The works made by the inmates in the penal centres are approached as the result of creative impulses that emerge out of the need to express themselves or, in some cases, simply to lighten the burden of time. Perhaps this explains why they are coarse expressions that exude a radical honesty, as well as clear signs of the individual's need to use, at a given moment, metaphorical language.
The selection of works in *Balsam and Flight* prioritises the understanding of impulse and the symbolic reading of creative expression rather than technical excellence. The more than 50 pieces made in prison have been collected during a 4-year process, in which the figure of the art educator in penal centres has been essential as a mentor and catalyser. This exhibition highlights the value of this work.

At present, in Catalonia there are 53 art educators for 10 penal centres. Their objective is to encourage the inmates' creative expression and personal growth, introducing them to artistic expressions and new languages unfamiliar to them. However, the meagre budget for these activities is one of the major problems. For this reason, in prisons people work with precarious finances, with cheap and usually recycled material. This is important for understanding creation in prisons as it affects both the spirit and the aesthetics of the resulting productions.

Balsam and Flight seeks to provide society with tools to interpret the imagery and symbols characteristic of prison life. However, it mainly reveals the huge potential of artistic creation to comfort people (act as a balsam) and make them freer (to attain a kind of flight). As a whole, the exhibition finally suggests interesting readings of human nature.



3.



4.

Exhibition in partnership with the General Directorate of Prison Services (Government of Catalonia). Curated by Mery Cuesta.

Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Justícia

26 OCTOBER 2016 TO 15 JANUARY 2017

CaixaForum
Social and Cultural Centre
Av. de Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia, 6-8
08038 Barcelona
Tel: 934 768 600

Opening Hours
Open every day, 10 am to 8 pm

"la Caixa" Foundation
Information Office
Tel: 902 223 040
Open every day, 9 am to 8 pm
www.laCaixa.es/ObraSocial

Exhibition Tickets
Admission to exhibitions: €4
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Activities
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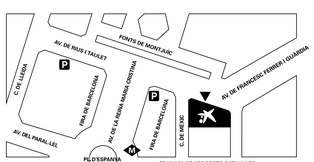
Admission and activities tickets at the CaixaForum ticket office and
ENTRADA ONLINE CaixaForum.com/agenda

#BalsamandFlight

Public Transport
Metro: Espanya station, lines 1 and 3
Catalan Railways (FGC):
Espanya station, lines L8, S33, S4, S8, R5 and R6
Buses: lines 13 and 150 stop in front of CaixaForum; lines 9, 13, 23, 27, 50, 65, 79, 91, 109 and 165 stop in Pl. d'Espanya; lines D20, H12, V7, L72, L80, L81, L86, L87 and L95 stop in Pl. d'Espanya

bicing
Gran Via | Pl. d'Espanya (station 96)
Rius i Taulet (station 237)

B:SM Car Park
P Entrance via Av. de Maria Cristina and Av. de Rius i Taulet
Direct access to CaixaForum on floor -1



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Obra Social "la Caixa"

BALSAM AND FLIGHT

ARTISTIC CREATION IN THE PENAL INSTITUTION



Mural created by Ricardo Cavallo in collaboration with inmates from the Centre Penitenciari Homes Obert de Barcelona and Centre Penitenciari Dones de Barcelona

CaixaForum Barcelona

Obra Social "la Caixa"

WORKS FROM "LA CAIXA" COLLECTION OF CONTEMPORARY ART AND PENAL CENTRES IN CATALONIA

How do individuals react to the imposition of rules, solitude or the desire for freedom? *Balsam and Flight* threshes emotion to harvest the personal dilemmas that people going through a period of internment in a penal institution must face. Moreover, it explores the function of artistic activity in this situation, providing relief and making them more autonomous and freer.



1.



2.

The exhibition combines the creations made in the 10 penal centres based in Catalonia and pieces from "la Caixa" Foundation's Contemporary Art Collection. The encounter between works from the two institutions – the artistic and the penal – triggers an open reading of the institutional contexts. The exhibition suggests free interpretations of the parallelisms and discrepancies between the institutions, seeing them as an essence (as a regulatory, legal and cultural body determining the forms of social exchange through a set of values and rules), in keeping with the theories of thinkers such as Erving Goffman or Michel Foucault. The layout of *Balsam and Flight* replicates the premises of an institution as a concept, where the relationships between the inmates' works and those of prestigious artists blossom, based on formal and emotional coincidences.

1.
Antonio Saura, *Soleá*, 1956.
"la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art
© Succession Antonio Saura
www.antoniosaura.org
A+V Agencia de Creadores Visuales 2016

2.
Anonymous, *Retrato de Camarón cubista (Cubist Portrait of Camarón)*, n.d.
Centre Penitenciari Quatre Camins © FotoGasull

3.
Jochen Lempert, *Aves-Ucelli*, 1997-2013. "la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art
© Joachim Lempert, VEGAP, 2016

4.
Andrei Cristea, *Pájaros (Birds)*, 2015. Centre Penitenciari Brians 2 © FotoGasull

ACTIVITIES AROUND THE EXHIBITION

Bookbinding on a shoestring
SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER | 11.30 AM > PRICE PER PERSON: €4
Bookbinding workshop as taught in prison.

Screen printing inside and outside
SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER | 6 PM > PRICE PER PERSON: €4
Workshop on screen printing themes and techniques as taught in prison.

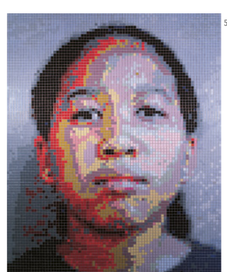
Artistic creation under deprivation of freedom
TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER | 7 PM > PRICE PER PERSON: €4
Roundtable on creative processes in penal centres.

LACA short films
26 OCTOBER TO 15 JANUARY | 10 AM TO 8 PM > OPEN ACTIVITY
Screenings of short films by the Laboratorio de Creación Audiovisual del Centre Penitenciari de Joves.

Theatre in the exhibition *Balsam and Flight*
THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER AND TUESDAY 10 JANUARY | 8 pm
PRICE PER PERSON: €4
Theatre performance directed by Carme Portaceli with inmates from the Centre Penitenciari Brians 2.

Closing concert of the exhibition *Balsam and Flight* by the Taller de Músics and inmates
THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 2017 | 7.30 PM > PRICE PER PERSON: €6
Concert by inmates from different penal centres in collaboration with Taller de Músics.

School workshop "Short Distance"
Booking on telephone 93 184 71 42
or by e-mail rcaixaforumbcn@magmacultura.net
PRICE PER GROUP: €25



5.

5.
Pedro Mora, *Amber Smoot*, 1998. "la Caixa" Collection of Contemporary Art
© Pedro Mora



MURAL CREATED BY RICARDO CAVOLO IN COLLABORATION WITH INMATES FROM THE CENTRE PENITENCIARI MAS D'ENRIC © FOTOGASUL