

Manteca! is a timely contribution to another challenging moment for race relations in the United States.

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Karen Mary Davalos, *Chicana/o Remix: Art and Errata Since the Sixties*. New York University Press, 2017. Pp. 336.

In *Chicana/o Remix: Art and Errata Since the Sixties*, Karen Davalos examines the work of artists, curators, and private collectors in Los Angeles, recovering the “stuff” of art exhibits past—historical documents such as exhibition catalogs, descriptive placards, and newspaper clippings, as well as artistic objects that have been displayed (publicly and privately) in LA since the 1960s. In addition to considering Chicana/o art, artists, and exhibition spaces, Davalos turns a critical eye on Western social science research methods. In laying out her methodology, which she calls “coparticipatory research,” she is unapologetic about the ways in which her interventions as a researcher are active, subjective, and participatory, and she acknowledges that her work seeks to “refut[e] the myth of the detached social analyst” (x). Instead of attempting to replicate the neutrality and detachment sought by traditional social science methods, Davalos embraces her role as expert and actively participates in the interpretation and production of knowledge. The introduction, “Reframing Chicana/o Art,” presents how Davalos developed her methodological approach, with Sandra de la Loza’s *Action Portraits* (2011) as a key inspiration. Acting as both artist and curator, de la Loza worked alongside six East Los Angeles muralists to create the *Action Portraits* video installation, which featured “art discourse previously ignored or undocumented” (7). De la Loza’s piece unveiled formerly obscured motifs by manipulating the very works of art that had been left out of mainstream discourse, and Davalos’s research follows de la Loza’s strategy to upend assumptions about Chicana/o art and undertake a canon critique, in terms of both academic discourse and institutional (museums, exhibition space) norms.

Chapter 2, “Errata Exhibitions: The Sites of Chicana/o Art Discourse,” focuses on six exhibitions that were organized in response to institutional discourse. The exhibitions that Dávalos dubs “errata” (whose two definitions are delightfully antipodal, as an erratum is both printing error and the correction of that same error) seek a real-time critique and engagement with public museum exhibitions that presented problematic notions of Chicana/o art. Dávalos’s engagement with the “errata exhibition” provides a compelling exegesis of the museum space, unveiling how curatorial decisions deeply impact how art is received. Her reading of the 2001 Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) exhibition *The Road to Aztlan: Art from a Mythic Homeland* demonstrates how the placement of a single piece of art has the power to manipulate viewers’ perception of the exhibit, as well as an entire artistic movement. The errata exhibition that delivered a counterdiscourse to LACMA’s curatorial essentialism was entitled *Other Footprints to Aztlan: Works from the Collection of Mary and Armando Durón*. The exhibition featured works by artists that were also part of the LACMA exhibition, and Dávalos describes how *Other Footprints* selected pieces that countered the LACMA curators’ statements and exhibition decisions that had portrayed Chicana/o art as clichéd, obsolete, and restrictive (43).

Chapter 3, “Looking at the Archive: Mechicano Art Center and Goez Art Studios and Gallery,” focuses on the early years (1969–78) of the Chicana/o art movement, digging into archival material and examining the exhibition and collaborative practices of the two titular institutions. The chapter considers the relationship between art and commerce, as both centers have been both for-profit and nonprofit institutions. Dávalos’s reading is revisionist in nature, and she brings to light the ways in which many scholars and activists, including herself, have been hasty in discounting the possibility of cultural and political activism from a for-profit entity. Chapter 4, “Tours of Influence: Chicana/o Artists in Europe and Asia,” takes Dávalos’s analysis of Los Angeles-based artists abroad to Europe and Asia. She utilizes Gloria Anzaldúa’s borderlands theory to interpret the intercontinental styles and techniques that Chicana/o artists incorporated into their art after returning home from their sojourns. She considers works and oral history interviews by John Valadez, Yolanda Gonzalez, Chaz Bojórquez, and Gilbert “Magu” Sánchez Luján, among others, to underscore how “Chicana/o art” may be mediated and influenced by a variety of art forms and compositional styles. The chapter ends with a demand for a new interpretative framework that takes into account the wide array of international influences that have impacted Chicana/o artists and their aesthetic praxis.

In chapter 5, the private collector becomes a protagonist in the history of Chicana/o art production and preservation. “Chicana/o Art Collectors: Critical Witness to Invisibility and Emplacement” details how private collectors have taken an active role in amending the art historical record imposed by public

museums and art galleries. In many ways an extension of chapter 2 (the Durón family's private collection practices appear in both chapters), here Chicana/o art collectors are portrayed as custodians with a social function rather than merely individuals who acquire art for purposes of "selfish materialism" (161). Dávalos explains how these custodian-collectors facilitate a making visible and an "art-based community making" that amends processes of colonization and "challenges master narratives about belonging in the United States" (166). Finally, chapter 6, "Remixing: Tracing the Limitations of Art History in Los Angeles," is a sustained critique of Los Angeles institutional art practices (and predominantly LACMA's exhibition history). This closing chapter draws attention to LACMA's historically illogical acquisition practices: the museum has not obtained the work of influential and popular Chicana/o artists such as Carlos Almaraz despite the success—in terms of attendance and critical reception—of their exhibitions.

Dávalos's monograph contains thirty-five color images that amplify the impact of the text. From Chaz Bojórquez's *placa* paintings, which are inspired by South Pacific tattoo culture (122), to Graciela Iturbide's photography project featuring the deaf youth of the White Fence community in East Los Angeles, which complicates the ambiguity of gestures that may be interpreted as gang signs or American Sign Language (217), the broad range of images illustrates Dávalos's central thesis that art historians, critics, and curators have often misinterpreted Chicana/o art due to their own insistence that all Chicana/o art is necessarily "ethnic" and hyperpolitical (2). In this way, *Chicana/o Remix* expands our understanding of what constitutes Chicana/o art. Perhaps most importantly, Dávalos demands that critics, curators, and academics move beyond essentialism—even implicating herself in this practice on occasion—and she demonstrates what such a paradigm shift looks like by rereading and reconfiguring the canon with a methodological framework that observes the heterogeneous influences, styles, and interventions that Chicana/o art and artists have made since the 1960s.

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