

Elena Asins *Antigone*

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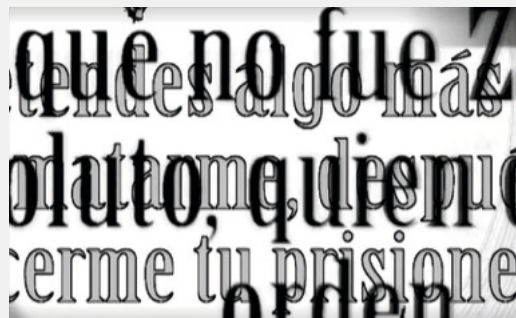
Elena Asins (Madrid, 1940 – Azpíroz, Navarra, 2015) is one of the most remarkable and meticulous of contemporary Spanish artists, qualities that won her the Gold Medal for Merit in the Fine Arts (2006) and the National Award for Plastic Arts (2011). Her endless curiosity and exceptional intellectual discipline made her work into a unique dialogue between mathematics, poetry, programming, music and drawing. In her artistic language, forms are born of logic and the artwork is built from knowledge and renunciation. Her practice is driven by a clear belief: art should not represent, it should think.

On occasion of the tenth anniversary of her death, the Museo Picasso Málaga presents *Antigone*, the artist's last major installation. Conceived between 2012 and 2015, the work addresses the classical myth from a contemporary and experimental point of view. The central sculpture, made up of the Greek characters spelling out the name, *Ἀντιγόνη*, and featuring a deep black finish, transforms the word into a structure, a sculpture to be read, a symbol unfolding in space where language is transformed into volume, rhythm and presence. The piece is complemented by *Haemon*, one of the videos that Asins produced as a part of the same project and in which, through voice, text and digital music, she explores time, repetition and the ethical tension that defines the myth.

Antigone has been a constant reference in modern times. Artists, writers and thinkers have sought inspiration in this mythological figure as a model for examining the connections between the individual, responsibility and the law. Jean Cocteau's stage version premiered in 1922, with set designs by Picasso and costumes by Coco Chanel, and shortly afterwards Arthur Honegger composed the opera *Antigone*. In their writings, both Jean Anouilh and Bertolt Brecht reinterpreted the myth in adverse political environments, while María Zambrano turned the story into a philosophical meditation. Asins's *Antigone* joins this legacy, taking structure as a starting point. Instead of illustrating the myth, it translates it into a visual system that brings together form, cadence and thought.

In this installation, the tragedy is transformed into geometry and rhythm. Words are more than meaning; they become figures, sounds and metre. Asins addresses the conflict between outer law and inner truth—the tension at the heart of Sophocles' play—with the same uncompromising clarity that characterises her entire production.

The exhibition, a part of the 'Guest Work' programme, has counted on the generous support of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía as custodian of Elena Asins's artistic legacy.



Elena Asins
Antigone, 2014
Installation at Galería Juana de Aizpuru,
5 April–30 May 2014
Corten steel (tubular interior structure), TIG
welding and two-layer polyurethane paint,
80 × 1950 × 124 cm
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía,
Madrid. AD07799. Bequest Elena Asins, 2017
© Courtesy Galería Juana de Aizpuru

Elena Asins
Haemon, 19 May 2015
Video, black and white, 8 h 48 min 30 s
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía,
Madrid. AD07761-059
Bequest Elena Asins, 2017
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Elena Asins in Azpíroz, August 2015
FOKU Agency
© Photo: Jagoba Manterola / Argazki Press

Officially opened in 2003, the Museo Picasso Málaga fulfils the artist's desire to be present in his hometown. Located in the Palacio de Buenavista, it houses a permanent collection of two hundred and thirty-three works by Pablo Picasso, spanning eight decades of his prolific career. The paintings, sculptures, prints and ceramics reflect the artist's versatility and his ongoing experiments with styles and materials.

The core of this permanent collection is the gift from Christine and Bernard Ruiz-Picasso, which is regularly enhanced by loans of a selection of works belonging to the Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso, together with other occasional loans.

Besides preserving and displaying the collection, the museum has a programme of temporary exhibitions that offer new readings of art and its context. In addition, its programme of cultural and educational activities aims to explore and disseminate the breadth of Picasso's legacy and its contemporary significance.

The museum's notable features include its archaeological site, bookshop and distinctive outdoor areas like the garden and courtyard—with its emblematic fig tree—leading through to the Christine Ruiz-Picasso Auditorium.