

ART FROM THE SOUL

Ramón Lapayese comes from a family of artists. His father, Jose Lapayese, is a great painter and decorator of well deserved fame - he must be credited for the revival of the technique of the *guadamecil* - and his brother, Lapayese del Río, is also a quoted artist of international fame. Ramón has the art in his blood. Violinist, sculptor, engraver, painter, he lives by and for the art. Numerous international awards and more than fifty solo exhibitions all over the world certify him.

— I do not know – Ramón says to me – when I began to paint. I have always drawn and painted. My father was my first arts teacher. But, in fact, I consider myself a self-taught person. I did not follow any syllabus at a College or Art school, but I have studied hard on my own. I have worked in Art workshops at Barcelona, in Rome - I was awarded with a scholarship for the Spanish Academy -, in Paris. I went to Paris with a scholarship of the French Government. It was only for a month's term but I stayed there for seven years.

— Which of the three Plastic Arts - sculpture, painting or engraving – appeals more to you?

— The three of them all alike. Really. I work according to my mood. There are times that I prefer to carve; other times I prefer to take the brushes and other times I consider that the best result for a topic will be etching or engraving. I have my all-in-one studio in Madrid. At a side, the easels and the drawing table; at another side, the sculpture workshop, the forge... and I go from side to side. I work all of them by snatches, one step at a time. According to their arising. Sometimes it happens that I make a sketch of a sculpture and when I finish it I believe that the subject will fit better painted with oil on canvas and I stop to carve it. It depends.

— Are you a slow worker?

— I work really hard but I let the work rest much. I am always working on several works simultaneously. Sometimes even five or six art pieces at a time. And I work on them little by little. I insist on any sculptural piece, any picture, before finishing it. I like things well done.

— Do you believe in inspiration?

— Yes, of course. What's important in all work is the idea, because that is the base. But then comes the task, the technique, the good taste. I believe in inspiration, but I believe that you must know how to work with it.

A LYRICAL TREMOR IN THE WORK

I said in the beginning of this interview that the Ramón Lapayese artwork has a distinctive mark that stands out from those of any other artists. His personal style is evident here. It is hard to find in the sculpture, the painting of Ramón Lapayese, any obvious background. For that reason I ask him:

— What artists have more impact on you?

— A lot. Many of them move me. But synthesizing, I would say that the fantastic worlds of El Greco and Goya are more rousing to me. And of course, all that ample list of anonymous artists who left their work in the caverns, with rudimentary instruments, and I am referring here to the cave painting. An artwork that was, first of all, a communication necessity.

— Is art still communication?

— Yes, of course. Through art you communicate your feelings to others, that's for sure.

But for me art is also an intimate happiness. Creating makes me happy. Proof of it is that when I have some idea worthy to shape it I start working with rage to unburden myself and I do not remain calm until the work is done. Soon a great satisfaction invades me when I finish the work.

— And that lyrical tremor that signs all your work, where does it come from?

— I've been having this tremor for all my life.

— How do you raise your compositions?

— Contours bother me. I do not like bounded things. And then I work on those simple shapes by making them cumbersome. It is as if it took the reality, a man, an animal and I disjointed them down to reassemble them my way, giving them more idealized forms. There is a kind of dislocation of the anatomy in my work. I detach the bodies, disturbing them to take them away of reality. Perhaps because my reality is different.

— Why so many figures and less landscape painting?

— I prefer the figure to the landscape and I believe that it is an error, because landscape painting is sold better, but I see landscape as a human being and am always looking for its vibrations. For example: architecture attracts me, the building arrangement in a city or town. And I paint urban landscapes and houses because I see the track, the beat of man in them, his heat and his color.

— Let us speak of colors. There are lively, warm colors in your canvases.

— Yes. I like strong colors, reds, blues, earthy ocher. But I use them not like pure colors, but very worked, very mixed, recreated in my way. They are part of my aesthetic world.

An aesthetic world, of the most peculiar forms, lived by men, by unique animals of original features, sweet, poetically deformed by the hand of an artist who has managed to give them in wood, in bronze, in iron, in canvas, a shivering human temperature.

Interview by Fausto Botello. Sur Newspaper, Sevilla, March, 21, 1981

© (of the pictures) 2004 Herederos de Ramón Lapayese

<http://www.ramonlapayese.com>

Tf: +(34) 917 661 694

Email: marchant@ramonlapayese.com

(Please note that these pictures' colors may lack accuracy from their originals)