

# ABANCA presents ‘Dalí and Surrealism in the ABANCA Art Collection’ at the Museo Nacional Thyssen

- Thirteen works from the bank’s holdings linked to this trend underline its key role in art history
- Notable among the chosen artists are leading names such as Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, Giorgio de Chirico, Joan Miró, Óscar Domínguez and Maruja Mallo

06.11.2018. ABANCA has presented *Dalí and Surrealism in the ABANCA Art Collection* at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza. The exhibition brings together 13 works selected from the bank’s art holdings linked to this key movement in twentieth-century art history.

ABANCA’s president Juan Carlos Escotet Rodríguez, the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza’s artistic director Guillermo Solana, and museum curator Juan Ángel López Manzanares, who is in charge of curating the show, gave an introduction to the exhibition, which can be visited free of charge until 27 January.

The president of ABANCA expressed his satisfaction at having the chance to further one of the priority aims the bank has set itself in managing its important art holdings, namely ‘to guarantee the preservation and dissemination of all the works that make it up, fulfilling the duty and responsibility this task entails when we are talking about a group of 1,350 works designated Heritage of Cultural Interest’.

This is the second time the two institutions have teamed up to bring visitors a small sample of the bank’s art holdings. The first was the exhibition entitled ‘Picasso and Cubism in the ABANCA Art Collection’, which was held at the same venue in the autumn of 2015 and attracted more than 41,000 visitors.

As Guillermo Solana writes in the catalogue, ‘when *Picasso and Cubism in the ABANCA Art Collection* opened at the Thyssen three years ago we were already thinking of organising a second exhibition centred on Dalí. [...] the ABANCA collection owns two very important pieces by the Figueras-born artist: *The Bloody Roses* (shown earlier at the Thyssen in the exhibition *Tears of Eros*) and *West Court of the Isle of the Dead (Reconstructive Obsession after Böcklin)* which is linked to one of the Dalí paintings in our own collection, *Gradiva rediscovers the Anthropomorphic Ruins*’.

This time the show revolves around Salvador Dalí, one of the most important contemporary artists represented in the ABANCA Collection. He exerted essential influence within the avant-garde trends – so much so that he became an unquestionable point of reference in the Surrealist movement worldwide. These two canvases are the starting point for the argument of the exhibition, which features a further 11 prominent works from the corporation’s art collection linked to Surrealism.

As the curator Juan Ángel López Manzanares points out, they all illustrate the doubly creative side of Surrealism centred on ‘automatic writing’ and ‘dream narration’, which concerned ‘not only the primacy of writing over painting and whether or not Surrealist painting existed’, but also ‘the choice between instinctive, random creation and a type that is more premeditated and reasoned, stemming from memory’.

Visitors can view a total of 13 paintings by ten different artists, including prestigious international names such as Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, Roberto Matta and Wilfredo Lam. The list continues with Spanish painters such as Joan Miró and Óscar Domínguez, as well as featuring representatives of this trend in Galicia: Maruja Mallo, Eugenio Fernández Granell and Urbano Lugrís.

As with the previous show, visitors wishing for further information about the artists and the works on display can use the ‘Colección de Arte’ app designed for mobile devices with Android and iOS operating systems.

## ABANCA Art Collection

Modern and contemporary art of the second half of the twentieth century is one of the core categories of the ABANCA Art Collection, which is comprised of 1,350 works by 250 Spanish and international artists and was designated Heritage of Cultural Interest in 2015. Artists who exerted essential influence on this period in art history, such as Dalí, Picasso, Leger, Miró, Braque, Millares, Chillida, Tàpies, Juan Muñoz and Barceló, among many others, are represented in these holdings.

Galician art is the other cornerstone – and origin – of the collection, which dates back to the 1970s. The acquisitions made over the years have led to the assembly of a group of works and names that symbolise developments and periods in Galician art history from the nineteenth century to practically the present day. Notable among them are Pérez Villaamil, Sotomayor, Castelao and Carlos Sobrino, along with others such as Manuel Colmeiro, Arturo Souto, Carlos Maside, Laxeiro and Luis Seoane, who, influenced by the international avant-garde movements, breathed new life into Galician painting. The holdings also include pieces by artists who currently enjoy great international acclaim, such as Francisco Leiro and Antonio Murado.