





# PARADOX

**Fine Art European Forum**

**Alternative Zones:  
Uncovering the Official and the Unofficial in Fine Art Practice, Research  
and Education**

PARADOX Fine Art European Forum  
Biennial Conference  
9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at The University of Arts in Poznań, Poland

**Paradox Fine Art European Forum Biennial Conference**  
9th–11th September 2015 at The University of Arts in Poznań, Poland

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11. Michael O'Donnell, The Academy of Fine Art KHIO, Oslo, Norway
12. Andris Teikmanis, Art Academy of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

**Key speakers and cooperating artists:**

1. Maria Anna Potocka, MOCAK, Krakow, Poland
2. Mirosław Bałka, Academy of Fine Arts, Warsaw, Poland
3. Janusz Baldyga, University of Arts, Poznań, Poland
4. Piotr Kurka, University of Arts, Poznań, Poland
5. Łukasz Skąpski, Academy of Art, Szczecin, Poland
6. Marek Wasilewski, University of Arts, Poznań, Poland

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#### Katrine Hjelde

see p. 34

#### Richard Elliott

PGDip Royal Academy Schools, Sculpture and workshop Manager Royal Academy Schools and widely exhibited artist

#### Isabelle Gressel

an artist living and working in London. Following her studies in English Literature at Queen Mary University of London (BA, MA) and Fine Art at Chelsea College of Arts (BA). Gressel now works as a copy-editor and video-editor for the arts education organisation Q-Art. She continues her arts practice creating videos and installations focusing on repetitive human behaviour. She is currently writing a series of lectures exploring the use of data in contemporary art.

## Circles of Recognition in Andalusia: a Study of the Artistic Careers of Two Different Generations of Artists

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#### María Dolores Gallego Martínez

I would like to emphasize that emerging artists are facing a competitive situation. They are competitors, having to promote and circulate their work.

The Andalusian artistic panorama is, without doubt, one of the richest in Spain.

Alicia Ventura (Medina 2015)

The names of Andalusian artists are present in innumerable collections, exhibitions, museums, biennales and art fairs across the world. Programmes to promote and give visibility to these names have been undertaken from Andalusia, such as publications by reputable art critics and curators, among them *The Renewal of Visual Arts in Andalusia* by art critic Bernardo Palomo and *Art from Andalusia for the 21st Century* by Iván de la Torre Amerighi, doctor in history of art, modern art expert and curator. Such programmes leave the quality of Andalusian artists' artworks beyond any doubt.

However, the aim of this study is to discern the circles of recognition and the relationships between different stakeholders in the emerging contemporary art scene in Andalusia. This system passes all art creations (and artists) through institutional filters and controls, and it is during this process that they acquire their value (economic and artistic) and meaning (Ramirez 2010). We know, moreover, that intrinsic factors of artworks are not the only factors which come into play to determine their artistic-economic value; sociological and even geographical factors also play an equal or more pronounced role. We shall therefore attempt to demonstrate the importance for young artists of understanding the hitherto unknown (to them) professional environment which they have to grapple with on graduating from university.

It is an interdisciplinary study developed using pluralism in its methodology, centring on the emerging art system in Andalusia. It contributes critical thought on the topic from the artist's perspective and combines the scientific research methods used in anthropology, fine arts and the sociology of art. It is a piece of research which focuses on the artistic careers of a group of Andalusian artists, its aim being to examine in greater depth the theory developed by Alan Bowness, former director of the Tate Gallery, historian and curator, to test their

circles of recognition. Theoretical analysis tools used and expanded by Nuria Peist, doctor in art history, in her study on the artistic careers of a group of modern artists. Another reference is the study carried out by Olav Velthuis, associate professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology in the University of Amsterdam, on the careers of contemporary artists in "BRIC-countries"<sup>1</sup> (1986-2011).

Publications such as exhibition catalogues and interviews in different media with different stakeholders in the Andalusian system will be fundamental for developing this study. As regards the personal data and careers of the different artists selected. These have been obtained from the *curricula vitae* posted by the artists themselves on their personal websites. The careers of these artists will be both the study subject and methodological requirement.

A group of twenty Andalusian artists was selected and divided into two generational groups: the first generation of artists with established careers (ten), born at the end of the sixties or beginning of the seventies, and the second generation of emerging artists (ten) born at the end of the seventies or during the eighties.

The comparison of two generations of contemporary Andalusian artists reflects the changes undergone by the sector over the last fifteen years: changes or growth in today's globalised society caused by the recession, advances in technology and the socio-cultural and political transformations which are changing traditional artistic practice in systems and markets considered traditional (Europe and America).

Regarding the results obtained, it is worth highlighting areas such as the significant dwindling of awards, artwork purchases, and grants and financial aid for creative output for artists without an established career. The scant opportunities such as *Iniciarte*<sup>2</sup> or *Desencaja*<sup>3</sup> announced by Andalusian institutions are still highly relevant for emerging artists to gain a foothold in the art system and to begin achieving career recognition.

In recent years, another area which has had a direct and negative impact on artists unable to get sufficient visibility to develop their artistic careers relates to contemporary art galleries in Andalusia, which have been forced to shut down "as a natural consequence of the market situation". (Pérez 2015).

This situation has led to collective self-management by artists of independent spaces, among which are: *EspacioCienfuegos*<sup>4</sup> (Malaga), *Combo*<sup>5</sup> (Cordoba), *Casa Sostoa*<sup>6</sup> (Malaga) and *Espacio*

<sup>1</sup> BRIC-countries: Brazil Russia India China

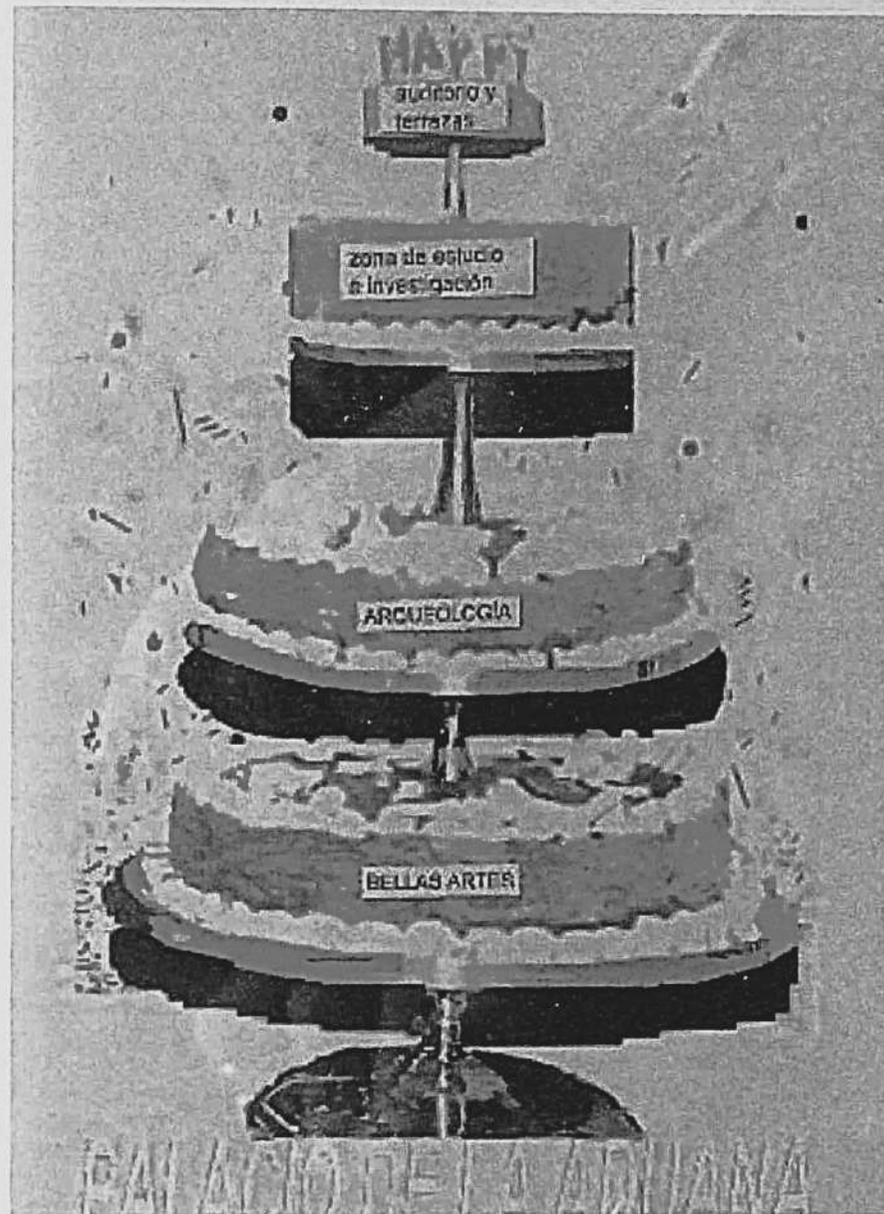
<sup>2</sup> Official website of *Iniciarte*, call for applications by the Regional Government of Andalusia Ministry of Culture for exhibition spaces in the provinces of Seville, Malaga and Cordoba. <http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/culturaydeporte/web/AAIICC/sites/consejeria/AAIICC/iniciarte>.

<sup>3</sup> Official website of *Desencajaart* and creation programme. Promoted by the Regional Government of Andalusia IAJ (Andalusian Institute for Young People). <http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/institutodelajuventud/desencaja/index.php/es/>

<sup>4</sup> Official website of *EspacioCienfuegos*. <http://espaciocienfuegos.com/>

<sup>5</sup> Official website of *Combo*. <http://comboarts.tumblr.com/>

<sup>6</sup> Official website of *Casa Sostoa*. <https://readymag.com/casasostoa>.



Ignacio Estudillo, *La penúltimacopa* (2015) (<http://estudilloperz.blogspot.com>).

The work was shown at the collective exhibition resulting from the "Felicidad Museística" [Museum Happiness] call for applications by *Iniciarte*. Ignacio analyses the project submitted by public sector institutions for the "Palacio de la Aduana" a spectacular building intended to house the Malaga Museum of Archaeology and Fine Arts, and thus provides his view on the current proliferation of museums in Malaga where the artist resides.

California (Seville)<sup>7</sup>; new "hybrid spaces"<sup>8</sup> where the artists in turn perform "hybrid roles". Here, artists combine their artistic production with roles such as cultural management, teacher, gallery owner, editor, festival director, art critic, curator and graphic designer. This is due on the one hand to the greater professionalization of artists<sup>9</sup> and on the other, because the majority of artists who consider themselves as such or who are considered as such (Blanco 2015) do not live solely off their artistic output, as commented by Juan Antonio Ramírez: "80-90% of artistic creation (or perhaps more) forms part of a non-monetary, non-quantifiable, economy, governed by practices such as donations, barter, private consumption, momentary (or permanent) stockpiling, or simply going to waste" (Ramírez 2010). As a consequence of these employment conditions, emerging and established artists joined forces to set up the Andalusian Union of Visual Artists (uavA) in 2010<sup>10</sup>.

But the most significant difference between the two generations of artists lies in the ways artists are promoted, disseminated and made visible by the Internet revolution, and the use of this tool by stakeholders in the emerging contemporary art system in Andalusia.

Web platforms such as Presente-Continuo<sup>11</sup> and SCAN<sup>12</sup> have been created, along with digital magazines (La rayaverde<sup>13</sup>, Ars Operandi<sup>14</sup>), a blog by art critics and curators (En la cuerda floja<sup>15</sup>), and artists themselves have their own websites (particularly the case for emerging artists). There is a physical and virtual community of art-related professionals who form a close-knit circle of friendships. The objectives are the same but the strategies have changed; the Internet is used as a tool and a channel for dissemination beyond the borders of Andalusia and to combat centralization in Madrid. Even so, today many Andalusian artists choose to change location in search of better professional opportunities and the internationalization of their careers, which demonstrates the importance of geographic location in the success or failure of their artistic careers.

Emerging artists are facing a competitive situation. They are competitors, having to promote and circulate their work themselves using online marketing strategies to turn themselves into a brand or a product. To do this, they must participate actively in different social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and Internet platforms (where the dialogue between their social development and professional careers is placed on show). These platforms, in addition to publishing and showing events, calls for applications, specialized texts and the work of artists, have

<sup>7</sup> Official Facebook page of Espacio California: <https://www.facebook.com/californiaespacio?fref=ts>.

<sup>8</sup> Exhibition space, artist studio, training courses, art residencies, etc.

<sup>9</sup> Fine Arts graduates are predominant among the group of established artists, whilst among the group of emerging artists; individuals with Master's and Doctorate qualifications are predominant.

<sup>10</sup> Official website of uavA: <http://www.uava.org/>.

<sup>11</sup> Web platform intended as dissemination channel and repository of contemporary Andalusian art, edited by SemaD'Acosta. Seville art critic and curator specializing in photography: <http://presente-continuo.org/>.

<sup>12</sup> Spanish Contemporary Art Network is a digital platform created to propagate and disseminate the work of Spanish contemporary artists worldwide. Three of the four founders of this platform are Andalusian architects based in London: <http://www.scan-arte.com/>.

<sup>13</sup> Digital magazine on contemporary art: <https://readymag.com/larayaverde>.

<sup>14</sup> Digital review with information, critique and discussion about art practices in the city of Cordoba and latest artistic creations. Edited by José and Tete Álvarez: <http://www.arsoperandi.com/>.

<sup>15</sup> Blog by Andalusian art critic and curator Juan Francisco Rueda: <https://juanfranciscorueda.wordpress.com/>.

also contributed to displaying and making visible the network created between the diverse stakeholders in today's emerging contemporary art system in Andalusia.

By way of conclusion, I would like to underline the importance in the research process of taking into account the social development of artists, since the success of an artist is not organized on an individual basis, "becoming established involves the system as a whole (artists, art critics, collectors, exhibition spaces and gallery owners), due to the recognition achieved by each participant based on their very existence and mutual support activities" (Peist 2012) which can currently be seen in social networks and digital platforms.

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## María Dolores Gallego Martínez

was born in Torreperogil (Jaen) in 1988 where she lived until 2006, when she started her studies of Fine Arts at the University of Granada in Spain. She was granted an Erasmus Scholarship to study at the Athens School of Fine Arts (Greece). Then, she came back to Granada and started studies of Restoration and Conservation Archaeological Material at Centro Albayzín/Andalusian School of Restoration. She went on to take part in restoration works of plaster and ceramic decoration in the Alhambra and Generalife in Granada. She finished her Masters studies in Production and Investigation of Art at the University of Granada and she served as an assistant teacher of drawing, painting and printmaking for children and adults in the Taller of Drawing, Printmaking and Printing "La Granja" (Granada) with the artist Emilio Luis Fernández Garrido. At present, she is one of the researchers of the project "Emerging Art System in Andalusia" (CEI BioTic Granada/University of Granada-Spain).