

Les Citoyens

Guillermo Kuitca on the collection of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

May, 6 – September 12, 2021
Triennale Milano

With the works of: Absalon (Israel), Claudia Andujar (Brazil), Richard Artschwager (USA), Cai Guo-Qiang (China), Vija Celmins (Latvia), Thomas Demand (Germany), Fernell Franco (Colombia), David Hammons (USA), Hu Liu (China), Junya Ishigami (Japan), Rinko Kawauchi (Japan), Guillermo Kuitca (Argentina), David Lynch (USA), Allan McCollum (USA), Isabel Mendes da Cunha (Brazil), Moebius (France), Moke (Democratic Republic of Congo), Daido Moriyama (Japan), Tony Oursler (USA), Artavazd Peleshyan (Armenia), George Rouy (England), Patti Smith (USA), Taniki (Brazil), Agnès Varda (France), Véo (Brazil), José Vera Matos (Peru), Virxilio Vieitez (Spain), Francesca Woodman (USA).

Triennale Milano and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain present, from May 6 to September 12, 2021, the exhibition *Les Citoyens* created by Guillermo Kuitca. The Argentinian artist stages the works of 28 artists from the Fondation Cartier collection to explore the idea of the collective, the group, the community. A second exhibition presented as part of the partnership between the two institutions, *Les Citoyens* proposes, through the singular gaze of an artist, a journey into the memory of a unique collection.

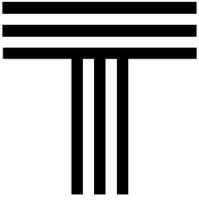
Les Citoyens, an artist's perspective

At the invitation of Triennale Milano and Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Guillermo Kuitca presents a personal selection of 120 works from the Parisian institution's collection. From his unique perspective, the Argentinian artist stages installations, paintings, sculptures, ceramics, videos, and drawings to create a cosmogony composed of works, artists, animals, and objects where the human figure is often represented, in its relation to others and to the World. Exploring the idea of the group, the collective, the community through a wide variety of contemporary creations, most of which have never been shown in Italy, the exhibition offers the visitor a sensitive and surprising journey, rich in new aesthetic encounters.

“The exhibition does not present anything homogeneous: it is a melting pot, a polyphony of elements and voices. It is about what is a community in the broad sense of the word, about the uncentered democratic aspect of all the works and the works in relation to each other.” Guillermo Kuitca

Les Citoyens is a comprehensive creation, an exhibition-work for which Guillermo Kuitca signs not only the choice of the works, but also their spatial setting in resonance with the architecture of Triennale and his own pictorial universe. Shaped by the artist, the exhibition becomes a creation in itself.

“It is interesting that this exhibition takes place in the building of Triennale Milano, a place that has opened the road to design. At some point of the project, when I was trying to design these spaces and to give an identity to the show, I also thought that being in Milan, a city where there is such an eye for design, could be inspiring, challenging, and somehow intimidating. I like to think that *Les Citoyens* is an act of design as much as an act of love”. Guillermo Kuitca



As the second project presented within the framework of the partnership between Triennale Milano and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, this exhibition is also an opportunity for both institutions to highlight the central role of art and design collections, the importance of preserving memory in order to think about the future.

Ensembles, constellations, groups and communities

"The exhibition is a community of artists that gather together around their work to create a work of art". Guillermo Kuitca

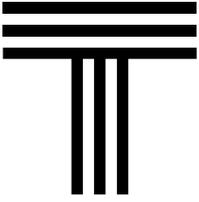
Through the eyes of an artist looking at his contemporaries, *Les Citoyens* invites us to follow a path where ideas of ensembles and constellations, of groups and communities harmonize with one another. A cosmogony of works, artists, animals and objects, the exhibition resembles a "solar system without sun", according to Guillermo Kuitca, who thinks of a journey without theme, center or hierarchy, but made of connections that "weave a network of senses and sensations". Thus, he brings the monumental drawings of **Cai Guo Qiang** closer to the film of **Artavazd Peleshyan**, which evokes a communion of animals whose vulnerability echoes the abstract presence of man in **Fernell Franco's** photographs or the miniature society in the sculptures by **Véio**. Other works carry this omnipresent idea of constellations. The work of **Agnès Varda**, in its spatial device, echoes videos on an all-ages community of women; and chairs that invite visitors to gather in a fortuitous group of viewers.

The gaze is also addressed in the installation by **Tony Oursler** which plunges the visitor into a forest of shamanic spirits. Or with the photographs of **Daido Moriyama**, who immerses the viewer in his studio through an installation made up of a multitude of polaroids. Immersion again in the 3D universe of the film by **Moebius**, who takes the human community to a new planet.

If the human figure is often present in the works chosen by **Guillermo Kuitca**, as in the groups painted by **Moke** or **George Rouy**, or shaped by **Isabel Mendes da Cunha**, it has a silent character, a sort of presence-absence which resonates with more abstract ensembles such as the works of **Richard Artschwager**, **Absalon**, **José Vera Matos** or **Thomas Demand**. Abstraction and dissolving bodies are also present in the photographs of **Francesca Woodman** and the nudes by **David Lynch**, or found in the drawings of the Yanomami artist **Taniki**.

The works of **Rinko Kawauchi** and **Virxilio Vieitez** evoke the universal idea of the family unit and the community of individuals and multiple temporalities that constitute it. With **David Hammons**, **Junya Ishigami**, **Allan McCollum**, **Vija Celmins**, **Hu Liu**, **Guillermo Kuitca** plays on the idea of combinations of elements, entities, units, on repetition and singularity, the whole and fragmentation.

A choral work merging the worlds of **Guillermo Kuitca**, **David Lynch** and **Patti Smith**, the installation *David's living-room revisited* (2014-2020) is emblematic of the idea of community that is the leitmotif of the exhibition *Les Citoyens*. Like the photographs by **Claudia Andujar** at the end of the journey, which bring to mind the exhibition previously presented in these same spaces, it embodies the spirit of the Fondation Cartier and the ongoing conversation the institution has had for nearly 40 years with the artists.



The collection, memory of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain

The Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is a private cultural institution whose mission is to promote contemporary art to the international public through a program of temporary exhibitions, live performances, and lectures. Created in 1984 by the Maison Cartier, its historic center is located in Paris in a building designed by the architect Jean Nouvel, a creative space for artists and encounters with the public.

The exhibition *Les Citoyens* reflects the richness and uniqueness of its collection. Initiated with the institution's creation, it now includes more than 2000 works by 500 artists of 50 different nationalities and is distinguished by the singularity of the principles that guide its development each year. The vast majority of the collection is made up of works presented as part of the Fondation Cartier's programming and commissioned by the institution to artists. Reflecting its history, its programming choices, and its openness to the world in all its diversity, it retraces nearly 40 years of international contemporary creation, from African painting to Japanese and Bolivian architecture, from Italian design to the drawings of Amazonian artists, from the masters of American photography to young European visual artists.

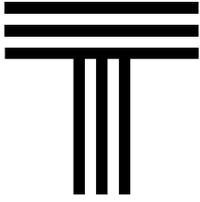
With *Les Citoyens*, Guillermo Kuitca marks the third chapter of his history with the collection inaugurated in Paris in 2014 with the exhibition *Les Habitants*. He revealed its spirit and distinctiveness, highlighting its close links with multiple geographies. In 2017, the Fondation invited him to write the sequel of the story in Buenos Aires with the exhibition *Les Visitants* presented at the CCK. For this second opus, he articulated the journey in a series of monographs, highlighting another feature of the collection that brings together large groups of works, substantiating the long-term relationship that the Fondation establishes with the artists. With *Les Citoyens*, Guillermo Kuitca has chosen as leitmotif for the exhibition the idea of community, playing throughout the spaces of Triennale Milano on the relationships between the works, the energy that unites them, the phrasing that articulates them. In a path conceived as a polyphony of works and voices, the exhibition offers, through the eyes of the artist, a journey into the memory of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain.

Guillermo Kuitca, a major figure of the contemporary art scene

Born in 1961 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he lives and works, Guillermo Kuitca began painting at an early age and had his first solo exhibition in 1974. In the 1980s, he developed a series of themes - architecture, theater, cartography - which have since then become the major focus of his work. Theater scenes, blueprints of theaters, road maps, pieces of furniture, compose a personal geography associating public spaces and intimate spheres, physical, mental or emotional territories.

His career has been punctuated by solo exhibitions in the most prestigious international institutions, from the Museum of Modern Art (New York, 1991) to the IVAM (Valencia, 1993), the Whitechapel Gallery (London, 1995), the Centro Municipal de Arte Hélio Oiticica (Rio de Janeiro, 1999), the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, 2003), and the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo (2014). The artist represented Argentina at the Venice Biennale in 2007. In 2021, he presents two solo exhibitions at LaM in Villeneuve d'Ascq (France) and at the Museo Tamayo (Mexico City).

Guillermo Kuitca's relationship with the Fondation Cartier dates back to the exhibition Guillermo Kuitca, *Œuvres récentes* presented in Paris in 2000. In 2014, 2017, and 2021, the Fondation Cartier entrusted him with three major exhibition



Triennale Milano

Fondation *Cartier*
pour l'art contemporain

projects based on its collection: *Les Habitants* (Paris, 2014), *Les Visitants* (Buenos Aires, 2017) and *Les Citoyens* (Milan, 2021).

Triennale Milano / Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain Partnership

Triennale Milano and the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain initiated an eight-year partnership in 2019, to present together a program of exhibitions, lectures and live performances in the spaces of Palazzo dell'Arte in Milan.

Following *Claudia Andujar, The Yanomami Struggle*, which inaugurated this collaboration in October 2020, *Les Citoyens*, Guillermo Kuitca on the collection of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain is the second exhibition presented as part of this partnership. This exhibition is an opportunity for the two institutions to converge on one of the themes that drives them, the central role of art and design collections and the need to preserve the memory of the future.

In October 2021, Triennale Milano and Fondation Cartier will present the first solo exhibition in Italy of French filmmaker and photographer Raymond Depardon, *La Vita Moderna*.

Related events

To accompany the exhibition, Triennale Milano and Fondation Cartier will organize a number of special events including concerts, meetings with the artists, lectures and guided tours.

The catalog

On the occasion of the exhibition, Triennale Milano and Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain publish a richly illustrated catalog, conceived in close collaboration with Guillermo Kuitca. This bilingual Italian and English catalog of 316 pages presents the works by the 28 artists of the exhibition.

Practical Information

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