



Neanderthalio

Manolo Millares

On display

Title/Description: Neanderthalio

Artist/Maker: Manolo Millares

Born: 1970

Object Type: Painting

Materials: Canvas, Oil paint, Sack cloth

Measurements: Unframed: (h. 1600 x w 1600 x d. 130 mm) Framed: (h. 1650 x 1650 x 130 mm)

Accession Number: 21

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Spain

Credit Line: Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

Born in Las Palmas (Canary Islands) and self-taught as an artist, Millares started his career as a painter of landscapes. Contact with Surrealist ideas led him to experiment with abstraction. By the time he moved to Madrid in 1955 he had established his way of working, preferring heavy textures and stark, contrasting tones and colours - chiefly black, white and red. To Millares, the act of painting was one of discovery, his informal compositions being, as it were, elicited through a dialogue between the artist and his materials. In what has been referred to as a 'magical and autochthonous' process, Millares stained, tore and otherwise manipulated canvas to create images that evoke ravaged landscapes and embattled figures. Often, as in *Neanderthalio*, abstract calligraphy suggests speech or some sort of inscription, turning what was otherwise a purely gestural area into a record of - or monument to - a particular, if unidentifiable, event.

To the artist, these paintings document unspecified episodes in an unending struggle for existence. Millares's use of stark colour contrasts, and of stretched and crumpled canvas, was a direct expression of the ultimate contrast. 'Everything', he is recorded as having said, 'is white and black, like the tension between life and death.' (Franga, 1974: n.p.; see also Franga, 1977, where this work is no. 387).

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

Provenance

Acquired by the Sainsbury Family in 1971. Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.
