

Ancient Ofrenda

Elements of an Altar



9th Annual
Día de los Muertos
Festival Exhibit

Gallery Guide

***Additional Information on Artworks and
Artists and some Spanish Translations***

ASU Museum of Anthropology

Fall 2008

Susan Elizalde-Holler
Transformation
Ceramic

All that is of this earth will undergo transformation. Vessels made of earth and transformed may be viewed as symbols or metaphors, yet to some they are merely utilitarian instruments. If vessels could speak, the stories they could tell of those who passed along the very earth they are made from. Time, tradition, and transformation are our experiences during this time on earth.

At this particular moment in time, this small clay vessel becomes an offering, a special offering - one of more transformations yet to come.

Mary-Beth Buesgen
Balancing the Elements
Ceramic, raku

Raku is a low-fire technique where clay work is quickly heated to red hot temperature and then taken out of the kiln and reduced in combustible material. The main material I used was the thoughts, prayers, and tributes left on paper at the altars from last year's Day of the Dead. I wanted to use the paper to assist in the representation of the four elements earth, air, fire and water in a Raku context. Everyone's wishes and words left behind for loved ones is now transformed in a beautiful work of art.

Guillermo Valenzuela
Santa Muerte (Clay)
Santa Muerte Luna (Oil on Canvas)

The cult to death has existed in Mexico for more than 3,000 years. The first residents of what is now Mexico conceived death as something necessary and that happens to all beings in nature. It is certain that cycles in nature, like night and day, seasons of drought and rain were the equivalent to life and death.

El culto a la muerte existe en México desde hace más de 3,000 años. Los antiguos pobladores de lo que hoy es la República mexicana concebían a la

muerte como algo necesario y que le ocurre a todos los seres en la naturaleza. Es seguro que los ciclos en la naturaleza como la noche y el día, la época de sequía y lluvias eran el equivalente a la vida y la muerte.

Guillermo Valenzuela has been working as a professional artist since 1992. Most of his work plays with the nudity, in painting and sculptures. Each piece express a different feeling and its inspired by personal experiences, metaphors, and his own culture. His work has been placed in Government Institutions, Museums and Galleries in Sonora, Mexico; and in the United States he has participated in art festivals and has exhibit in art galleries. Guillermo has a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration and a Diploma in Arts.

Guillermo Valenzuela ha trabajado como artista profesional desde 1992. La mayor parte de su obra juega con la desnudez, en la pintura y esculturas. Cada pieza expresa un sentimiento diferente y su inspirado en experiencias personales, las metáforas, y su propia cultura. Su obra se ha colocado en las instituciones gubernamentales, museos y galerías en Sonora, Mexico, y en los Estados Unidos ha participado en festivales de arte y ha expuesto en galerías. Guillermo tiene una Licenciatura en Administración de Empresas y un Diplomado en Artes.

Peter Bugg
Saint Britney
Inkjet Prints on Votive Candles

I wonder what it's like to be a celebrity, to be famous. I wonder how it feels to have people around the world recognize who you are, think you are beautiful, have an opinion about whether or not you should have broken up with your ex. I wonder if I would like it as much as I think I would, and I wonder if I would be able to behave any better than a lot of celebrities do. We pray to them, but we also pray for them.

Jaxinta Parra & Friends
Calavaritas

Molded from a sugar paste, then decorated with icing, glitter and foil

these skulls often are placed on altars. The sugar represents the sweetness of life, and the skull represents the sadness of death.

Esperanza Lopez
Death Hits the Piñata Hard
Mixed Media

Death hits right in the heart of the soul because we feel a loss, or the pain of never again being the same. The hit and pain are necessary for us to receive the treats that await both the departed and those who are left behind. Death is a sweet transition for the departed because they transcend from the earthly sufferings leaving behind sweet memories for those left behind. Let us celebrate those have departed and remember their sweet memories.

La muerte le pega duro al corazón porque se siente la perdida, o el dolor de que nada es igual. El golpe y el dolor son parte de los golpes que traerán dulzura al morir y a seguir viviendo. La muerte es algo dulce porque se deja de sufrir en la tierra y nos ayuda apreciar los dulces recuerdos de los que mueren. Celebremos las memorias de los que murieron! Que dulce recuerdos!

Mary Nuñez/DeLira
Alt Day of Water Day 9 of La pierda del sol
Quiahuitl Day of Rain Day 19 of La pierda del sol
Muertos
Prismacolor Pencil on Paper

Día de los muertos has it ancient roots to the Aztecs, Mayan, Mixtec, Toltecs. The simple symbols and codices were alwaysvto communicate to educate their philosophies of the duality and coexistence of life and death. This day has been affected by the mixture of yet other Spanish & religious belief that has brought this ancient celebration into our present day, day of the dead.

Though the both Day of Water and the Day of Rain deal with the element of water, they were represented by the Aztecs as two separate days in their presentation of the twenty days in the pierda del sol (Aztec calendar).

The sacredness and respect for the elements water & rain was important to sustain the survival of maize agriculture. Other importance uses of water were for the many ceremonial purifications, especially for baptism.

Day of water was dedicated to the completion of the 52 cycle year of the pierda. I wanted to show the emphasis in its relationship to the New Century Celebration where water was used to distinguish all the fires in the empire, all hearths in the temples/houses were put out. 12 days of fasting, penance and even blood letting was practiced until the 12th day when a volunteer sacrifice would take place and a new fire would be ignited from a bundled fire. New fires were started again 3 hearths inside each temple/house to help mark the beginning of next 52 year cycle.

Day of rain celebrated the different rains which affected the growth of el maize, underwater walls were developed as reserves to collect water for the times of drought (fiery rain would bring drought).

Muertos: The symbol for life is a flower. The symbol for death is a skull, the contrast of the two is the balance of our lives and the cosmic string to our past and future.

I have only been to Mexico one time when I was 10 years old. I went with my maternal grandfather to visit mi tia Maria Rodriguez (maternal great aunt) in Ojinaga, Chihuahua Mexico in her small adobe 10x10 home. I have never been to Mexico City or seen the actual pyramids themselves. My love and interest and connection to this history of stone and color started when I was in college, with a Precolumbian art history class. I began to learn the history of the migration, of the differences/similarities within the different Indian ancestors and important contributions each Indian group brought to the world. I learned that there was a history that was so close to who I was and yet so foreign in that I truly didn't know anything about it, except that these were my family roots and the innate love for the Aztec calendar. Its design was a very powerful, soulful, guiding wind in my life. As I've developed my art, so has the knowledge of the history, artifacts, mythologies and even an interest in trying to learn a little nahuatl.

Heriberto Luna
Chac (Rain God)
Oil on Canvas

Mary-Irene & Caroline Kinsley

In many cultures, butterflies represent the spirits of the dead come back to join the living. We invite you to participate in the ongoing creation of this altar by choosing a paper butterfly, writing the name of a loved one, or a thought, or a wish, on the wings, peeling off the paper adhesive, and affixing the butterfly to the altar, to the wall, or anywhere else in the gallery you wish.

It is our sincere hope that over the course of the existence of this altar that butterflies will come to inhabit all the nooks and crannies, filling the small empty spaces with love and memory. We have created these butterflies by hand, with love, in the hopes you will help us accomplish this. Please help us achieve this goal and honor the memory of a deceased loved one by affixing a butterfly or two.

Cynthia Pesselato
Fly Home
Paper Mâché and Acrylic Paint

Katie Hovencamp
Earth Attendant
Wood, Soil and Video

The element of earth is one is constant and never changes. It is historic; it holds the memories that are dear to us, it can also generate new life. Currently, we are in the digital age; in many ways technology has taken over history. Our past is being forgotten in society's movement forward. Earth Attendant is an attempt to resurrect history and nature from confined modern spaces. This piece reminds us to realize our past in order to preserve our history for the future.

René A. Westbrook
Earth-Home-Luck Triptych Shrine, 2008

Mixed Media and Found Objects

I have lived at the south rim of Grand Canyon National Park with my Park Service electrician husband Dan and our 12-year-old daughter Annabelle since 1999. The intermittent project “Shrines for the Everyday” began when we lived in Yellowstone in the 80s and 90s (using stuff found in old barns and ranch dumps), and continued during the 2 years we lived at Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska (beach flotsam and rainforest jetsam). Since moving to Northern Arizona, I’ve continued the series (with objects found in old mining camp dumps and around dilapidated cowboy bunk-houses). There is a mysterious narrative content in objects found out in the woods, discarded to the elements, retaining a hint of their utility and possessing their own story. Who ate sardines under this tree? Is that person still alive? How many different animals and insects did it take to clean out all the greasy bits left behind? How many seasons has it sat in the woods? How long does it take metal to rust in the dry red deserts? This often humorous work is a secular series of sculptures that celebrate the daily churning of life; the creative act of cooking and the tedious act of washing dishes, every day getting up and every night laying down again, the similarities between the painful joy of birth and the painful sorrow of death. I like working with found objects because you never know where it’s headed but you know the minute it’s done.

Gennaro Garcia & Luciano Garcia Michael

Mi Frida en el Aire

Acrylic and Oil on Hard-Carved Wood

Artist Gennaro Garcia and his father, Luciano Garcia Michael, have carved out a niche for themselves that crosses different times, cultures, and countries. 73-year-old Luciano came from a small town in Mexico called La Huerta Jalisco, where his family owned La Hacienda Los Ciruelos. As a young man, he learned to work the family farm, and it was in those fields where he gained his love of growing and preparing fine food, and working with his hands. He came to America 35 years ago in pursuit of his dreams, working again in agriculture until he could return to Mexico and open a family restaurant with his brothers. He returned to America several times and eventually opened another restaurant on the border of the United States and Mexico, where he remained retired in Bullhead City Arizona with his beloved wife, Martha. Luciano’s love of the restaurant business wasn’t lost on his son. Gennaro grew up in and around the family’s restaurants. But along with his passion for fine cuisine, Gennaro

discovered a passion for the arts. It wasn't enough to prepare the foods he loved, he wanted to paint and photograph them - along with the scenery, people and places that created the memories and experiences that captured his heart and sustained his family. He studied graphic design and photography in Mexico, paying his way through school by painting signs and murals for local restaurants, and eventually entered the restaurant business with his family. After opening his third restaurant, he moved to Yuma, Arizona. This is where he started working as a General Manager in a Mexican restaurant in his spare time. Later he moved to Phoenix. This is where he continued to pursue his art, while again managing another Mexican restaurant and staying in the restaurant business, this was until Mia Pratt saw his unique artwork in a local restaurant and immediately offered him a position as Muralist on the Old Pratt Studios team in 2002. He still continues his association as Senior Staff Artist.

Gennaro has traveled to Spain, France, Italy, England, Africa, and Latin America to visit museums, cathedrals, and churches of the world, where he gets his ideas of Retablos and other Iconic art. Inspired by his son, Luciano began sculpting small crosses and religious figures for Gennaro, which Gennaro in-turn painted. It was their deep, mutual love of their ancestry, art and religion that brought this father and son together at this point in their lives. They share the unexpected joy of creating the beautifully hand-crafted icons for which they have gained wide recognition. Together, these men now work with their hands in a new and different way - to share their love for each other, their history, and their passion.

Consuelo J. Underwood
Fifth Sun
Woven wire, paper

Death is a transition from the mundane to the timeless world of the spirit.

The movement is ongoing and often unnoticed. The American belief is that there have been four epochs of man on this planet. The layers of color in the work represent the previous eras. The current epoch is ending, we are oblivious to this event. We keep spinning, once in a while we look inside for a sense of spirit, (the hidden Virgen de Guadalupe inside the top rim), and then we return to our outer self and admire our wonderful mundane existence.

Consuelo J. Underwood has exhibited and lectured nationally and internationally for more than twenty five years. Her work is part of the

permanent collections of museums such as the Smithsonian American Museum of Art, Museum of Art & Design in NY, the National Hispanic Center for the Arts, NM, and the Mexican Museum in San Francisco. Her contributions to the contemporary Chicano and Fiber art movements have been referenced in multiple critical publications. Consuelo J. Underwood was born in Sacramento, CA and received her BA and her MA from San Diego State University in 1981. She began teaching fiber art at San Jose State University in the Spatial Area in the School of Arts & Design after receiving her MFA from San Jose State University in 1987. "My work reflects the quiet rage that has permeated the Americas for more than five hundred years."

Jose M. Loza
Remembering the Dead, 2008
Acrylic on Wood

Jose M. Loza was born in Cuernavaca, Mexico. He has lived in Long Beach California since 1983. Jose Loza's work with public art has been a common practice since his early teenage years. He has learned the trade of painting murals as an apprentice to other accomplished artists. Over the last nine years he has worked as a freelance artist doing commercial, fine art and mural works. He has worked on over thirty murals in and around the Southern California area. Aside from painting murals, Jose also works for the City of Long Beach's Mural and Cultural Arts Program, coordinating youth workshops, mural conservation/restoration, and mural production. His recent murals have been historically themed. Working with neighborhood committee members, he researches the area's history and travels to different cities to gather historical and recent information for the murals. Jose is currently working on designing a mural for the City of Long Beach and has been commissioned by the El Dorado Audubon Society to paint educational wildlife paintings.

Linda Vallejo
Water Spirit Series
Woman and Man, 2002
Woman's Inner Life, 2002

As we move into an increasingly devastated landscape and loss of natural resources, we will find that nature is a fundamental source of life, beauty, and solace. In *Water Spirits* I hope to help the viewer find a place where we can re-member and re-collect inspirational experiences in nature, specifically water and the ocean. These paintings are my personal way of bringing an eco-awareness to our losses of clean water, the ocean, and ocean life. If we can remember the value and beauty of clean water for ourselves and future generations perhaps we will be more respectful of nature and our natural resources.

Linda Vallejo is an artist that consolidates multiple, international influences gained from a life of study and travel throughout Europe, the United States and Mexico to create images and installations that investigate humanity's fundamental and metamorphic relationship with nature, and conversely the destruction of natural resources through pollution and waste.

She is represented in the U.S. by the Patricia Correia Gallery and has exhibited her work at the Los Angeles Natural History Museum, Los Angeles Craft and Folk Art Museum, The Carnegie Art Museum, Armand Hammer Museum, Laguna Art Museum, Bronx Museum, Museum of Modern Art New York, San Antonio Museum, Mexico City Modern Art Museum, Galeria Las Americas, Tropico Nopal, Ave 50 Studio Gallery, Patricia Correia Gallery, and Metro Gallery. Her work has been reviewed in *ArtNews*, *Art Business News*, *Southwest Art*, *Saludos Hispanos*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Artillery*, *LA Downtown News*, and *Latin Style Magazine*.

Vallejo has received grants and awards from the Durfee Foundation, UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, Artist Award, Quien es Quien in US Commerce, National Award, 1994, the National Association Chicano Studies, Distinguished Recognition, 1993, Comisión Femenil de Los Angeles Latinas Making History award in Art, the California Community Foundation, the Brody Fund Arts Fellowship, and the California Arts Council.

Ms. Vallejo has also studied and participated in Native American and Chicano traditional ceremony for over twenty-five years. She lives in Topanga Canyon, California, with her husband of thirty years, Ron Dillaway. Her son Robert attends Georgetown Law School and her son Paul is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz.

Vallejo states about her work, "My first memory of painting was at four years of age and it has continued as my life's dedication. My goal as an

artist has been to consolidate multiple, international influences gained from a life of study and travel throughout United States, Mexico, and Europe. My goal is to create an image that communicates the idea that without nature, humanity, history and culture as we know it are lost, that nature is the thread that encircles and describes all of us, regardless of gender, race, age, or creed, and finally, that nature is beyond politics, religion, market, and even art!

Antonio C. Estrada

Teocalli Achtontli (Náhuatl language for “Ancestral Temple”)

Mixed media on wood

Yohualtica (Náhuatl language for “At Night”)

Seed Beads on wood

On Loan from Private Collection

TEOCALLI ACHTONTLI Día de los Muertos is a time of the year when we welcome the souls of the dead for a few brief hours to enjoy the pleasures they enjoyed in life. We have the opportunity to honor and remember the lives of individuals who have passed on and who were important or in some way influenced or guided our lives. Death is inevitable; it is a part of living. We take joy in our lives and embrace death when it comes. The Day of the Dead Festival helps us to celebrate death and living which are closely entwined.

Rituals celebrating the lives of ancestors have been observed by Meso-american civilizations such the Aztec, Maya, Toltec, and Inca since pre-Columbian times. The Aztecs annually held a festival honoring the dead and offered human sacrifices to the dead and to the Gods of the Dead using their temples as the altar or place of offerings. In addition, in pre-Columbian times, the Indigenous populations of Mexico believed that the souls of the dead were given a divine right by the gods to visit the living once a year. Día de los Muertos came about as a blending of religious practices of two cultures – Aztec rituals and Spanish Catholic through the celebration of All Saints and All Souls Fest Days. Today’s Día de los Muertos is a mix of enduring pre-Hispanic rituals and modern day interpretations of the altars, also known as offerings or Ofrendas.

The altar (Ofrenda) and the objects placed on it invite and guide the souls of the departed (difuntos) to return to earth for a few brief hours to enjoy the pleasures they once knew while they were alive and “visit” with their living family. Altars are either created in one’s home, at the gravesite, or

more recently in museums and other public venues. Great care is taken in preparing the altar and offerings to welcome the departed. Items that are placed on the altar have evolved from ancient times of ritual and sacrifice to today's offerings of favorite foods, drinks, photos, toys and personal possessions that were meaningful in the life of the departed. There are many other modern day equivalents of items that can be placed on the altar which represent aspects of the ancient four elements of nature.

In the Aztec tradition, this piece focuses on the four main element of nature – earth, wind, fire, and water.

The Ancestral Pyramid or Temple represents the most ancient form of transformation and transition from the physical world to the mystical world of the afterlife. Each side of the Pyramid depicts one of the four elements.

The ancient Earth (Anahuatl) is represented by stone, animals, plants, flowers, maize, and primal jungles and forest. Today, corn, squash, fruits, and other foods and crops represent the earth.

Wind (Ehekatl) is symbolized by the God of Wind, Ehekatl-Quetzalcoatl. In the past, painted or cut out bark or paper figures or banners were used as ceremonial offerings. Today, wind is represented by a moving object such as papel picado (decorations made of tissue paper with intricately cut designs) which is commonly used to represent wind.

Fire (Tlachinolli) was recognized as the primary catalyst for change and symbolized by various fire gods, serpents, and the sun. In this piece Fire is represented by an erupting volcano exhibiting its great power and capacity for change. Today, candles are a symbol of fire and illuminate the way for a soul to reach its home. Extra candles are placed on the altar to light the way for the forgotten soul (ánima sola) who has no family or friends to welcome them home.

Water (Atl) was very important to ancient peoples for use in agriculture, for purification ceremonies and for life. Mountains, springs, oceans and other sources of water were often worshiped as magical God and Goddesses of water are among the oldest and omnipresent symbols in these cultures. In this piece La Sirena (Mermaid) shows the magical, spiritual, life giving nature of water.

Skulls and bones are the universal symbol of death. In this piece the Skulls represent the dead spirits of the ancestors. They have returned to

the world of the living using the Ofrenda as their path. The Aztec believed that the dead journeyed and experienced many trials as they traveled through the nine levels of the underworld of death (Mictlan) to their final resting place. Objects from the dead person's life that would be useful in their dangerous journey were placed in the graves of their loved. Today, familiar items are placed on the altar to invite and guide the departed back to earth for a brief while and to give them pleasure. Sugar skulls today come in all shapes and sizes and colorfully decorated with icing. Names of the deceased are inscribed with icing across the forehead and placed on the altar along with other sugar figures in some cases.

The Día de los Muertos tradition has been transformed into a joyous celebration in which the living honor and remember los difuntos (the dearly departed) in a family centered event. Día de los Muertos is a time to welcome the ánima (soul) of the dead, replenish the espíritu (spirit) of the living and renew personal relationships and enjoy the atolli (atole) and pan de muerto.

YOHUALTICA This piece celebrates life and death and the connection to the ultimate source of all creation - love. The act of creation begins in darkness. Los amantes antiguos (ancient lovers) portray the masculine and feminine energies of all that exists in the world. It was commonly believed in Mesoamerican civilizations that the soul traveled around while one slept. Dreams were often considered to be memories of the soul's nocturnal journeys and adventures. Not able to venture out during the day, these ánimas (spirits) meet "At Night." The lovers dream during the daylight hours of the night that will bring them together for eternity in the act of creation.

My passion for art began when I was a child living in South Tucson. I am the youngest of six children born to hardworking parents of humble means. I drew and created many pieces of art. After graduating from high school I worked to help support my family. College was out of reach and as a result I explored art on my own. Through experimentation I taught myself how to work with many materials and media and in a variety of styles from sculpting and mural work to woodcarving and screen printing.

Growing up, I could not afford my own art supplies, so learned to improvise and use non traditional "canvases" to display my work. If it had a surface, I could work on it. If it was blank, I could paint on it. If it was

drab, I could make it come to life with color and meaning. I continue to use this philosophy in my work to this day.

My art is personal. It comes from my life experiences and is inspired by my Chicano heritage. I tend to create works that are cultural or religious in nature. It is constantly evolving as every day brings with it the opportunity to learn something new.

Each year I create a number of designs specific to the Día de Los Muertos tradition to celebrate the lives of loved ones or others who have influenced my life whom are now departed. These designs take the form of screen prints for t-shirts, painting, altars, ceramics and a variety of other media. My Day of the Dead t-shirts are available primarily in the Tucson area, but many have found their way to states all over the country and as far away as Canada, Guadalajara and Spain. I also create custom rosaries from semi-precious stones, glass beads and sterling silver crosses.

Francisco Garcia
El Silencio Mata
Acrylic on Canvas

The piece was inspired by an indigenous mask, immigration issues and a trip to Mexico during the summer. It is showing you our roots, our art, our history, and where our culture came from. Its also stating that indigenous/ Mexican people were here in the “Americas” first and we can’t stay silent on the injustice that is happening to our people in the U.S. Immigration first started when “the fore fathers” of the U.S. constitution migrated from Europe.

Liliana Madero
Catrina Tequila
Green Hada Catrina
Mixed Media

Rosa or “Catrina Tequila,” like her friends knew her, loved old Mexican movies and had an obsession with Mexican legend Tin Tan. She died when the Tequila made her think that she could fly.

Rosa o “Catrina Tequila” como la llamaban sus amigos, le encantaban las

películas mexicanas de época y tenía una obsesión con Tin Tan. Murió cuando el Tequila la hizo pensar que podía volar.

She spent her entire life looking for Elvis “The King”, tracking all the legends claiming that he is still alive. One day she realized she had looked everywhere, and when she choked on a fish bone she was able to look on the only place left: heaven.

Pasó toda su vida buscando al “Rey” Elvis, investigando todas las leyendas urbanas que dicen que aún está vivo. Un día se dió cuenta que ya había buscado en todos lados, y cuando se ahogó con una espina de pescado pudo buscar en el único lugar que le faltaba: el cielo.

Liliana Madero has been working as a professional artist since 1997. Her love for Mexican folklore has influenced the subject of her work and she has recreated it in several ways. She is also very interested in the fashion industry, so she incorporated high couture designs on her “Catrinas” Collection, which are part of the celebration of the Day of the Dead in Mexico. This has brought her artwork to be placed in collections in the state of Jalisco and Sonora in Mexico; as well as in the USA. Her work has also been illustrated in Mexican magazines like Magis in Mexico and Latino Perspectives in USA.

Liliana received a Bachelors Degree in Communication from ITESO University in Jalisco, Mexico, and a Diploma in Clay animation by the Cannes award winning Calavera Films in Mexico.

Liliana Madero ha trabajado como artista profesional desde 1997. Su amor por el folklore mexicano ha influenciado su trabajo y lo ha recreado en diversas piezas. También está interesada en la industria de la moda, así que ha incorporado alta costura en los diseños de su colección de “Catrinas”, parte de la celebración del Día de los Muertos en México. Esto ha logrado que su arte esté colocado en colecciones en el estado de Jalisco, México, así como en los Estados Unidos. Su trabajo ha ilustrado revistas mexicanas como Magis en México y Latino Perspectives en los Estados Unidos. Liliana es Licenciada en Comunicación por parte de la universidad ITESO en Jalisco, Mexico, y tiene un diploma en Animación en plastilina por parte de Calavera Films, galardonado de Cannes.

Jenna Bustamante
Dance for Eternity
Paper/Mosaic Collage

Dancing is equivalent to happiness. The dead laugh at the living, because they are having a much better time in the afterlife than we are in our world. Being able to dance for eternity is much reason to celebrate. The calaca is indulging in the privilege of having a never ending dance.

Jenna Bustamante is a student at ASU.

Ramon Ramirez

PAX & El Dios Que No Pudo

Charcoal, Collage & Conté Crayon on Paper

My work has been centered on the built-environment, specifically that of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. Born and raised in Los Angeles, the urban landscape has made a tremendous impact on the development of my psyche. I paint the urban environment, not to replicate it, but to digest it and to understand the trends and social conditions that it generates.

The visual arts have allowed me to perform reconnaissance and interpret my environment. Not only do I aim to satisfy an internal need to better understand who I am, but I also hope to communicate to a larger forum my observations of the environment's effect on our aesthetic values and its constant evolution.

In analyzing our city, the realization of multiple authors has become a key ingredient of my work. No one single entity is responsible for our urban landscape. There are circumstantial forces at work that weave an unintentional aesthetic. This observation has led me to explore the use of multiple materials as a means to communicate the rich urban texture around us. In my approach, I always start with an inspired image; however, I embrace various elements, including gravity, to help manifest the image, often changing course from the initial intention. As our environment is continuously expanding and contracting, I similarly see my work in a constant state of flux, aiming to bring a visual understanding to our changing community.

Ramon Ramirez was born and raised in East Los Angeles, where he displayed signs of artistic talent, as demonstrated by his chalkboard murals that could be found in classrooms throughout his high school campus. However, it was not until he attended U.C Berkeley, where he majored in Architecture, that he was able to formally explore painting. In his freshman year, he took an art class taught by Yolanda M. Lopez,

which allowed him to understand that painting could be both cultural and formal. As an undergraduate, his artistic development paralleled his personal and political development in that his paintings reflected his emerging identity as a Chicano.

Ramon draws his inspiration from a variety of sources- Mexican muralists, American abstract expressionists, Chicano and Mesoamerican art. Music, from the energetic sounds of the Mars Volta to the eclectic tapestries of Manu Chao, also inspires Ramon's visual exploration.

An undeniable influence that informs Ramon's art is architecture. Upon analyzing his paintings, the contamination of architecture is evident, as confirmed by the two-dimensionality of his compositions and the aggressive presence of the built environment. his architecture, conversely, has also been informed by his painting. The 'URBANsubURBAN House', his residence, reflects playful fields of color, which seem to echo his art.

His paintings can be found in Private collections throughout the United States, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco, Washington D.C, and in Basel, Switzerland. his work can also be found in public collections, including the Chicano Studies Library at U.C Berkeley, the U.C Santa Barbara Library, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (print department), and the Laguna Art Museum in California

Ramon Continues to be an active painter in Souther California where he also practices and teaches architectural design.

Jenny Reyes-Heath

Moon Statue/Flute (Aztec)

Sun God Statue/Flute (Aztec)

Photographs

Calendar Stone (Aztec)

Plaster, Original Photographs, Mixed Media

According to the history, the Aztecs honored their muertos in the ninth month of their calendar, that approximately began with the first days of August and with the proliferation of the Catholicism in the American continent. This traditional festival began to intercross with the celebration of ALL THE SAINTS and ALL THE SOULS, that the Church celebrates at the beginning of November. The most famous surviving Aztec sculpture is the large circular Calendar Stone, which represents the Aztec universe. The Aztec spoke a language called Nahuatl. It belongs to a large group of

Indian languages which also include the languages spoken by the Comanche, Pima, Shoshone and other tribes of western North America. The Aztec used pictographs to communicate through writing. Some of the pictures symbolized ideas and other represented the sounds of the syllables. The face of the main Aztec god, Tonatiuh, is the center of the stone. Around the face are four squares called Nahui-Ollin, or the Four Movements. They represent the Aztec belief that in four ways, four previous worlds had come to an end: by animals, wind, fire, and floods. The Aztecs believed they were living in the fifth and final world. The circle shows the twenty squares naming each day of the Aztec month.

Según cuenta la historia, los aztecas honraban a sus muertos en el noveno mes de su calendario, que aproximadamente coincidía con los primeros días de agosto y, con la proliferación del catolicismo en el continente americano, esta festividad tradicional comenzó a entrecruzarse con la fiesta de Todos los Santos y la de Todas las Almas que la Iglesia celebra a principios de noviembre. La más famosa escultura azteca que sobrevive es el CALENDARIO AZTECA EN PIEDRA CIRCULAR, que representa el Universo Azteca.

Los Aztecas hablan una lengua llamada Nahuatl . Pertenece a un grupo grande de lenguas/idiomas indígenas donde se incluían también los idiomas hablados como el Comanche, Pima, Shoshone y otras tribus de Norteamérica occidental. Los aztecas usaban pictogramas/jeroglíficos para comunicarse por medio de su escritura. Algunos(as) de sus obras representan y simbolizan ideas y sonidos de sus silabas/silabario.

Prof. Jenny Reyes- Heath is a Mexican Painter since 1995 born in Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico, She derives much inspiration from different cultures including Mexican, English, American, Oriental, Indigenous and European. Her techniques are Oil Painting, Watercolour, Photography, Sculptures, Murals, and beading. Primarily exhibits in Mexico and The USA . She also holds works in both private and public collections. Now she resides in Gilbert, Arizona USA, with her husband Robert Heath. Also he has her own Art and Languages School where she teaches her techniques.

Prof. Jenny Reyes-Heath es una Artista en Pintura desde 1995 nació en Culiacán, Sinaloa México. Ella deriva mucha inspiración de culturas diferentes incluyendo la Mexicana, Inglesa, Americana, Oriental, indígena y Europea. Sus técnicas son Pintura al oleo, Acuarela, Fotografía, esculturas, Murales y bordado con cuentas, chaquiras etc. Sus exhibiciones son primeramente en México y los Estados Unidos. Como también en ambas partes tiene colecciones privadas y públicas. Hoy reside en Gilbert,

Arizona USA junto a su Esposo Robert Heath, así como también tiene su propia Escuela donde da clases de Arte e idiomas y ensena todas sus técnicas.

Yan Sheng Zhang

Bamboo

Transformation (Man/Animal)

Watercolor Paint and Ink on Paper

Noteworthy cultures that had solar-based religious systems were the ancient Egyptians and Aztecs. The ancient Chinese people believed that there were ten suns that appeared, while the Aztecs believed that there were five suns (Aztec Calendar).

Surya is believed to be a compassionate deity, who can heal sick people. The emperor, Yao asked the father of the ten suns, Di Jun to make them appear one at a time. The priest would track the process of the stars across the sky and when a certain star reached the center of the sky, the people believed that all was well because the sun would raise the next day and life as they knew it would continue. This story is significant, because in this case the sun is personified by a female, not a male which is very rare.

The Aztec civilization also had the God Sun named Tonatiuh and 20 days in their calendar as well as representation of different Gods as earth, wind, fire, water (each represented by an animal). China is believed to have developed its own independent system around the year 2000 B.C. Other early forms of astrology included those in ancient India and the Mayan civilization of Central America. It also spread to Greece, where early astronomers such as Plato and Pythagoras incorporated astrology into their theories about science and religion.

Déjame hablarte un poco acerca de mis obras de arte/pinturas. Hice la Transformación (Hombre/Animal) porque en los tiempos aztecas los hombres representaban a los Dioses por medio de los Animales y la del Bambú: representa la libertad, así como el aire/viento.

La Historia de los aztecas y arte antiguo como los chinos dicen: las culturas significativas que tenían religión solar eran los Egipcios y aztecas antiguos... El pueblo Chino antiguo creyó que había diez soles que aparecieron, cuando los aztecas creyeron que había 5 soles. (En el

calendario Azteca)

Es una creencia de una deidad de que Surya era compasiva, que podía curar a gente enferma. El emperador Yao pregunto al padre/sacerdote acerca de los 10 soles Di jun, aparecerlos uno a la vez. El sacerdote seguiría el proceso de las estrellas a través del cielo y cuando dicha alcance el centro del cielo, la gente creerá que todo está bien porque el sol se elevara en el horizonte el siguiente día, y todo comenzara de nuevo. Fue dividido en 18 meses y 20 días cada uno. Esta historia es significativa, porque en este caso el sol es personificado por una mujer, y no por un varón-hombre lo cual es raro.

En la civilización de los aztecas también tenían un Dios del Sol llamado Tonatiul y 20 días en su calendario y la representación de diferentes dioses como el de la tierra, viento, fuego, agua (representados por un animal). China se cree haber desarrollado sus propios independiente sistema alrededor del año 2000 A.C. Otras formas tempranas de astrología incluyen esas de la India antigua y de la civilización Maya de Centro América. Como también Se esparció a Grecia, donde los astrónomos como Platón y Pitágoras incorporaron astrología en sus teorías acerca de la ciencia y religión.

Yan Sheng Zhang, she is from Beijing. An inspirational 68 years old Artist, that loves nature and everything related with china and other cultures, she focuses mainly in Watercolour and Chinese traditional ink painting. She has 7 years painting and exploring new techniques. She has public and private painting in Beijing and here in the USA, mainly in Gilbert, Arizona.

Yan Sheng Zhang, ella es de Beijing. Una Artista inspiradora de 68 años de edad, que ama la naturaleza y todo lo relacionado con china y otras culturas, ella se enfoca principalmente en la técnica de Acuarela y tintas en la pintura. Ella tiene 7 años pintando y explorando nuevas técnicas. Ella tiene obras públicas y privadas en Beijín y aquí en los Estados Unidos de América, en Gilbert, Arizona.

Leticia Huerta
Mariposas para Daddy
Mixed Media on Handmade Paper

The butterfly is dedicated to the memory of my dad because when he passed I felt that his spirit soared out of his body to fly among the butterflies and other winged creatures.

Silivia Rodriguez
Madre Tierra/Mother Earth
Acrylic on Canvas

Mother Earth is dying, along with the four sacred elements, and no one is doing anything about it. Her rivers that are portrayed by her hair are drying out. She still has life to give, but she has become a muerta. In the beginning when she was young we received Maiz from her, then the rest of her blessings (sage), but now we are making ugly what once was beautiful. Lets keep the fire alive; this fire she holds in her hand in shape of the heart is the spirit of God the creator that still gives us life.

Toby Morfin
Muerte & The Four Elements
Acrylic on Canvas

I am a multi-faceted artist working in utilizing pastels, oils, charcoal and other mediums. I was born in Espanola, which is located in Northern New Mexico and I have been painting most of my life. Having lived all over the Southwest, my artwork has been heavily influenced by the rich and diverse cultures of the Hispanic and Native American people who reside there.

The vast majority of my work is based off of my everyday life experiences, observations, and visualizations of my surroundings. The way everyday life affects me is the medium I put into my work.

Robert G. Rivera
Linea de Espiritus
Acrylics on Canvas

Dedicated to three departed souls in heaven that I love very much.

Bob Hale
Jesus Malverde
Acrylic on Found Cabinet Panel

Since the invent of the Camera, Art has been ever changing to overcome the human elements lost to technology. I wish to push the envelope in Aesthetics as well as maintain the dying art of imagery made by hand and mind. Break the rules; trick the viewer, and force individuals to use their imaginations again since the ubiquitous technological society turns humans into drones.

In my figurative work I strive to evoke both the high and low brow, to cause a reaction of disgust or of understanding (after all that is what makes Art, Art!), pulling images from deviant subcultures and juxtaposing them against loaded images that are prevalent in our society.

Bob Hale holds a degree in Painting from ASU and has been teaching art for over twenty years. He has exhibited at the Harry Wood Gallery, Art One Gallery, Socio and has previously participated in our annual Día de los Muertos Festival Exhibit.

Peter Goin
Foundation Professor of Art, University of Nevada-Reno
Homage to Day of the Dead
Pigment Print on Hahnmanuhle watercolor paper

During the spring semester, 2008, I was on assignment in Puebla, Mexico, via the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC), where I taught digital photography and the History of Photography at the Universidad Iberoamericana.

During my research seeking objects and artifacts representing various rituals, I acquired a series of carved, antiqued miniature skulls. These skulls were not sold in tourist outlets, but in the street markets usually populated by vegetable and fruit vendors.

I photographed numerous skulls in-studio and assembled the resulting images onto a spiral pattern that is optically kinetic. Measuring 44" x 45" (112 cm x 114 cm), the finished work, exhibited here for the first time, is slated for exhibit in Mexico during 2009-2010.

Susana Valenzuela
Our Waters Nuestras Aguas
Tin Metal, painted with patinas

The wisdom of our ancestors Mayan, Aztec, Egyptian, Hindu, Incas, etc. says that we must die psychologically (to eliminate our defects) to born again spiritually. This psychological death is only possible with the correct transmutation of our internal waters and with a very high degree of understanding and wisdom. If we will die psychologically, we will be able to understand the microcosm (the man) in the seven dimensions and we will decipher all the mysteries of the life and the death of the man and the universe.

La sabiduría de nuestros antepasados Mayas, Aztecas, Egipcios, Indúes, Incas, etc. dice que debemos morir psicológicamente (eliminar nuestros defectos) para renacer espiritualmente. Dicha muerte psicológica es sólo posible con la correcta transmutación de nuestras aguas internas y con un grado muy alto de comprensión y sabiduría. Si logramos morir psicológicamente podremos entender el microcosmos (el hombre) en sus siete dimensiones y clarivamente descifraremos todos los misterios de la vida y la muerte del hombre y el universo.

Susana Valenzuela (Mexico) do the millennial art of embossing (“repujado” in Spanish or “repoussé” in French), born and developed in Greek, Egyptian, Aztec Teotihuacan and Middle Eastern culture. Susana apply the metal embossing to today’s world thru images and traditional icons of different cultures in the world. The metal embossing consists in achieving high and low relieves on tin, copper, aluminum, and brass to obtain the three dimensions of the picture. A patina or other medium can be applied to the embossed designs to duplicate the look of age or contemporary.

Susana Valenzuela (México) realiza el arte milenario del repujado (“metal embossing” en inglés o “repoussé” en francés) el cual nació y se desarrolló en Grecia, Egipto, en la cultura azteca y del medio oriente. Susana incorpora el arte del repujado en imágenes e íconos de las diferentes culturas del mundo contemporáneo y antiguo. El repujado consiste en dar volumen y relieves a los metales de estaño, cobre, aluminio y latón para lograr una imagen tridimensional. Posteriormente, se aplica patina, acrílico u otro tipo de pintura para lograr un aire nuevo o viejo.

Ruben Galicia
Cihuapipiltin on a Cloud of Cempasúchitl
Acrylic on Canvas

Dedicated to those women who have died with children in their womb, this death goddess represents the cihuapipiltin, evil spirits of the crossroads in the Aztec world. These are the spirits of women who died in childbirth, who steal children.

Juan Granados
Morning Flight
Ceramic

Cris Escobar
My Native Spirit Voyage II
Oil on Canvas

La Muerte, death as it is known to the cultures of Latin America and to the peoples of the Southwestern United States is traditionally characterized as a passage to a new world, an acceptance, and a time of remembering those that lived and died with a one day celebration, “El Día de Los Muertos”. The offerings are only generous gestures to our lost souls, so they can continue in their journey in paradise.

In my painting I depicted an indigenous world surrounded by mere pieces of color and shapes. These bold colors are always present in many of the indigenous cultures. Color I think brings to life many of the things we are surrounded by. Colors adds a source of spirit that is always joyful even in the harshest times. Poverty plagues many small Mexican villages and ranchitos in our region surrounding the Texas and Mexico border, yet people make the best of their daily lives. Perhaps they do it to forget about the situation they find themselves in, and to show their young ones to enjoy life to its fullest no matter what. This interpretive and playful painting reveals an artist’s dream world. My approach to painting starts with a rotating canvas, playing with varied color lines that turn into shapes that evolve into what is now entitled A Native Spirit World. The

images that resulted ended up being skull figures, feathered serpents, colored corn harvest, a jaguar, a native figure grasping a jaguar, a cosmic background depicting estrellas or stars, varied colored interpretive indigenous designs, religious icons, and la naturaleza represented by flowers. I wonder how this unplanned painting resulted to become. This painting is sacred and unpredictable, and carries an unidentifiable cosmic representation, and interpretation. I let the viewer seek meaning and possibly some sort of understanding or appreciation of the indigenous spirit world.

Chicano Visual Artist Cris Escobar grew up traveling through the Southwest and Eastern United States as a migrant farm worker. Escobar through his art depicts the Chicano and Mexicano experience and the rich traditions of his culture. Since attaining his fine arts degree from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1991, Escobar has devoted much of his time to community arts organizations, social service agencies, and local schools. Deeply concerned with environmental issues and social injustice, Escobar uses his work to promote ecological and social consciousness.

Marco Albarrán
Penca en Mano
Mixed Media

Penca en Mano, is an iconic representation of the creation of life in Pre-Colombian Meso-America. The prickly pear cactus leaves represent the original journey of the Aztecs, the base of its home, and sustainability of life. The hands that are part of the cactus leaves are the hands that built the ancient Tenochtitlan, the ancient cities of our ancestors; they are the hands that continue to travel and build the modern cities here in the U.S. The calaca or skull on the base of the ofrenda is made of concrete and jade-like stones, that give and take life as it is transformed in the journey of those travelers who continue to pursue the promised land. It is the gatekeeper of all life on earth. The stones and base, it is the roots, the land, our charted path of our journey.

Steve Long
Death Blossom
Acrylic on Canvas

Rosie Villegas-Smith
Altar

Our government and authorities make laws and they ignore the collateral damage. There are lives lost and the dignity of human beings is destroyed.

Juliet De La Rosa
The Guardian of the Earth
La Cuidadora De La Tierra
Wood, Cloth, Silk, Acrylic, Water Color, Metal, and Blood from the Artist

As a decedent of Aztec family, I see the Virgen De Guadalupe as the keeper of our earth, making offerings to her for our protection and for our future.

Erika Ricketts
Untitled, 2007
Screen print

Bachelors in Fine Arts from Herberger College with a concentration in Printmaking, minor in business from WP Carey. Expected graduation date of December 08. Born and raised in Arizona currently residing in Tempe.

Santa Maria Middle School
Student Artwork by
6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Classes

Santa Maria Middle School is part of the Fowler Elementary School District. At Santa Maria Middle School, we value the impacts different cultures have made on the Visual Arts. This fall all art classes focused on fall festivals, including Día de los Muertos.

To our classes, Día de los Muertos is a time to celebrate the lives of our friends and family members who have passed away. Altars are created in

honor of those passed loved ones. The altars include the favorite items of the loved ones such as foods, flowers, and music. The altars include the four elements: earth, wind, water, and fire. Altars can be anywhere from a simple shelf of items to an extravagant display at the cemetery.

We are honored to be included in the Día de los Muertos Festival Exhibit at ASU Museum of Anthropology. Presently, our artworks are displayed only within our school. Everyone is excited to have people outside of our school view the artworks and see all of the hard work that went into creating them. Many of us are interested in attending ASU after graduating from high school and look forward to visiting the museum to see our artworks on display.

The group chalk pastel work is based on and in honor of Self Portrait with Monkey, 1938 by Frida Kahlo. Created by 7th grade students at Santa Maria Middle Daniel Alvarez, Julia Avalos, Colten Cagann, Isaul Pina, Ildfonso Jr. Celis, Alexis Delcid, Adrian Gonzalez, Nahum Leon, Yolanda Najera Torres, Brianna Parker, Lilia Ramirez Garibay, Aylin Verduzco Gastelum, Vanessa Zamora.

Tesseract School

Tesseract's commitment to cultural awareness is easily seen in its intensive celebration of "Días de los Muertos". The students create ofrendas and gather together from two campuses to eat lunch together, much as family members would gather at the cemetery to remember and celebrate those family members now having a wonderful life as skeletons.

Rite of Passage Kindergarten

Celebrating the passage and process of beginning a new life the students have created monarch butterflies and placed them on a black grave wreath.

Memories begin in Books 3rd grade

Skeleton "photographs" capturing skeletons having a happy life.

2 books

Books can be gently handled.

Summer Picnic 4th grade

Plate of skeletons having a barbeque.

Celebrating Lyman 4th grade

Skeletal Frame: commemorating Lyman Haakstad recently born to afterlife.

Down on the Farm 4th grade

Farmers and Country life: Frame with Farm animals commemorating Lyman Haakstad.

At the Beach 4th grade

Celebrating sandcastles and sun skeleton style.

Mardi Gras 4th grade

Skeletons loving New Orleans.

Sugar Skulls 5th grade

A Day of the Dead tradition: sugar skulls on a tray ready to buy.

Hockey and Golf in 2 panels 9th grade

Tribute to Lyman Haakstad and his passions.

Larry Yanez

Día de los Muertos Banner

Painted Canvas Banner

From the private collection of Ralph Cordova.

Ralph Cordova

Día de los Muertos - Tanka

Charcoal and Collage on Paper

The work was inspired by The Tanka art from Tibet. It is a postmodern art object for reflection and meditation.

Ralph Cordova is a fifth-generation, native Arizonan. He fancies himself a Yankeeified, Pocho Chicano. He grew up in a middle-class suburban neighborhood near McClintock High School. An influential moment in his

artistic and personal development occurred in high school when an English teacher told him that he was “Anglosized”. Mr. Cordova knew his teacher spoke Spanish fluently. He wondered if his teacher had become “Chicanofied”. This event triggered a fascination “with all things Chicanesque” -- the phenomena created by the clash and integration of American and Mexican cultures.

The thematic bases for his artistic endeavors are drawn heavily from his experiences as a “suburban ethnic.” He combines elements and symbols from both cultures and creates artwork, which may be humorous, satirical, and/or controversial. He employs both visual and performance art mediums to express his observations concerning the broad spectrum of “Chicanesque vision,” the bicultural nature, which has emerged as people have struggled for their identity; and the pains and joys associated with the bicultural experience. This middle way is the best for now. He calls this middle way “Neomestizo”.

Cristina Pilar Acosta
Love Always (Siempre Amor)
Charcoal and Chalk on 100% Rag paper

Love eternal, renewable and cyclical binds together the bones of life. Vertebrae spiral like strands of DNA as they fly from the past into the future. Arteries from the heart bloom into evergreen pine branches. Feathers, like the shed-horns of the deer and elk renew with the seasons. Elements move through the space of the drawing, the dirt of charcoal stains a counterpoint to their beauty.

Born in Los Angeles, raised Catholic and Chicana, she now lives in Oregon. Acosta’s art training includes a BFA from the University of Oregon, two years as a billboard lettering and mural artist and 10 years as a commercial “street artist” painting store windows. For 10 years she owned an artisan ceramic tile business with national distribution, and licensed designs for other products. She wrote the art book, *Paint Happy*, illustrated the children’s book, *When Woman Became the Sea*, and contributes to other books and periodicals.

Zarco Guerrero
Calaca Sol & Catrina Copping a Tan
Carved Wood, Mixed Media

Michael Pesselato
Vinita
Ceramic

The sculpture is to represent my dedication to a woman that helped develop who I am and my concern for those in my life.

Michael J. Pesselato received his Bachelors of Fine Arts Degree in Painting at the Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburg Pennsylvania and continued his education to receive a Masters of Fine Arts Degree in Painting at Washington University of St. Louis in St. Louis Missouri. He presently teaches at the Phoenix County Day School as a Visual arts Teacher in Phoenix, Arizona.

ASU Museum of Anthropology

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