

Curatorial Introduction to *Border Crossings*

La Salle University Art Museum's exhibition of *Border Crossings: Immigration in Contemporary Prints* explores the subject of border crossings, immigration and human migration. From the journey itself, to settling into a new country and culture, contemporary artists are creating arresting images that deal with many facets of human movement around the world. While some of these images are optimistic and celebratory, others are mixed with criticism of political oppression and restrictions on freedom of movement. This essay provides some background about the exhibition, presents a curatorial introduction to the themes and the artworks, and offers some concluding thoughts about border crossings, art museums, and contemporary visual culture.

Immigration is a very broad subject and is part of a larger discourse about human migration. In the international art scene today, there are many interesting artists who are exploring topics related to border crossings, immigration, and human migration. Prominent among these are Latino and Chicano artists the United States (U.S.) and Mexico, working in a variety of media to raise public awareness about cultural and political issues, some through public art and grass roots community activism. With this in mind, I decided to focus the exhibition on migration to the U.S., particularly across the U.S.-Mexico border. As I began to select prints for the exhibition, I gravitated towards works by Spanish-speaking artists which supported this focus; though my selection also included works by other artists which I felt were appropriate for the subject. I identified several important themes which are highlighted in the exhibition: 1) immigration/migration, U.S.-Mexico border crossings, and borderlands; 2) cultural convergences and the complexities of contemporary American identities; and 3) art as a tool for political solidarity and activism.

While the exhibition is thematically cohesive, the artworks on display present a variety of subjects and viewpoints, some personal, others very political. Some of the prints focus on actual border crossings. Others address cultural fusions and identities, with subject matter rooted in Latino or Chicano experience. Still others are based in public art initiatives, such as murals and posters, and

participate in social and political activism. Some of the prints make strong statements about migration being a human right, reminding us that humans have a long history of migration prior to the enforcement of modern national borders. Other prints express solidarity with autonomous communities along the U.S.-Mexico border, and with the right to self-governance in other parts of the world. Finally, some prints are associated with public art initiatives and political advocacy campaigns in support of immigrant rights. Most of the prints are accompanied by wall labels featuring Artist Statements or commentary cited from websites to provide visitors with more information.

There is also great diversity in artistic style as well as in the print media and processes represented in the exhibition. While some of the artworks are limited edition fine art prints acquired directly from the artists, many were produced as part of professional printmaking studios such as the Serie Project in Austin, Texas, and the Brandywine Workshop in Philadelphia. Still other prints were created as part of the Justseeds Artist Cooperative, and participate in grass roots community efforts to influence social and political change. Thus, the exhibition includes a range of artistic print media, with variations in the context of production, the quality of materials used, the printmaking techniques, the professional and economic impetus, and the intended audiences. This diversity in my choice of prints was intentional in an effort to be inclusive of the range of artists working in this area. My selection also underscores the importance of professional printmaking studios in facilitating public awareness of work by contemporary artists.

The exhibition begins in the entrance area of the Art Museum, where two prints present historically important symbols for individuals migrating to the U.S. The first print is by Sam Coronado, a noted Chicano artist and founder of the Serie Project and Coronado Studio in Austin, Texas, who passed away recently.¹ Coronado's screen print, *Mestiza Virgin (Mixed Virgin)*, highlights the popular veneration of the Virgin of Guadalupe, particularly among Mexicans and their descendants [cat. 1]. This screen print is based on an original 16th-century



Fig. 1. Image of the Virgin of Guadalupe displayed at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, 2012. Photo by Karolja, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

image of the Virgin, enshrined in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, which has been copied and interpreted by many artists over the centuries [fig. 1]. As the story goes, in 1531 the Virgin appeared to a Mexican peasant named Juan Diego on Tepeyac Hill in Guadalupe, asking him in his native Nahuatl language to build a church on the site. Following her instructions, he gathered Castilian roses blooming out of season, placing them in his cloak, and when he opened his cloak to show the archbishop the roses fell to the floor, miraculously leaving the image of the Virgin on the fabric.² This highly venerated iconic image exhibits a Spanish colonial influence in the style and form of the Virgin, and in the prominence of Castilian roses in the iconography; however, other aspects of the iconography have given rise to layered associations with indigenous Aztec religious symbols and the native maguey plant. Thus, the image has become an important emblem of *Mestizaje* (mixed lineage) among Mexican people, and a merging of European and Indian belief systems.³ The image has

long served as a unifying national symbol for Mexicans, and continues to be a vital religious and cultural icon. For Mexican migrants seeking to cross the U.S.-Mexico border, the Virgin of Guadalupe is a key focus of prayers and a major source of protection and guidance. She is a symbol of compassion, mercy, spiritual empowerment, and hope for a safe journey.

The second print in the entrance area highlights the hopes and dreams of immigrants traveling to America in search of a better life. In Kenneth Tisa's silkscreen print, *Liberty*, the Statue of Liberty fills the composition, symbolically looking back at the long history of U.S. immigration as well as forward into the future [cat. 2].⁴ Her flaming torch lights the ghostly outlines of people, coming from different directions, to settle in the great American land of opportunity. The artist puts a positive spin on the welcoming experiences of immigrants to the U.S. The Statue of Liberty lights the pathway for

millions of people who come to the U.S. seeking to live the American Dream.

This positive spin continues upon entering the Special Exhibitions Gallery, with the first section featuring artworks that focus on subjects related to migration, border crossings and borderlands. Favianna Rodriguez's mono prints, *Migration is a Human Right* and *Sin Pasaporte II (Without Passport II)*, offer utopian visions of a world without borders [cats. 3 and 4]. In *Migration is a Human Right*, Rodriguez depicts a Monarch butterfly, with human faces outlined in the design of the wings. Migrating each year between Mexico and North America, the Monarch butterfly has become an important symbol of freedom of movement for immigrants and for immigrant rights proponents. In *Sin Pasaporte*, Rodriguez renders a human head with abstract gestural marks, with a title suggesting the fearlessness of world travelers, not constrained by national borders. The theme of migration as a human right emerges strongly, and indeed Rodriguez has been involved in various activist campaigns against migration restrictions.⁵

Another artist whose work addresses borders, border crossings, and border controls is Michelle Angela Ortiz, a Philadelphia-based muralist who contributed a digital print depicting the central scene of her public art installation, *Eres Mi Todo (You Are My Everything)* [cat. 5]. As part of her *Familias Separadas* series, this *Eres Mi Todo* illustrates the story of an immigrant woman who was separated from her husband and remained with her children in Philadelphia. The artist's aim was to raise public awareness about deportation practices, and the human implications of immigration policies.⁶ Here the tender portrait of a mother with a daughter, with the words "Eres Mi Todo" scrawled on a note from her husband, expresses the family's sadness and despair, their enduring love despite the distances, and their hope of someday reuniting in the future.

Nearby, Colorado-based artist Tony Ortega's screen print, *La Marcha de los Desvalidos (The March of the Powerless)*, offers a more conceptual view of borders [cat. 6]. For Ortega, these borders are located everywhere, yet dissolve as cultures collide and merge. He states that his work "interweaves, juxtaposes and superimposes images from American and Mexican popular cultures that include icons, symbols, art history and the contemporary world to foster opportunities for the bending of meaning."⁷

With this screen print, he re-envisioned Mount Rushmore as a culturally-hybrid monument, replacing the faces of U.S. presidents with the faces of Latino heroes. He fills the lower half of the composition with faceless crowds of peaceful protestors, waving American flags, in reference to the May 1, 2006, national protest, "A Day Without Immigrants."⁸ Ortega has created similar prints transforming other U.S. monuments, such as the Statue of Liberty and the Lincoln Memorial, affirming his view of the shifting nature of U.S. cultural demographics.

Similarly, Byron Brauchli's screen print, *La Migra (Border Patrol)*, reminds us of the persistent waves of migrants which cross the U.S.-Mexico border each year, and the fact that millions of undocumented immigrants are living and working in America today [cat. 7]. This screen print combines photographs that Brauchli made for *Cultural Refractions: Border Life en la tierra de nadie* ("In No Man's Land"), a multi-year project and 1998 exhibition focusing on the U.S.-Mexico border which wove together the rural and the modern in images of people and places in the borderlands.⁹ The screen print is based on an earlier *chine-collé* print, and combines several images in a grainy photomontage which highlights the role of the railroad, and the importance of religion and local history, in border communities.

Kansas-based artist Humberto Saenz's two lithographs in the exhibition highlight the perils of illegal crossings of the U.S.-Mexico border. In *La Arca (The Ark)*, Saenz depicts Mexican people in the back of a truck, which like Noah's Ark would grant them safe passage to a new home [cat. 8]. Instead, they are locked inside and imperiled by the dangers of human trafficking and U.S. border patrols. One of the individuals holds his head in despair. In *Persecucion de la Felicidad (Pursuit of Happiness)*, Saenz depicts immigrants desperately fleeing across a run-down chain link fence—men, women and children trampling each other in trying to escape to the other side [cat. 9]. His twisted interpretation of the Spanish title acknowledges the fragile nature of the journey, and how easily the immigrants' hopes can be dashed. In both prints, Saenz's rendition of faceless individuals, wearing costumes resembling piñatas, suggests the objectification of Mexican minorities as well as the cultural losses that come with immigration.¹⁰

Some contemporary artists have advocated for the rights of indigenous communities, particularly those living



Fig. 2, Map of North America with Political Divisions. Based on Map by TownDown, Licensed under GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2.

in the U.S.-Mexico border lands. Originally from the border town of El Centro, California, Texas-based artist Ernesto Yerena Montejano's mixed media print, *Our True History*, depicts a Native American woman holding a textbook by the same title, her left fist raised in a defiant symbol of resistance to colonizing forces [cat. 10].¹¹ The image is juxtaposed with various collaged components, including a U.S. map labeled with Native American territories, a Mayan calendar, and handwritten words such as "resistance," "survival" and "honor the ancestors." The artist originally created this image on canvas, then

produced several limited edition versions, including an edition of six large mixed media Hand Pulled Multiple (H.P.M.) prints, as seen here. He also produced a modestly-priced edition of 100 smaller silkscreen prints geared towards more popular audiences. His aim with these artworks is to provoke public dialogue about borders, colonization, and different types of knowledge. In producing multiple versions of this image, Yerena aims to reach different audiences, from museums and private collectors, to low-income individuals and community groups sympathetic with the issues.

Sandra Fernandez's screen print, *CAUTION: Dreamers in/on Sight*, also focuses on the borderlands and takes as its subject the U.S. Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, a legislative bill intended to provide conditional permanent residency to immigrant students who entered the U.S. as minors, graduated from U.S. high schools, and enrolled in institutions of higher education [cat. 11]. Fernandez's work with University of Texas-Austin Dreamers provides a personal perspective for this image, in which she overlays the faces of bright young college students, fighting to become an integral part of American society, with a map from a Department of the Interior Geological Survey of "El Paso, Port of Entry, Texas-Chihuahua, 1982."¹² She includes two CAUTION signs which face inward and seem to dialogue with each other: one placed over the Rio Grande river on the map, depicting a family fleeing across the border into the U.S.; and the other in the upper right, portraying three students wearing graduation gowns, inferring that for Dreamers the pathway to success is fraught with many dangers. The presence of cursive Spanish text around the border implies that the map is superimposed without regard for the underlying cultural continuity. The artist's inclusion of an ornamental red bird suspended by a thread in the upper left hand corner reminds viewers of how birds can fly freely and how borders can artificially constrain human movement.

The next section of the exhibition explores the theme of cultural resilience, adaptation, and bi-cultural experience. Many artists today are interested in creating artworks which explore their identities, both autobiographically and in reference to larger transnational frames of reference, such as religion, history, and culture.¹³ The variety in the prints in the exhibition illustrates the diversity and complexity of identities among Spanish-speaking people in the U.S. While some artists identify with the broad designations of Latino and/or Hispanic, others focus on their Mexican heritage and express pride in identifying as Chicano. Within American Spanish-speaking communities, there is also great diversity in identification along ethnic and national lines, with pockets of migrant communities from the Dominican Republic, Central and South American countries, the U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and elsewhere. Additionally, there are variations in ethnic and racial identifications (i.e., Mexico-Tijano, Afro-Latino, etc.), as well as linguistic differences, adding layers of complexity in the articulation of contemporary identities among Spanish-speaking populations.¹⁴

The importance of religious and spiritual traditions among Latino and Chicano artists is highlighted by several prints in the exhibition. California-based artist George Yepes' screen print, *Sabbatier Dolorosa (Sorrowful Mother)* draws upon Spanish Colonial and Baroque visual traditions to represent the Immaculate Heart of Mary, pierced by seven swords in evocation of the Seven Sorrows [cat. 12]. This image of the sorrowful mother highlights the strength and passion of Catholic devotional expression in Latino communities. Yepes' screen print displays an exuberance of surface detail, with the pattern in the Virgin's hair suggestive of a floral lace veil. Also, the spikiness of her haloed crown is reminiscent of the crown of thorns worn by Christ. Yepes describes this as an "image of 'La Virgen Dolorosa' in the photo solarization style of Man Ray."¹⁵ The effect of solarization adds to the otherworldly feel and has a flattening effect, which the artist counters by adding texture to the Virgin's hair, for example, and other features.

Nearby is another print which reflects the enduring importance of indigenous Mexican spiritual traditions. Texas-based Chicana artist Santa Barraza's hand-colored lithograph, *Virgen Indigene (Indigenous Virgin)*, suggests resonances of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the draped and silhouetted figure of Mary, her head framed within a blue-green cloak trimmed in gold [cat. 13]. But while the Virgin of Guadalupe is traditionally represented with her hands clasped in prayer, turning right and looking down at a supplicant, Barraza portrays her *Virgen Indigene* in a frontal half-portrait facing outward to the viewer, without the traditional mandorla of light, and with an exposed human heart. Here the white dove of the Holy Spirit does not descend on Mary's head, as with the Virgin of Guadalupe, but rather emerges from the *Virgen Indigene's* immaculate though very human heart, reinforcing Mary's humanity and the Trinitarian power of her intercession in prayers. In keeping with Barraza's identification with her cultural heritage as *mestiza* ("mixed," *Mexico-Tijana*), many of her works have also explored the use of pre-Columbian references, including Mayan glyphs and Aztec Codices, and have focused on the sacred aspects of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, described in the native Nahuatl language as *Nepantla* ("the space in between").¹⁶ In this unique hand-colored lithograph, Barraza includes a silver amulet referred to as a *milagro* ("miracle"), representing the figure of a praying man, and symbolizing the importance of prayer and miracles for migrants, many of whom commission ex-voto paintings after their successful border crossing. She also painted the Virgin's

eyes with the reflections of three worshippers, referencing the original three witnesses to the miraculous appearance of the Virgin's image on Juan Diego's cloak. Barraza's *Virgen Indigene* is *mestiza*, like Coronado's *Mestiza Virgin*; though Barraza's image offers a more human and indigenous interpretation of this religious icon.

Other artworks in the exhibition highlight the resilience of Latino cultural traditions in the U.S., as well as creative cultural adaptations, reflecting both contemporary visions and changing societies. California-based Queer Chicana artist Alma Lopez's screen print, *El Vals de las Mariposas (The Waltz of the Butterflies)*, takes as its subject the *quinceañeras*, a party celebrating the 15th birthday of a young woman as a rite of passage in the community [cat. 14].¹⁷ The artist's inclusion of Viceroy butterflies, which mimic the wing patterns of Monarch butterflies, makes reference to the free migration of individuals across borders, as well as the masquerade qualities of Lopez's artistic interpretation. Her representation of the female dancer as a mermaid, or Siren, against the image of the moon, derives from a popular Mexican lottery game. With the dancing partner, Lopez creatively re-figures the Virgin of Guadalupe in male disguise, wearing a jacket decorated with stars, reinforcing the sense of ambiguity in the genders and identities of the performers.

Various prints underscore the importance of immigrant families, their changing cultures, and their communities, particularly in the American Southwest. Texas-based artist Paul Valadez's screen print, *Abuela (Grandmother)*, celebrates the imagery and cultural residues of old signage, and the aesthetics of artworks with an aged look, resembling old painted signs on wood or tin [cat. 15]. Here, he represents the face of a youthful woman, with the Spanish word *Abuela* written in the lower section, identifying the subject. Valadez first created this image as an acrylic on canvas painting for his *Mujeres* ("Women") series, prior to publishing the work with the Serie Project. He says that the artwork was inspired by photographs of his grandmother as a young woman, and by his memories of a female student who became a grandmother in her 30s. The artwork is intended to spark conversations about changing perceptions of age and maturity in contemporary society.¹⁸

Similarly, Philadelphia-based artist Marta Sanchez's lithograph (?), *R Cigarette R Barrill*, draws upon the artist's childhood memories of growing up near the train

yards in San Antonio, Texas [cat. 16]. Here, she combines references to the railroads, the *Carpas* traveling tent circuses, and traditional Mexican religious traditions such as retablos and ex-voto paintings. For Sanchez, the train yard is a familiar landscape that serves as an important symbol of Mexican migration; and the circus recalls stories of her great-grandfather who was a lion tamer in the Mexican *Carpas* in the early 20th century.¹⁹ This artwork was a collaboration between Sanchez and Norma E. Cantú, who created a poem based on the childhood song "RR con RR cigarro." The cursive text running along the border of the image that tells us that "trains follow tracks leading to ends and beginnings as we come and go from here to here and from there to here we know life as a railroad track leading to ends and beginnings." Reminiscent of prayers of gratitude written on ex-voto panels, these words express the poet's thoughts and her thankfulness for the pathways her life has taken as well as for her future directions. Sanchez' image of a trapeze artist, melodically flowing from one rope to another, parallels Cantú's sentiments.

Alongside these autobiographical expressions related to Latino and Chicano experience is a screen print entitled *Siren's Song* by Philadelphia-based artist Anabelle Rodriguez, which celebrates the strength and vitality of Puerto Rico and its diaspora communities [cat. 17]. Like the island commonwealth, the mermaid is poised at the ocean's surface, gesturing toward the white dove of the Holy Spirit and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In the background, the lone star of the Puerto Rican flag visually radiates across sky and sea. The artist's inclusion of Mayan symbols reminds viewers of the contributions of indigenous populations in shaping contemporary Puerto Rican identities. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, Rodriguez has resided in the Philadelphia area since 1999 and has been involved with the *Taller Puertorriqueño*, an important Puerto Rican cultural arts center community in Philadelphia which celebrates the diversity of Spanish-speaking populations in the region.²⁰

Some of the artists in the exhibition express solidarity with the inhabitants of U.S.-Mexico border communities who are suffering from political and social oppression, and from the ongoing threat of violence. California-based Chicano artist Oscar Magallanes's screen print, *Flores Para Juárez (Flowers for Juárez)*, pays homage to the thousands of women killed in the Mexican border city of Juárez, across the Rio Grande south of El Paso, Texas [cat. 18]. Magallanes depicts a beautiful woman holding

an armful of red roses, her chest marked by a burning heart and thorns. He renders her tattooed face as half skeletal, evoking images from the Mexican celebration of Día de los Muertos (“Day of the Dead”), and combining references to Los Angeles tattoo culture and Mexican cultural traditions.²¹ The woman’s head is framed by a halo-like form, which includes words from a 16th-century Aztec song lamenting the conquest of Mexico: “Have you grown weary of your servants? Are you angry with your servants, O Giver of Life?”²² Behind the woman emerge the outlines of Aztec eagle warriors, reinforcing references to Aztec and Mexican colonial history as well as criticism of systems of political and social oppression.

Other artists have created works that explore the drive for political autonomy and independence among U.S.-Mexico border communities, and sometimes include activist language as a graphic element within the image. The linoleum print entitled *Rebeldia*, by Mexico City artist Iseo Noyola Isgleas, highlights the plight of border communities, and their industrial efforts to gain autonomy [cat. image omitted]. Along the top is the text “*Autonomía Resistencia Organización*” (“Autonomy Resistance Organization”), with the famous Zapatista logo running along the bottom, “*la autonomia es la vida, la sumision es la muerte*” (“Autonomy is life, submission is death”). The image features a woman carrying a child in her wrap, her lower face covered by a scarf in the manner favored by Zapatista rebels. In the lower section, five individuals plant seeds in the earth, and a child stands facing outward, sowing seeds that appear to scatter throughout the composition. Above the child’s head, a group of masked individuals read books, suggesting that reading and learning are subversive activities in this border town. Around the entire scene is a curvilinear framing design, stylistically evocative of Art Nouveau, and seemingly generated by the planted seeds. Flowers and a bird busts forth, reminding us of the freedom of nature and all of its inhabitants.

Some artists create artworks in support of immigrant and indigenous rights causes and organizations. Jesus Barraza’s six-color screen print, *Quince Años de la Lucha Zapatista* (*Fifteen Years of Zapatista Struggle*), was created to commemorate the 1994 uprising of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (E.Z.L.N.), which took up arms against the Mexican government in the state of Chiapas [cat. 19]. The print depicts a masked female Zapatista standing in the foreground, with Zapatistas wearing Mexican wide-brimmed hats marching in the

background. Barraza’s combination of images from two different photographs creates a provocative dialogue between foreground and background, between there and here, and between then and 2008, the year that the anniversary print was produced. Based in California, Barraza has worked for many years in partnership with Melanie Cervantes in a graphic collaboration, *Dignidad Rebelde*, which produces prints and posters in support of immigration rights, as well as housing and education initiatives.²³

Another artist engaged in activist causes and organizations is Mazatl, whose image for the linoleum block print *Alto a la Criminalizacion de Migrantes* (*Stop the Criminalization of Migrants*) also served a poster for an “Immigrant know your rights” campaign in 2011 [cat. 20]. The image represents the haunting face of a youthful person, peering through the bars of a chain link fence, with the large graphic lettering of the title appearing above and below. The artist included additional text in the lower part of the composition, which reads “*Todas y todos tenemos derechos con o sin papeles*” (“We all have rights with or without papers”). The project was created in response to the passage of an Arizona Senate Bill, SB 1070, in 2011, and was part of a larger artistic campaign to remind immigrants of their right to equal protection and due process under U.S. law. Proceeds from the posters were intended to support organizations addressing immigrant rights issues.²⁴ Mazatl has produced several versions of this image in limited editions prints. Similarly, Mazatl created a color lithograph, *Farmworker Justice*, in 2013 in collaboration with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a worker-based human rights organization in Florida [cat. 21]. This print depicts an immigrant farmworker in the tomato fields of Florida, her right arm holding a book entitled *Conoce tus Derechos* (“*Know Your Rights*”), her right arm carrying the symbolic sun of a new day that comes with organizing. Based in Mexico City, Mazatl uses art as a tool for social justice, to raise awareness of contemporary issues surrounding immigration and human rights, as well as climate change.

The final artwork in the exhibition illustrates the popular use of printed images as tools for social reform. An open edition lithograph by Ernesto Yerena Montejano and Shepard Fairey, *Immigration Reform Now!*, represents the smiling face of a child, holding a bunch of roses and clenching a fist in defiance, with the words “We are Human” and “Stop the Raids” written boldly on the child’s hat and shirt [cat. 22]. The design of the print was

based on photos taken during a 2006 May Day protest as part of “A Day Without Immigrants,” with proceeds from the sales supporting community-based immigration reform organizations.²⁵ The two artists remind us the America is a land of immigrants, founded on principles of human rights; and they advocate for U.S. immigration policy reforms which acknowledge those rights.

La Salle University Art Museum’s exhibition of *Border Crossings: Immigration in Contemporary Prints* offers visitors the opportunity to learn about artists in the U.S. and Mexico who are exploring subjects related to border crossings, immigration, and migration. Displayed together in the Special Exhibition Gallery, the artworks present many different personal and political perspectives. The images tell stories of optimism and hope, of despair and tragedy, of endurance and strong religious faith. They impart glimpses into the resilience of the human spirit, the challenges of maintaining cultural traditions while integrating into American society, and the creative potential of blended, hybrid and shifting identities. Through these images, contemporary artists share their dreams and aspirations, their personal experiences and identities, and their social and political concerns. As visitors, we are enriched by their artistic visions and commentary, and we expand our knowledge further through critical conversations with teachers, friends and family.

Through this exhibition, I was able to expand the Art Museum’s collection of works by contemporary artists and particularly by Spanish-speaking artists. Additionally, with the focus on human migration, I was able to acquire contemporary artworks on the theme of Journeys—a very significant theme which runs across many historical periods and disciplines, including artistic and literary expression. This theme is prevalent in the history of Western cultural production, encompassing ideas about physical, metaphysical, metaphorical and spiritual transitions from one place to another. The Art Museum’s collection is replete with artworks that address this theme—from biblical voyages of the Old and New Testaments, such as the Jewish Exodus and the Christian

Nativity story, to more symbolic representations of pilgrimages and spiritual journeys towards enlightenment. These artworks support educational teachings in the Catholic and Lasallian tradition, which acknowledge the importance of the individual journey, embodied in a spiritual path towards greater communion with God. Thus, in acquiring prints for the exhibition, I was able to enlarge the holdings related to secular journeys, some with references to religious beliefs and symbolism.

Through focusing on contemporary expressions by diverse artists in range of different print media, the selection of artworks included in the exhibition (and added to the collection) provides a democratic framework for educating La Salle University students, as well as wider public audiences. As a teaching museum, this framework is important for understanding the range of artistic production, and how artists respond to their upbringings, their cultures, their environments, their spirituality, and their interests. This framework is also important for understanding these works within the context of material and visual culture studies—as these prints are tangible works on paper produced for various audiences and purposes; as well as images reproduced and disseminated as multiples or as public art with potentially broad impacts. Many of the images can easily be found online, emphasizing the global reach of digital surrogates, and highlighting the imperative of teaching cultural and visual literacy to all of our audiences, including La Salle students, preK-12 school children, adults and special needs groups. Considering the pervasiveness of digital technologies, the Art Museum’s exhibition advances its Lasallian mission of experiential education by inviting our audiences to view these artworks first hand, and to join in interdisciplinary community conversations about human journeys, cultural diversity and cultural adaption within an increasingly interconnected global world.

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- 1 "Serie Project," <http://serieproject.org/>; "Coronado Studio," <http://coronadostudio.com/studio/meet-sam>.
- 2 The image proclaims to be a self-made icon in the long-standing Christian tradition of an *Acheiropoietia* (Greek for "made without hand").
- 3 The literature on the Virgin of Guadalupe is vast. See, for example, J.F. Peterson, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: Symbol of Conquest or Liberation," *Art Journal* 51, no. 4 (1992): 39-47; Jeannette Rodriguez, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Faith and Empowerment among Mexican-American Women* (University of Texas Press, 1994); and Poole Stafford, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Origins and Sources of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995).
- 4 "Ken Tisa," <http://ktisa.net/GalleryMain.asp?GalleryID=59473&AKey=5M335QYD>.
- 5 "Favianna Rodriguez," accessed January 3, 2016, <http://favianna.flying-cart.com/index.php?p=about>.
- 6 "The Art of Michelle Angela," <http://www.michelleangela.com/>. For a more in-depth discussion of this artwork, see Mey-Yen Moriuchi's essay which appears later in this book. See also "Familias Separadas: Stories from Philadelphians," City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, Open Source Project, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://opensource.muralarts.org/updates/2015/9/15/familias-separadas-stories-from-philadelphians>.
- 7 "Tony Ortega Visual Artist," accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.tonyortega.net/prints.html>.
- 8 This nationwide day of protest was widely covered in the news. For examples, see Maria Newman, "Immigrants Stage Protests Across U.S.," *New York Times*, May 1, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/us/01cnd-immig.html?pagewanted=all>; Anna Gorman, Marjorie Miller and Mitchell Landsberg, "Marchers fill L.A.'s streets," *Los Angeles Times*, May 2, 2016, <http://www.latimes.com/news/la-me-march2may02-story.html>; and Anita Hamilton, "A Day Without Immigrants: Making a Statement," *Time*, May 1, 2006, <http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1189899,00.html>.
- 9 "Byron Brauchli," <http://www.byronbrauchli.com/en/>. See also Rebecca S. Cohen, "Framing the Border Photography of the Region Between Mexico and the U.S.," *The Austin Chronicle*, May 1, 1998, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.austinchronicle.com/arts/1998-05-01/523370/>.
- 10 "Humberto Saenz," accessed January 3, 2016, <http://humbertosaez.com/artist-statement.html>.
- 11 "Hecho Con Ganas," <http://www.hechoconganas.com/>.
- 12 "Sandra C. Fernandez," <http://sandrafernandez.info/home.html>.
- 13 See Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, *Religion Across Borders: Transnational Migration Networks* (Walnut Creek: Altamira, 2002); and C. Alejandra Elenes, *Transforming Borders: Chicana/o Popular Culture and Pedagogy* (Latham: Lexington Books, 1987), Reprint 2011. See also the seminal work by Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987).
- 14 Many scholars have written about the complexities of Latino and Chicano identity. See, for example, Daniel D. Arreola, ed., *Hispanic Spaces, Latino Places: Community and Cultural Diversity in Contemporary America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004); and Claudia Milan, *Latining Americas: Brown-Black Passages and the Coloring of Latino/a Studies* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2013).
- 15 "George Yepes," accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.georgeyepes.com/shop/serigraphs-etchings-prints/>.
- 16 See Santa C. Barraza, *Santa Barraza, Artist of the Borderlands*, ed. Maria Herrera-Sobek (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 2000); and Cary Cordova, "Oral History Interview with Santa Barraza," November 21-22, 2003, Archives of American Art, accessed January 3, 2016, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-santa-barraza-13254>.
- 17 "Alma Lopez," <http://almalopez.net/>.
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- 23 Dignidad Rebelde, http://dignidadrebelde.com/section/view/about_us.
- 24 "Con papeles o sin papeles todos tenemos derechos: posters by Escuela de Cultura Popular, Martires del '68," Escuela de Cultura Popular, Martires del '68 (Mexico City, 2011). The full list of the 15 posters published is available through Stanford University Libraries, accessed January 3, 2016, <https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/9515278>.
- 25 "Obey Giant," "Immigration Reform Now!," <https://obeygiant.com/immigration-reform-now/>.