

David Rodríguez Caballero



**Marlborough**

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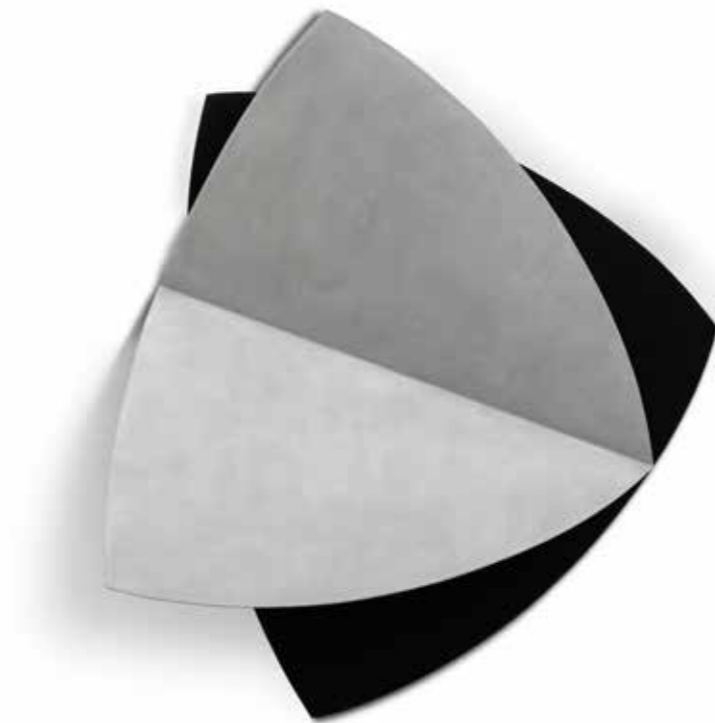
***Alchemy in Motion***

February 05 - March 02, 2019

**Marlborough**

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FRONT COVER / *16.diciembre.2018*, bronze, 55 x 23 1/2 x 11 3/4 in. | 140 x 60 x 30 cm  
BACK COVER / *21.noviembre.2018*, aluminum, 51 1/8 x 25 x 9 3/4 in. | 130 x 63.5 x 25 cm



12.noviembre.2018, enamel on aluminum, 47 1/8 x 44 x 9 5/8 in. | 120 x 112 x 24,5 cm

## David Rodríguez Caballero: Alchemy in Motion

by Susan L. Aberth, PhD

Professor of Art History at Bard College

The new works by David Rodríguez Caballero on display in this exhibition, *Alchemy in Motion* demonstrate the artist's masterful use of his signature folding technique as well as his other distinctive manipulations of metal. The finesse of his craftsmanship as well as the deft employment of his recognizable sculptural vocabulary mark Rodríguez Caballero as one of Spain's most intriguing and important contemporary artists. Numerous publications have explored the trajectory of Rodríguez Caballero's artistic development, particularly his obsessive attention to surface as a means to orchestrate his works' interaction with light. Filing, sanding, polishing – as well as heating, cutting, bending – Rodríguez Caballero's elegant and seemingly effortless exteriors belie all this intense exertion. Yet like magic mirrors, they maintain the concentrated energy of their production and exert a psychic pull that draws the viewer into the bends and interstices of their metallic terrain.

Although Rodríguez Caballero has been compared to modernist artists working in Europe and the United States, one can also observe hints of similar explorations in form and movement with artists in Latin America, thereby placing him within a more global context. In particular his folded wall pieces bring to mind artists of the Neo-Concrete movement in Brazil. Lygia Clark's (1920-1988) series of hinged metal sculptures titled *bichos* (critters) play with the juxtaposition between hard metallic form and organic organisms. Clark's *bichos* were designed to be manipulated and not static, as their flat metal planes could be reconfigured into multiple shapes via hinges. Alternating between two and three-dimensional forms, they resisted categorization and it is this mutability that is also to be found in Rodríguez Caballero's works. Although made of a sculptural material, Rodríguez Caballero's metal bas-reliefs hang on the wall like paintings and share their preoccupation with surface, color and light.

Another Latin American artist working with the reflective potentiality of metal is the Mexican painter and sculptor Mathias Goeritz (1915-1990). Utilizing perforated golden tin sheets, in the late 1950s and 1960s Goeritz created a series of flat sculptural pieces that vacillate between painting and minimalist sculpture. Their mystical mutability is amplified by their glowing gold and textured surfaces and they serve perfectly as secular altarpieces for modern times. Emulating in a subtle way the gilt and carved wooden walls behind the altars of Mexican churches, Goeritz's panels exuded an aura of gravitas and mystery whether hung in churches or office buildings. Like Goeritz, the sculptures of Rodríguez Caballero occupy a similar liminal position

by being at once flawless expressions of high modernism and yet also in possession of a spiritual weight reminiscent of metaphysical beliefs. This brings to mind the works Rodríguez Caballero hung in the Cathedral of Segovia earlier this year. His triptych of folded pieces hung near a sculpture of the dead Christ, where their cool and somber abstract surfaces served as the perfect emotional counterpoint to the gruesome hyperrealism of Spanish Baroque religious art.

Art history has shown that the formation of abstraction, particularly geometric abstraction, has its roots in esoteric philosophies, as seen in the ideas and works of Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, and Kasimir Malevich, to name but a few artists. Moreover, in earlier times artists were often linked directly to such hermetic practices as alchemy, which is responsible for the discovery and use of various types of paints and artistic mediums. The laborious process of the transmutation of metals undertaken by alchemists who were both artists and early scientists, and who worked across centuries and in many locations throughout the world, has reverberations felt in the contemporary art world. In medieval Spain, Islamic, Jewish and Christian alchemists experimented with turning base metals into gold, with gold often being philosophically associated with the search for immortality. Copper, bronze, aluminum, steel, brass - Rodríguez Caballero is totally immersed in working with metal. His meticulous attention to detail, his technical expertise in the many processes involved in the fabrication of his artwork possess the same intense devotion and obsessive repetition seen in alchemical experiments of old. The fluid undulations and creases of his sculptural surfaces express the processes of transformation that lie at the core of alchemy. Like magic, hard metallic surfaces appear to mutate and move before our very eyes, serving as metaphors for our own psychological and spiritual metamorphoses over time.

The presence of light in works of art has always been associated with the human soul and its desire to evolve towards dissolution. This is not exclusively relegated to the domain of religion and, in more secular meditative practices, is loosely associated with Zen Buddhism. Frequently Rodríguez Caballero's work has referenced Japanese origami paper folding and I would suggest that the careful and slow manipulation of such a delicate and ephemeral material has equivalences to certain other quasi-ritualistic practices such as Japanese tea ceremony. One can also think of traditional Japanese clothing with its folds and its singular notion of the charged area or "in between space" lying between the skin and the garment. The meditative quality of Rodríguez Caballero's folded wall pieces has always been clear with its subtle capturing and redirecting of light. But to think of it in terms of Japanese clothing adds another more visceral aspect that once again reminds us of the power of interstitial spaces. Rodríguez Caballero worked with Mexican amate paper in the late 1990s and that material, with its association with indigenous women and the supernatural, has yet to be fully explored.

Rodríguez Caballero's brass and steel works composed of thin metal strips, such as *22.diciembre.2018*, are like drawings in air and while they evoke Jackson Pollock's drip paintings and Cy Twombly's poetic text-like drawings, they are also reminiscent of the Venezuelan artist Gego (Gertrude Goldschmidt) and her spider-web like me-

tal reticulárea sculptural installations. This particular series by Rodríguez Caballero seems particularly metaphysical as the works fluctuate between absence and presence as the metal parts simultaneously coalesce into form and dissolve into nothingness. Processes of transmutation are infinitely suggested – dark into light, line into form, art into text, drawing into sculpture – as the artist displays his technical prowess with bravura.

On a final note, there is also a sensual and even erotic aspect to Rodríguez Caballero's sculpture as certain forms evoke nature, the organic, and the body. Discrete folds conceal, while certain apertures reveal. Textures are reminiscent of hair or skin and creases can be likened to bodily movements seen in sitting, lying or even moving. In the diptych *24.diciembre.2018*, two forms approach each other in a cautious encounter. Suggesting gender binaries with their materials of aluminum and bronze, their mirroring forms also suggest alchemical notions, particularly the idea that male and female are the two sides of the same spiritual coin and need to be successfully recombined to realize the Philosopher's stone. The soaring vertical *08.agosto.2013* is both phallic and reminiscent of feminine forms whereas the bronze and aluminum pair, *25.octubre.2018* and *19.octubre.2018*, are inverse mirrors of each other with projecting and sunken shapes that playfully suggest male and female. The beautiful brass and enamel *24.noviembre.2018* appears to flutter like a butterfly while the sad tear on the brass *10.diciembre.2018* transforms the leaf-like organic form into something slightly more ominous and wounded.

David Rodríguez Caballero is a highly accomplished artist for one so relatively young and now, at the height of his imaginative and technical powers, he is poised to move towards ever more exciting horizons. Metals celebrates his long involvement with this favored medium, a material that he has disciplined to convey meaning on many formal and symbolic levels, through forms both geometric and organic. In this most rigid of materials Rodríguez Caballero has managed to convey softness, movement, and the processes of transformation.



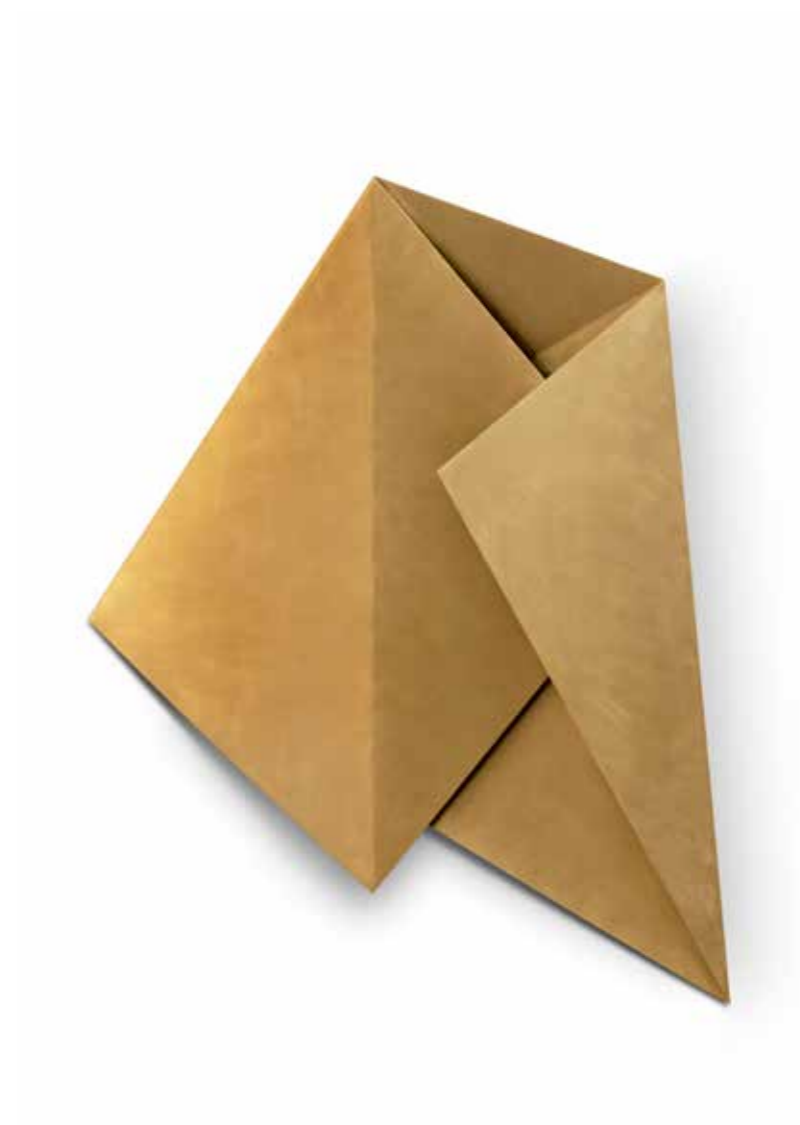
18.octubre.2018, aluminum, 39 1/4 x 39 1/4 x 25 1/8 in. | 100 x 100 x 64 cm



18.septiembre.2018, aluminum  
59 1/4 x 52 3/4 x 5 1/4 in. | 150.5 x 134 x 13.5 cm



24.septiembre.2018, copper  
59 1/4 x 55 7/8 x 4 1/2 in. | 150.5 x 142 x 11.5 cm



21.septiembre.2018, brass  
54 1/4 x 44 x 4 7/8 in. | 138 x 112 x 12.5 cm



09.marzo.2018, brass and steel, 66 7/8 x 82 5/8 x 23 1/2 in. | 170 x 210 x 60 cm



05.enero.2018, brass and steel, 63 x 76 3/4 x 23 1/2 in. | 160 x 195 x 60 cm





13.noviembre.2018, copper, 36 1/2 x 37 3/4 x 10 1/8 in. | 93 x 96 x 26 cm



24.diciembre.2018  
bronze: 37 3/8 x 10 1/8 x 10 1/8 in. | 95 x 26 x 26 cm  
aluminum: 37 3/8 x 9 3/8 x 9 3/4 in. | 95 x 24 x 25 cm



10.diciembre.2018, brass, 68 7/8 x 15 5/8 x 5 7/8 in. | 175 x 40 x 15 cm



24.noviembre.2018, enamel on brass, 43 1/4 x 27 1/2 x 7 3/4 in. | 110 x 70 x 20 cm



22.noviembre.2018, aluminum, 59 x 23 1/2 x 15 5/8 in. | 150 x 60 x 40 cm



12.diciembre.2018, brass, 59 x 20 x 15 1/4 in. | 150 x 51 x 39 cm



22. *diciembre.2018*, brass and steel, 79 1/8 x 118 x 24 3/4 in. | 201 x 300 x 63 cm

o8. agosto. 2013, aluminum, 94 3/8 x 19 5/8 x 15 5/8 in. | 240 x 50 x 40 cm





20.diciembre.2018, copper, 59 x 49 1/8 x 26 3/4 in. | 150 x 125 x 68 cm

## David Rodríguez Caballero

Born in Pamplona, Spain, 1970

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 *El pliegue sobre el pliegue*, Museo Esteban Vicente, Segovia, Spain
- 2017 *Abstracciones poéticas / Poetic Abstractions*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2016 *David Rodríguez Caballero. Danser La Sculpture*, Espace Meyer Zafra, Paris, France  
*Vynyls*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, United States
- 2015 *Citadelle. Pabellón de Mixtos, Horno y Jardines*, Pamplona, Spain  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Vibraciones de la Materia*, Galería Marlborough, Barcelona, Spain  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Through Time*. Galería Aurora Vigil-Escalera, Gijón, Asturias, Spain
- 2014 *David Rodríguez Caballero: Recent Works*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, United States
- 2013 *Re-flections*, C-Art Gallery, Miami, United States  
*Luz y geometría*, Centro del Carmen, Valencia, Spain  
*Plier et Déplier*, Marlborough Monaco, Monte-Carlo, Monaco
- 2012 *David Rodríguez Caballero. Recent Work*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York, United States  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Desarrollos: Ongoing pieces 2010-2012*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2011 *Los estados de la cruz: Luz y Geometría*, Claustro de la Catedral de Pamplona, Pamplona, Spain  
*Glaciers / Glaciares*, Museo Würth, La Rioja, Spain
- 2010 *Interpretaciones. Un diálogo con Jorge Oteiza*, Fundación Museo Jorge Oteiza, Alzuza, Navarra, Spain  
*Geometrías*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain  
*Figuras. Aluminios y vinilos*, Fundación María Forcada, Tudela, Navarra, Spain
- 2009 *Estructura y Orden (Structure and Order)*, Galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz, Pamplona, Spain  
*Plegados*, Galería Marlborough, Barcelona, Spain
- 2008 *Vinilos-Grabados*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2006 *Obra reciente*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain  
*Cinco Maneras*, Sala del Polvorín. Ciudadela, Ayuntamiento. de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 2004 *Origamis*, Engloba, Valencia, Spain
- 2003 *Color Elefante*, Valencia, Spain
- 2002 Galería Agurtxo Iruretagoyena, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 2001 Galería Dieciséis, San Sebastián, Spain
- 2000 Sala del Polvorín, Ciudadela, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 1998 Galería Dieciséis, San Sebastián, Spain
- 1996 Galería Pintzel, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 1994 Casa de la Juventud, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain

### CATALOGS AND MONOGRAPHS

- 2018 *El pliegue sobre el pliegue*, Museo Esteban Vicente, Segovia, Spain
- 2017 *Abstracciones poéticas/Poetic Abstractions*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2016 *David Rodríguez Caballero. Danser La Sculpture*, Espace Meyer Zafra, Paris, France  
*Vynyls*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, United States  
*Large Sculptures*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, United States  
*De Luces Mixtas 2016*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2015 *Citadelle, Pabellón de Mixtos, Horno y Jardines*, Ciudadela, Pamplona, Spain  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Vibraciones de la Materia*, Galería Marlborough, Barcelona, Spain  
*Tres propuestas para un nuevo espacio*, Galería Aurora Vigil-Escalera, Gijón, Asturias, Spain  
*Escultura Española siglos XX-XXI*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain  
*David Rodríguez Caballero: Through Time*, Galería Aurora Vigil-Escalera, Gijón, Asturias, Spain
- 2014 *David Rodríguez Caballero: Recent Works*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, United States  
*Itinerarios de una colección*, Fundación Coca-Cola, Sala Vimcorsa, Córdoba, Spain  
*Cita entre artistas*, Galería Marlborough, Barcelona, Spain  
*De Luces Mixtas 2014*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2013 *David Rodríguez Caballero. Luz y geometría*, Centro del Carmen, Valencia, Spain  
*Plier et Déplier*, Marlborough Monaco, Monte-Carlo, Monaco  
*Colectiva de Escultura*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2012 *David Rodríguez Caballero. Re-flections*, C-Art Gallery, Miami, United States  
*Recent Works: David Rodríguez Caballero*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York, United States  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Desarrollos: Ongoing pieces 2010-2012*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain
- 2011 *La inspiración y el artista*, BMW, Madrid, Spain  
*Ficciones y realidades. Arte español de los 2000 en la Colección Patio Herreriano*, Art Modern Museum, Moscow, Russia  
*David Rodríguez Caballero. Glaciers/Glaciares*, Museo Würth, La Rioja, Spain

### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- 2010 *Geometrías/Geometries*, Galería Marlborough, Madrid, Spain  
*Interpretaciones*, Fundación Museo Jorge Oteiza, Alzuza, Navarra, Spain  
*Aluminios/Aluminums*, Fundación María Forcada, Tudela, Navarra, Spain  
*Atrio. Colección Artística del Parlamento de Navarra 1979-2010*, Fundación María Forcada, Tudela, Navarra, Spain
- 2009 *Estructura y orden/Structure an Order*, Galería Moisés Pérez de Albéniz, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain  
*Joyas del Arte moderno. La orfebrería de Pablo Picasso, Julio González, Eduardo Chillida, Anthony Caro, Alberto Corazón y David Rodríguez Caballero*, Ayuntamiento de Torrent, Valencia, Spain
- 2008 *La mirada transferida*, Diputación Foral de Guipúzcoa, Spain  
*Museo de Navarra: Colección abierta. Adquisiciones 2005-2008*, Gobierno de Navarra, Spain
- 2007 *Silencios: 22 pintores navarros*, Gobierno de Navarra, Spain  
*Colección de Arte Contemporáneo Unión Fenosa*, Unión Fenosa, La Coruña, Spain
- 2006 *David Rodríguez Caballero*, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain  
*Arte sin límites*, Gobierno de Navarra, Spain  
*Mostra IX Internacional Unión Fenosa*, MACUF, La Coruña, Spain  
*Conversaciones con Artistas Navarros: David Rodríguez Caballero y Kosme de Barañano*, Gobierno de Navarra, Spain
- 2005 *Museo de Navarra: Colección Abierta. Adquisiciones 2002-2005*. Gobierno de Navarra, Spain
- 2004 *Origami, David Rodríguez Caballero*, Catálogo editado con motivo del Premio de las Artes Plásticas Engloba, Valencia, Spain
- 2003 *IX Bienal de Artes Plásticas Ciudad de Pamplona*, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 2002 *David Rodríguez Caballero*, Galería Agurcho Iruretagoyena, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain  
*Abstracciones. Pintura Navarra actual*, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- 2000 *David Rodríguez Caballero*, Ayuntamiento de Pamplona/Galería Dieciséis, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain
- Ayuntamiento de Pamplona, Navarra, Spain  
Ayuntamiento de Alcobendas, Madrid, Spain  
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Colección Olor Visual, Barcelona, Spain  
Colección Repsol, Madrid, Spain  
Fundación Coca-Cola, Madrid, Spain  
Fundación Volksbank, Paderborn, Germany  
Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE), Madrid, Spain  
ISE Cultural Foundation, New York / Tokyo  
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Museo de la Cultura del Vino, Fundación Dinastía Vivanco, La Rioja, Spain  
Museo de Navarra, Pamplona, Navarra, Spain  
Museo Patio Herreriano, Valladolid, Spain  
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