

Untitled Statements

Armando Reverón

Translated by the editor

Venezuela's premier Impressionist, Armando Reverón, worked in solitude on the beach at Macuto beginning in 1921. By the middle 1940s he had become something of a curiosity, and journalists began to seek him out. These statements, while they may reflect something of his deteriorating mental condition, also show clearly the passion and determination with which he painted.

1944

You and I are the canvas. You are the subject of my painting, and so am I.

On the palette all you need is white. In order to begin a drawing, first mark the boundaries of the subject nearly geometrically, and then draw and draw until the subject emerges.

Since you are here, I can't take my clothes off. I am the canvas, and the canvas must be bare. I do not accept the preparation of the canvas with sizing and priming. The canvas has to be in its natural state, because if it is first covered with primer, all intention is lost. Once you prime a canvas, you have already painted it. The painter has to approach the canvas as a bullfighter approaches a bull.

The light is a lady. I have never been introduced to her. Nobody knows her. The sun is everything. What a problem the sun is!

1949

I came here in search of simplicity, and here I clearly found myself.

I have been here painting for many years. I have succeeded in finding simplicity and the caress of austerity. I have been able to become familiar with the light. I am here because I am committed to light.

The sky is everything and it can't be avoided. It has within it all beauty. Goya painted many things by using his fancy, but here on earth we are drowning in anguish. I do what I can to save myself by painting. The world is really rather shabby. But on the other hand, there is already enough light even for magicians.

1953

Every person is a God. When I am talking I am God, and when you talk, you are God. God is in everything.

God is in color, can't you see? What a serious thing light is! How can we master the light? I have tried. This is my struggle. First we have to work on what we know.

What is painting? This is difficult to know. Painting is the true light. Light can blind you or drive you crazy or torture you because you cannot look directly at it.

Sources:

1944: from Reyna Rivas de Barrios, "Reverón y su Palabra," *El Nacional* newspaper, reprinted in *Imagen* no. 52, September 1944.

1949: from Joaquin Tiberio Galvis, "Armando Reverón," *Elite*, August 1949.

1953: from Oscar Yanes, "Reverón no Desmiente su Locura y Arriñenaza a la Municipalidad con el Santo Niño de Jesús," *Últimas Noticias*, 29 January 1953.