

9 March
– 28 May
2023



Touching
with your eyes,
seeing
with your hands

Táctica Sintáctica

Foreword

Valentijn Byvanck



Performance direction: Diego Bianchi.
Photo: Daniel Riera. Performer:
Antonio de Rosa
Cover image: With *Staircase hotel
Sweden* by Günther Förg, 2004,
courtesy of Museo CA2M collection

Táctica Sintáctica is a perfect illustration of the fact that museum collections are merely repositories of objects that can come to life only when they are questioned, disrupted, and activated. In 2022, Museo Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo invited the artist Diego Bianchi and curator and poet Mariano Mayer to offer new perspectives on its collections. They conceived *Táctica Sintáctica* to provide a prominent space for the body. They selected a series of works by well-known artists including Jimmie Durham, Günther Förg, David Hockney, Zoe Leonard, Julia Spínola, Bruce Talamon, Dan Flavin en Dora García, added Bianchi's own works, and framed them anew in a strategy (*táctica*) of loose ends (*sintáctica*).

Reconceived for the historic house of Marres, the resulting exhibition seizes every opportunity to awaken, surprise and touch visitors. Works are scattered in the rooms: some are partly hidden, while others can be viewed only when visitors are willing to squat, climb, or kneel down. The goal of this is not only to disrupt any assumptions about the art works themselves, but also to shake loose the identities and bodies that perceive these works. For years, Marres has proposed to bring the body back into the museum; *Táctica Sintáctica* deepens that proposal. Suggesting

physical, tactile, longing, and even erotic relationships between the object and the body, it poses an urgent and radical question: whose movements and identities are hidden and reflected in art exhibitions? And what do they want?

Marres wishes to thank Diego Bianchi and Mariano Mayer for adapting and reimagining the meaning and effect of this exhibition for its new surroundings in Maastricht. In addition, we wish to thank all the artists who have given their consent for their works to be brought into a framework that some museum professionals may view as adventurous (which it is!) if not outright disrespectful (which it is not!). Last but not least, I wish to thank Museo CA2M that has started all this, whose staff have been more than helpful and whose director, Manuel Segade, has been supportive from the very start in bringing the exhibition and its collections to Marres.

Diego Bianchi



- ↑ *Rotating buds*, 2022. Rotative glazed box (double layers), branches, foam, plastic, 80x80x12 cm
- ← *Double hole object*, 2022. Wood, polyurethane, fabric, 80x80x60 cm
- *Acupuncture torso*, 2022. Wood, chromed iron, epoxy clay, brick dust, toothpicks, 125x60x50 cm. With *Estudio elemental del Levante 1*, 2018 by Ricardo Cases. Photo: Paula Caballero





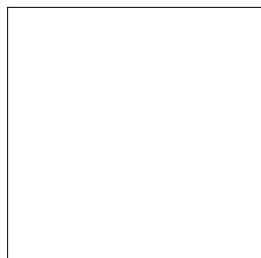
- ← *Portable Ass* (from serie *Portable Bodies*), 2022. Cables, soft poliuretane, 105x34x20 cm. Photo: Paula Caballero
- ↘ *INFLATION*, 2021. Video in three chapters. Courtesy Galerie Jocelyn Wolff



Artworks

Táctica

Sintáctica



1
Diego Bianchi
In situ works
2023



2
Diego Bianchi
Porcupine box
2016
cardboard TV box,
encrusted toothpicks,
varnish, iron pedestal,
114×84×30 cm



3
Diego Bianchi
Without title – Wall
2018–2019
epoxy clay, latex, wood,
objects, variable size



4
Diego Bianchi
My internal chair
2022
soft polyurethane, wood,
textile, telephone handset,
118×62×60 cm



13
Jon Mikel Euba
One minute
2004
silkscreen, 184×154.3 cm



14
Dan Flavin
*Untitled (To Paul
Gredinger, with respect
and admiration)*
1990
installation, 121×35 cm



15
Günther Förg
Staircase hotel Sweden
2004
photo, 243.3×163.6 cm



16
Cyprien Gaillard
The Smithsons
2005
video, 4 min 10 s



5
Diego Bianchi
Acupuncture torso
2022
wood, chromed iron, epoxy
clay, brick dust, toothpicks,
125×60×50 cm



6
Diego Bianchi
Rotating buds
2022
rotative glazed box (double
layers), branches, foam,
plastic, 80×80×12 cm



7
Diego Bianchi
Double hole object
2022
wood, polyurethane, fabric,
80×80×60 cm



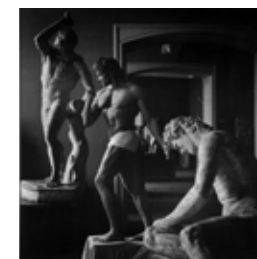
8
Diego Bianchi
*Portable Ass (from serie
Portable Bodies)*
2022
cables, soft poliuretane,
105×34×20 cm



17
Dora García
*Just because everything
is different it does
not mean everthing
has changed*
2008
video, 1hr



18
David Hockney
Yves Marie
1974
lithography, 109×88 cm



19
Valery Katsuba
*Film actor Alexey Osipov,
enthusiast of physical
culture*
2006
photo, 112×110 cm



20
Valery Katsuba
*Bodybuilder Yevgeny
Yeremetsk*
2006
photo, 144×110 cm



9
Diego Bianchi
INFLATION 2
2020
video, 12 min



10
Sergey Bratkov
New Year Tree
2001
photo, 121.5×91.8 cm



11
Thomas Demand
Rasen
1998
photo, 122×170 cm



12
Jimmie Durham
*Self-portrait pretending
to be my mother (as
played by Isabel Brey)*
2006
photo, 144.5×104.4 cm



21
Valery Katsuba
*Members of the General
Physical Culture Club,
'Rusich', Sasha Ageyev
and Vitaly Tyutrin*
2006
photo, 110.5×107.8 cm



22
Valery Katsuba
*Members of the Saint
Petersburg city
swimming team*
2006
photo, 128.5×128.5 cm



23
Valery Katsuba
*Pyramid on the stairs of
the Stock Exchange*
2006
photo, 128.5×112 cm



24
Joachim Koester
The kant walks
2003
photo, 69×81 cm



33
Jorge Molder
Comportamiento animal 1
2002
photo, 183.4×183.7 cm



34
Martin Parr
Benidorm
1998
photo, 108×163 cm



35
Kiko Pérez
Untitled (Leg)
2012
sculpture, 35×35 cm



36
Julia Spínola
Calor Serie Geológicos
2009
collage, 44×52.5 cm



25
Joachim Koester
The kant walks
2003
photo, 69×81 cm



26
Joachim Koester
The kant walks
2003
photo, 69×81 cm



27
Joachim Koester
The kant walks
2003
photo, 69×81 cm



28
Joachim Koester
The kant walks
2003
photo, 69×81 cm



37
Bruce Talamon
*David Hammons/Clevon
Little, Create a Body Print*
Los Angeles 1974
1974
photo, 45.5×62 cm



38
Bruce Talamon
*David Hammons/Clevon
Little, Create a Body Print*
Los Angeles 1975
1975
photo, 42×59 cm



39
Sue Williams
Land of Lakes
2002
painting, 101.7×122 cm



40
Erwin Wurm
Venezianischer Baroc
2005
photo, 83×70.2 cm



29
Fernanda Laguna
María Fernanda Laguna
1999–2000
painting, 45.5×62 cm



30
Jochen Lempert
Untitled (Botticelli III)
2017
silvergelatin print,
28.5×22 cm



31
Jochen Lempert
Untitled (Botticelli II)
2017
silvergelatin print,
29.5×23 cm



32
Zoé Leonard
I want a president
1992–2018
print, 27.9×21.6 cm



↑ Valery Katsuba, *Members of the Saint Petersburg city swimming team*, 2006, 128.5×128.5 cm
 → Valery Katsuba, *Bodybuilder Yevgeny Yeremetsk*, 2006, 144×110 cm



Diego Bianchi:

“The silver frames, the square image, the color of the swimwear, the color of the paper, the innocence of the positions and a certain erotic tenderness. And in the light of the eighties.”

Valery Katsuba (Belarus, 1960)
 “Just before New Year 2000, while working in the St. Petersburg Archive of Cinematic and Photographic Documents, which contains over half a million photographs and negatives dating from 1860 onwards, I asked the archive staff for photographs about the way of life in St. Petersburg at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. St. Petersburg, then the capital of the Russian Empire, was

a proud, prosperous city that set the tone in business and culture for Russia and the rest of Europe. The archive’s staff suggested that I look at some files from the city’s sporting societies. Idolizing the trained bodies of the self-confident cosmopolitan bourgeoisie, photographs were not popular in the Soviet period, and were soon deliberately forgotten. The series *Phiscultura*. (1998–2006) stems from my encounter with the

pictures made by the famous Russian photographer Karl Bulla at the end of the 19th century. Dr. Vladislav Kraevsky ‘Muscular development with the help of weights’ was widely practiced then, and the first fitness club in St. Petersburg (then called the *Circle of Sports Lovers*) was opened in 1885.” (Text: Valery Katsuba)

Diego Bianchi:

“If you can draw with a friend’s head, you have an underground affinity with the minutiae. Since hair is a constant presence in his work, David is almost like a brother to me, not that he knows it.”



Bruce W. Talamon (Los Angeles, 1949) is a Californian photographer usually known for his still photography work for the Hollywood industry. In the 1970s, he was closely linked to the group of African-American artists close to the political ideology of black nationalism. Among them, a character whose life and work are as fascinating as they are elusive: artist David Hammons (Springfield, 1943). Talamon documented his working processes during the production of his first signature series of “Body

prints,” in which Hammons himself or other black people covered themselves with animal fat and pressed their bodies against the paper, in order to fix the resulting stains with powdered pigment. This series constitutes one of the most radical allegations of the presence of the black body in the art system, engendering a sophisticated critique of its condition of representation by the white gaze, as a commercialized fantasy. In the late 1970s, when he was sharing a studio with artist

Senga Nengudi, Hammons began producing gardens using Afro hair. To do this, he collected remains of hair in the hairdressers in his neighborhood. He then separated the curly locks with a sieve and inserted them precariously into wire to build these new natures — reminiscent of cotton plantations — in exhibition halls or along the shore at Venice Beach. The only record of these ephemeral installations remains in these photographs”. (Text: Sabel Gabaldon and Manuel Segade)

Bruce Talamon, *David Hammons/ Clevon Little, Create a Body Print* Los Angeles 1975, 1975, 42 x 59 cm



Sergey Bratkov, *New Year Tree*, 2001, 121.5x91.8 cm

Mariano Mayer:

“This photo is not just evocative, it brings things. In my case, a summer, an end of year in Lobos (Argentina) and a very similar Christmas tree, decorated with photos from fashion magazines. Every time I see this image, the shiny satin paper appears from between the branches of the pine tree, the field, the fruit salad.”

The photos by Sergey Bratkov (Kharkov, 1960) form a direct and at times unsparring portrayal of everyday life since the collapse of the Soviet Union. They lay bare the obsolete ideological clichés of the Soviet era in scenes that occasionally evoke a strident theater of the new reality. His documentary portraits of steelworkers (*Steelworkers*, 2003),

homeless children (*Glue Sniffers*, 2000), or women who want to start a family (*Princess*, 1996) cite the hallmarks of nationalistic socialism by ostensibly classifying individuals in stereotype images. But what Sergey Bratkov seeks in his portraiture is not the conformity of the group, behind which the individual might be able to hide. Instead, his photographs

launch a provocative jibe at post-Soviet society by deliberately flouting aesthetic and moral taboos. By heightening the scenes that he observes with irony and subjectivity, Sergey Bratkov unmasks critical socialism as fictitious and ideologically defunct. (Text: Museo CA2M)

Diego Bianchi:

“Like ghosts, the images on the photographs seem to barely touch the medium. While confronting their lightness with the permanent, their grayish nature blends poetically in the walls.”



The works by Jochen Lempert (Moers, 1958) are positioned on the border area between scientific and artistic practice. They allow us to experience our direct living environment as an aesthetic space and, at the same time, as a place of scientific knowledge. Reminiscent of 19th century botanical cabinets, his photographs are closed compositions,

made to research the vegetal motif. An *Ipomoea tricolor* (morning glory in English), a detail of Botticelli's *Printemps*, a floral print of a cotton chemise are the elements that form a visual recital by the play of free conceptual or formal associations operated by the artist. The silver prints, invariably in black and white on matte baryta paper, are the result

of a selection from a large corpus of photographs taken daily on the spot by Jochen Lempert and displayed in his own laboratory. The subtle equilibrium that the artist composes constitutes an ecosystem, resting on the interdependence of images and their environment. (Text: Museo CA2M)



↑ Jochen Lempert, *Untitled (Botticelli III)*, 2017, 28.5×22 cm
← Jochen Lempert, *Untitled (Botticelli II)*, 2017, 29.5×23 cm

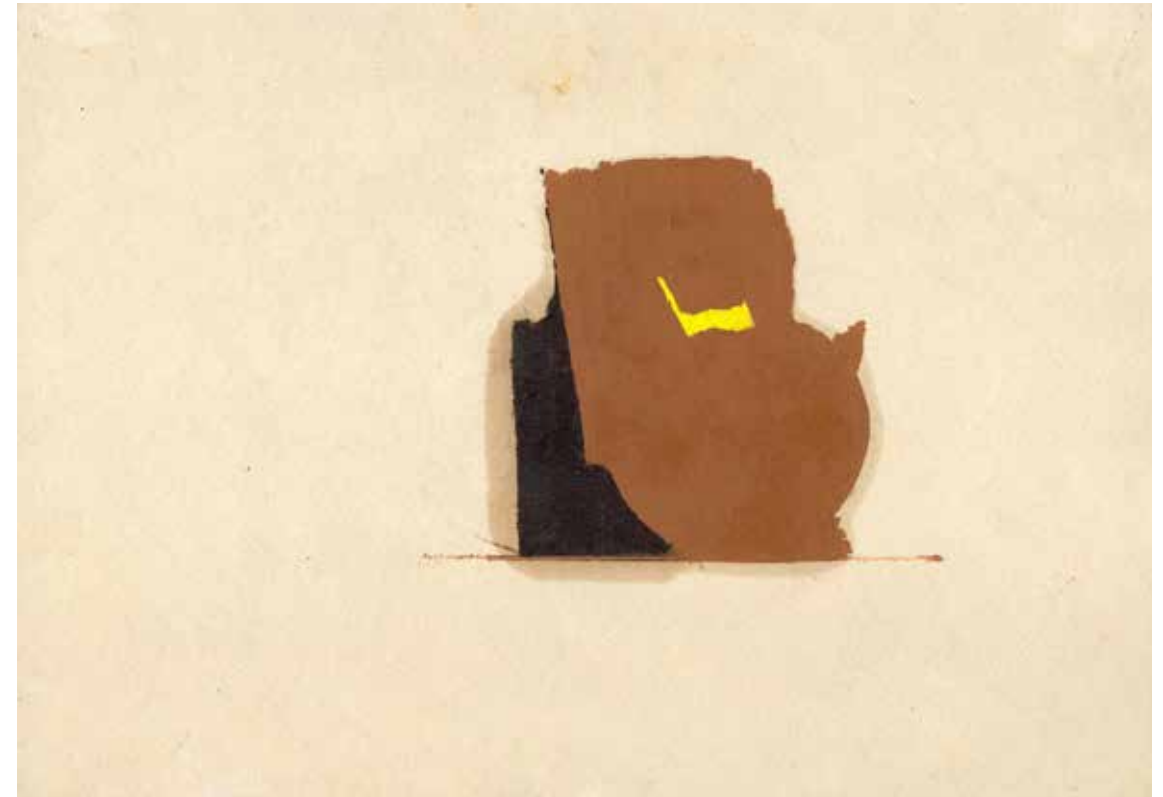


Mariano Mayer:

“Just like with people, there is a first time with paintings too. The first time I met this painting, I only saw traces, gestures and drawings designed to make others appear. Her transitive method changes this beautiful surface, packed with silhouettes and recollections. Each trace of this painting is a gateway, a temporary situation, an unstable image.”

Mariano Mayer:

“It does not happen often but when an artistic image appears without you looking for it, the world takes on new meaning. Actions chain images. I think of the dislocation between maneuver and material effect not so much as a dysfunction but as a body divided in half, capable of performing two different actions at the same time.”



Julia Spínola (Madrid, 1979): “Partly because of that very indefinite color, ‘poor demure brown, trampled by red,’ says Derek Jarman, which means nothing — without knowing why, I think of bone. Brown is the color of the material, of its mixture, of the mundane. I wanted it to explode and be very localized at the same time, which is why I introduced it very

occasionally and subtly. The color of the cardboard is a support, without added language, that surrounds the color and makes it concrete.

“The line is the wound, the essential tear where the body-form is established. This is where figure and background dissolve, and their refusal triggers their mutation into geometries. The angles intensify,

the bodies rub against each other, the images transcend their content. They caress each other, and through movement they compose a diagram that traces lines of force with their own, brutal energy, alien to the discourse. An energy with which to destabilize, even if only for a few moments, all hierarchies. No prescriptions.” (Text: Julia Spínola)

Julia Spínola, *Calor Serie Geológicos*, 2009, 44 x 52,5 cm



Diego Bianchi:

“The photo is so big, it invites me to step into it and fall inside. The format of this work generates a physical effect, a deep and reflective surface that draws you in like a black hole.”

Dialogue

Diego Bianchi and Mariano Mayer

Why would I get mad if someone didn't want one of my works anymore? If they hated it or maybe wanted to destroy it? It might bother me, but their indifference would annoy me much more.

– Diego Bianchi

Trusting in what our backs perceive.

– Sol Pipkin

Mariano Mayer: When we started to chat about how to design an exhibition organized around a selection of pieces held in a museum along with a very specific group of your works, the first thing we discovered was our interest in exhibitions in general. And also in finding a form of integrated action, where each element of an exhibition reflects your work as an artist.

Diego Bianchi: I think it was a good idea for us to connect with the works and the project in general, with a special attention to syntax. Taking apart the sentences that constitute our stability might leave us lost or might allow us to undo the rules of communication. By trying to distance ourselves from the content, we established a soft pact with the works. We could call this channel of dialogue morphological, or in simpler words, we wanted to treat the works like any other objects.

MM: We wished to construct a space without hierarchies. Using this

relationship model, the works of different artists can begin to connect in very intuitive ways, with each other and with the different elements in an exhibition. We could see it as a methodology, but also as an expansive, liberating interest that allows us to relate to the works through other channels. Those channels are not solely governed by taste, cultural narratives or genealogy. They drive us through shapes, elements, artistic expression, actions, materials and environments.

DB: It's a game of disarmament, where the works and the materials they consist of emphasize their role. Frames made of beech, tempered glass, methacrylate, but also their weight, dimensions, and the way they are hung. It was through all these stimuli that we designed a type of discomfort for each work that could transform the space around it. That way, a work could be a door, a bench is something that is waiting for me, or a ramp is a device that encourages me to obey. The specific nature of reincarnation turned out to be key. A photo does not have the ability to pierce walls, but let's imagine the poetic power of that image for a moment.

MM: This is all something that not only started to affect the works but the different points from which they are observed and the exhibition's architecture in general. The behavior of the visitors' bodies that would

come and see the exhibition became another of the elements to be integrated. Thinking of these bodies as plastic elements could be a way of destabilizing structures that drive our (unconscious) movement around an exhibition space.

DB: The body needs to be challenged in order to become aware of its capabilities. The experiment comes with using and linking art in an unusual way, for which the conventional behavior doesn't suffice, and new behavior changes the perceptive union in which visitors and art works both take part. Art subverts us. By introducing art into the way we move through the space, we give our whole body its perceptive ability back. Valentijn says that, in a certain sense, I try to free bodies from the rules that stipulate how we should act in a museum. A cigarette butt in the middle of a ramp, a hair hanging from the ceiling, or an olive thrown under a work of art can transform the body into a receiver of the most invisible links.

MM: Your way of developing an artistic practice, which is visible in most cases through the sculpture, the installation, or performance, along with a more analytical investigation, creates a method in which many things come into play. Architecture, exhibition stands, real-life objects, your works, and especially different authorships. In the exhibition, the set of structures and disciplines acts simultaneously

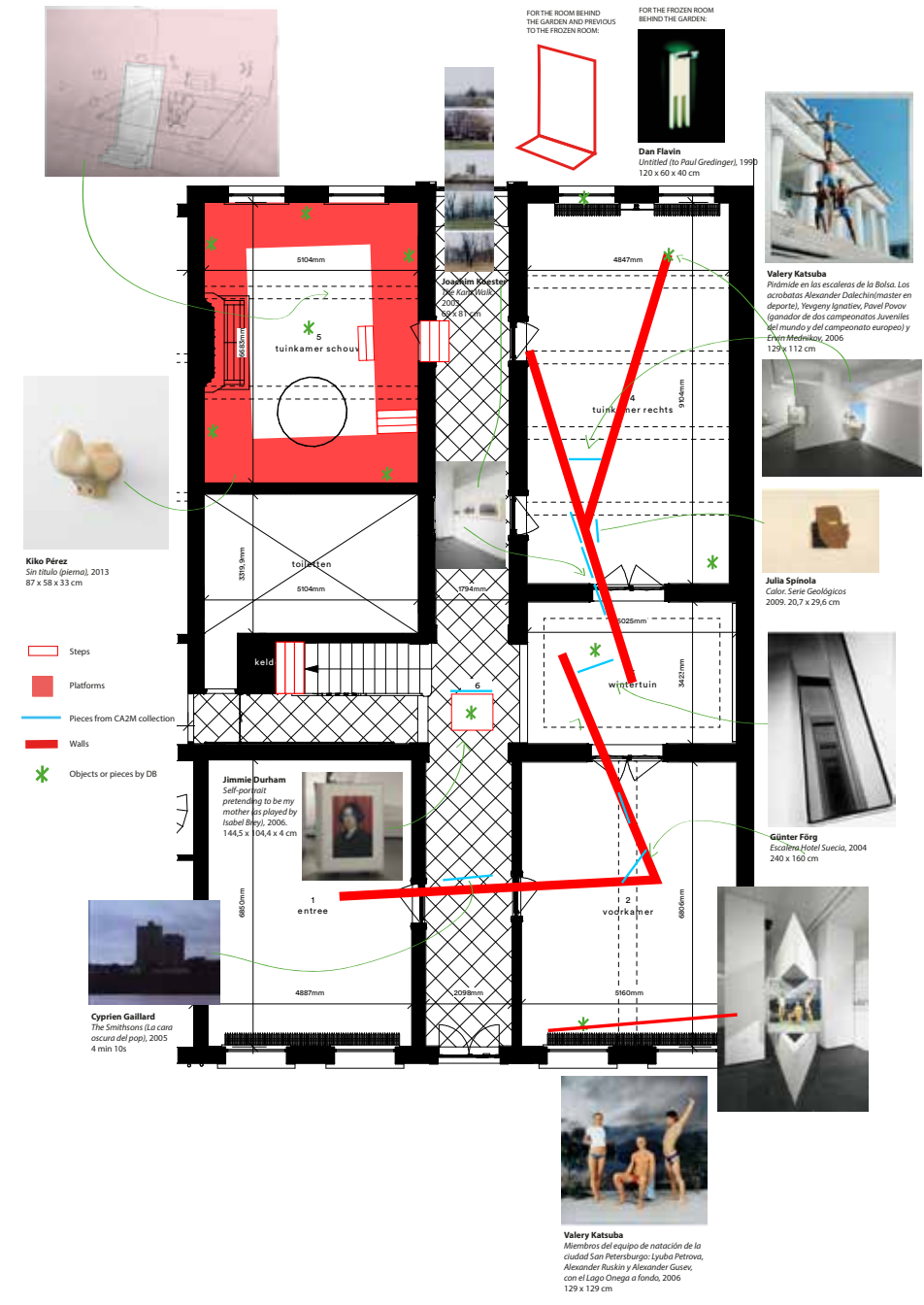
and significantly affects visitors' experiences. However, this hyper stimulus also allows you to take different paths. As you wrote in a previous message: "understand with your gut and appreciate something with your bones."

In relation to this, it is important to emphasize that the new artistic process that we have undertaken at Marres reveals only the most operational and functional part of the first version of *Táctica Sintáctica* (Museo CA2M, Móstoles, Spain, 2022). We know the general effect that this will achieve, but we can only talk about the specifics of the experience and the senses that it will awaken on an intuitive level. In the end, an exhibition only takes shape through the simultaneous activation of each of its components. Because, as Witold Gombrowicz wrote in the prologue to his book *Trans-Atlantyk*: "It does not contain any topics outside of the story that is told here."

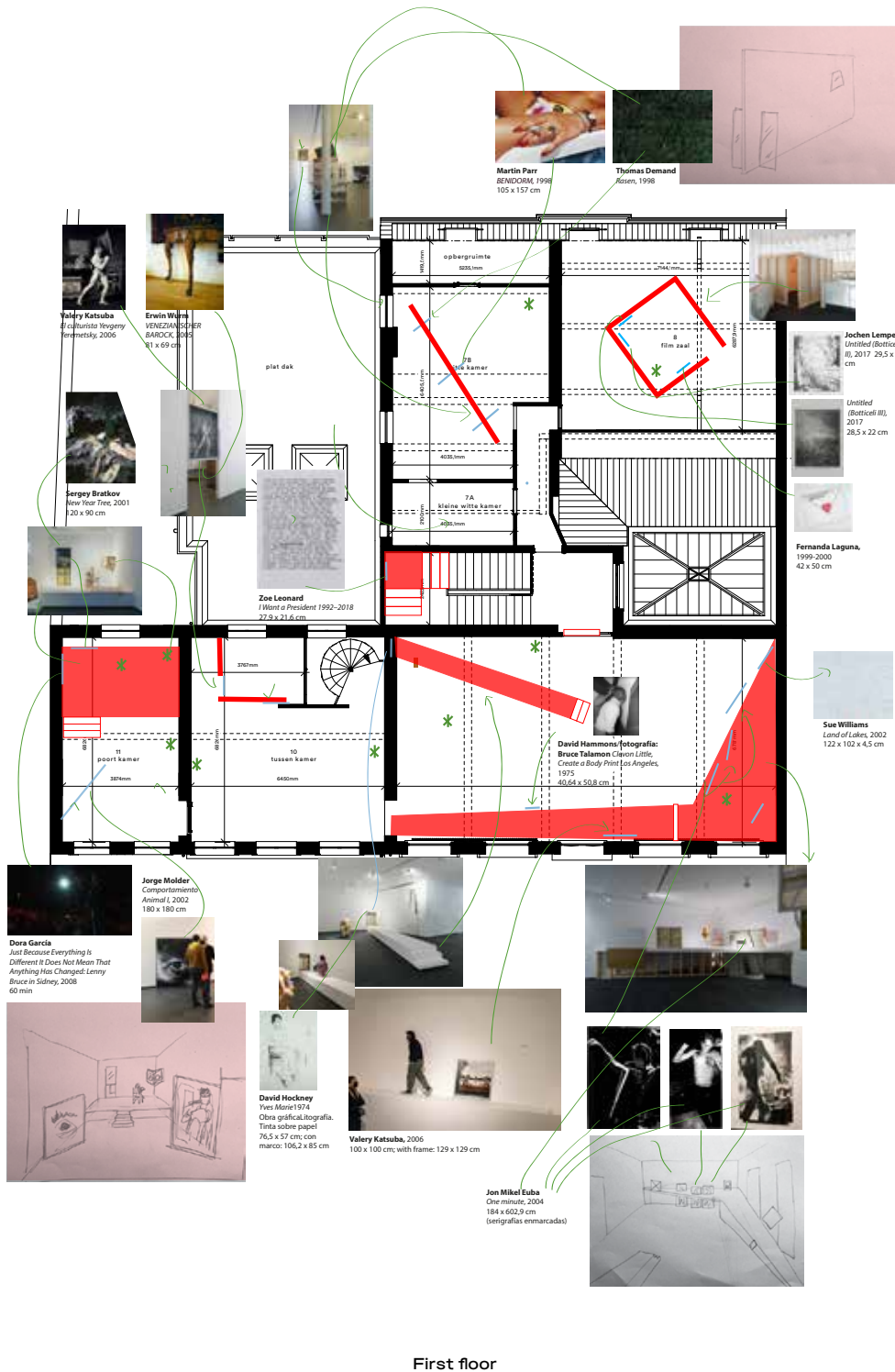
DB: The exhibition space can be seen as a sculpture; experiencing it in this way opens up the game and allows us to act in many ways as we look around it. The tactility of the objects and works that I have produced speaks of this limbo, where the bodies divide their attention between ideas and senses.

MM: Now I have a better understanding of your comment: "a cat's whiskers are hair just like ours."

Sketches Diego Bianchi for Marres



Ground floor



First floor

DIEGO BIANCHI (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1969) studied graphic design at the University of Buenos Aires and works as a visual artist and teacher since 2003. Among his most noteworthy exhibitions are *INFLATION*, Liverpool Biennial (2021); *Sauvetage Sauvage* and *Softrealism*, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff (Paris, 2020 & 2019); *Museo Abandonado: Barrio Kronfus*, Bienal Sur 2019 (Argentina); *The Enchanting Now*, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (2017); *WasteAfterWaste*, Perez Art Museum (Miami, 2015); *"Suspensión de la incredulidad"*, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires (2015); *Under de Si*, in collaboration with Luis Garay (Matadero, Madrid, 2018, Wiener Festwochen, Austria and Bienal de Performance, Buenos Aires, 2015); *El trabajo en Exhibición*, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff (Paris, 2015); *Into the wild meaning*, Visual Arts Center (Austin, 2013). His work has also been seen at the 13th Istanbul Biennial (2013); 11th Lyon Biennial (2011) and the 10th Havana Biennial (2009). Since 2009 he has taught in the Artists Program at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella and in other institutions giving workshops and symposiums. He has also published books, including *Enlarge. Diego Bianchi Works 2003-2010* (KBB, 2011); *RUB. Perspectivas sobre la obra de Diego Bianchi*, edited by Inés Katzenstein (Motto, 2018); *Diego Bianchi, El presente está encantador* (Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, 2019) and *Táctica sintáctica* (Museo CA2M, 2022). He participated in The Programme of Visual arts Rojas-UBA-Kuitca 2003-2005 (Buenos Aires) and The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (Maine, 2006).

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MARIANO MAYER (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1971) is a poet and independent curator who has been living in Madrid since 2002. His most recent curatorial projects include *Un lento venir viniendo, Cap 1. Colección Oxenford* (MAC Niterói, Brasil, 2022); *Amplitud de contexto* with Manuela Moscoco (ARCOmadrid 2023/2022); *Tiempo produce pintura – pintura produce tiempo*. Alex Marco (Espai d'Art Contemporani, Riba-Roja, Madrid, 2020); *En el ejercicio de las cosas*, with Sonia Becce (Plataforma Argentina ARCOmadrid 2017); *La música es mi casa. Gastón Pérsico* (MALBA, Buenos Aires, 2017); *Isla de Ediciones* (arteBA, Buenos Aires, 2017/2016) and *Plano, peso, punto y medida*. (Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires, 2011). Publications include *Fluxus Escrito* (Caja Negra, Buenos Aires, 2019); *Justus* (Diputación de León and Instituto Leonés de Cultura, 2009); *Fanta* (Corregidor, Buenos Aires, 2002). In 2016 he was Curating Professor of the Artist Programme, Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Buenos Aires.

Marres
 House for Contemporary Culture

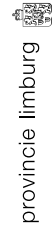
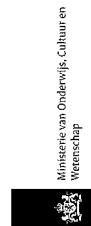
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Tuesday – Sunday
 12 – 5 PM

Marres is located in the heart of the old town of Maastricht. It develops a new vocabulary for the senses in collaboration with artists, musicians, designers, chefs, and performers. In addition to bringing a lively program of exhibitions, presentations and performances, Marres also features a beautiful garden and a wonderful restaurant.

COLOPHON

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 Curator: Mariano Mayer
 Head of production: Rosa van der Flier
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Marres

