



**MIROSLAW BALKA**

*LOS OLVIDOS*

21.02 - 09.05.2026

The Galería Elba Benítez is pleased to announce the coming exhibition of new work by Mirosław Balka, opening Saturday, February 21.

Titled *LOS OLVIDOS* (The Forgetting), the exhibition will consist of a selection of artworks (primarily sculptures and drawings) that, in formally different yet indelibly poetical ways, approach the theme of memory and forgetting on personal, societal and archetypal levels. As is characteristic of Balka's practice, the works on view evolve from existing objects and historical references, drawing on the layers of meaning those objects and references have often accrued -- or, just as often, lost -- through use and disuse over time. The exhibition will include a sculptural installation in which members of the public -- witnesses, in Balka's preferred terminology, more that spectators -- participate by contributing doormats from their own dwelling places to create a collaborative work positioned, like memory and forgetting, at the threshold between arrival and departure.

Mirosław Balka (Warsaw, Poland, 1958; lives and works between Otwock, Poland and Oliva, Spain) imbues physical objects and the spaces they occupy with subtle strata of metaphor and memory, seeking to express how history inevitably shapes and governs the present.

# Galería Elba Benítez

Working primarily with sculpture (although also frequently employing formats such as video, drawing and installation), Balka has developed a highly personal artistic idiom that incorporates an eclectic range of materials, often symbolic of his personal, familial or collective Polish heritage. Basing the scale of much of his sculptural work on the measurements and proportions of the human body, Balka creates installations permeated with a *mise-en-scène*-like quality, activating the works' temporal as well as physical presence.

Known as a "counter-memorialist", Balka rids his nonetheless memory-infused work of all redemptory or glorificational impulse; instead, he uses his practice to give voice to the ways the personal and the universal, past as well as present, speak not only to each other, but also through each other.

Balka has had solo shows at the Contemporary Art Space Kula (Split, 2024); Castello di Ama, (Sienna, 2019); MAN\_Museo d'Arte Provincia di Nuoro (2019); Muzeum Śląskie (Katowice, 2017); Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum (Lviv, 2017); Pirelli Hangar Bicocca (Milan, 2017); Baltic Gallery of Contemporary Art (Ustka, 2016); Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi (Łódź, 2015, 1994); Museum Arnhem (2014); Freud Museum (London, 2014); International Cultural Centre (Krakow, 2013); Winzavod Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow, 2013); Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma (Helsinki, 2013); WRO Art Center (Wrocław, 2013, 2008); Akademie der Künste (Berlin, 2011); Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme (Paris, 2011); FRAC Centre (Orleans, 2011); Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe (Karlsruhe, 2010); MNCARS Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía ( Madrid, 2010); MNCARS Abadía de Santo Domingo de Silos, Burgos (2010); Centre of Contemporary Art, GJK (Trnava, 2010); Modern Art Oxford (2009); Turbine Hall, Tate Modern (London, 2009); University of Massachusetts (Amherst, 2009); The National Gallery of Modern Art (Edinburgh, 2008); Fundación Marcelino Botín (Santander, 2007); Irish Museum of Modern Art (Dublin, 2007); Museo de Arte Moderna (Rio de Janeiro, 2007); Musée d'Art Moderne at Contemporain (Strasbourg, 2004); S.M.A.K. Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (Ghent, 2001); Zacheta National Gallery (Warsaw, 2001); The National Museum of Art (Osaka, 2000); Museu Serralves (Porto, 1998); IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (1997); Kunsthalle (Bielefeld, 1997); Museet for Samtidskunst (Oslo, 1997); Tate Gallery (London, 199); The Lannan Foundation (Los Angeles, 1994); Van Abbemuseum (Eindhoven, 1994); MIT List Visual Arts Center (Cambridge, 1993); The Renaissance Society (Chicago, 1993); Museum Haus Lange (Krefeld, 1992); De Appel Foundation (Amsterdam, 1991) and elsewhere.

Balka has participated on various occasions in the Venice Biennial (1990, 2003, 2005 and 2013) where he also represented Poland in the Polish Pavillion at the 45th Venice Biennial in 1993. He has participated in the São Paulo Biennial (1998), the Liverpool Biennial (1999), the Sydney Biennial (1992, 2006), SITE Santa Fe (2006), the Carnegie International (1995) and documenta IX (1992).

*LOS OLVIDOS* will be Balka's first solo exhibition at the Galería Elba Benítez, which now represents the artist.

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