

## SCENARIO # 1, About Europe, GFZK, Leipzig 2011

### Xabier Salaberria

*Inkontziente/Kontziente* (original title)

Unconscious / Conscious (2010) (This is the title of the work, it should be translated to German too)

Mixed media installation, iron, wood, framed photographs, variable measures.

Peio Aguirre/

The exhibition features a display system inspired in the hanging systems of Late modernism when the exhibition as a media became used in a variety of fields as well as a series of framed photographs. The Republican Spanish Pavilion for the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1937, is the subject of those photographs. A replica of the building, a faithful reconstruction of the original, is now in the outskirts of the city of Barcelona and it was built as occasion of the Olympic Games of 1992. The building is very less known that its other “peer”, the Barcelona Pavilion designed by Mies Van der Rohe for the Universal Exhibition of 1928 in Barcelona, that now is a touristic attraction for the city. The Spanish Pavilion became a symbol of the Republican resistance against Fascism during the Spanish Civil War and it was there where Picasso’s Guernica was shown for the first time, since the famous painting was a commission for the same pavilion. Now, Xabier Salaberria has commissioned those new pictures to Manolo Laguillo, himself a professional photographer working for decades within the documentary realm. This fact becomes a strategy of distance, questioning the authorship of the work as well as maintaining a tension with the mythical connotations of the pavilion as well as with the photographic medium.

The installation refers to the national identities represented by architecture as well as the growing awareness of the nation-state boundaries through the “exhibition” of national identities. The work thus questions both the referent and our connection with history as well as establishes itself in a dialectical game in between form (the display) and content (the heavy historical referent). Form and content shifts their own meanings to the point of becoming a subject of the work as such. The tension in between form and content shifts then to the dialectics between modernism vs. postmodernism, particular and universal in a playful way punctuated by the “unconscious” vs. “conscious” of the title.

A feature in Salaberria is the use of tools and strategies from design, furniture, architecture and art. He proceeds from installing the work from a site-specific approach, considering the economical and architectural conditions of the site.

Xabier Salaberria (born 1969, lives in Donostia-San Sebastian) is a representative of a new generation of Basque artists. He takes furniture classics from the pre- and postwar era as a point of departure for his work. His architectural structures for exhibitions recall furniture used for public spaces as well as for media devices at home. Salaberria’s work relates to the contradictions of functionalism and social utopia in the recent history of design, architecture and art.











