

Providing funding support to an artistic language distinctly of our time

The BBVA Foundation funds ten innovative projects through its 2017 Multiverse Grants for Video Art Creation

- The latest group of grantholders includes several generations of artists. Most have completed their training outside Spain and bring a global outlook to their work
- The Evaluation Committee selected the ten projects in an open, competitive process from 232 entries, the highest total of the three calls issued to date
- The Multiverse Grants support ambitious projects that draw on the latest available technologies, while allowing artists to shoot in the locations of their choice
- Artificial intelligence, our ancestral ties with the earth, the armed conflict in Colombia or women's conquest of the public space are just some of the subjects dealt with in the selected works

Madrid, September 21, 2017.- The BBVA Foundation has announced the outcome of the 2017 edition of its Multiverse Grants for Video Art Creation, enabling ten artists to undertake ambitious, innovative projects of up to one year's duration while enjoying ample flexibility in both their design and their execution.

The Multiverse Grants fund the creation of new work by Spanish artists wherever they are based and/or foreign authors resident in Spain, as well as providing a showcase for the finished products. The ten awardee projects in the current edition were selected in an open, highly competitive process out of 232 submissions, 23% more than in the previous call. The decision was made by an Evaluation Committee formed by experts in the audiovisual arts (see membership list at the end of this note) by reference to the interest, quality, innovativeness and feasibility of the proposed work, and the career record of the author.

A diverse community with a global vocation

The ten Multiverse grantees testify to the variety and dynamism of Spanish video art creation. There are several generations represented with ages

ranging from 30 to 58, though the most numerous group are the under 40s. Also noteworthy is the international reach of this year's authors as regards their studies, their place of residence and the resonance of their work. Three live outside Spain (in France, the United States and the United Kingdom), many of their number studied at top international centers including the Royal College of Art in London, the Anthology Film Archives in New York, the Kunsthochschule Kassel or the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and their work has been shown in a total of 47 countries across every continent.

The winning projects are no less varied in their subject matter, which ranges from man's ancestral connection with the Earth and the rituals of agricultural communities to the present and future of artificial intelligence, by way of movements reclaiming women's role in the public space, progress and its impact on the environment and migratory flows and the experiences of guerilla war victims in Colombia. Although the documentary genre predominates, projects also tackle the fictional video essay, the mock promotional film, narrative pieces combining scientific essay, linear fiction and poetry, and the blending of reality with states of altered consciousness.

The sum awarded – up to 30,000 euros – and the time allowed – a maximum of one year – give scope for the artists to take on ambitious projects requiring careful planning, the use of advanced equipment including drones, and a choice of at times singular locations like a glacier in southern Argentina, rural communities in The Gambia and Colombia, and landscapes and cities in the border region between Finland and Russia.

Projects also envisage a research component in which the authors generate not only video images but other materials employed in the creative process: books, objects, sculpture...

The Multiverse Grants form part of the BBVA Foundation's engagement with one of the languages most expressive of our time – that of the moving image. Its work in this area spans the whole cycle from creation – through other one-off vehicles besides these grants – up to and including public exhibition. The Sala Multiverso exhibition space in the Foundation's Madrid headquarters, with its permanent program, free admission and flexible opening times, has become a reputed venue for video art in Spain. Further, the Foundation organizes regular encounters with artists and students of the visual arts, giving the interested public a chance to learn more about the topics and techniques featuring in the artworks. Finally, this year the Foundation launched a Video Art and Digital Creation Program in conjunction with the Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao.

These ten MULTIVERSE grantees join the nineteen artists and works selected in the first two editions of the scheme, many of which have already exhibited or have shows under way or scheduled for coming months in the Sala Multiverso. The program also has a microsite with its own domain name (<https://www.multiverso-fbbva.es/>) as part of the BBVA Foundation digital

space.

Awardees and projects

Greta Alfaro Yanguas. *Work: Monster in Motion*

Greta Alfaro (Pamplona, 1977) holds a BA in Fine Arts from the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia and a master's degree from the Royal College of Art in London. She is currently based in Wales, completing a residence at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery. Her projects and installations have been shown in museums and galleries like Artium (Vitoria, Spain), the Hiroshima Museum of Contemporary Art, the Fish and Coal Buildings in London, the Flint Art Institute (Michigan's second biggest museum), Museo Ex Teresa in Mexico City, the Centro Huarte de Arte Contemporáneo in Pamplona or Dryphoto in Tuscany.

Monster in Motion plays with the idea of the railway, as a symbol of the Industrial Revolution and a train advancing in a straight line between then and the present day; the incarnation of a false notion of progress that sparked what Alfaro sees as an ongoing human and environmental catastrophe tied in with technological development and fossil minerals. The ideas of speed, travel, acceleration, accident, nightmare and shock will play out in a production featuring dream-like images. The train will appear in the recording and structure of the finished video, in a journey that takes us through barren landscapes and states of altered consciousness.

Itziar Barrio. *Work: Drones, Failed Stars*

Itziar Barrio (Bilbao, 1976), holder of a degree in psychology from the University of Deusto, is a multimedia artist living and working in New York. She has exhibited at venues ranging from the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona to the Belgrade Museum of Contemporary Art (Serbia) by way of PARTICIPANT INC, the Abrons Art Center and Anthology Films Archives (New York), Espacio ODEÓN in Bogota (Colombia), the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdansk (Poland) and festivals like the Havana Biennial 2009 (Cuba) or the 404 Festival of Post-Electronic Art 2008 in Trieste (Italy).

Drones, Failed Stars will be a piece of speculative fiction using drones, aerial shots of highways and archive material of the astronomical bodies known as brown dwarfs (failed stars). The project will include interviews with astrophysics experts, among them Jacky Faherty from the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The aims ultimately are to explore the artificial intelligence and robotics at the forefront of current and future change, and to deconstruct the cinematographic apparatus and the setting of approved standards in liquid modernity, characterized by deregulation and market liberalization.

Francisco Javier Codesal Pérez. Work: *Evangelio en Granada (Meta)*

Javier Codesal (Sabiñánigo, Huesca, 1958) has a degree in Sciences of the Visual and Auditory Image from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Regarded as among the pioneers of video art in Spain, his work shows a particular interest in music and the body, present in such diverse pieces as *Centauro*, *Sábado legionario*, *Los remotos países de la pena* and the *Ponte el cuerpo* exhibition, and in subjects like pain, death and sickness as, for instance, in the *DÍAS de SIDA* series. He is also author of a series of portraits that includes *La habitación de Rada* (about the Balkans conflict), *Mario y Manuel*, *Retrato de Francisco del Río* and *Mayte*. Poetry and drawing are other artistic expressions featuring regularly in his work.

Two years after peace talks concluded between the Colombian government and the FARC, *Evangelio en Granada (Meta)* will provide a platform to the peasant farmers caught up in a conflict involving guerilla fighters, paramilitaries, narcos and the army. Granada, in the Colombian district of Meta, is one of the epicenters of this process. The author intends to construct a fictional essay where elements drawn from people's real experiences are filtered and mixed in with their interpretations of scenes from the gospels, which in popular culture conserve the status of moral fables and can be directly linked to situations lived through by the victims of violence in the present and the recent past.

Andrés Duque Bernal. Work: *Internacional con monumento*

Andrés Duque (Caracas, Venezuela, 1972) is a Spanish filmmaker whose output (sixteen titles between 2004 and 2016) lies on the periphery of non-fiction with a strong documentary and essayistic component. His first feature-length film – *Color perro que huye* (2011) – had its premiere at International Film Festival Rotterdam and went on to screen at a dozen other festivals and museum venues. In 2016-2017 alone it received awards at the Festival Internacional de Cinema d'Autor de Barcelona, Dokufest in Kosovo and the SEEYOUSOUND Film Festival in Turin (Italy).

Internacional con monumento is the provisional title of a film about Karelia, a border region between Finland and Russia home to the Karelian people. Duque will construct a fragmented, essayistic narrative of historical moments in which real and fantastical elements of a culture collide. For Karelia – which has belonged in the past to Sweden, the Novgorod Republic, Finland and Russia – is a region of contrasts by virtue of its frontier dimension; the cradle of Finnish literature and a space where the memory of the wars and repression of last century is very much alive – indeed the Nazis' Ahnenerbe project had it as the location of an idealized past that endorsed the superior origins of the German Aryan people.

Lluís Escartín Lara. Work: *Hasta que las nubes nos unan*

Lluís Escartín (Barcelona, 1966) is a video artist trained at the School of Visual Arts and the Anthology Film Archives (both in New York) whose substantial production, markedly global in outlook, has taken him from Spain to the United States by way of Jordan, Uzbekistan, Polynesia, Egypt and the Netherlands. His works – straddling poetry and documentary, and not shy of tackling situations of conflict like the oppression of the Tuaregs, the Arab Spring or Middle Eastern politics – have been shown at festivals in Spain, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Finland, Kosovo, France, Germany, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, the United States, Australia and South Korea, among other countries.

Hasta que las nubes nos unan is a video essay about the invisible threads connecting very different and distant cultures, particularly though agricultural practices, music, ties with the ancestral past and interdependence with nature. Starting from the fact that our common origin is partly located in stardust, the author will film in rural areas of Penedés (Spain) and isolated communities in the Gambia connected to nature for reasons of survival, where primordial musical rhythms are of vital importance. The idea is to experiment freely with sound and image to show what lies beyond the reach of conventional audiovisual languages.

Ana Esteve Reig. Work: *La pantalla mágica*

Ana Esteve (Ages, Alicante, 1986) has BAs in Fine Arts from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and in Visual Arts, majoring in video, from the Kunsthochschule Kassel (Germany), where she also pursued postgraduate studies with Professor Bjørn Melhus. Holder of a Videolab master's degree in Contemporary Audiovisual Creation from the Lens School of Visual Arts, she has taken part in almost sixty exhibitions since 2008.

La pantalla mágica will be shot in Ciudad de la Luz, a 320,000 square meter complex erected at public initiative in Alicante in 2007, with the idea of turning it into a European Hollywood. Seven years later, its sets, warehouses, set construction workshops, dressing and make-up rooms, ancillary facilities and outdoor filming locations lie abandoned after the Valencian regional

Government ordered its closure in 2014. Ana Esteve will create a mock promotional film for the Ciudad de la Luz, not for documentary purposes but as a reflection on the power exerted by fiction and cinema in the construction of reality and its perception. The ruins will invite meditation on projects that fall through but also on how they might grow into places that are visited, venerated and mythicized.

María García. Work: *Tierras raras*

María García (Valdepeñas, Ciudad Real, 1981) holds an architecture degree from the Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura at the University of Granada. Based in Barcelona, her work has encompassed themes like the relationship between architecture and flamenco, the construction of the city's image and imaginary, and the representation of territory through hybrid narratives combining image, text and action.

Tierras raras will examine the relationships between landscape and singularity. It starts from the gaze on the landscape we belong to and which at the same time lives through us, but with the defamiliarization that comes from belonging to a place that was always alien. Beside this personal experience, the location of the video essay, the countryside of Ciudad Real, has for years been projected as the site of a rare earth mine; rare earth being a set of 17 chemical elements hard to encounter in a pure form. The initiative has caused a degree of social controversy, and the author will explore the tension between the terrain's economic and ecological worth, between social revitalization and destruction of the landscape.

Elena Lavellés. Work: *Roots in Route. An Atlas of Black Gold*

Elena Lavellés (Madrid, 1981) holds a BA in Fine Arts from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and an MA in Contemporary Art from the European University of Madrid. She subsequently completed her training at Syracuse University and the Whitney Museum of American Art (both in New York), and the California Institute of the Arts – CalArts (Los Angeles). Between 2011 and 2017 she has shown her work in Madrid, Syracuse, Los Angeles, Indianapolis and Mexico City.

Roots in Route. An Atlas of Black Gold will be a multi-channel audiovisual essay with a running time of between sixty and ninety minutes, accompanied by photographs, archive material and objects. The author will use the medium of gold (in its metal, oil and coal variants) to explore the processes of value production and their impact in terms of social exclusion, geographical displacement and the transformation of the landscape and the environment, and with reference to the social resistance movements and human rights struggles that have sprung up around these economic structures.

Estibaliz Sádaba Murguía. Work: *LAS INCONTABLES: cuerpos (no) domesticados*

en espacios públicos

Estibaliz Sádaba (Bilbao, 1963) holds a BA, MA and PhD in Fine Arts from the University of the Basque Country. Her work focuses on the study and analysis of female stereotypes as part of the deconstruction of the dominant discourse around women. She has exhibited in Paris (Very Short Film Festival) and at the Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, Museo de San Telmo, Museo Artium, Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Museo Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo Reina Sofía and Akademie der Künste (Berlin), among other venues.

LAS INCONTABLES: cuerpos (no) domesticados en espacios públicos will be an experimental audiovisual piece on the ways in which women have traditionally negotiated the limits between the domestic and the public space. To this end, it will center on three historic or literary moments when female collectives made their voices heard: les Précieuses, a group of women from the 17th-century Parisian nobility who organized intellectual debates on philosophical, moral and religious questions; the Flappers, followers of the 1920s fashion for wearing short skirts, eschewing the corset and listening to what was then considered outré music (jazz), who also drank, smoked and drove cars; and the Riot Grrrls, the feminist musical movement that reached the height of its fame in the 1990s, but continued to exert a significant influence on the culture of grunge.

Francisco Ruiz de Infante Ortiz de Zárate. Work: *Campos Eventuales*

Francisco Ruiz de Infante (Vitoria-Gasteiz, 1966) lives and works between Strasbourg and Auberive, in France. Holder of a BA in Painting and Audiovisual Art from the University of the Basque Country and an MA in Multimedia from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Paris, he is coordinator of the Art Hors-Format research group at the Haute École des Arts du Rhin (HEAR-Strasbourg) and co-director of the Centre des Rives, a laboratory of contemporary and documentary art in rural settings. His work has been shown at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the Museo Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo Reina Sofía, the Guggenheim Bilbao, Maison de l'Image in Geneva, the Blaffer Gallery in Houston and Museo Carrillo Gil in Mexico City.

Campos Eventuales will round off the BlueSky thematic series that Ruiz de Infante has been working on since 2005, and which to date has produced some ten short films, several exhibitions (Madrid, Strasbourg, Buenos Aires, Vitoria, Dijon, Casablanca...) and a number of performative projects. The title alludes to flat areas of ground that can serve at a given moment for emergency landings. The film will analyze and experiment with diverse sites – physical and allegorical – as potential landing spots. One will be a glacier in southern Argentina, presented as a possible haven to avoid the crash, and perhaps the threats looming over the world at the close of the present decade. The project has elements of scientific essay, linear fiction and poem, where the real and unreal merge leaving space for the initiatic journey.

Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee for the 2017 Multiverse Grants was chaired by **Chus Martínez**, director of the Art Institute of the Academy of Art and Design, Basel, and formed by **Laura Baigorri**, professor in the School of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona; **Eugeni Bonet**, writer, curator and artist; **Nuria Enguita**, director of Bombas Gens Centre D'Art; **Karin Ohlenschläger**, Head of Activities at the LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial; **María Pallier**, director of the arts program 'Metrópolis', RTVE; **Manuel Segade**, director of the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo (CA2M); **Blanca de la Torre**, exhibition curator and art historian; and **Virginia Torrente**, exhibition curator and art historian.

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For more information, contact the BBVA Foundation Department of Communication and Institutional Relations (+34 91 374 5210, 91 374 8173 / comunicacion@bbva.es) or visit www.fbbva.es