

MUSEU NACIONAL
D'ART DE CATALUNYA

THE HEARTBEAT OF NATURE

Drawings from the 19th century from the Museu Nacional collection

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The Museum wished to take advantage of the exhibition devoted to the great master of landscapes, J. M. W. Turner, to show a selection of 87 works. Most of them are sketches from the collection, and many of them are unknown to the general public and have never been exhibited until now.

The exhibition, *The heartbeat of nature*, which includes paintings and artists' albums, explores the attraction that Catalan artists also felt for nature's elements and atmospheric phenomena, influenced by the romantic trend that swept through Europe in the 19th century.

Through the works of such outstanding artists as Baldomer Galofre, Antoni Fabrés, Marià Fortuny, Claudi Lorenzale, Ramon Martí Alsina, Jaume Morera, Nicolau Raurich and Lluís Rigalt, we observe how art turns its back on convention to offer us a new vision of nature, a changing and unpredictable landscape. The pieces created in the open air contrast with the more thoughtful and measured studio works.



The itinerant artist or the nature Rambler

Often the teacher – such as Claudi Lorenzale, who taught Marià Fortuny – would go out with his students to paint in the open air. These sketches, gathered in the artists' notebooks, were then used to produce the work in the studio.

Josep Oriol Mestres

Portrait of Claudi Lorenzale, 1845

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A fascination for the night

Nature is interpreted by many artists of the time as the backdrop for mysteries and legends. Until the 19th century, landscapes represented in paintings were mostly of daylight, but this changed with Romanticism, which moved towards the night and darkness.

Antoni Fabr s

Le lac de la mort (The lake of death), c. 1900

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Claudi Lorenzale

Landscape two men drawing, c. 1840-1850

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Marià Fortuny

African beach, c. 1867

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Nicolau Raurich

Suburbs of Barcelona, c. 1845

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The fragility of being human

Ruins are one of the most important elements of the artistic imagination of the 19th century and, therefore, of Romanticism. They usually symbolise nostalgia for a lost or irretrievable time, and they also portray the image of human vulnerability in the face of the humbling force of nature.

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