



THINGS THAT HAPPEN

A PROJECT BY ENRIC FARRÉS DURAN
WITH THE MACBA'S HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

From afar, when we think about a public institution's archive, we understand that it serves several functions and is held to various definitions. Three functions are clear: to preserve documentation against all kinds of destruction (biological, political, natural disasters or the passage of time), to catalogue it so that we can find it with relative ease when we need it and to spread it so that people know that it exists—for can we look for something if we do not know that it exists? In principle, we can, right? While the institutional archive fulfils these three functions, it is traversed by definitions. Firstly, we understand that the archive is a place. It is a body that exists and occupies a physical and virtual space. This allows us to go to the archive and to stay there. Hospitality or the lack of it come into play. Secondly, the archive is a set of controlled data that allow us to describe a document—with all the political and epistemological implications that this entails—so we can insert it in an environment where it coexists with other documents and where we can access it by relating to it. In short, the archive is also the data added to the document, the metadata that makes up a system. Finally, when we arrive and walk through the door, we come across the key definition: the archive is the people. Some work with documents making drastic decisions when preserving, cataloguing and disseminating (constituting the memory of the future!), while others consult the archive, traversing functions and definitions using documents for their benefit to generate fictions with multiple types of meaning and significance.

Once inside, if we look at the MACBA's historical archive for a while, we see that it keeps moving. Unlike personal collections, in many of which the producer has died and we have time on our side, this is a living archive or one under construction. The MACBA's historical archive includes all the documentation produced by the museum in its exhibitions and its public and educational activities since it first

opened over 20 years ago. It is an archive-river where the flow of information does not stop and the documents and data that emerge from the various activities must be transferred or channelled in real time, thinking about the future. Because at the end of the day, when everything has been destroyed and sold, we know for sure that the historical archive will be the last to leave and turn off the light, as it contains little that can be marketed. It seems that the historical archive allows us to accurately anticipate unknown potential and presents us with a diffuse and slippery beginning. The archive laughs at itself.

Things that Happen is structured around a public programme of activities, an exhibition and a virtual space from which to ask about the format of the archive itself and how it relates to other contexts of visibility and exchange. The archive is a way of accessing information, as is what we mean by an exhibition, a book-object or a radio programme. If we consider that an archive is open by definition and that the user has access to the contents permanently, what does it mean to exhibit an archive? What are we exhibiting? To what are we exhibiting it? What is shown, what is hidden and how is it shown? It is a common place that the archive, in its processes, imagines and wants to be invisible, wants to allow access and not be accessed, and it is in this invisibility where we stand, welcoming it so that it can chat there for a while. It is in this context that we realise that in the course of the working process (in a *natural way*?), we have been generating documents. Furthermore, as an activity carried out by the museum-producer, we will be preserved, catalogued and made visible in the historical archive. It seems inevitable that the archive-river will end up flowing into the system it recounts, blending with everything around it.

Enric Farrés Duran

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

WE OPEN THE DOORS

— 22 APRIL AT 7 PM

There will be a couple of guided tours of the empty exhibit (but full of stuff)

WHAT A BOOK CAN DO #13: PRESENTATION OF THE BOOK *APARICIONES* ('APPEARANCES')

— 6 MAY AT 7 PM

In the Auditori Meier. Organised by Anna Pahissa, with Mela Dávila, head of Publications at the MACBA until 2006 and first head of the MACBA Study Centre (from December 2007 to July 2012), and Clara Plasencia, head of Publications

DOCUMENT CORRUPTION WORKSHOP

— 10 & 17 JUNE AT 6 PM

With Isabel Ayala (curator-restorer)

METANOISE PARTY. THE ARCHIVE'S KITCHEN — 10 JULY, SEMINAR

With Eli Rodríguez (coordinator of the historical archive) and Paloma Gueilburt (coordinator of the digital repository)

OUTING TO THE MACBA DIGITAL REPOSITORY (CSUC)

— DATE TO BE CONFIRMED

At the moment, only two people can go there because of the virus and we still do not know the day. It can be a romantic plan, for example. The idea is for two people to go there and then tell us what they have seen afterwards. Here, in the historical archive, is like a legendary place

THE SESSION OF THE CESSION: DOCUMENTARY FICTION IN THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

— 8 OCTOBER AT 6 PM

With Marta Vega (head of the Library) and Eli Rodríguez (coordinator of the historical archive)

IMPORTANT:

the features of the activities will be updated along with developments related to the virus. If you would like to sign up or request more information, please write to macba@macba.cat



More information
about the exhibition

macba.cat
[#ArxiuMACBA](https://twitter.com/ArxiuMACBA)

