

A Century of Painting in Panama



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On the Cover,
Roberto Lewis

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Tamarindos (Tamarind Trees), 1942
Collection of the Embassy
of the Republic of Panama
to the United States, Washington, DC



*A Century
of
Painting
in
Panama*



Manuel E. Amador

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Maternidad (Maternity), c. 1945
Collection of Mr. and Ms.
Guillermo Trujillo, Panama



Panama: *The Youngest Century*

To celebrate the century that Panama has been a nation is to celebrate the youngest of all the young republics of Latin America. Like all nations, Panama is a complex and collective creation, so what could better represent it than the dimension of creativity that is the freest of all: the arts.

We are most pleased to celebrate Panama's first 100 years by presenting this exhibition of the country's modern painting. In this way we complement a previous Cultural Center exhibition in 1995 entitled "Crossing Panama," which provided a history of the isthmus nation through its diverse artistic manifestations ranging from ancient ceramics to paintings from the country's early history.

Panama has a long association with the Inter-American Development Bank, having been one of the Bank's founding members in 1959. The country also has several characteristics that distinguish it from other Latin American nations. Panama is a historic point of hemispheric transit, a crossroads between north and south and the Pacific and the Caribbean, which is the Mediterranean Sea of the Americas. Its unique history is linked to Spain, Colombia and the United States. For many years Panama was considered a South American nation, while in more recent times it has become closer to the countries of Central America, with which Panama shares aspirations for economic integration.

The construction of enormous public works in transport and communications during the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century—particularly railroads and the inter-oceanic canal—produced migrations that transformed Panama's social and political physiognomy and enriched its religious, cultural and linguistic patrimony. Today, the country's diverse population includes not only indigenous groups but also people of European, African, Caribbean and Asian origin.

The IDB has long supported not only economic and social development in Panama, but also its integration initiatives with the Central American countries. With this exhibition, the Bank has the opportunity to celebrate Panama's culture, that subtle dimension of a society that liberates the mind, spurs the imagination, and strengthens a nation's identity and social fabric.

Mirna Liévano de Marques
External Relations Advisor

A Century of Painting in Panama

Although the concept of art has broadened noticeably in recent years, painting has been and remains the principal means of aesthetic expression in Panama. A complete view of the development of art in Panama over its century as an independent republic would include the names of several hundred painters. This exhibition presents exceptional works by 25 outstanding artists selected on the basis of a survey of a wide-ranging group of art connoisseurs, historians, critics, professors and art dealers in Panama. The presentation gives the public an overview of the development of painting in Panama over the century.

Early Years of the Republic

A crossroads and commercial center since the colonial period, Panama in the early 20th century experienced several major events: secession from Colombia in 1903, ratification of a treaty with the United States in 1904, and inauguration of the Panama Canal in 1914. Until 1903, Panamanian culture had been linked to trends in neighboring Colombia—to which the isthmus of Panama belonged for more than 80 years—as well as to the European styles that characterized art throughout the Americas in the 19th century.

During the initial years of the new republic, grand neoclassical buildings were erected to house governmental and cultural institutions. **Roberto Lewis** (1874-1949), a Panamanian painter trained in France, became the official artist of the period and was commissioned to decorate the interiors of numerous buildings in the grand neoclassic style favored at the time. A member of one of Panama's prominent families, Lewis was the preferred portraitist among the social and political elite, whose taste clearly followed European fashion. In addition, Lewis played an important role as an educator: in 1913, he founded the nation's first art academy, which he directed until 1937.

Lewis followed a classical style in his painting, as reflected by his superb draftsmanship and the allegorical themes of his official works such as the plafond in Panama's National Theater, inaugurated in 1908. In contrast, many of his easel paintings emphasized color and light, loose brushwork and atmospheric effects related to Impressionist and post-Impressionist art. His landscapes were often peaceful representations of Panama that surely contributed to the nascent sense of national identity. This is true also of his murals for the Presidential Palace, where, eschewing more classical subjects, he painted images of a family at the beach on the island of Taboga.

Lewis took particular pleasure in depicting tamarind trees and the Pacific coastline, with blue water and sailboats in the background. Paintings such as his





Manuel E. Amador

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Fesunhes, 1912

Collection of Mr. César Pereira B., Panama

"Tamarindos" (1942) offer a significant counterpart to the European-looking landscapes of his earlier years. The flickering golden light, the strong, gnarled tree trunks, the delicate branches bent with the wind, and the atmospheric quality of the sky come together to create a poetic image, a truer metaphor for the new nation than any depiction of the Panama Canal could have offered. It is in his landscapes that Lewis came closest to producing works more Panamanian in their nature. Lewis's official oeuvre reflected Panama in a classical style employed to represent the birth of a new republic and depict its major political figures, but his landscapes showed a more intimate view of Panama in all its natural and tropical beauty.

The creator of the flag for the new republic of Panama was **Manuel Amador** (1869-1952), an eccentric intellectual who dedicated a great part of his life to public office, created a universal language he named "Panamane," and developed a valuable oeuvre as a painter. Although he was a contemporary of Roberto Lewis, Amador assumed a more vanguard style, creating a rich oeuvre that was relatively unknown during his lifetime, but clearly establishes him as one of the first modern painters in Panama. Amador carried out diplomatic assignments in Hamburg, Germany, from 1904 to 1908, where he was exposed to German Expressionism, and later in New York City, where he remained from 1908 until 1926. In New York, Amador studied under Robert Henri, the leader of the Ashcan School that challenged the tradition of academic painting, and whose noteworthy exhibition "The Eight" had taken place precisely in 1908. Amador's painting "Fesuuhes" provides an example of his style during those early years in New York, and reflects the influence of Henri in the everyday subject as well as its intense palette and energetic brushwork. In a realistic, expressive style, the small oil on panel depicts two houses by a stream, one ochre and one red, with a church steeple in the background. Dark green trees and an agitated sky in tones of blue emphasize the dramatic quality of the composition.

In addition to his paintings from the New York period, Amador had a second productive period after 1940. By then up in years and again living in Panama, Amador created many drawings, watercolors and paintings, mostly of human figures, which amply prove his extraordinary drawing ability and reflect his early attachment to expressionism. The painting "Maternity" was produced around 1945, when Amador worked in a small studio in Panama City. The somber realism and spontaneity of form of this composition, as well as the volumes that emerge from a dark background and the subject matter, are reminiscent of the dark mood typical of German artist Kathe Kollwitz. In Amador's composition, the mother holds the child tenderly, but the face of the child is disturbing in its expression of shock or fright.

A Second Generation of Painters

Manuel Amador's years abroad and the modernity of his paintings place him somewhat outside the development of art in Panama, although younger artists undoubtedly were inspired by his oeuvre. On the other hand, Roberto Lewis was responsible for training a second generation of painters at the national art academy, including such figures as Humberto Ivaldi, Juan Manuel Cedeño and Eudoro Silvera.



Humberto Tvaldi

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Tambor de Orden, n/d

Collection of the LIMCA Foundation, Panama



Juan Manuel Cedeño

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Las Celestinas (The Procuresses), 1968
 Collection of Mrs. Shirley Berger, Panama

Humberto Ivaldi (1909-1947) completed his education in Madrid during the 1930s and, in 1939, became the second director of Panama's art academy, a post he held until his untimely death. In keeping with Lewis' lessons, Ivaldi employed an academic style in his still-life paintings and portraits, but also showed the influence of Impressionism in some of his landscapes, particularly in his almost romantic representations of trees in changing light. His exposure to Spanish art, in particular the work of the great Joaquín Sorolla, is evident in paintings such as "Tambor de Orden," in which Ivaldi depicts a scene from a traditional Panamanian dance with drums in an impressionistic style. A woman in a red montuno skirt occupies the foreground, looking out as she holds up a corner of her skirt, showing her petticoat in a gesture typical of Panama's traditional dances. To her left, Ivaldi sketched in the figure of her dance partner, whose hat lies at her feet, and in the background, the shape of the drummer who gives this dance its rhythm.

Ivaldi's portraits, like those by Lewis, show his able draftsmanship and his academic background. The permanent, realistic qualities of Ivaldi's portraits and still-lives stand in strong contrast to his more vivacious landscapes and outdoor scenes, in which both brushwork and composition show greater dynamism.



Tudoro Silvera

Bodegón con Piña (Still Life with Pineapple), 1951
Collection of Mr. Adolfo Arias, Panama



Isaac Benítez

Mar Revuelto (Stormy Sea), c. 1961
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Maduro, Panama

Like his teacher Lewis and his fellow student Ivaldi, **Juan Manuel Cedeño** (1914-1997) was an excellent portrait painter, responsible for recording the images of many of Panama's most well-known figures over a period of 50 years. Born in the rural province of Los Santos, where he was exposed to many local traditions that would become the subjects of his paintings, Cedeño began his studies in Panama and later continued at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Typically, in his portraits he followed an academic style, and most of his landscapes showed a preference for Impressionism. Cedeño stood apart in his compositions related to Panamanian themes, in which he applied a language derived from Cubism and Futurism to paintings that are both anecdotic and colorful.

Cedeño's painting "Las Celestinas" (The Procuresses) depicts a young woman in a typical blouse and hat, surrounded by two men propositioning her, and two women, obviously the celestinas of the title, coaxing her on, while messages and jewelry are being exchanged. Color is used to heighten the emotional effect, with the foreground figures depicted in a blue light, whereas the others recede into the darker, brownish background. The composition itself, like many of Cedeño's paintings after 1950, is made up of geometric structures and dynamic lines, the purpose of which was not to present multiple viewpoints as in Cubism, but rather to add movement and rhythm to the composition.

In addition to having produced an extensive oeuvre, Cedeño was important as an educator of younger artists, first at the Escuela Nacional de Pintura (as Lewis' academy had been renamed), which he directed from 1948 to 1968, and later at the Architecture School of the University of Panama. As a teacher, Cedeño was instrumental in introducing modernism to Panama, principally because he promoted interpretation over academicism, and a new, more contemporary approach to painting.

Eudoro Silvera (b.1917) studied under Roberto Lewis during the 1930s and in the subsequent decade spent time in New York City, where he studied painting at the Cooper Union and music at the Julliard School. In Panama he was much admired as one of the first truly "modern" painters, and in 1956 he received an Honorable Mention at the São Paulo Biennial. Like Cedeño, Silvera developed a style during the 1950s that absorbed the lessons of Cubism and combined them with autochthonous themes such as the Kuna Indians, tropical fruit and national symbols. At times, he showed a preference for painting elongated, sad-looking figures in emotion-inspiring compositions. Silvera's prize-winning painting "Bodegón con Piña" (Still-Life with Pineapple) (1951) is typical of his Cubist phase in its subject matter and subdued color, as well as the use of fragmented forms that articulate the pictorial space. In later years, Silvera developed a more personal, increasingly abstract style, and dedicated much of his time to classical art songs, literary translations and political caricatures.

Isaac Benítez (1927-1968) studied under Humberto Ivaldi from 1941 to 1948, then again in 1952 in Florence, Italy, from where he returned to Panama after only a year and a half. Poor, sickly and reclusive, Benítez produced a valuable and abundant body of paintings, although his economic difficulties caused him to paint on cheap paper or with bad pigments, to such an extent that many of his works have deteriorated over the years. His style, initially influenced by Ivaldi, later developed into an expressive language of bold strokes and intense, mostly dark, color. Benítez painted

portraits, landscapes and cityscapes, usually in tempera or black ink, with typically thick strokes and geometric structures that reveal an interest in Expressionism and Cubism.

With its light and lively colors, "Mar Revuelto" (Stormy Sea) is an unusually colorful and optimistic work within Benítez's oeuvre. Executed using wall paints on wood panel in tones of blue, pink and ochre, the semi-abstract composition depicts a small boat in turbulent waters. The sky, the sea and the boat are painted with bold slashes of color—quasi-geometric forms—that create a dynamic pattern on the painted surface, with the sort of self-revelatory brushwork that is common to certain action painters and present throughout Benítez's oeuvre. Benítez was ahead of his time in the Panamanian art world, and would come to be admired only long after his death.

The First Abstractions

Although the artists mentioned so far all explored modernist tendencies, the first painter in Panama to experiment with abstraction was **Alfredo Sinclair** (b. 1915), who was initially trained under Ivaldi at the Escuela Nacional de Pintura, and later studied in Argentina from 1947 to 1951. Although he was exposed to abstraction in South America, it was the work of the Abstract Expressionists, particularly Jackson Pollock and his drip paintings, that most influenced Sinclair's early work. His relationship to abstraction and color were also influenced by his years as a technician in a neon sign shop as a young man in Panama. Although the Panamanian public did not understand Sinclair's new style, as early as 1955 he was awarded a prize for a painting that incorporated crushed glass. He also sought to create the luminous effect of stained glass in paintings such as "Untitled" (1960), in which areas of color are surrounded by a network of thick and expressive black strokes. Within the dark areas of the painting, the artist explored a variety of textures and forms, ranging from drips to rectangles and from high gloss to sandy and matte finishes.

Over the years, Sinclair followed the lines of a lyrical abstraction that varied from collages to smooth and luminous non-objective compositions. A series of small paintings, including "Mancha" (Stain) (1971), were characterized by rhythmic, colorful compositions and the application of thick coats of paint. "Mancha" is composed of orange, yellow and brown squares and rectangles in a rhythmic arrangement, close in feeling to the painterly abstractions of the post-war Franco-Russian artist Nicolas de Staël. Although Sinclair went on to produce paintings with anecdotal or descriptive elements such as fruit, faces and hands, he has been most admired over his long career for his abstractions of pure and luminous color, which constitute his most valuable contribution to Panamanian art.

From Mid-Century Forward: Panama's Modern Maestros

The World War II years had brought an economic boom to Panama, and for the arts, the 1950s were a period of increasing international exposure. Over the next two



Alfredo Sinclair

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Mancha (Stain), 1971
 Permanent Collection
 of the Museum of
 Contemporary Art,
 Panama



Alfredo Sinclair

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Sin Título (Untitled), 1960
 Collection of Mr. and Mrs. George Zelenka, Panama

decades, Panamanian artists became more involved in the art world through studies abroad and participation in international exhibitions and biennials. The artists of the earlier generation continued to be active, and a new group of younger figures born in the 1920s and 30s joined the art scene, including Guillermo Trujillo, Manuel Chong Neto, Alberto Dutary, Julio Zachrisson, Olga Sánchez, Adriano Herrera Barría, Trixie Briceño and others. Although they were bound together by generation and friendship, they did not share common styles or goals.

By the time Panama celebrated its 50th anniversary as a republic in 1953, Panamanian art was beginning to catch up with developments in other parts of Latin America. After completing their studies in Panama, most artists went abroad to expand their academic experience. Spain, Mexico and Argentina were favored because of the common language, but some artists studied in the United States and Italy. Upon their return, these artists imported new ideas about Cubism, Surrealism, Expressionism and Action Painting, all of which seemed radical within the nation's limited cultural environment.

Outstanding among the artists of this generation is **Guillermo Trujillo** (b. 1927), who began his career at Panama's School of Architecture, and later studied in Madrid in the 1950s. By 1959, the quality of his work was acknowledged with an Honorable Mention at the São Paulo Biennial. Knowledgeable about pre-Hispanic art and aware of art history, Trujillo incorporated elements of indigenous art and hieratic figures into his paintings in a highly personal, contemporary style. His compositions combine political and social satire with a study of man's relationship to nature, a tendency that links him to the neo-figurative movement in Latin American art. His oil on canvas "Iconografía del Cantoral Chocoe" (Iconography of the Chocoe Hymnbook) (1972) reflects an important moment in his career, when Trujillo developed a style of tiny pointillist brushstrokes to represent sign-like figures in rituals of his own creation. The canvas has an overall golden color, which together with the painted cracks along the edges make it reminiscent of an old document. The figures are represented—barely insinuated—in groups, with harmonious combinations of pink, red, violet and brown. The title makes reference to the Chocoe Indians who inhabit Panama's Darien Province.

The allusions to indigenous elements are numerous in Trujillo's oeuvre. Starting in the 1980s, ceremonial canes called "nuchos" became a dominant feature in his paintings. They appear as vertical anthropoid shapes, stick figures with certain human features like heads, arms or breasts. "Tres Maestros" (Three Masters) (1988) shows a series of nuchos in groups from left to right, almost like a sampler of the different ways in which Trujillo had come to interpret these erect figures, but also as a display of three different pictorial techniques. They appear almost human, like priests in a ceremony, but simultaneously biomorphic, like twisted roots under the ground. Technically, there is a range of brushstrokes, from tiny dabs and pointillist effects, to large areas of color that imitate those in the "molas" made by Kuna Indians, to stitch-like brush marks reminiscent of Trujillo's own tapestries.

Trujillo has had considerable influence on Panamanian art, in great part because of his role as a professor at the University of Panama, where he and other artists of his generation, among them Chong Neto and Dutary, developed careers as teachers. In



Guillermo Trujillo

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*Iconografía
del Cantoral Chocoe*
(Iconography of the
Chocoe Hymnbook), 1972
Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
Leo Wiznitzer, Panama



Guillermo Trujillo

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Tres Maestros (Three Masters), 1988
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Wiznitzer, Panama



Manuel Chong Neto

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Personajes con Buitre, Perro y Bufón
 (Characters with Vulture, Dog and Buffoon), 1970
 Collection of the artist, Panama



Alberto Dutary

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Personajes al Crepúsculo (Figures at Twilight), 1960
 Collection of the Art Museum of the Americas, Organization of American States,
 Washington, DC, Gift of Mr. Joseph Cantor

addition, this faculty by the 1970s had developed into a de facto art school, where many of Panama's younger artists initiated their careers through courses in architectural drawing and watercolor painting.

The early work of **Manuel Chong Neto** (b. 1927) included paintings of figures in a cubist style and later social realist work that reflect his years of study in Mexico. By the mid-1960s, he had developed his own artistic language and favorite motifs. The oil painting "Characters with Vulture, Dog and Buffoon" (1970) is a good example of Chong Neto's style. The composition, which is figurative, is based on a solid geometric structure and abstract values. A strong sense of chiaroscuro permeates the image of a variety of characters. The central position in the painting is occupied by the figure of a voluminous and sensual woman who would become Chong Neto's leitmotiv over the next four decades. Typically, she appears surrounded by grotesque figures including men, voyeurs and animals in surreal combinations that convey an ironic message about human nature. Over the years, Chong Neto continued to paint similar characters, particularly the woman, in images that were initially subtle and diffused, then became more sensuous and daring, and by the 1990s became harder and increasingly colorful.

As a professor and promoter of younger artists, **Alberto Dutary** (1932-1998) made valuable contributions to the development of art in Panama. After spending most of the 1950s in Madrid, where his work was influenced by Spanish art trends such as Informalism, he returned to Panama. Dutary was much respected as an artist, and in 1962 won First Prize in a Central American Painting Competition in El Salvador. His early works incorporated thick textures, and even then his focus lay mainly with the human figure, which would remain a permanent feature in his paintings. In "Figuras al Crepúsculo" (Figures at Twilight) (1960), three small, dark figures are surrounded by a field of diffused, rich textures. The brooding quality of the work is close in feeling to Spanish art of the time, and is striking for the way the theme lies somewhere between the material quality of the painting and the spiritual insinuations of its motifs. Starting in the 1970s, Dutary focused on the depiction of nude or semi-nude feminine figures, often actual mannequins, alienated creatures that served to comment on the lack of spiritual values in contemporary society.

Another valuable artist of this generation is **Julio Zachrisson** (b. 1930), who studied in Spain in the 1960s after sojourns in Mexico and in Italy. Despite having stayed in Madrid since then, Zachrisson has remained an important figure in Panamanian art. Initially well-known as a printmaker—he received Spain's prestigious Goya award for his graphic work—Zachrisson also developed an extensive oeuvre as a painter. His work usually draws its subject matter from literature, mythology and Panamanian urban legends, in compositions peopled by grotesque figures related to Spanish art. In paintings on panel such as "Alucinado" (Hallucinated) (1976), Zachrisson paints figures that reveal human foibles or passions with exquisite draftsmanship, imperceptible strokes, delicate colors, and biting irony. Part of a series that included a contortionist, a pipe smoker, an aggressive black dog, and a wake for a crazy looking woman, the male figure in *Alucinado* appears with a bullfighter's hat, eyes that pop out, a toothy grin and twisted fingers like a character from some perverse fairy tale. Although he has never lost his sense of humor, Zachrisson's later paintings show humanity in a kinder light.



Julio Zachrisson

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Alucinado (Hallucinated), 1976
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Rodrigo Eisenmann,
Panama



Olga Sánchez

Larga Espera (Long Wait), 1961
 Permanent Collection
 of the Museum
 of Contemporary Art, Panama

Equally involved with the drama of the human condition is the painter and ceramist **Olga Sánchez** (b. 1921), who in the 1950s went to study in Spain, where she would remain for about 20 years. As a young artist, she befriended Manuel Amador, whose influence is apparent in the expressionist nature of her work and her interest in painting nudes. Her compositions are mostly either still-lives or images of human beings, such as the

woman in "Larga Espera" (Long Wait) (1961), in which the rear view of a large figure seated on a red chair over a blue-green background practically fills the canvas. Rather than committing to canvas the expression of a face, or the details of the clothing, Sánchez seeks to reveal an essential concept, in this case that of expectancy, maybe even tragedy. Restless strokes of paint cover the canvas, making it vibrate with subtle contrasts of color that activate the surface. Sánchez has also painted themes related to issues of human suffering, such as the Vietnam war and the plight of children in Biafra. There is a tragic, deformed nature to her figures that reflect both a sense of humor and a critical attitude.

Social criticism and political commentary are intense in the oeuvre of **Adriano Herrera Barría** (b. 1928), who has played a major role both as an artist and a teacher in Panama. Trained in Mexico and in Europe, he was director for many years of Panama's Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas (the National Art School). The work of this rebellious artist often reflects the influence of social realism and Mexican muralism. Usually heavily laden with emotion, even aggression, his paintings are characterized by a style of sinuous lines like roots or veins, which take over the composition, wrapping themselves around the contours of faces and figures. Sometimes, the men in his paintings, such as those in "Balseros en el Tiempo," (Rafters through Time) resemble monks or mystical figures in works of great compositional tension and somber colors. In addition to the obvious relationship to images of the "ship of fools" made famous by Hieronymus Bosch, this particular painting makes reference to the 1994 "balsero" crisis in Cuba, a subject about which a man as politically committed as Herrera Barría was surely informed.



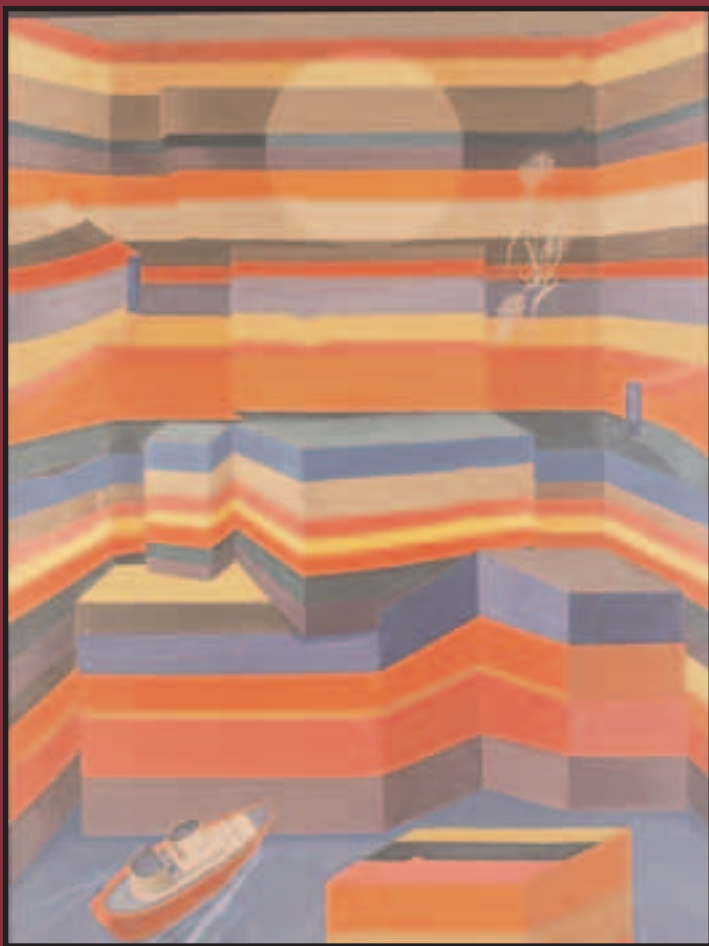
Adriano Herrerabarría

Balseros en el Tiempo (Rafters through Time), 1995
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Fernando Eleta, Panama

The Panama Canal and the presence of ships along the coastline is an everyday subject in Panama and the focal point in the painting "País Incógnito" (Incognito Nation) (1970) by **Trixie Briceño** (1911-1985). An English-born painter who became a naturalized Panamanian in 1943, Briceño first studied under Cedeño. Later she studied in Brazil, where she was influenced by the style and elements of Geometric Abstraction, although she was never an abstract artist. On the contrary, most of her compositions seem to tell stories about people and objects. Her paintings are usually characterized by bright colors, hard edges and flat acrylics, making her the first artist in Panama to express herself in the language of Concrete Art, which she combined with humor and her own brand of naïf surrealism. In a play on the fact that to traverse the canal, ships must go through locks that raise them several levels, the ship in "País Incógnito" confronts many high and nearly impassable steps, a series of colored horizons topped by a bright, round sun. For an artist who was not political, this composition, created just two years after the military revolution in Panama, invites multiple interpretations.

The 1960s: Fresh Tendencies in Panamanian Art

In retrospect, "Countdown" (1967) by **Coqui Calderón** (b. 1938) seems almost a premonition, since in the following year Panama went through a military revolution that changed its history. It was also around this time that Calderón, who had been living in



Trixie Briceño

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País Incógnito
 (Incognito Nation), 1970
 Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
 Jean Claude Augrain, Panama

Coqui Calderón

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Countdown
 (Cuenta Regresiva), 1967
 Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
 Jean Claude Augrain,
 Panama





Antonio Alvarado

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Gotama N° 3 (Gotama No. 3), 1983
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Eloy Alfaro, Panama



Mario Calvit

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Cabalgando con Viento Norte (Riding with North Wind), 1984
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. José Fierro, Panama

Europe and New York, returned to Panama. Although she began as an expressionist artist, her experience in New York during the 1960s led her to produce canvases with pure and strident acrylic pigments in a style that Marta Traba described as "sensitive geometry." Her use of repetitive designs and her experiments both with strident juxtapositions of color and the air brush connect Calderón to Op Art and Neo-figuration. On the other hand, her themes and the way she rendered figures and objects during this period, as well as the flat look of her paintings, reflect an association with Pop Art, a concern for urban culture and socio-political issues.

In "Countdown," a bright turquoise square surrounds a central orange rhombus that contains a lavender circle, split down the middle with mirror images of a woman's face and the open palms of her hands. Only the color of the woman's skin interrupts the otherwise total symmetry of the composition. It was painted the same year as Calderón's piece "July 67," for which she received first prize in an exhibition in San Salvador, where the judges included Traba and the Ecuadorian artist Guayasamín.

In later years, Calderón's style changed toward softer edges and milder color combinations, mostly in still-lives and pseudo-landscapes that often incorporate the female figure. In the late 1980s, she produced an important group of works entitled "The Panama Series: Winds of Rage," images that made reference to the military dictatorship and the opposition's protests, a unique body of work within Panamanian art, where references to political issues have been surprisingly rare.

Far removed for any sort of figuration, **Antonio Alvarado** (b. 1938) is one of the few purely abstract painters in Panama. A self-taught artist, Alvarado as a young man found a mentor in Alberto Dutary, who in the early 1960s offered him and Coqui Calderón guidance and space to work in his studio. Alvarado found inspiration for his work in the Abstract Expressionist painters of the United States, as well as in Japanese art to which he became exposed through a UNESCO grant that allowed him to travel to Japan. This experience left a mark on his style, particularly in terms of his ability to reduce a composition to its simplest elements. A gestural painter and a lyrical abstractionist, Alvarado has spent his career exploring the possibilities of color and composition. A painting such as "Gotama No. 3" illustrates his ability to infuse his canvases with light and to achieve harmony through inspired strokes of color. The calligraphic quality and the almost musical nature of his abstractions are unique in Panamanian art, but relate strongly to the work of the Brazilian Manabu Mabe, a telling comparison considering Alvarado's Japanese experience.

Although he began as an abstract painter, **Mario Calvit** (b. 1933) is better known today as a sculptor and a figurative artist. He was trained at the Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas in Panama. His paintings, which follow a lyrical vein, tend to focus on images of women, landscapes and horses that suggest a message of spiritual content rather than real description. Loose, dynamic strokes and delicate textures are the vehicles for the creation of imaginary landscapes where color and light are more poetic than real.

In "Cabalgando con Viento Norte" (Riding with North Wind), Calvit depicts a horse and rider in mid-air, amongst layers of pink, gray and white clouds. The horse and figure, composed of gestural strokes in a dramatic combination of gray and white, seem to occupy a place in the mind rather than on land, a metaphor for man himself.

Adrienne Samos has referred to this small painting as a "a mix of landscape, abstraction and figuration" that is a masterpiece because of its "exquisite simplicity and perfect balance of form and color." Curiously, most of Calvit's sculptures are completely abstract, often in iron and created through soldering, hammering, casting and assemblage. In a nation with very few sculptors, Calvit has made a valuable contribution. In addition, he has played an important role in creating a precedent—through the textures and forms of his abstract paintings—for artists such as Teresa Icaza and Raúl Vásquez.

The 1970s and 80s: Political Dictatorship and Artistic Boom

In October 1968, military forces in Panama took over the government, thereby initiating a period of dictatorship that would last for 21 years. Curiously, in spite of restrictions on speech and the press, it was a period of increased cultural activity, in part because the military government established institutions that offered the necessary infrastructure for artistic development. It was also a time of economic growth that saw art galleries established and increased interest in collecting art.

Teresa Icaza (b. 1940), a self-taught artist, began to exhibit in the 1970s, mostly abstractions based on geometric structures, neutral colors and the use of collage and thick textures. The mysterious light of those early compositions was present in her enigmatic paintings of subsequent years, which had more color and recurring images of planets or asteroids, seemingly floating in outer space. Towards the 1990s, Icaza turned to painting trees and reflecting water in landscapes with vibrant colors, dramatic, nostalgic compositions that have been described as lyrical landscapes or imaginary jungles.

In her latest works, such as "Navegante" (Voyager), Icaza has begun a new phase of abstraction with exuberant, almost explosive, colors that evince a lib-



Teresa Icaza

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Navegante (Voyager), 2003
Collection of the artist,
Panama



Olga Sinclair

•

Naturaleza Muerta
(Still Life), 2000

Private collection,
Panama

erating step in a creative process that has lasted 30 years. Whereas her early works were meditative

and almost monochromatic, these new collages are highly expressive, the product of an apparently spontaneous, but actually quite labor-intensive technique. The painted brushstrokes and the hundreds of strips of paper—from thick sheets to tissue—glued onto the canvas seem to surge, meet, intertwine, and spread out like flames. As if in a modern dance, they have a fluid and easy rhythm, but are actually the consequence of many years of trial and dedication. In "Navegante," a red and orange medusa with the shape and volume of a human heart floats through a deep blue environment, like an animal in the sea, or a soul through time.

Expressive color is the hallmark of the paintings of **Olga Sinclair** (b. 1957), who studied initially with her father Alfredo Sinclair and began to exhibit on her own in the 1970s. Showing a preference for the human figure from early on—first in charcoal drawings and later in paintings of pastel colors—Olga Sinclair's work was described in 1982 by the renowned critic José Gómez Sicre as "subtle, evocative, subjective, and extremely lyrical, providing only a schematic vision of reality." Over time, as her colors became more intense, her canvases grew larger, her figures became more anecdotal, and her still-lives more refined.

In the late 1990s, Sinclair's work leapt forward as she let herself be challenged purely by color, leaving behind the description of characters and stories. She initiated a phase in which the human figure became subjugated by color, transformed into an element that serves to communicate humanity and dynamism.

Olga Sinclair's still-life paintings of recent years, such as "Naturaleza Muerta" (Still Life) (2002) reflect, in comparison to her earlier work, a great coloristic freedom and a welcome pictorial maturity. Rather than mere objects, the fruit have transformed themselves into shape, color and sensual voluptuousness, reflecting a renewed focus on abstract values. Her paintings have become enveloping, intimate visions of color.

Amalia Tapia (b. 1949) is a painter whose work reflects an attitude that is both emotional and esthetic in relation to style and subject matter. After studying initially with Juan Manuel Cedeño in the 1970s, Tapia began to exhibit watercolors of landscapes and plants, and later, oil paintings of unusual objects from every day life, such as coconuts or jeans or the back of torn canvases, with a surrealist twist. With Tapia, objects always have meanings beyond their appearance. Starting in the 1980s, her collages and paintings became increasingly sophisticated, poetic visions of everyday objects, in works that seem to float between reality and illusion. Her eclectic still-lives make reference to absence or memories through the depiction of empty boxes, locks, abandoned toys, or bits of letters or newspapers, in the nostalgic atmosphere that permeates her compositions.

Coinciding with the handover of the canal to Panama in 1999, Tapia turned to painting scenes of the locks, waterways and ships, a surprisingly uncommon subject in the art of this country. Based on sketches made "en plein air," Tapia's "Bahía" (Bay) (2002) shows a ship docked at the Port of Balboa, drenched in early morning light. The illumination is soft, almost poetic, creating an atmospheric, vaporous image that the artist achieves with short, bold, impressionistic brushstrokes. The haziness of the sky and the water, and the misty light that bathes the scene, are reminiscent of the seascapes by the Romantic British artist J. M. W. Turner, whose influence was so important to the French Impressionists and now to this Panamanian artist. In "Bahía," a series of horizontal planes create the illusion of depth: the water in the foreground, the softened edges of the ship, the shadows of the land and Ancon Hill in the center, and a broad stretch of sky toward the top that occupies the greater part of the composition. The sky seems brooding and melancholy, and the ship offers a visual anchor, while the water shimmers with orange and yellow light over its green depths. Tapia's view of the canal converts an arid, contemporary and yet historical topic into a vision of poetry and light.

Like Tapia, **David Solís** (b. 1953) began his career as a student at the University of Panama's School of Architecture and as a watercolor artist. However, his life changed direction in 1975 when he won a grant to study art in France, where he still lives today. Although for many years he focused on watercolor landscapes and urban scenes of Panama, Solís gained artistic renown when he began to exhibit his oil paintings in the late 1980s. Paintings such as "Segunda Ronda" (Second Watch) condense many of the elements that have typified his works over the last 10 years: dark, rich colors, lugubrious characters, deformed human figures, and the use of extremely high or very low horizon lines. Above all, he has a noteworthy sense of composition, through which he distorts traditional perspective, creating space and proportions that are disconcerting, with the main purpose of offering his own critical interpretation of human nature. In many of his paintings, Solís achieves a magical, mysterious ambiance in which light and color are the real protagonists. Tones of blue and rose, in addition to ominous shadows, grant "Second Watch" a nocturnal feeling and air of melancholy. The artist paints his personal myths, the product of a combination of his heritage, his European experiences, and a deep concern about the world situation in our times. Solís considers painting a commitment and a political act through which the artist reacts to the excess of technology and consumerism in the world.



Amalia Tapia

Bahía (Bay), 2002

Collection Mr. Juan David Morgan, Panama

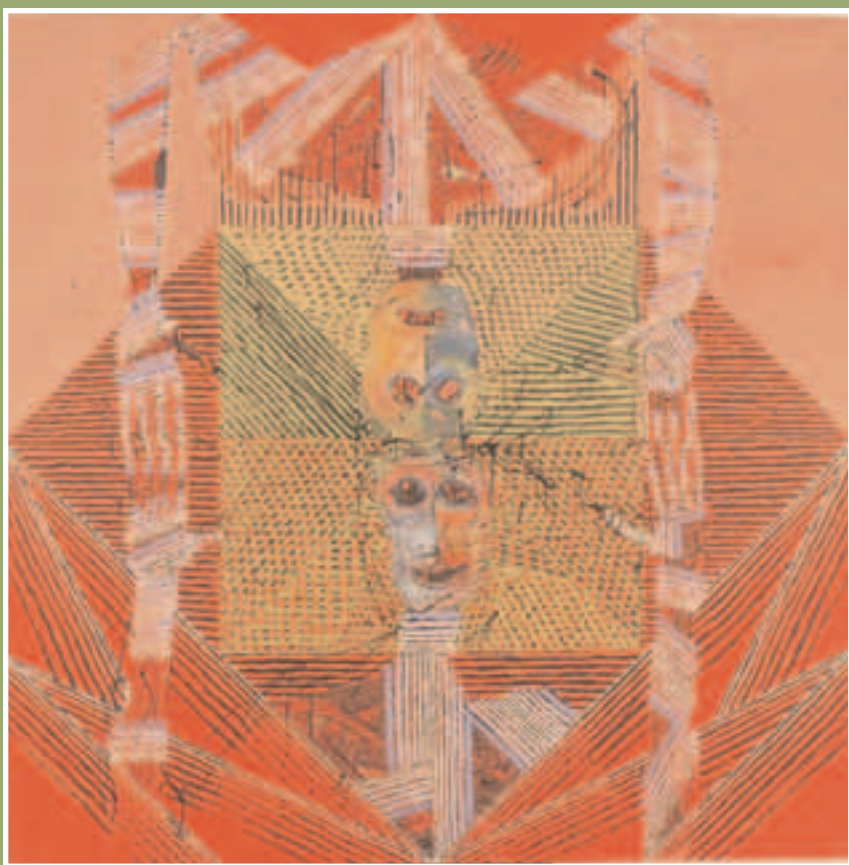
David Solís

Segunda Ronda

(Second Watch), 2002

Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Eloy Alfaro,
Panama





Tabo Toral

Pata Milkshake II (Pata
Milkshake II), 2001
Collection of the artist,
Panama



Raúl Vásquez

El Juega Conejos (The
Rabbit Juggler), 1989
Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Marcelo Narbona,
Panama

Tabo Toral (b. 1950) became known in the 1970s for his abstract paintings based on grid-like substructures and geometric concepts, with repetitive horizontal lines of color, over which the artist painted calligraphic strokes in black. During the subsequent decade, while he was living in the United States, Toral developed a completely different style, based mainly on semi-mechanical figures that reflected the influence of graffiti art and urban life, as well as the fact that he was painting murals. Upon his return to Panama in the 1990s, Toral began to paint in a surprising combination of his two previous, and almost opposite, styles, a new language in which the abstract structure provides the base for figurative elements, usually figures of women.

"Pata Milkshake II," a large canvas in tones of red, pink, green and light blue, consists of the heads, shoulders and arms of two figures, one right side up and one upside down. They are joined at the top of their heads and the tips of their fingers, and although the composition is apparently symmetrical, the figures are not identical. Their skeletal faces have disquieting, empty eyes and upturned mouths that, when considered upside down, are frowns. Combining elements reminiscent of both Pop and Op Art, Toral fills the surface of his canvas with numerous and repetitive horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines of candy-like colors, over which he paints the sometimes doll-like human figures. The message is one of humorous irony, as the women in his paintings often appear to be bound, expressionless, or contradictory, certainly never as playful as his style.

Mirror images of hares and the figure of a shaman provide the focus of "El Juego Conejos" (The Rabbit Juggler) by **Raúl Vásquez** (b. 1954), an artist who began to exhibit in the 1970s. His first show in 1989 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Panama, entitled "Sorcerer's Apprentice," brought him well-deserved public attention. His paintings are characterized by earthy colors, invented creatures and rituals, and a variety of figurative elements that stem from his knowledge of Shamanism. He is interested in themes related to ancestral roots, pre-Columbian images, and the rites and traditions of the region of Azuero, where he lives in the town of La Villa de Los Santos. Vásquez's style and colors often recall the work of artists such as Tamayo and Toledo, which is not surprising considering the time he spent in Mexico, where he claims to have "vibrated with the art and the people's roots."

"Juego Conejos" is typical of Vásquez's textured paintings with incised drawings and chimerical creatures. Two brownish gray hares are shown within a circle that is held by a juggler, a monstrous figure with bared black teeth and clawed hands. Rabbits are attributed with wide-ranging symbolism both in traditional legends as well as in Western art, related to sexual energy and regenerative potency as well as astuteness and a power of self-preservation. As with many of Vásquez's compositions, this canvas deals with the theme of the opposition and the integration between the animal and the human spirit. The painting represents the force of the larger monster against the smaller but cleverer rabbits, and takes on completely different connotations when one considers it was on exhibit precisely at the time of the U.S. invasion of Panama on December 20, 1989.

Crisis and the End of a Dictatorship

The painting "Aguas Turbias" (Muddy Waters) by **Isabel de Obaldía** (b. 1957) makes overt reference, in her highly colored, neo-expressionist style, to Panama's difficult political situation at the end of the 1980s. During those years, de Obaldía employed thick paint and heavy strokes to create disconcerting paintings of often painfully contorted figures as well as lush, exotic and sensuous landscapes that acknowledged Panama's abundant tropical vegetation.

The expressive distortion of figures and landscapes peaked in de Obaldía's series of paintings entitled "ManiObras" (ManOeuvres), produced in 1989, at the height of Panama's political crisis. Large format works such as "Aguas Turbias," among the works of that series, made reference to the oppression and injustice Panamanians suffered under the military dictatorship, which included the decapitation of an influential opponent, the dumping of bodies into the sea, illegal arrests, and total control over the media. The painting, divided into a bright yellow sky and, further down, a sea-land of blues and browns, depicts two human figures, one of whom has his head stuck in the water, as an ostrich would in the earth. To his right, stands a decapitated man with water up to his waist. They represent two different attitudes in relation to the critical situation: one who refuses to see what is happening and hides in powerlessness and shame, and the other, a cynic who crosses his arms and presumes there is nothing one can do. Two all-seeing eyes—an ever-present element in de Obaldía's work—loom above the figures in the painting.

Brooke Alfaro (b. 1949) is one of the few artists in Panama who painted a scene of the invasion in December, 1989. Titled simply "20" (for the date of the military attack), the painting shows a far away view of Panama City's downtown neighborhood of San Felipe with flames that light up the night sky. According to the artist, the figure looking on from above is the responsible party: a character with one blue eye and one brown eye, half Panamanian, half North American. For years, Alfaro's beautifully executed paintings have focused on human figures in compositions that mock Catholic imagery, political power, and the quirks of Latin American society. He finds inspiration in masters like Rembrandt and Bosch, but also in the lives of the poor, particularly the people who inhabit the rundown colonial center of Panama City, where Alfaro lived for more than 10 years.

By the 1990s, Alfaro's paintings had become replete with human figures, deformed characters and a plethora of details that offer broad iconographic and literary interpretative possibilities. "Brindis" (Toast) (1991) echoes the style of the Cuzco school of painting, specifically images of the Virgin Mary, replaced here by a naked woman with a pathetic face carrying not a child, but three tiny adult figures, one of whom touches her bare breast as if in rejection. Behind her is part of a brass bed, and beneath her, a crescent moon, a symbol of virginity and motherhood. Tears from the eyes of one of the figures in the woman's arm spill into a golden chalice held at the bottom of the painting by a dwarfish man, who represents the Church. Eight pink roses and rays of light emanating from the woman's head complete this highly ironic vision of a saint. The painting is typical of Alfaro's work at the time, which employed melodrama, sexual tension, and human deformation to comment on religious and social mores.



Isabel de Obaldía

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Aguas Turbias (Muddy Waters), 1989
Collection of Mr. Horacio Icaza, Panama



Brooke Alfaro

•

Brindis (Toast), 1991

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Marcelo Narbona, Panama

The man in "Tres" (Three) is based on the figure of a neighbor in downtown San Felipe who was a model for Alfaro. The strong, bare-chested young man stands alone in a frontal pose, with one eye staring out and the other looking away. The canvas demonstrates Alfaro's impressive ability to paint and his penchant for irony and political statement. In his right hand, the man holds a large knife, and the fist of his left hand releases a mysterious stream of white smoke. A strange, disembodied, lighter-skinned hand appears across his chest like the omnipotent hand of catholic imagery, but in lieu of the stigmata, a cascade of blood pours out from under it onto a small cloud. By design, the composition is tense, ambiguous and perturbing.

A New Era for Panama

For Panamanians, the last decade of the 20th century was one of key developments and great adaptations. The problems of the previous decade and the U.S. military invasion were major traumas that affected Panamanians deeply and would only be overcome over time. For the first time in 20 years, the nation had a democratic government, and the armed forces had been dissolved. In addition, the nation faced the task of absorbing the Canal Zone and preparing for the handover of the canal in late 1999. On the cultural front, it was a time of renewal, as institutions resumed activities and art exhibitions were again held, both at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo and the Instituto Nacional de Cultura. Government support and funding for the arts were limited, however, and continue to be to this day. New art galleries were established, and the older ones, which had come to a virtual standstill in prior years, renewed their activities.

A major impetus for contemporary art came with the establishment of the Bienal de Arte de Panamá (Panama Art Biennial), which has held exhibitions every two years since 1992. The Biennials made it possible for artists of all levels and ages to take part in a periodic group show, with international juries and professionally produced catalogs that promoted recent Panamanian art known abroad. Without a doubt, the Biennials have offered the most prestigious non-commercial space for art in Panama, thereby reinforcing the development of a new generation of artists.

Unlike earlier years, Panamanian art in the 1990s grew in new directions as artists experimented with innovative ideas and techniques, enjoying the freer environment afforded by democracy. In addition to a large group of painters, there has been an upsurge of young people coming to art from other professions such as journalism, architecture, graphic design, and advertising. Recent works of art have come to reflect urban issues such as Panama City's uncontrolled and idiosyncratic development, ecological problems like deforestation and pollution, and the social and political concerns of the new generation. Not surprisingly, photography, videos, installations, sculpture and computer art have occupied a position of ever-increasing importance within the realm of self-expression. As Panama celebrates its first centennial, the possibilities for cultural growth and the horizon for the arts seem broader than ever.

Mónica E. Kupfer
Associate Curator for the Exhibition



Brooke Alfaro

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Tres (Three), 1996

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Roberto Rodríguez, Panama

List of Artists and Works

Roberto Lewis

b. Panama City, Panama, 1874 - d. Panama City, Panama, 1949



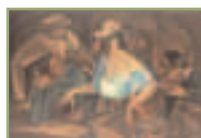
Tamarindos (Tamarind Trees), 1942

Oil on canvas
76.2 x 122 cms.

Collection of the Embassy of the Republic of Panama to the United States, Washington, DC

Juan Manuel Cedeño

b. La Villa de Los Santos, Panama, 1914 - d. Panama City, Panama, 1997



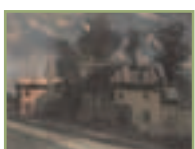
Las Celestinas (The Procureesses), 1968

Oil on canvas
145 x 98 cms.

Collection of Mrs. Shirley Berger, Panama

Manuel E. Amador

b. Santiago de Veraguas, Panama, 1909 - d. Panama City, Panama, 1952



Fesuuhes, 1912

Oil on wood
38.10 x 48.26 cms.
Collection of Mr. César Pereira B., Panama

Isaac Benítez

b. Panama City, Panama, 1927 - d. Panama City, Panama, 1968



Mar Revuelto (Stormy Sea), c. 1961

Industrial paint on wood
58.42 x 74.93 x 5.08 cms.
Collection of Mr. and Mrs.

John Maduro, Panama

Maternidad (Maternity), c. 1945

Oil on wood
62 x 54 cms.
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Guillermo Trujillo, Panama



Alfredo Sinclair

b. Panama City, Panama, 1915



Sin Título (Untitled), 1960
Mixed media on canvas
87.63 x 121.92 x 5.08 cms.
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. George Zelenka, Panama

Humberto Ivaldi

b. Panama City, Panama, 1909 - d. Panama City, Panama, 1947



Tambor de Orden, n/d
Oil
57 x 42 cms.
Collection of the LIMCA Foundation, Panama

Mancha (Stain), 1971

Oil on canvas
43.18 x 46.36 cms.
Permanent Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Panama



Eudoro Silvera

b. David, Panama, 1917
Bodegón con Piña (Still Life with Pineapple), 1951
Oil on canvas
37 x 44 cms.
Collection of Mr. Adolfo Arias, Panama

Guillermo Trujillo

b. Horconcitos, Panama, 1927



Iconografía del Cantoral Chocoe
(Iconography of the Chocoe
Hymnbook), 1972

Oil on canvas

87 x 93 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo
Wiznitzer, Panama

Tres Maestros (Three

Masters), 1988

Oil on canvas

76.20 x 91.44 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
Leo Wiznitzer, Panama



Alberto Dutary

b. Panama City, Panama, 1932 - d. Panama City,
Panama, 1998



Personajes al Crepúsculo (Figures at
Twilight), 1960

Oil and collage on canvas

96.52 x 119.38 cms.

Collection of the Art Museum of
the Americas, Organization of
American States, Washington, DC, Gift of Mr.
Joseph Cantor

Manuel Chong Neto

b. Panama City, Panama, 1927



Personajes con Buitre, Perro y
Bufón (Characters with Vulture,
Dog and Buffoon), 1970

Oil on canvas

91.44 x 121.92 cms.

Collection of the artist, Panama

Adriano Herrerabarría

b. Panama City, Panama, 1928



Balseros en el Tiempo (Rafters
through Time), 1995

Tempera and oil on canvas

58.42 x 76.20 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
Fernando Eleta, Panama

Trixie Briceño

b. London, England, 1911 - d. Sun City, Arizona,
1985



País Incógnito (Incognito Nation),
1970

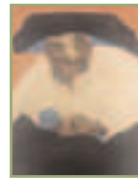
Oil on canvas

109.22 x 91.44 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jean
Claude Augrain, Panama

Julie Zachrisson

b. Panama City, Panama, 1930



Alucinado (Hallucinated), 1976

Mixed media on wood

100 x 80 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
Rodrigo Eisenmann,
Panama

Coqui Calderón

b. Panama City, Panama, 1938



Countdown (Cuenta Regresiva),
1967

Acrylic on canvas

102 x 102 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Jean
Claude Augrain, Panama

Olga Sánchez

b. Panama City, Panama, 1921



Larga Espera (Long Wait), 1961

Oil on canvas

92 x 65 cms.

Permanent Collection of the
Museum of Contemporary Art,
Panama

Antonio Alvarado

b. Le Havre, France 1938



Gotama Nº 3 (Gotama No. 3), 1983

Acrylic

107.95 x 107.95 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Eloy
Alfaro, Panama

Marie Calvit

b. Panama City, Panama, 1933



Cabalgando con Viento Norte
(*Riding with North Wind*), 1984

Mixed media on paper
30 x 40 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. José
Fierro, Panama

Olga Sinclair

b. Panama City, Panama, 1957



Naturaleza Muerta (Still Life),
2000

Oil on canvas
76.2 x 99.06 cms.

Private collection, Panama

Tabo Teral

b. Boquete, Panama, 1950



Pata Milkshake II (Pata Milkshake
II), 2001

Oil on canvas
149.86 x 149.86 cms.

Collection of the artist, Panama

Raúl Vásquez

b. La Villa de Los Santos, Panama, 1954



El Juego Conejos (The Rabbit
Juggler), 1989

Oil on canvas
115.57 x 115.57 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs.

Marcelo Narbona, Panama

Teresa Icaza

b. Panama City, Panama, 1940



Navegante (Voyager), 2003

Oil and collage on canvas
101.60 x 101.60 cms.

Collection of the artist, Panama

Isabel de Obaldía

b. Washington, D.C., 1957



Aguas Turbias (Muddy Waters),
1989

Oil on canvas
101.60 x 152.40 cms.

Collection of Mr. Horacio

Icaza, Panama

Amalia Tapia

b. Panama City, Panama, 1949



Bahía (Bay), 2002

Oil on canvas
121.92 x 152.40 cms.

Collection of Mr. Juan David
Morgan, Panama

Brooke Alfaro

b. Panama City, Panama, 1949



Brindis (Toast), 1991

Oil on canvas
101.60 x 76.20 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Marcelo
Narbona, Panama

David Solís

b. Panama City, Panama, 1953



Segunda Ronda (Second Watch),
2002

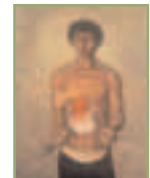
Oil on canvas
119.38 x 119.38 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Eloy
Alfaro, Panama

Tres (Three), 1996

Oil on canvas
101.60 x 76.20 cms.

Collection of Mr. and Mrs.
Roberto Rodríguez, Panama



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The IDB Cultural Center

The IDB Cultural Center was created in 1992 by Enrique V. Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The Center has two primary objectives: 1) to contribute to social development by administering a grants program that sponsors and co-finances small-scale cultural projects that will have a positive social impact in the region, and 2) to promote a better image of the IDB member countries, with emphasis on Latin America and the Caribbean, through culture and increased understanding between the region and the rest of the world, particularly the United States.

Cultural programs at headquarters feature new as well as established talent from the region. Recognition granted by Washington, D.C. audiences and press often helps propel the careers of new artists. The Center also sponsors lectures on Latin American and Caribbean history and culture, and supports cultural undertakings in the Washington, D.C. area for the local Latin American and Caribbean communities, such as Spanish-language theater, film festivals, and other events.

The IDB Cultural Center Exhibitions and the Concerts and Lectures Series stimulate dialogue and a greater knowledge of the culture of the Americas. The Cultural Development in the Field Program funds projects in the fields of youth cultural development, institutional support, restoration and conservation of cultural patrimony, and the preservation of cultural traditions. The IDB Art Collection, gathered over several decades, is managed by the Cultural Center and reflects the relevance and importance the Bank has achieved after four decades as the leading financial institution concerned with the development of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

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Exhibition Committee

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Curator

Mónica E. Kypfer

Associate Curator for the Exhibition

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The Cultural Center

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Soledad Guerra

Assistant General Coordinator

Anne Vena

Concerts and Lectures Coordinator

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November 6, 2003 to January 16, 2004
11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday

