

Claudia Guzman

Professor Kryczka

HUM 004

26 May 2025

### The Chicano Mind (1973)

This visual analysis report will be about *The Chicano Mind* (1973) by Guillermo Martinez located in the C Building of Pasadena City College. At first glance, the painting can look overwhelming because of all the designs and the different colors used. It gives an anxious but curious feeling to its viewers. As a PCC student, I have passed this painting many times and I never realized how much detail it has and the story it's telling. Every painting in history has a significant story to it and it takes extra time for a person to analyze what the artist could have been trying to say. When looking at this specific painting, the biggest part of the piece is at the center which is showing a shirtless man with a look of agony and anger. At first glance of this man, it looks very similar to the image of Jesus Christ on the cross which is a very important image for the Catholic church. The Catholic church has the most people who practice the religion and the majority of the people involved in Catholicism are of Hispanic/Chicano descent. This brings me to the surrounding images in the painting, which include a wide range of people's heads. The other people shown in the painting on the top and left side of the Christ looking man appear to be Hispanic. They all have characteristics of a hispanic individual such as a mustache, long thick hair, and sombreros.

The entire painting has many significant aspects that are sending different messages all around but, the most powerful part of the piece to me is the different people shown on each corner as I previously mentioned. On the left bottom corner, it shows a group of hispanic men who appear older, maybe around their 50's-60's. They could be representing farm workers because a few of them are wearing sombreros. This can be because of how much work these workers would put in a day when working these hard labor jobs when many of these Mexicans migrated to America in the 19th century after the US Mexican War and during the gold rush in California. Since America saw how desperate they were for jobs, it could have been the reason they were given the hard labor jobs. Above the first group of people there is another circle of people shown and they appear older. They might be representing the older generation of hispanics who have encountered hardships as well and possibly discrimination. The majority of the figures in this circle of the painting are also wearing sombreros and the women are wearing head covers as well. The top group of people in the painting are shown in a brighter green and are all looking in the same direction, which can show them as brave and a leader of something. One of the people shown looks very similar to Cesar Chavez, who was an important part of Chicano history when the labor laws were insufficient. There is one figure that has facial features but is covered by many white stars and a few hints of red and blue, which could be showing an American individual. They might have been painted this way because the artist wanted the Chicano figures to appear more important. The other group of figures on the top right corner all appear to be powerful, Hispanic men. They can be representing leaders of many Chicano movements in History. On the bottom right corner, the figures seem to be showing mostly White Americans due to the facial features and the accessories they have. A few of the heads are

wearing a military hat and this could be representing the men who had to fight in wars such as WWI and WWII. The other figures appear to be older, perhaps people who represent the American Congress or Government. These people are significant because they were responsible for importing different labor laws and limiting the Hispanic community from liberation. Each one of these figures might be representing different races and what role they played in this historical time. The man in the middle as I previously mentioned seems to be representing a possible Chicano man who might feel distraught with all of these different people wanting to influence him or control him. There are also many fists pointing outwards in different colors and a fist can usually mean a sign of power. As a student looking more into the details of this piece, I realize that it does have significant meaning to the Chicano/Hispanic community and their history. I consider myself a part of this community because of the culture I grew up in and where all my family is from. In today's society, the Hispanic community might have similar feelings of being excluded or controlled because of their race and I believe the figure in this painting was supposed to represent that since our Government can change our laws or rights and it can feel scary to be a non-white individual living in the United States. Overall, the painting is really beautiful and does catch the attention of anyone who walks by it.