
AN EXERCISE IN VIOLENCE.

GUILLERMO ROS

7 October 2021 - 6 February 2022

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Curated by:
Nuria Enguita



Place: Gallery 6

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1. EXHIBITION

The installation Guillermo Ros (Vinalesa, 1988) is presenting in IVAM's Gallery 6 simulates two frozen instants, with a different ambience on each of the gallery's two levels, in which a fight reminiscent of a video game takes place. *An Exercise in Violence* lays bare the violence the artist exposes himself to during the artistic process involved in the very act of exhibiting, which Ros renders here as a combat with the institution, with the architecture of the institution.



An Exercise in Violence. Guillermo Ros, IVAM, 2021. Photo: Juan García

The lower level is populated with a forest of columns calling to mind a hypostyle hall. The scene of a battle in the vein of *Berserk*, the legendary manga by Kentaro Miura, a go-to reference for Ros, in which the protagonist is challenged to a duel in a room with columns which prevent him from brandishing his sword properly. It is ultimately a fight against the elements in the hall which hamper the work of the exhibition: the hall's original columns are camouflaged among those newly produced by Ros, which can be identified solely by the rodent bitemarks and bits of embedded polished and natural stone. At the same time, the stone also speaks to one of the materials to be found in the Llotja de la Seda in Valencia and in many other emblematic buildings from Valencia's Golden Age.

The mystery is disclosed on the upper level, an aftermath of defeat and destruction infested by rats among broken columns and stone—ruins in which we can find bits of Damascus steel. These figures in a way transport us once again to the Llotja de la Seda and its many gargoyles, sculptures and reliefs which symbolize lust, perversity and macabre scenes alluding to a diabolical underworld.

On this occasion, the sculptures take the form of rodents: rats ready to lay waste to the museum and its architecture, gnawing away at everything with their teeth of Damascus steel, reminding us of the bits embedded in the stones. And yet, parts of their bodies are in the process of being parasitized by the institution, of blending in with the museum, with the limestone to be found below in the hypostyle hall.

Like the rats, the artist, self-exploited and with no disguise, faces the challenge of the context in which he is to exhibit and the material with which he has to work, in an exercise in violence against the architecture of the museum to which the creator — the artwork—will ultimately succumb.

All these elements make up a stage setting for Ros's imaginary, his way of viewing and understanding the art world, and his personal analysis of the context in which he lives and works. Ros focuses his more recent work on the violence inherent in the process of creation and here he presents his idea of the artist as a violated being, absorbed by the work in detriment of his own physical and mental condition.

In short, it is an exercise in analogies, imaginaries and violence that add up towards a production of epic proportions. The various layers and readings of each one of the elements can be summed up in the concept of 'lore', as used in videogames to refer to the backstory of the narrative and characters, which Ros applies to the field of art: the lore of the elements of the exhibition, of the museum's architecture, and his own, presenting a perfect mix of the references that shape his personal conceptual vision.

An Exercise in Violence. Guillermo Ros, IVAM, 2021. Photo: Juan García





*An Exercise in Violence. Guillermo Ros, IVAM.
Production process, 2021. Photo: Alberto Feijóo*

2. ACTIVITIES

Conversation between the artist Guillermo Ros and Nuria Enguita, curator of the exhibition.

- 7 October 2021
- 7:00 pm
- Carmen Alborch Auditorium

The conversation will explore the artist's initial process of investigation for the project, situating it within his practice as a whole, and will also address the specific working processes involved in tackling the work commissioned by the museum.

Visit to the Llotja de la Seda with the historian Eloi Boix

- November 2021

During a visit to the gothic building, we will take a look at the parallels between the architecture of the Llotja de la Seda silk exchange in Valencia and Guillermo Ros's exhibition *An Exercise in Violence*. We will discover how the true sculptors of our time are the descendants of a lineage of stonecutters over whom a brutal violence was exercised. That being said, they were well able to return that violence, leaving its print in the inert material with which they worked, the stone, with such force and precision that their message has survived down to the present.

Lecture by the philosopher and theorist Natalya Serkova

- December 2021

Starting out from the research undertaken for the essay included in the exhibition catalogue, Natalya Serkova will reveal to us how, in all processes, in all actions, in all movements of the world we can discern an underlying, ancient, impersonal violence, a force directed in equal measure toward processes of destruction, reassembly, and new birth. Such violence transcends time, it is not interested in contexts, individuals or particularities, however it manifests itself in things of all scales, from the global to the most insignificant. At once, this violence illuminates connections between phenomena and a capacity to reassemble things.

3. OUTREACH

AN EXERCISE IN MEDIOCRITY. Reflexive Actions and Impacts of the exhibition An Exercise in Violence. Guillermo Ros

Every process of creation and transformation, both in art as well as life itself, is violent but very often it is also indispensable.

This walkthrough of the exhibition *An Exercise in Violence*. Guillermo Ros is taken from the viewpoint of a dialogical game, sharing collective dynamics of creation and reflection in which, starting out from contemporary art practices, we will take a look at the museum space from our own awareness. During these sessions we will engage with silence; with what does not wish to be seen; with the force exerted in different areas, invisibly yet conspicuously; with the precarization imposed by the structural system that affects our everyday lives.

- **Dates: 14, 21, 28 October; 4, 11, 18, 25 November; 2, 9, 16 December 2021; 13, 20, 27 January and 3 February 2022.**
- **Time: 10:15-11:15 & 11:30-12:30**
- **Design and mediation: FRACTALS Educación Artística**
- **Duration: 60 minutes**



An Exercise in Violence. Guillermo Ros, IVAM, 2021. Photo: Juan García

COMMENTED VISITS

Mediated by experts in History of Art, Fine Art and Humanities, the goal of our commented visits is to afford the public with various situated readings of Guillermo Ros's exhibition at IVAM and to do so in a direct and rewarding fashion in the region's two official languages.

- **Practical information**
- **Duration: 45 min. approx.**
- **Aimed at: general public**
- **Dates: consult IVAM web**

5. PUBLICACIÓN

Coinciding with the exhibition, IVAM is publishing a catalogue with texts by the curator Nuria Enguita and by Natalya Serkova, as well as a conversation between Julia Castelló and the artist Guillermo Ros on his working process.

The publication will be available at the museum reception desk and on the online store: <https://tienda.ivam.es/>

6. CONTACT

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