
Deceased Name: **Rufino A. Silva, Artist, Professor**

Rufino A. Silva, 74, a professor emeritus at the Art Institute of Chicago, died Thursday in Skagit Valley Hospital, Mount Vernon, Wash.

Formerly of the Near North Side, he had been living in Sedro Woolley, Wash., since 1989.

Mr. Silva joined the Art Institute faculty in 1959, teaching for more than 20 years as an associate professor before retiring in 1982.

"He had a very fatherly attitude toward teaching," said a former student, Jennie Kiessling. "We were all his children. He was fabulous, with very few words. He believed in 'less is more' and really taught me how to see figures and color."

During his career in art, his personal works, mostly etchings and oils, were often exhibited in galleries here and abroad. He had one-man shows in Paris and Rome.

Among his many honors were a fellowship in painting from the Puerto Rican government, the John Quincy Adams Foreign Traveling Fellowship and Clusman Prize.

"He came into art during an era when it was being politicized," said his brother-in-law, Robert Rigacci. "Landscapes were out so he concentrated mainly on human subjects. He didn't do any political stuff."

A native of Puerto Rico, Mr. Silva came to New York in 1936 and to Chicago three years later to study art. At the Art Institute, he focused on drawing, painting and illustration.

Leaving the Art Institute in 1942, he continued his studies in Paris. It was in France that he met and married his late wife, Iola Rigacci, an Art Institute faculty member who was in Europe furthering her studies. The Silvas later returned to the states, after which Mr. Silva joined the Art Institute.

Survivors include a son, Peter; a brother, Melquiades; a sister, Domitila Coto, and a grandchild. No services were held and burial was private.

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