

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 relationship between form and processes of signification, 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 and concrete, as well as printed matter and a cut-out from an original woodblock print appropriated from another artist.

The work *Untitled (Syntagmatic Paradigmatic)* (2012) is a chain carved out of the trunk of a chestnut tree. Anthony Reynolds describes it as a literal metaphor, in which one element is inextricably linked to the one that precedes and the one that follows, constituting a well-formed structure, indeed a syntagmatic structure. Woodcarving is here used as an analogy of the relations between form and matter (*Hyle*, the Greek term for matter meant literally wood) and the forms that result from the technique of carving, determined by the matter they shape. They condense symbolic value through the history of their use. So happens, according to the artist, in the concave cuts that form the sculpture.

Kopf, Faust, Baum (Head, Fist, Tree, 2014) consists of two hollow *papier-maché* objects that evoke an oversized head and fist. Our perceptual apparatus could read them as a representation of fallen monuments. Both replicate a structural relation fundamental to the construction of signs: the relation of a vertical base and the differential form supported by it. The neck and the head, in the condensed image of a bust, but also the forearm and the fist or—the missing figure alluded to in the title—the trunk and the treetop. The concave forms that compose these elements, related to the cuts that compose the wooden chain, become not only the formal result of the process of carving, but also a symbolized trait that, as Mendizabal argues, becomes itself a characteristic of monumentality.

The works *Untitled (Warp and the Weft)* (2014) are concrete casts of baskets. The underlying structure of a traditional basket, fossilized in concrete, also implies a typology of forms; the relation between the form of the woven pattern and the geometric ornamentation in architectural elements and in vessels.

Asier Mendizabal (1973), lives in Bilbao and Stockholm, where he is a professor at the Royal Institute of Art. His work is currently on view in the exhibition *Art and Space* at the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, and he will have a solo exhibition at Fundación-Museo Jorge Oteiza, in Alzuza, this Spring. He has had solo exhibitions at Raven Row, London and Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (both 2011); Culturgest, Lisbon (2010); and MACBA Barcelona (2008). He participated in the 34th São Paulo Biennial (2014) and the 53rd Venice Biennale (2011). His work was featured in group exhibitions at Secession, Vienna and Kunstverein Düsseldorf (2015), Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig (2012), and Museu Serralves, Porto (2010). The artist presented projects at Alabado Contemporáneo, Quito; the chapel of Otzuarze (both 2016) and at San Telmo Museoa, San Sebastian (2014). An important part of his research-based practice is writing.

Anthony Reynolds Gallery operates without a fixed space but organizes 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, Raven Row, London: January 19, 6 pm
Please contact the gallery for further information and press images

ARTISTS: IGNASI ABALLÍ MERIÇ ALGÜN RINGBORG CHRISTIAN ANDERSSON OLLE BAERTLING MIROSLAW 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 FÁGERSKIÓLD 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