

ART EXPOSÉ

by ANGELA DANSBY / photography CARL DE KEYZER

MUSEO ROBERTO POLO

**CENTER FOR MODERN AND
CONTEMPORARY ART OF
CASTILLA-LA MANCHA**

PRIVATE ART COLLECTION TO
COMPLETE ARTISTIC PATRIMONY
OF SPAIN





SPAIN is known for legendary art but its institutions lack modern and contemporary pieces from certain parts of Europe, according to Brussels-based gallerist Roberto Polo, who is providing more than 7,000 works from his private collection to fill this gap. The pieces will be housed in a new Spanish state museum bearing his name, Museo Roberto Polo, with locations in the World Heritage sites of Toledo and Cuenca.

“MY COLLECTION WILL CLOSE A CIRCLE.”

“Spain is the richest country in the world in Old Masters from northern, central, and eastern Europe, but there is virtually nothing from these regions for the 20th and 21st centuries,” says Polo. “In Spain, there is no tradition of art collecting except in the aristocracy and the monarchy, so when Spain lost Flanders and the Netherlands, it also lost their art that followed. Spain cannot acquire such works, which are now rare and expensive. My collection will close a circle.”



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Polo's collection focuses on modern and contemporary art from Europe as well as the United States. Included are works by modern masters such as Max Ernst, Kurt Schwitters, and László Moholy-Nagy, as well as contemporary artists like Maria Roosen, Larry Poons, and Walter Darby Bannard. Pieces will rotate on a frequent basis while on loan from Polo for a minimum of 15 years, making Spain home to one of the largest collections of modern and contemporary art in the world.

The primary seat of the museum will be in Toledo, the capital of the Castilla-La Mancha region. Formerly, it was “the imperial city of the vastest empire in history, where painting was born in Spain thanks to its occupation of Flanders and the Netherlands,” Polo says. Toledo is just 30 minutes away from Madrid by train and attracts three million tourists a year. The museum's second seat will be in Cuenca, between Valencia and Madrid, and will display 21st century art only. Both museum locations are scheduled to open in February 2019. ▲