

**About the Cover Art:
Introducing Joaquin Alejandro Newman
and the Forrealism Movement**



The Anzaldúa portrait on the cover of this Special (Summer 2006) issue of *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* is a work of the artist Joaquin Alejandro Newman. The artwork was originally intended for a Días de los Muertos (Days of the Dead) ofrenda (altar) that Joaquin's partner Evelyn Orantes and he created at the Fine Arts Museum/Legion of Honor in San Francisco. The painting has received many great comments, and has been a wonderful conversation piece at several shows in the Bay Area.

Joaquin Alejandro Newman was born in 1973 in Oakland, and he currently lives and paints in San Francisco's Mission District. Joaquin has studied fine art and digital design at UC Santa Cruz and Cabrillo College and works as a painter, graphic designer, and illustrator. He has taught at the Academy of Art College, held workshops at the Oakland Museum of California, and made presentations to many classrooms around the Bay Area. Outside of works related to his mixed Indian heritage and explorations of other indigenous nations, recent paintings examine the delicate balance between nature and technology, faith and reason, and the Spirit that exists in all things despite the over-culture's attempts at extermination.

ABOUT THE FORREALISM MOVEMENT

"The Forrealism Movement is composed of a group of mixed Indian and Latino artists who create works collectively, drawing from our own traditions and those of our elders who have shared gifts of their wisdom and experience. We do not purport to be religiously bound to these traditions; rather we strive to deconstruct racial barriers in order to construct cultural bridges toward a greater indigenous consciousness.

"As urban Indians working in a city where many cultures come together, the scope of our work spans the Americas. It is not limited to symbolism from our particular cultural

background; we serve our community more generally. No one of these traditions defines us, nor do we attempt to expose the complexities and rites of traditions that require specific intention to understand.

“We strive instead to relate concepts and ideological systems and natural cycles that all people have in common. Certain of our images have elicited extremely enthusiastic response. The popularity of these images attests to an innate call for people of all cultures to grasp cyclical concepts of place and being. Our intention is to remind, remember, recover, realize:

- Remind us of all our relations,
- Remember our ancestors and the knowledge they hold that supports our collective survival,
- Recover lost wisdom from cultures that have suffered imperial extermination, and
- Realize, to make real, that knowledge through our creative endeavors and collaborations.

“European artists throughout the ages have looked to the works of Greek and Roman mythology and theory for inspiration and insight. We pay homage to great civilizations of pre-Columbian Americas and acknowledge the 21st century canon of Native American art. We look to ancient and traditional indigenous source material, including but not limited to painted books, vases, monumental inscriptions and architecture. These many artifacts, along with stories from our ancestors, contextualize our work as honoring the great masters of indigenous art of the Americas. The deliberate destruction of countless original meso-American literature and monumental artifacts by imperialist corporate forces illustrates how powerful this sacred knowledge is. We attempt to convey the importance of respectfully investigating the remaining documents, while consulting wisdom carriers who hold the true knowledge to ancient traditions.

“Many of our people are wary of sharing information for a variety of reasons. We understand that with sharing information there is always risk. The many different sources that describe the symbolism of certain images vary in their interpretations, and as in any discipline—such as decipherment theory—conclusions drawn cannot always be consistent. Our intention is to relate these concepts and to educate ourselves and others so that our indigenous cultures can survive the onslaught of cultural genocide that they continually endure.”

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