

THE TYRANNY OF CHRONOS



EXHIBITION HALL
BANCO DE ESPAÑA
27/11/2024 – 29/03/2025

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FACING THE TYRANNY OF CHRONOS

Among the holdings of the Banco de España, one tapestry stands out as the symbolic centerpiece of this exhibition: *The Triumph of Love and Eternity over Time*. In the tapestry, the winged figure of a halfnaked elderly man, kneeling and chained in a posture of submission and resignation, has lost his powers: his wings no longer take flight and an hourglass and scythe – symbols of his dominion over time – are strewn across the ground, now rendered useless and incapable of stemming the supreme tide of Eternity. This figure is most likely the Greek god Chronos, the embodiment of a linear conception of time, threading together the notions of past, present, and future. He enforces the partitioning of time, dividing before from after and today from tomorrow.

There exists, however, another divinity in Greek cosmology, who symbolizes circular, eternal time: the god Aion. He is depicted as an unclothed youth, though sometimes as an old man, within a zodiac wheel, accompanied by the seasons. On occasion, he is shown encircled by a snake eating its own tail, evoking the idea of infinite time, one with neither beginning nor end. Aion is the god of both old age and youth, of the future as well as the past – a future and a past released from the tyranny of the present imposed by Chronos.¹

The concept of time represented by Chronos – expressed as a sequential progression, the pursuit of goals, and oriented toward the horizon as the future – has shaped Western theories of time, as well as notions of progress and reason in modernity. Its graphic representation as a line, often depicted as an arrow or a river, reflects this perception: the arrow never returns and the river flows continuously onward, with no possibility of reversing. Time is also organized as consecutive numbers, as a series of assigned moments, as one number after another, arranged in order. This mathematical, measurable, and predictable conception of time is embodied by the clocks around which this exhibition revolves.

However, in contrast to the linear conception of time underpinning the contemporary logic of productivity, there are other ways of considering, experiencing, and representing it, rooted in different cultures where time is not simply a relentlessly advancing line, but also a

circle that returns again and again. This is the circular time symbolized by Aion in ancient Greece, the poetic, reversible time found in other cultures – ones that have been overshadowed by the violent imposition of a single narrative.

Before the invention of the mechanical clock – which seems to have occurred in medieval Europe in the early 14th century – time was associated with the cyclical processes of nature: bird migrations, the succession of days and nights, and the changing of seasons that signaled the start of planting or harvesting. Time was understood as a process of natural change, and human beings were not concerned about precise measurement. The development of manufacturing and trade, which began to accelerate in the Middle Ages, fostered the growth of cities and gradual detachment from the land. This shift contributed to the adoption of mechanical clocks as a way to establish synchronized work schedules, which were no longer regulated by sunrise and sunset. Hourglasses, water clocks, and sundials were not accurate enough to regiment the work of artisans or the rhythms of urban life.

However, 16th-century clocks were still far from precise, as they only had hour hands. The idea of measuring time in minutes and seconds had already been envisaged by early mathematicians in the 14th century, but it was not until the invention of the pendulum in 1657 that sufficient accuracy was achieved to add a minute hand to clock movements. The second hand did not appear until the 18th century – a technical flourish, but also a further tightening of the screws in the machinery of temporal control and its association with productivity. As George Woodcock cautioned, during these two centuries capitalism developed “to such an extent that it was able to take advantage of the industrial revolution in technique in order to establish its domination over society.... Socially the clock had a more radical influence than any other machine, in that it was the means by which the regularization and regimentation of life necessary for an exploiting system of industry could best be attained.”² Capitalist society as we know it would not have been possible without a device capable of measuring time precisely and converting it into merchandise, with a world operating under its tyranny.

As mentioned earlier, there are ways of breaking with the concept of time as absolutely and indisputably linear. These range from indigenous perspectives approaching time as something associated with natural cycles and local knowledge, to expressions rooted in the language of poetry and art, which have all become areas of resistance. In myth and poetry – and also in indigenous cultures – time may be understood as a *ritornello* (the Italian term for “refrain,” something that returns repeatedly in a composition), as a series including returns,

simultaneously accommodating various times, and allowing for reversibility.³ The poetic experience of time disrupts and fractures absolute sequential linearity, weaving curves and spirals, waves that ebb and flow. Rhythm and rhyme, essential elements of these languages, are processes of return, curving, and reversibility.⁴

In harmony with this idea of an alternative, ahistorical time – one that seems to have existed since the origins of myth and poetic expression – some artistic processes featured in this exhibition propose other models of time connected to natural cycles. They embrace the ethos of the slow movement,⁵ in a direct challenge to the widely accepted principle that “time is money,” meaning that, consequently, it cannot be wasted. These artists explore and experience time from more liberating perspectives, disputing the imposed regulation of time by consumer society. Through their works, they unveil new perspectives on the forces currently driving the establishment of the 24/7 notion of time, brilliantly analyzed by Jonathan Crary, in which there is “a generalized inscription of human life into duration without breaks, defined by a principle of continuous functioning [24 hours a day, 7 days a week]. It is a time that no longer passes, beyond clock time. ...It is actually a non-social model of machinic performance and a suspension of living that does not disclose the human cost required to sustain its effectiveness.”⁶

Yolanda Romero

1. Amanda Núñez, “Los pliegues del tiempo: Kronos, Aion y Kairós,” https://www.academia.edu/25127301/Los_pliegues_del_tiempo_Kronos_Ai%C3%B3n_y_Kair%C3%B3s, p. 2
2. George Woodcock, *The Tyranny of the Clock*, Philadelphia: Wooden Shoe Books, n.d., p. 5. First published in War Commentary – For Anarchism, March 1944.
3. See Leda Maria Martins, *Performances do tempo espiralar: poéticas do corpo-tela*, Rio de Janeiro: Cobogó Editora, 2021.
4. Bois, cited in Leda Maria Martins, p. 31.
5. Marcus Verhagen, *Viewing velocities: Time in Contemporary Art*.
6. Jonathan Crary, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, New York: Verso Books, 2013, pp. 8-9.

I HAVE NO TIME

This section explores how various artists reflect on time as a valuable and scarce resource – an intangible and universal commodity that everyone owns yet paradoxically seems to lack. The title of this opening is borrowed from Mladen Stilinović's book, in which the phrase "I have no time" is repeated insistently in everyday language. This gesture sets the stage for highly conceptual artworks examining the Western conception of time and its role in capitalist societies, which, as we know, would not be possible without a machine to keep time accurately, allowing us to exchange it for goods. Also considered are the conversion of time into monetary value, its subjective perception, and the possibility of transcending it through poetic acts. These themes resonate with contemporary theories on the capitalization of life and bodies, whose clearest precursor was Charlie Chaplin's prophetic film, *Modern Times*.

Lastly, this section also features works that directly or indirectly reveal the role of clocks in the Banco de España. The prominence of these timepieces is evident not only in the institution's art collection, but also in its buildings and workplaces. It is the utilitarian clocks that most influence the bank's spaces: from the flip clocks placed in offices and meeting rooms, to time clocks administering the working relationship between the employees and the institution, to the architectonic clocks in the bank's most iconic locations – the main banking hall and the corner of the plaza de Cibeles – all of which are conveniently coordinated by a master clock that synchronizes the time in every room, providing order and control.



ANONYMOUS

Time Clock, c. 1930

United States

Wood, iron, steel, glass, brass, zinc.

45 x 35.9 x 91 cm

Museo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología,

CE1998/020/1

This type of time clock became widely used in the early 20th century to keep track of the time workers started and finished in factories and businesses, recording the corresponding hours for each employee.

Initially, there were several methods for individually recording the clock-in and clock-out times for each worker. Some systems employed large levers allowing workers to select their employee number at the time of clocking in, which was then linked to the recorded time. In other systems, such as this one, each worker would sign next to their clock-in time on a roll of paper, which was periodically replaced. Accordingly, the clock features a window for signing and a lever for clocking in. There were certain limitations for subsequent verification of individual workers' start and finish times, as the order was determined by the clock-in time rather than by name, making it suitable only for companies with a small number of employees.

A later version of this type of clock led to a card-based system, still in use even today, in which each employee is issued an individual timecard with their details. The clock has a slot for inserting the card and automatically registers the clock-in and clock-out times for each worker throughout the week. The personnel in charge of recordkeeping had to place pins in the appropriate holes to ensure the time was printed in the correct position, preventing overlapping time stamps.

Typically, there was a rack beside this type of time clock for organized storage of the workers' cards. This system was used for several decades until the introduction of electronic time clocks in the 21st century.

The clock is divided into two parts: the upper part contains a pendulum mechanism, standard for the time, with a dial featuring two winding holes. The time data was transmitted via a shaft to the lower part of the case, where the timestamping mechanism is located. It includes an inclined surface, like a writing desk, to make signing easier. The timestamping mechanism consists of a series of wheels with raised alphanumeric characters, like a printing press. By pulling the lever on the left side, the data required – day, hour, and minute – are printed on the paper. For inking the type wheels, the clock uses a ribbon that advances with each stamp, functioning similarly to typewriters and calculators.

The clock case is made of American oak, a wood generally used for office furniture during the first half of the 20th century, until the introduction of metal furniture in classic midcentury gray or blue paint, which remained in use until the end of the century.

The model in the Colección Banco de España was one of several purchased in 1933 when the system of clocking in and out was implemented, and is similar to this one belonging to the permanent collection of the Museo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología. [ILL.]

MLADEN STILINOVIĆ

Artist at Work, 1978

Digitally printed photograph. Polyptych of eight photographs.

30 x 40 cm each

Colección Gerardo van Waalwijk van Doorn

Artist at Work (1978) is one of the most significant works by Croatian conceptual artist Mladen Stilinović. The piece comprises a series of eight black-and-white photographs showing the artist lying in bed, dressed in everyday clothing, in broad daylight. In these images, taken by his brother Sven, Stilinović is completely inactive, depicted with his eyes both closed and open, but always in a passive pose. Far from being a public performance, the (in)activity was conceived within a domestic setting, reinforcing the private nature of the work. It was created during a time of increasing political instability in Yugoslavia, just before the death of communist leader Josip Broz Tito, and can be interpreted as a commentary on the social and artistic conditions of the time, but also on the identity of the artist and the ambiguities of creative labor.

The artist's act of resting here suggests an ironic critique of work and poses a broader argument



against the systems promoting productivity as a fundamental norm. By portraying himself reclining in bed, Stilinović places himself outside these expectations, highlighting the convergence between late capitalism and state socialism in their shared obsession with labor. This idea is revisited in his manifesto *Praise of Laziness* (1993),¹ where he describes laziness not merely as the absence of activity, but as “dead” time and “futile concentration.” In this sense, *Artist at Work* embodies a radical act of resistance against the notion that individual value is inherently linked to one’s ability to produce. It is a call to embrace the need to do nothing. Unproductive time, represented by his resting, becomes a powerful artistic statement. For Stilinović, true creativity arises in the space of laziness, far from institutional and market demands, a theme he returns to consistently in other works, such as *Rad je bolest* (1981), in which, echoing Marx, he declares, “work is a disease.”

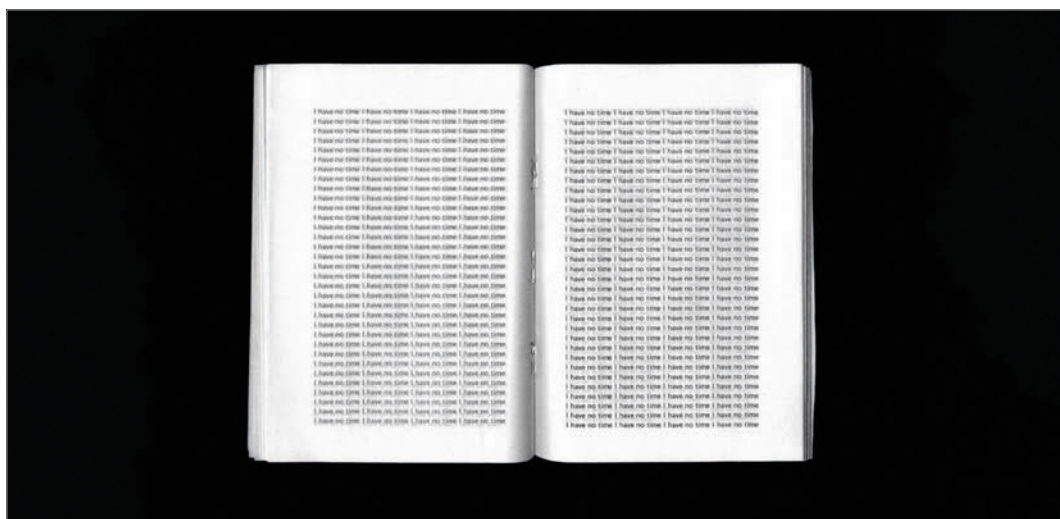
The idea of sleep as a form of resistance offers an intriguing reflection on artistic autonomy and engages with other critical approaches to labor, seemingly evoking the famous Situationist International slogan “Ne travaillez jamais” (Never work), which was revived decades later by artist Rirkrit Tiravanija in 2015, and resonates with *La Paresse* (1986) by Chantal Akerman. Stilinović’s humorous tone draws on the legacy of the Dadaists and exposes the absurdity of work as it is conceived in modern society. *Artist at Work* also anticipates the reflections of

Jonathan Crary in *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* (2013), where the critic analyzes how contemporary capitalism, with its 24/7 consumption of time, threatens to colonize even sleep, the last refuge untouched by the relentless logic of productivity.

The eight snapshots in the series possess a certain melancholic air: the artist appears vulnerable and weary.² With the post-Fordist development of immaterial forms of labor, art, like so many other areas of life, has been drawn inexorably into the capitalist systems of production. This trend has blurred the boundaries between life and work, causing private time to be blotted out by a continuous demand for productivity. Artists have become cogs in the machinery of consumption, with their work no longer understood as an autonomous space for creation, but as another way to generate value within the system. *Artist at Work* seems to anticipate these dynamics. In a system that absorbs every second of life, turning even rest into a potential opportunity for exploitation, Stilinović reacts by subverting this logic, reclaiming sleep as an act of rebellion. Today, his act of resting can be seen as an early critique of capitalism’s encroachment on personal time, as well as a reflection on the affective and cognitive forms of labor that would only intensify this phenomenon in the long run. For Stilinović, the act of “doing nothing” is not just a critique but a declaration of art’s ability to challenge these structures and reclaim unproductive spaces for truly existing. [cò]

1. Mladen Stilinović (1993), *Praise of Laziness*. <https://mladenstilinovic.com/works/10-2/>

2. D. M. Smith (2021), “The Artist Works: An Imperfective Reading of Mladen Stilinović’s *Artist at Work*,” *Art History*, 44 (5), 3.



MLADEN STILINOVIĆ

Re-Print #3: I Have No Time, (1983 [1979])

150 x 225 mm, 72 pp., offset.

Edition of 500

Colección Banco de España

After producing over 50 handmade books, Mladen Stilinović published his first printed book in 1979, *Nemam vremena* (I Have No Time) in his native Croatian. Later, in 1983, 150 copies were reprinted in Croatian, English, and German. This volume, spanning 52 pages, repeats a single phrase: “I have no time,” showcasing the artist’s penchant for poetry and his exploration of language as an ideological tool. As in many of his works, Stilinović plays with language and its performativity, deconstructing its meaning through repetition. In this case, he uses grueling repetition to alter the meaning of a particular idea: not having time. The publication opens with a note from the author: “I wrote this book when I had no time. The readers are requested to read it when they have no time.” This humorous introduction sets up a contradiction from the outset, challenging the reader’s perception and questioning the link between signifier and signified.

The notion of time and its availability (or lack thereof) hangs over much of Stilinović’s artistic production and his reflections as a creator, particularly concerning creative work. He returns to it in another of his well-known texts, *Praise of Laziness* (1993), where he considers laziness as a form of “dead time,” a state allowing for contemplation and reflection. From this perspective, laziness becomes a means to confront the tyranny of time in the contemporary world, providing the artist with an opening for genuine creativity and authentic expression. The work *I Have No Time* also explores this line of thought, presenting the lack of time not merely as a

complaint but as a commentary on the social pressure to be perpetually busy and as a call to slow down.

Thus, *I Have No Time* can be interpreted as a critique of the frenetic pace of modern society and the imperative of constant productivity. The artist challenges the notion that time is a resource to be exploited and suggests, instead, that wasting time can be a form of resistance against the demands of the system. It is intriguing to consider Stilinović’s work today from a post-Fordist context: in an era where work increasingly spills over its previously designated spaces and times, becoming fluid and swamping life itself, we can affirm along with Stilinović that we have no time, or perhaps that time no longer belongs to us. [cd]

MLADEN STILINOVIĆ

Chinese Business, 2009

Serigraph on canvas

22 x 297 cm

Acquired in 2022

Colección Banco de España

Chinese Business was the result of a residency by Yugoslav artist Mladen Stilinović at the 2009 IASPIS international program in Stockholm. The series comprises ten two-dimensional collages assembled on standard paper, incorporating three main elements: black-and-white photographic images of miners and steelworkers sourced from publications on Swedish industrial history, price tags from supermarket advertisements in Sweden, and strips of U.S. dollar bills seven millimeters wide. These components combine to compose collages continuing the artist’s exploration of the concept of labor and his critique of the capitalist production system, a theme central to his work since the 1970s.



The compositions in *Chinese Business* evoke the Dadaist artists of the historical avant-garde, whom Stilinović has acknowledged as a significant influence on several occasions. He shares an interest with them in the deconstructive power of the absurd, as well as the use of collage as a critical creative technique. Throughout his career, Stilinović has employed this ambivalent approach, which he has described as the “principle of order and disorder,” to address complex themes such as human suffering, power, and money.¹ The inclusion of dollar bills in *Chinese Business* can be interpreted as a Benjaminian critique of the commodification of art, a theme also appearing in Stilinović’s other works, such as *PJEVAJ!* (SING!) (1980), where the artist is shown with a bill glued to his forehead, questioning the autonomy of the artist. *Chinese Business* also suggests a parallel between capitalist modes of production and the practice of art itself.

The piece represents a natural evolution of Stilinović’s critical interest in history, structures of exploitation, and time, with his characteristic sense of humor and irony. In *Chinese Business*, the artist numbered his series so that the price tags with lower values corresponded to images with higher numbers. This contradictory numerical arrangement could be seen as an allusion to the reduced costs associated with outsourcing production and labor in a globalized production system: by the 2000s, the distinction between manufacturing countries and consuming countries had become a reality on a global scale. The images of industrial workers and miners, juxtaposed with price tags and dollar bills, highlight the precariousness of manual labor in factories, the setting where wage workers spend their time. The final image in the series – showing workers asleep and without any cut-up bills – might represent a state of extreme exhaustion, or, as other writers have suggested, a silent strike, symbolizing the devaluation of labor to the point of futility.² The snapshot is reminiscent of his iconic work *Umjetnik radi* (Artist at Work) (1978), in which Stilinović portrayed himself lying in bed in eight photographs. The introduction of sleep as a disruptive element in the productive sphere can be read as an act of rebellion against capitalist exploitation. In recent years, authors like Jonathan Crary have argued that sleep constitutes the only form of resistance against the 24/7 temporality of the current production system. In this sense, Stilinović’s image emerges as a precursor to many

contemporary theories on the capitalization of life and subjectivity that have multiplied in recent decades. [cd]

1. Mladen Stilinović, “Living Means Never Having to Attend Court: In conversation with Branka Stipančić,” in *Mladen Stilinović: Umjetnik na delu / Artist at work 1973-1983*, Ljubljana: Gallery ŠKUC, 2005. <https://mladenstilinoVIC.com/interviews/written-interviews/living-means/>.
2. Jonatan H. Engqvist, “Just as Money is Paper, so a Gallery is a Room”, in *Work, Work, Work: A Reader on Art and Labour*, Stockholm: Konstnärsmånden / IASPIIS / Sternberg Press, 2012.

INMACULADA SALINAS

Eco #2, 2023

Polyptych of 35 drawings

Colored pencil and ink on paper

150 x 150 cm; 29.7 x 21 cm each

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

Inmaculada Salinas (b. Seville 1967) frequently works with standard paper formats, such as A4 and A3, to create large mosaics or sequences often supplemented with photographs from various sources: images taken from the press, from the artist’s own extensive photographic archive, from art history, and by Salinas herself. These photos are integrated into her compositions through drawing or physically as collage. Many of these collages incorporate drawings – made with graphite pencils, markers, and colored pencils – whose origins, arising in many cases from art history itself, add systematic patterns that further complicate the relationship between art and productive labor.

Eco #2 (2023) is a polyptych comprising 35 A4-sized drawings arranged in a mosaic that forms a pattern of concentric squares. The impetus is making labor visible, with each piece documenting a specific day’s work to form a meticulously crafted whole. The resulting image is seemingly pleasant and deceptively decorative; however, this detachment breaks down upon closer inspection, revealing the piece’s underlying concept. The viewer reads “Work day” on each fragment, followed by the number of the day it was created: “Work day 01,” “Work day 02,” “Work day 03” ... up to thirty-five. “Work days, that’s how they are. Not with the aim of glorifying labor, but rather of making it visible. The working hours, the unsustainable, the unpaid, the ignored, the female...,” Salinas explains. Thirty-five workdays, systematically recorded and counted, like a diary



totally divorced from the romanticized notion we have been sold of art and *los artistas*. Yes, *los, male artists*, especially the art created by males – obviously not by all, but certainly by many. This may be why Inmaculada Salinas's work, even when it seems purely pictorial, is subjected to decisions establishing a distance from such notions. The “impulse versus gesture” dichotomy emerges, as Mar Villaespesa observes, adding that “there is no initial sense of gesture in her painting, despite the interaction between painting and the body, nor is it geometric painting, even though it is almost exclusively structured by lines.” In terms of color, she notes it has “always been functional,” and the approach “has been closer to the semiotic and to serialism.” Perhaps now, thirteen years after the text was written, a through line of work has emerged that is hard not to associate with the geometric. However, while formally *Eco #2* and other works of the same kind could be viewed within that framework, reading them only from that vantage would oversimplify and disable them.

The series of work diaries that includes *Eco #2* reflects a constant in Salinas's practice, of images leading into others, which in turn lead into still more in succession. This process is evident in works such as *Calle* (2023), where the images and drawings cut and complete each other in the next one, and in the next, the same happens, generating a sequence that closes when we understand that the last leads in the same way into the first. Thus, a narrative emerges successively interconnecting

the appendages of the composition. Similarly, this approach is evident in works like *Eco #1* and *Eco #2* (2024), and in the series *Diario Diana Work 1* and *2* (2023) and *Diario Diana 1, 2, 3, and 4* (2023). The method varies: here, large-scale drawings fragment, revisiting recurrent chromatic patterns – once again determined by the sequence imposed by her box of pencils – but still finding continuity in their immediate neighbors. Together, they form the pattern, once again of the semiotic and of serialism, with the title *Eco* alluding to its reception. “Female labor and more labor, in service of what? Of everyone and everything except their own voices,” the artist adds.

Eco #2 was exhibited at the stand of the galería 1 Mira Madrid at ARCOMadrid in 2024. [acu]

CHARLES CHAPLIN (dir.)

Modern Times, 1936

Digitized film clip

© 1936 Roy Export S.A.S. Renewed © 1963

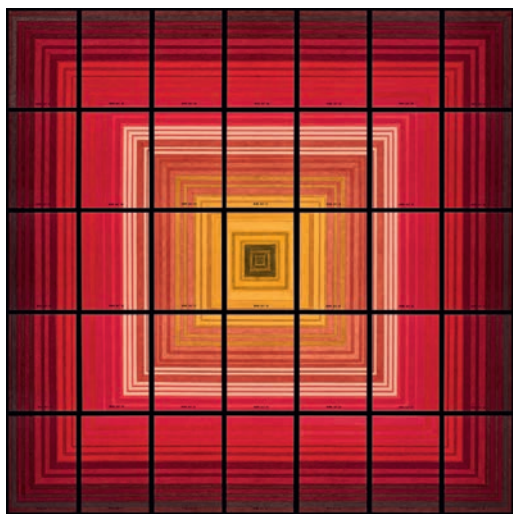
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Courtesy of mk2 Films

From its opening credits, Charlie Chaplin's acclaimed film *Modern Times* makes a bold statement: what defines human life in the modern world is the clock – not time in the abstract, but its exact, mechanical measurement, primarily in connection with productivity and work. The clock appearing in extreme close-up during those opening seconds shows the time as a few minutes before six, allowing the viewer to imagine it as the early start of a workday.

After those first moments, the montage that follows (which clearly draws on the Soviet “montage of attractions,” designed to provoke an emotional response by linking seemingly unrelated images) is revealing: a tightly packed flock of sheep moving forward is followed by the image of a crowd ascending the steps of a metro station en masse, only to quietly clock in at a factory. This metaphor for alienation came at a time when the Marxist interpretation of the concept was very much alive and present in public discourse.

The futuristic design of the sets in the factory scenes reinforces the supremacy of industrial machinery over human beings, like a new Moloch devouring all who approach it. Machinery is no less omnipresent than another subtle force recurring throughout the film: the clock. For example, in one scene, the character played by





Chaplin is forced to punch in even to use the bathroom, strictly monitored, as is the rest of the factory, by an Orwellian authority. Chaplin's comedic genius allows him to critique the capitalist system and the exploitation of workers while his character – never portrayed as a hero – accidentally becomes the standard-bearer of a cause, as would occur again in *The Great Dictator* (1940). Many of the paradoxes repeated in *Modern Times* have become iconic moments in cinema history precisely because of their profound themes, disguised as comedy: such is the case in the famous scene in which a machine “feeds” a worker (as if it nourishes him), when it seems instead that the person is being consumed by the machine.

Chaplin premiered the film at a moment in history in which the themes it explores were highly relevant. As an American production, the film was released during the years of the Great Depression following the 1929 stock market crash, marked by the rise of assembly-line production that would firmly establish an entire industrial system – Fordism – introduced a few decades earlier in automobile manufacturing. This was the era of the New Deal from 1933 to 1939, during which President Roosevelt implemented a series of reforms designed to stimulate the US economy, including reforms in industry, agriculture, and finance.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the release of *Modern Times* coincided with a key event with respect to time and working conditions: on 7 June 1936, the French government led by the *Front populaire's* Léon Blum, signed a historic agreement with labor unions to launch an unprecedented measure: paid vacations. This revolutionary development was undoubtedly the consequence of growing awareness that it was no longer just the worker's bodily labor, but also their time and physical and mental health that were at stake in labor relations. Chaplin emphasizes this in the film when his character, overwhelmed by the pressures of work, loses his mind and embarks on a journey that eventually leads him back to the factory. However, the humanism and overt optimism typical of Chaplin's productions of the time is revealed in the

final intertitle – which also touches on time, on the stages of life, on one's own personal history – and invites the viewer to imagine a future beyond the film's runtime: “Never say die.” [CM]

RAQS MEDIA COLLECTIVE

The Ecliptic, 2014

Clock, aluminum, acrylic, LED lights

55 x 55 x 15 cm

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

The title of this piece refers to the Earth's orbital plane around the Sun. To an observer on the planet's surface, over the course of a year the Sun traces a line against a seemingly fixed backdrop of stars. The ecliptic's perceived position changes depending on the observer's location and serves as the basis for devising the calendar – which, through the climate, shapes our daily experiences – and astronomical coordinates, which ultimately help us determine our place in the Cosmos. It is one of the most intuitive phenomena illustrating the tension between the objective – where the Sun is positioned in the sky year after year – and the relative – our position in observing it. From its title, this piece invites us to think from a shared space that encompasses both a subjective “I” and an undefined “we.”

The Ecliptic features a clock with a black, opaque face and hands. Instead of numbers, seven words appear on the dial, lighting up unpredictably. At three o'clock, we find the noun “TIME.” Between seven and twelve, the verbs “freeze,” “figure,” “fold,” “free,” and “fix” appear, words all starting with the letter “f.” This selection creates an evocative poetics: time can be frozen, inferred, folded, freed, and fixed. The hands move silently and inexorably, driven by the electric energy born of human ingenuity and modernity. Punctuality, one of its conquests, is as essential to the railway system and industry as it is alienating for the worker subjected to its tyranny. Only poetry can challenge this regime, or at the very least, question the moral imperative of efficiency and productivity so closely allied with time.

Another word beginning with “f” hovers over all the others: “future.” Walter Benjamin, reflecting on Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*, casts a critical eye on the passage of time, where every seeming progression is marked by the accumulation of catastrophes and suffering. Rather than a linear narrative of prosperity and improvement, Benjamin sees history as a series of tragic events that the angel is forced to witness without being able to intervene. With a look of horror, the angel gazes at the past while being propelled irresistibly into the future by a storm he calls “progress.” This tempest drives him forward, preventing him from pausing to ameliorate the disasters and ruins left behind.



In 2007, in a work titled *Fragments from a Communist Latento*, Raqs wrote: “It is not desirable for the future to be held captive by the present.” This poetic ambiguity navigates the multitude of futures possible. Their struggle against determinism is rooted in tools that are as imprecise as they are powerful. Raqs expands the universe of discourse, celebrating its multidimensional nature not only by exploring paths but also by generating tools through imagination and speculation that force the emergence of new avenues. They are meticulously indeterminate, projecting a broad field of action where individual and collective, and emotional and political elements intersect. All of this permeates *The Ecliptic* and its complex definition of time. Through its multiple conjugations, the piece emphasizes change, transience, and the “not permanent” that flows alongside time itself. It thus challenges the established order, or at least the utilitarian sense of it. It counts on flow, constant replacement, and the passing from some to others. In light of what the piece posits, it matters little whether what is imagined can actually happen, as, in fact, it is already happening by being articulated. [FB]

ISIDORO VALCÁRCEL MEDINA

Clocks, 1973

365 photographs in a box, urban intervention

Acquired in 2022

Colección Banco de España

This work from 1973, known as *Clocks*, may be considered interchangeably as an artist's book, a photographic piece, or an urban intervention. All three classifications are correct, which should suggest immediately that the interest of the piece lies less in its final, finished form – whether

as a book, photograph, or intervention – and more in what it is capable of inspiring. This determination to divert attention from the work as a completed object toward the act of creation and perception itself was widespread in the art of the 1960s, particularly in its more radical expressions, which were dominated by a poetics of happenings, in which Valcárcel participated. From this perspective, *Clocks* can be defined as a temporary urban intervention captured through a collection of photographs compiled in an album. More specifically, it is a box-book measuring 9.7 x 9.7 x 6 cm, containing 365 loose black-and-white photographs of various calendar clocks in Madrid, taken daily over the course of a year. As with most photo albums, there is no explanatory text, just a series of snapshots in an identical format, yet appearing to be heterogeneous and casual, each dedicated to one of these street clocks. The amateur feel of the photo album is heightened by the author's evident disinterest in the technical qualities of the images, whose only apparent function is to show – regardless of framing, light, or scene – the precise moment and location of the photograph, which necessarily coincide with the data on those chronometric tables placed on the sidewalk and raised above traffic. Rectangular in format and mounted at the top of a post, these panels indicated the name of the public road (for example, plaza de Cibeles) at the top and were divided into two symmetrical vertical fields: the left side displayed the actual calendar clock, while the right featured advertisements.

These clocks served as landmarks in public spaces, punctuating the road and marking time for pedestrians. Traditionally, this function, serving as a spatial and temporal marker, was associated with monuments. The difference here is that the purpose was not to commemorate any memorable event but merely to remind passersby of the time, helping them synchronize with the city's instantaneous time, the present of moments in series ticked off by the clock. Nor was the intention to highlight a specific place, but simply to indicate the pedestrian's location on the street map, given that the ubiquitous and isomorphic nature of metropolitan spaces no longer lend themselves to noticing any particular location, but simply to pointing out directions. These vertical panels stood in public spaces as anti-monuments, as signs of the new spatiotemporal experience of the city, dominated by traffic and movement. In the modern city, governed by the flow of people, goods, energy, and information, the artist need only surrender to the flow and pay attention to the signals that modulate movement. If walking purposefully is enough to reveal the basic order of time and public space, then it is equally sufficient to take photographs attentively to demonstrate that the most fundamental quality of photography lies not so much in the finished product as in the



operation of taking the picture, in the photographic act itself. The singular nature of the photos in *Clocks* lies in the fact that their subject is not so much public space as public time, and that to depict it, they rely not only on their representational value but also on the inherent power of photography as an act. By juxtaposing the transience inherent in photography with the time of the city, the underlying dynamic between the photographic device and the city as a spatiotemporal device is also revealed. Owing to this dynamic, photography – as a machine for recording instantaneous images in series – is ideally suited to capturing the temporal and spatial experience of the pedestrian: both the serial moments of the city-clock and the isomorphic and ubiquitous spatiality of cities built on uniform lots.

This is one of the first works from the period of public art that emerged after the artist's participation in the 1972 Encuentros de Pamplona. Like *Accounting for the Time*, also in this collection, it reveals the centrality of time in his work. [JMDC]

ISIDORO VALCÁRCEL MEDINA

Accounting for the Time, 1996

21 x 13.5 x 1.2 cm

Book published as part of the project "Ir y venir" by Valcárcel Medina

Edition: Centro José Guerrero; Region of Murcia; Fundació Antoni Tàpies

This work appears to be a standard-sized (13.5 x 21 cm) paperback book, divided into two symmetrical halves of 74 pages each, preceded by a brief 8-page preface. The volume was self-published as part of the exhibition *Ir y Venir de Valcárcel Medina* (Going and Coming by Valcárcel Medina, 2002) and was sold with the catalog.

The first part is a yearly calendar with simple chronometric tables inviting the reader to set the time according to solar time, adjusting their watch daily by 19 to 20 seconds. The author himself explains the reasoning behind this exercise: "Let's change the time, as the politicians want, but let's do it in a way they don't want: consciously" (p. 43). To facilitate this, precise tables are provided for setting the time forward or backward each day, with figures punctuated on the page by expressions corresponding to the aphorisms found on the same page and in the same place in the book's second half.

The second half is composed of brief statements on time and its paradoxes, one for each day of the year, which in tone could be considered an updated version of the proverbs and maxims typical of almanacs. Each part stands alone – one with daily time adjustments, the other

with daily aphorisms – but they are related by the exact mirroring of their pages, both numbered from 1 to 74. The textual space occupied by each aphorism in the second half is reflected precisely in the spatial arrangement of the daily calculations with their corresponding expression in the first half. For example, Part I ends on page 74 with the time adjustment figures for December 21 and the expression “21 December once again,” which could serve as a heading or title for the thought concluding Part II on page 74: “Dying wish: Make an hourglass with my ashes.”

In the preface to the book, considered by its author as a premonition of an unavoidable “art of the hour” (p. 27), we find a simple yet incisive explanation of the general plan of this piece, which could very well be interpreted as a method or guiding principle applicable to his entire body of work: “The project presented here bears no secret message or supposed intention other than that of adapting social convention to celestial reality” (p. 2). All his public art offerings seek to reveal or highlight the paradoxical discrepancies between the conventions of social reality and the logic of material reality. In this particular example, it is enough to consider social norms, on one hand, and the laws of physics on the other to see the utter absurdity of subjecting one set of laws to the other. The position for confronting the logic of these two realities always rests on common, everyday experience. Hence the central role both time and measurement have played in his work since

his beginnings in the 1960s as a normative and concrete painter, precisely because our ordinary experience is intertwined with and shaped by time and, consequently, by the contradiction between time perceived as the duration of an infinite present and time conceived abstractly as a succession of identical presents. Since only the latter can be quantified – and, as a result, priced – adjusting the clocks and counting the hours are enough to expose the absurd way in which society insists on measuring, legislating, and calibrating what our bodily experience and common sense, which everyone shares, tell us cannot be calculated and, therefore, cannot be bought or controlled.

The radio program *La Estación de Perpiñán* from the Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid dedicated a broadcast to this work in April 2007, which is included in Eugenio Castro's book *Conversations with Isidoro Valcárcel Medina* (2018). [JMDC]

MANOLO LAGUILLO

Making Time Visible, 2024

Eight consecutive photographs

9.29, 9.39, 11.46, 11.49, 12.01, 12.27, 12.35, 12.36

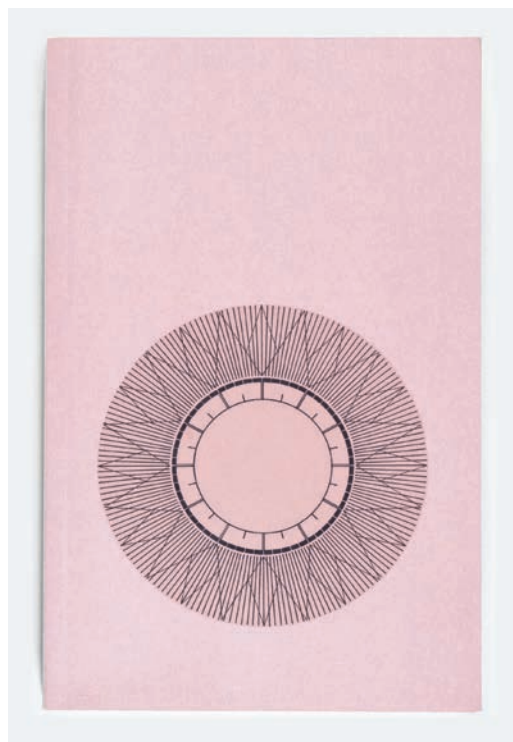
Giclée print

100 x 60 cm

Colección Banco de España

As a documentary photographer interested in the tensions caused by urban growth in geography, anthropology, history, and sociology, Manolo Laguillo is keenly aware of the need to reflect on the boundaries of the medium. Consequently, his work always possesses an element of the experimental. In view of his interests in architecture and its historical and social implications, Laguillo received a commission from the Banco de España in 2020 to visually explore the work of the architect of its headquarters, Eduardo de Adaro. The artist described the project thus: “As the idea was to go beyond mere reproduction, to photograph deliberately and construct a discourse that represents it, I opted for an approach not without subjectivity, meaning one clear of the mannerisms of conventional architectural photography. I sought to create a coherent series of photographs that, consistent with my other work, cast a new light on this Restoration-era architect.”

In this series, Laguillo has selected several photographs focusing on the iconic clock tower with bells by David Glasgow, which has been marking time from the corner of the building facing the plaza de Cibeles since 1 January 1891. The clock remains a prominent symbol of the institution and one of the most recognizable landmarks in the city. Laguillo captures the clock through a measured passage, in a suspenseful temporal sequence, progressing from the exterior to the interior. The public view of the institution



thereby gradually unfolds to yield perspectives typically reserved for a few: first, the clock as seen from the rooftops and from behind, and then, as if in a vivisection, its complex and fascinating clockworks, culminating in the enigmatic presence of the iron and wood pendulum suspended over a concrete floor. In doing so, he unveils the most intimate and unexpected image of the clock, which provided regularity to the start of shareholders' meetings (and hence ensured attendees' punctuality) and eventually extended its influence to the public sphere, affecting passersby as well.

It is precisely this position, that of the urban pedestrian, Laguillo first adopts in the images preceding those of the interiors, which are especially striking for revealing how technology seems to overpower architecture, crossing the building's usual boundaries and floor layouts. In this sense, Laguillo demonstrates how timekeeping technology asserts itself as hegemonic, eclipsing all other considerations. Just as Adaro's architecture represented the vanguard of its time and a forward-thinking approach to contemporary needs, so too did the work of the clockmaker David Glasgow, who in 1899 determined that his clock's movement should embody the latest technical innovations and achieve the highest precision. As the specialist Amelia Aranda Huete notes, "The pendulum was to be constructed with thermal compensation, ensuring that timekeeping would vary by no more than four or five seconds per week. [Glasgow] also decided that the clocks inside the bank would be controlled by this master clock."

Laguillo's photographs are arranged chronologically, with the time each was shot recorded. This serves to emphasize that time is also a decisive factor for the photographer: the exposure time, the time's influence on the light, the time constraints of the workday; these clues chronicle his passage. Laguillo aims for viewers to know where and when he paused and what captured his attention – that this approach, this sort of photographic stalking, is recorded: first from the street, then on the rooftops, and finally from within. In this series, Laguillo has also eliminated color to ensure formal homogeneity across the images, maintaining the clock as the central theme. The arrangement of the photographs is also significant, echoing that of the clock itself in a kind of schematic reconstruction from the individual fragments: the dial and bell at the top, the clockworks in the middle, and the pendulum at the bottom. [CM]





CANDIDA HÖFER

Banco de España Madrid V 2000, 2000

Chromogenic print on paper

120 x 120 cm

Edition 2/6

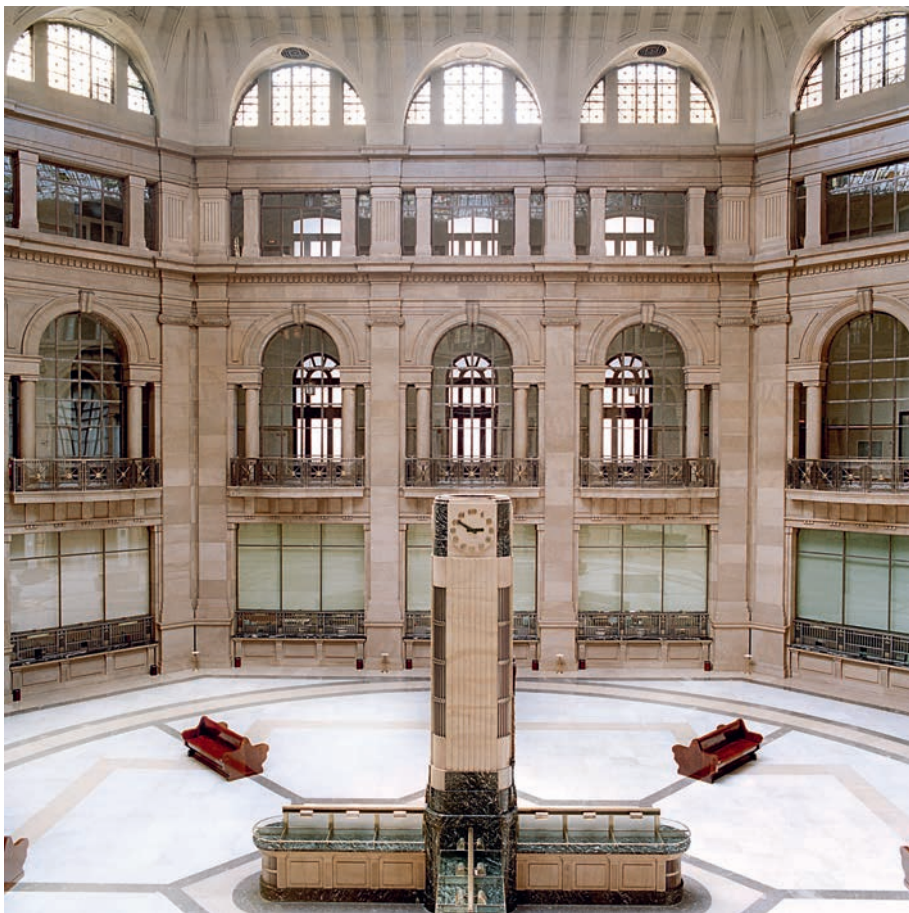
Acquired in 2001

Colección Banco de España

Candida Höfer's photographic work is often described as a portrayal of an "architecture of absence" due to her recurring focus on public or semi-public spaces devoid of any human presence. This absence does not, however, imply that there are no traces, no imprints of those who have passed or normally pass through them. When viewing these images, it is as though one is anticipating the arrival of people and for the everyday functions and the institutional systems the spaces represent to come back to life. The series of photographs taken at the Banco de España in 2000 undoubtedly reveals this interest, further heightened by the fact that, while ostensibly a public institution, the bank is perceived as somewhat inaccessible due to the security needs inherent to its purpose. In these two images, Höfer has shot spaces marked by the presence of clocks,

which, somewhat anecdotally, record the exact times the photographs were taken: one of the bank's main banking hall and the other of the current library, which was formerly the treasury hall of the original building designed by Eduardo de Adaro.

A certain seriality in the elements reflects Höfer's interest in repetition, the search for an internal order within architecture and a fundamental sense of the decorative. This impulse, inherited from her mentors Bernd and Hilla Becher, can be read in the filigree of the white wrought iron of the current library, which frames the *oeil de boeuf* clock crafted by Ramón Garín around 1891. The clock, well integrated – almost camouflaged – into the building's distinctive interior design, replaces the sequence of roundels with Mercury heads that originally ringed the first floor. Notably, this clock was photographed by Höfer when its frame was painted white (having been restored since to reveal its original wood finish), further blending it into the architecture. This photograph shares a curious feature with the one in the main banking hall: the photograph avoids symmetry by subtly shifting the framing laterally. [cm]



CANDIDA HÖFER

Banco de España Madrid VI 2000, 2000

Chromogenic print on paper

120 x 120 cm

Edition 3/6

Acquired in 2023

Colección Banco de España

The latter image highlights the increasingly functional nature of the building after the extensions completed by José Yarnoz in 1936, which aspire to a new classicism that converses, rather than competes with, Adaro's eclectic interiors. The photograph of the main banking hall is one of the images that best distills the serial nature reflected in Höfer's interest in minimalism: it is one of the most iconic spaces in the building and, like the other works in this series, explores institutional architecture by capturing its atmosphere and history at a specific moment in time. Yet there is an element that Höfer skillfully picks up on, adding personality to the interior: the large central clock, which, together with the stained-glass ceiling (left deliberately out of frame by Höfer, except for the light it casts

into the space), embody the Art Deco aspirations of this space. The monumental mass of this clock – perfectly coordinated with its surroundings – dominates the lower half of the photograph like a totem, seemingly indicating a symmetry that the background framing, as already mentioned, subtly rejects.

Beyond their intrinsic value as part of Candida Höfer's photographic oeuvre, these images document both spaces at a particular point in their history within a building undergoing significant internal changes to update and adapt its facilities for various functions. Höfer's work accentuates the specific moment, the sense of time, which the clocks undoubtedly help to emphasize. All of this coalesces with the photographer's ability to focus a probing and essentialist eye on not only the architecture most amenable to it (that of modernism and its derivatives), but also on a profoundly eclectic building like the Banco de España. [CM]



ANONYMOUS

Digital Flip Wall and Desk Clock, c. 1960
Possibly made in Spain
Plastic. Molded, polychromed.
32.5 x 32.5 x 12 cm
Colección Banco de España

This is a wall or desk clock with a digital flip display and calendar function, featuring polychrome Arabic numerals in white. It displays the day of the week, day of the month, month, hour, and minutes. The quartz movement is electronic.

These units are Spanish versions of a functional clock design produced by the Solari company in the early 1960s. The original wall clocks were conceived by the brothers Nani and Gino Valle, who won a design award for this simple clock, with its straight lines and lack of decoration. It was, however, highly effective in timekeeping, particularly in workspaces and places for daily activity.

This clock is the predecessor of the flip-letter and -number displays that still adorn train stations and airports around the world.

There was another, rectangular version intended for tables and desks.

Many of these clocks were manufactured and sold by the Unión Relojera Suiza brand.

Unión Relojera Suiza S. A. was founded in Spain in 1923 with the aim of representing the best Swiss clockmakers. In 1932, the company expanded and created the División de Cronometría, which focused on the study, production, and maintenance of synchronized timekeeping systems. Their products, in most cases, were mass produced. The clocks they sold became worldwide references for their precision and functionality. [AAH]

RAPIDPRINT

Date and Time Stamp Clock, United States, c. 1980-2000
ARC-E Model
Stainless steel shell, aluminum, plastic, steel, copper
18 x 11 x 25.5 cm
Colección Banco de España

This type of date and time stamp clock became widespread in the mid-20th century and was used primarily in the registry offices of institutions and businesses where it was necessary to reliably record the time and date a document was submitted. This ensured the person presenting the document received a copy stamped with the submission data. Traditionally, this process was done manually by the registry clerk, who would sign and stamp the copy.

In these types of clocks, both functions – stamping and recording the date and time – are performed simultaneously and automatically when the document is inserted for submission. Depending on the model, the printing capabilities varied; in this one, besides the date, month, year, internal code, hour, and minute data, the name and information of the corresponding institution were also printed. In this particular piece, the institution's identification plate has been removed.

The lower part of the clock contains a timekeeping mechanism with a front-facing dial indicating the hours and minutes, but not seconds. Through a synchronized motor, this mechanism controls the type wheels in the upper part, which operate via a gear train system. In this system, the motor only moves the first wheel; when this wheel completes a full rotation, a ratchet moves the next wheel one step, and so on through the series.

The wheels are made of brass and have raised numbers and letters on their outer faces, like the movable type in printing presses. When the paper is inserted, a mechanical lever detects it, at which



point the lower platform rises, pressing the paper onto the ink ribbon and then onto the wheels above, automatically registering the information on the document. In the present clock, the format is as follows:

| -1 | ABR | 2013 | | 10 | 31 |

| Date | Month | Year | Internal code | Hour | Minute |

This model closely resembles the earliest date and time stamp clocks. It features a futuristic outer case design with the classic textured gray paint typical of the 1980s. Unlike earlier models, which were mechanical, this clock uses an electric timekeeping system, an innovation that first appeared in the 1960s, though spring-driven models continued to be used for many years.

Despite being launched in the mid-1980s, this design has proven to be extremely durable. Even today, it remains part of the company's product range without any apparent modifications, reflecting its high reliability and build quality.

Currently, Rapidprint, the company that manufactures this clock, offers four different models:

Model AR-E - Basic time stamp

Model ARL-E - with LED clock

Model ARC-E - with analog clock

Model AD-E - Basic date stamp. [ILL]

ANONYMOUS

Watchman's Clock, c. 1940

Aluminum, brass, steel, leather

7 x 13.5 x 13 cm

Colección Banco de España

This type of clock was used primarily by night watchmen to ensure that routine rounds were carried out effectively. It consists of two distinct parts: the timekeeping mechanism, which powers the clock and allows it to tell the time, typically showing hours and minutes; and the recording system, whose design varied according to specific needs. If it was only necessary to log 24-hour shifts, a paper disc like those used in modern tachographs sufficed. However, for longer periods such as a week or more, a paper tape system similar to those of old telegraphs was required, as in the case of this clock.

The usual process for recording was as follows: as the watchman conducted his rounds, he carried the clock, which hung from a strap. Each checkpoint along the route had a different key, usually hanging from a chain or kept in a small box. Upon reaching the checkpoint, the watchman would insert the appropriate key into the clock, which recorded the time along with the corresponding checkpoint code.

This method allowed for an easy verification of whether the watchman completed the rounds as prescribed and on time. These mechanical clocks were manufactured with only minor modifications by various companies over several decades,

from their introduction in the 1920s until the end of the same century. Today, there are similar digital systems, where the clock is replaced by an electronic recording device and the checkpoint key by a tag or magnetic point.

These clocks required minimal maintenance thanks to their robust and durable construction, with mechanisms made from steel and nickel alloys and protected by a leather case to prevent damage to the components. They typically had an 8-day power reserve, meaning they only needed to be wound once a week. It was also necessary to re-ink the ink pad when the stamped marks became faint.

The watchman did not have access to the inside of the clock to prevent any tampering that could alter the records. On the back, there was a hole for winding the clock and a small window through which the current time could be viewed. The keyhole for inserting checkpoint keys was found at the top of the clock.

All stamps were recorded on the paper tape, which was removed periodically from the clock by the person in charge, who had the appropriate key - different from the winding and checkpoint keys - for routine inspections. [ILL]



BODET, clockmaker

Master Clock, Cristal Quartz Model, France, 1978
Injection-molded plastic, electronic components,
aluminum
33 x 24.5 x 9.5 cm
Colección Banco de España



This type of clock was essential in buildings and factories where it was vital to display the exact same time in different rooms, ensuring synchronization across various places. Achieving this with independent clocks was not feasible, as each one, even of the same model and manufacturer, would have slight mechanical variations making it impossible for all the clocks to maintain the same time.

The solution implemented involved using a single master clock to regulate and maintain time, whether through a mechanical winding mechanism, electricity, or eventually quartz oscillators. These master clocks would then transmit the time signal to secondary or slave clocks. The advantage of this method was that any time adjustments made on the master clock were transmitted automatically to the other clocks.

Initially, the time signal was transmitted mechanically, requiring the master clock to be placed in a specific location, with the secondary clocks positioned nearby. This system was commonly used in railway stations, allowing a single clock to display the same time across different dials, though typically in a limited number of locations – usually fewer than four.

At the end of the 19th century, master clocks began transmitting information via electrical impulses. This allowed for greater flexibility in clock placement and the ability to connect a larger number of clocks simultaneously.

The operation was straightforward: each electrical impulse generated by the master clock was received by the secondary clock, moving the hands proportionally to the impulse received. In the early days, clocks only had hour and minute hands. The slave clock had a very simple mechanism, usually a copper coil with an iron core that became magnetized when it received an impulse, producing movement that was transmitted to the hands. Depending on the precision required, these impulses were sent at different intervals, with one-second intervals being the most common, as this matched the typical time for a single oscillation in pendulum clocks.

The introduction of electronics significantly enhanced the precision of both master and secondary clocks, simplifying their mechanisms and increasing possibilities for adjustment, though the original impulse system remained the same.

The clock here offers two options for transmitting information: the standard one impulse per minute or a second option of 16 impulses per minute, switchable directly on the clock's dial by pressing one button or the other.

The time synchronization of master clocks needed to be done with more accurate clocks or through external time signals. One of the most commonly used signals was generated by the Real Observatorio Astronómico in Madrid, broadcast every hour via numerous radio stations. These signals were known as “time beeps,” which are still heard on some radio stations today. [111]

IBGHY & LEMMENS

Each Number Equals One Inhalation and One Exhalation (Table 3), 2016

Wood, wire, metal, plastic, and acetate
171 x 371 x 173.5 cm

Acquired in 2017

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Work comprises seven sculptures of varying dimensions.

Each Number Equals One Inhalation and One Exhalation is a work in progress that began in 2016 and comprised around a hundred individual pieces by 2018. It is informed by the artists' interest in giving architectural-sculptural form to the two-dimensional projections and records typical of the worlds of economics and labor. Its most immediate forerunner was their installation *The Prophets* presented at the 2014 Montréal Biennale and the 2015 Istanbul Biennial.

The series in the Colección Banco de España comprises seven small sculptures whose forms echo the aesthetics of Russian constructivism. The dialogue between them represents materially the graphical representations of human productivity from the mid-19th century to the present. The pieces touch on various topics of interest, from

the evolution of specific aspects of production economies to the psychology of work and the management of working time and workspaces. Some of the graphs exemplify early 20th-century attempts to visualize workers' bodily movements to improve production processes, while others present data on the impact of technological, psychological, and organizational factors on efficiency.

The artists employ simple techniques in creating these works, allowing them to playfully contrast their handcrafted models with the authoritative nature of the original graphs, which are drawn from scientific publications. They thus explore how graphical representations transform complex ideas about human labor into systematized forms. This exploration extends to the relationship between diagrammatic space and mental space, to how graphs create ways of thinking.

The title *Each Number Equals One Inhalation and One Exhalation* aims to create tension between the reduction of human labor to quantifiable units – where “each number” and “equals” refer to the act or process of counting, measuring, or quantifying – while reminding the viewer that these units represent human beings, that “an inhalation and an exhalation” refer to the basic bodily function of breathing.

The title of the series may also allude to the concept of household economy, which according to the Russian economist Bulgakov could be reduced to a metabolic process similar to the alternation between inhalation and exhalation. Accordingly, production corresponds to inhalation, and consumption to exhalation, and between them complete the economic cycle.

Through these graphics and diagrams, Ibghy and Lemmens challenge the way productivity, efficiency, and performance affect workers, and how their lives are ultimately in service to the notions imposed by global capitalism. [YGR]

JUAN LUIS MORAZA

International Bank of Work Time: Box (First Series), 2020

Graphics / Portfolio of 24 digital prints on Guarro Torreón paper 90 gsm

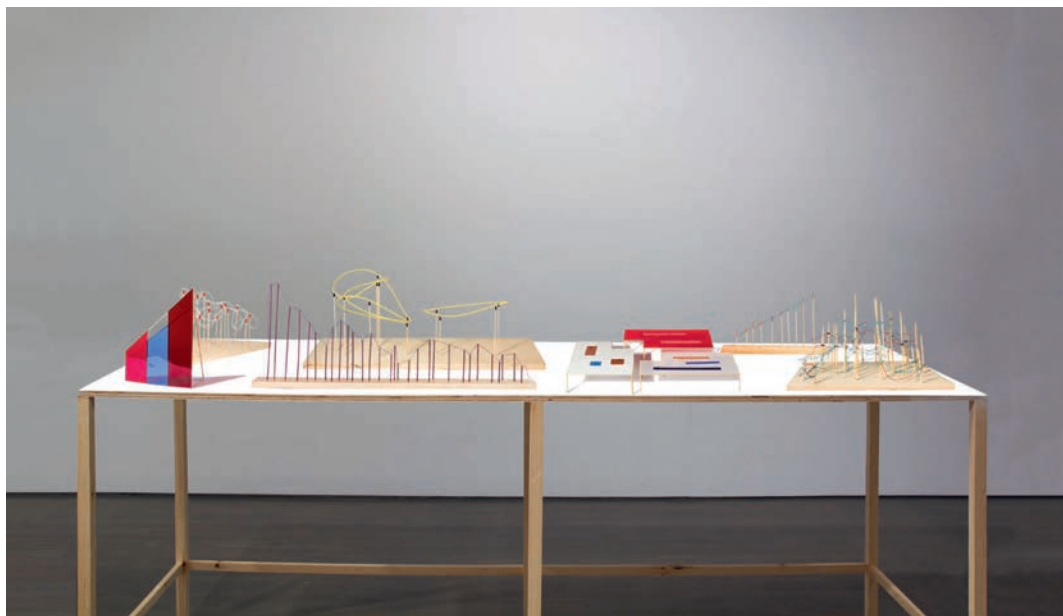
29.7 x 21 cm each

Ed. 10 + 1AP

Acquired in 2021

Colección Banco de España

In the late 1970s, during a period of political transition and with an eye on international developments, new ways of understanding art and engaging with artistic practice began to emerge in Spain through the rise of new languages. It was within this climate, in the vibrant artistic scene of Bilbao, that Juan Luis Moraza, together with María Luisa Fernández, founded the *Comité de Vigilancia Artística (CVA)* in 1979, a collective active until 1985. Their interests aligned with minimalism and symbolism, often resulting in cryptic works that even then questioned the protocols of art and its conditions for presentation and reception. This helps us understand the rich array of references and sensitivities that existed at the time, even as these artists were institutionally categorized under the moniker *Nueva Escultura Vasca (New Basque Sculpture)*, a label whose superficiality has been continually challenged by the artists themselves.





within timeframes committed to the experience of work, with values ranging from an almost infinitesimal moment (0:001 seconds) to the entire span of a human life (5,000,000 hours). Printed in their original languages and employing many of the stylistic patterns that define them, the banknotes feature historical figures associated with economics, politics, or culture, depicted through their portraits and their signatures as treasurers or administrators of this entity. In contrast to the aphorism “time is money,” which launched the culture of capitalism and represents the exchange of time for money, this paper currency presents the phrase “my money is your time” as a motto that leads the transaction back to its origin.

Moreover, his interest in incorporating new models of value and presenting them in these formats is something Moraza had already explored in an earlier work, *L.E.C.O.I.N.* (Letras de Cancelación de Obligaciones Internacionales, 2003) – printed on banknote paper and produced during a residency in Argentina – drawing on the financial situation the country experienced after the government imposed the 2001 “*corralito*” or bank freeze. This fascination with returning every basic unit of measurement to its previous state can also be traced back to works such as the one presented in 1991 in the boardroom of the *Círculo de Bellas Artes* (Madrid), as part of the project *El sueño imperativo* (The Imperative Dream), which alluded to the original meter standard, engraved on platinum and iridium, deposited in 1796 in the Archives de Paris and currently held at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers; or his iconic work *Arules* (2013), in which a set of twisted rulers lose the universal nature of the standard they represent, becoming unique and unrepeatable, thereby undermining their normalizing purpose. [ACU]

For over four decades, Juan Luis Moraza's career has extended beyond artistic creation to encompass teaching, curating, and writing, all rooted in a deep theoretical and practical foundation. His work draws together touchstones ranging from poetry and philosophy to the artistic and theoretical practices of movements such as conceptual and minimalist art. This led to an interest in semiotics, structuralism, anthropology, post-structuralism, and psychoanalysis – fields that sparked a profound engagement with text in connection to his work, and a concern with language that is *more plastic than linguistic*. He uses writing as a complementary medium, treating words as material that can be cut, pasted, or deformed.

The *International Bank of Work Time* series serves as a sequel to a body of works and reflections that Juan Luis Moraza has developed in recent years guided by the concept of “absolute work.” According to him, this concept applies “indiscriminately to any aspect of our existence: we work on our emotions, we work on our bodies, our relationships, our forms of rest, we work on our image and our future.” *International Bank of Work Time* (2020) is presented as an edition of graphical work exploring the relationship between time and money by issuing paper currency based on actual banknotes in different countries, from which their monetary values have been removed and replaced with time values. Its use would thus establish benchmarks for conducting transactions

THREADING PORTRAITS THROUGH TIME

This section opens with the large scale tapestry *The Triumph of Love and Eternity over Time*, featuring the mythological figure of Chronos, and traces a parallel narrative on the role of portraiture in the Banco de España and on its clock collection, with a selection spanning from the 18th to the early 20th century.

It was during the Enlightenment that the Banco Nacional de San Carlos – the predecessor to the Banco de España – was founded in 1782, bound to the emergence of a nascent financial bourgeoisie and industrial capitalism, the very world where the clock was becoming ever present. A notable example of the passion these timepieces inspired among Enlightenment elites is Francisco de Cabarrús, a chief proponent of the bank and one of its first directors. The first clocks telling time in the bank's headquarters at the calle de la Luna (and continuing to do so in this exhibition hall) were likely chosen or acquired on his recommendation.

Since then, clocks have remained integral to the institution's history – present not only in its main buildings, offices, and ceremonial rooms but also in various iconic portraits, some of which are on display in this exhibition. In an intriguing and historic twist, clocks appear in the most recent additions to the Banco de España's gallery: portraits of the reigning Spanish monarchs and outgoing Governor Pablo Hernández de Cos by Annie Leibovitz. These works continue a tradition, begun in 1784, of preserving institutional memory with commissioned images of governors and heads of state throughout the bank's history – though, for the first time, these portraits were captured through photography.



JAN LEYNIERS, after a design by David Teniers III

The Triumph of Love and Eternity over Time,
Brussels, 1684

Tapestry-heraldic hanging with the coat of arms

of López de Ayala, Counts of Fuensalida

Wool, silk and metallic threads

9 threads/dm

376 x 318 cm

Colección Banco de España

The Triumph of Love and Eternity over Time is a fitting testament to a period in Western tapestry when heraldry and moral allegory were intimately entwined to create true woven puzzles.

The center of the hanging – conceived as a tapestry within another tapestry – prominently displays the coat of arms of the López de Ayala family, the Counts of Fuensalida. Immediately below the heraldic group appears an elderly winged man in a posture of submission, restrained by chains being fastened by a *putto*. To his side are a winged hourglass and scythe. The scene is completed by eight more *putti*, all toiling to hold up the hanging, adorned with golden fringes, on which the scene just described is depicted.

This hanging is imbued with moral overtones: the figure of the elderly man, with his wings and the objects by his side – the hourglass and scythe – is surely the god Chronos, or more specifically

– in Erwin Panofsky's typology – Father Time.¹

This was one of the motifs revived from classical mythology during the early modern period, though inevitably "contaminated" by medieval interpretations. Father Time thus represents the culmination of a process of phonetic and semantic assimilation between the Greek Χρόνος (Chronos, as an allegory of Time) and the Titan Κρόνος (Kronos, later becoming Saturn in Roman mythology), resulting in Time assuming attributes of the devouring Saturn. The wings of transience and the hourglass meld with two Saturnian attributes: old age and the castrating scythe.

Through this evolutionary process, Time has become increasingly associated with death and destruction, but also with revelation and triumph. Time devours, destroys, and overcomes love, chastity, and fame. However, in David Teniers III's conception in this tapestry, it is Time who surrenders to Love, contradicting the more commonly disseminated image of Chronos triumphant, associated with the Baroque obsession with the passage of time and the *vanitas* genre. Yet the allegory cannot be fully understood without the figure of the maiden holding the ouroboros, the ring formed by a serpent devouring its own tail. In the hands of a winged maiden, this symbol of a neverending cycle seems to represent a deliberate appropriation of one of Father Time's

attributes by a figure that must be recognized as the personification of Eternity.

This tapestry of the Counts of Fuensalida, adapted to the coat of arms of the López de Ayala family from a preexisting model, bears the hallmarks of the weaver Jean Leyniers, a renowned craftsman who served the creative genius of David Teniers III, regarded as one of the foremost designers of Baroque tapestry and possessor of a keen sensitivity to the symbolic culture of his age.

This tapestry's allegorical aspects follow a train of thought where time has become a central concern, infused with reflections on the transience of life. The Banco de España possesses another invaluable piece from a related tapestry series – the *Allegory of Time*, woven by Geraert Peemans from designs by the same David Teniers III – which also masterfully illustrates this unease over the flow of the months and seasons. Indeed, there is nothing better than a tapestry – a true interweaving of thread and time – to express the feeling that all is vanity.

The Triumph of Love and Eternity over Time offers a ray of hope and, thanks to Cupid's arts, the irresistible flow of life's sands appears to have been arrested. [AS]

1. Erwin Panofsky, "El padre tiempo", *Estudios sobre iconología*, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998, pp. 93-138.



ANONYMOUS

30-Minute Sandglass, 18th/19th century
Wood, glass, ground sand, wax, and leather.
22 x 11 cm
Museo Naval de Madrid, 292

In the eleventh book of his *Confessions*, Saint Augustine of Hippo pondered: "What, then, is time? ...If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to he who asks, I do not know. Yet, I say in confidence that if nothing had happened, there would be no past time, and if nothing were still to come, there would be no future time, and if nothing were, there would be no present time."

To be sure, the attempt to capture time in a definition is, even today, one that risks failing to ever reach a convincing explanation. However, although the ancients never succeeded in defining time conclusively, they were sufficiently skilled at containing its tyranny by creating instruments that could trap and reduce it. One of the earliest and most familiar of these instruments is the sandglass.

The sand- or hourglass we know today evolved from even older water clocks, or clepsydras, which measured time through the uniform and continuous flow of liquid between two vessels. The sandglass was a simple device consisting of two glass bulbs, shaped like cones or pears, connected at their necks by a small opening allowing the material to flow between them. The properties of the glass were unaffected by weather conditions or time and maintained its transparency. One of the bulbs was usually filled with finely ground black marble powder and the amount of sand was calculated to measure time in seconds, minutes, or hours. Once the upper bulb emptied, the instrument was inverted to continue measuring time. In the case of our sandglass, this operation was performed every 30 minutes.

The bulbs were joined by a collar made of wax or putty, sometimes reinforced with cloth or leather, and decorated with braided thread. The fragility of the glass required a wooden frame to protect it from potential impacts. This mount consisted of two bases – square, round, or hexagonal – connected by columns or supports that protected and reinforced the instrument.

The sandglass was known to Spanish sailors as an *ampolleta*, a term derived from the Latin word *ampulla*, meaning flask or bottle. Thus, the union of two *ampolletas* made a sandglass, although by metonymy, the name of the glass bulbs came to refer to the entire instrument. For this reason, throughout the 16th century, references to its use were common in nautical works and treatises, due to its essential role in navigation. Gradually, the instrument made its way from the sea to the palaces, and especially during the 17th century, it began to appear in various forms of art as an allegory of the inexorable passage of time, *tempus fugit*.

The magnificent tapestry by David Teniers, displayed alongside the sandglass in question, is a fine example of this. An elderly, winged figure, lord and god of time – the Roman god Saturn – chained and defeated, bends his knee in surrender. Next to him lies the scythe, a symbol of death, and the sandglass, almost horizontal, from whose upper bulb the last grains of sand fall, taking with them the little life he has left. The winged sandglass became a metaphor for the completion and passing of our earthly life and the ephemerality of our possessions, which is why sandglasses are commonly carved on tombs and funerary monuments, figuratively showing us how life trickles away like sand. [JMMM]

DIEGO EVANS, clockmaker

Longcase Clock, c. 1770-1780

Made in the United Kingdom

Wood, lacquer, brass, silver, metal, bronze, glass.

Carved, lacquered, chased, engraved, gilded, cast.

241 x 50 x 24 cm

Acquired by the Banco Nacional de San Carlos

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Engraved on the dial, under the hand stem: "DIEGO EVANS / Bolsa Real / LONDRES."



In the mid-17th century, the invention of the pendulum marked a significant advance in timekeeping. Early English movements used a verge escapement as the regulator. These first pendulums were short and swung in wide arcs. With the invention of the anchor escapement, the arc decreased, allowing the mechanism to be hidden inside a wooden case. Cabinetmakers then created a new piece of furniture that not only housed the clock movement but also protected it from dust, preventing damage. From that moment, English longcase clocks abounded and became some of the most sought-after timepieces in Europe, known for both the precision of their movements and, as with this example, the beauty of their cases.

The English clockmaker Diego Evans, active between 1770 and 1832, signed the dial of this longcase or grandfather clock. The lacquered wood case is embellished with chinoiserie decoration. The hood features a pagoda-style crest, topped with three plinths – one in the center and one on each side. Originally, these may have supported finials in

the shapes of balls or urns. Two lacquered wooden columns with Doric capitals of blued metal flank the glass door protecting the clock face. The door frame is also of lacquered wood.

As was common, the face is made of gilt brass. The hour dial, crafted from silver, displays black enamel numerals: Roman for the hours and Arabic – in increments of five – for the minutes. The interior of the dial is decorated with stippling, a technique typical of English clockmaking. The second hand is on an auxiliary dial below the XII numeral. A rectangular window above the VI numeral shows the date. Above this window, a plaque bears the clockmaker's signature: "DIEGO EVANS / Bolsa Real / LONDON." The dial is completed by the hand stem and two winding holes. The blued metal hands are ornamented with a pierced design. Above the main dial, an auxiliary dial sets the chime to be struck or silenced: "Tocar/Silencio." The rest of the face is decorated with pierced metal plates featuring vegetal motifs. As can be seen, the inscriptions are written in Spanish.

The trunk or body supporting the hood is straight, and the rectangular base features simple molding framing a chinoiserie scene lacquered in black and gold. Additionally, the case has a front door with a molded edge and a lock, which, when opened, reveals the pendulum.

The English clock movement has rectangular plates and two trains: one for keeping time and another for striking. The time train is regulated by an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train, regulated by a fly, chimes the hours and half-hours.

The clock case follows the longcase or grandfather design particular to the English Chippendale style from the second half of the 18th century and is decorated with chinoiserie motifs. The scene on the front of the trunk attempts to create the illusion of depth with a landscape featuring architecture and gardens arranged in terraces. Several figures are scattered throughout the architectural space, completing and enlivening the scene. At the top is a sun resting among clouds. Interestingly, unlike other examples from the same period, the sides of this case are not decorated.

These cases, intended for the European market, imitate the *costumbrista* interpretations of Far Eastern art popularized throughout the 18th century. Due to high demand, similar cases were produced in Germany, replacing the expensive lacquer with layers of varnished gesso.

This clock was listed in an 1827 inventory of the furniture in the offices of the Caja de Pago of the Banco Nacional de San Carlos. It appears again in another inventory dated 4 January 1851 of the decorations in the Pieza Corrida de Contador (Accounting Long Room).¹ [AAH]

1. Archivo Histórico del Banco de España, Secretaría, bundle 1128.



FRANCISCO DE GOYA Y LUCIENTES

Francisco de Cabarrús y Lalanne, c. 1788

Oil on canvas

210 x 127 cm

Commissioned by the Banco Nacional
de San Carlos in 1786

Colección Banco de España

The portrait of Francisco de Cabarrús (b. Bayonne 1752, d. Seville, 1810) as honorary director of the Banco de San Carlos – which he both championed and founded – once hung in the Sala Grande de Juntas Generales (General Assembly Hall), possibly at its head. This was the last of the portraits that Goya painted for the institution. In 1790, Carlos IV conferred the title of the title of Count of Cabarrús upon the perceptive French-born merchant, who became a Spanish citizen in 1781. This marked the pinnacle of the social ascent of a man who, having arrived in Valencia in his youth, demonstrated remarkable business acumen and the ability to navigate among the most influential figures at the Bourbon court. In 1799, he was entrusted with provisioning the French and Spanish troops allied against England in support of the independence of the United States. The creation of the Banco de San Carlos in 1782, among other initiatives, further cemented Cabarrús's ties to the corridors of power, although he soon experienced a series

of accusations and persecutions from which he never fully recovered.

The portrait depicts him standing, as in real life, and master of all he surveys, though the Velázquez-esque shadowy background perhaps suggests the envy and enemies lying in wait for the brilliant financier. Goya knowingly modernizes the image of power previously reserved for the aristocracy, masterfully emphasizing Cabarrús's figure through the luminous green silk attire with golden highlights that clings to his substantial frame. This color, symbolizing money and wealth, alludes to the future Count's skill in increasing both his personal fortune and the Crown's finances by applying the progressive French ideas that would earn him powerful enemies.

For the bourgeoisie, who were advancing on all fronts against the old guard with drive, knowledge, and determination, the liberties and novelties of this portrait must have been startling. A technical study of this painting revealed that Cabarrús's right hand originally rested on the bank director's staff, the singular emblem of traditional power. Goya or perhaps his model decided to remove it, leaving the figure with neither decorative honors nor symbols, but adhering closely to Velázquez's composition for the portrait of *Pablo de Valladolid*. In that painting, the court jester and actor extends his right hand in a theatrical gesture, one that Goya uses here to play up the steadiness of his subject. Cabarrús's left hand is tucked into his coat, a pose associated with intellect at the time. The financier, of humble origins, seems to emerge from the darkness of history with force and clout, casting a sharply outlined shadow on the ground that suggests the figure's forward momentum, supported by the movement of his coat and his advanced leg, as if his image were driven by a centrifugal force propelling him forward toward a new project.

As always, Goya reveals the powerful physique beneath Cabarrús's clothing, his carriage and build, the contours of his head, and even the weight of the bones that would meet an ignoble fate after his death in Seville in 1810. He was buried in the chapel of la Concepción in the cathedral there, in a mausoleum near that of the Count of Floridablanca. After the war against the French ended in 1814, however, the Junta Central of 1809 declared him a traitor for accepting the post of Finance Minister under King Joseph I and his bones were relocated to a mass grave in the patio de los Naranjos. [MM]

THOMAS WINDMILLS, clockmaker

Bracket Mantel Clock, c. 1720

Mahogany wood, bronze, silver, metal, glass.

Carved, chased, engraved, gilded, cast

65 x 42 x 27 cm

Acquired by the Banco Nacional de San Carlos in 1783

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Engraved on the dial, flanking the VI numeral, and on the backplate: "Windmills/London."



From the 17th century onwards, the English mantel clock was the most popular and sought after timepiece among cultured and affluent clients. Called bracket clocks in Spain, they were originally designed as movable clocks to be placed on a shelf anchored to the wall. Owing to their weight, however, shortly after their invention they were placed instead on furniture or mantels. Once free-standing, there was a glass door at the back to allow for viewing of the exquisite decoration on the backplate of the movement, which was typically adorned with vegetal designs, cartouches, birds, and other burin-chased decorations, as well as the maker's name. The early square shape of the cases soon evolved to include a rounded arch top, which became bell-shaped or stepped by 1720.

Initially, the chapter ring was squared, but technical advances made it necessary to incorporate an arch at the top to accommodate auxiliary dials. These dials were often crafted by silversmiths, who engraved the numerals with a burin and enameled them in black. A curved aperture in the dial allowed viewing of a small pendulum in models that lacked a second hand.

The movement is housed between two thick plates and combines a barrel, which houses the mainspring, and a fusée, a spiral-grooved cone

that regulates the tension of the mainspring.

As the mainspring loses tension as it unwinds, the fusée compensates by holding the chain or gut line that wraps around the barrel. The escapement translates rotary motion into back-and-forth movement, oscillating with the pendulum's swing. Early clocks sometimes incorporated a repeat mechanism that chimed the hours and quarters by pulling a cord on the side of the case. The significance of this clock lies in its maker and its documented history as preserved in the Archivo Histórico of the Banco de España.

The records show that on 7 June 1783, Julián Martínez acknowledged receiving 1,500 reales from Pedro Bernardo Casamayor for a royal pendulum clock. Made by Windmills, the clock was intended for use in the Banco Nacional de San Carlos building on calle de la Luna.

The simple rectangular case is made of mahogany wood. It is crowned by a pagoda top adorned with a pinecone finial and acorns at the four corners. The stepped plinth of imitation ebony rests on four gilt bronze feet.

The lockable glass door protects and displays the squared gilt bronze chapter ring, which is surmounted by an arch. The chapter ring is made of gilt silver, with the hours marked by Roman numerals and the minutes in increments of five by Arabic numerals, all enameled in black. The interior of the dial is of metal and decorated with bright stippling. A square window above the inverted VI numeral displays the date, while a curved horizontal opening above the hands reveals the movement of the pendulum. The rest of the dial is decorated with gilded metal plates with openwork featuring vegetal motifs and female faces. Three winding holes and the hand stem complete the dial, whose hands are of blued metal.

The sides and back of the case feature glass panels that allow the mechanism and backplate to be viewed. The gilt bronze backplate is adorned with beautifully chased vegetal motifs surrounding the maker's signature. From 1734, the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in England mandated that all backplates be signed to prevent fraud and counterfeiting by continental clockmakers.

The English three-train movement is protected by rectangular plates and side pillars. The time train is powered by a spring motor that keeps the clock running for eight days. It is regulated by a fusée connected to a pallet escapement that drives the pendulum. The strike train sounds the quarters and half-hours through a rack and bell system, and includes a chime with six bells.

Curiously, this clock lacks the handles typically found on the top or sides, which were designed to facilitate moving the clock from place to place. The case may be of later manufacture. [AAH]



FRANCISCO DE GOYA Y LUCIENTES

José Moñino y Redondo, 1st Count of Floridablanca, 1783

Oil on canvas

260 x 166 cm

Acquired in 1986

Colección Banco de España

The portrait of José Moñino y Redondo (b. Murcia 1728, d. Seville 1808) has been dated to 1783, one year after the founding of the Banco of San Carlos. Although the place for which it was originally intended remains unknown, it was likely his personal residence. A letter from Goya to his friend Martín Zapater on 22 January 1783 hints at the secretive nature of the Count's confidential request.

Floridablanca, who Carlos III had ennobled as Count of Floridablanca in 1773, served as the chief secretary of state from 1776. He was a key figure in Goya's rise and success at court during this period. The minister had already favored Goya in 1781 with a commission for one of the grand altar paintings for the church of San Francisco el Grande in Madrid, and the year before had ordered that the *Cristo en la Cruz* (now in the Museo del Prado, Madrid) be sent there. In 1784, though some believe it was earlier, Goya painted another portrait of Floridablanca in connection with the

Banco of San Carlos (now also in the Museo del Prado), depicting the Count holding the *Memoria para la formación del Banco nacional de San Carlos* (Report on Founding the National Bank of San Carlos), a document written by Cabarrús in 1782.

The grand portrait here of Floridablanca was Goya's first courtly commission, and he skillfully employed all the allegorical elements typical of the genre. The minister takes center stage, dressed in red, displaying the sash and insignia of the Royal and Distinguished Order of Carlos III. He stands beneath the watchful presence of the monarch, whose oval portrait hangs in the background, recalling the longstanding European tradition of a "painting within a painting." Thus, the entire scene is sanctioned by the monarch's power and will, enhancing the minister's image with a sense of poise and grandeur.

Goya balances the composition by placing symbols of Floridablanca's achievements on either side of him. On one side, the public works projects he championed, which were among the most technically advanced and beneficial policies of his administration, are symbolized by maps, such as, among others, the one of the Canal Imperial de Aragón. These are being examined by a project supervisor, likely the hydraulic engineer Julián Sánchez Bort, who had been working on the Canal since 1775. On his left side, Floridablanca's crucial support for the arts is embodied by Goya himself, who presents a small canvas for the Count's approval, as though they were sketches for new decorative projects. Goya's presence as an artist is validated by the prominent display of Antonio Acisclo Palomino's famous theoretical book on painting, which Floridablanca was planning to reprint. Alongside the map and an engraving, it forms the visual and metaphorical foundation for what is depicted in the upper portion of the painting and for the minister's ideas and actions.

The large, gilded clock tells the exact time, half past ten in the morning. Carlos III began his workday at eight sharp with general audiences but would receive his ministers from eleven. Thus, having completed his morning tasks by ten-thirty, Floridablanca was undoubtedly preparing to meet with the king. Further emphasizing his readiness is the envelope at his feet, one of the many memoranda and petitions he received daily during his audiences, which has already been opened and read. Additionally, the clock on the table, symbolizing orderly work and incessant activity, is adorned with a beautiful figure of Old Father Time, seated and holding an hourglass in his right hand, which links the time of the historical past with that of the modern present of the Enlightenment. [MM]

FELIPE SANTIAGO and PEDRO CHAROST

Allegory of the Arts, c. 1771-1774

Mantel Clock

Bronze, enamel, metal and glass. Cast, gilded, enameled.

59 x 35 x 19 cm

Patrimonio Nacional, 10002079. Galería de las Colecciones Reales.

Observations: Enamel on the dial: "Charost / HERMANOS RELOXEROS DE SU MageSTAD."

Engraved on the pedestal: "CAROLVS III / EXALTAVIT ARTEM / ANNO / MDCCLXXI." Engraved on the backplate: "hermanos Charost Reloxeros De Su Magestad Madrid."



This gilt bronze mantel clock features an allegory honoring Carlos III as a patron of the arts. The monarch's effigy is depicted in a medallion held by a putto. Beside him stands a female figure representing Astronomy, holding a solar ring in her hand. The clock body housing the movement and dial is ringed by garlands and rests on a pedestal engraved with an inscription. The white enamel dial displays Roman numerals for the hours and Arabic numerals for the minutes, with hands ending in fleurs-de-lis.

The clock's dial and backplate are signed by brothers Felipe Santiago and Pedro Charost. These clockmakers, of French birth but residing in Madrid, petitioned the monarch for permission to establish a clockmaking factory at the royal court. Their request aligned with the mercantilist and protectionist policies concerning the industrial arts promoted by the king and his ministers, including Floridablanca, in an attempt to curb the import of luxury goods, which were enormously expensive and in high demand by a wide swath of society. By opening this factory – and others that might follow – the aim was to compete with Paris and London. The Charost brothers promised the king

to create a training school and teach their craft to a dozen young Spaniards. Once their apprenticeships were completed and they became masters, these young clockmakers could establish other factories to supply clocks and timepieces to Spain and the Americas. These principles were in complete harmony with the government's ambitions and the Enlightenment practice of promoting industry and the industrial arts. By Royal Decree at San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Carlos III approved the regulations that the Charost brothers were to follow in establishing a "factory of all types of clockmaking and a school for teaching this art" in Madrid.

On 9 December 1774, the Charost brothers presented and "gifted" this clock to the king, which they claimed to have made with the utmost perfection as a token of their gratitude for being entrusted with managing the school. The timepiece, described in a letter they signed, was a newly invented pendulum clock with an eight-day movement, chiming the hours and quarter-hours. A few days later, they submitted an invoice for a total of 12,997 reales.

However, the school-factory, located on calle del Barquillo, next to the Hospicio de San Fernando, failed to prosper despite the government's efforts to keep it open. Poor management and a lack of interest in teaching the craft of clockmaking – perhaps for fear of creating competition for their own products, sometimes imported from France – precipitated the school's closure, which likely occurred around 1794. [AAH]

PIETRO MELCHIORRE FERRARI

Miguel de Torres y Ruiz de Rivera, 3rd Marquis of Matallana, 1785

Oil on canvas

101.5 x 76 cm

Commissioned by the Banco Nacional de San Carlos in 1784

Colección Banco de España

However, after being appointed as the Minister Plenipotentiary to His Highness the Crown Prince and Duke of Parma in 1783, he left Madrid for his Italian post in June of that year. As the bank had decided to have portraits made of all its directors, that of the Marquis of Matallana had to be executed in Parma, which is why it was painted by an Italian artist: Pietro Melchiorre Ferrari, who completed it there in 1785, two years before the painter's death. The payment of 2,200 lire was reimbursed to the Marquis – who surely advanced the amount himself – in February 1786, according to documentation from the Archivo Histórico of the current Banco de España, as brought to light by the researcher José María Sanz García.



The portrait is an example of the Enlightenment style common in Italy at the time, which in Spain could be seen in some of Francisco de Goya's portraits. A sheet of paper on the table, likely a petition or memorandum, identifies the subject with the following text: "*Al señor marqués de Matallana, Comendador de Fuente del Moral de la Orden de Calatrava y Ministro Plenipotenciario de S.M.C. en la Corte de Parma* (To the Marquis of Matallana, Commander of the Fuente del Moral of the Order of Calatrava and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Most Catholic Majesty at the Court of Parma)." Other symbolic items providing clues as to the identity and social status of the sitter include the statue of Minerva, symbolizing intelligence and the cultivation of knowledge, as well as the sumptuously bound book he holds in his left hand, and the accessory hanging from his waist that mirrors the ornate buttons of his attire: a leontine most likely attached to a pocket watch hidden from view. This piece of jewelry, which continued to evolve from the time of this portrait on through the 19th century, was fastened to a buttonhole and fixed to a watch that could be tucked into the pocket of a waistcoat. Featuring a refined metal chain from which pocket watches were typically hung, the leontine's design was simpler than that of its precursor, the *châtelaine*.

The painting's subject is performing a dismissive gesture often seen in portraits of cultured aristocrats by artists like Antoine Watteau and Pompeo Batoni. Indeed, the general tone of this portrait is reminiscent of the latter's work. Already neoclassicist to a degree, the portrait hints at the "spirit of high rhetoric" and moral restraint to come in the paintings of Anton Raphael Mengs and Jacques-Louis David at the height of the Enlightenment.

During Matallana's time as Spain's plenipotentiary in Parma, Giuseppe Baldighi (1723-1803) and Pietro Melchiorre Ferrari were the most acclaimed portrait

painters in the court. Ferrari was appointed the official court portraitist in 1785, producing works such as the portrait of Fernando I of Bourbon, Duke of Parma (Galleria nazionale di Parma), which observed formal courtly conventions, as well as one of his most recognized works, the beautiful and celebrated portrait of the minister Guillaume du Tillot (also in the Galleria nazionale di Parma). The portrait of du Tillot has certain similarities with the portrait of the Marquis of Matallana, particularly in the way the gaze is depicted and in the precise rendering of the hands. [APS] [CM]

ANONYMOUS

Châtelaine, c. 1751-1850

Gold

2 x 9.6 cm

Museo Nacional del Romanticismo, CE2657

The *châtelaine* is a personal adornment used by both men and women. Its origin in France is associated with the term used to describe the woman who kept the keys to the castle: the *châtelaine*. Consequently, the richly embellished chain used to carry keys hanging at the waist came to bear this name. Initially functional, these items were first used in the Middle Ages. By the 16th century, this unique piece of jewelry also carried a watch, perfume bottle, small mirror, book of hours, and more. The 18th century marked the *châtelaine*'s golden age, transforming it into a luxurious object and sophisticated jewel reflecting the owner's wealth. We begin to see them in archival documents, fashion illustrations, and particularly in portraits. For example, in the Banco de España painting collection, a pair of *châtelaines* is visible on the green silk breeches worn by Francisco de Cabarrús in the portrait painted by Francisco de Goya in 1788. Another is subtly placed in Goya's 1787 portrait of Francisco Javier de Larumbe y Rodríguez, as well as in Pietro Melchiorre Ferrari's 1785 portrait of Miguel José de Torres y Morales, Marquis of Matallana, and in Francisco Folch de Cardona's 1788 portrait of Juan de Piña Ruiz. A double *châtelaine* like the one worn by Cabarrús adorns the green suit of the Count of Floridablanca in Goya's portrait now held in the Museo Nacional del Prado.

Many surviving examples consist of three or four silver or metal plates connected by rings, clasps, or hinges, making the piece more flexible. From the ends of these plates, through fine chains with clasps at the ends, keys, seals, and small accessories could be hung. The watch was typically attached to the bottom of the last plate, with its case often decorated to match the rest of the piece. Simpler models were made only of metal, while more elaborate ones were enriched with enamels and precious and semi-precious stones.

This piece from the Museo Nacional del Romanticismo comprises two gold strips resembling a mesh created from finely braided sheets that



recall a fishbone pattern. At the ends are geometric, openwork motifs, one serving to attach it to the belt and the other to hang the watch.

In the 18th century, both men and women wore them in pairs. Researcher Catherine Cardinal contends that this redundant use was due to the need to compare the time on two watches to ensure accuracy. However, the real reason was to cover the openings on both sides of men's breeches. Additionally, it helped to create a certain balance and symmetry in attire, especially in women's fashion, similar to the way bracelets or straps were worn on both wrists.

In the same century, women's watches could be replaced by a miniature sewing kit, writing implements, or a case for hygiene or beauty items. This piece was known in French as an *équipage*, a term not used in Spain, but referring to a set of small tools for specific tasks.

This accessory became widespread and as demand grew, imitation gold or pinchbeck – an alloy of copper and zinc nearly indistinguishable from gold – was used, making the piece more affordable for all social classes. For instance, some of these objects can be seen in portraits of the emerging bourgeoisie and in the engravings by Cano y Olmedilla dated 1777, depicting *majos* (fops), *petimetres* (toffs), *manolos* (dandies), and bullfighters (as in the print of the bullfighter Joaquín Rodríguez Costillares, who is shown wearing a pair of *châtelaines* hanging from his waist).

The *châtelaine* evolved and gave rise in the 19th century to the much simpler *leontine*, returning to its original purpose. [AAH]

ANONYMOUS

Watch with Leontine, 19th century
Silver, enamel. Braided, cast, chased, enameled.
32 cm; 5.50 cm (watch diameter)
Museo Nacional del Romanticismo, CE0975

The *leontine* is a jewelry accessory that adds a touch of color to the otherwise serious and dark male attire that dominated the latter half of the 19th century. Its design evolved from the gold,

silver, steel, or metal chain from which a pocket watch was hung. The watch case and chain were usually made from the same material and were sometimes adorned with precious stones, enamel, or *strass* (rhinestones) – a type of colorless, lead-rich crystal cut to imitate diamonds. In preserved portraits, the *leontine* can be seen fastened to a vest buttonhole, attached to a watch that could be stored in a pocket of the waistcoat, jacket, or trousers. Its origin is also linked to chains used during the Renaissance to hang a watch from the chest like a medallion. Unlike the *châtelaine*, more typical of the 18th century, the *leontine* is simpler, consisting of one or more chains rather than metal plates connected by rings, with fewer accessories – such as the winding key, seal, etc. – hanging from it.

This piece from the Museo Nacional del Romanticismo, dated around 1850-1875, comprises five chains made of braided silver thread, joined at intervals by two rectangular silver pins. These are embellished with enamel metal plates depicting colored flowers on a black background. The watch is hung from one end by a clasp, while the other end terminates in a T-bar that fits into a buttonhole, with a locket of similar shape and decoration as the pins. The *lépine*-style pocket watch has a silver case with a white enamel dial and Roman numerals marking the hours. The second hand is in a subdial above the VI numeral.

In the Banco de España painting collection, a silvery reflection can be seen on the dark suit worn by Martín Belda y Mencia del Barrio, Marquis of Cabra, in the portrait painted by Dióscoro Teófilo de la Puebla y Tolín in 1881. A luxurious model, with an ornament hanging from the chain, is worn by Francisco de Cárdenas in the portrait signed by Manuel de Ojeda Siles in 1891. Another, crossing the waist, catches the eye in the portrait of Luis María de la Torre y de la Hoz Quintanilla y Vega, Count of Torreánaz, by the same painter from 1901.

The *leontine* complements and enhances the simplicity of the suit jacket worn by the sitter, allowing them to project a degree of prestige and distinction. It fell out of use with the advent of the wristwatch, as seen in the portrait of José Ramón Álvarez Rendueles painted by Isabel Quintanilla in 1985. [AAH]





ANNIE LEBOVITZ

King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia, 2024

Diptych

Photograph printed on primed polyester canvas with UV curable inks

223.52 x 170.18 cm each

Commissioned 2023

Colección Banco de España

One of the most significant sections of the Colección Banco de España is undoubtedly its gallery of official portraits. Nearly without interruption, this gallery reflects the institution's history from the founding of the Banco de San Carlos in 1782 to the present day. It is not limited to portraits of figures involved in the bank's management, such as directors, governors, and finance ministers, but also includes the monarchs who have reigned during the institution's lifetime. As such, it stands as one of the finest collections extant for studying the evolution of official portraiture in Spain, from the Enlightenment onward. Additionally, it should be noted that many of the great portraitists who have worked in Spain, beginning with Francisco de Goya – who was responsible for the first six portraits commissioned by the Banco de San Carlos – continuing through Vicente López, and more recently artists such as Isabel Quintanilla and Carmen Laffón, are featured. It is within this tradition that these portraits of the current monarchs, King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia, should take their rightful place.

In October 2022, the Banco de España began the process of commissioning¹ the portraits of

their royal majesties, which culminated almost a year later with the selection of Annie Leibovitz to undertake the project. The inclusion of the American photographer in the roll of artists who have shaped this heritage collection undoubtedly reflects a desire for revitalization through this commission. One of the most innovative aspects of this project is the replacement of painted portraits – which had predominated in the gallery since its inception – with photography. It is also the first time that the commission was awarded to an artist from outside Spain, opening the way for greater internationalization of the collection in the future. Moreover, selecting Leibovitz meant promoting and increasing the number of female creators in this section of the collection.

While the use of photography represents a change, Leibovitz has skillfully honored the tradition of Spanish institutional portraiture while regenerating it. Her composition alludes to the court portraits by Velázquez, who, as noted by John Berger, was able to capture both the visible and the serendipitous from a singular perspective, managing to make the viewer feel part of the scene – thus anticipating photography. For Berger, this explains why, when viewing a portrait like *Las meninas*, we have the sensation that we could step into the painting. This sense of involvement is doubtless what first strikes us in Leibovitz's royal portraits, as she has set a scene where the viewer also feels present at the event: the queen's arrival in the royal quarters. This sensation is heightened by the large scale of the images and the immersive staging of the setting chosen: the Salón de Gasparini of the Palacio Real de Madrid.

The diptych composition of this royal portrait allows us to survey the sequence in two parts: in the first, King Felipe VI is dressed in full ceremonial uniform, surrounded by all the elements of a classic portrait – a mirror, a table, a grand chandelier, a clock, and an open door with draperies (though not the richly embroidered originals). In the second, Queen Letizia enters the room, bathed in natural light, free of the accoutrements traditionally denoting nobility (the royal tiara and sash of the Order of Carlos III);² with no need to rely on any of the customary elements of formal portraits, in which the royal poses with complete ease. It appears none of these elements are necessary and would in fact be superfluous and redundant in this “photographic enthronement” orchestrated by Leibovitz to proclaim their majesty. The artist’s eye and camera strike an exceptionally delicate balance: adhering to protocol while minimizing ostentation, drawing inspiration from the tradition of Spanish portraiture during its golden age, from Velázquez to Goya. Leibovitz is clearly *aware* of whom she is portraying and during which moment in history, but she also seeks to ensure that, in a single glance, so does the viewer. The result is a complementary pair of images that are both imposing and intimate, regal yet human, and above all, artistically compelling and historically significant. [yrg]

1. For this purpose, the bank’s Comisión Asesora (Advisory Committee) – including José Manuel Matilla, Senior Curator of Drawings, Prints, and Photographs at the Museo Nacional del Prado; Teresa Velázquez, Head of Exhibitions at the Museo Reina Sofía; and Yolanda Romero, Curator of the Colección Banco de España – was convened on several occasions to define the parameters for this new commission. After considering various alternatives, Annie Leibovitz was proposed for the project. The proposal was submitted by Alejandro Álvarez, Director General of Services, to the Comisión Ejecutiva of the Banco de España, which approved it.

2. She is wearing a pleated silk tulle dress and a ceremonial pink silk cape, both by designer Cristóbal Balenciaga (from the 1940s and 1960s, respectively), on loan from the Fundación Antoni de Montpalau.

**PIERRE JAQUET-DROZ, clockmaker;
ANTOINE FOULLET, cabinetmaker and bronzier**

Musical Mantel Clock, c. 1758

Made in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

(movement), and in Paris (case)

Bronze, brass, tortoiseshell, horn, mother-of-pearl, enamel. Cast, gilded, enameled.

114 x 56 x 24 cm

Musée international d’horlogerie, La Chaux-de-Fonds, IV-20

Observations: Dial and movement plate are signed: “P Jaquet Droz / A la Chaux de Fonds.” On the back of the case: “Ant Foullet.” The piece was added to the Musée international d’horlogerie collection in 1926.

The Swiss clockmaker Pierre Jaquet-Droz signed both the dial and the movement plate of this mantel



clock, which features a bell organ and a *serinette* in the lower section.

The case reflects the aesthetics of the Rococo style, decorated with volutes and opulent rocaille motifs. Two animal figures in the round allude to Jean de La Fontaine’s fable *Le Renard et la Cigogne* (The Fox and the Stork), which tells the story of the stork taking revenge on the fox after being mocked. The fox invited the stork to dinner and served soup in a shallow bowl that the stork could not drink from due to its long beak. In retaliation, the stork prepared a tasty meal and presented it in a tall, narrow-necked vessel that the stork’s beak could reach into, but the fox’s snout could not.

The decoration is rounded off with floral motifs made of inlaid tortoiseshell, dyed horn, and mother-of-pearl. The gilded and chased metal dial features independent white enameled brass cartouches displaying the hours in Roman numerals. The dial is not original but was installed during a restoration of the clock in 1952.

The Swiss movement is powered by a mainspring and has an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

The lower section contains a musical mechanism consisting of a nine-bell carillon and a *serinette* – a small organ – with a set of twelve flutes and six melodies. The chimes can be activated on demand with a cord located on the side or at the bottom.

This type of clock is also referred to as a cartel clock. At the end of Louis XIV’s reign, these clocks began to be placed on wall-mounted brackets or consoles. They were highly decorative pieces, intended to embellish salons and demonstrate the wealth of their owners. The cases, made of bronze or painted wood, were covered with rocaille, volutes, and geometric patterns.

Pierre Jaquet-Droz was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds in 1721. From an early age, he developed an

interest in the world of clockmaking, especially automata. In 1753, he traveled to Paris to present his creations. During this trip, he likely met Antoine Foullet, a cabinetmaker and bronzier specializing in the production of clock cases. Jaquet-Droz died in Vienna on 28 November 1790.

Antoine Foullet was probably born around 1710. He opened his workshop in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine district of Paris. He became a master cabinetmaker on 17 February 1749. He died on 24 September 1775.

A clock with a similar case that may have served as the model for this one is preserved in Spain's Patrimonio Nacional collection. It arrived in Spain in 1758 as one of six clocks, including the renowned *El Pastor* (The Shepherd), that Jaquet-Droz presented to King Fernando VI to showcase his mastery and mechanical expertise as a clockmaker.

Another example, featuring a white enamel dial differing slightly from the clock in the Patrimonio Nacional collection, was auctioned at Sotheby's Monaco on 14 June 1982 (lot 476). This piece retains its original function as a cartel clock, displayed atop a matching wall bracket. [AAH]

JOSÉ GUTIÉRREZ DE LA VEGA Y BOCANEGRA

Ramón de Santillán González, 1852

Oil on canvas

185 x 113 cm

Commissioned by the Banco Español de San Fernando in 1852

Colección Banco de España

Ramón de Santillán González (1791-1863) was educated in his birthplace of Lerma in Burgos. In 1809, he joined the guerrilla forces of the priest Merino as they passed through the region, remaining with them until 1813. In 1814, he began an official military career in the cavalry with the rank of captain, which continued until 1825, when he left the army with the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1821, before his discharge, he married Juana Pinilla (1774-1846), whose uncle, José López, introduced him to public tax administration and trained him according to his own reformist ideas. The same year Santillán left his military career, he began his ascent as a civil servant in the tax administration, becoming head of the *Sección de Ultramar* (Overseas Section) of the *Secretaría de Hacienda* (Spanish tax agency) in 1838, after having declined an offer from Alejandro Mon (1801-1882) to become undersecretary. He also became a member of parliament in 1838, contributing to specific projects in the lower house. Additionally in the same year, he turned down the offer of a ministerial portfolio, which he eventually accepted for three months in 1840, during which he demonstrated his acquired reformist leanings. He held this post again briefly in 1847.



However, it was after his first term as a minister that he made his most significant contributions to the public tax administration, particularly after 1843, when he implemented the 1845 tax reform. From 1849 until his death on 19 October 1863, he served as governor of the Banco Español de San Fernando – having encouraged the merger of the Banco de San Fernando with the Banco de Isabel II to create this new institution – and carried out a significant overhaul. After 1856, the institution became the Banco de España, which experienced an era of expansion and growth under Santillán's leadership. This prominent position allowed him to keep up with the state of the Treasury and of the Spanish economy. In contrast to Mon's ideas, Santillán defended the private interests of the bank's shareholders. His biographers, such as Vallejo Pousada, have highlighted his "relative independence from the government, which increased during his years at the bank, during which he implemented a strict policy of cooperating financially only if sufficient guarantees were granted."

Moreover, Santillán was deeply committed to public education and outreach, which motivated him to write his *Memoria histórica sobre los Bancos* (Historical Report on the Banks), a history of the formation of the Banco de España from

the founding of the Banco de San Carlos up to 1863; and another on the history of the *Hacienda pública*, completed in 1854; as well as a third, an autobiography. Perhaps one of these works is the bound volume he is holding in this portrait.

Painted at the age of sixty-one, Santillán is depicted full-length, seated next to a desk upon which his left arm elegantly rests, and dressed in the uniform of a *gentilhombre de cámara* (Gentleman of the Chamber), which bears the two highest civilian decorations of the state, the Grand Crosses and sashes of the Orders of Carlos III and Isabella the Catholic. He is holding a book in his right hand, perhaps alluding to his standing as a polymath. This portrait is undoubtedly one of the finest male portraits by Gutiérrez de la Vega, a Sevillian artist who settled in Madrid.

Executed at the peak of his career, the portrait is rendered with meticulous, light, and limp brushwork. With transparent glazes and the soft tints typical of Andalusian tradition, Gutiérrez de la Vega builds up the rich textures of the fabrics and, above all, the skin tones, producing sumptuous effects that he regarded as the legacy of Murillo's rich looseness and Goya's ease, his primary formal references. Perhaps in pursuit of this complex effect, he imbues the portrait with a freshness unusual for a subject of Santillán's age. Gutiérrez likely understood that this commission was an exceptional opportunity for self-promotion in a public institution of the first order, as he evidently executed the painting with an attention to detail – as reflected in its dense and polished finish – that is rarely seen in his more ordinary portraits. Its excellent state of preservation means it must be considered as one of his most painstakingly crafted pieces, contrasting with the generally more relaxed finish of his other male portraits. Additionally, the painter bestowed a serene distinction on the sitter's pose, ennobled by a scenic background blending architecture and nature, which is seen through the lens of Murillo-esque warmth and English empathy typical of Gutiérrez. It is, in fact, an approach to portraiture borrowed from Goya, specifically from his portrait of General Ricardos (Museo del Prado, Madrid), with which this portrait of Santillán shares not only the pose but also a certain stiffness in the subject's demeanor. [CGN]

JAMES MOORE FRENCH, clockmaker

Mantel Clock, c. 1808-1838

Made in the United Kingdom

Mahogany wood, bronze, glass, and metal. Carved, cast, gilt.

44 x 36 x 22 cm

Acquired by the Banco Español de San Fernando
Colección Banco de España

Observations: Above and below the hand stem: "J. M. French / Royal Exchange / London;" on the lower part of the backplate: "French / Royal Exchange / London."



In an inventory dated 1 January 1851 of the furnishings in the offices of the Banco Español de San Fernando at calle de Atocha No. 15, a mantel clock made by James Moore French is listed as being in the governor's office.

The clock's mahogany case is pedestal-shaped, resting on four small gilt bronze feet resembling lion's paws. Cushioned by a double volute, a cylinder-shaped housing for the clock's dial and movement rests atop the pedestal.

The dial is silvered metal, with the hours marked in polychrome black Roman numerals. The hands are blued steel and the clock has two winding holes. The glass door protecting the dial locks with a gilded metal key.

The English movement has two trains. The time train, powered by a mainspring, keeps the clock running for eight days, with an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

J. M. French, also known in Spain as Santiago James Moore French, was an Irish maker of clocks and chronometers active between 1808 and 1842. He likely studied under Robert Pennington in England, considering the similarities in the technical aspects of their work. French became a member of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers in 1810 and specialized in the production of marine chronometers. He had a shop at 15 Sweetings Alley, Royal Exchange, London (1808-1838), and later at 18 Cornhill, London (1839-1842). After his death, the brand expanded across Europe, particularly in Spain. José Rodríguez de Losada, a Spanish clockmaker originally from León who had worked in French's workshop, continued to trade under the French name for some time.

This clock was manufactured between 1808 and 1838, as indicated by the "Royal Exchange" inscription on both the dial and backplate. [AAH]

ISABEL QUINTANILLA

José Ramón Álvarez-Rendueles, 1985

Oil on canvas

130 x 97 cm

Commissioned in 1985

Colección Banco de España

This portrait of Álvarez-Rendueles is the first in the Banco de España's gallery of governors by a woman. The artist had previously collaborated with the institution on other projects, such as the decoration to adapt Sert's canvases to the wall panels at the Barcelona branch. In this work, the subject is depicted in one of the most distinguished rooms of the bank's headquarters in Madrid, the *Salón de los Goya*, where portraits commissioned from the Aragonese master by the Banco de San Carlos are displayed, among other works. This setting highlights the preference for the artistic, well away from the conventionality of an office. The artist has captured the subject during a moment of repose in his daily activities at the bank. He is portrayed standing, with his arms resting on a chair and table, where a small notebook with his signature lies. We can just catch a glimpse of a wristwatch on the governor's left arm, a change from his predecessors heralding a new age, for two centuries have passed since the first portraits. Accessories like *châtelaines* and *leontines* have been replaced by this new type of watch, strapped around the wrist, reflecting a way of living and working now defined more by functionality than by ostentation.



The composition also reveals part of the room, including a metapictorial detail of paintings within a painting: two of Goya's portraits of directors of the Banco de San Carlos, Francisco Javier de Larumbe and Miguel Fernández Durán. Their presence in the framing links Rendueles to the institution's Enlightenment origins and suggests a lineage spanning two centuries. The portrait's fidelity to the subject, the firm grounding of the figure, the atmospheric luminosity, and the precision of the brushwork reflect the best of Spanish realist painting of the time. [JGS]



ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Governor of the Bank of Spain, 2024

Photograph printed on primed polyester canvas with UV curable inks

137.16 x 111.76 cm

Commissioned 2023

Colección Banco de España

Annie Leibovitz's photographic portrait of Banco de España Governor Pablo Hernández de Cos represents a break from the tradition of portraiture in the Colección Banco de España. Since the 18th century, the bank has preserved the institutional memory of its governors through a gallery of painted portraits by prominent Spanish artists. However, with Leibovitz's work, photography has been employed for the first time for this purpose, marking a significant shift in the way the bank's leaders are represented. This watershed moment marks the culmination of an idea first proposed in

1856, when Tomás Varela, the senior official at the bank, suggested the use of photography¹ – likely as a cost-effective and practical alternative to painting – which would have facilitated resuming the tradition of commissioning portraits, which had died out in the 1830s. Although his proposal went unheeded at the time and has only now found its place in the collection in 2024, it did lead to the revival, starting in 1881, of the custom of portraying governors at the end of their terms. It is within this tradition that the commission for the portrait of Hernández de Cos, who led the institution from 2018 to 2024, takes its place.

Considered one of the most prominent figures in contemporary photography, Annie Leibovitz is the first foreign artist to contribute to the Banco de España's portrait gallery. Additionally, she is only the third woman to execute a portrait for the bank, following Carmen Laffón and Isabel Quintanilla. Her selection underscores the gallery's openness to new artistic practices and internationally renowned contemporary voices, while also highlighting the aim to refresh and bring a different perspective to this section of the collection.

Leibovitz's portrait of Hernández de Cos exemplifies her visual idiom, which seeks to unveil the psychological depths of her subject through the meticulous control of light, staging, and composition. The photograph is set in the Sala del Consejo de Gobierno (Governing Council Room) of the Banco de España, an exceptionally meaningful place for the institution, as since 1891 it has witnessed the most critical decisions to shape its history.

As in the bank's other iconic portraits, Leibovitz incorporates symbolic elements grounding the image in the tradition of Spanish institutional portraiture. In this instance, a regulator longcase clock by Maple & Co., a late 19th-century piece from the bank's collection, features prominently. This clock is not a decorative choice: its presence evokes the importance of timekeeping to the economy and also serves as a symbol of the institution's governance, alluding to the role of the bank's highest representative as the driving force behind its movement. However, unlike the solemnity typical of historical portraits, Leibovitz opts for a more human approach, portraying the governor in a relaxed pose, seated on the tabletop – a pose breaking with the stiffness common to these images of power. The table itself, a traditional feature in portraits of the leaders of the Banco de España, alludes to justice, authority, but also the workplace. In this sense, Leibovitz's photograph remains true to her style, which, despite all the ancillary elements that could be highlighted, seeks to create a portrait that feels close and accessible to the viewer. [YRG]

1. Javier Portus, "La Galería de Retratos," *Colección Banco de España: Catálogo razonado*, Madrid: Banco de España, 2019, vol. 1, p. 36.



MAPLE & CO, merchants

Regulator Longcase Clock, c. 1880

Made in the United Kingdom

Wood, bronze, mercury, glass, metal, silver, brass.
Carved, gilded, cast.

258 x 59 x 38 cm

Acquired in 1970

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Edwardian style. Signed on the dial:
"MAPLE & Co / Ltd LONDON."

A photograph of this clock appears in Félix Luis Baldasano y de Llanos's book *El edificio del Banco de España: Madrid* (The Banco de España Building: Madrid), published in 1959 by Talleres de Blass. The accompanying text reads: "This English longcase clock, featuring three weights, eight bells, a mercury pendulum, and a mahogany case, stands between two large windows of the Salón de Consejos (Boardroom). When the hour strikes and carillon chimes peal forth, it is as though the venerable eminence of the 'grandfather' causes the bank's Consejeros (board members) to fall silent to listen to it."

The furniture maker Maple & Co. of London signed the dial of this regulator longcase clock, which is crafted in mahogany wood. The hood is topped by a semicircular arch with molding and adorned with a gilt bronze finial in the center. Two pairs of columns with fluted shafts and Doric capitals flank the glass door protecting the dial. The sides feature openwork wooden panels, allowing the chimes to be heard while protecting the clockworks from dust.

The straight trunk is embellished with a column, similar to those on the hood, on either side of the glass door, which provides a view of the three weights, pendulum, and eight chime tubes. The rectangular base is decorated with a square with molding on the front. The sides of the case are of wood.

The clock face is gilt brass, with a silver chapter ring. The hour markers are in Roman numerals and the minutes in Arabic numerals, all engraved and enameled in polychrome black. Below the XII numeral, there is a silver subdial for the seconds. In the arch of the clock face, an auxiliary dial controlling the chimes is marked "Strike/Silent." The rest of the dial is decorated with chased gilt-brass plaques. In the spandrels and flanking the chime dial are cherub heads and vegetal motifs. The dial is signed along the lower edge between the 35 and 25 minute marks: "MAPLE & Co / Ltd LONDON" (Maple & Co. Limited of London). The hands are blued steel.

The clock is powered by an English movement with three trains: one for timekeeping and two for striking the hours, quarters, and half-hours. The pendulum features a container for mercury.

In the mid-19th century, John Maple opened a small furniture shop on Tottenham Court Road, London. By the 1880s, with the help of his son, Sir John Blundell Maple, the business had become the largest furniture store in the world, known for its excellent quality. They specialized in replicating antique designs, such as those by Hepplewhite and Chippendale, while updating them with a modern touch. After World War II, the company began to decline owing to changing tastes and the advent of mass production. In 1980, rival furniture manufacturer Waring & Gillow merged with Maple & Co. and the firm was renamed Maple, Waring & Gillow. [AAH]

ROBERT HIGGS, clockmaker

Longcase Clock, c. 1780

Made in the United Kingdom

Mahogany wood, bronze, silver, metal, glass.

Carved, chased, engraved, gilded, cast.

265 x 47 x 24 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Engraved on the upper part of the dial: "Robert // Higgs // LONDON."

The inventories stored in the Archivo Histórico of the Banco de España mention an English longcase clock, though we cannot definitively confirm that they are referring to this specific piece.

The mahogany clock case, with a dial signed by Robert Higgs (active between 1767 and 1785), is decorated with gilt bronze elements. The hood features a pagoda-style crest, topped with three gilt brass finials. Two wooden columns flank the door, which is fitted with glass to protect the clock face.

The face is crafted from gilt brass. The main time dial is of gilt silver, displaying time markers

in black enamel, with Roman numerals for the hours and Arabic numerals for the minutes. The surface within the dial is delicately stippled. Additionally, there is an auxiliary dial below the XII numeral for the second hand, and a rectangular window above the VI numeral for the date. In the arch above the dial, in a circular plaque, is the clockmaker's signature: "Robert / Higgs / LONDON." The hand stem, with hands of blued metal, and two winding holes are in the center of the dial. Above the main dial is a mechanism to silence the chime: STRIKE/SILENT. The rest of the face is decorated with fretwork on metal plates featuring vegetal motifs and cherub heads.

The wooden case trunk is straight and has a lockable front door. The rectangular base has simple molding at the bottom.

The clock's English movement has rectangular plates and two trains: one for keeping time and another for striking. The time train is regulated by an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train, regulated by a fly or stop system, chimes the hours and half-hours.

The clock case of this clock is typical of mid-18th-century British longcase designs.

Robert Higgs and his brother Peter, who became a master clockmaker in 1767, were active in Sweeting's Alley between 1740 and 1769. They partnered with Diego Evans around 1780 or 1785¹, signing their works as "Higgs y Diego Evans London." Several clocks predating this partnership bear only Robert Higgs's signature. This particular piece may have been produced before the partnership with Evans. Higgs also exported independently to Spain. [AAH]

1. F. J. Britten, *Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers*. Suffolk, UK: Antique Collectors' Club, 1983: p. 460





ANONYMOUS

Mantel Clock with Garniture. *The Four Seasons*, late 18th century

Made in Thuringia, Germany

Clock

Sitzendorf porcelain, bronze, enamel. Chased, enameled, cast, molded.

49 x 32 x 20 cm

Candelabra

Sitzendorf porcelain. Enameled, molded.

47 x 29 x 17 cm

Acquired in 1975

Colección Banco de España

Observations: On the clock plate, "No. 1152." Inside the candelabra bases, the factory mark and a gilded "B."

This mantel clock's porcelain case is polychromed in muted colors. Four figures in the round of children represent the four seasons: spring, with flowers in her hair and a garland in her hand; summer, with a sheaf of wheat; autumn, with grape clusters on their head; and winter, covered by a blanket, beside a fire. Porcelain flowers decorate the rest of the case.

The clock dial and movement are in the center of the case. The dial is surrounded by a gilt bronze frame adorned with chased and slightly raised egg-and-dart molding. A beaded bezel protects the dial. The time dial is enameled in white to simulate porcelain, with Roman numerals for the hours and Arabic numerals for the minutes, the latter marked in increments of five. The original hands are gilt bronze, with the hour hand shaped like a fleur-de-lis. There are two winding holes.

The French movement is of the Paris type. The time train keeps the clock running for eight days. It has an anchor escapement and is regulated by a pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours on a bell. "No. 1152" is inscribed on the plate.

The two porcelain candelabra are also decorated with pairs of figures in the round of children, seated on a trunk, representing the seasons of the year. On one, spring holds a basket of flowers, and summer a sheaf of wheat and a sickle. On the other, autumn has grape clusters on their head and a glass in their hand, while winter, covered with a blanket, warms their hands by a small fire. The shaft rises above them and the *labrae*, consisting of four arms adorned with leaves and flowers, are topped with a leaf-shaped *bobèche* and a candleholder. The circular base has four raised volutes decorated with insects and flowers. Inside the base are the factory mark and a gilded "B". The mark is the two crossed swords of the Sitzendorf factory in Thuringia, Germany.

This porcelain manufactory was inspired by the one in Meissen. From the second half of the 18th century, Thuringia experienced a boom that had significant consequences for the porcelain industry in Europe. This heavily forested region was ideal for the establishment and development of porcelain manufactories, as it provided an affordable source for the firewood these factories required. The composition of the ceramic paste is different from that used in Meissen or in Vienna, which is why it is known as "Thuringian hard-paste porcelain."

In 1760, G. H. Macheleidt obtained a license to manufacture porcelain in Sitzendorf, but the factory was moved to Volkstedt in 1762. Thuringian porcelain reached its peak in the 19th century. [AAH]

ANONYMOUS

Mantel Clock. *Allegory of Study and the Arts*, c. 1810
Made in France

Bronze, marble, metal, glass, enamel. Chased, gilded, patinated, cast, enameled.

51 x 72 x 16 cm

Acquired in 1970

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Empire Style.

This French Empire-style mantel clock, referred to as "Mariscal" (Marshal) in the documentation kept in the Banco de España archives, was acquired on 19 March 1970 at an auction held by Antonio Alonso Ojeda.¹ It was designated for the governor's office.

The clock features two patinated bronze figures, seated and dressed in classical attire – one a young woman reading and the other a young man drawing – flanking a gilt bronze cuboid base that supports the clock's dial and movement. The pedestal is crafted of green marble with curved sides. The front is decorated with gilt bronze appliqué, including a central openwork plaque with a rosette flanked by classical designs and four-petal rosettes at both ends of the front of the base. Garlands decorate the curved sides. The front of the cuboid base features, in relief, a lyre with vegetal motifs above two cornucopias tied with a ribbon. The clock stands on four oblate disc feet.

The chapter ring resembles a laurel wreath, with the hours painted in polychrome black Arabic numerals on circular enamel cartouches. The interior of the dial is undecorated, and the hands are patinated metal. There are two winding holes.

The French clock movement is of the Paris type. The movement is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days. It has an anchor escapement and is regulated by a pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours on a bell, using a count wheel.

The inspiration for this depiction was the theme of *l'Emploi du temps* or *pendule à la Geoffrin*. Marie-Thérèse Rodet, the wife of François Geoffrin, hosted an influential intellectual salon for artists and politicians in Paris in the mid-18th century. Her estate inventory, dated 1777, mentions a clock portraying *l'Emploi du temps*. The case was in fact a sculpted copy of a portrait of Madame Geoffrin painted by Jean-Marc Nattier, in which she is shown reclining with a book on her lap. This design became very popular and eventually inspired another one in which the female figure was accompanied by a male counterpart. From that point on, the figures came to symbolize Study and the Arts, from a design by Dominique Daguerre based on two figures created by Louis-Simon Boizot in 1780.²

The Empire style emerged around 1800 and lasted through the end of the reign of Charles X of France, encompassing the Consulate, the reigns of Napoleon I (1804-1815), Louis XVIII (1815-1824), and Charles X (1824-1830). [AAH]

1. With a shop in the new arcades at la Ribera de Curtidores No. 12 in Madrid. The invoice is stored in the archive of the Conservaduría of the Banco de España.

2. Christian Bauliez, "La pendule à la Geoffrin. Un modèle a succès," *L'objet d'art*, (April 1989), p. 34-41.

LEROLLE FRÈRES, bronziers and clockmakers (?)

Mantel Clock and Garniture, c. 1850-1860

Made in France

Clock

Bronze, marble, enamel, metal. Gilded, patinated, carved, enameled, cast.

94 x 75 x 23 cm

Candelabra

Bronze, metal. Gilded, patinated, cast.

96 x 45 x 45 cm each

Acquired in 1973

Colección Banco de España

Observations: On the dial, "Lerolle Frères // A Pariae."



Clearly inspired by classical design this clock is crafted from white and gray marble, and adorned with two patinated bronze caryatids serving as pilasters. They flank the case body housing the clock face and movement. This is topped by an amphora and a decorative element resembling a shield instead of a crest. Below the body, a gilt bronze bas-relief depicts an altar of love. Elements of classical architecture such as garlands, laurel wreaths, torches, and small medallions featuring classical busts round out the decoration. The base is marble.

The white enamel dial displays the hours in Roman numerals and minutes in Arabic numerals, both in polychrome black. There are two winding holes. The gilt metal hands are pierced and decorated with vegetal motifs. The clockmaker's signature, "Lerolle Frères," appears on the dial above the hand stem, with "A Pariae" (with the stylized A and P joined) below it.

The French movement is of the Paris type with two trains. The time train is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for



eight days, with an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

Tardy's *Dictionnaire des horlogers français* lists Lerolle Frères as bronze and clockmakers in Paris at la Chaussée des Minimes in 1840 and later at the Chaussée d'Antin between 1850 and 1860. The factory was founded by Louis Lerolle (1813-1875), who handed over the management of the bronze foundry in 1849 to his sons, Édouard-François and Camille, who established the firm Lerolle Frères. The brothers' training focused on sculpture and they made their debut at the 1839 *Exposition des produits de l'industrie française*. At the 1849 *Exposition nationale des produits de l'industrie agricole et manufacturière*, they were awarded a silver medal. They participated in other exhibitions throughout the second half of the 19th century (1851, 1855, and 1867). In the 1855 *Exposition universelle*, they received a first-class medal for a centerpiece or dining service for the Princess of Butera. Most of their creations, particularly their clocks, reflect their penchant for sculpture, as can be seen in this piece.

An undated inventory of clocks in the archive of the Conservaduría of the Banco de España includes the acquisition of this clock.

The candelabra are a pair of patinated bronze figures, dancing and wrapped in garlands. They hold up an urn adorned with large acanthus leaves, from which emerge the gilt bronze labrae in seven branches, one central and the others voluted. The base is an octagonal piece of gray marble.

The clock may be an allegory of agriculture. One of the female figures decorating the clock's case holds a sheaf of wheat and a sickle, symbolizing Demeter. One of the figures on the candelabra is Psyche, as identified by her four small wings. [aah]

PIERRE-CÉSAR HONORÉ PONS,
manufacturer of unfinished and Paris-type
movements; Rodier, clockmaker; and Victor
Paillard, bronze founder

Mantel Clock with Garniture, c. 1850-1860

Made in France

Clock

Bronze, metal, enamel, glass. Chased, engraved, gilt, cast, enameled.

63 x 64 x 31 cm

Candelabra

Gilt bronze

83 x 43 x 43 cm each

Colección Banco de España

Observations: On the dial, "Vicente Salazar y Hechevarría" and a coat of arms. On the backplate, three stamped marks: "Vr PAILLARD / À PARIS"; "RODIER À PARIS"; "MEDAILLE D'OR / PONS / 1827." Engraved number 245. Initials stamped on the lower part of the clock case: "VP."



The Second Empire in France saw a revival of Baroque styles. Clocks became increasingly popular, and workshops became more mechanized. Movements were mass-produced in large quantities, and case designs became more affordable, though their quality varied.

This clock's gilt bronze case features three putti in the round, who are seated on a rock, two of whom are holding doves. They rest on a geometric form – adorned with foliage, four large branches on the sides, scroll brackets, and other Rococo elements – housing the dial and the clock movement. The pedestal is decorated with large volutes, lush leaves, flowers, rocaille, and geometric details.

The dial has been enameled white with the hours in Roman numerals and minutes in Arabic numerals, and minute segments in between. The hands are in the Breguet style, with two winding holes flanking the hand stem.

The two-train French movement is the round Paris type. The clock has a time train with an eight-day winding and an anchor escapement, and is regulated by a pendulum.

On the lower part of the clock case, the initials "VP" engraved under a crown are those of the bronzier Victor Paillard, who also signed the backplate of the clock. Born in 1805, Paillard was active as a bronze founder and chiseler with his own factory by 1830. He achieved renown for his work, was awarded the *Légion d'honneur*, and participated in the Paris Salons of 1844 and 1848, as well as the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. Examples of his works are now preserved in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris and the Musée Lambinet in Versailles.

The backplate also bears the stamped mark of Honoré Pons, the clockmaker born in Paris in 1773. Specializing in precision clockmaking, he opened his own workshop on rue de la Huchette, an area where the best clockmakers – Berthoud, Breguet, Lepine, and others – had settled. He is also noted for inventing several escapements and designing machines for cutting gear teeth and polishing pinions. In 1807, after establishing the first factory for manufacturing clock movements, he became

a driving force behind the clockmaking industry in France. One of his many awards, from 1827, is stamped on this clock. A significant collection of movements signed by Pons is preserved in the Musée des Arts et Metiers in Paris and the Musée de l'Horlogerie in Saint-Nicolas-d'Aliermont.

The third stamped mark is that of the clockmaker Rodier, who most likely “finished” the movement produced a few years earlier in the Pons factory. The name enameled on the clock’s dial, Vicente de Salazar y Hechevarría, helps identify the owner of the garniture. He must have acquired the piece at an undetermined date, replacing the original dial with one bearing his name and coat of arms. Documentation on Salazar Hechevarría survives in the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid. A native of Santiago de Cuba, he requests to be admitted to the Order of Santiago in a file dated 1839.¹

The candelabra are decorated with putti in the round in opposing stances to create a *pendant*. Each wrapped in a garland, the putti hold thick, winding stems that support the labrae. Five acanthus branches and a central finial support leaf-shaped bobeche and bulb-shaped candleholders, though the central capital is topped by a flame. [AAH]

1. Archivo Histórico Nacional, *Órdenes Militares*, Santiago, file 9100 and *Ordenes Militares*, file 8917. I am grateful for the information provided by Dr. José María de Francisco Olmos, profesor titular de Ciencias y Técnicas Historiográficas (Associate Professor of Historical Sciences and Techniques) at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

JOSÉ DE HOFFMEYER, clockmaker

Mantel Clock, c. 1850-1860

Made in Spain

Marble, bronze, enamel, glass, metal, mercury.

Gilded, enameled, cast.

42 x 36.5 x 19.5 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: On the dial, beneath the hand stem, “J. HOFFMEYER // MADRID.”

Signed by José de Hoffmeyer, clockmaker to Queen Isabella II of Spain, this mantel clock stands out as one of the finest examples of Spanish craftsmanship. It includes a perpetual calendar modeled after those produced by the Brocot family in the mid-19th century.

The rectilinear case is crafted from black marble with a rectangular base. The front features three white enamel dials and two thermometers bordered by gilt metal bezels. At the top, the main dial displays the hours in polychrome black Roman numerals. The interior of the dial reveals a Brocot-style visible escapement with ruby centers. The hands are of the Breguet type. There are two winding holes, and above the XII, an adjustment hand allows for time adjustment either forward or backward.



Below the main dial are two auxiliary white enamel dials. The one on the left is a perpetual calendar showing the months of the year. Within it are two smaller dials: one for the days of the week and another for the date. Above these is a window indicating the phases of the moon phases, painted in polychrome blue. The auxiliary dial on the right is a barometer, bearing two enamel stamps: one for the “Medalla de oro // Exposición 1849 París” and another for the “Gran Medalla de 1.ª clase // Universal Exposición Londres 1851.”

Flanking the main dial are two thermometers, modeled after those created by the Brocot family. The thermometers are labeled “Réaumur” and “Centigrado” respectively and dated “Paris 1838”.

The French movement is of the Paris type, with two trains. The time train is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days, with an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours with a count wheel and bell. It also features, as mentioned, a perpetual calendar.

This type of clock is also known as a *pendule borne* and was produced predominantly during the reign of Napoleon III.

Louis-Achille Brocot and his brother Antoine-Gabriel – sons of Louis-Gabriel, the founder of the *maison* – perfected escapement and suspension systems and patented the visible escapement and perpetual calendar in May 1849. Trained mathematicians, they were fully proficient in geometry and the use of gemstones in escapement suspensions. They amassed an extensive clientele list and were enormously influential, with many clockmakers adopting and copying their techniques, one of whom was José de Hoffmeyer.

José de Hoffmeyer y Jiménez married Josefa Zubeldía Baquijano in Bilbao in May 1843. He was appointed royal clockmaker in 1849. He opened a shop on calle de Alcalá in Madrid. Hoffmeyer

produced his own movements and also used ones from Geneva, Switzerland, and Paris, France. He represented the London firm J. M. French in Madrid. When Spain decided to adopt the mean time system, Hoffmeyer became the person in charge of setting all public and municipal clocks in Madrid. He died in the Spanish capital on 16 December 1862 and was buried in the cemetery at the Sacramental de San Justo.

Signed by Brocot and Delletrez on one of its three dials, a similar clock is held in the collection of the Patrimonio Nacional, with inventory number 10012728. [AAH]



ANDRÉ M. MUSIQUE

Mantel Clock. *Urania: Allegory of Geography and Astronomy, Allegory of Time*, c. 1860

Made in France

Bronze, glass, metal, enamel. Gilded, chased, cast, enameled.

48 x 38 x 21 cm

Acquired in 1970

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Signed on the dial, "André Man Musique / LANGUERFAL SEINE / Paris." Stamped seal on the backplate: "S Marti & Cie" ringed by "MEDAILLE DE BRONZE."

On 24 February 1970, the bank's deputy governor approved the purchase of this French gilt bronze mantel clock from Policarpo Zabala Gómez for 57,000 pesetas. Featuring two chased figures representing the allegory of Time, it was placed in the deputy governor's Sala de Visitas.

The clock case is adorned with a seated female figure and a putto holding a sundial. They figures flank the case body housing the clock dial and movement. Above the body sits a two-handled urn accented by a black ring, to which the female figure

points with her index finger. On the base beneath the dial are a globe, parchment, and laurel branch.

The dial is a metal plate enameled in white to look like porcelain. The hour markers are in Roman numerals, while the minutes are in Arabic numerals. The hands are made of gilt brass and there are two winding holes.

The French movement is of the Paris type, with two trains. The time train is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days. It features an anchor escapement and is regulated by a pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

Samuel Martí was a clockmaker in Paris in the mid-19th century. Little is known about this clockmaking firm, which mainly produced mantel clocks. Martí established a factory in Le Pays de Montbéliard and first showcased his clocks at an exhibition in Paris in 1841. He later exhibited in 1851 and 1852, winning a gold medal at each, as well as a bronze medal in 1860. Tardy records that, from 1863 onwards, Martí collaborated with two other renowned clockmakers, Roux et Cie and Japy Frères, forming a company to sell movements. He was awarded a silver medal in 1889, and gold in 1900, both in partnership with Japy Frères. His shop was registered at rue Vieille-du-Temple in Paris in 1870.

Two higher quality clocks with similar cases are held in the Cornette de Saint-Cyr collection in Paris and the Pascal Izarn collection. One of them is signed on the dial by the French clockmaker Imbert L'ainé. Thanks to these clocks – one with patinated bronze figures – we know that the ring on the urn's body was originally a calendar. This detail confirms the iconography of the clock case: Urania is instructing a putto in the study of astronomy. In both examples, the muse is pointing to the calendar with her finger, indicating the passing of time. Objects representing Astronomy and Study appear at the base of the clock. This is yet another example of the mass production of clock cases that began in the early 19th century. [AAH]

RAMÓN GARÍN (attributed)

Mantel Clock, c. 1860

Made in Spain

Marble, bronze, metal, enamel, glass. Carved, chased, gilded, cast, enameled.

55.5 x 42 x 22 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Second Empire style. On the dial: "R. GARIN / Sucor de A. (?) Wilniez / MADRID." The signature is unclear. On the back of the dial: "94." Engraved on the backplate: "004."

Ramón Garín founded a clockmaking business in Madrid. His workshop is recorded in the 1880 *Anuario del comercio, de la industria, de la magistratura y de la administración* (Yearbook



of Trade, Industry, Judiciary, and Public Administration), located at calle del Príncipe No. 23. Garín was also the Madrid representative for the clockmaker David Glasgow of London and installed the clock in the tower of the new Banco de España building, which was acquired from the English clockmaker in 1890. He is also credited with the clock in the former main banking hall, which is now the library.

The case of this clock is of black marble. Its rectangular shape manages a sense of movement thanks to the sinuous lines that run along the base and flank the dial, positioned at the front; the molding beneath it adds emphasis.

The white enamel dial is ringed by a gilt bronze frame adorned with ovolos and vegetal motifs. Polychrome black Roman numerals indicate the hours, with minute segments also marked. Inside, there is a visible anchor escapement and two ruby centers. The hands are blued metal in the Breguet style. Two winding holes are protected by gilt bronze rings. The maker's signature, though unclear, appears below the hand stem, enameled in black. The bezel protecting the dial is under glass, with gilt bronze beaded molding. The French movement is the Paris type. The time train is powered by a mainspring that allows the clock to run for eight days. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

Most clocks of this kind, also known as *pendule borne*, were manufactured in France, particularly during the reign of Napoleon III. The first manufacturers of this type of clock were the Brocot family: Antoine-Gabriel and Louis-Achille. In their pursuit of perfection, they continuously invented and developed suspension systems, escapements, calendars, and striking mechanisms throughout the 19th century. They were savvy traders and established an internationally recognized brand that was widely imitated. This piece features

a visible escapement very similar to the one Louis-Achille Brocot began selling in 1842.

A pocket watch signed by RAMÓN GARÍN / MADRID, once owned by the painter Joaquín Sorolla, is preserved in the Museo Sorolla in Madrid.

Garín was succeeded by E. Max Schnabel, who later became the clockmaker for the Observatorio Astronómico of Madrid.

The fact that the signature is unclear raises doubts about the authorship. [AAH]



PEÑA Y SOBRINO, clockmaker

Mantel Clock with Garniture, c. 1860

Made in Spain

Clock

Bronze, porcelain, enamel, metal, glass. Chased, gilded, enameled, cast

55 x 39 x 16 cm

Observations: Louis XV style. Signed on the dial beneath the hand stem and engraved on the backplate: "PEÑA Y SOBRINO // MADRID" along with the serial number, "36488."

Candelabra

Anonymous

Bronze, enamel, metal. Gilded, chased, enameled.

72 x 29 x 29 cm

Colección Banco de España

Both the face and backplate of this mantel clock are signed by the makers, Peña y Sobrino. The gilt bronze case is adorned with two cherub figures in the round, whose lower limbs end in scrolls, seated on a rectangular pedestal with rounded corners. The cherubs hold an oval frame in their arms that houses the dials and the clock's mechanisms. The oval's edge is embellished with two ram heads and vegetal motifs, topped with a Greek vase

known as a *lekanis*. A floral garland links the two cherubs. The clock stands on four flattened disc-shaped feet decorated with geometric and vegetal motifs.

The face features two white enamel dials framed by gilt bronze. The upper dial indicates the hours with black polychrome Roman numerals and minute markers. Within the dial is a visible anchor escapement with ruby centers and blued steel Breguet-style hands. The two winding holes are protected by gilt bronze rings. The adjustment hand is above the XII numeral.

The lower dial displays the months of the year, a perpetual calendar, and an adjustment if the clock is running fast or slow. Within are two auxiliary dials, one for the standard calendar and another for the days of the week. Above them, a window displays the lunar calendar against an enameled backdrop of clouds and stars.

Flanking the dials are two enamel plaques with pink borders and cherub figures. The same pink adorns the rectangular plaques with curved ends that decorate the front and sides of the pedestal. A glass door protects the dials. The back features a gilt bronze door decorated with chased vegetal motifs and a pierced rosette, allowing the chime to be heard.

The clock has a French Paris-type movement. The time train is powered by a mainspring that allows the clock to run for eight days and includes an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours on a bell. The auxiliary mechanism features a perpetual calendar (including leap years), days of the week, months, and phases of the moon.

This clock copies a design produced between 1855 and 1860 by Louis-Achille Brocot for the British market. In his book, Richard Chavigny features a similar piece, preserved in the Musée des curiosités horlogères René Donzé.

The Brocot family, including several generations of clockmakers, perfected suspension mechanisms, escapements, calendars, and chimes to achieve greater precision. Two notable advances were the deadbeat escapement and the visible escapement, which became popular and were widely imitated by other European clockmakers.

In 1974, this clock decorated the Sala de Visitas of the governor of the Banco de España.

The garniture comprises two four-light gilt bronze candelabra. The stems feature cherubs similar to those decorating the clock case, seated on a smaller rectangular pedestal with rounded corners. The figures balance an urn on their heads, from which the *labrae* emerge, consisting of four curved arms topped by candleholders and *bobèches*.

Both the pedestals and urns are adorned with porcelain plaques similar to those decorating the clock case. [AAH]



MIROY FRÈRES

Mantel Clock, c. 1860-1870

Made in France

Bronze, marble, enamel, metal. Patinated, gilded, enameled, carved, cast.

93 x 54 x 28 cm

Acquired in 1970

Colección Banco de España

Observation: Stamped mark on the backplate:
"MIROY FRES BTES // SGD G // C.M. // PARIS."

This mantel clock was offered to the Banco de España on 4 December 1969 by the antique dealer Julio Bragado, who had a shop at calle de Velázquez No. 27 in Madrid. The clock was purchased on 5 March 1970 and placed in the Salón del Consejo General.

The clock's dial, surrounded by gilt bronze vegetal motifs, and the movement, enclosed in a blue enameled globe, are supported by four patinated bronze cherubs adorned with gilt bronze garlands. The base is red marble with gilt bronze trim.

The dial is enameled in blue, with Roman numerals set on pierced sheets of patinated bronze. The hands are also pierced. There are two winding holes.

The French movement mechanism has round plates and two trains. The time train is powered by an eight-day mainspring and has an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

Little is known about the clockmakers who signed the backplate of this clock. It was likely a trading company that attended the 1851 Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace in London. [AAH]



ANONYMOUS

Mantel Clock, c. 1865

Made in France

Marble, bronze, malachite, crystal, brass, enamel.

Carved, gilt, cast, enameled

50 x 37.5 x 17.5 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Stamped on the backplate:

'HORLOGERIE PARIS' and the serial number '4114'.

An inventory of artistic assets in the archive of the Conservaduría lists the price of this clock, but not the date of purchase¹.

This mantel clock – it might also be called a “skeleton clock” – is made of black marble and decorated with malachite plaques and vegetal motifs carved into the marble and painted gold. The front door and sides are glazed to reveal the movement.

The imitation-porcelain enamel chapter ring shows the hours in Roman numerals. The center disc features a Brocot escapement and two winding holes. The Breguet-style hands are made of blued metal.

The French movement is of the Paris type. The time train is powered by a mainspring that allows the clock to run for eight days, and has an anchor escapement and a pendulum with a gilt brass bob. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours using a count-wheel system. [AAH]

1. This inventory does give the dates of acquisition of other watches in the collection, ranging from 1970 to 1976.

ANONYMOUS

Mantel Clock with Garniture, c. 1870

Made in France

Imari or Arita Porcelain, bronze, metal, enamel.

Gilded, enameled, cast.

Clock

85 x 62 x 22 cm

Candelabra

89 x 43 x 22 cm each

Acquired in 1976

Colección Banco de España

This garniture was acquired on 18 May 1976 from the antique dealer Antonio Alonso Ojeda, who had a shop at calle de Ribera de Curtidores No. 12 in Madrid. The archives of the Conservaduría of the Banco de España include the invoice and a description of the garniture.

The clock's case is a porcelain vase flanked by two gilt bronze handles in the form of lion heads, each with a ring hanging from its jaws. The bronze lid, decorated with ovolo and geometric motifs along the edge, is topped with a gilt bronze figure of Cupid. The vase rests on a gilt bronze base, adorned with a putto on either side, each holding garlands of flowers. The dial, set into the center of the vase, is crafted of gilded metal and ringed by a beaded border. The hour markers are displayed on white enamel cartouches with polychrome black Roman numerals, while the minutes are indicated by Arabic numerals engraved on the outer edge of the dial. The interior features raised vegetal motifs, and the hands are blued metal. The ensemble sits on six baluster-shaped feet.

The movement is of the French Paris type, with round plates, and is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

Imari porcelain, named in the West after the port through which it was shipped, refers to products made in the town of Arita in Saga Prefecture, Japan. This porcelain became very popular in Europe after 1650, when the Dutch East India Company began importing it from Arita. Its popularity lasted for a century, benefiting from the interruption of Chinese porcelain production due to civil war. Eventually, Chinese porcelain overtook that from Arita by the mid-18th century.

Imari designs were instrumental in the “orientalization” of European ceramics, especially influencing the leading porcelain producers in Meissen and Vincennes. During the 19th century, the style was also copied elsewhere in Europe,



particularly in Delftware from the Netherlands and in Robert Chamberlain's factory in Worcester, England.

After the Meiji era, the production of Imari porcelain was industrialized and continues to be produced to this day.

The candelabra replicate the design of the vase that houses the clock's dial and movement, with two lion head handles resting on a two-tiered base. The lower tier, with straight sides, is decorated with a frieze of vegetal motifs, while the concave upper tier features geometric designs. The entire structure is supported by four feet resembling sharply tipped leaves. Seven curling vine-like arms extend from the top of each vase, each arm ending in a candleholder and *bobèche*. [AAH]



ANONYMOUS

Mantel Clock. *The Birth of a French Prince*, c. 1886
Possibly made in France

Bronze, metal, enamel. Gilded, enameled, cast.

89 x 81 x 34 cm

Acquired in 1969

Colección Banco de España

On 7 November 1969, Julio Bragado, an antiques dealer with a shop at calle de Velázquez No. 27 in Madrid, offered this clock to the governor of the Banco de España during the building's expansion works. He described it as a fire-gilt bronze clock representing the birth of a French prince dating to the late 18th century. The asking price was 300,000. Jesús María Fernández, the clockmaker for the Banco de España, inspected the clock and determined that, while not in working condition, it could easily be repaired. It was missing some parts and required minor repairs to both the movement and the case. For this reason, the offer was accepted, but Mr. Alcocer, secretary of the Banco de España's Junta de Obras, was charged

with negotiating with the dealer for a reduction of 25,000 pesetas. José Manuel Ferrer, head of the Conservaduría and the library, stated that the clock was an allegory of Industry and Commerce. It was acquired on 14 November 1969 for 275,000 pesetas and was placed in the Comedor de gala (formal dining room).

The face of the god Apollo or Helios, ringed by rays of light and billowing clouds, is the focus of the clock's gilt bronze case, which is topped by a globe enameled in shades of blue. Three female figures dressed in classical attire hold a garland in their hands. They surround and gaze at a child seated on the ground (Cupid). At his feet lie a bow and several arrows. The composition is completed by four putti or cherubs scattered around the upper part of the case. Symbolizing the four seasons, the one at the highest point holds a sheaf of wheat; the one on the right holds a cup and a cornucopia; the one on the left carries a garland; and the one at the bottom is missing the object it once held. The ensemble rests on a base with a coat of arms in the center, surrounded by roses and fleurs-de-lis.

On the front of the globe, the hour markers in Roman numerals are crafted from gilt bronze plaques, with the French names of the continents interposed.

The French movement is of the Paris type but is unsigned and bears no maker's mark. The time train is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days. The strike train chimes the hours and half-hours.

The double coat of arms belongs to a prominent French family: the Séguier-Kerret. Pierre Séguier (1858-1936) was an artillery officer and the fourth Baron Séguier. He was the son of Antoine Joseph Maurice Séguier and Marie Philippine Antoinette Charlotte de Goyon. Pierre married Isabelle de Kerret de Quillien (1866-1954), daughter of Jean René Maurice Vicomte de Kerret de Quillien and Marie Léonie Gaultier, in 1886.

The Séguier coat of arms is described as: *D'azur au chevron d'or accompagné de deux étoiles de même en chef, et un mouton tranquille d'argent en Pointe* (Azure with a chevron Or between two stars of the same in chief and a passant lamb Argent in base). The Kerret coat of arms is: "Quarterly: 1st and 4th Or, a lion Sable and a bendlet Gules overall; 2nd and 3rd Argent, with two pigeons addorsed Azure, and a beaked and membered Gules." Both coats of arms appear on the lower part of the clock case. Additionally, one of the family's mottos, "INDOLE BONUS,"¹ can be seen.

Based on this information, the clock should be dated to after their wedding, as both coats of arms are present.

One of Pierre Séguier's ancestors was the chancellor of France under Louis XIV. For this reason, the clock case is inspired by the Rococo models produced during the reign of Louis XIV of France.

It is believed that Pierre Séguier commissioned this clock on the occasion of his marriage, and that the case copies another clock made in the 18th century. The type of movement supports this dating. [AAH]

1. I would like to thank Dr. José María de Francisco, Associate Professor of Ciencias y Técnicas Historiográficas, for his assistance in identifying the coat of arms decorating this clock case.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE, clock brand

Mantel Clock, second half of the 20th century

Made in Switzerland

Bronze, brass, metal, glass. Cast, gilded.

23 x 18 x 14 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Inscribed on the dial, "Atmos."

This mantel clock is housed within a gilt bronze cage whose glass panels enclose a white enamel dial and the movement of an atmospheric clock.

The Atmos trademark is synonymous with a mechanical clock manufactured by the Swiss firm Jaeger-LeCoultre. Its distinctiveness lies in its ability to operate without winding: it harnesses energy from changes in temperature and atmospheric pressure through a hermetically sealed capsule containing a mixture of ethyl chloride gas and liquid. As the temperature rises, the gas expands within a chamber, compressing a spiral spring. When the temperature drops, the gas condenses, and the spring decompresses. This constant movement powers the mainspring. The regulating mechanism is a torsion pendulum, which consumes less energy than a conventional one. As a result, the clock can run for many years without human intervention.

The first Atmos clock was designed in 1928 by Jean-Léon Reutter, an engineer from Neuchâtel, Switzerland. On 27 July 1935, Jaeger-LeCoultre assumed production of the Atmos I. [AAH]



ANONYMOUS

Oeil de boeuf Wall Clock, c. 1875

Wood, mother-of-pearl, alabaster, enamel, metal, glass.

Carved, enameled, cast.

66 x 51.5 x 13 cm

Colección Banco de España

This wall clock – commonly known as an “*oeil de boeuf*” or “tavern” clock – features a hexagonal wooden case. The sinuous frame and case front are crafted to imitate ebony and decorated with wood stained to simulate mahogany, with mother-of-pearl inlays. The dial is an alabaster plate. The hour cartouches are enameled in white with blue Roman numerals. The hands are made of blued metal and there are two winding holes. The dial is protected by a glass cover.

The Morez-type movement includes a time train that is powered by a mainspring allowing the clock to run for eight days, with an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes on the hours and half-hours. The original key has been retained.

This model was very popular and matches those produced during the reigns of Isabella II and Alfonso XII.

In the mid-19th century, clocks with brass or sheet metal frames or cages began to be manufactured in France and Switzerland. The sheets or plates were fitted together by turned metal pillars. Inside the cage, the gears were arranged vertically. These movements became more complex and known as the “Morbier-Morez type,” named after the region where the factories were located. [AAH]

ANONYMOUS

Cartel Clock, c. 1875

Made in France

Wood, tortoiseshell, bronze, brass, copper, glass.

Copper marquetry on tortoiseshell background, cabinetry, gilded, cast, carved, chased.

132.5 x 39.5 x 34 cm

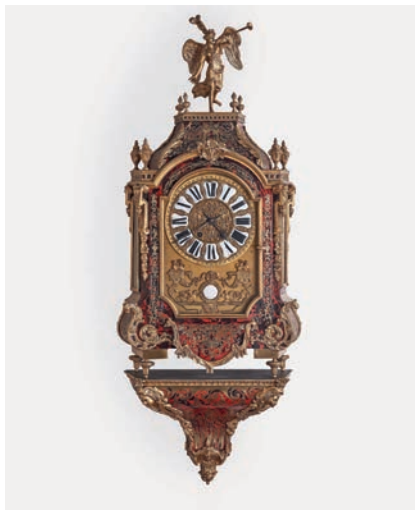
Colección Banco de España

Observations: Imitates Louis XIV style. On the backplate, "MADE IN FRANCE" and the serial number, "25192."

In the mid-19th century, historicist trends drove the revival of past styles. One of the most frequently imitated, due to the opulence of its cases, was the Louis XIV style, and specifically Boulle furniture.

Mounted on a bracket, this wall clock may also be removed and used separately as a mantel clock. The Neuchâtel-style case was widely copied by French clockmakers. The rectangular case is adorned with large volutes at the base and a bell-shaped finial at the top. Two fluted pilasters flank the dial. Part of the case is covered in tortoiseshell and embellished with cut and chased plates of gilt brass or copper. The case is topped with a gilt bronze figure in the round – possibly representing Fame – holding a trumpet. The clock's feet are also bronze. The sides of the case are decorated with tortoiseshell plates and gilt bronze appliqué, and feature two glass windows allowing a view of the clock's movement and the pendulum's swing.

The rectangular gilt brass face is topped with a semicircular arch. The hour markers are displayed in Roman numerals, enameled in polychrome black on cartouches. Surrounding them is a metal ring with chased Arabic numerals indicating the minutes. The interior of the dial is chased. Below the hour cartouches, a gilt brass plate features raised designs of sphinxes, masks, and vegetal elements. At the center is a circular white enamel



piece, likely a modern replacement, where the clockmaker's signature would have been.

The French movement has two trains. The time train is powered by a mainspring that keeps the clock running for eight days, with an anchor escapement and pendulum, the latter of which has a lens featuring the face of the Sun God. The strike train uses a gong system.

The bracket is made from the same materials as the clock case: wood, tortoiseshell, and bronze appliqué. It is triangular and decorated with female heads and vegetal motifs.

The case imitates the Louis XIV style, particularly Boulle designs, which reflected the opulence of the reign of the Sun King. Charles Le Brun, Jean Bérain, Daniel Marot, and André Charles Boulle were the most famous designers of this style. Boulle compiled his knowledge in a treatise titled *Nouveaux dessins de meubles et ouvrages de bronze et de marqueterie*. This type of case involved various artists: cabinetmakers, sculptors, founders, chasers, gilders, and others. The straight lines of the case are adorned with gilt bronze appliqué with clear baroque influences: pilasters, columns, volutes, figures, leaves, palmettes, masks, etc. Below the dial are scenes in bas-relief. The case is topped with mythological figures: Time and Fame. During the 19th century, these cases were widely copied, partly thanks to a return to decorative opulence.

In a photograph, dating to 1974, stored in the archive of the Conservaduría in the Banco de España, the case is seen adorned with a porcelain miniature of a woman's portrait, a copy of a work by Titian. [AAH]

ASMUS JOHANNSEN, clockmaker

Regulator Wall Clock, c. 1880-1890

Made in the United Kingdom

Wood, bronze, silver, mercury, glass. Carved, gilded, cast.

178 x 42 x 26.5 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: Signed in the center of the dial:

"A Johannsen London."

This high-precision regulator wall clock is the successor of those made by George Graham and John Ellicott in the 18th century. The square head is crowned by gadroon molding. The rectangular body, featuring a glass front, allows viewing of the mercury pendulum. The triangular lower section, resembling a corbel, is decorated with fluting.

The square silver dial features three subdials with polychrome black numerals. The largest subdial indicates the minutes in Arabic numerals and encloses the two smaller, vertically aligned subdials. The upper subdial displays the seconds and the lower the hours in Roman numerals.

The highly precise pendulum has a vial of mercury at the end. The clock operates by a weight and pulley system. A metal plate engraved with a scale measures the pendulum's swing. There are locks on the sides of the case.

Born in Denmark, Asmus Johannsen settled in London around 1859. He specialized in precision clocks, particularly marine chronometers. He founded the brand A. Johannsen & Co., competing with the London firm of Victor Kullberg. Johannsen won numerous awards in the Greenwich and Kew Watch Trials and manufactured marine chronometers for the navies of India, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Austria, and China.

The length of the pendulum rod varies slightly with temperature changes. To address this, George Graham began investigating how to compensate for this variation in metals to create more precise pendulums around 1715. In 1721, he developed the first mercury compensation pendulum. These clocks replaced the traditional metal bob with a vial of mercury, where the extension of the pendulum rod (due to thermal expansion) is offset by the mercury's high density in the vial. This maintains the pendulum's center of gravity, ensuring consistent timekeeping. [AAH]



CARISIO ANZOLA, clockmaker and retail establishment

Regulator Wall Clock with Calendar, c. 1930-1940

Made in Spain

Wood, brass, metal, glass, enamel. Carved, gilded, stained, enameled, cast.

143 x 50 x 23 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: On the calendar dial: "CARISIO ANZOLA. RELOJERIA SUIZA // SEVILLA // MANUFACTURED BY / THE / ITHACA CALENDAR CLOCK CO. / ITHACA N. Y. / PATENTED / April 18th, 1865, August 28th 1866."

This regulator wall clock with calendar features a vertical wooden case. It is topped with a molded, openwork triangular crest. The door, decorated with carved motifs, has two openings for the dials and a glass panel to view the pendulum. The lower section is shaped like an inverted bell.

The upper dial is of white enamel, with the hours indicated by polychrome black Roman numerals. It has two winding holes and the hands are pierced, blued metal.

The lower dial is a 31-day calendar, with the days marked by black polychrome Arabic numerals. Two rectangular windows show the day of the week and the month of the year. The calendar hand is arrow shaped.

The clock has a two-train movement. The time train is powered by a mainspring allowing the clock to run for eight days and features an anchor escapement and pendulum. The strike train chimes on the hours and half-hours.



The Carisio Anzola clock shop supplied a significant number of Swiss and American clocks in Seville. This particular model, with a perpetual calendar patented in 1865 by the Ithaca Calendar Clock Co. in New York, was in high demand well into the 20th century. [AAH]

INDUCTA, commercial brand

Electric Wall Clock, c. 1950

Wood, enamel, brass, metal, mercury, glass. Carved, enameled, cast.

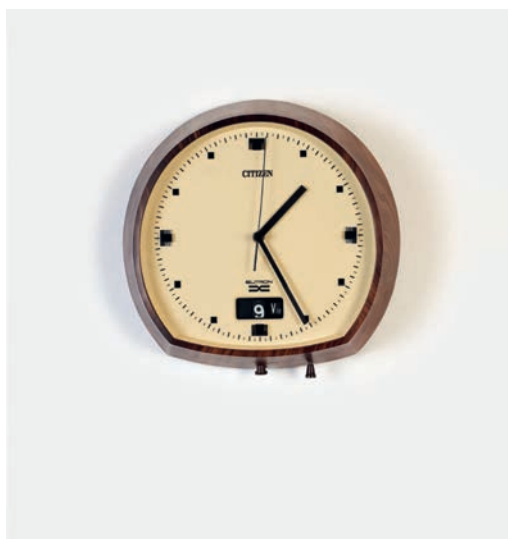
89.5 x 31.5 x 18.5 cm

Colección Banco de España

The rectangular mahogany case of this electric wall clock features a glass door that allows viewing of the dial and its mechanism. The dial is made of black enameled metal, with the hour markers for 3, 6, 9, and 12 o'clock displayed in white Arabic numerals. The seconds are shown on a subdial above the hand stem. The hands are white enameled metal.

The clock is powered by an electric mechanism with a mercury pendulum, which includes a dual screw adjustment. A plaque at the base of the case provides the following instructions: "Pendulum Adjustment // Rough adjustment Nut I // 1 Graduation line = 6 sec/day = 3 min/month // Fine adjustment Nut II // 1 Graduation line 1/10 sec/day = 3 sec/month // 1 Turn = 1 second/day = 30 seconds/month." The plaque also features a diagram of the pendulum.

Another similar plaque includes: "Minimum interval between signals // Duration of adjustable signals up to // Hourly distribution // Number of clock circuits // Operating voltage V per unit // Operating current mA per secondary clock // Clock unit capacity // Connection of secondary clocks in parallel." A circuit diagram is also provided.



This type of clock was first created in 1907 by Swiss inventor Martin Fisher, who named it "Magneta." Later, from 1929 to 1966, production was taken over by the company Landis & Gyr, with the clock rebranded as INDUCTA. The earliest models operated at 110 volts, later transitioning to 220 volts. [AAH]

CITIZEN, commercial brand

Wall Clock, second half of the 20th Century

Metal, wood, synthetic material or plastic, glass.

Cast, plywood.

31 cm x 32 cm x 8.5 cm

Colección Banco de España

Observations: The brand name "CITIZEN" appears under the 12 o'clock marker.

This wall clock is enhanced by a plywood circular case with a flat base. The dial, made of synthetic material, displays square and rectangular hour markers. The hands, also of synthetic material, are polychrome black. There is a second hand. Above the 6 o'clock marker, a rectangular cut-out in the dial shows the date. The clock has a quartz movement. [AAH]



A TIME WITHOUT CLOCKS

The final theme of this exhibition offers the most direct response to the concept of time established by the myth of Chronos. The artists featured in this section aim to challenge the principles that have governed Western notions of time and the consequences of imposing a single temporal paradigm, clock time. They do so from other latitudes and different cultural perspectives, from the indigenous to the autonomous, self created spaces that serve as an artist's sanctuary.

An initial response to this domination comes from indigenous culture, which experiences non colonial time as circular – returning over and over – not as a relentlessly advancing line, but as a repetition associated with natural cycles and ancestral knowledge. As María Jacinta Xón reminds us, “The time before clocks was a time that never ran out, never smothered you. It flowed with the sunrise, with the observation of the lengths of the shadows, the shapes of clouds, the winds whispering of what may happen tomorrow, and the flight of birds auguring rain.” This symbiosis with nature and its phenomena as a way of understanding time is reflected in various works in this section.

The artist's perception of time can also be understood as an alternative form of time, often disconnected from conventional measurements. Art historian Yve Alain Bois argues that certain paintings can slow time down, revealing themselves gradually to the viewer in stages. Painting thus becomes a way to rebel against and resist the oppression of the clock, to embrace slowing down and acting deliberately, to defy the tyranny of Chronos and the rigid control of life imposed by consumer society.



ÁNGEL POYÓN

The Present is Ours No. 4, 2018

Rubber and pencil drawing on paper

21 x 21 cm each

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

The Present is Ours No. 4 is a piece that longs for a time that was possible and expansive, a time when ancient peoples observed everything around them, inhaling and exhaling deeply. It was a time when the wisps of breath were cradled in clasped hands and offered to the morning, to the sun, to the rain, to the seeds, to the griddle, to the hoe, and more. *Ka kawij* – the wisp of breath offered to touch one's own life and that of others – as the artist did when he was a child. It is a longing for the past, for the time before the relentless measurement and confinement of time into 24 hours, 1,440 minutes, 86,400 seconds. The time before clocks was one that never ran out, that did not smother; a time that flowed with the sunrise, with the observation of the position of shadows, of clouds and their contours; with the wind that whispered of tomorrow's events; with the flight of birds that augured rain; with the darkness that lulled one to sleep; and with dreams that perhaps gave time a rest. For dreams have neither present nor past, and their future is only a possibility. Who wouldn't want to stop measuring time by timetables, by starting and finishing times, by time spent in traffic, by time as money, by exhaustion, by time spent having no time?

This work recalls how children perceive time. The almost round, perhaps square shapes in their

attempts to draw clocks are “a kind of rebellion by children against imprisoning their time. Their drawings have no defined borders, figures are flexible, a bit round, a bit square,” says Ángel Poyón.

The flexibility of time in *The Present is Ours* alludes to everyday life before 1970, to the days before industrialization and the schizophrenic measurement of time had reached Comalapa. “In our parents' time, work wasn't limited to exactly eight hours. What you did during the daytime was guided by observing the sun, the weather, the sunset. They didn't have a clock that dictated it was 4:00 p.m. and time to stop working, they finished at 4:15 or 4:30, they owned their time, *ta ya jun qij jun samaj*, a day's work is while the sun's up,” recounts the artist. Fatigue, stress, and punctuality were not quantified and monetized measures of time-effort-traffic-health before 1970. People had daily rituals, not survival routines in their day-to-day lives.

The rubber that outlines the almost-round and almost-square shapes in the work is a metaphor for flexible and multifaceted time. The flexibility and multiple forms of rubber reflect that it is possible for time to be experienced as a variable: while its existence is constant, the way it is lived is infinitely unpredictable – it stretches, it shrinks, it goes, it returns, it exists, and it is dreamed, just as described in the stories of the *Pop Wuj*. In the story of *Pop Wuj*, the mythical hero twins play with rubber balls that, in their bouncing, annoy and disturb the lords of *Xib'alb'a*, the underworld.

This work, the artist notes, “is not a piece meant to last for centuries and centuries, rubber deteriorates over time. This piece is a metaphor for skin, as it cracks, it ages, it lives its time, it builds memory through the little bars of the clock it holds. How long it will last can’t be calculated, it lives and has its own time.” The longevity of the piece is like a grandmother for the Kaqchikel people, it must be cared for and we must learn from it through its silences and anecdotes. The curators are now its family: its life, until its inevitable transcendence, depends on their care. [MJXR]

ANTONIO PICHILLÁ

Semilla, 2024

Wool threads

160 x 122 cm

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

Semilla is a trope of the symbiosis between the lives of Mesoamerican humans and the Earth – as mother; as seed; as plant, fruit, nourishment; and as the science of resilience. It serves as a metaphor for the enduring bonds with the clouds, water, soil, wind, and other life forms that interact in the maize-growing process, as elements in coexistence.

Semilla demystifies the exoticizing fiction of the chronotope in colonial and modern discourse that created the supposed “Mayan gods” by establishing an earth-bound trope: “It is a neologism enclosing a semantic territory that becomes a metaphor for the place to define the exotic, the barbaric, the savage,

the primitive, or any combination of motifs involving the notions of alterity and otherness” (G Weisz, *Tinta del Exotismo: Literatura de la Otredad* [Color of Exoticism: Literature of Otherness], 2007, p. 99). This work reminds us that there were no gods – not even one – in the ancient ontology. The only elements that existed were those that collectively helped seeds to awaken, grow, be, give, and reproduce as life.

This work is a visual, somatic, ontological, aesthetic, and political realization of centuries-old practice based on the science of ancient Mesoamerican peoples’ nutritional and crop association system. The alignment of threads suggests the furrows, and the knots suggest the seeds, that together will weave life. Like a sort of photograph of the moment when the cycle of life begins anew, the threads and knots represent the potential of the earth and the seeds, the probability or not of becoming maize, beans, and squash. Reproducing life in the soil requires a wise selection of live seeds, for not all merely sleep – some lie without the breath of life.

The knots-seeds in the piece refer to the ancient lunar calendar: *jun winaq q’anil* (20 seeds) or 20 days that multiply correlatively by the number 13, 20 seeds that give their *k’ux* (being) to ancient mathematics, 20 seeds as a metaphor for the warp that will give the *k’ux* (breath) to the fabric of life.

The education system in Guatemala interrupts the learning of the process of reproducing life by sowing seeds. This civilizing system appropriates the future of the life of the Maya Tz’utujil, for now few learn to cultivate the land, they no longer want to shell maize, nixtamalize it in lime, grind it, and make tortillas from it, opines Pichillá. These “civilized” people underestimate the transformation of seeds into nourishment-life because they prefer to buy packaged food, which leads to obliviousness, dependence, and diseases.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many learned that those who know how to cultivate the land will always be nourished. “Cultivating, harvesting, storing, and exchanging creole and native seeds is safeguarding life. If we don’t plant, what will we eat next year? We live by the life of our lands. Last year’s harvest is this year’s food; what is planted now will be next year’s food; planting is intrinsic to time, like weaving” (Antonio Pichillá).

Semilla offers a reflection: humans are seeds and humanity is a sowing. Accordingly, we should understand our existence as a symbiosis with the sun, air, water, dreams, and earth. Each human, with their ideas, intentions, motivations, and actions, is a sowing. Therefore, as Pichillá says, life ought to be a continual observation of each moment. Like maize, we not only sow the seed: we must care for it, clean it, fertilize it, store it, and select *chom ija’* (the best seeds) to nourish life next year.

Semilla was first exhibited at the Arco Madrid 2024 fair in Spain. [MJXR]



ANTONIO PICHILLÁ

Kukulkan (Feathered Serpent), 2017

Mahogany wood and wool threads

195 x 124 x 21 cm

Acquired in 2020

Colección Banco de España

Kukulkan (Feathered Serpent), from the *Kukulkan* series, is an artwork with a textile orientation, a feathered serpent in a warp that invokes the history of resistance by the Abya Yala peoples. It is also a visual voice emanating from the land of the Maya Tz'utujil, seeking to open a dialogue with the world of the historical "other" – the contemporary West. The serpent is mounted on a flat wooden structure with deliberate protrusions marking moments of connection and disconnection between the threads and their paths. Additionally, this piece is a reinterpretation of the archetype of the *q'inb'al* (warping board), a systematic framework that is a basic technology invented by early societies around the world. In an informal conversation, David Marín noted that the warping board enabled the use of various plant fibers to weave clothing, the development of biodiverse agricultural systems, the improvement of storage technologies, and the increasing complexity of social organizations.

A warping board in the shape of a serpent that moves through planes and corners is intentional. Formed by vertices, its discontinuous anatomy reinterprets – irreverently, given Christian demonization of the serpent – the representation of time, space, water, and rain for the indigenous peoples of Abya Yala. Neither is Kukulkan a god, as the indigenous peoples of Abya Yala are not polytheists, but instead define and relate to myriad forms of life in terms of time, shape, structure, weight, and so on. Thus, for these peoples Kukulkan is a being of diverse life that watches over time, space, water, and rain. Juan Xón, an *Aj q'ij K'iche'* (daykeeper or spiritual guide), described Kukulkan as a messenger from whom one must learn guile and wisdom, because the serpent "flies without wings, eats without hands, and walks without feet" (1996). Kukulkan is also the guardian of fertility and of life, for if water did not return to the earth, there would be no life.

Kukulkan invites consideration as a "Maya hacker." Diane Nelson notes that "like computer hackers who deploy intimate understandings of technologies and codes while working within a system they do not control, the Maya are appropriating so-called modern technology and knowledges..."¹ The Maya become what Trinh Minh-ha (1986) has termed "the Inappropriate/d Other."² In some ways, *Kukulkan* serves as a reminder of the existence of the Other as discomfort, as redefining oneself and at the same time redefining the identity and existence of indigenous peoples in contemporary Spanish-speaking culture. *Kukulkan* comes to Madrid as



a contemporary conceptual object to rewrite the history of a people.

The work is also a metaphor for memory and knowledge that for Pichillá represents the continuity of his relationship with his weaver grandmother and the legacy to her descendants. "Who among the Tz'utujil weave? It was the men," reflects Pichillá. To weave, to take up the warping board, redefines the historical status quo within indigenous societies. For a man to weave is a reality that breaks with the traditional precept that only women should do so. *Kukulkan* is an encounter with historical memory that weaves together time and space through shapes and colors, an encounter with a time and a people in permanent and dynamic resistance in an effort to remain Maya Tz'utujil in today's globalized world. [MJXR]

1. Diane M. Nelson, *Cultural Anthropology, Maya Hackers and the Cyberspatialized Nation-State: Modernity, Ethnostalgia, and a Lizard Queen in Guatemala*, American Anthropological Association, 1996.

2. Ibid, pp. 288-289.

PIETER VERMEERSCH

Painting # 24, 2007

Oil on canvas (polyptych)

92 x 70 cm each

Acquired in 2010

Colección Banco de España

In *Painting #24*, Pieter Vermeersch presents a reflection on space and time, using color as the primary tool. The work comprises seven vertical panels forming a polyptych, with subtle tonal transitions from light to dark hues, including luminous greens and muted browns. This gradient imbues the piece with an atmospheric quality, inviting the viewer into an experience that transcends mere appearance and immerses them in a deeper understanding.

Vermeersch's artistic practice is influenced by a profound interest in Baroque illusionism, pure abstraction, and photographic realism. Consequently, his works shift between representation and informalism, often translating into large-scale spatial interventions. Within his body of work, *Painting #24* is part of what the artist calls «Gradations»: monumental paintings – often exhibited together as arrangements – distinguished by an extremely precise, almost scientific, gradual blurring of colors. Vermeersch employs this chromatic gradation as a means to explore temporality in a phenomenological way. The process of creation involves meticulous application of color, resulting in an image that closely resembles that of a printed photograph. However, Vermeersch's approach is purely pictorial, requiring a technique that rigorously analyzes and visualizes the changes produced by the light, capturing them in photographs, and finally translating them into paint. Through this method, he transforms the work into a record of time and the conditions surrounding the execution of the piece, which also remain embedded in the canvas. The result is degressive fields of color that evoke the idea of natural cycles, such as the passing

of the hours, twilight, and dusk, and the changing of the seasons.

The artist's slow and deliberate process culminates in the viewer's experience, which requires a deliberate gaze. As one moves from panel to panel of *Painting #24*, the perception of color shifts, calling for prolonged contemplation and a certain physical engagement. The work cannot be fully grasped in a single glance, it demands time for observation and active participation from the viewer, situating them in a changing here and now. Observed long enough, the composition seems to metamorphose before the viewer's eyes. Some writers have described this aesthetic experience of Vermeersch's pieces as an “intrusive and pleasant vibration,”¹ one that transcends the merely visual to become relational, leading to a kind of physical and emotional interaction with the painting. This particular aesthetic experience, in concert with the artist's analytical and rational approach, centers the concept of temporality. Accordingly, *Painting #24* positions the viewer within a visual framework that transforms as they move, reinforcing the idea that a work of art is a temporal and ever-changing event rather than a static object. [CD]

1. Guy Bovyn: «The Work of Art, Folded Between Two Colours»
https://www.perrotin.com/artists/Pieter_Vermeersch/142#press

VICTORIA CIVERA

Two in the Afternoon, 1991

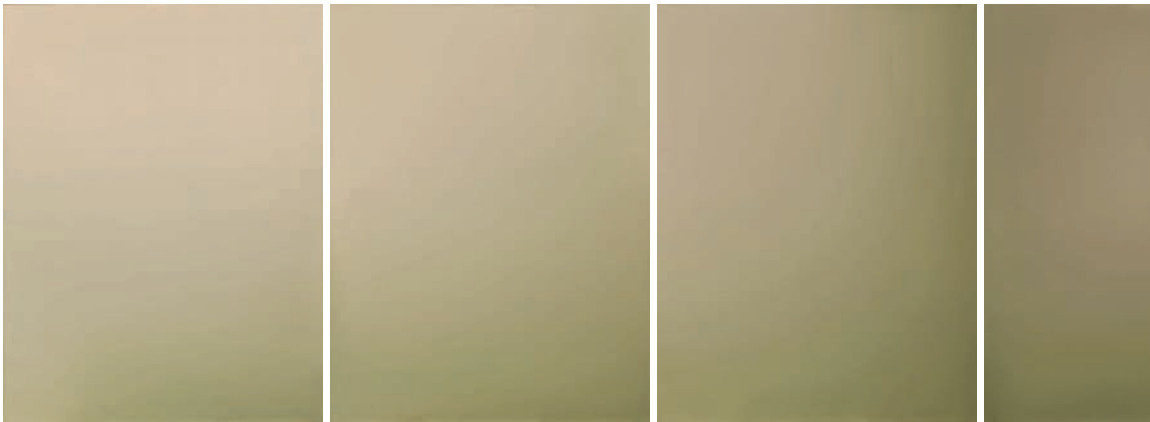
Oil on canvas

44.5 x 126 x 4.5 cm

Acquired in 1992

Colección Banco de España

Produced by the artist Victoria Civera in 1991, the work *Two in the Afternoon* is a manifestation of her exploration of time through abstraction. Applying mixed techniques on canvas, she employs a soft palette – black, ochre, and white – and organic forms that intertwine in a dynamic and fluid





composition. The title of the piece, *Two in the Afternoon*, refers to the time of the artist's birth, a detail of which her mother often reminded her, and adds an autobiographical dimension to the work, connecting it to the moment her life began. Civera uses painting to reflect on the passage of time, starting from that initial moment, from personal and subjective experience.

Her artistic approach involves a confluence of abstraction and figuration to construct visual narratives revolving around experiences and emotions. *Two in the Afternoon* comes from the stage in Civera's development when, having settled in New York in the late 1980s, she began to explore geometric forms and understated compositions in smaller formats, occasionally adopting a discreet, almost miniscule scale. Deciding to use linear abstraction to represent an experience as intimate as birth underscores the artist's commitment to experimenting with the potential of non-figurative language to express the personal. Through abstraction, the artist is able to transcend individual experience to evoke universal ideas about motherhood, femininity, and time. Combining geometric elements like the circle and straight lines with looser, more gestural strokes shapes the composition and reinforces the

sense of temporality. The motif of the circle recurs throughout Civera's work and takes on particular significance in *Two in the Afternoon*. Its repetition creates a rhythm and cadence that seem to allude to the intertwining of past, present, and future, evoking the cyclical nature of time and change as the only constant.

Two in the Afternoon thus fits within a broader theme of Civera's, where the idea of the circularity of time is central. The artist has emphasized this particular conception of time throughout her career, both in her visual work and in her statements, even naming one of her solo exhibitions "*El tiempo es circular en el silencio* (Time is Circular in Silence)," held at the Museo Patio Herreriano (Valladolid, Spain) in 2023. The circle has been a defining element in Civera's visual vocabulary since the 1980s and has remained through successive stages. She would later opt for the tondo format in series like *Horizontes Circulares* (2017) and in pieces addressing the corporeality of women from an abstract perspective, such as *Uno (1) (sonido de útero)* [sound of the uterus, 2017]. The artist herself has confirmed that the spiral began appearing in her work during her pregnancy in the early 1980s. In *Two in the Afternoon*, the circle not only acts



as a central visual element in the composition but also seems to evoke the natural cycles of life, or perhaps the connection between different moments of existence. As in much of her work, in this piece Civera explores identity and motherhood from a female perspective. *Two in the Afternoon* invites the viewer to remember the moment of birth and the mother's role as the agent and bearer of this memory. The work speaks to the personal history of a profound connection with the maternal figure, as well as the transmission of experiences and memories through affection. [CM]

YTO BARRADA

Hourglass II, 2023

Black silk and light twill

Triangular quilting of dyed silk twill and black silk fibers

102.9 cm × 101.6 cm

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

Yto Barrada's *Hourglass II* (2023) is a textile work using black silk and naturally dyed silk. The piece is arranged geometrically with a color palette that contrasts warm shades of orange with blacks, forming paired triangles converging at their vertices. The choice of materials and use of natural dyes enhance the tactile dimension of the work, creating an interplay between the visual and the material that is essential to its interpretation. Consistently with her previous work, *Hourglass II* continues her exploration of identity, collective memory, and the cultural history of North Africa. As a multidisciplinary Franco-Moroccan artist, she has refined her artistic practice with influences from postcolonial thought, feminism, and Pan-Africanism in media such as photography, film, sculpture, and installations. This piece encapsulates her interest in microhistories, subaltern knowledge, and everyday acts of resistance.

Hourglass II was created at The Mothership, an ecofeminist art residency and research center founded by Barrada in Tangier. In this space – where artists, botanists, ecologists, and cultural agents collaborate – they hold workshops on natural dyeing and experiment with various methods of cultivating, preserving, and sharing plants and seeds. The dye in the fabrics used by Barrada in this piece comes from pigments extracted from endemic species grown in the center's garden. The piece's varying shades are achieved through a prolonged and slow pigmentation process using plants such as chamomile, madder root, and turmeric. The work thus connects color to its botanical origins, reflecting the measured pace intrinsic to the practice of cultivation and artisanal creation. In this way, in contrast to the accelerated dynamics



imposed by Western paradigms of productivity, Barrada revisits the traditional processes of the Moroccan textile industry, sustained primarily by women through the years.

As the title *Hourglass* suggests, the concept of time is central to the work, both conceptually and in terms of form. The composition's geometric patterns, influenced by the designs typical of Moroccan fabrics, evoke the figure of the hourglass, an archetypal symbol of the passage of time. This visual representation of time, along with the use of common artisanal techniques, seems to invite reflection on the transmission of ancestral knowledge that has been marginalized over the centuries, as well as an appreciation of the work of anonymous creators excluded from the Western narrative. As in previous works, Barrada addresses temporality and memory here, reminding us that personal and collective narratives may also be contained within the artistic object itself.

Barrada's use of traditional crafting processes is also an act of cultural and ecological resistance, a way of preserving and treasuring artisanal practices in a globalized world dominated by mass production and extractivism. This approach advocates for sustainability versus capitalist exploitation of natural resources, slowness versus immediacy, and connecting with nature versus feverish consumption. *Hourglass II* thus presents itself as a call to decelerate, to experience one's surroundings deliberately, and to recover an organic sense of time. The work invites us to consider not only history and memory but also the

urgency of recognizing and preserving common techniques and knowledge. Through collective experimentation, Barrada reminds us of the value of the wisdom of the past and the importance of passing it on to younger generations. Her work constitutes a meditation on the continuity and transformation of cultural practices in Morocco and how they are imbued in the flow of time. [CD]

ÁNGEL POYÓN

Imagined Place No. 2, 2022

Polyurethane and oil paint on MDF, framed in cedar wood

124 cm (diameter)

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

Imagined Place is the image of a contradiction – natural time, with its own rhythms and cycles, which defies the rigidity of timekeeping. What surrounds, frames, quantifies, and defines modern time is a boundary imposed as a system, as progress, and as success – the kind of success that drives and feeds the ego. This limitation is represented as a perfect and exact sphere governing time through mechanization of the system.

Yet within this lies the possibility of time that exists without mechanical measurement, of time governed by its own essence. *Ma't moxorik chu chomaxik* – don't go mad, live at nature's pace – the elders would tell the children who asked about the infinity of time and space. The ancient ones advised that life on Earth follows its own rhythm, so long as the moon did its part, so long as the Earth rotated on its axis.... The birds, guided by instinct, perhaps by wisdom or simply because they were free, would fly south and north, announcing the arrival or retreat of the rain.

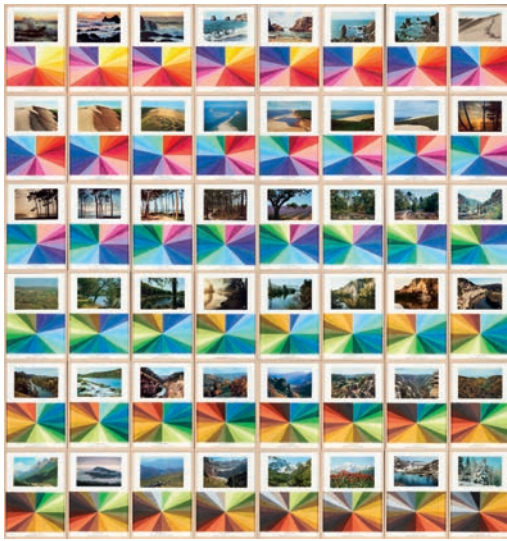
Poyón recalls that in the countryside, during the moments of planting the corn, beans, squash, chayote, and other crops, the Maya-Kaqchikel would work in silence while plowing the furrows. At the tops of the hills, among the trees, people would close their eyes to feel the breeze, sense the direction of the wind, observe the movement of the clouds and the heat; those were times when being part of the environment was an everyday occurrence. *Imagined Place* is a metaphor for natural life before the quantified limits of modernity. The birds that still fly remind us that, alongside the obsessive measurement of modern time, the time of flights and our ancestors still exists.

In the reflexive sense, the delimited domain of this piece – the bounded sphere that controls modern time – also exposes the restrictions of “national” radii or literal borders. It explores the violence directed against those who flee, enter, or exit with or without the permission of a system of law shaped by privilege and a bureaucratic



labyrinth. Immigrants/illegals, they call them. People, animals, seeds, minerals are lost; they are no longer where they were born and grew up; their lives are spent far away; the only contact with the land where their roots and umbilical cords still remain happens through screens, from a distance – and seeing each other is merely a contemplation of memory, from afar, a present accompanied remotely, a future where returning is an wish, perhaps down a road from which there is no going back.

The flight of the *azacuanes* (a species of migratory raptors) reminds us that once, the land had no owners; people rotated the land for cultivation because “the land gets tired,” they used to say. Birds, insects, people, and the wind exchanged knowledge and seeds as a natural everyday occurrence; now, sharing the life of seeds is illegal. A reflection that Poyón offers is: “What put us on the illegal side of history? What would have become of the lands and their peoples if colonization had not happened?” Hence, the *Imagined Place*: imagining the possible, dreaming, dying, and being reborn every day while we dream, “because they haven’t been able to colonize our dreams, *kuxlan a wanima*’ – rest in the breath of life.” [MJXR]



INMACULADA SALINAS

Viral Diary, 2020

48 sheets

Colored pencil on paper, ink and postcards on paper
29.7 x 21 cm each

Acquired in 2022

Colección Banco de España

Inmaculada Salinas (b. Seville 1967) often works with standard paper formats – A4 or A3 – to create large mosaics or sequences that typically include photographs from various sources: taken from the press, from the artist's own extensive photographic archive, from art history, or by Salinas herself. These photos are integrated into her compositions through drawing or physically as collage. Many of these collages incorporate drawings – made with graphite pencils, markers, and colored pencils – whose origins, arising in many cases from art history itself, add systematic patterns that further complicate the relationship between art and productive labor.

Viral Diary (2020) is presented as an installation of 48 drawings, one for each day corresponding to the period from 15 March to 1 May 2020 – the first 48 days (of 100 in total) of the COVID-19 lockdown in Spain – during which time leaving one's home even for a walk was officially prohibited. Each drawing is accompanied by a postcard depicting a natural setting, of the sea or the mountains for, as the artist notes, "When I'm in a crisis, I'm not interested in the mundane, only in nature." The drawings dialogue with this collection of idyllic places, which at the time represented an unattainable desire. If Inmaculada Salinas' pieces are often permeated by exhaustive detail of the days on which they were created, *Viral Diary* also involves the memory of a specific historical episode, influenced by the

administrative ban on going outside imposed by the Spanish government, a situation each affected country managed differently.

From this stimulus emerges a geometric pattern of twenty-four triangles, one for each hour of the day, converging at a central vertex to form a rectangle. The color schemes are determined by the artist's box of pencils, which loses one color each day and adds a new one, distinguishing each drawing and underscoring the uniqueness of the days they represent. The dates are noted at the bottom, along with the subtitle "Besos, abrazos, caricias (kisses, hugs, caresses)," a phrase, according to the artist, inspired by *Desobediencia, por tu culpa voy a sobrevivir* (Disobedience, because of You, I Will Survive), written and published during the early weeks of the lockdown by Bolivian activist María Galindo. Additionally, Salinas highlights the crucial influence of the idea of "making love to the days" promoted by the Japanese conceptual artist On Kawara, whose practice carries on a historical correspondence with Inmaculada Salinas's work.

This piece was included in the group exhibition *Discurso de incertidumbres* (Discourse of Uncertainties) at the 1 Mira Madrid gallery from 10 September to 14 November 2020, featuring works by artists associated with the gallery that were created during the same period or with chronological links to it, as well as during other periods of productive idle time. The relationship between the temporalities of art and its historical position in contrast to capitalist unproductivity is reflected in Inmaculada Salinas' *Viral Diary*, a work that not only alludes to a now-historical event but is also temporally inscribed within it, tying its form to the very event it references. Additionally, the use of images relates to an exercise in resignification common in Salinas' work, where she draws from her extensive photographic archive (postcards, family albums, etc.), connecting it with pieces such as *Microrrelatos en rojo* (Microtales in Red, 2012), *Trabajo I* and *Trabajo II* (Work I and Work II, 2017), or others like *Recuerdo de Sevilla* (Memory of Seville, 2014) and *El Turia como ninot* (The Turia River as a Ninot, 2017), where she explores the postcard format in diverse ways. In *Viral Diary*, we encounter a series of views that, when decontextualized, might seem devoid of political purpose. However, chosen at that moment, they take on a completely different meaning. Similarly, the decision to include an inscription like "kisses, hugs, caresses" introduces the presence of a hand that not only executes but, above all, feels and expresses itself.

Viral Diary features in the monograph Inmaculada Salinas completed in 2021, which was published by the Instituto de la Cultura y las Artes de Sevilla as part of the exhibition *Memoria del presente*, curated by Joaquín Vázquez, at the Atín Aya Hall (2020). [ACU]

MANUEL CHAVAJAY

Untitled, 2023

From the series *K'o q'ij ne t'i'lto' ja juyu' t'aq'aaj*
Used marine and automotive motor oil, watercolor,
and embroidery on cotton paper
100 cm x 107 cm
Acquired in 2023
Colección Banco de España

What we see here is a moment experienced, a fleeting instant just before dawn or right after the sun has set – what one might observe when traveling away from the lake in the early hours, or when approaching it. It's a perspective of movement, of transition. A clarity found at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, perhaps in summer, or maybe during the rainy season. The landscape along the road is composed of mountains sacrificed so that human life can move faster, mountains split and cut to build highways, to pass through. The systems of rapid mobilization inflict harm on life. "Humans harm life, causing damage is part of our everyday existence. What comes next? What more harm will we inflict?" reflects Chavajay.

The black substance that drips over the watercolors in this piece is used oil – used oil that alters the landscape, much like modern daily life. The impact on the landscape is the intervention of something unnatural. The dripping is intentional, but how it flows over the paper is unplanned. "It's like the process of industrialization: the process pollutes the air and its very existence contaminates life. We create it and it comes back to us: the damage is returned, nothing disappears," says the artist.

The moon appears within the gloom, at the beginning or the end of the day. Its roundness is never complete in any of Chavajay's pieces – it's always missing a stitch, a knot, or has too much thread; visually, it represents the prospect of what is permissible and feasible, a hope that never fully believes in a chance. The unfinished roundness of



the embroidered moon alludes to the 20-day lunar calendar system with 13 numbers, a 260-day cycle. The embroidered moon appearing in Chavajay's works symbolizes a dream he envisioned, "or maybe it's the other way around," he muses. It's a tribute to the experience of Grandmother Moon, who forever weaves and embroiders time, who plays with the tides of the sea and of Lake Atitlán.

Watching Grandmother Moon as she embroiders time, while the lake plays with the full or new moon, is a moment that Manuel Chavajay reclaims with his family. Together with his wife and children, they welcome the Moon in its various phases with incense, petals, and candles. On the day of *imox*, the "lunar day of water," they offer incense, petals, and candles to the lake and to the Moon.

"The Moon is always there, but we only see it partially, or not at all. It's hidden by the mist, concealed by the rain – it appears, it's there, or it's not. Our eyes have a capacity that no camera can capture; observing the Moon is an experience that allows us to understand the rhythm of nature. The presence of the Moon is a conjunction of things, of moments, of clouds, beings, wind, and water," says Chavajay. This work was exhibited at Arco Madrid in 2023. [mjxr]

PIETER VERMEERSCH

Untitled, 2014

Oil on canvas

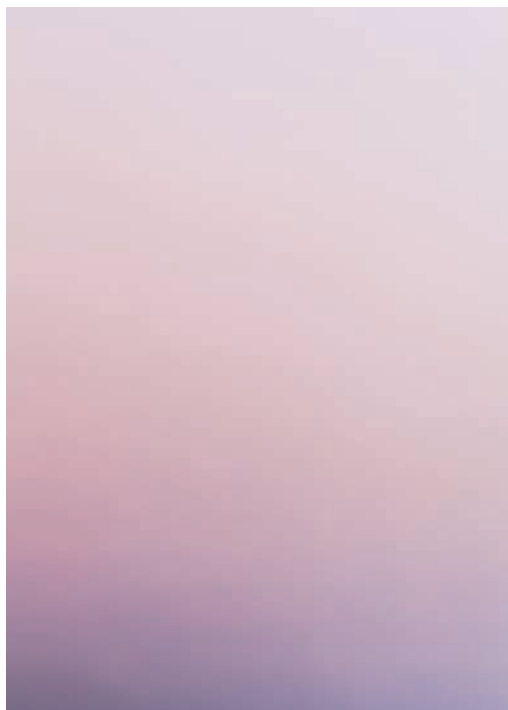
230 x 170 cm

Acquired in 2014

Colección Banco de España

Pieter Vermeersch is a Belgian artist known for his meticulous explorations of color and light in abstract paintings and large-scale compositions. *Untitled* is one such large-format work distinguished by a gradient of muted, ethereal colors that seem to evoke the sky at dawn. The painting is a vertical field of color that gradually shifts from pinkish to bluish hues. This effect is achieved through a systematic painting technique inspired by photography, with mechanical reproduction as a practical prerequisite, resulting in a personal style that the artist describes as "hyperrealistic abstraction." Vermeersch's signature gradient not only demonstrates his technical mastery but also creates a visual experience that invites deliberate consideration of time. The smooth transition of colors fosters a contemplative, even meditative, feeling, compelling the viewer to pause and reflect on the nature of time.

Vermeersch's works may fall within a tradition that traces back to the experiments with light and color of the Impressionists, yet also possess a contemporary sensibility close to the mathematical. Each of his paintings is an



attempt to capture the behavior of light and its interaction with real space. In his *Untitled* series, to which this piece belongs, each canvas recreates a photograph taken at a different exposure, in a meticulous study of light and time. Thus, his work, though seemingly informal, alludes to the dialectic between abstraction and representation, autonomy and contingency. In his gradations of color, the artist achieves a synthesis of these dichotomies, creating images that are simultaneously abstract and representational, autonomous and spatially dependent.

The photographic image that the artist transfers to the canvas ceases to be frozen in time and tied to the moment it was captured. By reproducing it on the pictorial plane, Vermeersch seeks to endow it with an absolute dimension of time and, in a sense, to liberate it.¹ Temporality is therefore central to the work, as it is to the process of creation. The methodical technique of applying layers of color to achieve the perfect gradient often extends over several hours and requires almost monastic concentration. Vermeersch himself has often highlighted the ritualistic and self-sacrificial aspects of his work, emphasizing the physicality and concentration required to avoid errors in color mixing. *Untitled* reveals the importance of time in the very act of painting.

The monochrome fading appears as if a prolonged, organic, photosensitive process had actually taken place on the canvas. The absence of a focal point in Vermeersch's gradations forces the observer's gaze to move continuously across

the surface of the work, to engage in an act of observing that is both physical and temporal. The transition of colors creates an immersive sensory effect that goes beyond the merely visual. *Untitled* evokes a specific time of day, dawn, which prompts the viewer to experience the sensations that accompany that moment. Thus, the piece is not just a work to be seen but a temporal experience that calls for complete engagement and contemplation. [cd]

1. Pieter Vermeersch, "Pieter Vermeersch: The Importance of Matter," interview by Mechteld Jungerius, *TL Magazine*, January 17, 2021. <https://tlmagazine.com/pieter-vermeersch-the-importance-of-matter/>

JAVIER NÚÑEZ GASCO

Open Sea: Phygital Experience, 2024

Digital prints on Hahnemühle paper 360 gsm and NFC microchips bonded to paper

111 x 66.6 cm

Acquired in 2024

Colección Banco de España

Technology permeates our daily lives, often unnoticed, as we engage in activities supported by blockchain, make contactless payments with our mobile devices thanks to NFC technology, or transfer financial assets through tokenization. What has been playing out in the world of business and finance has also been emerging in the realm of art. Until recently, NFTs were driven primarily by aesthetic ambitions but even more by speculative cravings. Once more the market and money devoured art, driven by a base impulse for profit. However, art is more than just money, more than just market value. Good art is a catalyst for social transformation, a condensation of ideas and emotions capable of stirring minds to independent thought. This is the kind of art we need now more than ever, and regardless of its physical owner, its symbolic power is shared as common heritage.

Starting from this premise, Javier Núñez Gasco has been working quietly on a new paradigm of artistic creation for years, remixing art, the market, and technology in a different manner. His ability to imagine new approaches, blending languages and creating his own conceptual frameworks, has been a constant in his artistic career.

Open Sea is a phygital artwork based on Web 3.0, meaning it is both a physical and digital piece representing the passage of time over the course of a day, depicted through a large-scale animated sea whose ownership is decentralized. The physical work displayed here has been acquired by the Banco de España as part of its extensive and select collection. However, it is also the first piece in the collection to achieve the status of a financial asset. This means that, beyond its physical ownership, the digital aspect of the work will continue to generate financial traffic through the acquisition of

its digital segments, divided into the 1,440 minutes of a day.

The physical piece is activated through NFC tags and contactless technology: by bringing our mobile device close, we can access the digital content as augmented reality, and even purchase the fragments we want through the Opensea online platform. These new economic interrelations are built on blockchain technology and the tokenization of physical and digital works. A key aspect is the reliability provided by blockchain in securing links that will never change, enhancing traceability as to authorship, location, and potential royalties for the artist from the second and subsequent sales. Smart contracts also come into play, functioning as programs stored on a blockchain that execute when predetermined conditions are met. These are used to automate the execution of an agreement, ensuring all participants can be sure immediately of the outcome, without any intermediaries. Having accurate location information on artworks is essential, as we lose track of many works over time, complicating their study or exhibition.

Open Sea also serves as a reminder that this ever-moving tide is an alarm, an environmental call to action, as rising sea levels will have profound consequences for life on the planet. On the IDObject platform, we can see how, in a sense, our time is measured by the drops falling from the melting glaciers, like the ticking doomsday clock of humanity. [JLPP]

CHEMA MADOZ

Untitled, 2009

Black-and-white photograph on baryta paper toned with sulfide

60 x 50 cm

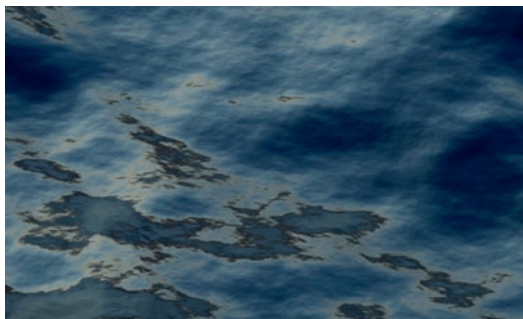
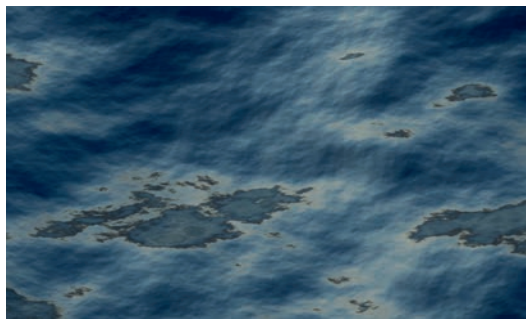
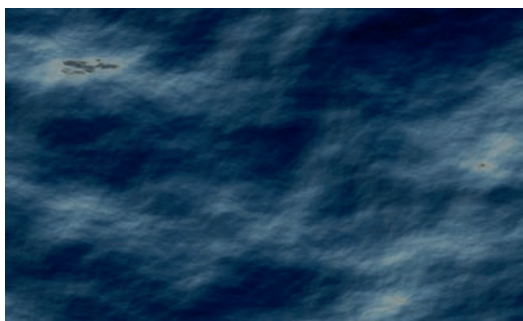
Ed. 2/15

Acquired in 2021

Colección Banco de España

Employing a sort of surrealist poetics in which objects are presented unadorned and plainly to evoke a sense of estrangement, Chema Madoz's photography reveals openly the fiction of its staging, which involves the alteration or juxtaposition of objects. His works begin with recognizable signifiers that ultimately generate new meanings through visual metaphors. Madoz's artistic imaginary is nourished by both visual poetry such as the *greguería* (aphorisms) of Ramón Gómez de la Serna and the assisted readymades of Marcel Duchamp.

In this piece, the image resulting from the combination of two elements carries a whiff of the tautological, for at work here is not the transformation of one object into another by displacement or the fusion of two objects into a third. On the contrary, the viewer's gaze swings ("pendulates," one might say) between two foci that share the same name and function: one clock and another clock, a wall clock turned into an hourglass and vice versa. It seems that the passage of one time (one of the two at play





in the work) has prevented the progress of the other, as the pendulum has been stopped by the weight of the sand from the other clock (could they both be the same?). The fact that the sand is sloped transports this mixed object into the realm of landscape: the natural curvature of the sand behind the glass evokes an encapsulated dune. Recently, as an introduction to his solo exhibition “En torno al tiempo” or “Regarding Time” (Centro Cultural Gran Capitán de Granada, 2023), Madoz displayed the modified object that is central to this work, thus highlighting the roots of his process in the manipulation of the everyday, while also clearly distinguishing between the physicality of the objects that populate his studio

and their entry into an aestheticized, timeless, and dreamlike state of some black-and-white photography.

The theme of time and the presence of the clock as a modified object or as a victim of ironic appropriation are recurring motifs in Madoz's work. In this regard, his book *Tempo Madoz*, is notable, with its introduction by Arturo Leyte revealingly titled: “Can Time Be Photographed?” In other works, time is more subtly present through its imaginary effect on an object, often defying temporal and physical laws, which do not seem to have left their expected impression on the photographed scene. In terms of the literal object of the clock and its components (hands, dials, movements), numerous photographs by Madoz, while not constituting a series, do end up spinning a thematic thread. These include images such as *Reloj de arena* or *Hourglass* (1997), in which an ant appears to have fallen with the last grain of sand, completing its futile task of building an anthill; *Reloj lápida* or *Tombstone Clock* (2004), in which the sand, with the placing of a small cross, becomes a modest grave; and *Sin título* or *Untitled*, where the pages of a partially open book form a myriad of hands marking the time on a clock.

The latter image brings together the two objects featured in the two photographs by Madoz held in the Colección Banco de España: the first is the double wall clock and hourglass in this text; the second, *Sin título* (2011), shows four books by Carlos Fuentes that have been violently punched out to spell the word “BOOK” – one of these volumes is *El mal del tiempo* (The Affliction of Time). Thus, the artist's body of work underscores the presence of time in the Colección Banco de España, from its iconic façade clock to the extensive holdings of other types of clocks, which find an ironic counterpoint in the suspended time of Madoz's photography. [CM]

THE TY OF CHF

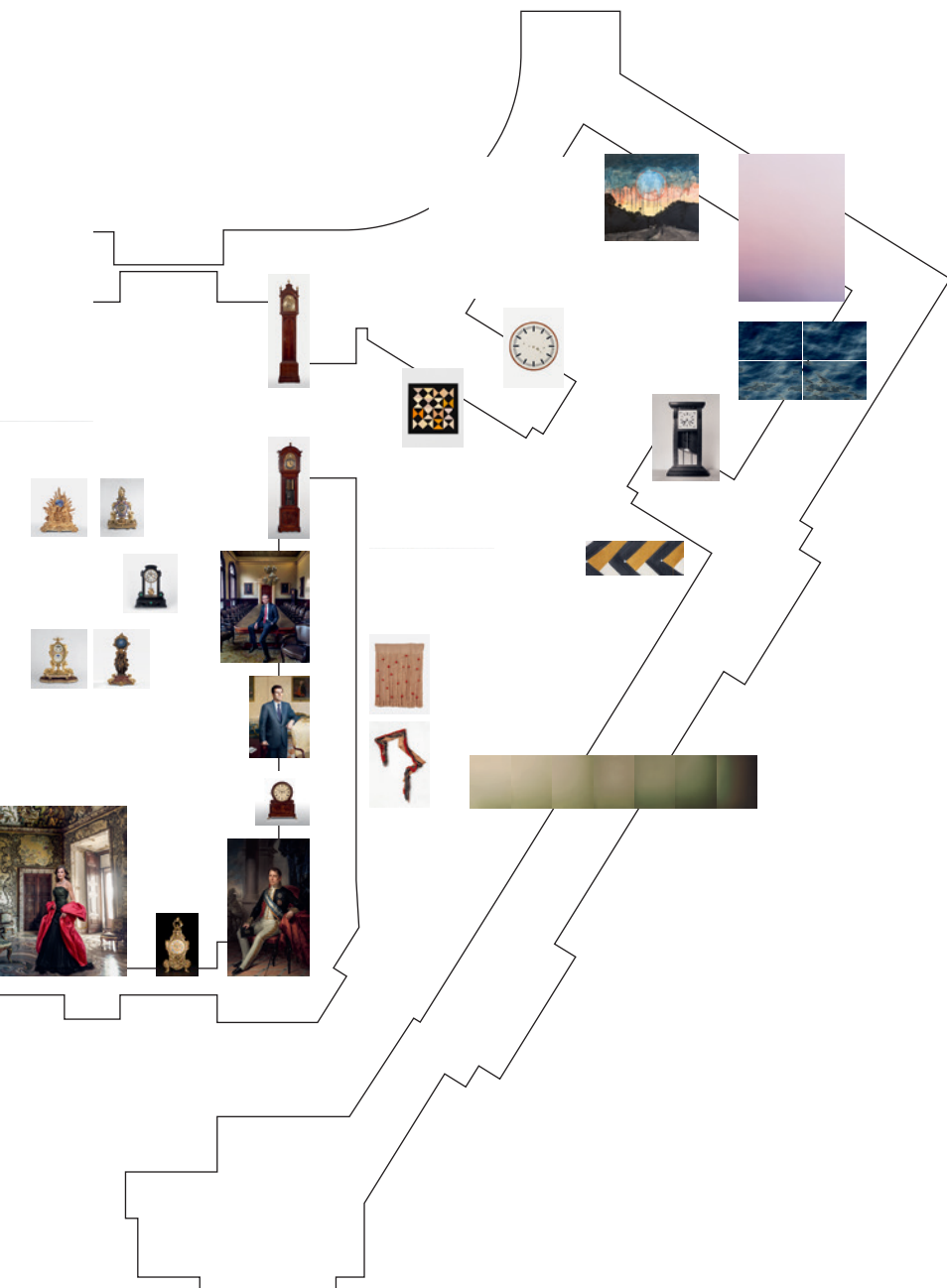
I HAVE NO TIME

THREADING PORTRA



ITS THROUGH TIME

A TIME WITHOUT CLOCKS



Art Commentaries

Clara Derrac [CD]
 José María Díaz Cuyás [JMDc]
 Ángel Calvo Ulloa [ACU]
 Ferrán Barenblit [FB]
 Carlos Martín [CM]
 Yolanda Romero Gómez [YRG]
 José María Moreno Martín [JMMM]
 Manuela Mena [MM]
 Amelia Aranda Huete [AAH]
 Alfonso Pérez Sánchez [APS]
 Carlos González Navarro [CGN]
 Julián Gállego Serrano [JGS]
 María Jacinta Xón Riquiac [MXR]
 José Luis Pérez Pont [JLPP]
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 VEGAP, Madrid, 2024

COVER IMAGE

Raqs Media Collective

The Ecliptic, 2014

Colección Banco de España

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