

VAQUERO

Title: Vaquero

Artist: Jimenez, Luis

Date: 1980

Type: Sculpture

Medium: Painted Fiber Glass

Location: Moody Park



Vaquero is a different interpretation of the traditional equestrian statue, which usually portrays a hero with a sword or a gun mounted on a stately horse. In this instance, an exuberant man & an equally high-spirited horse celebrate life. The fiberglass on steel armature sculpture is painted in lively acrylic. It honors the accomplishments of Hispanic vaqueros in establishing and perfecting the ranching economy so important to life in the Southwest. It has been a part of the Moody Park experience since 1980.

Vaquero was commissioned by the Art in Public Places Program, funded by the City of Houston and the National Endowment for the Arts. It is the work of El Paso native [Luis Jimenez](#). He studied art at the University of Texas at Austin, graduating in 1964, and went on to a distinguished art career. He taught at the University of Houston and the University of Arizona and is represented in many private collections and museums. The Houston Art League named Jimenez the Texas Artist of the Year in 1998. He died in New Mexico in 2006 while working on the 32-foot tall Mustang, which was installed at the Denver International Airport after his death. Like the horse depicted in Vaquero, it is vividly blue.

The sculpture in Moody Park was the first in a five-copy edition. Each one is painted differently. A sixth version, an artist's proof, was obtained by the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., where it stands at the entrance to the collection.

The bright Houston sun caused the colors to fade over time, and Vaquero was cleaned and repainted in 2009 to match the artist's original color palette. The conservation efforts were carried out by the Houston Arts Alliance.

