



FAUNALIA ARTIFICIOSA



FERAL ENCOUNTERS

Friday 26th of September 2025
10-19h30

With

Juliana Fausto, Chaveli Sifre, Vica Pacheco, Caique Tizzi,
Sofia Lemos and Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

FAUNALIA ARTIFICIOSA

Saturday 27th of September 2025
18h-late

Welcome Remarks with Sofia Dati, Sofia Lemos, and Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

Signes, cygnes, je signe: invention of a feral pact, invocation by Juliana Fausto and Pedro Taam

Soft Burn & Fauno Effect, multisensory performance and installation by Chaveli Sifre

Animacy or a Breath Manifest, musical performance by Vica Pacheco

Flora Incognita, edible landscape by Caique Tizzi

Vica Pacheco, DJ set

Offering Cocktail that Doesn't Exist

Faunalia Artificiosa

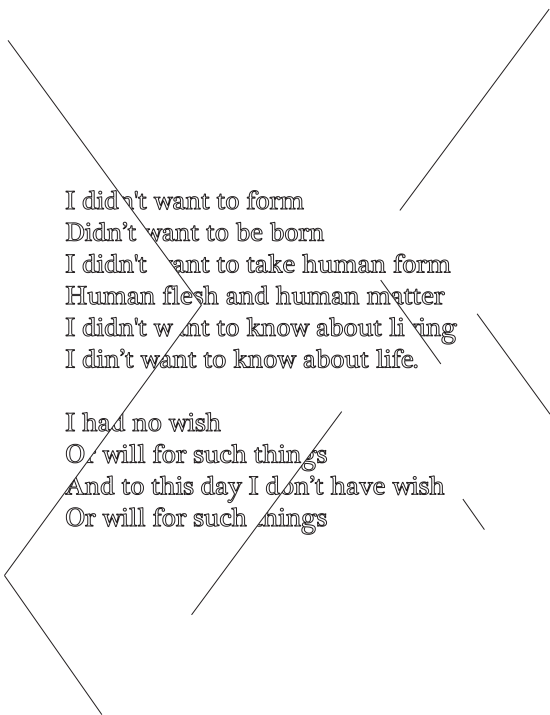
Drawing inspiration from the Roman myth of Faunus—the god of forests, herds, agriculture, and wild things—this immersive convening is the first iteration in a series of libations to ferality conceived by Juliana Fausto, Daniel Steegmann Mangrané and Sofia Lemos.

One of the oldest Roman deities, Faunus is described as an oracular god, prophesying the future in the rustling of sacred groves. According to the Roman poet Virgil, Faunus, at once wild and artful, would speak to seekers in dreams, where language dissolved into signs and echoes. In and through him, nature, culture, and supernature converged. Just as the ancient festivals—Faunalia, Feralia, Lupercalia—revered his cycles of fertility, death, and renewal through dance and offerings, this gathering celebrates Faunus’ liminality, or rather, the unbounded connectivity that weaves together earth, gods, spirits, ghosts, monsters, titans, animals, humans, machines, the seen and the unseen.

To invoke Faunus today is to summon a feral force. Bringing together artists, musicians, thinkers, and chefs, this convening publicly rehearses and expands on Brazilian philosopher Juliana Fausto’s notion of the feral thought. For Fausto, to speak of the feral is to name a moment of rupture, the breach of a pact—an agreement unmade, a relation undone. Yet this undoing does not lead back to an origin—the wild—or restore a pre-domesticated state. Instead, ferality takes shape in the afterlife of domestication, where the pact, now forsaken and abandoned, gives rise to reinvention. Ferality, then, exists only in relation to the structures that sought to contain it, reflecting an insistence, the capacity to endure, negotiate, and forge new agreements where old ones have collapsed. Like Faunus himself—dwelling between human and animal, dream and prophecy—ferality signals a condition of rupture and haunting, a force that lingers in the cracks of the visible, the articulation of the unplanned.

Conceived as a dramaturgy of roping in and unfolding events, this immersive celebration will inhabit Wiels’s architecture and explore ferality through the performative, the discursive, the gustatory, the olfactory, and the aural as practices for invoking Faunus, not in a conversation about ferality, but in a feral conversation.

I was pure gases, air, empty space, time
I was air, empty space, time
And pure gases, like that, oh, empty space, oh
I had no form
I had no formation
I had no place to make head
Make arms, make body
Make ears, make nose
Make roof of the mouth, make chatter
Make muscle, make teeth
I had nowhere to make any of those things
Make head, think about anything
Be useful, intelligent, be reasoning
I had nowhere to draw any of those things
I was pure empty space



I didn't want to form
Didn't want to be born
I didn't want to take human form
Human flesh and human matter
I didn't want to know about living
I didn't want to know about life.

I had no wish
Or will for such things
And to this day I don't have wish
Or will for such things

Signes, cygnes, je signe: invention of a feral pact
Juliana Fausto with Pedro Taam

Faunus, ancient king of Latium and hoofed spirit of rustling leaves and muttered dreams, embodies liminality, appetite, and the feral force that unbinds order. It was celebrated around 2,700 years ago in *Faunalias*, ceremonies marked by wine, fire, and music.

In *Invocation of Faunus* a threshold will be marked through the senses. Chant, scent, resonance, breath, pressure. Each sensation a key, each pause a gate. You will receive a talisman from deep time. Not for protection, but to alter perception. Once it touches your hand, the coordinates of your body will begin to shift. After that, the world may no longer coincide with itself.

Soft Burn & Fauno Effect
Chaveli Sifre

Soft Burn (Daphnomantic Offering)

The air is saturated with a dense olfactory composition: the resinous green of forest pine, the oily musk of sheep's wool, the smoke of fire, and a faint metallic trace of blood. Composed from wild pine, oregano, thyme, juniper, labdanum, and animalic accords, this olfactory installation diffuses through the space, rendering the air tactile—thick with atmosphere—drawing visitors into a terrain where memory and prophecy are inhaled.

Fauno Effect (Orexis)

Orexis—from the Greek for appetite or desire—invokes the restless hunger that binds body and spirit. Within the threshold space of an elevator, a durational performance unfolds: a solitary figure, cloaked in a fur spun from pine-infused sugar, conjures a mythic hybrid—part human, part animal. Visitors are drawn into an intimate rite of communion, invited to pluck and taste fragments of this edible mantle. Dusted with laurel powder and interwoven with lavender, thyme, and oregano, the fur engages the senses of scent, taste, and touch.

Laurel, long associated with purification, healing, and prophetic vision, summons the presence of Faunus, Roman god of forests, prophecy, and fertility—twin to Pan—whose appetite unsettles the border between pleasure and excess, instinct and ecstasy. In this ritual of ingestion, participants step into a lineage of Mediterranean rites of passage, where to eat is to take part in transformation, to cross thresholds, to dissolve into feral communion.

Animacy or a Breath Manifest
Vica Pacheco

Blending experimental music with sounds rooted in mythological hybridity and pre-Hispanic technologies, Mexican artist Vica Pacheco creates sonic environments that intertwine animism, ritual, and technology. Drawing on pre-Columbian Mesoamerican whistling vessels—ceramic instruments activated by air and water—she crafts hydraulic sculptures that form a wind chorus.

This chorus recalls the breath of Pan's flute—a sound fashioned from reeds, arising from mythic rupture, from the breaking of one form into another. In Rome, Faunus inherited this sonic register. His prophecies were said to arrive in rustling leaves, in dreams, in voices not fully human, as if the forest itself breathed through him. In resonance, Pacheco's soundscapes reimagine breath as a medium for reinventing the links between body, territory, and collective memory, opening a syncretic space where sound, materiality, and spirituality converge, and the line between the animate and inanimate dissolves.

Flora Incognita: An Edible Landscape
Caique Tizzi

Rooted in the chimeric, the surreal, and the gustatory, *Flora Incognita* is a performative tablescape and immersive meal installation that invites guests into a fog-laced terrain of burnt branches, herb smoke, moss, wire flora, cork textures, and dusted stones. The menu features smoked pine butter, seaweed farofa soil, wild mushrooms in mole negro, and dark chocolate, composing a performative dinner offered to Faunus.

The edible landscape draws from a sensory map of the ancient Roman festival Faunalia, developed by philosopher Juliana Fausto while weaving together inspiration from *Parallel Botany* (1976), Leo Lionni's fictional taxonomy of wild plants. It blurs the line between classification and invention, myth and matter, inviting guests to taste a landscape where the real and the imagined grow together.

I don't have a good head no
I don't know what's in here
I don't know what's in here
I don't know what's in here

I know there are eyes
But eyes to make seeing how?

Who makes them see
If it's not me who makes them see?

I think it's nobody
Sees by himself
It sees himself by himself

It's not me who likes ~~to~~ be born
It's they who put me to born ~~every~~ day
And every time I die they resuscitate me
~~They~~ incarnate ~~dis~~incarnate reincarnate me
They form me in less than a second
If I flee disappear they chase for me wherever I may be
To force me look to gases walls to ceilings
Or to their heads and their bodies

Sodalicia Feralis

Cicero once scoffed at a strange brotherhood: “a certain feral sodality,” he called it, “plainly pastoral and rustic, founded before humanity and law.” He meant the Luperci, priests of Faunus, clad in goat hides, streaked with sacrificial blood, racing through Rome each February with strips of hide, howling like wolves. Their rite, the Lupercalia, predated Rome itself. Official for 890 years, it marked a liminal stage older than law – an alliance (foedus) with forest, fertility, fear, and beasts.

This is where I begin: a cosmos made of alliances, not divine or “natural” laws. Faunus, ancient king of Latium turned hooved spirit of rustling leaves and muttered dreams. Though often merged with Pan, he is no echo but liminality personified: shepherd and sovereign, oracle and animal. Dating to around 2,700 years ago and celebrated as Faunalia Rustica for centuries, his rites took place in woodland clearings, with wine and fire and no fixed temple. He is a god of undivided nature, culture, and supernature.

To call someone feral today is risky. Overused, misused, often equated with rewilding or chaos, I use the term instead to name what emerges when categories collapse, when the domestic pact breaks and beings persist not in purity but in reinvention. This third realm of ferality is neither master nor captive, but a space of unpredictable alliances across difference and materialities.

In 1758, Linnaeus coined *Homo ferus*, a human subspecies drawn from reports of so-called “wild children.” His taxonomy racialized rupture to reinforce the boundaries of civilization. One such case was Marie-Angélique Memmie Le Blanc. An Indigenous girl kidnapped from North America and sent to France to be enslaved, she escaped into the forests and survived through wit and silence. When she was eventually “civilized,” her story was reframed as a triumph of domestication. Yet her life reveals a third path: neither regression nor submission. Taken by force from home, she did not return to it, nor did she submit – she invented life anew.

Domestication derives from *domus* and *dominium* – home and rule. To be feral is to be expelled from home and, with what is at hand, forge new communities

that challenge the claim that some lives belong and others do not. A wolf, long demonized as solitary, lives in packs: families. What seems savage often harbors hidden sociality.

Consider two plants. *Brachiaria*, an African grass introduced to Brazil, now chokes native ecosystems. *Capuchinha*, once ornamental, blooms in sidewalk cracks, feeding pollinators and resisting monoculture. Both are feral: one disrupts; the other adapts. Ferality is not about origin or species, but about entanglement, becoming, alliance.

We, the *sodalicia feralis*, gather those who haunt the in-between – human, animal, machine, microbe. We claim no purity. We seek no return. We dwell in fractured pacts – broken by empire, ecology, and science – and ask: what else is possible?

Our libation begins with *Faunalia Artificiosa*, not as reenactment but as invocation. We invoke Faunus not as a god of ordered nature, but as the force that undoes the orders nature was made to serve.

Today, the *Luperci* have turned to dogs.
The dogs have turned to trees.
And the trees have eyes –
Eyes that gleam, still watching.

Ex colonia, ex regno, ex terra fracta –
Iuliana, Sofia et Daniel,
Sodalicia Feralis

The place for the body is the head
Because the head is the body
Neither you will be able to stay in empty space
In the beds you won't be able to stay either
You can't stay on the floor or
The place for the body is the head
Because the head is the body
Neither you will be able to stay in empty space
In the beds you won't be able to stay either
You can't stay on the floor or



This programme departs from
Daniel Steegmann Mangrané and Juliana Fausto's
collaboration *La Pensée Férale*
on view in the exhibition "Magical Realism" at WIELS.

It is co-curated by Sofia Lemos and organised in collaboration
with Grégory Castéra, Sofia Dati, Dessislava Dimova
and Silvana Fiorese.

Faunalia Artificiosa and WIELS thank the generous support of
Lafayette anticipations – Fonds de dotation Famille Moulin
and Acción Cultural Española (AC/E)

Flora Incognita is co-produced with the team of
Point Albert and WIELS Café

The poems reproduced in this publication
are by Stella do Patrocínio and
have been translated by
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