



Einar and Jamex de la Torre: *La Belle Epoque*, 2002 (Courtesy of Riverside Art Museum)

THE CHEECH IS A JEWEL IN THE SOCAL CULTURE CROWN

SHANA NYS DAMBROT • JUNE 30, 2022



Einar and Jamex de la Torre: *Feminencia*, 2020



Einar and Jamex de la Torre: *Feminencia*, 2020 (Courtesy of)

Concurrently, *Collidoscope: de la Torre Retro-Perspective* is The Cheech's first temporary exhibition — encompassing almost three decades of work by Einar and Jamex de la Torre, with more than 70 mixed-media works, including blown-glass sculptures, installation art, and examples of the Brothers' newest lenticular pieces. The captivating show was curated by Selene Preciado and developed in partnership with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino, and is slated for a national tour after closing on January 22, 2023.



The de la Torre Brothers at The Cheech (Photo courtesy of Riverside Art Museum)



Einar and Jamex de la Torre: *Critical Mass*, 2002 (Courtesy of Riverside Art Museum)

The permanent collection galleries are centered around a massive site-specific two-story lobby installation — a 26-foot-tall lenticular monolith by the de la Torre brothers commissioned for the space. The spectacular backlit piece comes alive with layered optical illusions, hidden images, and a composition that changes as the viewer moves around it. The de la Torres' central image is a monumental Aztec earth goddess carrying an environmentally minded message about "how to save the planet." The Mother Nature figure emerges from lush botanical ground; as viewers move, she dissolves and becomes a cyborg robot made like a Transformer of lowriders. Nestled within the densely detailed textures are regional sights like windmills, solar panels, train tracks, freeways, and desert landscapes full of native plants.

"It's a lenticular process, which the Brothers have been working on for many years," Cheech explains. "I've been following since they started doing it, when it would look like little crackerjack prizes at first, and then they kept doing it and doing it and doing it, until they broke through. There is a piece up there [part of *Collidoscope* in the second-floor galleries] where they broke through, like wow! It became very dimensional and then I started buying those pieces, and then we commissioned them for this piece. They're the world's recognized authority, I think, in this kind of work; they travel the world and they're getting a big international reputation, which I'm sure will only come to be enhanced. But this is a spectacular piece. A real statement."