



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

FONS ÀUDIO #40

Martí Anson

Martí Anson is an artist of multiple registers who extends and redefines, through his works, the limits of the exhibition space, the possibilities of artistic reception and the status of the artist. In FONS AUDIO #40 Martí Anson tells us about his childhood summers in La Garrotxa, his formative years, the art public, the limits of the museum and the transfers between reality and fiction.

01. Summary

'I think if you can explain a work of art with a short story, that's already enough; you do not need to see it', says Martí Anson (Mataró, 1967) in the *statement* on his website. The art object is just an illusion. What matters to him are the stories. And art is simply a medium, like any other, to narrate them.

While studying Fine Arts at the Universitat de Barcelona, Anson worked as an exhibition installer: an occupation where he got to know the mechanisms of the art world from the inside. His first pieces were immersed in the spirit of the Catalan Conceptual art of the moment –under the special influence of Pep Agut–, but were also works that bore the imprint of his time as an exhibition installer and his interest in the installation process and the relations established between the artworks and the exhibition space. Works such as *L'ull de l'artista* (1995) *Welcome / Welcome* (1999) – belonging to the MACBA Collection –, *Bon dia* (1999–2000) and *L'apartment* (2002), are architectural installations that invite viewers to explore paths that end up frustrating their expectations, whether visual, spatial or conceptual.

Gradually, the artwork disappears and it is the artist, in the process of working, who occupies the museum galleries. In *Fitzcarraldo* (2004–5), Anson spent fifty-five days building a wooden boat in the Centre d'Art Santa Mònica in Barcelona: the entire duration of the exhibition. In fact, on the opening day the space was empty, because at that moment Anson was only just beginning to unfold the plans. The artist knew in advance that this sailboat could never leave the museum, as its dimensions were larger than the entrance door. To remove it he had no choice but to destroy it. And *Fitzcarraldo* thus became a Sisyphian project that questioned the function of public institutions, shook the foundations of the creative process and reassessed the roles of the artist and the viewer.

After this feat, Anson went a step further and hit the streets. In pieces like *Martí i la fàbrica* (2009), *Mataró Chauffeur Service* (2011), *Joaquim and Son* (2012) and *La botiga de l'Anson* (2015), the artist abandons the spaces of art and takes his stories elsewhere.

Anson's work establishes a complicity with everyday life, seeking out stories or familiar situations that, translated to an artistic context, acquire new readings and meanings and reach out to new audiences. As he declares on his website: 'Everything I do is a copy of something someone has done before: Peter Handke, Wim Wenders, local stories, political ideas, seventies furniture, holiday homes, etc.'

His influences are eclectic. He is a voracious reader of fiction, including Javier Tomeo, Peter Handke, Thomas Bernhard and George Saunders. But above all he recognises the direct influence of the cinema on his work. Werner Herzog had something to do with his *Fitzcarraldo*; Wim Wenders is behind a piece like *Walt & Travis* (2003); and *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971) was the inspiration for *Martí i la fàbrica*. Not only that, Anson also cites Jacques Tati, Buster Keaton and Bruce Willis, while declaring himself a fan of the *Star Wars* saga.

Martí Anson has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions, among which are: *Fitzcarraldo. Cinquanta-cinc dies treballant en la construcció d'un*



[Mataró Chauffeur Service]

veler Stela 34 al CASM (Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona, 2004; CPH Kunsthal, Copenhagen, 2006 and Ca l'Arenes, Mataró, 2007); *El preu dels colors* (Galeria Toni Tàpies, Barcelona, 2009–10); *Martí Anson. Pavelló català. Arquitecte anònim* (Galeria Estrany-de la Mota, Barcelona, and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013; Fundació Suñol, Barcelona, 2014). Recently, as part of the *Species of Spaces* exhibition (MACBA, Barcelona, 2015-16), the artist took over an old hardware store in Barcelona's Poble Nou for his project *La botiga de l'Anson*. A non-selling store dedicated to the exhibition of furniture inspired by the designs of his father, Joaquim Anson, in the sixties and seventies. In the same vein of recovering his paternal heritage, he has also developed *Joaquim and Son, Pavelló català. Arquitecte anònim* and the publication *Joaquim Anson: mobles, muebles, furniture, pieces* (2011).

02. Timeline

- 00:01** Intro: I make boats, I make houses, I make shops
- 00:38** Summers in La Garrotxa. Do it yourself
- 03:37** A student of Fine Arts. Exhibition technician
- 05:44** Early works: experiential architectures and the passing of time
- 10:51** The work of art disappears
- 12:31** Ship builder: *Fitzcarraldo*, Centre d'Art Santa Mònica (2004- 2005)
- 14:37** *Fitzcarraldo*: approaching audiences
- 16:38** Art leaves the museum. Art audiences
- 19:20** Explanations of art
- 21:24** Precarities

03. Related links

Martí Anson's website
www.martianson.net/castellano/

Interview with Martí Anson on Vimeo (Nezvanova, 2012)
vimeo.com/40243136

Fitzcarraldo. Cincuenta-cinc dies treballant en la construcció d'un veler Stela 34 al Centre d'Art Santa Mònica on Vimeo (Nezvanova, 2012)
vimeo.com/40180305

Martí Anson: Joaquim Anson: mobles, muebles, furniture, pieces. Barcelona: Save As... Publications, 2011
issuu.com/macba_publicacions/docs/joaquim-anson

David G. Torres: *VIDA POLÍTICA: Javier Peñafiel; Martí Anson; Público y privado; Antonio Ortega, Francis Aljés*
www.davidgtorres.net/spip/spip.php?article61

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

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