Cristina Iglesias
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Liquid Sculpture
Edited by Iwona Blazwick and Richard Noble

Book Project
“Water serves me as a material that measures time, changes, sounds in its silence and activates the places I build”

Cristina Iglesias
Public art in 21st century cities can reveal and regenerate, celebrate commonalities between distinct cultures and interrupt the urban flow with profound encounters in time and space. Outside the city it can serve as a destination, habitat, and catalyst for environmental awareness. Across all these settings great art also retains a visual, physical and conceptual autonomy that will resonate across generations.

The public art of Cristina Iglesias has inspired contemporary thinkers from the spheres of art, activism, ecology, heritage, science and urbanism to interpret her remarkable artistic practice and speculate on its wider significance.

This book draws together specially commissioned essays and debates that will be of interest to students, artists, architects, urban and rural planners, cultural historians, environmentalists and all those who encounter Iglesias’ work in cities and remote locations around the world.
It is structured around three major works. Forgotten Streams is a gigantic lateral sculpture that has introduced a gushing river into the heart of London’s financial district. It raises questions about submerged geologies and suppressed memories; about the deep time of nature versus the fast time of data and global finance; and about the viewer as flâneur. This chapter also features iconic public sculptures Iglesias has created in Barcelona, Folkestone, Madrid and Santander.
Commissioned by Artangel, the UK’s renowned public art agency, Tres Aguas comprises three permanent installations in the city of Toledo. Sited in an abandoned munitions factory, a convent and in a medieval cathedral square, these architectonic sculptures all deploy water, common to Christian, Islamic and Judaic architecture and ritual. This city wide work inspires debate about the politics of shared cultural histories and contemporary art as urban archaeology. Each architectonic sculpture is also animated by movement drawing the viewer in to a drama of ebb and flow, darkness and light. Other featured works include Iglesias’ fountains for Antwerp and Tuscany.
The final chapter revolves around Estancias Sumergidas or Submerged Rooms. In 2010 Iglesias installed three building sized permeable pavilions on the ocean floor at the Island of Espíritu Santo in Baja, California. 30 metres in length and 3 metres high, the latticed walls of these interconnected structures are actually texts.

These aquatic pavilions have restored marine life, with a host of manta rays adopting them as their home. This generative work is invisible from land; yet like much land art it has become legendary. It is also part of a new phenomena shared by artists such as Pierre Huyghe or Joan Jonas in embracing other species and raising consciousness about the growing fragility of our ecosystem. This section will also include works in Lofoten Island, Brazil and others.
I

Publication
Public art that has transformed the city and the wilderness, featuring globally commissioned pavilions, fountains and mazes by Cristina Iglesias.

Sculpture as a destination and a habitat is the theme of this volume of essays by an international cast of critics, philosophers, curators and scientists who have taken the remarkable structures of Spanish artist Cristina Iglesias as their point of departure.

Permanently installed in locations around the world, her sculptures have created new rivers, architectural constructions that combine structure with language and underwater chambers occupied by marine life.
Liquid Sculpture explores the way public art can intervene in the procedures of urban capitalism; regenerate communities; and restore natural environments.

This sumptuously illustrated book is divided into three sections. The first addresses the role of Iglesias’ work in major urban centres and in regional towns. The second explores how her sculpture draws on the architectural legacies of Christianity, Islam and Judaism and their shared use of water. The final section looks at public art in remote locations as a destination for cultural pilgrims and as a habitat for other species.

Including drawings, ‘mood boards’, technical plans and photographs shot on location, as well as theoretical and literary sources, this book will be an invaluable resource for art and architecture students, artists, architects, curators, designers, heritage and urban planners, scientists and scholars.
Proposed publication date: autumn 2020

Published in association with Goldsmiths College and Whitechapel Gallery. A series of launches are envisaged around the globe according to the location of Iglesias’ major sculptures. These would include:

**UK**
Whitechapel Gallery, London Art Book Fair/ Tate Modern/ Bloomberg Building/
Folkestone Triennial 2020

**USA**
Marion Goodman Gallery/ Guggenheim Museum

**SPAIN**
Prado Museum, Madrid/ Elba Benitez Gallery, Madrid
Centro Arte Botin, Santander
Guggenheim, Bilbao
San Sebastian

**FRANCE**
Marion Goodman Gallery, Paris/ Centre Pompidou

**NORWAY (tbc)**
Munch Museum, Oslo

**ITALY**
Castello di Ama, Tuscany

**BRAZIL**
Inotim, Belo Horizonte
II
Participants and Topics
Chapter I
Forgotten Streams (Bloomberg Building), London

INTRODUCTION

Iwona Blazwick - On art and public spaces in the 21st century

CONTRIBUTORS

Iwona Blazwick Editor, Curator/Director Whitechapel Gallery
Brian Dillon Writer, critic, UK editor of Cabinet magazine
Jane Rendell Professor at Bartlett School of Architecture
Andrea Schlieker Curator/ artist liaison White Cube/ former director Folkestone Biennale

MODERATORS

Kirstin Dunne Curator Fourth Plinth Project
James Lingwood Curator, critic/ Director Artangel, London
Michael Newman Academic, critic/lecturer, Goldsmiths College, University of London
Richard Noble Philosopher/ professor, Goldsmiths College, University of London

GUESTS

Michael Archer Professor of Art Goldsmiths College
Andrew Benjamin Professor of Philosophy and the Humanities at Kingston University
Lourdes Fernandez Organiser
Dr. Gaby Hartel Freelance Curator and Journalist, Berlin
Jade Hee-Kyung Yang Marian Goodman Gallery
Cristina Iglesias Artist
Stella Ioannou Sculpture in the City
Ben Luke Critic
Rebecca Morrill Phaidon Press
Farshid Moussavi Architect
Courtney Plummer Marian Goodman Gallery
Jemma Read Bloomberg Philanthropy
Michele Robecchi Phaidon Press
Andrea Schlieker Curator/White Cube
Mercedes Vicente Whitechapel Art Gallery Public

Chapter II
Tres Aguas, 2014, Toledo

CONTRIBUTORS

Estrella de Diego Writer, Researcher and Art Professor at University of Madrid
Luis Fdez.- Galiano Architect/ founder Arquitecturaliva magazine/ professor at the ETSAM
Joao Fernandes Chief curator, Museum Reina Sofia
Richard Noble Philosopher/ professor, Goldsmiths College, University of London
Jane Withers Writer, expert on the culture of water

GUESTS

Iwona Blazwick Editor, curator/ Director Whitechapel Gallery
Lynne Cooke Senior Curator, Special Projects in Modern Art, National Gallery Washington
Jesús Corroto Architect
Cristina Egaña Personal assistant
Russell Ferguson Professor UCLA Department of Art
Lourdes Fernández Organiser
Jade Hee-kyung Yang Marian Goodman
Cristina Iglesias Artist
James Lingwood Curator, critic/ Director Artangel, London
Farshid Moussavi Architect
Michael Newman Academic, critic/lecturer, Goldsmiths College, University of London
Andrea Schlieker Curator/ Director White Cube
Vicente Todoli Director of Art at Pirelli Foundation
Chapter III

Art/Wild: Estancias Sumergidas, 2015 (A submerged state), Mar de Cortés, México

CONTRIBUTORS

Octavio Aburto  Marine biologist/professor, Scripps Oceanographic Institute

Lynne Cooke  Senior Curator, Special Projects in Modern Art, National Gallery, Washington

T.J. Demos  Art/cultural historian, professor University of California, Santa Cruz

Exequiel Ezcurra  Professor of Ecology, UC Mexus

Russell Ferguson  Professor UCLA Department of Art

GUESTS

Mary Beebe  Director of Public Art, Stuart Collection UCSD

Andrew Benjamin  Professor of Philosophy and the Humanities at Kingston University

Iwona Blazwick  Editor, curator/ director, Whitechapel Gallery

Lourdes Fernández  Organiser

Mathieu Gregoire  Visual Arts Department at UC San Diego

Cristina Iglesias  Artist

Richard Noble  Philosopher/professor Goldsmith College, University of London
City Rythms

The work of art’s coexistence with the city
On the walk, the promenade
Encountering the unexpected – the flaneur
  The crowd
  Security in the citadel

Regeneration

Shining a light on forgotten spaces
The memory of a city
Development versus heritage
  Submerged rivers
  Art and community
Three Cultures

- How can cultural histories inform contemporary art?
- Can art broker a relation between distinct cultural beliefs, languages and architecture?
- Is art a force in nurturing co-existence and understanding?

Water As Medium

- Water as a medium of communication
- The mechanics of water and human habitation
  - Water in religious rituals
- The politics of the art commission
- Conservation of the contemporary
- Contemporary art as urban archeology
Art and Nature

How will the work of art take its place within a natural environment?
   Will it become embedded, part of the ecosystem?
   Can culture be part of the wilderness? Can it be a habitat?
   What relation can sculpture have with animals?
   Can the artist incorporate the unexpected, the uncontrollable?
   Could we envisage an underwater commons?
What are the competing claims of human and animal occupation?
   Can art conserve?

Remote Locations

The remote as a gathering place
   On the voyage and the search
   The value of getting lost
Entering an alien environment – being underwater
   Belief in the unseen
   Maintaining the visibility of the invisible
Publication details

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The public art of Cristina Iglesias

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