



Tell Him by Raquel Hinojosa

SURFACE TREATMENT

What: **“Women Among Women”**
Where: The Weslaco Museum for Local History and Cultural Art, 500 S. Texas Boulevard, Weslaco
When: Through August 2018
Hours: 10am-4pm Tues-Sat
Contact: (956) 968-9142
Regular admission applies.

The Face of Art

Stylized portraits of women grace the walls of the Weslaco Museum art gallery.

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

BY NANCY MOYER

“Women Among Women” riffs off the female psyche. Throughout the month of August, The Weslaco Museum will host this collaborative exhibit by regional artists Raquel Hinojosa and Thelma Lugo. The two-woman exhibition of acrylic paintings and mixed media works has a breezy feeling as it touches on the transient concerns and matters of its subjects. “Some are self-portraits, and some are portraits of other women,” explained Sara Walker, Executive Director of the Museum. The exhibit evolved from a conversation about how others think and shows how each artist approaches her work, “Women Among Women” is a collection of portraits of women done by women. “These artists have been friends for a long time and it was an excellent time for them to come into the gallery with their exhibit,” added Walker.

The works included in this show are all stylized faces of women, relying on color and line to express their primary characteristics. There is a feeling of the outer persona in the images

created by Lugo and the repetition of facial shapes and features leads us to believe that her images are simplistic. They are not. Lugo offers a sensitive and imaginative use of her media, favoring frontal depictions that echo the compositions of news media head-shots, featuring bold and sometimes harsh linear descriptions of her women's facial features. Distinctions among her figures occur with brash bravados of hair style and aesthetic subtleties. In "The Girl", translucent layers suggest a personality depth in contrast to the superficial false eyelashes and artificially colored cheeks. Lugo's paintings brim over with visual complexities that seem to multiply from painting to painting.

Hinojosa goes beyond the visual aspect, delving into the minds of her women with simple yet uncanny manifestations of feminine thoughts and attitudes. There is a notable Modernist aesthetic to these images in the shapes that Hinojosa has often chosen. Like her other works, "You Be in My Heart" utilizes smoothly flowing lines reminiscent of Modigliani in his portraits of women, but it is the communication of feeling that captures us with Hinojosa's work. The woman's earnest statement is palpable - we feel it. The same holds true for her other works. Her acrylic painting, "I Still Hope", reveals a diminishing, yet still enduring emotion, while "Tell Him" expresses an ultimate urgency. "Tell Him" not only superbly relays a reaction being compellingly released, but the composition itself is exquisitely complex in its brushstrokes and purposeful use of color. Both artists enjoy a comfortable relationship with their media; their brush strokes are confident and portray their subjects with a fluid easiness and grace that ultimately assures each work.

Because of the overall stylistic characteristics and how they occur, "Women Among Women" can almost be viewed as an installation representing a generic woman - an inner and outer self who ultimately enfolds the viewer and becomes a close friend sharing personal feelings and attitudes. Lugo's portraits are likable; their decorative presence creates a non-threatening environment where one may explore the formal qualities on the canvas. Hinojosa's portraits are accessible, but subject to mood swings. Lugo caresses the experiential impression, while Hinojosa engages psychological undercurrent.

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