

Francisco Eppens Helguera

By Greg Balagian

Francisco Eppens Helguera (1913-1990) was one of the most important and influential Mexican artists of the 20th century, famous for his beautiful paintings, murals and sculptures. His works were in the Mexican Mural Renaissance style of the 1920s with traditional Mexican themes featuring Aztec and colonial architecture, scenes of folk life and wild and farm animals.

Eppens (known also without ("Helguera"), also did the 1968 redesign of the Mexican coat of arms still used today on the Mexican national flag, official government documents and currency. He was a prolific and award-winning stamp artist between 1935-1951.

On November 25, 2013 Mexico Post issued se-tenant strip of five stamps promoting philately by commemorating Eppenson and his art on the centenary of his birth.

Eppens' 1980 painting, *Eagle Warrior and Jaguar Warrior* is one of the paintings in the stamp set. [See also page 48.]

Eagle and Jaguar warriors were the elite of the Aztec Empire. Eagle totems represents the light in mythology and the bird's fierceness and bravery. Eagle warriors were also scouts and messengers.

The jaguar represented ferocity and agility. A jaguar warrior had to capture 12 enemies during two battles, considered a greater feat than killing. Warriors wore jaguar skins over their heads with their faces peering out beneath the jaguar's mouth. 🐾



Eagle Warrior and Jaguar Warrior Mexico (2013).