

JULIO ALPUY

[1919, Uruguay - 2009, USA]

Growing up in the Uruguayan countryside with little exposure to art, Alpuy first began drawing at the age of twenty. Within a year, the young artist met Joaquín Torres-García. Inspired by his theories on Constructive Universalism, Alpuy joined the Taller Torres-García.

In 1944, Alpuy painted two murals as part of the Taller's project to decorate the Hospital Saint Bois in Montevideo, Uruguay. He would continue to paint murals throughout his career. Encouraged by Torres-García, Alpuy and other Taller members travelled to the Andean region of South America in 1945. This experience, along with other periods of travel during the 1950s in South America, Europe, and the Middle East, profoundly affected his work. For Alpuy, nature functions as a framework for his archetypal personal symbolism, based on a fascination with the organic and the primordial.

In 1961, Alpuy immigrated to New York, where he remained for the duration of his life. Alpuy's work has been featured in numerous exhibitions about the Taller Torres-García, as well as in several international solo exhibitions. It is also included in major international collections, including: The Morgan Library & Museum, New York City, New York, USA; Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales (MNAV), Montevideo, Uruguay; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; and The Nelson A. Rockefeller Collection, New York City, New York, USA.

GONZALO FONSECA

[1922, Uruguay - 1997, Italy]

In 1942, Fonseca chose to leave his study of architecture to pursue an artistic career. Working under the direction of Joaquín Torres-García, Fonseca joined the artist's workshop, where he participated in the group's collective exhibitions. In 1945, Fonseca traveled with other Taller Torres-García members through Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia to study pre-Columbian art. This experience, along with numerous trips throughout Europe, the Middle East, and Egypt during the 1950s, profoundly affected Fonseca's formal and theoretical approach to art.

Although Fonseca left the College of Architecture in Montevideo as a young man, an emphasis on structure and architectonics is present throughout his oeuvre. As a teenager, he taught himself to sculpt in stone and later returned to sculpture after studying ceramics in Spain in 1953.

Fonseca moved to the United States in 1958, settling in New York. He later divided his time between New York and Italy, where he created large-scale marble sculptures. In 1965, Fonseca contributed a playground and site-specific sculptures to the Lake Anne Village Center in Reston, Virginia, USA, a collaborative project with architects James Rossant and William Conklin. He was invited to create a monumental concrete tower for the 1968 Mexico City Summer Olympics, and he also participated in the Faret Tachikawa Art Project in Tokyo, Japan in 1995. Fonseca also illustrated books by authors including Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Mann, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Michel de Montaigne.

Artworks by Fonseca are included in the collections of: Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York, USA; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM), Valencia, Spain; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas, Venezuela; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Palacio Libertad, Montevideo, Uruguay; Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon, USA; and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City, New York, USA.

JOSÉ GURVICH

[1927, Lithuania – 1974, USA]

Populated with figures and images that reflect his Jewish upbringing, his participation with the Taller Torres-García, and his profound admiration for the European art masters Breughel and Bosch, Gurvich's artworks combine a unique personal style with technical mastery.

Gurvich was born in Lithuania and moved to Uruguay with his family in 1932. There, he excelled at both music and the visual arts, and it was while studying the violin alongside Horacio Torres that the young artist was introduced to Joaquín Torres-García.

Soon after, Gurvich joined the Taller Torres-García, participating in the workshop's exhibitions, writing for its publications, executing mural projects, and teaching.

In 1954 and again in 1964, the artist traveled to Europe and Israel, where he lived as a shepherd on the Kibbutz Ramot Menashe. These experiences profoundly influenced the iconography of his paintings and sculptures. Moving to the United States in 1970, Gurvich joined his fellow Taller artists, Julio Alpuy, Horacio Torres, and Gonzalo Fonseca in New York City, where he continued to produce art until his premature death in 1974. Fundación José Gurvich was created in Montevideo in 2001 and is now known as the Museo Gurvich.

FRANCISCO MATTO

[1911 – 1995, Uruguay]

At the age of twenty-one, Matto traveled to Tierra del Fuego and acquired the first pre-Columbian pieces of what was to become a major collection and an important influence on his art. In 1962, Matto opened his Museo de Arte Precolombino, which housed ceramics, textiles, and sculpture from Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela.

In 1969, Matto won first prize for the silver coin he designed for the Banco Central del Uruguay (BCU), awarded by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Geldgeschichte (GIG), an international numismatic association based in Frankfurt, Germany. In 1982, he was invited to participate in the First International Meeting for Open Air Sculpture in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

Art, for Matto, was a means of communicating with the divine, and the elemental forms of his sculptures became vehicles to facilitate the quasi-religious function of his art. In his *Totem Series*, Matto sought to develop the animistic principle through the liberation of the sign.

AUGUSTO TORRES

[1913 - 1992, Spain]

The eldest son of Joaquín Torres-García was born in Terrassa in the province of Barcelona. While living in Paris in the 1920s, Augusto met many of the great figures of twentieth century art, including Pablo Picasso, Piet Mondrian, and Joan Miró. During the 1930s, he worked as an assistant and apprentice to the sculptor Julio González and studied drawing in Amedée Ozenfant's Academy. It was also in Paris that Augusto developed his lifelong passion for tribal and primitive art. The artist was introduced to Native American art by the painter Jean Hélion, a friend of his father's. He later formed a great collection of Native American art.

After Torres-García brought his family to Uruguay in 1934, Augusto participated in the Taller Torres-García. He later went on to become a teacher himself. In 1945 he began his long collaboration with the Spanish architect Antonio Bonet. In 1960, he was awarded a grant by The New School in New York City where he lived for two years. During this time, Augusto traveled to Montana to visit Blackfoot Indian reservations. From 1973 on, he divided his time between Barcelona and Montevideo.

Augusto Torres's art is included in the collections of the Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain; Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales (MNAV), Montevideo, Uruguay; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City, New York, USA; and Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California, USA.

HORACIO TORRES

[1924, Italy - 1976, USA]

Horacio Torres was born in 1924 when his father, the painter Joaquín Torres-García, was living in Livorno, Italy. The family moved to Paris in 1926 where Horacio grew up and was introduced to Alexander Calder's *Circus*. In 1934, the family left Europe to settle in Montevideo, Uruguay. Horacio was a member of the Asociación de Arte Constructivo (AAC) and The Taller Torres-García. In 1942, he traveled to Peru and Bolivia with his brother Augusto to study pre-Columbian Art. He painted two large constructivist murals on the walls of a hospital in Montevideo, a collective project launched by his father with the Taller Torres-García artists. In 1947, Horacio won a competition to paint a large mural for the executive offices of ANCAP, the state-owned National Administration of Fuels, Alcohols and Portland Cement in Montevideo. After his father's death in 1949, he traveled to Europe, lived at the Maison du Mexique in the Cité internationale universitaire de Paris, and traveled throughout Europe visiting the great museums. Having returned to Uruguay, Horacio began collaborating with the architects Antonio Bonet in Buenos Aires, and in Montevideo, with Mario Payssé Reyes, who commissioned large wall reliefs in cut brick for the church of the Archdiocese Seminary.

In 1969, he settled in New York where he began painting large representational canvases of nude figures. Curator Kenneth Moffet wrote "this change to the figurative involved perceiving that his veneration for tradition and his desire to be modern were problematic and related impulses. His modernity had to be won, his traditionalism justified, and the friction that their conjunction generated proved fruitful." The figurative canvases were first shown at the Noah Goldowsky Gallery in New York City in 1972, and two years later, in an individual exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), Massachusetts, USA. Horacio died in New York in 1976.

His work is in the collections of the Art Gallery of Alberta (AGA), Edmonton, Canada; Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay, Montevideo; Uruguay; Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska, USA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, USA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, New York, USA; Musée National d'Art Moderne - Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Museo de Bellas Artes Juan Manuel Blanes, Montevideo, Uruguay; The Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD Museum), Providence, Rhode Island, USA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), Massachusetts, USA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York City, New York, USA; and Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, USA.

JOAQUÍN TORRES-GARCÍA

[1874 – 1949, Uruguay]

The Uruguayan painter, muralist, sculptor, teacher, writer, and theoretician, Joaquín Torres-García was born in Montevideo to a Catalan father and a Uruguayan mother. When he was seventeen years old, his family returned to the father's homeland in Catalonia, Spain. Torres-García would not return to Montevideo for another forty-three years, living in Spain, France, the United States, and Italy.

In Barcelona, he studied at the Academy La Llotja and at the Cercle Artístic de Sant Lluc. In 1903, he worked at Antoni Gaudí's studio. Commissioned to decorate a large hall for Barcelona's Palau de la Generalitat de Catalunya, he traveled to Italy in 1912 to study fresco. By 1916, he had completed four large fresco murals. He contributed essays to magazines and newspapers, and his first book, *Notes sobre art*, was published in 1913. In 1917, Torres-García began to design manipulable, didactic wood toys for children, which he continued to do until the 1930s in Paris.

In 1920, Torres-García left Barcelona for good. He settled in New York, and after two years, he returned to Europe; first, he lived in Tuscany, and then, in 1926, he moved to Paris. It was there that he met the French artist Jean Hélion who introduced him to the artists of the avant-garde. He became friends with Jacques Lipchitz, Theo van Doesburg, Alexander Calder, Piet Mondrian, Le Corbusier, Luis Fernandez, and Amédée Ozenfant. He also renewed his friendship with the sculptor Julio González. With Michel Seuphor, Torres-García founded the group and journal, *Cercle et Carré* (*Circle and Square*) in 1930. At the end of 1932, due to the economic effects of the stock market crash, he moved to Madrid.

After eighteen months in the Spanish capital, he returned to Uruguay. In Montevideo, he first founded the "Asociación de Arte Constructivo" (AAC) ("The Association of Constructivist Art") with a group of Uruguayan artists. In the first issue of *Círculo y Cuadrado*, a magazine inspired by *Cercle et Carré* which the group renewed, the seminal drawing of the *Inverted Map* of South America was published. Torres-García's statement was: "Nuestro norte es el sur" ("Our North is the South"). In 1943, he founded the "Taller Torres-García" (TTG), where he imparted his teachings to the next generation of artists. He died in Montevideo in August of 1949. In Torres-García's Constructive Universal compositions, he aimed to express a total worldview, forging a unique style which united elements of European modernism with those of ancient cultures, particularly of the Americas. It appeals equally to reason, to the senses, and to the spirit.

Torres-García's works are included in numerous public and private collections such as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA; Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, DC, USA; Banco de la República, Bogota, Colombia; Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, USA; Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, USA; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain; Kunst Museum Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland; LaM - Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art

contemporain et d'art brut, Villeneuve d'Ascq, France; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, California, USA; Le Musée d'Art moderne et contemporain de Strasbourg (MAMCS), Strasbourg, France; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid, Spain; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museo de Bellas Artes Juan Manuel Blanes, Montevideo, Uruguay; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid, Spain; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museo Nacional de Artes Visuales (MNAV), Montevideo, Uruguay; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico; Museo Torres García, Montevideo, Uruguay; Museu Coleção Berardo - Centro Cultural Belém, Lisbon, Portugal; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), Barcelona, Spain; Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), Brazil; Museu de Arte Moderna Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Brazil; The Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD Museum), Providence, Rhode Island, USA; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Texas, USA; Museum of Latin American Art (MoLAA), Long Beach, California, USA; Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM), Florida, USA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, USA; San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA), Texas, USA; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), San Francisco, California, USA.