Join us for a special presentation with Dr. Ray Hernández-Durán, Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Art History and faculty affiliate with the Latin American and Iberian Institute (LAII) at UNM. Hernández-Durán completed his doctorate in pre-hispanic and colonial Latin American art history at the University of Chicago in 2005. In addition to undergraduate and graduate courses on colonial art history, he teaches classes on Baroque arts and architecture, African art, and Museum Studies, as well as seminars on critical theory, visual culture, and professional practices.

This presentation will consider how much of the recent scholarship on the city in the colonial Ibero-American context focuses on the structure or design of viceregal cities, on representations of urban spaces, such as seen in maps and in painting, and/or on the kinds of performances that were conducted in colonial city streets and plazas. By combining semiotics, specifically via the semiological propositions in Mikhail Bakhtin’s dialogical theory, with recent developments in space theory and performance studies, this lecture aims to define a broader theoretical framework for the study of colonial space that will present a more unified analysis of cities in the Americas during the viceregal period. This approach takes into consideration indigenous ideas about urban planning, and the negotiation of the space and meaning of pre-existing cities with Iberian concepts and the demands of the new socio-political order. The spatial palimpsests that resulted functioned on numerous signifying levels in terms of historical indexing, imperial politics, institutional ideologies, and social regulation. Based on a paper delivered at the College Art Association conference in 2008 for the panel, ‘The Latin American City,’ this lecture will consider two Novohispanic case studies: a viceregal entry into Mexico City and a funerary ceremony for the archbishop of Puebla.

This event is sponsored by the LAII and is free and open to the public. Visit http://laii.unm.edu/events for more information. Image credit: Cristobal de Villalpando, “The Plaza of Mexico City” (ca. 1698-1702), oil on canvas.