

## MACBA presents the first retrospective dedicated to the work of Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

► Co-produced with the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, the exhibition *A Leaf Shapes the Eye* brings together drawings, paintings, photographs, holograms, sculptures, films and installations made from the late nineties to the present by Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (Barcelona, 1977). It is the first major retrospective dedicated to the work of this Catalan artist.

► For Steegmann Mangrané, who lived in Rio de Janeiro for two decades, the tropical forest is a living being capable of transmitting the urgencies of the contemporary world, whether ecological, political or social, themes that run through Steegmann's work, characterised by an aesthetic language close to Brazilian Neo-Concretism.

► The exhibition is accompanied by an artist's book. A limited edition, produced early this year, the book is structured as a circular visual cycle beginning with the artist's first works and advancing to his most recent, only to return to the conceptual origin and matter that has defined his career. This publication is co-published with Kiasma; the Centro de Arte Moderna Gulbenkian, Lisbon; and the artist's book publisher BOM DIA BOA TARDE BOA NOITE, Berlin.

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**Title:** *A Leaf Shapes the Eye* **Opening:** 15 November at 7.30 p.m. **MACBA Dates:** 16 November 2023 to 20 May 2024 **Production:** MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki **With the support of:** Institut Ramon Llull, Kriskadecor, Torres and Polytan and with the collaboration of Escola Massana Art and Design Centre **Curator:** Hiuwai Chu, Head of Exhibitions at MACBA and João Laia, Chief Curator of temporary exhibitions at Kiasma, with Piia Oksanen, Curator of temporary exhibitions at Kiasma.

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<https://www.macba.cat/ca/sobre-macba/premsa/roda-premsa-daniel-steegmann>

*A Leaf Shapes the Eye*, an exhibition co-produced by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona together with the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, is the first retrospective and the largest exhibition dedicated to Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (Barcelona, 1977) to date. Initially a painter, Steegmann Mangrané soon felt compelled to incorporate the relationship between space and body afforded by sculpture and installation. Featured in the exhibition are over twenty works, of various formats, including drawings, photographs, holograms, sculptures, films and installations, made from the late nineties to the present, and includes a recently produced work. Interested in exploring biological processes and the new anthropological discourses, in his work the artist dissolves the apparent dualisms between nature and culture, subjects and objects, reality and dream, visibility and invisibility.

‘There is a type of art produced in Catalonia that refers to the vernacular and the poor and embraces fragility, while at the same time being transcendental, a tradition that spans from the Romanesque to Miró, to Antoni Llena, and more recently to David Bestué. This is also my material culture, I belong to this tradition and I recognise myself in it’, the artist tells us. Also aware of how the perception of the viewer may alter the context of the work, he points out how during his Brazilian years the differences in this relationship could be attributed to the influence of Neo-Concretism and the relationship between art and phenomenology in Brazil during the sixties and seventies. Geometry, a concept he adopts even with organic elements, is always present in his work, as is poetry, which impregnates his ideas and artistic production, and is embedded in his roots and formation.

‘Art has the capacity to reconfigure our relationship with the world. I like to do my shows not as conclusions, but as points of departure: the important thing is not the exhibition itself, but what happens when you exit the museum and confront reality again.’

Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

*‘Eu era gases pure, ar, espaço vazio, tempo’* (I was pure gases, air, empty space, time). This verse by the Brazilian poet Stella do Patrocínio encapsulates the concepts of impermanence and transience that underpin the artistic practice of Daniel Steegmann Mangrané.

Drawing upon biology and new anthropological discourses as conceptual frameworks, Steegmann Mangrané proposes a holistic worldview in which there is no distinction between humans and their environment, and where relationships between all elements are in constant flux. His work questions the colonial dualisms such as culture and nature, subject and object, reality and dream, while also engaging with the subjectivity and social agency of non-humans and non-living elements.

Having lived in Rio de Janeiro for two decades, Steegmann Mangrané understands the rainforest as more than just a place, but as a living being that embodies the complexities of our contemporary world, whether they be environmental, political or social, and serves as a metaphor for the delicate balance and interconnectedness of all things. Climate change further reminds us that we are all part of the same organism and entangled within a complex network of relationships of mutual transformation.

Steegmann Mangrané's work is greatly influenced by Brazilian Neo-Concrete artists. Like them, he considers sensory engagement as a socio-political and democratic entry point to artwork, dissolving boundaries that attempt to compartmentalise our experience of the world and transforming the exhibition from an inanimate object-to-be-seen into an ever-changing entity experienced with our bodies and all our senses.

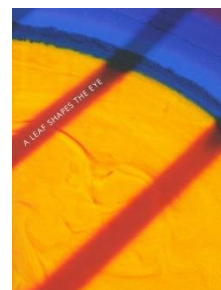
*A Leaf Shapes the Eye* brings together works that span twenty-five years and is a choreography between space, light, objects and people. Through explorations of the entanglements between living and non-living, the exhibition is a site with which to engage physically, sensorially and intellectually, and reshape our relationship with nature.

Daniel Steegmann Mangrané. *A Leaf Shapes the Eye*

The artist book *A Leaf Shapes the Eye* covers 25 years of work by Daniel Steegmann Mangrané.

Through hundreds of images, the book chronologically follows the development of his work from the beginning until reaching the present in the centre-pages, before immediately beginning the same journey in reverse, showing new details and points of view of the works until arriving again at his earliest works. The structure of the book thus forms a closed cycle that can be started anew. Page by page, the juxtaposition of works and details reveals themes that reoccur throughout his career and formal connections between disparate works. Inside the book are a series of loose facsimiles of notes and sketches that offer a unique introduction to this artist's universe.

Particularly interested in biological processes and anthropological discourses, the artist uses them as inspiration to create immersive works that blur the traditional separations between nature and culture, subjects and objects, reality and dream... dissolving these apparent opposites in relationships of mutual transformation. As the title of the book indicates, it is not only the gaze that alters the leaf, but the leaf also shapes the eye.



**Title:** Daniel Steegmann Mangrané. *A Leaf Shapes the Eye*

**Author:** Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

**ISBN:** 978-3-96436-064-9 (BOM DIA BOA AFTERNOON BOA NOITE)

978-84-17593-25-4 (MACBA)

**Publication date:** 31 March 2023

**Book subject:** Art, sculpture, installation, artist book

**Design:** Studio Manuel Raeder

**Published by:** BOM DIA BOA AFTERNOON BOA NOITE; CAM – Centro de Arte Moderna Gulbenkian, Lisbon; MACBA, Kiasma

**Language:** Mostly illustrated. Technical information in Catalan and in English

**No. of pages:** 160

**RRP:** €35 (€33.65, without VAT)

**Binding:** paperback

**Format:** 27 x 20 cm

**CRYPsis**

April 2024

Inspired by animal strategies of camouflage and echolocation, the Institute for Postnatural Studies will be organising a series of experimental activations, performances and listening sessions with which to expand the perceptual and conceptual layers of this exhibition through sound.

**Visits**

Sundays at 12 noon

Led by Albert Gironès, Eva Païà and Marina Ribot Pallicer.

Free activity. Advanced booking and further information at [www.macba.cat](http://www.macba.cat)

**Friends of MACBA**

Thursday. 11/01/24 6.30 p.m.

Guided tour led by Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

**Daniel Steegmann Mangrané (Barcelona, Spain, 1977)** lives and works in Barcelona, after having lived twenty years in Rio de Janeiro. He is part of the generation of artists who began their production at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The plurality of techniques and media used by Steegmann Mangrané encompasses film, sound, drawing, kaleidoscopic collages, photography, sculpture and gardens. Nature is a constant in his work, which explores the contamination and affinity of forms common to nature, art and architecture. Starting from the situation of planetary ecological crisis, he understands that every change in the natural environment also modifies our own nature. Both in his sculptures, which are highly fragile and incorporate altered organic material, and in his videos, the artist experiments with the correspondences between organic and geometric forms, and with the complex network of dependencies between the order created by the human being and the natural order.

His solo exhibitions include: Kunsthalle Münster (2020), Hangar Bicocca, Milan (2019), Institut d'art contemporain de Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes (2019), Nottingham Contemporary (2019), CCS Bard College, New York (2018), Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona (2018), Fundação Serralves, Porto (2017), Museo de Arte Moderno, Medellín (2016) and the Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro (2015). He has participated in biennials and triennials in Lyon, Berlin, New York, Paris, Porto Alegre and São Paulo, among others. His work is included in collections such as Tate Modern, London; Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; Museu Serralves, Porto; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Castilla y León; Fundació "la Caixa"; and MACBA, Barcelona.

**João Laia** is Chief Curator of exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Helsinki, and curator of *forms of the surrounding futures*, the 12th edition of the Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art (GIBCA, 2023). He has a background in social sciences, film theory and contemporary art. His previous projects were developed in collaboration with the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Galeria Municipal do Porto; Casa Encendida, Madrid; Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (MAAT), Lisbon; Moscow International Biennale of Young Art (MMOMA); Whitechapel Gallery, London; and the Sesc\_Videobrasil Contemporary Art Biennial, São Paulo. He has edited *Living Encounters* (Kiasma / Mousse, 2022) and *A Multiple Community* (Sesc, 2018), and contributed to the magazines *Art Monthly*, *Flash Art*, *Frieze*, *Mousse*, *Spike* and *Terremoto*. Together with Valentinas Klimašauskas, Laia curated the 14th Baltic Triennial (2021), titled *The Endless Frontier*, at the Contemporary Art Centre (CAC), Vilnius. In 2024, Klimašauskas and Laia will curate the Lithuanian Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale, with an exhibition of the artistic duo Pakui Hardware.

**Hiuwai Chu** is Head of Exhibitions and Curator of MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona since 2021. She has curated exhibitions including: *Bouchra Khalili: Between Circles and Constellations* (2023); *Panorama 21: Notes for an Eye Fire* (2021-22); *Undefined Territories: Perspectives on Colonial Legacies* (2019); and *Akram Zaatari. Against Photography: An Annotated History of the Arab Image Foundation* (2017). She is co-editor of the book *Climate: Our Right to Breathe* (K. Verlag, 2022). She is on the board Hangar, an artist residency and research and production centre, and of Cordova, an independent curatorial project, both based in Barcelona. She was a member of the Editorial Board of *L'Internationale Online* from 2021 to 2023. Before moving to Barcelona, she worked as an associate editor at *Aperture*, New York. She studied anthropology at Barnard College, Columbia University.



*A Dream Dreaming a Dream, 2020*

MACBA Collection. Fundació MACBA. Work acquired thanks to José Luis Blanco

\*Interviews with the artist that can be consulted online\*

<https://elestadomental.com/especiales/que-es-el-arte/relaciones-de-mutua-transformacion>

<https://metalmagazine.eu/es/post/interview/daniel-steegmann-mangrane-el-arte-como-realidad-alternativa-arnau-salvado>