

ANDALUSIA, 8 JUNE 2022

The Andalusian Centre for Contemporary Art presents the exhibition “Strange” with works by the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation.

The exhibition includes works by thirty international artists, nineteen of whom are women. The exhibition, with ample installations, paintings, videos, sculptures and drawings, is set up in the North Cloister and Monumental Area.

The Andalusian Centre for Contemporary Art (CAAC) presents the exhibition *Extraño* (Strange), which features works by 30 international artists from the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, comprised mainly of women.

This exhibition is part of a major institutional project organised by the Andalusian Centre for Contemporary Art and the Patio Herreriano Museum. The varied and simultaneous exhibitions feature an unprecedented display of the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo collection, thus commemorating 30 years of art collecting.

The Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation is a non-profit contemporary art institution based in Turin, Italy, founded by art collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo.

The CAAC exhibition occupies the broad areas of the North Cloister as well as the entire Monumental Area. It is made up of impressive installations, as well as drawings, paintings, sculptures, video installations and textiles among other disciplines. Among the artists taking part are renowned names such as Mona Hatoum, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Louise Lawler and Paul McCarthy.



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"Strange"

This major exhibition is based on certain driving forces developed and linked throughout the exhibition on the basis of works from the Sandretto Re Rebaudengo collection, one of the most important collections in Europe focusing on the art of recent decades. These ideas swing between a range of nuances that emerge from the different meanings that can be found in the following six words: *strange, extraordinary, extravagant, eccentric, exotic, foreign*. The sense of strangeness in the face of the world's future is combined on this unique occasion with the exceptionality that contemporary art provides as a framework for thought and experimentation.

A sense of estrangement, almost disbelief, has pervaded our lives in recent years. The global pandemic and the war in Ukraine have accentuated a becoming that appears to turn towards darkness. Guy Debord already spoke of a dead-end present that turns in the night. The monsters of reason linked to the human condition are arousing the serpent. Contemporary art, as an unusual language that plays with the unknown and the unfamiliar, can enable the spectator to find a way to materialize that which we sense but cannot quite grasp. In this way we discover other forms and other alien mentalities that speak to us of the times we inhabit.

The works

The exhibition is made up of a wide variety of pieces and formats, some of which are large-scale that enable interaction with the viewer.

In the Capilla de Colón, a dialogue is instigated between the human and the animal, with a certain reminiscence of Goya's *Los Caprichos* (The Caprices).



The work by Polish artist **Jakub Julian Ziółkowski** is an oil on panel entitled 'Nocturn or The Sleep of Reason', 2013. Ziółkowski's paintings are inhabited by odd figures: plants blend with human bodies, internal organs pour out, inanimate objects grow hair, and faces are distorted. The grotesque prevails over a disturbing and frightful world. In his works there is also room for satirical references to contemporary Western society, its contradiction, narcissism, greed and an exhausting pursuit of success.

Giulia Cenci's sculptures are part of a series entitled 'territory', 2019. Anchored to the walls, they appear to invade and occupy the space, creating an immersive, anthracite-grey environment. Here the inanimate becomes animate; the artist in a demiurgic gesture gives life to her sculptures. Her humanity expands them. She replaces industrial molding processes with her DIY own technique, enhancing these forgotten objects in an almost alchemical process.

In the large church, the piece by Romanian artist **Andra Ursuța** entitled 'Stoner', 2013, stands out because of its enormous size. It is located inside a large industrial fence that occupies the entire central part of the old church. The installation consists of a baseball-pitching machine that has been modified to hurl stones at two large tiles walls, making a shuddering noise. It speaks of stoning, torture and contempt.

This striking piece, however, contrasts with another by the same author entitled 'Doppel Chain Ganger', 2015, whereby she has opted for noble materials such as canvas and velvet on plywood in front of an image as an x-ray of an enslaved body.

In Profundis, two male heads contemplate each other. In the work by the Italian **Roberto Cuoghi**, 'Senza titolo', 2004, the self-portrait is both a conceptual and material starting point, in a process of alteration and multiplication of the artist's

identity. In order to create this work, Cuoghi used a complex technique based on the overlaying of surfaces of heterogeneous materials, as graphite, charcoal, spray, enamel, ink, cardboard, tissue, paper, etcetera. The painting belongs to the 'Black Paintings' series, in which the disturbing figuration emerging from a dark substratum of matter depicts the nightmares, madness, and macabre, all aspects of today's world that are capable of shifting our normal perspective on reality.

'Heraclitus Head', 2008, is a glass sculpture created by Portuguese artists **João Maria Gusmão** and **Pedro Paiva**. Suspended in an indeterminate zone between reality and artifice, this work reproduces an enigmatic tribal mask, discovered by the artistic duo during a faked trip to Africa: the face of Heraclitus, an inappropriate Western icon in an African country.

In the old sacristy, where Zurbarán's painting *Virgen de las Cuevas* (Virgin of the Cave) once stood, three works wax lyrical on the topic of absence. The sculpture 'La femme sans tête', 2004, by **Berlinde De Bruyckere**, investigates universal themes such as the suffering body, pain and memory, and the need to overcome and transform, drawing from art history and mythology.

The North American artist **Trisha Donnelly** presents 'Untitled', 2005. This is a black and white photograph which features a hand, wrapped in an elegant leather glove, clasping another glove, empty and hanging upside down. The image represents absence, the idea of an interrupted connection with the absent hand, which seems to have momentarily slipped out of the frame.

The Lebanese artist **Mona Hatoum** presents in the same monumental space the piece entitled, 'Hair Necklace', 1995. On a bust emulating the windows of jewellery shops we see a necklace. But what looks like a precious and decorative object reveals an organic presence when examined more closely. The beads of

which the necklace is composed have been created by the artist by rolling up human hair.

As you pass through the Mudejar Cloister, two rooms and the works on display serve as a connection to the beginning of the North Cloister, at the start of a section of the exhibition that speaks of the contemporary world from a critical viewpoint.

‘Commerce Exterieur Mondial Sentimental’, 2017, is a work installed in the old Magdalene chapel of the Monumental Area. It was created by the same Romanian artist, **Andra Ursuța**. It consists of a life-size marble sculpture, which depicts a middle-aged woman with her head veiled and a long robe on her. The artist took inspiration from a news picture of a gipsy woman firmly standing while waiting to be deported from France in 2011. The sculpture is adorned with a colourful nylon jacket: what first appears to be a traditional garment, decorated with Romanian coins, shows the logo of a world-renowned sportswear brand on its back.

In this exhibition, the French artist **Marine Hugonnier** presents three video works. These are ‘Travelling Amazonia’, 2006, shot on the Transamazonian Highway, about 2,600-mile-long road cutting through Amazonia’s vast forest. The construction of the Transamazonia generated industries around the extraction of natural resources like metal, wood, and rubber; thus denouncing man’s plundering of natural resources.

In ‘Ariana’, 2003, Hugonnier tells the story of a film crew that sets out to visit the Panjshir Valley in Northern Afghanistan. As the crew is unable to film the valley from a vantage point in the surrounding Hindu Kush mountains, the film becomes the story of the failure of this project.

Lastly, in ‘The last tour’, 2004, action is set at the end of the age of spectacle, at a time when tourist attractions are about to be closed off to the public. The viewer

embarks on a “last tour”; a hot-air balloon flight over the iconic Matterhorn in the Swiss Alps. The film suggests the possibility of a virgin space reappearing on the map, in reference to the world before the era of discovery.

The sound installation 'There is Nothing Left Here', 2008, is a recording of the voice of Scottish artist **Susan Philipsz** singing a cappella the sad words of Bonnie "Prince" Billy's indie-country song. In her works, Susan Philipsz mainly uses her voice, with no instrumental accompaniment, to explore the physicality of music and the relationship with our surroundings.

In the Clastrón Norte, two works share the same space and speak to us of the night. The Welsh artist **Cerith Wyn Evans** presents his work in neon and plexiglass in this exhibition. 'In Girum Imus Nocte et Consumimur Igni', 1999. Viewers are allowed to walk around the object and observe the mirroring effect between linguistic structure and physical movement evoked by its meaning. For this work, Wyn Evans drew inspiration from the title of Guy Debord's last film of 1978.

The North American **Charles Ray** presents in the exhibition the piece made in glass, metal and ink entitled, 'Viral Research', 1986. In the installation *Viral Research*, all the containers on the table are filled with black ink, which flows osmotically from one container to the other through a series of tubules, following the principle of communicating vessels. The work is in no way dangerous, but the frailty of its materials causes a risking sensation, to stain oneself with the black ink. As in his earliest performative pieces, the artist activates mental associations and distressing social references, making the spectators feel a strong sense of inadequacy.

The video by Argentinean artist **Sebastián Díaz Morales** is entitled, *Lucharemos hasta anular la ley* (We shall fight until the law is annulled), 2005. A crowd in

revolt is attacking a closed doorway. The video highlights the social unrest in Argentina after the economic collapse in 2001. The images actually refer to a demonstration by peddlers asking to repeal a law that prevents them from working on the streets. The image of these shouting demonstrators in front of the Parliament's gate is altered by a filter that makes the video look like a cartoon drawn with chalk on a blackboard. The images, therefore, look somehow removed from their context, giving the video a sense of enigma.

The work '9/12 Frontpage', 2001, by the German artist **Hans-Peter Feldmann**, consists of the front pages of 114 global newspapers that were published on 12 September 2001, the day after the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York. The principle behind this collection generates more than a thought on the relationship between reality and its representation in the media. This artwork encourages viewers to look for similarities and differences in the journalists' approaches, attributing the images to different political scenarios.

Claire Fontaine, traditionally known as a popular stationery brand, was the name adopted in 2004 by **Fulvia Carnevale** and **James Thornhill**, an Italian-British artistic duo, to define what they call a "collective artist". However, they do not present themselves as members of a collective called Claire Fontaine. Rather, they consider themselves to be her assistants. In this exhibition we can view the work titled 'Ucciso innocente' (Murdered Innocent), 2006, made of white plaque, white neon, cables and transformers. This work replicates the exact wording of the memorial plaque dedicated to anarchist Giuseppe Pinelli, who died on the night of 15–16 December 1969 while detained at Milan police headquarters, and who was later declared innocent.

The animated film 'History of the Main Complaint' by the South African artist, **William Kentridge**, depicts a journey back through the life of Soho Eckstein, a recurring fictional character in Kentridge's films. With a Monteverdi's madrigal



playing on the soundtrack, the video is a meditation on the contradictions of post-apartheid South Africa, still plagued by deep divisions that prevent a full recovery.

The North American **Rachel Rose** presents the video installation, 'Wil-o-Wisp (Moiré installation)', 2018. Rachel Rose creates video installations that ruminate on our image-saturated culture and histories of the past. Rose frames the story of her protagonist, Elspeth Blake, against the setting of the Enclosure Movement, the systematic privatization of common land in England that spurred tumultuous violent upheavals in agrarian life. The work explores themes such as witchcraft, persecution and threats in the harsh English rural society of the 16th and 17th centuries. Rose's installation evokes these shifts in its materials, producing a moiré effect – a shimmer-like rippling of light – through two layers of scrim that line the interior of the room.

Towards the middle of the route, it splits into two lines. First, those works that explore the historical heritage and its strangeness: Louise Lawler begins, Liz Glynn and Iman Issa continue and Bojan Šarčević closes.

In photographic print is the piece made by the North American **Louise Lawler** and entitled, 'As of yet untitled', 1984. The group of four pictures shows the marble sculpture of the Dying Gaul exhibited in a museum room. In this perspective, her practice can be ascribed to the tradition of institutional critique, which seeks to reconstruct the thick web that ties the different actors of the art system.

Liz Glynn, also from the USA, presents a piece with a complex title, 'Hellenistic Silver Collection, 3rd century B.C. (1981.11.15-22; 1982.11.7-13; 1984.11.3), from the series 'Surrogate Objects for the Metropolitan', 2011. The sculptures in the 'Surrogate Objects for the Metropolitan' series are ad hoc facsimiles of ancient artefacts that the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York returned to Italy between 2006 and 2010. These replicas are produced with low-cost

materials and exhibited on plinths, recalling ancient museum displays; for the same reason, each artefact is given in the title an accession number, which formerly identified its presence in the American museum's collection. Liz Glynn's copies are intentionally faked and serve as ideal surrogates for replacing the originals beyond their exhibition circuits and contexts.

Egyptian artist **Iman Issa** presents two pieces with the same title, titled 'Heritage Studies #1' and 'Heritage Studies #11', 2015. Made of blackened wood and vinyl lettering, these sculptures are contemporary reinterpretations of historical artefacts. Issa distances herself from history, and appropriates a cross-disciplinary field of academic inquiry instead: that is to say, heritage studies, which are not necessarily concerned with objectivity, thus are rooted in the local pride, collective mythology, and today's socio-cultural context.

Three pieces by the Serbian artist **Bojan Šarčević** under the same title, 'Untitled (Meanwhile)', from 2007. Made of brass, wire and graphite, this is a group of three sculptures whose extreme fragility creates the sensation of a light, almost floating presence. Šarčević gives life to time-laden images and places inhabited by disturbing phantoms. The way he arranges objects in space, be they virtual or real, is mysterious and fascinating, but not independent of cultural, social and political connotations, in this case Russian Constructivism.

The second bifurcation comes from the domestic realm of gender, sexuality and intimacy.

One of the rooms is completely taken over by the installation of the North American artist **Paul McCarthy** entitled 'Bang-Bang Room', 1992. Made with wood, steel, electric motors, linoleum and wallpaper, it is a deconstructed living space, with its wooden partitions ornamented with traditional wallpaper. As soon as the spectators steps into this environment, seemingly domestic and harmless,

one experiences an ever-changing space. All of a sudden, walls move, doors open and then shut violently. McCarthy's characters and environments make the space uninhabitable, as universal repositories of fears, obsessions and conflicts that place man before his monstrous present condition.

In the textile section, the work of the North American **Pae White** entitled, 'Still, Untitled', 2010, stands out. A massive 12-meters-long tapestry depicts wisps of smoke against a black background. This work belongs to one of the artist's lines of production, where she creates tapestries with images of crumpled aluminium foils and white smoke. In her works, the American artist analyzes the influence that design has on art creation, but at the same time she is attracted to the aesthetics of traditional handicraft production.

The German artist **Rosemarie Trockel** presents several pieces. Two charcoal drawings, *Senza titolo*, 1995. They tackle an important theme in Trockel's production: woman's condition in a society still constrained by enduring prejudices. In addition, the digital video 'Wollquatsch (Gioco di lana)', 1994, and the textile piece, 'Senza titolo' (Untitled), 1986, are on display, a machine-knitted wool work mounted on a stretcher, one of Rosemarie Trockel's famous knitted paintings created in the mid-1980s. The compositional structure of this work is based on the repetition of a popular and well-recognizable image. In fact, the red symbol which stands out against the green background is the Woolmark logo, the trademark employed internationally as an assurance of pure new wool.

Three photographs from 1993, 'Chastity Belt', 'Gynecological instruments' and 'Beauty calibrator no. 2 (Museum of Beauty, Hollywood)' make up the series by the North American **Zoe Leonard**. These three photographs are part of a series of black and white photographs taken by Leonard in medical and natural history museums in Europe in the early 1990s. They feature women's wigs, chastity belts, gynaecological instruments, devices employed in cosmetics to measure

one's face, and wax anatomical models with exposed viscera, revealing the internal organs in order to study them. Questioning the original purpose for which those objects were fabricated and the suggestive poses in which the mannequins are exhibited, Leonard reveals the representation of desire, death, and sexuality lurking beneath the surface guise of clinical study.

Hong Kong artist **Paul Chan's** video work 'Untitled (after Lacan's last laugh)', 2008, is inspired by the Marquis de Sade. Chan's work offers a reflection on the changes in the collective conscience, and on the progressive shift towards the boundaries of morality. *Untitled* is a video installation that uses an anonymous illustration taken from an 18th century pornography book. The subtitles in the image show sex-related onomatopoeias and words which also have a philosophical underpinning, as they constitute a sexualized translation of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's observations on the relationship between the Marquis de Sade and Immanuel Kant.

The tour concludes with a series of portraits, since perhaps there is no greater strangeness than the other.

British artist **Lynette Yiadom-Boakye's** paintings feature men and women portrayed by the artist through a combination of personal memories, images, sketches and drawings. These characters, as characters that exist in a different time and space, are placed against a dark background: with the exception of the clothes and poses of each figure, spatial context is hard to define. The artist's decision to portray black people exclusively challenges the accepted norms of Western portraiture. The works, all oil paintings, are entitled 'A File for a Martyr to a Cause', 2016, 'Pied Wagtail', 2016, 'No patience for Juju', 2015, 'Diamonds' 2013 and 'Midnight, Cádiz', 2013.



The work entitled 'Bo' 1994 by the North American artist **Catherine Opie**, made in chromogenic printing, can be viewed. Catherine Opie uses the photographic medium to explore and analyse her subjects' identity, portraying members of the gay community to which she belongs as well as natural and urban landscapes.

The North American **Elizabeth Peyton** presents the watercolour on paper entitled *Marcello* from 1996. Elizabeth Peyton's paintings combine the portraiture tradition with the low-quality images from gossip magazines. They depict music, movie and art celebrities, many of which are Peyton's personal friends, but also icons of the past together with great figures from history and literature. The artist paints her works after photographing or drawing inspiration from images published in pop magazines.

The final work in the exhibition by Uruguayan artist **Jill Mulleady**, entitled 'Interior' 2019, is included. The artist's vaguely surreal paintings depict characters lost in the private oblivion of a telephone conversation or a drug-induced state of unconsciousness, surrounded by sinister-looking objects in an atmosphere rife with tension. These intense, sensual, cold, nightmarish, generally large-scale scenes blend real and invented subject matter and ironically reflect on the history of painting.

The Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation

The Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation, one of the first private foundations in Italy, was established in Turin on 6 April 1995. In Italy, the Foundation has two exhibition venues, the first at the Palazzo Re Rebaudengo in Guarene d'Alba (since 1997) and its Turin headquarters (since 2002). Founded by Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, it is a non-profit institution that backs contemporary art and, in particular, the production of young artists.



Press release

Department of Culture and Historical Heritage
Andalusian Centre for Contemporary Art

The Foundation distributes and promotes contemporary art, seeking to attract a wider public by means of art courses for adults and families, workshops for students and a cultural mediation service, which is a means of accompanying the visitor through the exhibition. The Foundation promotes a programme of experimental and intercultural projects, as well as supporting artists, also through the commissioning of new artworks, working in synergy with other institutions for the dissemination and enhancement of art and organising residencies for young curators.