

Gia Del Pino  
GIDP  
Carter Travel Award application

**Proposal:** *Ruins, Dispossession, and Rebirth: Reimagining the Future Through the Lens of Chávez Ravine*

This paper explores the history and cultural memory of Chávez Ravine through two key frameworks: David Harvey's "accumulation by dispossession" and José Esteban Muñoz's "Brown Commons." The focus is on the photographic works of Don Normark and Sandra de la Loza, along with *testimonios* from former residents of the barrios of Palo Verde, La Loma, and Bishop.

At the center of this discussion is de la Loza's *Ruins, Chávez Ravine* series, featured in the *Chicana Photographers LA!* exhibition at the Center for Creative Photography. Through her photographs and video works, alongside a Facebook post from a former resident, this paper reflects on the history of dispossession and displacement in the area, as well as the cultural scars left by the demolition of this once-thriving community. Normark's historical photographs offer a poignant record of life in Chávez Ravine before its destruction, while de la Loza's contemporary works reimagine the lost neighborhood, emphasizing themes of memory, survival, and the struggle for recognition.

This paper will consider how these visual arts challenge narratives of erasure, preserving the memory of a displaced community and offering new ways of reimagining the future. By analyzing these works within the frameworks of dispossession and the Brown Commons, the paper seeks to explore how art can reframe the narrative of failure, fostering a vision of recovery, reclamation, and the creation of new commons for future generations.

Word count: 242

**Preferred panel:** Ruins and Reconstruction: Failure, Memory and Rebirth

**Bio:**

Gia Del Pino is an early-career cultural worker committed to critical arts-based methods, decolonial praxis, and the intersection of art and activism. Currently pursuing a PhD in Art and Visual Culture at the University of Arizona, Gia also works as a marketing specialist at the Center for Creative Photography. They hold an MFA in Art and Technology from the University of Florida, where they were mentored by Coco Fusco. Gia's professional experience includes positions at the Cisneros Art Foundation and Cannonball Artist Residency, as well as curating the cross-border exhibition *Para Seguir Adelante: Stories of Migration*. Most recently, Gia moderated the "Art and Activism" panel at the 2024 Photography Network Symposium.

Word count: 111