



# The Cold War

1947 - 1962

- In the wake of WW2, a brutal rivalry formed between the capitalist U.S. and the socialist Soviet Union (and their respective allies)
- Despite fighting on the same side in WW2, the fall of Nazi Germany left a political and economic opening
- 1948 saw the Soviets implementing communist regimes in Eastern Europe leading to the U.S.' involvement in western Europe
- Coined by George Orwell in his essay, "You and the Atom Bomb"
  - “a state which was at once unconquerable and in a permanent state of ‘cold war’ with its neighbors.”

# The Cuban Revolution (Jul 26, 1953 – Jan 1, 1959)

- Cuba became a Republic in 1902 and went through several presidents.
- Gerardo Machado was elected as Cuba's president in 1925, pledging reform. But instead, became Cuba's first dictatorial ruler, until he was ousted in 1933 after a revolt led by Fulgencio Batista.
- Following in Machado's footsteps Batista would later stage a coup as it became evident he would be facing political defeat.
- On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro, in an attempt to overthrow the Batista regime, would lead a raid against the Moncada army barracks in the city of Santiago de Cuba
  - Unlike most of his men, Fidel and his brother Raul survived the incident. However, they were imprisoned. In 1955, Batista would grant amnesty to many political leaders including the Castros.
- Fidel didn't give up. He gathered more men and in late December 1958, Che Guevara's forces defeated a much larger army garrison in the Battle of Santa Clara and captured a train loaded with vital arms and ammunition.

# Bay of Pigs

1961

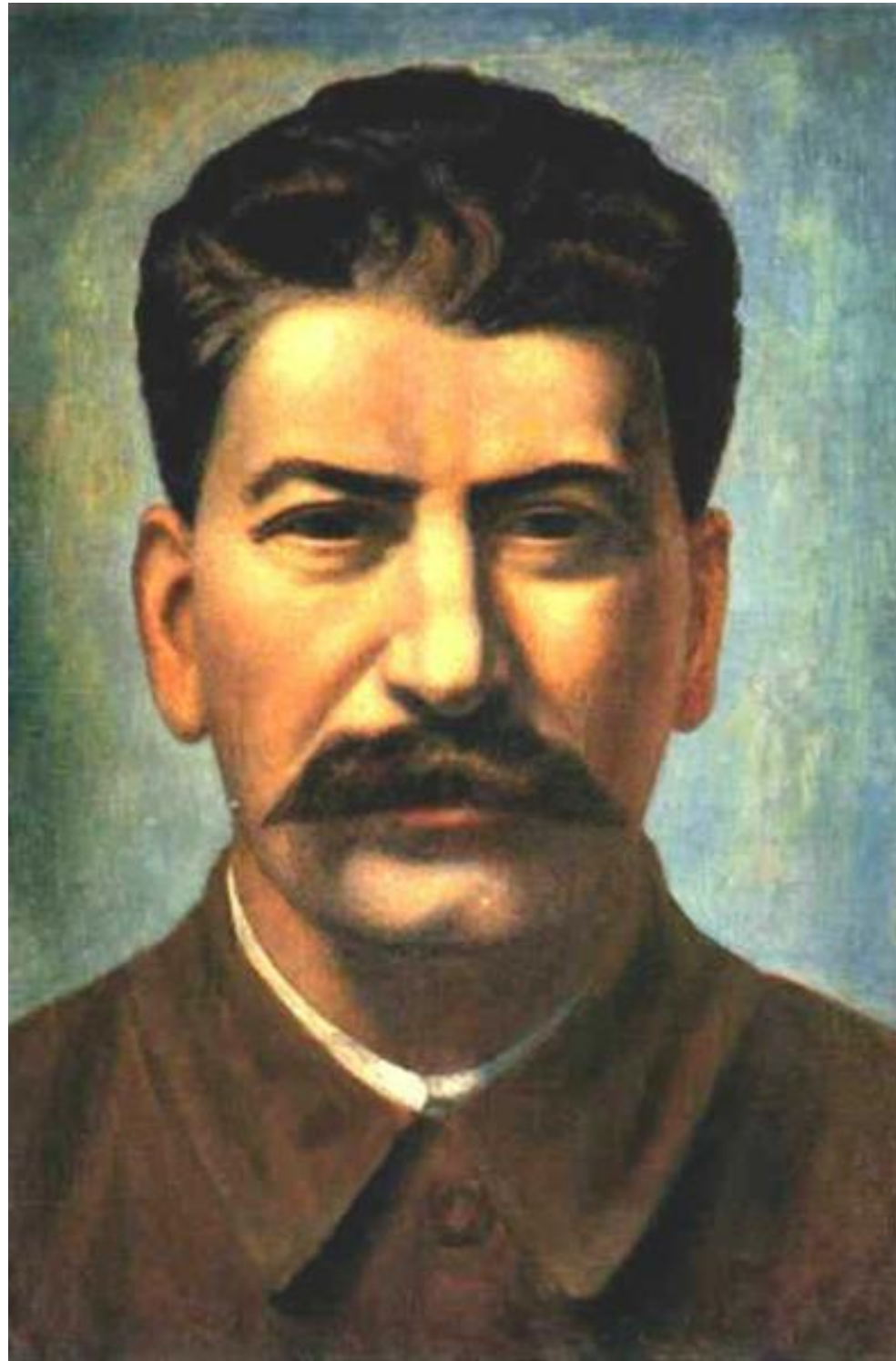
- March 1960, Eisenhower directed the CIA to develop a plan to overthrow the Castro Regime
- November 1960, After Kennedy takes office he convenes with the CIA and decides to follow through with Eisenhower's plan
- April 17, 1961 A group of exiled counter-revolutionary Cubans, trained and funded by the CIA, dubbed Brigade 2506 landed at the Bay of Pigs
- Within 2 days they were defeated by Cuban armed forces
- 1,200 members of Brigade 2506 surrendered whilst 100 were killed

# Cuban Missile Crisis

- July 1962 Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev reached a secret agreement with Cuban premier Fidel Castro to place Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba to deter any future invasion attempt.
- October 14, 1962, a U.S aircraft captures pictures showing sites for medium-range and intermediate-range ballistic nuclear missiles (MRBMs and IRBMs) under construction in Cuba
- On October 22, Kennedy ordered a naval “quarantine” of Cuba and sent a letter to Khrushchev denouncing offensive weapons in Cuba and demanding the dismantling of the missile bases.
- On October 26, Khrushchev sends a message saying the Soviets would remove their missiles from Cuba if the United States promised not to invade the island.
- On October 28, Khrushchev issued a public statement that Soviet missiles would be dismantled and removed from Cuba.

# Soviet vs American Art

- The USSR's art style came to be defined as Socialist Realism
  - Four guidelines were made by Maxim Gorky, writer, and Stalin confidant: Art should be relevant to the workers and understandable to them, it should present scenes of everyday life, its representations should be realistic, and it should be partisan and supportive of the aims of the State and Party
- The U.S. favored the style of abstract expressionism
  - This was largely to contrast the Soviets. Abstract expressionism embraced freedom and individuality, something the Soviets lacked.
- Unlike his socialist peers, Castro had no gripes with the abstract
- Fidel Castro, said “Our enemies are capitalism and imperialism, not abstract painting,”
- Castro's more relaxed approach to art allowed Cuba to develop an artistic style that took from both the U.S. and USSR
- Ultimately, during the Cuban Revolution, its art was mostly associated with the Pop Art movement
  - Traits: Recognizable imagery, bright colors, criticism of consumerism, among others



# Portrait of Joseph Stalin

Pavel Filonov, 1936





# Number 28, 1950

Jackson Pollock, 1950





# Rosas y Estrellas

Raul Martinez, 1972,  
47 1/4 × 35 7/16 in. (120 × 90 cm),  
Oil on canvas

From left to right, the back row is comprised of Simón Bolívar, Camilo Cienfuegos, Máximo Gómez, and Antonio Maceo. Directly to Martí's right stands Fidel Castro and to his left stands Che Guevara.

# The Tricontinental Conference

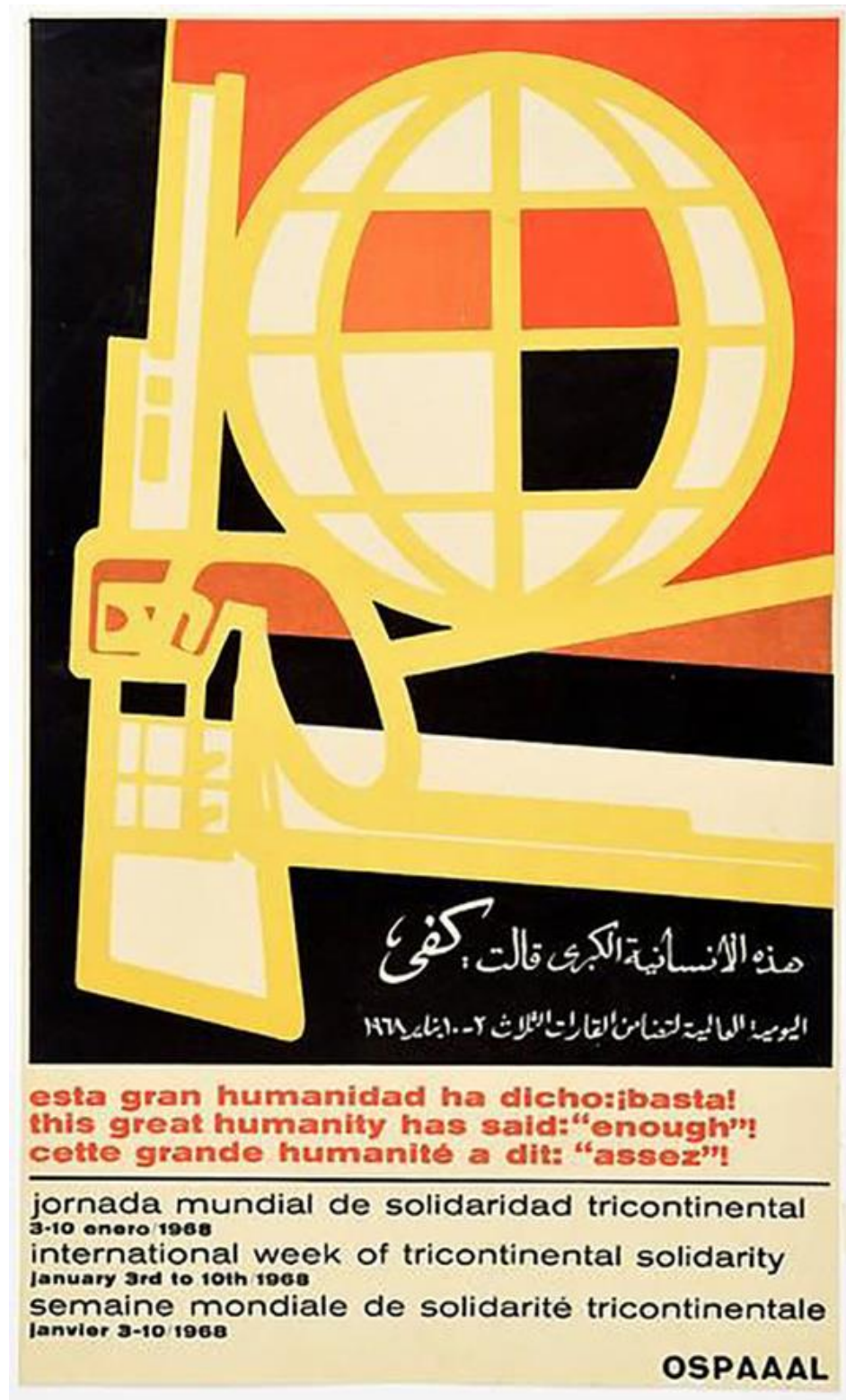
(1966)

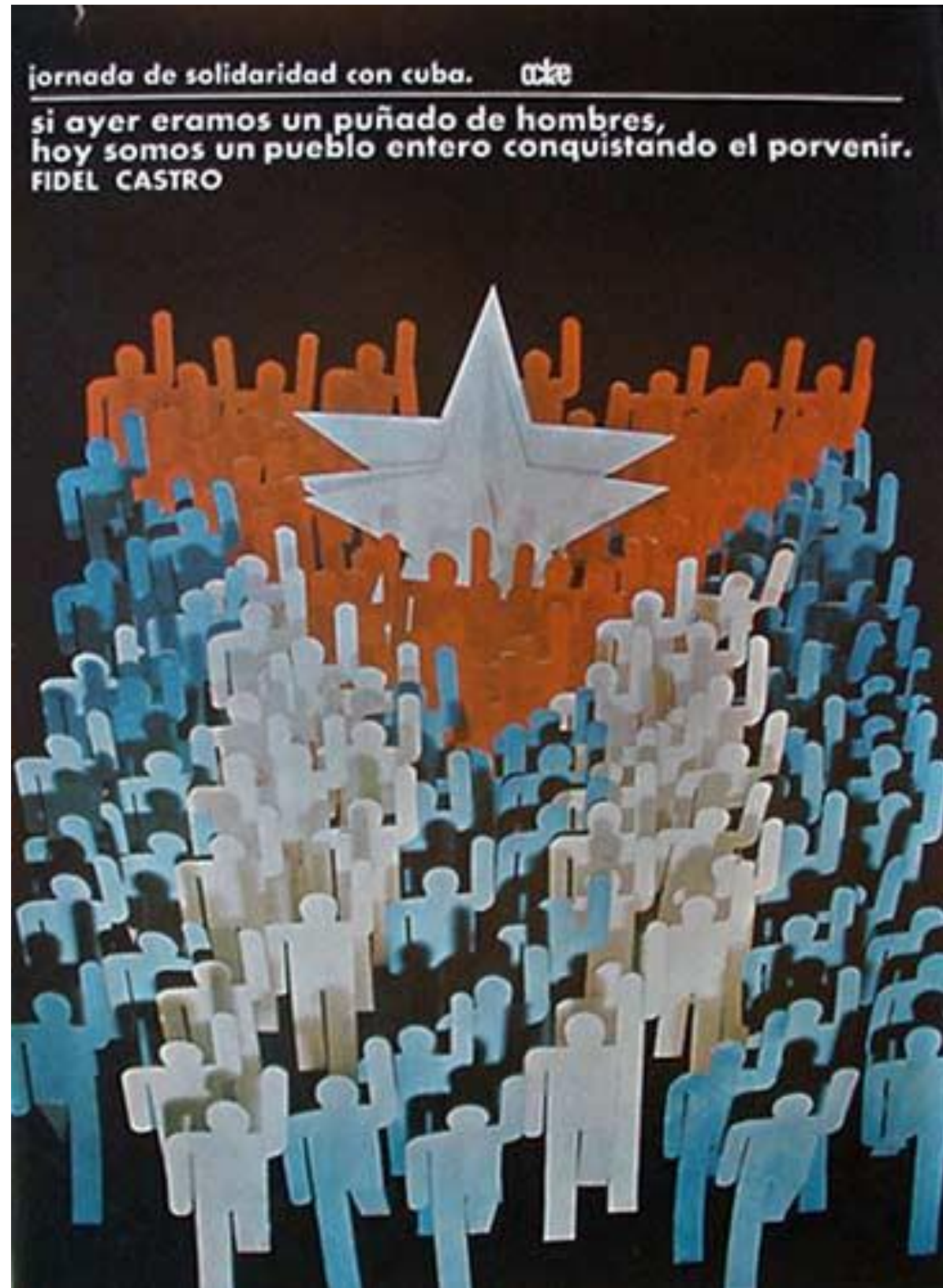
- The conference featured 82 countries and notably, the US was not invited
- The conference hosted in Cuba, was held with the intention of unifying countries with a shared sense of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism
- This led to the founding of Organización de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de Asia, África y América Latina (OSPAAAL)
  - The Organization of American States (OAS) described OSPAAAL as "the most dangerous threat that international communism has yet made against the inter-American system."
- After the conference, OSPAAAL launched a campaign that consisted of films, its *Tricontinental* magazine, and many well-known posters that spread their message



# This Great Humanity Said, "Enough"

The gun pictured next to the world sends the message that violence is necessary to overthrow imperialism





"Day of solidarity with Cuba. If yesterday we were a handful of men, today we are an entire people conquering the future." - Fidel Castro.

Braulio, Modest  
1970-1980



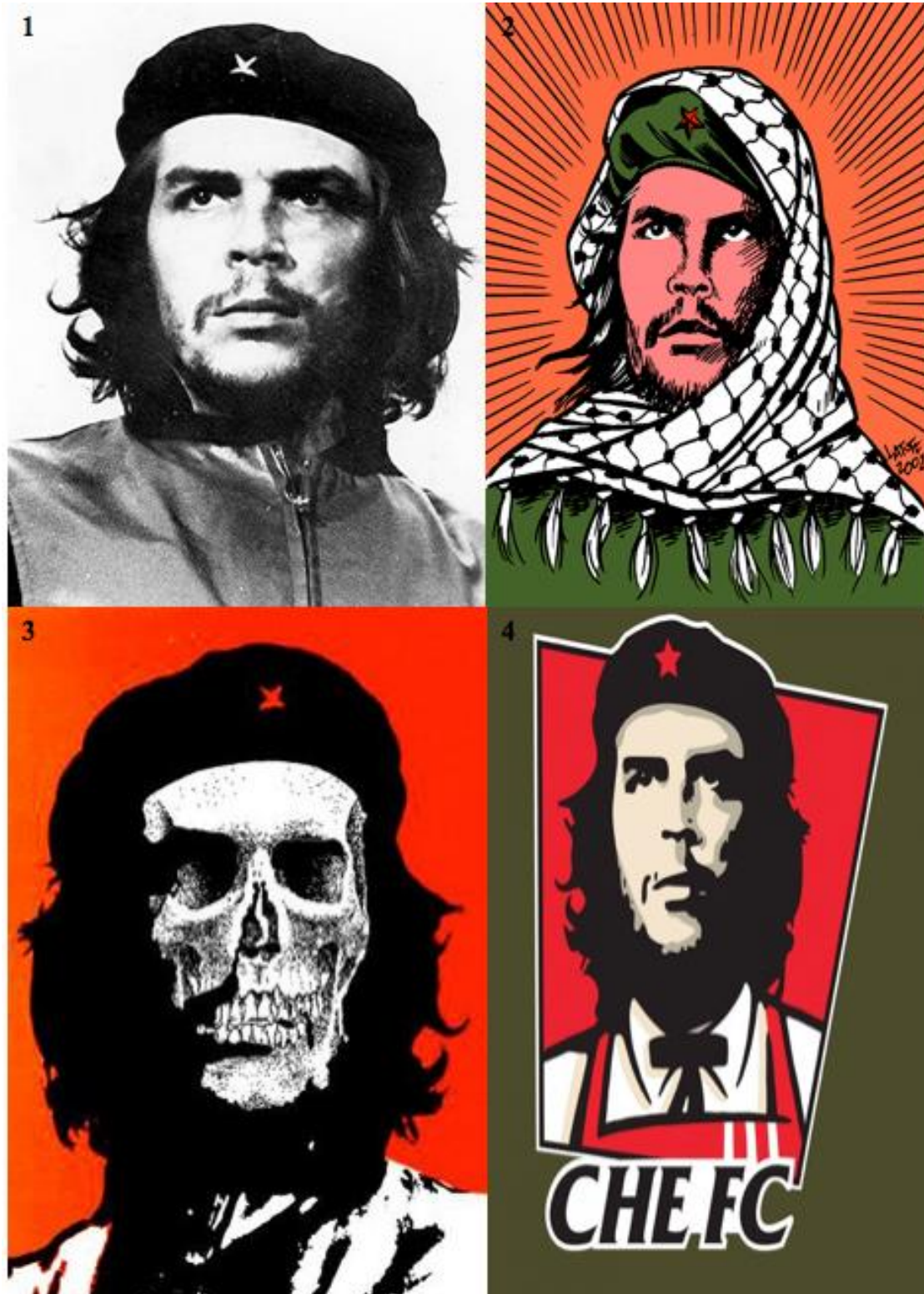


# Guerrillero Heroico

Shot by: Alberto  
Korda

# Appropriation of Che Guevara

- The photo was taken at a memorial service for victims of "La Coubre explosion"
  - On March 4, 1960, La Coubre, a french freighter, carrying 76 tons of weapons experienced 2 explosions in the harbor of Havana, Cuba
  - On March 5, Castro made a speech in which he accused the CIA of causing the explosion
- Korda described the moment he took the photo, "[the]impressive force in his expression, given the anger concentrated in his gaze after so many deaths."
- Tate museum: "the practice of artists using pre-existing objects or images in their art with little transformation of the original."
- What is the point of apropriation?



Using Che as a symbol of revolution  
Political Commentary  
Parody/ Subversion of Expectations

# Importance:

- Arts speaks to the human experience, it expresses the words that are normally too onerous for us
- Underrated part of Cuban history
- When discussing Castro's reign it is normally depicted as completely evil