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In Memory of Diego Cortez 1946-2021



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Diego Cortez was a friend since the 1970s, a gifted artist, curator, night club owner, and much more. By the 1980s he became an essential player in the downtown scene, curating the iconic 1981 "New York/ New Wave" which featured more than 100 artists and spanned two floors of P.S. 1. The exhibition combined uptown and downtown aesthetics into a maximalist display that introduced works by Keith Haring, Nan Goldin, Robert Mapplethorpe, Kiki Smith, Andy Warhol, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

In 1977, Diego Cortez collaborated with Jimmy DeSana to create the work shown here, "My Latin Heritage/El Cansearch Presidente" for the gallery's "MOVING" exhibition. Artists were invited to create works around the concept of motion and relocation to inaugurate the new gallery exhibition space at 90 West Broadway. As David Shapiro wrote, "Diego Cortez presents an explicitly autobiographical montage of 'scattered selves'." The artist himself writes that the work was a part of his "My Latin Heritage" series which was "a personal historical myth construction of the artist's real and imaginary past."

Diego Cortez is remembered above all else as being a supportive and caring friend who always encouraged and uplifted his creative peers. The gallery warmly remembers him and his work, sending condolences to his family and loved ones.

Diego Cortez, a Scene Shaper in Art and Music, Dies at 74



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