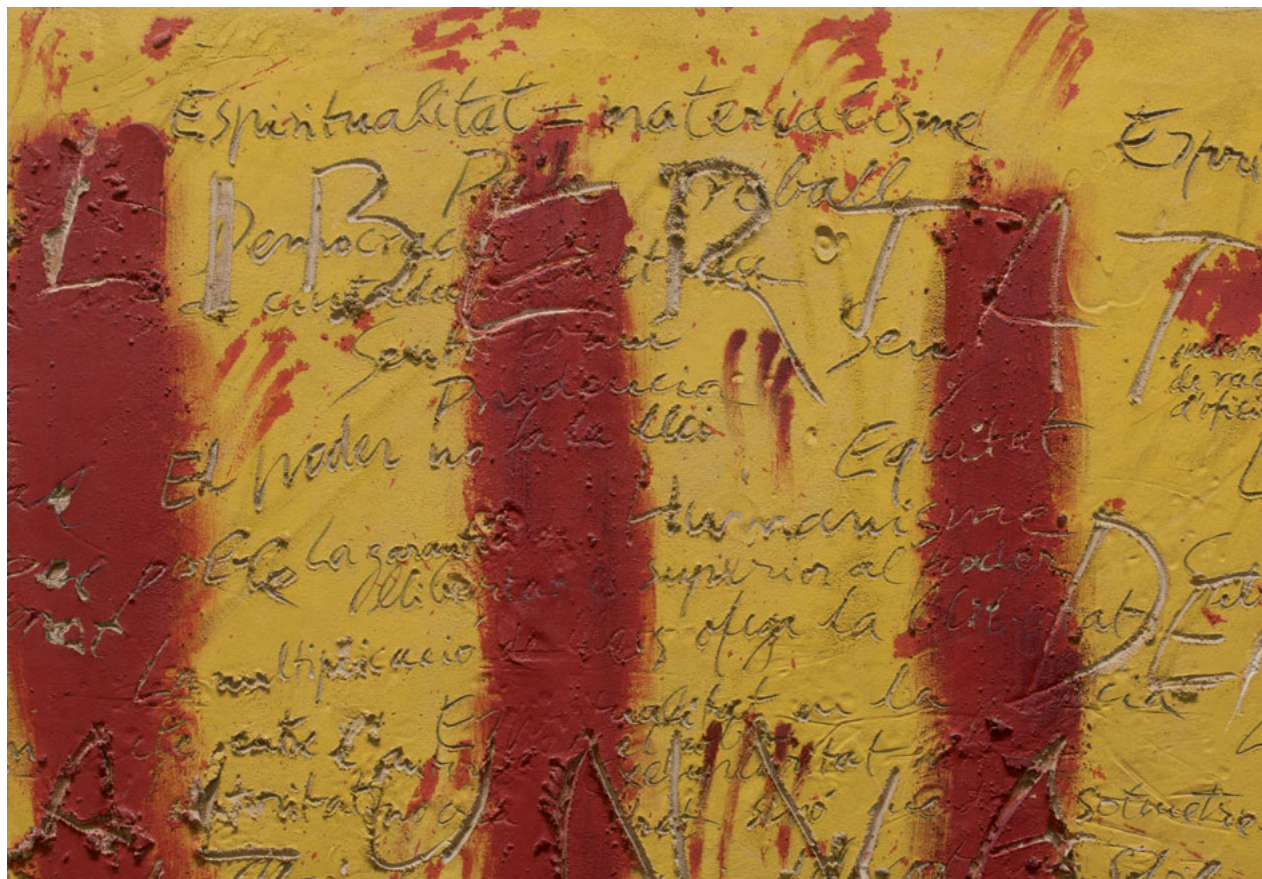


AD INEFFABILEM. AN ADVENTURE OF MATTER AND SPIRIT

OCT 20 2026
PERMANENT

ANTONI TÀPIES. L'ESPERIT CATALÀ, 1971

In life, there are adventures that require no suitcases, but rather the courage to shed all baggage. *Ad Ineffabilem* is one of them. It does not invite you to merely walk through an exhibition, but to cross a threshold that can lead you to a new way of seeing, capable of opening into the ineffable.

This is not an easy path. It requires a pause from the ceaseless flow of life to listen to that which has never ceased to speak to us from time and space, from form and matter. These are precisely the names of the four galleries that make up this journey: time, space, form, and matter.

They are not separate stages, but rather four perspectives from which to travel a single path toward the ineffability through which art connects us. Each work in these galleries has been conceived by its creator as a threshold. Picasso, Rothko, Oteiza, Palazuelo, Tàpies, among others, have brought each one to life so that, through their very materiality, they can lead us to the transcendent. Every artistic gesture—embodied in colors and lines, textures and layers, light and shadow—speaks to us of that immateriality that sustains them and makes them what they truly are: works of art.

They do not ask us to find answers, only to contemplate. To look slowly. To wait. To listen. To feel. To let go of all concepts so that silence may envelop us. Yes, silence. Only silence can create the space necessary for the true reality contained within them to begin to emerge. Only si-

lence allows us to hear the heartbeat of a truth that cannot be explained: it simply happens. That is why each work of art does not seek to explain the mystery, but rather to open a space for that mystery to unfold.



MARK ROTHKO. SIN TÍTULO, 1969



PABLO PICASSO. MOUSQUETAIRE. TÊTE, 1967

In **Time**, the works invite us to come into contact with eternity. Picasso breaks reality down into overlapping planes—front and profile, one moment and the next—with a few lines and color devoid of nuances, to remind us that a single glance is never enough to define identity, nor a single moment to contain it. Rothko lets color breathe in silent glazes, layer upon layer, until he transforms the canvas into a place that invites us to look inward, toward the infinity of the eternal. Zóbel envelops you in an almost



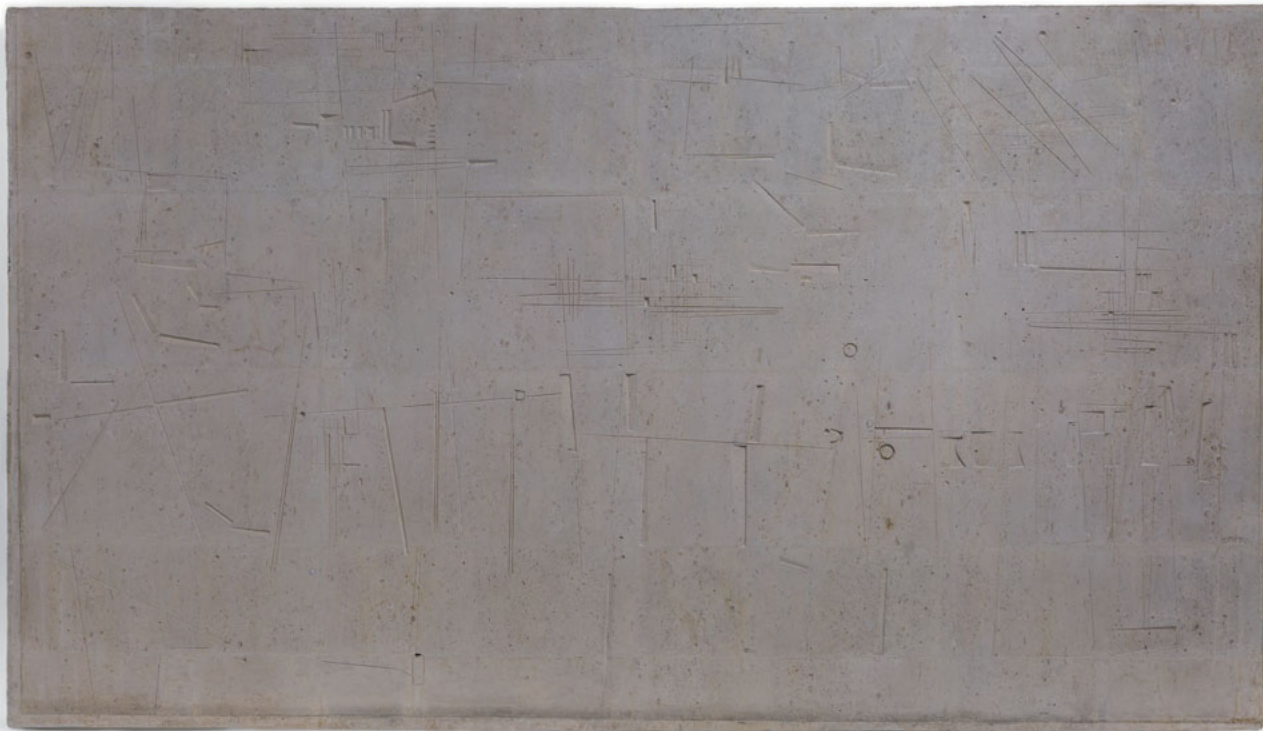
FERNANDO ZOBEL. MARINA, 1974

liquid, serene, unhurried contemplation. It is a moment of contemplation that seems to go on forever. And Sistia-ga brings the fleeting nature of the present to the canvas, like a *Ráfaga* [flicker] that remains suspended, reflecting in its spontaneity the colors of light before it slips away into the past.

We discover, then, that time is not merely what passes by. It is also that which, for an instant, ceases to pass in order to reveal a depth that was always there. Four artists, four ways of inhabiting time: what remains of you when the clock finally stops? Here, the present does not pass. It ascends, opening itself to the eternal.



JOSÉ ANTONIO SISTIAGA. RÁFAGA, 1970



JORGE OTEIZA. *HOMENAJE A BACH*, 1956

In **Space**, Oteiza takes us by the hand to hear that space does not begin where matter ends. It begins where the boundary gives way to the presence of the void. Oteiza brings this to life. That is why he does not sculpt forms, but rather the invisibility of the void that sustains them—motionless and silent—which he himself called “spiritual.” He empties the forms to isolate the space—calculated and transcended—and leaves it bare within its boundaries. As he himself stated, “air has become light, the void a spatial body emptied of matter and breathable by the forms.” In *Homenaje a Bach*, the concavities strip matter of its weight by gathering light, and as they follow one another rhythmically, they transform the wall into a musical score: intervals of matter and void, of light and shadow, make the music visible in the silence. Meanwhile, in *Elías y su carro de fuego*, the relief rises, animated by the vitality of the shadow cast by the light, until it is consumed by fire. What Oteiza wrote about his glass models also applies here: the shadow grows or shrinks, intensifies, and is complemented by a mysterious zone of twilight—a twilight that, he writes, is pierced by light.

And as we remain there, we perceive that space is not merely what contains things, but what allows them to appear. In this room, the white extends that gesture. The perimeter ceases to be a background and becomes part of the work, as it too is inhabited by light, shadow, and our own figure. If, for Oteiza, the viewer is within the very space of the work—actively included in the composition—then by dwelling in this white cube, the viewer’s presence activates the work’s dynamism and, through movement, sculpts a new spatiality. Just as in Bach’s music silence does not interrupt the work but rather makes it possible, here the space is not occupied: it opens up. And upon entering it, we too are included in that transcendence.



JORGE OTEIZA. *ELÍAS Y SU CARRO DE FUEGO*, 1956



PABLO PALAZUELO. *OMPHALE I*, 1962

In **Form**, Palazuelo does not represent reality: he expresses the secret order that gives rise to it. Beneath the world's ever-changing appearance, he uncovers a hidden geometry where numbers become figures, and figures become something real. For beneath the skin of things, an order pulses—a form that, by revealing matter, grants it a face so that it may take shape as a concrete reality. That is why he maintains that geometry is the measure of matter through number, which coalesces into dynamically flowing figures. In works such as *Omphale I* or *Orto IV*, the subtlety of the line and the chromatic variations do not represent nature: they pursue the hidden pulse that orders it, that creative energy that causes them to sprout into what he himself called “apparitions.” In *El número y las aguas I*, the lines obey an invisible order that, while remaining precise, seems to flow like water as it multiplies before our eyes with vibrant vitality. For Palazuelo, the number is the formal principle, and each line bears the trace of a movement; each figure, the memory of a transformation. His works do not seek to tell us what reality is, but rather to show us how it comes to be. For this reason, we must look slowly, because beneath the visible form lies an invisible architecture, and perhaps it is there—in that very moment when you contemplate it—that the form truly begins to reveal itself.



PABLO PALAZUELO. *EL NÚMERO Y LAS AGUAS I*, 1978



ANTONI TÀPIES. *INCENDI*, 1991

And so we finally arrive at **Matter**. At Tàpies's mural. At his alphabet of wounds, crosses, imprints, and signs inscribed on the skin of the world. Nothing seeks to hide matter. On the contrary. The rougher and more fragile it appears, the more vulnerable and tangible it is, the more intensely it reveals the light that dwells within it. That is why Tàpies wrote in *L'esperit català*, subtly yet as a central heading: *espiritualitat = materialisme*. For this work, like so many others by Tàpies, powerfully expresses—almost shouting—that the spiritual does not occur far from matter: it shines within it. That is why, here, the mural not only preserves—through colors, textures, and words buried in the dust—the traces of history and life experiences, but above all, it contains the spirit of a people making its way through matter. The same happens in *Composició amb cistella*, “Tàpies's box.” In it, the transcendent value of the everyday is revealed precisely through the poverty and fragility of the seemingly mundane. For what appears broken, dirty, weak, and worn is, in fact, a solid and heavy structure, capable of shining if it were carefully polished. Something similar occurs in *Incendi d'amor*. In this work, the wooden substrate, covered with tinted marble dust resembling sand, is covered with fingerprints. Subtle imprints of hands, feet, and even objects dialogue with the strength of incisions and scratches, of lines, numbers, and symbols—reminding us that existence is woven from memories and wounds in which the only reality that endures burns: love.

This is the essence of every artist's mysterious gift: to create, from the tangibility and finitude of matter, a gateway to the ineffable. That is why, as you journey through time and space, between form and matter, you will find different thresholds leading to the same mystery. And although they are there, open and waiting for our gaze, to cross them you need a key: wonder. Only wonder can remove the shadow that stands between us and the work. It is then that its truth reaches us. When the force of its radiance, having found the crack through which to burst



ANTONI TÀPIES. *L'ESPERIT CATALÀ*, 1971

forth, allows us a glimpse of that being which, stripped bare, reveals itself to us for an instant. It is but a flash. Barely enough time for its brilliance to pierce us and lead us, in a silent ascent, to cross the threshold opened by the work. If we cross over, we begin to dwell—starting from the sensory and material—a spiritual and, in a certain sense, sacred dimension. Here, time stands still and appearances give way so that the work may reveal itself in the nakedness of its presence. We brush against beauty. A beauty far deeper than the one eyes can perceive. A beauty that calls to us from within the work and that, as it dazzles us, slips away. It is fleeting, and the crack through which it had emerged closes again before it can be captured by words. The veil returns, and those colors and shapes regain their former opacity.

All that remains is the memory of this revelation. The memory that, in that very spark, we perceived the eternal and touched the infinity of the ineffable. An ineffability which allows itself to be glimpsed before hiding once more beneath the shadow in which it dwells. And even as the light fades, we are transformed. For in the clarity opened

up by the work, our thirst for meaning finds an echo. We discover that we, too, can live according to our own truth and fully be who we are. The beauty of the work thus draws us toward an authenticity similar to its own: a life without masks, capable of revealing—in our own way—the latent beauty that dwells within us. A beauty that never fades and that each of us—you, too—can reflect.

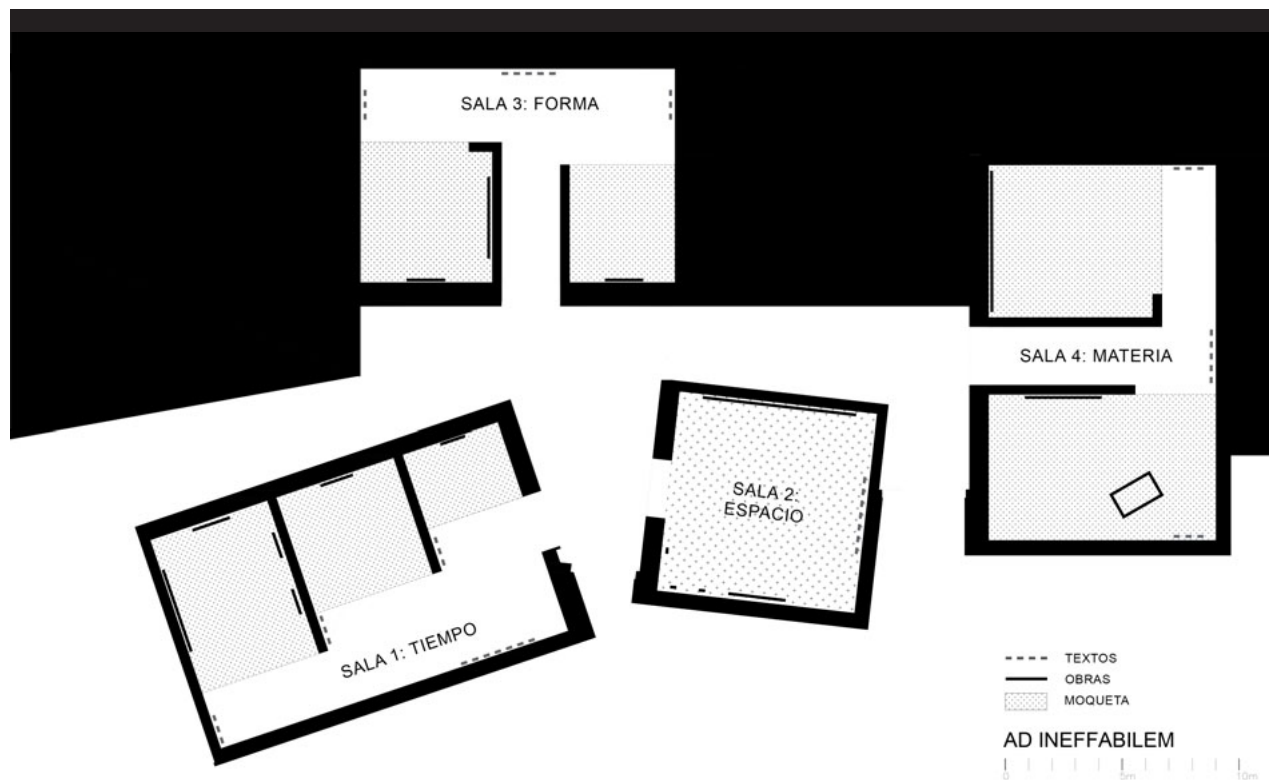
Four rooms, and in each work, a threshold. Dare to cross it. Perhaps you'll discover that the adventure isn't

about reaching the end of the path, but about learning to glimpse—with fresh eyes, even if only for an instant—that radiance which, beneath the surface of the visible, waits to be discovered so it can awaken in you the sense of the infinite.

María José Zegers-Correa

Marta García Alonso

Ricardo Piñero



CURATORIAL PROJECT. THE HAPPENING OF CONTEMPLATION: WONDER, RECOLLECTION AND ENCOUNTER IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF SPACE.

MARÍA JOSÉ ZEGERS-CORREA AND MARTA GARCÍA ALONSO

The brief for this curatorial project was to give form to the wish that María Josefa Huarte expressed when she donated her collection to the Museo Universidad de Navarra: that the manner in which the works are exhibited should reflect that art is one of many paths of encounter with the transcendent.

In response to this challenge, a simple proposal was devised, yet one radical enough to transform the four existing rooms into a space capable of opening the door to wonder, to recollection and to the viewer's encounter with each work. The project was thus articulated in four operations, which we might call concept, boundary, light and intimacy. These operations seek not only to order the space but also to configure a singular atmosphere, one that is necessary for contemplation to happen.

The first operation, *concept*, consisted in determining which works – shown as a solid line on the plan – would dwell in each room. This demanded a profound reflection

on each piece, on what each artist sought, and on the way in which each of them conceived of art in relation to the transcendent. From this reflection emerged four concepts capable of grouping the works while at the same time encompassing the whole of created reality: *time* and *space*, *form* and *matter*. It is these that give the rooms their names. Time is divided into three areas that articulate fragmentation, eternity and the instant. Space, by contrast, is conceived as a single white, cubic volume which, in dialogue with the works of Oteiza – themselves white – ceases to be a background and becomes part of them.

The second operation is the *boundary*. In Time, Form and Matter, the walls – shown in black on the plan – mark the boundary, defining new spaces while concealing the works. Each of these three rooms must be walked through in order to discover what it holds. By deferring the appearance of each work, the wall prepares its *uncon-*

cealment and, with it, wonder: the gateway to the contemplative gaze. Moreover, by isolating the great majority of the pieces, each is granted the significance it deserves as a threshold to the ineffable.

The third operation is *light*. Before reaching the work concealed behind the wall, the visitor encounters texts – shown as a dotted line on the plan – that illuminate both the mind and the path towards the encounter with the work. These texts remain respectfully outside the space of the work, for they seek only to illuminate and to prepare the viewer's disposition, not to distract the viewer once standing before it.

The fourth and final operation is *intimacy*. Only after the light of the words does one enter the place of encounter with the work, delimited by a carpet – shown textured on the plan – which muffles footsteps and invites silence and recollection. This remarkably simple operation succeeds in creating an intimate atmosphere in which nothing detracts from the work, which appears alone and bare before the viewer. In this space – almost sacred – sustained by the wall, the carpet and the prolonged encounter, the work may disclose the truth that dwells within it, and the viewer may set out on a path towards the transcendent.

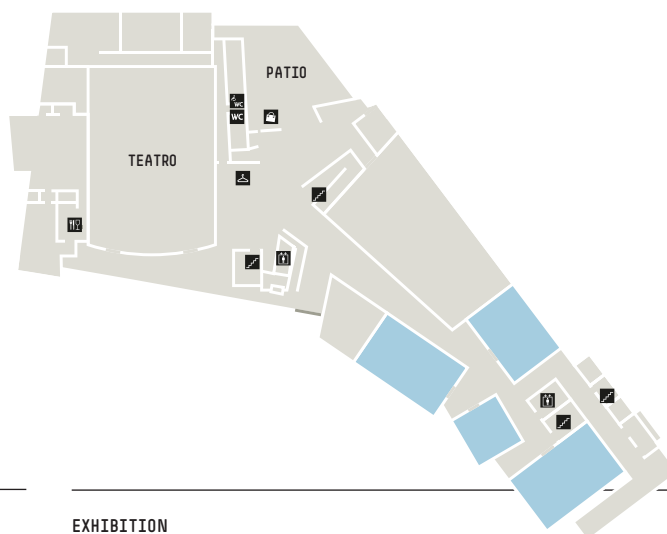


MUSEO UNIVERSIDAD DE NAVARRA

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