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# Museu del Disseny de Barcelona



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**PRESS KIT**

# 1

## Introduction

The new Museu del Disseny de Barcelona (Barcelona Design Museum) brings together the present, past and future of the arts of the object and design.



The Disseny Hub Barcelona building, which houses the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona

El Museu del Disseny de Barcelona és el gran museu de les arts de l'objecte i del disseny. És la seu d'un vast patrimoni de la ciutat, una gran col·lecció de col·leccions d'objectes amb un fons de més de 70.000 peces que tradicionalment s'han classificat sota la denominació d'arts decoratives o arts aplicades i que abracen del segle IV aC fins a l'actualitat, amb col·leccions úniques i de ressò internacional, com ara els teixits medievals, el vidre català esmaltat del segle XVI o la ceràmica de l'Alcora, entre d'altres. Aquestes arts de l'objecte enllacen amb les col·leccions de disseny del segle XX -de producte, gràfic i de moda- d'una manera natural. I finalment, aquestes col·leccions històriques d'arts decoratives es vinculen també de manera lògica amb les denominades arts contemporànies d'autor, aquelles expressions artístiques dels segles XX-XXI que adopten tècniques tradicionals, com ara la ceràmica, el vidre o l'esmalt.

La majoria són o han estat "objectes per viure", és a dir, propis de la vida quotidiana, personal o col·lectiva.

Així, el Museu del Disseny, inaugurat el 2014, conserva un triple patrimoni producte de la integració del que havien estat les col·leccions del Museu de les Arts Decoratives, el Museu de Ceràmica, el Museu Tèxtil i d'Indumentària i el Gabinet de les Arts Gràfiques de la ciutat.

El Museu del Disseny és el denominador comú de totes col·leccions i entre l'ahir i l'avui de l'objecte i tot el que significa o ha significat i aportat: des de la seva concepció, creació i producció fins al seu ús segons el temps i la societat, tant en l'etapa artesana i preindustrial com en la industrial o la digital.

El museu del Disseny vol ser un exponent de referència de la cultura de l'objecte a l'Estat, i a la vora de la seva funció de conservació patrimonial es proposa la reflexió crítica sobre l'experimentació actual envers una millor aplicació i ús del disseny. En aquest sentit, està molt atent al present que treballa i crea per al demà, Vol contribuir a descobrir i difondre aquells camins de la innovació que poden ser un veritable patrimoni social i cultural. Així, la vessant de recerca i experimentació impulsada pel Museu no es pot deslligar del patrimoni futur. El Museu planteja un programa d'exposicions temporals i activitats dedicades a temes que sorgeixen de l'observació i l'experimentació crítica sobre el present i el futur del disseny, una via permanentment oberta i sempre present en la programació, que vol recollir les darreres línies de pensament i acció del disseny plantejades arreu del món.

El Museu del Disseny de Barcelona disposa també d'un Centre de Documentació,

amb 20.000 llibres (publicats entre el segle XVI i l'actualitat), més de 3.000 títols de revistes i altres materials com catàlegs comercials, catàlegs de subhastes, guies de colors, llibres de tendències, fotografia antiga, gravats de moda i més de 30 arxius d'institucions, empreses i professionals del sector.

També forma part de l'oferta del Museu Disseny el projecte Pis-Museu de la Casa Bloc. habitatge 1/11 que es troba al barri de Sant Andreu. Símbol de l'arquitectura racionalista a Barcelona i paradigma de l'habitatge obrer dissenyat pel grup d'arquitectes Josep Lluís Sert, Josep Torres Clavé i Joan Baptista Subirana, sota l'ideari del GATCPAC (Grup d'Arquitectes i Tècnics Catalans per al Progrés de l'Arquitectura) L' habitatge 1/11 s'ha recuperat per tal de retornar-hi l'aspecte original i s'hi ofereixen visites guiades que permeten explicar la innovació que la Casa Bloc va suposar per a l'arquitectura i la societat del seu temps

# 2

## A building for a museum:

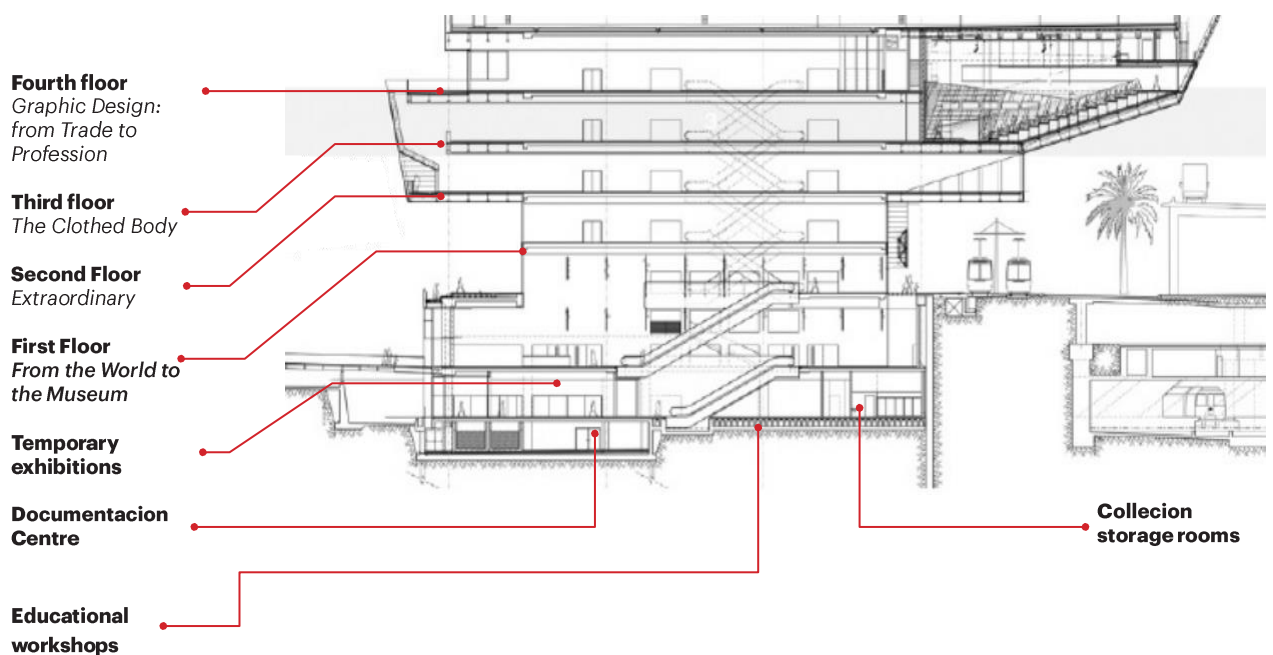
The Disseny Hub Barcelona building contains the following areas:

**6,000 m<sup>2</sup>** devoted to exhibitions (permanent and temporary)

**916 m<sup>2</sup>** to house the Documentation Centre

**2,000 m<sup>2</sup>** for storage and conservation of the collections

**160 m<sup>2</sup>** for educational workshops



The museum is housed in the Disseny Hub Barcelona building in Plaça de les Glòries. This building was designed by the MBM team of architects (Martorell, Bohigas, Mackay, Capdevila and Gual) specifically to conserve, exhibit and disseminate the museum's collections, which form an important part of our city's heritage. The building contains two different sections: an underground area (housed in space created by the split level created when the square was redeveloped); and 14.5-metre-high building above street level.

The permanent exhibitions occupy the four floors in the building above street level, whilst the basement houses the space devoted to exhibiting the museum heritage and conservation of the object and documentation collections (store rooms and Documentation Centre).

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# 3

## A new museography, flexible and plural

More than 70,000 objects

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Far from following a chronological discourse based on a conventional museography, featuring a single itinerary and a selection from all the collections, the exhibition spaces are used to illustrate the overall museum discourse in a plural, flexible way. Whilst fostering understanding of the collections, the museum suggests different readings of them through four permanent exhibitions of medium duration.

The fusion of the four museums previously devoted to the arts of the object in Barcelona into one multiplies the potential of their collections, expanding their discourse and opening up to a larger range of audiences and users. The diversity of this heritage permits broader readings, from the historic role of the arts of the object to the part they will play in future

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<b>Product design</b>	Furniture, lamps, electrical appliances, vehicles...
<b>Fashion design</b>	Contemporary and historic costumes, accessories
<b>Graphic design</b>	Posters, packaging, labels...
<b>Decorative arts</b>	Furniture, glass, gold and silver work, carriages, clocks, miniatures, leather hangings...
<b>Textile arts</b>	Tissues
<b>Graphic arts</b>	Wallpapers, dies and moulds...

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# 4

## The exhibitions

El Museu del Disseny s'inaugurà el 2014 amb un programa de quatre exposicions permanents. These are all in-house productions, conceived independently in accordance with the new museum discourse, which seeks a plural interpretation of the objects in the collection: from ceramics to clothing, from posters to furniture, both craft-made and mass-produced. There will be four permanent exhibitions featuring pieces from the collections, each running for five years. Catalogues will be published to accompany each exhibition.

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One of the underlying objectives of this first exhibition programme is to draw attention to the heritage value enshrined in the many different types of objects that once formed part of our everyday lives, perhaps even until quite recently, and which have now been integrated into the museum collection. How does this transition from everyday life to collection take place? What makes these objects so interesting?

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**The exhibitions will be housed on floors 1 to 4 in the main building:**

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<b>First floor</b>	DEL FROM THE WORLD TO THE MUSEUM. Product Design, Cultural Heritage
<b>Second floor</b>	EXTRAORDINARY! Decorative Arts and Author Art Collections (3rd-20th Centuries)
<b>Third floor</b>	THE CLOTHED BODY. Silhouettes and Fashion (1955-2015)
<b>Fourth floor</b>	GRAPHIC DESIGN: FROM TRADE TO PROFESSION (1940-1980)
<b>Floor B</b>	Temporary exhibitions

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**First floor** **From the World to the Museum**  
Product Design, Cultural Heritage



*Pedrera chair, 1955*

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<b>Content</b>	Product Design Collection
<b>Area</b>	537 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Number of pieces</b>	238
<b>Duration</b>	5 years
<b>Curator</b> <b>Assistant curators</b>	Pilar Vélez Teresa Bastardes and Rossend Casanova
<b>Exhibition design</b>	Lluís Pera
<b>Graphic design</b>	Lali Almonacid

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The Museu del Disseny de Barcelona conserves an industrial design collection formed by some 2,000 objects dating from 1930 to the present. Most of these objects were designed or produced in Catalonia. The exhibition seeks to show visitors why and how these objects reached the Museum and have become cultural heritage.

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**Second  
floor****Extraordinary!**

## Decorative and Author Arts Collections (13th-20th Centuries)

Panel *La xocolatada*, Catalonia, 1710

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<b>Content</b>	Collections of ceramics, furniture, glass, fabrics, clocks, bobbin lace, fans, leather hangings, endpapers and wallpaper; and collections of 20th-century author art (ceramics, glass, enamel and jewellery).
<b>Area</b>	954 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Number of pieces</b>	1,106
<b>Duration</b>	5 years
<b>Curator</b>	Pilar Vélez
<b>Assistant curator</b>	Teresa Bastardes
<b>Exhibition design</b>	Ignasi Bonjoch and Marta Moliner. Estudi Bonjoch
<b>Graphic design</b>	Anna Catasús. Estudi Bonjoch

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This exhibition brings together the most representative and/or outstanding collections of ceramics, fabrics, furniture, glassware, miniatures, clocks, wallpaper and so on to form a single discourse. It will feature collections not shown to the public for some time, along with singular works recovered from the Museum's most recondite storage rooms. The result is a journey through the history of the decorative arts and their collection in Catalonia and a "rediscovery" of the superb collections of the arts of the object in the city of Barcelona.



## Third floor **The Clothed Body**

### Silhouettes and Fashion (1550-2015)



Dress, 1958



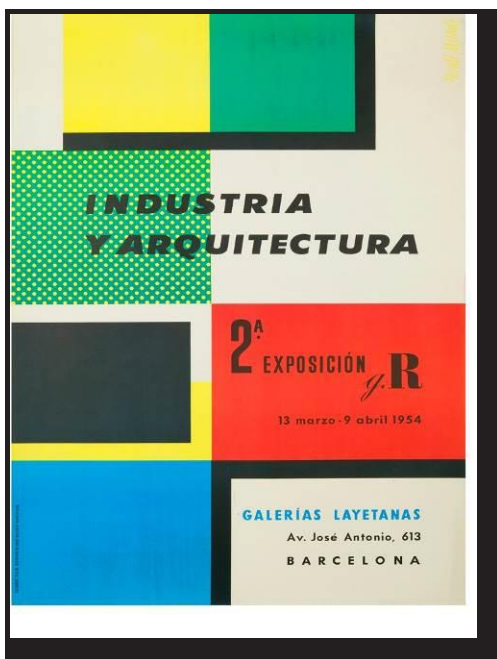
Crinoline, c. 1850

<b>Content</b>	Clothing and fashion collections
<b>Area</b>	657 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Number of pieces</b>	173
<b>Duration Curators</b>	5 years
<b>Exhibition design</b>	Teresa Bastardes and Sílvia Ventosa.
<b>Graphic design</b>	Julia Schulz-Dornburg, in cooperation with Eugenia Troncoso AAAA. Pere Canals i Daniel Pujal

Rather than merely presenting the collection of clothing from the 16th century to the present, whether by chronological order or by designer, this exhibition explores the relationship between clothes and the body, a relationship that has not always remained the same over the centuries. From the 16th century to the present, clothes have alternately compressed or freed, stylised or conferred volume. The Clothed Body illustrates how far the dictates of fashion can impose conditions of servitude or slavery. El 2017 es revisa i amplia l'exposició amb la incorporació de peces significatives de moda espanyola de la contemporaneïtat, des dels anys 90 fins l'actualitat amb 12 vestits nous i 7 dissenyadors que van entrar a col·lecció del Museu. S'incorporen nous models de dissenyadors que ja hi tenien peces com Sibylla, Ailanto i Miriam Ponsa i s'incorporen a l'exposició dissenyadors com Lydia Delgado, Carlota Oms, Isometric, Emilio de la Morena, Krizia Robustella, Brain&Beast, Celia Vela i Armand Basi. També es va reeditar el catàleg

**Fourth  
floor**

**Graphic Design:**  
From Trade to Profession (1940-1980)



Poster *Industria y Arquitectura 2.ª Exposición g.R.*, 1954



Poster *Tintes Iberia*, 1950

<b>Content</b>	Graphic Design Collection
<b>Area</b>	532 m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Number of pieces</b>	554
<b>Duration Curator</b>	4 years
<b>Exhibition design</b>	Anna Calvera and Pilar Vélez
<b>Graphic design</b>	BOPBAA Arquitectes. Josep Bohigas Arnau, Francesc Pla Ferrer, Iñaki Baquero Riazuelo

Malva García. Clase bcn

This exhibition, dedicated to the pioneers of graphic design, is based on graphic arts collections recently acquired by the museum. In it, posters, a range of advertising materials, both 2D and 3D, packaging and books illustrate the evolution from the commercial artist (advertising draftsman or poster painter) to the graphic artist and, subsequently, the graphic designer. The production context changes, and the trade becomes a profession. This will be the first in a series of exhibitions that will encompass the entire spectrum of graphic design, from the 1940s to the present. **La segona, prevista pel 2018, es dedicarà al disseny gràfic dels anys 80.**

# 5

## Pis-Museu de la Casa Bloc, Habitatge 1/11

La Casa Bloc és un edifici d'habitatges per obrers construït entre 1932 i 1939, considerat un símbol de l'arquitectura racionalista a Barcelona.

El Museu del Disseny de Barcelona ha museïtzat un dels seus pisos amb l'objectiu de retornar-li l'estructura i l'aspecte original que havia perdut amb el temps i obrir-lo al públic per tal d'explicar la novetat que va suposar el seu plantejament ara fa més de vuitanta anys.



Menjador Pis-Museu de la Casa Bloc. Foto Lourdes Jansana

El **Pis-Museu de la Casa Bloc** (1932-1939), situat al barri barcelonès de Sant Andreu, és un edifici d'habitatges per a obrers impulsat per l'Administració catalana en l'època de la Segona República (1931-1939). Va ser dissenyat pel grup d'arquitectes **Josep Lluís Sert, Josep Torres Clavé i Joan Baptista Subirana**, sota l'ideari del **GATCPAC (Grup d'Arquitectes i Tècnics Catalans per al Progrés de l'Arquitectura)**, que apostava per una nova arquitectura de qualitat i adequada als nous temps. L'any 1933 es va posar la primera pedra de la Casa Bloc, l'edifici d'habitatges impulsat per la Generalitat de Catalunya amb l'objectiu d'allotjar els obrers més necessitats amb una nova arquitectura de qualitat, adequada als nous temps i a les necessitats bàsiques de les persones.

Considerat avui un **símbol de l'arquitectura racionalista a Barcelona**, va representar doncs una nova forma de pensar l'habitatge per als més necessitats, i també d'entendre en clau local els plantejaments que aleshores, a nivell internacional, estaven trencant amb la vella tradició i apostaven per noves solucions. Idees com la practicitat, l'economia d'espais i de materials, la socialització o l'atenció envers la comunitat varen prendre forma en una nova lògica constructiva que es materialitzà en aquesta casa, **paradigma de l'habitatge obrer.**

Ara s'ha recuperat un dels seus habitatges per tal de retornar-hi l'aspecte original. **La visita guiada a aquest habitatge 1/11 permet explicar la innovació que la Casa Bloc va suposar per a l'arquitectura i la societat del seu temps.**

El gener de 2010, l'Institut Català del Sòl (INCASÒL) i l'Institut de Cultura de Barcelona (ICUB) van signar un conveni per a museïtzar l'Habitatge 1/11 de la Casa Bloc. La iniciativa tenia per objectiu retornar-li l'estructura i l'aspecte original que havia perdut amb el temps i obrir-lo al públic per tal d'explicar la novetat que va suposar el seu plantejament ara fa vuitanta anys.

L'INCASÒL i l'ICUB a través del Museu del Disseny de Barcelona van treballar conjuntament en aquest projecte, el primer en la part arquitectònica i el segon en la part documental i museogràfica. El propòsit ha tingut dos vessants: per una banda, un de reparador, consistent a retirar de l'Habitatge 1/11 tot allò que els seus estadants hi havien afegit durant anys i que desvirtuava la idea original, i a restituir allò que realment hi havia quan l'edifici va ser construït. Per altra banda, un vessant explicatiu, que dóna a conèixer les seves característiques (des dels materials fins als usos) i el que va significar l'immoble en l'arquitectura i la societat de la seva època.

## **INFORMACIÓ SOBRE LES VISITES GUIADES**

### **Horaris:**

Dissabtes a les 11h

Imprescindible reserva prèvia

Les visites de grups han de concertar dia i hora

Durada visita guiada: 1 h 30 min

Amb cadira de rodes només és accessible la planta baixa del dúplex.

Visites individuals: 4€ per persona.

Visites de grups: 60 €/grup. Màxim 15 persones/grup.

### **Informació i reserves:**

T. 93 2566801 (de dim a dv. de 10 a 13h, dj. de 15 a 17.30h)

E. reservesmuseudeldisseny@eicub.net

W. museudeldisseny.barcelona.cat

### **Lloc:**

Museu del Disseny de Barcelona – Casa Bloc

C. de l'Almirall Pròixida amb el Pg. de Torras i Bages

Preus

[Imatges per a premsa](#)

[Més informació web del Museu](#)

# 6

## Centre de Documentació

El Centre de Documentació del Museu del Disseny és un **espai de consulta i recerca especialitzat en arts decoratives i disseny** (gràfic, industrial, tèxtil, d'espais, de moda i de serveis). Té per objectiu **reunir i preservar** informació i documentació relacionada amb totes aquestes matèries, **difondre-la i posar-la al servei de professionals i investigadors**, amb la voluntat d'oferir un suport a l'estudi, la recerca, la creació, la reflexió, els processos d'innovació i la crítica especialitzada.

El Centre de Documentació vol ser un espai de referència a Barcelona posant a l'abast del públic especialitzat (investigadors, professionals i estudiants de disseny) tots els fons documentals del Museu i treballant de forma activa en la conservació del patrimoni documental i la recerca d'arxius de professionals, empreses i institucions relacionades amb el disseny.

Situat a la planta -1 de l'edifici, amb una superfície de 916 m<sup>2</sup>, exhibeix a la seva entrada materials pertanyents a alguns dels fons o de les col·leccions que conserva. Tota l'àrea pública se centralitza en un taulell que serveix de punt d'informació, referència i control i que es troba situat a la sala de consulta, de 389 m<sup>2</sup>, amb més de 40 punts de lectura. També en aquest espai es troben, a disposició dels usuaris, els 628 m lineals d'informació bibliogràfica especialitzada i un espai de 110 m<sup>2</sup> destinats a la consulta de revistes del sector. Els fons d'arxiu i les col·leccions especials es poden consultar en una sala de 67m<sup>2</sup> amb 16 punts de treball.

En aquest espai, de lliure accés, l'usuari té a la seva disposició més de **20.000 llibres (publicats entre el segle XVI i l'actualitat), més de 3.000 títols de revistes i altres materials com catàlegs comercials, catàlegs de subhastes, guies de colors, llibres de tendències, fotografia antiga, gravats de moda i més de 30 arxius d'institucions, empreses i professionals del sector.**

El Centre de Documentació ofereix **serveis gratuïts de préstec i reserva de documents, préstec interbibliotecari, d'informació bibliogràfica sobre el seu fons així com assistència i assessorament en el procés de cerca d'informació.** Amb l'objectiu de donar suport a la recerca professional, el Centre ha iniciat uns serveis d'accés a llibres de tendències en color, estampats, interiorisme, moda, producte per a les properes temporades i de temporades anteriors, així com guies de colors, bases de dades especialitzades i revistes digitals. Aquests serveis, facilitats previ pagament d'una quota anual de 50 €, també inclouen l'ampliació del període de préstec de llibres, revistes i DVD fins a 28 dies, renovables dos cops.

El centre obre també «Espais de Coneixement» en algunes de les exposicions temporals del museu; es tracta d'àrees de consulta on els visitants disposen de llibres, revistes o material audiovisual relacionat amb les exposicions i on poden obtenir el carnet d'usuari i fins i tot endur-se documents en préstec.

El Centre de Documentació impulsa cada any una **Jornada de Creativitat i Tendències**, on es convida a professionals i agències de tendències internacionals a compartir informació sobre les noves tendències creatives, i on el museu mostra alguns dels seus propis recursos i col·leccions, posant-los al servei dels nous processos de creació i disseny.

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El Centre de Documentació del Museu del disseny vol ser un espai obert de coneixement i reflexió per entendre el passat, el present i el futur del disseny i és per això que també és un espai polivalent on es poden realitzar presentacions de llibres, debats, conferències o taules rodones que permetin intercanviar opinions i enriquir el coneixement de totes aquelles persones interessades en el disseny.

### **Centre de Documentació**

Museu del Disseny de Barcelona

Edifici Disseny Hub Barcelona

Plaça de les Glòries Catalanes, 37-38

08018 Barcelona

Tel +34 93 256 68 30

documentacio.mdb@bcn.cat

<http://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/museudeldisseny/ca/centredoc>

Horaris: Dimarts i dimecres de 10 a 20 h.

Dijous de 15 a 20 h.

Divendres de 10 a 15 h.

Tancat de l'1 al 31 d'agost

[Més informació sobre el servei](#)



El Museu del Disseny ha desplegat un programa regular d'activitats educatives, generals i familiars. El programa compren: visites guiades a les exposicions permanents d'arts decoratives i disseny, serveis educatius adreçats a escoles, activitats familiars, jornades, cicles de conferències, cursos especialitzats, tallers i presentacions públiques d'increment dels fons, entre d'altres.

El Centre de Documentació és també un espai d'activitats pròpies, relacionades amb els projectes del Museu.

### **ACTIVITATS**

El programa d'activitats del Museu del Disseny que produeix directament o en col·laboració d'altres agents engloba diferents tipologies: les visites guiades, les activitats familiars, tallers i casals, conferències i presentacions, jornades i festivals, cursos, accions per l'accessibilitat i altres.

### **Visites guiades**

El programa de visites guiades s'articula a l'entorn de les exposicions permanents, les exposicions temporals i les visites guiades al Pis Museu-Casa Bloc.

Exposicions permanents: dissabtes a les 12:30 i per grups amb reserva prèvia.

Exposicions temporals, també adaptades a grups d'accessibilitat

Pis-Museu Casa Bloc: dissabtes a les 11 h i per grups amb reserva prèvia.



PIS-MUSEU DE LA CASA BLOC. Visites guiades

### **Activitats familiars**

El Museu del Disseny impulsa diferents propostes per disposar d'un programa estable d'activitats familiars. Aquestes propostes s'adrecen a famílies amb criatures fins als 12 anys i estan lligades tant a les exposicions permanents com a les temporals.



Serveis educatius Activitats Familiars

### **Conferències, xerrades, presentacions, tallers adreçats a públics especialitzats**

Cicles de conferències en relació a les exposicions temporals, conferències divulgatives o presentacions de llibres en relació a objectes o patrimoni relacionat amb les col·leccions del museu, xerrades impulsades amb la col·laboració d'escoles i institucions, així com xerrades divulgatives en relació al disseny.



Curs Introducció a la història del vestit

### **Jornades i festivals**

Jornades i festivals, de producció pròpia o en col·laboració, que concentren una programació científica o professional relacionada amb els sectors, indústries o processos d'innovació i creativitat propis del disseny.



Jornada Disseny per Viure



Jornada de Creativitat i Tendències

### **SERVEIS EDUCATIUS:**

Els serveis educatius del Museu plantegen cada curs tallers específics adreçats als alumnes d'educació infantil, primària, ESO, batxillerat i cicles formatius. La proposta de visites taller s'adequa als diferents nivells escolars i la metodologia es basa a aprendre fent, d'una manera pràctica i vivencial. L'objectiu es iniciar els alumnes en temes d'innovació i experimentació en els sectors d'influència del disseny per formar ciutadans que consumeixin de manera responsable i crítica.



Serveis educatius. Tallers per escoles



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# 8

## Useful information

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### Opening times

#### Exhibitions at the museum

Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 am to 8 pm

Closed: January 1, May 1, June 24 and December 25, and Mondays (except holidays)

#### Documentation Centre

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 10 am to 8 pm; Thursdays, from 3 to 8 pm; Fridays, from 10 am to 3 pm

Closed: all holidays and August 1-31

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### Prices

Permanent exhibitions: general admission, € 5; reduced admission, € 3

**Free admission** (with the appropriate accreditation): minors under 16 years; holders of the free Targeta Rosa "Pink Card" for senior citizens; members of ICOM (International Council of Museums); members of the Association of Museologists of Catalonia; professional tourist guides exercising their profession; formal education teachers accredited by school management; formal education teachers when accompanying groups of students; holders of the metropolitan pass for carers of people with disabilities; journalists, duly accredited; holders of the Barcelona Card.

**Reduced admission prices** (with the appropriate accreditation): unemployed people; holders of the reduced Targeta Rosa "Pink Card" for senior citizens; families, with a maximum of two accompanying adults, on condition that one is the father, the mother or the legal guardian (there must be at least one member under the age of 16 years); holders of Família Nombrosa large family cards; holders of Família Monoparental single-parent family cards; people aged from 16 to 29 years; people aged 65 years or more; holders of the Biblioteques de Barcelona

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### How to get here

**Metro:** Line 1 (Glòries)

**Bus:** Lines 7, 92, 192, H12

**Tram:** Trambesòs T5, T6 - La Farinera

**Bicing:** Av. Meridiana - Metro Glòries Bicing station

**Parking:** Ona Glòries (C/ Ciutat de Granada, 173-175), Centre Comercial Glòries (Av. Diagonal, 208)

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# 9

## Contact

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### Offices

Tel. +34 932 566 800  
museudeldisseny@bcn.cat  
www.museudeldisseny.cat  
facebook.com/museudeldisseny  
twitter.com/museudeldisseny

### Documentation Centre

documentacio.mcb@bcn.cat  
Tel. +34 932 566 830  
twitter.com/dissenydoc

### Communication

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# Journey through the four permanent exhibitions





Leading, innovative, artisanal, personalized, confronting, ergonomic, popular, evocative...

## From the World to the Museum, everyday objects which have made history

**238 objects have been selected from the collection of the Museu del Disseny. They represent different design stages, from the time of GATCPAC through to today. They take in the crucial moments and present the designers and companies which have driven design in Catalonia and Spain. They are arranged following three great concepts which are valid for all times and all styles: the capacity of objects to become a reference, the exploration of materials and social context. This is a large exhibition of industrial design, didactic and dynamic, which is the result of the work carried out by the Museu de les Arts Decoratives in the last twenty-five years, with designers and companies, to show together the most important exhibits, those which have had most impact and most international projection, and to construct the narrative of industrial design in Catalonia. Pilar Vélez, director of the Museu del Disseny, has curated the exhibition, together with Teresa Bastardes and Rossend Casanova. The museography of Lluís Pera establishes milestones and reference points in each space, and presents the exhibits to form part of a whole. In the background is the question: What is it that makes certain objects we have at home, in the office or in the factory, become part of our cultural heritage?**



BKF Chair, 1938



Oil dispensers, c.1961, Rafael Marquina Audouard

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**Reference.** The first space contains exhibits which have become exponents of good design, prototypes of success, personalized designs and leading designs.

The anti-drip oil dispensers (1961) designed by Rafael Marquina are the Catalan-made industrial design piece most copied around the world. Why this success? The first and main reason is the efficacy of the design; but also its beauty, the suitability of the form to the function for which they were designed, the surprise its outline causes, so different from the usual shape of oil dispensers, with bloated body and curved spout. Aseptic (they sometimes resemble a laboratory flask), clean, modern and elegant, they have entered the museum, but they have never disappeared from shops and homes.

Another outstanding example in this section is the BKF chair (1938), by Bonet Castellana, Ferrari-Hardoy and Kurchan. The prototype is exhibited here. No one would say it's from 1938! It is now known internationally and has become an icon of modernity. And the *Pedrera* chair (1955), designed by Barba Corsini for the attic apartments in the casa Milà, illustrates the third concept: pieces commissioned for a particular place, which have created great interest and later been mass produced.

Finally, the Minipimer food mixer *MR1 G.* (1959), designed by Gabriel Lluelles, shows the impact of design which offers new solutions and improves the usual use of a particular object. In food mixers from the forties and fifties the processor blade formed part of the bowl where the food was mixed, and was very difficult to wash. Lluelles took the blade out of the bowl, added an arm to it —“the third arm”, as it was called in the publicity— and changed mixer design forever.

**Materials.** The second space in the exhibition examines materials: innovative, artisanal, versatile, confronting, ergonomic and functional.

It presents a very up to date case of new materials and manufacturing systems: the platinum silicone kitchen utensils made by the company Lékué. And, next to innovation, the recuperation of traditional techniques and the possibility of adapting design to the requirements of different users. Ergonomics is on the rise: ergonomic objects adapt to the physical build of the user and offer maximum comfort. The utilitarian and practical value of design is shown, with functionality adapted to everyday life. And at the other extreme constructional challenges, the designs which confront the laws of equilibrium and statics.

Concepts and objects converse in the rooms of the Museu del Disseny: an *Orbea Grow* bicycle (2012), of the latest generation and a futurist design, and in front of it a *Samuro* chest of drawers (1989), by J. Tresserra, made of walnut and brass, of timeless beauty; the *Calder* light (1975), by Enric Franch, which if you look you are not sure how it holds up; and the very comfortable *Neko* revolving armchair (1999), which is firm and light, by Josep Llusçà.

The visitor comes out with the idea that there is no one reason for the success of a good design.

**Context.** The third space looks at design in its social context. Professional recognition, popularity, attention to ecological criteria, the capacity of design to play with visual memory and evoke forms and sensations with nostalgia and irony.

The *Toledo* chair (1988), by Jorge Pensi, has won prizes in Barcelona, Stuttgart and Madrid, and has been included among the furniture in large spaces linked to design, such as the Vitra Museum in Berlin and the Opera House in Sydney. The *TMC* light, by Miguel Milà, first produced in 1960, is still being sold today and can be seen in many places; it is a perfect example of a design object which people have made their own and has become very popular. The mixer tap by Ramon Benedito (1991) encourages rational water consumption. Finally, the *Garriri* chair (1986), by Mariscal has the ear shape recalling Mickey Mouse, reinterpreted in artwork and underground comics by Mariscal himself in the seventies.

Around these star exhibits, a Seat *Ibiza* car, lights, chairs, ashtrays, the Barcelona 92 Olympic torch by André Ricard, cutlery from El Bulli, a spectacular polyester chair in pop style by Jordi Galí, small electrical goods, cologne bottles, an *Impala* motorcycle by Leopoldo Milá, door knobs, the *Catalano* bench by Oscar Tusquets, a self-service cart, syringes, table lights, a rug by Nani Marquina, clothes hangers, stools, a knitting machine, an iron by Santiago Pey, a bicycle stand by Lagranja and Santa & Cole: a whole universe of objects which are functional, beautiful, rational and evocative. They speak of the great transformation that design has introduced into people's lives throughout the 20th century right up to the present day.

## Outstanding pieces

### Exhibition *From the World to the Museum*

[Download images](#)

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#### REFERENCE

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#### **Oil dispensers, 1961**

**Rafael Marquina Audouard (1921-2013)**

Donated by Nani Marquina. Diseño y Promoción SL, 1994  
MADB 135.612 and MADB 135.613



#### **Chair**

*BKF, 1938*

**Grupo Austral: Antoni Bonet Castellana (1913-1989), Juan Kurchan (1913-1972) and Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy (1914-1977)**

Donated by Victòria Bonet, 1994  
MADB 135.390



#### **Chair**

*Pedreña, 1955*

**Francisco Juan Barba Corsini (1916-2008)**

Donated by Galeria H2O, 1994  
MADB 135.431



#### **Hand blender**

*MR1, 1959*

**Gabriel Lluelles Rabadà (1923-2012)**

Donated by Carmen Barreda Campoy, 1994  
MADB 135.611

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#### MATERIALS

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#### **Steam roaster, 2011**

**COMPEIXALAIGUA Designstudio (Barcelona, 2006): Ruth Pérez (1977) and Xavier Flores (1975)**

Donated by Lékué SL, 2011  
MADB 138.814





### **Chest of drawers with double body**

*Samuro, 1989*

**Jaume Tresserra (1943)**

Donated by Tresserra Collection, SL, 1995  
MADB 135.878

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### **Bicycle**

*Orbea Grow 2, 2011*

**Àlex Fernandez Camps (1972)**

Donated by Àlex Fernández Camps, 2012  
MADB 138.892

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### **Table light**

*Calder, 1975*

**Enric Franch Miret (1943)**

Donated by Metalarte SA, 1994  
MADB 135.401

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### **Revolving armchair**

*Neko, 1999*

**Josep Llusçà (1948)**

Donated by Oken SA, 2002  
MADB 136.764

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### **Ice tongs, 1964**

**André Ricard Sala (1929)**

Donation, 1994  
MADB 135.414

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## **CONTEXT**

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### **Armchair**

*Toledo, 1988*

**Jorge Pensi (1946)**

Donated by Amat, Muebles para Colectividades SA, 1996  
MADB 136.138



**Footlamp**  
*TMC, 1960*  
**Miguel Milà (1931)**

Donated by the Campi Valls family, 1994  
MADB 135.619

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**Mixer tap for washbasin**  
*Lógica, 1991*  
**Ramon Benedito (1945)**

Donated by the Compañía Roca Radiadores SA, 1995  
MADB 135.771

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**Chair**  
*Garriri, 1987*  
**Javier Mariscal (1950)**

Donated by Akaba SA, 1999  
MADB 136.566

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**1,300 exhibits explain the relationship between Barcelona and objects, their creation and social function: from user to collector**

## **Decorative Arts and Author Art: the city heritage as it has never been seen before**

**Barcelona has an exceptional collection devoted to the object as art, with pieces from all eras, types and materials. It is witness to the work of creators from the Middle Ages to the present day. It gives an insight into the past and present inhabitants of Barcelona, from different points of view: how they lived, how they related to different cultural traditions, the importance in their everyday lives of aesthetics and fashions. Extraordinary! Decorative Arts and Author Art Collections (3rd-20th centuries) is not just a great exhibition devoted to the life of materials, the most complete, dynamic and interdisciplinary ever presented in our city: it is a plunge into a world of forms, techniques and manufactures, linking past and present, artisanal workshops with the studios of artists who in modern times have tackled the object as art. This is an illuminating journey through the beauty of singular pieces and spectacular selections, assembled by Ignasi Bonjoch and presented in themed glass cabinets. Each exhibit shines on its own, and taken together they form a narrative of the history of sensitivity, cultural and urban history. The curator of the exhibition, Pilar Vélez, has created a dynamic narrative, with agile counterpoints enabling the dialogue of works and authors.**



Berlin carriage, Majorca c. 1750



Chest with drawers. *The birth and the Epiphany*, Barcelona, 1525-1550

*Extraordinary! Decorative Arts and Author Art Collections (3rd-20th Centuries)* hopes Barcelona will realise it has a unique legacy which has grown over many years, and has the capacity to create new heritages. The exhibition shows 1,300 exhibits which are a synthesis of the four museums which come together in the Museu del Disseny: the Museu de les Arts Decoratives, the Museu de Ceràmica, the Museu Tèxtil i d'Indumentària and the Gabinet de les Arts Gràfiques. A flexible museography has been created, integrating the different collections, emphasising the great exhibits and bringing to light little known works, some of which had not been seen since before the war. The discourse connects the decorative arts with contemporary author arts, which have as their most visible and known landmarks the great artistic figures of the 20th century, Picasso and Miró, who developed their personal world via the traditional forms of potters, brought up to date now by contemporary ceramicists such as Suzanne and George Ramié and Llorens Artigas.

The graphics in the exhibition are also the work of the studio of Ignasi Bonjoch: they play with textures and filigrees which transmit a taste for the ornamental and the decorative, in a composition which transmits the idea of meticulousness and variety. This graphic exhibit accompanies a documentary section including the history of the

decorative arts collections of Barcelona from the Universal Exposition of 1888, and is the entrance to the rooms. The exhibits are arranged in chronological order inside the exhibition. At the same time it is themed into types and styles. The journey begins with the collection of Coptic, medieval and Hispano-Arab fabrics, one of the most important in the world with materials and clothing of subtle and delicate beauty. The tunic of the suit of Saint Valerie is outstanding: a piece of cloth with wide open sleeves which was placed over the alb, used by the deacons and subdeacons who attended the bishop of Barcelona in ecclesiastical ceremonies. This exhibit from the 13th century is of interest because it retains a previous fragment of Hispano-Arab fabric as a decorative addition, with a geometric design showing the original colour and textures. More than fifty specialists in all disciplines formed a restoration team to carry out a task lasting many months with rigour and sensitivity.

The transformations of some objects into others, the reusing of decorative elements following changes in taste and fashions, are constants in *Extraordinary! Decorative Arts and Author Art Collections (3rd-20th Centuries)*. For example, in the exceptional collection of late Gothic bridal chests (from the end of the 15th century and the 16th century), which have also been carefully restored, unknown elements appeared when removing the paint which covered them. It was obvious that in many cases they reused fragments of altarpieces with paintings, which were given a new use. Now we may look at these paintings whilst we admire the wood work and marquetry. The exhibits speak of the everyday life of the men and women who lived in Barcelona centuries ago and allow the visitor to enter the domestic lives of well-off families.

Thirty-five singular exhibits which explain the Barcelonese passion for objects

The collection which the Junta de Museus acquired from the industrialist, politician and collector Lluís Plandiura in 1932 (for a fee of seven and a half million pesetas: a fortune for the time, leading to many raised eyebrows) forms the basis of the decorative arts collections in the city. One of the star exhibits in the ceramics section is the Sant Jordi panel from the Catalan Renaixença from the Palau de la Generalitat. It was originally part of the legacy of this great collector.

35 singular exhibits have been chosen from the journey, which offer us a picture of the decorative arts as a whole: artistic value, social value and standing, techniques, materials and manufacture. Some of these works have a history appearing as narrative. This is the case of the banner of Sant Ot, an example of Romanesque embroidery, made by or for a woman: Elisava. Her name appears on the embroidery, and for this reason she is considered the first designer. The school of design created in 1961 took her name.

Next to it a sideboard by Jaume Roig, rescued from the storerooms, which had not been exhibited for years. It was used to store the household crockery in a highly effective decorative setting. This modality of furnishing has given its name to the Saló del Tinell in the Palau Reial Major in Barcelona. The piece shown in the Museu del Disseny was located at the top of a staircase.

La xocolatada is a ceramic panel from the beginning of the 18th century attributed to Llorenç Passolas. It came from a property belonging to Francesc Amat, count of Castellar. As well as the interest due to the way the pottery is made and the painting of the tiles, it is witness to the life of the Catalan nobility from the 17th to 18th centuries, and the way they spent their leisure time. Bullfighting was fashionable and chocolate was a passion.

From the pottery of Alcora to Picasso

Two extraordinary selections of ceramics and glass present rare and highly attractive exhibits: ceramics from Alcora and Catalan green vitreous enamel. They are situated in large glass cabinets and create a scenic effect. The assembly plays with the variety of materials, techniques and formats, and next to these delicate exhibits is a mobile bed made in Barcelona in the 19th century, and an extraordinary piece of bronze marquetry with scenes depicting the French war. Bobbin lace and beds from Olot, fans

and painted papers, calico and golden bowls. Also a baroque brazier from the Saló de Cent, a Modernist dressing table chair by Joan Busquets with brass by Antoni Fons, a lacquered deco window shutter by Ramon Sarsanedas and an extraordinary writing desk, also deco, the work of Santiago Marco.

With these exhibits which introduce us to the 20th century the visitor transitions between the decorative arts and author arts. In the last section we can see ceramics and glasswork by Xavier Nogués, ceramics by Cumella and Llorens Artigas, Picasso and Miró, enamels and a collection which depicts the great transformation undergone by jewellery in the last hundred years. A photo frieze encircles the glass cabinets and explains the development of author arts, with a homage to schools and teachers, and a recognition of the contribution of collectors: Pascó, Cabot, Gómez Novella, Plandiura, Rocamora, Muntadas, Estany, Roviralta and Amades, who laid the foundations on which the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona now stands.

One of the novelties of the exhibition is that all the exhibits can be consulted online from home. At the same time a catalogue has been prepared with reproductions and texts about the exhibits and the history of the collections of decorative arts now in the Museu del Disseny. We should also mention the restoration work carried out, which has affected all the exhibits in the exhibition and has involved specialists from all fields: this allows us to see the collection in all its beauty, as it had never been seen before.

## Outstanding pieces

### Exhibition *Extraordinary!*

[Download images](#)

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#### 1. Singular

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##### **Banner *Penó de Sant Ot*** **La Seu d'Urgell, 1095-1122**

Inscription ELIs/AVA/MEF/CIT (Elisava me fecit)  
Donated by la Junta de Museus, 1918  
MTIB 49422



##### **Panel *La xocolatada*** **Barcelona, 1710**

Bequeathed by Joaquim de Càrcer, Marquis of Castellbell, 1923  
MADB 52.770



##### **Chest** **Barcelona (?), 14th century**

Donated by la Junta de Museus, 1932  
MADB 3.922



##### **Berlin carriage** **Majorca, c. 1750**

MADB 2.952



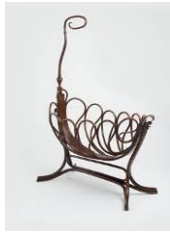
##### **Heater** **Germany, 1890-1900**

Donated by Fausta Furlan, 1994  
MADB 154.642



##### **Cabinet table** **Barcelona, 1898**

Joan Busquets i Jané (1874-1949)  
MADB 8.694



**Cradle Número 3**  
**Àustria, 1890**

Jacob & Josef Kohn (1867-1922), producció  
Donated by ESPAI CORBAT, 2010  
MADB 138.701

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**Dressing table**  
**Barcelona, 1902**

Joan Busquets i Jané (1874-1949)  
MADB 138.660

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**Shutter *La Creació***  
**Barcelona, 1929**

Ramon Sarsanedas Oriol (1896-1987), lacquerer  
Francesc d'A. Galí Fabra (1880-1965), artist  
MADB 135.344

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**2. Col·leccions**

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**Chest with drawers. *El Naixement i l'Epifania***  
**Barcelona, 1525-1550**

MADB 64.155

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**3. Arts d'autor**

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**Glass and plate, 1929**  
**Xavier Nogués (1873-1941), with Ricard Crespo (1891-1949)**

Enamelled mold-blown glass  
Bequeathed by de Santiago Espona, 1958  
MADB 65.662





**173 dresses and frames, from the 16th century to present day creators, explain how clothes model the body**

## **Dressing the Body unravels the fashion system**

**Dressing the Body. Silhouettes and Fashion (1550-2015) is an exhibition on the development of forms and how clothing models the body. It has the rigour of the exposition of a thesis, the spectacle of a great scenic mise en scene and its own tone which allows the visitor to plunge into the history of clothes and the ideas behind outlines, which change with the times. The basis of the historical collection is the extraordinary donation of dresses by Manuel Rocamora (1969), heritage of the city of Barcelona, from which we can see 58 exhibits. The collection has been updated in recent years to include the works of the latest creators and the latest fashion tendencies. Despite the years and centuries since they were put together, the 111 dresses and 62 inner frames we can see in the exhibition shine as if they were new. A meticulous restoration has recuperated and made visible colours and patterns. Sílvia Ventosa and Teresa Bastardes have curated this exhibition. Assembly was carried out under Julia Schulz-Dornburg, with the collaboration of Eugenia Troncoso. A series of audiovisuals by PROXI.ME. Christian Schärmer and Rein Steger, help explain concepts related to each era in simple, concise and educational language.**



Dress, Asunción Bastida, Barcelona, 1956



Court dress, France, c. 1760

The beginning of the exhibition explains five basic actions which have been used to modify the body's appearance throughout the history of the dress: to widen (through frilly necks, exaggerated busts, pumpkin culottes and puffed out frontispieces, frills and bows), to reduce (through tight bodices and corsets), to lengthen (with wigs and ornaments, top hats or platform shoes) and to profile (with leggings and tights which create a filiform outline, singlet or fishnet); and a fifth action, to reveal (through transparencies and minimal pieces of clothing), corresponding to times of freedom which break with conventions and artifice in clothing: the French Revolution, for example, the twenties and thirties, and the sixties in the 20th century.

In each era, depending on the fashion, these five actions model the body through clothing. There are multiple readings connecting forms and fashion with the aspirations of men and women, with the ever changing canon of beauty, with forms of social representation and moral conventions, which evolve with western history. The exhibition invites the spectator to take a fascinating journey through the history of culture, with dress, forms and the body as protagonists.

### **Each time has its own forms**

This journey comprises large glass cases organized into ten historical eras: from the world of the courtesans of the 16th and 17th centuries to present day designers. They explain the evolution of fashion, from the superposition of the five actions described at the very beginning: after the world of the courtesans came the revolution, the return to order of the Restoration, the apotheosis of the bourgeois life style, the triumph of industrialization, Modernism, the twenties and thirties, the golden age of *haute couture*, ready to wear clothes, and globalization.

One example: Modernist clothes reflect a taste for curves, the *whiplash*, which applied to a woman's dress gives an S shape: frills and flounces puff out sleeves and skirts. The arms and bust form a single volume pushing forward. The corset constrains the bust and the waist. They get to be so long that they impede movement and even cause serious health problems because since they constrain the body they change the position of the internal organs. The British tailor John Redfern creates the jacket and dress for greater comfort. Towards 1900 the figure becomes more svelte and skirts with corolla take on the shape of a flower. The dress cannot be separated from the other arts: it reflects the same idealized and decorative taste.

Another example: between 1919 and 1930 the dress shows the body, which is displayed or insinuated. Women show their legs for the first time in history. Corsets disappear and the body is unchained. Outlines become straight and simple; gowns are not a suit of armour but rather a comfortable functional piece. Taking the waters is considered a healthy activity and people begin to go to the beach. The elegance of the dress is freedom to move. This stage has three proper names: Paul Poiret, who by observing the freedom of gesture of dancers creates a new way of dressing without the constraint of the corset; Marià Fortuny, who takes Greek statues as a model and creates the Delphos pleated silk gown, and Gabrielle Chanel, who conceives a simplified outline for women, using comfortable fabrics —woollen goods— and adds trousers.

### **A spectacular and savvy show**

Each of the large glass cases contains fixed elements. A mannequin with mobile parts allows a description of the actions performed on the body. A reproduction of a painting from the time (with a lenticular screen to simulate movement) or, in modern times a projection, show the cultural context of the clothes. A golden mannequin standing out among all the others presents a contemporary dress, echoing historical forms and adapting certain aspects of them. This helps show the connection between the work of today's creators and the history of fashion, understood as a great collection of ideas, concepts and forms. Finally, the dresses, splendid, well lit and arranged in theatrical manner; a selection of the best from each era, unique pieces, preserved over the centuries and restored for this exhibition. Over and above the discourse proposed by the exhibition, the visitor can dwell on other aspects: colours, embroideries or patterns.

### **The collection grows and arrives to the present day**

The glass cases form a central architectonic body which gives form to the room. Around them is a timeline on the history of the dress, with illustrations, animations and in more recent times, film. The exhibition closes spectacularly with a space dedicated to the 20th century, where dresses and film join together in an installation conceived as a play with mirrors. Lastly, the latest fashion contributions: the Museu del Disseny has come to an agreement with O80 Barcelona Fashion to gradually increase its assets with dresses by new creators. A series of important acquisitions has also been made to update and round off the collection.

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### **Invisible inner frames**

The central space shows a collection of 62 corsets, crinolines —frames which enlarge the shape of skirts—, bustle and brassieres, and includes pieces which are unique due to their age, such as the 16th century bodices or 18th century corsets, and due to their refined fabrics and colours.

The exhibition, with a representation of 50 designers, pays special attention to Catalan and Spanish creators, and includes dresses and matching skirts and blouses by Marià Fortuny, Balenciaga, Santa Eulalia, Pedro Rodríguez, Pertegaz, Pedro Rovira, Esteve Pila, Antonio Miró, Andrés Sardá, Roser Marcè, Juan Duyos, David Valls, Miquel Adrover, Josep Abril, Miriam Ponsa, Txell Miras, Amaya Arzuaga and Josep Font. Des del 2017 amb la revisió i ampliació de la mostra es van incorporar dissenyadors com Lydia Delgado, Carlota Oms, Isometric, Emilio de la Morena, Krizia Robustella, Brain&Beast, Celia Vela i Armand Basi.

The exhibition has an accompanying catalogue, *reeditat el 2017*, a visual guide in three languages, reproducing the timeline, a visual explanation of how the dress modifies the shape of the body over nearly five hundred years, and contains all the pieces in the exhibition.

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## Outstanding pieces

### Exhibition *Dressing the Body*

[Download images](#)



#### **Court dress** **France, c. 1760**

Printed cotton taffeta with linen cuffs  
Donated by Manuel Rocamora, 1969  
MTIB 88.015



#### **Dress** **Spain, 1790-1810**

Batiste embroidered cotton with cotton thread  
Donated by the Forn-Homs family, 2002  
MTIB 2.875/02



#### **Dress and shawl** **France, 1830-1835**

Tafetà de cotó estampat  
Donació de Manuel Rocamora, 1969  
MTIB 21.954



#### **Dress** **Charles Frederick Worth** **París, 1865-1868**

Fluted silk  
Donated by Manuel Rocamora, 1969  
MTIB 88.096



#### **Dress** **Barcelona, 1885**

Taffeta and silk velvet, fluted silk belt and machine-made lace  
Donated by Roser Palomera i Camps, 1987  
MTIB 146.255



**Bridal dress Caroline  
Montagne Barcelona,  
1905-1907**

Crêpe and silk taffeta, gauze and silk ribbons  
Donated by Manuel rocamora, 1969  
MTIB 88.114

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**Dress  
Anita Monrós (1882-1959)  
Barcelona, 1926**

Crêpe georgette and silk gauze, fringes, beaded embroidery, sequins and silver thread  
Donated by Manuel Rocamora, 1969  
MTIB 88.165

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**Dress  
Asunción Bastida  
Barcelona, 1956**

Cotton tulle with chenille flock and velvel bow  
Label: "Costura Asunción Bastida Barcelona Madrid"  
MTIB 4.219/14

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**Overall with shorts  
Paco Rabanne  
Paris, 1966**

Plastic and steel and aluminium rings  
Donated by Paco Rabanne, 1979  
MTIB 109.628

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**Cloak and shirts set. Woman's collection *Sardonicus*  
Spring-summer 2013  
Martínez Lierah  
Barcelona-Paris, 2012**

Cotton neoprene cloak and double woollen cloth, cotton neoprene skirt  
Donated by Arturo Martínez Plaza and Daniel Lierah Beltran, 2013  
MTIB 4.032/13

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**Corset, 1750-1770**

Fluted and engraved with silk and gold thread, spokes  
Donated by Manuel Rocamora, 1935  
MTIB 21.959



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**A history of the 20th century: commercial artists who became designers**

## **Graphic Design with pencil and brush**

**Calendars, displays, labels, press advertisements, packaging and the king of graphic arts in the fifties and sixties: the poster. A selection of some 550 works, which show the evolution from publicity artwork to design, from the years immediately following the war to the beginning of the eighties. *Graphic Design: from Trade to Profession (1940-1980)* gathers together the work of pioneers of design, such as Josep Artigas, Josep Baqués, Pere Creus, Amand Domènech, Ricard Giralt Miracle, Enric Huguet, Eugeni Moradell, Antoni Morillas, Josep Pla-Narbona, Ramon Ribas and Tomàs Vellvé, and shows the importance of *Grafistes Agrupació FAD*, which had a decisive influence on the professional recognition of the first designers. Next to them, America Sanchez, Enric Satué, Toni Miserachs and Yves Zimmermann, who open the road towards a new idea and a new image of design. Pilar Vélez and Anna Calvera curated this exhibition, the first large format exhibition presented in Barcelona on the pioneers of design. It puts together work done since 2007. Since then personal assets have been added from designers and from the archives of companies. These have extended and transformed, also updating it, the collection of the former *Gabinet de les Arts Gràfiques de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona*.**



Póster. *Combinación perfecta*, 1962  
Josep Pla-Narbona (1928)



Display *Polil Cruz Verde*, 1948  
Josep Artigas (1919-1991)

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Large trays suspended from the ceiling in mid-air in the room, with publications in small and medium formats—books, records, flyers, cards, leaflets, postcards, daily papers and magazines— and some individual hoardings with the best posters for the Fira de Mostres and the pharmaceutical industry. The assembly of the exhibition *Graphic Design: from Trade to Profession (1940-1980)*, carried out by BOPBAA Architects, is very aware of the distance between the spectator and the work: it attempts to reproduce proximity with leaflets and promotion materials, one of the keys to the efficacy of graphic design. The visitor establishes a feeling of nearness to the exhibits, which allows her to evaluate the graphic inventiveness, the subtlety of the composition, the virtuosity of the artwork, the skill in the application of the typography.

*Graphic Design: from Trade to Profession (1940-1980)* is an exhibition of a thesis. The Modernist poster, the work of painters and illustrators, has been left aside and the professional aspect has been stressed, in a sequence which begins in the years immediately following the war. It begins with the generation who trained in the thirties as commercial artists in publicity studios and publishing houses, and ends with the generation who entered as apprentices and collaborators in the first design studios, before the emergence of design schools in the sixties. Some works from this period, such as the poster for Polil by Josep Artigas, the posters by Ricard Giralt Miracle's Grup R or the promotional elements of the pharmaceutical industry —especially those of Laboratoris Ubach—, have become classics. Others, such as the Osborne bull by Manolo



Prieto or the motorway sign by Enric Hugué, are visual icons. The great international contests held in Barcelona in the sixties also generated very powerful images: the Fira de Mostres, the Saló Hogarhotel, the Saló Nàutic and the Saló de l'Automòbil provided work and public recognition to the pioneers of design. Another important aspect are the best wishes for holidays and tourism leaflets. Graphic design contributed to creating the image of the culture of leisure.

Specialized high quality printing presses such as Filograf and Casamajó converted some of these printed works into little graphic jewels and collectors' pieces. They incorporated first productions, special papers and inks, and they designed pieces which could be assembled with volume, like little graphic sculptures. Next to all this production, which connects with craftsmanship, graphic designers were an important part of the new mass culture, which was evident in magazines, campaigns, street hoardings, large print runs and leaflet hand-outs in retail outlets and at the Fira de Mostres.

### **Functionality versus visual imagination**

The discourse of the exhibition leaves sociological elements to one side and concentrates on strictly graphic aspects: the different formats and supports used in graphic design, tendencies and schools and the various paths followed by professionals in contact with international movements and tendencies in design. One of these aspects worth underlining is that some of these designers, such as Josep Artigas, Josep Pla-Narbona and Joan Pedragosa, worked in Switzerland, where they came into contact with the most modern tendencies in international design.

In one of his books on the history of design, Enric Satué established a differentiation between pictorial design and architectonic design which is still useful today. The pioneers drew and painted in order to design and they dominated the professional scene in the fifties and sixties. The ever increasing complexity of publicity and of visual communication defined a new professional profile. The poster gave way to packaging, the editorial illustration to collection design, from composing leaflets and postcards to projecting integrated corporate identity programmes.

From the point of view of plasticity, graphic design in the sixties and seventies follows the example of the Neue Grafik of Basle and Zurich, influenced by New Typography and Concrete Art. But at the same time it drifts towards pop-art, which recuperated illustration and pictorial forms, imagination and freedom, and which acted as a counterpoint to functionalism and graphic purism.

### **A document of the history of design**

As a complement to the graphic elements there is an audiovisual of the billboard publicity campaign by the company RED —«*Conozca España en Barcelona*» (*Get to know Spain in Barcelona*); «*Para vivir siempre... practique ejercicios espirituales (Live for ever... practise spiritual exercises)*» (1963)—, which assembled in the Grupo 13 Catalan designers in ADG-FAD and designers in Madrid. A collection of photographs was recovered which show the Rambla de Catalunya and Passeig de Gràcia with large hoardings. It was a way of publicly affirming the importance of the publicity image and visual communication and acted as recognition of the creators, who began to associate in order to strengthen the profession. It is the first time that this material has seen the light of day. A number of interviews with designers of the time has been filmed, such as Enric Hugué, Pla-Narbona, Ramon Ribas and Pere Creus, who all took part.

*Graphic Design: from Trade to Profession (1940-1980)* is the first of a series of exhibitions of the history of graphic design. It will continue in 2018 with an exhibition dedicated to the design boom in the eighties.

## Outstanding pieces

### Exhibition *Graphic Design*

[Download images](#)

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#### 1940-1952

##### Poster makers and commercial artists

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#### Publicity for the pharmaceutical industry

*Recsodan, Lab. Prem, SA, the fifties*  
**Amand Domènech (1920-2002)**

Donated by the Domènech Serra family

GAGB 9.051/14

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#### Display

*Polil. Cruz Verde, 1948*  
**Josep Artigas (1919-1991)**

On loan from CRAI - Fine Arts Library  
(Universitat de Barcelona)

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#### 1953-1960

##### Towards professionalization

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#### Poster

*Industria y Arquitectura 2ª Exposición g.R, 1954*  
**Ricard Giralt Miracle (1911-1994)**

Donated by Daniel Giralt Miracle, 2008

GAGB 23/08

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#### Publicity graphics

*Blevit carne, 1968*  
*Blevilat 12, Blevilat 18. Instant milk for babies,*  
**Lab. Ordesa, 1961**  
**Àngel Grañena (1929)**

Donated by Àngel Grañena, 2014

GAGB 9.186/14.03,9.179/14.02,9.179/14.03

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## 1961-1968

### The institutionalization of graphic artists

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#### Poster

*Sector automóvil*, 1967

**Tomàs Vellvé (1927-1998)**

Donated by Vellvé Arilla family, 2014

GAGB 9.448/14

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#### Book Cover

*Retrat en fum*, Col·l. La Cua de Palla, Edicions 62, 1968

**Jordi Fornas (1927-2011)**

Donated by Anna Calvera, 2014

GAGB 9.446/14

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#### Poster

*Combinación perfecta*, 1962

**Josep Pla-Narbona (1928)**

Donated by Pla-Narbona, 2010

GAGB 70/10

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## 1969-1980

### The consolidation of graphic design

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#### Kitchen containers, 1974

**Josep Baqués (1931)**

**1974**

Donated by Josep Baqués, 2014

GAGB 8.939/14, 8.938/14, 8.940/14, 8.937/14, 8.941/14, 8.946/14

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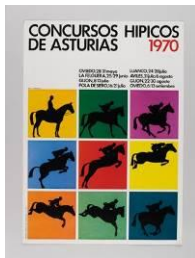
#### Publicity for pharmaceutical and veterinary medicine

*Calcium Sandoz Forte*, Lab. Sandoz, 1974

**Enric Huguet (1928)**

Donated by Enric Huguet, 2014

GAGB 9.600/14.05



**Poster**

*Horse shows in Asturias, 1970*

**Elías + Santamarina**

**(Elías García Benavides, 1937, and José Santamarina, 1948)**

Donated by José Santamarina, 2014  
GAGB 8.823/14

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**1980-...**

**The path to the normalization of graphic design**

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**Poster**

*ICSID 1971 Ibiza, 1971*

**Yves Zimmermann (1937)**

Donated by Yves Zimmermann, 2008  
GE 065

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