RAFAEL DOMENECH PRESENTS
LAS PALABRAS SON MUROS [PAVILION FOR ASTORIA]
AT SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK

A community-engaged sculpture and bookmaking project

New York – June 6, 2019 – Las Palabras Son Muros [Pavilion for Astoria] (Words are Walls [Pavilion for Astoria]) is a collectively authored dynamic sculptural “book” project by artist Rafael Domenech.

Scaffolding and construction mesh – both provisional materials emblematic of a changing urban landscape – comprise the two semicircular towers of this outdoor piece. Mesh “pages” are hung from the scaffolding and feature graphically dynamic laser-cut texts that are updated throughout the exhibition.

Domenech gleans these texts from various sources and through different layers of mediation: from other artists participating in public programs, from compositions submitted on site by Park visitors, via a call-in number, and through the exhibition website laspalabrassonmuros.info. The
artist allows for chance to determine the composition when aggregating this amalgamation of voices throughout the sixteen-week exhibition.

Domenech’s work takes its title from a line of the poem Flamenco in Big Bang – a book of concrete poetry by Cuban artist, poet, and critic Severo Sarduy. Palabras son Muros embodies some of the neo-baroque visual and textual metaphors that Sarduy identified and articulated in his writing. For instance, the ellipse – a shape rendered in relation to two foci – represents the conditions of dislocation, decentralization, and eccentricity. These elements appear both formally and conceptually in Palabras son Muros. Duality reverberates in the pairing of the towers, the outer borough geography, and the experience of migration. These dualities, the dissolution of authorship, and the embrace of artifice and exuberance further evince Sarduy’s aesthetics.

After the exhibition, Domenech will produce a book that combines all the texts and includes reused elements of the rotating mesh installments. The result will be a collection of fragmented perspectives combined into a new whole. As the piece evolves over time, the sculptural book can be viewed online at socratessculpturepark.org/las-palabras-son-muros

Las Palabras son Muros [Pavilion for Astoria] Public Programs:

Saturday Sculpture Workshop: Book as Architecture
Saturday, July 6 • 12-3PM
Explore the book as architectural space and sculptural process in conjunction with artist Rafael Domenech’s project at Socrates. Through cutting holes and collaging with different materials, we’ll improvise to create new narratives between the city and the book. This workshop is part of the Park’s Saturday Sculpture Workshop series of free, family-friendly, drop-in art classes.

Opening: Las Palabras son Muros [Pavilion for Astoria]
Friday, July 12 • 6-8PM
Join us to celebrate the opening and initial iteration of artist Rafael Domenech’s project Las Palabras Son Muros [Words are Walls], which explores text as architecture, collective authorship, and the urban experience.

Poetry Reading: Cruel Optimism (after Lauren Berlant)
Sunday, July 21 • 5PM
Poets will present new compositions that will be incorporated into Las Palabras Son Muros over the following weeks. Presenters include Pamela Sneed, Dana Deguilio, Vivian Chiu, and others.

Walk: Politics of Sharing Space
Monday, August 12 • 6PM
Join artist Rafael Domenech for a psychogeographic ramble through Astoria with discussions about the textures of the industrial urban environment and more. The walk will cover a distance of approximately 1 mile and end in Socrates at Las Palabras Son Muros. Starting location to be announced on the website.

Puppet Show: Rupture/Ruptura
Saturday, August 24 • 2-6 PM
Rain Date: Sunday, August 25 • 2-6PM
Join artist Ernesto Oroza in exploring an archive of material reuse through radical puppet theater. Ruptura incorporates more than 80 hand puppets holding machine spare-parts gathered from Cuban households over the last 5 years. These machine spare-parts were used to repair mixers, fans, washing machines, coffee machines, and pressure cookers imported by the Cuban government from China, Korea, Spain, and The Soviet Union, among
others. The project interrogates repair and reuse – considering these tactics as techno-political positioning and a critical approach to commodification of the contemporary industrial object. Through participation and manipulation of the puppets, the audience becomes an actor of the work.

**Fly: Kite Making Workshop**  
**Saturday, September 7 • 3PM**  
This workshop is inspired by an experimental class taught by Joseph Albers at the Bauhaus. We will rethink the kite as a structure for display by adding text and graphics. A total of 100 kites will be flown as a group to create a banner/an image/a floating graphic.

**Walk: Politics of Sharing Space**  
**Friday, September 13 • Time TBD**  
Join artist Rafael Domenech for a psychogeographic ramble through Astoria with discussions about the textures of the industrial urban environment and more. The walk will cover a distance of approximately 1 mile and end in Socrates at *Las Palabras Son Muros*. Starting location to be announced on the website.

**Wear: T-Shirt Printing Workshop**  
**Sunday, October 20 • 3PM**  
Give depth and texture to your t-shirt in a printing workshop led by artists Rirkrit Tiravanija and Tomas Vu inspired by the graphics of Rafael Domenech’s *Las Palabras son Muros*.

**Halloween Harvest: Lantern Workshop**  
**Saturday, October 26 • 12-4 PM**  
Create a lantern from everyday materials and explore aspects of illumination with translucency, opacity, and cut-outs. Presented in conjunction with Rafael Domenech’s project *Las Palabras son Muros*, this workshop further develops the artist’s ideas for creative re-use as a strategy for urban-living. The workshop is part of the Halloween Harvest Festival at Socrates, which offers a variety of family-friendly activities and performances.

Please RSVP to rsvp@socratessculpturepark.org for each program.

**SUPPORT**  
*Las Palabras son Muros [Pavilion for Astoria]* is made possible with generous support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

**ABOUT SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK**  
For more than thirty years Socrates Sculpture Park has been a model of public art production, community activism, and socially inspired place-making. Known for fostering experimental and visionary artworks, the Park has exhibited more than 1,000 artists on its five waterfront acres, providing them financial and material resources and outdoor studio facilities to create large-scale artworks on site. socratessculpturepark.org

Socrates is free and open to the public 365 days a year from 9am to sunset and is located at 32-01 Vernon Boulevard at the intersection of Broadway in Long Island City, New York.
Join the conversation on social media by mentioning Socrates Sculpture Park and using the hashtags #PalabrasSonMuros #PavilionForAstoria and #RafaelDomenech.

Facebook: /SocratesSculpturePark
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