

## Biography

**Tomás Sánchez** was born on May 22, 1948 in Aguada de Pasajeros, in the province of Cienfuegos, Cuba. The eldest of two sons, he comes from a middle class family in Ingenio Perseverancia, where his father was a sugar worker and merchant. He shared a sensibility for painting with his mother.

At the age of 16, he moved to Havana to study painting at the San Alejandro National Academy of Fine Arts in 1964. Two years later, he took a hiatus from the Academy, transferring in 1967 to the newly founded National School for the Arts (*ENA*), whose program of study was more contemporary. In 1971 he graduated from the ENA and that same year won first prize in Drawing from the National Young Artists' Salon, earning him the first recognition of his career.

After graduating, Tomas Sanchez stayed on at the National School for the Arts as Professor and Chair of Engraving until 1976. In 1975, he won two first prizes, in Painting and Lithography, from the Third National Salon of Art Professors and Instructors in Havana. He subsequently joined the Theater Department of the Ministry of Culture's Puppetry Workshop as a designer of scenery and children's theater puppets. Until 1978, he collaborated with UNESCO's Marionette Troupe, which introduced him to a universe very different from that of his previous work.

In 1980 he received the XIX Joan Miró International Drawing Prize for his piece *Desde las Aguas Blancas*, thus launching his international career. The following year he participated in an individual exposition at the prestigious Joan Miró Foundation's Centre de'Estudis d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona, Spain.

Among the most important recognitions of his career are the National Prize for Painting at Havana's First Biennial (1984), the Fifth American Graphic Arts Biennial in Cali, Columbia (1986) and an honorable mention at the First International Painting Biennial in Cuenca, Ecuador (1987).

He has participated in individual and collective expositions in over 30 countries, including Mexico, the United States, Japan, Italy and France. Among his most significant individual exhibitions are: *Tomás Sánchez: A Retrospective* at the National Museum of Fine Art (Havana, Cuba, 1985); *Tomás Sánchez: Different Worlds* at the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art (Florida, USA, 1996); and a 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, *Tomás Sánchez: A Retrospective*, at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Monterrey, Mexico, 2008).

Although best recognized for his landscapes (including his majestic landfills), his career is that of a prolific artist who has made incursions into painting, engraving, sculpture and photography. Critics, curators and the artist himself have often associated his work with the experience of meditation.

Tomás Sánchez has subsequently lived in Havana, Mexico, Miami (Florida) and Costa Rica.