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*Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections*

## **Folklife Festival Narrative Session: Murals & Low Riders: Border History; Chinese Presence in Baja, California**

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WEBVTT

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<i>Speaker 1</i>: Yeah, like this sort of thematic orientation of stuff on the northern side of the border.

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<i>Speaker 1</i>: Okay, I see another question. Why don't we keep things going here by trying to answer some questions rather than have us stand up here and babble.

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<i>Speaker 2</i>: How do people form a car club and how does an individual join a club that's already established?

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<i>Speaker 1</i>: How do people form a car club and how do they get into a club that is already established?

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<i>Speaker 1</i>: [In Spanish] [[?]]

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Um, first if I can just get back to finishing the latter part of this question over here.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: To, um, to be honest with you, although the movement I am part of each individual is involved with competing within his own club and with other clubs, we are a movement of unity.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And between where I live in Texas and in California, Southern California particularly, there is a brilliant exchange of wonderful ideas and wonderful innovations that make, that are beneficial to the whole movement in general.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: So, as far as differences are concerned, whatever little area can contribute of their culture you know that adds to the beauty of the whole.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: For instance, if there's a, what I like to refer to, a couple of murals in one area maybe somebody with a oriental origin will want maybe somebody from a Chinese mythology muraled onto their vehicle.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Where different areas they more, coming towards the East, somewhere in New Mexico somebody wants to do a little more work with hydraulics and somewhere in El Paso we'll do something with a border motif.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: The American and Mexican flag and the two hands coming together showing the, you know the camaraderie and the brotherhood there on the border.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Little variants like that, but I like to say that things like that add to the beauty of the whole movement.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And as far as the establishment of a car club, I'll go ahead and use my car club as an example. There are variants of this, but this is usually basically what happens.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Slow & Low founded five years ago by a family, and a couple of buddies of the family, needed a way out of the gangs, a way out of the bad elements in the streets, so they got together and took about two weeks to hammer out sort of a constitution to charter up, you know, some bylaws that the club goes by.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: It was very important that the founders all were united in those, in all the uh, all the little articles that were passed so that everybody would be, no one would, there would be no exceptions.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: You know, if this article said this everybody, they all agreed on it, so y'all have to follow it.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And pretty much you wanna just set down what kind of cars y'all wanna go with, there's many different custom applications, the four-by-fours, you have the rods, the speed and custom, and the low-riders.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And just, you make up your mind of which ones you're gonna represent, sit down and get, it's very important to have some sort of foundation there for you to refer to, otherwise the movement goes to chaos, your whole club just kind of falls apart.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: So I'd say order. Definite chain of order, chain of, I don't wanna say chain of command because that sounds a little militaristic, but sometimes that's exactly the way it is.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Definite chain of command. We elect presidents, we elect officers of the president's board and the elections take place every half year, every six months.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Therefore, the governing body doesn't so much, it doesn't acquire so much power that it's overpowering everything else, everybody has a shot.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: We require that our members be in the club at least a year before they can run for office, thereby showing us that they are committed to the club and that while in office they will work for the betterment of the club.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And we impose fines for everything from late fees, being late to the meetings, disrupting the meetings to disorderly conduct, disorderly conduct in public.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Also, there's stiff fines for drug use as well as expellment for drug use, we don't have any druggies in the club. and alcohol is also kind of kept on, under real tight control.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Keeping in mind we are an automobile club, we don't need to be driving around behind a wheel and you know, intoxicated.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: In order to get into the club, my club is kind of lenient as far as that goes. We require that the individual has a vehicle and is lowered, we are a low-rider club, so no, unfortunately, no four-by-fours and no stock restorations.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: I said unfortunately because again they are all other expressions of a movement that I enjoy very much, maybe in the not too distant future I will enjoy cruising around with four-by-fours.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: But as for now, only low-riders in Slow & Low.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: We require that the individuals stay within the club again for at least a year before we all start helping him work with his vehicle.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: This again shows the commitment to the club, commitment to the movement and that was born out of the past again.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: People joining the club, taking advantage of the services we provide and leaving.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Most of all, one of the prerequisites is patience. This is gonna take a lot of time and there's a lot of trouble that you know, that you need to overcome.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Whether it's with, uh, whether it's with the individuals in the club, whether it's with other organizations around you, whether it's

with the city government around you.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: All these things have to be dealt with and overcome.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Slow & Low at first was just like any other car club, they had their hard times with the police, not as much now because we are so extensively involved with the community.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: So I'd say if you really wanted to get somewhere, to be involved with the community as much as you can, that way you have a, you lead a high profile, the police can see you involved with the community, others can see you involved with the community, and they're less likely to group you together with the gangs and with the drug dealers.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: And just time, patience, a lot of time and a lot of love, takes a lot of love, the love of brothers and brothers and sisters, the love of sisters, and general just the love of the family.

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<i>Speaker 3</i>: Take care, because you're always gonna have problems, there's gonna be an alcoholic sometimes, there's gonna be someone who's really depressed sometimes and it's basically, if you operate like a family with the order of an organization, you'll achieve, you'll achieve a pretty strong club because that's basically how we're set up.



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