



VICTOR ZUBELDIA / Statement

Much of the process I go through in creating a painting begins with a question. Truly, my process of painting is the very process of questioning: I question the origins of human faith, the reason behind the dark side of the human spirit, and how we experience loneliness, hatred, sadness and choose to deal with our emotions. I do not paint to teach or preach my perception of the world and the human condition, but to question it and share with others my questions. I find more delight in the boundless mystery of human relationships, morals, science, and our universe than I do in finding finite answers. My paintings are visual reflections of a world characterized by nonsense and contradictions that don't have logical explanations.

Partially I think my questioning of the human experience is shaped by my history. Mexico, where I spent my first 25 years, has a knack for blending the sinister into everyday life with disturbing ease; average daily events somehow become characterized by tragedy or ridicule. The devotion to images of mutilated or tortured saints and baroque Christs made disturbingly realistic with human bones and hair is a perfect example of the Mexican infatuation with darkness. Revelry in misfortune or failure of those more successful than oneself; the dichotomy between the glorified image of the pre-Hispanic Indian and the aversion to the contemporary Indian; and the tortured lover who can only reveal emotion through drunken and desperate displays – these experiences of Mexican culture create together what I call the “collective shadow,” and are the thematic core of my work and the eternal source from which I find myself inspired to ask my questions. The collective shadow is certainly not unique to Mexico. It grows everywhere I live and travel and has become a great amalgamation of veiled elements inspire inquiry into the nature of human nature.

My work is almost exclusively figurative painting and drawing and more often than not narrative in character. I use images of the human figure, of animals and of landscapes. I very much enjoy the ritual of traditional painting techniques, including encaustic, oil, acrylic, tempera, gouache, and fresco. I feel that these methods are more easily absorbed and digested by a broad range of audiences and I find that they suit my personality and need for expression. I purposefully restrict the chromatic pallet in each piece to best accentuate light and shading, or better said, to emphasize the darkness of the painting. Solid but silent colors are also fundamental visual elements of my paintings.

Following the publication of my book, “la Llorona, the wailing woman,” a collection of paintings and drawings based on the Mexican legend and song, I began working on a new series of paintings in large format entitled “Los Imperfectos” or “Imperfections”. This series portrays individuals with physical or psychological abnormalities. Through these figures, which provoke unease and even cruelty, I explore the association between beauty and morality. These figures have been marginalized, both in contemporary life and historically through artistic depiction, principally because they do not conform to society's concept of beauty. With this series I ask my most recent question: what provokes our desperate search for beauty?...unattainable, ethereal and potentially destructive.

VICTOR ZUBELDIA / Resume

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BORN: Oaxaca, Mexico, 1971

EXHIBITIONS

SOLO SHOWS

- 2000** LA LLORONA, THE WAILING WOMAN, original paintings from the illustrated book "La Llorona, the wailing woman" by Víctor Zubeldía, The Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, California.
- 1998** IALMATE!, drawings, Centro Cultural Ricardo Flores Magón (*Ricardo Flores Magón Cultural Center*), Oaxaca, Mexico.
- SATURNO Y LA MELANCOLIA, drawings, Casa de la Cultura de Tehuantepec (*Tehuantepec Cultural Center*), Oaxaca, Mexico.

COLLECTIVE

- 2006** TODOS SOMOS MIGRANTES, *yo no crucé la frontera, la frontera me cruzó a mí*, The Museo de la Ciudad de México, Mexico City. Invitational.
- 2005** ULTIMO GRITO, *The lastest rage*, The Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, California. Invitational.
- 2003** DOS MOMENTOS, PLÁSTICA DE LA ZONA CENTRO, itinerant exhibition shown nationally in six states in Mexico. Sponsored by the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (*The National Board for Arts and Culture*). Invitational.
- 1999** 100 ARTISTAS OAXAQUEÑOS, Centro Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes de Oaxaca (*The National Center for Arts and Culture of Oaxaca*), Oaxaca, Mexico. Sponsored by the Government of the state of Oaxaca, the Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas (*Oaxacan Institute for the Arts*) and the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (*National Board for Arts and Culture*). Invitational.
- IMAGENES Y PALABRAS, paintings, drawing and installations. The Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, California. Invitational.
- ARTISTAS OAXAQUEÑOS, Rodolfo Morales Gallery, Ricardo Flores Magón Cultural Center, Oaxaca, Mexico. Invitational.
- 1997** XVII ENCUENTRO NACIONAL DE ARTE JOVEN 97 (*The XVII Annual National Competition and Showcase for Young Artists*), Pinacoteca de Monterrey (*Art Gallery Monterrey City*), and Carrillo Gil Museum, Mexico City. Sponsored by The Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (*National Institute of Fine Arts*) and the Government of the state of Zacatecas. Juried show.
- 1996** GENERACION 1991-1996, Gallery of the Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado "La Esmeralda" (*National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda"*), Mexico City.
- LOS HIJOS DE LA MAÑANA, paintings, sculptures and engravings, Gallery of the Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado "La Esmeralda" (*National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda"*), Mexico City.
- 1995** VIDA Y MUERTE, exhibition of large format paintings in the lobby of the Conservatorio Nacional de México, (*National Conservatory of Mexico*), Mexico City.
- FRAGMENTOS, Galería de la Capilla Británica (*Britannica Chapel Gallery*), Mexico City.
- BUSCANDO EXPERIENCIAS, Galería Casa de Bolsa Inverlat (*Inverlat Bank Gallery*), Mexico City.

- 1994 PINTORES OAXAQUEÑOS, Luis Elizondo Auditorium of the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (*Monterrey Technological Institute*), Monterrey City, Mexico. Sponsored by the Association of Oaxacan students. Invitational.

COMMISSIONS

- Artistic Stand of Oaxaca (Installation), Monterrey City, Mexico. Sponsored by the Association of Oaxacan students of the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (*Monterrey Technological Institute*), 1993, 1992, 1991.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (* reviews)

- *Julio César Sanchez García, "Víctor Zubeldía rinde homenaje a la Llorona", *El Noticias Newspaper*, cultural section, Oaxaca, Mexico, April 23 2003.
- * Itandehui Mendez, "La Llorona: el goce de la búsqueda a ningún lado", *El Imparcial Newspaper*, cultural section, Oaxaca, Mexico, April 21 2003.
- Walther Boelsterly, "Dos Momentos, plástica de la zona centro", *catalogue*. Mexico, 2002. Sponsored by the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (*The National Board for Arts and Culture*).
- Maria Fernanda Albarracin, "Víctor Zubeldía pinta a la tercera mujer en la vida de los mexicanos ", *Latino.com*, October 2000, San Francisco, California.
- Craig Chalquist, "The tears of la Llorona", www.tearsofallorona.com, 2003

PUBLISHED WORK

- "Cantera Verde", trimonthly Literature Review, No.42, *illustrations by Víctor Zubeldía*, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2004.
- "Nuestra Tierra", trimonthly Literature Review, No.7, *illustrations by Víctor Zubeldía*, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2004. Published by the Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas (*The Oaxacan Institute for the Arts*) and the Government of the State of Oaxaca.
- Víctor Zubeldía, "La Llorona, the Wailing Woman", *book of paintings and drawings*, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2003. Published by FOESCA (*The Oaxacan State Fund for Arts and Culture*) and the Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas (*Oaxacan Institute for the Arts*).
- Gerardo de la Torre, "Muertes de Aurora", *images on cover by Victor Zubeldia*, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2003. Published by Ediciones Aguas Profundas.
- "Castálida", Literature Review, no.22-23, *images on cover by Victor Zubeldía*, Mexico, 2003. Published by the Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura (*Mexican institute for Arts & Culture*).
- "American Passages: A Literary Survey", educational TV series including paintings from "la Llorona, the Wailing woman" by Víctor Zubeldía, USA, 2003. Produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting.
- "Tierra Adentro", Art Magazine, *illustrations by Víctor Zubeldía*, Mexico City, 2001. Published by CONACULTA (*The National Council for Arts & Culture*).
- "Cantera Verde", trimonthly Literature Review, No.31, *drawings by Víctor Zubeldía*; Oaxaca, Mexico, 2000.
- "Cantera Verde", trimonthly Literature Review, No.22, *drawings by Víctor Zubeldía*; Oaxaca, Mexico, 1996.
- Antonio Gonzalez Roser, "El hombre, como seguir a Cristo según San Francisco de Asís", *drawings by Victor Zubeldía*, Oaxaca, Mexico, 1989.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Recipient Artistic Grant by the George Sugarman Foundation, 2005
- Recipient Artistic Grant "Jóvenes Creadores 1999-2000" (*Young creators 1999-2000*) for "La Llorona, canción oaxaqueña", awarded by the Fondo Estatal para la Cultura y las Artes FOESCA (*Oaxacan State Fund for Arts and Culture*) Oaxaca, Mexico, 2000.
- Awarded honors for thesis entitled "Sombre painting: darkness as a visual vehicle", Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado "La Esmeralda" (*National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda"*), Mexico city, 1998.
- Selected artist in the category of painting, "XVII Encuentro Nacional de Arte Joven" (*The XVII Annual National Competition and Showcase for Young Artists*), Mexico City, 1997. Sponsored by The Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (*National Institute of Fine Arts*) and the Government of the state of Zacatecas.
- First Prize, Artistic Stand of Oaxaca, Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (*Monterrey the Technological Institute*), Monterrey City, México, 1993.

LECTURES / PUBLIC-SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- El Ultimo Grito / *The lastest rage*, roundtable, The Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, San Francisco, California, 2005.
- Book presentation, commentary by the artist, Manuel García Arte Contemporáneo Gallery, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2003.
- Interview, Asociación Oaxaqueña de Radio y Television Canal 9 (*Oaxacan Association of Radio and TV, Channel 9*), Oaxaca, Mexico, 1998.

EDUCATION

- Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado "La Esmeralda" (*National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving "La Esmeralda"*), Mexico City, 1991-1996. Bachelor of Fine Arts, graduated with honors.
- Centro de la Imagen "Alvarez Bravo" (*Photography School "Alvarez Bravo"*), Oaxaca, Mexico, 1997. Diploma in Black & White Photography.
- Laboratorio Multimedia del Centro Nacional de las Artes, (*Multimedia Laboratory of the National Center of Arts*), Diploma in 3-D Design, Mexico City, 1996.