HABLAMOS JUNTOS together we speak

VIVIANA PAREDES

Contemporary Latin@ Broadsides Project
Museo Eduardo Carrillo & Pajaro Valley Arts
Supported by the City of Santa Cruz
Let’s Get Personal

Cultural Heritage: Mexican – American but I prefer to identify myself as Chicana.

Education/Training: She received her Bachelors of Arts degree from the California College of the Arts with a focus in sculpture.

Influences: My grandmother was and continues to be my biggest influence.

Tell Young Artists: Trust your instincts; don’t be afraid of failure. Know that inspiration comes from the process of working so work, work, work. Be true to your instincts and don’t be tempted to follow trends. Find your own voice. Making art was how I finally learned how to express what I was feeling.

Here’s the Artwork

Art Medium: Sculpture and installations are my methods of expressing my thinking and ideas. For me sculpture is about the materials an artist uses, and I use glass as a lens. I’ve had to learn glass blowing and many techniques related to working with glass.

Intent of the Work: I draw from a rich cultural mix, a mestizaje (mix of cultures in the Americas) of images and rituals that reflect cultural, social and environmental interests and ideas. My art is also informed by complex global dynamics that transcend borders and offer potential for cultural interconnectedness. My artistic approach comes from growing up in the Bay Area, where the civil rights movement opened my eyes to social inequities and environmental issues.

With the “ALMA” it is meant to have a double meaning. First the name Alma is both a woman’s name and the word for soul in Spanish. When I made this piece I was thinking of the women being murdered in the deserts. I thought how no one but those who were causing them harm were witnessing their passing. But the natural world is the witness to all that we do to each other. I used the iconic maguey as the spirit and witness to what was done to these women. “ALMA” hovers over the sand representing their spirit, not yet in heaven and not of the earth. They hover in the world of Napantlan, the world in between.

I have a special interest in the practice of Curanderismo, the practice of healing the mind, body and spirit by using the traditional plants considered gifts of the gods. The scientific term for this study is called ethnobotany, focusing on the cultural and human relationships we have to the plant world. I use medicinal plants in my work as metaphors for society’s lack of spiritual and environmental connection.

Let’s Look Closely

Look: I see myself as a storyteller. Making art is my way of writing, and my objects become my words. My objective when making an art piece is to draw in the viewer by making something intriguing to look at and then having something to say with the work.

Notice: Look for the story in this work. Look deeper and ask yourself what feelings you are having as you experience this work.

Discuss: This work is temporary. That means it is created anew each time it is exhibited. How do you think it remains the same or changes each time it is reconstructed?

Get a Fuller Picture

Short Biography: Viviana was awarded the prestigious Artist-In-Residency at the De Young Museum in San Francisco, in October 2014. Her art has been included in exhibitions throughout the U.S. and México. In 2010, Viviana’s art was featured at the Triton Museum of Santa Clara as part of a Bay Area Chicana exhibition series titled: “Xicana: Spiritual Reflections/Relexiones Espirituales”. In Texcoco, México, Viviana’s work was part of the 2008, Internacional de Arte Contemporáneo Biennale Chapingo: “Arts with Roots in the Earth”. In 2007, Paredes’ seminal series, My Pocha Tongues was collected by the Don Julio Tequila Company. The Nuevo Arte: Colección Tequila Don Julio, debuted in New York City and featured works by some of the most innovative contemporary Mexican and Mexican-American artists.

For the full transcript please visit: http://museoeduardocarrillo.org
http://www.pajarovalleyartsCouncil.org