

Exhibition: **Paco Bascuñán: Design, Avant-garde and Commitment**
IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern
2nd February – 19th March 2006

Produced by: Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

Curated by: José García Casimiro

Once again, the IVAM is making room in its exhibition programme for the world of design. And this time for the work of Paco Bascuñán (Valencia, 1954) one of the most outstanding cultivators of that discipline. The exhibition includes 56 works ranging from posters, drawings and designs to models and videos, demonstrating his influence on the development of visual culture in Valencia over recent decades. The show reflects Bascuñán's rereading of the rewarding lessons of the historical avant-gardes, and his engagement with social transformations and conflicts, closely related with his own personal way of artistically intervening in the drift of his time.

Paco Bascuñán's personality is an exemplary case of the intersections between art and design, art practice and commitment, handcrafted technique and new technologies, sentimental memory and forward projection to the future. He is an artist who has learnt to establish in Valencia a totally solvent studio in the field of design, and who at the same time lends his generosity, wisdom and enthusiasm to projects which have actively contributed to transforming the visual culture of our time.

The exhibition catalogue reproduces the exhibited works, and includes essays by Felipe Garín, Antón Patiño, Guillermo Solana and Raquel Gutiérrez.

Paco Bascuñán conceives projects for all the major corporations and institutions in the Valencian Community, and manages to extend its influence outside Spain with the recognition of the prestigious Laus and Donside awards, among other distinctions. Recently, a selection of Bascuñán's works was included in *Print*, a leading design magazine in the United States. Currently, some of his works are on display in exhibitions at the Cervantes Institute in New York, and at the *300% Spanish Design* exhibition touring Japan and China.

Paco Bascuñán's theoretical reflections are rendered in practice in a number of commissions (corporate image, signage, graphics, posters, 3-D objects, stage design, multimedia animations, etc.) in which analytical thoroughness, communicational efficiency and social engagement are fused.

Within the body of work of this designer a special mention is deserved for his posters and two works in particular, synthesising the main features of his vision: his proposal for a rereading of *Die Scheuche* (The Scarecrow) by Schwitters (a symbol for imaginary generativity); and his colossal work based on the character of Ubu created by Alfred Jarry.

Paco Bascuñán was born in Valencia in 1954. He graduated from the School of Applied Arts and Crafts of Valencia in 1973, and is a member of ADCV, Association of Designers of the Comunidad Valenciana, of BEDA, The Bureau of European Designers' Associations, and also of the board of the Fundación Comunicación Gráfica (Graphic Communication Foundation).

His professional experience began in 1973. Initially in graphic design, both with commercial commissions and teaching in academic institutions. He gives papers at conferences and directs workshops in universities and foundations, and has been a jury member on many awards both here in Spain and internationally. Bascuñán regularly shows his paintings in exhibitions in various cities around Spain. In 1981 he co-founded the ENEBECE graphic design group with two other designers. In 1983 he set up the LA NAVE group together with ten graphic designers, industrial designers, architects and professionals from other disciplines until its eventual dissolution in 1991.

In 1992 he created Estudio Paco Bascuñán. He brought on board several collaborators until establishing the team he currently works with. He sometimes works in collaboration with other design studios, adding an extra dimension to the studio's commissions, covering projects in all areas of graphic design and book design (book collections for publishing houses and exhibition catalogues for museums; reports for banking institutions); corporate identity for businesses; indoor and outdoor signage (A7 motorway, museums, public organizations); multimedia; graphic design applied to temporary events (ephemeral exhibitions, booths at fairs); and the design of exhibitions and shows, which he conceives as a process in which it is possible to rationalize, yet also let his imagination run free, try out solutions and, above all else, enjoy himself and have fun.

Throughout his professional career, Paco Bascuñán has received many distinctions, including the Laus Award, A-7 Tourist Motorway, Barcelona. Work selected for the Laus Awards (publishers), Barcelona.

Another distinction is the Donside Award, Graphic Design (art catalogue), London. As well as work selected for the Laus awards (publishers), Second Prize of Tourism Posters, 1996, Valencian Tourism Agency. First Award to best graphic design applied to a sport product (aluminium water bottle for LAKEN firm) at Hispack 97- 2nd National Competition of Leaders in packaging and containers.

Levante-EMV Award, 3rd Territory and Housing Award from the most outstanding professionals from 1994-1998: Best Designer, and "Premios Letra" Technological Innovation Award, Signage for the A-7 Motorway, 2000.