

Lorea Alfaro and Jon Otamendi
2020

26 March 2021 – 18 July 2021

Turn It All Turns

Exhibition series in the Espai 13 at Fundació Joan Miró

Curator: Marc Navarro

With the collaboration of the Banco Sabadell Foundation

Press release

Lorea Alfaro and Jon Otamendi experiment with forms of dissemination and communication in their exhibition 2020.

The project stems from the development of a fragrance to then reveal the impact of industrial processes in the form, content, presentation and distribution of a product.

The ways in which olfactory experiences are communicated also help the artists to identify the functionality and limits of language in relation to perception and reality.

Evoking parallels as a result of this case study, the final project of the current series in the Espai 13 explores the traces that the conditions of production leave behind on exhibition projects, and the language crises that occur in the attempt to communicate both the object and the artistic experience.

***Turn It All Turns* is the exhibition series for the 2019–2021 season in the Espai 13 at Fundació Joan Miró, with the collaboration of the Banc Sabadell Foundation. Curated by Marc Navarro Fornós (Deltebre, 1984), the project examines and puts into practice the notion of estrangement, while suggesting a rereading of our immediate surroundings and the way we relate to them.**

Barcelona, 25 March 2021. Through her projects, Lorea Alfaro (Lizarra, 1982) explores different image production mechanisms and examines aspects of the communication process related to persuasion. Alfaro mimics the visual production mechanisms typical of advertising in order to generate multiform content. The exploitation of what she defines as a “hollow brand”, that is, a brand without products that exists only to the extent that it is disseminated visually, allows her to focus on language, forms of distribution, and the use and consumption of images.

For his part, the work of Jon Otamendi (Getxo, 1978) generates specific situations based on minimal gestures that transform architecture and its functions into a constant game between reality and its different layers of representation. Otamendi's projects are usually placed in or put into dialogue with spaces located on the periphery of traditional art institutions, and his exhibitions often present, simultaneously, an artistic project and a reflection on the way it is received. In his collaborative projects, the exhibition itself goes beyond the physical installation, which fixes an image on the retina, to shift towards the concept of an expanded space where sensate experiences that foster new relationships with the surroundings take place.



Installation view of *2020*, by Lorea Alfaro and Jon Otamendi. Espai 13, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Exhibition series 2019-2021 *Turn it all Turns*, curated by Marc Navarro. Photo: Roberto Ruiz

To end the exhibition series *Turn It All Turns* in the Espai 13, Alfaro and Otamendi present a multi-layered project that stems from the research and development of an aromatic essence to analyse the conditions of production and communication that mediate our experience of reality. Through conversations with the different agents involved in the synthesis of a smell (manufacturers, laboratories, designers), the artists identify a framework that is also present in the art field and around which their projects often revolve: the way production processes affect the presentation of a product—a perfume or, in this case, an exhibition—as well as its form and its content.

Furthermore, when attempting to describe the sensory behaviour of a fragrance, the artists run into a language crisis: the unstable and subjective nature of smells makes it necessary to resort to words and images, both tools of interpretation, as a means

to translate the olfactory experience. According to Marc Navarro, curator of the series: “This places in parallel two processual models—the artistic and the scientific—which bring the speculative factor into play in similar ways.”

By means of a technique known as chromatography—a scientific method for isolating the different molecules that make up a compound—Alfaro and Otamendi verify that the common fern, the plant that lends its name to an entire olfactive family in perfumery, is actually an odourless plant, that is, within the olfactory spectrum of human perception. This confirmation allows them to peer into the space that exists between reality and the ways we perceive, define and, ultimately, construct it. The absent perfume that structures and, at the same time, symbolises the exhibition is a hollow element that points to the motifs and images through which it is spread.

2020 presents the conclusions of their research in the form of physical objects, t-shirts and towels, which function as moulds that bodies occupy and charge with temporary meanings. The project also incorporates images—the graphic branding as well as photographs and video recordings—to highlight the porosity of visual language and its role in the construction of realities. In Navarro’s words: “Alfaro and Otamendi generate a multi-speed coexistence: what already happened, what is happening in real time, and what is going to happen. Simultaneously, they place on the same plane—that of the exhibition—phenomena that refuse to be located, thereby atomising the space and submitting it to a state of permanent construction.”

Lorea Alfaro (Estella, 1982) is an artist. Some of her recent projects are *No lo banalices*, CarrerasMugica (Bilbao, 2019) and <3 S P S <3, Tabakalera (San Sebastián, 2017). Her work has been shown at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao (2019), Azkuna Zentroa (Bilbao, 2018), Galería Moisés Pérez Albéniz (Madrid, 2017), Fundación-Museo Jorge Oteiza (Alzuza, 2017), Galería Elba Benítez (Madrid, 2016), Artium (Vitoria), the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2013) and CA2M (Móstoles, 2012).

Jon Otamendi (Getxo, 1978) is an artist. Some of his recent projects are *Instalación*, EtHall (Barcelona, 2019), *Antes de la imagen*, Asalto #4, Caniche Editorial (Bilbao, 2019) and *La palabra suceder*, Tabakalera (San Sebastián, 2018). His work has been shown at the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao (2019), Azkuna Zentroa (Bilbao, 2018), San Telmo Museoa (San Sebastián, 2014), Museo Artium (Vitoria, 2014) and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2013).

Turn it all turns is the exhibition series at the Espai 13 of the Fundació Joan Miró for the 2019–2021 season, with the collaboration of the Banco Sabadell Foundation. Curated by Marc Navarro Fornós (Deltebre, 1984), the project explores and activates the notion of estrangement, proposing a rereading of our immediate surroundings and the way we relate within them. The series experiments with languages and seeks to stimulate a critical gaze, enabling us to question the codes conditioning our perception.

The response to certain stimuli, as well as to the movement of ideas or the physical and cultural comprehension of reality, often takes place on the basis of automatic mechanisms that are hard to detect. *Turn it all turns* approaches forms of communication that resist such mechanisms, playing with meanings and displacing events from their habitual contexts. The series invites us to suspend emotions and to move through a zone of uncertainty where artists establish a dialogue, beyond all conventions, with the space hosting their proposals.

Turn it all turns is comprised of four exhibition projects, respectively by Laia Estruch, Beatriz Olabarrieta, Julia Spínola and Lorea Alfaro-Jon Otamendi, and of an educational project by Victor Ruiz Colomer.

Images and press kit, at <https://www.fmirobcn.org/press> and at <http://bit.ly/2IX3ec5>. Follow the activities of the Espai 13 on social media with the hashtag [#GiraEspai13](#).

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