

Majestic Impression

La Huella Magistral

September 22 through October 28, 2017

Curated by Nitza Tufiño



Jaime Montiel Rini -Templeton

This exhibition features the works of artists printmakers who are members of the "Consejo Grafico " (The Graphic Council), a national Latinx organization of "Talleres" printmaking workshops. The portfolio of prints is by selected artists, who have created original works honoring a master printmaker who has influenced him or her. The featured artists are Rene Arceo; Pepe Coronado; Francisco X Siqueiros; Marianne Sadowski; Kay Brown; Poli Marichal; Juan R Fuentes; Richard Xavier Serment; Ramiro Rodriguez; Joe Segura; Paul del Bosque; Sandra C Fernandez; Maceo Montoya; Lezlie Salkowitz Montoya; Malaquias Montoya; Loanda Lozano; Nitza Tufiño; Betty Cole; Eliezer Berrios; and Marcos Dimas. In addition, during this event, there will be an adjoining exhibit featuring the work from members of the Dominican York Proyecto GRAFICA (DYPG) and Taller Boricua's Rafael Tufiño Printmaking Workshop.

Since 2000, a group of independent printmaking workshops began to form a coalition, the CONSEJO GRÁFICO, to "advance Latino printmakers' capacity and legacy in the United States." This beautiful series of prints constitutes their third Portfolio Exchange. The Portfolio, an edition of 30, gathers 19 participating artists, each contributing to print

The Portfolio's title, LA HUELLA MAGISTRAL: HOMAGE TO MASTER PRINTMAKERS, reveals the charitable purpose of the participating artists: to honor their teachers — master printmakers who taught, mentored, or inspired them. These artists share moral values and social ideals with those who inspired them: the defense of poor and oppressed peoples, solidarity with workers, a commitment to public education. They are cultural activists whose work champions ethical principles they have struggled to uphold, individually and collectively, throughout their professional careers.

These artists are also part of a generation that came of age, artistically and politically, in the 1970s — an exciting decade of crafting collective social justice agendas, acknowledging difference, raising questions and concerns that broke cultural, ethnic, racial, and gender barriers. Collectively frustrated, angry, and tired of being represented by Anglo-dominated museums and exhibitions, they joined other culturally diverse artists and communities to consciously own their representation to give a clear voice to their concerns and identities.

As social activists, these artists have chosen to work collectively, banding together in Talleres or workshops. They defy the stereotype of artists isolated in their studios and work collaboratively towards solutions to real-world problems. Accessibility to a broad public is a crucial goal pursued through educational outreach: workshops, classes, public lectures, and lecture-demonstrations. Each of these artists is an artist-educator, a life choice by which they also honor their teachers.

Cheaply printed, widely disseminated broadsides originated the centuries-long tradition of urgent communication through the rapid distribution of multiple printed sheets, mostly in urban settings. In the twentieth century, graphic artists (notably in Latin America, Russia, and the US) made printmaking their preferred medium for advocating urgent social, often revolutionary, causes. This Portfolio celebrates printmaking masters who ennoble this tradition of social advocacy through printmaking. They include, from Mexico: Leopoldo Méndez, Rufino Tamayo, Elena Huerta, USA-Chicano artist: Rupert García, Luis Jiménez, Sam Coronado; Spain: Francisco Goya; Latin America: Antonio Frasconi; Puerto Rico: Carlos Raquel Rivera, Lorenzo Homar, Rafael Tufiño, María Somoza; Cuba: Belkis Ayón; US: Elizabeth Catlett, Rini Templeton, Bob Blackburn.

Latin American and Latino printmakers quickly took on the proud legacy of cultural advocacy for its accessibility, clarity of message, modest cost, and dissemination speed. As expressed by Chicano artist Rupert García (portrayed in the silkscreen here by Juan Fuentes): I want the viewer to see my pictures with as little outside interference as possible. The capacity to produce multiples of a given visual idea attracted me to silkscreen printing — the democratic idea behind making multiples also made sense.

As dictated by the chosen theme, the participating printmakers of LA HUELLA MAGISTRAL: HOMAGE TO MASTER PRINTMAKERS created mostly traditional portraits to honor their teachers. Yet they deftly customized their sensitive portraits by working in their mentors' preferred medium or recognizable style. Following a Puerto Rican tradition, Marcos Dimas' intaglio of his mentor, Carlos Raquel Rivera, shows him honoring his colleague, Carlos Osorio, by creating a poster in Osorio's style.

Each work in this Portfolio also displays its author's evident love of printmaking, their pleasure in the chosen medium. Nitza Tufiño and Kay Brown create masterful woodcut portraits, utilizing their mentors' preferred medium, respectively, Lorenzo Homar and Antonio Frasconi. Homar was single-handedly responsible for training several generations of Puerto Rican printmakers, while Antonio Frasconi led a renaissance of the woodcut in Latin America. Malaquías Montoya and

Juan Fuentes skillfully compose their powerful silkscreen portraits of Rini Templeton and Rupert García with saturated color patches; Sandra Fernández, uses color sparingly to frame Sam Coronado's commanding face, as does Betty Perez Cole in portraying gentle María Somoza. In depicting their mentors (Bob Blackburn, Rafael Tufiño and Luis Jiménez, respectively), Luanda Lozano, Eliezer Berríos, and Ramiro Rodríguez chose the starkness of light/dark contrast to convey their subjects' larger-than-life personalities, who influenced countless young artists. Blackburn trained innumerable artists of Latino and African American backgrounds, welcoming them to his Printmaking Workshop on West 17th street. Rafael Tufiño, born in Brooklyn, became a symbol of Puerto Rican art, a living cultural bridge between the islands of Manhattan and Puerto Rico.

Chicano Luis Jiménez seems afire with creative inspiration as he works on the lithographic stone; author Ramiro Rodríguez comments: The layered history of a lithographic stone being drawn upon by one artist, etched, printed, ground down, and reused by the same or another artist countless times is fascinating to me. I like to think that some of that creative energy continues to reside in the molecules of the stone.

The masterful blending of text and image, an essential quality for effective advocacy in printmaking, is manifest in a number of prints:

- Poli Marichal and Pepe Coronado's tributes to Elizabeth Catlett, and Jaime Montiel's to Rini Templeton.
- Paul del Bosque's beautiful cartouche honoring Leopoldo Méndez.
- The teasingly camouflaged quote in Fuentes' striking portrait of Rupert García.

Two fine prints take allegorical forms: Rene Arceo's delicate linocut crafts a lovely tribute to Francisco Goya as a bridge between European and non-Western cultures, just as his graphic workshop promotes international exchanges through printmaking. Joseph Segura's homage to Rufino Tamayo, one of Mexico's most creative practitioners of the graphics arts, proposes cryptic clues to his work. Francesco Siqueiros' lithograph offers a double portrait in three registers: bottom, a reproduction of a unique monotype by master printmaker, Cuban Belkis Ayón, whose mysterious spiritual world inspired him; middle, a glimpse of his self-portrait; top: a photographic image of two tools, symbols of his trade as a contemporary, experimental printmaker.

Ricardo Serment's moving linocut honors Elena Huerta as artist- educator engaged in practicing the highest calling: teaching children. It synthesizes HUELLA MAGISTRAL's participating artists and their mentors' ideal mandate — imparting artistic strategies to disseminate essential values of justice and equality to future generations.

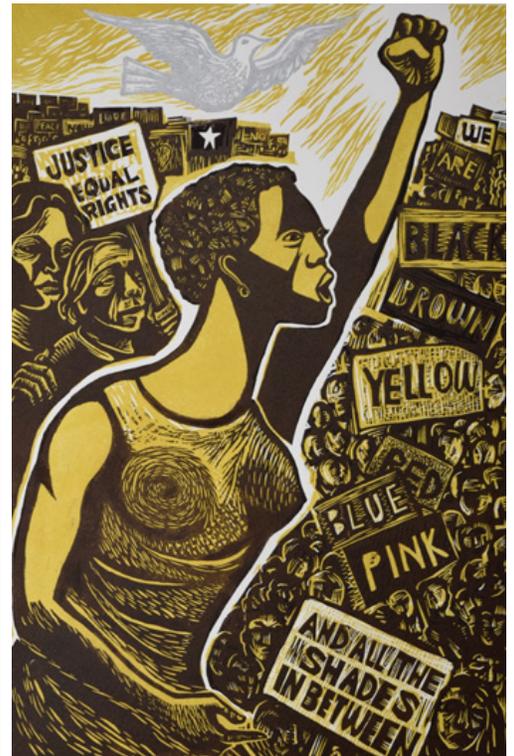
Marcos Dimas



Bety BP Cole



Luanda-Lozano,-Robert-Blackbourn



Ricardo Xavier Serment, Elena-Huerta

Juan Fuentes / Rupert Garcia

Poli-Marechal

The indissoluble whole of their life and work embodies the vision of
Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano:

By culture, we understood the creation of a place of common
discovery among people... We wanted to talk to people, to give them
their voice once again. Culture is communication, or it is nothing.

Susana Torruella Leval New York, September 2017