

MÒNICA PLANES

Portfolio 2024

www.monicaplanes.com

Statement

I think about sculpture as an event, always in relation to architecture and dance. I'm interested in the relationship that we establish with the architectures we inhabit. I analyze the way these structures affect our daily behavior and determine the way we perceive our environment and, therefore, how we relate to it. I develop a sculptural practice that seeks to materialize this relationship, as the fusion of the body in motion with architectural structures.

Over the last years, I have developed a work process in two phases. The first phase is performative and consists of defining movements in one or several bodies that relate to each other in a specific material environment; then, in the second phase, these movements are fixed in and with the material using the whole body as a tool. In this way, the work process is completely blind and the sculpture becomes a container that binds and presents the sum of the actions that have resulted in it. Thus, the potentiality of the sculpture is in the body and therefore, what is important is the way the body moves rather than the final shape of the sculpture.

Lately, this work process starts from a collective research phase in which we investigate the possibilities of body movement in relation to some materials such as concrete, hay, different kind of fats or coal. The work is usually formalized in sculptural installations that unfold in the space like choreographies, showing the possibilities of movement of the body in the exhibition space.



Exits, 2024

Gaza, plaster, vegetable fat, charcoal and chairs

210 cm x 30 x 50 cm each / 50 x 110 x 250 cm with chair each

Installation views at the Patio Herreriano Museum in Valladolid next to Works by Francesc Ferreras and Lucio Muñoz

Project commissioned by the Patio Herreriano Museum for the exhibition 'Replica Turn. A question of skin' curated by Javier Hontoria

Exits are the materialized path of two people who are initially sitting next to each other with their legs touching. The process consists on them moving with repetitive movements for between 2 and 8 hours depending on their starting position until they get up and get out of the chairs.

The pieces are made of plaster bands that solidify quickly, fixing the shape of the moving bodies, which move non-stop to create space and avoid becoming stuck in the plaster without being able to get out of it. Shape arises from within, pushing outward and forward. The drying times of the material in relation to the movements of their bodies generate the shapes of the sculptures. The images are gathered one after the other as time goes by.

The pieces are covered with vegetable fat and charcoal. Fat has also been used to lubricate the bodies and facilitate their movement in contact with the material.

Exits are presented on the chairs where the people who shaped them sat and who are no longer there: they are gone, but they have left the trace of their movement.

Anna Sevilla, Helena Ripoll, Mikel Adán, Milena Rossignoli and Àlex Palacín have participated in the production of these pieces.









Work process during the workshop given in Bulegoa z/b, Bilbao
Photo: Silvia Copola



Towards with the arm (wall), 2023

Two pieces of compressed hay and corrugated steel rods

300 x 100 x 85 cm (aprox. each)

Views of the installation in La Casa Encendida

Madrid

Project produced with the aid of Montemadrid Foundation's 2023 Generaciones Award

Towards with the arm (wall) is the first project of a sculptural investigation into affective relationships with the environment that is articulated from the idea of the wall. The wall is taken as a constructive element of both domestic and urban environments, which unites and protects but at the same time separates and isolates by modifying the possible relationships between bodies.

The project is formalized in a sculptural set where the relationship of a group of people with respect to the possibilities of certain materials is explored in a performative way, first, and materially afterwards: concrete is the starting point, straw is the material that enters into dialogue with concrete and iron. Straw is the material that supports and structures the other two. Taking reinforced concrete as a reference, a technique on which current architecture is based, this methodology is applied to straw, a material with almost opposite characteristics. Hay has neither beginning nor end, with an undefined form and it melts. It is therefore about being in this tessitura and managing to sustain a body with such characteristics, even if it is not entirely possible because no matter how much one holds on to it, it always ends up collapsing.





Towards with the arm (wall), 2023
Installation views at La Casa Encendida, Madrid





Photos: Roberto Ruiz

Pelvis, 2022
6 bread formwork with cement mortar
50 x 50 x 30 cm
Barcelona

Exhibition with Alejandro Palacín at La Infinita, curated by Núria Gómez Gabriel within the CREA Festival in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat

Price: 3000 euros + IVA each 'Pelvis'

Pelvis is a series of six bread sculptures that record the shape of the space left between two moving pelvises locked in different positions. The bread dough grows inside the cement mortar mold inside the oven and takes the shape of the space previously formed by the two bodies.







Pila (Battery), 2022

Water, mortar, bread, fire, coal and cast iron

Installation views in mNACTEC's steam engine room,
Terrassa

Project produced in collaboration with the mNACTEC, Museum of Science and Technology of Terrassa as part of the Past / Present cycle curated by Frederic Montornés

Pila (Battery) is the beginning of a research into combustible materials that aims to think of sculpture as having the ability to store energy and transform it into movement. It consists of a work process in the form of a chain of events. This chain starts with the body in motion and materializes in mortar. Then mortar is transformed through different sculptural techniques into different combustible materials as bread or coal. When moving from one phase to another of this process, the previous sculpture disappears to give way to the next. The cast iron sculpture is the last and therefore the one that keeps the memory of this process. Sculpture is an event.

Battery (bread), 2022

Bread moulded with cement mortar / steel table
58 x 76 x 26 cm / 120 x 66 x 90 cm. (with table)



Battery (mortar), 2022
Movement of two pelvises fixed in mortar / steel table
58 x 76 x 26 cm / 120 x 66 x 90 cm. (with table)



Battery (bread), 2022
Bread moulded with cement mortar / steel table
58 x 76 x 26 cm / 120 x 66 x 90 cm. (with table)



Battery (iron), 2022
Carbonized and melted bread in iron / steel table
58 x 76 x 26 cm / 120 x 66 x 90 cm (with table)



Nudo y beso (Knot and kiss), 2022

In collaboration with Milena Rossignoli, Elionora Locatelli, Jacopo Casamenti and Federico Grilli

Gelateria Sogni di Giacchio

Bologna

Nudo y beso (Knot and kiss) is a process of relationship between different bodies and a mattress that is articulated through reinforced concrete. Over the past year, I have begun to develop a two-phase work process through which I investigate the relationship between movement and form: movements that are interpreted in relation to the material being used, by way of the body as a tool, resulting in a sculptural form that brings together and presents the experience of movement. That is to say, sculpture is the materialization of a chain of actions: what can be seen of the sculpture is visible because it has happened previously. These actions are not represented, but presented. In this case, the sculptures bring together the experience of a group of people's relationships with each other and in relation to a mattress and reinforced concrete.

These are the first tests in which I investigate the idea of wall with a group of people.

Towards with the arm (you), 2022

Cement mortar and mattress cover

50 x 25 x 30 cm



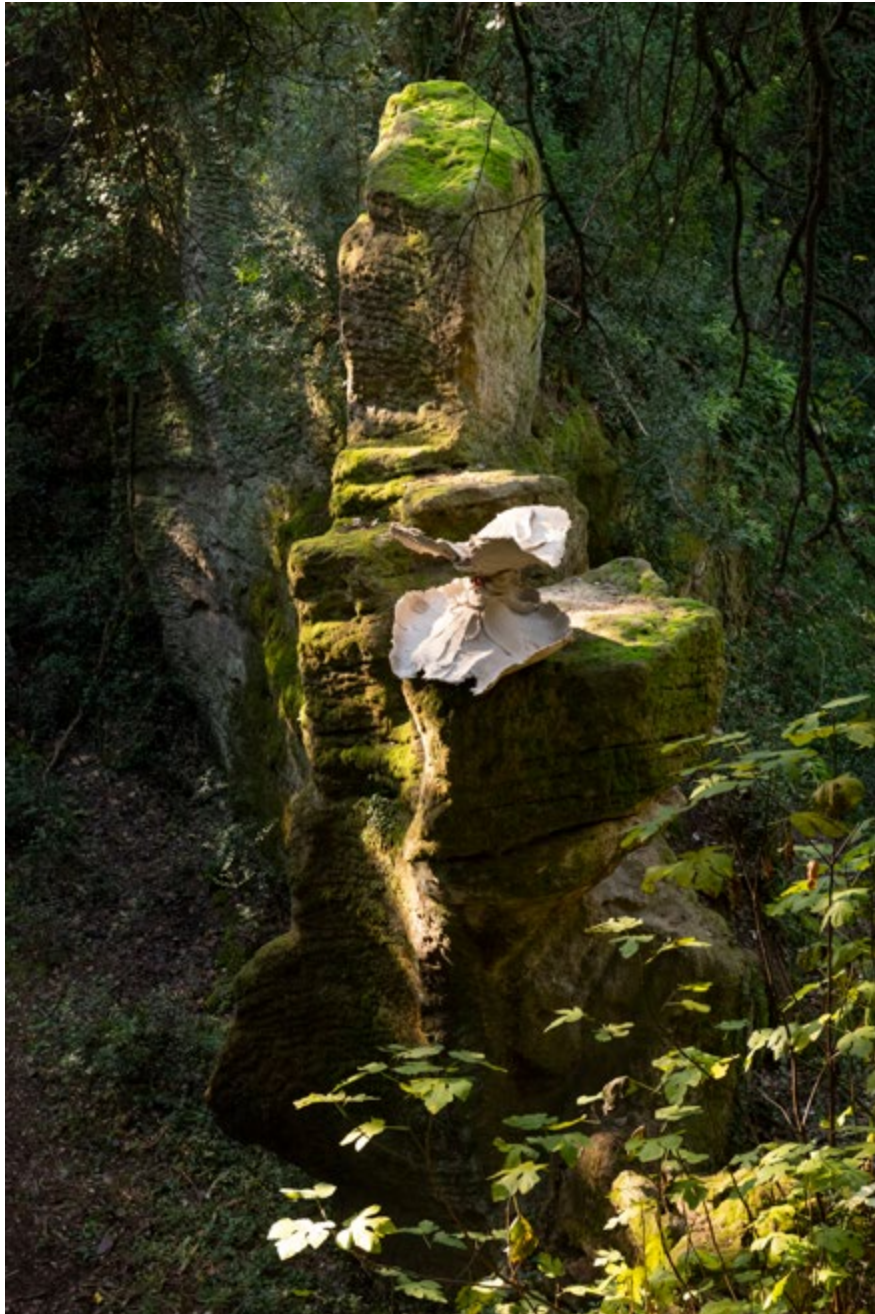
Wall, 2022
Mattress and cement mortar, 190 x 200 x 120 cm



Knot and kiss, 2022
Cement mortar, 190 x 45 x 40 cm



Towards with the arm (you), 2022
Cement mortar and mattress cover, 50 x 25 x 30 cm



Boques (Mounths), 2021
Curated by Pipistrello
Clots de Sant Julià, Baix Empordà
Catalunya

Mounths is a site-specific sculptural installation in dialogue with an Iberian quarry located in a forest in northern Catalonia. The material was extracted from this quarry to build one of the first Iberian cities in the area. *Mounths* is research into the relationship between the presence and the past action through movement. It is done by bringing to the limit the relation between the gestural meaning and the shape of the sculpture. To do so, I have developed a two-step work process that reveals this tension. The first step is performative and consists of defining movements in the body which then, in the second sculptural step, are fixed in by way of the material using the whole body as a tool. Thus, the sculptures which belong to the installation are made of reinforced concrete, a material used to build much of our cities. Its shape is the result of the movement of opening and making the space that gave rise to the quarry. In this way, a dialogue between the past and the present, full and empty, inside and outside is proposed.

Open cover, 2021
Cement mortar reinforced with steel
120 x 90 x 90 cm



Bocas (manos, brazos y piernas), 2021
Mortero armado con vigas de acero
Medidas variables



Bocas (manos), 2021
Mortero armado con viga acero
25 x 25 x 25 cm, 4,5 m en barra de acero







Towards with the arm (forward), 2021
Cement mortar
50 x 30 x 30 cm



Towards with the arm (inside), 2021
Cement mortar reinforced with steel, 40 x 25 x 25 cm



Open cover, 2021
Cement mortar reinforced with steel, 40 x 25 x 25 cm



A Phantom Heart, 2021
Installation in the angels barcelona gallery
Curated by Margot Cuevas
Barcelona

A Phantom Heart is a sculptural investigation into the relationship between movement and form articulated through cement, a material that can take any appearance, any shape; cement is at the origins of the first human settlements and since has served the desires and needs of each era. It is a research on the relationship we currently establish between our body and other bodies in this context and on what kind of physical and mental experience this material allows; hence the sculptures originate from friction with the environment. That is, the work process consists of a first performative phase where movements that make reference to the process of making cement are defined. In a second phase, these movements are applied to a mountain of sand from which the pieces are born and fixed with cement. Therefore, the technique is that of imitation, bringing the movement of cement to the body to understand its behaviour and obtain a return. Among the possibilities cement offers, some are proper to itself, thus the boundaries between sculptor and sculpture are blurred and all that remains of this relationship is the distance (or contact) between them.



(,)(, 2021
Cement mortar
View of the installation in the gallery angels Barcelona



)(, 2021
Cement mortar and precast concrete
100 x 90 x 90 cm



l. / l., 2021
Cement mortar
View of the installation in the gallery angels Barcelona



l. / l., 2021
Cement mortar and precast concrete
150 x 130 x 45 cm, 150 x 100 x 30 cm



(), 2021
Cement mortar
150 x 150 x 90 cm



Gravel heart. Gravel with cement mold, 30 x 30 x 30 cm
Sand heart. Cement mortar with sand mold, 30 x 30 x 30 cm

Photos: Roberto Ruiz

Affiliate buildings. The Mixer and Cement, 2020

Cement, mortar, concrete and water

Installation at Can Felipa Civic Center

Barcelona

Project carried out with Ajudes d'Arts Visuals del Centre Cívic Can Felipa and the Grant for research and innovation in the fields of visual arts of the Generalitat de Catalunya, 2020

Affiliate Buildings. The Mixer and Cement is an investigation into a material that despite being very present in our daily lives, presents itself as a great unknown: cement. A material that we think we know and can recognise, for its use and abuse – in a very specific way – in urban environments. Cement is a complex material, that insulates, protects and closes in on itself. Despite its hardness, it is dependent: it requires another material such as sand, gravel or iron to begin the process of hardening. Although it can be perceived as opaque, dense, thick, hard, heavy and even, sometimes obtuse; cement transits an infinity of states: from minute particles of dust, soft like flour, to robust solid blocks like stone.

The exhibition consists of a set of sculptures that open and close; they bring us from within towards the outside. We will find cement conglomerates of dust, sand, gravel, concrete and mortar... in different appearances and phases that share a common denominator: water. Water is what bestows and provides cement with movement. It gives it strength and allows for it to change completely, both its interior and exterior structure; to the point of modifying its appearance as water absorbs and expels it. Cement is also a docile and amiable material, that moulds itself to whatever models it changing its state and appearance. We will see there is a structure that repeats itself: the fountain, since the process of hardening of cement is above all a process of channelling water. We will also find molds and structures usually used in construction work, and a constant, the presence of 'hearts' that scattered in the room accompany us, besides showing us different states of cement, anticipating 'cycle' and 'gesture'. The gesture of kneading cement with force, drawing circles and the cycle of life of cement, which at the same time as it needs to be nourished by water, it also needs to get rid of it.

Claudia Elies



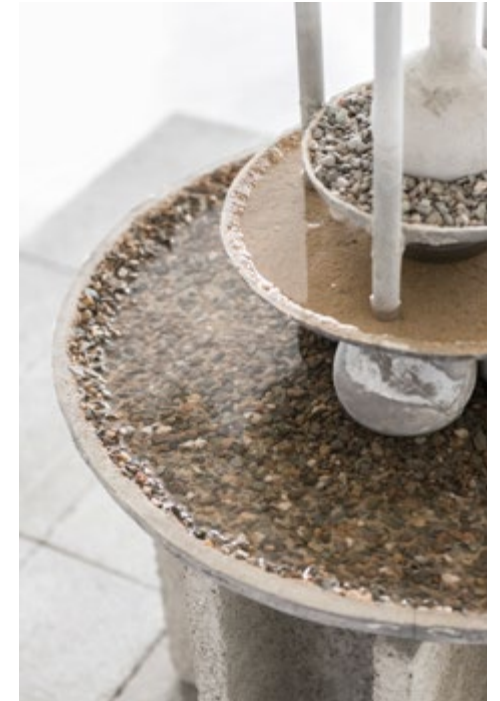
Channel / pillar, prefabricated cement pipes, 30 x 30 x 150 cm
Scrub, mortar tubes with sand mold, 10 x 10 x 120 cm
Concrete mixer, turned cement mortar, variable mesures





Concrete mixer, 2020
Turned cement mortar

Fountain of sleep, 2020
Precast concrete, concrete, mortar, cement
and water. 200 x 200 x 300 cm
Views of the installation at the Can Felipa



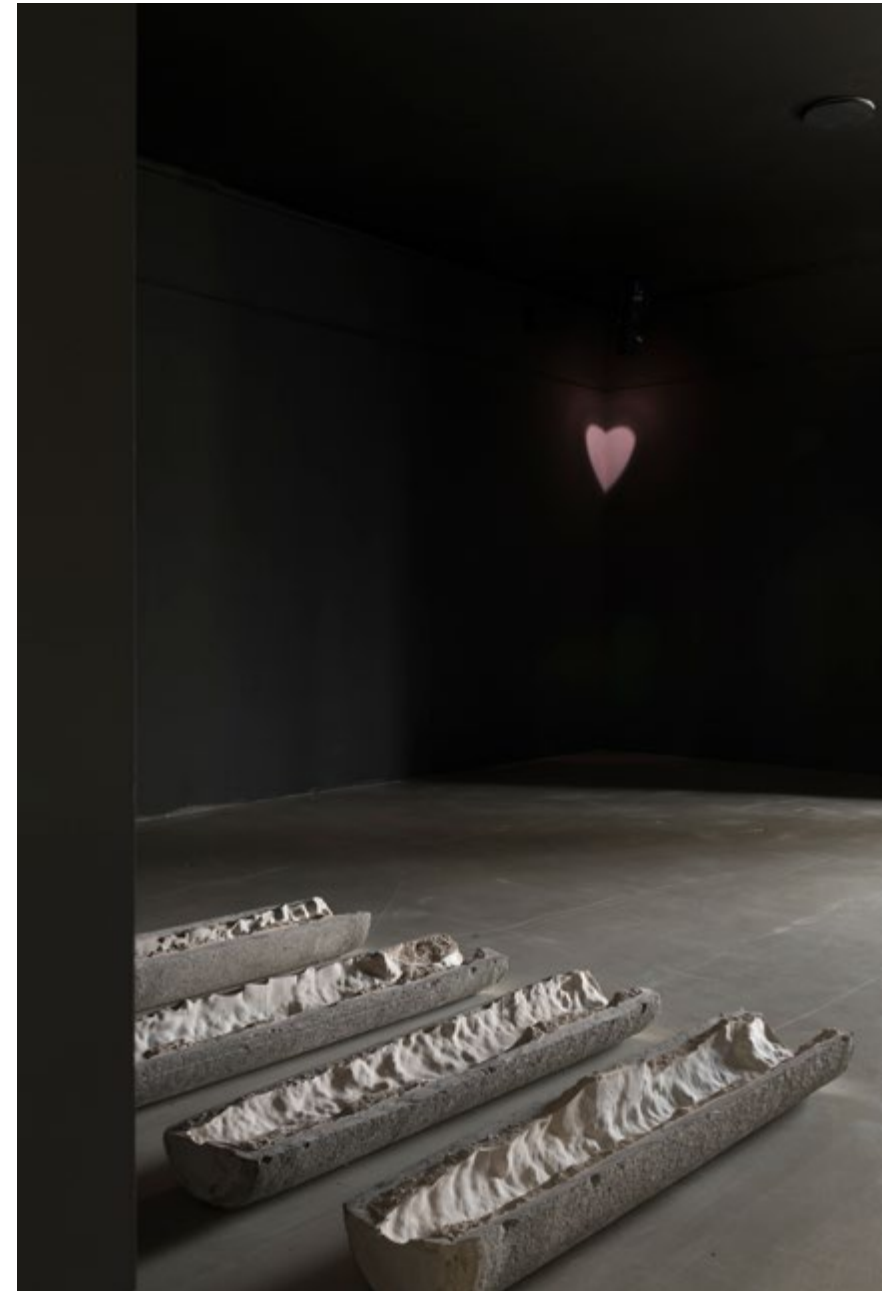
Fountain of sleep, 2020
Detail



Offering (support), 2020
prefabricated concrete pipe and concrete
25 x 25 x 150 cm



Offering (flexion), 2020
Cement mortar, cement and water
160 x 55 x 25 cm



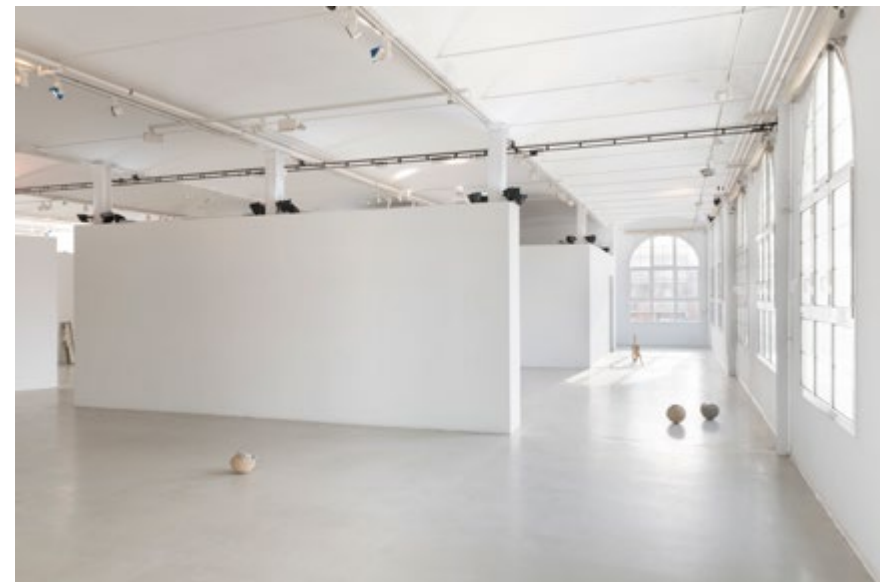
Cuts (of shame), 2020
prefabricated concrete pipes, concrete, mortar and cement
Variable measures



Vigil fountain, 2020
prefabricated cement, sand, mortar and water. 250 x 200 x 200 cm



Offering (abdominal), 2020
mortar and sand mold,
30 x 50 x 100 cm



Affiliate Buildings. The Mixer and Cement, 2020
Views of the installation at the Can Felipa Civic Center



Skeletal archetypes, 2019-2020

Curved iron tube and chains, curved iron plate and spring
Barcelona and Madrid

Project carried out with Ayudas Injuve a la Creación Joven 2018 - 2019

Skeletal archetypes are three sculptural elements based on theoretical research into the origins and evolution of children's play areas – playgrounds (*Danced History of Playgrounds*). These spaces are taken as a starting point for thinking about the relationship between body and object, and the effect the structures we live in have on us. This inquiry developed into movement research, resulting in the formalization of this sculptural ensemble.

These sculptures are a return to matter and form after passing through the sieve of the body. In this way, they materialize a corporeality derived from contact with specific playgrounds, most of which no longer exist. They are based on those playgrounds in which the traditional structures - slide, swing and balance - organize and drive body movement while determining a type of thinking, conditioned by a specific form. These archetypes originated in the late 19th century and have been reproduced in countless dimensions, materials and shapes up to the present day. These sculptures are made of curved iron tube to evoke the original structures of the nineteenth century. They seek to relate material manipulation, which requires a premeditated mental process, with these playgrounds' movement, designed before the body could come to think of it.



Skeletal archetypes (arms)
Curved iron tube and chain,
170 x 40 x 50 cm



Skeletal archetypes (back)
Curved iron tube and plate,
180 x 40 x 100 cm



Skeletal archetypes (waist)
Curved and spring iron tube,
170 x 50 x 150 cm



Skeletal archetypes (Arms, back and waist)
Details

Photos: Patricia Nieto



Danced History of Playgrounds. Views of the performance at the MACBA, 2021



Publication *Danced History of Playgrounds* that brings together the content of the research, 2020

Danced History of Playgrounds, 2018-2020
Performance, 60 "
MACBA, Barcelona

Art Jove 2018 research project, co-produced by MACBA, Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art, and Sala d'Art Jove of the Generalitat de Catalunya

Danced lecture based on a sculptural research into the origin and evolution of children's play areas - playgrounds. These spaces are taken as a starting point for thinking about the relationship between body and object, and the effect the structures we live in have on body and mind.

Through dance the history of playgrounds is told, thus establishing a dialogue between voice and movement. Movement arises from detaching gestures of play structures, whilst referring to different moments of this history, hence making visible psychomotor proposals these structures entail. The evolution of playgrounds is presented as the story of gestures that change depending on the context. And this collection of gestures builds a dance.

Text: Mònica Planes

Choreography: Melania Henrich and Mònica Planes

Dance: Melania Henrich

Music: Alejandro Palacín

Performance video: https://youtu.be/Q8ex8_kqSnU

Història ballada del playground

1. Presentació

2. 1880 - 1930: orígens del *playground*.

Els primers *playgrounds* són un producte de les ciutats industrials.

- 2.1. Circulació i respiració, sang i aire
- 2.2. Higiene i moral
- 2.3. *Playgrounds* i Grans exposicions
- 2.4. Forma
- 2.5. Tobogan

s. XV Muntanya de gel /
1854 Muntanya russa dels
Camps Elisis, Barcelona /
Tobogan



2.6. Gronxador

Gronxador /
Rotary Swings /
Cross Scales de Richter
Spielgeräte
Parc de Diagonal Mar



2.7. Balança

Balança romana - grua /
La Talaia del Tibidabo /
Balança d'un playground



2. Nova York 1930 - 1940: context de la Gran Depressió.

Els *playgrounds* que es van construir buscaven protegir, controlar, aïllar, homogeneitzar la població en crisi. Comencen a haver-hi algunes propostes alternatives.

- 2.1. Robert Moses (Connecticut, 1888 - Nova York, 1981)
- 2.2. Isamu Noguchi (California, 1904 - Nova York, 1988)

1930's
Robert Moses
Central Park Playground
Nova York, Estats Units

1933
Isamu Noguchi
Model for Play Mountain
No realitzat (a Manhattan)



1945
Carl Theodor Sørensen
Empdrup Junk Playground
Copenhague, Dinamarca

1948
Aldo Van Eyck
Zaanhof Playground
Amsterdam, Holanda



4. 1960 - 1980: Moment àlgid del *playground*.

En el context del Baby Boom i de l'augment massiu de les ciutats, els *playgrounds* passen a ser necessaris, sobretot a les noves perifèries. Propostes molt atractives, escultòriques, realitzades amb nous materials industrials.

- 4.1. Group Ludic (París, 1968)
- 4.2. Charles Forberg (Estats Units, 1919 - 2013)

1968
Group Ludic
Sous-Marin
Diverses localitzacions, França

1969
Charles Forberg
Cypress Hill Playground
Brooklyn, Estats Units



5. 1980 - present: a partir dels anys 80 la construcció de *playgrounds* específics entra en decadència a causa de la normativa pública i de l'augment de les empreses que els produeixen en massa. El context artístic és un espai que permet propostes alternatives.

- 5.1. Kompan (Dinamarca, 1970)
- 5.2. Superflex (Copenhague, 1993)

2018
Kompan
www.kompan.com
Diverses localitzacions,
tot el món

2018 Superflex
One, two, three Swing!
Tate Modern, Londres



6. Conclusió



Gestures, 2019. Video 1'16 "
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZuL5wlojPc&feature=emb_logo



Out of place. View of the installation in the Design Museum, Barcelona

Out of Place. Plaça de les Glòries: Route, Gesture and Object, 2018 - 2019
Installation in the Design Museum of Barcelona
Barcelona

Project carried out in collaboration with 11th grade students from the Juan Manuel Zafra Institute in the framework of the 10th edition of Creators IN RESIDENCE at the institutes of Barcelona, a program of the Institut de Cultura of Barcelona and the Barcelona Education Consortium, conceived in cooperation with the association A Bao A Qu.

Out of place is a project that starts from an exploration of Plaça de les Glòries with students of the Juan Manuel Zafra high school. We did an excursion while the square was under construction and we got to discover the material that makes up the city in different states: in some parts still shapeless — in sacks, stacked, wet, in the process of becoming something — and in other parts, already transformed into the elements we recognize on a day to day basis while we inhabit the public space.

The project is formalized in a sculptural set in which each element arises from relating the materials from the square's construction works with everyday objects — those we could find (em sembla bé, què és el que et falla? Podria ser we can find?) at the Design Museum- which invited the body to movements such as grabbing, hitting, picking up, turning, stretching, resting, or dumping. That is, through household objects with which we establish a quick bond, a habitual body movement, a familiar experience arises. We worked with the materials in (això sí que no ho sé, a mi em sona bé, these materials found in the square?) the square to explain our lived experience that day. The installation is complemented by the recording of a choreography based on different gestures that make up the sculptures.



To let go, 2019.
Iron, steel profiles and 4 struts. 160 x 70 x 100 cm
160 x 70 x 100 cm



Auca de Granada (in four revolving doors), 2018 - 2019
Turned and warped pottery with cement, plaster, turned wood and steel
Granada, Sant Marçal de Quarantella and Barcelona

Project produced for the III Alhambra Beer Prize for Emerging Art during ARCO 2019

The three concepts that make up the chosen title offer, from a literal point of view, all the information that we may need to place ourselves in front of this sculptural installation. In first place, we have the “auca”, a reference culturally linked to Catalonia that unites art and crafts, in order to announce a narrative method. Then Granada marks the context and defines the location. Finally, the specification in parentheses - the real title - reveals a continuous movement, thus vindicating a performative condition in which lies the common thread of the project. (em sembla bé també)

Mònica Planes offers us an objectual auca that comes into play in a particular way in four architectural styles representative of Granada. Chosen by the artist after analyzing and traversing them in one of her trips to the city, the four architectures synthesize an important part of the history of the city: a Bañuelo of the Ziri period (11th century), the Alcazaba of the Alhambra of the Nazarene period (13th century), the Casa Horno de Oro of the Moorish period (15th century) and, finally, the Palacio Carvajal, a Mannerist building dating back to the 16th-17th century.

In short, we see how the direct experience of each architecture is the leitmotiv that leads the artist to establish a set of fortuitous relationships between ceramics and some significant materials for the construction and subsequent evolution of the selected buildings. In her installation, each one of these spaces will be represented by a body of turned pottery divided into two parts: one base and a deck. Precisely, it will be this area of friction between the two pieces where the artist decided to add the material that will facilitate or sustain the union between them. In different ways, ceramic will coexist with cement, plaster, wood and iron.

David Armengol



Bañuelo
Periodo Zirí
siglo XI



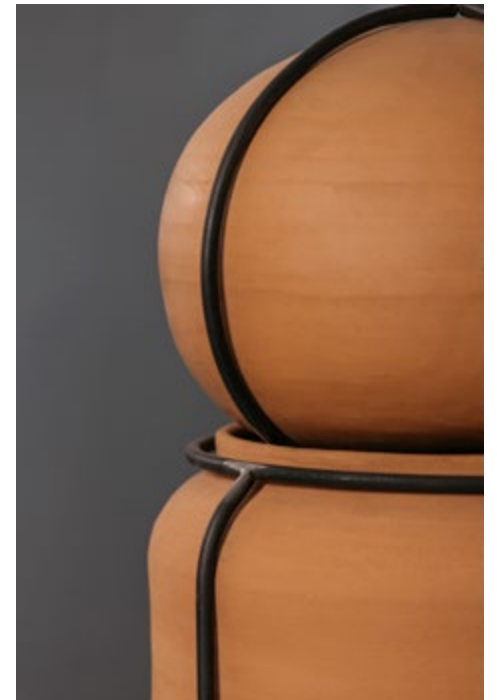
Alicazaba
Periodo Nazarí
siglos XI - XIII



Casa Horno de Oro
Periodo Morisco
siglo XV



Palacio Carvajal
Periodo Manierista
siglos XVI - XVII



àngels barcelona gallery

c/ Pintor Fortuny, 27
08001 Barcelona

+34 93 412 54 00
info@angelsbarcelona.com

www.angelsbarcelona.com

Mònica Planes Castán

C/ Leonardo da Vinci 21, 3
08901 L'Hospitalet de Llobregat

+34 626225825
monica_planes@hotmail.com

www.monicaplanes.com

46415307 L