



The presence of women in the lowrider phenomenon

La presencia de la mujer en el fenómeno lowrider

Mirna Ajo

LEAD AND CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

RESEARCH - METHODOLOGY - WRITING

Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez

ajomirna2018@gmail.com

Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico

ORCID: 0000-0003-1749-6578

Received: November 29th, 2022

Approved: March 20th, 2023

Posted: April 1st, 2023

Abstract

On the border between Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and El Paso, Texas, there was a very particular relationship between individuals and modified objects known as lowrider, which dates back to approximately 1930, although then it was produced by hand. It is about the tradition of transforming mechanics, hydraulics, structure, upholstery and aesthetics of automobiles, while respecting their original parts. Lowriders belong to the Chicano community and share a passion for this type of vehicle, which is why they organize celebrations between car clubs to exhibit them already transformed. Men outnumber women lowriders, who have been around since the start of this tradition, even starting their own independent clubs in the mid-1970s. In an ethnographic and participant observation exercise, testimonials were collected from some lowriders, who actively participate in the different transformation processes, from ventilation and upholstery to the design and painting process, who expressed their desire for individual recognition and gender as it is an important part of this lifestyle. This academic exercise allowed us to discover that the presence of women has been a pillar in this activity, and that they are looking for their own place in the lowrider world.

Keywords: women, lowrider, lifestyle, transformed object, nostalgia

Resumen

En la frontera entre Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, y El Paso, Texas, se daba una relación muy particular entre individuos y objetos modificados conocida como lowrider, la cual se remonta aproximadamente a 1930, aunque entonces se daba de manera artesanal. Se trata de la tradición de transformar mecánica, hidráulica, estructura, tapicería y estética de los automóviles, aunque respetando sus partes originales. Los lowriders pertenecen a la comunidad chicana y comparten la pasión por este tipo de vehículos, de ahí que organicen celebraciones entre clubes de autos para exhibirlos ya transformados. Los varones superan en cantidad a las mujeres lowrider, quienes han estado presentes desde el inicio de esta tradición, e incluso, a mediados de los años setenta, comenzaron sus propios clubes independientes. En un ejercicio de corte etnográfico y de observación participante se recogieron testimonios de algunas lowriders, quienes participan de forma activa en los distintos procesos de transformación, desde la ventilación y el tapizado hasta el proceso de diseño y pintura, quienes expresaron su deseo de reconocimiento individual y de género al ser parte importante de este estilo de vida. Este ejercicio académico permitió descubrir que la presencia de las mujeres ha sido un pilar en esta actividad, y que buscan un lugar propio en el mundo lowrider.

Palabras clave: mujeres, lowrider, estilo de vida, objeto transformado, nostalgia

◆ Introduction

The tradition of transforming objects such as cars is known as lowrider, although over the years bicycles and motorcycles have joined these modifications. The taste for this type of object arose in the thirties of the 20th century with the settlement of the Chicano community (Mexican migrants) in California. Several testimonies locate the genesis of this pastime in Ciudad Juárez around the same dates, although in an artisanal way, since the height of the cars was lowered with sandbags; Being until the fifties, in California, when the vehicles were modified by incorporating hydraulic technology in the context of World War II.

Lowriding is common on the Tijuana borders; Lower California; San Diego, California; Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and El Paso, Texas. It is a practice that has spread to other states of both the American Union and the Republic of Mexico, as well as other countries.

The cars that fall within this tradition are from the year 1990 to previous decades, especially from the Chevrolet brand, with the Impala model as one of the favorites. Since the first artisan modifications, in an activity known as "knocking down" the car, groups such as the "pachucos" have been involved in the exercise of this rolling tradition. Subsequently, in the context of civil rights, it was attributed to a group of young Chicano transgressors called "cholos", who made the taste for these cars cross-border (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Lowriders in Japan.
Source: Garrett, 2015.

Finally, the lowriders are a group of Chicanos who share roots with the pachucos and the cholos. And, although the popularity of this culture established itself as part of a Chicano tradition in the 1950s, it has continued to be accepted today and has spread to other parts of the world.

A lowrider can be a converted object/vehicle, as well as its owner. The transformation of automobiles in this culture occurs from the mechanical part, the aesthetics, the hydraulics, as well as the structural and upholstery. The ornamentation and coloring of the transformed objects of this type, as well as the symbology, refer to a specific culture and identity, studied by Valenzuela Arce (1988, 2014) and Del Monte Madrigal (2012, 2014), among others.

For some, these objects are considered as "canvas" or art canvases, or as "rasquache art", as indicated by Ybarra-Frausto (1989). For those who consider themselves lowriders, this activity is a tradition in which they can pour out their philosophy, culture, specific tastes, as well as their personal testimonials. The lowrider is considered a lifestyle, which is celebrated through exhibitions/exhibitions, walks/cruising and parades/parades (see figure 2).



Figure 2. "Lincoln park day" celebration, September 18, 2022.
Source: Kisselpaso, 2022.

Chicana women have been a part of this rolling tradition since its inception, although in a small percentage, compared to men. In the course of lowrider history, they were only considered as companions of the men in regards to this tradition, since very few of them were drivers or owners of vehicles.

However, when assuming female roles as pachucas and/or cholos, they also had to bear negative stereotypes. Chicana lowrider women have had to build themselves with dignity and pride, taking elements of cultural richness and identity from their own community and strengthening them with lowrider experiences and their lifestyle, whether as protagonists, companions, wives, friends, members of family or spectators.

The purpose of this research is to show that lowrider women are an important pillar in the rolling tradition, since their active participation in this tradition, as well as the visual elements of their cultural identity, have to do with an aesthetic and material manifestation that endorse their presence in a world considered for men and transformed vehicles.

The lowrider and the academy

The lowrider phenomenon has been of academic interest, especially in the area of social sciences. Tatum (2011) mentions it as a cultural, political, and social phenomenon in Chicano culture; Plascencia (1983) indicates that it is a social phenomenon from a historical context and Del Monte Madrigal (2012, 2014) considers it part of current urban culture, names it a cross-border phenomenon and mentions that its sympathizers resort to the concept of nostalgia, since its origins date back to the 1940s and 1950s. For their part, López and Reyes (2017) add that the bases of lowrider are found in the fifties with the organization of the first clubs in California, and they reflect on the beginning and present of the pastime, naming it an international phenomenon.

On the other hand, it was found that lowrider women were mentioned by López and Reyes (2017), who talk about the first women's lowrider clubs, in San Diego, California; and also by other authors in some journalistic reports that mention the participation of women in exhibitions or parades; however, there are few who speak of lowrider leadership or empowerment; Among them, Licón (2017) stands out, who describes the negative stereotypes against pachucos and cholos (including women) since racial persecution in the forties, and López (2019), who interviews lowrider women and weaves their stories to talk about the empowerment. Therefore, for the interest of this work, concepts about Chicano female empowerment (Anzaldúa, 1999), about political position and mestizo heritage (Cacheux, 2003), about resistance and distancing from patriarchal patterns (Trinidad, 2014) and about identity were addressed. Chicana (Rodriguez, 2001).

On the other hand, the discipline of design studies the relationship between individual and object. In this case, the car as an object has been studied from McLuhan (1996) as an extension of the individual to Norman (2012), who analyzes it from the point of view of emotional design, not so much because when the object is created it has value, but because the emotional relationship is transferred from the individual to the object, adding sentimental, identity and cultural values to it. In this sense, the community values the object from nostalgia, not because of the desire to possess it, but because of the reappropriation and personalization it undergoes without losing its main objective: being a means of transportation. For his part, Bürdek (2002) talks about the individual's perception of objects and their functions, which have to do with communicating symbols, which are present in the visual aesthetics of lowriders. In addition, there is the transfer that the lowrider individual makes by

embodying those identity elements in an act of nostalgic, emotional and symbolic self-appropriation.

For this reason, the testimonies of Chicana women in lowrider are important, since their experience and active participation has helped them earn a place in an activity considered masculine and that, despite the incipient public recognition, has allowed them to empower themselves, making elements of identity visible, culture and nostalgia present in the visual, material and aesthetic manifestation of which they are part, which could be an example for other women who are interested in this lifestyle and who have stopped thinking that it is an activity only for men.

Chicanos and lowriders

As mentioned above, the lowrider is a manifestation of identity. Those who are sympathetic to this type of car—known as lowriders, carts cholos, ranflas, and pachuco car, among other names—may join car clubs or act independently.

One of the characteristics of these vehicles is that they drive slowly and almost to the ground, which is called low and slow. Del Monte Madrigal (2012) mentions that: "Before being called a 'lowrider', the 'short' car was known as Low and Slow or 'Pachuco car'" (p. 20).

The origins of this hobby lie in the Chicano culture, made up of Mexican-Americans, current descendants of the first Mexican migrant workers who settled in California, United States, in the 1930s. Subsequently, they made a cross-border journey around the 1970s, settling on both sides of the border, until today when, regardless of their place of residence, there is individual self-recognition of Chicanos, that is, they have adopted an identity style.

The participation of women in this activity has grown considerably (see figure 3). In this regard, the leader of the lowriders association mentions that: "there are few women [...] directly involved with the cars, [...] there are other women [...] wives, [...] daughters, who are proud and help and are part [...] before one thought that [lowriding] was a thing for the boys who hung out with the cars and not..." (H. González, personal communication, September 18th, 2022).



Figure 3. *Pachucos and cholos.*
Source: *Personal photographic record, 2022.*

The Chicano community recognizes three identity archetypes: the pachucos, the cholos, and the lowriders. The pachucos were on the border of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and in El Paso, Texas, and they modified the cars in an artisanal way by placing sandbags to lower them, this as a form of group identity. Later, already as migrants around the Second World War, the transformation was carried out by implementing hydraulic technology to "knock them down".

Regarding identity, the "Pachucos' [were] [...] the first cultural expressions of Mexicans in the United States [...] promoted by young people who crossed into the North American country from Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua and which served to name a style of being and dressing like [...] Mexicans abroad [...]" (Hernández, 2022, para. 3). As a chronological consequence, the cholos later added murals about testimonies of their lives in the converted cars, and made this activity cross-border. "[...] the cholos appear in the cross-border daily environment, retaking codes [...] as a resource of social resistance for the pachuco and a popular-Mexican symbology, reappropriated [...] in the political-cultural resistance movement during the Chicano movement [...] in the United States" (Valenzuela Arce, Nateras Domínguez and Reguillo Cruz, 2007, p. 16).

Transforming cars into the lowrider is considered a hobby that has to do with Chicano identity. The individuals who carry it out may or may not consider themselves cholos, but they recognize the pachuco as an emblematic and nostalgic figure. There is also the female version of these three archetypes: "The Mexican American woman zoot suiter, or pachuca, [...] she donned the same style of zoot suit that her male counterparts wore" [La mujer México americana zoot suiter, or Pachuca [...] adopted the same style as their male counterparts] (Ramírez, 2009, p. 62, own translation). The lowrider identification logo is the fusion of

both archetypes: the cholo and the pachuco (see figure 4). It stands out that the mixed clubs include both logos on their blanket.



Figure 4. Mixed car Club.
Source: Personal photographic record, 2023.

The expression of lowrider identity

The lowrider aesthetic and visual manifestation is represented above all in a modified car especially in public spaces. The visual and identity elements are reflected as murals on the vehicles through religious (see figure 5), patriotic and pre-Hispanic iconographies, among many others. “It was also common to see [...] driving their low rider “ranflas” (cars modified to lower them as much as possible to the level of the pavement), adoring the “jefita” (Virgin of Guadalupe) or the crucified Christ or in full Calvary” (Monárrez, 2017, p.87).



Figure 5. *The Guardian Angel*. Religious detail on the seat of a bicycle owned by a teenager, dedicated in honor of his cancer-surviving aunt.
Source: Personal photographic record, 2023.

The visual manifestation of the lowrider is full of nostalgic and colorful symbols and is found in the celebration of massive events and holidays for Mexican culture, such as May 5, September 16, October 12, among others. As mentioned, they have three types of public expression: parade/parade, exhibitions/exhibits, and walks or cruises/cruising. One of the most striking is the ride: “Lowriders are cars that express identities—social, cultural, aesthetic. With their extended bodies and low to the road roll, the cars have been a vehicle of choice for cruising, a popular

pastime in many American communities since the mid-twentieth century. . With their bodies extended and low to roll, the cars have been a vehicle of choice for cruisers, a popular pastime in many American communities since the mid-20th century] (National Museum of African American History & Culture, n.d., para. 1, own translation). Those who join this mobile culture actively participate in the benefit of their community, for this they carry out fundraising in order to solve emerging needs, such as having medicines, paying for hospitals or funerals, collecting toys, etc., as Ortega (2020) refers: “Especially in the context of smaller, local-based car shows, lowriders focus on organizing these car shows to benefit the community. This model was adapted [...] in the late 1950s to benefit orphanages and children's hospitals” [“Especially in the context of small car shows, lowriders focus on organizing them for the benefit of the community. This model was adapted in the late 1950s for the benefit of orphanages and children's hospitals”] (p. 109, own translation).

However, despite the fact that lowriders perform positive actions, they still carry negative stereotypes, such as being cholo, gang member, and delinquent. In this regard, Cano (2015) mentions that this culture re-appropriates public space and that the aesthetic transformation of cars depicted with art murals is a way of distancing oneself from the stigma of the low-life cholo: “Lowriders are not a manifestation of gang violence, but a form of art that allows Chicanos to feel proud of who they are and where they come from despite their experiences with historical and current inequalities and segregation” Chicanos feel proud of who they are and where they come from, despite their historical experiences of segregation and inequality”] (p. 35, own translation).

In this sense, Chicana women who assume the role of chola and low-rider also experience discriminatory stigmas. Rebeca Castillo mentions: “Yeah, most definitely first of all being a female in lowriding that in itself a lot of people look down, people don't know who you are they're easily going to discriminate against you” [“Yes, definitely, being a low-rider woman is suffering discrimination by people because they don't know who you are”] (R. Castillo, personal communication, September 18 of 2022, own translation).

The chicana

Women in Chicano culture have been a pillar in their community, as they have supported their families in terms of religion, culture, and homeland abroad, with identity values founded on their Mexican heritage. The Chicana's public presence occurs in the context of civil rights; their requests are part of a female empowerment process. In this regard, Gloria Anzaldúa considers that the Chicana woman: “She becomes a molder of her soul. According to the conception that she has of herself” (Anzaldúa in Cacheux, 2003, p. 51).

The lowrider woman

Chicana and lowrider women have had to live in resistance and defense from the private sphere, since the public space was exclusively for men: “The Chicano movement of the sixties and seventies required the reinvention of symbolic identity referents such as [...] cultural resistance [...] resorting to new symbolic-cultural bases to resize their culture and hoisting ethnic and class symbols [...] in an intense cultural activity” (Valenzuela Arce, 2014, p. 28). The lowrider has transferred her own testimonies of struggle, history and nostalgia to the vehicles: “the symbols that [...] they adopted were associated with Mexico [...] in the first place, the Virgin of Guadalupe, who went from being a religious symbol to becoming a cultural and political symbol”, as well as the nostalgic idealization of the indigenous past, hence the presence of “other symbols of the indigenous culture of central Mexico such as the Aztec calendar [...] the recovery of the myth of Aztlán, as the place of origin of the Mexican people and metaphor [...] from which the movement is unleashed” (Rodríguez, 2001, p. 51). Nowadays the preservation of the culture in the cars of the lowrider chicanas has been growing.

Lowrider women empowerment

Earning a place in the lowrider world has not been easy, since around the seventies the car clubs did not accept women. Faced with this situation, a group of them formed their own (see figure 6): “Upon discovering that access into these clubs was prohibited to women, Chris took matters into her own hands and in 1979 started her own car club. The Ladies Pride Car Club” [“Chris discovered that women were banned from clubs, so she took matters into her own hands and started her own club in 1979, the Ladies Pride Car Club”] (López and Reyes, 2017, p. 97, own translation). Taking a steering wheel in her hands was then a form of female empowerment: “As women who possessed their own cars with a distinctive look and style, they were a symbol of independence” that distinguished them as a symbol of independence”] (López and Reyes, 2017, p. 99, own translation).



Figure 6. *Women's car club.*
Source: Lopez and Reyes, 2017.

The women learned to transform the cars and procured their own economy: "women who were striving to better themselves by holding down jobs and attending college and not having to depend on their parents or boyfriends" parents or boyfriends by keeping their jobs and attending the University"] (López and Reyes, 2017, p. 99, own translation).

But in addition to the men's and women's groups, there are mixed lowrider clubs, such as the Juárez Car Club, originally from Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, which has chapters in different cities, such as Kansas City. These are concessions with new members and their vehicles (see figure 7).



Figure 7. Juárez Car Club, chapter Kansas City.
Source: Juárez Car Club Kansas, s. f.

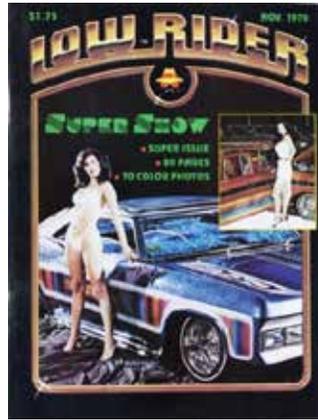
Ybarra-Frausto (1989) mentions that: "Rasquachismo is neither an idea nor a style but more of an attitude or a taste" ["Rasquachismo more than an idea or a style is rather a taste or attitude"] (p. 5, own translation). For lowrider women, it is a pleasure in which they record their own history, values and roots, through an outfitted vehicle that becomes a rolling canvas, either because it shows murals of revolutionary heroes or mythical figures, such as Aztlán, the indigenous or Chicana woman who next to the car makes a claim for her civil rights (see figure 8). Cacheux (2003) says in this regard: "The indigenous in the new *mestiza* is a political position that alludes to the history of resistance of Indian women" (p. 50).



Figure 8. *La Adelita and the protest.*
 Source: *Mujer chicana*, s. f.

Since the fight for civil rights, Chicana women have gone through a process of patriarchal decolonization: "Promoting positive images of Chicanas, organizing leadership, increasing their credibility, and gaining respect from the community" (Cacheux, 2003, p. fifty). López (2019) mentions that: "According to Elsa Castillo [...] 'Men could repetitively ask us, "Hey, is that dad's car or your boyfriend's car" and we would proudly proclaim: "No, this is my car. I own it!"» These women took great pride in their cars" [According to Elsa Castillo [...] 'Men continually ask us, "Hey, is that your father's or your boyfriend's car?" and we proudly answer: «No, this is my car. I own it!" These women feel great pride in their cars.'"] (p. 99, own translation).

One of the obstacles that the lowrider woman has had to face is the sexual objectification that she has had to face and that minimizes the importance of her cultural struggle. The companion image of a lowrider driver changed to that of a sex symbol or exuberant model when appearing on the covers of *Lowrider Magazine* (see figure 9). "The publication had problems at first. Growth was slow, but sales picked up when *Lowrider* began featuring bikini-clad models on its covers in late 1979 [...] they were part of the magazine's appeal" (Pineda, 2019, para. 14). As can be seen in the image of the *Lowrider* magazine of the year 1979, the feminine visual appeal accompanied the different vehicles presented there (see figure 10). You can also see the mural of a car with women in provocative poses.



Figures 9 and 10. Cover 1979 and mural in a low & slow.
Source: Lowrider Magazine, 1979.

The lowrider is considered a family activity, in which women are empowered by being an important pillar in many areas and by having the resources to acquire and transform a vehicle they own. In this regard, the lowrider activist from the Chicano Museum in San Diego, California, mentions the valuable work of women: “since the seventies in San Diego, women have participated in clubs. The role of women has changed over time, it is very important to give them credit [...] since their participation is important [...] women are imposing their own identity” (R. Reyes, personal communication, September 18th, 2022).

◆ Bond with objects

The relationship between a person and their car has been studied by McLuhan (1996), who says that the car becomes an extension of the individual: “The basic and obvious fact of the car is that [...] it is an extension of the man who turns his driver into a superman” (p. 231); he also says that the standardization of the automobile made them accessible: “The car did its job of social leveling” (p. 231). However, the Mexican-American community reappropriated it and adapted it to its own rules.

In addition, the emotional object is addressed by Donald Norman (2012), who speaks of the individual's perception of the objects with which he empathizes by saying: “We interpret and externalize emotions” (p. 162). The subject appropriates the object and makes it unique by endowing it with emotional and identity values: “Human beings have a predisposition [...] to project emotions and beliefs that are human onto anything [...] If everything works the way it must, fulfilling the expectations placed, the affective system reacts positively providing pleasure to the user” (Norman, 2012, p. 163). In addition, “we attribute our pleasure to the product, which is why we praise it and, in extreme cases, end up becoming emotionally attached to it” (Norman, 2012, p. 163).

Affective bonds are established by weaving history between the object and the individual. In the case study, lowrider vehicles are inherited in the family, since their transformation can take decades. Thus, they consider themselves part of the family, as illustrated in figure 11, which shows a working-class family from Juarez with their vehicle, in 1962; in the center you can see Mrs. Montaña, owner of the classic.



Figure 11. A family drive.
Source: Image provided by the Montaña family.

Methodology In accordance with the above, it can be understood that the approach from which this work is based is based on the relationship of a female person with mobile objects, which are identified with the lowrider lifestyle and, consequently, are part of Chicano culture. The central theme, therefore, is inscribed in cultural studies and design. Due to the aforementioned, a qualitative approach was structured with an inclination towards an ethnographic investigation through participant observation of women involved in this rolling culture, whose testimonies revealed the relationship with a reappropriated and modified design object, and allowed observe elements that are inscribed in the visual aesthetic both in said mobile objects and in their own bodies.

On the other hand, the open interview was used, which allowed to identify cultural, philosophical and testimonial elements about the attraction towards this type of objects and the choice of that particular lifestyle. This document was strengthened with the testimonies of lowrider women as protagonists and active participants in the modification of the object, as well as in other areas of the lowrider phenomenon, which translate into friendship ties, or membership in modified car

clubs, supporting to the family as the wife, domestic partner or daughter of a lowrider owner, or, in some cases, as an independent car owner.

The context in which the open interviews were carried out was on September 18, 2022, during one of the massive celebrations of lowrider culture: "Lincoln Park Day", in Lincoln Park in El Paso, Texas. The interviews were carried out at different moments and spaces of the event in order to observe the relationship between women lowriders and the objects transformed into a public exhibition space and to know first-hand what elements were important to them in this culture.

It is worth mentioning that living in a border area allows mobility between both sides, so the participants in these events travel to support the community on one side or the other.

The interviews were open and informal, since, without the rigidity of the structure, empathy between the interviewer and the interviewee was allowed, as well as the fluidity of the required information.

The interviews were recorded and photographs were also taken. Interviewees agreed to share their experiences, even providing their own photos for inclusion in this document. As mentioned above, although women who are in the lowrider lifestyle participate in many ways, only a very few of them own lowrider cars, bikes and motorcycles that they can invest their time and money to modify in different areas. . Therefore, in the preparation of this article, only the voices of six women who have been protagonists of their own history in the low & slow rolling lifestyle were taken into account.

Testimonies Among the celebrations of the Chicano and lowrider community are May 5, "César Chávez day" and "Lincoln Park day". These events are held in open spaces to expose the vehicles, since they are awarded in different categories. The work on this type of vehicle, transformations and restoration in its original parts is recognized by this community. One of the spaces considered Chicanos is the "Lincoln park" or the "Chicano park", in the city of El Paso, Texas, located in a neighborhood with Mexican roots very close to the river bank (natural division of this border); It is surrounded by 50 columns that support the free way that leads to Ciudad Juárez, so the park is below it. The columns are decorated with murals by local artists, highlighting the work of the painter Gabriel Gaytán. "It serves as a gathering space for lowrider car clubs, city sports and family picnics" (El Paso Museum of History, 2023, n.p., own translation) (see figure 12).



Figure 12. Murals on columns in Lincoln park, El Paso city.
Source: El Paso Museum of History, s. f.

In a festive atmosphere, the park fills with attendees who are sympathetic to the lowrider lifestyle. The exhibition of low & slow cars, bicycles, motorcycles and various objects is found along the corridors where there are also vendors' tents with various products ranging from "fedoras" (the typical pachuco or cholo hat) to t-shirts, accessories and ethnic jewelry, quartz stones, spare parts for this type of vehicle, nostalgic and collectible dolls, posters and records with oldies songs (specifically from the fifties and sixties). Del Monte Madrigal (2014) refers to nostalgia in lowrider cars as a memory car because: "it is linked to nostalgia [...] it is the motive that guides the senses [...] which it finds [...] in memory mobility . When they take their vintage cars out onto the streets, they 'evoke' a past that they honor and do justice by bringing it to the present" (p. 123).

In the event where the interviews were conducted, the entertainment program began with the matachines performing a ceremonial dance. They are dancers from the group "Santo Niño de Atocha" and their leader is Mr. Ismael Aguilera, who mentioned that his group has danced with the lowriders for many years and that it is a tradition that is inherited from father to son. The group is more than 60 years old and its members are from both Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, Texas.

Subsequently, the program continued with the folkloric ballet company "Paso del Norte" which, among sounds from the state of Jalisco, wore braids full of ribbons and multicolored ribbon skirts that moved in the wind as if they were floating (see figure 13). The director of the company, Professor Rodolfo Hernández, mentioned that he has participated in lowrider events since its inception: "Since the first event organized by

Héctor González we have been here, it has been more than 10 years, in the first event we were the matachines , a few cars and us and from there it grew". Then, she recalled that she has seen that the presence of women has increased over time: "At the beginning, the women only came with their outfits and they have gradually added to everything, also participating with lowrider cars" (R. Hernández, personal communication , February 2nd, 2023).



Figure 13. Ballet *Folklore Paso del Norte*.

Source: Image provided by Professor Rodolfo Hernández.

The placement of lowrider movable objects varies by classification: classic Chevys from the 1930s to '50s are grouped apart from Impalas and other models, for example. Generally, behind the exhibition area are the tents of the lowrider or only lowrider clubs, which are commonly found sharing with family and friends. The lowriders who shared their experiences and testimonials in this work are in both categories; Henceforth, and as agreed with them, I will mention them both as an informant and by the name they gave me.

Informant 1, Mónica Sánchez, who wants to be named "La Mony", is 49 years old, single, works, considers herself Chicana and Chola, was born in El Paso, Texas, recognizes herself as Mexican-American, and is an independent lowrider. She has liked these cars since she was 18 years old and she has owned several cars. It has not been easy for her to enter the lowrider world. She owns a modified car (see figure 14) and a modified motorcycle. She seeks recognition for her participation in these types of objects, and she would like to pass on her experience. She proudly says that she herself had to learn to "mechanize" her car because there are no specialists in this type of car, which are unique. "[...] my first car was a 1987 Buick Regal, now I have a classic 1936 Chevy car, I installed the ventilation system with an airplane turbine; I have had to learn how to do it myself" ("La Mony", personal communication, September 18th, 2022).



Figure 14. La Mony and her '36
Source: Image provided by "La Mony".

The lowrider driver explains that she is the only woman to have a classic: "[...] I only have a 1936 car, well, as a woman, because there is another '36, but its owner is a man. Here in El Paso there are only two of us and I have a classic motorcycle also modified" ("La Mony", personal communication, September 18, 2022). "La Mony" has not incorporated murals or images in her vehicles, she considers lowriding to be a culture and she has friends or homies who like this lifestyle. What she enjoys most about driving a vehicle of this type is that she draws the attention of other people and they tell her how beautiful her car is (see figure 15).

The colors she has put on her vehicles are solid, but blended, like her '36 Chevy; On the other hand, she did apply some designs on her motorcycle, such as the die-cutting on the antenna. In this vehicle, although it follows a monochrome pattern, the golden touches in the lines that adorn it contrast. It is worth mentioning that "La Mony" has tattoos on her body that are related to Chicano and Chola culture, like the ones she carries on her right arm: they start with a heart and are superimposed with two tragedy and comedy masks, as well as the legend " My love is timeless". In addition, on her chest she has open roses tattooed.

The interviewee mentions that participating in lowrider events also allows her to live with other women and friends of the same cultural interest as hers: "I like this environment and being with other women like OG veterans; They are my friends, they are veteran Original Gangsters and they dress up like from the eighties and chola type, they are also lowrider, they don't have a car, but they like the atmosphere" ("La Mony", personal communication, September 18th, 2022).



Figure 15. Car and motorcycle of "La Mony".
Source: Images provided by "La Mony".

Although many of the participants in lowrider culture are from the working class, there are also those who are college educated. Informant 2, named Rebeca Castillo, is 34 years old, is a teacher, and has a degree in Chicano Studies. She is in the lowrider culture by family tradition and considers it very important to highlight the roots where her culture comes from. Castillo is a solo lowrider or independent and owns three converted cars (see figure 16): a classic 1948 Chevy Stylemaster painted Mexican pink, a 1991 S-10 pickup truck in pale green, and a 1963 Impala, which has been repainted. at one time tender green and later Mexican pink.

The vehicles have a distinctive legend: "lowrider girl". The paint on these cars is solid and uniform colors, even the wheels of the '48 Chevy are painted the same Mexican pink, as the car is dedicated to her sister, who fought the fight against cancer.

Castillo got her first car as a graduation gift from her father and said she was proud that her father taught both her brothers and her how to fix that type of car: "[...] my dad was a mechanic, but he learned how to do hydraulics, the electrical parts of it he knew how to do everything, so he did everything to our cars" he knew how to do everything, he made our cars"] (R. Castillo, personal communication, September 18th, 2022, own translation).



Figure 16. Collage.

Source: Images provided by Rebeca Castillo.

The importance of culture to women lowriders is significant, Castillo says she represents that identity. In figure 17, Castillo poses for a mural by El Paso artist Gabriel Gaytán titled *Corazón Chicana*.

She considers herself a *chola* because it is her family's culture and because her cultural roots are Mexican-American; She also considers herself a lowrider because her love and affection for the lifestyle and converted cars are part of her daily life. “[...] it's all we know, it's who we are, it's what we do, it's what we love, it's just what represents us” [“This is all we know, this is who we are, this is what we do, what we love is what represents us”] (R. Castillo, personal communication, September 18, 2022, own translation). Interviewee 2 has faced discrimination due to her culture, being labeled as a *chola*, which equals her to being a criminal and, therefore, a gang member. She affirms that only when they meet her, they understand that she herself represents a culture: “[...] so you have to represent yourself and prove yourself and, then once they get to know who you are, your work ethics you're the kind of person you stand for they don't tend to judge” , September 18th, 2022, own translation).



Figure 17. *Chicana heart*, by El Paso muralist Gabriel Gaytán.
Source: *El Paso Times*, 2018.

Castillo has a tattoo on her back with the lowrider logo and on his arm is a gazelle jumping in a hoop with the legend “lowrider girl”, the same one that is on their vehicles (see figure 18). Among her accessories are earrings with large hoops, the traditional bandana and the Mexican flag on her fedora-type hat.”.



Figure 18. *Lowrider girl*.
Source: Image provided by Rebeca Castillo.

Informant 3, named Cindy Vásquez, 55 years old, was born in El Paso, Texas, and lives in California. She owns a modified classic Chevrolet car from 1949. She belongs to the "Viejitos Car Club" (see figure 19). Cindy wears the accessories that indicate the lifestyle in which she is committed. The cap says “Viejitos” on the back and the gold-colored hoop earrings have the legend “Latina”. Vásquez mentions: "We present our lives with these cars, the history that one has lived and gets into the

cars to teach people what we like about culture, and as I said, the cars go wherever they want" (C. Vásquez, personal communication, September 18, 2022).



Figure 19. *Cindy and her car.*
Source: Image provided by Cindy Vásquez.

Vásquez has several tattoos: one that says: "Tejana" due to her birth origin (she feels that she is Chicana, but more Mexican due to her family heritage), another on her chest, which indicates: "I am as I am"; On her back are elements of her culture, such as the city of Los Angeles, some chola frogs, two women with accessories in their hair, a bandana and a fedora hat and, in the center, her classic car (see figure 20). On her arm is the image of a woman with a hat, her hair tousled and her face made up as a clown. Vásquez considers the presence of women in the lowrider culture important so that the car culture is not lost: "because that way we learn and explain to the other girls what all this culture, cars and life that we are about is about. we live" (Vásquez, personal communication, September 18th, 2022).



Figure 20. *Tejana.*
Source: Personal photographic record, 2022.

Lucy Romero, informant 4, 52 years old and of border origin, is an active member of “Los Pachucos Car Club”, founded by her husband Junior Romero 17 years ago (see figure 21). Lucy shares that before being a lowrider, she knew nothing of that lifestyle, unlike her husband’s family. “[...] the woman is the most important thing, even though the boys have their cars, we invest the money and clean, transform and lengthen them, we also paint the murals; my mother-in-law upholsters and paints the cars, we have our family shop” (L. Romero, personal communication, September 18th, 2022). It is very important to her that the tradition of Chicano and lowrider culture continue to be celebrated: “[...] this is what is Mexican, actually here in the United States it is what we have, the lowriders [...] the Americans have a lot of respect for the lowriders because they know the work, the money, all the work that it takes”. In this regard, she mentions that: “[...] it is a lot of money that is invested, people do not know how much money they put in, they are old cars, and if a part breaks down, you have to change the whole piece with originals, just reupholstering it costs about fifteen thousand dollars” (L. Romero, personal communication, September 18th, 2022).



Figure 21. *Lucy and Junior.*
Source: *Personal photographic record, 2022.*

Lucy Romero owns a small Chevrolet S 10 pickup truck from the 1990s, a pastel purple, solid color, without details or murals. The chrome wheels with die-cut spokes stand out in the vehicle. Lucy has participated with him in several exhibitions (see figure 22).



Figure 22. "Chingona".
Source: Los Pachucos Car Club.

Also from the "Viejitos Car Club", Cassandra Vásquez, informant 5, is a resident and was born in California. She is 35 years old, owns a 1962 Impala and has tattoos on both arms showing figures of a clown and a woman with angel wings together with the phrase "in memoriam" (see figures 23 and 24), dedicated to his deceased sister. Cassandra got involved in the club because of her sister: "[...] she taught everyone in the club that it is not only for men, but also for women" (C. Vásquez, personal communication, September 18 of 2022).

For Cassandra, lowriding is a family tradition. She taught herself how to modify cars. "I grew up in Club Viejitos, I really like cars, I applied the color and style that I wanted, I didn't know anything, but I did it myself, because if it was my car I wanted to know how to do it" (C. Vásquez, personal communication, September 18th 2022).



Figure 23. Clowns.
Source: Personal photographic record, 2022.



Figure 24. *In Memoriam*.
Source: Personal photographic record, 2022.

The interviewee also mentioned that her children are in the lowrider culture because it is important for her to share that love for cars and so they can be with her and not in the streets like bums. In addition, she emphasized that it is important for women to become more involved in the world of low and slow: "The lowrider is a style that is not only for men, it is also for women" (C. Vásquez, personal communication, December 18). September 2022).

One of the most recognized converted cars in the lowrider world on this border is the so-called Queen of Hearts, the owner is Mrs. Mina Romero, informant 6, who is 72 years old, is originally from this border and has extensive experience. important in the car club "Los Pachucos", of which he is a member and which, in addition, is part of his family. Mina has been in lowrider for over 54 years and specializes in vehicle upholstery (see figure 25). She mentions: "I upholster my children's lowrider cars, there are some difficult parts, but you find it" (M. Romero, personal communication, September 18, 2022).

Mina Romero began in the lowrider world when she got married in 1968. It has taken her 54 years to transform her 1961 Chevrolet Impala car: "The car belonged to my brother and he sold it to me when I got married, I it cost 75 dollars, we have transformed the structure, and we added doors" (M. Romero, personal communication, September 18th 2022).



Figure 25. Queen of hearts.
Source: Los Pachucos Car Club, s. f.

Regarding how her car looks, Mina mentions: “[...] on the hood I have the mural of the Virgin of Guadalupe and on the trunk the guardian angel, the seats rotate and it has suicide doors, right now I am going to reupholster it, the same color a little pinker” (M. Romero, personal communication, September 18, 2022) (see figures 26 y 27).



Figure 26. Suicide doors.
Source: Los Pachucos Car Club, s. f.



Figure 27. Detail in tapestry and mural.
Source: Los Pachuco Car Club, s. f.

Results The previous testimonies show that between the relationship of the lowriders and the transformed objects there are symbolic referents, because: "with them we learn the uses of the world" (Judge, 2002, p. 17). The women interviewed have had direct contact with the lowrider tradition, either by birth or because someone introduced them to this world. Although the informants did not design the low & slow objects from their manufacture, they have transformed them by reappropriating them, since "what matters here is the history of the interaction, the associations we establish with the objects and the memories they evoke in us" (Norman, 2012, p. 62). They have had to learn to repair their own mobile objects, as well as to restore, modify, dress them up and implement sound, lighting and ventilation systems according to the type and year of the vehicle, creating emotional bonds with them.

The informants agreed on the importance of teaching about Chicano culture and the pride of having Mexican and pre-Hispanic roots, in their religiosity, and in the fact that their cars are an example of their lifestyle. Finally, "social relations, as well as identity, take place through networks of people, objects and ideas" (Del Monte Madrigal, 2014, p. 119). The interviewees resort to nostalgia when buying and modifying cars from past decades, in the case of three of them for classic cars, "pachuco cars" or little bombs. Norman (2012) says in this regard: "We tend to relate to things and objects when they have a significant personal association, when they bring to mind pleasant and comforting moments" (p. 64). For this reason, even the personal arrangement of four of them is in the cholo style: long, dark hair, wavy, with layers pulled back, with marked makeup and intense red lips, very from the eighties. All of them share a taste for the preservation of Chicano culture, mobile objects,

cars, bicycles, motorcycles, toys, decorative objects, and oldie music, among others.

Norman (2012) indicates in this regard: "All special objects evoked memories. The emotion was almost never focused on the object itself: what really mattered was the story that it aroused, the anecdote, the occasion that it brought to mind" (p. 64). This makes sense in the words of the sixth informant, who emphasized that she had been modifying her car for 54 years, the same as when she was married.

The support and teachings of other lowrider women are important because they strengthen their expressions, reflected in the cars and bikes they display. In addition, in these they honor the struggle and memory of the sisters, aunts and relatives who are no longer with them due to death or those who defeated illnesses, the same ones that are evidenced in their objects and on their own bodies through tattoos.

It can be seen that most women choose solid paints and in some cases contrasting with other colors. In the case of the designs, these are subdued, with simple lines. Only one of them applied religious murals to her vehicle. All of them, even if they are independent or only lowrider, have on their vehicles either the name, the logo or the distinctive plate of their club or what they consider appropriate according to their philosophy or particular taste. In addition, several of them have transferred the name of their club or the image of their car to their body through tattoos, that is, they carry identity elements of their culture, considering them almost as if they were animated, as Judge refers. (2002): "the perception persists that the object has or can have attributes beyond its material characteristics: what we do is load it with senses, assign it its own character and, with it, a soul" (p. 71).

Interviewee 1 has tattooed open roses and phrases from her about her love for lowrider culture; Informant 2 has tattoos of the rolling culture, one of the lowrider cholo and the other of the gazelle with the phrase "lowrider girl", in addition, the color of one of her cars is in honor of her sister who fought against cancer. Contactee 3 transferred the image of her car and linked it to her life in the Californian city, the chola culture in little frogs, which is her favorite animal and the name of her car club. She also has chola women tattooed with their faces made up like clowns, much-used symbols that allude to a life full of obstacles, suffering and joys in her own life, and she has the word "Tejana" written on it, which identifies her with her origin.

There are other elements, such as the license plate of informant 4's truck, with the initials LWR, meaning she is a lowrider, the one that says "Chingona" and a low & slow cholo monkey. Interviewee 5 also has tattoos on her body, in memory of her sister, as well as chola women with clown makeup, which signifies how difficult life has been with obstacles and losses. In this case, she uses her body to make a posthumous tribute to

her sister, drawn with angel wings on her arm. The lowrider 6 has transferred aesthetic and material elements to her car, which she has been transforming for 54 years, which shows subtle lines, color contrasts and the combination of pink in various shades, as if they were veins of a beating heart. This woman also captured the elements of her culture with images of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the guardian angel, as an example of her religiosity. The structural readaptation of the vehicle with a type of doors called suicide doors allowed it to hide certain visual elements that, when the doors are opened, allow us to appreciate a whole visual experience of emotional work and cultural identity. This is related to what was mentioned by Judge (2002): "The object [...] temporarily becomes a real extension of our body; and also, at times, what is acted upon is diluted from the attention and integrates in unity with the utensil and the user" (p. 71).

The accessories that the women wore identified them as lowrider: whether the interviewees wore large gold hoop earrings with the legend "Latina" or the name of the club they belonged to on their clothing and cap ("Viejitos" or, as in the case of three of them, who will wear plumber or mechanic-style t-shirts with the logo of their car club and the legend lowrider, or, "fedora" type hats with classic bandanas and with the flag of Mexico, all of them elements that speak of identity towards a cultural phenomenon in which women are protagonists.

Conclusions

Although there is not much written information about women in the lowrider world, the testimonies of the informants about their active participation as protagonists in this phenomenon allow us to understand that the different elements of their lifestyle are found in cultural studies and design. The cultural process that women have carried out allows them to be part of the history of Chicanismo, but also their participation in a process of structural reappropriation and personalization of an object allows them to be part of the so-called emotional design.

The ethnographic approach to women in the lowrider lifestyle was crucial to understand their participation in this culture and, at the same time, their willingness to transmit their experiences allowed elements of a deep relationship with the transformed objects to be found, but also an almost symbiotic transfer of visual, aesthetic and material signs both in their own vehicles and in themselves and their daily life. Simple data, such as population data, made it clear that age or marital status does not matter to get involved in a hobby considered for men and in which their gender demonstrates equality in strength and expertise to intervene by themselves a mobile object, such as a car or a bicycle.

It was possible to show in this text that the women interviewed were purposeful, that they are committed to a particular lifestyle that includes the modification of cars and a host of cultural values, including

community solidarity. Their actions have an impact on the preservation of their culture and serve as an example to inspire other women, becoming a symbol of the community not only as women who bear beauty and attractiveness next to cars, but above all as capable people whose income, time, work and effort is translated into a material, visual and aesthetic manifestation as is the cultural phenomenon of low & slow.

The six informants are examples of many others who are looking for a place for themselves. These women can assume themselves to be Chicanas and/or Cholas and/or Lowrider, and feel proud of it. As the second informant says: “[...] so you have to represent yourself and prove yourself and, then once they get to know who you are, your work ethics you're the kind of person you stand for they don't tend to judge” [“This is all we know, this is who we are, this is what we do, this is what we love, this is exactly what represents us] (R. Castillo, personal communication, September 18, 2022, own translation). The knowledge acquired through their culture, their traditions and their own experience is transmitted in various ways and spaces, both privately and publicly. Today their presence is notable, as they continue to write their own history and build an identity for other women. 🍷

🍷 **Special thanks to** To the lowrider women: Cindy, Cassandra, “La Mony”, Lucy, Mina and Rebeca. Thank you for your valuable testimonials.

To Salma, Said, Sara and Adrián, for their patience in the absence of my presence and support in the lowrider world.

To Mama Coco “In memoriam”, a nostalgic collector of objects, books, photos, cards, snails, flowers and strange things.

🍷 **References** Anzaldúa, G. (1999). *Borderlands: La Frontera-The New Mestiza*, 2a. ed., United States: Aunt Lute Books.

Burdek E., B. (2002). *Design. history, theory and practice of industrial design*. Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Gustavo Gili,

Cacheux, E.M. (2003). Chicano Feminism: Roots, Political Thought, and Women's Identity. *Reunion*, 37, 43-53. Mexico: Autonomous Metropolitan University Xochimilco Unit.

Cano, B. (2015). Lowriding through New Spaces. *Global Societies Journal*, 3. Retrieved January 5, 2023 from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0487w52c>

- Del Monte Madrigal, J.A. (2012). *Mobilizing identities: The urban cultures of bikers and lowriders in Tijuana B.C.* [Master's Thesis]. Tijuana: College of the Northern Border.
- Del Monte Madrigal, J.A. (2014). Slow, aesthetic and memorable. Lowrider automobiles and the aesthetics of nostalgia in Tijuana. *Contempt*, 45, 113-127. Mexico: Center for Research and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology Federal District.
- El Paso Museum of History. (2023). Lincoln Park Murals. Retrieved on December 22, 2022 from <https://www.digie.org/en/media/69771>
- El Paso Museum of History. (s.f.). Lincoln Park, El Paso City. Retrieved on January 14, 2023 from <https://epmuseumofhistory.org/>
- El Paso Times. (2018). Mural "Chicano Heart". Retrieved September 27, 2022 from <https://www.elpasotimes.com/picture-gallery/news/2018/07/16/a-look-at-el-paso-lincoln-park-murals/36920103/>
- Garrett, M. (2015). From Skylines to Lowriders: Welcome to Cholo's. *Speedhunters*. Retrieved on March 5, 2023 from <http://www.speedhunters.com/2015/02/from-skylines-to-lowriders-welcome-to-cholos>
- Hernández, J.R. (2022). The impact of the Pachucos in fashion: The construction of a new identity. Retrieved on November 2, 2022 from <https://badhombremagazine.com/el-impacto-de-los-pachucos-en-la-moda-la-construccion-de-una-nueva-identidad/>
- Juarez Car Club Kansas. (s.f.). No title. Retrieved on May 20, 2022 from <https://www.facebook.com/aaron.molina.319>
- Judge, M. (2002). *Contributions for an anthropology of objects*. Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Kissel passed. (2022). El Paso's Culture, Classic Cars on Display at 2022 Lincoln Park Day. Retrieved on September 23, 2022 from <https://kisselpaso.com/el-paso-lincoln-park-day-2022/>
- Licon, G. (2017). Pachucos: Not Just Mexican-American Males or Juvenile Delinquents. Retrieved August 12, 2022 from <https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/pachucos-not-just-mexican-american-males-or-juvenile-delinquents>
- Lopez, A. and Reyes, R. (2017). *San Diego Lowriders: A History of Cars and Cruising*. San Diego, CA: The History Press.
- Lopez, M. (2019). Women with lowriders go their own way in Santa Rosa. *Sonoma Press*. Retrieved on September 3, 2022 from <https://www.laprensasonoma.com/articulo/entretenimiento/mujeres-con-lowriders-toman-su-propio-camino-en-santa-rosa/>

- Los Pachucos Car Club. (s.f.). No title. Retrieved on February 2, 2023 from <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077729952566>
- Lowrider Magazine. (1979). U.S. Automobile Magazine Covers 1945 to 2010. Retrieved September 22, 2022 from <http://99wspeedshop.com.s3-website-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/>
- McLuhan, M. (1996). *To understand the communication media. The extensions of the human being*. Buenos Aires: Paidós Ibérica Editions.
- Monárrez, L.M. (2017). *Stories of resistance: Juvenile processes against violence. The cases of Fearless Crew and Circolectivo in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua*. [PhD thesis]. Mexico: Center for Research and Higher Studies in Western Social Anthropology.
- Chicano woman. (s.f.). No title. Retrieved on May 20, 2022 from <https://www.facebook.com/aaron.molina.319> and <https://www.california-mexicocenter.org/tag/che-guevara/>
- National Museum of African American History & Culture (n.d.). Lowriders, cars with identities. Retrieved August 13, 2021 from <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/lowriders>
- Norman, D. (2012). *Emotional Design, because we like (or don't) everyday objects*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós Editions.
- Ortega, F. (2020). The rhetodic of lowriding: A misunderstood cultural movement in the public realm [master's thesis]. California: California State University, San Marcos.
- Pineda, D. (2019, December 14). Lowrider Life and Death: How the Chicano Car Magazine Shaped California. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved on April 3, 2022 from <https://www.latimes.com/espanol/entretenimiento/articulo/2019-12-15/vida-y-muerte-de-lowrider-como-la-revista-de-automoviles-chicanos-shaped-california>
- Plascencia, L.F.B. (1983). Low Riding in the Southwest: Cultural Symbols in the Mexican Community. In Mario T. Garda *et al.* (Eds.), *History, Culture and Society: Chicano Studies in the 1980s* (pp.141-175). Ypsilanti, MI: Bilingual Review Press.
- Ramirez, C. (2009). *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*. New York, USA: Duke University Press.
- Rodriguez, M. (2001). The case of Chicano identity and ethnic cultural citizenship. *The Everyday*, 18(108), 48-59. Retrieved on July 9, 2022 from <http://www.redalyc.org/pdf/325/32510806.pdf>

- Tatum, C. (2011). *Lowriders in Chicano Culture: From Low to Slow to Show*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood.
- Trinidad, R. (2014). Chicana/Latin American Feminist Epistemologies of the Global South (Within and Outside the North): Decolonizing El Conocimiento and Creating Global Alliances. *Journal of Latino/Latin American Studies*, 6(2), 135-140. New Mexico: University of New Mexico.
- Valenzuela Arce, J M. (2014). *The color of the shadows. Chicanos, identity and racism*. Tijuana, Baja California: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte/Plaza y Valdés Editores.
- Valenzuela Arce, J M. (1988). *Our feed. Popular cultures on the United States-Mexico border*. Mexico: General Directorate of Popular Cultures.
- Valenzuela Arce, J. M., Nateras Domínguez, A. and Reguillo Cruz, R. (2007). *The gangs: Youth identities to the limit*. Mexico: Metropolitan Autonomous University, Iztapalapa Unit.
- Ybarra-Frausto, Tomas. (1989). Rasquachismo: A Chicano Sensibility. In R. Guglielmo (Dir.), *Chicano esthetic: Rasquachismo* (pp. 5-8). Phoenix, AZ.: Rio Salado Art Movement.

About the author *Mirna Ajo*

PhD student in Design at the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez, she completed her master's degree in Spanish and Interdisciplinary Studies and Art, with a specialty in Sculpture and Theatrical Set Design, at the University of Texas at El Paso, and a master's degree in Public Policy, with the specialty in Cultural Studies and Gender, at the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez. She completed her degree in Sociology at the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez. She is a sculptor, actress and presenter. One of his personal purposes has been research from cultural studies, gender, art and design, through the academy, in order to rescue from a bi-border position the roots and multicultural identity that constantly interacts on this border and that characterizes it. As a researcher and as an artist, it is important for her to make visible both social processes and their expression through visual and aesthetic manifestations.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons license.
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivative Work 4.0 International