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## Guide to the Richard Montoya Culture Clash Collection

Special Collections & Archives

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**Language of Material:** Multiple languages

**Contributing Institution:** Special Collections & Archives

**Title:** Richard Montoya Culture Clash Collection

**Creator:** Montoya, Richard, 1959-

**Identifier/Call Number:** URB.CC-RM

**Extent:** 0.50 linear feet

**Date (inclusive):** 1989-2004

**Abstract:** A founding member of Culture Clash, Richard Montoya was born in San Diego in 1959, the son of two educators. Culture Clash was founded on Cinco de Mayo, 1984 at René Yañez's Galería de la Raza/ Studio 24 in San Francisco's Mission District by Richard Montoya, Ricardo Salinas, Herbert Sigüenza, and José Antonio Burciaga. Culture Clash's brand of Chicano comedic theater has brought them to renowned venues including the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Lincoln Center in New York City, the Huntington in Boston, the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, The Alley Theatre in Houston, Texas, the Seattle Repertory Theatre in Seattle, and the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

**Language of Material:** English, Spanish; Castilian

**Biographical Information:**

Richard Montoya was born in San Diego in 1959, the son of two educators. Richard's father is José Montoya, poet laureate of Sacramento and founding member of the Royal Chicano Air Force, an artist collective that served as printmakers for the United Farm Workers. The family moved to Oakland, where his father taught at Oakland High School. Montoya attended the California College of Arts and Crafts. His family moved further north to small towns including Marysville and Lincoln.

Culture Clash was founded on Cinco de Mayo, 1984 at René Yañez's Galería de la Raza/ Studio 24 in San Francisco's Mission District by Richard Montoya, Ricardo Salinas, Herbert Sigüenza, and José Antonio Burciaga. Sigüenza had trained as a visual artist, Montoya's background was in spoken word poetry, and Salinas had performed as a break-dancer and bilingual rapper. The group was originally called Comedy Fiesta and conceived of as a troupe of six actors, comedians, and poets including Marga Gómez and Monica Palacios. This group worked with Luis Valdez's *El Teatro Campesino*. The group eventually fragmented, and Culture Clash was formed with four members Burciaga, Montoya, Salinas, and Sigüenza. Burciaga left the group in 1988 and died in 1996.

Some of their best-known plays include *The Mission* (1988), *A Bowl of Beings* (1991), *S.O.S.—Comedy for These Urgent Times* (1992, written in response to the Los Angeles Riots), *Carpa Clash* (1993; carpas are Mexican vaudevillian tent shows), *Culture Clash Unplugged* (1994), *Radio Mambo: Culture Clash Invades Miami* (1994), *Bordertown* (1998), *Nuyorican Stories* (1999), and *Mission Magic Mystery Tour* (2001). Many of these pieces were site-specific commissioned works. *Bowl of Beings* is particularly well-known as it was filmed for PBS' Great Performances series in 1992. Culture Clash performed their adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Birds* for South Coast Repertory Theater in San Diego, California and the Berkeley Repertory Theater in Berkeley, California in 1998.

Culture Clash's first book, *Culture Clash: Life, Death, and Revolutionary Comedy*, appeared in 1998. This publication includes scripts of many of their plays. In 2001 they published *Culture Clash in AmeriCCa*, a book that explores what it means to be an American through a series of vignettes. The book was inspired by the show *Culture Clash Coast to Coast*, which premiered at the Japanese Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

Through the efforts of comedian "Cheech" Marin, Culture Clash developed a show for Fox Television, entitled Fox Television's "Culture Clash." The show ran from 1993 to 1995 with a total of 30 episodes. The comedy sketch show featured guest appearances from Edward James Olmos, Jimmy Smits, Maria Conchita Alonso, and Dolores Huerta.

Los Boys de CC have been featured together and separately in several feature films. All three appeared in 1992's *Encino Man as Loco*, Enrique, and Chuly. Montoya was in *Lucky Luke* (1994), *Falling Down* (1993), and *Hero* (1992). Sigüenza can be seen in *Star Maps* (1997) and *Hero* (1992). In 1992, they co-produced and wrote *Columbus on Trial*, an award-winning short film.

The members of Culture Clash also work on their own theatrical projects. Herbert Sigüenza was in *Yo Soy Cantinflas*, based on the life of the Mexican comedy star.

**Scope and Contents**

The *Richard Montoya Culture Clash Collection* includes a flyer, a mailing, a newspaper clipping, a program, and a performance schedule. The collection has been divided into three series: **Plays** (1993-2004), **Troupe** (1994-2003), and **Personal** (1989).

Series I, **Plays**, contains materials related to specific plays.

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Series II, **Troupe**, contains materials that were created by and for the Culture Clash Troupe that are not part of the first series.

Series III, **Personal**, contains personal materials from Montoya.

**Arrangement of Materials:**

Series I: Plays, 1993-2004

Series II: Troupe, 1994-2003

Series III: Personal, 1989

**Electronic Format:**

Digital reproductions of selected items in this collection are available electronically as a part of the [Latina\(o\) Cultural Heritage Archives](#) project.

**Related Material**

[Ric Salinas Culture Clash Collection, 1978-2003](#)

[Herbert Sigüenza Culture Clash Collection, 1984-2005](#)

**General**

Other Information:

This collection was processed in part under a U.S. Department of Education Title V Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Grant.

**Conditions Governing Access:**

The collection is open for research use.

**Conditions Governing Use:**

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**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Richard Montoya, 2003.

For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the [Citing Archival Materials](#) guide.

**Processing Information:**

Robert G. Marshall, Rebecca S. Graff; February 2004

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Documents

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**Series I: Plays, 1993-2004**

Box 1, Folder 1	<b>AmeriCCa - Yale Repertory Theatre: schedule, November 2003-May 2004</b>
Box 1, Folder 2	<b>Carpa Clash - Mark Taper Forum: program, 1993</b>
Box 1, Folder 3	<b>Señor Discretion Himself - Arena Stage: invitation; postcard, 2004 April 15</b>
Folder 1	<b>Posters for <i>Culture Clash in AmeriCCa</i> Performance at the Berkeley Repertory</b>
Folder 2	<b><i>A Bowl of Beings</i> print with Culture Clash Logo, by Ignacio Gomez</b>
Folder 3	<b>Poster for <i>The Birds</i>, ca. 1998</b>

**Series II: Troupe, 1994-2003**

Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Big Top Locos - Cypress Hill Rage Against the Machines FOBIA: flyer, 1994 October 22</b>
Folder 4	<b>Thank You Card for <i>Chavez Ravine</i>, by the Students and Faculty of Fairfax Magnet Center for the Visual Arts, 2003 June 18</b>

**Series III: Personal, 1989**

Box 1, Folder 5	<b>"Teatro Campesino Actor Injured in SF Shooting," <i>Register-Pajaronian</i> article, 1989 September 8</b>
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