

Committee of the Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borjans, headquartered in Valencia.

He has revived the personalities of different Mallorcan painters from the Baroque era, such as Guillem Mesquida (1675-1747), to whom he devoted two ground-breaking articles in 1993 and 1998 and ultimately an exhibition with a catalogue in 1999; Miquel Bestard (1592-1633), with an article in 1996 and an exhibition and catalogue in 2007; and finally Miquel Cantalops (1678-1755), who was active in Mallorca and Rome, with an article in 1999 and an exhibition in 2005. Baroque sculpture and Mallorcan altarpieces have also been the subjects of his research, either in contributions to numerous collectively-authored works, such as a volume about *La Seu de Mallorca* in 1995, or in tribute books, but most importantly monographically in the book *Art de cisell i de relleu. Escultura mallorquina del segle XVII*, published in 2002.

In order to understand the unique features of art on Mallorca, Carbonell has been keenly attentive to the island's status as a place that is open to constant artistic exchanges with the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and other islands in the Mediterranean; hence his interest in studying the journeys taken by local artists, as well as the arrival to Mallorca of works by masters from other places, and therefore the importance of patronage and the phenomenon of collecting. In this sense, it is important to recall his 2000 article within a volume on the Order of Malta on Mallorca; his text on the Riberas owned by Antoni Gual, the secretary of the Duke of Medina de las Torres during his viceroyalty in Naples, published in 2009; and finally the seminal book on the rich collection of classical art and the painting gallery of Cardinal Antoni Despuig i Dameto (1745-1813), *El Cardenal Despuig: Col·leccionisme, Grand Tour i cultura il·lustrada*, Palma, 2013.

Carbonell's work and expertise have also been recognised outside academia through the institutional assign-

ments he has been awarded, such as when he was asked to study and catalogue the heritage art collection from the Council of Mallorca, first as a whole in 2001, then on its historical building in 2011, and once again in greater detail on the painting collection in 2012. Another example is his assignment to catalogue the painting and drawing collection of the Parliament of the Balearic Islands in 2015. The Barcelona Town Hall also commissioned him and Rafael Cornudella to conduct the scientific study on the art collection of the monastery of Pedralbes, which led to an exhibition and museographic design entitled *Pedralbes. Els tresors del Monestir* in 2005. But most importantly, the Generalitat itself has commissioned several institutional books from him related to the Palau de la Generalitat, an essential example of Catalan Renaissance architecture. His dedication to this topic, generically in his Bachelor's thesis, continued with a 2002 article which outlines the transfer of the chapel of Sant Jordi in the mid-16th century; it then took shape in different contributions to official publications in 2003, 2004 and 2005; and it finally culminated in a comprehensive study which he oversaw entitled *El Palau de la Generalitat de Catalunya. Art i Arquitectura* (Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament de la Presidència, Barcelona, 2015, 2 vols.), with contributions by different experts, which exhaustively analyses the entire complexity of the monument and studies its rich artistic heritage.

Today, Dr Carbonell is the most prominent scholar on the Catalan and Mallorcan artistic heritage from the modern age, and thanks to his dual residency in both Barcelona and Palma and his open, fluid research in these two places, his membership will unquestionably strengthen the IEC's presence on the Balearic Islands and deepen our section's research capacity.

Bonaventura BASSEGODA



**Miquel Molist Montaña** (Manlleu, Barcelona, 1956) is the Chair of Prehistory at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. He studied at the Universitat de Barcelona, where he trained under Joan Maluquer de Motes and Miquel Tarradell, and at the Université Lyon-2, where he earned a PhD in Oriental Prehistory and had the opportunity to work with the

French school of André Leroi-Gourhan and with Jacques Cauvin and his team in the Near East. He was director of the Museu Nacional d'Arqueologia de Catalunya and has curated several exhibitions in different museums. He has been an ICREA-Acadèmia researcher and has been or is a

member of the editorial boards of several scholarly journals.

His research has focused on two major fields of study: the recent prehistory of Catalonia and the earliest agricultural societies in the Near East (Neolithic). In the former, he has studied the habitat and forms of burial from the Late Bronze Age in the upper region of the Ter River with the necropolis in Collsavenc (Tavertet). He participated in uncovering and excavating a set of 9 monumental graves, including the grave of Padró (Tavertet), which led to the recognition of a new type of megalithic grave ("chamber or dolmen with complex mound") dating from the late Old Neolithic.

He has studied the prehistoric settlements in the Pre-Pyrenees, Eastern Pyrenees, La Garrotxa and Alta Garrotxa. For ten years, he excavated the habitat of the Bauma del Serrat del Pont (Girona), a large shelter with a

stratigraphic sequence ranging from the Roman era to the Mesolithic period.

In 2006, he launched the Prehistory on the Plain of Barcelona project in conjunction with the Museu d'Història de Barcelona (MUHBA) and the Archaeology Service of the Barcelona Town Hall, which is still underway. The study of the sites such as the Caserna Sant Pau del Camp, Carrer Reina Amalia and Plaça de la Gardunya have revealed a series of small settlements and burial areas in the current zone of La Raval and La Sagrera neighbourhoods between the mid-6th and 2nd millennium cal BC.

His second main avenue of research revolves around the Near East. He founded the "Seminari Arqueologia Prehistòrica del Pròxim Orient, SAPPO" Research Group, which has forged alliances with national and international groups. He has excavated in the desert regions of Syria, such as Umm-el-Tlel (El Kowm, Syria) (1987-1995), in the Euphrates Valley at sites like Tell Halula (1991-2011), in Turkey at Akarçay Tepe (southeast Anatolia) (1999-2008) and at Chagar Bazar (Djezirée, Syria) (1999-2010).

All these projects revolve around studying the earliest agricultural settlements, with an analysis of their cultural and socioeconomic features. He engages in interdisciplinary analyses of the cultural and economic changes that came about with the shift from groups of hunters/gatherers to sedentary establishments, which shed light on one of the most important transformations in humanity, and he does so in the very cradle of this change, the Euphrates Valley, from which it radiated out to other parts of the world, especially to Europe, including the Iberian Peninsula. The presence of a team of experts in bioarchaeology is essential, given the question of the first crops or domesticated animals, bringing not only the necessary biological approach but also its interrelation with the dynamic of the human groups.

Miquel Molist's contributions include studying the sedentarisation and formation of the first settlements at the excavations in Tell Halula and Akarçay Tepe, where the investment in labour, the innovation in the forms of habitat and the architectural work are associated with new forms of production and subsistence. The houses built with sun-dried brick whitewashed with lime form a dense, homogeneous fabric with similar storage capacities and similar waste materials. However, in this early phase of farming societies, differences among the houses can already be seen in the access to products or materials with exogenous origins by the different family units (represented by the different houses). The discovery of graves underneath the houses, with a very direct association between the buried people (with their grave goods) and the family unit, have revealed that only some members of this community had access to certain products like native copper and chalcedony necklaces. That is, they had access to networks in which semiprecious products circulated. Should we see this as the origin of inequality? It is likely, and this is one of the hypotheses which is cur-

rently being fine-tuned to properly define its characteristics.

Another major contribution is the origin of ceramic productions. The new data discovered in these past 20 years of research, many originating and proven from the investigations in the sites in the Euphrates region studied and overseen by Miquel Molist, have been extremely significant. It has been found that ceramic appeared simultaneously in different areas in southeast Anatolia and northeast Syria in a precise, brief window of time between 7,000 and 6,900 BCE. Likewise, cooking vessels have been found from the very start, despite the fact that it was previously believed that the first ceramic vessels were used for storage.

Since 2014, Dr Molist and Professor Anna Gómez-Bach from the UAB have been working in the region of Iraqi Kurdistan, where they are studying the earliest agricultural societies in unique ecological areas, namely the Zagros Mountains, at the Gird Laskhir (Erbil) site in what is called Upper Mesopotamia, and the Banahilkh (Soran) site located near Shanidar in the middle of the northern Zagros Mountains, which dates from the 6th millennium cal BC.

This project, which is currently underway, is helping fill the gaps in our knowledge of the easternmost areas of the Near East resulting from the complicated political and military situation in recent decades. The contact zone between Mesopotamia and the northern Zagros Mountains has always been characterised by a widespread phenomenon of livestock transhumance. It is a connecting zone between the plains of the Tigris and the highlands, and this fosters seasonal livestock movements. Even today, semi-nomadic peoples engage in this activity, which may be rooted in recent prehistory and survived throughout protohistory and ancient history. This is the search for another system explaining the origin and consolidation of farming societies. In the first phase, currently underway, different settlements of the last hunter-gatherers have been found, and one settlement from the era of the earliest farming societies is being excavated at the foot of the Zagros Mountains in Kurdistan, as well as a study and excavation of a settlement on the Erbil plain, as an example of the occupation of the plain. In all of these, the results have yielded another very interesting component: the description of the "archaeological cultures" throughout a broad region and a well-defined timeframe. The clearest example is the definition of the material features of the different cultures like the Halaf or Hassuna, among others, in the regions located between the west and east of the Near East, where it is essential to define the sociological and historical phenomena because they served as the engine of change. They are cultural mosaics in space and time in which phenomena involving the exchange, dissemination and mobility of human groups took place.

The results of this research have been published both in specialised journals and in scholarly books and monographs from both Spain and abroad.

Also worth mentioning is Dr Molist's museum activity, most notably the period when he served as the director of the Museu Nacional d'Arqueologia de Catalunya (2000-2004), while in the 1980s, he had been appointed by the Generalitat's Department of Culture to be director of the Museu Comarcal del Montsià (Amposta). The varied temporary exhibitions held in different museums (National Museum of Damascus, MAC, Museu de la Gar-

rotxa, etc.) are often yet another way of disseminating archaeological projects already conducted. The most recent exhibitions include "Els primers pagesos al Pla de Barcelona", which he and Anna Gómez-Bach jointly curated in a show produced and exhibited at the MUHBA from 29 April 2016 to 12 February 2017.

Marta PREVOSTI