

Rosado del Valle in retrospect

A retrospective of the works of Julio Rosado del Valle opened Saturday at the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. The exhibit of more than 100 paintings, sculptures and murals show different stages of the artist at work from 1940 to the present.

Consultants to the exhibit, organized by the plastic arts program, include Dr. Fernando Monserrate and Dr. Amaury Rosa-Silva who are collectors of the artist's work.

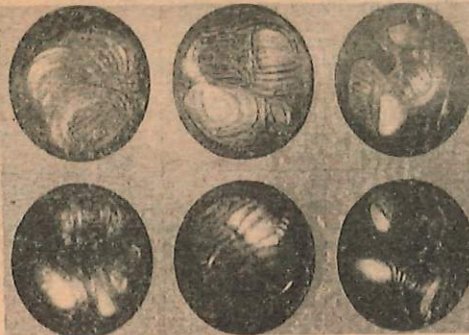
Julio Rosado del Valle was born in Catano in 1922 and had his first one-man show in 1944 at Bayamon high school. A student of Cristobal Ruiz, Rosado del Valle obtained a scholarship from the University of Puerto Rico to study at the New School of Social Research in New York. He also studied at the fine arts academy in Florence. He returned to Puerto Rico in 1949 and exhibited his work at the Ateneo Puer-torriqueno.

Along with Jose Antonio Torres Martino, Lorenzo Homar, Rafael Tufino and Felix Rodriguez Baez, Rosado del Valle founded the Centro de Arte Puer-torriqueno in 1950. In 1952, he won the gold medal in the Mural Painting Exhibition, sponsored by the



Architectural League in New York.

Rosado del Valle has participated in numerous group exhibits. In 1957, he received a Guggenheim fellowship and in 1965 the "Friends of Puerto Rico" in New York gave him its gold medal. His murals are featured at the Caribe Hilton Hotel, the Medical Center and Einstein High School. On these pages are examples of the artist's work from STAR file photos.



Julio Rosado del Valle's memories of his native Catano are filled with ships and sails and the sea, which may account for his penchant for building sailboats. The artist is shown with two of his models. Above is his painting, "Nina de la Sombrija." At left, an oil on the theme of fertility, Mother Earth.

By FELIX BONILLA NORAT
Special to the STAR

Of course, dear future Goya, with magic you don't need any art school to become a great painter.

There's not much to painting itself, anyway; ask any child in kindergarten: they know how to mix colors and how to apply them. If you need professors for those primeval facts of painting life, you've missed your kindergarten nowadays or else you have been misled by coupon mentality: food coupons are your federal right. Eat them.

Men were great painters long before modern art academies were invented a few centuries ago, and before the medieval guilds or unions of painters. In Paleolithic times men who knew nothing about agriculture, village streets, coupons, the movies or the bomb, but who had quick hunter eyes and the necessary magic, painted beautiful animals on cave walls in remarkably true-to-life motion. I suspect they had art academies, however, since small portable copies of significant bison in one cave have been found in caves 200 miles away, twice the distance from Humacao to Mayaguez.

It took modern movies to show us how badly and how recently painters like Leonardo, Velazquez and Goya painted horses in motion: their horses look like dogs, prancing with two legs at a time. Very stupid of Goya, Velazquez and Leonardo: they had no real hunter eyes as we can grandly announce now...after the movies.

So if you are a hunter, don't go to art school, just start painting. It is chic to claim to be self-taught in life, as Picasso and Francisco Rodon have claimed, and a "primitivist" as douanier Rousseau or our Manuel Hernandez Acevedo can really claim.

If as a hunter you are called "primitivist", it's your fault: you didn't teach yourself beyond basics. To teach yourself you need will power, not a coupon mentality. Then you must be able to read any number of books

A school for Goyas

on art and culture including philosophy, science and history simply by touching and quickly glancing through the books, understanding them without really reading them as you profoundly discourse about them with the best spirits of your time. If those spirits respect what you think about the books, you will make it as a painter nowadays.

But since Puerto Ricans on the average are lazy and read very little, maybe you'd better go to art school and listen to your professors and student friends talk about books as you also paint in earnest. There are only about 2,000 books in our Plastic Arts School now, not all about painting, so you have a small start in life. Then, of course, you need to visit world museums beyond Ponce's. Museums are schools by themselves, cheer up.

I mention these things, dear future Goya, because eyes alone do not a painter make: it takes ideas to paint or even tango nowadays. The quick painter's eye was left behind by the camera's much quicker and more testimonial eye. You do have the binocular vision necessary to judge three-dimensional space, while the camera does not, normally. But three-dimensionality in modern art is considered a Baroque lie and sin, most taboo. So falter what you see: better go to art school.

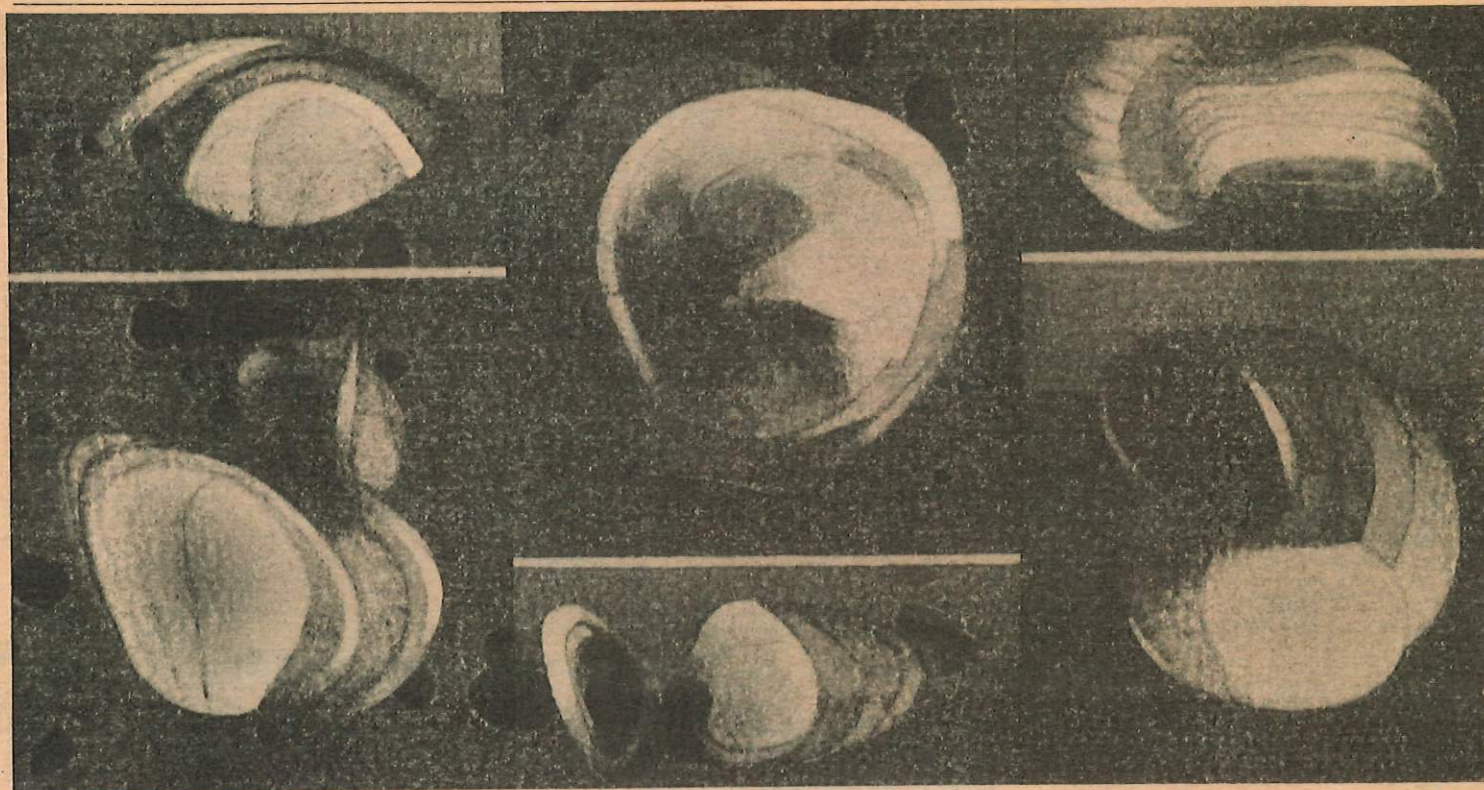
Here's the reasons why I claim our Institute of Culture's Plastic Arts School is for our future independent-minded and divinely impatient Goyas or Picassos: high school graduation occurs quite late in a future painter's life, so the impatient ones will want to be painting or sculpting all the time as they almost do in the Institute's Art School but not in the University of Puerto Rico art courses.

Both curriculums are wrong; the UPR's bachelor of arts degree admits only 19 credits in art workshop or laboratory courses as against 129 total credits, let's say one perceptual workshop course per six conceptual or theory classes. The Institute's Plastic Arts School reverses the proportions: six workshop courses for about every conceptual course. Yet both grant "bachelor of arts" "degrees suitable for teaching art in the public schools of Puerto Rico, but not suitable for pursuing a master's degree in just any American university.

To pursue a master in fine arts degree our UPR art graduates are penalized by having to take make-up workshop courses, sometimes as many as 20 more credits, depending on the university. Our Plastic Arts School graduates are not recognized academically since theirs is a bachelor's degree by legislative fiat in Puerto Rico. But as usual with Puerto Rican "foreign relations," the Institute already has interesting "arrangements" with three universities which do recognize our Institute graduates: they can pursue a master's degree at Mexico's Universidad Autonoma, Madrid's San Fernando Academy and New York's Pratt Institute. Only in those places, but notice that they are large cities with large museums, which works okay. They end by getting a Master's degree without the excessively conceptual UPR load of studies.

The Institute is negotiating with the Middle States Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges for fuller accreditation. As per their preliminary but "positive" finding, the Institute contemplates a "new program of studies", as was to be expected ever since Ricardo Alegria pushed his art school project through our legislature at a time when Jaime Benitez at the UPR was going slow on the matter. Both were right to be at odds: Benitez for patiently-serious-Academia's sake, Alegria for the sake of our future impatient Goyas. More power to both of them. But the problem remains unsolved.

Let us state right here our complete thought on offi-



Rosado del Valle's oil painting of sea shell forms, done for the Council on Higher Education.

cial art instruction: it isn't needed by the future Goyas and Picassos because they can absorb ideas magically and through quick-thumbing of books plus visiting the world art museum. Then they will earn their living through painting, absolutely not through teaching the arts. Only an artist's work counts in art, not his diplomas. The State doesn't consider most of the arts as dangerous or too "important;" therefore they aren't regulated. But architecture and public teaching are regulated, because they can become dangerous or are useful to the State's plans. Therefore, if the future Goyas expect to earn a living through teaching art in public schools, then they have to be regulated as benefits future bureaucrats of a sort. Goya and Picasso would laugh at them then.

It's very simple, isn't it, dear future Goya? Yours is the choice. Puerto Rico has designed for you two ways, right and left, to become an art teacher, and only one way to become a Goya, period. Of course you can become a Goya even if you go to the UPR, but then, somebody will always nag you: "Why did you waste so much time with Academe? were you afraid about earning a living as an artist, or are you mother-valenced?"

What will you answer to that, dear students of mine at the UPR? That Gauguin started painting when he was over 40 years old?

Remember, if I bring these points up it is because I too would like our UPR to have a complete bachelor in fine arts program with sufficient workshop or laboratory courses in each art field — plastic arts, drama and music — where only professional work counts. Just now the arts are small concentrations within the general humanities concentration and we end up by giving our students more history, philosophy and language than the regular students, since to their courses are added our art history, art philosophy and the language which makes up every art —, up to a total of 11 conceptual art credits and only 19 art workshop credits. Painters, musicians and theater people need some more real

Picassos may apply

workshop credits. Let's say one laboratory or real workshop credit per three conceptual ones, not a bad proportion for future professionals in the arts, including the future Goyas. We could almost attain that if our art history courses counted as general history, and aesthetics counted as philosophy in the humanities curriculum.

The Institute's Fine Arts School, besides its new curriculum programming, is working at enhancing its offerings. Recently, it inaugurated a small library as already mentioned, and boasts a "librarian" paid for by the Institute's "museums" budget. The school is not completely autonomous as to its budget: it depends on Father Institute to find such random funds, and as for benches, tables and other equipment, it got them when other agencies threw them out. I hope the polilla doesn't get at the books; the students and librarian seem alive, they are safe. Even with more students, budgets remain the same in these years of austerity.

The school has 26 professors and serves two kinds of students pursuing the bachelor degree: full time and part time ones, including the "listeners" who may get credit under some circumstances. Maria Somoza claims they also intend to open extension courses at night. Students from Aruba, the states, and other places including Santo Domingo are beginning to enroll.

The conceptual curriculum is taught mostly by UPR professors and includes general history, history of Puerto Rico, and history of ancient and modern art, also aesthetics, literature appreciation, including some of its history, introduction to music, and 15 University credits in art education; including seminar and classroom practice in public schools. The rest are work-

shop courses in painting, sculpture, graphics and artisan arts such as ceramics, mosaics, stained glass, scenography, calligraphy and two photo courses, though no moving-picture courses.

Students claim they need more materials for some of the courses, they get lots more than UPR students get, which is practically nothing. Should they all get it? Does that breed Goyas?

The school has yet to name an advisory board of "outside" members who will eventually work with an "inside" group of the professors, with student participation, to decide pertinent school courses and policies to merit future accreditation in the States.

Possibly the nicest sign of growth in the school is the recently inaugurated through badly lighted art gallery at its handsome central entrance under the rotunda, the succeeding room under the library, and possibly the entrance stairway spaces beyond. Director Felix Rodriguez Baez, who is a very good organizer as I know full well from previous occasions, was wearing his round Buddha smile as he passed the coffee during the inauguration.

"We are young yet", he said, "give us time. After this faulty show; we have three others coming up, including students' work. Makes for good working relationships in the classroom to have a "mano a mano" between professors and students."

Most of the work has been seen already and is logically conservative, not necessarily academic but tending to a "realistic" hunting vision of the world. Even Antonio Navia and Rafael Suarez, two abstractionists, seek a conceptual reality and their works mix well with that of the school "elders" such as Fran Cervoni, Augusto Marin, Myrna Baez and Luis Hernandez Cruz. They can all help any future Goyas, I am sure. As for sculpture, Tomas Batista and Lopez del Campo seem aware enough in their work and personality to please any impatient Maillols or Henry Moores of the future. Our to the future, mano a mano!