

**PRESS RELEASE**

*Thorns*

iah bahia  
Juri Bizzotto  
Bastien Gachet  
Leanne Picthall  
Perla Zúñiga

Curated by Cory John Scozzari

11/07/2024 – 18/10/2024

Opening: Thursday July the 11<sup>th</sup> 2024, h. 7pm – 9pm

*“We aim. We miss. We live in the gaps between our intentions and the shit that doesn’t work out. So many emotions caught in my pipe. I pound my chest to putter it out. The machinations. Glittery enunciation. The first time I heard the sound of your voice it filled me with a sense of future perfect. The friendship I will have had. Getting to know you. Sounding without thinking. Walking. Just walking and heart beating. Out of sync, but in time.<sup>1</sup>”*

Galleria Enrico Astuni is pleased to present *Thorns*, group exhibition featuring the work of iah bahia, Juri Bizzotto, Bastien Gachet, Leanne Picthall and Perla Zúñiga curated by Cory John Scozzari, open from July the 11<sup>th</sup> to October the 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The exhibition is part of ASTUNIpublicSTUDIO exhibitions program focused on new trends of contemporary art.

The selected pieces rather than being grouped by media or by direct conceptual frame, are brought together around sensibility. In many of the artworks on display — including sculpture, installation, painting and collage — there exists some form of contradiction, some are at once delicate but also confrontational, others tender but at the same time strong, light but frozen in motion, small but simultaneously poignant.

This multiplicity is played out through pictorial representation in the case of Juri Bizzotto’s colored pencil drawings from their *Transfarmer* series, which showcase scenes of agricultural labor, completed with hands adorned with acrylic nails and feet in platform heels, and in Leanne Picthall paintings, one of which depicts a historically accurate but unlikely friendship between a man and a bear. In the case of iah bahia and Perla Zúñiga the state of being many things at once is realized materially. With Bahia, she uses several sheets of paper to create layered wall work that are completely still held in place with a needle and thread, thereby transforming and transfixing a pliable material in motion. Similarly, a selection of Zúñiga’s *Untitled (Needle)* works are on display, where the artist’s fragile and intimate pencil drawings and transfers are pierced violently by medical syringes extending out of the wall towards the viewer, the likes of which were used which were used by the artist during her chemotherapy treatment to produce white blood cells. Lastly, this ambivalence is

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<sup>1</sup> Moten, Fred and Tsang, Wu. *Who Touched Me?*, in *If I Can’t Dance, I Don’t Want to Be Part of Your Revolution*, 2016.

enacted spatially through the sculptural installations by Bastien Gachet, where through a selection of familiar yet strange objects and spatial interventions the implicit functions of the gallery space are called into question.

Like the relationship outlined in the opening poem by Fred Moten and Wu Tsang, many of us experience multiplicity in many divergent aspects of our lives, through turbulent kinships, complicated feelings and mixed responses to the current state of the world. We are perhaps more accustomed than we think to being *Out of sync, but in time*.

**iah bahia** (1993, São Gonçalo – RJ; lives and works in Rio de Janeiro) works with different materials, seeking form through experimentation, process and abstraction. She develops her practice-based research through the observation of inhabited space and its transdisciplinary relationship with various materials including fabric, waste, paper and other compositional and transitory elements. Her works highlight tensions and conflicts between matter, form, textures and chromatic planes and are based on imaginative and procedural propositions. They call for the rearrangement of pollinating matrices into ecosystemic poetics.

**Juri Bizzotto** (1998, Bassano del Grappa – IT. Lives and works between Lausanne and Bassano del Grappa – IT).

The context of their family farm and the periphery from which they come has always deeply informed and determined their research. They engage in articulating ecology, agroecology, epistemology and transfeminism in order to think critically with respect to the link between body, landscape and language. In their artistic activity this translates into a multidisciplinary practice that combines drawing, props, music, video, installation and performance. Overlapping perspectives (body/landscape/language) intend to develop an anti-capitalist and anti-colonialist practice, detaching from a stable and immutable epistemology, in order to include the multiplicities that participate and shape a constantly changing reality; generating bridges between “cosmovisions”.

**Bastien Gachet** (1987, Geneva. Lives and works in Geneva) is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice expands through installations, sculpture, 3D modeling, painting and video. He graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in 2015 and Bard MFA in 2022. By playing with the attention we pay to our immediate environment, intervening in the infrastructure holding the exhibition space, offsetting qualities in objects through their manufacturing process, taking advantage of exhibitions dynamics and expectations – Bastien distorts the perceptible universe and creates strange worlds. Questioning the spectrum from real to fake, he investigates what makes a situation credible in our eyes, taking a particular interest in objects that are ambiguous, placing themselves between poles, such as the fake-found (fake-real) and the fake-made (fake-fake).

**Leanne Picthall** (1999, Genolier, CH. Lives and works in Borex – CH).

Her work deals above all with emotional ambivalence, more precisely with emotions that are at odds with one another and/or contradict each other. She is interested in how these states, often difficult to describe, coexist at the same moment, at different intensities depending on the paintings. It is this internal conflict that is transcribed in her practice, often in the form of self-portraits. For the artist, self-portraiture is first and foremost a tool. Using her own body as a point of departure allows her to shape it with greater control and freedom, both during the execution of the painting but also during the photographic process that precedes it. For Picthall, there are no questions of identity she says “I don't use my body for what it is, but rather for what it enables me to do”.

**Perla Zúñiga** (Madrid 1996 - 2024) was an artist, poet, and DJ. Since 2016, she lived with illness and works with its traces, drifts, and metaphors. Her work explores spaces of desire through visual arts, writing, sound, and the creation of events with her party collective Culpa, founded in 2016 to celebrate and advocate for trans and non-binary existences at night.

**Cory John Scozzari** (1988, Florida. Lives and works in Barcellona) is a curator, artist and writer. He is the founding director of *Cordova*, a curatorial project initiated in 2016 in Vienna, currently located in Barcelona. Between 2015 and 2019 he worked as a curator at Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary. He received an MFA in Curating from Goldsmiths, London in 2015, and a BFA in Photography and History of Art from SCAD, Savannah, GA, in 2010. He has contributed to publications such as *Rhizome*, *Mousse*, *Spike* and *Texte Zur Kunst*. He is the editor or co-editor of three books: *Tyler Coburn: Richard Roe*, *Allan Sekula: OKEANOS* and *Mario García Torres: An Arrival Tale*, all published by TBA21 and Sternberg Press. Some curatorial residencies include HIAP in Helsinki in 2018 and SOMA in Mexico City in 2019. Some of his recent projects include *Parastu Gharabaghi: Dare2bB&b*, at *Cordova* and *Esther Gatón: Emil Lime* at CA2M.