



scratched | rubbed | caressed

MIREIA ROCHER

18/8 – 24/9

Mireia Rocher's background in linguistics has, to a great degree, influenced her practice, manifesting through text-based works, collage, sculpture, performance and installation. In this way, she shares with the public personal stories from ordinary life composed of everyday materials. An interest in the barriers that prevent a total comprehension of language, emotions or senses shows in her work, which addresses themes such as exclusion, belonging, and the power that lies in vulnerability.

In *scratched | rubbed | caressed* we can see Rocher's latest series of sandpaper collages and the work *Self-portrait of Friction*, which also uses sandpaper and reflects on the artist's ongoing interventions with people, places and objects that affect her in multiple ways. The physical properties of sandpaper make it a perfect poetic material to transform thoughts, experiences, memories and emotions into a tactile form. Consequently, Rocher uses its different grit sizes and develops various geometrical compositions in an attempt to control and redefine the emotions deriving from experiences that have affected her life.

In the collage series, memories, longings and sorrows are transformed into forms that tease the sense of sight with the potential of contact. On specifically selected grounds; paper, steel or aluminium, Rocher reflects on ideas of grief and loss such as the longing for the Mediterranean or the anguish at the end of a relationship. The work process of the geometric collages presented here requires calculation, order, concentration and presence after a very intuitive and playful sketching stage.

Opposed to this need of control, the ongoing project *Self-portrait of Friction* presents a counterpart of the collage work. Rocher sands places and people who have somehow left a mark in her life or which she longs to be marked by. Sandpapering, for example, a wall at Moderna Museet because she wants to be part of it, her first apartment in Sweden or the skin of a loved one on a coarse paper. This ongoing intervention is a way to both leave traces and collect traces. To provoke friction and engagement. The used sandpaper is the physical evidence of an experience or feeling related to a space or a person. Additionally, when Rocher talks about friction, it is not just a physical contact but interaction on different levels – if there is friction, there is growth, evolution, there is energy and change.

It is thus possible to say that *scratched | rubbed | caressed* is an exercise to control and retain details and passages of life that would otherwise be difficult to deal with. Sandpaper is the clear protagonist in Rocher's latest works, a material that appears to unite a myriad of qualities and perspectives; whose name and texture evokes the sand of the mediterranean beaches that the artist had as a background in her childhood; which scratched on walls and people seems to retain their aura and caress their skin; which also takes different geometrical shapes to put some order on feelings, and which by only looking at it makes us wanting to touch it and become another part of Rocher's processes.