

## REINVENTING THE ISLAND I

Canarian artists in the CAAM collection (... two generations)

The CAAM Collection is the result of the decades-old acquisition policies followed by the Cabildo de Gran Canaria. These policies formed the basis of the Collection which over half a century later, along with the works included in the Martín Vera Collection, is among the most solid in southern Spain. Since the creation of the Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno in 1989 these works of art have been fully integrated into the museum's structure. The collection fundamentally compiles works produced by Canarian artists, the starting point of our idea of modernity and the foundations of the ideology behind the creation of the Centre. This ideology continues, acknowledging the peripheral nature of the Canaries in both a geographical and cultural sense – with the mixture of autochthonous and imported identities – and its role as a trans-Atlantic location and diverse corner of Europe. In a second stage, the collection grew with the contributions made by the vanguard generation of Spanish artists gathered around the Grupo El Paso and with the addition of other works by Canarian artists. Over two decades, these trends have facilitated the incorporation of works produced by European, African and Latin American artists, all under the same idea of 'tri-continentality', which has contributed so much to the crafting of the final focus of the CAAM collection. Following these initial stages, in 2002 the CAAM purchased a large part of the 'APM Collection', which increased the museum's collection with the addition of a large number of artists from the 1970s, including some first rate national and international works. In the same year the CAAM also purchased the equally important *Memoria del Papel*.

Therefore, the collection has paid special attention to the work of Canarian artists – an ideological-aesthetic guideline that the museum has cultivated from the beginning – along with their ramification into the tri-continental principles and the key targets of restoring, cataloguing, exhibiting, disseminating and contextualising Canarian contemporary art. The current exhibit, REINVENTING THE ISLAND Canarian Artists in the CAAM Collection (... two generations), aims at portraying this philosophy by outlining the geography and artistic coordinates of the Canary Islands from our perspective on modernity – in which surrealism and indigenism played such an important role – to the beginning of postmodernity. This will involve exhibiting rare pieces and less-well known works, many of which have been restored and will be displayed for the first time at gallery level, alongside better known – even obvious – pieces which will be approached from a fresh perspective, reinventing our insular identity. The diversity of the Canaries is fully represented in the CAAM Collection, which to date comprises over 2,500 pieces including works on paper, graphic works, paintings, sculptures, objects, photographs, videos and installations.

With this exhibit, the museological approach followed by the Art Department of our museum offers a detailed perspective of our artistic past, as a prologue of our present and as the best way to understand our future.