

# ANRI SALA

## AS YOU GO (Châteaux en Espagne)

14 DECEMBER, 2019  
3 MAY, 2020  
GALLERY 2

Curator:  
Benjamin Weil



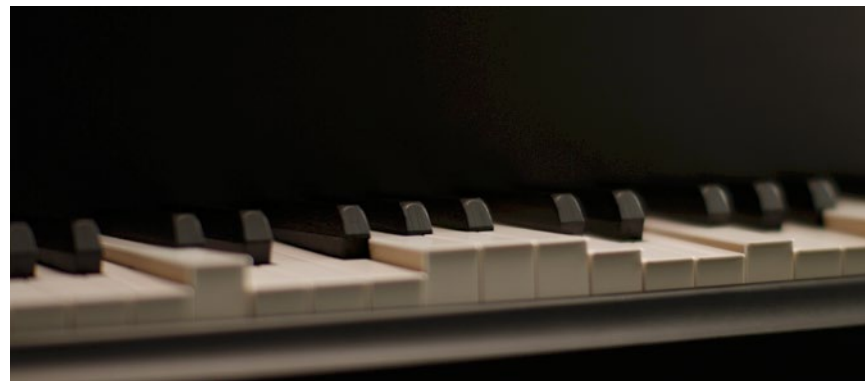
Anri Sala, *If and Only If*, 2018, Two-channel HD video and discrete 4.0 surround sound, color, 9 min 47 sec.

Centro Botín presents *AS YOU GO (Châteaux en Espagne)*, a new project by Anri Sala (Tirana - Albania, 1974), considered to be one of today's most influential contemporary artists. His work explores non-verbal forms of communication with innovative narrative techniques which he builds by means of the moving image, music, sound and the architecture of the exhibition space, creating a highly sensorial immersive experience for visitors.

The first phrase in the title chosen by Anri Sala for this new exhibition – *AS YOU GO* – implies the idea of movement: that of a time-based work, informed by music and moving images; and that of the visitors, who Sala implicitly encourages to keep moving and hence partake in the making of their own individual experience of an

exhibition that bears a certain resemblance to a performative stage.

In many Western languages, the expression “building castles in the air” refers to making unrealistic, over ambitious plans. The French, however, build their castles in Spain –one says “construire des châteaux en Espagne”-. A new exhibition is always the occasion for an artist to explore new formal territories. While the prospect may be quite exciting, it may also prove daunting: experimentation is risky and staging a complex project is always open to an almost magical component. Meanwhile, for a visitor, delving into the new work of an artist can be equally challenging. In fact, one could think of the encounter of the artist's proposal and the visitor's perception as something almost improbable.



Anri Sala, *Ravel Ravel*, 2013, Two-channel HD video and 16-channel sound, color, 20 min 45 sec.

The action imagined by Anri Sala takes place in three different sets. The first consists of a video display system of cinematic proportions. Here, he posits a new way of looking at moving images: three pairs of videos, all related to the interpretation of music, glide over a 30-metre screen whose shape alludes directly to the building. Sala has choreographed the left-to-right movement of the moving images, using blank intervals to create a specific visual rhythm, as well as two translucent screens placed beside the main screen, one on each side. This creates a sensation of double vision, enabling the public to be surrounded by the image as it walks in-between the two screens.

Going south, one enters a gallery where the main protagonist is the bay of Santander. Here Sala has installed *No Window No Cry (Renzo Piano & Richard Rodgers, Centre Pompidou, Paris)*, a fragment of the famous Parisian museum where he once presented his work. The displaced window enables him to stage the view as if it were his own work. In that sense, he revisits the *veduta*, a classic genre in Art History which dates back to the sixteenth century. Fixed on the window is a music box, which plays *Should I Stay or Should I Go?* by The Clash.



Anri Sala, *All of a Tremble (Encounter I)*, Var. I, 2017

The third act takes place in the gallery placed exactly at the opposite end of the space. It features an *anti-veduta* of sorts: *All of a Tremble (Encounter I)*, a wall whose surface is covered with wallpaper, bars the view onto the city. The hand drawn patterns of the wallpaper seem to have been printed by the machine affixed to the wall. One cannot tell whether the machine is actually printing the wall, or performing a strange, somewhat repetitive musical score. Upon closer examination, one realizes that the machine stands still, and two half rollers once used to print wallpaper activate specially designed pins, transforming the patterns into a tune. One is faced with yet another experience of synaesthesia: it remains unclear whether the sound informs the image, or whether it is the other way around.

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