

PRESS RELEASE

INAUGURAL EXHIBITION "ATLÁNTICA, 1980-1986"

DATES

From the 15th of November 2002 – to the 30th of March 2003

VENUE

Exhibition rooms on the first floor of *MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo* and "Project Room".

OPENING TIMES

From Tuesday to Sunday (holidays included): from 11:00 to 20:00. Fridays from 11:00 to 23:00.

ORGANISED BY

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

CURATOR

Xosé Antón Castro

TECHNICAL ADVISORS ON DOCUMENTATION

Antón Patiño

Manuel M. Romón Alonso

COORDINATOR

Pilar Souto

GUEST ARTISTS: 25

Rafael Baixeras
Ignacio Basallo
Luis Borrajo
Xaime Cabanas
Correa Corredoira
Alberto Datas
Manuel Facal
José Freixanes
Antón Goyanes

Armando Guerra
Ánxel Huete
Menchu Lamas
Antón Lamazares
Francisco Leiro
José Lodeiro
Francisco Mantecón
Quintana Martelo
Manuel Moldes

Guillermo Monroy
Antón Patiño
Reimundo Patiño
Silverio Rivas
Manuel Ruibal
Mon Vasco
Xesús Vázquez

NUMBER OF WORKS EXHIBITED: 94 + 150

Paintings: 75

Sculptures: 15

Installations: 4

Documentary works in the "Project room": 150

CATALOGUE

The *Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo* will publish a trilingual catalogue of 520 pages divided in 9 chapters: introductory texts written by different personalities, a text by the Curator and critiques, documentary annexes, chronology, the works exhibited, texts by the protagonists and texts by critics from outside Galicia, the biographies of the guest artists and translations.

THE CURATOR

Xosé Antón Castro: Professor at the Facultad de Bellas Artes de Pontevedra (Pontevedra College of Beaux Arts), he has published multiple books and articles and has been the curator of several exhibitions both in Spain and abroad.

SUMMARY OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT

In Spain, the transition to democracy and the sociopolitical changes it brought about gave rise to unique creative dynamism in all realms of culture: plastic arts, theatre, music, architecture, audiovisual arts, literature, poetry, cartoons, design, fashion, etc. Those were times of frantic political and cultural activity which deeply changed the social habits of Spaniards; the demand for cultural goods and services reached a level unknown until then.

The city of Vigo was not oblivious to this process, on the contrary it was one of the most bustling, creative cities in Spain. In 1980, an event took place within this general context: the appearance of ATLÁNTICA, a group of artists and intellectuals united by their common will to renovate art, who worked with a radically innovative approach aimed at integrating with the rest of the world, whose works had repercussions at Spanish and international levels.

The five exhibitions of the ATLÁNTICA group were not an isolated fact in the atmosphere of transformation that could be felt in Vigo during those years. That is why this exhibition was conceived from the start as a multidisciplinary field of research spanning from 1978 to 1986, also including samples from Vigo of creativeness in other fields such as music, poetry, graphic arts, video filming, performance, theatre, etc.

The exhibition has been structured in three different areas: a plastic arts exhibition on the first floor of the museum, a display of documentation, exhibited in the Project rooms, and a thorough catalogue of more than 600 pages. This threefold approach was a sine qua non prerequisite of the original project, although the idea of displaying documentation gained momentum as research into private files in homes in Galicia and Madrid advanced. So much so that all those documents which cannot be displayed in the exhibition for lack of room will be available to researches in the museum library.

The layout of the exhibition has been organised around certain creative styles, often personal or emotional ones, but above all focused on the specificity of languages and of space itself, without neglecting a symbolic sense which we have wanted to give to the route to follow across the rooms. This explains the fact that we have devoted the first room, the initial one, to the founding group of four –Guillermo Monroy, Antón Patiño, Menchu Lamas and Ánxel Huete–, starting point of an aesthetic discourse based on the complexity and co-existence of situations. This is followed by a space of homage to the deceased members of ATLÁNTICA: Reimundo Patiño, José Lodeiro, Mon Vasco, Rafael Baixeras and Francisco Mantecón. A space-passage that leads into another room linked, in terms of age and aesthetics, to the group of founding artists: Antón Lamazares, Manuel Moldes, Francisco Leiro, José Freixanes y Xesús Vázquez. Taking advantage of its fragmentary character we have strengthened the individuality of the space available so that the works of the different artists coexist with the least possible interference, without neglecting either the necessary dialogues, as is the case with Manuel Facal or Xaime Cabanas, and in the longitudinal sections of some of the rooms: Manuel Ruibal, Antón Goyanes, Ignacio Basallo, Luís Borrajo y Silverio Rivas, by opposing divergent situations. The last room, the one occupying the perimeter at the end of the route, displays, individually, the works by Xavier Correa, Alberto Datas, Armando Guerra and Manuel Quintana.

Although it is true that other artists took part in ATLÁNTICA's five exhibitions, the selection has been made considering those who have currently consolidated an idea of project that consecrates the old pursuits of the early eighties. Some of them –very few– have been lost along the way, and, although their belonging to the group cannot be ignored, their mention has been limited to the extensive catalogue which documents the history of ATLÁNTICA.

This extensive publication plays two roles at the same time: it compiles the works exhibited and serves as a medium to show the public the varied and valuable documents (personal photographs, postcards, press articles, invitations to concerts or exhibitions, posters, magazines...) rescued from private files.

As it could not have been otherwise, research was extended to a field of creation as genuine and transcendent as is the music of Vigo, since many of the songs by Siniestro Total, Golpes Bajos, Os Resentidos or Aerolíneas Federales (or the poetry group Rompente, led by multitalented Antón Reixa) are part of the collective memory of all those Spaniards who lived the "bustling 80's". That is why, besides everything above, *MARCO* has published a record so that the public (in the Adjoining Rooms) will be able to listen in sequence to the most significant songs of those years selected by Julián Hernández (Siniestro Total), Gonzalo López (Officer of BMG) and Antón Reixa (Os Resentidos).

TEXT BY THE CURATOR

"Twenty-two years have already passed since 1980, a turning point which brought about fundamental changes in the field of the visual arts. After all this time, we consider that the evolution of aesthetics and the occurrence of successive cultural, political, social and economic events (in other words the changing background which shapes the global community we live in) allow us to have a mature, well-adjusted view of the reality that gave rise to post-modern consciousness. This consciousness, alongside with the international context, enables us to analyse the "Atlantistic" philosophy and the philosophy of ATLÁNTICA, the core which consolidated the modernisation of art in Galicia within what is now called post-modernity, in parallel with the most interesting aesthetic movements in other parts of Europe – such as the Neuen Wilden in Germany or the trans-avantgarde artists in Italy, so nationalistic at the time- in response to a crisis caused by lack of references, after the abandonment of the linearity of the former avant-garde movements which came to an end at the turn of the seventies. However, we know now that ATLÁNTICA was much more than a group: it became an artistic climate from the very beginning, a convergence of circumstances in the cultural and vital environment of Galicia, at a time when our land was getting rid of its rural burden, moving ahead beyond the post-Francoist era and casting aside the "tradition-laden" reductionism which had so far characterised its isolation from the mainstream. In some way, the spirit of ATLÁNTICA evolved into a philosophy and a way of creating art, fashion, design, music and literature, that is, into an aesthetic concept involving all aspects of life which went beyond the limits and original intentions of the group which came to light one summer's day in 1980 in the port of Baiona, symbol par excellence of Columbus's return voyage after having just "discovered" America. In this existential atmosphere, which imbued Galicia in the early eighties, the spirit of ATLÁNTICA constituted the hallmark of the new art movement of this north-westerly corner of Iberia which was trying to strengthen its aesthetic signs of identity in keeping with the concern for a return to Europe.

This concern involved a review - through local traditions, according to the different countries- of the languages originated in certain historical avant-garde movements –especially those with an expressionistic character - as well as the express will to integrate with the rest of the world. Antón Patiño, Menchu Lamas, Guillermo Monroy and Ánxel Huete were to form the initial core of that group which, from the beginning, was able to count on the support and complicity of Román Pereiro, a noted art collector and patron. These five artists decided to bring ATLÁNTICA to life in Vigo in 1980, a representative year, as it entailed attending punctually the symbolic appointment where new great European events were starting to take shape as Thesis macro-exhibitions.

The ATLÁNTICA project, although heterogeneous –due to the difficulty of blending together such divergent languages and concepts as were those used by the numerous artists, painters, sculptors and architects who took part in the exhibitions- aimed likewise at affirming or vindicating the distinctive hallmarks of an art which, as is the case of Galician art, had a

complex historical background of links with a steadfast nationalistic awareness. Nevertheless, contrarily to continuity, which is lacking of self-criticism, prone to easy local praise and to reiterative themes that evoke an idyllic land and its folklore, the essential philosophy of the spirit of ATLÁNTICA was a blunt response to this, in manifestation of the ineluctible intention of becoming a part of Europe, which was imposing its aesthetic models on the rest of the world, as well as of the urge to recover its own mythological system.

As a collective and strategic set of ideas, theoretical and pragmatic corpus and of a Galicia that was rising from the ashes of barren prior decades, ATLÁNTICA either foreshadowed or occurred at the same time as other exhibitions in Spain (Otras figuraciones, in 1981, Salones de los 16 or of Tardor, besides the ones taking place in other autonomous regions) which were starting to lay the foundations of an internationalism that had never existed credibly in Galician art so far. It is no wonder either that its most significant protagonists took part habitually in the collective Spanish exhibitions of that period. Five exhibitions, between 1980 and 1983 bear out the consideration of a core, some of whose protagonists, even nowadays, constitute the main references when it comes to doing a serious assessment of Galician art. Nobody questions the fact that the group, or at least its most interesting members, managed to recover the project lost with the Civil War of 1936, when there was an attempt to consolidate the first avantgarde ideal by means of the works of art of those regarded as renovators. the most significant protagonists of the spirit of ATLÁNTICA search into the aesthetic and anthropologic expression of traditional Galicia, into its peculiar past, hence the references to the prehistoric world of stone carved as relief, petroglyph, memorial slab or little idol, to Romanesque and Baroque architecture, to popular art and the expressionism of stone masons or to historical avantgarde, to literature imagined in a jocular tone as a seductive, individualistic scenery. And there are artists who consciously allow themselves to be permeated with the maritime-rural atmosphere which reveals forms, contents and concepts free from clichés and who feel attracted by the idea of specificity that was taking over Europe and promoting a return to national artistic identity.

The change of aesthetic spirit in the middle eighties, which became obvious since 1986 and is officially manifested by Kassel-8 Documenta in 1987, would entail the exhaustion and the wearing out of expressionist images and the leadership of painting, of national anthropological references and the abandonment by international galleries and large European exhibitions of the principles that defined the renascence of historical interpretations. The new alternatives came from the most recent pasts, from the unconcluded neo-avantgardes and the experiences of conceptual and minimalistic revisions during the sixties, where design, object and the aspiration of the integrating totality of art in a specific space were to replace other more tradition-laden languages, casting aside Picasso's and Matisse's mythology –as protective models in the early eighties- in favour of the new guru, Marcel Duchamp. This situation would manifest itself in Galicia with the new strategies of what we could call postatlantism, an aesthetic position that detaches itself from the idea of group with the aim of reaffirming the value of individuality and an internationalism that overcame the excluding consciousness of anthropological specificity, a phenomenon which occurred in the early eighties and that would now bear out the impossibility of Atlántica in view of new present challenges. But that would require a history of art –the most recent one- very different from the one we have wanted to present here, comprising two periods: one between 1980 and 1983, the years of the five Atlántica exhibitions, and another between 1980 and 1986, characterised by the singular aesthetic atmosphere that we have attempted to define, the one that still believed in a history of art with distinct genders in artistic languages and that spoke about painters and sculptures, in contrast with that one that was to become diluted sheltered by the all-inclusive amplitude of the work of art, as a torrent where the numberless adherents to Duchamp could find a meeting place under the maxim "*faire n'importe quoi*".

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Twenty-two years later, with all the experience and hindsight accumulated by a whole generation and an artistic atmosphere widely consolidated in Galicia, we consider that, as a project, the ATLÁNTICA group defined, perhaps more adequately than it was done elsewhere in Spain, the horizon of the aesthetics embedded in a nascent, post-modern Europe that emerged during the first half of the eighties. As a system of ideas, it was a strategy necessary to leave Galicia behind and measure the capacity of a model nearly unique in Spain during that period of devolution that had just given birth to the different Autonomous Regions. A system of ideas that were directly in tune with the future United Europe and that showed the will not only to integrate with the rest of the world, but also to export an aesthetic born in this north-westerly region and deeply rooted in its history. "

ATLÁNTICA Exhibitions:

<i>Atlántica, últimas tendencias plásticas en Galicia</i>	<i>Atlántica, o feito plástico</i>	<i>Atlántica</i>	<i>Doce pintores de Atlántica</i>	<i>Atlántica, 1983</i>
<i>Casa de la Cultura</i>	<i>Centro Cultural Cidade de Vigo</i>	<i>Centro Cultural de la Villa de Madrid</i>	<i>Castillo de Doña Urraca</i>	<i>Pazo de Xelmírez</i>
Baiona, Pontevedra	Vigo, Pontevedra	Madrid	Salvaterra de Miño, Pontevedra	Santiago, A Coruña
14 th August to 14 th September 1980	19 th February to 5 th March 1981	April 1981	21 th to 30 th mai 1982	28 th January to 27 th February 1983
Painters:	Painters:	Painters:	Painters:	Painters:
Xaime Cabanas Correa Corredoira Alberto Datas Manuel Facal José Freixanes Antón Goyanes Armando Guerra Ánxel Huete Menchu Lamas Antón Lamazares José Lodeiro Francisco Mantecón Manuel Moldes Guillermo Monroy Antón Patiño Reimundo Patiño Manuel Ruibal Vidal Souto	Xaime Cabanas Correa Corredoira Alberto Datas Fermín Encinar Xosé Freixanes Antón Goyanes Armando Guerra Ánxel Huete Menchu Lamas Antón Lamazares Xosé Lodeiro Francisco Mantecón Manuel Moldes Guillermo Monroy César Otero Antón Patiño Reimundo Patiño Quintana Martelo	Xaime Cabanas Correa Corredoira Alberto Datas José Freixanes Antón Goyanes Armando Guerra Ánxel Huete Menchu Lamas José Lodeiro Francisco Mantecón Manuel Moldes Guillermo Monroy Antón Patiño Reimundo Patiño Manuel Ruibal Vidal Souto	Correa Corredoira Antón Goyanes Ánxel Huete Menchu Lamas Manuel Moldes Guillermo Monroy Antón Patiño Alberte Permuy César Otero Francisco Mantecón Antón Lamazares Xaime Cabanas	Rafael Baixeras Alberto Datas José Freixanes Antón Goyanes Armando Guerra Ánxel Huete Menchu Lamas Antón Lamazares Francisco Mantecón Manuel Moldes Guillermo Monroy César Otero Antón Patiño Reimundo Patiño Alberte Permuy Manuel Quintana Xesús Vázquez
Sculptors:	Sculptors:	Sculptors:		Sculptors:
Ignacio Basallo José Díaz Fuentes Mon Vasco Miguel Saco Silverio Rivas	Ignacio Basallo Mon Vasco Silverio Rivas	Ignacio Basallo Mon Vasco Silverio Rivas		Ignacio Basallo Luis Borrajo Francisco Leiro Mon Vasco Silverio Rivas Manuel Ruibal
Architects:				
Fernando Blanco Guerra M ^a Jesús Blanco Piñeiro Javier Corazón Alfredo Freixido Celestino García Rosario Gutiérrez F. Javier Pena Felipe Peña Luis Pérez de Juan J. Luis Sáez Carlos Sánchez Casas Santiago Seara				

REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS (FROM NOVEMBER 2002):

CD including photographs of the museum and both inaugural exhibitions in different formats.

IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE DOCUMENTATION, COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT BY E-MAIL, FAX OR ORDINARY POST TO:

MARCO, MUSEO DE ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEA DE VIGO

Departamento de Comunicación

Rúa Príncipe nº 54

36202 Vigo, Spain

Tel. +34 986 11 39 00

Fax.+34 986 11 39 01

E-mail: coordinacion@marcovigo.com

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