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WE WILL KEEP EACH OTHER COMPANY WHEN IT GROWS DARK

Exhibition series curated by Irina Mutt

ALBA MAYOL

INARI SANDELL

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY

HELENA VINENT

02/02/2024 – 19/01/2025

Table of contents

Information about the season	1
Press release	2
Curator	5
Artists	6
General information	17

We Will Keep Each Other Company When It Gets Dark

Season of exhibitions in Espai 13 at the Fundació Joan Miró

2 February 2024 – 19 January 2025

A season curated by Irina Mutt

ALBA MAYOL, *solc i no clos* (Furrow and not Closed)

02.02 – 14.04.2024

Opening: Thursday 01.02.2024 at 7.00 pm

INARI SANDELL, *Butterfly Logic*

25.04 – 07.07.2024

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY

18.07 – 20.10.2024

HELENA VINENT

31.10.2024 – 19.01.2025

With the support of:



Press release

Barcelona, 1 February 2024. *We Will Keep Each Other Company When It Gets Dark*, the Espai 13 season for 2024 curated by Irina Mutt, is a desire to situate interdependence, to explain it and share it, expressed through four solo exhibitions in which each artist will take a look at their way of being in the world, of managing and agreeing spaces.

Interdependence speaks to us of our relationship with the world, of how we inhabit it, about our limits and vulnerabilities. Thinking about interdependence requires us to challenge the fiction of autonomy and to recognise how interlinked our bodies and lives are with other bodies and lives. We are all part of everything and we exist in relation to other beings, structures and phenomena. Nothing presents itself, functions or operates in isolation.

Accordingly, the opportunities for agency, presence and access do not consist so much of individual triumphs or failures as of a collective and shared responsibility. Not every space issues an invitation to be occupied in the same way by everyone. Not all voices occupy the same space, nor do all stories endure the same across time. This season offers a few notes, indications and actions about different ways of occupying and being in the space, of lasting in time.

The title of the season alludes to a 'we', to gestures, rather than to a discourse: situating ourselves next to someone else, walking alongside them, even if only for a short stretch of the way, a brief while. It is an opportunity to assume our responsibility despite knowing we will not always be effective. This will be our gesture: to situate ourselves nearby.

In discourses against discrimination, reference is usually made to the idea of safe and accessible spaces, but often a safe space does not mean it is free of conflict, nor does complying with the rules guarantee accessibility. Being responsible and aware of our privileges can on occasion be wounding, at times it means surrendering, and to surrender is to lose power. But there are more important things than power, aren't there?

Over the course of the season, the narrative will gradually generate itself in an elastic, non-essentialist, non-linear manner. The body and the material, as planes of truth, will have the capacity to roll out the political and activate it. In these narratives,

fragility and power will not be binary opposites but instead relational phenomena that are exchanged and which overlap.

The artist from Barcelona **Alba Mayol**, drawing on the inspiration provided by Octavia Butler's short story entitled 'Bloodchild', will be proposing a stage-cum-body in which all the elements are interconnected. Various formats such as sculpture, installation art and drawing will generate an atmosphere or spectrum without defined limits or forms. Mayol aims to create an entity that beats and breathes; a presence that can be felt, smelt and touched. Using language as an elastic material and also as a condition and limit for portraying things and phenomena, the artist will be presenting her research into desire and the impossibility of defining it with absolute logics.

The Finnish artist **Inari Sandell** will be working on the basis of research into psychiatric disciplinary systems that have had an impact on narratives related to neurodiversity. This starting point will enable them to speculate on various sensory elements that can invite or exclude certain identities from the spaces we move around in every day. These narrative and formal elements will also intersect with the image of a butterfly as a symbol of resistance to normative thinking and standards since it defends itself from being captured by predators by flying in an unpredictable and chaotic manner.

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley, an artist who lives and works in both Berlin and London, will be proposing a space in which installation art and interactive video games will put into circulation various stories centred on the lives of Black Trans people. In Brathwaite-Shirley's work, visitors will become characters in the games and their decisions or the position they occupy on a scale of privileges will affect the story that unfolds and will determine which parts of the works they are able to access. In this exhibition, individual responsibility can affect possibilities for surviving or create a memory and community of other bodies.

Lastly, the artist **Helena Vinent** from Barcelona will create a space in which fiction and reality cease to be excluding binarisms. Vinent will be presenting a crip band or gang that will activate and reclaim the space by bursting into the exhibition room or even spilling out beyond it, while putting into circulation ideas and concepts to do with access, pleasure and desire. Thanks to the force of the group, rather than asking for permission or adapting to the system, this system will be assaulted, brought to a

halt. These situated actions of desiring and desirable bodies will assert themselves over dominant ableist expectations. Espai 13 will become the possible setting in which non-normative bodies will cease to be docile and deprived of agency and will instead become a danger, a threat that will rock normality.

The season will close with a performance by the Finnish artist **Teo Ala-Ruona** about Trans corporeality as a phantasmagorical and transcendental experience.

Espai 13: forty-five years of emerging art

Espai 13, heir to the legendary Espai 10, which opened in 1978 in what is now the Fundació Joan Miró shop, is the longest-running programme specialising in emerging art in Spain. It is also the programme that has continued the founding spirit of the CEAC (Centre for Contemporary Art Studies), the name by which the Fundació Joan Miró was initially known. This forty-five-year-long history has enabled the institution to maintain a close and active link with the artistic and curatorial practices that have developed over the course of this period and to support their evolution. Imbued with the same curious and demanding spirit as Joan Miró, Espai 13 is the space where experimentation and new works have been aided, as have research and the questioning of the role of art in a changing society that is ever-more aware of its diversity. Espai 13 aims to continue to reflect that complexity by offering an open and inclusive programme at the service of the most cutting-edge and bold art.



Curator

Irina Mutt was born in Girona, trained in Barcelona and currently lives in Helsinki. In her curatorial practice, she uses various strategies and tools to research and distribute artistic projects. She often finds these strategies and tools in ambits and formats such as fanzines and comics, video games and spheres such as the portrayal of the affects and desire of non-dominant identities.

She recently curated Glitches, the festival of the Pixelache art association (Puristamo – Tanssin Talo, Helsinki, 2023) and the Kinki Kioski post-porn mini festival (Myymäälä2, Helsinki, 2023). She has also co-ordinated workshops for the PUBLICS Youth programme with Laia Estruch as guest artist (a partnership between Latitudes and PUBLICS, Helsinki, 2022) and she has received grants to produce oral fanzines in collaboration with independent radio broadcasters such as Fugitive Radio, Open radio and Station of Commons.

Prior to this, in Barcelona she was a member of the Hangar committee (2017-19) and curated exhibitions in La Capella (BCN Producció, 2018), the Sala d'Art Jove (2018) and Can Felipa (2013), among others. In Madrid, she curated *Deshaciendo texto*, one of the winning projects of the Inéditos call for submissions from curators (2016). During her residency at the Centro Huarte, she presented her research *Si no puedo bailar* (Iruña, 2017).

In addition, her writings have been published in various print and online media, such as the publications *Rehearsing Hospitalities* (Frame, Helsinki, 2021) and *The Voice that Remains* (PUBLICS, Helsinki, 2023). She has also written pieces for artist's books, among them *Posar-se al lloc de l'altre* for the artist Luz Broto (2022) and *Lost in Transition* by Cabello/Carceller (2016).

Artists**ALBA MAYOL, *solc i no clos* (Furrow and not Closed)**

02.02 – 14.04.2024

Alba Mayol, *Cova* (detail), 2023-2024. Courtesy of the artist.

Taking as its starting point the short story 'Bloodchild' by the African American author Octavia E. Butler, the exhibition *solc i no clos* (Furrow and not Closed) posits a stage-cum-body impossible to limit either linguistically or by means of taxonomic categories. 'Bloodchild' features T'Gatoi, a non-human alien that regularly visits the home where a teenage boy lives. These encounters stir ambiguous emotions and reactions that make it impossible to grasp the nature of the relationship between these very different beings.

As Alba Mayol puts it, 'like the ambiguous magnetism and restlessness that emanate from T'Gatoi, the character in Octavia Butler's story, the fluidity of desire is an enlarged you/I/we when we immerse ourselves in a multiplicity. It is something that embraces and dissolves, that generates fabrics that move without us seeing the perimeters, without us ever quite understanding what they are made of. A body formed by an intrinsic undefinition, a divergent familiarity, curves, spores, soft

minerals. To enter this body is to negotiate; it is nothing existing without nothing, a circularity in motion; it is to settle oneself into not knowing.'

The elements that make up *solc i no clos* invite us to feel the space, to perceive its pulse and the beating of the walls, to note the trembling of membranes and the constant bubbling of holes and cracks. It is an exhibition that throbs and that can be heard and even smelt. The elements we find in the exhibition together generate a continuity with each of the parts. 'Nothing exists without nothing', the artist insists. In this existing accompanied by and in relation to a whole, thresholds are blurred and desire becomes a driving force that moves us forward without the need to understand or categorise. It is a desire that bubbles up and spills beyond the limits of language.

With this installation, Mayol aims to kindle a sense of fellow-feeling and strangeness, of atavistic memory and also of imagination and utopia. Longings and fears come into play, blended with a desire for contact and for feeling skin. The various formats present in *solc i no clos* – sculpture, mural pieces and drawing, among others – inhabit or exist in the space but with no intention of occupying it. Together they form a unitary body made up of fragments. Or rather, they invoke a spectre, a presence that beats, breathes and speaks in a circular murmur with no beginning or end.

Mayol's referencing of poetry and literature is also reflected in the exhibition title, a quotation from Maria Mercè Marçal's poem 'Freu', number XII in her book *Sal oberta*. The ambivalence between 'clos', meaning closed, motionless, and 'solc', which points to something that is open, that flows, generates another layer of tension in an exhibition in which contrasts and thresholds are blurred in a constant fluidity. A space where forms and textures, lights, shadows and smells go by, like the bubbling of a language that is simultaneously a condition and a limit of that which we can understand.

Alba Mayol (Barcelona, 1979) graduated in English Philology from the University of Barcelona (UB) and holds and MA in Aesthetics and the Theory of Contemporary Art, awarded by the Autonomous University of Barcelona (AUB). She also studied photography at Central Saint Martins and studied Visual Culture at postgraduate level at the UB. At the same time, she trained in Translation-Interpretation at the AUB and Psychology at the UB. She works with text and images, exploring the possibilities of permeability and fluidity between the two elements.

She has presented exhibitions and solo and group projects in spaces in Catalonia, among them Tecla Sala (L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2023), Centre d'Art Maristany (Sant Cugat, 2022), Casal Solleric (Palma, 2021), Centre d'Art Tarragona (2021), Tangent Projects (L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2020), Fundació Vila Casas (Barcelona, 2020), Bòlit Centre d'Art Contemporani (Girona, 2018), Can Felipa Arts Visuals (Barcelona, 2018), Hamaca (Barcelona, 2017), Arts Santa Mònica (Barcelona, 2016), Museu Abelló (Mollet del Vallès, 2010), Loop Festival, Sala d'Art Jove (2019 and 2010) and Fabra i Coats (Barcelona, 2010 and 2017), as well as in international galleries and events, such as the Württembergischer Kunstverein (Stuttgart, 2019), Eastern Bloc (Montreal, 2017), FOKUS Videoart Festival (Copenhagen, 2012) and Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, 2011).

Over the course of her career, she has received a number of grants and other financial support and she has been an artist-in-residence at Hangar (Barcelona, 2018-2020) and BAR Project (Barcelona, 2021). Her writings have been published in various media and she has worked extensively as a translator and editor.

INARI SANDELL, *Butterfly Logic*

25.04 – 07.07.2024



Inari Sandell, *Burnout Beach Towel*, 2023. Courtesy of the artist.

Using objects, audiovisuals and sculptures resulting from their artistic research, Sandell will be presenting a constellation of elements and forces that invite contemplation while at the same time shunning binary logics. The exhibition will allude to acts of touching, feeling the weight, caressing or holding, noting sharp edges, metals that punch holes, the softness of textures. It offers a place where opaqueness and transparency overlap and alternate, charting a path between situations and sensations while presenting itself as strategically disorganised. Jumbled patterns that take as their reference the chaotic flight of butterflies which, with their unpredictable movements, defend themselves against predators. A strategy of flight and displacement that is also transposed to the personal and social sphere. Disorderly behaviour, impossible to define, perhaps represents a possibility for escaping from systems that seek to capture meaning, to define everything.

Inari Sandell is a multidisciplinary visual artist. Their lens-based and sculptural work takes the form of installations and addresses themes of neurodivergence, accessibility and sensory experience entangled with post-digital and post-human millennial existence. Sandell combines photography and the moving image with delicate textiles and sharp and heavy materials like glass and metal. In their projects, Sandell seeks to challenge normative frameworks for bodily and cognitive abilities and to make room for alternative conceptions from the point of view of neurodiversity and queerness. These often appear as themes, but even more essentially as methods of unlearning ableism and of moving towards a more sustainable artistic process.

Irani Sandell (Lahti, Finland, 1991) lives and works in Helsinki. They hold an MFA in Time and Space Arts from Uniarts Helsinki (2023), a BA in Media Studies from the University of Turku (2020) and a BFA in Photography from the Turku Arts Academy (2016). Their praxis also includes self-publishing and curating.

Their work has been shown internationally in galleries, museums and festivals that include the UKS (Unge Kunstneres Samfund / Young Artists' Society, Oslo, 2023), Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art (Iceland, 2023), SÍM Korpúlfsstaðir (Reykjavik, 2023), Kaiku gallery (Helsinki, 2022), Titanik Gallery (Turku, 2021), SIC (Helsinki, 2019), Finnish Cultural Institute (New York, 2021) and Athens Photo Festival (Athens, 2016).

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY, *My mirror on fire*

18.07 – 20.10.2024



Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley, *When Our Worlds Meet*, 2022. Installation at FACT Liverpool. Photo: Rob Battersby.

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley will present *My mirror on fire*, an installation in which the audience is invited to confront their own fear. The choices you make in the space will determine what you see, what you must face and ultimately decide if you are ready to deal with your own failings. This isn't about supporting anyone anymore; it's about finding out who you really are and staring it dead in the face, leading audiences to deeply ponder issues around supremacy, violence, communities and responsibilities.

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley works predominantly in animation, sound, performance and video game development. Her practice focuses on intertwining lived experience with fiction to imaginatively retell the stories of Black Trans people. As the artist states: 'A lot of my practice is about archiving. It's about working with Black Trans people who are not artists and making available to them a space to be remembered, and also to generate and create things that they're not usually able to. New possibilities that don't just stem from telling the stories, but also from building the tools so that the story can be told.'

Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley (London, 1995) Shirley lives between London and Berlin. She received a BA from the Slade School of Fine Art (London, 2019). Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions and performances at institutions such as SCAD (Savannah, 2023), Art Night (Dundee, 2023), Villa Arson (Nice, 2023), Foundation of Art and Creative Technology (Liverpool, 2022), David Kordansky (Los Angeles, 2022), Project Arts Centre (Ireland, 2022), Skånes konstförening (Malmö, 2022), Arebyte Gallery (London, 2021), QUAD Derby (England, 2021), Albright-Knox Art Gallery (Buffalo, 2021), Focal Point Gallery (London, 2020), Science Gallery (London, 2020), and Hybrid Art House (London, 2020). Her work has also been included in group exhibitions at institutions such as the Julia Stoschek Foundation (Berlin, 2022), Münchner Kammerspiele (Munich, 2019), Les Urbaines (Lausanne, 2019) and Barbican Centre (London, 2018).

HELENA VINENT

31.10.2024 – 19.01.2025



Through this project, Helena Vinent seeks to question the normative standards related to pleasure and access and to defend other functional possibilities. This proposal is presented as an opportunity to envisage a possible action by a crip band or gang inspired by the power and rebellion of punk bands and in which fiction and reality cease to be excluding binarisms. A band that has no need to ask for permission but which assaults normality and brings it to a halt. The idea of the band that works as a collective shatters the established notion that disability is an individual problem that can be remedied or corrected. On the basis of this idea, the artist aims to undermine the ableist and paternalistic view that points to disabled people as accommodating, asexual, bereft of pleasure, inoffensive, boring, isolated, disconnected people without any kind of political or sexual-affective agency. As the artist puts it: 'We crip women need to get together and show that we are angry, disobedient and rebellious, but also that we desire and are desirable, introducing other possibilities for exploring pleasure and desire.'

Helena Vinent (Barcelona, 1988) works in different formats that include video, photography, text, sculpture, performance and installation art. Dissociation, subtitles, sounds, technological acceleration, prostheses, fiction, mistakes, misunderstandings, policies to control bodies, identity alliances and speculative spaces are terms that

could serve to define her areas of artistic research. Her work is traversed by the crip-queer discourse and anti-ableism and addresses the idea of human, posthuman and infrahuman construction. Starting from the premise that in an ableist society the disabled-assigned body is not read as a complete human body, Vinent highlights the usefulness of producing new imaginaries.

Helena Vinent graduated in Applied Arts in Sculpture from the Escola Llotja and Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona and she holds a University MA in Cultural Studies and the Visual Arts, specialising in feminist and queer perspectives, awarded by the Miguel Hernández University (Elche, 2023). Her work has been shown in group and solo exhibitions in cultural institutions and spaces in Spain, Germany, Holland, France, Mexico, Argentina and Colombia. She has had artist residencies at Fabra i Coats (2017), Hangar (2018) and L'Escocesa (2020) and she has received various awards and grants for creation, among them the Sala d'Art Jove Award (2017), the Guasch Coranty Grant (2018), the Hangar Production Grant (2018), the Visual Arts Grant awarded by the Fundació Güell (2019), the Baumannlab Production Grant (2020), the Creation and Museums Grant awarded by the ICUB (2020), the Generation 2021 Prize awarded by the Fundación Montemadrid (2020), the Research and Innovation in the Visual Arts Grant awarded by the Generalitat de Catalunya (2020), the Barcelona Awards 2020 Grant (2021), the Miquel Casablanças Prize awarded by Sant Andreu Contemporani (2021), the EMPELT Grant awarded by the MNAC (2022) and the Barcelona Creates Prize awarded by the ICUB (2022). Her work is held in public and private collections, including those of the Fundación Montemadrid (Madrid), the Fundació Guasch Coranty, the Fundació Güell, Sant Andreu Contemporani and MACBA in Barcelona. In addition to her artistic practice, and always in connection with the themes she addresses in her artistic research, Vinent has taught workshops and given talks, has participated in congresses, seminars and research groups, has contributed to publications and has been a part of a number of projects and self-managed spaces.

PERFORMANCE TO CLOSE THE SEASON***Lacuna*, Teo Ala-Ruona****Saturday 25 January 2025 (date to be confirmed)****Espai 13, Fundació Joan Miró**

ICA. London. 2023. Photo: El Hoeg

Lacuna is a fifty-minute solo performance by Teo Ala-Ruona and the working group consisting of Tuukka Haapakorpi (sound design), Ami Karvonen (dramaturgy) and Sofia Palillo (light and spatial design).

Lacuna means an opening, a pit, or a recess. It can be a missing or omitted part or a memory outage. For Ala-Ruona, it is an internal chasm in the body that preserves trauma memories of his body prior to medical and social transitioning. The piece talks about Trans embodiment as a ghostly and transcendental experience, bulimia, sex and death. On stage, these topics are composed into a verbal and musical incantation. The piece grows in time by playing with various images emerging from the past, that are being conjured on the stage through movement, speaking and screaming. Ala-Ruona opens a portal to the interiors of his body: carnal visions, through the skin, entering the orifices and into an abyss. *Lacuna* tells an autofictional horror story and borrows its form from punk and experimental metal.

The performative work of Teo Ala-Ruona focuses on somatospeculative fictioning. Ala-Ruona explores themes such as techno-Trans-masculinity, sexuality, ecology and toxicity through a combination of theoretical discourse, autobiographical textual material and psychologically and physically intense performance scores, aiming to redefine language and narratives that address pleasure and intimacy in the context of a toxic Earth. By often using his own body as a site for the various speculative stories to take place, he is experimenting on how through fiction he can transform himself, as well as the perspectives from which the audience looks at his body. He approaches Trans corporeality as an arena where various normative processes of naturalisation become unfeasible, and addresses queer ecological topics from an explicitly sexual perspective to revoke the heteronormative biases that influence the research done on biology and ecology, gender and sexuality.

Teo Ala-Ruona (Kuopio, Finland, 1990) lives and works in Helsinki. He graduated from the Master's Programme in Ecology and Contemporary Performance at Helsinki Theatre Academy (2018) and from the Master's Programme in Art Education at Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture (2016).

Ala-Ruona's work has recently been shown in the Vilnius Biennial of Performance Art (Vilnius, 2023), the Finnish National Gallery Kiasma (Helsinki, 2023), the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London (London, 2023), VEGA Arts (Copenhagen, 2023) the Teatteri Takomo (Helsinki, 2022), Jason Platform (Copenhagen, 2022), Drifts Festival (Helsinki, 2022), Baltic Circle Festival (Helsinki, 2021), Bangkok Biennial (Bangkok, 2020) and NAVEL, Gas gallery and Human Resources (Los Angeles, 2020).

General information

Opening times

Tuesday to Sunday

From 10.00 am to 7.00 pm

Last admission to the foundation thirty minutes prior to closing time

Mondays (except holidays)

Closed

Admission

€14 Concessions:* €7

* Students aged between 15 and 30, visitors aged over 65 and holders of a Biblioteques de Barcelona card

Free admission:

Children under 15 and the unemployed, members of ICOM and CIMAM, Friends and Benefactors (with accreditation)

[Online multimedia guide available for free download](#)

Accessibility



Images and material for the press are available at <https://www.fmirobcn.org/en/foundation/press/> and at: <https://bit.ly/EnsAcompanyaremEspai13>

You can follow Espai 13 activities on social media using the hashtag [#EnsAcompanyaremEspai13](#)

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