

Recreatura: Arts and Culture

A recent initiative to promote the active diffusion of European culture in Valencia was launched when a group of international and Spanish/ Valencian residents set up this new organisation dedicated to building social and professional networks through the arts and culture. From music and literature, to the performing arts, food, and drink, Recreatura's first year has soared from strength to strength.

Valencia has a strong cultural tradition, with many organizations dedicated to preparing exhibitions that showcase works by all types of contemporary artists, as well as countless traditional celebrations such as the Fallas and Semana Santa whose inner communities meet regularly during the year to prepare for the main event itself. Recreatura President Anne-Marie Melster noticed that there was space for a cultural exchange platform that brought European culture to Valencia, and also Valencian culture to the Europeans. "Instead of complaining about this," says Anne-Marie, "we did something about it and set up Recreatura."



European Film Night at the French Institute

With a clear mission statement and professional approach, Recreatura quickly gained the support of major Valencian institutions including the Centro Unesco de Valencia and the Conselleria de Cultura, surprising them with how much can be achieved on a limited budget! International institutions such as the French Institute have also been keen to participate, as well as local businesses.

Recreatura aims to continually increase the participation of local Valencia residents, and to maximise the reciprocal dialogue between Valencianos and other Europeans that each event can provoke. Indeed, the recent Photomathon counted with participants from all over Europe who contributed their photos to this exhibition whose theme was



Photomathon: Finalists

peace in Europe. "People in Spain tend to be more focused on local issues," comments Anne-Marie, who has been living and working in Valencia for 4 years.

Recreatura leads by example in promoting active European citizenship; instead of complaining about something that's not as you think it should be in the city, people are given a voice through the organization to democratically participate in changing it. Mahatma Gandhi's advice that "you should be the change you want to see in the world" is the driving force behind Recreatura's cultural program. By working together with international people who share the vision of Valencia as a European city, cultural boundaries can be overcome. A city loses energy when its people complain without proposing change, and the mentality of "es lo que hay", or "that's just the way it is" won't pave the path towards collaboration, development and progress.

These are principles on which the European Union itself was formed, and Recreatura is just one of the cultural organizations that are actively promoting this vision. It is a platform for empowering people, and providing a creative and versatile space for the process and experience of art that goes beyond just consumption. "People in Valencia tend to just buy a ticket and consume art and culture," com-

ments Anne-Marie. "In other Northern European countries such as the UK people are a lot more active." These countries have a lot of voluntary organizations, committees, groups and clubs for all interests. Here in Valencia, many people are involved in organizations such as the Fallas groups, which focus on local culture, and which don't offer the opportunity for the exchange of ideas with international residents and the culture they represent.

The Recreatura cultural association offers an excellent platform for all members to share their creative voices. There are two types of membership, friends and members. Friends pay an annual fee of €15 and get a reduction for all events. Active Members pay €30, and have the opportunity to present their work for inclusion in future events, as an inclusion on the website as well as voting rights in the General Assembly. The level of a member or contributor's commitment and involvement depends on their time available. For example, someone might be very involved in one exhibition, and then barely be seen for several months due to other commitments.

Come down and find out what it's all about at the



Festival Estival, June 09: performance

next Recreatura event on the 5th November! An innovative insight into gypsy culture is being presented at Valencia's French Institute. Upcoming events for the rest of the year include film screenings in unusual places of the city and a special Christmas event.

For more information about upcoming events and joining Recreatura, go to www.recreatura.com, or recreatura@gmail.com

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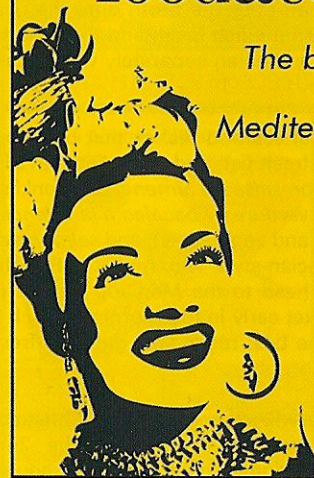
The best cocktails + mojitos + Agua de Valencia

Mediterranean market cuisine

Traditional dishes

Midday menus

Huge outdoor terrace



C/ de En Plom 9
Tel 963 366 283