Welcome to the World Traveling Art Exhibit at Truman State University

My name is Óscar Sendón, assistant professor of Spanish at Truman State University (Missouri). As a member of ALCESXXI (Asociación Internacional de Literatura y Cine Españoles Siglo XXI), I had the opportunity to bring to Truman the traveling exhibit Welcome to the World by Spanish artist Miguel Brieva. Brieva is a graphic artist who has worked with illustration, comics, posters, and book covers, among other formats. He has been published in many magazines and newspapers, including El País, La Vanguardia, El Jueves, and Rolling Stone. The exhibit deals with topics such as materialism, consumerism, globalization, and dehumanization from a very critical perspective.

Welcome to the World was organized by Carleton College (Minnesota), being the professor Palmar Álvarez-Blanco, curator of the initial exhibit, my contact person. Professor Álvarez-Blanco sent me the materials (2 packages: 1 long cardboard with the 24 prints and 1 medium box with the panels translated into English). Once we received the illustrations, we only had to provide the frames and locate a place for the exhibit. In our case, we decided that the gallery exhibit area on the first floor of Pickler Memorial Library was the best location due to its high traffic of students.

The exhibit was scheduled from March 18 to April 18, 2016. Using one of Brieva’s illustrations we designed a poster that was distributed campuswide. We advertised the exhibit in all possible ways (newsletter, email, campus newspaper, social media). During the first week we held a public reception for faculty and students where I offered a guided visit of the exhibit, talking about the artist and the social and cultural context of the display.

In conclusion, the interdisciplinary nature of the exhibit was a success because it attracted the attention of students from all majors, and especially from Modern Languages and Art. Welcome to the World offered an engaging opportunity to relate Brieva’s art to the content of specific courses. For instance, I used it to discuss about social topics in my Spanish Conversation course, covering current topics such as the Degrowth movement or the 15-M in Spain. Also, worksheets were available for extra credit and a few students showed their interest in working with Brieva’s art for their capstone experience on their senior year.