

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART /  
MUSEO DE ARTE CONTEMPORÁNEO

c/ Conde Duque, 9 y 11  
28015 Madrid  
Telephone (information): +34 91 588 59 28  
www.madrid.es/museoartcontemporaneo/  
www.condeduquemadrid.es  
010 Lineamadrid (municipal information hotline)  
mmacmcfusion@madrid.es

FREE ADMISSION

Opening Hours

Tuesday - Saturday: 10 am to 2 pm and 5:30 to 9 pm  
Sundays and holidays: 10:30 am to 2 pm

Metro stops:

Ventura Rodríguez, Plaza de España, San Bernardo,  
Noviciado

Bus lines: 1, 2, 44, 74, 133, Circular 1 y Circular 2

Mimbús: M-2

Parking facilities: Plaza de España

DL: M-32833-2014

© Alfonso, Lucio Muñoz, Isabel Quintanilla,  
Pablo Pérez Minguez, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014

Illustration sources:

AGA: Central Government Archives

MAC: Museum of Contemporary Art of Madrid



In his *Structural Anthropology*, Claude Lévi-Strauss taught us that "formal analysis immediately raises the question of meaning". In that sense, a formal analysis of the works that make up a collection and the collection itself as an entity in the context of a museum or institution always implies a certain sequencing which we might call "The Order of the Collection". Here this order is predicated on the syntagma of **The Portable Museum**, the vessel of the entire project deployed in these two galleries of the Museum of Contemporary Art (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo/MAC), and that syntagma serves as the nexus between two interconnected realities: the permanent collection and the **Study of Ramón Gómez de la Serna**. Portability is a trait that interlaces and defines both levels and contents, underscoring their transitory nature and cementing the notion of a mobile museum within a museum. For who can deny that Ramón's study is a museum within the museum, or that the works in a collection constitute a portable museum inside a museum? The new "reading" of the collection is based on the articulation of four independent units—FORM AND GESTURE, FIGURE AND REALITY, IMAGE AND THE CITY and ONENESS AND MULTIPLICITY—all of which can also be applied to Ramón's study, the basis of this new interpretation of the collection and of the programme that will bring it to life.

The writer Ramón Gómez de la Serna (Madrid, 1888 - Buenos Aires, 1963), a member of the Generation of 1914 widely known as "Ramón", was a pivotal figure of Madrid's literary and artistic avant-garde in the 1920s and 30s. In the context of his prolific output, the study he began to create in the 1910s—filled with objects acquired primarily in Madrid's famous El Rastro flea market but also in other European cities he visited, as well as images cut out of books and magazines that gradually papered and upholstered the furniture and walls—is one of the most singular artistic legacies of that era.

In the endless construction and reconstruction of that setting, which Ramón designed and used throughout his life as an atelier that inspired him to produce a body of work dominated by the universe of images, he employed two techniques invented by avant-garde artists:

*collage* and *photomontage*. With those tools he created one of the most surprising *photocollages* in Spanish avant-garde art, distinguished above all by its portability, a quality inextricably linked to the Baudelairean notion of modernity as the glorification of "the transient, the fleeting and the contingent".

With this "portable museum", Ramón positioned himself at the epicentre of the quests associated with Cubism, Dada and Surrealism, driving forces of the fascinating modernity required in the field of creativity, literature and art in the first third of the 20th century. That modernity, which Ramón embraced as the *leitmotif* of his life, combined the desire to search for new forms of expression with the longing to experience new artistic emotions. Little wonder, then, that Ortega y Gasset, after visiting Ramón's turret on Calle de Velázquez—flagship of the various studies created in the course of his long career and the writer's personal favourite—remarked that it was there where he "clearly saw the secret to modern art".

The task of building that setting allowed Ramón to reinforce his personal psychology, remain constantly immersed in the world he loved best, and consolidate his own image. Its encyclopaedic contents touched upon an infinite variety of themes—eroticism, death, comedy, everyday events, disease, phantasmagoria, the mundane and commonplace, the iconography of writers and artists—and included myriad reproductions of works of art, from classical Antiquity to the "isms" of his day, which, combined with the numerous objects scattered about the space, formed a veritable *Wunderkammer* of modernity.

This felicitous conjunction of selected pieces from the museum's permanent collection with images of the art and objects that Ramón collected in his study, the new identifying hallmark of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Madrid, has allowed us to interweave a variety of concepts and realities which, thanks to the fascinating formula of "the museum within the museum", will establish an appealing programme for the institution in the very near future.

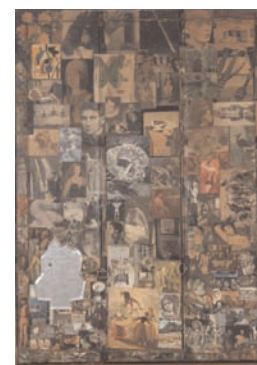
Eduardo Alaminos López  
Curator



Ramón in the Velázquez Turret. Alfonso Archive. AGA



Ramón in his Buenos Aires study. AGA



Sideboard and shutter.  
Furniture from Ramón's study. MAC



Ramón's drawing for a *greguería*. AGA



Folding screen from Ramón's study. MAC



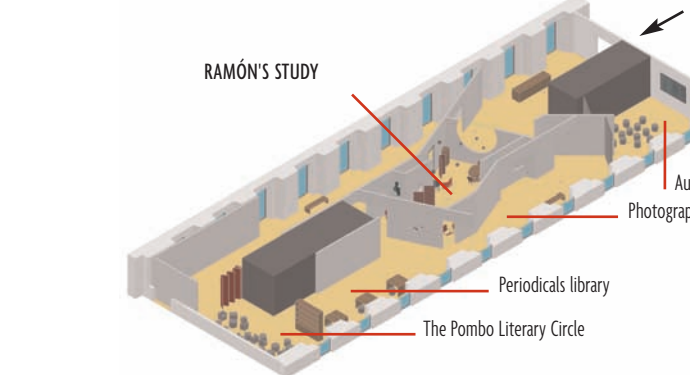
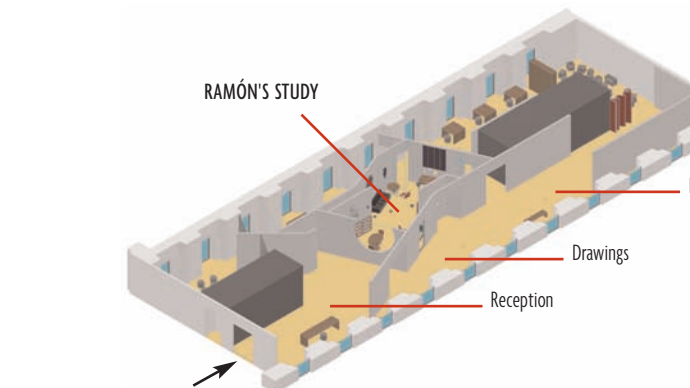
Ramón at the Pombo. Alfonso Archive. AGA



Wax head of a woman, tin mask, eye and ideas jar.  
Objects from Ramón's study. MAC



Wax head of a woman, tin mask, eye and ideas jar.  
Objects from Ramón's study. MAC

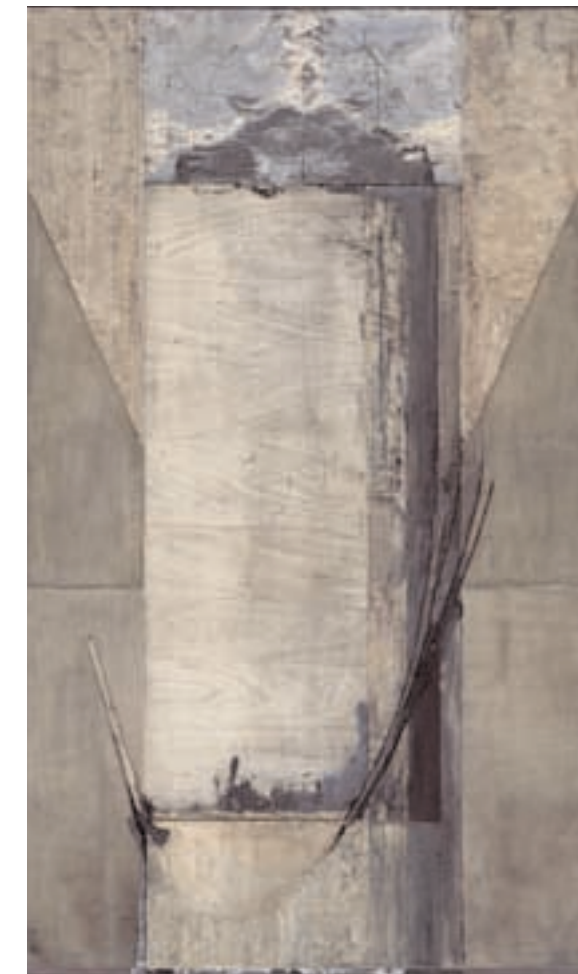


Vicente Patón / Alberto Tellería  
Axonometric projection of the exhibition layout of "Ramón's Study"





FORM  
Equipo 57. *Sin título. (M-6) [Untitled (M-6)]*. 1958



GESTURE  
Lucio Muñoz. *Tabla 39-94 [Panel 39-94]*. 1995



FIGURE  
Francisco Boreas. *El maniquí rosa [The Pink Mannequin]*. 1925



REALITY  
Isabel Quintanilla. *La noche [The night]*. 1995



IMAGE  
Pablo Pérez-Minguez. *Retrato de [Portrait of] Rafael Pérez-Minguez*. 1969



CITY  
Gabriele Basilico. *Madrid*. 1993



ONENESS  
Joaquín Torres-García. *Museo Escuela Madrid [Madrid School Museum]*. 1932



MULTIPLICITY  
Luis Garrido. *El urogallo [The Capercaillie]*. 1960

