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Initially, I was mesmerized by the powerful image of Rosie the riveter as my journey's guide in reviewing my work for this show. I have long loved and related to Rosie's spirit, so visible in her countenance and mighty muscles, but I found myself concerned that the spiritual focus of my work was somehow out of step with Rosie's intent and the theme: LabOratory. Curious that I was too ethereal or esoteric of a worker, communicator to party with the likes of Rosie, I decided to dismantle and reassemble the different definitions of "the word" and see if there was anything I wasn't knowing or seeing yet. This is what I found:

LABOR-

Physical or mental exertion, especially when difficult or exhausting; work;

Process of child birth.

ORATORY-

The art of public speaking;

A place for prayer, such as a small private chapel.

LABORATORY-

A place for practice, observation, or testing.

As I explored these separate elements, the meanings shifted and lifted; opened and expanded like a flower into an endless sky, and sweet Rosie, I found unexpected and personal relevance.

As I create(labor), I allow the largest portions of my multidimensional self to communicate(oratory). My body and my living(laboratory) serve as both container and point of study and practice. This becomes public when I share my work. Like the word: LabOratory, I embody, I am, I express all things at once. What a lovely. What a layered. Word.

In this light, I can perceive all of my work to adhere to the concept LabOratory...which then poses a curious dilemma: what work then to share?

Labor makes me think of children and strength and endurance.

Oratory makes me think of mouths and speech and inspiration.

Laboratory makes me think of embodiment and experimentation and ascension.

Rosie, what do you think?

When I look at Rosie, she speaks not with her mouth, but with her eyes. She speaks not with her words, but with her body. She speaks not with sound but with the force and power of her being. And so this is my criteria for choosing these 3 pieces.

MEANING

These 3 are part of my Chicana Buddha Series.

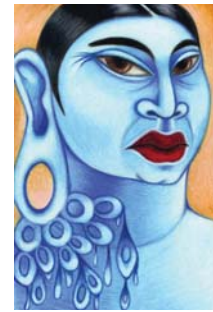


PINK CHICANA BUDDHA:

Pink, the color of the desert sunset. As a child, it is in the sunset that I found my face, my sense of SELF, my reflection when I could not find it in the media and the outside world that surrounded me. The breath of this Buddha is so strong as to create ornamentation for the openings in her own ears. She who decorates herself with herself knows her own beauty and power.

BLUE CHICANA BUDDHA:

Blue, the color of the sky and sea. Blue is the expanse of the eternal. Blue speaks to the continuity of life, generations upon generations of lesson and wisdom represented by the numerous openings in her ears. They are long and hard earned like the beautiful lobes of the Buddha.



BLACK CHICANA BUDDHA:

Black, the color of night, the color of the soul, the color of all colors gathered together equally. Black is completion. This Buddha can carry the weight of gold, of value, of self-worth learned and cherished.



As I began this series I looked at Buddhas from around the world. Not the smiling, soft Buddhas, but the ones that expressed the steadiness of endurance, the gravity of wisdom, the fortitude of inner peace in a world of lesson based on imbalanced power.

This is Chicana to me. This is Woman to me. This is spirit in action, a state of spirit so fully embodied that full empowerment and peace become one steady gaze of truth.

Rosie inspired women during WWII to step up and out of their designated roles to do what had to be done for the sake of humanity. Today my Chicana Buddhas are my Rosie's.

LABOR. ORATORY. LABORATORY. I AM.

