

Exhibition: Fernando Sinaga: *The uncanny stanza*

IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern
From 21 June to 17 July, 2005

Curator: Fernando Castro
Organised by: IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

The exhibition by Fernando Sinaga, *La estancia inhóspita* (The uncanny stanza), curated by Fernando Castro, brings together 17 works including sculptures and photographs from the "Polaroid" series in which the artist explores shadows, death and the theme of *vanitas*, and "Contramundum", a series that refers to the aesthetics of the Baroque period. Also included is a video piece titled *El pozo de los humos*. The exhibition catalogue reproduces the pieces exhibited and previous works of Fernando Sinaga and includes texts by Consuelo Císcar, Fernando Castro, Fernando R. de la Flor and Raquel Gutiérrez.

The show, through its title, refers as much to the ways of living in relation to the essential, as to the Freudian determination of what is familiar-strange. If the subject is, in the experience of the sublime, an impotent witness, he may also, from the artistic dimension, try to shed light on something which is purely amorphous. After all, the work of art is also *uncanny*, that strange place where we may linger.

The exhibition consists of works from the series *Polaroids* that explores shadow, the *vanitas* – in many pieces the theme of the self-portrait very often appears in "dialogue" with the skull – a reflection upon death, the portrait and, indeed, the flash that reveals

the real. Together with these instant photographs are arranged some sculptures that also integrate the detained image and the piece titled *Contramundum*, (2002), in which reference is made to the Baroque and the idea of a playful circuit. Also presented is the video piece *El pozo de los humos* (2005).

The sculptor has worked with polaroids in an experimental process, carrying out different operations that allow, for example, the action of the light on the chemical surface while peeling the cover. A reaction is triggered that may *correspond* to what the artist is searching for; the encounter demands a work of selection and combination of one image with another. The use of polaroids as unified formal structures led the artist to confront linealities of this kind without using the principle of collage, but, on the contrary, by composing unified structures. Furthermore, the Polaroid allows him to use pure colour in itself, as a flat reality that had nothing to do with the visible reality, thus breaking the structure of photographic designation.

Fernando Sinaga (Zaragoza, 1951) is one of the most prestigious Spanish sculptors. His work has been characteristic for its investigation and search for a final and expressive result, like an encoded, compressed and synthetic formula. In his work exactitude is one of the possible denominations for the precision, the rigour of forms, of the urgency and the compositional need. Faced with the tendency towards the dematerialisation of the work of art, Fernando Sinaga reacts by defending the *sensitive quality of sculpture*, that is to say, its radical physicality. In his artistic trajectory the project that he made for the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró de Palma de Mallorca, *Agua amarga* (1996), stands out, in which he intensified his (self)reflexive process and opened new paths for his imaginative framework.

Fernando Sinaga has had important exhibitions in national and international galleries, with referential expositive projects such as *Agua amarga* (Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró de Palma de Mallorca, 1996), *Doble inverso* (Palacio de los Condes de Gabia, Granada, 1998), *Anamnesis* (Palacio de Revillagigedo, Gijón, 1999) or *Esculturas 1991-1999* (Sala América, Vitoria, 1999). He represented Spain in the *São Paulo Biennial* (1989) and in the Spanish Pavillion of the *Universal Exhibition of Hannover* (2000).