

Vibiana Aparicio-Chamberlin, Performance Artist and Author

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In front of my eyes I saw our Mexican children losing their Spanish language. This was the 1960's. And the MIGRA immigration officers were going into Pasadena schools and homes. The Mexican Bicultural club and El Teatro De Los Niños that I directed with Ramona Moran, Lupe Reyes and Lupe Ramirez taught the children, Spanish, Mexican history, photography, folklorico, and theater. The Spanish language was denigrated in the public schools. It was a pride thing that we teach the kids their culture. This pride seemed to be hitting at all different levels. That was when MEChA [the Chicano or Mexican-American organization was taking root all over the Southwest. There was a sense of communicating with people from the other states and the other groups, it was a really supportive thing. Many theater groups such as the Bread and Puppet Theater from New York, The San Francisco Mime Troup, Los Angeles Provisional Theater and East LA's Teatro Urbano assisted in our growth and tours.

We mothers were activists for the youth. Before they had bilingual education in California, before they taught Spanish in the schools, we did it ourselves. We taught the kids in the back yards in the barrios of northwest Pasadena. Then we parents of the Mexican Bicultural Club of Pasadena toured our Teatro de los Niños to the Pasadena public schools as well as the Los Angeles schools, the public libraries, Pasadena City College, Cal State LA and UCLA. Our activism was linked to the activism of the youth in the schools. We're a people with hundreds of years of Southwest culture and history, so we did a lot of art and a lot of theater and music. I encouraged the teatro kids to write their own plays and poems. Then they performed them.

We used our culture to express educational inequality through song, dance, and street theater. My bilingual troupe, Teatro de Los Niños toured schools and libraries in Pasadena, Altadena, La Cañada, San Gabriel, Alhambra, La Verne, East Los Angeles and

community colleges such as Pasadena City College, East Los Angeles College. Los Angeles City College and Cal State LA and UCLA. We toured the Pasadena schools at the invitation of the Department of Intergroup Education headed by Walta Williams, Yvette Lightfoot, and Phil Gutierrez. We toured Mexico City, Yucatan, Texas, and Colorado with the support of The Pasadena Presbyterian Church and TENAZ, the international theater groups of -Aztlán in the 1970's – 1980s. The teatro children grew with confidence and critical thinking skills. They've grown up to be professors, artists, nurses, business and political leaders and community activists.

—Vibiana Aparicio-Chamberlin, Performance Artist and Author

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Immaculate Heart College, 1964, Hollywood.

Pasadena City College, 1965- 2016

Bilingual Teaching credential, University of Southern California, 1983.

MFA, Antioch University, 2018.

Mi Amor, A Memoir, Bambaz Press 2015.

The Getty's Pacific Standard Time Featured Artist and Poet, 2014-2018