

INTERCULTURA

DRAFT

TEXAS ART FROM THE BARRETT COLLECTION AN EXHIBITION FOR INTERNATIONAL TOUR

InterCultura is planning an important exhibition of the work of contemporary artists in Texas from the collection of Nona and Richard Barrett, of Dallas, Texas. The exhibition will be the first major show concentrating on Texas artists to be seen on an international tour. The exhibition, planned for four venues, will include approximately 60 to 80 works of painting and sculpture. The exhibition will be curated by Michael Ennis, an acknowledged expert on contemporary Texas art.

Texas has the third largest concentration of artists in the U.S., after New York and California. The Barrett Collection was started in 1987 by Nona and Richard Barrett, shortly after their marriage, and is the most important and comprehensive private collection of Texas artists in existence. The collection, comprising over 400 works, includes a wide range of work in painting and sculpture, from the beginning of serious painting in Texas at the turn of the century to the present day. Over 150 artists are represented in the collection, from early 20th century figures including Jose Arpa, Julian Onderdonk, Frank Reaugh, and Reveau Basset; to the "Dallas Nine" (including Alexandre Hogue, William Lester, Olin Travis, Everett Spruce and Jerry Bywaters); to contemporary artists including Bill Komodore, Melissa Miller, David Bates, Bill Haveron, James Serls, Vernon Fisher, and Harry Geffert. The entire collection has been donated to the Dallas Museum of Art.

All of these artists, like their counterparts elsewhere, are dealing with universal issues. Their vision, however, has a unique flavor. The exhibition will explore how the cultural diversity and unique characteristics of Texas have in the past and continue today to inform the creations of its artists. From its wide open spaces and its frontier mentality, to the mixture of races and cultures (Black, Dutch, English, French, German, Mexican, Polish--just to name a few), to the strong (if somewhat puritanical) religious background in the state, the artists of Texas have drawn inspiration from and re-processed these elements into a diverse and compelling visual vocabulary.

The Barrett Collection has been formed with the thesis that abstract and conceptual tendencies are essentially international in scope, and that the real strength of Texas art is in its realist and figurative tradition. Therefore, an emphasis was placed, from the inception of the collection, on representing the "Texasness" of the artistic production of the state while avoiding the stereo-typical "cowboy and Indian" images usually associated with Texas. Thus, the collection now represents an encyclopedic survey of the works of Texas artists in this century, which, while it does not exclude abstraction, focuses on those characteristics which define Texas art. Although photography and printmaking have also played important roles in Texas in this century, the collection excludes prints and photographs and concentrates on painting and sculpture.

The international tour of the Barrett Collection represents a unique opportunity to promote a greater and more sophisticated understanding of the cultural legacy of one of the United States most well-known but least understood states--Texas.