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Abstract:

While in Paris, Colombian artists were exposed to the female nude model for the first time. Despite its pedagogical and academic antecedents, the nude seriously challenged the insularity and conservatism of Colombian art. In so doing, these foreign-trained artists established the precedent of internationalism, which in turn ensured the flowering of Modernism in Colombia.

Modernism and the Nude in Colombian Art

by Maya Jiménez

Introduction

“Insularity has been the principal characteristic of the fine arts in Colombia.”^[1] It is with this statement that Barney Cabrera opens his survey of Colombian art, *Geografía del arte en Colombia* (1965). Insularity was, indeed, one of the defining traits of Colombian art from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth,^[2] due mainly to the political and economic instability of the post-independence era. Numerous changes in government;^[3] civil war and territorial disputes;^[4] financial crises and a rise in national debt;^[5] and limited means of communication and transportation,^[6] all created a lack of national unity in Colombia. Due to these domestic disturbances, Colombia was forced to look inward, which prevented its participation on an international stage.^[7]

In this context of cultural isolation, Colombians established their first government-sponsored art school, the Escuela de Bellas Artes, in 1886,^[8] which coincided with the founding of the Republic of Colombia that same year. As a result of Colombia’s cultural insularity, the Escuela de Bellas Artes, from the start, experienced pedagogical limitations in its course offerings and artistic practices.^[9] Most importantly, the academy did not offer courses in life drawing, which were common in European and North American art academies,^[10] because there were serious moral objections against the use of nude models. Confined to drawing and painting from reproductive prints and plaster casts, Colombian artists struggled in their attempts to master the most elevated of genres, those that relied on the depiction of the human figure.

At the Academia de San Carlos in Mexico City, established in 1785, the practice of life drawing—from both nude male and female models—was instated as early as 1867.^[11] In most of the art academies in Latin American countries, however, the practice of drawing from the live model was not fully accepted until the early twentieth century.^[12] As a result, the only way in which Colombian artists could engage in this practice was by traveling either to Mexico or to Europe. From 1885 to 1899, ninety-five Colombians traveled to Europe,^[13] among them ten art students who arrived in Paris,^[14] the most alluring city for nineteenth-century aspiring artists.^[15] In France, the rare presence of Colombian art students, in comparison to other Latin American nationals, can be confirmed by the enrollment records of Parisian art schools. At the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, from 1878 to 1902, only one Colombian artist, Andrés de Santa María (1860–1945) enrolled, whereas five Mexicans and five Chileans registered.^[16] The majority of Latin American artists at the Académie Julian came from Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.^[17]

Among the few Colombian artists to travel to Europe were Epifanio Garay (1849–1903), Salvador Moreno (1874–1940), and Francisco Antonio Cano (1865–1935). All three artists were government-pensioned, and, as a result, the conditions and duration of their trip were subject to the financial limitations of the Colombian government.^[18] Through Garay’s and Cano’s nude paintings, and Garay’s introduction of life drawing and his exhibition of nudes in Colombia, these Colombian travelers, upon their return, would challenge the limits of tolerance of innovation in a conservative society. By introducing life classes, Garay not only helped to professionalize art practice, but he also established a precedent of challenging society with his art. Cano was one to follow, continuing to paint the nude well into the twentieth

century. Without their example, Colombian art education and Colombian art would have remained underdeveloped and insular, further delaying the arrival of Modernism.

That the academic nude, typically excluded from any discussion of Modernism, was central to the development of Modernism in Colombia, speaks to the existence of different types of Modernism. The ability of artists to challenge conventions and the boundaries of tradition and innovation is subject to the social, religious, and political circumstances of each country, as well as to its artistic heritage. Whereas in France, the institutionalization of art education dates to the seventeenth century, in Colombia the Escuela de Bellas Artes was not established until 1886, with the introduction of the live model seven years later. Artistic and pedagogical developments that elsewhere were accomplished across centuries, were, in Latin America and particularly at the Escuela de Bellas Artes, achieved within decades. In Colombia, where the subject of the nude was introduced fairly early in comparison with its introduction in other countries in the region, the practice of life drawing and the exhibition of the female nude were considered gestures of rebellion, of *épater le bourgeois* ("shocking the middle class").

This paper will first discuss art education in Colombia. Then it will describe the experiences of some Colombian travelers in Paris, particularly with regard to their exposure to life drawing. It will subsequently describe the introduction of life drawing in Colombia and the first exhibition of a female nude by a Colombian artist. Finally, it will demonstrate how the nude helped to achieve the professionalization of artists and establish the trend towards greater internationalism and indeed towards modernity.

Early Art Education in Colombia

In 1819, when Colombia proclaimed its independence from Spain, the country did not have any art schools. It was not until 1863—nearly half a century later—that the earliest art school in Colombia, the Colegio San Bartolomé, was founded by the Jesuit priest Santiago Páramo (1841–1915).^[19] Not surprisingly, the focus of this school was on painting and drawing religious subjects. Ten years later, President Manuel Murillo Toro (1816–80) made an attempt to establish the first government-sponsored art school, the Academia Vásquez,^[20] but due to financial constraints and political roadblocks, it was not realized.^[21] In 1881, two private art schools were established: the Escuela de Dibujo y Grabado (School of Drawing and Printmaking),^[22] by Colombian Alberto Urdaneta (1845–87); and the Academia Vásquez (also known as Escuela Gutiérrez), by Mexican Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez (1824–1904).^[23] The Escuela Gutiérrez was perhaps the most ambitious and famous of these nineteenth-century private art institutions. Classes here were free, but enrollment was limited, and the curriculum was restricted to painting and drawing.^[24] Students learned by copying European manuals, book illustrations, and print reproductions of either religious or academic paintings.

On April 10, 1886, the first public art academy was established in the capital city of Bogotá. The Escuela de Bellas Artes represented the institutionalization of art in Colombia in that, as art historian Eduardo Serrano notes, it marked the transformation from artisan to artist and introduced the idea of contemporary art in Colombia.^[25] Its first director, Urdaneta, who had five years earlier established the Escuela de Dibujo y Grabado, was one of the first Colombian artists to travel to France, having visited Paris in both 1865 and 1878. In Paris, Urdaneta studied with Paul Césaire Gariot (1811–80)^[26] and, according to many scholars, with French painter Jean-Louis Ernest Meissonier (1815–91).^[27] His artistic training abroad made him a unique

candidate to lead the academy. The selection of Urdaneta as Director of the Escuela de Bellas Artes set a precedent in Colombian art education that guaranteed the presence of foreign-trained and foreign artists in the establishment and development of an arts curriculum. Indeed, for the remainder of the nineteenth century and even into the twentieth, the educators at the Escuela de Bellas Artes would continue to look to Europe as a source of artistic influence.
[\[28\]](#)

Yet despite this European influence, art students at the Escuela de Bellas Artes did not practice life drawing. The study of the nude model was considered morally offensive in Colombia, where, as a whole, society was politically and religiously conservative—a result of La Regeneración (1886–99), a movement that restored Catholic values and installed a centralist government under the leadership of President Rafael Núñez (1825–94). The absence of training in life drawing limited artists' mastery of history, portrait, and genre painting but was considered less serious than offending public sensibilities with regard to the exposure of the nude in a government-sponsored school, even within the limited confines of the classroom.

Artists' Travels to Paris and the First Encounter with the Nude

At the French Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture (later renamed Ecole des Beaux-Arts), founded in 1648, the primary function of the life class was its ability to expand on the study of the human figure.[\[29\]](#) Whereas plaster casts of the antique provided an example of the idealized human body, the live model served as its realistic foil. This close study of the human figure allowed for the creation of visual narratives, in which, according to Christine Giviskos, "figures had to be correctly drawn, appropriately expressive, and composed with a combination of the artist's knowledge gained from studying the live, nude figure and that gained from studying great artistic models including classical statuary."[\[30\]](#) Visual narratives were the *sine qua non* of history painting, considered the highest of the genres of painting throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the academy, drawing from life came only after the student had made copies after prints and plaster casts of antique sculptures, and even dissected cadavers in anatomy classes.[\[31\]](#)

In France, the importance of life drawing dramatically increased in the nineteenth century. This is reflected in the number of competitions that were based on the nude figure, including the entrance exam to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the monthly *concours de places*, and the annual competitions for the Prix de Rome.[\[32\]](#) In preparation for the rigorous entrance exam of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, an artist by the name of Rodolphe Julian (1839–1907) established the Académie Julian in 1868. Not surprisingly, the most important offering of the Académie Julian was life drawing.[\[33\]](#) This was not only beneficial for students aspiring to enter the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but also for female artists who sought the same artistic training as men,[\[34\]](#) as well as for foreign artists, who traveled to Paris in search of these same opportunities.[\[35\]](#) At least six Colombian artists, among them Garay, Moreno, and Cano, enrolled at the Académie Julian from 1882 to 1904, making this studio the most popular destination among Colombian travelers to Paris.[\[36\]](#) While life drawing was introduced in the Escuela de Bellas Artes in 1893 and then intermittently offered until it was officially instated in 1904,[\[37\]](#) most Colombian artists traveling to Paris before 1904—including Garay, Moreno, and Cano—encountered the subject of the nude for the first time while abroad. Since little is known of Garay's nude studies in Paris,[\[38\]](#) the work of Moreno and Cano here serve as examples of how the practice of drawing and painting from the nude reflected their experiences at the Académie Julian.

In 1897, Moreno painted *Back* (fig. 1), a study of an elderly nude male model seen from behind. The attention to detail with which Moreno painted the model gives evidence of the artist's focus. In the lower right-hand corner of the canvas, Moreno wrote "To my distinguished protector and friend Mr. R. Pombo/ J.S. Moreno/ Paris 1897."^[39] The dedication of this routine study to the poet and art patron Rafael Pombo^[40] (1833–1912) shows Moreno's desire to share his newfound interest in life drawing with a friend, who, he knew, would understand and appreciate it.^[41]



Fig. 1, Salvador Moreno, *Back*, 1897. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. [\[larger image\]](#)

Francisco Cano made both drawings and paintings of the nude model. *Model of the Académie Julian* (1898; fig. 2) may serve as an example of the numerous painted *académies* he executed while in Paris. In this study, Cano depicts the model in a rigidly frontal pose and positions him at the center of the composition, providing the nude with the same attention to detail seen in the work of Moreno.

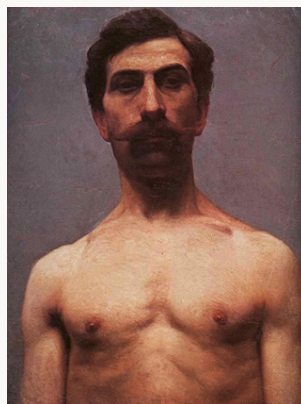


Fig. 2, Francisco Antonio Cano, *Model of the Académie Julian*, 1898. Oil on canvas. Colección del Banco de la República, Bogotá. [\[larger image\]](#)

In his travel notebook, *Apuntes de viaje, Medellín - París 1897-1899*, Cano made many drawings of the models of the Académie Julian, including both women and men (figs. 3 and 4). The presence of the female model in Cano's drawings confirms that the practice of life drawing was not confined to male models, as it was at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. ^[42] Additionally, one of the innovations of the Académie Julian was that both men and women, in mixed classes, drew from the live model (fig. 5). Although welcomed by many artists, this coeducational practice^[43] and the presence of both male and female models were controversial in their time, particularly among religious conservatives. Both would have been especially frowned upon in Latin American circles, where issues of morality prevailed over pedagogical ones, as evidenced by a letter from the Director of the Academia Española de Bellas Artes in Rome to the Colombian Ambassador in Italy requesting permission for Colombian artists to be able to join "the nude class that in the early hours of the night takes place in this Academy."^[44] The date of this letter, November 12, 1928, demonstrates that in Colombia the practice of life drawing was questioned well into the twentieth century, despite the introduction of this practice at the Escuela de Bellas Artes.



Fig. 3, Francisco Antonio Cano, Sketches. Pencil on paper. From *Apuntes de viaje, Medellín-París 1897-1899* (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), n.p. [\[larger image\]](#)



Fig. 4, Francisco Antonio Cano, Sketches. Pencil on paper. From *Apuntes de viaje, Medellín-París 1897-1899* (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), n.p. [\[larger image\]](#)



Fig. 5, Cover of *L'Académie Julian* (Paris, 1903). Bibliothèque François-Mitterrand, Paris. [\[larger image\]](#)

The Introduction of the Live Model in Colombia

In 1894, Garay, who like Moreno and Cano had studied at the Académie Julian, initiated life classes at the Escuela de Bellas Artes while he served (intermittently) as director of the school from 1893 to 1899. The Ministry of Education, however, opposed Garay's progressive initiative. On April 4, 1894, Liberio Zerda wrote to Garay on behalf of the ministry, stressing the "immorality" and "unlawfulness" of having live models at the Escuela de Bellas Artes:

On numerous occasions, I have notified you
... orally, that the use of nude women as models is prohibited in this school, and for the classes on Painting and Sculpture, because this practice goes against the morals and customs of our society. Nevertheless, the bills for these models have continued to be submitted, and from this moment on, I advise you that this Ministry will not recognize services of that nature.[\[45\]](#)

In his threatening statement, Zerda denounced only the use of female models, prompting speculation that perhaps, just like at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the issue of immorality arose only with respect to female, rather than male, models because students at the Escuela de Bellas Artes were mostly, if not all, male. This statement serves as an important reminder of how the religious and political conservatism of Colombia prevailed over the pedagogical benefits of life drawing.

Ten years after Garay's first efforts, and as part of the social reforms of Colombian President Rafael Reyes (1849–1921), the use of live models in art classes at the Escuela de Bellas Artes was finally tolerated.[\[46\]](#) In an article in *Revista de América*, Colombian critic Max Grillo explained the process by which the new director of the academy, Andrés de Santa María, who had returned to Bogotá from Paris in 1903, formally petitioned President Reyes for permission to study the human body from the nude. Grillo wrote:

Reyes received the students [of Santa María] in the presidential palace and when they explained, in front of the timid minister, the reason for their visit, the President called his eldest daughter [Sofía], a great admirer of the art of painting. Reyes addressed the students' petition by saying: 'Sofía should decide the matter.' Before the perplexed students and the embarrassed minister, the daughter of the President declared that in all of the painting academies of the world one studied from the nude human body.[\[47\]](#)

After this exchange and starting in 1904, life classes finally became a permanent part of the curriculum of the Escuela de Bellas Artes.

Garay's *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains*

In 1899, Garay exhibited a painting of a female nude, *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains* (fig. 6), at the Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes in Bogotá. This canvas was the second nude to ever have been exhibited in Colombia, after Mexican artist Santiago Gutiérrez's *The Huntress of the Andes* (fig. 7), and it was the first nude to have been painted and exhibited by a Colombian artist.^[48] The painting was considered so scandalous that it was exhibited separately from the other figurative works of art, which consisted of portrait and history paintings.^[49] Before entering the gallery, visitors were warned about the painting's immorality, as noted by the critic Jacinto Albarracín,^[50] and as appreciated by a visitor, who also thought that it was important to forewarn others of "the specialty of the place, so they could choose not to enter."^[51] At the same time, however, the painting's placement, the warning, and the press coverage it received drew much attention to it, and tested the limits of how far Colombians were willing to bend to new and foreign ideas.

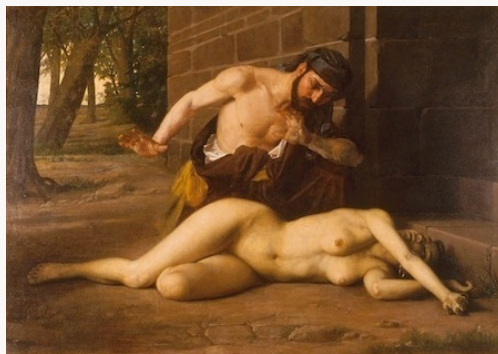


Fig. 6, Epifanio Garay, *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains*, 1899. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. [\[larger image\]](#)



Fig. 7, Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez, *The Huntress of the Andes*, 1874. Oil on canvas. Museo Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez, Toluca. [\[larger image\]](#)

From the criticism the painting received, it is clear that the manner in which the figure was represented; that is, as if dead, was as great a problem as the fact that the female in the painting was nude. Described as stiff, cold, and awkward, Garay's nude shocked viewers because it defied the traditional idea of the beautiful and sensuous female figure. In one of the published critiques, *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes de 1899: Los Artistas y Sus Críticos*, Albarracín described the woman's body as a "cadaver," recalling the smell "of bodies in decomposition."^[52] In his article, Albarracín also cited other critics' similar characterizations. He noted, for example, that an article from the September 10, 1899, issue of *El Tío Juan*, described the woman's body as "inanimate and already in decomposition . . . [but] with visible signs of being barely asleep."^[53] Although the issue of nudity was itself a major problem, it seems, based on these observations, that her cadaver-like representation also irritated visitors and accounted for the negative criticism, as did the choice of subject matter, which was based on an obscure and macabre biblical story.^[54]

Adding to the controversy surrounding the painting was the rumor that the nude in the painting was based on a photograph, which the critic Max Grillo claimed to have seen.^[55] Grillo openly accused Garay of plagiarism, noting that copying a nude from a photograph was analogous to a poet copying a poem.^[56] The negative comments about *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains* continued as time passed. In 1903, four years after the exhibition of the painting, Cano wrote that he had yet to hear a positive comment about the painting.^[57] Even in 1950, the *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains* stirred strong sentiments and in fact incited an act of vandalism.^[58] By then, however, the canvas had acquired a small group of defenders who interpreted this act of cultural vandalism as an indication of "the ignorance and lack of culture [of some Colombians]."^[59] In the course of more than 50 years, the reception of female nudity had changed now that both artists and critics defended its artistic value.

This growing tolerance towards the subject of the female nude is a testament to the curricular and exhibition efforts of Garay, whose *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains* remains an artistic and cultural icon that defied philistinism. Garay not only challenged his critics, superiors, and viewers, but also inspired his followers, among them Cano, Eugenio Zerda (1878–1945), and Domingo Moreno Otero (1882–1948) to continue painting the nude, as evidenced by Cano's *The Voluptuousness of the Ocean* (1924; fig. 8), which the artist gave to his friend and pupil José Restrepo Rivera (1886–1958). That these nude canvases, even in the early twentieth century, remained restricted to private collections demonstrates the extent to which they had to be safely guarded, since the choice to display them publicly—as demonstrated by Garay—incited criticism. Furthermore, and as seen in Cano's *The Last Drop* (fig. 9), the nude underwent an important transformation in the early twentieth century.



Fig. 8, Francisco Antonio Cano, *Voluptuousness of the Ocean*, 1924. Oil on canvas. Colección del Banco de la República, Bogotá. [\[larger image\]](#)



Fig. 9, Francisco Antonio Cano, *The Last Drop*, 1908. Oil on canvas. Museo de Antioquia, Medellín. [\[larger image\]](#)

Devoid of any mythological, allegorical, or biblical narrative, Cano depicted a naked, rather than nude, figure. In so doing, he transformed the subject of the female nude from the academic and narrative exercise that it had been in the late nineteenth century, to an erotic exploration of female sexuality in the twentieth.

While today the presence of a female nude in a biblical painting and the practice of life drawing at an art academy are not usually considered aspects of Modernism, Garay's experience demonstrates how they were considered gestures of rebellion, as evidenced by the resistance that Garay encountered from the Ministry of Education, from the conservative critic Albarracín, and from the general public. That Garay found a following in the growing artistic community of other Parisian-trained Colombian artists, like Cano, and pupils of the Escuela de Bellas Artes, like Eugenio Zerda and Otero, is no surprise, yet it is nevertheless significant, since he established the precedent of challenging convention, eventually inspiring others to do the same. While modernization was a slow and gradual process, as reflected in the act of vandalism that *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains* elicited as recently as the mid-twentieth century, Garay nevertheless challenged traditional Colombian painting by introducing a sense of internationalism to an artistic establishment that up to that point had been largely insular.

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Notes

All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[1] "La insularidad . . . ha sido la característica principal de las artes plásticas en Colombia." Eugenio Barney Cabrera, *Geografía del arte en Colombia* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1965; repr., Cali: Universidad del Valle, 2005), 9 (page citations are from the reprint edition).

[2] Marta Traba, in *Dos décadas vulnerables en las artes plásticas latinoamericanas, 1950–1970* (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1973), 36–37, explains that Colombia was an example of a "closed" country that was, in comparison to Argentina and Peru, not as progressive or broad-minded.

[3] On September 7, 1821, Simón Bolívar established the confederation of Gran Colombia, which expanded upon the jurisdiction of the former Viceroyalty of New Granada and included present-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama. After its dissolution in 1831, it was followed by the Republic of New Granada (1831–58), the Granadine Confederation (1858–63), the United States of Colombia (1863–86), and finally the Republic of Colombia, which was established in 1886.

[4] The Thousand Days War (1899–1902) led to Panama's secession in 1903, under pressure from the United States to begin construction on the Panama Canal.

[5] Charles W. Bergquist in *Coffee and Conflict in Colombia, 1886–1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978) argues how a decline in the production of coffee, Colombia's main export, led to a decline in coffee prices, which severely impacted an already weak economy and intensified the national debt.

[6] Marcos Palacio and Frank Safford, in *Colombia: País fragmentado, sociedad dividida* (Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2002), 15, have touched upon the consequences of this remoteness, arguing that the "scarcity and dispersion of the population," as well as the topography of Colombia, which includes a dense concentration of Amazonian jungle, impeded "the development of ways of communication and the integration of Colombia's economy."

[7] Colombia participated—at times quite minimally—in the international expositions of 1867, 1878, 1889, 1892, and 1893. Due to civil war and economic instability, Colombia was forced to withdraw its participation altogether from the 1876 Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia, and the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. Frédéric Martínez, "¿Como representar a Colombia? De las exposiciones universales a la Exposición del Centenario, 1851–1910," in *Museo, memoria y nación: Misión de los museos nacionales para los ciudadanos del futuro*, ed. Gonzalo Sánchez Gómez and María Emma Wills Obregón (Bogotá: Museo Nacional de Colombia, 2000), 219.

[8] The Instituto de Bellas Artes (later named Escuela de Bellas Artes) was approved by Law 67 of 1882; however, due to financial and political roadblocks, the school did not open until 1886. Eduardo Serrano, in *Cien años de arte colombiano 1886–1986* (Bogotá: Museo de Arte Moderno, 1985), 17, explains how the establishment of the Escuela de Bellas Artes in 1886 marked the earliest transformation from artisan to artist.

[9] While courses in sculpture and architecture were offered, the curriculum at the Escuela de Bellas Artes focused primarily on painting, hence the large number of classes in drawing, anatomy, watercolor, and perspective. *Historia del Arte Colombiano* (Bogotá: Salvat Editores Colombiana, 1977), 6:1286.

[10] At the Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts, established in 1805, the practice of live modeling first appeared in the 1850s, although it continued to be a point of contention well into the 1880s. Akela Reason, *Thomas Eakins and the Uses of History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 33.

[11] Esther Acevedo, "Desnudo femenino al natural," *Revista Historias* 46 (May–August 2000): 104.

- [12] The practice of life drawing was introduced to the Escuela de Bellas Artes in Quito in 1906, according to Michele Greet, *Beyond National Identity: Pictorial Indigenism as a Modernist Strategy in Andean Art, 1920–1960* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 25. According to Dawn Ades, in *Art in Latin America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 30, “in Venezuela, drawing from the nude female model was still forbidden in the Academy in 1904.”
- [13] Frédéric Martínez, in *El nacionalismo cosmopolita: La referencia europea en la construcción nacional en Colombia 1845–1900* (Bogotá: Banco de la República, 2001), 202, compiled a database of 580 Colombian travelers to Europe from 1845 to 1900, based on correspondence, periodicals, diplomatic and consular listings, and catalogues of international exhibitions.
- [14] I compiled a list of Colombian travelers to Paris based on archival materials, including the enrollment records of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and Académie Julian, the catalogues of Parisian salons and international exhibitions, and French and Colombian periodicals, as well as secondary sources.
- [15] For more information on Paris as the artistic destination of the nineteenth century, see John Milner, *The Studios of Paris: The Capital of Art in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), and H. Barbara Weinberg, *The Lure of Paris: Nineteenth-Century American Painters and their French Teachers* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1991).
- [16] José Sebastián Segura (Mexico), Luis Anzonera y Agrada (Mexico), Ernesto Moncayo (Ecuador), José Astega (Chile), G. B. Billa (Chile), Clemente Calderon (Peru), Joaquín Clausell (Mexico), Galíndez (Argentina), Rafael García y Sánchez Facio (Mexico), Higinio González (Chile), Nicanor González-Méndez (Chile), Miguel Miramón (Mexico), Xavier de Porto-Seguro (Chile), E. Hoynaz Sucre (Venezuela), and Alfredo Valenzuela Puelma (Chile) enrolled at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. File AJ 52, Archives of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Archives Nationales, Paris.
- [17] The enrollment records of all registered students, including Colombian and other Latin American artists, are contained in File 63 AS, Archives of the Académie Julian, Archives Nationales, Paris.
- [18] Garay’s government scholarship to Paris was terminated early because of civil unrest, while Cano was also forced, in 1901, to return early to Medellín.
- [19] “Tres pintores colombianos: Santiago Páramo, S. J., Ricardo Acevedo Bernal y Roberto Pizano Restrepo,” *El Grafico* 21 no. 989, July 1930, 654.
- [20] President Manuel Murillo Toro, Law 98 of June 4, 1873, Bogotá, Colombia.
- [21] Raúl Arturo Díaz Sánchez, “Cronología,” in *Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez: Pasión y destino*, ed. Esperanza Garrido, Raúl Arturo Díaz Sánchez, Alfonso Sánchez Arteche, and Héctor Serrano Barquín (Toluca: Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 1993), 66.
- [22] The Escuela de Dibujo y Grabado was dedicated to drawing and printmaking. Printmaking was especially important to Urdaneta, who had established in Paris in 1878 the illustrated magazine *Los Andes*, which ran for one year, and who founded in Bogotá the most ambitious and longest-running publication of the period, *Papel Periódico Ilustrado* (1881–1887).
- [23] President Rafael Núñez, Law 65 of January 28, 1881, Bogotá, Colombia.
- [24] Beatriz González, *El arte colombiano en el siglo XIX* (Bogotá: Fondo Cultural Cafetero, 2004), 106.
- [25] Serrano, *Cien años*, 17.
- [26] Urdaneta is listed as a pupil of Gariot, in H. W. Janson, *Catalogues of the Paris Salon, 1673–1881* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1977), 59:11.
- [27] María Fernanda Urdaneta, *Alberto Urdaneta: Vida y obra* (Bogotá: Biblioteca Luis Angel Arango, 1992), 14; Pilar Moreno de Angel, *Alberto Urdaneta* (Bogotá: Bogotá Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1972), 61; and Carmen Ortega Ricaurte, *Diccionario de Artistas en Colombia* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janes, 1979), 489.
- [28] Marta Fajardo de Rueda, *Presencia de los Maestros: 1886–1960* (Bogotá: Museo de Arte Universidad Nacional, 1986), 2; and González, *El arte colombiano* 107.
- [29] Anthea Callen, “The Body and Difference: Anatomy training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the Later Nineteenth Century,” *Art History* 20, no. 1 (March 1997): 23.
- [30] Christine Giviskos, “Académie, académie, etude: Figural Drawing in France, 1650–1885” in *The Language of the Nude: Four Centuries of Drawing the Human Body*, ed. William Breazeale, Susan Anderson, Christine Giviskos, and Christiane Anderson (Burlington, VT: Lund Humphries, 2008), 86.
- [31] William Breazeale, introduction to Breazeale and others, *Language of the Nude*, 10; and Callen, “Body and Difference,” 34–35.

- [32] Susan Waller, *The Invention of the Model: Artists and Models in Paris 1830–1870* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), 7.
- [33] According to Catherine Fehrer, “the Académie Julian soon achieved a reputation for excellence in academic figure studies; this particular distinction attracted art students from all over the world.” in “Introduction,” in *Overcoming all Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian* (New York: Dahesh Museum, 1999), 3.
- [34] Women were not accepted into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts until 1897. As a result, women who sought the practice of life drawing studied at independent art studios like the Académie Julian.
- [35] Entry into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts depended on diplomatic affiliations, as evidenced by a letter written by a representative of the Legación de los Estados Unidos de Colombia, Paris, to the director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, December 11, 1882, transcript in the hand of the representative from the Legación de los Estados Unidos de Colombia, in which the Colombian government requests that the director of the Ecole take special consideration when reviewing Santa María’s application. File AJ 52, Archives of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Archives Nationales, Paris. There were also age restrictions that prevented Cano’s admission, since in 1898 he was 32 years old, exceeding the 15 to 30-year rule. Juan Camilo Escobar Villegas, *Francisco Antonio Cano 1865–1935* (Medellín: Museo de Antioquia, 2003), 47.
- [36] According to the Archives of the Académie Julian, file 63 AS 1, preserved at the Archives Nationales, Paris, Epifanio Garay is listed as Stephan Garay, a resident of Bogotá, Colombia, and enrolled at the Académie Julian from 1882 to 1884, under the pupillage of William-Adolphe Bouguereau at 31 rue du Dragon; according to file 63 AS 2, Salvador Moreno enrolled at the Académie Julian from April 13 to October 14, 1894 and again from October 28, 1895 to October 26, 1896, under the pupillage of Tony Robert-Fleury and Jules-Joseph Lefebvre; and according to file 63 AS 4, Francisco A. Cano registered under Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant at 63 Rue Monsieur le Prince, from July 11, 1898 to January 11, 1899, and again from January 30 to February 6, 1899.
- [37] Max Grillo, “Andrés de Santa María Insigne Pintor,” *Revista de América* 3, no. 7 (July 1945): 65. André de Ridder, in *Andrés de Santa María* (Brussels: Editions de la Basculé, 1937), 83, discusses how Santa María introduced to the Escuela de Bellas Artes “ideas and methods taken from his frequent stays at European schools and studios” (“ideas y métodos tomados de sus frecuentes estadías en colegios y talleres europeos”).
- [38] Francisco A. Cano, in “Epifanio Garay,” *Lectura y Arte*, no. 4/5 (December 1903): 63, discusses an earlier nude painting by Garay that was entered in a Parisian competition.
- [39] “A mi distinguido protector y amigo Sr. R. Pombo/J. S. Moreno/ París 1897.”
- [40] Beatriz Helena Robledo, in *Rafael Pombo: La vida de un poeta* (Bogotá: Vergara Grupo Zeta, 2005), discusses Pombo’s influential role on the literary and artistic culture of Colombia during the nineteenth century.
- [41] Pombo was a great supporter of the arts and artists in Colombia. In 1873, he invited Santiago Gutiérrez to Colombia to establish the Academia Vásquez, realized in 1881. In “El pintor antioqueño,” *El Siglo*, May 1897, n.p., Pombo asked, in an open letter to the Colombian government, that Cano and another artist, José Eugenio Montoya (1860–1922), be granted scholarships to travel to Europe.
- [42] Gabriel P. Weisberg, “The Women of the Académie Julian: The Power of Professional Emulation,” in *Overcoming all Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian*, ed. Gabriel P. Weisberg and Jane R. Becker, 13. Female models in particular were a concern in Paris, where, until 1863, according to Waller, “for reasons of propriety and ideology, only male models posed nude in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.” Waller, *Invention of the Model*, 1.
- [43] In the United States, at the Philadelphia Academy of the Fine Arts, Thomas Eakins (1844–1916) was dismissed from his professorship when in 1886 he removed the loincloth of a male model in the presence of female art students. Amy Beth Werbel, *Thomas Eakins: Art, Medicine, and Sexuality in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 75.
- [44] “la clase del desnudo que en las primeras horas de la noche tiene lugar en esta Academia.” Hermenegildo Estevan, President of the Real Accademia di Belle Arte, Rome, to the Legación de Colombia in Italia, November 12, 1928, transcript in printed format, Archives of the Escuela de Bellas Artes, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.
- [45] “En repetidas ocasiones ha hecho presente a Ud. El infrascrito Ministro, verbalmente, que no conviene el uso de modelos tomados de mujeres al natural en esa Escuela, para las clases de Pintura y Escultura, porque eso pugna contra la moral y las costumbres de nuestra sociedad. Sin embargo, se han seguido pasando cuentas por salarios de dichos modelos, y desde ahora aviso a Ud. que en adelante no se reconocerán en este Ministerio servicios de esa naturaleza.” Liberio Zerda, Ministerio de Instrucción Pública, Bogotá, to Rector de la Escuela de Bellas Artes, Bogotá,

April 1, 1894, transcript in the hand of Liberio Zerda, Archives of the Escuela de Bellas Artes, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.

[46] President Reyes also permitted other institutional changes at the Escuela de Bellas Artes, including the creation of the Escuela Profesional de Artes Decorativas Industriales, also introduced during Santa María's tenure. For more information on how President Reyes aided in the development of the Escuela de Bellas Artes, see Alvaro Medina, *Procesos del arte en Colombia* (Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de Cultura, 1978), 77–89.

[47] “Reyes recibió a los estudiantes en su palacio y cuando ellos le expusieron, delante del ministro pudoroso, el motivo de su visita, limitose a llamar a su hija mayor, aficionada al arte de la pintura. Reyes resolvió la petición de los estudiantes diciendo: ‘Que Sofia venga a decidir el asunto.’ Antes los estudiantes perplejos y el azorado ministro, la señora hija del presidente declaro que en todas las academias de pintura del mundo se estudiaba el desnudo del cuerpo humano.” Grillo, Andrés de Santa María, 65.

[48] González, *Arte Colombiano*, 107. According to Alfonso Sánchez Arteche, “Aproximación al mundo de Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez,” in Garrido and others, *Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez*, 106, Gutiérrez's *Huntress of the Andes* was the first nude in Mexican painting.

[49] Carlos Miguel Pizarro, *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes de 1899* (Bogotá: B.B. Delar, 1899), 5.

[50] Jacinto Albarracín, *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes de 1899: Los Artistas y Sus Críticos* (Bogotá: Imprenta de Medardo Rivas. 1899), 6.

[51] “la especialidad de ese sitio, para que se abstengan de entrar los que bien tengan.” “Notas sobre la exposición,” *El Heraldo*, September 5, 1899.

[52] “de los cuerpos en descomposición.” Albarracín, *Exposición Nacional*, 5.

[53] “inanimado y ya en descomposición . . . con apariencias visibles de estar apenas dormida.” *Ibid.*, 5–6.

[54] The story, taken from the Old Testament's Book of Judges, tells how the wife of a Levite, who was unfaithful to her husband, met her punishment when she was raped and abused by thieves. In *Woman of the Levite from the Ephraim Mountains*, Garay has depicted the husband's discovery of his wife's body, which lies stripped naked on their doorstep.

[55] Max Grillo, “Por la crítica,” *El Autonomista*, October 4, 1899.

[56] “Decirle á un pintor que ha copiado el desnudo de fotograma, es como comprobarle á un poeta que ha plagiado literalmente un poema.” *Ibid.*

[57] Francisco A. Cano, “Epifanio Garay,” *Lectura y Arte*, no. 4/5 (December 1903): 69.

[58] Letter from Teresa Cuervo Borda to Alberto Galindo, Director of *El Liberal*, Bogotá, March 25, 1950, transcript in printed format, Archives of the Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.

[59] “la ignorancia y falta de cultura” *Ibid.*

Illustrations



Fig. 1, Salvador Moreno, *Back*, 1897. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. [\[return to text\]](#)

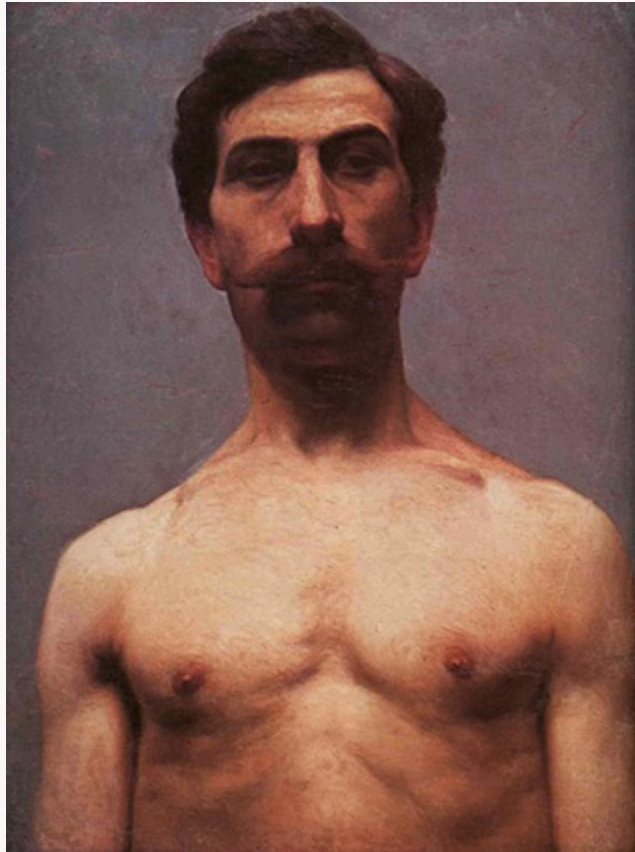


Fig. 2, Francisco Antonio Cano, *Model of the Académie Julian*, 1898. Oil on canvas. Colección del Banco de la República, Bogotá. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 3, Francisco Antonio Cano, Sketches. Pencil on paper. From *Apuntes de viaje, Medellín–París 1897–1899* (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), n.p. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 4, Francisco Antonio Cano, Sketches. Pencil on paper. From *Apuntes de viaje, Medellín–París 1897–1899* (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004), n.p. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 5, Cover of *L'Académie Julian* (Paris, 1903). Bibliothèque François-Mitterrand, Paris. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 6, Epifanio Garay, *Woman of the Levite from the Epharim Mountains*, 1899. Oil on canvas. Museo Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 7, Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez, *The Huntress of the Andes*, 1874. Oil on canvas. Museo Felipe Santiago Gutiérrez, Toluca. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 8, Francisco Antonio Cano, *Voluptuousness of the Ocean*, 1924. Oil on canvas. Colección del Banco de la República, Bogotá. [\[return to text\]](#)



Fig. 9, Francisco Antonio Cano, *The Last Drop*, 1908. Oil on canvas. Museo de Antioquia, Medellín. [\[return to text\]](#)