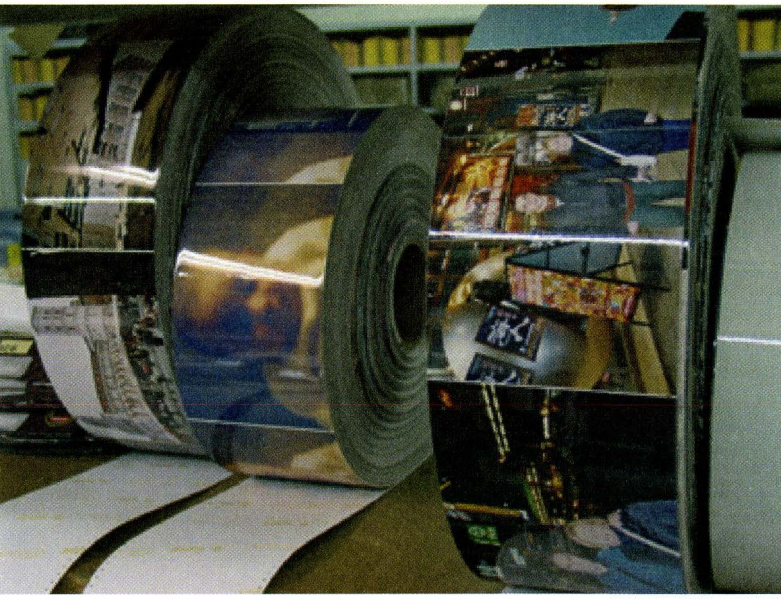
IGNASI ABALLÍ
0-24 h.



Revelacions, 2005. © Ignasi Aballí, 2005

20 October 2005 - 8 January 2006

This exhibition is an approach to the work Ignasi Aballí (Barcelona, 1958) has done over the last fifteen years. It is based largely on the idea that art does not own a natural place where it comes from and where it goes to; on the contrary, it must construct one of its own. That is why the arrangement of the works in the museum is part of the artist's task; he has produced some of them again and placed others in specific places, creating an itinerary that runs through transitional zones. The exhibition shows pieces in which the artist disappears as subject and allows the accumulation of dust or the action of time on the materials to constitute the work. We also find the artist who collects, inventories and meticulously lays out information from newspapers, collects images reproduced ad infinitum and pays tribute to the anonymity of others, who have become the authors of illegible images. These apparently neutral works contain disturbing, uncomfortable messages, occasionally harshly critical of the world around us.

Ignasi Aballí is the author of a series of works that develop around two complementary lines of practice. First, a reflection on painting from concepts of vision, visibility and material is related to minimal activity, tiny gestures and imperceptible modifications. Second, the cultivation of fiction as material and locator of his work links it to that of the artists in the late eighties who placed film and video at the centre of the art scene. Those two lines explore both the boundaries and the features of perception and the nature of artistic practice today.

MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona

The exhibition begins on the ground floor with a selection of works that reflect his initial concern with the boundaries of pictorial representation, an aspect that takes up a large part of his early output. The title of *Malgastar* (Waste, 2001) alludes to a twofold negative use of paint by the artist, who has let it dry owing to the difficulty of finding the proper representation through it, as occurs with the loss of meaning of the words contained in *Rètol* (Billboard, 2005). Aballí explains that he preferred to suggest the presence of a picture, the place occupied by the painting, leaving the image in suspension, as we see in *Finestres* (Windows, 1997-2005) – in which the imperceptible paint contrasts with the opacity of *Correcció* (Correction, 2001) – and *Gran error* (Big Mistake, 1998-2005), where the Tipp-ex erases and transforms real surfaces. And so the traces of footprints on the wall of *Persones* (Persons, 2000-2005), the accumulated dust in *Pols (Deu anys a l'estudi)* (Dust, Ten Years in the Studio, 1995-2005) or the absence of the books in *Llibres* (Books, 2000) are the results of the passage of time which, rather than eroding or subtracting qualities from things, adds elements. "I started to think that in a work the less there is to see, the greater the desire to see. That the fact of making the world see contains in itself the hiding of part of it."

The staircase at MACBA is the support for *Carta de colors (Ideologies)* (Chart of Colours, Ideologies, 2005), a work that uses the colours of universal catalogues to list the ideological or political connotations they have acquired through convention. In this work we see that those connotations, subjective but accepted over time, promote associations of meaning of unsuspected force, though at times they are absurd.

In the first room on the second floor are a series of projects done from elements taken from reality without altering their original characteristics or adding new devices, as happens in the works done from newspaper cuttings – also in *Demostrar* (Show, 2004-2005), on the ground floor – or the twelve panels of *Calendari* (Calendar, 2005), a collection of the photographs that appeared on the cover of a particular newspaper over the course of a year. Those cuttings are traces of reality subjected to a process of reordering which brings about a significant change in both the visual and the conceptual. In another way, in *Llistats* (Lists, 1997-2005) and *Inventari (Loteria 2004)* (Inventory, Lottery 2004, 2005) – works in which Aballí catalogues or quantifies different aspects of the organisation of society – the accumulation, the decontextualisation and the reiteration of events force

Malgastar, 2001. © Ignasi Aballí, 2005





Llistats (Temps), 1997-2004. © Ignasi Aballí, 2005

the spectator to take a new look at the elements. They are all works that show the artist's reaction to the superabundance of images in our environment and their cheapening of content. Indeed, for Aballí the forging of meanings from anodyne or overexposed images is fundamental. *Revelacions* (Revelations, 2005), a video in which anonymous photographs have been filmed as they come out of the developing machine, proposes a reflection on the history of photography which brings out this lack of meaning through the serial nature of objects produced industrially.

The second room contains a selection of the work in which Aballí develops different aspects of the idea of fiction, one of the fundamental concepts in his recent work on literature and film. In *Desapariciones II* (Disappearances II, 2005), from a process of investigation he constructs a fiction that allows him to relate his work to that of the writer Georges Perec, and to generate a hybrid which includes real aspects found in the documentation phase. The series *Próxima aparición* (Coming Soon, 2005) and *Sinopsis* (Synopsis, 2005) ponder film and its narrative component, the effectiveness of film consists of creating plausible worlds, unreal but realistic. *Sinopsis* uses a typical resource of the conceptual art of the seventies: a combination of images and texts which neither illustrate nor explain one another. But the incongruence is false; each of the panels shows us an image of elements of film production, signs of work done. The film material is transformed in these works into another reality, fictitious and material at the same time. In the video *0 - 24 h* (2005) – on the ground floor – the order is inverted: the capturing of reality through security cameras becomes film material. This work, done for the exhibition, consists of recording and showing the interior of MACBA at night, in real time, when the

museum is closed and inaccessible to the public. The piece shows his interest in approaching film using the minimum necessary technical infrastructure: Aballí closes the circle of perception with a 15 and a half hour film that allows us to see the "hidden face" of the museum. *0 - 24 h* (2005) condenses perception of the anonymous and that of the watchful eye of security, whose aim is for nothing to happen, in a hyperrealist tale of inaction.

ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE EXHIBITION

FRIDAY 28 OCTOBER at 19.30 h

Round table with **Ignasi Aballí**, **Ferran Barenblit**, director of the Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, **Manel Clot**, art critic and lecturer, and **Bartomeu Marí**, chief curator of MACBA.

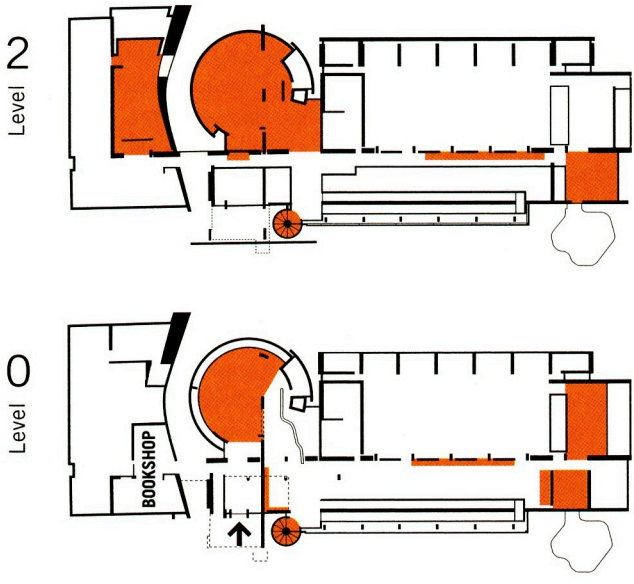
Entrance free. Limited number of seats.

GUIDED TOURS AVAILABLE IN CATALAN AND SPANISH

(Included in the price of admission)
Wednesday and Friday, at 18 h
Sundays, at 12 h

CATALOGUE

Ignasi Aballí. 0 – 24 h. Barcelona, Oporto, Birmingham: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Museu Serralves and Ikon Gallery, 2005. With an interview by Dan Cameron and texts by Bartomeu Marí (introduction), Andrew Renton and Gérard Wajcman. In English / Portuguese.



Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona

Plaça dels Àngels, 1
08001 Barcelona
Tel.: 93 412 08 10
www.macba.es

Museum hours:
Weekdays, 11 to 19.30 h
Saturdays, 10 to 20 h
Sundays and holidays, 10 to 15 h
Closed on Tuesdays (except holidays)
Open on Mondays

Exhibition sponsor: FOSSIL

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