

# Galeria Estrany-de la Mota

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## David Bestué. Piedras y poetas

Opening: Saturday, January 26th 2013, 12.00 m.

Exhibition: 26.01.2013 – 27.03.2013. Tuesday to Friday from 10.30 p.m. to 7.00 a.m. and Saturdays from 10.00 p.m. to 2.30 a.m.

Just a year ago the artist duo Bestué/Vives decided to separate after almost ten years working together. Since then the two have continued to work separately shaping new projects. As a result, Galeria Estrany-de la Mota is pleased to present the exhibition of recent work by David Bestué

Bestué has shown always a deep interest in architecture and form. Proof of this, are his books *Enric Miralles a izquierda y derecha (también sin gafas)* [Enric Miralles left and right (even without glasses)] published in 2010, and *Formalismo Puro. Un repaso a la arquitectura moderna y contemporánea de España* [Pure Formalism, a look at the modern and contemporary architecture in Spain] published in 2011. Other solo projects presented while still working together with Marc Vives already raised some of the issues that appear in his new work. For instance the exhibition of 2005 at the Sala Montcada of Barcelona (Fundació La Caixa) *Visión parcial del trabajo de un arquitecto* [Partial view of the work of an architect] and *Historia de la Espuma* [The history of Foam] presented in 2008 at the Centre of Culture Sa Nostra of Palma, among others.

*Piedras y poetas* [Stones and Poets] in addition to the reference to architecture and the city itself, relates to history as well, bringing new and surprising encounters. For David Bestué the urban fabric is a constant source of ideas competing to structure and embody his thought today. If until now applying his personal perspective to understand architecture has allowed to view the buildings as part of a particular language with which to narrate emotional aspects, this language has now been extended by a growing interest in sculpture, matter, and especially how does the later get to be imposed to form. So does he unfold before us the town, not only through its architecture but also through its monuments, public works and even countless small everyday details that give it meaning.

### Notes on the exhibition by David Bestué

For this exhibition I have seen many sculptures and have read many poets, I hope some of this exercise is visible in it. I do not believe it necessary to comment all works; I will focus on some of them:

### Materials

In college I worked with clay modelling, something that seemed quite anachronistic, and since then I have cherished a big resistance to work with form. However, I think the sculptural object is a kind of conquest of the irrational, a kind of anchor or focus of very powerful physical intensity that should be explored, even if it means taking constant choices. Some time ago, I looked for a material that is more in line with my interests and focused on the sculptures of sand (*Sand sculpture (kiss)*). I enjoy doing that kind of sculptures that after all are the first, because you know they will not last long, as if the sand were a kind of constantly changing demiurgic material.

## Representation and reality

Since modelling was not my thing I focused on the idea of the mould. In *Pure Formalism* I already spoke of the birth facade moulds in *Sagrada Família*, a theme that haunts me fairly. To complete his motif decoration Antoni Gaudí used moulds from animals, plants and even people. In some cases this involved the death by asphyxiation of the shaped, something that also happens in the film *A Bucket of Blood* where a mad sculptor coats with plaster things as if they were croquettes. Some of that tension between the real and the represented is visible in *Dog-dog*.

## The degree zero of the sculptural

In Chinese bazaars sculptures sell for 10 euros. The sculptures represent couples in love, clasped hands and even Buddhas. Usually made of plaster or resin, they are a kind of degree zero of the sculptural. They are certainly kitsch works aiming at generating some emotional withdrawal or a cheap transcendental resource, but sometimes they work: representing shamelessly sentimental aspects that are endangered, extracted from an exhausted deposit, which is the body. Perhaps the objections raised by such sculptures can be exorcised with matter. In *Realistic sculpture with condom found in the Arrabasada* I wanted to add a point of actuality playing with the idea of "poetic substance." Maybe my approach to the sculptural ought to focus on matter: delve into the creation, origin and properties of each material and use them as a metaphor for the mental, for thought, even if it means using them irrationally.

## Clara and desire

Josep Clara works since 22 around the naked human figure as embodiments of beauty, a research he will not abandon until his Death. I believe that the sculptor at work is escaping from himself; he builds a body to get out of his own. The goal is to create something stable because stone allows you to think of something that will last forever, where the effort is going to be captured. But he himself suffers from this decision: he falls in love with his models, like Pygmalion but in reverse, he gets ill when he works in the open, gets upset to see his work dirty, target of loutish acts... I am interested in the kind of sexual desire that can create a sculpture of this sort, just stone at the end. In *Clara with problems* I thought about a way to complete some of his sculptures. I liked to set up a temporary shelter to disable its volume. For that I thought to use the kind of conglomerate that mimics marble. To generate a game between the true and false, an issue on which I will talk more later.

## Styles and present

A particular legacy of the past symbolizes each country, historical or moral moments that define us. In Catalonia these symbols are linked to the Romanesque, to Modernism or, more recently, to the Olympics. Physical legacies emptied of their content which no longer work (without being able to replace them with other things). It is okay to manipulate physical fragments of the past, as in *Trencadissa*. Matter is indifferent to history, it is always present. I want to lose respect or eroticize Modernism (*Muscular Modernism*) as a way to exorcise it.

## True and false materials

This loss of respect for the past also includes the materials themselves. In fact, fake materials have gradually replaced quality materials. I'm interested in this loss of respect for materials because it leads to another question: if materials are currently used in such a way then other things also can be used like this as well. In *Truth surrounded by falseness* I play with the tension between the real and its copy. I'm specially interested in fake stuff, which mimics the other and seems to have no time or value but an inner emptiness. What does it mean exactly? Involves its existence a moral questioning? Accepting something like this, some elements null and without identity, somehow activating a kind of material schizophrenia means that we are a bit like them, we have some similar qualities.

## Body representation

Let's go back to Clarà, this time his sculpture *Puixança* and its contemporary version. Its hermetic quality intrigues me due to its extreme tightness and absence of holes or vanishing points. Sometimes this kind of sculptures connects with bodybuilding contests, the static choreography performed in them where bodybuilders are completely smeared with tanning oil. This metal patina emphasizes their goal of becoming statues, of which some subjects may become objects, as also happened in the beginning of mime. It also has to do with zentai, a Japanese practice initially linked to the dance in which a tight garment covers the entire body, showing it also without holes. In *Subject object* I wanted to make a formula for displacement between a model and an object, without easily eliciting the limits of each.

## The organic

Some butchers sell a duck pâté that is shaped like a duck. If you think about it, it is quite disturbing; an organ of the animal is used to represent the whole. It seems a cruel form of mockery. Both this example and the quote exemplify or describe a vision mechanism by which it is not important what something means but rather look into both the materials that form it and its features. In that respect, to admire matter over form, to actually understand it as something that is above its construction and destruction, mere survival. Some of it runs through the entire exhibition, which is nothing more than finding new roles for matter, which take it from nature to the "human comedy." In *Porma* I made a kind of biscuit starting from elements used to describe the writer Juan Benet. In other cases I work with non-visible features such as gravity or the melting point of an object: in *Epoch* the steel rod is held in tension thanks to a gallium hook, a metal that melts at 30 degrees temperature (therefore it can not be touched without losing its shape).

## Forced wood

At the entrances to some farms and parks arches are usually made by the union of two cypresses. It is something that seems very sweet but actually hides a painful situation, the internal metal structure that, like a vegetable bondage, exercises a constant pressure to both trees, creating a tension between the geometric and the organic. Nature is forced to be what humans want, as it happens in *Right angle in bush*. Maybe it has to do with a very urban manipulation of nature, in which street trees seem hostages of a constant struggle between territories. In short, our relationship with nature is seedy. In fact our relationship with materials, animals or the past is too.

## Reality and photoshop

Strolling along the beach, I took a picture of a girl's shorts. The grid pattern molded to the shape of her ass bending inwardly and causing a dislocation of its geometry. I tried to abstract that image in *Ass with red grid*. I was interested in the introduction of the abstract to the real, something that also happens in the blurring filters that are placed in shop windows or some combination of stone and glass panels in hallways and sinks. These are elements that seem to replicate photoshop tools, manipulations of the visible that also have something to do with the material.

## Steel structures

As its name suggests, in *Man inside structure*, a metal structure wraps a model as if it were an external skeletal system configuring a geometry or building of a moment. I like to put the bodies in tension with these metal structures as if captured by the ornament. Later on I thought of the possibility of structures that may enter the body, blurring the boundary lines of both. Of course I talked to a fakir but asked me for some time. In *Line of intonation crossing the vacuum of the mouth* you can see one of our first collaborations.

### Metal and gesture

Another point of interest regarding the metal is the work of the forge. In the bars you can guess the blacksmith gesture during construction as it remains impressed in the metallic form (twisting, turning...). The gesture hardens and unites the mental origin of the preparation drawings with the physical effort performed for construction (as a reaction of thought from its center). *Hard gesture* starts from the dialogue with a blacksmith whom I gave guidelines for the movements during the construction of the object, an object that I wanted to imitate a mannered movement, the perpendicular bending of the hand on his wrist. In fact modernist bars are usually described in the same way as forms "mannered". What does that mean?

### Metal buildings

One of the last exercises performed for the exhibition are hollow metal constructions that are "stuffed" in a variety of materials. At one time I thought of the possibility of using a variety of materials as if they were words. I wandered through the city collecting residues of feelings or actions, elements of specific places. Of course, placed just like that on top of a table, were quite disgusting. So I thought I'd find them a metal housing, which would render them invisible but felt. The shape or position of each metallic module is the grammatical apparatus of internal matter.

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