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Joaquim Rodrigo's Painting

A Particularity in the Portuguese Case

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ABOUT

Joaquim Rodrigo's Painting

A Particularity in the Portuguese Case

In the postwar period, Portuguese art faced a politically-imposed isolation that prevented emerging artists from engaging and interacting with the rest of Europe. For these artists, other geographical, cultural contexts were no more than remote possibilities of exchange: sometimes mythical places of an avant-garde known through magazine articles, sometimes places they had briefly visited in search of a more direct link with their time. Portugal lived in an established dictatorship known as *Estado Novo* (New State) that lasted until 1974. The regime's anti-modernism sought to eliminate all modern artistic practices in an attempt to preserve its traditional cultural values, strongly dominated by the government's fascist ideology. The absence of structures for the production, exhibition, and reception of modern art during the twentieth century contributed towards the lessening of modern practices in the national context, hindering the development of knowledge updated by artists, critics, and audiences. In spite of these setbacks, overall Portuguese artists succeeded in overcoming this aloofness to which the regime condemned them. Over time, these artists managed to find ways to a distant modernity – which had become predominant in the process of reconstructing a new world in the postwar period in Western Europe.

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