

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
January 1993

LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

June 6 - September 7, 1993

The most extensive exhibition of modern Latin American art ever assembled opens at The Museum of Modern Art on June 6, 1993. **LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY** reveals the range and diversity of nearly eighty years of Latin American art, beginning in 1914 with the generation of early modernists and continuing until the present. The exhibition includes over 300 works by more than ninety artists, many of whom have never before been represented in an international venue.

LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, on view through September 7, is made possible by grants from Mr. and Mrs. Gustavo Cisneros; Banco Mercantil (Venezuela); Mr. and Mrs. Eugenio Mendoza; Agnes Gund; The Rockefeller Foundation; Mrs. Amalia Lacroze de Fortabat; Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller; the National Endowment for the Arts; The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art; Consejo Nacional de Cultura y Galería de Arte Nacional, Venezuela; and WXTV-Channel 41/Univision Television Group, Inc. The exhibition was commissioned by the Comisaría de la Ciudad de Sevilla para 1992 and organized by Waldo Rasmussen, director, International Program, The Museum of Modern Art, under the auspices of its International Council, along with the participation of eminent Latin American art historians, museum professionals, and critics (list attached).

The focus of many previous European or North American museum surveys of Latin American art has been regional or with an eye toward Latin American identity, stressing the exotic or folkloric. In contrast, **LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY** focuses on individual artists, representing most with a significant number of works. About one-third of the selection is contemporary, including several installation works. Among the artists on view are Fernando Botero, Pedro Figari, Frida Kahlo, Guillermo Kuitca, Wifredo Lam, Matta, Ana Mendieta, Juan Sanchez, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Tunga (complete list attached).

Early Latin American modernists, such as Diego Rivera, Joaquín Torres-García, Tarsila do Amaral, Rafael Barradas, and Alejandro Xul Solar, spent considerable time studying in the capitals of Europe. Yet while these artists, and many who followed, used aesthetic and stylistic elements of European culture as a starting point for their own work, they adapted these elements to suit the cultural and political temperaments and traditions of their own countries.

Such adaptation is seen, for example, in the impact of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-20, which altered the course of Mexican art more than any imported aesthetic could have, providing such artists as Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros with politically charged subject matter for their painting. Similarly, the 1920s were marked by a resurgence of pride in pre-Columbian culture. The work of many artists was and continues to be informed by the indigenous customs and traditions of their own countries. This continual blending of the traditions of Europe with those of the artists' native countries is revealed in this exhibition.

LATIN AMERICAN ARTISTS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY is installed in nine sections: Early Modernism; Expressionism and Landscape Painting; Mexican Painting and Social Realism; Geometric Abstraction and Kinetic Art; Surrealism and Lyric Abstraction; New Figuration, Pop, and Assemblage; Minimal and Conceptual Art; Installation Art; and Recent Painting and Sculpture. The artists included in each section represent a broad range of content and style, enabling the viewer to see the complexities and variety of expression that have characterized the art of Latin America throughout this century.

The exhibition opened in August 1992 at the Plaza de Armas, Seville, and in November traveled to Paris where it was shown at both the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, and the Hôtel des Arts. Next on view at the Cologne Kunsthalle (February 8 - April 25, 1993), the tour concludes with its New York showing.

* * *

PUBLICATIONS *Latin American Artists of the Twentieth Century*, edited by Waldo Rasmussen, with fourteen essays by scholars and critics. 416 pages. 192 color and 130 black-and-white illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Hardbound edition distributed in the United States and Canada by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York; both hardbound and paperbound available in The MoMA Book Store.

A sixty-four page publication, with text in English and Spanish and with color and black-and-white illustrations will be available in the The MoMA Book Store.

No. 6

For further information or photographic materials, contact Helen Bennett, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 212/708-9750.