

## VICKI PENFOLD AND THE TENERIFE ART SCENE

When Vicki Penfold arrived on Tenerife in 1964, the island art scene was just beginning to stir in a context where men still dominated every artistic sphere and certain sectors continued to favour a more traditional art rooted in academic formulas. The *Gaceta de Arte* generation was still actively involved in artistic circles thanks to Domingo Pérez Minik, Pedro García Cabrera and, above all, Eduardo Westerdahl, who frequently published art reviews in the press and organised exhibitions of international artists on the island.

The next generation of artists, led by Pedro González, introduced modernising, avant-garde proposals in the orbit of the Nuestro Arte collective (1963–1969), associated with the Museo Municipal de Bellas Artes in Santa Cruz de Tenerife. Vicki Penfold was soon inducted into this group thanks to her friendship with the sculptor María Belén Morales, and she participated in three of the eight collective exhibitions held by its members. The Círculo de Bellas Artes welcomed artists who were attuned to the latest trends and backed what were then groundbreaking initiatives like the Experimental Art Show and the Christmas Fair. It was there that Penfold had her first solo show, just nine months after coming to Tenerife.

The media played a fundamental role in spreading the latest art tendencies: Eliseo Izquierdo wrote numerous articles about Penfold, and women like Olga Darias worked as art critics for the papers.

In the 1960s, when the tourism industry was beginning to take off in the Canaries, foreign artists often visited Tenerife, mostly thanks to the international connections and friendships of local power couple Eduardo Westerdahl and Maud Bonneaud.

Photographs taken at the openings of Vicki Penfold's exhibitions and, above all, the portraits she made constitute a record of her interactions and friendships with many of the most prominent figures on the Tenerife art scene of that era.