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The Latin American Spirit: Art and Artists in the United States, 1920–1970

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Mexican and Mexican American Artists in the United States: 1920–1970

by Jacinto Quirarte

Nineteen twenty marks the beginning of the modern period of Mexican art. It was a time in Mexico when efforts were being made to create a truly Mexican art, an art that would reflect the national character and culture. The birth of that art, which was initially seen in mural paintings and later in the graphic arts as well, can be attributed to the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and the desire of the artists and their supporters in the government to create an art that would serve the needs of the people. The revolution had led to the destruction of the thirty-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz and the creation of a constitutional government whose primary aim was to give the vast majority of the Mexican people hitherto inaccessible opportunities in the economic, political, and educational spheres of the nation. The purpose and function of the new art was to educate the Mexican people and to create a Mexican national identity. The motifs and themes used by the artists in their murals, drawings, and prints revolved mainly around the history of Mexico, although other areas of Mexican life were eventually included in these works. The practitioners of this art became known as the Mexican School.

The new art, which led to a new Mexican "style," was also informed by developments in Europe, where African and Oceanic art, the art of the untrained (naive or self-taught artists), children's drawings, and even images made by the insane were being "legitimized" and elevated to the status of high art. The nationalistic tendencies in Mexico combined with the new orientation of the art world aroused interest in Indian arts and crafts, pre-Columbian art, and the work of earlier "authentic" Mexican talents, such as the *retablo* (votive or ex-voto) painters and the printmaker José Guadalupe Posada (1851–1913). These were the thematic and formal sources used by the Mexican School to create a distinctive Mexican style. The new artists made a conscious break with their immediate predecessors, who had simply echoed European Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Impressionism, Fauvism, or Cubism, albeit occasionally focusing on "Mexican" subjects in their works. Ultimately, the aim of the new Mexican artists was to create an art that was based on Mexican reality and experience.

The mural was selected by the Mexican School artists as the medium best suited to achieve an art that represented the national identity. Among those who championed muralist art at an early date was Gerardo Murillo Cornadó, known as Dr. Atl. As early as 1910 he spoke of the need for an artistic center that would promote the painting of murals.[1] As a result of the chaos caused by the revolution, however, efforts to organize the new Mexican artists splintered until 1920. In the summer of that year a number of events signaled the changes that would take place in Mexico in the early 1920s. José Vasconcelos was appointed president of the National University of Mexico (in June 1920), and Alfredo Ramos Martínez was elected head of the Academy of San Carlos (in July 1920).[2] Both men acted as catalysts for the new art: the former was the official patron of the muralists, and the latter advocated a more open approach to the creation of art, exemplified by the open-air schools he introduced in Santa Anita Iztapalapa in 1913.[3]

Indicative of the new spirit was the exhibition of Carlos Mérida's paintings at the Academy of Fine Arts in 1920.[4] His work represented the earliest effort to create a modern aesthetic based on native art and native subjects. Among the subjects he chose for his pictures were the Tribute to Maize ritual and the Feast of the Dead. These and other themes related to the beliefs and customs of the Mexican people became

central to the new art.

Another important event took place in Europe in May 1921. David Alfaro Siqueiros, one of the early Mexican muralists, published *"Manifiesto a los Plásticos de América"* in the first (and only) issue of the magazine *Vida Americana*.[5] Siqueiros called for "a monumental and heroic art, a human art, a public art, with the direct and alive example of our great and extraordinary pre-Hispanic cultures of America."[6] Specifically, he made "Three Appeals of Timely Orientation to Painters and Sculptors of the New American Generation."[7] The second appeal was of particular interest to the new artists. Siqueiros referred them to the use of "Negro" and primitive arts by contemporary European artists and urged his fellow painters to use pre-Columbian art as an inspiration for their work. At the same time, he cautioned against the use of "lamentable archaeological reconstructions so fashionable among us, 'Indianism,' 'primitivism,' 'Americanism.'"[8] Siqueiros was referring to the use of pre-Columbian and other Indian sources to create images in paintings and sculptures in which the motifs were simply transcribed and their real artistic qualities and inherent meanings ignored.

The publication was extremely timely because its appearance coincided with the first mural commission awarded by Vasconcelos (the recipient was Roberto Montenegro).[9] Within a short time other commissions were given by Vasconcelos to paint the walls of the National Preparatory School and the Ministry of Education. Among the artists who worked on the mural programs were Jean Charlot, Ramón Alva de la Canal, Amado de la Cueva, Fernando Leal, Mérida, José Clemente Orozco, Fermín Revueltas, Diego Rivera, and Siqueiros.[10]

In 1923 the artists formalized their views on public mural art with the creation of the *Sindicato de Obreros Técnicos, Pintores y Escultores* (Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors) of Mexico and its official publication, *El Machete*.[11] Their manifesto called for artists to identify with the Mexican people and their struggle against imperialism and the class structure. It also called for a revolutionary art that would reflect the social conditions, the native land (the "geography") of the Mexican people, and the Amerindian heritage, as well as the international currents of modern art. In part, this was to be achieved by a collective effort modeled on the workshops of ancient times.[12] The artists believed that the great ideological art of the past had been created by the collective effort of those affiliated with workshops run by master craftsmen or artists.

The Mexican muralists soon became known as the artists responsible for a renaissance in Mexican art.[13] The new art was considered to be the successor to an authentic Mexican tradition. Thus, there were numerous references to a resurgence or rebirth of art. The new art, however, actually represents an amalgamation of Indian and Hispanic strands in Mexican life and culture; it was not the rebirth of pre-Columbian ideas or of a purely indigenous sensibility or spirit as so often emphasized in the contemporary articles, books, and reviews of exhibitions.[14]

The actual experience of painting murals proved to be difficult because the artists did not know how to use the fresco technique, and the encaustic method (used by Rivera in his first mural for the Simón Bolívar Amphitheater at the National Preparatory School) turned out to be a very laborious process.[15] Nor did they know exactly which formal and thematic programs they should use. Both problems were eventually solved by the artists—by trial and error—after they had painted a number of panels in the National Preparatory School, the building selected for the first murals commissioned by the Mexican government. Orozco and Rivera, who had the most experience as artists, used classical and Christian references in their first murals, which were undoubtedly the result of their traditional art training at the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City.[16] They may well have been inspired too by Vasconcelos, who as a philosopher was interested in the classical world.

Images of the Spanish conquest of Mexico and other themes related to the history of Mexico and the trials of the white-clad *peón*, symbol of the Mexican peasantry, became identified with the mural movement soon after they were first painted by some of the younger artists (plates 1 and 20). Charlot used a confrontation between the Aztecs and the Spaniards as the subject for his mural *Massacre in the Main Temple* (1922–23) in the National Preparatory School.[17] The *peón* and women wrapped

in *rebozos* (shawls) were first used by Revueltas in his mural *Homage to the Virgin of Guadalupe* (1922–23), also in the National Preparatory School.[18]

Unfortunately, students of the National Preparatory School, as well as visitors to the school and Mexican newspapermen, did not like the murals, which were considered bad art and inappropriate for the walls of a public building. This eventually led to their defacement during a student riot. Those painted by Orozco and Siqueiros in the school's courtyard were particular targets (Rivera's mural was in the auditorium of the school and therefore out of public view).[19] Orozco and Siqueiros were dismissed as a result of the public pressure; only Rivera survived the public outcry and continued to paint murals even after the conservative Elías Plutarco Calles was elected president of Mexico and J. M. Puig Casauranc was appointed minister of Education in 1924.[20]

Regardless of the changed conditions under which Rivera and Orozco thereafter worked as muralists, both turned to the Mexican Revolution as a source of ideas for the murals they painted during the remainder of the 1920s in Mexico City, Orizaba, and Cuernavaca.[21] Some of the themes they chose were presented within the context of Christian iconography.[22] They also used events from the conquest and from pre-Columbian history in the murals they painted in Mexico and the United States.[23]

Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros, and other mural artists also revered Emiliano Zapata, who was the foremost hero of the revolution because of his radical position on land reform and related issues, and they included his portrait in a number of images.[24] Ultimately, Zapata became the icon of the revolution most often used by the Mexican artists during this early period. The Zapata motif and some of the themes of the revolution, presented within a Christian iconographic program, were later used by Rivera, Orozco, and Siqueiros for panel and easel paintings and lithographs made in the United States.[25]

Although the goal of the Mexican muralists remained essentially consistent, to create a truly Mexican art, the conditions that had led to the development of the muralist movement had changed by the mid- to late 1920s. The government no longer sponsored major mural programs (except for those carried out by Rivera at the Ministry of Education, the National Palace, and the National Agricultural School at Chapingo). As a result, Orozco left Mexico for the United States in 1927, where he remained until 1934. He and the other Mexican muralists and their followers who concentrated on easel painting and printmaking (woodcuts, linoleum cuts, engravings, and lithographs) moved in various directions in the 1930s (plates 3, 4, and 6). They are still generally grouped under the label of the Mexican School because they all focused on Mexican subject matter in their work, but they can be separated into distinct coalitions according to their various intentions. Some were interested primarily in furthering their political points of view, while others displayed little or no interest in matters of state and could more accurately be described as artists of the "Mexican scene," because their main interest was the folklore and customs of the Mexican people.

Nevertheless, from the 1920s to the 1960s the Mexican School was perceived by art critics in the United States as a homogeneous group of artists.[26] Organizers of exhibitions of Mexican art in the United States ignored the distinctions between the political and nonpolitical artists in Mexico. The works of the leading muralists and others identified with the Mexican School were exhibited in the United States alongside the works of Tamayo and Mérida, who were primarily interested in formal rather than ideological problems. Also ignored were the disagreements within the ranks of the political artists, who splintered into groups that each claimed to have the "true revolutionary artists."

The internal dissension was best exemplified by a famous confrontation between Siqueiros and Rivera that took place over a period of months in 1934-35. It began with Siqueiros leveling a long list of particulars against Rivera in an article that appeared in the *New Masses* (May 1934) and continued during a discussion following a public lecture presented by Rivera at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City (August 1935).[27] Siqueiros charged Rivera with using folklore and archaeological sources to create an art that was false and the opposite of what true revolutionary art should be. He even characterized Rivera's art as the result of a "Mexican curio" frame of mind. In addition, he opposed Rivera's use of anachronistic methods, such as fresco painting

and his series of static images. He considered his own dynamic compositions far more appropriate to the present-day activity of the revolution. Rivera responded to these attacks, which he attributed to personal as well as political differences with Siqueiros, in a brochure he published in December 1935.[28] Rivera, who considered himself a Leninist, characterized Siqueiros's attacks as part of a concerted effort by Stalinists in the Communist party to discredit him. He also saw Siqueiros as an artist who used these attacks to make himself better known.

In subsequent decades the battle shifted from within the ranks of the Mexican School to its perceived enemy—the formalists or nonpolitical artists.[29] The latter, led by Rufino Tamayo, considered the art of the Mexican School artists propagandistic, nationalistic, and false. The former vehemently attacked the formalists for creating an art that simply echoed the Paris School and did not serve the needs of the Mexican people.

The Mexican School had control of government patronage for the arts from the very beginning of the new art movement in the 1920s. This was evident in the support provided by the government for a number of touring exhibitions of Mexican art sent to Europe, South America, and the United States. From the first exhibition, *Mexican Arts*, which opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1930 and traveled to seven other cities in the United States, the focus was on the new painting, and was dominated by muralists and other members of the Mexican School.[30]

The emphasis on the Mexican School continued unabated through the 1930s and was particularly evident in the momentous exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* held at The Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1940.[31] In this exhibition and subsequent shows held in the 1940s and 1950s, emphasis was placed on the modern Mexican painters and the related arts of the pre-Columbian, colonial, or nineteenth-century epochs, as well as on the arts and crafts of the Indians, the art of children, and the art of self-taught or naive painters.[32]

The Mexican government continued to support exhibitions in which the Mexican School was the primary focus in the 1950s and 1960s, but the situation began to change in the 1960s with the rising importance of the abstract movements.[33] No longer did the Mexican School have the upper hand in aesthetic matters. By the end of the 1960s, government support for murals (the key index for funding given to the Mexican School) had dwindled considerably, and exhibitions under the patronage of the government began to be taken over by abstract artists.[34] The watershed was a series of debates that revolved around the government-sponsored international biennials (*Bienal Interamericano de Pintura y Grabado*) held in Mexico in 1958 and 1960.[35] In 1958 the Mexican School maintained the preeminent position it had held for over thirty years; but by 1960 the abstract artists had gained the upper hand. For the rest of the 1960s exhibitions favored the abstract artists and the New Figurative artists.[36]

The Mexican Presence in the United States

The Literature: 1920–1929

Mexican artists and the new Mexican art did not reach the U.S. consciousness until the middle of the 1920s, when a number of articles and books on the art and artists were published in English and exhibitions of Mexican art were presented in the United States. The actual presence of the artists in the United States, which also began in the late 1920s, did not become universally known until the 1930s.

Articles and books on Mexican art and artists published in the United States in the 1920s were few in number compared to those published in the following decade—a statistic that reflects the growing interest in the new Mexican art in the United States. However, the various publications created an audience for Mexican art, and a number of U.S. artists, among them Pablo O'Higgins and Philip Goldstein (who later changed his name to Philip Guston), went to Mexico to study with the artists and to paint murals after they had read about the new art.[37]

Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco received most of the attention in the publications of the 1920s. Indeed, only two other artists—Carlos Mérida and Jean Charlot—were discussed in articles published during this period.[38] And most of the articles were written by a relatively limited number of authors from Mexico, the United States, and Europe. The articles appeared in art publications, newspapers (including

The New York Times), and other national magazines in the United States.

José Juan Tablada, a Mexican poet and newspaperman who wrote on art and resided in the United States at the time, wrote extensively on the artists up to the time the modern movement began in Mexico.[39] Among the artists he discussed were Saturnino Herrán, Rivera, Orozco, Adolfo Best Maugard, and Mérida. He also wrote about contemporary events, including Rivera's Paris work and his new murals at the National Preparatory School as well as Orozco's early drawings and watercolors of prostitutes (which he compared to Goya's work).[40] Toward the end of the decade he wrote about the use of Indian sources by the muralists.[41]

Anita Brenner, an energetic supporter of Mexican art in the United States and Mexico, her native country, wrote on the work of Mérida, Orozco, and the Mexican muralist movement.[42] She discussed all aspects of Mexican art as an expression of the Mexican spirit in her book *Idols Behind Altars*, in which she also included chapters on the beginnings of the modern muralist movement and the work of Siqueiros, Orozco, and Rivera.[43]

Walter Pach, a well-known American art critic and historian, included Rivera in a book he wrote on modern art.[44] He also wrote about the early Mexican movement, focusing on an exhibition of children's art and the work of Charlot in one article and on the French and Mexican influences on Rivera's development in another.[45] Some authors, among them Ernest Gruening, an American, and Eileen Dwyer, an Englishwoman, wrote on the new movement only.[46]

Rafael Vera de Córdova, a Mexican, discussed the fine and applied arts of Mexico in a review of an exhibition at the Gallery of Modern Art in Mexico City.[47] In his view, the time was right for the establishment of the gallery, given the advent "of a renaissance in Mexican art." He mentioned the work of Rivera, Revueltas, Montenegro, Dr. Atl, Charlot, and artists from the United States influenced by the Mexicans, including the photographers Edward Weston and Tina Modotti and the painter Pablo O'Higgins. He also mentioned the "ceramics, lacquers, sarapes, embroideries" included in the exhibition. "All the gems in the gamut of our exceptional national art."

Other authors concentrated on the work of one artist, with the movement serving as a backdrop for their critiques. Rivera received the most attention. Bertram Wolfe typically described the new movement in its early days by focusing on Rivera.[48] The artist's work at the Ministry of Education and the mural in the National Preparatory School were reviewed by Frederick Leighton, and his Ministry of Education murals were also discussed by Ernestine Evans and John Dos Passos.[49] The articles published in national magazines by well-known American authors indicate the level of attention and importance given to the work of Rivera. Other Mexican artists, like Orozco, were largely ignored. When they were mentioned, they were relegated to the status of a follower of Rivera. Evans, for example, focused on Rivera's use of the Indian as a primary motif in her article and identified Orozco as one of the young painters who benefited from Rivera's example. (Orozco was three years older than Rivera!) She also discussed Rivera's artistic career in the introduction to her book *The Frescos of Diego Rivera*, which includes reproductions of the murals in the Ministry of Education, the National Preparatory School, and Chapingo, as well as a number of his easel paintings and sketches.[50] Aside from articles by Tablada and Brenner on the work of Orozco, only a short note on his murals was published by Emily S. Hamblen.[51]

Rivera and Orozco also published their views on art in several articles. Katherine Anne Porter reported on Rivera's goals in one article, and Rivera himself wrote another piece on the same subject.[52] In other articles, Rivera dealt with the meaning of revolutionary art in Mexico and Orozco called for a new art based on the experience of the "new races" in the Americas and defended the mural as the appropriate vehicle for this art.[53]

Exhibitions of Mexican Art: 1920–1970

Group exhibitions of Mexican artists, organized by Americans in collaboration with representatives of the Mexican government, began in the late 1920s and invariably contained evidence of the new developments in Mexican art. The exhibition held at the Gallery of Modern Art in Mexico City in 1926 set the pattern for the exhibitions of

Mexican art that were sent abroad in the 1930s and 1940s.[54] Exhibitions sponsored by the Mexican government always displayed Mexican arts and crafts of the colonial and modern periods alongside the work of modern Mexican artists. Eventually, the work of pre-Columbian peoples was also included in the vast surveys of Mexican art that the government sponsored to travel outside of Mexico from the 1940s to the 1960s. Exhibitions with an exclusive focus on modern art, which began to appear in the late 1930s, were organized by Americans with the assistance of Mexican specialists in Mexico.

Frances Flynn Paine, an American, and René d'Harnoncourt, an Austrian who resided in Mexico and later in the United States, were the first to organize large group exhibitions of Mexican artists shown in the United States.[55] Other Americans, among them MacKinley Helm, Henry Clifford, and John Leeper, organized exhibitions that focused exclusively on modern Mexican art.[56] Miguel Covarrubias, a Mexican artist living in the United States, selected works for the modern section of an exhibition that covered all three epochs of Mexican art (pre-Columbian, colonial, and modern) plus folk art.[57] Inés Amor, the director of the Galería de Arte Mexicano in Mexico City, was responsible for at least three exhibitions of modern Mexican art, two of which were coupled with exhibitions of arts and crafts.[58]

Most of the reviews of the exhibitions of Mexican art that appeared in the late 1920s through the 1930s were positive. This was particularly true of the articles written by organizers of other Mexican art exhibitions. (See the appendix to this essay for more information.) Occasionally there were critical reviews. Charlot criticized the modern section of the exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*, held at The Museum of Modern Art in 1940, because works by the early Mexican muralists were not included in it.[59] James S. Plaut, who reviewed the exhibition of modern Mexican art at the Boston Institute of Modern Art in 1941, expressed the predictable American prejudices against "national" and "political" art that did not relate to the formalist tendencies seen in European and American art of the time.[60] By the 1950s and 1960s the modern sections of the large exhibitions of Mexican art were overshadowed by the sections devoted to pre-Columbian art, colonial art, and modern folk arts and crafts. In spite of this, the best-known artists, notably Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, Tamayo, Charlot, and Mérida, continued to be singled out by most reviewers for positive comments. The evaluations of the works of Rivera and Orozco changed the most from the 1920s to the 1950s. Rivera, the most discussed and valued artist at the beginning of the Mexican muralist movement, was faulted by Jules Langsner (in his review of the exhibition *Art of Mexico* held at the Pasadena Art Institute in 1953) for exhibiting works that were "weak" in comparison to those by Orozco, Siqueiros, and Tamayo.[61]

The actual presence of Mexican artists in the United States during the 1920s and early 1930s remained largely unnoticed by the general public. Indeed, their presence became widely known only when controversies erupted in places where the best-known artists were painting murals: Rivera in San Francisco, Detroit, and New York (1930–33); Siqueiros in Los Angeles (1932); and Orozco in Hanover, New Hampshire (1933).[62] Other indices of presence, such as lectures, commissions for theater and ballet productions, and illustrations for books and other publications, added to the overall presence of the artists but did not receive the attention of the press. Art exhibitions provided more tangible evidence of their presence (to which artists, students, and the general public could react), and reviews of the exhibitions and articles and books on the artists added appreciably to this presence.

The Mural Controversies

Americans reacted most of all to the murals painted by Rivera, Siqueiros, and Orozco in various parts of the country. The response was often violently critical, reflecting U.S. xenophobia and its attendant paranoia that U.S. institutions would be contaminated by outsiders. Individuals as well as groups objected in principle to foreigners being awarded commissions to paint murals in the United States. Other objections focused on the subjects of the murals, which many Americans considered offensive for a variety of reasons. A few individuals—artists, art critics, and patrons—fought these attacks. Mild as well as acrimonious debates were aired in articles published

in national magazines and in letters written to the editors of newspapers in the towns where the artists painted murals. The controversies polarized entire communities and led to demands that the murals in Detroit and Hanover, New Hampshire, be whitewashed and to the actual destruction of murals in Los Angeles and New York.

The controversy surrounding the murals Rivera painted seemed to grow with each successive commission. The negative reactions began in San Francisco even before he arrived in the city to paint murals.[63] Protesting artists, who felt that they had been slighted when the commissions were awarded to Rivera, contended that his "Communist ideas" placed him out of sympathy with his subject. These initial concerns were soon forgotten when Rivera arrived in San Francisco at the end of 1930. However, objections were raised shortly after the artist completed his first mural in 1931 at the San Francisco Stock Exchange, entitled *Allegory of California*.[64] A number of people objected to the artist's selection of Helen Wills Moody, a tennis champion, for the mural's large central figure, which they thought should have been a generalized icon rather than a portrait of a specific individual. *The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City*, painted at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Institute of Art) in 1931, created a stir among some of the locals because the artist included a portrait of himself in the act of painting on a scaffold with his back to the public.[65] Many considered it a premeditated insult. Rivera had merely intended to portray himself as a worker along with the many others he portrayed in the mural. This was the first of many misunderstandings that occurred largely due to differences in background and ideology between Mexican artists and their hosts in the United States (plates 9 and 10).

There was an uproar in Detroit over a small panel as well as over an entire mural program—*Portrait of Detroit*—painted by Rivera at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1932–33 (plate 5).[66] An editorial in *The Detroit News* voiced the most frequently heard criticisms: "The whole work and conception is un-American, incongruous, and unsympathetic; it bears no relation to the soul of the community, to the room, to the building, or to the general purpose of Detroit's Institute of Arts." Finding no clear-cut solution to the problem, the editorial called for the entire mural to be whitewashed. In addition, religious groups reacted violently to the panel entitled *Biological Research*, which they thought was a veiled representation of the birth of Christ in the manger ("a caricature of the Holy Family"), and therefore sacrilegious. Dr. Valentiner, who awarded the commission to Rivera to paint the murals, defended the work against all the critics. He believed that it was as out of place for him to ask the artist to change the murals to please the critics "as it would be…to remove the many crucifixes, religious paintings, and church relics from our collections because they give offense to Jews, unorthodox Christians, and the thousands who have no interest in any church." Walter Pach sent a wire in support of the murals and stated that he found "no allusion whatever to the Holy Family" in them. He further stated that "if these paintings are whitewashed, nothing can ever be done to whitewash America." Given Rivera's combative personality, it is very likely that he fully intended to make a reference to the Holy Family in the controversial panel in the same way that he made similar allusions to the Temptation of Saint Anthony in another panel of the Detroit murals, entitled *Pharmaceutics*.[67] The murals were saved in spite of the many calls for their destruction because Edsel Ford, who paid for them, gave his support to the artist and his work.

The Detroit problem was minor compared to the controversy Rivera created in New York when he began work in 1933 on a mural entitled *Man at the Crossroads* for the newly completed Rockefeller Center.[68] The work was never finished because Rivera refused to remove a portrait of Lenin he included in the mural despite the protests of Nelson Rockefeller, who had commissioned the work. Numerous articles as well as editorials appeared in *The New York Times* during the controversy, which began in the spring of 1933 and continued through the winter of 1934, when the mural was destroyed. The controversy was also given extensive coverage in the major art publications of the United States.

Because of its subject matter, controversy also surrounded Siqueiros's mural *Tropical America*, which he painted in Los Angeles.[69] The artist represented a crucified Indian in front of a pyramid along with a woman bound with rope. On one side of the mural were two menacing guerrillas (one Peruvian, the other Mexican) on top of

a building. The whole scene was dominated by an American eagle perched on top of a cross. The obvious references to U.S. imperialism and the implied call for armed struggle caused an uproar in the community, and the mural was whitewashed soon after it was completed in 1932.

Orozco's mural *The Epic of American Civilization*, painted at the Baker Library of Dartmouth College in 1932–34 (plate 7), created a controversy that embroiled the Dartmouth faculty, administrators, students, and alumni.[70] Orozco and his patrons were criticized by individuals as well as organizations within and beyond the college. The National Committee to Advance American Art indicted Dartmouth College simply for giving a major commission to a foreign artist.[71] The committee opposed foreign artists in general and proposed that such commissions in future be awarded by competition. On the other hand, John Sloan, president of the Society of Independent Artists, condemned the committee's stand because it would "throw the result into the arena of art politics, which has had such miserable results in the past."

Of far greater seriousness was an attack on the murals by Harvey M. Watts, an editorial writer who published a review of an illustrated booklet on the murals in the September 1, 1934, issue of *The Art Digest*.[72] Watts objected to the subject matter of the murals, "which deals with the hideous divinities of Mexico before the conquest." He also faulted the artist for not focusing on a story, which in his view was always a necessary component in a great work of art, and he reproached Dartmouth for allowing the artist "to satirize the English-speaking traditions, spiritual and educational, and academic, while forcing on the college the extremely tiresome tradition of an absent and somewhat abhorred civilization of the Toltec-Aztec cults."

A number of prominent figures in the art world immediately came to the defense of Dartmouth and Orozco. The art critic E. M. Benson, Frederic Hynd, director of the Hartford School of Art, and Hugh R. O'Neill, a newspaperman from New York, responded to Watts's indictment of the Orozco murals.[73] By contrast, Edward Alden Jewell, the art critic of *The New York Times*, reported the Watts review but without any editorial comment. In separate articles, Benson and O'Neill responded to Watts's criticism of the murals' pre-Columbian subject matter by pointing out that they dealt with the contributions of the Indians to America's civilizations as well as those of the "white man" to the New World. Watts's characterization of the divinities as "hideous" made no sense to Benson, unless Watts was applying "magazine-cover or National Academy standards" of beauty to them. In any case, Benson pointed out that Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec war god, was supposed to look "bloodthirsty," and Quetzalcoatl, the cult hero and god who brought civilization to the Indians, was "much more Western European in conception than Mexican." Benson and O'Neill also responded to the charge that Orozco had focused on the "tiresome" and "somewhat abhorred civilization of the Aztec-Toltec cults," by pointing out that Dartmouth was founded to convert American Indians, and it was therefore appropriate for Orozco to focus on this subject in his mural program. It is interesting to note that Benson thought it ironic that a college founded to convert the American Indian should now be converted by one. This was typical of the many misconceptions American critics had concerning the racial and cultural backgrounds of the Mexican artists. Orozco was not an Indian; although he was born in Mexico, his parents were Spanish. Indeed, as a Hispanist he also consistently criticized Rivera and all those who championed the Indian of the past and present in their efforts to forge a Mexican identity.

Watts's critics also evaluated Orozco's murals at the expense of U.S. art. In Hynd's view, Orozco had "attained a technical ability which places him well above the run of American painters." According to O'Neill, Orozco "handled his mural legitimately and brilliantly" from the traditional point of view; and "from the artistic, no less." Regarding the issue of whether a foreign artist should be given a commission to paint a mural in the United States, O'Neill stated that "it is better to have one powerful painting on this continent by a Mexican, Spaniard, Oriental or African than a thousand American mediocrities."

Watts, in his rejoinder to the criticisms by Benson, Hynd, and O'Neill in the October 15, 1934, issue of *The Art Digest*, steadfastly refused to believe that Orozco was capable of making a statement about "European-American" civilization in

the Dartmouth murals, given his Mexican background and his espousal of "the radical provinciality of the Rand School of thought."[74] More important, he was "concerned that art in America shall not be an art by proxy through imported helots." He simply did not believe that outsiders should be commissioned to paint murals at the expense of native-born artists. In his view, a little "xenophobia" was needed to help Americans realize their "artistic destiny." He pointed to the example of the ancient Greeks who created great works of art without bringing in outsiders. His narrow definition of Americanism was brought out when he referred to "Kipling, who once said that American literature was suffering from too much Ellis Island; and a little later Cortissoz [who] indicted the Ellis Island element in American art as deleterious." His final diatribe was specifically aimed at Mexico. He accused D. H. Lawrence of glorifying "the dull peon and his duller divinities," and he condemned the tourist bureaus for showing "us the infinite possibilities for mischief, artistic and otherwise, of the open border on the Rio Grande!"

Orozco, Rivera, and Siqueiros in the United States

The direction, if not the full development, of Orozco's painting style was established by the time he arrived in New York in 1927. Orozco had tentatively explored using the theme of the Mexican Revolution in a mural for an industrial school in Orizaba, Veracruz, in 1926, and he expanded on the same theme later that year at the National Preparatory School.[75] Orozco continued to focus on the Mexican Revolution and also used New York subjects in drawings, prints, and easel paintings he did in the United States. He introduced new motifs and themes, based on the worlds of classical antiquity and ancient American civilizations, in murals he painted at Pomona College in 1930 and Dartmouth College in 1932–34.[76] The image of fire associated with Prometheus and Quetzalcoatl—and identified with the Old and New Worlds respectively—was later used by the artist as a primary focus in murals he painted in Mexico City at the Palace of Fine Arts in 1934, and in Guadalajara at the University of Guadalajara (lecture hall), the Government Palace (stairway), and the orphanage, or *Hospicio Cabañas* (dome), in 1936–39. These major works can only be fully understood and appreciated by studying the earlier murals painted by the artist in the United States.

When Rivera arrived in San Francisco in 1930 to begin work on his first mural there, he had been working continuously as a muralist for seven years. The many commissions he received to paint murals in Mexico had enabled him to develop his painting style and to disseminate his ideas regarding the purpose and function of muralist art.[77] He eventually painted what many consider his best mural at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1932–33.[78] It exemplifies the period of his greatest maturity as an artist, and his work thereafter is generally not as well considered.

Siqueiros initiated the second and most important phase of his mural career in the United States. He began to use new materials and techniques as well as to formulate and implement his ideas regarding the treatment of the painted wall as a dynamic surface in several murals he painted in Los Angeles in 1932 and in Argentina in 1933.[79] He further developed these ideas in New York in the Siqueiros Experimental Art Workshop, which he established in 1936, and in the murals he later painted in Mexico. Siqueiros's work in the United States was seminal in the development of his later work in Mexico.

Soon after his arrival in New York, Orozco began a series of ink and gouache drawings based on the Mexican Revolution.[80] Among the lithographs based on the drawings are *The Requiem* (1928) and *Rear Guard* (1929).[81] The stark whites and the varying shades of gray and black used to define the figures—seen facing away from the observer and presented in simple compositional arrangements—convey the quiet dignity of the religious observance in *The Requiem* as well as the dramatic movements of the combatants in *Rear Guard* (plates 8 and 12).

In 1928 Orozco also began to use scenes of New York as subjects for his prints and paintings (plates 13–15). In the oil painting *The Subway*, the artist expressed the anonymity of the urban dweller riding the subway in an almost reportorial manner, without his usual dramatization of structures and stark contrasts of dark and light areas.[82] The highly textured surface of the painting is all that remains of the artist's

expressive vocabulary. *Vaudeville in Harlem* (plate 11) is appropriately lighter in mood. The viewer is invited to witness the acts on stage, barely discernible in the central part of the image, as seen from the back of the auditorium. The sets of heads in the audience rise above the backs of the theater seats, and the semblance of a festive mood is created by the repetitive patterns set against the light background.

Immediately following the completion of the Pomona College mural (1930), Orozco painted *The Caudillo Zapata* (also known as *Zapata Entering a Peasant's Hut*).[83] This large painting, over six feet high and almost four feet wide, has the intensity of some of the panels he painted on the first floor of the National Preparatory School, in particular *Barricade* (1926) and *Trinity* (1926). The large figure of Zapata, which looms over the anonymous figures in the hut and fills the doorway opening, is seemingly oblivious to the suffering people before him. The artist used the figures inside the hut to create a cruciform arrangement, made up of a series of interlocking diagonals, which contrasts with the vertical figure of Zapata. The arms, legs, and hats of the figures inside the hut convey a feeling of despair and hopelessness, and there is the threat of impending violence, signaled by the sword placed directly in front of Zapata's face.

Among the works Orozco painted in 1931 in the United States is *The Barricade*, which is based on his mural panel at the National Preparatory School. The oil painting has two extra figures in it (to the right of the three main figures) and a number of new additions (a rope around the feet of the central figure and a long knife held by the figure on the lower right). More important, the artist changed the pose of the central figure (no longer seen in the crucified pose of the original) and the pose of the figure on the immediate right. The area occupied by the latter was filled by three bodies heaped on top of one another, and the diagonals which give the original such emotive power were modified in the oil painting.

From 1932 to 1934 Orozco painted the walls of Baker Library at Dartmouth College. He focused on the history of the Americas for the first time and created a series of jarring scenes, each corresponding to one aspect of the hemisphere's history. Among the preparatory sketches the artist made for this mural program are two for the panel entitled *The Departure of Quetzalcoatl*.[84] One is a crayon drawing of the head of Quetzalcoatl, which in a few strokes conveys the legendary figure's clear-eyed stare.[85] The other, a composition sketch for the right half of the fresco panel, shows the powerful figure of the departing Quetzalcoatl pointing to the viewer's right, to indicate his destination is to the east. He is surrounded by writhing serpents, which are his standard iconographic accompaniments.[86]

Among the many works made by Rivera during the four years he resided in the United States (1930–33) are portable murals, lithographs, and drawings based on the murals he painted in Mexico and the United States. Two of the portable murals he painted for his 1931 exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art in New York are *Liberation of the Peón*, based on the mural panel of the same title in the Ministry of Education, and *Agrarian Leader Zapata*, based on one of the panels of the Cuernavaca murals.[87] Rivera used the latter subject again in 1932 in a lithograph entitled *Zapata*.

The *Liberation of the Peón* is Rivera's variation on the Descent from the Cross, a subject frequently portrayed by European Renaissance and Baroque artists. Rivera's panel, which portrays the Mexican *peón* as a martyr, has all the drama of traditional religious paintings. The result is a very moving and tender image. The Zapata lithograph is based on the original mural in Cuernavaca, but the pose of the leader and the toylike appearance of his horse offer a less than dynamic presence. The artist presented Zapata as a passive figure, even though evidence of the violence associated with his leadership is part of the image.

Rivera's *Self-Portrait*, a lithograph of 1930, shows the artist with an expression that suggests vulnerability but appropriately provides a glimpse of his mischievous character. His technical brilliance is seen in this print and in the beautiful painting *Flower Festival* of 1931. The composition study for the Rockefeller Center mural, a pencil drawing on brown paper (1932), demonstrates the artist's very orderly approach to the arrangement of the various parts of his ill-fated mural.[88]

The work of David Alfaro Siqueiros during the 1930s typifies the art of the Mexican School at that time. Siqueiros often chose Indians as his subjects for genre

paintings and prints, presenting them with great compassion and tenderness and always demonstrating their victimization.[89] He used Zapata as a subject for a painting (1931) and two lithographs (1930). The painting and one of the lithographs (plates 17 and 18) are portrait busts rather than the usual full-length presentations by other artists. The other lithograph shows Zapata on horseback against a backdrop of mountains. Some of the charisma of Zapata is evident in the portrait bust done in oil. Siqueiros partially accomplished this by capturing the squinting eyes of the leader; but what adds to the tension of the image is the representation of Zapata within an enclosed space, defined by converging walls made of large blocks of stone. The walled-in figure becomes too large for the composition to contain him comfortably. Siqueiros's lithograph of Zapata on horseback also exhibits the kind of power seen in the portrait bust. In sharp contrast to Rivera's elevation of Zapata into an icon and Orozco's portrayal of him as a catalyst for violence, Siqueiros saw him more personally, as a powerful leader of people.

The well-known portable panel paintings by Siqueiros in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art in New York were preceded by mural work he carried out in Los Angeles during a six-month period in 1932. It was at this time that he began to use plastic paints with airbrushes on a cement surface. He also began to consider the painted wall as a dynamic, rather than a static, two-dimensional surface after his experiments with a mural he painted in Argentina (1933). Following the trip to Argentina, he traveled to New York in 1934 and again in 1936, when he established his experimental workshop.[90] Not only did he continue to use new tools (airbrushes, still and movie projectors, plastic paints, and cement), which he felt reflected the times in which he lived, but he also developed new approaches to art in which chance played an important part. In spite of his interest in using these tools and techniques to create a "new" art, he thought of them as means rather than as ends in themselves. The important thing still was to express his views about society. For *Collective Suicide* (1936), he made an elaborate surface with new materials and procedures, but he used it only as the background to a narrative picture in which Europeans clash with the Indians of the New World.

From 1937 to 1939 Siqueiros fought in the Spanish Civil War. He returned to Mexico thereafter to continue his experiments in mural painting. Among the works the artist painted in 1939 are *Ethnography* and *El Sollozo*.[91] The former represents a white-clad Mexican Indian shown wearing a pre-Columbian mask made of wood, which is generally identified as Olmecoid in style. The latter focuses on the suffering of the victims of war.

Mexican School Artists in the United States

The Mexican School, initially represented by a group of muralists working under government patronage and later by independent muralists, eventually included other artists whose primary medium was either easel painting, drawing, or printmaking. Those who believed in the tenets of the Mexican muralist movement organized into two groups to carry on the traditions: they established LEAR (League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists), founded in 1934 and dissolved in 1938, and the Taller de Gráfica Popular (TGP: Workshop of Popular Graphic Arts), founded in 1937.[92] Others, who did not have a particular ideology, still used the everyday lives and customs of the Mexican people as subjects for their art. Most of these artists, who can be generically categorized as part of the Mexican School, made trips to the United States in the 1920s and 1930s to carry out commissions, to exhibit their work, and in some cases to establish permanent residence. Such travel afforded them additional opportunities to continue their work as artists. (The artists are discussed below according to their birth dates rather than by the dates of their arrival in the United States.)

Alfredo Ramos Martínez

Alfredo Ramos Martínez left Mexico for the United States in 1929 and settled in Los Angeles, where he resided until his death in 1946.[93] He painted murals in San Diego, La Jolla, Claremont, and San Francisco. The Mexican subjects used by the artist are presented in essentially static terms. His pictures are associated with pre-Columbian imagery (relief sculptures and paintings) due to his focus on symbolic accoutrements rather than personalities.[94]

Roberto Montenegro

Roberto Montenegro was a key figure in the efforts to present Mexican folk art as one of the sources for the new art. He participated in several exhibitions of Mexican art in the United States.[95] He was the author of a number of books on the subject, founder of the Museum of Folk Art at the Palace of Fine Arts in 1934 and the Museum of Folk Art in Toluca in 1946, and curator of the folk art section of The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*.[96] His interest in folklore and religious and folk art frequently inspired his art.

Jean Charlot

Jean Charlot left Mexico in 1929 and eventually taught at a number of schools, colleges, and universities in the United States. He also painted murals in the state of Georgia (one in the McDonough Post Office and two at the University of Georgia in Athens).[97] Earlier in his career, when he was a participant in the muralist movement, Charlot made a number of traditional drawings and prints, including a portrait of Tina Modotti (plate 19), which exemplifies the spare style of drawing that characterized works of the Mexican School of this period.[98]

Antonio Ruiz

Antonio Ruiz went to Hollywood (1926–29) to study set design.[99] Later he worked as an assistant to Miguel Covarrubias, painting murals in San Francisco's Pacific House in 1940.[100] Ruiz portrayed lively everyday Mexican scenes in his paintings. A characteristic work is the *Bicycle Race*, painted after a scene in a small Mexican town (plate 20). The bicycle riders are seen head-on, dwarfed by the enormous trees overhead and hemmed in by the reviewing stands and a high wall. The entire scene is full of onlookers, along the sides of the street, perched on the wall, and even balanced on the tree branches.

Julio Castellanos

Julio Castellanos, who is best known for paintings of nudes, traveled to the United States as early as 1920.[101] The compositions of his paintings are classical; his figures appear serene and introspective. *Three Nudes* (1930) and *The Dialogue* (c.1936) exemplify the quality of his compositions, which are based on a rigorous arrangement of verticals, slight diagonals, and horizontals. *The Angel Kidnappers* (plate 21) is a more complex work. The artist's affinity for classical arrangements, complete with shallow spaces, is demonstrated in this work. The severe vertical axes of the earlier works are supplanted by the dramatic portrayal of the figures arrested in motion.

Leopoldo Méndez

Leopoldo Méndez traveled to the United States in 1930 and exhibited his work in Los Angeles. He cofounded the Taller de Gráfica Popular with Pablo O'Higgins, Luis Arenal, and Alfredo Zalce in 1937.[102] Two years later he traveled throughout the United States on a Guggenheim Fellowship.[103] Portfolios of prints (linoleum cuts, woodcuts, and lithographs) were published by TGP from the date of its founding until the late 1960s.[104]

Vision (plate 22), a woodcut by Méndez, is typical of the prints produced by the members of TGP. Its subject is Mexico, expressed through the use of well-known emblems, motifs, and themes found in Mexican art. The Mexican national emblem is composed of an eagle perched on a cactus with a serpent in its beak. Méndez took the eagle, cactus, and serpent from their rightful places in the emblem and represented the eagle nailed to the cross with knives. The eagle's carcass forms the shape of the Nazi swastika. Marchers with their banners and priests (both typical subjects in Mexican art since the muralists) parade before the open jaws of the monstrous serpent. The death and destruction wrought by the Catholic Church in Mexico and by Nazism is vividly implied by the image. This is one of many such statements against fascism made in Mexico during the 1940s. *Deportation to Death* (also known as *Expatriation to Death*; 1942), a linocut, provides another glimpse of the expressive and narrative powers of Méndez's work. It deals with the excesses of fascism during World War II, exemplified by the deportation of Jews to Nazi extermination camps.

José Chávez Morado

José Chávez Morado worked in the citrus orchards of California and the fishing industry in Alaska from 1925 to 1931. In 1930 he studied at the Chouinard School of Art in Los Angeles.[105] Chávez Morado later represented Mexican scenes in prints as well as paintings. Religious observances and celebrations are the subjects of his oil paintings *Day of the Dead* (date unknown) and *Carnival* (plate 23).

Jesús Guerrero Galván

Jesús Guerrero Galván, who studied art in San Antonio in the early 1920s, was artist-in-residence at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque in 1942.[106] Guerrero Galván's mature style of painting is evident in *Images of Mexico* (plate 24). The artist's sensitivity is represented by this study of a mother flanked by sleeping children. The close-knit group of idealized figures is enveloped in a soft light. The wide-eyed expression of the mother figure seems to emphasize her vulnerability.

Raul Anguiano

Raul Anguiano traveled to Cuba and then to the United States in 1940–41, where he studied at The Art Students League for three months.[107] Like other members of TGP, Anguiano worked in oils and also did prints, especially lithographs. He also used the life of the Mexican people as subject matter for his art. *La Llorona* (The Weeping Woman; plate 25) is a representation of the Mexican equivalent of the bogeyman summoned by parents whenever children misbehave. In Mexican folklore. La Llorona, who went insane when she lost her own child, went about looking for children, whom she then killed with the help of the evil one. The artist has captured the absolute terror experienced by one of her victims.

Francisco Dosamantes

Francisco Dosamantes, a member of TGP, is known in the United States primarily for his lithographs and linocuts.[108] He also painted in oils and carried out a number of mural commissions as well. He lived in New York for several years after the end of World War II. Like the other artists of the Mexican School, Dosamantes used scenes of everyday life as subjects for his paintings and graphic works. On occasion, he also dealt with political subjects. The powerful lithograph *Dead Soldier* (plate 26), for example, shows the mangled body of a lone corpse seen from above. The greatly foreshortened figure inspires the observer to ponder the severity of the crime caused by warfare.

Miguel Covarrubias

Miguel Covarrubias, initially an outsider to the developments in Mexican art of the 1920s, arrived in New York in 1923 and made a name for himself producing caricatures of famous people and drawings and watercolors of blacks in Harlem. From the early 1920s to 1936, many of his drawings were published by *Vanity Fair* and reproduced in the books *The Prince of Wales and Other Famous Americans* (1926) and *Negro Drawings* (1929).[109] In 1940 he painted *Two Mural Maps of the American Continent* in tempera at the San Francisco World's Fair. He also selected the works for the modern section of the exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*, which opened at The Museum of Modern Art in New York in the same year. Thereafter he devoted himself entirely to the study of the pre-Columbian arts of Mexico, but the drawings he made for his books continued to give him a high profile in the United States.

In the lithograph *The Lindy Hop* (plate 27), the artist admirably captured the rhythmic movement of the black American dancers. Other Mexican artists shared Covarrubias's fascination with Harlem. Orozco, who first visited New York in 1917, referred to Harlem "where Negroes and Spanish Americans live" as one of the "nicest and most diverting scenes."[110] He was even more laudatory in his description of the men and women he saw ten years later in the theaters, cabarets, and dancing halls of Harlem: "All of them tall and well set up. Girls of vibrant features, strong, firm bodies, and an incredible beauty. Actresses and dancers like no others in the world."

The Mexican Influence on U.S. Art

The Mexican presence in the United States was so pervasive in the early 1930s that it dominated a good portion of all discussions on art in art periodicals and the general press.[111] The interest in the work of the Mexican artists and the furor created by it on occasion had a lasting impact on the budding U.S. muralists. The presence of the Mexican muralists also contributed directly to the development of U.S. art in the 1930s. Rivera gave lectures in conjunction with the public showing of the New Workers School panels in December 1934, and Siqueiros conducted art experiments in his workshop from April 1936 to early 1937.[112] Siqueiros, Orozco, and Tamayo had earlier participated with seven other artists from Latin America in the first American Artists Congress held in New York on February 14, 1936.[113] The involvement of the federal government as a patron of U.S. artists was a direct consequence of the Mexican example. George Biddle, a U.S. artist who was a close friend of President Roosevelt, became interested in setting up a government-sponsored project based on the Mexican model of the early 1920s. In a letter to the president outlining his plan, he referred to the success of the Mexican experience of the early 1920s and suggested a similar program of mural painting be established in the United States.[114] As a result, the federal government sponsored four art programs from 1933 to 1943.[115] The fourth program, under which most of the murals were funded (more than twenty-five hundred murals), was the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP), which commissioned mural paintings from August 1935 to June 1943.

The Mexican presence had been felt in a number of cities in the United States before the federally funded projects were started. In 1930 Jackson Pollock and Phillip Guston visited Orozco at Pomona College, where he was working on the *Prometheus* mural, and in 1932 Reuben Kadish worked as an assistant with Siqueiros on the *Tropical America* mural in Los Angeles.[116]

Pollock had earlier expressed an interest in Rivera's work in a letter to his brothers, Charles and Frank, dated October 22, 1929.[117] He referred to a Rivera painting he had seen in the Los Angeles museum and an article by Rivera: "I found the *Creative Art* January 1929 article on Rivera," he wrote. "I certainly admire his work." By the time Rivera began work on the New Workers School murals Pollock was in New York, too. He was studying art at the New School for Social Research when he watched Rivera paint murals there. By the mid-1930s Pollock had become aware of the work being done at the Siqueiros Experimental Art Workshop. According to Joseph Solman, Pollock witnessed the experiments Siqueiros was then conducting in his workshop with a spray gun filled with different colors. Solman supported this claim by retelling a story he had heard from Axel Horn, a member of the WPA/FAP and an early friend of Pollock's: "Axel claims this was the determining factor in the development of the famous drip style."[118]

Among the other U.S. artists who were influenced by the Mexican muralists were Thomas Hart Benton, Ben Shahn, and many New Deal muralists.[119] Edward Laning, one of the muralists, wrote about his experiences as a muralist while working for the New Deal mural projects.[120] He recalled that he and friends often visited Rivera and his wife, Frida Kahlo, in their apartment in 1933 at the time that Rivera was working on the Rockefeller Center mural. The young artists then accompanied Rivera on his trips to the center, where he worked every evening from around four or five in the afternoon to one or two in the morning. Laning watched him night after night work on the mural. After Rivera was barred from working on the mural he went on to paint other murals at the New Workers School. Laning recalled that he "followed him there and learned a lot more about fresco at close quarters than [I] had been able to gather in the vast spaces of the RCA Building."[121]

No firmer document of the Mexican influence is afforded us than the responses given by former New Deal artists to a questionnaire they filled out in the early 1970s.[122] Audrey McMahon, director of the College Art Association and regional director for one of the early New Deal mural projects, studied the completed questionnaires:

Many artists were enormously influenced by the Mexicans. They felt that art in Mexico had made so much progress that art in America should do likewise. They speak of the

Mexicans as "giants" and feel themselves "pygmies" in comparison. All this comes through as rather naive. Yet it is true that all the major Mexicans—Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros—painted murals here during the early 1930s.

American artists had become interested in Mexican muralist art at the very beginning of the movement. Pablo (Paul) O'Higgins, an American who became a Mexican citizen in 1968, first saw reproductions of Rivera's work in a magazine he was leafing through in 1924 in Guaymas, Mexico.[123] He was so impressed with Rivera's work that he wrote to him and later received an invitation to Mexico City. O'Higgins accepted and ended up working as an assistant to Rivera on the Chapingo murals from 1925 to 1927. O'Higgins was thereafter part of the Mexican movement as a muralist and graphic artist. He traveled to New York in 1931, where he stayed for six months and had an exhibition of his work. He also had other exhibitions in New York in 1939 and 1942.[124] O'Higgins was a founding member of TGP, and he painted murals in Mexico and the United States in Seattle (1945) and Honolulu (1951).

Between 1934 and 1935, O'Higgins, Marion and Grace Greenwood, Isamu Noguchi, and a number of Mexican artists painted murals in one of the markets of Mexico City.[125] In 1933 Marion Greenwood chose the Tarascan Indians as her theme for a series of fresco panels she painted at the State University in Michoacán.[126] She later painted murals under the federally funded program in the United States.[127]

Philip Guston and Reuben Kadish, two other U.S. artists who had seen the Mexican muralists' work in Los Angeles, also went to Mexico to paint murals in 1934.[128] Kadish, who had worked as an assistant to Siqueiros in Los Angeles, wrote to him to ask about the possibility of painting murals in Mexico. Siqueiros invited them to Mexico with the promise that a project would be found for them. He and Rivera arranged for them to paint a mural in the Morelia Museum (formerly Emperor Maximilian's summer palace). Kadish, Guston, and Jules Langsner, a poet, left for Mexico City in 1934. Guston, who saw the murals in Mexico City, was disappointed in the "much-heralded Mexican Renaissance," disliked Rivera's work, and was not enthusiastic about Orozco, who "is an expressionist and dominated by emotion but at least is plastic now and then." However, he was enthusiastic about the work Siqueiros had recently carried out in Argentina, which he saw in photographs. They showed that "he is experimenting with Kinetics!"

Guston and Kadish were given four months to complete the mural program (in fresco) in Morelia. By the October deadline, the mural was half finished. In a letter to a friend, Guston wrote: "We are trying many new things and although much is more or less unsuccessful I feel it to be a great experience and have profited greatly." Guston also carried out portrait commissions and created woodcuts and linoleum cuts during his stay in Morelia. Following the completion of the mural, the artists returned to California.[129]

Guston's experience with the Mexican muralists did not have a lasting effect on his work, because his own concerns in the arts changed in subsequent decades, as did the conditions of art making in the United States. The Mexican presence of the 1930s was soon overshadowed by the advent of World War II and the emergence of Abstract Expressionism as the dominant art style in the United States. Moreover, the arrival of leading European artists in New York at the beginning of World War II had an impact on U.S. artists and the subsequent development of Abstract Expressionism in the 1940s and 1950s. Abstract Expressionism had an overwhelming influence on most U.S. artists during that period. Guston was no exception. His interest in using socially relevant subjects in his paintings of the 1930s gave way in subsequent decades to a focus on abstraction.

Pollock's relationship to the Mexican muralists is not as easily explained. Pollock's early interest in Rivera's work does not seem to have had any influence on his work, but his reaction to Orozco's work in the mid-1930s may have had greater impact on him.[130] It is generally reported that the expressive qualities of Orozco's work deeply impressed Pollock, but how these specifically influenced his later development as an artist is not easily measured. His interest in Siqueiros's experiments with new materials and techniques in the mid-1930s is perhaps easier to document, as it may have been

source for his drip style of the following decade.

Mexican American Artists and the Mexican School

Mexican American artists, who matured as artists from the 1920s to the 1950s, were keenly aware of their Mexican background and were inspired by the works of the Mexican School. Some of the artists were born in Mexico and raised in the United States. They too felt strong ties to Mexico and traveled there to study, work, and establish residences. By the 1960s the pull of the Mexican School had waned and the influence of U.S. art movements became stronger. But Mexican American artists of the late 1960s and early 1970s, who identified themselves as Chicanos, turned to Mexico for inspiration, and they began to travel there to study the murals, particularly those by Siqueiros. In spite of the varying influences of Mexican art, the Mexican American and Chicano artists were still affected by U.S. art during the period from 1920 to 1970. They must, therefore, be considered part of U.S. as well as Mexican art movements.

The paintings of the late 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s by Antonio García of Corpus Christi, and the sculptures by Octavio Medellín of Dallas (now a resident of Bandera, Texas) of the same period, were inspired by the Mexican School as well as by American Regionalism. Their contemporary, Chelo González Amézcua of Del Rio, Texas, created a fantasy world in her work, most of which dates from the 1960s. The murals by José Aceves of El Paso and Eduardo Chavez of New Mexico (now a resident of Woodstock, New York), who painted under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA/FAP), are essentially part of the American Regionalist movement.[131] The drawings dating from the 1960s by Eugenio Quesada of Phoenix, on the other hand, fit into the Mexican School, due to their subject matter as well as their style. Most of the Mexican American artists who came of age in the 1960s reflect U.S. tendencies in the arts of the 1950s and 1960s (abstraction, figurative art, Neo-Dada, Pop, etc.).[132] By the late 1960s Chicano art fists began to reflect the influence of the Mexican School muralists as they began to paint murals of their own in the barrios of the Southwest, Pacific Coast, and the Great Lakes.

Antonio García

Antonio García's work became well known in Texas when one of his paintings, *Woman Before a Mirror* (plate 29), was exhibited during the Texas centennial celebrations of 1939.[133] An earlier work, *Aztec Advance* (1929), demonstrated his interest in portraying a famous battle between the Aztecs and the Spaniards in a way that is sympathetic to the indigenous people. The Aztecs are shown moving in close formation against the unseen Spaniards, who suffered many casualties in their retreat from the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán (present-day Mexico City). The artist created dynamic compositions in both paintings by using slightly unusual perspectives.

Octavio Medellín

Octavio Medellín traveled to the Gulf Coast of Mexico and later to the Yucatán peninsula in 1939. While there, he studied the works of the pre-Columbian artists, which left a lasting impression on him. He considered pre-Columbian art an important part of his heritage, although he was also influenced by the works of U.S. sculptors John Flanagan and William Zorach and the Russian Alexander Archipenko.[134]

An early work entitled *The Struggle* (1938), a sculpture of rose sandstone, exemplifies the artists's use of direct carving to create works of strength and expressiveness. Even more direct and indicative of the artist's interest in Social Realism is *The Hanged* (plate 28), a black walnut sculpture. Another sculpture, *History of Mexico* (1949), is carved on all four sides of a square column. Each register shows one of the three epochs of Mexican history (pre-Columbian, colonial, and modern) and the fourth register depicts the future. The ancient past is at the bottom; the future on top. In most cases, the figures are half-immersed in the nucleus of the column: some figures appear to lunge forward, others are barely suggested in low relief.

Chelo González Amézcua

Chelo González Amézcua used ballpoint pens on cardboard to create highly intricate

work she called "filigree art, a new Texas culture." This was a reference to the intricate designs she made almost exclusively with an undifferentiated line and some color. She used Aztec, Egyptian, and biblical personages as sources for the themes she incorporated into extremely complex images. She made no preparatory drawings, preferring to work directly on cardboard. She started her drawings in one corner of the sheet and then proceeded to fill the surface from one end to the other.

Examples of the intricate paintings by González Amézcua are *The Magnificent Poet Netzalhualcoyotl, King and Lover of Arts* (1969) and *Hidden Treasures* (1969).[135] In the first, the ruler is shown seated on a throne, and a fantastic pyramid, topped by multicolored feathers, is seen in the background. The second has fantastic architecture, palm trees, muses, and numerous birds interspersed throughout a multilevel spatial arrangement.

Eduardo Chavez

Eduardo Chavez focused on regional American subjects in his murals. He painted murals in Glenwood Springs and Denver, Colorado; Geneva, Nebraska; Center, Texas; and Fort Warren, Wyoming. All of the Chavez murals deal with regional subjects and are painted in oils except for the one in Wyoming, which was painted with egg tempera on plywood. Among the murals painted by Chavez are two panels placed on opposite walls of the entrance to West High School, Denver. The images for this mural, commissioned by the WPA, are made up of a series of curving diagonals created by the poses of figures on the wagon trail tending to oxen and chopping down trees (plates 30 and 31). Chavez only began to paint in an abstract manner in the 1950s and 1960s.[136] *Xochimilco* (1965) and *Ocate I* (1965) are characteristic of his abstract work. The artist used a Cubist grid in both works for the displacement of the forms on the visual surface.

Eugenio Quesada

Eugenio Quesada of Phoenix, who studied and worked in Guadalajara for six years in the 1960s, paints small-scale works.[137] Fairly typical of the small works is *Bullring* (plate 32), in which he used the barest essentials to define the subject. Everything in the work is governed by the needs of the painting rather than by faithful representation of the motifs. It is an abstract painting in spirit. On a more immediate and direct level are a number of drawings he made of children and their activities, including *Mischievous Girl* (1964), a charcoal drawing in which the child's intense concentration is admirably portrayed.

Abstract, Surrealist, and Fantastic Art: 1926–1970

Rufino Tamayo

Although Surrealism did not have an impact on Mexican art until the 1940s, and abstract art did not take hold in Mexico until the 1950s, it is appropriate to begin this analysis in 1927, the year Rufino Tamayo arrived in New York for the first time.[138] His interest in the formal aspects of a work of art above all other considerations became evident in the early works he produced in New York: portraits, still lifes, nudes, and landscapes. In addition, his rejection of political art was discussed in an article published in 1929.[139] He was touted as the leader of a new Mexican school of painting in which form took precedence over the subject matter of a work of art. This initial stance, which clearly pitted him against the dominant Mexican School, prefigured the confrontations several decades later between abstract artists and followers of the Mexican School.[140] By then Tamayo was back in Mexico taking an active part in these battles. He had become the best-known Mexican abstract painter in the United States and Mexico. Young Mexican abstract painters of the 1950s identified with him and saw him as an alternative to the Mexican School.

Although Tamayo painted a number of murals early in his career and later as a well-known easel painter, he was not very interested in the programmatic purposes of muralism expounded by the early Mexican muralists. His arena was easel painting in oil and to a lesser extent the graphic arts. *Self-Portrait* (plate 33), a gouache over black chalk, demonstrates Tamayo's interest in using texture to create illusions of masses and

color applied in very subtle ways. The self-appraisal is rare in Tamayo's work. The intense, introspective portrait is emphasized by the crowded visual field, and the pose is unlike the traditional three-quarter views of self-portraits that are the result of an artist looking at his reflection in the mirror.

Tamayo exhibited the work he produced from 1927 to 1928 in New York in 1928, and he was back in Mexico City in 1929.[141] He returned to New York in 1930, where he had another exhibition of his work. An example of his canvases from this period is *Mandolins and Pineapples* (plate 34). The light diagonals and rounded shapes of the musical instruments, interspersed with the pineapples in front of an open window, create a beautifully orchestrated painting.

Back in Mexico City in 1932, Tamayo served on the Council for the Fine Arts and became head of the fine arts department of the Ministry of Education. He returned to New York in 1936 as a Mexican delegate to the Art Congress and established residence in Manhattan for the next fifteen years. In 1955 he returned to Mexico for good. For most of the 1930s, Tamayo concentrated on painting still lifes and portraits. The portraits are stiffly posed and come across like snapshot photographs. His works of this period are characterized by a palette of rich earth tones and by consciously simplified formal and thematic configurations (plate 35).

The direction of Tamayo's work was changed by an exhibition of Picasso's work at The Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1939.[142] His experiments with new ways of representing figures and objects point directly to Picasso's influence. He began to use combinations of hemispherical and crescent shapes to represent the human figure. An example of this type of work is the painting entitled *The Carnival* (plate 38). He continued to explore positive and negative space with these motifs during this period in works such as *Animals* (1941). What is particularly distinctive is the new violence expressed in his painting—in sharp contrast to the calmer work of the previous decade. A more specific reference to Picasso's work is seen in the painting entitled *Women Reaching for the Moon* (1946). The greatly foreshortened women, presented as diagonal units within a shallow space, recall Picasso's seaside paintings of the early 1920s. Tamayo's paintings of the 1950s and 1960s became increasingly abstract, though his subjects ranged from self-portraits to portrayals of men and women shown under various emotional stresses. *Man Pouring out His Heart* (1955), *Woman in Gray* (plate 36), and *Woman Facing a Mirror* (1970) are representative works from his later years. Although the relationship of figure to ground altered—from the foreshortened figures in deeply recessed spaces in his paintings of the 1940s to the flattened-out visual fields of his later work—his focus remained constant: to use color and texture to create carefully arranged visual fields. This was an end in itself—and quite contrary to the expressions of his ideological countrymen.

Carlos Mérida

Rufino Tamayo was preceded in New York by another artist who also eventually developed into an abstract painter. The Guatemalan-born Carlos Mérida lived in New York from 1917 to 1919 and then established residence in Mexico. He had an exhibition of his work in New York in 1926.[143] The paintings in the exhibition were based on themes from folklore, which he had been using since the early 1920s. During a stay of two years in Paris (1927–29), Mérida became interested in the Surrealist works of Klee, Miró, and Picasso, and the expressionistic abstract paintings of Kandinsky. Using the newly discovered vocabulary he began to explore abstraction, which he also found in ancient Mayan art forms: "The feeling for abstraction mastered by my ancestors took form in me."[144]

Mérida exhibited his work in New York for the second time in 1930. He also had shows in Los Angeles in 1933 and San Francisco in 1934.[145] *Deer Dance* (1935), an oil on canvas depicting a Mexican Indian dance ritual, exemplifies the artist's interest in folklore during this period. From 1941 to 1942, he was a visiting professor of art at North Texas State Teachers College in Denton, Texas. *The Blue Apple* (plate 39), a representative work of Mérida's later period, is directly related to the many outdoor mosaics he made in Guatemala City, Mexico City, and San Antonio, Texas. The motifs are presented within a geometric framework but nevertheless remain recognizable

forms from nature. The interpenetration of the rectilinear shapes is contrasted with a few crescent forms, relating this work to the two-dimensional Cubist grid.

Surrealism and Fantasy Art

A number of Mexican artists were influenced by Surrealist ideas in the 1940s, but only Lenora Carrington, who arrived in Mexico in the early 1940s from Europe via New York, consistently used Surrealism and fantasy in her work. Guillermo Meza was a Surrealist who should also be considered a follower of the Mexican School because his work ultimately reflected his Mexican identity. Frida Kahlo never considered herself a Surrealist, though she created an intensely personal iconography of fantasy that has been closely associated with Surrealist tendencies. Pedro Friedeberg, a European-born artist who was raised in Mexico, incorporated Surrealist ideas into his highly controlled, almost detached images and sculptures. Francisco Toledo, an Oaxacan-born and largely self-taught artist, created naive worlds of fantasy in which people and animals cavort.

Frida Kahlo

Frida Kahlo created a very personal autobiographical style that was deeply influenced by the Mexican votive (ex-voto) painters and other folk artists. In 1926 she suffered a serious accident when a bus in which she was riding collided with a trolley car. During her long convalescence in hospital, she devoted herself to painting. She later came in contact with Diego Rivera in the Ministry of Education, where he was painting murals, and in 1928 they were married. She traveled to the United States with Rivera (1930–34) and in 1938 visited New York on her own to exhibit her work.[146]

One of the earliest works that Kahlo made in the United States is *Frida and Diego Rivera* (1931). The work is similar to the traditional wedding portraits of nineteenth-century Mexico. A pink bird holds a long ribbon in its beak over Kahlo's head with an inscription that provides information about the occasion.[147] The style, technique, and the use of inscriptions are deliberately related to the work of nineteenth-century Mexican provincial painting.

Self-Portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the United States (plate 40) was painted during Kahlo's and Rivera's stay in Detroit.[148] The artist is shown standing on a pedestal holding a cigarette in her right hand and a small Mexican flag in her left. The inscription on the pedestal reads: "Carmen Rivera painted her portrait in the year 1932." (Carmen was one of Kahlo's given names, which she used occasionally during this period.) The left side of the painting refers to Mexico (with the emblematic sun and moon, a pre-Columbian temple and figurines on the ground, and flowers and their roots); the right side refers to the United States (with the American flag, skyscrapers, smokestacks, and electrical appliances and their wires below ground). A wire from an electrical generator is plugged into the pedestal, and two others go underground, where they are connected to the plant roots on the left side of the painting. The motifs are obvious references to the two countries and reflect the artist's view of each one. Her ambiguous relationship is emphasized by the placement of her self-portrait straddling the border. The generator wires and the plant roots are also indirectly fed into the pedestal on which the artist stands. Her Indo-European heritage was expressed in a number of other ways. The sun and the moon in the sky (usually found in Mexican religious art of the colonial period) are framed by billowy clouds, which produce lightning at their point of contact in the center of the painting. (The darker cloud around the moon is in the shape of a hand, paraphrasing Michelangelo's famous Creation panel in the Sistine Chapel.) The lightning striking the Aztec temple of Malinalco (built in 1476) symbolically connects the European and Indian components. The letters on the factory smokestacks spell out the name "Ford," a reference to the Ford Motor Company plant Kahlo and Rivera saw during their stay in Detroit. Although the motifs, signs, and symbols refer to the two countries, the conception of the work is in fact related to colonial and traditional Mexican painting, evidenced by the use of registers, a device common to ex-voto panel paintings, the emblematic sun and moon motifs borrowed from colonial-period religious art, as well as the inscription on the pedestal, also from colonial-period painting.

My Dress Hangs There (1933), which was painted by Kahlo in New York when

Rivera was working on the Rockefeller Center mural, also has several levels of symbols.[149] Each of the various settings in the painting has its own spatial references, and the numerous motifs and symbols are represented in different scales. The upper part of the painting includes an aerial view of Manhattan on one side and a view of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty in the center and an ocean liner between them. The large central portion of the painting includes a foreshortened view of the city and its environs. A dress of the artist is seen floating above a mass of people represented along the lowermost portion of the work. The empty Tehuana dress (one of the artist's favorite costumes) refers to Mexico and her longing to be there. Other details in the picture, including a toilet on a pedestal (American efficiency), a portrait of Mae West (false values), a telephone on top of a building (connecting the financial district with American industry with its wires), and the view of the masses (suffering people), comment on American society and the severe economic conditions of the times.

Pedro Friedeberg

Friedeberg first exhibited his work in New York in 1962 and in Washington, D.C., in 1963.[150] He had other exhibitions in New York, from 1964 to 1969, and in Houston, Texas, in 1968. He also painted two murals for the Mexican pavilion of the Hemisfair in San Antonio in 1968. Although he is an architect as well as a sculptor, he is primarily known for his paintings and his furniture designs. Both fit into the category of fantasy art. Particularly well known is a chair he made of wood in the form of a large hand resting on a large foot. The palm of the hand forms the seat, the extended fingers form the back of the chair, and the thumb functions as an armrest. The foot forms the base of the chair. Friedeberg's paintings are full of architectural motifs and references to other manufactured items presented in bizarre and fantastic contexts. His works are known for their meticulous detail and his sense of humor.

Francisco Toledo

Francisco Toledo exhibited his work in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1959, and in New York in 1964, as well as in numerous galleries throughout Europe.[151] He exhibited in a number of group shows in New York in the late 1960s. Toledo's works represent fantastic scenes in which people and animals (ducks, cats, wolves, horses, and rabbits) are included. Many of his images are based on myths and legends he heard as a child in Juchitán, Oaxaca, where he was raised. Animals are used symbolically (rabbits and fish are often used in erotic contexts). His works have a strong formal network. Positive and negative spaces are given equal treatment, and the overall pattern often allows them to be seen from any angle.

The Mexican School and the Abstract Artists

A second phase of abstraction in Mexican art began in the 1950s with the advent of works by Mathias Goeritz, Gunther Gerzso, Rogier Von Gunten, Manuel Felguérez, Vicente Rojo, Luis López-Loza, Fernando García Ponce, and others. A number of these artists were not born in Mexico. Goeritz, Rojo, and Von Gunten arrived in the country in the 1950s; while others, such as Gerzso, spent many years abroad.[152] The exposure to international art movements provided by these European artists, as well as Tamayo's return to Mexico at about the same time, led to the development of abstract art in Mexico.

Unlike the Mexican School artists who received the support of the Mexican government, first in their capacities as muralists and later as participants in major exhibitions of art sent abroad, the abstract artists did not receive immediate official recognition for their work. The first steps taken to rectify this situation came in 1952 and 1953 when Tamayo was commissioned by the government to paint two separate murals for the Palace of Fine Arts.[153] A more general recognition of abstraction occurred when the prestigious first prize in the second Mexican biennial exhibition, held in 1960, was awarded to an abstract work by García Ponce.[154] This was an unprecedented move and caused an uproar. The followers of the Mexican School had been well represented in the 1958 biennial exhibition, whereas Tamayo and the other abstractionists had been excluded altogether.[155] The situation grew so tense in the following years that the third biennial exhibition never materialized.

The old battle between the Mexican School artists and the abstractionists for preeminence in the arts in Mexico was renewed during the biennial exhibitions of 1958 and 1960. The Mexican School artists sought to maintain control of the support system for the arts so that they could create an art for the people, a public art, a truly revolutionary art that would serve the needs of the nation. In contrast, the abstractionists sought to rid the country of false art, riddled with unnecessary programmatic content, an art that they felt no longer served any purpose.

The Abstractionists

Mathias Goeritz

Mathias Goeritz, born in Poland and raised in Berlin, where he studied art and art history, traveled throughout Europe in the late 1930s and went to Spanish Morocco at the beginning of World War II. He stayed there several years teaching foreign languages and art history.[156] He then went to Spain, living in several cities—Granada, Madrid, and Santillana del Mar (near the caves of Altamira)—for almost five years. He exhibited his work, lectured, and taught. He arrived in Mexico in 1948 and began an active life in the arts as a teacher, artist (painter and sculptor), and founder of several galleries of art. His environments and sculpture-monuments of the 1950s, which he built and displayed in Mexico, have had an influence on Mexican and U.S. sculptors, especially the Minimalists.[157] He exhibited his work in New York in 1956, 1960, and 1962.[158]

The best-known works by Goeritz are his experimental museum, El Eco (The Echo), and the *Five Towers*, constructed in Mexico City in 1953 and 1957 respectively.[159] Both had repercussions in the United States in the 1960s in the works of U.S. sculptors such as David Smith, Robert Grosvenor, Ronald Bladen, Tony Smith, and Mark Di Suvero.[160] In both works the artist exhibited his "emotional architecture." It was an art form opposed to functionalism, formalism, and other "isms," which he felt ignored spiritual concerns.

The most impressive aspect of the experimental museum was the inclusion of a large metal sculpture known as *The Serpent*. Made up of geometric shapes painted black, it was placed directly on the floor (with no base or pedestal), actively engaging the room's walls in the aesthetic of the work. The total space environment prefigured similar experiments carried out in the United States by at least ten years.[161]

The *Five Towers*, located in a suburb of Mexico City known as Ciudad Satélite, is a work of five painted towers made of concrete. They are each 180 feet high.[162] Goeritz had originally envisioned seven towers, each between 500 and 700 feet in height. The project represents painting, sculpture, and emotional (that is, nonfunctional) architecture. It grew out of experiments the artist carried out as part of his emotional architecture series, which included *Here and There* (1955), a polychromed wood sculpture inspired by the skyline of Manhattan. When he received the commission for the Ciudad Satélite project, he tried to create a replica of Manhattan that would elicit the emotions he had experienced when he saw the play of spaces created by the overlapping skyscrapers for the first time.

In March 1960 Goeritz entered the polemics of the New York art world by making a protest in front of The Museum of Modern Art against the *Homage to New York* piece by Jean Tinguely (a sculpture programmed to self-destruct within twenty-four hours).[163] Tinguely was a neo-Dadaist who introduced chance into his mechanized machines of the mid-1950s and early 1960s. Goeritz's printed manifesto, "Please Stop," was an example of his call for spiritual values in art and his opposition to the notions of impermanence and instability exemplified by the Tinguely machine. The Abstract Expressionists, among them Franz Kline, Mark Rothko, Ad Reinhardt, and Guston, applauded his protest. The formalists, and particularly the Minimalists, among them Gregory Battcock, did not accept his calls for absolute values and permanence in art as valid.[164] As artists who made primary structures and large-scale constructions, they were interested in challenging accepted notions of scale and proportion rather than in the "timelessness of the ancient Egyptians," as Goeritz put it.

Gunther Gerzso

Gunther Gerzso, who worked in the United States in theater set design and

cinematography from 1936 to 1942, began painting in 1939. From 1942 to 1965 he worked as an art director with Mexican film companies.[165] His work was influenced by the Surrealists in the 1940s and by the Geometric Abstractionists in the 1950s. His work has remained primarily abstract. He uses overlapping geometric shapes to create illusions of shallow depth. The carefully modulated surfaces of each of the shapes are given sharp contours by the inclusion of darker or shadowed shapes underneath. The results are finely orchestrated patterns based on a Cubist grid.

Manuel Felguérez

Manuel Felguérez exhibited his work in New York in 1959 and 1960, and at the Hemisfair in San Antonio, Texas, in 1968.[166] He taught art at Cornell University in 1966, and he was a founding member of the Salón Independiente de México in 1968 with Francisco Icaza and Kazuya Sakai.[167] Felguérez has been one of the leading Mexican formalists. He has focused on welded steel sculpture and on easel painting, in which he used a vocabulary based on Abstract Expressionism in the 1960s and computer-derived geometric configurations in the 1970s. A good example of his 1960s work is *Eight and a Half* (1966), in which texture, basic shapes, and color are arranged within Cubist-derived space.

Vicente Rojo

Vicente Rojo, who was born in Spain, moved to Mexico in 1949. He exhibited his work in a number of American cities beginning in 1966 and in New York in 1968 and 1970.[168] Rojo, like other artists of the 1960s, used Abstract Expressionist motifs but tried to rid his painting of its emotional content, focusing on signs and similar elements. His textured surfaces are applied to self-referential objects made up of basic shapes, such as hexagons, circles, squares, and trapezoids.

Luis López-Loza

Luis López-Loza traveled to New York in 1963, where he worked at the Pratt Graphic Arts Center. He exhibited his work in a number of American cities beginning in 1963 and in New York from 1963 to 1970. López-Loza has used pre-Columbian sources for paintings made up of interlocking forms arranged within a Cubist grid format. His early work, exemplified by *Children's Dream* (1955), is suggestive of the biomorphic shapes used by Gorky and Miró, but unlike these artists, who always focused on the distinctions between figure and ground, López-Loza emphasized the overall patterns of the image.

The New Figurative Artists

In spite of the success of the abstractionists in the 1960 biennial, the focus of the Mexican art world shifted from the confrontation between the Mexican School and the abstractionists to the work of a new group of artists who identified themselves as the Nueva Presencia. Their art was based on figurative trends that had their sources in Mexican art. The leading practitioners were José Luis Cuevas, Arnold Belkin, Francisco Icaza, Francisco Corzas, and Rafael Coronel. Most of them rejected mural painting because of its political content and the nationalistic bent of the muralists. However, Belkin and Icaza, who founded the movement and the magazine *Nueva Presencia* in 1961, continued to focus on what they called a New Humanism.

The crucial event led to this new development in Mexican art took place in 1960. Siqueiros was imprisoned by the government for "internal dissolution" in May of that year.[169] In 1959 he had organized a committee and then a national congress to help free striking railroad workers who had been imprisoned by the government. In Caracas, where the president of Mexico was scheduled to visit, and later in Havana, Siqueiros strongly criticized the government. Finding a hostile reception upon his return to Mexico, Siqueiros held a press conference to explain his position but was severely criticized in the newspapers. He was imprisoned on April 9, 1960, for an eight-year term. He was released four years later, at the end of the six-year term of office of the Mexican president who had imprisoned him. Belkin and Icaza thought of keeping Siqueiros informed of events on the outside with a newsletter, which later developed

into the publication *Nueva Presencia.*[170] This activity coincided with an exhibition of works by Belkin, Icaza, Cuevas, and others, and the appearance of Selden Rodman's book on art, *The Insiders.*[171] Rodman singled out the work of Cuevas as a prime example of "Insider" art. The artists were impressed enough with the book to use its title for their exhibition, which they translated as *Los Interioristas.* By the second exhibition, it was apparent that the title was inappropriate, given the various disparate tendencies of the artists included in it. By then, Cuevas had broken with the group. He felt that a number of younger artists who were imitating his style should not be included in the exhibition. The group survived under the name of Nueva Presencia until 1963.

Cuevas, along with Goeritz and Friedeberg, founded the group Los Hartos (Those Who Are Fed Up) as a reaction to the humanists of the Nueva Presencia group.[172] But Goeritz and Friedeberg had their own agendas outside the concerns of Cuevas, who has always been a figurative artist. Goeritz was more interested in nonfigurative art and Friedeberg in Surrealist-related sculptures and paintings.

Arnold Belkin

Arnold Belkin, a Canadian by birth, went to Mexico in 1947 to study art, and from 1949 to 1950 he worked as an assistant to Siqueiros.[173] He exhibited his work in Los Angeles and New York in 1962 and in other American cities in the 1960s, and he was a visiting professor in painting and advanced techniques at the Pratt Institute in 1967. The painting *The Dream* (1964) exemplifies the work of Belkin at the height of the Nueva Presencia period. The focus is on the emotional features of a contorted human figure. Although the emphasis is on building up the illusion of masses, the artist still consciously arranged the various parts of the image to conform to a Cubist grid in relation to the frame.

Francisco Icaza

Francisco Icaza exhibited his paintings in a number of American cities beginning in 1964, and his work was selected for a Guggenheim International Award exhibition.[174] *Los Juanes* (1961) is one of a series of paintings by Icaza in which the artist emphasized the anonymity of the figures he represented. The heavily built-up canvas of "somber earth colors," is broken up into simplified figural shapes, which nonetheless retain a semblance of identification as soldiers.

José Luis Cuevas

José Luis Cuevas, who first exhibited his work in Washington, D.C., in 1954, has received awards for his work throughout Latin America, the United States, Europe, and India, and has worked as a visiting artist in art schools in the United States.[175] He has illustrated and written a number of books and has been the subject of a number of film documentaries in Mexico and the United States.[176]

Cuevas is interested in portraying himself in various circumstances and contexts. The artist developed from a student of the work of Orozco, then of Picasso, and finally of Goya before creating his own unique calligraphic style. His early subjects—prostitutes, fortune-tellers, peddlers, beggars, and dwarfs—appeared for the first time in the United States in an exhibition held at OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C., in 1954. He also focused on victims of fights or accidents, the dying, and the insane as subjects for his drawings. He moved on to portray a world of freaks, monsters, and other bizarre creatures, inspired by the writings of Franz Kafka and the Marquis de Sade. He also based a number of self-portraits on the work of Rembrandt and Goya (plate 41).

Mexican Artists in the United States: II

From the 1930s through the 1960s, Mexican artists continued to receive attention in the national magazines and newspapers for their mural commissions and solo exhibitions in the United States and Mexico. Numerous books on the Mexican School and on individual artists were published, and Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, and Tamayo were so well known that even their exhibitions in Mexico were reported in the art periodicals and in *Time* and *Newsweek.*[177] However, the artist who received the most attention

during this period was Tamayo. His work was reviewed almost every year and sometimes several times a year from the 1940s through the 1960s.[178] He received reviews as favorable as those of the other Mexican artists. In the late 1950s and 1960s, however, the best-known Mexican artists were evaluated by a new generation of critics, and U.S. artists were no longer paying as much attention to Mexico. Even the works of the younger Mexican artists, among them José Luis Cuevas, who was the best known, were treated more harshly. The reviewers were no longer in awe of Mexican artists.

Sam Hunter was one of the first to give Tamayo's work, exhibited at the Knoedler Gallery in 1954, a negative review.[179] In his view, there had always been a conflict in Tamayo's art "between a genuine primitive quality—something native and in the blood—and the worldling's sophisticated taste." He saw these two tendencies resolved in Tamayo's *Wounded Beast* of 1941, but not necessarily so in his recent work: "All that is left of Tamayo's earlier manner are his fine, seductive colors." Tamayo's exhibitions at the Knoedler Gallery in January 1957 and November 1959 and at the New Art Center Galleries were not well received. According to one reviewer of the 1957 show, "something is required to lift this artist from the professional trivia into which his South-of-the-Border Parisianism has slipped."[180] The reviewer of the 1959 show was also not impressed.

There is not much new or different in these stylized, chic, and pseudo-archaic paintings. He has roughed up the texture a bit, but no matter how thin Tamayo slices it, it's still the same old slice of watermelon.[181]

Although Tamayo was still given some positive reviews, misconceptions about his racial background came up in a review of his exhibition at the Far Gallery in May 1969. According to one reviewer, "Tamayo's structure adheres to an admixture of Picassoid Cubism and Mayan symbolism, a blend he has turned into a personal trademark."[182] Tamayo is Zapotecan, yet the reference to Tamayo as a Mayan Indian also appeared in a review of his exhibition at the Valentine Gallery in 1942.[183] The Mayan reference appeared repeatedly in articles by Henry McBride starting in 1943 and continuing through 1951, and was particularly evident in a review of his works at the Knoedler Gallery.[184] Even though he considered Tamayo to be far from his source material, McBride still thought his Mayan background was important:

Just how Mayan his bringing up was I do not seem to know, but I am sure he doesn't have to go into trances in the effort to recapture the ancient way of looking at things. I am sure it's in his blood.

The Mayan reference appeared one more time in a review of another exhibition of his work at the Knoedler Gallery in September 1962.[185] According to the reviewer, the "curious figures may have stemmed from ancient Mayan gods, but it would seem rather more likely that they were inspired by primordial nightmares of the painter himself."

Cuevas was initially given favorable reviews of his work in the 1950s and early 1960s. A reviewer of his first New York exhibition, at the Herbert Gallery in 1960, considered his style "strikingly original."[186] He saw the strength of his work, not in his subjects, but "in the nervous ebb and flow of his scratchy lines, and in the composition of the figures." The continuing reference to a Mexican sensibility was brought up by Langsner in his review of Cuevas's 1960 exhibition of drawings in Los Angeles.[187] "Cuevas's preoccupation with the cruelty of the human predicament embodies a peculiarly Mexican sensibility." His 1962 exhibition at the Grace Borgenicht Gallery was not well received by another reviewer:

Cuevas comes on like a lyrical poet of the pen, ink, and brush. But his sweetly mellow, gluey, wishy-washy color, and faces and figures influenced by Shahn and Picasso of the Rose and Blue phases are merely a thin disguise.[188]

Following a discussion of the artist's development, the reviewer further stated: "In one or two instances Cuevas's drawings seem almost good, but they are about as substantial as cotton candy or charlotte russe."

Mexican American and Chicano Artists

The art of Mexican Americans and, to some extent, Chicanos began to receive attention in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the United States. Artists of Mexican ancestry began to think of themselves as members of a distinct group whose ethnic antecedents had a bearing on their work. Although artists with close ties to Mexico had been working in the southwestern United States for generations, awareness of kinship among Mexican Americans, Spanish Americans, and Chicanos essentially began in the late 1960s. (It should be noted that all of these designations refer to the same people and represent a difference in self-identification over a period of almost four hundred years.) The people in the area which now forms the American Southwest and Pacific Southwest have traditionally referred to themselves as *Hispanos* (Spanish Americans), *Mexicanos* (Mexican Americans), and *Chicanos*. The people of Mexican descent who emigrated to the Pacific Northwest and Great Lakes region also refer to themselves as Mexicans and Chicanos. Spanish Americans have emphasized their Spanish background, while Mexican Americans have embraced their Mexican heritage. Chicanos discard both traditions as inappropriate because they do not reflect the true reality of a people distinct from the Spanish, the Mexican, and the American.

The first efforts to exhibit the works of Mexican American or Chicano artists were not made until about 1970. One exhibition, entitled *Tlacuilo* ("artist" in the Aztec language) was held at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center in San Antonio in the spring of 1970, and another, entitled *Chicano Artists*, opened at the Pasadena Art Museum in November.[189] Another exhibition, entitled *Arte de la Gente* (Art of the People), opened at the Sacramento State College Art Gallery in June 1970. Esteban Villa, who organized the exhibition, expressed the feelings of the artists who were involved in the efforts to create a Chicano art: "We are lost right now. We are stumbling around trying to find an identity. We're not trying to make a racial thing. We're trying to establish a relevance as painters."[190]

The artists who came to maturity in the 1960s were influenced by U.S. art initially and, in some cases, by Mexican art by the end of the decade. Those who were attempting to create a socially relevant art, based on their own background and unique experience in the United States, used the life of the people—folklore, superstition, religion, customs—and their history as subjects for their paintings, sculptures, and prints.[191] Eventually these same subjects and others related to the community were used in murals painted in the barrios of the Southwest, Pacific Southwest and Northwest, and the Great Lakes region.[192] Their search for antecedents and models for their work led the Chicano muralists to the early Mexican muralists and Siqueiros, in particular, the only surviving member of the *tres grandes* at this time.

Among the leaders of the Chicano art movement who were instrumental in establishing community cultural centers, organizing groups of artists and art exhibitions, and working as artists were Salvador Roberto Torres of San Diego, Leonard Castellanos of Los Angeles, Esteban Villa and José Montoya of Sacramento, Ernesto Palomino of Fresno, and Melesio Casas of San Antonio. Among the artists who were not actively involved in the movement but were later included in exhibitions and publications with a focus on Mexican American and Chicano art in the 1970s and Hispanic art in the 1980s were Manuel Neri of San Francisco and Luis Jiménez of El Paso.[193]

Although both artists used pre-Columbian art as a point of reference for their works of the 1960s, Neri (plate 42) always remained interested in the formal and expressive qualities of sculpture, while Jiménez was more interested in the subject matter. Jiménez focused on modern Mexican art and the social and political conditions in the United States to make forceful statements about American society.

Many other artists began their careers in the 1960s and by the end of the decade were fully involved in the Chicano art movement. Malaquías Montoya and Rupert García of San Francisco were among the best of the graphic and poster artists of the movement. Judy Baca of Los Angeles, who painted her first mural in Los Angeles

in 1969 (*La Abuelita*), gained national recognition for her work as a muralist in the 1970s and 1980s.[194] Among the others who painted the first murals identified with the movement were Mario Castillo in Chicago in 1968 (*Metafísica*), Leonard Castellanos in Los Angeles in 1968–69 (Mechicano Art Center), Manuel Martínez in Denver in 1970, Eduardo Carrillo (plate 44) in Los Angeles in 1970, Raymond Patlán in Chicago in 1970–71 (*From My Father and Yours*), Gerónimo Garduño and others in Santa Fe in 1971 (*Clínica de la Gente*), Ernesto Palomino in Fresno in 1971, and Leo Tanguma in Houston in the early 1970s (*The Rebirth of Our Nationality*). Carmen Lomas Garza, a printmaker as well as a painter, focused on the customs and folklore of the barrio in her work. An example of her early work is the print *La Vida es Perra* (Life Is a Bitch; 1970).

Melesio Casas and Luis Jiménez

Works by Casas and Jiménez exemplify the critical views of U.S. society often expressed by Chicano artists, as well as the relationship to U.S. and Mexican arts shared by their colleagues in the movement.

Casas incorporated television and movie screens in a series of images he began painting in the 1960s, which he called "Humanscapes." Initially, he used erotic subjects as treated by the media, and later, he became more involved with social, political, and economic problems experienced by Chicano people. He began to pay particular attention to the Mexican American as migrant worker, youth, and "outsider." An example of these works is *New Horizons* (No. 65 in the series; 1970), which shows farm workers in the field with a Huelga eagle of the Farm Workers Union of California in the background.

Jiménez's sculptures, made of fiberglass from molds, painted, and then coated with epoxy, which gives them a glossy surface, are the result of extensive study and numerous sketches with colored pencils. *The American Dream* (1967–69) exemplifies the artist's interest in attracting the viewer's attention by unusual subject matter. The sculpture represents the coupling of a human female with an automobile—a contemporary variation on a common mythological motif. In this case, the artist referred to the pre-Columbian myth in which a jaguar copulates with a human female to create a supernatural being. Jiménez substituted the automobile for the jaguar and the blond, blue-eyed woman for the Indian to make a statement about U.S. society and its love affair with the automobile.

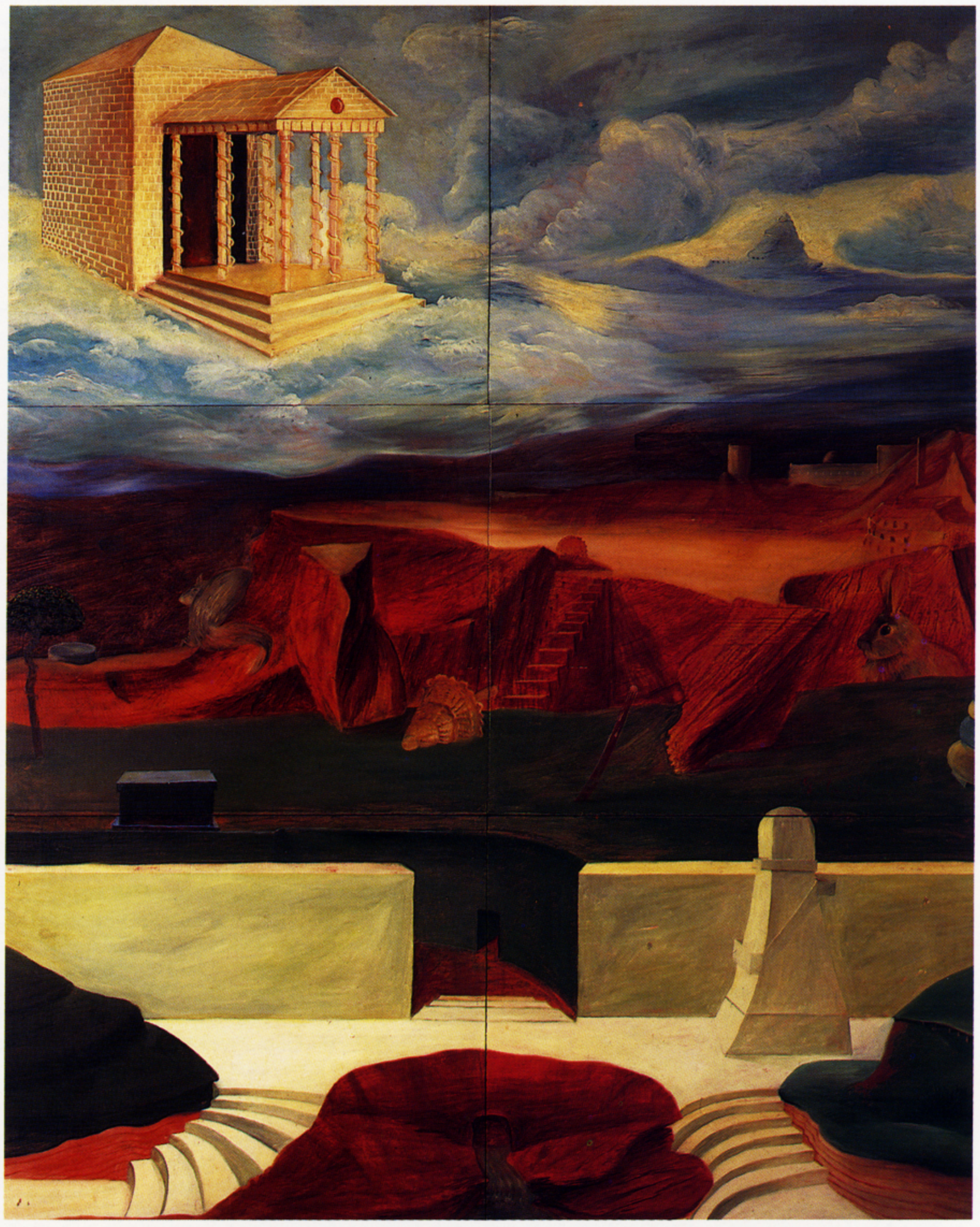
In the sculpture *The Man of Fire* (plate 43) Jiménez paraphrased Orozco's dome painting in the orphanage in Guadalajara, Mexico, and also made reference to the stories he had heard as a child regarding the torture by flames of Cuauhtemoc, the last Aztec warrior to fight the invading Spaniards in the sixteenth century. The work also refers to the Buddhist monks who set themselves on fire to protest the war in Vietnam.

42

43

Manuel Neri
42. *Figure.* 1958
Plaster, enamel, wood, and wire armature, 61 x 22 x 16½"
Private collection. Courtesy Charles Cowles Gallery, San Francisco
Photo: courtesy Anne Kohs & Associates, Inc.

Luis Jiménez
43. *Man on Fire.* 1969–70
Fiberglass and epoxy resin coating, 89 x 60 x 16"
Collection Dug McIntyre, El Paso, Texas
Photo: Bruce Berman



44

Eduardo Carrillo
44. *Cabin in the Sky.* 1963
Oil on plywood, 72 x 52″
Collection Anthony Berlant, Santa Monica, California
Photo: Lee Varis

Appendix

The following group exhibitions of Mexican artists seen in the United States are the most tangible evidence of the Mexican presence in the United States from the late 1920s through the 1960s. These exhibitions gave Americans opportunities to see the works of the Mexican School artists within the context of the "authentic" Mexican arts that had inspired them: namely, Indian arts and crafts, pre-Columbian art, votive paintings, and the prints of José Guadalupe Posada. The Mexican government used the exhibitions to further its national policies abroad, and the exhibiting artists enjoyed greater exposure to foreign audiences as well as economic benefits. The reviews of the exhibitions by the Mexican artists themselves, by the organizers of the exhibitions, and by the art critics for the major art periodicals demonstrate how the art was viewed and appreciated during this period. Although the reviewers often did not entirely understand the complexities of Mexican art and its antecedents, not to mention the many forces in Mexico and elsewhere that were affecting its development, they nonetheless generally responded to Mexico's art with insightful comments and appreciation.

The Art Center Gallery (1928)

The first large group exhibition of Mexican artists seen in the United States was organized by Frances Flynn Paine under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation and in cooperation with Mexico's Ministry of Education and the National University of Mexico. The exhibition, which presented work by twenty-two artists, was shown at the Art Center Gallery in New York City in January 1928. It formed part of a series of exhibitions of Mexican arts and crafts.

Anita Brenner, in her review of the exhibition, characterized it as the first truly significant demonstration of the new Mexican art outside Mexico.[1] Orozco, who was one of the exhibitors, attacked the show in a letter to Charlot: "The gallery is bad, just amateurs and beginners, the room dark, the director an imbecile, complete chaos, after one week there wasn't even a catalogue."[2] He complained about the hanging of the show and the public's reaction to it. "The very few people who came just laughed and joked or felt disappointed." He also noted that the "serious art press, like *The Arts*, *Art News*, etc., didn't say a word, neither did the critics…the newspapers and some magazines just ridiculed it too and a number of them had some very harsh words to say."

An American reviewer who discussed the works in the exhibition by Orozco, Rivera, and Charlot also made reference to Orozco's murals in the National Preparatory School, among them the *Maternity* panel, which he considered "fat and repulsive."[3] The other artists were categorized according to their respective styles, goals, and background. Among them were Francisco Goitia, deemed a "realist"; Siqueiros, "who seeks to fit modern murals to a machine age"; Mérida, "A Mayan, stylist, decorator, colorist"; Revueltas, "aims at pure decoration with mechanics"; Castellanos, "colorist"; Montenegro and Ruiz, "stylists and decorators"; Pablo O'Higgins, "an American amalgamated to the Mexican School"; and Tamayo, "colorist."

Metropolitan Museum of Art (1930–1931)

Mexican Arts, which opened in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on October 13, 1930, traveled to seven other American cities from late November 1930 to September 1931. René d'Harnoncourt, with the cooperation of the Mexican government and the support of the American sponsors, selected the pieces, organized the exhibition, and wrote the catalog for it.[4] The exhibition of 509 items included modern Mexican paintings as well as hundreds of pieces of applied arts dating from the colonial period to the time of the exhibition. D'Harnoncourt wanted to demonstrate that there was a continuous Mexican tradition in the arts, reflecting a true Mexican spirit.

Numerous articles appeared in museum bulletins and major art magazines as well as in the newspapers of the cities where the exhibition was shown.[5] Most of them were descriptive rather than critical and were based on d'Harnoncourt's catalog.

Ralph Flint, one of the few reviewers of the exhibition, characterized the works by Orozco as "stark, turbulent and Goya-like in the macabre intensity of their mood." He lamented the fact that murals by Rivera were not on view, with the exception of a small fragment (lent by Dwight W. Morrow).[6]

Philadelphia Arts Alliance (1939)

An exhibition of Mexican paintings, prints, drawings, and crafts was held at the Philadelphia Art Alliance with the cooperation of the Mexican government in 1939. A large painting of Zapata by Orozco and a plaster intaglio by Siqueiros were exhibited along with prints by members of the Taller de Gráfica Popular, including Leopoldo Méndez, Francisco Dosamantes, Raul Anguiano, and Alfredo Zalce. A reviewer emphasized the importance of the exhibition as "a further step toward a cultural fraternity between the United States and Latin America."[7] Orozco and Siqueiros were singled out as artists who were well known and admired in the United States. Méndez was considered "the best of the Mexican lithographers" represented in the exhibition.

Golden Gate Exhibition (1939)

The first exhibition to focus entirely on modern Mexican art was organized by Ines Amor, director of the Galería de Arte Méxicano, for the *Golden Gate* exhibition held in San Francisco in 1939. Twenty-four paintings by twenty artists were included in the exhibition. A reviewer, who reproduced a painting by Federico Cantú in his article, rated the exhibition "excellent."[8] According to the reviewer, "social protest…provides the underlying theme of most of Mexico's art production." The artists mentioned as being well represented in the exhibition were Rivera, Orozco, Montenegro, Mérida, Siqueiros, Tamayo, and Cantú.

The Museum of Modern Art (1940)

The exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* opened at The Museum of Modern Art in the summer of 1940.[9] Some three thousand items were displayed in the show, which was organized in collaboration with the Mexican government under the supervision of Alfonso Caso. A curator was selected for each of the four sections to choose the items for the show. They were Caso (pre-Columbian art), Manuel Toussaint (colonial art), Montenegro (folk art), and Covarrubias (modern art).

In Charlot's view, the modern section was limited in scope because works from the 1920s were not included:

Even though murals cannot be transported for exhibition purposes, there exists a body of work closely related to them….Even the painters that opposed in style the school of muralists would have increased in significance against this historic background. The oversight of a bare five years [1921–1926] punches a gigantic hole into the close-knit trend of those two thousand years of Mexican art.[10]

Jeannette Lowe, who reproduced works by Siqueiros and Tamayo in her review, considered the exhibition a "brilliant survey" of Mexican art.[11] The works of Siqueiros, Tamayo, Rivera, Orozco, Best-Maugard, and Charlot are discussed in the final part of her review, which she devoted to the modern section. She made the point that not all the artists in the show "have been active radicals":

[There is] the enchanting Pretty Girl *by Tamayo, the keen sense and fine draftsmanship of Castellanos in* Day of San Juan, *Frida Kahlo's Surrealistic* The Two Fridas, *and Covarrubias's* The Bone. *Roberto Montenegro… is represented by* Maya Women, *the repeating profiles reflecting the sense of pattern and line of its original.*

The five works singled out for discussion were reproduced in the exhibition catalog.

Institute of Modern Art (1941)

An exhibition of modern Mexican art, organized by MacKinley Helm, was shown at the Institute of Modern Art in Boston in 1941, and it was toured to five other U.S. cities. The exhibition grew out of research carried out by Helm in Mexico for a book on modern Mexican painters.[12]

James S. Plaut, who reproduced works by Antonio Ruiz, Tamayo, Meza, and Carlos Orozco Romero in his review, did not count himself among the aficionados of Mexican art, and he indicated why he and many Americans were not enthusiastic about it:[13] "Since our own art is fundamentally an international mélange, we cannot instantly relish the flavor of a national art which is essentially homogeneous." He also believed there were differences in the way Americans and Mexicans had absorbed foreign influences. "In the case of the latter, [it] is usually short-lived, as native background and tradition seemingly constitute a potent antidote." According to Plaut, Mexicans made no effort to assimilate European influence in the subtle ways that Americans attempted to do. Nor did they paint their country as Americans Scene painters did. Furthermore, the focus on political matters in Mexican painting put Americans off. Nonetheless, Plaut sought to describe the broad assets of the exhibition as well as its limitations. In his view, Orozco was not well represented by the small easel paintings included in the exhibition. He was more pleased with the *Flower Vendor* and a recent self-portrait by Rivera and with *The Sob* and *La Patrona* by Siqueiros. He also praised Dr. Atl, Abraham Angel, and "the brilliant women," Maria Izquierdo and Frida Kahlo. Montenegro was singled out for his several competent portraits and "a rich still life reminiscent of the Spanish painters of the seventeenth century."

However, in Plaut's view, there were six other painters who gave the Mexican movement "current validity and [raised] it to an exalted contemporaneous position." They were Tamayo and Orozco Romero, whose works in the show "are endowed with evocative mysticism"; Ruiz, "a whimsical, urbane primitivist"; and three painters all under thirty-five years of age. These three were Jesús Guerrero Galván, "a reverent interpreter of the classicism of the Italian Renaissance and the strong plastic forms of his native past"; Cantú, "an incisive draftsman and a finished painter"; and Meza, "the most spectacular of the three…a 'natural' Surrealist…a technical prodigy [who] possesses both the natural visions and the inherent restraint shared by the better painters of his country."

Philadelphia Museum of Art (1943)

The exhibition *Mexican Painting Today* was shown at the Philadelphia Museum of Art from March 27 to May 9, 1943. The exhibition was organized by Henry Clifford, the curator of paintings at the museum. He included 100 oils, 50 watercolors and drawings, 140 prints, and 50 photographs. Clifford reproduced works by Tamayo, Chávez Morado, Siqueiros, Castellanos, Soriano, Ruiz, and Goitia in his descriptive article of the exhibition.[14] He described his visits to the studios of Orozco and Rivera, and he characterized all of the artists represented in the exhibition as being preoccupied with the theme of death. In his view, this reflected an acceptance of death that was part of Mexican culture and even celebrated on All Souls Day, or The Day of the Dead.

According to Dorothy Grafly, who reproduced works by Castellanos and Rivera in her review, the exhibition "sweeps [the observer] on a wave of emotionalism that is deeply national."[15] In addition, the works "have a unity of feeling that stamps them as indigenous." An exception, she noted, was Rivera's Cubist work *The Sailor*. Orozco painted with religious fervor and intense emotionalism in works like *Golgotha 1942, Raising of Lazarus*, and *Prometheus*. She saw a strain of El Greco in these works and "in the color and long lines of *St. Veronica* by Cantú."

Grafly contrasted the works of Orozco and Cantú with Rivera's *Liberation of a Péon* and *Sugar Cane*, in which "composition dominates feeling; in the work of [Orozco], feelings create composition." Like Clifford, she also focused on the theme of death. Among the examples she cited were Rivera's *Liberation of a Péon*; Goitia's *Tata Jesús*; and *Angel Kidnappers* by Castellanos. She considered the "innate morbidity of the people...fertile soil for such Surrealism as it appears in *What I Saw in My Bath*, the life story of Frida Kahlo." Finally, she saw Mexico as "a modern summation of the art feeling of the ages. Not only does it partake of the Renaissance, it goes beyond it to the statuesque dignity of the Egyptians, strongly sensed in *La Patrona* by Siqueiros." She saw other Egyptian echoes in the works *National Holiday* by Ruiz and *Dark Mexico* by Chávez Morado.

According to another reviewer, who reproduced works by Orozco, Juan O'Gorman, Jesús Escobedo, Guerrero Galván, Meza, Tamayo, Castellanos, and Ruiz, no other exhibition of Mexican art "has equaled in quality and completeness the show which Henry Clifford has organized for the Philadelphia Museum."[16]

New York Gallery Exhibitions (1945)

Three different but related exhibitions of Mexican art went on view in three galleries in New York City (all within one block of one another) in 1945. Henry Kleeman, Karl Nierendorf, and Knoedler Gallery organized the exhibition with the assistance of Ines Amor, director of the Galería de Arte Méxicano. Eighty works were exhibited at the Knoedler Gallery; a smaller number of works went on display at the Kleeman Gallery; and Mérida's work was exhibited at the Nierendorf Gallery.

According to a reviewer, who reproduced one work each by Mérida, Chávez Morado, and Tamayo, "U.S. painting dwindles into something literal, cautious, even a trifle pedestrian" when compared to the Mexican art seen in the three shows as well as in the earlier show in Philadelphia (1943–44).[17]

Among the artists singled out for comment in the Knoedler show were Siqueiros, for three large paintings; Tamayo, who used "primitive shapes and crude clayey colors"; Meza, the worst offender of "a rather dubious sentimental-romantic trend"; Chávez Morado, the "Bosch of the school"; and Olga Costa, whose work is "fresh and vigorous."

Among the works considered notable in the Kleeman show were four by Charlot,"three in his familiar block-hewn style [and one] in a more realistic vein [that] illustrates admirably [his] ability to combine mountains of physical forms with an almost Oriental refinement of feeling." There were also three "admirable" works by Rivera, who was "the acclaimed leader and prophet of the school." Some Tamayo works in a "quieter mood" and "some stunning brush drawings" by Alfredo Zalce, "an outstanding graphic artist," were also applauded. Mérida, "Mexico's most distinguished semi-abstractionist," exhibited his work at Nierendorf "in conjunction with the ancient potteries of Tarascon [sic] and Guerrero." According to the reviewer, Mérida "fused the Maya tradition of his people with the modern language, establishing Mexico's participation in the contemporary movement."

Grand Central Galleries (1946)

In May 1946 *From Market Place to Museum* opened at the Grand Central Galleries in New York City.[18] The items in this exhibition were selected by Montenegro (folk art), Ines Amor (painting), and Leonard G. Field (crafts). Many of the works came from the IBM collection, loaned through the courtesy of Thomas J. Watson, president of the company. Thirteen paintings, many of them exhibited earlier at Knoedler's, formed the core of the exhibition along with twenty-two watercolors and the prints by thirty artists. Collections of arts and crafts and *retablos* were also included in the exhibition.

Judith Kaye Reed considered Tamayo's *Flute Player*, "one of the magical colorist's finest paintings"; Siqueiros's *Sunrise of Mexico*, "symbolic"; Guerrero Galván's *Children Playing*, "charming but static"; and Meza's *El Mezquital*, "strange."[19] According to Reed, the works by the graphic arts group was one of the largest and most comprehensive Mexican selections ever shown in New York, and one of the highlights of the exhibition was "the brilliant folk art displays."

Pasadena Art Institute (1953)

The exhibition *Art of Mexico* arranged by John Palmer Leeper, director of the Pasadena Art Institute, went on view in early 1953. The show included fifty paintings and drawings from The Museum of Modern Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, and from the collections of a number of private collectors and dealers in the Los Angeles area. It complemented part of an intercultural conference sponsored by Occidental College with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation. The three-day conference on the subject of "Mexican–United States Intellectual Cooperation," took place in late March, and the exhibition ran through the middle of April.

Jules Langsner, who praised the works by Orozco, Siqueiros, and Tamayo, considered Rivera "a decorative illustrator without plastic convictions."[20] He described Orozco's *Barricade* as "a powerful expressionist statement" and Siqueiros's *War* as having "an overwhelming impact on the spectator by its plasticity of form, compelling rhythms, and monumental scale." In his view, Tamayo's earlier work *The Family* was "a kind of primitivist fantasy, its stiffly postured figures, the toy bird, the suspended hoop adding up to a dignity and reserve that are quite charming." Another reviewer also considered Rivera's works "less imposing" when compared to the work of Orozco, Siqueiros, and Tamayo.[21] According to the reviewer, Orozco and Siqueiros "displayed magnificent power."

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1963–1964)

Masterworks of Mexican Art: From Pre-Columbian Times to the Present, an exhibition of over two thousand objects, opened in Los Angeles on October 12, 1963, following a tour that included fifteen European cities. The exhibition, directed by Fernando Gamboa, was shown in Los Angeles largely through the efforts of Richard F. Brown, director of the Los Angeles County Museum. A supplementary exhibition of works by the *Nueva Presencia* artists was shown at the Zora Gallery.

Henry J. Seldis devoted most of his review to the pre-Columbian section, essentially ignoring the colonial section and barely mentioning the modern artists.[22] In his view, Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros, and Tamayo were responsible for the renewed interest in the pre-Columbian materials. Their own works, "starting with Posada...demonstrate that Mexican art has not lost its ability to deal with material and spiritual matters with equal vigor and incisiveness." Finally, according to Seldis, the spirit and even some of the techniques of the ancients were carried on by the contemporary folk artists.

Rosalind Wholden considered the selection of the modern paintings "skimpy" and their quality "poor and insignificant."[23] She faulted the directors of the show for failing to assemble "a larger and more representative show of prints and drawings," which would have maintained the quality of the show. She also reviewed the *Nueva Presencia* exhibition at the Zora Gallery. She considered the work promising; however, in her view, they all seemed "to confuse bulk with profundity." Among the works singled out for comment were those by Arnold Belkin, "dull, academic skull-and-muscle heaps"; Francisco Icaza; "clumsy handling of his own esoteric legends"; and Leonél Góngora, "expressive compositions."

Peter Yates, in his review of the Los Angeles exhibition, focused on the pre-Columbian section.[24] In passing, he mentioned having seen the first large exhibition of Mexican art at the Corcoran Gallery, *Mexican Arts*, in 1931. He remembered admiring the work of Rivera and Orozco. The Los Angeles show, he said, "is replete with [Rivera's] charm and has also a few of the Cubist paintings" but "contains only work of [Orozco's] last years."

Notes

Mexican and Mexican American Artists

1. Bernard S. Myers, *Mexican Painting in Our Time* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1956), p.12. The Centro Artistico was founded by Dr. Atl and commissioned to decorate the Simon Bolívar Amphitheater in the National Preparatory School in 1910. The revolution put a stop to the project. **2.** Jean Charlot, *The Mexican Mural Renaissance: 1920–1925*, (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1962), pp.70 and 82. Sources consulted for this section include Anita Brenner, *Idols Behind Altars* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929); and Justino Fernández, *Arte Moderno y Contemporáneo de Mexico* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1952). **3.** Charlot, op. cit., p.46. **4.** Ibid., pp.70–71. See also Brenner, op. cit., pp.232–34 for a discussion of Mérida's work. **5.** Brenner, op. cit., pp.241–42, and Charlot, op. cit., pp.72–73. **6.** Fernández, op. cit., pp.388–89. **7.** Charlot, op. cit., p.72. **8.** Ibid., p.73. **9.** Ibid., p.99. Vasconcelos commissioned Montenegro to paint a mural in the former church of San Pedro y San Pablo, Mexico City, 1921. The work, *The Dance of the Hours*, was painted in oils. **10.** See Charlot, op. cit. **11.** Ibid., pp.241–51, and Brenner, op. cit., pp.254–59. **12.** Charlot, op. cit., pp.243–44. **13.** For references to a "Mexican Renaissance," see José Juan Tablada, "Mexican Painting Today," *International Studio*, January 1923, p.276; Ernest Gruening, "The Mexican Mural Renaissance," *Century Magazine*, February 1924; and Brenner, "A Mexican Renascence," *Arts*, September 1925, pp.127–50. **14.** See for example René d'Harnoncourt, *Mexican Arts* (see note 4, Notes to the Appendix). **15.** See Charlot, op. cit., pp.168–71 and 257–60. **16.** Classical references were used by Rivera in his mural *Creation* (1922–23) and by Orozco in his mural *Maternity* (1923). **17.** Charlot, op. cit., p.175. **18.** Ibid., p.154. **19.** Ibid., p.300. **20.** Ibid., pp.301–302. **21.** Orozco painted murals with Revolution themes in Orizaba, Veracruz (1926); Rivera painted references to the Revolution in Mexico City (1923–24, 1928 and 1929) and Cuernavaca (1929–30). **22.** Rivera used the Descent from the Cross motif in *Liberation of the Peon* and the Crucifixion motif in *Leaving the Mine*, both in the Court of Labor of the Ministry of Education (1923). Orozco used the latter for *The Barricade* (1926) in the National Preparatory School. **23.** Rivera used the Conquest theme in the Palace of Cortés and the National Palace murals (1929–30), and a pre-Columbian theme in the latter. Orozco used both themes at Dartmouth College (1932–33). **24.** Rivera painted the image of Zapata in a number of murals in Mexico from 1926 to 1931. **25.** For example, Orozco painted *The Caudillo Zapata* and another version of *The Barricade* (both 1930) in the U.S. Rivera painted a portable panel, based on his painting of Zapata in the Palace of Cortés, in New York (1931) and a lithograph of the same subject (1932). **26.** See James S. Plaut, "Mexican Maximum: Exhibition Organized by Institute of Modern Art, Boston," *Art News*, December 15, 1941, pp.1–11, and Dorothy Grafly, "Deeply National Art of Old Mexico Presented in Philadelphia," *The Art Digest*, April 15, 1943, p.8. **27.** See David Alfaro Siqueiros, "Rivera's Counter-Revolutionary Road," *New Masses*, May 29, 1934. **28.** See Raquel Tibol, *Diego Rivera: Arte y Política* (Mexico City: Imprenta Mundial, 1935), pp.111–25. **29.** See Siqueiros *No hay más ruta que la nuestra* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1945). A turning point in favor of the formalists occurred when the Mexican government invited Tamayo to submit works for a major survey of Mexican art exhibited in Paris in 1952 and invited him to paint two murals in the Palace of Fine Arts, Mexico City. See Flora Lewis, "Mexican Counter-Revolt," *New York Times Magazine*, October 12, 1952; Gladys Harrison, "Gallery Gazer," *Time-Herald* (Washington, D.C.), October 26, 1952; and Emily Grenauer, "Art and Artists: Liberation of Mexican Mural Art Hailed as Tamayo Completes Mural," *New York Herald Tribune*, October 5, 1952. **30.** See note 4, Notes to the Appendix. **31.** *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1940. **32.** For example: *Philadelphia Arts Alliance Exhibition* (1939) and *From Marketplace to Museum* (1946) at the Grand Central Galleries. **33.** *Masterworks of Mexican Art: From Pre-Columbian Times to the Present*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1963–64), focused on the Mexican School as well as earlier art. **34.** See Orlando Suárez, *Inventario del Muralismo Mexicano* (Mexico City: UNAM 1972), p.384. **35.** See Shifra Goldman, *Contemporary Mexican Painting in a Time of Change* (Austin: U. Texas Press, 1981), pp.35–38. **36.** Ibid., p.39. **37.** See Suárez, op. cit., p.226; and Dore Ashton, *Yes, But...: A Critical Study of Philip Guston* (New York: Viking, 1976), pp.30–32. **38.** *Mexican Life* and *Mexican Folkways*, English-language magazines published in Mexico, were not distributed widely in the U.S. **39.** Tablada, op. cit., pp.267–76. **40.** Tablada, "Diego Rivera, Mexican Painter," *Arts*, October 1923, pp.221–33; and "José Clemente Orozco, the Mexican Goya," *International Studio*, March 1924, pp.492–500. **41.** Tablada, "The Arts in Modern Mexico," *Parnassus*, February 1929, pp.8–9. **42.** Brenner, "An Artist from the Maya Country, Carlos Mérida," *International Studio*, April 1926, pp.85–87; "A Mexican Rebel," *Arts*, October 1927, pp.201–209; and "A Mexican Renascence," op. cit.,pp.127–50. **43.** Brenner, "Idols," op. cit., pp.260–87. **44.** Walter Pach, *Masters of Modern Art* (New York: Ayer, 1972), pp.95, 99–100, and 113. **45.** Pach, "An Exhibition of Art Work by Mexican School Children, and Jean Charlot," *Art Center Bulletin*, April 1926, pp.244–46; and "The Evolution of Diego Rivera," *Creative Art*, January 1929, pp.21–39. **46.** Gruening, op. cit.; Eileen Dwyer, "The Mexican Modern Movement," *Studio*, October 1927, pp.262–66. **47.** Rafaél Vera de Córdova, "Art in Mexico," *The Art Digest*, December 15, 1926, p.10. **48.** Bertram Wolfe, "Art and Revolution in Mexico," *Nation*, August 27, 1924, pp.207–208. **49.** See Frederick W. Leighton, "Rivera's Mural Paintings," *International Studio*, February 1924, pp.378–81; Ernestine Evans, "If I Should Go Back to Mexico," *Century*, February 1926, pp.455–61; "Frescoes Glorify Mexican Indian Life," *New York Times Magazine*, September 26, 1926, pp.12–21; and John Dos Passos, "Diego Rivera's Murals," *New Masses*, March 1927. **50.** Evans, op. cit. **51.** Emily S. Hamblen, "Notes on Orozco's Murals," *Creative Art*, January 1929, p.46. **52.** Rivera, "The Guild Spirit in Mexican Art; as told to Katherine Anne Porter," *Graphic Survey*, May 1, 1924, pp.174–78; and "From a Mexican Painter's Notebook," *Arts*, January 1925, pp.21–23. **53.** Rivera, "The Revolution in Painting," *Creative Art*, January 1929, pp. 17–18 and 23–30; Orozco, "New World, Races and New Art," *Creative Art*, January 1929, pp.44–46. **54.** See note 47 for information on this exhibition. **55.** Flynn Paine organized the Art Center Galleries exhibition (1928). D'Harnoncourt organized the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition (1930–31). **56.** Helm, Clifford, and Leeper organized exhibitions at the Boston Institute of Modern Art (1940), the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1943), and the Pasadena Institute of Art exhibition (1953), respectively. **57.** See note 31 and note 4 in Notes to the Appendix. **58.** See Delmari Romero Keith, *Historia y Testimonios: Galería de Arte Méxicano* (Mexico City: Galería de Arte Mexicano, 1986). See note 32 and the Appendix for more information on exhibitions organized by Inés Amor. **59.** Charlot, "Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art," *Magazine of Art*, July 1940, pp.398–405. **60.** Plaut, op. cit., pp.1–11. **61.** Jules Langsner, "Art of Mexico at the Pasadena Art Institute," *Art News*, May 1953, p.49. **62.** See Bertram Wolfe, *The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera* (New York: Stein and Day, 1963); and Goldman, "Siqueiros and Three Early Murals in Los Angeles," *Art Journal*, Summer 1974, pp.321–27. **63.** "Seeing Red," *The Art Digest*, October 15, 1930, p.8. **64.** Wolfe, op. cit., pp.284–87. **65.** Ibid., pp.291–93; see also "Diego Rivera Paints a Novel Theme for San Francisco Art School," *The Art Digest*, September 1, 1931, pp.3–4. **66.** "Will Detroit, Like Mohammed II, Whitewash Its Murals?" *The Art Digest*, April 1, 1933, pp.5–6 and p.30; see also "Rivera Squall," *The Art Digest*, April 15, 1933, p.6. **67.** Wolfe, op. cit., p.310. **68.** See, for example, "Rockefeller Boards up Rivera Fresco," *Art News*, May 13, 1933, pp.3–4; "Artists Quit Show in Rivera Protest," *The New York Times*, February 14, 1934, p.17, and "Art Society Quits Show in Protest," February 15, 1934, p.17. **69.** Goldman, op. cit., pp.321–27. **70.** Teresa del Conde, *J.C. Orozco: Antología Crítica* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1982), p.10. **71.** "Dartmouth Indicted," *The Art Digest*, July 7, 1933, p.12. **72.** "Orozco's American Epic at Dartmouth Starts Controversy," *The Art Digest*, September 1, 1934, pp.5–6. **73.** "Mr. Watts' Attack on Orozco's Murals Stirs a Hornet's Nest," *The Art Digest*, October 1, 1934, pp.6 and 21–22. **74.** "Watts Writes in Defiance; Mumford in Appreciation of Orozco," *The Art Digest*, October 15, 1934, pp.8, 10, and 19. **75.** Myers, op. cit., pp.89–92. **76.** Ibid., pp.100–103 and 106–114. **77.** See notes 52 and 53 for articles by Rivera. **78.** See Francis O'Connor, "An Iconographic Interpretation of Diego Rivera's *Detroit Industry Murals*," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1986), p.215. **79.** Laurance Hurlburt, "The Siqueiros Experimental Workshop: New York, 1936," *Art Journal*, Spring 1976, pp.237–46. **80.** See Charlot, "Orozco's Stylistic Evolution," *Art Journal*, Winter 1949–1950, pp.148–57. **81.** The lithographs are related to the "Revolution" panels Orozco painted in the National Preparatory School in 1926. *Rear Guard*, in particular, is based on a panel on the third floor of the school. **82.** See Jacqueline Barnitz, *Latin American Artists in the U.S. Before 1950* (New York: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1981), p.16. **83.** Frederick A. Sweet, "The Leader Zapata," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago*, November 1941, pp.90–91. See also John Hutton, "'If I am to die tomorrow'—Roots and Meanings of Orozco's *Zapata Entering a Peasant's Hut*," *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Fall 1984, pp.38–51. **84.** See Sidney Tillim, "Studies for the Dartmouth Murals at The Museum of Modern Art," *Arts*, January 1962, pp.30–31. **85.** Orozco represented Quetzalcoatl (a pre-Columbian deity as well as legendary historical figure) as a white man, accepting the views of many nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers who refused to believe an Indian could have achieved such feats. This attitude led them to look for Old World sources to understand the civilizations of the New World. **86.** The historical figure born in Tula in the tenth century and named *Ce Acatl Topiltzin* (Prince One Reed) became identified with the cult of Quetzalcoatl. At Dartmouth, Orozco focused on the Prince's expulsion from Tula in the Dartmouth mural panel following a dispute with a rival group. Orozco shows him pointing east, vowing to return someday to reclaim his kingdom. The prophecy was fulfilled, or so the Indians thought, when Hernán Cortés arrived from the east in a year identified by the Aztecs as *Ce Acatl* or One Reed (1519). **87.** See Ralph Flint, "Rivera Frescos Seen at Museum of Modern Art," *Art*

News, December 26, 1931, pp.5–7. **88.** Rivera was barred from completing the Rockefeller Center mural on May 9, 1933. **89.** See Myers, op. cit., pp.117 and 144. **90.** Hurlburt, op. cit., pp.237–46. **91.** *Ethnography* was originally titled *The Mask* according to MacKinley Helm, op. cit., p.95. **92.** Myers, op. cit., pp.136–43. **93.** Suárez, op. cit., pp.262–63. **94.** George Raphael Small, *Ramos Martínez: His Life and His Art*, edited by Jerald Slattum (Westlake Village, Calif.: F. & J. Publishing Company, 1975). **95.** See the Appendix and Artists' Biographies for more information. **96.** Suárez, op. cit., p.212. **97.** Ibid., pp.120–21; see also Lamar Dodd, *Charlot Murals in Georgia* (Athens: U. Georgia Press, 1945). **98.** See Brenner, op. cit., pp.145–46. **99.** Suárez, op. cit., p.286. **100.** Ibid., p.287; according to Suárez, Ruiz painted four panels at Pacific House; according to a press release from the *Golden Gate International Exposition* (October 8, 1938), Ruiz aided "Covarrubias in the completion of the eight pictorially illuminated maps" for the exposition's Pacific House. **101.** *Julio Castellanos* (Mexico City: Banco Nacional de México 1962). **102.** Suárez, op. cit., p.196. **103.** Ibid., p.195. **104.** Among the portfolios of prints produced by the Taller de Gráfica Popular are *25 Grabados de Leopoldo Méndez* (1943), *Estampas de la Revolución Mexicana* (1947), and *450 años de lucha: homenaje al pueblo mexicano* (1960). **105.** Suárez, op. cit., p.121. **106.** Ibid., p.164. **107.** Ibid., p.64. **108.** Ibid., pp.129–31. **109.** Miguel Covarrubias, *The Prince of Wales and Other Famous Americans* (New York: Knopf, 1925) and *Negro Drawings* (New York: Knopf, 1927). **110.** Orozco, *José Clemente Orozco, An Autobiography*, Robert C. Stephenson, transl., (Austin: U. Texas Press 1962), pp.72 and 124. **111.** See notes 63–74 for more information. **112.** Hurlburt, op. cit., pp.237–46. **113.** O'Connor, ed., *The New Deal Art Projects: An Anthology of Memoirs* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), p.210. See also Matthew Baigell and Julia Williams, eds., *Artists Against War and Fascism: Papers of the First American Artists' Congress* (New Brunswick: Rutgers U. Press 1986). **114.** George Biddle, *An American Artist's Story*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1939), p.268. **115.** See O'Connor, op. cit., pp.11–49. See also O'Connor, "New Deal Murals in New York," *Artforum*, November 1968, pp.41–49; and Richard D. McKinzie, *The New Deal for Artists* (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1973). **116.** Ashton, op. cit., pp.26 and 30. **117.** O'Connor, *Jackson Pollock* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1967), p.14. **118.** O'Connor, *The New Deal Art Projects*, op. cit., p.128. **119.** See O'Connor, "The Influence of Diego Rivera on the Art of the United States During the 1930s and After," in *Diego Rivera: A Retrospective*, op. cit., pp.157–83. **120.** O'Connor, *The New Deal Art Projects*, op. cit., p.128. **121.** Ibid., pp.78–113. **122.** Ibid., pp.318–19. **123.** Suárez, op. cit., p.226. **124.** Ibid., pp.226–28. **125.** Ibid., p.227. **126.** Ibid., p.323. **127.** McKinzie, op. cit., p.178. **128.** Ashton, op. cit., pp.31–32. **129.** Ibid., p.31. See also Robert Storr, *Phillip Guston* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), p.13. **130.** See Sam Hunter, *Modern American Painting and Sculpture* (New York: Dell, 1963), p.139; and Barbara Rose, *American Art since 1900* (New York: Praeger, 1968), p.153. **131.** See Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists* (Austin: U. Texas Press, 1973) and *A History and Appreciation of Chicano Art* (San Antonio: Research Center for the Arts and Humanities, 1984), pp.163–68. **132.** Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, op. cit. **133.** Ibid., p.43. **134.** Octavio Medellín, interview with the author, 1970. **135.** See Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, op. cit., p.45. **136.** Ibid., pp.58–62, and *A History and Appreciation of Chicano Art*, pp. 165–68. **137.** Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, pp.78–80. **138.** Suárez, op. cit., p.300. **139.** Jorge Montaño, "Rufino Tamayo: Leader of a New Mexican School of Painting," *Mexican Life*, November 1929, pp.23–27. **140.** See note 29. **141.** Suárez, op. cit., p.300. **142.** James B. Lynch, Jr., *Rufino Tamayo: Fifty Years of His Paintings* (Washington, D.C.: Phillips Collection, 1978), p.18. **143.** Suárez, op. cit., p.202. See also *A Salute to Carlos Mérida* (Austin: University Museum, 1977). **144.** *A Salute to Carlos Mérida*, p.11. **145.** Suárez, op. cit., p.202. **146.** Hayden Herrera, *Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1983), pp.228–32. **147.** The inscription on the painting reads: "Here you see us, me Frida Kahlo, with my beloved husband Diego Rivera. I painted these portraits in the beautiful city of San Francisco for our friend Mr. Albert Bender, and it was in the month of April in the year 1931." **148.** Herrera, op. cit., p.150. **149.** Ibid., pp.173–75. **150.** For reviews of Friedeberg's 1963 exhibition, see Leslie Judd Ahlander, "Gallery Notes: Latin Artists show at Pan American Union," *The Washington Post*, October 6, 1963; and "Pan American," *The Sunday Star* (Washington, D.C.), October 13, 1963. **151.** Barnitz, *Young Mexicans* (New York: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1970). **152.** Biographical information from the Archives of the Museum of Modern Art of Latin America. **153.** See note 29. **154.** Goldman, op. cit., p.33. **155.** Ibid., pp.35–38. **156.** Archives of the Museum of Modern Art of Latin American and Federico Morais, *Mathias Goeritz* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1982). **157.** See Gregory Battcock, *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Dutton 1968), pp.19–20 and 25. See also Jack Burnham, *Beyond Modern Sculpture* (New York: George Braziller, 1968), p.122. **158.** "First Exhibition in New York at Carstairs Gallery," *Art News*, November 1956, p.8; V. Raynor, "Exhibition at Byron Gallery," *Art News*, March 1964, p.64. **159.** Morais, op. cit., pp.30–45. **160.** Ibid., p.34. **161.** Burnham, op. cit., p.122. **162.** Morais, op. cit., pp.34 and 37. **163.** Ibid., p.48. **164.** Battcock, op. cit., pp.19–20 and 25. **165.** *Gunther Gerzso: Paintings and Graphics Reviewed* (Austin: Michener Galleries, U. Texas, 1976). **166.** Archive of the Museum of Modern Art of Latin America. **167.** Barnitz, op. cit., p.31. **168.** Ibid. **169.** Goldman, *Contemporary Mexican Painting*, pp.37–38. **170.** Ibid., pp.46–64. **171.** Ibid., pp.42–45. Selden Rodman, *The Insiders: Rejection and Rediscovery of Man in the Arts of Our Time* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Press, 1960). **172.** Ibid., pp.35–36. **173.** Suárez, *Inventario*, p.80. **174.** Ibid., p.181. **175.** José Luis Cuevas, *Cuevas por Cuevas* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1965), p.217. **176.** José Gómez Sicre, "A Backward Glance at Cuevas," *José Luis Cuevas* (Washington D.C.: Museum of Modern Art of Latin America, 1978). **177.** For books on the works of individual artists, among them Rivera, Orozco, and Tamayo, see the Bibliography. For contemporary articles see: "Mexican Volcano," *Time*, August 19, 1946, and November 10, 1947, pp.58–60; Jo Gibbs, "Diego Rivera's Mexican Retrospective," *The Art Digest*, April 1, 1950, p.23. For Tamayo's work see "Painter's Year," *Time*, March 8, 1954; and "The Talented Tamayo," *Newsweek*, November 23, 1959. **178.** Although Tamayo received attention in the art magazines in the early 1930s, it was not until the late 1930s that lengthy reviews of his work appeared. See: "Rufino Tamayo: New Works," *Art News*, February 11, 1939, p.13; "Tamayo: Glowing Color & Discreet Distortion," March 16, 1940, p.15; "Tamayo: More Strength, New Fury," February 15, 1942, p.27; "Tamayo: Ancient & Modern Savagery," November 15, 1943; "Rufino Tamayo at the Height of his Powers," January 1, 1946; Henry McBride, "Tamayo: Exhibition of Recent Paintings at Knoedler's," May 1950, p.46. "Tamayo of Mexico in New Paintings," *The Art Digest*, November 15, 1943, p.6; Ben Wolf, "Tamayo of Mexico Exhibits Massive Forms," January 15, 1946, p.9; Margaret Breuning, "Rufino Tamayo Deserts the Archaic Past," February 15, 1947, p.10; Breuning, "Tamayo Commands," December 15, 1947, p.17; Judith Kaye Reed, "Tamayo: Power of Palette and Vision," May 1, 1950, p.14; Breuning, "Tamayo: Color Is Light and Light Is Color," December 1, 1951, p.16; Sam Hunter, "Tamayo: Fire and Ice," March 15, 1954, pp.17 and 32–33. **179.** Hunter, "Tamayo: Fire and Ice," p.17. **180.** *Art News*, January 1957, p.22. **181.** "Knoedler's and New Art Center Galleries," *Art News*, December 1959, p.18. **182.** "Rufino Tamayo," *Arts Magazine*, Summer 1969, p.64. **183.** "Tamayo: More Strength, New Fury," *The Art News*, p.27. **184.** McBride, "Exhibition of Recent Paintings at Knoedler's," *Art News*, p.46. See also McBride "Escapism: One Artist Who Definitely Gets Away from This Period," *The New York Sun*, November 12, 1943, and "A Success Story," *Art News*, December 1951. **185.** "Reviews and Previews: Rufino Tamayo," *Art News*, September 1962, p.10. **186.** George Dennison, "Drawings at the Herbert Gallery," *Arts*, April 1960, pp.49–50. **187.** Jules Langsner, "Show of Drawings in Los Angeles," *Art News*, September 1960, p.51. **188.** "Show at Borgenicht Gallery," *Arts*, April 1967, p.62. Mexican American and Chicano Artists **189.** Quirarte, *Chicano Art*, op. cit., p.28. **190.** "The Chicanos Turn to Paint," *The Sacramento Bee*, June 7, 1970. **191.** Ibid. Among the artists who exhibited their work in Sacramento were Vincent Rascón, Francisco Compli, and Villa. **192.** See Quirarte, *Chicano Art*, op. cit., for more information on the Chicano muralists. **193.** Quirarte, *Mexican American Artists*, op. cit., pp.87–92 and 115–20. **194.** The literature on the Tujunga Wash mural, Los Angeles, painted by Judy Baca, provides an example of the coverage of Chicano muralists in the 1980s: *Life*, December 1980, pp.87–90; C. Rickey, "The Writing on the Wall," *Art in America*, May 1981, pp.54–57; and E.K. Mills, "The Great Wall of Los Angeles," *Ms.*, October 1981, pp.66–69 and 102.

Notes to the Appendix

1. Anita Brenner, "The Mexican Primitives," *Nation*, February 1928, pp.129–30. **2.** Orozco, op. cit., p.37. The letter to Charlot is dated February 23, 1928. **3.** "New York Sees Mexico's Revolutionary Art," *The Art Digest*, January 15, 1928, pp.1–2. **4.** René d'Harnoncourt, *Mexican Art: Catalogue of an Exhibition, 1930–1931*, Portland, Maine, 1930. **5.** Articles appeared in most of the publications of the museums where the exhibition was shown: d'Harnoncourt, "Loan Exhibition of Mexican Arts," *Metropolitan Museum Bulletin*, October 1930, pp.210–17; A.W. Karnaghan, "Exhibition of Mexican Art," *Boston Museum Bulletin*, December 1930, pp.113–16; "Mexican Art Exhibition," *Cleveland Museum Bulletin*, February 1931, pp.28–30; E.A. Jewell, "Exhibition of Mexican Arts," *Milwaukee Institute Bulletin*, May 1931, pp.1–5; and "Exhibition of Mexican Arts," *Chicago Art Institute Bulletin*, December 1931, p.126. Notices, articles, and reviews appeared in art periodicals, including *Art News*, *American Magazine of Art*, *Arts*, *International Studio*, and *The San Antonio Express*. **6.** Ralph Flint, "Metropolitan Holds Big Show of Mexican Art," *Art News*, October 18, 1930, p.3. **7.** "Philadelphia: A Mexican Exhibition," *Art News*, November 14, 1939, p.14. **8.** "Art of Mexico, Land of Social Protest at San Francisco," *The Art Digest*, March 15, 1939, p.45. **9.** *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1940). **10.** Charlot, "20 Centuries of Mexican Art," *Magazine of Art*, July 1940, pp.398–405. **11.** Jeannette Lowe, "Bimillennial View of Mexican Art: A Brilliant Survey at MOMA," *Art News*, May 25, 1940, pp.6–8. **12.** Helm, *Modern Mexican Painters* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1941). **13.** Plaut, op. cit., pp.1–11. **14.** Henry Clifford, "Mexico Scene from Philadelphia," *Art News*, April 15, 1943, pp.14–17. **15.** Grafly, "Deeply National Art of Old Mexico Presented in Philadelphia," p.8. **16.** "Mexican Painting Today: Exhibition at Philadelphia Museum of Art," *Magazine of Art*, May 1943, pp.168–71. **17.** "Mexicans of the Moment at Kleeman's and Knoedler's," *Art News*, November 15, 1945, p.23. **18.** "Mexico's Ancients and Moderns Mingle in Exhibit at Grand Central Art Galleries," *Art News*, May 1946, p.53. **19.** Judith Kaye Reed, "Mexican Art—From Marketplace to Museum," *The Art Digest*, May 15, 1946, p.22. **20.** Jules Langsner, "Art of Mexico at the Pasadena Art Institute," *Art News*, May 1953, p.49. **21.** "Mexican Painting in the Pasadena Art Institute," *The Art Digest*, April 1, 1953, p.12. **22.** Henry J. Seldis, "Masterworks from Mexico," *Art in America*, October 1963, pp.86–91. **23.** Rosalind G. Wholden, "Ceremony: Hallowed and Pragmatic," *Arts*, January 1964, pp.60–63. **24.** Peter Yates, "Thirty-Five Hundred Years of Mexican Vision," *Arts &Architecture*, February 1964, pp.4–5 and 21–25.

The Special Case of Puerto Rico

1. This struggle is discussed at length in Gordon Lewis, *Puerto Rico: Freedom and Power in the Caribbean* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1968), pp.53–54. **2.** Fernando Picó calls the process "*la cañaveralización de Puerto Rico*" (the "sugar-caning" of Puerto Rico) in *Historia General de Puerto Rico* (San Juan: Ediciones Huracán, 1986), p.221. **3.** The most complete account of the sugar industry is José A. Herrero's *La mitología del azúcar* (San Juan: Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Puertorriqueña), mimeographed, undated. **4.** Angel Quintero Rivera, "La clase obrera y el proceso político en Puerto Rico," *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* (P.R.), March–June 1974, pp.145–200. **5.** Gervasio García and Angel Quintero Rivera, *Desafío y solidaridad, Breve historia del movimiento obrero puertorriqueño* (San Juan: Editorial Huracán, 1982). **6.** See Thomas Matthews, *Puerto Rican Politics and the New Deal* (Gainesville: U.