

ENGLISH

Museu de Maricel
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Miquel Villà

Painting without chance

May 21th – September 26th, 2021



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

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.

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



The Kitchen, c. 1939
Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
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.»



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



El Masnou
Oil on canvas
Signed and date on the back: "Miquel Villà / Masnou 1951-61"
Private collection



The Stable (El Masnou)
Oil on canvas
Signed and date on the back: "M. Villà / 1936"
MNAC-Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona

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



Ocata Square in Winter, c. 1931
Oil on canvas
Signed on the back: "Miquel Villà / Masnou"
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.»



Houses in Eivissa
Oil on canvas
Neither signed nor dated
Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza 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.»



Yellow Wall, 1988
Oil on panel
Neither signed nor dated
Private 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)