



Conference

»GEGO.
PROCEDENCIA
Y ENCUENTRO«

April 7 & 8, 2022

[»Gego. Origin and Encounter«]

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

»GEGO. PROCEDENCIA Y ENCUENTRO«

The conference will take place in conjunction with the exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist« at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart.

Gego's independent artistic position was formed in an intensive confrontation with architectural practices of her time. The meaning of »origin and encounter« (»procedencia y encuentro«) played a central role for the exile-artist. Together with international art historians, curators, and architectural theorists, we not only attempt to explore the significance of architecture in Gego's work, her education in Germany, and the impulses her new hometown Caracas brought into play. Moreover, we aim to analyze Gego's manifold body of work against the backdrop of prevailing discourses in art and architecture, the social political as well as the professional contexts in which the artist was embedded in during her life.

SPEAKERS

Mónica Amor (Maryland Institute College of Art)
Noit Banai (Hong Kong Baptist University)
Hannia Gómez (Fundación de la Memoria Urbana, Caracas)
Hubert Klumpner (ETH Zurich)
Pablo León de la Barra (Guggenheim Museum, New York)
Sabine Mainberger (University of Bonn)
Mari Carmen Ramírez (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston)
Stefanie Reisinger (University of Stuttgart)
Kerstin Thomas (University of Stuttgart)

THIS BOOKLET INCLUDES

About the exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist«
Program of the conference
Speakers & their lectures
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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

»GEGO. THE ARCHITECTURE OF AN ARTIST«



Exhibition view »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist«, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, 2022
Photo: Gerald Ulmann

With »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist« the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart has devoted its second monographic exhibition to the work of the artist Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt, Hamburg, 1912–Caracas, 1994) with a particular focus on Gego’s architectural education in Stuttgart and her works on paper.

Gego studied architecture and engineering at the Technische Hochschule in Stuttgart (Institute of Technology). With the help of her professors, she was able to receive an official diploma two weeks after the November pogroms as one of the last Jewish students in Germany. Shortly after she was forced to emigrate to Venezuela, where she was unable to gain a foothold as a woman and immigrant in her learned profession. In the mid-1950s, when she began working as an artist, she wrote to her former professor Paul Bonatz that she had gone lost to architecture. By 1960, the MoMA in New York had already acquired one of her first works and soon she was among the most renowned artists in Latin America. Her position in the context of her time, however, has been described as very independent. One reason for this might be her architectural training in Germany. Architectural thinking, planning, and working always remained a point of reference in her artistic practice, which she continually expanded in various media—from technical sketches along with drawings, etchings, and prints to objects and extensive installations in museums or public spaces in Caracas. Gego was able to playfully translate her ideas to different scales and media.

After receiving a long-term loan of one hundred works by the Fundación Gego, Caracas, in 2017 the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart (Ulrike Groos, Director) initiated a three-year research project together with the University of Stuttgart (Kerstin Thomas, Professor at the Institute of Art History) and the Wüstenrot Foundation (Philip Kurz, CEO). The project has been closely accompanied by the Fundación Gego. The research and the exhibition have been conducted and curated by Stefanie Reisinger.

PROGRAM

APRIL 6

Arrival of all speakers

Check in at the Hotel EmiLu (find directions on the last page of this booklet)

4.15 pm Visit to the Weissenhofsiedlung for those who arrive early. We will pick you up at the hotel

APRIL 7

10.00 am We invite you for a morning coffee at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart followed by a visit to the museum including the exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist«

(12.00 pm) We will book a table at the museum café for those who would like to have lunch otherwise we will meet you back at the museum at 1.15 pm

1.30 pm Introduction (Ulrike Groos, Philip Kurz, Kerstin Thomas)

2.00 pm Stefanie Reisinger (University of Stuttgart): *Gego in Stuttgart*

3.00 pm Hannia Gómez (Fundación de la Memoria Urbana, Caracas): *Gego in Caracas*

4.00–4.45 pm Break

4.45 pm Mónica Amor (Maryland Institute College of Art): *Public Intervals*

5.45 pm Hubert Klumpner (ETH Zurich): *Caracas is Everywhere*

6.45 pm Remarks (Stefanie Reisinger)

7.15 pm Dinner at Gasthaus zum Becher

APRIL 8

10.45 am Opening remarks (Ulrike Groos)

11.00 am Kerstin Thomas (University of Stuttgart): *Modernist Questions Towards Form in Stuttgart*

12.00 pm Noit Banai (Hong Kong Baptist University): *Gego. Speaking Exile*

1.00–2.30 pm Lunch at Cube Restaurant

2.30 pm Sabine Mainberger (University of Bonn): *Dancing Architecture*

3.30 pm Performance: Sonia Sanoja, *Cuerdas, simple medida (Coreogego)*, restage 2022

3.45–4.15 pm Break

4.15 pm Pablo León de la Barra (Guggenheim Museum, New York): *Gego. Tropical Abstraction*

5.15 pm Mari Carmen Ramírez (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston): *Gego. Finally in Germany*

6.15 pm Closing remarks (Stefanie Reisinger)

7.15 pm Dinner at Casa del Consumo

APRIL 9

10.30 am For those who can stay a little longer: we are invited to a private preview of the exhibition »Moved by Schlemmer« at the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

Times according to the German time zone (UTC+2)

MÓNICA AMOR
»PUBLIC INTERVALS«
Thursday, April 7 at 4.45 pm



ABSTRACT | Public Intervals

In her lecture, Mónica Amor will explore »Cuerdas«—one of Gego’s works in the public space of Caracas installed in 1972. The sculpture was made by parallel ropes of nylon that signal the space between building and architectural frame. By focusing on the site where the sculpture was installed—a large residential and commercial development called Parque Central in the city center—as well as the urban and artistic interventions that immediately preceded »Cuerdas« and its host architecture, the lecture will outline the work’s relational articulation of site and anti-monumental stance. Amor argues that the work enunciated relational possibilities and signaled contingent ways of weaving the urban fabric of the city.

Mónica Amor holds a Ph.D. from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She has written art criticism and essays for *Art Margins*, *Artforum*, *Art Journal*, *Art Nexus*, *Grey Room*, *October*, *Poliester*, *Third Text*, and *Trans*. She has curated several exhibitions, including »Gego Defying Structures« for the Serralves Foundation in Porto (2006). Amor is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her book »Theories of the Nonobject: Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, 1944-1968« was published in 2016 by The University of California Press and her current book project is titled: »Gego: Weaving the Space In-Between«, forthcoming with Yale University Press, 2023.

NOIT BANAI
»GEGO. SPEAKING EXILE«
Friday, April 8 at 12.00 pm



Photo: Niko Havranek

ABSTRACT | Gego. Speaking Exile

Instead of looking at Gego's work in purely formal terms or naturalizing her practice within a Latin American or Venezuelan locus, Noit Banai's lecture approaches Gego and her work in relation to her status as a German Jewish woman who survived the Nazi regime. In doing so, Banai entertains a subject that Gego was not fond of treating: namely the constitution of an aesthetic and linguistic practice in relation to her status as a German Jewish woman, her subsequent condition of statelessness and exile. Further, Banai argues that to be assimilated into either a universalist modernist idiom or a regional/national categorization Gego's »Jewish difference« had to be erased, denied, or repressed.

Noit Banai (Ph.D., Columbia University) is an art historian and critic who specializes in modern and contemporary art in a global context, with a particular focus on conditions of migrations, exile, diaspora, border-regimes, and statelessness. She is currently Associate Professor, Art and Theory, at the Academy of Visual Arts at Hong Kong Baptist University; previously, she served as Professor of Contemporary Art in the Department of Art History at the University of Vienna and Lecturer of Modern and Contemporary Art at Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She is the author of »Yves Klein« (Reaktion Books, 2014) and »Being a Border« (Paper Visual Arts, 2021).

HANNIA GÓMEZ
»GEGO IN CARACAS«
Thursday, April 7 at 3.00 pm



ABSTRACT | Gego in Caracas

In the mid-1950s the Ciudad Universitaria de Caracas was built in the middle of the Venezuelan capital—a modern city within the city. With this project architect Carlos Raul Villanueva aimed to experiment anew with various forms of integration of art. Hannia Gómez' lecture takes a closer look at this ambitious architectural project and the resulting campus, where Gego taught her »Taller Gego« from 1959 on. In doing so, she aims to examine the influence of the university city on the artistic milieu in Caracas, the integration of the arts in the surrounding city as well as the influence of Gego's teaching on the young students of architecture.

Hannia Gómez is founder (2010) and Chair (2016) of Docomomo Venezuela. Architect, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas (1982). MS Urban Design, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University, New York City (1984). President, Fundación de la Memoria Urbana (2000). Director, CENTRO de la Ciudad (2001). Curator of »Gio Ponti's Villa Planchart« (2001) and »GEGO, Architect« (2007). Author, curator, and architecture and city critic of the Venezuelan newspaper EL NACIONAL (1992).

HUBERT KLUMPNER
»CARACAS IS EVERYWHERE«
Thursday, April 7 at 5.45 pm



ABSTRACT | Caracas is everywhere

Gego's architectural context in Caracas has widely been researched at the backdrop of a modernist architectural discourse. Hubert Klumpner aims to shift the focus towards urban developments in Caracas at the time and discuss the visions then in comparison with the current situation now—also in reference to the vast integration of art in the daily life realm of the Caraqueñas. If the city of Caracas is to be compared with an open-air museum that has entered the cultural and urban self-understanding of its inhabitants over the last decades, what is there to learn for us with regard to the development of urban spaces in the future?

Hubert Klumpner is counted among the originators of the social turn, a movement that had its breakthrough with the MoMA exhibition, »Small-Scale Big Change / new architectures of social engagement«. He is Professor at the ETH Zurich, where he holds the Chair of Architecture and Urban Design. Urban-Think Tank received numerous awards, including the Golden Lion of the Venice Biennale, the Gold Holcim Award, or the Chicago Museum of Architecture Award. He recently finished »Fabrica de Cultura« in Barranquilla / CO. Klumpner lives between Zurich and Medellin.

PABLO LEÓN DE LA BARRA
»GEGO. TROPICAL ABSTRACTION«
Friday, April 8 at 4.15 pm



ABSTRACT | Gego. Tropical Abstraction

With this lecture Pablo León de la Barra will explore the influence the Venezuelan tropics had in the development of Gego's work, from her arrival to Caracas in 1939, her period in the remote village of Tarmas with Gerd Leufert for 3 years from 1953, her contact with Tropical Modernism and Tropical Brutalism specially through the architecture of the University of Caracas (Carlos Raul Villanueva 1944–54) and Museum of Contemporary Art (Siso Shaw Architects 1972–74), the influence nature and vegetation had on her work, and the possible inspiration the Venezuelan-Amazonian hammock (chinchorro) had in the creation of her reticularea works.

Pablo León de la Barra is Curator-at-Large, Latin America, at the Salomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation, New York. Based in Rio de Janeiro, he was born in Mexico City. He has a Ph.D. in Histories and Theories from the Architectural Association, London. He was previously the Guggenheim UBS MAP Curator, Latin America (2013–2016), and Chief Curator at MAC Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro (2017–20). He is co-curator of the Gego exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum, New York (Spring 2023), as well as its iterations at Museo Jumex, Mexico City (Autumn 2022) and MASP, São Paulo (Autumn 2019).

SABINE MAINBERGER
»DANCING ARCHITECTURE«
Friday, April 8 at 2.30 pm



ABSTRACT | Dancing Architecture

In Venezuela Gego was in intense exchange with other artists. Her unusual sculptures stimulated poetry, book design, and dance. In 1978, the pioneer of contemporary dance Sonja Sanoja created the performance »Cuerdas, simple medida (CoreoGego)«: a work that combines movement, music, language, and architecture. For Sanoja considered dancing constructing. Here, something sculptural and at the same time fluid emerges from her dancing movements. Sabine Mainberger's lecture will take a closer look at the performance and give some insights into its making, structure, and poetics.

Sabine Mainberger is Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Bonn, Germany. Her research fields are arts, aesthetics, and anthropology. In recent years, she published books and essays on concepts and functions of lines in Western culture, e.g. (as co-editor) a volume on the issue in philosophy, mathematics, cartography, anthropology, and art theory. Her latest monography focusses on lines, gestures, and books in the work of the francophone writer and artist Henri Michaux.

MARI CARMEN RAMÍREZ
»GEGO. FINALLY IN GERMANY«
Friday, April 8 at 5.15 pm



Photo: Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

ABSTRACT | Gego. Finally in Germany

In her talk Mari Carmen Ramírez will analyze the implications of the Stuttgart exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist« and symposium on the current state of research on Gego with particular attention to key open questions regarding her position vis-à-vis 20th century art.

Mari Carmen Ramírez is the Wortham Curator of Latin American Art and founding Director of the International Center for the Arts of the Americas (ICAA) at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (2001–to the present). Prior to that, she was curator of Latin American Art at the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art and adjunct lecturer in the department of art and art history, both at The University of Texas at Austin (1989–2001). Ramírez also served as director of the Museo de Antropología, Historia y Arte de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus (1985–89) and assistant to the director, Ponce Museum of Art (1977–79). She received a Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Chicago in 1989.

STEFANIE REISINGER
»GEGO IN STUTTGART«
Thursday, April 7 at 2.00 pm



ABSTRACT | Gego in Stuttgart

In this lecture, Stefanie Reisinger will not only present Gego's curriculum and the most influential professors, such as Karl Schmoll von Eisenwerth, Hans Hildebrandt, Wilhelm Tiedje, and Heinz Wetzels and their teaching methods at the TH Stuttgart but aims to demonstrate in how far trained techniques and concepts would later continue to nurture Gego's artistic practice. Moreover, acquaintances with Bodo Rasch and Viktoria Regener-Mintschina, as well as architectural planning on paper, had indirectly trained Gego to challenge media specificity. Yet, drawing continued to be instrumental in developing her work. The skill set Gego was given in Germany allowed for a multi-dimensional art practice that would lead to a non-hierarchical unfolding, translation, and interweaving of a heterogeneous oeuvre that the artist laid out in various scales and dimensions.

Stefanie Reisinger (Department of Art History, University of Stuttgart) is the adjunct curator of the exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist« (2022) at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart and responsible for the research project »Gego in Stuttgart« (2019–22). She teaches regularly at the University of Stuttgart focusing on Latin American Art since the mid 20th century, Global Art discourses and Architectural History of the 20th century. Previously, she worked at das weisse haus in Vienna, the Austrian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, and the Guggenheim Collection in Venice. She was the co-editor of »all-over | Magazin für Kunst und Ästhetik« (2014–19), and co-founded phileas in Vienna (2014–21).

KERSTIN THOMAS

»MODERNIST QUESTIONS TOWARDS FORM IN STUTT GART«

Friday, April 8 at 11.00 am



Photo: Gerald Ulmann

ABSTRACT | Modernist Questions Towards Form in Stuttgart

With the choice to study in Stuttgart, Gego did not only decide for a distinct place for modern architecture in its different currents. Moreover, she moved to an important center for modern art, coined by Stuttgart's Royal Academy of Fine Art and the School for Applied Art. Here, the fruitful connection between art, technique and design fostered a pronounced interest for modern forms, apparent in the works of the academy professor Adolf Hölzel, as well as in those of his pupils Ida Kerkovius, Willi Baumeister, Oskar Schlemmer and Lily Hildebrandt. Kerstin Thomas' contribution seeks to track the significance of form concepts by Stuttgart's modernism for Gego, who was introduced to them through the art history lessons at TH Stuttgart, taught by Lily Hildebrandt's husband Hans Hildebrandt.

Kerstin Thomas is Full Professor for Modern Art History at the University of Stuttgart since 2016. She studied art history, philosophy, and archaeology at the Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main. In 2006 she received her Ph.D. in Art History, with a book on World and Mood: Puvis de Chavannes, Seurat und Gauguin, published in 2010. From 2006 to 2009 she was scientific assistant at the German Centre for Art History in Paris (Centre Allemand d'histoire de l'Art). After one year at the Free University in Berlin she directed a research group on Form and Emotion at Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz (2010–2015).

ULRIKE GROOS

Director, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart



Photo: Gerald Ulmann

Ulrike Groos holds a Ph.D. in Art History and Musicology. Since 2010 she is the director of the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart. Prior to that she was the director of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2002–2009) and worked with institutions such as the Sculpture Projects Münster 1997 and Manifesta 2 Luxembourg. Groos curated numerous exhibitions such as »Back to Concrete. The Beginnings of Punk and New Wave in Germany 1977-1982«, »I Got Rhythm. Art and Jazz since 1920«, »Candice Breitz. Ponderosa«, and »Ragnar Kjartansson. Scheize—Liebe—Sehnsucht«.

PHILIP KURZ

CEO, Wüstenrot Foundation



Photo: Benedikt Kraft / DBZ

Philip Kurz is the CEO of the Wüstenrot Foundation (since 2010). The foundation operates on a non-profit basis in the fields of historic preservation, science, research, education, art, and culture. It conceives its own projects and promotes the realization of outstanding ideas and projects of other institutions through close and sustainable collaborations—a focus lies on the quality of life, the built environment, and interaction with our shared cultural heritage, particularly on cultural assets from the period after 1945.

EXTENDED PROGRAM

VISIT TO THE KUNSTMUSEUM STUTT GART

Thursday, April 7 at 10.00 am



Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Photo: Brigida Gonzáles

The Kunstmuseum Stuttgart opened its doors in 2005. Its collection, however, dates back to 1924 when Count Silvio della Valle di Casanova donated 77 paintings by Swabian impressionists of his private collection to the City of Stuttgart. Today, the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart is famous for its collection of works by the artist Otto Dix. In addition, there are impressive collections of works by artists such as Willi Baumeister, Dieter Roth, Fritz Winter, Wolfgang Laib, Joseph Kosuth, Adolf Hölzel, and of course Gego.

Also currently on view at the Kunstmuseum is the exhibition »Tobias Rehberger. I do if I don't« curated by Ulrike Groos. The exhibition features the artist's central work groups from the last three decades. These include his multiform light installations, the so-called Window Pictures, and Vases Portraits as well as a series of sculptures that play with the effects of light and shadow. Installations created especially for the show offer viewers a variety of opportunities for participation.

PERFORMANCE
SONIA SANOJA, »CUERDAS, SIMPLE MEDIDA (COREOGEGO)«, RESTAGE 2022
Friday, April 8 at 3.30 pm



Sonia Sanoja, »Cuerdas, simple medida (Coreogego)«, restage 2022 at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart.
Photo: Gerald Uhlmann

The performance »Cuerdas, simple medida (Coreogego)« dates back to collaborations between the artist Gego and the dancer and choreographer Sonia Sanoja in 1977 and 1978. Both, Sanoja and Gego had a particular interest in notions of space and possibilities »to build space« by means of new and innovative ways of creation. Their quest »to construct situations« was only one of their shared pursuits. For instance, in the year the performance premiered, Sanoja noted: »To dance means to build, to create something solid from which we can contemplate and explore the infinite.«

On the occasion of the exhibition »Gego. The Architecture of an Artist« at the Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, a restage of this performance was produced in cooperation with the Fundación Sonia Sanoja – Alfredo Silva Estrada, the Venezuelan choreographer Claudia Capriles and the John Cranko School in Stuttgart. »Cuerdas, simple medida (Coreogego)«, is being regularly staged during the opening hours in the exhibition.

VISIT TO THE WEISSENHOF SIEDLUNG
with Anja Krämer (Director of the Weissenhof Museum)
Wednesday, April 6 at 4.15 pm



Weissenhof Museum, Photo: Thomas Wagner/Stadt Stuttgart

The Weissenhofsiedlung (Weissenhof Estate) was developed in 1927 within the context of the building exhibition »Die Wohnung« which again was organized by the Deutscher Werkbund. Under the artistic direction of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe 17 international architects presented 33 innovative and forward-looking designs for modern, healthy, affordable, and functional living. The participants included great architects such as Walter Gropius, Hans Scharoun and Le Corbusier. Today, Le Corbusier's famous pair of semidetached houses is home to the Weissenhof Museum. In addition, the other remaining houses can be viewed from the outside on a walk around the estate.

PREVIEW

»MOVED BY SCHLEMMER. 100 YEARS OF TRIADIC BALLET« at the Staatsgalerie
With installations by Ulla von Brandenburg, Kalin Lindena and Haegue Yang
Saturday, April 9 at 10.30 am



Oskar Schlemmer, »The Triadic Ballet«, 1922, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, © Oliver Kröning

Oskar Schlemmer's »Triadic Ballet« premiered in Stuttgart in 1922 to mixed reactions of outrage and enthusiasm. Today, a hundred years later, it is celebrated all over the world, and the Bauhaus artist's complex world of ideas has lost none of its appeal.

The centenary offers an occasion to take a fresh look at the »Triadic Ballet« through the prism of the present. Three internationally renowned artists – Ulla von Brandenburg, Kalin Lindena and Haegue Yang – have been invited to present large-scale works that engage with Schlemmer's ideas and investigate their significance today. At the same time, the exhibition provides insights into the cosmos of the »Triadic Ballet« and its reception all the way to the present day.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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RESTAURANTS

CUBE RESTAURANT

Kleiner Schloßplatz 1

Kunstmuseum

70173 Stuttgart

<https://www.cube-restaurant.de/de/cube/>

GASTHAUS ZUM BECHER

Urbanstraße 33

70182 Stuttgart

<http://www.zum-becher.de/>

CASA DEL CONSUMO

Heusteigstraße 45

70180 Stuttgart

DIRECTIONS

Once you have arrived at the hotel everything is in walking distance.

Arrival from the airport

To get to the city center from the Airport Stuttgart, you can either take a cab (Terminal 1) or the train (S-Bahn, S2 direction »Schorndorf«). The train runs every 15 minutes. To get to the Hotel EmiLu, the best way is to get off »Stadtmitte«. From there it's a 5-minute walk to the hotel.

Arrival by train

If you arrive at Stuttgart main station (»Hauptbahnhof«), you can either walk to the hotel (approx. 17 min.) or take the train (S-Bahn). Every S-Bahn departing at S-Bahn-platform 1 is possible. You get off at »Stadtmitte« and from there it's a 5-minute walk to the hotel.

Arrival by car

Please follow this link: [Nadlerstraße 4, 70173 Stuttgart, Germany](https://www.google.com/maps/dir/49.593875,10.182750/49.593875,10.182750)

