

Organization Attributes: Artistic Assassins (Artistas Asesinos)

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A. When the organization was formed + brief history
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The gang operates at the Ciudad Juarez border with the United States.• Under the orders of the Sinaloa Organization and along with the Mexicles gang, this organization has been fighting for the control of the Ciudad Juarez drug smuggling corridor.¹• Members of this organization consider killing as an art form and their members' main characteristic is that they are fairly well groomed and articulate.²
B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,
a. In general
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contract killing and drug retail sales.
b. <i>Specific detail: types of illicit trafficking activities engaged in</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contract killing and drug smuggling for the Sinaloa organization in the Ciudad Juarez corridor.
C. Scope and Size
a. Estimated size of network and membership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approximately 600 members.³
b. Countries / regions group is known to have operated in. (i.e. the group's operating area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ciudad Juarez in the northern state of Chihuahua
D. Leader Characteristics
a. Who is/are the leader(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
b. Leadership timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
c. Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
E. Organizational Structure
a. Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
b. Membership – is there formal or informal membership in the organization or network? What role do informal or nonmembers play in trafficking and other criminal activities?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of this group do not consider themselves as gang members. Since they can come in and out of the organization, they consider their group to be more union-like.⁴• Their members range from the age of sixteen to the mid-thirties.⁵
c. Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
F. Resources
a. Financial
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
b. Human
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
c. Logistical
i. Forgery, safe-houses, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
ii. Key routes

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
d.	Transportation
	i. Land
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
	ii. Sea
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
	iii. Air
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
	iv. Intermodal container
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities	
a.	Corruption
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
b.	Concealment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
c.	Deception
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
d.	Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
H. Prior / Existing Relationships	
a.	Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along with the Mexicles this organization has been fighting to gain control over the Ciudad Juarez corridor for the Sinaloa Organization. To fight off attacks from the Artistic Assassins, the Juarez organization subcontracts enforcement activities to the Aztecs and La Linea. Rivalry between these groups has escalated and reports show that Artistic Assassins have slain dozens of La Linea and Aztec gang members at drug rehabilitation centers.⁶
b.	Corrupt politicians, law enforcement , political parties and other state entities, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
c.	<i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So far, there is no indication of this group having any dealing with terrorist organizations.
I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
J. Technical Sophistication	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
K. Penchant for Innovation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
L. Activities in United States	
a.	Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
b.	<i>Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
c.	Linkages with US groups
	i. Market/transaction links
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
	ii. Stable supplier

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.
All research conducted according to the project manual.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
iii. Franchise arrangement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
iv. HQ and Branch office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
M. Evaluations
a. Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its nontraditional approach to gang membership could be an asset in confronting the Aztecs and La Linea members, since the ability to come and go from the organization might strengthen the bond and willingness to engage in criminal activities. • Their strategic location as well as their smuggling capabilities for the Sinaloa Organization through the Juarez corridor can be accounted as a major asset.
b. Weaknesses and vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their relative small numbers (compared to 7,000 Aztecs) might make them an easy target to be overrun.
c. Additional insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their nontraditional approach to membership as well as their violent behavior, could mean that leaders lose control over their members' activities raising the possibility some segments might be inclined to participate in riskier but more profitable activities.
Other Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

¹ Maclean, Ruth, "We're not a gang, we're a union, say the drug killers of Ciudad Juárez" The Times, March 27th, 2010, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article7078075.ece

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Borunda, Daniel, "Boy, 16, among suspected gang members held after Juárez shootout", El Paso Times, February, 15th, 2011, http://www.elpasotimes.com/ci_17389894?!ADID=Search-www.elpasotimes.com-www.elpasotimes.com

⁶ CNN Staff, "Mexico: Suspect arrested in U.S. consulate shooting deaths", July 2nd, 2010, http://articles.cnn.com/2010-07-02/world/mexico.consulate.deaths.arrest_1_drug-gang-lesley-enriquez-juarez-cartel?s=PM:WORLD