



AUTHORS

Salvador Acevedo
Verna Bhargava
Steven Diller

IN THE ARTS

LATIN X PERIENCE

ENGAGEMENT



An Experiential View of Latino Engagement in the Arts in California

Introduction

The LatinXperience Study aims to provide insights about the experiences Latinos seek in the arts and to develop actionable guiding principles that arts organizations could use in the design of their programs* and communications. The LatinXperience Study focuses on the experiential dimension of the engagement of self-identified Latinos in the arts in the state of California.

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There is a lack of research studies about the needs, motivations, attitudes and experiences of underserved populations in the arts that arts administrators could use to make sound decisions when they are developing programs and communication strategies to engage them. The LatinXperience Study was developed with the goal of covering this need specifically for an important population group in California: Latinos.



Our intention is to bring the face of the Latino visitor, with all their complexity, in front of arts administrators and decision-makers. We achieve this by providing:

- Models and frameworks to understand and empathize with the experiences Latinos seek in the arts;
- Guiding principles to empower the design of programs and communications; and
- Recommendations to inspire solutions that will result in higher and more meaningful engagement in the arts.

WHAT'S INSIDE

INTRODUCTION	1
EXPERIENCES	2
FINDINGS	7
SEGMENTS	15
IMPLICATIONS	22
METHODOLOGY	28
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	30

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The James Irvine Foundation

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* We refer to "programs" throughout this study as any offering of an arts organization to the public at large: exhibits, concerts, lectures, films, festivals, etc.

THE EXPERIENTIAL MODEL OF ARTS ENGAGEMENT

There have been many different approaches to Latino engagement in the arts over the years, but all of them have something in common: they are based on the notion that ethnic identity is the most effective engagement tactic: “if you identify as Latino you’d want to engage with my arts program,” is the underlying assumption. Consequently, most strategies designed for Latino engagement rely on culturally-specific content and cues, which is a conventional way to say that an arts organization is interested in engaging them. Programs are based on Latin American cultural manifestations, or Spanish language marketing and communications including advertising in Spanish language channels such as newspapers, radio and TV stations (for a specific example review “Arts, Culture and the Latino Audience” by the Maricopa Partnership for Arts and Culture.¹) A few arts organizations even venture to create Spanish-language social media channels, with the specific intention of signaling to Latinos that they are interested in engaging them.

While many of these solutions have been successful in the past, mostly among low acculturation Latinos, we think that they are limited. A person’s ethnic identity is a very important part of his/her identity, but it is not the only one. People are complex, and our identities include myriad different categories, including our occupation, family role, sexual orientation, interests, and many

other identities besides our ethnic one. Not only that, but ethnic identity has many potential options as you can see in this quote from a colleague during the GENIAL conference at the Exploratorium in 2017:

“I’m José, Mexican by birth, American by citizenship, Latino by cultural identity, Chicano by socio-political identity, and Hispanic by Census count. All of those are true, but which José does the DMV get versus which José do you get versus which José does my grandmother get?”²

e los pasado
de lo usado otra
a reusar para otro

Mis padres son inmigrantes y han salido adelante.
Me gradue de la universidad y regresé a mi comunidad
trabajo con niños . he ayudado a juvenes en mi
comunidad a seguir sus sueños de seguir estudiando

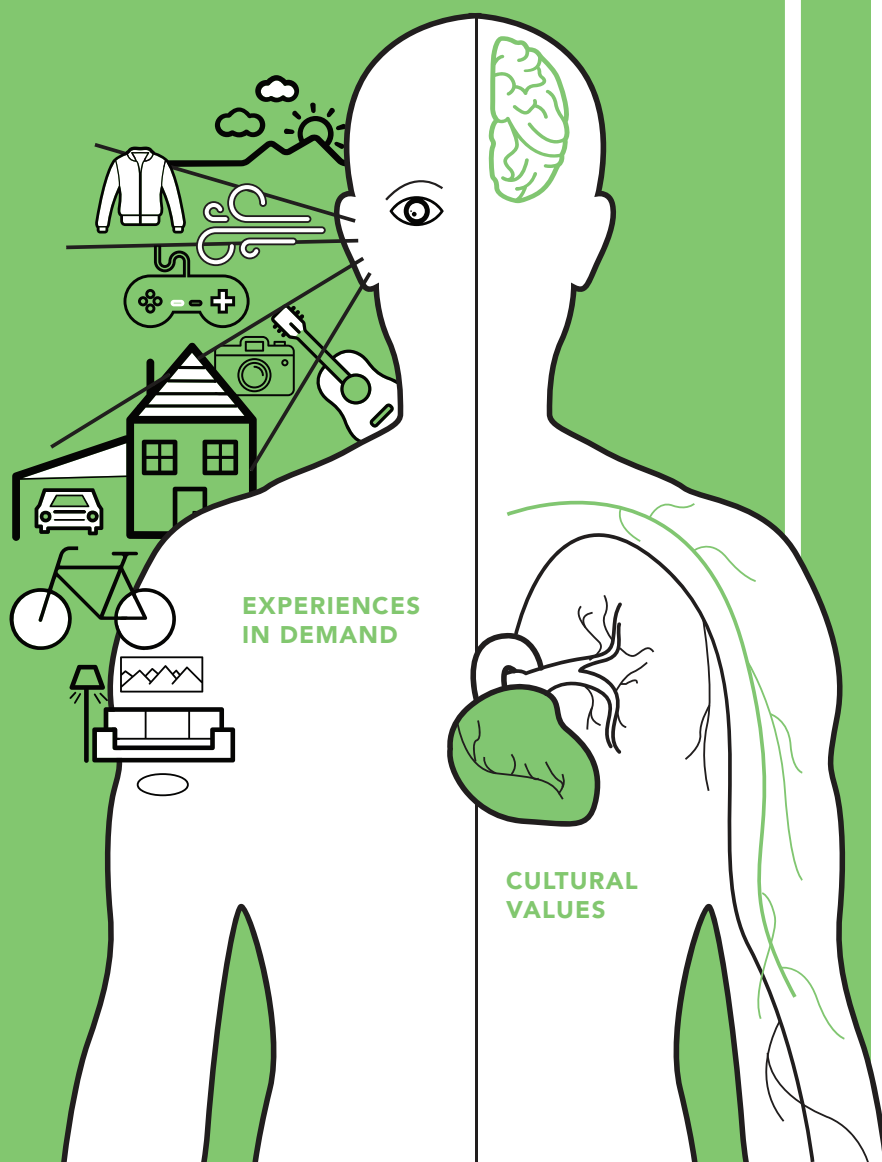
League a Ri
para mi es
y ser parte
Todo lo que
Le doy grac
strong me

Viewer / Participative Art Installation about Identity / Riverside Art Museum

The key aspect that we need to understand about ethnic and cultural identity is that they are not abstract, static constructs in an ethereal mind. They are powerful drivers of experiences that people purposefully seek out, and they provide value and meaning to their lives. Cultural identity is actualized through a series of experiences that people demand which are based on specific needs. By focusing on the type of experiences people want, we uncover the core of their cultural identities. Cultural identities are constantly evolving, and understanding this dynamism provides arts organizations with a deeper understanding of their audiences and the best ways to engage them.

But what is an experience? According to the book ***Making Meaning*** that focuses on the most typical experiences people are looking for when they engage in a variety of situations, ***an experience is a change in ourselves***³. We think about the experience, we feel something about it and we're compelled to act in a specific way because of what we are thinking and feeling. In this process, we assign a significance to the experience that goes from something as simple as feeling cold and putting on a sweater, to experiencing the wonder of a sunset and feeling like a speck of stardust in the vastness of the universe.

*An experience is
a change within
ourselves.*



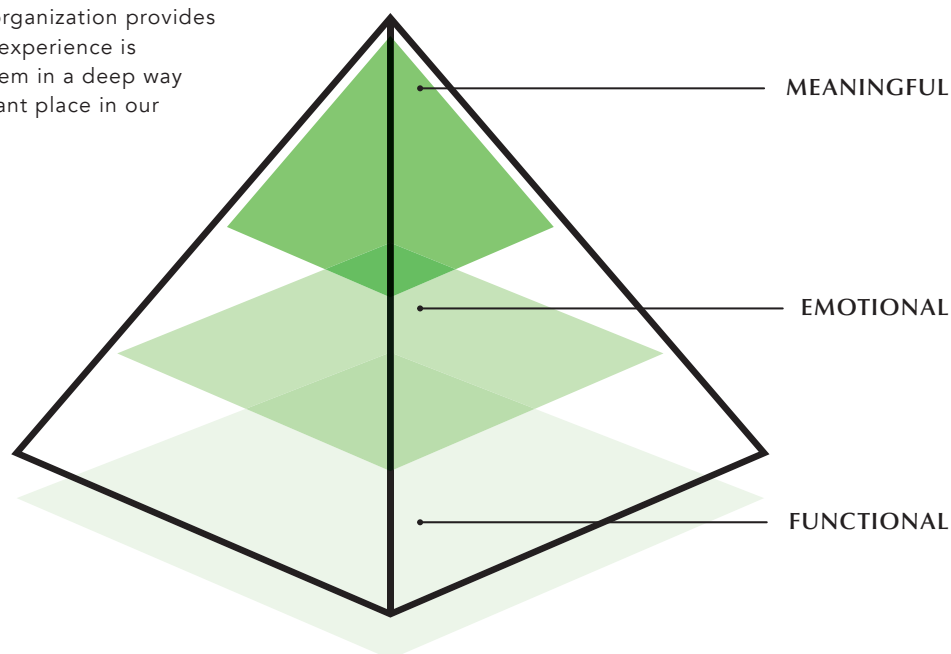
MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES

We can classify experiences having three possible levels: **functional**, **emotional** and at the top we have **meaningful** experiences. Most of us focus on and pay more attention to experiences at the meaningful level since those are the types of experiences that make life worth living, such as harmony, beauty, oneness, duty, community, wonder, etc.⁴ Based on the finding of this study, the arts evoke meaningful experiences in people.

Meaningful experiences in the arts are not something that happen to people, quite the opposite. People usually seek out and actively look for art experiences that they deem meaningful. When an arts organization provides a way in which a particular experience is evoked, we engage with them in a deep way and they occupy an important place in our minds and hearts.

We assert that a more holistic way of understanding why and how Latinos engage with arts organizations is by understanding their specific needs related to the arts, and the associated experiences they look for. This study is based on the assumption that experiences in general, and meaningful experiences in particular, are the best possible framework to understand and act upon the engagement of Latinos in the arts. One of the key hypothesis of this study was that Latinos are looking for specific meaningful experiences when they engage with arts programs.

There are 3 types of experiences that people seek:

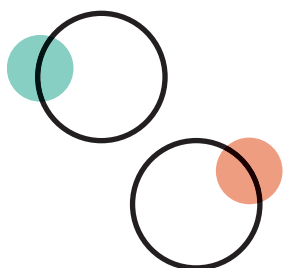


CULTURAL OPENNESS

For some time now, the concept of “bonding and bridging experiences”⁵ has had a big influence among arts administrators that are looking to engage new and diverse audiences. The attitudes of people towards bonding or bridging experiences is what we identify as **cultural openness**⁶ which is the degree to which a person is open to expose him/herself, understand, and ultimately relate to experiences and people he/she perceives as different.

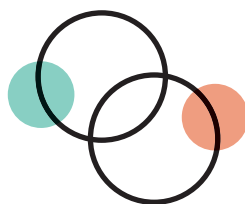
One of the most important aspects of the cultural openness spectrum is whether a person is capable of identifying differences across cultures and develop the skills to navigate those differences in their interaction with others.⁷

Based on this we identified three levels of cultural openness. This framework has proven useful to understand arts engagement since it explains how people relate to cultural content and arts experiences. The second hypothesis of this study was that the degree of cultural openness influences Latinos when they engage with the arts.



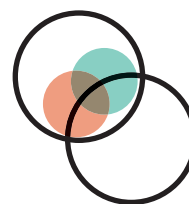
LEVEL 1

People in this level perceive others who they regard as **different** from themselves as suspicious and avoid interacting with them if possible.



LEVEL 2

People in this level **acknowledge** the benefits of intercultural influences in society and in their lives, but don't know how to interact with others who belong to a different culture.



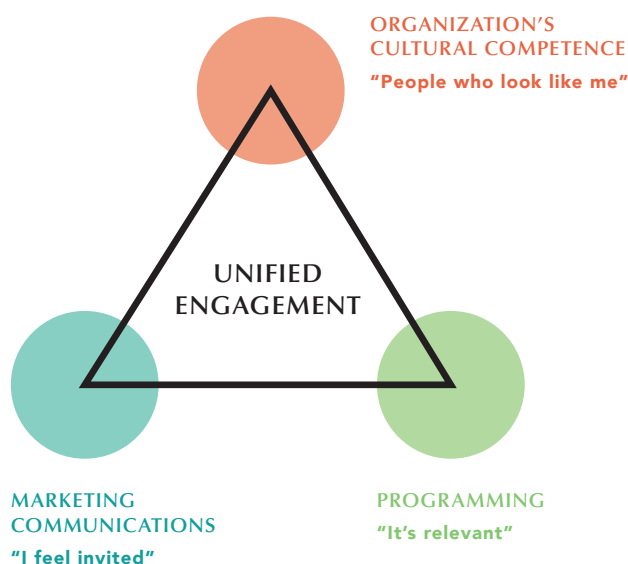
LEVEL 3

People in this level recognize the existence of cultural differences, how those differences influence interpersonal relationships, and actively develop the skills to **navigate** them.

UNIFIED ENGAGEMENT

If we think about experiences as the “what” people want, we should also think about the “how” an experience is designed, which takes us to think about how an organization evokes an experience⁸. Nowadays we think about the relationship between the arts organization and its audiences as audience engagement.

For years arts organizations have tried to solve the key to the engagement of new audiences, be them Latinos, African American, low income, or people with disabilities. Many different types of strategies have been developed that range from outreach tactics to digital solutions. Over time the non-profit arts field interested in engaging diverse audiences has moved from focusing on marketing and communications, to culturally-specific programming, and lately it pays much more attention to the ethnic diversity of staff and boards⁹. Little by little the field has come to realize that the true key to solve the engagement question does not rely in one of these aspects, but in the combination and interaction of several factors¹⁰. The third key hypothesis of the study was that the **articulation** of marketing and communications, programming and content, and the organization’s cultural competence results in effective engagement of Latinos. We call this Unified Engagement.



If an arts organization wants to create effective strategies to engage new audiences, in this case Latinos, it needs to pay attention to all three aspects of unified engagement, and develop solutions in each one and focus on how they are articulated together. Marketing and communications by itself is not going to move the needle alone, but most importantly, it needs to be well articulated and coordinated with the programmatic content, as well as with the organization’s cultural competence.

NEEDS AND DESIRED EXPERIENCES RELATED TO THE ARTS

Through our interviews and ethnographies, we were able to identify multiple experiences that Latinos seek when engaging in the arts. These experiences are the result of the particular needs that they have in their lives that they seek to fulfill through the arts.

The needs that we identified (in no particular order since they are equally important):

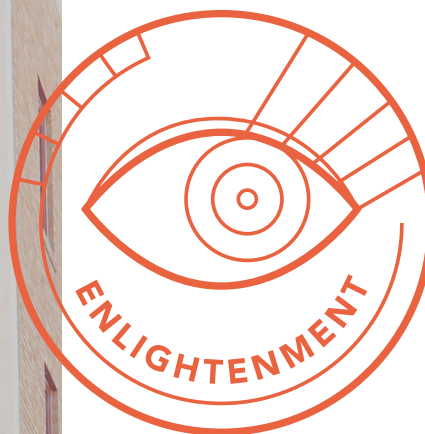
- To connect with their own heritage.
- To educate themselves and their family and children.
- To strengthen family unity, including covering the needs of multiple people in the family (multi-generational groups.)
- To be stimulated: to have alone time and to reflect, and to be entertained.
- To nurture themselves and be creative.
- To relate to others.



Art Hop / Concert by the Luchador Artist Cooperative / Fresno



Mural / Fresno



Latinos reported that being exposed to the arts is an important part of being “educated” and a “well-rounded” person. The arts is a human endeavor that touches every aspect of society and they feel the responsibility to get that knowledge and be informed about it. At the same time, the aesthetic enjoyment associated with the arts experience is something they deeply value and seek out in their lives, because it makes them feel like they are fulfilling their responsibility as educated individuals “to better yourself.” Getting to understand the origins of cultural manifestations, linkages across different cultures, and/or modern art representations is all part of being educated. By achieving this understanding, they can develop an opinion about it, which is important so they are perceived by others as “having an interesting conversation” (which in turn could open business opportunities, as one respondent mentioned). Whether is the art from ancient civilizations such as the Mayas or Romans, or modern artists such as Diebenkorn or Richter, including popular culture, they are interested in learning about Latino cultures as well as others.



The aesthetic experience is important and Latinos in this study described a sophisticated appreciation of the experience of beauty. For many this is one of the most cherished experiences that humans can achieve and what “makes us human.” Often times this experience is difficult to articulate because it seems so personal and profound that many respondents felt they lacked the words to describe it, yet they reported a deeply meaningful experience that allows them to immerse themselves in the art form and feel a deep connection to the artist and to themselves.



Griffith Observatory / Los Angeles



Enjoying an art experience with others allows them to create a common sense of identity, that they value and seek out. Being able to enjoy an event with family and/or friends is part of what draws them to arts organizations, making it a social experience *par excellence*. Therefore, large and multigenerational groups are common. A couple of experiences associated with community are:

DUTY

In relationship with their children or younger members of the community, Latinos feel that it is their duty to pass on Latino cultural values and traditions, and the arts is the perfect vehicle to achieve this. While Latino-specific events and programs are favored, there are also many opportunities to engage in other type of programs or activities but always as a family, strengthening family unity by creating cherished memories.

VALIDATION

From a sense of community grouped around a common cultural heritage, Latinos feel validated when they see arts organizations offering Latino-specific programs and events, Spanish language communications, diverse staff and leadership. This validation translates into a deep sense of pride, that is cherished by many.



Watts Towers / Los Angeles



Breaking free from the constraints of the everyday life is one of the most valued experiences related to art activities. This freedom allows them to connect with others, usually over a festive occasion that frequently involves music and food in an informal environment. This is what Latinos define as “ambiente.” But for some respondents this freedom goes further and becomes an opportunity to learn something and “break free” from ignorance.



One of the most interesting outcomes of the arts experience for Latinos was the acknowledgment and appreciation of many different cultures and artists. Through the arts they are able to connect and understand different cultures, including their own, and feel that they know and respect them. Respondents were always insistent that no culture is better or is above other, and the arts were a representation of this harmonious world view.

Exhibit at Arte Americas / Fresno

RELATIONSHIP TO ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

PROGRAMMING AND CONTENT

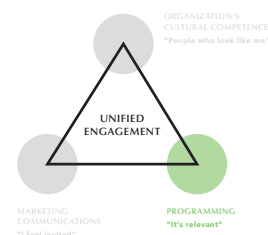
We identified two main ways Latinos connect or participate with arts organizations. One that is more occasional and transactional, and another one that is more intentional and purposeful. Most respondents didn't have a special relationship with any arts organizations. Their interest was mostly directed by the programs offered.

Many respondents, mostly Spanish-dominant and from older generations, were interested in Latino-specific content but by any means that was the whole extent of their interest. Reasons to enjoy Latino-specific programming were varied, but in general were associated with two main goals: getting in touch or reinforcing their own cultural identities, and teaching or instilling cultural values to younger generations. Programming that was not associated with Latin cultures was also of interest and respondents mentioned frequently an interest in learning about art movements, other cultures, and/or contemporary art.

The range of programming mentioned was also broad, going from community-generated art programs such as festivals, traditional celebrations, or rituals to artist-generated ones such as exhibitions or performances.



Grand Central Market / Los Angeles



RELATIONSHIP TO ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

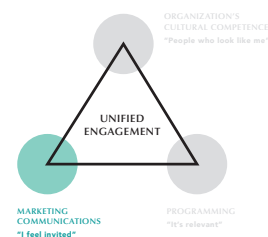
A prevalent commentary among respondents was the lack of information and marketing communications from arts organizations in general. Most respondents mentioned they never or almost never receive or are exposed to any kind of messages from arts organizations if they were not looking specifically for information. When they are looking for specific information the organization's website becomes the main source. Spanish-dominant respondents mentioned also never seeing anything in Spanish or in Spanish-language media channels, such as radio stations, TV or newspapers. We suspect that even though marketing communications from arts organizations might get lost in the bombardment to which we all are exposed on a daily basis, one of the reasons why respondents report not seeing any messages from arts organizations is because those don't seem relevant to them. A few respondents mentioned seeing sometimes some ads but acknowledged that they didn't feel they "are talking to me."

The communication channel that is the most relevant for respondents was social media. It is no secret that the Latino population is one of the most active users of social media channels, over-indexing the general population in the use of Instagram or Snapchat for example¹¹. Without exception, our respondents mentioned social media as the one channel of communication they use the most, and the one that has the most influence on them. The way they use social media related to art experiences includes:



Riverside Art Museum

- Receiving "tags" from their friends
- Looking at what their friends are doing via their feeds
- Looking at events trending in their cities/regions
- Reading recommendations and activities from their friends
- Connecting directly to an arts organization's page/feed
- Looking at ads



RELATIONSHIP TO ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

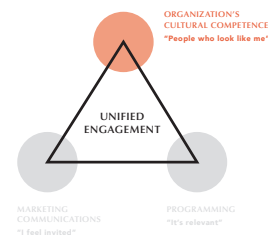
We explored respondents' perceptions of arts organizations' cultural competence and inclusive practices. We asked respondents their perceptions and experiences in the following areas:

- Audience diversity – whether seeing people from different ethnic groups in an audience is important to them.
- Front-of-house staff diversity – whether the ethnic identity of the staff they interact with at an arts organization is important to them.
- Producers/curators diversity – whether the ethnic identity of curators or producers in charge of programming is important to them.
- Organization's leadership – whether the ethnic identity of senior staff and board of an arts organization is important to them.

The analysis of respondents' data around these three aspects of Unified Engagement provided the base for the segmentation model described below.



Chicano Library Collection / Los Angeles



SEGMENTATION... WHAT? ANOTHER SEGMENTATION STUDY?

Segmentation studies, in particular those created for the arts field, seem to be a never-ending source of puzzlement and discrepancy when it comes to their effectiveness. Not all segmentation studies are useful for different types of arts organizations or to understand different population groups, yet they offer a significant way of understanding audiences: they invite us to think about the multiple reasons why people engage with the arts. It's no secret that arts administrators, as well as politicians, marketers, government agencies, etc., tend to think about Latinos as a homogeneous, consistent, and unified block. We talk about "the Latino community" as if 57 million people could ever be a community. But identifying the mindset with which people approach the arts experience opens the doors to a compelling and actionable insight: specific segments of the Latino population have discreet needs that require discreet responses from the arts community. Latinos are in fact not all alike when it comes to the arts.

In this study, we identified two specific mindsets with which Latinos tend to engage with arts organizations. They are also associated with specific demographic and psychographic characteristics. Our data shows that generation (Millennial, Gen. X and Boomers), language preference (Spanish-dominant, bilingual, English-dominant), and level of cultural openness (from level 1

to level 3) are associated with differing meaningful experiences Latinos are looking for and the way they engage with arts organizations.

Through an experiential segmentation model, we describe the two specific mindsets and name them based on the ultimate motivation for engaging with the arts and the experiences associated with it: Pride and Progress.



—
Understand the way
another person lives and
respect that, but never
change the essence you
carry... your roots will
always be there.
—

RESPONDENT, SAN FRANCISCO



MAIN DESIRED EXPERIENCES



CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Tends to be more occasional and/or transactional.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Tends to be Gen X or Boomer, Spanish dominant, and score 1 or 2 in the cultural openness spectrum.

KEY MOTIVATION

A key aspect of this segment is their sense of belonging to a minority group in the overall American population.

The Pride Mindset is most likely the target of most arts organizations seeking to engage “Latinos.” People in this segment most likely self-identifies as Hispanic, Latino/a/x or “from my country of origin” (Mexican, Salvadorian, Venezuelan, etc.), and one of the most distinguishable characteristics is a strong sense of community that permeates most of their activities. Connecting with others with similar experiences is very important because it reinforces their own identity, and because it makes them feel at ease knowing that they share values and behavioral codes. Fully aware of the cultural diversity in which they live, they are interested in strengthening their own cultural group, but at the same time they are also interested in learning about other cultural groups.

Many are immigrants who have a contrasting point of view of how life is in the U.S. and how it was back in their countries of origin, reporting that their own lives here are “stressful,” “too busy,” and even “boring.” An important aspect that they are looking for when they attend any kind of art event or public art program is the opportunity to feel free of any constraints, enjoying the company of family and friends, connecting with others in a festive environment that most likely includes music and food, which is what some respondents defined as “*ambiente*.” When an event has “*ambiente*” Latinos feel that it is an opportunity to celebrate life and relationships in a festive environment. They feel free.

*“El arte necesita más alegría.”
(Art needs more happiness.)*

RESPONDENT IN FRESNO

Engagement with arts organizations is tied to a sense of community and common identity for most respondents, mostly immigrants who come from countries that have defined arts policies designed to build a notion of national identity. Yet, the experience they are looking for is not only culturally-specific in terms of content or programming. They are interested in many different themes or topics, anything they can relate to that connects with their individual experience. Yet, having clear signs of inclusion is important to this segment, as many recognize that they didn’t have a lot of opportunities to engage with arts organizations growing up, so a clear, open invitation is welcomed. Once they engage with an arts organization, they admit that feeling included either by seeing other Latinos in the audience or as staff, which has the effect of making them feel validated.

Latinos have a strong interest in the arts as a vehicle for entertainment, stimulation, but also for passing on traditional Latino values to their children which they see as their parental duty. Reinforcing their own cultural identities and that of their children is very important because children “need to know where they come from (meaning the parents’ own cultural heritage),” so they seek Latino-specific arts experiences as learning and/or teaching tools. They also seek art experiences that are not Latino specific because they believe that being informed and/or educated is an important goal in their and their children’s lives. The arts are the perfect vehicle for reinforcing a sense of self-awareness (“know who you are”), of family unity (“family is everything”), and community (“mi gente/ my people.”)

Someone with the Pride Mindset is very aware of any sign that an arts organization is trying to engage them, and they appreciate and value the effort, since it is a sign of validation that “they matter.” Representation and inclusion are very important, so they pay attention to other visitors or attendees, the front of house staff, and even in some cases, the organization’s leadership. At the same time, they don’t want to be singled out as a population group more important than others, because “every culture is equally important.” In other words, they want representation, but not if it is at the expense of others. When they see themselves represented in an arts organization’s leadership it brings a sense of pride because it is proof that “we are capable as much as anyone else.”

UNIFIED ENGAGEMENT ENABLERS

CONTENT

All that speaks of my own experience

MARKETING

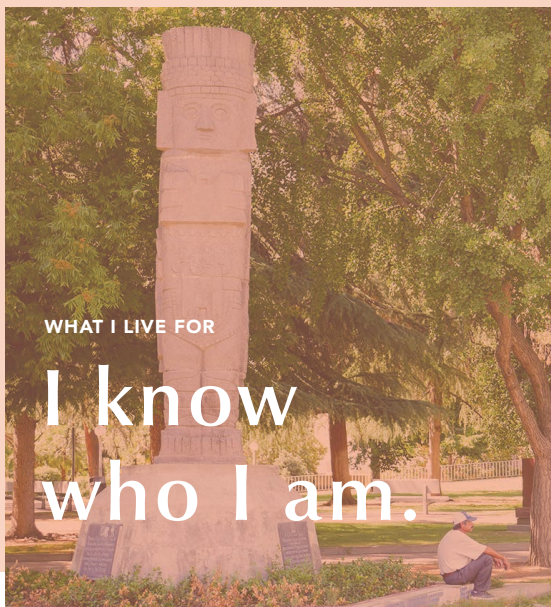
Reinforce our common identity

ORGANIZATION

Provide an inclusive experience that validates/represents me as a visitor

THE PRIDE MINDSET MENTAL MODEL

A mental model is an explanation of someone's thought process about how something works in the real world.



Indigenous Monument / Fresno

CORE DESIRED EXPERIENCES / MOTIVATORS



Freedom: Break free from the constraints of work and routine

Ambiente



Duty: We are strong by knowing where we come from

Family Unity

Validation: We matter

Pride

—

Just be kind, embrace
people, appreciate the
differences, don't be
afraid of the differences...

—

RESPONDENT, RIVERSIDE



MAIN DESIRED EXPERIENCES



CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Tends to be more purposeful/intentional, as well as slightly more inclined towards artist-generated vs. self- or community-generated.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Tends to be Millennial, bilingual or English-dominant, and score 3 in the cultural openness spectrum.

KEY MOTIVATION

A key aspect of this segment is their sense of belonging to American culture with a strong awareness of how they are changing its nature.

Arts organizations are most likely unaware of Latinos with a **Progress Mindset** because they probably behave just like any other regular visitor, so it is much more difficult to pin-down this mindset. Even though their cultural identity is strong and well defined as “people of Hispanic background/heritage/ancestry” they don’t behave like the “typical Latino,” and they might not even identify as Latino but as “American of Latino background.” They appear to identify as 100% American and 100% Latino (something we identified as “The Latino Paradox” in a previous study.¹²) At the same time their interests and values are beyond countries of origin since they are interested in learning about many different cultures and art from many different people. Their main interest is to be “a well-rounded person,” which they identify as a strong Latino cultural value: “my parents always told us to be the best we could be and learn as much as we could, because that would make us good people.” Enlightenment is definitely a big priority when they think about the arts.

Beauty is also an important experience, either by experiencing an art form that has an aesthetic value for them, or by witnessing the value of community-generated art experiences, such as traditional festivities. Their own cultural identities might not be the primary goal for them when they engage in the arts, and instead they are looking to get inspired and/or moved by the artist’s talent or mastery. In many cases they speak eloquently and in detail about how an artist’s talent captivates their imagination and they get transported to a different level of consciousness through the beauty of the art form. Enjoying art is a goal in itself.

My parents always told us to be the best we could be and learn as much as we could, because that would make us good people.

The drive for personal and community growth is strong in this segment. Any opportunity to be exposed to new ideas and new art forms is appreciated and taken advantage of. Being used to being bicultural and flowing smoothly from one culture to another, they appreciate art experiences that highlight the crossover of different disciplines, different cultures, and/or different points of view. They are particularly attuned and sensitive to discover the intersections that art brings to them, so they are more educated which in turn helps them to be more better equipped for life, which is an important cultural value “progresar (progress).”

Very much attuned to the Millennial attitude towards marketing and advertising, Americanos don't want to be "advertised to," so they tend to look for information within their own circles of friends and family. Social media is critical for them to find out about art events and programs, and more often than not, they hear about them by being tagged by their friends, or seeing their friends' newsfeeds in Instagram, Twitter and/or Snapchat. This way of obtaining information brings a level of legitimacy to the art experience that cannot be replaced by traditional advertising.

Once they engage with an arts organization, they expect a quality experience, one that is naturally representative of the diverse communities in which they live, and is not trying to push diversity in front of them. They don't necessarily seek to be engaged as people of Latino heritage, but at the same time "it would be strange if there are no Latino artists represented, since we are in California," as one of our respondents explained.

THE PROGRESS MINDSET MENTAL MODEL

A mental model is an explanation of someone's thought process about how something works in the real world.



Griffith Observatory / Los Angeles

UNIFIED ENGAGEMENT ENABLERS

CONTENT

Intersections among art forms sparks my curiosity

MARKETING

Become part of *mi gente* (my personal community)

ORGANIZATION

Provide a quality experience as a valued visitor

CORE DESIRED EXPERIENCES / MOTIVATORS



Enlightenment: I want to be a well-rounded person
Cultured



Beauty: Immerse myself in the art form
Disfrutar

Discovery: Connect with new things that make me grow and progress
Progresar

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Insights are not worth much if we don't know what to do with them. At the same time solutions are 100% dependent on the type of arts organization, its size, the local Latino population, and what type of programs and communications we are designing. The LatinXperience Study cannot recommend solutions for every different circumstance, but what we can do is to provide *Design Principles* to apply to the design of programs and communications. You can see these design or guiding principles as the criteria you could apply when you and your team are designing, planning, executing and/or evaluating a particular approach.

It's most useful to think about design principles as guiding statements that inform the design of programs and communications to evoke the right experiences. Experiences are the "what to do," while design principles are the "how to do it." Effective design principles:

1. Provide actionable guidelines
2. Help teams focus on the most critical experiences
3. Stimulate people's creativity
4. Leave room for interpretation
5. Give strategic and competitive advantages

We have developed design principles for programming and for communications for the two segments described in the previous section.



Painted Skulls / Arte Americas / Fresno



PROGRAMMING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1 Bring “ambiente” to the art experience.

The arts are an opportunity to connect with others in a festive occasion.

2 Design multi-sensory experiences.

Immersive, participatory experiences are often times more significant for Latinos.

3 Focus on contributions and similarities from ethnic populations.

Reinforce a sense of pride by showing connections among Latino and other cultures.

4 Emphasize traditional values.

Appeal to Latinos’ sense of duty towards younger generations by focusing on traditional festivities.

5 Provide historical cultural context.

Learning about Latino and others’ cultures is meaningful.

6 Facilitate multigenerational experiences.

Always consider the needs of large, multigenerational groups.

7 Foster teaching opportunities for parents.

Acknowledge that instilling a cultural identity in their children is important for parents.

COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN PRINCIPLES

8 Reinforce a sense of collective experience.

“Authentic” experiences are always relevant and instill a sense of pride.

9 Provide opportunities to share the experience with others.

Word of mouth is more effective when the message can be easily shared.

10 Generate a critical mass to create comfort.

Being comfortable in a social setting is important, so make sure that there is a welcoming environment for large groups.



PROGRAMMING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1 Provide cultural context for the art form.

Focus on cultural influences among artists and their influences.

2 Foster multigenerational participatory dialogue.

Create opportunities for meaningful connections across people from different backgrounds.

3 Relate art to personal experiences and current events.

Uncover the influences of the art form on today's events.

4 Emphasize the value of intercultural dialogue.

Focus on the points of intersection between different points of view.

5 Focus on guiding aesthetic appreciation allowing enough flexibility for interpretation. Offer tools for Latinos to learn about the art form and offer their points of view.

6 Highlight multiple cultural influences beyond the art itself.

Be explicit about the cultural context in which the art form occurs.

COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN PRINCIPLES

7 Provide an epilogue as a take-away.

Communicate the intended outcome of the experience as a guide for further exploration.

8 Provide multidisciplinary experiences.

Emphasize the intersections of different points of view.

9 Foster discussion and dialogue.

Opportunities for processing and sharing the experience are valued.

10 Authentically highlight diverse audiences' participation.

Do not push a diversity message, but integrate it in your overall marketing.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Think about the experience you want to evoke and what's the best way to communicate it.

Focus on the meaningful experiences of the two segments of the Latino population described in this study when designing your messaging, and select the best communication channel.

1



2

Appeal to the experiences that Latinos desire including but not limited to their ethnic identity.

Cultural and ethnic identity is very important to Latinos but could be limiting if it's the only angle you use to engage them. Appeal to their overall mindset instead.



3

Make your message explicit for Latinos.

Make sure that you're appealing to the experiences that Latinos are looking for in the arts, and tailor your message accordingly. Make sure that the message is relevant by testing it beforehand.



4

Communicate only genuine expressions of diversity. Latinos know when you're trying to "push" a diversity message and it is always a good policy to be transparent and genuine about your constituencies and stakeholders.



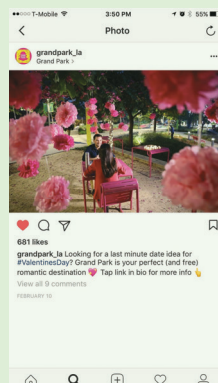
Social media is your most powerful tool, use it wisely.

The essence of social media is to create a two-way communication, not an informative channel. You will always win when you engage the Latino audience in a dialogue.

HOW LATINOS USE SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE ARTS

- Receiving “tags” from their friends
- Looking at what their friends are doing via their feeds
- Looking at events trending in their cities/regions
- Reading recommendations/activities from their friends
- Connecting directly to an arts organization’s page/feed
- Looking at ads

5



6

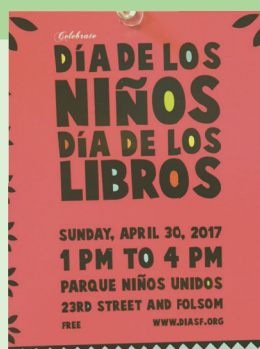
Social media is an extension of word of mouth.

The interpersonal connections happening on social media are your best option to develop brand recognition and validation for your organization, not only to disseminate your message.

7

Use Spanish language communications not as a strategy but as a tactic.

The content of your message should be relevant for the audience you’re trying to reach beyond translation.



8

Craft communications that include a complete outing. Attending an arts program is often an occasion that includes a meal and other social activities. Including information about restaurants, parking, and multi-generational groups’ needs will make your message stand out.



9

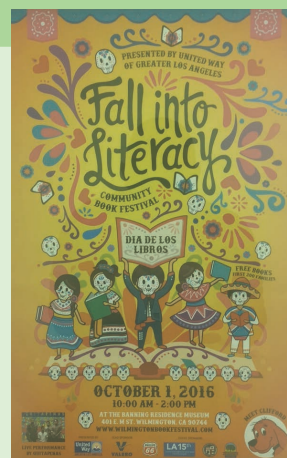
Research and use the communications channels favored by Latinos in your region.



It's important to meet the Latino audience where they are, either physically (e.g. specific neighborhoods) or virtually (e.g. social media groups.)

10

Collaborating with trusted partners in the community is a good way to gain the visibility you're trying to achieve. Partnerships, collaborations, cross-promotional campaigns are always good ways to create brand recognition, but make sure you're ready to establish a relationship with your partners.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Using an audience-centered approach and ethnographic research methodologies, Scansion aimed to deeply understand the values, motivations, and desired experiences related to cultural activities of Latinos in different phases of the cultural openness spectrum and generational brackets (Millennials, Generation X, and Boomers).

Using an intercultural framework, Scansion focused on how the cultural identity of Latinos evolve and how that evolution is represented in their cultural participation. From a mix of primary and secondary research activities, Scansion synthesized a high-level understanding of Latino engagement in the arts, providing recommendations for inclusive practices and actionable insights for more effective tactical implementations.

PRIMARY RESEARCH



In-depth Interviews

We conducted 41 in-depth Interviews (IDI's) of one hour each with self-identified Latinos in four California regions, 2 coastal and 2 inland: San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles metro, Riverside / Inland Empire, and Fresno.

Respondents profile:

- Language preference: Spanish dominant, bilingual, English dominant
- Generation: Millennial, Generation X, and Baby Boomers
- Country of origin: US born, foreign born including a good representation from Latin American countries
- 60% female and 40% male in each city
- Mix of educational and income levels, and occupations
- Active cultural participation using a broad definition (museums, performing arts, festivals, fairs, social dancing, etc.)



Digital Ethnography Assignment

36 complete digital ethnography assignments in which respondents were asked to submit their 10 best ideas of how arts organizations could further engage people "like them." Respondents used their smartphones to submit short videos and/or still photography, and answered a few questions about each idea. They had 3 to 4 days to complete the assignment after their interview.

We received a total of 317 entries (each with an image and an explanation) that were classified using semantic analysis. The following categories were the most frequently mentioned:

- Increase stimulation
- Create Latino marketing and communications
- Offer Latino centric programming
- Establish partnerships with community organizations
- Use Spanish language
- Develop immersive, participatory experiences



Expert Interviews

We conducted 8 interviews with experts in the field of arts diversity, equity, and inclusion. All respondents are practitioners in their respective areas:

1. Leticia Buckley, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
2. Frank Delgado, Arte Americas
3. Drew Oberjuege, Riverside Art Museum
4. Elva Rodriguez, Arte Americas
5. Eric Romero, Riverside Art Museum
6. Katie Hernandez, Riverside Art Museum
7. Luis Arreola, Artist, Luchador Art Collective
8. Nikiko Masumoto, Farmer, Artist, Community Leader

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

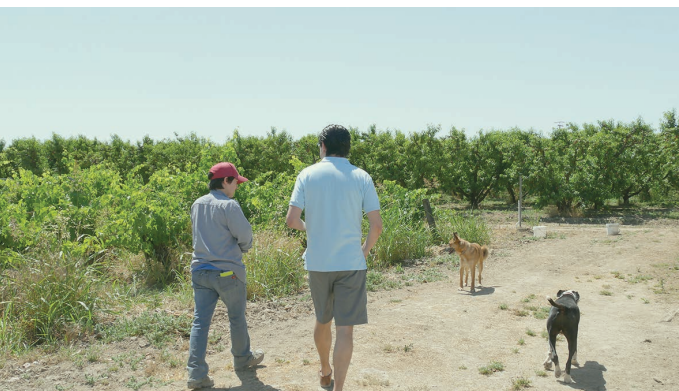
SECONDARY RESEARCH

Secondary Research

We conducted a literature review of previous work about Latino engagement in the arts and associated communications.

Advisory Committee

- Roberto Bedoya, City of Oakland
- Tamara Alvarado, School of Arts and Culture in San Jose
- Leticia Buckley, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
- Lucero Arellano, former California Arts Council
- Frank Delgado, Arte Americas, Fresno
- Edgar Aguirre, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences



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- Drew Oberjuege, Riverside Art Museum
- Elva Rodriguez, Arte Americas
- Eric Romero, Riverside Art Museum
- Katie Hernandez, Riverside Art Museum
- Luis Arreola, Artist
- Nikiko Masumoto, Farmer, Artist, Community Leader
- Frank Delgado, Arte Americas
- Leticia Buckley, Los Angeles County Arts Commission



Visit the study website
and view the videos at:

www.latinxperience.org



Learn more about Scansion and the
authors of this study at

www.scansion.com

Get In Touch:

Salvador Acevedo
salvador@scansion.com

Verna Bhargava
verna@scansion.com

Steven Diller
steve@scansion.com

