

About a dozen years ago Ramón Lapayese was revealed to us here as a fabulous sculptor, through the magnificent reliefs that decorate the architectural crosses of the central patio of our Universidad Laboral. Today, with the exhibition that we open in the art hall of this same learning institution, he shows himself to be an extraordinary painter.

For some years now Ramón Lapayese alternates oil and paintbrush with stone, iron and wood with such skill that we can affirm that the great artistic game of this universal Madrid artist has achieved two victories that are equally important: sculpture and painting. Two victories so equally important that I have to say that my colleague Angel Marsá, a critic from "El Correo Catalán", is completely right when stating that it is not possible to talk about a Ramón Lapayese painter and a Ramón Lapayese sculptor, as they are one and the same. Indeed, we must speak of a Ramón Lapayese of the plastic arts, without limits or dimensional borders that confine him.

As is easily seen in this exhibition, for Ramón Lapayese painting means, more than fulfilling any "-ism", to communicate a series of conquests snatched from mystery, using some of the latest expressive realities that continue to have an effect. And he has thus been able to create this refined, rich, eloquent and ambitious work that does not renounce earlier experiences, but rather proposes to make use of them. It is for this reason that all of his works ooze expressionism, *picasso-ism* and informalism in all their aspects. It is for this reason that Ramón Lapayese can be described as an "integrating" artist, who knows very well that positive art has never been a thing of dazzling talk, but rather an adventure of concrete things.

There is no doubt that this artist focuses on that part of reality that interests him and then he expresses it, but in his own way, after having assimilated the best of the latest plastic revolution and having passed everything through the filter of his powerful personality. In this way he creates these paintings, centered on a solitary figure or on groups —characters from far away places, female nudes sitting down or with their backs to us, dramatic scenes of bullfighter and bull— which Lapayese makes emerge from a phantasmagoric and unreal world. Severe, deformed or semi-devastated men and women who try to communicate, through a strange language of attitudes, a message that is both shocking and beautiful all at once.

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