

Mural Art in the Peruvian public space

First muralism in Peru

Main exponents of the first muralism in Peru:

José Sabogal and Teodoro Nuñez Ureta.

José Sabogal (1888-1956)

- Peruvian painter and muralist, founder of the *indigenismo*, artistic indigenist movement and its leader for thirty years.
- Travelled to Europe, studied Fine Arts in Buenos Aires. He taught at and directed the National School of Fine Arts, Lima, for many years, from where important artists related to the indigenous movement emerged.
- Sabogal renewed painting, graphic arts, was an inspiration for writers, musicians and architects.

José Sabogal

- He stayed six months in Cusco, taking an interest in depicting the city and its inhabitants. His Cusco paintings attracted attention at an exhibition in Lima, in 1919.
- The Indian is no longer a decorative element, an extra from the scenography of his own country, but the protagonist of pictorial art.
- The essence of José Sabogal's indigenismo was to paint the “new man” generated by the mixture of Spaniards and Peruvian natives.
- He made a very important visit in 1922 to Mexico -a second one 20 years later- where he met Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros, and learned the technique of the mural.
- Under the influence of Mexican muralists, he fell in love with the concept of painting on public walls to create a national consciousness and perform an art for the vast majority instead of for the elites.

José Sabogal

- Unlike Mexico, where the muralists had official support to paint the walls of the ministries, Sabogal had to do it in private homes.
- In the 1940s, however, laws were issued in Peru to promote artistic decoration in public buildings.
- Sabogal painted in Cusco, at the “Hotel de Turistas”, a large mural sponsored by the Ministry of Education (1945), including four frescoes that link the Inca mythology to the conquest.

José Sabogal



From the conference “José Sabogal, popular art and mural painting in Peru”, Dr. Fernando Villegas Torres

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Teodoro Nuñez Ureta (1912 - 1988)

- One of the most prominent Peruvian watercolorists and the most prolific muralist. Doctor in Philosophy History and Letters, journalist. He taught Art History and Aesthetics at the Univ. of San Agustin of Arequipa and chose to be self-taught to become an artist.
- He did not agree with indigenismo orthodoxy, although the characters and scenes painted throughout his life were, to a large extent, from the rural and mestizo world of his native land. In his murals, the human figure stars monumental allegories about education, work or Independence. Big admirer of the Mexican muralists, particularly of David Alfaro Siqueiros
- He feared the threat of modernity to the preservation of popular traditions.

Teodoro Nuñez Ureta



"The countryside of Arequipa" (1948), Hotel de Turistas, Arequipa

Teodoro Nuñez Ureta



Fig.8. *La construcción del Perú*, ca.1954. Boceto del mural. Acuarela y lápiz sobre cartulina, 51 x 128 cm.
Colección del Museo de Arte de la UNMSM.

“The construction of Peru”, at the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Trade (1954)

Teodoro Nuñez Ureta



"The Independence of Perú" at the Pantheon of the Heroes (1971).

Teodoro Nuñez Ureta



“The education in Peru”, Ministry of Education (1955-1963)

Other projects and artists of this time

- Palace of Congress, 1942 Carlos Quizpez Asin
- Amazonic exhibition, Urb. San Felipe.
- Municipal palace of Miraflores, 1944
- Second national mining exhibition, 1945
- Artists: Quizpez Asin, José Sabogal, Ugarte Eléspuru, Nuñez Ureta, Sabino Springett, Leonor Vinatea Cantuarias, Teresa Carvallo, Adolfo Winternitz, Enrique Camino Brent

Street art today

- “Todos somos trigueños: La presencia de los pueblos indígenas en el arte urbano de Perú”/ “We are all olive skinned: The presence of indigenous peoples in urban art in Peru“, Aubrey Parke, Trinity University, 2019
- To the legacy of indigenism and the influence of Mexican muralism, comes in the 90s graffiti as another main influence on the murals of Peru. Many of Peru's current mural artists have moved from graffiti to muralism in recent years.
- These diverse influences, with totally different histories and characteristics, coexist in Peruvian murals today.

Street art today

- Financing of the murals: self-management, collaborative projects, festivals and commissions. Most artists make their murals through a combination of all three. Many artists depend on commissions from restaurants, hotels, and businesses for a living.
- Some artists use the money to paint murals commissioned by companies that pay them well to travel and paint in places where they cannot be paid.

Street art today

- Projects: *Pinta Lima* seeks to capture the capital's iconography and recover public space through urban art. It does so through the *Lima Mural* and *Puro Muro* collectives in coordination with the Municipality of Lima to manage permits for the artists.
- The coordinator of *Lima Mural*, César Camacho, says that the initiative aims to remove the negative conceptions that exist about urban art, creating works that touch you. Likewise, for the Municipality of Lima, the objective is to improve spaces through art.
- Some artists organize their own festivals: Ximena Mil with *AmazonArte* and Jade Rivera with *Despierta Project*, both in the jungle. There is also an initiative to paint in areas such as Pucara, Iquitos, Huancayo and Pucallpa through festivals and self-managed projects. They include some local artists, but most of the projects are organized in Lima.

Lima

- Lima has the highest concentration of murals and muralists in Peru. Even if several murals are in rural areas outside of Lima, all of the artists live in the capital.
- There are murals in all parts of Lima but they take a different form in each area, depending in part on the relationships between the artist, the community, those who finance them and the municipality.

Historic center

- UNESCO World Heritage Site, this area is mostly comprised of historical landmarks and buildings that date back to the 16th century.
- During the first decade of this century, a competition was launched to carry out a mural project in the city. Several designs were created representing the culture and diversity of Peru. In 2013, national and foreign artists painted more than 20 murals in the Historic Center of Lima to recover various public spaces in the city.
- In 2016, the mayor of Lima authorized the erasure of most of the murals in the center, for “going against the image of the city” and for “not being in accordance with UNESCO rules”. However one can see them thanks to the google maps image bank, which allows you to travel through time.
- In December 2018, the current mayor announced that he would allow the return of some murals, "as long as they comply with the regulations that protect the monumental heritage of Lima." So far, 10 murals have been authorized in the center.

Historic center



Portraits of the painter Víctor Humareda, Wa, 2019. Foto Aubrey Parke.

Historic center



"Ofrenda", Fefa, 2019. managed by *PuroMuro*. Foto Aubrey Parke.

Historic center



"Weaving hope", print version of a mural in Cantagallo, Elliot Tupac.

Callao

- A large but less affluent municipality adjacent to Lima, it has a combination of graffiti and spontaneous street art. It has galleries and murals run by a small group of people who want to gentrify the port city.

Callao



Urban Art Museum, *foto Aubrey Park*

Callao



Urban Art Museum, *foto Aubrey Park*

Callao



Urban Art Museum, *foto Aubrey Park*

Miraflores

- Residential and business district, it has more commissioned murals and a large presence of the *Lima Mural* project, which brings international artists to the city.

Miraflores



El decertor, foto pinterest

Miraflores



Miraflores



Miraflores



Miraflores



El decertor, foto pinterest

Barranco

- Bohemian, “hipster” neighborhood with historical houses from the beginning of the XX c. Due to municipally-promoted and encouraged murals, its streets have become a canvas for local artists.

Barranco



Mia Spingola | © Culture Trip

Barranco



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Mia Spingola | © Culture Trip

Barranco



Escaleras para la playa, Foto Aubrey Park.

Barranco



Mural in a restaurant. Foto Aubrey Park

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Mia Spingola | © Culture Trip

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© surtr / Flickr

Barranco



"Pensar con el Corazón". Eliot Tupac. Foto Aubrey Park

Barranco



"Todas Las Sangres" Entes, 2017

Barranco



"Bodegón Hipster", Entes 2017.

Barranco



Sin título, Ximena Mil y Monks, 2018.

Other neighborhoods in Lima

Villa María de Triunfo



"Vine a conquistar", Jade Rivera, 2018

La Victoria



conmemora al periodista deportivo Daniel Peredo, foto USI

San Juan de Lurigancho



"Chola Hipster" Entes, 2017

Other cities outside of the capital

Iquitos



Sección de un mural pintado para el festival SelvaSueño, Ximena Mil, 2018

Jauja



Sin titulo. Paulo Sierrah, 2018

Arequipa



"Lenguado", Lucia Coz, 2019

Pucara



"Descubrimiento", Jade Rivera, 2019

Huanuco



Sin titulo, Ximena Mil 2018

Some additional elements
(from the study of Aubrey Park)

- The muralists form the identity of their city by providing images of Peru that come from their own experiences, they bring aspects of their own identities and stories to their public murals.
- They not only feel connected to the geography and nature of Peru, they all share the mission of communicating the importance of protecting nature.
- As with indigenismo, which wanted to present the "new man" generated by the mixture of Spaniards and Peruvian natives, today street artists present a mestizo identity with many more elements of the multicultural identity of Peru. Urban artists continue to address the question of what it means to be Peruvian.

Some examples



Entes paints the head of an Afro-Peruvian with a hat, a potted succulent and a bottle of Pisco with a shot, also stereotypically “hipster” objects. He treats the issue of race and ethnicity from his own experience as an Afro-Peruvian combined with his study of the indigenous people of Sabogal.

Some examples



In “I came to conquer,” in Villa María de Triunfo, a neighborhood on the outskirts of Lima, populated by migrants who come from rural areas looking for work, Jade Ribera presents the image of a boy from the jungle, carrying a flag as if he were a conqueror. The artist incorporates features and nature of the mountains due to her connection with Huancayo.

Some examples



In the case of Paulo Sierrah, he paints current people from different areas of Peru, but his interest is to capture a bit the essence of how the neighborhood is going ... people see it and feel included.

Some examples



Ximena Mil paints indigenous people with a symbolic approach that emphasizes their historical traditions and connections with the land. In this mural, painted in Tingo María for Amazonarte, half hidden behind an animal mask, a face painting and a very traditional headdress. To paint that face, Ximena investigated the Bora culture and the significance of her traditional clothing. She paints jungle-themed art because of her own connection to the jungle and her experience with ayahuasca

Some examples



Eliot Tupac has a mission to reclaim the historical significance of the word "chicha" and restore it to a positive position. Through his typographic style, he maintains active ties with indigenous communities. He painted this mural "Weaving Hope" for the Shipiva community of Cantagallo, which includes a group of women experts in weaving. Eliot Tupac uses chicha typography techniques and traditional embroidery from the Peruvian highlands due to the influence of his parents.

Final comment

- By painting in public spaces in a globalized city like Lima, street artists are changing the physical and imagined space of the city. They are creating “landmarks” that communicate an idea about the identity of the country and as such, engaging viewers in the process of imagining their city. Autonomously, the artists imagine their city, but at the same time they are participating in a broader conversation about the identity of Peru. They interact with pre-established categories of race, historicity, and nature, and with social forces such as discrimination, segregation, poverty, and colonization. They live within the social imaginary, but from the inside, they reimagine and modify it. And because urban art is an increasingly global scene, muralists are taking this story throughout the world.