

Exhibition: **Evarist Navarro. La construcción de la memoria
(The Construction of Memory)**

Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM)
30 November 2011- 15 January 2012

Organised by: Institut Valencia d'Art Modern (IVAM)

Sponsored by:



C O R T S V A L E N C I A N E S

The exhibition entitled *La construcción de la memoria* (The Construction of Memory), which presents the work of Evarist Navarro at the IVAM, comprises a selection of his research in the field of sculpture and installations, in which clay, both raw and in its fired or ceramic version, is the predominant material. Several small-format series arranged according to motifs and emblematic forms are placed around three site-specific monumental installations. The series are called *Arquitecturas del cuerpo* (Architectures of the Body), *Arqueologías* (Archaeologies) or *De tripas corazón* (Making the Best of Things), and in them he explores the links between past and present and their representation as solid objects. These works are accompanied by 25 drawings on acetate and 30 watercolours, in which he portrays the sculptural and spatial essays and reflections of his sculpture in two dimensions. A catalogue has been brought out for the exhibition with reproductions of all the works displayed and texts by José Francisco Yvars and Consuelo Císcar.

Evarist Navarro (Castelló de Rugat, 1959) graduated in Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona, where he had Santos Torroella and Hernandez Pijoan, among others, as teachers. When he returned to Valencia, he got a PhD in Fine Arts at the Polytechnic University of Valencia, where he is now a professor in the department of sculpture. As a creator, he forms part of the generation of artists whose work occupied a place at the forefront of the sculpture renovation period in Spain in the nineteen eighties. At this initial period of his artistic career, his research covered such diverse materials as industrial plastic or cast iron. In

the nineties his production changed radically when he gave up the trends of his generation and embarked upon a more personal research, in which he chose clay as the raw material and support for his works.

Clay, in the rigid ceramic version, or as a flexible, plastic mass that solidifies and hardens with the passage of time, allows him to achieve a more pliant arrangement of space. It is the typical characteristics of this material that determine the flexibility and plasticity and also the density, weight and equilibrium of the piece, and provide an almost craftsmanlike tactile appearance, a far cry from the impersonality of serialised industrially-produced works, and shape their construction in the exhibition space. The choice of clay as his material connects his work with the ancestral clay and ceramic trade and his own family tradition.

Evarist Navarro endows his works with an architectonic layout and structure, with which he attempts to configure the abstract representation of everyday spaces. As we can gather from the titles of his series of works – *Palacios de la memoria* (Palaces of Memory), *Estaciones balsámicas* (Balsamic Seasons) *Arquitecturas del cuerpo* – evoke spatial structures in which clay – and also metal – adopts an essential monumentality that evinces primitive constructions: cabins, shelters or ruins.

We also find this architectonic layout in the small-format pieces, representing towers, fountains, walls... Barely outlined, they form the fragments of a discourse that arises, according to the author, from a “need for introspection and to turn thought into an object”.

His work has been exhibited in countries like the United States, Germany, Denmark, Holland and in different Spanish galleries and museums. Among the awards and grants he has been given for his work, it is worth mentioning especially the following: Salón de Primavera sculpture prize, Valencia, 1981; Ciutat de Gandia prize, 1983; Bienal d'Ontinyent prize, 1983; Muestra de Arte Joven prize, Instituto de la Juventud, Madrid, 1986; Bienal de Mislata sculpture award in 1987; Banesto grant for artistic creation, Madrid, 1991; IV Certamen d'escultura a l'aire lliure prize, Borriana, 1993; a grant for the training of professionals in cultural arts and industries from the Ministry of Culture, Madrid, 1994; the “Art Institute of Chicago” grant for university research from the Generalitat Valenciana, 1996; the 11th “Alfons Roig” grant from the Diputación de Valencia, 1996.