

MARINE LANIER – Our lights belong to us

Our lights belong to us Brings together different series That are echoed since 2006. This installation explored the theme of the clan, and in its extension, the idea of Belonging, by the stories That shape it, the far-off fantasies to which family legends send us back.

What does it mean to come out of the clan – in the same movement to reconcile, in order to approach to third place? The clan, a Gaelic word, evokes the family. It is also related to the plant, and branches, roots, ramifications, fragments that come back obsessively.

I come from a family of gardeners, landscapers, nurserymen, horticulturists, florists. For five generations, the men of this clan have been organizing the space, trying to maintain it, to discipline it. They cut trees, carry trash, burn them, monitor fires, carry roots to the back of trailers, scour class sheets full of gravel, plant live hedges, deliver flowers, dress burials, birthdays baptisms, weddings, participate in all the rituals that give shape to a life. The smell of the water of flowers is something that grabs the family. A fragrance that amazes us. It is an echo of faded flowers, green mosses, stems cut with pruning shears, whole sap spreading.

The fire, a pivot of this construction – a catalyst element with high symbolic load, must be understood here as a rallying figure. The landscapes of Armenia are great deserts calcined with heat. Military views depopulated from the warlike event. Places of shooting and watch. Places from which one fires. There is my brother's face covered with soot. The hand of a wounded vine grower, charred by the rubbing of matter on his skin, receptacle from outside; the unfolding of a fire from its birth to its extinction, the family greenhouses invaded by lush vegetation from the southern hemisphere, dry, burned on hectares evoking the flight of the boat people from Vietnam. Something snatches us – a flash of lightning rises on our faces, a shadow covers our skins. The heat keeps us at the edge of the circle. The fire envelops with their pungent, strong, carnal, definitive odor. The fire is a magnet, bright, shiny, with facets that twist in the fog around. One stands in silence, hypnotized by the height of the flames. Beyond joys, dramas, passing time, ancient stories, words that tear themselves away from life. Everything happens in the immediacy of the element. We know that it is no longer necessary to call, to wish to live the absence of words, to cry in the darkness. We imagine the beauty of what is unspeakable, the strangeness of the unspeakable, the open spaces of what is unthinkable, the tragic distances of what escapes, flees, flows through us.