

MAC BA Collection

October 2005 - March 2006

The selection from the MACBA Collection on show now on Floor 0 of the Museum begins with a series of works that illustrate the clashing discourses that dominated the art debate from the fifties. The background was the crisis of 1948 and the aftermath of the war in Europe, which brought about the emergence of class and national struggles. The Collection reflects that host of responses to the time and its conflicts, such as the flowering of European pictorial informalism, American expressionism and the *nouveaux réalistes*. The starting point is the work of Alexander Calder and Roberto Matta, whose opening up of the conception of space would be fundamental over the following decades.

The works show two main tendencies linked to abstraction which, though apparently contradictory, are in fact complementary. First, in the line of informalism, partly rooted in surrealism – the case of Antoni Tàpies – we find artists who reflect the Spanish political situation subjectively, such as Antonio Saura and Manuel Millares, members of the El Paso group. Second, a tendency based on the functionalism and constructivism of the European avantgardes reaches abstraction through a search for order, balance and objectivity. That in turn leads to concrete art, two of whose leading figures in Spain are Pablo Palazuelo and Jorge Oteiza.

**MAC
BA**

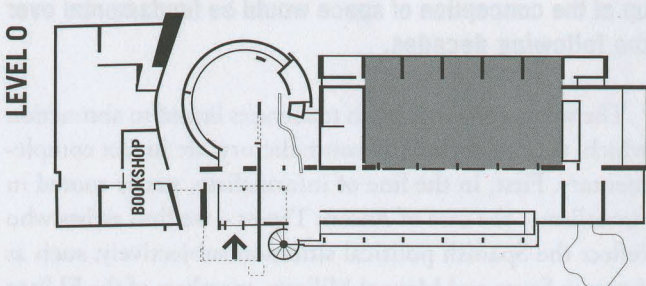
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At the end of this period the works of artists like Jim Dine and the French *nouveaux réalistes* break up the abstract homogeneity of the pictorial space by including real objects that highlight the material conditions of the work to the detriment of illusion and representation. The links between a series of artists and poets of the city can be seen in the work of Robert Rauschenberg, Larry Rivers and Georges Segal, but most of all in the photographs of Robert Frank, who was closely connected to the beat generation. His work in the MACBA Collection is now on show for the first time.

In the next rooms this thread develops towards another turning point, which spans the sixties and seventies. It corresponds to the flowering of new critical discourses which, in the different social and cultural orders, find their emblem in May 68. That is the time of the coexistence of practices like American minimalism and the different derivations of conceptual art. They question the kind of artistic activity aimed at the production of objects and favour the performance and process aspects of the work. In this context we find the work of Marcel Broodthaers, a fundamental artist in the MACBA Collection. Broodthaers' work brings together two essential traditions of modern art: Duchamp's ready-made and Magritte's image-rhetoric. Although it springs from writing, it adopts different media: photography, film, installation, graphics, multiples, books, etc. It foreshadows the consequences of the transformation of artistic production in the expansion of consumer culture that began in the seventies and of the museum in the face of the new practices and the critical thought of the new social movements.

GUIDED VISITS (available in Catalan and Spanish)

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, at 17.30 h
Saturdays, at 12 h



**Museu d'Art
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de Barcelona**

Plaça dels Àngels, 1
08001 Barcelona
Tel.: 93 412 08 10
www.macba.es

Museum hours:
Weekdays, 11 to 19.30 h
Saturdays, 10 to 20 h
Sundays and holidays, 10 to 15 h
Mondays, open
Closed on Tuesdays (except holidays)

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