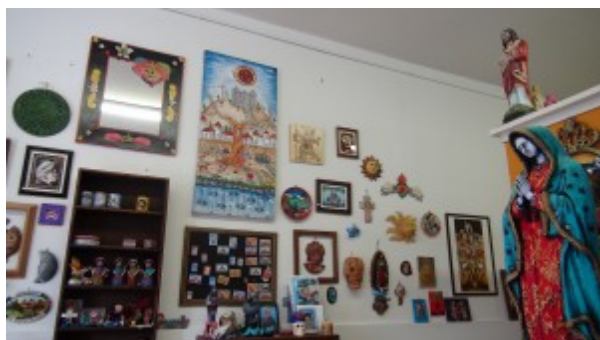


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Tu Tienda Azteca is located at 3104 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, Calif. 94602. Art work as seen on Sunday, November 3, 2013 in Oakland, Calif. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez)

[Tu Tienda Azteca](#), a Mexican Folk Art store opened in Hayward in 2007 as a collaboration between Oscar Cisneros and his mother, Rosario Cisneros. Oscar is a self-proclaimed, self-taught artist who was born and raised in Oakland. In 2013 the shop relocated to the Fruitvale District in Oakland and along with art, brought a desire to work together with the community.

The Cisneros family not only bring traditional Mexican artwork to the communities they work in, they also share their knowledge with them. When they were located in Hayward they collaborated with [Tennyson High School](#) on their Día de los Muertos event. This year, they have collaborated with [La Clinica de la Raza's](#), Casa Che department's Youth Brigade in creating traditional *nichos*, or shadow boxes for their altar.

In addition Tu Tienda Azteca has also been busy with Día de los Muertos celebrations such as [The Unity Council's](#) yearly community



Oscar Cisneros of Tu Tienda Azteca and his assistant's work at the Unity Council's yearly Día de los Muertos Festival in Oakland, Calif., on Saturday, November 2, 2013. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez)

celebration and hosting workshops at the store. On Sunday, October 13th, they hosted Miguel Quintana, a sugar skull artist from Puebla, Mexico who had a live demonstration and sale. Local artist [Leanne "Elrod" Rodriguez](#) also recently hosted a "Glitter 101 Día de los Muertos Edition" workshop. Workshops are open to the community.

By making a purchase at Tu Tienda Azteca you are not only supporting local artist and merchants, you are also supporting community enrichment for the youth.

Visit Tu Tienda Azteca:



Friend
them
on



STORE HOURS
TUES-FRI 12:00 - 6:30
SATURDAY 11:30 - 6:30
SUNDAY 12:00 - 4:30
CLOSED MONDAYS

Follow them on



The infl uenc e of Samu

[Samuel Martinez Discusses History and Traditional Healing](#) from [Natalie Rodriguez](#) on [Vimeo](#).

[Samuel Martinez](#) is a part of the history Oakland's [Fruitvale district](#) as a therapist, healer, social justice worker, activist, writer and traditional dancer. During the [Urban Relocation](#) program of the 1950s, he and his mother were relocated to the Oakland housing projects where they faced [racial inequality](#) and discrimination, which he says

el Mart inez in the Fru itval e Dist rict

have “made him stronger.”

After refusing to join the Vietnam War, at 18 years old he became an anti-war activist and joined the [Chicano Moratorium](#). As a parent and organizer he helped create [El Centro Infantil de La Raza](#) and served on the board of directors.

Martinez is a [Licensed Clinical Social Worker](#), who contributed to the creation of a mental health department at [La Clinica de La Raza](#). He refers to himself as a “Social Justice Healer offering a Traditional Healing Praxis.” His praxis began with his mother’s traditional teachings of healing and in 1977 he incorporated the theories of Paulo Freire’s [Pedagogy of the Oppressed](#). In 1971 [La Clinica de La Raza](#) was established in the [Fruitvale district](#) in order to provide accessible health care for the neighborhood’s Latino population. La Clinica opened its first mental health site named [Casa del Sol](#) in 1978.

In his backyard, Martinez leads community *TemesCalli*’s or Sweat Lodges for family and extended family alike. Martinez says that the meaning of *TemesCalli* stems from “Calli” which means home and “Teme or tema is in a prayerful way.” He says that the prayer lodge is “the creation story in our five senses because we are beings of the five senses.”

As an author he has published several books including [The Indian Dream: Surviving the American Holocaust](#) and [AmeriCaCa—The Sounds of Silenced Survivors: Surviving America’s](#)

Campaign to “Kill the Indian,
Save the Child.”

Youth Wisdom of Homies Empowerment Book Release

[20130628 Youth Wisdom Book Release](#) from [Natalie Rodriguez](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Monserrat Rodriguez Ortiz is a 15-year-old, Oakland student, who is featured in the book “Youth Wisdom.” The book release took place at the Cesar Chavez branch library in the Fruitvale District of Oakland, Calif., on Thursday June 25, 2013. It is a publication of the Homies Empowerment Program. Cesar Cruz, co-founder of the program explains that Homies Empowerment works with “kids that are gang impacted, and in this neighborhood, who isn’t gang impacted? But we’re not a gang prevention program.” The program strives to educate the youth with “knowledge of self classes.” Rodriguez Ortiz explains that from Cruz she has learned about Raza history and the community. She hopes that through the book people see that Oakland youth “are not how people think they are” and that they “are making a change.”

“Youth Wisdom” features the work of 25 students from Arise High School who also participate in Homies Empowerment, including four pieces by Rodriguez Ortiz. According to the back cover of the book, the pieces “express life lessons bringing forth hope and a vision for a new way to live.”

Amor Eter no: Eter nal Love for Art, Tatt oos and Oakl and

Amy “Corazón” George-Cortez, art curator, along with husband and tattoo artist, Salvador “El Chamuco” Cortez have co-owned [Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space](#) in the [Fruitvale District](#) for approximately two and a half years. This Saturday, June 8, 2013 the couple celebrated the unveiling of their new and larger space and art gallery. The name *Amor Eterno* translates to Eternal Love from Spanish. On the invite that was put out through the [Amor Eterno blog](#) and [Facebook event page](#), the Cortez’s explain that the name was chosen based on the love that the couple share for each other, their love for art and tattoos, for their family “and the community of Oakland.”

Cortez has been tattooing around the Bay Area for 10 years now. His wife has been curating for roughly the same amount of time. One of the goals of [Amor Eterno](#) according to Cortez is “to make art accessible to everyone, especially the community.” He also hopes that they “keep people inspired and keep people understanding the power that is art.” Now that the shop has expanded George-Cortez expects to use the shop for “everything,” including performing arts.

The Downtown area of [the City of Oakland](#) has recently been recognized as being one of [America’s Top Twelve ArtPlaces 2013](#), according to [Artplace](#). Cortez says, “Oakland has always been an art place, it just never got the due credit because of the bad reputation.” The galleries

that are curated by George-Cortez at their shop feature the work of local artist.

The Fruitvale District has recently made the news for high crime rates including robberies and prostitution, however, [Amor Eterno](#) is not alone in its effort to bring more art to the community. Oscar Cisneros, artist and owner of [Tu Tienda Azteca](#), which re-opened in the Fruitvale District a week ago, attended [Amor Eterno's](#) unveiling. Cisneros recently noticed another gallery that opened up near his own shop. "It's a good thing," says Cisneros, about more art being brought to the Fruitvale District. "We're trying to make our own true kind of art scene here in the Fruitvale San Antonio area," said Cortez, "Fruitvale has always been a beautiful place."



Amy "Corazón" George-Cortez of Oakland, Calif., watches the blessing of the Aztec Dancers at Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space in Oakland, Calif., on June 8, 2013. The dancers blessed the unveiling of the new space and art gallery. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).



George-Cortez personally welcomes guest to the reception of Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space, in Oakland, Calif., on June 8, 2013. "We like to create an environment that's comfortable for people just to come relax, be able to look at art," said Cortez, "and not have to worry about any kind of stigma or anything like that." (Photo by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).



Cortez shows us his Grandfather's television remote control, which is a part of his shrine at Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space, in Oakland, Calif., on June 8, 2013. "He watched the world change through this," says Cortez. He believes that the remote control, which his grandfather carved in Spanish after the letters had faded, is the closest thing to a work of art that his grandfather ever made. "It's my greatest treasure," he says. (Photo by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).



Cortez shows us his “altar” at Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space, in Oakland, Calif., on June 8, 2013. On his shrine Cortez has religious artifacts of different religions, photographs and treasures he holds dear, including his grandfather’s first television remote control. (Photo by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).



George-Cortez thanks guests for coming to the event at Amor Eterno Tattoo and Art Space in Oakland, Calif., on June 8, 2013. The event invite states, “It is the love and support from our family, friends and clients who have made it possible for us to grow.” (Photo by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).

Exposure of students to

In the Fruitvale District of Oakland there are almost 30 schools and day care centers, there is also a high rate of crime. According to CrimeMapping.com, within a two-mile radius of the corner of Foothill Blvd. and Fruitvale Ave., there have been more than 300 crimes that have been reported in the month of May. Elizabeth Guerra, a Student Coordinator and After School Teacher at Learning Without Limits, a school within the Fruitvale District, says that in eight years of experience in working with students after school she has worked with many students who have been affected

crime in the Fruitvale District of Oakland

by crime. Guerra has had students whose families have been victims of home invasions, whose “mother’s have been robbed”, and has even “done a memorial for a student [who was] murdered.”

View [Fruitvale Schools](#) in a larger map. Infographic by Natalie Rodriguez



Jefferson School in the Fruitvale District of Oakland, Calif. Elizabeth Guerra is a Student Coordinator and After School Teacher at Learning Without Limits, one of two schools within this campus. Photograph taken on June 22, 2013. (Photograph by: Natalie Rodriguez/Full Sail University).

The [Unity Council](#) defines the Fruitvale District as a two and a

half square mile area bordered by High St., 14th Ave., Interstate 580, and the Oakland Estuary. The list of crimes reported by [CrimeMapping.com](#), which is linked through the [City of Oakland's Police Department](#), includes crimes such as robbery, assault, prostitution, and burglary. Of approximately 375 reported incidents of crime, 86 of them were assaults, 51 were theft related, and 48 of them were burglaries. Crimes were reported the seven days of the week. There is a high concentration of crimes bellow the Foothill Blvd, which is where more than half of the schools are located.

Guerra believes that students are affected and exposed to crime in schools that are "more down towards that area." "That" area is what she considers to be "down bellow Foothill." International Blvd., which is bellow Foothill Blvd., has made headlines because of [prostitution](#). The Fruitvale District is considered one of the "hot spots" for robberies in the article "[Oakland: Robbery capital of America.](#)"