



Menu de 5 Años by Marco Antonio Garcia Rosales

SURFACE TREATMENT

With COVID-19 still with us and slowing gallery openings, we will keep your art experiences alive by looking back at memorable shows. Today we remember “The Third Mexican ‘Shinzaburo Takeda’ Biennial of Printmaking at IMAS from 2013.

The Third Mexican ‘Shinzaburo Takeda’ Biennial of Printmaking

This exhibition represents printmakers from all over Mexico, showcasing different concerns, styles, and techniques.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

Walk into the often-agitated soul of today’s Mexico right here in McAllen. In the large Clark Gallery and spilling over into the Cardenas Gallery, IMAS presents powerful works that speak of Mexico’s present concerns - political, traditional, social, and individual - as perceived through some of its most inventive printmakers. “The Third Mexican “Shinzaburo Takeda” Biennial of Printmaking” is a remarkable exhibition. It is also Takeda’s first Mexican Biennial of Printmaking to be shown in the United States.

The first printmaking biennial was created in 2008 through the efforts of a group of artists in Oaxaca. Led by Maestro Shinzaburo Takeda, originally from Japan, they created a forum that fostered the creation of new printmaking works to showcase the traditional techniques. The concept of the biennial is the brainchild of Takeda. Printmakers from all over Mexico were invited to enter and compete for awards, resulting in sixty-eight works selected from over 460 entries to be included in the exhibition. The prints demonstrate a comfortable range of printmaking techniques, often reflecting the location of the maker and in some

cases the generation. Because 90% of the printmakers are under 25 years old, they reflect the styles of different schools from around Mexico. There is also a diversity of subject; in each print the artist has created an allegory based on subject matter representing contemporary concerns.

“The main goal throughout my career,” declared Takeda, “has been to convey the results of my work to the widest audience possible. The very act of making multiples makes them attainable to a much wider audience than painting. Before radio, television, or the internet, it was the technology of printmaking that represented the first mass media.”

Meant to communicate with the public, all these works are rich with information and relevant points of view. If you are knowledgeable about Mexico, each print is there for you to read. If not, the technical qualities and artistry may represent the gold standard of printmaking for you.

The xylograph, “Herencia (Heritage)”, by Enrique Gijón draws on the tradition of Oaxacan mothers to introduce their newborn children to the natural world. The alligator depicted is the Lord of the River and is an important part of that culture. In “Con algo lquebrantable y aun Immortal (With Something Unshakeable and Yet Immortal)”, José Domínguez Lopes expresses the social connection between himself and the homeless. The image of a Mexican birth certificate represents all Mexicans born into poverty. Marco Antonio García Rosales uses an image suggesting cartel violence in his “Menu de 5 Años (5 Year menu)” to comment on a social condition. Is the severed head on the plate that of a drug victim being served to a beaten population, or does it represent something equally unpleasant that’s forced on the public daily? Food for thought, here. Takeda comments on migration in his own lithograph, “Familia de Juchitán (Family from Juchitán).”

“This represents some of the most important graphic work made anywhere in the world,” added Joseph Bravo, past Director of IMAS. “Each work has a life and personality of its own.”

In 2012, Maestro Takeda received the Medal of the Order of the Sacred Treasure from Emperor Akihito in Tokyo, Japan. It recognized his work as a professor and artist, and his philanthropic initiatives in improving the quality of education of the School of Fine Arts at the Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca.

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