



Cosmopolitanism in Mexican Visual Culture (Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture)

By María Fernández

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Since the colonial era, Mexican art has emerged from an ongoing process of negotiation between the local and the global, which frequently involves invention, synthesis, and transformation of diverse discursive and artistic traditions. In this pathfinding book, María Fernández uses the concept of cosmopolitanism to explore this important aspect of Mexican art, in which visual culture and power relations unite the local and the global, the national and the international, the universal and the particular. She argues that in Mexico, as in other colonized regions, colonization constructed power dynamics and forms of violence that persisted in the independent nation-state. Accordingly, Fernández presents not only the visual qualities of objects, but also the discourses, ideas, desires, and practices that are fundamental to the very existence of visual objects.

Fernández organizes episodes in the history of Mexican art and architecture, ranging from the seventeenth century to the end of the twentieth century, around the consistent but unacknowledged historical theme of cosmopolitanism, allowing readers to discern relationships among various historical periods and works that are new and yet simultaneously dependent on their predecessors. She uses case studies of art and architecture produced in response to government commissions to demonstrate that established visual forms and meanings in Mexican art reflect and inform desires, expectations, memories, and ways of being in the world—in short, that visual culture and cosmopolitanism are fundamental to processes of subjectification and identity.

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Review

"Covers "episodes" in Mexican art and architecture from the 17th through the 20th centuries." - Chronicle of Higher Education

About the Author

María Fernández is Associate Professor of Art History at Cornell University. Her work has appeared in journals and edited volumes, including *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*, *Hacia otra historia del arte en México: La amplitud del modernismo y la modernidad (1861–1920)*, and *At a Distance: Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet*.

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