

LINDA VALLEJO
ARTIST STATEMENT

National Museum of Mexican Art
Mujeres de Juarez Exhibition

Mexican movies and movie posters often depict the salacious, wonton woman being seduced, or sexually used and abused by the dashing, dominant male. The man watches intently as the woman displays her body, inviting him to pleasure. But the Women of Juarez are not movie stars and they did not invite “men to pleasure.” They are young working woman that were taken hostage, raped, and killed for perverse and angry pleasure.

Is it possible that media has a place in this grisly story of loss and pain? Can media – movies and movie posters – effect the way that men understand their relationship and responsibilities to women and family?

In these gruesome acts of violence, men have chosen to dominate, abuse, and kill hundreds of women. Over 500 violent deaths is proof that women are seen as nothing more than sexual victims and a way for men to experience a fantasy of seduction and aggression. Have the men of Juarez lost respect for women, mothers and daughters?

In “Amor” and “Cortesana” I have manipulated two Mexican movie posters to draw attention to the over-sexualized imagery of Mexican media, the loss of dignity for women, the manipulative nature of seduction, and the aggression and hatred inherent in rape.

My heart goes out to the Women of Juarez, their mothers and families for their losses, and to men who have perpetrated these terrible crimes.

The National Museum of Mexican Art

The *Women of Juarez/ Mujeres de Juárez* exhibit will educate the public about the femicide plaguing Ciudad Juárez and the larger social, economic and political issues that have allowed this level of violence to continue with impunity. The exhibition will include diverse art media such as: painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, installation, serigraphy, video and didactics to immerse visitors in the lives of the victims. The Museum has an excellent history of presenting sensitive and controversial topics in a way that is accessible and informative. The murders and abductions of the women of Juárez have evolved into a sensitive and pressing concern for Mexicans in the U.S. and Mexico in that it encompasses issues such as immigration, exploitation, violence against women and girls, drug trafficking, and globalization.

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