Thank you, Maestro Botero

Thank you, Maestro Botero A life dedicated to art and philanthropy
It is with great sadness and deep gratitude that we at *Banco de la República* (the Central Bank of Colombia) bid farewell to Maestro Fernando Botero, the most internationally recognized Colombian artist and undoubtedly one of those who has loved this country the most, one he portrayed in numerous works and to which he gave one of his greatest treasures : the collection of international art of his own work that today we have the privilege of preserving and exhibiting for all Colombians in the #MuseoBotero, with free admission as he wished.

“For me, it is an infinite pleasure to know that today these works belong to Colombia, that the students who enter this house will come into contact with the most important artistic trends of our time and will be able to permanently contemplate original works of great masters, and that painting and sculpture lovers will be able to come and visit this haven of peace and walk peacefully through these rooms, letting themselves be flooded by modern aesthetics. Let this small oasis of culture remain amidst the frenzy of city life”.

Until recently, Maestro Botero visited the Museum, walking through the rooms and greeting the public and the staff working there. Like the good student he was, he calmly observed the artworks and paid attention to the details of the assembly: “This light needs to be raised,” “that wall needs painting...” Always thinking that the visitor's experience would be the best, he was always willing to take a picture with anyone who asked for one.

Thank you, Maestro, for this Museum and for your legacy. Our best tribute will be to keep it intact for present and future generations of compatriots, its real owners, who have the doors open to visit it again and again. This will be a gift forever.

Rest in peace, Fernando Botero.

- To learn more about the life and work of the Maestro Fernando Botero, watch the selection of videos we have prepared for you (only in Spanish).
- Fernando Botero's work is characterized by creativity, sensuality in the forms, the handling of volume, a taste for unforeseen details, and a combination of irony and respect that has marked his approach to Colombian issues and his allusions to universal painting. Read the complete biography of Fernando Botero.

Fernando Botero was born on 19 April 1932 in Medellin, Antioquia, and died on 15 September 2023 at the age of 91. He is and will always be one of the most internationally recognized Colombian artists; his works are exhibited in different museums, and his sculptures are imposed in public squares and stages in different cities around the world.

The volume of his works is compared to his philanthropy. Botero is the national artist who gave one of the most significant gifts to Colombian citizens: the collection that makes up the Botero Museum of *Banco de la República*, located in the historic center of Bogotá. The eastern side of the museum houses 123 of the Master’s works created between 1980 and 1990, and the western side houses 85 works from his private collection, allowing locals and visitors to appreciate some of the most representative pieces of world art by such important artists as Pablo Picasso, Claude Monet, August Renoir, Joan Miró, and Max Beckmann, among others.

About the Botero Museum
On several occasions, Fernando Botero mentioned that his first approach to universal art was not in a museum but through the reproductions of masterpieces he found in books and prints.

This story, which was the same for most Colombians who were unable to travel to Europe or North America to see original works, changed in the year 2000, when the artist donated an art collection of 208 artworks to *Banco de la República*, which since then have been exhibited free at the Botero Museum, allowing thousands of Colombians to admire in person masterpieces by some of the most important names in modern art and Colombia's most renowned artist.

Since its opening in 2000, the Museum has opened its doors to national and international audiences for free, allowing visitors to take a journey through the history of modern art from the late nineteenth century to the last decade of the twentieth century, with a focus on the European avant-garde.

In addition, the Museum allows the public to learn about Fernando Botero’s work through guided or individual tours. The collection comprises paintings, sculptures, watercolors, and drawings that show the connection of the Antioquian artist with the reality of the country from a critical viewpoint, the use of humor and irony, and the use of volume and color that make him so well-known around the world. In addition, the Museum offers a variety of educational and research activities that enliven the space, which is recognized for housing one of the five most significant public collections of international art in Latin America. Learn more about the Botero Museum and its collection (only in Spanish).

Fuente: https://www.banrep.gov.co/en/news/thanks-maestro-botero