

"Images of Mexico" on exhibit

April 3, 1980

"Images of Mexico," one of the most comprehensive exhibitions of Mexican painting ever to be shown in this country, will be presented in the Mandeville Art Gallery at the University of California, San Diego April 19 through May 23.

The university showing is being sponsored by the Banamex Cultural Foundation. Expanded gallery hours for the show are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. Sunday and 7 to 10 p.m. Wednesday.

The exhibition is a classic perspective, tracing Mexico's artistic evolution from the Pre-Columbian era through Spanish rule to Modernism. The 150 works in the show are from the extensive collection of Banco Nacional de Mexico and its affiliate institutions with emphasis on key paintings from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A cultural festival featuring poetry readings, visual presentations and films will be presented on the campus in conjunction with the exhibition. Poets Jose Emilio Pacheco and Julio Chavezmontez are scheduled to present a poetry seminar at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 23, in the Mandeville Center Recital Hall.

The visual presentations "Three Millennia of Mexican Art," featuring a bank of 12 slide projectors and three screens will be presented at 8 p.m. May 15 and 2 p.m. May 16 in the Mandeville Auditorium. The film "Sentinels of Silence" will be shown at 7 p.m. Wednesdays, at noon Thursdays and at 2 p.m. Sundays during the entire run of the exhibition in room 103 of the Mandeville Center. The exhibition and all of the cultural festival events are open free to the public.

The major periods of Mexican art represented in the exhibition have been shaped by four epochs of Mexican history: the Pre-Columbian and indigenous era before the arrival of Cortes in 1519; the three subsequent centuries of Spanish rule; the nineteenth century leading up to the Mexican Revolution in 1910, and the Revolution to the present. The show clearly demonstrates the integration of Mexico's indigenous and Spanish European cultural heritages and how the combination of these cultures produces, even today, a third, unique and spiritually new art.

By the eighteenth century, artists in Mexico had adopted styles ranging from strict adherence to European schools to free interpretation of Creole and Mestizo styles. Many techniques of Mexican origin were received with enthusiasm by the Spaniards. And some, such as the paintings on laminated mother-of-pearl featured in this exhibition, are considered treasures by art historians today.

Also valued from this period are "Conquest" paintings, depicting fanciful episodes from the conquest of Mexico as well as rare portraits of Cortes, Moctezuma, dona Marina and others. "Caste" paintings, which served as registrations of marriage and birth, reflect the racial mixtures resulting from generations of intermingling.

The nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of Mexico's political revolution along with a strong artistic movement that turned from religion and politics to everyday life. This genre grew in popularity when world-wide interest in "New Spain" attracted major European painters such as Baron de Gros, Daniel Edgerton and Edouard Pingret who discovered the wonders of physical and psychological Mexican landscapes. Their paintings, liberally

represented in this collection, laid the groundwork for the first great Mexican landscape painter, Jose Maria Velasco and those to follow.

The latest manifestations of Mexican art in this collection are represented by unique examples of the powerful work of twentieth century Mexican muralists Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros, and with paintings rarely seen outside of Mexico by Jose Chavez Morado, Rufino Tamayo, and by an excellent selection of landscapes by Gerardo Murillo.

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