



Holding space

Aurora Caja
creation 2025

multidisciplinary solo
circus / visual arts / dance

non-conventional spaces,
museums

Suitable for all audiences

Duration: 30 minutes

Touring team: 2 people

contact

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Holding space* will be a multidisciplinary solo performance.

Body (circus and dance) and **visual arts** (painting and installation) are the main interlocutors of the piece.

An **installation** will be created and transformed live, composing a scenographic space.

Designed to be displayed outside the most usual places of representation, in order to create an alternative situation to the one that may usually exist in the space that hosts it.

A **singular body appropriates the possibilities of its movement and materiality's (paint, fabrics, sounds) as a form of physical activism**. A body as a material and also a support for a sensitive visual and aesthetic experience.

Holding Space is designed to be a mutant form (adapting to space and context) and to exist in constant creation.

**Holding space is a practice of making space for somebody else's experience and centering them. To hold space, one must be fully present and create a safe environment. Once the circumstances are created, holding space fosters listening and empathizing.*

artistic universe_

Aurora Caja (Palma de Mallorca) works with **physical language and the visual arts**. Her research focuses on how to articulate these disciplines on stage and create her own artistic signature.

Physically, she works with circus (acrodance, hand balancing and contortion) and dance.

"Circus technique is not a tool I use, but a state I live in. Circus has allowed me to reveal a part of me that I know existed before I started practicing. It has allowed me to express myself in a more authentic, more extreme and extraordinary way".

Visual arts is the universe in which her proposals and her vision of the world are embedded. It is also a way of approaching materials and understanding the body (also material and support).

She works from what she is, proposing reflections of the current society context. **Always based on principles that are already a form of rebellion: the extreme use of the body and her vision as a woman.**



creative urgency_

My main motivation is to share my artistic practice. I have always heard my father say a phrase (which is not his, but Walter Lippmann's):

"when everyone thinks alike, no one is thinking".

We live in a system that, in order to function, needs us to be as disconnected as possible from sensibility and not to think for ourselves.

Art has infinite forms of expression and in my opinion they all have a common link, the capacity to expand thought.

Artistic languages put us in contact with reality in a sensitive and critical way.

We feel, think and read relating to the work of art in a subjective way.

*On the other hand, there is our responsibility, the one we have as artists: to **find our own voice to express ourselves.***

*From my point of view, the challenge lies not only in criticizing what doesn't work, but in **creating and validating alternative narratives to the normative and the hegemonic.***

In this sense, in Holding Space I have the will to appropriate the creative process, the body, the space and the material. Accepting continuous transformation.





material_

Visual dimension

My practice focuses on **painting by printing the body on canvas.**

In this way, the body becomes the first support for the painting and, through contact with another surface, the painting is transferred to another support.

The composition of these canvases will create a live installation.

The actions of applying paint to the body, of stamping the body on the canvas and of creating and composing the installation are the main lines of research.

The following are some of the possibilities to be explored and taken into account during the creation:

1. Applying paint to the body.

This action can come in various forms:

- I paint myself.
- I ask the audience to paint me.
- People in the audience paint themselves or each other.
- I paint someone in the audience.

2. Stamping the body on the canvas.

This action requires contact between the body and the canvas. This contact can take place in many different ways:

- The contact can last for a long time, or last for a very short time.
- It can be tender like an embrace or violent like a blow.
- The cloth being printed can be hanging or lying on the floor.
- The canvas can be on a regular, stable surface (such as a wall) or on an uneven surface (such as a tree).
- The canvas may be between two people.

3. Creation and composition of the installation.

Options:

- The entire installation is created and composed live.
- A part of the installation is previously created.
- There is an installation already located in the space that is transformed live.
- There are already painted canvases, created collectively through a previous activity with the public.

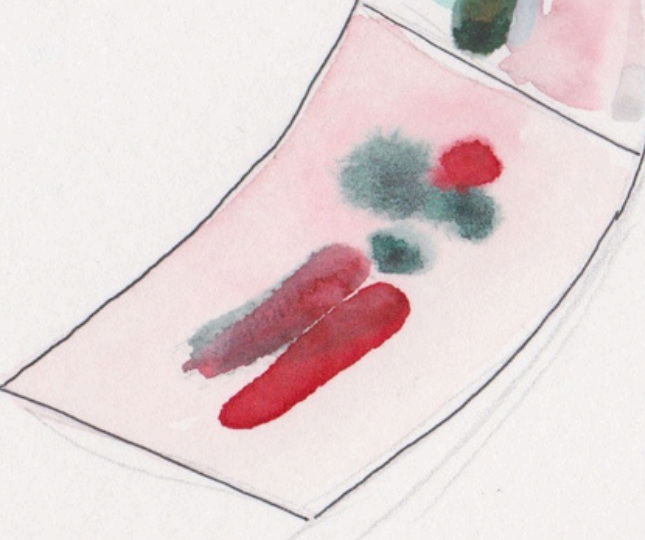
4. The resulting installation.

- It can be a gift for the place that hosts the piece or for the people.
- It can be accumulated to make the installation grow.
- It can be collected to generate an exhibition.



*First home painting tests. Aurora Caja.
Acrylic on paper. Detail. 2024.*





Physical dimension

I am very committed to my physical practice and to the exploration of movement. **The body occupies a central place in my artistic universe** and it is through it that I express myself and generate meaning.

The body is my playground and my manifesto.

The circus disciplines that are part of my vocabulary are acro-dance, **handstands and contortion, as well as dance.**

My aim is to share the physical practice and connect the audience with the more abstract and sensitive dimension of communication. Also to validate this language as an alternative to the hegemonic.

From this connection, the public can make their own reading of what is shared and in this way be part of the language.

1. Free body research.

The free-body training/research sessions are a progression of exercises that lead me to **explore different states and dimensions of movement.** These exercises are **my own changing methodology.**

In these sessions, I work on **improvisation** and also generate different **physical writings.** As working tools I use **video, writing, drawing, feedback** from colleagues and the audience, and **analysis.**

Video is a medium that helps me a lot to remember what I'm creating, but it doesn't help me much to recognise the sensations I was experiencing at the time.

To describe the sensations and states that come over me, I prefer to use writing.

Drawing is the best medium for describing the position of the body.

I also often make maps of the body's path in space.

The question I ask myself after improvising or performing is: How did I feel? After answering this question, I proceed to the analysis.

To analyze, **I watch the video of my presentations and take notes.** I also **ask for feedback** from those who have seen me on stage and/or I send the video of my presentation to specific people whose vision I am particularly interested in.

I compare my feelings, the comments received, my notes and my objectives.

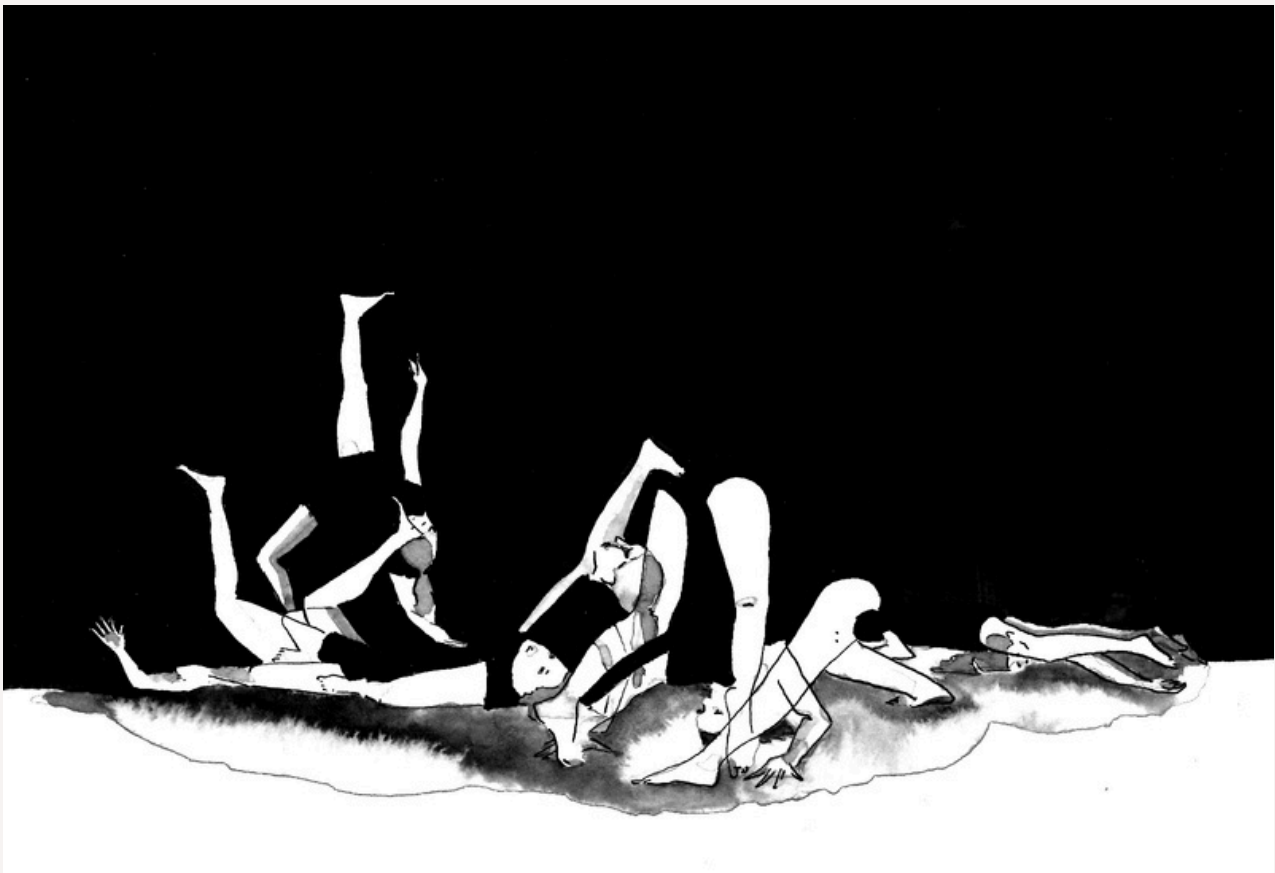
I do the exercise of **seeking perspective** and talk to people who can help me with that. I try to **guide the criticism towards a constructive place**. I also try to place it in the present moment to help me move forward and set new goals.

I am currently working on the state of **affirmation, security and decisiveness**. This state empowers my presence. The movement is fluid and organic. The density is like that of magma. The gaze travels between inner listening and connection with space.

On the other hand I am dancing without music. This leads me to explore the musicality of movement in a freer way.

My state of listening sharpens. A connection is created with the sound of space, of breath and of the body in movement.

My body is transformed into a paintbrush that draws in the space.



Study of movement in a *No verbal* scene. Aurora Caja.
Chinese Ink on paper. 21 cm x 29,7 cm. 2020.

2. Physical search with the chair.

I have been developing a form of movement research with a chair for five years. I consider it my circus discipline.

The relationship I create with the chair is one of collaboration. It brings me new possibilities of movement: in terms of form (technical figures) and also in terms of quality.

In return, my research broadens the imagination of the use of the chair and I question the idea of comfort.

With the chair, I have developed a quality of movement that seeks the limits of elasticity. It is a tendon work. In this direction I experience a physical state of internal conflict and questioning, "something is not working".

3. Researching with visual arts.

The work with visual arts is a sensorial work: it has a tactile, olfactory, sound and image dimension.

Before coming into contact with materials, I awaken my senses through breathing and exercises that have the premise of connecting me with matter and space.

When the body enters into a relationship with matter, a duo is created.

This relationship can take different directions and travel between them: collaboration, submission or domination.

A new technical dimension also appears: the manipulation of the material.

Chiara Marchese (circus author, puppeteer and visual artist) will help me to approach the research with materials. With whom we already worked in No verbal (my first show).

Space and audience_

I want to propose an artistic experience in spaces that are not dedicated to performance. Modifying the usual use of places and launching artistic practice adrift, as the situationists did.

To connect the performance and myself, not only to the audience but also to the population.

I imagine Holding Space in a space that favors intimacy with and among the audience, whether indoors or outdoors. People have to be close to the stage space and have clear visibility of the floor.

It is a proposal for all audiences. It is not purposely designed for a children's audience, but I consider it very important for children to see this kind of proposal.

I will also keep in consideration throughout the process the inclusive dimension of the proposal.

Ecological awareness_

Ecological responsibility is a **factor that I take into account** and that will **determine some of the decisions** that have to do with the scenography and the **materials that I will use.**

Also in the way I think about **the mobility of the piece.**

Costumes_

I consider the costumes used on stage to be **very important, especially when the purpose of the piece is the aesthetic language.**

I want to work on researching with the use of different materials.

Eulàlia Roca, with whom I previously worked on the costumes for No verbal, will accompany me in thinking about and creating the design.

Sound_

I want to work on the sound dimension of the piece, although I haven't started to plan it yet.

What I can say is that I really like to work in **silence and to value the natural sound of the movement and the materials.**

Lighting_

My initial approach is to take advantage of the **natural light of the place and adapt to work with the resources available in each context.**



1. Carlota Guerrero / 2. Miquel Barceló i Joseph Nadj
3. Vivian Suter / 4. Ana Mendieta
5. Marina Abramovic / 6. Doris Salcedo

Referents_

1. Carlota Guerrero

Photographer and artistic director from Barcelona (1989).

Performance, nature and feminism are the ingredients of her work. I am inspired by her vision of the female body, how she presents it in such an honest way and in connection with humanity and space.

2. Paso Doble by Miquel Barceló i Joseph Nadj

Miquel Barceló is a painter of Mallorcan origin (1957). Joseph Dadj is a dancer, choreographer and visual artist of Serbian origin (1957).

I have always admired Miquel Barceló's work. His painting has no limits, it takes the space and transforms it without asking permission, it is wild. The material reaches its maximum expression in Paso Doble, his performance with Joseph Nadj, who is one of the references that has been with me for years.

3. Vivian Suter

She is a painter born in Argentina (1949) and grew up in Switzerland.

This year I was lucky enough to see the Triennial at the National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne, Australia).

At that exhibition I discovered Vivian Suter's installation of paintings. I instantly felt a sense of recognition in her, I had been dreaming of such an installation for a long time.

4. Ana Mendieta

Conceptual artist, sculptor, painter and video artist born in Cuba and raised in the United States (1948-85).

She speaks autobiographically about themes such as violence, life, death, place and belonging, creating fascinating images.

I am particularly interested in her work Silueta Series (1973-78), ephemeral works set in nature that she documents through photography and video.

5. Marina Abramovic

Performance artist born in Serbia (1946) and currently living in New York.

Marina Abramovic is part of my artistic education and since I discovered her work in my fine arts studies she has become one of my references.

Her deep commitment to art and her critical message have been essential foundations for me.

6. Doris Salcedo

Colombian visual artist and sculptor (1958).

Her work is completely linked to the political and social reality of her country. Her works are proposals for healing in the face of structural violence.

I am inspired by Doris Salcedo's human commitment. One work that has stayed with me is Fragments (2017).

"Fragments is presented simultaneously as a living work of art, a place of memory and a space for artistic creation. The work consists of a construction whose floor was made from the melted weapons of the FARC-EP and was created with the participation of women who were victims of sexual violence during the armed conflict in Colombia".

<https://www.fragmentos.gov.co/fragmentos/Paginas/default.aspx>

artistic team_

Conception and interpretation: Aurora Caja.

Visual accompaniment and scenography: Valeria Canals.

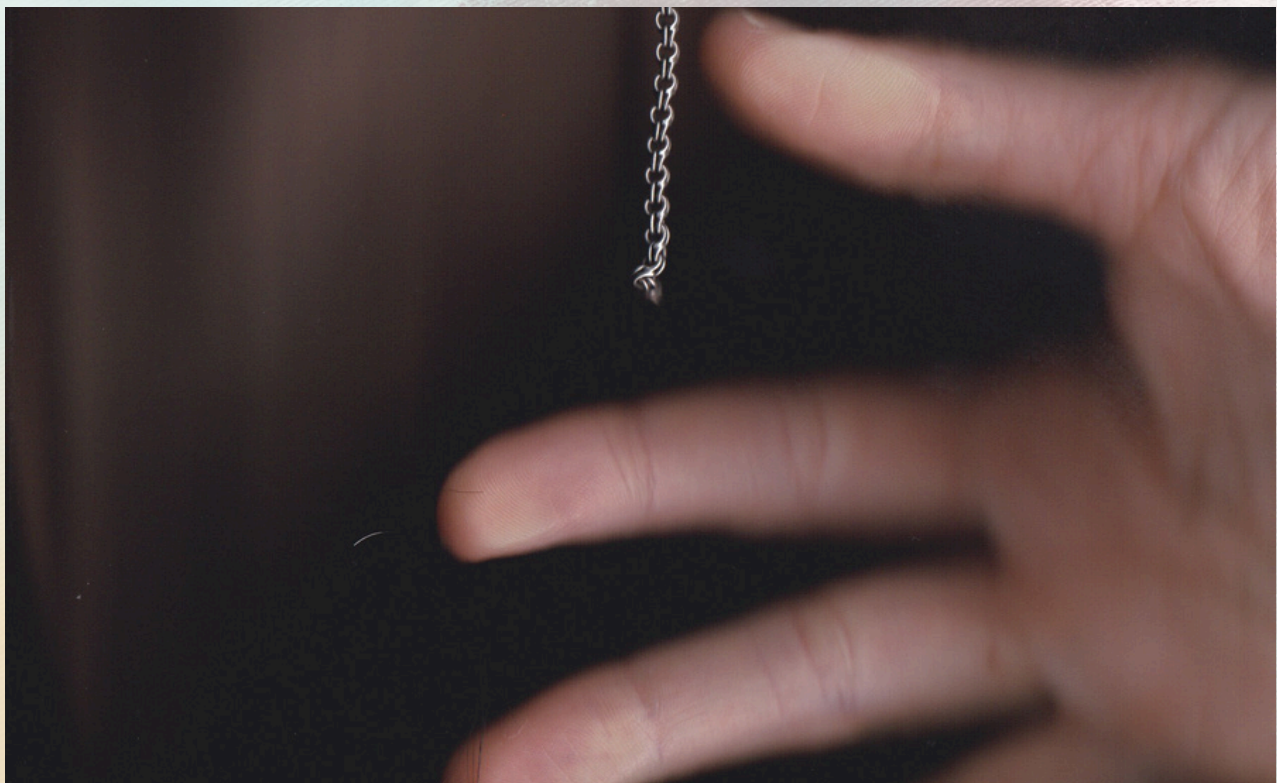
Creation assistant: Chiara Marchese.

Technical accompaniment: (In research).

Costumes: Eulàlia Roca.

Sound creation: (In research).

Distribution: Aurora Caja.



biographies_

AURORA CAJA (Palma de Mallorca)

She studied **visual arts at Escola Massana in Barcelona and Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona.**

She trained as a circus performer at the **Flic Scuola di Circo in Turin, Italy.** There, she specializes in the discipline of handstands.

Her first creation work is entitled **"In danger of extinction" (2016).** She participates in **different creation laboratories** with professionals such as Semolina Tomic, Jean Michael Guy and Volmir Cordeiro, Roberto Magro, Marta Torrents, Eva Ordoñez, Cristian Coumin and Pau Portabella.

In 2019 she begins the creation of her first show "No verbal". In October 2021 she participates with **"No verbal" in the professional formation "FOCON" of Ésacto'Lido (École Supérieure des Arts du Cirque Toulouse-Occitanie, FR).** In 2022 she presents an **in situ version of "No verbal" at the Picasso Museum in Barcelona.** Produced by La Central del Circ and the Picasso Museum and part of the programming of the Grec Festival of Barcelona.

The same year she presents "Manifest" and *La Red Española de Teatros* includes "No verbal" in her 5th catalog of recommended circus shows. In 2023 she premiered the piece in the circus tent of the collective Nilak.

In parallel, she works on other projects as a visual artist, with Compagnie Eia (2021) and Joan Català (2021). She also receives commissions as an illustrator. But, above all, **she draws, paints and engraves independently, as a practice intrinsic to her life.** In 2022 she presented the exhibition 'Out of the Box'.

Aurora continuously formulates and rejects ideas, plays with materials and moves. She feeds her universe and defines her vision as an artist. This flow evokes now, in what is for the moment titled 'Holding space'.

VALERIA CANALS RECODER (Barcelona)

She studied the **artistic baccalaureate** at the **Escola Massana in Barcelona** and then frequented **La Llotja - Escola d'Art i Disseny (Barcelona)**, where she completed a higher degree in artistic ceramics.

She continued her formation as a ceramist **specialising in pottery**, taking different courses at the **Escola de Ceràmica de la Bisbal d'Empordà** (Catalonia) and at the **Escuela de Artesanos Della Robbia**, in Seville (Spain).

In 2013 she created **Can Fanga**, her own studio-school of ceramics and visual arts, together with **Isolda Piñol** (ceramist), located in the Raval neighbourhood of Barcelona.

In 2016 she started a new artistic-rural project in the region of **Girona**. It is the **Association of Can Verdura (Maçanet de la Selva)**. **Can Verdura** is a space where artistic workshops, talks and events related to the world of the arts are held.

Currently, she continues to materialise numerous projects there. She is also weaving a large network of collaboration with people and other associations in the area.

This past **March 2023** Valeria, together with other people, was in charge of creating and organising the **first edition of VerdArt, a visual arts festival in a rural environment**.



CHIARA MARCHESE (Sicily)

She begins in art through painting. After her studies in **decoration and scenography at the Academy of Fine Arts in Catania**, she discovers the tightrope. That's when she decides to leave Sicily to grow artistically.

For three years she studies at the **Vertigo circus school in Turin**, where she learns the basics of the technique with Arian Miluka. She enters **CNAC (Centre national des arts du cirque de Châlons-en-Champagne)** and graduates in 2014. She participates in the show "Over the cloud", directed by Jérôme Thomas. **During these years at CNAC, she takes up visual arts again and is initiated in the art of puppetry** with Morgane Aimerie Robin and Chloée Sanchez, students of l'ESNAM (École Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette de Charleville Mézières).

After finishing school, Chiara works in the new creation of the Belgian company Théâtre d'un Jour, Les Inouïs and collaborates with the multidisciplinary project Bibi, of the company Ruska. **In 2016 she creates Mavara, a choreographic form mixing circus and puppetry**, with which she performs in numerous festivals abroad.

Chiara develops her research from the crossing of different disciplines: circus, puppetry, visual arts, dance, theater. As in her latest creation "Le Poids de l'âme- tout est provisoire"; winner of the European competition **CircusNext 2019/2021.**

From 2020 to 2023, she is part of the **Collectif Porte27**, with Marion Collé and Vasil Tasevsk.

In 2023 Chiara founded her own company, the WoW Compagnie, based in Reims. She is currently working on her latest play **Wonderwoman** and at the same time dedicates herself to artistic support for other authors' projects.



support for the creation:

Quattro4 "La Parola ai Corpi" (IT).

Residences:

Quattro4 (IT), La Central del Circ Fàbrica de Creació (ESP), Associació Can Verdura (ESP), La Vinya Kultural (ESP).

Work in progress:

Ésacto'Lido - École supérieure des arts du cirque
Toulouse-Occitanie (FR).