



Meadows/ARCO Artist Spotlight: Ignasi Aballí



Meadows Museum features Aballí's conceptual work “*Palabras Vacías*” in an exhibit confronting 27 iron plates that showcase “empty words,” creating tension and dialogue between form and meaning, language and image, signified and signifier.

The multimedia work of Spanish conceptual artist [Ignasi Aballí](#) (b. 1958), who is representing Spain at the 59th Venice Biennale, often incorporates unusual materials that challenge the viewer's perception of reality while raising questions about transience and permanence. The Meadows exhibits his series *Palabras Vacías* (*Empty Words*, 2020), which confronts the viewer with 27 individual, galvanized iron plates hung at eye level.

Cut into the metal plates are words such as “INVISIBLE” and “ABANDONED”—and other adjectives that reference being invisible or forgotten—thereby imbuing the negative space with meaning; what he refers to (both literally and figuratively) as “empty words.” The resulting tension between the form and meaning of the words creates a dialogue between language and image, between signified and signifier. Confronted by empty space, the viewer is, in a way, seeing the meaning of the words rather than the words themselves. *Palabras Vacías* is hung differently each time it is exhibited, and the artist himself will work with museum staff to oversee the installation in the Meadows's galleries when he is on site in early March.

This exhibition marks the inauguration of the Meadows's partnership with Fundación ARCO, which is among Spain's most important advocates for living artists. Established in 2019, MAS: Meadows/ARCO Artist Spotlight is a six-year partnership under which one contemporary Spanish artist with limited recognition in the U.S. is chosen biennially to present his or her work at the Meadows Museum for approximately four months. The artist is selected through a juried

VISUAL ARTS
DALLAS

Sun, March 06–
Sun, June 26, 2022

Venue

Meadows Museum, 5900 Bishop Blvd,
Dallas, TX 75205

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Admission

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Credits

Organized by the Meadows Museum, SMU, Dallas, in collaboration with Fundación ARCO and funded by a gift from The Meadows Foundation.



process involving representatives from both Fundación ARCO and the Meadows Museum. A key component of the program is the artist's visit to Dallas for educational programming and special events in coordination with the Meadows School of the Arts and other local partners. Selected artists will do studio visits with MFA students, present their work in a public gallery talk, and more, with the goal of building lasting ties between SMU, Fundación ARCO, and the artists themselves.

ABOUT IGNASI ABALLÍ

Born in Barcelona in 1958, Aballí has had solo exhibitions of his work in galleries and public institutions, both national and international, since 1990, including shows at Espacio Uno, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, 2002); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (Macba, Barcelona 2005); Fundação Serralves (Porto, Portugal, 2006); IKON Gallery (Birmingham, United Kingdom, 2006); ZKM (Karlsruhe, Germany, 2006); Today Art Museum (Beijing, China, 2009); Artium Museum (Vitoria, Spain, 2012); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, Spain, 2015); Fundación Joan Miró (Barcelona, Spain, 2016); and the Museo de Arte de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Bogotá, Colombia, 2017).

In addition to being chosen to represent Spain at the *59th Venice Biennale* in 2022 he has participated previously in the *52nd Venice Biennale* (2007), as well as the *Sharjah Biennial 8* (United Arab Emirates, 2007), the *XI Sidney Biennial*, (1998), the *4th Guangzhou Triennial* (2012) and the *13th Cuenca Biennial* (Ecuador, 2016).

Aballí was awarded the Premio Nacional de Arte Gráfico in 2007 and the Premio Joan Miró in 2015. He continues to live and work in Barcelona and exhibits regularly at the galleries Estrany de la Mota (Barcelona), Elba Benítez (Madrid), Meessen de Clercq (Brussels), Proyecto Paralelo (Mexico City) and Nordenhake (Berlin).