



"la Caixa" Foundation



Press Release

CaixaForum Barcelona

17 May 2021 – 9 January 2022



teamLab brings its interactive, immersive artworks to CaixaForum Barcelona

- The international art collective brings *Art, Technology, Nature*, an interactive, immersive project with infinite possibilities to the cultural centre operated by "la Caixa" Foundation.
- In two large installations, the multidisciplinary team presents an innovative project in which art and technology go hand-in-hand, recreating worlds full of a nature that changes according to the presence and behaviour of the visitor: what happens at a given moment will not ever occur in the same way again.
- The show, which occupies Exhibition Room 4 at CaixaForum Barcelona, comprises the works *Born From the Darkness a Loving, and Beautiful World* and *Graffiti Nature: Lost, Immersed and Reborn*.
- Both pieces comprise a song to nature and the sustainability of our planet, and explore how the use of digital technologies for the purposes of art can change the behaviour of visitors who, both individually and collectively, will create different new interactions on every occasion.

teamLab. *Art, Technology, Nature*. Conception and production: Exhibition produced by teamLab in cooperation with "la Caixa" Foundation. **Curated by:** teamLab. **Dates:** From 17 May 2021 to 9 January 2022. **Place:** CaixaForum Barcelona (Avda. Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia, 6-8).

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Barcelona, 17 May 2021. At CaixaForum Barcelona on Monday, **Elisa Durán**, Deputy General Director of "la Caixa" Foundation, **Lluís Noguera**, Director of CaixaForum Barcelona, and **Takashi Kudo**, a member of the teamLab art collective, via streaming, presented the exhibition **teamLab. Art, Technology, Nature**, which will be open to the public in the Catalan capital until 9 January 2022.

In cooperation with "la Caixa" Foundation, teamLab will bring an **immersive, interactive show to Barcelona, installing a unique digital project in Exhibition Room 4 at the CaixaForum cultural centre.** teamLab, an art collective founded in 2001 by Toshiyuki Inoko, is an **interdisciplinary, collaborative, ultra-technological group** formed by a several hundred specialists of different nationalities, including **artists, programmers, engineers, CG animators, mathematicians and architects.** Their collaborative practice seeks to navigate the confluence of art, science, technology, design and the natural world.

For the first time in Barcelona, then, CaixaForum will present two installations by this collective, whose works are known worldwide and are in the permanent collections of museums around the world, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; the Asia Society Museum, New York; the Borusan Contemporary Art Collection, Istanbul; the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, and Amos Rex, Helsinki.

The two interactive installations installed in this cultural centre in the Catalan capital will be **projected onto all the walls in the exhibition room** – and one of them will even be projected onto the floor. One of the major challenges to organising the show was that of installing all the necessary technological infrastructure without perforating the Modernista ceiling in CaixaForum Barcelona, which occupies the former site of the Casarramona factory, built in that style, known elsewhere as Art Nouveau. To this end, a substructure was built, to which 60 projectors and 50 loudspeakers are attached.

The show represents a revolution in the way that visitors perceive art at a cultural centre like CaixaForum. While, until now, and throughout history, the presence of other viewers has constituted a hindrance to those trying to admire artworks, this project is a radical game-changer: at the show, relationships with other viewers generate new and different dialogues with the pieces. Indeed,



when an artwork created using digital technology changes based on the presence or behaviour of visitors, it causes the boundaries between artwork and visitor to become blurred. Whether a viewer was present five minutes ago, or how the person next to you is behaving now, result in changes in the artwork. In consequence, these interactions become positive elements for each individual visitor to the exhibition.

Born From the Darkness a Loving, and Beautiful World

This installation is the first to welcome visitors, and occupies the first half of the exhibition. The projections fuse elements from nature with Chinese characters. When visitors interact with these letters – for health reasons, a few centimetres from the wall in order to prevent direct physical contact – elements from nature are generated, and become what the characters signify: water, wind, bird, flower, etc., interacting with the other elements in the installation and influencing one another to create a unique world.

The elements that are born from the characters are placed at various positions within the artwork space, and each interaction between them generates a new image. For example, when the wind blows, flowers and snow physically fly away. Birds alight in trees, and butterflies are attracted to flowers. Just as in nature, each image is generated by interaction with the other elements and, as a result, what you see at a particular moment can never be seen in the same way again.

The Chinese characters were first carved in turtle shell or ox or deer bones, and were also engraved on bronzeware. Each character had a specific meaning. Through the characters in this work, and their meaning, each individual visitor will be able to call up a new world, and this world will connect and interact with those generated by other visitors so that, all together, they create a great, constantly-changing and unique space.



Graffiti Nature: Lost, Immersed and Reborn

This second work also occupies an immersive, interactive space that, this time, becomes an ecosystem. In it, various creatures, drawn by visitors, live. Living things eat and are eaten by others. The ecosystem is balanced according to the number of living beings, which become food for other creatures. The ecosystem is also balanced according to the number of living beings from each different species. As a result, visitors will become aware of their role within the ecosystem, while also sampling an impressive technological experience.

More than 10 million living species are said to exist on Earth. Each and every one of these species lives while interacting with the others. Plants create nutrition from rain, soil, and sunlight (photosynthesis). Animals eat those plants. These animals, in turn, are eaten by other animals. When animals die, bacteria decompose their bodies, allowing plants to use them for nutrition. All these living things and the habitat they live in is known as an "ecosystem". Inside an ecosystem, everyone plays a specific role. Therefore, when an animal or plant greatly changes in number due to climate change or human intervention, the ecosystem's balance is destroyed, affecting all that live inside it.

In this space, flowers will bloom if you stand still, but their petals will disperse if you walk around. If you approach the animals, they will sense your presence and begin to move.

Another way of interacting with the installation is to colour in an animal or plant using a stencil, then scan the drawing in the Drawing Room inside this second space. Once scanned, animals and plants will come to life in the exhibition space itself.



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