

## ABSTRACT

The 1936 Texas Centennial has been regarded as the single event that placed Texas on the map, introducing the state as a competitive, industrious and dynamic entity with a robust history. While there is much merit in heralding the importance of the Texas Centennial Exposition, most scholars have dismissed the lesser-known, follow-up exposition to the centennial, as subsidiary and unsuccessful. The aim of this essay looks to dissect two important, yet overlooked dimensions of the elaborately rich spectacle of the 1937 Greater Texas and Pan-American Exposition. I hope to establish how the architectural envelope and visual display of events, served to formulate a more nuanced Texana identity that falls in line with our contemporary view of Texas today. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, I will demonstrate how the featured art exhibition of the exposition, with the ingenious title, *Art of the Americas: Pre- Columbian and Contemporary*, should be recognized as one of the earliest exhibitions within the region to link a classic Pre-Columbian past

with the vibrant, modern era of the late 30s, which was specifically articulated through the climate of Pan-Americanism. By tapping into a myriad of the most important cultural movements of the time to include, Mexican Muralism, the Mexican Renaissance, the American Art Scene, American Regionalism and most importantly Pan-Americanism, Texas artists placed themselves beside their contemporaries in Latin America. In doing so, they abandoned the Eurocentric vision offered the year prior at the Texas Centennial, becoming pioneers in purporting Pre-Columbian art, not merely as a source of inspiration for American artists, but as a distinct connection to the vibrant heritage of American art as a whole.