

Miguel Covarrubias (Mexico City, 23–24 Aug 17)

Sala Francisco de la Maza, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM, Mexico City, Aug 23–24, 2017

Deadline: Apr 20, 2017

Mariana Aguirre, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM

Miguel Covarrubias: Encounters Between Anthropology, Geography, and Art

The research project Miguel Covarrubias and the Art of the Pacific: Towards a History of Contacts and Diffusion, is currently underway at the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM. It has been made possible with the support of DGAPA, and is directed by Dr. Rita Eder with the collaboration of Anahí Luna and Mónica Ramírez. The purpose of this symposium is to gather papers and discuss ideas that have been developing, both in Mexico and abroad, in relation to the work of this Mexican figure, who has distinguished himself through an important international presence, and whom we can locate in the intersection between art, anthropology, and geography. Miguel Covarrubias explored the cultural and artistic diversity of the Pacific and the Americas. In his writings and visual works, such as films, documentaries, maps, drawings and paintings, he produced an open anthropology that supported his hypotheses regarding the aesthetic study of works produced by several indigenous cultures. His ideas resonated with those of Franz Boas, Alfred L. Kroeber, Paul Rivet, and other anthropologists, as well as with the scholarship of the art historian Carl Schuster.

His own conception of anthropology, his enormous capacity for observation, his experience in Bali, and his profound knowledge of ethnographic collections from Asia and the Americas, allowed him to argue in favor of cross-cultural connections between the Greater Pacific and the Americas, and he gave a special emphasis to the organization of design and its symbolic meaning.

We are interested in papers dealing with several moments of Miguel Covarrubias's oeuvre. Papers can focus on his cartography, his contribution to archaeology and anthropology, his relationship to modern art, or on the methods of formal analysis he employed. On the other hand, we welcome papers that study other anthropological, geographic, or archaeological projects, or those linked to the study of images that allow us to understand and problematize the historical moment in which Covarrubias developed his theories.

The symposium also proposes to reconsider the study and analysis of form and its integration with Covarrubias' hypotheses regarding cross-cultural contact. This problem was key to works such as *El Águila, el Jaguar y la Serpiente* (The Eagle, the Jaguar, and the Snake) and his series of maps, *Pageant of the Pacific*, which led him to develop a comparative methodology to highlight affinities between objects and diverse ways of life. This problem also emerges in his studies on Tlatilco, the Olmecs, Tehuantepec, and Bali.

The deadline to receive proposals is on 20 April. Results will be announced on 6 May. The symposium will take place on the 23 and 24 August at the Sala Francisco de la Maza, at the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM. We invite interested scholars to send their proposal as a one-page abstract alongside a short bio to simposiocovarrubias@gmail.com. Papers should have a length of 25 minutes and can be in Spanish or English. We anticipate the publication of select papers from the symposium. The deadline to submit the longer papers will be on 20 October 2017; the maximum length for those should be 40 pages, double-spaced.

Information:

simposiocovarrubias@gmail.com

Reference:

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