

M^NAC



MUSEU NACIONAL D'ART DE CATALUNYA

Introduction

■ The Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya comprises an exceptional display of Catalan art in an almost uninterrupted itinerary from the Romanesque to the mid-nineteenth century that runs parallel to the major European movements.

After a long refurbishing process of the Palau Nacional directed by architects Gae Aulenti, Enric Steegmann, Josep Benedito and their teams, the Museum is now able to exhibit all its collections on the same premises. To the works from the Romanesque and Gothic periods, together with the Cambó Bequest, which were already on display at the Palau Nacional, the Renaissance and Baroque collections, those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the photography collection, the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints, the Numismatic Cabinet of Catalonia and the Art History Library have now been added. Furthermore, the Museum has recently incorporated the Thyssen Collection, which until a few months ago was exhibited at the Pedralbes monastery, as well as a selection of Catalan paintings from the Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection.

Visitors to the Museum are afforded the opportunity to enjoy a clarifying view of the history of European art in general and of the distinguishing character of the different artistic strands in the Catalan cultural context.

Standing alongside great masters like Fra Angelico, Titian, Ribera and Zurbarán are the seminal works by Catalan painters, such as Jaume Huguet, Lluís Dalmau, Antoni Viladomat, Mariano Fortuny, Ramon Casas and Julio González, represented in the different collections.

On December 16, the inauguration of the Museum presided over by Their Majesties Juan Carlos and Sofía will mark the culmination of a long process begun in 1990, when the Parliament of Catalonia approved the Museums Law, which contemplated the creation of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya as a pre-eminent institution of its kind, thereby reuniting the collections of the Museu d'Art de Catalunya established in 1934, which were dispersed during the Spanish Civil War.

When all the collections are opened to the public, the Palau Nacional premises of the MNAC will display almost one thousand years of Catalan art, from the Romanesque era to the mid-twentieth century and, in the case of photography, to the present day. The Museum will thereby become consolidated in the circuit of major international museums as an institution that preserves and exposes the artistic heritage of Catalonia, as well as serving the purpose of a centre for research, documentation and restoration.

The Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, in Harmonious Coexistence with the Palau Nacional

■ The Palau Nacional, which houses the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, was built on Montjuïc by architects Eugeni P. Cendoya and Enric Catà on the occasion of the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition. It was conceived as the focal point of a broad perspective from Plaça d'Espanya. Academic and mannerist in style, its total surface area of 45,000 m² is shared between two floors with interior spaces and geometrical roof structures on a monumental scale. By virtue of its dimensions and location, the Palau constitutes one of the most prominent features of the city's skyline.

A Long Project of Refurbishment and Consolidation

■ The Palau Nacional was built very quickly and was intended to be demolished once the Exhibition had closed. Conceived as a representative building, it also contained exhibition spaces and served the purpose of a museum as from 1934. Soon, however, it was discovered that it suffered from important structural problems.

The refurbishment of the Palau Nacional as the premises of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya involved a consolidation project of the original building in order for it to fulfil its new mission. We began to work on this project in 1987, and the refurbishment process was carried out in a succession of different phases.

By 1992, on the occasion of the Barcelona Olympics, much of the building had been consolidated, making it possible to hold the opening ceremony of the Games in the Museum's Sala Oval, possibly Europe's most spacious covered hall.

In 1995 the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya opened its Romanesque gallery and the vestibule to the public, followed in 1997 by the Gothic gallery and the Cambó Collection. During these phases of the project we worked in collaboration with architect Enric Steegmann.

Work on the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya concludes now with the opening of the permanent exhibitions of Renaissance and Baroque art, of the art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and of drawings and prints, photography and numismatics. The Museum offices, the Centre of Restoration and the Art History Library are also opened. Other new dependencies will include the restaurant, the cafeteria, the gift and book shops, the auditoriums and the educational workshops. This final phase is being supervised by Josep Benedito, the architect in charge of the Museum's private areas and the Art History Library.

A New Scale Tailor-Made for Visitors

■ The transformation of an early twentieth-century building into a twenty-first-century museum involves compliance with new regulations. Structurally, the Palau (roofs, walls, floor-ceiling frameworks and foundations) was required to conform to seismic and public use requirements. Working together with architect and engineer Agustí Obiol, we sought reinforcement solutions that would not disfigure the original architecture. To preserve the artworks in the best possible condition, we decided to install an air conditioning system, which involved adding false ceilings and counter walls that conduct the treated air to those areas where works of art are exhibited and stored.

The new architecture features characteristics very different from those of the original 1929 building. The former monumental scale has been replaced by a new individual scale, tailor-made for visitors and better adapted to the functions of a museum. The elaborately mannerist architecture of the Palau Nacional is now offset by an austere, monochrome form of architecture. Such spatial and formal contrasts foster an understanding of the recent intervention and clarify the building's refurbishment mechanisms. Both forms of architecture engage in a subdued dialogue that ensures that the works of art themselves play the leading role.

A Cheerful, Dynamic Space

■ Given its vastness, the original building was characterised by dark, gloomy interiors in which visitors lost their sense of orientation. In the middle of the Palau exterior spaces have been opened on both the ground and first floors, allowing the penetration of natural light and providing views of the roof as a point of reference and orientation. With the same end in mind, the museographical itinerary is marked by spaces that connect with the exterior and provide vistas of the Montjuïc mountain greenery.

The aim of the recent architectural intervention, beyond purely technical and functional objectives, was to endow the Palau interiors, originally conceived as institutional spaces, with a new spirit of dynamism and cheerfulness.

Gae Aulenti,
December 2004

The Collection of Romanesque Art

■ This collection is undoubtedly one of the Museum's most emblematic, above all by virtue of its series of exceptional groups of mural painting. The collection comprises Catalan artworks from the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which may be compared to others from the rest of Spain and abroad. Besides mural painting, mention should be made of the examples of panel painting and wood carving, many of which are paradigmatic pieces in their respective media, as well as remarkable holdings of stone sculpture and metalwork.

Much of the collection was put together between the late nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth century. Interest in evidence of Romanesque artifacts was fruit of the desire to recover and study the Catalan medieval past, particularly on the part of cultural movements such as the 'Renaixença', whose aim was to get to know the country, and to define and assert the Catalans' right to their own identity. This endeavour went hand-in-hand with attempts to safeguard the architectural and artistic heritage. As the process unfolded, one factor in particular had a determining effect on the nature of the Romanesque art collection, and particularly on that of the murals: as a result of their being studied, published and seen by art dealers, interest in them gradually increased during the initial decades of the twentieth century, and this in turn led to attempts to export them, an operation in which Italian experts were called upon to remove the frescoes from their original sites. The Board of Museums was quick to react and halt the operation, and shortly afterwards it was decided to transfer the paintings to Barcelona and to install them in the Museum. This took place between 1919 and 1923.

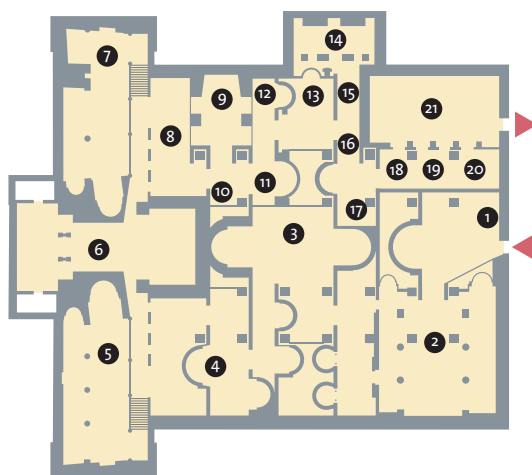
Today the selection and arrangement of the works follows a chronological and stylistic discourse, determined above all by the murals, although examples of panel painting are occasionally included. In that respect, some of the most significant trends of the period are represented, such as the strand of French filiation—*Sant Joan in Boí*—and the Italianate—*Sant Quirze de Pedret*—from around the year 1100. Dating from a later period are the most important works in the collection, namely the paintings from *Sant Climent in Taüll*, especially those of the main apse, and the ones from *Santa Maria in Taüll*. Outstanding among later sets of works are those belonging to the art of the year 1200 or so, notably several Catalan groups of mural and panel painting (*Frontal from Avià*) as well as a Castilian group (*San Pedro in Arlanza*) and one from Aragon (*Sigena*). This latter was one of the wonders of medieval Hispanic painting until it was severely damaged by fire in 1936, during the Spanish Civil War.

In between, a series of sections and parts of sections allow us to explain several significant aspects of the Romanesque, particularly techniques and iconography. Outstanding among the panel painting, mainly intended as altar furniture, are the *Frontal from La Seu d'Urgell or of the Apostles*, and the one from *Cardet*. For its part, the collection of

wood carving offers a broad, comprehensive view of the Romanesque, with works of extraordinary quality representing different typologies, such as the *Virgin from Ger*, the *Batló Majesty* and the two carvings of the *Erill la Vall Descent from the Cross*, a truly exemplary work from the Romanesque period. Finally, the collection also features outstanding examples of sculpture in stone, such as the *Capitals from Sant Francesc*, and of enamelwork, such as the *Mondoñedo Crosier*.

Sections

- 1 The Beginnings and the Context of Romanesque Art in Catalonia
- 2 The Paintings from the Church of Sant Joan in Boí
- 3 The Pedret Circle Paintings
- 4 The Iconography of Christ and Mary
- 5 The Paintings from Sant Climent in Taüll. Liturgical Furnishings in the Romanesque Church
- 6 Architectural Sculpture
- 7 The Paintings from the Church of Santa Maria in Taüll
- 8 Wood Carving
- 9 Paintings from the Church in Sorpe
- 10 The Iconography of Saints. The Frontal from Durro
- 11 The Apse Paintings from Estaon and Surp
- 12 The Paintings from the Santa Coloma Circle in Andorra
- 13 Art around 1200
- 14 The Atrium Paintings from Sant Vicenç in Cardona
- 15 Metalwork and Enamelling
- 16 The Paintings from the Apse of Toses
- 17 The Iconography of Angels. The Frontal of the Archangels
- 18 Other Works from the 13th Century
- 19 The Ribagorza Workshop
- 20 The Paintings from the Palatine Hall of San Pedro in Arlanza
- 21 The Paintings from the Chapter House in Sigüenza



Ground floor

The Collection of Gothic Art

■ This collection displays the artistic output of both Catalonia itself and those territories with cultural links to Catalonia during the late Middle Ages (from the late thirteenth until the fifteenth centuries).

Donations, permanent loans and acquisitions are the main forms of deposit that have permitted the collection to grow. From the outset works of architectural sculpture were brought together from Barcelonan convents closed down during the nineteenth century—Friars Minor, the Carme, Santa Caterina—with the help of the country's cultural institutions. Once the Museums and Fine Arts Board had been created in 1902 and reformed in 1907, an active policy was promoted of acquisitions during the first third of the twentieth century, a policy guided by intelligence and perspicacity in an art market extremely rich in possibilities at the time. The acquisition of the Plandiura Collection in 1932 was a crucial landmark for the enriching of the holdings, as was that of the Muntadas Collection in 1956. Other important deposits are the donations of Enric Batlló in 1914 and Francesc Cambó in 1945, and the bequest of Martí Estany that same year. Finally, in this section it is worth mentioning the deposit in the Museum of two private collections of importance: the Bertran Bequest in 1970 and the Fontana Collection in 1976.

The Gothic period is one of the most brilliant in the entire history of Catalan art, and coincided with the country's maximum territorial expansion and the consolidation of its central position in the political, economic and cultural spheres within the context of Mediterranean Europe of the time.

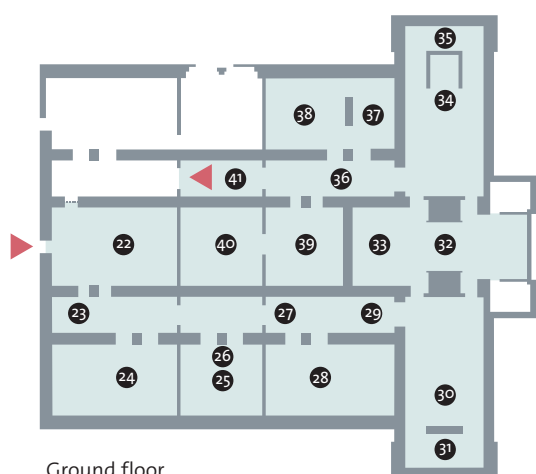
The Catalan nucleus of the collection allows visitors to observe the emergence, development and culmination of the Gothic style, along with the reinterpretation in the Crown of Aragon of its different manifestations: the linear or Franco-Gothic, the Italianate Gothic, the 'courtly' or International Gothic and its Flemish-influenced counterpart. Both the kinship between the Catalan Gothic and the different European strands of the period on the one hand, and its own unique qualities, which came to the forefront from the courtly style onwards, on the other, are clearly appreciable in the work of major figures of international repute such as the Catalans Bernat Martorell and Jaume Huguet, and Bartolomé Bermejo, who was active in Catalonia during a period in his career.

Among the most important typological items in the collection are the pictorial altarpieces, that is, the liturgical furniture par excellence of the period or, in their absence, the panels that have been preserved. And in the formal field, the richness and ornamental profusion of the figurative arts as a whole, which include mural painting, gold- and silversmithing, enamelwork, sculpture in stone, wood and ivory and, above all, panel painting, first in egg tempera and later in oils.

The chronological and stylistic discourse of the permanent exhibition, in which works in different media stand side-by-side, is enriched by both the possibility of contrasting Catalan art with the creative output of other territories during the same period, and by the thematic presentation of certain nuclei of particular interest, which are exhibited monographically by virtue of their unquestionable artistic importance. For example, civil art burgeoned to such a phenomenal extent during the Gothic period that it deserves specific attention in its own right. Turning to a different sphere, devotion to the Virgin and the funerary genre took visual form in works of such extraordinary typological variety and conceptual richness that they too are presented monographically.

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- 23 Early Manifestations in Aragon, Navarre and Castile
- 24 Early Manifestations in Catalonia
- 25 Sculpture from the Second
- 26 Half of the 14th Century and Early 15th Century
- 27 Italian Painters
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- 29 Valencian International Gothic
- 30 Catalan International Gothic
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- 32 Bernat Martorell and Lluís Dalmau
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- 35 The Vergós Family
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- 37 The Master of La Seu d'Urgell
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- 39 The Evolution of the Figure of the Donor. Religious Metalwork
- 40 Funerary Art
- 41 The Representation of the Virgin in European Sculpture



Ground floor

The Renaissance and Baroque Art Collection. Painting and Sculpture from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries

■ The Renaissance and Baroque collections comprise sixteen sections (nos. 42 to 57) devoted to the art produced in Catalonia and the rest of Europe from the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Charles V to the Napoleonic era.

The transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance begins with a parenthesis in the discourse of Catalan art to enter a section devoted to early sixteenth-century Flemish art. Born in Flanders in the fifteenth century, the *ars nova* movement marked the beginning of a major episode in the history of Western art. The wealth generated by trade in the Low Countries propitiated great artistic activity in the ports of Antwerp and Bruges, which spread to all the territories with which they established commercial links.

The Flemish model, characterised by a plastic idiom that reached unprecedented heights of perfection, laid especial emphasis on the symbolic content of devotional representations. Exaltation of emotivity combined with the experience of reality, the description of details of everyday life and a penchant for the landscape, in which scenes related to the main theme were introduced, are aspects that characterise the style. Supreme examples of this are triptychs such as the *Baptism of Christ, Saint Michael, Saint Francis and the Annunciation* by the artist known as the Master of Frankfurt.

We witness the resumption of the Catalan art discourse when we enter the gallery devoted to the art that was produced (or may already have been present) in Catalonia early in the sixteenth century. The marble reliefs imported from Italy by the Emperor Charles V's vice-chancellor in the Kingdom of Catalonia and Aragon, Miquel Mai (d. 1546) and by Archdeacon Lluís Desplà (d. 1524), marked the introduction of the art of the latter part of the fifteenth century into Barcelona during the first third of the sixteenth century. In Catalonia, though, there were also sculptors, such as Damià Forment from Valencia, who executed the apostles for the *Dormition of the Virgin*.

In the context of Catalan Renaissance painting, commissions were practically monopolised by artists from abroad, from both northern and southern Europe. Consequently the masterpieces of the period, although they may have been executed here, were the work of painters born elsewhere, such as Ayne Bru, who was responsible for the panels from the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès, representing a Renaissance knight personified as *Saint Candidus*, and the *Martyrdom of Saint Cucufate*. Pere Fernández, a painter from Murcia who settled in Girona, painted *Saint Blaise*, possibly during a sojourn in Italy. Attributed to Joan de Burgunya is the *Madonna and Child with the Infant Saint John*, a veritable mine of deep erudition. The personality of the Portuguese Pere Nunyes may be fully appreciated on the outer door faces of the *Altarpiece of Saint Eligius of the Silversmiths*, an astonishingly modern composition.

The Renaissance manner reached the Iberian Peninsula, specifically the region of Valencia, at the beginning of the sixteenth century directly with the arrival of Italian artists like Paolo da San Leocadio. Later, Vicent Macip and his son Joan adopted the new style after models of Raphael and Sebastiano del Piombo. In Aragon a follower of Dürer gave free rein to his enigmatic manner on the high altarpiece of the monastery of Sigena, to which the panel of *Christ among the Doctors* belonged. And in Castile, the painter Pedro Berruguete had already before the turn of the century enriched the Hispano-Flemish tradition with the lessons he learnt in Italy. Among his works are *The Pope Saint Gregory* and the two doors featuring scenes from the life of *Saint Catherine* from Toledo.

The sculptor Diego de Siloé, who received his training in Naples, returned home to found his own school that was to exert an influence on the art of the entire Peninsula. A fine example of his work is the *Madonna and Child*.

The Cambó Bequest

■ The Cambó Bequest has its own space on the ground floor between the Spanish Renaissance sections and the one devoted to Carracci's murals.

Francesc Cambó, who was born in Verges in 1876 and died in Buenos Aires in 1947, put together a collection of Renaissance and Baroque painting with its own identity, embracing the history of European painting from the fourteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Cambó was more than just a simple collector, for he programmed his activity as such in accordance not only with his own personal tastes but also with the ambition to put together a selection of works by great masters absent from the country's public museums and to contribute to completing the medieval series at the MNAC. Thanks to his efforts, he eventually managed to compile a highly respectable collection of paintings belonging to the Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Flemish, French and German schools.

These works speak most eloquently of the Italian *Quattrocento*, particularly Francesco del Cossa's *Madonna and Child with an Angel*, and of the sensuality of Venetian painting, such as Titian's *Girl before a Mirror* or the *Portrait of a Lady* by Sebastiano del Piombo. The economic prosperity of the Low Countries is reflected in a notable series of paintings, including the portrait of *Lady Aletheia Talbot* by Rubens. Outstanding among the works from the European Rococo are the canvases by Giandomenico Tiepolo, *The Minuet* and *The Charlatan*, as well as a set of French paintings including the portraits of *Jean-Paul Richard*, *Abbot of Saint-Non* and of *Pierre-Louis de Laideguive*.

Other works belonging to the Cambó Bequest are *The Ill-Matched Couple* by Lucas Cranach, the *Still Life with Four Vessels* by Francisco de Zurbarán, and the portrait of *Manuel Quijano* and the *Allegory of Love, Cupid and Psyche (?)* by Francisco de Goya.

The Beginning of the Seventeenth Century

■ The murals of the Herrera chapel constitute a splendid set of paintings that astonishingly enrich the mural painting collections of the MNAC.

The Castilian noble Juan Enríquez de Herrera dedicated a votive chapel to San Diego de Alcalá at the church of San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli in Rome as a token of gratitude after one of his sons had been cured of an illness. The murals were entrusted to Annibale Carracci, who, having completed the Galleria in the Palazzo Farnese, set to work on his new commission at the end of 1601 or beginning of 1602. The master from Bologna executed all the cartoons and supervised the work *in situ* until he fell ill and his collaborators had to complete the task. The Herrera chapel was dismantled in the mid-nineteenth century and the frescos were removed from their original site to be sent to Spain, where they were shared out between the Prado and what is today the Reial Acadèmia Catalana de Belles Arts de Sant Jordi, which ceded them on permanent loan to the MNAC.

And after the parenthesis of the Cambó Bequest and the Carracci murals, the visitor enters the section devoted to the painting from the High Renaissance.

Halfway through the sixteenth century Jacopo Robusti, 'Il Tintoretto', who was perfectly familiar with the *maniera* of Michelangelo and a pupil of Titian's, became regarded in Europe as one of the best portraitists, his clientele embracing both institutions and private individuals. A fine example of his work is the *Portrait of a Gentleman*. Jacopo Bassano executed an exquisite *Calvary* in oils on slate, a genuine *capolavoro* in his oeuvre. The modernity of Venetian masters such as Titian, Tintoretto and Bassano led Doménikos Theotokópoulos, who was born in Crete, trained in Venice and settled in Toledo, where he was known as 'El Greco', to develop a highly personal idiom that would place him among the geniuses of world painting. Two of his most splendid works are *The Bearing of the Cross* and *Saint Peter and Saint Paul*. A contemporary of El Greco's, though worlds apart from the Cretan in terms of style, was Luis de Morales, known as 'the Divine', a painter from Extremadura who masterfully conveyed the spirit of the Counterreformation in canvases like *Ecce Homo*.

The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

■ This collection, on permanent loan to the MNAC from the Thyssen-Bornemisza Foundation, brings together paintings and sculptures that allow the visitor to formulate a global view of European art from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The works were amassed by the Thyssen-Bornemisza family through two generations, and before they were purchased by the Spanish State constituted one of the world's most important private collections. A selection that, while certainly reflecting the tastes of the Thyssen-Bornemisza family, also reflects the links between the medieval art strands in Catalonia and Italy and northern European painting, which also left its imprint on Catalan art.

The will to highlight the cultural interrelation with Catalonia by no means eclipses splendid works of the primitives from Gothic Sienna, from late Gothic Florence or the innovations of Giottism and the Italian *Quattrocentisti*, such as Fra Angelico's exquisitely serene *Madonna*. On the other hand, the importance of central European painting helps explain the evolution of this school in the domains of Charles V, in which major figures include Cranach, Mielich, Huber and the anonymous painter known as the Master of the Thyssen Adoration.

Equally significant are the two glazed terracotta *angeli ceroferari*, products of the Della Robbia family workshop, pieces belonging to Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza that exude the artistic spirit of the Tuscan *Quattrocento*.

The discourse that began with the primitives evolved into the new language of the Venetian *Cinquecento*, the *maniera moderna* that may be contemplated in Titian's *Madonna*, a small religious painting whose grandeur is nevertheless far from eclipsed by the *Portrait of Antonio Anselmi*.

Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, a pupil and collaborator of Pietro da Cortona in Rome, became interested in the landscape and used the tones he had learnt in the Eternal City in the *Return from the Flight into Egypt*, which also belongs to the Baroness.

The Italian *Settecento*, which opens with Ceruti's *Three Beggars*, found some of its greatest talents in Venice—Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo—and culminated in *The Return of the Bucintoro on Ascension Day*, a masterpiece of Canaletto's *veduttism*.

The Spanish Golden Age. Francisco and Juan de Zurbarán

■ The first hall on the first floor of the Museum is devoted entirely to the Zurbaráns, father and son. The father, Francisco, represented the religious spirit of the Counterreformation in Spain and his style is characterised by both abstract and natural values. A painter who led a monastic life and an illustrator of innermost religious feelings, Francisco also shone as a painter of everyday scenes and still lifes. His *Immaculate Conception*, one of the emblems of the Museum, is one of his masterpieces in the genre, while *Saint Francis of Assisi after the Vision of Pope Nicholas V* is one of the artist's most moving canvases.

The history of the Golden Age continues in the gallery that exhibits the naturalist revival led early in the seventeenth century by Michelangelo Merisi, 'Il Caravaggio', which spread throughout Europe as far as the ports of Valencia and Seville.

Jusepe Ribera, born in Xàtiva, settled in Naples, where he developed his highly personal interpretation of Caravaggism. An example of the forcefulness of his art is the *Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew*. Both Francisco Ribalta, a painter from Solsona who settled in Valencia in his mature years, and his son Joan cultivated realism, as we observe in what is regarded as a portrait of *Ramon Llull*, by the father, and *Saint Jerome*, by the son. Meanwhile, in Seville a young genius who had studied under Francisco Pacheco, Diego de Silva Velázquez, before embarking on his brilliant career as court painter to Philip IV in Madrid applied his extraordinary talent to the Caravaggist language, as we see in his canvas depicting *Saint Paul*.

The last of the three galleries given over to the Golden Age is devoted to the Madrid and Seville painters from the second half of the century, who adopted a style of Venetian origin known as the 'triumphant' Baroque, present in the *Immaculate Conception* by José Antolínez, a version of the theme charged with almost profane sensuality. Other artists like Francisco Rizzi, Mateo Cerezo, Claudio Coello, Juan Carreño de Miranda, Francisco Camilo (who painted the *Ascension*) and Francisco Solís, or the Sevillians Juan de Valdés Leal and Francisco Herrera 'the Elder', also conveyed the splendour of the ambience that enveloped the decline of the Habsburgs.

Before entering into contact with Baroque sculpture, visitors are provided with the opportunity to enjoy a thematic space devoted to the still life of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, a period during which the genre, hitherto regarded as a minor art form, reached its zenith. In Spain, still lifes were characterised by austerity and a certain degree of Tenebrism and were given the specific name of *bodegones*. Artists such as Juan de van der Hamen and Pedro de Campobín produced works that were nonetheless far removed from the exuberant warmth and sensuality of their Italian counterparts.

Luis Egidio Meléndez worked at the enlightened eighteenth-century court of Charles III.

In a space flooded with natural light that establishes a relationship with the Museum's exterior, visitors re-encounter the Catalan art itinerary with a sample of stone sculpture produced in Catalonia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Outstanding here is the image of *Saint Cajetan* by Andreu Sala.

Far from the Catalan capital, at the royal monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet, which had been a major centre of art production since its foundation, sculptors worked of the stature of Francesc Grau and Lluís Bonifàs, creators of the *Atlante* and *Saint Jerome* respectively.

Once visitors have paused to admire the sculpture collection, at the far end of the gallery they return to painting with works by artists from different parts of Europe and influenced by seventeenth-century Italian art. Painters from the north who trained in the Low Countries under the influence of the Caravaggism developed in Rembrandt's milieu, and who set up their studios in Rome and Naples in order to put the principles of Naturalism directly into practice. Meanwhile, in the north of Italy major schools were founded, such as the one at Genoa, which assimilated all contemporary trends.

As the century unfolded, the second-generation Neapolitan painters like Massimo Stanzione, who painted *Saint Agnes*, Bernardo Cavallino and Andrea Vaccaro turned their backs on realism to cultivate the classical style.

In this section, Catalan art re-emerges in the form of a monographic space devoted to Antoni Viladomat, the Catalan painter of the Baroque, active in the first half of the century, who followed the Baroque tradition with a style in which Spanish, French and Italian influences converged. Since nothing indicates that Viladomat ever left his homeland, he would probably have learnt his technique at the Barcelona court of the pretender to the Spanish throne, the Archduke Charles of Habsburg, during the latter's sojourn in the Catalan capital. The canvases devoted to the *Life of Saint Francis* that decorated the main cloister of former monastery of minor friars in Barcelona constitute the only complete set of scenes from monastic life preserved in a museum. The collection also includes secular works, such as the series of *The Four Seasons*, the portrait of a *Gentleman* and the *Still Life with Vegetables, Turkey, Other Fowl and Rolled Wafers*, indicative of both the artist's versatility and the extent of the influences on his oeuvre.

Sharing space with Viladomat's secular works we find Francesc Pla, known as 'El Vigatà'. Pla, born in Vic, devoted himself to decorating the interiors of seigniorial mansions

belonging to the well-to-do bourgeois class that rose to prosperity thanks to the royal decree that authorised free trade between the Peninsular ports and the overseas colonies, a decree that Charles III of Spain issued in 1768 having reached Naples in 1759 via Barcelona. The series devoted to the *Life of the Virgin* is a delicate work in the Rococo style that denotes the independent, innovative manner of the painter from Vic.

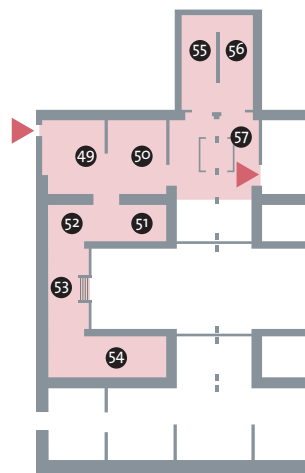
Before the itinerary through the sections given over to Renaissance and Baroque art ends, a room is devoted to the work of Jacint Rigau, the true master of the portrait style represented here.

The sculptor Lluís Bonifàs, who became member of the Real Academia de San Fernando in 1763, established a studio in Valls that became the training centre for figures such as the Barcelonan Ramon Amadeu, also admitted into the Madrid institution in 1778. His figures are strongly reminiscent of the Baroque, although Amadeu developed a personal popular style that served as the model for a numerous entourage of followers.

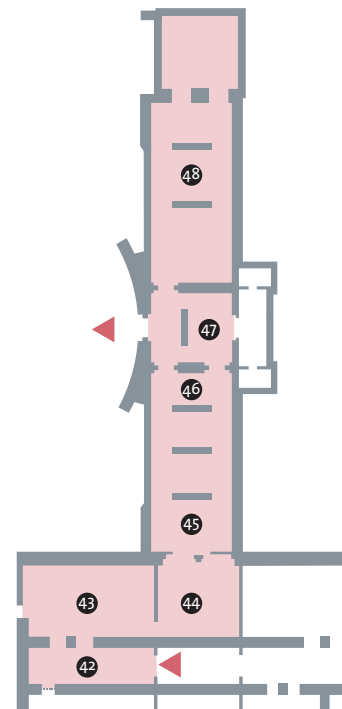
In 1775 the Barcelona Board of Commerce founded the Llotja school, the first director of which was the Valencian engraver Pasqual Pere Moles, portrayed here by his fellow Valencian Vicente López, an early work in the Rococo style that contrasts with his other two pieces preserved at the Museum, which belong to the period when López was Isabella II's official portraitist in Madrid.

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- 49 The Spanish Golden Age. Francisco and Juan de Zurbarán
- 50 The Spanish Golden Age. Madrid and the Art of the Court in the Second Half of the 17th Century: The Triumphant Baroque
- 51 The Spanish Golden Age. Valencia and Seville in the First Half of the 17th Century
- 52 The Still Life
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- 54 Painting in Italy in the 17th Century. Encounters between North and South
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First floor



Ground floor

The Collection of Modern Art

■ The collection of nineteenth-century art begins with a gallery devoted to the neoclassical sculptor Damià Campeny, an outstanding artist who went to Rome with a scholarship from the Acadèmia de Belles Arts (Academy of Fine Art). Exhibited together with *Lucretia* and *Cleopatra*, two of his most notable works, there are some sketches, until now little known, that enable us to appreciate the process of his artistic creation, his thematic diversity and in short his fidelity to the neoclassical postulates. In the adjoining gallery there are works by artists associated with the Academy, like Flaugier, Solà, Lacoma Sans and Lacoma Fontanet, as well as two excellent portraits by the painter from Valencia Vicente López, one of the most prestigious portrait painters of his day. With regard to the artists adhering to Romanticism, the most notable are the Nazarene painters, such as Lorenzale, who gave preference in their work to portraiture and, among the landscape artists, Lluís Rigalt, who began the tradition of Catalan landscape painting, which continued into the Realist period. As for sculpture, the leading light is *Dante* by Suñol, who shows the mediaevalist spirit that prevailed in this artistic period. The two sections devoted to Romanticism are completed with the portraits by such outstanding artists as Clavé, Arrau or Federico de Madrazo, the finest exponent of portraiture in Spain.

Special mention should be made of Fortuny, the best Spanish painter of the nineteenth century after Goya, who had great success internationally with genre painting and who evidenced advanced ideas in his later production. Along with *The Battle of Tetuan*, a very large canvas and undeniably attractive, the best paintings by this artist conserved by the MNAC are on show, among them *The Spanish Wedding*, the work that brought him fame and which was considered one of the most emblematic icons of its time. The section devoted to the disciples of Fortuny is made up of some artists trained in Rome shortly after his death and by the odd representative of the Luminist school of Sitges.

Catalan Realism occupies the following galleries, devoted to the most outstanding artists of this artistic movement. Antoni Caba, Simó Gómez and Benet Mercader share a gallery devoted especially to the portrait with some of the most successful examples of this genre. The same section includes sculptures by the brothers Venanci and Agapit Vallmitjana, the finest representatives of the Realist tradition, among which there is a notable female nude by Agapit Vallmitjana, which is a sketch of the *Portrait of Isabella II Presenting her Son Alfonso*, a marble sculpture kept in the gardens of the Palau de Pedralbes in Barcelona. Ramon Martí Alsina, the man who introduced the ideas of Courbet to Catalonia and an undisputed figure of Catalan Realism, is featured in the following section, where there are works from different periods and genres. Notable for its size is *The Saint Barbara Society*, an oil painting that has not been exhibited to the public for the last twenty-five years. Sharing the same gallery are two works by the landscape painter Carlos de Haes and four sculptures by Rossend Nobas. After that the damp gloomy landscapes of the countryside around Olot are grouped together,

painted by Joaquim Vayreda, an outstanding member of the Olot School; they clearly show the direct inspiration of nature, though highly charged with lyricism, along the lines of the Barbizon School. Note also the presence of a work by the French pre-Impressionist painter Eugène Boudin and those of other landscape artists, contemporaries of Vayreda, who however opted to interpret nature differently, such as Modest Urgell and Jaume Morera i Galicia. Finally, in the last galleries devoted to Realism also featured are the artists who leant towards anecdote, a genre which towards the end of the nineteenth century was very popular with the public, represented by the painting of Ribera, Masriera, Cusachs and Ferrer Miró, and the sculptures of Gamot, Reynés and Vallmitjana Abarca, among others.

One of the central themes of the collections of modern art is *Modernisme*, a movement inspired by the European artistic trends that refreshed Catalan art and culture in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth. Promoted at first by the left-wing intellectuals of the magazine *L'Àvens*, it ended up becoming a sign of identity of the Catalan bourgeoisie and eventually spread to all levels of the country's society. The extraordinary artistic level that *Modernisme* achieved is reflected in the magnificent collection of works by the most outstanding painters, sculptors, architects and first-class craftsmen that the MNAC conserves and which fill a series of galleries that together show the artistic riches of this splendid period.

The visit begins with works by the members of the Artistic Circle of Sant Lluç. In painting, especially significant is the presence of two works by Joan Llimona, the veritable driving force behind this artistic society with a Catholic ideology that brought together a group of artists opposed to the ideas of the renewing *Modernistes*, with the aim of championing artistic values in keeping with their religious convictions. In sculpture, together with the almost symbolic presence of Rodin and Meunier, the European sculptors who most influenced the Catalan sculptors of that period, notice *The First Cold Spells* by Miquel Blay and *First Communion* by Josep Llimona, two masterpieces of Catalan art that belong to the most idealised period of their work. The symbolist trend that these same sculptors adopted shortly afterwards, materialised in sinuous and deliquescent shapes, is featured here with *Desolation* by the afore-mentioned Josep Llimona, *Pursuing the Dream* by Blay and *Eve* by Clarasó, three paradigmatic works of modern Catalan sculpture. Pictorial Symbolism is also well represented with works by Riquer, Vancells, Tamburini and Brull. Despite the undeniable *Modernista* nature of the above-mentioned works, the paintings most identified with *Modernisme* for their spirit of renewal are those by Casas and Rusiñol. The monographic sections devoted to these artists show a wide selection of their production with important examples from the Parisian period and such paradigmatic works as *Ramon Casas and Pere Romeu on a Tandem*, the painting that used to hang in Els Quatre Gats.

The collection of *Modernista* decorative arts includes some exceptional groups of interior decoration by Puig i Cadafalch, Homar and Gaudí from, respectively, the Amatller, Lleó Morera and Batlló houses in Paseo de Gràcia in Barcelona, without forgetting the items of furniture by Francesc Vidal, Joan Busquets and other outstanding craftsmen, evoking everyday scenes at the turn of the century, a reflection of the burgeoning middle class. The Museum has increased the material on display, including works never before exhibited such as a huge

fireplace from the Macià house in Lleida, by Lluís Domènech i Montaner, or groups not seen in public for years like the complete set of curtains from a music room in the Solà Pou house. Both pieces have been carefully restored. Completing this section are the objets d'art in their various specialities, such as the jewels by Lluís Masriera, the ceramics by Lambert Escaler and Antoni Serra, and some ironwork from the workshop of Concordi González e Hijos. It is worth mentioning that many of the areas devoted to the *Modernista* decorative arts receive natural light, subject to the measures of preventive conservation, with the aim of highlighting the natural beauty of the textures, the colours and the materials the objects are made of. It should also be said that in the current presentation, the MNAC devotes a monographic section to Gaudí's facet as a designer. By him are the railings from the Vicens house, the first important example of the prominence that iron was to achieve as a decorative material, and other groups of furniture from the Batlló and Calvet houses and the church of the Güell Industrial Estate in Santa Coloma de Cervelló. In these latter works Gaudí reveals himself as a forerunner of ergonomic designs and dispenses with all reference to style.

The second generation of *Modernista* artists occupies the galleries adjacent to those of the decorative arts. These artists, some ten years younger than the first *Modernistes*, took over from them and guided Catalan art to one of its most brilliant moments. The works by Pidelaserra and Canals clearly show how they had assimilated Impressionism, the movement that *In Saint-Mammès. June Sunshine*, by Alfred Sisley, belongs to, the only work conserved by the MNAC of a true Impressionist painter. Next comes the gallery devoted to Joaquim Mir, the most brilliant landscape artist of his generation and also probably the best of the whole of modern Catalan painting, for his personal artistic language, which used colour as the protagonist and with which he almost reached abstraction. After him comes Anglada Camarasa, one of the artists who enjoyed greater international recognition in his lifetime, featured with several works, such as *Granada Woman*, a magnificent example of the decorative style that pervaded his entire output. Equally important is the presence of Raurich and Gimeno, artists with a marked personality who kept themselves on the edges of the artistic circles, although for their characteristics they may be considered as being close to the second generation of *Modernista* artists. The gallery devoted to Nonell, the last of those dealing with *Modernisme*, brings together a good selection of work by this strongly expressionist artist who managed to emphatically transmit poverty, pessimism and the most profound loneliness in the figures of gypsy women that he painted almost obsessively.

Other artists featured in the galleries devoted to *Modernisme*, albeit symbolically, are Romero de Torres, Zuloaga, Sorolla, Regoyos and Gutiérrez Solana, with works very representative of their respective artistic languages. With regard to the sculptors of the second generation of *Modernistas*, note the work from the early period of Clarà, Gargallo and Casanovas, and the singular contribution of Carles Mani with *The Degenerates*, a work expressionist in nature, quite unusual in the art of that time.

The other movement widely represented in the MNAC is *Noucentisme*, which embodies the quest for the essences typical of the Mediterranean. The first voices advocating the need for

change appeared in the first decade of the twentieth century, but it was not until 1911 that this movement became consolidated, taking root very strongly in Catalonia and with a broader scope than the strictly artistic. The first section devoted to this movement brings together works by Sunyer, the undisputed leading light of the movement, and Torres-García, one of its theoreticians. The former developed the figure and landscape, incorporating elements typical of constructivism originating in Cézanne, while the latter took the French painter Puvis de Chavannes as his prime artistic reference, although after 1917 he abandoned the *Noucentista* postulates and leant towards the avant-garde. In the same gallery there are also paintings by Feliu Elias, closer to the German New Objectivity. As for sculpture, Clarà and Casanovas took as their most immediate plastic reference the sculptor Aristides Maillol and opted for aesthetic approaches based on harmony, reason and the refinement of the shapes, which, all in all, became the portrayal of the ideal Catalan woman as defined by Ors in *La Ben Plantada*. Completing this movement are the sculptures by Manolo Hugué and the paintings of Nogués, markedly popular in tone. The former remained faithful to the Mediterranean spirit although his contacts with the Cubists pushed some of his works towards avant-garde sculpture, while the latter created a body of work of great sensitivity, not without irony, in which especially notable are the mural paintings that he did for the Galeries Laietanes wine cellar, one of the most attractive works in modern Catalan art. Silver jewellery, enamelled glass and ceramic vases by both artists are also exhibited. Around 1917 the second generation of *Noucentistes* appeared, who, while being critical of the earlier *Noucentistes*, decided to continue with the figurative tradition, and produced work with a style of its own in the context of between-war international realism. Outstanding among these artists are Togores, Domingo and the members of the 'Evolucionistes' group and the 'Agrupació Courbet'.

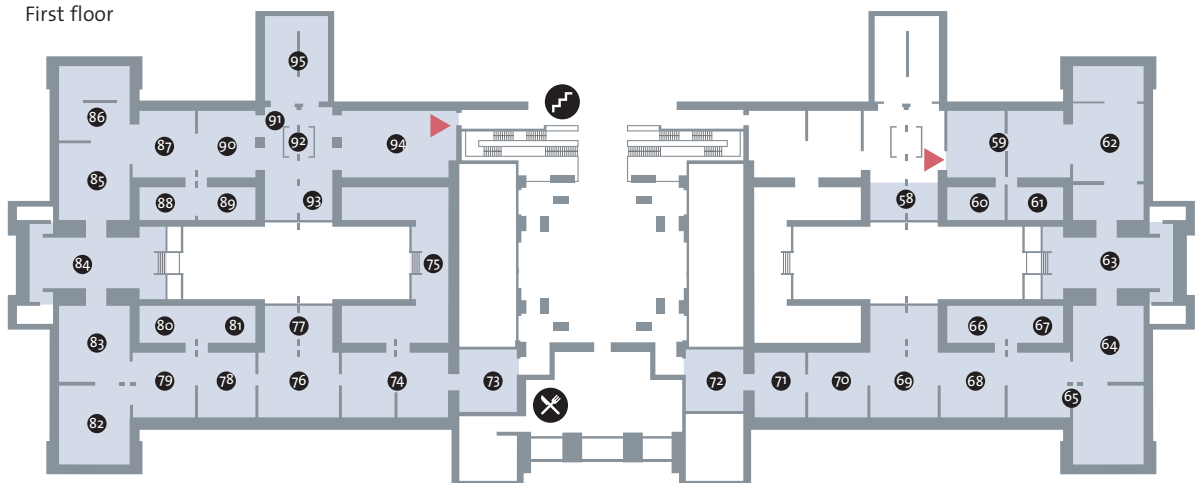
The artists associated with the avant-garde occupy the final sections of the modern art collections. Note the presence of the sculptor Gargallo, both for his works centred upon the depiction of the human body, in keeping with *Noucentista* postulates, and, most particularly, for his avant-garde sculptures. His contributions referring to the use of cut and welded iron, and the inclusion of empty space as an element of volume, earned him an outstanding place in modern sculpture. With regard to painting, a number of artists are featured together, most of whom were linked to the circle of the dealer Josep Dalmau, one of the most outstanding champions of the avant-garde movements. Especially significant is the presence of works by Barrades, Torres-García and Dalí, who painted the portrait of his father, a work emblematic of the Museum's collections. For the first time, in this museographical project, an exhibition area has been set aside for the decorative arts of the 1920s and 30s. This space brings together the creations of jewellers, potters and designers whose contribution was acknowledged at the 1925 Paris International Exhibition of the Decorative Arts, a show that acted as a catalyst for Art Deco. The avant-garde trend also filtered down into the world of design and interior decoration. Good examples of this are the design for the Roca Jeweller's shop by Josep Lluís Sert, a faithful exponent of the GATCPAC architects group, and the series of brooches by Manuel Capdevila, made in Paris in 1937 in collaboration with the lacquerer Ramon Sarsanedas, plus the ceramic creations free of

decorativism by Josep Llorens Artigas, exhibited in a glass cabinet. Finally, after a group of Surrealist sculptures by Leandre Cristòfol, there is in the last gallery a rich group of sculptures, paintings and pieces of precious metalwork by Julio González, one of the most outstanding Catalan artists of the European avant-garde. His plastic experimentation, which centred upon the use of iron, in experimenting with new techniques and going beyond the traditional concept of volume, allowed him to create a new lyrical language, very personal, which was a fundamental contribution to twentieth-century sculpture.

Sections

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- 59 The Early 19th Century. Academicism
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- 61 Romanticism
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- 64 Ramon Martí Alsina
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- 66 The Collection of the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints. The *Modernisme* Context
- 67 The Origins of Photography, 1839-88
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- 79 Francesc Gimeno
- 80 The Collection of the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints. From *Modernisme* to *Noucentisme*
- 81 Pictorialist Photography, 1888-1917
- 82 Isidre Nonell
- 83 Classicist *Noucentisme*: Joaquim Sunyer and Joaquín Torres-García
- 84 *Noucentista* Sculpture
- 85 Popular *Noucentisme*: Xavier Nogués and Manolo Hugué
- 86 The Generation of 1917
- 87 Pablo Gargallo
- 88 The Collection of the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints. From *Noucentisme* to the Avant-Garde
- 89 Late Pictorialist Photography, 1917-36
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- 91 Leandre Cristòfol
- 92 Modern Photography, 1917-36
- 93 From Art Deco to the Avant-Garde
- 94 Julio González
- 95 The Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

First floor



The Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection

■ This gallery contains about twenty paintings from the collection of Catalan art belonging to Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza and consisting of more than 350 works. In view of the wealth and heterogeneity of this collection, the works ceded to the MNAC give priority to diversity rather than to unity of discourse, with the object of giving an idea, even though it may have the conciseness of a telegram, of the plurality of this collection.

The chronological period covered by this section responds to the chapters in the history of Catalan painting from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, one of the most brilliant moments in Catalan art. The nineteenth century is amply represented in the Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection and particularly stands out for the presence of Fortuny, the most important artist in Spanish nineteenth-century painting after Goya, whose influence can be clearly seen in *Bullfight. Wounded Picador*, painted in about 1867 on the occasion of Fortuny's stay in Madrid. As regards the *Modernista* movement, of which there are also leading works in the Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, there is a particularly outstanding selection of important artists from this period such as Casas, with his *Open-Air Interior*—dated Barcelona 1892, just after his fertile stay in Paris—Anglada Camarasa, with *Le Paon blanc*—a paradigmatic painting from his Paris period—and Mir, with two paintings from two significant moments in his career, *The Cathedral of the Poor*—with the Sagrada Familia under construction in the background—which the artist painted in 1898, and *The Abyss. Majorca*, which Mir did during his prolific stay in Majorca. Equally noteworthy is the presence of *Noucentisme*, a movement deeply rooted in Catalonia, with paintings by its leading artists, amongst them Torres-García and Sunyer. Sunyer stands out for his *Mediterranean*, a programmatic work of *Noucentista* painting, and there is also a representation of younger artists than the early *Noucentistes*, who extended the *Noucentista* spirit. A brilliant colophon to this suggestive tour of the history of modern Catalan painting lies in the presence of the indisputable Antoni Tàpies.

The Collection of Photography

■ The MNAC decided to include photography in its collections in 1996 as a response to the demand from several cultural and patrimonial entities who called urgently for commitment on the part of the Museum to the photographic heritage. This response took the form of the creation of the Department of Photography, whose mission is both to provide exhibition space for photographers and their works and to meet the moral obligation to rescue major legacies in the genre from oblivion and material destruction.

The Museum's aim is to bring together works ranging from the origins of photography in 1839 until the present day in a collection representative of the history of photography that lays especial emphasis on the work of Catalan photographers.

The collection constitutes an itinerary through the different movements, starting at the very beginnings, the pre-industrial era, that is, when photography had not yet attained the degree of technological simplicity that would make it available to everyone, with works by Disdéri, Jean Laurent, Francis Frith, Charles Clifford and Gaston Braun, among others.

Next comes the pictorialist period: the massive industrialisation of photography that began with the invention in 1888 of new Kodak camera models marked the emergence of a phenomenon crucial to the technological evolution of photography: amateurism alongside what might be regarded as its elitist counterpart, Pictorialism, the first movement to claim artistic status for the genre. In opposition to technological standardisation and documentary utilitarianism, Pictorialism advocated the use of pigment processes that evoked the manual work of painters as well as painting's symbolic, picturesque or sublime themes. The movement persisted in Catalonia until the mid-twentieth century with figures of the stature of Antoni Campañà, Claudi Carbonell, Pere Casas Abarca, Josep M. Casals i Ariet, José Ortiz Echagüe, Joaquim Pla Janini and Joan Porqueras.

Next, the historical avant-garde movements, an itinerary through the modern art precepts of the first third of the twentieth century. More specifically, the birth of modern photography in Europe coincided with the between-war period and the outburst of the avant-gardes. In the Catalan context, this period ended with the Civil War. This was the moment when a discourse of radical photographic innovation was imposed internationally: talk was heard of 'new vision', 'new objectivity', 'new photography' and so on in reference to the predominant idea that a genuine rebirth of photography was taking place. That is, for the first time in its history the genre had reached its specificity or the age of majority as regards painting. The most outstanding figures here were Antoni Arissa, Josep Batlles, Pere Català Pic, Emili Godes, Josep Lladó and Josep Masana.

The following period, that of the Civil War, saw the birth of reportage. It also coincided with the rise and consolidation of illustrated journals and of small-format cameras and new materials that made high-speed shots possible. In this sense, the Spanish Civil War was a

fundamental context since it constituted the first major field of operations in which new technical possibilities of mass reproduction were tested in preparation for the imminent outbreak of World War II. This period is represented in the collection by the work of Agustí Centelles.

The new avant-garde that emerged after the war reflected the persistence or reconstruction of the discourses of modernity in the post-war period and during the Franco dictatorship. Unlike the previous period, the modern photography of those years was dominated by the precepts of realism and reportage. This was the period when illustrated journals reached their maximum popularity and influence worldwide and in which the trauma of war transformed the visual experimentation and aspirations towards abstract forms of the initial avant-garde into a new documentary imperative—marked most probably by the photographers employed by leading American publications—which found in Europe a replica adapted to the circumstances of the post-war situation: humanism in France and neo-realism in Italy and Spain. Humanism began with Otho Lloyd and Joaquim Gomis and continued with the neo-realism of Francesc Català-Roca, Colita, Joan Colom, Oriol Maspons, Xavier Miserachs, Leopoldo Pomés, Ton Sirera, Ricard Terré and Julio Ubiña.

Finally, the contemporary period stretches from the restoration of democracy in this country in the mid-seventies until the mid-1990s, a period when major transformations took place not only in the political sphere but also in the cultural industries in general. Broadly speaking, as from 1975 photographic culture witnessed a progressively widening schism between photojournalism on the one hand and, on the other, photography that sought an artistic status of its own.

Enjoying new-found freedom of expression, photojournalism discovered new terrain and a new social and political role during the initial years of the transition, and parallel to the appearance of new publications a new generation of photographers emerged.

Unlike photojournalism, photography that sought artistic independence maintained a discourse of modernisation that linked back with previous avant-garde movements, although by now the identification between the avant-garde and social manipulation had ceased to exist.

As from the 1980s and until the mid-1990s the artistic debate was dominated by discourses of postmodernism, which widely questioned models of modern art and generated reflection on the universe of the image. Photography was understood as the emblematic medium for these critiques of representation. In the long term, the postmodern debate and criticism of representation led to photography's dominating the art scene as from 1980, with generations of younger artists who revealed an implicit understanding of the fictitious and conventional nature of photographic realism, their work becoming oriented principally towards visual fictions.

- Sections**
- 1 The Civil War, 1936-40
 - 2 The New Avant-Garde, 1940-70
 - 3 The Contemporary Period, Mid-1970s to 1980s
 - 4 The Contemporary Period, 1980s to Mid-1990s

The Collection of the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints

■ The Cabinet of Drawings and Prints (GDG) occupies its place in the permanent exhibition itinerary with a representative selection from its collections. A total of four sections are devoted to a holding of great quantitative and qualitative richness in which Catalan art is generously represented. These galleries have been adapted to provide the ideal conditions for exhibiting work on paper, a highly delicate medium that requires stringent preservation measures and the imposition of limits on its exhibition time.

The four sections cover the period stretching from the sixteenth to the first half of the twentieth centuries and contain a selection of over eighty works embracing drawings, engravings and posters. The itinerary has been designed to combine a diachronic with a synchronic discourse in order to situate the works belonging to the Cabinet in the context of the other museum collections. This theoretical concept takes the practical form of a spatial arrangement in which the different sections become integrated in their corresponding chronological place into the overall itinerary of the permanent exhibition. Consequently, apart from the first section, entitled *From Old Master Drawing to the Nineteenth Century*, which constitutes a very heterogeneous collection of artists representative of a wide variety of idioms and covering the long period between the sixteenth and the last quarter of the nineteenth centuries, the remaining sections adapt to the above-mentioned conceptual model. In this context, the second section, entitled *The Modernisme Context*, exemplifies the importance of this movement in the history of Catalan art, a movement that cultivated, among other genres, the graphic arts as one of its favourite means of expression, as denoted by the large number of posters that feature in the exhibition. From that period the Cabinet keeps the legendary series of charcoal drawings by Ramon Casas, a veritable gallery of the society of the time donated in 1909 by the artist himself to the Board of Museums.

The third section, entitled *From Modernisme to Noucentisme*, is devoted to a set of works belonging to two of the most important movements in the history of Catalan art. Even so, this section also contains a generous selection of works by Nonell and Gimeno, two artists who cultivated highly personal languages and are therefore very difficult to classify. Finally, the itinerary through the galleries devoted to the Cabinet closes with a fourth section that as its name indicates, *From Noucentisme to the Avant-garde*, illustrates both the continuity of *Noucentista* inertia, exemplified in the work of Manolo Hugué, and the emergence of new figurative ideas that broke away from the conventions of preceding artistic models. A paradigmatic example of this stance is the work of Julio González, an artist who cultivated a language of unquestionable modernity and originality that denotes knowledge and assimilation of the precepts of the main twentieth-century avant-garde movements without falling into the trap of imitation.

In this way, work on paper contributes as a form of expression in its own right to the enrichment and diversification of the presence of the most important artists and movements in the history of Catalan art, without overlooking work by artists from elsewhere that further enhance the quality of the exhibits.

The Collection of the Numismatic Cabinet of Catalonia

■ The Numismatic Cabinet of Catalonia (GNC) was created in 1932 with the aim of having an institution devoted to the research and dissemination of the history of coinage and medals in Catalonia. At present, there are over 130,000 examples in the GNC's collections, corresponding to a wide diversity of materials. The coin collection contains over 100,000 pieces, among which the principal coinage series are represented. Without doubt, the most important and emblematic in the GNC are those issued in Catalonia, with a significant number of extremely rare examples and unique pieces. The collections begin with the series of ancient coinage, outstanding among which are those minted in Hispania, with such significant examples as the first silver coins produced in the Peninsula by the Greeks of *Emporion*.

The passage from the ancient to the mediaeval world is documented especially with an interesting collection of Visigothic coins. Outstanding among the mediaeval, modern and contemporary issues are the coin series minted by the Catalan counts, the one from the Reapers' War (1640-52) and that of the Napoleonic invasion. Moreover, the GNC houses important coin hoards, like the examples from the excavations of Empúries or treasures that record key moments in the use of coinage in Catalonia.

The medal collection comprises 7,500 pieces, from the first ones struck in Italy during the second half of the fifteenth century to the present day. Whilst a fair number of European and American countries are represented, the core of the collection is made up of Spanish medals, the most notable of them being the ones struck for the proclamation and swearing in of kings, and a very interesting collection of *Modernista* medals and plaquettes.

Another large part of the GNC's collections is made up of paper money, ranging from banknotes, bonds and credit vouchers to different types of credit documents such as bills of exchange, shares, debentures and cheques. A special mention should be given to the collection of paper money from the Civil War period (1936-9), of which the GNC keeps a representative collection of the bonds and credit vouchers issued by Catalan local councils.

As is customary in all numismatic cabinets, the GNC also possesses materials directly related to coins and medals, such as tesseræ, *pellofes* (religious tokens), weights, scales and dies. Furthermore, it possesses a small collection of objects less associated with coins and medals, such as mediaeval and modern seals, insignia and badges.

The GNC's collections can be displayed in several different ways in the MNAC's exhibition galleries. On one hand, in the galleries where the different collections are exhibited eleven display cabinets with coins have been installed and ten with medals, which have been integrated into the expositional discourse of these sections. Furthermore, there are two galleries devoted exclusively to coinage. One shows the monetary history of Catalonia and the other is given over to temporary exhibitions, the first of which will look at *The Public Image of Rome*.

The expositional discourse of the gallery dealing with the monetary history of Catalonia begins in the fifth century BC with the first issues of the Greek colony of *Emporion*, and continues for over 25 centuries until it arrives at the coinage and money of the present day. Throughout the different sections of the gallery special attention is given to the issues made in Catalonia, but those that have been official currency during the periods when coinage has not been minted are also shown. Also exhibited in some sections are issues in territories with close links with Catalonia. Above all, we are referring to the territories that, along with the Principality, once formed the Crown of Aragon. Several sections are devoted to showing the mintages that have circulated in Catalonia, produced either in its own mints or in other territories.

The monetary history of Catalonia is exhibited in 27 display cabinets, each of which is devoted to a specific theme. There is an evident wish to show this monetary history in a rigorous way from the scientific point of view, but also in an easy, direct, contextualized manner. On several occasions objects are exhibited that complement the coins. Thus, in the case devoted to the religious tokens, they are accompanied by some of the dies that were used to make them. Another example is offered by the cabinet containing the issues of Ferdinand VII and Isabella II, where instruments are shown that were used to measure the weight of the minted coins, for instance some scales and a coin frame. Exhibited in certain cabinets devoted to mediaeval and modern issues are royal seals and medals with images showing the figure of the monarch or scenes alluding to events of the time.

Sections

- 1 The Greek Colonies of *Emporion* and *Rhode*
- 2 The Iberians
- 3 Currency in *Emporion* in the 2nd and 1st Centuries BC
- 4 Imperial Roman Issues
- 5 Currency in Empúries in Imperial Times
- 6 The Visigoths
- 7 Carolingian Dominion and the Age of Counts
- 8 Currency Hoarding in the Age of Counts
- 9 Royal Currency in Catalonia: The House of Barcelona
- 10 Royal Currency in the Other Territories of the Crown of Aragon: From the Late 12th Century to the Early 15th Century
- 11 Royal Currency in Catalonia: The Trastamaras
- 12 Royal Currency in the Other Territories of the Crown of Aragon: The 15th Century and the Early 16th Century
- 13 Local Currency
- 14 Gold and Silver Hoarding: The Sant Pere de Rodes Find
- 15 Use and Circulation of Small Change
- 16 The First Monarchs of the Austrias Dynasty
- 17 The Reapers War
- 18 The War of the Spanish Succession and its Consequences
- 19 The French Occupation
- 20 The *Pellofes*
- 21 From Ferdinand VII to Isabella II
- 22 Gold and Silver Hoarding in the First Half of the 19th Century
- 23 The Peseta: From the Provisional Government to Alfonso XIII
- 24 The Second Republic and the Civil War
- 25 Catalan Paper Money during the Civil War
- 26 From 1939 to the Adoption of the Euro
- 27 Payment Cards

Art History Library

■ The origins of the Art History Library of the MNAC lie in a small core of reference works for technicians of the museums of Barcelona which was created at the end of the nineteenth century, after the Universal Exhibition of 1888. The beginning of the Library's public activities at the turn of the century coincided with the creation of the Board of Museums. From that time onwards, the material was added to with some bequests and donations by important private libraries. To the modest initial core of volumes were incorporated libraries formed in the nineteenth century.

It was J. Puig i Cadafalch who organised it personally. The work begun by the notable architect, archaeologist and art historian was later brought up to date by Joaquim Folch i Torres, the first director of the Museu d'Art de Barcelona (Art Museums of Barcelona).

The Library was given a vigorous boost with the creation of its special committee, on which figures so identified with the city's museums such as Lluís Nicolau d'Olwer and Jaume Bofill i Matas sat.

Today, the Art History Library is the key part of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya's Research Centre (1), and is an essential place of study and an obligatory reference point for art historians.

Currently, the Library's collection contains over 120,000 volumes and more than 2,500 titles of national and foreign journals covering the various fields of art: art, artists, photography, numismatics and local history publications. Sections of special interest are those of catalogues of exhibitions held in Barcelona, in the galleries of the rest of Catalonia and Spain, some held abroad, and the Press Archive, which features the news items about art that appear in the daily papers. This section includes the press archive of the former art critic Joan Cortes.

The collection also has some valuable pieces, ranging from books by artists, collections of manuscripts and bound volumes to works published before 1900 and very valuable incunabula.

The collection of manuscripts is especially interesting as it contains originals by artists and art theorists from Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and numerous handwritten articles by different figures. It conserves incunabula like the so-called *Nuremberg Chronicle* of 1493, and a history of the Roman Empire by Flavio Biondo, from 1484.

The main collection of bound volumes in the Library comes from the Toda, Riquer and Marçal de Carvajal bequests, without forgetting the bound books from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

(1) Study Centre or Research Centre, depending on what the management of the MNAC decides.

The collection of journals from the *Modernista* and *Noucentista* periods and the avant-garde are a bibliographical jewel.

Much of the material in the Art History Library is funded thanks to the MNAC's publications policy, one of its chief aims being to encourage exchanges in order to supply the Library with the volumes published by specialist museums and centres all over the world.

Collaboration and the exchange of information with other institutions, such as universities and international research centres, make the Art History Library one of the tools important for the consolidation and daily development of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

The Library is a specialist centre with installations prepared to provide a service to museum technicians, researchers, students, professionals of art and anyone interested in the art world. The reading room puts in the hands of the user a selection of material, to which access is free, that includes books, journals and a general reference section specialising in art history.

Several computers provide access to the on-line catalogue of the Library itself and to the CCUC, to the 'University of Princeton: Index of Christian Art' and 'Bibliography History of Art' databases, and to the databases available on CD-ROM and Internet, with their ample offer of information resources. The Library also has microfilm and microfiche scanners that enable copies of them to be made, plus a photocopying service in colour and black and white.

General Archive

■ The General Archive of the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya was created in 1995 with the aim of administering, in a normalised way, the documentary material that the institution looks after. To achieve this aim, a system of documentary administration has been introduced at the Museum, functioning since 1997.

The Archive's responsibility is the design, introduction and control of the corporate system of documentary administration. At the present time, the system acts at every stage of the life of the documents and extends throughout the institution via a network of archives: administration archives, the central archive, the historical archive and the sound and image archive. With this structure, the Museum controls its production of documents, guarantees the correct conservation of the material, ensures access and sees to it that the reserved data contained in the documents remains confidential, thus complying with the Generalitat de Catalunya's Law 10/2001 of archives and documents.

In relation to the provenance of the material, the documentation generated by the Museum since 1991 and the old material produced by the institutions now making up the MNAC is all kept in the Archive: the Museu d'Art de Catalunya, the Museu d'Art Modern, the Gabinet de Dibuixos i Gravats, the Gabinet Numismàtic de Catalunya and the Biblioteca General d'Història de l'Art.

As well as the documentation of the institution itself, other material is kept in the MNAC Archive, coming from institutions that were directly related to the creation of the Museu d'Art de Barcelona (Art Museums of Barcelona) and the public art collections and, as a result, closely linked to the creation of the institutions that today make up the MNAC. Thus, in the Archive there is all the documentation that has been conserved from the vaults of the different organising committees of fine art exhibitions (1891-1946) and part of the material from the Barcelona Board of Museums (1906-81). Personal material relating to the art world can also be found.

Moreover it should be pointed out that, as well as the textual material, the Archive has a section specialising in the management of images, the Sound and Image Archive, with over 350,000 documents on photographic support, x-rays, videos, audios and digital documents.

All the documentation catalogued by the Archive is controlled by a documentary administration programme that makes it possible to find out, with a single consultation, which documents the Archive has on a specific work of art or activity. This concept is called a virtual file. With this function, the information from archive documents is integrated into the Museum's Information System.

Technical Services

Restoration and Preventive Conservation

■ This is important as a centre of research and the application of specific techniques and new materials in the field of conservation and the restoration of works of art.

Traditionally, its main aim has been to oversee the restoration of the collections themselves, which include works of different kinds from the mediaeval period up to the twentieth century. For this purpose, the Museum has a team of restorers specialising in different disciplines, as well as a Preventive Conservation laboratory where research work and technical tasks of prevention are carried out for the correct conservation and handling of the works. With regard to restoration, the Department of Restoration and Preventive Conservation intervenes on works of mural painting, on canvas and wood, polychrome woodcarving, sculpture in stone, plaster or clay, sculpture in metal, work on paper, photography, coinage and medals, precious metalwork and furniture. Currently, as well as working on the restoration and conservation of the MNAC's collections, this department can make studies and reports on the state of conservation, proposals for restoration, give advice on projects and direct and/or do the restoration, alone or in collaboration, for other museums and public or private institutions that may require it.

Department of Registration of Artworks and Documentation – Photographic Service

■ The chief functions of the Department of Registration of Artworks and Documentation – Photographic Service are the computerized registration, monitoring and control of the location of the collections, as well as the management and coordination of the production, distribution and sale of photographs.

This department produces and applies normalised methods of description for the cataloguing of the Museum's patrimony, including the computerised registration of the collections, which enables it to make, on request from interested parties, systematic searches by subjects, authors, collectors, ways of admission, types or materials. Moreover, it carries out the monitoring and control of the movements and location of the works of art and can inform on the whereabouts of any work in the collections, thus facilitating access to it with the authorization of the Museum management.

The graphic documentation of the Museum's collections and activities is also the responsibility of the department, which directs and coordinates the production, distribution and sale of the images. Through the Photographic Service, this department collects the Museum's graphic chronicle and facilitates its consultation, besides offering the sale and hire of photographs, whether for study and research or for their publication, always making sure that these images are used correctly, within the framework of the Law of Copyright.

Study and Problem Solving for Organisations

■ Through its technical services, the MNAC provides support and assistance to any museums and cultural institutions that may need it, for which it carries out studies and analyses of evaluation and problem solving with ideas for improvement or setting up in the fields of the safety of the patrimony, the installations and personnel; the drafting of museological and museographical projects; the design of organisations, and the establishment and working of museum structures.

Chronology

1928

Construction of the Palau Nacional on Montjuïc, by the architects Eugeni P. Cendoya and Enric Catà, for the Barcelona International Exhibition of 1929.

1934

Opening of the Museu d'Art de Catalunya in the Palau Nacional.

1936

The collections of the Museu d'Art de Catalunya are evacuated. For the whole of the Civil War they remain in Paris, Olot and Darnius.

1945

The collections, back in Barcelona after the war, are dispersed. Opening of the Museu d'Art Modern in the old arsenal of the Ciutadella.

1990

Museums Law passed, by which the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya is created.

1992

Opening of the Oval Hall and the temporary exhibitions gallery of the MNAC.

1995

Opening of the Romanesque Art Gallery and of the Museum.

1997

Inauguration of the Gothic Art Gallery and the Cambó Collection.

2003

Inauguration of the small temporary exhibitions gallery.

2004

The refurbishment work of the Palau Nacional finishes; the different collections are moved there and installed. On December 16th, Their Majesties the King and Queen preside over the official opening.

Technical data

Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya
Palau Nacional. Montjuïc Park
08038 Barcelona
tel. (00 34) 93 622 03 60 (offices)
(00 34) 93 622 03 76 (Museum)
www.mnac.es
info@mnac.es

Built-up area

45,103 m²

Useful area

40,624 m²

Area of gardens

14,258 m²

Area available for use

Permanent exhibition galleries: 10,556 m²
Temporary exhibition galleries: 2,237 m²
Offices and rooms: 1,523 m²
Reserve rooms: 2,659 m²
Restoration workshops: 1,400 m²
Other public services: 22,249 m²

Total cost of the refurbishment work

122 million euros

Number of pieces exhibited

Romanesque art: 167
Gothic art: 389
Renaissance and Baroque art: 236
Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: 64
Modern art: 636
Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection of
Catalan painting: 27
Drawings, prints and posters: 89
Photography: 53
Numismatics: 4,285
Total: 5,945

Temporary exhibition galleries

3

Pieces permanently exhibited

5,945

Centres of documentation

Art History Library
General Archive

Bibliographical material

125,000 volumes (books and journals)

Image and sound material

409,932 documents

Opening hours

Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10 am to 7 pm
Sundays and holidays, 10 am to 2.30 pm
Mondays closed, except public holidays

Admission fees

8.50 € (includes the visit to all the collections and the temporary exhibitions, and the audioguide)
3 to 5 € (temporary exhibitions)

Reduced admission fee

6 € (families, groups of adults, students)

Admission free

Children under 12, senior citizens, groups of students with bookings, members of the ICOM and other accepted associations
Free day (permanent collection): first Thursday of each month

Ticket sales

Up to half an hour before the galleries close
Advance ticket sales from the 'Tel-entrada' service of Caixa de Catalunya
Price of Art Ticket: 17 € (includes admission to the MNAC, the Fundació Miró, the Fundació Tàpies, the Fundació Caixa de Catalunya, the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona)
Tourist Bus: 10% discount

Renting of space for functions

Museums Section

Museu Cau Ferrat de Sitges
Museu Comarcal de la Garrotxa, Olot
Biblioteca Museu Víctor Balaguer, Vilanova i la Geltrú

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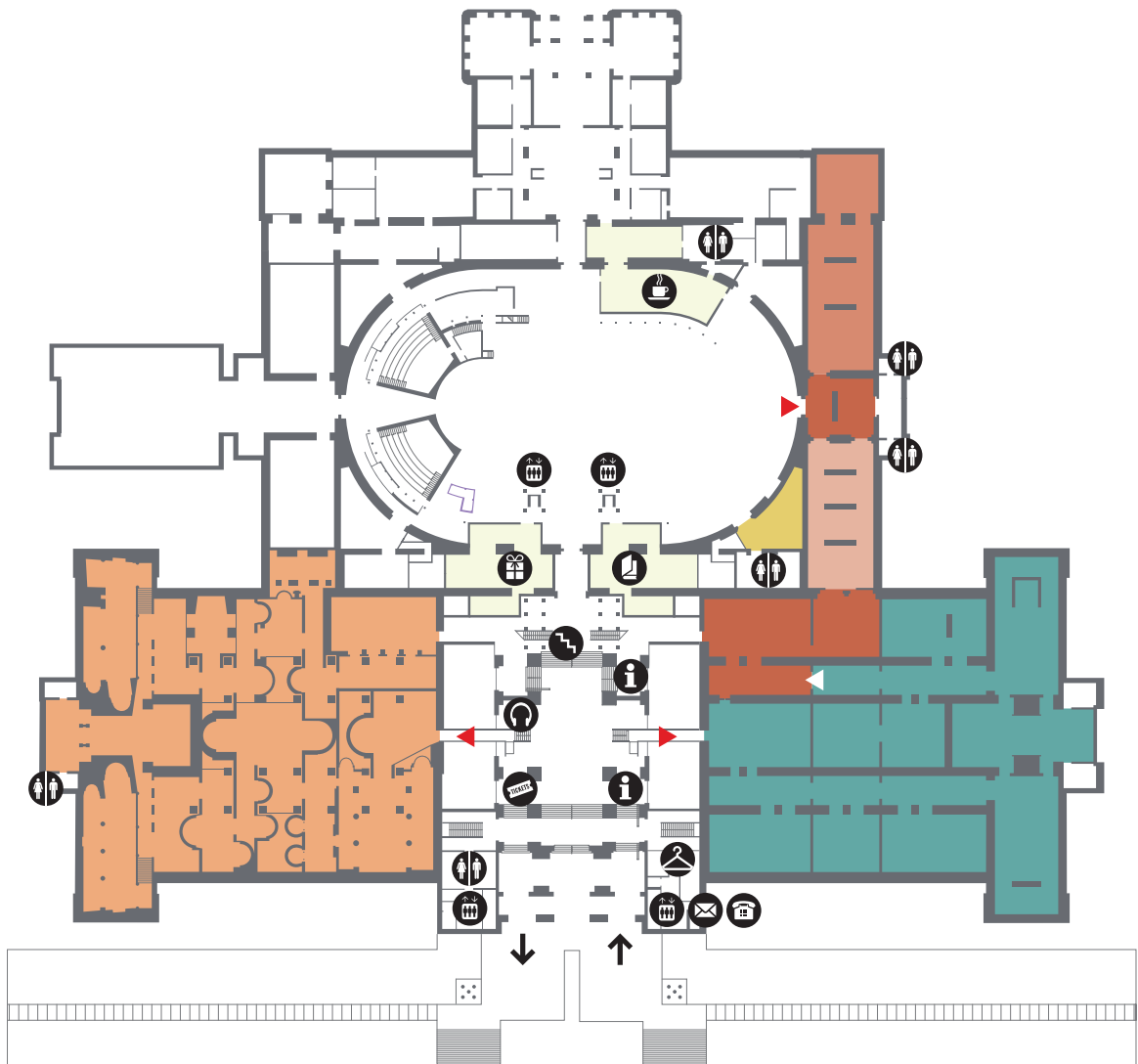
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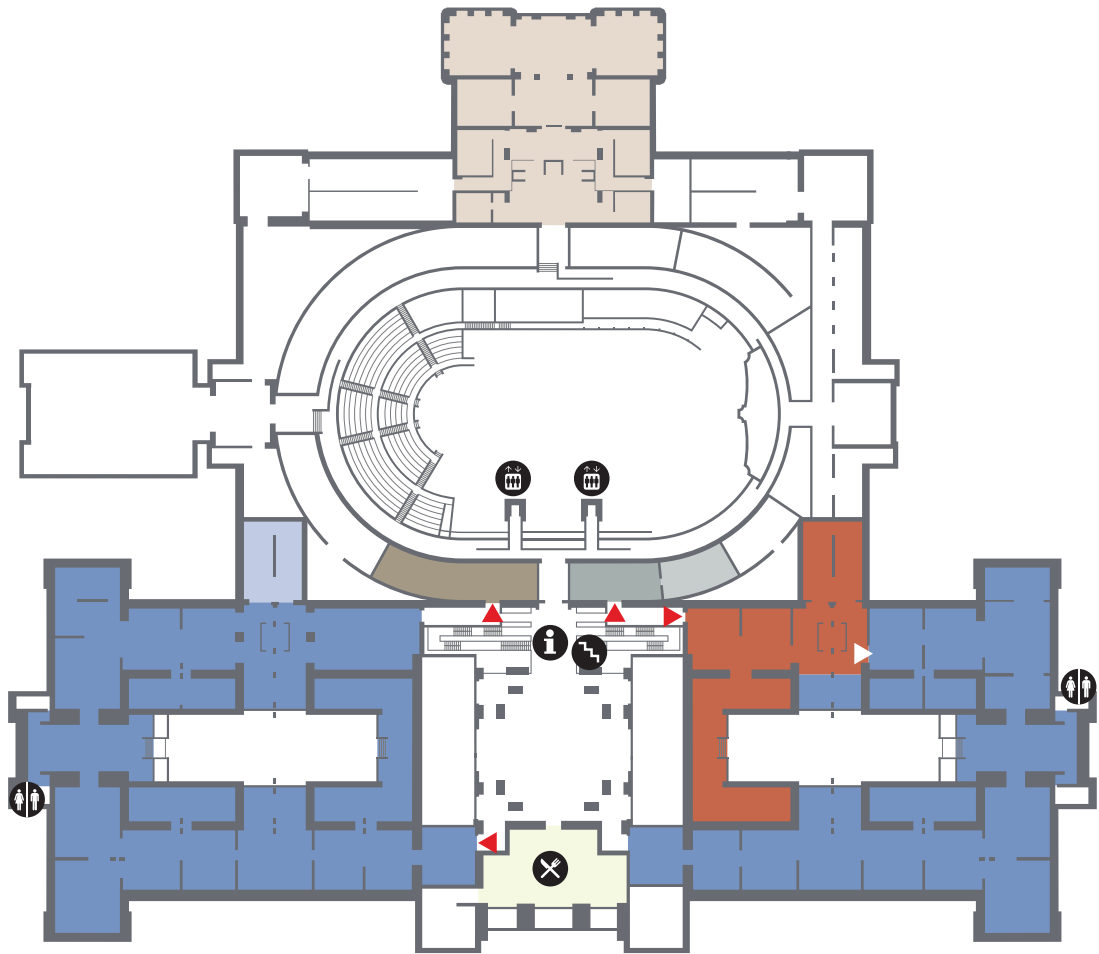
To mark the occasion of the inauguration, on the 17th, 18th and 19th December the Museum will hold Open Days from 10 am to 7 pm. On these days, TMB will provide a free bus service from Plaça d'Espanya for visitors.

Ground floor



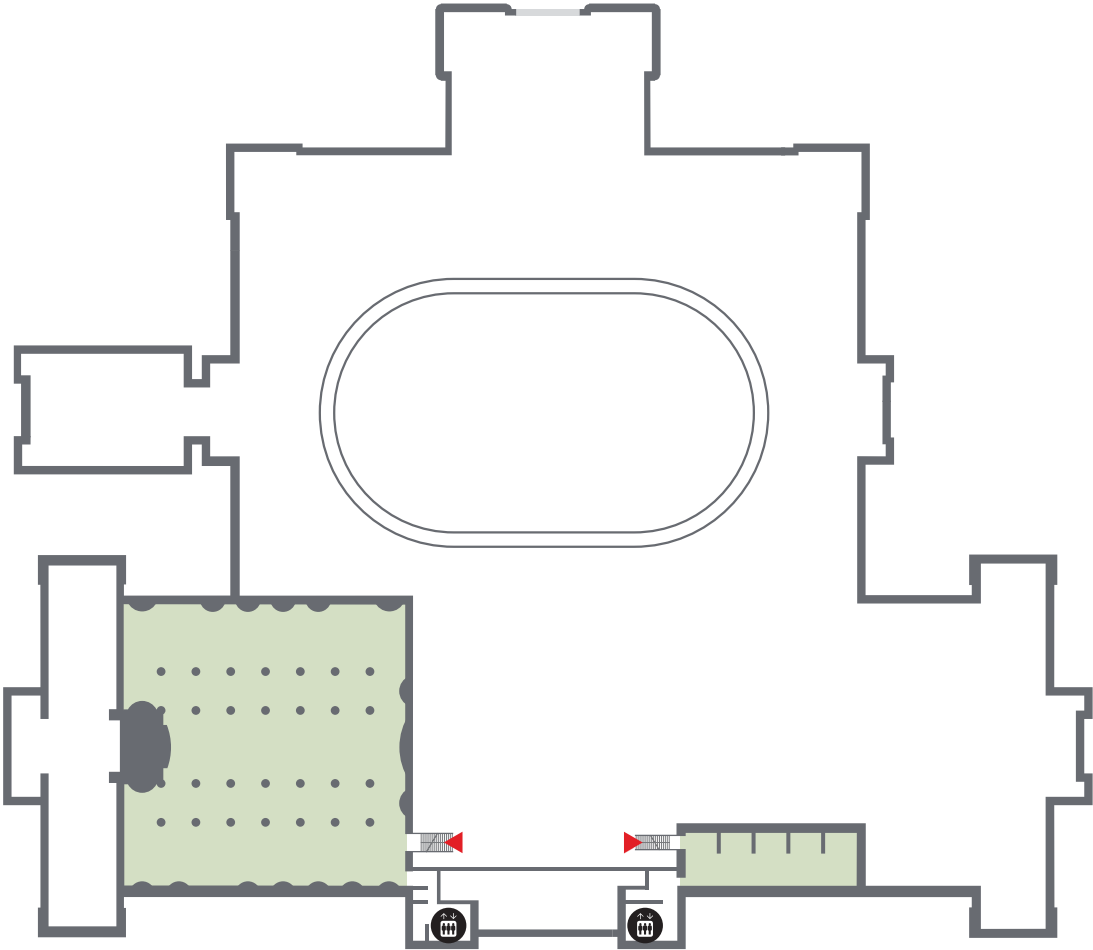
- | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|-------------|
| ■ Romanesque art | Cafeteria | Gift shop | Audioguides |
| ■ Gothic art | Toilets | Bookshop | Tickets |
| ■ Toddler's and youngster's library | Lifts | Stairs | Cloakroom |
| ■ Renaissance and Baroque art | Telephones | Postbox | |
| ■ The Cambó Bequest | | | |
| ■ The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection | | | |

First floor



- | | |
|--|------------|
| Modern art | Restaurant |
| The Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection | Toilets |
| Renaissance and Baroque art | Lifts |
| Photography | Stairs |
| Numismatics | |
| Temporary exhibition | |
| Art History Library | |

Basement floor



Temporary exhibitions

Lifts