

Ateneo award and other bad uses of color

helterskelter in composition. Other "youngsters," such as Edwin Rosado, color local shapes well but go bananas with flat black in the background as does the only honorable mention.

All the works in the Ateneo show are marred including the winners. But the jury was right because the selected works have either magic or metaphor working for them.

The first prize, "El Visitante," by Juan Ramon Velazquez is a suggestive drawing—not painting—of an upright figure, an alien shape in lead pencil grays visiting an inhospitable brown room. Two pictures, also in lead pencil grays, hang on the walls or they could be windows to a more hospitable exterior landscape. The "Visitante" title is a good metaphor. Similar lead pencil drawings on ink-washed backgrounds by Velazquez were not as magically woven as this one, and it merits the prize for its metaphoric spell.

A similar metaphoric quality is seen in "Prehistoria negra del petroleo," by Carlos (Suenos) Ortiz who won the only Honorable Mention. Against a jet black background, the only relief is a horizontal chalky-gray line and some brownish curlicues. It is a very economical picture but it is an ink wash, not a real painting as normally expected in Ateneo contests.

It could be said of the jurors that they consider two drawings with black and brown ink washes better than our normal paintings. An onlooker could claim that the jurors are imperialistically educating us to continue to see reality in colonial blacks and browns only, not in color. But I don't blame them. Great painting needs both good color and good form plus metaphor and if the form is poetically suggestive even in only adequate color, it should win the prize. It is an adequate prize at least.

ANTONIO LOPEZ AT THE INSTITUTE

Thwarted by the Ateneo show, I thoroughly enjoyed the display of optical color by Antonio Lopez at the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. He is deeply into the study of prismatic color relationships as they impinge on the spectator's eye. We need such an artist here with the necessary vim and patience. I hope he gets students with patience too.

The first works are like language exercises with no great emphasis on formal content other than simple squares such as those in our Muestra Nacional. Later works suggest atmospheric landscapes, since geography will out. Now let's hope that the gods and goddesses will come out too if only as totems. Especially if driven by the passionate id or animal within all of use. Everything can be said in the prismatic language of color, although naturally, the great paintings with the greatest magic and poetic metaphors of life, death and alienation, take more time and some luck.

BOTELLO AND PALOMAS GALLERIES

Two excellent shows grace Galeria Botello and Galeria Palomas.

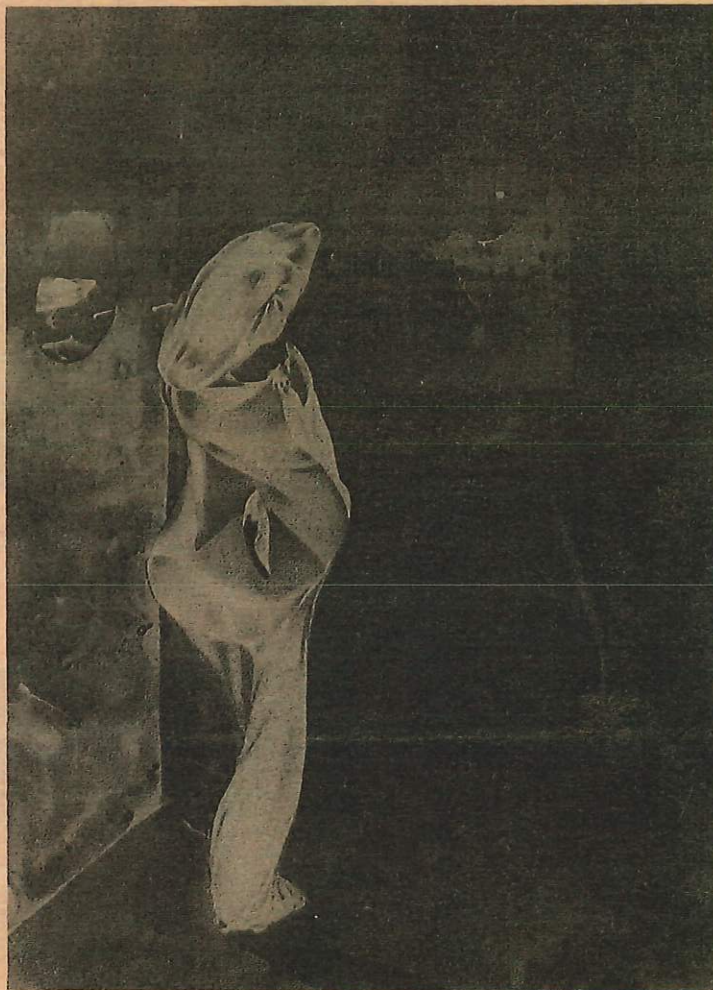
Palomas has a good sampling of Puerto Rican art. I am happy to see that the colorful planar abstractions by Raul Zayas Lopez are beginning to catch on. Colorful figurations by Roberto Moya and other artists enliven the walls, but tonal works prevail.

At Galeria Botello five professional artists are featured: Julio Rosado del Valle with two nice temperas, Augusto Marin with an impressively large rhythmic work, Rolando Lopez Dirube with several excellent crayon pencil drawings of realistic nudes and a fine naked, uncolored and unvarnished planar wood abstraction by Luis Hernandez Cruz which seems to have been done to exorcise his normal use of good color. It is nice to know that he can get away from color, the better to catch it next time.

Fernando de Szyslo's recent paintings from Peru are resonant in color and strong in formal almost "neolithic" content but they seem to be overworked and unnecessarily dark, as if he got tired on the way. His previous batch of paintings were more emphatic and straight-forward but they seemed underworked. Even for a professional it is a see-saw to get the proper combination of color, form and finish. Botello Barros always gets good finish, good color, textures, and tone but he limits his forms. They are excuses to paint only.

AGUADILLA IN SAN JUAN

An unbelievably colorful exhibit by beginners is at the Carnegie Library. The works are by students in Antonio Loro's school in Aguadilla. The color is sophisticated and not blatant. Some pieces have fine fauvistic colors. Others remain post-impressionistic.



"El Visitante" by Juan Ramon Velazquez, winner of the \$3,000 first—and only—prize given by the Ateneo this year. There was an honorable mention, which went to Carlos (Suenos) Ortiz, without money.

The miracle of good color without blatant saturations is possible in Puerto Rico, if only in the west right now. The only trouble with the Aguadilla students is that they have to pursue formal style and drawing and good form. All the scenes use conventional realistic codes for their touristic images. Beyond the Fauves, they have to understand the cubistic

formal revolution without necessarily abandoning their subject or content.

HAITIAN PAINTING

This discussion on color in art is incomplete if we don't mention the Haitian works at the UPR Museum, which has already closed. But another Haitian show with added sculpture will soon open at Casa Blanca. We look forward to that time.

GALERIA LA CALETA

70 Caleta de San Juan. Old San Juan. 723-8627. M-Thurs. 10-6; Fri 10-3, Sat closed Sun. 1-6. Paintings and prints by proprietor Luis Cajigas, ceramics, graphics and sculpture. Current exhibit: Christmas season show of 300 works by 50 local artists.

GALERIA MUNICIPIO

City Hall, Old San Juan. Current show: Prints and posters by Luis G. Cajigas.

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.

GALERIA PALOMAS

207 Cristo St. Old San Juan 725-2660, 724-8904, 10-6 Mon-Thurs; 10-10 Fri.; 10-6 Sat.; Closed Sunday. Collection of Puerto Rican fine art including Photos, Ceramics, and Folk Art.

GALERIA RAQUEL

San Jose 257. Old San Juan. Mon. to Sat. 10-6. European oil paintings.

GALERIA SAN SEBASTIAN

104 San Sebastian St. Puerto Rican paintings and Sculpture. Current show. "Tintas" by Augusto Marin

INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

Convento de San Domingo, Old San Juan. Current show "Muestra Nacional de Pintura."

MANOS

Convention Center, Condado. Contemporary ceramics by the Caparra Studio. T-F 12-3; S&S 12-4.

INTERAMERICAN UNIVERSITY

San German Beverly Student Center. Current show: Art festival.

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.

MUSEO DEL GRABADO

LATINOAMERICANO

Casa de los Contrafuertes. 101 San Sebastian St. Plaza San Jose second floor. Open every day from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Current show: works by Juan Gomez Quiroz.

PLASTIC ARTS SCHOOL GALLERY

El Morro. Current show: works of photography and photo-graphics by students of Ramon Aboy.

UPR MUSEUM

Rio Piedras Campus. Open daily 9-9, Sat., Sun. 9-3.

Ateneo award and other bad uses of color

helterskelter in composition. Other "youngsters," such as Edwin Rosado, color local shapes well but go bananas with flat black in the background as does the only honorable mention.

All the works in the Ateneo show are marred including the winners. But the jury was right because the selected works have either magic or metaphor working for them.

The first prize, "El Visitante," by Juan Ramon Velazquez is a suggestive drawing—not painting—of an upright figure, an alien shape in lead pencil grays visiting an inhospitable brown room. Two pictures, also in lead pencil grays, hang on the walls or they could be windows to a more hospitable exterior landscape. The "Visitante" title is a good metaphor. Similar lead pencil drawings on ink-washed backgrounds by Velazquez were not as magically woven as this one, and it merits the prize for its metaphoric spell.

A similar metaphoric quality is seen in "Prehistoria negra del petroleo," by Carlos (Suenos) Ortiz who won the only Honorable Mention. Against a jet black background, the only relief is a horizontal chalky-gray line and some brownish curlicues. It is a very economical picture but it is an ink wash, not a real painting as normally expected in Ateneo contests.

It could be said of the jurors that they consider two drawings with black and brown ink washes better than our normal paintings. An onlooker could claim that the jurors are imperialistically educating us to continue to see reality in colonial blacks and browns only, not in color. But I don't blame them. Great painting needs both good color and good form plus metaphor and if the form is poetically suggestive even in only adequate color, it should win the prize. It is an adequate prize at least.

ANTONIO LOPEZ AT THE INSTITUTE

Thwarted by the Ateneo show, I thoroughly enjoyed the display of optical color by Antonio Lopez at the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture. He is deeply into the study of prismatic color relationships as they impinge on the spectator's eye. We need such an artist here with the necessary vim and patience. I hope he gets students with patience too.

The first works are like language exercises with no great emphasis on formal content other than simple squares such as those in our Muestra Nacional. Later works suggest atmospheric landscapes, since geography will out. Now let's hope that the gods and goddesses will come out too if only as totems. Especially if driven by the passionate Id or animal within all of use. Everything can be said in the prismatic language of color, although naturally, the great paintings with the greatest magic and poetic metaphors of life, death and alienation, take more time and some luck.

BOTELLO AND PALOMAS GALLERIES

Two excellent shows grace Galeria Botello and Galeria Palomas.

Palomas has a good sampling of Puerto Rican art. I am happy to see that the colorful planar abstractions by Raul Zayas Lopez are beginning to catch on. Colorful figurations by Roberto Moya and other artists enliven the walls, but tonal works prevail.

At Galeria Botello five professional artists are featured: Julio Rosado del Valle with two nice temperas, Augusto Marin with an impressively large rhythmic work, Rolando Lopez Dirube with several excellent crayon pencil drawings of realistic nudes and a fine naked, uncolored and unvarnished planar wood abstraction by Luis Hernandez Cruz which seems to have been done to exorcise his normal use of good color. It is nice to know that he can get away from color, the better to catch it next time.

Fernando de Szyslo's recent paintings from Peru are resonant in color and strong in formal almost "neolithic" content but they seem to be overworked and unnecessarily dark, as if he got tired on the way. His previous batch of paintings were more emphatic and straight-forward but they seemed underworked. Even for a professional it is a see-saw to get the proper combination of color, form and finish. Botello Barros always gets good finish, good color, textures, and tone but he limits his forms. They are excuses to paint only.

AGUADILLA IN SAN JUAN

An unbelievably colorful exhibit by beginners is at the Carnegie Library. The works are by students in Antonio Loro's school in Aguadilla. The color is sophisticated and not blatant. Some pieces have fine fauvistic colors. Others remain post-impressionistic.



"El Visitante" by Juan Ramon Velazquez, winner of the \$3,000 first—and only—prize given by the Ateneo this year. There was an honorable mention, which went to Carlos (Suenos) Ortiz, without money.

The miracle of good color without blatant saturations is possible in Puerto Rico, if only in the west right now. The only trouble with the Aguadilla students is that they have to pursue formal style and drawing and good form. All the scenes use conventional realistic codes for their touristic images. Beyond the Fauves, they have to understand the cubistic

formal revolution without necessarily abandoning their subject or content.

HAITIAN PAINTING

This discussion on color in art is incomplete if we don't mention the Haitian works at the UPR Museum, which has already closed. But another Haitian show with added sculpture will soon open at Casa Blanca. We look forward to that time.

GALERIA LA CALETA

70 Caleta de San Juan. Old San Juan. 723-8627. M-Thurs. 10-6; Fri 10-3, Sat closed Sun. 1-6. Paintings and prints by proprietor Luis Cajigas, ceramics, graphics and sculpture. Current exhibit: Christmas season show of 300 works by 50 local artists.

GALERIA MUNICIPIO

City Hall, Old San Juan. Current show: Prints and posters by Luis G. Cajigas.

GALERIA OLLER

Calle Escorial 368 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.

GALERIA PALOMAS

207 Cristo St. Old San Juan 725-2660, 724-8904, 10-6 Mon-Thurs; 10-10 Fri.; 10-6 Sat; Closed Sunday. Collection of Puerto Rican fine art including Photos, Ceramics, and Folk Art.

GALERIA RAQUEL

San Jose 257. Old San Juan. Mon. to Sat. 10-6. European oil paintings.

GALERIA SAN SEBASTIAN

104 San Sebastian St. Puerto Rican paintings and Sculpture. Current show. "Tintas" by Augusto Marin

INSTITUTE OF CULTURE

Convento de San Domingo, Old San Juan. Current show "Muestra Nacional de Pintura."

MANOS

Convention Center, Condado. Contemporary ceramics by the Caparra Studio. T-F 12-3; S&S 12-4.

INTERAMERICAN UNIVERSITY

San German Beverly Student Center. Current show: Art festival.

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.

MUSEO DEL GRABADO

LATINOAMERICANO

Casa de los Contraluzes. 101 San Sebastian St., Plaza San Jose second floor. Open every day from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Current show: works by Juan Gomez Quiroz.

PLASTIC ARTS SCHOOL GALLERY

El Morro. Current show: works of photography and photo-graphics by students of Ramon Aboy.

UPR MUSEUM

Rio Piedras Campus. Open daily 9-9, Sat., Sun. 9-3.