

On the one hand, the affirmation that Latino art is American art is simply a fact: Latino artists are American by birth, citizenship, residence, education, experience, and even sacrifice—a factor made clear by the large number that have served in the United States armed forces. On the other hand, the statement poses a challenge to the ways in which we traditionally think about what constitutes American art
—E. Carmen Ramos

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Our America
The Latino Presence in American Art
E. Carmen Ramos

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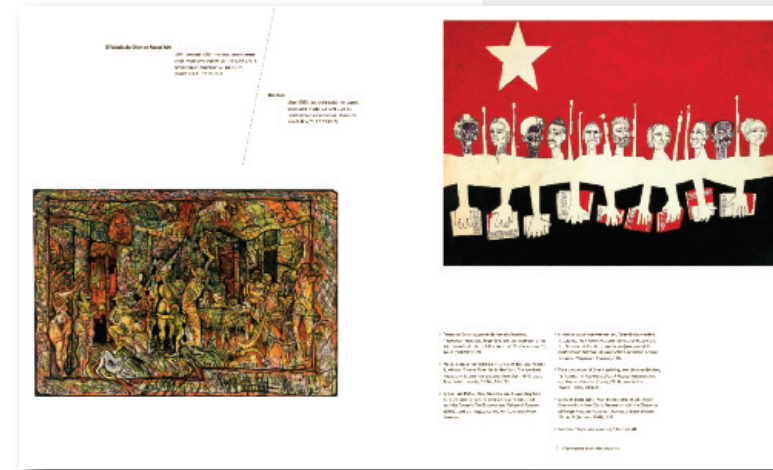
Exhibition Details

Our America: The Latino Presence in America Art
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC,
October 25, 2013– March 2, 2014
The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum at Florida
International University in Miami, FL,
March 28, 2014–June 22, 2014
Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA,
September 21, 2014–January 11, 2015
Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City, UT,
February 6, 2015–May 17, 2015
Arkansas Art Center in Little Rock, AR,
October 16, 2015–January 17, 2016
Delaware Museum of Art in Wilmington, DE,
March 5, 2016–May 29, 2016

OUR AMERICA

THE LATINO PRESENCE IN AMERICAN ART





Is Latino art an integral part of modern American art? Presenting over one hundred major artworks from the Smithsonian American Art Museum, *Our America: the Latino Presence in American Art* seeks to recalibrate enduring concepts about American national culture by exploring how one group of artists – those of Latin American descent and heritage – express their relationship to American art, history and culture.

Author and curator E. Carmen Ramos addresses the whole issue of the definition of “Latino art” and how this emerged within the context of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, as American artists with roots in a number of Latin American communities (Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban American and, more recently, Dominican) began to give a tangible face to Latino American groups long excluded from mainstream U.S. culture.

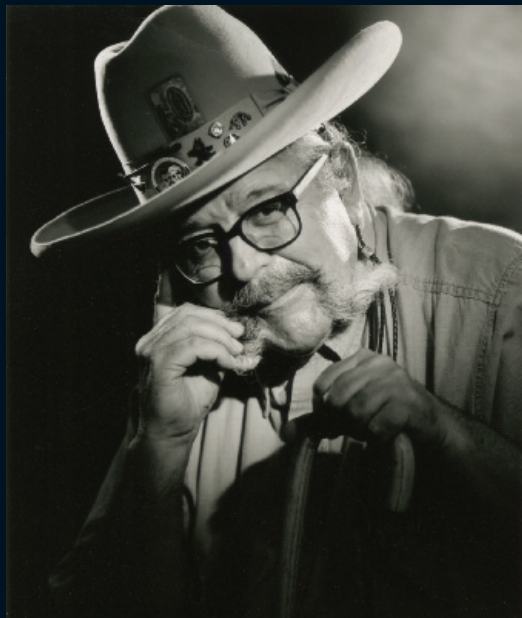
With the rise of multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s, Ramos argues that whilst Latino art gained a much wider national profile, as museums across the U.S. grappled with an increasingly diverse United States, this same “multicultural” approach – with its obsessive and misconstrued focus on identity – created barriers to, rather than paths towards, the meaningful integration of Latino art into the category of modern American art.

Highlights include an installation altar by Amalia Mesa-Bains; the “recycled” films of Raphael Montañez Ortiz; and a 1960 geometric painting by Carmen Herrera. Other notable artists include Olga Albizu, Melesio “Mel” Casas, Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons, Margarita Cabrera, Enrique Chagoya, Teresita Fernández, Ken Gonzales-Day, Luis Jiménez, Ana Mendieta, Pepón Osorio, Sophie Rivera, Freddy Rodríguez and John Valadez, among many others.

Authors

E. CARMEN RAMOS is the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Curator of Latino Art. She has organized numerous shows, including the fifth biennial at El Museo del Barrio in New York City in 2007.

DR. TOMÁS YBARRA-FRAUSTO, the “Grandfather” of this subject, and formerly Associate Director for Creativity & Culture at the Rockefeller Foundation in New York, has written and published extensively on U.S./Latino cultural issues.



Carlos A. Cortéz

2005 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1923 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Alex Gallindo, *Carlos A. Cortéz*, about 1987, gelatin silver print, 10 x 10 in. National Museum of Mexican Art, Permanent Collection