

Paired histories

Chapter 1: The chance of restitution

Pepe Espaliú (and Alberto Cardín) in Barcelona

Exhibition: Sep 15 – Nov 26, 2021

Opening: Sep 15 from 17h to 21h

Hours: Mon to Fri, from 11h to 15h by appointment

Barcelona Gallery Weekend special hours:

Thur 16 and Fri 17 from 10h to 20h; Sat 18 from 11h to 20h; Sun 19 from 11h to 15h

NoguerasBlanchard is pleased to announce the first chapter of *Paired histories* in our space in L'Hospitalet. This exhibition marks the beginning of a season of programming overseen by Joaquín García Martín, founder of the Madrid gallery *garcía | galería* and proposes a (further) look at some of the artists showcased by the gallery between 2012 and 2020 in Doctor Fourquet, Madrid, articulating relationships between participating artists and literary authors.

garcía | galería was a space dedicated to contemporary creation inaugurated in 2012 at the same time as the Madrid branch of the NoguerasBlanchard gallery, located just a few doors down on the same street. The coincidence of location and date was planned from the outset as part of a shared strategy, endorsing a collaborative mode of working and continuing a personal relationship that had begun many years earlier.

After the closing of *garcía | galería* in 2020, NoguerasBlanchard has invited its founder and director Joaquín García Martín to present an exhibition based on the 8 years of his parallel gallery project. To tell this story, García proposes a selection of 4 artists from the gallery whose work is intertwined with written texts.

A succession of elements presented in pairs: history and narration, visual artist and literary author, two galleries, two cities.

The chance of restitution
Pepe Espaliú (and Alberto Cardín) in Barcelona



The chance of restitution proposes an imaginary encounter between the artist Pepe Espaliú and writer, anthropologist and philosopher, Alberto Cardín through the medium of their work.

From a series of photographs taken by Espaliú in Barcelona in 1975 and selected fragments of Cardín's writings from the same period, the curator suggests a speculative relationship between the two creators. When placed in proximity, correlations appear between the various elements, allowing us to fantasize about a meeting between artist and author that, in reality, never took place.

Pepe Espaliú (1955-1993) arrived in Barcelona in 1971 and came into contact with a local art scene that at the time was very interested in the practices of conceptual art. Through experiences such as the Escola Massana he met other visual artists with whom he took his first strides as an artist. Among these early works is a series of photographs documenting actions carried out in the streets of the Raval neighbourhood. Though these works remained unseen until after the artist's death, they feature many of the themes and interests of his later work.

For his part, Alberto Cardín (1948-1992) settled in Barcelona in 1973, immediately beginning a series of collaborations with various newspapers and magazines. He soon became a prominent voice in both the generalist media and in countercultural publications of the time. His constant literary output in the press sought always to provoke debate within a society undergoing change. During these years he also published his first books of essays, fiction and poetry.

Espaliú left Barcelona in 1976 for Paris and later lived in New York and Madrid, developing one of the most important and singular trajectories in Spanish art as a sculptor. Cardín continued to live in Barcelona and published a series of fundamental works which

cemented his place as one of our country's greatest heterodox thinkers. In the early 1990s, both Espaliú and Cardín made public their status as carriers of the AIDS virus, raising awareness of the issue for the first time in Spain and stimulating debate. Alberto Cardín died in January 1992 and Pepe Espaliú in November 1993.

There is no trace of the two crossing paths in the same place and time. No photograph, no mention by one of the other. Nothing. This project thus imagines a meeting that, as far as we know, never took place.

With many thanks to Pepe Cobo.

Alberto Cardín (Villamayor, 1948 - Barcelona, 1992) was one of the most important people in the origins of contemporary Spanish LGBTI literature. Translator, writer, anthropologist, philosopher and essayist, Cardín was also responsible for one of the first editorial initiatives dedicated to LGBTI issues. "Rey de bastos" (King of clubs) collection, from the Laertes publishing house, saw the light in 1985 and published academic texts – such as Cinema and homosexuality, by Richard Dyer – as well as works of fiction – authors such as Copi, Lawrence Schimel or Nazario complete the catalogue-. In relation to HIV, Cardín translated and published together with Armand de Fluvià, the historic Catalan activist, a book with a compilation of articles published in the United States on the subject.

Pepe Espaliú (Córdoba 1953 - 1993) was the artist who did most for the visibility of HIV in the years when institutional silence was so profound that any public demonstration, no matter how small, was a relief for thousands of people. This painter, sculptor, performer and writer of international projection had already been reflecting on identity in his works and, once he was diagnosed, he turned the wheel and continued working on the same issue, but already applied to the disease.

Joaquín García Martín was born in Madrid and studies Art History at the UCM. He has been part of the curatorial collective DOMÉSTICO from 2000 to 2008. As a manager, he has collaborated with a large number of contemporary art institutions, both public and private. In 2012 he founded [garcía | gallery](#) until its closure in 2020. He is currently conducting the series of podcasts of interviews with contemporary Spanish creators "[Hablar normal y corriente](#)". Recently curated the exhibition "Cuestión de Ambiente" at CentroCentro, Madrid.

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