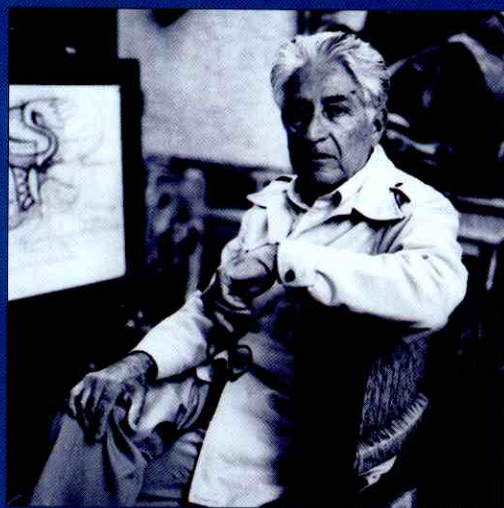


RAUL ANGUIANO



Reprinted courtesy of Raúl Anguiano

Raúl Anguiano belongs to the so-called “Third Generation” of postrevolutionary painters, along with Juan O’Gorman, Jorge González Camarena, José Chávez Morado, Alfredo Zalce, Jesús Guerrero Galván and Julio Castellanos, all known for being unorthodox, both in politics and in art, while at the same time holding to certain traditional canons. Anguiano’s work is viewed as an expression of its time because of its undeniably Mexican flavor, and this link to his people is clear not only in his murals but also on canvas, in etchings, pencil and ink drawings, lithographs and illustrations, and also more recently in sculpture and ceramics. Without compromising his personality or ethnic roots, and at the same time not allowing them to limit him, Anguiano has vindicated and taken advantage of the principles of modern art, and this gives his work a universal character transcending boundaries.

Raúl Anguiano was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, on February 26, 1915. He started drawing cubist pictures at the age of 5, and it is said that his first models were movie stars: Mary Pickford, Pola Negri and Charlie Chaplin. Anguiano recalls that his first artistic influence or aesthetic emotion came from the *Holy Family* by Rafael Sanzio.

At 12, Anguiano entered Guadalajara’s Free School of Painting under Ixca Farías, whose method was to hang reproductions of works by Michelangelo and Rafael on the walls and have the students copy them. From 1928 to 1933, he studied with master painter José Vizcarra, the disciple of Santiago Rebull and José Salomé Piña, and organized the group “Young Painters of Jalisco” with other artists. During this period, Anguiano worked with different kinds of models: workmen, employees and a few intellectuals like Pita Amor. He began to develop a pre-

ference for Oriental features and straight hair, which lasted throughout his career. This was why he was so interested by the Lacandon people from the jungles of Chiapas, and the exoticism of Gauguin's Tahiti paintings.

In 1934 Anguiano moved to Mexico City. In addition to his creative painting, Anguiano began teaching in primary schools. He taught drawing and painting at La Esmeralda academy and the UNAM School of Art. Anguiano is a member of the Mexican Artistic Renaissance movement which was started in the 1920s by the Mexican School of Art to which he belonged. This renaissance began with the San Carlos Academy movement —among whose leaders were Ignacio Asúnsolo and José Clemente Orozco— that emerged out of the students' and teachers' discontent with traditional painting methods (academicism), and the close contact the young artists had with the problems of Mexico and its people, which explains the marked critical realism of the painters of the time, including Anguiano himself. This same year, Anguiano received a commission to paint his first mural, *Socialist Education*, a 70-meter fresco for Mexico City's Carlos A. Carrillo School. Other works followed, including *Mayan Rituals* (oils on canvas and wood), for the Mayan Hall in the National Museum of Anthropology, and *Trilogy of Nationality* (acrylic on canvas and wood), for the Attorney General's Office.

In 1936 he moved on to his surrealist period, which lasted almost a decade. He painted circus performers and prostitutes, and most notable among his works of the time are *The Madame* (gouache, 1936), *The Clown's Daughter* (oil, 1940) and *The Pink Circus Artist* and *The Grey Circus Artist* (oil, 1941). Also during this period Anguiano produced a series of drawings based on his dreams, with cold tones and silver-grays predominating. Other stages followed: he was a portrait painter during the 1940s, influenced by Cézanne, Tintoretto and Picasso, when he painted María Asúnsolo and Ruth Rivera, and then came the naturalist realism stage, which could well be considered a forerunner of U.S. hyper-realism;

his work on the theme of the Bonampak Indians belongs to this period.

In 1937 Anguiano joined the League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists. Together with Alfredo Zalce and Pablo O'Higgins, he was also a founding member of the Popular Graphics Workshop, where artists practiced a graphic style based on Mexico's folk traditions. This was due to the powerful influence of the recently discovered José Guadalupe Posada and Goya. Anguiano's relationship with artists of other disciplines, for example the poet Efraín Huerta and the cinematographer Emilio "Indio" Fernández, enriched his world of life sensations and experiences, because, in addition to discussing literature and different art forms with other artists, Anguiano came to know and frequent places such as the Peralvillo district, Garibaldi and the Salón México, where the poor and working classes and some of the capital's intellectuals gave free rein to their sensuality until the early hours of the morning.

Anguiano held his first solo exhibition, entitled "Raúl Anguiano and Máximo Pacheco", at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City, in 1935; and in 1940 he took part in his first collective exhibition, "Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art." These were followed by more than 100 shows in many countries: Cuba, Chile, Colombia, Brazil, the United States, France, Italy, the former Soviet Union, Israel, Germany and Japan. His most recent exhibitions include the presentation of a series of four color lithographs, held at the Hall of Graphic Arts SAGA 88, from 1989 to 1990, in Paris; and a retrospective look at Anguiano's work in graphics (1938-1940), held at the National Print Museum in Mexico City in 1990.

Anguiano's works form part of well known national and foreign collections in China, New York, San Francisco, Brussels, Poland, France and Italy. Since 1982, Anguiano has been full member of Mexico City's Academy of Arts, and since 1993, he has also been Creator Emeritus of the National System of the Creators of Art.

Translated by Jennifer Turret