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## ZABAL programme brings Vasyl Cherepanyn, incoming Berlin Biennale curator, to the Basque Country to explore local artistic scene

- The visit, organised by the Etxepare Basque Institute, strengthens the links between Basque creativity and one of the world's leading contemporary art events
- Over the course of two days, Cherepanyn visited artists' studios and held meetings with cultural institutions in Bilbao, San Sebastián and Vitoria-Gasteiz
- Since 2019, the ZABAL programme has sought to forge lasting bonds between the Basque art scene and the international art world

Donostia/San Sebastián, 22 May 2025-. The ZABAL programme, a strategic initiative of the Etxepare Basque Institute, reinforces the internationalisation of the Basque arts ecosystem with a visit from Ukrainian curator and philosopher Vasyl Cherepanyn. Cherepanyn's visit was especially timely following his recent appointment as curator of the 14th Berlin Biennale, to take place in 2027, and offers a key opportunity to connect contemporary Basque art with one of the world's leading contemporary-art events.

During his 21–22 May visit, Cherepanyn kept a busy schedule of artists' studio visits and meetings with cultural-institution representatives in Bilbao, San Sebastián and Vitoria-Gasteiz. The meetings aimed at providing the curator with a direct and contextualised understanding of the region's creative wealth, enabling Basque art to feature in his future international projects and strengthening the links between the local scene and European art circuits.



The visit also served to consolidate the ZABAL programme's role as a strategic tool for the Etxepare Basque Institute in fostering lasting relationships between the Basque art scene and international contemporary art circuits, thereby contributing to the global standing of Basque art through exchange, collaboration and mutual recognition.

### **Berlin Biennale, June 2027**

The 14th edition of the Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, which will take place in the summer of 2027, is presented as a reflection on the political, social and historical tensions shaping contemporary Europe. Under the curatorial direction of Vasyl Cherepanyn, the biennial invites us to rethink the role of art as a space for public engagement, critical memory and collective construction.

The curatorial proposal centres on the war in Ukraine, democratic transformations in Europe and relations between Eastern and Western Europe, bringing together a programme that examines the cultural and social consequences of contemporary conflicts. The biennial will also address post-Soviet and postcolonial legacies, as well as new forms of solidarity and resistance in a global context marked by political instability and displacement.

The project is based on the idea that the Berlin Biennale, as one of the cultural institutions that emerged following the fall of the Berlin Wall, has the potential to generate new forms of 'publicness', understood from an artistic, academic, social and political perspective.

The biennial will encourage dialogue between local experiences and global issues, highlighting the power of contemporary art to inspire new forms of critical thinking and public engagement.

### **Vasyl Cherepanyn**

Vasyl Cherepanyn was born in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, and currently lives in Berlin.



Cherepanyn is a key figure for understanding the intersection of art, political philosophy and activism in today's Europe. He holds a PhD in philosophy and is head of the Visual Culture Research Centre (VCRC) in Kyiv, notable for directing the Kyiv Biennale and for co-founding the East Europe Biennial Alliance (EEBA). His career, which earned him the Princess Margriet Award for Culture in 2015, is distinguished by exploring art as a space for civic resistance and social transformation, a vision he will now bring to his role as director of the Berlin Biennale.

## **ZABAL**

Since its launch in 2019, the ZABAL programme has established itself as a highly effective tool for cultural diplomacy. Through this programme, leading international figures have gained an in-depth understanding of the Basque context, leading to historic milestones such as the participation of Basque artists in the Venice Biennale and Documenta. With Cherepanyn's arrival, ZABAL reaffirms its commitment to opening new avenues of opportunity and dialogue for Basque creators on the international stage.

To implement the ZABAL programme, the Etxepare Basque Institute receives technical support from Artingenium, which specialises in the management of local and international contemporary art projects.

## **Etxepare Basque Institute**

The Etxepare Basque Institute is a public agency that promotes Basque language, culture and creative talent internationally and fosters lasting ties with other countries and cultures. To this end, the Etxepare backs high-quality artistic projects, facilitates mobility for artists and cultural professionals, and promotes teaching of the Basque language and culture. The Institute also encourages collaboration with international stakeholders in the pursuit of cultural and academic endeavours.



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