

"Yo sé quien soy"

Anthony Pearce



The ironic statement from Cervantes's seminal classic, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, affirms the identity of the caballero manchego and is emblematic of some of the most important questions surrounding our own identity: Who are we and what does that mean? Identity is, and has been, a crucial aspect of Luso and Hispanic literature and art for centuries. Many fruitful and important conversations about identity are a result of the diversity of thought, culture, race, politics, and language within the Luso and Hispanic world. With this volume of *Entremundos*, we seek as editors, artists, and writers to contribute modestly to these important conversations.

Identity is often conceptualized on one of two sides of a binary. One side would convince us that we all share a common identity. While it is easy to be sympathetic to a positive universalism that would seemingly connect all of us, in this idea there is a dangerous connection to colonialism that would pave over cultural differences. Opposing this homogeneity is a differential ontology of identity that affirms unique cultural identity. We are all different and we can learn from each other. However, this conceptualization is vulnerable to a tribalism that would pit us against each other.

Perhaps though, these choices offer us a false dichotomy. Perhaps the most important aspect of identity in relationship to other people is not how we are the same or different, but how successful we are at understanding each other, whether or not we are the same or different. The works in this issue allow us to grow comfortable with liminality, with absurdity, with the unknown in order to explore the relationship of varying cultural and personal identities and our relationship with others.

The cover art that we have selected for this volume speaks to this gesture towards empathy in understanding identity. Hunter Tolbert's prize winning photograph interpellates us. We are confronted by the penetrating eyes of an unknown child that examines us as we examine him. The connection is personal and intimate. The art facilitates a connection that is not dependent on our similarity or difference. We would ask you to seek these connections, regardless of similarities or differences, as you explore Volume II of *Entremundos*.