

## Wifredo Lam



WIFREDO LAM  
*Nativité*, 1947  
Óleo sobre lienzo  
218,4 x 110,5 cm  
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía

- DATES:** April 5 - August 15, 2016
- PLACE:** Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. Sabatini Building, Floor 1
- ORGANIZATION:** Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne in collaboration with Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and Tate Gallery
- CURATORSHIP:** Catherine David (Centre Pompidou / Musée national d'art moderne) and Manuel Borja-Villel (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía)
- COORDINATION:** Belén Díaz de Rábago and Carolina Bustamante
- EXHIBITION TOUR:** Centre Pompidou, Paris (September 30, 2015 – February 15, 2016)  
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (April 5 – August 15, 2016)  
Tate Modern, London (September 14, 2016 – January 8, 2017)

The retrospective on the Cuban painter **Wifredo Lam** (Sagua La Grande, 1902 – Paris, 1982) responds to a general desire to give an account of modernism in all its complexity, and aims to reinstate Lam’s work in an international art history of which he is an essential player. The exhibition not only returns to the genesis of his work but also surveys the various phases and the conditions of the progressive reception and integration of an oeuvre patiently built up between Spain, Paris and Marseilles, and Cuba.

The Museo Reina Sofía dedicated an exhibition in 1992 to Lam’s pictorial work. The current retrospective traces the artist’s singular career through about 250 paintings, drawings, engravings and ceramics, together with over 300 documents including letters, photographs, journals and books. This material illuminates the context of his work and thought, with special attention paid to his years in Spain (1923-1938), the engravings of the sixties and seventies, his collaborations with the leading writers of his time, and the major works created upon his return to his native Cuba (1940-1950). The result is a definitive account of a committed life in a turbulent century.

Some very rarely seen works have been retrieved for the Madrid show. Located in Spain after the artist’s death, they bear witness to a long and difficult apprenticeship during the fifteen years he spent in this country. His formal eclecticism recalls fin-de-siècle and Expressionist aesthetics as well as late Cubism, and it feeds on the transnational “syntax” that artists adopted around the world in the 1920s and 1930s in attempting to challenge or transform dominant forms and orders.

### **Catalogue**

A catalogue of the exhibition has been published. The Spanish edition includes essays by Catherine David, Kobena Mercer and Paula Barreiro, an anthology of texts on Wifredo Lam, and a complete biography by Jean-Louis Paudrat. The edition contains reproductions of many of the works on view only in Madrid.

#### **For further information:**

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