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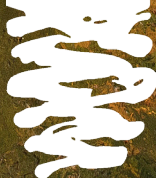
Miquel Villà

Painting without chance

Miquel Villà, Landscape (fragment), c. 1937. Museu de Marcel·lí Sitges, Generalitat de Catalunya. Col·lecció Nacional d'Art

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Diputació
Barcelona

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Miquel Villà

Painting without chance

The work of Miquel Villà (Barcelona, 1901 - El Masnou, 1988) is one of the most personal ones in 20th century Catalan art. From very early on, it became worthy of the critics' attention due to its independence and its originality. His structured painting with compact masses, the dense brush-stroke and his taste for the subject and the colour make it particularly well esteemed by those who defend figurative art as well as avant-gardism.

El Masnou, where he had family roots, Eivissa (or Ibiza), La Pobla de Segur and Altea were to become his favourite landscapes. As well as South America, in particular Colombia, Argentina and Venezuela, where he used to spend long periods for many years. It is the cartography of a tireless traveller and, at the same time, of a painter who requires time to paint a single place and to make it completely his.

Vilà's painting is an exercise in synthesis, a search for what is primordial in nature, by means of a laborious task of observation to be able to achieve the essential shapes and colours.

1 *Self-Portrait*, 1933

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
Eusebi Isern Dalmau Collection

2 *Self-Portrait with Pipe*

Oil on canvas
Signed: "M Villà" (bottom left-hand corner)
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / París 1928"
MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya,
Barcelona. Legacy of the artist, 1989

3 *Self-Portrait*

Oil on panel
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / París 1926"
Private collection

4 *Olga Sacharoff*

(Tbilissi, Georgia, Russia, 1889 –
Barcelona, 1967)

***Portrait of Miquel Villà*, c. 1951**

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
Private collection

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LANGUAGE

5 *City of Bogota*, 1919

Oil on canvas
Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

6 *Gentilly*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Gentilly 1923"
Private collection

7 *Paris Rooftops*

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
Private collection

8 *Landscape*, c. 1927

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
Família Cervelló Casanova Collection

9 *Pine trees at El Masnou*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1932"
Museu de Maricel, Sitges. Fons Maricel
Acquisition of the Consorci del Patrimoni
de Sitges, 2020

10 *Paris Landscape*

Oil on canvas
Signed: "M Villà" (bottom left-hand corner)
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / París 1928"
Private collection

«What there is in a painting takes shape little by little, as we live, over the years, over the centuries, with all the sediments of history. Those who paint quickly only achieve something by accident, by pure chance.»

11 *Amsterdam*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Amsterdam / 1937"

Private collection

12 *Landscape with Bridge*

Paris, c. 1927-1929

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Generalitat de Catalunya. Col·lecció Nacional d'Art. Old Salvador Riera Collection

13 *Female Nude*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / París 1926"

Private collection Felip Massot

14 *La Pobla de Segur*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur 1934"

Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

15 *Landscape, c. 1937*

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Museu de Maricel, Sitges
Generalitat de Catalunya. Col·lecció Nacional d'Art

16 *Organyà*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Organyà 1935"

Private collection

17 *The Waterwheel*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Ibiza 1936"

Museu de Valls
Generalitat de Catalunya. Col·lecció Nacional d'Art

18 *Still Life wit Herring, 1934*

Oil on canvas
Signed: "Miquel Villà"
(bottom left-hand corner)

Joan-Artur Roura Collection

19 *Still Life with Sweet Potatoes and Partridges*, c. 1934

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Private collection

20 *Still Life with Fruit*, c. 1934

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Private collection

21 *Still Life with Melon*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Barcelona 1935"

Private collection

22 *The Stable (El Masnou)*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"M. Villà / 1936"

MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona

23 *Cow and Bull*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"M. Villà / Pobla de Segur 1934"

Private collection

24 *Two Cows*, c. 1932-1936

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Private collection

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLOUR

25 *Profile of Girl*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Barcelona 1946"

Private collection

28 *Maella*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Maella 1942"

Private collection

26 *The Kitchen*, c. 1939

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Private collection

29 *The Town. Eivissa*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"M Villà / Ibiza 1970"

Berenguer Collection

27 *The Kitchen*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / 1949/65"

Private collection

30 *Houses in Eivissa*

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

«In the face of nature, I try to organise that chaos and reduce it to basic shapes and colours.»

31 Eivissa

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Ibiza 1948"

Private collection

32 The Saint Michel Bridge

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"M Villà / Pont St. Michel / París 1951"

Private collection

«Painting is a work involving time; it is done slowly, and the spirit of the viewer is also slow in reaching it.»

33 Altea

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Altea 1980"

Private collection

34 Altea

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Altea 1976"

Private collection

35 Bridge

Oil on fine cardboard. Monotype
Signed and dated:
"Miquel Villà / Altea 1984"
(bottom right-hand corner)

Private collection

36 La Pobla de Segur

Oil on fine cardboard. Monotype
Signed and dated:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur / 1986"
(bottom right-hand corner)

Private collection

37 Altea

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Altea 1982"

Private collection

38 Eivissa

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Ibiza 1948"

Rosa Benet Collection

EL MASNOU AND LA POBLA DE SEGUR, IN THE MIDST OF ARCADIA

39 *El Masnou Landscape*, c. 1932

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de
Catalunya, Barcelona

40 *El Masnou Square*, 1926

Oil on cardboard
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1926"

Museu de Montserrat. Abadia de
Montserrat

41 *Ocata Square in Wintern*, c. 1931

Oil on canvas
Signed on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou"

Private collection

42 *Ocata Square in Summer*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1931"

Private collection

«The best thing to do is to stay
in a single place, with the same
themes. The relationship of two or
three shapes, the harmony of two
or three colours is sufficient to look
in depth at our studies of nature
throughout life.»

43 *El Masnou Landscape*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou / 1940-52"

Private collection

44 *La Pobla de Segur*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur 1978"

Private collection

45 *La Pobla de Segur*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur / 1963-65-67"

Private collection

46 *La Pobla de Segur*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur 1967-69"

Private collection

47 *Landscape*, 1964

Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated

Private collection

48 *La Pobla de Segur*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur 1975"

Private collection

«If I paint a mountain that I'm not familiar with, I see a shadow and I'm not sure whether it is a hole or a projection, and I get anxious. [...] I always think about nature, not about my painting. Sometimes, I become so enthusiastic about what I am painting, that I get up at night to stroll through the place and touch the trees.»

49 *The Way to Town*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Pobla de Segur 1985"

Private collection

50 *El Masnou*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1933"

Private collection

51 *El Masnou*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1951-61"

Private collection

52 *The Street*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1954-61"

Private collection

53 *El Masnou*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Masnou 1969"

Museu Deu, el Vendrell. Tarragona

54 *Collegats*

Oil on canvas
Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / La Pobla de Segur 1978"

Private collection

SHAPE AND MATTER

55 *Female Nude*

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated on the back:
"Miquel Villà / Ibiza 1966"

Private Collection

«For my own taste, I would not have painted more than one single painting. Day and night, the landscape of the tropics [...], winter and summer, autumn and spring would all be synthesised in it. A complete, unique landscape that would include and define the whole of life, the entire world, in itself.»

56 *Savanna Landscape, 1917-1986*

Oil on canvas

Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

«I have started a painting on the façade of the Church. It is a motive that I have already done several times, but up until now I needed other colours, the door, the window, the stairs. Now I'm trying to seek simplification itself. Now I'm trying to paint the Church without the need to go into details. My hope is that, on observing the painting, the viewer's eye becomes filled with yellow and that this yellow is sufficient and is Everything.

How to achieve it? *Hella.la!* I still don't know. This is my current search and my new idea. Will I have time to develop it?»

(Fragment of a conversation between the painter and Dr. Jordi Mitjà in the summer of 1988, a few days before his death)

57 *Yellow Wall, 1988*

Oil on panel

Neither signed nor dated

Private collection