

Artist: Ian Waelder
Exhibition: even in a language that is not your own
Venue: Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma
Exhibition Dates: 20.10.2023-18.02.2024
Organized by: Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma
Curator: Francesco Giaveri
Texts: Francesco Giaveri and Carina Bukuts
Exhibition Hall: D

Press release:

Ian Waelder (Madrid, 1993) works by collecting fragments of materials and seemingly fictional stories that have been cast aside and lost to memory. His art explores often intertwined lines of thought, from accidental poetry to memories fashioned from remains or traces left behind, picking out small material stories and stretching the possibilities of language through his life and work.

“even in a language that is not your own”, his new project for Es Baluard Museu, begins by researching his family tree, reflecting on recent history and drawing parallels between body and machine, while also inviting us to reflect on our bearings, speech and insignificant gestures that can replace words.

In this show, Waelder leads visitors along a path and structure far removed from both the museum and the hustle and bustle of everyday life. They are taken on a journey through a kind of interzone, a space between the real and the imaginary. This space might be an oral cavity or the engine room for an abstracted yet strangely familiar place where speech is materially articulated.

History is inevitably viewed through a personal prism. Waelder embarks on a quest filled with stories, casual asides that throw open a dazzling array of prospects and detours, almost as footnotes to the main text.

This path forms a single space in which visitors have to reorient themselves. The physical structure of this transitory passage contains a series of interventions, images and sculptures consciously articulated without any logical sequence or discourse. Rather it is designed as a whole in which first to lose yourself, before gradually regaining your bearings and eventually finding a route.

The show's underlying structure is like a labyrinth, a blank map, a sketch with enigmatic or laconic elements that the viewer has to decipher—short notes scrawled from memory or written in pitch darkness.

The artist uses the means at his disposal to engage the audience and nudge them towards a mutual experience, a kind of shared memory passed on orally, perhaps unprecise and surely incomplete. And yet somehow clearly recognisable.

We find ourselves in a kind of suspended interzone, as if conveyed to someone else's speech and language—a place where, despite initially losing our habitual references, we are surprised to recognise understandable and even familiar surroundings. The exhibition format was conceived as an oral discourse that continuously appeals to the personal and the political, introducing us to a language that whispers along with every step, revealing traces and fragments lying in wait for us.

– Francesco Giaveri,
curator of the exhibition

About the artist:

Ian Waelder is a Spanish artist and publisher. He studied Fine Arts under Haegue Yang, Mark von Schlegell and Peter Fischli at the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, where he currently lives. His work is primarily based on concepts linked to memory, trace and language, using media ranging from photography and sculpture to sound and installation.

He has had solo exhibitions at Galerie Rolando Anselmi (Rome), ethall (Barcelona), Centro Párraga (Murcia), The Finnish Museum of Photography (Helsinki), L21 (Madrid/Palma) and LOCAL Arte Contemporáneo (Santiago de Chile), among others. He has also participated in numerous collective exhibitions in galleries and institutions such as Francis Irv (New York), Nassauischer Kunstverein (Wiesbaden), Kunstverein Wiessen, the Venice Biennale of Architecture, Salón (Madrid) and La Casa Encendida (Madrid).

Since 2019, alongside his artistic practice, he runs Printer Fault Press, a publishing house specialising in artists' books.

More information:

www.esbaluard.org/en/exposicion/ianwaelder/

www.ianwaelder.info