

Aspects of Ramón Lapayese's Work

From a palette that is free-flowing and rich in tonalities; a figurative painter who puts manifest realities forth on canvas through the concentration of lines and the employment and appreciation of the material's density; in this exhibition Ramón Lapayese also offers himself to us in his aspect of engraver and sculptor, as he has done in earlier occasions.

A consolidated summary of past works done with other means of pictorial manifestation, the oil paintings of Ramón Lapayese fall within an expressionism of strikingly defined planes. Upon these the author highlights suggestive figurations, and their formalization usually tends towards stylization by means of fillers and thicknesses that in some cases almost dilute the brush strokes and strengthen the content of the work.

As a sculptor, Ramón Lapayese works with hard woods, bronze and wrought iron, materials that he handles with evident sensitivity and with an excellent command of technique. Here he twists the forms and still tends towards stylization, within an expressionism that is essentially linked to his paintings. The canvases on exhibit are from the year 1974, and the sculptures date from earlier years. *J. I. del Marquet. Gazeta del Arte Magazine, December 7, 1975.*



Bullfighting with the left hand. Oil on canvas, 1959. 73 x 60 cm.

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Ramón Lapayese's work comes to us in a culmination of provocative explorations. The expressive boldness, the musicality of color, the thematic variety and the sense of mural decoration are surprising, and their inspiration, as far as the nervous splotches of determined figures are concerned, might be found in the paintings of primitive man. Above I point out an enrichment of aspects that is easily recognizable by those of us who have followed the work of Lapayese: I am referring specifically to his pictorial work – at least since his extremely defining exhibition of 1968 that was also held in the Kreisl Gallery. The painter continues to be faithful to a varied world, which lies between the Arcadian and the lunar, maintained by custom and leaning toward popular delight, and in it he interweaves ironic escapes from determined social classes. The bull, in its movable and black engraving, is once again the focus of many of his compositions, although he prefers to depict the animal in the country, at peace and ignorant of bullfighting capes or, if he deals with the bullfighting ritual, then it is in the *tentadero* (a bullring where the animals are tested for their bravery) and on the ranch. However, one of the most beautiful paintings on this topic that Ramón Lapayese has hung in the Kreisl is the one entitled *Chiquero*: The black and expectant spot of the bull appears enclosed in the white perspectives of the bullring facility.

Julio Trenas, Jano Magazine, October 31, 1980.



Torso. Wood, 1974. 80 x 22 x 17 cm.



Third-class car. Oil on canvas, 1970-1982. 160 x 114 cm

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Ramón Lapayese is not a sculptor who paints, as there are also painters who sometimes sculpt, but rather a complete artist who cultivates both forms of expression. He is a great artist, whose plastic language goes beyond any borders that might exist when attempting to reduce or give a new dimension to a work.

The breadth of his world and the depth of his talent are revealed to us at the same level when, as is currently the case in the Álvaro gallery, this Madrid artist exhibits both aspects of his work. Paintings and sculptures with no barriers that separate them, as both are expressed with the same tone and transmit us the same preoccupations.

Form and space, in the noble materials that give shape to the sculptor's preoccupations, and love itself, sketched or suggested, in the brief spots of color, in the loose strokes of a pictorial work that has so much of the tactile harshness or smoothness and of the neofigurative schematism that, with tremendous personality, characterize his bronze sculptures or wood carvings. Or the other way around, because we could also affirm that the fine strokes of the paintings take on unusual force in each and every one of the parts that make up his sculptures.

Manuel Lorente, ABC Newspaper, Sevilla, March 11, 1981.



Bird from Paradise. Iron, 1974. 95 x 79 x 25 cm. And detail

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Hurricane Andrew. Oil on canvas, 1993. 81 x 73 cm.

I like the paintings of Ramón Lapayese. They amuse me and provide me with some compensation for the overwhelming avalanche of photographic hyperrealists, determined to depict all the fruits of this suffering world and all the apples on the earth; compensation for the no less notable lack of imagination of those others who shelter their interior void in a decrepit and aesthetic avant-garde that died many years ago but is maintained with a costly process of hibernation.

The painting of Ramón Lapayese is furiously and joyfully personal. Reality becomes "his" reality. Sarcasm and lyricism reach a balance in his work. All of humanity is turned into a puppet theater, in shadows that stretch out from themselves, drenched in light and color. There is no naivety in the paintings of Ramón Lapayese, but rather brazenness masked in laughter. Paintings without nuances, without mixtures, violently pure, without chromatic cadences or forced lyricism. Paintings of the farce, the circus, of the delightful roll of the drum. Paintings of the burlesque and of satire. A festival of colors, with jack in the boxes, lion tamers, bullfighters, fighting cocks and cardboard and rag dolls

Lapayese is also a sculptor, but it seems to me that it is his paintings that influence his sculptures, and not the other way around, as has always been said, because I think that, fundamentally, Lapayese is an extremely personal painter, who advances day by day, eliminating imperfections and hesitations along his own creative path.

Mario Antolín. Ya Newspaper, Madrid, March 18, 1982.

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