

*Sobre el arte contemporáneo latinoamericano:  
debates y estéticas*

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## **What is Latin American art?**

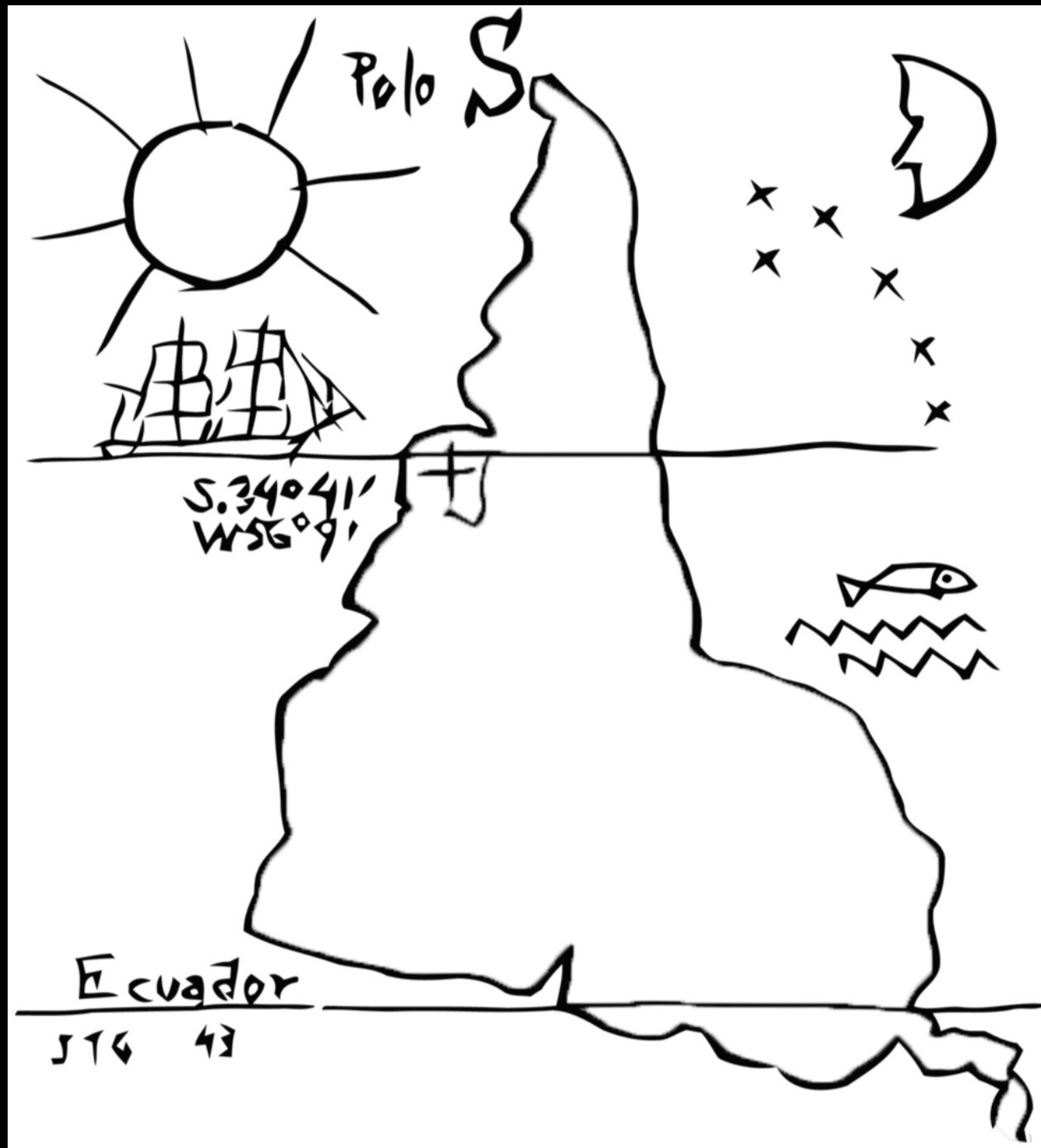
How could we define it?

Does Latin American art exist as a distinct artistic expression?

What does this category or label contribute to the artistic practices and discourses that Latin American artists deploy in their works?

Latin American art is a geo-aesthetic category whereby “the temporal hierarchies and spatial disjunctions of our global imaginaries have been made evident” since modernity/coloniality.

Abya Yala, which in the Kuna language means "land in its full maturity" or "land of vital blood," and is used by the Panamanian Kuna people to refer to the American continent before the arrival of Columbus



Joaquín Torres-García  
*América invertida*  
1943

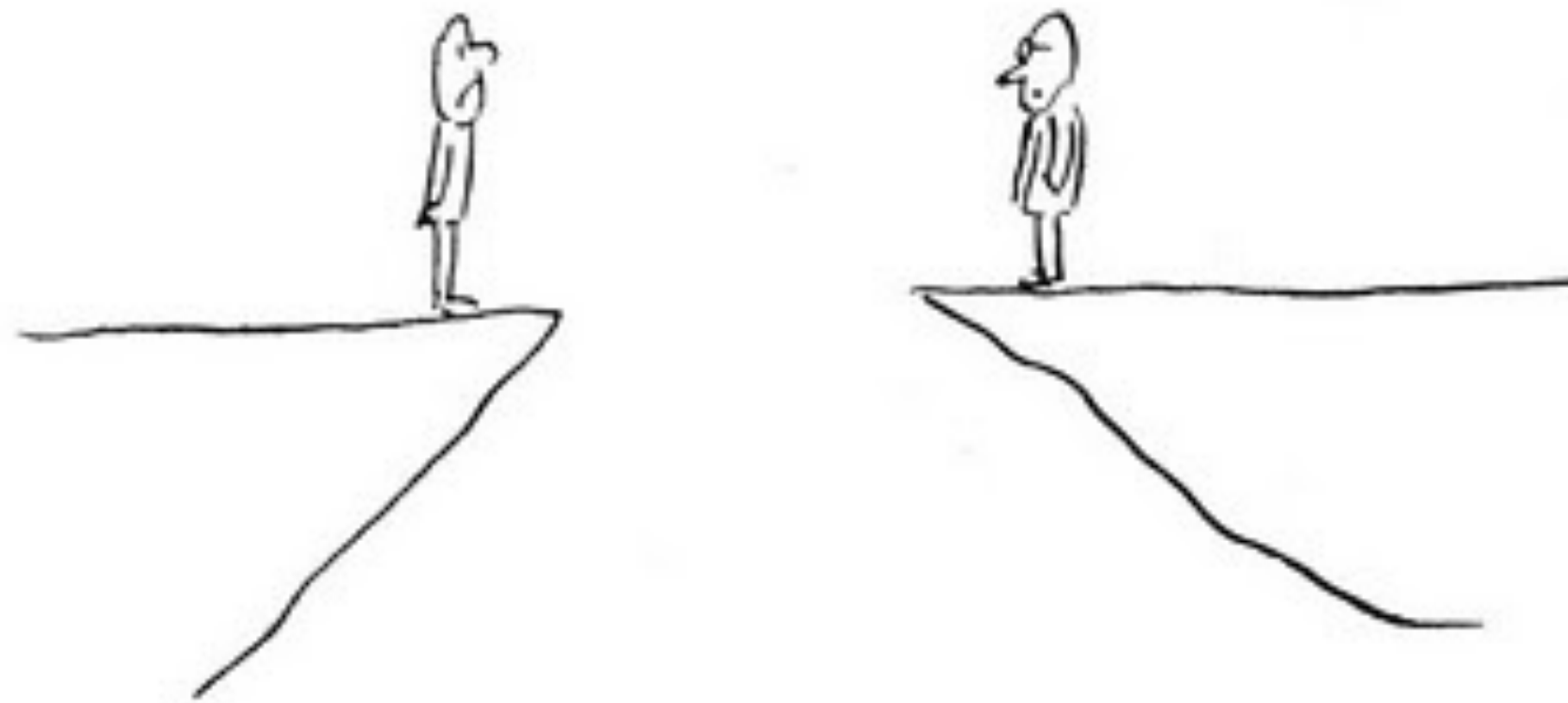
Latin American art was therefore also considered a specific expression of one geography -exuberant, dramatic, extensive, and romantic-, and of a shared history -an indigenous past, colonization, miscegenation-

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By the 1960s and 1970s, art was no longer believed to be separate from its social and political context, and national or regional identities began to be viewed as expressing struggles that were part of historical conflicts against imperialism and acculturation.

In the 1990s, the question of identity was debated mainly through an interrogation of the place of enunciation: one speaks *from* Latin America. Yet the acknowledgment of the place of enunciation did not alter the logics of circulation in the contemporary art world, nor seriously intervened in the global geopolitics of knowledge.





*"It appears you were born on the wrong side of art history."*

Pablo Helguera

*The wrong side of history*

2012

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- The idea of the fantastic or the “marvelous real”





Conceptualism during the 60s and 70s was characterized by its intervention into the region's sociopolitical contexts: in contrast to other parallel avant-garde tendencies centered on formal innovation, the outstanding feature of the conceptual avant-garde in Latin America was the merging of art and politics into a socio-artistic project of emancipation.





Cildo Meireles  
*Insertion Into Ideological Circuits:  
Coca-Cola Project*  
1970

In the 80s and especially the 90s, an art criticism emerged that undertook deeper analyses and linked itself with critical theories –most notably, postcolonial, postmodern, and feminist.

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- Other claims, such as those of indigenous groups excluded from the narratives of postcolonial nation-states, were also beginning to be voiced.

Mosquera: by the late twentieth century, Latin American art no longer needed to declare its identity explicitly in order to be legitimized.

Barriendos: Latin America is being reinvented and consumed as an exhibition project.