

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: Anthony Quinn: What am I? ¿Qué soy?

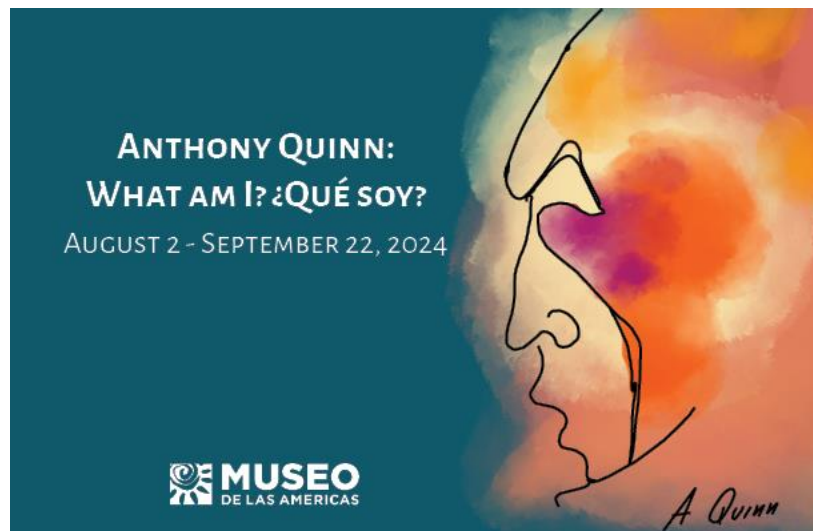
DATE: August 2-September 22, 2024

RECEPTION: 6:30-9:00 pm, Friday, August 2, 2024

PLACE: Museo de las Americas, 861 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, CO 80204

HOURS: Tuesday-Friday, 12 pm-6 pm; Saturday & Sunday, 12 pm-5 pm

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DENVER, CO—Opening during the Art District on Santa Fe’s busiest First Friday of the year, Museo de las Americas presents, *Anthony Quinn: What am I? ¿Qué soy?* This pop-up exhibition highlights the creative life of Anthony Quinn, the first Mexican-American to win an Academy Award and an artist with an expansive and long career. Curated by Yolanda Fauvet, the exhibition emphasizes Quinn’s storytelling abilities as an actor and visual artist. Selections of Quinn’s self-portraiture, including those of the artist while in character, demonstrate his skill in a variety of mediums and reveal themes of identity, culture, and the artist’s passion for his craft. The exhibition will be open **August 2 through September 22, 2024**, with an opening reception from **6:30-9:00 pm on Friday, August 2**.

The exhibition’s title points to one of Quinn’s earliest moments of awareness about his identity, when he asked his father “What am I?” Responding to a school form that requested his nationality, Quinn initiated a conversation that would span his seven-decade-long career. After watching interviews with the artist and hearing his wife, Katherine’s stories, exhibition curator Fauvet observed that Quinn, “having lived through several iterations of US society’s categorizations of Spanish-speaking peoples, [he] had an

ongoing dialogue with the labels being given to him as compared to his own relationship to his dual nationalities, and I think seeing how these questions play out in his artwork can give us insight into our past and at the same time accompany us on our present-day questioning.” Fauvet felt invited to the conversation Quinn began decades ago, leading her to feel “both daunted and thrilled by the open invitation to define [myself] beyond the limiting categories we’ve traditionally known and am also inspired by younger generations who are eager to have these conversations and are paving the way for more expansive ways of inhabiting the world.”

Born in the state of Chihuahua, Quinn spent little time there, though its regional influence dances around his work. This exhibition underscores that impact while connecting to Denver’s strong Chihuahuan community. Similarly, the curator selected prints from Quinn’s *Tribal Series*, which draws from the Plains Indian cultures, also known as the indigenous peoples of the Great Plains and Canadian Prairies, their spiritual beliefs, and the landscape of the Great Plains area. By intertwining these various influences with Quinn’s affinity for self-portraiture, a vivid narrative emerges that encompasses his dynamic relationship with himself and the world around him. Moreover, it sheds light on his unique dual identity as a Mexican-American and the dual artistic spheres he inhabited. Museo’s Executive Director Claudia Moran reflects on this, stating: “The artistic wealth of Anthony Quinn invites us to reflect on the adaptations which we constantly undergo in order to fit into a predetermined social model although limited by cultural patterns. Let’s say that either one is an actor or one is a visual artist, it is difficult to be allowed to have both careers.”

In *¿Que soy?*, Quinn’s inherent storytelling abilities and interest in identity exploration are evident in his portraiture. The artist possessed a remarkable eye for transforming his own and his subjects’ facial details into emotional gestures, whether using a paintbrush, pen, charcoal, printmaker’s tool, or sculptural materials. He also captured emotion in non-representational art forms, turning lines into sculptures and abstract, quasi-Cubist lithographs. The work presented at Museo, most of which has been preserved by the late artist’s wife, Katherine, demonstrates how Quinn not only dug into his own identity but also shed light on the diverse journeys of others, immersing himself in the world around him while remaining committed to learning who he was.

Anthony Quinn: What am I? ¿Que soy? is organized with support from Katherine Quinn and the Anthony Quinn Estate, with funding from the Bonfils Stanton Foundation, and the residents who support The Scientific Cultural and Facilities District (SCFD).

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