

IPAR BALTZA

11 SEP 2026 -
08 NOV 2026

Ipar Baltza is the fifth solo exhibition by Erlea Maneros Zabala at Carreras Mugica. The exhibition takes its name from one of the works, *Ipar Baltza* (black north) – a Basque maritime and meteorological term meaning severe north wind, often associated with rough seas and poor weather conditions.

The Revolt of Form I (2026) is a series of 350 monoprints made by suspending ink on water. Produced over the span of several months, the prints document Maneros Zabala manipulating the density, temperature, and depth of the water, along with the type of ink and medium, to contract or expand the object-like shapes she creates on each page. Through seriality and accumulation, they build a structure that suggests an alphabet of signs. Each print illustrates a tension between the viewer's impulse to assign meaning to the forms and the pull toward abstract ideation.

In The Revolt of Form II (2026), Maneros Zabala engages with the same water-based process; this time, she locks in on a shape that crosses vertically through each page, referring to the natural world around her.

Orientalisms (2010) juxtaposes images printed in US newspapers between 2001 and 2005 with drawings of optical illusions. The works are formal deconstructions of images presented to the US public by the legacy media as documents – as windows onto the realities of conflicts in the Middle East. They point to the ways editors stylize and shape depiction in press photographs, affecting the public's perception of events through choices of image, cropping, color, composition, size, and so on. The work echoes a pseudo-visual analysis, proposing hypotheses about the aesthetics of these images by suggesting references to styles in Western art history – 19th-century Romanticism, Classicism, Orientalism, and so on – and drawing comparisons with visual illusions. Whether accurate or an absurd stretch of the imagination, the work denaturalizes these images by removing them from their original context, forcing a critical view of their formal qualities – not as illustrations accompanying written press articles, but as elements that shape our perception in their own right. *Orientalisms* addresses the ways the aesthetics of these images homogenize their subjects, using beauty and the sublime to make war permissible, and further, palatable to their audiences.

Ipar Baltza (2026) is a three-channel video installation that documents the behavior of ink as it first meets glass and moves through a scanner in the process of being captured in digital images. Maneros Zabala records the physical event of the tray carrying slides into the machine – the sound of friction, and the form of the black tray. The videos appear as a horizontal scroll, structured by a rhythmic visual and sonic pattern, capturing fleeting moments of form becoming and disappearing. These recordings are juxtaposed with scenes from Maneros Zabala's studio where a rattlesnake casually moves through objects. The rattlesnake carries a contradictory set of symbolic meanings in this work. The scenes bring an expectation of danger – venomous, wild animal, something to fear and keep at a distance. But the footage undercuts that expectation, showing ease and cohabitation instead, presenting it as a calm, domesticated, free-roaming, marking the point where familiarity and threat overlap. In the American Revolution, Benjamin Franklin and others used the rattlesnake as an emblem of the colonies – vigilant and dangerous. Franklin's "Join, or Die" cartoon used a segmented snake to represent colonial unity. This symbolism has been revived in modern contexts, particularly by libertarian ("Don't Tread on Me" flag) and some conservative political movements, and by the military. This imagery is prevalent around the artist, as she lives in close proximity to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms.