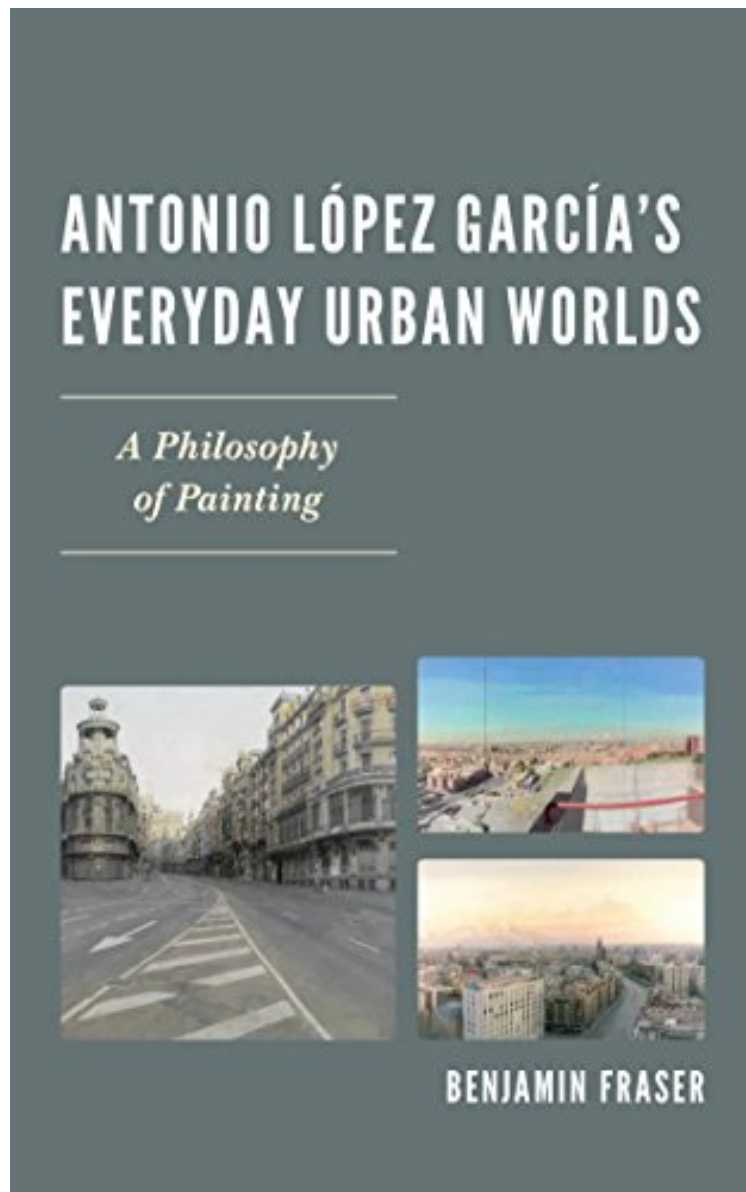


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Benjamin Fraser

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Benjamin Fraser : Antonio López García's Everyday Urban Worlds: A Philosophy of Painting before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Antonio López García's Everyday Urban Worlds: A Philosophy of Painting:

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in black and white, and when an art book is nearly all text, and when a book on a brilliant artist is written by a professor of Foreign Languages and Literature you know you are in for some (publish or perish) turgid reading. THERE ARE NO VERBAL EQUIVALENTS FOR VISUAL EVENTS! and beyond a little biographical info. and the words of the artist, books like this one impart little useful information.

Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutearsquo;s *Everyday Urban Worlds: A Philosophy of Painting* is the first book to give the famed Spanish artist the critical attention he deserves. Born in Tomelloso in 1936 and still living in the Spanish capital today, Antonio Loacutepz has long cultivated a reputation for impressive urban scenesmdash;but it is urban time that is his real subject. Going far beyond mere artist biography, Benjamin Fraser explores the relevance of multiple disciplines to an understanding of the paintersquo;s large-scale canvasses. Weaving selected images together with their urban referentsmdash;and without ever straying too far from discussion of the paintersquo;s oeuvre, method and reception by criticsmdash;Fraser pulls from disciplines as varied as philosophy, history, Spanish literature and film, cultural studies, urban geography, architecture, and city planning in his analyses. The book begins at ground level with one of the artistsquo;s most recognizable images, the *Gran Viacutega*, which captures the urban project that sought to establish Madrid as an emblem of modernity. Here, discussion of the artistsquo;s chosen painting stylemdash;one that has been referred to as a *hyperrealism*mdash;is integrated with the central streetsquo;s history, the capital's famous literary figures, and its filmic representations, setting up the philosophical perspective toward which the book gradually develops. Chapter two rises in altitude to focus on Madrid desde Torres Blancas, an urban image painted from the vantage point provided by an iconic high-rise in the north-central area of the city. Discussion of the Spanish capital's northward expansion complements a broad view of the artistsquo;s push into representations of landscape and allows for the exploration of themes such as political conflict, social inequality, and the accelerated cultural change of an increasingly mobile nation during the 1960s. Chapter three views Madrid desde la torre de bomberos de Vallecas and signals a turn toward political philosophy. Here, the size of the artistsquo;s image itself foregrounds questions of scale, which Fraser paints in broad strokes as he blends discussions of artistry with the turbulent history of one of Madrid's outlying districts and a continued focus on urban development and its literary and filmic resonance. Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutearsquo;s *Everyday Urban Worlds* also includes an artist timeline, a concise introduction and an epilogue centering on the artistsquo;s role in the Spanish film *El sol del membrillo*. The book's clear style and comprehensive endnotes make it appropriate for both general readers and specialists alike.

"For decades, Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutega has defamiliarized Madrid in his paintings, and in Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutega's *Everyday Urban Worlds: A Philosophy of Painting*, Benjamin Fraser defamiliarizes Loacutepz's paintings. He looks, thinks, feels, and walks us through the artistsquo;s seen-and-unseen Madrid in a journey that is in equal parts realistic and oneiric, and he does so with telling accuracy. Loacutepz is eminently a painter of place, and Fraser takes us in and out of the frames in a constant movement between the canvas and its social surroundings. But he also shows us that Loacutepz is just as eminently a painter of time, and he guides us to Madrid's past and its historical and artistic links to the present. The result is an important contribution to the study of contemporary Madrid and its culture." (Edward Baker, author of *Madrid Cosmopolita: La Gran Viacutega 1910-1936* and *Materiales para escribir Madrid*) Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutearsquo;s *Everyday Urban Worlds* confirms Fraser's growing reputation as the leading practitioner of cultural geography in the field of Hispanic studies. His look at three key Loacutepz paintings begins as a critical stroll through a half century of life and literature in Spain's capital city but quickly morphs into an often breathtaking tour de force analysis of cultural artifacts, historical detail, and spatial theory wherein the processes of the very urbanization of consciousness are laid bare. At the same time, by highlighting the dialogue of these paintings with not merely the city as object but with the rich complexity of urbanization as process, Fraser breathes new life into the Loacutepz oeuvre, gifting the artist the critical attention he clearly merits. (Nathan Richardson, associate professor of Spanish and chair of the Department of Romance and Classical Studies, Bowling Green State University) Taking his cue from Loacutepz Garciacutega, a self-described tireless city stroller, Fraser expertly moves through vast expanses of urban time and space to peel back the layers of each localersquo;s discursive palimpsest, integrating commentary of well-known representations of Madrid created by the capital city's most attentive observers (like authors Larra, Mesonero Romanos, Galdoacutegs, Martiacutegn Santos, and filmmakers Nieves Conde or Amenaacutegbar); histories of turn-of-the-century urban expansion, postwar speculation, immigration and neighborhood associations; and urban philosophy, especially the work of Henri Lefebvre. Fraser's great achievement is to present the landscapes in Loacutepz's communicateacutegs as a deeply human invitation for us to connect the lived spaces of the city with a greater understanding of our contemporary urban condition. (Francie Cate-Arries, professor of Spanish at the College of William and Mary) Antonio Loacutepz Garciacutearsquo;s *Everyday Urban Worlds: A Philosophy of Painting* carries the reader on an interdisciplinary journey through painting, philosophy, art criticism, Spanish literature and film, history and culture, immigration, architecture, urban planning, and more. Appropriate for general readers from

numerous disciplines and with rigorous endnotes appealing to the specialist, each chapter is inspired by a single image by the Spanish artist (Gran Viacut;a, Madrid desde Torres Blancas, and Madrid desde la Torre de Bomberos de Vallecas).About the AuthorBenjamin Fraser is professor and chair of foreign languages and literatures in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences at East Carolina University.