



Cartes per a la Teresa, 1971  
(Letters to Teresa)  
Mock-up  
Mixed media on paper  
77 x 63 cm  
Private collection, Barcelona

Institutional Sponsors



Collaborators



Of the works: © Comissió Tàpies / VEGAP, 2018. DL: B-2781-2018

Antoni Tàpies  
T for Teresa

Exhibition  
6.2-28.10.2018



FUNDACIÓ ANTONI TÀPIES

## Antoni Tàpies. *T for Teresa*

In *Memòria personal* (A Personal Memoir, 1977), Tàpies recalls 'the clear green of [Teresa's] eyes, her fine and blond hair, her Slavic cheekbones, her appealing lips...'<sup>1</sup>

Antoni Tàpies (1923–2012) met Teresa Barba (1934–) at the end of the 1940s, when she was still a young girl. A few years earlier, she had lost her mother and had to take care of her five siblings, while looking after her father. This gave her a maturity and humanity uncommon for her age. During the artist's stay in Paris in 1950–51, they exchanged a regular and intense correspondence that united them through intimate links. On Tàpies' return from Paris, they formalised their relationship and in October 1954 Antoni Tàpies and Teresa Barba were married in Barcelona.

The presentation of the series of drawings entitled *Sèrie Teresa* (Teresa's Series, 1966), together with the series of lithographs, litho-collages and collages *Cartes per a la Teresa* (Letters to Teresa, 1974), pays tribute to their relationship by celebrating a private language accessible only to those who spoke it. The two sets of works display a repertoire of signs without translation for the viewer: a series of gestures that preserves the couple's intimacy despite explicit allusions to domesticity and a shared sexuality.

Both titles refer to the methodology of serial music with which the possible combinations of the series of twelve tones is explored. Tàpies considered that music, freed from the more traditional narrative, was

a purer form of expression. So he decided to apply this methodology to drawing. When in 1971 he made the series *Cartes per a la Teresa* (published in 1974 in the form of a portfolio), the artist plays with the double meaning of the word *carta* (letter and card). On the one hand, a written communication that alludes to the romantic correspondence between him and Teresa, and, on the other, in a far more esoteric sense, referring to a stack of cards used to play certain games or to perform illusionist tricks.

Teresa is also a name that carries a political meaning. As Tàpies said in the fragments for his autobiography, 'in the early sixties [...] Teresa and I lived more intensely than ever the injustice wrought onto our vexed country, onto the working classes, onto the devoted members of the opposition. We became aware of the struggle one had to sustain to demand the most elementary rights that should be enjoyed in any democratic country. Both Teresa and I felt a growing identification with that struggle.'<sup>2</sup>

1. Antoni Tàpies. *A Personal Memoir. Fragments for an Autobiography*. Barcelona: Fundació Antoni Tàpies; Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010: 182.

2. *Ibid.*: 338-339.

## Activities

### Approximations

Guided visit to the *Allora & Calzadilla and Antoni Tàpies. T for Teresa* exhibitions.

**Duration:** 1 h and 15 min. | **Dates:** Saturdays, 17.00 h. | **Admission:** Free with entrance ticket to the museum. | No booking required. Limited places.

### The Night of the Museums

Guided visits to the exhibitions for The Night of the Museums 2018.

**Date:** Saturday 19 May 2018, 19.30 h. | **Admission:** Free. | Limited places. Booking in order of arrival.

### T for trace

Family activity around the exhibition *Antoni Tàpies. T for Teresa*.

**Duration:** 1 h and 30 min. | **Dates:** Sundays 18 February, 11 March and 6 May 2018, 12.00 h. | **Age group:** accompanied children from 6 to 12 years old. | **Duration:** 1 h and 30 min. | **Admission:** 4 € per person. Advance booking required: 932 075 862 / reserves@ftapies.com).

*Sèrie Teresa Núm. I-LVI*  
(Teresa Series No. I-LVI), 1966  
Mixed media on wrapping paper  
Variable dimensions  
[35 x 25 cm approx.]  
Private collection, Barcelona

From left to right, top to bottom,  
No. II, V, IX, XIV, XVI, XVII, XXII, XXIII,  
XXIV, XXVI, XXIX, XXXVI, XLI, XLII,  
XLIII, XLIV, XLVIII, XLIX, LIII, LVI.

