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Creating Sustainable Foundations for Rhizomes of Mexican American Art Since 1848

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Introduction

With the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848), some 80,000 residents living in the former Mexican territories became United States citizens. Over the subsequent 173 years, Mexican American artists created a rich array of artistic forms that include murals, wooden sculptures, cut-paper art, installations and new media. Given the geopolitical context within which the artists work, Mexican American art aligns with categories, genres, styles, and practices outlined by canonic American art history. Nevertheless, this affinity is not without paradox. While uncompromisingly voicing American identity, Mexican American art and artists simultaneously continue to lay claim to influences from Spain, Mexico, and the indigenous populations of North America. Additionally, Mexican American art encompasses the pre-modern, modern, and postmodern eras and engages in a visual and ideological play of cultures. For instance, the *santeros* (sculptors and painters of religious art) of New Mexico employ the style and techniques of the Spanish colonial period in their renderings of saints while appropriating imagery relevant to the present. Meanwhile, conceptual artists forgo the universal to advocate political declarations, while installations, such *as ofrendas* (offerings), are at once pervaded with contemporary issues visually impacted by 500 years of sacred representation and tradition. In this simultaneous recognition of past and present, Mexican American artists both

Luis Tapia, *Northern New Mexico Woody* (Peñasco Truck), 2002. Carved & painted wood, 11 x 30 x 12 in. Collection of Jack and Rebecca Parsons. Photo © Dan Morse.

critique and expand traditional definitions of American art and, by extension, what it means to be "American." It is unfortunate that this innovative use of combined traditions has frequently been met with misunderstanding that, in turn, has led to invisibility.

This report describes the goals and lessons learned during the foundational efforts to create, *Rhizomes of Mexican American Art Since 1848,* a digital tool in development that will enhance discovery of Mexican American art and related documentation at libraries, archives, and

museums nationwide.[1] The digital tool takes its name from continuously-growing stems that produce complex, connected lateral structures. This metaphor for rhizomatic roots also references the reciprocal, redistributive, and equitable methods employed to create a cross-institutional network that shares digital files and historical documentation about an underrepresented community. Furthermore, *Rhizomes* operates as a post-custodial archive that virtually unifies content and directs users back to stakeholder institutions. By receiving visitor traffic through the portal, *Rhizomes* credits the small-sized, community-based institutions which steward the nation's largest collections of Mexican American art. This post-custodial design rejects colonial models of knowledge extraction and appropriation by operating an inclusive and democratic method for digital preservation and dissemination.

In the first iteration, we will harvest information from four open-source compilers—the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), Smithsonian Institution, Calisphere, and The Portal of Texas History—and a document repository produced by the International Center for Arts of the Americas, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. These open-source aggregators and the database allow for a variety of art and related documentary records with emphasis on the Southwest, the traditional core of Mexican American communities, and with some attention to the Midwest and Pacific Northwest. For the second iteration, we plan to digitize and virtually compile the nation's largest collections of Mexican American art and related documentation helds by the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, and Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, Texas.

Goals of our NEH Foundations Grant

Co-Principal Investigators Karen Mary Davalos (UMN) and Constance Cortez (UTRGV) completed three foundational goals of the two-year planning process for *Rhizomes of Mexican American Art Since 1848*. These included:

1. Determining a potential process through which relevant content from small-budget institutions feed into *Rhizomes* (see Appendix A);
2. Determining culturally-informed search strategies and the *Rhizomes* metadata schema (see Appendix B), and groundwork for controlled vocabularies (see Appendix C), and;
3. Proposed the adoption of new culturally-informed metadata and sources to the National Museum of Mexican Art and the Getty Research Institute's *Union List of Artists' Names*, an internationally significant vocabulary that operates with Linked Open Data. (See Appendix D).

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[1] Follow our progress at the documentation website, https://rhizomes.umn.edu/home, and on social media @rhizomes1848.

Lessons Learned regarding Goal 1

Within the context of achieving Goal 1, we learned that cross-institutional digital humanities collaborations require consistent attention to equity, transparency, reciprocity, and redistribution of resources. This is paramount in importance, in order to avoid the legacy of structural inequalities that lead to the erasure of Mexican American art, culture, and history in the first place. We were also informed by the experiences of UMN librarians who recently had launched the post-custodial portal *UmbraSearch* (https://www.umbrasearch.org/)*,* and we streamlined the number of links to other sources. We proposed to connect our inaugural and subsequent partner museums to their local DPLA-hubs to harvest content from the DPLA, one of the nation's largest aggregators. The Digital Public Library of America compiles over 40 million records from hundreds of partners, and we believed that a single reliable institution as the source for *Rhizomes* materials would reduce risk of obsolescence or technological breakdown.

However, a grant-supported meeting with the NMMA to discuss how they might connect with the Illinois-hub of the DPLA revealed that they would not be able to prepare their collection information for ingestion into the DPLA or any aggregator. NMMA and other small-budget community-based museums do not have the technical infrastructure and allocation of staff time that would make this possible. To circumvent this problem, we considered direct linkages to our partner museums. By shifting our attention to creating direct linkages with stakeholder cultural institutions, we mitigate the lack of diversity of the DPLA, which continues to have relatively fewer partners in the American South and Southwest, the original homelands of Mexican America. We also circumvented the high financial and technical bar set by the DPLA for small-budget institutions.

We recognize the added need for resources to create and maintain connections with partner institutions, but the lesson learned is simple: *Rhizomes* is as equally about relationships as it is about linking records. Building strong partnerships makes it more likely to support ongoing sustainability of the portal. Indeed, we recognized that no technological magic can guarantee the sustainability of *Rhizomes*. Without solid partnerships, no amount of technological infrastructure can produce the trust and reciprocity necessary for the portal's long-term duration and sustainability. We recommend that university projects that partner with community institutions focus on mutually beneficial collaborative relationships, especially if they aim to intervene against mainstream conventions of knowledge production.

As we shifted away from the DPLA and toward our partner museums, we realized the need for transparency of process for collaborators as well as for ourselves. To that end, we co-created

with the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA) **The Socio-technical Protocol for Partnering with Small-Budget Cultural Institutions**. (If the hyperlink is not viable, the protocol is included as Appendix A). This co-authored social and technical document outlines the procedure for harvesting digital content into *Rhizomes* from underfunded cultural institutions with collections of Mexican American art. The document includes a communication plan for conflict-resolution. It also fleshes out how we make technological linkages to our partner institutions through exportable metadata in a format such as comma-separated values (.csv) or other plain text files. The production of this protocol achieved our objective on two levels. First, it helped us to define the procedure by which *Rhizomes* would compile relevant content from underfunded cultural institutions. Second, it illustrated, in practice and in writing, our commitment to reciprocal collaboration. These reflective practices will help us to navigate complicated issues relating to data and digital maintenance while keeping us focused on sustaining healthy, mutually-beneficial, and reciprocal relationships with the institutional partners that make this work possible.

For example, per the protocol, we recognize that stakeholder museums might not adopt the new metadata or vocabularies we identify because they might be beyond their local needs and capacities. Thus, we do not force partner museums to adopt our new metadata or culturally-informed vocabularies (originally an aspect of goal 3). Rather, the protocol instructs us to extract metadata, transform it, and then load the new metadata into *Rhizomes* to improve discovery by users. (This is known as ETL code). Our emphasis on reciprocity, redistribution, equity, and meaningful collaboration generated trust and respect between the project leaders. When we asked NMMA what metadata they would share with *Rhizomes*, they agreed to the following: image of work (multiples, if available), artist name, title/keyword description, media (technique), dimensions, date/year, accession number, edition (if relevant), credit line, and themes.[2]

During the grant period, we were able to implement the "Socio-Technical Protocol for Partnering with Small-Budget Cultural Institutions." We formed mutually-agreeable collaborations not only with the NMMA in Chicago, but also with two additional cultural institutions that would ensure that *Rhizomes* is nationally, aesthetically, and historically comprehensive: Mexic-Arte Museum (MAM) of Austin, Texas, and Albuquerque's National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) Art Museum. The National Hispanic Cultural Center has a significant infrastructure for preservation and cataloging of their collection, which has strengths in 19th century art and women and self-taught artists. It is already moving toward a public-

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[2] It is important to acknowledge that the NMMA is willing to share metadata fields that expand beyond the conventional "tombstone" information shared through Linked Open Data, thereby enhancing discovery among experts and non-experts that rely on complex information for searching.

facing collections interface. Mexic-Arte Museum has a significant collection of queer and emerging artists and prior experience with digitization and online sharing of the collection. We had no prior contact with the Mexic-Arte Museum, so our success in engagement suggests that our protocol is effective in generating new institutional relationships that support the formation of the portal. We partnered with NHCC and MAM to share metadata and to apply for funding to digitize their collections. Together, these three cultural institutions represent the nation's largest and most comprehensive collections of Mexican American art and related documentation. Additionally, these two institutions are very different from NMMA, which indicates that the flexibility built into the protocol makes it relevant for multiple contexts. The protocol is inherently flexible and it center's the needs and experiences of our partners rather than a one-size fits all models that we found with the DPLA.

Lessons Learned regarding Goal 2
Our second goal was to determine culturally-informed search strategies and a *Rhizomes* metadata schema, while laying the groundwork for culturally-informed controlled vocabularies. With this goal in mind, we conducted 55 open-ended surveys and focus groups among content- and non-content-experts in multiple settings. From her perspective as a cultural anthropologist, Davalos was confident in the qualitative results from fifty-five faculty, librarians, archivists, curators, arts educators, and K-12 teachers. We administered the open-ended survey at meetings we convened for our National Advisory Council (both in-person and virtually) and curators from the three stakeholder museums, at two discussion sessions at the annual conference of the College Art Association, at the National Museum of Mexican Art for K-12 educators and the museum's director of education, and through social media. We posted a link to the survey on social media and provided QR codes for prospective participants to access the survey.[3] By using multiple avenues to investigate diverse audiences for *Rhizomes*, we were able to gather insights into points of confluence and divergence regarding search strategies. Indeed, the qualitative data was instructive about search strategies for locating information and identifying culturally-informed vocabularies used for these procedures. The data also helped to generate a roadmap for our metadata schema (see Appendix B).

From the surveys and focus groups, we learned that content-experts search for Mexican American art using the following:
- period- and geography-specific terms (i.e. *Hispano, tejano, tejana*, and *Californio*);
- historical themes, time periods, or events (i.e. US imperialism, Manifest Destiny, and US-Mexico War);

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[3] Although the social media post generated over 100 individuals who opened the survey, none completed it which suggests that the personal networks of the National Advisory Council and the co-Project Directors are critical to the success of the survey and the user response to *Rhizomes*.

- regional names of places (Aztlan, *Nuevo México*, borderlands, US-Mexico border, and The Rio Grande Valley);
- culturally-informed styles (i.e. *domesticana, rasquache, mestizaje,* borderlands, *tortilla* art, *punkero*) and American art styles;
- culturally-informed forms of art (i.e. *santero, piñata*, and paper fashions);
- materials and geographic origins of materials (wool, wood, and wool from Rio Grande Valley);
- and critical concepts (i.e. colonialism, settler colonialism, racism, and sexism).

Equally important, content-experts expect search strategies that will indicate relationships between content, networks of artists, artist collectives, exhibition webs, social movements, and other works of art.

Both content-experts and non-experts rely on first- and second-degree terms. First-degree terms are artist name, style, period, year, collection, medium, artwork title, subject, theme. Second-degree terms include aesthetic influences, material referenced in the work, contemporaries, techniques, and exhibition venue. Both the affiliated metadata of the first- and second-degree terms are more comprehensive than the traditional "tombstone" information (i.e. artist name, year, medium, and artwork title) shared by most mainstream museums through Linked Open Data. We also recorded the concerns of non-content specialists as they navigated the open-ended survey and discussed the Eurocentric challenges that current taxonomies pose. The qualitative information from non-content experts will be used to make recommendations for developing and evaluating preferred terminology, reconciling or transforming metadata, and for ontologies suited to the project goals.

Search strategies, including the first- and second-degree terms, consistently reveal culturally informed nomenclature. For example, content-experts employ the following cultural terms that do not appear in the *Chicano Thesaurus*, the *California Ethnic and Multicultural Archive Thesaurus*, or Getty's *Art and Architecture Thesaurus*: *alebrije, ofrendas*, altar-installation, *arte popular*, barrio art, borderlands, *calaca* attire, *changarrito* (also spelled *changarritto*), Coatlicue consciousness, *con safo* (or *con safos*), *domesticana*, emplacement, Guadalupe/Tonantzin, *Hispano*, lowrider bike, masa, oppositional gaze, *paños*, paper fashions, piñata (art form and technique), pre-Cuauhtémoc, *punkero, rasquache, rasquachismo*, street art, *tejana, tejano, tortilla* prints, and walking mural. (For a complete list, see Appendix C). Ideally, per the proposed objectives, we would use these terms to establish a controlled vocabulary, contribute our new controlled vocabularies to open environments, and use these terms to enhance or reconcile existing vocabularies. That is, we understood the new culturally-informed terms as a strategy in the future that would enhance discovery of Mexican American art.

That being said, we also learned that sometimes meaning's erasure is perpetuated not by unfamiliarity (what is rasquache?), but by the institutional cataloguing software chosen by the field itself. An example of this can be found in the embedded nomenclature of museum software and the term "piñata." "Piñata'' has long been part of the English-language lexicon, and many people know that it is a suspended object filled with treats (unusually candy!). Participants are blindfolded and swing a bat or stick at the piñata, deliberately breaking it to acquire the treats . However, standard museum cataloging consigns the object as "vessel," thereby making a piñata invisible to those unfamiliar with such a cataloging system and vocabulary. Yet, we wonder how the Metropolitan Museum of Art would respond if we swung a stick at their "vessels"?

Paper Amphora ??

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Greek Piñata ??

And, it gets worse: many museum systems use the Greek word, *amfora*, for jar, vase or vessel, which further complicates the visibility of the piñata. We want to describe a piñata as a piñata, and within *Rhizomes* we plan to enhance or reconcile the metadata used by conventional cataloguers. Our enhancement will mitigate the cultural erasure of and improve access and discovery.

We learned that our budget and timeline did not allow sufficient resources for finalizing controlled vocabularies. However, a larger, overriding challenge or lesson learned concerns the standardization or control of vocabularies. Although we identified culturally-informed vocabularies, we realized that funders, archivists, and librarians expect a standard definition for the cultural terms we use and share in open environments. However, meaning is often fluid and

contextual. This standardization requires us to perpetuate the very structures that produced the invisibility of Mexican American art in the first place.

The theoretical frameworks that underscore our work in Chicana/o/x art histories are decolonial and thus embrace the intersections, complexities, and the ambiguities around aesthetic concepts, such as *rasquache, domesticana, mestizaje,* borderlands, *tortilla* art, and *punkero* art. The foundations of Chicana feminist theory and critical ethnic studies center paradigms that interrupt Western binary logic, singular subject positions, and Eurocentric epistemologies that dominate or invalidate Mexican American ways of thinking and organizing reality—art included. Members of our National Advisory Council—an interdisciplinary team of nationally-known scholars, curators, and arts educators—are content-experts who have embraced intersectional and decolonial theories. We are familiar with the publications that describe these cultural terms, but it was extremely difficult for this group to identify a single definition for cultural concepts as the definitive approach for controlled vocabularies clashed with their expertise and scholarly practice.[4] It's not that they did not understand the meanings of these cultural terms. It is that they felt that generating a standard definition required them to disregard the Chicana feminist, critical ethnic studies, and decolonial frameworks. These are the very tools that interrogate masculine and European epistemologies at the core of archiving, cataloguing, and criteria for open environments, such as Open Metadata Registry. Asking the council to select a single definition for culturally-informed terms required them to reject the nuances of their fields and reify and canonize perspective.

Lessons Learned regarding Goal 3

Our third goal provided important lessons about contributing to the Getty Research Institute's (GRI) *Union List of Artists' Names*. Originally, we'd planned to submit new metadata and controlled vocabularies to the GRI's *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (AAT) and *Cultural Objects Name Authority* (CONA).[5] We found that AAT required controlled vocabularies which, as noted above, are a challenge for our project's intersectional and decolonial frameworks, and CONA is still in development. To determine an effective intervention that could advance long-term diversification of standards in art history, we made an analysis of all the GRIs existing vocabularies and identified the *Union List of Artist Names* (ULAN) as the most relevant site for

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[4] The publications include Paul Allaston, *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) and Deborah R. Vargas, Nancy Raquel Mirabal, and Lawerance La Fountain-Stokes, *Keywords for Latina/o Studie* (New York City: NYU Press, 2017) which provide extensive discussion about "borderlands," "mestizaje," and "rasquache." *Resisting Categories: Latin American and /or Latino?* organized by Héctor Olea, Mari Carmen Ramírez, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto (Houston: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2012) compiles decades of resistance to Eurocentric categories that obscure art attributed to artists of Latin American heritage, including Mexican American and Chicana/o artists.

[5] As noted above, Goal 3 also proposed submission of new metadata to NMMA, but our protocol required us to reconsider this objective.

making a contribution. ULAN is a structured vocabulary of artist names and relationships. It contains over a million records and it's a participant in Linked Open Data. We focused on ULAN because it will simultaneously address discoverability, sustainability, and culturally-informed taxonomies and ontologies for aesthetic practices.

Nonetheless, we were surprised to learn that ULAN is technologically difficult due to obsolescence and a patchwork of software code. The barrier to diversifying this resource is too high for small-budget institutions and other Authorized Contributors similar to our team which is comprised largely of scholars.[6] The painstaking effort to enhance, correct, and add new metadata to ULAN to improve discovery of Mexican American artists was more complex, time consuming, and cumbersome than we'd anticipated. Overall, we learned that diversifying vocabularies generated by standard-setting bodies may enrich the field, but the time invested to complete this work might negatively impact the larger project goal to establish the foundations for and build the *Rhizomes* portal.

At the same time, by targeting ULAN, we made a significant intellectual intervention against one of the leading and widely accepted vocabularies of artist names. Prior to our project, ULAN identified only 32 "Mexican-American" artists, discoverable through the search bar for "nationality."[7] Many more actually exist in ULAN, but only if the artist's name is known to the searcher—a challenge for novices. Due to the persistence, ingenuity, and resilience of Mary Thomas, the project's data curator, we corrected and enhanced 96 existing entries on Mexican American artists, added 58 new Mexican American artists to ULAN, and contributed 90 new authorized sources to the GRI.[8] If approved, the new information will advance the long-term

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[6] An Authorized Contributor is a GRI's approved institutional partner who can recommend or submit corrections and new records to GRI vocabularies. The Department of Chicano and Latino Studies, University of Minnesota became an Authorized Contributor in June 2020. However, time and GRI editors are also barriers to submissions. According to the GRI, "The turnaround time for contributions is dependent upon various factors, including how closely the contributor has followed the editorial guidelines and the status of editorial priorities and technical support available at the Getty during a given period. In general, individual contributions entered via the online Web form in a given month will appear when the Web data is refreshed two months later" https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/intro_to_contributing.pdf (slide 27).

[7] It must be noted that the search bar for "nationality" is problematic as it includes national terms ("Canadian" and "Cambodian"), sexual identities ("LGBTQ"), temporal categories ("late period"), geographic or regional terms ("Asian"), and other social categories for locating information in the database.

[8] The project team recognizes and is attentive to nuances of identity and the dangers of pigeonholing ethnic minority artists. We corrected or added "Mexican-American" to those artists who consistently are self-identifying in print as "Chicano", "Chicana," or more recently as "Chicanx." We also corrected or added "Mexican-American" to those artists whose biographies indicate they were born in Mexico or raised by Mexican migrants and work in the United States. However, we did not change records about artists who have rejected non-white ethnic labels, even if they identify their parents as Mexican migrants. Furthermore, since ULAN allows two or more descriptors (i.e. both "American" and "Mexican-American"), we felt that our additions and corrections were not pigeonholing artists.

diversification of American art by facilitating adoption by other institutions. Still, we would not recommend targeting ULAN, even for humanists interested in diversifying the field. Working in the ULAN interface requires a major time-commitment to learn and navigate the software. The patched-together interface has several counterintuitive steps for correcting metadata, and the instructions for adding new records are equally challenging. Additionally, the interface requires redundancies: Dr. Thomas had to enter and reenter new sources multiple times and some fields require data but are not described as essential in the ULAN instructions. We plan to share our findings with the GRI to encourage a complete overhaul of ULAN and a reconsideration of the relationships with Authorized Contributors. We hope that sharing our insights with the GRI will mitigate barriers to ULAN and thus barriers to diversifying this vocabulary.

We were strategic in submitting 90 new sources to the GRI through ULAN. Each addition or correction to ULAN requires source documentation, typically two sources, such as peer-reviewed articles, books, and obituaries. We knew that there was the potential for rejection of our corrections and enhancements to existing records or to the new records. We circumvented the denial of our submissions by proposing exhibition catalogues funded by the Getty, oral histories because they provide extensive information, and exhibitions that have recognized and longstanding value outside of Chicana/o studies and ethnic studies. We also selected resources that provide information about multiple artists to demonstrate the submission's comprehensive art history. Approved sources could have an exponential impact on American art history and criticism, since conventionally trained scholars are typically unaware of these references. The list of ninety sources, including the more extensive obituaries and Smithsonian and UCLA oral history interviews, are a foundational bibliography for non-content experts and students hoping to diversify their knowledge of American art history. (See Appendix D).

Conclusion
Finally, we offer lessons learned about structuring of time and this is directed toward funders and prospective applicants who are new to this process. A multi-stage project requires consistent applications for funding, even if grant cycles do not match the overall progress or status of the project. Otherwise, projects tend to languish. For example, we made the decision to apply for funding to support the first iteration of *Rhizomes* prior to the completion of the NEH Foundation grant. If we had not applied and received funding from American Council of Learned Societies, then we would have had a 12-month gap in activity. To avoid delays in the project, we continue to apply for grants as the opportunities arise. This requires that time for future grant development always be a consideration when structuring a schedule and outcomes.

Our Foundations-level project lays the groundwork for *Rhizomes*, which will harvest and virtually compile images of paintings, photography, works on paper, sculpture, textiles,

installation, assemblage, new media, murals, and ceramics as well as religious sculpture, furniture, clothing, equestrian crafts, tin work, jewelry, papier mâché, *papel picado*, and other *arte popular* produced by Mexican Americans. *Rhizomes* will enable access to not only visual art but an array of materials related to Mexican American art: rare catalogues, unpublished artist interviews, scrapbooks, correspondence, manifestos, art reviews, and documents of Mexican American arts organizations and artist collectives. As a result, *Rhizomes* will broaden understanding of Mexican American art and cultural history by enabling access to nation-wide digital collections through a single open-source platform. It will facilitate research in disciplines ranging from art history, anthropology, and sociology to history, archeology, and interdisciplinary studies. Educators and students at all levels and the public will likewise be able to draw upon *Rhizomes* to enrich their cultural knowledge.

APPENDIX A

Socio-Technical Protocol for Partnering with Small-Budget Cultural Institutions

This document is designed to guide and enhance relationships between the intellectual architects of Rhizomes of Mexican American Art since 1848, co-Directors Karen Mary Davalos (UMN) and Constance Cortez (UTRGV), and partner institutions who will participate in Rhizomes. The protocol addresses social, interpersonal, and institutional relationships and guidelines for establishing technological linkages. It also includes the Rhizomes Conflict Resolution Protocol.

This living document was created through the labor, feedback, and insights of the following people who endorsed it in December 2019:

> Mary Thomas, Operations Manager and Data Curator, University of Minnesota
> Cristina López, LATIS Consultant, University of Minnesota
> Rebecca D. Meyers, Permanent Collection Curator, National Museum of Mexican Art
> Raquel Aguiñaga-Martinez, Visual Arts Associate Director & Registrar, National Museum of Mexican Art
> Cesareo Moreno, Director of Visual Arts and Chief Curator, National Museum of Mexican Art
> Colin McFadden, Technical Architect, LATIS, University of Minnesota
> Karen Mary Davalos, co-Director, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
> Contance Cortez, co-Director, University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley

Rhizomes guiding principles: relevant excerpts

Rhizomes is a project that depends upon healthy, strong, and committed relationships that are collaborative, transparent, equitable, generative, and sustainable.

We want to be accountable to institutional partners, but they should be accountable to us in some capacity.

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Communications Protocol:

1. Ask partner institution to locate a facilitator to serve as an advocate for institution during preliminary meeting to cultivate stakeholders and identify benefits of participation within the project.
2. Articulate potential points of conflict throughout period of collaboration and develop strategies for resolving conflict. (i.e. agreement not to compete for the same grant within calendar year)
3. Develop a communications plan that designates institutional points of contact, preferred mode of communication, location and access information regarding shared materials, amount of time needed for review of documents, approximate time periods when institutional staff are unavailable to comment substantively on Rhizomes, and mutually-agreeable duration for meetings and phone calls.

4. Develop an agreement for reciprocal sharing of announcements and material regarding institutional partner's participation in Rhizomes whether in newsletters, press releases, or social media channels.
5. Communicate forthcoming updates of institutional partner's website or changes to Rhizomes interface at regular intervals.

Building Relationships with Partner Institutions:

1. Assess the institution's mission and how it aligns with Rhizomes' goals
2. Identify relevant holdings within the institution that align with Rhizomes' goals (i.e. permanent collection, archival holdings, etc)
3. Inquire about institution's history of previous partnerships and collaborations/projects similar in nature to Rhizomes. Cultivate an understanding of what factors influenced the success of those endeavors.
4. Examine institution's existing strategic plan to identify where Rhizomes' partnership aligns with current and upcoming institutional priorities.
5. Locate potential stakeholders for project throughout institution (i.e. collections staff, outreach, education, leadership)
6. Meet with potential stakeholders to understand how Rhizomes can benefit their existing workflows and operations.
7. Articulate to all stakeholders the benefits of participating in Rhizomes

Technical Protocol:

1. Understand existing digital infrastructure within partner institution: How much of the collection has been digitized? How much of this is available online? What equipment and technical standards are used for digitization? What is the museum's web presence? How does the institution assign metadata to collection materials? What is the institution's social media presence?
2. Understand institution's maintenance plan for digital infrastructure, the role of staff in the digitization process, their workflows for these processes, what percentage of time this work represents relative to their other responsibilities, and their availability to take on additional digitization projects.
3. Identify current professional development and education of staff. Assess whether more training is needed.
4. Identify sources of support (private foundations, non-profit, state, and federal) and other partnerships that can facilitate participation in the project.

Ingestion and Aggregation Protocol:

1. Understand existing practices for assigning metadata to objects within institutional partner's collection and assess other data available for aggregation.
2. Learn how institution classifies and organizes its holdings.
3. Develop an agreement regarding which collections will be included in Rhizomes portal. In the case of material that has not been digitized, establish priorities for collections to be digitized.
4. Develop an agreement regarding which categories of metadata will be ingested into the portal from institutional collection.
5. Develop an agreement regarding acceptable modes of enriching metadata for collection materials within portal.
6. Establish machine-readable language regarding usage rights for institutional collection materials displayed within portal.

Building Capacity through Rhizomes:

1. Map Rhizomes' three-year sustainability plan onto partner's existing practices.
2. Document trends across partner institutions: identify similar challenges and strategies for overcoming obstacles. Track and report this information to be used as an advocacy tool to facilitate investment in digital infrastructure as significant marker in institution's continued growth and evolution.
3. Build evaluation into Rhizomes workflows.
4. Encourage partner institutions to view themselves as larger collective body of institutions as a means to cultivate a larger consortium wherein members can share resources.
5. Create opportunities for partner institutions to share and learn from each other.

Although the protocol for local institutional practices is designed to be adaptable to address existing practices within future stakeholder institutions, we request that partner institutions agree to implement a baseline set of preservation standards to ensure consistency in practices across collaborating institutions. This threshold set of standards addresses common issues related to storage, backups, preservation, and migration.

These preservation standards include:

1. The creation of digital images that meet FADGI standards.
2. The use of three backup locations for all digital files, including one site that is geographically-distinct from the institution.
3. Exportable metadata into a format such as .csv
4. The quarterly use of checksums to ensure fixity of image files.
5. Quarterly archiving of web content in consultation with the executive committee and their respective web developers.
6. The development of automated continuous checks of files to ensure consistent access to content.
7. After the conclusion of the grant period, the partner museums' public websites will be maintained onsite at each institution.

Rhizomes Conflict Resolution Protocol

I'd rather lose an argument than lose a friend.

The purpose of this document is to sketch out a protocol for conflict resolution (and good collaboration) that will align with Rhizome guiding principles and goals. This is not meant to be definitive, but a starting point for discussion and further development. And the process below need not be worked through entirely every time an issue comes up. Rather, the process is meant to provide ideas for thinking about what works and what doesn't when it comes to working through differences that will arise.

Conflict resolution guiding principles

Perspective-taking is key for resolving differences while maintaining relationships and trust. That's why we should all take time to reflect on our assumptions and develop some ideas about how to resolve conflict.

Prevention is best, but when conflict arises, let's make it productive and grounded in trust and respect.

If and when conflict does arise, let's be prepared to apply what we've learned through reflection.

How will we work together while navigating (occasional) conflict?

Reflection

What causes conflict?

Unfortunately, when people work together conflict is inevitable (though not necessarily because people behave badly). Although conflict is expressed between people, it's not just about personalities.

Conflict can stem from differences in
- resources
- styles
- perceptions
- goals
- pressures
- roles
- values

And those differences work at organizational, personal and cultural levels.

Questions to consider
- What are common causes of conflict within your own organization?
- What are common causes of conflict when working with people outside of your organization, or other organizations?
- What causes of conflict should we anticipate as we work together on the Rhizomes initiative?
- Under what circumstances is it possible to address conflict at the root, to change or eliminate its causes? When is it not possible?

Conflict resolution strategies

Avoidance, accomodation, collaboration and competition are often characterized as conflict styles, but they can also be viewed as strategies. Some people might rely on a particular style most of the time, but often it depends on the situation. Whatever you call it, styles and strategies are not just personal. They are also part of cultures of all kinds, including organizational cultures.

Dual concern model

The dual concern model takes into account that resolving conflict involves a balance (or sometimes lack thereof) between concern for our own outcomes and concern for others' outcomes. Depending on how people prioritize concerns, they use specific styles and strategies to resolve conflict.

	Concern for own outcomes	
Concern for others' outcomes	Low	High
High	Accomodation	Collaboration
Low	Avoidance	Competitive

A few thoughts about styles and strategies

A given strategy might be deemed inherently positive or negative, but it's worth reflecting on its short term and long term impact: resolving the issue at hand, mitigating or eliminating root causes of conflict, and maintaining trust and good relationships.

Avoidance is often easier than confrontation, but that means a lost opportunity to learn through collaboration. On the other hand, sometimes it's better to keep moving along if the stakes are low.

Prioritizing your own concerns isn't always a bad thing. For example, if the issue at hand is high stakes for you but not the other person, they might accommodate you. Accomodation could mean "I lose, you win," but it could also mean, "you win, I lose this time."

Collaboration is great for building trust, learning more about each other, finding solutions. But it can be a lot of work.

Factors that influence styles and strategies are assertiveness (or lack thereof), individualistic v. collectivist worldviews. There are always advantages and disadvantages in play.

Questions to consider
- Do you have a predominant style/strategy for resolving conflict, or is it more situational? Under what circumstances do you use a particular strategy?
- Does your organization have a predominant style/strategy for resolving conflict?

- What have you observed about the impact, both short term and long term, of different styles/strategies?
- What impact would changes in styles and strategies have, both positive and negative? To what extent is it possible to change?

Prevention

As we're working together to identify shared goals, discuss how we'll work together, and identify both possibilities and obstacles, we focus on cultivating trust. We should also focus on identifying in advance what might cause conflict later: resources, styles, perceptions, goals, pressures, roles, values.

Shared goals are key, shared values are ideal. But we don't have to agree on everything. It's possible to work well together even if we're not exactly on the same page.

Resolution

Questions to address when conflict arises

Analyzing the problem

- What is the issue at hand?
- How significant is this issue?
- Who is involved? (Who is affected?)
- What are some root causes of the problem?
- For each person, group, organization involved, are the stakes low or high?
- If we leave this unresolved, what will the outcomes be for all involved?
- If we leave this unresolved, what are differences in outcomes, both positive and negative for all involved?
- If this is left unresolved, how will this situation affect relationships?
- For everyone involved, how high or low are your concerns for your own outcomes? For others' outcomes? In other words, what are your priorities?

Resolving problems

- Which outcomes are a priority for each involved? Can we agree on priorities?
- How might we address, mitigate, eliminate root causes? To what degree is that possible?
- What strategy (or strategies) will be most effective for resolving the problem?
- What impact, both positive and negative, will a given strategy have on resolving the problem?
- What adjustments should we make in goals, perceptions, values?

- What changes do we need to make in terms of resources, pressures, roles? Are those changes possible? How much time and effort will it take to make changes?

APPENDIX B
Metadata Schema

Rhizomes Fields	Rhizomes Display	Portal to TX History	DPLA	Calisphere	Smithsonian	ICAA
Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title	Title
Author/Artist	Author/Artist	Author or creator	Creator/Contributor	Creator	Name	Author
Description	Description	Description	Description	Description	Notes	Synopsis
Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Year
Resource Type	Resource Type	Resource Type	Type		Object_type	Type
Digital Format	Digital Format	Format	Format	Type		
Form/Genre						Genre
Dimensions	Dimensions		Format		physicaldescription	
Identifier	Resource Identifier	Resource Identifier	id	id	id	ICAA Record ID
URL	URL	Resource Identifier	isShownAt	url_item	guid	
Source	Source	Source	Collection_name		setName	
Language	Language	Language	Language			Language
Era)		Coverage				
(Topic/Keywords)		Subject and keywords	Subject	Subject	topic	
(Geographic)	Relevant Topics	Coverage	Spatial			
			Coverage			
Notes						Annotations
Copyright status	Copyright status					Digitized From
information	Collection information		dataprovider	collection_data	Topics	
Credit line	Credit line				creditLine	
		OAI Identifier		sort_collection_data		
			reference_image_dimensions	reference_image_dimensions	Rhizomes	
					culture	
					unitCode	
					unit_code	
			Object			
		OAI Identifier		repository_url	url	
		DateStamp				
				campus_name		
				collection_url		
				repository_name		
				repository_data	usage_flag	
				campus_url		
				archives	identifier	
				timestamp	Timestamp	
				score		
					docSignature	
					hash	
					record_id	
					lastTimeupdted	
		setSpec				In
						ICAA Team
						Researcher

APPENDIX C
Culturally-informed Vocabularies

The following is a culturally-informed vocabulary not present in existing sources. Following best-practices in cataloging, we indicate when possible, the relationship to existing sources.

- California Ethnic Minority Archives Thesaurus (CEMA)
- Chicano Thesaurus (ChT)
- Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)
- Art and Architecture Thesaurus (ATT)
- National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA), not open data

A
alebrije (NMMA)
altars (ChT), use also altares, ofrendas, altar-installation, home altars (CEMA), community altars
arte popular, NOT folk art (AAT)
Ayotzinapa 43 (NMMA)
Aztlán, use also Aztlan (ChT)
B
barrio art
barrio calligraphy, use also graffiti (ChT), NOT vandalism (LCSH)
Borderlands, use also frontera, fronteriza
C
calaca (NMMA)
calaca attire, use also face painting
calaveras (CEMA; NMMA), use also calaca attire, sugar skulls, NOT skull in art (LCSH)
Califas (NMMA)
Caló, use with calo (ChT)
castas, use also casta paintings
cempoalxochitl
centros, use with community centers (AAT)
catrina (f), cantrin (m) (NMMA), use also la cartina
ceremonia, use for spiritual ceremonies
changarrito (also spelled changarritto)
Chicana feminism, use also feminism (LCSH, ChT)
Chicana indigeneity

Coatlicue consciousness, use also mestiza consciousness

codex art

commemorative poster, commemorative print

community altar

con safo, use with con safos, C/S

corazón

D

Decolonial imaginary, use also decoloniality, decolonize

    Día de los muertos (CEMA), use also días de los muertos, día de muertos, Day of the Dead,

    Days of the Dead, festival de las calaveras, NOT Death in art (LCSH)

domesticana

E

emplacement

ephemeral art (ATT), use with altars, ofrendas

F

face painting (LCSH), use also calaca attire, máscara (NMMA)

folk art (AAT), NOT to be used; use arte popular

G

Guadalupe/Tonantzin

grupos, use also artist collective,

H

Hispano

hociconas

homenaje

hybrid aesthetics

I

indigeneity

indigenist,

Indigenous,

J

Jota (f), joto (m), joteria, use also maricónology

L

latinidad, use also latinidades

lowrider bike, use also low rider bike

M

masa, use with tortilla art

maguey

memoria

mestiza consciousness, also use Coatlicue consciousness

mestiza (f), mestizo (m)

Mexican American (LCSH), NOT Chicanos

Mexican American art (CEMA), NOT Chicano art (ChT)

muralism, muralismo, use also murals (AAT), mural art (ChT)

N

Nuevomexicana (f), Nuevomexicano (m)

O

oppositional gaze (NMMA)

P

paños, use with paño art, pinto art (ChT)

papel picado (CEMA), use with cut paper

paper fashions

piñata (art form and technique) (NMMA)

portrait or portraiture (New definition: without a specific sitter)

pre-Cuauhtémoc (NMMA)

punkero

Q

quinceañera (NMMA), use also 15th birthday (NMMA)

R

rasquache, use with rasquachismo

S

spiritual art, use also spirituality

street art

T

Tejana, tejano

tlamatinime

tortilla prints

V

vato/vata, use also pachuco (CEMA)

visual quotation

W

walking altars

walking mural

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