La Motte

a culture of excellence

Deurdagte Reis – 'n viering van vrouekunstenaars
Thoughtful Journey – a celebration of female artists

Georgina Ormiston (1903 – 1967)

Ormiston is in 1903 in Chelmsford, Essex gebore. Sy het van jongs af in die kunste belang gestel en formele studies aan kunsskole in Londen en Glasgow onderneem. In 1926 is sy met H.T. Ormiston getroud en hulle het hulleself in 1929 in Suid-Afrika gevestig.

Gedurende die daaropvolgende 23 jaar het sy haar tyd aan haar gesin en die grootmaak van haar kinders gewy. Sy het wel nie kontak met die ontwikkelings in moderne kuns verloor nie en belangstelling in die werk van veral Amerikaanse abstrakte-ekspressioniste getoon – die invloed van hierdie styl is in haar werk na 1962 sigbaar.

Eers in 1952 het Ormiston aktief begin skilder en, toe sy 55 jaar oud was, by haar eerste solo-uitstalling, in 1958, by die Whippman Galery in Johannesburg, het sy in die kunskollig gekom en stelselmatig die aandag van 'n uitgebreide groep kunsbewustes begin trek. Na die sukses van hierdie uitstalling het sy nog drie gehou, almal ewe suksesvol.

In 1965 het die Ormiston-gesin hulleself naby Durban gevestig. In dieselfde jaar is Ormiston as een van 10 kunstenaars verkies om as Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaars by die Grosvenor Gallery in Londen uit te stal. In 1966 het sy ook haar werk by die Republiekfees-uitstalling in Pretoria vertoon.

Haar sig is deur katarakte belemmer, met gevolglike beperkings op haar skilderaktiwiteite. Sy het nie 'n groot volume werk gelewer nie – 'n totaal van net meer as honderd werke.

Ormiston is in 1967 oorlede, net 14 jaar nadat sy aktief begin skilder het. Die meeste van haar skilderye is deur private versamelaars gekoop en dit is net by openbare versamelings soos die William Humphreys-kunsgalery in Kimberley, Durbanse Kunsgalery, Pretoriase Kunsmuseum, Rembrandt Kunsstigting en Schlesinger-organisasie waar haar werk besigtig kan word.

Ormiston was born in Chelmsford, Essex in 1903. Being interested in the arts from a young age, she undertook formal studies at Art Schools in London and Glasgow. She married H.T. Ormiston in 1926 and they settled in South Africa in 1929.

During the next 23 years she devoted her time to her family and raising her children. Not losing contact with developments taking place in modern painting, she showed interest in the art of, particularly, American abstract-expressionists – the influence of this style is visible in her works from 1962 onwards.

It was only in 1952 that Ormiston started painting actively and, at the age of 55 years, she came under the art spotlight with her first solo exhibition, in 1958, at Whippman's Gallery in Johannesburg, and gradually started to the attract the attention of a wide audience. Following the success of this exhibition she held three more, all equally successful.

In 1965 the Ormiston family settled near Durban. During this year she was selected as one of 10 artists to exhibit as South African artists at the Grosvenor Gallery in London. In 1966 she also exhibited at the Republic Festival exhibition in Pretoria.

Due to cataracts, her sight was affected, resulting in restrictions on her painting activities. She did not produce high volumes of work, the total of which amounted to just over one hundred.

Ormiston passed away in 1967, only 14 years after she had begun painting actively. Most of her paintings were purchased by private collectors and it is only in public collections such as in the William Humphreys Gallery in Kimberley, Durban Art Gallery, Pretoria Art Museum, Rembrandt Art Foundation and Schlesinger Organisation where her work can be viewed.

> "*Although there is no evidence of Ormiston having deliberately applied the dictum of Paul Klee, the dual value of her work is best explained in terms of his concept of art, i.e. that its purpose is not simply that of rendering the visible, but by giving visual form to the unseen.*"
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> Esmé Berman (1983:217)

Bronne / Sources:
Berman, E. 1983. *Art & Artists of South Africa*. AA Balkema : Cape Town.

Ormiston, Georgina (1903 – 1967)
African Landscape, 1961
Olieverf op bord / Oil on board

Versameling / Collection:
Rupert Kunsstigting / Rupert Art Foundation, Stellenbosch