

Exhibition

A escala humana

La Ribot

Sala Alcalá 31

19 February – 3 April 2022

This exhibition, A escala humana, has objects and bodies that should be viewed as devices to be used.

It is not simply a question of looking: rather it is a case of acting and using.

The exhibition speaks about what people do with their bodies, objects and space. And about what happens in the manifold relationships formed between them. These relationships may be geometrical, philosophical, sentimental, catastrophic, narrative, unexpected and always poetic.

Here there is no separation between visual and choreographic, sculptural and live, action and gaze.

Here all things are part of a compact whole.

La Ribot

A escala humana is one of the most ambitious solo exhibitions dedicated to the choreographer, dancer and artist La Ribot, in her hometown, Madrid. As the title suggests, the exhibition underscores the key role of the human body in her practice: the staged body, contact between bodies, the body's relationship with its spatial and architectural environment, the trace of the body in objects, the memory of gestures in video or photography. The idea of scale is also critical, given that the works are conceived and produced with the artist's or the performers' bodies. The props and accessories employed, such as video and photo cameras, costumes and objects, are used according to the body's physical capability, without any other external input or artifice. The body is thus "left to its own devices," and expresses itself fully, mainly through movement, gesture, gaze, voice, laughter or writing.

Whether they take the form of dance shows, videos, photographic compositions, objects or texts, her works establish a direct, one-to-one relationship with the spectators-visitors. As such, they offer the possibility of an empathic relationship between the “observing” body and the “acting” body, constructed through tension, questioning, beauty, strength, fragility and feeling. The artist questions the physical, social and political value of the human body, underlining its many states, which are, at once, solitary, other and collective. Her practice is a powerful ode to freedom, courage and action: “be yourself, don’t hold back,” these works seem to say.

On view in the sumptuous space of the Sala Alcalá 31 exhibition hall, a selection of works conceived over the course of more than twenty years gives an overview of La Ribot’s highly singular practice. The exhibition opens with *Laughing Hole* (2006). An emblematic example of her interdisciplinary approach, the six-hour performance and installation incorporates dance, performance, theatre as well as visual and graphic arts to deliver an unsettling and fascinating collective experience and an incisive political message. The video-installation *Despliegue* (2001) is both a “retrospective” and a foundational work, since, on one hand, it condenses the gestures and objects of the preceding distinguished Pieces (the generic name for the project started by La Ribot in 1993), and, on the other, it marked the beginning of her *corps opérateur* practice, a method based on the use of a handheld video camera and a single sequence shot.

A escala humana brings together, for the first time, the three groups *Walk the Chair* (2010), *Walk the Bastards* (2017) and *Walk the Authors* (2018-ongoing). These works, made up of dozens of folding wooden chairs which were once used for seating in travelling theatres, have been fire-branded with texts. People have to physically handle the chairs and move them in all directions in order to read the texts, thus turning spectators into performers of these participative pieces that take over the space. Each of the three sets of chairs has its own history and theme.

Among other works on view on the upper floor is a large selection of notebooks in display cases. Real extensions of the artist’s mind over the last forty years, these notebooks give an intimate and sensitive insight into her way of thinking,

of combining elements, of outlining projects, of using references and mixing art and life.

During the exhibition, a digital catalogue and a video documentary will be published on the website of la Comunidad de Madrid.

Olivier Kaeser, curator of the exhibition

La Ribot

Born in Madrid, La Ribot is based in Geneva and works internationally. She was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the Venice Biennale of Dance 2020; Switzerland's Grand Prix for Dance granted by the Federal Culture Office in 2019; the Region of Madrid Visual Arts Award in 2018; the Golden Medal of Merit in Fine Arts granted by Spain's Ministry of Culture in 2015; and the National Dance Award granted by Spain's Ministry of Culture in 2000.

“La Ribot is a choreographer, dancer, and visual artist. She began working in the 1980s, towards the end of Spain's transition to democracy, and has gone on to profoundly change the field of contemporary dance. She defies the frameworks and formats of the stage and the museum, borrowing freely from the vocabularies of theatre, visual art, performance, film and video to instigate a conceptual shift in choreography. Her solo works, collective explorations, experiments with amateurs, installations and moving images are the many facets of a protean practice that constantly focuses on the rights of the body.” *Marcella Lista, writer and Chief-Curator of the New Media Collection, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2020).*

The artist has presented her choreographic work at, among others, Tate Modern, London; Festival d'Automne, Théâtre de la Ville and Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid; Aichi Triennale, Nagoya; Galería Soledad Lorenzo, Madrid; Museu Serralves, Porto; the Art Unlimited platform at the Art Basel Festival, Basel; S.M.A.K., Ghent; and Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), Mexico City.

La Ribot's visual work may be found in major private and public collections, including Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris; el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC), Leon; Artium (Centro-Museo Vasco de Arte Contemporáneo), Vitoria; and Fonds régional d'art contemporain (FRAC) de Lorraine, Metz (France).

Olivier Kaeser

Curator of the exhibition

After studying Art History at the University of Geneva, Kaeser began working at the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, first as an assistant, and later as a curator. Together with Jean-Paul Felley he founded and directed Attitudes, an independent art structure based in Geneva but active in the whole of Switzerland, throughout Europe and, by means of exhibitions-expeditions, also in Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile and Beirut. In 2008, and always as part of the duo, he became director of the Swiss Cultural Centre in Paris, where he developed a multidisciplinary program for ten years. Since 2019 he has worked as a freelance curator and directs Arta Sperto, a curatorial agency for the production, organisation and publication of mostly multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary art projects. In 2020 he presented the *Dance First Think Later - Rencontre entre danse et arts visuels* exhibition-festival in Geneva, and in 2021 organised and co-produced the underwater performance *SpO2*, by Anne and Jean Rochat, in two spots in Lake Geneva and in a river in Tesino (Switzerland).

Programme

A escala humana

Monographic exhibition of visual and performance works

Opening hours

Saturday 19 February to Sunday 3 April 2022

Tuesday to Saturday – 11:00 am - 8:30 pm

Sunday – 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Wednesday 23 to Saturday 26 February – 11:00 am - 9:30 pm

Performance works:

Laughing Hole (2006)

with Olivia Csiky Trnka, Delphine Rosay, Lisa Laurent, Piera Bellato, Mathilde Invernon and Fernando de Miguel

Saturday 19 February – 4:00 - 10:00 pm

Exhibition opening

Pièce distinguée N°45 (2016)

with La Ribot and Juan Lorient

Wednesday 23, Thursday 24, Friday 25 and Saturday 26 February – 8:30 pm

Costume Design: La Ribot

Production of Costumes: Laurence Durieux

LaBOLA (2022)

With three performers, alternating: Piera Bellato, Mathilde Invernon, Lisa Laurent, Juan Lorient, Thami Manekehla, Ludovico Paladini

Tuesday 1 March to Sunday 3 April

Tuesday to Saturday– 7:00 pm

Sunday – 12:00 noon

Costume Design: La Ribot

Production of Costumes: Marion Schmid

Tuesday 1 to Sunday 13 March: Piera Bellato, Ludovico Paladini, Thami Manekehla

Tuesday 15 to Sunday 20 March: Mathilde Invernon, Lisa Laurent, Ludovico Paladini

Tuesday 22 March to Sunday 3 April: Lisa Laurent, Mathilde Invernon, Juan Lorient

List of works:

Ground floor

Laughing Hole

2006

Installation, variable dimensions, produced during the performance

Cardboard, marker, adhesive tape

Inauguration with single 6-hour performance on 19 February

With Piera Bellato, Olivia Csiky Trnka, Delphine Rosay, Lisa Laurent, Mathilde Invernon and Fernando de Miguel

Costume Design: La Ribot

Sound Design: Clive Jenkins

Courtesy of Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid

Cnap Collection – Centre national des arts plastiques, Pantin, France

Many thanks to Sophie Alphonso, Yan Duyvendak, Michel Hamerski, Nelson Jimenez, Gilles Jobin, Sylvie Kleiber, Yann Marussich, Daisy Phillips, Ruth Childs, Ursula Achternkamp, Victor Roy, Pablo Jobin, Karine Vintache, Maria-Carmela Mini, Mélanie Rouquier, Soledad Lorenzo. Thanks to Magda Ptasznik as performer

Despliegue

2001

Video-installation

Duration: 45'

Corps-opérateur: La Ribot

Technical Direction and Director of Photography: Daniel Demont

Assistant to Demont and Sound Design: Nelson Enohata

Sound Technician: Richard Rudnicki

Assistant to La Ribot: Christianne Toledo

Production Managers: Eduardo Bonito and Michel Quéré

Administration: Daisy Heath

Technical Production: Steve Wald

Produced by La Ribot-36 Gazelles, London, with the support of London Arts

An Artsadmin associated project

ARTIUM Collection, Vitoria-Gasteiz, España; MUSAC Castilla y León, Spain; FRAC Lorraine, Metz, France; Fundación Bancaria “la Caixa”, Barcelona, Spain

Walk the Chair

2010

Installation

50 folding wooden chairs

Fire-branded wood, adhesive tape, wire

Commissioned by Hayward Gallery, London, UK, for the exhibition *Move: Choreographing you.*

Courtesy of Centre Pompidou, Paris

Thanks to Kumiko Kuwabara, Ewa Fontaine, Rares Donca, Clémentine Küng, Pablo Lavalley, Christophe Khim, Quentin Simon, Marine Magnin and Gilles Jobin

Walk the Authors

2018-ongoing

Installation

30 folding wooden chairs

Fire-branded wood, adhesive tape, wire

Artist's collection

Thanks to Tamara Alegre, Thami Manekehla y CCEMx (Centro Cultural de España en México)

First floor

Rojo

2020

Video

Duration: 3' 25"

Corps opérateur: La Ribot

Color grading: Massimo Simbula

Music: Mia Martini

Collection of Galería Max Estrella, Madrid

Otra Narcisa

2003

Composition of 337 polaroids

Dimensions: 162 x 209 cm

Artist's collection

Work notebooks

1982-2019

Notebooks with collages and designs

Archives dramaturgy: Jaime Conde-Salazar

Artist's collection

Cuarto de oro

2008

Video

Duration: 3' 31"

Corps-opérateur: Cristina Hoyos

Director of Photography: Javier Codesal

Video Assistant: Oscar Clemente

Music: *Carmen* by Bizet (Entre-act III)

Mastering: Javier Codesal

Production Manager: Ignacio Collado

Produced with the support of Cajasol Obra Social for the Intervalo project, Seville

Artist's collection

Thanks to Juan Antonio Jiménez and Tina Panadero

Walk the Bastards

2017

Installation

11 folding wooden chairs

Fire-branded wood, adhesive tape, wire

Artist's collection

Biographies

Piera Bellato - performer

After obtaining an MA in International Relations, Piera Bellato went on to graduate from The Manufacture Performing Arts School in Lausanne in 2013. She then worked for several artists, Lucile Carré, José Lillo, Eric Salama, Stéphanie Blanchoud, Eric Salama, Nina Negri, Les 3 Points de suspension, Vincent Coppey and Isis Fahmy, among others. She also dedicates much of her time to research projects around performance, particularly with one of her collectives, Third Floor Group. She followed a stint as associated artist at L'Abri in 2019-2020, with her own project, *Merci pour cette danse*, fusing dance and theatre, presented at Usine à gaz in Nyon and Théâtre du Loup in Geneva. Since 2020, she has been working with La Ribot, particularly in two projects, *Pièce distinguée N°54*, at Le Commun cultural space in Geneva, as part of the *Dance First Think Later* exhibition-festival; and *Distinguished Anyways*, for the Real Academia de España in Rome. In October 2021 Bellato joined La Ribot Ensemble as a permanent dancer.

Olivia Csiky Trnka – performer

Born in Bratislava, Olivia Csiky Trnka grew up in Switzerland. While studying at The Manufacture Performing Arts School, she completed a Master in Art History at the University of Lausanne. Founder of Full PETAL Machine, a production company working with theatre, video-installation and performance, she has created *Fronaisons*, *Demolition Party*, *Come to me*, *V.A.L.E.N.T.I.N.A* and *Mars Attending Paupière train fantôme*. Since 2011 she has been working on *Les Précipités*, a video-poems installation. In theatre she has worked as a performer and dramaturge for, among others, La Ribot, Maya Bösch, Jérôme Richer, Marcel Schwald, Marc Liebens, Karelle Ménine and Adina Secrétan. In cinema she has worked, among others, with Virginie Despentes, the Dowdle brothers, Stella di Tocco, Manuel Billi, Jacob Berger, the comedians V. Veillon and V. Kucholl or Fairouz M'Silti.

Fernando de Miguel – musician

A Swiss musician and composer of Spanish descent, Fernando de Miguel was born in Geneva in 1971. After training in composition and electroacoustic music under Gabriel Brncic, he joined the Database59 collective and began to collaborate with visual artists and video-makers. His field of expression also covers compositions for theatre and dance, for which he creates sound environments and original music. He is active as a composer for audiovisual projects and shows, and in music and performing projects for the stage. His most recent collaborations include: Oskar Gómez Mata - Cie L'Alakran, Vincent Coppey, Matthieu Vertut, Jean-Louis Johannides, La Ribot, Andrés Garcia, Dallas Suiza and Caroline de Cornière.

Mathilde Invernon – performer

Mathilde Invernon is a French-Spanish actor and dancer. After studying Dance and Theatre at the Paris Conservatory, in 2019 she graduated in Theatre at The Manufacture Performing Arts School in Lausanne. She works in stage, performance and film projects. She is behind performing arts projects like *El Intruso*, staged at the Lausanne Underground Film & Music Festival (LUFF), Gaîté Lyrique in Paris and Alte Munze in Berlin; and recently *Let's Pretend*, for Théâtre Sévelin 36, in Lausanne. She is currently directing and writing *The Bath*, to be staged at TLH in Sierre and at Théâtre du Crochetan in Monthey (Switzerland). She has danced in the latest works by La Ribot, *Pièce distinguée N°54*, at Le Commun, in Geneva, as part of the *Dance First Think Later* exhibition-festival; and *Distinguished Anyways*, staged at the Real Academia de España in Rome. As from October 2021 she has reinforced this collaboration as a permanent performer in La Ribot Ensemble.

Lisa Laurent – performer

Lisa Laurent is a French dancer born in 1996. In 2019 she completed her studies at Ballet Junior in Geneva. In the three-year period of her training she danced many repertoire pieces (Jan Martens, Sharon Eyal, Thomas Hauert) and began to develop her own personal work. In September 2020 Laurent presented her first project, *Pas de deux*, in collaboration with Mattéo Trutat, at the Quarts d'Heure of Théâtre Sévelin in Lausanne. The project was selected for Tanzfaktor2022, organized by Reso. Her second project, *HYPER* (provisional title), is due to be premiered in November 2022 in Geneva as a focus piece at the Emergentia Festival. Apart from her work as a choreographer, Lisa Laurent is also a performer for Cindy Van Acker and a member of La Ribot Ensemble.

Juan Lorient - performer

Born in 1959 in Santander, Juan Lorient was a professional tennis player before discovering a vocation for the stage. He studied performing arts at the University of Cantabria and the Odin Teatret, in Denmark, with Torgeir Wethal and the International Exchange Natacha Project. Since 1999 he has been collaborating as first actor with the playwright and director Rodrigo García, in solos like *Borges* (1999) and plays like *After Sun* (2000), *Compré una pala en Ikea para cavar mi tumba* (2003), *La historia de Ronald el payaso de McDonald* (2003), *Accidens: Matar para comer* (2005) and *Gólgota Picnic* (2011). He has worked with La Fura del Baus, Carlos Marquerie, Elena Córdoba and Ion Munduate, among others, and has collaborated with La Ribot in two duets: *Los trancos del avestruz* (1993) and *Oh! Sole!* (1995). Lorient also directs radio and theatre research projects and workshops.

Thami Manekehla – performer

Thami Manekehla is a South Africa-born dancer and choreographer. He is the driving force behind the Statement Art project and co-director of Nyakaza SPACE in Soweto since

2012. He has benefited from several choreography scholarships and in 2008 won the Africa Dance Festival Prize. In 2016 he took part as co-creator and performer in the production of Ligia Lewis, *Minor Matter*, which won many distinctions and was staged in theatres and festivals worldwide from 2016 through 2019. In 2016 he was, together with La Ribot and Juan Oriente, a member of the trio of performers in *Another Distinguée*, the fifth series of the distinguished Pieces project by La Ribot.

Ludovico Paladini – performer

Born in Rome in 1998, Ludovico Paladini is a dancer and performer active in Italy, France and Switzerland. In 2020 he graduated in Contemporary Dance at The Manufacture Performing Arts School in Lausanne. In February 2021, Paladini performed with his fellow graduates from The Manufacture in *A Dance Climax*, a show by Mathilde Monnier presented at the Antigél Festival in Geneva. Since 2020 he has been performing with Olivia Grandville in France and since December 2020, he has worked as a choreographer with AMAT and the Teatre delle Muse of Ancona in the production of his solo *Tales of FreeDoom*. In September 2021 he performed in *L'amour de la fille et du fils*, choreographed by Prisca Harsch and Pascal Gravat, in the context of the Bâtie Festival in Geneva. In October 2021 he became permanent dancer in La Ribot Ensemble.

Delphine Rosay – performer

An actor and assistant director, Delphine Rosay currently coordinates the degree and master programmes at The Manufacture Performing Arts School in Lausanne. Between 1990 and 1994 she worked in Spain with Oskar Gómez Mata, prior to moving to Geneva where they jointly created the Alakran company. Rosay was involved in the creation of the pieces *Boucher espagnol* (1997), *Tombola Lear* (1998-1999), *Ubu!* (2000), *Cerveau Cabossé 2: King Kong Fire* (2002), *Optimistic vs Pessimistic* (2005), *Construis ta Jeep* (2006), *Epiphaneïa* (2006), *Kairos, sisyphes et zombies* (2009), *Suis à la messe, reviens de suite* (2010), *Psychodrame* (2012) and *La maison d'Antan* (2013). She has also worked with local artists including Denis Maillefer, Evelyne Murebeeld, Evelyne Catstellino, Caroline de Cornière and Fabrice Hügler. In 2007 she joined La Ribot in *Laughing Hole* and *Llámame Mariachi*, two pieces in which she performs with La Ribot herself and Marie-Caroline Hominal.

Almudena Ribot – spatial installation

Almudena Ribot is Senior Lecturer in Projects at ETSAM, UPM (Madrid Polytechnic University) and runs Unidad CoLab. Her interests are focused on three interrelated fields: industrialisation, personalisation, and sustainability. Professionally speaking, this involves a systematisation and construction of the project as a language and the use of bespoke systems. That is the case of the Cuatro50 Industrialised Housing System. From the viewpoint of pedagogy, this

implies the use of collaborative processes. In 2009 she founded and codirected the CoLaboratorio: Industrialization, Prototyping and Collaboration group and has been teaching and researching in that field since then.

Jaime Conde-Salazar – archives dramaturgy

Jaime Conde-Salazar Pérez graduated in Geography and History at Universidad Complutense, Madrid, majoring in Art History. In 2002 he obtained an MA in Performance Studies at New York University, thanks to a MEC-Fulbright grant. In 2003 he obtained an Advanced Studies Diploma for his research into “Narrations of Modernity in the History of Dance”, directed by Estrella de Diego. He has collaborated as a dance critic in magazines including *Por la Danza* (Madrid), *SuzyQ* (Madrid), *Ballet/Tanz* (Berlin), *Mouvement* (Paris), *Hystrio* (Rome) and *Obscena* (Lisbon). Between 2003 and 2006 he directed Aula de Danza Estrella Casero at the University of Alcalá and between 2006 and 2008 he was managing director of Escuela Infantil Waldorf “El Moral” (La Laguna, Tenerife). Between 2009 and 2010 he received a grant from the Real Academia de España in Rome.

Curator: Olivier Kaeser

Performers: Piera Bellato, Mathilde Invernón, Lisa Laurent, Ludovico Paladini, La Ribot, Juan Lorienté, Thami Manekehla, Olivia Csiky Trnka, Delphine Rosay and Fernando de Miguel

Spatial Installation: Almudena Ribot

Museographic Design: María Fraile

Archives dramaturgy: Jaime Conde-Salazar

Production Manager: Aude Martino

Production and Communication assistant: Iris Obadia

Administration: Gonzague Bochud

Technical Manager: Marie Prédour

Wardrobe and prop technician: Clara Macías

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