

Huntington Beach



La Historia de Adentro/La Historia de Afuera/History From Within/History From Without

Mural by Yreina D. Cervantez & Alma Lopez

As muralists we function as storytellers providing images almost as a scrapbook from different experiences that hopefully create an interest for the viewer in terms of the people depicted in the mural and what their stories are.

When we think of audience, we think of a broad cross-section of the population which represents Orange County and the many people who will be seeing the mural when they visit Huntington Beach and the Art Center. It was important to include various cultures that have had an important presence in the area over the years. So, we are talking about a broad audience that is visible and a smaller audience that is invisible in the "official" histories of Orange County as a result of being marginalized. In many cases, mural images are based on peoples' oral histories, personal memories, and experiences that reflect and are connected to historical events and periods of time in a community.

Although this is not a historical mural in the sense that it would depict the literal history of Orange County and Huntington Beach, we do highlight and draw upon some historical references/concepts. In a conversation with a longtime Orange County resident librarian Alfredo Zuniga, we discussed the concept of *la historia de adentro/la historia de afuera* or the history from within/the history from without.

This concept is presented by the renowned Mexican anthropologist Miguel Leon Portilla in his book *Endangered Cultures*, which deals with the concept of the preservation of the experiences of a particular community and its historical past: "Nonetheless it is undeniable that history as a search for roots and antecedents from one's own orientation is fundamentally linked with an awareness of cultural identity and its defense...deprived of its memory, cultural identity dissolves."

A related aspect is presented by French philosopher Michel Foucault: "Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics of truth'; that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true...the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those charged with saying what counts as true." (Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*)

As muralist we are coming from the tradition of the school of Mexican mural painting in which the function of murals as a public art form is rooted in the idea of reclaiming the purpose and identity of people. This basic philosophy was adapted and transformed by the Chicana/o art movement in the United States. As women artists, we are interested in evolving the technique, form, and content of murals to reflect a contemporary vision and emphasizing a Chicana aesthetic.



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