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MEXICAN REVOLUTION AND RENEWAL OF MURALISM

Beatriz de la Fuente et Elisa Barragan

The movement of renewal in every aspect of Mexican life and culture that accompanied the Revolution in 1910 found outstanding expression in mural painting. This movement was not only political and social but amounted, in fact, to a Renaissance of national consciousness which was to express itself in the most varied forms. It anticipated other revolutionary movements of the century and coincided with the upheaval in European thought, art and literature that Pierre Haffner took place in the years before, during and after the first World War. In 1922 the Mural Painting movement was launched by a group of Mexican artists inspired by new social ideals, and in the space of few decades it came to be the most important manifestation of modern Mexican art. Humanist and therefore universal in spirit, it is inspired by history and by everyday life. Its aesthetic values lie in an originality and grandeur of conception whereby monumental painting on public buildings was to be accessible to all. Mexican mural painting demands appreciation for the rich complexity of its emotional and thematic content and not merely for its unusual subjects. A distinguishing characteristic of the great mural painters is their critical approach to history, which varies according to the temperament of each one of them : Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros. This paper will emphasize the interaction of social and political revolution with artistic innovations and further developments.