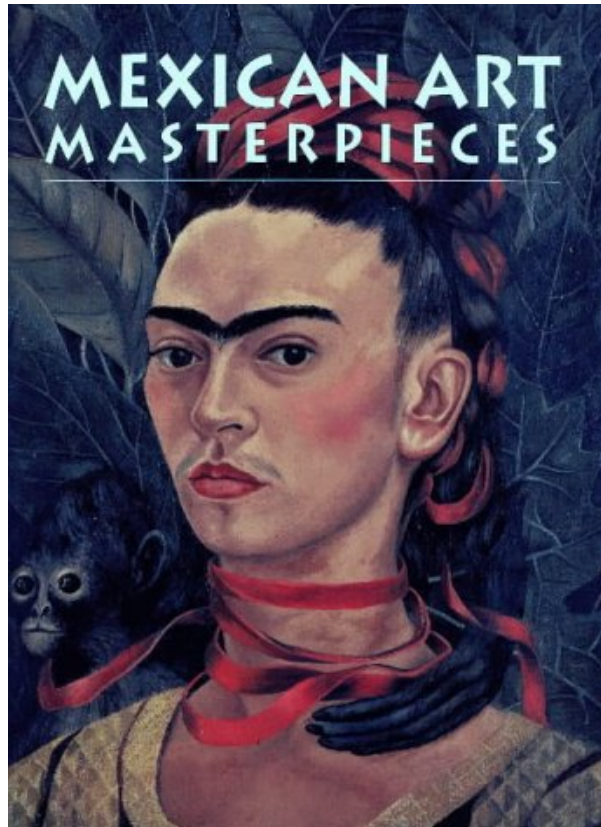
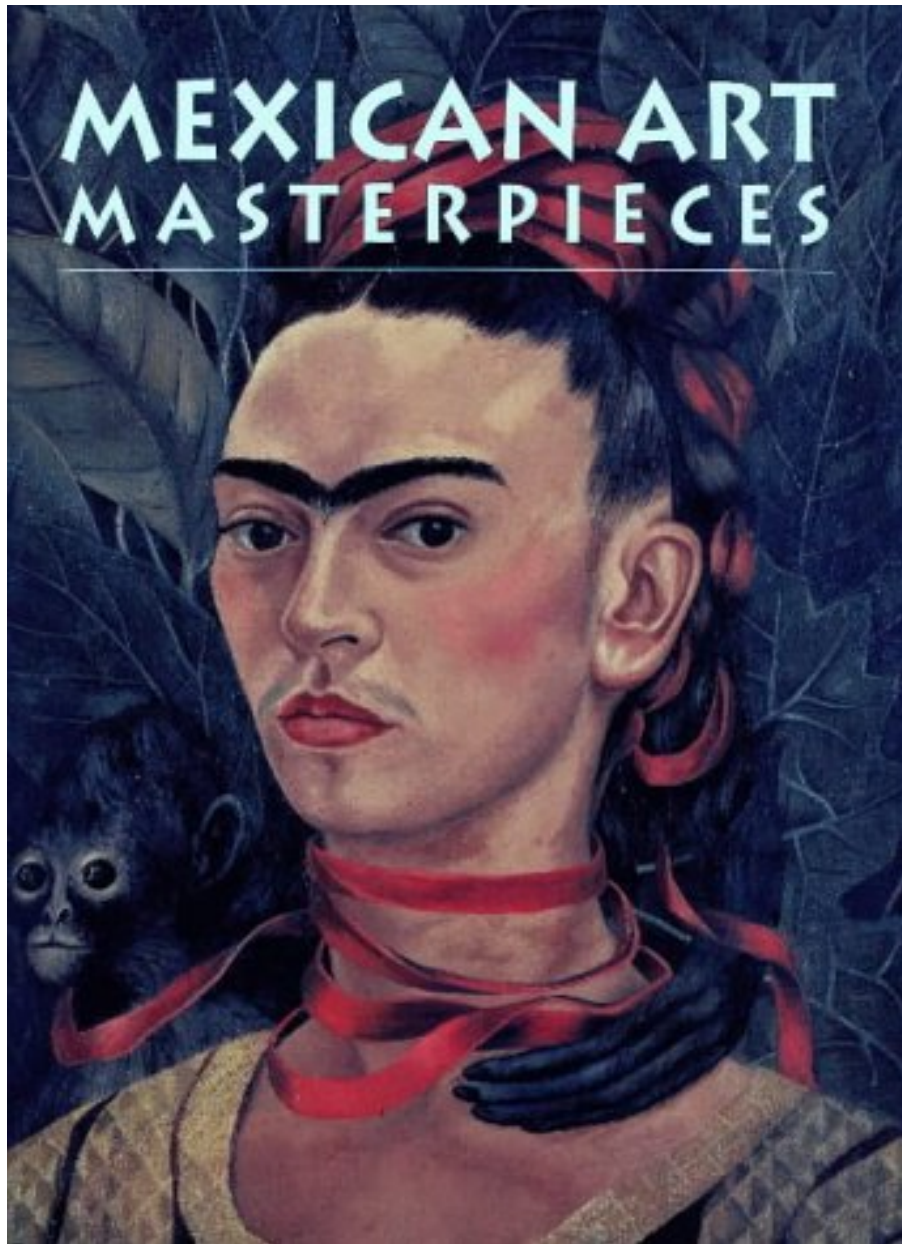


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Nice Introduction to Mexican Art

By Enrique Torres

Whenever such a subjective title is chosen such as "Mexican Art Masterpieces" there are bound to be omissions and unlikely selections. For the most part this book is a good, quick study, covering in abbreviated form the art of Mexico in four sections: Prehispanic, Viceregal or Colonial, briefly the Nineteenth Century and more extensively the Twentieth Century. Most of the art featured is familiar to those who have even the most remote understanding and scope of Mexican Art. With just under fifty color plates to cover some 3,500 years of monumental art, as previously stated, this is a good introduction but by no means an exhaustive study. One of the strengths of this book is the one page synopsis given to each piece that gives a history lesson covering the social and political climate, a biography and an interpretation of the art piece pointing out the little details and nuances. The information provided is not earth shattering but helpful nonetheless and is not overly analytical and very easy to follow. The other strength is the magnificence of the chosen pieces, reflecting both ancient and modern themes by Mexican masters. I found it curious that missing from the Prehispanic section were such items as the wood carved Aztec drum or huehuetl from the Toluca Basin, considered by many to be the consummate representation of artistry achieved in woodcarving by the Aztecs or the figure of Chacmool, which is found throughout Mesoamerica, most notably in Chichen Itza and Tenochtitlan. From the Colonial period there is not an oil painting by Cristobal de Villalpando, who along with Juan Correa is considered to be the most representative from the Baroque period. Surely his "St. John the Evangelist and Mother Maria de Jesus de Agreda" is worthy of being featured. The image of the revered La Virgen de Guadalupe is also missing from this time period. Miguel Gonzalez's exquisite oil, gilding and mother-of-pearl inlaid masterpiece, "Virgin de Guadalupe," which is housed in the Museo Frantz Mayer in Mexico City should have been included in my humble opinion. From the Nineteenth Century Rodrigo Gutierrez's "The Senate of Tlaxcala", housed in the Museo Nacional de

Arte in Mexcio City, is also missing. With it's luminous light on the orator and Romanesque posturing it is truly a masterpiece. In the Twentieth Century, Francisco Goitia, considered to be to be the most Mexican of Mexican painters is nowhere to be found. His landscapes reflecting the turmoil, pathos and beauty of Mexico are absent from this collection of masterpieces. With many works to choose from, his masterpiece "Tata Jesucristo"(Father Jesus) is one that could easily have been included. These minor discrepancies and personal observations aside, I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the art history of Mexico. This is a good introductory book to the masterpieces in Mexican Art.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Combines scholarship with passionate storytelling

By Midwest Book Review

In Mexican Art Masterpieces, Marcus Burke showcases forty-eight unique and fascinating pieces of Mexican art that range from ancient ceramic statues and mosaic masks from the Mayans and Aztecs, to tomb facades and interior temple reliefs. Also represented are feather pictures, monstrosities, classically inspired paintings by artists of the viceregal period (including Baltasar de Echeve Orio and Juan Rodriguez Juarez); 19th-century masterpieces by Obregon and Velasco; and 20th-century favorites including works by Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, Frieda Kahlo, and others. Burke combines scholarship with passionate storytelling in each of the forty-eight essays that accompany the works and reveal the complicated connections between Mexican politics, society and art. Mexican Art Masterpieces is especially recommended for students and enthusiasts of Mexican history, art and culture.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent Investment

By Laura Cleveland

I read this book for months and months and months. It is a rich investigation into the history of Mexican art /its creators/ and the confluence of cultures that brought it about.

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