

emerged in the post-Soviet Union. On the contrary, retired senior military officers live a quiet, simple life. The PCC established a monopoly of state power and controlled (and controls) the weak opposition. Pedraza and Romero emphasize the exodus waves in both Cuba and Venezuela.

After a first year of insecurity, Nicolás Maduro established a regime of military top echelons, devotees of Chávez, and civilian loyalists or supporters of Chávez's party, the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (United Socialist Party of Venezuela, PSUD). Its internal opposition opted for several waves of exodus but a significant part of the internal opposition remains in the country, though not in a comfortable position. In 2024, after an election that by many internal and external observers was considered a rigged one, the real winner, president-elect Edmundo González Urrutia had to hide and go into exile.

The book is easy reading and can be used in undergraduate and graduate courses.

Dirk Kruijt

Utrecht University

ANDREA GIUNTA. *The Political Body. Stories on Art, Feminism, and Emancipation in Latin America*. Translated by Jane Brodie. University of California Press, 2023.

Why review a book published seven years ago? This is perhaps one of the first questions that arise when we come across a late review, such as this present review of *The Political Body. Stories on Art, Feminism, and Emancipation in Latin America* by Andrea Giunta, published in English in 2023, but first published in Spanish in 2018 under the title *Feminismo y arte latinoamericano. Historias de artistas que emanciparon el cuerpo* by Siglo veintiuno editores in Argentina and reissued in a revised version. The publication of the book in Spanish was an editorial success with its mostly academic audience, which resulted in a “translation” into English within the University of California Press collection “Studies in Latin American Art.” As various reviews have been published about the work that contemplate its main points, this analysis chooses to focus on the editorial differences between the editions and, in light of these, speculate on how Giunta's research has “aged” since its launch.

Before discussing the publications, I would like to emphasize the relevance of Argentine researcher Andrea Giunta in the field of Latin American visual arts (an inherently colonial political-geographical category). A retired Professor from the University of Buenos Aires and with teaching experience at the University of Texas and several research centers, Giunta's intellectual trajectory has been

both “curious”—in Giunta’s own words—and focused on political themes and on interrogating regionalisms. Regarding her involvement with feminist, femininity, and gender issues, she has contributed with articles and essays on the subject since the early 1990s. However, it is with the publication of this book of essays that the author asserts her place as a contributor to the feminist agenda (not forgetting, of course, her curatorial work with Cecilia Fajardo-Hill on the important exhibition *Radical Women*, held the same year that the book was published in Spanish).

Materiality

In addition to a critical review of the contents discussed in the book, it is essential to consider certain editorial choices and physical features of the publications, as they explain the slight but noticeable changes from one edition to the next and their respective target audiences. The first edition, in Spanish, was printed in a softcover format, with illustrations by artist Eugenia Lardiés, printed on pollen paper, with B&W images, in an easily portable size (160 x 230 mm), thus asserting the editorial option for a more accessible and comfortable edition to read.

On the other hand, the US edition opted for a hardcover, heavyweight, with matte-gloss cloth alk paper, in a larger size (210 x 280 mm). The cover features a photoperformance by Mexican artist Lourdes Grobet in red tones, and the volume includes 85 color illustrations and 52 high-quality b/w illustrations. It is undeniable that the US edition is more robust and imposing, but this feature makes it difficult to handle for more assiduous readers of Giunta’s work, due to its weight and size.

I emphasize from the outset these differences between the publications because their materiality marks the place of the book in terms of economic and social capital, and also highlights how it has been modified in function of different target audiences: Spanish-speaking readers, predominantly from the Latin American continent, and English-speaking readers, globalized but predominantly US American.

Another pertinent but little-compared aspect is the commercial price of each book, which also denotes a class division: while the Spanish-language version is sold on Siglo veintiuno’s website for ARS29,990.00 Argentine pesos, US\$31.33 in bookstores in the US, and €24.50 in bookstores in Europe, the English-language edition, in turn, is sold for US\$50.00 dollars or £42 pounds on the University of California Press website (all values consulted on April 14, 2025). Such differences determine who can afford each book.

Content

The Spanish-language edition is comprised of an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, glossary, list of artworks analyzed, and bibliography, whereas in the English-language version, we also find a conclusion, but now eight chapters, along with a glossary, bibliography, list of illustrations, and an index. The main difference in content between the editions lies precisely in the addition of chapters and the exclusion of part of the original bibliography.

The book in both editions is presented as a selection of essays and articles worked on by Giunta in recent years, mainly as a result of the curatorial research conducted for *Radical Women*, an exhibition held in 2018, circulated in three museums—Los Angeles, New York and São Paulo—, and of utmost importance for the theme of art and feminism in Latin America. Each chapter can be read independently and contemplates the production of female artists in territories of the continent (specifically, Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil, the latter only in the English edition).

The introduction, in its two variants, is essential to understanding the researcher's critical positioning and methodology, as well as the time gap between editions.

Based on the premise that images have a significant impact on the relationship between the body and its grammar, Giunta develops pivots around this framework, activating a set of critical elements to assert the political dimension of feminist and/or feminine artistic practices, in relation to the theme of the body. Although this theme is by no means new, it is part of the set of problems inherent in the feminist perspective on culture—a tradition duly mentioned by the author, who indicates the essential work of Linda Nochlin in the field of art historiography, as a starting point.

For Giunta, there is an undeniable singularity in artistic production by women—not in the already anachronistic question of the existence of a feminine art exclusive to the agent of the female biological sex, but in what concerns the social experience of womanhood, especially in a context of political-economic crisis of continental dimensions. The author aligns the diversity of experiences between Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, and Argentina (mainly) with the violence exerted by the military dictatorships, the patriarchal regimes of life, and the strategies artists deployed to navigate these contexts.

It is important to highlight the emphasis on Argentina in both editions of the work, since it is the territory with which Giunta is most familiar—but the absence of the racial dimension in the author's intersectional approaches in the Spanish version is striking. This gap was later addressed in the expanded English-language publication, with the addition of a chapter on Brazil and the

work of Rosana Paulino, a Black Brazilian artist who played a crucial role in expanding the Brazilian artistic scene to include racialized agents.

The chapter on Rosana Paulino was a most welcome addition, not only because it contemplates the work of a contemporary artist who critically analyzes racist culture in Brazil, but also because it broadens the territorial scope of the research, since in the Spanish version, the absence of essays on the Brazilian context ends up intensifying the cultural fissure between the Portuguese-speaking country and its neighbors.

Returning to the introduction, and to Giunta's postulate on the body as a paradigm of Latin American women's production, it is worth noting, for readers more versed in the subject, both the predominance of a US theoretical framework and the absence of a theoretical in-depth consideration of the epistemological investigation of the body as a problem—Michel Foucault's contribution is perhaps the most evident absence, as he is mentioned on occasions unrelated to the theme of corporeality. This choice can be understood as a stylistic strategy by Giunta, who opts for a colloquial dissertative flow, even though she systematically applies the academic practice of citing and mentioning references in the body of the text.

This stylistic choice continues throughout the chapters. In Chapter 1, where Giunta establishes her theoretical scope, key figures in the field are mentioned and commented on, such as the aforementioned Linda Nochlin, but also the South African Griselda Pollock, the art critic and curator Lucy Lippard, and the curator Maura Reilly—in fact, Pollock is asserted as Giunta's main methodological influence, and Reilly's statistical research on the US American scene is applied by the author in the Argentine case—however, there is a noticeable absence of Latin American intellectuals on the subject, who are mentioned in passing but not discussed.

Since this is a chapter explaining the genealogy of feminist art, which was established as the American canon due to the strength of the country's epistemological machine, the chapter leaves the reader who is not familiar with the subject without an analytical explanation of important names, such as the work of Ana Paula Cavalcanti Simioni in Brazil, or Laura Malosetti in Argentina and Gloria Cortés Aliaga in Chile, to name just a few. The canon obviously needs to be mentioned and contextualized, as Giunta does very well, but as this book proposes to discuss Latin American feminist art, a greater presence of local research, already established in the field, is expected—perhaps this could be contemplated in a future edition? We hope so.

Taking as a starting point Giunta's use of Reilly's statistical research on the Argentine art scene, we can note the predominance of the author's homeland as a reference in several chapters—more specifically, Chapters 2 and 3, in which

the audiovisual production of Colombian artist, Clemencia Lucena, and the Argentines María Luisa Bemberg, and Narcisa Hirsch, respectively, is discussed, as well as the final chapter, in which Giunta takes stock of feminist struggles in Argentina, both within and outside the artistic field. Again, such an emphasis is understandable, but the desire remains for other territories to be considered.

Regarding the other chapters, Chapter 4 examines the singularity of the Mexican case, followed by Chapter 5 on Nelbia Romero in Uruguay, Paz Errázuriz in Chile in Chapter 6, and, as mentioned, Rosana Paulino in Chapter 7—and among all these regional chapters dedicated to one or two artists, the focus on the Mexican scene is the most interesting due to the complexity of the context, the territorial and cultural proximity of the country to the US cultural environment, and the relationship between the feminist groups, artists, and state institutions.

Giunta repeatedly asserts the singularity of the Mexican contingency as a fortuitous exception in the Latin American region. Ranging from seminars, conferences, activist groups, thematic exhibitions, media insertions and feminist exchanges with the Los Angeles artistic community, there is a myriad of events that put Mexican feminist art at the forefront of actions and research.

The last chapter, on feminism and art in contemporary Argentina, is more essayistic than the others. Divided into three “scenes,” Giunta presents notes and chronicles on the feminist uprising, the meetings of the militant group *Ni Una Menos*, and the political functionality of her work.

Although first published in 2018, and with an updated version in 2023, as we have already demonstrated, the importance of such a publication makes it a must-read for those interested in a subject known for its complexity, ambivalence and even contradiction—as seen in the ongoing refutation of the feminist epitome among many artists,” despite their trajectories of resistance and subversion. Giunta’s set of texts is still the most accessible and didactic entry into this territory, allowing the author’s expectation to be fulfilled: that more research, productions and revisions, will materialize from her contribution.

Talita Trizoli

University of Texas Austin