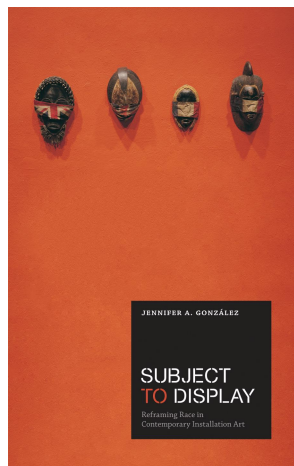


Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art / Jennifer A. González.
 Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, June 2008.—300 p.: ill.— ISBN: 978-0-262-07286-1 (cl., alk. paper): \$29.95.



All too often, installation as art-making practice is viewed and described by the visual components that comprise it—video, sound, sculptural elements and still photography, among many others. In her work *Subject to Display*, Jennifer González takes a different approach by choosing to reframe the works of five artists—James Luna, Fred Wilson, Amalia Mesa-Bains, Pepón Osorio and Renée Green—around the subject of race. By focusing on men and women artists who represent different American racial types, including Native American, African-American, and Latino, González can more broadly explore the ways in which race, in general, colors the creation, presentation, and experience of contemporary art.

In the book's introduction, González, an associate professor in the history of art and visual culture at the University of California, Santa Cruz, offers an explanation of the discourse of race as subject, discussing and reacting to the theories of such writers as Annie E. Coombes, Hal Foster, and Homi Bhabha. While she is reliant on theory to build her arguments, this work is not overwhelmed by it.

Each chapter in this study is devoted to the work of one of the five artists. González discusses and explores finished works, but also the intentionality of each artist, who has both presented and emerged from a racial context. In all the featured works, race is depicted through the use of cultural objects from the artist's background; These objects that created and fostered racial stereotypes are, in the context of the contemporary installation, commenting on racial issues. In this way, race is continually deconstructed and constructed. Repeatedly, Rodríguez confronts us with these conflicting narratives, positioning race somewhere between them. González's scholarship is rigorous, almost scientific in its ability to connect theory to art practice.

I recommend purchase of this publication for any academic library that supports a curriculum on American and/or contemporary art. It augments the growing body of work on installation art, as well as race in art, and thoroughly documents specific works by these challenging artists.

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