

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Hulda Guzmán: Meet Me in The Forest

16 March–14 April 2022

Private View

Tuesday 15 March, 6–8pm

Gallery Hours

Tuesday–Saturday, 11am–5pm



Stephen Friedman Gallery presents Dominican artist **Hulda Guzmán's** first solo exhibition in the UK. 'Meet Me in The Forest' brings together a body of vibrant new paintings centred on her immediate surroundings in Samaná.

Combining modernist interiors with lush foliage, the works conjure a sense of harmony between human and natural worlds. Often mythical and dreamlike in appearance, Guzmán's paintings playfully capture nature with a cast of imaginary creatures, children, and animals. Though human figures drive her narratives, Guzmán prompts the viewer to recognise nature as a protagonist: the artist is accompanied by a cat on the flute while she paints; dogs line the foreground of a coastal landscape; and cocks dance in a garden.

With elements of surrealism, Mexican muralism, and Caribbean folk traditions, Guzmán's works echo the paradisiacal styles of Henri Rousseau and Paul Gauguin. Her technicolour paintings reveal a utopia where humans embrace the spirit of the natural world. Guzmán explains, "I feel that being in nature connects us to the deeper wisdom of life which is ever present and only asks to be lived and recognised within our own hearts. I seek to feel like an instrument of nature, especially when I am painting." Frequently, Guzmán's paintings nod to humanity's role within a vast ecosystem; towering trees dwarf her subjects, and lightning and encroaching plants evoke the power of nature.

Guzmán's fantastical scenes depict loud and lively moments as well as those that are quiet and contemplative. 'Jusqu'ici Tout Va Bien', which shows a smiling motorcyclist holding onto her hat as she is trailed by cantering horses, captures feelings of freedom and joy in the natural world. Meanwhile 'verdecito' portrays an intimate domestic scene as children bathe together under the watchful eye of a large bird.

Guzmán often employs wood as a surface for her paintings, allowing textured grain to blend with leaves and skin. She describes these as "a celebration of nature." On the other hand, they question our own nature as creators of our 'reality' and examine the manifested world in relation to and reflection of the inner world.

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About Hulda Guzmán

Guzmán studied Fine Arts and Illustration at Escuela de Diseño Altos de Chavón, La Romana, Dominican Republic (2002–2004). She went on to receive a BA in Visual Arts from Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Mexico City, Mexico (2004–2006).

The artist has exhibited in institutions including Art Museum of the Americas, Washington DC, USA; Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica; Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil and Pérez Art Museum, Miami, Florida, USA. She featured in the Dominican Republic's pavilion at the 58th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 2019.

Guzmán's work is included in the permanent collections of Museu de Arte de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; Centro León Jimenes, Santiago, Chile; Fundación Casa Cortés, San Juan, Puerto Rico; Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco, California, USA; and Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami, Florida, USA.

The artist is represented by Stephen Friedman Gallery, London and Alexander Berggruen, New York.

About Stephen Friedman Gallery

Stephen Friedman Gallery represents exceptional emerging and mid-career artists from around the world. Since its inauguration in 1995, the gallery has been based in Mayfair on Old Burlington Street. The gallery now has three spaces in which it hosts solo and group exhibitions throughout the year. Additional works can be viewed by appointment in private rooms and office spaces. There is also a facility to exhibit outdoor sculpture in a landscaped private garden.