

Rodolfo Morales

A Sovereign of Simplicity

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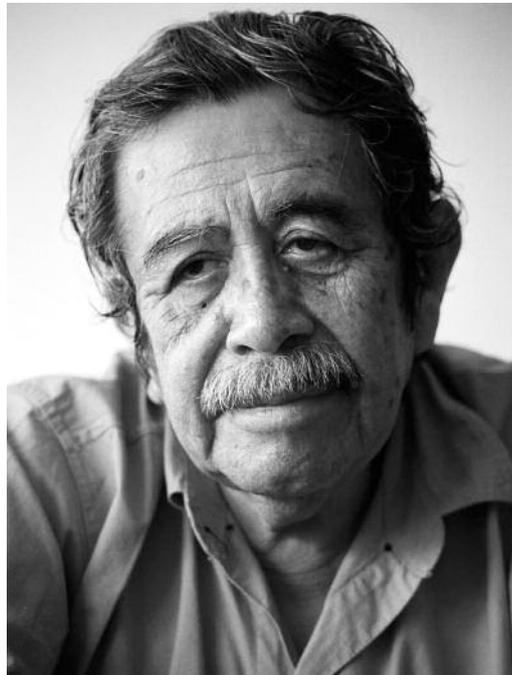
To speak of Rodolfo Morales is to speak of generosity, patience, character, love of his fellows. It is to speak of a painter of the people, the love of the people, of a unique artist.

Rodolfo Morales was born in Ocotlán de Morelos, Oaxaca, May 8, 1925. His humble origins, his simplicity, his love, respect and admiration for women—for those wonderful women of his people—and his affection for the faithful friend and companion, to whom he told the great adventures and many odysseys of his childhood, his dog, are all well known.

Morales began his studies in 1949 in the San Carlos Academy in Mexico City. He painted his first work as an artist, a mural, in High School No. 5, where he was a drawing teacher.

From the beginning, Rodolfo Morales was a man who rendered daily life with no more complexity than that of a people—or rather, of his people. He also painted their dark faces, perhaps those of people tanned from their daily toil, figures lost in marvelous colors, characteristic of a master.

Of women, he always said, “I believe that Mexico has a matriarchy...They [women] are the ones who have the power in the family.” His work always showed the day-to-day to and fro of his people, their buildings, their colors, their individuals, a permanent dream, a possible hallucination of the fantastic, the unreal, that which can only be looked at with love and hope. His work, so important, has



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traveled from his town to distant places in Mexico and the rest of the world: Spain, the United States, France, Canada, just to mention a few, where he is renowned.

An intimist, the painter of frescoes and waking dreams; delicate and rugged at the same time. In his canvases characters float absorbed by the beauty of the colors of Rodolfo Morales, angels wrapping his people in their arms, dogs keeping them company on every kind of occasion.

Ingenious, a dreamer, a lover of what was his—his people—and just as his work always depicts them, so was he always a simple man.

He liked going to a fiesta in his

town better than going to some fancy, ostentatious place. He was just as comfortable on a rock on some street of a town as on an upholstered chair. He worked without great ado, just observing from his window, painting and painting.

On the way from his house in Ocotlán to the former monastery, he would silently greet other walkers. As he watched the restoration work, he would talk about his dreams. He had great projects for his town, like the restoration and conservation of churches—because if people appreciate anything in Oaxacan towns it is their churches. He also designed plans to support children—little artists—like the founding of a music school, and these projects have been taken up by the foundation that bears his name.

To talk about Rodolfo Morales is to talk about hopes, about a man with a great capacity for sharing (the house where he lived his last years is open to everyone), about giving and asking nothing in exchange, about an artist in all the meaning of the word. **MM**

* Rodolfo Morales Cultural Foundation.