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December 16, 2014

Contact:
212-206-8080 Curator@acagalleries.com

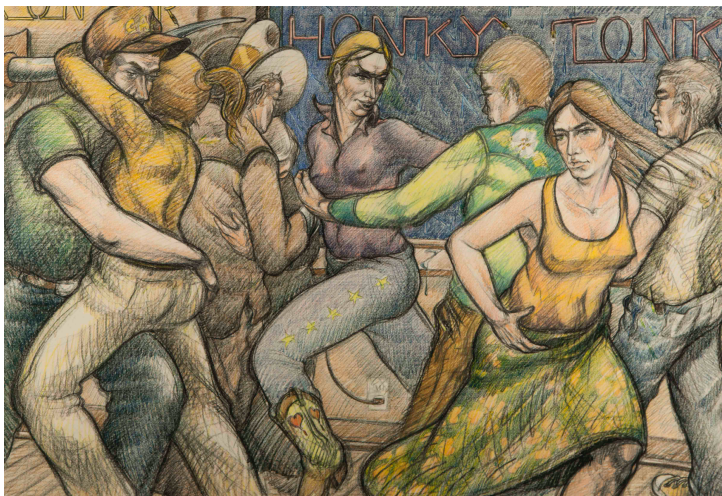
LUIS JIMÉNEZ (1940-2006)

AMERICAN DREAM

FEBRUARY 19 THROUGH APRIL 4, 2015

ACA Galleries is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition, **Luis Jimenez: *AMERICAN DREAM*** on view February 19 through April 4, 2015 with a reception on Thursday, February 19th. Color, sensuality, raucous pleasure, a bawdy zest for life: these are the elements, which burst from the work of Luis Jiménez (1940-2006). This exhibition reveals the power and energy of this highly respected yet controversial artist.

As the son of a Mexican sign maker, Luis Jimenez absorbed the Latino culture of his community and his father's love for the materials from which he created his commercial signs: neon tubing, automotive paint, metals and fiberglass. Born in El Paso, Texas, the Mexican-American community shaped the young Jiménez's formative cultural experience. While his art studies at the University of Texas helped him to incorporate the aesthetic of his Latino culture into a disciplined practice of art. After graduating in 1964, Jiménez studied for an additional two years in Mexico City before relocating to New York. It was there that he caught the attention of tastemaker Leo Castelli, who arranged for Jiménez's first show at the Graham Gallery. Jiménez remained in New York, gathering acclaim through important exhibitions until 1971, when the siren call of his Mexican-American roots led him to return to the Southwest. First back to El Paso, then to Roswell, New Mexico, where he worked for Donald Anderson's private museum. Jiménez remained in New Mexico, in the town of Hondo, until his death.



Honky Tonk, 1980, mixed media drawing, 27 ¾ x 40 inches

Back to the land of his birth and the culture that formed him, Jiménez's work grew deeper in theme and larger in scale. His public sculptures often provoked controversy for their bold expressions of the Southwest's sometimes violent and rowdy history. Inspired by the Mexican-American vernacular imagery found in local calendar art and rancho lore, cowboys were reclaimed from their Caucasian mythology and restored to their original vaquero identity. Jiménez expressed the sensuality of Latin culture through colorfully dressed, sinuous figures out for an evening's pleasure. Looking at the modern Latino experience, Jiménez adapted the "low-rider"

automotive culture of wildly painted American cars, and the vast spaces of open roads through the great deserts of the Southwest, where modern vaqueros roamed not on horseback but in the low-rider cars and boldly decorated RVs.

Jiménez's New Mexico is also the land of game to be hunted not for sport but for food, a practice Jiménez maintained. His sculptures include the game around his Hondo home. Like their human counterparts, Jiménez has invested them with a boisterous vitality. His "Jackrabbit" leaps, his body stretched to the full extent of his sinuous muscles.

Using industrial, commonplace materials such as fiberglass and automotive paint for his sculptures, Jiménez was primarily a Realist, his themes colloquial. But though his imagery is accessible, the totality of the visual and philosophical experience is highly complex. Under the surface of vibrant color and pulsing life are emotions coming at us in waves, bringing along the impact of immediate experience and the conflicting interpretations of historical lore.

Though controversial in his lifetime, today Luis Jiménez is regarded as one of America's most important sculptors. His work is in significant public collections including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, NY; Albright Knox Art Gallery; NY; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and the Art Institute of Chicago, among others.

Jimenez is the recipient of numerous awards and grants including a Hassam Fund Purchase Award (1977); Mid-career Fellowship Award, American Academy in Rome and National Endowment for the Arts (1979); La Napoule Art Foundation Residency Fellowship (1990); and City of Houston, Goodwill ambassador Governor's Award, State of NM, among others.



*Study for Southwest Pieta, 1983, fiberglass,
23 x 15 x 11 inches*

*For additional information and images, contact:
curator@acagalleries.com*