

Teamwork

30th anniversary

Contemporary accounts from the CGAC Collection

Curators: Verónica Santos and Santiago Olmo

An anniversary is somewhat more than a celebration. Remembering a history is also about taking stock, reviewing, and re-reading the past in order to gain momentum to address the future. This exercise of revision also, necessarily, involves acknowledging the work of all those individuals and institutions who, in one way or another, have participated in the planning and execution of a programme, and in the construction of an essential public collection. Hence, the title of this exhibition, **Teamwork**, underscores the collective efforts of those who, since 1993, have helped to construct and consolidate an essential project for culture and art in Galicia.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Contemporary Art Centre of Galicia (CGAC), two institutions dependent on the Regional Government of Galicia, the CGAC itself and the Gaiás Centre Museum, join forces to celebrate and showcase the transformational importance of the CGAC as a museum, but also and, above all, as the creator, trustee, and custodian of Galicia's benchmark public collection of contemporary art.

To this end, the **Teamwork** project is organised into two complementary but independent exhibitions. On the one hand, the building designed by the Portuguese architect, Alvaro Siza Vieira, will house the exhibition titled **A possible history of the CGAC**, conceived as a review of the exhibitions, activities, and publications the centre has promoted since its creation. All this through the milestones and singular pieces which, over three decades, have been shaping its history and, in parallel, the evolution of the artistic setting in Galicia. On the other hand, in the halls of the Gaiás Centre Museum, designed by Peter Eisenman, the exhibition **Contemporary accounts from the CGAC Collection** proposes a thematic approach to the present on the basis of the Santiago-based centre's collection.

Contemporary accounts from the CGAC Collection is a re-reading of the collection influenced by some of the major themes of the contemporary world: nature and ecology, dialogues with space and architecture, the idea of constriction, work, feminisms, post-colonial perspectives, the re-reading of history, and art as a healer. Each one of these section and chapters propitiates intersections with others, and the tour facilitates dialogue between the works. Given that the CGAC Collection has, to a great extent, been shaped on the basis of the centre's exhibition programme, an exhibition of these characteristics allows us to perfectly visualise the main lines of the exhibition project and of activities that give the museum its unique character.

As of 1996, since its initial acquisitions and deposits—on one hand, a section comprising the Regional Government of Galicia's Collection and, on the other, a significant series of international pieces from the ARCO Foundation Collection—, the CGAC Collection has been displayed to the public mainly in temporary exhibitions on thematic themes or of new acquisitions. This is due to the fact that, even though the time frame of the collection dates back to the 1950s, until relatively recently there was neither a perspective or a sufficient volume of work to explore the possibility of an exhibition format subject to annual review, along the lines of other major museums.

In short, this project highlights the CGAC Collection's capacity to construct an account that incorporates new narratives and which, in turn, can be organised historically, striking a balance between art in Galicia, the Spanish setting, and international references.

As a model for public contemporary art collections, the CGAC Collection is an indispensable tool for understanding the evolution of the artistic, social, and cultural changes that have taken place in the Galicia since the mid-20th century.

Contemporary accounts from the CGAC Collection

1 July - 15 October 2023

1st Floor

Curators: Verónica Santos y Santiago Olmo

The contemporary narratives from the CGAC collection establish a number of connections generated from the thematic areas of current art, but they also transpire in a specific place and protagonist: namely the interiors of the Gaiás Centre Museum, designed by Peter Eisenman. This exhibition hall constitutes a special architectural setting which conditions the curatorial project and encourages certain stimulating associations between the works, with no closed chapters in the itinerary, rather they are conceptually organised around three sections, with transit areas connecting the different narratives.



Mona Hatoum, *La Grande Broyeuse (Mouli-Julienne X 17)*, 1999

The first area of the exhibition that receives visitors is made up of large sculptures and installations accessed through Jorge Perianes' narrative forest. Mona Haotum's *Grande Broyeuse*, a gigantic rotary food mill, around which the works are scattered, and in which many of the exhibition's themes are concentrated: feminisms, colonialisms, criticism of the imbalances in the contemporary world, denunciations of warmongering and totalitarian regimes, reflections on the artistic object, the history of art, and the role of artists. In this first part there is also a dynamic rhythm between macro and micro formats, as happens between Tono Carbajo's installation and Rosendo Cid's pieces, in which the *objet trouvé* is combined with essays addressing the beyond of painting and sculpture.

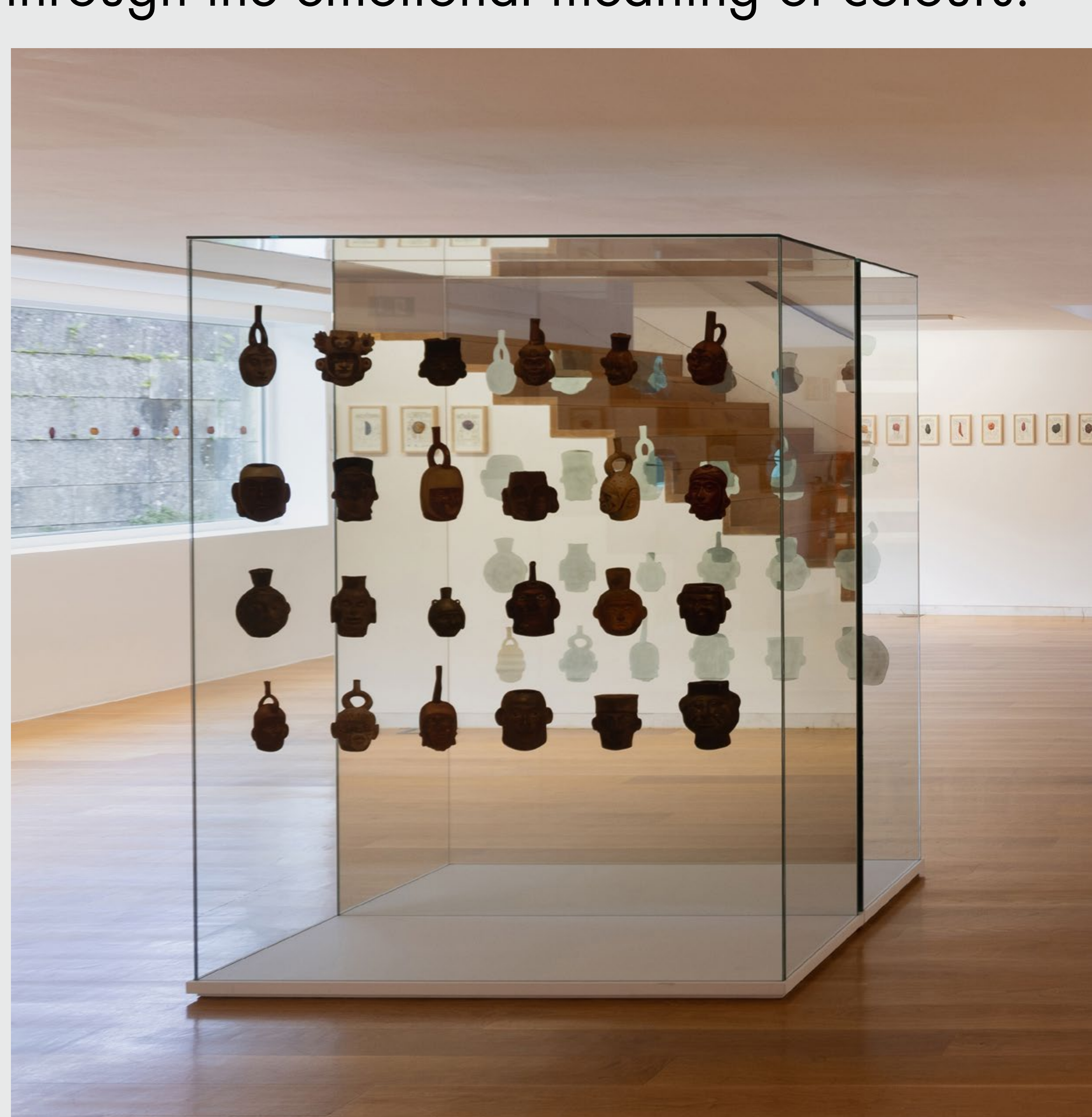
The monumental treatment of Leiro's *Hannover Altarpiece* or the figures from Stephen Balkenhol are complemented with the architectural brutalism of Marlon de Azambuja and contrasted with the lightness of Rui Chafes. The spatial fragmentation of Pedro Croft's work will be repeated in other sections of the exhibition, showcasing the evolution of current sculpture.



Stephan Balkenhol, *Zwei Grosse Männer*, 2001

The advocacy of nature, ecology and local identities and criticism of the effects of capitalism is embodied in the works of Penone and Fernando Casás, combined in a second section, in which the binomials art/architecture and art/landscape are present. The denouncement of environmental, social and economic inequalities are clearly visible in installations such as *Keep it yourself* by Juan Gopar, and in the photographs of Daniel Lara. The relationship with the spectator and the architectural context are another of the narratives of this project: in L. Gillick's *Terminal Screen*, contradictory connections are established with the public and with the room, interrupting the gaze with visual games of brilliant planes. Others require the visitor to complete them and encourage them to become part of the piece, as experienced in Ricardo Basbaum's bench-like sculptural-exhibitographic element.

In the transit areas, we find pieces somewhere between painting and sculpture, such as *Kiwi and the frog* from Kiko Pérez, and rooms which introduce us into a more immersive spatial configuration, defined, in a certain way, by colour. The blue in Mircea Cantor's work invites us to continue with a narrative of an imaginary or dystopian world. Suso Fandiño's gimmicky blue and red neon lights explore the link between art and politics and language as a system for organising force and ideologies. Mónica Alonso places us inside a therapeutic room through the emotional meaning of colours.



Sandra Gamarra, *Expositor III e IV*, 2021

The last area offers us a wall with works from Berta Cáccamo, Julia Huete and Mar Vicente, three Galician artists who operate in the field of abstraction exploring the outer limits of painting. This wall is a declaration of intent to establish an itinerary through an anthology of the production of current female artists who offer solid work with a feminist slant, analysing gender behaviour and stereotypes, as occurs in the photographs of Maria María Acha-Kutcher and Ana María Maiolino, denouncing male violence as in Priscilla Monge's shocking video. Installations from Ângela Ferreira and Sandra Gamarra also introduce strong lines of research on colonialism and historical inequalities. Marinella Salvatore's banners provide freshness, topicality and humour to traditional masculinised symbols of the political and military sphere. Rounding off the exhibition, voices critical of the capitalist system are once again addressed by creators such as Patrick Hamilton. The new use of materials and languages which originate from the artisanal or industrial sphere are another of the current creative pathways that we can appreciate in Galician artists such as Pablo Barreiro.

Verónica Santos Farto