

## PRESS RELEASE

# Minneapolis Institute of Art Presents Exhibition of Works by Renowned Photographer Graciela Iturbide



Graciela Iturbide  
(Mexican, born 1942)  
Mujer Ángel, Desierto de  
Sonora (Angel Woman,  
Sonoran Desert), México  
1979  
Photograph, gelatin silver  
print  
Elizabeth and Michael Marcus  
© Graciela Iturbide  
Courtesy, Museum of Fine  
Arts, Boston

**Minneapolis Institute of Art**  
2400 Third Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
artsmia.org

**MINNEAPOLIS—July 31, 2019**—The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) presents a major exhibition exploring the 50-year career of renowned photographer Graciela Iturbide (born 1942). Organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), “Graciela Iturbide’s Mexico” features 125 photographs that tell the visual story of the artist’s country since the late 1970s. Going beyond documentary photography, Iturbide’s work reveals Mexico’s complexities through her personal explorations. Focused on the tensions between urban and rural life, human presence and nature, and indigenous and Spanish cultures, her photographs have contributed to Mexico’s visual identity while calling attention to the rich syncretism, diversity, and inequalities of Mexican society.

The exhibition is drawn primarily from Iturbide’s own collection, with loans from the MFA, private collections throughout the United States, Mexico, and France, and includes Mia’s two recent acquisitions of her work. On view from August 17 through December 15, 2019, the exhibition features interpretation in English and Spanish, as well as a documentary video of the artist shot at her studio in Mexico City. “Graciela Iturbide’s Mexico” is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue produced by MFA Publications.

“We are thrilled to bring this extraordinary exhibition of works by Graciela Iturbide, a path-breaking and visionary photographer who brings a feminist lens to the layered cultures and histories of Mexico,” said Casey Riley, PhD, curator and head of the Department of Photography and New Media at Mia.

The exhibition is organized into eight thematic sections:

- **Early years** presents early images that attest to the photographer’s keen observation of Mexican contemporary culture in the 1970s and early 1980s.
- **Juchitán** captures the essential role of women in Zapotec culture, in which the women are known for their economic, political, and sexual independence.
- **Los que viven en la arena (Those Who Live in the Sand)** documents the way of life of the Seri people, a formerly nomadic group of fisherfolk, living in the Sonoran Desert.

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- **La Mixteca** documents elaborate goat-slaughtering rituals in Oaxaca, a tradition that dates back to colonial times and carries on today.
- **Fiestas** records a variety of lavish and visually stimulating celebrations from Iturbide's travels throughout the country since the mid-1970s.
- **Death and Mortality** depicts signs of mortality in everyday life, as well as representations of surreal funerary rituals and celebrations like *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead).
- **Birds** includes photos of skies filled with birds to close-up portraits of birds in trees, illustrating Iturbide's interest in the cycle of the natural world, while also evoking the spiritual world. Iturbide's fascination with birds is linked to her journey to overcome personal loss.
- **Plants** features photographs of native plants—mostly cacti—from a 1998 project for the Oaxaca Ethnobotanical Gardens.

A fully illustrated catalogue produced by MFA Publications, accompanies the exhibition. More than 100 tri-tone reproductions of photographs are placed alongside essays to invite readers to share in Iturbide's personal artistic journey. The volume comes with a three-piece cloth and printed binding with foil stampings. Available at the Store at Mia for \$49.95.

"Graciela Iturbide's Mexico" is organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where it premiered January 19–May 12, 2019. The exhibition then travels to Minneapolis Institute of Art, where it is on view from August 17 through December 15, 2019 in the museum's third-floor Harrison Photography Gallery.

#### About Graciela Iturbide

Iturbide was born in 1942 in Mexico City. In 1969, at age 27, she enrolled at the film school Centro de Estudios Cinematográficos at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México to become a film director. However, she was soon drawn to the art of still photography as practiced by the Mexican modernist master Manuel Álvarez Bravo, who was teaching at the university. From 1970 to 1971, she worked as Bravo's assistant, accompanying him on various photographic journeys throughout Mexico. In the early half of the 1970s, Iturbide traveled widely across Latin America—in particular to Cuba and Panama. In 1978, she was commissioned by the Ethnographic Archive of the National Indigenous Institute of Mexico to photograph Mexico's indigenous population. Iturbide decided to document and record the way of life of the Seri people along the country's border with Arizona. In 1979, she was invited by the artist Francisco Toledo to photograph the Juchitán people, who form part of the Zapotec culture native to Oaxaca in southern Mexico. This series resulted in the publication of her book *Juchitán de las Mujeres* in 1989. Between 1980 and 2000, Iturbide was invited to work in Cuba, Germany, India, Madagascar, Hungary, France, and the United States, producing a number of important projects. She has enjoyed solo exhibitions at the Centre Pompidou (1982), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1990), J. Paul Getty Museum (2007), MAPFRE Foundation, Madrid (2009), Photography Museum Winterthur (2009), and Barbican Art Gallery (2012), among others. Iturbide is the recipient of the W. Eugene Smith Memorial Foundation Award (1987); the Grand Prize Mois de la Photo, Paris (1988); a Guggenheim Fellowship for the project *Fiesta y Muerte* (1988); the Hugo Erfurth Award, Leverkusen, Germany (1989); the International Grand Prize, Hokkaido, Japan (1990); the Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie Award, Arles (1991); the Hasselblad Award (2008); the National Prize of Sciences and Arts in Mexico City (2008); an Honorary Degree in photography from Columbia College Chicago (2008); and an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute (2009).



Museum of Fine Arts Boston

#### About Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA) is recognized for the quality and scope of its collection, representing all cultures and time periods. The museum has more than 140 galleries displaying its encyclopedic collection, which includes Art of the Americas; Art of Europe; Contemporary Art; Art of Asia; Art of Africa and Oceania; Art of the Ancient World; Prints and Drawings; Photography; Textile and Fashion Arts; and Musical Instruments. For more information, call 617.267.9300, visit [mfa.org](http://mfa.org), or follow the MFA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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## About The Minneapolis Institute Of Art

Home to more than 90,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest wide-ranging art collections in the country—Rembrandt to van Gogh, Monet to Matisse, Asian to African—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

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## Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday	10am–5pm
Thursday, Friday	10am–9pm
Sunday	11am–5pm
Monday	Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit [artsmia.org](http://artsmia.org)

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