



# Race and Mexican Art of the Late Colonial and Early National Periods

Ray Hernández-Durán, Department of Art, University of New Mexico

Above image: Rafael Ximeno y Planes, "El milagro del pocito," 1812-1813, oil on canvas

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7 • 2:00 PM • Register to attend at: <https://bit.ly/3ptiKsk>**

When speaking of race in Mexican art, specifically, in the art produced before 1900, we must begin by recognizing three things: the stratified social structure of Mexican society, its intersection with the nation's racially diverse population, specifically as seen in central New Spain/Mexico, and the role of, first, imperial and later, national politics in the definition and representation of race. If considering the relationship between race and art production in Mexico City, a leading question then becomes: are we looking at the art produced BY Indigenous and Black artists or are we examining the representation of these subjects IN art? These are two very important yet different questions that communicate distinct things about the role of artists and patrons in art production, the kinds of art forms produced and the subjects depicted, and the circulation and reception of art. In this talk, I will focus on a transitional period in Mexican art history, 1750-1850, and explore the role of the Academy of San Carlos in shaping Mexican art production. By looking at the academy in Mexico City during this period, we can trace how the image of the Indian was transformed and the Black subject gradually erased as the colonial period came to an end and independent Mexico emerged.

*Ray Hernández-Durán completed his M.A. in Art of Africa and the African Diaspora at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his Ph.D. in Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Latin American Art History at the University of Chicago. He is currently a Professor of Spanish Colonial Art History in the Department of Art at the University of New Mexico. Outside of his colonial art classes, he teaches, Arts of 19th Century Mexico, Baroque Art and Architecture, Arts of Spain, U.S. Latinx Art, African Art, and Museum Studies. His research specializations are grounded, geographically, in New Spain/Mexico/U.S. Southwest and historically, in the 18th- and 19th centuries. His book, The Academy of San Carlos and Mexican Art History: Politics, History, and Art in Nineteenth-Century Mexico (Routledge, 2017) will be followed by two publications, A Historiography of Colonial Art in Mexico, ca. 1855-1934 (University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming) and A Routledge Companion to U.S. Latinx Art, for which he was invited to serve as editor. Ray has been the recipient of various awards, among them, a Fulbright-Hays Research Fellowship to Nigeria, a Fulbright-Hays Dissertation Fellowship to Mexico, an Iberian Studies Research Fellowship to Haiti, a Title V.I. F.L.A.S. Award for the study of Portuguese in Brazil, a Title V.I. F.L.A.S. Award for the study of Yoruba, a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant, and an Andy Warhol Foundation Grant. In addition to his book projects, he is currently co-curating an exhibition of Chicano and Chicana artists who were part of the early movimiento in New Mexico from 1970 to 1980 and developing an article on Tejano artist, Vincent Valdes's great grandfather, who was a painter working in San Antonio, Texas in the 1930s and 1940s.*



This lecture is free and open to the public. Individuals of all abilities are encouraged to attend LAll-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in one of our events, please visit [laii.unm.edu/events/accessibility.html](http://laii.unm.edu/events/accessibility.html). You can find more information on available accommodations on the UNM Accessibility Resource Center website. For more information, visit [laii.unm.edu](http://laii.unm.edu) or contact [laiioutreach@unm.edu](mailto:laiioutreach@unm.edu).