

**Jesús de Vilallonga** (Santa Coloma de Farners, 1927–Barcelona, 2018) is one the best kept secrets of Catalan painting from the second half of the twentieth century. He trains at Ramon Rogent's studio, where he meets Joan Ponç, and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris with Marcel Gromaire. He moves to Quebec in 1954 and is contracted by the Dominion Gallery in Montreal, with whom he works for the subsequent thirty years. So, most of his artwork is made and his most important commissions are gained in Canada.

His artwork is a very personal synthesis of diverse currents such as surrealism, symbolism and mannerism, with which he reworks a lyrical figuration with a dreamlike matrix, and opposes the predominance of abstraction and informalism at an international level. He is endowed with exquisite knowledge of drawing, substituting oils with tempera painting, and with an perpetual experimental desire which propels him to do collage, engraving, sculpture, book illustrations and digital art. His artwork offers a splendid exercise in creative freedom that reminds us of the poetry of the great authors of the twentieth century, like Joan Ponç or Marc Chagall. Just as they did, he created his own imaginary which he deployed through a long and productive career, guided at all times by the 'inner eye' that Freud spoke of.

Through this exhibition, curated by his daughter **Marta de Vilallonga**, the Fundació Vila Casas wishes to remember and pay homage to the career of an artist who was one of the most unique *rara avis* of Catalan art from the second half of the twentieth century.

