

Chicano Studies Research Center Earns Awards for Two Books

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LAURA AGUILAR SHOW AND TELL



UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center

Two books from the [UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center](#) have recently won honors from the Independent Publisher Book Awards, which recognize the year's best independently published titles from around the world.

"Judith F. Baca," by Anna Indych-López, was awarded the silver prize in the group's multicultural non-fiction adult category. The book is the first published retrospective of [Baca](#), a UCLA professor of Chicana and Chicano

studies and also world arts and cultures, who is one of the world's few female large-scale muralists. A revered community activist, Baca is also locally renowned as the artist who created "The Great Wall of Los Angeles," a vibrant 7,740-foot mural in Los Angeles that presents an alternative history of California — one that focuses on the contributions of marginalized and underrepresented communities. The mural is emblematic of Baca's pioneering approach to creating public art, a process in which members of the community are essential contributors to the conception and realization of the work.

Indych-López explores Baca's oeuvre, from early murals painted with local gang members in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles to more recently commissioned works. She takes an in-depth look at the Great Wall and considers the artist's ongoing work with the Social and Public Art Resource Center in Venice, California, a nonprofit group founded by Baca in 1976. Throughout, Indych-López assesses what she calls Baca's "public art of contestation" and discusses how ideas of collaboration and authorship and issues of race, class and gender have influenced and sustained Baca's art practice.

The other book to earn an award was "Laura Aguilar: Show and Tell," which was edited by Rebecca Epstein, the Chicano Studies Research Center's senior officer for communications, academic programs and development. Epstein's book won the gold prize in the West-Pacific Best Regional Nonfiction category.

The book surveys the career of Aguilar, a Chicana photographer who is most widely known for black-and-white nude self-portraits that are frank and self-assertive, yet deeply sensitive and poetic. In photographs that are frequently political as well as personal, Aguilar offers candid portrayals of herself, her friends and family, and her Chicano/Latino and LGBT communities. Ten essays trace the development of Aguilar's work during three decades, exploring her photography in terms of its social, historical, and art historical contexts.

The catalog accompanies "Laura Aguilar: Show and Tell," a retrospective of her work that showed at the Vincent Price Art Museum at East Los Angeles College in fall 2017 as part of the Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA series. The exhibition was a collaboration between the museum and the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, which houses the artist's papers and photographs

The awards are intended to bring increased recognition to the thousands of exemplary independent, university and self-published titles published each year.