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BORDERLANDIA UNBOUND: AN ABBREVIATED GUIDE TO THE VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF ENRIQUE CHAGOYA

We used to go for picnics to the pyramids of Teotihuacán... [where] my dad's family is from. And then we were going to [Catholic] church. At the same time, I grew up with Mickey Mouse and Superman and all the comics. All the American programs from the sixties and seventies were translated into Spanish. You name it; I saw it, all the way from Rin Tin Tin to Zorro to the Lone Ranger. —ENRIQUE CHAGOYA¹

Enrique Chagoya recalls a time from his Mexican childhood, a typical Sunday filled with the “parallel experiences”² of disconnected cultures—from ancient Aztec ruins to Spanish colonial Catholic masses to U.S. American³ popular culture. This recollection speaks volumes about the layered complexity of his artwork. Such daily encounters with clashing cultural references reemerge in his fantastic, dynamic compositions, in which he combines a wide variety of icons, languages, symbols, and imagery separated by hundreds of years in history and thousands of geographical miles. The artist’s *When Paradise Arrived* (1988; p. 52), a nearly seven-foot-square charcoal and pastel on paper, exemplifies such a diverse arrangement. The work features the giant gloved hand of Mickey Mouse poised to flick an innocent Latina out of the picture and off the face of the earth. The girl’s body radiates a halo that alludes to the sunray mandorla⁴ associated with the Mexican icon of the Virgin of Guadalupe,⁵ while her hands are raised in a Christian iconographical gesture of invitation.⁶ A bright red bleeding heart marks her chest, the traditional Mesoamerican symbol of invasion and suffering as well as the supreme sacrificial offering in the Aztec religion.

Chagoya’s combination of ancient Aztec, Christian, and contemporary popular iconography in a single, simple

composition also provides sociopolitical commentary. *When Paradise Arrived* belongs to the artist’s series of editorial cartoons from the 1980s, which are rendered in a politically charged palette of red and black on white paper. These colors reflect Russian Communist propaganda and, in turn, its assumption by Constructivist artists, including Alexander Rodchenko and El Lissitzky. In Aztec culture, the prevalent red/black combination symbolizes duality and the interdependent nature of opposites. A basic structural element of Mesoamerican religious thought, this dual concept holds a place in numerous cultures, including the yin and yang of Chinese philosophy.

Typical of the large charcoals, the title appears in block letters vertically oriented on the black bands of the work’s left and right borders. The words “ENGLISH ONLY!” written across the flicking finger refers to the 1986 referendum in California that made English the official language of the state—a harsh blow to the bilingual education laws that had assisted in the assimilation of a huge population of immigrant children into the United States.⁷ In more general terms, Chagoya’s text confirms the contempt shown toward the culture of minorities and native populations by the dominant powers of U.S. corporate culture—here exemplified by Disney as

indicated by Mickey's giant, gloved hand.

Chagoya's social conscience began developing at the age of fifteen. He recalls that, one day, his mother returned home from work downtown crying and very upset, having witnessed the police shoot an eleven-year-old child. This incident took place in 1968, during the weeks of political unrest and student and worker demonstrations that led up to the Tlatelolco Massacre, which took place in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City on October 2 of that year. The incident began as a typical campus revolt of the 1960s. However, with all eyes trained on Mexico City as the hosts of the upcoming Olympic Games, the government took action. Although it has been estimated that hundreds and possibly even thousands of people were killed by police and military forces that day, government sources controversially and infamously cited "4 Dead, 20 Wounded." Chagoya states, "I have had a curiosity for social problems ever since."⁸

The artist's personal experience in the student movement cemented his interest. On June 10, 1971, a paramilitary squad known as the Falcons (*halcones* in Spanish) attacked a peaceful demonstration by ten thousand students and workers in Mexico City. Chagoya barely escaped the violence. As many as one hundred people were killed in this brutal incident, known as the *Halconazo*, but Chagoya reports that the event never received media coverage in the newspapers or on television. It was his first lesson in "how society works, the politics of the state, at least in Mexico."⁹ And so it follows that Chagoya went on to study political economics at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (National Autonomous University of Mexico) before moving to the United States in 1977.¹⁰

These brief excursions into Chagoya's early life identify the seeds of the ideology that informs his varied and complex oeuvre, an ideology he categorizes under two headings—social satire and reverse anthropology. The social satire includes *When Paradise Arrived* and the other

large-scale charcoal drawings that make up Chagoya's first major body of mature work, begun in 1984 and continuing through the Ronald Reagan era into the George H. W. Bush years. Although, due to the current turbulent state of world politics during the George W. Bush presidency, the artist has more recently felt the need to revisit his large charcoals with a new fervor. But, the series began with *Their Freedom of Expression... The Recovery of Their Economy* (1984; p. 50), which features Ronald Reagan and Henry Kissinger, respectively, as giant and miniature versions of Mickey Mouse. Both figures are shown painting graffiti messages onto a wall from buckets of red paint/blood containing severed body parts. Reagan's message reads, "Russkies and Cubans out of Central America," while Kissinger's says, "By the way, keep art out of politics." Created expressly for the group exhibition *Artists Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America*, which involved the well known feminist art critic and theorist Lucy Lippard, the cartoon criticizes Reagan's support of the Contras in Nicaragua, a political stance that essentially promoted more killing in that country in the interest of the greater good.

Chagoya continued to explore social satire while paying homage to the Spanish master and political artist Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828) in his contemporary versions of Goya's classic series of etchings "*Los caprichos*" (1797–99), which examines social injustice and the human condition, and "*Disasters of War*" (1810–20), which depicts in graphic detail the gruesome realities of the Peninsular War between France and Spain (1808–14). Chagoya retains Goya's compositions and title captions (they remain absolutely relevant two hundred years later) in his own ten-piece "*Homage to Goya II: Disasters of War*" (1983–2003)¹¹ and eight-piece "*Return to Goya's Caprichos*"¹² (1999) while inserting contemporary political figures, popular cultural icons, and modern-day technology to address the social and political issues of the time. From "*Caprichos*," *Se repulen (They Spruce Themselves Up)* (1999; p. 81) shows a trio of fiends—U.S. Senator Jesse Helms, Reverend

Jerry Falwell, and a grotesque winged monster. Helms trims Falwell's talons, while Tinky Winky, the purple Teletubby from the BBC television series, sits with his feet amputated in the foreground. In 1999, Falwell controversially denounced the television show, *Teletubbies*, stating that Tinky Winky, the "gay" Teletubby was a bad role model for children. Numerous timely characters from news headlines make up Chagoya's motley cast in the two series, including U.S. President Ronald Reagan, Cuban leader Fidel Castro, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan David Duke, Pope John Paul II, former White House intern/Bill Clinton indiscretion Monica Lewinsky, and Lewinsky's "friend" Linda Tripp. Pop icons presented are Mickey Mouse, Snow White, and Ed "Big Daddy" Roth's Rat Fink. Objects of modern technology update Goya's two-hundred-year-old images and include sly insertions of a television set, video camera, tape recorder, microphone, the space shuttle, a military helicopter, a stealth aircraft, fighter jets, and a variety of bombs and missiles.

In the two Goya-inspired series, Chagoya's self-portrait appears in several plates, while he also gives nods to some important artists and their iconic works by presenting Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907), popular Mexican graphic artist José Guadalupe Posada and his signature skeleton subject *Calavera Catrina*, and, of course, Goya and his classic bulls. Each print bears a red stamp centered in its lower margin, which again brings into play the symbolic black-and-red palette. Each stamp's pictogram refers back to the etching's narrative. The faux museum emblem mimics and criticizes the official state seal printed on works at Madrid's Prado Museum, where the largest collection of Goya's works resides.

In addition to Goya, Chagoya honors the contemporary master Philip Guston in a remake of Guston's "Poor Richard" series of caricatures of President Richard Nixon (1971)—tracing his life from childhood to the White House, including key members of his administration such

as Spiro Agnew, Henry Kissinger, and John Mitchell. Remarkably created two years before the Watergate scandal, Guston's searing political satire focuses on the shifty character of Nixon. The president's facial features receive special treatment, especially his prominent nose and cheeks, which Guston depicts as a phallus and testicles. In 2004, Chagoya appropriated Guston's stippled drawing style (with, of course, the addition of red ink to the black) and a selection of compositions in his own "Poor George" series, in which George W. Bush assumes the central role. In Chagoya's *Poor George (After Philip Guston) #7* (2004; p. 73), an opening image to the series, an airplane banner announcing "Rich W" crosses the sky over a beach scene that presents the main characters of the narrative. Moving left to right across the drawing, we see Barney the Scottish terrier standing on the reclining U.S. President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney in a Hawaiian shirt, then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice in a striped tank top, and then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld represented by a pair of spectacles framing squinting eyes.¹³ There is no interaction among the individuals of the group lounging on the littered shore by a red sea—likely the Red Sea in the Middle East, given the spouting oil towers in the background,¹⁴ which replace Guston's palm trees.¹⁵ George W. Bush's nose closely resembles that of Pinocchio, indicative of the perceived lies the administration has told to the public. Between the Guston-inspired drawings and the reworked Goya prints, Chagoya illustrates the point that over a span of some two hundred years of social and political struggle, as much as things change, they also stay the same. History repeats itself time and time again.

Although all of Chagoya's work exhibits a social conscience, he characterizes particular works not strictly as social satire but as "reverse anthropology," the term he uses for revisualizing the histories written by the dominant cultures or the military victors—primarily those of Europe and United States. Western culture has long "cannibalized" other cultures. Chagoya regularly cites as

examples Picasso's appropriation of African tribal masks first seen in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Henry Moore's use of reclining pre-Columbian *chacmool* figures in his own figurative sculpture, and Frank Lloyd Wright's inspiration from Mayan temple architecture in his own buildings. In response, Chagoya reinterprets the "official" histories, replaying them through the eyes and culture of the defeated. As a self-labeled "utopian cannibal" or "un-noble savage"—the antithesis of the stereotype of the noble savage as a morally superior human uncorrupted by the influences of civilization—Chagoya rewrites, redraws, and collages playful and violent alternate histories in an inexhaustible collection of signs, symbols, imagery, and languages.¹⁶

Among Chagoya's source materials are several decaying books of nineteenth-century engravings, which he discovered in a flea market during one of his annual visits to Mexico. The black-and-white print books highlight important European artists; each two-page spread features a brief biography on one page and an art reproduction on the facing page. These Spanish-language books, produced in Europe, were imported to Mexico to provide lessons in traditional Western art history to Mexican art students. Onto their paired pages, Chagoya imposes his "reverse anthropology" by painting a new version of art history, one chiefly dominated by Aztec icons. The series numbers approximately thirty works. In *The Prayer in the Forest (La oración en el bosque)* (1997; p. 71), Chagoya claims the work of German artist Hubert Salentin (1822–1910) for the Aztecs. The quiet rural scene depicts a young girl kneeling in prayer at a Christian shrine in the woods, which Chagoya has over-painted with a colossal sculpture of the Aztec earth goddess Coatlicue¹⁷—She of the Serpent Skirt. To contemporary eyes, she strikes a frightening figure. The goddess stands on huge talons, dons a skirt of woven rattlesnakes, and bears the pendulous breasts of a mother covered by a gruesome necklace of severed hearts and hands that ends in a skull amulet at her waist. Giant coral snakes replace Coatlicue's head and hands, with blood pulsing

through each to alternately signify life and death, the latter plotted by her own daughter Coyolxauhqui.¹⁸ Chagoya paints four rounded forms—black, blue, white, and red—onto each edge of the paper. These four sacred colors of the Aztecs refer to the directions north, south, east, and west, respectively, and create an invisible cross on the composition. The artist also paints a simple feather headdress onto the German girl that culturally connects her to the Aztec goddess and, with a dose of humor, to the contemporary community known as "German Indians."¹⁹ At the annual Karl May²⁰ festival in Radebeul, Germany, the nineteenth-century writer's hometown, this German quasi-cult group celebrates Native American culture by adopting their dress, living in tepees, and reenacting their indigenous dances and rituals. *The Prayer in the Forest* imagines a different religious norm if the Aztecs had defeated the Europeans.

Chagoya applies the same ideology to his large-scale paintings on amate paper from the mid-1990s. Amate—wild fig bark—was the material traditionally used by the Aztecs for their codex books,²¹ another art form with which Chagoya engages directly and with which the large amate paintings have a relation.²² *Xenophobic Nightmare in a Foreign Language* (1994; p. 60) brings together Aztec, Catholic, and contemporary political references in a three-part portrait of Pete Wilson, California's governor from 1991 through 1999. Perhaps best remembered for his anti-immigrant prejudice, Wilson likely owed his 1994 reelection to his support of Proposition 187, which deprived illegal aliens of the right to receive public education and general services. By incorporating African-language text into this work, Chagoya likens Wilson's treatment of Mexican immigrants to the system of apartheid, the ethnic classification and separation that, since 1948, had denied those same rights to South Africa's blacks. That practice was finally overturned in 1994, when the first free democratic elections were held in that country. In *Xenophobic Nightmare*, Chagoya sacrifices Wilson to the stereotyped naked, dark-skinned Aztec cannibals. The governor appears in full body in the

upper left corner of the composition; then decapitated, disemboweled, and dismembered in the lower right; and finally, with his head and organs dumped into a fiery cauldron in the lower left. Indeed, this disturbing activity and visual narrative would qualify as xenophobe Wilson's worst nightmare. An Afrikaans-language text that crosses the main image reads, "*Ek wil nou opstaan,*" meaning, "I want to wake up now."²³

Xenophobic Nightmare comprises additional elements, including a red and black bar in the upper right, representing duality or a "dialectical symbol [that may have been] part of a Pre-Columbian counting system."²⁴ In the lower right, a birdlike figure with a radiating head gestures toward the image of cannibalism as speaking symbols come from its mouth. The creature derives from pictorial catechisms that were commissioned from indigenous artists by the Spanish at the time of the Conquest²⁵ in order to teach Catholic doctrines to the native people in a visual language. And finally, a ghost image emerges from the backside of this and the other amate works, emulating the effect of ink seeping through the reverse side of the stuccoed pages of the ancient Aztec and Mayan codices (plural of *codex*, Latin for *block of wood*, *book*). Chagoya appropriates the image of a jaguar consuming a dialectical symbol covered with eyes,²⁶ the supernatural representation of an Aztec priest that consumes hearts.²⁷ Directly related to the Pete Wilson cannibalism scene, the hunting jaguar image derives from the *Codex Borgia*, one of the few surviving pre-Conquest manuscripts, which served as a pictorial reference for Aztec rituals.

The ancient Aztec and Mayan codices hold an important place in Chagoya's oeuvre and in Mesoamerican history. These largely pictorial pre-Columbian and Spanish-colonial-era books provide some of the best records of the culture of the Aztec and Maya. The sometimes two-sided, accordion-folded, amate-paper books, generally viewed from right to left, functioned in a performative manner²⁸ rather than as traditional books that would either

be spoken or read. Subjects of the codices vary and include history, genealogy, astronomy, calendrical cycles, herbs and medicine, and religious rites and rituals. Soon after the Conquest, the Spanish priests and soldiers burned entire libraries of indigenous codices and manuscripts across Mesoamerica, essentially destroying the historical record of the indigenous population in order to write a new state-sanctioned history according to the Spaniards. In *Codex Ixtlilxochitl*, the author describes the destruction of the Texcoco library built by King Nezahualcoyotl in the second half of the fifteenth century, a few decades before Columbus arrived in the Caribbean islands. The enormous library contained dozens of rooms filled with thousands of books created by the Aztec people and their neighboring cultures. When the Spaniards incinerated these books in huge bonfires, there was a massive indigenous suicide.²⁹ Ultimately, some codices escaped destruction, because they were shipped back to Europe as souvenirs of the conquerors. A mere twenty-two survive—three Mayan, nineteen Mixtec/Zapotec,³⁰ and no Aztec—and for the most part continue to reside in European collections, far from their lands of origin.

Chagoya's move to the United States precipitated his interest in the codex and the richly layered culture he left behind in Mexico: "Where you grow up leaves a mark on you. When I left Mexico, I began to reevaluate my experience there... the burning of the books was a major [piece of] history for me."³¹ He goes on to imagine:

What would have happened if most of the books had survived,... the books of medicine, astronomy, the books of their histories? I can't help myself but to fantasize again when I was sitting on top of the pyramids. I feel this need to see more of those books. That's when I began to do my own versions of them [using only] visual symbolism, [but] now from the cultures I've encountered, which are not only pre-Columbian, but also American comic books, Mexican comic books, religious iconography, the Virgin of Guadalupe, and other bloody Catholic things.³²

Chagoya has maintained an ongoing engagement with the codex for the past fifteen years. He created his first codex in 1992 to commemorate the quincentennial of Christopher Columbus's so-called discovery of the New World. Focusing on the subject of invasion in general terms, Chagoya again employs his "reverse anthropology" in his ten-panel, amate-paper *Tales from the Conquest/Codex* (1992; p. 66). The book begins with a panel depicting ancient Aztec warriors armed with arrows, clubs, and shields attacking a U.S. Army tank with two soldiers and several allies trapped in an enclosed space. A chapel adorned with pictures of the Virgin Mary and of Christ on the Cross burns while an indigenous person attempts to douse the fire with water. In the composition from which this work is drawn, *Yepeuqyaoyotl ycha ciucoma* (1520), the Spanish—rather Chagoya's U.S. military men—occupy the center of the composition. Both images show the Aztec ruler Moctezuma atop the wall calling for an end to the attack. A thrown rock hits and kills him. According to legend, "Now began the war in the house in which Moctezuma was."³³ The date was June 27, 1520.

Another page of *Tales of the Conquest/Codex* parallels three female icons from different cultures and time periods: the Catholic Virgin of Guadalupe, the dramatic Aztec goddess Coatlicue (She of the Serpent Skirt), and a miniature Wonder Woman with her invisible jet. The contemporary superheroine's diminutive stature illustrates Chagoya's concept of reverse anthropology. In comparison to her colossal ancient Mexican counterparts, the message is clear; here, Mexican culture trumps U.S. American culture. Throughout the codex, Chagoya uses color Xerox transfers from the Codex Borgia. Chagoya's page 5, signified in the upper left corner by a dash from the ancient Mayan dot [one] and dash [five] numbering system that orders all codices, depicts Quetzacóatl and Mictlantecuhtli (right and left).³⁴ These gods of life and death are taken on by American comic book heroes Wonder Woman and Batman, while Superman stands by and exclaims, "Hey! Hold on! I've got a million questions!"

Superman raises an excellent point in regard to understanding Chagoya's complex codices, which number approximately twenty-five unique works since 1992 and eight limited-edition print codices since 1998 with more to come. On the one hand, they are nonlinear narratives and essentially abstract, just like the majority of surviving ancient Mesoamerican codices, which continue to resist interpretation by scholars to this day. On the other hand, as contemporary people, most of us do not have the education, cultural background, or equipment to read the specific ancient Mayan and Aztec symbols. Nor do we possess the multicultural experience to decode the more obscure modern references in Chagoya's codices. However, even with the knowledge of every source image in a single codex, there is no decipherable story with a traditional beginning and end. And that is the point. As the culmination of Chagoya's artistic practice, the codex brings together all of the visual symbols and thematic subjects of his socially- and politically-engaged times and worlds of oppositions—through matters of war, border and immigration issues, religious differences, cultural clashes and connections, Washington and global politics, homages to artists, lost histories, and editorial cartooning. These nuanced, imaginary adventures with a social conscience could exist only in the space of a dream. In recalling a pre-Columbian religious principle, Enrique Chagoya seems to locate the otherworldly place where these nonlinear, cyclical fantasy worlds reside. "Life is a dream. When you die, you wake up."³⁵

NOTES

- 1 Enrique Chagoya, interview by Paul Karlstrom, transcript from tape recording, San Francisco, 25-26 July and 5 August 2001, *Archives of American Art*, Smithsonian Institution, 18.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Throughout this essay, U.S. American will be used to differentiate United States American from Latin American, Central American, Mesoamerican, etc., to avoid possible confusion with the larger area of The Americas, which consists of the continents of North America and South America and their related island regions.
- 4 Derived from Medieval Christian art, a *mandorla* is an oval- or almond-shaped form that traditionally surrounds the figures of Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary.
- 5 The Virgin of Guadalupe first appeared to Aztec Indian Juan Diego (his Christian name) outside Mexico City on December 12, 1531, about ten years after the Spanish Conquest of the Aztec nation. Her name has been a matter of controversy, given that the Spanish word "Guadalupe" is remarkably similar in pronunciation to the Nahuatl (Aztec) word *coatlaxopeuh*, which actually refers to the Aztec serpent-god Quetzacóatl.
- 6 This reading of the gesture follows Renaissance convention. See Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 67.
- 7 For more on California politics and education, see Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future* (New York: The New Press, 1988).
- 8 Chagoya, interview in *Archives of American Art*, 3.
- 9 Ibid., 3-4.
- 10 Chagoya moved to the United States with his wife at the time, the U.S. American Jeanine Craemer, who was originally from Berkeley, California. They met while doing social work in the Veracruz countryside in Mexico. She was part of a Christian group working with immigrant workers in California.
- 11 Begun in 1983, while Chagoya was working toward his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the San Francisco Art Institute, the artist continued to work on the ten-piece series while in graduate school at the University of California at Berkeley. He completed the last image in the series after graduation, and it was printed later.
- 12 *Capricho* is the Spanish word for "whim."
- 13 Guston's version includes the banner reading "Poor Richard" with the characters of Checkers the spaniel standing on top of the reclining Richard Nixon, the cone-headed Vice President Spiro Agnew with a pronounced nose, Attorney General John Mitchell smoking a pipe, and then National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger represented by his signature thick-rimmed glasses.
- 14 The oil wells could be a dual reference. In addition to the Middle East, they could also refer to Bush's career as a West Texas oilman and the buyout that made him a millionaire, hence "Rich W."
- 15 Guston's setting for Nixon was Key Biscayne, the president's Florida island retreat, where he was vacationing when the Watergate scandal broke.
- 16 Chagoya's studio is jam-packed with the source materials that invade his works. Piles of books, magazines, comic books, postcards, and random images cover his work table, while the artist maintains files of American comics; Mexican comics; Catholic icons; various paintings; racial stereotypes; Renaissance architectural drawings; anatomical drawings; popular collectibles; dinosaurs and natural history; early illustrations of the Americas, Asia, and Africa; nineteenth-century Mexican painting; nineteenth-century French painting; and political figures and images from *Newsweek*, *The Economist*, and *The New Yorker*.
- 17 Coatlicue is a complex figure known variously as the mother of gods who gave birth to the moon, stars, and the god of sun and war; the goddess of life, death, and rebirth; of fire and fertility; and the protector of women who die in childbirth.
- 18 Coyolxauhqui masterminded the decapitation of her pregnant mother Coatlicue. At the time of her death, she gave birth to son Huitzilopochtli, the god of sun and war, who promptly killed his sister (who became the Moon) and four hundred warriors. In another version of the legend, Coatlicue gives birth to Huitzilopochtli just in time to be saved by him.
- 19 U.S. American artists Andrea Robbins and Max Becher, whose work deals largely with cultural dislocation and hybridization, produced a series of documentary-style, color photographs of the German Indians in 1997-98.
- 20 Popular German writer Karl May (1842-1912) is best known for his adventure tales of the American West in which Native Americans were the heroes and white men the villains.
- 21 Animal skin—deer hide in particular—was also used for ancient Aztec books.
- 22 In fact, some of the large amate paintings exist as single pages in Chagoya's codex books. For example, *Crossing II* (1994; p. 58) is page 7 in the codex *El regreso del canibal macrobiótico (The Return of the Macrobiotic Cannibal)* (1998; p. 91).
- 23 However violent Chagoya's images are, he is sincere. It is never his goal to shock. He states, "I feel frustrated with a lot of things in the world, and rather than going crazy on the street, I just dump it into my artwork. That's personally what I need to do, just to feel free in expressing my ideas.... I like to share my anxieties with the world." See Chagoya, interview in *Archives of American Art*, 56.
- 24 Mel Watkin, *Enrique Chagoya, Utopian Cannibal: Adventures in Reverse Anthropology*, exh. cat. (St. Louis: Forum for Contemporary Art, 2001), 19.
- 25 Led by conquistador Hernán Cortés, the Spanish Conquest of the Aztec Empire (Mexico) took place from 1519 to 1521.
- 26 The jaguar source image is reproduced in Gisele Diaz and Alan Rodgers, *The Codex Borgia: A Full-Color Restoration of the Ancient Mexican Manuscript* (New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 54.
- 27 See Bruce E. Byland, "Introduction and Commentary," in *The Codex Borgia*, xxi.
- 28 It is generally believed that priests and leaders used the books as visual tools in presentations and performances to groups.
- 29 Condensed history of King Neza's library taken from Enrique Chagoya, "Artist Statement," in *Codex Espangliensis: From Columbus to the Border Patrol* (San Francisco: City Lights Books and Moving Parts Press, 2000).
- 30 The pre-Columbian Mixtec and Zapotec civilizations controlled the state of Oaxaca before being conquered by the Aztecs approximately thirty years before the Spanish Conquest.
- 31 Chagoya, interview in *Archives of American Art*, 36.
- 32 Ibid, 37.
- 33 See "Yepeuqyaoyotl ycha ciuco ma" in the digital collections on the Washington State University Web site at <http://content.wsulibs.wsu.edu>.
- 34 The source image can be seen in Diaz and Rodgers, *The Codex Borgia*, 22, and explanation in Byland, "Introduction and Commentary," *The Codex Borgia*, xxviii.
- 35 Artist in telephone conversation with the author, 2 July 2007.