



Press Release

**Manuel H. Mompó**

***Pinturas. 1955-1980***

Manuel H. Mompó (Valencia, 1927-Madrid, 1992) is a post-war artist who, like others of the 1950s generation, was captivated by the spirit of freedom and creativity emanating from the historical avant-garde of the first half of the 20th century, especially those that led to the formation of abstract art. Like other artists born around the same time as Mompó; Millares and Saura, members of the El Paso group, in 1926 and 1930 respectively; the constructivist Andreu Alfaro, in 1929; Ángel Duarte, member of the geometric Equipo 57, in 1930; it is through the different possibilities offered by abstraction, whether lyrical or analytical, that these artists enter fully into modernity and leave behind an art at the service of the authorities and power of the time.

But it is the personality and character of an artist that shape the language of his work, and in these aspects Manuel H. Mompó always made freedom and independence fundamental traits of his persona and his work. Placing himself on the margins of groups of artists and dogmas in favour of collective work, so present in Spain in the 50s and 60s, Mompó delineates his identity by highlighting what the rest concealed: the autonomy of painting, its connection and closeness to people and simple things, the liberation of colour and form as a means of taking the pulse of what surrounded him and the incorporation of signs and letters that added a narrative and symbolic component to his work, in the tradition of artists such as Klee or Miró. These unusual traits gave Mompó recognition from the society of the time, receiving in 1968 the UNESCO Prize at the XXXIV Venice Biennale and being commissioned for the poster marking Spain's accession to Europe in 1985.

The exhibition of Mompó's work, which opens on 13 September as part of APERTURA 2018, brings together a selection of paintings and works on paper that covers, from 1955 to 1980, the artist's entire trajectory, from his first works linked to post-cubist figuration to the free and radical abstraction of his late period. Among the selected paintings will be major works such as *Clown Sleeping Near the Sea*, exhibited in the Sala Clan in Madrid in 1957; *Three musicians*, exhibited in Paris, Galerie Synthèse, in 1961; *Another That Rises*, exhibited in 1968 in the Spanish Pavilion at the XXXIV Venice Biennale. Most of the works belong to the artist's estate, and comprise historic and unpublished works of great significance.

To accompany the exhibition, the Fernández-Braso Gallery has published a catalogue with an introductory and analytical text by Juan Manuel Bonet and a reprint of an interview by Miguel Fernández-Braso conducted with the artist in 1980 in Alaró, Palma de Mallorca.

Mompó exhibited his paintings in the most important Spanish galleries of the time: Biosca, Juana Mordó, Juana de Aizpuru, Theo, and some of the most important in Europe: Galerie Synthèse, Paris; Mortimer Brandt Gallery, New York; Mc Roberts & Tunnard Gallery, London; Claude Bernard, Paris; Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf; Ruth S. Schaffner Gallery, Los Angeles; Il Collezionista Gallery, Rome; Kaj Forsblom Gallery, Helsinki. His work is present in major museums and collections in Spain, including the Museo Reina Sofía, IVAM, Fundación Juan March, Macba. In 2005 the Museo Reina Sofía and Fundación Telefónica published the catalogue raisonné of his work.

Manuel H. Mompó's relationship with the Fernández-Braso Gallery dates back to the seventies, including many articles in the art magazine *Guadalimar*, founded by Miguel Fernández-Braso in 1975. In 1980 he featured in the book of collected interviews *En el taller*. He exhibited for the first time in our gallery in 1981 and again in 1992, 2004 and 2018.