

1st MONTIJO INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL – IX Vespeira Award 2008

Vespeira, a brief Biography

Vespeira, Marcelino (Samouco, Alcochete, 9 September 1925 - Lisbon, 22 February 2002)

Marcelino Vespeira is one of the greatest Portuguese contemporary painters, becoming known for his versatility. Vespeira was integrated in the neo-realistic current of the Portuguese Art where he became noticed with his participation in the 1st General Exhibition of Fine Arts of the National Society of Fine Arts (1946). He started to paint in the neo-realist or social realism style, since 1945, but moved to the Surrealist Group, organized in Lisbon, in 1947, where he was one of the leading names. In the surrealist phase he contributed to the execution of '*Cadavre Exquis*' (1948) and participated in the first exhibition of the Surrealist Group of Lisbon (1949). In the decade of the 50's he had a brief passage through geometric abstractionism, having participated in the 1st Hall of Abstract Art. Vespeira would return to his initial surrealist language in the 1970s. His political resistance to the "Estado Novo" regime, as well as the numerous civic activities he became involved in after the 25th of April of 1974, led him to create the symbol MFA. Despite his intense activity as a graphic artist, Vespeira never abandoned painting. A retrospective exhibition organized in 2000 by the MNAC - Museu do Chiado in Lisbon allowed to know the artist extensive work and also the detached and least spread professional activity that Vespeira maintained from much early on (from 1942) as a publicist, as a decorator and as a designer. He received the "Columbano" Award in 1957 and the AICA (International association of Critics of Art) award in the year 2000. The Montijo City Hall created the "Vespeira" Award in 1985.