

## Playgrounds. Reinventing the square



Palle Nielsen, A group of activists from different organisations in Denmark cleared a backyard in Stengade 52 in the area Nørrebro in Copenhagen the 31 of March 1968 and build a playground for the children instead. This was done to create attention of the lack of playgrounds as well as an overall redevelopment of the area.

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**DATES:** 30<sup>th</sup> April - 22<sup>th</sup> September 2014

**PLACE:** Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid)  
Sabatini building. Room A1

**ORGANIZATION:** Exhibition organized by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

**CURATOR:** Manuel Borja-Villel, Teresa Velázquez and Tamara Díaz

**SCIENTIFIC  
COMITEE:** Lars Bang Larsen, Beatriz Colomina, Marcelo Expósito,  
João Fernandes y Rodrigo Pérez de Arce

**COORDINATOR:** Tamara Díaz, Beatriz Jordana and Rocío Robles

Adopting as its premise the notion of carnival pageantry as a practice that alters the established order, the exhibition *Playgrounds. Reinventing the square* will explore the **collective dimension of play** and the need for a “ground” of its own in order to engage in the construction of a new public arena.

Playgrounds (curated by Manuel J. Borja-Villel, Tamara Díaz & Teresa Velázquez) takes **a historical and artistic approach to the space reserved for play** and its socializing, transgressive and political potential from the dawn of modernity to the present day.

The show to be seen at the Museo Reina Sofía aims to explore the recreational, playful, festive side of life that puts the humdrum reality of the everyday on hold, subverting, reinventing and transcending it for one fleeting moment.

With approximately 300 works in several formats (painting, sculpture, facilities, video, photography, graphical arts, cinema and documents) of artists like **James Ensor, Francisco of Goya, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Helen Levitt, Alberto Giacometti, Ángel Ferrant, Hélio Oiticica, Lina Bo Bardi, Fischli and Weiss, Vito Acconci, Priscila Fernandes, or Xabier Rivas**, *Playgrounds. Reinventing the square* shows how the *playful element*, understood as creative strategy, coexists with questions related to the public sphere. Departing from this idea, the exhibition explores the recognition of the time and the space of the game as areas of essay and learning.

The introduction to the exhibition will provide background on the carnivalesque concept of life, underscoring certain aspects related to the notion of free time in modern life. **The show will also revisit the street as a place of play** and self-realization, through examples of adventure playgrounds as well as photographs and films that will give a historic panoramic since the 1930s from a documentary perspective.

The nucleus of the exhibition is devoted to the model of the modern playground and its contradictions, with relevant materials accounting for the urban revolution of the 1960s, the consideration of the city as a relational and psychological construction and works that parallel aesthetic and political transformations.

The last section of the show will consist of a series of experiments based on anti-hegemonic exercises, such as the civil appropriation of the street for “playground” use and works that challenge passive recreation through the emancipative power of play, not to mention recent experiences that resume the collective reinvention of the square and have become essential in envisioning new ways of doing politics.

**For further information:**

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