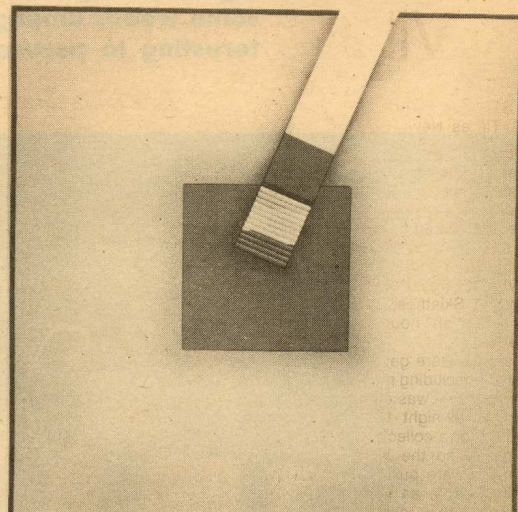
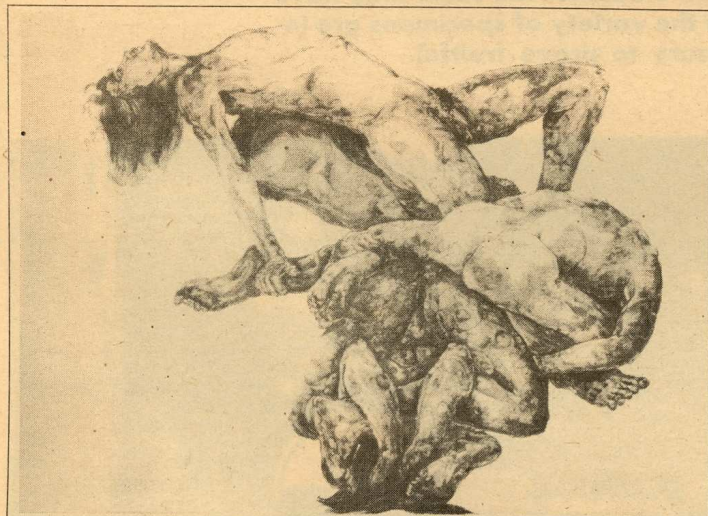


Galería Oller

FOUR FOR THE SHOW

FINE ART IN FINE NEW SURROUNDINGS



**HERRERO
DIAZ
HERNANDEZ
BALOSS**

Clockwise from top left: "Manifestacion de personalidad" by Susana Herrero; "Penetracion sublime" by Lope Max Diaz; "Earth Song" by John Balossi and "Paisaje — Figura Num. 4" by Luis Hernandez Cruz. (Photos by Jose Garcia)

By MYRNA RODRIGUEZ
STAR Art Critic

An excellent show by four top professional artists is being held to inaugurate the *Sala Francisco Oller y Cesteros* at the UPR Río Piedras Campus. Luis Hernández Cruz, Lope Max Díaz, John Balossi and Susana Herrero, all professors in the UPR Fine Arts Department, are exhibiting their works.

The new gallery is in the remodeled *Luis Palés Matos* Building, part of the Fine Arts complex. The gallery's L-shaped space is well designed and very conveniently located in the building which is in the core of the university, across from the theater. Smoked-glass windows all around force the artists to invent exhibition devices such as panels, but also serve to attract attention from passersby.

The artists themselves mounted this exhibition with very successful results.

Susana Herrero's lithographs, for example, were placed on the wall next to the entrance, so competition for attention with the other works is low. Her work is based

on wrestling humans, the activity enforced by the curving diagonal lines. Nonetheless, since the merit of the work is based on the linear drawings of the figures, interest might be lost if the drawings were placed beside the strong works of the other artists.

John Balossi is exhibiting several of his ceramic sculptures dating from 1977 to 1983. His "Soldier Wall" of 1983, is a most interesting sculpture, different from the rest in the interplay of its vertical and horizontal planes. "Earth Song," a work in three pieces, offers a contrast in texture and color in its banded cylindrical forms. The combination of materials enhances the artistic qualities. Three small "Runic Symbols" in different colors and variations of the rounded form are also part of his presentation. Two wall plaques placed next to the entrance prove the artist's versatility in dealing with the medium.

Of different styles, Luis Hernández Cruz' and Lope Max Díaz's large-sized paintings nevertheless go well together. They complement each other rather than

compete because of the way the exhibition has been arranged.

Lope Max Díaz is presenting four of his painting-constructions from 1981 and 1982 which were exhibited last year at his individual exhibit in the UPR Art Museum. His meticulous technique in constructing and painting the works is the result of a well-planned process following a well developed idea. The artist bases his composition on the square, extending it or contracting it, dealing with the geometric figure and its symbolic implications. Bright, pure colors attract the spectator to the well-balanced compositions.

Luis Hernández Cruz' paintings, all from 1983, denote a change in approach to subject matter as well as in style. While *Composicion en formas blancas* follows a vertical totemic composition common in many of his paintings, *Desde arriba, desde abajo*, is horizontally oriented. This painting in particular produces a sensuous effect with its round forms covered with white impasto on the bottom and the top of the composition. The red-orange saturated color field in the middle, covering

most of the pictorial surface, adds to the sensuous feeling.

Paisaje en la arena, as the title reveals, brings the artist much closer to nature than his previous works, although his "abstract" works have always been based on natural organic forms. The raised textural surface, product of the spatula and acrylic modeling paste and paint, adds to the artistic quality. *Paisaje No.4* also shows the artist's new tendency of moving to landscape as a source of inspiration.

The gallery is open to the public week-days only. The UPR administration deserves merit for sponsoring both the excellent exhibition space and the exhibition. It was a wise decision to open an art gallery run by the Fine Arts Department, which in a way complements the other exhibition spaces at the UPR, the Art Museum, which is so much larger, and the room in the Student Center which is so much smaller and more for semi-professionals. The new gallery should attract students as well as professionals.