

Antonio Ballester Moreno

Not There - Here

Galerie Urs Meile Zurich
January 31 - March 22, 2025
Opening: Friday, January 31, 2025; 6 pm - 8 pm
(Opening Hours: 11 am - 8 pm)
The artist will be present

Galerie Urs Meile is delighted to announce the opening of the first solo exhibition in Switzerland by Spanish artist Antonio Ballester Moreno (*1977) at our Zurich gallery. Renowned for his distinctive blend of geometric abstraction and figurative symbolism, Ballester Moreno presents a selection of his latest paintings and sculptures. His artistic practice is characterized by perfect harmony, an extremely precise technique, and a continuous engagement with themes of nature, culture, and the individual's role within these spheres.

Upon entering the exhibition, visitors are greeted by large suns and moons in vibrant shades of orange and blue, painted on rough jute canvases. These motifs echo throughout the space, recurring in steel sculptures. Whether these depict sunrises or sunsets is left to individual interpretation. Rather than offering definitive answers, Ballester Moreno aims to portray the natural cycles of the world: day follows night and night follows day in a perpetual rhythmic cycle. This representation of time, conveyed through the recurring repetition of motifs at different moments, varying in light and color, is central to the artist's vision. He seeks the essence of existence in nature's patterns, where all elements are interconnected. This interconnectedness is reflected in his works—whether on canvas or in sculpture—which seem to communicate with one another.

In his work, Ballester Moreno combines simple geometric forms with bold, luminous colors, creating a visual language that initially appears naïve and straightforward but holds a deeper, philosophical dimension. His vibrant palette ranges from intense reds to soothing blues in which organic shapes evoke landscapes but resist clear representation, inviting viewers to experience the freedom of form and color while seeking their own interpretations beyond rigid definitions of meaning and structure. This approach applies equally to his sculptures and paintings, which, though made from different materials, share the same visual language: positive and negative space, color, and portrayal.

Through his deliberate yet simple patterns, Ballester Moreno has developed a personal vocabulary that allows him to create worlds of subtle variation and symbolic composition. His works—whether paintings, collages, ceramics, or sculptures—are guided by an aesthetic rooted in nature. Circles symbolize the sun or moon and their cycles; triangles represent trees and mountains, while yellow denotes light and blue represents water. These elements come together to form landscapes that, though seemingly simple at first glance, reveal upon closer inspection a dynamic interplay of elements and a dialogue between individual works. For Ballester Moreno, landscapes serve as metaphors for how we perceive the world and how our perceptions shape reality. He views landscape art as a means of bringing the external world inward, akin to a scenography, which explains the dimensions of his paintings and the immersive installations he creates. During the scorching Madrid summers, Ballester Moreno escapes to rural Extremadura, where he produces collage sketches inspired by the surrounding nature. These sketches evolve into the signature works he is known for. In the city, he paints landscapes as a way of filling the void left by their absence. To him, looking at a landscape is oftentimes an inherently fulfilling experience.

Though Ballester Moreno's approach is grounded in abstraction, his work draws on a rich array of historical influences, including the history of patterns and decoration, craftsmanship, textile arts, design, and traditions from African and Islamic art. These influences coalesce into a unique artistic expression that innovatively explores the relationships between form, color, and symbolism. His creative practice extends beyond painting, investigating the capacity of art to transcend boundaries—both artistic and educational. Ballester Moreno believes that art, rooted in popular wisdom, experiential learning, and unregulated educational processes, can forge deep connections across various societal spheres. His body of work spans traditional canvas paintings as well as interactive museum installations, continually questioning the role of cultural institutions, which he views primarily as spaces for human connection. His visual language becomes a vessel for emotions and stories, embedded within the layers of color and form in his works.

Antonio Ballester Moreno was born in 1977 in Madrid, Spain, where he continues to live and work, alternating between the city and his residence in rural Extremadura, where much of his inspiration originates. He studied art at Complutense University in Madrid, one of Spain's leading institutions renowned for its strong tradition in fine arts. Over the years, Ballester Moreno has garnered significant international recognition and exhibited at prestigious institutions worldwide. Recent highlights include *Seeds of Resistance* at the MSU Broad Museum in Michigan (2021) and the 33rd São Paulo Biennial (2018). His earlier exhibitions include showcases at La Casa Encendida in Madrid, Museo Patio Herreriano in Valladolid, and MUSAC in León. He has also exhibited in leading galleries such as Galería Pedro Cera in Lisbon, Tanya Leighton in Berlin and Los Angeles, and Maisterravalbuena in Madrid.