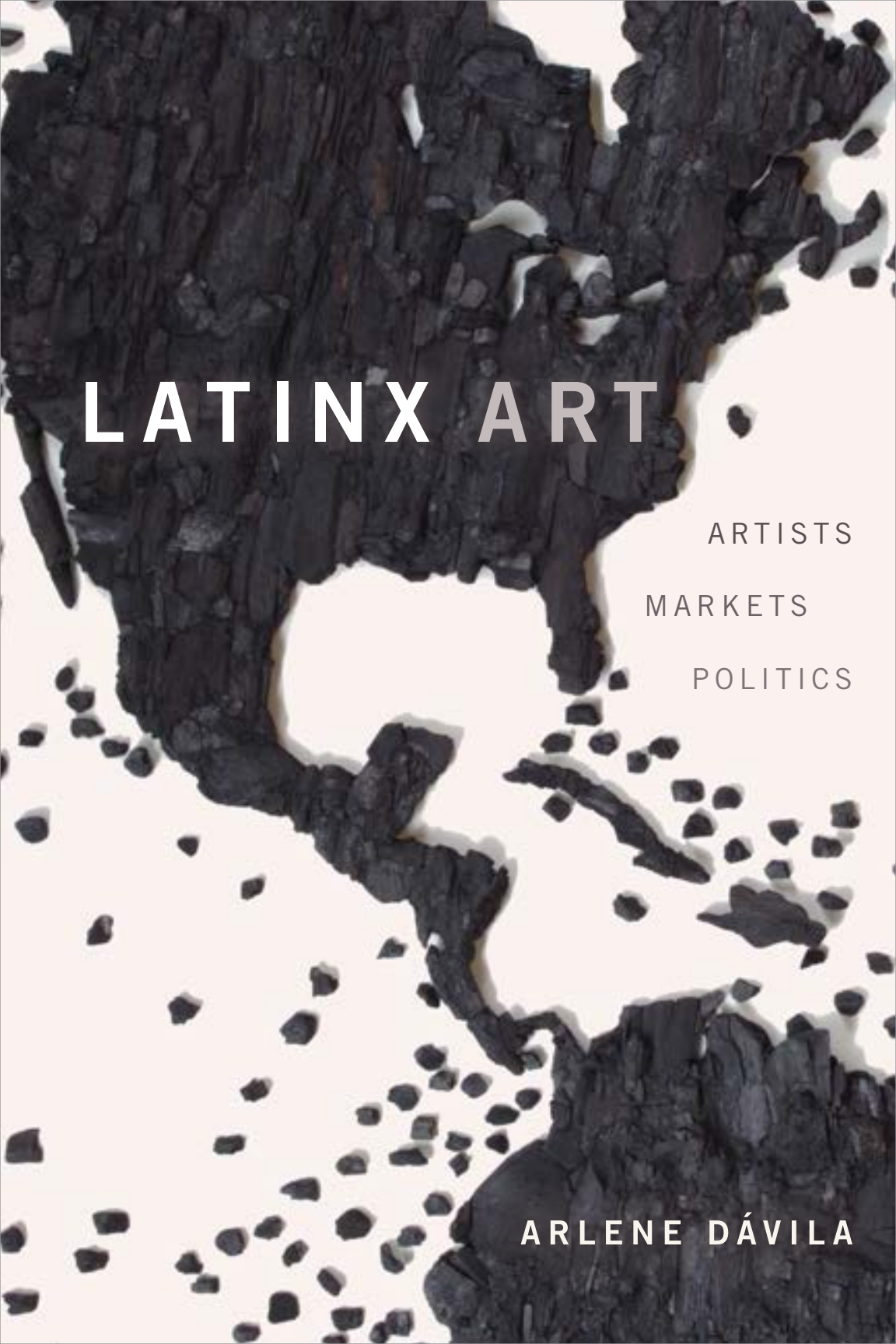
LATINX ART
ARTISTS
MARKETS
POLITICS
ARLENE DÁVILA

BUY LATINX ART

LATINX ART

ARTISTS / MARKETS / POLITICS

ARLENE DÁVILA

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I started this book in the midst of increased calls for greater representation of Latinx art in US museums and art institutions and it has been rewarding to witness promising changes in the span of a few years. Some of the artists I interviewed have finally received more attention, including important museum shows and gallery representation while many gallery dealers and curators who stared at me blankly a mere year ago have shown a marked interest in learning about these artists. This growing recognition and appreciation of Latinx art and artists give me hope about what is possible and what comes next.

At the same time, my hopes are tempered by past experience. If I could reduce my decades-long studies on Latinx culture into one lesson, it is that visibility is merely the first step to recognition, which in turn, has very little to do with equity. Equity demands structural and lasting transformations in society, and in the context of the arts, in the makeup and functioning of all institutions that are part of the larger ecosystem of artistic evaluation—from art schools, to museums, to galleries, and more. And in these realms, changes are unfortunately very slow to come by. Consider that as I write, and despite a mayoral mandate for art institutions to embrace diversity or risk losing funding, the staff at the New York City arts and culture institutions remains three-quarters white, even when whites represent only one quarter of the city's population. [1] My hope then is that five, ten, or twenty years from now, readers will look back at this book to gauge signs of progress and gain inspiration to continue transforming what today stands as one of the most elitists spaces in society, and also one of the most recalcitrant to change.

This book draws from collective conversations and participant observation with colleagues, artists, curators, and Latinx studies stakeholders that took place from the summer of 2016 to the fall of 2019, and I would

like to acknowledge each and every one of them for their collaboration and trust in my analysis. They include friends and acquaintances I have known for years, and others I met for the first time through my research and writing, most of whom are identified by name with their permission, though I used pseudonyms for people who either preferred not to be identified, or I was unable to consult about the interviews and observations that I incorporated into my writing. In particular, I am grateful for the generous feedback and encouragement provided by Yasmin Ramirez, Teresita Fernández, Karen Davalos, Adriana Zavala, Olga Herrera, Elizabeth Ferrer, Naomi Guerrero, Elia Alba, Max Durón, Cecilia Jurado Chueca, Marina Reyes Franco, Marta Moreno Vega, Rita Gonzalez, Pilar Tomkins Rivas, and Rocío Aranda Alvardo. All of them are amazing artists and artivists pushing boundaries through their work, their writings, and their activism, and I am grateful they were able to provide contacts and resources, and always pushed me to enrich my analysis. I also want to thank Patricia E. Banks and Mary K. Coffey for making the project stronger by providing generous feedback on earlier drafts of the book, and Marcela Guerrero, María Elena Ortíz, Karen Davalos, Barbara Calderón, Néstor David Pastor, Nicole Mouriño, and Marty Correia for providing comments on chapters and sections of the book. Speaking invitations by Tatiana Reinoza, Adriana Zavala, Deb Willis, Patricia Zavella, and Darrel Wanzer-Serrano led to productive insights from students and general audiences, while the support and enthusiasm from Deb Willis and Edward Sullivan to the grant proposal that led to this book provided the necessary encouragement to turn a research proposal into a book. Special thanks to Teresita Fernández for producing the powerful work that graces the cover. I am also grateful to Pilar Tompkins Rivas, Javier Arellano Vences, and Joseph Daniel Valencia from the Vincent Price Art Museum for helping me to compile a list of West Coast artists to make appendix A more diverse.

I wrote most of the book while I simultaneously launched the Latinx Project at NYU and artists Shellyne Rodriguez and Barbara Calderón made up the most perfect team for our inaugural year. Our rich collaborative exchanges and the enthusiastic response from artists and audiences to our work provided continuous and inspiring jolts to my writing. In terms of research and production, Carolina Maestre and Kassandra Manriquez assisted on earlier stages of the work, and Eva Jensen with the art program and with securing permits and other publishing logistics. Javier Esteva, my loving and brilliant hus-

band who I started dating during the research and writing process, proved an invaluable supporter and I can't thank him enough for his patience and for his newfound and genuine interest in learning about Latinx artists. I also want to acknowledge photographer Luis Carle, best known for his images of New York City Latinx queer life, and also as the founder of the former Organization of Puerto Rican Artists, Inc., one of the many artists-led initiatives artists have historically launched to challenge their erasure. Despite battling illness, Luis Carle served a steady dose of inspiration during all facets of this work. Last, Carolyn Dinshaw, dean for the Humanities at New York University, and David Stasavage, dean for the Social Sciences at New York University, provided a publication subvention that made it possible to produce an image dossier in color to accompany the text.

The image dossier includes sixteen works by some of the artists interviewed or discussed in the book. Some of this work is referenced in the text, while others are included to help readers visualize the diversity of works produced by contemporary Latinx artists. Readers should note that both the image dossier and the list of artists included in appendix A represent a fraction of the artists who were interviewed or mentioned during my interviews, or whose work I saw exhibited during the length of my research. They are also more representative of artists in the New York City area where I wrote and researched the book. I also decided to focus on living and working artists rather than on legacy artists, though many of them are also listed throughout the text. The artists in the list also tend to be younger, reflecting the greater opportunities available for younger artists to be exhibited, part and parcel of the markets' growing interest in newer generations of artists right out of art school. In other words, neither the image dossier nor appendix A should be treated as a complete representation of the totality of Latinx artists working across the United States. Instead, I hope readers use them as working documents in which to fill in with more names of artists discovered on their own.

Likewise, appendix B provides additional resources where readers can continue learning about Latinx artists and where to find them. This list is also not comprehensive, but includes some of the museums and institutions with key archives and collections on Latinx artists, as well as research centers and Instagram accounts and other digital sources where readers can learn more about Latinx artists and their work. More locally, readers should reach out to Latinx-focused or culturally focused community organizations in their area, as well as libraries,

universities, and not-for-profit organizations and stay tuned about their programming as these types of institutions have historically been pioneers in showing more diverse artists.

I did not consult the artists in appendix A about whether they identify as a Latinx artist. The categorization of artists by museums, libraries, curators, scholars, and archivists is not a process of mutual consultation, but follows dominant designations used in society at large, as I discuss throughout this book. However, it is important to note that while most Latino/a/x people generally accept, recognize, or use these categories in their daily lives, the gender neutral use of Latinx is not as familiar or as widely accepted by everyone. Also, most artists prefer national, racial, or ethnic designations of identity, as is also true to the Latinx population at large. For the purposes of drafting this list, however, I refrained from adding ethnic, racial, national, and other types of identifications to individual artists, though it is my hope that readers are encouraged to continue exploring these artists' histories and backgrounds.

Together, the image dossier and appendixes are meant to stand on their own and provide the most important lesson of this book: That it is impossible and futile to narrow Latinx art to a single aesthetic. Nor should we try. Most of all we must never treat Latinx art as a simple reservoir of Latinx identity.

It was frustrating to realize how many people I talked to believed or assumed that, if looked at closely, Latinx art will always reveal itself on its own as Latinx art. These views reproduced the facile stereotypical assumption that there is a one-to-one relationship between the identity and the artistic expression of artists of color that is unfortunately very prevalent and that we must always fight hard to resist. These views are dangerous not only because they are false, simplistic, and reductionist but because they also serve as powerful veils for stereotypical assumptions and assessments. This is why I hope the art program provides a resource and a summary of this book's most important points for those who may not even read into its content. Latinx art is as diverse and complex as any other category of art or visual arts expression. Likewise, we should never make assumptions about Latinx art without looking at it closely or checking our own personal assumptions and expectations about this work. Latinx art is a social project and an intervention and we should always resist the impetus to narrow its scope, its meaning, and its look. What we should always do, though, is show these artists, appreciate them, and really see them.

Making Latinx Art

In May 2017, a painting by Jean-Michel Basquiat sold at auction for $110.5 million, a record high for any American artist in history. Because Basquiat is commonly identified as a Haitian American or African American artist, few people know that he was also Latinx. Haitian-Americans are also Latinx; Basquiat's mother was Puerto Rican, and he was immersed in Nuyorican art worlds and incorporated Spanish words in many of his works.[1] In fact, chances are that it is Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Fernando Botero, or other Latin American artists who come to mind if one is asked to think about a Latinx artist, as I confirmed whenever I posed this question out loud to my students. This paradox raises several questions: What is Latinx art? How does it relate to American art? Why don't we know more about Latinx artists, and why should we care?

This book answers these questions by exploring the place and future of Latinx art and artists in the contemporary art world. Latinx refers to artists from Latin American background in the US, whether they are first generation or have a longer history here, who work primarily in the United States and identify with the US Latinx experience. These artists have been central to the artistic vitality of the United States though they remain largely eclipsed from its history. They are the largest majority missing from most museum collections and commercial gallery circuits, a self-perpetuating omission that affects the evaluation

of Latinx artists into the future.[2] In this book I explore this predicament by examining how contemporary art critics, museums, gallery owners, and others define, (mis)understand, and engage with Latinx artists in exhibitions, museums, and the market, and by considering what is at stake when Latinx art and artists remain so invisible from mainstream art worlds. Foremost, I ask how their invisibility affects our ability to achieve a more equitable and diverse contemporary art world, and a more just society.

I ask these questions at a moment of contention and reassessment in the arts when there is renewed attention to issues of inclusivity, equity, and representation across museums and art institutions. Calls for addressing the historical exclusion of artists, curators, and creators of color are highlighting the pressing need to diversify museums to meet changing demographics everywhere. Where Latinx artists are concerned, however, these issues are complicated by their heterogeneity across nationality, race, class, and more—leading many to question whether Latinx art is a meaningful category. This book suggests Latinx art is in fact a productive category especially for revealing how matters of class, race, and nationality are operationalized in contemporary art worlds.

The book draws from interviews with artists, curators, gallerists, and other stakeholders of the contemporary art circuit and is devoted to challenging the overwhelming focus on white North American and European artists while complicating many of the generalizations made about contemporary art markets.[3] I also draw from almost two decades of studying the politics of Latinx and Latin American culture, examining the rise of marketable and sanitized hemispheric representations of Latinidad. From "Hispanic" media to "Latin" music and "multicultural" advertising, my previous work shows how much creative industries capitalize on larger and more marketable constituencies spanning US, Latin American, and even Spanish-language speaking populations beyond. These slippery and marketable formulations of Latinidad consistently tell us that "Latin" culture is all the same, while US Latinxs remain invisible. My goal is to correct some of the slippery definitions generated in contemporary art and to call attention to the inequalities and hierarchies of value produced in the representation of US Latinxs, especially when Latinx and Latin American art are fused as one and the same. I show how the blurring of Latinx and Latin American groups and histories furthers racial and class inequalities, making the full evaluation of Latinx artists, and their richness and complexity, impossible to imagine.

"Latinx," "Latin American," and even "American" art are not fixed, homogenous, or universally accepted terms. These categories are specially contested in the art world, where any hyphenated art has long been regarded as less genuine, less creative, and of generally lower quality and value, than "unmarked" art. Art and aesthetics are ruled by their own set of blinders. Essential here is the idea that matters of identity and history are irrelevant even when they are intrinsically involved in the creation of value. Hence, we seldom recognize race in categories such as "American art" and "contemporary art" that index whiteness, while "Latinx art" or "Black art" cannot be read apart from signifiers of race. All the while, "contemporary art" and "American art" remain uncontested, made-up, and homogeneous categories that hide more than they reveal. The sale of Leonardo da Vinci's five-hundred-year-old painting *Salvator Mundi* at Christie's 2017 postwar and contemporary art sales, on account of its "contemporary significance," is a perfect example of the market-driven malleability of the category of "contemporary art." Still, the dominant art world regularly accepts these made-up determinations and categories. By contrast, "ethnic" categories such as Latinx art are always bemoaned, supposedly for "erasing complexity," especially when used to identify and gain recognition for artists of color. The racial politics of the art world become normalized through these unequal assessments and through the racialization of selected categories while "the mainstream" continues to signal "white" as the norm. This explains why many curators and artists of Latinx, African American, Caribbean, and Latin American art bemoan these categories as "necessary evils." Everyone recognizes that these categorizes ghettoize artists into sectors apart from the white-dominant center, yet at the same time they have opened up spaces that would have otherwise remained even more exclusive and inaccessible.

All of this points to the art world's "possessive investment in whiteness," or the incentive to maintain whiteness in the form of an imaginary postracial art world, because it provides resources, power, and opportunity to those who have historically most benefited from it (Lipsitz 1998).[4] This possessive investment in whiteness is at play in the white-only spaces that dominate the art world, especially those most involved in markets and profits. Whenever I enter New York City's galleries, auctions, and conversations around collecting, I see mostly white-only spaces, in contrast to the more diverse audiences that may converge in contemporary art events, particularly in the few instances when artists of color are shown. However, the possessive investment

in whiteness is also evident in the most intimate spaces, such as in the ways in which artists choose to identify or are identified by others. Racist and Eurocentric ideas of universality in the arts still impact these identifications, fostering a continuous tiptoeing around identifying or embracing any identity that is nonwhite. Hence the disinvestment in "Latinx" identities, because they are seen to compromise artists' quality and artistry; "universality" becomes a key indication of the whiteness of the art market, and any artists that cannot come across as "unmarked" (i.e., white) are immediately devalued.

Interestingly, these ideas persist alongside a seemingly coming of age of identity, seen especially in the growing popularity and "discovery" of some Black artists in contemporary art markets. This trend indexes the currency of identity in art markets, raising questions about its long-term effects and about what categories are more marketable and why. One noticeable pattern is a preference for the more appreciated category of "Latin American art" or "Caribbean art," never that of "Latinx art." In fact, Latinx artists often do better if they were born or have links and connections with their home countries, allowing them to be branded as a "Latin American" artist. The representation of Carmen Herrera is a good example of this preference for national identifiers. Even though she's lived in the United States for over fifty years, she's always labeled "Cuban-born," never "a Latina." The United States' dominant Black/white racial binary also contributes to the invisibility of Latinx artists. Accordingly, while some Afro-Latinx artists are rightfully finding opportunities in a rising number of galleries and collectors focusing on Black artists, most Latinx artists remain at the margins of contemporary art markets. A young curator expressed regret about this situation, predicting that "Black Latinxs will end up in Black galleries, white Latino/as in white or Latin American galleries, and Indigenous Latinx in Native American exhibitions" but that everyone else will fall under the radar. Her prediction that only "white Latinxs" would be absorbed in the "white or Latin American" art sector reveals why it is so important to center race and class in discussions of Latinx art in order to halt the whitewashing and erasure of Latinx artists.

This is the impetus behind the growing emphasis on Latinx art among many curators, art historians, and artists. The goal is to define a space for Latinx art, and about attaining respect and visibility and gaining a foothold in museums, institutions, and the market while fostering a position of antiracism in the arts. A common goal is seeking to

bring recognition to US-based Latinx art currently "lost" in the categorizations of Latin American and American art, from which these artists remain invisible.[5] Like Latinx identity itself, Latinx artists span differences along the lines of nationality, citizenship, race, language, and more. Some have been here for generations, while others are more recent immigrants, and most work in a variety of topics and genres that defy categorization under any recognizable rubric. What unites them is their shared minoritized position as Latinx artists in the United States, the key variable underlying their historical erasure notwithstanding their achievements, and in some cases, mainstream success.

In particular, the Latinx *artivist* moment is about rescuing all of the issues lost by subsuming Latinx art as an appendage to "Latin American art," the dominant rubric around which Latinx art has been understood since the so-called Latin art boom of the 1990s. This is why I define Latinx art as a project, not a fixed identity, a blueprint for the acknowledgment and identification of the work of artists who have been consistently bypassed by the American and Latin American art history. In other words, this is a project of "culture making" following anthropologist of art Fred Myers, who pushes us to examine the production of cultural categories, the work of interpreting these categories, and the forces at play involved in evaluating and institutionalizing art. I agree with his argument here: "The point is to imagine conditions of cultural heterogeneity, rather than those of consensus, as the common situation of cultural interpretation" (Myers 2002: 351).[6] When thinking of Latinx art, I suggest that the dominant categories for thinking about contemporary art must be problematized and expanded for the full richness of Latinx art and artists to be recognized, beyond the search for a readily recognized aesthetic, a distinct expression, or "a look."

Throughout, I use "Latinx," a term that is increasingly used in the arts, to index an openness to gender, sexual, and racial inclusivity. I also use "Latinx" to index that most contemporary "Latino" projects generated within culture industries, from TV to mainstream museums, are too co-opted and whitewashed to fully represent any sense of progressive Latinidad, and to mark a break toward more inclusive definitions. This does not mean that Latinx is not being co-opted, or likely to be in the future, as have many previous terms to designate a complex pan-ethnic and racial community in our neoliberal economy so hungry for marketable ethnicity.[7] The argument is that at least for now the category "Latinx" points to the urgent need to raise questions

and to call attention to the silencing of Latinx artists and communities. As Adriana Zavala put it so neatly: "To me, the X in LatinX is about addressing structured absence. But it also marks presence. It says I am here and I will be counted. The X also insists on queering structures of knowledge in order to make this presence visible."[8]

I consider myself part of this movement and call for greater Latinx visibility. I have known and worked with Latinx artists for decades, especially with Nuyorican artists, since I first came to New York City as a graduate student in the 1990s. First, my early work at the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art and El Museo del Barrio sensitized me to the racialization of anything Puerto Rican, Nuyorican, and Latinx in the art world. Then, when writing about the gentrification of New York City's El Barrio/East Harlem, I learned about the significant work of Nuyorican artists to mark identity onto space and to visualize social and political movements. Throughout these decades, I have seen artists struggle to make a living, and I have seen them gain very little transformation in the visibility and recognition of their work.

I was additionally inspired by the renewed activism among artists and scholars stating out loud, in numerous panels and events addressing this issue, "Latinx art is American art." In particular, the US Latinx Arts Futures Symposium (2016) held at the Ford Foundation organized by artist Teresita Fernández generated multiple conversations about the nationwide invisibility and devaluation that Latinx artists experience in museums, art schools, and all structures in the art world. Tired of being the only Latina in contemporary art spaces, Teresita gathered artists, curators, scholars, and other art world stakeholders to explore what accounts for the invisibility of Latinx art, and how we can change things. It was especially eye-opening to hear artists from Texas, Chicago, Los Angeles, and beyond share tales with uncanny commonalities to those I have been hearing for decades from artists in New York.

These conversations honed in on the importance of delving into the workings of race and the market by exploring the difficulty of naming, branding, and marketing Latinx art. This issue permeated most discussions and conversations at the symposium even though it was never addressed directly beyond my own short remarks on the marketing of Latinx culture. Because my work, reputation, and livelihood do not depend on the art world, or on the ecosystem of museums, art critics, and galleries that sustains it, I am freer to address issues that are known to everyone but that few can express so easily. In the art world, everyone seems to be in constant fear that their careers and reputation will

suffer if they rescind the dominant "artistic positioning" demanding polite silence around matters of race and the market. This positioning is very different from the more open critical stances I am used to as an academic, and I marveled how change could actually take place when discussions of racism in the art world are so repressed, even when recognized as the greatest challenge for visualizing Latinx artists.

By building and strengthening African American spaces, artists and stakeholders have brought national and international recognition to African American artists throughout the US, and to Black art on a global scale.[9] At the same time, African American and Latinx artists occupy different places in the contemporary art world that underlie the challenges of achieving a similar level of recognition for Latinx art. African American artists in the US have been historically marginalized, yet the dominant US Black/white racial binary nevertheless anchors African American artists as undeniably "American," recognition often denied to Latinxs. Instead, Latinxs have been historically racialized as unbelonging and forever foreigners, despite their historical presence in the United States prior to its establishment (as with Mexican Americans), or despite their citizenship status (as with Puerto Ricans). In this way, the quest for attaining visibility and recognition of Latinx art as central to the "American" art story in the United States presents a necessary challenge to narrow visions of US identity, at play not only in the arts but also in society at large.

I make a case for specifying Latinx art well aware of the transnational histories and relations between the US and Latin American art worlds, and the Latin American origins and histories of many Latinx artists. A considerable amount of work has been devoted to documenting such linkages, exposing the forces from US cultural policy to transnational corporations that have shaped the very idea of Latin American art, as well as the different types of hemispheric migrations and exchanges among artists, and the existence of transnational artistic movements.[10] The issue is that after decades of explorations of Latinx and Latin American connections in the arts, we are no closer to achieving equitable transnational exchanges than we were when these issues were initially debated at the height of the so-called Hispanic arts boom of the 1990s. Arguably, two decades of connecting Latin American and Latin art have done more to legitimize Latin American art as a category of art scholarship and the market than to bolster the legibility of Latinx art.

In this way, I wish to complicate how we summon "transnationalism" across the Latin American–Latinx spectrum by anchoring matters

of class and race, and an art market that continues to trade in the currency of nationalism. I want to challenge the unquestioned spread of "aesthetic cosmopolitanisms" that have become normalized with the globalization of art markets and that revolve around imaginary, representational, and consumption-driven imaginaries.[11] Instead, I focus on the actually existing social worlds of art fairs, gallery shows, museums, and exhibitions to inquire who participates in their creation, and who benefits and why. These questions are necessary to examine issues of equity and understand the social worlds and the different types of cultural consumption and forms of participation and sociability that are created or erased when we appeal to the global or transnational.[12]

For instance, the transnational Latinx–Latin American appeals and networks of Latinx artists are very different than those circulated in the international contact zones of art schools and art fairs.[13] The transnational moves of Latinx artists tend to be expansive or antiracist or to center on migrants' rights or on bringing about visibility to groups, such as Black Latin Americans and Salvadorans, who are consistently bypassed by dominant definitions of "Latin American art." One example is LA-based artist Beatriz Cortez, who is very committed to maintaining linkages with El Salvador as part of her Central American activism in Los Angeles.[14] For her though, the issue is about battling racism, which should rightfully be seen as a transnational battle. As she put it: "For me what is important is talking about a community that is Indigenous and Black, separating the idea of Central America as an exclusively Hispanic space." In other words, the transnational linkages of many Latin American immigrant artists are of a different reiteration of those espoused in Art History's scholarly circles or in contemporary art markets. This is one of the reasons we must foreground matters of race and class when locating Latinx artists and trouble the dominant Latin American–Latinx framework as the most appropriate rubric for understanding Latinx art. I argue that this dominant formula regularly marginalizes Latinx artists as I examine in the example of the "Pacific Standard Time LA/LA" project funded by the Getty Foundation, which showcased over eighty Latinx and Latin American art exhibitions held throughout Los Angeles in 2018. Instead, I suggest that Latinx art must be foregrounded in relation to US discourses of race, as well as to the transnational dominance of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in both the US and Latin America.

Toward this goal, I highlight the need to challenge vague notions of "Latin" culture as being one and the same generated by the homog-

enization of Latinx and Latin Americans artists. This representation elides the different histories and particularities of what it is to live and work as an artist, as a racial minority working in the US, or as a national or unmarked artist in Latin America. In particular, Latinx artists are more likely to be unmoored and unrecognized in both the US and in their home countries, while Latin American artists, even those living in the US on a temporary or long-term basis, often have some level of recognition and linkages with their countries of background in Latin America. In other words, these artists differ in what throughout this book I call "national privilege," or the benefits based on different degrees of connection to Latin American cultures and art worlds. This book shows how national privilege is a key medium of differentiation used to rank the value of different Latin American artists, as well as to separate and devaluate Latinx artists, and thus one of the elements we most need to expose and debunk in order to create more equitable art worlds. Moreover, while both Latin American art and Latinx art are compromised categories in the art world, this book shows why it is so important to recognize that they are so at very different registers.

Understanding the politics and currency of categories also requires accounting for the many identifiers—Nuyorican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, Chicanx, Colombian, and so forth—among other categories that inform individual Latinx identities and reveal important information about the history, location, and experiences of individuals and communities, as well as about the historical collectivity of Latinx. These multidiverse identities are especially important because the category of "Latinx" (like Latino/a/o and Hispanic) is not exempt from erasures and challenges, especially when promoted to sanitize histories and meet the preferences of the market. This is why we need to consider Latinx a "term of entry, not a term of closure," in the words of artist Ronny Quevedo;[15] in other words, it is a term to open up conversations on all the different Latinx stories, backgrounds, and identities that have seldom been given the necessary attention. For instance, when thinking about individual histories within larger categories, the Dominican artist Pepe Coronado's training with Chicanx and Latinx printmakers from Self-Help Graphics in Los Angeles is important to his work; likewise with the street art, hip-hop, and graffiti background of Dominican Puerto Rican interdisciplinary artist CarlosJesús-MartínezDomínguez. Both are regularly known as "New York–based Dominican artists," yet their histories, training, trajectories, and collaborations with other artists are different, and this information is

important to understanding their backgrounds and their work, and the multidiverse influences at play in the work of most Latinx artists.

Finally, as someone who has been studying Hispanic, Latino/a, and Latinx cultural politics for almost two decades, I offer this analysis hopeful that the Latinx artivist movement may represent a significant break and intervention away from many of the dominant "Latino" projects that have been advanced on their behalf, including what I have elsewhere termed "Latino spin," that promote assimilationist and conservative representations of Latinos as "model minorities" (Dávila 2008). I also write as a call for progressive Latinx specific spaces and projects that are expansive and open to simultaneity of identities and allow room for appreciating and exploring differences.[16] Most of all, I hope that by examining the making of hierarchies and distinctions in contemporary art markets we get a little bit closer to breaking their pull and to fostering more diverse art worlds.

The Unequal Terrain of Global Art Worlds

For decades, a network of institutional spaces and interests have forged "Latin American art" as a differentiated sphere of production, study, collection, and consumption. This recognition stems from the Good Neighbor Policy of the 1930s and the Pan-American visual art exchanges between the US and Latin America and was congealed in art markets from the 1970s onward, when major auction houses like Sotheby's (1979) and Christie's (1977) and Phillips (2009) began to hold regular Latin American art auctions.[17] Major exhibitions followed, making Latin American art a fashionable subject for collectors, institutional spaces, and stakeholders devoted to its study, promotion, and marketing across the United States and beyond.

The result is that, while still relegated to a dominant Anglo- and Eurocentric art history canon, Latin American art counts, with important institutionalizing spaces creating and sustaining "regimes of value" for the evaluation and valuation of Latin American art.[18] Research on Latin American markets attributes their origins to the nationalist imperatives of collectors, embassies, and governments fueling their own national markets (Dávila 1999; Martin 2009). But today the rising profitability is leading to new arrangements whereby Latin American elites are no longer invested in their own national art worlds; rather, they are sustaining the profitability of Latin American art to ensure

their greater alignment of national markets with this larger and more profitable category. The rise in regional Latin American art fairs, such as ArteBA (1991), ArtRio (2010), ArtBo (2005), and Art Lima (2013), modeled after international megafairs like Art Basel, point to a growing globalization of "Latin American" art worlds. So does the growing visibility of Latin American art in major international art fairs from Art Basel in Miami Beach to ARCOmadrid (Borea 2016: 315–337).

Having visited galleries and attended art fairs and interviewed stakeholders in Bogotá and Buenos Aires, I can attest that the entry of Latin American art into these global spaces represents not the "diversification" of the mainstream art world, but the expansive spread of Latin American elites all over the world.[19] As Giuliana Borea writes with regard to Lima, Peru, the globalization of Latin American art markets has neither transformed dominant epistemologies in the field of art, nor accepted Indigenous artists or racial minorities as equals, nor led to a more open and democratic art world. Most galleries I visited in growing arts districts in Latin America looked and felt like galleries in New York City's Lower East Side, and most of the white and middle-class artists I met insisted that their work was not different than contemporary artists anywhere else in the world. The world of Instagram provides access to global standardized visual vocabularies, and there is enormous convergence in the tastes of the global art elites of the world. Aware of this, the organizer of ArtBA even shared plans to bolster tourist offerings to differentiate and brand the larger city of Buenos Aires as a major draw during the art fair, realizing that art fairs on their own no longer provide enough differentiation to justify travel.

We see similar trends in other sectors of the global contemporary art market. For instance, the Chinese and Asian art renaissance has not translated to a wider recognition of Asian American artists in the US. Curators of Asian American art confirmed that the experience of Asian artists in the US is similar to that of Latinx artists. In particular, there is a greater number of galleries, institutions, and collectors interested in Chinese and Asian artists over Asian American artists, leaving some groups, such as Filipino Americans, entirely invisible. The rising category of "African art" provides another example of the types of inequities reinforced through globalization. In recent years, "African art" has become a key category of contemporary global art, yet at the 2018 edition of the 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair in New York City there were only three African-owned and African-based galleries among the twenty-one international exhibitors present, representing

a field that is primarily dominated by white-owned European galleries. I met Dolly Kola Balogun, the twenty-four-year-old cofounder of Retro Africa Gallery in Abuja, Nigeria who was forthright about this problem and presented her gallery as "a cultural intervention to put a halt to a new form of colonialism." As she put it: "Before they would take our art by force, but now artists are exporting themselves abroad." With her gallery, she hoped African artists would no longer have to travel abroad to work with galleries with international contacts.

In other words, matters of political economy can be determinant when deciding who profits from global art markets, what artists are promoted, and on what grounds. In regard to Latin American art, we see the dominance of artists who emerge with the financial backing of national elites and institutions like cultural embassies, such as Mexican, Argentinean, or Brazilian artists, who are considered trendier and more profitable for speculation. By contrast, Latinx art has historically lacked institutional support, hence the growing consensus on the need to specify, define, and promote Latinx art as a space of scholarly, curatorial concern and as a market category. Latin American art curator Mari Carmen Ramírez put it simply when recalling the role Latin American elites have played in launching mainstream interest for Latin American art: "It was from the beginning tied to an elite, and it has been that process that has built the infrastructure . . . which Latinx art still does not have, and more appropriately put, never had" (Ramírez 2016).

Latinx artists' presence in American art predates the very foundation of the United States (Carmen Ramos 2014). However, the contemporary history grew out of the Nuyorican and Chicano art movements, as a space of resistance and assertion inspired by the Black Arts and the civil rights movement and their demands for recognition, equity, and redress (see Cahan 2018). Nuyorican and Chicano/a artists were involved in a cultural revolution to challenge and transform mainstream museums' historical Euro-centrism, which marginalized the artistic creation and input of people of color. In New York City, the creation of alternative spaces and institutions such as El Museo del Barrio, Taller Boricua, and the Alternative Museum was also part of the art- and culture-based social movement of the times. So was the development and validation of a different aesthetic. The result was art connected to communities and informed by larger social movements around equity, antiracism, and social justice. Market prerogatives were never the incentive; rather, what drove this movement was the desire

to expand a symbolic and visual repertoire that validated the history of Latinx as people of color in this country.[20] Since then, Latinx artists have been making contributions in graphic arts, muralism, conceptual arts, photography, destructivist art, social art practice, and so on, in ways that art historians are only beginning to examine.[21]

Despite this rich history, Latinxs' racial minoritarian status continues to obscure their value and creativity. "I think of the ghetto, I think of Washington Heights or the Bronx, or the lady who cleans your house," is how one of the first Latin American art dealers I spoke to put it, among the many statements that make it so clear that ingrained racism in the arts is the number one reason affecting the evaluation of Latinx art. This is why we must question assumptions that "there are no great Latinx artists" and look at the institutions and infrastructures that underpin this situation, akin to how Linda Nochlin wrote an essay asking "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" in 1971 and Michelle Wallace made a similar inquiry for Black artists in 2004 (Nochlin 1995; Wallace 2004). This book shows that there are indeed a lot of amazing Latinx contemporary visual artists, even though racial logics deny their value, and "globality" blinding us from imagining Latinxs as agents, as artists, as collectors, and even as arts entrepreneurs.[22]

These issues take on added meaning in light of the larger xenophobic environment, where Latinx lives are under attack and there is a push to whitewash "American" history. They are also more prescient amid a political climate hostile to government funding for the arts and to matters of cultural equity, and amid a general retreat from investing in arts and culture. With the expedited financialization of art markets, art becomes a coveted commodity and a financial investment for the new elites throughout the world. In this context, art is increasingly sold, purchased, and treated as a financial asset, evident in the spread of new venues for purchasing art, and even of art storage facilities where people can store their acquisitions as investments.[23] Not surprisingly, as the art world becomes more of a terrain of financial speculation, most observers admit that it has also grown less diverse and more unequal. The result is a growing eliticization of art spaces and cultural institutions in New York City and other cities across the Americas, at the very same time that the US is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse than ever and that its arts institutions are in greatest need of transformation.

These trends hit Latinx artists especially hard. Their exclusion from art markets represents a significant erasure that impacts artists' lives,

their economic well-being, and the evaluation of generations of artists into the future. It stifles any impetus for collectors, institutions, and stakeholders to invest in our artists—relegating Latinx art collection to a matter of "love and rescue," as anthropologist Karen Mary Davalos (2007) has put it. She notes that for generations, Latinx activists, communities, and friends and family have been acquiring Chicanx and Latinx art to support our artists and rescue our visual tradition—without which there would be no visual arts archives and collections from which curators could now turn to fill in the void in their collections.

Whereas the Latin American art market has decades of legitimacy and a track record for evaluating artists, the general omission of Latinx art from the market results in a void of data about its value that makes it impossible to price. This represents a circular and self-perpetuating problem: lack of access to markets hinders the evaluation of their work, and hence their ability to enter the market in the future. The result is that even the most canonical artists, those who were foundational in the Chicano and Nuyorican art movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, are impossible to price. Most of this work has never been bought and sold, and this alone saps their value and hinders their evaluation. Even artists who have been collected by important national museums face this problem of evaluation. This is one reason that museums and nonprofit cultural institutions have played an important role in promoting Latinx art: these institutions have historically played a determinant role in legitimating the work of artists who are shut out of other means of evaluation. Then there is the added challenge that Latinx art is highly diverse: many of our artists produce work that is not market driven, or work with political content that is not seen as palatable to the dominant sensibilities for what makes a marketable political art. As someone asked, "Who'd like to live with work that is so politically driven in their home?" Or work that would make them uncomfortable?

This book tackles some of these myths, discomforts, and misunderstandings about the work of Latinx artists to suggest that debates over Latinx art in contemporary society are an index of the larger place of Latinxs in larger society, and of the contemporary art world's continued possessive investment in whiteness. My goal is to open up a space of debate where we can fully appreciate the challenges involved in theorizing Latinx creativity, as well as in exhibiting Latinx art and artists. I also hope to show that, notwithstanding the current disavowals of discussion of race, contemporary art worlds continue to create value

by reifying identities, sometimes highlighting them and other times, whenever profitable, muddling and obscuring them.

My argument is that matters of race and markets have historically impacted the evaluation of Latinx artists. Efforts to market Latinx art and artists by whitewashing or linking them to more established categories such as "American" art or Latin American art will continue to be of limited use unless we grapple with the continued racialization that makes Latinx creativity impossible to imagine.

Five Guidelines for Understanding Latinx Art

Before we start, let me address five misconceptions about Latinx art in a way that may help readers navigate the following pages.

Myth 1. Defining Latinx is too confusing and does not make sense.

Latinx artists are highly diverse. They span differences of class, race, ethnicity, region, history, citizenship status, and more—just like the Latinx population at large. Many artists of Latin American background have historically resisted identifying as Latinx artists, despite living in the United States for decades. Others embrace the category even as recent migrants. Thus, what makes a Latinx artist? Is it a matter of being born and raised and of having worked primarily in the US? Is it a matter of self-definition? I want to pose that the issue is never one of "authenticity," or neat boundaries between US-born and Latin America–born artists. Latinx artists include those who have been here for generations and those born in Latin America but raised in the United States, what sociologists term the "1.5 generation." Instead, I suggest that the definition of "Latinx artists" is more richly seen as a matter of politics, identification, and access. As curator E. Carmen Ramos states, "I use the term 'Latino art' not as a sign of cultural essence but as an indicator of descent, shared experience, and art historical marginalization" (C. E. Ramos 2014: 36). In sum, no person or artist from Latin American backgrounds in the US is born Latinx; they become Latinized by being racialized into, or socialized or acculturated into US racial frameworks and by developing articulating identifications with larger Latinx communities.

In particular, this book argues for the need to account for national privilege as a key element of differentiation and evaluation. With this term I call attention to the fact that while all artists of Latin American

descent in the US are minoritized in one way or another, Latinx diasporic ones are especially racialized, particularly those who are Black and Brown. These artists are characterized by an absence of ties to home countries and of elements rewarded in the creative industries of Latinidad (from media to advertising and museums)—where it is the currency of "authentic" Latinidad, such as fluency in Spanish language, Spanish-sounding names, or "Latin looks" favoring light-skinned and white features, that is most rewarded.[24] National privilege also allows many Latinx and Latin American artists living in the US to get respite from their US experiences of marginalization by traveling home and by being recognized in national rather than minoritized ways. These artists may experience dislocation, and questions about their belongingness, but their previous ties to home countries can nevertheless generate networks of institutional support. By contrast, Latinx artists who are born and raised in the US or are undocumented, or exiled from their home countries, or Black or Brown are seldom seen beyond their minoritarian status in the US or anywhere else in the Americas. In other words, Latinx diasporic identities are out of place everywhere, while those with national privilege can access cultural currency by more easily inserting themselves or by others into Latin American and global art and creative worlds. As a result, while it is not uncommon for people from Latin American backgrounds in the US to identify with countries of origins, the extent to which national identifications become a medium of hierarchy and differentiation vis-à-vis other Latinx groups, or against people of color more generally, is almost always a symptom of racism. Finally, national privilege differs across the region—it carries significantly more weight for artists hailing from countries with leading art and culture industries such as Mexico or Brazil, than countries lacking similar infrastructure. However, recognizing national privilege as a key element of hierarchization is essential for addressing the inequalities that exist and are being rapidly exacerbated through global art worlds.

Arguments can be advanced about the aesthetics, themes, and concerns that may distinguish Latinx artists working in the US from those of Latin American artists. Undoubtedly, these artists have different histories and distinct histories and engagements with Latin American or US lived experiences, though I leave arguments about the interplay of these different experiences and visual cultures to art historians. However, aware of what Darby English (2010) has termed "viewer complicity," or the tendency to limit the work of Black artists to ideas of racial

character or social identity, beyond what the works are or the artists intend, I caution against the quest to define Latinx art in terms of any identifiable aesthetic. Because as he warns, narrowing "the look" of any identity is one of the key ways that whiteness operates in the art world.

Instead, my main concern is to explore why we recognize and talk about Latinxs in a variety of settings—for instance, as a political constituency or as a market—yet find it difficult to conceptualize and acknowledge the existence of Latinx art and Latinx artists. I ask, what makes it impossible to think about Latinxs as equal participants in the arts/creative sector? Ultimately I argue that the lack of recognition of Latinx art and artists is a testament not to their quality or originality, but to processes of racialization that deny creativity and visibility to US Latinxs. These issues inform chapter 1.

Myth 2. There is no place for identity in the art world.

Matters of race and identity implicate the art world everywhere, which marks and erases identity whenever profitable. This book shows that the whitening of the category of "contemporary American art" and the exotification of Latin American art are essential processes to their current evaluation as collecting categories. I show that Latin American art became valuable because of the existence of networks of stakeholders invested in creating and fostering this space (in opposition to Latinx art). The art world has changed since the Latin American art institutional skeleton was forged, and it increasingly favors more "global" positions, but I will show that identities continue to have a lot of purchase in the contemporary art world. As such, naming and creating Latinx institutional spaces continues to be central to their ability to be seen, exhibited, archived, and valued. Chapters 2 and 3 make these points.

My work thus challenges most race-blind analyses of art markets, which fail to account for race and racism and for the purchase of identity categories as criteria for establishing value. For decades, scholarship on art has touted its "special" nature, especially when considerations of markets are concerned. We are told that art is ruled by "noneconomic logics," to the point that most contemporary research on art markets harks back to Bourdieu's description of the field of cultural production as "the economic world reversed" (1993: 29) to refer to art's irreducibility to economic logics. In sum, art is seen as the outmost transcendental thing because its value is never contained to economic logics, while the work of an "artist's artist" is still defined by its

putative negation of economic motivation or any other political or social influence. However, we must remember that evaluation processes are never arbitrary. Research on art and aesthetic markets shows that claiming "disinterested positions" in prices and the market is a key medium to establish art's irreducibility to economics (Velthuis 2007). Value is also created by what Isabelle Graw (2009) calls "the market of knowledge," or the range of symbolic and prestige-giving institutions and publications that help position artists as "priceless."

I suggest that claiming "disinterested" positions in race and identity is also a key value-making strategy in contemporary art markets. However, just as the reality of market logics is not denied by the adoption of "disinterested" positions in prices, so is the reality of racism not belied by refusals to name it. In fact, commercial success is predicated on the complicity to not talk about racism, which means few people dare to challenge it outright for fear of compromising their own artistic prestige and position. Unfortunately, this silence is exactly why contemporary art remains so whitewashed. For clarity, racism is neither a matter of intent or feeling, but effects. Its clearest diagnostic is inequality and, on this regard, it is evident that racism embeds the entire contemporary art world despite the dominant liberal anti-racist positions that dominate this space. This is why art critic Aruna D'Souza uses the apt metaphor of Whitewalling for the historic and cyclical processes of reinforcing whiteness at play in US museums despite open invocations to openness and "artistic freedom" (D'Souza 2018). This is also why scholars maintain that it is not enough to claim to not be racist. The only way to not be racist is to be an anti-racist, by actively struggling to understand, tease out and challenge policies and naturalized frameworks that lead to inequalities (Kendi 2019). In this book, I suggest that centering the experiences of artists and creatives of color within key institutions of the contemporary art world provides a great starting point for this analysis.

Myth 3. Identity is becoming hot in contemporary art markets, and it is just a matter of time until Latinxs get the same interest as many contemporary African American artists are currently receiving.

African American and Latinx artists are affected by racism in the arts, but in very specific ways. Although African American artists are marginalized, there is greater recognition that they belong and are part of American art history and should be represented equally in all of its institutions, whereas Latinx have been historically racialized as

foreigners, undocumented, and unbelonging. This is why Latinx curators continue to insist that "Latinx art is American art": because Latinx are constantly treated as newcomers who need to repeatedly prove that they are also "part of America" and hence should be represented in US museums and cultural institutions.

The category of Black art/artist is also highly diverse, encompassing artists who differ in nationality, class, and language; this diversity is akin to what one finds with Latinxs. For instance, "Black artists" also includes Caribbean and African artists, and Afro-Latinx and Black artists in the diaspora, not solely African Americans. Arguments can be made about the shifting relationship between African American and Black artists in relation to the rise of new global markets categories, such as African art and Caribbean art. Certainly, the currency of nationalism is also at play in the evaluation of these artists. But at this moment there is a more level relationship between African American and the larger category of Black artists than there is with Latinx and Latin American art. For instance, the sociologist of culture Patricia A. Banks (2018) has found evidence that, historically, African American artists were better positioned in the contemporary art market in the United States than African artists were.[25] Additionally, some important museums in Africa, such as Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town, South Africa—the largest contemporary art museum in Africa—collect and feature African American artists in their collection (Banks 2019b). This is in direct contrast to the current situation of Latinx artists in relation to Latin American art markets: US Latinx artists are rarely included in Latin American museums, with the exception of the internationally famous Ana Mendieta and Félix González-Torres.

This difference is undoubtedly related to the hegemony of anti-Black racism in the United States and globally. For instance, Patricia A. Banks shows that across Black upper middle classes everywhere, racial identification trumps nationality, strengthening their collecting practices toward the collection of Black art across ethnicity and nationality (Banks 2010). By contrast, among the upper middle-class communities of Latin American migrants, racism has led to the overvaluation of Latin American art compared to Latinx art. As one collector explained about his own and other collector practices, Latin American collectors in the United States have been primarily wealthy upper-class migrants seeking to re-create a sense of community by building collections that reminded them of their home countries. In other words, they had little

to no interest in the cultural empowerment or assertion of Latinx communities in the United States. In fact, to date, it is not Latin American galleries but emerging galleries representing Black artists that are making headway in representing Latinx artists. My hope is that this book centers matters of race and class in the Latinx art conversation and becomes an incentive for future collectors from all backgrounds to focus their eyes and wallets on the work of Latinx artists. These issues are woven throughout the book, but especially chapters 4 and 5.

Myth 4. It is up to Latinxs to build markets for Latinx art.

It was white US elites who built North American museums, and African American upper middle classes and Latin American elites who first patronized African American, Black, and Latin American artists. Why, then, should anyone be concerned with the invisibility of Latinx art, except US Latinx artists, curators, and scholars? The pages that follow argue that the invisibility of Latinx artists is everyone's concern. Latinx art and artists are central to the intersecting histories of Latin American, US, Native American, Asian, and African diaspora art. They include Afro-Latinx artists, Indigenous Latinx artists, and those who are not Indigenous but nonetheless draw inspiration from Indigenous cultures and traditions across the Americas. They also include Asian Latinx descendants from Asian migrations across the Americas, and many others whose work examines and straddles the borders of the US and Latin America and extend to Latinx diasporas all over the world. As a result, no Latin American, "American," or African American institution—in sum, no art institution, archive, or collection across the Americas and beyond—can be considered complete, nor can any of these spaces tell complete and capacious stories, if Latinx artists are not recognized as a key component of all of these histories.

Myth 5. Art can bring about change.

Decades of research into the representation of Latinxs across a variety of media have led me to one conclusion: on their own, representations can do little to challenge racism. It takes structural change to create a visual revolution that can fully change and destroy our racist illusions. It is in this spirit that I offer this analysis of racism in contemporary art worlds as a starting point to challenge dominant perceptions and treatment of Latinxs in the arts. This requires going against the nationalist, colonial, and racist hierarchies of value that are normalized by market logics. It also involves recognizing that value

is always a social creation, the product of institutional structures of evaluation that feed into the evaluation of some artists and categories of art over others. There's nothing innocent or natural about art markets, and we need to demystify them to challenge the pull and purchase they have on the entire ecosystem of museums, critics, collectors, and so on involved in the process of evaluation. This is why art alone is not going to save us. However, learning to see how race and racism structures the arts could help to bring about change. US Latinxs make up 18 percent of the US population, and it is estimated that by 2040 they will be the "majority minority" in the United States. But how many people of color were present at the most recent art fair, museum opening, or MFA class? Readers should remember these questions as we thread our way through the world of Latinx artists, markets, and politics.

NOTES

Acknowledgments and Reader Instructions

1 A summary of the first report can be found in Schonfeld and Sweeney 2016. Dafoe and Boucher 2019 discuss a follow-up survey by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs showing demographics of the city's arts and culture staff unchanged since the first study.

Introduction

1 For a discussion of Haitians' Afro-Latinx identity, see Legros 2018; and on the erasure of Basquiat's Latinx identity, see Guerrero 2017. Additionally, when locating Basquiat as part of Nuyorican art worlds, I am referring to a wider Nuyorican art scene that also includes the emergent New York City hip hop scene and is not limited to the traditional Nuyorican art world most associated with visual arts and poetry. On this point see Rivera (2003)

2 There are no reliable studies on Latinx artists representation in museums because Latinxs are even missing in the categories researchers use to conduct studies on issues of diversity in the arts. A recent study showing that 85.4% of artists represented in museums are white and that Hispanic/Latino make up 2.8% of artists represented provides a good example (Topaz et al. 2019). When one examines the study closely one learns the actual number of Latinx artists represented in US museums is less than 1% considering the 2.8% results were obtained from a sample of 230 artists where there were only 12 Latinx artists born in the US, the most narrow definition of Latinx and where most of the artists in the study were born in Latin America and even Spain, to the point that even Spaniard Salvador Dalí was counted as Hispanic/Latino/a. In sum, the study shows the overwhelming representation of white artists in US museum collections but does little to help us understand the fate of US Latinx artists—because the vague and inaccurate treatment of Latino/a/Hispanic category entirely erases them as a variable of analysis.

3 See, for instance, important works on contemporary art markets, such as B. Davis 2013; Thornton 2009; D. Thompson 2010, 2015; and Graw 2010. All of these works take primarily Anglo-American and international artists as the norm and are incomplete because they do not account for racial dynamics, which are a key element of value making in contemporary art markets. Important exceptions include works focusing on African American artists, such as Cheryl Finley's interdisciplinary project "Black Market: Inside the Art World" and her online course on the art market; and works by Patricia Banks (2010, 2019). My goal is to promote more research about Latinxs and art markets, a hugely overdue subject of study that seems to be slowly getting attention. See for instance a recent master's thesis on Mexican American artists (Ledesma, 2016).

4 Matters of race and inequality have long been ubiquitous in the contemporary art world. However, in recent years these issues have received renewed urgency and attention among cultural commentators and the public at large. I point readers to scholarship by art historians and interdisciplinary scholars such as Susan Cahan (2016), Karen Mary Davalos (2017), Laura E. Pérez (2007), Kellie Jones (2017), Aruna D'Souza (2018), Mabel Wilson (2012) and Bridget Cooks, among others, for important research exposing the racist foundations that have informed the exhibition and representation of African American, Chicanx, and Latino/a artists in North American museums.

5 See, for example, the project by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, "A Ver: Revisioning Art History" (2002–present). The project includes a book series that highlights the art and individual histories of Latinx artists to both document their work. See also the Latino Art Now! conference, launched as part of the Inter-University Program for Latino/a Studies in 2005. Some key Latinx art stakeholders include a younger generation of Latino/a art historians, such as the founders of the US Latinx Art Forum (founded by Adriana Zavala, Josh Franco, and Rose Salseda) as a space to challenge to the College Art Association's lack of panels and spaces devoted to Latinx art. In 2016, the US Latinx Arts Futures convening at the Ford Foundation was foundational in bringing the conversation to wider audiences. Organized by artist Teresita Fernández, the event gathered artists, curators, scholars, and other stakeholders of the art world to explore what accounts for the invisibility of Latinx art and how we can change this. Finally, Latinx artists have been foundational in these conversations by creating works and collaborations making Latinx art and matters of race and identity central to their work as I discuss in chapter 1.

6 Myers (2002) develops his insights in relation to aboriginal Australian art and the trails for becoming recognized as "contemporary art" but his major theoretical insights about the making of value for work that is devalued and racialized on account of its identity are relevant for the case at hand.

7 For a discussion of the marketing of Latino/a identities; their co-optation by corporations, government, and institutions; and their insertion into projects of whiteness, see all of my previous works, especially *Latinos Inc.* (2001) and

Latino Spin (2008). There I also discuss the consistent challenge to insert it into more civil rights and antiracist moments. See also Morales 2018 for a discussion of Latinx as a racially progressive movement.

8 Zavala made these comments in a presentation on April 6, 2019, in the "USLAF: Latinx Art Is American Art" session at the Latino Art Now! conference hosted by the University of Houston and the Inter-University Program for Latino Research, in Houston, Texas, and will develop them further in her forthcoming book.

9 This impetus led to the rise of long-standing collections and infrastructures for collecting and exhibiting African American art from the early turn of the twentieth century, especially within historical black colleges and universities and libraries. The inclusion of African American art in mainstream museums has been more contentious and mired in racist debates. For a history of African American activism to expand museums' engagement with African American arts and visual culture, see Cooks 2011, Wilson 2012, and Cahan 2016. https://blackmuseums.org/history-2/.

10 See Fox 2013; Fusco 1995; and Goldman 1995 for a discussion of the cultural policies and corporate business practices that fueled Latin American art from the Cold War era onward. See Cullen 2009 for a discussion of New York City as an example of transnational connections among Latin American artists. And see McCaughan 2012 for exchanges between Mexican and Chicano artists from the 1960s and 1970s. Looking at the 1990s literature examining the boom of Latin American art, it is uncanny how similar tensions to those I document in this book were already apparent. I also discuss these issues in Dávila 1999.

11 For the concept of aesthetic cosmopolitanism, and the role of festivals and museums in shaping it, see Delanty, Giorgi, and Sassatelli 2011; Sassatelli 2012. A key concern is the tension between imaginary and consumption-driven imaginaries of cosmopolitanism, and how they impact on issues of participation, and the creation of cultural public spheres.

12 See McRobbie 2016 and Pham 2015 among others who have analyzed the global hierarchies involved in arts and creative industries.

13 See Manthorne 2009 for art schools as contact zones; and see Levitt 2015 among other works discussing the global conditions shaping global art worlds, including the permanence of a nationalism-cosmopolitanism continuum (where nationalism is expressed and reinforced through "universal" and international references).

14 See Reinoza 2017 for a discussion of the transnational sensibilities of immigrant Latinx artists, and Herrera and Gaztambide 2017 for an analysis of Latin American and Latino/a art that centers on creating bridges with attention to matters of movement, exchange, and circulation. In this work, I add the lens of the market, class, and race to these conversations.

15 Artist Ronny Quevedo, as quoted in Adriana Zavala's presentation on April 6, 2019, in the "USLAF: Latinx Art Is American Art" session at the Latino Art Now! conference hosted by the University of Houston and the Inter-University Program for Latino Research, in Houston, Texas.

16 Ed Morales 2018 provides the best overview of Latinx as a progressive racial identity project.

17 Some of these auctions were discontinued in 2018 as part of an impetus to insert Latin American art in global art world. See chapter 3 for a larger discussion of these dynamics.

18 See Appadurai 1988 for a discussion of the importance of regimes of value and institutions for creating value. Today Latin American art is recognized as a subject of study at major universities, which has contributed to a rise in specialized Latin American scholars. Studying the output of PhD dissertations between 2002 and 2015, Adriana Zavala (2016) points to 131 dissertations on Latin American completed, versus a mere 17 dissertations on Latinx art—which, as many scholars have noted, remains generally unrecognized in both the US and the Latin American art canons.

19 For a good example of these dynamics in Peru, see Borea 2016.

20 See Dávila 2001a; Y. Ramirez 2007. See also Cahan 2016 for a larger discussion of the historical context and larger conversations around museums and representation at the height of civil rights and the age of Black Power. See also Davalos 2001 for the development of Mexican American museums in the United States.

21 Hence, Yasmin Ramirez has argued for Nuyorican artists to be seen as an arts vanguard who introduced new aesthetics, and new social contexts and ways of producing and circulating work into New York City art worlds, including Afro-Taíno, engaging with the working class, and the creation of alternative spaces for unrecognized artists. See also, e.g., Cortez 2010; González 2013; Indych-López 2018; and the entire A Ver series edited by Chon Noriega at the Chicano Research Center, which focuses on Latinx artists who are underrepresented in art scholarship. See also the new journal *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture*, edited by Charlene Villaseñor Black and published by UC Press.

22 Here I repeat the same arguments I develop in greater detail in Dávila 2004 focusing on urban development and gentrification in El Barrio/East Harlem, and in Dávila 2012 on creative work across the Americas.

23 See Alden 2015 for discussion of Uovo, the art storage company, and its influence in transforming the role of collecting and the financialization of art markets.

24 I refer readers to my previous works, *Latinos Inc.* (2001) and *Latino Spin* (2008), where I discussed marketable Latinidad. See also C. Rodriguez 1997 (the classic study); Baez 2018.

25 Banks describes the role that the Studio Museum in Harlem played in the valorization and the creation of a market for contemporary African art. She cautions against the boosterism around the so-called boom and internationalization of African art by noting that the African art market still lags in appreciation in the contemporary auction market, and that it is African artists located in the West who tend to get more visibility in markets (Banks 2018).