

Camen Lomas Garza's eloquent etchings, lithographs, and gouache paintings depict primal images of the rural environment and communal cultural experience of Mexican descended people in the United States.

In an introspective and personal language, she describes the customs, traditions, and way of life of her Texan - Mexican heritage.

By 1972, Lomas Garza had evolved her distinctive monitos, paintings of stylized figures in culturally specific social environments.

She transposes images and scenes from her past, combining cultural documentation with invention in an interplay of fact and fiction.

Through selection, emphasis, and creation, these monitos delineate facets of experience, expressing deeper truths.

Oral tradition is a mainstay of Chicano culture.

In both urban and rural communities, a rich and varied repertoire of ballads, tales, and poetic forms is preserved in memory-and passed from generation to generation.

Lomas Garza's monitos function as an oral tradition in visual form.

Her unique art of storytelling employs iconographic elements to create a concentrated narration.

Visual episodes within an unfolding epic tale of cultural regeneration, the monitos keep alive the customs and daily practices that give meaning and coherence to Chicano identity.

Their basic aim is to delight and instruct.

For those outside Chicano culture, the precise and minutely detailed monitos provide a glimpse into the rich and vibrant lifestyle of the largest Spanish speaking cultural group within United States society.

Although her art has an innocent earnestness and folkloric affinity.

Lomas Garza's expression is neither naive nor instinctive.

The artist is highly trained academically, but has chosen to remain independent of dominant artistic trends in order to work toward a private aesthetic response to social concerns.

While her work does not posit an overt political statement.

it originates from a desire to respond to the contemporary situation of Mexican Americans by expressing positive images of their culture.