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The painters of the Poetic Reality

1. Jules Cavaillès (1901-1977), *Le port de Naples*, Oil on canvas
2. Roland Oudot (1897-1981), *Portrait au corsage rouge*, Oil on canvas
3. Roger Limouse (1894-1990), *Nature morte*, Oil on canvas

This group was made up of eight members: Jules Cavaillès, Roland Oudot, Raymond Legueult, Roger Limouse, Kostia Terechkovitch, Maurice Brianchon, Christian Caillard and André Planson. They exhibited together in the inter-war period and in 1949 they began to call themselves painters of “the Poetic Reality.” Despite their very different backgrounds, the eight creators of “the Poetic Reality” shared some common characteristics: their attachment to figurative art, an interest in nature and the poetry that emanates from it, the defence of a certain ideal of beauty and a taste for the simple life.

Jules Cavaillès (Carmaux, 1901-1977) came to Paris in 1921 to devote himself to painting. In the Second World War, he returned to the Tarn and enlisted in the Resistance. When France was liberated, he was appointed curator of the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse and in 1946 he took up his old teaching position at the École des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. He played an important role in building up the Albi Museum’s collection, acting as an intermediary with Pierre Bonnard and the artists of the group to which he belonged, the Poetic Reality. He is represented in the collection of the Musée Toulouse-Lautrec by a series of works in tranquil tones. His work reveals a benign regard towards creatures and objects, producing calm landscapes like those of *Les Champs-Élysées* and *Le port de Naples*, bought in 1937, the year in which he achieved recognition in Paris, a painting of an interior with the windows open on the countryside, *Femme dans un intérieur*, and still lifes, including his *Bouquet de roses*.

Roland Oudot (1897-1981) remained under the influence of Matisse, Bonnard and Cézanne until 1920, before developing a style of his own from 1923 on. He produced vigorous portraits and still lifes with classical brushwork such as *Portrait au corsage rouge* and *Nature morte* through which he conveyed the silent existence of objects and the relationship between them, a story told without words. His works include a studio, based on a sketch drawn from life and static, desolate landscapes, devoid of human life. He presents us with places

that were familiar to him; Ile de France, where he started out, the Provence of the 1930s, Normandy in the 1950s, and the Mediterranean, from Greece to Venice, where he spent the last years of his life.

Roger Limouse (1894-1990) was born in Algeria, moving to Paris in 1919 to pursue a life as a painter. There he met Jules Cavaillès at the Académie Julian. He drew on his knowledge of old masters, Rembrandt and Tintoretto, as well as the painting of Cézanne, van Gogh and the Fauvists to forge his own style. After a visit to Norway in 1933, travel became a vital source of inspiration for him. Portraits, still lifes, landscapes... the subject mattered little since it was no more than a pretext. His research revolved around light, colour and mass in motion. This sense for form pervades all his work, not least *Paysage: La chartreuse de Villeneuve-lès-Avignon* and *Nature morte*, with its broad brushstrokes and harsh colours.

Kostia Terechkovitch (1902-1978) was originally from Moscow. Moving to Paris in 1920, he discovered the works of Delacroix, Courbet, Renoir, Cézanne and Bonnard and formed a friendship with Chaïm Soutine. In terms of influences, Terechkovitch was preoccupied with problems of light and atmospheric vibration, and explored matter and colour. From 1930, he mainly painted portraits, paying homage to two French artists, in his *Portrait de Henri Matisse* and *Portrait de Vlaminck*. Through his use of dynamic brushstrokes and vibrant colours, he was able to capture a profound likeness of a face, whilst at the same time transfiguring it.

Initially, **Raymond Legueult** (1898-1971) was influenced by the work of Henri Matisse. Rather in the way of a ritual, each spring, he began with watercolours which were often abstract in nature, painting them between 1921 and 1938 in the Franche-Comté, then on the beaches of Porquerolles. In summer, he turned to canvas compositions, completing the works in winter at his studio in Montparnasse. In *Paysage*, painted in 1938, we can observe a style based on a distinct relationship between shape and colour, light and transparency. His work blends his respect for the great artists with his close interest in those around him and the simple things in life.