

The Story of Mexican Murals

by Caitlyn Meagher



This is part of a mural painted by Diego Rivera. The title of the mural is "History of Mexico," and the sign in the painting reads, "Land and Liberty." This was an important political message during the Mexican Revolution.

Public art has been important throughout history. In Mexico, many artists used murals to communicate social and political messages. Murals are paintings that are painted directly on a large wall. Back when most people in the country could not read, artists would paint murals to express certain politics or traditions. These murals were available for all to see. Mural painting became a way for artists to share their beliefs and try to unite a divided country.

In 1910, the Mexican Revolution began. This Revolution was a civil war that started with an election and lasted for about a decade. Many people were unhappy with the dictator Porfirio Díaz, who had declared himself the winner of that election. So a war broke out as people struggled for power. For many years, Mexico experienced division and violence. No one could agree on who should lead the country. Many people fled Mexico in hopes of a better life. People who stayed in the country wanted reforms. Reforms are changes that improve people's lives. Even though the Revolution ended in 1920, Mexico was still very divided. Artists tried to bring people together by making murals.

The artists painted farmers, laborers, and revolutionaries. They painted these middle- and

lower-class people as heroes. They also painted images of the Mexican Revolution. Some of these images showed the violence and fear during this decade.

Three artists became known for their revolutionary murals. They were nicknamed "Los Tres Grandes," or Three Great Ones. They were Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros. Siqueiros even fought in the Revolution.

Los Tres Grandes and the rest of the mural artists proudly displayed Mexican culture and heritage. They also taught people the history of Mexico. They did not paint for the wealthy, but for every Mexican citizen. The murals were for the people and by the people, just like a lot of street and graffiti art today.



This is a mural painted by David Alfaro Siqueiros in Mexico City.