Heart and Soul

Oct. 8, 2010-Feb. 2, 2011 Connections Café



IglesiaSanCrisanto by Gina Santi

"Heart and Soul" features two local female artists, photographer Gina Santi and painter Mary Ann Rodriquez-Veatch. Both work in different media yet share commonalities such as Latina heritage and a strong sense of self expression, passion for life and connection with family and community. The artists were asked to comment on the exhibition themes and respond to each other's work.

"We met recently and had the opportunity to share ideas and a bit of our personal lives. We found several things that we have in common: the depiction of Latino-related themes, the passion for the work we do and the conflict between commerce and art: how do we present our work without losing the intimate connection between art and the artist and without turning our work into a flea market commodity?

"Perhaps the most important common trait is that we both are women of Hispanic heritage living in the Southwestern United States. As such, we share the same values regarding kinship, friendship and heritage pride, and we both have struggled to succeed in a society in which, at times, gender and ethnic issues have presented obstacles difficult to overcome. Being Latinas can also be a point of divergence. The common belief is that Latinos are one single ethnic group united by a common language, Spanish. However, the reality is that each country – and even each community – can have very different traditions. ...throughout the Spanish speaking world there are myriads of variations: in food, religions, dress, rituals, and dialects."

Mary Ann Rodriquez-Veatch was born and raised in South Phoenix. She is a self-taught artist and says that her interest in art started at a very young age. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in business management and is currently working on a Master of Science degree in business/public administration from the University of Phoenix. Veatch currently works for the city of Phoenix. Over the past three years, she has concentrated on her art career and has shown in solo and group exhibitions around the Valley at venues such as the Farm at South Mountain, Brios Art Center, Burton Barr Library and the Cesar Chavez Library in Laveen.

Veatch says that much of her passion for art comes from her Mexican heritage, colorful community festivities and the influence of religious imagery while growing up in a large, boisterous and close-nit family. She enjoys using a colorful palette and hopes that her work is a communication of her life and experiences living in the Southwest. "My true inspiration is my family: husband, my children and my grandchild."

Gina Santi was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, and is a free-lance/self-taught photographer currently leaving in Tempe. She received a Bachelor of Sciences degree in industrial relations from the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello in Caracas, Venezuela, and a Master of Arts degree in business administration from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. She earned her teaching certification in secondary education and a Master of Arts negree in



Dia de los Muertos - Vaquero by Mary Rodriguez Veatch

cultural anthropology from Northern Arizona University. She has held numerous positions as an educator and administrator in public and private higher education and has been a consultant for several study abroad programs at universities in the U.S., Mexico, Argentina, Spain and Morocco. Through the years, her passions for travel led to a love of photography that through the encouragement of friends has developed into a new career.

Santi says: "Photography is my way to share my passion for world cultures, travel and art with those who believe it is more than a simple reflection of light on an object. It is an attempt to capture the diversity and beauty of humankind's varied cultural expressions."