

Domenicos Theotocopoulos

Domenicos Theotocopoulos' "sublime work" as he called it, is the *Burial of Count Orgaz* where the nearness of so much happening is astonishing. What is the element that makes this painting a miracle? Leo Bronstein, in one of his texts referring to El Greco's paintings, tries to find an answer:

"Is it the juxtaposition of two worlds that is painted here - heaven and earth; pictorial richness and privation; warmth of tonality and coolness of color contrasts; solitary figures and consolidated forms? Is it conciliation or conflict? Silence. And is the radiant beauty, melancholy, and kindness of all these men's faces a deep memory of ancient Greece? Or is it Greco's rejection of all violence in life -above all the violence of death, the execution and destruction of beautiful faces and beautiful bodies too often seen by him there, in Toledo, when victims of the Inquisition were executed? Yes, that is what it must have been."

El Greco. The pure mystic, the deformer of the body for the triumph of the flaming spirit. The Mannerist. The first Baroque painter. How are the elements of his structure united and separated at the same time? Maybe, the answer is the contrasts within his cool colour scale and his harmonic and centralized tone warmth. His canvases were all-honey, all-gray or all-madder. His compositional schemes are full of contrasts. On the one hand, geometry prevails with its elliptical, triangular concentric forms and, on the other hand, the presence of the irregular or unforeseen is obvious.

A. Questions

1. How did D. Theotocopoulos himself call his *Burial of Count Orgaz*?
2. What makes the above mentioned piece of art astonishing?
3. Does L. Bronstein give only one answer to what makes the above painting a miracle? If not, refer to some.
4. How is El Greco characterized in the text?
5. What is a possible answer to the way with which the elements of El Greco's structure are united and separated at the same time?
6. What were his canvases like?
7. How does geometry prevail in his structure?

