

Art Viewer

Karlos Martínez Bordoy at Okela
Kultur Elkarte

September 1, 2024



The skin of reality: The house of flesh and the second skin of truth

In the heart of Bilbao, the Okela Kultur Elkarte space stands as an apex where the perception of existence becomes labyrinthine. "FRONTS" is a swarm of geometric canvases that metamorphose

architecture into a skin that beats, breathes, and pulsates with a vitality that transcends its own mortality. In this context, architecture transforms into a gigantic wall that constantly collapses and reconfigures itself, as if the very skin of reality was trying to escape its finite condition.

The exhibition evokes the classic tale "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allan Poe. Here, the twisted and distorted tarpaulin reveals the fissures and cracks between appearance and reality, between the visible and the invisible, where a wall partition slowly crumbles, devoured by an invisible force, in which boundaries are permeable and getting more and more blurred.

In this labyrinth of memory, the visitor is taken on a pilgrimage through the space that was once a butcher shop and now holds the remnants of time's passage. The work is a wall that becomes a metaphorical network of dry leaves that crackle and unfold like a blanket, enveloping him/her in a sensory experience. Each piece of the sculptural ensemble is a precarious balance between two opposite extremes. A defence that turns into a growing carpet upwards and downwards, forming a miniature space within the same space.

In this sense, the canvas takes on natural forms: curls, extensions, and withered lines to lead us to the boundary between the outer and the inner world. A wall that has turned into a bottomless moat that aims to swallow the visitor, absorb him/her in its depth. The exhibition invites to explore the border between the concrete and the abstract, where the pieces are nothing but an extension of the human body itself: our skin beyond ourselves.

Karlos Martinez B. (Bilbao, 1982) lives and works between the Basque Country and Madrid. His speciality is sculptural production with objects in different plastic and visual media. Some of his exhibitions include: "Dark Matters" at La Taller Gallery, Bilbao (2024); "Gaps & Corners" at Nadie Nunca Nada No, Madrid (2023); "Black Patterns" at Carreras Múgica, Bilbao (2021), and "Egin Berri" at the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (2017).

His work has been incorporated into the Collection of the Reina Sofía Museum in Madrid, la Colección Compartida (Shared Collection) of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the Basque Country-Artium Museoa, the Museum of Fine Arts in Bilbao and Tabakalera in Donostia-San Sebastián.

Martínez works sculpture from drawing and from two dimensions, a process in which the volume comes to life from the plane. Currently, his work focuses on exploring one's desire, capturing it, and questioning the possibility of doing so, with the suspicion that actually, binding desires rather means submitting to them.

Artist: Karlos Martínez Bordoy

Exhibition title: FRONTS

Venue: Okela Kultur Elkarte, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain

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