

XUL SOLAR

[1887 – 1963, Argentina]

Alejandro Xul Solar was born Óscar Alejandro Agustín Schulz Solari in 1887, in the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina. His father was of German origins born in Latvia and his mother was of Italian extraction. He studied music and architecture, which he did not complete. His art is Expressionist, surrealist, symbolist and modernist and is a unique representative of the vanguard in Latin America. In 1912 he travelled to Europe where he remained till 1924 having lived in Italy, France, England, and Germany. Back in Argentina he took an active part in renovating the design of the publication Martin Fierro for the publishers. He was a friend of Jorge Luis Borges for whom he illustrated several of his works and with whom he shared an interest in authors such as Emanuel Swedenborg, William Blake, Gustav Mayrink and Arthur Schopenhauer. Xul Solar also cooperated with various editorial undertakings, in publications such as Revista Multicolor de los Sábados y Destiempo.

Xul Solar had a broad range of interests such as Astrology, Cabbala, I Ching, philosophy, Oriental ancient religions and beliefs, India, the Americas before colonization, theosophy, and anthroposophy among other branches of learning. Furthermore, he undertook the creation of two artificial languages: neocriollo (a new Creole/native language) and a pan-language. He modified the game of chess to make an improved version which he called pan-chess; he proposed changes to musical sheet and to the keyboard of a piano, he created a puppet show for adults and a Tarot game different to the original version. Xul Solar's paintings in distinctive colours are full of symbols and reflect his unique vision of the world.

The Foundation Pan Klub Museo Xul Solar is an institution created to conserve and spread the work of the Argentine artist Alejandro Xul Solar. Its purpose is to develop and promote diverse cultural activities.

In 1986, when Micaela (Lita) Cadenas, widow of the artist, and Natalio J. Povarché, Xul Solar's art dealer, set up the foundation in accordance with the artist's original plans from the late 1930s for a Pan Klub, they created a space where intellectuals and artists could come together for cultural discussion.

The museum opened its doors for the first time on 13th May 1993. The works on display were chosen personally by Xul Solar for the Pan Klub. These works constitute the permanent collection of the museum, together with other objects, sculptures, and documents from his personal archive. The Foundation is also responsible for maintaining the artist's home where there is a library with close to 3,500 tomes.

The architecture of the museum building was devised using Xul Solar's thoughts, ideas and images taken from his artistic work. In the 1998 awards the building was semi-finalist in the Premio Mies van der Rohe for Latin America. The purpose of this award is to bestow a prize on Latin American contemporary architecture and in 2003 the

Década prize awarded to the best building, built during 1993 in the city of Buenos Aires.