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A lavishly illustrated look at Argentine identity and history through photography

LOS ANGELES — Examining photography through the lens of national identity is often a revealing process, one that shows us the project of nation-building up close. Photographs reveal how citizens see themselves or want to be seen, how nations want to remember themselves—and often what they want to forget as well. *Photography in Argentina: Contradiction and Continuity* edited by **Idurre Alonso and Judith Keller** (Getty Publications, \$55.00, hardcover) explores the evolution of photographic practices alongside the construction of a national identity. By simultaneously discussing patterns and echoes within Argentine photography while eschewing a neat singular narrative, the resulting text is rich and complex.

From its independence in 1810 until the economic crisis of 2001, Argentina has been seen, both in the Argentine national and broader international collective imagination, as a modern country with a powerful economic system, a massive European immigrant population, an especially strong middle class, and an almost nonexistent contemporary indigenous culture. In some ways, the early history of Argentina strongly resembles that of the United States, with its frontier ideology, the image of the cowboy as a national symbol (equivalent to the Argentine gaucho), the importance of the immigrant population, and the advanced and liberal ideas of the founding fathers. But did Argentine history truly follow a linear path toward modernization? How did photography help shape or deconstruct notions associated with Argentina?

Photography in Argentina examines the complexities of this country's history, stressing the heterogeneity of its realities and especially the power of constructed photographic images—that is, the practice of altering reality for artistic expression, an important vein in Argentine photography.

This volume is published to accompany an exhibition on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center September 16, 2017 through January 28, 2018. This exhibition and catalogue are part of the Getty-led Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA initiative.

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles taking place from September 2017 through January 2018. Led by the Getty, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is a collaboration of arts institutions across Southern California.

Through a series of thematically linked exhibitions and programs, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA highlights different aspects of Latin American and Latino art from the ancient world to the present day. With topics such as luxury arts in the pre-Columbian Americas, 20th



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century Afro-Brazilian art, alternative spaces in Mexico City, and boundary-crossing practices of Latino artists, exhibitions range from monographic studies of individual artists to broad surveys that cut across numerous countries.

Supported by more than \$16 million in grants from the Getty Foundation, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA involves more than 70 cultural institutions from Los Angeles to Palm Springs, and from San Diego to Santa Barbara. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.

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Idurre Alonso is associate curator of Latin American Collections at the Getty Research Institute. **Judith Keller** was senior curator in the Department of Photographs at the J. Paul Getty Museum.

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Idurre Alonso and Judith Keller

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