



On rau la realitat?

¿Dónde reside la realidad? / Where does reality reside?

**Irene de Andrés, Joan Bennassar Cerdà, Cati Cànoves, Diana Coca,
Daniel Loves The Sodomites, José Fiol, Núria Marquès, Joan Morey, Albert Pinya,
Tomás Pizá, Marta Pujades, Olimpia Velasco, Marcelo Viquez, Nicholas Woods**

Where does reality reside?

The history of contemporary art situates the advent of *Nouveau Réalisme* (new realism) at the end of the 1960s, when the French critic and theorist Pierre Restany proposed this as a name for the work of Yves Klein, Arman, Haines, Spoerri, Tinguely, and others. In spite of Klein's resistance regarding the veracity of the term "Nouveau", the manifesto signed by Restany was presented in Paris and Milan.

The name was fortunate, especially amongst French artists, because the artistic proposal eschewed and barefacedly disowned the Realist style of painting that prevailed in French art, which was sluggish, whilst Abstraction dominated the artistic scene (and market) with (European) Informalism and (American) Expressionism. The main objective of this return to reality focussed on the pre-eminence of the human figure and its objective reality, in order to establish a dialogue between the work and the spectator. This was in opposition to Pop figuration, which flourished on the new art scene of the United States as a current of the English-speaking world that had emerged in London.

Man, his figure, was a statement against the banalization and consumerism of a society which already presented the economic opulence of developed countries and it was emerging as a criticism of the boundless consumerism that dominated all of modern society (Tati and the filmmakers of the *Nouvelle Vague* would be another French example of the break with the predominant languages). The individualization of the artist showed through in this new *ism* which would not hold out for more than a decade, although it made a mark that is still standing. Thus, New Realism emerged as the European wager on the Pop concept, less critical and given over to the trivialization of consumerism.

And so it was that around the newly-born "New Realism", other visual manifestations emerged in parallel which were more "fortunate" than the French-speaking one, for example *Fluxus*, under the high-profile protection of Joseph Beuys and the enthroning of the new technologies (Paik, Vostell), or *Povera*, so-called by the critic Achille Bonito Oliva, still valid today on the Italian art scene. In spite of this, the co-existence of the different movements, with an evidently local profile, impregnated all Art of the '70s and '80s, crossing the frontiers of nationality to assume a presence beyond its place of origin.

Why speak of reality if nobody believes in it any more, much less artists? If we look at the new figuration, we will see how it does not attempt to show reality, because there is no longer a single reality, especially in the face of the atomization of the visual variants.

The list of artists who form part of "Where does reality reside?" is not intended as a review or demand for realism, because it is neither new nor realist. But in spite of everything, the amplification of the Realist echo is curious fifty years on, and with artists born after the decade of changes of the 1960s, when many of us (our parents of course), have not taken on the challenges of that decade and do not question what the hell happened in May of '68 (note that for the Frenchman Bruno Latour, the real cultural changes took place in 1989).

True, the work of these artists is not the heir of those movements, but even so, their work is impregnated with those years that broke the barriers of the avant-garde and moved in new ambiances, which are now consolidated. Years later, the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman would accurately call his essay *Liquid Life*, to describe contemporary society, governed by individualism as a creative and supportive trend in a compromised society. They were times of analysis of modernity and post-modernity.

The same Bauman proposed that, "to regain (albeit for just a moment) its capacity to excite, the artwork must be rescued from grey ordinariness and turned into a unique event, that is to say, into the opposite of the eternal", and because of this, art must serve us as a stimulus to live out new experiences and express them.

With "Where does reality reside?", we propose a new interpretation that centres on the oeuvre of creators associated to the Balearic Islands, specifically artists born between the 1970s and the 1990s whose creative process takes on a figurative route, with a concept of realism. The selection includes proposals based on the pictorial medium, including painting and photography, and is projected through an exploration of others, such as video, installation or performance, which invoke issues such as the individual, gender perspective, the art system, the urban environment and the conflicts that have arisen in the new millennium, amongst other themes.

The exhibition, including works from the Collection and complemented by the work of artists who are not represented in the museum's reserves, is a continuation of Es Baluard's line focussing on a distinct gaze directed towards present-day creation. The selection of works we present – created from 2007 to 2019 – is based on a particular, diffuse and personal reality, detached from any behaviourist movements and open to broad spectrum of meanings.

We begin with the works the museum has in its possession and with no chronological purpose, the drawings of **Marcelo Viquez** (Montevideo, 1971) propose a “classical” interpretation of the visions drawn in Indian ink on paper. This is a series of 21 drawings featuring crows, and the artist names it thus, with a typographical inscription added by way of an encrypted message. The multiple references to Poe, Hitchcock and Corman are appropriate given the symbolism that links this black-feathered animal to modern and contemporary culture.

Speaking of liquid society, Bauman cited nomadism as one of the paradigmatic sociological axes of the whole of today's society. **Olimpia Velasco** (Madrid, 1970) entitles her work *Pulsión Nómada*, and in it she clearly reflects on the spirit of flight. Two drawings give a glimpse of the destiny of the clouded human figure escaping from the scene, with no goal. A metaphor of the liberation (or not) of the human being, breaking the roots that tie it to the place. Velasco's work multiplies the references of this mixed society. Technically, in spite of the classical realism of the two drawings, the object-piece is made using materials as contemporary as resin, polyester and a refined finish, completed with white lacquer. This was the winning work at the Certamen d'Arts Plàstiques Dijous Bo 2016 contest in Inca.

Nicholas Woods (Lynchburg, Virginia, 1971), with *Ghost Rider*, looks at reality from his nomadic vocation, as though the place were not one of belonging, but a shared space. In shadows, a cyclist travels along the street of an urban area which the artist situates in Sóller, his place of residence at that time. Because of the light and the surroundings, the place suggests to us a dilapidated landscape, amongst ruins. In spite of the dazzling light, the image irradiates an impulse between desire and landscape, habitual in the work of that period. Perhaps it is the result of the artist's nomadic experience, which brings to mind the sentence of John Berger, “Today, to try to paint is an act of resistance that satisfies a generalized need and can create hopes”.

In his own way, **Joan Morey** (Sant Llorenç des Cardassar, 1972) is also a nomad, both in his physicality and in the totality of his oeuvre. An activist and performer, Morey's work moves through worlds of his own which he endows with a significance beyond the reality he expresses based on the images (photo, video, objects). His contribution to this exhibition, *Tour de Force*, oscillates between denouncement and representation, always under social commitment. In this case, it is a dissertation on the HIV virus in which he proposes to the public an open reflection on its effects, stigmas, rejections, originated by the expansion of this pandemic the effects of which gave rise to changes in sexual behaviour.

For **Núria Marquès** (Ciutadella, 1975), reality comes from dreams or sleeplessness. Her characters, endowed with that rare personality that arises from the subconscious, as though they were treated from parallel worlds, have that fantastic, disturbing presence that makes them irresistible, endearing. Two series of drawings grouped together under the title “The unfairy tales”: “Lasting impressions” and “Sharing mind diseases”, created between 2007 and 2010, are the result of small, illustrated remnants, ironic or wicked. They are not ghosts or elves, although they could be; they seem inspired by the enigmatic Yūrei, phantasmagorical characters created by Japanese mythology.

By contrast, **Diana Coca** (Palma, 1977), in *Voluntary Martyrdom* from 2012, shows a perverse image of domination, both in aesthetics (the clothing and chains make this explicit) and in development, taking violent action on some objects in the miniscule space, activated with unsettling music like that of Morphine or Enigma. After a time when the artist participates in her performance, another character, dressed up as a panda bear, bursts into the performance to give it a different pace and less aggressive sensations, with rhythms close to *Chi Kung*, with the sound of pieces by Yann Tiersen added. All in the presence of some guests, perhaps to lead one to understand that, at the end of the day, it is a performance.

If **José Fiol** (Palma, 1978), were a Renaissance artist, he would paint events based on their effect on history, their standing as actions that need to be reproduced (painted) in order to immortalize their existence. Clearly, he is not a Renaissance artist, and yet Fiol fixes his gaze on events and characters, some of them anonymous or forgotten, to recover them through his painting. Some have a heroic appearance, whilst others, by contrast, allow one to recover bizarre moments of art, like the one that must have been experienced by the 10 artists who took part in the 1995 performance of which the painter makes his own version. *To lose a performance meter in an anonymous painting* came about after viewing the photograph of the performance in the

Beijing studio of Cang Xin, one of the participants in that collective work. The art market turned this image into artistic merchandise, different in each of the editions the participants produced. Fiol's painting redefines the landscape from three different perspectives.

The *Invisible Cities* of Italo Calvino appear to inspire the work of **Tomás Pizá** (Palma, 1983) with that constant gaze set on the metropolis, a kind of contemporary Babylons in which waste is just another urban element, included in the routes of the passer-by. The conjunction of architecture and painting generates strange connivances and from its result he obtains landscapes of incredible luminosity, neutral or vacuous spaces, like small deserts in a contingent of futile routes, devoid of attractiveness. And yet, in *Arco mediterráneo*, the painter fixes his gaze on those little paradises naked of civilization, as though he wanted to convince us that paradise exists and is in this world, in the bend of a loop on the next motorway.

By contrast, the paintings of **Cati Cànoves** (Manacor, 1983) reveal the existence of a civilization hidden in some of her paintings on wood. Pictures in small dimensions which, forming a triptych or polyptych, unearth characters whose habitat is in the folds of a vortex of colour, revealed with the refinement of a Chinese profile drawer. *El viatge de Leah* is like an evolutionary synthesis of humankind, a palimpsest with anonymous characters, observers of the restless spectator, engaging in dialogue or thoughtful in their world. Maybe they're hallucinating...

The constant debates on beauty in art become boring and innocuous, unnecessary. **Daniel Loves The Sodomites** (Ciutadella, 1990) proposes a return to aesthetics based on his vision of classical mythology. His works set forth rigorous mise-en-scènes in which the artist is the main character, carrying out the performative execution until enveloping the spectator in a kind of sinister, electrifying halo, dominated by a poetics of transgression with an effective use of electronic technology. All that remains for the spectator is to become imbued with that mystery which is presented in his *Danse Macabre*, the maximum expression of hedonism and passion.

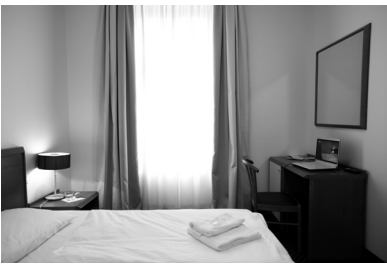
In *Pokoj s vyhledem na more (Room with sea views)* **Irene de Andrés** (Eivissa, 1985) proposes a thought-provoking gaze, not without mystery, of an empty, apparently occupied room, the luminosity and sound of which transmit to us the sensation of a place near the sea. It could be any room in any place; little by little, it reveals moments of dramatic tension, of loneliness, of absence. Produced in 2011 in the Czech Republic, the images of an illusory reality entrap the spectator, tensing that feeling of concealment, of secret, which the work transmits. Which is why it is essential to watch the video until its surprising end.

The work of **Joan Bennassar Cerdà** (Palma, 1991) proposes an easy-going look at the influence social changes have on customs and how culture becomes consumption under the name of entertainment and free time, showing spaces in which simulation substitutes reality. Through three antagonistic visions in space, the phenomenon of mass tourism is staged in three episodes, the existence of which is scheduled to be invaded by those “new barbarians” with the sole aim of living out programmed experiences. However radical it may appear, *The sun is gone but we still have the view* is an example of how real nature and the imitation of it are the metaphor of our times in which, as Guy Deboard wrote, “In a truly inverted world, the truth is a moment of the false”.

Nosaltres by **Marta Pujades** (Palma, 1990) was the work that won the Premi Ciutat de Palma Antoni Gelabert 2016. The work of this artist has evolved on the basis of a photography in which the human figure has always prevailed, both intuited or directly, by way of a portrait. The piece displayed presents seven half-completed portraits, as though they were dependent on a final shot, waiting for the flash to give the image its ultimate meaning. To do so, she installed two flashes mounted with tripod and umbrella, connected to presence sensors that are activated when the spectator approaches to observe the piece. Here, reality is transmitted via the flash the spectator receives, overtaken by curiosity, enhancing the idea of immediate, constant reality.

The creative universe of **Albert Pinya** (Palma, 1985) resides in his own peculiar artistic reality. His painting, sculpture or mural work feeds on a reality that only exists in his own personal conception of art, and confirming that each reality is a new reality. His expressive capacity is reflected in *Coreografía de artefactos pictóricos frente a dos personajes observando un frenesí*, an installation produced for this exhibition, a large-dimension mural which includes eight sculptural elements, creating an ensemble with a great visual and formal impact, subject only to the artist's ability to generate a reality in which the spectator's participation will complete their integration into the artist's own, highly unique world.

Biel Amer



Pokoj s vyhledem na more (Room with sea views), 2011
Installation. Full HD video (single-channel, colour, sound, duration: 7') and a colour photograph. Dimensions variable.
Courtesy of the artist

Her work is the result of complex research processes which she frames using photography, video and installation, media that become the ideal means for exploring, in her early works, the technological processes of creation of light and image associated to the idea of landscape. Irene de Andrés analyses mass



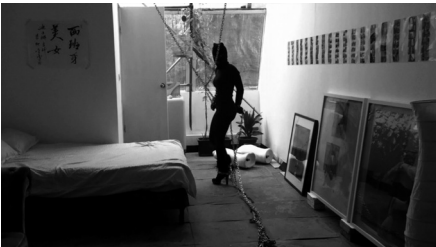
The sun is gone but we still have the view, 2016
Video, single-channel, colour, sound. Duration: 16' 10". Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, donated by the artist

From a multidisciplinary stance, Joan Bennassar Cerdà analyses the representation of the image from the context of architecture and town planning. His projects, made using video, photography, drawing, models and even through mediation actions, turn into narrative strategies that influence how spaces and objects are built and developed, the links between culture, nature and economic structures in today's world. He currently lives and works in both Mexico and Barcelona.



El viatge de Leah, 2013
Acrylic and Indian ink on wood. 40 x 135 cm (triptych)
Private Collection

Since the beginning of her career, painting has been her medium for expression. Her early works reveal her interest in characters, who would be a constant presence in her pieces, first as the principal element and later, evolving towards beings who inhabit somewhere between the fantastic and the real, integrated into complex environments with a profusion of imaginary forms. Forms that are drawn with Indian ink on chromatic backgrounds; works that force spectators to engage in detailed observation. Through her works, Cati Cànoves explores her inner world, defending themes such as the social and environmental situation. She lives and works in Manacor, Mallorca.



Voluntary Martyrdom, 2012
Video HD, single-channel, colour, sound. Duration: 42' 42". Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, donated by the artist

The destruction and construction of reality or the control exercised by all the attributes that contribute to characterising the female body (make-up, high heels...) are recurrent themes in her work, dealt with from the symbiosis between the performance, video and photography. Her body is conceived as object and subject at the same time as she uses herself as the territory for experimentation and subversion, in order to transmit the tension of the concealed, placing emphasis on the slavery of human beings arising from the technological dependence of present-day society. She currently lives and works in both Mallorca and Barcelona.



Danse Macabre, 2017. Video. Single-channel, colour, sound. Videographer: Laura Ribatallada. Duration: 7' 41". Collection of the artist

Performance and video are the main media – alongside poetry and dance – employed by Daniel Loves The Sodomites to make us participants of a universe in which the reality of the representation of gender and sexuality is distorted and altered. An oeuvre in which he deconstructs his identity and analyses the relationships between presence (body), time and space. He uses performance as a field for experimentation on his own ego, his surroundings and the spectator, creating ambiances that are sometimes inhospitable, but also reconciliatory. He lives and works in both Menorca and Barcelona.

Irene de Andrés (Eivissa, 1986)

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To Lose a performance meter in an anonymous painting, 2018
Oil on linen. 160x120 cm. Private Collection

He works on the image with painting and drawing, visual resources that are used as a tool and a conceptual part of the process in which he takes a photographic record as a starting point, in order to extract a different vision of certain historical events that have already been depicted. These files allow him to expand and/or alter the original information, which spectators can recognise easily in order to follow the discourse proposed by the artist, or create a narrative of their own. Together with the artist Tomás Pizá, he manages Trastero 109, an alternative space that generates site-specific projects. He lives and works in Palma, Mallorca.



Lasting impressions, 2007
41 x 32 cm
Sharing mind diseases, 2010
150 x 100 cm
Lasting impressions, 2007
100 x 70 cm
Sharing mind diseases, 2010
50 x 70 cm

Lasting impressions, 2007
50 x 70 cm
Sharing mind diseases, 2009
100 x 70 cm
Mixed media on paper
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma



TOUR DE FORCE, 2017
Installation. Video (single-channel, colour, sound), photograph (giclée print), working documents, traces of the performance and related elements arranged inside showcases. Project in the context of the exhibition "1,000 m2 of Desire: Architecture and Sexuality" at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB). Production: CCCB and Han Nefkens Foundation, in collaboration with the Public Health Agency and the Healthcare Consortium of Barcelona. Courtesy of the artist

enables him to explore the creative act itself, a process whose main axis is the way in which the individual relates to others, the link between "Master-Slave", between the oppressed and the oppressor. He lives and works in Barcelona.



Coreografía de artefactos pictóricos frente a dos personajes observando un frenesí, 2019
Installation made up of a wall painting and eight sculptures made of paint (double layer) and double lacquer on resin and fibreglass:
Artefacto pictórico 1, 2018, 170 x 30 x 30 cm. Drew Aaron & Hana Soukupova Collection, New York/ Mallorca
Artefacto pictórico 2, 2018, 115 x 30 x 30 cm. Courtesy of Galeria Pelaires
Artefacto pictórico 3, 2018, 60 x 40 x 40 cm. Courtesy of Galeria Pelaires
Artefacto pictórico 4, 2018, 56 x 60 x 30 cm. Courtesy of Galeria Pelaires
Artefacto pictórico 5, 2018, 48 x 39 x 18,5 cm. Courtesy of Galeria Pelaires
Artefacto pictórico 6, 2018, 28 x 39 x 7 cm. Courtesy of Martina's Gallery
Artefacto pictórico 7, 2018, 25 x 24,5 x 15 cm. Courtesy of Martina's Gallery
Artefacto pictórico 8, 2018, 20 x 30 x 15 cm. Courtesy of Martina's Gallery
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

labyrinths and optical games that appear to enter and leave the work, between what occurs inside and out of the pictorial medium, playing with the perception of the spectator. Albert Pinya lives and works in Palma, Mallorca.

José Fiol (Palma, Mallorca, 1978)

He works on the image with painting and drawing, visual resources that are used as a tool and a conceptual part of the process in which he takes a photographic record as a starting point, in order to extract a different vision of certain historical events that have already been depicted. These files allow him to

Núria Marquès (Ciutadella, Menorca, 1975)

A multidisciplinary artist, she develops her work using photography, drawing, sculpture and video. Her discourse, which centres on the inner self, deals with the psychological pressures we are subjected to every day and the desire to escape to a permanent state of happiness and create our own permanent artificial paradise. Anxiety, fear and repression are recurrent themes in her research, conceived as the reflex of a society that is too demanding and frenzied and which leads people to extreme situations of mental chaos. She lives and works in Barcelona.

Joan Morey (Sant Llorenç des Cardassar, Mallorca, 1972)

The references to politics, religion, art history, philosophy, film, theatre or the art system itself are characteristic of his work, which is eminently conceptual and bears great intellectual weight. Joan Morey resorts to multiple formats, such as photography, video and other audiovisual communication media, but performance is the main vehicle which en-

ables him to explore the creative act itself, a process whose main axis is the way in which the individual relates to others, the link between "Master-Slave", between the oppressed and the oppressor. He lives and works in Barcelona.

Albert Pinya (Palma, Mallorca, 1985)

His work is in a process of metamorphosis and evolution which leads him towards other media, such as sculpture, the installation, and more recently, video. From the figurative, he has embarked on a journey towards the paths of abstraction. One line of research within his artistic practice centres on the study of the derivation, composition and evolution of painting itself and its corresponding variations, limitations (if indeed it has any) and possibilities. In this regard, he questions his limits beyond the physical framework and introduces geometries,



Arco Mediterráneo 04, 2019
Acrylic on canvas. 290 x 210 cm.
Collection of the artist

Tomás Pizá
(Palma, Mallorca, 1983)

An artist and architect, in pictorial practice he finds a medium through which he delves into a process of personal introspection that materialises in projects which are often linked to literature and the idea of travel. His first work is developed around the idea of ruin as decadence, taken as a starting point in order to reinvent the concept from a purely contemporary stance. This leitmotiv underlies all of his subsequent work and is the background concealed by his figurative – mainly urban – landscapes, which transmit us a loss of condition, at times merely intuited, the result of which are disturb-

ing, inhospitable and solitary places. Together with the artist José Fiol, he manages Trastero 109, an alternative space to the commercial exhibition circuit. He lives and works in Palma, Mallorca.

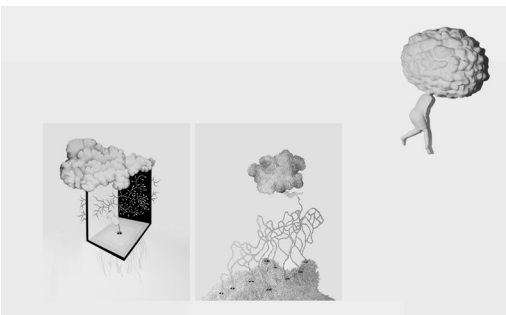


Nosaltres, 2015
Installation. Photography, video (HD single-channel, colour, sound, 11' 50", loop) and interactive lighting elements. Dimensions variable.
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma, Ajuntament de Palma collection long-term loan

Marta Pujades
(Palma, Mallorca, 1990)

The processes by which identity is represented through image define the main axis of Marta Pujades' creative process. Video and photography are the media she employs to articulate her works, which are conceived as mechanisms that activate perception around social construction and subjectivity, the definition

of the individual and the latter's relationship with the rest of society, or the specificity of the photographic medium. She lives and works in Palma.



Pulsión nómada, 2018
Installation. Two drawings (mixed media on paper) and one sculpture (white resin and polyester). Dimensions variable. Ajuntament d'Inca collection

Olimpia Velasco
(Madrid, 1970)

Sculpture, painting, installations, photography, video, performance, but above all drawing – delicately executed – are the media this artist uses to delve introspectively into concepts and emotions which generally speaking, she structures in dualities: time vs.

non-time, the woman-freedom relationship, the correlation between nature and society, and the pairing of roots and displacement are just some of them. Trees, spirals, roots, houses, vegetation, women, brains /clouds are some of the icons that are repeated in her works. She lives and works in Palma, Mallorca.



«Cuervos» Series, 2010
Indian ink on paper. Set of 21 drawings. 29,7 x 21 cm each.
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma



Marcelo Viquez
(Montevideo, Uruguay, 1971)

Viquez makes use of his own biography as a creative resource and faces his obsessions, fears, hopes, desires and above all the experiences he has had. Using drawing, painting, installation, photography and video, he traces a critical portrait of society from a stance which

he himself defines as that of an outsider, always with humour and irony. He lives and works in Palma, Mallorca.



Ghost Rider, 2010
Synthetic polymer on canvas. 240 x 203 cm.
Es Baluard Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani de Palma

Nicholas Woods
(Lynchburg, Virginia, USA, 1971)

The work of Nicholas Woods – developed mainly on the basis of drawing and the pictorial medium – revolves for the most part around two main themes, the natural landscape and eroticism. His creative process, articulated in series, is the result of profound research into the visual perception of nature and the individual, which he formulates using an oneiric figuration that is currently evolving towards a formal reductionism based on which he explores the limits of colour. He lives and works in Mallorca.

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Tuesday to Saturday: 10 - 20 p.m.

Sundays: 10 -15 p.m.

Mondays closed

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