

# off the wall gallery

paintings • sculpture • original prints



## RAMON VILANOVA

*"I am inspired by a vital need to express my feelings through painting.*

*Spread out on the palette; the colors prepare themselves to give birth to the white canvas's emotions. The word is silent, passionately contemplating the landscape. A throbbing that comes from nothing, enmeshed with yesterday, today, and tomorrow. That way, it keeps on growing, like a blessing, a pentagram of colors, full of emotions while the heart's journeys take place. Life, heartbeats, of vision, a language expressed in pleasures without time to contain them."*

- Ramon Vilanova

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## RAMON VILANOVA - ARTIST VITAE

Art World News, August 2000

*Plein Air Painter of Catalonia by Sylvia Tiersten*

Ramon Vilanova dreamed of becoming a painter. . . literally. When his parents discouraged him from studying fine arts, he reluctantly agreed. But that night, the young man had a powerful and life-defining vision. "In my dream," he recalls, there was a levitating table and a voice that sang these words to me over and over: 'You must be a painter.'"

The unearthly voice, Vilanova, and the art world won. After squeezing fine arts painting into his life's interstices as a technical illustrator, 12 years ago, he became a full-time painter. "Learning how to paint meant learning how to see—and carrying on a constant dialogue with nature," says Vilanova. As Vilanova strives to capture the air or space between objects, the conversation continues, rather than the objects themselves.

In his evolution as a painter, he has moved away from the drawing and figurative elements that dominated his early work, toward a freer, more expressionistic style. Despite, or perhaps because of his years as a technical illustrator, color is now more important to him than drawing.

He uses the dripping and splattering oil impasto techniques to create his intensely colored, densely textured work. Using a spatula, Vilanova stains the canvas with oil underpainting. With deft brush strokes, he models forms and spaces.

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Catalonia, Vilanova's physical and spiritual home, is the wealthiest province in Northeast Spain with its language (Catalan), a semi-autonomous government, and strong cultural ties to Southern France. Barcelona is Catalonia's capital city, which numbers Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, and Joan Miró among its native artistic sons.

Catalonia also has a landscape painting tradition, as exemplified in the work of Anglada Camarasa and Joaquim Mir. The latter two, like Vilanova, were landscape artists who gradually moved from realism to a more abstract style influenced by Impressionist and Post Impressionist French art.

Catalonia has a cornucopia of views to delight the painter's eye: snow-covered mountains, even in the summer months; miles of wild coastline where the sea lashes the ancient cliffs; arid, sunbaked vistas; forgotten houses on uninhabited lands; farmhouses ringed by lush fields of poppies, sunflowers, wheat, and deep green grasses. Vilanova paints in rural Catalonia and the Balearic Islands of Majorca and Minorca.

Vilanova paints what he sees, and his integrity is inviolable on this point. When asked if he would create a painting with a field of sunflowers as its subject, he replied: "But the sunflower season is over."

Pressed further on the subject, he obliged by painting the field—but the stems were shriveled, and all the sunflowers were dead. It's what he saw.

The orderliness and balance of a French garden is not the stuff of a Vilanova painting. He prefers a natural environment that surprises and is constantly in flux—"the continuous heartbeat of life," in the words of art critic Josep Cadena. For instance, in "Arboles," weeds and emerging young grasses vie for existence in a barren, windswept landscape.

Vilanova was born in 1947 in Caldes de Montbui, a small Barcelona town.

His father was a poultry farmer, and his mother worked in a textile factory. A precocious draftsman, even in grade school, Vilanova anxiously awaited the classroom drawing periods, "which barely lasted as long as breath lasts," he recalls. As a self-taught painter, he began his "lessons" at age 16, when his aunt gave him a box of paints and an instruction book.

To his working-class parents, a fine-arts career was an unattainable luxury. They proposed career in architecture or civil engineering, but the motivation wasn't there, and Vilanova didn't even come close to completing the courses. Fast-forward, Vilanova is an accomplished artist with works in various Collections and Museums.

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Several European museums have exhibited works by Vilanova, including the Musée de Lyon, Musée de Grenoble, Musée de Antibes and Musée de Chartres in France; the Taunestain Museum in Germany, and the Collectiva Museo de Historia-Gerona, Museu Deu-Vendrell, Museo de Vilafranca, Casa Museo Prat de la Riba-Castelltercol, and Collectiva Palacio Meca-Barcelona in Spain.

A generous contributor to charitable causes, Vilanova frequently donates his paintings to the Red Cross in South America, Spain, and Africa.

Success has not spoiled this Catalan artist except for one concession to comfort. He is building a new studio space with an interior courtyard. The courtyard will have trees, plants, and brush that he can view from his warm, dry studio when the rains and snows come, and he won't have to venture outdoors to paint—unless he feels like it.

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### EXHIBITIONS AND AWARDS

#### MUSEUMS

Museo Thermalia / Manolo Hugué, caldes de Montbui  
Palau Meca, Barcelona  
Museu de Historia, Girona  
Casa Museu Prat de la Riba, Castell Terçol  
Museum of Chartres, France  
Fundació Gali, Palamós  
Museu de Vilafraca Museu de Fraga, Osca  
Museum of Taunusstein, Germany  
Museum Antibes, France  
Fundado Sant Miquel de Cuixart, France  
Museu de Tossa de Mar  
Botanic Museum, Chicago, USA  
Museu de Granollers

#### EXHIBITIONS IN SPAIN & WORLDWIDE

Alcoy	Pineda	London, United Kingdom
Amer	Reus	Naples, FL
Arenys de Mar	Sabadell	New York, NY
Barcelona	San Feliu de Guixols	Park City, UT
Blanes	Sant Cugat del Vallès	Washington D.C.
Castellar del Vallès	Sitges	La Jolla, CA
Castellón	Terrassa	Andorra.
Castelltercol	Valladolid	St. Augustine, FL
Cerdanyola	Appia, France	New Jersey, NY
Caldes de Montbui	Birmingham, United Kingdom	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Elche	Bolonia, Italy	Hinsdale, IL
Girona	Chicago, IL.	Austin, TX
Granollers	Gent, Belgium	San Francisco, CA
l'ametlla del Vallès	Göteborg, Sweden	
Madrid	Grenoble, France	
Olot	Laguna Beach, CA	

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## RAMON VILANOVA

### PRIZES & AWARDS 1980-1989

1982

1st prize Cardedeu

1983

1st prize Vilassa de Dalt

1st prize Sant Quirze de Safaja

1st prize Valldoreix

1st prize Ripollet

1984

1st prize XXII Saló d'art Ajuntament de Martorell

1985

1st prize Roda de Ter

1st prize XIII Ajuntament de Centelles

1st Grand prize Ciutat Montornès

1st prize Vilafranca del Penedes

1st award «Manolo Hugué», Caldes de Montbui

1st prize Parets del Vallès

1986

1st Prize Ciutat de Badalona

1st prize Argentona

1st prize Sta. Perpetua de la Mogoda

1st prize Tiana

Award «Manolo Hugué», Caldes de Montbui

Award in honor of the painter Lamolla, Lerida

1st prize 1st Bienal de Malgrat de Mar

1st prize Baix Llobregat

1st prize Ciudad de Fraga

1st prize Calella

1987

1st prize Ciutat de Badalona

1st prize Montcada i Reixac

1st prize Oremià de Mar

1st prize Argentona

1st prize Hostalets de Balanyà

1st prize XXIX Concurso Mercat del Ram, Vic

1st prize Matadepera, Sala Aida

1st prize Generalitat de Catalunya Dept. de Cultura, Cassà de la Selva

Award «Nit de l'art», Sala Blau de Mar, Arenys de Mar

1st prize Ripollet Award Feria de la Fruta, Barcelona

1988

1st prize la Celler de Ter

1st prize XVI Concurs de Centelles

1989

Award Concurso Nacional de la Rosa, Sant Feliu de Llobregat

1st prize Beget

1st prize Hostalets de Balanyà

1st prize Calella

XXXIII International award of Tossa de Mar

Special award of Conselleria de Cultura de la Generalitat

Award «Maria Trias Joan in Memoriam»

XIX Concurso de Arte de Palamós

### PRIZES & AWARDS 1990-2000

1990

Award Àngel Marsà, XX Concurso de Arte de Palamós

1st prize Manlleu

1991

Award Aguilar Canosa, XXI Concurso de Arte de Palamós

1992

Award Gómez de Segura Herrero,

XXII Concurso de Arte de Palamós

Europe Award, XXV Salón de Castelnaudary, France

1993

1st prize, Gold Medal, XXIII Concurso de Arte de Palamós