

## CENTRO BOTÍN PRESENTS THE EXHIBITION 'OCTOPUS, CITRUS, HUMAN' BY SHIMABUKU



Shimabuku, *When Sky was Sea*, 2002. Performance / Video Installation. Courtesy of the artist, Air de Paris, Romainville.

- The exhibition – Shimabuku's first institutional show in Spain – on display at Centro Botín from 5 October 2024 to 9 March 2025, will feature video, photography, sculpture, installation and text spanning from the early 1990s until now.
- Centro Botín will feature new works involving local communities, both human and non-human, showcasing the artist's unique practice of documenting interactions between diverse entities.
- Key works include *Going to meet the octopuses in Santander* (2024), a new video filmed off the coast of Santander. It documents the interactions of octopuses with a series of vessels made by the artist as offerings for these aquatic animals.
- The exhibition will include *Flying People (Santander)* a work created in collaboration with citizens of Santander and Cantabria, where more than 100 personalized kites were flown collectively. These kites were previously made in participatory workshops led by the artist.
- This exhibition will be accompanied by a publication, co-edited with La Fábrica, featuring texts written for this project by researcher Filipa Ramos and artist Philippe Parreno, as well as a conversation between the artist and the co-curator.

**Exhibition Dates:** 5 October 2024 – 9 March 2025

**Press Preview:** Friday, 4 October 2024

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*Octopus, Citrus, Human* is the first institutional solo exhibition of

Shimabuku in Spain, spanning video, photography, sculpture, installation and text from the early 1990s until now. Through his affective and humorous performative actions, Shimabuku relays the simplicity of daily coexistence and the beauty of interspecies interaction. His practice is firmly grounded in relationships, rather than creating specific objects, encouraging viewers to re-familiarise themselves with the natural world. For this exhibition, Shimabuku has created new works with the participation of local communities, both human and non-human, including an underwater piece installed and recorded on the seabed off the coast of Santander. The artist also created a work in collaboration with local residents who, together with the artist, created more than 100 personalized kites, which were then collectively flown in the outdoor amphitheater of Centro Botín.

Shimabuku (1969, Kobe, Japan) generates improbable encounters between diverse entities by wandering and exploring various places in Japan and abroad. The artist creates social and spatial experiments in nature and public spaces that are unrefined and unrestricted, allowing for the beings involved – a person, an octopus, a citrus – to engage at their own pace and with their own abilities. The entities engaged become the primary audiences of his interventions – an exhibition for monkeys, a sculpture for an octopus, a meeting between a fish and a potato. These encounters are documented via photography, video, sculpture or text, which are made public in exhibitions where convictions between nature / culture, process / artwork, audience / collaborator are overturned. His works emerge beautifully out of the mundane, of the artist's own curiosity and desires, and evolve slowly over time, with certain protagonists manifesting themselves in variations across multiple experiments, adapting to new contexts and ecologies.

Bárbara Rodríguez Muñoz, Director of Exhibitions and the Collection at Centro Botín and curator of this exhibition, said: "As the title of Shimabuku's exhibition, *Octopus, Citrus, Human*, suggests, his work shows with great candor the same level of curiosity and engagement with all forms of living things, exposing the beauty and variety of interspecies interactions that can occur in the living world. Shimabuku has taken a special interest in the natural and social context of Santander and is developing several new works with the participation of local protagonists - human and non-human - that I believe will be perceived by our audiences with a kind of familiarity that is simultaneously charged with wonder."

### Octopus, Citrus, Human

In 2019 Shimabuku made a work titled *Sculpture for octopuses exploring for their favorite colors*, which consisted of an arrangement of glass marbles and self-made vases that were placed within an octopus aquarium. This experiment was based on the peculiar tendency that octopuses like to pick up and carry stones and seashells with them, and are inclined to enter narrow spaces, like a flower vase. For Centro Botín, Shimabuku has placed a larger version of the same vases on the sea floor off the coast of Santander: *Going to meet the Octopuses of*

*Sanander (2024)* The monument became an offering for the octopuses and a stage to observe his interactions, which were recorded underwater by a team of divers and the artist himself.

For the video *Flying Me* (2006), a lone, real size self-portrait of the artist drawn on the kite flies silently across a blue sky. Shimabuku worked with the local residents to create kites in their own likeness, which were flown simultaneously last Sunday, and will be displayed as an installation in the exhibition space.

The 2010 installation *Something that Floats/Something that Sinks*, featured fruits and vegetables circling each other (one above, one below) demonstrating an odd natural phenomena—certain fruits of the exact same species, float, while others sink. For the exhibition, the tanks will contain a selection of autumn citrus fruits from Todolí Citrus Fundació de la Comunitat Valenciana, a non-profit organisation created for the study and spreading of citrus and citriculture.

Other works included in the show expose or generate the displacement of living things from one place to another. *Exhibition for monkeys* consists of a series of photographs documenting the descendants of the Japanese snow monkeys that were relocated to a desert sanctuary in Texas in 1972 for a scientific experiment. Shimabuku was curious to find out if these monkeys still had a memory of the snow, despite not being in contact with it for generations, so he brought a pile of ice from a nearby gas station and observed their reactions. The film *Fish and Chips* (2006) documents the encounter between the constituent parts of the ubiquitous British dish by showing a potato embarking on an underwater tour of Liverpool to meet a fish. A series of early photographic works – *Tour of Europe with One Eyebrow Shaved*, 1991; *Symbiosis: hyacinth & black gold fish*, 1992; *Christmas in the Southern Hemisphere*, 1994; or *Sitting on the wave*, 1998 pay testament to his nomadic and ephemeral approach to art making, offering refreshing perspectives of life.

This exhibition will be accompanied by a publication, co-edited with La Fábrica that includes texts written specifically for this project by researcher Filipa Ramos and artist Philippe Parreno, as well as a conversation between Shimabuku and Bárbara Rodríguez Muñoz. Additionally, in 2025, Shimabuku will invite artists to participate in the Fundación Botín Art Workshop that he will lead in Santander as a closing to his exhibition. The exhibition is curated by Shimabuku & Bárbara Rodríguez Muñoz. Additionally, in 2025, Shimabuku will invite other artists to participate in thew Fundación Botín Art Workshop, which he will lead in Santander as a closing event for the exhibition.

**ENDS**

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**Opening Times:** Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 2pm and 4pm to 8pm. Weekends and holidays, 10am to 8pm.

**General admission:** €8 (€9 box office). Concession €4 (€4,5 box office)

**Free Entrance:** 18 May (Museum Day) & 12 October (Hispanic Day)

[www.centrobotin.org/en/](http://www.centrobotin.org/en/)

#### **About Shimabuku**

Shimabuku (Born in Kobe, Japan 1969. Lives in Naha, Okinawa, Japan). Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthalle Bern (2014), MNM Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2021), Wiels, Brussels, Belgium (2022) and MUSEION: Museum of modern and contemporary art, Bolzano, Italy (2023). Group exhibitions include, Centre Pompidou in Paris and Hayward Gallery in London, and in numerous international exhibitions including Venice Biennale (2003 & 2017), the São Paulo Biennial (2006), Havana Biennial (2015), Lyon Biennale (2017) and Thailand Biennale (2023).

#### **About Centro Botín**

Set in the heart of Santander, Centro Botín opened its doors to the public in 2017. Designed by the renowned architect Renzo Piano, it is the most ambitious project of the Fundación Botín to date and is one of the leading international arts centres. It presents an outstanding, experimental and inspiring programme of exhibitions, publications and public activities that, alongside its collection, respond to and ignite contemporary debates within the fields of art and culture while awakening audiences' creativity.

Centro Botín is a place of encounter, situated in a unique enclave in the heart of the city and overlooking the bay, it has become a cornerstone in the cultural arc of the Cantabrian Coast. Its mission is to create a greater understanding of art and foster its power to stimulate and develop creativity and emotional intelligence. Fundación Botín aims to bring social and economic strength to the communities it supports, with Centro Botín making a major contribution to helping promote Santander and the wider region on both the national and international stage. Since its opening in 2017, it has staged a programme of historical and contemporary exhibitions including *Agility and Audacity: Goya's Drawings; Picasso Ibero; Joan Miró: sculptures; Julie Merethu: A Universal History of Everything and Nothing; Carsten Holler: Y; Anri Sala: As you go; Martin Creed: Amigos; Ellen Gallagher with Edgar Cleijne: A Law... a blueprint ... a scale; Damián Ortega: Expanded View; Roni Horn: I am Paralyzed with Hope; Enredos: Eva Fábregas; El Greco / Tino Sehgal; Shilpa Gupta: I Live Under Your Sky Too* and *Silvia Bächli: Partitura*.

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