Opening at Ordovas this summer, Chillida: From Iron to Light is the first dedicated exhibition of Chillida’s sculptures to take place in London for almost twenty years. Now regarded as one of the foremost pioneers of modern sculpture, Eduardo Chillida (1924-2002) produced an extraordinary body of work over a period of fifty years, establishing him among Spain’s most distinctive and internationally acclaimed artists. Organised in collaboration with the artist’s estate, Chillida: From Iron to Light will go on public display from 5 June until 27 July, showcasing sculptures made in steel and alabaster, alongside works on paper and source materials from the artist’s archive.

Ignacio Chillida, son of the artist, says “It has been some time since there was an exhibition of this nature dedicated to Eduardo Chillida in London. For this special occasion we have selected with Pilar Ordovás a group of works which are all closely related to Chillida’s interest in public art and therefore deal with themes such as scale - in particular the human scale, which is always an important reference in his work, making his sculptures monumental regardless of their size. For the Chillida family it is an absolute pleasure to have been able to entrust Pilar Ordovás and her gallery to show this body of work and we wish her all the success she deserves for the great work she is doing.”

“Collaborating with the estate of the artist in staging this exhibition has been a wonderful and illuminating experience,” says Pilar Ordovás. “Looking closely at Chillida’s work through the eyes of his children and grandchildren has been revelatory. It is a great honour to have the opportunity to show this work in London and, by doing so, expose it to a new generation of collectors, further strengthening awareness of Chillida’s sculpture around the world.”

Chillida considered his relentless search for the unknown in art to be an adventure in learning, and his sculptural study of temporal and spatial relationships has transformed the field of sculpture; he is hugely respected by many artists working today including Sir Anthony Caro, David Hockney, Ellsworth Kelly and Richard Serra. Chillida’s works in iron and steel are not cast; they are forged, solid forms and the weight even of smaller pieces is quite considerable – each sculpture is unique. One of the four sculptures that will be exhibited on the ground floor of the gallery is Basoa IV, a sculpture forged in steel in 1990, measuring 108cm high and weighing almost 1,500 kgs. Three smaller works will also be exhibited, En el limite I, 1995, Idea para un monumento II, 1994 and Begirari III, 1994.

The early to mid-1960s were crucial years for Chillida. As he turned forty, his approach to sculpture underwent a significant shift, moving away from working predominantly in wrought iron to producing pieces carved from marble. What is less well known about this exciting 1960s moment

Press Release
4 June 2013
25 Savile Row
London W1S 2ER
T. +44 (0) 20 7287 5013

Gallery Hours:
Tue–Fri: 10:00–18:00
Sat: 11:00–15:00

Press View: Tuesday 4 June 10.00–17.00

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The early to mid-1960s were crucial years for Chillida. As he turned forty, his approach to sculpture underwent a significant shift, moving away from working predominantly in wrought iron to producing pieces carved from marble. What is less well known about this exciting 1960s moment
is that it coincided with Chillida’s first trips to Britain and the beginning of his engagement with art and museum culture in London. Chillida visited the capital in 1962 to study the Parthenon frieze sculptures at the British Museum, inspiring his shift towards alabaster. The following year he travelled to Greece, where he visited a number of famous ancient sites and became fascinated by the way that light is able to enter this dense yet translucent stone. Two alabasters, Sin título (Untitled), both carved in 1966, were made during this transitional moment; several decades later, Chillida’s project to make a sculpture inside the mountain of Tindaya on Fuerteventura developed from his alabaster works of the 1990s. Inspired by a phrase by the Spanish poet Jorge Guillén, the series was called Lo profundo es el aire (deep as the air) and includes Arquitectura heterodoxa III, an alabaster sculpture carved in 2000, and included in the Ordovas show. The exhibition also features twenty works on paper, including several pen and ink drawings of hands, a recurring theme in Chillida’s sculptures and drawing.

Chillida’s collecting base is truly global with examples in major collections, both public and private, throughout the Americas, Asia and Europe. His body of work is displayed in cities throughout the world and includes over forty-seven public sculptures installed in site-specific locations as well as over sixty works in museums, including the Tate in London and Guggenheim New York. Notable examples include Chillida’s tribute to German reunification, Berlin, 1999, which consists of two colossal iron structures in front of the new German Chancellery, and Peine del viento XV (Wind Comb XV), 1977, a series of giant steel forceps that extend from the cliffs of San Sebastián, emblematising man’s connection with nature.

Selected Biography
Chillida exhibited his early work in 1949 in the Salon de Mai at the Musée d’Art Moderne in Paris, and the next year took part in Les mains éblouies, a show of postwar art at the Galerie Maeght. After his first solo exhibition at the Galeria Clan in Madrid in 1954, Chillida exhibited his work in more than 100 one-man shows. He also participated in many international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale (1958, 1988 and 1990); the Pittsburgh International, where he received the Carnegie Prize for sculpture in 1964 and, in 1978, shared the Andrew W. Mellon Prize with Willem de Kooning; and Documenta. His first comprehensive retrospective in the United States was organised by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in 1966. Major retrospectives of Chillida’s graphic and sculptural work have since been organised by the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. (1979), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York (1980), Hayward Gallery in London (1990), Palacio de Miramar in San Sebastián (1992); the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid (1999) and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain (1999).
Editors’ Notes

1. The titles of the works in the exhibition:

   **Steel**
   - *Basoa IV*, 1990
   - *En el límite I*, 1995
   - *Idea para un monumento II*, 1994
   - *Begirari III*, 1994

   **Alabaster**
   - *Arquitectura heterodoxa III*, 2000
   - *Sin título*, 1966
   - *Sin título*, 1966

   The exhibition will also display a number of works on paper and source materials from the archive of the artist.

2. The catalogue includes an essay by Jon Wood, Research Curator, Henry Moore Institute, and introduction by Pilar Ordovás.

3. The last exhibition in the UK dedicated to the sculpture of Eduardo Chillida was at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in 2003 (eight works from this exhibition were included in the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition later that year). Chillida was a major retrospective held at the Hayward Gallery in 1990, and sculptures and works on paper were shown in 1995 at Annely Juda, London.

4. When Ordovas opened in June 2011 it made a commitment to a public gallery programme staging museum-quality exhibitions as well as offering a private space for selling 20th century and contemporary art in the secondary market. *Chillida: From Iron to Light* is the sixth exhibition to have been presented at Ordovas since the gallery space opened.

For further details please contact Clare Roberts at communications@ordovasart.com
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List of Works

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Basoa IV
corten steel
108 cm. high
Executed in 1990

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Begirari III
corten steel
96.5 cm. high
Executed in 1994

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Idea para un monumento II
corten steel
50 cm. high
Executed in 1994

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
En el límite I
corten steel
37 cm. high
Executed in 1995

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Arquitectura heterodoxa III
alabaster
53.5 cm. high
Executed in 2000

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Sin título
alabaster
27.5 cm. high
Executed in 1966

Eduardo Chillida (1924–2002)
Sin título
alabaster
28 cm. high
Executed in 1966