

bilbao **museoa**

BBKateak **Van Dyck –** **Sáez**

Arte Ederren Bilboko Museoa
Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao

bbk 

Van Dyck – Sáez

Room 2

Old building

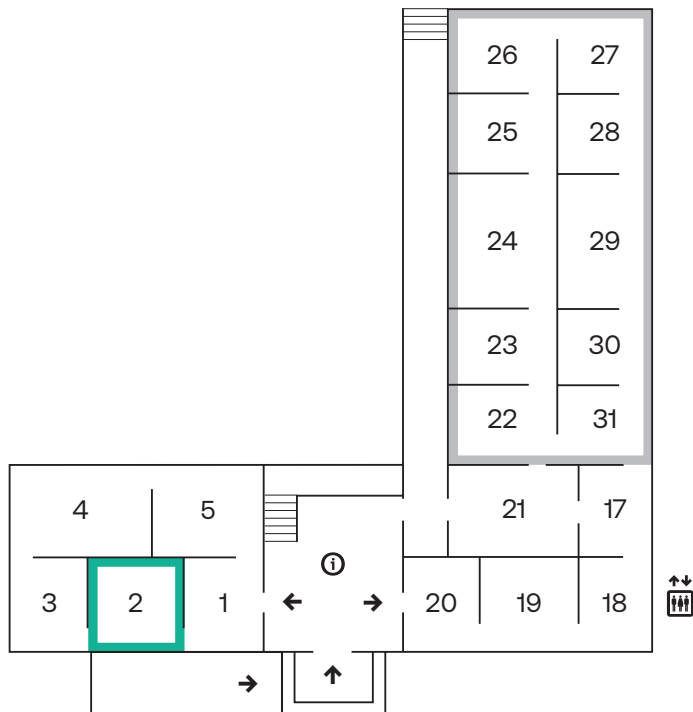
Ground floor

Tradition and risk

In the fifteenth century, the practice of using oil paint radiated out from Flanders and became common among European painters. It allowed the artists to paint slowly and apply light layers that let the preceding ones shine through. Sáez also used it, although in his works the oil shades the violent contrast between the form and background on this large painting. In the composition, using almost mirror-like parts, he superimposes the red lines, like blood circulating, that run around it onto the unusual black geometric pattern. Just as in Van Dyck, a human figure at the centre organises the drama, although here it is as intimate and mysterious as the response to a Rorschach test.

O Old building

Ground floor



Anthony van Dyck

1599-1641

Trained in Antwerp by Hendrick van Balen and Rubens, whom he worked for as a helper, he and Rubens are considered the premier painters in the Flemish Baroque. After a sojourn in London, he stayed in Italy for six months in 1621, where he became familiar with masters like Titian and Veronese, and he travelled around different cities, where he became a successful portraitist, especially in Genoa. Back in Antwerp, he painted his best religious scenes and cultivated the theme of mythology in spectacular compositions between 1627 and 1632. He reached his peak when Charles I of England commissioned him to paint several portraits. Van Dyck is one of the most inspiring artists and the most refined portraitist of his era.



Lamentation over the Dead Christ

c. 1627-1632. Oil on canvas

Painted in Antwerp, this is perhaps the most beautiful of the versions of this theme that Van Dyck painted, which also included other variations. Here, he based Christ's splendid anatomy on classical sculpture models such as *Allegory of Tiber* and *Dying Gaul* from the Capitoline Museums. The Virgin is holding her son in her lap, as she did when he was an infant, while she lifts her despairing eyes heavenward. The drawing is impeccable and rhythmic, and the dusky atmosphere proves no obstacle for the exquisite treatment of the masses of colour, achieving a theatrical feel that is profoundly dramatic.

Acquired in 1985

Ignacio Sáez

1971

At the tender age of seven, he attended the painting classes taught by Justo San Felices in Galdakao (Bizkaia), where he lived. There he met the teacher Iñaki Álvarez, who introduced him to contemporary art in 1987. Extraordinarily talented in painting and drawing, in 1989 he joined the Fine Arts Faculty of the UPV-EHU, and when he was still a first-year student he won the Bizkaiko Arteia award. After he finished his degree, he moved to Barcelona in 1994 and one year later earned an artistic creation grant from the BBK Foundation, which enabled him to travel to New York and Mexico. Since 2000, he has been part of the Espacio Abisal artistic project in Bilbao. His participation in the exhibition *Gaur, Hemen, Orain* (Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, 2001) marked him as a prominent referent among the artists of his generation.



Untitled

2000. Oil on fabric

Until 2013, Sáez worked on large surfaces. In this one, the centre is occupied by a human figure situated before a large tree superimposed on a plane of water where the crisscrossing lines of the sky are reflected. On the lower part, the shrubs and plant forms on the shore are intertwined with the man's body. The oil paint diluted in linseed oil creates rings of ochre colour which subdue the brightness of the dominant yellow. The contrast between these two tones and the black masses and the painstaking lines of the blood red drawing generates an intensely dramatic scene.

Acquired in 2021



Archive of projects 2013–2019

2013–2019. Mixed media

With his incredible painting skill and in-depth knowledge of art history, Sáez recreates a world where the relations between art and life, or between art and the body, are indivisible. His works make a break from the figurative, or may organise the figure from the abstract through the sacred or eschatological. They study the body, the female figure and the landscape elements like water, earth and sky, which are found here. Since 2013, he has been making series of photographs and drawings in which the notion of mistake is abolished: he projects his gaze onto imperfect and occasionally tormented forms and it is able to rescue them as motifs with high aesthetic value.

Acquired in 2021

BBKateak

BBKateak is an exhibition proposal which seeks to offer the collection new stories while construction on the enlargement is underway. Via a dynamic programme of presentations which are periodically updated, each of the galleries in the old building shows an unexpected face-to-face interaction between two artists and their works; their names may be distant in time and/or in their cultural and geographic provenance, but they suggest a look at art transformed and under construction. The museum's metamorphosis is thus reflected in a constantly changing collection.

This opens *Thirteen to Centaurus*, a sculptural project by the artist Sergio Prego inspired by the emptying of the galleries.