

**Catalonia in Venice\_LLIM****Collateral Event of the 59th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia****Water and glass give birth to *LLIM*, the organism that comprises Lara Fluxà's participation in Venice.**

Catalonia presents the Collateral Event *Catalonia in Venice\_LLIM* within the program of Biennale Arte 2022, an installation from the artist Lara Fluxà curated by Oriol Fontdevila. *LLIM* (silt) is an organism that employs water and glass to place Venice in its substratum, both past and present.

*LLIM* is an organism that temporarily displaces water from the Canal di San Pietro using a tubular glass system. Water and glass, two idiosyncratic materials that have played a key role in the city's history, become inseparable with this installation; two sides of the same landscape, which is both natural and cultural.

The ability of glass and water to reversibly mutate between states of matter keeps them open to collaboration and facilitates their coexistence. In this sense, *LLIM* is generated from a precise intuition of the vital flux: life's possibility is thanks to matter's viscosity and collaborative capacity.

**Water and Glass**

Glass was described by Georgius Agricola as a fusible stone at the same time as a solid juice. He was the first traveler to describe the industry in Venice, in the 16th century. For him glass materialized as the manifestation of ambiguity. The same can be said of the city; it has been cradled throughout the centuries in a fragile balance between a solid state and a liquid one. Venice emerges from the sediments supplied by the rivers that flow into the lagoon, although it is under perpetual threat of disappearing into the waters of the Adriatic.

Water has fertile power because it becomes silt when in contact with the earth. From the black mud of the Nile, the fertile land, comes the Arabic word *khemia*, alchemy, which has historically found a source of inspiration in glass, and its practitioners used it for the transmutation of base metals. *LLIM* does not aspire, in any case, to the obtaining of gold nor of the quintessence: it moves the foundation of Venice with the same calm that it metabolizes and returns the materials to their origin.

*LLIM* discreetly adheres to the canals and the glass tubes, connecting them, and, through its circulation, progressively assimilates the layers that make up the place. Without being able to distinguish cause from effect, or interior from exterior, in Venice *LLIM* pronounces itself like a Klein bottle: it is a situated manifestation of the viscous behavior of matter.

**Installation**

*LLIM* consists of a group of glass cisterns, capsules and tubes that create a landscape of organic shapes. Water permanently circulates in the installation, where it interacts with oil and milk as if it were a performance whose protagonists are the materials. The movement of the

water will be dictated by the force of gravity, as well as being helped by the water pumps and valves controlled by PLC microprocessors.

In this way, a pump system installed on the banks of the Canale di San Pietro extracts water. This pump will continuously supply the building that houses the Catalan participation in the Venice Biennale with material from the canal bed. Inside, as it circulates, the water scatters remnants of mud. After a few minutes the water returns to the flow of the Venice water network. Gradually, over the period of the Biennial, the installation will assimilate the subsoil of Venice, which will move as it passes through the tubes of this organism.

### **Publication**

*LLIM* will be accompanied by a free publication, which will be distributed from the exhibition space. A narrative unfolds in the publication, composed of different visual and textual documents that have all been necessary in the creation process of this organism.

The publication includes two letters: one from **Jane Da Mosto**, an environmental scientist and director of the association We Are Here Venice, which addresses issues associated with silt management in the lagoon. A second letter is by **Javier Peñafiel**, a visual artist, who reflects on the idea of metabolism, making references to artistic and architectural practices that have previously taken place in Venice.

### **The artist: Lara Fluxà**

Lara Fluxà (Palma, 1985) usually works with elements with their own poetic qualities that are close to us, like water or glass. A Fine Arts graduate with a Masters degree in Artistic Productions and Research from the University of Barcelona, she has specialised in working with glass through different glass-blowing courses in Segovia, Barcelona and La Bisbal. The physical qualities of water and glass have led her to be interested in concepts such as fragility, stability and also scientific experimentation. Her works question the weakness of the balance of ecosystems.

She has collaborated with institutions such as Lo Pati, Fundació Joan Miró, Fundació Felícia Fuster, Capella de la Misericòrdia, Museu d'Art Modern i Contemporani Es Baluard, Casal Solleric de Palma, Museu Marítim de Barcelona and Arts Santa Mònica, among others.

<https://larafluxa.net>

### **The curator: Oriol Fontdevila**

Oriol Fontdevila (Manresa, 1978) is a curator, writer and researcher focused on artistic practices and education. A doctoral candidate in Humanities and Communication at UOC, he has curated projects at many modern art centres and museums, such as Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Fundació Joan Miró, Centre d'Arts La Virreina, Centre d'Arts Santa Mònica, Centre de Cultura Contemporània El Carme de València and Vojvodina Contemporary Art Museum in Novi Sad, Serbia.

He was on the team of curators for the European project Performing the Museum; and artistic director of Sala d'Art Jove, an initiative of the Catalan Government. His essay *El arte de la mediación* (The Art of Mediation) was published in 2018 by consonni, written thanks to a grant from MNCARS. He has collaborated on many books and modern art catalogues. He is a visiting professor at several Masters programmes. He is currently an associate professor at EINA.

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This will be the seventh time the Institut Ramon Llull represents Catalonia as a Collateral Events at the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. In the previous edition, the Institut Ramon Llull presented the project *To Lose Your Head*, curated by Pedro Azara.

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