

Exhibition: **H₂O. Gaetano Pesce.**
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern
15 September – 20 November

Curator: Consuelo Císcar

Sponsor: Fundación Astroc

The IVAM presents the exhibition *H₂O* by the architect-artist-designer Gaetano Pesce, an interdisciplinary project designed especially for a city on the Mediterranean like Valencia and focused entirely on a natural element: water.

In this exhibition, the Italian artist, one of the most visionary of today's designers, will construct a gigantic circuit dedicated to water, the only element that manifests itself in three different states: solid, liquid and gas, at which the visitors and their emotions become the protagonists of this unique proposal.

In this exhibition, Pesce deals with this element of nature in all its states and processes connected with water, like steam, ice, work, transport, food, as an atmospheric element, sound, hygiene and as a communication element.

In this way, the architect Pesce echoes the universal view of water, which appears throughout art history as a depository of human nature in all its conditions. In this large installation, Gaetano makes a reflection about the states of water, its properties and its possible dialectics, offering us a broad artistic representation of this natural asset.

As a life-giving element, water is the protagonist of a succession of expressive forms that range from the object to the concept, exploring from steam to sound, from its function in navigation support to an instrument of hygiene.

The exhibition route, made up of several stages, conveys fluidity, transparency, vaporisation, condensation, water as an instrument of life, sound, taste and smell. Water seems to be a suitable material for creation because of its versatility, since it permits a multiple, imaginative, multifarious use.

In his installation, Gaetano Pesce also addresses the need for rationality in its use and distribution; he represents not only the return to a primary element but the possibility of its scarcity, something that can affect anthropology.

In this way, the spectator will participate in the following: **Water as Steam**: against a blue-painted back wall, through some ninety tubes arranged in a grid, steam spouts out in different colours and with different perfumes. In **Water as Ice**: a structure of

refrigerating serpentines runs around the gallery, partly supported by coloured wires or resting on the floor, with ice forming on its surface. **Water as a Driving Force:** giant arms pour out a stream of water that falls into some receptacles, and from there it passes out to glass pipes in an endless cascade of water. **Water as Food:** visitors can taste instant soup served from an enormous cooker on tables placed around it. **Water as an Atmospheric Element:** the gallery at the end is cooled and snowdrops fall from the ceiling and form dunes coloured by changing lights. **Water as Sound:** rain falls from the ceiling onto different sized receptacles; the sound is amplified by loudspeakers and spectators can sit and listen in a dimly lighted ambience.

Gaetano Pesce (La Spezia, 1939) studied architecture and industrial design at Venice University. In 1959 he founded Group N in Padua, the protagonist of cultural exchange between groups of artists from Milan, Paris and several places in Germany. He has carried out research into serial and kinetic art. In 1962 he began to work on interior and furniture design (with a series of inflating pieces for Cassina & Busnelli, 1969). In 1971 he founded Bracciodiferro for the production of experimental objects. In 1972 he participated in the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* in the MoMA in New York and in the following years he undertook a broad range of projects in the field of architecture and the design of furniture and accessories. He now lives in New York and is an outstanding exponent of experimental design and an expert in the treatment of plastic materials.

The catalogue of the exhibition contains texts by Consuelo Císcar, Achile Bonito Oliva, Raquel Gutiérrez and poems by Jaime Siles.