



American Federation of Arts

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MEXICAN PRINT EXHIBITION COMPLETES TOUR AT THE SPENCER MUSEUM OF ART

Mexican Prints from the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams

August 21--October 17, 1999

(March 1999)-***Mexican Prints from the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams***, a survey of printmaking in Mexico from the 1920s through the 1950s, completes its tour at the Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas, August 21 through October 17, 1999 (please see below for tour itinerary).

The exhibition, whose national tour is organized by The American Federation of Arts, presents over 125 works by more than 40 artists, including Elizabeth Catlett, Jean Charlot, Frida Kahlo, Leopoldo Méndez, Pablo O'Higgins, Isidora Ocampo, José Clemente Orozco, Antonio Pujol, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Rufino Tamayo. Drawn from the collection of Reba and Dave Williams, one of the finest private print collections in this country, the exhibition also includes non-Mexican artists who worked in Mexico, as well as prints by Mexican artists done outside the country.

In the wake of the Revolution of 1910, Mexico experienced an important graphics revival that paralleled the country's more renowned mural movement. Like murals, prints were an accessible, populist medium and, despite the smaller format, often shared the monumental aspirations of larger works. Prints had the advantage of being inexpensive and portable, and were an ideal medium for artists to express social concerns and pay tribute to revolutionary heroes.

Leading muralists, such as Orozco, Rivera, and Siqueiros, were among those who embraced printmaking as a way to transmit their often political imagery to the broadest audience possible. This interest in the radical potential of the graphic arts culminated in the founding of the cooperative print workshop *Taller de Gráfica Popular* in 1937.

The TGP was established to publish prints on revolutionary topics to educate the public. Several prints by Taller artists are featured in the exhibition.

The exhibition reveals Mexican artists' characteristic synthesis of indigenous and European influences, including Surrealism and Cubism. Various printmaking techniques are represented, including etching, lithography, woodcut, and linocut.

The fully illustrated catalogue accompanying the exhibition features an introduction by Edward J. Sullivan, Professor and Chairman, Department of Fine Arts, New York University; a history of the Williamses's collection by Dave Williams; an essay on the Mexican School by art scholar James Marshall Wechsler; an examination of Rivera's *The Communicating Vessels* by Starr Figura, Assistant Curator, Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, The Museum of Modern Art; essays by Reba Williams on the printmaking careers of Kahlo, Orozco, Rivera, Siqueiros, and Tamayo and muralism; and artist biographies by art historian Diane Cochrane.

CREDITS:

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NATIONAL TOUR

Cleveland Museum of Art
March 14 -- May 23, 1999
Cleveland, OH

Spencer Museum of Art
August 21 -- October 17, 1999
Lawrence, KS