

Apertura 2020.

The date to start over

_ Simultaneous inauguration of 48 Galleries, with more than 75 artists, to set the sector in motion. Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend starts, from the 10th to the 13th of September.

_ For this edition, due to the impact of the Covid-19, some social gatherings have been deferred and others have been cancelled, maintaining galleries open as safe environments.

_ As novelty, Apertura celebrates its eleventh edition in a physical –within the galleries– and digital format –from any electronic device–, which allows visiting them, or even buying art without leaving home.

_ With the goals of attracting new publics and turning the galleries into meeting points with other disciplines, the program “Danza en las galerías” has been created. On Friday 11th and Saturday 12th Arte Madrid galleries will host performances by eight young companies residents at Centro Coreográfico Canal.

_ In 2020, Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend has been integrated in Art Across Europe to increase the international awareness on the local art scene.

_ Public administrations have devoted themselves to the development of Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend 2020, particularly with the support from the Madrid City Council, the Community of Madrid, the Ministry of Culture and Sports, and Acción Cultural Española (AC/E).

_ The most important cultural event after the summer is open to all audiences and free.

“In a complicated context, dominated by the uncertainty –decrease of galleries’ resources and income, cancelled fairs, suspended exhibitions...–, Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend 2020 makes even more sense on its eleventh edition. This event will restart the contemporary art sector”, says Manuel Fernández-Braso, president of Arte Madrid. Galleries reopen as safe environments –respecting capacities and complying with health requirements– with the latest contemporary creations, as a showcase for the artists’ works, and also wanting to become a meeting point between art and other disciplines. Nerea Fernández, vice-president, adds “we wish to join the general effort to maintain the cultural pulse in Madrid. This ‘stubbornness’ –so to speak– has led us to lay out a great season, despite the circumstances”.

Apertura turns Madrid into the capital of contemporary art for one weekend, and launches the artistic season. 48 galleries inaugurate simultaneously, with more than 75 artists. It is a –free– event to which anyone can join. Also, there are side events, guided visits...

Galleries are safe environments to visit and enjoy. From the 10th to the 13th of September, Apertura will be held with extended opening hours to ease the access

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to exhibitions and, thus, to comply with capacity recommendations. The joint inauguration will be held on Thursday 10th, from noon to 10 p.m.

Digitalization

This year, the great commitment has been towards digitalization. Arte Madrid has partnered several technological firms to offer, in addition to the physical experience, a 100% digital experience of Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend. Thanks to them, it will be possible to experience a virtual visit of the 48 exhibitions, from any device and from anywhere. There will be virtual exhibitions, stream visits... it will be possible to search information on the artists' works, to study works calmly, and even to buy them. These tools allow preparing visits, to enjoy them during these days or throughout coming weeks.

All exhibitions in Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend will be available, apart from in Arte Madrid's website, in the online information and sale platform **Artsy** (www.artsy.net). As showcase of the cultural scene in Madrid, this website will remain active throughout September, approaching Madrid's offering to other markets. Exhibitions will also be visible, in 3D virtual tours, through **Artland** (www.artland.com), a platform that allows approaching the galleries' proposals to a global audience.

Dance in the galleries

Arte Madrid aims galleries to be meeting points with other arts and in this edition of Apertura, in collaboration with the **Centro Coreográfico de los Teatros del Canal**, directed by Blanca Li, eight of its resident companies will perform in the galleries spaces. Art and dance, from Sergei Diaghilev, have strengthened their relationship, helping to propel each other repeatedly. The companies that will act are Instituto Stocos; Compañía Ana Morales; Proyecto Lanza / Cristian Martín; Begoña Quiñones / Verónica Garzón; Full Time Company / Fabián Tomé; Colectivo Lamajara; Metamorphosis Dance and Elías Aguirre.

In the words of Blanca Li, director of the Teatros del Canal, "OFF Canal-El Centro Choreographic Canal de los Teatros del Canal, wants to share with the galleries art of Madrid some samples of the choreographic creations of the resident companies in 2020 and thus place the most current dance outside your usual space, with the intention of creating new interesting synergies and productive for the Madrid public."

"Dance in the galleries" will take place on the afternoon of Friday 11 and on the morning of Saturday 12.

Beyond our borders

The art scene increasingly attracts prestigious collectors worldwide, experts and professionals to our city, but the commitment with the internationalization of the Spanish cultural sector, carrying it abroad, is also important, and is yet another of the event's goals. In order to meet this objective, Apertura carries out two specific actions. On the one hand, in collaboration with **Acción Cultural Española (AC/E)** and its programme for the internationalization of the Spanish Culture (PICE) in its modality of Visitors, this year, eight curators and consultants from some of the most important European institutions and collections will come to Madrid to get to know the local art scene, generate synergies, and spread our art scene beyond our borders. "This kind of initiatives strengthen

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the Spanish cultural industry, and generate wealth. It is an investment for the future”, says Nerea Fernández, vice-president of Arte Madrid.

As Gallery Weekends grow worldwide, Apertura has established bonds with “sister” organizations from other European capitals, becoming part of **Art Across Europe**, a network of cities with Gallery Weekends, born in 2020 for the purpose of achieving an international dissemination of local proposals. Cities such as Paris, Brussels, Milan or Lisbon have associated with Madrid in this first phase. Art Across Europe offers a platform to share each city’s experiences through videos, interviews, images... and fosters the Intereuropean mobility through a travel programme to each Gallery Weekend. Art Across Europe goes beyond the artistic perspective, becoming a way to celebrate the European citizenship and cultural wealth.

The galleries’ key role

Galleries are our ambassadors of contemporary art and creation. They build and consolidate the ‘Spain brand’ abroad. Currently, Arte Madrid members represent almost one thousand artists, and are present in the main international fairs (in average, on an annual basis, each gallery visits five fairs). No other institution –public or private– carries out such a complex task.

“Sometimes, there is a psychological barrier that makes many people believe that they cannot go into a gallery. We continue trying to change this perception, and this is one of Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend’s objectives. One goes into a gallery to be happier, to live experiences, explore uncharted territories, reconnect with the classics, and discover new artists”, states Manuel Fernández-Braso. “Opening a gallery’s doors means starting an adventure, a trip. Once we overcome this invisible barrier, we become part of a world that we do not want to leave”.

These spaces are opened to anyone, and it is the single free cultural industry. It is also an essential platform to support artists, helping them in the work’s production, making their proposals known (inside and outside our market), as well as becoming their representatives before institutions and museums, and a meeting point for collectors, those interested in art or onlookers.

“Our task is to offer an alternative to the culture of mass entertainment, and to propose something different, fun and edifying, in a different way”, explains Manuel Fernández-Braso. Part of the fun is the idea of making a tour, a circuit. “Arte Madrid consists of galleries located throughout the city. From Chueca to Carabanchel, from Chamberí to Lavapiés. Touring allows visiting a neighbourhood or, with the excuse of visiting galleries, walking through areas that are not usually within our radar, generating a city fabric” he states.

What we find

“It is perhaps too early for the experience of the Covid to be reflected in the artists’ work. But it is clear that its impact inevitably permeates this edition and our reflections, not only in relation to the health crisis, but also to the future. We are living difficult times and these exhibitions reflect this heterogeneous complexity”, notes Nerea Fernández.

Apertura 2020 offers a tour throughout all disciplines: installation, photography, painting, sculpture..., and throughout all times, from the great vanguard masters, to contemporary artists, through the latest works by the youngest emerging creators. It is the precursor of those exhibitions

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that will be programmed by Madrid galleries during the season: more than 300 exhibitions by nearly 400 artists.

Apertura also counts with a wide programme of side events, some developed within the galleries, and others in the city. Thus, with the help of experts, the initiative **Visits to the City's Contemporary Art** brings to the public the contemporary art around us, sometimes unnoticed. The first visit –guided by the art critic and historian Alfonso de la Torre– will be to Banca March and Fundación March's gardens. Throughout the current season, there will be others.

Beyond its exhibitions, in coming weeks –and within the framework of Apertura 2020–, galleries will develop programmes within their spaces, covering from poetry readings to book presentations or workshops, becoming meeting points for arts, in general.

“We want things to happen in galleries, for them to be spaces of confluence and exchange, and that is why we look for synergies with other fields of artistic creation. Unfortunately, this year, we have had to suspend certain ideas, although we continue working to develop them in the future, when the situation allows it. In coming editions, the Apertura party will be an event with room for other artistic disciplines, such as dance”, explains Nerea Fernández.

Apertura's determination –since its origin– to approach the contemporary art to new audiences frames the collaboration with **Fundación ARCO**, with which guided visits by experts are organized to Madrid galleries in the ARCO Gallery Walk, with different tours and timings, and complying with security requirements.

Allies

In such a complicated year for everyone, celebrating Apertura Madrid Gallery Weekend has been an important challenge. “We appreciate and value our partners' huge effort. Thanks to each one of them, within their own capabilities, –almost– everything has gone forward”, claims Fernández-Braso. And he adds that “Arte Madrid has the remit to disseminate art and culture, to approach it to new audiences, and to offer other views and experiences to improve the people's lives. Therefore, any support is appreciated”.

Organized by the association of art galleries of Madrid –Arte Madrid–, Apertura 2020 has counted with the collaboration of the **Madrid City Council**, which has allowed developing an ambitious dissemination plan of the Madrid artistic scene. Also, through the Acquisition Valuation Board, the City Council selects and acquires works from galleries that participate in Apertura 2020, following criteria and objectives set by the Museum of Contemporary Art of Madrid, as institution that will preserve such works. These acquisitions are part of the Madrid City Council's aids to galleries derived from the health crisis. “The Covid crisis has strongly affected the art market, which is an important economic actor in the city. Therefore, we deeply appreciate the City Council's support to the sector; without their help, in this situation, it would not have been possible to launch this initiative”, declares Nerea Fernández.

Another supporting institution is the **Community of Madrid**, which has introduced the first edition of the Apertura Prize Community of Madrid that, through its Procurement Committee, selects and acquires works from galleries that participated in Apertura 2020, following criteria and objectives set by the Museo Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, which is the institution that will preserve these works.

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The **Ministry of Culture and Sports** has also joined the initiative, for another year, providing support in the digitalization process.

Other collaborators who have supported Apertura 2020 are **Fundación Banco Sabadell**, –which mission is to promote dissemination, training and investigation activities in the educational, scientific and cultural fields, as well as to foster and support the young talent–, or **Fundación Pablo Palazuelo**, –which aim is to perpetuate the artist’s legacy, providing access to his work–.

A faithful accomplice in each Apertura edition is the company Mahou San Miguel, this year through its brand **Cervezas Alhambra**, with its firm support to contemporary art and creation. In turn, **Radisson Blu Hotel Madrid Prado** participates again as Apertura’s official hotel, hosting this edition’s international visitors.

At technological level, **IT Gallery** reiterates its support in Apertura 2020. This company, specialized in galleries’ management software, is leading the artistic sector’s transition to the digital world.

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