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Mimi Chen Ting

Compass-Ion
(La Madre Poderosa)

Acrylic
22K Gold Leaf
Clayboard

36" X 36" X 2"

2005

La Madre Poderosa reviewed by Dory Hulburt for the Horse Fly, April 16, 2005

Freelance curator Olga Torres-Reid's exhibits unearth ancient veins in modern-day traditions (and revive ancient traditions, a la her Día de Los Muertos celebrations). With Mother's Day coming up May 8, Torres-Reid's current exhibit at the Harwood Museum burrows underneath the multi-tasking, harried, nurturing, negligent, working, guilty motherhood we hear so much about, to a realm that encompasses much more: Powerful Mother. The 19 artists invited to create altars on the theme reflect a broad spectrum of attitudes, from love to fear.

Mimi Chen Ting renders Mother with great love and tenderness in her mixed-media "Compass-Ion." She's fluid, in motion, infinite. Her body extends off the canvas, and is encased in a red circle: intimations of blood, womb, and warmth. The altar is a square niche in the center of the piece, at a powerful site on Mother's body: the tan tien, the sea of chi, the cauldron, the Manipura chakra, the source of healing. The site is also that of Mother's womb and yoni, signifying her receptivity, the yin, the feminine. Mimi ingeniously constructed the piece in four rectangles that fit together in such a way as to leave the center-the altar-empty. In essence, the piece is a spiral, a vortex, converging at the altar. According to a ribbon of Chinese calligraphy: "The embrace of compassion knows no bounds and never tires."

The show continues through June 12.

"What a joy to review such a beautiful, elemental piece" –DH-