



Jean Dupas

1882-1964

Harper's Bazaar "The Casual Aristocracy of a Palm Beach Season" Jean Dupas, Dinner Dress, Musician
Drawing and ink on paper signed and dated 1929 lower left

Dimensions : 46 x 41 cm

Dimensions : 18.11 x 16.14 inch



Dimensions with frame : 66,5 x 60,5 cm
Dimensions with frame : 25.98 x 23.62 inch

Advertising project for Saks Fifth Avenue stores, published in Haper's Bazaar magazine in December 1931

Biography

French painter and decorator born in Bordeaux in 1882, Jean Dupas learnt drawing from Paul Quinsac, a painter specialised in allegorical and mythological subjects, portraits and landscapes, and also from Artus and Jean-Gustave Lauriol at the Bordeaux School of Fine Arts. In Paris, he continued his apprenticeship with Gabriel Ferrier at the Académie des Beaux-Arts. Despite his academic training, he already had a very personal and assertive style.

After winning the prize of Rome in 1910 with his work Eros Victory on the God Pan, he joined the Villa Medici. He was successively under the direction of Carolus-Duran, an academic painter who was one of the most appreciated portrait painters of high society during the Third Republic, and Albert Besnard, a French painter, decorator, engraver and renowned portrait painter. The latter encouraged Dupas to assert his style and singularity. Besnard gradually led him towards a more synthetic search for form. In this artistic context, Dupas evolved with his friend, the sculptor Alfred Janniot who was living in Rome too.

But the stay in Rome was interrupted by war and the artist was mobilized in 1914. During this period, Jean Dupas multiplied his studies. Marked by the atrocities of the fighting, he produced a dozen of works, whose sale benefited to the wounded of the Great War.

During the 20's, he participated in many exhibitions where he was supported by critic. He gained the Gold medal during the 1922 Paris' Salon with his painting titled "Pigeons blancs". He also exhibited at the "Exposition des Arts décoratifs" in 1925 and worked with Dunand, Janniot and Bourdelle in the "Hotel du collectionneur", pavilion imagined by Ruhlmann on that occasion. He also frequented Jean Despugols, an American painter of French origin, renowned for his frescoes and monumental size canvases.

To reconcile the classical style and the modern is one of Jean Dupas' ambition in art. Indeed, his interest in cubist style is felt in the anatomical treatment of figures with geometrically inspired volumes. Dupas' treatment of space often creates a surrealist, idealized pastoral landscape as a setting for his figures, gracefully distorted by elegant elongation. Little by little, he became one of the most important "peintre-décorateur" of Art Deco and through his participation in many shipyard he worked in collaboration with Dunand, Subes or Janniot. He is also known for decorating the interiors of the Île-de-France and the Liberté, as well as the Normandie, in 1934, for which he created fabulous verre églomisé panels for the Grand Salon. Portions of this mural are now on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and also at the Forbes Galleries in New York.

The "Dupas look" dominates advertising and commercial art throughout the whole of the Art Moderne period. In fact, Dupas did a great quantity of posters and other advertising work. His work also frequently appeared in fashion magazines such as Vogue and Harper's Bazaar, and he also created a catalogue for the furrier Max, in 1927, which is considered to be a "masterpiece of print advertising." It is easy to recognize a "Dupas woman" - the hair is cropped, her eyes are almond shaped, the mouth is small but full, and her neck is always elongated.

During his career, Jean Dupas honoured numerous public and private commissions, among which the Manufacture nationale de Sèvres who asked him to design the decoration of a spectacular hard-paste porcelain vase. He also collaborated with the Manufacture des Gobelins.

He was appointed curator of the Musée de Marmottan in Paris in 1940, of which he later became director, and became a member of the Académie des beaux-arts in 1941.

Museums

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux

Musée national de la Marine, Paris

Musée d'Aquitaine de Bordeaux

Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris

Musée des Arts décoratifs, Bordeaux

Musée départemental de l'Oise, Beauvais

Musée Antoine Lécuyer, Saint-Quentin

Bibliography

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