



INCERTEZA VIVA
32 BIENAL DE SAO PAULO

*restos materiales
obstaculos y
herramientas*

xabier salaberria
2016

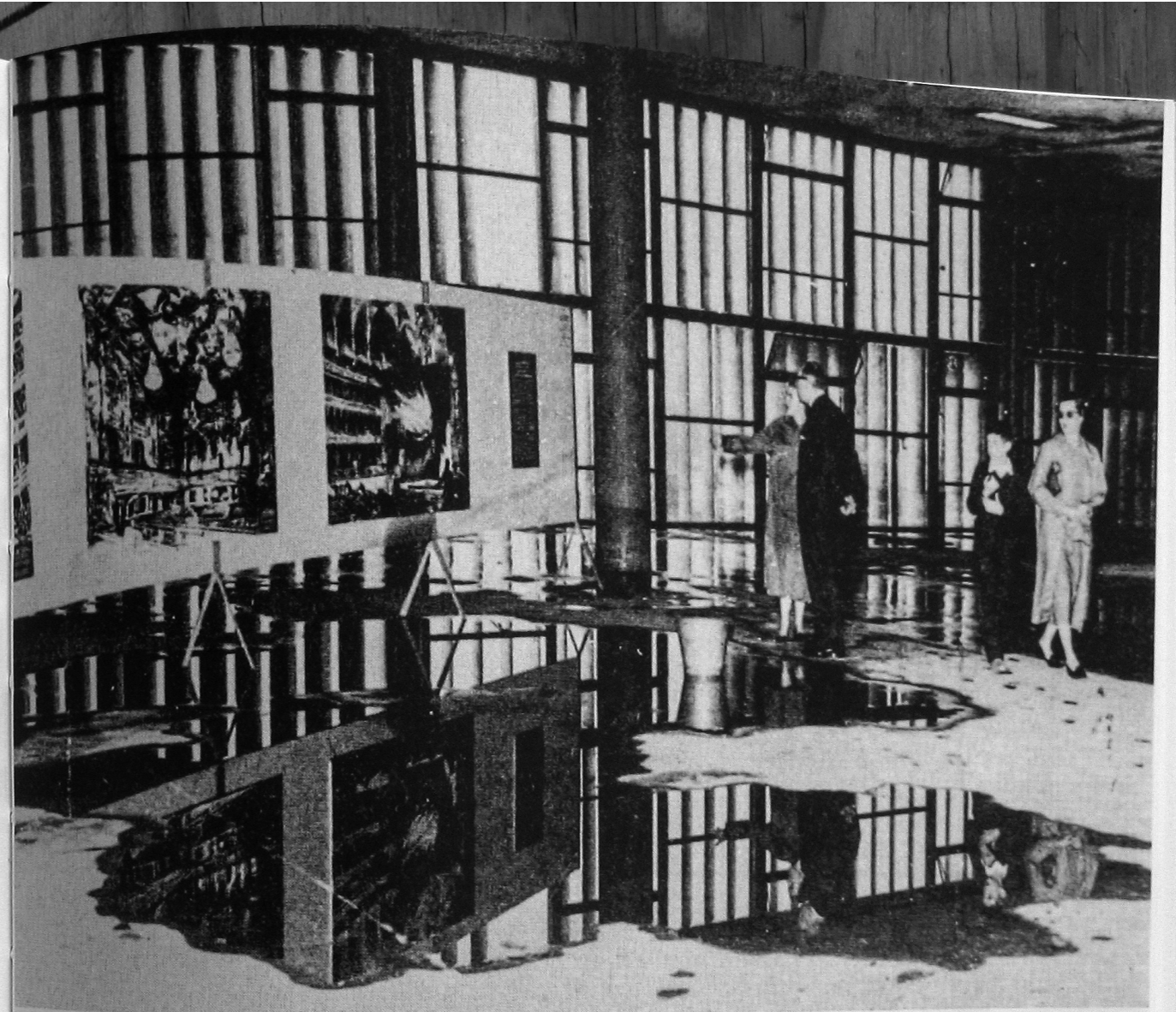
Xabier Salaberría works across various artistic media – including installation, photography, graphic design and exhibition architecture. He explores processes of formalization, as well as the potentials of those media to become something else, given their shifting material, ideological, and institutional contexts. Vacillating between being sign and material, art and something other than art, his works open up to contemplation as displaced or even intransigent objects and situations. A kind of vanishing point for what they normally are and the norms they uphold, they question their time and place in history. Salaberría talks about a process of “denaturalizing sculpture”.

At the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, where the Bienal de São Paulo has taken place since 1957, the artist explores the relationships between the Pavilion’s architecture and the reality of its surroundings, and also mobilizes local elements from the city of São Paulo and from the history of the Bienal. In his installation, which Salaberría defines as “the abstract materiality” of objects, conditions and alters people’s movement within the space, causing unexpected connections between visitors, objects and location. Concepts like ephemeral structures, obstacles, alliances and affections shared in the field of conflict can be operative in a critical approach to the artist’s work.

In the installation *Restos materiales, obstáculos y herramientas* [Material, remains, obstacles and tools] (2016), commissioned for the 32nd Bienal, bricks from Vila Itooró, a construction from the 1920s, that witnessed the urban development and real estate speculation of the Bela Vista neighborhood in São Paulo, join a number of elements such as wooden modules, in a display similar to those from the first Bienal de São Paulos. Large bottles of mineral water and metal frames emulating the frames of the building also integrate the work, as well as the photographic reproduction of the stone wall, in direct vicinity to the installation itself. Images and objects of differing natures seek to broaden the context in which they operate, extending the limits of the exhibition space out towards the city. The installation intervenes in the space, permitting new experiences with the temporalities evoked by these objects without falling into nostalgic interpretations.

The elements in Salaberría’s work pile up and are redistributed as obstacles to the flow of visitors. They demand a certain critical positioning through an interrupting gesture, a momentary suspension of temporal references, maybe creating in this pile of elements a space for shuffling memories, the construction of a different relationship between the overlapping objects. This barricade set up by the artist affirms the impossibility of a historical narrative that is neutral, linear, regarded as a mere accumulation of information about the past. The visitor is then in an opportune moment for rearranging these narratives, a moment of recollection which is in fact political, collective and “dangerous”. The objects that the artist mobilizes come up displaced, intended to cause surprise and indicate not only new directions to the visitors – new experiences before the conflict of which they are an index – but to claim new narratives and also a new place in the past.

— Paulo Carvalho

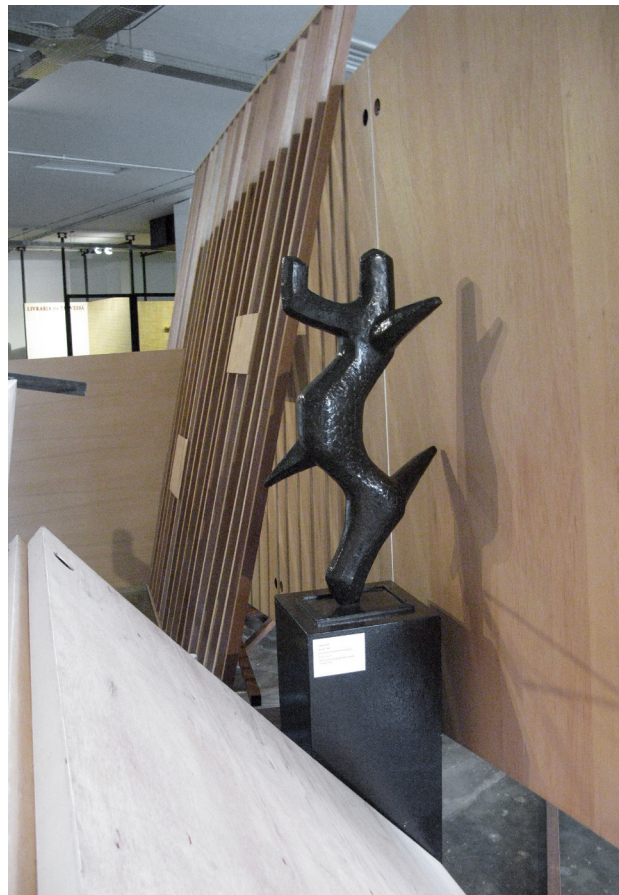


4th Bienal de São Paulo, in 1957, flooding of the Pavilion Ciccillo Matarazzo. Reproduction.









Ficha tecnica:

Diversos materiales, reproducciones de elementos expositivos de la Bienal de SP a lo largo de su historia, escultura de bronce de Liuba Wolf de las oficinas de la bienal, fotografía del pabellón Ciccillio Matarazzo, diseños anónimos de objetos del espacio urbano de la ciudad SP, garrafas de agua y fragmentos de la arquitectura del pabellón de Niemeyer.

Medidas variables, se tuvieron en cuenta condiciones del espacio expositivo, conversaciones con el equipo curatorial y normativas para el transito y desalojo del recinto.