



Cultural Center

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
1300 New York Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20577

Information Bulletin No. 105

Medellín: Art and Development



Horizontes (Horizons), 1913
by Francisco Antonio Cano (b. 1865 Yarumal, Colombia – d. 1935 Bogotá, Colombia)
oil on canvas, 37 3/8 x 59 1/16 inches
Collection of the Antioquia Museum, Medellín, Colombia.
Donated by Carlos Alberto Restrepo in 2002
Photo: Courtesy of the Antioquia Museum

Washington, D.C.
Open February 19 to April 24, 2009

The Cultural Center of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

announces the opening of the

Medellín: Art and Development

Open February 19 to April 24, 2009

An exhibition exploring the development of the City of Medellín, Colombia, and the connections that may exist between art and development.

Medellín is the city selected by the IDB for the 2009 Annual Meeting of IDB Governors in March of this year

The exhibit is one of the events celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Washington, D.C., January 29, 2009

"Few cities in the Americas have made more progress overcoming the obstacles of poverty, violence and inequality than Medellín," says Luis Alberto Moreno, President of the Inter-American Development Bank in his introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition, **Medellin: Art and Development**, which opens to the public of Washington at the gallery of the IDB Cultural Center on February 19th. He continues: "Over the past half century this city has transformed itself, often with financial and technical support from the IDB. Today Medellín is a model of creative urban renewal and high-quality services for all income levels."

More than 450 years have passed since the first Spaniards arrived at the Valley of Aburrá in 1541, and more than 350 years since they decided to create a settlement there, which officially

became a city in 1675 by decree of the Hapsburg Queen Regent of Spain, Mariana of Austria. But it was not until after Colombia's independence that Francisco de Paula Santander, the first Colombian president, declared the city as the official capital of the Province of Antioquia. Eventually, Medellín became Colombia's industrial city.

It is possible to understand such a transformation through the relation that has existed between art and development. With the help of forty-three objects, including maps, photographs, paintings and sculptures, the selection illustrates the evolution of Medellín from a colonial village to the bustling industrial town it is today. Among the artworks included is a 1859 watercolor by Simón Eladio Salom depicting Berrío Square, and the 1913 iconic painting "Horizontes" (Horizons) by academic artist (the only one the city ever had) Francisco Antonio Cano, both on loan from the Antioquia Museum. Late 19th century and early 20th century photographs by Melitón Rodríguez and Benjamín de la Calle are from the Collective Archive at the Piloto Public Library; and mid-century oils and watercolors by the first Colombian modernist Pedro Nel Gómez came from the Casa Museo Pedro Nel Gómez. There are also late 20th century sculptures by Alberto Uribe, Ronny Vayda and Hugo Zapata, to name a few. The objects and artworks come from private and public collections, among them the **Museo de Antioquia, Medellín's Piloto Public Library, the Casa-Museo Pedro Nel Gómez, Etra Fine Art in Miami, Remy Toledo Art Projects in New York, and the Colombian Embassy in Washington DC**, as well several from the artists themselves.

To further expand on the meaning of the artistic works selected for this exhibition, and to explain how they are linked to the development experienced by Medellín in the last one hundred years, the Cultural Center has assembled a distinguished group of scholars from various disciplines to offer their views on particular aspects of the city as an urban entity. They are Roberto Luis Jaramillo (historian), Jaime de Jesús Osorio (photographer), Lucrecia Piedrahita and Santiago Londoño (art historians), Zoraida Gaviria (architect and urban planner), and Darío Ruiz Gómez (novelist, poet and urban theoretician).

The Curator of the exhibition is IDB Cultural Center Director Félix Ángel, who has also contributed to the catalogue. In his introduction, he states, "the visual arts are a phenomenon that acts in parallel with society, reflecting current and recurrent circumstances, interests, and peculiarities at different times." The exhibit does not constitute, by any means, an exhaustive sociological study, but is rather a collection of artistic and urban instances that, in sum, may give the visitor an idea about the singularities that make Medellín a city like no other.

President Moreno concludes his catalogue introduction saying, "The 50th Anniversary of the Inter-American Development Bank is a great opportunity to reflect on the challenges that the Region has overcome, and on the new role the Bank must play in the future to help achieve better social and economic conditions for all communities in our hemisphere."

The exhibit will be complemented with a lecture by **Medellin's Secretary of Culture, Jorge Melguizo Posada, on February 19th**. He will discuss how culture has contributed to reduce violence and promote social integration in a city that not so long ago was famous for its many problems, such as illegal armed groups and drug cartel wars.

Selection of works in the exhibition



Mapa del Nuevo Reino de Granada y Popayán

(Map of the New Kingdom of Granada and Popayán), 1630

Edition 1650; by Janssonius

14 3/4 x 19 1/2 inches

From the Collection of Dr. Roberto Luis Jaramillo

Photo: Carlos Tobón



(detail)

Estudios para mural del Banco Popular de Medellín: Historia del desarrollo económico e industrial del departamento de Antioquia, 1954

(Studies for the Mural of the Banco Popular de Medellín: History of the Economic and Industrial Development of the State of Antioquia)

by Pedro Nel Gómez (b. 1899, Anorí, Colombia – d. 1984, Medellín, Colombia)

6 mural sketches, 2 pieces in each frame
watercolor on paper

various measurements

From the Collection of the Casa Museo Pedro Nel Gómez, Medellín, Colombia

Photo: Courtesy of the Casa Museo Pedro Nel Gómez



Plaza de Cisneros (Cisneros Square), 1923

by Gonzalo Escovar

Photomontage by Jaime de Jesús Osorio Gómez

black and white photo enlargement

15 3/8 x 30 inches

Original format: 2 old photographs, restored by digital photomontage to give the impression that the photos were taken with a panoramic camera.

From the "Collective Archives" of the Piloto Public Library, Medellín, Colombia

Photo: Courtesy of the Piloto Public Library



Nudo (Knot), 1985

by Alberto Uribe Duque (b. 1947, Medellín, Colombia –)

Sculpture, guayacán wood and squared iron-calibrated bar, squared 3/4 inches

19 11/16 x 19 11/16 x 13 3/4 inches

Photo: Rosidan Khan

Exhibition

The exhibition will run from February 19 to April 24, 2009. A full color, bilingual (English and Spanish) catalogue, containing the entire selection of the objects in the exhibition, plus the essays of the various contributors is available upon request. Photographs of the exhibit are available upon request. For photographs, please call 202 623 1213.

The Art Gallery is open five days a week, Monday through Friday, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., free of charge.

For guided tours of groups of ten or more (in English and Spanish) and for additional information about the IDB Cultural Center and its programs, please call (202) 623-3774.

Inter-American Concert, Lecture and Film Series all events are free, open to the public and held at the Enrique V. Iglesias Conference Center, 1330 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20577, and one block from Metro Center. Photo ID required. For more information, please call 202 623 3558.

The IDB Cultural Center is located at 1300 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. The nearest Metro station is Metro Center (13th Street exit). All the events are free of charge.

The Cultural Center home page is located at: www.iadb.org/cultural
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