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Press Release
Exhibition

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ANTONI
TÀPIES
20.07.24—12.01.25
THE PRACTICE
OF ART



Curator: Manuel Borja-Villel

Museu Tàpies

Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art

20 July 2024 – 12 January 2025

Museu Tàpies, Barcelona

Curator: Manuel Borja-Villel

Co-produced with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid

Museu Tàpies presents the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art*.

Curated by Manuel Borja-Villel, this is one of the most comprehensive exhibitions devoted to the artist's career. With over a hundred works from public institutions and private collections in Spain and elsewhere—some of them on show for the first time in Barcelona—*Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art* allows Tàpies' work to be re-situated in the most recent history of art.

The exhibition presents a journey from 1943 to 2011, from his first self-portraits to his final works, marked by a preoccupation with death, and taking in his material, political and also most intimate works, such as the *Teresa Series*, devoted to his wife.

The project is complemented by an extensive public and educational programme, as well as a catalogue with texts by the curator, Cathleen Chaffee, Carles Guerra and Pedro de Llano Neira, fragments of the interview between the curator and Tàpies from 1995 and the interview by Barbara Catoir from 1988, as well as a review of Antoni Tàpies' career through key documents.

Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art opens at 7 pm on 19 July with an event curated by Imma Prieto and Judith Barnés, featuring Blanca Llum Vidal and Los Sara Fontán, Lolo & Sosaku and a homage to Mika Vainio, the author of a sound installation on the museum roof in 2001, beneath the sculpture *Núvol i cadira* [Cloud and Chair].

The central exhibition in the commemorative programme for the Tàpies Year, which celebrates the centenary of the artist's birth, comes to Barcelona after being presented at Bozar in Brussels (autumn 2023) and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid (spring 2024).

Barcelona, 18 July 2024.

The Tàpies Year, the programme of exhibitions and activities to commemorate the centenary of the birth in Barcelona of Antoni Tàpies (1923–2012), reaches its climax with the presentation of the retrospective exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art* at the museum founded by the artist himself in Barcelona, after visiting Brussels and Madrid. The exhibition, which reflects the museum's own history, celebrates the occasion to pay homage to Tàpies' artistic and intellectual legacy.

Manuel Borja-Villel (b. Borriana, Spain, 1957), curator of the exhibition, is one of the leading experts in the world on Tàpies' work, and ran the artist's museum in Barcelona between 1990 and 1998. Borja-Villel conceived and developed this project on the basis of the affections and connections between the artist's life and his work through settings with a marked political but at the same time poetic meaning in the works.

Tàpies took himself as his starting point—whether in self-portraits or else through his own language on walls, with the cross/T standing for both his own surname and his wife's name or with bubbles—in an effort to situate himself in the world and understand his relations with others and with his environment, with a touch of humour. The artist defied labels and explications for his work, highlighting the gesturality of attachments with calls to attention using external elements or colour or whatever is hidden in his works, which might exist or not: the canvas as the imprint of the absent body, of someone who was there.

The title of the exhibition refers to the first compilation of his writings, published in 1970, which brings together sixteen texts by the artist about freedom, both in artistic practice and in his interpretation, in the broadest sense of the word.

The exhibition offers visitors a non-linear journey through Tàpies' career, structured in different settings that make connections beyond chronology. The starting point is the self-portraits made over a long period recovering from an illness, influenced by the avant-gardes and by his links with the artistic group Dau al Set, and his experiments with raw materials in the 1950s, which earned international recognition of his work, with major exhibitions in New York and at the biennials in Venice and Sao Paulo. In the following decade, Tàpies deepened his anti-Francoist political commitment, producing work from everyday objects.

His early work on paper and cardboard, through drawing and grattage, allowed the artist to undertake a painting free from brush strokes, written and scratched on the support. Tàpies embarks on new material explorations, incorporating objects in his large-format creations, using varnish as an element of his work and experimenting with parts of the body, at the same time continuing to work in small formats on cardboard and paper with recurrent motifs and a structural persistence of attachments and intentions.

In his final stage, celebration of international accolades and the opening of the Museu Tàpies (1990) alternated with melancholy and a concern for illness and death present in his work. According to the curator in the exhibition catalogue, for the artist time "was a spiral. There are mutations and changes in his work and from the materials of the 1950s to the varnishes of the 1980s there is an evolution. But this is not founded on a progression, or on completing stages or a linear development, but in superimpositions and repetitions."

The catalogue of *Antoni Tàpies: the Practice of Art*, published together with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, is supported by Acción Cultural Española. Available in Catalan, Spanish and English, it includes texts by the curator, Manuel Borja-Villel; the curator of the Buffalo AKG Art Museum Cathleen Chaffee; curator and art critic Carles Guerra, art historian and curator of exhibitions Pedro de Llano Neira, as well as fragments of the interviews with the artist conducted by Manuel Borja-Villel and Barbara Catoir in 1995 and 1988, respectively.

Committed to his times and his city, Tàpies stood up for democratic freedoms and Catalan culture, giving his support to a range of international humanitarian causes. The big questions he poses in his work and in his intellectual legacy, about life, death, illness, people and human rights, remain valid, in his critical spirit and the social function the artist gave his work.

The exhibition project allows the creation of thought spaces around his legacy, by exploring his work and generating new interpretations. Among other things, the public programme includes an international symposium where eminent thinkers will reinterpret the works in the exhibition, as well as a conference which, for the first time, will explore the *Teresa Series* from a philosophical and poetic standpoint. A performance series commemorating Fluxus and a concert by Jordi Savall will round off a bill of activities to suit all audiences complementing the programme for the Tàpies Year.

The educational programme includes guided tours and joint visits together with other institutions, routes around the city, a Gaudir UB course organised with the University of Barcelona and a wide range of workshops for families, schools and people working in the social and educational fields. These activities will begin on 25 July with *Picnic at Museu Tàpies!*, an afternoon specially for families, in collaboration with El Culturista and involving a visit and a creative workshop between 6 and 8 pm.

Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art opens at 7 pm on 19 July with an event featuring Blanca Llum Vidal and Los Sara Fontán, Lolo & Sosaku and a homage to Mika Vainio. The event is to begin with the eighth performance of the series *The Chairs of Tàpies*, in which the poet Blanca Llum Vidal and the music band Los Sara Fontán will process voices and turn something that may not have been intended as music into sound. After this, Mika Vainio's work *Sondear* will give us the chance to listen to what we would hear in real

time if we were on the roof of the museum with Antoni Tàpies' sculpture *Núvol i cadira* (1990). This sound installation created by the Finish artist in 2001 as part of the exhibition *Architectures of Discourse* was reactivated as part of the *Engagement* project during Sónar 2022. The festival once again collaborates with the museum at this opening event. Lolo & Sosaku will be closing the event with a sound space—featuring a period piano and a set of machines—to represent Tàpies' relationship with music.

“I try to make my painting useful... Painting is my therapy. It's my way of learning to live with myself, to understand myself, to understand the world around me and also to help others. After all, I can't help feeling overwhelmed by the tragedies that take place in the world and seem to be getting worse and worse... And apart from wars, I can't ignore the fact that our so-called welfare society is above all a consumer society rooted in the destruction of nature, in countless injustices and in widespread suffering. It is vitally important that people realise this.”

Antoni Tàpies to Manuel J. Borja-Villel, “By Way of Introduction: A Conversation with Antoni Tàpies”, in *Antoni Tàpies: New Paintings* (New York, Pace Wildenstein, 1995).

Exhibition texts

The Practice of Art

Within the framework of the centenary of the birth of Antoni Tàpies (1923-2012), the exhibition *The Practice of Art* presents a synthesis of the research and development of the artist over eight decades of intense production. From his first works of the 1940s to those finished months before his death, Tàpies continually experimented with all types of supports, techniques and materials, freeing himself from the constraints of academic tradition. His drawings, collages, paintings, objects and sculptures, made of paper, cardboard, wood, marble dust, varnish or bronze among many other elements, propose new aesthetic ways of addressing the contemporary world, from a perspective based on matter and existence. Thanks to numerous loans from public institutions and private collections, both national and international, this retrospective constitutes one of the largest surveys of his work to date.

Following the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels and the Reina Sofía Museum, Madrid, the final presentation of *The Practice of Art* takes as its starting point the memory contained in the space of the Fundació Antoni Tàpies, now Museu Tàpies. Reflecting on some projects that have marked the institution's history, the exhibition presents a non-linear journey through the artist's career, articulated around different environments that establish relationships beyond chronology. When Tàpies states, for example, ‘I began painting eyes and I will end up painting eyes!’, he seems to be referring precisely to the cyclical or spiral time that imbues the whole of his work, in which motifs, materials and formats are repeated over the years, always with relevant differences. More than each individual work, it is the multiple links between the works—latent from the moment of their creation in the studio and recovered when exhibited together—that offer keys to understanding the complexity and relevance of Tàpies' artistic practice.

Antoni Tàpies created his first works during a long period of convalescence for a lung disease. A self-taught painter, he used the self-portrait as a means of initial exploration in getting to know himself and the world around him, while assimilating different artistic traditions in the process: his eyes looked to himself, but also at other artists and other cultures. Very soon he began to incorporate extra-pictorial materials such as newspapers, cord, thread and rice, while he painted using heavy impasto, mixing oil with whitewash, to show his contempt for academic art.

Thanks to certain contacts in Barcelona, he became familiar with Surrealism, the last avant-garde movement prior to the Spanish Civil War. Interested in primitivism and the power of artistic manifestations then considered marginal, in 1948 he founded, together with other artists, the group *Dau al Set*, created in protest against the imposed order. At this time, the influence of Max Ernst, Paul Klee and Joan Miró became evident in a series of landscapes populated by fantastic flora and fauna, cosmic fields whose model was no longer external reality but the inner world. Magic and mimicry, alchemy and mysticism, intermingle in the illusionistic spaces of a dreamlike scenography, as a result of the simultaneous conception of painting as both surface and depth. The exhibitions in which Tàpies showed these early works did not receive a particularly positive critical reception, but they gave him an entry into the national and international scene, becoming one of the artists represented by Martha Jackson's gallery in New York.

From 1953-54, Tàpies moved from Surrealist-influenced compositions to the development of his matter paintings, in line with the trends of European Informalism and American Abstract Expressionism. These works are characterised by dense and opaque surfaces, in which tactile values predominate over optical effects and in which the chromatic range is restricted to earthy tones. The appearance of cracked walls covered in graffiti contains an autobiographical element that is no longer narrative but existential, since they bear the name of the artist himself as a reference. Also, by connecting with the social dimension of the degraded urban centres following the Second World War, these walls specifically address the question of representation for a humanity in crisis after the explosion of the first atomic bomb. The exposure of these works in international exhibitions consolidated Tàpies as one of the most important artists of the twentieth century.

In contradistinction to the academicism of easel painting, since that time Tàpies' studio practice involved placing the painting horizontally—on a table or directly on the floor—and accumulating various materials on the flat surface, typically marble dust, cement or soil. Sometimes, he inscribed his materials with initials and symbols, the interpretation of which may be complex, configuring a communication on the wall that is articulated through non-verbal codes and that proposes a form of knowledge beyond logocentrism. As the works increased in size over the years, the focus shifted from the central part of the composition to the outer margins. One work begins where the previous one ends, and so on, until composing a relational whole in which all the component parts are interrelated.

Tàpies' early works, from the mid-1940s, were mostly on paper or cardboard; some were even made with paper and cardboard, exploring the expressive possibilities of materials that themselves transmit the values that obsessed the artist, such as physical deterioration or the humility of things considered ignoble. Those initial works already suggested an approach to painting that was not based on the brushstroke, but on writings and inscriptions that are inseparable from the support, in the same way that a tattoo is inseparable from the skin. This interest in textures, as well as a palette restricted to grey, brown and ochre, remained a constant over the years: the matter paintings of the fifties and sixties derive from the cardboard and paper works, and not the other way around; but, at the same time, these early experiments acquire a new relevance, thanks to the subsequent experience of matter paintings.

In comparison to the large-format matter paintings—monumental, public—the cardboard and paper works maintain an intimate scale, more experimental as a result. The small format and the elements used suggest a different relationship with the body: the hand that draws, paints, erases, marks, soils or tears does so from a sense of proximity, through a movement that is not gestural but calligraphic, and which links with the last decades of Tàpies' production. The works on wood, paper, cardboard, and the collages did not always receive the critical and historiographical attention they deserved, but they clearly reflect—probably better than other groups of work—not only the profusion of recurring images and motifs, but also the structural persistence of certain affects and intentions.

The notion of matter painting does not simply respond to a chronological category, but rather to a way of working that spans Tàpies' entire career. Faced with the heated debate between figuration and abstraction, Tàpies defined himself from his first theoretical texts as a realist painter, but one who investigates the profound reality of things and is not satisfied with superficial resemblance. The motifs that inhabit his paintings seem to undergo a process of formation and deformation: the matter is transformed into an object and the object is transformed into matter, temporarily adopting the form of an armpit or foot. By blurring the supposed boundaries between a formed figure and a formless ground, certain dualisms of Western thought—matter/form, materiality/spirituality—are also brought into question, although for Tàpies they are intertwined like the two axes of a cross.

During the final stages of the Franco dictatorship, from 1967 Tàpies accentuated the link with the material and concrete through the direct manipulation of everyday objects, whether incorporated into paintings or constituted as a work in themselves. Used clothing, old furniture and utensils of all kinds foreground reality, encrypting in their palpable connection with life a seal of authenticity. These artistic strategies also entailed taking an increasingly explicit political position, which led Tàpies to intervene in the public sphere through actions in defence of democratic freedoms, in favour of Catalan culture and later also in support of various international humanitarian causes.

During the 80s, Tàpies' work became more graphic, and the drawing more prominent. Varnish, one of the structural elements of the matter paintings, now began to assume expressive functions based on its fluid, fleeting and unpredictable nature, which resists formal control. With the introduction of this element as his main medium, working in the studio became filled with new technical challenges related to gesture, colour stains and transparency. The results, light and luminous, with their characteristic exposed white grounds, offer a sensation of dynamism especially suited to capturing a reality in permanent transformation, like a desire that escapes the moment it seems to be achieved. The apparent celebratory tone of many of these honey-like paintings coincides with his receipt of numerous lifetime achievement awards, as well as the establishment of the *Fundació Antoni Tàpies* (1984) and the opening of its museum (1990).

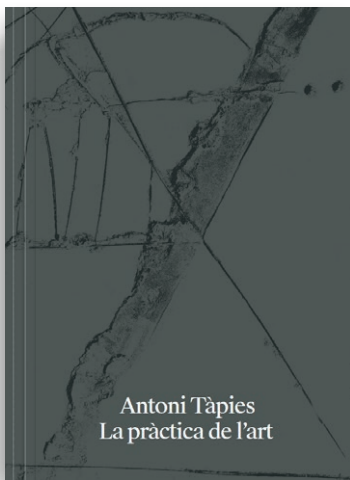
Despite being publicly honoured, from the 1990s onwards Tàpies' production seems tainted by melancholy. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the armed conflicts that arose in the midst of globalisation—the first Gulf War, the Balkan War, the genocide in Rwanda—were being presented as an announcement of the end of history and utopias, while bringing back some of the convictions the artist had already felt during the post-war era of his youth. Many works from this period isolate heads, arms, legs and other lacerated body parts on a black ground, acknowledging the incessant presence of pain, illness and death as an integral part of life. Until his last days, Tàpies continued to create from that productive tension between light and shadow, between the end of something and the beginning of something different, which is precisely the spirit that guides this centenary; with the memory of the past mapping out a new future.

Lenders

Galerie Lelong & Co, Paris, France
Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, Switzerland
Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, Geneva, Switzerland
Fundación Juan March, Palma, Spain
IVAM (Institut Valencià d'Art Modern), Valencia, Spain
Kolumba, Cologne, Germany
Kunstmuseum Appenzell, Heinrich Gebert Kulturstiftung Appenzell, Germany
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, Germany
Les Abattoirs, Musée - Frac Occitanie Toulouse, France
MACBA collection. Holdings of the government of Catalonia.
National Art Collection, Barcelona, Spain
Meadows Museum, SMU Dallas, USA
Musée d'art moderne, Toulouse. Holdings of les Abattoirs - Frac Midi-Pyrénées in 07/1995, France
Museo de Bellas Artes, Bilbao, Spain
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain
Museo Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani, Palma, Spain
Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, Germany
Nicola Erni Collection, Steinhausen, Switzerland
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, USA
The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles - The Panza Collection, USA
And private collections

Catalogue

The catalogue of *Antoni Tàpies: the Practice of Art*, published together with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, is supported by Acción Cultural Española. Available in Catalan, Spanish and English, it includes texts by the curator, Manuel Borja-Villel; the curator of the Buffalo AKG Art Museum Cathleen Chaffee; curator and art critic Carles Guerra, art historian and curator of exhibitions Pedro de Llano Neira, as well as fragments of the interviews with the artist conducted by Manuel Borja-Villel and Barbara Catoir in 1995 and 1988, respectively.



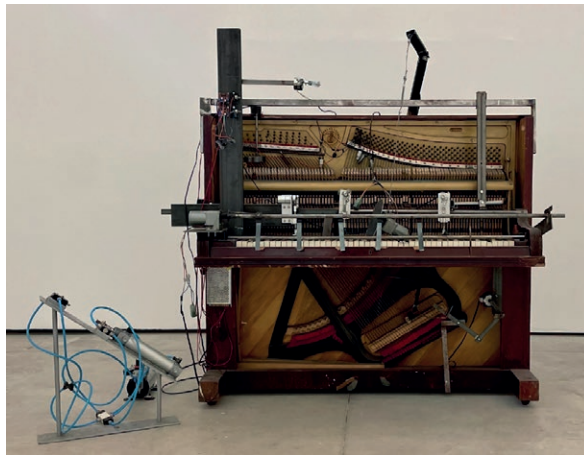
Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art / Authors: Ernest Urtasun, Pere Aragonès, Jaume Collboni, Imma Prieto, Manuel Segade, Manuel Borja-Villel, Núria Homs, Cathleen Chaffee, Carles Guerra, Pedro de Llano / 326 pages, 28 x 20.5 cm, colour, hardcover / ISBN: 978-84-122771-4-2 (English); 978-84-122771-2-8 (català); 978-84-122771-0-4 (castellano)

Public Programme

Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art is an exhibition project to allow the creation of thought spaces around his legacy, by exploring his work in order to review certain historiographical genealogies and, at the same time, encourage new interpretations.

This is why the public programme includes an international symposium where eminent thinkers will be invited to reinterpret the works in the retrospective exhibition, and a conference which, for the first time, will explore the *Teresa Series* from a philosophical and poetic standpoint. Apart from the regular series, which will go on throughout the Tàpies Year, highlights will include a day of performance commemorating Fluxus and the concert by Jordi Savall in the museum itself, in direct contact with Tàpies' art works.

Opening Event



The Museu Tàpies will welcome the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art* at 7 pm on Friday 19 July with an event curated by Imma Prieto and Judith Barnés, featuring the public presentation of the eighth performance of *The Chairs of Tàpies* series, by Blanca Llum Vidal and Los Sara Fontán. This is a piece that will modulate textures, process voices and turn something that was not intended as music into sound. Calling on lots of authors, the poet and the musicians will attempt to turn words into rhythmic material and draw sounds out of things to construct a narrative from them. The chair, like Tàpies, will be more than just an idea. Above all, it will be object and reality to think, to move around, to meditate.

By way of an interlude, Mika Vainio's work *Sondear* will give us the chance to listen to what we would hear in real time if we were on the roof of the museum with Antoni Tàpies' sculpture *Núvol i cadira* (1990). This sound installation created by the Finish artist in 2001 as part of the exhibition *Architectures of Discourse* was reactivated as part of the *Engagement* project during Sónar festival in 2022.

The opening event will be closed by the artistic duo Lolo & Sosaku, who, using a set of machines and a period piano belonging to the composer and music theorist Josep Barberà i Humbert, will construct a sound space to represent Tàpies' relationship with music, Luigi Nonno and Giacinto Scelsi, among others. In order to do this, the piano will be manipulated using machines, the human voice and texts written by Tàpies in his paintings. The performance will feature soprano Ximena Agurto and multidisciplinary artist Renata Gelosi.

Date: 19 July 2024 / Time: 7 pm / Length: 1 h / Price: free

Rereflux



Performance by the Reflux Orchestra in the auditorium of the Museu Tàpies on 29 January 1995. From left to right: Borja Zabala, Joan Casellas, Júlia Montilla, Alexis Tauler, Noel Tatú, Quim Tarrida, Miquel Baixas, Lluís Alabern and Oscar Abril Ascaso. Photo: Teresa Ramírez - Arxiu Aire

Thirty years ago now, the Museu Tàpies, then headed by Manuel Borja-Villel, opened *In the Spirit of Fluxus*, a comprehensive retrospective, curated by Elizabeth Armstrong and Joan Rothfuss, of the movement that revolutionised the foundations of art in the 1960s. The exhibition featured the work of artists including Joseph Beuys, George Brecht, Robert Filliou, Dick Higgins, Shigeo Kubota, George Maciunas, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik, Benjamin Patterson, Carolee Schneemann, Mieko (Chieko) Shiomi, Ben Vautier, Wolf Vostell, Emmett Williams and La Monte Young, among many others, and of Zaj artists like Juan Hidalgo and Esther Ferrer.

The exhibition was also accompanied by a series of activities which included the Reflux project, a programme of re-enactments of Fluxus events curated by Oscar Abril Ascaso and executed by a group of young local performance artists: Borja Zabala, Jaume Alcalde, Denys Blacker, Lluís Alabern, Júlia Montilla, Joan Casellas, Quim Tarrida, Miquel Baixas, Alexis Tauler and Noel Tatú.

In the Spirit of Fluxus played a central role in catalysing a moment of effervescence in performance techniques in Catalonia in general, and in action art in particular in Barcelona. Intense and collaborative, but not free from criticism and disagreement, it set the pace for a generation of young artists and, among other ramifications, led to the creation of the first platform for performing artists in Spain, Club7, right here in the museum.

Rereflux is a programme of debate and action that sets out to commemorate that crucial moment in the history of action art in Barcelona and in the artistic practices of the 1990s in this country. With this aim, *Rereflux* is organising a round table with some of the protagonists of the Reflux project of 1994 and a programme of Fluxus actions executed by contemporary performance artists, in what would now be a new Re-Reflux Orchestra for the 21st century.

The initiative forms part of the ARTefACTe4 days, an event to foster contemporary performance practices that works as a laboratory for new cultural institutionalities. A project by CLUB9, the platform that is the heir to Club7 and that was publicly launched in the auditorium of the Museu Tàpies on 29 May 2021.

Programme

6 pm. Talk by Oscar Abril Ascaso, curator of the project Reflux 1994.

7 pm. Round table with Manuel Borja-Villel, former director of the Museu Tàpies, and Lluís Alabern and Joan Casellas, artists on the project Reflux 1994.

8 pm. Fluxus performances by Estel Boada, Paloma Orts, Pia Sommer and Llapispanc.

A one-day event organised by ARTefACTe 9

Date: 23 October 2024 / Time: 6 pm / length: 3 h / Price: €5

Representation and Enigma: From the threshold of images

The Museu Tàpies wants the celebration of the Tàpies Year to culminate in an international symposium to encourage new interpretations and new ways of approaching the artist's legacy today, given that we are currently rewriting certain historiographical genealogies. As has been pointed out repeatedly, the centenary of Antoni Tàpies' birth involves not only a homage to the past but also a celebration of all that is to come. In this respect, it is absolutely necessary for us to be able to rethink a legacy that still speaks to us and in which there still remain many layers of interpretation to reveal and discover.

The international symposium *Representation and Enigma: From the Threshold of Images*, coordinated by Manuel Borja-Villel and Imma Prieto, will revolve around three broad conceptual areas:

Representation and non-representation, focusing on the representation or not or reality and on the pair of figuration and abstraction, generating new, more permeable nominal situations.

Time and non-time, concentrating on the continuity and otherwise of techniques, of symbolic languages, breaking with linearity and with the chronological sense of the creative process.

Enigma and specificity, relating creation to magic, incorporating the concept of the demiurge and highlighting the multiple layers of interpretation of a work of art and the active role of the viewer in activating narratives.

Through these three areas, and with the works by Antoni Tàpies that make up the retrospective as a backdrop, participants in the symposium will be encouraged adopting a free, personal approach, to allow them to look again at a visual and thought code in order to rethink it and rethink ourselves today. As indicated in the symposium programme, the invitation goes out to researchers, academics and curators from Spain and abroad without any apparent connection with the artist, precisely to encourage this disruption.

The three sessions of the international symposium will begin with an initial talk, followed by two replies to encourage criticism and dialogue between the guests. The programme features Hans D. Christ, Isabel de Naverán, Leda Martins, Marie José Mondzain, Carmen Pardo, José A. Sánchez, Rita Segato, María Sierra and Amador Vega.

The full programme will be announced soon

Dates 13 November 2024, 14 November 2024 and 15 November 2024 /

Time: 5 pm / Length: 3 h / Price: €3 one session and €6 the full programme

Conference

I, You, World: Symbol and Universe

This retrospective exhibition spotlights the work of Antoni Tàpies, but also his life, as well as the people around him. Teresa Barba Fàbregas, who he married in 1954, was his travelling companion and the person who experienced at first hand the construction of a language of his own and the forging of one of the most important figures of the second artistic avant-garde, both nationally and internationally.

In this respect, for the first time the Museu Tàpies is organising conference on the series of 56 drawings entitled *Sèrie Teresa* (1966) and the portfolio of 66 lithographs, lithocollages and collages entitled *Cartes per a la Teresa* [Letters for Teresa] (1974). The first is a long love letter with explicit allusions to domesticity and shared sexuality, and a compendium of the signs Tàpies generally used. The second refers to the love letters he exchanged with Teresa Barba during his stay in Paris in from 1950 to 1951. It is therefore a set of material that discusses poetry, art and writing from a holistic point of view that transcends language itself. The series reveals a world that is only decipherable by the couple,

but at the same time allows free interpretation by the spectator, ranging from everyday experience to the universal. In this respect, the conference meet a need to give a new dimension to the series, establishing new connections and meanings from the metaphor of words and fleshing out the cosmic dimension of gesture.

The conference *I, You, World: Symbol and Universe* will feature theorists from the fields of art and poetry and poets such as Maria Josep Balsach, José Manuel Cuesta Abad, Ana Gorriá, Anna Gual and Rasha Omran.

The full programme will be announced soon

Dates: 27 November 2024 and 28 November 2024 / Time: 6 pm /

Length: 2 h 15 min / Price: €3 one session and €4 the full programme

Educational programme

Family activity

Picnic at Museu Tàpies!

Special afternoon for families at the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art*.

Want to spend a summer afternoon at the museum to discover the exhibition with your family and have a picnic on the terrace? Come along with your snack or dinner and we'll supply the drink to celebrate the Tàpies Year! We've got things ready for you to get together and enjoy the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art* and a creative workshop we'll be running in three different sessions: at 6, 6.30 and 7 pm.

Date: 25 July 2024 / Time: 6 pm / Length: 2 h / Price: €4 per person.

Free activity for Friends of the Museu Tàpies

Training /

Gaudir UB course.

Antoni Tàpies and the Practice of Art

Antoni Tàpies was born in Barcelona on 13 December 1923. Today he is recognised as one of the most important artists of the 20th century. However, his work remains relatively little-known and is often considered cryptic and inaccessible. On this course we'll give you some keys to get into Tàpies' work. Through theoretical and practical sessions held in different parts of the museum, we will look at a range of aspects: the artistic conception that lies behind his work, his creative techniques and processes, the links with the art of his time and his contributions to the history of art.

Dates: 16 and 30 Sep., 7, 14, 21 and 28 Oct., 4, 11, 18 and 25 Nov. / Time: 10.30 am /

Length: 2 h / Organised by the Museu Tàpies and University of Barcelona /

UB bookings <https://www.il3.ub.edu/ca/gaudir/antoni-tapies-i-practica-art>

Combined visit

Tàpies, political commitment

Combined visit to the Museu Tàpies and the Museu d'Història de Catalunya.

On the occasion of the Tàpies Year, the Museu Tàpies and the Museu d'Història de Catalunya are organising a joint guided tour of the exhibitions *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art* (Museu Tàpies) and *Tàpies: Art and Activism* (Museu d'Història de Catalunya) to explain the artist's most social and committed side.

Dates: 28 Sep. 2024 and 23 Nov. 2024 / Time: 11 am / Length: 2 h 30 min /

Price: €11 per person. Free activity for Friends of the Museu Tàpies

Family activity

Tàpies landscape

Tour/workshop for families at the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies: The Practice of Art*.

Antoni Tàpies and his family spent their summers in the Montseny area, where they enjoyed the nature park. We often find landscapes or elements that make reference to nature in his work. During the tour we'll speculate about the different stories some of his pictures have to tell, by asking each other questions. What is Somac the lion doing in the middle of a landscape by Tàpies? Can bulls fly? Can a man be bigger than a landscape? During the workshop we'll make our own Tàpies landscape-collage. We'll create a landscape with techniques used by the artist, adding elements taken from his works.

Date: 29 September 2024 / Time: 11 am / Length: 1 h / Price: €4

Workshop

Anigetals

Anigetals are beings that are turning from animals into plants, invented at Espai C at the Dolors Monserdà School by Anita García, Gonzalo Elvira and the students taking part. Could the anigetals live in a work by Antoni Tàpies? We invite you to take part in a drawing and collage workshop designed for people of all ages to take us into the forest of Misiones (in northern Argentina), as described by Horacio Quiroga in *Cuentos de la selva*, at the same time allowing us to discover Tàpies' work and local flora.

By Anita García and Gonzalo Elvira

Date: 20 October 2024 / Time: 10 am / Length: 5 h / Price: Free /

Activity within the Espais C project and the Barcelona Dibuixa festival

Workshop

A fold, a wrinkle, a line, a body

A workshop so draw with the body, by making folds, wrinkling, tearing or walking, and explore matter for building and the infinite notebook. Training course aimed at social work and education professionals registered in the Apropa Cultura programme.

By Teresa Rubio

Date: 23 November 2024 / Time: 10 am / Length: 4 h / Price: Free / Organised by

Fundació Antoni Tàpies and Apropa Cultura / Bookings Apropa Cultura

Family activity

Walls, Surfaces or Tàpies

During his career, Antoni Tàpies explored the new possibilities offered by painting and experimented with extra-pictorial materials such as powdered marble to achieve different textures in his work. As he was doing this, as he himself said, the painting surprised him by turning into a wall surface. Have you ever noticed the walls around you at home? What do they tell us? How do they do it? During the activity we want to listen to the surfaces of the walls [the Catalan name of the activity, *Parets, murs i tàpies* is a play on words in Catalan: all of them mean different types of wall, and of course one is also the artist's name]. All together, we'll find out about the creative process behind Antoni Tàpies' wall creations, about his communicative ability and his fascination for walls. At the same time, while walking around, we will look at the marks on the walls around the museum to see what stories they have to tell.

Date: 1 December 2024 / Time: 11 am / Length: 1 h 30 min / Price: €4

Exhibition

Antoni Tàpies. The Practice of Art

Any Tàpies: 13.12.2023–13.12.2024

On the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of the artist's birth, the museum is organising a programme of exhibitions, publications, educational activities and creative and research projects to be run over the whole year. The purposes of the Tàpies Year are to cement the museum's commitment to an in-depth approach to the artist's work and thought, to publicise this both nationally and internationally and to contribute to and update interpretations of them from new viewpoints.

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Find out more:

Museu Tàpies Barcelona / Press / +34 934 870 315
press@museutapies.org / comunicacio@museutapies.org

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