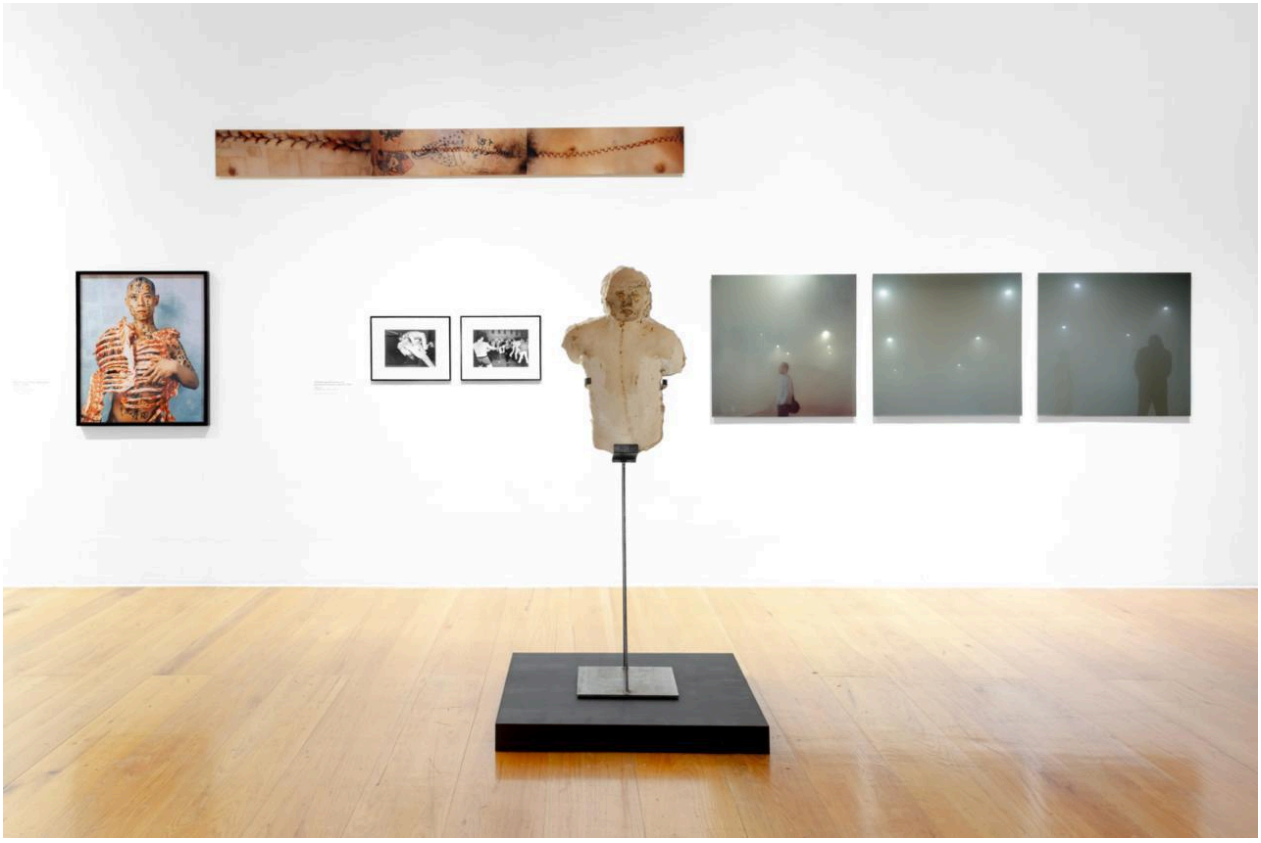
CUERPO, PERFORMANCE Y ACCIÓN:
OBRAS DE LA COLECCIÓN HIRMAS
(BODY, PERFORMANCE, AND ACTION:
WORKS FROM THE HIRMAS COLLECTION)



Installation view of ***Cuerpo, performance y acción: obras de la colección Hirmas (Body, Performance, and Action: Works from the Hirmas Collection)***. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey (MARCO), 2026. Photograph by Arthur Mora.

- **The exhibition brings together six decades of artistic practices centered on corporeality, featuring 71 works by 46 artists and two collectives.**
- **The selection highlights the genealogy of performance art, an artistic discipline that emerged in the 20th century and has influenced contemporary art**
- **The exhibition will be on view at MARCO from Saturday, November 7, 2026, through Sunday, April 4, 2027.**

The Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey (MARCO) presents ***Cuerpo, performance y acción: obras de la colección Hirmas (Body, Performance, and Action: Works from the Hirmas Collection)***, an exhibition that explores the body as a site of political and aesthetic contestation.

According to curator Virginie Kastel, “the exhibition stems from an interest in understanding how the body, through performative action, demonstrates its critical power in the face of mechanisms of power that seek to regulate and discipline it. In this sense, performance and action persist as practices of resistance against the various forms of repression exerted on bodies.”

This is the first exhibition to be organized around this private collection, which is considered one of the most important in Mexico. Boris Hirmas began building his collection more than two decades ago, and works from it have been featured in various exhibitions at museums in Mexico, including the Tamayo Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, as well as internationally, at the Reina Sofía Museum and the Venice Biennale. From its inception, the collection has focused on contemporary art and has consistently benefited from the guidance of experts. One of them was the prominent curator and art critic Osvaldo Sánchez (1958–2025), who introduced the collector to performance art.

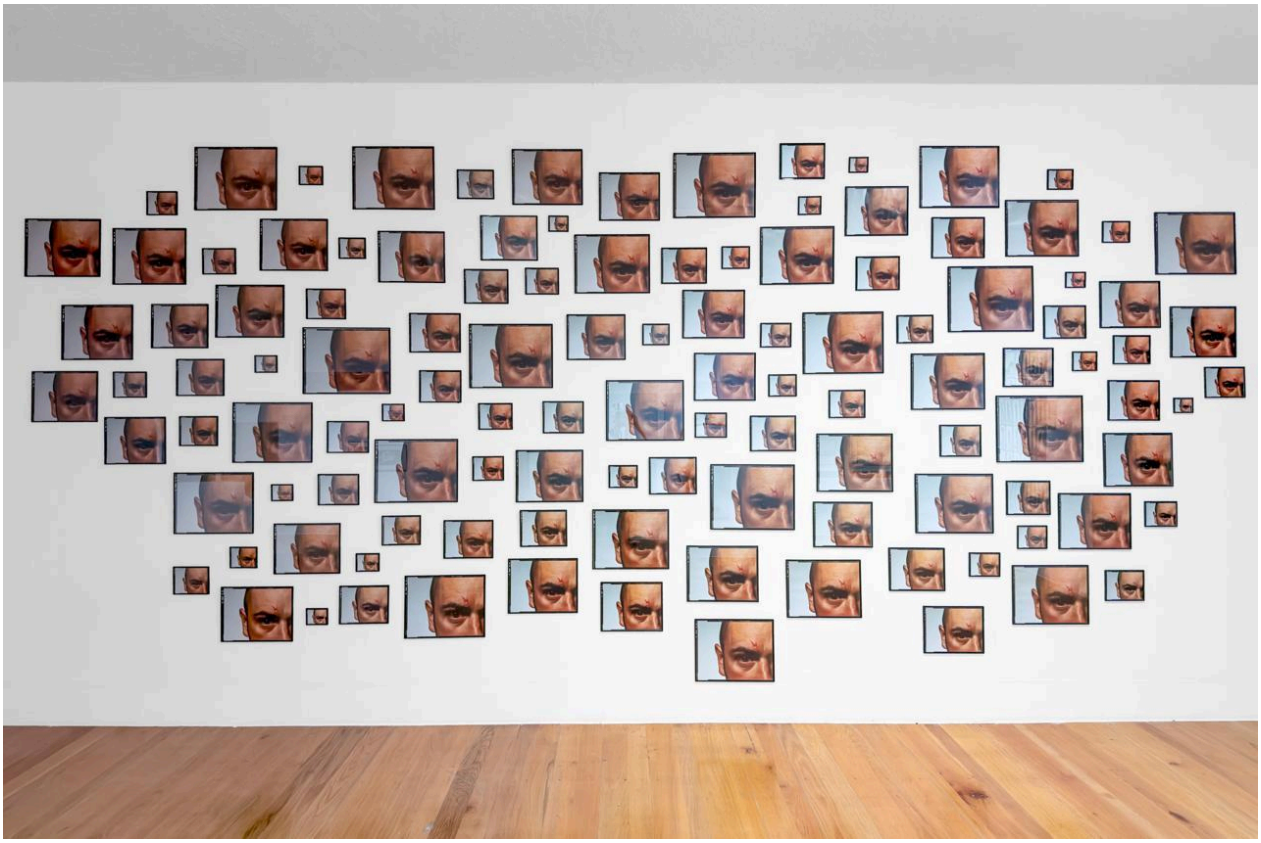
For Hirmas, works of art, especially this selection, help the public understand today’s world because they reflect society and everyday life across different eras and contain political and historical elements.

The exhibition reveals the collection’s particular interest in practices related to corporeality. Rather than following a chronological order, it takes a historiographical approach, bringing together 70 works created over six decades, from the 1960s to more recent productions.

The selection includes key figures in contemporary art, ranging from historically significant artists such as Yves Klein, Günter Brus, Carolee Schneemann, Anthony McCall, Hermann Nitsch, Rudolf Schwarzkogler, VALIE EXPORT, Marina Abramović, Oleg Kulik, Vito Acconci, Paul McCarthy, Judy Chicago, Robert Longo, Ana Mendieta, Tunga, Lara Favaretto, Teresa Margolles, Santiago Sierra, Carlos Amorales, Melanie Smith, Alfredo Jaar, entre otros. También están presentes nuevas generaciones de artistas, como Carlos Martiel, Enrique López Llamas, Erik Tlaseca, Seba Calfuqueo and Diego Vega Solorza to emerging voices.

“Performance art is a practice that speaks to human freedom, identity, and fragility. It also challenges norms and impositions, questioning conventions through transgression. Thus, performance artists seek exercises in critical interpretation,” reflects Kastel.

“I believe that contemporary art has evolved into its current forms, in part, thanks to what performance artists have discovered and to their willingness to push the boundaries of tradition.”



Punishment (2000), by Douglas Gordon.Installation view of Cuerpo, performance y acción: obras de la colección Hirmas (Body, Performance, and Action: Works from the Hirmas Collection). Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey (MARCO), 2026. Photograph by Arthur Mora.

As a discipline characterized by its ephemeral nature, since the action takes place at a specific time and place, performance art is documented in the exhibition primarily through photography and video, although other types of records are also included, such as works that resulted from an action. Examples include an abstract image composed of soot and varnish on canvas by the artist Santiago Sierra, titled ***Pintura realizada por arrojafuegos núm. 17*** *(Painting Created by a Fire-Eater No. 17)*, and the work ***Drawing for Ruth and Arlene (from Compressed Women Who Yearned to Be Butterflies series)*** (1973) by Judy Chicago, a letter signed by the artist and featuring a drawing. The latter has not been exhibited before.

Although it is not organized by themes, the exhibition features informational guides that will help the public understand the discursive concepts behind the pieces. The tour begins with a series of works that reflect on “Experimentación y ruptura (Experimentation and Rupture).”

In the 1960s and 1970s, artists questioned the limits of both representation and certain concepts, such as freedom, resistance, individuality, gender, and sexuality. Yves Klein used a specific shade of blue in his works, which he patented under his own name. The exhibition features a photographic record of the iconic ***Anthropométries de l'époque bleue*** *(Anthropometries of the Blue Period)* (1960), in which the models served as "living brushes," covering themselves with Klein's fresh paint to imprint their silhouettes on the canvas. Carolee Schneemann's ***Up to and Including Her Limits*** (1976) is a performance in which the artist painted a white surface while suspended from a harness; this process was influenced by Jackson Pollock's action painting.

Next, the public will encounter a group of works addressing "Violencia y estructuras (Violence and Structures)." These are performances in which the artists focused on questioning power structures, particularly in recent decades. The works reflect economic crises, dictatorships, or historical and social events, such as Oleg Kulik's ***Mad Dog*** (1994), in which the artist behaves like a dog. In the recording of the performance he staged outside a gallery in Moscow, the artist is seen standing over a person whom he appears to have knocked to the ground. Naked and chained, the artist represents the inhumane policies of Eastern Europe in the post-Soviet era.

In a third section, the public will find works on the theme of "Territorio y construcción social (Territory and Social Construction)," where artists delve into recent concerns, for example, by questioning colonialism and its impact on Indigenous peoples, as seen in the works of Seba Calfuqueo.

On the other hand, artist Carlos Martiel addresses violent acts of racism in a performance in which his naked body is bound by a rope around his neck, and the audience holds him up to prevent him from hanging.

The exhibition will invite the audience to reflect on the body as a medium of creation, one that is simultaneously a space for questioning, a site of vulnerability before the audience, and a source of catharsis in the face of the world. It also offers an opportunity to engage with an exceptional collection and gain an up-close look at significant performance art from the 20th century and part of the 21st, especially since some of the works are held in the collections of museums and institutions abroad and are rarely seen on display.

Check the museum's hours and admission prices at: https://www.marco.org.mx/visita/.

EXHIBITION INFORMATION

Title: ***Cuerpo, performance y acción: obras de la colección Hirmas (Body, Performance, and Action: Works from the Hirmas Collection)*** | **On display:** Saturday, November 7, 2026, to Sunday, April 4, 2027 | **Museography**: MARCO | **Curator**: Virginie Kastel | **Number of works:** 70 | **Galleries**: 5, Ground Floor | **Techniques**: Photography, video, painting.

SUPPORT

The exhibition is sponsored by Bitsave. Generous support is provided by the Government of the State of Nuevo León, through the Nuevo León Ministry of Culture, as well as from the companies Arca Continental, CYDSA, FEMSA, FRISA, Xignux, and Alberto Fernández G; and also from Arte Expuesto, VivaAerobus, and V Media Group.

Press contact:

Teresa Martínez prensa@marco.org.mx

For download exhibition photos in high resolution, visit: https://www.marco.org.mx/press-kit/

ARTISTS

Alfredo Jaar (Chile, 1956)

Ana Mendieta (Cuba, 1948)

Anthony McCall (United Kingdom, 1946)

Arnulf Rainer (Austria, 1929)

Artur Żmijewski (Poland, 1966)

Boris Mikhailov (Ukraine, 1938)

Carlos Amorales (Mexico, 1970)

Carlos Leppe (Chile, 1952)

Carlos Martiel (Cuba, 1989)

Carolee Schneemann (United States, 1939)

Diego Vega Solorza (Mexico, 1981)

Douglas Gordon (United Kingdom, 1966)

Enrique López Llamas (Mexico, 1985)

Erik Tlaseca (Mexico, 1982)

Eugenio Dittborn (Chile, 1943)

Graciela Carnevale (Argentina, 1942)

Günter Brus (Austria, 1938)

Hermann Nitsch (Austria, 1938)

Judy Chicago (United States, 1939)

Lara Favaretto (Italy, 1973)

Lotty Rosenfeld (Chile, 1943)

Marina Abramović (Serbia, 1946)

Melanie Smith (United Kingdom, 1965)

Oleg Kulik (Ukraine, 1961)

Paul McCarthy (United States, 1945)

Peter Hujar (United States, 1934)

Ragnar Kjartansson (Iceland, 1976)

Raphael Montañez Ortiz (United States, 1934)

Robert Kinmont (United States, 1937)

Robert Longo (United States, 1953)

Roman Signer (Switzerland, 1938)

Rudolf Schwarzkogler (Austria, 1940)

Santiago Sierra (Spain, 1966)

Seba Calfuqueo (Chile, 1991)

Sigurður Guðmundsson (Iceland, 1942)

SUPERFLEX (Denmark, 1993) was founded in 1993 by Jakob Fenger, Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, and Rasmus Nielsen.

Tercerunquinto (Mexico, 1998) an art collective founded that year and currently made up of Gabriel Cázares and Rolando Flores.

Teresa Margolles (Mexico, 1963)

Torbjørn Rødland (Norway, 1970)

Tseng Kwong Chi (China, 1950)

Tunga (Brazil, 1952)

Ulay (Germany, 1943)

VALIE EXPORT (Austria, 1940)

Vito Acconci (United States, 1940)

Yves Klein (France, 1928)

Yvonne Venegas (Mexico, 1970)

Zhang Huan (China, 1965)