Politics,” only seven of the artists (Acosta, Cabrera, Capistran, Carlee Fernandez, Jauregui, Lopez, and Villegas) present artwork devoid of any references to Chicano culture and identity. Over seventy-five percent of the artists include content related to the Chicano experience.

What is very interesting about this exhibition is that ninety-three percent of the artists have BFA and/or MFA degrees, and almost three fourths of them have received their degrees since 1995. We would expect artists of this generation to know a lot about art and art history, and apparently they do. This is a fact that deserves congratulatory praise.

The members of ASCO deserve credit for leading the conceptual art movement in Chicano Art during the early days of the Chicano Movement. This exhibition follows in this tradition with art that is highly conceptual, e.g., Capistran, De La Loza, Diaz, Esparza, Estrada, Carlee Fernandez, Garay, Gonzales-Diaz, Jauregui, Morales, Ochoa, Ortiz-Torres, Romo, Sarbia, Saldamando, Villegas, Rios, Los Jaichackers, Mendola and Ortiz-Torres, Morales, Ochoa and Rios, and Ybarra. The artwork by Acosta, Cabrera, Castano, Christina Fernandez, Lopez, Montoya, and Villegas is more problematic to classify as such. Moreover, the work of Castano, Morales, and Saldamando are figurative (representational) pieces – an art category that the curators derided as being passé in art schools.

The art in this book demonstrates that most of the younger artists in this exhibition are working in the tradition of conceptual art, but they also are artists who are still making references to the Chicano/Mexican experience. Identity politics and conceptual art are not antithetical. We must guard against creating a fourth phantom of our own making: a phantom that we create ourselves by characterizing artists of Mexican origin living in the United States as having little to nothing to do with “identity.” Assimilation is not what the content of the art in Phantom Sightings demonstrates. To think so is “naïve thinking,” as Paulo Freire would classify it.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census projects that by 2050 Latinos will comprise thirty percent of the population of the United States. It is a tribute to the younger generation of Chicano artists in the Phantom exhibition that most are still creating Chicano art after all these years.

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