

Empúries launches first underwater archaeological tour

An archaeologist will take swimmers on a guided tour floating above the Roman port

DANICHICANO

Fancy trying your hand at cultural diving? The Archaeology Museum of Catalonia (CASC) is pioneering this new activity by offering visitors the chance to go on a subaquatic tour of the old Roman port of Empúries.

The remains now lie totally submerged just off the coast in front of the archaeological site onland. The site is actually two sites; the Greek settlement Emporion and the Roman city Emporiae that replaced it. The activity has been called 'a dive into the past' and participants will be taken on a guided underwater tour of Empúries during which they will be swimming along the sea's surface.

The remains of the Roman port of Empúries were discovered in 1996, thanks to research undertaken by the Catalonia Subaquatic Archaeology Centre. The port was once the point of entry to the Iberian peninsula for a number of classical cultures.

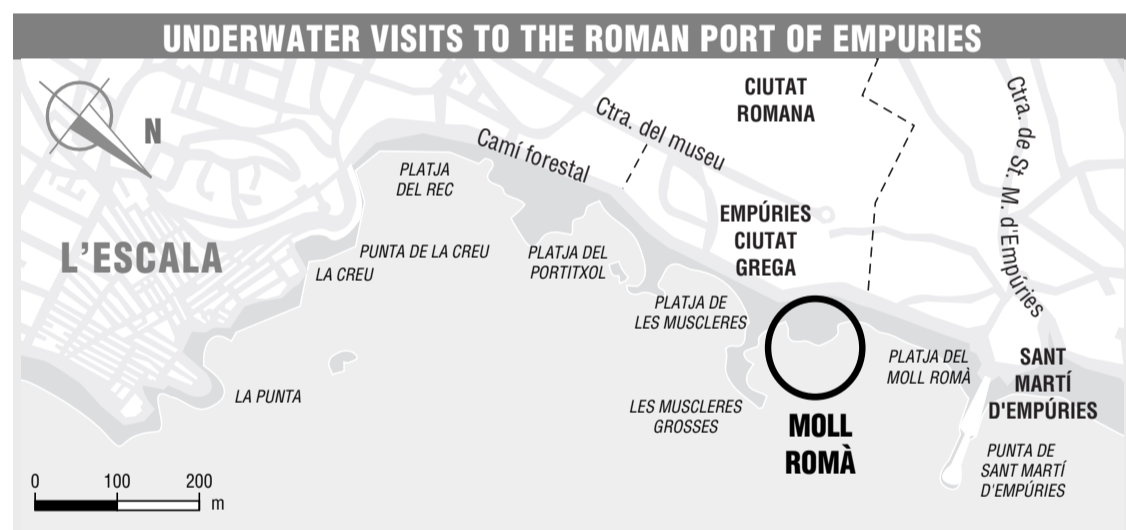
This discovery led experts to reinterpret their understanding of the old city; the submerged port is made up of 350 stone blocks which were found less than 200 metres from the coast in front of the Greek city. They occupy an area of 50 square metres and date back to the early 1st or late 2nd century BC.

The idea of providing underwater tours was first hatched in the year 2000, - the first and only one that exists in our country - to allow the public to explore this impressive submarine archaeological site. The CASC, the Museum of Catalonia-Empúries and Arqueolític, the company running the tour, are joint promoters of the scheme which begins from next Thursday July 1 until 31 August (open 11 am - 7 pm).

Visitors will be taken on their gui-



What remains of the Roman city of Empúries. The Roman port lies some fifty metres off the coast



ded tour by an archaeologist and they will be able to look around underwater Empúries as they swim along the sea's surface within an area that has been designated as a swimming area by l'Escala town council.

Visitors will not need to swim more than 50 metres from the beach to see the remains and will not be required to dive underwater.

All swimmers will be provided with goggles, snorkels and life jack-

ets. Then they will be given a short talk on the tour and how it came about, as well as an introduction to subaquatic archaeology and the port remains. The visitors can then take to the water and begin the tour.

ART

Finnish police raid Dalí show

Helsinki police shut down an exhibition on Dalí on Monday after complaints that some exhibits are not genuine. The police were tipped off by art collectors who had bought pieces only to discover they were fakes. The authorities have confiscated etchings, woodcuts, sculptures and pictures which are now being examined by experts. All 400 exhibits will now be looked at and, if they are found to be forgeries, criminal charges may be pressed. The show is to mark the centenary of the Catalan artist's birth.

FLAMENCO

Son of Camarón makes debut

Luis Monje, oldest son of legendary flamenco singer Camarón de la Isla, has formed a group *De Buena Rama* which has brought out its first recording *De buena rama*. The group, which includes Monje's cousin Rodo and brother-in-law José Heredia *Nene*, will combine a note of nostalgia with the up-to-the minute style of flamenco fusion. The first album includes vocals by Niña Pastori is produced by J. Jiménez *Chabolí*, son of one of original Falmenco pop band *Los Chichos*.

TELEVISION

BBC maps out digital future

British broadcaster the BBC has published its blueprint for a digital future, including expanded digital distribution and a renewed commitment to making sure the viewing public gets value for money for the \$5.4 billion it pays in licence fees every year. The corporation also pledged to pay more attention to current affairs and less to ratings. Commentators view the timing of the 135-page document as an attempt to rebuild its reputation after one of the worst crises in its history caused by the Kelly enquiry.

VANDALISM

Vandal attacks Venice art

An unknown attacker has mutilated statues and bas-reliefs in Venice in four incidents over the past few days. A statue of Saint Mark and a second one of Saint Francis by the 17th century artist Girolamo Campagna, situated on the outside of a church on Guidecca island, were the first to be attacked. The Italian police believe the man being called "the madman with the hammer" is either unbalanced or bears a grudge against symbols of Christianity. The attacker was spotted, hammer in hand by Italian tourists, at the scene of one of the attacks, but escaped before the police arrived.

FILM

Cast changes for Woody Allen

Scarlett Johansson, co-star of *Lost in Translation*, will join the cast of Woody Allen's 36th film, replacing Kate Winslett who dropped out last Friday. Winslett reportedly wanted to spend more time with her family. Johansson joins Emily Mortimer and Jonathan Rhys-Meyers on the untitled feature, due to begin production shortly at London's Ealing studios. As per usual, Allen is keeping the story under wraps.

Diversity comes home to roost in the Raval

MICHAEL BUNN

Anyone interested in art and diversity will be fascinated by Quorum, a new exhibition just opened at La Capella on Carrer Hospital, 56. It aims to provide "a view from the street of the diverse mix that currently exists in Barcelona, especially in the Raval," says exhibition curator Rosa Pera.

The exhibits use a wide range of styles and approaches, but what they all have in common is the desire to encourage local residents to take part in the debate on their surroundings. A 28-minute video by Iban del Campo and Elena Marín features Mohammed Ramzan, a Pakistani who came to Barcelona 14 years ago. It shows him at work lug-



Artists invite immigrants to engage in the debate on their surroundings

ging gas bottles through the streets and talking about his life and work as an immigrant in Barcelona.

Binary relations, a video installa-

tion by Argentinean Emiliano Mora Lewis, consists of quirky interviews with couples from different countries on how they met and fell in love

and how they have dealt with their cultural differences. Each couple is presented as a separate world but, as Mora says, there can be no doubt that "love is an important factor in achieving integration."

The speaking photo by Colombian Consuelo Bautista, features black and white portraits taken during a one-month period in Carrer Hospital, the same street in which the exhibition is being held. But this is no ordinary exhibit - as visitors wander from photo to photo, they trigger sensors which emit the street sounds Bautista recorded while taking the photographs.

Entry to Quorum is free and extra activities, including poetry, debates and video screenings, are planned.