

made a mini-circus that was immortalized by the camera of Jean Painlevé, and this idea of recording and using technology to situate ourselves in the place of the other appears in the works of Francis Alÿs and Marcel·lí Antúnez.

Regarding photographic works from different viewpoints, Joan Ramon Bonet and Guillermo Srodek-Hart draw on the context of proximity. The latter approaches his work not only from an anthropological point of view but is also concerned with the passage of time and death in surroundings that are destined to disappear. The trades, traditions and industrial uses imposed on animals by us, mark a new era in the evolution of our relationship with them in which also appear two other major themes: food and bioethics, both represented recurrently in the work of Eduardo Kac and Rosalía Banet.

Pests and plagues have also accompanied the history of our civilization, as Eugenio Ampudia reminds us with his installation featuring cockroaches. Another piece by this artist is *El perro de Tonetty*, which, besides alluding to the idea of the monumental equestrian statue, offers us a way to talk about the domestication and humanization of animals. In a similar vein, Levi Orta plays with the idea of social status with the story of Gunther IV, the richest dog in the world, and Guy Maddin, with Spanky, brings up the subject of mourning in relation to pets.

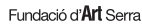
The exhibition is complemented by a documentary component with different graphic and photographic takes supplied by three artists; Auguste André Lançon, David Douglas Duncan and Walter Chandoha, who were forerunners of the iconography and trends of current modes of transmitting and detecting the symbiotic and millennial relationship between human and non-human animals.

At a broader level, the Education, Mediation and Artistic team at Es Baluard has worked on information handouts on the show's contents and artists, which will serve as the basis for the educational and social activities that we will carry out while the exhibition is on and which will reach out to people from different social groups and circumstances. This is a new thematic exhibition which, like "Ciutat de vacances", is attuned to problems and developments in society, and via the optic of non-human animals analyses the issues of today and the concerns of tomorrow.

**Nekane Aramburu, curator**

Dates of exhibition:  
21/09/2018 - 03/02/2019

**ESBALUARD** | museu d'art modern  
i contemporani de palma



## THEM AND US

The curatorial thesis of "Them and Us" presents the symbiotic and simultaneously contradictory relationship between the animal world and human societies, from their designation based on the pre-Darwinian distinction which differentiates "humans" from "animals" to the revision of the more significant social, economic and legislative changes, as well as aesthetical and advertising tendencies and lines of thought and ecological alterations.

In this way the exhibition analyses the evolution of the relationship of humans and non-human animals through a series of contemporary artistic projects and historical reference works, taking into account the contradictions implanted over centuries of co-habitation and the transformations brought about by the anti-specist movements.

The works that make up the exhibition suggest reflections surrounding the different ecosystems, industries, leisure and trades, the domestic and the emotional, sport and circus, myths and traditions, torture and hunting, feeding or bioethics, or as metaphors of the art medium itself. As well as the exhibitive format, the project "Them and Us" integrates the cultural complex of the Es Baluard museum (based on associated artistic works, dog zones, feline colony and birdwatching) with the dynamics of our immediate surroundings, peculiarities and progress that has been promoted in the Balearic (organisational, legislative and ecological) sphere, analysing the present and looking to the future at a time when an accelerated change in awareness is taking place.

The exhibition was conceived on the basis of extensive research initiated by the curator in previous periods, during which she established a work system that is transversal to the different areas of the museum implicated in the gestation process of the project. In this way "Them and Us" integrates questions that are absolutely topical, inserted into the exhibition and guiding the final selection of the works and the mediation actions. By the same token, work has been conducted with pro-animal life associations, professionals from different fields, foundations and public and private entities.

Descartes' theory of the machine-animal based on the idea *Cogito ergo sum* disregarded pain and death in animals. However, from the late 19th century on, other thinkers like Frederick Nietzsche, Georges Bataille or later Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari began to consider their otherness. With "Them and Us", we have sought to link different viewpoints and to do so via artworks. An extensive cartography that adheres to those mapped out over recent years by museums or collectives linked to contemporary creation, generating approaches that go beyond the aesthetics of applying ethics.

The lines we deal with imply certain basic questions which we will also work on over the months of the exhibition. From the human viewpoint, we deal with bonds (for example, through grief from loss, therapy for humans or humanisation of

domestic animals), diet and bioethics, leisure and professions (such as zoologists, bullfighting, circus, hunting, advertising, film, tourism, etc.), iconography (representing traditions, myths and other elements of popular culture), invasive species and mutation, urban and marine ecosystems and legislation (cases of sanctions/cruelty, feeding animals in the street, civic awareness or the trafficking of species).

Based on the viewpoint of the non-human animal, we deal with the right to life, dependence, the humanisation of pets, the binomial destruction-extinction of the ecosystem or habitat and climate change. Above all, the transversal lines developed on the basis of museum mediation are torture, the sacred, dependence, the anthropomorphic and communication-language.

In addition, we are interested in revealing the different historical treatment there has been of non-human animals in cultures of east and west, of the northern and southern areas of the planet, thus emphasizing the peculiarities of the Balearic Islands as a privileged place in the Mediterranean, between cultures of the north and cultures of the south.

### **Proposal for a possible exhibition**

The starting point for this project was the fact that the Es Baluard collection contains works by creators who have in some way used the theme of animals throughout their artistic process. Miquel Barceló uses the representation of animals as still lifes and motifs in many of his works, and Picasso used both animal symbolism and direct references to animals in scenes of ritual and death. They also appear in the anthropological documentation of Joan Ramon Bonet, as well as in the photographic conceptualism of Juan del Junco's ornithological investigations and the interplay of gazes in the work of Amparo Garrido, while Joana Vasconcelos often appropriates ceramics to explore second skins made from crochet covering crabs, reptiles, insects and larger animals.

Upon this a discourse was constructed in order to delve deeper into the history of art and produce a study which, dispensing with explicit imagery, would be of value as an analysis and to increase social and cultural awareness both from the aspect of non-human animals as well as that of humans.

Religion, mythology, legends, fables and fairy stories all undertook to immortalize unforgettable anthropomorphic images and scenes which have become part of the human collective unconscious. Archaeological excavations have clearly revealed this, as seen in the representations of bulls found in Talaiotic temples. The painting attributed to Giuseppe Dardanone showing a sea monster and the picture of Romulus and Remus by Jacques-Laurent Agasse are also examples. Likewise, for many years, as painting became more wide-spread, the nobility and the upper classes commissioned portraits, hunting scenes and still lifes to adorn their homes. In the "Nins" section of the collection, we can observe the fre-

quent appearance of pets in works which also reveal the bonds they create with children. The social satire reflected in *Los Caprichos* by Goya uses messages that portray eighteenth-century society. Something which much later Paloma Pájaro also gave us in her paintings *Zoosofías* with respect to today's society. A documentary element also appears in period painting; there is nothing sadder nor more allegorical of the future to come than a whale stranded on a beach, as the painting by Esaias Van de Velde shows.

With this project we are aiming for a dialogue between different currents of art; thus the beached whale can be viewed alongside videos by Eulàlia Valldosera, who has for many years been looking into extrasensory connections, so here we see it accompanied by whales, dolphins, penguins and jellyfish.

Each is reflected in the other; they are both mirror and subject. The butterfly by Rebecca Horn and the Miró bird also draw us into this interplay.

In their own domains – land, sea and air – non-human animals live out the cycle of their lives, while at the dawn of mankind man depended on them; they provided food for survival, tools for working, ritualistic associations and companionship. Hunting was a necessity and not a sport, as pointed out in the work of Marie Voignier with her images of safaris in Africa. Veru Iché reflects on the nature of human violence by introducing several elements in an installation which includes a taxidermied bear.

Some of the most prominent artists of the twentieth century have appropriated animals precisely as metaphorical or physical entities. As in the case of Damien Hirst, who has been at the centre of several controversies. In a different sense, the poetic subtlety of creators like Joan Jonas inspects the magical mystery of the relationship between animals and humans from the perspective of poetic performative action and subliminal images.

There is also the celebrated and legendary performance piece by Joseph Beuys, in which he explained pictures to a dead hare from inside a gallery; a fundamental development in the understanding of the function and meaning of creation.

Communication is a question that has been exhaustively dealt with in contemporary art. Juan Luis Moraza lays bare the codes and colours that nature adopts for its survival in his installation, while drawing our attention to the functioning of ecosystems. This relationship becomes more evident by watching the video by Amparo Garrido alongside the painting of an orangutan by Agasse. Wild animals uprooted from their habitat end their lives in zoos or circuses; they become labourers in an enforced marginalization which leads to dependence. Many will still remember the chimpanzee Adán, who drowned in a local sewage works after escaping from a zoo in Sa Coma, despite the Balearic Islands being a leading region in the field of animal protection. Paloma Navares decries captivity with an exceptional piece from 1984, where she created a closed loop of a caged tiger. With very simple resources Calder