

From the 16 of october of 2013 to the 5 of January of 2014

which those affected by the illness are subjected. There also arose during those years a number of collectives fighting for the rights of gays and lesbians. Such projects constructed a militant political imagery originating in the proposals of international activist groups. This is the case of Act Up in New York and Paris, movements which carry out important work aimed at the visibilization and critique of certain problematics of these collectives through the publication of periodicals and actions carried out in the public arena.

Continuing the practice in earlier displays of the Collection of incorporating documents from the Museum's Documentation Center, this exhibition is enriched with the presentation of the Estrujenbank archive, together with graphic materials from the *Guernica* research fund and from the ARCO Art Fair.

Minimal Resistance is organized within the framework of "The Uses of Art", a project of the network of European museums formed under the name of L'Internationale. This project proposes a new artistic internationalism, non-hierarchical and decentralized, founded on the value of difference and on horizontal exchange between a constellation of locally rooted and globally connected cultural agents. In this context, the exhibition includes works which belong to the collections of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven and the Museu d'Art Contemporani (MACBA) in Barcelona, so initiating an exchange which will lead to the presentation at prestigious European institutions of artists represented in the Collection of the Museo Reina Sofía. L'Internationale is made up of six major European museums: the Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana; the Museu d'Art Contemporani (MACBA), Barcelona; the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; the SALT, Istanbul and Ankara; the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (MHKA), Antwerp; and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid. Collaborating with L'Internationale are various associate institutions from the academic and artistic spheres.

Museo Nacional
Centro de Arte
Reina Sofía

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Opening hours
Monday to Saturday
and bank holidays from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Sundays
from 10:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
Open the whole Museum
from 14:15 to 7:00 p.m. visit to Collection 1
+ Minimal Resistance (check Website)

Closed on Tuesdays

Visitors are kindly asked to clear
the galleries 15 minutes before closing.

16 October 2013- 5 January 2014
Sabatini Building, 3rd floor

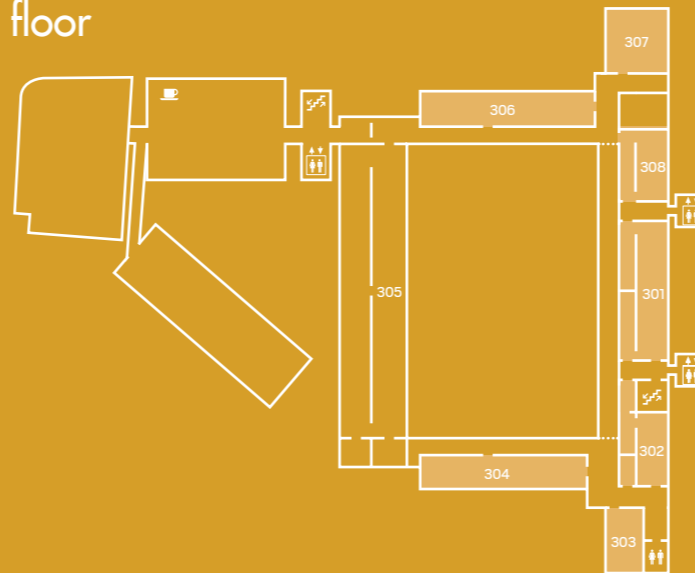
Minimal Resistance

Between late modernism and globalisation: artistic practices during the 80s and 90s

With this display from its Collection, the Museo Reina Sofía looks at the art produced in the eighties and nineties in Spain and within the international context. *Minimal Resistance* focuses on the search by artists for spaces of resistance in a globalized world, and explores the series of dualities which polarize the period in question: from the global economic crisis to financial capitalism, from the power of the collective to the recovery of the myth of the artist, from interventions vindicating public space to discourses revolving around memory and the body, from the theatricality that emphasizes the scenic and the architectural to the language of the performative and of relational models, and from the rehabilitation of traditional genres to the appropriation of images by the media and mass culture. These tensions, a sign of the times, are translated into a multiplicity of overlapping practices and discourses, and into a renovation of the codes and languages of art born of a perception of modernity as belonging to the past.

This presentation suggests dialogues between works that are mostly new acquisitions and loans, and have therefore not been shown before in the Museum's rooms. Since contemporary art collections are always based on a fragmentary position, this is the first vision in a succession of new presentations to be held in the future.

3rd floor



The exhibition is organized within the framework of "The Uses of Art", a project of the European museums network L'Internationale.

With the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union:

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MUSEO NACIONAL
CENTRO DE ARTE
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NPO_039-19-007-8 / Depósito legal: M-20794-2013



Fischli & Weiss. *Minimal resistance*, 1980–1981. Film DVD. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.
© Peter Fischli David Weiss, Zürich 2013

The period covered by the exhibition begins with the political transformations associated with the conservative governments led by Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States. With the stock market crash and the recession of the seventies, there was a varied succession of plans for economic readjustment with global repercussions that pointed towards the progressive disarticulation of the welfare state. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the turning point between the two decades and announced the return of the United States to a hegemonic position on the world chessboard. This was to be confirmed by facts like the international consensus on the invasion of Iraq during the Gulf War, and it shaped a troubled period with a number of different armed conflicts, such as that of the Balkans, together with historic processes like the fall of long-standing Latin American dictatorships.

On this new geopolitical map, artists were faced with a complex world where the *pensée unique* appeared to be strongly consolidated while Francis Fukuyama published his celebrated thesis on the end of History. This sensation of being at the gates of a new era was bolstered by an acceleration in the circulation of information and by the appearance of the internet in the western countries. After the period of enthusiastic activism which characterized the seventies, the neoliberal policies of the early

eighties made way for what Félix Guattari called the “winter years”. With the loss of any prospect of global social change, some initiatives for collective mobilization made their appearance in response to specific issues like the AIDS crisis, growing militarization or gender struggles.

In Spain, the early eighties are identified with the transition to democracy. The decade began with events like the arrival of Picasso’s *Guernica*, the opening of the ARCO Contemporary Art Fair, and the creation of the Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. These milestones, which symbolized the country’s homologation with democratic states, were added to in the nineties with events like Expo ’92 in Seville and the Olympic Games in Barcelona. In the field of art, the country’s aspiration toward modernization was reflected in the development of artistic languages whose principal referents lay in international trends, often determined by the market, which entered into a dialogue with local genealogies. Those years also saw successive productions that took the processes of institutionalization of art and culture as an object of study, resulting in critical experiences arising as a response to the celebrations centered on the key date of 1992.

Minimal Resistance includes historic case studies like that of the circle of artists associated with *Pictures*, a show organized in 1977 by Douglas Crimp with artworks that set in motion various strategies of appropriation. Overall, these pieces respond to a postmodernity which was anticipated by the critic as a “dangerous argument” for the recovery of the most traditional forms and modes of modernity. By means of a return to “the theatrical dimension of the pictorial image”, the artists of *Pictures* opposed the return to order and traditional disciplines, which had been displaced in the previous decades by the theatrical component in art. Their tools are superimposition, fragmentation, citation or repetition.

Concurrent with these artworks linked to appropriationism was a notable return to painting, in opposition to the progressive academicization of certain conceptual practices. Groups and individuals emerged who vindicated painting as a critical space, in defiance of those who branded them as authoritarian. This return to the Fine Arts tradition led to a profound reflection on the practice of painting and its different genealogies. The exhibition presents works by an outstanding group of artists who embarked on large-format painting, such as Georg Baselitz, Leon Golub and Sigmar Polke. Alongside their work is that of Miguel Ángel Campano, one of the key artists in the group of renovators of Spanish painting. A collective exhibition paralleling this display is dedicated to them at the Palacio de Velázquez.

Reflections on photography occupy a central place in the exhibition. Over these decades, there was a perceptible evolution of photographic

language as the heir to the style and social uses of the working-class photography of the thirties in the production of artists like Allan Sekula. Groups like the Düsseldorf School, whose members include Candida Höfer and Thomas Struth, treat institutional spaces as the site from which to establish a New Objectivity that will relate architecture, knowledge and power. These links are also present in the sculptures, installations and projects of artists like Reinhard Mucha, Lothar Baumgarten, Jordi Colomer and Isidoro Valcárcel Medina.

Minimal Resistance moreover returns to lines of research that were opened by previous presentations of the Museum’s Collection, such as the reformulation of the role of the author and the exploration of a new institutionality. Working in this direction, artists like Fischli & Weiss establish new sites of resistance. In clear reference to the rehabilitation of the myth of the artist in the eighties, this pair of creators works on the basis of amateurism and the transgressive capacity of the absurd. Their position is shared by artists like Guy de Cointet and Mike Kelley, whose works vindicate the subculture in contrast to high art, and feed it by using referents from the mass media and popular culture. Other anti-models of the artist and institutional critique are those developed by Les ready-made appartement à tout le monde®, with the radical disappearance of the author, or in the parodic proposals of collectives like General Idea. Publications, videos and performances establish relations with media like television and musical phenomena like post-punk, which offer alternative means of diffusion (fanzines, periodical publications or cable channels).

Another of the lines of investigation open in the Collection is related to the new feminisms, which emerged forcefully in the nineties. While feminist artistic practices in the seventies centered their analysis on questions like that of the visibility of woman artists or the notion of excellence linked to the masculine gender, the nineties saw the beginning of a period marked by the problematization of the category of woman as a sociocultural construction defined on the basis of the very patriarchal presuppositions the movement was trying to combat. Contributing to this was the appearance of texts like Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990) and of movements like the so-called “third wave” of feminism, which emerged in the United States. Debates on identity, sexual difference and performative gender theories occupy the center of many artworks during the period.

The appearance of AIDS in the eighties constituted a painful and disconcerting fact that obliged a whole generation to “get real”. In artistic practice, actions like *Carrying* (1992), performed by the artist Pepe Espaliú, were formulated as denunciations of the marginalization to