

The Critical Canvas of Leon Golub

The Museo Nacional Reina Sofía held, at the Palacio de Velázquez of Retiro Park, the first Spanish exhibition of the American artist

Madrid, 05/04/11

Leon Golub (1922 -2004) is almost unknown to the Spanish public. Recognized by the recent historiography for his critical position, any Spanish museum has paid a special attention yet. Therefore, the MNCARS stated in his proposal about a hundred works with a retrospective perspective. Works that can trace his history from its beginnings in the thirties, and over seven decades.

Paintings and drawings in which allows for different styles —informality, poetic abstraction, aesthetics, pop and classical monumental figure that would become characteristic of his style— structured around the work *Vietnam II*. A path full of aesthetic drift in its beginnings, which ended by joining the academic tradition of the classical figure with powerful political imagery (full of contemporary critical symbols).



Leon Golub. *Threnody I*. 1986. The Broad Art Foundation, Santa Monica.

A combination between the human body and the policy, that uses the expression and gesture as a vehicle. His paradoxical initial evolution, however, insisted positioned outside media experimentation that has characterized the artistic production of his contemporaries, speaking on a renewal of traditional painting genres (history or portrait).

Organized around the paradigmatic work of 1973, its production is marked by the international political arena: the brutality of the Vietnam War, South Africa *apartheid* or the imperialist desires of the last century. Tables to denounce the hangman through aggressive gesture, placing the viewer in an uncomfortable position of passivity. Visual rhetoric of renewal for a traditional genre.

Leon Golub can be seen at the Palacio de Velázquez of Retiro Park from tomorrow until September 12. Curated by Jon Bird, closes the group of exhibitions of MNCARS devoted to the critical art in contemporary society.