



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Juana Alicia

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Oral history interview with Juana Alicia
Identifier:	AAA.alicia00
Date:	2000 May 8 and July 17
Creator:	Juana Alicia (Interviewee) Karlstrom, Paul J. (Interviewer)
Extent:	99 Pages (Transcript)
Language:	English .
Digital Content:	Digital Content: Oral history interview with Juana Alicia, 2000 May 8 and July 17, Transcript Audio: Oral history interview with Juana Alicia, 2000 May 8 and July 17, Digital Sound Recording (Excerpt)

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This interview is part of the Archives of American Art Oral History Program, started in 1958 to document the history of the visual arts in the United States, primarily through interviews with artists, historians, dealers, critics and administrators.

Acquisition Information

Funding for this interview provided by SI Latino Initiative II, 1999.

Biographical / Historical

Juana Alicia Araiza (1953-), commonly known as Juana Alicia, is a painter, printmaker, and educator in Berkeley, California. Juana Alicia is among the leading Chicana muralists in California and a major figure in Bay Area Chicana and women's movements. Among her commissions is a mural done with her partner Emmanuel C. Montoya at the San Francisco International Airport. Uses only her forenames; does not use her last name.

Scope and Contents

An interview of Juana Alicia conducted 2000 May 8-July 17, by Paul Karlstrom, for the Archives of American Art, in Alicia's studio, Berkeley, California.

Scope and Contents

Juana Alicia discusses her childhood in Detroit and Texas; her feelings of identification with the Black community; admiration of Paul Robeson and Martin Luther King, Jr., whose death "devastated" her; moving in 1972 to Salinas, California at the invitation of Cesar Chavez; working in the lettuce fields and inspiration for her mural *Lechugueras* (1985) in the Mission District of San Francisco; Chicana identity; art as central to her story; her work during the 1970s and 80s becoming more international in scope and connecting to the struggles of others; her interest in ancient techniques and in the work of Los Tres Grandes and the frescos of Diego Rivera; her current project, *Santuarios*, with her partner, at SFO, and the iconography of the work in terms of three forces at work: artist's experience, mandate of commission, spiritual/universal force; *El Cordon Rota* (1998), a banner prepared for and withdrawn from a Tijuana show in response to John Valadez's poster image of a nude Chicana; interest in aesthetics and the idea of beauty in art as vital to survival; her views on gender equality, empowerment through art, differences between men and women; the "Positive Visibility" mural (1995) in San Francisco's lower Haight district, with a description of the iconography and recent restoration project supported by Neighborhood Beautification Program fighting hate crimes throughout the city.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 8 digital wav files. Duration is 4 hrs., 6 minutes.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Chicano artists
- Latino and Latin American artists
- Women artists
- Women educators
- Women muralists
- Women painters
- Women printmakers

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Occupations:

- Educators -- California -- Berkeley
- Muralists -- California -- Berkeley
- Painters -- California -- Berkeley
- Printmakers -- California -- Berkeley