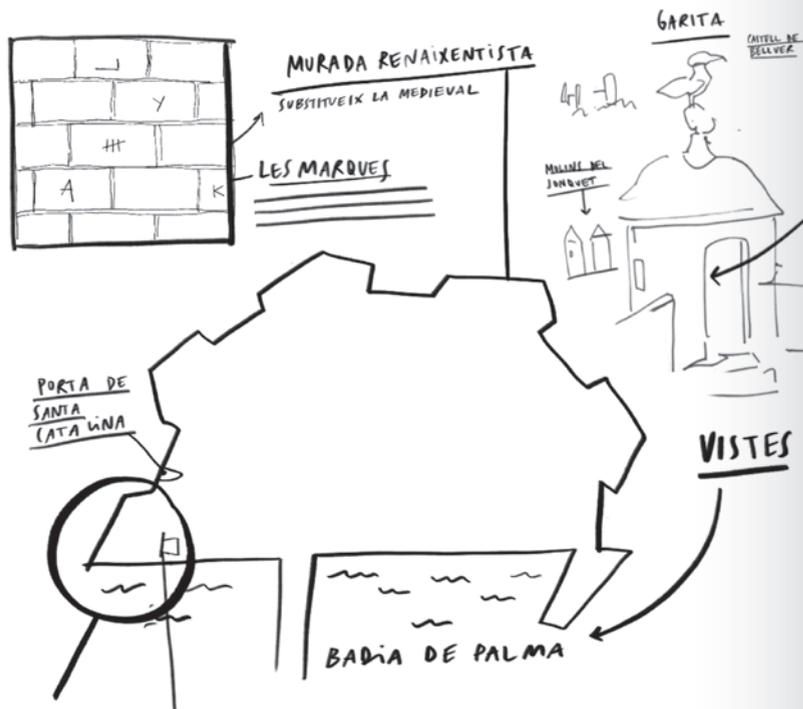


IN CONVERSATION: THE MUSEUM AND THE COLLECTION

31.01–26.05.2024

museum. [From Lat. *mūsēum*]. n. A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.



ES BALUARD MUSEU ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Enrique Juncosa

American philosopher Arthur Danto stated in his book *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace* that contemporary art was something that could not exist without the theory behind it. At present, and after two or three decades of manifest scepticism against traditional museums, especially US-style encyclopaedic museums, which show works of art from all periods and civilisations, and in doing so perpetuate established and outdated canons, it seems that museums also require critical apparatuses in order to justify themselves. And all this despite their immense success in terms of visitor numbers, the impressive expansions they manage to finance and the creation of franchises in faraway countries. At the international forums where museum professionals meet, the definition of *museum* has recently been changed, but this was only achieved following lengthy discussions. Rather than adding new ideas regarding what museums are and what their role is, however, the definition was updated and adapted to describe what many museums were already doing. The current scene is global, dominated by postcolonial perspectives and revisions of history, as well as new interpretations of identity issues, redefining concepts of race, gender and sexual orientation.

The established canons had always evolved slowly over time, with previously ignored figures being rediscovered, while others fell into oblivion. Now this happens at a much quicker pace, and nothing seems to last. Everything that came before seems to be questionable and problematic. This, which has served to reclaim and support women artists around the world, as well as African-American artists in the US, has led to a discrediting of memory. History is no longer seen as something real and objective, but as something written

Tonina Matamalas, *Es Baluard Museu: Graphic Recording of a Historical Vision*, 2024
(fragment of the work)

Cover image: Museum definition
updated by ICOM on 24 August 2022

by the privileged. Some museums seem to align themselves with political activism, flying the flags of education, plurality, accessibility and sustainability. Perhaps as a result of this, works of art are often treated as documents, suggesting now that their value is to be found in the ideas and not only in the theories that underpin them, as Danto said. It has been repeated for years, too, that works of art lose their meaning when displayed in museums, altering the contexts that generated them. This is all taking place, however, at a time when artists still create work designed to be exhibited and acquired by museums, while reflecting on their nature and also questioning, paradoxically, the need to do so.

One of the most highlighted aspects in the description of museums in recent times is their role in education. The vast majority of museums have expanded their educational programmes, along with those for attracting new audiences. The existence of these programmes is seen as an effective alibi against accusations of an elitism they aim to eliminate. Exhibitions, for their part, allow us to engage with the art of our time and to reflect on and discover, as we mentioned before, emerging or historical artists. Nowadays, moreover, exhibitions are also a way to spread the ideas of curators and museum directors. It is curious, but frequent, that in an interview with a museum director we read all sorts of programmatic and curatorial ideas, but not a single mention of the work of the artists who might supposedly be of interest to them. Yet beyond a museum's exhibition programmes and educational programmes, its collection remains the backbone of its identity. When they are located in small cities, such as Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, and if they are not specialised in a certain theme, such as photography, or dedicated to a specific artist, they tend to collect local artists, including foreign resident artists and local artists who live and work elsewhere. The core of Es Baluard Museu's collection, and what gives it its personality, is therefore the work by artists from the Balearic Islands or by those who are linked to the

archipelago, to which work by international artists has been added according to the tastes of the institution's management.

On the occasion of Es Baluard Museu's 20th anniversary, and very opportunely, this exhibition of the museum's collection has been organised in three different sections. In Exhibition Hall A on Floor 0, a selection of works from the collection is presented following a traditional chronological approach, spanning from the end of the 19th century to the present day. This section of the exhibition is further divided into parts. One of them is devoted to landscapes and early avant-garde art, with works by artists connected to the islands, including H. Anglada-Camarasa, Joaquim Mir and Norah Borges; another brings together works by leading figures from different post-war movements, such as Fernand Léger, André Masson, Marie Laurencin, Hans Hartung and Antoni Tàpies, and, finally, the third section presents works in conversation with each other by various historic artists such as Wifredo Lam, Joan Miró and Picasso, as well as prominent contemporary artists such as Miquel Barceló and Marina Abramović. The chronological approach, and a narrative that sees modern art as an evolutionary line of formal progressions, remains dominant in the accounts of art from 1900 to 1970.

In Exhibition Hall C on Floor -1, as an epilogue to what is shown on Floor 0, the curators of the project, Eva Cifre and Soad Houman, adopt a more experimental approach, in thinking of the works as metaphors for the very definition of a museum and its duty to favour research, education and the promotion of diversity and inclusivity. Here we find works by Mounir Fatmi, Alicia Framis, Chema Madoz, Paloma Navares, Jaume Plensa, Tomás Saraceno and Thomas Ruff. At the end of the 1960s, what has come to be known as Postmodernism began, and from that decade onwards, semantic matters became more important than formal ones, even though a material revolution led by post-minimalist sculpture was taking place at the time.

Finally, the presentation of the collection is complemented by a piece created for the occasion by Tonina Matamalas (Andratx, 1987), a Mallorcan artist currently based in Berlin. It is a work that recalls the history of the site where Es Baluard Museu is located, from its military defence origins to its transformation into a contemporary art museum. And lastly, the collection not only tells us about the context of the institution—Palma, Mallorca, the Balearic Islands, Spain, the Mediterranean Basin or Europe—but also carries intrinsic reasons for its acquisition: the inheritance of private collections (in this case the collection of Pere A. Serra), institutional loans or loans from other local collectors, donations from artists, temporary long-term loans and payments to the tax authorities with works of art.

Following two decades of activity, and in these times of much theorising about the nature and role of museums, many of us wonder how Es Baluard Museu will continue to evolve. It would be good if it were to take on a personality that we could call dual, and do so without allowing itself to be “colonised” by ideas produced in the US, in order to become, in the first place, a home for artists from the archipelago, while also showing, in a way that is non-dogmatic and open to dialogue, the work of the most outstanding international artists whose careers are not entirely dependent on the whims of the market or on curatorial trends. At the same time, other aspects in which the museum has yet to excel are the periodic collaborations with other museums, as well as the publication of attractive, accessible and innovative books that are felt to be necessary. The museum has to be a place for discovery, reflection and enjoyment, while also building trust amongst the public, who know that what they will see here is always interesting, even if it is work by artists they are not familiar with yet.



Ricard Anckeremann, *Molinar amb gent*, ca. 1890. Oil on canvas, 90,5 × 167,6 cm. Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Consell de Mallorca collection long-term loan



Maria Blanchard, *Bodegón con frutero, botella y vaso*, 1918.
Oil and pencil on canvas, 35,5×32 cm. Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Serra Collection long-term loan

Fernand Léger, *Esquisse pour les plongeurs (fond jaune)*
(1er état), 1941. Oil on canvas, 66×84 cm. Es Baluard Museu
d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Govern de les Illes Balears
collection long-term loan



Joan Miró, *Chevaux en fuite par le vol de l'oiseau-terreur*, 1976.
Oil on "Pompier"-style chipboard, 49 × 74 cm. Es Baluard
Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Serra Collection
long-term loan



Bernardí Roig, *The man with the fire eyes*, 2003 (video still).
Video. Single-channel, colour, sound. Duration: 4' 54".
Edition: 3/3. Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma,
donated by the artist and Galería Kewenig

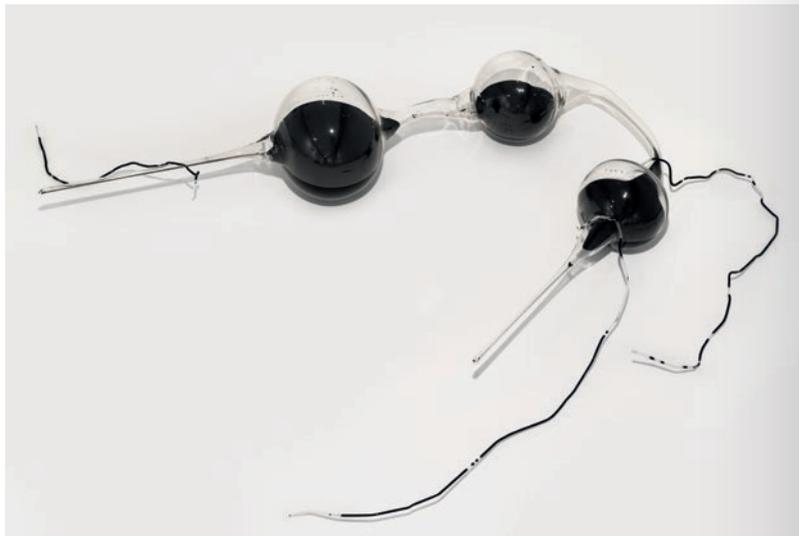


Chema Madoz, *Untitled*, 2009. Black and white photograph on barite paper toned with sulphur, 125 × 185 cm. Edition: 2/7. Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma

Elena del Rivero, *LTTM: Series XIII, #2 (sanitary gauze with pearls)*, 2017. Hemp paper handmade in Capellades with linen fiber, thread, needles, fake pearls, plaster, sanitary gauze, graphite, flashe and acrylic on canvas, 139,5 × 123,5 cm. Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma



Lara Fluxà, *Luprea*, 2018. Glass, motor oil, 35×150×68 cm.
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma



IN CONVERSATION: THE MUSEUM AND THE COLLECTION

Eva Cifre, Soad Houman

“In Conversation: The Museum and the Collection” presents a selection of Es Baluard Museu’s collection chronologically organised in two complementary chapters that can be viewed independently: Exhibition Hall A, on Floor 0, begins in the late 19th century and ends in the 1990s, while Exhibition Hall C, on Floor -1, features works produced since the turn of the century, from the year 2000 onwards.

Ever since its opening in 2004, Es Baluard Museu has promoted research into the different periods, artistic currents and creators based on the study of the relations, connections and influences that exist between the Balearic, national and international scenes, as we will see in each of the sections of the exhibition and through a selection of 150 works and documentation from the Collection. This itinerary across the Collection will be preceded by an artistic intervention by Tonina Matamalas that will explain the history of the place in which we find ourselves. The exhibition, organised on the occasion of the museum’s 20th anniversary, gives us the opportunity to express our gratitude to the artists, collectors, specialists and entities involved with the museum, as well as the public and private institutions that make up the museum’s Board of Trustees—Govern de les Illes Balears, Consell de Mallorca, Ajuntament de Palma, Ministerio de Cultura, Fundació d’Art Serra, with a special mention to Pere A. Serra, founding president of the museum—who over the years have contributed to the enrichment and development of the Es Baluard Museu d’Art Contemporani de Palma Collection.

On 24 August 2022, the ICOM Extraordinary General Assembly approved by 92.41% of votes the new definition of “museum” that is being applied since then on a global level:

“A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”

Why has the concept of museum been modified, and what characteristics or functions have been incorporated? Like other areas of the economy, science or education, the museum context is permeable to the advances and transformations of our society and, therefore, museums must be capable of considering new scenarios for their development in the 21st century. The need to update the museum model and the code of ethics that affects the sector’s professionals motivated ICOM to organise an extensive period of participatory consultations and debates, which began in 2019. The response to this call was an extended debate during which key concepts were proposed in order to develop the new definition. Some of the most shared terms were research, conservation, education, sustainability, inclusivity, collection, diversity, community and dialogue, among various others.

As a museum institution, Es Baluard Museu d’Art Contemporani de Palma has the duty to adjust its own fundamental nature based on this update, with the aim of adapting to our current times and in accordance with the new needs and future challenges that economic development and technological advances in particular pose, always from a critical perspective.

But what is a museum?¹ Many voices in the field of museology have debated about what a museum actually is. As Jennifer Harris points out in her 2015 text, the institution has left behind the 19th-century European concept of museum, which considered it a type of transparent container in which the relationship between the art object and the visitor was not taken into consideration, and now defines it on the basis of a person’s experience in the rooms, of the visitor who walks through the spaces, while also taking into account the term corporeality—the relationship between body and space—and the actions and reactions developed by the body, even though the institution maintains its control over the validity of the meaning of the works of art (the visitors’ possible responses to a work of art leave it open to interpretation, even if museums do not agree). In this way, we walk into what seems like a more open institution, where there is room for multiple meanings when it comes to understanding an exhibition or a work of art whose aim is to activate the visitor’s critical thinking, thus establishing the visitor-object relationship and its problematics. All this has led to detecting the need to renew the concept of museum, distancing it from the idea of a sacred, contemplative space. Contemporary art museums—our area of activity, according to our nature—have also been the object of analysis and debate, even going so far as to propose a radical model which is more experimental, less architecturally determined, and which offers a greater political commitment to our historical moment, as defined by Claire Bishop.²

The new “museum” definition responds to the need to include the active role of society—or community—by placing the emphasis on proposing a reading of history through

1. Harris, Jennifer. “Embodiment in the Museum – What is a Museum?”. In: *ICOFOM Study Series*, 43B, 2015, p. 101–115.

2. Bishop, Claire. *Radical Museology, or, What’s ‘Contemporary’ in Museums of Contemporary Art?* Cologne: Koenig Books, 2013, p. 6

multiple narratives, responding to the need to be inclusive and open to diversity, and offering spaces for reflection and education—not only in terms of art, but as a society. The exhibition “In Conversation: The Museum and the Collection” reflects this new definition, making us and our team, our visitors and our entire community participants in the construction of our present and future times, as expressed through the programme we have put together for the 20th anniversary of the museum under the motto: “Let’s imagine the future”.

EXHIBITION HALL A

The Divinity of Landscape: 1890–1930

This title, alluding to the beginning of the article published by Robert Rosenblum³ in 1961, in which he traces a continuity of the concept of the sublime in abstract art after Romanticism, marks the beginning of the itinerary through Exhibition Hall A, tracing the period between *ca.* 1890 and *ca.* 1930 and featuring works that document Mallorca’s role in the resurgence of landscape painting at a Spanish level during the early years of the 20th century. The rise of this theme and its development as an independent genre took place in the 19th century with the consolidation of Romanticism in Europe—characterised by its exaltation of nature and a taste for the exotic—and the writing of travel books, containing detailed descriptions of the places visited, accompanied by illustrations produced by the authors themselves or by others.

Far removed from the phenomenon of the Industrial Revolution, the territory of the Balearic Islands remained practically unchanged, a fact that led to the spreading in Europe of an idyllic vision of Mallorca (let us not forget the literary work of George Sand, who travelled to the island in

3. Rosenblum, Robert. “Friedrich and the divinity of landscape”. In: *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1975.

1838 with Frédéric Chopin and later published *A Winter in Mallorca*; Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Habsburg-Lorraine and his vast encyclopaedic work, *Die Balearen in Wort und Bild Geschildert*, published in Leipzig between 1869 and 1891, and Gaston Vuillier’s *Les îles oubliées. Les Baleares, la Corse et la Sardaigne*, published in France in 1893).

The academic tradition of Mallorcan landscape painting, linked to Romanticism and French Realism, is represented in the Collection by painters Ricard Anckermann and Francesc Rosselló: the two works on display are associated to *genre painting* and denote a certain modernist influence in terms of the use of lighting effects and short brushstrokes. In a context in which controversy arose due to the distrust of certain critics at the time, a new language was emerging, centred on the subjectivity of the artist, interested in the expressiveness of colour and the search for nuances through the use of complementary colours, experiments in the use of light and the gradual abandonment of form in favour of abstraction, as can be seen in the landscapes of painters from Mallorca, Catalonia and Argentina, notably Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Francisco Bernareggi, Pedro Blanes Viale, Llorenç Cerdà, Antoni Gelabert, Sebastià Junyer Vidal, Eliseu Meifrèn, Joaquim Mir, Santiago Rusiñol and Joaquín Sorolla.

Santiago Rusiñol and Javier Vallhonrat make up the first of a series of “links” located in Exhibition Hall A, the term “link” understood as a means to make visible points of union between the artistic practices of the 20th and 21st centuries, and to reflect on the different approaches that have emerged during this period related to similar themes, genres, styles or concepts. In this case, both artists lead us to a natural landscape, the Tramuntana Mountains, and to the figure of Archduke Ludwig Salvator, a researcher and enthusiastic promoter of knowledge of the Balearic Islands in Europe during the 19th century, via two different mediums (painting and photography) and two different periods. Writer and painter Santiago Rusiñol, a great connoisseur of Mallorca,

who frequented the island between 1893 and 1923, depicts one of the *possessions* or large farming estates that belonged to the Archduke and in which he resided between 1871 and 1913. Son Moragues, owned by the aristocrat since 1883, is the subject of a composition in which Rusiñol reflects the modern influence of capturing the effects of light on the natural landscape, devoid of references to the human figure or to the aristocrat himself. Meanwhile, artist Javier Vallhonrat continues this approach to nature through photography and offers the viewer an interpretation of the Archduke's perspective based on the latter's contributions to the systematisation of scientific data related to entomology and the geography of the island, present in his series entitled "La senda y la trama" [The Path and the Weft].

*Signs of Change: The Historical Avant-Gardes /
The Return to Order, 1900–1945*

The turn of the century brought with it new ways of approaching reality, either by transforming it into pure energy, as Wassily Kandinsky practised throughout his life, or by adhering to the "return to order" in the wake of the First World War, an idea championed by artists involved in the modern movement who, as a rejection of the avant-garde, turned to classicism and figurative art, as in the cases of Fernand Léger and Marie Laurencin.

Paris was the epicentre of the historical avant-garde from 1900 until the outbreak of war in 1914. In addition to Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró, artists such as María Blanchard, Paul Gauguin and Wifredo Lam, among others, and even artists who worked independently of these isms, such as Amedeo Modigliani and Juli Ramis, gathered and coincided there at different times. Two of these movements are represented in the Collection: the rejection of the figurative approach according to the Western tradition reflected in Cubism, through María Blanchard and with Leo Gestel as a nexus between Mallorca and said movement; and Surrealism, characterised

by including a strong social component, which found one of its defenders in Wifredo Lam—in this exhibition we will contemplate a work prior to his Parisian period and his contact with Surrealism in which he reflects the horrors of war, which he experienced first-hand during the Spanish Civil War, when he fought on the Republican side.

The break with tradition and the challenge of searching for new forms and creative processes triggered new perspectives in painting and sculpture, as reflected in the reminiscences of African and Greek art in Amedeo Modigliani's work. Mallorcan painter Juli Ramis escaped his insular isolation and travelled to the French capital in 1931. There he met Pablo Picasso, Marie Laurencin and André Derain, among other artists, came into direct contact with the spirit of modernity and throughout his career explored various artistic languages such as Cubism, Surrealism and Fauvism, the latter represented in *Flautistes* [Flautists], from 1936.

The following two paintings continue the theme of the nude, but from a point of view tied to figurativism and classicism, the so-called "return to order", which emerged after the First World War as a result of the rejection of the avant-garde movements: *Les deux amies (Youki et Mado)* [Two Friends (Youki and Mado)], by Léonard Tsuguharu Foujita, from 1926, and *Female Nude (ca. 1932)* by Archie Gittes. Foujita, who gained recognition in Paris in the 1920s for his fair-skinned nudes, depicts his wife—Youki—and Mado Anspach—André Derain's lover—in this suggestive composition resulting from his technical mastery of drawing, in line with his more classicist style, although aware of modernist trends, as reflected in the perspective used. Gittes, a native of Massachusetts, following his time in Paris where he improved his knowledge of portraiture and nudes, established his realism-inspired painting style in this nude, which was seen as daring by Mallorcan society (it was created in the same year he arrived on the island accompanied by his wife, the sister of Juli Ramis' wife).

The next timeline takes us to the beginning of the Second World War and shows how it affected the art scene in Europe, preceded by the aforementioned “return to order” movement. Fernand Léger and Marie Laurencin were among the artists who continued to follow the figurative path yet from a modern base. Léger, like many other intellectuals and artists, such as André Masson, for example, left Paris in 1940 and moved to the United States, where he produced the preliminary version of the painting *Les plongeurs* [The Divers], from 1942. Léger maintained the dynamic nature of his compositions, developing his technique into an organic union of all the represented elements, understood as independent mechanisms that fit together perfectly. Following her Cubism-inspired beginnings and her friendship with Georges Braque and Picasso, among others, Marie Laurencin defined her work as figurative, championing women and feminine beauty while consciously omitting any reference to men. Her portraits, almost all of which feature women, reflect her subtle connection with the queer community; she interprets the female figure enveloped in an unreal, dreamlike atmosphere as a way of conveying its independence and autonomy.

We dedicate a special mention to the only recognised female Mallorcan painter of this period, Pilar Montaner de Sureda, the protagonist of the second “link” alongside Pilar Albarracín: Montaner de Sureda, whose work reveals the impressionist tradition reflected in her landscapes, olive trees and local everyday scenes, and Albarracín, who since the end of the 1990s has focused on issues such as identity, inequality and gender through the use of different mediums such as photography and video. Both reveal the anonymous role of women, relegated to the background, in a passive stance in the face of the future. A stereotype of femininity that they represent as a result of their own eras and experiences.

Norah Borges’ presence in Mallorca between 1919 and 1921 brought the island’s intellectuals into contact with

Ultraism in the field of poetry. Her painting style lays somewhere between German Expressionism and Cubism, as reflected in her work produced on the island around 1920. Borges articulates the third “link” alongside Marina Abramović: both address a subject, motherhood, from their own female perspective, although with two opposing aesthetics. The first through the manifestation of religious fervour, which, in turn, alludes to the traditional role assigned to women at the beginning of the 20th century, while the second offers with her work a direct reflection on the saturation of violence in today’s contemporary society.

Europe: Freedom and Resistance, 1945–1979

Following the Second World War, the European art scene somewhat faded into oblivion, except for in France. As Lóránd Hegyi explains,⁴ the assimilation of freedom and resistance with modern art allowed its progression there, with Picasso as a key figure in the development of the modern language. For Picasso, resorting to multiple artistic languages and techniques responded to a vital question; he understood the creative act as a way of getting to understand human beings and the world. The pieces on display by the Malaga-born artist take us back to a return to Primitivism, to Cubism, expressed in the language of ceramics, which he discovered in Vallauris in 1947, when he visited the Madoura workshop. He adopted utilitarian and domestic objects—plates, dishes, vases, pitchers, etc.—as painting surfaces on which he developed themes related to mythology, portraiture and bullfighting, even manipulating the material and moulding the support to bring it closer to his subjects of interest, as he did with *Chouette* [Owl] (1968).

4. See the text by Lóránd Hegyi “La lluita pel llenguatge” [The Fight for Language] in the catalogue of the exhibition “Post-war Europe: 1945–1965”. Barcelona: Fundació la Caixa, 12/05/1995–30/07/1995, p. 33–64.

André Masson, an artist also linked to the Parisian capital, remained connected to Surrealism between 1924 and 1929, when he introduced automatic writing into his work and experimented with various materials. In *Dans la forêt* [In the Forest], from 1955, we can see his reconnection with landscape painting—which took place in the United States, where he stayed between 1940 and 1946 following the outbreak of the Second World War. This painting is an ode to nature, highly saturated on a compositional level and clearly under the influence of Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism, while the reminiscences of figurative art remain. Stemming from a more emotional-based approach, Roberto Matta's work revolves around the search for what he called “psychological morphology”, his interpretation of art based on the absorption and emission of internal energies in movement. Matta maintains the connection with the surrealist movement in this undated work, thought to be from the mid-1940s onwards, when he developed his characteristic “fantastic” landscapes inhabited by anthropomorphic characters.

From 1945 onwards, the abstract movement made headway in France in the midst of a debate concerning its very nature. It was art critic Michel Tapié who, in 1951, coined the term “art informel” to describe the new painting practices tied to abstraction, which defended aspects such as spontaneity, gestural and even a certain spirituality. The work of Jean Fautrier, Hans Hartung, Georges Mathieu, Serge Poliakoff, Jean-Paul Riopelle and Nicolas de Staël illustrate the new formulas in the field of painting, which rejected any form of imitation. According to the theoretical framework developed over time, their work is defined on the basis of the spontaneity of the brushstroke (gestural abstraction), the relevance of materials as the bearers of expression (matter painting) or the search for the incarnation of cosmic signs beyond the control of reason (lyrical abstraction).

In the Spanish context, this period was marked by severe repression, combined with a tough economic situation.

After the Civil War (1936–1939), Spain found itself under Franco's dictatorship and isolated internationally following the UN blockade in 1946, which lasted for two years. Spain's entry into the UN in 1955, the establishment of the Economic and Social Development Plan Commission in 1962 and the migration of the population to other European countries to work in the industrial and service sectors, above all, marked the following decades of economic growth in the country.

The voices of intellectuals and artists against the regime were silenced. Artists such as Joan Brossa and Joan Miró remained in the country, watchful of the weakening of the regime, while others abroad, such as Pablo Picasso, were able to express themselves freely. Through the work of Josep Guinovart, Manolo Millares, Joan Miró, Antonio Saura, Antoni Tàpies and Rafael Tur Costa we will take a closer look at the criticism of the Franco regime and the social commitment that art defended—both inside and outside Spain—preceded by a benchmark piece, Wifredo Lam and his outstanding *Escena de la Guerra Civil Española* [Scene from the Spanish Civil War] (1937), a symbol of the artist's commitment to the Spanish Republic. Along these same lines, Rafael Tur Costa—whose work evolved from lyrical abstraction towards a more matter-based approach—integrated a poem by Rafael Alberti, “El ángel avaro” [The Miserly Angel], in one of his compositions from the 1960s. Next to them are works by Antonio Saura and Manolo Millares, members of the El Paso group and representatives of Art Informel in Spain, who developed their own gestural language based on the fragmentation of the body, a dramatic interpretation of the canvas—sackcloth in the case of Millares—and references to the painting style of the Spanish Golden Age—for example, Velázquez, in Saura's case. Antoni Tàpies came into contact with European abstraction during his time in Paris between 1950 and 1951, reflected in an exploration of the limits within the field of painting, resulting in the equality between matter, form and idea. This section closes with Joan Miró's *Chevaux*

en fuite par le vol de l'oiseau-terreur [Horses Fleeing the Flight of the Terror Bird], produced in 1976, as a metaphor for the fear, pain and repression of the time.

As for the Balearic Islands, specifically Ibiza, the arrival of artists from different parts of Europe—such as Erwin Bechtold of the Ibiza 59 Group—facilitated the introduction of new non-figurative languages. Two artists who arrived on the island in the 1950s and worked in the field of graphic design stand out: Frank el Punto (Frank Ludwig Schaefer), who, after exploring figurative art, adopted a form of abstraction dominated by gestural brushstrokes, and Don Kunkel, whose abstract language focused on linearity, symmetry and rational order.

Towards the mid-20th century, a new artistic medium, video art, emerged in Europe and the United States, in a time of technological advances—the Sony Portapak—marked by political and social demands—the rejection of social and cultural stereotypes. Its origins can be traced back to the 1950s, when television was appropriated by Wolf Vostell and Nam June Paik, who marked the origins of this new medium.⁵ Vostell, who was linked to Fluxus—a collective that emerged between the late 1950s and early 1970s and rejected established art—employed the medium of television, linking it to performance art and installation. Under the term *Dé-coll/age*, the German artist defines real life as the basis of his creative principle, while denouncing how society is dominated by mass media, absorbed by television and the “reality” it broadcasts. In *Vietnam* (1971), Vostell references the war in the Asian country, which took place between 1955 and 1975, and uses images taken from a television report to create a continuous playback sequence of blurred images of American soldiers entering a Vietnamese village, interrupted by the sight of a soldier on fire.

5. Meigh-Andrews, Chris. *A History of Video Art*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014, p. 10–11.

In Spain in the 1970s, various forms of artistic expression coexisted, such as narrative figurative art in the field of painting—Eduardo Arroyo, Rafael Canogar and Equipo Crónica—and conceptual practices with common references, such as popular culture, the body and action, which developed mainly in Catalonia thanks to various artists who in the late 1960s and early 1970s felt the need to travel abroad—to Paris and New York—including Joan Rabascall, Antoni Miralda and Antoni Muntadas. Realist painting defines Juan Genovés’ career, whose work reflects the context of the time: politics in Spain, where he was based. As Valeriano Bozal describes,⁶ from the very beginning, Genovés’ work had a political and social aspect; he produced compositions in which anonymous people were arrested or even persecuted or executed, as captured in his piece *M. 131* from 1971. Rabascall’s work was related to the media, and we should keep in mind that during this decade the development of video art continued, while new reproduction techniques such as photocopying appeared. The world of images and advertising texts became powerful tools for artistic creation, and Rabascall, defined by critic Pierre Restany as a “great specialist in the deviation” of images,⁷ criticises the alienation of mass media in his 1971 work *Out of Order*, the result of the appropriation and manipulation of an enlarged everyday image. Antoni Miralda, unlike other artists such as Vostell, defended mass culture and developed a particular language full of references to politics, society, interculturality, food and nutrition. His sculptural work in the Collection,

6. Bozal, Valeriano. *Historia de la pintura y la escultura del siglo XX en España. II. 1940-2010* [History of Painting and Sculpture in the 20th century in Spain. II. 1940–2010]. Madrid: Machado Libros, 2013, p. 234.

7. Parcerisas, Pilar. *Conceptualismo(s) poéticos, políticos y periféricos. En torno al arte conceptual en España, 1964-1980* [Poetical, Political and Peripheral Conceptualism(s). About Conceptual Art in Spain, 1964–1980]. Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2007, p. 174.

produced in 1973, connects with the pacifist spirit of the time and reflects the suffocating environment he experienced on a personal level when he was drafted into the Spanish army.

Mallorca was no stranger to the influence of mass culture, comics and advertising. Painting and poetry became active at the same time as the demand for free art and public space, and various collective movements linked to conceptual art emerged, such as the Criada 74 group and Taller Lluàtic, among others, as well as new disciplines such as performance art. This selection from the archival collection *Risc i Ruptura. Arxius 1973-1983*, by artists Pep Canyelles, Jaume Pinya and Horacio Sapere, reflects this transgressive and radical spirit through actions associated to the environmental movement, such as the *Salvar la Dragonera* [Save la Dragonera] manifesto from 1977 and participation in the *Fester salvatge* [Wild Party] happening in 1978, as well as taking part in the practice of mail art and visual poetry—through works by Jaume Pinya and German artist Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt, the latter as an example of the development of mail art in Europe, alongside Endre Tót. The aforementioned Berlin-based Hungarian artist, also linked to Conceptualism and mail art, defended the use of irony in the face of the censorship experienced in his native country up until 1980. *I am glad if I can type zeros* (1975) is one of a series of letters in which he uses the number zero as a symbol of oppression. He would then send these letters by post to break the isolation he was experiencing at the time.

The practice of live performance art, carried out in both public and private spaces, also developed as an autonomous artistic discipline in the 1970s. The performance, a unique and ephemeral action, was captured in photographs and videos, and these were the only documents that recorded its creation. In the European scene, it is worth highlighting the work of Croatian artist Mladen Stilinović, who, through performative action together with poetry, painting, film, installation and photography, developed one of the marginal

approaches that went against established art. His work, of a conceptual nature, is a critical reflection on artistic practice and society, ironically denouncing the alienation of labour as an integral part of the creative process.

Through Francesca Woodman's work, we reference the development of the medium of photography in art in the 1970s, as well as the growing presence of women in artistic circles, a struggle that greatly marked the history of art at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s (let us not forget Linda Nochlin and her text *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*, published in *Art News* in 1971). Woodman, alongside Mallorcan artist Amparo Sard, is the protagonist of the fourth "link" in this room, which references self-portraiture and self-referential art. Both use methods such as the fragmentation of the body and explore the relationship between the body and space to focus, in Woodman's case, on identity and gender, recreated in decadent scenarios halfway between reality and illusion, while Sard uses it to address the existential, alluding to themes such as pain, anguish and doubt.

Joan Miró

The "Mallorca" series, produced in 1973, reflects Joan Miró's affection for the island. His family ties and the fact that he established his permanent residence in Palma made Mallorca the ideal place for both his personal life and the development of his artistic career. We will focus on the decades of his maturity, represented in the Collection: international recognition increased as Miró continued his constant experimentation with materials and techniques—under the guidance of Artigas in ceramics and Josep Royo in tapestry—while at the same time introducing bronze into his sculptures and developing his graphic work.

In the present selection of pieces, we find references to the iconographic motifs central to his work since the 1930s, such as birds, women and stars. Chance and the spontaneous

choice of support were part of the creative act, which Miró regarded as an internal, spiritual process, as the works on display reveal. In 1976, he collaborated with Joan Baixas and the theatre group La Claca in the creation of the set design and characters for the play inspired by Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* titled *Mori el Merma* [Death to Merma]—where Merma was a character who became a metaphor for dictator Franco—the preview of which took place in Palma on 7 March 1978. Miró's fascination with the character of Ubu originated in Paris in the 1920s, when he discovered the writer and playwright Alfred Jarry, an inspiration that remained reflected in his work ever since, as can be seen in the sculpture *Fille d'Ubu* [Daughter of Ubu] (1971) and *El Abanderado* [The Flag Bearer] (ca. 1977), one of the characters created for the play *Mori el Merma*.

Miró's 85th birthday, in 1978, was the focus of various events in the city of Palma, organised as a heartfelt tribute by Mallorcan cultural society to the painter: the Ajuntament de Palma awarded him the city's Gold Medal, while an exhibition was held at the Llotja de Palma, and the newspaper *Ultima Hora*—at the instance of the publisher, collector and founding president of Es Baluard Museu, Pere A. Serra, with whom he maintained an affectionate friendship—dedicated a special issue to Miró in which he collaborated by designing an alphabet, the originals of which were exhibited alongside the printed copy.

The Resurgence of Painting: 1980–1999

Painting regained its prominent place in Europe from the 1980s onwards, after being relegated to the background by the conceptual and minimalist movements. A desire emerged to recover this traditional art form, “painting as the subject of painting”. The Junge Wilde or New Expressionists, in Germany, and the Transavanguardia, in Italy, were the names given to the groups of artists who reignited the recognition of painting, and who in turn influenced artists in Spain.

The early 1980s also marked the reestablishment of figurative art and the “style of no style”, freeing painting from any political, social or technological background, as reflected in the work of Miquel Barceló, Ferran Garcia Sevilla, Antoni Socias and Maria Carbonero, while the abstract approaches that explored matter and gesture—José María Sicilia, Miguel Ángel Campano, Guillem Nadal—continued to share space with the lyrical abstraction of José Manuel Broto and Xavier Grau. The coexistence of figurative art and abstraction in painting developed during the 1990s, while other disciplines such as photography, sculpture and video art (F. Plessi, for instance) continued to spread. This scene is reflected in the geometric abstraction of Miguel Ángel Campano and Ramon Canet, in the figurative-based gestural and matter painting of Rafa Forteza and Guillem Nadal, and in the sculpture work of Mallorcan artist Teresa Matas.

The last “link” of the itinerary takes us back to nature, to landscape painting, through the conversation between the work of artists Dineo Seshee Bopape and Miquel Barceló, as representatives of the genre that marks the beginning and end of the timeline of this room, before we give way to more contemporary artistic manifestations in Exhibition Hall C. Bopape reveals the symbolic dimension of her three-dimensional piece through contemplation, and in it we find references not only to nature, but also to the African diaspora, to transformation, leaving its interpretation open to the spectator. Barceló's experiences in Africa, where he first travelled to in 1988, allowed him to explore the landscape and natural phenomena. His fascination is reflected in the “White Paintings” series he produced following that first trip, paintings in which his mastery of the material and the introduction of new iconography reveal his interest in the continent. Both artists allude to the same landscape but from two different points of view. The first, from a spiritual position, that of the individual, reflected in the materials she uses, such as the feather to allude also to healing, while the second interprets

nature observed from a realistic and figurative perspective, concentrating his gaze on the wealth of textures and details of the African territory while avoiding the presence of man.

EXHIBITION HALL C

We end the timeline set out in “In Conversation: The Museum and the Collection” with a selection of work dating from the year 2000 onwards, as part of a more experimental approach based on the definition of “museum”. The pieces will be used as a means to break down and analyse the characteristics that define the museum institution, through concepts such as research, collection, interpretation, diversity, community and education, all of which are present in the recent and updated ICOM definition of “museum” (August 2022). In this way, the aim is to open up the conversation on what the museum of the 21st century should be like and the challenges it faces from now on.

Collection / Archive

Juan del Junco, Thomas Ruff, Francisco Ruiz de Infante,
Inmaculada Salinas, Sean Scully

What makes a museum different from other cultural institutions is the fact that it is the custodian of a collection (whether tangible or intangible heritage), the nature of which defines its identity.

The pieces and artists present in this section have in common a work methodology based on archiving and documentation. The use of scientific methods such as cataloguing and recording are brought to the realm of artistic expression, subverting objective criteria and infusing them with emotion and subjectivity. The selective gaze, the systematisation and value of the work process, the exploration of memory and the accumulation of sensitive knowledge are constants of the artists represented in this section.

Research / Experimentation

Nevin Aladağ, Eric N. Mack, Chema Madoz,
Max, Paloma Navares, Tomás Saraceno

The hybridisation of artistic languages, interdisciplinarity, textile and photographic exploration and the refinement of style are the results of the form-based experimentation of the artists in this section, who engage in research into different themes and disciplines such as gender, science and the revision of the classics.

Research is understood as the driving force behind many artists’ work, and in the case of the museum institution, it focuses on the collection and its defining discipline, on museographic and museological issues, as well as on social, historical and environmental issues. In short, research and experimentation are necessary ways for the museum institution to constantly question and rethink itself in order to explore its limitations and be at the service of society in all its diversity.

Education / Interpretation

Ana Gallardo, Joseph Grigely, Bernardí Roig,
Kemang Wa Lehulere

Museums understood as tools for social and cultural development must focus on education in order to become centres for social transformation. It is not a question of educating the public, but of jointly building a better understanding of the world and fostering citizens’ critical judgement in order to move towards fairer and more equal societies. Thus, the works in this section are committed to promoting the value of communication, conversation and networks as transformative elements.

Education understood as a basic pillar, as an inherent function of the museum institution, not as a service.

Diversity / New narratives

Irene de Andrés, Mounir Fatmi, Lara Fluxà, Alicia Framis,
Elena del Rivero, Sean Snyder, Martine Syms

Museums, in turning away from a hegemonic Western vision, from single points of view or official histories, must reflect a plural society along with its challenges and conflicts. They must work on the basis of diversity and the multiplicity of voices, and listen closely to those that have been historically silenced.

Through their work, the artists in this section draw attention to issues that have traditionally been left on the margins or excluded, such as migration, race, gender and violence, as well as those resulting from our current times, such as sustainability.

Individual / Community

Concha Jerez, Antoni Muntadas,
Jaume Plensa, Avelino Sala

We live in a world suffering from multiple crises (the climate, the economy, migration, war), a world crying out for help. Faced with these situations, it is necessary to slow down and be silent in order to listen and reflect. Silence implies listening, listening to the other, to the community.

Active listening is the skill that the museum of the 21st century must develop in order to place individuals at the centre, to make the museum a comfortable and intimate space where everyone feels accepted, welcome, represented and listened, by working on the basis of care and the concerns and desires of people. Active listening as a means of getting closer to communities and encouraging their active participation in the decision-making processes that will bring about the necessary changes for the museums of the future.

In Conversation: The Museum and the Collection

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Contemporani de Palma

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