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# *Beyond words*

## Avelino Sala

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05.06.2021 – 28.08.2021

ADN Galeria presents the second solo exhibition of Avelino Sala in the gallery, one of the leading artists of art as a vehicle for political resistance in Spain.

The exhibition, titled *Beyond words*, will be inaugurated on June 5th, 2021, from 12:00 to 15:00.

Avelino Sala (Gijón-Spain, 1972) is an artist, curator, writer, and editor. His work as an artist has led him to question cultural and social reality from a late romantic perspective, always with a critical tone, open to the observer's interpretation. By continually exploring social imagery, Sala attempts to pinpoint sore spots, challenging the status quo, and using art as a powerful space for experimentation that demonstrates the need to create other realities. Sala is a Spanish reference of art as a vehicle for political resistance. His works reflect on the State's power and the control they exert in what could be considered a poetic manner. Furthermore, his recognizable aesthetic reinforces a discourse that is as necessary as it is powerful, encompassing sensitive and relevant issues such as migration, the environmental crisis, and the paradoxes of capitalism.

His work has been shown locally and internationally in spaces such as the Abrons Arts Center, New York; Museum of Fine Arts of Asturias; MAAC of Guayaquil; National Center for Contemporary Art, NCCA, Moscow; Matadero, Madrid; among others. He has received several grants, including Cajastur, Hangar, Bilbao Arte, and the Caja Madrid Generations Prize. In 2007 he was awarded by UNESCO and the New York Foundation for the Arts with the Artport International Video Award in Basel. He has participated in different biennials and, recently, he has exhibited individually at Ecco Cádiz and Center del Carme Cultura Contemporània in Valencia.

On this occasion, Sala presents at ADN Galeria ***Beyond Words***, a selection of recent works that describe a world in collapse. For Sala, each piece works as a mark on what is being done wrong in the current global context. With that in mind, he looks at issues that may pertain to different realms but that result from the same rooted dystopian perversion that characterizes contemporary society. According to the artist, it is no longer necessary to search for parallelisms with science fiction, for the nightmare has already become our reality.

Based on this premise, the artist traces a line that takes the viewer from the ecological to the political, taking on issues such as the constant and excessive mistreatment of the earth and its consequences on health, and more specifically focusing on the political agents and interests that lead, sustain and exacerbate these practices.

An example of this is the piece *Naturaleza Muerta*, named after the concept of still life. The series consists of vertical gardens made of preserved moss containing the logos of the dominant companies in the genetically modified crops agricultural industry worldwide. Through the use of preserved moss, dead vegetation, Sala seeks to represent these fields through landscapes that denounce their owners.



Avelino Sala  
*Naturaleza Muerta*, 2020

On the other hand, and keeping with the practice of art as protest, Sala presents *Libros para una Historia no Escrita*, a set of book sculptures that show the slogans of the environmental movement Fridays for Future silhouetted on their covers, among other protest phrases. These sculptures materialize the books that will, or should be, written in the future that would contain the causes that must be advocated today for such a future to exist. Sala proposes that, from the observer's point of view, words become images, and thus the phrases in these sculptural books constitute new imagery of the present.

The transformation of words into works of art is also manifested in the *piece S.O.S paddle out*, a video action that shows people forming the acronym S.O.S from the water. The word SOS is used by the artist for what it is, a call for help, both through the meaning of Save our Souls and *Si Opus Sit* (if necessary). In any case, he introduces it as an image recognizable for everyone that also represents us as a species in crisis. In this way, recognizing oneself is a fundamental part of Sala's works, who seeks to involve the viewer and encourage reflection with each piece

This call to awareness is introduced through irony, a recurring element in the artist's work that captures the observer's attention. An example of this is *Felpudos*, a work co-created with the artist Eugenio Merino consisting of a series of doormats that contain misogynistic quotes from relevant men in history. Aristotle, Nietzsche, and Kant are some of the names present within these mats on which Sala and Merino invite us to step on, as a sign of rejection, as a call to action to trample on old beliefs and review who controls history.

This is how Avelino Sala fosters a space of resistance, dissent, and reflection, where it is the viewer who activates the works and takes them beyond the image and the words.



[Avelino Sala artist portfolio](#)