



GUITAR SHOP

24TH NOVEMBER 2024 TO 19TH JANUARY 2025

The Gallery of **Everything** presents *Guitar Shop*: a sculptural installation of vernacular musical instruments from America. The exhibition, which occupies the top floor of the gallery on Chiltern Street, is accompanied by the collaged (musical) objects of **Felipe Jesus Consalvos**: a self-taught Cuban art-maker, whose satirical and political opus was discovered long after his death.

Connecting the two is a manner of manufacture, a style born in the spirit of make-do. For the string (and no-string) instruments in *Guitar Shop* reflect 50 non-conformist makers, their names lost to the currents of time, their talismans reflecting profound and personal experiences.

These remarkable objects - from improvised banjos and box guitars, to violins and tambourines - are more than just tools for making music. They are spectacular vernacular sculpture: some playable, some not, their usage impeded by basic laws of physics.

Co-curated with musician, composer and guitar enthusiast Eg White, the works in *Guitar Shop* range in price from £150 to £2,500 depending on age, rarity, size, condition and vibes.

Born in Havana in 1891, Felipe Jesus **Consalvos** emigrated to Miami in 1920 and made a living rolling cigars until his death in the 1960s. His life would have been forgotten, were it not for a garage sale in which his private oeuvre was discovered; and with it, a life's work spun from a life's labour.

The art of cigar band decoupage was known at the time **Consalvos** commenced his hobby. Yet the many hundreds of collaged elements - from photographs, books, musical instruments, even household furniture - pointed to a committed creative activist, as astonishing as he was eccentric.

Consalvos used political collage to skewer contemporary culture. As an immigrant, he relished the tropes of American jargon, taking pot-shots at the great and the good. Thus, he reflected his (unwitting) peers, Kurt Schwitters and Joseph Cornell, and perhaps foretelling the satire of Peter Blake and Terry Gilliam.

Since its discovery, **Consalvos**' work has been exhibited internationally at Kunsthal Rotterdam, The Museum of Old and New Art, Tasmania, and Philadelphia Museum of Art. His oeuvre is part of a number of collections including Philadelphia Museum of Art (Philadelphia), the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago), American Folk Art Museum (New York), and High Museum of Art (Atlanta). Prices range from £7,500 to £75,000 depending on rarity and size.