



Public Lecture Offerings

Frida Kahlo's Creativity: Staging Art, Staging Life

In this lecture I explore Mexican artist Frida Kahlo's creativity in the context of the cultural renaissance that followed the Mexican Revolution. Springing from the exhibition *Frida Kahlo: Art Garden Life*, which I curated at the New York Botanical Garden (2015), I offer a close examination of several of the artist's most important paintings to explain how Kahlo's self-adornment and the artful arrangement of her home and garden were equally important modes of creative expression. The presentation concludes by touching upon the ways that other artists, ranging from Diego Rivera to photographers like Nickolas Muray and Lola Álvarez Bravo, collaborated with Kahlo to facilitate the promotion of her art, her cultural politics, and her image.

Resurrecting Mexico-Tenochtitlan, 1521-2021

Modern-day Mexico City sits atop the ruins of the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan, which was founded in 1325, overthrown by Spanish invaders in 1521 and demolished in 1523. While fragments, or spolia, of Tenochtitlan's physical remains had been present within the city's urban fabric since the sixteenth century, new archaeological findings at the turn of the 20th century—such as the definitive identification of the site of great teocalli (temple pyramid), captivated the minds and imaginations of some of the country's most prominent nationalist thinkers from author and statesman Alfonso Reyes, to anthropologist Manuel Gamio, architect Ignacio Marquina, and visual artists Diego Rivera and Juan O'Gorman. This lecture will explore key moments and articulations of the modern "resurrection" of Tenochtitlan and will invite the public to reflect on what lessons the 2021 quincentennial of Tenochtitlan's capture and destruction offer for us today.

Of Bodies and Borders*

This lecture examines works by Latin American-descended visual artists living in the United States, that is to say Latinx artists, whose lives have been marked by and whose works explore the violence of colonialism, empire, and the ongoing politicization of borders. Through a reading of art works by Adriana Corral, Teresita Fernández, Guadalupe Maravilla, Carlos Martiel, Sandy Rodriguez, and Juan Sánchez, I explore how racialization as a violent form of social differentiation cannot be separated from the critical study of geopolitical power. As a scholar of both Mexican and U.S. Latinx art and visual culture, I will address the necessity of intersectional scholarship and praxis, and the importance of generosity, care, and witnessing in these troubled times.

*Note: because of the topic of this lecture, some of the works presented can be challenging for some audiences.

Classroom Discussion Topics

1. Q & A on any of the lecture topics above

2. Why study the history of art today? What can art and artists teach us?

- a. In this workshop/seminar I will share and engage students in close, historical and aesthetic readings of works of art (from my fields) and together we will explore how coupling art historical methodologies like close looking with interdisciplinary theories (Critical Race Theory; Women's Gender and Sexuality/Queer Theory; Decolonial Thinking) can yield new insights and help us see the past and present in new ways.

3. Latinx Art, History, and Institutions

- a. In this workshop, I introduce students to some of my favorite contemporary artists. We explore their cultural background and art, while also discussing Latinx art's cultural and political specificity and its flux in history and in relation to other art historical categories like "American" art or "Latin American" art, as well as more specific group identities like Chicana/o/x, Diasporican, Cuban-American, etc.