

Art Along the Hyphen: The Mexican-American Generation

The Autry National Center, in partnership with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC), will present a collection of works by a virtually unknown generation of Mexican American artists whose rarely seen works will be exhibited to the public in Art Along the Hyphen: The Mexican-American Generation, opening October 14, 2011.

This exhibition is part of a collaboration with CSRC called L.A. Xicano, which examines crucial dimensions of this history through four interrelated exhibitions at the Autry, the Fowler Museum at UCLA, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. L.A. Xicano is curated by Chon A. Noriega, Terezita Romo, and Pilar Tompkins Rivas. Romo is the lead curator for Art Along the Hyphen: The Mexican-American Generation. The exhibition is also part of Pacific Standard Time. This unprecedented collaboration, initiated by the Getty, brings together more than sixty cultural institutions from across Southern California for six months, beginning in October 2011, to tell the story of the birth of the L.A. art scene. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.

"The history of art in Southern California is incomplete without a full consideration of the contributions made by Mexican American and Chicano artists," said Daniel Finley, Autry President and CEO. "Therefore, the Autry is proud to present this exhibition that brings to light the works of these extraordinary Mexican American artists thanks to our collaboration with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC) and the Getty initiative, Pacific Standard Time."

Between 1945 and 1965, Mexican



American artists contributed to the emerging California iconography and its connections to the national imagery, whether as part of the American West, Spanish California, or Hollywood. Documenting an overlooked yet significant tributary within the emergence of modern art in Los Angeles, the exhibition combines the work of Hernando Villa (1881–1952), Alberto Valdés (1918–1998), Domingo Ulloa (1919–1997), Roberto Chavez (born 1932), Dora De Larios (born 1933), and Eduardo Carrillo (1937–1997) to explore each artist's dialogue with various art movements of the twentieth century as refracted through cultural heritage, artistic influences, and social commentary. The exhibition also documents the

fluid transition by some artists into the Chicano art movement activism of the 1970s.

"Art Along the Hyphen opens up an entirely new vein of American artistic production, one that was in intimate dialogue with the major styles and issues of its time period," says L.A. Xicano organizer and CSRC Director Chon Noriega. "But it is also one that introduced a new aesthetic approach grounded in dynamic space between two national cultures."

Prior to the Chicano civil rights movement, which began in 1965 and brought national visibility to the community, artists of Mexican descent such as Villa forged paths that followed traditional artistic trajectories, yet countered stylistic conventions with their "bicultural aesthetic synthesis." The majority of these Mexican American artists have, however, been neglected by the mainstream art canon, ignored by art institutions, and absent from the art school curricula.

Against the backdrop of post-WWII social and political change in Los Angeles, from the Zoot suit riots to "white flight" and freeway construction, Mexican American artists created work that responded to aesthetic developments in New York as well as artistic and cultural influences from their Mexican heritage. This marks the beginning of a synthesis that would define them as artists and provide a foundation for the emergent Chicano art movement of the late 1960s. The careers of Carrillo, Chavez, De Larios, Ulloa, Valdés, and Villa constitute individual stories of struggle and achievement, and together illustrate the multiplicity of aesthetic responses present within the Mexican American community.

**Art Along
the Hyphen:
The Mexican-American
Generation Featuring
Rarely Seen Art From
Six Extraordinary Los
Angeles Artists From
1945 to 1965**

**Oct. 14, 2011 to
Jan. 8, 2012**