

**ARTISTS SPACE**

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BORDER ART WORKSHOP/TALLER DE ARTE FRONTERIZO  
"VIDAS PERDIDAS/LOST LIVES"

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 19, 6-8pm  
January 19 - February 18, 1989  
Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11-6

Guillermo Gomez-Pena  
Emily Hicks  
Bertha Jottar  
Richard A. Lou

Victor Orozco Ochoa  
Robert Sanchez  
Michael Schnorr  
Liz Sisco  
Rocio Weiss

San Diego's Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo (BAW/TAF) is a multi-disciplinary group of Chicano, Mexican and American artists whose goal is to establish the Mexican-American border region as a viable forum for intercultural communication. The group has met regularly since 1984 to formulate ideas for their collaborative works (multi-media events and installations incorporating performance and video) which appear in traditional galleries as well as at site-specific locations in the border region. Their work comments upon the images of the border region that have been created by the mass media.

In "Vida Perdidas/Lost Lives," BAW/TAF explores many of the issues surrounding the undocumented worker in a large scale multi-media installation. Their piece examines the physical as well as the spiritual death that many undocumented workers suffer once they cross the border. Gallery visitors will enter the exhibit through **Victor Orozco Ochoa's** "Mexico" composed of brightly colored Mexican flowers. One then "crosses" the border and enters **Liz Sisco and Michael Schnorr's** recreation of the Tijuana border, an ominous American freeway flanked by a K-Mart and mountains, and inhabited by border guards, surveillance cameras, menacing headlights and ghostly figures which allude to the harsh reality of the border and the rising death toll of people hit by cars as they try to cross the border/freeway.

The viewer then walks through **Robert Sanchez's** haunting room filled with monochromatic flowers and simulated canisters of the deadly pesticides field workers are subjected to. **Emily Hicks and Rocio Weiss'** altar to Saint Frida illustrates how Frida Kahlo has become a patron saint to women artists in Tijuana helping them to reveal the "invisible" matriarchal power in Mexico. Their



installation includes a flower cart, a mannequin of St. Frida, and a mannequin of the masked Wrestler Bride with projections of the Wrestler Bride's actual pilgrimage across the border.

**Guillermo Gomez-Pena's** installation includes eight commissioned black velvet paintings by a Tijuana velvet painter depicting current Mexican pop culture figures such as the shaman and specific wrestling heroes. Gomez-Pena has brought these characters to life in his poems and performances, and here he includes texts, also on black velvet, to further bring these characters to life. **Richard A. Lou's** hanging serapes are painted black except where skeleton figures dance across the fabric. Photo-text stories framed in lace tell of individual lives of those who have crossed the border. Beneath his serapes, surrounded by votive candles, are actual pieces abandoned by those who have tried to cross the border including shoes, sweaters, and letters from relatives in the U.S., some of which are mounted on a coffin.

**Bertha Jottar's** installation deals with the many women working in the fields who have died or had miscarriages as a result of their exposure to pesticides. A map of California composed of zip-lock bags containing dead flowers and the names of many of the women who have died rests above rear-projected scenes of workers in the fields and an explanatory text. Below this are rows of morgue drawers, some left open to reveal items belonging to the women.

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