

Isabel Martinez,
Hermana Luna, 1994,
mixed media, 44" x 31".

ISABEL MARTINEZ

Social issues have caught my attention almost from the beginning of my career. Subject matter comes from my own experiences. This usually consists of depicting native people, immigrants, and the hardships of poor people in the urban landscape. In this series of work, I am attempting to demonstrate the results of the



injustices we all commit toward native people in society. I come from a contradictory society which is proud of its historical past and at the same time seemingly unaware of its mistreatment of its native people. We relegate them to impoverished, shabby and unhealthy conditions. We exploit and abuse them. They live with shame of their Indian heritage and often have no pride in their race. The cities are worse than the small towns. These people can be found begging in the street for mere existence.

The technique I have used is mixed media on paper; I apply different painting techniques, including acrylic, pastel, ink, watercolor, etc., sometimes with the inclusion of photography, paper and fabric. The brilliant colors are taken from the native people of my country. I also use fragmentation in the background and sometimes distorted figures, in order to represent the "brokenness" of the native lives.

I believe my artwork sets up a connection to the viewer in the same way that social issues make people more sensitive to human conditions. I want to create awareness about the problems of other human beings, focusing in this case on outcasts, such as native people, homeless people, immigrants and the poor.

Artweek Calendar

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