AHIS 128g: Arts of Latin America (Colonial to Contemporary)

Class: Mondays & Wednesdays, 12–1.30pm, room GFS 106
Discussion section: Fridays, VKC 258

Professor Daniela Bleichmar
bleichma@usc.edu
Office Hours Mondays 2–4pm, or by appointment
Art History Department, VKC 344

Teaching Assistant: Alexis Clark, Ph.D.
alexis.clark@duke.edu

Course Description

This class provides an introduction to the art, architecture, and visual culture of Latin America from the colonial to the contemporary period. The course will begin by examining early contact between Europeans and indigenous Americans, the importation and adaptation of European artistic models in the Americas, and the transformation of indigenous art as a result of the conquest. We will analyze a variety of materials and topics including urban planning, religious architecture, paintings, sculpture, manuscript drawings, and prints from the colonial period (1492–ca. 1820). We will place particular emphasis on the interaction between native traditions and imported ideas, particularly in relationship to religion, politics, and daily life. The second half of the course will examine art from the early nineteenth century to the present, considering the role of the arts in building independent nations and developments in modern and contemporary art. No background in art history or in Latin America is necessary for this course.
**Course Components**

1. **Lecture:** Students are expected to attend all lectures for this course. The information presented in the lectures is not duplicated in the weekly readings and will be assessed in the writing assignments and exams. If you absolutely must miss a particular lecture, you will still be responsible for the material covered in that class. Please make arrangements with another student to get copies of notes and announcements.

   Attendance implies being both physically and mentally present in the classroom. Please refrain from napping, eating, talking, using cell phones, or anything else that interferes with your capacity to concentrate and is distracting to others. If you are doing something that is distracting to your classmates or the professor, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

   **IMPORTANT:** The use of laptops in the classroom is permitted ONLY for taking notes. It is not appropriate or acceptable to be online for non-class-related purposes during lecture, since it does not allow you to fully concentrate on the material, is distracting for those around you and for the professor—yes, I can tell—and is profoundly disrespectful. If you come to class, do yourself and everyone else the favor of being engaged with the class. If you need to check your email, update your Facebook profile, or shop online so urgently that it cannot wait until the end of class, then you might as well not be coming to class at all. Students who are using their laptops for non-class-related purposes will be asked to turn off their computers; they may also be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of that lecture, and/or to refrain from bringing their computer to class in the future.

   *** Inappropriate use of laptops during lecture will affect your participation grade for the class. If there are repeated problems regarding inappropriate laptop use, the use of computers in the classroom will be suspended for everyone in the class for the entire semester. ***

2. **Reading assignments:** Reading assignments are listed in the schedule of meetings in this syllabus. Readings are a very important part of this class, since they complement the lectures and provide vital material for participating in the discussion section and completing assignments. You will need to refer to the reading assignments in both the exams and the writing assignments. For this reason, readings are required and must be done IN ADVANCE of your discussion section.

   All readings for the class are gathered in a Course Reader available for sale at Quick Pix / University Graphics, located in the shopping center at 2820 South Vermont Ave. between 28th and 29th streets, three blocks north of campus, tel. 213.744.1511.

3. **Discussion Section:** This course has a required weekly one-hour discussion section led by a Teaching Assistant (TA). Given the large size of the lectures, the discussion section provides an invaluable forum for analyzing the readings and material from the lectures and for answering any questions you might have about the lectures. Attending the discussion section is as important as attending lecture, and students are expected to attend all section meetings. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the start of every section. If you will not be able to attend a particular session, you should inform your TA beforehand and make arrangements with another student to get copies of notes. Sections may include surprise quizzes. Students will be graded on preparedness and participation in the discussion section. All students are expected to have completed the week’s reading prior to their discussion section and should bring the reading to section.
Please note that your work in the discussion section accounts for a significant portion of the final grade (20%, more than each of the writing assignments and almost as much as each of the exams). This means that an important part of success in this class is doing the readings, attending section, and participating in the discussion.

4. Writing Assignments: There are two required writing assignments for this course. They are designed to help develop valuable skills that form part of this course’s mission: to look and analyze works of art as aesthetic objects as well as in their historical context, to perform rigorous analysis, to think critically, and to advance a sophisticated argument in writing.

The first writing assignment is due on FRIDAY OCTOBER 3rd; the second is due on FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21st. Deadlines are indicated in the schedule below. The assignments must be printed out and submitted in person to your TA at the end of section on the week they are due. In addition, they must be submitted electronically on Blackboard using “Turnitin.” Assignments that are not submitted through Turnitin will not be graded. Detailed guidelines will be provided ahead of time.


IMPORTANT: Writing assignments must be turned in on time. Assignments turned late will be marked down 10 points for every 24-hour period after the deadline. This measure is to ensure fairness for your colleagues in class who turn their work in on time.

If you are ill and have a doctor’s note, or have had a personal or family crisis and have consulted with the counseling or advising staff, we will grant you an extension. Extensions for other circumstances are given only with the joint approval of your teaching assistant and the professor.

Social events, poor planning, computer/printer/internet failures, and other excuses will not be accepted. Basically, expect every human, natural, automotive, and technological disaster to befall you when completing an assignment and PLAN AHEAD.

6. Exams: There will be two exams for this class:

- A midterm exam on WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 15 during regular class hours, covering material from the first half of the course
- A final exam on FRIDAY DECEMBER 12, 11am–1pm, covering material from the second half of the course

The exams will be based on the lectures, readings, and discussion section. Students will not be examined on their memorization skills but rather on their capacity to analyze the material presented in the course. In preparation for the exams, students should review their notes from lectures, all readings, and all images discussed in lectures (available on Blackboard).

On exam days, bring two small bluebooks (available for purchase at the USC Campus Bookstore). The TAs will exchange your bluebooks for Art History departmental bluebooks immediately before the exam; only
exams written in the Art History departmental bluebooks will be graded. Write in ink. Write your answers as complete paragraphs, not as outlines. Never leave an answer blank! You may receive partial credit for an answer that is not totally correct.

Format for exams: 5 brief image discussions (6 points each/30 points total); 3 image comparisons/discussions (10 points each/30 points total); 2 short essay questions (20 points each/40 points total).

**Course Grades**

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

- First Writing Assignment 15%
- Second Writing Assignment 15%
- Midterm Exam 25%
- Final Exam 25%
- Discussion Sections 20%

**Blackboard Website**

This course will use the Blackboard system to post announcements, all images from the lectures, class documents, and send emails. You will be responsible for any information communicated through Blackboard. Please make sure that the email address that is listed for you on the system is one you check at least once a day. You may log into the Blackboard system at https://blackboard.usc.edu/.

**Guidelines for written work**

All written assignments should be well written and researched with appropriate documentation (footnotes, bibliography, reproductions of images). They should not be preliminary drafts but finished pieces of research and writing, with well-developed ideas, argument, structure, and tone, and demonstrate both independent thought and a thoughtful engagement with the materials and issues discussed throughout the seminar. *Your work should always be spell-checked and proofread.*

All written assignments must be printed in standard fonts and type size (no larger than 12), double-spaced, on 8½” x 11” paper, with 1” margins. Please make sure you include your name on the first page!

Proper citation is required in all writing assignments. There are two main citation styles in use in the humanities: MLA and Chicago Manual. Either is appropriate to use, provided you use it consistently. Choose the one you prefer, and stick to it! You can review all citation norms in either of these books:

  Available at Doheny Reference and Leavey Commons Desk.  

In addition, the following reference work is an extremely useful guide for written work in general:

 Deviating from these guidelines will adversely affect your grade. If you have any questions about format or methods, please contact your TA, who will review them with you.

### Students with Disabilities

The University of Southern California makes every effort to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations should be obtained from DSP and delivered to your teaching assistant as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30am to 5pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

IMPORTANT: If you will require any type of accommodation for the midterm or final exam, you must provide the DSP form to your teaching assistant and verify what accommodation you will need AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EXAM.

### Academic Integrity

Students are expected to submit their own original work for all assignments. Breaches of academic integrity include (1) turning in work that has been written by anyone other than yourself or contains portions that have been written by someone other than yourself and copied into your assignment—this include work from the internet, an electronic database, or a local source such as another student; and (2) improper citation practices, such as copying exactly an author’s words without using quotation marks and citing the source, paraphrasing in your own words an author’s work without citing it, or faking a citation. Plagiarizing means stealing somebody else’s words and also lying by claiming that it is one’s own. A plagiarist shows contempt not only for the author whose work he/she stole but also for the professor, the TA, other students who are fulfilling the assignment with honesty, and for the entire academic enterprise. Most importantly, a person who plagiarizes is cheating him/herself of the very point of getting a college education, which is to learn valuable skills such as conducting research, thinking and analyzing, organizing, writing, planning, and managing time.

Any breach of academic integrity will be treated with the utmost seriousness. The student will receive an “F” for that assignment. Based on the seriousness of the offense, he or she could receive an “F” for the course and be brought to disciplinary action by the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.
Academic integrity practices, especially citation and plagiarism, are discussed in helpful detail in the following USC documents, which are available online:

- “Trojan Integrity: A Guide Avoiding Plagiarism.”
  http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tig.pdf
- “Trojan Integrity: A Guide to Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty”
  http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tio.pdf
- “Academic Integrity Overview”
  http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/AcademicIntegrityOverview.pdf

Please read these documents carefully. If you have any questions about what is acceptable and unacceptable academic practice, please consult the Writing Center or talk to your TA, who will be able to clarify information or discuss specific questions and examples.

Email Etiquette

Your professor and TA will always try to help you as best as we can. If you have a question about an assignment or exam, the best thing to do is to bring it up in person during section or office hours. Use email only when something is so urgent that it cannot wait until the next class, office hours, or the next section meeting. Please treat email as a privilege that should not be abused: if you can find the answer to your question by yourself or by asking a classmate, then there is no need to email your professor or TA. Please email your TA rather than the professor; your TA will let you know if you should check in with the professor.

IMPORTANT: Always observe proper email etiquette when contacting any professor or TA. Your email should have a proper subject heading (“Question about AHIS128 assignment” or something along those lines, not “Hello!”) and use a proper and polite greeting (“Dear Professor So-and-so,” not “Hi prof!”). Write in standard English and in full sentences, with proper capitalization and punctuation—this is as a professional communication, not a text message to a friend. Aim for politeness, consideration, and a professional attitude; all your professors will greatly appreciate this.

Extra Credit

There are many collections, exhibits, and events in the Los Angeles area that relate to Latin American art and visual culture, and I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities: visit a museum or gallery, attend a lecture, or participate in any activity that extends your engagement with this class outside the classroom. To receive extra credit, turn in a written report analyzing the event you attended or site you visited and connecting it to the class; the report must be at least one-page long. Please staple your admissions ticket or other proof of attendance to your report.

Students can receive extra credit for a maximum of four reports. Reports will be graded with 1, 2, or 3 points, which will be added to the grade for the exams (first and second reports) and writing assignments (third and fourth reports).
The following collections and events are approved for extra credit. If additional events come up during the semester, they will be announced. If you hear about an event that might be appropriate, please alert your professor or TA and we will be happy to consider it and to share the information with other students. IMPORTANT: if you want to write a report about an event or site that is not listed below, you must obtain approval from your TA beforehand.

**Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)**
http://www.lacma.org
This important Los Angeles museum has a permanent collection of Latin American art:
Please note: one of the required writing assignments will be based on a visit to this museum; a visit at another time to view other works will count for extra credit.

**Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA)**
http://www.molaa.org/
This museum, located in Long Beach, has a noteworthy collection of Latin American Art as well as temporary exhibits. You can visit the permanent collection, or one of the temporary exhibits.

**Boeckmann Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies, part of USC Libraries, Special Collections**
The Special Collections Department of the USC Libraries, located in the second floor of Doheny Library, holds the Boeckmann Center, a very rich collection of materials related to Iberia and Latin America. Of particular interest to this class is the collection of facsimiles (exact reproductions) of Mexican codices, which we will study in this course. You will view the codices during your weekly section time on Friday September 20th. You can study the codices at greater length on your own time and write a report to receive extra credit. They will be on display the week of September 15th–20th, and available for consultation (on a “hold truck” for this class) for the next three weeks.

**América Tropical, Mural by David Alfaro Siqueiros, Olvera Street, Sepulveda House**
http://www.americatropical.org/index.html
You can visit what remains of one of the most controversial murals painted in the United States by David Alfaro Siqueiros, *América Tropical* (1932), located in downtown Los Angeles.
Schedule of Classes and Readings

M 08/25: Introduction to the Class
- Required website: Art historians Dana Leibsohn and Barbara Mundy are co-curators of an online collection of Latin American colonial art, which has wonderful images and very helpful essays about each work. You can see the prize-winning website, Vistas: Visual Culture in Spanish America, 1520–1820, here: http://www.smith.edu/vistas/. View by themes or search galleries by time period. The essays, glossaries, and bibliographies are extremely helpful. This will be a helpful resource for the entire first half of the course (colonial period).

W 08/27: New Worlds
- Required website: To better understand the complexity of the world system in 1492, visit the online exhibit “1492: An Ongoing Voyage,” from the Library of Congress: http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/
- Recommended website: Read historian Alfred Crosby’s short essay, “The Columbian Exchange,” http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-era/american-indians/essays/columbian-exchange (be sure to click on “show full essay”

M 09/01: No class meeting – happy Labor Day

W 09/03 A War of Images: The Military Conquest of Mexico
- Stuart Schwartz, Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2000), 127–155 and 182–213
- Required website: For a glimpse of how print culture spread the news of the Columbian exchange, and helped shape attitudes towards the New World and its inhabitants, visit the University of Pennsylvania’s exhibit Cultural Readings: http://www.library.upenn.edu/special/gallery/kislak/index/cultural.html

M 09/08: The Second Conquest: Envisioning a New Religion
- Recommended website: You can view photographs and read about missions, monasteries, and convents in Mexico here: http://www.colonial-mexico.com/Main/archive.html
**W 09/10: Colonial Cities**
- Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Life in the Imperial and Loyal City of Mexico* [1554], 37–67
- Required website: You can see maps of Mexican colonial cities, drawn for the *relaciones geográficas*, from the Benson Library collection at UT-Austin: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/benson/rg/](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/benson/rg/)

**M 09/15: The Indigenous Presence in Colonial Art: Codices**
- Required website: Listen to art historian Dana Leibsohn discuss an image from the *Codex Mendoza*, painted only twenty years after the conquest of Tenochtitlan, here: [http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/analyzing/mcimages/mcimgsq1.html](http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorysources/analyzing/mcimages/mcimgsq1.html)
  (the link takes you to the first question, from where you can click on the other questions).
- Recommended website: You can read short and very useful introductions to six Mexican codices here: [http://www.mesolore.org/tutorials](http://www.mesolore.org/tutorials) (click on any of the six the “introductions”)
- EXTRA CREDIT: You can watch a lecture on the *Florentine Codex* by Dr. Diana Magaloni-Kerpel and write a report to receive extra credit. To view the lecture, visit: [http://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/events/florentine_codex.html](http://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/events/florentine_codex.html)

**W 09/17: The Indigenous Presence in Colonial Art: Featherwork and Murals**

**M 09/22: Making Art in Colonial Mexico**
- Recommended website: You can view many examples of Mexican colonial paintings, and read about them, by visiting the online collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s (LACMA). You can check the boxes on the left to select specific media or time periods. [http://collections.lacma.org/search/site/?front=1&f[0]=bm_field_has_image%3Atrue&f[1]=im_field_curatorial_area%3A48](http://collections.lacma.org/search/site/?front=1&f[0]=bm_field_has_image%3Atrue&f[1]=im_field_curatorial_area%3A48)
  These are works that you can go see in person!

**W 09/24: Making Art in Colonial Peru**
- Recommended website: To learn more about polychrome sculpture, watch a slide show here: [http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/features/slideshows/spanish-polychrome-sculpture.html](http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/features/slideshows/spanish-polychrome-sculpture.html),

**M 09/29: Local Devotions**


**W 10/01: Global Connections**

- Sofía Sanabrais “The *Biombo* or Folding Screen in New Spain,” in Donna Pierce and Ronald Otsuka (eds.), *Asia and Spanish America: Trans-Pacific Artistic and Cultural Exchange 1500–1850* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 2009), 69–94
- Recommended website: “Asia and Latin America,” in LACMA’s collection: [http://collections.lacma.org/node/1054329](http://collections.lacma.org/node/1054329)

**First writing assignment due in section this week**

**M 10/06: Midterm prep**

**W 10/08: Portraying Society in Colonial Peru**


**M 10/13: Portraying Society in Colonial Mexico**

W 10/15: MIDTERM EXAM

M 10/20: Art after Independence: Imagining New Nations (1)
- Stacie G. Widdifield, *The Embodiment of the National in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexican Painting* (University of Arizona Press, 1996), 14–31

W 10/22: Art after Independence: Imagining New Nations (2)
- Natalia Majluf, “‘Ce N’est Pas le Perou,’ or the Failure of Authenticity: Marginal Cosmopolitans at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855,” *Critical Enquiry*, vol. 23 no. 4, 868–893

M 10/27: Modernismo and Early Twentieth-Century Vanguards
- Pedro Figari, “Regional Autonomy” [1924], in Patrick Frank (ed.), *Readings in Latin American Modern Art* (Yale University Press, 2008), 14–16
- Jorge Schwartz, “Tarsila and Oswald in the Wise Laziness of the Sun,” in *Tarsila do Amaral*, exh. cat. (Fundación Juan March, 2009), 93–103
- Recommended website: Browse through “Latin American Modernism” in LACMA’S collection: [http://collections.lacma.org/node/592864](http://collections.lacma.org/node/592864)

W 10/29: Art and Social Protest, 1910s–1940s
- Required website: Browse through “Taller de Gráfica Popular” in LACMA’s collection: [http://collections.lacma.org/node/580931](http://collections.lacma.org/node/580931)

M 11/03: Mexican Muralism
- José Clemente Orozco, “New World, New Races and New Art”
- David Alfaro Siqueiros, “Corrections about Visual Arts”
- Required website: You can take a virtual tour of Rivera’s mural in the Detroit Institute of Arts here: [http://www.360cities.net/image/rivera-court-from-end-detroit-institute-of-arts-usa-2#-48.52,6.20,58.3](http://www.360cities.net/image/rivera-court-from-end-detroit-institute-of-arts-usa-2#-48.52,6.20,58.3)
- Recommended website: Works by Diego Rivera in LACMA's collection: http://collections.lacma.org/search/site/diego%20rivera?f[0]=sm_field_artist%3Anode%3A164926

W 11/05: Frida Kahlo
- Frida Kahlo, letters to Nickolas Muray and Carlos Chávez, in Frida by Frida (Mexico: Editorial RM, 2003), 169–72 and 184–85
- Website: you can watch the fascinating feature-length documentary by Amy Stechler, The Life and Times of Frida Kahlo (2005), here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9_bzn1rXBs

PBS has a nice website linked to the film: http://www.pbs.org/weta/fridakahlo/index.html

- EXTRA CREDIT: Write a critical reaction to the arguments presented in the following two articles, assessing the gender implications and the issues posed by biographical approaches to the study of art:
  o Amy Fine Collins, “Diary of a Mad Artist,” Vanity Fair (July 2011), available online: http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/features/1995/09/frida-kahlo-diego-rivera-art-diary (easier to read if you choose the “single page” view; scroll down to find the option)

M 11/10: Surrealism
- Recommended website: One of the most influential surrealist films, An Andalusian Dog, was made by Spanish artists Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali in Paris. Buñuel later emigrated to Mexico, where he made numerous films. You can view the haunting, bizarre, unforgettable film here: https://archive.org/details/UnChienAndalou_313
- Recommended website: You can find a concise introduction to surrealism here in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s wonderful website: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/surr/hd_surr.htm
- Recommended website: You can read about a recent show on surrealism in Mexico here: http://www.getty.edu/research/exhibitions_events/exhibitions/dyn_mexico/

W 11/12: Modernist Architecture
- Valerie Fraser, Building the New World: Studies in the Modern Architecture of Latin America, 1930-1960 (New York: Verso, 2000), 62–84 (on Ciudad Universitaria in Mexico City) and 212–244
- Required website: Watch the famous (and rather funny) segment on Brasilia in the landmark television documentary series the Shock of the New (1980), a history of modern art featuring critic Robert Hughes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=he4C7gWEpEU

M 11/17: The 1960s and 1970s: Art as Experience
- Ferreira Guillar, Lygia Clark, Lygia Pape, et al., “Neo-Concrete Manifesto”
- Required website: Please view the (very trippy) 1973 documentary *O Mundo de Lygia Clark (The World of Lygia Clark)* by Eduardo Clark, 25-mins. long, here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0Q88KcEO6M
- Required website: watch footage of Helio Oiticica’s *Parangole* here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJTr8l2M6Ps
- Recommended website: “Postwar and Geometric Abstraction” in LACMA’s collection: http://collections.lacma.org/node/688394

**W 11/19: Art, Politics, and the Object in Latin American Art of the 1970s and 1980s**
- Website: “Contemporary Art,” in LACMA’s collection: http://collections.lacma.org/node/593184

**Second writing assignment due in section this week**

**M 11/24: Art and the Argentine Guerra Sucia**
- Recommended movie: *The Secret in their Eyes*, the 2009 Oscar-winning film by Argentine director Juan José Campanella. Read more here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Secret_in_Their_Eyes

**W 11/26: No class. Happy Thanksgiving!**

**M 12/01: Contemporary Art: Doris Salcedo, Santiago Sierra, Gabriel Orozco**
- Recommended videos on Doris Salcedo:
  - 2011 talk about her project reacting to the violent deaths of young people in Los Angeles: http://whitecube.com/channel/in_the_museum/doris_salcedo_on_plegaria_muda_2011/
  - ART21 segment on the making of her pieces: http://www.pbs.org/art21/watch-now/segment-doris-salcedo-in-compassion
- SFMOMA, on memory: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOpEO8kgq0uE
- TATE Modern, on Shibboleth: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJJDn2MAN9I
- Recommended videos on Gabriel Orozco:
  - TATE Modern retrospective: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwF9nTEB84k
“Mobile Matrix” installation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7yNaqYEheg
And many many more: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=art21+gabriel+orozco
- Recommended website: You can visit the website for the 2009 Gabriel Orozco show at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) here:

W 12/03: Contemporary Art: Vik Muniz
- Recommended film: I highly recommend the amazing 2010 feature-length documentary Wasteland, directed by Lucy Walker: http://www.wastelandmovie.com/
- Recommended website: You can see much of Vik Muniz’s work by visiting his personal website: http://www.vikmuniz.net/

FINAL EXAM: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 11am–1pm