

Box 951549, Los Angeles, California 90095-1549
phone 310/825.4288
fax 310/206.7007
www.fowler.ucla.edu

Department of Marketing and Communications

Stacey Ravel Abarbanel
staceyra@arts.ucla.edu
310/825.4288

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Fowler Museum to Host Two Exhibitions about Native American Arts and Culture

***Rigo 23: From the Heart of Santa Madera and Fowler in Focus: The Yaqui Masks of Carlos Castaneda* Open May 4 at Fowler Museum**

As part of its fiftieth anniversary year, the Fowler Museum is offering two exhibitions that highlight its collection of Native American art and longstanding commitment to exhibiting the works of indigenous cultures. *Rigo 23: From the Heart of Santa Madera* will be on display from May 4–Aug. 31, 2014 in the Museum's Goldenberg Galleria, and *Fowler in Focus: The Yaqui Masks of Carlos Castaneda* will be on display in the Fowler in Focus gallery from May 4–Aug. 17, 2014.

Rigo 23: From the Heart of Santa Madera.

Drawing from the Fowler's Native American collections and artist Rigo 23's own long history of collaborating with native and indigenous communities around the world, the artist will use a variety of media to create an immersive exhibition that considers past and contemporary relations with Native American cultures in California, and more broadly, intercultural relations in an age of globalization.

Rigo 23: From the Heart of Santa Madera will consist of eight wall-sized canvases that incorporate photography, painting, graphic art, poetry, recorded sound, film stills, and other media, along with artifacts from the Fowler's collections. The compositions will incorporate elements as diverse as the film *The Exiles*, Indian Island in Eureka Bay, contemporary Tongva voices, the United Nations General Assembly voting records, the continued imprisonment of Lakota tribesperson and American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier, and quotes by Jean Paul Sartre and Franz Fanon. The project will address the invisibility of Native American cultures by highlighting contemporary struggles and cultural renewal.

Rigo 23 has long considered social issues in his work, including concerns for international workers in the global economy, the incarceration of political prisoners, and the treatment of Native Americans. In 2010 he temporarily changed the appearance of The Warehouse Gallery at Syracuse University to host a fictional museum, the Taté Wikikuwa Museum, focusing on Leonard Peltier. His work was also included in the exhibition *No Reservations: Native American History and Culture in Contemporary Art* (2006-7) at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum.

Rigo 23 was born in 1966 on Madeira Island, Portugal and lives in San Francisco. He has exhibited nationally and internationally since the mid-1980s. With an emphasis on forms of community-based practice, Rigo 23's murals, paintings, sculptures, and public interventions have been exhibited at

REDCAT, Los Angeles (2012); the Serralves Museum, Porto, Portugal (2011); the New Museum, New York (2009); Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Niterói, Brazil (2007); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Santiago, Chile (2000); and the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum (1999). Rigo 23 has also been included in biennials and international exhibitions including the Aichi Triennale, Japan and Auckland Triennial, New Zealand (2013); the Kochi Muziris Biennale, India (2012); the Shenzhen & Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture and the Lyon Biennale in Lyon, France (2009); the 4th Liverpool Biennial (2006); and the California Biennial at the Orange County Museum of Art (2004). Rigo 23 holds an MFA from Stanford University (1997) and a CFA from the San Francisco Art Institute (1991).

This exhibition is organized by Sebastian Clough, Director of Exhibitions, and Wendy Teeter, Curator of Archaeology, of the Fowler Museum.

Fowler in Focus: The Yaqui Masks of Carlos Castaneda

With long beards cascading from their chins and hair sometimes falling over their eyes, the painted and etched wood masks by the Yaqui of northern Mexico are haunting, humorous, playful, and arresting. *Fowler in Focus: The Yaqui Masks of Carlos Castaneda* showcases the collection of Yaqui *pahko'ola* masks and rattles field collected in the 1960s by famed author and UCLA-trained anthropologist Carlos Castaneda. The exhibition includes video and photographs that provide an opportunity to see the masks in context and in performances during *pahko'ola* rituals, which take place throughout the year, including for important ceremonies.

Pahko'ola masks offer a glimpse into some of the most ancient and respected aspects of their makers' worldview. The masks are most often carved to resemble a human face or the head of a goat, and the name, *pahko'ola*, may be translated as "old man of the fiesta," suggesting the wisdom and comprehensive knowledge associated with age. They usually employ red and white design elements and features on a black background. The masks are present at every major celebration: birthdays, weddings, death ceremonies, and religious holidays such as Semana Santa (Easter).

In the past, the *pahko'ola* dances communicated with the animals to ensure safe and successful deer hunts. Although such hunts are no longer essential to Yaqui survival, *pahko'ola* performers today entertain crowds as clowns and narrators. They joke with and tease spectators and ritual participants, but they also bless the ritual ground, making it safe from negativity and any potential for harm.

Castaneda (Dec. 25, 1925–Apr. 27, 1998) received his BA and PhD degrees from UCLA, mostly awarded due to his work with a Yaqui Indian named Don Juan Matus. His best-selling book, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (1968), and subsequent books he authored describe Castaneda's apprenticeship with Don Juan. After several well-publicized exposés questioned the validity of Castaneda's claims, many scholars doubted that Castaneda had done research among the Yaqui communities in Mexico. Unable to verify if Castaneda's books were fact or fiction, Time Magazine described him as "an enigma wrapped in a mystery."

His contribution of the Yaqui masks on display in this exhibition is therefore exceptionally valuable, as the acquisition documents prove that Castaneda was in the Yaqui pueblos during the time of his dissertation fieldwork. Additionally, the quality of the masks and the artistry of the mask-makers are undeniable.

This exhibition is guest curated by David Delgado Shorter (www.davidshorter.com), Associate Professor and Vice Chair of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA.

Additional Information

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 \$12 in Lot 4. For more information, the public may call 310/825-4361 or visit fowler.ucla.edu.

Related programs:

Thur., May 1, 2014 6–8 pm

Reception and Preview

Meet Rigo 23 and preview his work in *Rigo 23: From the Heart of Madera* and join guest curator David Shorter for a first look at *Fowler in Focus: The Yaqui Masks of Carlos Castaneda*. Live music, light refreshments.

Fri., May 1, 2014 12 pm

Culture Fix: Rigo 23 on Rigo 23

For his exhibition at the Fowler, Rigo 23 created eight large panels incorporating references as diverse as the Black Panther Emory Douglas, Indian Island, and Leonard Peltier, among others. Come for a preview and hear the artist discuss what links them in his latest project, on display in the Goldenberg Galleria.

Thur., May 22, 7:30 pm

Screening: *The Exiles*

(Director: Kent Mackenzie, 1961, 72 minutes, black and white)

One of the images in Rigo 23's exhibition comes from the rarely screened 1961 film *The Exiles*, a film that chronicles one night in the lives of young Native American men and women living in the Bunker Hill district of Los Angeles. Based entirely on interviews with the participants and their friends, the film follows a group of exiles—transplants from Southwest reservations—as they flirt, drink, party, fight, and dance. A talkback with artist Pamela Peters follows the screening.

More related programs will take place this summer and be announced online at fowler.ucla.edu.

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