

22.09.2018 - 18.11.2018

DANIEL GARCÍA ANDÚJAR

PLUS ULTRA

ENGLISH

Plus ultra! Ever onward! The ring of mottos changes over time. It was 'our' Charles V, born in Ghent in 1500, who bestowed this device on Spain. He was crowned King of Spain at age 16, and during his reign the country saw an enormous colonial expansion. With his chosen motto, the Emperor suggested that the known borders were no longer the end of the world, and the ambitions of his Spanish Empire should extend beyond them... Globalize!

By naming his exhibition at KIOSK *Plus ultra*, Spanish artist Daniel García Andújar expresses the ambition to add a new, contemporary narrative to this already heavily loaded motto. He delved into the local history of Ghent, its historical narratives and particular anecdotes, to reinterpret them and link them with events from other eras and other places. With the illustrious figure of Charles V, he came upon a bit of shared history that could serve as the focal point in a greater, alternative story of power, manipulation and resistance.

Working from the intersection of the internet and the art world, García Andújar's practice interrogates the representation of power and the public sphere, cultural and intellectual property, authenticity and reproduction, control and theft. Since the 1990s, he has been starting up numerous critical internet projects and collectives that hack and appropriate material from contemporary culture. They come up with new strategies of visual and performative resistance in which they employ collective open-source methods of production opposing the notion of the unique work of art, but also the globalized product.

The story of *Plus ultra* might start in 1547, the year that Titian painted the now famous heroic equestrian portrait of Charles V, or in 1549, when the emperor commissioned the Italian sculptor Leone Leoni to make an equally life size statue of him, in bronze and with completely detachable armour. Both images were to be copied many times, a new visual canon was born. Imagine the surprise, then, when in 1872 the emperor's tomb was opened and he appeared in fact to have been rather short and somewhat ugly.

Or, another potential start: 23 June, 2017, the day that Daniel García Andújar organized *Burning the Canon*, a bonfire and parade in Kassel as part of his project for Documenta 14. The event goes accompanied by (the Valencian version of) the International, the anthem of the leftist labour movements that was translated in many languages but was originally composed in 1888 by Pierre De Geyter, a composer from Ghent. The current exhibition at KIOSK also opened with a parade, on 21 September 2018, and here too, the workers' anthem was reinterpreted for the occasion. Charles V was also part of the parade, riding along on horseback, to the rhythm of a hurdy-gurdy, bagpipes and accordion. During this, and probably his last parade through Ghent, the emperor could witness how the canon of power he helped to initiate has changed the face and life of the city, with the 'noose bearers' of Ghent and their annual procession ever since their revolt against his war taxes as just one reminder.

Alternatively, we could travel back in time two centuries, to the time of professor Victor D'Hondt of Ghent, who devised a new method for allocating seats and thus contributed greatly to modern democracy worldwide.

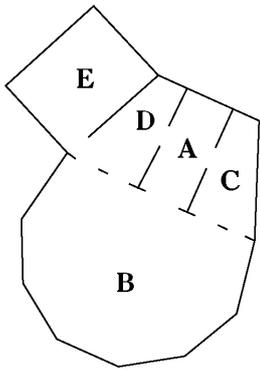
Or yet, let's imagine ourselves, unfettered by the laws of space and time, in a room where these local, historical characters meet up: Leone Leoni's nude Charles V with at his side a distant descendant of his, while Jules Lagae's 'chained slaves' and Jules Van Biesbroeck's 'flag planters' are standing opposite each other (as in real life), and industrial spy/hacker Lieven Bauwens closes the circle.

All of these apparently loose threads come together in a previously untold story with one or two protagonists and a group of minor characters. It confronts us with an intricate network of data, contexts and moments leading up to this particular present. *Plus ultra* focuses not so much on the past, as on its effect on the present. Making use of contemporary synthetic materials and online reproduction strategies, centuries-old moulds and stereotypes are filled in a new way.

Going through the KIOSK rooms, we continuously move back and forth between areas and events that are at once real and virtual. Every window gives out on a sea of questions, each object opens up a micro-history that transports us to a new place, each reading represents a different way of thinking.

Plus ultra's visualization of the notion of the canon is striking, with its direct, sloganizing language. Yet this is motivated by a desire to confront, highlight, disassemble, hack and critically re-deploy dominant systems of thought that contribute to inequality, hoping ultimately to be able to create better forms of resistance against their many violent outgrowths. That other Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand I, might have said: 'Fiat iustitia, et pereat mundus!' Or, Hacking the Canon! Although in this particular context, hacker/artist García Andújar's motto might rather be: Behead the canon!

Thanks to the Spanish embassy and the MIAT print studio.



Exhibited works
(per room, clockwise)

Daniel García Andújar
Plus ultra

ROOM A

3D recreation based on 'Mummie van Karel V', sketch by Rico de Ortega, 1872, drawing in STAM, Ghent

By Technologies To The People
2018

Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
FineArt Pearl paper, 84x120cm

The Naked Emperor

By Technologies To The People
2018

Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
FineArt Pearl paper, 84x120cm

ROOM B

The Internationale (Ghent version)

2018
Audio, 2'40"

Composition for hurdy-gurdy, bagpipes and accordion, performed by Thomas Hoste, Pieterjan Van Kerckhoven and Bert Ruymbeek

The Horse of the Emperor

In collaboration with Manolo Martín and Hijas de Vicente

Luna
2018
Wood, paper-maché,
237x250x70cm

Fiat iustitia, et pereat mundus
2018

Series of 8 drawings, inkjetprint
on paper, 32,9x48,3cm (each)

*Equestrian Portrait of Charles V
by Titian, 1548 (hacked copy)*

2018
Inkjetprint on canvas, wood,
283x335cm

ROOM C

*Allegory of Virtues and Vices at
the Court of Charles V by Hans
Daucher, ca. 1522*

2018
Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
Photo Rag Satin paper,
59,4x42cm

*Memorial for the executed
leaders after the Revolt of
Ghent, 1540-1545*

2018
Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
Photo Rag Satin paper,
59,4x42cm

*The hacker, the emperor, and
the slaves (chained slaves)*

2018
3D-printed PLA, 13x19x7cm

*The hacker, the emperor, and the
slaves (Keizer Karel Prinsenhof)*

2018
3D-printed PLA, 8x8x20cm

*The hacker, the emperor, and
the slaves (the naked emperor)*

2018
3D-printed PLA, 8x8x48cm

*The hacker, the emperor, and
the slaves (poner una pica en
Flandes)*

2018
3D-printed PLA, 9x9x40cm

*The hacker, the emperor, and
the slaves (Lieven Bauwens)*

2018
3D-printed PLA, 8x8x21cm

ROOM D

*Manuscript of The
Internationale by Pierre De
Geyter, 1888*

2018
Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
Photo Rag Satin paper,
59,4x42cm

*The Internationale (Valencia
version)*

2017
Audio, 1'18"
Composition for dolçaina and
tabalet, performed by Xavi
Richart, Cristina Marti and Pau
Llorca

*Système pratique et raisonné de
représentation proportionnelle,
Victor D'Hondt, 1882*

2018
Inkjetprint on Hahnemühle
Photo Rag Satin paper,
59,4x42cm

*Documentary Plus ultra parade,
September 21st, 2018*

Filmed and edited by Eva Giolo
2018
Digital video

ROOM E

*How to understand the D'Hondt
method (democracy)*

2018
Digital video, 32'50"