

As of September, 2011

**GUILLERMO GÓMEZ-PEÑA**

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border performance artist, spoken word intellectual, poetic activist  
& radical pedagogue

Performance artist/writer Guillermo Gómez-Peña resides in San Francisco where he is artistic director of La Pocha Nostra. Born and raised in Mexico City, he came to the US in 1978 to study Post-Studio art at Cal Arts. His pioneering work in performance, video, poetry, journalism, photography, cultural theory and radical pedagogy, explores cross-cultural issues, immigration, the politics of language, the politics of the body, "extreme culture" and new technologies. A MacArthur Fellow and American Book Award winner, he is a writer for newspapers and magazines in the US, Mexico, and Europe, a contributing editor to *The Drama Review* (NYU-MIT) and an active member of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics.

For nearly thirty years, Gómez-Peña has contributed to the cultural debates of our times staging legendary performance art pieces such as, "Border Brujo" (1988), "The Couple in the Cage" (1992), "The Cruci-fiction Project" (1994), "Temple of Confessions" (1995), "The Mexterminator project" (1997-99), *The Living Museum of Fetishized Identities* (1999-2002) and the "Mapa/Corpo" series (2004-2009).

Continually developing multi-centric narratives and large-scale performance projects from a border perspective, Gómez-Peña creates what critics have termed "Chicano cyber-punk performances," and "ethno-techno art." In his work, cultural borders have moved to the center while the alleged mainstream is pushed to the margins and treated as exotic and unfamiliar, placing the audience members and readers in the position of "foreigners" or "minorities."

He mixes experimental aesthetics, activist politics, Spanglish humor and audience participation to create a "total experience" for the audience member/reader/viewer. These strategies can be found in his live performance work, his award-winning video art pieces, his "photo-performances" and his 9 books.

Gómez-Peña's artwork has been presented at over nine hundred venues across the US, Canada, Mexico, Spain, the UK, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Poland, Russia, Australia, South Africa, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and Argentina. In recent years, he has presented work at Tate Modern (London), Arnolfini (Bristol), the Guggenheim Museum (New York), LACMA (Los Angeles), the House of World Cultures and the Volksbuhne (Berlin), MACBA (Barcelona), El Museo de la Ciudad (Mexico City)

and the Encuentros Hemisféricos in Lima, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte and Buenos Aires. He has participated in the following Biennales: Havana, The Whitney, Sydney, Liverpool, Thessaloniki and Mercosur. His photo-performances are now in the permanent collection of Daros Foundation (Zurich) and Galeria Artificios (Gran Canaria).

Gómez-Peña has lectured extensively in universities such as Brown (Providence, RI), Yale (New Haven, CT), NYU (New York, NY), Rutgers (New Brunswick, New Jersey), MIT, Pennsylvania State University, UCLA, UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkley, Stanford University, the Chicago Art Institute (Chicago, IL), UNAM (Mexico City, Mexico), California College of the Arts (San Francisco, CA) and the School of Arts (Lisbon, Portugal).

Through his organization, La Pocha Nostra, Gómez-Peña has intensely focused on the notion of collaboration across national borders, race, gender and generations as an act of radical citizen diplomacy and as a means to create "ephemeral communities" of rebel artists. La Pocha Nostra is a transdisciplinary arts organization that provides a support network and forum for artists of various disciplines, generations and ethnic backgrounds. La Pocha is devoted to erasing the borders between art and politics, art practice and theory, artist and spectator. Every year, La Pocha conducts a summer and a winter performance art school. The site for this pedagogical adventures changes every year.

Selected performances, international events & festivals:

- 2011 SFCamerawork, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 SOMArts, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 Cal Arts, Valencia, CA
- 2011 Belles Artes, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2011 Tribe, Saskatoon, Canada
- 2011 Neutral Ground, Regina, Canada
- 2011 Hammer Museum, Los Angeles
- 2011 Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
- 2011 Mills College, Oakland, CA
- 2011 Wooster University, Wooster, OH
- 2011 CounterPULSE, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 Club LaMaMa, New York, NY
- 2011 Performance Art Institute, San Francisco, CA
- 2011 American Theater in Higher Education Conference, Chicago, IL
- 2011 Museo de Las Americas, Denver, CO
- 2011 Su Teatro, Denver, CO
- 2010 Middlebury College, Middlebury Vermont
- 2010 Gordon Institute for Performing Arts, Cape Town South Africa
- 2010 National Review of Live Arts, Glasgow, Scotland
- 2010 Berkeley University, Berkeley, California
- 2010 Columbia College, Chicago, IL
- 2010 Danube Festival, Vienna, Austria
- 2010 Queer Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

2010 San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, San Francisco  
2010 Museo de las Americas, Denver, Colorado  
2010 York University, Toronto, Canada  
2010 La Perrera, Oaxaca, Mexico  
2010 Smithsonian Museum of American History, Washington, DC  
2010 SF Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California  
2010 Instituto Buena Vista, Curacao, Netherlands  
2010 Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool, UK  
2010 The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
2010 Gala Theater, Washington, DC  
2009 ANTI Art Festival, Kuopio, Finland  
2009 Barroquísimo, Puebla, Mexico  
2009 Prisma, Mexico City and Oaxaca, Mexico  
2009 Thessaloniki Biennial, Greece  
2009 La Habana Biennial, Habana, Cuba  
2009 El Art Es Accion, Tatro Valle-Inclán, Madrid, Spain  
2009 The "Trouble" Festival, Bruxells, Belgium  
2009 The Maison Folie, Mons, Belgium  
2008 Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto  
2008 DIA Museum, Detroit  
2008 National Review of Live Art, Glasgow, Scotland  
2008 The "Prognoses" Festival, HAU Theater, Berlin  
2007 Arnolfini, Bristol  
2007 Center for Contemporary Art, New Orleans  
2007 Cal Arts, Los Angeles  
2007 Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia  
2007 Centro Cultural La Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
2007 The "Border Exercises" Festival, Harstad, Norway  
2007 Festival "Escrita na Paisagem," Covento do Carmen,  
Evora, Portugal  
2007 Casa de las Americas, Lisbon, Portugal  
2007 National Review of Live Art, Glasgow  
2006 de Young Museum, San Francisco  
2006 Museo de la Ciudad, Mexico City  
2006 PSI (Performance Studies Internacional), London  
2006 University of California, Humanities Research Institute,  
Irvine, California  
2006 Center for Performance Research, Aberystwyth, Wales  
2005 Galeria Artificios. Gran Canaria, Canary Islands.  
2005 Bienal del Mercosur, Porto Alegre, Brazil  
2005 LACMA, Los Angeles, CA  
2005 Encontro Hemisferico. Belo Horizonte, Brazil  
2005 ARCO, Madrid, Spain  
2005 Toronto Free Gallery. Toronto, Canada.  
2004 Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY  
2004 Cervantino Festival, Guanajuato, Mexico  
2004 Detox Festival, several cities in Norway, 2004  
2003 Zuerher Theatre Spektakle. Zurich, Switzerland

2003 Muffathalle, Munich, Germany  
2003 Center for Performance Research. Aberystwyth, Wales  
2003 Performance Space. Sydney, Australia  
2003 Tate Modern, London, UK  
2002 Volksbuhne /House of World Cultures. Berlin, Germany  
2002 Liverpool Biennale. Liverpool, UK  
2002 Encuentro Hemisférico. Lima, Peru  
2001 Espacio C, Santandar, Spain  
2001 Performance Space. Sydney, Australia  
2001 Ayuntamiento de la Gran Canaria, Canary Islands  
2001 Experiències: Barcelona Art Report. La Capella.  
Barcelona, Spain.  
2001 Performance Space, Sydney, Australia.  
2001 International Theater Festival, Havana, Cuba  
2000 Encontro Hemisferico. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
2000 Eventa 5, Sweden  
1999 Sonart, MACBA. Barcelona, Spain  
1999 Le Lieu International Performance Festival. Quebec,  
Canada  
1999 Caribe 2000. San Juan, Puerto Rico  
1998 Diaspora. Oviedo, Spain  
1998 Inroads, Arts International. Miami, FL  
1997 Root/less Festival. Hull, UK  
1997 ARS Electrónica. Lintz, Austria  
1996 Szene Festival. Salzburg, Austria  
1996 Polverigi Theatre Festival. Ancona, Italy  
1996 5Cyberconf. Madrid, Spain  
1996 Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC  
1995 LIFT. London, UK  
1995 X-Teresa Arte Alternativo, Mexico City  
1995 Helsinki Act, Finland  
1994 Ante-América. Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, Bogotá,  
Colombia; Museo Alejandro Otero-Caracas, Venezuela;  
The Queens Museum of Art-New York; Centro Cultural de  
la Raza-San Diego, CA; The Center For the Arts,  
Yerbabuena Gardens, San Francisco, CA; The Spencer  
Art Museum-Lawrence, Kansas; Museo de Arte y Diseño  
Contemporáneo-San José, Costa Rica.  
1994 Banff Centre, Banff, Canada.  
1993 The Los Angeles Festival, MOCA, Los Angeles, CA  
1993 LIFT. London, UK  
1993 III Festival de Performance. X-Teresa, Mexico City.  
1993 The Hamburg Theatre Festival. Hamburg, Germany  
1993 Festival Rompeforma, San Juan, Puerto Rico  
1993 Fundación Banco Patricios. Buenos Aires, Argentina  
1993 The Whitney Biennial, New York, NY  
1992 The Sydney Biennial. Sydney, Australia  
1992 EDGE '92. Madrid-London, UK

- 1991 The Festival of the Worlds. Helsinki, Finland
- 1991 The Next Wave Festival. Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY
- 1990 The Los Angeles Festival, MOCA, Los Angeles, CA.
- 1990 EDGE '90. Newcastle, England
- 1989 Biennale de la Havana, Havana, Cuba
- 1990 The Decade Show, Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, Museo del Barrio, New York.
- 1989 The Demons des Anges. (Touring exhibition, 1989-90)  
Halle du Centre de Recherche pour le Developpement Culturel, Nantes, France; Centre d' Art Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain, Kulterhuset, Stockholm, Sweden; Espace Lyonnais d'Art Contemporain, Lyon, France
- 1988 The International Theatre Festival of the Americas. Montreal, Canada

Awards:

Among numerous fellowships and prizes, Gómez-Peña was recipient of the Prix de la Parole at the 1989 International Theatre Festival of the Americas (Montreal), the 1989 New York Bessie Award, and the Los Angeles Music Center's 1993 Viva Los Artistas Award. In 1991, Gómez-Peña became the first Chicano/Mexicano artist to receive a Macarthur Fellowship. In 1995, he was included in the UTNE Reader's "List of 100 Visionaries." In 1997 he received the American Book Award for his book *New World Border*. In 2000, he received the Cineaste Lifetime Achievement award from the Taos Talking Pictures Film Festival.

The film version of his solo performance *Border Brujo* (in collaboration with Isaac Arstenstein), was awarded first prize in the 1991 National Latino Film and Video Festival and first prize in the category of "Performance Film" at Cine Festival (San Antonio 1991). His videos, *El Naftazteca: Cyber Aztec TV for 2000 AD* and *Temple of Confessions* were awarded first prize at Cine Festival in San Antonio, Texas in 1996 and 1998, respectively. In 2001, his film *Borderstasis* was awarded the prize for "best performance video" from the Vancouver Video Poetry Festival. His work was recently featured in the HBO special *Americanos*. An anthology of his video work was published by Video Data Bank (Chicago) under the title *Border Clasicos*.

Gómez-Peña's experimental radio works have received the following honors: *Border Notebooks* won the Silver Award in Performance/Spoken Word Category from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1991; *We Don't Speak English Only, Vato!*, obtained first prize by the National Association of Community Radios, 1993; *Menage-à-Trade*, obtained the Golden Reel Award in 1995. A collection of his audio work entitled *Borderless Radio* was released on compact disk by Toronto's Word of Mouth in 1995. Calaca Press published *Apocalypse Mañana*, his latest audio CD.