Exploring “Pre-Columbian Influence” in the Art of Estuardo Maldonado

Amanda Chacón
Personaggio

MAKER: Estuardo Maldonado
(Ecuadorian, b. 1928)
DATE: 1963
MEDIUM: Oil on canvas
DIMENSIONS: Sight: 50 1/4 x 37 3/4 in. (127.6 x 95.9 cm) Framed: 52-1/8 x 38-7/8 x 1-3/8 in. (132.4 x 96.2 x 3.5 cm)
CREDIT LINE: Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Guttman
OBJECT NUMBER: 1994.28
Estuardo Maldonado

- Ecuadorian, studied and worked in Italy
- Abstract Expressionism with Pre-Columbian references
Abstract Expressionism

• “large scale, include non-objective imagery, lack a clear focal point, and show visible signs of the artist’s working process”

• Vanguardia Artística Nacional (VAN) in Ecuador, where artists appropriated Abstract Expressionism to speak to Pre-Columbian history and art
Going to Quito
NAME: Composición
MAKER: Estuardo Maldonado
DATE: N/A
MEDIUM: Stainless Steel

NAME: Anthro-zoomorphic statue *Picasso La Tolita*
MAKER: La Tolita Culture
DATE: 350 BCE-400 CE
MEDIUM: Ceramic
Casa del Alabado

NAME: Vessel
MAKER: Guangala Culture
DATE: 500 BCE-800 CE
MEDIUM: Ceramic

NAME: Lliptero
MAKER: Carchi Culture
DATE: 750 CE-1550 CE
MEDIUM: Ceramic

NAME: Relief
MAKER: Chorrera Culture
DATE: 1000 BCE-200 BCE
MEDIUM: Stone
Valdivia Culture

• Archaeological culture that inhabited the Guayas and Santa Elena provinces on the coast of Ecuador from about 3200-1000 BCE
  • Before going to Italy, Maldonado studied art at the la Escuela de Bellas Artes in Guayaquil

• Known for textured ceramic vessels and representational figurines
The “S” Symbol

• Pre-Incan symbol of recursivity
• Present in many Andean archaeological cultures, especially the Valdivia
• Used by Maldonado during and beyond his Pre-Columbian Period

NAME: Bowl
MAKER: Culture Valdivia
DATE: 4000 BCE - 1500 BCE
MEDIUM: Clay
DIMENSIONS: width 9.9 cm x height 16.3 cm
PROVENANCE: Ecuadorian North Coast, Museo Casa del Alabado
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Figurines

• One of the most outstanding archaeological findings of the Valdivia culture is the stone and clay figurines that represent humans in an abstracted form.

• Abstracted depictions of people in Maldonado’s Pre-Columbian period bear heavy resemblance to these figurines.

NAME: Anthropomorphic Figurine (Venus)
MAKER: Culture Valdivia
DATE: 4000 BCE - 1500 BCE
MEDIUM: Clay
DIMENSIONS: width 14.5 cm x height 3.2 cm
PROVENANCE: Ecuadorian North Coast, Museo Casa del Alabado

NAME: Estructura No. 10
MAKER: Estuardo Maldonado
DATE: 1963
MEDIUM: Encausto on canvas
DIMENSIONS: 100 x 80 cm
PROVENANCE: Artist’s collection, Rome
Figurines

NAME: Monoliths
MAKER: Culture Valdivia
DATE: 4000 BCE - 1500 BCE
MEDIUM: Stone
Other Forms of Research
Conclusions

• Maldonado did not just reference an Ecuadorian past, he aided in the construction of an Ecuadorian present

• Gained experience in new research methods

• Future interests: how did Maldonado’s practice interact with that of his contemporaries?

NAME: Quito Ardiente
MAKER: Oswaldo Guayasamín
DATE: 1995
MEDIUM: Acrylic on Canvas