

**Linda Vallejo**  
**Giant Earrings 2008**  
**Artist Statement**

The inspiration for my giant earrings came both slowly and suddenly. I wanted to find a way to draw ideas from my life as a Mayan and Aztec dancer “danzante” in the 1980s. As I reminisced about this time of my life, I remembered that I had hand-beaded my own ceremonial gear and regalia. Beadwork is considered a meditation: the creation of concentric circles and rows, even the counting of the beads, reflect the symbols inherent in indigenous belief systems and philosophy.

Around this time, I visited MOMA in New York and saw Claes Oldenburg’s oversized pop sculptures. I was captivated by the “stitching and sewing” inherent in the work as well as their enormous size and sense of humor.

At that moment I realized I could continue my “danzante” bead making skill set by marrying it with the idea of the “super-sized.” I made the decision to combine indigenous traditional beadwork with a contemporary conceptual outcome to create oversized “Xicana pop sculptures” of my own.

To carry the myth even further I imagine that the giant earrings would be worn by a colossus indigenous goddess. I wonder what god used Oldenburg’s giant ice pack or telephone or ate that huge hamburger!