

ASIER MENDIZABAL: SINFINES

Opening: Friday November 12, 2021. Exhibition until 29.01.2022.

Tuesday to Friday 11.00 to 19.00 h. Saturday 11.00 to 15.00 h.

Asier Mendizabal's fourth exhibition at ProjecteSD, *Sinfines*, brings together a group of new works in which the ambiguous relationship between fragment and totality, background and figure, sign and meaning, recurring subjects in Mendizabal's oeuvre, are revisited from a new point of view. *Sinfines* is the plural of the Spanish word *Sinfin* which is a colloquial term for the backdrops used in studio photography, but it also means endless and in its plural version, "endlesses".

There is a motif that is repeated in the show: that of the curve which represents in mathematics and statistics the exponential function and that has become the omnipresent ideogram with which to represent accelerated growth, acceleration itself. In the artist's words: *The statistical image seems to have filled the void that the mythical image or the artistic image should have proposed for the historical present that we live in and that is characterized by recurring narratives of explosive acceleration. The idea of the end of the world, the end of our reality, has always been linked to a sensation of dizzying acceleration. The Tiburtine Sibyl, in her prediction of the destruction of the Roman Empire, already predicted "and the years will be shortened to months and months to weeks and weeks to days and days to hours". This idea of explosive acceleration (and the explosion is indeed a particular case of extreme acceleration) appears in all the most urgent narratives of our present as an apocalyptic present. From the exponential accumulation of carbon emissions, or the increase in global temperatures, to the spread of a pandemic, through the classic Malthusian fear of population growth or the development of Artificial Intelligence. What strikes me is that the graphic model with which this idea of acceleration is visualized and disseminated is that of a line that joins specific points moving along a time axis. A linear idea of progress and history that itself supposes a certain limitation. This correspondence between the statistical sign and the idea of linear progress has kept me busy in recent months. It has caught my attention that in the absence of a symbolic image with which to reconcile ourselves with a world that we could not understand, it has been the rhetoric of statistics and probability that has served as an almost fetish figure".**

Sinfines takes the title from the piece that centers the exhibition, a large mural that runs along the entire width of the main wall in the gallery. Mendizabal has worked with several rolls of backdrops of various colors, which are used as neutral backgrounds for studio photography. Cut out and superimposed on several layers, having altered the axis of what would be its regular use, compositions are generated that could evoke geometric abstractions. What Mendizabal highlights with this exercise is the interchangeability of each composition. Each hyperbola, each curve drawn or cut is not permanent, it seems to be able to be displaced, replaced, if we change the order and move the rolls of each backdrop.

A similar modus operandi is used in the *Parabel* series of collages. Through sections by cuts and superimpositions of two photographic papers that interrupt the continuity of the image of an already obsolete delineation tool, the formal pattern is broken to make parabolic compositions of a random character appear. New forms without continuity, interrupted and meaningless.

Overlays are also the basis for the sculptures in the *Diagramas de dispersión (scatterplot)* series. In these, highly enlarged and printed cutouts of various images (crowds, clouds of smoke ...) are combined with glass and mirrors on top of each other, so that the subject of each composition becomes difficult to visualize. Not only due to the assembly of the layers but also, even more, due to the interference of what is reflected on the specular areas in them. For his title, Mendizabal has referred to terms or tools used in mathematics. In the same way that it is usually interpreted in these statistical graphs, in Mendizabal's sculptures, it is also the mixture of simple relationships between variables that becomes visually evident as overlapping patterns.

In contrast to this "dispersion" we find the small sculptures in the *Condensar (condensate)* series. Made with industrial metal chains and plastic zip ties, these are dense, nuclear works, motley masses, closed, tied, that go against the supposed mobility of a chain, the linearity of a graphic or linguistic sequence. If in the previous a reference was made to the Cartesian of the mathematical graphics, here this scheme is broken to return us to a more chaotic and more organic space.

In any case, in *Sinfines*, Mendizabal emphasizes the idea that, in general, none of the alleged ways of representing an "endless number" of data, imaginary and diverse contexts, succeeds in explaining them with due efficiency.

(*) Fragment of the interview that will be published in the December issue of the magazine *White paper* by.

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Asier Mendizabal (Ordizia, 1973) lives and works in Bilbao and Stockholm. Mendizabal graduated from the Facultad de Bellas Artes of the Universidad del País Vasco in 1997. He did post-graduate studies at the Byam Shaw School of Art in London. Since 2017 he is professor at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. In 2017 he was awarded the Premio Arte y Mecenazgo given by La Caixa.

He has had solo exhibitions in institutions such as the MACBA, Barcelona; Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid; Culturgest, Lisbon; Raven Row, London; Galerie Miroslav Kraljevic, Zagreb; Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen; Museo San Telmo, Donostia-San Sebastián; Zarigüeya/Alabado contemporáneo, Quito; Fundación-Museo Jorge Oteiza, Alzuza. He has participated in group shows at the Patio Herreriano Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Español, Valladolid; Carré d'Art, Musée d'Art Contemporain, Nîmes; Museo Guggenheim, Bilbao; Secession, Viena; Kunstverein Düsseldorf; GFZK, Leipzig, Fundació Tapies, Barcelona; Museu Serralves, Porto; CCCB, Barcelona. He participated at Manifesta 5, the 54th Venice Biennial, the 31st São Paulo Biennial; EVA International 2014, Limerick; Taipei Biennial 2002 and the 4th Bucharest Biennial.

His work is part of international public collections such as Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (MNCARS), Madrid; MACBA, Barcelona; ARTIUM, Vitoria; Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea (CGAC), Santiago de Compostela; Museo Guggenheim Bilbao; Fundació Banc de Sabadell, Barcelona; Fundació "La Caixa", Barcelona; Museo de San Telmo, San Sebastián; Colección Meana-Larraucea, Madrid; Fundación Iberdrola, Madrid; Colección Banco de España, Madrid; Fondation Kadist, Paris; Frac des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou ; Julia Stoschek collection, Düsseldorf; Schröder Collection, Berlin, among others.

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