

‘Where are you from?’: a question we often use to initiate conversation at moments of first introduction.

Although simple as it might sound, it is quite a loaded query, potentially deeply inquisitive, for how we answer it can reveal so much about ourselves and become an entryway to a dialogue that delves into our identity. Where we are from is not only a place when we consider how we define ourselves. Language and even the accent with which we speak it can reveal something beyond the singular locale of one’s birth or home but also the geographical path our lives have taken us. And often our cultural and familial backgrounds play an equal role in where we consider ourselves ‘from’ in a world that gets ever more demographically complex. Place, history, and language have a great influence on the broader sense of ‘where we are from’.

For this first series of exhibitions, *20/21* chooses this question as its conceptual theme, a form of introduction to the people of La Palma, both for its spirit of curiosity and its invitation to initiate dialogue. Beginning with the inaugural presentation and changing in sequence every six months, the temporary shows will approach art from these defining perspectives of identity: language (*Contemporary Spanish Art*), history (*History: a microcosmic perspective*) and place (*Somewhere: Contemporary Landscape*). And with each, three independent exhibitions will also be introduced, unveiling them one at a time by thematically tying them into the respective themes (*Spanish Art of the mid-20th century*, *Anselm Kiefer*, and *Miquel Barceló*), remaining permanently on view thereafter to serve as anchors to the Art experience at *20/21*.

CHAPTER ONE

Spanish Art: the evolution of a visual language

Spanish Art of the mid-20th century + Contemporary Spanish Art
September 2023 – March 2024

CHAPTER TWO

History

History: a microcosmic perspective + Anselm Kiefer: making sense of the senseless
May – December 2024

CHAPTER THREE

Somewhere

Contemporary Landscape + Miquel Barceló: the canvas as landscape
January – July 2025

CHAPTER TWO

History: a microcosmic perspective

There is no need to speak. You must only concentrate and recall all your past life. When a man thinks of the past, he becomes kinder – “Stalker”, 1979 / screenplay: Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, dir: Andrei Tarkovsky

World history is written from broad and sweeping perspectives. The places and names, often associated with power and conflicts that span over eras, can abstract the past obscuring its personal relevance to the present. Art can fill this void when it takes on the role of humanizing these events. Definitely, in literature, we see it in the form of storytelling, and in the visual arts, it is also found when artistic output directly correlates with personal experiences of their times.

The history of an individual is as much about cultural legacy as it is about recent family heritage, and viewing Art from this perspective shines a light on our differences on both the global and the personal scale. That we are all in fact unique is what we actually all have in common, and understanding this enables us to see ourselves in the ‘other’ and develop the empathy that is necessary to build a humane and peaceful world.

V and VI: Family Matters

Property and photographs left behind by family often have little or no value to anyone else besides the children and grandchildren who inherit them, their worth emotional or sentimental rather than monetary. There is a special alchemy that happens when artists elevate these belongings or intimate memories by including them as media and subject in their works, where in doing so, they inject a personal narrative – their own heritage - into a conceptual and formal creative practice.



Oliver Beer (Kent, UK, 1985 – London, UK, currently)

“Household Gods” reflects Oliver Beer's exploration of the relationship between sound and form, and the innate musicality of the physical world. The “Household Gods (Father)” of the title are physical objects (once belonging to or have a connection to his father), placed on plinths in a whitened room and idolized to the point where they can sing. They are given voice and raised to the status of household divinities. Beer uses microphones to amplify the ambient sound ricocheting within the internal spaces of the objects, creating gentle acoustic feedback loops, that allow us to hear the innate sound of each object. These notes are determined by volume and form of empty space, and have remained unchanged since the day each piece was created. (*Oliver Beer, “Household Gods”, Ropac Paris, 2019 – excerpt*)



“(For *Elysium*), I decided to work with a very personal object, one of my grandfather’s tobacco pipes. I’ve transformed its form to reveal its internal anatomy, surgically slicing the pipe in half and filling its interior with opaque resin, sanded to a perfectly flat finish. The pipe's interior is revealed and the air’s pathway defined and drawn out by the resin. Like an ultrasound scan, the object’s interior is represented in two dimensions. I normally call works from this series 2D sculptures, when the object is entirely embedded in resin, but this is the first ‘2.5D’ sculpture that I’ve made where only the interior is revealed in this way.” (*Oliver Beer, 2020*)



Roman Ondak

(Žilina, Slovakia, 1966 – Bratislava, Slovakia, currently)

Roman Ondak's past personal experiences find themselves imbedded in his present. Memories of a classical artistic practice and longings to see the famous sights in the West during the years of the Cold War come face to face with a current conceptual artistic practice that developed after the opening of the political borders.

In 'Cubic Floor', Ondak has taken the old floors of his childhood home in Slovakia to reconstruct it as a perfect sculptural cube. In doing so, the artist combines his personal heritage with his conceptual and minimal artistic practice.



Carlos Sagrera (Madrid, Spain, 1987 – Leipzig, Germany, currently)

The work of Carlos Sagrera are interiors; different spaces of a home where time seems to have stood still. The spaces evoke associations with the past and as a spectator one wonders if the interiors really existed or if they are merely created by the artists imagination. We might recognize the furniture and objects from the 50s and 60s, the period in which the grandparents of Sagrera furnished their home, where the artist also lived during most of his childhood.

The domestic deterioration that comes from ordinary use leaves traces on the furniture, the floors, the walls and the ceiling. The routines and habits from those who occupy the space leave evidence of living. These patterns or traces appear in the paintings; fluid and incomplete reconstructions of spaces which are no longer possible to access but, through this recreation, almost seem tactile. A frozen moment in the slow process of fading memories of places that were once so familiar. (*Arróniz Arte Contemporáneo*)



Carol Rama (Turin, Italy, 1918 – 2015)

Carol Rama never received formal training. She began her artistic production in the mid-1930s, before the onset of the Second World War. In the 1950s, Rama turned to geometric abstraction and became involved with the Concrete Art Movement. Then from the early 1960s onward, themes of the body and discarded objects re-emerged in her work not by means of representation, but as material itself. This method is now widely referred to as “bricolage,” a term coined by the Italian poet and intellectual Edoardo Sanguineti, a life-long close friend of Rama, specifically in reference to Rama’s work of the 1960s. (*Lévy Gorvy Gallery*)

When Rama was young, her father committed suicide after his factory went bankrupt. The memory haunts this work with its materials. Rama incorporates the product that the factory produced: rubber bike tires. For Rama though, a bike tire is never just a bike tire. When she saw these objects close together or in stacks, the texture reminded her of skin. (*The Standard*)



Isa Lorenzo (Manila, Philippines)

“I got to think about my mother’s house, how it is a repository of installations: the height markings on the edge of a bedroom door, tables of decorative trinkets, walls and walls of photographs— and I thought to photograph these installations, these collections of objects left behind by the generations of the house’s occupants. After a couple of times of shooting, I realized that they are more than the objects. The house itself also means a lot. The wooden floors in various patterns, the steps in the hallways, the grills on the windows and doors, the doorstops, the clocks and the banisters— these are most vivid. So I shot those and I shot the installations and in the darkroom, started the process of laying down memories to print in a way not unlike remembering— in layers, selectively, with images that come forward and some that recede, depending on the memories and their meanings.” – *Isa Lorenzo* (“*Isa Lorenzo, 001*”, *Silverlens*, 2007)

In *The Moro Negatives*, Lorenzo returns to the darkroom continuing her multi-negative collages which she began in *Isa Lorenzo, 001*. This time however, she brings together found negatives of her late father, Luis “Moro” Lorenzo—his life as a young man in the Mindanao of the ‘50s, the architecture of the ‘60s, and the recording of a growing family shuttling between Luzon and Mindanao in the ‘70s—and her own photos of the homes that he built still in existence. Each image brings together circumstances decades apart, and is titled by the year of the Moro Lorenzo negative. (“*The Moro Negatives*”, *Silverlens*, 2008)



Anthony Goicolea (Atlanta, GA, USA, 1971 – New York, USA, currently)

Anthony Goicolea is a first-generation Cuban American artist now living and working in Brooklyn, New York. His extended family immigrated to the United States in 1961, fleeing Cuba soon after Castro came to power—a fact that underpins many of the artist's works. Employing a variety of media, Goicolea explores themes ranging from personal history and identity, to cultural tradition and heritage, to alienation and displacement. His diverse oeuvre encompasses digitally manipulated self-portraits, landscapes, and narrative tableaux executed in a variety of media, including black-and-white and color photography, sculpture and video installations, and multi-layered drawings on Mylar.

These poignant, sometimes cinematic, images and installations are characterized by a fervent search for ancestral and social connections to a mythical homeland, Cuba—at once revealing nostalgia for a past that the artist never actually experienced, as well as a pronounced sense of cultural dislocation and estrangement. (*International Center of Photography, New York, 2001*)



Samson Young (Hong Kong, 1979)

Samson Young's practice centers upon an attempt to re-present and re-interpret lost or overlooked events of socio-political and personal significance. Formally trained in philosophy and composition, Young approaches complex questions of identity and conflict, without imposing solutions or halting productive dialogue. The composer and sound artist's process is deeply invested in rigorous, historically grounded research that often involves Young gathering 'sound sketches' and recordings that eventually make their way into his multimedia works. (*Biennale of Sydney, 2018*)

In this work, the artist imagines a "fictional adaptation" of J.S. Bach's *Coffee Cantata* through songs, videos, stage design, and family histories. This imaginary production is set in the Rio Del Oro Valley in the Valencia County of New Mexico, on a piece of land that the artist actually owns.

In 1732, J.S. Bach composed a secular cantata entitled *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht*, which is also nicknamed the *Coffee Cantata*. In this comic opera, the soprano sings melodious praises of coffee, while her father forbids her from enjoying the caffeinated beverage. What underpins this strange composition is the conception at the time that coffee is an "evil drink": the Prussian king condemned coffee drinking as disgusting, and urged his subjects to consume alcohol instead.

The protagonist of this “fictional adaptation” – Michael Kar Fai Young – owns and manages a café (called “Old Reliable Coffee”) on this land that is run out of a caravan. Michael appears to suffer from paranoia, and is under constant fear that NASA will soon dispossess his property. Daily at sunset, Michael turns his café into a jazz club and sings to an imaginary audience. Michael sees visions of a staging of *the Coffee Cantata*, he then improvises a set of original songs that are inspired by the cantata. He repeats the same performance every night to an open empty landscape, projecting his voice into the valley.

And about this piece of land: during the heyday of Hong Kong’s economic miracle, the city’s nouveau riche invested in land properties in various locations around the globe. One of the stranger ones of these locations was the Rio Del Oro Valley. At the time, these Hong Kong investors were led to believe that NASA was soon to establish new facilities in the area, which would eventually lead to an increase in land value. The artist’s father invested in a piece of land in Rio Del Oro in the 1980s under the artist’s name, along with numerous other Hong Kong businessmen. The promised NASA-induced boom never occurred, and these lands are worth next to nothing. Today, miles upon miles of Hong Kong-owned barren land sits between long stretches of motorways in the middle of nowhere. (*Samson Young*)

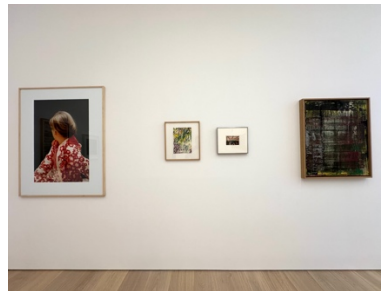
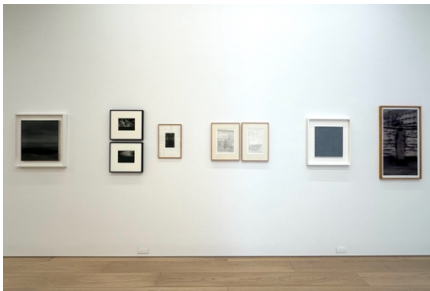


Iñaki Bonillas (Mexico City, Mexico, 1981)

Since the late nineties, the young Mexican artist has been establishing a relationship with photography in his work. With a regard for the aesthetics and the conceptual practices of the sixties and seventies, Iñaki Bonillas has been gradually isolating the constituent elements of photography and connecting them with other procedures. In 2003 Iñaki Bonillas started introducing the vast photo archives of his grandfather, J.R. Plaza, into his work. He linked elements together that were a priori incompatible: on the one hand a personal, biographical narrative that consists of private anecdotes and emotions, and on the other a quasi-scientific element of compilation, classifying and archiving. (*Projecte SD*)

VII and VIII: Bridging East and West

The trauma of political and ideological borders, specifically the Wall that divided the Communist East from the Democratic West of Europe after the Second World War, is the narrative from which the artists in these rooms build their individual creative practices. The reactions to living at a time of this division and its eventual opening up offer us, on one hand, a bridge of humanity between two distinct social environments, and on the other, a portal to a place where hope comes in the form of memory and reassessment manifested in Art.



Gerhard Richter (Dresden, Germany, 1932 – Cologne, Germany, currently)

This installation of intimate paintings and photographs by Gerhard Richter highlights the many contrasts and dialogues existing in the artist's works. Each becomes an analogy for the complexities of the image as it relates to memory and truth: photography vs. painting, creation vs. destruction, realism vs. abstraction, color vs. the lack of it. Duality is a central theme in all aspects, physical and conceptual. Here they are taken to a personal and profound level with the juxtaposition of two photographs Richter took of his own paintings, each a realistic rendering of a photograph of a member of his immediate family; a black-and-white portrait of his Uncle Rudi proudly wearing his now-shameful SS uniform and a color close-up of his daughter Betty facing away, seemingly to avoid our gaze - a poetic metaphor of looking at the past, in the present and into the future.



Jiří Kolář (Protivín, Czech Republic, 1914 – Prague, Czech Republic, 2002)

Jiří Kolář's career spanned over four decades with a focused dedication on the language of collage. With his work, not only did he define and classify the existing methods of collage, he also created new techniques and variations that have broadened the language that continues to be influential to this day.

Kolář began his career as a writer and poet who challenged the political regime of his time, spending a brief time in prison as a result of his controversial writings. He began experimenting with combining the written word and painting, and in the 1960s, he eventually shifted completely to the visual arts, creating a language of visual poetry; a poetry of silence. Kolář's experimentation and creativity in manipulating printed material, was much more than just about methods and techniques, as it was a work of discovery and a desire to see and express new perspectives. By deconstructing and constructing, or repeating or re-contextualizing found imagery, and combined with the printed word, Kolář broadened the capacity of words and extended the power of poetry. His work was a symbolic and metaphoric form of rebellion, as he continued expression with the "word" in a landscape of political and social repression. (*r/e projects, Madrid*)

"The world attacks us directly, tears us apart through the experiencing of the most incredible events, and assembles and reassembles us again. Collage is the most appropriate medium to illustrate this reality." (*Jiří Kolář*)



Roman Ondak

(Žilina, Slovakia, 1966 – Bratislava, Slovakia, currently)

Roman Ondak plays with ideas of relocation, representation, and the duplication of experience - shifting and sharpening the viewer's attention to everyday life. Growing up under the communist regime of former Czechoslovakia, the artist became attentive to systems of inclusion and exclusion that ordered this society. Questioning the failure of the communist structure in his work, Ondak explores the potential for different orders: new patterns of behavior, and ultimately, alternative social and political possibilities. His work is often quite subtle, infiltrating the spectator's surroundings in imaginative and quiet ways, suggesting a renegotiation with reality. Adopting an almost anthropological approach, he recombines aspects of the quotidian with his incisive artistic wit, opening up space to challenge the rules of the everyday through his poetic alterations. Ondak's work is not only curious about the rituals and assumptions that govern our lives: he playfully interrogates the art system as well as society at large, urging us to greater awareness. (*Kurimanzutto Gallery*)



Aleksandar Duravcevic (Montenegro, 1970 – New York, USA, currently)

Memory and story-telling are very much at the center of Duravcevic's work, where each piece is the melding together of a colorful and often-conflicted past, from early violent years in war-torn Yugoslavia, to an enlightened development in the arts and culture in Florence, and his current life as an artist and professor in New York City. And like memory, it floats backward and forwards without chronology, creating layers and building context depending on the stimulus of the present. What we see is a very personal journey and investigation in search for identity manifested in work that speaks universally, as we all in our own way search for the same. (*r/e projects, Madrid*)



Michael Morgner (Chemnitz, Germany, 1942)

Michael Morgner intersperses his abstract paintings with figurative metaphors of basic human experiences: the figures 'Angst' (Fear), 'Schreitender' (Man pacing) and 'Aufsteigender' (Man climbing) are a constant theme throughout his entire oeuvre. (*Kerber Verlag*)

As the title of this work (9 nov. 1989) indicates, it was created on the day that the Berlin Wall was finally taken down. Taking the markings used on maps to indicate the locations of the Wall, Morgner creates a composition that deconstructs and reconstructs it in homage to the long-awaited moment that would eventually lead to the end of the Cold War.

IX: Layers of history

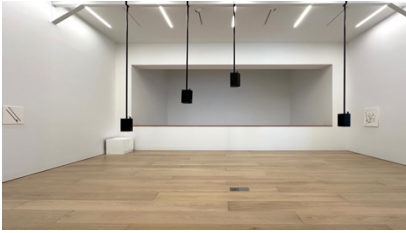
Cultures and traditions evolve over time, each era adding another layer to their complexities formed by everything from religion, colonization, war, and migration to technological advancements and changing social structures. The works exhibited here highlight these intricacies, deconstructing the collage of influences to reveal what creates these diverse contemporary identities.



Martha Atienza (Manila, Philippines, 1981 –
Bantayan Island, Philippines, currently)

Our Islands 11°16'58.4"N 123°45'07.0"E reflects the artist's relationship with island life, water and social rot. The video depicts an underwater Ati-atihan, an ancient animistic festival and procession, Christianised by colonial influence. Ati-atihan means 'like Aetas', an indigenous group predating the Austronesian migration around 30,000 years ago. The traditional procession represents visions of reality and aspirations through the use of costumes, music and dance. Every year, Atienza films the Ati-atihan and adds some footage to her work *Anito* (2009-ongoing), the terrestrial basis combining the vibrant festival images to those of more pressing social issues on which the submarine version is based. Nowadays, natural and political violence has become part of the procession and the festival has transformed into an "annual record of victories and disasters, dreams and protests".

The men in the video work wear costumes combining diverse sources, from the religious to the historical, such as Roman centurion skirts or Manny Pacquiao's boxing gloves. Fully submerged under the sea, the subjects are presented as if in a trance, pushing against the current, incessantly walking forward. Heading the procession is a man dressed as the Santo Niño – the child Jesus and Patron of the Islands – carrying a doppelgänger statue, which he raises repeatedly with slow movements. (*Art Radar Journal*)



Oliver Beer (Kent, UK, 1985 – London, UK, currently)

“Impossible Composition” gathers a body of work reflecting Beer’s experience as artist in residence at the Sydney Opera House for the 21st Biennale of Sydney. These pieces draw on the design principles of its architect, Jørn Utzon, who saw the space ‘like a violin’. In turn, Beer sought to ‘tune’ the building, allowing Utzon’s labyrinthine structure to be played as an instrument.

The result is Impossible Composition, a major sound piece arranged for four Australian singers performing in the tips of the Sydney Opera House roof. The piece plays in an arrangement correlating with the relative height of each sail. Each singer was asked to choose their earliest musical memory, which Beer then re-orchestrated. These include a Mongolian folk song, a chant by Hildegard, a Belgian lullaby and a Christian hymn. The piece juxtaposes the physical and sonic properties of the building with the personal histories of the musicians. Impossible Composition is the only trace of a performance commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney at the Sydney Opera House.

Two-dimensional sculptures made from fractured cross-sections of violins and cellos surround the sound installation. (These form an abstract portrait of Sonya, one of the singers with whom Beer worked closely during his residency, and “Recomposition (Backslash)”, inspired by the composer Hildegard who’s chant she chose to sing.) The “Recomposition” works have a particular character, which reflects Beer’s interest in ‘physical cubism’, using the form of the violin to represent the performer’s bodies. The experience of these lyrical portraits with the evocative sound installation fills the gallery, creating an environment that encourages us to, as Beer describes, ‘hear with our eyes – or see with our ears.’ (“*Oliver Beer, Impossible Composition*” (excerpt), *Anna Schwartz Gallery, 2018*)



Gert & Uwe Tobias (Brasov, Romania, 1973 – Cologne, Germany, currently)

The Transylvanian-born Germany-based artists, Gert & Uwe Tobias are collaborators and identical twins. The Tobias brothers paint, sculpt, draw with a typewriter and make large-scale woodcuts. Their renewed and colorful take on traditional media such as ceramics and woodcuts form the body of their work together with an almost nostalgic approach to making art, as each work is handmade by both sets of artists' hands. In their exhibitions, the Tobias brothers often combine these media; the almost animalistic ceramics and large-scale woodcuts together – all of which display lush, vivid color and strong graphic compositions. Drawing on sources as diverse as popular culture, their own heritage in traditional Eastern European folk art and art historical movements such as constructivism, the Tobias brothers create artworks that are both playful and haunting. (*Nils Staerk Gallery*)

X: Home is the Place You Left

It is impossible to evade the issues surrounding the African diaspora when talking about global history and identity. To look at the African story is as much about the current events we read in the daily news – tribal wars, mass migrations and the problems of racism against Black populations around the world – as it is to revisit the troubling history of slavery and the suffering endured from colonial injustices. The subject matter is extremely broad and complex spanning over centuries and therefore cannot be given justice in a single room, perhaps not even in a whole museum. Any attempt would probably fall short for being too general and incomplete. However, through Art, we try to find some poignant and powerful insights, one work at a time. In the poetry of artistic expression, our sympathies might be inspired to understand that for so many souls past and present, ‘home’ is an abstract idea and as a result, a fight for survival, pride and a sense of belonging.



Elmgreen & Dragset

(Michael Elmgreen: Copenhagen, Denmark, 1961 – Berlin, Germany, currently
Ingar Dragset: Trondheim, Norway, 1969 – Berlin Germany, currently)

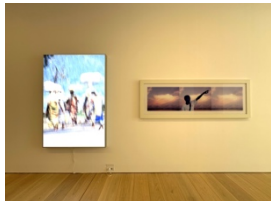
The title is taken from a poem that Michael Elmgreen wrote when he was 19 years old. The poem describes, in its own simple, youthful manner, issues of emotional homelessness. Home traditionally alludes to family, local context and nationality--to structures which are pre-set and often disconnected to one's individual desires. (*"Home is the Place You Left"*, (excerpt) *Trondheim Museum*, 2008)



Patricia Gómez (Valencia, Spain, 1978)
María Jesús González (Valencia, Spain, 1978)

“Since 2002, we have been working on projects that try to rescue the memory of places immersed in processes of disappearance or abandonment. Through the intervention inside uninhabited buildings, we carried out a work of photographic exploration and stamping by removal of large mural surfaces, with the aim of extracting a material record of their condition, and ultimately, generating a physical record and documentation that allows us to preserve the traces and memory of places that will cease to exist.” (*Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González, Bombas Gens*)

“The Fuerteventura Internment Center for Foreigners was created in 2003 and is located in a former Legion barracks. It is the largest facility of its kind in Spain and one of the largest in the European Union. It was closed in 2012 and currently does not house any migrant, although it maintains the infrastructure and a permanent police force. It kept a large number of written testimonies on the walls of the cells, where the first phase of the project was developed (May-June 2014).”



Alfredo Jaar (Santiago de Chile, Chile, 1956 – New York, USA, currently)

Images have the ability to evoke strong emotions from us. Photography as a medium creates a relationship between the photographer as an observer, the subject of the photograph and the viewer of the image that reminds us to consider the ways in which we see and perceive any given image. Alfredo Jaar's multidisciplinary practice challenges the medium and the ways we consume images, news media and its facilitation of a voyeuristic gaze. Jaar asks the viewer to consider what is not immediately visible and the possible ways in which an image can live beyond its moment of creation and outside of its frame.

Walking II, from the Rwanda Project: Largely derived from investigations and photojournalistic field research in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, this (body of work) seeks to investigate how one can engage with trauma as an outsider and also serves as a critique to the world's indifference and a lack of global visibility to the atrocities in Rwanda at that time. (*"Alfredo Jaar: The Rwanda Project"* (excerpts), Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, 2020)

Angel depicts a boy against an expansive urban backdrop in Luanda, Angola's capital city. What I find striking is Jaar's visual strategies to call attention to larger social and political issues. For instance, a bright orange marking on the boy's white shirt deliberately swirls upward—a hand-painted 'swoosh' form that evokes Nike's iconic logo and suggests economic challenges and aspirations in contemporary Luanda. Jaar's focus on site-specific work has addressed political topics and social issues in various contexts, as he has worked on projects internationally, spanning from Angola and Rwanda to Brazil and Hong Kong. (*"Angel: by Alfredo Jaar"* (excerpt), Allison J. Martino, The Bowdoin College Museum of Art, 2019)

One Million Points of Light was shot off the coast of Angola, in Luanda. It was taken while facing the ocean directly towards Brazil, in memory and homage to the 5 million slaves sent from Angola to Brazil. (*"Alfredo Jaar: The Politics of Images"* (excerpt), Galeria Luisa Strina, 2017)



Leilah Babirye (Kampala, Uganda, 1985 – New York, USA, currently)

Ugandan artist Leilah Babirye's multidisciplinary practice transforms everyday materials into objects that address issues surrounding identity, sexuality and human rights. Composed of debris collected from the streets of New York, Babirye's sculptures are woven, whittled, welded, burned and burnished. Babirye's choice to use discarded materials in her work is intentional – the pejorative term for a gay person in the Luganda language is 'ebisiyaga', meaning sugarcane husk. "It's rubbish," explains Babirye, "the part of the sugarcane you throw out."

The sculptures, created from wood, wax, nails, screws, wire, plastic and found objects, demonstrate how the artist frequently uses traditional African masks to explore the diversity of LGBTQI identities. The chiseled, roughly-textured wooden head is adorned with found objects that the artist has gathered during her commutes in New York. Babirye frequently references members of the Bugandan Kingdom, a Ugandan royal family, in the titles of her work, challenging traditional ideas of gender and power. Through the act of burning, nailing and assembling Babirye addresses the realities of being gay in the context of Uganda and the world at large.

Following her participation in the Fire Island Artist Residency, New York in 2015 Babirye was granted asylum in the United States in spring 2018. Living and working in Brooklyn, she is fueled by a desire to locate herself within her new environment and incorporate new materials and subjects into her vocabulary. (*Stephen Friedman Gallery*)



Jean-Michel Basquiat (New York, NY, USA, 1960 – 1988)

Jean-Michel Basquiat was an influential American artist of Haitian and Puerto Rican descent. Basquiat first achieved fame as part of SAMO, an informal graffiti duo who wrote enigmatic epigrams in the cultural hotbed of the Lower East Side of Manhattan during the late 1970s, where hip-hop, punk, and street art cultures coalesced. Basquiat's art focused on "suggestive dichotomies", such as wealth versus poverty, integration versus segregation, and inner versus outer experience. He appropriated poetry, drawing, and painting, and married text and image, abstraction, figuration, and historical information mixed with contemporary critique. Basquiat used social commentary in his paintings as a "springboard to deeper truths about the individual", as well as attacks on power structures and systems of racism, while his poetics were acutely political and direct in their criticism of colonialism and support for class struggle. (*Dellasposa Gallery, London*)



Tom Burr (New Haven, CT, USA, 1963 – New York, USA, currently)

On 14 May 2017, Marcel Breuer's Pirelli Building was revived. Electricity had been restored to the long empty tower, safety measures put back in place and permission to use the space granted by the various powers overseeing the Brutalist landmark in New Haven, Connecticut. The opening of *Tom Burr/New Haven* (2017), alternatively titled *Body/Building*, also marked the eponymous artist's prodigal return: the building stands in Burr's hometown.

Central to this project was a consideration of the time and place in which the artist was raised. New Haven at the end of the 1960s and start of the 1970s encapsulated a turbulent period in American history, and Burr's representations of that time imbue the show with a poignant sense of loss.

Jean Genet, a key figure in the exhibition, appears in the prime of his youth and as an old man. (It) refers to the 1970 speech delivered by Genet in New Haven that took as its theme violence against African Americans in light of Black Panther-cofounder Bobby Seale's recent arrest by the city's police. ("*Tom Burr*" (excerpts), *Sam Korman, Art Review*, 2018)



Charles Gaines (Charleston, NC, USA, 1944 – Los Angeles, CA, USA, currently)

Employing a systems-based conceptualism that Gaines has long embraced and highlighting the enduring influence of composer John Cage’s experiments with chance, the 12-part body of work brings together the score of a tragic love story, the opera *La Vida Breve* (c. 1904) by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, and a fiery 1967 speech by the civil rights activist and Black Panther Party (*) member Stokely Carmichael. The unexpected combination of music and text foregrounds the universality of long-standing class and racial struggles and the power of music to bridge difference. (*“Charles Gaines: Librettos: Manuel de Falla / Stokely Carmichael”* (excerpt), Anne Ellegood and Jamillah James, Hammer Museum, 2015)

* *The Black Panther Party (BPP)* was a Black Power political organization founded by college students Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton in October 1966 in Oakland, California. The party was active in the United States from 1966 until 1982, with chapters in numerous major cities, and international chapters in the United Kingdom in the early 1970s, and in Algeria from 1969 to 1972. At its inception on October 15, 1966, the Black Panther Party's core practice was its open-carry armed citizens' patrols ("cop-watching") to monitor the behavior of officers and challenge police brutality.



William Kentridge (Johannesburg, South Africa, 1955)

William Kentridge is a remarkably versatile artist whose work combines the political with the poetic. Dealing with subjects as sobering as apartheid, colonialism, and totalitarianism, his work is often imbued with dreamy, lyrical undertones or comedic bits of self-deprecation that render his powerful messages both alluring and ambivalent. Best known for animated films based on charcoal drawings, he also works in prints, books, collage, sculpture, and the performing arts. (*“William Kentridge: Five Themes”* (excerpt), *Museum of Modern Art New York*, 2010)

Monument is Kentridge's second film in the series (*Drawings for Projection*) and explores his feelings of ambivalence about the privileges and comforts of the white South African society into which he was born. It was made from a basis of eleven drawings and is accompanied by music composed by Edward Jordan. Soho Eckstein, wealthy real estate developer, here assumes the guise of civic benefactor and erects a monument to the black South African workforce, from whose labor his wealth is derived. The monument is a huge statue of an anonymous African workman. During the ceremony of unveiling the monument, in the first half of the film, the statue comes to life. Slowed by the enormous burden on his shoulders, he makes his way across the outskirts of the city, before disappearing into the distant landscape. As both product and embodiment of nature, he represents the moral dilemma at the core of Soho's empire and, by analogy, that of the white South African élite. Soho may feel sufficient gratitude towards the anonymous multitudes laboring for his luxury to build a monument in tribute to their work, but if in this act of recognition they become human, he must acknowledge their suffering and his abuse of them. For Kentridge, abuse of the populace runs parallel to exploitation of the land, as the second half of the film makes clear by the proliferation of billboards, lamp posts, loud-speakers, microphones and other bleak geometric forms appearing throughout the gradually expanding urban landscape. (*Tate*)

XI: A reassessment of history

Filipino artists Ryan Villamael and Manuel Ocampo, each in their own way, investigate how the narratives and symbols of colonial history are made, reassessing the way stories are passed on and the veracity and completeness of their perspectives.



Ryan Villamael, (Laguna, Philippines, 1987)

In Ryan Villamael's book sculptures, paper structures grow and spill out of old books on historical victories and defeats, specifically on the post-World War II of the Pacific, carefully collected by the artist on numerous trips to antique shops, book sales, and garage sales over the years. These are broken open to reveal something other than the text written inside, contain structures that are visually precarious, but simultaneously persistent and insistent in their desire to break away from what often feels like propaganda. The rebuilt ruins look like they're trying to escape; they're the truths that refuse to be buried in narratives that others have written and made up. The books exist to say one thing, often from the perspective of the victors, but Villamael's structures, which are made from photographic evidence of what transpired, exist to say something else that's true. (*Silverlens, Art Basel Hong Kong, 2017*)



Manuel Ocampo (Manila, Philippines, 1965)

Manuel Ocampo has a reputation for fearlessly tackling the taboos and cherished icons of society and of the art world itself. During the '90s, Ocampo was noted for his bold use of a highly charged iconography that combines Catholic imagery with motifs associated with racial and political oppression, creating works that make powerful, often conflicted, statements about the vicissitudes of personal and group identities. His works illustrate, often quite graphically, the psychic wounds that cut deep into the body of contemporary society. They translate the visceral force of Spanish Catholic art, with its bleeding Christs and tortured saints, into our postmodern, more secular era of doubt, uncertainty, and instability.

In recent years, Ocampo's works have featured more mysterious yet emotionally charged motifs that evoke an inner world of haunting visions and nightmares. He often makes use of an eclectic array of quasi-religious, highly idiosyncratic icons featuring teeth, fetuses, sausages, and body parts alongside more traditional Christian motifs. The process of artistic creation is often a central concern, with many works making ironic commentaries on notions of artistic inspiration, originality, and the anxiety of influence. The artist himself is frequently the subject of parody and self-mockery; sometimes he appears as a buzzard, a kind of cultural scavenger, or assumes slightly deranged alter egos. He frequently includes sly references to the works of other artists, just as in the past he often referred to the work of provincial painters of Catholic altars.

Recently, Ocampo has made silkscreens based on photographs of his older paintings, mainly well-known works from the '90s, altering the images to resemble darkened and distorted photographic negatives. New interventions were then hand painted on top of these images, creating rich, multi-layered compositions that capture a sense of the passing of time, the evolution of consciousness, and the ongoing structuring of personal and group identities. (*Tyler Rollins Fine Arts, New York, 2015*)

XII (Permanent Installation): Anselm Kiefer - Making Sense of the Senseless

Legacy is not always a gift; it can also be a burden and in some cases a terrible one. There is the biblical saying, “The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son.” (Ezekiel 18:20). However, so much of a person’s identity depends on heritage, and there are those who feel the responsibility of acting upon their inheritance no matter how dark it might be. German artist Anselm Kiefer is such a person whose dedication since the beginning of his career has been to face a post-Holocaust heritage head-on. In his search for understanding the atrocities committed before him, he has intensely studied mythologies, folklore, philosophy and alchemy, attempting to find a coherent view of a world that makes no sense in more conventional thought. These investigations have become the foundations of his paintings, sculptures and installations, from which results a body of work that speaks as much about a personal history as it does of all humanity. These are narratives to keep memories alive, and these are memories to ensure the hard life lessons are not lost.

“For me, art is the only possibility to establish a connection between things that make no sense and those that have a meaning. I see history as something synchronized, both if it refers to the Sumerians or to German mythology. As far as I am concerned, old sagas are not old at all. Neither is the Bible. When you look into it, the majority of things have already been formulated.” (Anselm Kiefer quoted in Ein Gespräch: Joseph Beuys, Jannis Kounellis, Anselm Kiefer, Enzo Cucchi. Edited by Jacqueline Burckhardt. Ed. Parkett-Verlag, Zurich, 1986, p. 40)

Anselm Kiefer (Donauessingen, Germany, 1945 – Paris, France, currently)

Born just months before the final European battle of World War II, Anselm Kiefer grew up witnessing the consequences of modern warfare and the division of his homeland. He experienced the rebuilding of a fragmented nation and its struggle for renewal. The artist dedicated himself to investigating the interwoven patterns of German mythology and history and the way they contributed to the rise of Fascism. Many of his paintings—immense landscapes and architectural interiors, often encrusted with sand and straw—invoke Germany’s literary and political heritage; references abound to the *Song of the Nibelung*, a German epic poem from the Middle Ages or to Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler (1889–1945). In one of his earliest projects, his 1969 Occupations (Besetzungen) series, Kiefer photographed himself mimicking the Nazi salute at various sites in France, Italy, and Switzerland. Following his move to southern France in the early 1990s, Kiefer’s iconography expanded to encompass more universal themes of civilization, culture, and spirituality, drawing upon such sources as alchemy, ancient myths, and the Kabbalah.

Kiefer became one of the foremost representatives of Neo-Expressionism, an approach characterized by violent, gestural brushwork. Bright color and strong light are not usually present in his works: images are cloudy, veiled, and show twilight scenes, painted with gray as the dominating color. His large-scale works combine a nearly monochromatic palette with mixed media, including materials such as ash, plaster, seeds, soil, straw, and strips of lead. Experimenting with materials is of great importance to Kiefer’s creative process. The chosen material acquires a symbolic meaning when understood in combination with the subject matter. The objects that are gathered in his works transcend their physical identities and speak for themselves, showing the artist’s obsessions through rich association and metaphors. Sand, flowers, dry branches, straw, and the iron objects all show Kiefer’s fascination with metamorphosis. Lead becomes a key material, both for its physical properties and great transformation capacity, as for its relationship with alchemy and the Kabbalah. (*Guggenheim Museum Bilbao*)



Cette obscure clarté qui tombe des étoiles, 1991-1992
Oil and sunflower seeds on gelatin silver print

The French title, meaning *The dark light that falls from the stars*, is taken from *Le Cid* by Corneille, a play wherein the choice between love and honor are a source of conflict for the protagonists of the story. It refers on one hand, to Kiefer's kinship to France where he moved in 1992, and on the other, to his complicated relationship to his fatherland Germany and its troubled past. *Le Cid* takes on an additional special significance here, as it takes place in Spain and is based on the 11th century Spanish warrior Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar.

Sunflowers are a recurring image in works by Kiefer, not so much for their golden radiance but for their heads packed with black seeds. They are a potent symbol of rebirth, the duality of death and life that is for him a central theme.



Die Meistersinger, 1982
Straw and oil on canvas

This work is inspired by and named after the opera Richard Wagner wrote in 1868, one of the most popular and successful of its time. An epic story that revolves around culture and tradition, it became a symbol of German patriotism in the Arts but eventually co-opted by the Nazis, frequently used as a form of propaganda. Kiefer honors this Wagner masterpiece in his work as a way to restore it from its corrupted legacy, reclaiming what the Nazis had tarnished by their abuse of its optimistic message.

Kiefer's use of straw in his work represents energy. He claims this is due to straw's physical qualities, including the color gold and its release of energy and heat when burned. The resulting ash makes way for new creation, thus echoing the motifs of transformation and the cycle of life. (Albano, Albert P. (1998). "Reflections on Painting, Alchemy, Nazism: Visiting with Anselm Kiefer". *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*)



*Von den Verlorenen gerührt, die der Glaube nicht trug,
erwachen die Trommeln im Fluss, 2005
Gouache and charcoal on photographic paper collage*

The horizon in Kiefer's work is a highly charged symbol of the line between heaven and earth, and in this work, he includes a dress that appears to fly over and transcend its boundaries. The idea of transcendence is furthermore symbolized by the stairs connecting earth to sky.

The title of the work translates to, “the drums in the river came alive, beaten by the lost ones, who were not supported by faith”, which Kiefer has written in the top portion of the collage, as he does in many of his works, reflecting his interest in written traditions. But rather than serving as an explanation to the visual experience or his own specific intentions, he allows us to bring our own associations in to become part of a broader conversation in the spirit of the work.

“When people say that oral and written traditions are different layers, the same holds true for pictures. Here too there is a purely visible presentation and a written one piled on top of each other like shifting slates continually displacing each other.” (*Anselm Kiefer and Thomas H. Macho, A conversation from the catalogue ‘Anselm Kiefer Am Anfang’, Galerie Thaddeus Ropac Salzburg, 2003*)



Velimir Khlebnikov, 2004
Oil, emulsions, acrylic and lead-sculpture on canvas

This work refers to the poet and numerological theorist Velimir Khlebnikov, specifically his notion that a naval battle with significant cosmic consequences on human history occurs every 317 years. Although Kiefer does not necessarily agree with these historical-mathematical theories, he is intrigued by their metaphysical interests and the meticulous computations that led to them, a part of which he has included in this particular work.

There is a discomfort in the juxtaposition of a battleship and the romantic seascape, a tension making it appear to aestheticize war. But upon considering the reference to Khlebnikov, who attacked conventional language and traditional ways of understanding historical development, we begin to observe parallels in Kiefer's work wherein the unconventional confrontation between the horrors of history and the transcendental beauty of the creative act might bring on new perspectives to both.



Schwarze Flocken, 2006
Oil, emulsion, acrylic, charcoal, wood, branches,
burned books and plaster on canvas

Books in Kiefer's work represent personal and collective memory. *Schwarze Flocken* (*Black Flakes*) draws inspiration from a poem of the same name by Paul Celan, a German-speaking Romanian Jew who survived the concentration camps. His parents did not survive: Celan's father died of typhus and his mother was shot when exhausted and deemed unfit for work. One section of Celan's poem reads:

Autumn bled all away, Mother, snow burned me through:
I sought out my heart so it might weep, I found – oh the summer's
breath,
it was like you.

Words from the poem, written by Kiefer in charcoal, recede into the painting's high horizon line.

Snow and ice are symbolic in Celan's poetry of both loss and silence in the face of the Holocaust. This symbolism carries over to Kiefer's canvas, and – in the form of a painting – it gains extra art-historical association. The winter landscape is a staple in 19th-century German Romantic art, a fine example being (the paintings of) Caspar David Friedrich. In Friedrich's work the winter landscape of Germany is sublime and spiritual; in Kiefer's it is testament to the country's dark history.

Critics have seen the branches as representing the barbed wire of the concentration camps. But trees have a wide range of references for Kiefer: for example, he remembers how his family took refuge from Allied bombing in the forest, and his work has often focused on myths associated with trees and wood, such as that of Yggdrasil, the Norse 'World Tree' that shelters the universe. (*"How to read an Anselm Kiefer"* (excerpts), Sam Phillips, Royal Academy, London, 2014)

Provocatively, but perhaps inevitably, book-burning is also in Kiefer's repertoire: he has produced many weighty books, some from sheets of lead, many with carbonized pages, deliberately calling to mind the Nazi delirium, and Heinrich Heine's (1797-1856) prophecy: "Where they have burned books they will end in burning human beings."

Hitler's ruinous legacy, although far from being Kiefer's only subject, has found its way into all corners of his work. Even as he draws on ancient history and mythology, 20th-century literature and philosophy, cosmology, physics, and alchemy, his work is always in dialogue with this more recent history. (*"Anselm Kiefer: Inside a Black Hole"* (excerpts), Sebastian Smee, *Prospect*, 2014)



Landschaft bei Buchen, 1971
Watercolour and opaque white on paper



Untitled (Winterbild), Undated
Acrylic and dispersion paint over bromine silver gelatin print, mounted on paper



Siegfried's difficult way to Brunnhilde, 1988
Photograph and treated lead on wood in artist frame

The title of this work refers to the hero of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*), Siegfried, and his journey to the place where his lover, Brunnhilde, sleeps inside a ring of fire. (It is a story of epic scale with gods, heroes and mythical creatures, but its central theme is clear and simple and serves as a forceful message of the dangers of power and the struggles to acquire it.) It is also the title of a 1977 book of photographs Kiefer made on the subject of an abandoned railway bed, a motif that suggests a sense of loss, of forgotten time. "Our historical knowledge . . . determines our way of looking at things," Kiefer once said. "We see railway tracks anywhere and think about Auschwitz. It will remain that way in the long run."

Kiefer discovered lead as an artistic medium while repairing an old washing machine. It appealed to the artist because of its different applications, whether by alchemists who try to turn it into gold or by medical professionals who use it to protect patients from the harmful effects of X-rays. (*Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*)

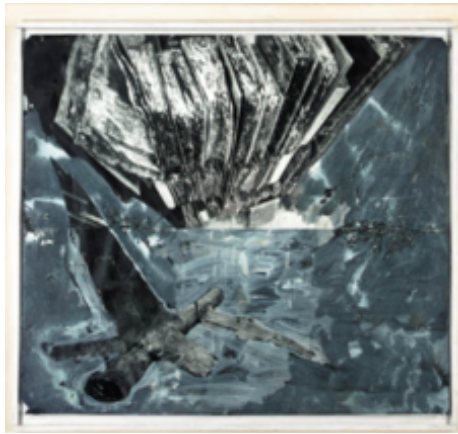
Highly symbolic connections emerge from lead, concrete, dirt, dried plants, barbed wire and the inclusion of found objects such as books, scythes, and model ships. Lead is of particular importance to the artist, who has described it as "the only material heavy enough to carry the weight of human history." (*Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac*)



Die Ungeborenen, 1997
38-page book with photographs laid on cardboard
including cement, fabric, metal, charcoal, straw, paper,
paint, sunflower seeds, and plaster

Die Ungeborenen (The Unborn) is a theme that Kiefer has explored profoundly through major paintings and photographs for many years. He has enigmatically described the term as "the desire of not wanting to be born," referring to the writings of Paul Celan, a poet that he reveres and has often quoted. This work, with its hauntingly cold abandoned views scattered with ash and doll-like dresses, hints at a state of limbo.

The chair is another object that Kiefer includes symbolically in his works. Empty as they are on the pages of this book-form assemblage, they invite us to occupy them and place ourselves in the center of these settings, and therefore in the center of history. To enter this gloomy landscape is a serious challenge requiring moral maturity and psychological courage as we are asked to face the tragic deaths of the innocent.



Der Engel der Geschichte, 1989
Oil on silver gelatin print

Der Engel der Geschichte (The Angel of History) takes its title from an essay written by the German philosopher Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) about the *Angelus Novus*, a monoprint by Paul Klee (1879-1940) he purchased in 1921 which would become an ongoing inspiration to him. Benjamin describes the angel in his ninth thesis on the philosophy of history (1940):

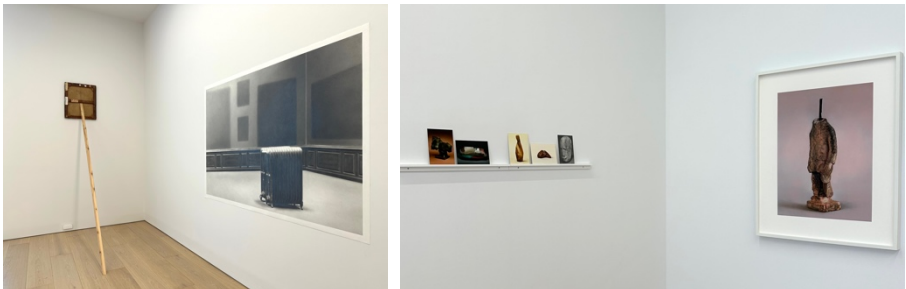
A Klee painting named Angelus Novus shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn [London, 1973], p. 259)

Kiefer's 'Angel' is not an angel at all but a rather sinister war plane. As Benjamin expressed his suspicions in his thesis, Kiefer has criticized the 19th and 20th century modernist approach of embracing technology as the great human achievement and salvation. The invention of the jet aircraft was in fact one of the most critical innovations of World War II, much of the success of the German army owed to it. It is with irony that Kiefer relates his work back to Benjamin and Klee, where the messenger of god has turned into the bringer of death and destruction.

XIII: An elephant in the room

Besides serving as carriers of memories and history, Art has also been the protagonist of these chronicled events, caught in the crossfire of social and political upheavals. The installation of drawings and paintings from two separate bodies of work by Martí Cormand not only specifies a painful time in history when freedom of expression and creative progress were undermined but also relates two seemingly distinct events, reminding us of their interconnectedness.

Furthermore, the postcard format of the shelved paintings pointedly indicates how we consume art in our commodified world. Along with Javier Arce's crumpled and belittled copy of the Guernica by Pablo Picasso, they might remind us that we neglect the greater purpose of these images when they are reduced to tourist destinations and gift-shop purchases.



Martí Cormand (Barcelona, Spain, 1970 – New York, USA, currently)

As Cormand explains: The title (“*Un elefante en el Prado*”) comes from an article by Peio H. Riaño published on December 10, 2017 in “*El Español*” where one of the most fascinating and unpublished scenes of the Civil War is explained: the shipment of almost a hundred showcases from the Museum of Natural Sciences to The Prado museum. Among other animals there was an elephant, the only one that did not have a crate. The Republic government decided that the Prado was the best place to protect the funds of other museums. The Ministry appointed the Prado as the ideal refuge, although its paintings had moved prior due to lack of security. A week before the bombing, the Museum emptied itself of thousands of paintings that were transported to Valencia, and then to Geneva, via Figueras. The transfer was orchestrated by Josep Renau.

At the same time in 1937, the Nazis organized an exhibition of what they considered “degenerate art” (*Entartete Kunst*) curated by Adolf Ziegler, Hitler's favorite painter. The show opened on July 19th and remained until November 30th. Through the halls of

the Archeology Institute of Munich about 600 works were presented by artists whose legacy is nowadays indisputable: Marc Chagall, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, George Grosz, Emil Nolde and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, among other masters of the modernism. In the 1930s though these works aroused controversy not only in Germany, their value was already recognized in major capitals of the world. Taking advantage of this situation, the Nazis sold most of them in the international art market; 1,004 paintings and 3,825 engravings of those that could not be detached were burned in 1939.

The title "An elephant in the Prado" suggests the English expression "an elephant in the room" which refers to an obvious truth that is ignored or goes unnoticed. It also applies to and easily understood problem or risk that no one wants to discuss. Badly solved issues of the past return, and come to light in the present, to be inevitably discussed.

Cormand's work attests to the coalescence of time, or rather, of an intangible past that can only be grasped in the present through intuition. According to the artist, our present reaffirms the concept of an "eternal return," the idea that our existence is cyclical in nature instead of linear. These images also become a byproduct of entangled temporality in cyberspace, where Cormand often derives his source material. (*"Martí Cormand: Un elefante en el Prado", 2019, Espacio Minimo, Madrid*)



Javier Arce
(Santander, Spain, 1973)

Javier Arce's early output was undergirded by a concern with the popularization of the image and its instant consumption, his unease captured in a conflict with the global and reflected in the slowness of the practice of drawing. For more than a decade, ever since settling in his Pasiego hut—the opposite extreme of the global—the artist started to speak from the personal and the individual, which comes together in a single critical discourse, without detriment to the discipline of drawing, but this time also paying attention to the unhurried uses and tempered gestures of the objects and materials that surround him. (*"Javier Arce: Montaña, trigo, tigre"*, 2019, *The Goma, Madrid*)

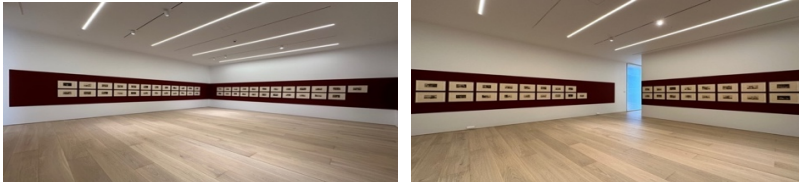


Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes
(Fuendetodos, Spain, 1746 – Bordeaux, France, 1828)

'Animal Folly' from the 'Disparates' (Follies / Irrationalities): The elephant is based on a drawing Goya made in the 1800s, possibly upon the arrival in Madrid of an Indian elephant. Conveying the wonder with which animals from other places were regarded in early nineteenth-century Spain, this print has been interpreted as a reference to the so-called Persian Manifesto (from a note on the customs of "the ancient Persians" in its first article) that led to the annulment of the constitution and the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814. Here, men in Eastern robes hold an open book and a harness with bells, attempting to lure an elephant standing in a circular space that recalls a bullring.

One of the four additional plates prepared for the set but not included in the posthumous first edition published by the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid in 1864 under the title 'Los Proverbios'. (*Metropolitan Museum, New York*)

Room XIV: Disasters of War



Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (Fuendetodos, Spain, 1746 – Bordeaux, France, 1828)

Although Francisco de Goya lived and worked in the 18th-19th centuries, the unconstrained and unapologetic expression of his work have made many declare him “the father of Modern Art”. Influential for generations after him and still so in the present, the etching series *Disasters of War* remains a striking example of this important contribution to Art.

Although they were not published until 1863, the *Disasters* date from the second decade of the 19th Century, when Goya was already a mature artist with a reputation as a brilliant court painter and satirist. Years earlier, in 1793, he had suffered a mysterious illness, perhaps a series of strokes, which left him permanently deaf. This had a profound impact on his art, which became increasingly visionary and strange – arguably paving the way for the nihilistic worldview expressed in the *Disasters of War*.

Even today it is difficult to look at the *Disasters*, because Goya catalogues the brutality and fatal consequences of war in such a stark, confrontational and unflinching manner. The series is divided into three groups: prints of wartime “disasters” responding to the Napoleonic invasion of Spain; a record of the famine in Madrid of 1811-12, in which more than 20,000 people died; and a final ‘chapter’ of so-called allegorical *caprichos* lampooning the repressive government of Ferdinand VII, who returned to Spain as king in 1814.

The genius of the *Disasters* is that they transcend particularities of the Peninsular War and its aftermath to feel universal – and modern. Perhaps this is because, as the British writer Aldous Huxley put it in 1947, “All [Goya] shows us is war’s disasters and squalors, without any of the glory or even picturesqueness.” (“*Goya’s Disasters of War: The truth about war laid bare*” (excerpts), Alastair Sooke, *BBC Culture*, July 2014)

Installations throughout the building:

Found along the hallways and stairway landings, next to windows and in the entry courtyard of the building are strategically placed artworks connecting inside to outside and vice-versa, relating back to main themes of the exhibitions and making us pause as we rush through from room to room.

Reception area: this is where our offices are and where we welcome you to *20/21*.

Bottom staircase landing: a long wall that runs the length of the first set of steps to the upper level is an invitation for works that are particularly effective on horizontal stretches of space – for example, a panoramic landscape or a series to be seen as one.

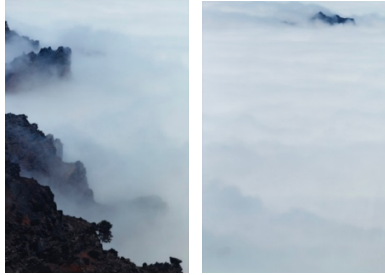
The Viewpoint: while strategic for a bench to enjoy the great view through this window behind the bottom of the staircase, you might find an artwork has already taken your spot. “The Viewpoint” is a place where specially selected works of art with poignant connections to the environment are placed, not only to face the scenery that once inspired their creation but also to be visible from the outside to those just passing by.

Upper staircase landing: at the top of the staircase, one finds the unusual view of looking out of a window to look into another, a clear view into The Lighthouse installation. The wall across becomes an interesting location for a work to interact with this particular situation.

The Lighthouse: an outdoor balcony on the upper level for special works of art that use light as part of their medium, somewhat turning the space into a beacon to be seen from afar outside or up close from behind the glass window inside.

Patio: just in case you didn’t notice it coming into the courtyard of the building, don’t miss the outdoor sculpture between the entrance/exit ways.

Reception area



Axel Hütte

(Essen, Germany, 1951)

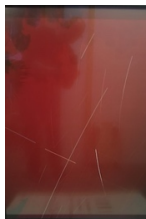
“La Palma”, 2005



Gerhard Richter

(Dresden, 1932 - Cologne, Germany, currently)

“Kanarische Landschaften II”, 1971



Sharon Harper

(Stamford, CT, 1966 - Cambridge, MA, USA, currently)

“La Palma”

Bottom staircase landing



Tim Rollins and the KOS (Kids of Survival)
(Pittsfield, ME, USA, 1955 – New York, NY, USA, 2017)
“The Red Badge of Courage”, 1991-1992

Tim Rollins was an artist, teacher and activist. In 1979, he founded Group Material in New York. In the early 1980s, he taught ‘at risk’ youth with learning disabilities at Intermediate School 52 in the Bronx and went on to create the Art & Knowledge Workshop. His highly acclaimed collaboration with the members of K.O.S. (Kids of Survival) continued for many years. Rollins combined lessons in reading and writing with making artworks. The source material laid out and studied by the students generally related to literary or musical classics, but can also include comics or legal documents. Their collaborative work took the form of drawings, photographs, sculptural objects and paintings on canvas and paper. The backgrounds of works are often comprised of pages of books pasted into a grid. The results blend elements of Minimalism with an interest in the revival of painting that took place in the 1980s and in art that is socially and politically engaged. Rollins has said: “What we’re doing changes people’s conception about who can make art, how art is made, who can learn and what’s possible, because a lot of these kids had been written off by the school system. This is our revenge.”
(Xavier Hufkens Gallery)

The Red Badge of Courage is a war novel by American author Stephen Crane (1871–1900). Taking place during the American Civil War, the story is about a young private of the Union Army, Henry Fleming, who flees from the field of battle. Overcome with shame, he longs for a wound, a "red badge of courage", to counteract his cowardice. When his regiment once again faces the enemy, Henry acts as flag-bearer, carrying the regimental colors.

The Viewpoint



Rob Carter

(Worcester, UK, 1976 – Richmond, VA, USA, currently)

Untitled (films4peace), 2013

Rob Carter uses photography, stop-motion animation, and time-lapse video to spotlight buildings and their shifting political and historical significance. Architectural themes and histories are invented or modified using physically cut-up and digitally manipulated photographic images of specific buildings, towns and landscapes. This process simulates paths of urban development and recontextualizes cultural traditions such as sport and religion. The interaction of plant life with these photo-structures represents the irrepressible strength of nature that our buildings attempt to shield us from, as well as the temporality and fluidity of the environs we inhabit.

“My visit to the Ebensee Nazi concentration camp in Austria in 2010 was not only highly disquieting but also left a lasting emotional imprint on my mind. Instantly moved by the place, I felt troubled for taking the few photographs I did. So instead, I turned my camera on the breathtaking landscape of the area, especially Lake Traunsee. Ultimately it is impossible to comprehend the horror and atrocities that occurred at Ebensee between 1943 and 1945. I was mesmerized by the haunting beauty of the area, the peace and stillness. In shocking contrast, deep within the rock, the remnants of armament bunkers and tunnels remain and their silence barely contains the remembrance of the terrible noise.

Using time-lapse photography shot during my visit and stop-motion animation shot this year, the video is an attempt to describe the layered history that lies within the town and landscape of Ebensee. Separated from the disturbing images we have of the camp's liberation, this video uses the images of the contemporary visitor to re-animate the place and describe how the land has recovered its tranquility but not its innocence.”

Upper staircase landing



Alfredo Jaar

(Santiago de Chile, Chile, 1956 – New York, USA, currently)
“(Kindness) of (Strangers)”, 2015

Alfredo Jaar’s artistic practice is multidisciplinary, and he explores the unequal power relations and the social and political fractures resulting from globalization. He often incorporates photographs, texts, and historical references into his highly symbolic installations, performances, and devices in public spaces. Despite his clear will to denounce history, Jaar does not renounce aesthetic intention. *Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona*

“In this chaotic map, we are all strangers looking for kindness.”

The work “(Kindness) of (Strangers)” confronts visitors with the movement of people fleeing war and persecution. A work that has special relevance these days. These movements across Europe reveal the extent of the refugee crisis and the perpetual flux of escape routes, where people encounter both kindness and its contrary. It also reveals the origin of their journey, and their destination.

The Lighthouse



Bernardí Roig
(Palma de Mallorca, Spain, 1965)

Bernardi Roig's "Ejercicios para tener frío en Canarias", 2014 with its title that references the islands is an apt inaugural installation as we bring light and warmth to our newly built structure.

Patio



Danh Vō

(Bà Rịa, Vietnam, 1975 – Berlin, Germany and Mexico City, Mexico, currently)
“We the People” (Detail-H5), 2011-2016

Through a body of personal work inspired also by historical and political events, Danh Vō probes into the inheritance and construction of cultural conflicts, traumas, and values. When Vō was a child, his family fled Vietnam and settled in Denmark: their assimilation to European culture and the political events that prompted their flight are intrinsic to his artistic investigations. His work sheds light on the relation between the inseparable elements that shape our sense of self, both through collective history and private experience. Exhibiting objects based on the ready-made principle is a characteristic artistic strategy of Danh Vō; through objects charged with symbolism that retains the sublimated desire and sadness of individuals and entire cultures, he examines how meaning changes with context. Danh Vō’s work, enigmatic and poetic, deftly avoids didacticism as he explores the power structures behind liberal societies and the fragility of our nation-state notions.

Kurimanazutto

Danh Vō’s sculpture *We the People (detail)* is one of 250 individual parts of the artist’s 1:1 replica of the Statue of Liberty. Vō’s segmented version, however, was never intended to be assembled; rather, the artist’s intent is to allow the viewer to experience the world-famous icon on a human scale, and to reflect on the idea of liberty from multiple perspectives. Made using repoussé (hammered metal), the same technique employed by the French sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi to create the original statue in 1876, the individual parts of Vō’s segmented version have been dispersed around the world and have to date been exhibited in more than fifteen countries.

We the People brings together a host of historical and cultural references. While the Statue of Liberty was produced by French craftsmen as a gift from France to the United States, with the site, pedestal, and erection paid for by American citizens, Vō's *We The People* was conceived in Germany, fabricated in Shanghai, and funded by the artist's French gallery and collectors in Europe, Asia, and the United States. In 1979, when Vō was four years old, his family fled Vietnam in a homemade boat and were rescued at sea by a Danish freighter; they eventually settled in Denmark, where he grew up. His early life as a refugee and his assimilation into European culture are reflected in Vo's art, while his reimagining of the Statue of Liberty takes on increased urgency in our current moment in time, where immigration and refugee crises have become issues of both national and worldwide debate. "*Dahn Vō: We The People (Detail)*", *The Aldridge Museum, 2018-2019*