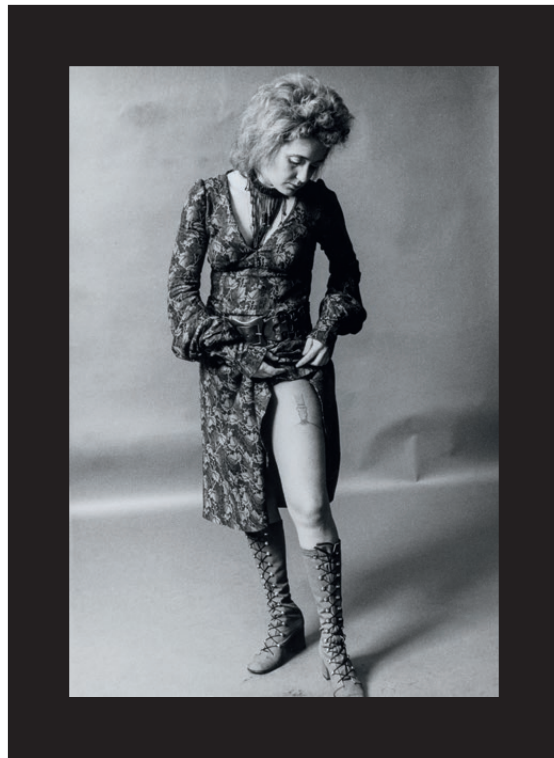


Exhibition

popular

05 Oct. 2023 — 14 Apr. 2024



Valie Export, *Tattoo II*, 1972.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

Press Dossier
Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

IVAM

Exhibition

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Most of the works in the exhibition come from the collection of the IVAM. These are complemented by pieces from the Colección Michael Jenkins & Javier Romero housed at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Alicante (MACA), the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), the Archivo Miguel Trillo and the Archivo Lafuente at the Library and Documentation Centre of the MNCARS, and the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC). The show also includes works from the following institutions and private collections: Colección Ricardo Borja, Residencia de Estudiantes de Madrid, Museo Ramón Gaya (Ayuntamiento de Murcia), Archivo de la Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo, Galería Rafael Ortiz (Sevilla), Herederos Llorens Peters C.B, Colección Antonio García y Sebastián Becerra, Galería Alarcón Criado (Sevilla), Occupational Centre of the Day Centre of La Puebla de Cazalla, Collection Kai Dikhas (Foundation Kai Dikhas, Berlin), Prometeo Gallery Ida Pisani (Milan), KOW (Berlin), CRAI Biblioteca Pavelló de la República (Universitat de Barcelona), Collection APRA Foundation (Berlin), Odin Teatret Archives Collection (Denmark), Fondazione Echaurren Salaris (Rome), Biblioteca Històrica de la Universitat de València, Monasterios Loeches, Light Cone Collection, Archivo Fundación Federico García Lorca (Granada), Film collection of Radiotelevisión Española (RTVE), Fílmoteca Española, Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie, diffusion RMN-GP and Colección Instituto de Estudios Giennenses.

Also participating with works from their collections or specially produced for the occasion are the artists Alegría y Piñero, Colectivo Ojo Pértico, María Jesús González and Patricia Gómez, Joy Charpentier, Teresa Lanceta, Inmaculada Salinas, Erik Beltrán, Alejandra Riera, Oriol Vilapuig, Julio Jara, Hiwa K, Yinka Esi Graves and Miguel Ángel Rosales Mateos.

Curator: Pedro G. Romero



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Unknown artist after Joaquín Sorolla,
The People (Republicans! Anti-Fascists!), 1937.
Printed by E. Machi. Colección Ricardo Borja

What is popular? Popular does not mean famous. Popular does not mean the products of mass culture. Popular does not mean the art of the people. Popular does not mean the handicrafts of the working class. Popular does not mean folklore. Popular does not mean clichés or tourist souvenirs. The popular moves between all that and beneath all that, but it is something else. *popular* is an exhibition and a research project – teaching is a form of knowledge – that tries to answer that question.

The popular is a form of imagination, often words, images and things, produced in very different ways through gestures, actions and festivities. The popular has a performative, plastic and mobile nature in constant metamorphosis, closer to ritual than to the monument – a liturgy with no theology whatsoever. *popular* starts from a strong interpretation. Those human groups who have no political representation at all, for whatever reason, thoroughly develop their symbolic representation.

This is certainly not a simple formula. Identifying these human groups is not only a difficult task, but it is also not a matter of subjecting the archive



Max Aub and Josep Renau, *Picasso and Josep Torres Campalans*, 1958. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat. Deposit Fundación Renau



Alberto Corazón, *Proposal for the Formation of a Popular Iconography*, 1973.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat. Gift of the artist

– in this case the IVAM collection – to a police search. The history of social emancipations gives us an idea of which human groups have achieved political representation in the last few centuries. The industrial revolution, the American and French revolutions and the feminist revolution all add fields on which to focus our attention.

If we endeavour to fix our gaze on the Valencia of the 21st century, we can see how the proletariat, women and LGTBI groups pass through that imagination we call popular in their own particular way. So too, however, do the Latin American, Arab and African migrants.

popular works on the rich collection of the IVAM, broadening the focus onto certain aspects such as music, spotlighting numerous facets of the collection such as the imaginary of the working classes, and showing up absences, among them the Afro-descendant imagination. *popular* draws on the IVAM archive while relating its gazes in a new way (Niño de Elche, for instance, has made songs



Öyvind Fahlström, *Red Seesaw*, 1968-1969.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

out of 15 pieces in the collection), overflowing the framework of what modern art means (another of the qualities of the popular) and at the same time trying to mark clear guidelines for reading.

The exhibition brings together over 1,500 pieces, including prints, audiovisuals, installations, sculptures, paintings, photographs, books and documentation, mostly from the IVAM collection, together with pieces from other centres, museums and private collections.



Teresa Lanceta, *Jerusalem*, 1973.
Artist's collection

A PHANTOM STALKS THE EARTH

In fact, the phantom stalking the earth was not so much revolution as the people. Sovereignty, legitimised until then directly from above, from God himself, was now to be replaced by a spring gushing from below, the ambiguous idea of the people. Giorgio Agamben points out that the birth of the people also meant the birth of the idea of the populace or 'riff-raff'. While the political representation



Unknown artista, *Untitled*,
1936-1939. IVAM Institut Valencià
d'Art Modern, Generalitat

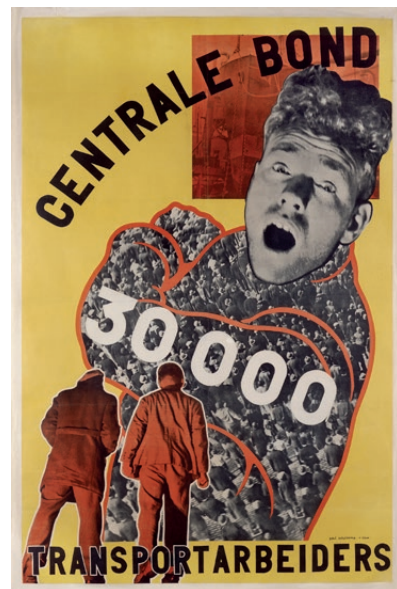


George Grosz, *Ob, Explosive World*,
Cabinet of Abnormalities, from the portfolio
'*Ecce Homo*', 1916. Marco Pinkus-IVAM
Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

of the nation rests on the first, the second term, contemptuously used for a people that is not a people, is the one that releases its symbolic imaginary. It is in the subtraction between people and populace that the popular is imagined. The popular is what is lost. This section includes works by Ignacio Pinazo, Roberta González, Alexander Rodchenko, John Heartfield, Josep Renau, Museo del Pueblo, Art et Action, Gabriel Cualladó, Lola Lasurt and others.



George Grosz, *Keep Smiling*, 1932.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat



Paul Schuitema, *Poster for Centrale Bond
Transport-Arbeiders*, 1930. IVAM Institut Valencià
d'Art Modern, Generalitat



Cindy Sherman, film still,
Untitled no. 6, 1979. IVAM Institut Valencià
d'Art Modern, Generalitat



Katharina Fritsch, *Madonna*, 1982.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

DISPUTED GENDER

Like gender, the popular is essentially a territory of conflicts. Since before the emancipation of the popular classes, in the male world of the famous hetero-patriarchate, the role of woman as muse, model, numen, inspiration or symbol always concealed the fact that this symbolic pre-eminence masked total dispossession of any political rights. From the imagery of the mother to that of the prostitute, each imagination depends directly on the ability to obtain political rights. As María Zambrano said, the goal is emancipating the feminine imaginary without renouncing the mythological role as goddesses, muses and models of our social body. This section includes works by Varvara Stepanova, *Mujeres Libres*, Sonia Delaunay, Sophie Tauber-Arp, Grete Stern, Ana Peters, Cindy Sherman, Lenore Tawney, Sanja Ivekovic and others.

THE SEX OF THE ANGELS

In many ways, the generic, in the double sense of generality and origin or lineage, defines the qualities of the popular. Gender dissidence has to do not only with the sexes or reproduction but also with the

dissidence of bodies in connection with autonomous living and thought. The carnivalesque popular as inversion of a normative and obligatory heterosexuality is the first gender dissidence. From parody to politics, as Judith Butler indicates. In many respects, the popular, originally 'feminine', becomes irredeemably 'camp'. On display are works by artists like Claude Cahun, Ximo Berenguer, Michel Journiac, Ocaña, ZAJ, Pepe Espaliú, Félix González-Torres, Miguel Benlloch and Ahlam Shibli.



Christopher Makos, *Pedro Almodóvar*, 1985.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat



Chim (David Seymour), *Terezka drawing her house in a residence for problematical children, Poland, 1948*. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

THE DECLINE OF ILLITERACY

Individuals attain their political rights when they reach a particular age of majority. The previous territory, that of childhood, is also the territory of the imagination. Boys and girls, always at the edge of political representation, are the genealogy of our imagination. Walter Benjamin located it in play and its capacity to give words, images and things a function different from their usual one. The popular also inhabits the territory of childhood. With pieces by DADA, Dario Carmona de la Fuente, Bon, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Joan Miró, Georges Grosz, Manuel Ángeles Ortiz, Peter Fischli & David Weiss, Xisco Mensua and others.

IN PRAISE OF MADNESS

Relieving someone of responsibility. Distancing them. Making sure that although they have their rights, their testimony will have no legal validity and they will be unable to exercise political responsibilities. The art of the insane has often been in the



Jacinta Gil Roncales, *Convergence, 1975*. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

sights of the avant-garde: art brut, psychological art, marginal art, art therapy, outsider art, psychiatric or anti-psychiatric art. What interests us here is the loss of political representation caused by certain pathologies and the symbolic power that accumulates in that same imaginary. There are no madmen and madwomen, there is a people in a state of purity. With pieces by Henri Michaux, Jean Dubuffet, Francis Picabia, Luis Gordillo, Zush, Lucebert, Miriam Cahn, María Jesús González & Patricia Gómez, Alejandra Riera and others.

PROLETARIAN CHAMBER THEATRE

In political theory, representation and participation are probably diametrically opposed. In artistic practice, however, representation and participation



José María Gorris, *Free Punch, 1976*. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

are a continuum, mutually demanding powers that stimulate each other. It is at the disorders of the mind that the limits of political responsibility are set. In the symbolic order, however, madness reigns in the world of the popular imagination. The monsters in stories and videogames, psychedelia, new age religions and fantasy are precisely imagination. This section contains pieces by Estampa Popular, GuyDebord & Asger Jorn, El Cubri, Jose María Gorris, Richard Hamilton, Equipo Realidad, Joan Brossa, Oyvind Fahlström and Agustín Parejo School.



Lothar Baumgarten, *Terra Firme*, 1992.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

THE CONQUEST OF AMERICA

Of course, this is not an evocation of the imperial and colonial past, although that common past has something to do with it. It is from the American continent that our popular imaginary has been conquered, from the dawn of modernity to the present day. Of course, it will be its subordinate classes – Blacks in the United States, Brazil or Cuba, indigenous peoples in Chile, Mexico or Peru – that have no political rights or even no rights at all, like the slaves reduced to mere merchandise, the depositories of the popular imagination. With pieces

by Max Aub, Vicente Huidobro, Norah Borges, Horacio Coppola, Joaquín Torres-García, Roberto Matta, Sergio Larrain, Lothar Baumgarten, Paz Errázuriz and others.

A SECONDARY ORIENTALISM

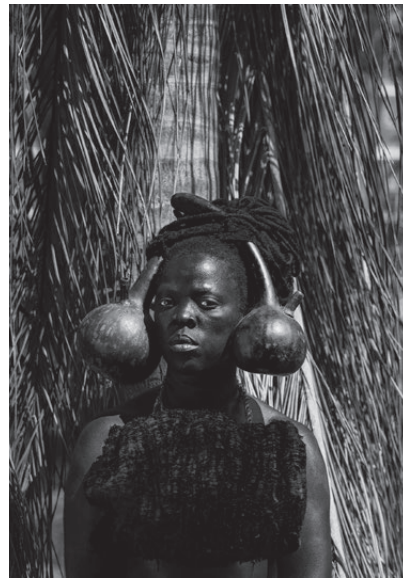
Américo Castro asserted that a part of the Iberian heritage in America that is referred to as 'popular' in fact boils down to sediments of the Arab and Jewish cultures that once inhabited us. The Arab and the Jewish, the Muslim and the Judaic, are our concern because they are also us. It is not just a question of historical information, of the centuries those peoples spent on Iberian soil, and of the rapid conversion of the Hispano-Roman population to Islam and the proliferation of Sefarad, but also the fact that the cultural continuity between North Africa and the Mediterranean relates us to those social and cultural forms. With the arrival of Christian hegemony, of course, the Arab and the Jewish were deposited in the popular lower classes. Included in this section are works by Yto Barradas, Taysir Batniji, Bouchra Khalili, Francesc Ruiz, Anna Boghiguan, Rula Halawani, Marta Sentis, Nadja Benchallal, Shazia Sikander and others.



Marta Sentis, *Plaza de la Reina*,
Valencia, 1998. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art
Modern, Generalitat

THE WORLD'S CONDEMNED

Slavery is still the great shame of capitalism. It is above all an ocean, the Atlantic, that forms the space for that consideration of humans as merchandise, the place where men and women are stripped of all rights and their subordinate condition is fossilised. The tempo and development of what we call 'popular' around the world is of course marked by the Black Afro-American. Not the complex sounds of the festival or ritual, but the binary boom-boom which sets the rhythm to which the world moves. Slavery is the origin, for example, of rock'n'roll, tango, Latin music and even flamenco, providing the beat for all forms of popular music. A terrible and stimulating paradox. With pieces by Kara Walker, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Adrian Piper, Lorna Simpson, Victoria Santa Cruz, David Hammons, Zanele Muholi, Yinka Essi Graves & Miguel Ángel Rosales and others.



Zanele Muholi, *Calabasbe. Emblabeni*, 2019.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

CAMELAMOS NAQUERAR

Camelamos naquerar means "we want to speak" in Caló, the Iberian Gypsy variant of Romany, the Gypsy language. Can subordinates then speak? That is precisely the question. When they speak, when they manage to acquire a political voice, then they lose their subordinate position. It is in that articulation, in that starting to speak, that the popular appears. However, it is not solely a Gypsy affair. Pastori Filigrana proposes we should learn from them and the world they have successfully retained.

From the poor, from the outcasts, from those we definitively leave out of our societies. *Camelamos naquerar* develops the power of those who want to speak through pieces by Helios Gómez, Ceija Stojka, Federico García Lorca, Moholy-Nagy, New Deal Photography, Alberto Greco, Ramón Zabalza, Xavier Mollá and Delaine Le Bas.



Francesc Catalá i Roca, *Gypsy Girl, Montjuïc*,
from the portfolio 'Masters of Spanish
Photography', 1955. IVAM Institut Valencià
d'Art Modern, Generalitat



Ceija Stojka, *Ohne Title*, 2011.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

SOUND TOUR

The exhibition includes a sound tour that can be followed in the gallery with QR codes linked to 45 musical pieces that are related to the artworks in the IVAM collection. The tour is divided into three sections, with 15 original compositions by the flamenco singer Niño de Elche, 15 others based on the illustrated scores of František Zelenka kept at the IVAM, and a series of pieces selected by the curator, Pedro G. Romero.

Songs (one)

The magnificent collection of scores by Jaroslav Ježek illustrated by the architect František Zelenka opened the path for some sort of presentation of songs as one of the privileged sites for the narration and emergence of the popular. Both were artists of Jewish origin linked to the Czech avant-garde: the architect was murdered at Auschwitz in 1945, and the composer died after an illness two years later in his New York exile. The particularity of this repertoire, linked to the rise of vernacular musics produced by the colonial displacements of the 1920s, is exceptional in this respect. The popular appears exactly at the point of surrender of displaced political representations whose success and symbolic power is based on their obligatorily subordinate position. In the years of the shellac record, we witnessed the birth of the global cultural industry that would later be called pop or popular music.

Songs (two)

The Manichaeic division between visual culture and musical culture has a strong theological component. The reduction of sound to abstract, spiritual or ritual categories with no recognised material symbolic representation, imagination or figuration is above all the result of the classificatory project of a totalitarian Enlightenment that orders the world. What there actually is, rather, is a set of continuities and relations. Between *poiesis* (mode of doing), *esthesis* (mode of seeing) and *phonesis* (mode of talking), a circulation is always produced. Rather than a specific cultural production, the popular is



František Zelenka, cover of musical score *Mercedes Tango*, 1930.
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern,
Generalitat

the fruit of that circulation through these modes, which can most certainly continue to multiply. The relations between texts, sounds and images that we have selected are based on that principle. There are avant-garde pieces, pieces of academic music, productions of the cultural industry, studio experiments and street experiences, and circulating through all of them is the possibility of the popular.

Songs (three)

The collection of songs produced by Niño de Elche with the collaboration of Xisco Rojo explores the sometimes blurred limits between sound, music and the popular that are consubstantial to the song. Agustín García Calvo said that the popular in a song is measurable by its chances of being hummed while you are taking a shower. Whether with electronic dance music, the spoken word, the musics of the Latin diaspora or flamenco, Niño de Elche has tried to connect the images of some of the pieces in the IVAM Collection with possible ways of being sung. That is, hummed in the shower: from a statement by Juan Hidalgo to the *petenera* intoned by the Mexican natives portrayed by Paul Strand, and from a *fandango* dedicated to Helios Gómez to the rhythmic imprint of Rosalía's famous VALIE EXPORT tattoo. An image is also a song.

ACTIVITIES

Presentation of the exhibition by the curator, Pedro G. Romero, and the director of the IVAM, Nuria Enguita

Date: 5 October 2023, 7 pm

Place: Carmen Alborch Auditorium

Actions, workshops and performances by Oriol Vilanova, Mónica Valenciano, Niño de Elche, Oriol Vilapuig, Alegría y Piñero, Julio Jara, Erick Beltrán, Teresa Lanceta & Zineb Achoubie, Yinka Essi Graves and Delaine Le Bas.

CATALOGUE

On the occasion of the exhibition, the IVAM is publishing an ample catalogue. Designed by Filiep Tacq, it compiles the essays on the exhibition written by its curator, Pedro G. Romero, together with an anthology of texts constituting a certain idea of the popular that developed in Spain during the first decades of the 20th century, with writings by Antonio Machado, Juan de Mairena, María Zambrano, Ramón María del Valle Inclán, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, José Bergamín, Maruja Mallo, Silverio Lanza, Corpus Barga, Felipe Alaiz, Antonio Núñez de Herrera, Américo Castro and Federico García Lorca.

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