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VIGAS

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«... Beings, plants
and vermin

must have been

together, melted

in a single body.

With these figures

I am trying

to reunite what

should have never

been separated,

to reset a sense

of balance in

the disorder of

creation...»

Oswaldo **Vigas**
Vigas. O. Caracas, 1982

1

Bartelik, M. *Vigas Informalista. Paris 1959-1964*, exh. cat. Ascaso Gallery. Miami, United States. 2014, pp. 3-4

Recognized as an emerging talent associated with the post-war resurgence of figuration .../.. Vigas allied himself with a group of expatriate Latin American artists in Paris (Berni, Cárdenas, Camacho Lazo, Lam, Matta, Penalba, Pardo, and De Szyszlo). He also became involved with the review *Signal*, in which the writings of the critics Raoul-Jean Moulin, José-Augusto França, Jean-Clarence Lambert, and Karl-Kristian Ringström were published. All of these artists and critics advocated new approaches to figuration with roots in both expressionistic tendencies in modern art and pre-Columbian art and cultures, the latter source treated as «prehistoric» and therefore universal Vigas described his style of that time .../.. as «[a] system of signs and symbols, a personal way of conceiving objects, figures, planes of color, lines, spaces,» pointing to the heterogeneity of his artistic language, which relied on a complex matrix of referents and modes of expressions.



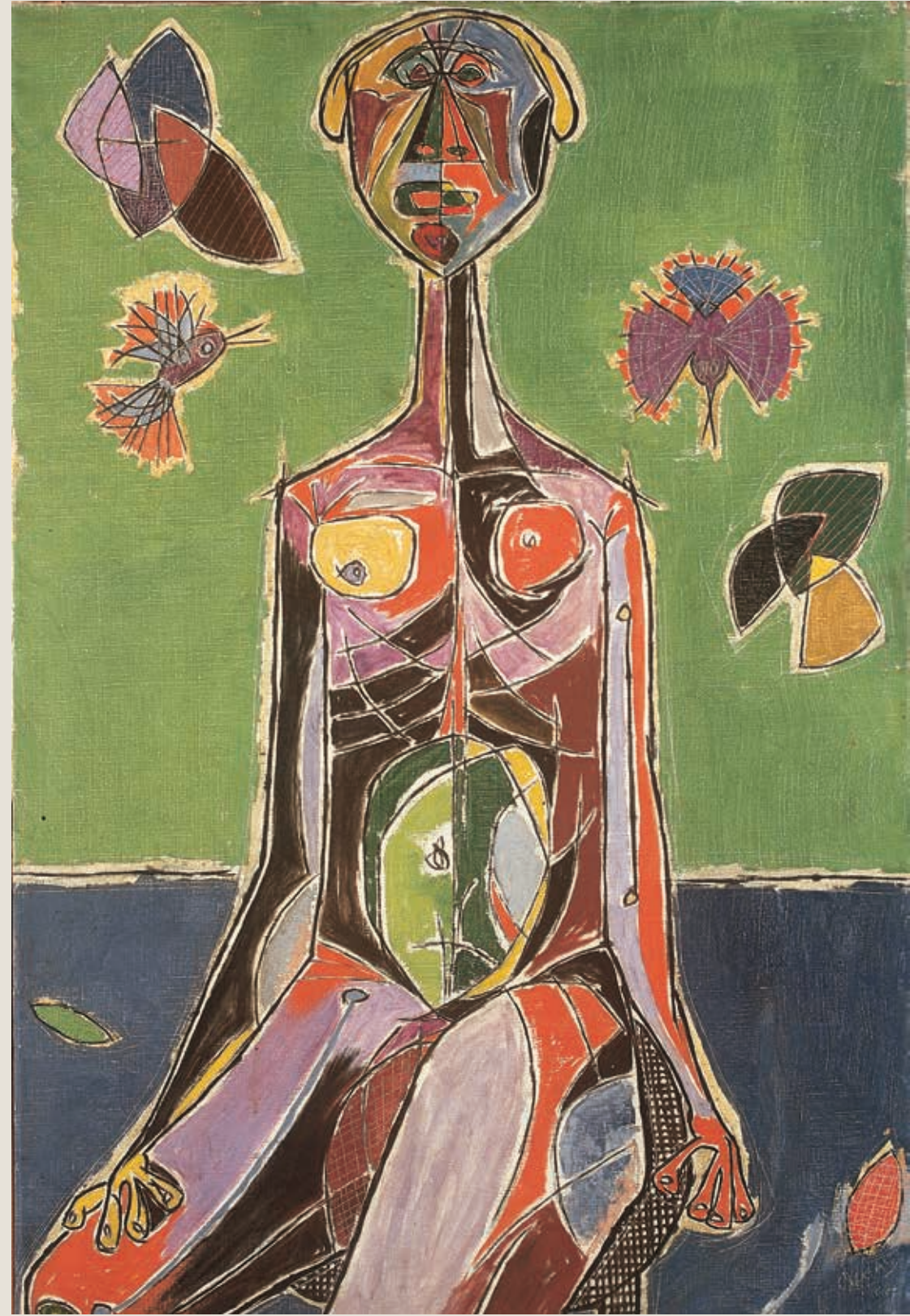
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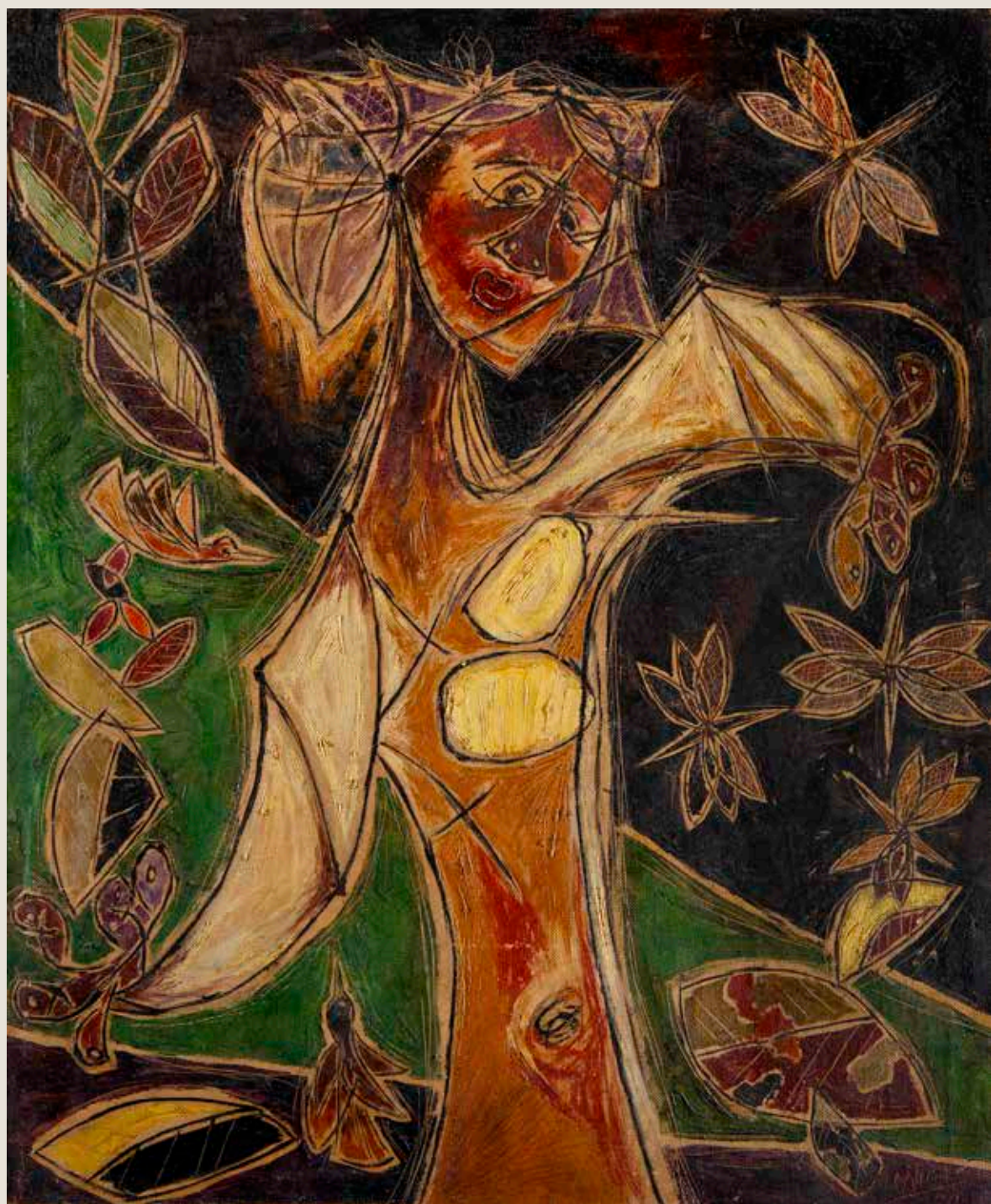
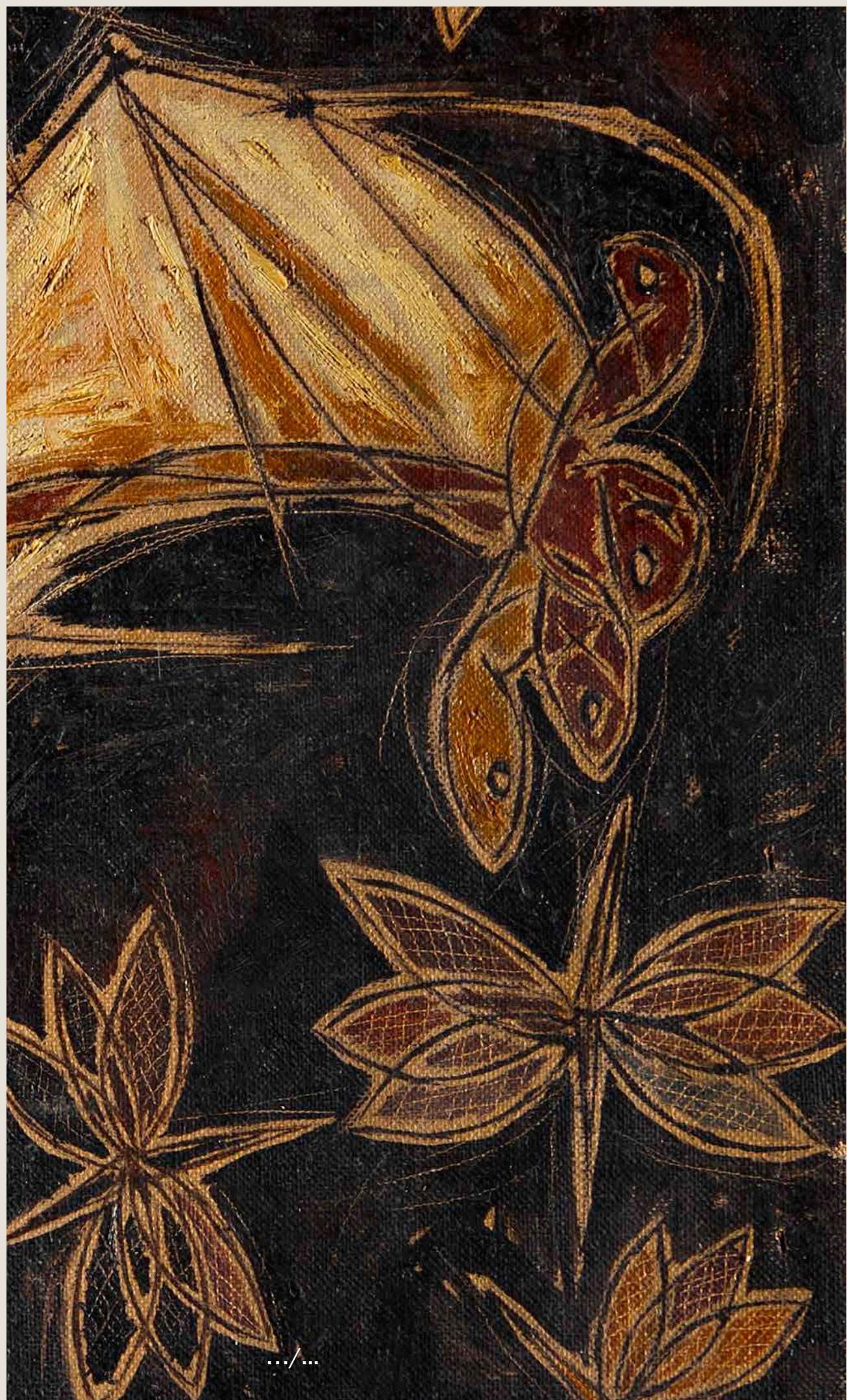


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2

Van Schie, M. *Oswaldo Vigas: Antológica 1943-2003*, exh. panel MAC USP, Sao Paulo, 2016

Related to Joaquin Torres Garcia's «Universalismo Constructivo» Vigas formulates a visual lexicon to represent the 'true' South American culture. Synchronous with prevailing artistic ideas he submerges himself in the field of abstraction and experiments, similar to other Latin American artists, including the Brazilian artists Aldo Bonadei and Burle Marx, with abstract art in combination with a focus on line and structure of space. Vigas never surrenders completely to any stylistic norm though. His artistic process is shaped by a search for an original idiom influenced by cultural identity and personal creativity.

The relation between the murals and the constructivist paintings is evident, but also in other stylistic phases Vigas' work has a strong architectural character. Both the *Formas* series of the fifties and the early 1970's works resemble mural compositions or architectural formations.

Madelon Van Schie, 2016

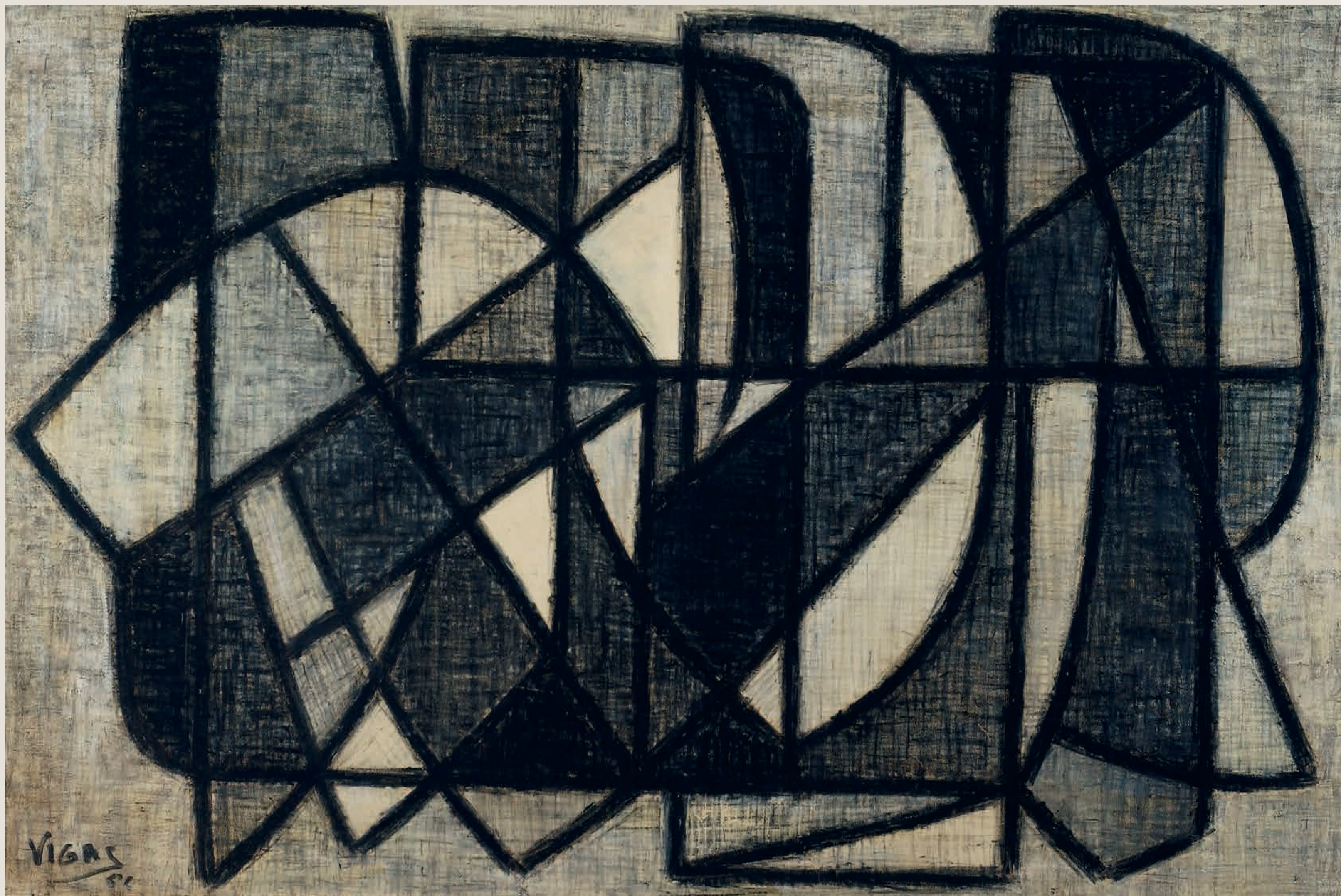


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influenced by cultural identity and personal creativity.



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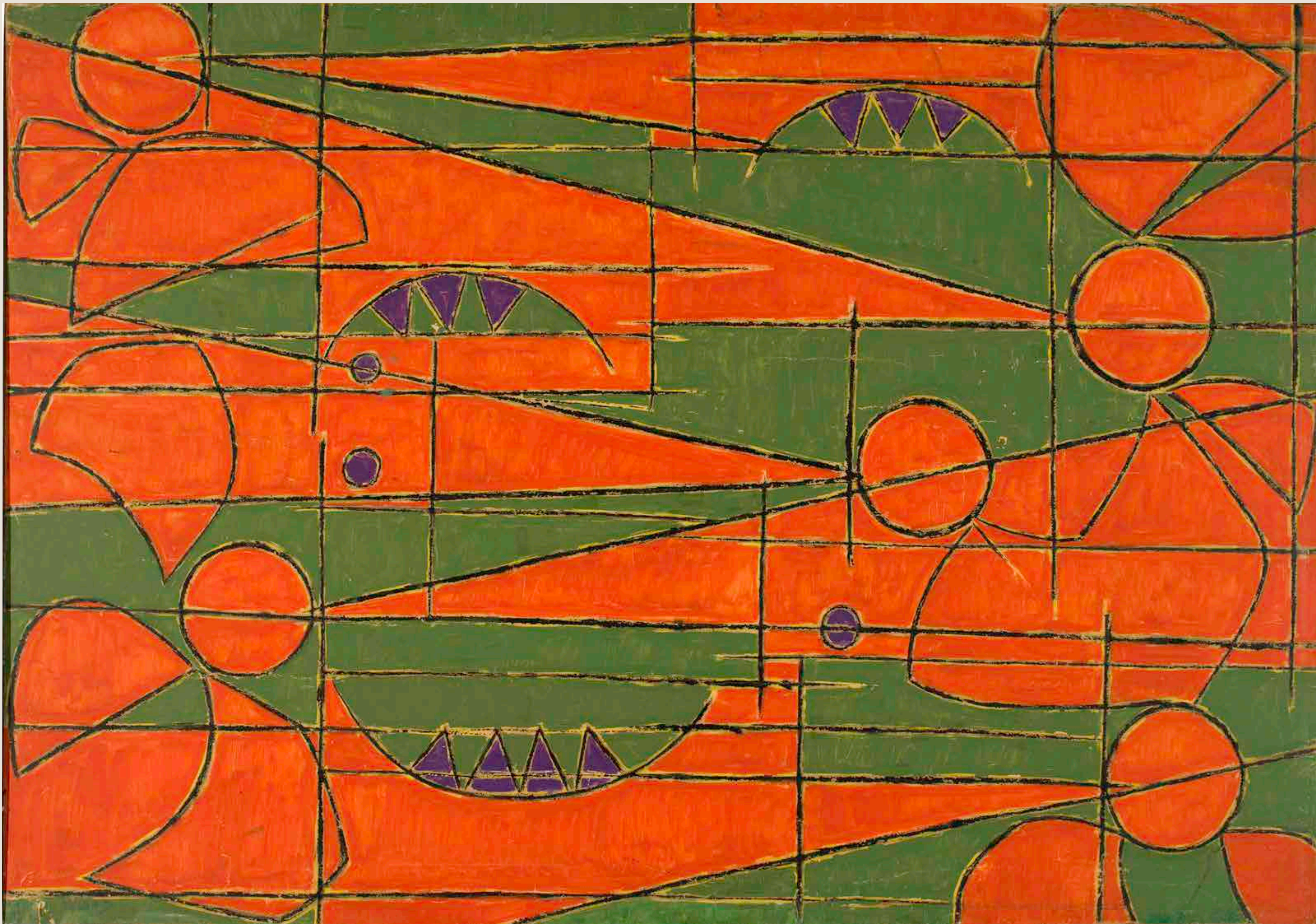
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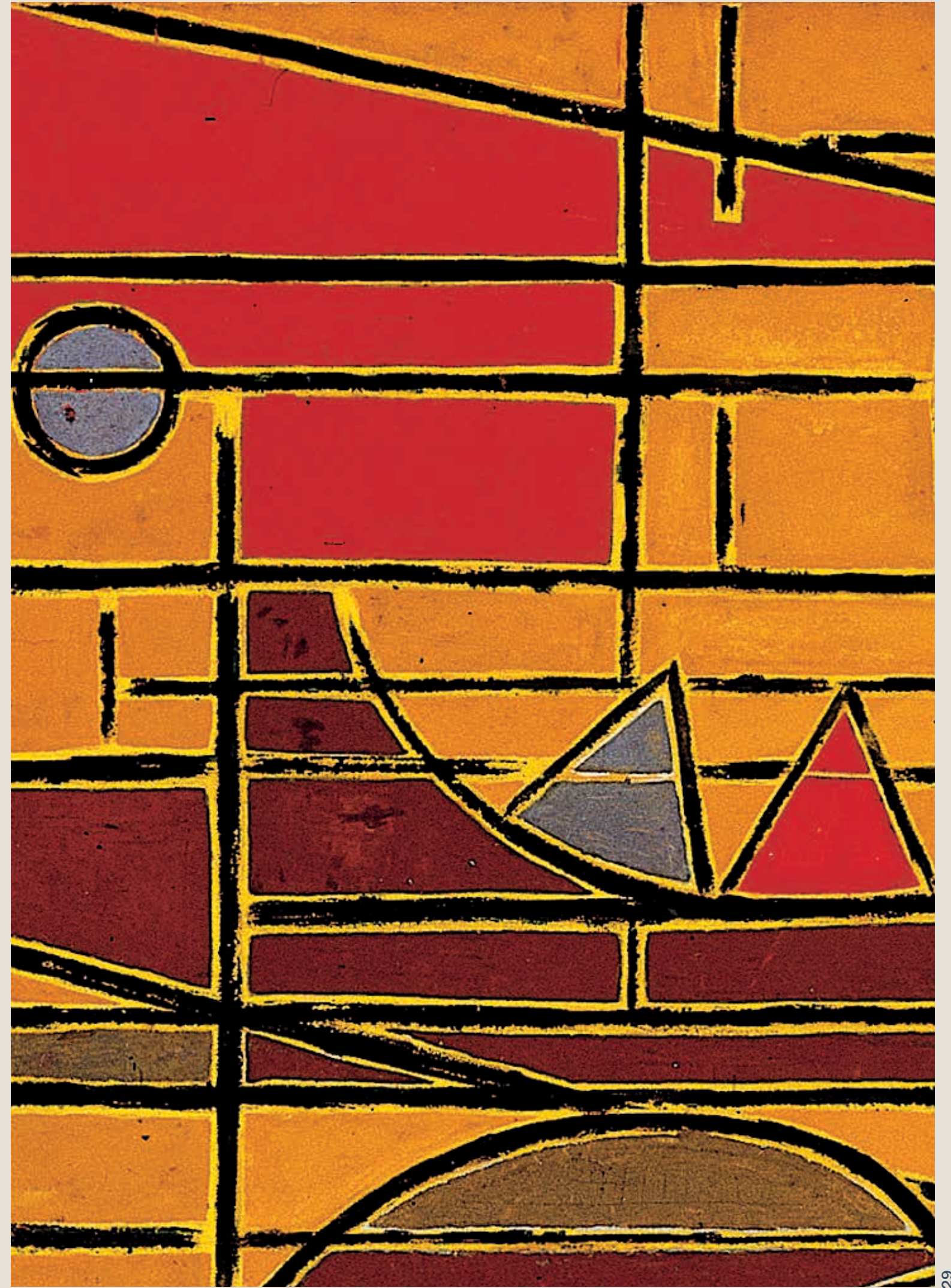
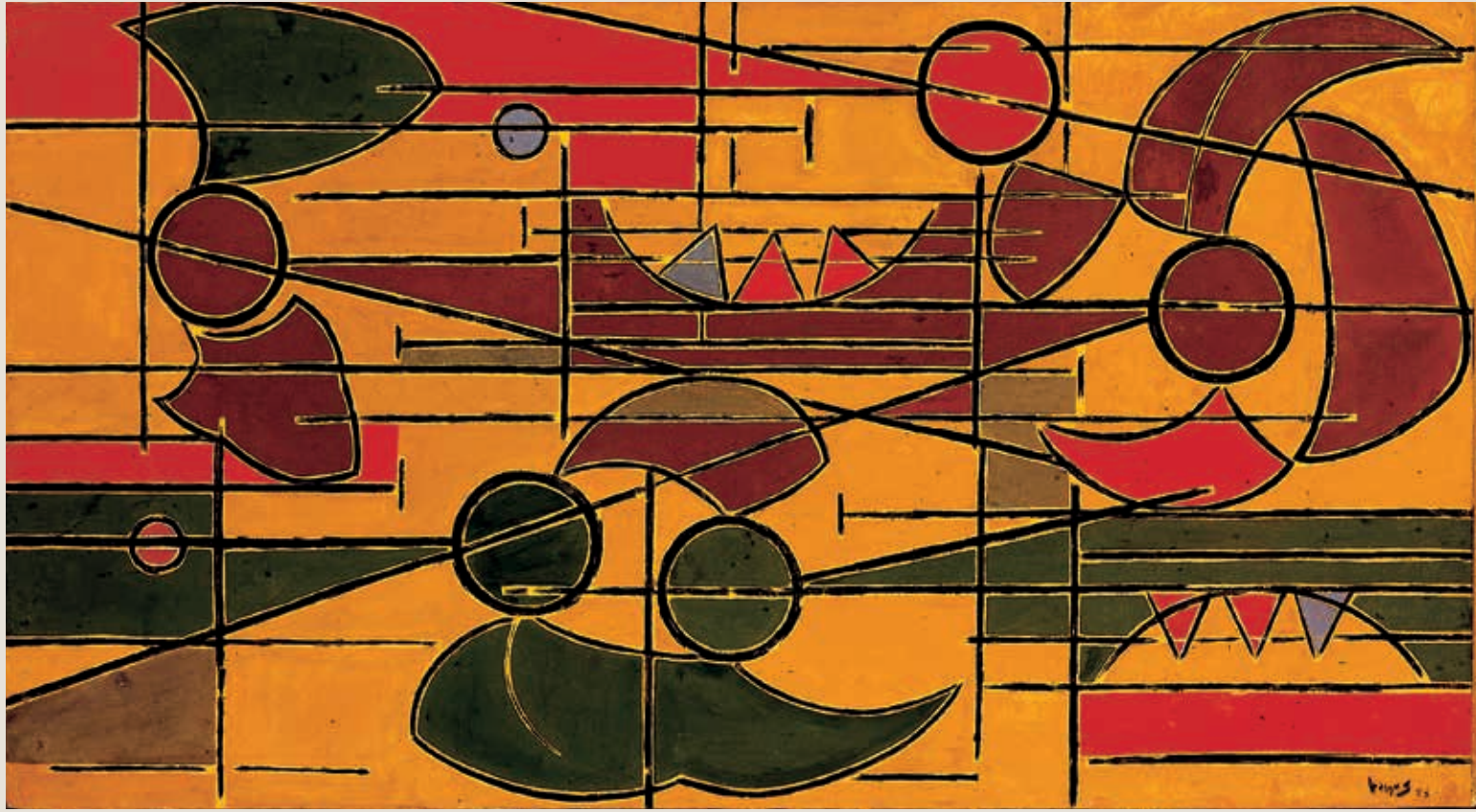
Rodríguez, B. *Oswaldo Vigas*. Caracas, 2012, p.14

The invitation he received from architect Carlos Raúl Villanueva to take part in the Integration of the Arts project at the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas (now a UNESCO World Heritage Site) was the catalyst that led Vigas to geometry. He made many sketches for the project that now form the series *Proyectos para murales*, several of which were integrated into the facades of some important buildings on the campus, such as the *Plaza del Rectorado*. In this project Vigas participates together with Arp, Laurens, Léger, Pevsner, Vasarely and Calder, who according to Dan Haulica, 1990 turn the University City into a place that pays tribute to the glory of modernism, but also to creative sociability, to a healthy and serene emulation.

The artist appropriates elements from Cubism and Constructivism to structure his mural proposals and thus emphasizes triangular planes, underlined brushstrokes that symbolically evokes a strange nature, both human and natural. The monumental scale of these projects is obvious even in the format of studies and can be appreciated clearly once they have been installed on the surface of a large wall. Bélgica Rodríguez. 2014







4

Rodríguez, B. Oswaldo Vías. Caracas, 2012, p.14

In the sixties Vías turned to Informalism, a style that erupted at the time in Venezuela and was embraced by several important artists by virtue of its iconoclastic and irreverent attitude, its rejection of figurative art and, more specifically, of geometric abstract art. Informalism took up much of the sixties.

Vías adopted its codes, which were a novelty at the time, without distancing himself completely from figurative art. Much of the work he made at that time reveals hidden sketches that resemble mysterious ghosts hidden within the exuberance of his sweeping brushstrokes. A further symptom of figurative art resides in the titles' references to subject matter, which also refer to a familiar everyday world. Bélgica Rodríguez. 2014.



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Much of the work he made at that time reveals hidden sketches that resemble mysterious ghosts hidden within the exuberance of his sweeping brushstrokes.

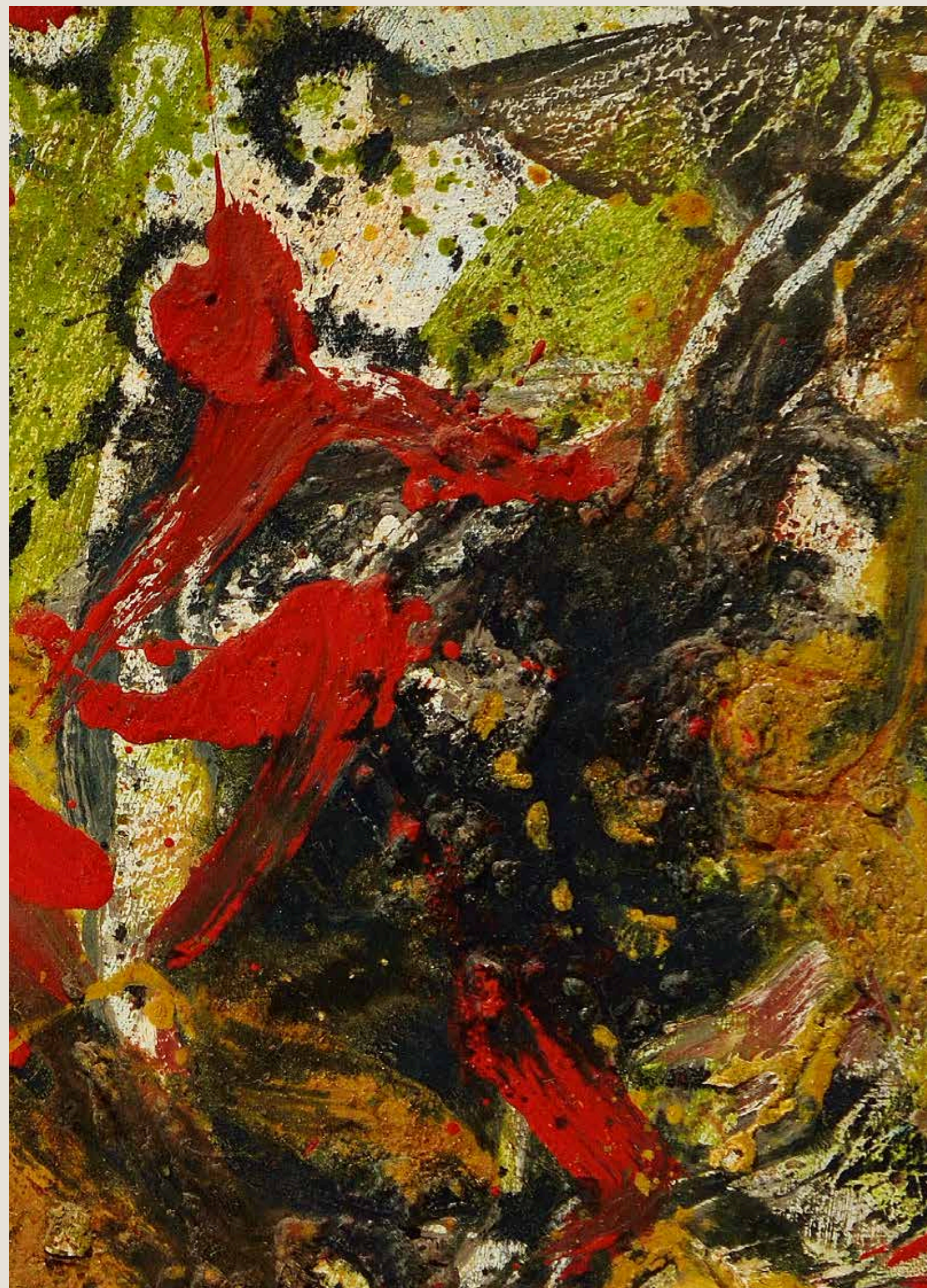


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5

França, J-A. *Vigas: Etchings, Drawings, Gouaches*, exh. cat. Ateneo de Caracas, 1964, p.22.

José-Augusto França called Vigas's paintings: «An uplifting spectacle, maybe a little monstrous, of unforeseen dimensions: those black shapes, living snakes, menacing in oil compositions, are organized in his gouaches, joining the game of key gestures as a key to our reading, or as compasses marking the path.»





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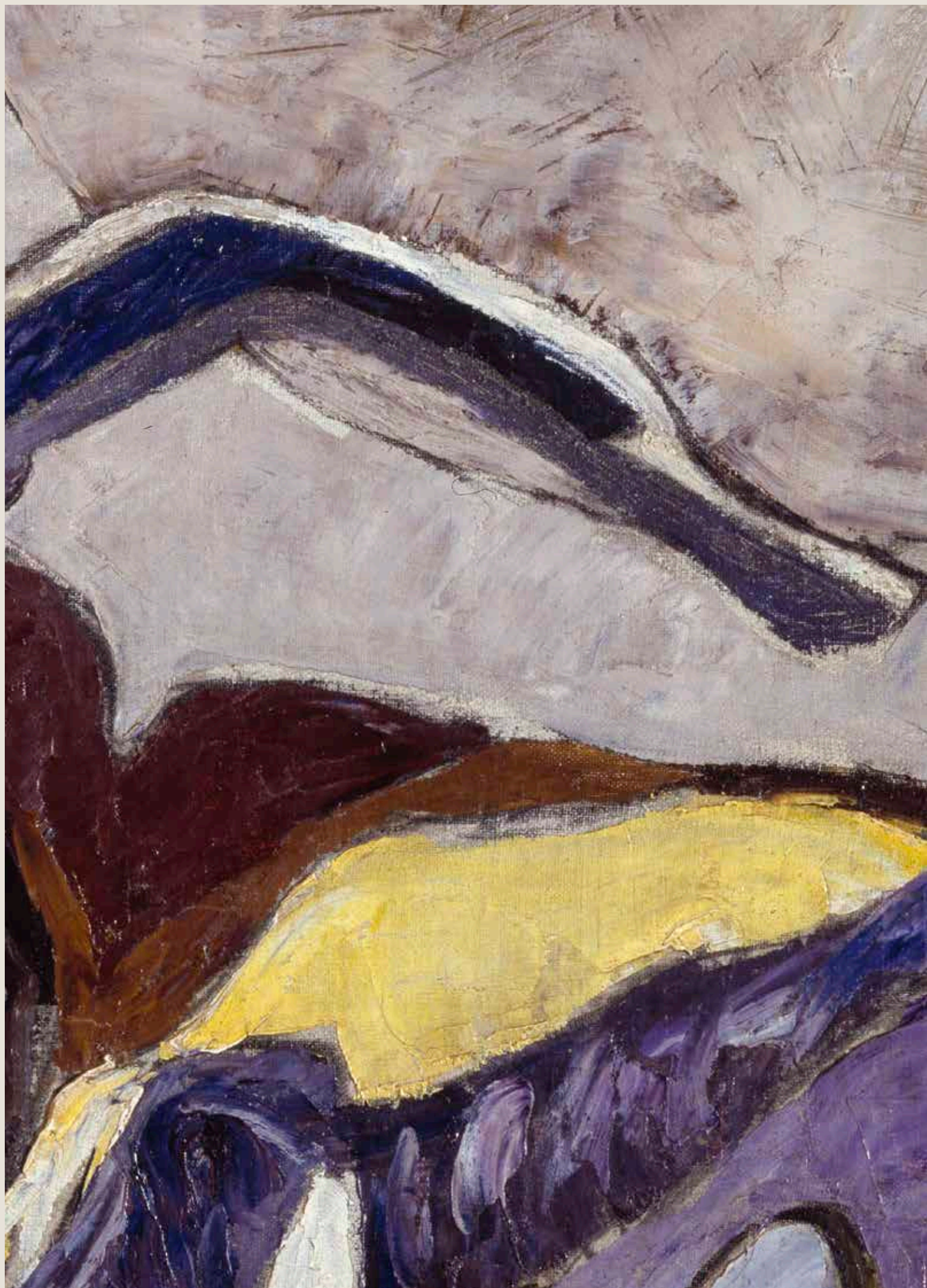
Bartelik, M. *Vigas Informalista. Paris 1959-1964*, exh. cat. Ascaso Gallery. Miami, United States. 2014, pp. 5-6

Vigas never directly responded to the calls of American and British Pop artists and French New Realists to bring art close to life by embracing the iconography of consumer culture. Neither did he fully subscribe to the *prescriptions* of Clement Greenberg, who advocated close attention to the surface of painting, and a confirmation of the flatness of the canvas, which influenced many artists in the United States and elsewhere. For the Venezuelan artist, such flatness derived not so much from the specificity of the medium of painting—a modern concept *sui generis*—as from the «primordial» aspects of art, which brought him closer to Jean Dubuffet and his treatment of materials for making art as «living substances» (...) Subsequently, the surface in Vigas's paintings in the late 1950s and early 1960s remained highly visceral, oozing with thick paint while exposing a jarring self-awareness as part of the act of creation. Many of his paintings from that period emphasize the porous quality of the surface, as well as the brushwork; in these works, the paint often behaves as if it were volcanic lava, imposing its own gravity on the natural terrain of the canvas. Dr. Marek Bartelik. 2014



17





19

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22



7

Vigas, O. *Tapicería de Oswaldo Vigas*, Interview with Axel Stein. exh. cat. Museo de Bellas Artes. Caracas, 1981, p. 4

In our work in Latin America, we are characterized by continuity, not by rupture; the concept of rupture belongs more to North American society. In our art there is a strong idea of historical continuity; the great Latin American artists mesh with an art coming from behind. In contrast, the artists of the north break out incessantly, because their society demands it, for reasons of a market in which we do not participate, maybe to our advantage. Entrevista Axel Stein tapicerías



In our art there is a strong idea of historical continuity; the great Latin American artists mesh with an art coming from behind.



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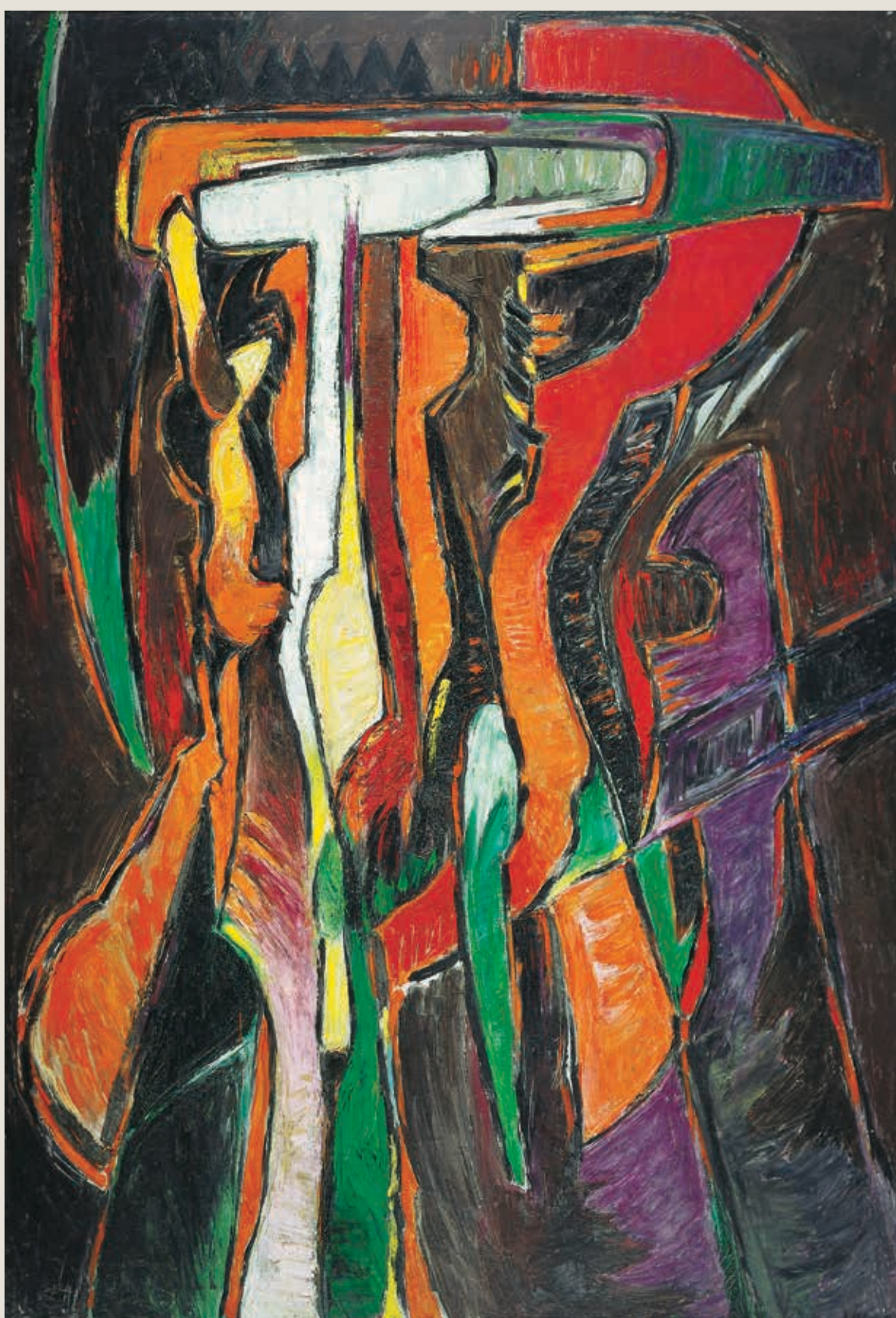


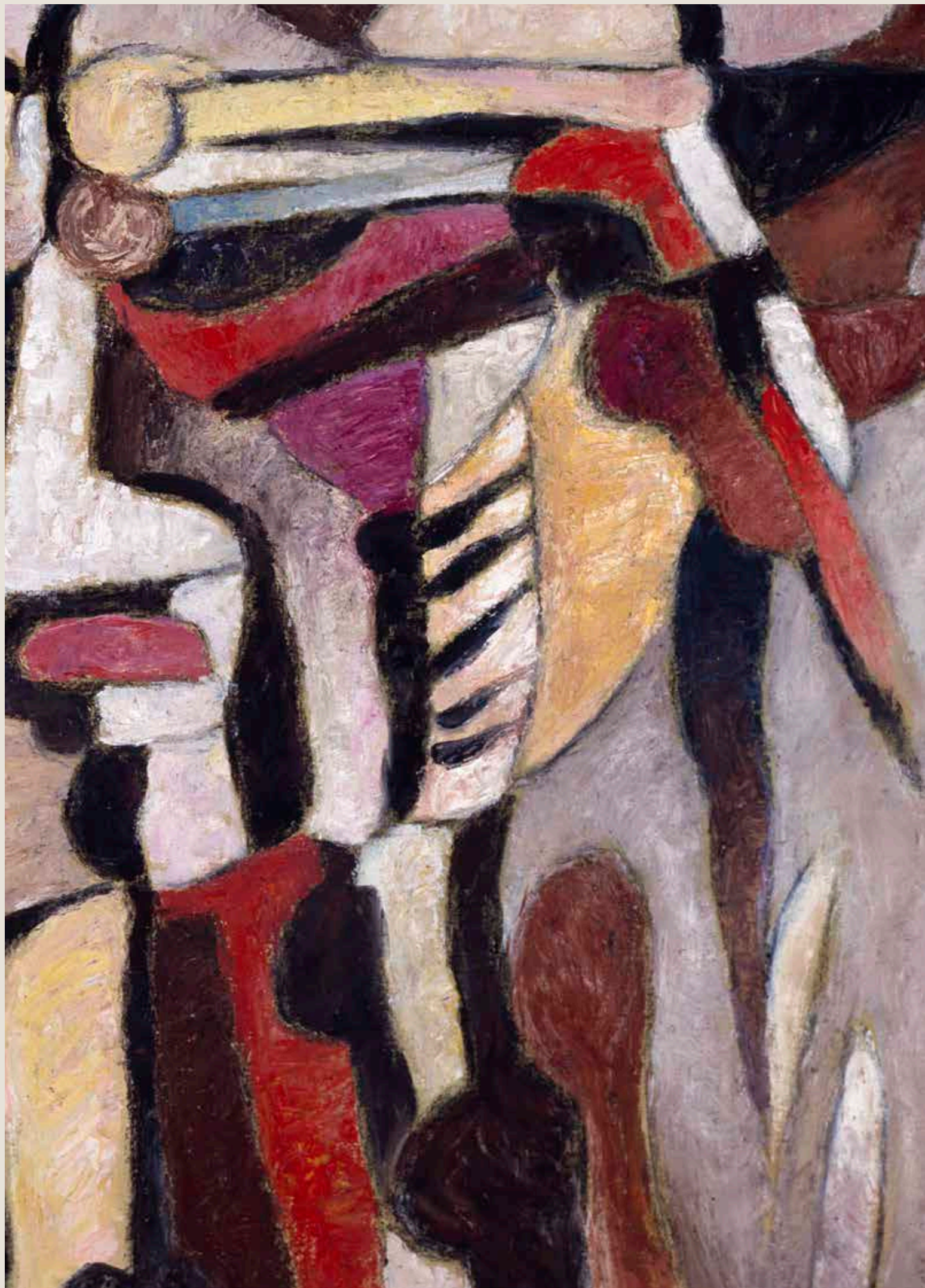
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Chacón, K. *Sobre Oswaldo Vigas*, Miami, United States, 2018.

The creation of Vigas´ s «mythical women» coincides with the boom period of the so-called «new figuration». These representations blurred the boundaries between abstraction and figuration, and mixed resources from Informalism and Expressionism. Katherine Chacón. 2018







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Chacón, K. *Sobre Oswaldo Vigas*, Miami, United States, 2018.

The period of the «new figuration» culminates around 1990. In the last decade of the twentieth century Vigas takes a turn to the painting that he had been making, not only incorporating new themes, but radically changing his plastic solutions. The «mythical women» who starred in their previous stage gave way to small-town characters, animals and diverse entes. The color is significantly restricted, and most of the pieces are made in a chromatism of earthy ranges contrasted with white, grey and black.

Vigas takes back Dubuffet's textural lesson here. For several moments of his career the French artist had invested in texture, as he attached it to his interest in the «aesthetics of common spaces». In some works in *the Les Murs series*, Dubuffet had begun to emphasize the plasticity of the wall as a background, restructuring it into two light, dark surfaces on which linear figures were arranged. In the *Sols et terrains series* of the 1950s, his intention to free the painting from the drawing led him to radically highlight the textures, which he achieved by mixing sands, gravel and other materials to pigments. The surfaces created in this way were wide textured fields that were sometimes divided by the application of a contrasting color monochrome layer on top of the area, as in *Knoll of Visions* (1952) of the Guggenheim Museum (XX). This solution created the idea of a horizon and, in some works, served as a background for graphics that the artist executed by scraping the surface with a pointed instrument. Dubuffet reiterated this horizon structure in many of his works from the stages known as *L'homme du commun* and *Célébration du sol*, which take place between 1942 and 1960 Katherine Chacón. 2019







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1 Oswaldo Vigas
Mujer Maternal, 1952
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
95 x 65 cm / 37 13/32 x 25 19/32

2 Oswaldo Vigas
Animal, 1953
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
85 x 125 cm / 33.46 x 49.21 in

3 Oswaldo Vigas
Tres Brujas Nacientes, 1952
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
92 x 65 cm / 36.22 x 25.59 in

4 Oswaldo Vigas
Bruja de las Libélulas, 1950
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
71 x 58 cm / 27.95 x 22.83 in

5 Oswaldo Vigas
El Encuentro, 1954
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
195 x 130 cm / 76.77 x 51.18 in

6 Oswaldo Vigas
Personaje Naciente, 1954
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
144,1 x 113,7 cm / 56.73 x 44.76 in

7 Oswaldo Vigas
Objeto vegetal americano, 1954
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
115 x 146 cm / 45.27 x 57.48 in

8 Oswaldo Vagas
De la serie «Objeto Negro», 1956
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
97 x 143 cm / 38.18 x 56.29 in

9 Oswaldo Vigas
Proyecto para Mural Rojo, 1953
 Óleo sobre cartulina fijado sobre contrachapado / Oil on card fixed on plywood
 75 x 107 cm / 29.52 x 42.12 in

10 Oswaldo Vigas
Proyecto para Mural en Naranja, 1953
 Óleo sobre papel fijado sobre masonite / Oil on paper laid on masonite
 67 x 123 cm / 26.37 x 48.42 in

11 Oswaldo Vigas
Salinas II, 1961
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
130,3 x 97,5 cm / 51.29 x 38.38 in

12 Oswaldo Vigas
Germinal Naciente, 1960
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
116 x 80,7 cm / 45.66 x 31.77 in

13 Oswaldo Vigas
Piedra Cielo, 1960
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
130 x 97 cm / 51.18 x 38.18 in

14 Oswaldo Vigas
Bestiezueta, 1963
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
120 x 100 cm / 47.24 x 39.37 in

15 Oswaldo Vigas
Megatú, 1962
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
200 x 200 cm / 78.74 x 78.74 in

16 Oswaldo Vigas
Señora de los fuegos marinos, 1967
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
89 x 116 cm / 35.03 x 45.66 in

17 Oswaldo Vigas
Biología de la Noche, 1967
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
90 x 116 cm / 35.43 x 45.66 in

18 Oswaldo Vigas
Óseas Entrelazadas, 1967
 Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
 80 x 100 cm / 31.49 x 39.37 in

19 Oswaldo Vigas
Sembradora de Hojas, 1967
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
170 x 72 cm / 66.92 x 28.34 in

20 Oswaldo Vigas
María Lionza la Dominadora, 1967
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
170 x 74 cm / 28.34 x 29.13 in

21 Oswaldo Vigas
Guardiana, 1967
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
170 x 72 cm / 66.92 x 28.34 in

22 Oswaldo Vigas
Ave y Personaje II, 1977
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
150 x 200 cm / 59.05 x 78.74 in

23 Oswaldo Vigas
Iniciación, 1970
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
100 x 120 cm / 39.37 x 47.24 in

24 Oswaldo Vigas
Asmodé, 1970
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
100 x 80 cm / 39.37 x 31.49 in

25 Oswaldo Vigas
Belisama, 1970
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
100,5 x 110 cm / 39.56 x 43.30 in

26 Oswaldo Vigas
Aguiladora, 1972
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
150 x 180 cm / 59.05 x 70.86 in

27 Oswaldo Vagas
Agorifera Gris, 1976
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
205 x 137 cm / 80.70 x 53.93 in

28 Oswaldo Vagas
Ancestral, 1976
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
195 x 133 cm / 76.77 x 52.36 In

29 Oswaldo Vigas
Agorero, 1986
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
190 x 140 cm / 74.80 x 55.11 in

30 Oswaldo Vigas
Cabeza, 1987
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
100 x 100 cm / 39.37 x 39.37 in

31 Oswaldo Vagas
Equilibristas, 1994
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
140 x 120 cm / 55.11 x 47.24 in

32 Oswaldo Vigas
Equinoccio, 1998
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
180 x 120 cm / 70.86 x 47.24 in

33 Oswaldo Vigas
De paseo con su mascota, 2007
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
155 x 160 cm / 60.5 x 62.4 in

34 Oswaldo Vigas
Zarabanda en Gris, 2003
Óleo sobre tela / Oil on canvas
120 x 250 cm / 47.24 x 98.42 in

35 Oswaldo Vigas
Composición Estática / Composición Dinámica - Diptych, 1954
 Mosaico veneciano / venetian mosaic
 300 x 800 cm / 118.11 x 314.96 in

36 Wifredo Lam
Sin título / Untitled, 1947
 Tinta sobre papel / Ink on paper
 21 x 16.5 cm / 8.26 x 6.49 In
 Colección del artista / Collection of the artist

37 Wifredo Lam
Sin título / Untitled, 1945
 Tinta china y lápiz sobre papel / Chinese Ink and graphite on paper
 20.2 x 30 cm / 7.87 x 11.81 In
 Colección del artista / Collection of the artist

38 Arte Africano
Guardian del espíritu
Madera / Wood
120 x 30 x 25 cm / 47.24 x 11.81 x 9.84 In
Colección del artista / Collection of the artist

39 Arte precolombino / Serie Valencioide. Venezuela
Venus de Tacarigua
 Arcilla / Clay
 8 x 3,5 x 7 cm / 3.14 x 1.37 x 2.75 In
 Colección del artista / Collection of the artist

Oswaldo Vigas

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