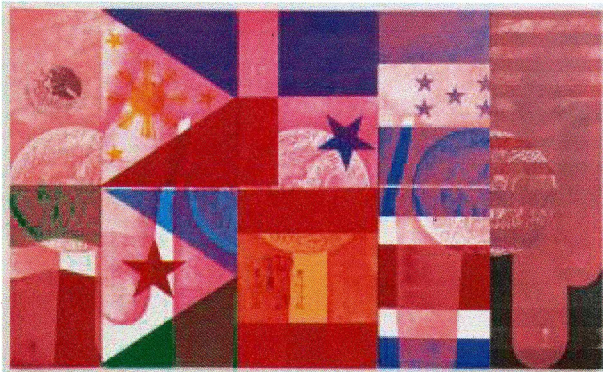


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## Rauschenberg Gallery shows Arturo Vega retrospective



A piece from Arturo Vega's "Empire" retrospective COURTESY IMAGE

Florida SouthWestern State College will offer "Empire: An Arturo Vega Retrospective" at the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery, located on FSW's Lee County campus.

Opening with a public reception from 6-8 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 4 this ambitious survey runs through Dec. 17 and will include guest lectures, performances and a panel discussion exploring Arturo Vega's broader impact on popular culture and contextualizing his work as a visual artist.

A collaboration with the Arturo Vega Foundation in New York City, "Empire: An Arturo Vega Retrospective" is the late Mexican-born artist's first solo U.S. museum retrospective and features photography, collage and a number of iconic canvases from the artist's Supermarket and Silver Dollar series (begun in the 1970s); his Flags and so-called "word paintings" from Insults and other series produced during the 1980s, '90s and 2000s.

Escaping the repressive violence of an authoritarian regime under Mexico's "perfect dictatorship" in the late 1960s, Arturo Vega made his way to New York City to study English, philosophy and photography at the New School for Social Research in the early 1970s. Having discovered Elvis as a child and later co-directing a touring production of The Who's "Tommy" at the National University in Mexico City, Mr. Vega understood the revolutionary and transformative power of music, theater/ performance and art. While working on his first painting series of supermarket signs, he befriended members of The Ramones, a rock and roll band that would soon play its first show (and would decades later be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame). Designing the Ramones' ubiquitous logo based on the Great Seal of the United States, painting backdrops for its stage and creating a lighting scheme loosely adapted from Albert Speer's "Lichtdom" to enhance the effect, Mr. Vega created visual imagery that defined the transgressive aesthetic of punk rock by co-opting and questioning symbols of power.

