

Border Crossing

title *(Cruzandro El Rio Bravo)*

artist **Luis Jiménez**



Location: South lawn of LeBaron Hall

Materials:

Fiberglass with urethane finish

Size: 127" x 34" x 54"

Date: 1989

Made Possible by:

College of Family and
Consumer Sciences

About the Work of Art

Border Crossing, a totem-like sculpture, is one of Luis Jiménez's signature works. The sculpture is of a man crossing the border carrying a woman on his shoulders. The woman holds an infant in her arms, sheltering the child from the elements. The sculpture commemorates the hundreds of thousands of Mexicans who have travelled across the southwestern border from Mexico into the United States in search of a better life. The sculpture is a celebration of the immigrant and is dedicated to Jiménez's father who crossed the border illegally with his mother.

The style of *Border Crossing* is typical of Jiménez's other works of art with larger-than-life figures. These figures are depicted in motion to give the feeling of movement towards a goal and a will to survive. At the same time the figures appear fixed in time, exposed and in peril. The sculpture is made of fiberglass, a medium which Jiménez preferred over glass, metal or wood sculpture. Crafting in fiberglass allows the illusion of a flawless finish and gives a look of mass production. The color is a jet aircraft acrylic urethane which is applied to the fiberglass. Once the sculpture is finished, an extraordinarily tactile surface is left, which is a hallmark of Jiménez's style.

University Museums/Art on Campus Program
Iowa State University Ames, Iowa

About the Artist

Luis Jiménez was born in El Paso, Texas in 1940. After high school he attended the University of Texas, Austin and Ciudad Universitaria, Mexico City, Mexico, D.F. After completion of his studies he moved to New York in 1966 where he assisted Seymour Lipton, an accomplished sculptor whose work is also found on the Iowa State University campus. Jiménez's varied works of art consist of sculptures, drawings and prints, and capture the everyday person as a hero through his use of color, form and imagery. As an artist, he was fascinated with popular culture, relating his art work to everyday objects such as cars and plastic. The artwork produced by Jiménez is very personal, and he established himself as a role model for people both inside and outside of the Latino community. Jiménez was named a Goodwill Ambassador from the City of Houston and was awarded the Governor's Award in New Mexico in 1993. He died in June 2006 in Honodo, New Mexico.

Selected Commissions

End of the Trail, 1971-Collection of The University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX

Sodbuster, 1977-City of Fargo, ND and the National Endowment for the Arts

Southwest Pieta, 1981-Albuquerque, NM and the National Endowment for the Arts

Steelworker, 1982-Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, Buffalo, NY

Howl, 1983-Wichita State University, Wichita, KS

Border Crossing, 1984-Otis Art Institute of Parsons School of Design, Los Angeles, CA

Mustang, 1992-Denver International Airport, Denver, CO

Firefighter, 1995-Firefighter's Association, Cleveland, OH

Fiesta Dancers, 1986-General Services Administration, Otay Mesa, CA

What is Art on Campus?

Iowa State's Art on Campus Collection (public art collection) spans over a century, beginning with the design of central campus by Adonijah Welch, Iowa State's first president. Since the 1930s, Iowa State has commissioned, purchased, and received gifts of art that form the Art on Campus Collection. At the height of the Depression, Iowa State College President Raymond Hughes envisioned that the "arts would enrich and provide substantial intellectual exploration into our college curricula."

From 1955 to 1978, public art at Iowa State and around the country experienced lean years. However, following the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts and Art in Public Places programs, public art gained nation-wide momentum. In 1978, Iowa passed the Iowa Art in State Buildings law, which today allows for the acquisition of public works of art for the campus. Private and class gifts also continue to be used to purchase public art.

Border Crossing

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Additional information about the Art on Campus Program, other Art on Campus information sheets and Art on Campus maps are available at the University Museums office, 290 Scheman Building (2nd floor) 515/294-3342, or visit us online at <http://www.museums.iastate.edu>.