

Asier Mendizabal
Kopf, Faust, Baum

Galerie Nordenhake presents the first solo exhibition of Asier Mendizabal in Berlin in collaboration with Anthony Reynolds, London. The artist's practice has consistently revolved around the relationships between form and space, thoroughly exploring the legacies of radical sculptural languages and their multilayered political implications. For the exhibition Mendizabal brings together a group of works with different references and materials such as wood or concrete, as well as photographic works and woodblock prints.

The work *Untitled (Syntagmatic Paradigmatic)* (2012) is a massive chain carved out of the trunk of a single chestnut tree. Anthony Reynolds describes it as a literal metaphor, in which one element is inextricably linked with the one that precedes and the one that follows, and together constitutes a well-formed structure. But the analogy doesn't end there for Mendizabal is nothing if not aware of the ancestry of the political in art, the need to acknowledge and nourish the smallest roots as they reach out furthest from the tree. This sculpture is a perfect rendition of that historical thread from the 'seed' to the artifact, from the word to the question, from the idea to the act. Reynolds further notes that 'Untitled' is the most paradigmatic 'title' in art, and only a work of art could be defined thus. And it is in the manifest presence of this sculpture fashioned from a tree that sense can be made of this absence.

Kopf, Faust, Baum (Head, Fist, Tree, 2014) is a work consisting of two hollow papier-maché empty objects that evoke two oversized heads, or an even more oversized pair of fists placed directly on the floor supporting each other. One of the elements is painted bright yellow, the other white. Our perceptual apparatus could read them as a representation of fallen monument. Nevertheless, at the same time it's fragile texture and abstract form directs our perception to essential questions of modernist sculpture such as representing emptiness or the 'de-occupation of space'. The subtexts of the work, though, inform different meanings such as the tree announced in the title of the work, as if the erection and destruction of monuments or cultural identities could have a plausible equivalent with the growth and fall of trees.

The works *Untitled (Warp and the Weft)* (2014) are concrete casts of baskets with round hollows at the center that open a void in such objects. The underlying structure, one of a traditional basket, fossilized in concrete, is given both metaphorical and physical weight in its transition from functional tool to sculptural form.

Asier Mendizabal was born in 1973 in Ordizia, Basque Country, Spain. The artist lives in Bilbao and Stockholm, where he recently has been appointed Professor of Fine Art, Installation and Sculpture at the Royal Institute of Art. He will have a solo exhibition at the Foundation Jorge Oteiza, Alzuza, Spain this year. Mendizabal has had solo exhibitions at Raven Row, London and Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (both 2011); Culturgest, Lisbon (2010) and Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (2008). His work was featured in group exhibitions exhibition at Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid, Pavillion of the Sao Paulo Biennial (both 2016), 34th Sao Paulo Biennial (2014), the 53rd Venice Biennale (2011) and Museu Serralves, Porto (2010) among others. The artist presented comprehensive site-specific projects at Alabado Contemporáneo, Casa del Alabado, Quito, Ecuador; the chapel of Otzuarze, Spain (both 2016) and at San Telmo Muesoa, San Sebastian, Spain (2014).

Anthony Reynolds Gallery operates without a fixed space but organises exhibitions in collaboration with colleagues in galleries internationally. "This project with Galerie Nordenhake is the perfect illustration of the mutual benefits of our modus operandi namely the opportunity to work with a valued colleague and friend, the placing of an artist in the best context for his work. This is Collaboration # 8." (A.R.)

Exhibition: January 20 – March 3, 2018

Artist talk: Asier Mendizabal in conversation with Alex Sainsbury: January 19, 6 pm

Please contact the gallery for further information and press images

ARTISTS: IGNASI ABALLÍ MERIÇ ALGÛN RINGBORG CHRISTIAN ANDERSSON OLLE BAERTLING MIROSŁAW BAŁKA ANNA BARHAM IÑAKI BONILLAS ANN BÖTTCHER MICHAŁ BUDNY GERARD BYRNE JOHN COPLANS SARAH CROWNER JONAS DAHLBERG ELENA DAMIANI ANN EDHOLM SPENCER FINCH HREINN FRÍÐFINNSSON PAUL FÄGERSKIÖLD ZVI HECKER SOFIA HULTÉN FRANKA HÖRNSCHEMEYER GUNILLA KLINGBERG KARL LARSSON EVA LÖFDAHL MEUSER HELEN MIRRA ESKO MÄNNIKKÖ SIROUS NAMAZI WALTER NIEDERMAYR SCOTT OLSON MIKAEL OLSSON MARJETICA POTRČ HÅKAN REHNBERG ULRICH RÜCKRIEM MICHAEL SCHMIDT FLORIAN SLOTAWA LEON TARASEWICZ JOHAN THURFJELL ALAN UGLOW NOT VITAL MAGNUS WALLIN STANLEY WHITNEY RÉMY ZAUGG JOHN ZURIER