In Conversation with JAŠA
September 9, 2026 | Amaya

Describe your role in the art world. How did your career bring you into the arts and what was your path to your current position? I am an artist, in every way possible. It took me a while to fully embrace it, but that process only strengthened my conviction and sense of vocation. I love what I do—it never feels repetitive, yet it always feels as if I am starting entirely from scratch. I live from my art, and it has been like this since I decided to go all in right at the beginning. Throughout high school, I was already engaging with cross-media work, but I still needed a deep dive into painting at the academy to fully realize what I wanted to do: to free myself across various mediums and approach each with passion and humility, yet with a cunning grin on my face. I am now where I always wanted to be—completely free in my art. What I wonder about now is where I will go from here as I continue to dream big and wide. What was the first artwork that you remember really struck you? What was the context of your seeing it and why did it resonate? The very first work that struck me was the Sistine Chapel in Rome. I was five years old, and my parents brought me along for my uncle's wedding. We took a week to drive there, taking it slow and stopping along the way. But arriving in Rome was the ultimate pinnacle of that journey for me. Walking into the Sistine Chapel, I encountered something so utterly powerful that I still remember the complete physical reaction—I was completely taken by the sheer magnitude and the fact that I was standing right in the center of it. At one point, my mother leaned down and said, "There is Michelangelo's self-portrait too. You see that man holding a human skin? That's him," pointing at the massive painted wall. That was it for me. I ran out of the chapel with my parents chasing after me. For years after, I avoided any kind of art or sacred spaces because they would trigger that exact same intense physical reaction. When I returned as a teenager—after the restoration revealed all the vivid colors—it all clicked: I wanted this. I wanted this feeling. What's your favorite museum and what do you like about it? This is a hard choice—a really hard one. When Tate Modern opened in London, I managed to be there, and it completely blew my mind. From both an architectural and curatorial perspective, that was the beginning of what we know and see today. Since I am based in Berlin, I also have a real soft spot for the Neue Nationalgalerie. It's a very challenging space—being so open, you really need to contextualize visually well. But over the years, the shows I've seen there have put together groundbreaking solutions for rethinking space in relation to works. It offers a progressive curatorial approach that gives the artist's voice its full overall power and sensibility. If you could force one conversation the art world isn't having right now, what would it be about? Experimentation and collaboration. Art has the unique capacity not only to make mistakes, but to embrace them as singular marks—to be openly fragile and vulnerable. Yet today, massive productions and the hyper-focus on collectability can overshadow this, as artists are expected to look sleek and professional in every aspect, especially on the production side. We are giving a very narrow idea to younger generations about what "being successful" in art actually means. The second thing is collaboration. The extreme "solitary genius" narrative isn't just art embracing hyper-capitalism—it's bowing down to it. Be bold, be wrong, and do it with others—so we can at least have a proper laugh together at the end of the day. Imagine a dinner with any artist, living or dead. Who's sitting across from you, and what do you ask them? Besides all the amazing artists of my generation and beyond that I've had the privilege to grow with? Let's play a bit. First of all, it's a very crowded room, and I am the one cooking—so it's a total feast! I won't say everyone is in the room, because that would be a bit over the top

even for me, ha ha. But let’s start with Gordon Matta-Clark: of course we talk about his New York FOOD project, while looking at the surrounding walls and drawing holes on them where we’ll cut through in the morning. Absalon sits next to him, and we compare our arm spans. Santiago Sierra is silently listening while chain-smoking, and Félix González-Torres points out the two clocks on my wall—my homage to his work “Untitled” (Perfect Lovers). Louise Bourgeois watches us from afar as the dinner turns into a wild, crazy party. And as I said—everyone is here, and we are all friends. Take us back to the moment you knew the art world was where you belonged, and was there ever a point where you almost walked away? I guess it didn’t happen all at once; it came in stages. First, there was the inner sense of belonging—when, through the amazing work of others, you feel not just connected to the field, but intimately, profoundly part of it as an active young artist. Then there is the career side, which also moves in phases. But if I had to pick one pivotal moment, it was definitely the “Olympics” of the art world: representing Slovenia at the Venice Biennale with my durational project. What a ride. When did I almost walk away? Every single time I got too close to the hypocrisy of it all—the projected public image of “we are here to better the world,” contrasted with the dog-eat-dog reality behind the veil. But in the end, that realization only reinforces your own true vocation. Tell us about an artwork that didn’t only impress you, but genuinely shifted your thinking. Ha, there are many! But if I had to choose one that genuinely shifted my entire perception, I would actually say the album Kid A by Radiohead. I was in London with a friend when it came out. We went to the Virgin Megastore, stood in line for the listening booths, and listened to it from A to Z. We walked out and stayed completely silent for hours before we finally started talking late into the night. That was the night I felt what kind of artist I wanted to become. Even though I was mainly a painter at the time and didn’t quite know how to translate that energy yet—though, looking back, I was already engaging across various mediums—I just hadn’t named it as such yet. What’s a widely accepted idea in the art world that you disagree with? The idea that there is only one definition of “success”—one that merely mimics pure capitalistic and hyper-individualistic mentalities. We are currently at a massive crossroads across environment, technology, and politics. Art should be creating new cross-combinations and bold alternatives, rather than simply supplying market demand. Beyond art, tell us about a book, a place, a person, an experience, or anything else that influenced and has shaped how you approach your work. If I close my eyes, there is a kaleidoscope of all of the above. But if I have to choose just one—right now—I would choose my father. I don’t separate myself into compartmentalized roles as a person—son, friend, father, partner, artist. My father was my most important teacher within this holistic view. He is the backbone that allows me to play various tunes in many different directions. Picture the art world ten years from now. How will we discover, authenticate, or experience art differently? As mentioned before, groundbreaking shifts are happening right now, so the future is already in motion. What we constantly keep re-discovering is how we feel in the middle of it all. However you look at it, every era goes through a birth-everything-death cycle. It is always inspiring to look for the differences and similarities in how we relate to that cycle—and how we stay human inside it. Photo: Christian H. Hasselbusch