

# Isabel Muñoz

## The Anthropology of Feelings

Isabel Muñoz, National Photography Award 2016, presents in Tabacalera a selection of 97 photographs and six video installations about the photo works more representatives of her actual production.

*The Anthropology of Feelings* is the title of the exhibition curated by Audrey Hoareau and François Cheval, co-founders of The Red Eye.

The exhibition builds a thematic journey around the obsessive and heterogeneous representation of the human body, from the origins of the humanity in itself, the spirituality, the madness, the boundaries and extremes of the body, the social dimensions of what is corporal and, finally, the sexuality and the desire.

"Given an instinctive power, the work of Isabel Muñoz is like its creator: complex and elusive. She creates what we can call, *faute de mieux*, images. We prefer to say that she sees characters upside down. Their condition does not determine what we see. She accesses and makes us access dimensions which the subject themselves disguises" Audrey Hoareau.

"If the aesthetics of Isabel Muñoz's photography impact us, it is not to please narcissism of the species but rather the intimate understanding of a shared secret. Essentially, this entails offerings to the unknown and human being's wish to build bridges between different worlds" François Cheval.

The exhibition catalogue has been edited in three languages –Spanish, English and French- and includes photographs of all the pieces that make part of *The Anthropology of Feelings*.

The exhibition, organized by the Subdirectorate of Fine Arts Promotion, will be open in La Principal of Tabacalera from 27th April to 17th June 2018.



PROMOCIÓN DEL ARTE

# Isabel Muñoz

Isabel Muñoz (Barcelona, 1951) stands out as world-renowned photographer. Platinum developments and extra large formats are her favourite techniques used in order to strengthen her message of passion for the body as a means of approaching the study of human beings.

*Tango and Flamenco* (1989) are considered the starting point of her unremitting search of the sentiments and emotions of groups and cultures around the globe capturing the expressions of the human body. When Isabel Muñoz focuses her camera on dancers, wrestlers, warrior monks, bullfighters, prisoners, tribes, children –and more recently (2016) primates, reflecting human ancestry- she does it with the strong sense of commitment that characterizes her and her photography.

Her first individual exhibition, *Toques* (1986) at the French Institute in Madrid and her participation in *Mois de la Photographie* in Paris (1990) set her international projection as a world-class photographer. These lay out the first of hundreds of exhibitions throughout the main cities of Europe, the Americas and Asia.

Isabel's photographs are shown in multiple permanent collections, such as Maison Européenne de la Photographie (París), New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York), Contemporary Art Museum (Houston), Foto Colectania (Barcelona), Instituto Cervantes (Mexico City, Guatemala City, La Paz in Bolivia, Shanghai in China), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid), Fundación Canal (Madrid).

Isabel Muñoz work has been widely recognized with numerous honours and distinctions. Recent awards include two World Press Photo prizes (2000 and 2004), Bartolomé Ros Prize (PHotoEspaña, 2009), the Gold Medal to Fine Arts awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (2009), UNICEF Spain Awareness Raising Award (2010), Fundación DEARTE (2012), National Photography Award 2016 by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, Colección Himalaya Award 2017.

# François Cheval

Exhibition curator

François Cheval studied history and ethnology and has worked as a museum curator since 1982. From 1996 to 2016, he was director of the musée Nicéphore Niépce in Chalon-sur-Saône. He strives to rid photography of its prejudice and to present photographic originality through renewed forms of museology and discourse.

In the projects he undertakes outside museums, he continues his activity as artistic director (he is founder of the BMW residency and the HSBC Photography Prize), as well as exhibition curator (MuCEM for Marseille-Provence 2013, the Pavillon Populaire in Montpellier, PhotoEspaña, Rencontres d'Arles, etc.).

He is the guest curator of the 2017 edition for the Mérignac Photographic Festival. François Cheval is co-founder and co-director of the Lianzhou Museum of Photography, the first public museum in China to be devoted to photography.

Audrey Hoareau and François Cheval co-founded, and since 2017 direct, The Red Eye, a platform which supports international projects devoted to photography.

Más información en: [www.the-red-eye.fr](http://www.the-red-eye.fr)

# Audrey Hoareau

Exhibition curator

Following her studies in communication and curatorial studies, Audrey Hoareau began her career working with the collections of the musée Nicéphore Niépce at Chalon-sur-Saône from 2003 to 2016. She conducted several studies on the collection before focusing on exhibitions (André Steiner in 2011 and Henri Dauman in 2013).

Since 2016, she has contributed to the launch of the Lianzhou Museum of Photography and has become Assistant Director.

She has been working independently since 2017, and centres her activity around setting up photographic projects, managing archives for photographers and collaborations with galleries and institutions.

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# Isabel Muñoz

The Anthropology of Feelings



*Series Metamorphosis, 2016 © Isabel Muñoz*

“In an equal treatment of the bodies, which we could call paradigms, Isabel Muñoz identifies sacred postures. They are no longer called “models”. In different ways, these figures embody all representations the human being makes of another reality. Only the descriptions of the Kadiweu people by Claude Lévi-Strauss were able, due to the effectiveness of their conciseness, to provide a description of a mythical universe. This is the real nature of this photography; a monument which pays homage to the invariability of feelings.

Since Homo sapiens became its own master, nothing fundamental has changed in the understanding of the cosmos and chaos. What History has taught us does not contradict the hormonal and sacred mechanics, the tribal element in us; it binds us and distinguishes us from the other species.

The message these people send us is not only for us. The spectator, a tolerated intruder, is, in the best case scenario a guest in the photography ceremony.

The body which gives in to the photographer is an ecstatic transmitter. The skin no longer thwarts anything; it is a signal transmitted in the aim of catching the attention of the gods, Absolute Reality, or whatever name we give it. Where morality sees no wounds, scars, social rituals and transgressions, the photographer leads us to the confines of what is mystical. A religious weight arises from each image, a spiritual communication is dispersed and brings us, bewildered, beyond the boundaries of reality. This is why the religions revealed dislike it when their carnal outer layer is threatened, or altered. This must be banned.

In a «neo-primitivism» which is impartial to morality and its implications, Isabel Muñoz’s photography allows for no comments. Its own objective is to half open what has been rejected to us, as what is visible blinds us.”

François Cheval

“*The Anthropology of Feelings* resembles the precious fruits of a meeting. This exhibition and book are in no way retrospective. Instead, they present a reading of the artist’s latest creative moments.

In 2015 we were invited by Isabel Muñoz to visit her studio in the area Pacífico. This story is rooted in this exact moment of discovery and calling into question. With the generosity that is typical of her, Isabel Muñoz showed us everything: her drawers and all the photographs and stories they contain.

She had understood, like us, the obviousness -and even the need- that we should build a common project: a clear picture, a one-on-one encounter with no compromise.

We had to see everything in three years. This is how we work as that is what a work needs. How can we talk about or provide a fair compilation of a production if we do not know it in its entirety? We saw the work being created on a boat off the coast of Mataró; in Japan with butoh dancers; among the smell of chemicals in the lab.

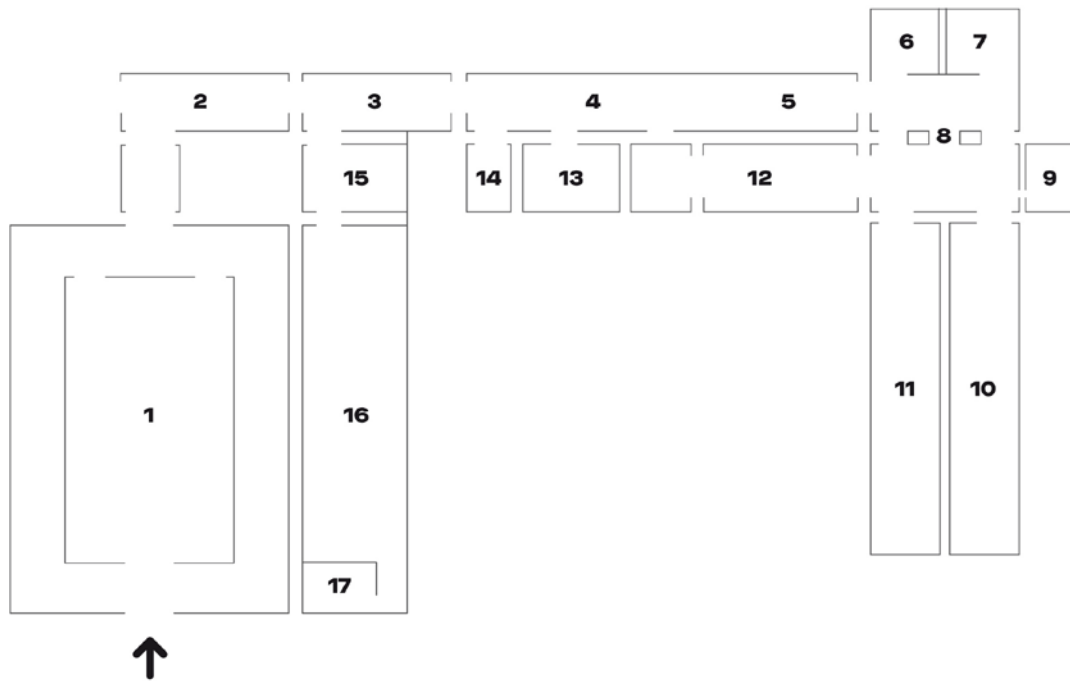
Naturally, our original proposal with a retrospective nature—left behind—gave way to new project. It was necessary to break away from icons, with a certain idea of beauty, which is not in line with what the photographer has become today. The choice of her subjects has hardened; her approach has become more serious. It is a global quest, that of human being in general, and also that of a territory, the world. This is a subject which is difficult to define. Isabel Muñoz doesn’t claim the status of an anthropologist and does not place her photography in the category of documents. More than anything, she hates the reduction of her images to simple aesthetic signs.

And then there is this freedom, the backdrop of the universe Isabel Muñoz seeks uncompromisingly, thanks to a team of women she has created. The studio’s autonomy is held and defended by this gynaeceum. This demand for independence spreads. Feminism or social engagement; freedom is a combat at every moment. There is no exclusivity, nothing to explain, no debt. The studio works only under the pressure of the photographer. Isabel Muñoz’s palliative photography will only grow.”

Audrey Hoareau

# Museum map

## La Principal. Tabacalera



**ISABEL MUÑOZ**  
LA ANTROPOLOGÍA  
DE LOS SENTIMIENTOS

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1     | INTRODUCCIÓN<br>Kudo San, 2018  |
| 2–5   | I<br>Agua, 2016<br>Álbum de familia, 2015–2016<br>Mitologías, 2012<br>Crisálida, 2018<br>Video 5'33"      |
| 6–9   | II<br>Fragmentos, 1995<br>Sexo, 2002<br>SM, 2002  |
| 10    | III<br>Hijras, 2012<br>Trans, 2007–2008   |
| 11    | IV<br>Contorsionistas, 1998<br>Metamorfosis, 2016   |
| 12    | V<br>Etiopía, 2000–2005<br>Maras, 2002  |
| 13    | La Bestia, 2008<br>Video 5'   |
| 14    | Hidden Glances, 2015<br>Video 22'09"  |
| 15–16 | VI<br>Amor y éxtasis, 2010<br>Video 6'36"<br>Shaolin, 1999<br>Metamorfosis II, 2016<br>Nueve dioses, 2016 |
| 17    | CONCLUSIÓN<br>Locura, 2016  |



# Selection of images



*Series Mythologies, 2012 © Isabel Muñoz*



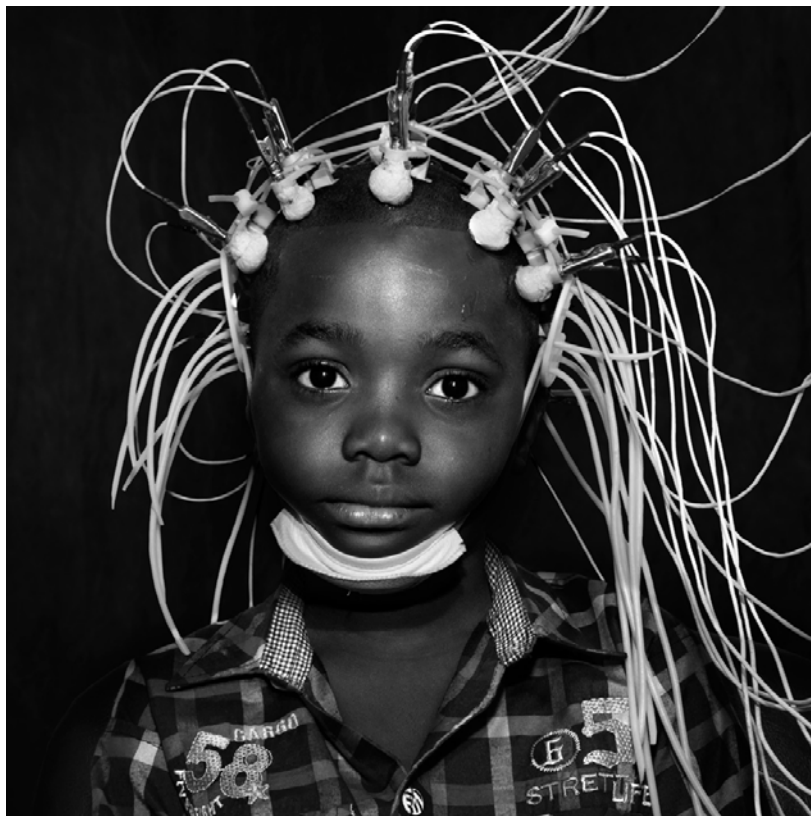
*Series Nine gods, 2016 © Isabel Muñoz*



*Series Water, 2016 © Isabel Muñoz*



*Series Kudo San, 2018 © Isabel Muñoz*



*Series Madness. 2016 © Isabel Muñoz*

# Catalogue



## Editors

Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. General Technical Secretariat.  
Subdirector General for Documentation and Publications.

The Red Eye

### **Isabel Muñoz. The Anthropology of Feelings**

Hardcover book lined with Imperial black cloth and stamped in gold

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ISBN (The Red Eye): 978-2-9563956-0-7

# Credits

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Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport

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François Cheval and Audrey Hoareau

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## Framing

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## Installation

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Rec&Bros

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Art Play

## Ilumination

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## Graphic design

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## Transport

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# **Practical information**

## **Isabel Muñoz**

The Anthropology of Feelings

Exhibition from 27th April to 17th June 2018

<https://www.promociondelarte.com/tabacalera/expo-331-isabel-munoz-la-antropologia-de-los-sentimientos>

### **La Principal. Tabacalera**

Embajadores, 51. Madrid

[www.promociondelarte.com](http://www.promociondelarte.com)

#### **Hours:**

From Tuesdays to Fridays: 12:00 - 20:00

Saturdays, Sundays and holidays: 11:00 - 20:00

Closed Mondays

**Free admission**

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