



Show Time

The 50 Most Influential Exhibitions
of Contemporary Art

Jens Hoffmann

About the Author

Jens Hoffmann is an exhibition maker and writer based in New York. He is Deputy Director and Head of Exhibitions and Public Programs at The Jewish Museum, New York. He has curated and co-curated a number of large-scale exhibitions, including the 2nd San Juan Triennial (2009), the 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011), and the 9th Shanghai Biennial (2012).

Show Time is dedicated to the pioneering work of **Harald Szeemann**

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Editorial assistance and picture research by
Joanna Szupinska-Myers and Dane Jensen

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On the cover: Aomori Museum of Art, Aomori, Japan, view of the Aleko Hall. Architect Jun Aoki & Associates. Photo View Pictures Ltd/Superstock
pp.2-3: Installation view, *An Unruly History of the Readymade*, Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico, 2008-9
p.4: Ayşe Erkmen, *Sculptures on Air*, 1997, installation for Sculpture Projects Münster 97, Münster, Germany, 1997

**Others
Everywhere**

**The 1993
Whitney Biennial**

**In a
Different Light**

**31st Panorama
of Brazilian Art:
Mamõyguara
Opá Mamõ Pupé**

**11th
International
Istanbul Biennial:
What Keeps
Mankind Alive?**

**Phantom
Sightings:
Art After
the Chicano
Movement**



Los Jaichackers (Julio Morales and Eamon Ore-Girón), *Migrant Dubs*, 2008, installation view from *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, USA, 2008

Others Everywhere

The United States in the 1990s was a hotbed of political debate, and many of the contested issues related to “identity politics,” a catch-all term for matters that involve self-identified social groups, including those categorized by race, gender, class, national identity, and sexual orientation. The art world had become particularly embroiled in these issues in 1989 during controversies over National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) funding cuts stemming from a Robert Mapplethorpe exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; the show had been funded in part by the NEA and included sexual imagery considered inappropriate by conservative politicians. The debates about the exhibition led directly to widespread discussions regarding the role of the museum as a site for displaying contemporary culture, and the place of the exhibition in investigating specific concerns and questions.

The 1993 Whitney Biennial was an early attempt to encapsulate issues related to identity politics; its curators selected works that dealt with controversial issues related to race, gender, and sexual orientation by a large number of artists who identified themselves with those categories. Other curators developed exhibitions that looked at identity as a core organizing principle. In 1995, the curator Lawrence Rinder and the artist Nayland Blake collaborated on *In a Different Light*, an exhibition that displayed a broad cross-section of queer artists and queer cultural influences from the 20th century. The 2008 exhibition *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement* was a large-scale traveling survey of an underrepresented group of Mexican–American artists. Curators internationally have used the exhibition format to problematize ideas of national identity—for instance the 31st *Panorama of Brazilian Art: Mamôyguara Opá Mamô Pupé* (“Foreigners Everywhere”), organized by the Brazilian curator Adriano Pedrosa—or to reconsider quashed political movements, as in *What, How and for Whom’s 11th International Istanbul Biennial: What Keeps Mankind Alive?*

Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement

April 6 – September 1, 2008
Los Angeles County Museum of Art,
California, USA, and touring



Installation view with Arturo Romo, *Rended House Drops Facade*, 2008 (left) and Victor Estrada, *Soy Natural*, 1992 (right)

Exhibition Title

Phantom Sightings:
Art after the Chicano Movement

Organizers

Los Angeles County Museum
of Art in conjunction with the
Chicano Studies Research
Center, UCLA

Curators

Howard N. Fox
Rita Gonzalez
Chon A. Noriega

Dates

April 6 –
September 1, 2008

Location

Los Angeles County Museum
of Art, California, USA

Tour Locations and Dates

Tamayo Museum of
Contemporary Art, Mexico
City, Mexico, October 16, 2008
– January 11, 2009

Museo Alameda, San Antonio,
Texas, USA, March 12 – June
14, 2009

Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona,
USA, July 25 – October 4,
2009

Museo de Arte de Zapopan,
Guadajajara, Jalisco, Mexico,
November 6, 2009 – January
31, 2010

El Museo del Barrio and The
Americas Society, New York,
USA, March 21 – June 6, 2010

Publication

Rita Gonzalez, Howard N. Fox,
and Chon A. Noriega, *Phantom*

*Sightings: Art after the Chicano
Movement*, University of
California Press, Berkeley,
California, 2008

Artists

Scoli Acosta
Asco
Margarita Cabrera
Juan Capistran
Carolyn Castaño
Alejandro Diaz
Adrian Esparza
Victor Estrada
Carlee Fernandez
Christina Fernandez
Harry Gamboa, Jr.
Gary Garay
Ken Gonzalez-Day
Gronk (Glugio Gronk Nicandro)
Danny Jauregui
Nicóla Lopez

Los Jaichackers (Julio César
Morales & Eamon Ore-Giron)

Sandra de la Loza
Jim Mendiola
Delilah Montoya
Ruben Ochoa
Cruz Ortiz
Rubén Ortiz-Torres
Marco Rios
Arturo Romo
Shizu Salamando
Eduardo Sarabia
Patssi Valdez
Jason Villegas
Mario Ybarra, Jr.

Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement was an international traveling exhibition curated by Rita Gonzalez, Howard N. Fox, and Chon A. Noriega in 2008, featuring more than 100 works in a variety of media by 30 different artists. A remark by the artist Harry Gamboa, Jr. that Chicano culture has been a kind of phantom presence in history, largely ignored and unrecognized by the mainstream, inspired the title. The Chicano movement and its accompanying art began to form in the 1960s and 1970s with Puerto Rican activism in New York. The movement emphasized political empowerment and ethnic pride over issues such as civil rights or immigration.

Phantom Sightings was unique in format compared to past shows looking at art originating from Mexican-American culture. Usually such art is treated as an identity or style, whereas Phantom Sightings focused attention on the conceptual strategies that the artists use to bring awareness to the public. It also focused on emerging artists from around the United States, many of whom do not consider themselves as working under a "Chicano art" label. The show included experimental works that incorporated performance, video, photography, and film, often capturing guerilla art interventions in public life such as culture jamming. For instance, Alejandro Diaz made an installation based on a public performance in which he had dressed in a white suit to look like a modern-day

dandy and stood in front of Tiffany & Co. selling cardboard signs to exiting consumers with slogans such as "Mexican Wallpaper" or "Looking for Upper East Side lady with nice clean apt. (must have cable)." The exhibition became a much-needed introduction to the art production of a young generation of Mexican-American artists and their experiences in the United States.

Phantom Sightings adjusts
its thematic focus on artists
whose practices evidence an
awareness of street aesthetics
as a transnational landscapes
of signs and forms of address.

Rita Gonzalez, "Phantom Sites: The Official, The Unofficial, and the Orifificial," in Rita Gonzalez, Howard N. Fox, and Chon A. Noriega, *Phantom Sightings: Art After the Chicano Movement*, University of California Press, Berkeley, California 2008.

Following pages: Installation view



