**”la Caixa” Collection of Contemporary Art**

**Selected by Maria Fusco**

Glasgow-based writer Maria Fusco (b. Belfast) takes an experimental approach to art writing, connecting criticism, fiction and theory to explore new ways of looking at and reading art. The title of this exhibition and accompanying text *NINE QWERTY BELLS. Fiction for Live Voice* considers the idea of giving voice to mainly mute artworks and references the mechanical and performative act of writing. Q, W, E, R,T, Y are the first five letters of the standard English keyboard, originally created for E. Remington and Sons typewriters in 1873. Fusco’s imagines nine artworks participating in an unusual conference, each with a different story to tell or position to uphold.

Fusco takes as her starting point a video by Spanish performance artist Esther Ferrer. *Astonishment, Pain, Disdain and So On* (2013) is a portrait of the artist embodying a series of intense yet silent emotions, conveyed through facial expressions. This performance is contrasted to the wary gaze of the female figure in a dramatically staged photographby **Cindy Sherman**. A large ‘photowork’ by **Astrid Klein** uses experimental darkroom processes to push photographic imagery to abstraction. It finds an echo in two black-and-white photographs of automobile tyres by **Christopher Williams**, part of his longstanding investigation into the production and circulation of commercial photography.

A concrete arch by **Cristina Iglesias** provides a portal into the display’s exploration of language, silence and space, while **Alan Charlton**’s mute grey monochromes entitled *Painting in Ten Parts* (1990) articulate the architecture of the exhibition space through seriality and repetition. Nearby a mysterious sculpture by **Pello Irazu**, *Room for Two* (1992) is redolent of domestic space and Minimalist sculpture but is empty of inhabitants inviting the viewer to muse on its function.

Punctuating the display with the mechanical sounds of typewriter keys and the chime of carriage returns is **Ignacio Uriarte**’s film The History of the Typewriter Recited by Michael Winslow (2009). The well-known American actor deploys his extraordinary vocal skills to recreate the sounds of 32 different typewriters using only his voice and two microphones to conjure an aural history of analogue writing.

This display is accompanied by a fully-illustrated publication featuring Maria Fusco’s *NINE QWERTY BELLS. Fiction for Live Voice* available from the bookshop.