

SPOTLIGHT

On Anthony Quinn's Artwork

by **Clint Hamblin**

Much has been written about internationally acclaimed film and stage actor Anthony Quinn who appeared in more than 200 films and numerous stage performances in the United States and abroad. A five-time Academy Award nominee, Quinn won Oscars for his roles in *Lust for Life* with Kirk Douglas (1956) and in *Viva Zapata!* (1952) with Marlon Brando. Perhaps Quinn's most identifying performance was portraying Zorba in the 1964 film *Zorba the Greek*.

Words including prolific, powerful and prodigious have peppered biographies and reviews throughout his remarkable film, television and stage career, but not many know that Quinn, the actor/director, is also Quinn, the sculptor, painter and prolific creator of art with an exhibit now showing at the InterContinental Hotel Boston located at 510 Atlantic Avenue.

Anthony Oaxaca Quinn was born on April 21, 1915 in Chihuahua, Mexico, the son of Irish-Mexican Francisco Quinn and Indian-Mexican Manuela Oaxaca-Palleres. His mother smuggled her young son to Texas when he was 8 months old. At 6 years old, Quinn began to draw and sketch. At 18 years old, he won a design competition for Ralph's Marketplace in Los Angeles. The award was to study under Frank Lloyd Wright, who insisted that Quinn visit a doctor to fix a speech impediment. The remedy included a snip under the tongue and acting lessons to improve his speech.

The lessons led to a few performances, which led to work on stage and then in films. When faced with signing an acting contract, Wright advised Quinn to take the acting gig saying, "You can always be an architect later."

Throughout Quinn's life, he collected and created great pieces of art. According



Ryan Quinn holding a picture of his father, Anthony Quinn

to Katherine Quinn, his wife and mother of two of Quinn's 13 children, "When I first started working for Tony, this 70-year-old man was not planning the end of his life. He was planning a new life and about to go off to play Zorba The Greek on stage for one and a half years. He was also planning several films and writing a book."

Katherine Quinn describes her job, "We began consolidating his studios, bringing everything he had collected or created throughout his life to the new home in Bristol, Rhode Island. We dismantled the Italy home, the apartment in New York and the warehouse in New Jersey."

In 2001, Anthony Quinn died in Boston from pneumonia and respiratory failure. He was 86 years old. Soon after, Katherine

Quinn started the Anthony Quinn Foundation, a not-for-profit organization with the intent to perpetuate the memory of Anthony Quinn and to assist youths in the granting of scholarships for higher cultural education.

The InterContinental Hotel Boston and Katherine Quinn presented the first art exhibition in New England, Monumental Works. The exhibit consists of 18 sculptures, bronze bas reliefs, lithographs and a series of sketches created by Quinn, with select pieces on public view for the first time.

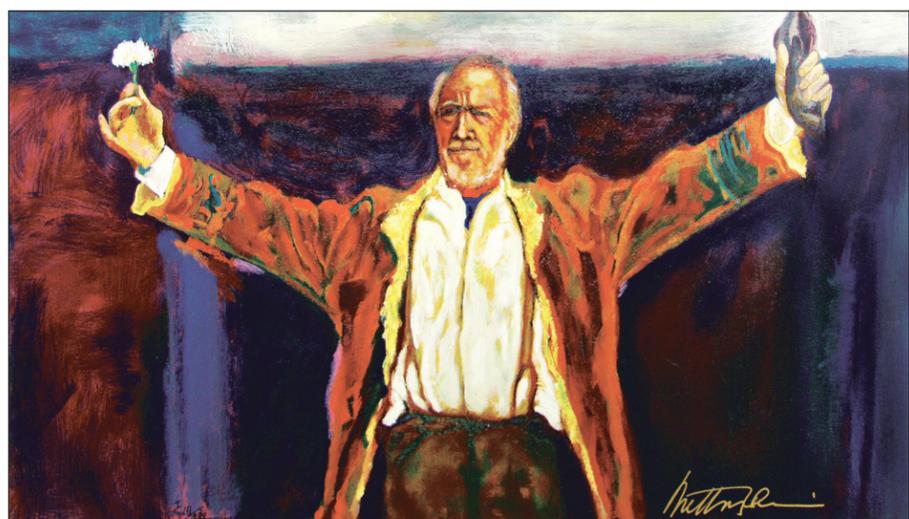
The work is profound and enticing, with hotel guests gathering around the sculptures reading the informational plaque and reaching out to feel the texture of the pieces. One of the most outstanding representations in the hotel's main lobby is a travertine sculpture called "Destroyed But Not Defeated." The inspiration for this piece came when Quinn was filming *The Lion of the Desert* in 1974 in Libya, where he discovered an archaeological site where fragments of ancient sculpture had been unearthed. Many of the pieces were missing parts, but Quinn was struck by the fact that the strength and beauty of the art had not diminished. At the same time, Quinn was reading Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and was impressed by the story of the struggles of an old fisherman. Hemingway's original phrase, "A man can be destroyed but not defeated," became the theme for this very special creation.

All of the pieces in this exhibit are worthy of your attention. Quinn's collection of work is compelling and so approachable, you shouldn't miss it. The exhibit runs through the end of June.

For more information on the Anthony Quinn Foundation, visit www.anthonnyquinn.com.



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