

Landmark study explores Hispanic Baroque while reinventing digital humanities research

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Inspiring everything from Las Vegas to Lady Gaga, Hispanic Baroque is every bit an influence on modern day trends as is hip-hop and hipsters. And yet, tracing the cultural complexity that Hispanic Baroque has spawned for centuries has proven an unenviable task. Until now.

A landmark study by The Cultureplex Lab at Western University has explored Hispanic Baroque like no previous research project of its kind. By combining traditional research tools of the humanities with complex data analysis from the sciences, Cultureplex Lab principal investigator Juan-Luis Suárez and his team have developed new methodologies which have ignited research capabilities of this ever-influential cultural phenomena (and all other [digital humanities](#) research for that matter), figuratively – not literally – transporting the game-changing study through space and time.

With their most recent findings published in *Oxford Journals Literary and Linguistic Computing*, *The Hispanic Baroque: Complexity in the First Atlantic Culture* is a multidisciplinary collaboration at Western between Digital Humanities, Computer Science and Art History that started in 2007. The project brings together internationally-renowned researchers from varying backgrounds to analyze cultural complexities from an increasingly globalized society. Those involved in this multi-year study have focused on tracking Spanish Baroque patterns that have surfaced across the globe within Hispanic Baroque art, music and literature.

In this new publication, titled, "Towards a digital geography of Hispanic

Baroque art," Suárez and his team have presented the most current results of their project, which examines different ways in which social practices – from creation to circulation to collection – affect the spatial organization of art beyond political territories.

Suárez, a Hispanic Studies professor in the Modern Languages and Literatures Department at Western's Faculty of Arts and Humanities, says the team's complete and coherent methodology can be applied to other problems and subfields within the humanities, addressing long-standing cultural questions of cause and concern.

"The power of data analysis and visualizations allows us to work in harmony – illustrating and articulating answers to questions that have been plaguing humanities researchers for centuries," says Suárez, who notes The Cultureplex is currently working on measuring influences among Baroque artists, specially the different paths in which the work of Peter Paul Ruben inspires Latin American painting of the 17th and 18th centuries.

More information: [llc.oxfordjournals.org/content ...](https://www.oxfordjournals.org/content/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/hispanc/29.1.100)
[c.fqt050.short?rss=1](https://www.oxfordjournals.org/content/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/hispanc/29.1.100/c.fqt050.short?rss=1)
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