

# BCN PRODUC- CIÓ '16

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## 8 CHAPTERS

The tour starts with what would be the chronological end of the story, thus highlighting its looping effect. Here the protagonist is **The She-Wolf**, the female version of the famous Wolfman played by actor Paul Naschy.<sup>1</sup> Next we see the mask created in collaboration with artisan Lluís Quinrob (Lluís Robles)<sup>2</sup> on the head of Pilar Carrión, who, in a new performance filmed at the legendary bar O'Barquiño, incarnates Queen Hypsipyle and sings “La Loba”, a song riddled with intimate confessions and words of heartbreak.<sup>3</sup>

We move along through the **Hall of Columns**, with allusions to Barcelona de Noche and the Bodega Bohemia, well-known nightspots that brought together the theatre world in Ciutat Vella from the 1950s to the 1970s. In Lemnos, in the midst of the Greek ruins of the Kabeirion temple, in a recording made especially for the exhibition we hear Violeta la Burra, one of the most popular artists of the Whisky Twist, another popular Barcelona variety venue. Because they had neglected Aphrodite's shrines, the goddess condemned the Lemnian women to giving off an awful stench. Their husbands recoiled from them and took up with slaves. To avenge this affront, the island women decided to kill all of their male relatives.<sup>4</sup> Violeta, in the role of the vengeful goddess, struts around and casts her spell to make off with the men.

We continue through the spectacular scenography focused on **The Stench**, dedicated to octogenarian transvestite starlet Gilda Love, an institution at venues like the now defunct Bodega Apollo and presently the star of the monthly show *El desplume* at the Antic Teatre. The latter venue is where she was filmed last May singing “Yo soy Gilda Love”, a video of which is projected facing the scenography. Gilda speaks about the stench to which the Lemnian women were condemned, provoking their husbands' rejection and tragic murder.

In the first side chapel we see the **Fire Purification Ritual** in the form of a video documenting a musical performance in which José Jaén sings the song “Tengo miedo” together with the mixed synchronized swimming team WoMen Synchro. This performance was part of the event *Mercuri Splash* (2015) curated by Hervàs and artist David Bestué at the Fundació Joan Miró. The video credits include drawings documenting ancestral elements of the Kabirian rituals on the island of Lemnos dedicated to the purification and renewal of fire as well as the need to keep it surrounded by water. The narration moves from the rituals to a daytime musical performance within the Barcelona institutional setting to end with a night scene: a box with drawings of Jaén and the swimmers contains a batch of fireworks, that transform the ritual into a modest pyrotechnic show.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Naschy (1934-2009) was a Spanish actor, film director, screenwriter and weight lifter. He was one of the famous actors to play the Wolfman. Naschy was immortalized by the drawings and poems created and published by Pierrot (1942-2011), pioneer of *fantaterror* and experimental cinema, in his fanzine *Vudú* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_Naschy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Naschy)).

<sup>2</sup> The mask was part of the solo exhibition *Agón* in Barcelona's etHALL gallery (from 28 June to 30 July 2016), where it was presented as a preamble to this exhibition (<http://www.ethall.net/>).

<sup>3</sup> Hypsipyle became pregnant by Jason, who swore eternal fidelity. However, Jason continued his journey to Colchis with the Argonauts and soon forgot his promise (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypsipyle>).

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Grimal, *Diccionario de la mitología griega y romana*, Ed. Paidós, 1994.

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On the front of the scaffolding we see **The Struggle**, represented through documentary traces of an activity that took place in April, when Hervàs invited the “Greco-Roman warriors” of the La Mina wrestling club to participate in a “from the waist up” workshop in which they could use a photocopier to fix an image representing the movements they make during their training. These contemporary warriors link to the Argonauts, who upon reaching Lemnos and before beginning the festivities, held a traditional friendly fight whose winner obtained a garment. Here photographs of the workshop are interspersed with personalities from Barcelona’s cabaret scene. And Hypsipyle appears once again as mistress of ceremonies of the Kakanoures, festivals of renewal (a sort of ritual transposition in which young men set fire to wreaths) held annually in late June on Lemnos, and which Hervàs attended in 2013. The liturgy of the bodies of the young men takes centre stage, and it is believed that they embody their ancestors, the Argonauts, who according to legend stayed on the island on their way to Colchis.

The adjoining chapel features a garment, **The Fight Trophy**. The psychedelic leotard, as if made of shimmering snakeskin, will be activated in an event to take place on 18 September in the former Copacabana nightclub (today the car park of the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Catalonia on La Rambla) when Gerard López, Spanish Senior National Champion in Men’s Rhythmic Gymnastics, will perform wearing this outfit designed by Hervàs for the occasion. The Copacabana was the first venue for transvestite shows in Barcelona following the Spanish Civil War. One of its most popular acts was the transvestite Margarita (now played by the award-winning gymnast), who dressed in a frilly costume made with newspapers, and invited spectators to light her outfit on fire to set off her frenzied dance.<sup>5</sup> As we approach the leotard we hear a sinuous version of “The Dance of the Seven Veils” that Norman Bambi has composed for this performance, where the graceful and seductive movements of the athlete belie the powerful and aggressive dance which will fan the ashes of the defunct venue.

The penultimate scene, at the top and within the scaffolding, makes reference to the ceremonies of the Kakanoures and – the most playful but most necessary facet of the rite: **The Mockery of Masculinity**. This relief-collage created with images from the magazine *Party*, held in the archive of Casal Lambda,<sup>6</sup> centres on merry masculine and cross-dressing figures whose arrangement recalls the friezes of the architecture of Greek temples. They are joined with snapshots of the Compañía Impacto, which performed *El sueño de Antínoo*<sup>7</sup> in the Antic Teatre in the 1970s,<sup>8</sup> and it proceeds with a defence of sexual and expressive freedom and the atonement of the guilt of the Lemnian women.

Lastly, from the “mouth” of the stage dedicated to Gilda Love we enter a tunnel towards **The Invocation of the Gods of the Underground**. In an epic final stage design, scenes of fire rituals witnessed by the artist on his trip to Lemnos are merged with phantasmagorical entertainment figures like Madame Arthur, a famous Avinguda Paral·lel transvestite, surrounded by projections of a selection of films made by Pierrot (1942–2011), a pioneer of *fantaterror* and experimental cinema. It is a tremendous final vortex in which, as with the stop-motion special effects created by the memorable Ray Harryhausen for the legendary peplum-inspired film *Jason and the Argonauts*, the gods of Barcelona’s underground finally seem to step out of the drawing and take form.

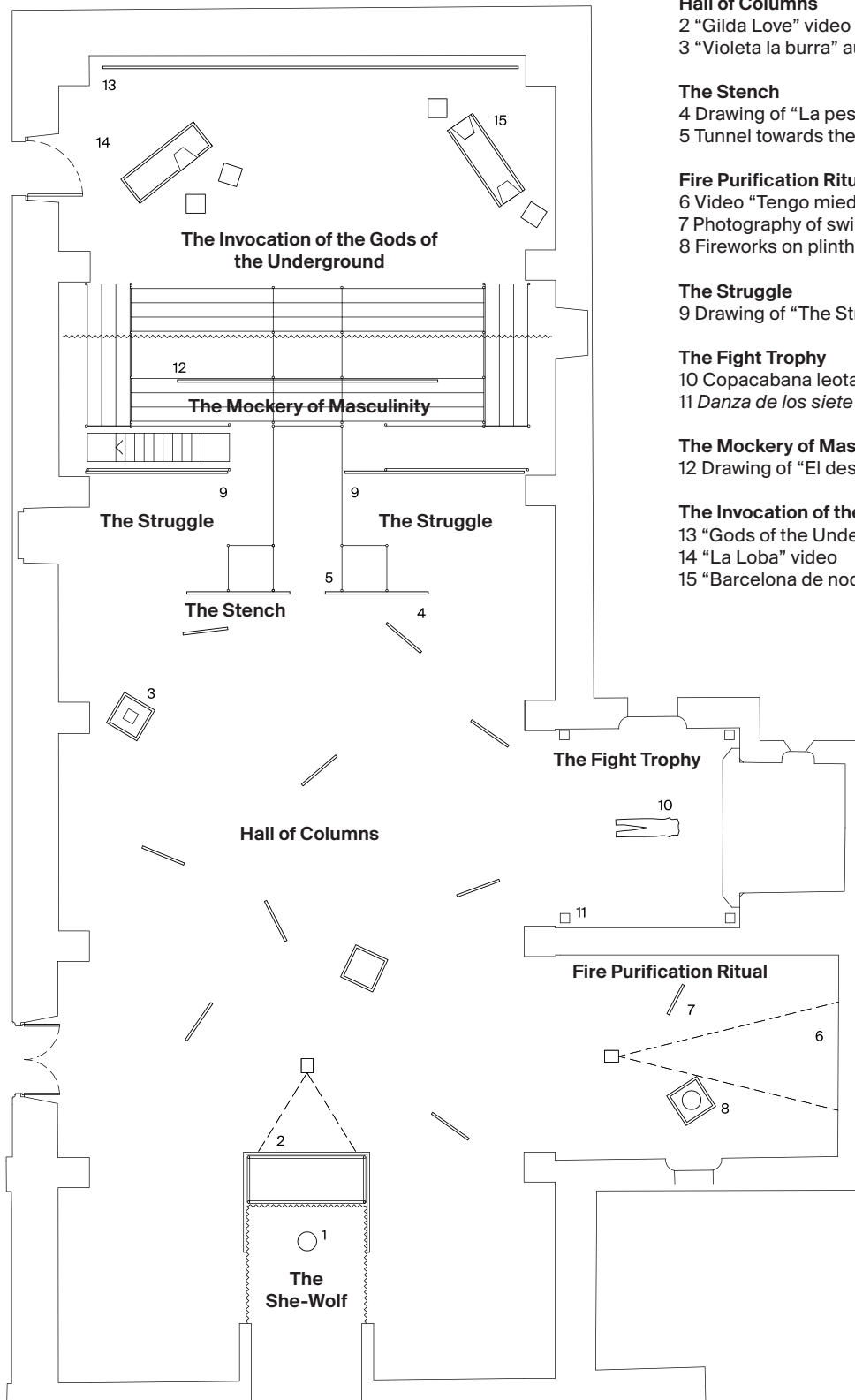
### *Latitudes*

<sup>5</sup> The scene can be seen in the film *Far from the Trees* (1961) by Jacinto Esteve.

<sup>6</sup> The Casal Lambda is a non-profit association centre founded in 1976 that aims to normalize homosexuality (<http://lambda.cat/>).

<sup>7</sup> The Roman Emperor Hadrian (76–138 CE) was distraught following the premature death of his adolescent lover, the slave Antinous, on the banks of the Nile River. The couple is a recurring theme in gay literature (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antinous>).

<sup>8</sup> The performance also appears in the documentary *Lentejuelas de sangre* made in 2012 by cinematographer Eduardo Gión. Gión is also the producer of the monthly show *El desplume* at the Antic Teatre.



### The She-Wolf

1 La loba mask

### Hall of Columns

2 "Gilda Love" video  
3 "Violeta la burra" audio

### The Stench

4 Drawing of "La peste"  
5 Tunnel towards the Underground

### Fire Purification Ritual

6 Video "Tengo miedo" by José Jaén  
7 Photography of swimmers  
8 Fireworks on plinth

### The Struggle

9 Drawing of "The Struggle"

### The Fight Trophy

10 Copacabana leotard  
11 *Danza de los siete velos* by Norman Bambi

### The Mockery of Masculinity

12 Drawing of "El despiporre"

### The Invocation of the Gods of the Underground

13 "Gods of the Underground" wall  
14 "La Loba" video  
15 "Barcelona de noche" video