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# MANTECA YOTL

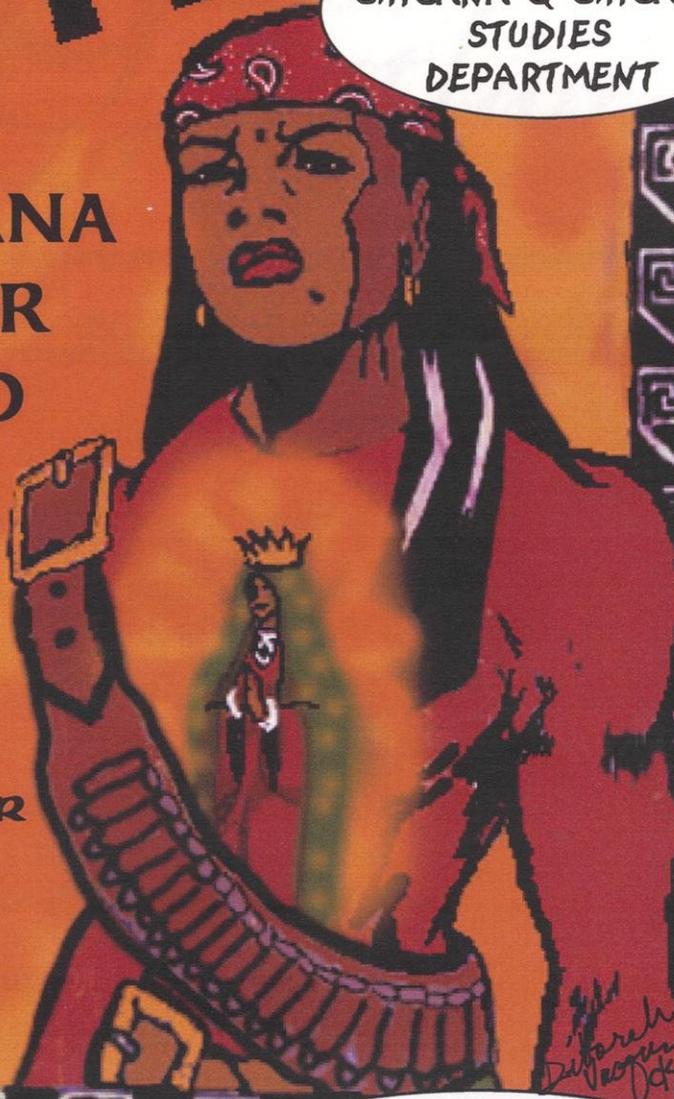
Arte de la Gente de Aztlan

# CITLALI

QUEREMOS UN  
CHICANA & CHICANO  
STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT

XICANA  
SUPER  
HERO

Avenger  
of the  
Bronze  
Gente  
de  
Aztlan



WE WON'T REST  
'TIL WE GET IT AND  
NEITHER WILL YOU!

FALL - SPRING 2000

VOLUME 2

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON



# Arte de la Gente de Aztlan

FALL - SPRING 2000

VOLUME 2



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Graduate Student in the Visual Arts  
University of Wisconsin Madison

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON

# AMANTECAYOTL

Amantecayotl is dedicated to the exhibition and examination of Chicana and Chicano art, music, performance, poetry, theater and writings which pertain to Chicana/o politics and culture by Chicana and Chicano artists. Although ChicanArte respects the right of others to identify as they choose, ChicanArte declares this publication Chicana and Chicano space which will not include Hispanic, Mexican-American, nor Latino art. Both the collective and the publication will provide a sanctuary protecting Chicana and Chicanos so they may artistically express their views on the conditions of our gente historically and currently.

Amantecayotl is in agreement with the philosophy and goals of MEChA, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlàn, and acknowledges the necessity for movement among students, professors, and academic staff at all university levels. MEChA has given ChicanArte constant support in its inception, therefore ChicanArte and subsequently Amantecayotl will assist MEChA and serve as an ally in all their endeavors.

Amantecayotl encourages radical, avant garde art for the purpose of enlightening Chicanas and Chicanos to become aware of the indigenous people from which we originated and the positions in which are currently in U.S. society.

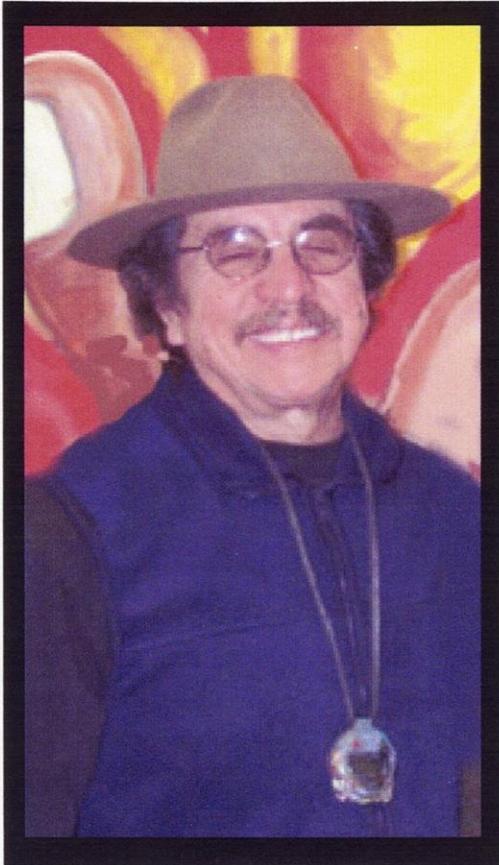
*"Revolution is only won by a mass movement of all sectors of society, including artists, and if artists aren't visionaries then we have no business doing what we do" Cherrie Moraga (1993).*

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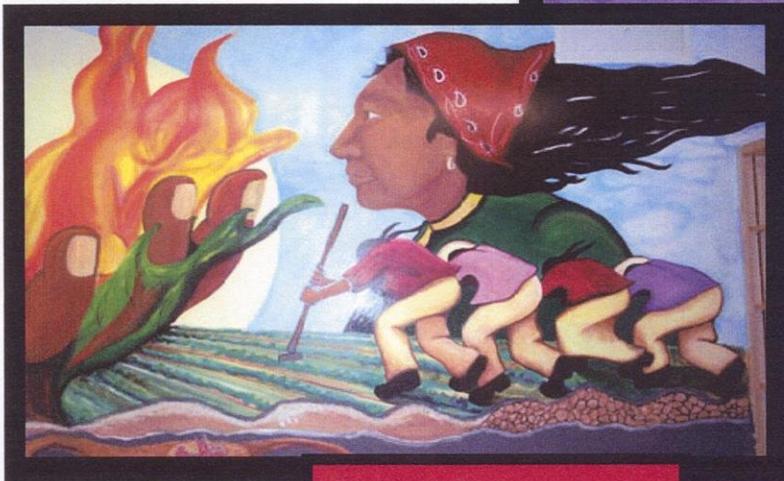
# VISITING ARTIST

## MALAQUIAS MONTOYA



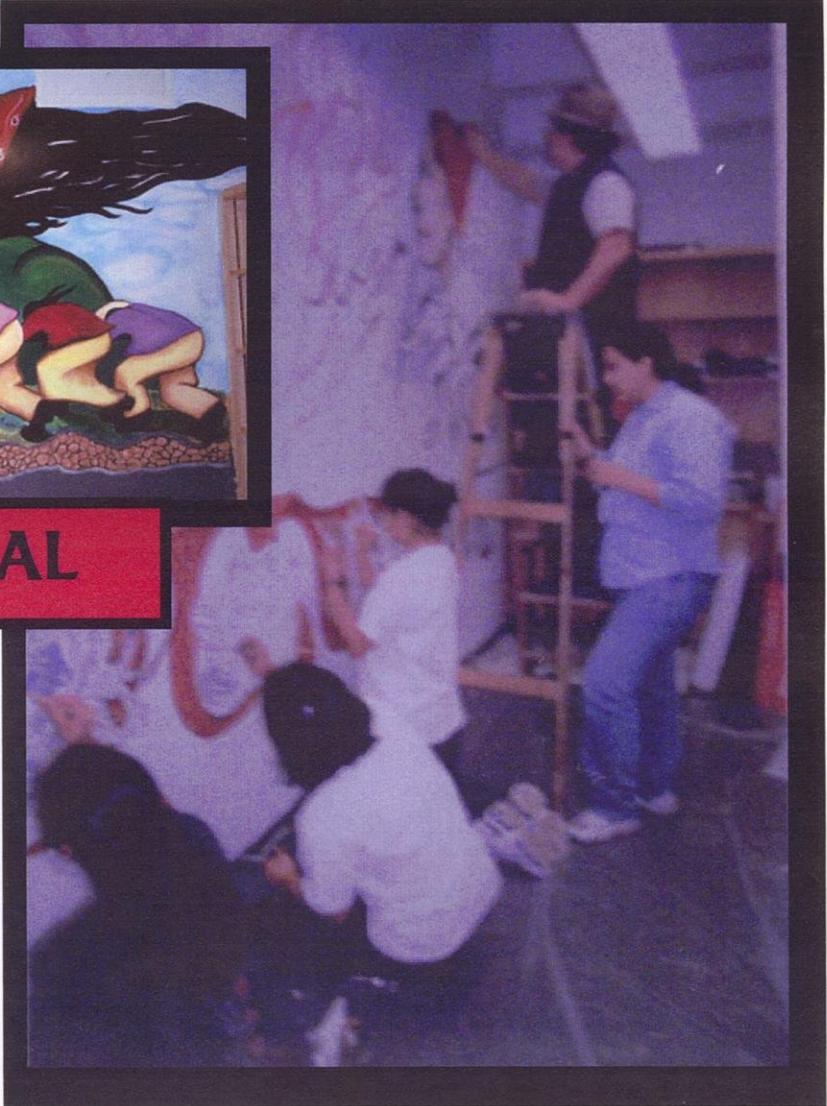
Malaquias Montoya and the students from ChicanArte se aventaron con el mural en el Cesar Chavez Student Lounge located on the 3rd floor of Ingraham Hall within the Chicana and Chicano Studies Program. Malaquias visited the University of Wisconsin Madison during Spring Break to begin the mural with the collaboration of the members of ChicanArte. Malaquias instructed the enthusiastic chavalitas y chavalitos on how to divide the wall into a grid and then project the image to be penciled in. Leslie Salkowitz-Montoya assisted the students in purchasing paint and documented the progression of the mural for archival purposes. Malaquias has been an excellent mentor for many of our novice artists and his article *Critical Perspective on the State of Chicana/o Art (Metamorfosis, v.3 1980, n.1)* has been used as a guideline since his philosophy parallels ChicanArte's mission statement. It's empowering to students to interact with artists from the 60s that sustain the original ideals of the Movimiento and continue to be invested in our communities.

Left to Right-Back Row: Darrell Balderrama, Naomi Gonzales, Brook Flores, Malaquias Montoya, Dèborah Vàsquez, and Desiree Alva. Front Row: Gladiola Reyes and Rosalva Amezcua.



**MURAL**

**EN BUSCA  
DE AZTLAN**  
*Chicana & Chicano  
Evolution  
Art Project*



**EN BUSCA  
DE AZTLAN**

*Chicana & Chicano  
Evolution  
Art Project*

**LINO-CUTS**



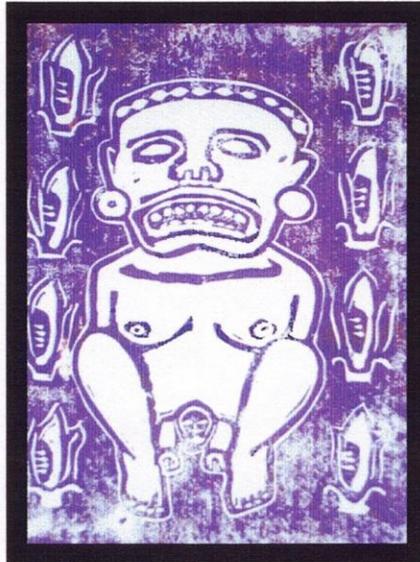
**DARRELL BALDERRAMA**



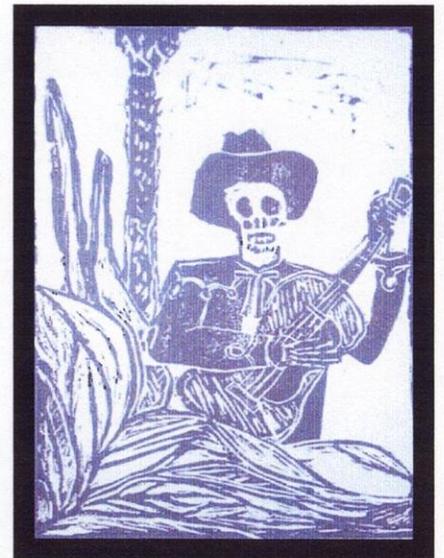
**ROSALVA AMEZCUA**



**DESIREE ALVA**



**JUANITA SOTO**



**KRISTELA CERVERA**



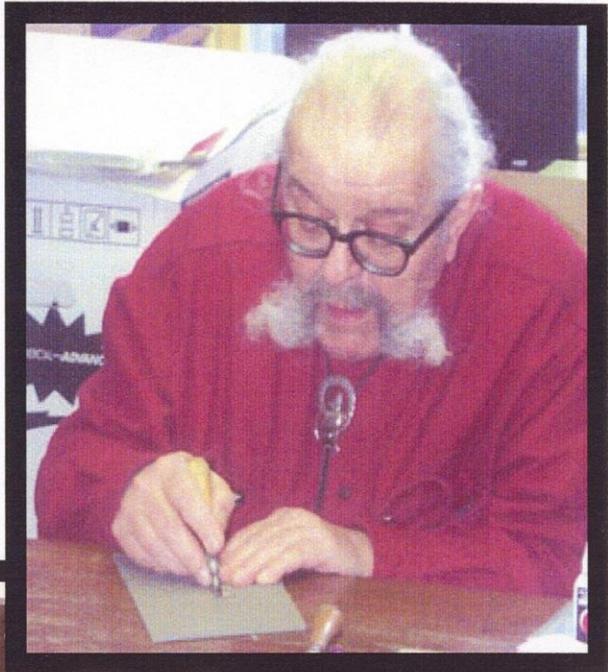
**MARIO PONCE**



**GLADIOLA REYES**

# VISITING ARTIST

## CARLOS CORTEZ KOYOKUIKATL



Carlos Cortez Koyokuikatl visited the UW Madison campus in March of this semester as part of the En Busca de Aztlan Art Project. Mr. Cortez is a Chicago based artist who has been committed to el Movimiento since the 60s. Although his work travels across the nation, his work can be seen frequently at the Mexican Museum in the heart of Pilsen (Chicago). On Friday, March 3 he presented slides of his work in the Chicana/o Studies Conference Room. He also made available books of his poetry and prints of wood-cuts and lino-cuts. On Saturday he gave a lino-cut demonstration for the art workshop group in ChicanArte at the MEChA office. The students finished their lino-cuts and proceeded to print.

Left to Right-Back Row: Kristela Cervera, Darrell Balderrama, Carlos Cortez, Deborah Vasquez, Rosalva Amezcua, Mario Ponce. Left to Right-Front Row: Ofelia Delgado, Desiree Alva, Juanita Soto, Gladiola Reyes, and Becky Trevino.

# LA TOTACHA

*Orale vamos a tirar la totacha sobre el arte. Cuando hablo de Chicana or Chicano Art, hablo muy poco de design, composition y color desde que the language que usan to speak of art viene del western philosophy of "American Art."*

Chicano Art was intended to negate all the restraining rules of this theory of knowledge. Chicana/os did not want their art to be considered mainstream therefore did not follow the restrictive rules forced upon other artists hoping to enter that realm. Some artists who were Chicana/os desired to become a part of that world and did subject themselves to these limitations which operate under the guise of individualism or evolvment. Even though Chicana/o artists had differing opinions on the manner in which to achieve this solidarity, the majority had a vision to create a solid cohesive movement. This movement would remain within the barrios in galleries and centers, producing art for our gente to view and become empowered. With the restrictions dictated by Western culture cancelled, Chicana/o Art was free to become artistically, politically, and socially unshackled.

Although I feel we must question cultural traditions that are oppressive to one group or another within the culture, I do not believe we should be so flexible as to allow for opportunist to commodify on Chicana/o culture. "Chicana" or "Chicano" is historically a political term and if we are so honored as to use this term, then our art should be political. If we are our art, and our art is a reflection of our experiences, how can we separate our politics from our art, without it becoming false? Chicana/o artists should focus on the obstacles of our communities whether it is sexism, homophobia, or our ever-oppressive invisibility among "American," and other communities of color. To be Chicana/o is to never forget from where you come by not ever leaving our people. I'm not saying you should never leave the barrio to pursue an education, but Chicana/os and Mejicana/os can be found everywhere in the U.S. If there are none, MOVE! You don't belong there either. And those Chicanas and Chicanos, who never lived in the barrios, we

genuinely need to interact with our people. Only there will we find *el corazon del Chicanismo*. We should come down from our silver-plated studios and in the case of academics, their ivory towers, and interact with our people. How can we make art and write books about Chicanismo if we haven't any connection to them? *Eso mi gente dejenselo a los gringos*. Do not follow the gringo's example and study your people as if they were insects. Interact with them, give of yourself, and allow them to educate you. You will then be painting and writing from your own experiences. If we are not giving back to our Chicana/o communities we should not be allowed to identify as such.

The two artists highlighted in this issue under La Totacha use traditional icons of the Chicana/Mexicana culture very differently. While Carmen Lomas Garza affirms la cultura with her depictions of scenes from our childhood, Yolanda López takes a resistant political stance against the patriarchal systems within our own culture and reinforces our autonomy from white feminist. Garza's work causes a resurgence of pride within us as it reflects our experiences. But is it acceptable to concentrate on comfortable representations and not send a stronger message about what is plaguing our communities when she has the attention of our people and that of the dominant culture? Even though she has been criticized by those intent on perpetuating this status, López simultaneously interrogates various facets of Chicana/o and white culture through her work.

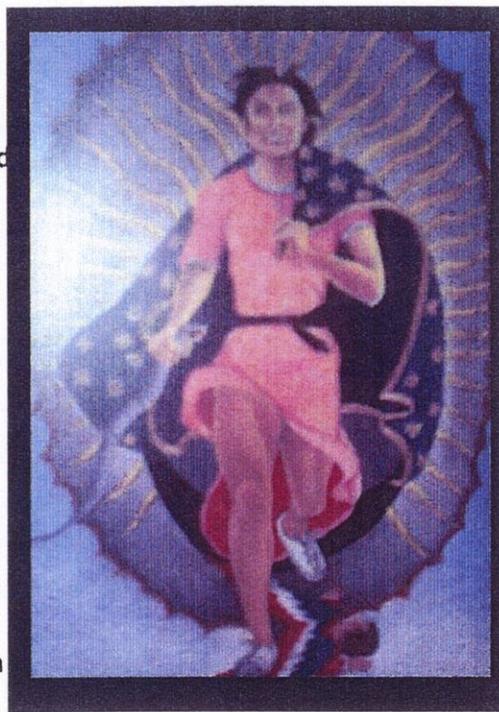
Upon examining the next readings keep in mind the following questions. Does art need to be political to be categorized as Chicano Art? Is it sufficient to identify yourself as a Chicana/o and subsequently everything you create is Chicana/o Art? Are some of us becoming as opportunistic as the gringos and if we are, do we continue to consider them Chicana/os? Is it time for us to clean house and stop people from making art under the guise of Chicana/o? Should we begin to unmask those making art and writing about Chicana/os without having a connection to the actual community?

This opinion may or may not be endorsed by the ChicanArte collective.

# YOLANDA LÓPEZ

A Californiana from San Diego, Yolanda M. Lòpez was raised in Logan Heights. Growing up in Califas educated her on the stereotypes forced upon Mexicanos. In an interview with Amalia Mesa-Bains, Lòpez said, "The ideal was white, and I was not. I didn't understand it in those terms as such, but I knew very well that I didn't look like that. So never considered myself pretty or anything like that," (del Castillo et al [Eds.] 1991, p. 137). After her parents divorced, Lòpez lived with her mother and her maternal grandparents. Living with her grandmother, a Native woman, was essential in linking Lòpez to her culture. For 30 years her mother worked as a piece worker at an industrial sewing machine to support the family. Lopez' uncle was influential in sparking her interest in art by furnishing her with supplies and further nurturing this interest with encouragement to continue making art, (Wright, 1995).

Yolanda Lòpez is acknowledged as one of the foremothers of Chicana Art, but she can also be considered an artist within the parameters of the Feminist Art movement. Women like Lòpez challenged sexist systems imposed upon us by White and Chicano men as well as the men within the Chicano Art Movement. The challenges white women faced in art were different than those of Chicanas. Chicanas are concerned with women's issues, but ethnicity tends to form the basis for the content of their art. It is difficult for Chicanas to identify with the Women's Movement since Anglo-American women have monopolized it from its inception thereby marginalizing all women of color (Lòpez & Roth, 1994).



Portrait of the Artist as  
the Virgin of Guadalupe, 1978

In this series Yolanda Lòpez takes La Virgen de Guadalupe one if not the most recognized visual icons in Chicana/o, Mexican, and Mexican American culture, and reinvents it. Although La Virgen de Guadalupe is familiar to these communities, others may not be able to recognize or connect the visual reference to this Catholic icon. Shortly after the Spaniards conquered the Aztec Empire, La Virgen appeared to Juan Diego, a Mexican Indian, asking him to petition the church to build her a shrine on the location at which she became visible. The location of La Virgen's apparition is the site of the temple of Tonantzin, the earth mother, and is thought to be one in the same. She gave Juan Diego roses which were unavailable in that area during that season to carry in his manta, a pre-conquest cloth worn over the chest. Upon dropping the roses at the feet of the priest, the image of La Virgen appeared on the manta. She continues to be one of the most beloved and empowering figures in the Mexican/Chicana/o culture. She was the symbol of strength used during the Mexican Revolution, the Chicano Civil Rights Movement, and some recent initiatives. It is not surprising that Lòpez and other Chicana Artist visualize la Lupita as a mobile, active entity as comfortable to us as we are ourselves. She is the deity with which we speak on a daily basis as if she were sitting having *cafecito* (coffee) with us. La Virgen is not the immobile Madonna that is presented on the manta perpetuating the idea that she is a submissive deity. Even though she is rendered stoic and unattainable, Chicana artists tend to see her in flux touching our lives on different level. Some traditionalists were angered and viewed this statement as a criticism of the Catholic Church and therefore sacrilegous. Our (Chicanas and Chicanos) eyes have been closed and we have turned the other cheek long enough. We must be critical of all institutions that oppress and begin reevaluating our homes and social interactions to cease perpetuating blind loyalties. Those who acknowledged that these loyalties were detrimental to women embraced this work, but those who would benefit from the status quo were extremely hostile. Lòpez realized that this work was causing a response which commonly indicates that the problem has been isolated, or as she refers to this reaction "it hit the twitch meter." Mexico City kiosks were vandalized and bomb threats received at the Fem office because the magazine ran Portrait of the Artist as the Virgen de Guadalupe in one of their issues. Another example of the manner in which the public took this work as a personal attack occurred when this piece was being reproduced. The workman as the print shop refused to photograph it because of the imagery. He said "you can mess around with my woman, my car, anything. But you don't mess around with my lady."

Lòpez renders these women as the spiritual, powerful abuelita (grandmother), the strong, working-class mother, and the daughter as the strong, powerful runner and artist. These women continue to emit the same radiant glow that delineates La Virgen. She reinterprets the Chicana as a multi-faceted woman that is not the one dimensional paper doll described by Chicano/Mexican men or the dominant society. Artist like Ester Hernandez and Yolanda Lòpez shatters the constraints of these traditional roles imposed upon Chicanas.

## CARMEN LOMAS GARZA

During her visit at the University of Wisconsin, I was able to have a personal interview with Carmen Lomas Garza over a leisurely lunch. She was pulling a print at the Tandem House so we walked over to Fyfe's, a local bistro in Madison. On our walk over we quickly got on the subject of Chicano Art and she promptly informed me that "Chicanos did not have to make Chicano art to be Chicano artists." A question she apparently had been asked before, only I hadn't asked it yet. She said she was tired of being asked the Chicana question and seems rather bothered by this. But during lunch we spoke of danza, which she has begun to practice and several other subjects of similar interest. As we spoke of other things Ms. Garza became more relaxed and gave me some good resources on the business of art. Her persona is quite pragmatic so it is easy to see why she has entered the mainstreams of "American Art". Her work is a contradiction of herself, a fact she seemed to enjoy. "Did you think that by looking

at my work, I would be passive?" And quite frankly I had to say yes. Lomas Garza's images of Chicana/o and Mexican culture rendered in naive figures of families and the elements that we hold dear seem to lack a political agenda. But at her lecture she commented that some of the universities she had visited considered her work too political. Upon viewing this work a pang of nostalgia strikes as you recall your childhood experiences, but it does not deal with any issues of resistance. It appears to be concerned with the affirmation of women and traditions in Chicana/Mexicana culture within the larger "American" culture. However, this type of image is more acceptable to the dominant culture and artists such as Carmen Lomas Garza, Gronk, Frank Romero, and Rupert Garcia more readily enter the mainstream art world. It is much easier for the dominant culture to classify this style of work as Chicano Art than to allow artists making art about political and social issues into these mainstreams. To allow this type of Chicano art (political & social) into the "American Art" realm may force the dominant culture to acknowledge responsibility towards this population.



Loteria-Tabla Llena, 1972, Hand-colored intaglio print,  
17 x 22 3/8 inches, Collection of the artist

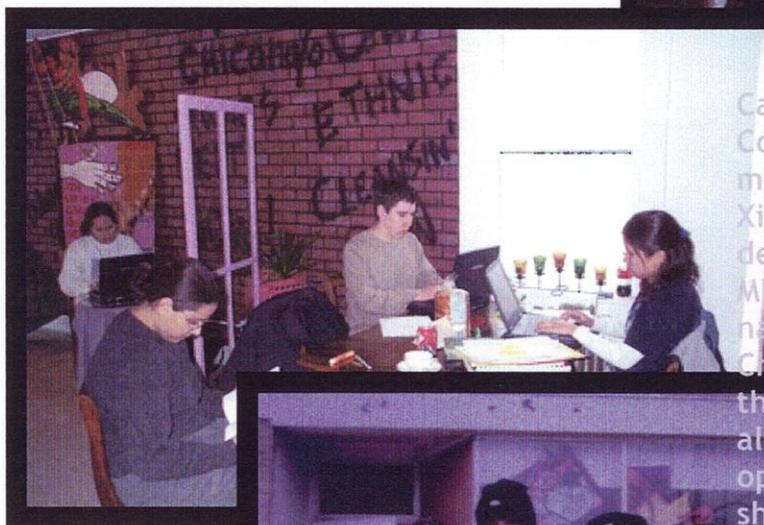
Loteria-Tabla Llena transports Chicana/os and Mexicanos to a time of family togetherness. On Friday or Saturday nights my family would cook and invite our closest relatives over to our small home. After a good meal, the chavalitos would pull out the loteria game and the adults would join in. Our family would sit around the kitchen table, listening to Augustin Ramirez and Chelo Silva records on the hi-fi and play for hours even after the children fell asleep. Although the protagonist in Carmen Lomas Garza's scene are playing North American bingo not Mexican Loteria and is in an outside setting, her images are popular among our gente because they trigger memories. The prizes placed on the table indicate they may be playing at a *Jamaica*, a spring or summer festival usually sponsored by the church where family and friends gather to eat, drink, dance, and play games.

Lomas Garza's naive manner of drawing and painting monitos is exemplified strongly in this print which appears to be more like an unfinished illustration from a child's coloring book. She has developed a highly stylized form in rendering these figures. The flat color, outlined form, and childlike detail to clothing and the selection of objects are clearly recognizable as her work. For this type of work, the stylization and simple coloring book format is effective in recalling childhood memory. The placement of the seated characters on the picture plane is far from simplistic. The figures are flat and placed in rows suggesting the drawings in the pre-conquest codex. The limited color on the black background is interestingly accented by the tints on the streamers, selected clothing, parrot, purse, lights, and papel picado. Papel picado is a tissue paper with cut out designs and scenes. The repetitive framing of bingo cards, people, and the outer border of trees, animals, cobbled pathway and the interchanging of the streamers, lights, and papel picado, designate the prizes as the central perspective. This, in addition to Lomas Garza's askewed birds-eye view, creates a more interesting composition.

# INSTALLATION



## CAFÉ CITLALI



Café Citlali, an installation of a Chicana Coffee House was the final exhibition for my Master of Fine degree. Citlali, la Xicana Super Hero is a character I developed from my experiences with the MEChistas and other Chicanas across the nation. It was created for Chicanas and Chicanos to have a public space in which they could be in their comfort zone, but also so Chicanas could voice their opinions and concerns without being shut down. The installation was set up as a conceptual piece to experiment as to whether or not students could run a coffee house collectively. The students from ChicanArte and MEChA were instrumental in this process. The key to the coffee house was left in MEChA and whoever arrived first, would open up for business. The last student to leave would leave the key in MEChA. Afro-Am., Art, and even English classes were held in this space throughout the week. This method was successful and the students utilized the space to its full potential.

*Thank you  
MEChA &  
ChicanArte  
for all your support  
D. Sanchez*

734 UNIVERSITY AVENUE



# THOUGHTS ON CHICANISMA/O FROM AN ARTIST'S PERSPECTIVE

## EN BUSCA DE AZTLAN

*Chicana & Chicano*

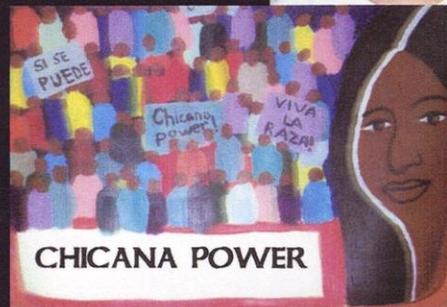
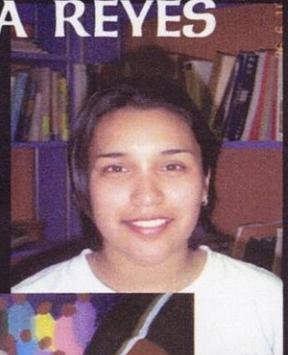
*Evolution*

*Art Project*

Chicanisma to me means being able to recognize my indigenous roots and learning from where I come. That is, realizing the struggles of my people, past and present. It's being able to hold my head up high and know that I'm contributing to "LA CAUSA." I'm part of the solution not part of the problem. Art helps me express my pride of being a Chicana and of living the Chicana experience.

### GLADIOLA REYES

SOPHOMORE



### JANIE OCEJO



### COMMUNITY

Being a Chicana is a reaffirmation of who I am as a Mexicana and India. I refuse to distinguish any differences between a Chicana and a Mexicana.



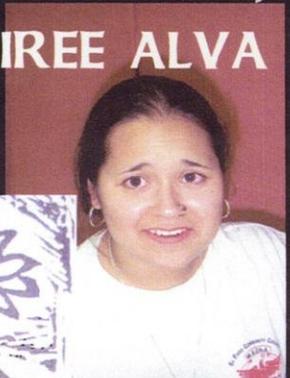
Being a Chicana is more than just calling yourself a Chicana or wearing a t-shirt - it is a state of mind that is undefineable by any other than ourselves. It is a consciousness of our unique culture, traditions, and the gente of Aztlan.

A Chicana must help her community, her family, and then herself.

Chicanismo to me simply stated is when a person realizes that in order to find their true identity they must first find their people's cultura. And when you identify as a Chicana/o you are awakening to the rebirth of pride and confidence within your own culture building the strength vital to enable you to fight for LA CAUSA." I feel there are many levels to identifying myself as a Chicana, and I haven't lived through all of them. However, my heart is with my "Gente,"

my strength lies in the "struggle," and the empowerment I gain goes directly to "LA CAUSA." And this is why I feel that I AM CHICANA!

### DESIREE ALVA



SOPHOMORE

Chicana/o is an affirmation of our indigenous roots and awareness of the cultural rape of our people...

Art is a powerful medium we use to communicate this affirmation. It invades and makes a presence, leaving one no option but to see it. It is our voice when we cannot speak...and for generations after us to learn about the history of Chicanas and Chicanos.

## DARRELL BALDERRAMA

SOPHOMORE



A Chicano is someone who believes in Chicanismo. La raza de Tejas y de Califas, all Chicanos, all raza, all are rich in culture and heritage. Beautifully expressed through their souls that have risen from Aztlan. Bronze skin that rises from the brown mother earth, who cares for her children. Chicanas and Chicanos draw strength from their intertwining Indigenous Mexican roots. Chicano/os are a unique people that are willing to fight for the betterment of nuestra gente. Art has impacted our people by allowing others to become aware of our history, our stories, our struggles, and has also allowed me to journey back to my homeland. There I am free, there I am Chicano and not afraid to struggle for equality of our people who have been silenced, willing to go to the extremes to take back what was once ours, what is ours ...

Aztlan

## KRISTELA CERVERA



GRADUATE STUDENT

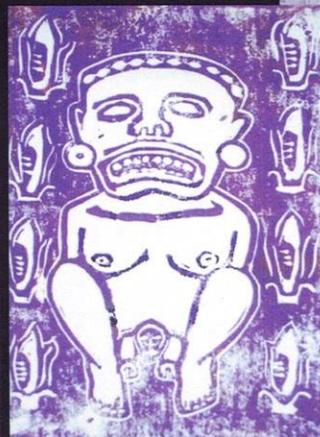
To me Chicanismo means power, intelligence, and pride but most importantly it means familia. The coming together of my brothers and sisters feeds my soul and strengthens it to battle the ramifications of racism that occur everyday. With them I stand tall and powerful like the pyramids of my ancestors the Aztecs. Through my art I educate those who want to learn and those who ignore my Chicanismo pride.

La lucha continua y seguire peleano

*Chicana by mind,*

*Mexican by heart*

## JUANITA SOTO



SENIOR

Matlactli Once



11

# POESIA

## MEXICANA MOTHER TO DAUGHTER

OFELIA DELGADO



My daughter  
my necklace  
of precious stone  
you are my blood  
you are my color  
you are my image  
now listen!  
now understand!  
you are alive  
you have been born  
nopiltzin has  
sent you to earth  
here on earth there is  
heartache, fatigue  
a wind blows  
it is obsidian  
it is sharp  
it is cold  
we are burned by the sun  
we are burned by the wind  
but our God has given us  
food, sleep,  
strength, laughter  
my daughter  
watch for the dawn  
raise your face  
raise your arms to the sky  
wash your hands  
cleanse your mouth  
you will spin  
you will weave  
you will learn  
what is Toltec  
the art of feathers  
how to embroider in colors  
how to dye the thread  
my daughter  
now listen!  
now understand!  
you are noble  
you are precious  
you are turquoise

you have been shaped by the gods  
see that you do not dishonor them  
do not act common  
do not become ordinary  
you are precious  
you are turquoise  
my daughter  
pay attention!  
be strict with yourself  
you were not meant  
to sell vegetables, wood,  
bowls of chile, pots of salt  
in the doorways of the houses  
in the street  
you are noble  
you are turquoise  
you are not common  
you must not cheapen yourself  
choose your life companion  
with care  
you must go to the end of life  
together  
even though your companion  
be poor  
only a very small eagle  
only a very small tiger  
do not neglect your loved one  
my daughter  
with these words my duty is done  
may the Gods give you  
a long and happy life  
my turquoise one

EXCERPT FROM  
ANA CASTILLO'S  
MASSACRE OF THE DREAMERS

ANA CASTILLO



## Re-examining our role models

Ofelia Delgado read the poem to the left with the impression that Ana Castillo was a die-hard, ass-kicking Chicana CHINGONA. After a visit to UW Madison where she served as the key-note speaker for the Mujer Latina Conference we had a chance to get a little one-on-one with her. She appeared contrite, condescending and our students were disappointed with her advice to the youth protesting against corporate America. Under further examination we realize that the beautiful poem at the left was advice from an indigena mother to her daughter and not written by Ana Castillo. So mi gente be careful who you use as role models and read their words with a critical eye, they may not be their words at all.

## LA CULTURA CURA

We are the chancla people  
The children of the Quinto Sol  
The people who became strangers in their own land  
labeled as "aliens" and immigrants  
They label us as "Hispanics"  
ignoring our indigenous roots  
They place us under one label  
that excludes our different heritage and culture  
They keep us as outsiders  
only allowing us to come into their white realm  
when we assimilate and shut down our past

My response to this is a cry of LIBERATION

I will not subside and let them walk over my culture  
and claim it as their own and CHANGE IT!!  
WHAT'S THIS TACO BELL CHALUPA SHIT ANYWAY  
They are the aliens that came from afar  
and stole the land of my ancestors  
and claimed it as their own  
by their assumed righteousness of their monarchs  
They raped us of our culture  
and altered our religion  
They colonized our minds  
so that we are blinded to the shit they do  
I feel my SKIN CRAWL and BLOOD BOIL  
when I think of the things they did and still do  
I could get mad and raise havoc  
but instead I choose  
to use their weapons against them  
I will educate my mind  
and revolt against the norm  
the system has set for my gente and me  
I will make it clear that  
with this Xicanita no van a poder.

## GLADIOLA REYES



## YO SOY JOAQUIN

I am Joaquin  
lost in a world of confusion  
caught up in a world  
of a gringo society  
confused by the rules  
scorned by attitude

Suppressed by manipulation  
and  
destroyed by modern society

I am Cuauhtemoc  
proud and noble  
leader of men  
king of an empire  
civilized beyond the dream  
of the gauchupin Cortez  
who is also the blood  
the image of myself.

I am the Maya prince.  
I am Nezahualcoyotl  
great leader of the Chichimeca  
I am the sword and flame  
of Cortez the despot

I am the eagle and serpent  
of the Aztec civilization

*Conley  
Gonzales*

MARISSA LOPEZ



# WHAT IS A CHICANA/O?

In the first issue of *Amantecayotl*, we ran an excerpt from Elizabeth "Betita" Martinez' book *De Colores Means All of Us* on her definition of Chicana and Chicano. Her view was inclusive yet does not resolve the difference between Hispanic and Latinos and how the term Latino fails to erase the Indigenous in Chicana/os. In this issue we include Olin Tezcatlipoca's definition on these terms from the *Not Hispanic Not Latino Mexica Handbook*. He is a member of the *Chicano Mexicano Mexica Empowerment Committee* (CMMEC), and offers a more focused terminology.

Chicano is a political, assertive, aggressive, and proud term used by those of us of "Mexican" descent who were born in this country-those of us who do not want to be identified as Mexican American or as Hispanic American. Chicano is used by those of us who know our history and are proud of our Mexica heritage. Chicano is a political and ethnic term widely used by our people since the 1960s.

Mexicano (Meh-hee-kah-noh) is the term for those of us born in Anahuac (Mexico) and who are now living in Aztlan (the so-called U.S. Southwest). It is what the Spaniards called us, mispronouncing our name.

Mexica (Meh-shee-kah) is what we called ourselves before the European invasions (Spaniards and Anglo-Americans). Mexica is the term and reality that we (CMMEC) are in the process of solidifying. We, who do not identify with Europe, want to be known as "Mexica;" a proud "Original Inhabitant" people who are free of European-imposed identities (Hispanic, Latino, Mestizo, Raza). The Mexica-equally include the Original Inhabitant full-blood and the mixed-blood (the European racially scarred so-called "Mestizo") people. The "Native Americans" of Aztlan and the people known as "Central Americans" who are aware of our shared heritage, and who identify with us as a people, are welcome to join us as equal Mexica brothers and sisters. Artificial European boundaries on our land can never sever our ties to our common Olmeca mother civilization and our shared Maya, Teotihuacan and Nahuatl-Mexica culture, or our shared oppression and exploitation....

...We, the people of Mexica Original Inhabitant (Indigenous) descent have been branded "Hispanic" and "Latino". This lie has been committed to make us think that the interest of Europe, and European descendants, are our interests-and that they are our heritage. We're supposed to believe that white interest are superior, and that "Indian" things are inferior. We are to think that we are "almost white" and that we are not "Indian". The racial rape of our people is supposed to get us on the "good road" to being white.

*The members of ChicanArte may or may not agree with all the definitions published in Amantecayotl. Our goal is to offer a variety of perspectives on this controversial subject.*



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*By virtue of calling myself Chicana, I haven't any other option but to political art. "Chicana" or "Chicano" is historically a political term and if I am so honored as to use this term, then my art should be political. The use of the word affords me a responsibility to the Chicana/o community. If through my art or any other method necessary, I cannot create a voice for my people as they face the injustices afflicting our communities then I should not call myself a Chicana artist. I am then only an artist.*

*Gracias por su apoyo mi gente  
Deborah Vasquez C/S*



**ChicanArte**

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