Press Release, 27 May 2024

OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

STATE OF CRAFTS

Key Pillars in the Contemporary Craft Sector

Thursday, 20 June at 9.00 CET
DISSENY HUB BARCELONA & WCCE YT Channel

Join us at the event that will bring together a network of almost 40 craft organisations across Europe and a programme of exciting guests to shed light on current overarching key issues within European craft through key pillars: entrepreneurship, sustainability, community and beauty.

What can be learnt from crafts to benefit other sectors and broader society? What positive stories can be told to bring craft to more people and the use of hand-made crafted products into their everyday lives? What are the key challenges and opportunities facing the craft sector today, particularly in the realms of entrepreneurship and knowledge exchange? How can crafts serve as a model for sustainability and circular economy principles? How can craft practices be applied to foster community building and how to nurture those principles? How does the intersection of aesthetics, heritage, and skills influence the perception and value of crafts in Europe?

Guest speakers include:
Paulo Ribeiro, Founder and Director of CONTEMPORANIA
Jessica Guy, Strategic research lead at Distributed Design, Fab Lab Barcelona
Graciela Melitsko Thornton, Creative Green Consultancy and Training Programme lead at Julie's Bicycle
Rosa Muñoz, Brand, trends and futures consultant at Ohayō
Ana Cristina Mendes, Deputy Director of CEARTE & WCCE Vice-President
Laura Miguel Baumann, Secretary General WCCE

Moderated by:
David Places Balsalobre, head of Internationalisation and cultural promotion at CCAM & WCCE board member

The conference will be opened by **Roger Torrent**, Minister of Business and Work of Catalonia.

The event is free and open for all to attend on-site or online! It will be held in English and on site simultaneously translated to Catalan.

PROGRAMME

09:00	**Registration**
09:30	**Welcome** Roger Torrent, Minister of Business and Work of Catalonia Ana Cristina Mendes, CEARTE & WCCE
09:40	**The State of Crafts** Laura Miguel Baumann, WCCE
10:00	**Craftsmanship beyond crafts: Developing Thriving Economies and Healthy Societies** Rosa Muñoz, Ohayō
10:40	**Crafting the Future: creative climate and circular approaches** Graciela Melitsko Thornton, Julie's Bicycle
11:30	**Break**
12:00	**Weaving communal threads: Fab Lab Barcelona's approach to enable resilient communities** Jessica Guy, FabLAB Barcelona / Distributed Design Platform
12:40	**A piece of Beauty** Paulo Ribeiro, CONTEMPORANIA
13:20	**Final remarks** Cristina Mendes, CEARTE & WCCE

The conference is the third in a series which have been taking place between 2022-2024 as part of the CRAFTING project co-funded by the European Union.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Paulo Ribeiro
Founder and Director of CONTEMPORANIA High Craftsmanship Barcelona and Le Département Interiors

Paulo Ribeiro, a Brazilian architect with a master's and PhD from the Polytechnic University of Catalonia, has been directing the creative agency Le Département since 2007, managing projects worldwide. In 2023, he founded Contemporania High Craftsmanship in Barcelona, Spain's premier international contemporary crafts fair. Held at the Royal Palace of Pedralbes, the fair features over 400 artisans and combines neoclassical architecture with high craftsmanship for a unique experience. Contemporania, organised in collaboration with the Crafts Council of Catalonia, showcases a curated selection of artisans from prestigious associations such as the World Crafts Council Europe, Michelangelo Foundation, and Loewe Prize, alongside international galleries and institutions. Ribeiro's contributions to the craft sector extend to his role as a juror for numerous international craft and jewellery competitions. In addition to his work with Contemporania, Ribeiro has lectured and provided coaching on crafts, business development, and techniques in various countries. He has also served as a professor and coordinator at the Institute European of Design and IDEP Barcelona.

Jessica Guy
Strategic Research Lead at Distributed Design, Fab Lab Barcelona

Jessica Guy (They/ Them) is a designer, maker, and strategic research lead of Distributed Design at Fab Lab Barcelona located in IAAC. Jessica's work centers around researching ontologies and narratives of design from plural perspectives within design and maker education. At Fab Lab Barcelona, Jessica is the project manager of the EU-funded Creative Europe project Distributed Design Platform and is the global coordinator of Make Works. They design and curate annual programs for learning experiences, knowledge exchanges, publications, hybrid events, awards, and other opportunities to support emerging creative talents.

Graciela Melitsko Thornton
Creative Green Consultancy and Training Programme Lead at Julie's Bicycle

Graciela leads the Creative Green Consultancy and Training Programme at Julie's Bicycle, UK. She is a sustainability and climate change professional with more than 25 years of experience. Her diverse skill set includes developing policy and delivering projects for low-carbon cities, environmental management for the Arts and Leisure sectors, as well as the promotion of renewable energy in the UK, Europe, and Latin America. In the last five years she has worked on 70 environmental sustainability projects with different art forms and organisations including design, heritage and museums at different stages of environmental literacy and action. Over time Graciela has worked in a wide range of roles: as an environmental campaigner; project manager of an International NGO; consultant and trainer; researcher; University lecturer; and sustainability expert for a dynamic

local authority in the UK. She holds a Master's Degree in Urban and Environmental Policy from Tufts University (Boston, USA)

Rosa Mª Muñoz Gómez
Brand, Trends and Futures Consultant at Ohayō

Rosa specialises in trends and futures foresight. At Ohayō, she manages the Otō trend observatory: a system for monitoring what's new in the craft, living, leisure/tourism, agri-food and lifestyle sectors. Bachelor in Market Research. Master in International Business Administration. She worked as an international trade consultant at the Habitat Department of the Spanish Trade Office in Tokyo (Embassy of Spain). She was also part of the Marketing and Sales team at Fagor America (USA). She was responsible for the creation of the Trends Observatory of the Surgenia Foundation (Technological Centre of Andalusian Design). Since 2013 she has been writing in the architecture section of Eikyô magazine.

Ana Cristina Mendes
Deputy Director of CEARTE & WCCE Vice-President

Ana Cristina Mendes holds a Law Degree from the Faculty of Law of the University of Coimbra, is a Postgraduate in Communications and media law by FDUC, with training in Public Management by INA, I.P. She has been with CEARTE – Professional Training Center for Crafts and Heritage since 1991 in the Training Department and as a Legal Advisor. She became Deputy Director of CEARTE in 2018 and was the general coordinator of the Vocational training department since 1998. Ana Cristina is also the Coordinator of the work team responsible for the design of Crafts training curricula integrated into the National Catalogue of Qualifications. She is a member of the work team of the National Legal certification system for the crafts sector and the National Sectorial Council for Qualification – Crafts, and Jewellery. She is co-author of the Study "The Sector of Craft Activities in Portugal"/ 2006: Chapter IV.She has extensive experience in the preparation of training projects for applications for European Programs and the coordination and monitoring of transnational training projects. Ana Cristina is also the author of several articles and communications within the thematic Crafts and Vocational Training.

David Places Balsalobre
Head of Internationalisation and Cultural Promotion at CCAM & WCCE Board Member

David Places Balsalobre is a seasoned professional in the development, growth, and exploration of crafts, art, design and local cultures and is head of Internationalisation and Cultural Promotion for the Catalan Crafts Council in Barcelona. David has developed and implemented a powerful cultural program to highlight the synergies between craftsmanship, design, and contemporary art. This program elevates and changes the perception of crafts in society, debunking the collective perception that craftsmanship is a skill of the rural world. David has managed and curated almost 200 exhibitions in Europe and beyond and has imported several crafts shows to Barcelona from around the world. As a liaison between craftsmen, artists and designers, David enables collaborations which

develop new products relevant to today's consumer needs. This cross-pollination of skills and creativity has, in return, expanded the craftmanship presence in prestigious spaces such as art galleries and museums and high-level markets of other industries such as jewellery, textiles and interior design.

Laura Miguel Baumann
Secretary General WCCE & Consultant for national and international customers, related to the craft sector, design and the cultural and creative industries

Laura has a degree in translation and interpretation from the Pompeu Fabra University. She has completed her studies with several Master's degrees: in International Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid; Business Internationalisation; and, Intercultural Communication and European Studies. She has worked both in the private sector, as well as in non-profit organisations and public bodies, especially in Spain, but also in other countries such as Serbia or Belgium. For more than 14 years, she has been managing projects to strengthen and improve the competitiveness of the craft sector, as well as promotion and enhancement. She has been part of juries for awards and recognitions to the craft sector and has been in charge of numerous exhibitions.

ABOUT WCCE

WCCE is a European network representing craft organisations based in European countries whose main mission is to promote crafts in Europe, by increasing the awareness and appreciation of crafts as an integral part of the cultural, social, and economic well-being of society. https://wcc-europe.org/

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MORE INFO
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