

**WE WILL KEEP EACH OTHER COMPANY
WHEN IT GROWS DARK**

 **Espai 13**

45 anys

ENSACON

Exhibition series curated by Irina Mutt

MPANYARE

CREASE NOT ENCLOSURE

WQUANES

ALBA MAYOL

FACI FOSC

02/02 - 14/04/2024

Upcoming exhibitions of the series:

INARI SANDELL 26/04 - 07/07/2024

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY 19/07 - 20/10/2024

HELENA VINENT 31/10 /2024 - 19/01/2025

Alba Mayol opens the new season at Espai 13, *We Will Keep Each Other Company when It Grows Dark*, with her exhibition *solc i no clos* (*crease not enclosure*).

Taking as its starting point the short story «Bloodchild» by the African American author Octavia E. Butler, the exhibition *solc i no clos* posits a space-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 Mayol puts it, «like the ambiguous magnetism and unease that emanate from T'Gatoi, the character in Butler's story, the fluidity of desire is an enlarged you/I/we, an immersion 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

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by an intrinsic undefinition, a divergent familiarity, with curves, spores, soft minerals. To enter this body is to negotiate; it is to enter a circularity in motion; it is to settle into not knowing.»

The elements that make up *solc i no clos* invite us to feel the space, to perceive its pulse and the walls beating, to notice the trembling of membranes and the constant oozing of holes and cracks. It is an exhibition that throbs and that can be heard and even smelt. Together, the elements we find in the exhibition generate a continuity with each of its 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, as well as 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 pulsates, 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 evolve, like the emergence of a language that is simultaneously a condition and a limit of that which we can understand.

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Barcelona, 1979. Artist and writer. She works with text, matter, and images, exploring the possibilities of permeability and fluidity between these elements. Mayol graduated in English Philology from the University of Barcelona (UB) and holds an MA in Aesthetics and the Theory of Contemporary Art, awarded by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). She also studied photography (Central Saint Martins), Transla-

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tion-Interpretation (UAB) and Psychology (UB). In addition to the several grants and other financial support she has received over the course of her career, she has presented solo and group exhibitions at Tecla Sala (Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2023), Centre d'Art Maristany (Sant Cugat, 2022), Casal Solleiric (Palma,

2021), Tangent Projects (Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2020), Fundació Vila Casas (Barcelona, 2020), Can Felipa Arts Visuals (Barcelona, 2018); 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).

Ens acompanyarem quan es faci fosc (*We Will Keep Each Other Company when It Grows Dark*) is the title of the Espai 13 exhibition programme for 2024, curated by Irina Mutt.

Mutt's curatorial project stems from a desire to situate interdependence, to explain it and share it by means of four solo exhibitions in which each artist will look at their way of being in the world, of managing and negotiating spaces.

According to Mutt, interdependence speaks to us of our relationship with the world, of how we inhabit it, about our limits and vulnerabilities. To think in terms of 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.

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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 feels as inviting or can be occupied in the same way by everyone. Not all voices fill up the same amount of space, nor do all stories endure the same across time. This programme offers a few notes, indications, and actions about different ways of occupying and being in space, of lasting in time.

The title of the programme alludes to a «we», to gestures, rather than to a discourse: how we place ourselves next to someone else, walk alongside them, even if only for a short stretch of the way, for a short amount of time. It provides an opportunity to assume our responsibility despite knowing we

will not always be effective. This will be our gesture: to place ourselves close by.

In discourses against discrimination, reference is usually made to the idea of safe and accessible spaces, but oftentimes a safe space does not mean a space free of conflict, nor does complying with the rules guarantee accessibility. Assuming responsibility for and being 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 this programme, a narrative will gradually generate itself in an elastic, non-essentialist, non-linear manner. The embodied and the material, as planes of truth, will have the capacity to deploy the political and activate it. In this narrative, fragility and power will not be binary opposites but relational phenomena that are exchanged and which overlap.

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Fundació Joan Miró
Barcelona

Sabadell
Foundation

Fundació Joan Miró
Parc de Montjuïc
08038 Barcelona
T +34 934 439 470

www.fmirobcn.org

