

Joel Shapiro



Joel Shapiro, Untitled (JS 2657). Madera y caseína, 215,9 x 195,58 x 58,42 cm.
Cortesía de Joel Shapiro Studio.

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Opening
Friday, 10th June 2022

1st July – 27th August 2022

Sant Roc 24, Mahón - Menorca

Cayón Menorca is pleased to present an exhibition by Joel Shapiro (New York, 1941), the artist's first show at the gallery and in Spain since his solo show at the IVAM in Valencia more than 30 years ago (1990-1). The exhibition will present some of his most recent sculptures, pastels on paper and an installation that will occupy the vast main hall of the old theater that now hosts Cayón's exhibitions in Mahón, Menorca.

Since the seventies, Shapiro's sculptural work uses and takes to the extreme some of the basic principles of sculpture such as scale, forcing the spectators' vision and abstracting their position to examine the smallest or medium-sized works to becoming participants in the artist's most monumental installations, including the one that will be presented in Cayón, Menorca. Composed by a series of geometric elements in basic colors (yellow, orange, red and blue), these imposing works reaching up to three meters will hang at different heights across the 12-meter-tall room.

In addition to the installation, the exhibition will present various of Shapiro's sculptures in wood and bronze characterized by the assembly of different bodies, normally of enormous formal simplicity, that have allowed those who know Shapiro's work to relate him to the avant-garde of the early years of the last century; from Tatlin to Picasso, passing through Julio González (Barcelona, 1876-Arcueil, 1942).

Precisely because of this relationship with the Catalan sculptor, and for the first time, an encounter between González and Shapiro will be proposed in one of the gallery spaces. Thus, some sculptures by the New Yorker will coexist with major works by Julio González (such as "Les Amoureux I", 1932-3 or "Tête Aigüe/Masque Aigu", 1930) owned by the Julio González Administration, with whose collaboration this project is being carried out.

ABOUT JOEL SHAPIRO

Joel Shapiro is an American artist renowned for having developed, since the 1970s, a body of sculpture distinguished by its dynamism and formal elegance. Employing a vocabulary of often geometric elements, his work, which frequently blurs the line between figuration and abstraction, explores the possibilities of sculptural form and attempts to challenge one's sense of scale and invigorate one's sense space.

A resident of New York, Shapiro has been the subject of numerous solo and retrospective exhibitions at institutions including the Whitechapel Gallery in London (1980), the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York (1982); the Metropolitan Museum Rooftop, New York (2001); the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1985); the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1995-1996); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2011); the Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2016); Kunstmuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2017); and the Yale University Art Gallery (2018).

Shapiro's work is installed in public settings across Europe, Asia, and North America and is held in international collections including New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Whitney Museum of American Art, and Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Tate Gallery, London; and the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

In Spain, his work can be found in such public collections as the IVAM, Valencia, and the Helga de Alvear Collection, Cáceres.

JULIO GONZÁLEZ (Barcelona, 1876-Arcueil, 1942)

Julio González is one of the most important and influential artists of the first half of the 20th century. He was the first to use welding to make his works, which meant a radical change in the conception of sculpture that had been held since the time of Greek art. Through the industrial technique of autogenous welding, the elements that make up a sculpture occupy the space, giving it a capital importance because, finally, the sculptor was able to "draw in space" without the limitations that artists had been dragging when using materials such as wood, stone or traditional foundation.

He spent most of his life in Paris, where he came into contact with the artistic avant-garde. It was there that he would begin to move towards an abstract language, giving space and emptiness the main role in his work. From his hand -and from the famous collaboration with Pablo Picasso in 1930- emerged some of the most important works of the last century and of the history of sculpture. Julio Gonzalez is perhaps the most influential European artist in American sculpture; without his presence we cannot understand the work of David Smith, among many others.

This is the first time that a dialogue between Gonzalez and Shapiro has taken place. The works are from the Julio Gonzalez Administration, Paris, with whose essential collaboration this project is made.

SOBRE CAYÓN MENORCA

In July 2018, Cayón inaugurated a new space in Menorca, an exhibition hall located in the building that, years ago, housed the former Victoria Cinemas -in what was formerly in what was the Palacio del Barón de las Arenas- named after Queen Victoria Eugenia de Batenberg, wife of Alfonso XIII, having been built at the beginning of his reign. The cinemas were inaugurated on October 18, 1917, with the screening of "The Legend of Pierrette".

Since 2018, the unique three-story building has housed a 500m², 12-meter-high exhibition hall, which is presented as a single diaphanous exhibition room - the former cinema hall - accessed from the reception area. The inaugural opening in 2018 hosted an exhibition dedicated to the American artist Fred Sandback (Bronxville, NY, 1943-New York, NY, 2003), considered one of the leading exponents of the so-called minimal art.

The second season, 2019, opened with This Array of Colors, an exhibition that established a dialogue around color through the figures of Yves Klein (Nice, 1928 - Paris, 1962) and works by Stanley Whitney (Philadelphia, 1946).

In 2021, Cayón Menorca presented an exhibition by Cruz-Diez (Caracas, 1923-Paris, 2019) in what has been, to date, the largest ever gallery show by the artist.

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