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## Indigenismo and the Limits of Cultural Appropriation

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# INDIGENISMO AND THE LIMITS OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

*frida kahlo and marina núñez del prado*

Camilla Sutherland

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In July 2021, the online arts magazine *Hyperallergic* published an opinion piece by Puré-pucha photographer and writer Joanna García Cherán entitled “An Indigenous Perspective on Frida Kahlo.” In it she proposes that what is “missing from the public discourse about the artist are discussions about how the ‘nationalism’ that Kahlo promoted both in her art and personal style perpetuate the construction of a mythologized Indianness at the expense of Indigenous people” (García Cherán, par. 1). At the heart of García Cherán’s critique of Kahlo is a broader reflection on the problematics of the *indigenista* movement that her work responded to. This early twentieth-century movement, which flourished particularly in Central American and Andean regions but is present across Latin America, was characterized by the valorisation of indigenous art forms and traditions. However, as García Cherán highlights, “*indigenismo* was the creation of indigeneity without Indigenous voices” (par. 9). This absence of indigenous voices led to the reinscription of narrow and homogenized conceptualizations of indigenous cultures and identities. It likewise led to the (mis)appropriation of these cultures in the advancement of the agendas of political and artistic elites.

As an admirer and scholar of Kahlo’s work, I found myself faced with a substantial challenge when called upon to align the most insidious aspects of *indigenismo* with the strategies of my feminist idol. Is it time for us to “cancel Frida Kahlo,” as some Twitter users and subreddits have proposed as a response to the artist’s alleged cultural appropriation? In the

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quest to pursue a more nuanced discussion, two alternative questions presented themselves to me: firstly, to what extent should we efface or wilfully ignore problematic elements of women artists’ work in the name of feminist recuperation? Concurrently, is there a way in which to hold these elements in a productive tension?

In an attempt to explore these issues, I will offer a brief overview of the emergence of *indigenista* movements in Mexico and the Andean region, paying particular attention to the complex gender and racial politics that undergirded them. I will combine this with

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discussion of two interrelated case studies. One is perhaps the best-known woman artist, Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907–54), whose painting *Diego y yo* (1949) recently broke all records for the most expensive piece by a Latin American artist to be sold at auction.<sup>1</sup> The other has been all but erased from art history: Bolivian sculptor Marina Núñez del Prado (1910–95). Both women drew heavily from indigenous cultures in their works and employed modes of self-fashioning rooted in performed indigeneity. As members of a cosmopolitan elite, Kahlo's and Núñez del Prado's engagements with indigenous culture can be framed as appropriative. However, what I seek to explore here – to approach that desired nuance in the discussion of this controversial topic – is the extent to which gender and location complicate our interpretation of the racial tensions at the heart of Latin American modernism. This is not an apologia for women *indigenistas*, but rather an attempt to think through what happens at the intersections of distinct forms of marginalization and the strategies used to overcome them.

### revolutionary roots

To begin, let us travel to the Mexico of 1921, a moment in which *indigenismo* was truly consolidated in the region. At that time, Mexico was emerging from almost a decade of violent civil war (1910–17), and was embarking on a rebuilding process in accordance with a sense of unified revolutionary nationalism. The valorisation of indigenous culture – both in terms of the splendour of pre-Columbian civilizations and the vibrant living traditions of the region – became a hallmark of the post-revolutionary period. However, as critics such as Alan Knight and Rick López have highlighted, it is important to recognize that *indigenismo* did not emerge out of direct pressure from the indigenous community in the same way as the agrarian uprisings of the Revolution had. “The turn toward an ‘ethnized’ or ‘Indianized’ definition of Mexico’s national culture,” López asserts, “did not flow inevitably out of Mexico’s historical experience,

as is generally assumed, but instead resulted from a distinct movement led by cosmopolitan nationalists inside and outside the government” (23).

It was in 1921 that this “distinct movement” really began to fully take shape. This year saw the appointment of José Vasconcelos as head of the newly formed Secretariat of Public Education, and with it the initiation of the state-sponsored muralist movement. Led by figures such as José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera (who would go on to become Kahlo's husband in 1929), the muralist movement sought to visualize new national narratives that embodied the ideals of the Revolution. Public art was considered a unique and democratic vehicle through which to communicate revolutionary nationalist sentiment to a population with high levels of illiteracy.<sup>2</sup> The year 1921 also saw the celebration of the centennial of Mexico's independence from Spain – a historical milestone that galvanized the nascent *indigenista* movement. Seen by the new revolutionary government of General Álvaro Obregón as a chance to unify a people fragmented and demoralized by war, and also as an opportunity to set the ideological agenda of the coming years, prominent figures were commissioned to curate a series of patriotic spectacles. Central among these were the “Noche Mexicana” [Mexican Night] and the Exhibition of Popular Arts, inaugurated in September 1921 as centrepieces of the centennial celebrations. Both events represented self-conscious articulations of *mexicanidad* (Mexicanness) as rooted in rural popular culture, and contributed to framing *rural popular culture* as specifically indigenous. Speaking of the exhibition catalogue that accompanied the Exhibition of Popular Arts, Karen Cordero Reiman observes the “increasing conflation of the categories ‘popular’ and ‘indigenous,’ crediting the Indian's ‘innate’ manual ability for the quality of Mexican crafts and associating both terms with the essence of national culture” (23). A romanticized, heroic vision of Aztec and Mayan civilizations had formed part of Mexican national narratives since long before the Revolution. However, what distinguished

the post-revolutionary conceptualization and deployment of indigeneity was the weaving of living indigenous peoples and traditions into a larger discourse of populist nationalism.

On the one hand, the “Noche Mexicana,” with its ostentatious performances of regional folk dances and stalls celebrating food traditionally eaten by the peasant classes, can be viewed as a radical attempt to erase prevailing prejudices towards rural and indigenous groups. The placement of previously disparaged rural art forms in a museum setting in the Exhibition of Popular Arts, can likewise be seen as a progressive challenge to cultural biases that had predominated in Mexico since the colonial period. Popular art forms were likewise exalted specifically for their distance from European visual traditions, adding another significant decolonial dimension to these interventions. In a July 1923 article in *El Universal*, Dr Atl (author of the Exhibition of Popular Arts’ catalogue) forcefully declared that the artistic renaissance underway in Mexico was not “una emanación de las fórmulas virreinales o coloniales: es un renacimiento de las antiguas virtudes de las razas autóctonas que parecen haber atravesado las oscuras capas de la dominación española / an emanation of viceregal or colonial formulas: it is a rebirth of the ancient virtues of our autochthonous races that have broken through the dark layers of Spanish domination” (“Colaboración artística”). And yet, despite these radical proclamations, there were substantial ways in which *indigenista* movements of the first half of the twentieth century in fact replicated hegemonic racial and gender hierarchies.

In January 1921, the Mexico City broadsheet *El Universal* declared that it would be sponsoring a beauty contest entitled the “India Bonita” (“Pretty Indian”) as part of the centennial celebrations. The announcement framed the event as a “completely racial contest” going on to assert that “Never before has a [Mexican] newspaper dignified its pages with the strong and handsome faces of the infinitude of *indias* who hail from the nation’s lowest social classes” (qtd in Zavala 162). Setting aside the clearly problematic aspects of so-called

“beauty contests,” the “India Bonita” serves as a striking snapshot of the fraught conflation of racial, gender, and class politics playing out in post-revolutionary Mexico. In her detailed examination of the “India Bonita” contest, art historian Adriana Zavala highlights it as a turning point in the construction of a specifically feminized indigeneity, one that not only served to reinforce traditional gender roles (based on notions of innocence, purity, and self-sacrifice), but also advanced a eugenicist agenda.

The discourse of *mestizaje* (racial mixing) was prominent in *indigenista* movements and the broader construction of post-revolutionary Mexican national identity. Manuel Gamio, who was chosen as one of the main judges of the “India Bonita” contest, was the author of *Forjando patria* (1916), a collection of essays which extolled the necessity of racial miscegenation to Mexico’s national unity: “[la] avanzada y feliz fusión de razas, constituye la primera y más sólida base del nacionalismo / [the] advanced and happy fusion of races, constitutes the first and most solid basis of nationalism” (13). In addition to his role as judge of the “India Bonita” contest, Gamio was also Mexico’s representative at the Second International Eugenics Congress held in Washington, DC in 1921. José Vasconcelos, who played a key role in advancing *indigenista* cultural programmes, was equally invested in promoting the discourse of *mestizaje*, culminating in his 1925 book *La raza cósmica*, which proposes the Americas as the potential crucible of the new race of man, resulting from the unique forms of miscegenation occurring in the continent.

Most relevant to the present discussion is the extent to which events such as the “India Bonita” contest and the discourse of *mestizaje* were not only racialized but also specifically gendered. “The contest mobilized an ‘economy of desire,’” Zavala observes, “wherein the ‘Indian’ lower class, and in this case a particular indigenous woman, were situated as objects of (sexual) consumption for middle- and upper-class men” (182). These specific gender dynamics perpetuated a long-

held conception of *mestizaje* as a process occurring uniquely between white men and indigenous women (187). Many of the cultural initiatives of post-revolutionary Mexico encouraged the assimilation – or in the words of co-organizer of the Exhibition of Popular Arts, Jorge Enciso, the “rehabilitation” (qtd in López 31) – of indigenous peoples into the body politic in a way that did not threaten the existing hegemony of the white and mestizo elites. It likewise served to reinforce idealized and limiting roles for women within this post-revolutionary landscape.

When considering the Bolivian *indigenista* movements and Núñez del Prado’s contribution to them, it is necessary to consider the country within the wider Andean region (also encompassing Peru and Ecuador). Michelle Greet has rightly highlighted that “Bolivia did not contribute to the construction of Indigenist ideologies in the Andes to the same extent as Peru and Ecuador” (4). Likewise, we cannot read Andean *indigenismo* as somehow divorced from the developments occurring in Mexico. The Mexican Revolution and the subsequent agrarian reforms and *indigenista* models that emerged in its aftermath had a large impact throughout the Latin American continent, particularly areas which had large indigenous communities (as was the case with Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador).

The utopian ideology of *mestizaje* advanced by José Vasconcelos in Mexico, was likewise taken up within the Andean region, with Ecuadorian writer and diplomat Benjamín Carrión hailing him as the “prophet and poet of these tropical lands” (37). However, the term *indigenismo* did not originate in Mexico, but rather in Peru. It was coined in 1925 by the Lima-based intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui, who was the founder of one of the most influential vanguard magazines in the continent, *Amauta* (1926–30). It was within its pages that he explored a three-fold understanding of *indigenismo* – as “a literary genre, a political ideology, and a pictorial classification” (Greet 16). Unlike many of his contemporaries, as early as 1927 Mariátegui recognized the problems inherent to a movement that exalted

indigenous culture but did not empower indigenous peoples to be agents of culture themselves: “La literatura indigenista no puede darnos una versión rigurosamente verista del indio. Tiene que idealizarlo y estilizarlo. Tampoco puede darnos su propia voz, su propia ánima. Es todavía una literatura de mestizos / Indigenist literature cannot provide a rigorously truthful version of the Indian. It must idealize and stylize him. Nor can it evoke the Indian’s own voice, or his own soul. It is still a mestizo literature” (Mariátegui et al. 38).

Nonetheless, Mariátegui advocated for the widespread adoption of *indigenista* principles (even if defined by mestizo elites) in the construction of national unity. In common with post-revolutionary Mexico, *indigenismo* in the Andean region became interwoven with a Marxist tradition, spearheaded by the writings of Mariátegui, whose now canonical 1928 work *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* [Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality] framed the plight of indigenous peoples in the region as first and foremost an issue of class, rather than race. What the works of Mariátegui make clear is the extent to which *indigenismo* across both the Andean and Central American region was, from its inception, operating at an uncomfortable crossroads between socio-political and cultural/artistic agendas – a set of agendas that often obscured indigenous figures themselves. As Jorge Coronado highlights,

when indigenismo is understood beyond its desire to improve the lot of the region’s indigenous peoples and placed, rather, at the intersection of nationalist, classist, and racial contentions and the difficult birth of a modern society, the contradictions between indigenista texts and discourses and their titular objects become glaring. (11)

These inherent contradictions become even more complex once *indigenismo* and the artists who advanced its themes and forms began operating outside of the Latin American context – specifically in the United States. Here we see another layer added to our consideration

of the workings and problematics of cultural appropriation. This is pertinent to the cases of both Kahlo (who calculatedly navigated the US art scene) and Núñez del Prado, who in 1940 was awarded an International Fellowship by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and consequently spent eight years studying and working in the United States. With the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe, this was a period of renewed efforts to generate Pan-American sentiment, solidarity, and cultural exchange; *indigenismo* became an unlikely vehicle in these efforts. Within a US context the political and avant-garde charge of *indigenismo* was almost completely diffused, as was its regional specificity. Instead, *indigenista* artists and their works became subsumed into a homogenized nativism with the dual aims of distancing the Americas from a decadent Europe and educating a North American public about their neighbours to the south (Greet 163).

## the two fridas

Frida Kahlo's work was born within the complex and often conflicting intersections of class, race, gender, and geopolitics that emerged in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. With the use of Aztec and Mayan symbolism in her paintings, her employment of materials and forms typical of folk art, coupled with her striking use of indigenous clothing and jewellery, Kahlo could be seen as a faithful poster girl for the nationalist agenda of post-revolutionary Mexico. However, there are crucial ways in which her works challenged and subverted elements of the standard state-sponsored *indigenismo*.

Kahlo's exploration of indigeneity is intimately bound up with an interrogation of her own identity and personal origins. Born to a German father and a mother of both Spanish and indigenous origin, Kahlo often employed her family history as metaphor for the nation. In contrast to the monumental national epics rendered by her male contemporaries – think here of the grandiosity of Orozco's mural series for Mexico City's Escuela Nacional

Preparatoria (1923–26) and Rivera's fresco cycle *Epopéya del pueblo mexicano* [Epic of the Mexican People] (1929–35, Palacio Nacional, Mexico City) – Kahlo brought nation-building firmly into the realm of the personal and, in so doing, “reinvents history painting” (Lowe 61). Works such as *Mis abuelos, mis padres y yo* [My Grandparents, My Parents and I] (1936) and *Mi nana y yo* [My Nurse and I] (1937) dramatize an individual tale of mixed heritage while reinforcing a broader narrative aligning *mexicanidad* (Mexicanness) with *mestizaje* (racial mixing).<sup>3</sup> However, Kahlo's story of Mexico is one that centres powerful women and conceives of the post-revolutionary state as a form of cosmic matrilineage. In *Mis abuelos, mis padres y yo*, it is Kahlo's mother who stands looming over her husband, placing a protective hand on his shoulder. The infant Kahlo, portrayed nude standing in the centre courtyard of the family home, also towers over the scene as if staking claim to the vast Mexican territory that surrounds her.

In the later work *El abrazo de amor de el universo, la tierra (México), yo, Diego, y el Señor Xolotl* [The Love Embrace of the Universe, the Earth (Mexico), Myself, Diego, and Señor Xolotl] (1949),<sup>4</sup> the universe, Mexico, and Kahlo herself are depicted as commanding yet protective goddesses cradling a naked and infantilized Diego Rivera. The bilateral symmetry of the work's backdrop – made up of opposing but complementary elements (moon and sun, dark and light, etc.) – alludes to the duality inherent to Aztec and Mayan cosmogonies but also, again, betrays a preoccupation with *mestizaje* encapsulated in the image of the universe's interlocking brown and white hands. Yet, the presence of the artist herself and that of renowned Mexican muralist Diego Rivera at the centre of the composition, causes this image to move beyond a meditation on biological miscegenation. Here Kahlo gives primacy to female creative forces, subtly and humorously undermining the inflated centrality given to male artists within the post-revolutionary Mexican canon.

Her representations of indigenous women likewise resisted many of the standard idealized

tropes prevailing in the first half of the twentieth century. In contrast to the cowering and faceless characters of Rivera's 1940s *Cala lily* series, for example, Kahlo's indigenous figures directly meet our gaze. In pieces such as *Vendedora de flores* [Flower Vendor] (1941) and *Vendedoras de alcatrazes* [Cala Lily Vendors] (1943),<sup>5</sup> Rivera established a standardized composition that he would come to repeat across numerous works during the early 1940s. These picturesque renderings of Mexican flower markets depict indigenous figures almost exclusively with their backs turned towards the viewer or with heads bowed and eyes lowered. With long braids draped over embroidered *rebozo* shawls and bare feet prominently foregrounded, Rivera's flower vendors contributed to a vision of indigeneity dominated by notions of tradition, diffidence, and anonymity. Resisting this trend, Kahlo's works such as *La niña, la luna y el sol* [The Girl, the Moon and the Sun] (1942) foreground assertive female presences that defy singular conceptions of indigeneity as associated with strictly rural, passive, and self-sacrificing figures.<sup>6</sup> This work shows a young indigenous girl sat alone on a rock with both sun and moon prominently visible above her head. Behind her are two pyramids that Nancy Deffebach has identified as belonging to the archaeological zone of Teotihuacan, thirty miles northeast of Mexico City (89). Kahlo's *niña* is not, however, relegated to a distant or idealized past – dressed in a plain white dress and modern knitted sweater (as opposed to the traditional *huipiles* and *rebozos* often associated with indigenous dress) the young girl holds in her hands a model aeroplane and is thus transformed into a symbol of modernization. As Deffebach has observed, it is significant that “Kahlo chose to entrust the future to a child who was female, indigenous, and poor” (96); in so doing she destabilized long-standing gendered and racial narratives.

I would argue that her broader explorations of the theme of *mestizaje* continued this process of destabilization. In presenting a more nuanced vision of mestiza identity as shot through with violence and fragmentation

as well as unity and reconciliation, she for the most part eschewed the utopian eugenicist discourse of those such as Gamio and Vasconcelos. In works such as *Las dos Fridas* [The Two Fridas] (1939) and *Dos desnudos en un bosque* [Two Nudes in a Forest] (1939),<sup>7</sup> Kahlo visualizes the experience of *mestiza* identity as one of very literal duality. When dividing her own self-image into two halves – the European and the indigenous Mexican – the artist often emphasizes visceral fragmentation. She exposes, rather than smooths over, the initial corporeal violence of *mestizaje* that occurred during colonization and highlights the struggle (or impossibility?) of reconciling these disparate parts into a unified whole. *Dos desnudos en un bosque* comes closest to a form of desired reconciliation, returning the two halves of the fractured *mestiza* self to a rural idyll. Here the darker-skinned woman cradles the lighter-skinned one in a gesture that is at once protective and homoerotic. This painting disrupts the racial and gender hierarchies traditionally reflected in visual treatments of *mestizaje*. Orozco's canonical *Cortés y la Malinche* [Cortés and Malinche] (1926),<sup>8</sup> for example, employs similarly prelapsarian imagery – presenting the Spanish conquistador and his indigenous female slave as Adam and Eve. However, the ghostly white used to render the commanding Cortés's sinewy flesh, radically accentuates their racial difference and the arm outstretched in front of Malinche's body suggests not protection or union but rather patriarchal control. A broader interweaving of procreation and nationalism had been present in Orozco's work since his first murals for the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria which, alongside images of the independence wars and contemporary class struggle, contains a panel entitled *Maternidad* [Maternity] (1923–24) foregrounding a beatific vision of motherhood and exalting women's role as mothers of the nation.<sup>9</sup> Rivera's frescos such as *La tierra virgen* [The Virgin Earth] (1926),<sup>10</sup> *La tierra fecunda* [The Fertile Earth] (1926–27), and *Germinación* [Germination] (1926–27) likewise conflate sexual desire, fertility, and nation-building in a manner that reduces women's bodies to



fruits ready for harvest. In the works of Kahlo, however, the racialized female body retains its sovereignty, it is no longer reduced to an object of sexual consumption by the male gaze or to a vessel of biological reproduction at the service of the state.

Victor Zamudio-Taylor has linked Kahlo's use of indigenous symbolism to "the broader modernist trend of 'primitivism,' [which] offered a reservoir of inspiration, forms, materials, and outlooks that function as an antidote to and critique of the dehumanizing aspects of modernity" (27). What we see in the case of Kahlo, and also in that of Marina Núñez del Prado, is the vexed and often paradoxical workings of artistic "primitivism" within the Latin American context. In common with European or Anglo-American primitivism, Latin American *indigenismo*'s critique of the "dehumanizing" dimension of the Machine Age likewise entailed the dehumanization of living indigenous peoples whose bodies and cultures were transformed into "raw material for the creation of art" (López 38).

However, in contrast to Picasso's engagement with African art forms and Gauguin's representations of Tahiti, for example, Latin American artists seeking revitalizing antidotes to modern life turned to a less distant source – what Amaryll Chanady has termed the "internal Other" (33–37). That this so-called "primitive" culture had been recently and actively framed as part of the national patrimony, gave Mexican artists like Kahlo a very distinct relationship to it, one defined by perceived proximity rather than distance; this was closer to a form of "auto-primitivism" (Flores 160). This claim to authenticity and ownership, on the surface, appears to evade the imperial or overtly appropriative gestures of European primitivism. Nevertheless, the extent to which primitivism enacts a violent homogenization and/or misuse of indigenous cultures is no less the case in the Latin American context.

When considering this context, and a woman artist like Kahlo in particular, what further complicates the fraught power dynamics inherent to modernist primitivism is the extent to which she became herself the subject

of the exoticizing gaze of others. For André Breton, for example, Kahlo was "adorned, [...] like a fairy-tale princess, with magic spells at her finger-tips, an apparition in the flash light of the *quetzal* bird which scatters opals among the rocks as it flies away" (Breton 143). Whereas for Greek modernist poet and art critic Nicolas Calas, she "fit completely the Surrealist ideal of woman, she had a theatrical quality, a high eccentricity. She was always very consciously playing a role and her exoticism immediately attracted attention" (qtd in Herrera 234). Likewise, New York gallery owner Julien Levy recalled visiting the Central Hanover Bank on Fifth Avenue with Kahlo:

Arriving inside the bank with her, I found we were surrounded by a flock of children who had followed us, despite all protests of the doorman. "Where is the circus?" they were calling. "Fiesta" would have been more accurate. Frida was dressed in full Mexican costume. (Qtd in Herrera 234)

Kahlo playfully and deliberately courted spectacle. She actively constructed her own distinctive self-image rather than wait to be categorized within a generic "exoticism" by outside observers. In much the same way that she famously refused the label of "Surrealist" bestowed upon her by Breton, Kahlo utilized her self-image to control her own narrative.<sup>11</sup> Her choice of the regional dress of the Zapotec women of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec has long been seen as deliberate in its feminist symbolism, responding as it did to the perception of the Isthmus Zapotec as a "matriarchal utopia" (Taylor 815). As already stated, Kahlo's fervent *mexicanidad* outwardly demonstrated her allegiance to a particular set of revolutionary and anti-colonialist values. Speaking of Kahlo's use of indigenous clothing, Sarah M. Lowe has asserted that the artist "was motivated by a conscious disregard of appropriate bourgeois behaviour, but it was equally a stance of solidarity with the people who wore and produced these beautiful objects" (62).

I believe that there is a further dimension to Kahlo's deployment of indigenous dress, one

which specifically aimed to counter the marginality and invisibility she experienced as a woman artist, as a Latin American artist, and as the wife of an internationally famous *male* artist. If we look at US media coverage of the artist, for example, there is a clear evolution of Kahlo's public persona from her first visits to the United States as the young wife of renowned muralist Diego Rivera in the early 1930s to her subsequent visits to the country in 1938, 1941, and 1946.

A photograph of the pair appeared in the *Detroit News* in early 1932 to announce the arrival of Rivera in the city to undertake a mural commission in the Garden Court of the Detroit Institute of Art.<sup>12</sup> Photographed on a staircase, Rivera towers over a diminutive-looking Kahlo, who is positioned several steps below the muralist to the right-hand side of the frame. Dressed in a long, delicately ruffled skirt and accompanying shawl, the elaborate and ostentatious indigenous costume that Kahlo would come to be known for is not yet in evidence in these early photographs. An article by Florence Davies published on 2 February 1933 in the *Detroit News* profiles "Senora Diego Rivera" [*sic*] beneath the headline "Wife of the Master Mural Painter Gleefully Dabbles in Works of Art."<sup>13</sup> An accompanying photo shows the young Kahlo at work at her easel wearing a plain dark-coloured tunic and plaid apron. She is almost unrecognizable from the woman pictured five years later in the 14 November 1938 *Time* magazine article covering Kahlo's solo show at New York's Julien Levy gallery. Standing defiantly before her work *Lo que el agua me dio* [What the Water Gave Me] (1938), Kahlo has adorned herself theatrically from head to toe – she is, as the article's headline suggests, a "Bomb Beribboned."<sup>14</sup> It is this form of highly ornate and extravagant outward appearance that characterizes the public persona of the artist from the late 1930s onwards, captured in the iconic colour photographs of Hungarian-American photographer Nickolas Muray.<sup>15</sup> Aside from her *indigenista* allegiances, Kahlo's appropriation of indigenous forms of dress went hand in hand with her attempts to move from being the

demure "Señora Rivera" who "gleefully dabbles" in painting to coming centre stage as an artist in her own right.

### "an indian princess from bolivia ..."

Though she does not enjoy the same level of international recognition as Kahlo does today, Marina Núñez del Prado's trajectory – particularly her experiences as a young Latin American woman struggling for visibility in the US and European art scenes – has striking parallels with that of Kahlo. The two women shared a common fascination with the indigenous cultures of their respective countries though often found themselves operating in the margins of (male dominated) *indigenista* movements. Núñez del Prado was born into an upper-middle-class family in La Paz, Bolivia, in 1910. In common with Kahlo, her artistic talents were nurtured and encouraged by her family from a young age – with her father going as far as to build a sculpture studio for her in the garden of the family home. The artist attended the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes in La Paz from 1927 to 1929, becoming an instructor of art anatomy and sculpture at the same school upon graduating. Núñez del Prado held her first exhibition in October 1930 at the Club de La Paz, and during the 1930s played an active role in Bolivian artistic circles before embarking on a truly international career – she lived, worked, and exhibited across Latin America, the United States, and Europe. Notwithstanding her productivity and international reach, Núñez del Prado has remained absent from art histories of the Andean region and Latin America more broadly. It is really thanks to her own autobiography *Eternidad en los Andes* [Eternity in the Andes] (1973) that we can start to piece together the story of this pioneering woman sculptor.

In her autobiography, Núñez del Prado describes her early experiences as a Latin American artist working in the United States, characterizing it as "[un] mundo cerrado y difícil en el

que para el que comienza ninguna parte se abre, y la lucha es titánica, sobre todo en ese tiempo, 1940, en que no había ningún interés por los artistas latinoamericanos / a closed and difficult world in which for someone starting out no doors will open and the struggle is titanic, especially at that time, 1940, when there was no interest in Latin American artists” (55). When recounting her attempts to navigate her way into this “closed world” she describes her intense sense of alienation through recourse to the literary: “Procuré entrevistar a los directores de galerías pero siempre me recibían los secretarios de los secretarios, como en el ambiente de pesadilla del ‘Castillo’ de Kafka / I tried to interview gallery directors but I was always received by the secretaries of the secretaries, as if I were in the nightmarish environment of Kafka’s ‘Castle’” (58). In contrast to the heightened visibility detailed in accounts of Kahlo, Núñez del Prado presents her experience in the United States as one of anonymity and invisibility: “Se sentía una pasar tan desapercibida, que era como sentirse una hormiga en las arenas del desierto / It felt like going totally unnoticed, like an ant in the desert sands” (59). In a seemingly paradoxical tactic that can be found across accounts of Latin American women artists’ experiences abroad, Núñez del Prado reacted against her outsider status precisely by accentuating her otherness. The Bolivian artist recounts a revelation she had upon learning of a gala to celebrate the inauguration of the exhibition “Indian Art of the United States” at New York’s Museum of Modern Art in January 1941:

Súbitamente se me ocurrió vestirme de indígena boliviana, en la forma más espectacular posible. Me puse una hermosa chaqueta encarnada de terciopelo profusamente bordada con abalorios y mostacillas y una larga pollera de tejido vernáculo, me adorné con grandes aretes y topos de plata y dejé caer por las espaldas mis largas trenzas. Mi presencia fue todo un éxito, desde la entrada en esas salas por las que crucé con paso firme y rítmico como

cuadraba a una princesa india. Pronto se me acercaron personas para admirar mi atuendo y preguntarme quién era yo y de dónde venía con ese traje tan exótico; mi hermana Nilda, que me seguía vestida a la europea, respondía: “Es una Princesa India de Bolivia. Es la escultora Marina Núñez del Prado.”

It suddenly occurred to me to dress as an indigenous Bolivian woman, in the most spectacular way possible. I put on a beautiful embroidered velvet jacket, and a long skirt woven with native patterns, I adorned myself with large earrings and silver bracelets, and I let my long braids fall down my back. My presence was a complete success from the moment I entered those rooms with the firm and rhythmic stride of an Indian princess. Soon people gathered to admire my attire and ask me who I was and where I came from with such an exotic costume: my sister Nilda, who followed me dressed as a European woman, would answer: “She is an Indian Princess from Bolivia. She is the sculptress Marina Núñez del Prado.” (59)

The detailed description of her adornment accentuates the contrived nature of this act. From her “long skirt woven with native patterns” to the “firm and rhythmic stride” with which she crosses the gallery floor, Núñez del Prado enacts a carefully constructed performance of exoticism. The fact that her sister also plays a role in this performance, “dressed as a European woman,” introduces a further dynamic to this complex construction of otherness: in her appropriation of the exoticizing discourse of the Western traveller or ethnographer, Nilda Núñez del Prado succeeds in adding an illusion of authenticity to her sister Marina’s embodiment of alterity. In the same way that Kahlo’s use of indigenous clothing was uncommon among women of her class in Mexico City, the reader’s knowledge that both Marina and Nilda Núñez del Prado originate from an upper-middle-class family from La Paz, within whose circles this form of dress would have been just as unusual, heightens the sense of masquerade that prevails over the

scene. It likewise succeeds in subtly undermining the crowds of New York photographers “[que] se agolparon a [su] alrededor y las señoras [que] exclamaban: ‘¡Qué interesante!’ / [who] crowded around her and the ladies [who] exclaimed: ‘How interesting!’” (Núñez del Prado 59). The search for authenticity in so-called distant cultures had already been long established within European modernist circles. Once in exile in the Americas this fascination continued, with artists such as André Masson, André Breton, and Max Ernst known to have eagerly frequented the Museum of Modern Art’s (MoMA) 1941 “Indian Art of the United States” exhibition.<sup>16</sup> The fact that Núñez del Prado chose to debut her performance of indigeneity at this particular MoMA show is therefore notable – it sees the Bolivian artist submit her own body to be viewed alongside these coveted curiosities, willingly transforming herself into a living artefact from a distant culture.

Just four years before Núñez del Prado’s spectacular appearance at the MoMA gala, Frida Kahlo’s distinctive style had been featured in the October 1937 issue of *American Vogue*, in an article entitled “Señoras of Mexico” by Alice-Leone Moats. Photographed by Toni Frissel standing next to a vast agave plant, dressed in ruffled blouse and flowing skirt, with ribbons woven through her braids, Kahlo holds an embroidered fringed *rebozo* shawl above her head. The artist cuts an elegant and striking figure in this 1937 fashion editorial and would go on to be the subject of a more in-depth piece for *Vogue* the following year. In both articles it is the artist’s physical appearance as much as her creative prowess that captures the journalists’ attention. “From the bright, fuzzy woolen strings that she plait into her black hair and the color she puts into her cheeks and lips, to her heavy antique Mexican necklaces and her gaily colored Tehuana blouses and skirts,” wrote Bertram Wolfe in that 1938 article, “Madame Rivera seems herself a product of her art and, like all her work, one that is instinctively and calculatedly well composed”

(132). The next year, Kahlo’s elaborate costumes were known to have caught the attention of the Paris fashion world, with designer Elsa Schiaparelli releasing a Tehuana-inspired *robe Madame Rivera* for eager Parisienne consumers.

The international visibility generated by Kahlo’s carefully curated self-image stands as a key precursor to Núñez del Prado’s own later use of indigenous dress. We know from her autobiographical writings that Núñez del Prado paid close attention to developments in the international art world. Considering her stated admiration of the work of Kahlo’s husband Diego Rivera, we might suppose that she had Kahlo in mind as she adorned herself before the 1941 MoMA gala. When Núñez del Prado met the Mexican artist in person in 1948, it was precisely her visual aspect that first caught her attention: “wrapped in her *rebozos* of bursting pyrotechnic colors [...] Frida was a marvelous spectacle for anyone who saw her” (124). Regardless of whether the influence was direct or not, both women recognized the power of self-fashioning in the construction of their artistic identities.

Unlike Kahlo, Núñez del Prado did not lay claim to indigenous ancestry. In the opening of her autobiography, she details that her paternal line descends from the “Conquistador Don Juan Núñez del Prado” who had “sometió a los indios calchaquí de la pampa argentina / subdued the Calchaqui Indians of the Argentine Pampa” in the sixteenth century (2). Núñez del Prado’s paternal grandmother – Natividad Seally – was the daughter of Irish parents and her own mother – Sara Viscarra – was of Basque descent. Considering this, there is an undeniably problematic element to the artist’s theatrical adoption of an indigenous identity. As a woman who enjoyed great material privilege in her country of origin, for Núñez del Prado to engage in a pantomime of indigeneity for a US audience could suggest a cynical act of cultural appropriation for her own advancement. However, as with Kahlo, Núñez del Prado demonstrated an earnest dedication to the promotion of indigenous cultural traditions throughout her career. She

consistently credited indigenous art forms and traditions both past and present as a central source of inspiration and influence in her sculpture. She likewise exposed the exploitation of these communities in pieces such as *Mineros* [Miners] (1944).<sup>17</sup> Resulting from the artist's own visits to the mining communities in Potosí, this sculpture responds to the ways in which the metal ore industry "ha engullido millones de vidas de humildes indígenas / has swallowed the lives of millions of humble indigenous people" (Núñez del Prado 36–37). Sometimes referred to by the title *Mineros en rebelión* [Miners in Rebellion], this carved wooden sculpture evokes both defeat and defiance. Depicted in profile in the manner common to both Incan and Mayan relief carvings, two figures are shown with eyes closed, heads bowed in sorrow or resignation, while in the foreground a fellow worker raises his fist to the sky in a mutinous gesture. The strong simplified features of the miners' faces draw upon the representations of warriors and nobility at ancient sites such as Tiwanaku, Bolivia and Yaxchilán, Mexico,<sup>18</sup> constructing a direct line of inheritance between these powerful civilizations and contemporary indigenous peoples. The alignment of proletarian struggle with a pre-Columbian lineage emphasizes the decolonial dimension of the work. In the words of the artist herself, this sculpture represented her own "protesta por la injusticia con que ha sido tratado el boliviano por propios y extraños / protest against the injustice with which Bolivians have been treated by locals and foreigners" (37). Whether misguided or not from a current understanding of intercultural exchange, Núñez del Prado's selective engagement with indigenous culture appears to be far more complex than cynical self-interest.

Though the Bolivian artist credits her dramatic debut at the MoMA gala for having secured her a two-week exhibition at New York's Grand Central Gallery, and subsequently a substantial show at the Pan American Union in Washington, DC, her writings display an overt ambivalence towards the status that her self-othering tactics produced.

The artist found herself having to continue her performance of the role of "Indian Princess" as her artistic career developed within the United States, with an expectation of and demand for exoticism evident amongst her audiences there:

En el Congreso de Artistas y Escritores de Michigan, al que fui invitada, tuve la oportunidad de escuchar a muchas personalidades [...] El tema de la conferencia de [Waldo] Frank era su visita por los países latinoamericanos [...] al hablar de arte, contó que le impresionaron las esculturas de una escultora indígena y con gran sorpresa para mí, repitió mi nombre [...] Cuando Waldo Frank terminó su conferencia, me invitaron para que hablara en mi idioma "- ¿En mi idioma?" había dicho la escultora indígena. Con aplomo y tono oratorio, inicié mi discurso en aymará y dije: "- Maya, Paya, Kimsa, Pusy, Peska, Sojita, Pakallko, Kimsakallko, Tunka," contando en aymará del 1 al 100. El éxito fue retundo, el público nunca había escuchado esa lengua. Estoy segura de que ningún discurso hubiera tenido más aplausos. Esta alocución se hizo famosa en los medios artísticos en que me conocían en los Estados Unidos.

At the Michigan Congress of Artists and Writers, to which I was invited, I had the opportunity to listen to many well-known personalities [...] The theme of [Waldo] Frank's lecture was his visit to the countries of Latin America [...] when talking about art he said that he was impressed by the sculptures of an indigenous sculptor and to my great surprise, repeated my name [...] When Waldo Frank finished his talk, I was invited to speak in my language, "In my language?" the indigenous sculptor had said. With aplomb and an oratory tone, I began my speech in Aymara and said: "Maya, Paya, Kimsa, Pusy, Peska, [...]" counting in Aymara from one to a hundred. The success was resounding; the public had never heard that language. I am sure that no speech could have received more applause. This performance became famous in the artistic print media through which I was known in the United States. (Núñez del Prado 65–66)

That Núñez del Prado refers to herself in the third person (“the indigenous sculptor”), combined with her initial surprise at being invited to speak “in her language” (which was, of course, Spanish, not Aymara), reinforces the extent to which the artist felt alienated from the persona that she had initially willingly created.

Despite the heightened visibility that the adoption of self-exoticizing tactics brought Núñez del Prado, it also served to further embed her within a complex framework of cultural diplomacy efforts that shaped the course of her international career and the subsequent legacy of her work. The artist’s earlier assertion that there “was no interest in Latin American artists” in the United States of the 1940s, could more accurately be characterized not as a lack, but rather, an intense, narrow interest in Latin American artists, as long as they could be seen more as “cultural ambassadors” than “artistic innovators” (Greet 167).

For more than two decades before the Bolivian artist arrived in the country, the United States had been cultivating close ties with Latin America precisely through cultural exchange. Following recommendations made at the Second Pan American Scientific Congress held in Washington, DC in 1915, the Pan American Union began its concerted efforts in the area of Inter-American Cultural Relations in 1917, initially restricting its activities to the field of education. By 1929, the Pan American Union’s Section of Education was renamed the Division of Intellectual Cooperation in order to reflect the Union’s widening sphere of interest and influence – in addition to Education, the Division was charged with “follow[ing] as closely as possible the different phases of the cultural movement in the Americas” (Romero James 2). Falling within this remit, one of Núñez del Prado’s first solo US exhibitions was held at the Pan American Union in 1941. The show garnered substantial public attention: seven articles about the artist appeared in the *Washington Post* alone between May and September 1941.<sup>19</sup>

The press coverage of Núñez del Prado’s exhibitions in the US capital situated her firmly within a frame of what Greet terms

“didactic Indigenism” (172). A June 1941 article in the *Washington Post* tells the reader that “her work is somber, serious and unaffected, and apart from the machine age influence. It reveals the charm of a world unconscious of war and destruction” (“Bolivian Moods”). The Bolivian artist was frequently cast in the role of anthropologist or ethnographer. Reviewers observed that her work demonstrated “deep insight into the life and culture of the Bolivian Indian” (Arndt) and that “her sculpture has caught the Indian myths often expressed in the dances used to interpret their reflections about life” (“Bolivian Girl”). Whilst it is true that Núñez del Prado’s early work was dominated by indigenous themes, her stylized forms also enter into dialogue with global trends in modernist sculpture, such as those of Moore, Brâncuși, and Hepworth – connections that are absent from the reception of her work in the United States. While biomorphic sculpture would come to all but dominate Núñez del Prado’s later work, the sweeping curves and abstracted human figures in early pieces – such as *Tuku-situ Guagüita* (1934), *Danza de Waka-Tokori* [Waka-Tokori Dance] (1936), and *Danza de cóndores* [Condor Dance] (1936) – already contain echoes of the formalist aesthetics of Brâncuși’s *Mademoiselle Pogany* (1912), Hepworth’s *Mother and Child* (1927), and Moore’s *Reclining Figure* (1929), for example.<sup>20</sup> However, the parallels to be found between Núñez del Prado’s work and that of her European modernist counterparts is not a simple case of direct influence: this group of sculptors from opposite sides of the Atlantic were drawing upon a common source of inspiration. As Barbara Braun has observed, Moore advanced a form of modernism characterized by “formal and technical innovation informed by styles of the past” (159). As was the case with Núñez del Prado and her Latin American colleagues, European modernist sculptors such as Brâncuși and Moore were also directly influenced by pre-Columbian art forms (Braun 162–63; Ades).

Rather than undermine the specificity of Núñez del Prado’s engagement with indigenous

themes, the overt references she makes to artists such as Moore in both her sculptural works and her writings seek to underscore her own privileged closeness to indigenous cultures. While Moore is seen by Núñez del Prado to “brinca de Africa a Grecia y a las culturas precolombinas / hop between Africa, Greece and pre-Columbian cultures” for inspiration (77), the Bolivian artist defines her work as born out of “un concepto de mi paisaje y de mi raza / a concept of my landscape and my race” (25). Setting aside the problematics of this possessive gesture, in claiming “real” ownership over the indigenous sources she shared with Brâncuși and Moore, Núñez del Prado attempts to highlight the comparative inauthenticity of European modernist primitivism.

Within the European context indigenous art forms were “viewed as the material culture of long-standing traditions [and] thus cast as static and isolated from history” (Rhodes 17). Reviews of Núñez del Prado’s work evidence the extent to which within the United States representations of indigenous peoples were likewise understood to be divorced from living, politicized *indigenista* movements. The world referenced in Núñez del Prado’s work did not in fact exist “apart from the machine age” and in a charmed state “unconscious of war and destruction” but was rather engaged in addressing the contemporary struggles wrought by industrialized capitalism within the region (“Bolivian Moods”). Once reframed within the United States of the 1940s, *Indigenismo* was drained of both its avant-garde aesthetic value and of its revolutionary and decolonial politics, becoming a term that designated art that portrayed generic indigenous traditions in an educational mode. While the adoption of indigenous iconography in their self-presentation and artistic production afforded both Kahlo and Núñez del Prado an empowering degree of visibility among US audiences, this was most often reduced to a form of exoticized novelty devoid of political and cultural specificity.

The years of the Second World War and its aftermath saw a different set of political agendas come shape the reception of Latin

American art in the United States. That First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt was among the visitors to Núñez del Prado’s 1941 show is indicative of the extent to which official forces played a role in shaping the Bolivian artist’s career in the United States.<sup>21</sup> Núñez del Prado arrived in the country in September 1940 – the year that President Roosevelt instituted the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs with Nelson Rockefeller at the helm. As previously mentioned, the Bolivian artist went to the country to undertake a yearlong fellowship awarded by the AAUW. Since 1917, the remit of the AAUW’s International Fellowship programme was to fund opportunities for Latin American women to study in the United States. These fellowships were not simply educational opportunities – the AAUW’s work must be considered within the framework of the intercultural activities initiated by the Pan American Union in 1917. The political orientation of these programmes profoundly shaped the role assigned to Núñez del Prado during the eight years she spent in the United States. She was called upon to attend events such as the 1941 Peoples Mandate Committee for Inter-American Peace and Cooperation and the 1942 “Inter-American Promotion of the Good Neighbor Policy” roundtable. Núñez del Prado’s time in the United States is emblematic of the ways in which Latin American artists of the time were implicated in inter-American diplomatic relations. The years of the Second World War and its aftermath marked the height of what Fabiana Serviddio characterizes as “the use of Latin American art to accomplish political goals” (483). The locations within which Núñez del Prado’s works were typically exhibited and the climate of inter-American cultural diplomacy that dominated her entry into the international artistic field had a profound impact on the reception of her work within her own time and its subsequent critical assessments.

The case of Marina Núñez del Prado reveals to us the extreme complexity of considering *indigenismo* (particularly women artists’ engagement with it) in relation to cultural appropriation. With both Kahlo and Núñez

del Prado what we see is, in fact, multiple appropriative dynamics working in tandem – but to quite different ends. For the women artists themselves, employing indigenous themes in their visual works firstly formed part of an exploration of personal national and regional identity (within which frame autochthonous art forms are subsumed into a national patrimony regardless of individual racial affiliations and specificities). Their visual engagement with indigeneity likewise allowed them to assert allegiance to an artistic movement that promoted a specific set of decolonial values through positioning indigenous art forms as a shorthand for “non-European.”

When it comes to the issue of self-fashioning and “performed exoticism” or “performed indigeneity,” these women utilized such tactics to very literally counter invisibility – to overcome the gendered and geopolitical marginality they faced as female artists, but also as Latin American artists attempting to operate on the world stage. The cruel irony is that, in overcoming their own marginality through such tactics, they tended (whether knowingly or not) to perpetuate the continuing marginality and invisibility of indigenous peoples themselves. We also need to account for the extent to which *indigenismo*, but also women artists such as Kahlo and Núñez del Prado, became themselves the objects of a further form of appropriation when received outside of the Latin American context. This saw Latin American art forms and artists transformed into, on the one hand, mythical antidotes to the Machine Age and, on the other, as tools of Pan-American cultural diplomacy. As we find ourselves called upon to decolonize our own syllabi, canons, and scholarship, the case studies of Kahlo and Núñez del Prado reveal the necessity but also the complexities of rethinking ideas of ownership, authenticity, visibility, and marginality within the cultural sphere.



### disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

### notes

- 1 See Small.
- 2 At the outset of the Revolution in 1910, literacy levels stood at only 20 per cent; through the post-revolutionary Public Education programmes literacy rates were raised to 37 per cent by 1940. See Presley and “Mexico: An Emerging Nation’s Struggle Toward Education.”
- 3 Where possible, all references to visual works include a URL to an online example of the image: *Mis abuelos, mis padres y yo* ([www.moma.org/collection/works/78784](http://www.moma.org/collection/works/78784)); *Mi nana y yo* ([www.fridakahlo.org/my-nurse-and-i.jsp](http://www.fridakahlo.org/my-nurse-and-i.jsp)).
- 4 [www.wikiart.org/en/frida-kahlo/the-love-embbrace-of-the-universe-the-earth-mexico-myself-diego-and-se%C3%Blor-x%C3%B3lotl-1949](http://www.wikiart.org/en/frida-kahlo/the-love-embbrace-of-the-universe-the-earth-mexico-myself-diego-and-se%C3%Blor-x%C3%B3lotl-1949)
- 5 [www.nortonsimon.org/art/detail/P.1980.2.3/learn.ncartmuseum.org/artwork/calla-lily-vendor/](http://www.nortonsimon.org/art/detail/P.1980.2.3/learn.ncartmuseum.org/artwork/calla-lily-vendor/)
- 6 [www.artnet.com/artists/frida-kahlo/niña-tehua-cana-lucha-maria-sol-y-luna-UxqcgU5MsbSWvkAEFD5ZPQ2](http://www.artnet.com/artists/frida-kahlo/niña-tehua-cana-lucha-maria-sol-y-luna-UxqcgU5MsbSWvkAEFD5ZPQ2)
- 7 [mexicana.cultura.gob.mx/es/repositorio/detalle?id=\\_suri:MAM:TransObject:5c-f178687a8a02382bfe146b](http://mexicana.cultura.gob.mx/es/repositorio/detalle?id=_suri:MAM:TransObject:5c-f178687a8a02382bfe146b); [www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5992050](http://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5992050)
- 8 [www.epdlp.com/cuadro.php?id=672](http://www.epdlp.com/cuadro.php?id=672)
- 9 [www.sanildefonso.org.mx/mural\\_maternidad.php?iframe=true&width=810&height=100%25](http://www.sanildefonso.org.mx/mural_maternidad.php?iframe=true&width=810&height=100%25)
- 10 [www.granger.com/results.asp?image=0104016&itemw=4&itemf=0001&itemstep=1&itemx=35](http://www.granger.com/results.asp?image=0104016&itemw=4&itemf=0001&itemstep=1&itemx=35)
- 11 When interviewed for *Vogue* in 1938, Kahlo sardonically stated “I didn’t know I was a Surrealist until André Breton came to Mexico and told me I was.” See Wolfe 64.
- 12 [artsandculture.google.com/asset/newspaper-coverage-of-rivera-and-kahlo’s-arrival-in-detroit/PQFTROCTvg17eQ](http://artsandculture.google.com/asset/newspaper-coverage-of-rivera-and-kahlo’s-arrival-in-detroit/PQFTROCTvg17eQ)
- 13 [www.openculture.com/2015/03/1933-article-on-frida-kahlo-wife-of-the-master-mural-painter-gleefully-dabbles-in-works-of-art.html](http://www.openculture.com/2015/03/1933-article-on-frida-kahlo-wife-of-the-master-mural-painter-gleefully-dabbles-in-works-of-art.html)
- 14 This image derives from André Breton’s 1938 characterization of Kahlo’s art as a “ribbon around a bomb.” That the language of Breton is taken up by *Time* magazine is indicative of the extent to



which exoticized framings of her work by European critics continued to dominate within a US context. See Breton 144.

15 [www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2017/apr/08/frida-kahlo-nickolas-muray-photos-pictures](http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2017/apr/08/frida-kahlo-nickolas-muray-photos-pictures)

16 For further discussion, see Eckmann 4–5.

17 [www.dropbox.com/s/e26qyftlfjx51bh/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Mineros%20%281944%29.jpg?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/e26qyftlfjx51bh/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Mineros%20%281944%29.jpg?dl=0)

18 [www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/313010](http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/313010); [www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E\\_Am1923-Maud-1](http://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Am1923-Maud-1)

19 See “Bolivian Girl Will Exhibit”; “Bolivian’s Art to be Shown Here”; “Exhibit of Bolivia Sculptress Opens at Americas Union”; “Bolivian Moods Shown in Sculptures”; Arndt; “A.A.U.W. Tea Honors Artist”; Bell.

20 [www.dropbox.com/s/ivbn6nezbvmo0es/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Tukusitu%20Guagüita%20%281934%29.jpg?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/ivbn6nezbvmo0es/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Tukusitu%20Guagüita%20%281934%29.jpg?dl=0); [www.dropbox.com/s/m54k0v9k4vw5k5w/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Danza%20de%20Waka-Tokori%20%281936%29.jpg?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/m54k0v9k4vw5k5w/Núñez%20del%20Prado%2C%20Danza%20de%20Waka-Tokori%20%281936%29.jpg?dl=0); [www.artsy.net/artwork/constantin-brancusi-mlle-pogany;barbarahepworth.org.uk/sculptures/1927/mother-and-child/](http://www.artsy.net/artwork/constantin-brancusi-mlle-pogany;barbarahepworth.org.uk/sculptures/1927/mother-and-child/); [catalogue.henry-moore.org/objects/14439/reclining-figure](http://catalogue.henry-moore.org/objects/14439/reclining-figure)

21 [www.dropbox.com/s/oas56u1zxvj5cvc/Núñez%20del%20Prado%20with%20Frist%20Lady%20Eleanor%20Roosevelt%20%281941%29.jpg?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/oas56u1zxvj5cvc/Núñez%20del%20Prado%20with%20Frist%20Lady%20Eleanor%20Roosevelt%20%281941%29.jpg?dl=0)

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