

Curatorial Essay Colors of Latin America

Art is magic. The real artists protect their inner self which is where they guard their creative realm. That is why asking an artist why she/he did this or that has almost no sense. Let's just inhale the breeze coming out of their sculptures, the intensity of the colors that permeate our spirit, the contrast of textures and materials that awaken our memories, and the nontraditional approaches that nourish our senses of a present unlike any other.

Astonishment, smiling faces, nature in its splendorous variety, and all the colors of the spectrum are what tourists that travel to any of the many cities in Latin America encounter. Although this part of the continent has gone through tragic periods of crimes and destruction, people still care about color and smiles, remembrance of traditions, and being welcoming to those who arrive to their lands.

How is it possible that all their sufferings didn't break their will? They come back up, they stand-up, and withstand life. They see that example in the trees that resist the storms. They consider that hard work brings back the energy, and intense colors revive the desire to live. Above all, the different indigenous cultures that inhabited a big part of Latin America survive generation after generation, mixed with European immigrants that never understood or respected them. But here they are, in a continuous survival attitude, dressing in embroidered clothes, and contrasting with the summer men white outfits, accompanied with brilliant paliacates, dancing, playing instruments, and painting to celebrate life.

Paisanos, they know how to suffer without complaining. They find ways to survive when they emigrate, learning from the toughest situations. Immigrants allow themselves to help newcomers as much as their families who stayed back. The earthen color of the seeded territories talk hand in hand with the brilliant variety of pigments people use to paint their houses.

It was Pablo Picasso who realized the strength of Spanish countryside women, and of African sculptural figures cut with machete like knife. He knew the interaction of white and black races, and of their encounter in the eternal heaven with more respect than they treat each other on earth nowadays.

Graciela Kartoffel
ArteLatAm's Curator & Critic