

MAI 36 GALERIE

Isabel Nuño de Buen

Garden of Time

Vernissage: Thursday, March 21, 6pm
Exhibition Duration: March 22 – May 25, 2024
Opening Hours: Tue-Fri, 11 – 6.30pm; Sat 11 – 5pm

Isabel Nuño de Buen's works appear like enigmatic relics from an unknown civilization. Their material composition and sculptural versatility convey a complex system of references, weaving motifs from the present as well as the past into poetic allusions that pivot around the artist's personal disposition and the complexities of human experience.

For her first solo exhibition at Mai 36 Galerie, Isabel Nuño de Buen (*1985, Mexico City, lives and works in Hannover) presents a selection of six unique reliefs from her ongoing *Codex* series as well as two large-scale wall pieces that she personally likes to refer to as drawings. As a whole, these works provide us with a fascinating insight into her artistic journey.

Besides the fluctuating, ever-evolving process of creation, it is the hybrid nature of a work of art that interests Isabel Nuño de Buen. Presented in the style of a wall tapestry, her work *Garden of Time* originates from numerous drawings that the artist executed on tracing paper, using charcoal, graphite, and watercolor. Subsequently the drawings were torn, cut, and reconfigured, until patched and sewn together into a fragmented three-dimensional wall piece, distinguished by its textural diversity and extraordinary materiality. Uniting bold imagery and organic depictions, the piece itself resembles a fragment of something larger, like a surviving piece of a historical artifact or manuscript. Characterized by gaping voids that defy clear topographical identification, the work carries a metaphorical potential and timelessness. It appeals to a transhistorical and -cultural view of human creativity in which practices like drawing and sewing are ancient art forms, which at different moments in history served to preserve knowledge and experience.

Isabel Nuño de Buen's intricately crafted *Codex nr. 41-46* are evocative and mysterious wall reliefs that remain open to speculation. It is possible to find formal connections between her work *Garden of Time* and these reliefs. Not only do they allude to the fragments and drawings at play in *Garden of Time*, but are similarly articulated by layers of materials that here pile on top of each other: papier maché armatures, segments of glazed ceramics and dyed textiles, including documents or small letters as well as drawings on transparent paper.

MAI 36 GALERIE

Tied together with hand-made yarn, string or gauze, they appear like little outlandish gifts or ancient talismans. Indecipherable yet complete, these diffuse formations display a determination and precision in their form and material sensitivity, paralleled only by their intent to encode. They invite close observation but, as fragments, refuse complete clarification.

With her distinctive blend of traditional techniques and innovative conceptual approaches, Nuño de Buen's work has garnered critical acclaim for its depth, complexity, and emotional resonance. With its many possible meanings, it dances around the edges of our comprehension, much like former civilizations that exist on the threshold of our understanding, yet somehow remain beyond our grasp.

Isabel Nuño de Buen was born in Mexico City in 1985. She completed her studies at the HBK Braunschweig under Bogomir Ecker in 2014. In 2020 she received the Sprengel Prize from Sprengel Museum Hannover. Her works have been featured in galleries, museums and private collections across the globe. Most recently, she has had solo exhibitions at the Kunstverein Hannover, Chris Sharp Gallery LA and Sprengel Museum Hannover. In 2024, she will have a solo exhibition at ICA, Milano.