

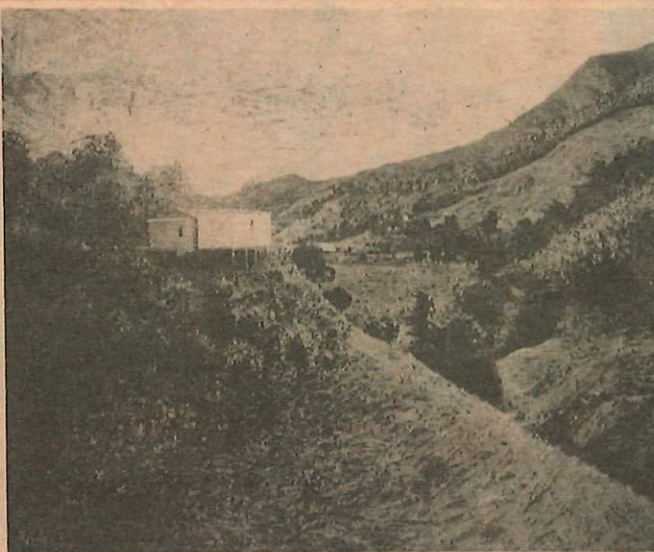
Feb. 26, 1978

ART: STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

The Second Gulf Oil Salon



FIRST PRIZE: "Formas Intimas" by Angel Rodriguez



SECOND PRIZE AND SPECIAL PRIZE: "Paisaje de Orocovis" by Arnaldo Roche



"La cña" by Gabriel Cruz Díaz

By FELIX BONILLA NORAT
Special to the STAR

The principal student activity this month was Gulf Oil's exhibition of about 40 paintings, selected from a healthily large number entered in Gulf's second contest for university art students. Three prizes of \$600 \$450 and \$250—and a special \$350 prize for landscapes—were awarded. And those awarded honorable mention received art books as tokens.

The Institute of Culture's Plastic Arts Section received the entries for the oil company and helped hang the selected works at Casa Blanca where gallery space is slowly being equipped to handle the exhibits which used to be shown in the Fine Arts

Museum on Cristo Street. The second floor space there is now being used for the expanded permanent Puerto Rican painters exhibition.

First prize in the Gulf show went to Angel Rodriguez Díaz; second to Arnaldo Roche—who also won the special prize for landscape painting—and third prize to Ramon Frontera.

Rodriguez's first prize, the strong yet subtly colored and impastoed "Formas Intimas," shows a soft-edged square form of light, carrying a painterly and alive spherical shape encroaching on (or separating from) a dark green landscape so that only an L-shaped bit of the landscape remains. A tubing or a water pipe lies

horizontally along the lower part of the ground.

Rodriguez is at last beginning to use a more contrasted tonal scale in his work and the effect is dramatic. I hope he gets the optimistic intimate message that I get from this picture: that he is at last spherically on his own as he liberates himself from the umbilical tubing at the University of Puerto Rico to study for a master's degree in the United States. His very credible command of painterly pigment should carry him successfully as he tries to combine soft geometric planes to the organic and realistic shapes with which he began six years ago. Pure abstract geometry or even constructivism alone doesn't seem to

be his singing medium. Let those oval spheres roll on.

Arnaldo Roche won the second prize in painting and the special prize in landscape painting with "El Anexo," a realistic scene in Orocovis. The painting depicts a jibaro house with an "annexed" room dramatically set in a lively, nervously brushed, series of hills. Aerial perspective is missing; the same greens and brush marks are used for first, second and third grounds, and the rear mountain is sharply defined and not softened against the light sky—as if in his hurry to finish the painting he forgot such details. But the landscape stands heartily true and exaggerating aerial perspective could create a deeper

The daring art teachers

A mosaic of collective shows by art teachers and art students has marked the month of February. Art contests can be cruel compared to other rites of passage for the young but our young artists keep competing. God bless them, even where angels and art teachers fear to tread.

Hard earned caution comes near the age of 30, after the many rites of passage, especially when you are a teacher of art. It becomes difficult to

exhibit then. Teaching sublimates a lot of creative energies.

That's why it took daring art teachers to exhibit at the Department of Education gallery in its headquarters in Hato Rey. Of course, the works are seen mostly by their peers since students and gallery goers do not normally tread such byways. But the paintings could be better seen if the affairs were better publicized.

GALLERIES

CARNEGIE EXHIBITION HALL
Carnegie Library Ponce de Leon Ave. Stop 1. Puerta de Tierra. 724-1046. Open Mon. to Fr. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sat. 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Current show: Ninth salon of Puerto Rican Cartoonists.

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

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. Current show: Puerto Rican primitive paintings.

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. "The Art of the Calendar"

CASA BLANCA MUSEUM
Casa Blanca. (Entrance at San Sebastian St., Old San Juan. Current exhibit: Second Salon of University Art

GALERIA COABEY
101 San Sebastian St., Old San Juan. Current show: Silkscreens by Eliseo Echevarria
GALERIA CONDADO
Convention Center. Open 11-7 every day. 723-6090 Ext. 1632 Exhibition of work by local artists

GALERIA FOTOGRAFIA PL 900
Ponce de Leon 900, Santurce. Ponce de Leon 900, Santurce. 725-2617 open 9-5 daily except Tuesday and Wednesday.

GALERIA GUARAGUAO
Callejon de la Capilla, Old San Juan, 723-3836. Current show: Collective Exhibition.

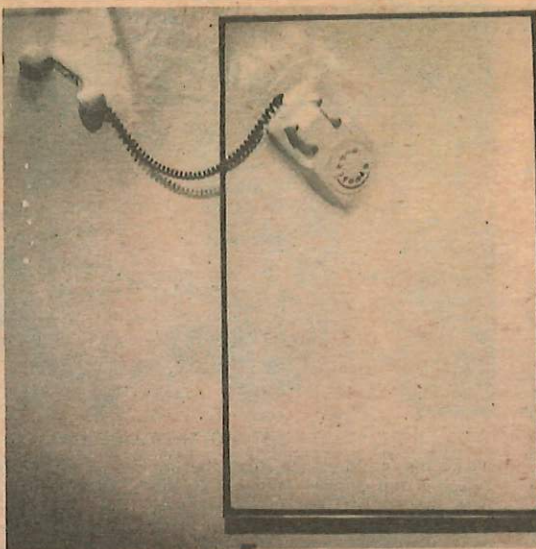
GALERIA INTERAMERICANA
Interamerican University. San German. Student Intercenter. Current show: Puerto Rican graphics.

GALERIA LA CALETA
70 Caleta de San Juan, Old San Juan. 723-8627. Paintings and prints by proprietor Luis Cajigas, 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.



"Hombre y recuerdo" by Myrna de Jesus Pizarro



"Pintura" by Jose Ramos Perez



"Dos niños" by Felix Vega

sense of space than modern painting demands, anyway.

"I feel kind of immoral," he said, "because I seem to be painting only for contests." His architectural studies at UPR take most of his energies, so he doesn't paint as much as he used to or would like to. "Furthermore, somehow I question this business of contests, how they are organized and hung. There are too many loose-ends to be explained. Sometimes I wonder if the whole process isn't immoral too, and divisive of youth."

Roche felt down-cast since he tries to know the cosmos religiously too and is active in his church. So I consoled him by saying that art contests and salons of paintings with jurors are

being questioned all over the world today particularly because prize-winners do not always keep producing afterwards. But in Puerto Rico they have been both diagnostic and prognostic. Most prize-winners have pulled through and become better known afterwards since most of us take competing as well as being a jury member quite seriously. Roche's sense of frustration may also be due to the fact that he has run through the gamut of contests or rites of initiation which society offers our youth and now is growing up. Maybe he is ripe for an un-established society such as Adam and Eve's where the fatherly and motherly archetypes of governments, universities and oil companies do not exist and he must

create them on his own—as should be the magnificent norm.

Ramon Frontera won third prize for his painterly though dark, "Salmo a la Amistad."

I liked all three honorable mentions, discreet and sensitive works. I also liked the all-white "Pintura" ("Painting") by Jose Ramos Perez which is really a white cast of a real telephone embedded in a white picture plane with a real listening-end hanging from a real telephone cord. The name, "Painting," is used as a come-on for discussion.

Open for discussion too is the construction, "Flores detras de usted" (Flowers Behind You), by Luis Cesar Stephenberg of Aguadilla who is now studying in San Juan. It suggests a

small town photographer's set-up with such as a real stool for really sitting on, a back-drop of badly painted realistic flowers and some real looking artificial flowers on the side. It's a haunting concept, though too hurriedly put together.

But I guess "hurriedly put together" applies to many Puerto Rican manifestations including this hurriedly put together contest which was hung barely an hour before opening time, had no printed catalog on opening night nor could I get a copy of one a week later. Photographs which were promised for this article never appeared at the STAR.

The show will continue for two weeks more, I hope with catalog.

Recently Rolando Borges exhibited some of his latest freer investigative cellular paintings in the Education Department gallery. Now this month it is a group of public school art teachers from Arecibo including Borges and some 10 others. They are out to develop "the consciousness of the teaching artist which lies in every art teacher." The effort is meritorious, the work is kind of "expected," though, with no wild oats sown. But then, would Puerto Rican teachers

dare to exhibit any raw works?

That's the trouble with—and also the glory of — Puerto Rico's teachers at large. They are sagely respectful of society and dutifully democratic about the rights of others — as was proven some time ago by an island-wide quest. Just about everybody came out as autocratic about their own rights but not the equal rights of others. Everybody, that is, except the teachers. Democracy is an art to them.

Equally respectful was the exhibit held of members' work at the Art Students league in its new handsome headquarters in Old San Juan. You can still see some of it with, I hope, by now some more work by the teachers themselves. The league's efforts are, however, more daring than the work of our democratic public school art teachers. Is free enterprise the reason? Or did we, the teachers of the art teachers and the jurors of the art contests, fail to hail their free

untrammelled art expressions whenever we had the chance?

But there is a ray of hope in the present "Frente" exhibit now at the Institute of Culture headquarters in San Juan: Lope Max Diaz and Luis Hernandez Cruz teach at the UPR, and Antonio Navia teaches at the institute's Plastic Art School and at the Liga de Estudiantes. Their example should inspire other art teachers to keep on daring to exhibit.

—Felix Bonilla Norat

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.

LA FORTALEZA
End of Fortaleza St., Old San Juan.
Current exhibit: Works by Eli Barreto

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

MUSEO DE LA ESCUELA DE ARTES PLASTICAS
El Morro Grounds. Mon. to Fri. 8 to 5. Sat. 2 to 5.

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: "Reproductions and falsifications."

MUSEO DEL GRABADO LATINOAMERICANO
Casa de los Contraluerdes. 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. Current exhibit: "Grupo Frente" paintings by Paul Camacho, Lopez Max Diaz, Luis Hernandez Cruz and Antonio Navia

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.

UPR MUSEUM
764-0000, Ext. 2452 or 2456. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sundays, 10 to 5. Current show: Paintings by the Argentine artist Perez Celis