



Kahlo and Rivera Pair Up with Mexican Modernists at Lauderdale's NSU Art Museum

March 25, 2015

by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL—Two of Mexico's most celebrated 20th century artists will be shown together in a new group exhibition at NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale. Some of the better-known works of Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) and Diego Rivera (1886–1957) will be showcased alongside pieces by other influential Mexican artists working in the same period who helped define Mexican modernism.

"Kahlo, Rivera & Mexican Modern Art," an exhibition of 75 works on view through May 31, 2015, features major artworks from Mexico City collectors Jacques and Natasha Gelman and Fort Lauderdale collectors Stanley and Pearl Goodman.

Showcasing the rich artistic traditions of Mexico and the passionate and patriotic pride of its artists, the exhibition features paintings, sculpture and works on paper by Kahlo, Rivera, and other influential Mexican artists involved in the country's political and social struggles. The show includes works by Leonora Carrington (1917-2011), Gunther Gerzso (1915-2000), José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), Wolfgang Paalen (1905-1959), Alfredo Ramos Martinez (1917-1946), David Siqueiros (1896-1974), Rufino Tamayo (1889-1991), and Remedios Varo (1908-1963).

Taken together, the artists included in the exhibition "demonstrate the broad range of artistic expression and varying political forces that shaped the country's cultural heritage," according to the museum.



"Panorama" by Gunther Gerzso, 1944. Oil on canvas. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SOMAAP, Mexico City.

Also on view as part of the exhibition are photographs of Kahlo and Rivera taken by American and Mexican photographers, including Leo Matiz (1917-1978), Martin Munkácsi (1896-1963), and Nickolas Muray (1892-1965). The trio documented the vastly different personalities of Kahlo and Rivera, whose tempestuous relationship included marriage, divorce and subsequent remarriage.



“Diego and Frida” by Martin Munkácsi, 1934. Gelatin silver print (printed later by Joan Munkácsi). The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art, courtesy of the Vergel Foundation and the Tarpon Trust. © Howard Greenberg Gallery.

Major works were brought together for this exhibition from both the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection and the Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection, the latter comprised of more than 75 works by modern Latin American artists pledged by the couple to the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale.

The exhibition also inaugurates NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale’s Stanley and Pearl Goodman Center for the Study of Latin American Art, the only resource of its kind for scholars in the region. A portion of the new center’s library and archived documents are on view in one section of the exhibition.



“Successful People” by José Clemente Orózco , 1931. Oil on canvas. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SOMAAP, Mexico City.

The renowned Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection is known for its significant holdings of work by Kahlo. The collection was established in 1941 by Jacques Gelman (1909-1986), a successful filmmaker, and his wife, Natasha (1912-1998), two Eastern European immigrants who met and married in Mexico City before becoming Mexican citizens in 1942. The Gelmans were passionate about the art and culture of their new homeland, becoming devoted art patrons and establishing close friendships with Kahlo, Rivera, and many of their contemporaries.

Outstanding paintings from the collection include many of Kahlo’s best-known self-portraits. In *Diego on my Mind (Self-Portrait as A Tehuana)*, 1943, Kahlo gazes at the viewer, enshrined in the elaborate headdress traditional to Mexico’s southwest region, with a portrait of Rivera inscribed on her forehead. *Love Embrace of the Universe, Earth (Mexico), Myself, Diego and Señor Xolotl*, 1940, presents a mythical portrait of Kahlo cradling Rivera’s naked body in her arms. *Self-Portrait with Monkeys*, 1943, is a well-known image of the artist surrounded by monkeys.



“Diego on My Mind (Self Portrait as Tehuana)” by Frida Kahlo, 1943. Oil on masonite. The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art, courtesy of the Vergel Foundation and the Tarpon Trust. © 2015 Banco de Mexico Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Major works by Rivera are also drawn from the Gelman Collection, including his provocative *Portrait of Natasha Gelman*, 1943. In this work, the seductive art collector stares out of the canvas from a chaise of gray-green cushions, surrounded by an abundance of white calla lilies. Rivera presents the lily again in his sensual *Calla Lily Vendor*, 1943, in which floral forms contrast with three faceless figures who kneel immobilized in reverence to these lively, organic forms. A similar organic dynamism appears in his *Landscape with Cacti*, 1931, in which figurative cactus forms repeat in vertical and curving shapes.



“Portrait of Natasha Gelman” by Diego Rivera, 1943. Oil on canvas. The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art, courtesy of the Vergel Foundation and the Tarpon Trust. © 2015 Banco de Mexico Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



“Landscape with Cacti” by Diego Rivera, 1931. Oil on canvas. The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection of 20th Century Mexican Art, courtesy of the Vergel Foundation and the Tarpon Trust. © 2015 Banco de Mexico Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Stanley and Pearl Goodman began collecting Mexican and Latin American art in 1991. According to the museum, their collection “represents the richness and breadth of modern art produced in Mexico not only by Kahlo, Rivera and their contemporaries, but also in the work of artists who developed independently and made the daily lives of Mexico’s people the subject of their work.”

The Goodmans’ collection includes Surrealistic paintings by Kahlo and other artists, including Leonora Carrington, Gunther Gerzso, and Wolfgang Paalen, offering depictions of fantasy, dreams,

and the subconscious. Carrington's *Artes 110*, 1942, presents ambiguous narratives about the power of female creativity, birth and rebirth in interludes of illusionistic imagery. The abstract forms of Paalen's *Paysage totémique*, 1937, render aspects of his fantastical childhood dreams, such as living in castles sited in magical forests.



"Artes 110" by Leonora Carrington, 1942. Oil on canvas. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © 2014 Leonora Carrington/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



"Paysage Totémique" by Wolfgang Paalen, 1937. Oil on panel. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © Estate of Wolfgang Paalen.

Works by David Siqueiros, a political, radical-minded Mexican social realist painter, and an adversary of Rivera, who was best known for his large fresco murals, are also included in the collection. The first painting purchased by the Goodmans was his gouache on paper, *Flight*, 1964, depicting a woman holding a child wrapped in a shawl. Siqueiros juxtaposes primary colors and applied gesturally to convey the energy and vitality of figures that struggle with forces beyond their control.



"Mother and Child" by David Siqueiros, 1956. Duco paint on masonite. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/SOMAAP, Mexico City.

Also drawn from the Goodman collection are works by Alfredo Martínez Ramos, known as the "Father of Mexican Modernism." The artist's *Minotaurus*, 1959, has as its subject the mythological creature born of the union between a bull and the queen of Crete. Rather than being put to death, the minotaur was condemned to live forever in an inescapable labyrinth, but in this Ramos painting, he holds a key, suggesting the discovery of a way out.

Para-surrealist painter Remedios Varo's *Zapatista*, 1931, depicts a compellingly resolute, seated

figure whose direct stare conveys the sadness and resignation at the end of the Mexican Revolution.



“The Minotaur” by Remedios Varo, 1959. Oil on masonite. Stanley and Pearl Goodman Collection. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VEGAP, Madrid.

BASIC FACTS: “Kahlo, Rivera & Mexican Modern Art” is on view through May 31, 2015 at NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale, 1 East Las Olas Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301. www.nsuartmuseum.org

Programming includes:

“Art Talk: Stanley and Pearl Goodman Lecture on Latin American Art with Dr. Salomon Grimberg on Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera” on Friday, March 27, at 6 p.m. “Art Collectors Perspectives | Stanley and Pearl Goodman” on Sunday, April 26, at 2 p.m. Limited seating. Reservations can be made by emailing moareservations@moafl.org or calling 954-262-0204.

Copyright 2015 Hamptons Art Hub LLC. All rights reserved.