Oral history interview with Patssi Valdez

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection Overview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Information</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biographical / Historical</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names and Subjects</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container Listing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collection Overview

Repository: Archives of American Art
Title: Oral history interview with Patssi Valdez
Identifier: AAA.valdez99
Date: 1999 May 26-June 2
Creator: Valdez, Patssi (Interviewee)
Rangel, Jeffrey J. (Interviewer)
Extent: 80 Pages (Transcript)
Language: English
Digital Content: Digital Content: Oral history interview with Patssi Valdez, 1999 May 26-June 2, Transcript
Audio: Oral history interview with Patssi Valdez, 1999 May 26-June 2, 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. Funding for the interview and transcription provided by the Smithsonian Institution Latino Initiatives Fund.

Restrictions
Transcript available on the Archives of American Art website.

Biographical / Historical

Patssi Valdez (1951-) is a painter, and installation artist from Los Angeles, California. Valdez is known for her boldly rendered works that vary in themes from homages to female deities to mystical environments.

Scope and Contents
An interview of Patssi Valdez conducted 1999 May 26-June 2, by Jeffrey Rangel, for the Archives of American Art.

Scope and Contents
The interviews were conducted at the artist's home/studio in Los Angeles, California. Valdez discusses her current show at the Laguna Art Museum, "A Precarious Comfort," and the intensely personal nature of the
work being exhibited; the liberating aspects of painting and her journey from dealing with the problems and
careers of the Chicano community to a more internal focus in which she examines her personal emotional
life through symbol and imagination; how, in her work, landscape has come to represent emotions and
states of mind; health problems and her turning to alternative methods of healing; her relationship with Asco
and her eventual break from the group to pursue her art studies at Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles (now
Otis College of Art and Design) and in New York, and with a NEA grant to Europe and Mexico; difficulties
she experienced with her decision to focus on art school and on her survival as an artist, while trying to
keep in touch with friends and peers; friendships with Amalia Mesa Bains, Christina Fernandez, and Gronk,
as well as with Sister Karen Boccalero whose Self-Help Graphics contributed so much to the growth of a
younger generation of Chicano artists; fellow Asco artist Harry Gamboa, Jr., and their mutual goals in their
art to subvert Chicano stereotypes; what constitutes Chicano art and how the Les Demon des Anges show
changed her perspective; and her ability to create change through her art.

General

Originally recorded on 4 sound cassettes. Reformatted in 2010 as 7 digital wav files. Duration is 3 hr., 32 min.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Latino and Latin American artists
- Mexican American artists
- Women artists

Types of Materials:

- Interviews
- Sound recordings

Names:

- Asco (Group of artists)
- Gamboa, Harry
- Gronk, 1954-
- Mesa-Bains, Amalia
- Otis Art Institute
- Self-Help Graphics and Art, Inc.

Occupations:

- Artists -- California -- Los Angeles