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How Pacific Standard Time celebrates our unique “LA/LA” land



By Michael Juliano

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Photograph: Courtesy Roberto and Fernando Luna

Choose a single metropolis as the capital city of the Americas, and it would have to be Los Angeles. It's a bold claim, sure, but a group of art exhibitions opening in September—covering thousands of years of Latin American culture, from pre-Columbian gold work to postwar architecture—make a compelling case.

“Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA (<http://www.pacificstandardtime.org/>)” assembles 70 Southern California cultural institutions, each of which presents coinciding exhibitions that explore the intersection between Los Angeles and Latin American and Latino art.

While the first PST, a 2011 multi-museum display of 20th-century art in L.A. organized by the Getty Foundation, was a coming-out party of sorts for the Los Angeles art world, “LA/LA” takes a more international approach.

“[PST] established the Getty (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/museums/getty-center>) as an institution that supports a program much bigger than itself,” says Timothy Potts, director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, which itself presents five exhibitions. “[With ‘LA/LA’] we’re letting each institution focus on the aspects of the chosen theme that resonate with their collection or their community.”



Photograph: Courtesy the Ministry of Culture, Peru/Juan Pablo Murrugarra Villanueva

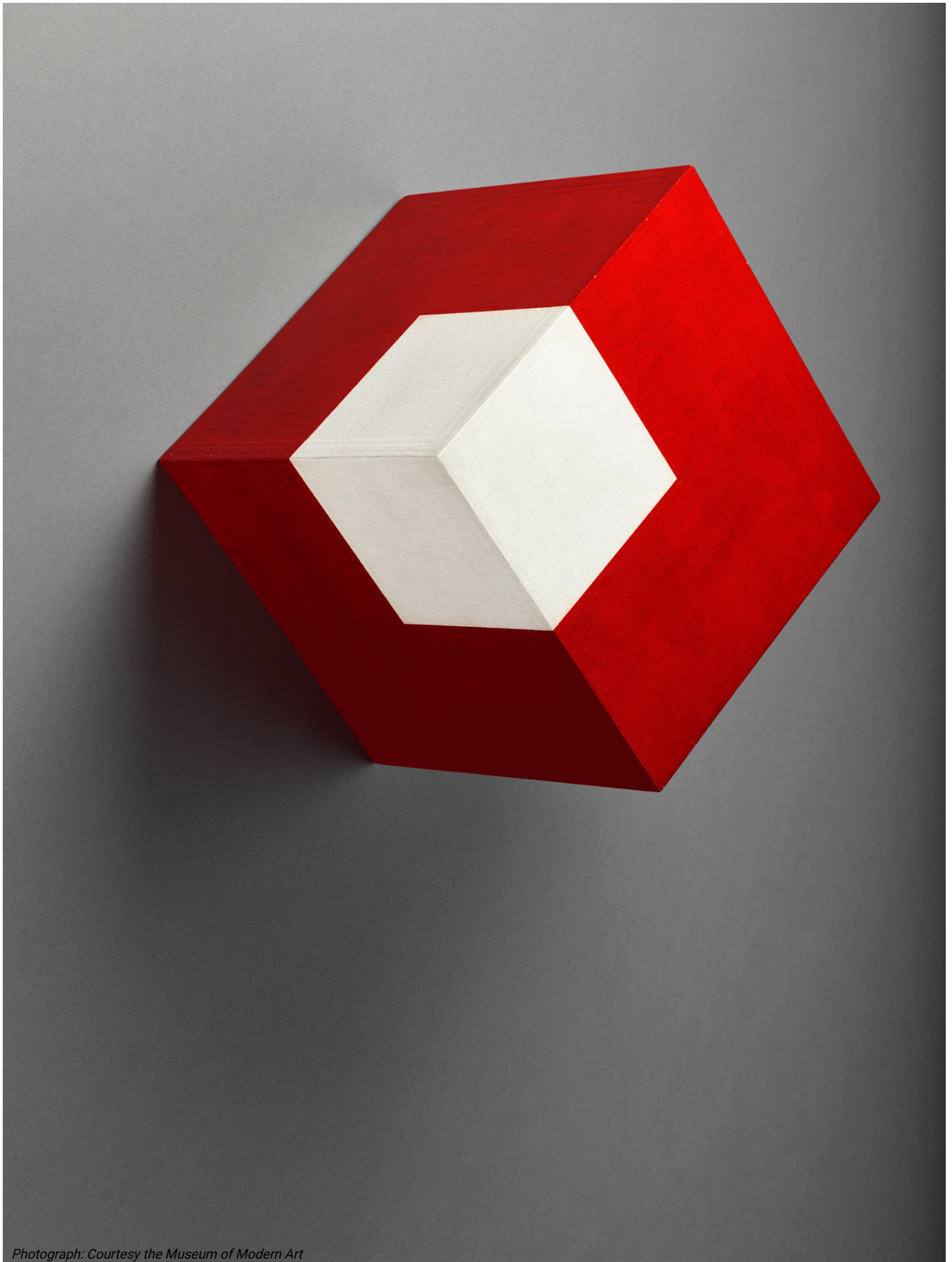
For Chon Noriega, director of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, that means leveraging L.A.'s curatorial expertise in Latin American art to challenge the traditional idea of borders. "We cannot look at Latin America as if it were 'over there' when our histories continue to overlap," he says.

Noriega cocurated four exhibitions at LACMA (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/museums/los-angeles-county-museum-of-art-lacma>), the Autry (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/museums/the-autry-museum-in-griffith-park>) and the Fowler (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/museums/fowler-museum>); he was also part of a panel that developed "LA/LA"'s theme. Four years and \$16 million in Getty Foundation grants later, that's manifested itself in more than 80 exhibitions.

No two are alike in content or approach. Elena Shtromberg, an associate professor at University of Utah, worked with the Getty Research Institute to showcase Latin American video art that pairs room-filling installations with a public library at West Hollywood (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/west-hollywood>) alternative space LAXart (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/art/laxart>).

"We thought about how to present this to audiences that may not care about Latin America or video art," she says. "We have problems that we can all relate to."

That gap-bridging element, in terms of both geography and ideology, is precisely what makes PST such a unique museum initiative. "No one [institution] can be the final word," says Noriega. "But collectively, we can do something that has never been done before."




Photograph: Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art

"Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA" runs at various museums from September through January. To mark the series kickoff, 52 museums are opening for free on September 17 (<https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/blog/you-can-visit-more-than-50-la-museums-for-free-on-one-day-this-september-082317>).

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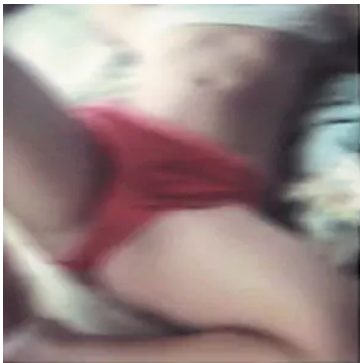
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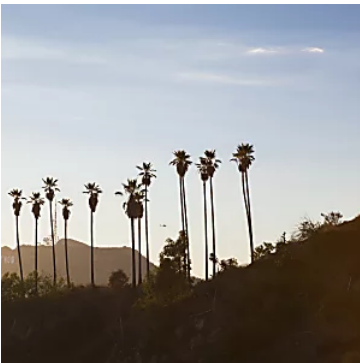
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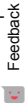
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