

Nov. 6, 1977

ART

JULIO ROSADO

A RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION

By FELIX BONILLA
Special To The STAR

Julio Rosado del Valle has produced about 2,000 drawings—not counting fast-sketch pads which he fills like mad and leaves behind—and about a thousand paintings. That's very few by Picasso's standards, but a lot for Puerto Rico. We normally work less. Can any other Puerto Rican artist living or dead claim as many works of such consistently high quality?

And at 55, his body clear of the white lead dust and other poisons that almost killed him, Julio has a lot of painting yet to do.

Julio's body of work is the history of Puerto Rican painting and drawing in the last 37 years. His retrospective exhibition of 150 works at the Institute of Culture will help all of us to take stock and try anew.

Rosado is, as Picasso was, a "figurative" painter. None of their works is a complete abstraction, independent from reality. None is a complete withdrawal from worldly objects, or a real abstract idea or concept, or a visionary notion except Picasso's "Peace" which actually he named "Dove," or Julio's many circular seeds, snails and bugs which signify the earth's "life force."

Like Picasso, Rosado produces archetypal images and figures which meaningfully stick to our minds. Symbolic "Doves" are "Peace" and circular compositions are "Wombs," not "Tombs," as Julio paints them, ever so touchably and life-enhancingly. In none of the works is there an absence of mind from the here and now.

Picasso never disengaged himself from reality. Julio has been distracted, but his work is anchored in reality, both literally in his life and in the textural richness of the pigment in his works and the touchable pictorial matter which is richer than Picasso's. Too many modern painters work more as eyes than as



The artist working, 1961...

touching hands whereas Julio always caresses objects, paintings and sculptures by hand and eye.

"Abstraction" for both Rosado and Picasso means a synopsis of reality, a reduction or abridgement of reality, an "abstract" or summary, an epitome. Their works are condensed realities. Their styles are the formal quite "essential" result of condensation. It is in color and number of works that Julio is limited compared to Picasso, who ranged far afield where numbers and rainbows glow. Except for rare occasions, not too successful, Julio limits his palette to a few earth colors plus black and white. In the earlier more romantic works strong greens and blues appear. In his later works they turned silvery or grey, a muted world.

A most heartening discussion on Julio Rosado del Valle's work was held on Wednesday, Oct. 27, at the Institute of Culture, midst Julio's work on display. I was surprised that few artists came to size him up or down officially but many teachers and commentators did take part along with some 40 other persons. I hope the Institute continues this kind of activity, though mid-week is a bad time sometimes. Muralism in Plaza las Americas was another coinciding activity.

I was fascinated by Julio's symbolic silence and complete aplomb during those two hours when his work was being dissected. Like planet Earth, he seemed to be saying, "My work is done, let history take care of it."

Julio's principal gift for our arts was seen in the steady continuity and growth, the overall serious quality of his work, his subtle refined color, and his sensuous textures, making for his permanency as a decidedly important member in our art world. With qualities such as those it is immaterial or even silly to ask if he is a "vanguard" artist or our best painter, which I personally believe he is. But, I repeat, it is silly to discuss such things when artists and peers are alive. The important thing is that we get many more like him.

GALLERIES

CARNEGIE EXHIBITION HALL

Carnegie Library Ponce de Leon Ave. Stop 1. Puerta de Tierra. 724-1048. Open Mon. to Fr. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sat. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

CASA DEL LIBRO

255 Calle del Cristo 723-0354. Open Mon. To Fri. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sat. 2 to 5 p.m.

EL TRAPICHE GALLERY

200 Cristo St. San Juan. Open Mon. to Sat. 10 to 12 and 1 to 4 Sunday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Carved wooden birds by Elpidio Collazo

GALLERIA BOTELLO

208 Cristo St. 723-9987 Prints, painting and sculpture, mostly by Puerto Rican artists.

GALLERIA COABEY

Current Exhibition: Small paintings and drawings of well-known artists.

GALLERIA CONDADO

Convention Center. Open 11-7 every day. 723-6090 Ext. 1636. Exhibition of work by local artists.

GALERIA DE LA CASA CAMPECHE

200 Calle San Sebastian Open Tues. to Sat. 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. 723-5252.

GALERIA FOTOGRAFIA PL 900

Ponce de Leon 900, Santurce. Ponce de Leon 900, Santurce. 725-2617 open 9-5 daily except Tuesday and Wednesday. Photographs of Portugal by Robert Leith.

GALERIA LA CALETA

70 Caleta de San Juan, Old San Juan. 723-8627. Paintings and prints by proprietor Luis Caligas, ceramics, graphics and sculpture.

GALERIA MARIA RECHANY

Magdalena 1363. Open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon. to Sat. 725-4828. Paintings, and prints by Puerto Rican artists.

GALERIA OLLER

Calle Escorial 366, Caparra Hts. 782-3171. Open Tues to Thurs. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fri. 2-9; Sat. 9-2. Paintings and Graphics by Puerto Rican artists.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF PUERTO RICO

1396 Goergetti, Santurce. Mon. to Fri. 9 to 4. A summary of history of P.R. in antique objects.

INTERAMERICAN UNIVERSITY MUSEUM

IAU, San German, Beverly Student Center. Jewelry by Peter Aylen and Judith Connair.

MANOS

Convention Center, Condado. Contemporary ceramics by the Caparra Studio.

MUSEO DE BELLAS ARTES

Instituto de Cultura 253 Cristo St. 723-2320. Open every day 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oil, prints and graphics.

MUSEO DE LA ESCUELA DE ARTES PLASTICAS

El Morro Grounds. Mon. to Fri. 8 to 5. Sat. 2 to 5. Opening Saturday: Exhibit by Silk Screen Workshop students.

MUSEO DE LA FUNDACION

Behind Tapia Theater, Plaza Colon 725-5962. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mon. Indian Artifacts and sculpture. Current show: photographs, "Petroglifos de Borinquen" by Oscar Mendez Caratini.

MUSEO DEL GRABADO ALTINOAMERICANO

Casa de los Contrafuerzas. 101 San Sebastian St., Plaza San Jose second floor. Open every day from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

MUSEO DEL CONVENTO DE SANTO DOMINGO

Instituto de Cultura. Open every day 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Corner Cristo and Norzagaray, Plaza San Jose, 724-0700, 724-0702. Current show Retrospective show by Julio Rosado del Valle

PONCE MUSEUM OF ART

Las Americas Ave. 842-6215. Open Wed. to Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sun. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

SALON ISABEL II

City Hall, San Juan. Current show: paintings by Olga Reyes.

UPR MUSEUM

764-0000, Ext. 2452 or 2456. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sundays, 10 to 5. Current show. "Barroco Paraguayo"

