ANTHONY REYNOLDS GALLERY

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Press release

ASIER MENDZABAL

Untitled (Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic)

31 MAY – 14 JULY 2012

This exhibition of new works by Asier Mendizabal is titled (or, rather, untitled) after one of the pieces in it. This would suggest that this piece, or its title (or lack thereof) functions as a key to access the content, the intentions or the links proposed in the show. It very obviously fails to do so. Not only because its rhetorical self denial as a title shirks this function, but also because its allusion, in parenthesis, to linguistics evokes a formalist approach that hardly helps identify a narrative content. The 'untitled' piece is a sculpture of a strange virtuosity that reproduces an exercise of skill, a common task of craftsmanship among carpenters to prove dexterity by carving out a chain, with all its separate links, out of one piece of timber, but this time out of a whole 4m chestnut trunk. The association of the structural elements, the links that form the chain, is one of repetition and difference, each of them being carved in a very gestural manner, reminiscent of an ideologically coded monumentality.

Also included in the exhibition, *Rotations (Moiré/Foule)*, is a series of silkscreens that reproduce photographic representations of multitudes from the illustrated press, mainly from early 20th century publications. Mendizabal has often recalled the moment in which the first photographic representations of massive gatherings started circulating as a moment of self awareness, in the advent of the mass as a political subject, determined by the form of its photographic image. Photography inadvertently introduced an interesting representational paradox, because if the main subject of these representations was the totalizing form of the mass, randomly spread in the available street space, always shot from above, one could recognize the features of each individual constituting this very form, indiscriminately registered in the take. The mass printed reproductions use a dot screen that overlaps the grid of little points with the pattern of little heads forming the crowd, often generating somewhat blurred optical effects very similar to the Moiré patterns that result of overlapping grids. The final form we recognise as symbolic is very often determined by its technical possibilities, and this determination conditions, in retrospect, the very subject matter it represents.

Mendizabal lives and works in Bilbao, He has been the subject of major exhibitions at MACBA, Barcelona, Reina Sofia, Madrid and Raven Row, London and was featured in the 2011 Venice Biennale. This is his first solo show at the gallery.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT DANIEL@ANTHONYREYNOLDS.COM