

**Large Print Guide
In the Eye of Bambi:
"la Caixa"**

**Collection of
Contemporary Art**

14 January – 19 April 2020



Gallery 7

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This document includes large print of all the wall labels found within **In the Eye of Bambi:**

**"la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art
Selected by Verónica Gerber Bicecci.**

The document begins with the first wall label to the right of the gallery entrance which provides an overview of the exhibition, and then moves in a clockwise direction around the space.

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In the Eye of Bambi

"la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art:

Selected by Verónica Gerber Bicecci

The sun had driven even the tiniest cloudlet from the sky.

The air quivered in glassy, transparent ripples as it does over a flame.

With so much calm, it seemed that the earth would split in half.

And it did.

– Verónica Gerber Bicecci

The artist and writer Verónica Gerber Bicecci (b. 1981, Mexico) imagines a new post-human world following a global catastrophe and the collapse of language in this selection of works drawn from "la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art and her accompanying short story. Through the soft and sinuous red woollen tendrils of Concha García's *Trepadora roja* (Red Creeper) (2004) invading the gallery, an enlarged eye peers out of a circular canvas, from which paint drips like tears.

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In this painting by Victoria Civera, the familiar gaze is that of the plucky fawn, orphaned by the destructive actions of humans, in one of the earliest environmental novels, *Bambi, A Life in the Woods* (1923) by Felix Salten and later immortalised in Walt Disney's 1942 animated film.

Inspired by the words of Donna Haraway, Greta Thunberg and W. B. Yeats, Gerber Bicecci proposes a science fiction scenario based on the aftermath of a catastrophic event envisioned by Carlos Amorales in his fantastical animation *Useless Wonder* (2014). In this double-sided projection, a world map disintegrates into small fragments on one side, while on the other humans and animals struggle to co-exist, accompanied by an increasingly ominous percussive, electronic soundtrack.

Carmen Calvo's mixed media landscape of tiny unfired clay trees and coloured ceramic shards, ranging across the surface of the canvas, is described by the artist as a 'cemetery of nature'.

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Two series of photographic works explore the effects of war on landscapes. *Fait #07* by Sophie Ristelhueber examines from an aerial perspective the marks and traces of human intervention in the Kuwaiti desert after the first Gulf War. *Bleda y Rosa* (María Bleda and José María Rosa) also document former sites of conflict by revisiting historic colonial-era battlefields in Latin America, now desolate or liminal places where communities once lived. In a second work by Civera, *A-be-ce-da-rio* (1991), a new alphabet of abstract painted forms point to an uncertain future.

This display is accompanied by a fully-illustrated publication, *In the Eye of Bambi* by Verónica Gerber Bicecci, available from the bookshop.

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"la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art

Part of the Whitechapel Gallery's programme of presenting international collections rarely seen in the UK, this display is drawn from the renowned collection of "la Caixa" Foundation in Spain. Founded in 1904, "la Caixa" has pursued a mission of social engagement and outreach for 115 years. In the early 1980s, "la Caixa" Foundation began to organise exhibitions, presenting contemporary work in dialogue with twentieth-century art.

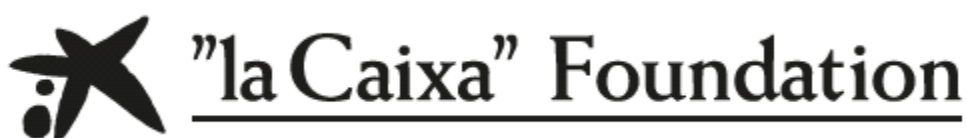
"la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art was established in 1985. The core of the collection is devoted to Spanish and international art from the 1980s to the present, but also includes works by outstanding artists from the 1960s and 1970s.

Guided by a director and committees of international advisors, the collection has strong holdings of Spanish, Italian, German, British, American and Latin American...

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...art and numbers more than 1,000 works,
encompassing painting, photography, moving image
and large scale installations.

From January 2019 to April 2020, Whitechapel Gallery
is presenting a series of exhibitions, each conceived by
a writer and accompanied by a new piece of writing
based on their selection.



"la Caixa" Foundation

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Bleda y Rosa

(Maria Bleda b. 1969, Castellón and José María Rosa, b. 1970, Albacete, Spain)

Otumba, 7 de julio de 1520 (Otumba, 7 July 1520),
2015

Ollantaytambo, enero de 1537 (Ollantaytambo, January
1537), 2015

Reinohuelén, invierno austral de 1536 (Reinohuelén,
Southern Winter of 1536), 2015

Mbororé, 11 de marzo de 1641 (Mbororé, 11 March
1641), 2014

Inkjet prints on cotton paper mounted on Dibond

These works are part of Ultramar (Overseas, 2014–16), the third in the series 'Campos de Batalla' (Battlefields) preceded by Spain (1994–96) and Europe (2010–12). This series saw the artists making a journey to sites of violent historical confrontation at the hands of European powers in Latin America...

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...Working with photography and text, they create landscape images of sites of overlooked historical significance. Memory and the passage of time are key themes as they revisit events that took place at these now unremarkable locations.



Otumba, 7 de julio de 1520.

Image Description: **Otumba, 7 de julio de 1520
(Otumba, 7 July 1520), 2015**

A rectangular photographic work which consists of an image split into two halves. The above work depicts an overgrown roadside in Otumba, Mexico. The title of the image is typed in small black font below the image.

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Ollantaytambo, enero de 1537.

Image Description: **Ollantaytambo, enero de 1537 (Ollantaytambo, January 1537), 2015**

A rectangular photographic work which consists of an image split into two halves. The above work depicts a dusty road in Ollantaytambo, Peru, with a dramatic mountainside seen to the left of the image. To the right of the image are steps carved into the landscape, characteristic of Peru. The title of the image is typed in small black font below the image.

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Reinohuelén, invierno austral de 1536.

Image Description: **Reinohuelén, invierno austral de 1536 (Reinohuelén, Southern Winter of 1536), 2015**

A rectangular photographic work which consists of an image split into two halves. The above work depicts the shallow banks of a calm, pale river. The scene is misty, with rough green and brown foliage growing from the banks. The title of the image is typed in small black font below the image.

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Mbororé, 11 de marzo de 1641.

Image Description: **Mbororé, 11 de marzo de 1641
(Mbororé, 11 March 1641), 2014**

A rectangular photographic work which consists of an image split into two halves. The image depicts the banks of a vast, muddy brown lake. A lush green horizon can be seen in the distance, and in the foreground, lush green foliage growing from a muddy bank. The title of the image is typed in small black font below the image.

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Carmen Calvo

(b. 1950, Valencia, Spain)

Serie Paisajes (Landscape Series), 1979

Fired clay on canvas

Calvo has organised the fired clay objects and shards of found coloured ceramics in such a way to indicate a landscape view with the horizon line separating earth from sky. This work is part of a wider series the artist made after coming across a small line drawing by Vincent van Gogh of a tree blowing in the wind in an anthology of letters written to his brother Theo.

Following a visit to the Louvre as a young artist in the early 1970s, Calvo became interested in archaeology, paying attention to how objects are categorised and displayed. She began laying small-scale pieces fashioned from fired clay in groups across flat surfaces like display cabinets or canvases...

In her own words: 'Each piece follows the lines of the drawing, fixed to a canvas background by sewing them on with twine like an archaeological reconstruction'.

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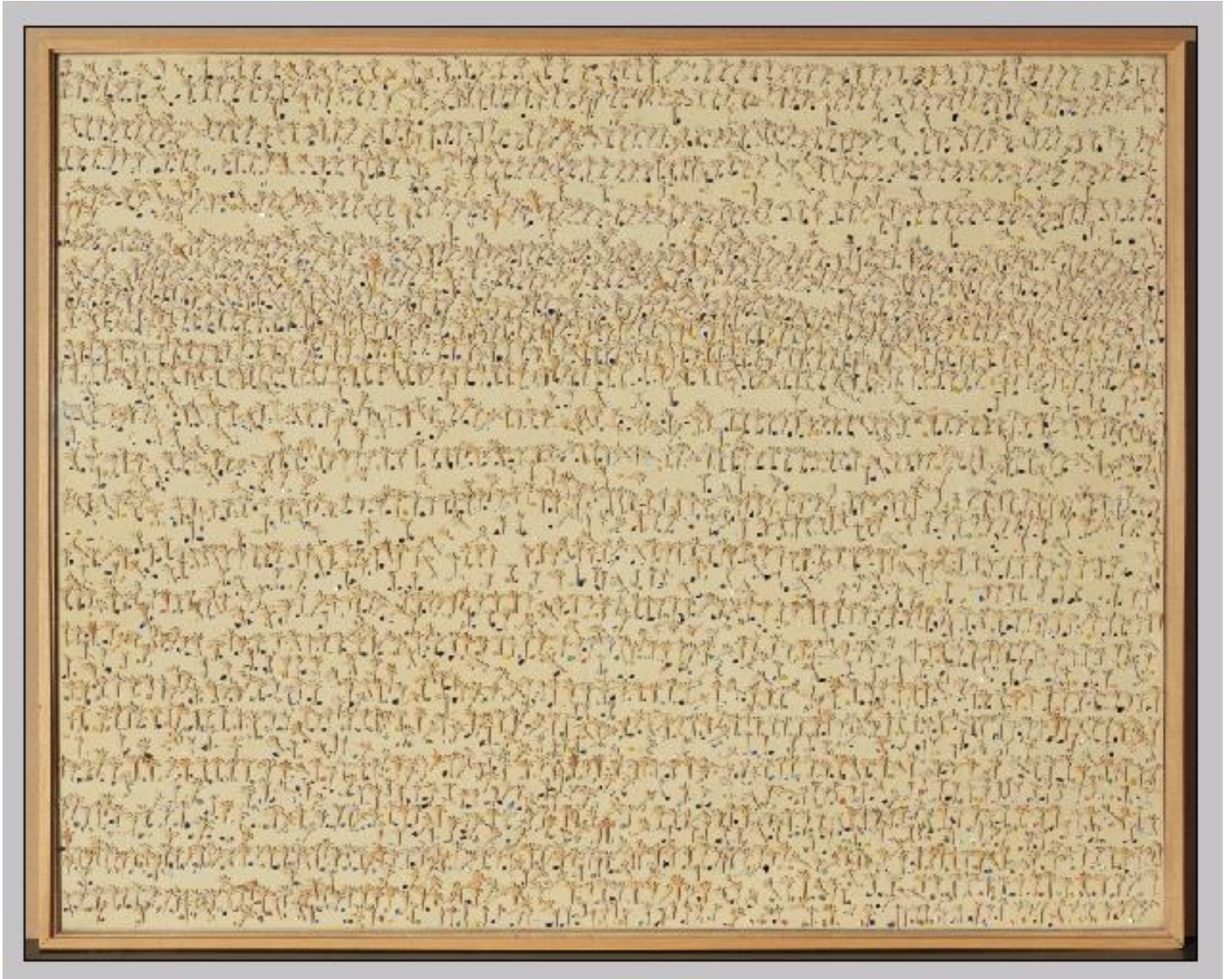


Image description: **Serie Paisajes (Landscape Series), 1979**

A sand coloured, rectangular canvas. The surface is textured by fired clay pieces and tiny broken pieces of glazed ceramic, which appear something like minuscule trees or desert foliage. The piece is displayed behind a glass surface and in a warm wooden frame.

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Concha García

(b. 1960, Santander, Spain)

Trepadora Roja (Red Creeper), 2004

Tubular structure with textile materials

Borrowing from nature, *Trepadora roja* (Red Creeper) lies somewhere between a living organism and sculptural form. Concha García often works with delicate materials from everyday life and here she has used the ribbon edging which decorates flamenco dresses and jackets in Valencia. The small pom poms are also a reference to the madroño or strawberry tree which bears small red berries.

Following the formal conventions of sculpture, García explores volume, materiality and the relationship of the viewer to the object. In this work however, sculptural form appears like a drawing in space or 'drawing by other means' with its looping cursive forms.

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Image description: **Trepadora Roja (Red Creeper), 2004**

A large, spiralling red form curves and coils from the gallery floor to the ceiling, where it is suspended. The sculpture is wrapped in red fabric and is adorned with hundreds of tiny red pomp poms.

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Sophie Ristelhueber

(b. 1969, Paris, France)

Fait #7, 1992

Colour photograph, silver print mounted on aluminium with golden polished frame

Taken in Kuwait after the end of the first Gulf War, this image is one of 71 colour and black-and-white photographs from the series *Fait* (1992), a word which has been translated as 'fact' but can also mean 'event' or 'made'. The series focuses on the abstract scars of warfare: the meandering lines of supply routes, the zigzag of trenches, pockmarks made from ballistic impact craters, plumes of smoke rising from burning oil fields and the insect-like vehicles found abandoned in the desert. Ristelhueber's images were first published in a small photobook *Fait* (2009). The soft metallic lustre of the frame surrounding the image echoes the warm desert sand or may refer to oil, which is often called 'black gold', the commodity that has been...

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...the source of conflict in the region.



Image Description: **Fait #7,1992**

A rectangular, photographic image in sandy, earthy tones. The image's scale is difficult to judge, but appears to depict an aerial shot of huge angular scars in a desert landscape. The lines seem to score deeply into the ground and interconnect, making a strange almost alien, triangular like shape.

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Victoria Civera

(b. 1955, Valencia, Spain)

Bamby, 1997-98

Mixed media on canvas

In the centre of this dramatic tondo is the eye of Bambi (the title of the exhibition and accompanying publication), the fawn that artist and illustrator Tyrus Wong drew for Walt Disney. The eye looks out at us after having shed tears of paint. Its loneliness and fixity isolates a sharp and curious gaze that is at once sweet and sad. By means of this suggestive isolation, Civera has created a pictorial dramatisation charged with emotion and mystery. Bambi's lonely eye looks curiously at the viewer, whose childhood memories are maybe triggered upon seeing it. There is something playful yet uncertain about this presumed meeting of gazes — it's unclear whether Bambi's 'spying' eye is aware of us looking at it, while we in turn cannot be sure whether we are the cause of its tears.

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Image Description: **Bamby, 1997-98**

A circle canvas is painted a dark, murky brown, it is textured with murky brown dots which blend into the background. In the centre of the canvass the eye of Walt Disney's 'Bambi' is painted, light brown paint drips from the eye and down the bottom of the canvas.

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Carlos Amorales

(b. 1970, Mexico City)

Useless Wonder, 2006

Two-channel animation video projection on suspended screen: 8.36, 7.51 mins

Useless Wonder is loosely based on The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (1838) by Edgar Allan Poe, which begins as a sea voyage but becomes more fantastic and supernatural as the tale progresses from storm and mutiny, to shipwreck and cannibalism, exploring an unconscious desire for annihilation.

Amorales transposes the narrative around an ambiguous threat – an apocalyptic event with catastrophic environmental and evolutionary consequences. On one screen the world map disintegrates and reforms itself while on the other humans, animals and birds struggle to co-exist. The animated vignettes are drawn from Amorales' Liquid Archive (1999–), a database of thousands of vector...

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...graphic files, including those depicting human figures, animals and masks, which the artist began developing 20 years ago and has used as a source for many other works.



Image Description: A video still from **Useless Wonder, 2006**

Orange and black lines wave and wiggle diagonally across the screen. A white profile of a face looks downward in the centre of the image which acts as a frame for black silhouettes of birds.

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Victoria Civera

(b. 1955, Valencia, Spain)

A-be-ce-da-rio, 1991

Mixed media

Using different materials from glass and felt to canvas, this work shapes the sounds of the first syllables of the Spanish alphabet a-be-ce-da-rio.

Civera has created a highly personal pictorial language that emerges from a complex blend of symbols, fragments of abstractions and references to the history of modern painting, as well as from intimate memories and feelings. Working with photomontage in the 1970s, Civera's work developed to encompass painting, photography and sculpture. Producing large scale canvases inspired by Neo-Expressionism in the 1980s, Civera significantly reduced their size in the next decade, creating intimate smaller format paintings alongside installations including objects from everyday life. Although her interest in self-reflection and the...

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...female body weave through her practice, she is primarily motivated by experimentation, both formal and conceptual.

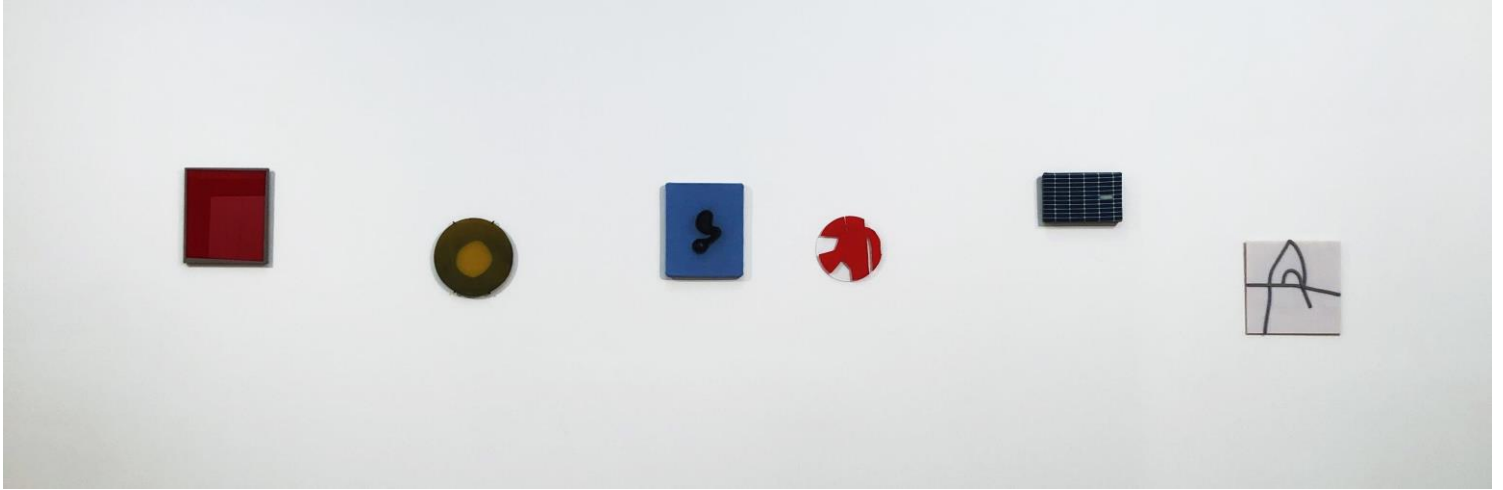


Image Description: **A-be-ce-da-rio, 1991**

The above image depicts six small shapes varying in size, shape and material. The first is rectangular and is made of bold red glass, wrapped with silver tape around its edges. The second is a small circular board, painted in murky yellow. The third is a rectangular shape wrapped in soft blue cotton and is marked with a black painted abstract mark in the centre. The fourth is a clear glass circle with large red marks strewn across it. The fifth is a rectangular shape wrapped in navy and white gridded fabric. The sixth is a white glass square with grey, raised lined running across it which look something like a capital A.

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