ALMINE RECH

SCARIFICATIONS
Miquel Barceló & le musée Barbier-Mueller

Oct 12, 2023 — Apr 21, 2024 | Musée Barbier-Mueller, Geneva, Switzerland

This exhibition is the fruit of an idea sparked back in 2008, during a lunch attended by Miquel Barceló, his friends Monique and Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller along with the museum's then director, Laurence Mattet.

They offer a fertile dialogue between the artist's paintings, drawings, prints and ceramics and pieces from the Barbier-Mueller collections. What connects them – scarifications – is compelling, no doubt because of the indelible mark that it conveys. This theme guided Miquel Barceló's selection of his own pieces and our choices from the Barbier-Mueller collections. The artist works his pieces like flesh that he scratches, deforms, tears, pricks and discolours. The "skins" of a Senufo anthropomorphic statuette, a Baule mask, a face-pendant from the kingdom of Benin, among others, have undergone similar procedures. But the designs that run through them attest to an act willed by tradition, a passage, a transformation.

Such mark-making and transformative actions are all expressions of an artistic or ritual practice. Creative gestures, signs of ownership, traces that have prophylactic, therapeutic, aesthetic or even erotic properties: the convergence of a multitude of
visual experiences.