

# The Comparative Study

## Introduction

By Alessandra Vazquez

Delving into two different art mediums, the contemporary art of Edel Rodriguez and the installation art by Doh Ho Suh are created with many of the same motives, despite the stark cultural and artistic differences. With both works being made by immigrants, coming from Cuba and Korea respectively, both of these artists and their work focus heavily on topics such as immigration, the effects of controversy that surround being a foreigner, as well tackling the topic of the struggle that comes with having to assimilate into an entirely different culture and environment.



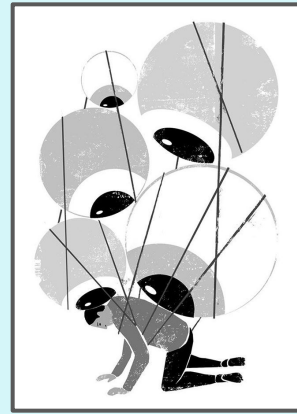
Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018) Acrylic Painting

These topics are ones that are particularly important to me, so much so that it feels as they are directly tied to me as a person. Having been fortunate enough to be the child of two Mexican immigrants who came here to the United States in order to provide me with a better life, the topics surrounding having to get accustomed to American culture and still try to maintain these strings to my own culture are ones that have been bound to me since I came into this world. Although it wasn't me who had to go through the trouble of immigrating to another country, the effects of such are ones that become deeply rooted regardless.

The artworks of Do Ho Suh and Edel Rodriguez are able to invoke this rich relatability and experience of immigrants and their children everywhere, no matter the background. For me, these artworks spoke of the difficulty of maintaining a sense of cultural identity due to the effects of American assimilation. The inner struggle that comes with feeling too "foreign" for either culture, or not feeling as if we are ever being true to our roots and identity. The ostracization of immigrants for being "illegal." All of these topics are deeply illustrated between these artworks.

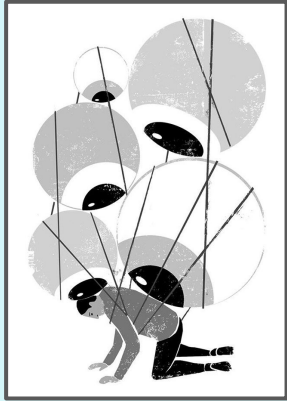


Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)  
Outdoor Installation



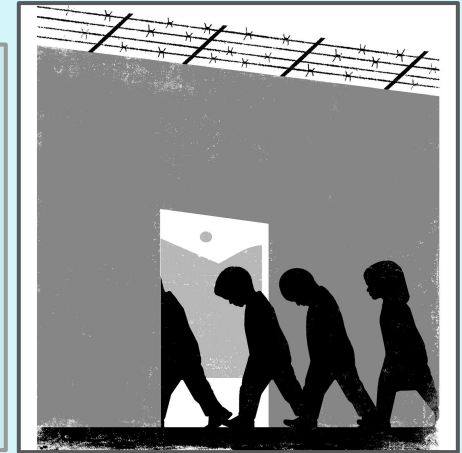
Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs  
Surveillance" New York  
Times, Illustration

# Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Ediel Rodriguez



Ediel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance" New York Times

Born in Havana, Cuba in 1971, Ediel Rodriguez grew up in a small farm town called El Gabriel up until the age of 9 years old. During the year 1980, Ediel, alongside his mother, father, and sister, boarded the Mariel boatlift, emigrating to the United States and arriving in Miami. Coming to the United States, Ediel had been exposed to all of these new western ideas and American pop culture, as opposed to his hometown where he was surrounded by fields of tobacco. Once his family had arrived in Miami, they were left with little resources, moving in with relatives as the Cuban government had taken most of their possessions such as their clothes, furniture, and home. Within a span of a couple of years, Ediel was able to become fluent in English, and pursued an education in art, receiving a Master of Fine Arts degree in college. Rodriguez has been able to create a successful career through immigrating to America, working with popular clients such as *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, as well as other publishers.



Ediel Rodriguez "Immigration Kids Sent Back"



Photo of Ediel Rodriguez' Workspace, Americas Quarterly



Photo of Ediel Rodriguez' Workspace, Americas Quarterly

Growing up in his small hometown of El Gabriel, Rodriguez had only been exposed to revolutionary art, varying greatly from the new, western advertising and contemporary city life that he was now surrounded by in the United States. Despite this, his experiences growing up in Cuba and immigrating to America have remained apparent throughout most of his artworks, as he focuses on aspects such as his personal history, identity, and cultural displacement. Immigration becomes an apparent theme within a variety of his artworks, often focusing on the subject of feeling ostracized by society in his painting "Strangers," and the experience of moving to a new country as a child, as seen in his illustration of "Immigration Kids Sent Back."

Many of his works can be influenced by the notion of democracy and the freedom of speech, a factor which he and his entire family looked up to once they had arrived in the United States. Regardless of the challenges and struggles that Ediel has faced as a Cuban immigrant in America, his success has helped spread the messages of his works to millions, expressing his experiences and belief that, "This country now seems scared to take risks on foreigners, to bet on the possibility that the next boat full of strangers might be full of greatness."

# Evaluation of Cultural Significance of Do Ho Suh



Do Ho Suh Entrance, Ground Floor, 348 West 22nd Street, New York, NY 10011, USA, 2016

Born in Seoul, South Korea to the famous artist, Suh Se-Ok, who led an artistic movement during the 1960s, Do Ho Suh became a Korean sculptor and installation artist after failing to become a marine biologist. He established an education in art and received a masters degree in Korean painting before immigrating to the United States to continue his education, describing this as a way of freedom from the comparisons and weights of his father's artistic abilities. After establishing his own identity away from the influence of his father, Do Ho Suh's work has shaped to represent his life and his experiences, whether it be about the experience of being an immigrant or the homes he's moved between, his work embodies to "...see life as a passageway, with no fixed beginning or destination."



Do Ho Suh, Passage/s, Installation, 2017-2018

Through the use of colorful models, the artwork of Do Ho Suh captures the essence of identity and the idea of colliding multiple homes and experiences together in unity. Do Ho Suh often aims to encapsulate his past experiences by recreating his past homes into beautiful works of installations and sculptures. Through his work, he is able to represent the multiple cultures and identities that many immigrants are faced to switch between, often having to assimilate to an entirely different culture and bring up a new identity in order to be successful in their new environments. Many of Do Ho Suh's artworks include incorporating parts of his home country, South Korea, into completely different places, such as London in his installation, "Bridging Home." Do Ho Suh tackles the idea of cultural displacement and the struggle of identity through his works, a common theme displaying sets of multiple doors that seem to have no definitive end or beginning. The assimilation of immigrants is something that is far from new, and Do Ho Suh's work reveals that inner battle of identity that so many immigrants face.

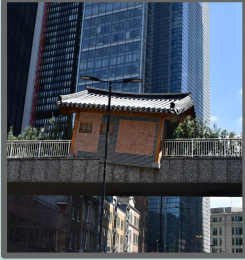


Do Ho Suh, Blueprint, 2010



Do Ho Suh, Home within Home within Home within Home within Home, 2013

# Comparing Cultural Significance



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs. surveillance"

- All of the pieces presented here have been made during the same time period, the 21st century. This is an important fact to consider as the overall discussion surrounding immigration and cultural displacement hasn't been as open as it is today, leaving many to hide their personal experiences.
- All of the artworks presented here come from artists who have immigrated to the United States, allowing them to share many of the same experiences as they both had immigrated to the same country.
- All of the artworks depict some sort of negative experience with being an immigrant in a new country or place.
- Both Edel Rodriguez' work *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* focus on the idea of forever being associated with labels. For example, the label of being an immigrant can oftentimes have negative connotations, especially in the United States. With *Strangers* showing us how immigrants are often viewed with no individuality, and socially surveyed.



• Both *Bridging Home* and *Strangers* utilize the aspect of past homes and environments in order to convey their messages. For example, *Bridging Home* tackles the past by reminiscing about past homes, such as the one above of an old traditional Korean home Do Ho Suh used to live in. In *Strangers*, this idea is explored through showing multiple humanoid figures on a boat, leaving their past homes and environment behind them.

• All pieces displayed are made with the motive of feeling 'left out' or 'out of place' as a result of immigration. This is seen in *Bridging Home*, where a traditional Korean home is thrown into the middle of a bridge in London, in *Strangers* as depicted by the title and variety of people boarding the boat seen in the piece, and by the multitude of eyes that weigh down and are drilled into watching the individual below in *Privacy vs. Surveillance*.



Both *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* have a fixation on eyes, as many figures in *Strangers* are given ghostly white eyes against a contrasting body, *Privacy vs. Surveillance* scales up the size of eyes.

# Contrasting Cultural Significance

All the pieces shown here address the same experiences revolving around being an immigrant in America, but all in varying stages. For example, *Strangers* depicts the early experiences and struggles of becoming an immigrant, being seen as foreign and an ‘outsider.’ With *Privacy vs Surveillance*, it depicts the struggles and judgements that many immigrants endure and carry with them as they continue to try and adapt to their new life in the US, while *Bridging Home* focuses on the later aspects where one is able to get accustomed to the multiple cultures that surround them, while also granting homage to their own.



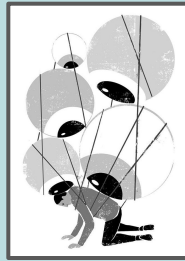
Do Ho Suh, “Bridging Home” (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, “Strangers” (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, “Privacy vs Surveillance”



While both *Strangers* and *Privacy vs Surveillance* focus on the struggle of immigration, *Strangers* has an emphasis on the actual experience of travelling to a different place entirely, while

*Privacy vs Surveillance* instead focuses on the struggle and stigma that is associated with adapting to this said new environment, rather than the actual experience and struggle of immigrating to this foreign environment.

Although both *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* are made by Edel Rodriguez, there is a stark difference in terms of the art style that went into the creation of both that can invoke entirely different emotions. *Strangers* exemplifies the meaning of the artwork by using traditional painting techniques, allowing for us as the viewer to see all of the strokes and the messiness that is applied to the canvas, as opposed to the illustrative, clean piece of the other.



● Both *Bridging Home* and *Strangers* utilize the backgrounds of the pieces to their advantage, but they do so in contrasting ways. For example, *Bridging Home* uses the natural blue sky and buildings to portray the positive message of being able to incorporate multiple cultures into your life, while *Strangers* uses blue to create a grim mood, as well as to create a defining sense of singularity and confused uniformity.

● Cultural displacement is addressed in both pieces above, but with incredibly different mediums: art installation and traditional painting.

# Comparing & Contrasting Cultural Significance W/Edel Rodriguez



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

Alessandra Vazquez, "Enmascarado" (2023)

## COMPARING

- Both pieces are completed by two hispanic individuals, with Edel Rodriguez being Cuban and myself as Mexican, creating a similar cultural influence by coming from hispanic origins.
- Both pieces are created by those who have been affected by immigration in the United States, as Edel Rodriguez is a Cuban immigrant, while I am a second generation immigrant.
- Both pieces depict the isolation that many immigrants face, making them pieces essential to furthering the understanding of the immigrant experience when it had been difficult to do so in the past as a result of the lack of open discussion surrounding the topic in America.

- The concept of the loss of identity within those affected by immigration is prevalent in both pieces of artwork
- Artworks were created at a time where the stigma against immigration has lessened, allowing the opportunity for those with creative freedom to share their experiences

## CONTRASTING

- *Strangers* focuses on the struggle that comes with the physical immigration of coming to a different country as a first generation immigrant, while *Enmascarado* focuses on the struggle of conformity in the US as a 2nd gen immigrant.
- Edel Rodriguez' painting *Strangers* is made to heavily reference the Mariel boatlift, a mass emigration of Cubans that occurred during 1980, while *Enmascarado* does not have ties to any historical event/influence of historical event.
- Artworks appeal to different audiences, with *Strangers* providing more relatability to the older generations while my own work *Enmascarado* appeals to my current generation.
- Although both works are made by two hispanic individuals, cultural differences are prevalent as Edel Rodriguez is of Cuban descent while I am of Mexican descent, providing differing experiences & influences.
- Both artworks were created w/differing political influence

# Evaluation of Material & Concept

- Do Ho Suh's work in *Bridging Home* being an architectural art installation allows for the conceptual meaning surrounding cultural displacement and the colliding of cultures in the work to be further explored. The structure such as the Korean house that Do Ho Suh has created allows for the idea for permanence and wither, as a structure/physical art piece is a more resilient form of art. Physical pieces of art are able to torn, ruined, and broken down over time. This is true especially in *Bridging Home*, where the structure is exposed to the elements as it sits on a bridge in London.

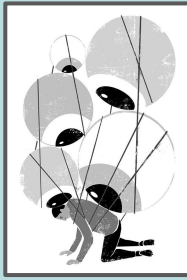
- This form of material for this piece leaves it incredibly vulnerable and susceptible to unwanted change, which connects back to the struggles of many immigrants who, in order to be successful, often have to adapt to an entirely different culture from their own. The ability for this structure to break down resembles the way immigrants often have to sacrifice parts of themselves, to break parts of themselves, in order to conform to society.



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs surveillance"

- The painterly approach to Edel Rodriguez' *Strangers* is significant to the time period of 1980 as the Mariel Boatlift had occurred during this time, which Edel Rodriguez had boarded when he was immigrating to the US.



- The use of messy yet controlled brush strokes in this painting allow for us to further the meaning surrounding the piece, as the quality of the piece becomes representative of the mindset that many immigrants may have as they are immigrating to a new environment, especially at a young age like Edel had. In many instances, immigration is often tied to many traumatic events, such as war, poverty, natural disaster, and the effect of those aspects can be expressed through the brushwork of *Strangers*, as well as the use of texture that the paint leaves behind, and the usage of unrefined shapes.

- The digital illustration of *Privacy vs Surveillance* by Edel Rodriguez was a piece that was featured in the New York Times, allowing for the message and experiences of dealing with the stigma surrounding immigration in the United States to reach an immense amount of individuals, allowing for a greater understanding and awareness of many people's everyday lives and struggles.

- The digital, clean approach for *Privacy vs. Surveillance* is significant to the topic regarding the struggle and stigma surrounding immigrants as it allows for a more modern approach and awareness around the subject. The 21st century has allowed for an immense amount of technological advancements, where information is able to be spread across the globe. Having this piece of art be made digitally and cleanly allows for easy accessibility and easy understanding of the subject matter being presented in the art piece.

# Comparing Material & Concept

- Both artworks *Bridging Home* and *Strangers* utilize the background of the art to their advantage to exemplify the meaning of the piece. For example, the structure in *Bridging Home* is surrounded by a vast city adorned with buildings, while the figures in *Strangers* are surrounded by a gloomy ocean beneath them, with a grim sky matching the waters below.

- Both artworks use historical aspects in *Bridging Home* and *Strangers*. *Bridging Home* incorporates bringing a historically traditional Korean home into the piece, while *Strangers* focuses on the Mariel Boatlift of 1980



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

- Both Edel Rodriguez' work *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* focus on incorporating multiple aspects or objects into the composition to further the meaning of the work. For example, *Strangers* features a multitude of humanoid individuals, while *Privacy vs. Surveillance* uses a multitude of eyes strapped to someone to convey the art's message.



- Both of these works by Edel Rodriguez use more traditionally practiced art forms, with the utilization of painting and illustration, respectively.

- Both *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* utilize color to their advantage to support the messages of their pieces. *Strangers* uses a variety of blues to establish negativity, while *Privacy vs. Surveillance* uses shades of grey and black to invoke a serious and grim atmosphere.

- Both pieces by Edel Rodriguez focus on an experience and struggles of many who go through assimilation as they adapt to a new country and environment by showing how both physically and socially, no matter the culture, there are so many individuals who have to give up parts of themselves and their past.



Both *Strangers* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* have a fixation on eyes, as many figures in *Strangers* are given ghostly white eyes against a contrasting body, *Privacy vs. Surveillance* scales up the size of eyes.

Both pieces here, *Bridging Home* and *Strangers* use the aspect of people or otherwise humanoid figures in order to enhance the focal point of the artwork.





# Contrasting Material & Concept

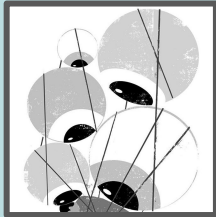
- Artworks *Bridging Home* and *Strangers* utilize entirely different materials and mediums in order to convey their messages. While *Bridging Home* is an architectural art installation, Edel Rodriguez' *Strangers* is an acrylic painting. Generally, Do Ho Suh is known to use a variety of physical materials, such as glass and fabric, while Rodriguez focuses on paintings and illustrations.

- *Bridging Home* offers a more physical, permanent impact on the viewer due to the nature of the materials used, such as plywood and timber, as opposed to the 60" x 40" acrylic painting of *Strangers*.

- Although both *Privacy vs. Surveillance* and *Strangers* both use more commonly used forms of art mediums, in this case painting and illustration, the quality and refinement of the art styles that are used for both of them despite being made by the artist are contrasting. For example, in *Privacy vs. Surveillance*, the subjects in the piece are all cleanly shaped out, outlined with clean, black lines. This is a stark contrast from *Strangers*, which uses intentionally messy brushstrokes and rough shapes in order to add to the feel of the overall piece.



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance"



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



- *Bridging Home* and *Privacy vs. Surveillance* use different elements to their advantage to determine the focal points of each piece. Art installation *Bridging Home* utilizes the background and environment to compliment the main piece, while *Privacy vs. Surveillance* relies on the foreground and accentuates it with a white background.

All of the artworks presented here convey a message regarding the experiences of immigrants coming to the United States, although it is displayed from the views of two entirely different people who come from different backgrounds and cultures. For example, Edel Rodriguez is a Cuban immigrant, while Do Ho Suh is a Korean immigrant. This affects the concepts they have as although the two share similar experiences and struggles, their different cultures allow them to have varied concepts from one another as a result of living under varying influences. This can include things such as music, food, and even architecture. What these individuals were exposed to, especially growing up, can lead them to ultimately having unique ideas, concepts, and motivations from one another.

# Comparing & Contrasting Material & Concept W/ Edel Rodriguez

## COMPARING

- Both artworks *Strangers* and *Enmascarado* utilize the same technique of restricting the artwork to a set color palette within the piece, with both artworks utilizing varying shades of blue in order to convey the sorrowful tone within the respective pieces.
- Both artworks utilize abstract shapes in order to symbolize the lack of identity that comes with being associated with immigration as a result of stigma, creating dark figures with strange facial expressions or lack of facial features all together to create a lack of identification between the figures in each of the art pieces.
- Both pieces utilize their background to their advantage, as *Strangers* utilizes a background that transitions from a dark to light horizontally, while my piece *Enmascarado* utilizes a transition from light to dark vertically.
- Both Edel Rodriguez' *Strangers* and my piece *Enmascarado* utilize the composition in the same way by having emphasis on crowds of people present.

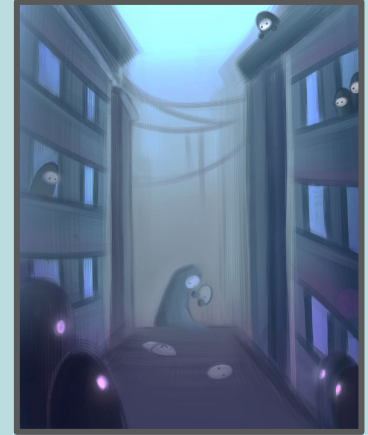
## CONTRASTING

- *Strangers* and *Enmascarado* utilize their setting and background in vastly different ways, as *Strangers* is set in an open space of water, *Enmascarado* instead takes place in a shrouded blue city.
- The techniques used for both pieces vary between each other, as *Strangers* utilizes a messy artstyle to convey its message of lack of distinction between immigrants due to stigma while *Enmascarado* instead uses a cleaner, textured artstyle in order to convey immigrants conforming to American society.



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

Alessandra Vazquez, "Enmascarado" (2023)



- Both artworks utilize two different mediums to convey the immigrant experience, with Edel Rodriguez utilizing the more traditional medium of acrylic painting, while I utilized more modern medium of digital illustration for my own piece.
- While both of our pieces utilize abstract figures in our piece in order to show a lack of distinction and humanity, the levels of how this is expressed differ greatly from each respective piece. *Enmascarado* utilizes abstract, humanoid figures that use much of the same facial features throughout, *Strangers* utilizes more distorted, complex facial expressions.
- Texture within both pieces is prevalent, but used contrastingly, as *Strangers* utilizes texture to build more tone while *Enmascarado* does not.

# Interpretation of Function and Purpose

Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

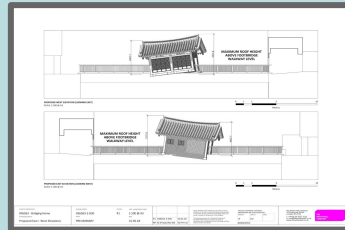


Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers" aims to highlight the historically significant event of the Mariel boatlift of 1980, as well as provide a sense of relatability to a multitude of immigrants everywhere, but more specifically ones who immigrated to the United States. The artwork functions both as symbolism, of how the outside world views immigrants, while also shedding light on the mindset that immigrants carry. Expressing the ostracization from society and stripping of individuality, the piece also captures the loss of identity and culture that occurs as a result of immigrating to a new environment. This historical narrative that the piece paints also serves as an expression of the artist's feelings and personal experiences, as it details a significant historical event that personally affected Edel Rodriguez, as he boarded the boat in 1980 with his family when immigrating to the United States.

Do Ho Suh "Bridging Home" functions as an art piece that is used to both commemorate and express the personal ideology of Do Ho Suh. "Bridging Home" is an art installation that aims to give homage to all of the old homes and experiences of the artist, as the artist personally believes that, we should, "see life as a passageway, with no fixed beginning or destination." The art piece also serves as a way to express the artist's feelings and experiences regarding cultural assimilation in the United States for an immigrant. The artwork aims to instill confusion in the viewer, focusing on the idea that immigrants are seen as "out of place," much like the subject in its environment. The overall function of the piece is both a conceptual and symbolic piece that paints both the positive and negative experiences associated with immigration, through displaying the diversity and merging of different cultures, while also expressing the struggle and societal judgement that comes with doing so.



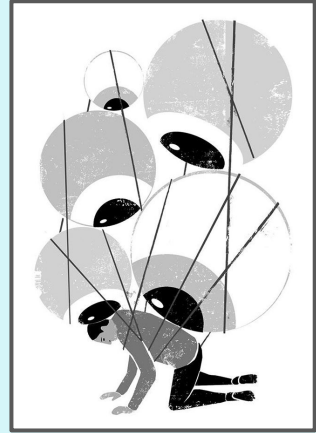
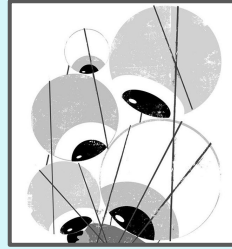
Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Original Blueprints for "Bridging Home"



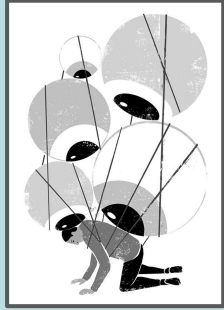
"Bridging Home"



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times

Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs Surveillance" functions as symbolic artwork that aims to spread awareness and express the artist's personal feelings on the outlook that outsiders carry towards immigrants. The artwork looks to inform the public about the struggle and negative associations and harmful labels that come with being an immigrant in America by using disturbing imagery and symbolism. For example, symbolism is used when "Privacy vs Surveillance" focuses on the idea of power and status. Oftentimes, in the United States, whether it be lower wages or poverty rates, immigrants are subject to less advantages than US natives. In addition to economical disadvantages, this work brings to light the social issues and stigma regarding those who are immigrants, who are often forced to fit into harmful labels and generalizations. Overall, this artwork serves to be an expressive piece and representation of the multitude of struggles that immigrants face.

# Comparing Function and Purpose



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs. Surveillance", New York Times

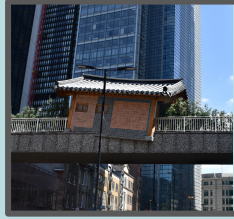


Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

Edel Rodriguez' "*Strangers*" and "*Privacy vs. Surveillance*" both focus on the function and purpose of informing the public and exposing truths. In their own individual ways, these pieces of artwork serve as a way to expose the truths of the immigrant experience to people everywhere in the United States. They both share a similar purpose by utilizing grim imagery and composition in order to get the meaning of their messages across, to show the world the burdens of being an immigrant in a different country, but more specifically the experiences of being an immigrant in the United States.

Both artworks share a similar purpose and function of presenting the idea of negative associations towards immigrants, both featuring the widespread problem of stigma and lack of individualism that many immigrants end up facing as they try and adapt to a new environment. Both artworks focus on this collective pain and struggle of adaptation.

Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs. Surveillance", New York Times



Do Ho Suh's, "Bridging Home," and Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance" both provide the similar purpose of expressing the experience of cultural assimilation in America. In their own individual ways, they share the silent and not openly apparent effects that many immigrants of all types and from all places in the world end up having to experience in their lives, oftentimes with permanent effects. Both of the artworks share how the entirely new environment around them can have devastating and confusing impacts on many individuals, such as loss of identity, culture, and depersonalization. The effect and impact of moving to a new country or area can often leave people feeling as if they are losing essential parts of their identity, or sometimes even forced to completely abandon and leave parts of their culture behind due to stigma and lack of protection regarding cultural practices as a result of unjust restricting laws.

Both of these artworks tackle the idea of suppression and conformity to American life and culture, utilizing the function of symbolism in order to expose the immigrant experience when dealing with cultural constraints.

Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



Do Ho Suh's, "Bridging Home," and Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers" both focus on the function and purpose of commemoration and memory. Both artworks use their pieces in order to commemorate impactful memories, and the sense of retaining this past association and overall affiliation with a past home, and having to leave it all behind. The struggle of retaining memories of what many immigrants have to leave behind as they move to an entirely different country from their true home.

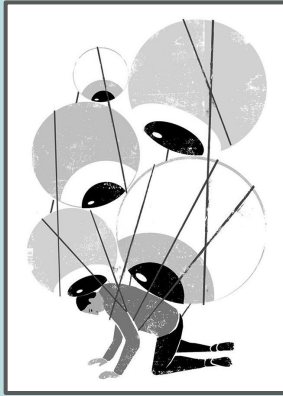
Both artworks document the experience of leaving behind past homes, the bittersweet memories that immigrants often have to hold and carry for lifetimes. Both pieces also expose this idea of confusion and individuals or cultures feeling out of place, being brought into areas where society often feels they shouldn't exist or be introduced in. Both artworks use these aspects to their advantage to drive the narrative of each of their pieces.

# Contrasting Function and Purpose

Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers" and Do Ho Suh "Bridging Home", while both being able to focus on the idea of leaving past homes and moving into new ones, they do so in two completely different ways as a result of personal artist ideology and experiences. While both Edel Rodriguez and Do Ho Suh are immigrants who have immigrated to the United States, they both share differing stances

on memory and homes. For example, Do Ho Suh in his artwork focuses on primarily representing the memory of his past homes in positive lights rather than negative, like how Edel Rodriguez' work implies due to the grim and depressing nature of his piece. Both tackle the idea of feeling out of place in your environment as an immigrant from a different country, but overall share a differing outlook and express these ideas differently from one another by sharing the positive and negatively individually.

Do Ho Suh's, "Bridging Home," and Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance", while both focusing on the idea of cultural assimilation, take drastic artistic interpretations and experiences from one another. Do Ho Suh focuses on the aspect of losing and struggling to incorporate one's personal cultural identity and practices into a different one, more specifically in the United States, Edel Rodriguez' work focuses on more vague struggles, expressing immigrant's overall struggle with assimilation.

Both artworks tackle the purpose of exposing different struggles that immigrants face, but to varying degrees. Do Ho Suh functions to tackle more specific problems, while Edel Rodriguez' work is more open to interpretation "Bridging Home" focuses on the idea of leaving behind homes and trying to find one's place in a different country, while "Privacy vs. Surveillance" focuses on the more social struggles and discrimination that immigrants face, as opposed to the cultural dilemmas that immigrants are challenged with..

Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times



Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance" and "Strangers" both focus on the struggle of adaptation to a new environment, more specifically the United States. However, these two artworks by Edel are set apart as they hone in on the differing stages of discrimination and stigma multiple immigrants may experience as they begin and continue to adapt to their entirely new environment, language, and culture around them.

"Strangers" focuses on the purpose and idea of leaving behind past memories and experiences, beginning the stepping stones to adapting to a new environment and home, while "Privacy vs Surveillance" functions to expose the continued immigrant experience and struggles that occur, even if an individual has gone a long way in adapting to the differing culture and social relationships that exist within their new environment.



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

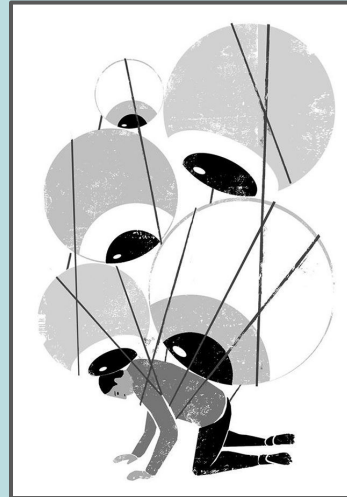
# Comparing & Contrasting Function and Purpose W/Edel Rodriguez

## COMPARING

- Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance and my own work "Percepción" both serve to illustrate the struggles of immigrants in the United States as they are forced to deal with the stigma and struggle that comes with being an immigrant, especially as a hispanic individual in America.
- Both artworks function as a way to give voice and represent the silenced immigrants who are unable to speak out about the wrongdoings towards immigrant peoples in the United States, while also aiming to question their identity in America.
- Both of our artworks serve to continue to expose the devastating effects and impacts that come alongside cultural assimilation on a social scale to the public, allowing those who feel disconnected from their culture as a result of assimilation to the US to be represented in an era where such topics are often shamed.
- "Privacy vs Surveillance" and "Percepción" function to create social and political commentary about the state and impact of immigration in the United States.

## CONTRASTING

- While both artworks are able to represent immigrants and their struggles as a collective, "Percepción" is intended to be a more personal representation of one's individual identity and struggle as a 2nd-generation immigrant in America.
- Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance" focuses more on the purpose of highlighting the broad struggle of immigrants in the United States as opposed to my work "Percepción".



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs. Surveillance", New York Times



Alessandra Vazquez, "Percepción" (2023)

- "Percepción" functions to emphasize and bring attention to the loss of identity that can come with cultural assimilation.
- Both of the artworks target the public eye, but are intended to appeal to contrasting audiences. Edel Rodriguez' "Privacy vs. Surveillance" aims to target a more political audience, while my own work "Percepción" aims to target a more social audience.

# Formal Quality Analysis of Do Ho Suh

In Do Ho Suh's piece, "Bridging Home," he utilizes his knowledge and impactful craft of architectural installation in order to create a replica of his old home in South Korea. Do Ho Suh uses a variety of different techniques and materials when replicating this piece, making sure to get the product as close as possible to his original home. It was imperative that this past home of his be replicated to the best of his ability in order to fully symbolize and reimagine this memory into an entirely new environment. In addition to a recreation of a traditional Korean house, Do Ho Suh also recreated a surrounding bamboo garden, using traditional nature from his past environment in order to further the replication and authenticity of not only his home, but the artwork itself. Do Ho Suh often utilized his materials to his advantage, using things such as plywood and softwood in order to create "Bridging Home," creating stark contrast from the original architecture of steel and glass that surrounds him in his home in London



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



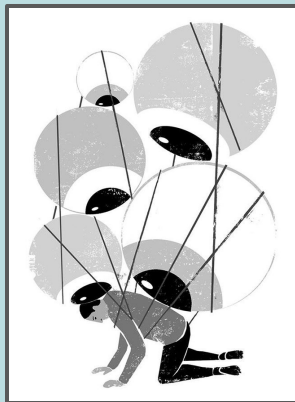
Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



What makes "Bridging Home" stand out in particular as opposed to a variety of other art installations that Do Ho Suh has created is that the lack of color and prominence of strong structure within the piece. Traditionally, Do Ho Suh's work consists of colorful, almost transparent installations made of glass and other materials such as fabrics, often created and held in an enclosed space. These works of Do Ho Suh, due to their often see-through nature, often give off the impression of a lack of structural integrity and overall strength. Do Ho Suh's usual style of art installation gets completely flipped on its head however when it comes to "Bridging Home," which utilizes a strong structure, strong materials, and vulnerable environment to its advantage. To stray away from one's traditional style of architecture and installation was an essential and symbolic part of creating the entirety of "Bridging Home."

The overall deviation from one's personal style of artwork worked to enhance the meaning, symbolism, and overall effectiveness of the message that "Bridging Home" aims to put into the public. With most of Do Ho Suh's work being confined into an enclosed space for viewing, "Bridging Home" breaks this pattern by inserting this Korean home onto a bridge in the middle of London. Do Ho Suh's utilization of placement, material, color, and technique when creating this piece not only gives homage to his traditional home in South Korea, but exemplifies the quality of the work by allowing the viewer to see this structure as more impactful and strong, as opposed to the other traditional works by Do Ho Suh, which give off a sense of fragility as a result of the vulnerability of the materials used. Additionally, the absence of the usual colorful installations he completes offers as as viewers to understand that in comparison to his other works, "Bridging Home," becomes an installation that grounds itself in an air of seriousness.

# Formal Quality Analysis of Edel Rodriguez

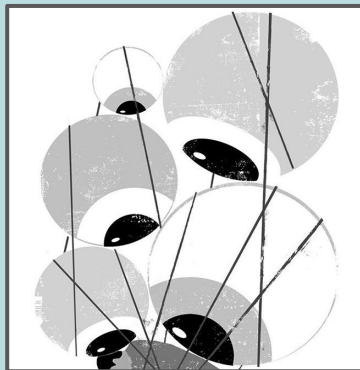


Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)

Do Ho Suh often utilizes having multiple figures present within his artworks, whether it be illustrations or paintings. He often uses this to his advantage to further the meaning and symbolism of his pieces, as seen prominently in his works, "Privacy vs. Surveillance," and, "Strangers." In order to delve into the impact and struggle to assimilate into America as an immigrant, he utilizes the imagery of an overcrowded boat, filled with multitudes of people that lack humanity in his artwork, "Strangers." His other work, "Privacy vs. Surveillance," also achieves the same effect by piling on numerous eyes onto an individual being crushed below. In addition to this, "Privacy vs. Surveillance," utilizes monochromatic, grayscale colors to establish mood.

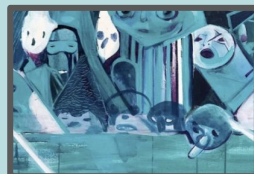


Edel Rodriguez' is known primarily for his illustrations, however, the aspect of color and how it can be used to further one's message is something that is often utilized within his works, no matter the type of medium. Edel uses color to his advantage to establish the tone, message, and overall feeling that he wishes to convey within his artworks, whether they be political illustrations, or messy paintings that retain that sense of precision. In his painting, "Strangers," he especially uses color to his advantage here, using a variety of blues and whites in order to create a sense of monotony and lack of diversity, driving home the idea that immigrants often struggle with retaining this sense of individuality, often facing stigma and discrimination by harmful stereotypes that have been continuously perpetuated in the U.S.



The figures within this piece are carrying these eerie, unusual facial expressions and features that look so closely human, yet lack certain features, keeping us from seeing their true humanity and individuality. Faces begin to mesh with one another, with there barely being clear distinction between one another.

Both the use of color, composition, and fine detailings drive this idea that immigrants are often seen as "less human," or, "less worthy," stripping them of everything that makes them their own person, only seeing people for the harmful and discriminatory stereotypes they have put and continue to hold onto them.



The messy yet controlled brushstrokes that are utilized in order to make this piece help to create this sense of depersonalization and accentuate these strange deformities within the painting. Edel Rodriguez' brush techniques create a sense of uneasiness and confusion.



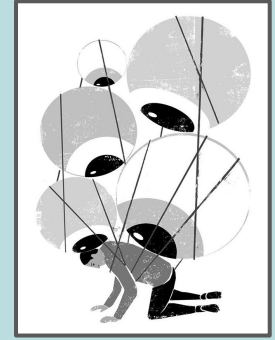
# Comparing Formal Quality Analysis

Both pieces, “Strangers,” and, “Privacy vs. Surveillance,” by Edel Rodriguez use the aspect of color as a main tool for the piece. Edel Rodriguez In both artworks uses a variety of shades, with limitation to two overall colors. For example, in “Strangers,” we can see how Rodriguez’ uses a plethora of dark blues and light blues to create the atmosphere of his piece. The same thing can be said for when we look at “Privacy vs. Surveillance,” with its especially limited and dark color palette, consisting of only varying shades of grey, white, and black.

In addition to color and mentioned in previous analysis, Edel Rodriguez’ often uses the composition and figures in his piece to drive his overall message. He does so by incorporating numerous different figures, both colliding and crashing.



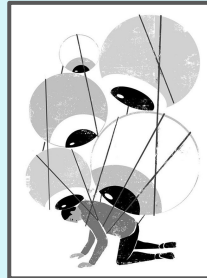
Edel Rodriguez, “Strangers” (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, “Privacy vs. Surveillance”, New York Times



Do Ho Suh creates a focus on paying attention to the placements of his work and each aspect of his installation as a result. The environment and background in which the artwork exists in is something that is utilized not only in Do Ho Suh’s work, but also in Edel Rodriguez work. The overall utilization of an artworks environment, whether already existing or not, exemplifies the piece,



Both Do Ho Suh and Edel Rodriguez’ work share similar qualities to one another as they both utilize a very clean, refined finish to their piece. For example, “Privacy vs. Surveillance,” uses clean colors and linework, while Do Ho Suh’s, “Bridging Home,” features an art installation of a Korean House in good condition.



Edel Rodriguez uses the similar technique of being able to utilize the artwork, or rather the figures in the artwork, to their advantage by setting them as the focal point of their environment. While Do Ho Suh’s installation sits in the middle of London, these figures on the Mariel Boatlift sit dead in the center of the piece.



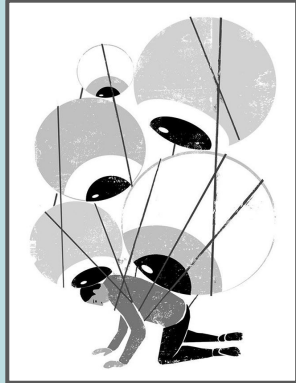
Overall, all of these artworks use figures and the objects around them in order to heighten the value of the piece. While “Strangers,” by Edel Rodriguez utilizes the grim stormy sky and cramped boat as a way to amplify the pieces environment and meaning, Do Ho Suh does the same by deciding to incorporate his art installation of a traditional Korean home into the center of a London bridge. Edel Rodriguez’, “Privacy vs. Surveillance,” is also no exception, utilizing the empty, blank background of the piece as well as the numerous enormous eyes that pierce the figure below.

# Contrasting Formal Quality Analysis

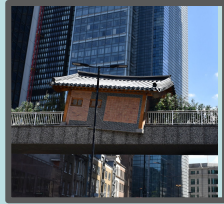
Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times



Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers," and Do Ho Suh's, "Bridging Home," although similar in some aspects, share their fair amount of differences from one another. For example, the overall quality between the two pieces becomes apparent to the viewer. For example, while Do Ho Suh utilizes a clean and refined finish to his piece, Rodriguez instead uses a more carefully precise messiness for his own artwork.



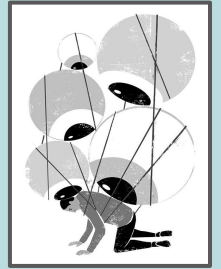
Both pieces also differ from each other as they both use color in contrasting ways. In one piece, we can see a variety of colors, and in the other, we are met with an array of similar colors blending in with one another. Do Ho Suh utilizes the background of his artwork to stand out, while Edel's work aims to blend all aspects together.

While comparing Do Ho Suh's work with the work of Edel Rodriguez', it becomes clear that with the stark differences in medium between all of the artworks, techniques and focused aspects become apparent. For example, while "Strangers" utilizes implied texture through color and brushstrokes, Do Ho Suh "Bridging Home" utilizes texture in order to mimic actual bricks, without the actual material. "Strangers," instead aims to use this texture in order to create a sense of disparity, depersonalization, as well as dissociation.



The figures within this art piece, "Strangers," differs greatly from the figure in "Privacy vs. Surveillance," both by Edel Rodriguez. Rodriguez utilizes the aspect of shapes and ambiguous form in order to give a sense of depersonalization within this piece, while in the grayscale illustration, clearly depicts the figures within the piece. The difference lies between the refinement of the human form.

While both Do Ho Suh "Bridging Home," and Rodriguez' "Strangers" both utilize color and their backgrounds to their advantage, the same can't be said for the art illustration "Privacy vs. Surveillance," also by Edel Rodriguez. Instead, this piece focuses on being devoid of these usual aspects we see in life. What we see is a blank background, rather than a busy one like the stormy sky in "Strangers" or the busy, towering buildings that reside in the background of "Bridging Home." This art piece instead aims to strip away these aspects.



# Comparing & Contrasting Formal Qualities With Do Ho Suh



Do Ho Suh, "Bridging Home" (2018)



Alessandra Vazquez,  
"Enmascarado" (2023)

## COMPARING

- Do Ho Suh's, "Bridging Home," and my work "Enmascarado" both take advantage of the backgrounds of the artwork in order to elevate the overall composition.
- Both of our artworks utilize a city environment, where Do Ho Suh places his art installation into a city with tall buildings, while I illustrated them.
- Both artworks convey a mood of displacement & non belonging, out of place.
- Both artworks create a central focus through their composition, with the installation "Bridging Home" being in the center of a London bridge, while

my work "Enmascarado" features a figure placed right in the center of this empty street.

- "Bridging Home" and "Enmascarado" both carefully consider the angles and shapes within the composition, with blending a created center point with surrounding objects and shapes that both elevate it and don't distract from the focal point.
- Both "Bridging Home" and "Enmascarado" create an emphasis on this upper level in both of the artworks. Do Ho Suh's art installation "Bridging Home" creates emphasis by having the installation be placed right in the center of this bridge in the air, while in my illustration "Enmascarado" this emphasis is created by using multiple high telephone lines to mimic and reference the bridge in which Do Ho Suh's installation is placed upon.

## CONTRASTING

- Both of these artworks use greatly different mediums in order to convey a similar message. For example, "Bridging Home" is an art installation, while "Enmascarado," is a digital illustration piece.
- Although both of these artworks utilize background and environment to further the impact of the piece, the environments in which they are in aren't the same. The background/environment in "Enmascarado" is stagnant, while for "Bridging Home," it is ever changing as it sits in a public place.
- The color choices for both of these pieces vary greatly from one another, as my work "Enmascarado" utilizes a set color scheme/palette, while "Bridging Home" does not.
- Do Ho Suh's "Bridging Home" does not directly incorporate humanoid figures within the composition, while my artwork "Enmascarado" does.
- "Enmascarado" utilizes the repetition of recurring figures within the composition to further the piece, while "Bridging Home" is a solo installation of one figure.

# Comparing & Contrasting Formal Qualities With Edel Rodriguez

## COMPARING

- When comparing my work to Edel Rodriguez', the resemblances between them are apparent. Both artworks "Percepción" and "Enmascarado" directly correlate to "Privacy vs. Surveillance" and "Strangers" through their usage of connecting and utilizing the same color palette between artworks.
- Both artworks "Privacy vs. Surveillance" and "Percepción" utilize the same media of digital illustration.
- Artworks "Strangers" and "Enmascarado" both feature abstracted humanoid figures within the composition, as well as all the artworks featuring multiple figures/objects.
- All artworks are connected as they all focus on some sort of focal point/center of interest within the piece.
- My artwork "Percepción" and Edel's work "Privacy vs. Surveillance" both utilize a clean, precise line art, in addition to this, both of these illustrations create a fabricated white texture on the final artwork.

## CONTRASTING

- My illustration "Enmascarado" utilizes a completely different medium than the piece it connects to, Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers," which instead is an acrylic painting as opposed to my piece being digital illustration.
- Although my piece "Percepción" has striking similarities to "Privacy vs. Surveillance," the angling of the subjects are entirely different. In my piece, I instead have the human figure dead center facing the audience, while Edel made the human figure be viewed from the side.
- Edel's artwork "Strangers" utilizes a purposeful messy style, while "Enmascarado" is more precise.
- "Enmascarado" utilizes a city environment in its piece, while "Strangers" utilizes an open ocean instead.

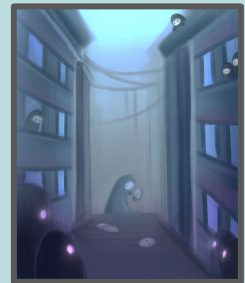
Edel Rodriguez, "Privacy vs Surveillance", New York Times



Alessandra Vazquez, "Percepción" (2023)



Edel Rodriguez, "Strangers" (2018)  
Alessandra Vazquez, "Enmascarado" (2023)



- Not all of the artworks share the same medium & style.
- Artworks "Privacy vs Surveillance" and "Percepción" don't utilize a background to amplify the piece like Edel Rodriguez' "Strangers" does or my work "Enmascarado."

# Comparative Study Bibliography

Telford, Anne. "Edel Rodriguez." *Communication Arts*, 5 May 2006, [www.commarts.com/features/edel-rodriguez](http://www.commarts.com/features/edel-rodriguez).

[www.buglogic.com](http://www.buglogic.com), Bug Logic -. "Edel Rodriguez Illustration - Illustration." *Illoz*, [www.illoz.com/edel/](http://www.illoz.com/edel/). Accessed 9 May 2023.

"Do Ho Suh." *Lehmann Maupin*, [www.lehmannmaupin.com/artists/do-ho-suh](http://www.lehmannmaupin.com/artists/do-ho-suh). Accessed 9 May 2023.

Ong, Jyni. "Do Ho Suh Is 'Bridging Home' in a New, Large-Scale Outdoor Installation in the Heart of London." *It's Nice That*, [www.itsnicethat.com/news/do-ho-suh-bridging-homes-art-260918](http://www.itsnicethat.com/news/do-ho-suh-bridging-homes-art-260918). Accessed 9 May 2023.

Artist of the Day, February 2: Edel Rodriguez, Cuban American Illustrator, Painter, 2 Feb. 2018, [visualdiplomacyusa.blogspot.com/2018/02/artist-of-day-february-2-edel-rodriguez.html](http://visualdiplomacyusa.blogspot.com/2018/02/artist-of-day-february-2-edel-rodriguez.html).

Vandamme, Emma M., and Edel Rodriguez. "Q&A with Illustrator Edel Rodriguez." *World Literature Today*, vol. 94, no. 1, 2020, pp. 71–72. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.7588/worllitetoda.94.1.0071>. Accessed 9 May 2023.

"Front Matter." *World Literature Today*, vol. 84, no. 5, 2010. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27871167>. Accessed 9 May 2023.

GROSS, JENNIFER R. "Introduction: The Field of Sculpture." *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin*, 2009, pp. 26–33. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40682625>. Accessed 9 May 2023.

"Art of Asia Acquired by North American Museums, 2006-2008." *Archives of Asian Art*, vol. 58, 2008, pp. 137–85. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20542572>. Accessed 9 May 2023.

"Museum Exhibitions and Programs." *MoMA*, vol. 4, no. 5, 2001, pp. 36–40. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4420596>. Accessed 9 May 2023.