

What Humanity?

Figurations in the post-war period (1940-1966)

Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya. Barcelona

26 October 2023 – 11 January 2024

This ambitious exhibition will present nearly 100 works by first-rate international artists who between 1940 and the mid 1960s tackled the figure and the human condition when it was faced with the consequences of the Second World War and the Spanish Civil War, conflicts that turned contemporary history upside down.

Joan Miró, Roberta González, Juana Francés, Lasar Segall, Oswaldo Guayasamín, Leon Golub, Francis Gruber, Antonio Saura, Manolo Millares, Jorge de Oteiza, Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, Zoran Music, Andrzej Wróblewski, Albert Giacometti, Henry Moore, Francis Bacon, Inge Morath, Renato Guttuso, Germaine Richier and Bernard Buffet are among about 80 artists, creators whose works reflect a zeitgeist (spirit of the times) shared by different cultural imaginaries. The art expresses the emotional, moral and also philosophical concerns of humanity in crisis. The figurework – often on the edges of abstraction – accepts the challenge of representing the body and the face, creating the image of a wounded, anguished humanity, destroyed but also reinvented and germinal.

What Humanity? highlights major problems such as the disintegration of classical humanism or the construction of a new subjectivity through sorrow and hope. It also proposes a series of intriguing subjects such as the relationship between the body and the consciousness, the possibility of heroism, the function of the grotesque, the image of the monster, the nostalgia of beauty or the

communicative function of the face. We thus see that, beyond the vicissitudes of history, the questions and the moral and existential unease that these artists posed are once again valid today.