Co-founders of the groundbreaking performance group La Pocha Nostra, since 1993 Gomez-Peña and Sifuentes have collaborated in innumerable performance, video and installation works and co-authored two books. These radical performance projects utilize a unique combination of sharp-edged conceptualism, hard-core politics and Chicano irony that has become the trademark of La Pocha Nostra’s performance style. In 2012, they teamed with LA filmmaker Mariah Garnett to create Mexercise.

**Let's Go For Some!!**

Styled to follow the campy, DIY look and structure of an exercise video trailer on late night 80’s TV, the viewing gallery audience is invited to join in on a series of humorous Mexercise routines led by 'Billy Gomez' and 'Bob Sifuentes' with names like “Bust Me Tai Chi” and “Chihuahua Curling.”
While satirizing celebrity exercise and self-help videos, *Mexercise* exposes the superficial hedonism of contemporary body culture; who has time and money to engage in the cult of fitness, who doesn’t and why?

By appropriating the exercise video’s sequential format and activity-based content, *Mexercise* comments on the current environment of paranoia and corruption by pointing to the almost ‘recreational’ attitude adopted by police officers and border patrolmen. In this sense the video is also about the internalized adaptation of the ‘other’ body, the brown body -- and to an extent all bodies of difference -- that is required to conduct daily life in a setting of law enforcement violence, almost as if ‘training’ the body for a intense physical event. The film project playfully invokes racial stereotyping and fear of the other as a creative tactic to explore racism and anti-immigrant hysteria.

The term ‘Mexcercise’ was inspired by events that took place in Los Angeles in the 1990s during the Rampart Scandal. This period refers to a pervasive corruption in the anti-gang unit of the Los Angeles Police Department whereby more than 70 police officers were assigned to or associated with the ‘Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums’ or CRASH unit and the eventual misconduct that ensued as a result. The convicted offenses of these officers included unprovoked shootings and beatings, framing of suspects and the covering up of evidence related to these activities. The Rampart scandal stands as one of the most widespread cases of undocumented police misconduct in United States history.

When cops from the Rampart division would go out at night to harass, frame and beat up Mexicans they would use the term, “Let’s go for some Mexercise.”

**Credits:**
Filmed and edited by Mariah Garnett
Concept: Guillermo Gomez-Peña and Roberto Sifuentes
Produced by Emma Tramposch
Writing: Gomez-Peña, Sifuentes and Lisa Manter
Other performers include Lisa Manter, Avila Reese, Robert Gomez and Babalu.
Special thanks to Chuck Mobley and SFCamerawork

(Excerpts of this text can be used in the catalogue, publicity or the wall text. Another wall text with larger font should say something like: “Please follow the exercises while in the gallery”