

THIS SEASON AT THE GRAND PALAIS

HERGÉ

28 September 2016 - 15 January 2017

There is no longer any need to present the career of Georges Remi, known as Hergé, Belgian cartoonist best known for *The Adventures of Tintin*. Often referred to as "the father of the European comic strip", he was one of the first French-speaking authors to use American-style cartoon speech bubbles. The exhibition looks back on his creative approach, inspired by the cinema, painting, photography, adventure novels and his passion for drawing. It shows how Hergé's universally recognised drawings fit in with both his era and the history of art as a whole.

FROM PALMYRA TO...

5 endangered World Heritage Sites

14 December 2016 - 09 January 2017

The exhibition offers an immersion at the heart of five great archaeological sites at risk. Bamiyan in Afghanistan, the ancient capital of King Sargon in Khorsabad, Iraq, the Palmyra site, the Crac des Chevaliers and the Great Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, Syria. This excavation is backed by a 3D survey which was conducted by Iconem.

ALMAGUL MENLIBAYEVA. TRANSFORMATION

17 December 2016 - 02 January 2017

Almagul Menlibayeva is currently the most renowned Kazakh contemporary artist, both in her country and internationally. An artist with a cause, she mainly uses video installations and has imagined a piece specifically designed for the Salon d'honneur of the Grand Palais, titled "Transformation". Examining the combination of history, architecture and science and the transformation processes of a society through this fresco of the Kazakhstan of yesterday and tomorrow, Almagul Menlibayeva delivers a piece of global significance.

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AROUND THE EXHIBITION

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

AUDIO-GUIDES (to hire): in French and English €5

ADULT TOURS

Guided tour

Between post-Impressionism and Cubism, Surrealism and Muralism, sculptures and drawings, paintings and photography, a collection of masterpieces tells the story of Mexican creations in the first half of the 20th century. Accompanied by a tour guide, discover the art of a fascinating country, marked by pre-Columbian cultures and political commitment. Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Dessins en promenade adult workshop tour

Do you like drawing? Do you teach plastic arts or run a drawing workshop? Are you an amateur or a professional artist? Come and experience the Grand Palais atmosphere for yourself, alone or in a group, during a restricted opening session. Take a tour with our tour guide and fill a sketch book with masterpieces of Mexican art. Drawing equipment not provided. Duration: 2 hours

Introductory tour of the exhibition

Special offer for new visitors!

Learn about life at the Grand Palais with a tour guide and discover an original and sensitive presentation of universal art. The tour is followed by free time to explore on your own. Duration: 1 hour

FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Family guided tour

Enriched with descriptions by a tour guide, take a family outing to discover historical paintings and everyday life scenes and gain a better understanding of Mexican art and culture. Duration: 1 hour

Faire le mur Individual workshop/tour 8-11 years

After touring the exhibition, participants follow in the footsteps of Diego Rivera. They are invited, into a workshop, to experiment with Muralism: to conceive a collective piece representative of Mexican creations of the 20th century.

Duration: 2 hours

Online

Play as a family and introduce your children to Mexican art since 1953, on the Jeune Public activities for youngsters page on www.grandpalais.fr/fr/jeune-public

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Admission to the auditorium is free with an invitation, which can be downloaded from grandpalais.fr.

WEDNESDAY MEETINGS - 6.30 pm

Wednesday 19 October - The Mexico of renaissances

Exhibition presentation by Agustín Arteaga, Director, National Art Museum of Mexico City and curator of the exhibition.

Wednesday 26 October - Mexican cinema, tradition and modernity

Conference by Paulo Antonio Paranaguá, a journalist at *Le Monde*, Latin American films historian

Wednesday 23 November - A journey across modern Mexican art

Conference by Serge Fauchereau, writer and art historian, specialist of the Americas.

Wednesday 7 December - Through the artist's lens: Betsabée Romero

Betsabée Romero, an artist who lives and works in Mexico City, has been invited to speak about Mexican female artists: Frida Kahlo, Nahui Ollin, etc.

Wednesday 14 December - Mexican music concert

Wednesday 11 January - Frida

A film by Julie Taymor, 2002, featuring Salma Hayek, Alfred Molina and Geoffrey Rush, 2 hours

AROUND THE EXHIBITION

FRIDAY FILM SCREENINGS - AUDITORIUM - 12 noon

The "Que viva le cinéma!" Cycle

Friday 2 December - *Que viva Mexico!*

By Grigori Alexandrov and Sergueï M. Eisenstein, 1932, with Félix Balderas, Sara García and Martín Hernández, 1 hour 25 minutes

Friday 9 December - *La Perla*

By Emilio "el Indio" Fernández inspired by John Steinbeck, 1947, with Pedro Armendáriz, María Elena Marqués, and Fernando Wagner, 1 hr 25mins. *This session is part of the "Addicted to the art work" event.*

Friday 16 December - Los Olvidados

By Luis Buñuel, 1950, with Alfonso Mejía, Roberto Cobo and Estela Inda, 1 hour 17 minutes

DOCUMENTARIES

Friday 7 and Friday 28 October - *At home with Frida Kahlo*

By Xavier d'Arthuys and Xavier Villetard, 2011, 52 minutes

Friday 6 January - *A portrait of Diego - Revolution of the perspective*

By Gabriel Figueroa Flores and Diego Lopez, 2007, 1 hour 10 minutes (all rights reserved)

LEARNING SESSIONS - STUDIO CLEMENCEAU

In partnership with Maison Universitaire Franco-Mexicaine and the Mexican Embassy in France

Monday 7 November, 9.30 am -12.30 pm, The Mexican Revolution: A new national project,

2.00 - 5.00 pm, Cosmopolitanism and the avant-garde: Debates and discussions.

Wednesday 18 January, 9.30 am -12.30 pm, Tradition and Modernity in Mexico: Indigenous cultures

heritage, 2.00 - 5.00 pm, Artists' journeys: revolution and renaissances

MULTIMEDIA: STAY CONNECTED!



THE EXHIBITION APP detailed information, ticket office and programming

Get a guided tour from the application, by downloading the audio guides

(€2.99 - French, English and visits for children) (Google Play, Appstore) Tinyurl.com/appmexique

THE GRAND PALAIS ONLINE

Enrich your visit with articles and videos about the exhibition, and play games with your family on the Jeune Public page with activities for youngsters.

Details on grandpalais.fr and its social networks

THE MEXICAN PHOTO BOOTH

Take pictures in the photo booth at the end of the exhibition. Strike a pose and share your photos on social networks!

#ExpoMexique

PUBLICATIONS

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE, publications from Réunion des Musées Nationaux - Grand Palais, 2016.

€45, 352 pages, bound.

EXHIBITION ALBUM, published by Réunion des Musées Nationaux - Grand Palais, 2016.

€10, 48 pages, 60 illustrations, paperpack.

Find all our publications on grandpalais.fr



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Grand Palais, Galeries Nationales
Clemenceau entrance

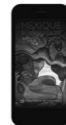
MEXICO 1900-1950

Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo,
José Clemente Orozco
and the avant-garde artists

5 October 2016 - 23 January 2017



#ExpoMexique



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ART BEFORE THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

In Mexico, the modern aesthetic language is rooted in the century that preceded the Mexican revolution. Indeed, after the Republic was restored in 1867, the government was compelled to justify the existence of a relatively recent State in addition to ensuring overall cohesion. Artistic production was sought to promote a common background and to create national references that focus on historical themes, portraits and genre scenes, thereby asserting the existence of a people in all its diversity. Concurrently, no efforts were spared to establish Mexico on the international stage. New art tinged with symbolism, which was very commonplace at the time in Europe, would be become its driving force, and Julio Ruelas one of its leading representatives. The San Carlos painting academy enabled the most promising artists who left for Europe and spent time there to gain a broad spectrum of artistic references. During this journey to the Old Continent, they made the acquaintance of the avant-garde artists of that era, and presented and re-interpreted a large variety of styles. This is illustrated by the interest Diego Rivera and Ángel Zárraga had for Cubism, which they revisited in their own way to better detach themselves from it.

Prior history

During the second half of the 19th century, Romanticism as well as the emergence of the Realism movement led to a diversification of themes and the evolution of the artistic composition in Mexican academic paintings. Genre scenes, which were increasingly sought after, and collective portraits of families of the oligarchy painted by artists such as Tiburcio Sánchez and José M. Jara are representative of this period. Their works featured the figurative art canons of that era: bucolic idealisation of a garden in which elegantly dressed children are posing, or a mystical contemplation scene in a baroque chapel. The demands of Realism in terms of physiognomy, attire and accessories make these two pieces the very expression of naturalism based on the skin tone, colours and natural light details. This representation of two opposite realities is a reflection of the plurality of ethnic, economic and cultural elements in Mexico. *The Wake* by José M. Jara was assimilated to French Realism and earned the artist a bronze medal when it was presented at the Mexican stand at the 1889 World Fair in Paris.

The Mexicans in Paris

At the onset of the 20th century, several Mexican artists with academic training obtained government scholarship and left for Europe for an encounter with the masters of the old, to discover the avant-garde artists and consolidate their careers. They amplified their knowledge of post-Impressionist aesthetics and explored the possibilities of Futurism and Cubism. After more than ten years spent in France, artists like Diego Rivera, Zárraga and Montenegro gained widespread recognition within the Parisian avant-garde circles. When the Mexican revolution broke out, their artistic future became uncertain. After the chaos of World War I, most of the artists, including the Mexicans, sought to represent the quest for a “return to order” in their works. Some gave up European avant-garde to go back to Mexico and create their own style, more in agreement with the national thinking aesthetic, while others, such as Nahui Olin and Agustín Lazo, took refuge in Europe to escape the Mexican revolution backed by financial support from their families.

MEXICO AND THE REVOLUTION

The Mexican revolution played a determinant role in terms of building the political, historical and cultural identity of Mexico. Not forgetting that this bloody episode claimed thousands of victims, thereby deeply modifying the social structure of the country as well as its aesthetic language. The most important aesthetic expression - but not the only one - which was established through accounts of the revolution is without a doubt Muralism, the outcome of a constant search for a national aesthetic language. These circumstances prompted the emergence of what is known as “The Big Three”: Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros. Nationalism established through art came in various forms, depending on the artists. José Vasconcelos, then Secretary of Public Learning, encouraged mural painting which he perceived as a means for conveying the ideals of the revolution. However, the revaluation of the past provided the basis for conducting a critical analysis and for thinking ahead. By expressing left-wing ideology and by experimenting with new materials, Mexican artists of the 20th century created unique, powerful art works whose reach transcended the borders of their country.

José Clemente Orozco and the revolution of man

The works of José Clemente Orozco, both the mural and easel paintings, depict the extreme violence of the events that transpired in Mexico in the past century. The artist was keen on considering history from the perspective of his continent, America, in all its complexity and without restraint. He bestowed upon the revolution, and particularly the people, an image filled with contradictions where the power and melancholy of man compose a vision that is often critical of the future of Mexico and humanity. This section presents works illustrating the aesthetic language of José Clemente Orozco on other media such as photography and sculptures, and which are also linked to the violence of the Mexican revolution.

Siqueiros and class struggles

David Alfaro Siqueiros was the most active artist in social and political movements. This commitment, combined with his knowledge of avant-garde movements, is manifested in his works. He was most keen on creating public art, hence his preference for mural painting to the detriment of easel painting, which he regarded as private art. As such, he established a message that gave precedence to workers’ struggles. Fascinated by the progress of modernity and machines, Siqueiros offered techniques that he applied to his own productions and strived to make them popular in order to energise and renew plastic arts. Class struggles go hand in hand with art, in his view. According to Siqueiros, only the art/politics “duo” can create a critical conscience, and art must be the vector and conveyor of this premise.

Diego Rivera. Social utopia

Diego Rivera’s contributions in the revaluation of Mexican arts were varied. Although the artist interacted closely with European avant-garde artists, he did not wish to be part of them, but rather developed his own figurative language which supported revolutionary ideals and appreciated the past history of his country. The first Secretary of Public Learning, José Vasconcelos, launched a cultural programme which gave rise to the Muralism movement in which Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros participated in. This movement helped establish the fame of a generation of artists who adopted a different approach to representing the proletariat, peasants and traditions, glorifying the revolution through a nationalist and socialist ideology, which some historians deem fascinating. After going back to Mexico in 1921, Diego Rivera created the iconographic language of a genuine utopia, the popular and monumental image of the Indian and mixed-race Mexican people, bound for a future filled with progress and greatness. All this prompted the emergence of a sense of national pride and belonging to a race, which helped forge the social stereotypes still present today.

Strong women

The Mexican revolution profoundly modified the structure of the society: Since men had gone to war or to seek work and a livelihood, women assumed new duties; first in the armed struggle then in the reconstruction of culture and education within their society. As such, the image of the *soldaderas*, these strong women who went along with the revolutionary troupes, acquired a particular significance and were symbolically compared to the “strong women” in the Bible. In the artistic realm, women also played a determinant role, sometimes referred to as “protofeminism”: sponsoring valuable artists or becoming artists themselves, they participated in the quest for an aesthetic language capable of expressing their doubts and questions.

THE OTHER FACES OF THE MEXICAN PAINTING SCHOOL

The Mexican painting school represented by “The Big Three” gained such a reputation that they overshadowed other aesthetic movements. One of the most avant-garde movements of that era was Stridentism, led by poet and diplomat Manuel Maples Arce Influenced by Italian Futurism, Dadaism and Ultraism, Stridentism pushed for a renewal of the aesthetic forms and asserted superiority in the city, technology and industry. Significant artists such as Ramón Alva de la Canal, Germán Cueto and Fermín Revueltas were part of this movement which included painting, engraving, photography, literature and music. Groups such as ¡30-30!, the League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists, and later the Popular Graphic Design Workshop prompted the progression of engravings. The ease of reproduction that enabled this technique initiated by Jean Charlot prompted its use, and these groups used it to promote revolutionary ideologies.

A MEETING OF TWO WORLDS: HYBRIDISATION

Owing to their resounding success, which soon after transcended the Mexican borders, “The Big Three” received painting commissions from abroad, particularly the United States. In 1929, the country entered the worst economic crisis period in its history and had to find solutions to provide work for all its citizens. Franklin Roosevelt, President of the United States from 1933 to 1945, launched the New Deal, of which the Public Works Art Project (PWAP) was the cultural branch; it later became Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP) and was related to José Vasconcelos’s project. The director of the project, John Dewey, believed that the Mexican Muralism programme would help stimulate creativity in the United States and set an example of art with a social message. At the same time, between the end of the revolution and the beginning of World War II, Mexico welcomed North American and European artists and become the safe meeting point for poets, painters, film makers and photographers fleeing the unrest in their countries, turning Mexico into the melting pot of a multitude of singular aesthetic languages. The encounter between Surrealism and magical Realism was the genesis of a new hybrid being.

Mexico and the United States

During the first half of the 20th century, several cultural personalities helped Mexican art blossom in the United States. Among them Katherine Anne Porter, who in 1922, organised the first exhibition for popular Mexican art in California, at the request of Mexican President, Álvaro Obregón. Frances Flynn Paine, on her part organised the exhibition at the Art Center in New York in 1927. One of the events which undoubtedly had the strongest impact at that time was the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1930, which presented colonial, popular and modern Mexican art, and had a determinant effect on the local artistic production. In the same vein, certain artists made individual marks in the American cultural scene, such as cartoonist Miguel Covarrubias, famous for his biting criticism of society, or Marius de Zayas, a friend of Alfred Stieglitz and promoter in the United States of Pablo Picasso’s works, from Cubism to African art, which directly contributed to the aesthetic established in this country. José Juan Tablada, a Mexican poet and diplomat, spearheaded the arrival in New York of artists such as José Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera.

Surrealism

Mexico City became the choice destination for European artists seeking to flee political persecutions, which were rampant in Europe in the 1940s. The exotic appeal of Mexico and the artistic prospects it offered were not lost to Antonin Artaud and André Breton when they stayed in Mexico City a few years prior. There, they had found a suitable place for pursuing Surrealist art. In 1940, the International Surrealism Exhibition was organised in the Mexican Art Gallery: European Surrealism works were displayed side by side with pre-Hispanic works and pieces from Mexican artists of that era, making up, according to specialists, an ensemble that was too heterogeneous to be coherent. Yet, this mix of aesthetic values constituted a source of inspiration for the artists, who did not shy from blending original concepts and incorporating elements of pre-Columbian art and other cultures. A hybridisation which made them converge towards the Surrealist language, but reinterpreted according to their own Mexican culture.

Mexico 1900 - 1950

Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, José Clemente Orozco and the avant-garde artists
(5 October 2016 - 23 January 2017)

Exhibition opening times

Open every day, except Tuesdays, from 10 am to 8 pm. Late-night opening on Wednesdays until 10 pm.
Early closure at 6 pm on 24 and 31 December. Closed on Friday 25 December 2016

This exhibition is organised by Réunion des Musées Nationaux - Grand Palais and et la Secretaría de Cultura/ Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes/ Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico.



Curator: Agustín Arteaga, director of the Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City

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EXHIBITION MAP

