

MY SPACE

Rita Martorell

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Born in Zurich but brought up in Catalonia, Rita Martorell has made a name for herself as an artist who specialises in painting portraits of public figures, such as Samuel Eto'o or Michel Houellebecq. Although she now mostly works from Madrid, Rita opened up her studio in Olot and showed us around.

1. **Drawing trophy.** I got it from the former president of the Generalitat Jordi Pujol, when I was only 10. I will never forget that moment as it confirmed for me that I had to continue with my art. After getting my first painting award at seven years old, during my childhood and adolescence I won over 35 awards.

2. **Tommy Robredo trophy.** In 2005, I designed this stainless steel trophy for the wheelchair tennis organisation, the Tommy Robredo Foundation, together with the poster for the third Open International Girona - Costa Brava. I got involved in this project for three reasons: in the first place, I like to participate in charity projects, as I did for Samuel Eto's Foundation. Secondly, tennis is one of my hobbies, and I am fond of challenges and discipline. And thirdly, I love sculpture, volume and space analysis, which have been constants in my way of observing and expressing myself.

3. **Luc Godard's Le Mépris.** I am a film addict, maybe because I like psychology. However, my great discovery was the Filmothèque, to which I was introduced by my colleagues in Strassbourg in the 1990's. Since then I've seen Le Mépris more times than I can remember. The lighting, space, dialogues and tragedy have been an enormous influence on my art.

4. **Michel Houellebecq's Dialogues with Fabianní Belemuski.** In Madrid, I coincided with Michel Houellebecq at a public event. When I read his book, La Carte et le Territoire (García award 2010), I knew that one day I would paint his portrait. The occasion arrived soon after, when a publishing house commissioned his portrait from me for the cover of his latest book.

5. **The book by Gerardo Fernández Albor, La elegancia del Compromiso.** I am honoured to be mentioned in this book by the former president of Galicia. Fernández Albor also mentions the portrait I painted for him in Strassbourg, which is now on show in Berlin's Bundestag gallery of illustrious personalities.

6. **Baltasar Garzón's gown,** almost a fetishistic object for me. The former magistrate of the Audiencia Nacional gave it to me a year ago when I started working on his portrait. Mr. Garzón will be part of my gallery of public figures, people that have stood out through their work and personalities. I am soon going to add Israel's former internal affairs minister, Silhomo Ben Ami, among others.

7. **"Latin Note" pillow.** It is part of my collection designed for the interior design company of the actress Lola Herrera in Madrid. For me it was a new experience in the business world and I found it entertaining, and I am looking forward to similar projects.

8. **My motorcycle helmet.** It's been my favourite means of transport for years. Riding a bike gives me a feeling of freedom and direct contact with the environment. I am a fan of any sport or activity related to motorcycles. I value the sensibility and sense of balance you need for this sport. I had the opportunity to paint the portrait of Marc Colomer, former world champion of indoor trial; when I was painting him, he was injured and he really suffered much more than I did. www.ritamartorell.com



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