

## LET'S WALK TOGETHER



In order to commemorate World Refugee Day, 20<sup>th</sup> June (2021), we gathered, as a group of *arpillera* makers, to participate in an international action proposed by Roberta Bacic. We held two sessions to discuss the topic and afterwards, two sessions of sewing together as a group. This collaboration resulted in the *arpillera* called *Let's Walk Together*.

As we spoke about the plight of refugees, we remembered the project we had worked on several years ago, when we held a photo exhibition called *After the Waves*. It was that collaboration which motivated us to create *Refugees, Arpilleras in Action*. Once again, we see people who are travelling, carrying suitcases, bags, and children. Once again, we witness the exhaustion, the fear and the struggle to arrive at a safe destination. We remember all those who did not arrive, who lost their lives during the journey. In this current project, we have incorporated new stories of other refugees who continue to flee: the attempt to cross the bobbed wire wall at Ceuta, the dinghies arriving in the Canary Islands, and the volunteers on the beach, as well the forced repatriations...

As a fundamental part of this “walking together”, we decided to sew little dolls that represent ourselves, as well as dolls that represent the refugee who is asking for our help. In this way we hope to motivate people to get involved.

And we do not forget each and every one of those who lost their lives during their journey, in the desert, in the sea...

(160 x 54 cm)



### Fina Niubó

I have tried to reflect the solidarity and sisterhood that is awakened in us when we see all the people who arrive looking for a new opportunity in their life.



### Paqui Báez

Today, on World Refugee Day, I remember what I saw on television when a journalist was covering the border between Serbia and Hungary. Someone intentionally tripped a father who was carrying his son.



### Encarna Ortega

Today on World Refugee Day, I want to show the young woman from the Red Cross who hugged a young man who had just come out of the water.



### Loli López

Today, on World Refugee Day, I want to show myself and a refugee that made a big impression on me, one of the poor people who risk their lives trying to cross the Strait.



### Pilar López

We are preparing for World Refugee Day. We are making a little doll of ourselves and another doll of a refugee and how I want to behave towards that person.

I see this young woman, so very tired, like so many others, after the long journey.

I have my arms open, at least inside my heart, because in reality, as far as taking action is concerned, I don't do much.



### Manoli García

I think that in all periods of time, girls are the most vulnerable, but also the boys. They are the ones who suffer most in all types of inequality and crisis. Children are the future so they should be the ones who are most cared for and respected.

In this globalized world, we should all hold hands and walk together, because we are all travelling in the same boat.



### Montse Caro

This is the first refugee women that I've ever met, and the first and only woman from Syria that I have met. One summer she came to live in Sant Adria de Besos with her family, her husband and three children. They were living in an apartment set up by an NGO and this caused a big stir in the City Council. They were very worried about the education of the children, as they had spent two years travelling from refugee camp to refugee camp. They seemed like a lovely family. What

I most noticed about her was her posture. She didn't speak, she observed, it seemed that she knew what she wanted, without asking for anything. She had a lot of dignity. After a few months they left without saying anything, not even to the NGO. However, the people at the NGO imagined that they wouldn't be here long because they had family in Germany, and they wanted to go there, and they left. We never heard anything else about them. It's a shame that they may have lost their refugee status. Since that time, nobody else has come here.



## Mercè Monge

I met her by accident, waiting our turn in the queue of a supermarket. Then I met up with her again in another circumstance and we became friends, her name is Rhimou. We developed trust and she started to tell me her story. She told me a little about leaving her village and her arrival in Barcelona. Her eyes were so sad; she didn't want to remember because it was so painful, others were left behind.

She is doing well and she has reasons to smile nowadays. She is happy because once again she has hope on the horizon.



## Antonia Amador

Thinking about something from the days of my childhood on World Refugee Day,

I remember this boy I saw trying to cross the bobbed wire fence at the border. It is something that really made a big impression on me.



## Roser Corbera

On World Refugee Day, I want to remember the many immigrated people who are in an irregular legal situation and thus remain invisible. They are unable to access basic rights such as housing, jobs, education and healthcare because of bureaucratic obstacles and perverse migration policies.

Here I am at a demonstration in December of 2020, together with the victims of the fire that occurred in an abandoned factory in the Gorg

neighborhood in Badalona, where they were living. Five people died in the fire and 25 were injured. They are in the headlines again today because, once again, they do not have a place to live and they encounter grave difficulties in obtaining dignified living conditions.



### Mònica Moro

“Mama, I’m afraid” said Moudou in the dark of the night, in the middle of the night, in the small boat.

Many times, I have tried to imagine fleeing from my home with my two children seeking a better life. As much as I try, I cannot imagine what that must be like. Each and every one of the images of mothers arriving with their children breaks my heart. It makes me think of the long arduous road they have travelled. And what about the people who never arrive? Fear, sadness and silence.



### Anita Ramonet

In search of a better life.

Making the arpillera has made me feel sad because I think about the desperation of the young people and children calling for help and running so that they would not be caught. The younger ones had been lied to and told that when they reached Europe, they would see the football star Ronaldo play a football match. I think this was awful, how could someone be that cruel?



### Fina Cala

I admire these women who are brave enough to make this journey with babies.

They don’t know what the outcome of this adventure will be, but they have made the decision.

*Spanish-English translation: Mary Ann O’Neill.*

