



*20th ANNIVERSARY*  
**PASSAGES MEMORIAL**  
**WALTER BENJAMIN**

**BY DANI KARAVAN**

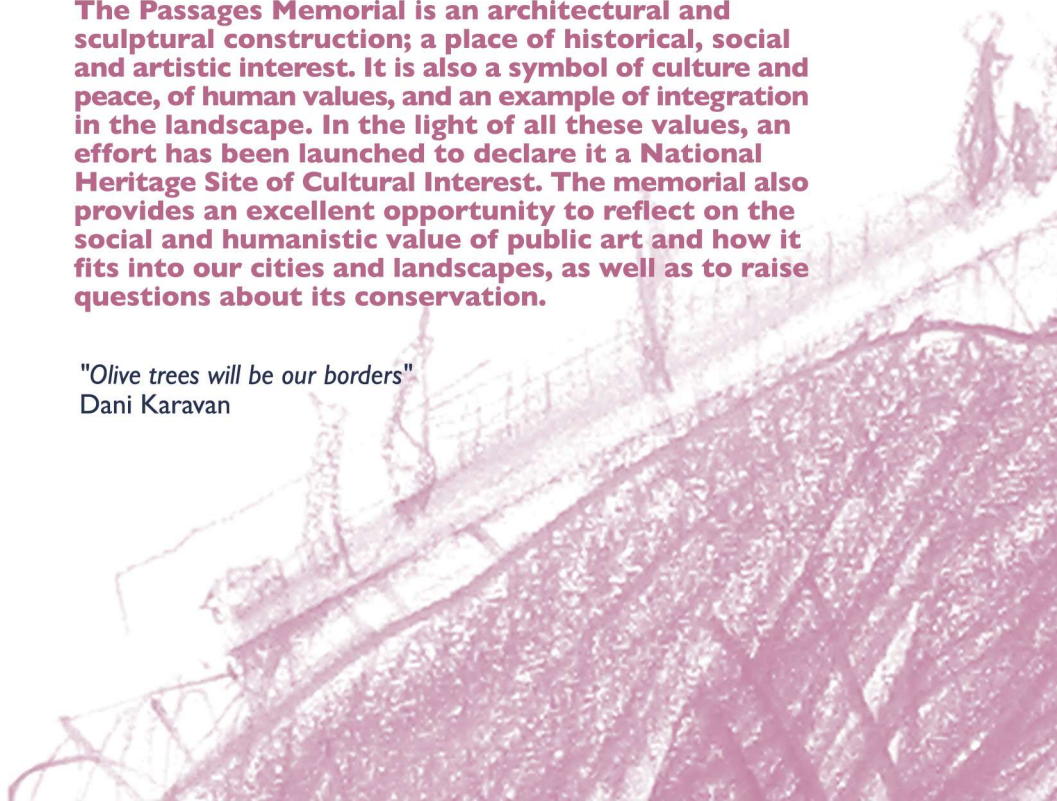
***International Symposium on Public Art***  
*PORTBOU, 5th October 2014*

**This year marks the 20th anniversary of Dani Karavan's Passages Memorial to Walter Benjamin (Berlin, 1892 - Portbou). The memorial was inaugurated on the 15th May 1994, as an initiative by Bonn's association AsKI, with the support of the President's Office of the Generalitat de Catalunya, and of the German federal states. The work is an homage to the eminent philosopher, who committed suicide in Portbou on 26th September, shortly after a strenuous crossing of the Pyrenees on foot. Benjamin, who had learnt he was to be repatriated, was fleeing to the U.S. The work also pays homage to all those anonymous fugitives who go into exile in search of freedom.**

**The Passages Memorial attracts numerous eminent intellectuals to Portbou, and is the reason why many international visitors come to the town. It has also become a part of the identity of the place and its coastal landscape. Together with the adjoining cemetery, today the monument is a landmark in the Costa Brava.**

**The Passages Memorial is an architectural and sculptural construction; a place of historical, social and artistic interest. It is also a symbol of culture and peace, of human values, and an example of integration in the landscape. In the light of all these values, an effort has been launched to declare it a National Heritage Site of Cultural Interest. The memorial also provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on the social and humanistic value of public art and how it fits into our cities and landscapes, as well as to raise questions about its conservation.**

*"Olive trees will be our borders"*  
Dani Karavan



## **Commemorative Events. Passages Memorial 20th Anniversary**

**Sunday, 5th October**

**11:00 h.** Screening of the commemorative film: *Passages*, 1994-2014.  
Venue: La Congesta.

**11:30 h.** Guided visit by the artist Dani Karavan to the Passages Memorial. Speech in front of Benjamin's symbolic grave by Jörg Zimmer, director of Walter Benjamin Memory and Exile Professorship at the Universitat de Girona. Reading of Walter Benjamin's statements by attendees. Site: Cemetery.

**12:00 - 12:30 h.** Naming of the new "Passeig Dani Karavan" (Dani Karavan Harbour Promenade). Unveiling of commemorative and street plaque. With the attendance of Josep Lluís Salas, Mayor of Portbou, Joan Pluma, General Director of Archives, Libraries, Museums and Heritage of the Generalitat de Catalunya, Miquel Puig, General Director Institutional and Parliament Relations of the Generalitat de Catalunya Government and a Diputació de Girona representative. Closing of the event by Dani Karavan. Site: Harbour Promenade.

## **International Symposium on Public Art.**

Venue: Centre Cívic Ca L' Herrero.

### **Session I**

**12:30 h - 14:00 h.** *Landscape and the place of art.* Panel with Dani Karavan, artist, Joan Nogué, director of Catalonia's Landscape Observatory and Professor of Human Geography at the Universitat de Girona, Xavier Monteys, architect and architecture critic for the newspaper *El País*, and Pep Admetlla, sculptor. Chair: Ricard Planas, director of the Foundation Lluís Coromina and Bonart magazine editor.

### **Session II**

**16:30 h- 17:00h.** Presentation. *Walter Benjamin, the solitary thinker*, by Jordi Llovet, philosopher.

**17:00 h- 17:30h.** *Passages Memorial, 20 years. The Project*, by the artist Dani Karavan.

**17:30 h - 18:30 h.** *Urban landscape and public art. The environment.* Panel with Dani Karavan, Benedetta Tagliabue, from the Studio Miralles Tagliabue EMBT, Noa Karavan, President of Artists for Public Art 1777, and Carme Grandas, person responsible for the Barcelona Virtual Museum of Public Art. Chair: Pilar Parcerisas, art historian and exhibition curator.

**18:30 h - 19:00 h.** Screening of the film *La forme et le lieu, l'art public de Dani Karavan* (The shape and the place, public art by Dani Karavan, 1990), directed by Philippe Collin. 27'.

**"It is more difficult to honour the memory of the anonymous than it is to honour the memory of the renowned. The historical construction is devoted to the memory of the anonymous."**

Walter Benjamin

Organization: Associació Passatges de Cultura Contemporània  
Project and coordination: Pilar Parcerisas  
[www.passatgescultura.org](http://www.passatgescultura.org)



**PASSATGES**  
CULTURA CONTEMPORÀNIA

Supported by:



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Ajuntament de Portbou

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Museu Memorial  
de l'Exili

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Noa Karavan  
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© Studio Karavan, for the Passages Memorial drawings printed on the program.

Simultaneous translation will be provided during the Symposium Sessions.  
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