

MARIUS SZNAJDERMAN

RESUME

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BIOGRAPHY

MARIUS SZNAJDERMAN was born in Paris, France in 1926. In November of 1942 he escaped to Spain with his parents and moved to Venezuela where he lived until 1949. His early training as a painter and printmaker was at the School of Fine Arts in Caracas. His teachers were the painters Ramon Martin Durban and Rafael Monasterios, as well as the painter and scenic designer, Ventrillon-Horber. In 1948, he was a founding member of the Taller Libre de Arte, an influential workshop for the visual arts responsible for the introduction of contemporary trends in the Venezuelan art world. In Caracas he was active in art circles, exhibiting, illustrating and designing for the theater. In 1949, he had his first one man show at the Taller Libre de Arte in Caracas. His Venezuelan period had a seminal influence on his style, color and imagery.

In the summer of 1949, Sznajderman moved to the USA but always kept in touch with his many friends of the Venezuelan art world and also remained active in Venezuelan cultural circles. He studied at Columbia University with scenic designer Woodman Thompson and printmaker Hans Mueller, ultimately receiving Bachelor of Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from Columbia University. He served in the US Army from 1953 to 1955 during the Korean Conflict. While serving, he worked as Chief Artist-Illustrator at Red River Arsenal, Texarkana, TX.

As a scenic designer he worked for Circle in the Square Theater, the Felix Fibish Dance Company, the French Art Theater, Columbia Theater Associates, Queens College Drama Department and Summer Stock.

He has taught art, art history and design at New York University, the School of Visual Arts, New York City, Fairleigh Dickinson

University and the Ridgewood School of Art in New Jersey. He also taught experimental art programs in New Jersey public schools under state and federal grants.

In 1958 and early 1959, he travelled with his wife to Mexico, staying in Cuernavaca, where he painted, did illustrations and a series of woodcuts on Mexican subject matter. This Mexican trip was influential in his later work.

In 1959, he did a series of woodcuts on the Concentration Camps, now in the collection of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Israel. In the early 1960s, he started working on a mural project on the Revolt of the Warsaw Ghetto. This material was exhibited at YMHAs in Hackensack, NJ, Newark, NJ, Baltimore, MD and Houston, TX. In the summers of 1960 and 1962, he taught at Indian Hill, a music and art school, Stockbridge, MA. From 1974 to 1983, he directed Galeria Venezuela in New York City for the National Council of Culture and Fine Arts of Venezuela (CONAC). That gallery was dedicated to the showing and promoting Venezuelan artists in New York City. Oswaldo Vigas, Mateo Manaure, Hector Poleo, Carlos Cruz-Diez and Alejandro Otero were some of the artists exhibited there. From 1980 to 1986, he coordinated part of the international editions of prints for AGPA (Actualidad Grafica Panamericana); a Latin-American subsidiary of Container Corporation of America and later Smurfit Carton De Venezuela. Some of the artists who did prints under his supervision were Maria Luisa Pacheco, Luis Solari, Julio Alpuy, Marcelo Bonevardi and Elba Damast. In 1987, following a trip to the Venezuelan Andes with his friend, Oswaldo Vigas, they had a two-man show of Landscapes at the Espacios Calidos of the Ateneo, Caracas, Venezuela. In 1988, he printed a lithograph "Elegy for My Shtetl" that included a Yiddish poem written by his uncle, the well-known Yiddish journalist S. L. Shneiderman. This poem is about Kazimierz, a small Polish town and the home of the artist's grandparents. It is a premonition of the Holocaust. This print is in the permanent collection of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library and other public collections.

In 1989, Sznajderman illustrated *Magicismos*, a book of poems by the Venezuelan poet Enrique Hernandez D'Jesus. Also, in 1989, he designed and executed a brass holocaust monument for Temple Beth El, Hackensack, NJ. In 1991, what was then known as The Museum of Contemporary Arts of Caracas Sofia Imber, Caracas,

Venezuela gave him a major retrospective with a text for the catalog by Eduardo Planchart Licea.

In 1992, he illustrated *Who Were The Pre-Colombians*, by Bernard Barken Kaufman. In 2000, he worked on a project for a book of drawings based on a series of sketchbooks from the 1950s. In 2005, Venezuelan poet Hugo Brett Figueroa published a book titled *Scargot* with illustrations by Sznajderman. Recent projects include a series of print-collages using material from incomplete editions of serigraphs from the 1960s. In 2007, he exhibited his *Warsaw Ghetto Revolt mural project* and *Concentration Camps woodcut series* created between 1958 and 1959 at the Puffin Forum in Teaneck, NJ. In 2009 and 2010 he worked on a series of collages and a collage construction dealing with the Vichy Government and the Holocaust in France.

In 2010, Sznajderman donated to the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, his costume designs for The Felix Fibich Dance Company. In 2011, he donated to the Army Historical Foundation, designs and illustrative work done while serving in the US Army. He also donated to the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, theater designs that he did in the 1950s for Circle in the Square Theatre and for the French Art Theatre in New York City. That same year, Sznajderman donated, to the Library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, a collection of more than one hundred Venezuelan Art and Culture posters dating from the 1960s to the 1980s.

In 2011 and 2012, he executed a large collage construction and a series of collages on paper (*The Yanaka Series*) using Chiyogami Traditional Japanese printed paper brought back from Japan by his son, Michael in 1990.

In 2011, he did “*The Dali Series*,” seven collages with six color lithographs by Dali that, for many reasons, were not acceptable in the art market. In these collages, he kept the basic composition of these prints. In 2013, the collages were reproduced in the first edition of a book entitled “*Dali, Dumas and Me*” published by Matomi Press (Amherst, MA) with a text by his son Marc. That same year, this book was presented at Chashama Exhibit Space, NYC in a one-man show for the benefit of the World Lung Foundation. In 2013, he donated to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island National Park, a series of designs executed in 1985 for a poster project on the history of Ellis Island.

He has had more than thirty one-person exhibits and numerous group shows in South America and in the US. His work is in major public collections, among them the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, the Fine Arts Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Arts, Caracas, Venezuela, the Cincinnati Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the Museo del Barrio, New York City, the New Jersey State Museum, Trenton.

He is listed in Who's Who in American Art, and in Printworld International, as well as many other publications (see resume and bibliography for partial listing).