

7. Hidden Economies in Los Angeles: An Emerging Latino Metropolis

Alessandra Moctezuma + Leda Ramos

Since 1995, the artist team Alessandra Moctezuma + Leda Ramos has been investigating the terrain between art and architecture, community issues, public space, and popular culture through installation and site-specific art and design. Alessandra Moctezuma is originally from Mexico City and Leda Ramos's El Salvadoran parents immigrated to L.A. in 1958. Both individual and collaborative work explores themes of dislocation, language, memory, home, representation of Latinos and women, and documentation of the urban landscape. Our shared individual, cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds are to a great extent fundamental elements contributing to our continued work as an artist team.

Histories: Moctezuma + Ramos

While still completing her MFA at UCLA in 1992, Alessandra Moctezuma cofounded ADOBE LA (Architects, Artists, and Designers Opening the Border Edge of Los Angeles) with several artists and architects who joined together to create an awareness of Latino contributions in art and architecture in Los Angeles. With ADOBE LA she developed public art projects, designed exhibitions, contributed to publications, and lectured widely on issues of art, Latino cultures, and vernacular architecture until her departure from the group in 1996.

Her personal work focuses on her experience as a woman and an immigrant and uses humor to deal with the complexity of gender relations and the contrasts in Mexican and U.S. cultures. In 1994, she received an MFA from UCLA, where she concentrated in painting and printmaking. As a member of the multidisciplinary arts collective Collage Ensemble she has performed in the United States, Mexico, and

Japan and has produced videos and exhibitions. She manages public art projects for Metro Art of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority and has worked extensively with the Latino community in Boyle Heights.

Leda Ramos graduated with an MFA from Rutgers University in 1995. Her primary explorations in object-making and installation art led her to the Princeton School of Architecture, where she attended various seminars while in graduate school. When she returned to Los Angeles in 1995 she joined ADOBE LA, where she met cofounder Alessandra Moctezuma, thus beginning collaborative endeavors in art and architecture both within ADOBE LA and subsequently as an artist team when both decided to leave the group in 1996.

In 1996–97, Leda was the first College Art Association Fellow in studio art at the Getty Research Institute, where she designed a prototype community exhibition series exploring the notion of Los Angeles archives and collections. During that time, she was active in the dialogue of Getty visiting scholars focused on Los Angeles: Perspectives, Narratives, Images, and Histories seminars. Several collaborative projects with scholars emerged from that year, in particular with visiting scholar Raul Villa, whose work *Heterotopias of the Latino Cultural Landscape* encompassed much of Moctezuma + Ramos's research and installation projects.

Concurrent with art-making and teaching, Leda is director of technology and education at the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) in Los Angeles and For Families coordinator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Since 1995 both have been coteaching at the Southern California Institute of Architecture, early on with ADOBE LA and currently as an art team.

Collaboration: Strategies

Our work together is intentional. We both bring to the collaborative a wealth of experiences both Mexican and Central American. We enjoy the humor and the intellectual stimulation of dialogue. Our current professional work also creates a dynamic communication network with other artists, academics, administrators, community historians, garment workers, street vendors, and recent immigrants. We both speak and write Spanish, giving us access points to various communities and individuals. In addition, we are invested in the exploration of an inclusive Los Angeles history. Working together also simply lets us divide the workload while we work full-time schedules in various professional settings.

The installations are directed at multiple audiences, both inclusive of recent immigrants and art audiences and placed in diverse locations, to engage the viewer in a dialogue about art, L.A. history, diverse cultures' sharing of space, and the innovative ways individuals create meaning and a sense of community.

Our installation "sites" vary from the traditional art museum/gallery context to the appropriation of historic landmarks and everyday storefront windows to "theoretical" design studios at the Southern California Institute of Architecture. These include

*The Bus/Civil Rights, Architecture of Tolerance/Continuance, Housing for People with AIDS, Hybrid Marketplaces in the Montage City, Between House and Home: Theorizing Architecture as a Cultural Practice, and Las Mil Mascaras of L.A. Land/Insurgent Urbanism.*¹

All the installations, moreover, have invited and involved the participation of students, academics, architects, union members, family, friends, other artists, and community groups.

Installation as Case Study

In her article "Contesting the Public Realm: Struggles over Public Space in Los Angeles," Margaret Crawford discusses the role of recently arrived immigrants in reshaping urban space:

Looking around the city, we can discover innumerable places where new social and economic practices reappropriate and restructure urban space. Arenas for struggle over the meaning of social participation, these new public spaces are continually in flux, producing constantly changing meanings. Streets, sidewalks, vacant lots, parks, and other places of the city, reclaimed by immigrant groups, the poor, and the homeless, have become sites where public debates about the meaning of democracy, the nature of economic participation, and the public assertion of identity are acted out on a daily basis.²

The three installations that we describe as case studies are based on extensive research and documentation of the cultural landscape of Spanish-speaking Los Angeles, a "Latino metropolis" of 3.5 million people. They explore the "hidden" or "informal" economies of everyday urban existence as well as the populist strategies by which immigrants contest dominant culture. "Documentation" includes photography, video, and interviews specific to each project.

The major spatial practices that we document are (1) Latinos' alternative semiotic landscape: religious and commercial signage as well as graffiti, "tagging," and labor/employment signs; (2) the street as a performance space: street vendors, *taco-trocas*, mobile markets, orange sellers near freeway exits, and front-yard sales and celebrations; and (3) vernacular aesthetics and design.

The Cultural Landscape

Los Angeles is "a forest of signs." Driving through nondescript streets and minimalls indicates an urban district's cultural identities. On Broadway, north of Sunset, signs advertise ginseng cures in Chinese characters. To the south, a marquee at the Million Dollar Theater displays the words "Jesus Saves" in Spanish.

In the densely populated neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles, the city dweller is struck by the profusion of homemade signs dangling on chain link fences along

empty lots, sides of buildings, homes, and small shops. They constitute an integral part of the informal economy of the city. Everywhere we encounter the "Yellow Pages" of the streets.

Crudely painted on pieces of discarded plywood, these sometimes plaintive signs display, along with phone numbers, messages such as "Need a handyman? painting, stucco" or "Real save roofing." A sign cut to resemble a bathtub reads "bathtub reglazing," and there are English-and-Spanish signs for "plumber, *plomero*."

On corner stores in residential areas, small cardboard signs (sometimes in incorrect phonetic Spanish) rest on glass windows—"Se acen reparaciones de bastillas, siperes, sierres y toda clase de costura" (we fix hems, zippers, and do all type of alterations). A humorous sign on an empty building states in large letters, "Se renta para oficinas o tiendas o para lo que quiera" (we rent for offices or stores or for whatever you want).

Flyers posted on telephone poles, small signs on clandestine factories working out of converted garages, and even a sign for piecework that reads "Aqui se cose" (we sew) dramatize the insatiable demand for *costureras* (seamstresses) for the largest garment industry in the country.

In many Latino neighborhoods the products prominently painted on a store's walls—*rotulos*—serve to advertise what is sold inside. Giant boxes of detergent, fruits, Mexican products, cleaning supplies, and milk remind us of pop art or comic-book images. Humorous depictions of TV sets walking into repair shops with sad faces and stepping out with a happy grin accompany more sinister images of little pigs cooking people in large pots found in the *carnecerías*. Other culturally hybrid images indicate the transformative nature of L.A.'s communities—for example, an image of a young Latina in a *quinceañera* dress appears next to an African American boy with a flatcap and tuxedo in an area traditionally African American (Central Avenue and Olympic Boulevard) but now primarily Central American.

Stores hire local immigrant sign painters, or *rotuleros*, to do lettering, to paint images, or to create more elaborate pictorial scenes. Most *rotuleros* learn this traditional Mexican craft in their hometown or village. This commercial pictorial tradition dates back to the turn of the century, when taverns that sold *pulque*, an alcoholic drink made from the maguey plant, hired artisans to paint scenes on walls.

Pulquerías had two characteristic features: colorful walls and exotic names. Even the humblest corner tavern . . . might be painted pink, bright red, or sky blue. Interior walls were "painted in lurid colors" that depicted "low, bacchanalian scenes."³

Pictorial art also adds considerable charm to customized street-vending carts, *taco-trocas*, and mobile markets, while simultaneously communicating regional and national attachments. In addition to the already mentioned surfaces, we have observed the growing number of ocean scenes and mermaids on *mariscos* (seafood) restaurants and landscapes, or *paisaje*, depicting village life in local eateries.

Mexican and Central American religious iconography erupts everywhere in the

urban environment. The Virgen de Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico, blesses the walls of hundreds of *tiendas*, *panaderías*, *carnecerías*, muffler shops, schools, and community centers. La Morenita, a term of endearment that refers to her brown complexion, embraced the indigenous people and became their protector and maternal figure. In Los Angeles, she is venerated by both Mexican and Central American communities. Her image is always a sacred space, and *placas* and other forms of tagging carefully avoid desecration.

Another popular religious icon is the small shrine placed high atop a business's entrance or in a front yard behind an elaborate wrought-iron fence, in both instances adorned with flowers and other small offerings. The most simple gesture is sometimes the most touching, such as an image of the Virgin printed on a piece of paper nestled in the crevice of a tree trunk.

This wealth of signage served as inspiration for the *Living Room* installation at the L.A. *Freewaves* exhibition. Our intent was to bring the popular and significant form of communication of the streets into the realm of the art institution, in this case a museum.

Living Room

Living Room was an installation for the L.A. *Freewaves Video Festival/Exhibition* at the Geffen Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, in August 1996.⁴ In Latino neighborhoods the front yard redefines the street landscape and culturally identifies it. On the West Side of Los Angeles the empty and well-manicured lawns are passive borders, a glacis to keep others away. By contrast, the yards and porches of East L.A., Echo Park, and South Central are used for celebrations and other activities. Front yards, occupied by lawn chairs, furniture, and plants, extend the "private" home into the public street and allow for highly interactive spaces, with fences for neighbors to lean on.⁵ We created a surreal and ambiguous private space—front yard, backyard, and cultural landscape—in the form of a life-size interactive "Monopoly" game.

The game-board paths were painted directly on the museum floor and were surrounded by green astroturf. Each path was divided into squares, some of which were randomly numbered. Some squares incorporated images of the painted products seen on storefronts or the signs offering services found in the landscape. On different squares were household items: an old Singer sewing machine, a ceramic image of the Virgen de Guadalupe, a red wagon, a bird cage with a live parakeet, and other domestic objects. Some referred to the traditional role of Latinas at home; others verged on the sentimental and kitsch.

In a darker vein, we also included a yellow "CAUTION" sign seen on the sides of the San Diego Freeway in San Clemente; the INS checkpoint just north of the Mexico-U.S. border. This terrifying sign shows a man, a woman, and a young girl in black silhouette running for their lives. As a matter of fact, many immigrants cross to avoid being caught by the INS and have been killed inadvertently, like "roadkill."

An industrial sewing machine was prominently displayed at the center of this

artificial field, and on top of it rested a small black-and-white monitor that played the video program. At intervals during the exhibition Leda Ramos sat down at the machine repetitively sewing pieces of fabric and occasionally glancing at the monitor. To the viewer the woman laboring in front of her machine floated in the midst of a dream game. She was like the many women who do piecework at home to support their families while simultaneously minding children.

Like a surreal documentary, our installation depicts complex elements of the contemporary Latino urban and social landscape in the form of a dreamscape. It evoked the *lucha por la vida*, composed in equal amounts of humor, courage, and resourcefulness, as well as pain, fatigue, and danger.

We Are Vendors, Not Criminals/Somos Vendedores, No Criminales

We Are Vendors, Not Criminals/Somos Vendedores, No Criminales was an installation project for the Full Moon Gallery exhibition *Architectural Interventions*, curated by the Foundation for Art Resources, at Pershing Square, downtown Los Angeles, from March 28 to May 23, 1997. The following is our artists' statement that was displayed on the storefront window site for the exhibition. In order to include a Spanish-speaking audience, the text was in English and Spanish:

We are expanding the notion of architecture to address cultural and social relationships in Los Angeles rather than putting emphasis on "form" or the "built environment."

Pershing Square is a border, an intersection. Just one block west is the command center of the new Pacific Rim economy: towering skyscrapers of glass, steel and marble. One block east is Broadway, the thriving commercial street of the Latino immigrant community.

The Square was once an oasis of trees and fountains where all classes, and all ideas, intermingled. Now it is an abstract concrete desert, carefully designed to keep the homeless and the poor out of the face of power.

Street Vendors subvert this logic of walls and borders. They humanize the harsh streetscapes by selling oranges, fruit, or corn on street corners, parks and freeway on-ramps. "Somos vendedores, no criminales" is the slogan of the Asociación de Vendedores Ambulantes, an organization seeking acceptance and understanding of street vending.⁶

The oranges that the vendors sell on the street are a product of the Southern California citrus industry. This industry played a significant role in the creation of California myths: crate labels representing a romantic past—the home of Ramona—and racial stereotypes of the farm workers from Mexico, Philippines, Japan and China. Today, we still know very little about those who work in the fields or those orange sellers who populate our streets.

In this storefront installation we contrasted the consumer experience of shopping in the Thrifty Store, which closed in the 1980s, with the everyday "illegal" selling of

oranges on street corners and traffic islands. Shopping in a conventional store is markedly different from purchasing from a street vendor. We wanted to emphasize the dignity of street vending, which city policies and city planning often criminalize.

The installation featured racist orange-crate labels reproduced from the Huntington Library Ephemera Collection. Labels included "Lazy Peon Avocados," depicting a Mexican laborer asleep under a gigantic sombrero; "Rosita," complete with a very Anglo-European-looking "senorita"; and the Ruff Skin orange brand—"Ugh, poor looker outside, but heap fine taste inside"—which juxtaposes a "mean" and "menacing" Indian with feather with a "happy" and smiling Indian. These labels were contrasted with photographs of hardworking men and women orange vendors whom we interviewed around downtown Los Angeles.

In addition, we placed iconic imagery and objects representing varying degrees of southern California myth perceptions. We included a sea of terra-cotta Spanish tiles serving as both floor and roof of the storefront window, reproductions of tourist postcards, a Spanish mantilla, an orange tree with strangely formed oranges, and on the window the words "We Are Vendors, Not Criminals/Somos Vendedores, No Criminales" in the format of official street signage.

Between Home and Work

Between Home and Work, for *Hidden Labor: Uncovering L.A.'s Garment Industry*, was a project in collaboration with Common Threads Artists Group and UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees, AFL-CIO). Occupying nine storefront windows at the historic May Company Building in downtown Los Angeles, *Hidden Labor* was a year-long installation project (May 1997 to May 1998) that highlighted the significance and history of the Los Angeles garment industry and its workers.⁷

The design of *Between Home and Work* was preceded by eight months of research into the garment industry, attendance at union meetings, and interviews with garment workers. Our department store window installation included personal narratives, memory of place, and demographics and explored the contribution of Latinas to a hidden economy in the urban landscape of Los Angeles.

We devoted our window to the personal stories of Latino and Latina garment workers. During interviews with them, conducted in Spanish, we gained an increasing appreciation of the resourcefulness and courage of their daily lives: the difficulties finding work to support their families and the abuses they were subjected to in their places of employment. An excerpt from a letter to the Martínez family in Oaxaca, Mexico, describes a typical situation:

I got a job as a seamstress without knowing how to use a sewing machine. The first week I earned \$20. It was just enough for the bus fare. The following week I earned \$50. Then there was no work so they let me go. I found another shop where I earn

\$50. They pay me 5 to 8 cents per piece and even though I try real hard I can't do any more pieces. But it's better than staying home and not earning anything. I have to pay \$100 for food and rent. Gaby has been lending me for food.⁸

Many of the women regularly send money to relatives in Mexico or Central America as well as supporting families here in Los Angeles. "Home" in this double sense is the constant referent in their lives. Memories and mementos, as well as letters and photographs, emphasize the continuing link, sentimental and material, to places of origin. At the same time workers struggle to create new homes in L.A. and build supportive relationships through friends, church, and, in our particular case, the union.

We asked the workers to bring personal objects, letters, and family photographs to display in the window for the duration of the exhibit. All the donated items were carefully placed on shelves of varying sizes and at different heights on the back wall of the storefront window display. This participatory element was one of the most successful moments of all three installations. During the dedication all those who had donated items felt included in the making of the piece and the retelling of their stories.

The installation was designed to be as visually appealing as a department store window. Ironically, a few years ago, these same windows displayed clothes laboriously made by workers exploited by the garment industry.

A slightly larger than life *quinceañera* dress stands as a centerpiece of the window. Fifteen-year-olds celebrate the passage from girlhood into womanhood with a *quinceañera* party. Maps and demographics provided the fabric for this *quinceañera* dress. The torso was a collage of *Thomas Guide* pages, with ruffles made out of doilies. The skirt's satin was a census map detailing Latino income levels and poverty in Los Angeles County. The poorer areas matched immigrants' communities.

The dress, surrounded by contemporary photographs and objects, faced a TV monitor that played a video documentary about the garment industry in Los Angeles in the 1970s.⁹ Viewing images from two decades ago and reading current letters from the garment workers, one realizes that their conditions have scarcely improved.

A sewing machine on a pile of bricks, sewing patterns, measuring tape, and hundreds of spools of thread complete the window. Ultimately, the most compelling element and the most satisfying part of the process was the participation of the workers through their letters, objects, and photographs and their review, critique, and ultimate celebration of the piece.

Collaborative Work: Juntos Creamos la Ciudad

Documentation of the Latino urban landscape serves as a blueprint of the daily interventions and inventions of immigrants as they contribute to the constant transformation of streets, neighborhoods, and the city. Each attempt of a store owner, a family, or

a vendor to reshape an establishment, home, or cart in order to re-create home is captured and added to our collection of photographs. Each gesture—enlivening a store with colorful paint, stuccoing a facade, creating a garden shrine—changes our perception of a neighborhood. In *Living Room* we acknowledged this vernacular architecture and design by representing them within the museum.

The inverse of this act of bringing the “Latino public sphere” into an art institution is exemplified by *Somos Vendedores* and *Between Home and Work*. These storefront windows featured the street-vending debate and sweatshop conditions, but the true protagonists were the street vendors and the garment workers directly involved in the final piece. The collaborative process and the exchange that evolved between the artist and the participants were essential elements in these two projects.

In our photo documentation we are observers filtering the urban landscape through the camera lens; in a collaboration we become participants in an urban narrative. Our car pulls in front of a street vendor. He races toward the car to sell us some fruit. We turn off the engine. There’s a look of suspicion. Are we the police, the *migra*, reporters? Then we introduce ourselves in Spanish, explain our project, and ask him some questions. A sigh of relief. We proceed with the interview. He is curious about our project and asks us questions.

The vendors we interviewed were paid the hourly minimum wage, nine hours a day, six days a week, or they were given a commission depending on the number of orange bags they sold. One whole family is in business, driving to local farms, piling oranges on open trucks, and then parking them at choice locations along major streets to sell.

A woman in Echo Park made barely enough money to support herself and her son. She sat every day on a traffic island, a thin blue tarp her only protection from the sun and rain. Her nine-year-old son attends a nearby school. She tells us that he helps her sell oranges when he is off from school. In most cases the vendors we interviewed would allow us to take their pictures. We then included these portraits in the installation: hardworking men and women stood next to historic, and often racist, orange-crate labels. Some labels represented California as the “promised land,” but what most immigrants found were low wages and hard labor in the land of sunshine.

Formal interviews with the garment workers were organized through UNITE. The goal of the Common Threads Artists Group was to create public awareness of conditions in the garment industry through posters, the storefront installation, and participation in rallies and protests.

Soon we learned that working conditions in the Los Angeles sweatshops were no better, or maybe even worse, than those of vendors in the streets. Piecework makes it impossible for workers to earn minimum wage. When some of the workers attempted to unionize they were fired. Still they were eager to keep on with the fight. As she sewed, Sandra Hernandez, a twenty-seven-year-old woman we interviewed, would sing:



Figures 1 and 2. *Living Room*, installation at Museum of Contemporary Art, L.A. *Freewaves* exhibition. August 1996. Photographs courtesy of Willie Garcia.

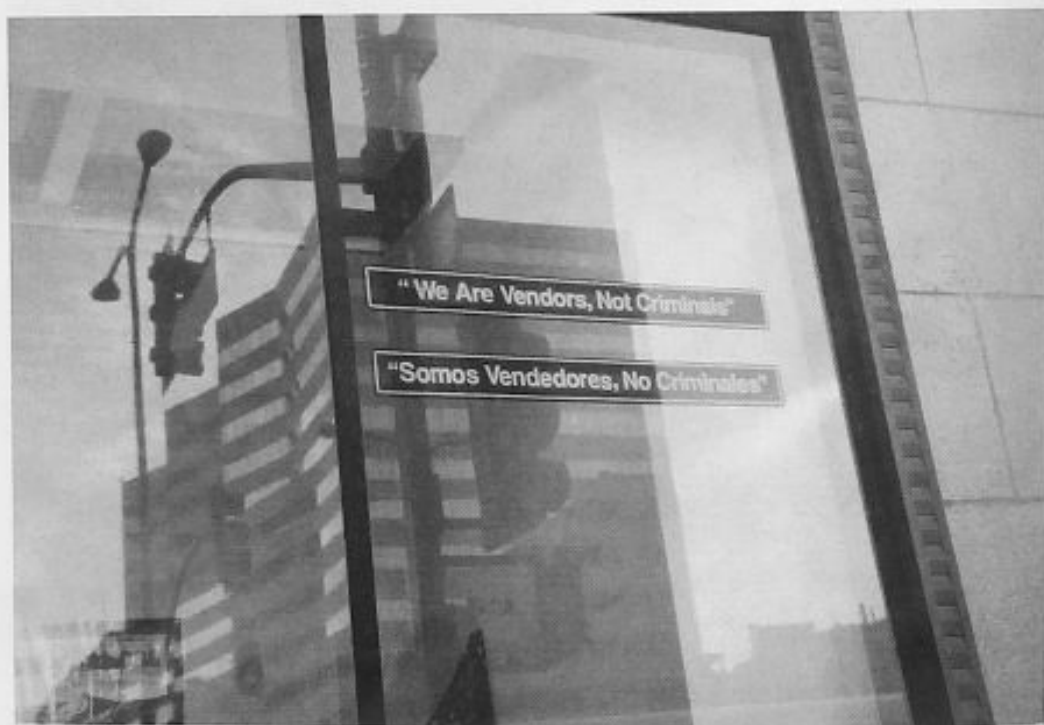
La Marina tiene barcos,
el patrón tiene un avión,
nosotros lo que queremos
es pertenecer a la unión.

[The Navy has ships, the shop owner has a plane, what the workers want is to belong to the union.]

In the accounts relayed to us of their daily struggles their voices would become a little softer, their eyes sadder when they reminisced about home. Many came here to earn money to help families back home. Many mothers, fathers, and children are separated for years. The Thai women enslaved in El Monte, the Salvadoreans, Mexicans, and Guatemalan women who did piecework at home while taking care of children—all missed their countries, families, and friends while struggling to send money home every month. It was this aspect of memory and home that we felt compelled to present. We asked them to participate in our piece by contributing their own personal letters, photographs, and meaningful objects. These were the constant reminders of a “cariño” that kept them going when times were hard.

In both pieces we hoped that the interviews, photographs, and memories of home would convey the human side of an economic and social injustice. The visual imagery, such as the orange-crate labels and the *quinceañera* dress, provided an aesthetic framework that informed the viewer within a poetic context. We wanted the beautiful nature of our “look” to seduce viewers into the piece, where they would find a social and political message about the complexity of Los Angeles history.





Figures 3 and 4. *We Are Vendors, Not Criminals/Somos Vendedores, No Criminales*, installation for *Architectural Interventions* exhibition, March 1997. Photographs courtesy of A. Moctezuma.



Figures 5 and 6. Leda Ramos performance in *Between Home and Work*, installation from *Hidden Labor: Uncovering L.A.'s Garment Industry*, May 1997–May 1998. Photographs courtesy of Judy Branfman and A. Moctezuma.

Participation, Multiple Audiences, and Different Reflections

The participatory element evolved into collaborative art-making. The public setting established a relationship with multiple audiences.

During the creation of *Between Home and Work*, we collaborated with Common Threads Artists Group, UNITE, garment workers, family, and art students from California State University Northridge (CSUN), where we were doing an artist's residency. Before the unveiling of the piece, those who had contributed objects were not sure of the "art" purpose they would serve, but as soon as they saw the completed installation they realized that the power of our window relied on the stories and images they had provided.

People from various classes, occupations, cultures, and life experiences experienced the installations, especially the storefront windows, every night and day. The locations in downtown Los Angeles, vacant historical buildings along major streets, were ideal for heavy pedestrian and bus ridership traffic.

People's experience of the piece depended on their relationship to the subject and their interpretation of our artwork. The bilingual Spanish-English presentation of all the pieces facilitated accessibility to a wide range of viewers, including those who had contributed to the pieces.

In addition to presenting the work to passersby, we also formally shared the work with students. We invited the youth at the Central American Resource Center to see the *Somos Vendedores* window, and while we were conceptualizing the piece, Occidental College students visited our studio and interviewed us. We talked and showed slides of *Between Home and Work* to the art students at CSUN and at the UCLA Chicano Studies Center. Other organizations we presented to were Asociación Vendedores Ambulantes (Street Vending Association) and El Rescate.

In conclusion, the work discussed in this essay helped expand how we continue to define and redefine ourselves as artists. It added to the dialogue about art and architecture, social issues, and Latino representation in the city, and it engaged different audiences in the process. Continuing in this vein, our next project includes working with high school youth from Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, exploring family histories, music, and street sounds and featuring their discoveries on KPFFK, a public radio program.

Notes

1. Design Studios taught collaboratively: *The Bus/Civil Rights*, instructors Alessandra Moctezuma, Leda Ramos, Mike Davis; *Architecture of Tolerance*, instructors, Norman Miller, John Chase, John D'Amico, Leda Ramos; *Hybrid Marketplaces*, instructors Moctezuma, Ramos, with ADOBE LA; *Between House and Home*, instructor Leda Ramos; and *Las Mil Mascaras*, instructor Leda Ramos, with ADOBE LA.

2. Margaret Crawford, "Contesting the Public Realm: Struggles over Public Space in Los Angeles," *Journal of Architectural Education* 49, no. 1 (September 1995): 4-9.

3. Michael Johns, *The City of Mexico in the Age of Diaz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), 51.

4. Assistance by Ulises Diaz and Holly Harper of ADOBE LA; curated by Anne Bray and Joe Lewis.

5. This discussion is indebted to James Rojas's pioneering work on East L.A., "The Enacted Environment: The Creation of 'Place' by Mexicans and Mexican Americans in East Los Angeles," (master's thesis, Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991).

6. Robert Lopez, "Vendors Protest against LAPD," *Los Angeles Times*, August 2, 1994, B3.

7. Common Threads Artists Group is part of Common Threads, an organization dedicated to supporting the Garment Workers Union UNITE in Los Angeles. Participating Common Threads artists in *Hidden Labor* include Roxanne Auer, Judy Branfman, Eva Cockcroft, Leslie Ernst, Mary Linn Hughes, Alessandra Moctezuma, Sheila Pinkel, and Leda Ramos. This project was funded in part by a grant from the Community Redevelopment Agency Downtown Cultural Trust Fund.

8. One of the original letters in the archive of Larry Siems, author of *Between the Lines: Letters between Undocumented Mexican and Central American Immigrants and Their Families and Friends* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992).

9. The documentary *Garment Industry of Southern California* by Susan Racho, first shown on the Boston PBS television show *Realidades*, which aired in the 1970s. This was one of the first television shows focused on the representation of Latinos and their communities on television. Loaned by the L.A.-based National Latino Communication Center.