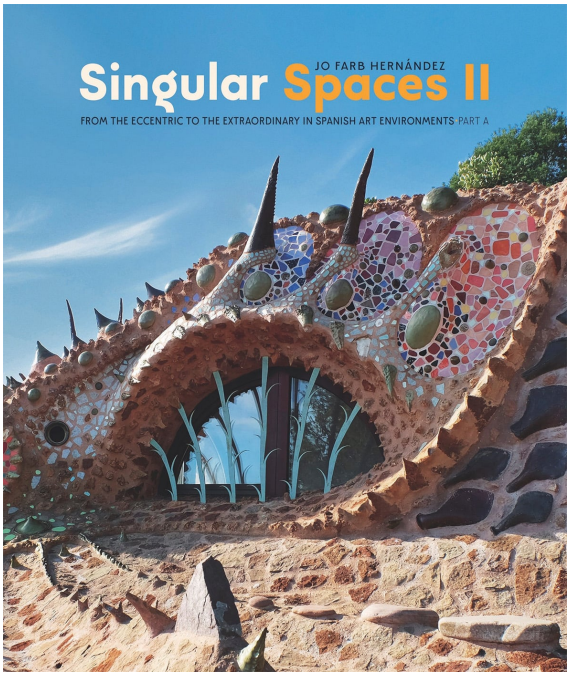
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Singular Spaces II

From the Eccentric to the Extraordinary in Spanish Art Environments

Jo Farb Hernández

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- A groundbreaking and encyclopedic book on Outsider Art environments in Spain
- Documented by Jo Farb Hernández, director emerita of the world's most important archives on these monumental sites

This two-volume set marks Jo Farb Hernández's fifty years of scholarship on art environments and the capstone of her work on self-taught artists who have built art environments in Spain. ***Singular Spaces II*** evolved from her 2013 book, Singular Spaces. Together these works constitute an encyclopedic exploration of Spanish art environments and an epic narration of the stories of those who made them.

Singular Spaces II introduces and examines 99 artists and their intriguing and idiosyncratic sculptures, homes, and gardens, most of which have never been thoroughly documented or previously published. The author has cast a wide net to ensure all regions of Spain are represented, as are all kinds of spaces assembled with all kinds of materials.

These sites are developed organically, without formal architectural or engineering plans: they are at once evolving and complete. Often highly fanciful and quixotic, the work is frequently characterized by incongruous juxtapositions, the result of a dynamic approach to creation that may appear impulsive and spontaneous. But these artists and their works have much to teach us about the process of creation and also about the confidence to undertake a path radically different from the one they had followed during the prime of their working lives.

Hernández combines detailed case studies of the artists and their work with contextualized historical and theoretical references to a broad range of interlocking fields, including art, art history, anthropology, vernacular architecture, Spanish area studies, and folklore, complemented with compeling visuals of each of the artists and their artworks. Breaking down the standard compartmentalisation of genres, she reveals how most creators of art environments, building within their own personal spaces, fuse their creations with their daily life in a way generally unmatched in any other circumstances of making art, in the process providing an open self-reflection of their life and concerns. The universality of the need to create, and the issues that are confronted when one does so in a public and non-sanctioned way, are relevant to art and artists worldwide.

Jo Farb Hernández, Director Emerita of SPACES and the Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery at San José State University, is an internationally-recognized scholar in this field, and an award-winning author, curator, and photographer. Her work has illuminated — and preserved via documentation — the creative lives of individuals who, working outside of the commercial spheres, may have otherwise gone unnoticed, and bodies of work that often cease to exist after the artist is no longer alive to care for it. In a field wherein each artist's work is ongoing, organic, and accumulative but also impacted by real world elements, this kind of long-term study is critical — and too rarely done. Hernández has been dedicated to the field of self-taught artists and vernacular art environment builders for five decades and is one of very few scholars to dedicate their careers to this under-recognized community of makers. She was among the early pioneers in the United States, and has become a singular force in her work on the self-taught artists of Spain. In conjunction with her first volume on this subject (*Singular Spaces. From the Eccentric to the Extraordinary in Spanish Art Environments*, Raw Vision 2013), ***Singular Spaces II*** provides an encyclopedic treatment of the field.

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