

Júlia Peraire, Ramon Casas' definitive muse

Emiliano Cano Díaz

Over the last few years, the figure of Júlia Peraire i Ricarte (Sant Martí de Provençals, 1888-Barcelona, 1941), a model from 1905 and Ramon Casas' wife from 1922, has quietly begun to take her true place in the painter's artistic work, thanks to the identification and consideration of more than a hundred portraits, including paintings and sketches, that show her as Casas' definitive muse, equal to what Saskia was for Rembrandt, Aline for Raimundo de Madrazo and Gala for Dalí. However, this has not always been the case, and it is worth remembering that never during Casas' life was she mentioned by her name or even her initials in the titles of exhibited works, as was the custom for personal portraits, and while Josep Maria Jordà, Casas' friend and first biographer, did not write even one line about Júlia in his book published in 1931, Alberto del Castillo in his 1958 biography only mentioned her in the chapter on the artist's "complete decline".¹

Bearing in mind the quality of her portraits, it is paradoxical that the entire production of Júlias has been framed within what many consider the painter's "bad period", which grosso modo would coincide with him abandoning the painting of social chronicles, after the official awards received for *La Càrrega* [The Charge], and of the classless Parisian figures that Raimon Casellas liked so much, being the first critic who warned, with indignation, of the painter's new direction. This is what he said in his review of the 5th International Art Exhibition in Barcelona (1907), where for the first time two portraits of Júlia were exhibited: *La Flora* [The Flora] (National Museum of Fine Arts of Havana) and *La Sargantain* (Cercle del Liceu of Barcelona):

"Look at Casas today and compare him with the Casas of a few years ago. Then he was a painter indifferent to daily realities; now he is the artist arranging select situations. (...) And even the figures posed by the professional model [Júlia], garnished as they are with shiny

Fig. 1. (Adjacent page)
With his palette and inseparable pipe, Casas drew himself painting a svelte Júlia Peraire dressed in a Manila shawl with a carnation in her hair.

Júlia Posing for Ramon Casas.
Pencil and watercolour on paper, 1912.



Figs. 2-4. In posters, postcards, illustrations and magazine covers like those shown here, the work of Ramon Casas, Júlia Peraire's face was abundantly reproduced in modernist Barcelona.

.....
Júlia, the Painter.
Cover of *La Campana de Gracia*, issue 2,000, published on 7 September 1907.

.....
Júlia, the Artist.
Cover of *Progreso* magazine, July 1911.

.....
Júlia With a Black Mantilla.
Cover of *Feminal*, 25 April 1915.

fabrics, depicted as they are in a phony attitude and swathed in elegant coquetry, made clear the private effort to embellish, to refine the humble possibilities of vulgar existence.² In the same vein as Casellas, Folch i Torres subsequently expressed himself, as did the aforementioned Castillo, Pla, and later Fontbona and Alcolea Albero (1990), who affirmed that in his last period:

“(...) he chooses what seems to him to be easier and more comfortable. He paints and repaints Julia Peraire and, even worse, Casas, once refined, urban and for some even decadent, becomes a rural landscapist.”³

More recently, in the 2001 anthological exhibition Cristina Mendoza refers to La Sargantain as his last masterpiece, and justifies that “in this exhibition a choice has been made to hint at later works and insist, however, on the works that deservedly made Casas the best painter of Modernisme”,⁴ identical criteria to that followed in the principal 2016 exhibition for the 150th anniversary of Casas’ birth: *Ramon Casas. The Desired Modernity* in which, once again, the last 25 years of the painter’s work were left out. However, it is worth insisting on the artistic validity and interest of Casas’ work in his final stage, and particularly in Júlia’s portraits, as another of Casas’ biographers, Josep F. Rafols, reasoned in a letter dated 6th March 1958 to Ainaud de Lasarte, Director of the Art Museums of Barcelona:

“Perhaps the contrast between Casas’ good period and bad period appears too significantly [in the biography by Alberto del Castillo]. Perhaps, if we wish to be profoundly fair, we should no longer talk of this contrast. Also, everybody has insisted on reminding us that



Fig. 5. Here we see a drawing used as a promotional card for Fayans Català, an establishment that began selling ceramics before expanding its business until advertising as “parfumerie aux fleurs”.

.....
Júlia Holding a Bottle of Perfume.
Charcoal and sanguine on paper, c. 1906.

Casas enjoyed good food and drink. It is true that this contributed to his artistic decadence, but it did not stop him from making (even in his later years) some very expressive faces in the most regal portraits of Júlia.” (Catalonia National Archive).

To finish the review of Júlia’s critical success, one must acknowledge the quantitative leap that the news and images contained in the catalogue raisonné of Ramon Casas by Isabel Coll (1999, 2002) meant for their knowledge and appreciation, where Casas’ final period is dealt with without falling into the former prejudice; as well as novelties in the model’s biography contained in the section “Ramon Casas’ women” in the catalogue for

the *L’Encis de la Dona* [Women’s Charm] (2007) exhibition, by Mercedes Palau-Ribes with the assistance of Josep de C. Laplana. In 2013 the documentary *Júlia*, by Emiliano Cano,⁵ was released covering research on the character later published in *Goya* magazine (2018).⁶ Finally, in 2016 the exhibition *Júlia, el Desig* [Júlia, The Desire] was presented at the Cercle del Liceu in Barcelona, where its curator, Isabel Coll, outlines a very personal vision of Júlia and her circumstances, also managing to bring together a large number of her portraits, although half a dozen of them are really portraits of other models.

DRAWING THE LOTTERY SELLER

Júlia, born “Junia Victoria” on 30th June 1888, sold lottery tickets from 1898 at least, at just 10 years of age, on the corner of the Rambla and the Plaça de Catalunya in front of the Continental

Café terrace. Ramon Casas would not regularly frequent it until the end of 1904 or beginning of 1905, after his Madrid stay of 1904, once the Maison Dorée was opened next to the Continental (14th September 1903), which became the new meeting place for the group of friends after the closure of Els Quatre Gats (26th June 1903). In his biography on Casas (1959), Sánchez de Larragoiti takes credit for having introduced him to Júlia, whom he had previously photographed, and who quickly became the painter’s favourite model.⁷ This is shown by a series of very similar drawings, made for commercial purposes around 1905-1906, in which Casas shows the two profiles of Júlia in different attitudes of half and full-length, always with a low-lying hairstyle. They were used in advertisements for GORGOT LIQUID SOAP, Espasa Encyclopedia, WERTHEIM sewing machines, Fayans Català, on a cover for the magazine *Progreso* [fig. 3], in a drawing of *Júlia Llegint*



Fig. 6. This scene shows us a portrait session in Ramon Casas’ studio in Sant Gervasi, Barcelona.

Júlia Peraire is sitting posing in front of the painter, accompanied by Flora and the photographer Adolf Mas.

Photograph taken by Pelai Mas around 1913.



Fig. 7. In this drawing, Júlia is wearing a typical hat decorated with red dots, which also appears in the work *Hivern* [Winter], an oil painting dated 1912.

Júlia With Hat and Parasol. Charcoal and pastel on paper, c. 1912.



Fig. 8. *The “Five Júlias”* Folding Screen originally decorated the room in the Maricel Palace in Sitges, shown here. It comprised five hinged screens, each decorated with a portrait of Júlia representing different countries: Italy, Spain, France, England and America. The paintings, separated from the whole piece, are currently found in different collections.

[Júlia reading] (private collection), and in another for the *Álbum de Pintores Catalanes Dedicado a Alfonso XIII* [Album of Catalan painters for Alfonso XIII], where some originals were hastily gathered together as a gift for the King upon his marriage to Victoria Eugenia of Battenberg.

Ricard Salvá (Andrés Corzuelo) is the first journalist to notice the young lottery seller’s presence in an article on the aforementioned 5th International Art Exhibition of Barcelona (1907), which he revealingly entitled “Julia”. In it he refers to the two exhibited portraits where:

“The artist knew to embody two forms of Julia’s soul: the concern for the present by knitting her brows and smiling as a mask against sorrows [*La Sargantain*], and a smile in sheer joy of living [*La Flora*].”⁸

The title *La Sargantain* no doubt comes from the frenchification of a Catalan word “sargantana” [lizard], as the work appeared with that exact title: *La Sargantana*, in the Catalan version of the magazine *Forma*. Its reproduction in this publication, published by Utrillo and Casas, also has the peculiarity of showing the work unfinished, still unsigned



Fig. 9. This scene is part of an album of Ramon Casas’ drawings that belonged to Charles Deering. This notebook is an example of the artist’s habit of setting down those events and news that were worth highlighting, preferably using images rather than written chronicles.

The “Five Júlias”
Folding Screen
(Self-portrait With Júlia).
Pencil, ink
and watercolours
on paper, c. 1911.

and with the model’s left hand completely visible. This would later be hidden by a series of somewhat rough brushstrokes, that remove some strength from the figure perhaps to show her as less shameless. For the rest, using the nickname “Sargantain” to refer to Júlia was not at all unusual as Casas and Utrillo were very prone to using them. Casas’s close friends called him “Ciscu” or “Francisquet”, Rusiñol was “Mus”, Clarasó “Vicentó”, and Utrillo “Señor Domingo”. Even the model seems to have been part of the game to invent nicknames, as there is a postcard from Casas to Júlia, dated 17th June 1910, when they already had a sentimental relationship, in which the painter signs off with a name that the model could have given him in the intimacy of the couple: “El Raret” [the little strange one].

From the number of references that have reached us, it seems obvious that Júlia did not go unnoticed in her job as a lottery seller. Francesc Cambó remembers her in his memoirs from a brief encounter they had on the terrace of the Maison Dorée in July 1907, while in 1908 she is once again acknowledged in the press as the poster model for the Jochs Florals de Barcelona [Floral Games of Barcelona]:

“A damsel, which can be said to give importance to the matter, turns out to be the lottery seller who normally sits in her booth between the Continental and the Maison Dorée, who undoubtedly has been the artist’s model”.⁹

This extremely elegant poster is connected with a second set of sketches done around 1907-1908, before Casas’ trip to America: three of them are probably different versions of the same poster, with Júlia dressed in a white tunic knotted on her left shoulder (Galería Gothsland [fig. 17] and private collection). Another two sketches show the model with a flower in her hair and would be projects for some kind

of advertising, almost all of them sharing the peculiarity of being stamped “r. casas”, in other words, they were found unsigned in Casas’ workshop after his death as working material and were marked by the executors as the painter’s original work. From this time several portraits of Júlia have been preserved with handwritten inscriptions by Casas (private collection and Fundación AMYC), a *Júlia Pintora* [Júlia Painter] for the cover of *La Campana de Gracia* [fig. 21], another *Mirant l’Il·lustració* [Looking at the illustration] published in *Il·lustració Catalana*, and another *Reverie* in the magazine *Hojas Selectas*.

Casas’ trip to America between November 1908 and April 1909 invited by Deering marks a break in his work and in his relationship with the lottery seller. This trip arose after the death of Emília Huet (10th September 1908), Casas’ “official” girlfriend from 1890 but with whom he never got engaged. On his return to Barcelona one can perceive a change in the painter’s way of looking at his model; she poses and dresses more elegantly and with more determination. From 1909 there is a sketch of Júlia in a close-fitting white dress with a large black hat with feathers, preserved in an album of Casas’ sketches

that belonged to Charles Deering [fig. 15]. There is an oil painting showing Júlia with the same clothing, dedicated to “my friend Charles Deering”, which was part of the “Exhibition of old and modern portraits and drawings” in Barcelona in 1910. Its title: *Lady N. D.*, could refer to a new nickname, the meaning of which he wished to keep secret.

In May 1910, the relationship now official, the couple travelled to Paris, where we find a timid greeting from Júlia to Utrillo in a letter written by Casas: “Regards, Julia”. From the same trip there is also a postcard from her sister, Flora Peraire, who states her satisfaction “for the happiness and wellbeing” her letters revealed, perhaps due to the excitement produced by her first trip abroad. The large number of oil paintings and sketches of Júlia from this time makes one think that around 1910 she worked as a model full-



Fig. 10. Here is a photograph of the painting *La Sargantain* taken during the process, before its completion. There are noticeable differences with the finished work. Here Júlia’s left hand appears, which was later eliminated.

.....
Photograph published in *Forma*, July 1907.



Fig. 11. The oil painting *La Sargantain*, shown here, was exhibited in the 5th International Art Exhibition of Barcelona and purchased by the Cercle del Liceu in Barcelona, where it still hangs in one of the rooms. The upper and lower sections of the painting, which did not form part of Casas’ final version and were folded back, were recovered in 1986 during restoration of the work, unfolding and incorporating them into the picture.

.....
La Sargantain.
Oil painting on canvas, c. 1906.

time, although written confirmation comes from a reference in the press the following year, in which she is referred to as “Casas’ ex-lottery seller”.¹⁰ Various preparatory sketches are preserved from these years, which coincide with the clothing worn by Júlia on a five-panel folding screen at Maricel, the set of buildings purchased by Charles Deering in Sitges under the direction of Miguel Utrillo. Various charcoal portraits of the model are also known to be in private collections, and others belonging to the aforementioned album at Northwestern University. In 1911 Casas took part in the “6th Inter-

national Art Exhibition of Barcelona” with two portraits of Júlia. Of one of them, the splendid *Estudi de Dona* [Study of a Woman], which was reproduced in the exhibition catalogue, two charcoal studies are preserved (Galería Gothsland and a private collection) in which the model appears dressed up with a feather boa and a white fox fur muff, a dark leather hat and a small bouquet of flowers. Folch i Torres, in his exhibition critique, after acknowledging they were two exquisite examples of Casas’ work, although “extremely repetitive and insignificant for his art”,¹¹ asks himself whether Casas painted solely to achieve some prestige, the implicit answer being that his painting lost interest once official awards were obtained. It is a very hard critique in line with a letter he sent to Utrillo from Paris on 17th September 1913, in which the historian comments with disdain the indifference he felt when meeting Casas if the latter was accompanied by Júlia: “meeting with such company was of no interest to me either”. So it would be worth asking whether what Folch disliked about Casas’ recent work was actually the model, who in that year, 1913, a little after the

death of Casas’ mother, had moved in with the painter (ignoring the social and religious conventions of the time) to a “torre” on Carrer Descartes in Sant Gervasi, on the outskirts of Barcelona. This is how Sánchez de Larragoiti described the situation (1959):

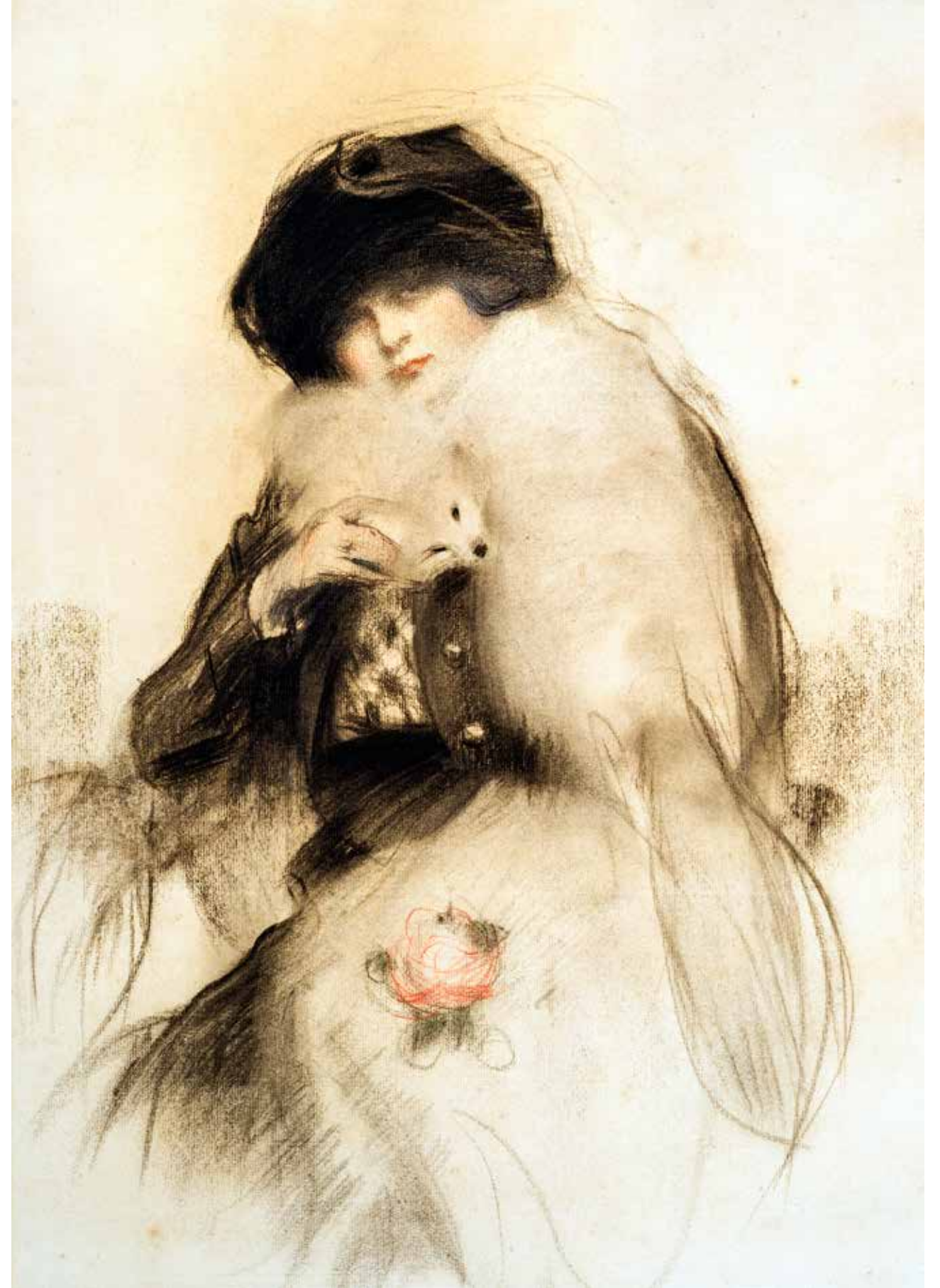
“It could well be said that this is an unusual case, almost unbelievable, and that if the artist had not been the unconcerned and unprejudiced man he was, that union could not have formed in the way it did. But Ramon Casas, with his innate humour, laughed, with passion, at the nonsense and impertinence of the world; particularly, of that nosey and critical world, so willing to crush others’ lives, putting it down to an endless number of unreal eccentricities. No, Ramon Casas lived isolated, far from all the malevolent riffraff, he lived for his art and passionately united with Júlia, his wife.”¹²



Figs. 12-13. Women dressed in fox or ermine furs, as seen here, are often seen in Casas’ portraits.

Study of a Woman.
Oil painting on
canvas, c. 1911.

.....
(opposite page)
Study of a Woman.
Charcoal and pastel
on paper, c. 1911.



Júlia's humble background and her job as a lottery seller have contributed over the years to giving her that romantic, fantastic aura, of a girl from the gutter who ended up marrying a rich man, and who in this case was also an artist. A mythical idea, a cliché, which although it may seem older was actually conceived precisely at the time Júlia and Casas' story was developing. So, Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion*, which narrates the education of a street flower seller by an upper class phonetics professor, was written in London in

1912. In Spain, the cuplé singer Raquel Meller began to sing *La Billetera* [The Lottery Seller] by Borguñó/Blanch that same year, and a little later she would also sing *La Violetera* [The Violet Seller] by Padilla/Montesinos, which became extremely popular. In Catalonia, two of Casas' close friends, Enric Morera and Ignasi Iglesias, were the writer-composers of *La Billeteraire* [The Lottery Girl], a "cançoneta" [little song] which includes a verse "a very rich old man ... mischievous / because he has sympathy for me / he wants to set me up a lottery booth ... / in a charming little flat", which could well have been inspired by Júlia and Casas' story, although its exact date of composition is not known.

In 1913, having just moved into his new home in Sant Gervasi, Ramon Casas had a workshop with a garage built next door which was accessed via a narrow door concealed by a charcoal nude of Júlia, drawn on canvas and mounted on a frame, its whereabouts are currently unknown. Several photos of the studio are kept in the Mas Archive, two with Júlia posing full-length, and two others in which appear Ramon Casas, who is

sketching her, Flora Peraire, and the photographers Adolf Mas and Pelai Mas, father and son, who each appear in one of the photos [fig. 6]. From 1914-1915 three bust sketches of Júlia are known from private collections, and another half-length marked with a stamp, in which she is wearing a large hat full of flowers, probably a study for a very similar oil painting portrait in which Júlia is wearing a wedding ring. Also from that time is the poster for the Tibidabo Cup organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Catalonia (Catalonia National Art Museum-MNAC), and a sketch of Júlia with a black mantilla which was the cover of the monthly supplement *Feminal*, published by *Il·lustració Catalana* [fig. 4]. Several of these works were exhibited in January 1915 in a joint exhibition in the Sala Parés together with works by Rusiñol and Clarasó, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the first joint exhibition of the inseparable friends. Here the oil painting and sketches of Júlia were interspersed with those of another, Andalusian, model with dark eyes, who had begun to pose for Casas around 1912.



Fig. 14. Above, a bust of Júlia —a fragment of a full-length portrait—it is one of the five paintings on vertical panels that, together, comprised *The "Five Júlias" Folding Screen*. The location of the work is unknown.
.....
Júlia in a White Dress and Large Hat. Oil painting by Ramon Casas reproduced on the cover of *La Esfera*, 11 December 1915.



Fig. 15. Here we see a sketch of Júlia that Ramon Casas made after returning from his first trip to the United States and which he sent to his host, Charles Deering. The drawing shows a new way of depicting his favourite model, representing her as more sophisticated and elegant.
.....
Sketch for the painting *Júlia in a White Dress and Large Hat*. Pencil and tempera on paper, Barcelona, 1909.



Fig. 16. Here is an example of the great variety of folkloric Júlias that Casas depicted, dressed in mantillas, shawls, combs, fans, and many of them wearing a flower in her hair.

Júlia With a White Mantilla and a Flower in Her Hair.
Charcoal and pastel on paper, c. 1912.

At the end of 1919 Júlia became ill, so Casas decided to rent a little house in Caldetas so she could recover. Casas had found refuge in this same place in 1886, at twenty years of age, to cure himself of a bout of tuberculosis with the help of his cousin, Dr. Miquel Carbó. The painter managed to recover well, and according to Pompeu Gener, “elegant and delicate as a youngster, he became a robust young man with a thick beard, broad shoulders and a healthy colour.”¹³ As for Júlia, we can assume her health problems were similarly resolved in the coastal village.

At the beginning of the 1920s two new important events occurred in the painter’s life, the end of his friendship with Utrillo, arising from the latter’s broken friendship with Deering, and the death of his older sister, Montserrat Casas, on 18th March 1922. A few months later, on 28th September, Casas and Júlia got married in the Bonanova Church in Sant Gervasi, with Miquel Carbó and Jaume Serra (the husband of Lluçiana Peraire, Júlia’s sister) acting as groomsmen, and Enric de Fuentes and Enric Clarasó as witnesses. Júlia was 34 years old at that time, and although the reason for driving the couple to seal their union is unknown, the fact is that that same year Ramon Casas drew the poster *La Tuberculosis Amenaza la Vida i la Riquesa de Catalunya* [Tuberculosis Threatens the Life and Wealth of Catalonia], in which Júlia represents a mother hugging her daughters. However, the couple did not have children. Various charcoal portraits of Júlia have been preserved from that period: two in which she is wrapped in fox fur (both in a private collection), and another watercolour with loose hair and a loose dress (MNAC), of easy and brilliant execution, which shows a more mature Júlia, but with the same intense gaze coming from her first portraits.

In 1923, Casas travelled to the United States to visit his friend Deering, and he returned the following year, this time accompanied by his wife. They left Barcelona at the end of February 1924 and after a turbulent crossing they reached Havana, from there going to Key West, Florida, on 21st March. The immigration forms of the SS Governor Cobb provide some interesting details about the couple, such as their heights: Casas measured 5’9”, and Júlia 5’6”; their hair and eye colour: black and brown in both cases (this detail could help dismiss some blue-eyed models who have been identified as Júlia); and their skin colour: dark in Casas’ case and light in Júlia’s. After living in the Deering’s summer house in Cutler, Florida, for a month, the couple moved to Chicago and Bos-

Figs. 17-18. In the first portraits of Júlia we see Casas’ inclination to depict her in profile. Here, two portrait examples: posing in profile and full-length.

Júlia in Profile With a Flower in Her Hair. Oil painting on a postcard, c. 1906.

Júlia in a Red Dress and Shawl. Pencil and tempera on paper, 1912.



ton, where Casas continued to draw charcoal portraits of the American's friends and acquaintances for 200 dollars a piece, "this is a vineyard!!!" [a Catalan proverb meaning it is good business] exclaimed Casas in a letter to Clarasó, although a little later from Chicago, where prohibition prevailed, he changed his mind to confess that he now thought, "with the vineyards of Catalonia, although they don't produce dollars like here, they produce wine and I cannot comprehend one without the other". The last city they visited was New York, and from there the couple returned

to Barcelona via Plymouth and Paris at the end of June. Just before this trip to the US, Casas had exhibited a new type of work at the Sala Parés, together with his close friends Rusiñol and Clarasó, which reveals his interest in continuing to show new things in each exhibition he attended. In this case they were three domestic scenes in which Júlia appears in everyday poses with her pug, while in 1926 they were landscapes of Tamarit and a domestic scene of Júlia in the bathroom. No preparatory drawings or studies are known of these last paintings in which his wife appears.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FINAL YEARS

The couple's relationship with Júlia's family seems to have always been close, little wonder Júlia's mother, María Ricarte Moreno, lived with them for many years in the torre on Carrer Descartes, where she had a room decorated with a drawing of her daughter, another of her deceased husband Marcos Peraire, a drawing of the Virgin Mary with child published in *Pèl & Ploma*, and one of another daughter, probably *Flora* (Inventory of the Catalonia National Archive). Regarding the relationship with the painter's family, which has traditionally been considered distant, the preserved photographs seem to indicate it would only strengthen in the final years of Casas' life, particularly after Glòria Codina's marriage to Artur Riera on 27th June 1929, in which the painter was the bride's best man. Thus, both Júlia and her mother appear in the family photo of the wedding, kept in the Mas Archive, and also in other photos in Sant Benet and in Blanes, together with Ramon Casas, his sister Elisa and her children: Glòria, Elisa and Santiago, as well as other relatives.

On 13th June 1931, Rusiñol's death in Aranjuez was a hard blow for Casas emotionally, made worse by an illness he had had all year. On the occasion of the annual Casas-



Fig. 19. Here Júlia is representing Flora, in a sketch where she appears sitting on the goddess's carriage, which was not included in the final composition.

.....
Sketch for the *Floral Games of Barcelona* poster. Charcoal and pastel on paper, c. 1908.



Fig. 20. An example of the series of six canvasses painted by Casas depicting Júlia in different parts of the Monastery of Sant Benet de Bages, dressed as a nun from the Order of Calatrava. This work appeared in the Casas-Clarasó-Rusiñol exhibition in the Sala Parés held in January 1915.

.....
Júlia Dressed as a Nun in the Sant Benet Cloisters. Oil painting on canvas, c. 1914.



Figs. 21-22. Here we see Júlia in a preliminary sketch by Casas. The adjacent page shows the drawing applied to a printed advertising postcard for the Espasa Encyclopaedia.

.....
Júlia, the Writer.
Charcoal on paper, c. 1907.
.....
(Adjacent page)
Promotional postcard for Espasa Encyclopaedia, c. 1907.

Clarasó-Rusiñol exhibition, this time held as a posthumous homage to Rusiñol, Casas acknowledged to a newspaper that: “This has finished, it is the last exhibition of my works; that is why some of them are not finished, because I can’t do it ... I am a walking dead man; my eyes don’t see colour.”¹⁴ Scarcely two months later, on 29th February 1932 at 8 o’clock in the evening, Ramon Casas died from uremia at his home in Descartes, where his wife received condolences from friends and public figures from Barcelona over the following days. In the photographs of the funeral, which was held on 2nd March, the absence of women is surprising. This may correspond to a social usage, although there are photographs of Clotilde, Joaquín Sorolla’s widow, who could also be considered that painter’s muse, at the head of his funeral rites in the streets of Valencia just a few years before.

Between April and July 1932, the lawyers Algarra, Hurtado and Serrahima acted as mediators between Júlia Peraire and Elisa Casas, the painter’s sister, to resolve the differences arising from Casas’ will, made three years before. From analysis of the process documents (Catalonia National Archive) it is deduced that it was an amicable agreement, in which a few paintings and drawings, particularly family portraits from the first period, were reassigned to Elisa, together with two medals, some jewellery and foreign currency kept in a wallet that was deposited in a safe in the Credit Lyonnais bank. In the same safe there were

two backpacks and a leather case with jewellery and coins “which Júlia states as being hers”, an affirmation that was respected in the agreement, which corroborates the assignment of these goods to the widow. There is a list with its description written by Júlia, where it can be observed that at 43 years old she continued using childish handwriting, a sign of having left school early as she had to work as a lottery seller from a very young age.

After a life marked by luck and art, on 18th January 1941 at 9 o’clock in the evening, Júlia Peraire died in her home in Sant Gervasi from viral bronchopneumonia, and was buried next to her mother María Ricarte, who died from the same illness on 11th February the year before, and Ramon Casas in the Montjuic cemetery. These days a gravestone remains engraved with “Casas Family”, although in an official notice on 29th May 1990, the Barcelona Funeral Services gave a 30-day deadline with no option to extend it to

regularise the payment situation of the family grave, which was in Júlia’s name, otherwise it would revert back to the City Council. The historian Palau-Ribes wrote a letter a few months later in the newspaper *La Vanguardia* “with profound sadness and indignation” upon finding out that the couple’s remains “were thrown into the Montjuic cemetery charnel house”. Casas, the letter ended, “did not deserve this ingratitude.”¹⁵

Endnotes

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