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PANAMANIAN PAINTINGS FEATURED

IN EXHIBITION AT THE OAS

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 19 (OAS)--Paintings by two of the most promising young artists from Panama, Sheila Lichacz and Rogelio Pretto, will be featured in an exhibition at the Organization of American States (OAS) opening on Tuesday, May 26.

The exhibition is sponsored by Panama's ambassador to the OAS Juan Manuel Castulovich, and Mrs. Castulovich, and by OAS Secretary General Alejandro Orfila, and Mrs. Orfila, and organized by the OAS Museum of Modern Art of Latin America. The OAS Gallery is located at 17th Street and Constitution Ave., N.W.

According to José Gómez-Sicre, director of the OAS Museum, most of Sheila Lichacz's career, has been devoted to the depiction of the fruits and household utensils to be found in the tropics. "The representation is so simplified as to border on abstraction," says Gómez-Sicre. "The intricate designs of her compositions," he adds, "exude great power, however, and the towering masses, with their feeling for volume, convey a sense of solidity suggestive of sculpture."

The OAS exhibition is Lichacz's first individual presentation in the United States. The artist was born in Monagrillo, Panama, in 1942. She

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undertook the study of art at the Inter-American University in Puerto Rico, and in recent years has enjoyed considerable success. Since 1977 she has had ten individual exhibitions and participated in numerous group shows.

Rogelio Pretto is not a newcomer to the United States. In addition to group exhibitions in his native Panama and in Mexico, last year he had an individual show in Miami, Florida. According to Gómez-Sicre, "both the subject matter of the pictures there displayed and the technique employed by the artist led to a readily understandable first impression that the work was that of a researcher in the field of entomology: fastidiously executed depictions of insects constituted the bulk of the show." But the OAS Museum director adds that "a more careful examination of the compositions, however, revealed the purely plastic values which were the true object of Pretto's concern."

Gómez-Sicre goes on to explain that "the OAS exhibit does not concentrate on insects, but draws rather on a variety of human elements, each of which is analyzed in a highly effective manner. Sensitivity to color values and skill in rendering minute detail are characteristic features of the paintings here on view, part of whose charm derives precisely from their minimal format."

Rogelio Pretto was born in Colon, Panama, in 1944, and began to exhibit in 1976. He considers himself to be self-taught.

The Panamanian art show at the OAS will remain open to the public through June 19.

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