

Exhibition: Ignacio Pinazo en Italia

IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

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Organised by: Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

Curated by: Francisco Javier Pérez Rojas

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The exhibition *Ignacio Pinazo en Italia* (Ignacio Pinazo in Italy) continues the series of shows dedicated by the IVAM to promote and study the Valencian painter's abundant work. This new edition focuses on the period between 1870 and 1880, which coincides with the two periods of time Ignacio Pinazo spent in Italy to complete his artistic education. It is a crucial decade in the painter's life and oeuvre, as it is full of discoveries and projects that led to the creation of several of his masterpieces. The exhibition, curated by the Professor of Art History at Valencia University Javier Pérez Rojas, comprises a total of 255 pieces between oil paintings and drawings, most of which are displayed here for the first time.

The works in the exhibition are from Pinazo's House Museum, Valencia Fine Arts Museum, Asturias Fine Arts Museum, Valencia Provincial Council, the González Martí National Ceramics Museum and the Prado Museum, apart from the collection of the IVAM.

In 1872 Pinazo applied to Valencia Provincial Council for a scholarship in Rome, which did not prevent him from making a trip there of his own accord, which was completed by a second official scholarship between 1876 and 1880. Ignacio Pinazo's first trip to Italy without any official commitments was very important in his evolution, and yielded immediate results. In Italy he saw the works of the great masters of the Renaissance and discovered the artistic atmosphere to be found in that country. Although Paris had outstripped Rome

as a place of attraction and a laboratory for modern painting, the latter was still an international meeting place favoured by the presence of the different international academies located there. On his first trip, Pinazo came into contact with Fortuny's circle in Rome, and met Fortuna himself shortly before his death. Pinazo was a great admirer of Fortuny and Rosales, who were authentic paragons and models for him at that time.

In his 1873-1874 stay, Pinazo did not produce any great compositions, but sketches and small-format pieces inspired on what he observed around him. The landscape and outdoor paintings took on great force from this time onwards, for until then he had been more inclined to make portraits and scenes of everyday life. His view of the landscape is very different from that of others who cultivated this genre. Valencian landscape painters still chose to follow criteria of excellence and singularity (scenes of high mountains portrayed from a realistic point of view, broad vistas, paintings of monuments...) and, although the most immediate and ordinary geographical reality was starting to be discovered and appreciated, no one addressed it with such a clear sense of contemporaneity as Pinazo. Thus a new perception of nature appeared in him and he soon outdistanced his Valencian predecessors, and this had a great deal to do with the renovation embarked upon by Fortuny and Rosales.

The series of vistas and perspectives of the cloister of San Giovanni in Laterano that he made, which can now be seen in sequence, are the most outstanding items from this period. His portrait of a *Ciocciara* dates from 1874; it is an example of his interest in reflecting the most genuine Italian archetypes. Pinazo developed a broad gallery of Italian types during his two trips to Italy, but it was the landscape that he seemed to discover and develop with the greatest pleasure. Pinazo is a pure, curious and analytical landscape painter; he is an attentive observer of his surroundings, with extraordinary sensibility towards the beauties and manifestations of nature.

When he returned to Valencia in 1874, the painter's horizon was a good deal richer and he was better prepared to compete for the 1876 scholarship of the Provincial Council, which he won with a canvas on a historic theme, *Desembarco de Francisco I en Valencia* (The Landing of Francisco I in Valencia). After marrying Teresa Martínez he went to Rome. The work he produced in that four year was extraordinary and few of the artists of his time can match it. Pinazo not only complied strictly with his commitments to the Council, but had time to make hundreds of sketches and studies in oil taken from life, which, together with the enormous amount of drawings that he made, constitute one of the most vivid chronicles of Italian life, which is a token of the universality of his oeuvre. Pinazo then paved the way for the so often mentioned Valencian luminosity, of which he is an undeniable creator. The beach themes, the urban scenes, the popular individuals and even historic subjects were addressed from an extremely modern perspective.

The works he made for the scholarship in these years alone would be enough to situate Pinazo at the forefront of European painting at the time. Paintings like *El guardavías* (The Signalman), *Juegos ícaros* (Icarus' Games), *Baco niño* (Bacchus as a Child) or *Las hijas del Cid* (Daughters of El Cid) are some of the

works he sent back to Valencia Provincial Council. Nude studies are one of the most particular of his lines of work in Italy, which can now be seen together so as to appreciate his creative phases and process.

In Italy, Pinazo's Impressionism was also reinforced in his studies and sketches taken from life. A series of pieces of undeniable historical value dealing with the funeral of King Vittorio Emmanuele and Pope Pius IX have now been identified and documented.

The trip to Venice is also reflected in his fascinating series of views of the city. The greatest achievement of his time in Italy is the painting *Don Jaime I en el momento de entregar la espada al infante Don Pedro* (King Jaime I el Conquistador Handing his Sword to Prince Pedro). The complexity and painstaking effort Pinazo took with his painting is evident from the numerous sketches he made for this canvas, all of which are now displayed at the IVAM to celebrate the eighth centenary of Jaime I. These studies and sketches are magnificent portraits in their own right.

The exhibition shows Pinazo's extraordinary fertility at that time. As a complement to the investigation carried out by the curator and the team of researchers, a voluminous catalogue containing over three hundred illustrations that documents and structures the production of these years has been brought out. It is a crucial reference book for the study of Pinazo's work and Valencian painting in general and to examine the many paths trodden by Pinazo in his plastic adventure. The catalogue includes texts by Francisco Javier Pérez Rojas, Carlos González, Aida Pons, Andrés Jiménez, Flavia Matitti, Mateo Sagradora, Franco Tirletti and Vicente García Edo.