

## EDITOR'S COMMENTARY: Art, Discourse, Dialogue

Tiffany Ana López

Visual culture occupies a central role in feminist discourse for the ways it so tangibly illustrates the history, issues and themes, both celebrated and contested, that inform identity formation. This is powerfully illustrated by how the journal's regular offerings of articles, creative writing, occasional section and review quite organically stand in conversation with the inaugural special focused section on Chicana art included in this volume. As this focused section's guest editor Guisela Latorre writes, Chicana art represents "a dynamic and fluid academic and activist movement that has put various disciplines in dialogue with one another." This issue of *Chicana/Latina Studies* thus provides a vehicle to invigorate past and future exchanges through its focused writing about art and visual culture.

This volume also represents a transition between coeditors. Transition means change, but it also means making connections and forging links. As Chicana/Latina scholars, we come together in various ways on and off the page. Alicia Partnoy employed a powerful, creative lens through the vision she brought to the journal to bring together this readership. The editor's craft is largely invisible, a combination of sculpting and finessing language, form, and, to a lesser extent, content. But it is also the invisible hand of the storyteller, someone who lends coherency, manifests conversation, and orchestrates dialogue, all from behind the scenes. Nothing moves forward without an editor's careful, albeit quiet, direction. Alicia's work stressed discursive excellence and evidenced the vision of a poet using the economy of language to pull

readers into the very heart of things both critical and creative. This spirit is one I hope to draw on in my own contributions as coeditor.

I once had the privilege of studying under the poet and teacher Olivia Castellano, an early mentor who taught me to embrace poetry and short story as links between art and academia, similar to what we do within the pages of this journal. I value this aspect of our work within this forum and hope to continue energizing this connection through my editorial hand. The vision I bring to my own scholarship, teaching, and writing is focused on using the personal as a springboard for critical engagement. I believe the inverse is also important, that our critical work very much informs our personal lives. This philosophy led to my creation of the occasional section which premiered in volume 6, issue 1. Notably, there are many of us working across the genres of analytical and creative writing to find a balanced engagement. The writing selected for this issue follows, challenges, and expands the questions and concerns explored by the critics and artists gathered here. The theme of violence, from the colonization of lands to the subjugation of bodies, notably plays in the background of the creative section. The result, I hope, is a body of writing focused on transition and transformation.