

# BCN PRODUC- CIÓ '16

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Off-site project – XX.XX to XX.XX

## ARIADNA PARREU *LA MATÈRIA COM A FORMA*

The material nature of the artwork is one of the central interests and a constant in Ariadna Parreu's oeuvre that has led her over the course of her career to pursue projects linked in one way or another with sculpture. This is exemplified by *Espai doble* (2010), in which the artist rendered an entire range of office furnishings unusable by turning them into dysfunctional installations; *Soft-porn* (2012), a series of polymer clay pieces made by hand and based on ergonomic studies of dildos and similar objects that serve no sexual purpose; and *Sider-* (2014), an exercise in fantasy speculation on humankind's use of iron that gave rise to a number of physical and virtual presentations. Her research into material makes the most of the flexibility of the artistic realm – even its uselessness in practical terms – to explore another type of connection with the design and function of objects. In short, it is an exercise in the euphoric liberation from the conventional and the approved that enables her to opt for new systems for perceiving and understanding material and reality.

Her concern with the physical qualities of the real world places her close to those who have embraced the theories of New Materialism, a line of thinking and action strongly present in artistic practices that draw on the legacy of Conceptualism but which are still sensitive and attracted to form. Indeed, it is precisely the post-humanist condition that defines these tendencies – in other words, the strengths and powers of things outside us – that has gradually shaped Parreu's body of theory and practice.

In keeping with these lines of research, *La matèria com a forma* (Matter as Form) – one of the off-site projects of BCN Producció 2016 – is a lengthy working process that encapsulates Parreu's interest in material and its formal, discursive and, especially, its speculative aspects. To pursue this project, the artist has established an ongoing relationship with Materfad, the materials centre in the Disseny Hub Barcelona, a continually expanding archive that specialises in preserving, raising awareness of and studying new materials, an ideal and fabulous place for her as an artist.

Materfad normally aims its services at professional and academic circles with connections to material from a functional perspective – companies, universities, technology centres, etc. – but in this instance it has opened its doors to the positively unstable experimentation of art. Thus, Parreu has drawn up a structure of collaborative work that has given rise to a number of areas of action. Initially, and perhaps more akin to the work of a curator than an artist, she decided to invite three other creative agents to participate in the project who have adopted positions similar to her own way of engaging with material: the MAIO collective of architects; Sara de Ubieta, the shoe designer and maker; and Lucía C. Pino, another artist.

Alongside this, Parreu has added another feature that is fundamental to the project dynamics by leading guided tours of Materfad. During these visits, she follows her own individual approach to the material centre's holdings: her own classification criteria, configuration of the space, particular

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stories about certain materials, even the furtive addition of outside materials, etc.

The project results – including Parreu's own results and those of her collaborators – will be publicly presented at a two-day symposium to be held in the Museu del Disseny on 1 and 2 December, a hybrid event that will be part conference, part performance and part exhibition. In addition to MAIO, Sara de Ubieta and Lucía C. Pino, the symposium will be attended by other guests who will speak about material from standpoints as disparate as language (Francesc Parreu), poetry (Laia Noguera), sound (Pau Magrané) and art criticism (Marc Navarro).

Lastly, Ariadna Parreu wishes to thank the team at Materfad, in particular its director, Valérie Bergeron, for their help and enthusiastic involvement in the project. As evidence of this close relationship, during the symposium the artist will be presenting a specific publication that includes an extensive interview with Valérie Bergeron.

David Armengol

*Ariadna Parreu (Reus, 1982) focuses on sculpture – and hence form – in her work, in which she adopts a conceptual position that encompasses psychological, social and historical aspects. She has been selected in various competitions that support young art, among them Injuve (2008, 2010 and 2011), the Guasch Coranty Biennial (2011) and the Amposta Art Biennial (2012 and 2016). Her work has been shown in a number of art institutions and centres such as the Actus Magnus Gallery (Vilnius, Lithuania, 2011), the Galeria José Robles (Madrid, 2011), Dafo (Lleida, 2014), the Tàpies Foundation (2014), the Joan Miró Foundation (2015) and the Tarragona Museum of Art (2016). Together with Antoni Hervàs, she organised Domestica (2009, 2011 and 2014), a day-long event on local art in the city of Barcelona. She lives and works in Barcelona and currently lectures on the theory and history of art at the Massana School.*