

Mandeville Gallery shows Dana Salvo's photographs of "Home Altars of Mexico" on November 2-December 15 at UCSD

August 22, 1991

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MANDEVILLE GALLERY SHOWS DANA SALVO'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF "HOME ALTARS OF MEXICO"

The first West Coast solo exhibition of large-scale color photographs by Boston artist Dana Salvo will be shown from Nov. 2--Dec. 15 in the Mandeville Gallery, at the University of California, San Diego, in a show titled "Nichos y Nacimientos: Home Altars of Mexico."

There will be a reception for the artist at the gallery from 6--8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 1.

Salvo, who won the 1987 Friends of Photography's Ruttenberg Fellowship for the "Home Altars" photographs, began the series in December 1986. At the time, he and his family had arrived in the remote central highlands of Mexico at the beginning of the Christmas holiday festivities. The Chamulan people were preparing their villages for the holiday celebrations by decorating their homes with the annual nacimientos (home altars).

Normally a retiring people, these descendants of the Mayans were charmed by Salvo's young daughters and artist wife, and the family was invited into the modest Mexican homes. The ensuing photographic sessions of the home altars became a collaborative effort between the residents and the photographer, with Salvo using a four-by-five camera with Polaroid materials, and offering suggestions about lighting and placement of objects.

Plastic materials played a major role in the altars' creation. Plastic figures of saints, plastic table cloths which perform as backdrops or altar covers, plastic flowers and receptacles are greatly in evidence in the photographs. In addition, the Chamulans used crepe paper, cloth, fruits, natural greenery for garlands, tinsel, votive candles and electric string lights to create their highly individual faith offerings.

Salvo will show 31 framed works, 21 of which are 23" by 29", and 10 larger works that are 38" by 46".

Salvo received his B.F.A and M.F.A. from the Massachusetts College of Art. He has had exhibitions at many art centers, including solo shows at the Neilsen Gallery in Boston and the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and at the Lisa Sette Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona. He has participated in group shows at the Boston Center for the Arts, the Musee Cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, and at San Francisco Camerawork, San Francisco, California.

His awards include a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, a Maine Photographic Workshop and Eastman Kodak Photographer's Work Production Grant, a Massproduction Award from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts & Humanities, and a 1990 Council for the International Exchange of Scholars' Fulbright Scholar Award.

Salvo's works are included in such collections as the Museum of Modern Art, New York City; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City; the Polaroid Corporation, Cambridge, Massachusetts; The Phoenix Arts Commission, Phoenix, Arizona, and the Bank of Boston, Boston, Massachusetts.

Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is free. There is a \$2 fee to park on the UCSD campus. For information about gallery exhibitions call 534-2864.

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