

received a graduate degree in art from the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Now an artist-in-residence at UTSA, Rev. Acres has brought his spirited work to San Antonio, where recent sermons have featured exercises

"with Richard Simmons," a food fight between costumed devils and a descent into Cascade Caverns. For Contemporary Art Month, Art in the Hood is hosting a collaboration by Rev. Acres and artist Hills Snyder entitled *DUNK*. Beginning at 8 p.m. on First Friday, in the former Primera Iglesia Bautista Mexicana on South Alamo, the event will celebrate the spiritual rite of baptism through the secular metaphor of basketball.

Art happens

BY JOHN EWING

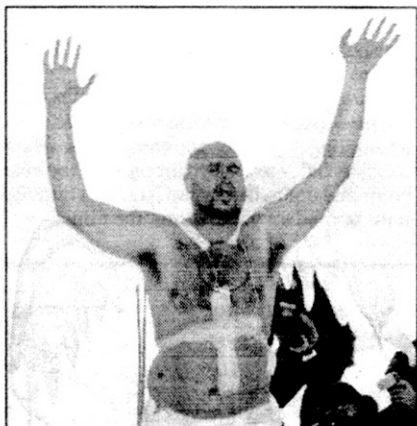
CHICANO ARTIST PAPERS THE BARRIO

In the surreptitiously hung posters of Cruz Ortiz (call it hit-and-run art), cans of refried beans and boxes of fideo represent the staples of the working class. Posted on telephone poles on the East, West, and South sides of San Antonio, Ortiz's public art mixes cartoon graphics with love songs by Selena and Sunny Ozuna, offering a homegrown rasquachismo ("making do with what you got") for the puzzled amusement of passersby.

As Community Mural Coordinator for San Antonio Cultural Arts, Ortiz is organizing the Center's 20th project in the Alazan-Apache Courts neighborhood. Nearby, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center will host an open-air celebration for the community on First Friday, with screenings of comic films by Ortiz, live conjunto music by Sandy Sanchez, and free raspas and Chinese candy. Through July, the GCAC Visual Arts Annex is also exhibiting *¿American Dream?*, a collection of Ortiz's silk screens featuring his recurring character Spaztec, which Ortiz describes as "part Aztec, part dumbass," a spokesman for a generation caught between the Chicano movement and Scooby-Doo.

HOLY ROLLER TAKES IT TO THE HOOP

Although contemporary art and religion seem irreconcilable in today's cultural climate, there exists a vast historical precedent for Rev. Ethan Acres' dynamic fusion of the two, stretching from Sister Wendy Beckett to Fra Angelico. An ordained evangelical minister from Alabama, Rev. Acres pioneered his colorful blend of preaching and popular culture on the street corners of Las Vegas, and also



The Rev. Ethan Acres in performance

QUIRKY CONCEPT ARTIST GETS HIGH

If you're a local, the Tower of the Americas is the last place you'd look for a Contemporary Art Month event. For miles in every direction, the 1968 monument to HemisFair dominates the San Antonio cityscape. But like a mirage, the closer you get, the more the Tower becomes oddly irrelevant, having all but vanished from the current cultural life of the city. On July 11, *Tower of Power* awakens the sleeping giant with videos, cocktail table art, and avant-garde music. Organized by artist Ana de Portela, the event is scheduled from 7 to 10 p.m. in the newly remodeled Sky Lounge operated by Frontier Enterprises — fondly known as "Jim's in the Sky."

Since 1998, de Portela's quirky Happenings and Wachales have lured art crowds into uncharted territory, from the Seven Oaks Motel to her apartment mate's bedroom. This year, a theremin-fueled lounge act called Pelón (Jack Stamps, John Navarro, and Chuck Fischer) will be accompanied by de Portela's video *Shaving It for the City*, not to mention the unbeatable 360-degree view of San Antonio from 600 feet above HemisFair Park. ¡Salud!



Direct from the Sky Lounge by Ana de Portela, 2001, photograph, 15 by 24 inches

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