

# The Angela de Hoyos Papers

Now Available at the Center for Mexican American Studies and Research  
at Our Lady of the Lake University

By Joseph De León

The Chicana poet, artist, songwriter and activist Angela de Hoyos left behind a prolific artistic and literary legacy in San Antonio and South Texas when she passed away in 2009. Now her papers are available to scholars, artists, and the general public at the Center for Mexican American Studies Special Collections at Our Lady of the Lake University.

Born in Coahuila, Mexico, in 1924. She was brought to the United States as a three-year old by her family. She graduated from Fox Tech High School in 1947 with honors. Her first published works appear in the 1946 high school art book, *In and Around the Alamo City*. Throughout the 1950s she wrote Spanish language song lyrics for various local artists, which were recorded on 12 inch 78 RPM vinyl disks. She also designed dresses for female royalty for the Annual San Antonio Battle of Flowers Parade.

The 1960s through the late 1980s were a turning point in her artistic and literary career, when she became involved in the burgeoning Chicano movement. Many readings of her literary and poetic works were accompanied by artistic performances that were held at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center on the Westside of San Antonio. Her husband Moises Sandoval, who also ran his own publishing company, M&A Editions, recorded all of Angela's events. Because Chicana/o writers were generally excluded from mainstream publication outlets, they published their own works. M&A Editions published the poetry, essays short stories, and artwork of an emerging Texas-based Chicana/o literati. While they published the work of many aspiring writers, the early works of Chicana literary stars such as Carmen Tafolla and Norma Cantú can be found in some of the chapbooks.

Angela de Hoyos' body of work feature feminism, gender, and Chicana philosophy as prominent themes. Her career also had an international reach, as several of her works were translated and published in South America and Europe. Books by literary scholars were also published about her life and career, most prominently that by Luis Arturo Ramos titled *Angela de Hoyos: A Critical Look*, and *The Multifaceted Poetic World of Angela de Hoyos*, by Dr. Marcela Aguilar Henson. The poet and author Raúl R. Salinas, referred to her as the "spiritual den mother of Chicano Letters."

Her artistic output extended beyond literature and included drawings and other artistic motifs that include flowers and nature, buildings in the Spanish architectural style, sculptures, as well as intimate family portraits. According to her husband, Moises, her only self-portrait was made in 1953, and was featured in many references to her literary and artistic works.



Self portrait by Angela de Hoyos, 1953.

Throughout her artistic career, de Hoyos worked with a variety of materials, such as copper, plaster, glass, and plastic.

In the fall of 2021, her husband Moises donated materials related to her career as a Chicana author and artist to the Center for Mexican American Studies and Research Special Collections at Our Lady of the Lake University, under the auspices of Dr. Aimee Villarreal where the collection is currently housed. The Angela de Hoyos papers themselves consist of approximately five linear feet of printed, and digitally scanned documents, audio and video saved to CD and DVD spanning her entire career from the 1940s through the 2000s. Included in the collection are original poetry, books by and about Angela de Hoyos, instructional pamphlets, royalty statements, and various publications in which she was featured. The digital files contain photos of her paintings, sculptures and block prints, dresses, and pottery, all which attest to an artistic and literary career for which posthumously gained the sobriquet *la Poeta del Pueblo*.

In the Spring of 2022, the finding aid to the Angela de Hoyos papers was published under the Our Lady of the Lake University Library webpage for the Center for Mexican American Studies



Angela de Hoyos' most prominent work, the poem titled, *Arise Chicano*, was published in an anthology of her poems by Backstage books. The poem ends with:

Arise Chicano!  
that divine spark within you  
surely says...Wash your wounds  
and swathe your agonies.

There is no one to succor you  
*You must be your own messiah*

and Research. The papers are accessible in person by appointment at the Special Collections for the Center for Mexican American Studies and Research, located in the Our Lady of the Lake Convent, room 112. Throughout the summer the archive is open Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Please contact archivist, Joseph De León at [jdeleon6315@ollusa.edu](mailto:jdeleon6315@ollusa.edu). The archives can also be accessed at: [bit.ly/hoyos-papers](http://bit.ly/hoyos-papers)