Embracing My Other Half
By Ricardo Pérez
Mexico is the land my family originates from and it's the other half I identify with. Although my family is from Mexico, my siblings and I were born and raised in the States of America. Being Mexican American was nothing to be distraught about but I realized I knew more about American culture than Mexican Culture. Knowing only the very little my parents showed me, it wasn't enough to embrace my other half. We are living in a current society where people get discriminated because of who they are, but I'm here to say there's nothing to be apologetic about. We are who we are and that what makes us unique. You either love yourself or improve yourself. There's no room for hate.
Baile folkórico, which translates to folkloric dance, are traditional dances that embody the regions in which the dancer is from. Each region with its unique characteristics and choreography crafted to mirror the way of life on their land. The regions go from Mexico to Central America. Most of these particular dances are from the regions of Oaxaca, Mexico.
Flor de piña is a folkloric dance that originated by the indigenous people of the region. The dancers wardrobe are textiles covered with vivid colors and it is performed with a pineapple.
Los Matachines are believed to be mimicked figures constructed by one's imagination from the legends told. They dance to beat of the music genre Banda and carry whips. The dances were specifically for men, but women later disguised themselves to join.
Art is another outlet in which creativity is expressed in the Mexican culture. Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo are two of the many artists that are memorable for their work. Bright colors are a big part of the culture and they're definitely shown very well. Like photography, painters are able to capture a moment in time.
Murals are a great way to tell and visually express a story. This mural was on the walls of a classroom at Cal State Northridge. The design of the mural is so well detailed and executed. Although the name is unknown, it has a sense tying back to indigenous roots. Murals like these are need in more places to show that there is more than one story.
This mural is part of the halls of Cal State Northridge. This mural tells 30 years of Chicano past events. There is a Chicano house on campus that is up today, but in the past, it was set on fire. Farm workers are part of the mural because it is a common job for undocumented people. Protests were a big part in which activist brought change in the Chicano movement. The figures in the mural are marching for higher education. Aztec dancers are added to show a part of the traditional way this cultural expresses itself.
This mural is in another classroom at Northridge that pays tribute and acknowledges past events that took place on the campus. The figures are past professors who are no longer there but made a contribution to the movement. Students protested on campus and the police was called to control the students. The students wanted the schools support and they felt they weren't getting it. The police injured a professor, who was siding with the students. It clear that some of the signs say "Support the CSUN16" and "Art is my weapon"
Día de Los Muertos is a very important day in the Mexican community. It's the day we welcome our love ones, who have passed, back to earth. Altars are made and decorated with the love one's favorite things. Pan muerto and fruits are often placed on the altar alongside a picture of the person being honored. This day is a celebration of the lives that were lived. November 1st is dedicated to the children and the following day is for the adults. This is an art piece I made in honor of this day.
"La cultura es lo que, en la muerte, continúa siendo la vida." – André Malraux