

CATALAN ARTISTS @

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Catalan Artists @ XX Art Flanerie

The project is initiated and supported by the **Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to Central Europe**, in collaboration with the festival management and under the coordination of the curators and cultural advisors of the delegation, **Lluís Lipp** and **Oona Zyman**.

The participation of artists based in Catalonia in the *XX Art Flânerie* Festival also receives the support of the Institute for Catalan Cultural Promotion, the **Institut Ramon Llull**. The aim is to promote cultural exchange between Vienna, Vilnius, Barcelona and related European locations.

The *Catalan Artists @ XX Art Flânerie* project takes as its starting point the essay **BARCELONA, anys 20: Les polítiques de l'aigua; les aigües de la política** (*BARCELONA, the 1920s: The politics of water; the waters of politics*) written specially for the occasion by none other than the Catalan anthropologist and best-selling author **Albert Sánchez Piñol**. In his historical novel *The Fall of Barcelona* (2015), he has already meticulously recorded the architectural history of Barcelona; now he focuses on the turbulent history of the capital's development in the 1920s, which correlates with the modernization of maritime trade, the tremendous flow of ideas, colorful nightlife, the emergence of the labour question and the flourishing avant-garde movements, all of which have a major impact on the history of the Mediterranean metropolis.



Albert Sánchez Piñol (© Agencia Literaria Carmen Balcells)

Albert Sánchez Piñol is a member of the Centre d'Estudis Africans, his work has taken him on frequent trips to a variety of African countries. In 2000 he published *Payasos y monstruos*, a satirical essay on eight African dictators. His first novel, *La piel fría*, surprised critics with its strength and originality, it achieved excellent sales figures and was translated into more than 30 languages. *Pandora en el Congo* was also very well received by critics and the public alike, and his most recent novel, *Victus*, which narrates the War of the Spanish Succession, questioning official versions of this episode in history, has achieved phenomenal sales, establishing Albert Sánchez Piñol as the most international of Catalan's contemporary writers.



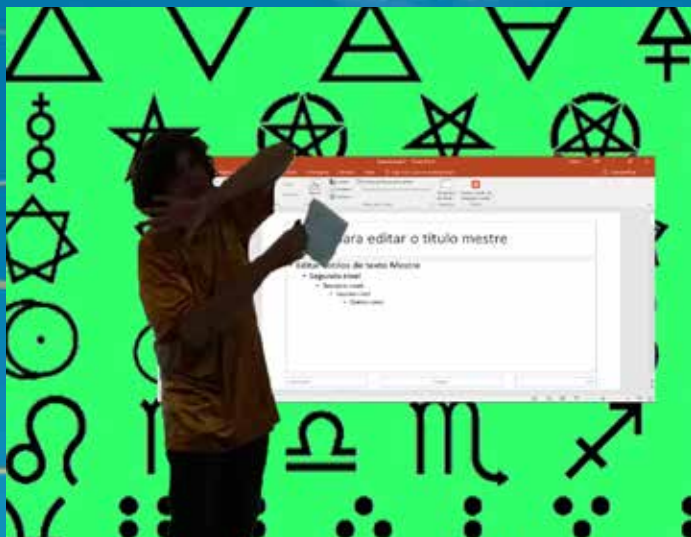
Oona Zyman and Lluís Lipp (sitting), Justina Špeirokaitė, Ale Zapata, Georgij Melnikov and Eva Baumgartner

The participating artists were selected by a joint curation with the festival direction, **Justina Speirokaite, Ale Zapata** and **Georgij Melnikov**, as well as the center for urban art **B-MURALS**.

In accord with the leading festival team, this year's Catalan artists **Laia Estruch**, **Luz Broto**, **Simon Contra** and **Eduardo Ruiz** were encouraged to respond thematically, conceptually and visually to Sánchez Piñol's text. Focusing on water, they not only use liquidity as a methodology for artistic and empirical experiences but are able through their investigative works to establish an inventory of the ecological and economic effects of water policies in the EU context.

The Catalan artist **Pedro del Real**, who is based in Vienna, will reference the context described in the essay by means of performance as part of the festival's artistic framework program.

Aiguamància (2021) is a lecture performance that makes use of the occult practices of the 20th century and explores the method of hydromancy, using divination and fortune-telling by means of water. The attempt is made to make divinatory water reading more reliable than previously through new energetic, astrological and kinetic conditions.



"Aiguamància" (2021) by Pedro del Real

The video work **Sibina** (2020) is based on a performance series in which **Estruch** repeatedly soaks her head in a water trough while trying to sing a Catalan song despite the impairment. Here, the water in motion becomes both a (life) source and an obstacle. For the artist, the performance functions as an experiment which is intended to examine the space that the voice can inhabit.

Meanwhile, **Broto** is concerned with infrastructural interventions of natural landscapes by the growing agro-industrial complex. As a point of departure, the artist chose the expansion of the pipeline network around the Segre River near Lleida in Spain, which has consequently led to the drastic decrease of the water level in the riverbed.

For her site-specific intervention **Aumentar el caudal de un río** (2014), Broto discreetly placed a new hose route in order to counteract the desiccation; in doing so, she could tap a small amount of water from the Serós Canal to divert it back to the Segre.

The discretion surrounding this project is reflected in the exhibition context, and where simply a newspaper clipping is referring to the clandestine river diversion project.



Artist Miquel Wert at XX Art Flanerie 20 (@saLeh_roZati)

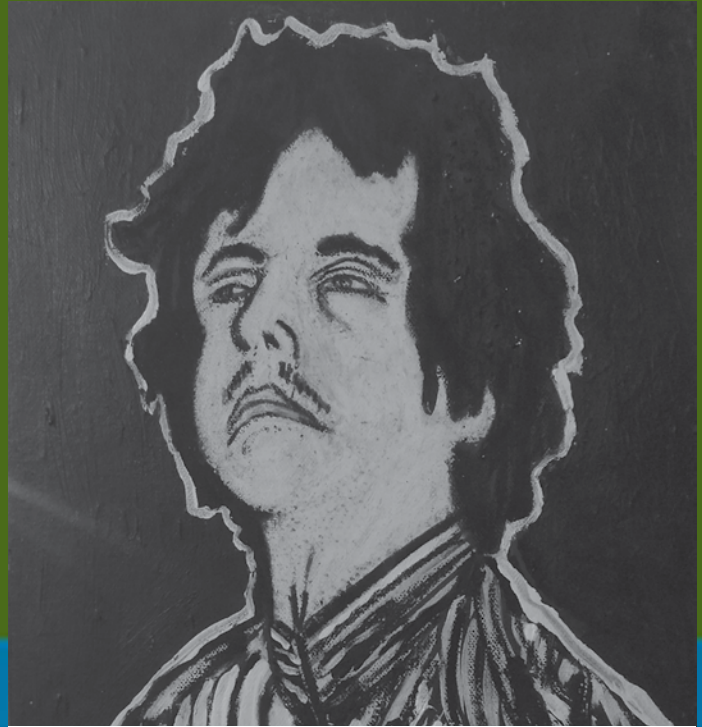
Alongside environmental issues, the current refugee crisis can be seen directly in relation to the regulatory processes of international water policy.

In **The eyes of the sea** (2021), **Contra** deals with the tragic scenes of refugees on the open sea and concerns himself critically with the admission guidelines that grant them access to land.

He takes the career of Sada Keita Evans, a Spanish model with African origins whose piercing-blue eyes have earned him the title of Mr. Tarragona, as an example of the (paradoxical) integration policy in Europe.

As a reference, he draws upon Géricault's painting, *The Raft of the Medusa* (1818-19), which he deconstructs as an all-encompassing installation for the exhibition, bearing in mind the contemporary setting. The curtain functions as a threshold which separates the status of fugitive from successful model. After the crossing, the hope for a better life ultimately crumbles in the wake of the double standards that make up the West: integration, yes - but only if economic benefits can be extracted and if the illusion of complete assimilation is perpetuated.

Pedro del Real



Portrait of Pedro del Real by Markus Tozzer

Pedro del Real (Barcelona 1990) does many things related to words: lecture performances, cartoons & writing. His performances try to engage the audience with new concepts & ideas, focusing on the interaction with them as means of discovering new aesthetics. Magic & Games & Beautiful Slides are his specialty.

In this lecture performance, Lic. theol. PdR Lavergne, will present his most recent discovery: a new type of divination through water. Although hydromancy has been a staple in many foretelling practices around the world, this new method offers a series of energetic, astrological and kinetic conditions that make it more reliable than previous attempts to use H2O in fortunetelling.

The event will start with a presentation on PdR's investigations on occult practices and phenomena in early 20th century Barcelona, which have directly impacted his discovery. This will be followed by the first public demonstration of **Aiguamància**.

www.pedrodr.net



Ana Garcia-Pineda's artwork at XX Art Flanerie 20
(©Katharina Schiff)

Today, Somorrostro Beach in Barcelona is considered a tourist hotspot – but until the late 1960s, the impoverished working-class neighborhood of Somorrostro was settled there. During the modernization period of the Catalan capital, the inhabitants were expelled from the ghetto and it was ultimately razed to the ground.

For his multimedia work **Somorrostro. Underwater Neighborhood** (2021), **Ruiz** dives into the ocean in search of the artifacts of this past destruction; in fact, some bricks of the old shacks have still remained submerged in the depths of the seas all these years. The artist reassembles the remains as a sculpture, trying to reform a building block in order to produce an emotional carrier out of raw material. Ruiz documents the process photographically, and, as a participatory gesture, encourages visitors to take a printed postcard with his underwater motives.

Luz Broto



Luz Broto (©Galerna)

Luz Broto (Barcelona, 1982) works with what is here, taking into account this architecture, its urban environment or its position in the territory, its infrastructure or organizational structure, its regulations, uses, or protocols. She proposes minimal operations that change everything. She has done site-specific projects in commissions, grants, exhibitions, or residencies in collaboration with many institutions in different countries for fifteen years. www.luzbroto.net

Aumentar el caudal de un río (*Raise the water level of a river*, 2014) was a site-specific intervention at Canal de Seròs – R o Segre (Lleida, ES). It consisted of installing a hidden 200-meter long hose to permanently divert 40 liters/hour of water from the canal to the river. It attempted to minimally decompensate the impact that large infrastructures have on the state of territory. In the exhibition, a newspaper explains what was happening in the landscape at that time.

More info: www.luzbroto.net/en/aumentar-el-caudal-de-un-rio

Simon Contra



Installation view of "9mus@s", by Simon Contra

Simulating the waves, ***The eyes of the sea***, like a dimensional portal, evokes the african migration journey and the hope. With a surprise element, the life of Keita, Mister International Tarragona 2020, takes center stage, and his eyes captivate us. Blue. Sea. Survival. A story. An experience. The eyes that are the sea and the sea that is the journey. Intentional deconstruction of G ricault's work, *The Raft of the Medusa* (1818-19), the installation also criticizes, through an onomatopoeia, the hate in political speech.

Chance, politics, philosophy, reality, aesthetics... The work of the artist **Simon Contra**, graduate in Art History (Universitat de Lleida) and Fine Arts (Universitat de Barcelona), born in the inland Catalonia (fruit trees, fog, tropical sun), uses sounds, smells, smoke or ultraviolet light. Form and content that converge in a pentalogy about "el proc s" (Fel cia Fuster Foundation Scholarship 2019), a time capsule (Residency ACUR 2021) or a (nostalgic) future with electronic pets (BCN Producci  2020, curated by Christian Alonso, La Capella, 2022).

www.simoncontra.com

Laia Estruch



Laia Estruch performing "Sibina" (©Eva Carasol)

My artistic practice delves into the language of the body and the voice, on the threshold between sculpture and performance.

Treating the voice as the principal device and instrument to develop my projects, I am interested in finding new ways of working with orality and listening while inhabiting structures that I design. In the past few years, I have been interested in investigating new dialogues between body, voice, and space. To this end, I have been building physical structures that I use as live ephemeral sets. These sets tend to become a physical score for me to navigate (with body and voice) throughout a performative event.

www.laiaestruch.com

Eduardo Ruiz



Eduardo Ruiz

Eduardo Ruiz Investigates the relationships between territory and forms that defines it, maps, landscapes that appear on the banknotes, passports and parts found in it as forgotten objects and hidden vegetation species. Seeking to establish a bridge between space and policies that condition human behavior.

A feature of Eduardo's works is the use of materials considered trivial, which eliminates their conventional meaning and ensures that what was intended for a specific use can be considered an autonomous work.

He has studied Degree in Fine Arts and the Master's Degree in Art Production and Research at the University of Barcelona and residencies at Cal Gras (Avinyó), Fabra and Coats (Barcelona), Nauestruch (Sabadell), Can Castells Art Center (Sant Boi de Llobregat) and Cultural Center of Spain Juan de Salazar in Asunción (Paraguay).

He currently lives and works in Barcelona.

www.eduruiz.es

Jan Vallverdú



Mural by Catalan artist BTOY at XX Art Flânerie 20 (©Lluís Lipp)

Part of the *Catalan Artists @ XX Art Flânerie* project is a collaboration with **B-Murals**, the Barcelona-based centre for urban art, who have issued an open call for applicants to design the walls of the **Schwendergasse Public Gallery**.

The final selection of the artist, **Jan Vallverdú** who will engage with the mural as a projection surface for creativity in relation to the topic *Social Lubricant & Water Politics*, was made in consultation with **Improper Walls**.

B-MURALS was created with the aim of consolidating itself as a centre for urban art in Barcelona. The project is conceived as a pole of creation, exhibition and social transformation around urban art, which pivots on a fixed exhibition space, the “gallery” **B-MURALS**, a space from which “hangs” the studio and outdoor spaces designed to host murals and other events.

The main lines of work of the project are: support to artistic creation (especially in urban art), social transformation, stable programming and the discourse about urban art and related disciplines.

www.bmurals.com

Partners & Supporters

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XX Art Flânerie

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Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to Central Europe



B-MURALS

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Catalan artist Laia Fabre and Anton Spielmann performing at the opening of XX Art Flânerie 20 (©saLeh_roZati)

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