

The Third Triennial Conference of the Association for Latin American Art

Cities, Borders and Frontiers in Ancient, Colonial, Modern, and Contemporary Latin American Art

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Session 1: Pre-Columbian Art

Matthew H. Robb, De Young Museum, San Francisco
The Wilderness of Teotihuacan

What is 'outside' at Teotihuacan? Where did the city stop, and the non-city begin? How were ideas about exterior spaces, places, and things presented and conceptualized within the minds and sightlines of the ancient city's inhabitants (Short 1991)? This paper addresses these questions in light of the discoveries of elaborate faunal, avian, and reptilian offerings created during the multiple phases of the construction of the Pyramid of the Moon (Polaco 2004; Sugiyama and López Luján 2007); These offerings, complete with cages for coyotes that were subsequently buried alive, speak to a Teotihuacan way of understanding and controlling the natural world that brought powerful predators into the very heart of the city's ceremonial spaces (Sugiyama and Cabrera Castro 2007).

The natural environment is broadly understood as a primary subject of the art of Teotihuacan (Pasztor 1992). But the specific manifestations and implications of an urban / non-urban opposition in the city's ideology remain underexplored. Similarly, our knowledge of the exact species included in these offerings – and even in some cases how they were processed and dissected (Blanco, et al. 2010) - contrasts with our lack of insight into the broader social practices that both acquired and conceptualized these creatures. Given their prominent deposition at a key site of the city's ritual center, the menagerie of coyotes, pumas, eagles, owls, and snakes must have had a profound impact on the city's cultural landscape, both in terms of the actual events leading to their presentation and sacrifice, to the strategies of social memory that kept these creatures alive in the minds of the city's inhabitants. The iconographic continuities among the animals sacrificed at the Pyramid of the Moon and those appearing on the walls of the city's apartment compounds compel us to draw connections from one to the other (Sugiyama and Sugiyama 2007),

and may suggest that certain compounds were aligned with certain animals and perhaps even their acquisition, taming, quasi-domestication, and husbandry. Through a close reading that compares and contrasts these offerings with the presentation of processional animal imagery in murals along the Street of the Dead, as well as the spatial contexts of animal imagery in some key apartment compounds, I argue that these artistic, cultural and religious programs participated in a coordinated system of references that established the shared cultural parameters of the wilderness of Teotihuacan.

Cynthia Kristan-Graham, Auburn University

Looking at the Overlooked at Chichén Itzá: Architecture, Landscape, and Ontology

My title is borrowed from Norman Bryson's *Looking at the Overlooked* (1990, Reaktion Books), which demonstrates how some seemingly mundane European still life paintings are charged with deep cultural, social, and political significance. Bryson's approach to art as totalizing and comprehensive, rather than as a puzzle to dissect, results in innovative, nuanced readings.

Often architecture is analyzed piecemeal, with unequal focus placed on the façade as a canvas for complex symbolic and narrative programs and the exterior as a container for habitation and rituals. My work on Mesoamerican architecture focuses on a unified field of space, building, and people, and is informed not only by art history, archaeology, and anthropology, but also by architectural, landscape, and urban history, with emphases on gendered space, memory, ontology, and phenomenology. In my ongoing study of the Mercado at the Maya site of Chichén Itzá and other Terminal Classic-Postclassic gallery-patio buildings, it is apparent that the plan and *in situ* furniture have both mimetic and linguistic associations.

Mimetic buildings appear across the globe, with plans and elevations representing functions; examples include cross-plan churches, Buddhist stupas, and more prosaic instances such as restaurants in the form of food. One well-known Maya example is the radial temple, whose *kin* sign plan intersects with the temple's function as a calendric monument. The gallery-patio building is also mimetic; most often the plan is a T, the central element of the day sign *ik'*. *Ik'* symbolizes kinship, death, and rulership, all of which intersect with plausible uses of the Mercado as a lineage house and site for coronations and sacrifice.

A linguistic-symbolic phenomenon is found in the gallery. The *talud-tablero* throne that projects from a wall forms an artificial landscape. An analysis of the *tablero* or cornice, and its carved imagery, indicates that it functions as sky band. Below this, the angle of the sloping *talud* recalls the

side of a pyramid or mountain. In addition to the basic landscape placement of sky above land, in Yucatec Maya the throne can be understood as *chan witz* ("sky-mountain"), a Maya place of origin. This allusion to the deep past, when the natural and social worlds were created, highlights a rulership-fertility link, echoes some *ik'* associations, and is a fitting throne for lords and elite lineages engaged in rituals.

In addition to the throne being a corporeal *chan witz*, it helps to define the physical building. Because the Mercado is porous, with columns and pillars rather than planar facades delineating the exterior, it is interior walls and furniture that actually provide structural definition. Hence, the throne as surrogate landscape helps to shape the Mercado as a stable, physical presence while symbolically transforming and transporting it, its occupants, and activities to other times and places. Moreover, looking at these overlooked aspects of the building may help to understand similar gallery-patios and thrones at Xochicalco, Tula, and Tenochtitlan.

Patrick Hajovsky, Southwestern University

Aztec Built Environments and a Phenomenology of Scale: Between Bodily Presence and Body Representations

A comparison of two late Aztec monuments under the patronage of Moctezuma II (r. 1502-20) reveals the intersections between Aztec built environments and divine kingship. The two sculptures refer to two salient events during the king's career: the so-called Teocalli de la Guerra Sagrada celebrated the New Fire Ceremony of 1507, and his portrait at Chapultepec Park celebrated his 52-year jubilee in 1519. Unlike other existing Aztec sculptures, these require his physical participation in their interpretation, as their hieroglyphs call attention to a developing imperial narrative. I argue that the interpretation of these sculptures hinges as much on the king's physical body as on the images contained within them, and that their respective environments help frame a narrative of the king's body as a cosmological model.

The Teocalli was excavated from the site of Moctezuma's palace compound. It is a miniature representation of the Templo Mayor fit to human scale, and as Emily Umberger has convincingly demonstrated, a person could literally sit upon the temple platform and convert it into a "throne". Represented on its surfaces are several figures that offer auto-sacrifice and speak of warfare to a solar disk, and Moctezuma II is the only figure among them identified with a name sign. Cecelia Klein has convincingly shown how sculptural images of the king involved in auto-sacrifice, including the Teocalli, reference the founding acts of the king's political legitimacy. Building from these ideas, I read the monument in terms of directional symbolism, which transforms the king into a grand

solar metaphor when he occupies it. While the images offer an important foundational narrative, the king's physical inclusion transforms the temple into a microcosm, and his body into a macrocosm.

Across the marsh to the east, in the pleasure park of the kings, the Chapultepec Portrait still stands *in situ* near what was once the beginning point of a sacred aqueduct, which carried fresh water across Lake Texcoco to Tenochtitlan. The sculpture commands a vista east toward Tenochtitlan and the rising sun, and more broadly toward the ultimate source of water, Mount Tlaloc. Moctezuma II was continuing a tradition of portraiture at the park to emphasize his responsibility to provide water to Tenochtitlan, and to reemphasize Aztec dominance of this important historical site. Though the sculpture is badly damaged, I reconstruct it based on archaeological evidence and ethnohistoric accounts, and because it is *in situ*, life-size, and decorated with metaphorical imagery, I read the work as a representation the king as a sun-bearer in a way that complements the Teocalli.

Moctezuma II and his sculptors developed the conceptual relationship between the divine king's body and his political power, and in their works the relationship between sculptural forms, images, and the royal body converge with an Aztec sense of place. In the absence of the king's body seated on the Teocalli, his life-size sculpture at Chapultepec portrait stands in as a culmination of an imperial narrative, in which the king becomes both microcosm and macrocosm.

Reinaldo Morales, Jr. and **Melisa Quesenberry**, University of Central Arkansas

The Antillean Frontier: Rock Art and (the Other) Mesoamerica

Art and place rarely come together as potently as in cave ritual. Mesoamerica and the Antillean islands represent a "fertile crescent" of pre-Columbian cave art and ritual. Yet rarely is this connection recognized, and rarely does the Caribbean figure prominently in Mesoamerican studies. This paper seeks to explore this overlooked nexus of art, identity and ritual that unites mainland Mesoamerica and the Antillean archipelago. Borderland communities in the pre-Columbian Caribbean were the essential links between diverse polities over diverse landscapes since at least 2000 BC. Archaeological evidence points to long-distance trade networks that sometimes leapfrogged through the Caribbean, skipping entire island chains. Around 300 BC a new wave of migrants brought new art and ideas up from South America; this is the impressive Saladoid horizon. Most scholarship on the Caribbean relies almost exclusively upon this Amazonian cultural inheritance to contextualize prehistoric Antillean art — this is "conventional wisdom" (Keegan 1997:138), one needs to look no further.

However, cave art and its ritual context provides evidence of a significant cognitive and aesthetic connection between the Antilles and mainland Mesoamerica, and a distinct disconnect with lowland South American traditions. Modified speleothem sculpture — a unique class of cave art characterized by low- and high-relief carving on secondary cave formations like stalagmites and stalactites — illustrates this connection most dramatically. There is no precedent for dark-zone rock art or modified speleothem traditions in South America. The Yucatán peninsula and southern Maya highlands, on the other hand, boast dozens of sites with remarkably similar rock art. From Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico, to Anguilla and Barbados, we find the same class and context of rock art as at mainland sites in Mexico's Yucatán peninsula, and in Guatemala, Belize and Nicaragua. Many of the mainland sites are still vital to local indigenous identity, with ample evidence of ancient and modern rituals involving communication with ancestral forces for sacred (and political) benefit and stability. Contact-period documents report similar roles for caves and cave art in the Caribbean. This nexus of art and ritual unites the Antilles with mainland Mesoamerica in a cave art tradition unique in the Americas, yet one clearly infused with a familiar pan-American ideological character.

Laura Wingfield

Ancient Nicoyan Identity across the Nicaraguan/Costa Rican Border

Long held to be the southern frontier of Mesoamerica, Greater Nicoya seems to have struggled for two millennia to assert its own identity. Within its northern and southern regions (today's southwestern Nicaragua and northwestern Costa Rica), ancient Nicoyan peoples worked to create art emblematic of shared beliefs yet telling of subtle differences between the north and the south. From c. 500 BCE-800 CE, Nicoyan art suggests a relationship of "country cousins" in Nicaragua versus the more worldly Nicoyans of Costa Rica, those connected through trade to the Maya in the distant north, Caribbean peoples to the east, and Ecuadorians to the south. By 800 CE, immigrants from a troubled Mesoamerica began settling in Greater Nicoya, particularly in the Nicaraguan sector. After 800 CE, Nicoyan art retained some of its earlier unique characteristics, yet on the surface at least, this new art clearly diverged between Nicaragua and Costa Rica. By the sixteenth century when the Spanish encountered peoples in both northern and southern Greater Nicoya, there were very few people living in northwestern Costa Rica compared to the estimated 500,000 in southwestern Nicaragua, among them chiefs of great wealth speaking Central Mexican languages. Can the art of Greater Nicoya help us understand what cultures were active in Greater Nicoya when and how exchanges north and south were negotiated?

For over a hundred years, archaeologists, curators, and a few art historians have debated the identity of the makers of art from Greater Nicoya with suggestions of cultural identity ranging from various Mesoamerican and Chibchan groups with the general consensus being possibly Chibchan or Misumalpan until 800 CE and then displacement of the original inhabitants by migrating Mesoamericans after that time, making the region purely a Mesoamerican frontier by the time of Spanish Contact. Careful scrutiny of *the iconography, forms, and uses of Greater Nicoyan art* in conjunction with understanding recent archaeology in the region presents a complex picture of a strong Chibchan cultural undercurrent for two millennia with intermittent Mesoamerican and South American influences until 800 CE and then a blending of some Oto-Manguanean cultural traits in both northern and southern Greater Nicoya and possibly greater Nahuatl cultural identity in parts of Nicaragua by 1522 CE. Even in the midst of internal and external cultural pressures, the art of Greater Nicoya suggests the region was grounded in a Chibchan foundation for over two thousand years.

Session 2: Colonial/Viceregal Art in Latin America

Barbara Mundy, Fordham University
Ideologies of Mexico-Tenochtitlan

In the sixteenth century, the recreation of Mexico-Tenochtitlan after the Conquest of 1519-21 was actually two parallel projects, one carried out by the Spanish cabildo who was seated on the Plaza Mayor, and the other by the indigenous government of the city, whose new center was in the city's southwest. As is often the case in the creation of urban environments, both parties brought ideal models to bear in building the city. One of those ideal models, the Renaissance grid-plan city that provided the *traza* for the layout of city is well known and the name of its author, Alonso García Bravo, is indelibly imprinted in the numerous histories written of Mexico City.

The other is not. The ideal city that Mexico-Tenochtitlan's Nahuatl residents created would fall victim to the terrible floods of the seventeenth century, floods that had the same devastating effect on the urban body as epidemic diseases had on its population the previous century. Unlike the *traza*, which determined a streetscape that still exists, few traces of this ideal indigenous city survive in the urban form today. Its existence must be sought in other media. In this paper, I turn to three well-known works: one feather painting (the Mass of Saint Gregory now in the collection of the Musée d'Auch) and two manuscript pages (fol. 2r of the Codex Mendoza, now at the Bodleian Library and fol. 38r of the Codex Osuna, at

the Biblioteca Nacional de España) to discuss the ideologies of the ideal indigenous city to be found within. I will close by positing that these images were not meant to just represent the city or elements in it, but actually capture the physical experiences of the city, a little-explored phenomenological dimension of the work of indigenous colonial art.

Michael A. Brown, Denver Art Museum

A Sevillian in Bogotá: Gregorio Vásquez and his Workshop in Colonial Colombia

The most important painter of viceregal Colombia, which was then part of Spain's kingdom of New Granada, Gregorio Vásquez de Arce y Ceballos (1638-1711), was born in Bogotá to a Creole family who had come from Seville in the late sixteenth century. Vásquez Ceballos was a prolific artist' with the help of a workshop that included his brother, daughter and son, he produced more than 500 paintings and over 100 drawings on paper during a 40-year career. Best known for his religious works, Vásquez Ceballos was commissioned to paint more than 50 works for the cathedral in Bogotá and its adjacent Sagrario Chapel, which was constructed and decorated between 1660 and 1700. Four paintings have come to light recently in the collection of the Denver Art Museum (Colorado, USA) that now may be attributed securely to Vásquez Ceballos and his atelier. The paintings are the *Virgin in Prayer*, *The Penitent Mary Magdalene*, *The Death of St. Dominic*, and *The Temptation of St. Thomas Aquinas*, and it appears that all four date from the last quarter of the seventeenth-century. The attribution hinges on several autograph drawings (Museo de Arte Colonial, Bogotá) that served as preparatory sketches for figures in the paintings. Today, these four works offer unique evidence of the painter's workshop practices, his dedication to draftsmanship, and his deep understanding of artistic trends in Golden Age Seville.

This paper examines Vásquez Ceballos in the context of the trans-Atlantic connections between Bogotá and Seville, highlighting the transmission of artistic style, theory, and workshop practices. It was by no accident that the Colombian painter modeled his workshop on that of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, whose son Gabriel was by this date living in Bogotá. Seville and Bogotá might at first appear to represent artistic center and peripheral Andean backwater, yet Vásquez Ceballos employed Italian print sources before they became known in Spain. This was because his Dominican patrons imported prints and paintings to assist in the decoration of their university. Thus, Vásquez Ceballos's paintings of St. Dominic and St. Thomas Aquinas reflect a geographic relevance to the Dominican institutions being founded in Bogotá while indicating a nearly immediate artistic influence of both Rome and Seville. Rather than

periphery, Vásquez Ceballos's work proves Bogotá an artistic and cultural crossroads.

Niria E. Leyva-Gutiérrez, Long Island University Post
Prince of Power: St. Michael, New Spain and the Iconography of Ecclesiastical Conflict

Seventeenth-century New Spain was the staging ground for heated political conflicts between the ecclesiastical and civic branches of colonial governance. Citing their privileged position as custodians of faith and spiritual life, bestowed upon them directly by the office of the pope and thus by St. Peter himself, the bishops of New Spain directly challenged the office and power of the viceroy. However, another conflict brewed within the ranks of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and pitted Mexico City, seat of the colony's lone archbishopric, against the rising diocese of Puebla de los Ángeles. This battle was waged in iconographical terms as each city enlisted the image of St. Michael the Archangel as an emblem of its political legitimacy.

The triumphant militant Archangel Michael occupies an important place in the Church's holy hierarchy of power. As official protector of celestial order and law, Saint Michael became a metaphor for good church leadership and an emblem of power and prestige in European paintings of the Renaissance and Baroque. As it had in Europe, the cult of St. Michael grew dramatically in 17th century New Spain owing to the 1690 publication of the creole Jesuit Francisco de Florencia's account of the angel's miraculous apparition to the Indian Diego Lázaro in the town of San Bernabé and the subsequent sanctification of the apparition by Puebla Bishop Gutierre Bernardo Quiroz.

The text is significant since it at once parallels the growing spirit of creole self-awareness in the Americas and localizes the miracle in Puebla. The images of St. Michael produced in Puebla during this period are visual testimonies to this extraordinary miracle and not only exhibit a pride of place that links the narrative to the early church in Tlaxcala they also celebrate the proactive political work of Bishop Quiroz and those ecclesiastical prelates who succeeded him (e.g. the renowned Juan de Palafox y Mendoza and the influential prelate José Salazar Baraona).

Despite Puebla's claim to ownership of the cult of St. Michael, there is no place where the image of the archangel appears more triumphantly than in the sacristy of nearby Mexico City. Of the six large-scales canvases created for the sacristy (the majority of which were painted by Cristóbal de Villalpando), four include the image of the Archangel Michael performing a variety of tasks. In one particular painting (*Apparition of St. Michael*), Villalpando features portraits of the local ecclesiastical hierarchy including the archbishop Aguiar y Seijas, a known rival of bishop Manuel

Fernández de Santa of Puebla. Though it is not surprising that Michael figures prominently in the cathedral's sacristy, why is he depicted multiple times? Furthermore, why is there no inclusion of the Indian Diego Lázaro? Finally, where are the portraits of the bishops and ecclesiastical officers (i.e. Quiroz, Palafox, Baraona) who were responsible for establishing the cult of the angel in New Spain?

This paper considers these questions and proposes that the decision to change the way St. Michael was represented in Mexico City was in fact a political one. The archbishop of Mexico City and his *cabildo* claimed the archangel as its patron as a direct iconographic challenge to the bishops in Puebla. The decoration of the sacristy offered the *cabildo* an opportunity to visually document the bond between the prelates in Mexico City and the Archangel Michael and vividly expressed the ongoing rivalry between Mexico City and the powerful ecclesiastical stronghold in Puebla.

Magali Carrera, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
Many Histories and Many Spaces: Mapping Place in Late Colonial Mexico

"Perhaps a really 'radical' history of a place would be one which did not try to present either simple temporal continuity or only spatial simultaneity with no sense of historical depth. A way of understanding which, in the end, did *not* try to seal a place up into one neat and tidy 'envelope of space-time' but which recognised that what has come together, in this place, now, is a conjunction of many histories and many spaces." Doreen Massey, 1995

Visual reference to place appears consistently across diverse genres of the art of eighteenth century New Spain. In *Casta* paintings, for example, kinds of people are associated with place: mixed-blooded individuals are often shown in urban settings—street markets, while indigenous groups may be located in untamed (wilderness) landscapes (figure 1). Other secular paintings depict quasi-historical scenes located in specific sites, such as events of the Spanish conquest on the shores of Lake Texcoco with the gleaming city of Tenochtitlan looming in the background. At the same time, religious paintings may illustrate sacred stories situated in the countryside of the Valley of Mexico and portrait images often locate elite individuals in personal places such as the interior of a house. City, frontier wilderness, rural countryside, private house—this associated imagery of place ostensibly provides visual context or background within these images.

This recurring reference to place is coincident with the Bourbon

regime's growing interest in the management and re-ordering of colonial space. Beginning in the sixteenth century, European mapping knowledge was transferred continuously from Spain to New Spain through administrative networks into urban as well as rural locales. By the eighteenth century, geometric projection methods of cartography were actively promoted for improved administration. As a result, a broad web of cartographic knowledge may be traced across late-colonial New Spain.

This interdisciplinary consideration of the emergence of late colonial mapping provides valuable insights when examining the broad theme of 'cities, borders and frontiers' of the ALAA 2013 Triennial Conference. Doreen Massey's notion of place, quoted above, as "a conjunction of many histories and many spaces" precisely describes New Spain as a place in the eighteenth century. This is illustrated in figures 2 and 3, showing maps from different regions of New Spain both dated to 1760, which were part of legal cases about land disputes. In each case, plaintiffs tried to describe and depict their particularistic view of local place. In figure 2, a dense and active geography with people and animals engaged in a variety of activities is depicted; alphabetical letters index places. While in figure 3, neither active people nor animals appear; instead, the relationship between natural features (mountains and rivers) and man-made features (churches and houses) are emphasized through the reference to a compass and a *pitipié* (combination of ruler and compass to show scale). Here, depictions of local geography and a measurement system intermingle to fabricate place.

A geographic space and its concomitant construction of place may be understood in a myriad of ways that are not and cannot be congruent because of the diverse interactions that produce a place over time. Indeed, place may be conceptualized as a never-finished product of local processes and practices. In eighteenth-century New Spain, shifting renderings of colonial place and places—whether frontier wilderness, rural countryside, or city spaces—were brought into being and given meaning through distinct articulations of space that reflected locally focused activities of everyday life as well as bureaucratic interests and methods.

Session 3: Modern and Contemporary

Delia Cosentino, DePaul University

Urban Overlays: Edwards' Mapa and the Transnational Construction of a Modern Mexico City

The focus of this paper is a pictorial map of Mexico City made by a woman artist from Texas whose life and work transcended borders to engage with and to help construct urban realities in the post-revolutionary period. Emily Edwards' unusual image of Mexico's capital city, "Mapa de la

ciudad de Mexico y alrededores, hoy y ayer" (1932), takes the form of an Aztec eagle warrior wielding a spear who is also empowered by modern technologies, including an enhanced tramway system: the map offers us a particularly rich opportunity to consider cartographic representation as visual practice with a clear relationship to place. In part, this paper responds to a problem articulated by Magali Carrera (2011) who calls attention to a traditional scholarly disconnect between mapping and art. The present study addresses in Edwards' work what Carrera describes as the "fragmented appropriation process" of cartographic production. By unpacking the diverse artistic practices embedded in *Mapa*, the study demonstrates its participation in the larger visual discourse on Mexican modernity and nationalism.

Most significantly for this conference, Edwards' cartographic interjection in this discourse deftly translates some of Mexico's most salient post-revolutionary cultural ideals into a powerful geographic statement. The paper uncovers the relevance of archaeological developments in the city, as well as the "excavation" of the pre- and post-contact codices which were increasingly circulating in reproduction and helping to affirm the fundamental role of the indigenous past in Mexico's modern identity: of clear significance are the early colonial Santa Cruz map and the *Codex Mendoza* frontispiece. *Mapa* likewise maintains a clear dialogue with the harmonious nationalist images of contemporary mural painting and other appeals to a growing urban populous. Edwards' work therefore overlays an historically fractured geography—most recently fragmented by civil war—with a coherent vision of shared space.

But while *Mapa* actively promotes local cultural politics of the post-revolutionary moment, it simultaneously transcends the place of Mexico to connect with a more global frontier. Most immediately tangible, the representation of electrical lines and the image's patronage tie the work, and indeed the city itself, to a multinational corporation with inter-American and trans-Atlantic interests. Moreover, the map and its maker—herself a foreign resident in Mexico—have direct associations with other transforming urban settings and their representations, most notably, San Antonio, Chicago and London; Mexico City's own evolution must be seen in conjunction with the concurrent metamorphosis of those and other disparate cities. The image further invites consideration of the global, modernizing forces of tourism and popular culture which employ visual practices to make urban public space more accessible—and appear less messy—than ever before.

If we understand that, following geographer John Pickles (2004), "territories are produced by the overlaying of inscriptions we call mappings," we might think about how Edwards' *Mapa* constructs a dynamic notion of Mexico City as a cultural concept: as the formidable stage where the past and the present, where tradition and modernity,

where the local and foreign come together to wield a single spear towards the future.

Rachel Kaplan, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University
Expanded Spaces: The Galería de Arte Mexicano as Center and Frontier

In 1935, the Galería de Arte Mexicano opened in Mexico City to advance the production and sales of modern Mexican art. The gallery space provided a meeting place for artists and intellectuals as well as interested collectors. Since its inception the gallery engaged foreign audiences by attracting tourists in Mexico and sending shows abroad, particularly to the United States. As the gallery's reputation and activities grew over the next decade, the Galería de Arte Mexicano became a direct link to collectors and arts institutions in the United States. From its physical location in Mexico City the Galería de Arte Mexicano became a symbolic frontier with the cultural sphere of the United States. It marked a point of entry for collectors from the United States into the Mexican art scene and a gateway for Mexican artists to U.S. institutions and collections. This paper proposes to explore the shifting dynamic of the Galería de Arte Mexicano in its early years as it functioned conceptually as both center and frontier.

In the early 1940s, the director of the Galería de Arte Mexicano, Inés Amor, was influential in organizing seminal exhibitions of modern Mexican art in the United States at institutions such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art and New York's Museum of Modern Art. By 1943, Amor had entered into discussions about opening a branch of her gallery in New York. In 1945, through collaborations with M. Knoedler & Co. in New York, Amor organized an exhibition featuring 11 of her gallery's painters. By focusing on this gallery-to-gallery connection and understanding the 1945 Knoedler exhibition as an outpost of the Galería de Arte Mexicano, this paper will explore how the gallery functioned as a physical locus and portal, connecting the major urban and cultural centers of Mexico City and New York, while also serving as a conceptual frontier between the two. By investigating the works selected to be shown and their reception, this paper will consider whether the gallery's space, extended into New York, condensed or amplified perceived distance. A study of the Galería de Arte Mexicano in the expanded sense offers a way to transcend physical understandings of center and frontier and to contemplate how such constructions function on a conceptual level. The Galería de Arte Mexicano through its physical site and outposts allows us to reconsider a more fluid nature to these categories.

Finally, this paper will evaluate how the Galería de Arte Mexicano functioned as a contact zone where the cultural and diplomatic relationship

between the United States and Mexico materialized. Whether in the physical space of the Galería de Arte Mexicano in Mexico City or its expanded network, the interests of artists and collectors, individuals and institutions, and cultural and commercial entities on both sides of the geographical border converged. Investigating the Galería de Arte Mexicano not as a static site but as an active entity where these various dynamics occurred will shed light on the shifting conceptual understandings of center and frontier and how specific works of art and their extended sphere function within this system.

Fabiana Serviddio, CONICET/Universidad de Buenos Aires
Art, Identity and Propaganda: Devising Latin America through Art Exhibition (1939-1945)

On the edge of its engagement in World War II, the United States government executed a program of cultural and commercial interchanges with Latin America in order to protect its interests in the Western hemisphere and to counterattack the influence exerted by the Axis. The agency responsible for this mission was the Office of the Coordinator of Inter American Affairs, led by Nelson Rockefeller. To meet this goal, OCIIA engaged, as advisers or members of staff, representative and influential citizens from a variety of spheres. A strong Pan-American net expanded towards Latin America and established ties with artists, intellectuals and politicians that shared the same common enemy: Nazism and its credo on ethnic superiority. In the visual arts section, OCIIA dedicated mostly to organize, to promote and circulate Latin American art exhibitions.

The proposal for the ALAA Meeting is to work on the national, regional and hemispheric representations of Latin American art and culture in International Exhibitions during 1940. The focus will be put on the Latin American section of the Golden Gate International Exhibition in San Francisco, curated by Dr. Grace McCann Morley -director of the Museum of Fine Arts at the time-; the Latin American art exhibition at the Riverside Museum in Manhattan organized as a parallel event to the New York World Fair; and the IBM Hemispheric Collection of Latin American Painting, Sculpture and Engravings which was established at the beginning of the 1940s accompanying the official political propaganda. Comparing these three shows will allow me to underscore the different meanings that were developed at the same time to imagine Latin American people, habits and places through its art and to produce alternative discourses on its changing identities and consequently, on US-Latin American relations. *Museum studies* propose thinking about exhibitions as objects of study, discourses over imposed to artworks that imply authority criteria and give

away, through their organization, to identities' representations. Therefore, they are considered key agents in the artistic field.

During the Second World War, exhibitions utilized artworks for both their esthetic and documentary capacities and were able to articulate an official cultural policy that targeted several (sometimes contradictory) aims. On one hand, there was a constant claim coming from artists, politicians and intellectuals that the cultural and historical specificities of Latin America were not acknowledged and taken into consideration in the United States, so this was one of the most important demands exhibitions were in charge to respond. It was crucial to demonstrate that the United States government and people were tolerant and democratic towards cultural and racial diversity. On the other hand, there was a concrete necessity to strengthen the geopolitical ties with Latin America through the "Western hemisphere" ideology, in order to secure protection from any European pretension in the Americas. The common cultural inheritance that both Latin and North America, as European colonies, could exhibit, had to be underlined to establish the basis for a continental identity.

These ambiguous representations of different cultural identities for Latin America –national, regional, hemispheric- served nonetheless at this time to put in the first place the fact that Latin American artists were also contributing to artistic modernity.

Maria Hartenthal, Southern Methodist University
Peter Scheier: On the Margins of Heroic Brasília

On April 21st, 1960, Brasília was inaugurated. The date marks an uncommon event: the physical materialization of a city first born as a concept, imagined by architects, planners, and politicians. Such rare occasion was registered by numerous photographers, as the new capital's monumentality, expressed in white, smooth-surface buildings of striking geometrical shapes shining under the savannah sun, made Brasília a city to be photographed. While images of buildings under construction and aerial views of the incipient city permeate most of these photographers' production, each of them focused on a particular subject, contributing with a personal account of this historical event. But besides being a physical realization, Brasília was a mythical construction, which photographers registered and helped to create. The city has been seen either as a "capital of hope" or as a failed enterprise that did not fulfill its high expectations. Terms such as "mythic," "heroic," and "utopian" appear in most accounts of the new capital's history.

This paper will examine a group of pictures of the early days of Brasília taken by the German photographer Peter Scheier (1908-1979) between 1958 and 1960. These images, I argue, are significant because they operate outside the mythical construction of the city. Unlike more

iconic images of the early days of the capital, especially the ones taken by French photographer Marcel Gautherot, Scheier's photographs do not constitute a heroic narrative on the epic endeavor of a man-made miracle. Neither do these images focus on the miserable living conditions of the construction workers (mostly coming from the poorer Northeastern states); therefore, they cannot be seen as a denunciation of the stark inequalities that characterized the enterprise. Fundamental to my argument is the photographer's preference for depicting the middle-class public servants and their families, as well as women and children. Even though these bureaucrats were supposed to be the original residents of the city (as it was the country's administrative seat), they were rarely depicted by most reporters of the early days of Brasília, who preferred to show the builders, either politicians, or the construction workers, instead of the residents. Scheier's images are relevant because they reveal an alternative perspective; one that privileged the un-heroic everyday life of the bourgeoisie, Brasília's first inhabitants.

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Where Else Could We Talk About?: The Border as Nomadic Site

Since 2005, contemporary Mexican artist Teresa Margolles has created a number of individual works and solo exhibitions that address the drug- and gang-related violence and death that have plagued Mexico's northern border for the last two decades. Calling upon the artist's background in forensic pathology, these works incorporate abject materials and bodily fluids from the morgue or crime scenes, such as the water used to wash bodies, blood-soaked fabrics, and even body fat. Like much of Margolles' oeuvre, her border works employ bodily remnants in order to bear witness to a culture of brutality that has come to characterize the Mexico-U.S. border, and particularly Ciudad Juárez.

Many of these artworks also share a decidedly spatial quality, as Margolles has physically transported material traces of criminal acts to secondary sites. For example, in 2005, she formed rough-hewn bricks out of earth collected from the locations where the bodies of murdered women were discovered in the deserts surrounding Juárez; the bricks were subsequently installed in a cemetery-like arrangement at the Galerie Peter Kilchmann in Zurich and as two free-standing walls at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. In 2009, Margolles imported canvases stained with dried blood and mud cleaned up from public shootings in Mexico to Italy, where they were reconstituted with seawater and the particle-infused liquid used to repeatedly "mop" the floors of the Mexico pavilion during the 53rd Venice Biennial. A similar transference of material occurred in Margolles' *Irigación* from 2010, in which the artist used a water truck to shower the highway between Alpine and Marfa, Texas with 5000 gallons of

tainted water. Finally, the artist's most recent large-scale exhibition, *Frontera* (2010-2011), consisted of a monumental display of sanguineous canvases and two bullet-riddled walls from Culiacán and Juárez installed in the Kunsthalle Fridericianum in Kassel, Germany.

Such site-oriented and performative techniques allow Margolles to present the border as what art historian Miwon Kwon terms "nomadic," an unhinged site-specificity that widens the scope of the artist's inquiry from the direct experience of the actual space itself to investigate a larger discourse surrounding the visualization of the *frontera*. In doing so, the border becomes unfixed and geographically dispersed even as it still delineates the physical limits of the country. Artistic nomadism transgresses national boundaries, but at the same time, shores up the national definitions that identify the border as a dangerous peripheral site, a space where Mexican sovereignty is tested and/or reified by the ongoing struggles for democracy and human rights violations. This paper explores the implication of Margolles' visualization of a nomadic border and the ways in which it visually conflates site, nationhood, trauma, and the human body. It looks to the inherent contradictions of nomadic site-specificity as a means to visually explore the tensions between the constant presence of violence as a tangible threat on the border and the seeming unrepresentability of national trauma and how it is portrayed at both the national and the global scale.