MUJERES MARCHARAN
1.2019 & 2.2022

by Anel I. Flores

In my second edition of one of my most important works of my life, Mujeres Marcharan 2.2022, I hope to offer a place for us to connect our hearts to the energia of our vibrant and powerful youth, our spirit guides, and the fire of our community curanderas and healers. It is such a brilliant honor to create this work and connect with you through their memory and impact. Each time I pick up my pencil to doodle their smile, sketch their energy, their posture, or add a small detail in the clothing they wore, I stare into their eyes and can still feel them walking and working with me. I hope this awakens in you too. Their presence here is to remind us that when we feel like we walk alone, we walk with our spirit guides. My goal with this work is to document the legacy of such brilliant people, and also provide a place for them to join together in our continuous prayer for justice in the world. As each of these people have impacted you in ways you might not even know, it is no mystery they each made a pivotal impact on my life as an artist, writer, activist, healer, queer mother and lover.



When reflecting, I looked through the hard-copy photos I took in the early 90's, my digital archives shot from my flip-phone and newer iphones, and also through photos taken and published in news stories. I traveled on an endless journey of the many times they lifted me from a fall or joined with me in a triumph. Their postures as well as their placements are intentional. For example, I stood Maria A. Ibarra, a dear friend I met in college and later the director of my play Empanada, with Nickie Valdez, the founder of Dignity San Antonio and super LGBTQIA activist - because it was in college that the two of them brushed paths when UIW blacklisted me for creating Arco Iris, an LGBTQIA organization at our Catholic University. Nickie and her wife, Deb Myers came to the campus and held a vigil that Maria attended in protest and support, sparking our friendship for years to come. I didn't know then, they would be two of the most instrumental people in my life, connected in spirituality, my queer heart and my creative career. In 2016, when they granted marriage equality to same gender couples, Nickie and Deb were the second couple to be married. When Erika and I finally married, Maria Ibarra was there with us. These are people that have proven the activism of love and friendship brings about lasting and impactful change. Although the paths Maria and Nickie crossed were brief, the connection they both have to spirituality seemed very fitting; and in true Maria essence, she holds her elder close and marches on with her loving and strong smile. In Mujeres Marcharan 2. 2022, I center the youth of Empower House (formerly Martinez Street Women's Center), from a photo I took in 2015, at San Antonio's International Women's Day March. They bring las grandes spirit guides of South Texas along with all of us on our march towards peace, social justice, equity and love. Connecting the spirit guides with the youth, on the left, center and right, I placed three young curanderas, doing the work together to heal and open up the community through unearthing traditional practices of spiritual and earth medicina.

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Art at left is Mujeres Marcharan 1.2019 and below 2.2022. Pictured from left to right, Maria A. Ibarra, Nikki Valdez, (Susana Ramirez) Angela De Hoyos, Artemesia Bowden, Sylvia Rodriguez, Kenne McFadden, Sr. Dorothy Etteling, (Reb Mari), Choco Meza, (Erika A. Casasola) Gloria A. Anzaldua, Gertrude Baker, Erica Andrews, Martha Prentiss, Lauryn Ferris & Isabel Sanchez.