

**Fito Conesa**  
***Our Own Path Remains***  
21/09 – 04/11/2018

***A Monster Who Tells the Truth***  
**Espai 13 exhibition series at the Fundació Joan Miró**  
20 September 2018 – 8 September 2019

Curator: Pilar Cruz  
With support from Fundació Banc Sabadell

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## **Press Release**

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**Fito Conesa will be opening the Espai 13 exhibition series for the 2018-19 season at the Fundació Joan Miró.**

**Using composer Arvo Pärt as his point of departure, the artist considers the notion of crisis as an opportunity for reinvention and as a path for generating knowledge.**

**In *Our Own Path Remains*, Conesa presents a composition of his own influenced by Pärt and builds an architectural structure for appreciating the piece, turning Espai 13 into a chapel for transcendent listening.**

***A Monster Who Tells the Truth* is the Espai 13 exhibition series held at the Fundació Joan Miró during the 2018-19 season, produced with support from the Fundació Banc Sabadell. Curated by Pilar Cruz, the project questions the nature of disciplines and inquires into the relationships between knowledge and power.**

**Barcelona, 20 September 2018.** Fito Conesa (Cartagena, 1980) is used to casting suspicion on the structures of knowledge and moving across disciplines: hybridising them, confronting them, wandering along their boundaries or eluding them altogether. He chooses his own free way of bypassing creative rigidity and staking out a unique path. A large part of his practice of art reflects an interest in the translation process as a form of creativity and in the celebration of what could be described as *won in translation* –the proliferation of meanings and experiences that occurs when things are shifted to a different place. That is why Conesa's work often materializes in messages carried over from one language to another, usually from music to the language of concepts.

To open this season's Espai 13 series, the artist will be presenting *Our Own Path Remains*, an exploration of the concept of using professional and personal crises as a method for generating knowledge. According to the curator Pilar Cruz, "as opposed to the idea of indiscriminate production based on hackneyed patterns, forms and words, Conesa vindicates the pause and rupture caused by a crisis when previous paths no longer lead anywhere." The artist also addresses the notion of abandoning the discipline of art as an act of resistance and a way of reinventing oneself and being reborn in the process.

The point of departure for the project is the life of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt and the way he emerged from a profound artistic and spiritual crisis by creating a radically new musical paradigm. After a primarily neoclassical early stage followed by another period inspired by twelve-tone music, Pärt was eventually considered the most original and noteworthy composer of his generation, despite his avant-garde music becoming increasingly controversial for the cultural authorities of his country, under Soviet rule at the time. Pärt broke away definitively in 1968 with the opening of *Credo*, a musical expression of the stylistic and personal crisis he had been experiencing for some time. He then began his quest to find the appropriate tools for staking out his own path. He stopped composing, retired, hit rock bottom and began a painful spiritual and artistic exploration, stemming from his deepest roots, which led him to ancient music, Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony, among other forms. Almost ten years later, after having blazed his own trail, Pärt felt capable of transforming everything he had lived into something new. He presented *Tabula rasa*, creating a new musical style; he introduced a new composition method and paved the way for what became a key genre in the late twentieth century: minimalism.



Zdzislaw Beksinski, 1978

As the core of his project, and stylistically inspired by Arvo Pärt, Fito Conesa composed a piece for two double basses. Played by the Portuguese musician Miguel Leiria, the piece at Espai 13 is accompanied by a choral track produced with the Cor Jove de l'Orfeó Català, directed by Esteve Nabona, in a joint effort to give a voice to Conesa's composition. In the room, the architectural conception of Pärt's music is translated into a large structure built for an attentive listening. The device was designed in collaboration with the Olga

Subirós Studio, turning Espai 13 into a portal or a chapel for sound experimentation while fostering a transcendent experience of sound capable of connecting the visitor with a mystical dimension that is often inaccessible. In the curator's words, "what

Conesa proposes is not to place this religious sense at centre stage again [...] but rather to trace the derivations of this spiritual path in the present. Even though this mysticism may not be exactly where we would expect to find it.”

This is the point where Fito Conesa’s project takes its last turn to address the two-directional flows that happen to link *high culture* to *popular culture*. The artist closes the circle opened with Pärt and considers the case study of the appearance of mystic minimalist music on the dance floors of the *ruta del bakalao* movement. At the clubs in the Valencian circuit, DJs played and remixed contemporary minimalist musicians like Steve Reich and Wim Mertens. For Cruz, “nights on the *ruta* clubs, the way music was being used, the rest iconic elements that at the time made up this youth subculture were also part of a mystic journey. The *ruta* was an ecstatic way of escape for the working class to a place beyond everyday life.”

This last line is included in Conesa’s video *Maximizing the Audience*, the documentary shown at the Fundació Joan Miró in November 2018 as part of the videoart Loop festival. It’s a road movie that returns to the personal path that always remains, in which the visitor witnesses the process involved in producing the choral part of the Espai 13 musical piece, jointly with a road trip through some of the iconic venues of the *ruta* –or their ruins—listening to Arvo Pärt and other minimalist composers.

**Fito Conesa** (Cartagena, 1980) lives and works in Barcelona. Conesa holds a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Barcelona. His work has been shown in a variety of museums and festivals, including the *Oslo Screen Festival* 2010, the *Barcelona Loop Fair* 2009-2012, the Centro Cultural Español in the Dominican Republic, Matadero Madrid, La Casa Encendida, CCCB, and CaixaForum in Lleida, Tarragona and Barcelona. Conesa has contributed to several publications, such as *Zeitgeist: Variations & Repetitions* (Save as... publications, 2010), *Unique Window Display* (Loft Publications, 2009) and *Suite for Ordinary Machinery* (Save as... publications, 2008). The last of these contributions made it into the collections of the Tate Modern, the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and the MACBA libraries. In the areas of pedagogical mediation and teaching, Fito Conesa has contributed to the University of Granada’s Master’s Degree in Contemporary Photography and to the Master’s Degree in Illustration at ELISAVA, led workshops for the education department at the “la Caixa” Foundation and been part of the educational programming team at the Sala d’Art Jove. From 2014 to 2017 Conesa directed Habitació 1418, the joint CCCB and MACBA project for 14- to 18-year-olds. [www.fitoconesa.org](http://www.fitoconesa.org).

***A Monster Who Tells the Truth*** is the exhibition programme for Espai 13, Fundació Joan Miró, for the 2018-2019 season, with support from the Banco Sabadell Foundation. The project, curated by Pilar Cruz (Zaragoza, 1972), questions the nature of disciplines and examines the relationships between knowledge and power. Using Michel Foucault's *The Order of Discourse* as its point of departure, the series reflects on the procedures for controlling discourses in an effort to understand how power structures operate and identify their influence on current knowledge. Although knowledge is validated in the framework of disciplines, Cruz looks at what happens on the fringes. Artists tend to place themselves in this marginal territory, the realm of boundaries or aberrations, as a work method and as a way of escaping control. For the curator, art is a powerful monster, capable of unveiling the power dynamics that drive the internal mechanisms of these disciplines. The artists Fito Conesa, Lara Fluxà, Vanesa Varela, Für Alle Fälle and Paco Chanivet examine and try out alternative ways of relating and generating knowledge based on art.

Images and press materials are available at [www.fmirobcn.org/premsa](http://www.fmirobcn.org/premsa) and <http://bit.do/E13-2018-2019>. Follow the Espai 13 activities on social media with the hashtag **#monstreEspai13**

With support from

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