

Louis Stern Fine Arts at Art Basel Miami Beach
December 6-10, 2023
Survey Sector, Booth S13

Louis Stern Fine Arts is pleased to present a selection of works by Ynez Johnston (1920-2019). Over seven decades of artmaking, Johnston worked tirelessly to bring imaginary lands, mythical beasts, and fantastical voyages to exuberant life. Her innovative painting, sculpture, and printmaking practice was as varied and diverse as her influences, owing as much to the European Modernist works of Henri Matisse and Paul Klee as the narrative and decorative structures found in Indian and Persian miniature paintings and Tibetan *Thangkas*. Seeded from an amalgamation of ancient and modern cross-cultural influences, Johnston's captivating visual language emerged as a fully-fledged chimerical phenomenon all its own, immutably tethered to her strange and romantic inner life.

Johnston was born in Berkeley, California, where the wharves and fog of the San Francisco Bay Area would prove foundational influences on her dreamy aesthetics and thirst for adventure. She obtained her BFA and MFA from UC Berkeley and was invited to present her first solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1943. A travel grant permitted her to live and make art in Mexico between 1941-1943, sparking a passion for travel and inspiring future visits to numerous countries including Nepal, Spain, India, Cambodia, and Italy.

Johnston moved to Los Angeles in 1949, exhibiting frequently at prominent venues including Paul Kantor Gallery and the Los Angeles County Museum. The following year she was one of three artists included in a *New Talent* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the first of many presentations of her work on the East Coast. Johnston would form enduring friendships with a number of fellow Southern California artists, including June Wayne, Lee Mullican, and Emerson Woelffer. She was declared an LA Times Woman of the Year in 1959 for her contributions to the Los Angeles art scene.

Over the course of a lengthy and fruitful career, Johnston developed an enigmatic symbolic vocabulary to describe the legendary adventures and mysterious denizens of imaginary worlds. Her vigorously tactile paintings and sculptures made use of any materials at hand which offered creative potential, mingling canvas and oil paint with commercial epoxy resin, raw silk, wax, chemical dyes, sand, and carved wood. A voluble cast of recurring glyphs and composite forms depict fanciful creatures prowling invented continents, cloud cities bristling with pyramids and palaces, and bulbous ships traversing sparkling harbors and whirling maelstroms. Johnston's feverishly inscribed markings comprise an alien language that is nonetheless elusively legible, chronicling a mystical codex from a far-off realm to be deciphered by fellow travelers.

Works by Ynez Johnston have been regularly exhibited across the United States and internationally, including shows in Japan, India, and Brazil. She is represented in over 60 institutional collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, NY; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Brooklyn Museum; Smithsonian American Art Museum; National Gallery of Art; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Art Institute of Chicago; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Dallas Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The Estate of Ynez Johnston is represented by Louis Stern Fine Arts.

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Meridians Sector, Booth M17

Louis Stern Fine Arts is pleased to present a full-scale preliminary study by Alfredo Ramos Martínez (1871-1946) for his mural *Vendedoras de Flores*, executed between 1945-1946 in the Margaret Fowler Memorial Garden at Scripps College in Claremont, CA. Ramos Martínez was a prolific painter, esteemed muralist, and innovative teacher who counted David Alfaro Siqueiros as one of his first students. An influential cultural interlocutor between his native Mexico and his adopted home the United States, Ramos Martínez was renowned for his sensitive works celebrating Mexican culture and portraying the daily lives and struggles of its people. Because of his tremendous influence on a generation of young Mexican artists in the early years of the 20th Century, he is considered by many to be the Father of Mexican Modernism.

Beginning in 1929, Ramos Martínez was commissioned to paint a number of murals across California and Mexico. These included murals in the Beverly Hills home of screenwriter Jo Swerling, at the Chapel of the Santa Barbara Cemetery in Santa Barbara, CA, and at the Escuela Normal de Señoritas in Mexico City. A few of the artist's mural projects survive to the present day, but many have been partially or completely destroyed. The full-scale preliminary sketches the artist created to visualize and plan his murals are often the most complete records remaining for these lost works. Ramos Martínez fell ill and passed away before completing *Vendedoras de Flores*, and thus the mural remains unfinished. This study for panel 6 offers a rare glimpse into the artist's planning process and suggests how aspects of the mural may have appeared had he lived to complete it.

Works by Alfredo Ramos Martínez have been exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Dallas Museum of Art; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey (MARCO), Mexico; and Museo Nacional de Arte (MUNAL), Mexico City, among many others. His work is held in numerous public collections, including the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; Dallas Museum of Art; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, Los Angeles; Phoenix Art Museum; San Diego Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Santa Barbara Museum of Art; Seattle Art Museum; and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

The Estate of Alfredo Ramos Martínez is exclusively represented by
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