

25 GUGGENHEIM BILBAO

Press release



SECTIONS/ INTERSECTIONS

25 YEARS OF THE GUGGENHEIM
MUSEUM BILBAO COLLECTION

Sponsored by

bbk 



As it turns 25, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is an institution now consolidated as an international referent in the field of art and culture, and has become the icon of a city that had already accumulated seven centuries of fascinating history. Also profoundly linked to Bizkaia, the territory where the Museum is located, and closely involved with its development and social cohesion, BBK has determined to join in the celebration of this 25th Anniversary as the sponsor of its main exhibition, *Sections/Intersections: 25 Years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection*, which highlights the works collected over these years.

We share many of the Museum's values, such as a commitment to society, culture, and citizen welfare, and we feel very close to it in our role as harbingers of the radical innovation in the socio-cultural field that has taken place in Bizkaia in recent decades, particularly in matters regarding the creation and diffusion of knowledge, the fostering of talent, the integration and recognition of all individuals, and the due valuation of effort and teamwork.

Over these 25 years, the Museum has significantly enriched Bilbao with its aesthetic and patrimonial contribution, and has brought a formidable artistic and cultural dynamism to the city. At the same time, it has helped to increase the accessibility and dissemination of art, making it possible for new gazes to be cast on the contemporary world from perspectives whose discovery is an enrichment. In this way, it has also enabled many people to draw closer to a wide variety of artistic works, proposals, and visions, and to explore their significances. We fully agree with the inclusive focus that characterizes the Museum and aim to collaborate in promoting it, allowing an ever larger public to share in aesthetic enjoyment, cultural activity, and debates on the most urgent issues on the basis of the reflection that modern and contemporary artworks often inspire on key topics of our time.

The connection between the local and the international, the synergies between art and the different spheres of human activity, and the interaction between cultural production and other areas of the economy are other important dialogues that have been stimulated by the existence of the Museum and its original integration in a wider process of industrial regeneration. The transformation begun by Bilbao in the late 1990s, which very soon became an international economic and urbanistic model, continues its unceasing evolution today, oriented toward a future where art and culture will continue to play an outstanding role. For its part, BBK will continue to support this progress, contributing to a greater knowledge, understanding, and diffusion of contemporary art among all people, and always strengthening the unceasing socio-cultural development of Bizkaia.

Xabier Sagredo

Chairman of BBK

Sections / Intersections
25 Years of the Collection of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

- Dates: October 19, 2022 – January 22, 2023
 - Curated by: Lekha Hileman Waitoller, Manuel Cirauqui, Geanine Gutiérrez-Guimarães, Lucía Agirre and Maite Borjabad, Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.
 - Sponsored by: BBK
- Conceived as a giant triptych, the exhibition *Sections / Intersections* is made up of three thematic sections that engage in mutual dialogue and permit a new vision and rediscovery of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection as it celebrates its 25th Anniversary.
 - *Marking History*, on the third floor, features two of the cornerstones of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao: the architecture of Frank Gehry in all its original luminosity, and some of the most outstanding pieces in the Collection, which individualize key moments in the history of art of the second half of the 20th century.
 - Presented in various chapters, *Unfolding Narratives*, on the second floor, brings together the works of some twenty artists who offer an expansive vision of the paradigms of narrative through multiple timeframes, movements, and thematically grouped styles.
 - *Material Life*, on the first floor, follows the trail of the fundamental elements of nature and observes their transformations, combinations, and forces in today's complex context.

In 2022, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is celebrating its 25th Anniversary with an ambitious presentation of its own Collection spread across all its galleries, with the sponsorship of BBK. *Sections / Intersections. 25 Years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection* is conceived as a giant triptych with three thematic sections that engage in mutual dialogue and permit a rediscovery of the works that have historically defined both the interior and the exterior of the Museum. For the first time in its history, all the galleries on every floor of the building, many of them normally used for temporary exhibitions, will host a panoramic view of the Collection acquired by the Museum from its foundation until the present day. The thematic cores of this major collective exhibition will be *Marking History* on the third floor, *Unfolding Narratives* on the second, and *Material Life* on the first.

Each of these themes will be based on a concept that is autonomous while also in dialogue with the others, suggesting multiple sections and intersections between the different geographies, timeframes, and areas of interest, and so enabling a new vision of the Collection. Among the exceptional aspects of this exhibition project will be the presence of rarely exhibited pieces and new acquisitions, as well as the return to the galleries of recently restored large-format works. Visitors will thus find a new light shed on masterpieces

like *Marina* (1998) by Gerhard Richter, *Wall Drawing #831 (Geometric Forms, 1997)* by Sol LeWitt; *Lightning with Stag in its Glare (Blitzschlag mit Lichtschein auf Hirsch, 1958-85)* by Joseph Beuys; and *Untitled* (1988) by Jannis Kounellis, among some more recent additions to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection.

TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION

Marking History – Third Floor

This display features two cornerstones of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao: the architecture of Frank Gehry and a selection of works that individualize key moments in the history of art after World War Two. With the clear ambition of amplifying both art and architecture, the diaphanous and luminous spaces on the upper floor of the Museum are celebrated through some of the most outstanding pieces in its Collection, which are reinstalled to reveal the original nature of the building after opening the skylights and removing the interior partitions added over the course of time.

Marking History is inspired both by the works of individual artists and by the artistic movements that are so well reflected in the Collection through avant-garde figures whose contributions were decisive in their field. Each gallery thus offers an opportunity to see the work of a single artist or of several who explore similar concerns. The works of Cristina Iglesias and Sol LeWitt will be shown in spaces designed for specific installations, while other rooms will house thematic displays. The first, dedicated to post-war abstraction in New York, brings together the works of Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Lee Krasner, Clifford Still, Robert Motherwell, and Ellsworth Kelly, pointing to some of the most significant voices of a period when a radical vocabulary based on abstract expression was developed.

Another of the galleries offers us the chance to observe the evolution of abstract expression toward new languages that developed in the decades from 1960 to 1980 through artists recognized for their experimentation with new materialities, the incorporation of silkscreen, and the use of text in the artistic work. Among them are artists like John Chamberlain, Cy Twombly, Robert Rauschenberg, Sigmar Polke, and Jean-Michel Basquiat.

The next room highlights the way in which selected Spanish artists approach abstraction and its evolutions through works by Eduardo Chillida, Jorge Oteiza, Antoni Tàpies, Pablo Palazuelo, Cristina Iglesias, and Juan Uslé. The result is a stimulating meeting of artists from different generations with distinct languages who display shared concerns about space and materials.

An interest in the mass media and popular culture has been a source of inspiration for artists like James Rosenquist, Andy Warhol, Gilbert & George, and Jeff Koons, whose work can be seen in another of the galleries. These artists of diverse origins created works that have their own artistic vocabulary, although all show a constant interest in reflecting contemporary events of their respective periods and using popular culture as a raw material.

Also included in the presentation is the latest acquisition to have joined the Collection, *Rising Sea*. This expansive metal sculpture by the African artist El Anatsui reveals a unique focus through a global contemporary aesthetic. The artist develops an innovative technique for converting liquor bottle caps into large metal sculptures. He works with a community of people to flatten, twist, and crush this material, and afterwards to stitch the aluminum elements together with copper wire to create panels that are joined to form monumental sculptures. *Rising Sea* is one of the artist's most recent and largest pieces, and one of the seven unique monochrome metal sculptures he has created to date. Its place in *Marking History* serves as an example of contemporary sculpture that transcends the division between culture and medium.

Unfolding Narratives – Second floor

Narrative works often illustrate religious, legendary, historical, abstract, representative, or mythological events that yield different layers of meaning, resorting to individual experience as a means for transmitting shared stories, whether real or fictitious. Sometimes the narrative is articulated around subjects and characters, sometimes it is based on everyday objects and materials that are redolent with cultural associations, and occasionally it has its origin in fictions that activate the viewer's imagination in order to complete or question it.

This type of commitment and reinvention of narrative forms by contemporary artists arises from a resistance to *grand narratives*, a term coined in 1979 by the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard, who explained how discourses, and with them experience and knowledge, were presented in a totalizing fashion as absolute truths. With his resilient and to some extent emancipatory critique, Lyotard suggested focusing on micronarratives, or '*petits récits*', whose representations are based on the fragmentary nature of cultural multiplicity and personal perspective. Artists in our contemporary society adopt this new perspective, amplifying and transforming the visual and poetic potential of narrativity, and so weaving their own stories and expanding traditional narrative in a localized way.

On this premise, the second floor brings together pieces by twenty artists produced between 1957 and 2019 in media like painting, sculpture, photography, work on paper, and installation. They offer an expansive vision of narrative paradigms stemming from various movements of the second half of the 20th century. The rooms of *Unfolding Narratives* are thus presented as chapters through a coherent selection of works that run through many timeframes, movements, and thematically grouped styles. These chapters include *Masking Identities*, *Transcending the Spiritual*, *Belonging to a Memory*, *Modes of Expression*, *Ambiguous States of Realities* and *States of Transformation*.

Some of the galleries are devoted to individual artists with site-specific installations of great spatial and experiential dimensions, like those by Christian Boltanski or Francesco Clemente, while others highlight singular series from the Collection like those of George Baselitz or Alex Katz. Other rooms show works that experiment with materiality and the notions of mythology, symbolism, or history, such as those by Joseph Beuys and Anselm Kiefer, or they emphasize performative and corporal manifestations through subject, technique, and material, like the works of Yves Klein and Yoko Ono. In other cases, there are groups of works that also converge under broader themes that expand the possibilities of narrative, with

examples by Miquel Barceló, Jenny Holzer, Abigail Lazkoz, Juan Luis Moraza, Juan Muñoz, Ernesto Neto, Javier Pérez, Antonio Saura, Julian Schnabel, and others.

***Material Life* – First floor, gallery 105**

In recent decades, the progressive rise of information technologies has led artists of different generations and origins to reconsider the materiality of our world, emphasizing its tangible and irreducible reality with their practice. Through a selection of works from the last fifty years of global art, the exhibition, almost like a landscape, presents the force of this recognition, which is also an inexhaustible reinvention. The resonance of historic movements like Arte Povera or Conceptualism is key to the plastic developments of today, and is felt with special force in the realm of sculpture, without excluding other media and techniques.

The richness and drama of today's panorama emerge indisputably from the amalgam of the natural and the constructed world, and from its ecological overburdening and its progressive influence on our lives, but also from the new science of materials fostered by the rise of technology. Within this complex framework, *Material Life* proposes an elementary point of view in the strict sense of the term. Rather like an unfinished inventory, the exhibition follows the trail of the fundamental elements of nature and observes their transformations, combinations, and forces. The cultural discrepancy on the number of elements—four for Ancient Greece and Baroque alchemy, seven in the traditional cosmology of China, and five in Indian philosophy—allows an interpretive freedom from the outset that leaves a great deal of room for speculation and invention.

The question about the essential ingredients of the world and their combination is thus openly reformulated again and again. This room is therefore devised as a possible configuration of forces and forms, of materials laden with memory but also strongly present. Converging in it are pieces by artists like Doris Salcedo, Gerhard Richter, Mona Hatoum, Richard Long, Asier Mendizabal, Susana Solano, Itziar Okariz, Rodney Graham, and others.

***Yayoi Kusama* – First floor, Room 103**

Through a long-term loan to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, the exhibition includes a work by the Japanese artist and writer Yayoi Kusama (Matsumoto, Nagano, 1929). A leading and pioneering figure in contemporary art, Kusama envisages art as a means of social change, and to this end makes use of performance, painting, drawing, sculpture, literature, and her celebrated immersive installations, the *Infinity Mirror Rooms*.

With *Infinity Mirrored Room – A Wish for Human Happiness Calling from Beyond the Universe* (2020), one of the last works produced by the artist, Kusama draws us into an immersive experience. The space projects Kusama's hallucinations and the need for "self-obliteration", making viewers into participants in her obsessive universe by inviting them also to disappear in the vibrant interplay of colored lights that multiply limitlessly on the mirrored walls of an infinite room.

DIDAKTIKA

The Didaktika project that complements the exhibition is implemented both online and presentially under the title *If the walls spoke... If the walls spoke...* potentially offers us an infinite number of narratives with which to learn, reflect, and enjoy 25 years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection.

This Didaktika highlights the special dialogue that emerges between the artworks and the extraordinary architecture of the Museum through images and videos accompanied by texts on a selection of works by El Anatsui, Joseph Beuys, Christian Boltanski, Francesco Clemente, Jenny Holzer, Jeff Koons, Abigail Lazkoz, Sol LeWitt, and others.

Activities:

Inaugural talk on *Sections/Intersections* (October 18)

Juan Ignacio Vidarte, the director of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, presents the show celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection, together with the curators responsible for the exhibition: Lekha Hileman Waitoller, Manuel Cirauqui, Geanine Gutierrez-Guimarães, Lucía Agirre and Maite Borjabad.

Shared reflections*

In these special visits, the professionals of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao offer different points of view on the contents of the exhibition, a giant triptych formed by *Material Life*, *Marking History* and *Unfolding Narratives*.

Curatorial vision

The curators of the Museum will take visitors on a guided tour of their corresponding sections:

- *Material Life* – First floor, Gallery 105, Manuel Cirauqui (October 5)
- *Marking History* – Third floor, Lekha Hileman Waitoller (October 26)
- *Unfolding Narratives* – Second floor, Maite Borjabad (November 9)
- Installation of Yayoi Kusama – First floor, Gallery 103, Lucía Agirre (November 16)

Furthermore, on the occasion of the presentation of the new additions to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection, there will be a special “Curatorial vision” tour with Lekha Hileman Waitoller, Curator of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection (September 28).

Key concepts

Luz Maguregui, the Museum’s Educational Coordinator, will converse with the public on the educational keys to the exhibition *Sections/Intersections*:

- *Material Life* – First floor, Gallery 105 (September 21)
- *Marking History* – Third floor (November 2)
- *Unfolding Narratives* – Second floor (November 23)

* Sponsored by the Fundación Vizcaína Aguirre.

Activation of Yoko Ono's *Wish Tree* (October 23 and December 31)

The first reactivation of the *Wish Tree* by the artist Yoko Ono since the pandemic, on the occasion of the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Museum. A unique opportunity to share wishes while looking to the future with enthusiasm and positive energy. The work, which belongs to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection, is presented in a new location, so generating different experiences and dialogues. The wishes hung on the tree will remain exhibited until the end of the year.

Creative process: *Intersections with dance* (November 5)

The young dancers of Sekai explain their interest in urban dance and the energy of their choreographies in this talk prior to their performance in the Museum.

Break In Art. Intersections with Dance (November 6)

After the New York choreographies programmed by the Museum in October, we now present a sample of local choreographies with various urban dance interventions inside the Museum in dialogue with its artworks and spaces. Pop-up performances on the three floors of the building will celebrate the diversity and richness of the Collection with the public. After interventions in the galleries, the performance is brought to a close in the Atrium. With the participation of the dancers of the Sekai company.

Kairós: harp and poetry recital (December 18)

The harpist Francesca Romana Di Nicola and the poet Juan Kruz Igerabide pay tribute to the idea of time in Richard Serra's installation. In *Kairós, Time / Return*, the visitor is invited to drift, discover, and rediscover the evolution and transformation of the human being through the vibrations of the harp and the force of the verses in dialogue with the monumentality of the artworks and the architecture itself.

For more information:**Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**

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Images for press usage

Sections/Intersections. 25 Years of the Guggenheim Bilbao Collection

Guggenheim Museum Bilbao

Online press image service

In the press area of the Museum's website (prensa.guggenheim-bilbao.eus), you may register to download high-resolution images and videos of both the exhibitions and the building. If you do not yet have an account, you can register and download the material you need. If you are already a user, enter your username and password and you can access images directly.

- The images provided must be used solely for editorial advertising related to *Sections/Intersections. 25 Years of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao Collection* exhibition, which is open to the public at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao from October 19, 2022, through January 22, 2023.
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For more information, you can get in touch with the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao press area at tel. +34 944 359 008 or email media@guggenheim-bilbao.eus

Gallery 103

Yayoi Kusama

Infinity Mirrored Room – A Wish for Human Happiness

Calling from Beyond the Universe, 2020

Mirrored glass, wood, LED lighting system, metal, acrylic panel

Ed. Nr.: 1/5

293.7 × 417 × 417 cm

Courtesy Ota Fine Arts

©YAYOI KUSAMA



Gallery 105

Mona Hatoum

Home, 1999

Wood, galvanized steel, stainless steel, electric wire, crocodile clip, light bulbs, computerized dimmer switch, amplifier, and speakers

76,2 x 198.1 x 73.7 cm (table)

Dimensions variable

Edition 1/3 and 1 AP

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Jannis Kounellis

Untitled, 1988

12 steel panels with coal and burlap sacks

Dimensions variable

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Richard Long

Bilbao Circle, 2000

Delabole slate

Diameter: 1,300 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Asier Mendizabal

Nom de guerre, 2007

Concrete, metal, and ethanol combustion

Burner: 56 x 80 x 38 cm.

Dimensions variable

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Gerhard Richter

Seascape (Seestück), 1998

Oil on canvas

290 x 290 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Doris Salcedo

Untitled, 2008

Wood, metal, and concrete

78 x 247 x 121 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Susana Solano

Jaosokor, 1997

Iron, PVC, cord, and photograph

Dimensions variable

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Second Floor

Txomin Badiola

Family Plot: Second Version (Complot de familia. Segunda versión), 1993–95

Wood, glass, rope, and photographs

Dimensions variable

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Miquel Barceló

Flood (Le Déluge), 1990

Mixed media on canvas

230 x 287,7 x 4 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Georg Baselitz

Sunning and mooning in the house of Jeff and Damien, from the series *Mrs Lenin and the Nightingale (Sonnung und Mondung im Hause von Jeff und Damien, aus der Serie Mrs Lenin and the Nightingale)*, 2008

Oil on canvas

Sixteen canvases, 300 x 250 cm each

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Joseph Beuys

Lightning with Stag in its Glare (Blitzschlag mit Lichtschein auf Hirsch), 1958–85

39 elements. Bronze, iron, and aluminum

Edition 0/4

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Francesco Clemente

Mother's Room (La stanza della madre), 1995–97

Oil and tempera on linen

Group of 17 panels

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Anselm Kiefer

Only with Wind, Time, and Sound (Nur mit Wind, mit Zeit und mit Klang), 1997

Acrylic and emulsion on canvas

470 x 940 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



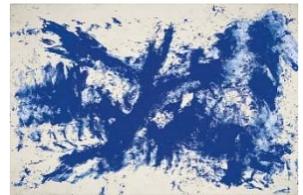
Yves Klein

Large Blue Anthropometry (ANT 105) [La grande Anthropométrie bleue (ANT 105)], ca. 1960

Dry pigment and synthetic resin on paper, mounted on canvas

287,8 x 430 x 4 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Ernesto Neto

White Bubble, 2013–17

Polyamide, tubes, and glass beads

400 x 710,66 x 540, 66 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa

Gift of the artist



Yoko Ono

Hichiko Happo, 2014

Sumi ink on nine canvases

200 x 100 cm each canvas, 200 x 900 cm overall

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa

Gift of the artist



Third Floor

El Anatsui

Rising Sea, 2019

Aluminum and copper wire

800 x 1400 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Jean-Michel Basquiat

Man from Naples, 1982

Acrylic and collage on wood

124 x 246,7 x 3,5 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Eduardo Chillida

How Profound is the Air (Lo profundo es el aire), 1996

Alabaster

94 x 122 x 124 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Cristina Iglesias

Untitled (Jealousy II) [Sin título (Celosía II)], 1997

Wood, resin, and bronze powder

260 x 350 x 300 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Ellsworth Kelly

Yellow Curve, 1972

Oil on canvas

170,2 x 341 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Jeff Koons

Tulips, 1995–2004

High chromium stainless steel with transparent color coating

203 x 460 x 520 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Sol LeWitt

Wall Drawing #831 (Geometric Forms), 1997

Acrylic on wall

Site-specific dimensions

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Robert Motherwell

Phoenician Red Studio, 1977

Acrylic and charcoal on canvas

218,44 x 487,68 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



James Rosenquist

Flamingo Capsule, 1970

Oil on canvas and aluminized Mylar

290 x 701 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



Mark Rothko

Untitled, 1952–53

Oil on canvas

299,5 x 442,5 cm

Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa

