



# VISIONES: TACO SHOP POETS

"VISIONES: LATINO ART & CULTURE"  
CAPTURES THE RICH CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC  
EXPRESSIONS OF LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES

—From Mural Painters to Break Dancers to Spoken Word Poets  
Latino Artists Take Center Stage in Special Six-Part Series—

**VISIONES: LATINO ART & CULTURE** is the first PBS series to focus exclusively on Latino artistic expression in the United States. This landmark presentation will examine the nation's diverse Latino communities and how they have been able to keep their artistic expressions alive while creating new and unique visions that contribute to art in America.

**VISIONES** is a journey through the music, words, dance, painting and performance of rich Latino cultures made more complex and fascinating by their history in our country. The series explores how contemporary Latino artists continue to build on rich traditions that reflect a unique multi-ethnic experience, taking established art forms and reinventing them, constantly challenging themselves and the communities which nurture them. From New York City's breakdancers to mural-painters in Los Angeles and Chicago to theater in Texas, the series offers a unique cross section of Latino artists working today.

**VISIONES** also examines the origins of Latino art and culture through storytelling and vivid imagery, depicting the struggles and victories that the artists endured to continue their artistic interpretation.

Four years in the making, **VISIONES** is a co-production of Galán Inc. and the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC), and is presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), with Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB) as co-presenter. Funding for **VISIONES** was also provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Houston Endowment and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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## **EPISODE DESCRIPTIONS**

The social, historical and cultural context of each thirty-minute episode is made clear by the analysis and commentary of artists, scholars and critics. The six half-hour episodes are described below.

### ***Episode One***

The Latino Mural Movement of the 1960's, Nuyorican spoken word, and editorial cartoonist Lalo Lopez are featured in the first episode of the series. Created in New York, Nuyorican spoken word is a form of artistic expression that emerged from the tumultuous 1960s and continues to influence and inspire the American Puerto Rican community. The episode includes interviews with Nuyorican poets Pedro Pietri, Piri Thomas and Caridad (La Bruja).



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### ***Episode Two***

Episode two features Miriam Colon and the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater Company (PRTT) of New York, Tejana musical artist Selena, and the Santero art tradition of New Mexico. This episode unveils the stories of New Mexico artisans known as Santeros who engage in an art form heavily steeped in history and tradition. Santeros present an interesting juxtaposition of imposed religion and Native American culture. Santero artists Charlie Carillo and Nick Hernandez and historians Sabine Olivari and Sylvia Rodríguez discuss their views.

### ***Episode Three***

Episode three features Luis Valdez and the legendary Teatro Campesino, a segment of San Antonio's Day of the Dead Celebration, the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe as a Latina icon, experimental border filmmaker Willie Varela, and a profile of Chicago's soapbox artist Carlos Cortez. This episode also explores San Francisco performance artist Guillermo Gomez Peña, performance troupes such as ASCO, and performance art pioneers the Royal Chicano Airforce.

### ***Episode Four***

Episode four begins with New York's Latino Hip-Hop and dance cultures. The Hip-Hop story looks at the new wave of Latinos who took Hip-Hop and created a culture that revolutionized the genre. It features New York Hip-Hop dancing couple Rokafella and Kwikstep. Then it travels to Miami's unique Afro-Cuban sound. The second segment takes us to Miami to experience a music that is a blending of traditional Cuban music, explosive jazz and American Pop called the Miami Sound. Musical artist Willie Chirino is featured in this segment. The episode ends in Los Angeles with modern dance pioneer Rudy Perez. Though legally blind, Perez continues to create and inspire as a teacher and choreographer for his Los Angeles based Modern Dance Company.

### ***Episode Five***

Episode five highlights the Taco Shop Poets of Southern California, early tent theater of the Southwest called Carpas, and performance art in San Francisco. The Taco Shop Poets, a group of Chicano poets living in San Diego, blend the spoken word with lively beats. The poets strive to take their social and political poetry to where people congregate—the Taco Shops.

### ***Episode Six***

Episode six features the history of Salsa music and dance in Philadelphia, the first Mexican-American Prima Ballerina Evelyn Cisneros, Tejana music pioneer Lydia Mendoza, and the father of Chicano music and National Medal of Arts recipient, Lalo Guerrero. A segment unveils the trajectory of Salsa music includes commentary on world renowned performers Celia Cruz and Tito Puente.