

Exhibitions 2023



In the eye of the storm: modernism in Ukraine, 1900 - 1930s

From 29 November 2022 to 30 April 2023

The exhibition *In the Eye of the Storm: Modernism in Ukraine, 1900-1930s* presents the ground-breaking art produced in Ukraine in the first decades of the 20th century, showcasing trends that range from figurative art to futurism and constructivism. The development of Ukrainian modernism took place against a complicated socio-political backdrop of collapsing empires, the First World War, the revolutions of 1917 with the ensuing Ukrainian War of Independence (1917-21), and the eventual creation of Soviet Ukraine. The ruthless Stalinist repressions against Ukrainian intelligentsia led to the execution of dozens of writers, theatre directors and artists, while the Holodomor, the man-made famine of 1932-33, killed millions of Ukrainians.

Despite these tragic circumstances, Ukrainian art of the period lived through a true renaissance of creative experimentation. *In the Eye of the Storm* reclaims this essential – though little-known in the West – chapter of European modernism, displaying around 70 works in a full range of media, from oil paintings and sketches to collages and theatre designs. Following a strict chronological order, the show presents works by masters of Ukrainian modernism, such as Oleksandr Bohomazov, Vasyl

Yermilov, Viktor Palmov, and Anatol Petrytskyi. Exploring the polyphony of styles and identities, the exhibition includes neo-Byzantine paintings by the followers of Mykhailo Boichuk and experimental works by members of the Kultur Lige, who sought to promote their vision of contemporary Ukrainian and Yiddish art, respectively. It features pieces by Kazymyr Malevych and El Lissitzky, quintessential artists of the international avant-garde who worked in Ukraine and left a significant imprint on the development of the national art scene. The exhibition also showcases artworks of internationally renowned artists who were born and started their careers in Ukraine but became famous abroad, among them Alexandra Exter, Wladimir Baranoff-Rossiné, and Sonia Delaunay.

In the most comprehensive survey of Ukrainian modern art to date, with many works on loan from the National Art Museum of Ukraine and the State Museum of Theatre, Music and Cinema of Ukraine, the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza celebrates the dynamism and diversity of the artistic scene in Ukraine, while safeguarding the country's heritage during the inadmissible, present-day occupation of its territory by Russia.



Davyd Burliuk
Carousel
1921

National Art Museum of Ukraine

Restoration of *The Virgin of Humility*

From 19 December 2022 to 12 December 2023

With its restoration now complete, Fra Angelico's *The Virgin of Humility* is once again on display to visitors in a special installation in Room 11 of the permanent collection which presents the results of that project.

The restored painting is shown alongside two musical instruments similar to the ones depicted in the composition and an explanatory video on the work carried out by the restoration team. Over the past months the museum's restorers have undertaken a complex process of technical study, identifying the materials used in the

work's creation, taking chemical analyses and obtaining technical images such as X-radiographs and infrared reflectographs, together allowing for a detailed study of the painting. This prior research revealed Fra Angelico's creative procedures and provided the necessary information for embarking on the restoration with the maximum rigour and respect for the work. Following its presentation in Madrid the painting will return to the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) where it is habitually on display as part of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection on deposit at that museum.



Funding for the conservation of this artwork was generously provided through a grant from the Bank of America Art Conservation Project.



Fra Angelico
The Virgin of Humility (detail)
ca. 1433 - 1435
Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, on deposit at the
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)

Ana Esteve Reig.

Fictional Stages

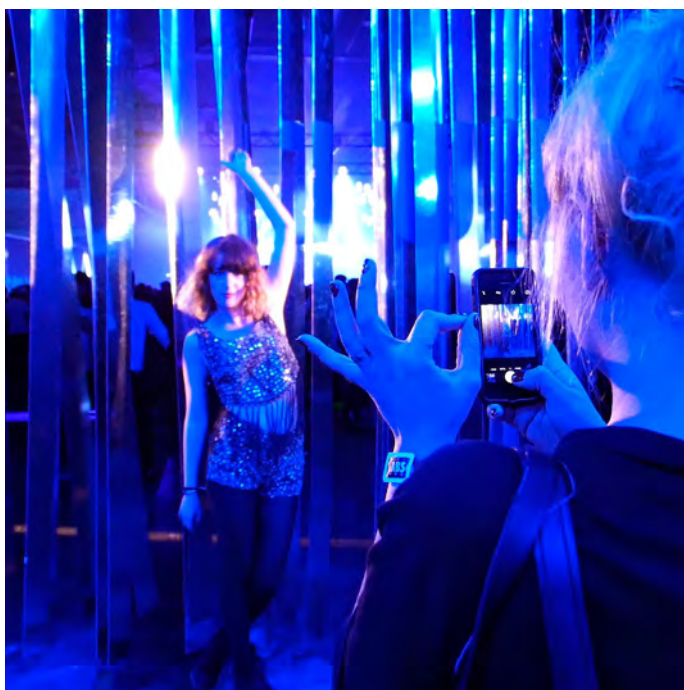
From 30 January to 23 April 2023

The Kora exhibition series, which adopts a gender-based approach, has now reached its sixth edition with *Fictional Stages*, a solo exhibition by artist Ana Esteve Reig (born Agres, 1986). It focuses on issues such as identity and its construction, the importance of images in that process, and the elements that culturally configure people to make them the way they are.

The stages are possible places, neither entirely real nor invented, and anything might happen in them. Music, internet, social media, human relationships and what

generates them are some of the themes analysed in the different projects presented. They take the form of audiovisual works in which the characters move freely between different identities, aesthetics and realities in an ongoing process of construction.

The exhibition, curated by Semíramis González and coordinated by Laura Andrada, from the museum's Curatorial Department, is presented in the 1st floor exhibition gallery and also in Rooms 19, 20 and 21 in dialogue with works from the Permanent Collection.



Ana Esteve Reig
Still from *"The documentary of Delilah"*
2016
Courtesy of the artist

Lucian Freud.

New perspectives

From 14 February to 18 June 2023

To mark the centenary of the birth of the British painter Lucian Freud (1922-2011) the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza and the National Gallery in London are presenting a retrospective on the artist and his work. The exhibition, which opens in October 2022 at the National Gallery and in February 2023 in Madrid, features around 50 works that span the seven decades of the career of one of the most important European artists of the 20th century.

Freud's painting, which was incisive, subversive and on occasions shocking, focused on the representation of the human body and the portrayal of modern man. An assiduous visitor to historic museums, his work reveals a series of allusions to the great masters of the past, from Egyptian art to Ingres, Courbet, Rodin and Cézanne and encompassing Grünewald, Hals, Velázquez, Rembrandt, Daumier, Watteau and Géricault, although that connection with the past coexists with a powerful spirit of independence. Freud's true abiding interest throughout

his work was to present painting on painting - his personal meta-artistic reflection and "the intensification of reality" which he always aspired to achieve.

The exhibition is divided into various sections that offer an approximately chronological survey of the painter's evolution and subject matter. These are: *Becoming Freud*, devoted to the artist's early works which are notably figurative in the face of the prevailing abstract trends of the period; *Early portraits*, works that already reveal Freud's desire to capture the essence of his sitters; *Intimacy*, which focuses on his preference for depicting people from his close circle; *Power*, portraits of individuals whom he agreed to paint on the basis that they accepted his conditions for working; *The Studio*, Freud's creative space which became a subject in his art; and *Flesh*, featuring the artist's naked portraits, that reveal his profound observation of the human body and the mortality of flesh.



With the collaboration



Lucian Freud
Reflection with Two Children (Self-Portrait)
1965
Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid
© The Lucian Freud Archive / Bridgeman Images

TBA 21 Wu Tsang (TBA21)

From 21 February to 11 June 2023

The Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza and TBA21 present *Of Whales*, an installation by the American artist Wu Tsang (born 1982), based on her film adaptation of Herman Melville's novel *Moby Dick*. Presented at the 2022 Biennale di Venezia within the international art exhibition *The Milk of Dreams*, this project is set in a psychedelic oceanic setting generated by extended reality technology.

Of Whales re-analyses the profound meditation on knowledge, exoticism and eroticism of Melville's

original text through a post-colonialist lens. Seen from the perspective of the whale and the diverse crew of sailors on board the whaling ship the Pequod, this complex work locates Melville's story in the context of mid-19th-century naval history, of the transatlantic birth of modern capitalism and of the birth of mass protests. The immensity of the ocean becomes the symbol of the unknown and the artist's ideas point to the existence of oblique perspectives, encouraging the idea that any viewpoint is a unique one.



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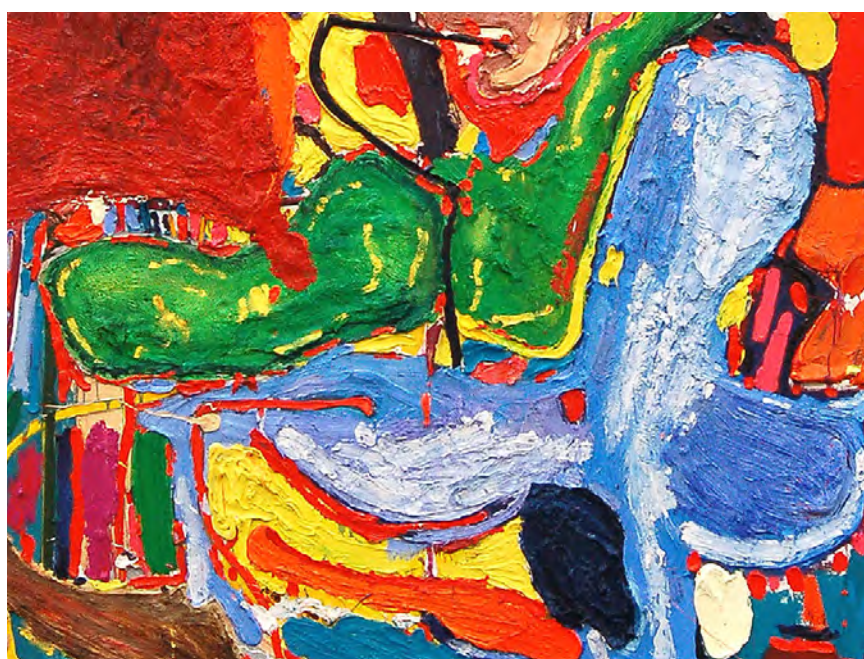
Wu Tsang
De Ballenas
2022
59 Bienal de arte, The Milk of Dreams
Fotografía de Matteo de Fina

André Butzer

From 9 May to 10 September 2023

The Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza is presenting the first retrospective on André Butzer (born Stuttgart, Germany, 1973) to be held outside the artist's native country. Coinciding with the artist's fiftieth birthday, it presents a selection of 22 works created between 1999 and 2022, including some of Butzer's most iconic paintings, and reveals the scope of his pictorial experience. Among the works on display are two that were recently added to the Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: *Aladdin and the Magic Oil Lamp* (2010) and *Untitled* (2022).

Curated by the Museo Thyssen's artistic director Guillermo Solana in close collaboration with the painter's studio, this monographic exhibition of Butzer's career launches a new series of exhibitions on artists represented in the Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection. These will be presented in the new exhibition's space on the museum's first floor.



André Butzer
Aladdin and the Magic Oil Lamp (detail)
2010
Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

The Occult in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Collections

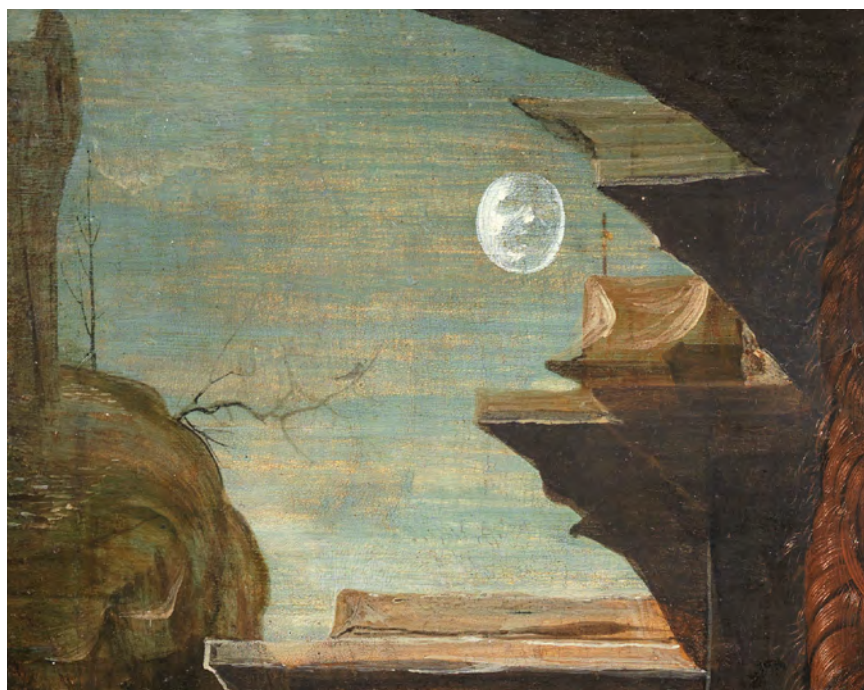
From 1 July to 8 October 2023

The *Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy* describes the "occult sciences" as "mysterious practices and forms of knowledge, such as magic, alchemy, astrology, etc., which since antiquity have aimed to penetrate and master the secrets of nature." Refining this further, the occult tradition could be seen as based on three suppositions: 1. The transmission since ancient times of a secret wisdom only accessible to a few initiates; 2. The correspondences between different parts of the universe (elements, planets, temperaments, etc.), within the context of a fundamental correspondence between macrocosms and microcosms; and 3. The existence of certain superpowers latent within human beings, which must manifest themselves in order to lead us to a spiritual metamorphosis or transmutation.

Occult knowledge has survived over the centuries in a hostile cultural climate - dominated firstly by hegemonic

religion and later by rationalism and positivism - thanks to its ability to disguise itself and infiltrate. It is in the field of the visual arts that esoteric ideas and beliefs have found the ideal terrain for their encoded messages; from the hermetic allegories of the Renaissance to their presence in 20th century avant-garde art.

Curated by Guillermo Solana, this exhibition brings together around 70 works from the Thyssen-Bornemisza collections (both the museum's permanent collection and the private collections of various members of the Thyssen-Bornemisza family) which reveal documented traces of the occult. The esoteric tradition provides a series of codes for deciphering hidden meanings. Its value lies in the fact that it reveals details and aspects of works of art that have previously passed unnoticed, offering us new, heterodox readings.



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Bramantino
The Risen Christ (detail)
ca. 1490

Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Jordy Kerwick

From 22 September 2023 to 15 January 2024

The exhibition programme devoted to the Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection is focusing this season on an emerging figure in new painting, the Australian artist Jordy Kerwick (born Melbourne, 1982). On display are 9 works, ranging from large-format canvases to smaller creations on paper and including three paintings from this collection.

During the early years of his career Kerwick painted still lifes. Initially characterised by muted tones, they became increasingly colourful with a wider range of

details. These interior scenes then started to include a camouflaged cobra and a tiger; fantastical creatures which subsequently moved outdoors, into jungle landscapes inhabited by lions and wolves but also by unicorns, the majority with two heads. Kerwick's most recent paintings are more complex, narrative compositions that evoke an entire mythology and, in some cases, depict a female divinity.



Jordy Kerwick
Jules and his Friends
2022

Collection Blanca and Borja Thyssen-Bornemisza
©Jordy Kerwick ©Courtesy the artist and cadet

Picasso: The Sacred and the Profane

From 4 October 2023 to 14 January 2024

Pablo Picasso's implacable intention to constantly reinvent his art and take it beyond the limits of his own time expressed itself in both his non-conformist, innovative spirit and his desire to devour and reinterpret works of the past. The exhibition *Picasso. The Sacred and the Profane* focuses on the audacity and originality with which the artist approached both the classical world and themes from the Judeo-Christian tradition, revealing his ability to incorporate elements and themes from earlier art into his own output and to reflect on the ultimate essence of painting. At times traumatic and existential and at others dynamic and optimistic, Picasso looked at the art of the past and showed us new ways of interpreting history, while with his farsighted vision he continues to offer us fundamental clues to the uncertain contemporary world.

The exhibition includes around 30 paintings to be shown in three galleries on the first floor. The works by Picasso from the museum's collection and various loans from the Musée national Picasso-Paris and other collections and institutions will establish dialogues with paintings by El Greco, Rubens, Zurbarán, Van der Hamen, Delacroix and Goya. The first section shows how Picasso assimilated the tradition of portraiture and religious imagery, transforming it into a veritable catalogue of promiscuous and profane characters. The second section looks at more intimate, domestic subjects with still lifes and mother and child compositions. A third room contrasts the traditional theme of the Passion with scenes of violence and sacrifice through Crucifixions, bullfights and the dramatic women depicted by the artist in the 1930s.



Exhibition organized with the support of the National Commission for the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the death of Pablo Picasso And with the exceptional support of



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Pablo Picasso
***Man with a Clarinet*, 1911-12**
Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza
© Sucesión Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid

Women Masters

From 31 October 2023 to 4 February 2024

Artemisia Gentileschi, Angelica Kauffmann, Clara Peeters, Rosa Bonheur, Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, María Blanchard, Natalia Goncharova, Sonia Delaunay and Maruja Mallo were celebrated artists in their lifetimes who are now enjoying renewed recognition in response to their erasure from the art-historical account alongside others who broke moulds with creations of undoubted excellence.

Featuring nearly 100 works, including paintings, sculptures, works on paper and textiles, the exhibition is curated from a feminist viewpoint by Rocío de la Villa. It presents a survey from the late 16th century to the

early decades of the 20th century through eight contexts important within women's path towards emancipation. Starting from the contemporary notion of sisterhood, it focuses on groups of female artists, patrons and gallerists who shared values as well as favourable socio-cultural and theoretical conditions despite the patriarchal system. Employing a structure principally based on the conjunction of historical periods, artistic genres and themes, the exhibition reveals how these artists approached important issues of their day, established their positions and contributed new iconographies and alternative gazes.



Organised by the Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum in Madrid, in collaboration with the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck.

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Sonia Delaunay
Simultaneous Dresses (Three Women, Forms, Colours)
1925
Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza
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