

G O N Z A L O B O R R O N D O



BIOGRAPHY

Gonzalo Borondo (Valladolid, 1989) is a multimedia artist who lives and works between Spain and Italy. Beginning as a muralist in the field of public art, his current artistic research revolves around the value of memory and heritage, with a focus on the historical and relational characteristics of spaces. By conceiving History as a continuum, the artist finds in the inherited culture and traditional iconography a myriad of symbols that are capable of renewing the perspective of the present when updated. This results in site-specific interventions that change (with) the space, examining the environment to reveal those narratives and events that have been buried within it, which could potentially make for other visions of the contemporary.

Borondo's works operate from the intersection of different media, creating enveloping atmospheres by analog and digital means. They do so by taking nature as an allegory of the spiritual, transcendent and sacred, and architecture as a transposition of that which is artificial and transitory. The connection between that which is human and the landscape also serves as a pretext to reflect on the nature of the human psyche, by articulating a dialogue between the permanent and the ephemeral, between the essential and the artificial.

One of the most relevant formal components of Borondo's work is the temporal leap faced by the public in the artistically intervened space, which generates a different look at the past, but, most notably, unveils an alternative outlook on the present.

Since 2010, Gonzalo Borondo has collaborated with numerous institutions, festivals, museums, galleries and non-profit spaces, creating installations in England, Italy and Spain, Australia, India, Ukraine and the United States. His works have been exhibited at the Urban Nation Museum, Berlin, the MACRO Museum, Rome, the Selci Cemetery Chapel, or the former church of San Mattia, Bologna, among others. Likewise, his intervention in the Temple of Chartrons was acquired by the Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux as part of its permanent collection.

His solo exhibition Hereditas, curated by José María Parreño, was shown at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Segovia. Since 2023 he has been a full member of the Royal Academy of History and Art of San Quirce.



SETTIMO GIORNO

EX CHIESA DI SAN MATTIA

BOLOGNA, ITALIA

2023

POETICS TEXTS AND VOICE: ÁNGELA SEGOVIA

SOUND CREATION: IRENE GALINDO QUERO

CO-PRODUCED BY: GONZALO BORONDO

AND MAGMA GALLERY

PRESENTED BY: MAGMA GALLERY, BOLOGNA (IT)

Settimo Giorno is a sensorial revisitation of the first six days of creation drawing from the Book of Genesis, one of the oldest narrative texts in the world. It does so in dialogue with the internal structure of the Ex Chiesa San Mattia, in Bologna.

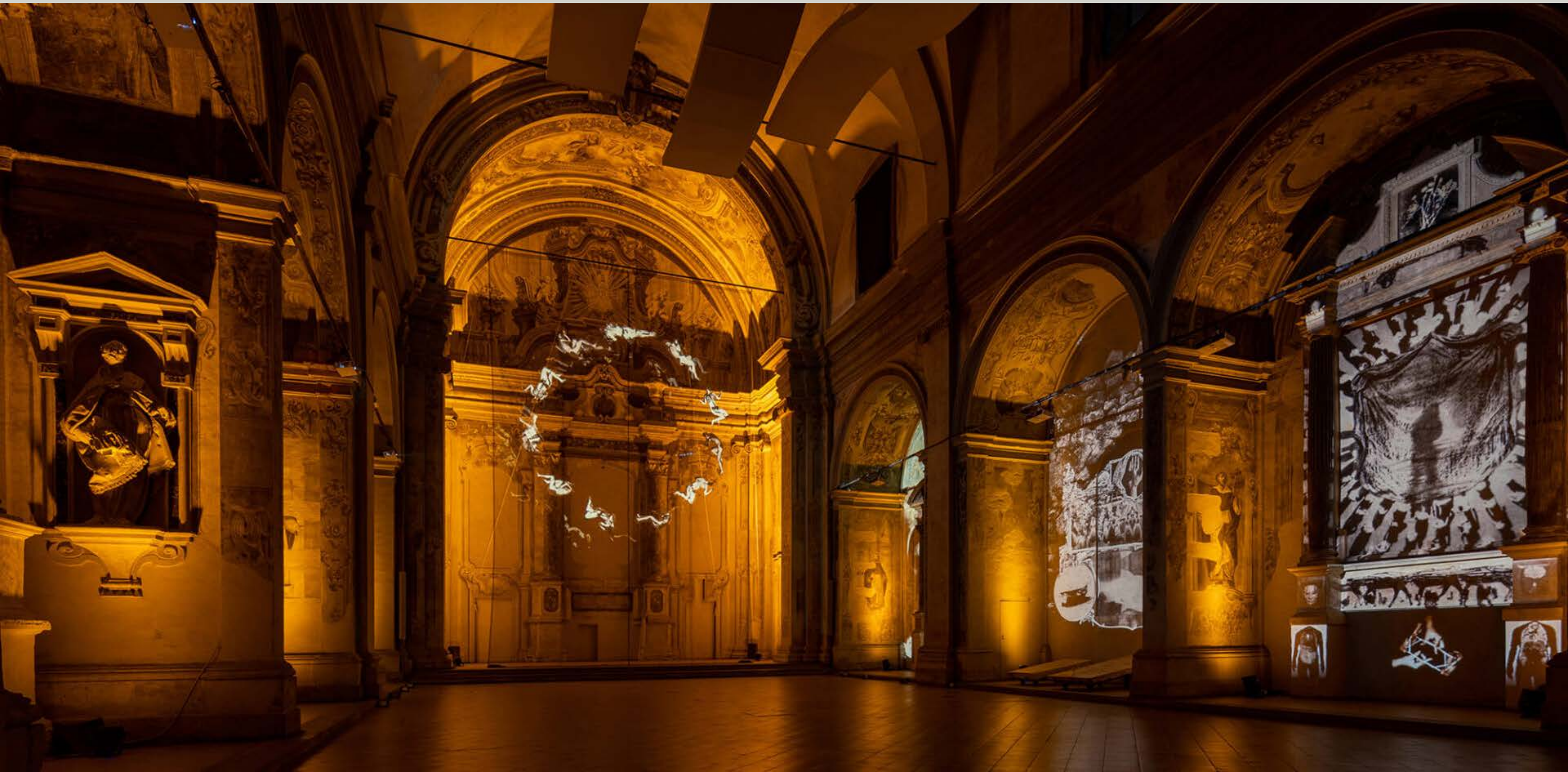
Consisting of more than sixty videos distributed among six chapels and the altar, Settimo Giorno marks a turning point in the artist's practice, with the incorporation of video as the only medium to engage in a visual recount of the creation myth's six days. The videos are made with ancient photographic processes that the artist combines with current techniques when he manually intervenes about a thousand frames in cyanotypes and combines them with 3D technology. By both technical and conceptual means, they propose a transit between past and present which, by intervening in the architectural space, gives rise to a timeless dialogue between heritage and contemporary creation.

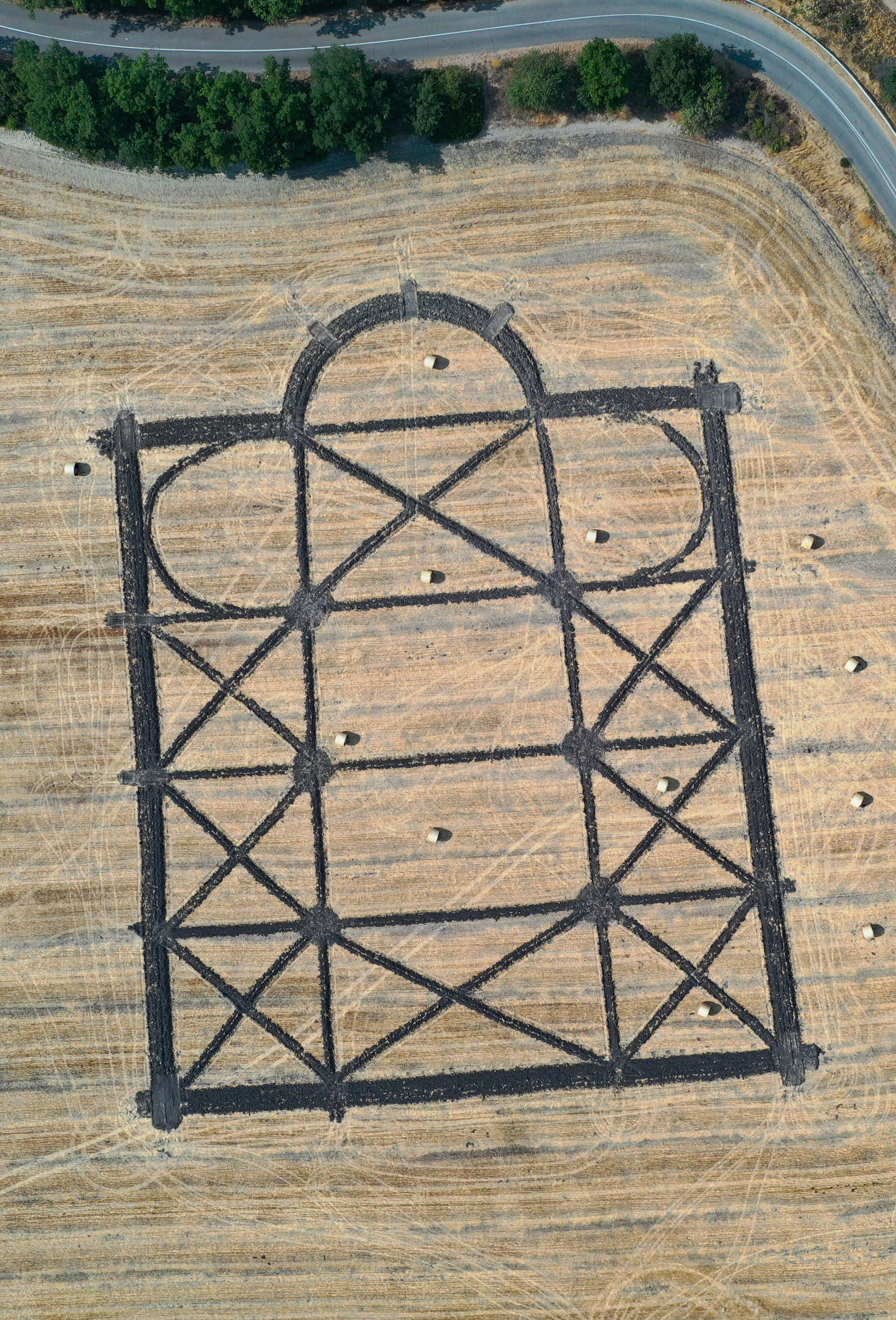
This is how the work recreates the chaos, disorder and confusion, as well as the irruption of light, that characterized the six days of Genesis. It does so through the rhythms -varying in each projection-, the chiaroscuro generated by the images in consonance with the church's own lighting and through the free will granted to the public when moving through the installation. The word, which in the Book of Genesis has a creative function, now also breathes life into the work through Ángela Segovia's texts (Miguel Hernández National Youth Poetry Prize), accompanied by composer Irene Galindo Quero (Berlin-Rheinsberger Kompositionspreis).

Therefore, Settimo Giorno culminates in a piece that takes over the seclusion, silence and historical load of the Ex Chiesa San Mattia.









MAGNATERRA

STIGLIANO, ITALIA

2021

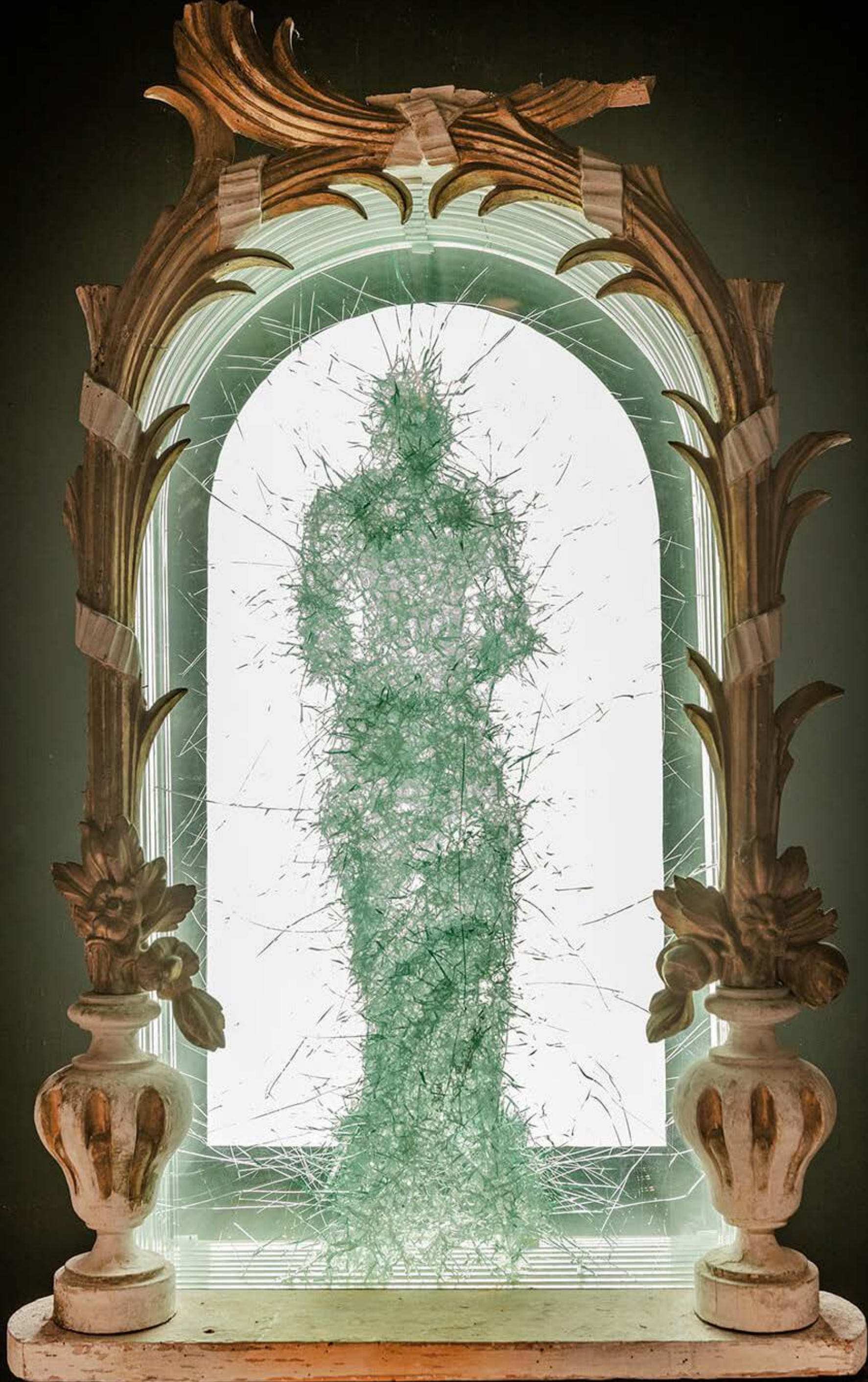
PRODUCED BY: STIGLIANO CITY COUNCIL

PRESENTED BY: APPARTENGO FESTIVAL (IT)

One of Stigliano's oldest traditions was to annually offer the harvested cereal to St. Anthony, the patron saint of the village, in hopes that he would bless its inhabitants with a bountiful crop. Magna Terra pays homage to this pilgrimage through a transposition, in which it is the church that heads towards the countryside. Considering that farming is inscribed with the beginning of civilization and the abandonment of nomadism, and thus recognizing its quasi-ritual character, the installation emphasizes the close connection that, even today, grain maintains with development and economy.

Thus, the intervention infuses the landscape with the image of one of the first coins used in Ancient Rome, which had engraved the two-faced god Janus. One of them, the one facing forward, wears a mask which, when tied, blinds the other, preventing it from looking back into the past. The work, which occupies more than 1.9 ac of land and was created in collaboration with local farmers, is an allegory of the young new generations' attitude, who abandon the increasingly impoverished countryside chasing a better future, ignoring the fact that progress is also bound to the land that nurtured them.





HEREDITAS

MUSEO ESTEBAN VINCENTE

SEGOVIA, ESPAÑA

2021

CURATED BY: JOSE M^A PARREÑO

PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY: MUSEO ESTEBAN
VICENTE . SEGOVIA (SP)

Hereditas is a site-specific artistic intervention in the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente which questions the institutional framework of the exhibition space and the position of the artistic object within it. In the artwork, the artist engages in a dialogue with the building, pointing out its historical and relational dimension, thus deconstructing the falsified autonomy, ahistoricism and stasis that the white cube lays on art.

Hereditas takes up four floors of the building by staining its interior in black, and is divided into four chapters or altars that pay homage to the vegetable world (Herba/grass), the mineral world (Petra/stone) and the animal world (Carnis/flesh). The last chapter of this choral work is reserved for the realm of the immaterial, that which is mental and spiritual (Ether/ether). The piece is shaped in a mandatory ascending journey that vindicates the previous formal uses of the space, which was the urban palace of the controversial Henry IV, a nursing home, a school of arts and even the headquarters of the museum of sacred art.

By means of combining painting, video and sound effects with digital technologies, the intervention reveals the heterogeneity of the historical strata that shape Segovia and its people. Thus, through different languages and media, Hereditas reveals the palimpsest of the place, confronting the public with the surrounding human and natural heritage.













INSURRECTA SEGOVIA, ESPAÑA 2020

IN COLLABORATION WITH: STUDIO STUDIO
AND SUPPORTED BY: AC
PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY:
SEGOVIA CITY COUNCIL (SP)

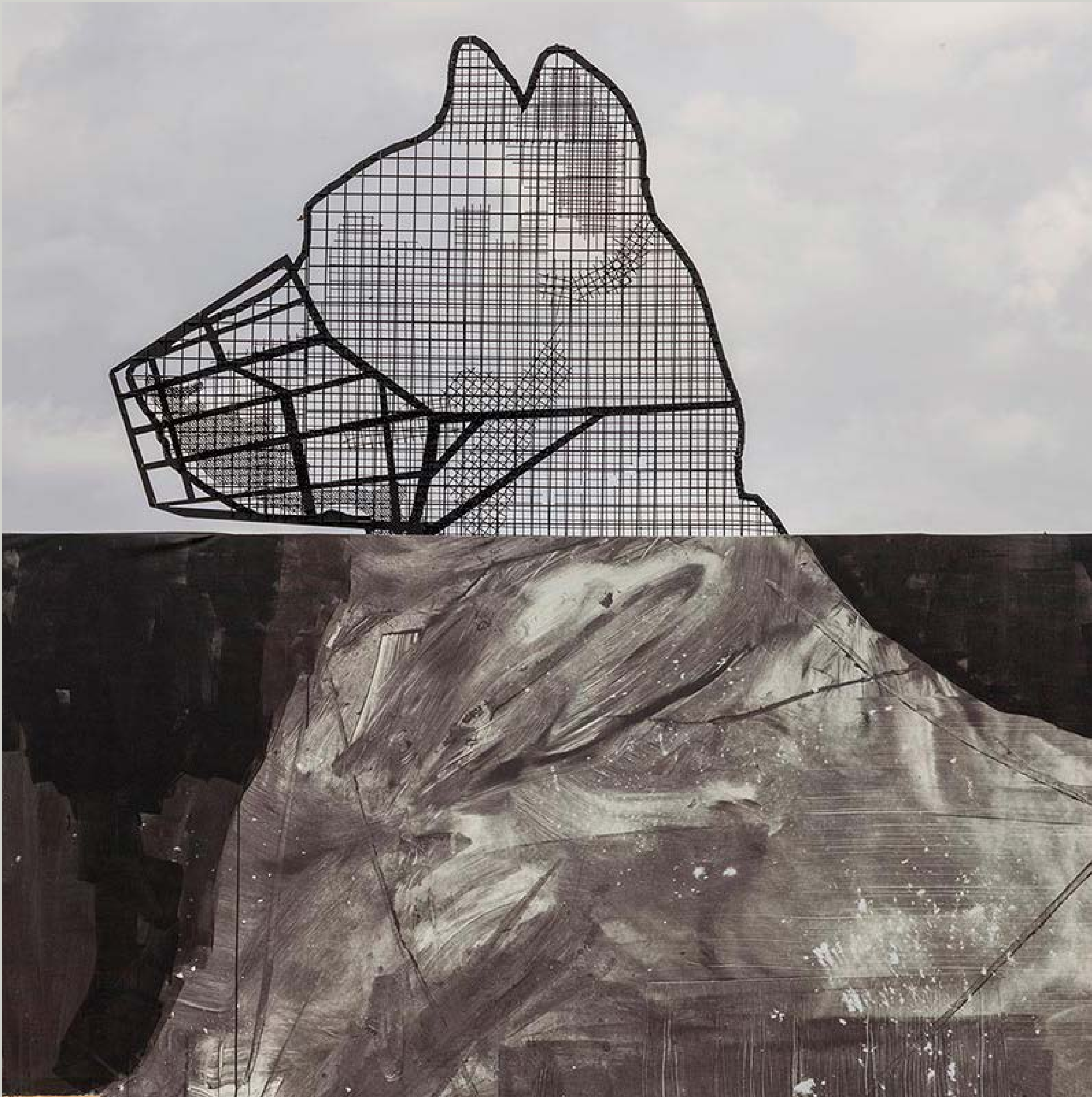
Insurrecta commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of the Comunero uprising in the city of Segovia.

In this work, Gonzalo Borondo analyzes the pulses of power through a microscopic approach, focusing on micro displacements and attending to the modes of resistance present in everyday disobedience. Thus, he discovers a principle of reappropriation in the deviant uses of space, thus examining their capacity to question or displace the status quo. It is from this perspective that the artist revisits this insurrection and pays homage to the comuneros, re-interpreting this historical episode from a contemporary perspective and intervening thirty-two billboards distributed in seventeen locations. As it makes its way through the city, the route is accompanied by both a map and historical texts that will mediate the public's interpretation of the pictorial works and, by extension, of the past. Establishing a parallelism between the force of the comuneros and the natural force, he presents the latter as that which, while subjugated, sustains society, but which, by uprising, could destroy it. Thus, it encourages a critical reconsideration of revolutions as situated episodes, assuming that change is cyclical and inevitable and that conflict is the engine of transformation.

Insurrecta was made in collaboration with the City Council of Segovia and AC/E (Acción Cultural Española), with the support of STUDIO STUDIO STUDIO.











PASSAGE

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER, FRANCIA

2020

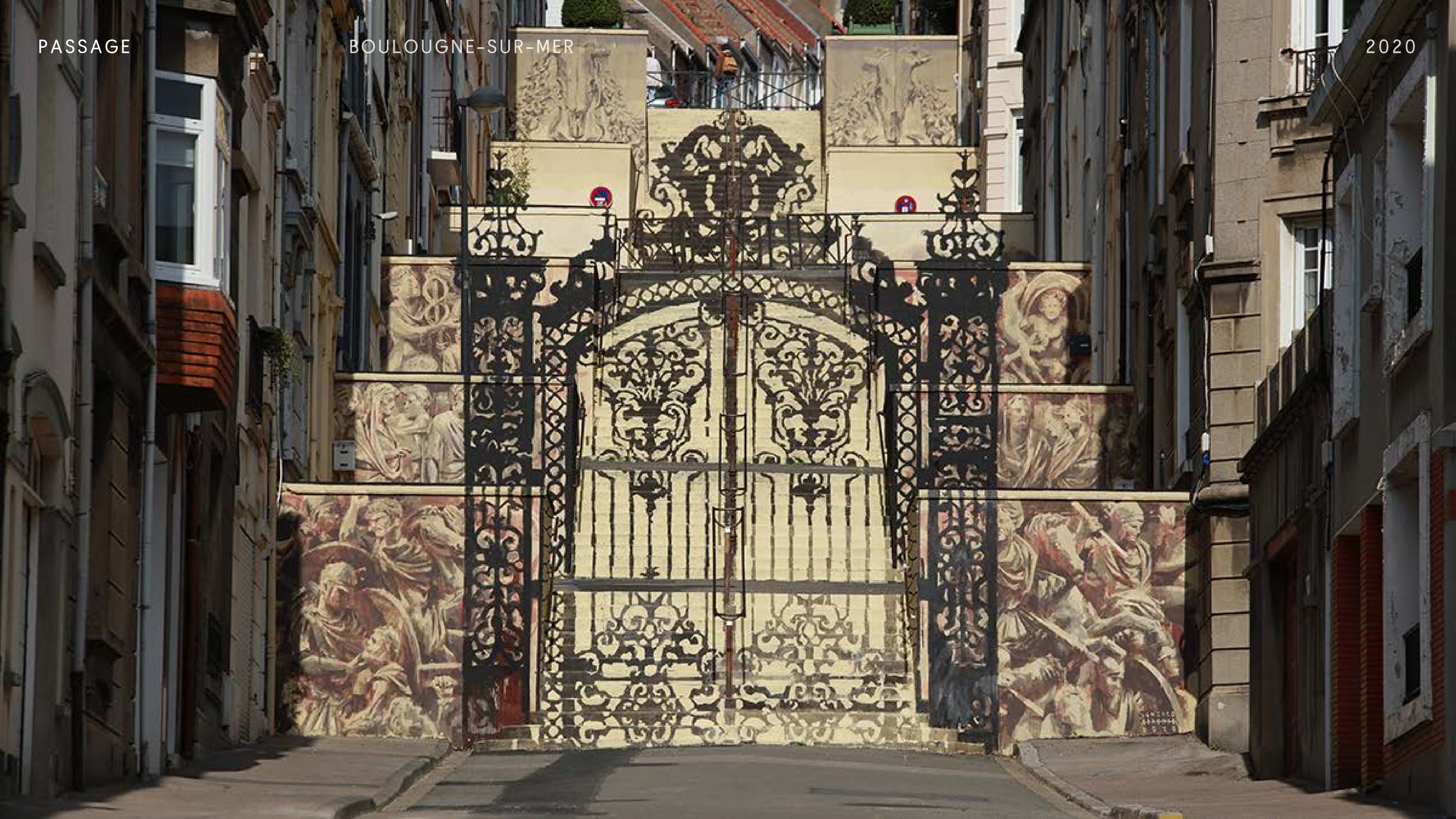
PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY:

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER CITY COUNCIL (FR)

The body and mind become automatically paralyzed when faced with circumstances beyond their ability to handle; this occurs as a preventive measure against weariness. Mammals have inherited this self-limiting mechanism from reptiles. Since there are no natural predators in the human environment, this resource functions on an internal level, overcoming mental obstacles and personal beliefs with a strong will and a strong impulse.

In this passage, the intervention that explores the stages of the creative process is shaped by the staircase, which serves as the medium. Gonzalo Borondo therefore alters the staircase in a way that rises before the viewer like a gate (the imposed limit) based on his own artistic experience, but each step represents a potential for ascension (the deliberate choice to impose oneself on the barrier). The work is divided into six phases by the visuals, which depict the creative process and draw from the individual's interpretation of the area. A primal creative force is represented by Fureur, whereas illogical instincts are reflected and analyzed by Tempérance, and possible drifts and experiments are explored by Libre Arbitre. Conscience, which refers to making deliberate artistic decisions that are always in line with the original impulse, and Harmonie, or the illusion of a goal, come next. Lastly, Tout et rien denotes a going back to the start.

As a result, the artist presents a very subjective understanding of the creative process that was informed by his interactions with the École primaire Jules Ferry school during the piece's production.





MERCI

TEMPLE DES CHARTRONS

BORDEAUX, FRANCIA

2019

PRODUCED BY: BORDEAUX CITY COUNCIL (FR)

PRESENTED BY: LIBERTÉ! FESTIVAL

*THE INSTALLATION IS ACQUIRED BY THE CAPC
(MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN DE BORDEAUX)

Merci turns the Temple des Chartrons in Bordeaux into an immersive installation through an artistic intervention that invites meditation and the consideration of the sentient world surrounding the human being. Inside this Protestant temple, the grandeur of the parlor takes the public back to the sacred, placing them in an attitude of reverence and promoting an affective response. This corresponds to what Gilles Deleuze defines as “the capacity to affect and be affected”: to be moved or symbolically impacted by the other or by the environment. The affective response is thus an essentially relational reaction, which connects the human being with the rest of sentient beings, predisposing an ethical and spiritual movement of openness to the other and to the world.

In the center of the room, a tree surrounded by a circle of light occupies the central choir.

As dramatic as a crucifix, it stands as the central sculpture of the installation, in an allusion to the Landes forest, which surrounds the city of Bordeaux. The circle, which can be interpreted as a circle of light or fire and might evoke either consecration or destruction, opens the piece to multiple interpretations. In the same vein, the tree evokes, at the same time, the ruin of a construction as well as the natural and native, or that which is sacred and spiritual. Thus, Borondo uses superimposition as a strategy of signification, presenting the installation with a profuse layer of meanings that unfold in cascade. Each image is thus an allegory, articulating that which Jorge Luis Borges defined as “the representation of an irrevocable distance between past and present that contributes to consecrate a space”. Temporality thus becomes the constant that runs through the work, turned into a reference to the ephemerality of art, nature, human construction and, ultimately, of existence.

MERCI

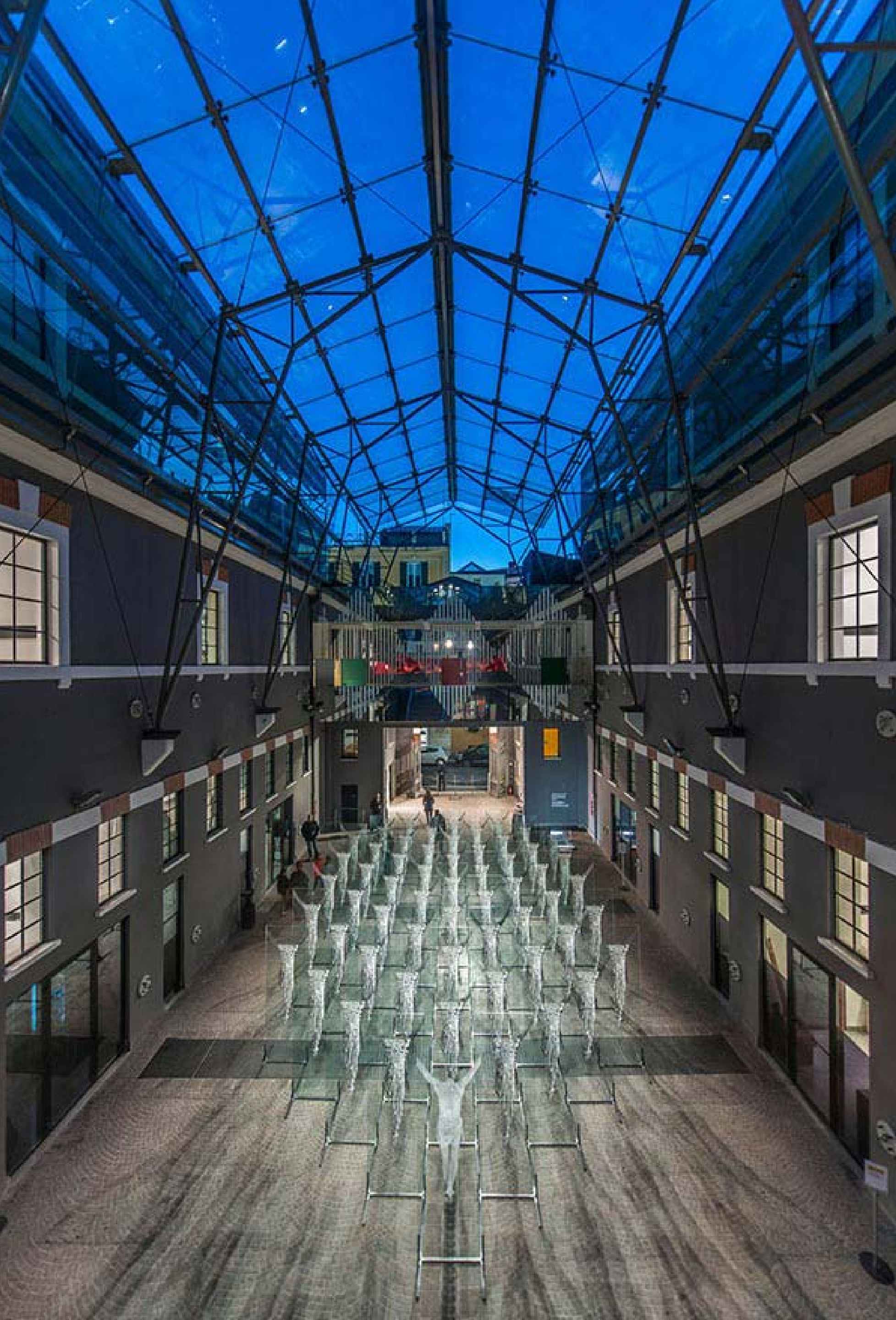
TEMPLE DES CHARTRONS

BORDEAUX

2019







~~NON~~ PLUS ULTRA

MUSEO MACRO

ROMA, ITALIA

2018

CURATED BY: CHIARA PIETROPAOLI

PARTNER: STUDIO VOLANTE

IN COLLABORATION WITH 56FILI

PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY:

EX DOGANA. ROMA (IT)

Non Plus Ultra is a screen-printed installation curated by Chiara Pietropaoli and Arturo Armitrano that examines the concept of limit and the human will to cross it: the need to venture beyond the known world.

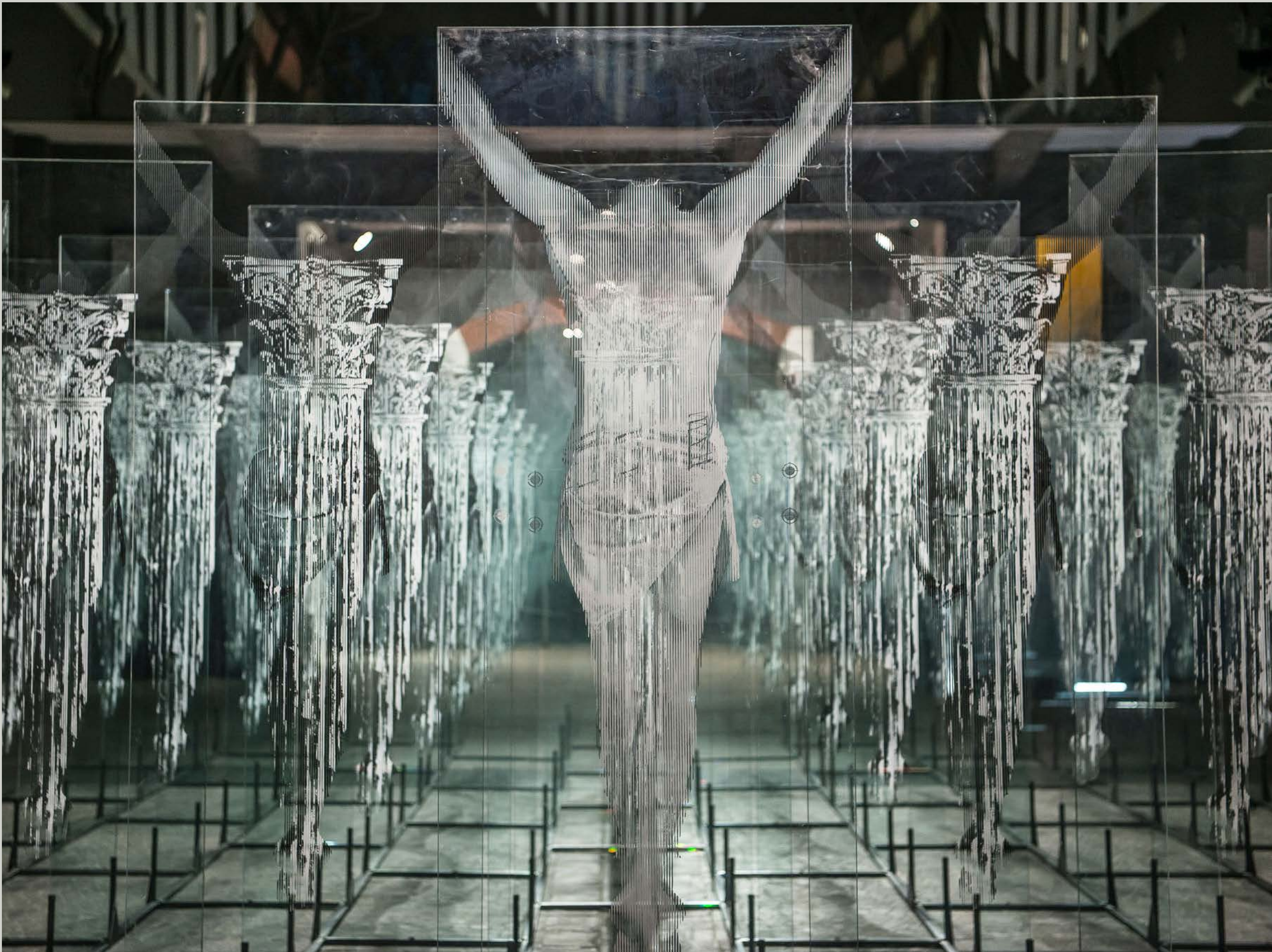
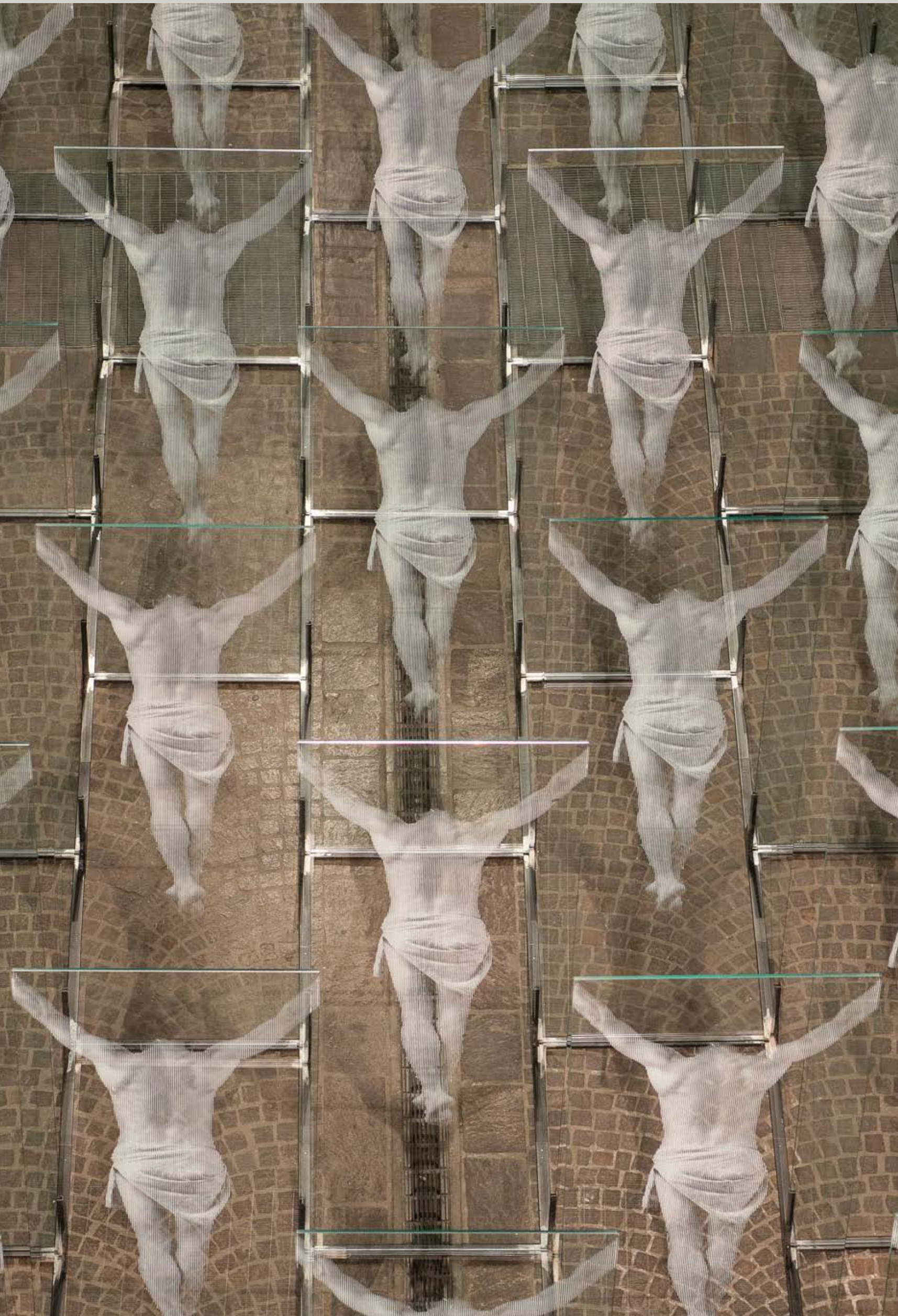
Composed of fifty-six printed glass plates installed on iron bases and functioning as a single modular structure, the work raises a technical challenge linked to overcoming the transparency of glass. Borondo overcomes it by managing to get the glass to accommodate two pictorial images, so that they coexist on the same plate, taking shape at the same time in the exhibition space and maintaining, in turn, the possibility of an independent visibility.

This delivers a singular viewing experience: on the one hand, the viewer can appreciate how the architectural structure draws a column on each plate and, on the other, the viewer can discern the figure of a man with his arms outstretched, in an allusion to the figure of Christ and the human will to encompass every field of reality. Both are icons of Western's artistic hegemony, formal complexes that limit the perception and appreciation of heritage.

In the installation context, Non Plus Ultra invites to enter a space that is as refractory as it is precarious, due to the vitreous nature of the piece. Thus, while offering a series of holographic interplay, the glass exposes its own fragility, generating in the public the need to move away from it aiming to protect it, leaving the installation.

Non Plus Ultra is the result of a research and experimentation process that began with Shame in Athens in 2013. For the Museo Macro's exhibition, Gonzalo Borondo shares with the public the silkscreen printing process as well as the installation of the piece, which take place in the museum's courtyard.







MATIERE NOIRE

MARCHÉ AUX PUCES

MARSELLA, FRANCIA

2017

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

BRBR FILMS, CARMEN MAIN, DIEGO LÓPEZ
BUENO, EDOARDO TRESOLDI, ISAAC CORDAL,
ROBERTO ATZORI, SBAGLIATO.

GIF BY A.L. CREGO

CURATED BY: CARMEN MAIN

CO-PRODUCED BY: GONZALO BORONDO,
EDOARDO TRESOLDI

PRESENTED BY: GALERIE SAINT LAURENT,
MARSEILLE (FR)

Matiere Noire, is framed as a collaboration where Gonzalo Borondo invited another eight multidisciplinary artists from different origins to shape a 13123ft site-specific installation at the Marché aux Puces Saint Ouen, the world's largest flea market.

Curated by Carmen Marin, Matiere Noire is an examination of the concept of dark matter: that which is discarded because it cannot be appreciated, but nevertheless conditions the universe and people's existence.

Thus, using those objects that they find during the three months residency in the city, the artists reflect on the "memory of the unknown", by using various artistic mediums, such as animations, holograms and videos. Structured in three acts -projection, perception and creation-, the exhibition questions what human knowledge and reasoning can distinguish, pointing out how technological processes, or even the artistic gesture itself, can blur the perception of reality. The work rescues and stresses, or invents and fictionalizes, the stories of the found objects from the Marché aux Puces Saint Ouen. In this way, it alludes to the limitation of human perception and to the material (and immaterial) conditioning factors determining the future of events and the destiny of individuals. The result is an alternative, non-systematic archive of dark matter that is open and potential, and which structures a past without which the present would be unthinkable.

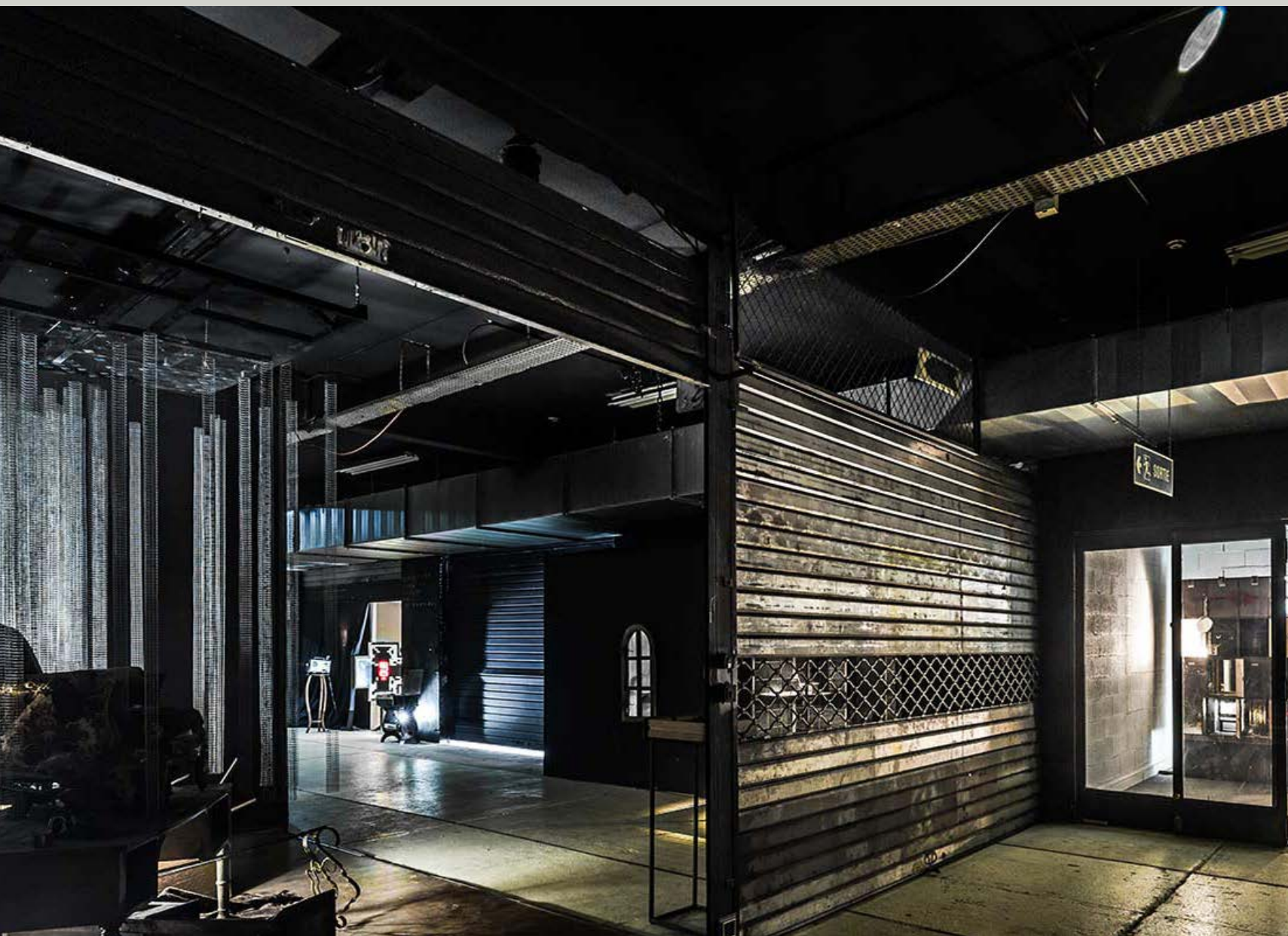
MATIERE NOIRE

MARCHÉ AUX PUCES

MARSEILLE

2017







CENERE

SELCI, ITALIA

2017

PRODUCED BY: SELCI CITY COUNCIL

PRESENTED BY: ASOCIACIÓN KILL EHE PIG (IT)

*ART PRIZE LAGUNA

Cenere is a permanent installation within the funeral chapel of the Selci Cemetery.

The nature of this space, which is still used for worship and memory, complicated the conceptualization of a work that was meant to accompany one of humanity's oldest rites of passage. A delicate calibration of the intervention's scope was necessary, so that it would safeguard the passage, merging with it without standing out.

Thus, the research and conceptualization of the piece is articulated around the healing and the respectful listening to the space, updating a medieval conception of art that allows to deal with the spiritual charge that burial entails.

The result is a plastic intervention that does not only modify the circular walls of the building, but also the pavement and the vault. The paintings return the attention to the earth, which is perceived as a holy ground, and, at the same time, as the natural environment and primary material to which the ashes return. The installation is presented through a nocturnal route that deepens the intimate dimension of the project, presenting it as a space that lives in full daylight, revealing itself completely in the emptiness of the night.

Cenere followed a two-year project in the village of Selci, in the framework of the Pubblica artistic residency. It deserved the Arte Laguna Prize (2018).







HIERARCHIE

URBAN NATION

MUSEUM

BERLIN, GERMANY

2017

IN COLLABORATION WITH: 56FILI

AND AIRLIGHT LAB

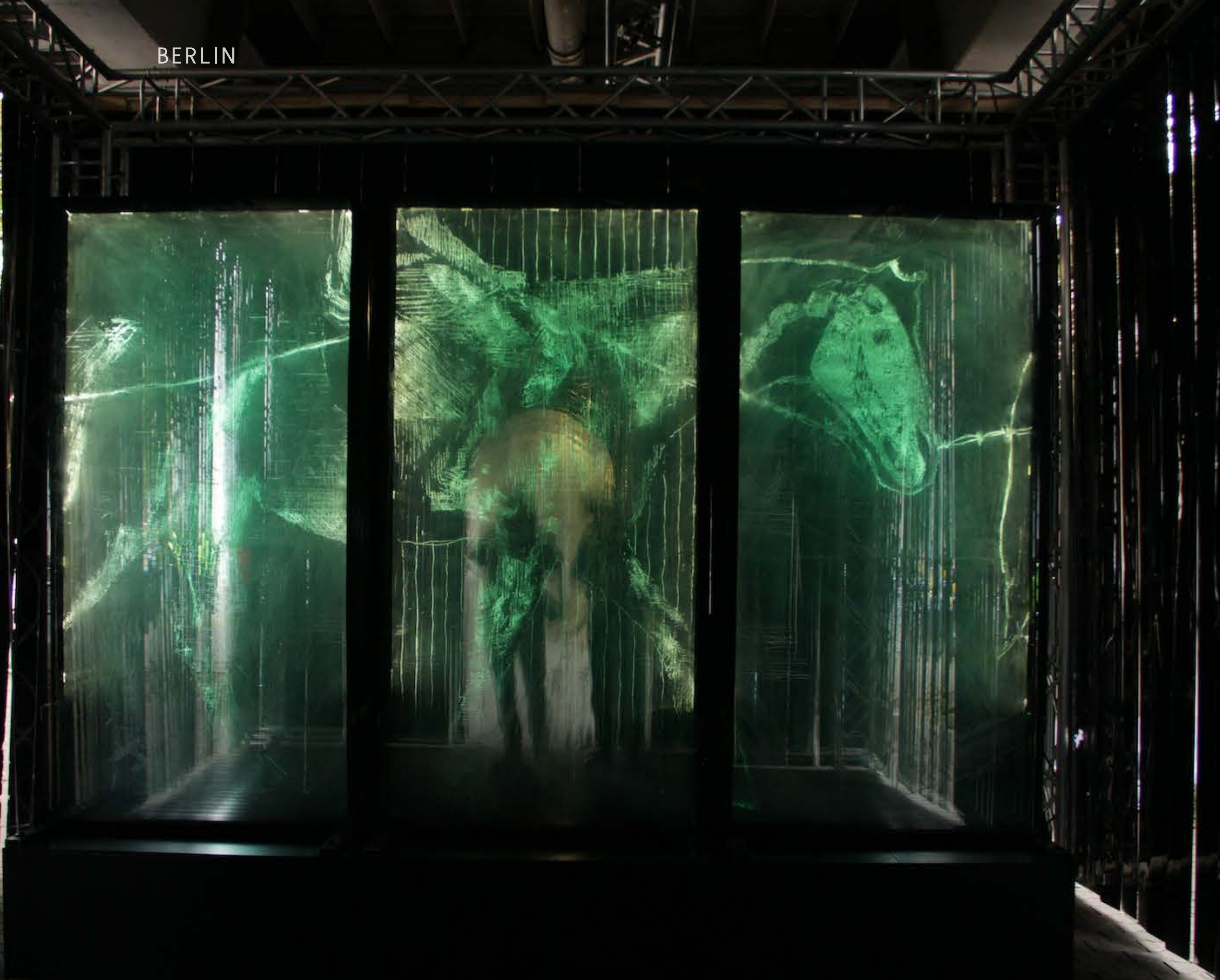
PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY: URBAN NATION

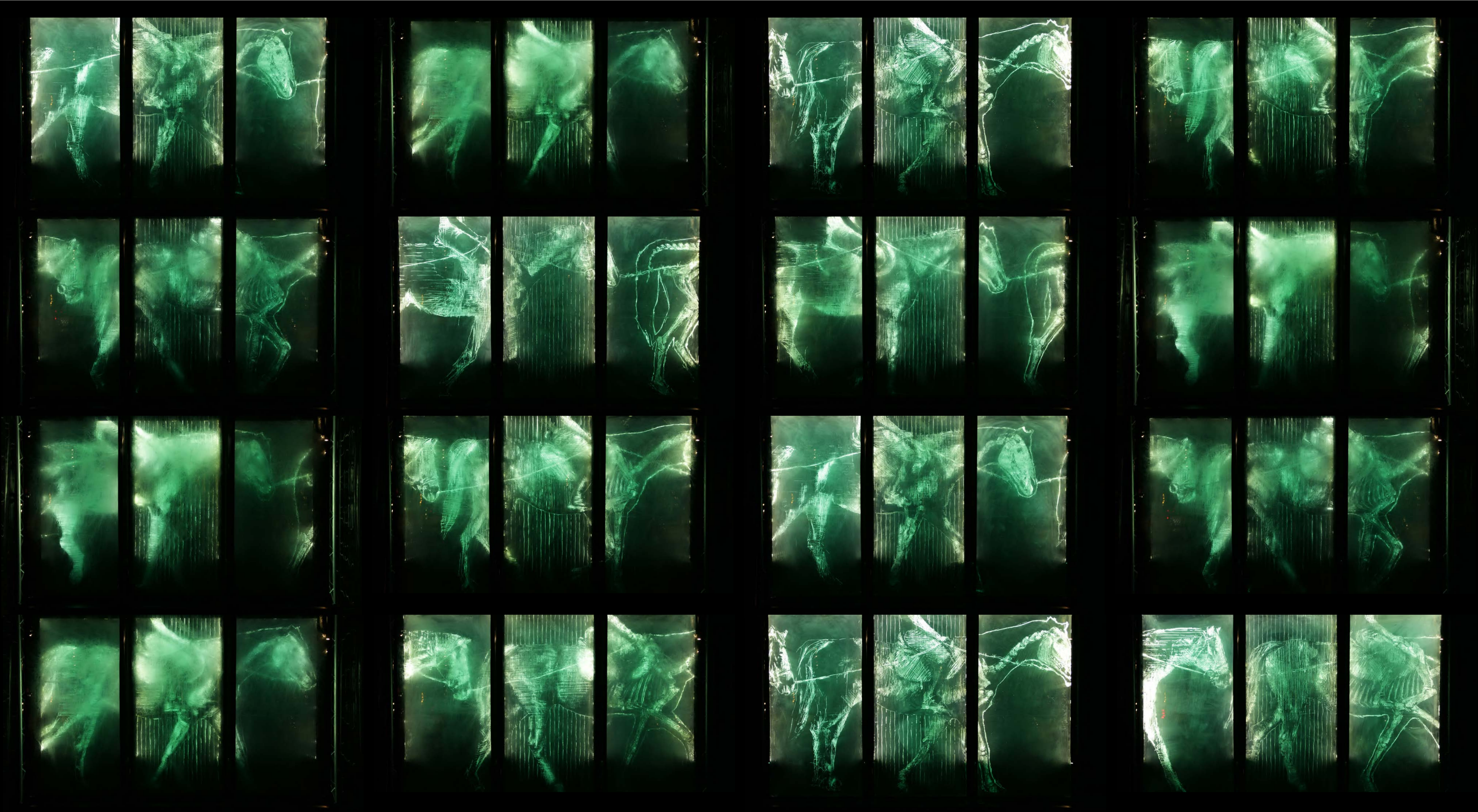
CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM.BERLÍN (DE)

Hierarchie, commissioned by the Urban Nation Contemporary Art Museum in Berlin, is a site-specific installation that aims to represent movement without the need for a screen. To achieve this, Gonzalo Borondo works with glass by intervening it with paint and acid so that, by interaction with light, it conveys movement without the need for a screen.

Thus, installed in a space that favors the luminous effect, the forty-eight glass plates that make up Hierarchie are animated by an intermittent LED lighting process inspired by pre-cinematography devices.

The images represented allow the distinction of a horse mounted by a rider in the foreground. Thanks to the play of light, its reproduction suggests that the position of the horse varies when moving, in an allusion to temporal flow and permutation. In turn, the installation is accompanied by a musical adaptation of the processions that take place in Segovia during Holy Week played by the band San Andrés. The images, now emphasized by a drum roll that falls somewhere between the sacred and the military, are tinged by a question on domination. This adds another layer of significance to a piece that seems to stage the processual character of power as it moves through history, never the same, but just mutating to perpetuate itself.







ARIA

CATANZARO, ITALIA

2016

PRESENTED AND PRODUCED BY: ALTROVE
FESTIVAL. CATANZARO (IT)

Aria, which is located in the courtyard of the San Giovanni complex, draws from a remarkable collaborative artistic process.

While creating the piece, Gonzalo Borondo drew the figures that make up the piece with acrylic paint, which would later be transformed into print frames. These were created by 56Fili and StudioSuperfluo, made to measure in the windbreaks, already installed in the complex's courtyard. The screen printing took place on site, in the courtyard itself.

The figures depicted in Aria hold flags which change depending on the perspective: they might be empty or come up stamped with the image of the landscape surrounding the building. A landscape that is, therefore, either reflected by the windbreaks or seen through them, showing that the identity of a territory is shaped by its landscape and its people more than it is by its flag. The composition and formal aspect of the glass result in a swing on the visual perception of the work, which oscillates between emptiness and fullness. Therefore, the appearance of the installation changes when the sunlight does, showing a different landscape depending on the time of day.

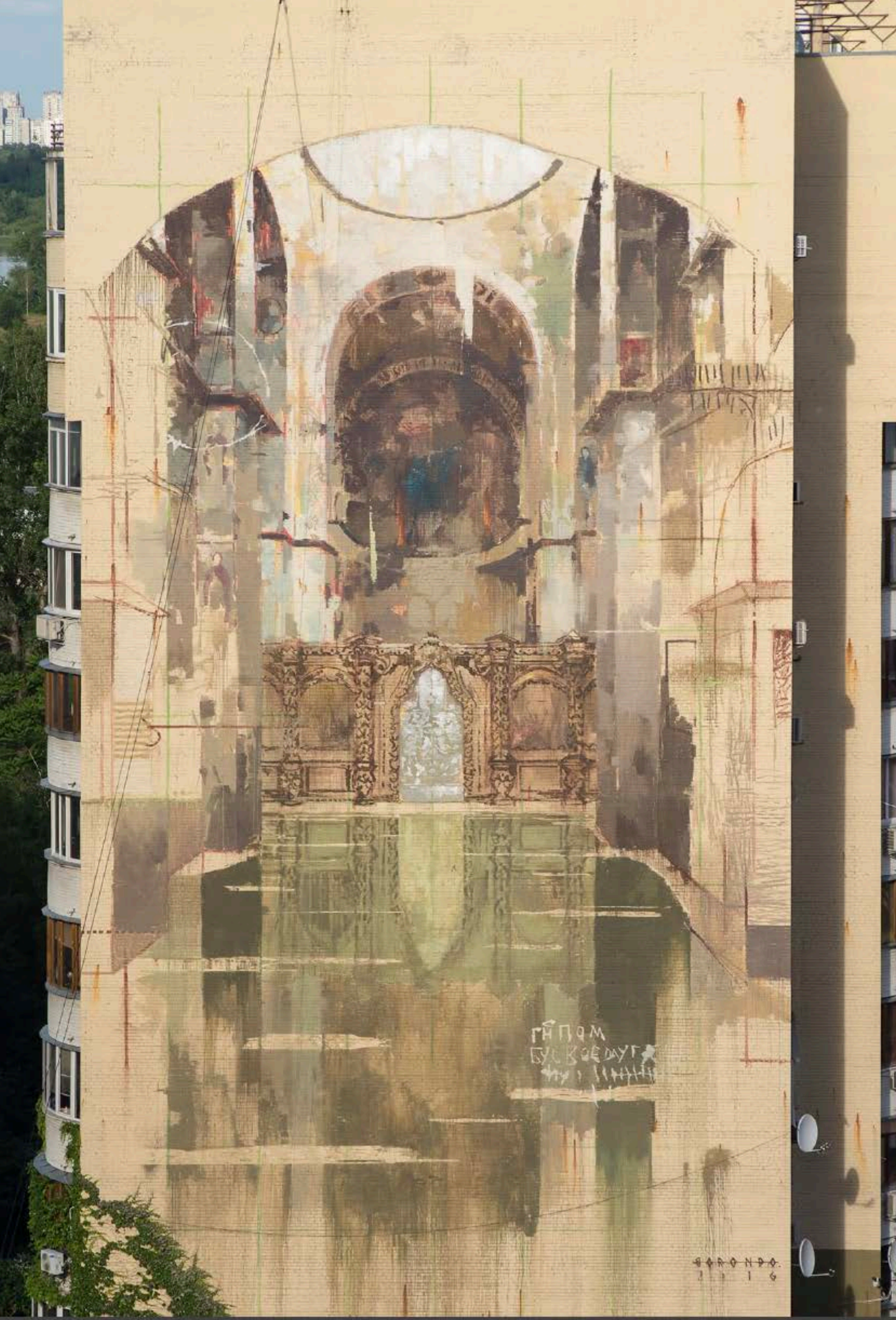
The intervention is accompanied by a video in which the figures of the windbreak are captured at different times of the day, so that their appearance fluctuates with the variation in light exposure.

This makes for a series of seventy-three different figures that are digitally animated to simulate movement; a displacement that, in turn, alludes to migratory movements as well as to the contradictions and adversities inherent in the fact of leaving one's own territory.

The work is thus the result of an artistic and architectural research, born from the desire to create a structure that would be both useful and capable of establishing a fruitful dialogue with its setting.

Aria was created as part of the Altrove Festival.





PREVIOUS WORK. PUBLIC ART.

MURALES AT: SPAIN, ITALY, FRANCE, GERMANY,
DENMARK, PORTUGAL, POLAND, BOLIVIA,
NORWAY, SWITZERLAND, RUSSIA, AUSTRALIA,
INDIA, BRASIL, USA, TURKEY.

Gonzalo Borondo's artistic practice began in the field of mural painting. This previous work in public art contributes to the understanding of the artist's pictorial approach and the role that scale and dimension play in relation to space in his current interventions.

Throughout his career, the artist will not relinquish his former tendencies in relation to the mechanisms of artistic mediation, which he bases on a process of artisanal manipulation which, now combined with digital media, cross-examines the public space and the landscape. Thus, Borondo has maintained a constant in his works: an exploration and unveiling of the different layers (historical, relational) built up on spaces and which have been buried, in order to recount from them that which might interpellate the present of society. The exhibition of this palimpsest of the landscape stresses the paradoxes and contradictions that inform contemporaneity and that the artist unearths through strategies of rendering or intervention that allow their examination. Thus, by prolonging the dichotomy instead of canceling it, he emancipates the contrasts avoiding its resolution, so that they describe, in the process of their constitution, the dissonances and antagonisms of the natural and social environment. Thus, this creative procedure is already conveyed in his first works, which aimed at research lines that Borondo has nurtured through his artistic career.

WALLS



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