

Art of the Revolution in Latin America

The Mexican Revolution led to a renaissance in art. Mexican artists known as muralists, changed art to make it more available to the public. This movement in Mexican art became known as **Mexican muralism**. Muralism changed the way we look at art in Western society. Western artists were often isolated from the world around them, creating works of art that were understood only to themselves (personal themes). Instead, Mexican artists now focused on creating art that focused on the social problems around them.

Society leading up to the Mexican Revolution was marked by enormous divisions in wealth, property, and power. Many of the Mexican muralists focused their works on historical topics, such as the invasion of the Americas by Europeans. The Murals are not bought and sold but publicly shown in some of the most important buildings in Mexico. As public art, they were painted for all to see, not hidden away for the benefit of a few. Many murals can be found on the sides of buildings, in trains stations, museums, libraries, and universities.

The Mexican muralist painted all over the world, therefore the work did not only impact Mexicans but it helped spread the word of the Revolution to every end of the globe.

What is the purpose of Mexican muralism? How is it different from Western art of the past?



Rivera, Kahlo, and Orozco

Three of the most well known Mexican muralists are Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and Jose Clemente Orozco.

Diego Rivera (1886-1957), is probably the most influential of the three and helped establish the Mexican Mural Renaissance in the 1930's. His works can be found throughout Mexico, San Francisco, Detroit, and New York. ⇨



⇨ Though she was not a muralist, the works of **Frida Kahlo (1907-1954)** are critical in understanding Mexican indigenous (native) culture and the effect of the Mexican Revolution on the Mexican people. Kahlo was married to Rivera and together they saw Marxism (communism) as an answer to many of the problems in Latin America.

Jose Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), was a muralist like Rivera. His complex works all contain political messages, showing the suffering and plight of the Peasant people of Latin America. His works can be found throughout Mexico as well as in New York City at Dartmouth College and The New School.



Instructions for the Activity

1. Create groups of 5-6 students (We need exactly 6 groups!)
 2. When you get to the station, you will analyze the art for two features:
 3. What do you see? Colors, objects, races and classes of people
 4. How would the art make a person in Latin America feel? What is the message in the art?
DICUSS IT WITH YOUR GROUP! That's why you're in a group!
 5. Fill in your answers in the chart.
- You will only have 4 minutes to examine each piece of art. *Each group will be responsible for sharing at least one answer with the class! **BE READY**

	<i>What do you see?</i> (colors, objects, classes/races of people, etc.)	<i>How would the art make a person in Latin America feel?</i> <i>What is the message in the art?</i>
“The Flower Carrier”, Diego Rivera, 1935		
“Roots”, Frida Kahlo, 1943		
“El Vendedor de Alcatraces”, Diego Rivera, 1941		
“The Exploiters”, Diego Rivera, 1926		
“The Epic of American Civilization: Hispano-America”, Jose Clemente Orozco, 1932		
Diego Rivera, “From the pre-Hispanic Civilization to Conquest” 1951		

How did Latin American’s use art to spread the word of the revolution?

Be sure to give examples from the art you viewed today.
