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Charles Lisanby, the artist: Defining masculinity through the matador

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Charles Lisanby, the Artist: Defining Masculinity Through the Matador

A Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Visual and Performing Arts
James Madison University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

by Michelle Nicole Strickland

May 2014

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Art, Design, and Art History, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	3
Preface	4
Acknowledgements	5
Introduction	6
Charles the Man	7
Significance of the Bullfight	9
Lisanby's Interest in the Bullfight and Matador	12
Appendix	25
Bibliography	34

List of Figures

Images

1. Figure 1	25
2. Untitled Matador 2	25
3. Figure 3	26
4. Untitled Matador 1	26
5. Painting for Untitled Matador 1	27
6. Figure 6	27
7. Figure 7	28
8. The Agility and Audacity of Juanito Apinani in the Ring at Madrid	28
9. Diversion de Espana	29
10. The Forceful Rendon Stabs a Bull with the Pique, from Which Pass He Died in the Ring at Madrid	29
11. Figure 11	30
12. Sketch 1 for Untitled Matador 1	30
13. Sketch 2 for Untitled Matador 1	31
14. Standing Matador Sketch	31
15. Pepe Hillo Sketch	32
16. Ole! Ole! Poster	32
17. Figure 17	33

Preface

This text serves as a catalogue for the exhibit, *Charles Lisanby, the Artist: Defining Masculinity Through the Matador*, which is on view in JMU's Lisanby Museum from March 31-May 2, 2014. I served as the curator for this exhibit, selecting the works of art to be presented, designing the exhibition layout, and researching the works in order to adequately educate the public on the collection of works. This catalogue and the accompanying iBooks, which are on view at the exhibit, serve as educational material, providing insight for the audience on the significance and context of the works of art. This exhibit is a creative project and not a traditional work of research.

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I would like to thank the Lisanby family for providing artworks for the exhibit and aiding in our research on Charles Lisanby.

Introduction

Charles Lisanby is an Emmy Award-winning set designer for American television and theater. As the production designer for the first non-new television broadcast, the first mini-series, and the first MTV Music Video awards, his pioneering techniques for scenic designs are still used to this day. Lisanby was so successful in part because of his training in the fine and graphic arts. Every weekend, he worked with his other artistic friends such as Andy Warhol, in his New York studio apartment. Through these collaborations, Lisanby identified his individual artistic style and aesthetic. The aesthetic works he produced demonstrate a profound interest in images of successful, strong and elegant men. His works focusing on the Spanish matador, specifically those illustrating the matadors role as the ultimate definition of masculinity, are an excellent example of this. Charles Lisanby's paintings of Spanish matadors create an image of modern man that is full of vigor and grace, illustrating his own idyllic vision of masculinity during the 20th century. He used his paintings of Spanish matadors in his work as a set designer, using them as inspiration for the costume and set design for Spanish scenes of Flamenco dancers and bullfights.

Charles the Man

Charles Lisanby was born in 1924 in the small town of Princeton, Kentucky and grew up on his family's farm on the outskirts of town. Lisanby's interest in art can be traced back to his early childhood. His mother was an artist so he grew up in an environment that encouraged his artistic interest and growth. Lisanby graduated early from high school at the age of sixteen and won a scholarship to go to an art school in Nashville. Although his father wanted him to go to medical school and become a doctor, Lisanby pursued his dreams in the arts and enrolled at the Nashville art school in 1940. Because he promised his father to enroll in medical school if he could not become a successful artist, he studied advertising art and illustrations, choosing practical application over art for art sake.¹

As Charles worked as a set designer, he continued his interest in the realm of both historical and modern fine arts. While working for the Gary Moore show, he worked for thirty-nine weeks of the year with thirteen weeks off for vacation. With this free time Lisanby traveled to Europe every summer, exploring historical culture through their art. He went to Europe every summer for ten years where he saw first-hand all the works he had studied in art history textbooks. For example, Lisanby was fascinated by Francisco de Goya's depictions of Spanish culture, which heavily influenced his work as an artist and set designer. Lisanby accumulated an immense amount of cultural and artistic education through these travels and used this knowledge in his work in Hollywood and in New York City to create modern images of these different cultures for Americans. His interest in the bullfight and role of the matador is a prime example of

¹ Charles Lisanby, interview by Karen Herman, "Archive of American Television," Cassette, March 22, 2007.

how his interpretations became the “reality” consumed by Americans through television entertainment.

Significance of the Bullfight

Bullfighting is one of the most renowned traditions in Spain and serves as a defining characteristic of the country's cultural identity. With the summer season of bullfighting celebrated throughout the country, many have even termed the bullfight “The Fiesta Nacional”, furthering the bullfight as a national celebration of culture.² As a result, the mere image of a bull has become a national symbol for Spain, appearing on nearly every travel pamphlet or tourist souvenir. The bull is still internationally known as the emblem of Spain and is part of the country's distinct identity.

The symbolism of movements within bullfights is what creates much of the artistic aesthetic within the performance, holding honor and masculinity as the most central notions. Bullfighters embody “Senequismo”, or Spanish stoicism, which is characterized by honor, passion, artistic ability and intelligence.³ As a structuring value for Spanish society, honor is the most revered and significant of these characteristics. These characteristics are demonstrated through the bullfighters’ ability to control, contain, and finally kill the bull.⁴ In contrast, Lisanby demonstrated these characteristics of stoicism solely through the imagery of the matador, completely excluding the bull. Lisanby successfully illustrates the power, honor, and artistic ability of the matador without any references to the actual bullfight.

Although Lisanby never depicted the matador’s interaction with the bull, he used his knowledge of these encounters to structure his image of the matador. For example, during a

² Stanley Brandes, "Trophiles and Trophobes: The Politics of Bulls and Bullfighting in Contemporary Spain," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 82, no. 3 (2009): 779-794, 780.

³ Carrie B. Douglass, "'toro muerto, vaca es': An Interpretation of the Spanish Bullfight," *American Ethnologist*, 11, no. 2 (1984): 242-258, 242.

⁴ Carrie B. Douglass, "'toro muerto, vaca es': An Interpretation of the Spanish Bullfight," *American Ethnologist*, 11, no. 2 (1984): 242-258, 245.

bullfight, the actual killing of the bull is what ultimately asserts the bullfighters masculinity. As the sword penetrates the bull, the bullfighters' manliness enhances as he conquers the bull and the bull is made feminine through its act of dying.⁵ The sword becomes a tool of masculinity for the matador, making it possible for him to assert his mastery and dominance on the bull in a definitive manner. The conquered animal appears feminine through its vulnerability and weakness. Throughout the performance, as the matador taunts the bull, the bull appears like a foolish brute animal in comparison to the perceptive elegance of the matador. However, the moment the sword penetrates the bull is when the man is proven to be undeniably superior. With the death of the bull serving as a conclusion to the bullfight, the performance is meant as a demonstration of man's superiority over the beast. Lisanby illustrates this superiority by excluding the bull in his work, demonstrating the bull as an insignificant part of the performance. Lisanby's ability to demonstrate the virility of the matador without the bull illustrates his intense belief in the power of the matador. The matador does not need the bull to illustrate his strength and expertise; these characteristics are inherent to the matador and present in every aspect of his personality.

Although a violent event, the act of killing the bull serves as part of the aesthetic beauty of the performance. Timothy J. Mitchell, who has written several books on the historical complexities of bullfighting and flamenco dancing, said that, "A dead bull is what remains at the end of the process, but it is the skill with which death is administered that constitutes *raison d'être* for the matador's performance and its one valid aesthetic criterion".⁶ The killing of the bull must be clean and precise, not an act of brutal fury. Every aspect of a bullfight follows the

⁵ Carrie B. Douglass, "'toro muerto, vaca es': An Interpretation of the Spanish Bullfight," *American Ethnologist*, 11, no. 2 (1984): 242-258, 245.

⁶ Timothy J. Mitchell, "Bullfighting: The Ritual Origin of Scholarly Myth," *The Journal of American Folklore*, 99, no. 394 (1986): 394-414, 396.

theme of grace and precision, especially the killing of the bull. The inherent mayhem of death must be non-existent, instead appearing as fluid and agile, requiring even more skill than the actual teasing of the bull. The killing of the bull is the grand finale to an artistic performance, holding the power to either further establish or destroy the aesthetic worth of the entire ceremony.

Serving as a public spectacle, the role of bullfighting has progressed from a cultural performance to a tourist attraction and commercial enterprise. It is seen as a form of exotic entertainment, central to one's experience of Spain. However, the bullfight isn't merely a cultural event, but holds political significance as well. In November of 2013, Spain's Senate established bullfighting as a cultural heritage, therefore allowing public funds to support and sustain the industry. This decision wasn't without controversy, as many animal rights activists were outraged that the government was promoting a tradition which they deemed as cruel and outdated.⁷ Nonetheless, the bullfights establishment as a cultural heritage speaks to its dominance within Spanish culture.

⁷ Fiona Govan. The Telegraph, "Spain Grants Bullfighting Protected Status." Last modified October 3, 2013. Accessed November 21, 2013.

Lisanby's Interest in the Bullfight and Matador

Searching through Lisanby's artistic work and inspirational material, the imagery and information on bullfights and matadors is remarkably extensive. His initial interest began after he personally witnessed a bullfight in Spain (See Lisanby personal photograph in figure 1). Lisanby experienced first-hand the drama, terror, anxiety, excitement, and poetic violence of an authentic Spanish bullfight. An authentic bullfight is not only a beacon of Spanish culture, but a test of the audiences own emotions and courage as they connect with the matadors tensions and fears and witness the brutality of death. Matadors display the ultimate definition of masculinity as they not only face a vicious and unpredictable bull, but actually challenge and taunt it. The matador's inherent virility captured Lisanby's interest, evident in his paintings, which focus more on the matador than the actual bullfight. Lisanby modified the image of the Spanish matador to emphasize the matador's role as an entertainer. He synthesized his various sources of inspiration and foundational education on the bullfight, utilizing the elements that fit his image of the matador as a performer. Lisanby illustrates the grace and poise of the matador instead of the violence and brutality, transforming the way in which we view masculinity.

Masculinity is essential to the role of the matador. Once a man becomes a matador, his manliness becomes irrefutable. It is essential for the audience to see and feel the strength of the matador in order for them to trust him. Although they expect and want to feel the drama and tension of the bullfight, they trust that nothing will go tragically wrong and the matador knows what he is doing. Lisanby recognized that the bullfight relies on the foundation of masculinity and intended to illustrate the intrinsic vigor, strength, and grace that defines the matador.

Once Lisanby's interest in the bullfight began, he started collecting books on the history of bullfighting. Lisanby's collection of books contains a variety of different sources exploring the realm of Spanish bullfights, including three of the six volumes of the most comprehensive and complete text on the history of bullfighting and matadors, Jose Maria de Cossio's *Los Toros*. Cossio published the first volume of *Los Toros* in 1943 after the Spanish Civil War. Jose Maria de Cossio's work reawakened the interest and discussion on bullfights after a period of time when traditional Spanish cultural events, such as bullfights, were rare because of the civil war at the time. Cossio wrote six volumes of *Los Toros* before his death in 1977, with each volume containing nearly 1, 000 pages each. This extensive set of literature explores every imaginable aspect of bullfighting, from every individual bullfighter, bullring and bull of significance up until that time. The texts were more descriptive than interpretative, producing a historically detailed account on the entire realm of bullfighting up until Cossio's death. Whether Lisanby acquired *Los Toros* merely as an addition to his collection of works on bullfighting, or intended to read and learn more about bullfighting through these books, his deep intrigue into the lengthy history and detail of bullfighting is clear.

Lisanby also owned Ernest Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon*, which provides a historical account of bullfighting while also illustrating it as one of the most intensely spirited artistic forms. Hemingway describes the beauty of bullfights as an "emotional and spiritual intensity and pure classic beauty that can be produced by a man, an animal, and a piece of scarlet serge draped on a stick".⁸ Hemingway poetically describes the bullfight as an artistic performance, exploring the contrasting realms of cowardice and courage, and sport and tragedy.⁹ For Lisanby, *Death in the Afternoon* served as foundational research on the history of

⁸ Ernest Hemingway, *Death in the Afternoon*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 207.

⁹ Simon and Schuster, "Death in the Afternoon." Last modified July 25, 2002. Accessed November 19, 2013.

bullfighting while also illustrating its artistic complexities. Lisanby connected with Hemingway's depiction of the matador's grace and artistic finesse, illustrating the softer side of the matador. Lisanby's images of the matador assert that the refined elegance of the matador is a part of his manliness. This notion was inspired by Hemingway's image of the matador.

Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* illustrates and explains many of the technical details and movements of bullfights, such as the mariposa, or butterfly, which can be seen in Lisanby's *Untitled Matador 2* (figure 2). In this move, the matador moves backwards across the bullring as the folds of his cape swing lightly behind him. This movement takes great skill and knowledge of bulls in order to perform properly. Choosing to illustrate this specific move, Lisanby is conveying the skill and finesse required during a bullfight. Hemingway's image (figure 3) and Lisanby's *Untitled Matador 2* are remarkably similar, as the matador is seen from the same angle and in the same exact stance. It is possible that Lisanby created *Untitled Matador 2* based on this specific image of the mariposa. The similarities between Hemingway's image and *Untitled Matador 2* illustrates *Death in the Afternoon*'s direct influence on Lisanby's work and proves it as a critical source within his research on bullfights.

While *Untitled Matador 1* (figure 4) has a series of material providing insight to its creation, there are no sketches or additional paintings of Lisanby's *Untitled Matador 2*. However, the style of this painting appears similar to that of Lisanby's *Painting for Untitled Matador 1* (figure 5). They both have a simplified background and impressionistic style. Since the *Painting for Untitled Matador 1* served as practice for the final painting, there is a possibility that Lisanby painted *Untitled Matador 2* with the intention of creating a larger, more detailed and finished version. However, the visible brushstrokes and inclusion of movement serves the image of the fighting matador in *Untitled Matador 2* more than a realistically detailed style would. The

matadors swift action is felt by the audience through the strong brushstrokes emphasizing the drapery and shadows of the cape. The use of visible brushstrokes and mastery of light and shadow allow the audience to actually feel both the frenzy and grace within a bullfight. This is similar to the work of Francisco de Goya, who is notorious for his *Tauromaquia* series, which captured the violent elegance, tension, and fear of a bullfight.

Lisanby specifically studied Goya's *Tauromaquia* series, owning five books which all include a discussion of Goya's interest in and subsequent works on bullfights. For example, Enrique Lafuente Ferrari's *Goya* includes a full-page image of every lithograph from Goya's *Tauromaquia* series, which consisted of 33 works focusing specifically on bullfights. Goya's *Tauromaquia* series was his most publicized series of etchings. His *Caprices* series is also very well known, however since they were banned from sale to the public, they didn't reach as many people during Goya's time. In contrast, *Tauromaquia* was heavily publicized and therefore spread further than Spain, becoming internationally known.

Although there are many iconic artists who incorporated the theme of bullfighting into their works, it is clear that Francisco de Goya was Lisanby's main influence when it came to artists and the bullfight. Lisanby not only owned several books featuring Goya's works on bullfights, but also three prints from Goya's *Tauromaquia* series. Photos taken from Lisanby's living room (figure 6 and figure 7), show that he owned a print of plate 20 from the *Tauromaquia* series, *The Agility and Audacity of Juanito Apinani in the Ring at Madrid*, plate 28, *The Forceful Rendon Stabs a Bull with the Pique, from Which Pass He Died in the Ring at Madrid*, and plate 30, *Pedro Romero Killing the Halted Bull*. He enjoyed these prints so much, that he displayed them prominently in his living room until he died. Lisanby connected with Goya's depiction of the bullfight as entrancing entertainment. The shared notions of performance

and entertainment drew Lisanby to Goya's *Tauromaquia* series. These images inspired Lisanby's vision of the matador as an entertainer and demonstrated the dominant virility of the matador, which Lisanby utilized to convey the tough manliness of the matador.

Goya's *Tauromaquia* series focuses on famous tragedies and disasters within the history of bullfighting. All of the prints illustrate scenes of violence and dominance instead of the usual depiction of the bullfight as a graceful dance. Even in the scenes where the bull kills the matador, the matador is still illustrated as the epitome of masculinity. Although the bull ultimately won, the matador dies with valor, honor and pride. He has sacrificed his life in an act of graceful violence, which has not only validated his manhood, but ensured that he is remembered for this honorable and courageous act. The violence Goya depicts is not meant as a comment on the inhumane practices of bullfighting. Goya's intention was to highlight the physical and emotional intensity of bullfights, affecting not only the matador and bull, but the entire audience of spectators.

Plate 20 of Goya's *Tauromaquia* series, *The Agility and Audacity of Juanito Apinani in the Ring at Madrid* (figure 8), illustrates the dominance of the matador. The matador literally hovers over the bull, asserting his superiority and mastery of the bull. Goya aims to illustrate the agility and audacity of the matador. This is similar to Lisanby's *Untitled Matador 2* in which Lisanby illustrated the careful and precise movements of the matador.

Goya was fascinated with bullfights, specifically the struggle between the matador and bull, requiring speed, courage, skill, and elegance.¹⁰ He created works focusing on their themes of violence and hypnotizing danger until the day he died. Goya's mini-series of four lithographs,

¹⁰ The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, "Spanish Painting from El Greco to Picasso: Time, Truth, and History." Accessed January 26, 2014.

Bulls of Bordeaux, was the last series of lithographs Goya produced before he died. This series focuses on the audience's fascination and passion as they are intoxicated by the danger of the fight, with each member of the audience feeling like they are the matador in the ring. The audience is captivated by the energy of the matador and the anger and frustration of the bull. In *Diversion de Espana* (figure 9), the audience literally becomes a part of the bullfight, using their clothing as a cape to mimic the matador and flooding into the ring, forming a human barrier surrounding the fight.

Lisanby's interest in and appreciation of Goya is indisputable, but not merely because of his collection. While working on his own series of works on bullfighters it is clear that Lisanby took influence and inspiration from Goya's extensive work on bullfights. Lisanby even used one of Goya's prints, *The Forceful Rendon Stabs a Bull with the Pique, from Which Pass He Died in the Ring at Madrid* (figure 10) in his set designs (figure 11). This was one of the three prints that Lisanby owned. Goya's images of the matador influenced Lisanby's work as an artist and a set designer, as Lisanby literally incorporated Goya's prints into his set designs. Although Lisanby's work is vastly different in style and specific subject matter, studying Goya's work, specifically the *Tauromaquia* series, provided Lisanby with an image of the matador's strength and dynamism.

Lisanby's defining image of the masculine matador takes form in his *Untitled Matador I* (figure 4). Lisanby's *Untitled Matador I* is the culmination of his works focusing on the matador. Even when compared with Lisanby's entire collection of painted works, this painting stands as one of the most elaborate, detailed and largest works. This speaks to the intense interest Lisanby had in the matador, as he put the most time and effort into this painting. *Untitled Matador I* demonstrates Lisanby's naturalism with elaborately detailed elements on the

matadors costume and his mastering of light and shade throughout the painting. The viewer is automatically drawn to the matadors face since it's the brightest part of the painting and contrasts with the dark colors, which dominate the entire composition. This contrast creates the illusion of a spotlight on the matador, as the light is brightest on his face and the top of the painting and then diffuses going down. Appearing like a performer in a show, Lisanby furthers the image of the matador as a theatrical artist of confidence.

Illustrating the matador as a performer, Lisanby fused his experience in the entertainment industry with his interest in the matador. The matador poses in front of the wall as if it were a movie poster with him as the leading role, illustrating his confidence and emphasizing the role of the bullfight within Spain's entertainment industry. The matador appears three-dimensional against the flat background of the bullfighting poster. Lisanby added a ledge for the matador to stand on, further adding to the three-dimensional perspective. All of these components come together to enhance the image of the matador as the central component of not only the painting, but the performance of a bullfight.

Lisanby's process of creating *Untitled Matador 1* is documented through various sketches and paintings, illustrating his artistic process and the significance of this piece to Lisanby. The first sketch (figure 12) focuses solely on the matador as Lisanby establishes the costume and pose of the matador. The matadors costume is called a *traje de luces*, which translates to suit of lights. This outfit includes a short jacket, a waistcoat, and knee-length skintight trousers made of silk and satin. The trousers must be skintight in order to prevent the fabric getting caught on the bulls' horns. These elements are decorated with sequins, beads, and embroidery to create an extraordinarily luminous outfit, giving it its name, "suit of lights." The costume also includes a white undershirt, skinny black or red tie, pink socks, black slippers, and

a montera, the traditional hat, which is hand-sewn and made of black silk. The matador's cape is only worn in the beginning of the ceremony and is embroidered in silk, gold and silver.¹¹ Every component of a matadors costume contributes to the tradition and spectacle of the performance. The dressing of the matador is a ceremony all on its own, taking place an hour before the bullfight begins and considered an honor just to be invited to.¹² Lisanby's preliminary sketch for *Untitled Matador 1* displays every element of a matador's traditional costume except for the cape. Since it's just a sketch, the traditional colors aren't yet visible, however when looking at the final product, all of the traditional colors and pieces of clothing, including the cape are illustrated. This detailed illustration of the matadors costume illustrates Lisanby's extensive research and knowledge on the matador. The emphasis on the costume further glamorizes the matador, as his exotically glittering costume is highly significant within Lisanby's process of creating his image of the matador.

The next sketch includes more elaborate detailing on the costume and establishes a background (figure 13). The matador appears to be standing in front of a traditional bullfighting poster. The heading is believed to ultimately say "Plaza de Toros de Seville", which translates to the Seville bullring, located in Spain. These posters usually feature an image of a matador in action with the bull; however Lisanby illustrates the matador completely differently. The matador is not a part of the poster, but instead appears to stand in front of it. Additionally, instead of the bullfighter appearing in action with the bull, Lisanby depicts the matador alone, striking a pose and looking at the audience. Solely depicting the matador demonstrates Lisanby's intention to focus on the role of the matador, not the act of the bullfight. With one hand on his head, and the other on his juttled out hip, the matador appears more like a glamorized model

¹¹ Barnaby Conrad. Encyclopedia Britannica, "Bullfighting." Accessed January 24, 2014.

¹² Barnaby Conrad. Encyclopedia Britannica, "Bullfighting." Accessed January 24, 2014.

instead of a fierce fighter. This pose illustrates the matador's seductive elegance and confidence, establishing Lisanby's departure from the Spanish image of the matador as a vigorous male. While Lisanby still depicts the vigor of the matador, he conveys it in a different way, illustrating the manliness through elegance, not violence. Out of all of Lisanby's preliminary works, this sketch is the most similar to the final painting.

Before painting *Untitled Matador 1*, Lisanby painted a much smaller version (figure 5). This smaller painting doesn't include the entire background of the poster, but instead focuses on bringing more detail to the costume and image of the matador. This is the first time Lisanby brought color to the work, bringing the matador to life. The purple and blue color scheme is established and one can now see the costumes elaborate embroidery and embellishment. There is a difference in quality and style between this smaller painting and the final painting. The smaller painting takes on an almost impressionistic style with its colorful visible brushstrokes and lack of realism. In contrast, the final painting is precisely detailed and realistic. The gold embroidery and embellishment appears to literally sparkle and the matador's body becomes more realistic and defined. The difference in detail and style can be contributed to the drastic size difference and to the fact that the smaller painting was mere practice for the final painting. It is possible that Goya's *Tauromaquia* series influenced Lisanby's use of an impressionist style when practicing for his final pieces. Although Goya is not an impressionist, his *Tauromaquia* series are his most impressionist works, illustrating his intention to emphasize the reproduction of movement and light when depicting the action of the matador.¹³ However, Lisanby would only utilize this style for practice, never for final pieces. Lisanby preferred more realistic and naturalistic art over the expressive features of styles like impressionism.

¹³ F.D. Klingender, *Goya in the Democratic Tradition*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1948, 167.

Lisanby's sketch of a standing matador (figure 14) served as practice in illustrating the matador's elaborate costume. Lisanby didn't draw the rest of the matador's legs because the matador's physical characteristics were not the point of the sketch. The sketch focuses on the basic features of the matadors costume and how the costume fits on his body. This sketch may have been completed as preliminary preparation for his series of sketches for *Untitled Matador I*. It appears to have been drawn in a much quicker fashion, lacking the realism and detailed definition of the large sketches for *Untitled Matador I*. This sketch enabled Lisanby to practice the essential components of a matador's costume.

Lisanby's extensive work on the matador served as foundational research and inspiration for his set and costume designs with flamenco dancers. Lisanby's image of the matador was especially suitable for his flamenco set designs since Lisanby focused on the glamour and grace within the matador's masculinity. Just as Lisanby transformed the manliness of the matador into elegant strength, he transforms the poise of the flamenco dancer to embody vigorous masculinity. The matador and male flamenco dancer both embody graceful masculinity through their swift yet rigid movements. Lisanby fused the image of the matador and flamenco dancer, creating connections between the two roles. This is illustrated in Lisanby's *Pepe Hillo Sketch* (figure 15), depicting the famous bullfighter Pepe Hillo in flamenco dress.

Jose Delgado Guerra, otherwise known as Pepe Hillo, was one of the most notorious and well-respected matadors of the eighteenth century. He was regarded as one of the highest authorities on the art of bullfighting, publishing a book in 1796 that created rules for the sport and established the matador code of honor.¹⁴ Pepe Hillo may be most famous for the way he died

¹⁴ Walter Matthew Gallichan, and Catherine Gasquoine Hartley, *The Story of Seville*, (London: J.M. Dent & Co., 1903), 248.

in 1801. In the moment just before he was about to kill the bull, a surprising switch of events occurred as the bull plunged his right horn into Pepe's stomach and proceeded to toss him around for over a minute.¹⁵ Francisco de Goya depicted his death in the last etching of his *Tauromaquia* series as a way of memorializing Pepe Hillo.

Pepe Hillo was one of the first truly masculine matadors. He embodied the virility of the matador through the way he lived, establishing the matadors code of honor, and the way he died, tragically, but honorably killed by a bull. By illustrating Pepe Hillo in a flamenco costume, Lisanby fuses the masculinity of the matador with the grace and elegance of a flamenco dancer. Pepe Hillo was known for asserting that the style and flamboyance of a bullfight was more important than the technical precision. He was the perfect example of a masculine, yet graceful matador. The role of the matador is still dominant in this sketch, with the pose of Pepe Hillo identical to Lisanby's *Untitled Matador I*. However, through this sketch, Lisanby begins to form his image of the flamenco dancer through the lens of the masculine matador.

Lisanby's inspiration from the masculine matador manifested itself for the first time in one of his set designs for the theatre show, "Ole! Ole!". Lisanby used his previous work as the inspiration for his set and costume designs, as seen in this poster (figure 16). Lisanby was the set designer for this production, which featured well-known flamenco dancers such as Cruz Luna and Pepe Reyes.

Lisanby used his powerful image of the matador, applying it to flamenco dancers and providing the audience with a new and exciting image of the male flamenco dancer. This set design photograph (figure 17) illustrates the synthesis of all of Lisanby's influences relating to

¹⁵ ("Unlucky Death of Pepe Illo in the ring at Madrid, Plate 33 of La Tauromaquia")

the matador. These flamenco dancers demonstrate their strength and masculinity through the combination of their firm posture and elegant costume and movements. Lisanby's interest in the masculine matador helped to inform his decisions within his career as a set designer.

Lisanby's unification of the bullfighter and flamenco dancer illustrates the similarities between the two arts. Bullfighting and flamenco dancing are commonly associated with each other due to their similar movements, dress and artistic values. Both performances center on pride and fiery passion. Often, when bullfighters have a successful bullfight, they go out to a cafe where a flamenco dance is held in their honor.¹⁶ This tradition has been around since the 18th century when bullfighters would celebrate with flamenco dancers after their performance.¹⁷ Although they do hold deep connections, the association between the two roles is often an American stereotype of Spanish entertainment and culture. Bullfighting and flamenco are the main entertainment industries in Spain, thus being promoted as tourist attractions. Although Spain has created the exotic imagery of its entertainment industry, Americans contribute to this stereotype as they identify all of Spain's cultural traditions as being the same. Lisanby perpetuates this himself by making the outfits for bullfighters and flamenco dancers interchangeable. Although Lisanby recognizes their inherent cultural similarities, he also furthers the idea that the traditions of Spain's entertainment industry are identical and nearly indistinguishable to the eye of the foreigner.

The bullfights popularity has persisted through centuries of political turmoil, proving its significance to the history of Spain and thus becoming an official cultural heritage. It is one of Spain's most historic and cherished cultural traditions, illustrating many of the unique

¹⁶ Donald K. Sharpes, *Sacred Bull, Holy Cow: A Cultural Study of Civilization's Most Important Animal*, (New York: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, 2006), 11.

¹⁷ Emma Martinez, *Flamenco*, (Pacific: Mel Bay Publications, 2011), 66.

characteristics of Spanish culture and character. The virility demonstrated by the matador captured Lisanby's interest, inspiring him to paint images of the matador, not the bullfight, in an attempt to isolate the role of the matador as a masculine, courageous hero. Lisanby's exploration of the matador helped him create an innovative image of the flamenco dancer, which is also one of Spain's most cherished cultural traditions. Lisanby combined the masculinity of the matador and the grace of the flamenco dancer, transforming the image of a refined flamenco dancer into a strong, vigorous man. Charles Lisanby synthesizes two main cultural traditions within Spanish culture, reinterpreting them to fit his image of the Spanish entertainment industry. Lisanby merges grace and poise with, illustrating a new vision of manliness uncommon in Lisanby's own culture within the United States. Although Lisanby illustrates images of Spanish heritage and culture within his paintings and set designs, he unintentionally displays his differences in values and mindset within his own culture in the United States.

Appendix:



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17

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