

**Claudia Pagès**

***Banditry***

10/02 – 16/04/2023

***Fixations per Minute***

**Exhibition series in Espai 13 at Fundació Joan Miró**

9 February 2023 – 21 January 2024

Curated by Yaby (Beatriz Ortega Botas and Alberto Vallejo)

In collaboration with Fundació Banc Sabadell

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**Press release**

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**Claudia Pagès opens the 2023 exhibition series in Espai 13 at Fundació Joan Miró**

**The artist uses video installation to investigate the relationships that exist between power, the construction of history and the material substrates upon which meanings are fixed.**

**In *Banditry*, Pagès bases her work on an investigation into stamped paper, watermarks and other marks as tools for identification, legitimisation and control. The concept of taking sides, or bands, runs through her project, which distances itself from the romantic idea of the highwayman and points to the complexity of a phenomenon financed by the nobility that served feudal interests and sustained their power relations.**

***Fixations per Minute* is the new exhibition series at Espai 13, presented by Fundació Joan Miró for the 2023 season in collaboration with Fundació Banc Sabadell. Curated by Yaby, the curatorial team made up of Beatriz Ortega Botas (b. 1990, Oviedo) and Alberto Vallejo (b. 1990, Zamora), the project examines the concept of reading and its relation to current artistic practices through the work of a selection of artists from the local and international scene.**

**Barcelona, 9 February 2023.** In *Banditry*, Claudia Pagès (b. 1990, Barcelona) continues her research into the formal, corporeal and spatial consequences of text. Pagès extracts elements from language and transfers them to the visual domain in order to expose and submit them to interactions that do not normally occur.

For the exhibition that opens the new series at Espai 13, the artist explores the history and political consequences of marks such as watermarks and those featured on stamped paper. Pagès has divided the room in two by means of a wall of paper featuring watermarks created by her. Two projection screens facing each other on either side of the dividing wall alternately reproduce parts of the same audio-visual piece.



*Banditry*, by Claudia Pagès. Courtesy of the artist

The title also points to a system of opposites: beyond its romantic image, banditry was a complex phenomenon financed by the nobility, who organised bands of men and women that, apart from robbing merchants, served the interests of one feudal lord against others, consistent with the power relations in a social structure based on vassalage. The curatorial team highlights how “the concept of taking sides, or bands, runs through the exhibition: friends, enemies, walls, dilemmas, dualisms, their hierarchies and complications, and that which runs much deeper and is less visible, underlying and sustaining them.”

A watermark is an integrated mark—typically an image or a pattern—produced via thickness or density variations generated during the fabrication of paper. More or less complex designs, logos or letters made of copper wire are placed in the paper mould, preventing the pulp from reaching its maximum density at the points where the wire is positioned and causing marks to emerge, visible when looking at the sheet against the light.

In Pagès’ piece, the wall of watermarked paper displays its marks when viewed from the side that remains in darkness when the projector on the other side is turned on. According to Yaby, “the artist is interested in how these marks incite communication without establishing a conclusive reading. They operate within a system of meanings and values in which power flows and is exerted in an almost invisible way.”

Capellades, the artist's hometown, acquired significant prestige in the 18th century through the production of stamped paper, which was used mainly for judicial and administrative documents and as a tool for identification, legitimisation, colonisation, property and control. The video that flanks the wall was filmed in two locations in Capellades: the Museu Molí Paperer—which houses an important historical collection of stamped paper—and the Abric Romaní del Capelló—a Neanderthal archaeological site that preserves marks from different periods engraved on its stone walls. In the curators' words: "Both the museum and the Palaeolithic cliff have accumulated signs that transit an ambiguous space between words and images."



*Banditry*, by Claudia Pagès. Courtesy of the artist

The video was filmed with three GoPro cameras mounted on three different bodies, establishing a parallel with the three points of view articulated in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Purloined Letter": the person who sees, the one who does not see, and the one who sees that the other does not see a thing. In the story, a letter—the content and sender of which remain unknown—sets off a web of blackmail. The letter, similarly to a watermark, deploys its power by means of its inherent circulability, and not by the fixed, legible meaning of what it states—the moment the letter is opened and its contents are revealed, it loses its power as a control mechanism. Finally, in Poe's story, it is the ability to identify with the other, to switch sides, which leads its protagonist Detective Dupin to find the stolen letter and deactivate it. In this sense, Yaby point out how in Pagès' video they "play at 'reading' the marks, pointing at them without deciphering them completely, breaking down the signifiers until they lose or acquire more meaning, hollowing out the images, stripping them of their accumulated time and imaginary".

**Claudia Pagès Rabal** (b. 1990, Barcelona). Visual artist, performer and writer. Lives and works in Barcelona. In her most recent works, Pagès focuses on the logistics system and its link to jurisdictional language, both operating in the verbal tense of a non-finite and violent gerund that has direct effects on bodies. Pagès' artistic research addresses circulation and maintenance and their role in sustaining the status quo. The continuity of certain systems and institutions is maintained by means of what Pagès calls the "immobility of stable circulations" and the "architectures of containment", which sustain power through specific flow of goods, capital and value in a suspended and entrapping present. Her more recent investigation continues to move around in search of its most primary signifiers: marks.

Claudia Pagès has read, performed and exhibited at Tabakalera (Donostia, 2022), Vleeshal (Middelburg, 2022), The Ryder (Madrid, 2022), MACBA (Barcelona, 2021), Kunstverein Braunschweig (2021), La Casa Encendida (Madrid, 2021), CAPC (Bordeaux, 2022), HAU2 & CreamCake (Berlin, 2019) and Sharjah Art Foundation (Sharjah, UAE, 2018), amongst others. She has published work with Onomatopée (2020) and is currently preparing a new book with Wendy's Subway (2023).

***Fixations per Minute*** is the new exhibition series at Espai 13, presented by Fundació Joan Miró for the 2023 season in collaboration with Fundació Banc Sabadell. Curated by Yaby (Beatriz Ortega Botas and Alberto Vallejo), the project examines the concept of reading and its relation to current artistic practices through the work of a selection of artists from the local and international scene. The exhibitions by Claudia Pagès, P. Staff, Jota Mombaça and Iki Yos Piña Narváez Funes, and Kandis Williams use diverse visual media to complicate some of the technical and rhetorical mechanisms of reading by exposing their political consequences.

The title of the project is a reference to the formula used to calculate reading speed. Each fixation is the moment the eyes fixate on a word: the lower the number of fixations per minute, the higher the speed at which you process text. These fixations are the intimate and physiological points of contact through which a text enters the body. The term also points to other characteristics of language that are relevant in this series, such as its ability to fix meanings and impose itself, just as an obsession does.

## Upcoming exhibitions in the *Fixations per Minute* series

### **P. Staff**

28/04 – 9/07/2023

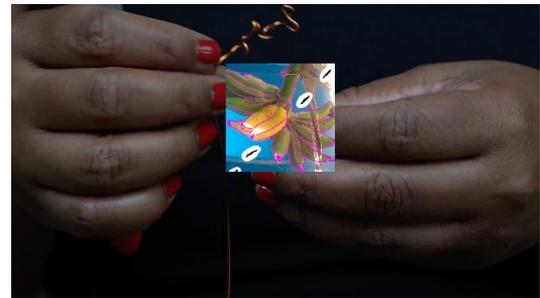
Staff draws on poetry, video and holograms to explore the sensual and corrosive environment in which pleasure and violence coexist. Poetry and the experience of its reading are central to their work, which proposes a reflection from a queer and trans perspective on the volatile exchanges that take place between bodies, ecosystems and institutions.



### **Jota Mombaça and Iki Yos Piña Narváez Funes**

21/07 – 22/10/2023

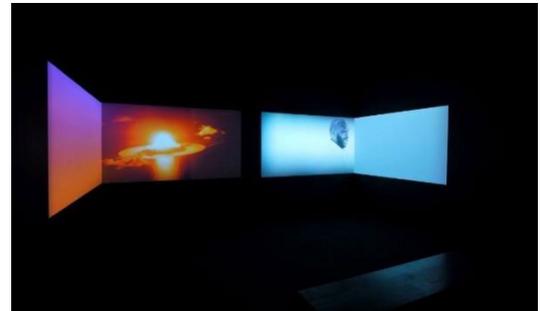
Their proposal for the current exhibition series at Espai 13 is a joint project that revolves around Western narratives on ecology and a rereading of the colonial archive. Their exhibition is based on certain ancestral techniques linked to specific territories such as ceramics and *bajareque*, and examines certain non-alphabetic processes of signification affected by geology, displacing the modern concept of a book.



### **Kandis Williams, *Death of A***

3/11/2023 - 21/1/2024

*Death of A* revisits the theatrical text *Death of a Salesman* to reflect on the Black body as a focus of experience and, at the same time, as a political symbol. The piece investigates certain themes raised in Miller's work, such as failure, fatigue and disappointment with the American dream. In addition to the theatrical text, Williams includes excerpts from cultural theorists and archival footage related to the history of war and entertainment, police and media violence, extractivism and commodification.



Press images and material at <https://www.fmirobcn.org/prensa> and the following link: [bit.ly/E13Fixacions](https://bit.ly/E13Fixacions). You can follow the activities at Espai 13 on social media via the hashtag [#FixacionsEspai13](https://twitter.com/FixacionsEspai13).

#fixacionsEspai13

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# Fundació Joan Miró ✱ Barcelona

In collaboration with:

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