

BONES
1924



BONES

BORIS

**Madrid-París
1898-1972**

**EXHIBITION
20.05.24-09.06.24
MUSEO CASA DE LOS TIROS
DE GRANADA**

**C/ Pavaneras 19 18009 Granada
Tel. 958 037 918**

Opening hours:

**From Tuesday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and
from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Sundays and holidays from
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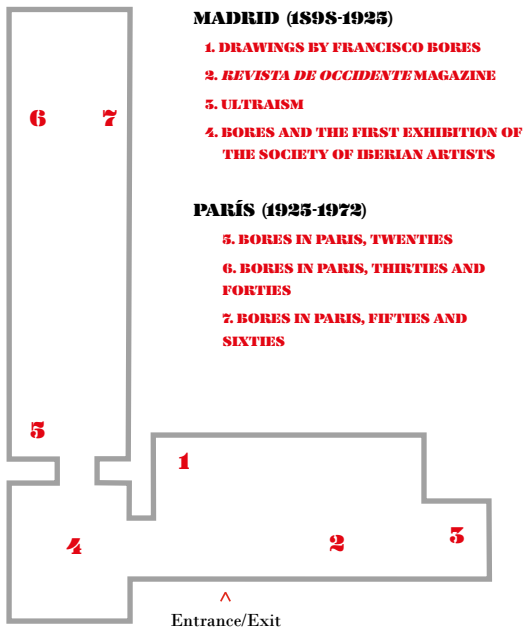
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FRANCISCO BORES (Madrid, 1898 – París, 1972) is one of the most important and unique artists in contemporary Spanish painting. At all times throughout his career as a painter he was in the spotlight, and way ahead of his Spanish and foreign contemporaries. During his youth he found his place in the rich environment of the so-called Edad de Plata, the Silver Age of Spanish Culture. It was extremely connected to the Residencia de Estudiantes, which was the unavoidable meeting point of artists and thinkers. Towards the end of 1925, Bores abandoned Madrid and settled in France, where he lived for the most part of his life and became one of the main figures of the so-called School of Paris. It has been often noted that Francisco Bores cannot be associated with any movement. The alignment with Impressionism, Cubism or Fauvism could serve as a starting point for the critical explanation of his work, but it would always be insufficient and incomplete. Bores' sensitive and rigorous art was fuelled by the modern avant-gardes to develop an unmistakable style of its own that stands out for its exquisite treatment of colour, for the reflection of an apparently simple intimacy and for a powerful evocative ability. Bores was a painter of a specific time who built a very personal world with the plastic instruments of his historical moment. With the passing of time he gained excellence until he became, as Juan Ramón Jiménez had stated in 1931, a classic of contemporary art.



Untitled [Self-portrait with pipe and raincoat], c. 1925.
Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.

MADRID

(1898-1925)

DRAWINGS

Nudes

The peaceful interiors that Bores offers in his still lifes have a continuation in the series of nude drawings that stand out for their intimist nature. The very faint lines disappear in the white paper. In this nude series Bores uses varied techniques, from India ink to pencil, without forgetting about the subtle hints of watercolour or charcoal, with which he highlights the volumes of the figure. In some of his nudes it is possible to see the influence of cubism when dividing the figure in multiple views that finally blend in with the different elements present in the room.

Still lifes

Bores' still lifes portray his cubist practices, as well as the lessons learnt from Cézanne. In these works, he centres his view on daily motifs that speak of peaceful interiors, of an orderly life and a meditative painting. The shapes are in line with a renovated classicism, the objects have weight and volume, and colour and drawing are always present. Bores gives weight, measurement and volume to each element of the composition. In some occasions he seems to approach Giorgio Morandi, and in others, André Derain or Paul Cézanne.



Still life, 1923. Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.

Views and scenes of Madrid

Boscs paints unequivocally urban scenes, breaking with the rural landscape painting that had predominated in the previous regenerationist movement. These are post-cubist scenes and have a great influence from Cézanne, which is particularly notable in the trees. As a regular participant in the literary circles and social gatherings of Madrid, Boscs recreates scenes at cafés dominated by tranquillity. These portray anonymous characters who read but rarely converse because they are alone, often surrounded by a halo of melancholy. The protagonists of his drawings are people sitting at the café, vaguely geometric, smoking a pipe, with a jar of beer or wearing a bowler hat.



Dinner in a cafe, c. 1923. Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.

Portraits

This set of portraits made by Borell shows the rich and varied cast of friends he made during his youth in Madrid. At the academy of Cecilio Pla he shared experiences with Pancho Cossío, Manuel ángeles Ortiz and Joaquín Peinado. Moreover, at the Residencia de Estudiantes, main meeting point of artists, writers and intellectuals linked to the Edad de Plata, Borell established a close relationship with Juan Ramón Jiménez, Salvador Dalí, José Ortega y Gasset, Federico García Lorca and José Bergamín, among others. He also frequented the literary circles and participated in the social gatherings of avant-garde Madrid, represented by Ramón Gómez de la Serna.

REVISTA DE OCCIDENTE

Revista de Occidente is one of the most meaningful and significant of the numerous publications that were edited in Spain within the context of the Edad de Plata. Founded and directed by José Ortega y Gasset in 1923 it was, together with its appended publishing house, the main platform for Spanish modernity. Since its first issue, Bores created numerous cover strips and colophons for the *Revista de Occidente*. The Residencia preserves both the original work and the magazine issue in which the artwork appeared. Bores' collaboration spread to the editorial field as well, since in 1925 he made the cover art for *El decamerón negro* by Leo Frobenius, *Cantos y cuentos del antiguo Egipto* o *El estupendo cornudo*, by Fernando Crommelynck.



Pluvioso and *Ventoso*, original strips for the cover of the *Revista de Occidente*, year III, issues XX and XXI, Madrid, 1925. Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.

ULTRAISM

The ultraist movement was at the beginning limited to poetry and to a lesser degree to prose. However, it quickly spread to other fields such as painting, sculpture and the graphic arts, as is revealed by the works of Rafael Barradas, the Delaunay couple, Norah Borges, Daniel Vázquez Díaz, Salvador Dalí, Alberto Sánchez or Pancho Cossío. Out of the whole ultraist production of Francisco Bores, the most interesting pieces may be the xylographies. Some of them were published in magazines such as *España*, *Tobogán*, *Plural* or *Alfar*, and show a clear connection with German Expressionism. In them, the artist recreates motives of the life in Madrid such as cafés, the barber's shop, the circus, the theatre or football. The presence of Bores in the ultraist orbit was late, since he did not join the public acts of the movement and his engravings did not appear in the main magazines of the group, but his link to Ultraism breathed new life into



Soccer players and *Dancers*, c. 1922. Residencia de Estudiantes, Madrid.

the movement and provided it with a better conclusion. It seems like it was Argentinian Norah Borges who introduced him to the xylographic technique, making her ample collection of publications on German expressionist engravers available for him. Bores practically dedicated the year 1922 and part of 1923 to engraving and his production was much more extensive than what the magazines at the time showed, as is evidenced by the selection of works exhibited here.

BORES AND THE FIRST EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF IBERIAN ARTISTS

Bores' participation in the *First Exhibition of the Society of Iberian Artists*, celebrated in the Exhibition Centre in the Retiro Park of Madrid in May and June of 1925, became a decisive milestone in his career. He participated with sixteen oil paintings and watercolours that belonged to the stage he named 'renewed Classicism'. Among these were the selfportrait and the portrait of Guillermo de Torre —the earliest one, coinciding with his ultraist stage—. He also showed a series of still life paintings and interior scenes populated with objects that had weight and volume, framed within that new Classicism that was demanded by modernity. His contribution was well-received by the press, which introduced him —together with Benjamín Palencia— as one of the most interesting creators at the time, with their eyes set on what would be his future career. Despite the positive reaction of the press, the exhibition gained the unanimous rejection of the public. Many of the exhibited works were too modern for the audience, who was used to seeing what



The pink mannequin, 1925. Museum of Contemporary Art of Madrid.

the manifesto of the Iberian Artists Society would define as ‘official painting’ straight out of the San Fernando Academy. After confirming the Spanish audience’s lack of interest in the new art, represented as well by Salvador Dalí, José Moreno Villa, Benjamín Palencia or Alberto Sánchez, Borek resolved to leave for Paris in the summer of 1925, where he joined his friend Pancho Cossío.

PARÍS (1925-1972)

BORES IN PARÍS, TWENTIES

Towards the end of 1930, Bores discovered the light of Provence thanks to a sojourn in Grasse. “I felt captivated by the light, by the fruit, by the women in that region and I started to paint landscapes and figures again, trying to restore the extraordinary brightness of the world to my paintings. Thus, I recovered the lesson of the impressionists”, wrote the artist about this movement in a stage he referred to as “paint-fruit”. Bores returns to painting landscapes and figures, trying to restore in his works the



Nature morte [Still life], 1926. Private collection

extraordinary brightness of the world. From 1934 he started a long period that lasted for over fifteen years, which meant his return to interior scenes. The Thirties were a moment of diversity and search, but also of discoveries for Boreas, maybe the most heterogeneous time of his career. He turned to a more familiar topic full of calm and balance in which the intimist dimension made him choose an atmosphere of delicate lyricism, without losing sensuality. Never before had his work focused on sceneries of his intimate, familiar and daily life.



Untitled [Card Players], 1928. Private collection

BORES IN PARÍS, THIRTIES AND FORTIES

Towards the end of 1930, Bores discovered the light of Provence thanks to a sojourn in Grasse. “I felt captivated by the light, by the fruit, by the women in that region and I started to paint landscapes and figures again, trying to restore the extraordinary brightness of the world to my



Jeune fille buvant une citronnade
[Girl drinking lemonade], 1934. Private collection

paintings. Thus, I recovered the lesson of the impressionists”, wrote the artist about this movement in a stage he referred to as “paint-fruit”. Bores returns to painting landscapes and figures, trying to restore in his works the extraordinary brightness of the world. From 1934 he started a long period that lasted for over fifteen years, which meant his return to interior scenes. The Thirties were a moment of diversity and search, but also of discoveries for Bores, maybe the most heterogeneous time of his career. He turned to a more familiar topic full of calm and balance in which the intimist dimension made him choose an atmosphere of delicate lyricism, without losing sensuality. Never before had his work focused on sceneries of his intimate, familiar and daily life.

BORES IN PARÍS, FIFTIES AND SIXTIES

At the end of the Forties and the beginning of the Fifties a stylistic change took place, which Bores referred to as “the white manner”. In it light flooded the canvasses in an ocean of clarity, tuning his colour scheme in subtle hints and refining his sense of composition even further. The succulence of the shapes and the joy of colour were the most visible aspects of his work. The higher or lesser grounding in reality had no real importance since the limits of realism and abstraction in Bores were never strict and always personal. It seemed like a way to close the cycle of his career, of resuming problems he had already considered upon his arrival to Paris. The monochromatic variant fluctuates among whites, ochres,

blues and different hues of green. They are still lifes full of puppies, flower vases or fruit bowls with a marked evocative sense. Bores simplifies the expressive resources to an extreme and favours a higher degree of plasticity, whereas the chromatic value contrast is able to create a sense of spatiality.



Les fruits rouges [The red fruits], 1967. Private collection

Portrait of Bores in his studio
on rue Julie, Paris, 1932.
Particular collection

