Pan-American (Dis)Unity:
Culture and Diplomacy in UNM’s “Good Neighbor” Murals

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Kenneth Adams, *Three Peoples mural*, 1939. Oil on canvas, West Wing of Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

New Mexico’s Myth of Triculturalism


Indian Village at the Panama-California Exposition, San Diego, 1915. Pavilion sponsored by the Santa Fe Railway. Postcard in the collection of the San Diego History Center
Taos Society of Artists


E. Irving Couse, *Sand Painter*, 1927
**Pueblo Indian Eagle Dance**, Santa Fe Railroad Advertising Calendar, 1922, painting by E.I. Couse

**The Blanket Taos-Puye Indian-detour, New Mexico**, Santa Fe Railroad Advertising Calendar, 1929, painting by E. Irving Couse

**Art & Tourism**
Spanish-Pueblo Revival Architecture at UNM

William G. Tight (1865–1910)

Hodgin Hall, Before and After
The Palace of Governors, "One of the famous buildings of the United States," (El Palacio Real), Santa Fe, New Mexico. Postcard, ca. 1930-1945.
John Gaw Meem (1894–1983)

John Gaw Meem, Administrative Building (now Scholes Hall), 1934-1936. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.
John Gaw Meem, Administrative Building (now Scholes Hall), 1934-1936. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

St. Estevan del Rey Mission Church, Acoma Pueblo
The University of New Mexico

Which has made a remarkable record in the way of student enrollment and in building improvements in the last few years, is preparing for an even greater year in 1937-1938.

Just completed is the new Associated Students' Building, which will be open to students at the beginning of the fall term, September 13. The new Central Heating Plant and Engineering Laboratory Building was completed late in the second semester.

A $370,000 PWA Library Building project will be completed in December, and will be ready for use by the second semester of 1938, if not sooner. The Library, to be built of brick, concrete and steel construction, one and two stories above the basement, will be 280 feet long by 193 feet wide and finished in Southwestern Pueblo architecture.

In keeping with its program of scholastic development, the University has added a College of Fine Arts. The General College was added two years ago.

The University of New Mexico is the
FASTEST GROWING UNIVERSITY IN AMERICA
The future looks exceptionally bright
John Gaw Meem, Main Library (now Zimmerman Library), 1936-1938. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.
View of the Grand Hall and circulation desk with bare walls, Zimmerman Library, ca. 1937.
Kenneth Adams’s Mural Commission

James F. Zimmerman, president of the university 1928-1968

Kenneth M. Adams (1897-1966)
Kenneth M. Adams (1897-1966)

The Taos Society of Artists:
Rear: Walter Ufer, W. Herbert Dunton, Victor Higgins, Kenneth Adams
Center: Joseph H. Sharp, E. Martin Hennings, E.I. Couse, Oscar E. Berninghaus
Front: Bert Phillips, Ernest Blumenshein
Photo courtesy of Robert Parsons
Kenneth M. Adams, *Bernerisa Tafoya*, 1932. Oil on canvas, University of New Mexico.

According to Adams:

The Taos Society of Artists “stimulated the art of painting so effectively that today NM has more resident artists per capita than any state in the union. Its several members in the course of their lives have found themselves allied with the anthropologists, archaeologists and ethnologists in many a battle for the preservation of native arts, national monuments, historic architecture, and the independence of the Indian. Many workers in the fields of the applied arts, architecture, sculpture, music, and literature are grateful to these men. *Their contribution as unwitting publicists, perhaps, has been worth millions of dollars to the state and the surrounding areas. Certainly no other professional group has contributed so much to the Southwest.*”

(emphasis added)
Kenneth Adams, *Mountains and Yucca*, Deming Post Office, New Mexico

Kenneth Adams, *Dancers or The Ballet*, ca. 1936, oil on canvas mounted to wall.
Promotional pamphlets for UNM’s School of Painting at Taos, where Adams was an instructor both before and after the Zimmerman Library mural commission.
Mr. E. F. Keppel, President  
Carnegie Corporation  
5522 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York  

My dear Doctor Keppel:

For several summers leaders of the art colony in Taos have been assisting us in the summer field school of art which we hold in Taos, and from time to time members of the art group have assisted us in giving instruction on the campus.

There is an outstanding artist in Taos named Kenneth Adams, who would like very much to work on the campus of the University, giving some time to teaching and the remainder to the painting of murals in two or three of the new buildings which we have just had constructed under the FWA program. We have some very fine places for murals in the new Student Union Building, in the new Administration Building, and in our new Library.

I have thought that the value of having a vital artist associate with our faculty, giving some instruction in painting and demonstrating his own work on the campus, would be a move in the right direction and would greatly strengthen our art instruction program in the University. It so happens that I very much want Kenneth Adams to make these murals, and he would also be glad to do the work and give us some time for instruction.

I am wondering if it would be possible for the Carnegie Corporation to assist me in this particular project, making it possible for Mr. Adams to be with us for at least two years on this kind of arrangement.

I shall deeply appreciate a reply from you at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

President
August 10, 1938

Dr. F. F. Keppel, President
Carnegie Corporation
522 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

My dear Dr. Keppel:

Some time ago I wrote you expressing our deep appreciation for your making possible the appointment of Kenneth Adams as Artist in Residence at the University of New Mexico. Having seen a great amount of publicity concerning the plan at Dartmouth and Wisconsin, I think it would be pleasing to Mr. Adams to have some publicity given to his appointment here. You will know what is appropriate in this connection.

Since the appointment of Mr. Adams to the position of Artist in Residence the resignation of Professor Nosley in the Art Department leaves a vacancy, and I am wondering if it would be feasible for Mr. Adams to give a portion of his time to teaching an advanced course in painting along with the assignment which he already has. We want to have your full approval of this action before we take it, and I am therefore writing you in advance, wanting to know if that would be satisfactory to your organization. I shall appreciate a reply at your convenience.

I think I should add also that upon the completion of the term as Artist in Residence I shall seek the services of Mr. Adams for the position of director of the Art Department.

With kindest personal regards and best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,

[Signature]

[Note: The signature is not visible in the image.]

“Resident Artist to Work at University, Teach Classes,” Albuquerque Journal, September 18, 1938.
Kenneth Adams, *Three Peoples mural*, 1939. Oil on canvas, West Wing of Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.
Pan-Americanism and World War II

Arias Bernal, Poster commissioned by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA), ca. 1943

Arias Bernal, *Como un Solo Hombre/As One Man*, Poster commissioned by the OIAA ca. 1941
Exhibition catalogue for “Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art,” Museum of Modern Art, 1940 (OIAA)

Movie poster for Disney’s animated movie Saludos Amigos, 1943 (OIAA)
Inter-American Affairs at UNM

The Role of the Arts in a Program of Inter-American Relations
At the University of New Mexico

To state within a brief compass the role that the arts could play in an Inter-American Relations program at the University of New Mexico, would be rather difficult because of the many aspects of the question, but here is a picture of what might be accomplished by long-range planning.

In the field of the Fine Arts, one sees the possibility of having on the campus a "Latin American artist in residence", well equipped to teach a general course in "Hispanic Art" (including painting, sculpture and the minor arts) and others in "Modern Latin American Art" and "Modern Mexican Art". General courses on Hispanic Art are offered in many institutions, and specialized ones on Latin American Art at Minnesota, Texas and Yale. The "artist in residence" could be brought with an arrangement similar to the one affected in the University of Wisconsin with the great American painter Curry, who holds informal training classes with students and who at the same time labors independently in his own creative work. It should not prove difficult to find a man combining theory and application, for in the Hispanic world both things go often together. Another subject which could be eventually added to the curriculum in Fine Arts is "Hispanic Architecture", or a more comprehensive treatment of "Architecture in the Americas", contrasting the historical background and architectural manifestations of North and South.

In Dramatic Art, particularly in the applied field, a regular program of staging several Spanish plays each year could be inaugurated - plays of leading Spanish and Latin American authors, or original with students and...
THE FINE ARTS FESTIVAL
of the Arts and Crafts

this year presents the theme:
“The Arts and Latin-American Inter-relations.”

A cordial invitation is extended to all interested to attend programs, conferences, exhibitions and to visit laboratories and classes in the College of Fine Arts and the School of Fine American Affairs.

Exhibitions:
Series of small groups of paintings: works by Joseph Albers, mural sketches; silk-screen process in functional arts; Santa Fe Museum of Anthropology displays; Peninsular objects; Fine Arts Building.

Latin-American Publications and books, Library.

At La Quinta Gallery, Old Town Boulevard, national craft revivals and New Mexico painters.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, April 15
Exhibitions will open and continue until May 1, 1942.
5:00 a.m. Conference—Music and the Arts, Rodey Hall.
11:00 a.m. Pan-American Day Student Assembly, Gymnasium.
2:00 p.m. University Band, Campus Grove.
5:00 p.m. New Mexico Art League Ten, Fine Arts Building.
8:00 p.m. Music Department Program, Student Union Building.

Saturday, April 18
10-12 a.m. Conference, “The Student Today and the Pan-American Cultural Effort.”
1-6 p.m. Student College Festa, Band Concert at 3 p.m., Campus Grove.
3 p.m. Lecture and Conference on Industrial Art.
5:00 p.m. Student Body masquerade costume ball honoring Latin-American students in residence of the Curtiss-Clark Flying School, Student Union Building.

Note: Thursday, April 16, 8:00 p.m. University Symphony Orchestra, Rodey Hall.

Thursday, April 16
10-12 a.m. Conference, Folk Literature and the Arts.
12:00 noon Luncheon (place to be announced).
3:00 p.m. All Spanish play, “El Par de Zapatos,” place to be announced.
8:00 p.m. Annual Student Musical, Rodey Hall.
9:45 p.m. All Spanish Program broadcast KOB.

Friday, April 17
10-12 a.m. Conference, “The Pan-American Scheme and its active participation in the arts,” Rodey Hall.
12:00 noon Luncheon (place to be announced).
8:00 p.m. Annual Student Musical, Rodey Hall.

Detailed Program Available at Fine Arts Building, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

Fifth Annual Fine Arts Festival of the Arts and Crafts, UNM, 1942
THEME: “The Arts and Latin-American Inter-relations”
Humoristic Fiesta: Caricatures of New Mexicans, exhibition brochure for the works of Miguel Angel Ayala, Gallery of the College of Fine Arts, UNM, 1944
Leon Helguera, “Americans All, Let’s Fight for Victory,” 1943. Poster commissioned by the Office of War Information.
“Cultural Gifts” Movement of the 1920s and 1930s
Maria Antonia Pena (Quah Ah), born in 1893 in San Idelfonso Pueblo, died 1949 in Cochiti Pueblo, NM. She attended the Santa Fe Indian School where she studied art under Dorothy Dunn. Photograph by T. Harmon Parkhurst, Museum of New Mexico #73945.
The Discourse of “Cultural Gifts” in Pan-American-themed Public Art

Boris Deutsch, Terminal Annex Post Office Mural, 1944, Los Angeles.
Boris Deutsch, Terminal Annex Post Office Mural, 1944, Los Angeles.
Boris Deutsch, Terminal Annex Post Office Mural, 1944, Los Angeles.
Boris Deutsch, Terminal Annex Post Office Mural, 1944, Los Angeles.
Boris Deutsch, “In Defense of the Americas,”
Terminal Annex Post Office Mural,
1944, Los Angeles.

Kenneth Adams, *Three Peoples mural*, 1939. Oil on canvas, West Wing of Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.
Dr. F. F. Kappel, President
Carnegie Corporation
525 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

Dear Doctor Kappel:

I am enclosing herewith photographs of the two completed murals drawn by Kenneth Adams for the University of New Mexico Library. May I explain that the murals are located in a dark room, and that the photographs are very poor. The originals are indeed beautiful, and we are looking forward to the completion of the entire four with much interest and pleasure.

The general plan of the murals is as follows:

1. The Indian, showing his work as the artist;
2. The Spanish, giving a general idea of their contributions to the civilization in this area in the fields of agriculture and architecture;
3. The Anglo, with scientific contributions; and
4. The union of all three in the life of the Southwest.

I think the idea and the plan are quite stunning, and I am confident that when they are completed they will constitute a mural of which the University and the entire Southwest will be proud. We expect the murals to be finished at the end of this year.

With warm personal regards and best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

J. F. Zimmerman
President
October 23, 1942

Dr. Walter Joseph, President
Carnegie Corporation of New York
582 Fifth Avenue,
New York City

Dear Dr. Joseph,

In sending to you the small handbook of the Annals of New Mexico Library which contains reproductions of the murals I did for the library during the academic years of 1938 and 1939.

This work, as you know, was made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation which supported me as resident artist at the University those two years.

Three years have passed since the murals were installed and I feel today as I felt then, that they are my most satisfactory accomplishment in the field of mural painting.

Sincerely,

Kenneth M. Adams
1927: Official adoption of Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style for UNM Architecture

1936: Administrative Building completed

1938: Renaming of campus streets using Spanish Colonization as a theme; Main Library completed

1938-1940: Adams teaches and paints at UNM as artist-in-residence

1940: Coronado Cuarto Centennial; U.S. government establishes the OIAA

1941: UNM establishes the School of Inter-American Affairs; U.S. enters World War II

1942-1943: Jesus Guerrero-Galvan teaches and paints at UNM as artist-in-residence
Jesús Guerrero Galván’s Mural Commission

Jesús Guerrero Galván (1910-1973)

Jesús Guerrero Galván, *Tres mujeres*, 1940
Pablo O’Higgins, *Buenos Vecinos*, Lithograph on Paper, 1944
LATIN AMERICAN ARTIST IN RESIDENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Who Makes the Announcement?

The Art Committee of the School of Inter-American Affairs;
Hela Sedille, Chairman; David Harris and Emily von Amw, all of the College of Fine Arts.

Facts about the Selection, Grant, and Appointment

The School of Inter-American Affairs has obtained a grant of funds from the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs through the Committee for Inter-American Artistic and Intellectual Relations, to invite the well-known Mexican painter, Jesus Guerrero Galvan, to be "Latin American Artist in Residence" at the University of New Mexico from June to December 1942.

A special committee composed of the distinguished Mexican scholars, Manuel Toussaint, Daniel F., Julian del La Norvella and Justino Fernandez, gratefully accepted the invitation of the School of Inter-American Affairs to help in the selection of the artist.

Mr. Guerrero Galvan has accepted the invitation and will arrive in Albuquerque early in June.

Teaching Programme

Mr. Guerrero Galvan will join the faculty of the College of Fine Arts and teach courses during the 1942 summer session and the first semester of 1942-43.

In the summer session he will give a technical course on painting and another one of lectures on contemporary Mexican painters, illustrated with colored slides. His contact on fellow artists of his own group, whom he knows intimately, should prove very interesting.

Mr. Guerrero Galvan is expected to establish contacts with the art groups of the region, and in general, to promote inter-American relations in the field of the graphic arts.

Career

Mr. Guerrero Galvan was born at Tonjia, State of Jalisco, Mexico in 1910. At the age of 12 he entered as an apprentice in the studio of the painter Jose Viscarra in Guadalajara, Jalisco. He progressed rapidly, and by 1928 he was well launched on his personal career as teacher and creative artist. He directed a shop on plastic arts, and later became professor of painting in a school of art of the Department of Fine Arts of the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Guerrero Galvan is at present professor of Figure Drawing in the School of Fine Arts (the old Academy of St. Charles) at the National University of Mexico.

Though fundamentally interested in Basel painting, in 1936 he painted fresco in the public schools of the City of Mexico and in the old building of the University of Guadalajara, and in his early work with the University of Mexico he gave classes on structural drawing in a workers school.

His Works

His works figure in the best collections of Mexico and the United States and have been exhibited in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Havana and Lima.

He was represented in the exhibit of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art, organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1936 and displayed her at Albuquerque in the Gallery of the College of Fine Arts of the University in the spring of 1941 under the auspices of the Art League of New Mexico.

The Gallery of Mexican Art held in 1941 at Mexico City an individual exhibit of his works.

Other Accomplishments

Besides being one of the most prominent painters of the younger generation, Mr. Guerrero Galvan has been very instrumental in various advanced theoretical movements in Mexico and has contributed settings for Mexican plays and ballets.

The Artist's Interest in New Mexico

Dr. Ortega conferred with Mr. Guerrero Galvan last September in Mexico City. He showed keen interest in our region. "It is an ideal place for an artist to live," he said. "Beautiful nature, peace, interesting and varied human models; and the stimulus which will come to me from the personal acquaintance with so many excellent artists who have made of New Mexico a place famous in the art centers of all the Americas."
Dedication Program for Jesús Guerrero Galván’s fresco *Union of the Americas*, February 13, 1943

James F. Zimmerman’s speech at the fresco unveiling, February 13, 1943
most talked about, the farthest from evil, that is to say, from good and evil. He is the one who holds the greatest importance for us, not esthetically but historically. Rivera is the painter for all the "isms," for according to the judgment of Rodriguez Lozano (a great Mexican painter), Diego sums up the whole history of modern painting. He starts from classicism, passes through neo-classicism, and then through expressionism, impressionism, cubism, then he passes into Dieguism, from there to Trotskyism, and winds up in tourism. As one can see, he is the painter who exerts the strongest attraction on the student of
Coatlicue, Aztec goddess of creation and war

Diego Rivera, *Pan American Unity*, 1940

Diego Rivera, *Detroit Industry* (Detail) 1932
Frida Kahlo, *Self Portrait Along the Boarder Line Between Mexico and the United States*, 1932

Jose Clemente Orozco, *Dive Bomber and Tank*, 1940. Commissioned as part of “Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art” at MoMA.

are clouds of stone which are molded and take the forms which hallucination provokes in us. To be sure, we do not attempt to oppose this art (taboo for us) to European art. Still less do we, with our passion for pre-Columbian art, wish to deny Spanish art which is part of our body and blood. That earthy realism and mystical impulse of the Spanish primitive painters is present in our art. It is necessary to have our feet placed firmly on the ground, but our faces must feel the caress
ASSESSING DAMAGE to Kenneth Adams's tricultural mural in Zimmerman Library are Roy Sandvold, the Physical Plant's lead painter, and Arthur L. DeVolder, technical services librarian. Green paint was splashed on the panel Jan. 25. The panel has been criticized because only the white man in the center has eyes. Black paint was thrown on the mural in 1970, requiring $3,000 in repair work. Plans were being made at Campus News press time to have the panel repaired. (Campus News Photo)
Kenneth Adams, *Three Peoples mural*, 1939. Oil on canvas, West Wing of Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.