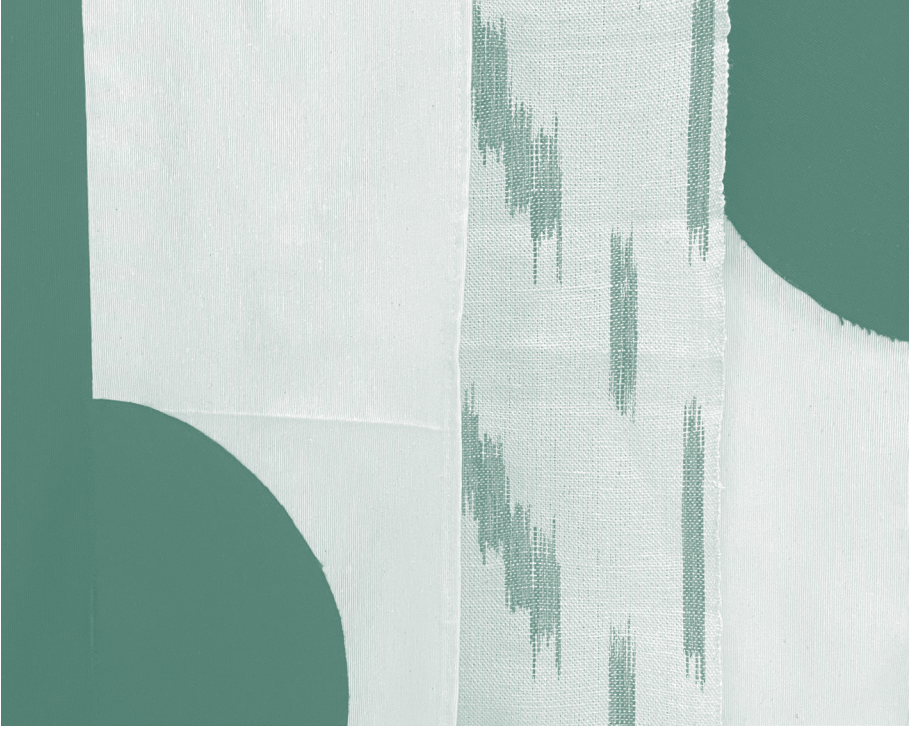


VALERIA MACULAN.

LLENGUA DE FOC [THE ISLAND AS A STAGE]

11.09.25 – 30.09.25
CASAL DE
SON TUGORES,
ALARÓ

Curated by:
Iñaki Martínez Antelo and Alicia Ventura



Valeria Maculan, *Llengua de foc*, 2025 (detail). Fabrics and cotton canvas.
© of the work of art, Valeria Maculan, 2025. Photograph: Courtesy of the artist

“Llengua de foc” is a textile installation conceived as a scenic device, created in collaboration with the artisan workshop Bujosa.

The project, presented by Valeria Maculan as part of Biennial B, suggests a suspended scene between the textile, the choral and the symbolic. It is a living work waiting to be ignited by the voice, activating a poetics of the in-between—between bodies, times, memories and embodied knowledge.

The central piece is a large suspended curtain that cuts across the space. Inside it, the choir costumes are displayed, accompanied by a series of wooden masks whose mouths take the shape of megaphones, designed to project the voice. This ensemble is activated during the opening reception through a choral performance of popular Mallorcan folk songs. The work configures an intermediate space between the scenic and the collective, where textiles, voice and popular memory intertwine.

The title “Llengua de foc” alludes to the motifs on the fabrics used, whose patterns evoke flame-like shapes. In Mallorcan, “flàmules” designates precisely these flaming figures present in the designs.

This project continues a line of work in which the artist explores the elements of the scenic space from a performative, textile and visual perspective. The crossover between body, image, sound and matter proposes an expanded dramaturgy, where the symbolic is embodied through weaves, gestures and vibrations. On this occasion, the use of choral singing and Mallorcan textile elements activates a collective dimension of memory and belonging, engaging with the local context through a sense of community.

From its etymological root, theatre is presented as an instrument of contemplation and knowledge. This installation is part of a research that understands the stage as an epistemic device, capable of revealing invisible structures of thought and identity. The scenic gesture does not aim to represent, but to provoke a form of embodied knowledge, in which the viewer is addressed as an active subject. Narrative linearity is replaced by a cyclical, ritual and sensorial logic.

The Greek theatre, as the first stage space in the Western world, operates here not only as a historical antecedent, but also as a symbolic and structural matrix. In its circular and open architecture, drama was a collective act. Actors wore wooden masks which, beyond character depiction, incorporated a small megaphone to project their voices. This ancient acoustic technology inspires a series of masks in Valeria Maculan’s work, designed to be activated by the chorus, an essential figure of Greek theatre and symbol of a plural, shared voice.

Masks do not conceal, but channel; they do not represent, but resonate. They function as devices for both, sound and symbolic amplification. The voice, understood as sculptural and performative matter, articulates the space and makes it vibrational. Its use is not limited to performance; it becomes a structuring element, capable of shaping narrative, body and space. This link between vocal form, body and scenic architecture is embedded in a practice that considers theatre not as a spectacle, but as a structuring mechanism of the human. Valeria Maculan works with what she calls “articulations”: the joints of the body (elbows, knees, necks, shoulders) as zones of transition between the physical and the symbolic, between gesture and narrative. It is in these folds where the human is constructed and deformed.

Each of her works can be understood as an extension of a larger scenic space. There is an inclination towards the world of theatre, not as an institution, but as a structural language. Curtains, for example—whether borrowed from the theatre and assembled as stage sets or transformed into colorful bedspreads—appear recurrently as part of this research. These textile pieces, halfway between sculpture and painting, frame, cut out or lead the space, creating recesses, passages or tensions within the exhibition device.

Paradoxically, this use of the curtain allows the artist to reactivate pre-theatrical forms such as classical tragedy. For this reason, she is interested in working with models that have been considered obsolete, even discarded by modernity. In this sense, she recovers imaginaries connected to the 19th century: spiritualist photography, the transition from hypnosis to psychoanalysis, tarot cards, secret societies. These references do not appear as quotations, but as formal and affective resonances. Valeria Maculan works from a renewed symbolist imagination, connecting with a bodily mysticism and with the utopia of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art). She also uses black and white as a conceptual palette, and appropriates the vocabulary of theatre, performance and painting, often synthesized into *tableaux vivants*, where the choruses of Greek tragedies reappear as embodied structures, at once archaic and contemporary.

In this expanded scenic device—circular, without scenery, and in dialogue with Kiesler’s “Endless Theatre”—everything is exposed. The scene is not represented; it is embodied, activated or archived as latency. The figure only exists if there is a background; the voice only resounds if there is a body ready to emit it. Thus, the work does not narrate; it articulates, vibrates, inhabits.

A choir is traditionally a group of people singing in unison or in polyphony. The use of this resource serves the artist to reimagine, within the context of contemporary art and performance, a sound and visual device that goes beyond music, exploring collective forms of expression, presence and tradition. This practice breaks with the notion of the individual artist, making way for a common voice. In performance, the choir may function as a vocal and bodily choreography. It is not only the voice that speaks, but also the body that sustains it. Some artists approach the choir for its potential to embody historical, social or emotional discourses. The result is an immersive experience, in which the audience not only listens, but is confronted with a collective presence that interrupts the linearity of the discourse and the passivity of the spectator.

In this case, the choir is dressed in garments designed and made by the artist herself, inspired by one of the island’s oldest craft traditions: the textiles of the Bujosa workshop. Founded in 1949 in Santa Maria del Camí and with three generations behind it, this business has, since its beginnings aimed to offer an authentic and quality product that today represents a part of Mallorca’s cultural heritage. In addition to the well-known “teles de llengües”—a Mallorcan weaving pattern that remembers fire flames—, Bujosa produces the fabrics used in traditional folk costumes of the island, which the artist has incorporated to dress the choir and produced the pieces on display in the exhibition and performance. With old techniques and equipment worthy of a museum, the family business continues to work in a way that makes the Balearic Islands home to one of the world’s finest treasures of textile craftsmanship.

Valeria Maculan (Buenos Aires, 1968) develops an artistic practice that investigates the limits of the pictorial plane as a critical device. Her work addresses the configurations of the social body—in its physical, psychic and symbolic dimensions—, exploring how these bodies are constructed, represented and dislocated through visual and performative languages.

She has had solo exhibitions at Espacio OTR, Galería Jorge López, Galería Tramo, Galería Magda Bellotti, Matadero-Madrid, Galería Jean Broly, Galería Braga Menéndez, Galería SlyZmud, Ecole des Beaux-arts de Besançon, Museo MACRO and CCEBA.

Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at Artium, 2024, C. Alcobendas, 2024, Galería Jorge López, 2021. Galería Patricia Dorfmann, 2019 Paris. Galería Kir Royal, Madrid, 2017. Espacio OTR, Madrid, 2014. Galería Magda Bellotti/ León/ Ponferrada/ Cádiz, 2014– 2013. CEART, Madrid, 2013. MAMBA, 2012. Le 10 neuf, Montbéliard, France, 2010. FNA. Bs.As. 2010. Casa de América, Madrid, 2010. Dumbo Art Center, USA, 2008. Diverse Works Art Space, USA. 2007.

She has received awards such as MataderoCrea and the grants of the Comunidad de Madrid, VEGAP, FNA, Kuitca and Fundación Antorchas. She has participated in residencies such as Skowhegan School of Art, The Atlantic Center for the Arts (ACA) and CCA Andratx. She has also directed Alimentación30, an independent space in Madrid, from 2014 to 2023.

LIST OF WORKS:

Llengua de foc
2025
8 textile pieces and cotton canvas
11 x 2,50 m approx

Llengua de foc
2025
10 wooden masks, 10 garments
and cotton canvas
Dimensions variable

BIENNAL B is an initiative promoted by Es Baluard Museu d’Art Contemporani de Palma and the Consell de Mallorca, with the support of numerous institutions, agents and collectives of the island.

BIENNAL B highlights the cultural richness of the island of Mallorca and the Balearic archipelago with art as a tool.

BIENNAL B is a transversal, inclusive and non-seasonal project, born with the ambition to shape a creative ecosystem capable of integrating contemporary artistic practices with crafts and trades for the sustainable transformation of the Balearic territory.

BIENNAL B will activate ecological and cultural connectivity actions, a series of interdisciplinary creative projects and an international congress on art, culture and science.

PROJECT: Biennial B. The Island as a Stage
TITLE: «Valeria Maculan. Llengua de foc»
DATES: 11.09.25 – 30.09.25
OPENING: 10 September, 7 p.m.
VENUE: Casal de Son Tugores, Alaró
CURATORSHIP: Iñaki Martínez Antelo i Alicia Ventura
INSTALLATION: Tomeu Simonet / Es Baluard Museu
COORDINATION: Jackie Herbst / Solange Artiles
GRAPHIC DESIGN: Hastalastantas
PRINT: Impresrapit

PERFORMANCE:
Ensemble vocal de la Coral Universitat de les Illes Balears. Director: Núria Cunillera Salas

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:
Llorenç Galmés, Antònia Roca, Guillem Ginard, Pere Ferrer, Llorenç Perelló, Catalina Cifre, Tomeu Simonet, David Barro, Pilar Rubí, Bujosa Artesania tèxtil, Curro Martin Capilla, Hanging Arts Transport, Manoj Sawlani, Óxido estudio

ESBALUARD
MUSEU



Consell de
Mallorca

Ajuntament
d'Alaró

casalSonTugores

With the collaboration:



Universitat
de les Illes Balears

Coral Universitat
de les Illes Balears

BIENNAL B

BIENNAL B