

DANIEL JACOBY: THE PERSISTENCE OF STIGMA AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

From 06/01/2026 to 07/04/2026

Maisterra

Madrid, Spain



By Álvaro De Benito

The exhibition by Peruvian artist at Galería Maisterra examines memory, identity, and belonging through a literary narrative articulated across video and sculpture, interrogating systems of social classification and the cultural hierarchies that sustain mechanisms of exclusion.



Installation view Daniel Jacoby: *Cathartes*. Photo: Roberto Ruiz

Maisterra presents *Cathartes*, a solo exhibition by Daniel Jacoby (Lima, Peru, 1985), which investigates memory and its role in shaping recollection and temporality, alongside identity formation and social classificatory systems that generate exclusivity and belonging. The exhibition unfolds across two technically differentiated yet conceptually interdependent areas. The audiovisual work *Gallinazo*, together with five bronze sculptures, initiates and develops a narrative of literary character whose formal articulation emerges through moving image, sculptural figures, and spatial environment.

In the film, Jacoby constructs a guided trajectory through personal episodes mediated by the presence of the artist's hand, taking as its point of reference a private club that operates as a symbol of continuity and segregation. Within this space, temporality appears suspended, producing a condition in which time seems arrested and permanence is reinforced as an illusion. Through these recollections, the work reveals how identity and belonging are shaped—and constrained—by dominant social and perceptual structures.

At the exhibition's conceptual core, a vulture (*gallinazo*) functions as a disruptive agent. Its appearance destabilizes entrenched classificatory categories, while the symbolic framework imposed upon it simultaneously positions the bird as an emblem of transformation and purification. The refusal to acknowledge its presence within established social hierarchies reiterates the semiotic power of the figure as a perceived threat to stability.

The narrative concludes with the subjective account of an eighteenth-century European naturalist whose questionable methodological practice leads to the stigmatization of the vulture despite never having encountered it directly. This episode articulates a broader critique of European epistemological systems devoted to cataloguing and ordering the world. Only when the naturalist falls ill and is saved by the bird does recognition of its purifying function emerge, although its imposed categorization persists historically.

The bronze sculptures extend the conceptual framework introduced in *Gallinazo*, embodying these mediated perspectives through the image of a central subject rendered distorted and eroded, positioned atop elevated plinths in a manner that echoes the surveillance implied in the audiovisual work. The gallery space is covered with blue raffia, emphasizing the artificial condition of the exhibition environment, replacing the symbolic neutrality of the white cube with a visibly constructed interior endowed with its own spatial identity.

***Daniel Jacoby: Cathartes* can be viewed until 4 July at Galería Maisterra, Hospital 8, Madrid (Spain).**