

Tiendas, comercios y estanquillos

*en las colecciones
Carlos Monsiváis*

She historical documents, photographs, prints, sculptures, magazines, caricatures, and other works of art that Carlos Monsiváis collected throughout more than forty years, resembles the jumbled universe of objects housed by small shops called estanquillos. These small shops thrived across a newly independent Mexico during the XIX century, when the Spanish Crown no longer controlled commercial activities. In the estanquillos one could find a smorgasbord of objects such as candles, corn, soap, bread, petroleum, and an endless number of items for every day consumption and use. The eclectic character of the estanquillo inspired the name of this museum and this exhibit, which showcases the collection of the chronicler and essayist

In this exhibit one can appreciate the diversity of commercial establishments and the social situations that arise during commercial practices and that reflect the costumes, desires, and aspirations of Mexicans as well as their frustrations and ability to confront everyday difficulties. For Monsiváis, the pieces in this collection were part of his personal treasure, which evokes the history of Mexico and from which he drew inspiration for his chronicles.

The writer acquired some of the objects in this collection during those Saturday mornings when he would walk around the Plaza del Ángel of La Zona Rosa, where more than 50 antique shops could be found. The work of Teresa Nava, an artist born in Puebla, makes up a substantial portion of the collection. When the artist first came into contact with Monsiváis she was no longer creating miniature models, but the writer



was so insistent in his request that she create one for him, that Nava ended up selling to him 130 miniature models within the span of 16 years.

It can be said that the artists featured in this exhibition were, in one way or another, chroniclers of their own time. Perhaps that's the reason why Monsivais identified himself with their work and was inspired to acquire it. The chronicler once wrote about Teresa Nava "...there is no picturesque sentimentality in her work. It is the execution of a meticulous plan to symbolically preserve the costumes that have faded, giving a place to those scenes that during their time would go unnoticed".

The diversity of techniques, styles, and media will be evident in this montage where one can appreciate not only the miniature models that we already described, but also figurines by Teodoro Torres, miniatures by Roberto Ruiz, photographs by Antíoco Cruces, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, Hugo Brehme and Nacho López; caricatures by Santiago Hernández, Constantino Escalante, Andrés Audiffred, Gabriel Vargas, Alberto Isaac, and Eduardo del Río "Rius"; illustrations by Hesiquio Iriarte, José María Villasana, Claudio Linati, Ernesto García Cabral and José Clemente Orozco; XIX century books such as *Historia Antigua de México* by Francisco Javier Clavijero, *El Gallo Pitagórico* by Juan Bautista Morales and *México y los Mexicanos* by Carlos Sartorius, and multiple works of historical and artistic relevance that were created by another authors.

The works of art in this exhibit represent places, characters and personalities that are deeply embedded in Mexico's collective imaginary and evoke phrases, smells and flavors that are part of our day to day. Thus, without further ado, let us welcome you with the traditional market call out "¡Pásele marchante!" "Welcome, come on in".



“One can say that each of [Teresa Nava’s] boxes, dioramas, or miniature models is almost literally, a fragment of community life.”

Carlos Monsiváis

“The people need a reason to get together, to celebrate when a deal is made, to foster social relationships, to make their industry prosper. They need a market where they can exchange their agricultural or manufactured products.”

Ignacio Manuel Altamirano
in Aires de México

“We Mexicans like that chaotic version of Eden that is the open market. We like to touch and smell, to be given a sample and to strike up with the seller the platonic dialogue that is haggling.”

Juan Carlos Bautista
*in “Hágame la merced”,
Nueva Guía del Centro Histórico de México*

“He who has nothing, buys something.”

Carlos Monsiváis

“Monsiváis, yes, he is a market, but a market that is always moving, a nomadic market, an intellectual street market that shows up here today and somewhere else tomorrow.”

Adolfo Castañón
*en Nada mexicano me es ajeno:
seis papeles sobre Carlos Monsiváis*

