfand adds, “Buzz terms have been cropping up. ‘The Mission school’ has been uttered with some regularity. ‘Urban Rustics and Digital Bohemians’ were the terms given in an article by Center for the Arts curator Renny Pritikin.” Helfand, “San Francisco’s Street Artists,” and “Wheelin’ and Dealin’.”

⁶⁸⁴ Even the hour long discussion sponsored by the Commonwealth Club provoked no such consideration.

the late 1990s. Already struggling with gentrification, the Mission District experienced the full brunt of San Francisco's dot-com gold rush, with an onslaught of Internet start-up companies seeking lower rents and a diverse, bohemian atmosphere. According to one source, "the gap between rich and poor in San Francisco increased 40 percent between 1994 and 1996."⁶⁸⁵ In the year just prior to the 2000 bust, six-hundred tenants were evicted, and many others left the city voluntarily in order to attain relief from the new economic pressures. Though tensions have eased since 2000, the displacement of Latino and low-income residents persists.

While geographic location and local economy are critical factors in the politics of gentrification, the contemporary contested status of some Latino, or "ethnic," inner-city neighborhoods, such as New York's El Barrio, Los Angeles's Silverlake, and Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, show that the Mission District's situation is hardly singular. In fact, the story echoes the complex histories of Harlem, Greenwich Village, North Beach, and Paris's Latin Quarter. In the 1990s, gentrification escalated with a new corporate mandate: Internet companies and employees who wished to show their youthful, counterculture independence from traditional American business practices could project that image by locating in an area traditionally "foreign" to more established businesses. As one reporter notes, "technology companies have recently seized upon the Mission District as the newest hub of dot-com culture, attracted by its gritty mix of Latino families, free-spirited artists and cause-oriented nonprofits."⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁵ Paulina Borsook, "How the Internet Ruined San Francisco," Salon.com, October 27, 1999.

⁶⁸⁶ Glionna, "Dot-Com Boom Makes S.F. a War Zone." Among the texts that discuss the counterculture proclivities of Internet companies include, Mike Daisey, *21 Dog Years: Doing Time @ Amazon.com* (New York: Free Press, 2002). Daisey describes his recruitment to work at Amazon.com, recalling the placement

The Mission District also made economic sense for Internet companies; not only were property values lower than other parts of the city, but these companies also claimed artist status. Thus, they moved into “live/work lofts,” in order to enjoy tax exemptions originally designed to retain artists in the community. The real estate laws created to make the neighborhood more hospitable to artists thus became a tool for their displacement.⁶⁸⁷

At times, scholars have implicated artists in the process of gentrification. Arguably, the “bohemian” appeal of the artist’s life generates a hipster atmosphere, which spurs development and increases property values.⁶⁸⁸ In the Mission, this presents an interesting dilemma, since many of the artists in the neighborhood have defined themselves as cultural workers, dedicated toward invigorating and politicizing the community. In fact, many of these artists and activists have been fighting gentrification since the late 1960s.⁶⁸⁹ More accurately, as Rebecca Solnit observes, “it is clearly not talented individual artists but the widespread ambience created by cafés, nightclubs,

agent stating, “Amazon is always telling us to find them the freaks ... you know, people who might not fit in elsewhere.” (17) Rodney Rothman delivers a humorous discussion of the corporate ethos in, “My Fake Job,” *The New Yorker*, November 27, 2000, 121-131; For a sharply critical discussion of the high-tech corporate mindset and the underlying politics, see Paulina Borsook, *Cyberselfish: A Critical Romp Through the Terribly Libertarian Culture of High Tech* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000); and David Brooks, who writes, “the key is to be youthful, daring, and avant-garde, to personify change. The center of gravity of the American business culture has moved westward and youthward,” *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (New York: Touchstone, 2000), 113.

⁶⁸⁷ Hayes, “Artists vs. Dot-Coms.”

⁶⁸⁸ Sharon Zukin shows how the popularization of artists’ lofts in New York: “around 1970, as the bare, polished wood floors, exposed red brick walls, and cast iron facades of these ‘artists’ quarters’ gained increasing public notice, the economic and aesthetic virtues of ‘loft living’ were transformed into bourgeois chic.” Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 2; David Ley, “Artists, Aestheticisation and the Field of Gentrification,” *Urban Studies*, November 2003, 2527-2544; Richard Kostelanetz, *Soho: The Rise and Fall of an Artist’s Colony* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise*; Albert Parry, *Garrets and Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America* (1933; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1960).

galleries and those who hang out in them—by a visible bohemia, along with ‘lifestyle’ commodities—that seeds gentrification.”⁶⁹⁰

This situation underscores a double bind, since the more that Latinos develop signifiers of a pan-Latino identity, whether out of a sense of community or good business practice, the more likely they are to invest the region with the “colorful” and “festive” aura of nonconformity that Americans associate with traveling south of the border. Certain cities, such as San Antonio or Santa Fe, have sought to maximize the presence of their Hispanic or Native heritage in the interest of boosting tourism. In many ways, the Mission’s “tropicalizing of cold urban space,” as Mike Davis describes it, visually and culturally projected the atmosphere of an urban bohemia apart from the mainstream.⁶⁹¹ Thus, *The New York Times* Travel section can sell the neighborhood’s bohemian Latinidad as a delightful tropism: “sidewalk vendors sell yucca flowers and avocados, blue-haired anarchist daddies push strollers, young men loiter at the corner, Central American housewives and vegan lesbian tattoo artists shop for fresh handmade tortillas.”⁶⁹² The 2005 article smoothes over any conflict and perpetuates a quaint atmosphere for tourism and settlement.

⁶⁸⁹ The term gentrification was coined by Ruth Glass in 1964, per Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 33; citing Ruth Glass, *London: Aspects of Change* (London: Center for Urban Studies and MacGibbon and Kee, 1964), xviii.

⁶⁹⁰ Solnit, *Hollow City*, 100.

⁶⁹¹ Davis, *Magical Urbanism*; Carey McWilliams, *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*, New Edition, updated by Matt S. Meier (1948; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1990); William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004); James Oles, *South of the Border: Mexico in the American Imagination: 1914-1947* (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993); Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

⁶⁹² Dicum, “San Francisco’s Mission District,” *The New York Times*.

Though escalating property values have produced enormous stress in the community, gentrification also has served as a significant source of cultural production. The sea-change launched massive protests, subversive graffiti, and minor property destruction, which then made headlines in newspapers across the country.⁶⁹³ At the Galería de la Raza, a team of young artists – John Leños, Jaime Cortez, René Garcia, Gerardo Perez, and Praba Pilar – posted one of many exterior billboards mocking the stress of the situation. Reproducing the front page of the local newspaper as *San Francisco Re-Examined*, the headline declared, “One Last Mexican Discovered in the Mission District” [Fig. 7.4]. According to the newsprint, “Ese” was captured in Dolores Park, where he had been “living among the Bushes on roots and berries, foccacia crumbs and leftover bits of antipasti.” Ese subsequently becomes the subject of an anthropological study, since he is the last vestige of a culture that once thrived in the neighborhood. Amusing in tone, the billboard struck at the heart of multiple concerns and provided a critical outlet to protest the ramifications of gentrification. The billboard artists, all of whom are skilled at integrating new technologies into their

⁶⁹³ The extensive series of responses to gentrification is most visible in newspaper coverage. Examples include, Lynda Gorov, “Classes Clashing: San Francisco Quarter Feels Squeeze,” *Boston Globe*, July 13, 1999, A1; A. Clay Thompson, “Evicting Art: From Arts Mecca to Silicon Valley Suburb,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, September 29, 1999; Joel P. Engardio, “Mission Implacable,” *SF Weekly*, July 5, 2000; David R. Baker, “15 Arrested as Protesters Occupy Offices of Internet Firm in Mission,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 22, 2000, A22; John M. Glionna, “Dot-Com Boom Makes S.F. a War Zone,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 3, 2000, A1; Neva Chonin and Dan Levy, “No Room for the Arts,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 2000, A1; Rose George, “Mission Undesirable,” *The Independent* (London), November 5, 2000, 37; Bill Hayes, “Artists vs. Dot-Coms: Fighting San Francisco’s Gold Rush,” *New York Times*, December 14, 2000, F7. Also see, Solnit, *Hollow City*; Simon Velasquez Alejandrino, “Gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations,” Master’s thesis, City Planning, University of California, Berkeley, 2000.



Fig. 7.4: John Leños, Jaime Cortez, René Garcia, Gerardo Perez, and Praba Pilar, “Ese, Last of His Tribe,” Galería de la Raza billboard, 2000. Image reproduced from Galería de la Raza postcard. The text states: “*San Francisco Re-Examiner*, May 5, 2002: The Last Mexican in the Mission District was captured last night in Dolores Park. ‘Ese,’ the last of his tribe, lived a feral Mexican lifestyle in Dolores Park, living among the Bushes on roots and berries, foccacia crumbs and leftover bits of antipasti. After leading authorities on a dramatic chase through the wilds of Dolores Park, the last Mexican in the Mission was apprehended. ‘Ese’ as he calls himself, was not easy to capture. ‘Jeez, I thought we’d never bring him down,’ commented Park Ranger Junipero Brown. ‘Decades of border crossings have given these people inborn evasive instincts beyond those of normal or even naturalized American Citizens. Every time we thought we had him cornered, he’d find some new Mexican trick to escape. We finally brought him down with bear traps baited with chorizo(Mexican sausage) and sour cream.’ Considered by most experts to be the last Mexican in the Mission, Ese had lived in Dolores Park for over 15 months. ‘I didn’t know how else to stay in SF,’ explained Ese in his native tongue (Spanish). Ese formerly shared a small studio with two other young men, but they were all un-housed when their space was reclassified from an apartment to an e-partment, with a corresponding rent increase. Ese was shocked to learn he was the last Mexican in the Mission. When informed that the dishwashers and laborers he spied from the park were all bussed in from outside of the digital zone, he fell silent. Ese is currently under observation at the UC Department of Cultural Anthropology, where his simple beliefs, behavior and language challenge and intrigue the best anthropological minds on the west coast. Ese is mystified by common everyday articles such as wireless voice-operated word processing and surgically-embedded Palm Pilots. ‘To observe Ese’s pre-digital behavior is an unparalleled anthropological learning experience,’ gushed one professor, ‘when he’s frightened or confused, he will actually get down on his knees and pray for answers and guidance. Extraordinary. Just extraordinary.’”

creative endeavors, also used the billboard to play with the representation of Latinos as “orphans of modernism.” According to their newsprint, “Ese is mystified by common everyday articles such as wireless voice-operated word processing and surgically-embedded Palm Pilots.” The playful poke at the digital divide is a recurring, at times ambivalent theme for these artists. In fact, Garcia, Leños, and Pilar subsequently came together as “Los Cybrids,” an informal visual arts / performance arts group to “instigate radical dialogues about the social, cultural and environmental consequences of information technologies (IT).”⁶⁹⁴ According to the trio, a cybrid is “a Latino digi-tech artist from a disproportionately under-represented demographic in the cyberworld.”⁶⁹⁵ Thus, Pilar has staged her “Computers are a Girl’s Best Friend” performance [Fig. 7.5] to the tune of “Diamonds are a Girl’s Best Friend,” Leños has cultivated his role as “El Techno-Santero,” an unorthodox minister of technology who relies on *Wired* magazine as his bible, and Garcia has dramatized the branding of “Homeland Security” in his performance of “9-1-BUY-1,” a commentary on the commodified surveillance culture, post-9-11. As Latino artists working in the Mission, each conveys the ways in which their interest in technology is tempered by their concerns about how technology perpetuates inequalities. In general, this ambivalence about technology appears in a wide array of cultural production now issuing from the Mission.

⁶⁹⁴ “El Webopticon,”

http://www.galeriadelaraza.org/eng/programs/mural_archive/webopticon.html#webopticon, accessed on November 19, 2005.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*



Fig. 7.5: Praba Pilar in performance costume from *Computers Are A Girl's Best Friend*. Recycled CD-Roms, 2004-2005. Image from <http://www.prabapilar.com/pages/projects/computas.html>, accessed on November 19, 2005.

Indirectly and directly, the impact of gentrification has stimulated a passionate new generation of Latino artists, including Jaime Cortez, René Garcia, John Leños, Albert Lujan, Veronica Majano, Gerardo Perez, Praba Pilar, Rio Yañez, and many others. New filmmakers, such as Adrian Arias, Al Hernandez, Adriana Montenegro, Veronica Majano, Dolissa Medina, Lise Swenson, and Pepe Urquijo continue to document the community and create new aesthetics. Similarly, more galleries continue to appear, from the Balazo Gallery, to the Red Poppy Gallery, to the Encantada Gallery. At present, there is no shortage of artistic activity in the Mission District.

Indeed, the Clarion Alley Mural Project also serves as evidence of the ways in which the Mission continues to inspire community organizing and art. Aaron Noble, Rigo, Michael O'Connor, Mary Gail Snyder, Sebastiana Pastor, and Aracely Soriano started to paint the murals in 1992 to respond to the rapid change and development they were witnessing in the Mission.⁶⁹⁶ Ultimately, the CAMP murals are seeded in a long history of cultural activity to protect the neighborhood and affirm a community. The point here is not to undercut the meaningfulness of CAMP and the “Mission School” artists, but to argue that this seemingly new movement drew inspiration from a long-standing, vibrant, activist, arts-based community history.

Ultimately, I drew inspiration for this dissertation from my concerns about displacement in all its forms. I hoped to show the long-standing activism and cultural production of Latino artists in San Francisco and to start the process of acknowledgement

⁶⁹⁶ Lynn Rapoport, “Wall Space: The Clarion Alley Mural Project Uses Public Art to Paint a Home,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, October 23, 2002.

and integration in American (art) history. This work started as a meditation on a place, but it became an ofrenda. By “ofrenda” I mean the traditional activity of creating an altar for Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, to celebrate the spirits of the dead and to remember what it means to be alive. However, as Richard Montoya of the comedic theatre collective Culture Clash cautions:

We've really got to fight the tendency to make it a eulogy for the Mission, because the Mission is not dead. Even if it's an artist that's come and gone, that artist in many ways is still here. ... The Mission is a place where our jazz is still being composed, for Chicanismo. This is our Art Blakely, our Dizzy Gillespie, this is our bebop. This is where we find our Dead Sea scrolls. In a way we're taking a moment to reflect on our losses but also say, man, what an amazing place the Mission still is.⁶⁹⁷

Montoya's point is well taken. To this day, the Mission continues to serve as a rich site for the intersection of Latino cultures and as a critical physical space for artistic activity. The plethora of cultural production in the Mission is far greater and more expansive than I can do justice to here. But perhaps this dissertation serves as a seed for recognition and integration. This work is in many ways a circular return to the people who have educated me, and a tribute to the people who continue to move mountains, make art, and who dream of changing the world. ¡Viva La Misión!

⁶⁹⁷ Richard Montoya, quoted in, Camille T. Taiara, “Surviving the Conquest: Culture Clash Confronts Gentrification in its Hometown,” *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, January 17, 2001.

Bibliography

Archives

San Francisco Public Library
Archives of American Art (AAA), Smithsonian Institution
California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA), UC Santa Barbara

Also from the personal archives of:

The author
Francisco Camplís
Carlos Loarca
Michael Nolan
Don Santina
René Yanez

Newspapers and Periodicals

<i>America</i>	<i>Mission District News</i>
<i>American Banker</i>	<i>El Mundo Hispano</i>
<i>Artforum</i>	<i>New Mission News</i>
<i>ArtNews</i>	<i>Newsweek</i>
<i>The Arts Biweekly</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>Artweek</i>	<i>New Yorker</i>
<i>Alsop Review</i>	<i>The Oakland Tribune</i>
<i>Bad Subjects</i>	<i>El Occidental</i>
<i>Basta Ya!</i>	<i>Pacific Sun</i>
<i>Boston Globe</i>	<i>People's World</i>
<i>Bronce</i>	<i>Ramparts</i>
<i>California Living</i>	<i>Segundamano</i>
<i>El Californiano</i>	<i>S.F. Independent</i>
<i>City</i>	<i>SF Weekly</i>
<i>Forbes</i>	<i>Sunset</i>
<i>The Independent (London)</i>	<i>San Francisco Bay Guardian</i>
<i>KPFA Folio</i>	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>
<i>Latin Beat Magazine</i>	<i>San Francisco Examiner</i>
<i>Life</i>	<i>El Tecolote</i>
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	<i>Tin Tan</i>
<i>Metamorfosis</i>	<i>U.S.A. Today</i>
<i>Métier</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
<i>Mindfield</i>	

Oral Histories

Conducted by author:

Juana Alicia, class recording, San Francisco State University, October 21, 2002.

Francisco Camplis, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 12, 2003.

Luis Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, April 2, 2003.

Susan Kelk Cervantes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 23, 2003.

Maruja Cid, interview by author, telephone recording, October 22, 2004

Juan Fuentes, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 13, 2003.

Amelia "Mia" Galaviz de González, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 5 and 12, 2003.

Yolanda Garfias Woo, interview by author, Daly City, CA, May 14, 2003.

José Ramón Lerma, interview by author, Oakland, CA, December 29, 2000 and January 5, 2001.

Carlos Loarca, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, April 8, 2003.

Yolanda Lopez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 25, 2003.

Patricia Rodriguez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, March 27, 2003.

Nina Serrano, interview by author, Oakland, CA, April 16, 2003.

René Yañez, interview by author, San Francisco, CA, February 18, 2003.

Published and archival oral histories:

Rolando Castellón, Jerry Concha, Carlos Loarca, and Gustavo Rivera (group interview), San Francisco, CA, October 16, 1983, uncorrected Transcript from Califas Videotape #158-162, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman. Califas Book 5, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

- Enrique Chagoya, "Interview by Moira Roth," in *Enrique Chagoya: When Paradise Arrived* (New York: Alternative Museum, March 11-April 29, 1989).
- Jesus Campusano, Michael Rios, and Luis Cortazar, "Tres Muralistas," interview conducted by Michael Nolan, 1974. Interview pamphlet given to the public at mural opening. Personal archive of Michael Nolan. Excerpts also printed in *El Tecolote*, June 10, 1974.
- Maruja Cid, interview by Suzanne B. Riess, in *The Arts and the Community Oral History Project: San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Program*, Berkeley, CA, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1978.
- Rupert Garcia, interview by Paul J. Karlstrom, Oakland, CA, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, September and November 1995 and June 1996, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/oralhist/garcia96.htm>.
- Rupert Garcia, interview, Oakland, CA, October 14, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #155-158, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 5 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.
- Rupert Garcia, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, *The Fifth Sun: Contemporary / Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977), 27-30.
- Shifra Goldman, interview, Pasadena, CA, August 9, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #102-105, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 3 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.
- Gronk, interview by Jeffrey Rangel, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, January 20 and 23, 1997, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/oralhist/gronk97.htm>.
- Carmen Lomas Garza, interview, San Francisco, CA, October 30, 1982, uncorrected transcript from Califas Videotape #56-58, transcribed by Carlos Palado, Califas Book 2 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.
- Yolanda Lopez, Conference Session 1, UC Santa Cruz, April 16, 1982, transcript, Califas Book 1, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.
- Ralph Maradiaga, Slide Presentation, UC Santa Cruz, April 17, 1982, transcript from tape #6B, Califas Book 1 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.
- Ralph Maradiaga and René Yañez, interview, San Francisco, CA, October 29, 1982, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #52-55 and 75, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 2 in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

Amalia Mesa Bains, "Interview: Amalia Mesa-Bains," conducted by Anne Barclay Morgan, *Art Papers*, March and April 1995, 24-29.

Alberto Mijangos interview by Cary Cordova, in San Antonio, Texas, for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, December 5 and 12, 2003, <http://archivesofamericanart.si.edu/oralhist/mijang03.htm>,

Ernie Palomino, interview, Fresno, CA, October 8, 1983, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #146-150, transcribed by Philip Brookman and Amy Brookman, Califas Book 5, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

Patricia Rodriguez, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun, Contemporary/Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977).

Patricia Rodriguez, interview, San Francisco, CA, October 30, 1982, uncorrected transcript from Califas videotape #58-61, transcribed by Carlos Palado, Califas Book 2, in Califas Conference Final Report, AAA.

Martin Snipper, interview by Suzanne B. Riess, in *The Arts and the Community Oral History Project: San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Program*, Berkeley, CA, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, 1978.

René Yañez, interview by Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun: Contemporary/Traditional Chicano & Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1977).

Books and Articles

--- "El Plan de Aztlán" in *Documents of the Chicano Struggle* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), 4-6.

Helen M. Abrahamsen, *What to Do See Eat in San Francisco* (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books 1952).

Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: The Chicanos Struggle Toward Liberation* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972).

Rafael Alarcón, "From Servants to Engineers: Mexican Immigration and Labor Markets in the San Francisco Bay Area," CLPP Working Paper, California Policy Seminar, Volume 4, Number 3 (Berkeley: Department of City and Regional Planning, University of California, Berkeley, January 1997).

- Thomas Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area: 1945-1980, an Illustrated History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).
- "The California School of Fine Arts, c. 1945-1960," in *Reflections: Alumni Exhibitions, San Francisco Art Institute, January 1981* (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute Alumni Association, 1982), 13-24.
- "San Francisco's Rolling Renaissance," in *San Francisco Underground Art in Celebration: 1945-1968* (San Francisco, CA: Intersection, Center for Religion and the Arts, Second Edition, 1976), 3-10 (3).
- Claribel Alegria, *They Won't Take Me Alive: Salvadorean Women In the Struggle for National Liberation* (London: The Women's Press, 1990).
- Robert Alvarez, "Mexican Entrepreneurs and Markets in the City of Los Angeles: The Case of an Immigrant Enclave," *Urban Anthropology* 19 (1990): 99-125.
- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983; reprint, London; New York: Verso, 1991).
- Frances R. Aparicio, Candida Jaquez, with Maria Elena Cepeda, editors, *Musical Migrations: Transnationalism and Cultural Hybridity in Latin/o America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
- Frances R. Aparicio and Susana Chávez-Silverman, *Tropicalizations: Transcultural Representations of Latinidad* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997).
- Rene H. Arceo Frutos, curator, *Día de los Muertos*, (Chicago, IL: Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, 1991).
- Michael Archer, *Art Since 1960*, Second Edition, Revised (New York; London: Thames and Hudson, 2002).
- Daniel D. Arreola, "Mexican American Exterior Murals," *Geographical Review* 74 (October 1984), 409-424.
- Dore Ashton, *The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning* (1972; reprint, New York: Penguin Books, 1979).
- Leonard Austin, *Around the World in San Francisco* (Palo Alto, CA: James Ladd Delkin, Stanford University, 1940).
- Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004).

- Edward Duran Ayres, "Edward Duran Ayres Report," reprinted in *Readings on La Raza: The Twentieth Century*, eds., Matt S. Meier and Feliciano Rivera (1942; reprint, New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 127-133.
- David Bacon, *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Wars on the U.S. / Mexican Border* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004)
- David C. Bailey, ¡Viva Cristo Rey! The Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974).
- Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1992).
- Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodriguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).
- Howard Ball, S. D. Berkowitz, and Mbuelelo Mzamane, *Multicultural Education in Colleges and Universities: A Transdisciplinary Approach* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1998).
- Arturo Barea, *Lorca: The Poet and His People*, translated by Ilsa Barea (London: Faber and Faber, 1944).
- William Barlow and Peter Shapiro, *An End to Silence: The San Francisco State College Student Movement in the '60s* (New York: Pegasus, 1971).
- Alan Barnett, *Community Murals: The People's Art* (Philadelphia; New York: Art Alliance Press / Cornwall Books, 1984).
- Holly Barnet Sanchez, "Where Are the Chicana Printmakers: Presence and Absence in the Work of Chicana Artists of the Movimiento," in *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 117-149.
- Magdalena Barrera, "Hottentot 2000: Jennifer Lopez and Her Butt," in *Sexualities in History*, eds., Kim M. Phillips and Barry Reay (New York: Routledge, 2002), 407-417.
- Konrad Bercovici, *Around the World in New York* (New York, London: The Century Co., 1924).
- Roberto Berdecio and Stanley Appelbaum, *Posada's Popular Mexican Prints: 273 Cuts* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972).

- Alan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Plume, 1991).
- Christiane Bird, *The Da Capo Jazz and Blues Lover's Guide to the U.S.: Completely Revised and Updated, 3rd Edition* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2001).
- Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (New York; London: Routledge, 2005).
- Suzaan Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).
- Albert Boime, *The Art of Exclusion: Representing Blacks in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990).
- Paulina Borsook, *Cyberselfish: A Critical Romp Through the Terribly Libertarian Culture of High Tech* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000).
- Nan Alamilla Boyd, *Wide-Open Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).
- Jan Butterfield, "An Interview with Fred Martin," *Reflections: Alumni Exhibitions, San Francisco Art Institute, January 1981* (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute Alumni Association, 1982), 26.
- Olivia Cadaval, *Creating a Latino identity in the Nation's Capital: the Latino Festival* (New York: Garland Pub., 1998).
- Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
- Howard Campbell, "Beat Mexico: Bohemia, Anthropology and 'the Other,'" *Critique of Anthropology* 23 (2): 209-230 (2009).
- James Campbell, *This is the Beat Generation: New York – San Francisco – Paris* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1999).
- Francisco Camplís, "Towards the Development of a Raza Cinema," in *Chicanos and Film: Representation and Resistance*, ed., Chon Noriega (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 284-302.
- Luis Cancel, et al., *The Latin American Spirit: Art and Artists in the United States, 1920-1970* (New York: The Bronx Museum of the Arts in association with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1988).

- Elizabeth Carmichael and Cholè Sayer, *The Skeleton at the Feast: The Day of the Dead in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991).
- Albert H.Z. Carr, *The World and William Walker* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975).
- Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981; reprint, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).
- Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 40th Anniversary Edition (1962; reprint, New York: Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin, 2002).
- Alejandro Casona, *El Caballero de las Espuelas de Oro; Retablo Jovial*, in Spanish, (1965; reprint, Madrid: Colección Austral, Espasa-Calpe, S.A., 1982).
- Jeanett Castellanos and Lee Jones, eds., *The Majority in the Minority: Expanding the Representation of Latina/o Faculty, Administrators and Students in Higher Education* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub., 2003).
- Rolando Castellón, *Mano a Mano: Abstraction / Figuration, 16 Mexican-American & Latin-American Painters from the San Francisco Bay Area* (Santa Cruz, CA: The Art Museum of Santa Cruz County and University of California, Santa Cruz, 1988).
- Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1983).
- René Castro, "Mission Gráfica: Un Taller Humilde en el Barrio de la Mission," in *Corazon del Barrio*, Mission Cultural Center, February 2003; and in *Voices on Paper: 25 Year Retrospective of Posters and Prints by Mission Gráfica*, Galería Museo, Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, CA, September 13- October 12, 2002, 4.
- Ann Charters, *Beat Down To Your Soul: What Was the Beat Generation?* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001).
- Ernesto Chavez, *'Mi Raza Primero!' Nationalism, Identity, and Insurgency in the Chicano Movement in Los Angeles, 1966-1978* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
- Leo R. Chavez, *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).
- C. Ondine Chavoya "Orphans of Modernism: The Performance Art of Asco," in *Corpus Delecti: Performance Art of the Americas*, ed., Coco Fusco (New York: Routledge, 2000), 240-263 (240).

- Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003).
- *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, eds., John Schoeffel and Peter Mitchell (New Press, 2002)
- *Chomsky Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1987).
- Angie Y. Chung and Edward Taehan Chang, "From Third World Liberation to Multiple Oppression Politics: A Contemporary Approach to Interethnic Coalitions," *Social Justice* 25 (Fall 1998), 80-100.
- Ward Churchill, *On the Justice of Roosting Chickens: Reflections on the Consequences of U.S. Imperial Arrogance and Criminality* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2003).
- "'To Disrupt, Discredit and Destroy': The FBI's Secret War Against the Black Panther Party," *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, eds., Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas (New York; London: Routledge, 2001), 78-117.
- Richard Cimino and Don Lattin, *Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).
- Charles Clements, *Witness to War: An American Doctor in El Salvador* (New York: Bantam, 1984).
- Michelle Cochrane, *When AIDS Began: San Francisco and the Making of an Epidemic* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
- Eva Cockcroft, John Weber, and Jim Cockcroft, eds., *Toward a People's Art: The Contemporary Mural Movement*. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998).
- Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez, eds., *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals* (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993).
- Eva Cockcroft, "The Story of Chicano Park," *Aztlán* 15(1) (1984): 79-103.
- Johnnetta B. Cole, "Black Studies in Liberal Arts Education," in *Transforming the Curriculum: Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies*, Johnella Butler and John Walter, eds. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993) 131- 148.
- Barnaby Conrad, *Name Dropping: Tales from My Barbary Coast Saloon* (New York: Harpercollins, 1994).

- Hector R. Cordero-Guzman, Robert C. Smith, and Ramon Grosfoguel, eds., *Migration, Transnationalization, and Race in a Changing New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).
- Carlos B. Cordova, "The Mission District: The Ethnic Diversity of the Latin American Enclave in San Francisco, Calif.," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989.
- Wayne Cornelius, "From Sojourners to Settlers: The Changing Profile of Mexican Migration to the United States," in *U.S.-Mexico Relations: Labor Market Interdependence*, eds., Jorge Bustamante, Raul Hinojosa, and Clark Reynolds (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
- Juan Corradi, Patricia Weiss Fagen, and Manuel Antonio Garreton, eds., *Fear at the Edge: State Terror and Resistance in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
- Susan Bibler Coutin, *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the U.S. Sanctuary Movement* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).
- Jack Cowart, *Manuel Neri: Early Work, 1953-1978* (Washington, DC: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, exhibition, January 31-May 5, 1997).
- David Craven, *Abstract Expressionism as Cultural Critique: Dissent During the McCarthy Period* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 17.
- "Abstract Expressionism and Third World Art: A Post-Colonial Approach to 'American' Art," *Oxford Art Journal* 14, 1 (1991), 44-66.
- Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and the Law in Collision* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988).
- Thomas Crow, *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).
- Daniel Crowley, "The Sacred and the Profane in African and African-derived Carnivals," *Western Folklore* 58 (3/4), 1999: 223-228.
- , *African Myth and Black Reality in Bahian Carnival* (Los Angeles, CA: Museum of Cultural History, UCLA, 1984).
- Mike Daisey, *21 Dog Years: Doing Time @ Amazon.com* (New York: Free Press, 2002);
- Mark Damner, *The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War* (New York: Vintage, 1994).

- Michael Davidson, *The San Francisco Renaissance: Poetics and Community at Mid-Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
- Hugh M. Davies, et al., *Blurring the Boundaries: Installation Art, 1969-1996* (San Diego, CA: Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, 1997).
- Arlene Davila, *Barrio Dreams* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 61.
- Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. Cities* (New York: Verso, 2000).
- Arnoldo De Leon, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1983).
- Nicolas de Oliveira, Nicola Oxley, Michael Petry, *Installation Art in the New Millennium: The Empire of the Senses* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).
- Walter del Mar, *Around the World Through Japan* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1902).
- Richard Edward DeLeon, *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992).
- Kevin Delgado, "A Turning Point: The Conception and Realization of Chicano Park," *Journal of San Diego History* 44(1) (1998): 48-61.
- Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
- Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (New York and London: Verso, 2004).
- , *The Cultural Front* (New York: Verso, 1998).
- Christopher DeNoon, *Posters of the WPA* (Los Angeles, CA: The Wheatley Press, 1987).
- Geri DePaoli, *Emmy Lou Packard, 1914-1998* (Davis, CA: John Natsoulas Gallery, 1998).
- William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004).
- Eleanore Maxwell Dial, "Critical Reaction to Buero Vallejo and Casona in Mexico," *Hispania* 54 (September 1971), 553-558.

- Nidia Diaz, *I Was Never Alone: A Prison Diary from El Salvador* (Melbourne: Ocean Press, 1992).
- Richard Dillon, *High Steel: Building the Bridges across San Francisco Bay* (Millbrae, CA: Celestial Arts, 1979).
- Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996).
- Joel Dinerstein, *Swinging the Machine: Modernity, Technology, and African American Culture between the World Wars* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003).
- Luis Arturo Dominguez, *Diablos Danzantes en San Francisco de Yare* (Los Teques, Venezuela: Biblioteca de Autores y Temas Mirandinos, 1984).
- Ruben Donato, *The Other Struggle for Equal Schools: Mexican Americans During the Civil Rights Era* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).
- Erika Doss, “‘Revolutionary Art is a Tool for Liberation’: Emory Douglas and Protest Aesthetics at the *Black Panther*,” in *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, eds., Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas (New York; London: Routledge, 2001), 175-187.
- Timothy W. Drescher, “Street Subversion: The Political Geography of Murals and Graffiti,” in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, eds., James Brook, Chris Carlsson, and Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1998), 231-245.
- , *San Francisco Murals: Community Creates its Muse, 1914-1994* (Hong Kong: Pogo Press, Inc., 1994).
- , *Progress in Process*, exhibition catalogue, Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, May 4-June 12, 1982.
- Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island & in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
- Robin J. Dunitz and James Prigoff, *Painting the Towns: Murals of California* (Los Angeles, CA: RJD Enterprises, 1997).
- Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S. - Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home* (Austin, TX: The Center for Mexican American Studies, The University of Texas at Austin, 1996).

- Rebecca Earle, "'Padres de la Patria' and the ancestral past: commemorations of independence in nineteenth-century Spanish America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, (November 2002), 775-806.
- Gwynne Edwards, *Lorca: Living in the Theatre* (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen, 2003).
- Lewis Erenberg, *Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
- *Swingin' the Dream: Big Band Jazz and the Rebirth of American Culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
- Ramón Favela, *The Art of Rupert Garcia: A Survey Exhibition* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books and the Mexican Museum, August 20-October 19, 1986).
- Russell Ferguson, ed., *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition, 1955-62* (Los Angeles, CA: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, exhibition catalogue, December 6-1992-March 7, 1993).
- Raúl Fernandez, *Latin Jazz: La Combinación Perfecta* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2001).
- Susan Ferriss and Ricardo Sandoval, eds., *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Movement* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997).
- John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2001 (1989)).
- Frances Fitzgerald, *Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000).
- Juan Flores, *Divided Borders: Essays on Puerto Rican Identity* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1993).
- Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998).
- Julia Elena Fortun, *La Danza de los Diablos* (La Paz: Ministerio de Educacion y Bellas Artes, Oficialia Mayor de Cultural Nacional, 1961).
- Jean Franco, "Rupert García" in, "Juan Fuentes y Rupert García: Posters, Drawings, Prints," exhibition brochure, Galería de la Raza, San Francisco, May 21-June 15, 1975.
- Patrick Frank, *Posada's Broadsheets: Mexican Popular Imagery, 1890-1910* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998).

- Rosa Linda Fregoso, *The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
- "The Representation of Cultural Identity in 'Zoot Suit' (1981),' *Theory and Society* 22 (October 1993), 659-674 (662).
- Ted Friend, *Ted Friend's Guide to San Francisco* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Press, 1950).
- Juan Fuentes, "Mission Grafica," in *Corazon del Barrio*, Mission Cultural Center, February 2003.
- Coco Fusco, *English is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (New York: The New Press, 1995).
- and Brian Wallis, *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self* (Harry N. Abrams, 2003).
- Ignacio Garcia, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).
- Maria Cristina Garcia, *Havana USA: Cuban exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996)
- Rupert Garcia, "Rupert Garcia," *Toward Revolutionary Art* 2 (1975), 20.
- Juanita Garciagodoy, "Contemporary Attitudes Toward Death," *Digging the Days of the Dead: A Reading of Mexico's Dias de Muertos* (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1998), 173-195.
- Charles Garry and Art Goldberg, *Streetfighter in the Courtroom: The People's Advocate* (New York: Dutton, 1977).
- Alicia Gaspar de Alba, *Chicano Art: Inside / Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the CARA Exhibition* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998).
- Malcolm Gault-Williams, *Don't Bank on Amerika: The History of the Isla Vista Riots of 1970* (Santa Barbara, CA: Gault-Williams, 1987).
- Gary Gereffi, David Spener, and Jennifer Bair, eds., *Free Trade and Uneven Development: The North American Apparel Industry after NAFTA* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002).
- Jonathan Gill, "The Promised Land Blues: Allen Ginsberg and LeRoi Jones / Amiri Baraka," *European Contributions to American Studies* 42 (1999), 241-249.

- Ruth C. Gillespie, "Introduction," in Alejandro Casona, *La Sirena Varada* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951).
- Ann Gibson, *Abstract Expressionism: Other Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
- Sander L. Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988).
- Ted Gioia, *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- Henry Glassie, *The Spirit of Folk Art: The Girard Collection at the Museum of International Folk Art*, (New York: Abrams in association with the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, 1989).
- Alexander Girard, *The Magic of a People / El Encanto de un Pueblo: Folk Art and Toys from the Collection of the Girard Foundation* (New York: Studio Books / The Viking Press, 1968).
- Brian J. Godfrey, "Urban Development and Redevelopment in San Francisco," *The Geographical Review* 86, July 1997, 309-334.
- Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).
- Renny Golden, *Sanctuary: The New Underground Railroad* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1986).
- Shifra Goldman, *Dimensions of the Americas: Art and Social Change in Latin America and the United States* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 164.
- "How, Why, Where, and When it All Happened: Chicano Murals of California," in *Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals*, eds., Eva Sperling Cockcroft and Holly Barnet-Sánchez (1990; reprint, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 23-53.
- "The Iconography of Chicano Self-Determination: Race, Ethnicity, and Class," *College Art Journal* 49 (Summer 1990), 167-173.
- and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, "The Political and Social Contexts of Chicano Art," in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985*, eds., Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa Mckenna, and Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, UCLA, 1991), 83-95.

- Guillermo Gomez-Peña, *The New World Border: Prophecies, Poems & Loqueras for the End of the Century* (San Francisco: City Lights, 1996).
- Juan Gonzales, *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (New York: Penguin, 2001).
- Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, *Message to Aztlan: Selected Writings of Rodolfo 'Corky' Gonzales*, compiled by Antonio Esquibel (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2001).
- Rafael Jesus Gonzalez, *El Hacedor de Juegos / The Maker of Games* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1977).
- Allan M. Gordon, *Other Sources: An American Essay*, curator, Carlos Villa (San Francisco: San Francisco Art Institute, exhibition catalogue, September 17-November 7, 1976).
- Sylvia Gorodesky, *Arte Chicano Como Cultura de Protesta / Chicano Art as Protest Culture* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1993).
- Nancy M. Grace and Ronna C. Johnson, eds., *Breaking the Rule of Cool: Interviewing and Reading Women Beat Writers* (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2004).
- Susan D. Greenbaum, "Marketing Ybor City: Race, Ethnicity, and Historic Preservation in the Sunbelt," *City and Society* 4 (1) (1990): 58-76.
- Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961).
- Richard Griswold del Castillo, Teresa McKenna, Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, eds., *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation (CARA), 1965-1985* (Los Angeles: Wight Art Gallery, University of California, Los Angeles, 1991).
- Salvador Guereña and Raquel Quiroz, with assistance from Luis Leal, *Día de los Muertos: An Illustrated Essay and Bibliography* (Santa Barbara, CA: Center for Chicano Studies and Colección Tloque Nahuague University Library, 1983).
- David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
- José Angel Gutierrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant: Lessons from Cristal* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).
- Richard Handler, *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

- Gladys Hansen, ed., *San Francisco: A Guide to the Bay and Its Cities*, originally compiled by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for Northern California (1940; reprint, New York: Hastings House, 1973).
- Zoe Harris and Yolanda Garfias Woo, *Piñatas and Smiling Skeletons: Celebrating Mexican Festivals* (Berkeley, CA: Pacific View Press, 1998).
- Chester Hartman, *City for Sale, The Transformation of San Francisco*, revised and expanded (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).
- Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1997).
- Louis Heath, *Red, Brown, and Black Demands for Better Education* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1972).
- Majorie Heins, *Strictly Ghetto Property: The Story of Los Siete de la Raza* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1972).
- Harvey Helfand, *The Campus Guides: University of California Berkeley* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002).
- Hayden Herrera, *Frida, a Biography of Frida Kahlo* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983).
- María Herrera-Sobek, *Santa Barraza, Artist of the Borderlands* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2001).
- David Hilliard and Lewis Cole, *This Side of Glory* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993).
- Steven Hoelscher, "Conversing Diversity: Provincial Cosmopolitanism and America's Multicultural Past," in *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*, eds., Paul C. Adams, Steven Hoelscher, and Karen E. Till (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 375-402 (378; 383).
- *The Invention of Ethnic Place in America's Little Switzerland* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).
- Fred L. Holmes, *Old World Wisconsin: Around Europe in the Badger State* (Eau Claire, WI: E.M. Hale, 1944).
- Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1997).
- Seymour Howard, John Natsoulas, Rebecca Solnit, Michael McClure, Bruce Nixon, John Allen Ryan, and Jack Foley, *The Beat Generation: Galleries and Beyond* (Davis, CA: John Natsoulas Press, 1996).

- Laurence P. Hurlburt, *The Mexican Muralists in the United States* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1989).
- Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2004).
- Maurice Isserman, Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).
- Richard J. Jensen and John C. Hammerback, eds., *The Words of César Chávez* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002).
- Marilynn Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).
- Ronna C. Johnson and Nancy M. Grace, eds., *Girls Who Wore Black: Women Writing the Beat Generation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).
- Caroline A. Jones, *Bay Area Figurative Art: 1950-1965* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).
- Robert S. Kahn, *Other People's Blood: U.S. Immigration Prisons in the Reagan Decade* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996).
- Charles Kaiser, *1968 in America: Music, Politics, Chaos, Counterculture, and the Shaping of a Generation* (New York: Grove Press, 1988).
- Dikran Karaguezian, *Blow it Up! The Black Student Revolt at San Francisco State College and the Emergence of Dr. Hayakawa* (Boston: Gambit Incorporated, 1971).
- George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987).
- Elaine Katzenberger, ed., *First World, Ha Ha Ha! The Zapatista Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 1995).
- Stephen Kinzer and Stephen Schlesinger, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- Paul Kleyman and Barbara Taylor-Sharp, "The Seeds of Creative Community: A Report on the San Francisco Arts Commission's Neighborhood Arts Program and its

- development of the CETA Arts Program as a national model from 1974-1976," 1976.
- Brenda Knight, *Women of the Beat Generation: The Writers, Artists and Muses at the Heart of a Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: Conari Press, 1996).
- Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt, eds., *Societies of Fear: The Legacy of Civil War, Violence and Terror in Latin America* (London: Zed Books, 1999).
- Richard Kostelanetz, *Soho: The Rise and Fall of an Artist's Colony* (New York: Routledge, 2003)
- Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991).
- Jack Kugelmass, "Imagining Culture: New York City's Village Halloween Parade," in *Feasts and Celebrations in North American Ethnic Communities*, eds., Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Geneviève Fabre (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 141-157.
- , "Wishes Come True: Designing the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade," in *Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life*, ed., Jack Santino, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 187-217 (194).
- Mark Kurlansky, *1968: The Year that Rocked the World* (New York: Random House, 2005).
- Betty LaDuke, *Women Artists: Multi-Cultural Visions* (Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press, 1992).
- Susan Landauer, *The San Francisco School of Abstract Expressionism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).
- David J. Langum, *William M. Kunstler: the Most Hated Lawyer in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).
- Agustín Laó-Montes and Arlene Davila, *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York*, eds., (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
- John Lardas, *The Bop Apocalypse: The Religious Visions of Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001).
- John P. Lerner, "North American Hero? Christopher Columbus 1702-2002," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 137 (March 1993), 46-63.

- William Lawlor, *The Beat Generation: A Bibliographical Teaching Guide* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998).
- Cynthia Lecount, "Carnival in Bolivia: Devils Dancing for the Virgin," *Western Folklore* 58 (3/4), 1999: 231-52.
- Anthony W. Lee, *Picturing Chinatown: Art and Orientalism in San Francisco* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001) 237-285.
- Robert Lee, "Chicanismo's Beat Outrider? The Texts and Contexts of Oscar Zeta Acosta," in *The Beat Generation: Critical Essays*, ed., Kostas Myrsiades (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), 263.
- Lizetta Lefalle-Collins and Shifra Goldman, *In the Spirit of Resistance: African-American Modernists and the Mexican Muralist School* (New York: American Federation of Arts / Studio Museum in Harlem, 1996).
- David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (1979; reprint, New York: Penguin Books, 1997).
- David Ley, "Artists, Aestheticisation and the Field of Gentrification," *Urban Studies*, November 2003, 2527-2544.
- Isabelle Leymarie, *Cuban Fire: The Story of Salsa and Latin Jazz* (London, New York: Continuum, 2002), 329-340.
- José Limon, *American Encounters: Greater Mexico, the United States, and the Erotics of Culture* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998).
- Lucy Lippard, *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990).
- *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972: A Cross-Reference Book of Information on some Esthetic Boundaries* (New York: Praeger, 1973).
- George Lipsitz, "Not Just Another Social Movement: Poster Art and the Movimiento Chicano," in *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 71-89.
- Amilcar Lobos, *Quetzal: Poemas Representables del Barrio San Francisco*, and Leland Mellott, *Ceremony for a Chicano Community Wedding*, a double volume (San Francisco: Glide Publications / Casa Editorial, 1973).

- Amilcar Lobos, *Portal a la Californiana: Prosopoemario* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975).
- Ian F. Haney Lopez, *Racism on Trial: the Chicano Fight for Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003).
- Yolanda Lopez, "Artist's Statement," in "Yolanda M. Lopez, Works: 1975-1978," exhibit brochure, Mandeville Center for the Arts, La Jolla California, December 1978.
- , "Cactus Hearts / Barbed Wire Dreams: Media Myths and Mexicans," exhibit brochure, Galería de la Raza, September 6-October 1, 1988.
- Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- "Double V, Double-Time: Bebop's Politics of Style," *Callaloo* 36 (Summer, 1988), 597-605.
- Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
- Donald J. Mabry, *The Mexican University and the State: Students Conflicts, 1910-1971* (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 1982).
- Gary MacEoin, *Sanctuary: A Resource Guide for Understanding and Participating in the Central American Refugee's Struggle* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985).
- Sarah J. Mahler, *Salvadorans in Suburbia: Symbiosis and Conflict* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1995).
- Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, *Mankiller: A Chief and Her People* (New York: Griffin, 1993).
- Jane Mansbridge, "The Making of Oppositional Consciousness," in *Oppositional Consciousness: The Subjective Roots of Social Protest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
- Ralph Maradiaga, curator, *The Fifth Sun, Contemporary/Traditional Chicano and Latino Art* (Berkeley, CA: University Art Museum, UC Berkeley, 1977).
- Victor Margolin, *American Poster Renaissance* (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1975).
- Cheech Marin, *Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge* (New York: Bulfinch Press, 2002).

- Jorge Mariscal, "Left Turns in the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975," *Monthly Review* 54 (3), 2002: 59-68 (59).
- Alice Goldfarb Marquis, *Art Lessons: Learning from the Rise and Fall of Public Arts Funding* (New York: Basic Books, 1995).
- Manuel Martínez, "The Art of the Chicano Movement and the Movement of Chicano Art," in *Aztlán: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature*, eds., Luis Valdez and Stan Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 349-353.
- Manuel Luis Martinez, *Countering the Counterculture: Rereading Postwar American Dissent from Jack Kerouac to Tomás Rivera* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003).
- Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).
- Peter Matthiessen, *Sal Si Puedes: Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution*, (1969; reprint, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000).
- Mauricio Mazon, *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1984).
- Cameron McCarthy and Warren Crichlow, *Race, Identity, and Representation in Education* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
- Jim McCarthy, with Ron Sansoe, *Voices of Latin Rock: The People and Events that Created this Sound* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2004).
- Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998).
- Thomas McEvilley, *Art & Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity* (Kingston, NY: Documentext / McPherson, 1992).
- Gerald W. McFarland, *Inside Greenwich Village: A New York City Neighborhood, 1898-1918* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).
- Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (1939; reprint, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
- Carey McWilliams, *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*, New Edition, updated by Matt S. Meier (1948; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).

- Lara Medina and Gilbert R. Cadena, "Días de los Muertos: Public Ritual, Community Renewal, and Popular Religion," in *Horizons of the Sacred: Mexican Traditions in U.S. Catholicism*, eds., Timothy Matovina and Gary Riebe-Estrella (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2002).
- Miguel "Mickey" Melendez, *We Took the Streets: Fighting for Latino Rights with the Young Lords* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003).
- Martha Menchaca, *The Mexican Outsiders: A Community History of Marginalization and Discrimination in California* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995).
- Amalia Mesa-Bains, "The Art of Provocation: Works by Ester Hernández," Gorman Museum, UC Davis, Davis, CA, October 10-November 17, 1995.
- , *Ceremony of Memory: Nature and Memory in Contemporary Latino Art*, (San Francisco, CA: The Mexican Museum, 1993).
- , Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, et al., *A Life in Color: The Art of Peter Rodriguez, A Fifty Year Retrospective Exhibition* (Stockton, CA: The Haggin Museum, Exhibition, November 15, 1992-January 24, 1993).
- Jean Molesky, "Amnesty for Qualified Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area: The Implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989, 16-20.
- David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).
- Ed Morales, *The Latin Beat: The Rhythms and Roots of Latin Music from Bossa Nova To Salsa and Beyond* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2003).
- *Living in Spanglish: The Search for Latino Identity in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002).
- Jean Molesky, "Amnesty for Qualified Immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area: The Implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986," *Journal of La Raza Studies* 2, Summer/Fall, 1989, 16-20.
- Dorinda Moreno, *La Mujer Es la Tierra: La Tierra da Vida* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975).
- M. Morgan, "If you like New York and Chicago, You're Gonna Love San Francisco," in *The Ultimate Highrise: San Francisco's Mad Rush Toward the Sky*, eds., Bruce Brugmann and Greggar Sletteland (San Francisco: San Francisco Bay Guardian, 1971).

- Carlos Morton "Celebrating 500 Years of *Mestizaje*," *MELUS* 16 (Fall 1989-1990), 20-22.
- Carlos Muñoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London; New York: Verso, 1989).
- Henri Murger, *The Bohemians of the Latin Quarter*, Trans. by Ellen Marriage and John Selwyn (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- Alejandro Murguía, *The Medicine of Memory: A Mexica Clan in California* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002).
- Alejandro Murguía, *This War Called Love: 9 Stories* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2002).
- Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Saga* (New York, NY: C. N. Publishers, 1989).
- National Collection of Fine Arts and the Corcoran Gallery, *Images of an Era: The American Poster, 1945-1975* (Washington, D.C.: National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, 1975).
- John Natsoulas et al, *The Spatsa Gallery, 1958-1961* (Davis, CA: Natsoulas / Novelozo Gallery, January 11-February 3, 1991).
- Lisa Navarrete and Charles Kamasaki, *Out of the Picture: Hispanics in the Media: The State of Hispanic America, 1994* (Washington, DC: Policy Analysis Center, Office of Research Advocacy and Legislation, National Council of La Raza, 1994).
- Armando Navarro, *A Raza Unida Party: A Chicano Challenge to the U.S. Two-party Dictatorship* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).
- Frances Negrón-Mutaner, *Boricua Pop: Puerto Ricans and the Latinization of American Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).
- George W. Neubert, *Manuel Neri, Sculptor* (Oakland, CA: Oakland Museum, exhibition, September 21 to November 28, 1976).
- Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002).
- Huey P. Newton, *War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America* (New York: Harlem River Press, 2000).

- Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
- Chon A. Noriega and Wendy Laura Belcher, eds., *I am Aztlán: The Personal Essay in Chicano Studies* (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, 2004).
- Chon Noriega, ed., *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California* (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001).
- "From Beats to Borders: An Alternative History of Chicano Art in California," in *Reading California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900-2000*, eds., Stephanie Barron, Sheri Bernstein, and Ilene Susan Fort, Exhibition Catalogue, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 355.
- "Why Chicanos Could Not Be Beat," *Aztlán* 24 (2), Fall 1999, 1-11.
- Don Normark, *Chavez Ravine, 1949: A Los Angeles Story* (San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 1999).
- Suzanne Oboler, *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives: Identity and the Politics of (Re)Presentation in the United States* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).
- María Ochoa, *Creative Collectives: Chicana Painters Working in Community* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2003).
- James Oles, *South of the Border: Mexico in the American Imagination: 1914-1947* (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).
- Cynthia E. Orozco, "Chicano and Latino Art and Culture Institutions in the Southwest: The Politics of Space, Race, and Money" in *Latinos in Museums: A Heritage Reclaimed*, eds., Antonio Ríos-Bustamante and Christine Marin (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1998), 95-107.
- William Orrick, *Shut it Down! A College in Crisis: San Francisco State College, October 1968-April 1969* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969).
- Felix Padilla, *Latino Ethnic Consciousness: The Case of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago* (Notre Dame, IL: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985).
- Leonardo Padura Fuentes, *Faces of Salsa: A Spoken History of the Music*, trans. by Stephen J. Clark (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2003).

- Eduardo Obregon Pagan, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
- Ernie Palomino, *In Black and White: Evolution of an Artist* (Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild), 1956.
- Americo Paredes, *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border*, ed. Richard Bauman (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, Center for Mexican American Studies, 1993).
- Michael Parenti, *Against Empire* (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 1995).
- Albert Parry, *Garrets and Pretenders: A History of Bohemianism in America* (1933; reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1960).
- Silvana Paternostro, *In the Land of God and Man: Confronting Our Sexual Culture* (New York: Dutton, 1998).
- Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1950; reprint, New York: Grove Press, 1985).
- Richard Peabody, ed., *A Different Beat: Writings by Women of the Beat Generation*, (London; New York: Serpent's Tail, 1997).
- Emma Perez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas Into History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999).
- Gustavo Perez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994).
- Marifeli Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- John Perkins, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2004).
- Gill Perry and Paul Wood, *Themes in Contemporary Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).
- Nancy J. Peters, "The Beat Generation and San Francisco's Culture of Dissent," in *Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture*, eds., James Brook, Chris Carlsson, and Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998), 199-215.
- Arthur G. Pettit, *Images of the Mexican American in Fiction and Film* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980).

- Lisa Phillips, *The American Century: Art & Culture, 1950-2000* (New York : Whitney Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton, 1999).
- *Beat Culture and the New America, 1950-1965* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1995).
- Frederick B. Pike, *FDR's Good Neighbor Policy: Sixty Years of Generally Gentle Chaos* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995).
- Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).
- Robert A. Potter and James J. Sullivan, *The Campus by the Sea Where the Bank Burned Down; a Report on the Disturbances at UCSB and Isla Vista, 1968-1970, Submitted to the President's Commission on Campus Unrest at the Request of Joseph Rhodes, Jr.* (Santa Barbara, CA: Faculty and Clergy Observer's Program, 1970).
- Ronald Powaski, *Return to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1981-1999* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- , *March to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1939 to the Present* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
- Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).
- Jacinto Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists* (Austin, TX: University of Texas at Austin, 1973).
- Charles Ramirez Berg, *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, & Resistance* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002).
- Alfred Charles Richard Jr., *Contemporary Hollywood's Negative Hispanic Image* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995).
- Francis Rigney, "Creativity in Bohemia," in *San Francisco Underground Art in Celebration: 1945-1968* (San Francisco, CA: Intersection, Center for Religion and the Arts, Second Edition, 1976), 12-14
- Francis Rigney and L. Douglas Smith, *The Real Bohemia* (New York: Basic Books, 1961).
- John Storm Roberts, *Latin Jazz: The First of the Fusions, 1880s to Today* (New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1999).

- *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States* (1979; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- Desmond Rochfort, *Mexican Muralists: Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros* (Mexico City, Mexico: Laurence King Publishing, 1993).
- Clara E. Rodriguez, *Changing Race: Latinos, The Census, and The History of Ethnicity in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).
- Joseph A. Rodriguez, "Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos, and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (Summer, 1998), 165-185.
- Richard Rodriguez, *Days of Obligation: An Argument with My Mexican Father* (New York: Viking, 1992).
- Salvador Rodriguez del Pino, "Francisco Xavier Alarcón," *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 122: Chicano Writers, Second Series*, ed., Francisco A. Lomeli (The Gale Group, 1992), 3-7.
- Juan Rodriguez-Castellano, "Nota Biográfica," (in Spanish) in Alejandro Casona, *La Dama Del Alba* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947).
- David Roman, *Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture, and AIDS* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).
- Mary Romero and Michelle Habell-Pallán, *Latino/a Popular Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).
- Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: The History of a Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).
- Terezita Romo, "A Collective History: Las Mujeres Muralistas." in *Art / Women / California: Parallels and Intersections, 1950-2000*, eds., Diana Burgess Fuller and Daniela Salvioni (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 177-186.
- , "Points of Convergence: The Iconography of the Chicano Poster," in *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 91-115.
- , ed., *Chicanos en Mictlán: Día de los Muertos in California* (San Francisco: The Mexican Museum, October 6 – December 31, 2000).

- Francisco Arturo Rosales, *Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1996).
- Mark Rosenthal, *Understanding Installation Art: From Duchamp to Holzer* (Munich; London: Prestel, 2003).
- Aaron Rose and Christian Strike, *Beautiful Losers: Contemporary Art and Street Culture* (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 2004).
- Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).
- Max Salazar, *Mambo Kingdom: Latin Music in New York* (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2002).
- Bobbi Salinas-Norman, *Indo-Hispanic Folk Art Traditions II: A Book of Culturally-based, Year-round Activities with an Emphasis on the Day of the Dead* (Albuquerque, NM: Piñata Publications, 1990).
- Larry R. Salomon, *Roots of Justice: Stories of Organizing in communities of Color* (Berkeley, CA: Chardon Press, 1998).
- Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., 'Let All of Them Take Heed': Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981 (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1987).
- Jos Sances, "Mission Gráfica," in *Voices on Paper: 25 Year Retrospective of Posters and Prints by Mission Gráfica*, Galería Museo, Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, CA, September 13- October 12, 2002, 6.
- Carol Lee Sanchez, *Conversations from the Nightmare* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1975).
- George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- Pilar Sanchez, *Symbols* (San Francisco: Casa Editorial, 1974).
- Irving Sandler, *The Triumph of American Painting* (1970; reprint, New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1976).
- Alberto Sandoval-Sanchez, *José, Can You See? Latinos On and Off Broadway* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).
- Chloe Sayer, *Mexico: The Day of the Dead, An Anthology* (Boston: Shambhala Redstone Editions, 1993).

- David Schoem, Linda Frankel, Ximena Zuniga, Edith A. Lewis, eds., *Multicultural Teaching in the University* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995).
- Sarah Schulman, *My American History: Lesbian and Gay Life in the Reagan and Bush Years* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
- Peter Selz, "Rupert Garcia," exhibition catalogue, Harcourts Gallery, San Francisco, CA, September 6 to September 28, 1985.
- , *Funk* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkley, University Art Museum exhibition, April 18-May 29, 1967).
- Fred Setterberg and Lonny Shavelson, *Toxic Nation: The Fight to Save our Communities from Chemical Contamination* (New York: J. Wiley, 1993).
- Nina Serrano, *Heartsongs: The Collected Poems of Nina Serrano, 1969-1979* (San Francisco, CA: Editorial Pocho-Che, 1980).
- Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk, *From ACT UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization* (New York; London: Verso, 2002).
- Benjamin Heim Shepard, *White Nights and Ascending Shadows: An Oral History of the San Francisco AIDS Epidemic* (London: Cassell, 1997).
- Randy Shilts, *And The Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York: St. Martin's Press: 1987).
- Alice L. Sickels, *Around the World in St. Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1945).
- Daniel Singer, *Prelude to Revolution: France in May 1968*, Updated edition (1970; reprint, Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2002).
- Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996).
- Robert Smith, et al., *By Any Means Necessary: The Revolutionary Struggle at San Francisco State* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970).
- Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
- Rebecca Solnit, *Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism* (New York: Verso, 2000).

- Shelley Sommer, *John F. Kennedy: His Life and Legacy* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005).
- Laurie Kay Sommers, "Inventing Latinismo: The Creation of 'Hispanic' Panethnicity in the United States," *The Journal of American Folklore* 104 (Winter, 1991), 32-53.
- "Symbol and Style in Cinco de Mayo," *The Journal of American Folklore* 98 (October 1985), 476-482.
- Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* (New York: Picador USA, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989).
- Frank Soulé, John H. Gihon, and James Nisbet, *The Annals of San Francisco* (1855; reprint, Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Hills Books, 1999).
- Peter Stackpole, *The Bridge Builders: Photographs and Documents of the Raising of the San Francisco Bay Bridge, 1934-1936* (Corte Madera, CA: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1984).
- Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (Metropolitan Press, 2000).
- Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition: The Power of a People* (1995; reprint, New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2001).
- David Sterritt, *Mad To Be Saved: The Beats, The 50s, and Film* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998).
- Tom Stoddard, *Jazz on the Barbary Coast* (1982; reprint, Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 1998).
- Jerry Stoll, *I Am a Lover* (Sausalito, CA: Angel Island Publications, 1961).
- Susan Stryker and Jim Van Buskirk, *Gay By the Bay: A History of Queer Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1996).
- Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).
- Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
- Edward Sullivan, "Frida Kahlo in New York," in *Pasion Por Frida*, eds., Blanca Garduño, José Antonio Rodríguez (Mexico: Museo Estudio Diego Rivera, De Grazia Art and Cultural Foundation, 1992), 182-184.

- Chris Swiac, ed., *Fodor's San Francisco 2005* (New York, NY: Fodor's Travel Publications, 2005).
- Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's 'Dirty War'* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).
- Lorenzo Thomas, "'Communicating by Horns': Jazz and Redemption in the Poetry of the Beats and the Black Arts Movement," *African American Review* 26 (2), June 1, 1992, 291-298.
- Piri Thomas, *Down These Mean Streets* (1967; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1997).
- Robert F. Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984).
- Raquel Tibol, *Frida Kahlo: Una Vida Abierta* (1983; reprint, Mexico, D.F.: Editorial Oasis, 1987).
- , *Frida Kahlo: Cronica, Testimonios y Aproximaciones* (Mexico: Ediciones de Cultura Popular, 1977).
- Reies Lopez Tijerina, *They Called Me 'King Tiger': My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, translated by José Angel Gutierrez (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 2000).
- Robert Tomsho, *The American Sanctuary Movement* (Austin, TX: Texas Monthly Free Press, 1987).
- James Tracy, *Direct Action: Radical Pacifism from the Union Eight to the Chicago Seven* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
- Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995).
- Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).
- Kay Turner, *Beautiful Necessity: The Art and Meaning of Women's Altars* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1999).
- and Pat Jasper, "Day of the Dead: The Tex-Mex Tradition," in *Halloween and Other Festivals of Death and Life*, ed., Jack Santino (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1994).
- Akinyele Omowale Umoja, "Repression Breeds Resistance: The Black Liberation Army and the Radical Legacy of the Black Panther Party," in *Liberation, Imagination,*

- and the Black Panther Party*, eds., Kathleen Cleaver and George Katsiaficas (New York; London: Routledge, 2001), 3-19.
- Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit and Other Plays* (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1992).
- José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race: A Bilingual Edition* (1948; reprint, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).
- Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).
- Raul Homero Villas, *Barrio-Logos: Space and Place in Urban Chicano Literature and Culture* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000).
- Gerald Vizenor, "Christopher Columbus: Lost Havens in the Ruins of Representation," *American Indian Quarterly* 16 (Autumn 1992), 521-532.
- Susan Waggoner, *Nightclub Nights: Art, Legend, and Style, 1920-1960* (New York: Rizzoli, 2001).
- Steven Watson, *The Birth of the Beat Generation: Visionaries, Rebels, and Hipsters, 1944-1960* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995).
- Carol A. Wells, "La Lucha Sigue: From East Los Angeles to the Middle East," in *Just Another Poster? / Solo Un Cartel Mas?: Chicano Graphic Arts in California / Artes Graficas Chicanas en California*, ed., Chon Noriega (Santa Barbara, CA: University Art Museum of California, UC Santa Barbara, 2001), 171-201.
- David Whisnant, "Rubén Dario as a Focal Cultural Figure in Nicaragua: The Ideological Uses of Cultural Capital," *Latin American Research Review* 27 (1992), 7-49.
- Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).
- Elizabeth Wilson, *Bohemians: The Glamorous Outcasts* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000).
- Jules Witcover, *The Year the Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America* (New York: Warner Books, 1997).
- Charles Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
- Angus Wright, "Rethinking the Circle of Poison: The Politics of Pesticide Poisoning Among Mexican Farm Workers," *Latin American Perspectives* 51 (Fall 1986), 26-59.

Scott Yanow, *Afro-Cuban Jazz: The Third Ear – The Essential Listening Companion* (San Francisco, CA: Miller Freeman Books, 2000).

Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, "Turning It Around: Chicana Art Critic Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano Discusses the Insider/Outsider Visions of Ester Hernández and Yolanda López," *Crossroads*, May 1993, 15, 17.

Yvonne Yarbrow-Bejarano, "Female Subject in Chicano Theatre: Sexuality, 'Race,' and Class," *Theatre Journal* 38 (December 1986), 389-407.

Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, introduction for Raul Salinas, *Un Trip Through the Mind Jail Y Otras Excursions* (Houston, TX: Arte Público Press, 1999).

--- "Rasquachismo: A Chicano Sensibility," in *Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation, 1965-1985*, eds., Richard Griswold del Castillo, et al. (Los Angeles, CA: Wight Art Gallery, University of California Los Angeles, 1991), 155-62.

Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989).

Dissertations and Theses

Luis Alberto Alvarez, "The Power of the Zoot: Race, Community, and Resistance in American Youth Culture, 1940-1945," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2001.

Pennee Lenore Bender, "Film as an instrument of the Good Neighbor Policy, 1930s--1950s," Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2002.

Stacey Ann Cook, "Power and Resistance: Berkley's Third World Liberation Front Strikes," Ed.D. diss., University of San Francisco, 2001.

Harvey Dong, "The Origins and Trajectory of Asian American Political Activism in the San Francisco Bay Area," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002.

Jason Michael Ferreira, "All Power To the People: A Comparative History of Third World Radicalism in San Francisco, 1968-1974," Ph.D. diss., UC Berkeley, 2003.

- Michelle C. Heffner, "Bailando la Historia / Flamenco Bodies in History and Film," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Riverside, March 1998, 20-21.
- Kuregiy Hekymara, "The Third World Movement and its History in the San Francisco State College Strike of 1968-1969," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1972.
- Joanna Dale Levin, "American Bohemias: 1858-1912: a Literary and Cultural Geography," Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2001.
- Anthony Macias, "From Pachuco Boogie to Latin Jazz: Mexican Americans, Popular Music, and Urban Culture in Los Angeles, 1940-1965," Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2001, 250-331.
- Suzanne Shumate Morrison, "Mexico's 'Day of the Dead' in San Francisco, California: A Study of Continuity and Change in a Popular Religious Festival," Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 1992.
- Tomas Sandoval, "Mission Stories, Latino Lives: The Making of San Francisco's Latino Identity, 1945-1970," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002.
- Laurie Kay Sommers, "Alegria in the Street: Latino Cultural Performance in San Francisco," Ph.D. diss., Department of Folklore, Indiana University, 1986.
- Simon Velasquez Alejandrino, "Gentrification in San Francisco's Mission District: Indicators and Policy Recommendations," Master's thesis, City Planning, University of California, Berkeley, 2000.

Films and Videos

- Around the World in New York*, dir., Larry Kostroff , 13 min., Victor Kayfetz Productions, 1940.
- Chicano Beat: An Interview with José Lerma*, dir. and interviewer, Ana Montano, 1996.
- Chicano Park*, dirs., Marilyn Milford and Mario Barrera, 58 min., Red Bird Films, 1988.
- Los Desarraigados/The Uprooted*, dir., Francisco Camplis, San Francisco, CA, 1974.
- Forbidden City USA*, dir., Arthur Dong, Deep Focus Productions, 1989.
- Flower Drum Song*, dir., Henry Koster, 1961.

The Mexican Presence in San Francisco, 1930-1950, dir., Francisco Camplís, 2001.

La Ofrenda, dirs., Lourdes Portillo and Susana Muñoz, Xochitl Films, San Francisco, CA, 1989.

Spark, “Fame” episode, KQED Television, 2003.

Unmined Treasures, dir., Francisco Camplís, 2000.

The Wrath of Grapes, United Farm Workers of America, Keene, CA, 1986.

Online Resources:

Adela Clara Flamenco, <http://adelaclaraflamenco.com>

Arriba Juntos, <http://www.arribajuntos.org>

Artists with AIDS, <http://www.artistswithaids.org>

Askart, <http://www.askart.com>

California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives, <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu>

Chili Pie, <http://www.chilipie.com>

Commonwealth Club, <http://www.commonwealthclub.org>

Fantasy Inc., <http://www.fantasyjazz.com>

Robert V. Fullerton Art Museum, <http://rvf-artmuseum.csusb.edu>

Galería de la Raza, <http://www.galeriadelaraza.org>

GroundWork, <http://www.groundworknews.org>

Handbook of Texas Online, <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/>

Horizons, <http://horizons-sf.org>

Jazzwest, <http://www.jazzwest.com>

Mission Language and Vocational School, <http://www.mlvs.org/aboutus.htm>

Mission Hiring Hall, <http://www.missionhiringhall.org>

Reclaiming Quarterly, <http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org>

Dennis Reed, <http://www.dmreed.com>

SFGov, <http://sfgov.org>

Salon, <http://www.salon.com>

Salsa Crazy, <http://www.salsacrazy.com>

San Francisco Community Clinic Consortium,
<http://www.sfccc.org/sfcccclinics/mnhc.htm>

San Francisco Flamenco, <http://www.sfflamenco.com>

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <http://www.sfmoma.org/>

San Francisco State University Archives, <http://www.library.sfsu.edu>

Smithsonian American Art Museum, <http://americanart.si.edu>

Stretcher, <http://www.stretcher.org>

Theatre Flamenco, <http://www.theatreflamenco.org>

Mitchell Yangson, "The Philippine American Collegiate Endeavor,"
<http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~runamuck/PACEPAPER.htm>

J. William T. Youngs, "A Historian's Home Page," <http://www.narhist.ewu.edu/>

Vita

Cary Cordova was born in San Francisco, California on December 31, 1970, the daughter of Solomon Cordova and Jennifer Feeley. She grew up in San Francisco, graduated from Lick-Wilmerding High School in 1988, and received her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from UCLA in 1992. For five years, she worked in publishing and conference planning in the public relations and electric power industries. In 1997, she entered the Master's program in American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She received her Master of Arts in 1999, and then continued to pursue a doctoral degree in American Studies. In that time, she has worked as a public historian, oral historian, and archivist. In January 2005, she became a Lecturer in American Studies at UC Davis.

Permanent address: 1900 Broadway #2, San Francisco, CA 94109

This dissertation was typed by the author.