

January 24, 2020

TO: Michelle Lujan-Grisham, NM Governor, all NM Political Leaders,  
Citizens of Santa Fe, the State and the Nation:

RE: **“Multicultural” Mural on the State Halpin Bldg., Guadalupe St., Santa Fe, NM**  
***“A nation that forgets its past has no future”***

I, Gilberto Guzman, muralist, come to ask for your support in helping the NM State Dept. of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and I agree on a building design in order to keep the historic, cultural mural known as “Multicultural”. Through a \$4M donor-name change right given to the Vladem family of Chicago, the Halpin Building will be renamed the Vladem Contemporary Museum. This change has also changed the keeping of the mural.

In my life, and as a recognized international muralist with a mural in the NM State Library, the Gold Star Mother painting in the Bataan Bldg., paintings in the Rotunda, a mural in Albuquerque on 4<sup>TH</sup> St., plus numerous others, and in addition to being awarded the Santa Fe Living Treasure designation in 2017, I have been honored and privileged to have painted the recognized mural on the wall of the current Halpin Building, named after the honored Joseph Halpin family of Santa Fe.

The mural is named “Multicultural” because it depicts the multicultural settlement of families, individuals and all ethnic groups who were the first settlers in our beautiful city of Santa Fe. It also already represents the “Gateway to Santa Fe”. This contemporary mural has been published nationally and gives Santa Fe the honor of having a mural of high quality incorporating the historic and cultural history of the region. It is very much a part of what makes Santa Fe!

The “Multicultural” mural was created in 1980, renovated in 1990 and today in 2020, the mural again needs renovation. In addition in 1980, a mural contract was signed by me and the NM State DFA/Property Control Division, the then owner of the Halpin building. The contract states that both parties, the muralist and the state, agree that the “muralist” will have the responsibility to maintain the upkeep of the mural. Nowhere does the State contract read that my access to renovate the mural end, change or for any reason be terminated since the ownership of the building remains with the State.

As of today, the State still owns the building; however, now, with the oversight by the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), a department whose main responsibility and mission statement is the following: ***“The New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs preserves, fosters, and interprets New Mexico’s diverse cultural heritage and expression for present and future generations, enhancing the quality of life and economic well-being of the state.”***

Regarding the proposed Vladem Contemporary Museum, please be advised that since 2018, I have communicated with the director of the NM Art Museum, DCA, architects, and planners. I had accepted a design concept that the mural could remain in its current location, however, possibly reduced in size (see attached AD). After it was stated that there was no money for the mural renovation, I directly requested funds from Senator Ortiz y Pino, a well-known supporter of Art in Public Places, from the 2019 legislative session. It is known, that through this request, the Senator procured +/- \$53,000 earmarked for this mural renovation.


Today, the museum design has changed again as to not “allow” for the mural renovation. Now, the mural is proposed to be digitized and therefore removed.

Attached is a copy of the proposed “Vladem Contemporary Museum” AD which 1) shows a concept where the mural could remain, and 2) requesting donations for placing ones name on a brick. This AD was found in the May 2019, *Southwest Art, Special 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue*.

- **Isn't it ironic that this AD requests \$250 from donors to be a part of a permanent, historical recognition to “create a history” on a museum –a history that already exists?**
- **Isn't it ironic that this new “contemporary” art museum does not regard an “in-place” contemporary, international mural of high stature enough to keep it and honor it enough for its representation of the City where this new, proposed museum wants representation?**
- **Isn't it ironic that the Dept. of Cultural Affairs' mission statement is contrary to their defending the “retaining” of the mural?**

Again, with my team of local muralists, design architects and DCA, we can renovate the current mural in its current location and with its current depiction of Santa Fe history.

Thank you very much,

  
Gilberto Guzman, International Muralist

Enclosed/Attached:

- 1) Letter from US Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, Santa Fe Living Treasure Award
- 2) Copy of the Vladem Contemporary AD
- 3) Photo of Gilberto Guzman with the “Multicultural” mural



BEN RAY LUJAN  
3RD DISTRICT, NEW MEXICO

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
2231 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
PHONE: 202-225-6190  
FAX: 202-226-1528

SANTA FE OFFICE  
1611 CALLE LORCA SUITE A  
SANTA FE, NM 87505  
PHONE: 505-984-8950  
FAX: 505-986-5047



ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Gilberto Guzmán  
1600 Cienquite, G-6  
Santa Fe, NM 87507

October 15, 2017

Dear Mr. Guzmán,

I write to you today to congratulate you on receiving *The Santa Fe Living Treasure Award*. I applaud the dedication and hard work that is required to be honored as a *Living Treasure*. This is indeed a very important award as it reminds us that our elders are the links to our past and future.

I would like to recognize you for your outstanding commitment to preserving Chicano and our New Mexico cultural heritage. Through your artwork and volunteer efforts you are an invaluable example and mentor to young artists and underprivileged youth. All of this is apparent by the fact that your lively and vast murals appear throughout New Mexico and internationally. Through your murals, and your interaction with the community, you encompass what it means to be a citizen extraordinaire.

If ever my staff can be of assistance to you please do not hesitate to contact my office. Again, congratulations on the honor of this recognition.

Sincerely,

Rep. Ben Ray Lujan

Member of Congress

New Mexico 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District

TUCUMCARI OFFICE  
404 W. RT. 66 BLVD.  
TUCUMCARI, NM 88401  
PHONE: 575-461-3029  
FAX: 575-461-3192

GALLUP OFFICE  
110 WEST AZTEC AVE.  
GALLUP, NM 87301  
PHONE: 505-863-0582  
FAX: 505-863-0678

RIO RANCHO OFFICE  
3200 CIVIC CENTER CIRCLE NE  
SUITE 330  
RIO RANCHO, NM 87144  
PHONE: 505-994-0499  
FAX: 505-994-0550

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FARMINGTON OFFICE  
800 MUNICIPAL DRIVE  
FARMINGTON, NM 87401  
PHONE: 505-324-1005  
FAX: 505-324-1026

LAS VEGAS OFFICE  
P.O. Box 1368  
LAS VEGAS, NM 87701  
PHONE: 505-454-3038  
FAX: 505-454-3265  
OFFICE LOCATION:  
NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY  
903 UNIVERSITY AVENUE LAS VEGAS, NM





# ADD YOUR NAME to the New Mexico Museum of Art's VLADEM CONTEMPORARY



We invite all members of the community to support the Centennial Campaign to expand the New Mexico Museum of Art into a second location in the Railyard Arts District.

**Purchase a brick for just \$250.** It will be inscribed with your name and placed permanently in the courtyard of the new Vladem Contemporary. Permanent recognition on a brick is also a great way to honor a family member or friend.

Brick by brick, we can all make the Vladem Contemporary a reality.

**PURCHASE A BRICK TODAY AT:**  
[museumfoundation.org/centennial-brick](http://museumfoundation.org/centennial-brick)  
or call 505.216.0829







*Gilberto Guzman*

Gilberto Guzman  
International Muralist  
Muralist for "Multicultural", Santa Fe, New Mexico

Contact information:

Gilberto Guzman, International Muralist  
1600 Cieneguita, G-6  
Santa Fe, NM 87507

Others:

Theresa Sanchez  
[mtsanchez888@hotmail.com](mailto:mtsanchez888@hotmail.com)  
505-603-0247

Rick Martinez  
[morgmartinez@yahoo.com](mailto:morgmartinez@yahoo.com)  
505-660-3725