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Gabriel Figueroa: Under the Mexican Sky: Art and Film

Claudia Monterde

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The films of Gabriel Figueroa (1907-1997) constitute an essential node in the network of exchanges and appropriations that formed Mexico's cultural identity in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century. Featuring color images and stills, *Under the Mexican Sky* provides a comprehensive view of the enduring Mexican iconography that Figueroa crafted throughout his career as a cinematographer, working on more than 200 films and collaborating with some of the world's leading directors of the time, such as John Ford, John Houston, Emilio Fernandez and Luis Buñuel. Figueroa trained as a painter and photographer before transitioning into the world of film in 1932, and these early studies influenced Figueroa's distinctive and vivid approach to cinematic composition. Drawing from a diverse array of influences--Renaissance perspective, German Expressionist cinema, Goya's prints and the landscapes of José María Velasco--Figueroa forged a lasting image of Mexico's history, landscape and people.