

KUNSTHAUS BASELLAND

Whispers from Tides and Forests

Caroline Bachmann

Johanna Calle

Lena Laguna Diel

Abi Palmer

Nohemí Pérez

Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa

Belén Rodríguez

Ana Silva

Julia Steiner

Surma

Liu Yujia

11 April –

17 August 2025

Opening

Thursday, 10 April

6.30 pm

With a sound performance by Surma

Press conference

Wednesday, 9 April

11 am

This is an exhibition of quiet tones as well as the delicate new stories that we should begin telling in these times of crisis and upheaval. In the face of climate change, landscapes, forests and rivers under threat, and the mass migration caused by the extreme global climatic and political situations that are becoming increasingly apparent, we need to find new narratives that might not be the same as the previous ones. Because, as the professor and anthropologist Anna Tsing recently explained, we should now prepare ourselves to survive without the old stories that could tell us what happens next.

The internationally active artists involved in the exhibition facilitate these subtle new narratives that position human beings in a new relationship between space, time and body. They are about a caring, considerate coexistence between people and nature, but also progress and the power of resilience – without dismissing current events. They offer us a glimpse of the world, from South America to Europe, showing us turbulent places and themes of vulnerability and loss, but also trees, forest floors and their mushroom cultures, rivers and landscapes full of beauty, poetry and the future.

List of Works (Selection)

Liu Yujia

Mushrooms, 2023

Single channel 4K film

Color, stereo sound

13' 14"

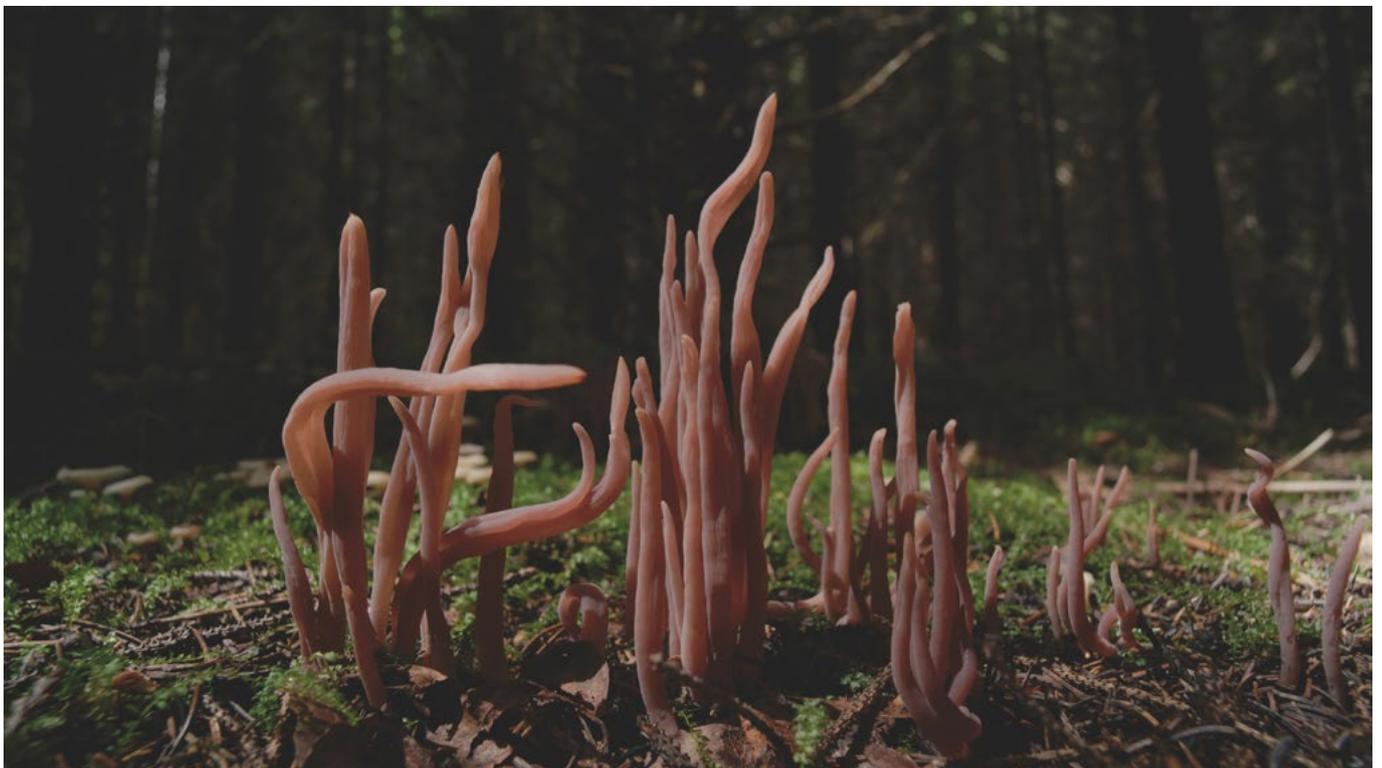
[Vimeo](#)

In the vast boreal forests of Northeast Asia, a flickering, elusive and scattered light embodies the soul of forest ecology. Beneath this dappled light, the data and energy of life pass between members of the forest biome. Liu Yujia employs a macro lens to capture the light beneath the forest canopy, as well as the ecology surrounding the mushrooms. These micro understory ecosystems are amplified into a different kind of jungle, offering us a clear view of the symbiotic dance between mushrooms, moss, insects, and soil.

liuyujiastudio.com

Liu Yujia graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute and obtained her master's degree from London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. She currently lives and works in Beijing.

Liu's short films weave documentary footage, literature, ethnography, folklore, and travelogue into embodied and affective experiences. Taking the physical landscape of Asia for her subject matter and setting, her lyrical style unsettles the line between straight documentary and narrative storytelling. Meditative and symbolic, Liu's work often relegates humans to the status of minor characters by focusing on other forms of life.



Abi Palmer

Abi Palmer Invents the Weather, 2023
Quad HD video, single channel

Rain 12' 4"

[YouTube](#)

Fog 9' 28"

[YouTube](#)

Light 9' 30"

[YouTube](#)

Heat 11' 5"

[YouTube](#)

Unable to reach the outside world during the Covid-19 pandemic, Abi Palmer began a year-long process of performing the outside world for her indoor cats Cha-U-Kao and Lola Lola, translating each season into a cat-accessible format.

Using foraged and found materials from local wildlife, Palmer creates DIY performances staged within a series of seasonal boxes in her spare room, engaging with the cats through movement, sensory interaction, and play.

Taking a crucial feature from each season, Palmer broke down the elements into four boxes using sensory found objects from local woodlands to reinvent the experience of autumn rain, winter fog, spring sunlight and summer heat.

The processes Palmer used to convey each season ranged from literal: the fermentation and distillation of natural materials to recreate the smell of rain; to figurative: Palmer performed the role of the sun by using a disco ball and stitching moss together into a wire mesh surface. Each film documents Palmer's meditative process of collecting fragments of nature and assembling the boxes. As she engages with the cats through movement and sensory interaction, the boxes become their primary play and performance space for the films.

The accompanying voiceover, written and narrated by Palmer, is a love letter to her cats and the climate, and explores the tensions between what we can and can't control. The resulting films are a playful meditation on disability, climate, and life that can't talk back.

Abi Palmer is an artist and writer. She uses film, text, sculpture and sensory intervention to explore sick bodies, viscous textures and ecological landscapes.

She is the author of *Slugs: A Manifesto* (Makina Books) and *Sanatorium* (Penned in the Margins). Artworks include mixed-media solo exhibition *Slime Mother* (Chapter, Cardiff); film series *Abi Palmer Invents the Weather* (Artangel), and interactive gambling arcade *Crip Casino* (shown at Tate Modern, Somerset House, Wellcome Collection).

She is a Bloomberg New Contemporary Artist and a recipient of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's „Awards For Artists.“ Abi's work was included in *Crip Arte Spazio* at La Biennale di Venezia 2024, the first major international exhibition of the UK Disability Arts Movement.



Nohemí Pérez

Polinizadores dormidos #5 & #8, 2023

Oil on canvas

20 × 30 × 4 cm

Apuntes para el Ruido del Hombre #2 & #3, 2025

Oil on canvas

20 × 30 × 4 cm

El ruido del Hombre #1–#5, 2023

Charcoal, sanguine and embroidery on canvas

218 × 500 cm

Bosque No. 1; 3; 5, 2021

Charcoal and oil

on canvas

329 × 216 cm

Nohemí Pérez was born in Tibú, Colombia in 1964. She lives and works in Bogotá.

The multidisciplinary practice of Nohemí Pérez, revolves around the relationship between men and nature; the conflicts, tensions and genesis that arise from this constant friction.

Based on the notions of architecture, cinema and sociology, the artist proposes a rereading of the Catatumbo territory; a geographical region in the border between Colombia and Venezuela with a very particular natural and sociocultural ecosystem. From the conquest until today, Catatumbo is the scene of multiple conflicts that have been transformed to compose a complex plot of anachronistic situations characteristic of Latin American contemporaneity. Illegal armed groups of right, left, native tribes, evangelical missionaries and large multinationals of mining and drug trafficking coexist in this jungle region.

Very often, Pérez uses charcoal in her work as a reference to mining; coal itself is also a recurring element, with which she aims to make visible the exploitation of natural resources and at the same time the violence that this triggers. From the territory of her memory and her

affections, Nohemí Pérez reconstructs the history of her origin and thus, collects the voices of those who live and have lived the Catatumbo from the close emotional ties of their experience.

A particular interest in Nohemí's work is to draw new symbolic and geographical maps that correspond to the various realities of the Catatumbo to allow it to appear on the scene of reconstruction and peace.



Caroline Bachmann

Le Rhin II; V; VIII; IX; XVIII; XX; XXII; XXIV,
2024

Oil on wood
Ø 60 cm

Caroline Bachmann's paintings owe as much to turn-of-last-century Symbolism – in their attempt to depict an infinite stillness, whose synthetic depiction of nature could be mistaken for that of eternity – as to plein air painting. The artist lives and works on the shore of Lake Geneva, where she spends hours contemplating the scenery, recording with a lead pencil on paper minute details of atmospheric events, making notes in the margins of subtle colour changes – not unlike comic book colourists of the pre-digital age, whose job it was to pass on to engravers written codes corresponding to the 64 possible combinations of percentages of cyan, magenta, yellow and black at their disposal. Back in the studio, the paintings are then built up over a lengthy period of time with translucent glazes of oil paint. The portraits, part of an on-going series initiated in 2014 of women artists in her circle, are done in a similar fashion. The models are first drawn in pencil from life over a number of sittings. These preliminary black and white drawings then serve as templates for the finished paintings.

Caroline Bachmann was born in 1963 in Lausanne, Switzerland. She lives and works between Cully, Switzerland and Berlin. Winner of the Swiss Grand Award for Art | Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022, Bachmann was Professor and head of the painting and drawing department at the university of art HEAD – Genève from 2007 to 2022. Between 2004 and 2014 she collaborated with Swiss artist Stefan Banz, a period during which they founded KMD – Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp | the Forestay Museum of Art.

In autumn 2023, her work was the subject of a large solo presentation at Le Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry – le Crédac. Previous solo exhibitions include shows at Galerie Gregor Staiger (Zurich, 2021), Kunsthau Glarus (2020), Duane Thomas Gallery (New York, 2020), Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (2016) and Museum Schloss Moyland (Bedburg-Hau, 2014), the latter two together with Stefan Banz. During her solo exhibition at Meyer Riegger, Karlsruhe in 2022, Bachmann presented her 12-panel panorama painting *Le matin* for the first time. Bachmann has also participated in numerous group exhibitions including at Mamco (Geneva, 2021), MCBA Musée cantonal des beaux arts (Lausanne, 2021), Kunstmuseum Luzern (2020), Palazzina (Basel, 2020), Kunsthalle Palazzo Liestal (Basel, 2018) and Fotomuseum Winterthur (2011), as well as at Hubei Institute of Fine Arts with Stefan Banz (Wuhan, 2010).



Ana Silva

Guardiãs 002; 005; 006; 007; 010; 014–020, 2024

Drawing, natural pigments, acrylic, embroidery, metal, pearls and glitter on crinoline
252 × 150 cm

Vestir memórias 012; 013; 014, 2022

Embroidery and pigments on photography
167 × 116 cm; 157 × 109 cm; 150 × 105 cm

„In this new series of works, Ana Silva continues to weave her personal fabric, embroidering fragments of intimate memory that find their way back to the universal matrix of Woman, mother of humanity and defender of the Earth and its children since time immemorial.

The even more monumental dimension of her woven pieces projects us into the open space of nature, where man's infinite fusion with the universe becomes possible once again. Caring for nature takes on a cosmic dimension, and the protective animals or totems that accompany Ana Silva's female figures remind us of the interdependent relationship between humanity and its environment, and between the feminine and nature.

Her embroidery sublimates the woman who acts as guardian of our souls and of Time. Weaving, the eminently feminine art of patience, is also a work of wisdom. It is in time that everything is revealed. There is a certain hope in this appeal: preserving nature, animals and plants is vital for the survival of humanity, which, fortunately, has always had its guardians to show us the way. In return, nature protects us and intimately guides us with its beneficial powers.

This grand and luminous woman, who dictates to nature and guards its mysterious gates like a shield or a shaman, is also, in a way, the guardian of our heritage, in tune with today's conservation challenges, which are not only environmental,

but also linked to our cultural heritage, which is equally vital for passing on ancestral knowledge to future generations.“

By embroidering our sublime, dark humanities on these semi-abstract faces, Ana Silva gently reminds us that reappropriating our memories to better build our future is a work of body to body, heart to heart.



Johanna Calle

Rama Wada (Polyptych), 2022
typed written text on vintage Notarial ledger
106 × 214 cm

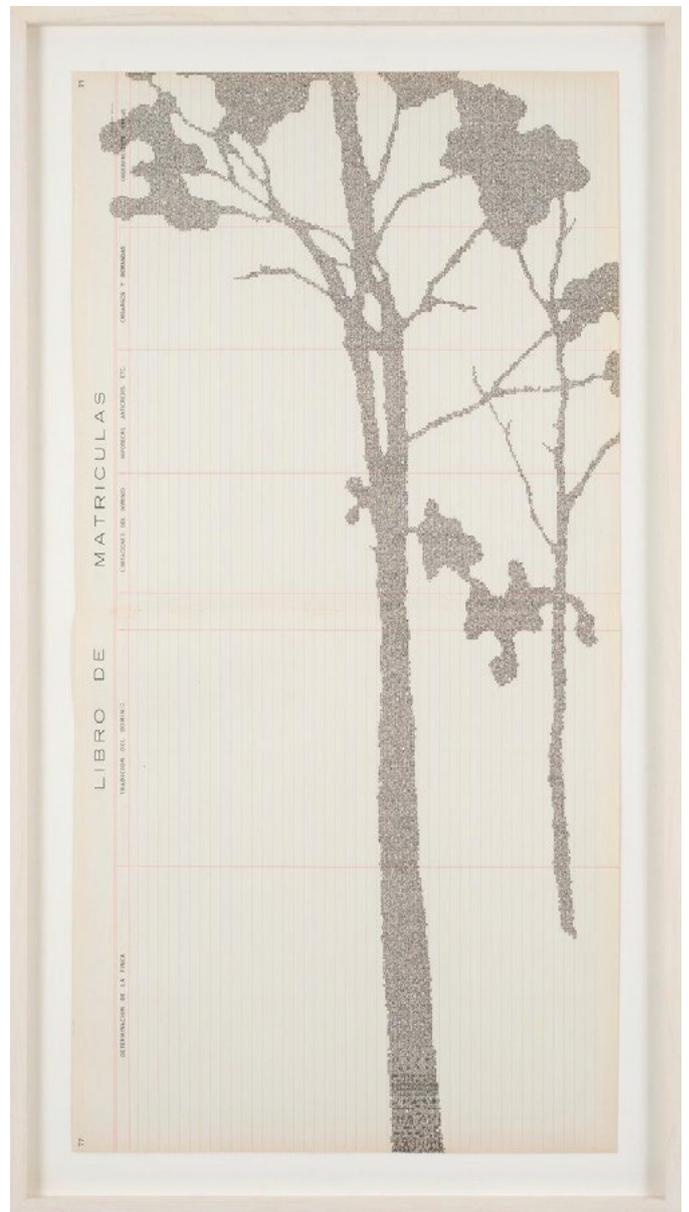
Perímetros (Guayacán), 2023
typed written text on vintage Notarial ledger
415 × 374 cm

Erial 1 – 3, 2024
typed written text on vintage Notarial ledger
83 × 41,5 cm

Indenture I; III; IV; VIII; IX, 2024
Oil on antique parchment
40 × 52 cm; 40 × 52,5 cm; 57,2 × 67,5 cm;
53,7 × 77,5 cm; 71 × 59 cm

Johanna Calle is born 1965 in Bogotá, Colombia, she lives and works in Bogotá, Colombia. Colombian artist Johanna Calle finds the themes for her poetic works on paper mainly in realities that arise from her Latin American background. Through an expanded concept of drawing and intensive periods of research, her refined artistic practice sheds light on important social and political issues, such as social inequality, violence, ecological concerns or the loss of cultural identity. Through her choice of materials and the artistic execution, Calle constructs complex, symbolically charged representations. Johanna Calle studied visual arts at the Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá from 1984 to 1989, where she earned her BA in Art. In 1993, she earned her Master of Fine Arts from Chelsea College of Art and Design in London.

In *Erial 1* (2024), the artist in turn worked with sheets of vintage, unused notarial books that were common in Colombia at the end of the 19th century and for several decades of the 20th century, on which she transcribed various texts in the form of a tree referring to the unlawful distribution of property during the colonial period under the Spaniards. The shape of the tree not only references its historical function as proof of land ownership, but also epitomizes the rainforests, whose resources are mercilessly exploited without anyone being held accountable for its destruction.



Surma

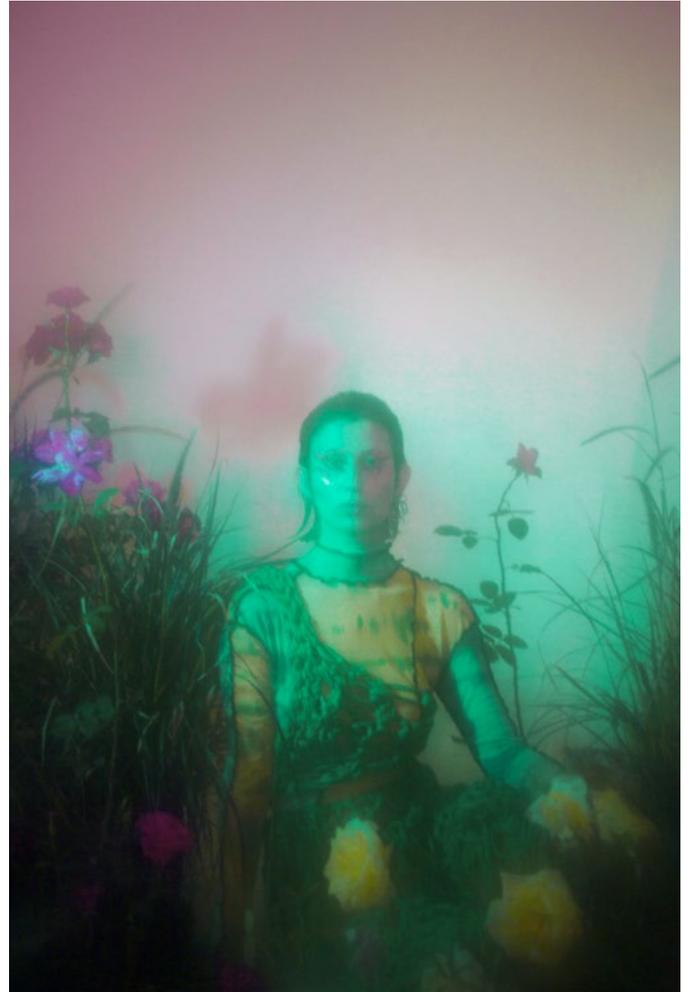
Surma, real name Débora Umbelino, is one of the most innovative and influential voices on the contemporary Portuguese music scene. With her unique blend of indie, electronic and experimental music, she has attracted international attention.

For some time now, Surma has been working with Swiss video artist Pipilotti Rist, who used her song *Maasai* for her installation *Pixelwald Turicum* at Kunsthaus Zürich, for example.

Surma finds inspiration in silence to create a unique universe of songs, where jazz, electronics and a variety of influences intertwine. Exploring paths that are not always obvious, yet always with a strong identity and her own phonetics, Surma crafts unforgettable moments that transport us from the Nordic fjords to cosmopolitan cities.

Her career has been marked by a rare and special light, reflected in awards and impressive achievements that highlight the reach of her music, ideas, and personality. The album *Antwerpen*, released in 2017, took her around the world, with over 250 performances across 21 countries, ranging from small clubs to major outdoor festivals. Along the way, Surma also accumulated a series of parallel projects – soundtracks, sound design, music for Theater, Cinema and Dance, as well as collaborations with other artists – demonstrating not only her energy but also her generosity and willingness to go beyond, always exploring new possibilities. Her latest album, *alla*, released in 2022, presents a boundless challenge, where Surma surrounds herself with diverse collaborations and genres to enrich and deepen her sonic universe. On stage, *alla* reveals a renewed, intense and free Surma, guiding the audience through an immersive experience of her new musical aesthetic, surprising with the freshness and strength with which she reinvents herself.

Additionally to her installation two concerts by Surma will take place at Kunsthaus Baselland. At the opening on Thursday, 10 April, 9 pm as well as on Tuesday, 17 June, 9 pm during Art Basel.



Julia Steiner

Whispering System, 2022 – 2023

Grass galvanized (copper), Series of 62 pieces,
Sizes between approx.

30 × 20 × 1 cm and 85 × 70 × 15 cm

Julia Steiner is a contemporary Swiss artist whose artistic practice focuses on site-specific works. She is known for creating installations, sculptures and interventions that interact in a significant way with the environment in which they are created. Her artistic approach is characterised by a reactive and organic approach in which she takes into account the spatial, architectural and geographical characteristics of the site to shape her works. Julia Steiner developed her own style early on and works with black gouache paint and blunt brushes. She is interested in condensation, empty spaces and transitional states. Her paintings are created without sketches or preliminary drawings. She likes to concentrate on large-format paintings that allow visual immersion in her works. Rhythm, density and dynamics play an important role in the artistic spatial structure.

juliasteiner.ch

With “whispering system”, a series of 62 objects made of copper-plated grasses was created in 2022/23. Grasses from the artist’s immediate surroundings were used to create braids and networks. Starting from a playful drawing with the grown lines, Steiner searched for her own laws of arrangement and structure in each piece. The resulting object-like drawings were copper-plated using the electroplating process, thereby stabilizing and preserving them. This material shift gives the objects new effects and statements. The ephemeral is manifested forever and oscillates between stability and fragility.



Lena Laguna Diel

Lena Laguna Diel was born in Zurich in 1993 and studied at the School of Art and Design in Olten, where she learnt the basics of her technique and developed her artistic vision. She later graduated in Fine Arts and completed her studies with a Master's degree under the guidance of Franz Ackermann at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe (Germany). She currently lives in Basel (Switzerland) and is about to complete her second Master's degree at the Institute of Art IAGN, FHNW.

Over the course of her career, Lena has made a name for herself as a multidisciplinary artist. Although painting remains her main focus, she has also explored other forms of artistic expression such as ceramics and cyanotype.

Lena Laguna Diel will develop a new work for the show at Kunsthhaus Baselland.

lenalagunadiel.com



Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa

Chiperrec, 2021

Bronze and resin

257 × 73 cm

Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa was born in Guatemala City in 1978. He received a BFA in Media Arts from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Vancouver, in 2006, and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2008. He was also a postgraduate researcher at Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, the Netherlands, in 2013. Working in drawing, performance, sculpture, and video, Ramírez-Figueroa explores the entanglement of history and form through the lens of his own displacement during and following Guatemala's civil war of 1960–96. Borrowing from the languages of folklore, science fiction, and theater, he reframes historical events and protagonists.

Chiperrec is a hanging installation consisting of a deformed and dwarfed *Camellia sinensis* tree cast in bronze. The form and size of the tree is inspired by the tea producing trees in the Chiperrec Cooperative in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. The cooperative's plantation holds some of the oldest tea trees in the Americas, brought from India by German companies working in Guatemala in the middle of the nineteenth century. Strings of beads in the shape of leaves hang from the suspended bronze sculpture; dispersed among the beads are a series of semitransparent resin cast plaques. These plaques are carved in low relief and show vignettes of the story of tea: from its early cultivation and cultural significance for ethnic groups in China; to the espionage and cruelty of Britain to attain tea trees and break the monopoly of China as tea producer; the importation of tea trees to Guatemala by Germans; the accusations of the US government in the 1940s of money from German-owned companies in Guatemala aiding the army of the German Reich;

the expropriation of these companies and plantations following the end of World War II; and, finally, the creation of a tea-growing cooperative following these expropriations. The Chiperrec Cooperative is owned and run by Kekchi-Maya women, and dedicates itself to growing, harvesting, and selling tea to the Guatemalan market, where it has become a household name, „Té Chiperreco.“ The cooperative also tries to promote appreciation and awareness of Kekchi culture, and the land where the plantation is located, which is home to a number of caves that are sacred to the Maya people. The name of the plantation, Chiperrec, means „at the side of a cave“ in Kekchi.



Belén Rodríguez

I danced myself out of the womb, 2023

Curtain made from natural dyes on organic cotton fabric

10 × 120 cm

Cosmic Dancer (Carmen), 2023

Painting suit. Cotton dyed with dyes from the forest and bleached with lemon. Iroko wood support.

150 × 120 cm

Cosmic Dancer (Pati), 2023

Painting suit. Cotton dyed with dyes from the forest. Iroko wood support.

150 × 120 cm

Belén Rodríguez is a Spanish female artist born in Valladolid (ES) in 1981.

www.belen.news

Her artistic practice revolves around sustainability, nature, and textile production. She works primarily with textiles, weaving, dyeing, and assembling materials to create pieces that champion a simple lifestyle and explore the relationship between art and the environment.

Belén Rodríguez's artistic projects deconstruct the essential cultural components of textile craftwork, both pictorially and sculpturally. Reaping the benefits of the environment like a landscape sur le motif painter, Belén Rodríguez acts more like a gatherer than an agent of representation.

Once achieving the colour, there is no need to recreate the shape of the trees or the clouds, the grass or the rocks. By working in this way Belén Rodríguez avoids the painter's palette. Instead, she creates her own repertoire that reaches peak chromatic expression and maximum formal abstraction, delving deep into the mystery of colour and its superficial glory.

