

The KMSKA loves nothing better than to spark a dialogue between artworks that range widely in date! *What's The Story?* is all about contemporary art and how it relates to early and modern works of art in the museum's collection. Conservator Nico Van Hout and co-curator Erno Vroonen chose associative, themed ensembles so that visitors can discover for themselves links between modern-day artists and their kindred spirits from the past.

What's The Story? is all about the dialogue between the collection and contemporary artists. Artists past and present influence our ideas about universal subjects we consider important today. The presentation shows how the same themes change over the centuries and how artists build on each other's work. Shown together, the artworks tell a shared story. Our interpretation of them, however, is not set in stone. So you can come up with your own explanations of the artworks and discover possible links. The exhibition invites you to uncover stories behind the works.

The exhibition is arranged thematically, giving each gallery its own theme and identity. Six different stories are told in two parts. Part I covers three themes, namely Space, Time and Power. The first gallery shows how artists deal with space. On display are paintings from the museum's collection by Jean Brusselmans, which use colours and patterns to divide space. They inspired artists like Raoul De Keyser, Mark Manders and Koen van den Broek. In the case of the last two artists, the creative process is part of the end result.

The second gallery relates to Time, with the emphasis on finite, infinite, real and manipulated time. Around Léon Spilliaert's *Woman by the Sea* and Rik Wouters' *Woman Resting* are intimate videos by Chantal Akerman and David Claerbout, who both approach the concept of Time differently. The exhibition rounds off with a reflection on Power, starting with the portrait of *Norbertus van Couwerven, Abbot of Sint-Michiels* by the forgotten 17th-century artist Katharina Pepijn. The works by George Condo, Matthias Dornfeld and Thomas Houseago prompt us to reflect on traditional representations of power.

Part II covers three more themes: Life and Death, Seduction and Storytelling.

Works from the museum's collection by Jacob Jordaens, Jan Massijs and Constant Permeke converse with work by Evelyn Axell, Maen Florin, Kati Heck, Jozef Legrand, Rinus Van de Velde, Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven and Liliane Vertessen.