

Antoni Clavé
A dialogue between figure and colour

Throughout his career, Antoni Clavé (Barcelona 1913 – Saint Tropez 2005) has always based his work on the experimentation of various materials, techniques and topics. Showing paintings from which his willingly experimental method emerges properly, the exhibition organized by Galleria d'Arte Maggiore g.a.m. aims to emphasize Clavé's eclectic personality and executive skills. The Spanish artist doesn't just paint, but combines the results of cuttings, tears, assemblages, collages of many different materials into the same artwork, all wisely put in dialogue with each other. Inside the canvases, noble figures of kings and warriors give way to abstract figurations focused on colour.

Antoni Clavé has always been particularly attracted by the practical and manual aspect of creating an artwork. Born a few years later the main exponents of the Nouveau Réalisme, he shared with them the reuse of objects and materials within his artistic production.

Since he was young, he has combined an interest in traditional painting with technical and stylistic research, combining the classical use of a brush with practices such as lettering, assemblage and collage. His curiosity led him to concentrate on different forms of the artistic field: as well as being by definition an artist, he also dealt with engraving, sculpture, illustration, and even the production of stage costumes and theatrical settings in the 50's. Nevertheless, he abandoned the theatre interlude to dedicate himself entirely to pictorial research, even if some trace of this experience can still be found in the later use of materials such as fabric and tapestry elements.

Success came during the 80's when, while his works started to be displayed on influential and international exhibitions, Clavé was invited to take part to the Venice Biennale in 1984 as the main exponent of the Spanish Pavilion.

The exhibition organized within the rooms of Galleria d'Arte Maggiore g.a.m. covers some periods of the artist's research, with particular attention to the canvases. Clavé doesn't express his versatility only in the practical execution, but also through the choice of the subjects to be represented. Indeed, the show moves from the figurative field, based on the representation of subjects that refer to the noble descendants of XVII Spanish lineages, to the purely abstract realm, in which the artist's ability to combine materials emerges through the addition of cut-outs and unexpected aluminium foils. The series of kings, queens and warriors has an ancient, mythological, but sometimes also ironic flavour, as for some nearly caricatural figurations. On the contrary, non-figurative paintings are immersed in a more meditative and personal atmosphere. Even the chromatic choices are interesting and range from warmer, earthy, almost melancholic tones, to vibrant shades, such as the intense blue that characterizes some works or flashes of bright red. In these canvases, colour becomes the undisputed protagonist, with its application sometimes extremely material, sometimes stained or even crossed by deep furrows.