

## Forum Gallery announces representation of the Estate of Claudio Bravo



Claudio Bravo, Marjana Amarillo / Yellow Marjana, 2008, oil on canvas, 51 1/8 x 63 3/4 inches.

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NEW YORK, NY.- Forum Gallery announced representation of the work of Chilean born artist Claudio Bravo (1936-2011). Opening in January 2021, the gallery will present an exhibition of paintings, pastels and drawings by Claudio Bravo, including rarely exhibited works completed towards the end of the Artist's life.

In the monograph *Claudio Bravo: Painting & Drawing* (Rizzoli, 2005), Edward J. Sullivan writes, "While it is certainly true that Bravo has very consciously forged his own path and makes his art with particular attention to the traditions of classicism and academic convention, I always argue that he is, at the same time, a modern painter, and even a radical one. Bravo's intense dedication to the figure, to his own peculiar view of observed reality and his steadfast disregard of any of the artistic fashions of his time have defined him as an artistic individualist."

Claudio Bravo's art is best known for hyper-realistic execution, but upon studying his paintings, his gift for economy and nuance reveals a greater interest in evoking an emotional response to his subjects, rather than merely documenting them.

Born in Valparaiso, Chile in 1936, Claudio had prodigious talent in his early years. His only studies were at the studio of Miguel Venegas Cifuentes in Santiago from age 11 to age 20. Anxious to explore the world of art, Bravo booked passage to Europe in 1961, and soon arrived in Madrid, where he immediately became a celebrated society portraitist. Claudio Bravo created his first painting of colored paper packaging in the early 1960's. He was intrigued by the potential of the abstracted forms, varied textures, and blocks of color he observed in this ordinary material. Bravo stated that the initial impetus to paint wrapped packages and other objects draped in fabric came from looking at Mark Rothko's color field paintings and the compositions of Spanish Informalist painter Antoni Tàpies. He had also frequently attended the Museo del Prado in Madrid where he admired the old Spanish and Italian masters, especially the color and light effects of Diego Velázquez, the cloth studies of Francisco de Zurbarán, and the still lifes of Juan Sánchez Cotán. Bravo went on to achieve great success and acclaim with his own still life paintings of cloth and paper, animal skins and bones, and ordinary everyday objects.

Claudio Bravo moved to the United States in 1969, where he settled on the East Side of Manhattan. He received rave reviews for his exhibition at the Staempfli Gallery in New York a year later. After three years of city life, the Artist decided to spend time in Morocco, where the climate and landscape better suited his temperament. He moved to Tangier in 1972, where he settled into a spacious 18th Century home with views of both the Atlantic and Mediterranean. Bravo's work became infused with Moroccan culture and took on the spiritual aspects of the Islamic art and architecture in his surroundings. The influence of Surrealism became more prominent in his subjects, noticeably in his juxtaposition of objects, dreamlike compositions, and ethereal backgrounds. Some view his oeuvre as being a hybrid of multiple religions and styles – traditional techniques with contemporary sensibilities. However, the Artist did not seek to merge his work with any one culture and stayed remarkably true to his own particular style of painting. Claudio Bravo remained in Morocco for the remainder of his life, where he passed away at his home in Taroudant, at the age of 74.

During his lifetime, Claudio Bravo was recognized with fourteen solo museum exhibitions in the United States, Chile, Mexico and France. His works are found in many prominent public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago; the Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany; and the Museum Boijmans Van Beunigen, Rotterdam, Netherlands. In 2007, Bravo represented Chile in the Venice Biennale at the Museo Diocesano.

Of his practice, Bravo said, "The objects I paint transcend and magnify reality. I use light somewhat in the way Francisco de Zurbarán did. He was one of the few painters that gave true transcendent meanings to objects. This treatment of light makes them appear more as they are. Their essence is greater."