



## **Miquel Vila**

Barcelona 1901 - El Masnou 1988

### *El Masnou*

1932

Oil on canvas

95 x 185 cm

### **Awards**

1951 First Biennale Hispanoamericana Madrid

1955 Third Biennale Barcelona

Creu de sant Jordi

## Collections (selection)

Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid  
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona (Spain).  
Museu del Cau Ferrat, Sitges (Spain).  
BBVA Collection (Spain).  
Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid  
MOMA, New York

Miquel Villà was a Catalan painter and engraver, one of the main representatives of Spanish Fauvism. At the age of 13 his father took him to Bogotá (Colombia). There he attended the School of Fine Arts until 1918.

In 1920 he discovered Paris, where he lived until 1930. In Paris he attended the Académie Colarossi. He befriended Jean Fautrier, Marcel Duchamp, Josep de Togores, Pancho Cossío and the sculptor Pablo Gargallo who greatly influenced his artistic career. In 1927 he exhibited at the Galerías Dalmau, in Barcelona, encouraged by its director, who also promoted exhibitions of Miró, Dalí, and García Lorca. From 1930 he lived mostly in Catalonia (Barcelona, Masnou, La Pobla de Segur), alongside seasons spent in Ibiza. Villà's greatest influences were: Cézanne, for his constructive technique; Gauguin, Van Gogh and Vlaminck, for their use of colour, and especially Rembrandt in his last stage, when he moved from chiaroscuro to colour. For him, painting was a discipline, a reason for being and way of responding to nature. Villà worked both in painting and engraving. He has had both solo and group exhibitions in Spain, the United States, Switzerland, Italy and Mexico, among other countries.

This landscape of El Masnou belongs to an essential moment in Miquel Villà's pictorial career. After his stay in Bogotá between 1914 and 1922 and in Paris from 1922 to 1930, the artist settled in Spain, making El Masnou, along with La Pobla de Segur and Ibiza, his favourite spot as subjects for his works. The painting presented here shows Villà's expressive capacity through the landscape posed in an emotional way and which serves to develop his pictorial personality, based on spontaneous and agile brush strokes, which are the result of a quick action. The thicknesses and the use of the pictorial paste make the work adopt a relief that highlights in expressiveness. Villà follows his main artistic references: Cézanne in the structure of the landscape; Rembrandt in the use of thick paint; and Maurice de Vlaminck in the expression and deformation based on the

synthesis of the elements. In this view of the coast of El Masnou, the painter builds the composition from three colour accents: deep blue and almost metallic tones for the sea, dark green with light-free brushstrokes for the wild vegetation that gives way to the town, and the reddish brown of almost arid spaces. Undoubtedly, it is a good example of what Gaya Nuño defined as "decidedly Mediterranean painting" of the work of Villà, one of the most important colourists of the 20th century in Spain.



Miquel Villà, *L'estable (El Masnou)*. Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona.



Miquel Villà i Bassols, *Pobla de Segur*, 1934. Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid.

# COLNAGHI

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