

## **"FIVE PHOTOGRAPHERS: Contemporary Views of Mexican and Mexican-American Culture" exhibit at Mandeville Art Gallery**

**September 1, 1981**

A look at social, political and cultural issues of the Mexican and Mexican American heritage will be examined in "FIVE PHOTOGRAPHERS: Contemporary Views of Mexican and Mexican-American Culture," an exhibition opening September 15 in the Mandeville Art Gallery at the University of California, San Diego.

The exhibition features works by photographers Louis Carlos Bernal, Robert C. Buitron, Alberto Lau, Meridel Rubenstein and Richard Tichich. A public reception is scheduled from 5-8 p.m. Friday, September 25. The exhibition will be on display through October 9.

"We know about a culture through what the people in it collect and build," says Bernal, an Arizona photographer whose photo credits include Sunset Magazine and Popular Photography. Bernal will display his Benitez Suite photographs which along with his Chicano barrio photos have been recently earning him acclaim.

"Nearly all of the barrio photographs use available light, and all are vibrant with color," writes Tucson Magazine. Another magazine, Nuestro, states, "His luminous photos reveal a great deal about an unpretentious lifestyle and a delight in personal icons."

Buitron another emerging Mexican display photographs of his extended family with handwritten narratives and captions beneath the photos. This year he won first prize in the America's Photography contest, sponsored by the Organization of American States Fine Arts Gallery in Washington, D.C.

In 1980 Buitron received a B.F.A. in photography from Arizona State University. Since its inception in 1978, he has been a member of Movimiento Artístico del Rio Salado (MARS), a Hispanic-Indian artist organization which directs and operates a co-op visual arts gallery in Phoenix, Arizona.

A San Diego photography instructor, writer and architect, Lau will display photographs which examine the people and the architecture on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border. Lau, who earned a master's degree in architecture from Yale University, shows the cross-cultural exchange of ideas for the decor and design of interior and exterior architecture.

Lau is a full-time photography instructor at San Diego City College and has also taught at Grossmont College and the San Diego Community Colleges. Since 1976 he has been a photography and architecture critic for The Reader.

Rubenstein will exhibit color photographs of the "Lowriders" from the Santa Fe, New Mexico area, where she teaches photography at the College of Santa Fe. A native of Detroit, Michigan, Rubenstein received a privately funded grant in 1979 to document the customized cars of the area, a study which culminated in a photo/car exhibition-installation on Santa Fe's main plaza sponsored by the Museum of Fine Arts.

Tichich, program director of the Galveston Arts Center in Galveston, Texas, will exhibit more than 30 photos he took in the offices of Mexican mayors, called presidentes municipales.

"Icons often form natural frames around the presidentes, who are posed at their desks," writes Nancy W. Cook in Artweek magazine. Cook further highlighted the "standardization of form" of the series, where the mayors are seated at their desks surrounded by accoutrements such as a bullfight poster, world globe, or even laundry and hammock.

"At the other end of the power and population spectrum are those who have seemingly reinforced their position by surrounding themselves with up to seven telephones, Mexican banners, flags, murals, weapons and renderings of Benito Juarez, Father Hidalgo, President Portillo and the local softball team," states Cook.

Admission to the Mandeville Art Gallery is free. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday.

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