

María Belén Morales

ITINERANT LABORATORY OF FORMS

CORDOVA/TENERIFE 1990-2000

MAY 16/2024 to JUNE 30/2024



María Belén in 2004, Photography: J. Gregorio

The 1990s was for Tenerife sculptor María Belén Morales (1928-2016) an intense period of creative activity: she created large-scale works that she exhibited in seven solo shows and participated in group exhibitions both on the islands and on the mainland. She also received commissions for sculptures for private collectors, entities and public spaces.

His travels between the Canary Islands and Andalusia generated a reflection on nature and territory that opened new horizons for both sculpture and collage. His studios in Cordoba and Tenerife become authentic itinerant laboratories of forms in which he experiments with light, line and color, as well as with the folding of planes and the play of real and fictitious shadows.

Through the revelation of the geometry of his “Assemblages”, “Oxides”, “Hinges” and “Structured Landscapes” we appreciate how he advances towards “Between Cliffs”, extreme synthesis of a vital landscape with which he wanted to pay homage to this period of his life. And next to these works, we show his “Alphabet of Air”, a set of characters designed to articulate a combinatory plastic in which also converge the forms arising from his experiments in the construction of volume from the flat form.

The sculptor presented at the Sala Viana in Cordoba the work created between 1990 and 1993 in studios and workshops in Tenerife and Cordoba, areas in which she continued to work intermittently throughout the 1990s. In 1993 and 1994 the exhibition toured Granada, Jaen, Nerja and Malaga. At each stop the exhibition was enriched with new pieces in which he deepened a process of formal synthesis and expressive purification that he deployed throughout the nineties. In 1995 a large part of the exhibited works traveled to Tenerife, others remained in Andalusia.

In 2023, a collection made up of more than a hundred pieces began a new voyage, departing from her native island, to offer a comprehensive vision of María Belén’s plastic production in that decisive decade for her art, the 1990s. It highlights the incidence of travel in her work and how the discovery of new territories led her to an abstract interpretation of nature, as had already happened in the 1960s, when her iron assemblages made her a pioneer of sculptural abstraction in Spain.

Thirty years later, Maria Belen’s work returns to Andalusia at the initiative of the University of Cordoba, with the support of the CajaCanarias Foundation and the

Rafael Botí Provincial Foundation of Plastic Arts, also counting on the support of TEA (Tenerife Espacio de las Artes) and the MACEW (Eduardo Westerdahl Museum of Contemporary Art), which depends on the Institute of Hispanic Studies of the Canary Islands.

On this occasion the exhibition has two venues: the exhibition hall of UCOCultura and the Presidential Gallery of the Palacio de La Merced, headquarters of the Provincial Council of Cordoba. In both shows we can enjoy the fullness and monumentality of his work, embodied in different formats, techniques, materials and scales; from the design of logos and book covers to large sculptures for open spaces, of which he leaves drawings and models that are now exhibited for the first time, as well as two large format works located in the Patio del Reloj of the Palacio de La Merced.

On display are pieces based on the reflection on the insertion of sculpture in the public space and the incidence of landscape and territory in contemporary creation, in a transition from the organic to geometric abstraction.



www.mariabelenmorales.org