



# **Spilling the Beans in Chicanolandia: Conversations with Writers and Artists**

*Frederick Luis Aldama*

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Since the 1980s, a prolific "second wave" of Chicano/a writers and artists has tremendously expanded the range of genres and subject matter in Chicano/a literature and art. Building on the pioneering work of their predecessors, whose artistic creations were often tied to political activism and the civil rights struggle, today's Chicano/a writers and artists feel free to focus as much on the aesthetic quality of their work as on its social content. They use novels, short stories, poetry, drama, documentary films, and comic books to shape the raw materials of life into art objects that cause us to participate empathetically in an increasingly complex Chicano/a identity and experience.

This book presents far-ranging interviews with twenty-one "second wave" Chicano/a poets, fiction writers, dramatists, documentary filmmakers, and playwrights. Some are mainstream, widely recognized creators, while others work from the margins because of their sexual orientations or their controversial positions. Frederick Luis Aldama draws out the artists and authors on both the aesthetic and the sociopolitical concerns that animate their work. Their conversations delve into such areas as how the artists' or writers' life experiences have molded their work, why they choose to work in certain genres and how they have transformed them, what it means to be Chicano/a in today's pluralistic society, and how Chicano/a identity influences and is influenced by contact with ethnic and racial identities from around the world.

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