



Creative Collectives: Chicana Painters Working in Community

Maria Ochoa

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A compelling blend of art history, social analysis, and personal testimony, *Creative Collectives* presents a new paradigm for understanding Chicana/o studies. By following the artistic and ideological journeys of two groups of northern California Chicana artists, María Ochoa argues that the women involved in these collectives created complex images whose powerful visual social commentary sprang from the daily experiences of their lives.

Ochoa's artistic narrative first focuses on Mujeres Muralistas, a pathbreaking San Francisco group of mural painters organized in the early 1970s at the height of the Chicana/o Movement. The story then turns its attention to Co-Madres Artistas, a group of artists who came together in the 1990s after spending decades tending their families, becoming successful in their careers, and launching key Chicana/o cultural institutions in the Sacramento Valley. Ochoa tells the stories of the individual members of these collectives to show how they combined art and activism.

Through an innovative application of oral history interviews, a fascinating compilation of individual and collective stories emerges. *Creative Collectives* is notable for its skillful weaving of personal recollections, representational analysis of mural and easel painting, and social movement narration.

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