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Whimsical Mexican animal figures to be displayed at the Fowler Museum

Fowler in Focus: Curious Creatures from Mexican Popular Arts Opens July 1

Fowler in Focus: Curious Creatures from Mexican Popular Arts—on display at the Fowler Museum at UCLA from July 1–Nov 28, 2012—includes approximately forty objects from the Fowler’s significant collection of Mexican popular art in an installation that offers an intimate look at how animal figures are imaginatively crafted, drawing on selected family and regional traditions in Mexico.

Ranging from familiar wildlife and domesticated species engaged in eccentric activities to wondrously whimsical beasts, the works included in the exhibition highlight how varying artistic styles bring fantastic fauna to life. An orchestra of miniature *animalitos* by the noted figural ceramist Teodora Blanco (1928-1980) of Atzompa, Oaxaca is juxtaposed with a selection of hoofed and winged acrobats posing in odd harmony by celebrated potter Herón Martínez Mendoza (1918–1990) of Acatlán de Osorio.



Woodcarvers Arsenio Morales, Susano Morales, and Edilberto Cortes of Arrazola, Oaxaca contribute brightly colored critters patterned after those one might encounter in fields or streams, but likely not in Mexico. Moving from the fanciful to the ferocious, a series of otherworldly earthenware works from Ocumichu, Michoacan brings viewers face to face with a snarling two-headed dog and a ravenous six-legged fiend among other weird beings. And adding an even more fearsome touch to this menagerie are four sharp-fanged papier-mâché monsters or *alebrijes* by members of Mexico City’s renowned Linares family (pictured, winged *alebrije* by Miguel Linares).

Fowler in Focus: Creatures from Mexican Popular Arts is curated by Patrick A. Polk, Curator of Latin American and Caribbean Popular Arts, Fowler Museum. Support comes from the Donald B. Cordry Memorial Fund. The exhibition will be on view in the Fowler in Focus gallery, the central space within the long-term exhibition *Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives*. Fowler in Focus is dedicated to rotating installations of new acquisitions, sub-collections, and particular artistic genres in the Fowler’s permanent holdings.

The **Fowler Museum at UCLA** is one of the country’s most respected institutions devoted to exploring the arts and cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas. The Fowler is open Wednesdays through Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m.; and on Thursdays, from noon until 8 p.m. The museum is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. The Fowler Museum, part of UCLA Arts, is located in the north part of the UCLA campus. Admission is free. Parking is available for a maximum of \$11 in Lot 4. For more information, the public may call 310/825-4361 or visit fowler.ucla.edu.