



Capturing Nature: The Cement Sculpture of Dionicio Rodríguez (Rio Grande/Río Bravo: Borderlands Culture and Traditions)

Patsy Pittman Light

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Over a period of some twenty years, Mexican-born artisan Dionicio Rodríguez created imaginative sculptures of reinforced concrete that imitated the natural forms and textures of trees and rocks. He worked in eight different states from 1924 through the early 1950s but spent much of his early career in San Antonio, where several of his creations have become beloved landmarks. More than a dozen of Rodríguez's works have been included on the National Register of Historic Places. Patsy Pittman Light has spent a decade documenting the trabajo rústico ("rustic work") of Rodríguez, along with its antecedents in Europe and Mexico, and the subsequent work of those Rodríguez trained in San Antonio. Rodríguez's unique and unusual art will fascinate those new to it and delight those to whom it is familiar. San Antonio sites such as the bus stop on Broadway, the faux bois bridge in Brackenridge Park, and the "rocks" on the Miraflores Gate at the San Antonio Museum of Art, along with the Old Mill at T. R. Pugh Memorial Park in North Little Rock and Memorial Park Cemetery in Memphis, are just a few of the locations covered in this volume celebrating the life and work of a Latino artisan. Students and devotees of Texas and Southwestern art will welcome this book and its long-overdue appreciation of this artist. Additionally, this book will commend itself to those interested in Latino studies, art history, and folklore.

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