

ARTFORUM

"HOME—So Different, So Appealing"

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (LACMA)

5905 Wilshire Boulevard

June 11–October 15

And just like that, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is upon us. If this is the initiative's opening salvo, then the portents are good. Organized by Chon A. Noriega, Mari Carmen Ramírez, and Pilar Tompkins Rivas, this exhibition represents the efforts of three giants within the field of Latin American and Chicana/Latina curatorial practice.

The show excels in presenting intricate, and sometimes cumbersome, room-size installations. Luis Camnitzer's *Living Room*, 1968, articulates a concrete poetry of domesticity, with vinyl stickers featuring words around the room where furniture and household objects would otherwise take up space. Thus, one can look out the "WINDOW" at a "TREE" or "FLOWER." Amalia Mesa-Bains's *Transparent Migrations*, 2001, is all mirror, glass, and crystal, with the exception of appropriated images of nineteenth-century *casta* paintings—Spanish colonial-era depictions of different combinations of mixed-race parents and their potential offspring—which appear to be deeply inset into a mirrored armoire. Nearby, Pepón Osorio's virtuosic *Badge of Honor*, 1995, realizes two dissimilar spaces: a stark prison cell belonging to a father, and the exuberant bedroom of his teenage son. Two videos stage a conversation between the pair, yet a dividing wall keeps them apart.

Worth mention, also, are the videos by Raphael Montañez Ortiz. For his video *Cowboy and "Indian" Film*, 1958, Ortiz, according to Noriega's catalogue essay, "chopped to pieces with a Tomahawk" a copy of the 1950 Western film *Winchester '73*. The fragments were then spliced together to the sounds of the artist performing what is only generically described in the video's opening intertitle as a "Native American War Cry." So often missing from histories of underground filmmaking, the artist's works presciently bring together key artistic strategies that later in the twentieth century became de rigueur: appropriation, deconstruction, and the politics of identity in representation.



Pepón Osorio, *Badge of Honor*, 1995, two digital videos, black-and-white, sound, 19 minutes 25 seconds, prison bars, beds, steel toilet and sink, fabric, cigarette boxes, photographs, shoes, dresser, cabinet, nightstands, lamps, baseball cards, posters, reflective floor tile, trophies, air fresheners, clothes hamper, television monitor with sound system, basketballs, mountain bike, computer, plastic, watches, rings, black-and-white photographs, dimensions variable. Installation view.

— Andy Campbell

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