



ARTS SANTA MÒNICA

**THE COLLECTION**  
**OF COLLECTIONS**  
**OF GUY SELZ**

**27 JANUARY-11 APRIL 2010 EXHIBITION**

**Press release**

Produced by

Museu del Joguet de Catalunya

Arts Santa Mònica

Departament de Cultura i Mitjans de Comunicació

Arts Santa Mònica 2010

**27 JANUARY-11 APRIL 2010 EXHIBITION**

**THE COLLECTION OF COLLECTIONS**  
**OF GUY SELZ**

**ARTS SANTA MÒNICA ARCHIVE SPACE (FLOOR 00)**

The exhibition is fruit of the generous donation by Philippe and Dorothée Selz to the Museu del Joguet de Catalunya of the collection of a series of collections that their parents, Françoise and Guy Selz, put together over half a century (1925-1976) and that they themselves have gone on adding to.

Now being presented in Barcelona, the inventive universe of this 'Collection of collections' — scraps, crepe paper, reliquaries, crosses, votive offerings, birds, dolls, animals, masks, lead soldiers, popular prints, albums of stickers, toy boats, etc — reflects the spirit of the collector who seeks to capture the energy of the past in groupings of objects that create a set of transverse systems of knowing with a recurring figuration that configures the ecology of the authentic against the barbarism of technology

**CURATED BY:** JOSEP MARIA JOAN I ROSA

**PRODUCED BY:**  
ARTS SANTA MÒNICA  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND THE MEDIA  
AND MUSEU DEL JOGUET DE CATALUNYA

**MEDIA SPONSOR:** EL PUNT  
**THANKS:** JOAN RABASCALL

## **ACTIVITIES LECTURE AND DISCUSSION**

**Wednesday 27 January. Hall. Free Admission Free**

«A number of European and American intellectuals and artists discovered the island of Eivissa, or Ibiza, in the nineteen-thirties and took to it as an ideal retreat in which to fashion a new life. Dorothée Selz and her brother Phillippe shared at first-hand in that creative atmosphere and knew the outstanding personalities of an Eivissa that seemed far-removed from modern civilization, isolated in its own dream of unspoilt landscapes and an ancient and deep-rooted culture. From Walter Benjamin to Albert Camus, Esteban Vicente, Rafael Alberti, Josep Palau i Fabre, Gisèle Freund, Florence Henri, Drieu la Rochelle...»

**Vicente Valero**

**7.00 p.m.**

**'The Selzes and European intellectuals in Eivissa in the years 1930-1936'**

Lecture by Vicente Valero, with Philippe Selz.

**8.00 p.m.**

**'The Selzes and the Catalan artists in Paris in the 1970s'**

With: Antoni Miralda, Joan Rabascall, Benet Rossell, Dorothée Selz and Jaume Xifra.

**Organized by:** Arts Santa Mònica and Museu del Joguet de Catalunya

**With:** Espai Mallorca

## **BOOK**

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Edition: **Josep M. Joan i Rosa y Cinta Massip**

Authors: **Philippe Selz and Dorothée Selz**

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## THE SEVEN SENSES OF THE SELZ COLLECTION: ANALOGY, ACCUMULATION, FETISHISM, SYMBOL, ESOTERISM, SAFEGUARDING AND THE DIY OF THINGS

'This good-humoured man is Guy Selz, who knows all there is to know about Paris life: exhibitions, the new plays, the latest film. He is secretary general (of *Elle*). His hobby: popular art. Under his arm, item number 30,000!'

This is how the man on our front cover was portrayed back in the sixties. The fact is that in the 'Yeah Yeah' era of pop the art object as a product of avant-garde culture (signed and unique, refined, snobbishly elitist, appealing to a minority, and expensive) and the popular object (anonymous and off-the-peg, demotic, credulous, unsophisticated kitsch for the common people, and cheap) came together in modern mass culture. The middle classes — self-assured and cultured, cosmopolitan, progressive and protofeminist — actively embraced the consumer dynamics and the tastes of a revamped feel-good capitalism happy and its dream of technology. Popular culture was to provide the domestic appliances and the *prêt-à-porter* of avant-garde art. All through his life Guy Selz, who came from an authentically bohemian *fin-de-siècle* (1890s-1900s) Paris family, combined his first vocation as a collector with his career as a journalist. It was during his restless and eventful youth that Guy Selz first discovered the close links between the local rural architecture of the island of Eivissa, where he opened a bar, and the rationalism and functional of international modern architecture, and where he developed the first of many friendships with a number of outstanding people from the world of culture, from Walter Benjamin and Jacques Prévert in the isolation of the pre-War Balearic Islands to Breton and Sartre, Juliette Greco and Agnès Varda in post-War existentialist Paris. A reader and champion of the visual novels of Max Ernst, the mobiles of Calder, the interpretations of Dalí and the permutations of Queneau, a follower of Mallarmé's affinity for chance and the blank space and of the associations of the Surrealists or the assemblages of *art brut*, Guy Selz helped spread an awareness of modern art among the readers of women's magazine *Elle* and combined this with a visceral passion for collecting and the varied qualities of 'the lover, the maniac, the pythoness, the detective and the voyeur'.

Unlike the museologist or the archivist, the collector does not list, classify and conserve with methodical rigour but is a person possessed who forms a taste for the optimism of the anonymous in contrast to banal decontextualized objects stripped of their original meaning. The collector seeks not to preserved memory but to capture energy. The groups of objects Selz brought together create a series of systems of transverse multiple understandings that transcends their themes (from religious imagery to the handiwork of the insane), their techniques (from children's coloured cut-outs to lace), their materials (from the recycled sheet metal of Haitian trucks to the glass of French magic lanterns) or their origin (from the *siurell* statuettes of Mallorca to the cowboys of Brazil). A recurrent narrative figuration made the unusual configures here an ecology of the authentic as a bastion against the barbarism of technology. In the words of François Mathey, chief curator of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris: 'In demonstrating that there is no hierarchy of genres, that art is all around us, fragile, and lies in wait where it is least expected... You are a wonderful model!'

For this exhibition — being presented for the first time in the Archive at Arts Santa Mònica — we are indebted to the generous donation made by Philippe and Dorothée Selz to the Museu del Joguet de Catalunya toy museum of the collection of a set of collections built up by their parents Françoise and Guy Selz over 50 years (1925-1976), and which they themselves completed: a collection that inspired Dorothée Selz to create a unique body of art rooted in popular culture which spread from her to the group of Catalan artists in Paris (Miralda, Joan Rabascall, Jaume Xifra and Benet Rossell, members of the conceptual Grup de Treball). An entire collection of family relationships in continuity, fraternal artistic relationships and geographical and cultural relationships.

**VICENÇ ALTAIÓ** Director of Arts Santa Mònica  
**JOSEP MARIA JOAN I ROSA** Director of the Museu del Joguet de Catalunya

## List of objects:

Some objects of the exhibition...

- Iglesias, avión, etc. (barro cocido), Ayacucho, Perú, c. 1960
- Músicos (barro cocido), Ayacucho, Perú, c. 1960
- Adan y Eva (barro cocido), Oaxaca, Méjico, c. 1960
- Iglesia, candelabros, animales, etc. (barro cocido), Puebla, Méjico, c. 1960
- Gran sirena lemanjá [del yoruba *Yemoja* – a Cuba: *Yemaya*], diosa del mar y del amor (yeso y cemento pintados) de Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1969
- Juego de cubos que representan los departamentos franceses (imágenes pegadas sobre madera), Francia, c. 1920
- Pequeñas jaulas de pájaros (madera y bambú), Francia, c. 1950/1960
- Esqueleto de Todos los Santos (papel maché sobre alambre) Oaxaca, Méjico, c. 1960
- Máscaras de carnaval (cartón, papel de revista), Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1969
- Muñecas del ritual «macumba», vudú de Rio de Janeiro, Brasil (tejido) 1969.
- Par de muñecas de África Occidental, 1970
- Bailarín (lata pintada), Chiapas, Méjico, c. 1978.
- Pequeñas máscaras (lata oxidada), Méjico, c.1960
- Muñecas de fertilidad –llevadas por las jóvenes casadoras– (madera, perlas huesos, etc.), Mandji, Camerún, c. 1980
- Diablo (cartón y papel maché sobre alambre), Oaxaca, Méjico, c. 1960
- Papeles de envolver naranjas y limones, España, Italia, Grecia, 1950/1970
- Objetos de «mal gusto» (porcelana, cerámica, caucho...), Francia, Estados Unidos, Portugal, c. 1960
- Candelabro en forma de figura femenina (barro cocido), Chichicastenango, Guatemala, 1966
- Candelabro en forma de figura masculina (barro cocido), Chichicastenango, Guatemala, 1966
- Diablo, (barro cocido pintado), Méjico, c. 1960
- Zapatitos y botines (porcelana, cristal y metal), Francia, 1900/1950, colección Françoise Selz
- Siurells* (barro cocido pintado), Portal, Mallorca, España, 1950/1960
- Tapas de cajas de camembert (imágenes sobre madera) y un falso camembert musical de plástico, Francia, 1950/1970
- Pájaros (madera pintada), Bombay, India, 1956
- Pareja-candelabro de Todos los Santos (barro cocido), Oaxaca, Méjico, c. 1960
- Cabezas exvotos (madera), Fortaleza, Brasil, c. 1968,
- Dos máscaras (madera pintada en rojo), Wum, Camerún, c. 1980
- Pececito, juguete con ruedas (madera pintada), Japón, c. 1970
- Imágenes de primera comunión (papel recortado), Francia, c. 1900
- Tres diablos de «macumba», vudú de Rio de Janeiro, Brasil (yeso pintado), 1968
- Nidos de pájaros, Francia, 1950/1960
- Cruz (madera pintada), Puebla, Méjico, c. 1960
- Muñecas eróticas de «Mme Ska» (tejido), Francia, 1954
- Toro (papel maché pintado sobre alambre ) Oaxaca, Méjico, c. 1960
- Figuritas de coca de Reyes (porcelana), Francia, España, 1940/1970
- Animal coronado (barro cocido pintado), Méjico, c. 1960
- Siurells* (barro cocido pintado), Barcelos, Portugal, c. 1980
- Pipas de tierra cocida (pintadas), Francia, Holanda, Inglaterra, siglo XIX
- Diablo (barro cocido pintado), Méjico, c. 1978
- Vasos del ritual «macumba», vudú de Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, c. 1968
- Huchas (barro cocido, etc.), una de ellas con la cabeza del presidente Giscard d'Estaing, Europa, América Latina, 1960/1975
- Louis Pons, pequeño cuadro-escultura con manos de muñeca y huevo , Francia, c. 1960
- Sillitas, Francia, c. 1960
- Dos platos cubiertos con anillos de puro pegados, Francia (?), c. 1940
- Cristo sobre un soporte de procesión (barro pintado sobre una caja de madera), Méjico, c. 1960
- August Bonnefoi, figura musical con lata-campanita (tejido, lata, madera), Banon, Provenza, Francia, c. 1960
- Máscaras de carnaval (cartón pintado) Celaya, Guanajuato, Méjico; Bogotá, Colombia; Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, la de color azul y la de color marrón: Barcelona, España, 1960/1970
- Pipa de cerámica, Inglaterra, finales del siglo XIX Inglaterra, Francia, c. 1950
- Gran muñeca erótica con vestido militar (tejido) de «Mme Ska», Francia, c. 1954
- Muñecas con brazos articulados (madera pintada), Rúsia, c. 1970
- Botellas con símbolos –de madera, tejido, metal y piedra– de los espíritus del ritual «macumba», vudú de Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 1969

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**Arts Santa Mònica- Departament de Cultura i Mitjans de Comunicació  
Museu del Joguet de Catalunya**

Curated by **JOSEP MARIA JOAN I ROSA**

Press conference january 26 /2010

Opening, january 26 /2010

Exhibition dates: **27 JANUARY-11 APRIL 2010**

**MEDIA PARTNER ARCHIVE SPACE (FLOOR 00)**

**EL PUNT**

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PRESS CONTACT:

**Neus Purti**

T 93 556 53 14 (directe) - 93 316 28 10 [npurtic@gencat.cat](mailto:npurtic@gencat.cat)

CC & Press **Arts Santa Mònica**

**Cristina Suau**

T 93 316 28 10 ext.13442 [csuau@gencat.cat](mailto:csuau@gencat.cat)

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**\_RTS S\_NT\_ MÒNIC\_**  
**ARTS CIÈNCIA**  
**PENSAMENT COMUNICACIÓ**  
**LA RAMBLA 7 / 08002 BARCELONA**  
**TEL +34 93 567 11 10**  
**WWW.ARTSSANTAMONICA.CAT**