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In the Ruiz Gallery
INSPIRACIÓN: THE ART OF *ESPERANZA*
 Feb 1 - April 1, 2012

Arte Américas will begin their 25th Anniversary year with a rare collection of original work by acclaimed Latina artist Esperanza Martínez. These rare paintings, drawings, and hand-written letters are from the private collections of a South Valley group of Martínez's closest friends, fans and collectors.



In the late 80s the Tulare County League of Mexican-American Women honored Esperanza for her lifelong work as a Latina trailblazer. An exhibit of her work was part of the event – which **inspired** several attendees to make their first art purchase. Guest curator Ramona Walker was one of Esperanza's closest friends and was able to negotiate the loan of artwork from private collections that have never been seen before.

Esperanza was a Mexican-born painter who overcame sex discrimination to place her vibrant, sweeping paintings in museums and collections around the world. It is reported that she began drawing when she was only three, attracted the attention of an art

teacher at seven, and sold her first painting at twelve. Female artists in Mexico in the 1930s and 1940s were not highly regarded, she often recalled. Esperanza's family, in fact, declined to promote her studies.

Ever-**inspired** by her artistic passion, Esperanza worked two jobs and sold paintings to pay her tuition at Mexico City's Academia de San Carlos, where muralist Diego Rivera was the Director



Her works – done in oils, charcoal, pencil or ceramic paint – have been displayed at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, Moscow's Pushkin Museum and in Los Angeles at the Casa del Adobe Museum.

After a long battle with breast cancer in 1998, Esperanza died at the age of 64.



- To read a more extensive bio written by guest curator Ramona Walker, [click here](#)

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