



The artist in front of one of her works.

Where there's smoke, there's painting by Olga Maria Rivera

By FELIX BONILLA NORAT

Special to the STAR
"Fumareva" is showing at the University of Puerto Rico Student Center Music Room.

Olga Maria Rivera was christened "Fumareva" by Samuel R. Quinones because she started using smoke to paint with. The reason she used smoke is because the Metropolitan Bus Authority buses are great air polluters and she wanted to criticize them. I remember she had painted a realistic ship-shape bus but her critical painted smoke wasn't too satisfactory, so she used the real thing, which she then learned to spray-fix on her acrylic paintings.

Her first individual show was at the Carnegie Library in 1973. This show is her second. She is also diligently working on her master's thesis for Mexico's National University. A university master's thesis can show no smoky corners, so she is careful with the torch she now used "only for painting, yes."

Her themes are quite sacerdotal. Both Christian and Taino rites and lively scenes are shown. In "Mahohiti" it is a ritual Taino dance, in "Resurreccion de Cristo Jesus" it is the supreme moment when the

angel tells the waiting women: "He has risen from the dead." The smoke-defined lonely figure of the angel is a masterful bit of painting! I wish other figures in this show were as beautifully alive and as mysterious. The imagery of "Milagro de la Fe" and other works are quite stereotyped. She has to develop a more sophisticated sense of form and composition to get away from pure illustration.

Her two portraits here, of herself and of Pablo Casals, are quite successful with their smoky aura which is played against harsh enclosing rectangular bands: the harshness of geometry is played against the softness of biology, quite a painterly theme.

Another solution she is trying combines those two elements, but the biology is schematized, as it should be if it wants to play around with hard-edged geometry: witness her two "Mahoyas," or spirits of the dead, where college and actual raised surfaces are used in an almost pictographic manner.

Her smoky medium is very functional in a picture such as "El Polvo de los Tiempos," and a charming nostalgia invades "Algunas plantas flore-

cen en el desierto," where behind a healthy desert plant, a shadowy dead figure lies on the ground and another stumbles onwards.

Olga's sacerdotal thought can also be enjoyed in "El Hombre es un Eslabon entre Dios y el Mundo," where man is pictured as almost a unicyclist, hurtling between heaven and earth. Such a composition transcends mere illustration, as do her portraits and her pictographs mentioned above.

Thus Olga finds herself now with several horses under her reins, each pulling a different way. But she is quite young yet and her vision is steady. No smoke in her eyes. The show is closing Tuesday.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

I must remind the public that the fine Carlos (Suenos) Ortiz exhibit at UPR's General Studies library will remain open past the beginning of March. It is presented by Carlos as part of his general studies thesis, which deals with Paleolithic art and religion as very potent and very practical and social answers to a way of living which might hold answers for us even today, since adversary systems of law and order prevail in our society even now.

Ann Landers

Dear Ann: My husband and I have four teenagers. We are barely making it. Our income is limited and everything is so expensive today.

My mother-in-law has been terminally ill for five months. She is being kept alive by machines and tubes. It's terrible. My husband's sister has called him three times to say, "Mother is dying. Come at once." The air fare for these trips is out of sight. The last time he went was on money my parents gave me in case I had to go to them in an emergency.

After my husband returned from the last two trips he said his mother didn't recognize him. I think my sister-in-law is punishing us because we had the gumption to move out of

the old home town and she is stuck there.

Last night I told my husband if his sister calls again to say he'll come when his mother is pronounced dead. I'm not positive but I think he was relieved. Now I feel guilty. Help me see things right, Ann. — After Thoughts

Dear After: So long as you merely suggested it and didn't insist, don't feel guilty. I suspect, as you do, that he was actually relieved. Now forget it.

Dear Ann: I think you did some damage when you said, "True feelings come out when a person is drunk." A comment like that could give the message, "Since the truth

comes out when my husband (wife or son) is loaded, all the terrible things he says about me when he's drunk are true."

Please do some further checking into "sincere delusion," "projection" and what alcoholism does to a person's feelings. I think you'll find that while the feelings may be very real to the alcoholic, truth and reality are clouded, even obscured. I recommend "The Booze Battle" by Ruth Maxwell. Have you read it? — C.D.

Dear C.D.: Yes, I have read it. "The Booze Battle" is an excellent book. I recommend it highly for every woman who lives with an alcoholic.

The statement you take exception to — that a person's true feelings come out when he is drinking — should not create guilt among spouses, family members, or friends. It does not necessarily mean that because the drinker perceives something to be so, that it is so. Liquor removes the inhibitions and out of the "vino" comes the "veritas" but you must remember it is only the "veritas" as the drinker sees it, which may be gross distortion.

Ann Landers discusses teenage drinking — its myths, its realities. Learn the facts by reading "Booze and You — For Teen-Agers Only," by Ann Landers. Send 50 cents in coin and a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope to Ann Landers, P.O. Box 11995, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

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