

Marigolds & Skulls

*The works of José
Guadalupe Posada*

Exhibit of the Courtyard Gallery/
Flood Fine Arts Center Collection

November 1 - December 19, 2014



NORTH CAROLINA
HUMANITIES
COUNCIL

MANY STORIES, ONE PEOPLE



The José Guadalupe Posada's limited edition prints on display are printed from the original plates. Sixty-two prints are limited edition 944 of 1500, printed in 1960 at the Museum of Graphic Arts in Mexico City. Twenty-three other limited prints are from the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes printed in 1943. There will also be several original prints on display from the collection of the Courtyard Gallery of the Flood Fine Arts Center.

José Guadalupe Posada, the father of Mexican printmaking, was born in Aguascalientes, Mexico in 1852. In 1868, he was apprenticed to a local printmaker and publisher, José Trinidad Pedroza, who specialized in lithography, influenced Posada's first prints, which are in this medium. In 1872 Pedroza opened a second shop in the city of León and left Posada in charge of it. Posada bought the



shop in 1877. This experience helped him make a few satirical illustrations for "El Jocote" magazine. In 1872 his satires of Jesús Gómez Portugal (a regional boss or cacique) became the first to produce repercussions. Gómez forced Posada and Pedroza to move to León, Guanajuato where they started to produce their own lithographs and prints in wood that would illustrate matchboxes, documents and books. After a flood destroyed most of León in 1887 Posada decided to move to Mexico City, where he went to work for Irineo Paz, grandfather of Nobel Prize winning author Octavio Paz. He opened two additional workshops and also drew political cartoons for many periodicals. His dedication to his work became legendary.

In Mexico City, Posada found recognition as chief artist for Antonio Vanegas Arroyo, where he made thousands of illustrations for this press that produced inexpensive literature for the lower classes. They printed various newspapers as well as comedies, farces, thrillers, songbooks and histories of saints and historical figures. He also made illustrations and political caricatures for other editorials like "Argos", "La Patria", "El Ahuizote" and "El Hijo del Ahuizote", where they would oppose the current



government run by Porfirio Díaz. He is reported to have worked for over 50 different publications in all. Posada worked closely with Manuel Manilla and Constancio Suárez (poet) to produce rich editorials against the dictatorship. Along with Manilla, he became the greatest promoter of the tradition of the Day of the Dead, celebrated November 2 in Mexico. Posada's most notable work is the "Catrina" where a skeleton is dressed up in the fanciest clothes of the time to represent the corrupt society under which he lived. It was this theme that got him national recognition and even landed him in jail a few times. From the outset of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and up until his death on January 20, 1913, Posada produced countless prints for the workers press where he established his notoriety becoming an influence on other artists such as José Clemente Orozco, Leopoldo Méndez and the Taller de Gráfica Popular.



Posada's prints cover an amazing range of imagery. National events, disasters, miracles, abnormalities, executions, illustrations to popular songs, broadsheets, protests to modern machines, and political protests cover a large portion of his artistic oeuvre. But by far his best known work in the United States remains the Mexican Revolution images and the "Calaveras" that have permanently been placed at the summit of Mexican artistic expression. By means of the Calaveras (Spanish for skulls or skeletons) Posada was able to mime practically every human folly. Posada is to Mexico what Daumier, Goya and Hogarth are to their countries. To this day, any print in Mexico is referred to as a "Posada." Masters of the succeeding generations, such as Rivera and Orozco, were deeply influenced and indebted to Posada's art.

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Pump Gallery • November 1 - December 19, 2014

109 Roberts Street • Phil Mechanic Building • River Arts District • Asheville, NC 28801



Lecture by Volker Frank

Pump Gallery • 7 pm • November 1, 2014

Volker Frank, instructor at UNCA will be giving a lecture on José Guadalupe Posada's prints at 7pm at the Flood Gallery Fine Arts Center's Pump Gallery. This lecture and exhibition is made possible by a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Volker Frank: "My research and teaching interest relate to processes of democratization, civil society, labor movements, comparative studies (Europe and Latin America)."



Education

- BA 1983 University of Tuebingen, Germany, Political Science, American Studies
- MA 1987 University of Florida, Masters of Arts in Latin American Studies
- PhD 1995 University of Notre Dame, Sociology

Courses Taught

(Soc 357), Labor Movement Formation in Comparative Perspective (Soc 446), Sociology and Modern Culture: Sociology through Film (Soc 410), Humanities The Individual in the Modern World (1945-) (Hum 414), Humanities The Modern World (1700s-1945) (Hum 324), Masters of Liberal Arts-Human Condition (MLA 500) Masters of Arts -Contemporary Issues (MLA 600), Introductory Colloquium (LS 379), Senior Colloquium- Cultivating Global Citizenship (LS 479), International Studies – Honduras Service Learning (INTS 365), Senior Symposium (Soc/Ant 465).

Teaching and Research Interests

- Latin American Studies



A Black Mountain Press Publication
www.theBlackMountainPress.com
Asheville, North Carolina
Print in the USA

