

bilbao **museoa**

# **BBK**ateak **Zurbarán – Baquedano**

Arte Ederren Bilboko Museoa  
Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao

**bbk** 

# Zurbarán – Baquedano

## Room 11

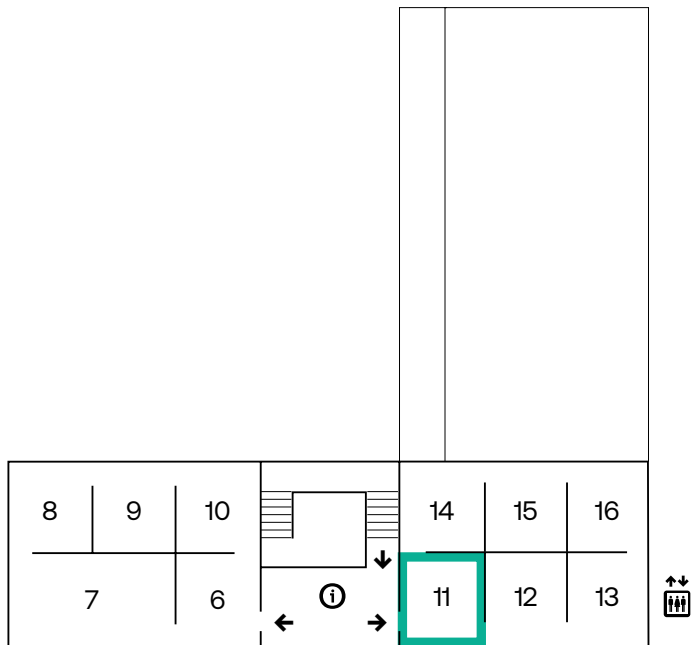
Old building

First floor

## Still Life

'Still life' is the term that art uses to define images of inert objects, plants or animals. Therefore, it is the prime genre for depicting the material qualities of things: the dining room table with the white canvas of its tablecloth solely punctuated by the tableware or the gleam of a fruit bowl. Here, perhaps, Baquedano and Zurbarán are religiously talking to us about the futile realism of existence.

# 1 Old building First floor



# Francisco de Zurbarán

1598-1664

Zurbarán spent most of his career in Seville, where he ran an atelier to meet the large demand for religious scenes which came from convents and private individuals, even from as far away as the Americas. He travelled to Madrid in 1634, probably invited by Velázquez, to work on the decorations of the palace of the Buen Retiro. Access to the royal collections and other contemporary artists in the capital city led him to forge his own style, in which devout passion and miraculous feats are distilled in a simple, everyday style. Upon his return, he made the major series for the Charterhouse of Jerez and the Monastery of Guadalupe. Eclipsed by Murillo's fame, he died on the verge of indigency in Madrid.



## **Saint Catherine of Alexandria**

c. 1650-1660. Oil on canvas

It was common in the seventeenth century for Sevillian ladies of a certain social standing to have their portraits painted dressed as the saint or martyr after whom they were named. Here, the sword with which Saint Catherine of Alexandria was decapitated and the palm frond of martyrdom are the attributes which enable us to identify the young woman's alter ego. She is luxuriously dressed with rich embellishments and fabrics whose depiction verges on hyperrealism, which match the fashion at the time it was painted. Zurbarán garnered extraordinary success with these 'portraits of the divine' with a profane appearance, in which the figures are placed before a neutral background.



## **The Virgin and Child with the Infant Saint John the Baptist**

1662. Oil on canvas

This painting, dated 1662 on a sign painted in the trompe l'oeil style on the lower part, is the last known work by Zurbarán. It was also painted wholly by the old master's hand. This physiognomy of the Virgin and Child were common during this stage in his oeuvre, where the modelling is softer. The wonderful still life on a pewter or silver dish is an example of astonishing lifelikeness. This is one of the most beautiful works from the artist's last and most fertile period.

Acquired in 1940

# Isabel Baquedano

1936-2018

Trained at the Arts and Crafts School of Zaragoza and the San Fernando Academy of Madrid, Baquedano taught at the Arts and Crafts School of Pamplona from 1957 to 1988. Her works include references to quattrocento painters like Piero della Francesca, as well as to contemporary painters like Edward Hopper. Post-cubism, informalism, the new figuration, expressionism, social reality and the Spanish version of Pop Art are all found in her works, though shaded by her personal style of material and conceptual sobriety. Everyday scenes, still lifes, biblical themes, themes from the classical tradition and circus images predominate in her paintings.



## **Table**

1979. Oil on canvas

Created at time of artistic maturity, this still life shows part a photograph of the dining room of the Hotel Internacional in Canfranc, Huesca, which the artist had taken years earlier. It shows the tables prepared for service with a folded napkin inside the glass. After making an initial painting, which transferred the entire photographed space into paint, Baquedano reached a final synthesis with this work, which boasts extraordinary symbolism imbued with an existential realism.

Acquired in 1983





## **Cea Bermúdez's Room**

2006. Acrylic and charcoal on canvas

In this interior with no human presence, the inanimate furniture, which is solely comprised of a group of three sofas, nonetheless suggests an inhabited space. In this ethereal setting, the artist expresses her interest in showing everyday solitude, a mission which connects her directly with the existentialist paintings of Edward Hopper. This work dates from a time in Baquedano's career when she had managed to streamline her stylistic and expressive resources to the utmost.

Donated by Mayte Baquedano Elvira in 2020



## **Virgin and Child**

2010. Acrylic and charcoal on canvas

This scene takes place in the same room in the house of Cea Bermúdez which is captured in another painting in this gallery. In a contemporary space decorated with armchairs is a Virgin with Child seated on a Louis XVI-style chair. This is an example of the artist's numerous depictions of this same theme coming from an extensive series featuring subjects from the Old and New Testament. This work is a synthesis between the artist's interest in quattrocento painting, her profound religiosity and the formal sobriety and technical precision she achieved in her works from this period.

Donated by Mayte Baquedano Elvira in 2020

# 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.