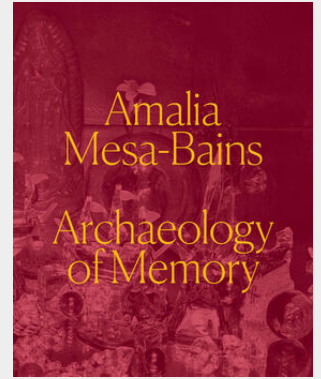Perez / Pérez / Fernandez

Amalia Mesa-Bains

Archaeology of Memory

This first major retrospective of Amalia Mesa-Bains unearths her significant contributions to Chicanx/Latinx art and feminism. Best known for her pioneering altar installations, Amalia Mesa-Bains is one of the most innovative feminist and Latinx artists of her generation. In her forty-year career as an artist, activist, educator, and scholar, she has explored the experiences, spiritual practices, and histories of Mexican American women and addressed the colonial erasure and recovery of Mexican, African American, and Indigenous Californians. Appropriately called an "archaeological" practice, Mesa-Bains's art creates sacred spaces imbued with cultural memory, leading viewers on a magical journey of discovery through what might otherwise be lost to existing canons of history. Amalia Mesa-Bains: The Archaeology of Memory is the exhibition catalog accompanying the first major retrospective of her work, bringing her installations from the 1970s to the present together for the first time. Featuring an essay by the artist and an interview with her, the book also brings together top-tier scholars who explore the ecofeminism, migrant histories, spirituality, and politics of erasure that ground her interdisciplinary practice. As a whole, the book cements Mesa-Bains's place as a trailblazing artist within the history of art. Published in association with the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. Exhibition dates: - Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive: February 4-August 13, 2023 - Phoenix Art Museum: November 2023-March 2024 - El Museo del Barrio, New York City: April 2024-August 2024 - San Antonio Art Museum: October 2024-January 2025 - Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Arts and Culture, Riverside, CA: March 2025-August 2025

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