

ATENCIÓN San MIGUEL

VOL. IX SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE No. 38.

20 PESOS * FRIDAY OCTOBER 21, 1983.

Letters

Art

Dear Editor:

When I try to pinpoint exactly why I like Mark Byrd's paintings, I immediately think of his fresh, new viewpoint; for there really is nothing new under the sun, except (perhaps) the way we view things in our ordinary lives.

Thus, when I viewed his exhibition at Bellas Artes recently, I was struck anew with his "message," framed on monstrous canvasses and populated with bulky figures, the latter often in almost impossible poses.

These views are not vignettes, for they seem to contain a whole philosophy as it is related to present living. Thus, his *Piedad* has no scars, but only suffering faces -- and what magnificent faces! The woman is gaunt with exquisite pity, the man staring aloft as though expecting a miracle from his comforter.

But then, there is a change of mood and style. One scene, "busy" and sinuous, I was tempted to dismiss with a smile; but then, I was almost shocked to recognize

Mamá Mía and some of its patrons, so realistic and humorous is this one. I did "Look at That Gringo Dance" until I realized I could see him reflected in one viewer's glasses, certainly nothing new, except for its "modern" viewpoint.

I wonder if Mexico, or the world, is ready for a crucifixion with an all-female cast; I wonder if we are ready for the pathos in such a scene.

I like Mark Byrd. He styles himself Marcos here -- a bit phony of him to change his name -- I changed only the spelling of mine! But there is nothing phony about his art. Viewed at disadvantage in cramped quarters, it still was possible to see powerful, though earth-bound, figures living out their daily struggles. Though his imagery is sometimes muddled, his belief in our final triumph could hardly be more clearly stated.

I hope Mark -- ahem, Marcos -- continues here. San Miguel deserves him.

Dewey Bowman