



# In Conversation with Adriana Alvarez-Nichol

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ARTS

Our guest writer Hing Chao discusses Latin American art and the works of Hector Velázquez with the founder of Puerta Roja gallery





In the video above, Hing Chao, *Hong Kong Tatler* guest writer and founder of Earthpulse Foundation, meets with Puerta Roja's Adriana Alvarez-Nichol to discuss, among many things, the spirit of Latin American art and the emotional works of Hector Velázquez. The Mexican artist is showcasing his inspiring sculptural pieces at The Space, in an exhibition titled *Unfolding Bodies*. It is the first time Velázquez has ever shown his work in the city.

*[Read more about Unfolding Bodies, which opens October 18th at The Space](#)*

"The artist doesn't feel restrained in terms of using very powerful images," says Alvarez-Nichol, who is committed to bringing about a sounder understanding of Latin American art in Hong Kong. Velázquez's exhibition is the highlight of a 10-day "festival" celebrating Mexican culture, which includes art tours, talks, and interactive events for children.

Chao is a long-time fan of Puerta Roja's work, and he joins us in conversation with Alvarez-Nichol to explore the role of art in cultural understanding, why Hong Kongers may feel an affinity to Latin American art, and how Puerta Roja's philosophy can have implications for future projects, such as the government's West Kowloon Cultural District initiative.

*[See what Hing Chao has to say, in detail, about Latin American art and the world of Hector Velázquez](#)*

If there is one thing to take away from this engaging exchange, it is that works from Latin American artists such as Velázquez invite us to put aside our preconceptions of

the role of art in communities. His colourful, voluptuous sculptures beg to be touched and interacted with, breaking down barriers between artist and observer. To both Alvarez-Nichol and Chao, Velázquez's ability to elicit a powerful emotional response from viewers is another quality to be admired.

“In Hong Kong, a lot of people look at art from an investment standpoint,” suggests Chao. “If I buy a piece of art, is it going to appreciate in value? And there's this kind of cool calculation, rather than looking at art as a piece of art, and whether I can personally emotionally relate to that piece of art.”

Alvarez-Nichol agrees. “I think the viewing of art, contemporary art, has been dominated by the commercial galleries here. And I think as gallery owners we have to start exploring more ways to engage everybody to come and enjoy the art.”

Watch the video above to find out more about Latin American art, Hector Velázquez and Hong Kong's art scene.

*Videography by Tyrone Wu*

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