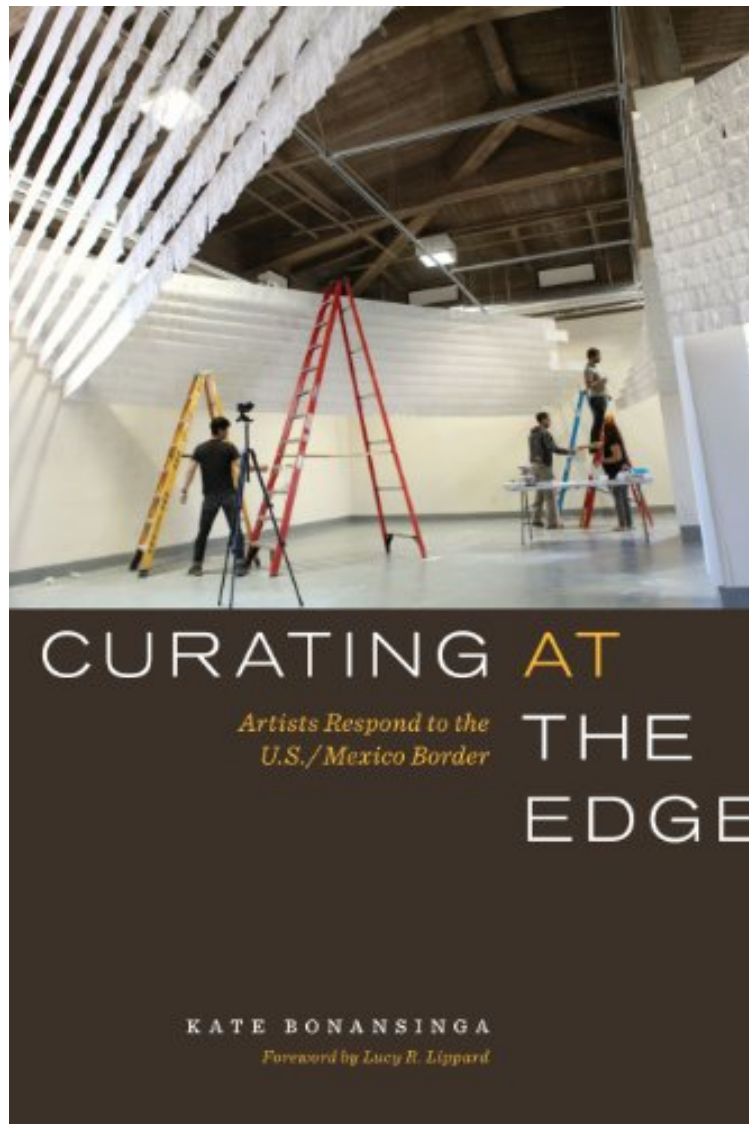


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Curating at the Edge: Artists Respond to the U.S./Mexico Border (William Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture of the Western Hemisphere)

Kate Bonansinga

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Kate Bonansinga : Curating at the Edge: Artists Respond to the U.S./Mexico Border (William Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture of the Western Hemisphere) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Curating at the Edge: Artists Respond to the U.S./Mexico Border (William Bettye Nowlin Series in Art, History, and Culture of the Western Hemisphere):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. who LED lights glowed like an unending series of candles along the hillsBy Leslie NortonLong before Donald Trump ascended to the White House, the U.S. ndash; Mexico border has provoked heated debate and rich emotions. An enigmatic line drawn in 1848 to divide Mexico and the U.S. it is the subject of countless projections and meditations of the literary and artistic variety.In 1999, Kate Bonansinga moved to a town north of El Paso, Texas from Oregon, where she had been a writer and a gallery owner. Soon after, she was charged with creating, from scratch, the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at the University of El Paso. The new museum would be less than a mile from city of Juarezmdash;the name of the city directly opposite El Paso. The university's student body is 80% Mexican American and primarily first generation, economically underprivileged and unable to travel. The University had to bring the artists to them. Over the next eight years, Bonansinga sought commissions from artists who would be inspired by El Pasorsquo;s mountains and desert climate and its proximity to Mexico and the ever-present border. Altogether, she curated 61 exhibitions, of which nine are addressed in the book, including Leo Villareal, who LED lights glowed like an unending series of candles along the hills; Margarita Cabrerarsquo;s crushed cars, Tania Candanirsquo;s family photographs, Tom Leader Studiosquo;s ghostly figures and Simparchrsquo;s meditation on water in the desert. Bonansinga is a scholar who also has an excellent eye for human detail. This is a compelling, highly readable account of how she became a curator, how artists create, and the myriad things the border represents. If only as an antidote to the brutish discussions about the proposed border wall, buy this book.

Located less than a mile from Juaacute;rez, the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for Visual Arts at the University of Texas at El Paso is a non-collecting institution that serves the Paso del Norte region. In *Curating at the Edge*, Kate Bonansinga brings to life her experiences as the Rubinrsquo;s founding director, giving voice to a curatorial approach that reaches far beyond the limited scope of ldquo;border artrdquo; or Chicano art. Instead, Bonansinga captures the creative climate of 2004ndash;2011, when contemporary art addressed broad notions of destruction and transformation, irony and subversion, gender and identity, and the impact of location on politics.The Rubinrsquo;s location in the Chihuahuan desert on the U.S./Mexican border is meaningful and intriguing to many artists, and, consequently, *Curating at the Edge* describes the multiple artistic perspectives conveyed in the place-based exhibitions Bonansinga oversaw. Exciting mid-career artists featured in this collection of case studies include Margarita Cabrera, Liz Cohen, Marcos Ramiacute;rez ERRE, and many others. Recalling her experiences in vivid, first-person scenes, Bonansinga reveals the processes a contemporary art curator undertakes and the challenges she faces by describing a few of the more than sixty exhibitions that she organized during her tenure at the Rubin. She also explores the artistsrsquo; working methods and the relationship between their work and their personal and professional histories (some are Mexican citizens, some are U.S. citizens of Mexican descent, and some have ancestral ties to Europe). Timely and illuminating, *Curating at the Edge* sheds light on the work of the interlocutors who connect artists and their audiences.

"ldquo;A valuable resource for scholars and students of U.S.-Mexico border studies, museum studies, and art history.'" (The Americas 2014-10-15)"Reading much like a novel, the narrative is fascinating. The subject is important as a result of the Rubinrsquo;s proximity and affinity to the border, [and] the commissioning of artists to create new works specifically for the Center is intriguing." (Benito Huerta, Director and Curator, the Gallery at UTA, University of Texas at Arlington) "Reading much like a novel, the narrative is fascinating. The subject is important as a result of the Rubinrsquo;s proximity and affinity to the border, [and] the commissioning of artists to create new works specifically for the Center is intriguing." (Benito Huerta, Director and Curator, the Gallery at UTA, University of Texas at Arlington)About the AuthorKate Bonansinga is Director of the School of Art in the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati. She was the first director of the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at the University of Texas at El Paso.