

``For Both sides of the border``
Ángel Bados

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Once (I remember that what I was working on at the time was approaching absolute chaos), the sculpture stood in front of me to say:

“I am what I am and I have my own law. (...) You can take me down from the pedestal you put me on, or exchange me for other objects, fill me with colour like the finest sacred images, or if you prefer, turn me into a pure outline. But you know that before and after your adventures –to which I entrust myself– only I can turn this material into passionate flesh, and embody the time of duration. And since these are the symbolic attributes of the spatial quality you allocate me, it would be good for you to treat them with the utmost care.”

Perhaps this is why now I dare only to defend the material root of art in my work, in the hope that one of the pieces will stand as testimony to what in the studio moves between considerations about the world we live in or reflecting inwardly on what has been learned and enjoyed with the forever lasting art; because it is not easy to account for sculptures that, even “shaped” with the hands, sometimes escape from what was conceived to be resolved in pure contingency, between senselessness and anarchy, helped only by the faith granted by daily work.

In this regard, it is fair to say that since the first material movement, the logical part of the structure has to endure all manner of ruptures and unforeseen events, as occurrences that ignite desire, and to whose satisfaction one must inevitably fall back on “dealing with what is not known” which, in my opinion, is characteristic of the very making of Art. As for titles or themes, I can say that long ago I decided to avoid titles to let the work transmit its own calling, although it is true that from the beginning each sculpture promotes its identification through different mottos, either as a tribute to other artists or a reference to the landscape and nature, from the massive manifestations of house and mountain, to the hollow and the things that inhabit it. Thus, come to mind House Difficult to Keep, African Mountain, Southern Cross, Lalibela ..., With Oteiza’s permission, For I. B.

But the reference to landscape, also cultural, often crosses paths with Arab art, either with the material economy of its architectural space, or with the kind of religious monument sometimes embellished with embroidered stories. I see these as proof, shall we say, of symbolic sustainability in a sea of increasingly explicit images of our culture. This, perhaps, explains the use in sculptures of almost always veiled photocopies, as a counterpoint, I think, to the image of consumption, but also as a trick for turning it into sculptural material.

However, what in one way or another is always present in the work is a group of sculptures –Metaphysical Boxes, Homage to Klee, You are Peter... –which, by betraying the experimental mandate of their author with good lines, manage to give material body to the underlying theme or idea, and which also act as a response to some of his poetically more enigmatic lessons, such as “(...) the artist puts in the time and nothing and no one can take it away” – which we repeat like a slogan without realising the material truth it holds.

Revolving around these motifs, the exhibition’s motto could be some fragment of poetry by Al-Russafí de Valencia, a 12th-century Arab poet who lived in Valencia and Malaga, whose poem Si el mar pudiera hacerse de jardines (If the sea could be made of gardens) has often resonated during my long period living and working in Bilbao. But it could equally be titled Sculpture as a Remainder, given the militancy of pieces in the sculpture as opposed to its disciplinary fragmentation; or In Spite of Oteiza, because of the heart-felt treason committed by some of us, sculptors of Bilbao.

Although, if you allow me, we could call it For Both Sides of the Border.

Angel Bados

Bilbao, summer of 17



Installation view



Installation view



Cabeza I, 2012. Wood, stone, fabric, paper. 26x29x30cm.



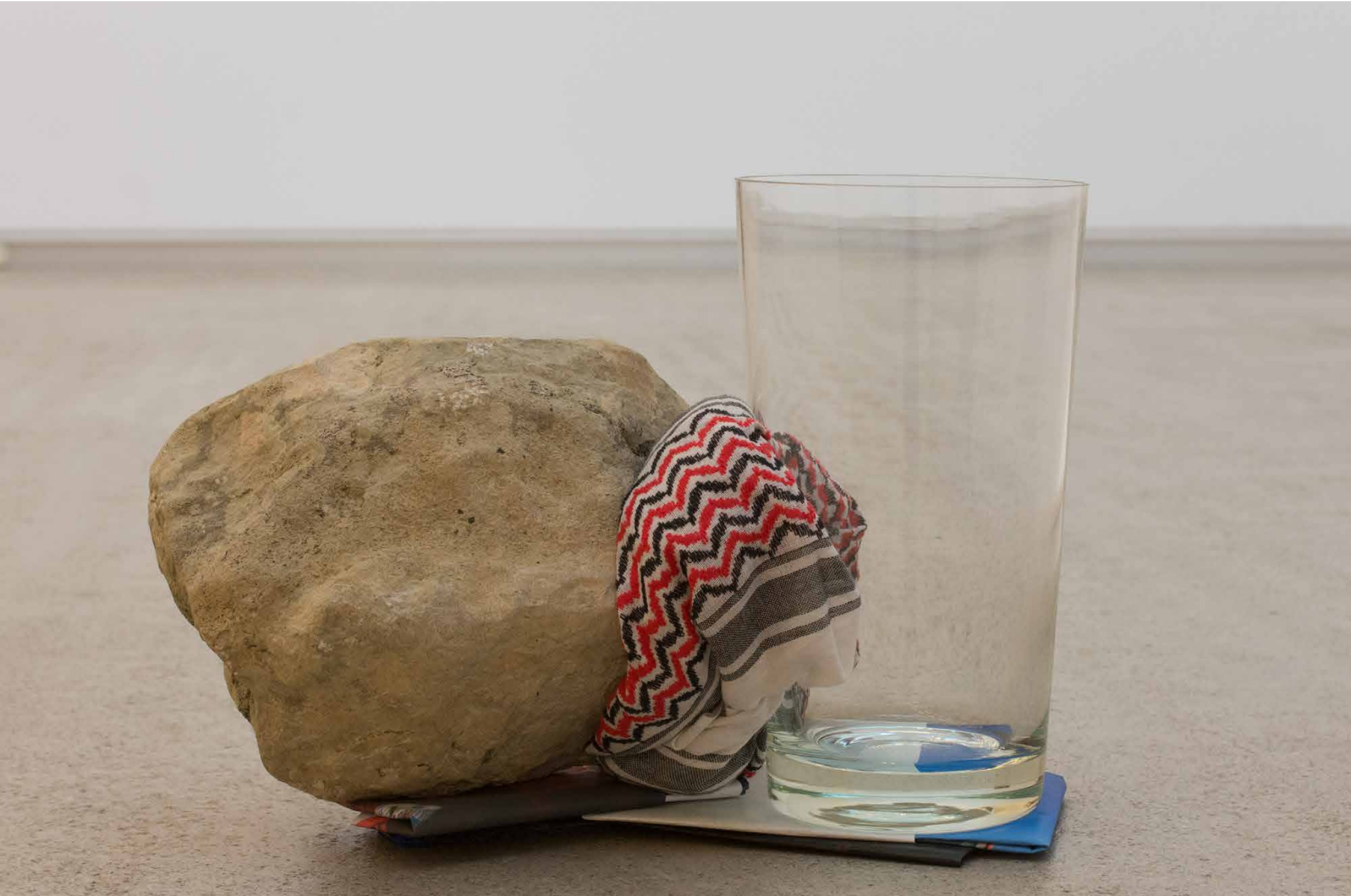
Cabeza II, 2012. Wood, stone, fabric. 24x26x37cm.



Montaña Africana III, 2013. Wood, paper. 45x44x31cm.



Montaña Africana III, 2013. Wood, paper. 45x44x31cm.



Untitled, 2010. Stone, crystal, paper, fabric. 40x22x31cm.



Untitled, 2014. Wood, cardboard, fabric. 73x76x53cm.



Installation view



Untitled, 2014. Wood, cardboard, paper. 81x84x57cm.



Frontón, 2014. Wood, stone, cardboard, fabric, wire. 48x30x37cm.



Untitled, 2011. Plaster, wood, fabric, paper. 50x47x32cm.



Shifter II, 2010. Stone, cardboard, plastic, paper. 48x40x15cm.



Untitled, 2011. Plaster, wood. 53x55x22cm.



Installation view



Shifter III, 2010. Cardboard, fabric, paper. 83x62x21cm.



Installation view



Palestina, 2012. Cardboard, wood, fabric. 47x49x22cm.



Untitled, 2012. Wood, fabric, stone. 20x29x23cm.



Untitled, 2013. Wood, cardboard, crystal. 47x38x37cm.



Untitled, 2013. Wood, cardboard, crystal. 33x34x42cm.



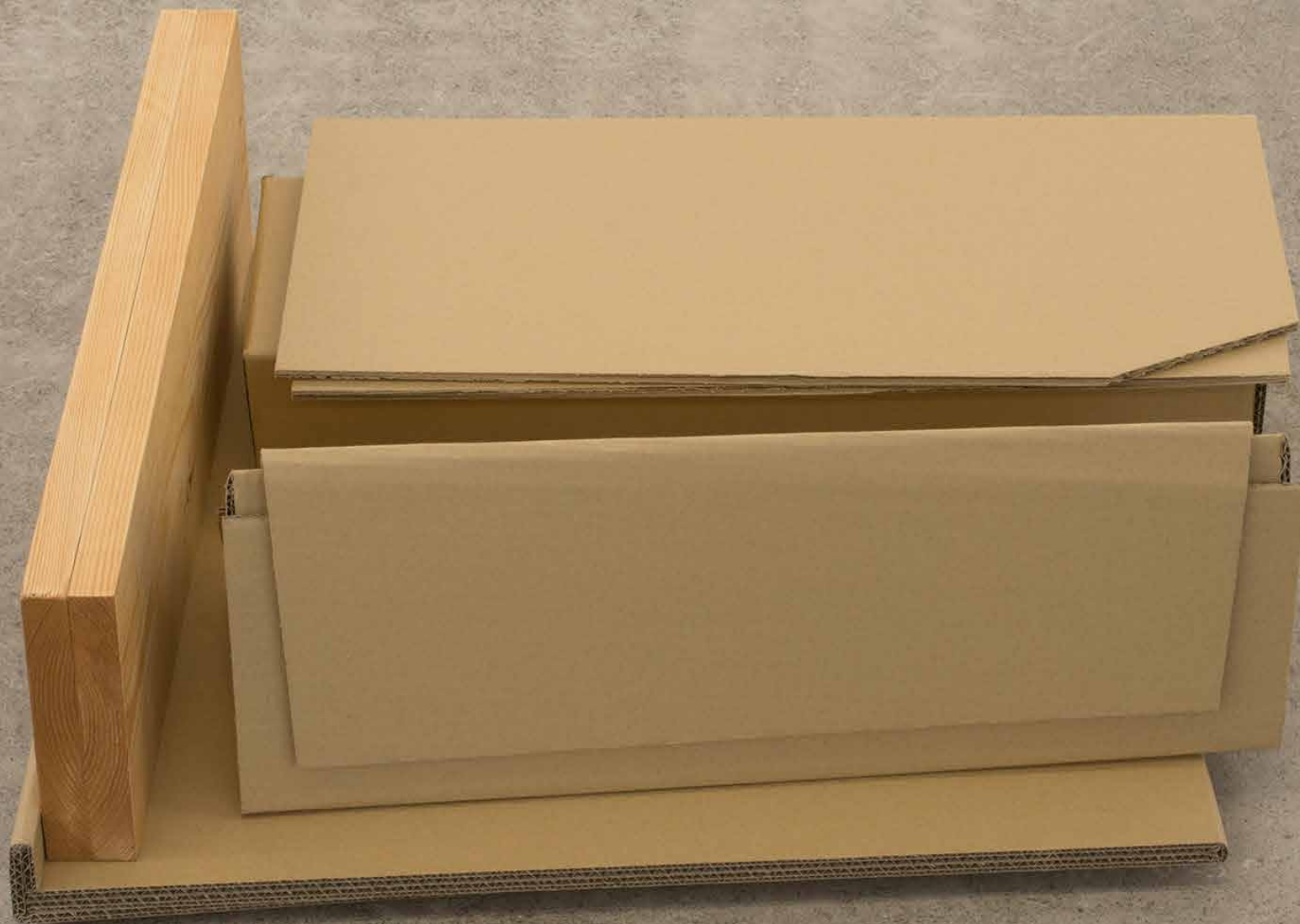
Untitled, 2007. Wood, paper, crystal. 18x15x46cm.



Installation view



La cruz del sur, 2012. Wood, fabric, stone. 30x27x23cm.



Shifter I, 2007. Cardboard, wood. 59x59x19cm.



Untitled, 2007. Crystal, stone, paper. 26x27x34cm.



Installation view



Montaña Africana I. Wood. 53x46x45cm.



Montaña Africana II. Wood. 53x46x45cm.



Installation view



Para ambos lados de la frontera II, 2011. Lead, fabric. 91x163x107cm.



para ambos lados de la frontera

ÁNGEL RADOS

Installation view



Caja difícil de guardar, 2012. Cardboard, wood, paper, plastic. 47x35x24cm.



Para ambos lados de la frontera I, 2011. Lead, fabric. 152x90x84cm.



Installation view



Lalibela, 2007. Wood, stone, fabric. 29x24x26cm.



Proletario, 2013. Cardboard, fabric. 26x40x28.

Angel Bados (Olazagutia, 1945) studied at the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, where he received a Bachelor's degree in 1973. He taught at the Faculties of Fine Arts in Valencia and Bilbao. From 1994 to 1998, he led a series of sculpture workshops at Arteleku together with Txomin Badiola which had a huge impact on an entire generation of Basque artists, some very relevant in today's art scene. Bados's work is exhibited in a number of museums including Fundación Caixa de Pensiones de Barcelona, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Fundación Juan March de Madrid, Museo de Bellas Artes de Navarra (Pamplona), Fundación ARCO, and Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao.

CarrerasMugica

www.carrerasmugica.com

info@carrerasmugica.com

Calle Heros 2 / E-48009 BILBAO
T. +34 944234725 / F. +34 944241841