

DORA GARCÍA

She Has Many Names

10 February - 21 May 2023



M HKA

INTRODUCTION

The exhibition *She Has Many Names* by Spanish artist Dora García surveys some of the most important performances, drawings, installations, printed matter and films created throughout a career spanning three decades.

Dora García's practice relates to community and individuality in contemporary society, exploring the political potential of marginal positions, and paying homage to eccentric characters and antiheroes. These characters have often been the centre of her film projects, such as *The Joycean Society* (2013), *Segunda Vez* (2018) and *Amor Rojo* (2023). An essential aspect of García's work is entanglement with political movements such as feminism, and the ways they occupy public spaces. The notion of 'collectiveness' in her work relates to the political potential of love, friendship, companionship, as well as a way of working with and transforming social environments.

This exhibition is the first to focus on a central element in García's work, namely her performance-based practice situated at the intersection of visual and performing arts. Drawing installations, objects and spaces are activated with scripted and unscripted performances. *She Has Many Names* considers the relationships between audience, artwork and context, using to the gesture of drawing, writing and the act of speech.

García's work references texts by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, Irish novelist James Joyce, Argentine psychoanalyst Oscar Masotta, Chicana-Tejana* writer-activist Gloria Anzaldúa and Russian revolutionary-theoretician Alexandra Kollontai among others. The title of the exhibition cites a poem from Anzaldúa's book *Borderlands / La Frontera* (1987) in which she challenges the way we understand identity by presenting it as a disputed social, psychological, political and cultural concept. Ideas elaborated by Anzaldúa are close to the critical practice of García, who in her work refers to concepts such as the juncture of cultures, class struggle and different notions of borders in relation to physical and mental spaces.

García's new feature film *Amor Rojo* (2023) will premiere as part of this exhibition. The work is part of a large research project based on the historical figure Alexandra Kollontai, a Soviet revolutionary and radical feminist. The experimental film discusses the tradition of over one hundred years of feminism in Europe and Latin America and explores how transnational forms of feminism correlate with ecological and postcolonial struggles. The most recent wave of feminism in Latin America agrees with Kollontai in her proposition that feminism must go beyond the fight for equality, and that a complete change of paradigm, a full subversion of society, is necessary.

* Chicana : a woman of Mexican descent living in the United States; Tejana: a woman of Spanish or Mexican descent descended from people who settled in Texas before the area became part of the United States of America.



Little object <a>, 2021
Performance, gold coin
Photo: Vasco Stocker de Vilhena for Rialto6, Lisbon



Dora García, Two Planets Have Been Colliding for Thousands of Years, 2017.
Performance and floor drawing. La Verrière, Brussels. Performers: Leen Van
Dommelen and Erica Schipa. Photo: Isabelle Arthuis.



Coyolxauhqui, as part of the instalation "The Labyrinth of Female Freedom"
Galeria Juana de Aizpuru, 2020
Photo Dora García



Background: The Labyrinth of Female Freedom, 2020.
Front: Two Planets Have Been Colliding for Thousands of Years, 2017
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, US, 2020
Photo: Charles Mayer

A SELECTION OF PERFORMANCES

Two Planets Have Been Colliding for Thousands of Years, 2017

Durational performance and floor drawing
Courtesy the Kerenidis Pepe Collection, Paris

Two performers face each other, their gazes permanently interlocked. Each one is positioned inside one of two non-concentric circles painted directly on the floor. As one performer moves, the other must alter their position to maintain a constant distance. However, as the circles are not concentric, at some point the distance cannot be kept the same, and the performers must start all over, in an endless game of continual negotiation.

First performed at La Verrière, Brussels, 2017

The Messenger, 2002

Durational performance
Courtesy the artist

A messenger must deliver a message of vital importance. But the messenger neither identifies nor understands the language in which the message is written. The performer, holding a handwritten copy of the message, tries to find someone among the visitors to the museum who understands the message, or who at least has some leads towards the language and the meaning of the message.

First performed the Saint-Gilles neighbourhood in Brussels, 2002.

The Labyrinth of Female Freedom, 2020

Durational performance, drawing, poetry books
Courtesy the artist

Inside a white chalk circle on the floor, a performer reads poems written by female poets out loud, modulating her voice between public proclamation and private whisper. The performer's decision on the volume of her voice determines the space occupied by the performance. The number of poetry books by female poets grows in each consecutive performance iteration, always including books in the local languages spoken at the location where the performance is shown.

First performed at the Rose Art Museum, Waltham, US, 2020

The Artist Without Works – A guided tour around nothing, 2009

Performance

Courtesy Elizabeth and Yves Monlibert

Language: English and Dutch

The performance is exactly what the title says: it is a guided tour around the work of an artist who does not produce any works. The monologue was written by García in 2009. Its starting point was her reading of Jean-Yves Jouannais' book: *Artistes sans oeuvres: I would prefer not to* (1997), where an answer is sought to an impossible question: How do you make a radical artistic act par excellence, producing nothing, and remain at the same time within artistic practice?

The monologue is structured like a guided tour in 5 stops, the last one being the same as the first.

First performed at Fondation Ricard, Paris, 2009



The Labyrinth of Female Freedom, 2020,
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, US, 2020
Photo: Charles Mayer

PERFORMANCE, SCREENING AND ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

As part of the exhibition *She Has Many Names*, M HKA offers a unique performance, screening and activity programme, including a philosophical café, reading sessions and guided tours by experts.

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME

Opening night: Thursday 9 February

Two Planets Have Been Colliding for Thousands of Years
The Labyrinth of Female Freedom
Little object < a >
Révolution
Best Regards from Charles Filch
The Romeos

From Wednesday to Friday 14.00 – 17.00 and from Saturday to Sunday 13.00 – 17.00

Two Planets Have Been Colliding for Thousands of Years
The Labyrinth of Female Freedom
Little object < a >
The Messenger
The Sphinx
Révolution

Saturday 11 February

Black Veil

Sunday 19 February and Sunday 26 February

The Artist Without Works

Thursday 23 February

Rehearsal / Retrospective

MEDIATION

Saturday 11 February, 14.00

Guided tour by Dora García

During this guided tour, the artist will highlight some of the important themes in the exhibition and the way they interrelate. This activity is part of a new series of guided tours at M HKA. Other guests who will give a guided tour are Persis Bekkering, Bojana Cvejic, and Aaron Schuster.

Thursday 23 February 19.00 – 21.00

Philosophical café on James Joyce

The Philosophical café during the exhibition is organised in collaboration with Filozoo. On multiple occasions we bring together a philosopher and a special guest to talk about an interesting theme related to the exhibition.

FILM SCREENINGS AT DE CINEMA

Sunday 5 February

Love with Obstacles, 2000, 60'

Followed by a Q&A with artist Dora García

Love with Obstacles focuses on the extraordinary author, Marxist feminist, October revolutionary, political exile and diplomat, Alexandra Kollontai (St. Petersburg, 1872– Moscow, 1952). The film dives into the conservation of her legacy in Moscow archives, what has been told and untold, and her vision of the future of a socialist feminist revolution. *Love with Obstacles* is the prologue of the feature film *Amor Rojo*, which will premiere during the exhibition at M HKA. More info and tickets are to be found [here](#).

Sunday 5 March, 17:15

The Joycean Society

With the participation of the Antwerp James Joyce Center

Sunday 2 April, 17:15

DOUBLE BILL: El Helicóptero & La Eterna

Sunday 7 May, 17:15

Segunda vez (2017)

With an aftertalk by Gerardo Salinas (KVS)



ABOUT DORA GARCÍA

Dora García lives and works in Oslo. She studied visual arts at the University of Salamanca in Barcelona and the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam in the early nineties. Subsequently, she moved to Belgium, where she spent fifteen years developing her personal visual language, experimenting with film, printed matter, performance, theatre and web-based works. García's practice is situated at the intersection of the visual arts, performing arts, theatre and literature. She represented Spain at the Venice Biennale in 2011. She has participated in the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015, Documenta 13 in 2012, and other international events such as Skulptur Projekte Münster in 2007, Sydney Biennial 2008, and São Paulo Bienal 2010.

ALSO AT M HKA*IN SITU***Tenant of Culture**
21.01–30.04.2023

Under the moniker of Tenant of Culture, Hendrickje Schimmel works with fashion as a trained fashion and textile practitioner, but does so from the perspective of the field of contemporary art. The artist makes objects and installations employing used, leftover or deadstock garments as her main source material. By means of collage, analysis and (de)construction, Tenant of Culture seeks to set the terms of an inclusive understanding of cultural production, in which labour and craft, bodies and warehouses, waste and resources, affect and industry, planned obsolescence and sustainability, agency and dependency, exist in visible proximity.

With the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Belgium and Mondriaan Fund, the public fund for visual art and cultural heritage.

*Collection presentation***SLAVS AND TATARS**
Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi'ite Showbiz
28.01–30.04.2023

The project *Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi'ite Showbiz* (2011) by the artist collective Slavs and Tatars reveals the connection between Polish and Iranian heritage, more specifically that between the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and the Polish trade union movement Solidarność of the 1980s. Both events encapsulate major geopolitical narratives of the recent past: political Islam and communism. *Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi'ite Showbiz* reevaluates craft objects and practices as carriers of history, political emancipation and ideology.

*Collection presentation***DENMARK**
50 years of Dead Letters
28.01–30.04.2023

The oeuvre of Antwerp-based artist Denmark has for more than 50 years been a search for simplicity and essence. He recycles and transforms discarded information carriers such as books, magazines and newspapers into visual artworks. He wages a symbolic and existential battle against the incessant stream of opinions and news events in the mass media. To mark the 50th anniversary of his artistic career, M HKA is organising a collection presentation featuring four installations. One of the installations, Daily Dust, contains dust of pulverised printed matter and is displayed in the museum's reading room.

Archival presentation

MULTI / ART / PAPER / PRESS / GALLERY
Hommage to Paul Ibou & Liliane-Emma Staal
21.01– 30.04.2023

Multi-Art was a publishing house, gallery and art bookstore that became an increasingly influential avant-garde workshop. In 1969, Multi-Art Press International and Multi-Art Gallery & Bookshop were founded by spouses Paul Ibou (1939) and Liliane-Emma Staal (1939–2015). The couple developed a prominent visual language of their own, a very multifaceted graphic practice and a widely branched network. This archival exhibition at M HKA offers an insight into their practice through the presentation of 'multiples' (limited editions), photographs, posters, invitation cards, flyers, printed maps, brochures, calendars, and paper art objects.

INBOX

GALERIE RONNY VAN DE VELDE
The Five Seasons. Galerie Ronny Van de Velde. Fragments from life and works. Part 5:
Galerie Ronny Van de Velde
10.02–26.03.2023

For more than five decades, Antwerp art collector and art dealer Ronny Van de Velde has been organising pioneering and remarkable exhibition projects, which have made him one of Belgium's most important connoisseurs and defenders of a variety of artistic vanguards. This fifth and final installment in a series of small-scale presentations on the history of Galerie Ronny Van de Velde, presents a *wunderkammer* of works by artists who were of pivotal importance to the gallery, including Marcel Duchamp, James Ensor, the nineteenth-century Zwans, Marcel Broodthaers, Jules Schmalzigaug, Panamarenko, Henry Van de Velde and Bruce Nauman.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Dora García
She Has Many Names
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M HKA

Curated by Joanna Zielińska

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Opening Hours
TUE–SUN 11:00–18:00

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PUBLICATION

Inserts in Real Time: Dora García Performance Work 2000 - 2023

Dora García's exhibition is accompanied by the book *Inserts in Real Time: Dora García Performance Work 2000 - 2023*, co- published by M HKA and K. Verlag (Berlin) in May 2023. It constitutes an overview of the artist's performance-based works and gestures, as well as a new reading of some of her artworks through the lens of political engagement, feminism and queer theory.



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