

## Spain

## Hiatus in dispute over artist's foundation

*Loan of Guerrero works extended*

GRANADA. A truce has been called in the battle over the Centro Guerrero in Granada, after a public outcry and the threat by the heirs of José Guerrero (who died in 1991) to withdraw their father's paintings.

The conflict erupted in April, shortly before brother and sister Tony and Lisa Guerrero's ten-year loan of more than 500 paintings and drawings to the centre expired. The loan, valued at €5m, has now been extended to 31 December 2009, while details are worked out about the future of the art centre.

"You could say there's a lack of confidence between us and the Diputación [the provincial government]," Tony Guerrero told *The Art Newspaper*. He said that he and his sister had been in negotiations with the Granada government about the possibility of the centre continuing under the auspices of a new Fundación Granadina de Arte Contemporáneo. But when the government began to make public statements that contradicted their promises, relations soured.

Lisa Guerrero said that the final straw came when the government approved a resolution that absorbed the Centro Guerrero after ten years of inde-

pendence. "Our museum would be encompassed by this foundation of theirs," she said. "It would all be run by politicians and they would make all the decisions. They were going against something that we had all agreed on just four days before."

In late May, the Guerreros announced that they would withdraw the works. Maria Asunción Perez, deputy of culture for the region, blamed the breakdown in negotiations on miscommunication, saying that too many interested parties had fuelled emotions. In the end, different political parties in the government decided to cooperate. Shortly after it appeared that the works of art would be leaving Granada, new promises were offered and the Guerrero children decided to extend the loan.

"Negotiations are going to be much calmer now," said Ms Perez. "They are set to begin anew in September." She rejected the suggestion that a citizens' movement had anything to do with inspiring more flexibility within the government. "Por El Centro Guerrero" staged public protests and gathered more than 500 signatures in support of preserving the Centro Guerrero. **Matt Elmore**



José Guerrero, *Blue Variations*, 1962 (detail)