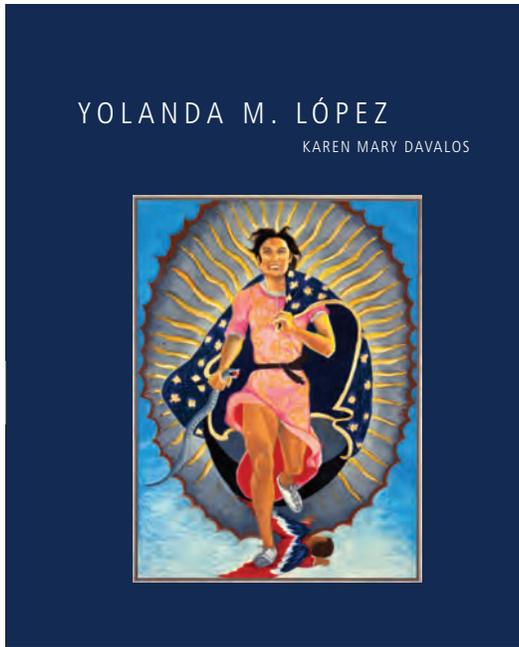




UCLA CHICANO STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER PRESS



TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR *YOLANDA M. LÓPEZ*

A VER: REVISIONING ART HISTORY,
VOLUME 2

VERONICA ALVAREZ AND THERESA SOTO

The A Ver teacher's guides are supported in part by a grant from the Ford Foundation

Yolanda M. López, by Karen Mary Davalos, was published by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press in 2008. Books in the A Ver series are distributed by the University of Minnesota Press: www.upress.umn.edu

The publication of *Yolanda M. López* was sponsored by Tamar Diana Wilson

A Ver: Revisioning Art History is made possible through the generous support of the following institutions: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Ford Foundation, The Getty Foundation, The JPMorgan Chase Foundation, The Joan Mitchell Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, UC MEXUS

Copyright © 2009 by the Regents of the University of California

All rights reserved

PUBLISHED TITLES IN THE A VER SERIES

Gronk, by Max Benavidez (2007)

Yolanda M. López, by Karen Mary Davalos (2008)

Celia Alvarez Muñoz, by Roberto Tejada (2009)

María Brito, by Juan A. Martínez (2009)

A Ver: Revisioning Art History stems from the conviction that individual artists and their coherent bodies of work are the foundation for a truly meaningful and diverse art history. This series explores the cultural, aesthetic, and historical contributions of Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, and other U.S. Latino artists. **A Ver ... Let's see!**



CONTENTS

Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images	1
Lesson 1: Challenging Cultural Stereotypes.	5
Five Elements of Contemporary Art	9
Yolanda M. López, <i>When You Think of Mexico</i>	11
Yolanda M. López, <i>Things I Never Told My Son about Being a Mexican</i>	12
Lesson 2: Depicting Your Influences, Creating a Series.	13
Yolanda M. López, <i>Self-Portrait</i>	18
Yolanda M. López, <i>Mother</i>	19
Yolanda M. López, <i>Grandmother</i>	20
Yolanda M. López, <i>Runner: Mandeville Center for the Arts</i>	21
Yolanda M. López, <i>Runner: Third College Parking Lot</i>	22
Yolanda M. López, <i>Runner: On My Own!</i>	23
Lesson 3: The Virgen de Guadalupe: Reinterpreting an Icon.	24
Traditional Image of the Virgen de Guadalupe	28
Yolanda M. López, <i>Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe</i>	29
Yolanda M. López, <i>Untitled (Guadalupe as Venus from Botticelli's Birth of Venus)</i>	30
Yolanda M. López, <i>Walking Guadalupe</i>	31
Yolanda M. López, <i>Nuestra Madre</i>	32
Susan R. Mogul, <i>Tableaux Vivant</i>	33
Additional Resources	34

YOLANDA M. LÓPEZ: INVESTIGATING IMAGES



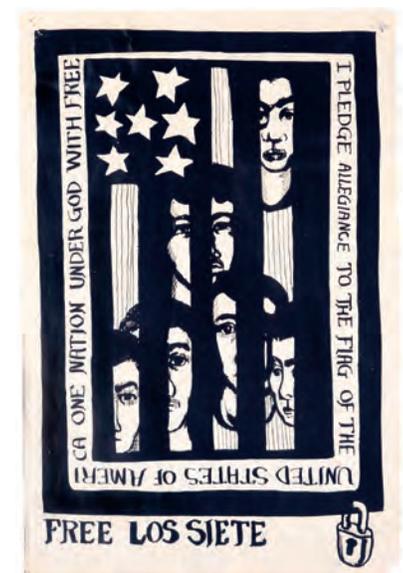
EXCERPTED AND ADAPTED FROM *YOLANDA M. LÓPEZ*,
BY KAREN MARY DAVALOS

Chicana feminist and conceptual artist Yolanda M. López is committed to using her art to challenge viewers' social and political preconceptions. Through mixed-media, drawings, collages, and paintings, López consistently confronts predominant modes of Latino and Latina representations, proposing new models of gender, racial, and cultural identity.

López was born in San Diego, California, where she learned firsthand the disconnect between the nation's myths and its realities. In this segregated military town, she was taught that *Mayflower* pilgrims were her forefathers. By 1978 she was already acutely aware of racial stereotyping and the concurrent erasure of Mexicans from U.S. history. Her interest in creating dignified and contemporary images of Chicanas emerged from her dissatisfaction with media and popular representations of Mexican and Mexican-origin women, which she could not reconcile with what she saw growing up on the border, as a young adult in the San Francisco Bay Area, or within her own family.

INFORMAL TRAINING

López's identity as a Chicana was formed on the picket lines of the Third World Liberation Front at San Francisco State College (now San Francisco State University) and in the streets of San Francisco's Mission District. She fought for the defense of Los Siete de la Raza, seven Latino youths accused of killing a police officer. She played a significant role in the Chicano



Yolanda M. López, *Free Los Siete*, 1969. Printed in *¡Basta Ya!*, no. 3.

Yolanda M. López holding "Support Los Siete" poster, Holly Park, San Francisco, ca. 1969.



Cover of *¡Basta Ya!*, no. 12 (1970), with a collage created by Yolanda M. López.



Yolanda M. López and her mother, Margaret F. Stewart, 1977.

movement in Northern California and did extensive work within the Latino communities of the Bay Area. It was through activism that she learned an art of politics and a politics of art. Her aesthetic expression merged the struggle for equity among women, people of color, the poor, and the workers.

López credits her mother, Margaret, for teaching her “never to cross a union picket line.” Margaret worked long hours, especially in the mid-1950s, when she was employed at the Grant Hotel as a presser. She became a union member, at one point serving as secretary. Margaret’s pro-union stance was rare in the conservative town of San Diego, and it shaped López’s own nonconformity and “boldness” as an artist.

Like her mother, who divorced two men before the onset of the feminist movement, López did not expect or receive familial rejection or reprimand for her unconventional life. She found multiple ways to express new ideas for Chicana womanhood, including an appreciation for well-made men’s clothes and the rejection of makeup and feminine hairstyles. She wore baggy pants from army surplus outlets, simple T-shirts, and a ponytail. These personal choices, which enacted a new Chicana womanhood, were echoed in the visual imagery of the women that she created.

Over the years, López resisted romantic representations of indigenous cultures and women, and her sharp wit and playfulness found their way into her installations and videos, as well as photo collages that informed her paintings and drawings and her political posters.

GROWING UP IN A CREATIVE ENVIRONMENT

López was raised by her mother, grandmother, and, until the age of eleven, her grandfather. Throughout her childhood López was surrounded by creative expression. Her grandparents, mother, and uncles, particularly Uncle Mike, encouraged her to develop her own artistic voice. Her grandparents nurtured her appreciation for music, her grandfather painted, and Uncle Mike was the first to supply Lopez with a watercolor set and drawing tablets.

Her mother, Margaret, encouraged creativity and beauty, teaching López a love of visual expression and the value of working with one’s hands. They would make collages of their favorite Hollywood actresses. Margaret would also make fashionable clothes for her daughter out of inexpensive materials, re-creating the styles of designers such as Yves Saint Laurent. The use of inexpensive fabric for high fashion and the collage technique influenced López’s own art making. In the 1970s she used montage in artworks designed for a newspaper, and in 1974 she combined pencil drawing, newsprint, photography, and colored paper to create several portraits of her grandmother, Victoria Franco. López experimented with materials in order to challenge notions of high art; this strategy would later manifest itself in the *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series (drawn on butcher paper “in defiance of precious materials”), in the use of color Xerox in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and in installations consisting of everyday objects.

Both Margaret and Victoria helped shape the artist’s notions of womanhood. Victoria had a measure of authority in the household. When Victoria deemed Louisiana too hot, the family moved to New York. When she felt that New York was too cold, the family moved once again, eventually settling in San Diego. Victoria, who had only a third-grade education but had taught herself to read, managed the household by growing food and raising goats and chickens (and, later, pigeons). Her ingenuity allowed the family to survive the Great Depression.

Victoria also reinforced López’s appreciation of satire and wit. Typical of the artist’s use of visual puns are the color Xerox collages used in her series that transforms or reappropriates the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe. In *Untitled (Guadalupe with Margaret S. Stewart’s Face)*, López superimposes a photograph of Margaret’s slightly larger head on the Virgen de Guadalupe’s smaller body; the disproportion and misalignment is intended to produce a

laugh. Play is central to López's artistic process because it allows for experimentation and stimulates ideas, composition, and design. The color Xerox technique allowed her to play with the Virgen de Guadalupe's image, rapidly and easily creating effective collages. Such experimentation often provided the foundation for finished works such as the Guadalupe triptych and *Who's the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim?*

DEVELOPING AN ARTISTIC VOCABULARY

López developed her artistic vision while studying for her Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree at the University of California, San Diego. Her professors Allan Sekula and Martha Rosler provided López with a language with which to question the then-current trend of modernist art and its focus on "art for art's sake." Rosler and Sekula emphasized the political function of art and the political agency of the artist and the viewer. They both wanted to widen the audience beyond the gallery and studio circuit and sought to communicate with spectators as active agents rather than as obedient or uninterested viewers.

While in graduate school, López learned about conceptual and feminist art, which resonated with her interest in the relationship between images and social change. López's MFA exhibition demonstrated her ability to destabilize conventional images through manipulation. This technique was evident in each series created for the MFA exhibition: the Guadalupe triptych; the *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series, which consists of nine monumental drawings of the women in her family; and the *¿A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series, also known as the *Runner* series because of its sequential paintings of the artist running across the college campus. Together these series offered a new visual vocabulary for and about people of Mexican descent.

NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR CHICANAS

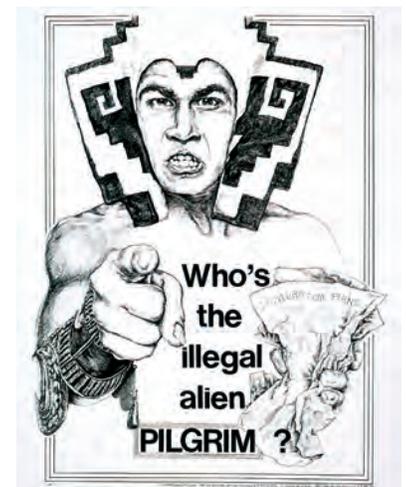
López would continue to reformulate image and boundaries over the next several decades. She is best known for her artworks that transform the Virgen de Guadalupe into new visions of Chicana womanhood. Her most well known work is a Guadalupe triptych (1978), in which she combined elements of religious imagery with portraits of herself, her mother, and her grandmother in order to challenge and redefine representations of Chicanas. The self-portrait, *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*, depicts the artist running with an exuberant expression. It represents the joy found in the ability to take charge of one's life. Within each portrait in the triptych, López manipulates the iconography of the Virgen de Guadalupe to emphasize women's dignity and value. The portraits can be interpreted as honoring working-class Chicanas, young and old—whom López calls "ordinary women."

The triptych is one of several works in López's Guadalupe series, which also includes mixed-media collages such as *Walking Guadalupe* and *Untitled (Guadalupe as Venus from Botticelli's Birth of Venus)*; photographs taken by artist Susan Mogul for the *Tableaux Vivant* series; and paintings completed between 1978 and 1988, such as *Nuestra Madre*, which references two religious female figures in addition to the Virgen de Guadalupe—Tonantzin and Coatlicue. López's manipulation of the iconography of the Virgen de Guadalupe allowed her to destabilize patriarchal and Catholic expectations of women. Her intent was not to explore the Virgen de Guadalupe's divinity but to deconstruct the image "to see how we present ourselves." López's deconstruction of images of women such as the Virgen de Guadalupe was an effort to acknowledge the complex social and historical conditions that inform the experiences of Mexican and Mexican American women.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the artist created conceptual artworks using objects depicting stereotypical images of Mexicans, which she had collected over the years. Her personal



Yolanda M. López, *Untitled (Guadalupe with Margaret F. Stewart's face)*, 1978. Mixed-media collage, 6 x 10 inches. Study for the Guadalupe series.



Yolanda M. López, *Who's the Illegal Alien, Pilgrim?*, 1978. Offset lithograph, 22 x 17½ inches.



Yolanda M. López, *Margaret F. Stewart: Our Lady of Guadalupe*, from the Guadalupe series, 1978. Oil pastel on paper, 22 x 30 inches.

collection of “Mexicana” (pronounced mek-see-CAN-a) includes dishes, plates, glasses, and toys, and objects from popular culture and mass media. The collection formed the foundation for several installations and projects, including *When You Think of Mexico* and *Things I Never Told My Son about Being a Mexican*. In these works, López selected objects from her vast collection and created new contexts for them, using formats such as a mock slide show presentation, a video, and multiroom installations.

López intentionally selected these objects for their mundane or everyday quality so that she could support her argument about the ubiquitous nature of stereotypical images. The images of sleeping Mexicans, smiling señoritas, and dancing fruits and vegetables are made absurd through unexpected placement, juxtaposition, and repetition. Her work interrogates images of Mexicans and Chicanos, and it challenges not only the context in which fine art is displayed but also the assumptions about who should be invited into such elite spaces.

López’s primary impulse as an artist is the investigation of images. She analyzes the production, function, and context of images that enter public culture. She was consequently a forerunner in the battles against the mass media and the entertainment industry for their demeaning portrayals of Mexicans and Chicanos. López’s artwork aims to offer new possibilities for Chicanas and women of color living under conditions of patriarchy, racism, and material inequality.



Yolanda M. López, *Guadalupe: Victoria F. Franco*, from the Guadalupe series, 1978. Oil pastel on rag paper, 22 x 30 inches.



Yolanda M. López, *Homenaje a Dolores Huerta*, from Women’s Work Is Never Done series, 1995. Silkscreen, 20 x 20 inches.

LESSON 1



CHALLENGING CULTURAL STEREOTYPES

Grades: 6–12
Subjects: Visual Arts, History-Social Sciences
Time Required: Four to six 50-minute class periods

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will discuss how Mexicans have been portrayed in American popular culture through an examination of two works of art by Yolanda M. López. Students will discuss various factors that stereotypes comprise. Using “Five Elements of Contemporary Art” and López’s choice of media, the lesson will culminate in the creation of a work of art that depicts a stereotype that the students identify.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to

- Analyze how a Chicana artist recontextualizes and reappropriates stereotypical images of Mexicans in two works of art
- Learn about conceptual art strategies
- Analyze, research, and collect visual depictions of different stereotypes in various media
- Create an original work of art that depicts a stereotype, is directed at a particular audience, and has a direct intention

MATERIALS

- Background information: “Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images” (pp. 1–4) and “Five Elements of Contemporary Art” (pp. 9–10)
- Transparencies or digital images from López’s *When You Think of Mexico* (p. 11) or Internet access to view portions of the video (<http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/research/lopezguide-whenyouthink.asp>) and transparencies or digital images of *Things I Never Told My Son about Being a Mexican* (p. 12)
- Overhead projector and wet-erase marker or a computer with an LCD projector, depending on type of reproductions available
- Magazines and newspapers
- Video cameras (optional)
- Internet and/or PowerPoint access
- Various art supplies that students can use to create works of art: pens, pencils, acrylic paint and brushes, drawing paper, canvas, household props, digital media (such as Photoshop), etc.

LESSON STEPS

Warm-up Activity

1. Show still or video images of Frito Bandito, Speedy Gonzalez, the Taco Bell Chihuahua (or any other depictions of Mexicans or Mexican culture in popular American media).

2. Ask students the following:
 - Are you familiar with any of these images? Which ones?
 - Where have you seen these images? Were any on a television commercial? If so, during what show, at what time, and on what TV station was the commercial aired?
 - Based on where and when the images were displayed, who do you think sees them (consider age, hobbies, gender, race/ethnicity, class)? What can you infer about who the intended audience is?
 - Do these images appeal to you? Why or why not?
 - How are Mexicans being portrayed?
 - Do you think the images accurately portray Mexicans and Mexican culture? Why or why not?
 - What stereotypes of Mexicans are being reflected?

The “Lazy Mexican”

1. Show still images or video clips from López’s *When You Think of Mexico* and still images from *Things I Never Told My Son about Being a Mexican*.
2. In a class discussion, consider the following:
 - What objects and images does López include in these works?
 - How are Mexicans being depicted?
 - What media did López use to convey her message? How is López’s technique the same or different from that of other artists? (Point out how, as a conceptual artist, López has appropriated images for her installations, and is thus more concerned with the concept or ideas behind the work of art rather than “creating” traditional art.)
3. Point out that these images include everyday objects and that the images were likely produced by a dominant American culture. Mention that López created her images for a particular audience—a Mexican audience that would have been familiar and/or more responsive to these images. Discuss how a different audience might react to these two works of art and how their meaning might change.
4. Discuss how López reappropriates these images and uses them as a source of empowerment for the Mexican community. Point out that by taking images from the popular media of a dominant culture and giving them a new context, she reclaims the images for the Mexican community. (Refer to the background information, “Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images.”)

Other Stereotypes

1. Have the class list other stereotypes. Point out that they can include stereotypes about youth, race/ethnicity, gender, class, and so on.
2. Have students choose a stereotype and a particular audience that they would like to address through a work of art. Ask students to consider whether the audience and the group that is being stereotyped should be the same.
3. Instruct students to collect images (from newspapers, magazines, or the Internet), or everyday objects that depict or allude to the stereotype chosen. Students can also draw images of stereotypes that they have seen (this should be encouraged for students that choose to do a diorama since they have to take scale into account). Remind students that López often collected pre-existing images and objects, composing and combining them in new ways and thus giving them a new meaning. In this way, students should consider the *act* of collecting and arranging these images and objects as the work art.

4. Discuss “Five Elements of Contemporary Art”: appropriation, time, space, performance, and hybridity. Ask students the following:
 - Which of these elements and principles does López use, and how does she use them?
 - Which will they use in creating their work of art?
5. Have students create a work of art by putting together the images and/or objects they drew or collected. Each student’s artwork should reflect one of the different media López used—a diorama (a scaled-down version of her multi-room installations), a video, a collection of everyday objects, or a PowerPoint presentation (a contemporary version of her slide show). Have students think about:
 - What message they are creating.
 - To whom they are addressing their message.
 - Which elements of contemporary art best convey their message.
 - Whether their work of art will include text.
 - How the placement of objects in a diorama or collection, or the order of the images on a video or PowerPoint, sheds new light or creates new meanings for these objects and images.
 - Whether the meaning would change with a different audience.

ASSESSMENT

Assess students' participation in class discussions.

Assess students' works of art on the following:

- Did they incorporate one or more of the elements described in "Five Elements of Contemporary Art"?
- Was their choice of media influenced by the different media López used?
- How effective was their work of art in depicting a stereotype to an intended audience?

EXTENSION

Have students write a paragraph on the artwork from the perspective of a member of the intended audience. Next, have students pick an audience *not* addressed in the artwork and have them write a paragraph from the perspective of a member of that audience. Have students identify the differences between the two and share them with the class.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

National Visual Arts Standards—Grades 6–12

Standard 1: Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts.

Standard 3: Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.

Standard 4: Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

National History-Social Science Standards—Grades 6–12

Standard 31: Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States.

FIVE ELEMENTS OF CONTEMPORARY ART



Adapted from "Elements and Principles of Today's Art," by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN (schools.walkerart.org).

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation is the act of creating a new work of art by using—that is, borrowing—something from another source and transforming it.

The artist can transform a borrowed image through any number of techniques: cutting up the image or object; reproducing it by photographic, digital, or mechanical means; combining it with other images; attaching to another artwork; and so on. Collage frequently makes use of appropriated images.

Objects that are used in a similar way are called "found objects." Found objects are often incorporated into assemblages (three-dimensional artworks made from a combination of media) and installations (artworks that use the exhibition space as part of their design).

The source of the original image is often the reason for its selection. The appropriated image may be politically charged; it might reflect the artist's message; it might have special personal significance for the artist.

TIME

Time is an important artistic element, although its significance is not always obvious.

Many artworks, from all eras, focus on a specific moment in time—perhaps an important moment in history, perhaps an important moment in the artist's life.

Some contemporary artworks track the passing of time, either visually or mechanically (by incorporating a clock into an installation, for example). Artists can also mark the passing of time by using slow motion and repetition in videos and films.

The viewer's time is another consideration. Some artists require viewers to spend time with their art: viewers must walk through an installation or watch a video to experience the work.

PERFORMANCE

Performance art comprises works presented for an audience, whether that audience is public, private, or assumed (such as the audience that watches a film).

Performance art can incorporate many art forms— theater, music, dance, poetry, literature, ritual, visual art, video, and so on—in unlimited combinations. Some performance pieces are scripted, some are improvised, some rely on a combination of script and improvisation. Some pieces depend on the involvement of the audience.

In most performance pieces, the act of performing is more important than the product (like a painting) or an outcome (like the audience's reaction).

SPACE

Space can be confined (the space within a room or a box, for example), or unconfined (like the sky). It can be the real space that people and objects occupy and move through, or the space that we think about (like the virtual space of the Internet).

Artists use a variety of materials — from wood, plastic, and steel to light, video, and digital media — to frame or define a space.

An installation is a work of art created for a specific space. In an installation, viewers can be physically surrounded by the art. Installations frequently encourage viewers not only to look at the work but also to listen to it, touch it, and even smell it.

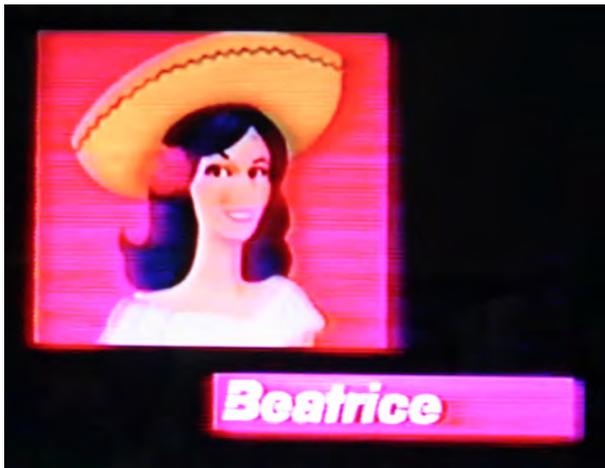
An installation is often temporary. After it is disassembled, it exists in a different kind of space: in photographs, on film, or in memory.

HYBRIDITY

Hybridity is the quality of being hybrid. Hybrids are composites—they are made up of different elements.

Artists combine different media and different artistic techniques to create hybrid art forms. These composites might be created from traditional media (paint, clay, and bronze, for example) as well as newer media (such as found objects and industrial materials). They might be made using traditional techniques (like painting and sculpture) as well as techniques that are more recent (such as photography and audio and visual recording).

Contemporary artists often feel that traditional media and techniques do not allow them to fully express their artistic ideas and concepts. Hybridity allows artists to expand their artistic vocabulary and create new forms. A hybrid work is often called a “multimedia” work.



Yolanda M. López, stills from *When You Think of Mexico*, 1985. Video.



Yolanda M. López, *Things I Never Told My Son about Being a Mexican*, 1985. Mixed-media installation, Santa Cruz Veterans Hall.

LESSON 2



DEPICTING YOUR INFLUENCES, CREATING A SERIES

Grades: 6–12
Subjects: Visual Arts
Time Required: Four to five 50-minute class periods

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will discuss artistic techniques and elements in a series of drawings and a series of paintings. They will analyze how an artist's decisions regarding color, scale, media, and background affect a work's meaning, and then they will create a series depicting people or places that have influenced them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

- Learn how a Chicana artist explores an idea throughout several works in a series
- Interpret facial expressions and gestures of figures depicted in two series
- Analyze how works of art reflect the influence of people and places who are important to an artist
- Analyze how an artist's decisions regarding color, scale, media, and background affect a work's meaning
- Apply what they learned about shading, color, and scale in two works of art in a series

MATERIALS

- Background information: "Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images" (pp. 1–4)
- Overhead transparencies or digital images of *Self-Portrait* (p. 18), *Mother* (p. 19), and *Grandmother* (p. 20), from Yolanda López's *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series
- Printed copies of Yolanda López's *Self-Portrait*, *Mother*, and *Grandmother* (one per pair of students)
- Overhead transparencies or digital images of *Runner: Mandeville Center for the Arts* (p. 21), *Runner: Third College Parking Lot* (p. 22), and *Runner: On My Own!* (p. 23), from Yolanda López's *¿A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series
- Overhead projector or a computer with an LCD projector, depending on reproductions available
- Drawing pencils
- Overhead transparency film and wet-erase markers (optional)
- Copy paper
- Butcher paper
- Charcoal
- Drawing paper
- Oil pastels

LESSON STEPS

Warm-up: What's in a Series?

1. Ask students what comes to mind when they think of items that are part of a series (television series, baseball cards series, concert series, etc.). What are the advantages and disadvantages of experiencing a series of items rather than an individual item? For example, compare the experience of viewing a television series with that of viewing a movie. How do the experiences differ?
2. Explain to students that many artists explore their ideas in several artworks within a series. Tell students that they will be analyzing two series of works created by Yolanda López. Ask students, working in pairs, to discuss why they think an artist would want to create a series rather than individual works, then invite them to share their ideas with the class.

Three Drawings from Tres Mujeres/Three Generations

1. Display a reproduction of *Self-Portrait* in López's *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series without mentioning the title. Begin a discussion of the work by asking students to share their immediate reactions to it. Then ask students the following:
 - What do you notice about the person in the drawing?
 - What can you tell about her by the way she is dressed?
 - What does her pose and facial expression communicate about her?
2. Tell students that the drawing is a self-portrait. Ask students if they think about the drawing differently knowing that it is a self-portrait. Have them discuss, in pairs, what they think the artist is communicating about herself in the work.
3. Distribute one copy of *Self-Portrait* to each student pair and tell students to view the work upside down. Viewing the work this way will help students break down the drawing into shapes and lines. Pass out a piece of butcher paper to each student, and have each student fold the paper into three parts. Tell students to use the first column of the paper to sketch a small detail from the portrait while looking at it upside down. They may choose any detail they wish. After they have finished sketching, ask students if they have any new observations about the portrait they would like to share.
4. Display the reproduction of *Mother* in the *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series and discuss the work using the questions in step 1.
5. Distribute one copy of *Mother* to each student pair and tell students to view the work upside down. Tell students to choose a detail of the drawing that includes shading. Have them draw a detail from *Mother* in the second column of their butcher paper, paying particular attention to how the artist employed shading to create a sense of three-dimensionality. Ask students to share any new observations they have about the portrait after focusing on this detail.
6. Display the reproduction of *Grandmother* in the *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series and discuss the work using the questions in step 1.
7. Distribute one copy of *Grandmother* to each student pair and tell students to view the work upside down. Have students use the last column of their piece of butcher paper to sketch the face of López's grandmother. Challenge them to focus on proportion by noting the distance between the various shapes and lines that make up the face. When students are finished sketching, encourage them to share any new observations they have about the work.

8. Divide students into groups of four and ask them to compare and contrast the three portraits. Prompt discussion by asking them the following:
 - What do you notice about the three women? How are they similar? How are they different?
 - How do these portraits compare to other portraits you have seen?
 - What is the effect of depicting all three individuals without a background or setting?
 - Why do you think the artist chose not to use color in the portraits?
 Have one student from each group share what they discussed.
9. Reveal the title of the series—*Tres Mujeres/Three Generations*—and pass out the background information “Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images.” Have students take turns reading each paragraph aloud. Tell them to share what they learned about the artist’s mother and grandmother. Ask students how these two figures influenced the artist and how this influence is reflected in the portraits.
10. Display images of women from popular magazines and stereotypical images of Latinas, such as the “exotic bombshell” (Carmen Miranda), the maid (Marisa Ventura [played by Jennifer Lopez] in *Maid in Manhattan*), and the “spitfire” (Anita in *West Side Story* or Maria Elena [played by Penelope Cruz] in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*). Ask students to discuss in their groups how the portraits made by López differ from these images.
11. Tell students the dimensions of each work (4 x 8 feet), and ask them why they think the artist created the works on a scale that is larger than life. Then point out that the artist may have been showcasing the strengths of ordinary people in everyday clothes on a heroic scale. By looking at all three portraits, what do they think the artist is communicating about Chicana and Latina women?
12. Point out that the artist drew the portraits on butcher paper, which is the material they have been using for their sketching activities. Why would an artist use such an inexpensive material for a series that was intended to be displayed in a gallery? Explain that López was interested in critiquing traditional American portraiture, not only in its content (the lack of Chicana and Latina representation) but also in its form (the use of expensive materials) and process (the ability of people with leisure time to sit and pose for portraits).
13. Remind students that López created portraits of ordinary people who greatly influenced her life. For homework, have students write about three people who have greatly influenced them.

Painting a Journey: ¿A Donde Vas, Chicana?

1. Ask students to share what they remember about López’s *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series. Tell students they will be focusing on a different series created by López.
2. Display a reproduction of *Runner: Mandeville Center for the Arts* from López’s *¿A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series and begin a discussion of the work by asking students to share their immediate reactions.
3. Pass out pieces of butcher paper and tell students to divide the paper in thirds. Have students create a gesture drawing in the first column by looking at the position of the runner’s body in the painting. To create a gesture drawing, they should roughly and quickly sketch what they see in a continuous line without taking their pencils off of the paper. Tell them not to draw the exact shapes they see; rather, they should depict a sense of the action without thinking too much about sketching a form precisely. Give students about ten seconds to complete the gesture drawing.

4. Return to the painting and ask students the following questions:
 - What do you notice about the person in the painting?
 - What can you tell about her by the way she is dressed?
 - What does her pose and facial expression communicate about her?
 - What do you notice about the setting?
 - What do you notice about the building in the background? What does the building's architecture reveal about the setting?
 - What do you think the figure's relationship to the setting is?
 - What do you think the figure is thinking?
5. Display the reproduction of *Runner: Third College Parking Lot* from the series and complete steps 2 through 4 with this painting.
6. Display the reproduction of *Runner: On My Own!* from the series and complete steps 2 through 4 one more time.
7. Tell students to compare and contrast all three works in the series in their small groups. Prompt discussion by asking them the following questions:
 - How is each of the figures in the paintings similar to and different from the others?
 - How would you describe the figure's relationship to the setting in each painting? How does this relationship change from painting to painting?
 - What do you notice about López's use of color in each work?
 - The series depicts a runner on a journey. What kind of journey is being depicted?
 - What does the title of the series—¿A Donde Vas, Chicana?—mean? What does it reveal about the artist's intentions?

Have one student from each group share what they discussed.
8. Refer to the background information about López that students read earlier. Remind them that the artist studied at the University of California, San Diego. Ask students to share what they remember about López's experiences at the university and the ways these experiences influenced her.
9. Invite students to discuss both series, using the following prompts:
 - When analyzing a character depicted in an artwork, what kinds of information can a setting convey about him or her?
 - What can you learn about a character when no setting is included?
 - Can the inclusion of a setting limit a viewer's understanding about a character?
 - How can color be used to convey information about a character?
 - How can an artist convey information about a character without color?
10. Point out that both series depict figures on a scale that is larger than life. What does the phrase "larger than life" mean, literally and figuratively? Why would the artist depict "ordinary" people at an extraordinary scale? Pass out one long sheet of butcher paper (about 4 feet long) per student pair. Have partners take turns posing and creating gesture drawings of each other using the front and back of the sheet of butcher paper. Alternatively, you could have students complete gesture drawings on overhead transparencies, display them on an overhead projector, and discuss the large-scale form of the figure projected onto the wall. Ask students how the experience of creating the gesture drawings on a large scale differed from creating the drawings on a small scale.

Considering Influences, Creating a Series

1. Lead a warm-up sketching activity so that students can practice shading techniques. Pass out copy paper and have students draw five squares on the paper. Tell them to fill in each square with their pencil, using a different tone in each square and moving from lightest tone to darkest tone.
2. Students will create a series of two works of art inspired by either of López's series. The first option is to create two portraits of "ordinary" people who have greatly influenced their lives, using butcher paper and charcoal. Students who choose this option should incorporate shading and pay careful attention to proportion. The second option is to create two works that depict an autobiographical journey through a specific place that has influenced them, using drawing paper and oil pastels. Students who choose this option should consider how color can help tell their story and pay attention to how the figure is positioned in each setting.
3. Give students time to brainstorm about the people and places who have influenced them. Once they have come up with an idea for both works in their series, pass out art supplies. Each student will receive butcher paper and charcoal, or drawing paper and oil pastels. Allow students time to complete their works of art.
4. When the works are completed, display students' series in the school library or your classroom. Lead a discussion about the process of creating the series. Return to the question asked at the beginning of the lesson:
 - Why would an artist want to create a series rather than individual works?
 - What did each of López's series convey that could not be conveyed if the artist had made only one drawing exploring Latina/Chicana womanhood or only one painting exploring the artist's journey as a student?

ASSESSMENT

Assess students' participation in class discussions. Assess their series based on their effectiveness at exploring one idea in two works. If they chose to depict two portraits, assess whether they incorporated shading and proportion. If they chose to depict an autobiographical journey, assess whether they used color to help tell their story and considered the figure's position relative to the setting.

EXTENSION

Students will write a reflective essay based on the series they created. They will write either about the two people who have influenced their lives or about a journey through a specific place that was important to them.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

National Visual Arts Standards—6–12 grades

Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts

Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others



Yolanda M. López, *Self-Portrait*, from *Tres Mue*
Three Generations series, 1975–76. Charcoal o
paper, 4 x 8 feet.



Yolanda M. López, *Mother*, from *Tres Mujeres/Three Generations* series, 1976. Charcoal on paper, 4 x 8 feet.



Yolanda M. López, *Grandmother*, from *Tres Mujeres/ Three Generations* series, 1976. Charcoal on paper, 4 x 8 feet.



Yolanda M. López, *Runner: Mandeville Center for the Arts*, from *¿A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series, 1977. Oil on acrylic on paper, 48 x 72 inches.



Yolanda M. López, *Runner: Third College Parking Lot*, from *¡A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series, 1977. Oil on acrylic on paper, 48 x 144 inches.



Yolanda M. López, *Runner: On My Own!* from *¿A Donde Vas, Chicana? Getting through College* series, 1977. Oil and acrylic on paper, 60 x 144 inches.

LESSON 3

THE VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE: REINTERPRETING AN ICON

Grades: 10–12
Subjects: Visual Arts, Language Arts, History-Social Sciences
Time Required: Three to four 50-minute class periods

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn about the Virgen de Guadalupe. Students will examine the various ways that Yolanda López has adapted, challenged, and engaged with this iconic image. They will discuss other types of icons and choose one that is relevant to their own lives. Using one of the mediums used by López, students will create an original work of art that challenges or redefines their chosen icon.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

- Understand the concept of “icon” as a cultural and artistic concept
- Examine how a Chicana feminist artist interpreted an iconic image using various media
- Analyze and think critically about images of women as reflections of culture and patriarchy
- Experiment with and consider how different types of media convey different messages to different audiences
- Create an original work of art depicting an influential iconic figure from their lives

MATERIALS

- Background information: “Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images” (pp. 1–4)
- Transparencies or digital images of a traditional image of the Virgen de Guadalupe (p. 28) and Yolanda López’s *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe* (p. 29)
- One printed copy of Yolanda López’s *Untitled* (Guadalupe as Venus from Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus*) (p. 30), *Walking Guadalupe* (p. 31), and *Nuestra Madre* (p. 32), and the image from the *Tableaux Vivant* series (p. 33)
- Overhead projector and wet-erase marker or a computer with an LCD projector, depending on type of reproductions available
- Various art supplies that students can use to create works of art: pens, pencils, acrylic paint and brushes, drawing paper, canvas, fabric, Xerox copies, transparencies, household props, Photoshop, etc.

LESSON STEPS

Warm-up Activity: The Virgen de Guadalupe

1. Show students a traditional image of the Virgen de Guadalupe and Yolanda López’s *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*. In pairs, have students compare and contrast the two images.
2. As a class, discuss students’ findings.

3. Next, briefly discuss the story of the Virgen de Guadalupe and Juan Diego. Point out that according to Mexican tradition, the Virgen de Guadalupe appeared to a poor, indigenous man named Juan Diego in 1531 and instructed him to tell the Spanish bishop to build a shrine to her on that very spot. When the bishop doubted Juan Diego's tale, the Virgen de Guadalupe provided a sign by miraculously impressing an image of herself on Juan Diego's mantle. Two weeks later, the bishop ordered a shrine to be built. The Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe) is one of the most visited Catholic shrines in the world. The miracle is credited for a mass conversion of indigenous peoples in the Americas to the Catholic faith. The Virgen de Guadalupe became the patron saint of Mexico and the Americas. Later, Mexican generals such as Miguel Hidalgo (during Mexican independence) and Emiliano Zapata (during the Mexican Revolution) used flags that bore the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe. She continues to be a strong national and religious iconic figure in Mexico. Prompt students with the following questions:
 - What does this image symbolize?
 - What does it mean to Mexicans? How has it been used? (Teachers can refer students to <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/629932/Our-Lady-of-Guadalupe>.)
 - Is this image familiar to you? If so, where have you seen it?
 - How has López challenged and redefined this iconic representation of womanhood?

Deconstructing an Icon

1. Split the class into four groups and provide each group with one of the following works of art that relate to the Virgen de Guadalupe: *Untitled* (Guadalupe as Venus from Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*), image from the *Tableaux Vivant* series, *Walking Guadalupe*, and *Nuestra Madre*.
2. Have each group look closely at the gaze, position, and body language of the Virgen de Guadalupe in their image. Ask students to consider the following:
 - What do these elements communicate?
 - How is López referencing the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe?
 - How is she challenging and/or redefining the icon?
3. Have groups read the background information "Yolanda M. López: Investigating Images." Have them return to their image and discuss the following:
 - How is the image a reflection of López's culture as a Chicana artist?
 - How has López deconstructed the image?
 - How does López explore new possibilities of Chicana womanhood in each image? What is she saying about the patriarchal nature of Chicano culture? (Explain that she is redefining and showing women's dignity and value in the dominant male Latin culture.)
 - Have each group discuss the media López used and how this may have influenced the final work.
4. Have each group present their findings to the class.
5. As a class, wrap up the discussion by pointing out the variety of ways that López has engaged with this image, including how she has incorporated traditional art history, used a wide variety of media, intentionally destabilized the image by using humor, and has appropriated the image by placing it in a modern context.
6. Tell students about López's use of "inexpensive, ephemeral, and unthreatening" materials to make works of art more accessible to a Latino audience.

Depicting an Icon

1. As a class, brainstorm examples of iconic personalities. Students might suggest Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, Tupac Shakur, Barack Obama, and so on. Lead a class discussion with the following questions:
 - What makes this person an icon?
 - How are they portrayed?
 - To whom do they appeal?
2. Have each student choose an iconic image from his or her background and/or heritage that has been pervasive or has made an important impact on his or her life. Have students think of a question or conflict that the icon might raise, or, if they do not like how the icon is depicted, why they are dissatisfied.
3. Instruct students to write a one-page essay describing their icon, why they chose that particular one, and the influence it has had on their lives. In the essay, have students address the question, conflict, or dissatisfaction they have with the image of the icon.
4. Using one of the mediums inspired by López’s work (tableaux vivant, collage, painting, Xerox copies, transparencies, digital media), have students create a work of art using their chosen icon. Have students consider the following:
 - How is the image a reflection of the culture that produced it?
 - How is the icon being depicted? How could they change, update, or make it more relevant?
 - What impact will these changes have on the icon?
 - Who is the intended audience for their work?
 - What intended impact will these changes have on that audience?
5. Before making a final decision on their project, encourage students to experiment with different materials and forms and to think about which materials or forms will best communicate their ideas to different audiences. Encourage students to try digital media (such as digital cameras and Photoshop), since López probably would have used digital media if it had been available. Does their choice of medium directly appeal to or challenge the audience with whom they are trying to communicate?

ASSESSMENT

Assess students’ participation in class discussions.

Assess students’ essays on whether they adequately address the following questions:

- Did they choose an image that can be seen as an icon?
- Were they effective in stating why they chose the icon?
- Were they able to demonstrate the impact that the icon has had on their lives?
- Did they address either a question or conflict or how they were dissatisfied with the image of the icon?

Assessment of works of art should be based on the students’ effectiveness at creating a work that comments on or updates an iconic image. Assessment should consider the media the student chose and whether students satisfactorily addressed an intended audience.

EXTENSION

Research the three figures or deities that López used in constructing ideas about gender roles in her *Nuestra Madre* (Virgen de Guadalupe, Tonantzin, and Coatlicue). Read excerpts from Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (such as the chapter titled “Entering into

the Serpent” or the poem titled “*Cihuatlyotl, Woman Alone*”) and have students write a comparative paper between Anzaldúa’s ideas of gender and femininity and Lopez’s fusion of Mexican and indigenous deities in *Nuestra Madre*.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

National Visual Arts Standards—Grades 6–12

Standard 1: Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts.

Standard 3: Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.

Standard 4: Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

National English-Language Arts Standards— Grades 6–12

Standard 1: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.

Standard 7: Evaluation Data: Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Standard 9: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media.

National History-Social Science Standards—Grades 6–12

Standard 31: Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States.



Card printed with the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe, ca. 1980s.



Yolanda M. López, *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*, from the *Guadalupe* series, 1978. Oil pastel on rag paper, 22 x 30 inches.



Yolanda M. López, *Untitled (Guadalupe as Botticelli's Birth of Venus)*, 1978. Color Xerox with color transparency, 6 x 8 inches. Study for the Guadalupe series.



Yolanda M. López, *Walking Guadalupe*, 1978. Mixed-media collage, 6 x 10 inches. Study for the Guadalupe series.



Yolanda M. López, *Nuestra Madre*, from the Guadalupe series, 1981–88. Acrylic and oil paint on masonite, 4 x 6 feet.



Susan R. Mogul, Tableaux Vivant series, 1978. Color photograph with Yolanda López.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ARCHIVAL RESOURCES

The Yolanda M. Lopez Papers, California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives, University of California, Santa Barbara, California

This collection includes materials from the artist's personal and professional life from 1961–1998. Letters, event and exhibition flyers, media clippings, slides, original screen prints and offset posters, and other ephemera make up this rich collection, which offers insight into the artist's history as an artist and activist. An online finding aid is available at the Online Archive of California: <http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf109nb0nx>.

ARTICLES, CHAPTERS, AND BOOKS

Cisneros, Sandra. "Guadalupe the Sex Goddess." *MS Magazine*, July–August 1996, 43–46.

The subjects of this personal exploration are the Virgen de Guadalupe's relationship to Latina sexuality and her pre-Columbian lineage. Cisneros argues that the icon offers Latinas a site for sexual reclamation and empowerment.

Ferreira, Jason Michael. "Yolanda López." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States*, vol. 3, edited by Susana Oboler and Deena J. González, 13–16. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Ferreira's concise biography emphasizes how López's education and her activism with the Third World Liberation Front, Los Siete de La Raza, and the Chicano Federation shaped the social justice themes in her artwork.

Hidalgo de la Riva Kusmiss, Osa. "Chicana Spectators and Mediamakers: Imagining Trans-Cultural Diversity." *Spectator* 26, no. 1 (2006): 66–73.

López reflects on her upbringing, Chicana identity, activism, and art in this personal interview.

Huacuja Pearson, Judith. "Chicana Critical Pedagogies: Chicana Art as Critique and Intervention." Presentation at "Interpretation and Representation of Latino Cultures: Research and Museums," Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., November 2002. <http://latino.si.edu/researchandmuseums/background/introduction.html>.

This essay focuses works conducted with students during the artist's visit to the University of Dayton in 2002. The installations in her media series Cactus Hearts/Barbed Wire Dreams, which included the film, "When You Think of Mexico: Commercial Images of Mexican in the Mass Media," are discussed.

LaDuke, Betty. "Yolanda Lopez: Breaking Chicano Stereotypes." *Feminist Studies* 20, no. 1 (1994): 117–30.

This article looks at Yolanda López's upbringing and emergence as an artist. It includes illustrations of some of her artwork focusing on women.

Peterson, Jeanette Favrot. "The Virgin of Guadalupe: Symbol of Conquest of Liberation?" *Art Journal* 51, no. 4 (1992): 39–47.

The focus of this historical discussion is the Virgin of Guadalupe from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Peterson challenges widely held assumptions concerning the Virgin's role as a national emblem.

Stott, Annette. "Transformative Triptychs in Multicultural America." *Art Journal* 57, no. 1 (1998): 55–63.

This article examines how the triptych has been appropriated and reinvented by artists who are also women of color artists. Stott uses López's Guadalupe triptych as one of her case studies.

A VER SERIES EDITOR

Chon A. Noriega, University of California, Los Angeles

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Alejandro Anreus, William Patterson University

Gilberto Cárdenas, University of Notre Dame

Karen Mary Davalos, Loyola Marymount University

Henry C. Estrada, Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives

Jennifer A. González, University of California, Santa Cruz

Rita González, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Kellie Jones, Yale University

Mari Carmen Ramírez, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

Yasmin Ramírez, Hunter College

Terezita Romo, Mexican Museum, San Francisco

AFFILIATED INSTITUTIONS

Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution • California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA), University of California, Santa Barbara • Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College, New York • Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University • Hispanic Research Center, Arizona State University, Phoenix • Inter-University Program for Latino Research (IUPLR) • Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame • Jersey City Museum • La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, Los Angeles • Latino Art Museum, Pomona • Latino Museum, Los Angeles • Los Angeles County Museum of Art • Mexican Cultural Institute, Los Angeles • Mexican Museum, San Francisco • El Museo del Barrio, New York • Museum of Fine Arts, Houston • National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC)

VERONICA ALVAREZ is an educator and historian. She has worked with elementary, high school, and college students, teaching subjects such as Spanish and ancient Mediterranean history, and has served as an art education consultant for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. For the past eight years she has worked in the education department at the J. Paul Getty Museum, where she helped develop educational programming for the newly reopened Getty Villa in Malibu. She currently is an education specialist for teacher audiences at the Getty Center, developing curriculum for ESL teachers and facilitating professional development workshops for K-12 teachers.

THERESA SOTTO is a writer and art educator who lives in Santa Monica, California. She has experience teaching poetry, English Composition, and art to students in kindergarten through college. She has also worked as an art education consultant and curriculum writer for institutions such as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the University of Arizona's Poetry Center. Currently, she works as an education specialist at the J. Paul Getty Museum, where she develops curriculum and facilitates professional development workshops for K-12 teachers.

This publication was developed under the guidance of Sandy Rodriguez, who served as content advisor for this project.

UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press

CSRC Director: Chon A. Noriega

Senior Editor: Rebecca Frazier

Manuscript Editor: Catherine A. Sunshine

Design and Production: William Morosi

Production Assistant: Jenny Walters

Developmental Editor: Colin Gunckel

Research Assistants: Janyce Cardenas, Lauro Cons, Beth Rosenblum, Ariana Rosas

Getty Intern: Nathalie Sanchez



UCLA CHICANO STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER PRESS

193 HAINES HALL

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA 90095-1544

WWW.CHICANO.UCLA.EDU