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## *False Bottom*

**Eduardo Basualdo**

What material forms the screen, in Plato's cave, onto which the images are projected? In Eduardo Basualdo's work, the screen is porous, crumpled, inherently distorted; it demands contemplation, through the shadows, to discern the instances of reality hidden within the folds. This concealment is precisely the starting point of the exhibition title, borrowing it from a device familiar in stage magic: a hidden compartment beneath a visible surface, where the decisive action unfolds unnoticed. Here, what appears before us is never the whole. Each work invites observation into a second possible layer—political, psychological, or historical—embedded within its visible form. Like myth, which operates as a metaphorical machine carrying a real story inside it, Basualdo's works stage magical fictions hinting towards lived realities.

The exhibition unfolds across three rooms. The first two spaces display a complementary relationship: similar elements, divergent propositions. Through their control of light and shadows, both works toy with ideas of inherent power dynamics and how these are negotiated – perhaps usurped and manipulated, perhaps taken by force. The installations are constructed as machines; elementary, exposed, almost archaic. Motors turn, metal structures hold, light passes through apertures. The mechanisms are simple and laid bare, displaying a stark contrast to the underlying opacity of the scenes. This clarity extends generosity : inviting the viewer to understand its mechanisms, it offers an opening to contemplate their own form of control within its negotiations.

In the first room, a black suspended form rotates slowly, punctured by a small aperture that releases cold light. The motor emits a sharp, nervous sound, like an exposed electrical current. Domesticated and disciplined, light is set into obedient motion by the rhythm of its overarching structure. Its circular movement evokes both the turning of the moon, distant and nocturnal, and searchlights surveilling borders or prison yards – suggesting, almost inevitably, control and manipulation.

The adjacent room reverses the proposition. The same black form, or hood, cyclically encloses a luminous source, evoking an explicit act of violence, of extinguishing. Warm light rises and falls from the dark enclosure like sun cycles. As the form rhythmically descends, the space disappears into darkness, erasing the shadows of the viewers previously projected on the wall. Where the first room whispers of reason and subtle control, the second feels charged with force and intimidation. Together, the works trace a history that shifts between these poles: at times guided by reason and control, at others overtaken by force and shadow.

The final room turns inward. A projection of mutable faces, cast from a rotating wax sculpture, appears on a crumpled surface, visibly distorted. Filtered through the dance of shadows, notions of metamorphosis and moods are invoked – perhaps begging the question of the masks we carry with us. The screen itself, creased and irregular, insists that perception is always folded, filtered through internal and external chaos. As the sculpture rotates, hidden spaces emerge, like thoughts surfacing when attention sharpens.

Alongside the installations, a series of drawings operates as a parallel field of inquiry. Executed in pastel chalk, these works distill the exhibition's central concerns into intimate gestures, offering moments of quiet breathing amongst the heavier presence of large-scale works. The images suggest vortices, embraces, or fractured windows: forms that oscillate between protection and rupture, intimacy and exposure, light and darkness. In their reduced

scale and tactile immediacy, they evoke interior diagrams contrasting the installations' machinery, yet display a similar kind of myth-making. Human bodies enter the paper in tender gestures – echoing feelings of togetherness and compassion within the struggles of power.

*False Bottom* appears structured through contradiction: black and white, sun and moon, reason and force, revelation and concealment. Yet contradiction is never static. Between opposing terms a third element arises; the dialogue that sets them in motion. Basualdo's "false bottom" therefore extends an opening rather than a conclusion. Beneath every surface lies another space, another possibility: the persistence of darkness, certainly, but perhaps also the enduring chance of illumination.

Eleonora de Caria

**Eduardo Basualdo** (born 1977) lives and works in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Recent solo exhibitions include: *In Media Res*, Ruth Benzacar, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2025); *Pupila*, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina (2022); *Corona*, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Germany (2021); *Casa Naranja*, Córdoba, Argentina (2020); *La Cabeza de Goliath*, Musée d'Art Contemporain Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France (2018); *Arena*, MuBE - Museu Brasileiro de Escultura e Ecologia, São Paulo, Brazil (2017). Recent group exhibitions include: *Under Construction*, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany (2022); *Recovering Histories, Recovering Fantasies*, 2nd Bienal Sur, National Museum, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (2019); *Immediately Before and Shortly After*, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo Hotel de Inmigrantes, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2019); *Picasso et l'Exil*, Musée d'Art Contemporain Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France (2019); *Secretos Compartidos*, Centro Cultural Borges, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2019); *All the World's Futures*, 56th Venice Biennale (2015); *XII Bienal de La Habana*, Havana, Cuba (2015). His work is part of collections such as: Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Rochechouart, France; Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, USA; Juan y Patricia Vergez, Buenos Aires.

Exhibition dates: March 14 – April 18, 2026

Open: Tuesday – Saturday 12 – 6 pm