



Specials > FONS ÀUDIO

The *Specials* podcasts focus on projects by artists and curators who have some kind of connection to the Museum's programming and the MACBA Collection. Conceived as an audiovisual project, FONS ÀUDIO is a documentary series in which artists from the MACBA Collection talk about their work.

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Produced by Lucrecia Dalt. Interview and documentation: Dolores Acebal.

FONS ÀUDIO #27

Jordi Colomer

Jordi Colomer (Barcelona, 1962) uses sculpture, mockups, video, installations, photography, set design and actions to create Beckett-inspired micro-narratives that explore the constant permutations between the public and the private spheres, between reality and fiction, between the spaces of art and those of life.

In FONS ÀUDIO #27 Colomer ponders the uses of writing, architecture and representation, and takes us through his works in the MACBA Collection.

01. Summary

Jordi Colomer studied Art at EINA, Art History at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, and Architecture at the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona, all in the context of the progressive Barcelona of the eighties.

After a brief foray into abstract painting he soon began to experiment with the possibilities of a type of sculpture that expanded into the fields of set design and architecture. Works from this period include *24 Goldfish inacabats*, *Frase (Der Wachturm)* and *Como en casa*, all dating from 1991, which are a kind of unintended trilogy in the form of a critical repertory of domestic-bourgeois situations and objects that are on the brink of extinction.

These works already show one of the interests that would keep coming up throughout Colomer's career: the questioning of the role and the position of the spectator in the exhibition space and in relation to the works.

Then there is *El lloc i les coses* (1996), which is a kind of scenography—essay on the vices and virtues of rationalist architecture and of museum spaces.

These works are part of a first stage that could be described, in aesthetic terms, as a vehicle for a very physical minimalism put together out of poor, fragile, strangely familiar materials.

From 1996 onwards, Colomer started to use video as a medium, introducing the elements of narrative, fiction and the human figure into his work. In 1997 he presented his first video installation in an especially built site-specific screening room at MACBA: *Simo* (1997) is a tragic-burlesque story about our paradoxical relationships with objects, and it took Colomer one step further in his exploration of the limits and properties of exhibition spaces.

Other cinematic micro-narratives from this stage include *Pianito* (1999), *Les Jumelles* (2001) and *Le Dortoir* (2002), which were produced during a period when Colomer created highly elaborate sets in which the setting totally determines the behaviour of the characters.

To counter this, in 2001 Colomer began to feel the need to take his 'actors' into the streets and allow them to interact with reality and contaminate it with fiction. His scenographic research opened up to urban space, exploring the many different stages on which social life is played out (neighbourhoods, roads, deserts, rooftops, etc.) This stage of his work revolves around journey-works such as *Anarchitekton* (2002-2004), a travelling project involving four major global cities (Barcelona, Bucharest, Brasília, Osaka), in which the individual actions of one character (Idroj Sanicne) encapsulate the possibilities for poetic survival in the contemporary city.

Other pieces from this period include *NOFTURE* (Le Havre, 2004), *Cinecito* (Havana, 2006), *En la Pampa* (Atacama desert, Chile, 2008) and *Avenida Ixtapaluca (Houses for Mexico)* (Mexico, 2009).



[Jordi Colomer during the interview. Gemma Planell/MACBA, 2014]

Jordi Colomer has created set designs for works by Joan Brossa, Samuel Beckett and Valère Novarina, and one for an opera by Robert Ashley. He currently lives and works between Barcelona and Paris.

He has participated in numerous solo and group shows in Spain and internationally, including: *Prototips ideals* at Espai 10, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona (1986); *Gold-fishes* at the Shedhalle Rote Fabrik, Zurich (1992); *Arabian Stars* at Espacio 1, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2005); *Jordi Colomer* at the Jeu de Paume, Paris (2008); and *Prohibido cantar / No Singing. Obra didáctica sobre la fundación de una ciudad paradisíaca* at Matadero Madrid, Madrid (2012).

02. Timeline

- 00:30** 1991: *Frage (Der Wachturm)*, *Como en casa* and *24 Goldfish inacabats*. Pieces from a domestic scenography.
- 04:02** *Alta comèdia* (1993) and *Teatro Maravillas* (1995). Inhabited scenographies. The shift from the stage to the city.
- 06:00** *El lloc i les coses* (1996). The reinvention of the architectural model.
- 07:32** *Simo* (1997). The sculptor: Sisyphus in the white cube.
- 12:05** *Simo*. The roles of the spectator.
- 13:05** *Simo*. Simon, the hermit of the desert.
- 14:15** *Simo*. Burlesque, Beckett and silent cinema.
- 15:36** Collective creation processes.
- 17:31** From *Le dotoir* (2002) to *Anarchitekton* (2002-2004)
- 19:22** *Anarchitekton*. Barcelona. The city limits.
- 20:23** *Anarchitekton*. Bucharest. Urban planning and dictatorship.
- 21:20** *Anarchitekton*. Brasília. Another modern utopia.
- 22:17** *Anarchitekton*. Osaka. Behind the neon lights.
- 22:32** *Anarchitekton*. Jordi Colomer versus Idroj Sanicne. On performers and artists.
- 25:00** *Anarchitekton*. Precedents: *Père Coco y algunos objetos perdidos en 2001* (2002).
- 25:57** *Anarchitekton*. Architectural models: an ephemeral life.
- 28:56** *Anarchitekton*. The characters take the streets.

03. Works by Francesc Abad in the MACBA Collection

Como en casa, 1991

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium. Long-term loan of Juana de Aizpuru
www.macba.cat/en/como-en-casa-1464

Frage (Der Wachturm), 1991

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium. Long-term loan of Peter Meeker
www.macba.cat/en/frase-der-wachturm-1244

24 Goldfish inacabats, 1991

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium. Long-term loan of Peter Meeker
www.macba.cat/en/24-goldfish-i

Nueva geografía dorada para chicos y chicas / Jordi Colomer, 1995

Col·lecció MACBA. Centre d'Estudis i Documentació
www.macba.cat/en/a03116

El lloc i les coses, 1996

MACBA Collection. MACBA Foundation
www.macba.cat/en/el-lloc-i-les

Simo, 1997

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium. Private long-term loan
www.macba.cat/en/simo-1012

Anarchitekton (Barcelona, Bucarest, Brasília, Osaka), 2002-2004

MACBA Collection. MACBA Foundation
www.macba.cat/en/anarchitekton-barcelona-bucarest-brasil-osa-2464



La Ricarda, 2006
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium
www.macba.cat/en/la-ricarda-36

04. Related links

Jordi Colomer's website
www.jordicolomer.com

Interview with Jordi Colomer to coincide with the exhibition *Prohibido cantar / No Singing* at Matadero Madrid (2012)
<http://vimeo.com/55517176>

"De Brecht a Eurovegas", article by Fietta Jarque published in *El País* (16 September, 2012)
http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2012/09/14/actualidad/1347639579_150031.html

Jordi Colomer exhibition at the Jeu de Paume, Paris (2008-2009)
www.jeudepaume.org/index.php?&idArt=541&lieu=1&page=article

Interview with Jordi Colomer to coincide with the exhibition *Fuegogratis* at the Laboratorio Arte Alameda, Mexico City (2009)
<http://vimeo.com/12895164>

05. Credits

Produced by Lucrecia Dalt. Voice: Lucrecia Dalt and Roc Jiménez de Cisneros. Documentation and interview: Dolores Acebal. Recorded with Beyerdynamic MC 930, a Tascam DR-100 recorder and edited with Ableton Live.

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