

For this edition of ARCOmadrid, carlier I gebauer presents an expansive and conceptually rigorous selection of works by artists from diverse regions of the globe. With contributions from Luis Gordillo, Asta Gröting, Kyungah Ham, Iman Issa, Lúcia Koch, Julie Mehretu, Oscar Muñoz, Paul Pfeiffer, Leonor Serrano Rivas, Maria Taniguchi and Ian Waelder the presentation examines the ways in which art engages with temporality, perception, and history, creating a dialogue between memory's elasticity and the fragile limits of human experience.

Muñoz's work presents an urgent critique of our political moment, inviting viewers into a reflective space where the mechanisms of censorship and the erasure of history are brought to the fore. His edition of Fahrenheit 451, where every single word in Ray Bradbury's text is meticulously burned, underscores the chilling implications of censorship, not just as an act of suppression, but as a radical erasure of the cultural fabric that binds society together. In this act of literal destruction, Muñoz gestures toward the frailty of knowledge, history, and identity in an era where information is both hyper-available and perilously vulnerable to manipulation. The work's relevance extends beyond the literary to touch on contemporary political climates, where narratives are constantly rewritten, and truth itself becomes an increasingly fragile commodity. This intervention, which both acknowledges the past and critiques the present, is particularly poignant as Muñoz prepares for a major solo exhibition at MAMBO in Colombia and participates in a group show curated by Georges Didi-Huberman at the Reina Sofia, further cementing his role as a key figure in global contemporary discourse on memory and erasure.

Koch's Fundos series further delves into the ephemeral nature of space and perception, turning ordinary, discarded boxes into haunting, life-sized architectural forms. In this work, she confronts the viewer with an uncanny tension between the mundane and the metaphysical. The boxes—once utilitarian objects—are transformed into visual portals that extend and distort the spaces they inhabit. Koch's manipulation of scale and perspective pushes the boundaries between the physical and the imagined, challenging the viewer to reconsider the nature of the space itself. Her works evoke questions of inhabitation and absence, compelling the viewer to contemplate what constitutes a "home," and how space is not just defined by its physical limits, but by the psychological and perceptual thresholds we place upon it. In a world where the boundaries of public and private, real and virtual, are increasingly blurred, Koch's work invites us to rethink our relationship to the spaces we occupy, and the boundaries we set between the known and the unknown.

Issa's newest works, presented on the outside wall of the booth, bring a unique conceptual twist to the medium of photography, exploring the idea of representation through non-traditional forms. By moving away from lens-based photography and towards sculptural displays, Issa creates a "display" rather than an image, using the interplay of materiality and form to open up new avenues for thinking about perception. Her work presents the viewer with objects that are both familiar and unfamiliar—neither purely sculpture nor pure photography—forcing us to engage with the medium in a new way. Much like Koch, Issa plays with the boundaries of what we see and how we understand it, asking us to reflect on the fluidity of form and representation. Her work highlights the delicate balance between the real and the imagined, prompting us to reconsider not just what we see, but how we see it. As

she participates in a major group exhibition at The Met, Issa's approach stands as a profound challenge to the fixed boundaries of traditional visual language.

Waelder's recent works are a poignant exploration of memory, trauma, and familial history, using materiality to embody the fragility of both personal and collective histories. Through his layering of cotton-printed images and open weave linen, Waelder creates a textured interplay of transparency and opacity that mirrors the fragile nature of memory itself. His works delve into his Jewish grandfather's escape from Nazi Germany, tracing personal history through the metaphor of the hand gestures from an Opel Olympia manual—a family relic. This subtle yet powerful reference binds the fragility of human existence with the complexities of historical memory, inviting reflection on the generational weight of trauma and survival. The act of layering materials—one permeable, the other more opaque—creates a visual language that speaks to the complex nature of memory: a fluctuating, fragile, and often elusive entity. In Waelder's hands, the material is not simply a vessel but a medium through which the impermanence of life and the body itself are captured and re-imagined.

Together, these works form a meditation on the fragility of our cultural and personal histories, encouraging viewers to question not just what is represented, but how the act of representation itself can shape our understanding of reality. In this occasion, carlier I gebauer not only highlights the diversity of contemporary artistic practices but also provides a platform for a deeper exploration of the material, philosophical, and political underpinnings that define our current moment. Through the lens of these artists, the ephemeral nature of existence is not simply a theme, but a pressing inquiry into the ways in which we navigate, preserve, and ultimately forget the stories we tell ourselves about who we are.

Presented artists:

Michel François, Luis Gordillo, Paul Graham, Alexandra Grant, Asta Gröting, Kyungah Ham, Iman Issa, Lúcia Koch, Oscar Muñoz, Paul Pfeiffer, Laure Prouvost, Erik Schmidt, Leonor Serrano Rivas, Maria Taniguchi, Ian Waelder.