



POZU SANTA BÁRBARA

## The singing of birds returns to the mine shaft with the opening of *Visual Bird Sounds* audiovisual installation at Mieres' Pozu Santa Bárbara

Next Tuesday December 5, Cultural Center Pozu Santa Bárbara in Mieres (Asturias, Spain) presents the opening of the project *Visual Bird Sounds* by internationally renowned Australian artist Andy Thomas. A wide-format audiovisual installation promoted by Mieres' Town Council Cultural Department and curated by L.E.V. (Laboratorio de Electrónica Visual) composed by fascinating, generative sound and visual shapes inspired by the fauna and flora of remote landscapes from all over the planet, even from this mine shaft.

Pozu Santa Bárbara is the first Asturian mine shaft declared as a protected heritage of the first order, as it has been listed as an Asset of Cultural Interest (BIC) since 2008. Located at La Rebaldana, Turón, in the Council of Mieres, PZSB was the first coal exploitation in the Caudal basin, one of the biggest mine shafts in Asturias, and part of the outstanding industrial and historical heritage of a location of Asturias which is also unique because of its natural and cultural heritage.

In September 2021, refurbishment works started to turn the mine shaft into a **reference site for contemporary art interventions**. On October 15 of the same year, the Center opened its doors to showcase the solid light works by British artist Anthony McCall. This intervention was followed by *Voladuras controladas*, by Asturian artist Herminio (May 2022), and *Innerlight*, by German artist Regine Schumann (March 2023).

And now, curated by L.E.V. **Laboratorio de Electrónica Visual**, the center hosts the opening of the audiovisual installation *Visual Bird Sounds*, by Andy Thomas. A long-term project with a heavy dose of environmental criticism, in which the Australian artist showcases his “**sound life forms**”.

AT PZSB, this multi-screen installation with an iconic visual language will show **fascinating abstract shapes, created through the interpretation of generative algorithms of motion graphics of sound recordings and pictures of birds, compiled in journeys to remote habitats from all over the world**. Inspired by the beauty in nature, Thomas' extraordinary, intricately-layered visual compositions emulate physical properties such as audio reactive smoke, liquids or growing plants.

Behind this project, we find the artist's strong statement about the **impact of technology in our planet, and how society developments are affecting natural ecosystems**. During the last decade, the artist has been taking long expeditions through some of the oldest rainforests in the world, and this installation shows the result of his **field work at the Amazon, Finland, Australia, and New**

**Zealand.** Besides, exclusively for this exhibition, Thomas will showcase **newly created pieces based on birdsongs from the Protected Area of the Mining Areas of Asturias**, declared as Protected Landscape and Special Area of Conservation.

This way, **the singing of canaries comes back to the mine shaft.** These birds, **which have saved many miners lives**, come back to the Pozu in this art intervention promoted by the Cultural Department directed by Rocío Antela who, because of her profession and background, knows well the importance of canaries in mine shafts, as they were able to detect the inflammable firedamp before a tragedy occurred. **The installation transforms history in light surrounded by sound, as a tribute to the birds' singing.** "Our territory is currently in the middle of a transformation process, and this initiative is a clear example of this", says the Councilor.

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### Practical details

Location: Pozu Santa Bárbara, La Rebaldana (Mieres, Asturias)

Dates: From December 5 to January 28, 2023

Schedule: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from 16:00 to 20:30 h. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, from 10:00 to 14:00 h. and from 16:00 to 20:30 h.

Organized by: **Cultural Department of Mieres' Town Council**

Curated by: **L.E.V. Laboratorio de Electrónica Visual**



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