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CULTURE

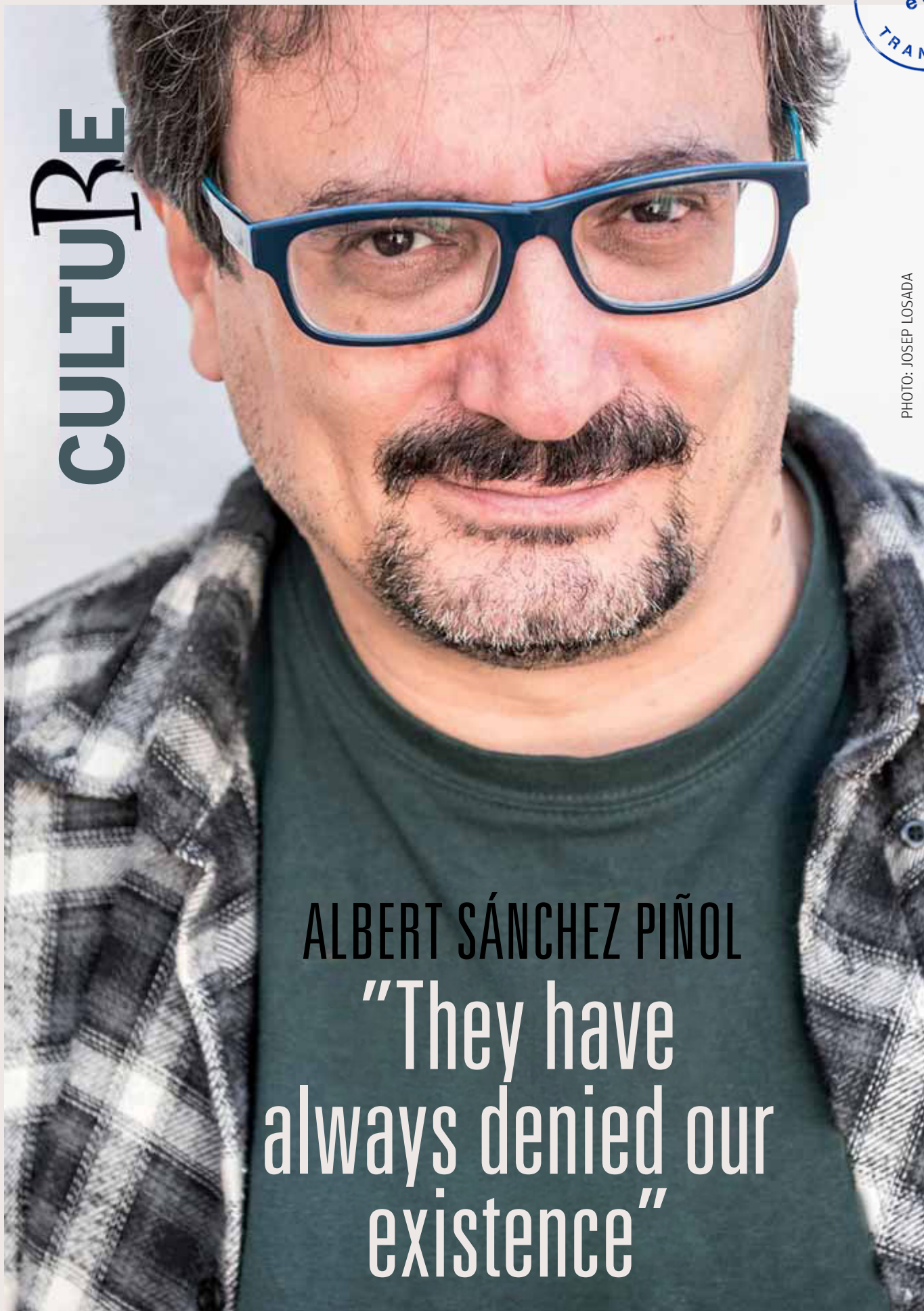


PHOTO: JOSEP LOSADA

ALBERT SÁNCHEZ PIÑOL

"They have
always denied our
existence"



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Paris, dead city

Civilization and barbarism

After the massacre, silence. At the heart of civilization, barbarism. Walter Benjamin had already announced it in his *Theses on the Philosophy of History*: "There is no document of culture that is not also a document of barbarism." Its beloved city, a symbol of modernity, civilisation, culture and progress, the city of passages, of the panoramas, the beginnings of photography and an example of the cult of the commodity, attacked by the most ferocious barbarism. This city portrayed by Benjamin with its messages, advertisements, urban events and example of the construction of a true city of immigration that has welcomed artists and writers from all over the world, people from many countries of the world, authentically cosmopolitan, has had to experience the horror first-hand in an act that can be seen as a declaration of war. *Nous sommes en guerre*, said Minister Manel Valls.

Uncertainties

For those of us who were in Paris, the facts carry the color of an uncertain future. Surely there will be a before and after. A shadow hovering over the so-called Europe without borders. The war has ceased to be *there* to be *here*, among us. In those days, these days Paris was the cosmopolitan capital: Paris Photo at the Grand Palais, the splendours and miseries of prostitution at the end of the nineteenth century at the Musée d'Orsay, pioneering women photographers at the Orangerie and Philippe Halsmann at the Jeu de Pomme. The most portrayed city paid homage to photography, as always, with a view of broad horizons. The day after the attacks, everything was silent. The culture, with its mouth closed, expressed its mourning. The *flanerie* portrayed by Walter Benjamin and that casual Paris where André Breton could meet Nadja were over.

The culture of silence

Museums, libraries, theatres, auditoriums, sports centres, even Paris Photo, all closed. It was recommended to stay at home. Empty metro stations, chills in the street, gendarmes and army attentive on street corners, tears and flowers in the affected neighbourhoods, the end of the party with blood. On Saturday, November 14, Paris became a specter of itself, a mirror of the world that does not find or does not seek a solution to conflicts, that does not practice dialogue with otherness and that reacts to violence with greater violence. When culture closes in a city, it becomes a dead city. *

Poetry in pumpkin

David Ymbernon (Igualada, 1972) dedicates his first book of poems to things, *Carbassa emergent (llum de bengala)*, just published by LaBreu Edicions. The cover of the poetry book, as it could not be otherwise in a Ymbernon book, is orange in color. Things of this color (like oranges and butane gas bottle) populate the universe of this multidisciplinary, para-theatrical, transversal artist - call it how you want - that refuses to lose the innocence and sensitivity of childhood. We're not saying that Ymbernon is a man who didn't want to grow up. Nothing like that. But surely it must have some mechanism to connect directly with that state of continuous wonder in little

started during the *performance* he made at the Joan Prats-Artgràfic gallery on the occasion of the exhibition *Cricket and opera by Latung La La* in 2012. Then he finished it in his study and finished it by entering through the window of El Quadern Robot. The work is a landscape (pumpkin), which could be a plowed field, with a tractor (pumpkin) which is a direct reference to the tractors I saw in the fields when I was a child. And everything that appears in Ymbernon's work ends up having a concrete reference in some part of his subconscious, but it arises spontaneously. "One of my obsessions is siphon bottles and I didn't really know why. Until one day I discovered an



children. "I'm a surprise!/I said/and here I am/yet to be unwrapped," he says in one of his poems in his book.

En this territory fully prepared for poetry is where David Ymbernon's work moves, both when he writes, paints and performs. Or even when she's at home, decorated as a work of his own. The spirit and memories of childhood, especially those related to his stays in the Lagoon (l'Anoia), are present in everything he does. Look at his exhibition at the El Quadern Robot gallery (Còrsega, 267, main 2b), which summarizes his entire world in a dozen pieces. An example is the large canvas *The pumpkin tractor*, which Ymbernon

old photo of my dad, sitting at the table with a siphon next to him," he explains.

The most common question we can ask ourselves in front of Ymbernon's work is why the orange: "When I started painting, one day an orange came out, which from then on became an icon. And from orange, I went to the color orange. It's an energetic color but it also refers to pop art, for example." Orange, always contrasted with white or black.

The artist will show a part of this whole cosmos in motion on December 21, 22 and 23, when he will bring his show *Pla fix, Latung La La*, to the Hiroshima room in Barcelona. *



David Ymbernon, with the work 'The pumpkin tractor' (in the background) and 'Untitled' (car and orange) ORIOL DURAN

Art