

bilbao **museoa**

BBKateak
Vieira da Silva –
Garaigorta

Arte Ederren Bilboko Museoa
Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao

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Vieira da Silva – Garaigorta

Room 12

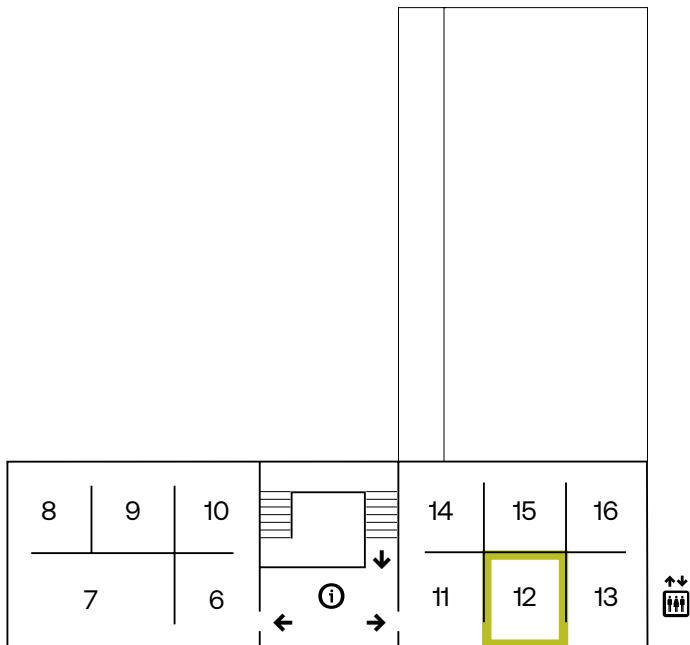
Old building

First floor

The belly of the architect

In 1784, the Frenchman Étienne-Louis Boullée signed the paradigm of visionary architecture, *Newton's Cenotaph*, a giant, limpid sphere that was never built. Unlikely architecture is also the nexus between these two artists, who are interested in constructing non-places. Vieira da Silva paints a vibrant hallway that may reveal an absence, while Garaigorta organises the fiction of her project in a bug-table where a pit, a snake or a hand upset the perfect time of the metropolis.

1 Old building First floor



Maria Helena Vieira da Silva

1908–1992

Originally from Portugal, this painter and engraver's career unfolded in France, where she was the first woman to win the National Grand Prix of the Arts in 1966. Her career started in the late 1920s and she achieved fame with extraordinarily lyrical abstract works that set out to explore visual perception. Her drawings of marked lines and geometric, labyrinthine grids, vibrating light and lack of spatial definition are the hallmarks of her work, which also includes designs for pottery, stained glass—like the ones she made for the cathedral of Reims—and book illustrations. In 1962 she received the International Grand Prize of Painting at the São Paulo Biennial, and in 1991 she was inducted in the Legion of Honour by the French government.

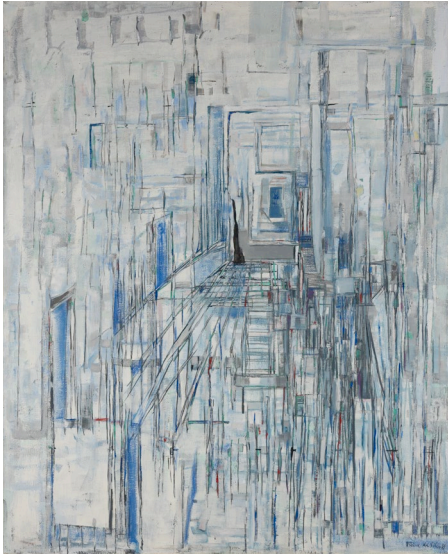


The Towers

1977. Colour lithograph on paper

Works on paper occupy a prominent place in Vieira da Silva's oeuvre. She worked with a range of engraving techniques, like etching, drypoint and lithography, which she used for the first time in 1948 and avidly returned to in her works from post-1961. Just like in her paintings, the fantastical and real mix in her graphic works, with labyrinthine, spatial plays created by sharp lines.

Acquired in 1983



Passage of Mirrors

1981. Oil on canvas

Poetic and semi-abstract, Vieira da Silva's paintings play with space and perspective and encourage the spectator to wander through multidirectional volumes. The lines and grids suggest the presence of hallways, labyrinths or rooms with a claustrophobic appearance. They are solitary, vaguely *real* places which, just like in this luminous—yet fragile and cramped—hall of mirrors, with its dense and almost monochromatic paint, are impossible to either travel through or inhabit.

Acquired in 1982

Charo Garaigorta

1961

She studied in the Fine Arts Faculty of the UPV/EHU between 1979 and 1984, and in 1989 she moved to New York to study art and education at Columbia University. Her artistic practice has developed based on different formats and *corpuses of work*, like drawing, writing, sculpture and video. The outcome is projects which mingle architecture, urban design, biology, literature and science, all of which tend to harbour an idea of fiction that alludes to dystopian societies. She has worked in the education departments at the MoMA, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, El Museo del Barrio and the Guggenheim Museum New York, and since 2001 she has directed the education department at the Artium Museum in Vitoria-Gasteiz.



10 drawings from the 'Airports' series

2001-2023. Watercolour, ink and pencil on Mylar

These drawings are part of a broader project lasting over time that also includes animated films and a book, all joined by the theme of the architecture of airports, places that recreate the old dream of the ideal city and the public square, yet where travel and the incessant movement of human beings do not always translate into interaction. Made on transparent polyester, they are based on the blueprints of real airports, which are then manipulated by the artist and at first glance suggest biomorphic animal or plant elements.

Artist's collection



El Instituto de los Pasillos Complejos (IdePC) (The Institute of Complex Aisles)

2021. Mixed media

Half-scale model, half-sculptural object, this piece seems like it is about to move or change. It is comprised of a board held up on four jointed legs bisected by a large tower that connects the upper and lower planes, creating a mirror-like effect. On either side, numerous architectural elements—hallways, houses, an aquarium—suggest the promise of habitability. Compared to the overall geometric nature of the piece, the artist also included her life-sized hand and a snake, the latter housed in a large cylindrical volume that is reminiscent of Los Angeles's Hollywood Bowl.

Acquired in 2022

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.