

The exhibition is on display until 8 March 2027

***THE WAYWARD PEARL* GRANTS INSIGHT INTO FERNANDO SÁNCHEZ CASTILLO'S ART- MAKING OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES**



View of the exhibition room of *Fernando Sánchez Castillo. The Wayward Pearl*.
Museo Reina Sofía, photographic archive. Photograph: Fátima Sanz

- The Museo Reina Sofía's gallery **reopens with the show *Fernando Sánchez Castillo. The Wayward Pearl*** following two years of restoration work and improvements funded by Spain's Recovery Plan.
- **Fernando Sánchez Castillo's** artistic practice dissects monuments, gestures and legends to show history not as a stable narrative, but as a permanently conflictive field which governs how we must remember and move under authority.
- The show is made up of around 200 works, including pieces currently being created as the artist moves his studio into the Palacio de Velázquez to become part of the exhibition.

The show ***Fernando Sánchez Castillo. The Wayward Pearl*** was presented on Tuesday by **Manuel Segade**, alongside the artist and the show's curator, Ferran Baldebirt. The Museo Reina Sofía director stressed how "it is a mid-career retrospective which is also a space of artistic production", with the artist present across the months of the show's display. It is like a score by Fernando Sánchez Castillo, which he describes as a "machine of narratives and anecdotes".

During the press conference, the show's curator, Ferran Barenblit, spoke of the Wayward Pearl as "synonymous with many things, among them how power travels and moves from one hand to the next". Equally, "this pearl allows us to reflect on art's role".

Fernando Sánchez Castillo, for his part, stressed how "really, as artists we are a medium, through which images are channelled and stories or experiences are entwined".

From 24 June 2026 to 8 March 2027, the Palacio de Velázquez will house this show devoted to the work of **Fernando Sánchez Castillo** (Madrid, 1970), who on this occasion will put forward a reflection on the relationship between history, power and representation via a comparison with a pearl's formation. As in nature, where an aggressive act sets off a slow process which ends up creating a unique and remarkable object, the exhibit considers how art often arises in response to damage, turning trauma into form, memory and language. A form of beauty born out of aggression.

The Wayward Pearl assembles watercolours, sculptures, installations, videos, objects, loaned works which are resignified through their presentation form, recently made works and works in progress. Therefore, the exhibition's curator speaks of a "**retro-prospective**": **a show in which the artist's trajectory is revised while also remaining open to the present**, given that Sánchez Castillo will continue working in visitors' presence while the show is open to the public.

Sánchez Castillo's work examines different episodes of contemporary history, establishing a dialogue between the symbols associated with Francoism and other models of authority and citizen-built narrations and struggles for freedom. Thus, **historical memory** does not appear as a unique, closed narrative, but more as **a territory of permanent negotiation** with the co-existence of monuments, objects, documents and daily gestures capable of **questioning traditional forms in the representation of power**.

A visitor-constructed narrative. A route through the exhibition rooms

The show is devised as an exhibition route which orbits around the artist's studio. Visitors follow a path that reflects on protest, historical memory and art's capacity to turn gestures of resistance into new forms of representation. Beyond offering a linear narrative, the project invites visitors to traverse a set of connections, where history, politics and culture appear entwined.

The Palacio de Velázquez reopens

The exhibition centred on this Madrid artist heralds the reopening of the Palacio de Velázquez following restoration work carried out and commissioned with European funds. The aim of these works has been to improve the state of conservation of the roof structure and the climate control system, the change to LED lighting and the creation of a digital twin to manage the building.

Built for the National Exhibition of Mining in 1883, the Palacio de Velázquez has, since it was founded, welcomed different culturally, politically and socially relevant events, making it a fitting location for housing *Fernando Sánchez Castillo. The Wayward Pearl* and its investigation of **the way in which institutions produce, conserve and transform their narratives.**

Catalogue

Furthermore, in conjunction with the show, a **catalogue** in two editions, Spanish and English, will be published with texts by curator Ferran Barenblit, two essays, one by Germán Labrador and the other by Cuauhtémoc Medina, and, to conclude, a conversation between the artist and Isabel Argerich and Miguel Caballero. Moreover, the book includes numerous views of the show, as well as historical images within the artist's creative process.

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Press material



For further information

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