

# BCN PRODUC- CIÓ '16

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Sala Gran – 15.09 to 13.11

## ANTONI HERVÀS *EL MISTERIO DE CAVIRIA*

Antoni Hervàs' artistic project revolves around the legend of Jason and the Argonauts' expedition in search of the Golden Fleece. However, Hervàs is not solely interested in the literary narrative of Greek mythology but also in the popular imagery derived from the eponymous film directed by Don Chaffey in 1963, that included famous sequences using innovative special effects that made it possible to blend reality and animation.

Hervàs brings all of this imagery into his artistic domain: an "expanded" drawing that draws from the artist's own experiences as well as other disciplines – music and popular culture, performance and sport, oral tradition and self-managed publishing projects – work dynamics that, by extension, usually include an extensive network of collaborators and close friends.

The exhibition *El misterio de Caviria* (The Mystery of Cabeiria) is divided into eight acts that take as their point of origin the section in which the expedition led by Jason stops for a few months in Lemnos, the island of fire, in the northern part of the Aegean Sea. Here live a kind of tribe of Amazons organized under the gynaecocracy of Queen Hypsipyle who are keeping a grisly secret. Taking this fragment, Hervàs explores the transformist and genre-bending possibilities of drawing, a medium that enables him to unite two mythologies: the Caebeirian rites of Classical Greece and figures from Barcelona's dwindling cabaret scene.

The exhibition is the culmination of a lengthy investigation through which Hervàs has intuitively overlapped legends and personalities from both worlds, in such a way that fantasy, camp and reality coexist in the same time and space,

and generating, in the artist's words, "a complex visual spectacle in the *copla-terror* style invoking the gods of the underworld and in which fire, blood and mockery of masculinity are the essential ingredients for providing insight into a story that is at once local and universal".

Fauvist in spirit and allegorical in its references, Hervàs' drawing uses gaudy colours and reverberant combinations. This time the characteristic dynamism of his drawing is transferred for the first time to giant, makeshift theatrical scenery made from recycled cardboard whose narratives have been activated (or will be activated) sporadically over the course of the exhibition through musical performances, choreography, film screenings and guided tours. The succession of scenes connects a fabulous plot of seemingly minor anecdotes and events taken from the footnotes of history. Bas-reliefs, curtains, scaffolding and false columns are bathed in multicoloured lighting resulting in conscious and accidental speculations that eschew the nostalgic and call attention to apparently unconnected fields of action and resistance: the figures of Catalan folklore, minor sports like men's rhythmic gymnastics and the progressive disappearance of cabaret venues.

Latitudes

*Antoni Hervàs (Barcelona, 1981) studied fine arts at the University of Barcelona (2006) and took a course in engraving and printing at the Escola de la Llotja. His solo exhibitions include Hércules en la Luna at the Espai Cultural Caja Madrid, Barcelona (2012); Kakanoures i kitschades at Galeria SIS, Sabadell (2015) and Agón at Galeria etHall, Barcelona (2016). Hervàs has participated in numerous group exhibitions, including Capítol II. Fugides. La ficció com a rigor as part of the El text: principis i sortides programme at Fabra i Coats – Centre d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (2014) and Punk. Its Traces in Contemporary Art at MACBA (2016). As part of his artistic practice he directed Fénix (2013-2016), Sant Andreu Contemporani's educational programme involving a number of artists from the city. He has also undertaken numerous self-managed publishing projects like Grandmopotheper (2009) and has curated performance events like Mercuri Splash with David Bestué for the Fundació Miró (2015) and regular exhibitions like Doméstica, with Ariadna Parreu. In 2010 he received the Injuve Creation Award.*