

**Celeste Olalquiaga, Ph.D.**

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**Education**

- 1990 Ph.D., Latin American Cultural Studies, Spanish and Portuguese Dept., Columbia University.
- 1983 M.A., Spanish and Portuguese, University of Maryland, College Park.
- 1980 B.A. in Literature, Cum Laude, Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Caracas, Venezuela.

**Fellowships**

- 2019 The Clark Art Institute
- 1996 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.
- 1994 The Rockefeller Foundation, Bellagio Center.

**Teaching Experience**

- 2012 Adjunct Professor, Transdisciplinary Graduate Seminar, Department of Fine Arts, Parsons The New School. Taught seminar on kitsch.
- 1998 Writer in Residence, Department of Critical Studies, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California. Taught graduate seminar on Walter Benjamin; led writing workshop.
- 1992 Adjunct Professor, Department of Performance Studies, New York University. Taught graduate seminar on kitsch.
- 1991-93 Adjunct Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, The Cooper Union. Taught literature and film to undergraduates.

## **Books**

*Downward Spiral: El Helicoide's Descent from Mall to Prison*, co-edited with Lisa Blackmore. New York: Urban Research, 2018.

*The Artificial Kingdom: A Treasury of the Kitsch Experience*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1998; British edition, London: Bloomsbury, 1999; US paperback edition, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002; French translation published as *Royaumes de l'artifice*, Lyon: Fage Editions, 2008, two editions; Spanish translation published as *El reino artificial*, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 2008.

*Megalopolis: Contemporary Cultural Sensibilities*.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992, two editions; Spanish translation published as *Megalopolis*, Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1993, and Santiago: Metales Pesados, 2015; Portuguese translation published as *Megalopolis*, Sao Paulo: Editora Studio Nobel, 1998.

## **Cultural Organization**

2013-18 Founder and Director, PROYECTO HELICOIDE, a non-profit cultural association dedicated to the patrimonial and cultural rescue of El Helicoide de la Roca Tarpeya, a modern building in Caracas, Venezuela. PROYECTO HELICOIDE expanded its activities in 2016 to Santiago de Chile, developing comparisons between El Helicoide and local spiral architecture.

[www.proyectoelicoide.com](http://www.proyectoelicoide.com)

## **Curatorship and Juries**

2017 "El Helicoide: From Mall to Prison" Center for Architecture (AIA, NYC). A compact show presenting original material along with contemporary photos and videos of El Helicoide. Featured by *Artforum's* Critics' Picks

[www.artforum.com/picks/id=68864](http://www.artforum.com/picks/id=68864) and New York Magazine's Approval Matrix

<http://nymag.com/arts/all/approvalmatrix/approval-matrix-2017-06-26/>

2014 "Helicoides fallidos: proyectos, ocupaciones y usos de El Helicoide de la Roca Tarpeya (1955-2014)," Museo de Arquitectura, Caracas. An 82-foot timeline of El Helicoide from its origins in 1955 until the show's date, along with original material in display cases, and videos. WINNER AICA VENEZUELA BEST 2014 COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION.

Main curator, "Helicoides posibles: visiones fantásticas," Centro Cultural Chacao, Caracas. A 40-foot timeline of El Helicoide and a selection of artistic works and videos on the topic. WINNER AICA VENEZUELA BEST 2014 COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION.

2009 Studio Judge (Jury d'atelier), Haute Ecole d'art et de design, Geneve. Evaluation and discussion of student projects, specifically, aquaria.

1993 Co-curator of "The Final Frontier," The New Museum, New York City. This show presented the human body as the final frontier of technology, showing how the boundaries between the organic and the technological are increasingly blurred. I participated in conceptualizing the exhibition, selecting the artists and designing how the work would be showed. Artists included Diller+Scofidio, Andrea Zittel, Michael Joo, Julia Scher and Aziz+Cucher, among others.

#### **Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals (Selected)**

"Tropical Babel" *Cabinet* #52 (Winter 2013-4), 50-5. Posted in Failed Architectures Sept. 11, 2014 [www.failedarchitecture.com/tropical-babel/](http://www.failedarchitecture.com/tropical-babel/). Translated and republished as "Babel Tropical," *Cuadernos de literatura*, vol. XX, 39 (enero-junio 2016), 398-406. [www.academia.edu/19781326/Celeste Olalquiaga Babel tropical](http://www.academia.edu/19781326/Celeste_Olalquiaga_Babel_tropical)

"Mira pero no toques: El rol de la tactilidad en la era visual." *Revista de Occidente* #373 (June 2012), 27-47. [www.academia.edu/5176460/Se mira pero no se toca](http://www.academia.edu/5176460/Se_mira_pero_no_se_toca)

"Holy Rollers." *Cabinet* #45 (Spring 2012), 46-52. [www.academia.edu/5176457/Holy Rollers](http://www.academia.edu/5176457/Holy_Rollers)

"Flore Sacrée: Les reliquaires à paperoles, ornements sublimes." Special issue "Ornement/Ornemental." *Perspective, La revue de l'INHA* (Institut national

d'histoire de l'art), Paris 1 (2010/2011), 151-6.

"La Troisième nature ou la fin des origines." Special issue  
"Le postmodernisme, et après?" Ed. Eduardo Ayres  
Tomaz et Raphaëlle Nollez-Goldbach. *Tumultes* (Cahiers  
du Centre de Sociologie des Pratiques et des  
Représentations Politiques, Université Paris Diderot -  
Paris 7) 34 (Mai 2010), 163-76.

"Third Nature, or the End of Origins." Special issue  
"Staging Vernaculars." Ed. Glen Lowry. *West Coast  
Line* (Simon Fraser University) 50, vol. 40 #2 (2007),  
40-53. [www.academia.edu/5176461/Third Nature](http://www.academia.edu/5176461/Third_Nature)

"The Trash of History." Issue on Caracas. *StadtBauwelt* 48  
(2003), 24-34.

"Rodney, King. Eennatuurlijkehistorie van de kitsch."  
Special issue "Trasher." *AS MediaTijdschrift* 160.  
(Oktober, November, December 2001), 83-93.

"Vigencia y caducidad del libro, reflexiones de una lectora  
errática." Special issue "Mercado, editoriales y  
difusión de discursos culturales en América  
Latina." Ed. Maria Julia Daroqui and Eleonora Cróquer.  
*Revista Iberoamericana* vol. 67, no. 197 (October-  
December 2001), 661-70.

"A Small Tribute to a Dying City." Special issue.  
"Collapsing New Buildings." Ed. Lawrence Chua. *Muae* 2  
(1997), separata inside back cover.

"Paradise Lost." Special issue, "Sites and Stations,  
Provisional Utopias. Architecture and Utopia in the  
Contemporary City." Eds. Stan Allen and Kyong Park.  
*Lusitania* 7, 1996, 43-50.

"The Pandemonic Junk Shop of Solitude: Kitsch and Death."  
Special issue, "The Abject, America." Ed. Catherine  
Liu. *Lusitania*, Vol. 1 no. 4, 1993, 162-165.

"The Dark Side of Modernity's Moon," *Agenda:Contemporary  
Art Magazine* 28 (1992), 22-25.

#### **Articles in Peer-Reviewed Anthologies (Selected)**

"Riches to Rags: The Sad Story of Venezuela's Modern

Flagship." In *Downward Spiral: El Helicoide's Descent from Mall to Prison*, edited by Celeste Olalquiaga and Lisa Blackmore, 20-33. New York: Urban Research, 2017.

"The Concrete Monster of Roca Tarpeya." In *Downward Spiral: El Helicoide's Descent from Mall to Prison*, edited by Celeste Olalquiaga and Lisa Blackmore, 223-235. New York: Urban Research, 2017.

"El Helicoide: Modern Ruins and the Urban Imaginary." In *Materializing Memory in Art and Popular Culture*, edited by László Munteán, Liedeke Plate and Anneke Smelik, 29-44. New York: Routledge, 2017.

"Dead Stock: The Researcher as Collector of Failed Goods." *What is Research in the Visual Arts? Obsession, Archive, Encounter*. Ed. Michael Ann Holly and Marquard Smith, 33-46. Williamstown and New Haven: Clark Art Institute/Yale University Press, 2008.

[www.academia.edu/5176459/Dead Stock. The Researcher as Collector](http://www.academia.edu/5176459/Dead_Stock_The_Researcher_as_Collector)

"Las ruinas del futuro: arquitectura modernista y kitsch." *Más allá de la ciudad letrada: Crónicas y espacios urbanos*. Eds. Boris Muñoz and Silvia Spitta, 207-219. Pittsburgh: Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana/Biblioteca de América, 2003.

"A Natural History of Kitsch." *Re-verberations: Tactics of Resistance, Forms of Agency in Trans/Cultural Practices*. Ed. Jean Fisher. (Maastricht: Jan Van Eyck Akademy Editions, 2000), 107-16.

"La basura de la historia. Las ruinas modernas en la era virtual." *Modernidad y postmodernidad. Espacios y tiempos dentro del arte latinoamericano*. (Caracas: Museo Alejandro Otero, 2000), 145-158.

"Pain Practices and the Reconfiguration of Physical Experience." *When Pain Strikes*. Ed. Bill Burns et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 254-65.

"From Pastiche to Macaroni." *Performing Hybridity*. Eds. May Joseph and Jennifer Natalya Fink. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 171-6.

"Vulture Culture." *Rethinking Borders*. Ed. John C. Welchman. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 85-99.

"Kitsch y vanguardia." *Modernidad, Postmodernidad y Vanguardias*. Ed. Ana Pizarro. (Santiago: Fundación Vicente Huidobro, 1995), 61-9.

### **Articles in catalogues (Selected)**

"Méduse, méduses." In Mark Dion, *Extra Naturel*, catalogue for the exhibition presented at Beaux-Arts de Paris from May 18 through July 14, 2015, 69-71. (Paris : Editions Beaux-Arts de Paris, 2016), 69-71.

[www.academia.edu/33676517/Meduse\\_meduses.pdf](http://www.academia.edu/33676517/Meduse_meduses.pdf)

"Temps perdu." *Erre, variations labyrinthiques*, catalogue for the exhibition presented at the Centre Pompidou-Metz from September 12, 2011 through March 5, 2012. (Metz: Editions du Centre Pompidou-Metz, 2011), 182-5.

"Tongue in Kitsch." *Miralda: De Gustibus Non Disputandum*, catalogue for the exhibition presented at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía from June 24 through October 11, 2010. (Madrid: Editorial La Fábrica, 2010), 81- 6.

"Look but don't Touch: The Role of Tactility in an Era of Visual Excess," catalogue for the exhibition *Trevor Gould: Posing for the Public, The World as Exhibition*. (Hamilton and Montreal: Art Gallery of Hamilton/Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, 2002), 83-99.

[www.academia.edu/5176458/Look\\_but\\_dont\\_Touch](http://www.academia.edu/5176458/Look_but_dont_Touch)

"Home is Where the Art is," catalogue for the exhibition *Home and the World : Architectural Sculpture by Two Contemporary African Artists : Aboudramane and Bodys Isek Kingelez*. (New York: The Museum for African Art, 1993), 15-19.

### **Invited Lectures**

2018 "El Helicoide: From Mall to Prison." Visiting Lecture, The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture of The Cooper Union

--- "El Helicoide: A Futuristic Living Ruin in Caracas." Spring

- 2018 SCIAME Lecture Series, Spitzer School of Architecture of the City of New York
- 2017 "El Helicoide: Venezuela's Downward Spiral."  
Utopia/Dystopia: Accidental Dystopia Series. Hauser and Wirth, NYC.
- 2016 "Las ruinas de la modernidad," Facultad de Arquitectura, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago
- "Ruinas vivientes: Las extrañas vidas de las ruinas modernas," Facultad de Arquitectura, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago de Chile
- 2015 "Tactility and Digitality" ECAL (Haute Ecole d'Art et Design), Lausanne
- 2009 "Look but don't Touch: The Role of Tactility in an Era of Visual Excess," Goldsmiths University, London.
- 2004 "Le royaume artificiel: kitsch et modernité", Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Nîmes.
- 2002 "Natural Artifice or Cultural Residue", Biennale of Sydney.
- 1999 "The Trash of History: Modern Ruins in A Virtual Age," Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, Columbia University.
- 1994 "Vulture Culture," Department of Art and Art History, Colgate University.
- 1993 "New York: Postmodern Megalopolis," Department of Architecture, Parsons School of Design.
- "Subcultural Crossdressing," Faculty of Environmental Design, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne
- "Kitsch and the Avantgarde," California College of Arts and Crafts.
- "The Culture of Pain," Camerawork, San Francisco.
- 1992 "Vulture Culture: The Recycling of Images in Postmodernity," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

## Invited Conference Presentations

- 2018 Panel "An Attempt to Become Modern." Americas Society. In conjunction with the exhibition "The Metropolis in Latin America, 1830-1930."
- 2017 Panel "Architecture and Design in Venezuela," in conjunction with the exhibition "El Helicoide : From Mall to Prison," Center for Architecture, NYC.  
[www.facebook.com/CenterforArchitecture/videos/10155254627862978/](http://www.facebook.com/CenterforArchitecture/videos/10155254627862978/)
- 2016 "Las ruinas en la era digital," Romanisches Seminar, University of Zurich
- 2015 "El naufragio del ímpetu futurista en Caracas: El Helicoide de la Roca Tarpeya" in "Paisajes modernos de América Latina y el Caribe," PUCMM, Santo Domingo.
- 2014 "Modern Ruins and the Urban Imaginary," Keynote Lecture, "Things to Remember: Materializing Memories in Art and Culture," Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands.
- 2010 "La troisième nature ou la fin des origines," at "There is no Such Thing as Nature! Redéfinition et devenir de l'idée de nature dans l'art contemporain," Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Paris.
- 2008 "Les poubelles de l'histoire: les ruines modernes à l'ère du virtuel", at "Urbanismes Entropiques," Jeu de Paume, Paris.
- 2007 "The Researcher as Collector," at "What is Research in the Visual Arts?" Clark Art Institute.
- 2005 "Nostalgia y melancolía," at "Erase una vez: la modernidad y sus nostalgias," Museo Tamayo, México DF.
- 2004 "De l'origine à la fin en passant par le 'fake'", at "De l'ethnographie du poisson à l'objet de luxe: Un autre regard," Maison des sciences de l'homme, Paris.
- 2003 "Modernity in Ruins", at "Cultura urbana informal," Universidad Central de Venezuela.
- 2002 "Out of Site". Panel discussion, The New Museum.
- 2000 "Natural Artifice or Cultural Residue: The Role of Nature



in an Era of High Technology," at "The State of the International Exhibition at the End of the Millenium," Carnegie International.

1999 "The Trash of History," at "Reverberations," Jan Van Eyck Akademie, Maastricht.

1995 "Spirits in the House of Art, A Discussion on Spirituality and Cultural Identity." Panel discussion at El Museo del Barrio, NYC.

1994 "The Ruins of Modernity," in Denaturalized Urbanity," Graduate School of Design, Harvard University.

"Pain Practices" in "The Art Object in an Age of Electronic Technology." Parsons School of Design.

Moderator, "The Submissive Moment: Pleasure and the Politics of Pain." Panel discussion at The New Museum.

1993 Panelist, "Libido," at Exit Art Gallery, NYC; "The Boundary Rider," at Biennale of Sydney; "Lift and Separate," at The Cooper Union; "Identity, Power and the Cultural Body," at School of Visual Arts.

1992 "Epilogue" in "Terminal Instructions (From the Technocracy)" at Four Walls, New York City.

1991 "Kitsch and the Avantgarde," at "Vanguardia y Modernidad," "Fundacion Vicente Huidobro, Santiago de Chile.

## **Languages**

Spanish, native fluency.

English, native fluency (second language).

French, proficiency in reading, writing and speaking.