

Making Art Panamerican

Cultural Policy and the Cold War

Claire F. Fox

Among the buildings on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., only the Pan American Union (PAU) houses an international organization. The first of many anticipated “peace palaces” constructed in the early twentieth century, the PAU began with a mission of cultural diplomacy, and after World War II its Visual Arts Section became a leader in the burgeoning hemispheric arts scene.

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As it traces the careers of individual cultural policymakers and artists who intersected with the PAU in the two postwar decades—such as Concha Romero James, Charles Seeger, José Gómez Sicre, José Luis Cuevas, and Rafael Squirru—the book also charts the trajectories and displacements of sectors of the U.S. and Latin American intellectual left during a tumultuous interval that spans the Mexican Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, the New Deal, and the early cold war. Challenging the U.S. bias of conventional narratives about Panamericanism and the postwar shift in critical values from realism to abstraction, *Making Art Panamerican* illuminates the institutional dynamics that helped shape aesthetic movements in the critical decades following World War II.

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