



Exhibition: **EDUARDO ARROYO**

IVAM - Institut Valencià d'Art Modern
5 febrero - 13 abril 2008

Curated by: Marcos-Ricardo Barnatán

Organised by: IVAM - Institut Valencià d'Art
Modern

The retrospective exhibition dedicated to Eduardo Arroyo comprises the work he has produced in the last ten years. In thirty-one paintings and twenty-two sculptures we can see the evolution of this artist, one of the most representative exponents of contemporary Spanish art, in a period of intensive creativity and enormous international success. The importance of sculpture in this exhibition is especially significant. In these last years, Arroyo has developed a sculptural universe with simple references and totemic and mythical echoes: heads of goats, oxen or cows fashioned out of blocks of stone from the parish of Laciana (León), where the sculptor has his studio. The catalogue published on the occasion of the exhibition is illustrated with reproductions of the works displayed and includes texts by the director of the museum, Consuelo Císcar, and Marcos-Ricardo Barnatán, writer and art critic, and curator of this retrospective.

The oeuvre of Eduardo Arroyo (Madrid, 1937) has been created in a current of critical and literary figuration of enormous originality. After an initial vocation in literature, which he did not renounce with the passage of time but went on to study journalism, he moved to Paris in search of a climate of freedom that was not to be found in Spain. In 1963 he exhibited at the III Biennale de Paris as part of the group L'Abbattoir. Initially characterised by a matteric use of colour, his work evolved towards a technique that was identified with Pop art: bright colours, a flatter application of paint and a rich iconographic vocabulary that permitted him to satirise and criticise the culture, politics and society of his time. His opposition to the dictatorship led to his exile from Spain in 1974, and he did not recover his passport until the advent of democracy in 1976. In 1982 he was

granted the National Plastic Arts Award, and that same year a retrospective of his work was held at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

The exhibition now presented at the IVAM begins chronologically in 1998 –the year the Museo Nacional Centro Reina Sofía dedicated an important retrospective to Arroyo– and covers the last ten years of his production, placing special emphasis on the large-format paintings and sculptures of this period, mostly displayed here for the first time.

The remarkable importance of sculpture is one of the most outstanding features of this exhibition. Eduardo Arroyo's sculpture, like his painting, is literary, and his interest in the content results in an oeuvre loaded with meanings. The artist appropriates tradition, myths and emblems to tell his own story directly or ambiguously related with the present, using complex visual metaphors in constant evolution. His most recent work narrates mainly European stories, from fairy tales to patristics, from mysticism to mass icons, with very specific leitmotifs. These images are recurrent preoccupations of his, linked to the metaphorical nucleus of his earlier work. The new series *Fantômas* is an example of appropriation of a theme and earlier supports –paintings on paintings– often confronting each other in the painter's most recognisable manner.

The IVAM has organised an educational workshop addressing the multidisciplinary creative process developed in Eduardo Arroyo's oeuvre.