



# HISTORICAL PRESENCE IN VISUAL CULTURE Contemporaneity

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## Border Check

Hazel Batrezchavez

### About the Artist

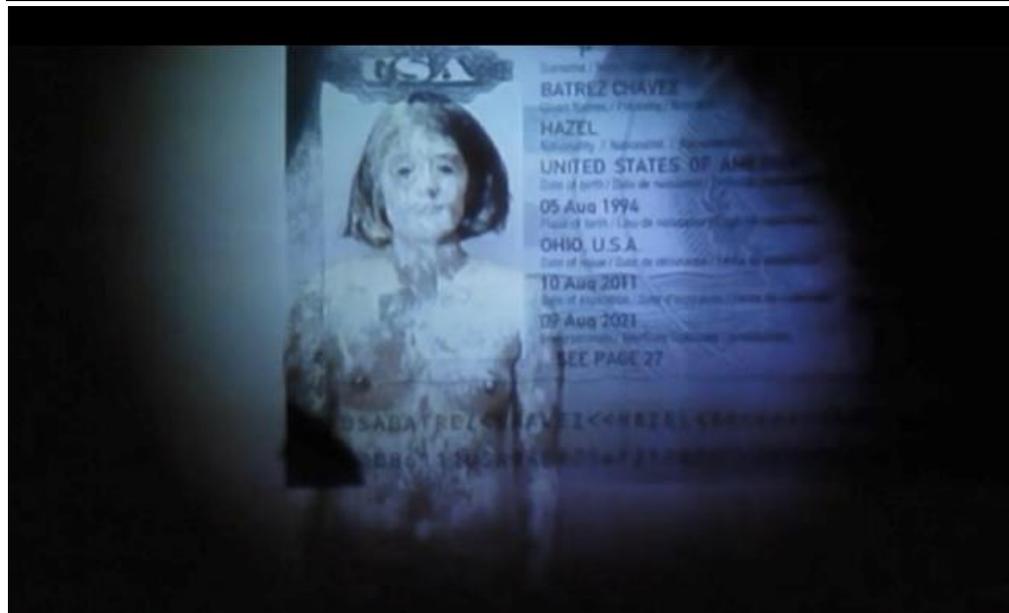
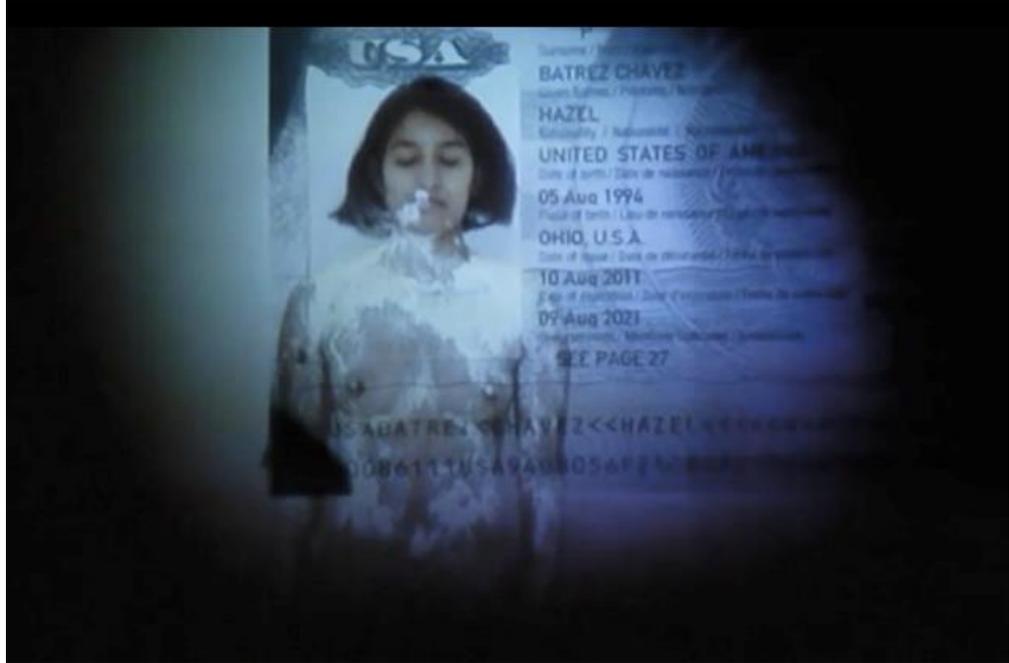
*Hazel Batrezchavez received her bachelor of arts degree in studio art and anthropology from Grinnell College. She has been a part of various group exhibitions and pop-up shows in California, New Mexico, Iowa, and Minnesota, and has had solo exhibitions in New Mexico and Iowa. Her work moves freely among sculpture, video installation, and performance as a way to address the complexities of identity and all that is tied to it—such as the body, language, and material. She is interested in how the act of performing identity through daily rituals can be translated to the action that occurs in the process of making a sculpture or doing a performance. She recognizes that within the fine arts world there is an expectation that if you are raced, or gendered, your work is directly associated with identity. Often in identity- or race-curated exhibitions, the work functions as a double-edged sword; it celebrates achievement while also creating and fixing notions of race. In Batrezchavez's praxis and work, you will not find Frida Kahlo or Day of the Dead skulls, nor will you find a sombrero or a trope about the hard-working immigrant; you will not find delicate and soft materials just because she is a female, either. What you will find is the artist taking up space, making the viewer recognize the space she is taking, and a resistance to conform with the existing structures, to be defined and labeled with the institutional language, whether that is accomplished through the large-scale objects, or the actions that take place in the artist's studio or her performance. Currently Batrezchavez is an Instructor of Record and working towards her MFA in sculpture at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.*

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Hazel Batrezchavez

My current work moves freely among sculpture, video installation, and performance. I work in multiple mediums as a way to address the complexities of identity, and all that is tied to it, like the body, language, and material. Lately, I've been interested in how the act of performing identity through daily rituals can be translated to the action that can happen in the process of making a sculpture or doing a performance. Making work that revolves around identity can sometimes feel burdening as a human; it leads me to questions.

What work might be expected of me in the art world because of my gender or the way I am "raced"? Often in critiques it can be difficult to talk about these specificities, like "race," gender, and the nude body, let alone be responsible for directing that conversation. I hope that through this work, a dialogue can be started.



**Figures 1&2**

Hazel Batrezchavez, *Border Check*, 2018, Film Stills.

Full Film: [Hazel Batrezchavez, Border Check, 2018, Video.](#)

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