

## [EDITORIAL]



Cover: Rebeca Plana. *Secrets*, 2021. Mixed technique on canvas, 60x73 cm.

Rebeca Plana (Albalat de la Ribera, Spain, 1976) has always aimed for an abstract art that transcended the concept itself. Her carefully wild use of colours and brush strokes achieves an energetic expression that breaks all the possible codes ever set.

The last two years have undoubtedly been marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. While 2020 was the year in which we discovered SARS-CoV-2 and its consequences for human health, economy, and our way of life in general, 2021 was the year of the vaccines. We have now started a more hopeful 2022, precisely because of the positive impact of the vaccination effort. Vaccination has also evidenced a two-fold duality: on the one hand, between the countries that have had access to the vaccine and those where it is not yet accessible. This has highlighted the lack of solidarity in a world where local events lead to global consequences. On the other hand, however, we have also witnessed an internal duality in countries that have monopolised vaccination resources: among those who had access to vaccines, anti-vaccination and anti-science movements have emerged that have undermined vaccination effectiveness. Hence, while in Spain more than 80% of the population has received the COVID vaccine (with percentages close to 100% among the elderly and other groups most vulnerable to the disease), in the USA and other European countries, reluctance to vaccinate has led to the governmental vaccination plans stalling. This paradox has meant that countries with large reserves of vaccines still have high percentages of unvaccinated citizens, while in some parts of the world vaccination coverage is still below 3%.

The pandemic has also intertwined with other long-standing challenges and threats, such as the climate crisis. Or maybe, rather than intertwining with it, the pandemic has arisen precisely as a result of our relationship with the environment and our overexploitation of resources in the current globalised scenario— or, at least, the pre-2020 scenario— which makes it extremely easy to fly around the globe in a few hours, the ideal situation for the spread of a highly contagious virus.

In this context, it has become more necessary than ever to set our sights on the future of science and the science of the future. On climate change and its impacts and mitigation strategies, but also on aspects that directly affect us as individuals. Because the pandemic has highlighted our collective fragility and has brought mental health problems to the forefront. Closely connected to this, we find that addictions are on the rise, and societies have to address the challenge and offer strategies to deal with it.

Scientific advances present us with a future full of hope, but also uncertainties. The ethical implications of anything related to the intervention in and improvement of our species are questions that cannot be ignored. There will be two types of human beings, the improved and the unimproved. Will they gradually become increasingly differentiated? The future of human design, which in many respects is still somewhere between science and fiction, will force us to make decisions, and we need to reflect on the subject now.

For all these reasons, the future of science depends on greater citizen involvement. Scientific development cannot be carried out without the society that provides the funding, suffers the problems that must be solved, and should be the recipient of the improvements proposed.

This new volume of the *METODE SCIENCE STUDIES JOURNAL* focuses on these crucial issues for the future of science and our society. Ultimately, for citizen involvement to be effective, it must be provided with tools for analysis and reflection.

**MARTÍ DOMÍNGUEZ.** Editor-in-chief of *Metode Science Studies Journal*.