

*Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata remugit.
una voz clamó, redoblada por el asentimiento del bosque.*

— Virgil, Georgics (III, 45)



“Birds fascinate me – their movements, their appearance, the patterns on their feathers, their graphic form, and their shape as volume in space. Especially their hopping behavior on the ground appears endearing, whimsical, almost comical.

They accompany us everywhere – in daily life, in pictures, museums, and media. Their presence in art history, spanning numerous cultures and thousands of years, reveals their magical aura and the significance attributed to them as symbols, sometimes representing deities and spiritual themes.

Birds have always aroused human curiosity, inspired dreams of flight, and driven scientific discovery. As descendants of the dinosaurs, their whistling was heard long before humans spoke their first words. The study of finches inspired Darwin’s theories on the evolution of species and thus fundamentally changed our view of the world.

Even today, birds are the subject of intense research. Numerous scientists and entire institutes study their living conditions, their behavior, their songs, their flight, and other aspects. They continue to puzzle us and offer solutions – for example, for aviation – or serve as inspiration, such as in architecture. Others focus on protecting endangered species and examining their adaptation to urban life and cohabitation with humans.

For *Hollow Bones - Huesos Huecos*, I am delving deeply into the forms of birds, exploring the theme both graphically and sculpturally. I am creating studies of their movements, nest building, and the characteristics and materials of their nests. These extensive studies inspire me to develop new, original forms.”



I have never seen a gallery space change so profoundly as Marc Bibiloni's in Madrid has done through its recent exhibitions — those of Manu García (1994) and Ela Fidalgo (1993), and now with Bianca Barandun (1984) and her exhibition *Hollow Bones*.

With *Dog Bed Games* (June–July 2025), García turned the gallery into a cinematic space, as if writing a diary that moved between graffiti, intimate drawings, traditional painting and scattered sculptural pieces — a diary of melancholic introspection, a memory of emotions, and a complex spectacle of characters borrowed from other artists.

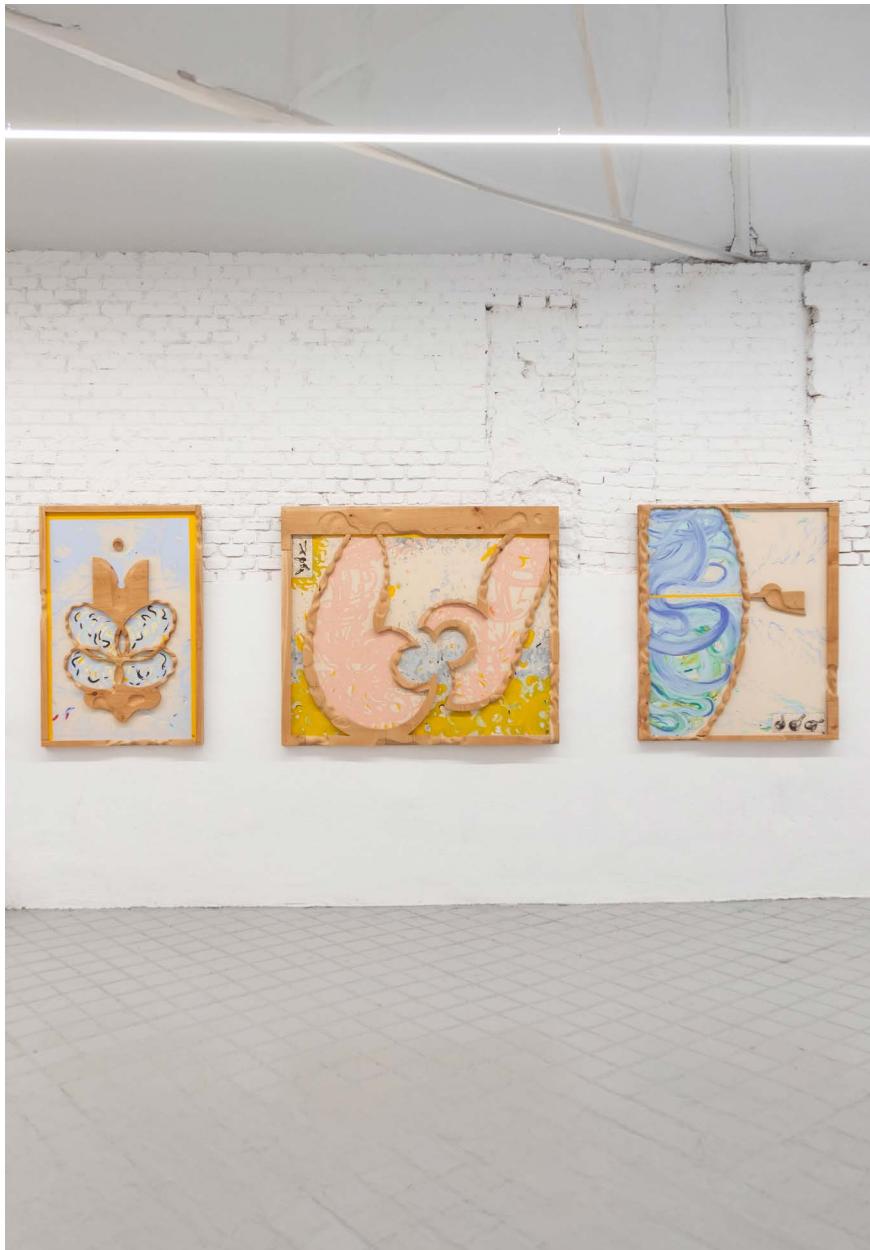
Shortly after, Fidalgo, with *Fragmento Ausente* (September–October 2025), transformed this vast space into a refuge against adversity. Canvases and canvas hands emerged from the walls and ceiling as if to offer rest — sculptural extensions of emotion. The gallery became a resonant chamber, an introspective experience of pain and anguish with a confessional tone. Certain sewn texts, like sutures, reinforced the message upon the canvases. Everything acted as a mirror, a space that, from the moment we entered, re-gathered us — to use a term from the philosopher Martin Heidegger.

Hollow Bones by Bianca Barandun is not just another exhibition, but rather a magical space that allows us to submerge ourselves and lose ourselves in a different world — a visual chant orchestrated through a polyphony of elements.

I first encountered Barandun's work at the Bündner Kunstmuseum in Chur a few years ago, retracing the path of Alberto Giacometti through Maloja (Engadin), in the Swiss canton of the Grisons — a route I had already taken in 1987, before curating Giacometti's retrospective at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in 1990. For Barandun, *Ghost Note* was likely her first institutional solo show *1. Here, multiple sculptures — resembling combs or musical staves — formed an experiential installation framed by strange wooden structures.

The artist explained that it was an exploration of memory, of whether we can speak about remembrance without the use of form or color — whether memory can be re-gathered or understood through its verbalization. Barandun drew upon recollections of a flock of sparrows in her parents' garden. Both in that exhibition and in the current one in Madrid, the Swiss artist reveals her full range of skills — as a draftswoman, printmaker, sculptor, and creator of space. Barandun studied Printmaking at the Royal College of Art in London, Illustration at the University of Applied Sciences Hamburg, and Scientific Illustration at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK).





***Platalea Ajaja 1*, 2025**

Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink and ceramics.
120 x 80 x 4.5 cm

***Platalea Ajaja 2*, 2025**

Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink and ceramics
120 x 140 x 4.5 cm

***Platalea Ajaja 3*, 2025**

Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink and ceramics
120 x 100 x 4.5 cm

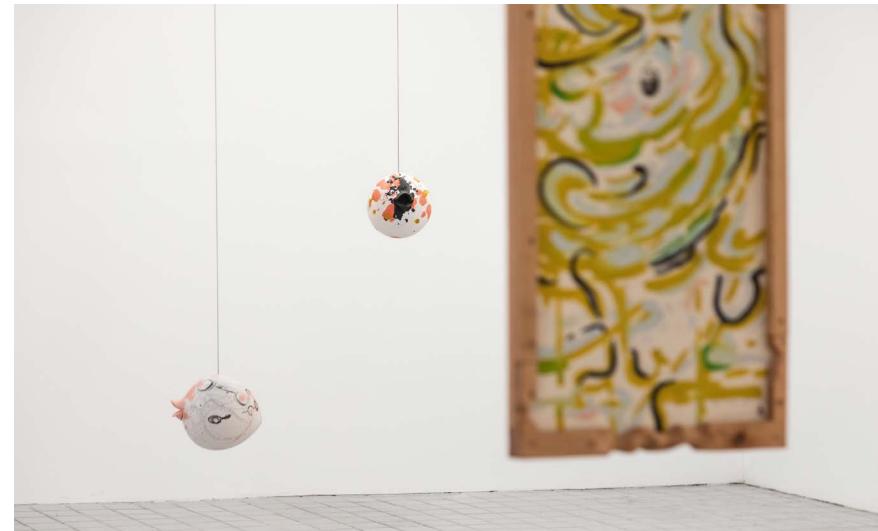
In the artist's own words, the meaning of the works in *Hollow Bones* lies in "the joy of birds and my fascination with them. The core idea was to deliberately choose a subject that is not overly complex or multilayered, but rather accessible. Even if you don't work in the art world, it's a subject that anyone — young or old — can relate to. It's about different kinds of birds and their peculiar ways of living and behaving. During my project, and through observing birds in my everyday surroundings, documentaries, texts, and art history research, I slowly began to shift from seeing to hearing birds." *2

The gallery is not turned into an aviary, nor into a manual of ornithology, but rather into a personal space, a vast poem of forms structured like a musical symphony — well composed and well tempered, like Bach's music, a composition that turns back upon itself.

This fascination with birds has accompanied Barandun for a long time; she has continually revolved around them. Her exhibition at LA BIBI in Mallorca (2024) already served as a moment of clarification. It was not conceived as a compendium of ornithological knowledge, but as a contemporary form of reception, both visual and linguistic. The translation of a theme — the subject matter of the exhibition — must never be an ekphrasis, a simple description or narrative, but rather a transformation.

Barandun seeks a relationship with the music of the birds' language — with their rhythm and corporeality — which has, in some way, become absent. She attempts to encode this connection through her own conception of rhythm, through her linguistic music, through her forms — canvases, organza fabrics, ceramics — that invade the gallery space, sometimes clinging to the walls, sometimes suspended from the ceiling.

The artist has studied in detail several species — the hummingbird, woodpecker, sparrow, owl, duck, and penguin. The hummingbird, for instance, can hover in the air and fly backward, sideways, or even upside down, beating its wings up to eighty times per second. The woodpecker has an undulating, ascending-and-descending flight. Ducks and penguins are birds that hardly fly at all. Birds travel, they have their color, their proportions, and even their distinctive gait when grounded. The hummingbird and woodpecker differ greatly in size, diet, and behavior.



Anser Anser 5, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm

Anser Anser 2, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm

Hollow Bones 7, 2025
Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 45 x 4.5 cm



When birds soar so high in the sky, are they truly able to see their prey from such height? Eagles, hawks, and sparrowhawks possess vision about eight times sharper than that of an average human being. Many species migrate twice yearly – in spring and autumn – often about ten days after the full moon. At that time, entire flocks synchronize their migration and take flight almost simultaneously, following shared aerial highways known as flyways. The Arctic tern is the master of long distances: its migration spans from pole to pole. Over its lifetime, one tern can fly three times the distance between the Earth and the Moon, returning to its breeding grounds year after year.

How do they sense, in their bones and feathers, the day they must once again rise into the air, spiral upward into the clouds, and tilt against the wind? How does the lunar cycle affect their time of departure? How does the moonlight make it easier to catch flying insects and replenish their energy reserves? Are not owls the masters of silent hunting, with ears like parabolic antennas? How do we know where birds come from and where they are going? How do they navigate thousands of kilometers across seas and deserts? How many stages do these precise navigators – doves, swifts, godwits, or Arctic terns – require for their journey? Are the nocturnal songs of “moon birds” healing? How many poets have sung to larks and nightjars?

Barandun’s installation postulates a positive philosophy: that human experience can be enriched when we connect with other forms of life with which we allow ourselves to coexist. The exhibition *Hollow Bones* unfolds across two spaces.

The main hall acts as a relief canvas – drawings, paintings, and raised surfaces hang from the ceiling – while a second, lower room, painted pink, contains two earlier suspended works and framed pieces along the walls. As the two yellow suspended sculptures can be circled, one perceives their different reliefs – front and back – within a single form. The two large circular wall pieces in the main hall are mural sculptures in liquid ceramic *3 transmitting both movement and rhythm through their raised surfaces and through the spatial arrangement of their forms.

The space then gradually transforms into a magical forest, where paintings and reliefs hang and intertwine, forming a



Dino, 2025
Glass wax, liquid ceramics and pigment.
37 x 21 x 26 cm

dynamic orchestration of materials — classical yet used in unconventional ways. It becomes a space where pictorial logic diverges from what one might expect.

Barandun works with pencil, fine-line rottings, oil sticks, liquid ceramic, wild cherry wood, silks, organzas, and canvases, with delicate cords that suspend her works. She assembles forms drawn from architecture, everyday objects, and memory. By orchestrating printmaking, drawing, ceramic color, and sculpture, Barandun constructs her work as an installation of sounds and echoes — turning a theme into a compositional symphony.

As the artist explains:

“For each work, I create an individual linoleum and silicone mold. This way, I develop a three-dimensional ‘print’ carrying the relief motif. During production, I organize materials and tools so I can move swiftly from one piece to the next, since the casting process with colored liquid ceramics requires high precision and speed — the material hardens within just a few minutes.”

Sketch 1, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm

Sketch 4, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Contextualizing Bianca Barandun's Work

It is not easy to contextualize Barandun's oeuvre. From an art historical perspective, there are few direct references beyond early twentieth-century sculpture from a conceptual or thematic viewpoint. Nor can one simply resort to ornithological texts, or even to the scientific references she herself cites – such as Stephen Moss's *Ten Birds That Changed the World*, or various BBC and Max Planck Institute documentaries.

Ornithology, as a scientific branch of zoology, studies birds – their physical form, behavior, flight, songs, migratory patterns, and conservation. It encompasses everything from their physiology and ecology to their evolution and behavior. This general body of knowledge forms the starting point for *Hollow Bones*, yet its meaning and visual philosophy belong neither to science nor to literature about birds, but rather to poetry – or more specifically, to music – and, of course, to art history.



Interplay of Genres, Intertextuality, and Worldview: Virgil

If literature, music, or cinema are characterized by their linear storytelling – with beginning, conflict, and resolution – in Barandun's installation *Hollow Bones*, many things occur simultaneously within a single context. This is the result of an enormous, intuitive and visceral labor, born from a particular visual philosophy, an artistic credo reminiscent of Paul Klee.

In *Hollow Bones*, the sense of musical composition and orchestration gathers a multitude of sensations, reordering them into a clear melody with a firm harmonic structure. This is not an ornithological treatise, but a great song, a poetic vision akin to Virgil's *Georgics* (29 BC) – a work marked by thematic and propositional tension, a long poem of nearly two thousand verses commissioned by Maecenas.

Barandun sings of the contribution of birds, just as Virgil sang of human labor – its triumphs and failures – whether agricultural or otherwise. Virgil does not confine himself to the field: he gives us the description of a great storm (Book I, vv. 311–350) that destroys all human effort, and then the detailed account of the land's fertility and nature's rebirth after winter (Book II, vv. 323–370). He concludes (Book IV, vv. 123–165) with the metaphor of the society of bees, culminating in the idea of nature's reintegration – not as a mere social organization, but as an essential link in biodiversity and human existence.

Through the myth of *Aristaeus*, Virgil tells us that bees can be reborn from death (through the process of bougonia), symbolizing hope, endurance, and rebirth after devastation. Despite threats such as climate, war, or pestilence, they are capable of rebuilding and thriving again. The beauty, transience, and ephemerality of life – echoes of

Stoic concerns – intertwine throughout Virgil's poetry, culminating in this metaphor of the bees as a symbol of resistance.

Like Virgil, Barandun employs a double language in this installation. In the *Georgics*, Virgil alternates between archaic and rustic Latin, drawing inspiration from Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* and from the speech of the farmers he observed. Barandun likewise blends a profound knowledge of classical artistic techniques with the most contemporary forms.

Barandun achieves the skilled integration of all her media – drawing, painting, ceramics, wood – to compose the poem she presents in the gallery. Phrases, thoughts, and rhythms have fused in her mind and transmuted into an original work of poetic art. This poetics of intertextuality is one of Barandun's most evocative tools, enabling her to communicate ideas and invite the active collaboration of a perceptive viewer.

This is an aesthetic device operating on the lexical, semantic, and pragmatic planes. Such metaliterary depth allows her to probe the boundaries of the visual genre. In Barandun's work, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, and installation interact – much as in Virgil's great poem, which conceals a meaning far deeper than that of a mere didactic text.

The *Georgics* ostensibly belong to the didactic genre – an instruction manual on agriculture, viticulture, animal husbandry, or apiculture. Yet this is merely a pretext for composing a poem that embodies a higher, symbolic level carrying a universal message, one that transgresses its genre through broader themes and perspectives.

Virgil works through crossings of genre, inserting digressions into his didactic narrative. In the proem of Book III (vv. 10–40), he signals his poetic intention – to reveal or sing a “remarkable symbolic vision.” Similarly, Barandun creates a form of intertextuality between artistic genres, seeking visual and communicative depth through the confrontation and interweaving of elements.

Barandun constructs a kind of script or score for a polyphonic exhibition, where different “voices” from a didactic framework coexist – not necessarily in agreement. This installation does not aspire to scientific ornithology but rather to a worldview, much like that of the poet Virgil in his *Georgics*.

Her installation unfolds as a complex poem, with changing metrics – or, like a symphony with distinct movements. It may be better contextualized through examples from literature and music. Barandun reorganizes a place into a poetic space, just as Heidegger’s bridge in Heidelberg – in his famous interpretation – does not merely connect two points but rather creates the place itself:

“The bridge does not come to stand in a location; rather, a location comes into existence only through the bridge itself.” *4

Barandun’s work plays a crucial role in interpreting our current environmental crisis, connecting past and future. Her “translation” or reinterpretation of the world of birds offers new perspectives for understanding and confronting today’s ecological tragedies – suggesting that the wisdom of the past is indispensable to shaping the future.

A few years ago, Frédéric Boyer’s French translation of Virgil’s *Georgics* was retitled *Le Souci de la Terre (The Care of the Earth)*, explicitly appealing to contemporary ecological concerns. As Boyer writes in his preface:

“As a translator, I find that today’s tragic paradigm concerning the Earth looks toward the future through ancient works. In other words, the past is in dialogue with the future – right now.”

Just as in Virgil’s time, our ecological crisis stems from a loss of focus, from the same preoccupation with distant wars and internal conflicts. The vast majority of migratory birds depend on aquatic ecosystems – wetlands, rivers, lakes, marshes – all increasingly threatened across the

globe. These environments are vital for feeding, nesting, and resting during long journeys. Yet the aquatic ecosystems, like the migratory birds that rely on them, are themselves endangered.

We may thus read this exhibition as a great chant, not of lamentation but of melancholy – about our relationship with the world, with nature, and with what lies beyond. It can be understood as an eco-poetic reception. Through birds, Barandun touches something profoundly human: our connection to Earth and to the beyond, to life and to death. As Virgil wrote, “there is no place for death” (nec morti esse locum, *Georgics* IV, 226).



Hollow Bones 7, 2025

Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 45 x 4.5 cm



Hollow Bones 6, 2025
Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 45 x 4.5 cm

Barandun and Art History

In Barandun's work one can easily recognize certain general references: the pure forms of Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957); the grace with which Alexander Calder (1898–1976) built his circus and mobiles; the dynamics of flight in late paintings by Georges Braque (1882–1963); or the lyrical vision of Eastern artists, particularly in China, who captured the world of birds and flight in flowing ink — where movement meets stillness, song meets silence, and lightness meets the formation of flocks.

There is also an affinity with the cosmovision of the Nazca Lines in southern Peru — hundreds of mysterious drawings, often monumental in scale, visible only from above: human figures, birds, whales, cats, and serpents, dating from between 100 and 300 CE. Recent archaeological research led by Masato Sakai (Yamagata University, Japan) and Jorge Olano (Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris) has identified 358 previously unknown geoglyphs through high-resolution aerial photography.

But above all, when one sees how Barandun cuts her wooden panels or builds her frames and pedestals, one hears Brancusi's voice — a voice that rose from the ashes of post-Impressionism and Art Nouveau, and whose resonance pervaded all twentieth-century sculpture. From Brancusi onward, sculpture would rise directly from the ground (Giacometti), demand wind and motion like the flight of Calder's birds, challenge space from within (Chillida), or stabilize itself as a kind of furniture architecture (Scott Burton). From Brancusi also emerges the force of Isamu Noguchi, Henry Moore, and Barbara Hepworth.

Brancusi was a brother to Marcel Proust. We must recall that Proust died on 18 November 1922 — while Monet was still painting — after sleepless nights, exhausted yet serene. Both men authored a single, monumental work: Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, and Brancusi's singular body of sculpture — both shaped by the refinement of time. Brancusi worked time down, sanding and polishing his forms toward abstraction, bringing sculpture closer to the ground; while Proust narrated life from the bed, life at ground level. If one was insatiable in description, the other was insatiable in the pursuit of purity in material treatment. Both have suffered hermeneutic excesses and, at times, decontextualization. Yet their roots sink deeply into sculpture bound to architecture.



Regulus Regulus, 2025
Wild cherry wood, liquid ceramics and pigment.
30 x 38 x 92 cm

Barandun reaches her installations not only through her mastery of drawing, painting, ceramics, and glass, but through the possibilities that sculpture — opened up by Gauguin and later Brancusi — made possible. She possesses both the technical formation (Hamburg, London, Zurich) and the knowledge of art history, alongside that lesson of the search for lost time born with the Romanian sculptor and his immense readings.

Her countless drawings populate her studio like a forest of ideas — exceptional works filled with feeling, intensity, wonder, and joy — giving form and measure to her work. In her own words: “After this initial phase of collecting ideas, I need a clear overview. I place all my sketches side by side — taping them to the walls or spreading them across the floor. Seeing everything at once helps me identify connections, patterns, and possible directions. From there, I begin selecting the sketches I want to develop into finished works. The appearance of my studio changes quickly depending on the process.”

*5

Like Brancusi, Barandun shows a profound respect for her materials, constantly investigating and experimenting with them: “Changing materials, discovering, experimenting, and continually learning about different materials and processes are central to my practice. Certain materials fascinate me — their texture, weight, touch, their particular surfaces. The less familiar a material or process is to me, the more it attracts me. I’m captivated by what happens when I combine or force two materials together, when the material itself begins to develop its own language.”

Sketch 6, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm

Sketch 5, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Barandun and Creative Literature about Birds

In Barandun there is a certain distrust of verbal language, which leads her to take refuge in the visual. Yet her inward exploration — through the knowledge of birds — is somehow connected to literature. She devotes much of her studio time to reading, researching, and informing herself. In her words:

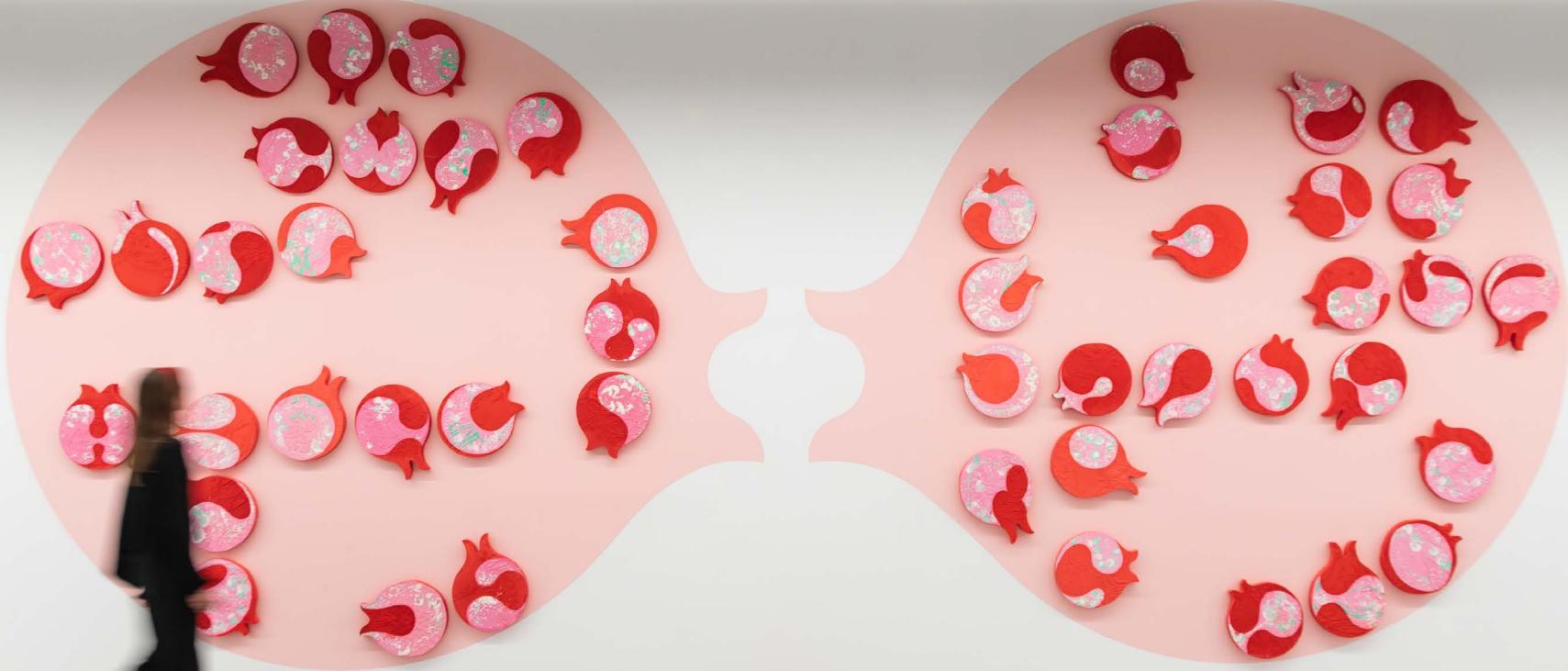
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In this, she reminds me of the naturalist Gerald Durrell (1925–1995), who wrote about animals and birds with a witty and detailed style, emphasizing their individual personalities. His book *Birds, Beasts, and Relatives* (1969) is full of engaging observations of the avian life on the Greek island where he grew up. ^{*6}

Another example, and a masterful lesson on reconciling life and death through the singularity of a bird, is Helen Macdonald’s *H is for Hawk* (2016). ^{*7}

As with Durrell or Macdonald, Barandun is neither obsessed with ornithological classification nor with photographic documentation. Hers is an inner gaze, focused on a single theme — like a simple song or a complex symphony. Entering the exhibition *Hollow Bones* is entering a philosophical field, much like reading Kenn Kaufman’s *Kingbird Highway* (1997), where the author reflects:

“Somewhere far down the slippery slope, we look back and realize how far we have come from the simple appreciation of birds.” ^{*8}



Regulus Regulus 1-47, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment.
38 x 50 x 4 cm

Barandun and Certain Types of Musical Composition

As noted earlier, Hollow Bones cannot easily be contextualized either within the strict domain of art history or that of scientific ornithology. Its meaning and visual philosophy belong less to science and more to poetry – in the sense of a lyrical chant like Virgil's Georgics – or to music, in the sense of a composed symphony.

We may, therefore, contextualize her work in relation to various musical structures: complex compositions, popular songs, or modes of musical creation.

Some of Barandun's pieces – the blue and green reliefs, certain sculptures hanging in the air – evoke for me two songs:

“El cant dels ocells” (The Song of the Birds), a traditional Catalan Christmas carol that celebrates nature's joy upon learning of Christ's birth in a Bethlehem manger. The great cellist Pau Casals (1876–1973) made it world famous, performing it at the start of every concert during his exile after 1939. Later, Joan Baez included it in her 1966 album *Noël*, dedicated to Casals, arranged by Peter Schickele.

“El pajarito colibrí” (The Little Hummingbird), a Mexican folk song belonging to healing music – songs meant to ease pain through elements of nature: moonlight, the sound of the sea, or the hummingbird's song. This music seeks to amplify the emotional resonance of melody and open deep emotional channels. Our brain waves slow down; the song sends calm frequencies, tuned to 432 Hz, producing a relaxed, dreamlike state.

The hummingbird, a tiny and rapid creature, is considered in several cultures a spiritual companion. The version sung by Natalia Lafourcade in her live concert at Walt Disney Concert Hall (Los Angeles, 2024) includes these verses:

“When you feel the world infinite / opening its wings within your chest, / and lose your breath, / ask the heavens to make you fly. / If you feel vertigo in the fire of your flight, / ask the universe – within your whole being – / for gentle freedom.”

The notion of music as healing, the bird as mediator between sky and soul, resonates deeply with Barandun's exhibition – her forms vibrate in the air like frequencies that soothe the space.

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Ghost Note II, 2024
Ceramic and pigments
200 x 150 x 4 cm

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On another level, the compositional structure of Hollow Bones brings to mind two contrasting yet related musical approaches: the ecological experimentation of Cosmo Sheldrake (b. 1989), and the layered, symphonic ambition of the Canadian composer and guitarist Devin Townsend (b. 1972).

Sheldrake’s album “Wake Up Calls” (2020) begins at night with a nightjar and a common nightingale; its tracks follow the progression from dawn through day to dusk, returning again to night. It fuses field recordings of endangered bird species with Sheldrake’s own musical improvisations — both acoustic and electronic — creating a soundscape that evokes

deep connection with the living world. His music reminds us of the joy of listening to birds, urging us to care for them. Sheldrake paints a natural landscape through sound; Barandun, in turn, sculpts one through form — her installation becomes an orchestration of chords, a passionate yet delicate visual symphony.

By contrast, Devin Townsend’s “Empath” (2019) sought to see “what would happen if all the styles that make up my current interests were finally represented in one place” — allowing the audience to experience an entire range of musical emotions beyond genre. His music, like Barandun’s installation, is marked by adventure, intrigue, and chaotic atmospherics, producing what Phil Spector once called a “wall of sound”:

“I was looking for a sound so strong that, if the material wasn’t the best, the sound itself would carry the record. Everything had to fit together like a puzzle.”

The same could be said of Hollow Bones: a wall of visual sound, where colors, textures, and rhythms interlock like the puzzle of an ecosystem.

However, if we analyze the type of composition that Hollow Bones embodies, we must consider it a well-tempered symphony, or a complex jazz installation, where complexity and improvisation coexist hand in hand.

What do we mean by symphony from a musical standpoint? A symphony is an extended form of composition in Western classical music, generally divided into four movements, and written for orchestra — strings, winds, brass, and percussion. The Spanish Royal Academy defines it first as a “set of voices or instruments sounding harmoniously together” and second as an “instrumental composition for orchestra.”

In that sense, Hollow Bones can be understood as a musical architecture — a symphony. More precisely, a well-tempered symphony, paraphrasing Johann Sebastian Bach’s *The Well-Tempered Clavier* (1722).

The word symphony derives from the Latin *symphonía* and the Greek συμφωνία (*symphónía*), meaning “sounding together.” In the sense of “to sound in accord,” the term first appeared in the titles of 16th- and 17th-century compositions — such as *Sacrae Symphoniae* — and reached its maturity with Beethoven.

The well-tempered system, or temperament, refers to a method of tuning instruments, including the human voice. Early systems, like the Pythagorean tuning, divided the scale into twelve mathematically unequal parts according to the 3:2 ratio. “Well-temperament” represented a Baroque refinement of this ancient Greek system.

The American musicologist Bradley Lehman (1964) demonstrated that the structure of Bach’s tuning system is encoded in the curls or loops decorating the title page of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* – elegant ornamental spirals that, as it happens, resemble the carved patterns in the cherry-wood frames of Barandun’s works. *9

More profoundly, what links Barandun to Bach is her mastery of counterpoint – her singular attention to negative space, to the silences on the walls where her pieces hang, what she herself calls ghost notes.

Her 2023 installation *Ghost Note* recalled for me the sheets of sound of jazz saxophonist Pharoah Sanders (1940–2022) – his interest in layered melodies and dense rhythmic phrasing, sculpted toward a steady pulse.

In music, ghost notes are muted or barely perceptible sounds that add rhythm and texture without a clearly defined pitch. They appear especially in jazz and funk compositions, creating a percussive effect – a complex, dynamic groove, an intensifying inner energy rather than volume. In German they are called Geisternote (“spirit notes”), in Italian note false or note morte.

On guitar, a ghost note is produced by plucking a muted string; in funk bass, by slapping – striking the string with the thumb to create a percussive tone. These slaps can be compared to Barandun’s subtle brushstrokes on organza, adding depth and nuance to the whole composition, sometimes visible from both sides.

Hence one of her works bears that same title – *Ghost Note* – which she describes as:

“Based on my own memories and observations of a flock of sparrows in my family’s garden in Switzerland. The installation *Ghost Note* focuses on the verbalization of our memories. I want to investigate whether the phenomenon of memory completely escapes language, and whether one can speak of memories without resorting to form and color. In musical theory, ghost notes are soft, intermediate beats that add rhythm and dynamics to a pulse. My project explores this concept both

in content and in method.”

Both *Ghost Note* and *Hollow Bones* explore memory as something existing in pauses, silences, and interstitial spaces.

In Barandun’s words:

“Like music, memory often unfolds in fragments, lingering in the spaces in between. It is not fixed, but fluid, dynamic, and deeply subjective.” And elsewhere she elaborates:

“I’m attracted to the in-between spaces where thought turns into sound and memory oscillates between image and object.”

Musicians call these spaces Zwischenschlag – the intermediate beat – or Zwischenräume, in-between spaces, seemingly absent but essential: they are what allow the downbeat to exist and give jazz its groove.



Ghost Note III, 2024
Ceramic and pigments
153 x 99 x 4 cm

In this sense, Barandun's work draws close to one of the classic bebop compositions, *Ornithology* (1946), by saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker and trumpeter Benny Harris. The title refers to Parker's nickname, Bird. His music — Bluebird, Chasin' the Bird, Birds Get the Worm, Parker's Mood — embodies the freedom of flight. *10

Pianist Bud Powell recalled hearing Bluebird for the first time:

"I was struck by its propulsion, its charisma, its joyful spirit — because he was always flying high, flying over the changes like a bird."

In a poem written as a ghazal titled "Ornithology – a Ghazal," composer Joel Glickman captured that same idea:

*But Parker never got the changes wrong,
even when flying at the speed of light.
Each bird lives its life inside a song.
People try — hardly any get it right.*

The bebop style was not bound by strict harmonic structure or predictable chord progressions. Against the big-band swing, Parker and his peers sought asymmetric phrasing, intricate melodies, and new harmonic constructions, reformulating classic tunes through melodic quotation — sometimes borrowing from popular songs or classical compositions.

Ornithology reworks the chord changes of *How High the Moon* (1940), a love song about distance — that same sky where birds fly and lovers find their moon. Its illusion of altitude — "how high" — is psychological as much as physical: the moon does not change, but our perception of scale and emotion does. *11

All of *Hollow Bones* reminds us, from the moment we enter, that our sensations of birds — their flight, their steps on the ground, their wings and beaks — arise both from objective measures (science, proportion, physiology) and from our own vision, born within us, between affect and memory, codified into voice. And here, it is the voice of an artist composing her own ornithology.

As Parker once said:

"I realized that by using the high notes of the chords as a melodic line, and with the right harmonic progression, I could play what I heard inside

me. That's when I was born."

Likewise, *Hollow Bones* is the birth of a visual music — the articulation of inner hearing made visible.

The idea of Parker's jazz was to transmit emotion — to make others feel it — to change how people thought about and approached music. His freedom of phrasing became an act of healing. This musical lineage extends to Mal Waldron's *The Seagulls of Kristiansund* (1986), a slow, meditative landscape inspired by seabirds on the Norwegian coast. Its atmosphere — rhythmic yet mournful — invites immersion and introspection.

Waldron's piano is full of ghost notes — as was Parker's saxophone, whose muted reed allowed notes to be felt rhythmically though barely heard.

Barandun uses her innumerable drawings as musicians use their notes, her corrected sheets of sketches like a score repeatedly refined. If musicians seek tonal directionality, Barandun employs her traceable forms — silhouettes and graphic chords — to grant her figuration a readable logic, her own traceable units.

The auditory logic of a symphony — a kind of architectural sound structure — is based on repetition and recurrence, an oscillation between imbalance and stability. What distinguishes music from noise is comprehensibility: sound becomes meaningful when it contains an internal logic — a living language, something that reaches us.

Barandun's installation guides us, as a conductor guides an orchestra through a symphony.

It also leads us through a free-verse poem, akin to Boyer's modern translation of Virgil — unmetered, unrhymed lines following the rhythms of natural speech. Barandun's work likewise dispenses with meter, focusing instead on frequency (pitch, tone, melody), acoustics (timbre, texture), and polyphony (interval, chord, overlap).

The exhibition speaks for itself. It is not an exhibition of bird portraits, but, like Parker's or Waldron's pieces, it evokes the pulse of birds — their poly-rhythmic complexity, their song as a succession of chords. *Hollow Bones* transforms architecture into topography: we wander through it as the installation redefines the abstract geometry of certain birds



— the hummingbird, the owl, the duck, the penguin — along with the intensity, tone, and landscape over which they soar or tread.

Barandun achieves all this with deceptive austerity. Behind the apparent simplicity of the display lie thousands of drawings and thousands of hours of thought about how to make the works hang, gravitate, and converse — with each other, with the wall pieces, and with the spaces in-between.

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The result is an exhibition of extraordinary technical and conceptual refinement, yet one that communicates at an immediately human level.

Like Parker's *Bird*, the hummingbird, or Waldron's *Seagulls*, Barandun's work offers a moment of communion — for, as Waldron's lyrics remind us:

“They know from the past / that life cannot last, / so they live for today, / for tomorrow they may not / be able to dive from the sky.”

The same structural elements — shifting phrasing, self-quotation, ghost notes, silences, negative spaces — permeate Barandun's installation.

“Fundamentally, I began to see the wall as a canvas from which I compose the full arrangement of several works,” she explained during her residency in Mallorca.

Perhaps there she discovered what jazz musicians know well: that “playing the notes” is not the same as “playing the music.” The downbeat — the heartbeat of music — is the constant, firm pulse that keeps

the composition alive and moving, the base of its rhythmic structure. Understanding that pulse, in Barandun's case the two large ceramic circles, is crucial: from it, the exhibition develops like a legato — that binding between pieces that flow and sing together, seamlessly.

As Pharoah Sanders said in 2021, upon releasing *Promises with Floating Points*, “What matters is the ability to find an emotion or an idea that feels both familiar and revelatory — to speak a common language in an uncommon way.”

That is precisely what Barandun does in *Hollow Bones*: she gives us a composition that is more than drawings or paraphrases of birds — a composition that unfolds like an extended poem of forms and colors, immersing us in her singular visual forest.

For Carl Gustav Jung, the key to harmony in life lies in diving into what he called our individuation — the journey of confronting and integrating our unconscious, the shadow, until we accept ourselves as a whole. This process includes recognizing universal symbols, or archetypes, appearing in dreams and myths — the evidence of a collective unconscious.

Jung, a deep student of art history across cultures, observed the similarity between the circular, recurring patterns of Eastern religions — mandalas — and Aby Warburg's *Pathosformeln* in Renaissance art.

In this sense, Barandun's installation *Hollow Bones* gathers forms, chords, and harmonies that evolve like a singular melody. Thus, as I wrote at the beginning, Barandun has created a magical space — one that allows us to submerge ourselves, to lose ourselves in a different world through a visual chant orchestrated by a polyphony of elegant and beautiful elements.

Kosme de Barañano y Letamendía
November 2025

Adélie penguin

/ə,deɪli: 'pɛŋgwin/

Using their flippers and feet as rudders, Adélie penguins glide effortlessly over the ice, conserving energy as they travel between their nesting areas and the sea.







Adélie, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
37 x 18 x 18 cm



Roseate Spoonbill

/'rəʊziət/

The roseate spoonbill is a striking wading bird, easily recognizable by its vibrant pink plumage and its unique spoon-shaped bill. It feeds in shallow waters, sweeping its specialized bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans, and other aquatic invertebrates. These social birds inhabit coastal areas and wetlands throughout the Americas.



Owl

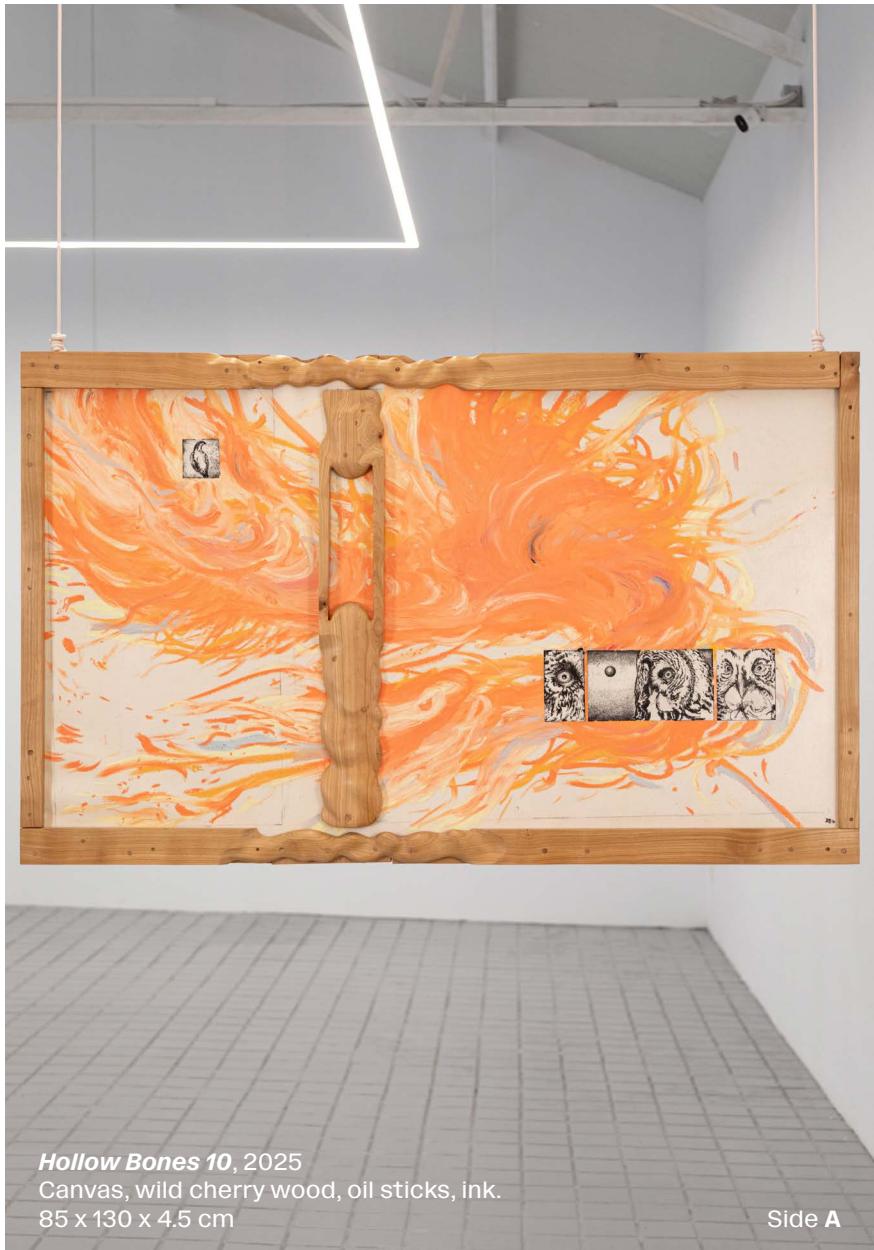
/'aʊl/

The great gray owl is a master of silent hunting, and its unique facial features play a key role in its success. Its large circular face acts like a parabolic antenna, channeling sound toward its ears and helping it locate prey even beneath a thick layer of snow. With one ear positioned higher than the other, the owl can detect the source of a sound not only from left to right but also in terms of elevation. These incredible birds can locate and capture small mammals guided solely by sound, thanks to their exceptional hearing and specialized facial structure.



Side A





Hummingbird

/'hʌmɪŋbə:d/

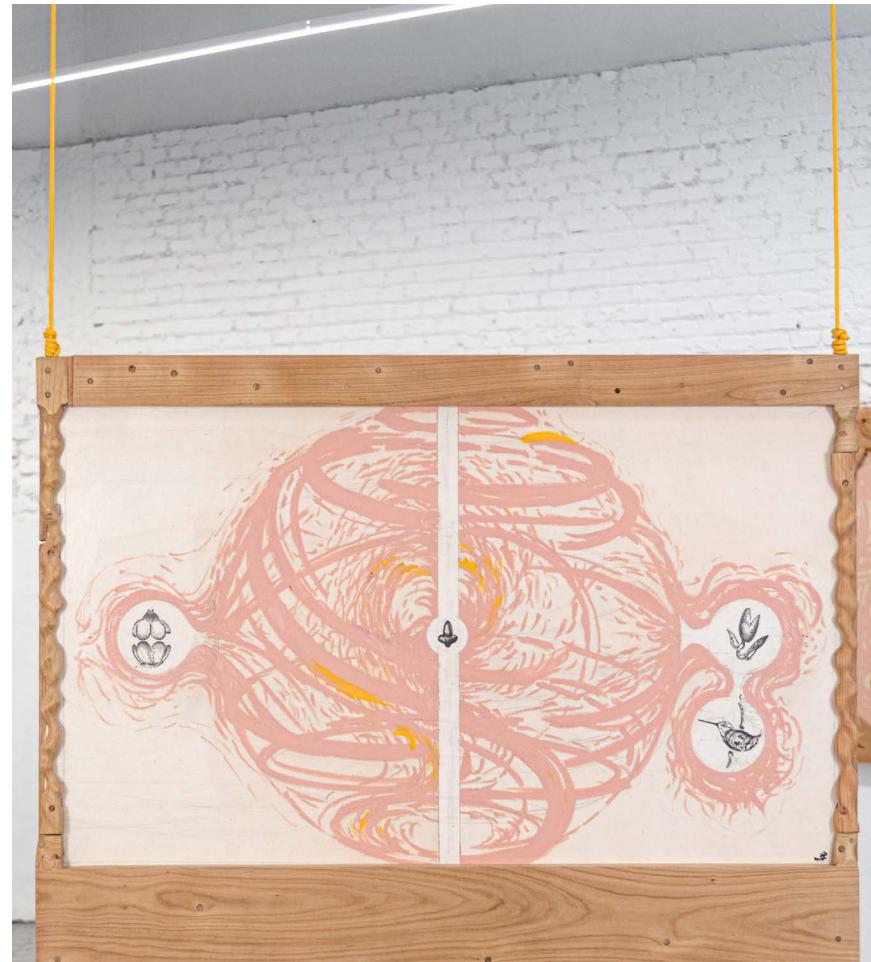
The size and shape of a hummingbird's bill are adapted to the length and form of the flowers it feeds from. This coevolution means that longer, straighter bills are better suited to open flowers, while long, curved bills are ideal for deep, tubular ones, as in the case of the sword-billed hummingbird. Some species have even developed highly specialized bills to access nectar in unique ways. Each egg is about the size of a small piece of chewing gum, a coffee bean, or a Tic Tac.



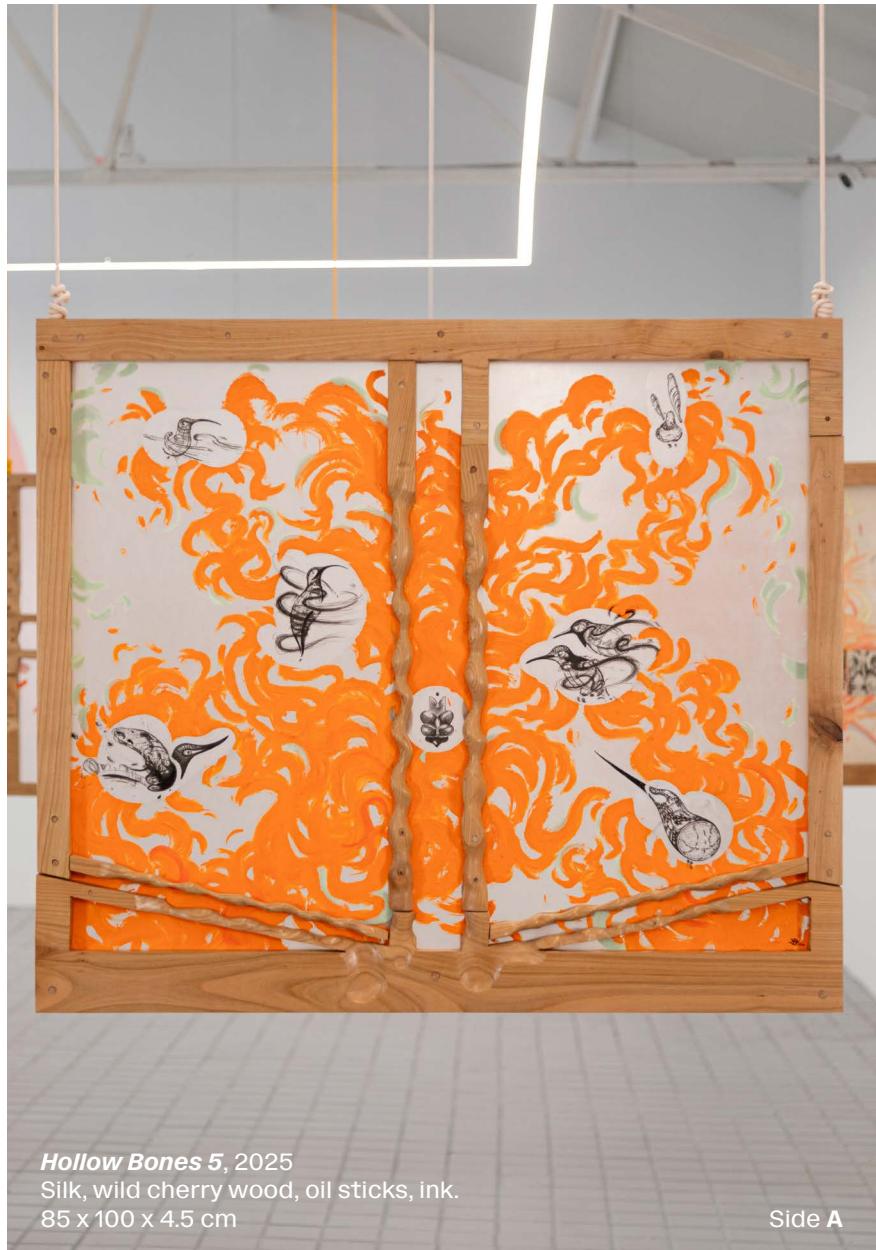
Hollow Bones 1, 2025

Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 114 x 4.5 cm

Side A



Side B



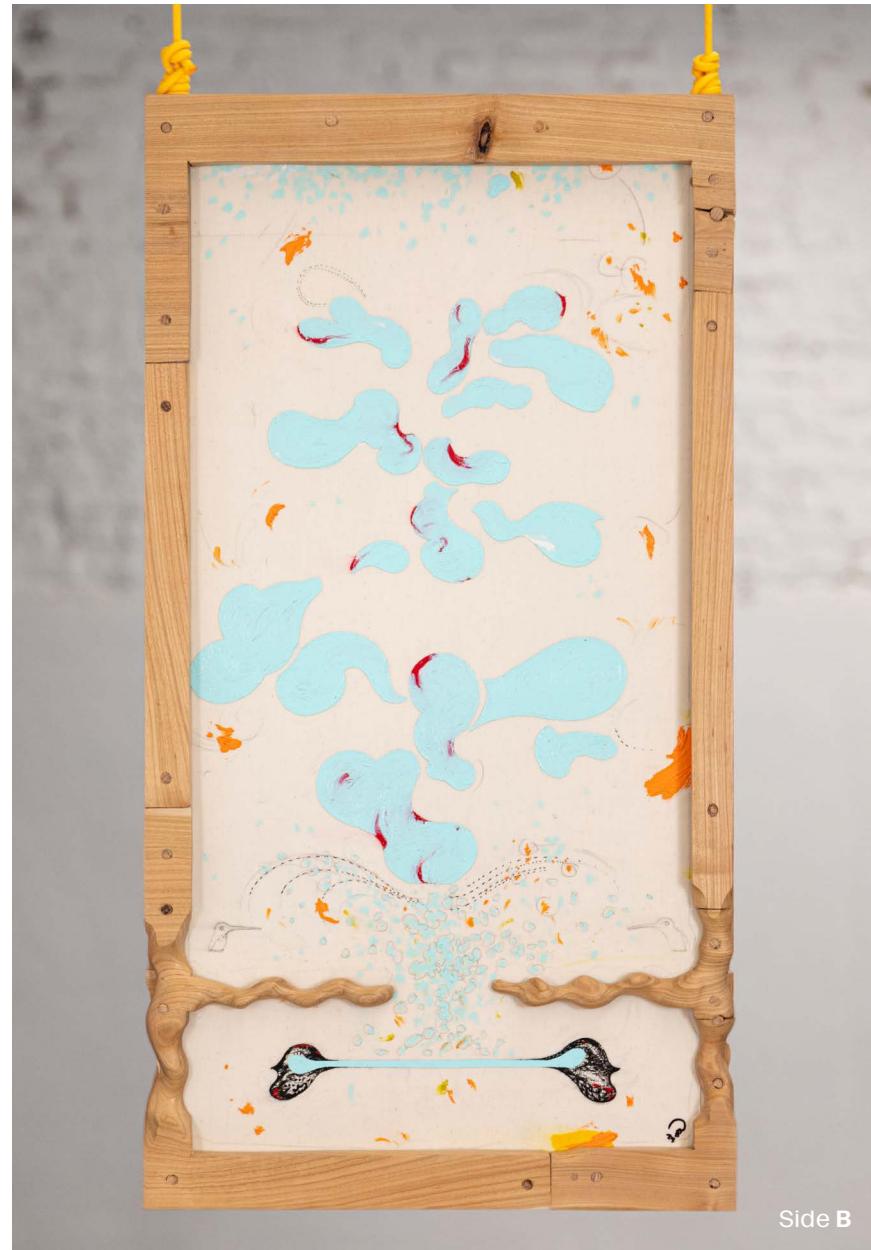
Hollow Bones 5, 2025
Silk, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 100 x 4.5 cm

Side A





Side A



Side B

Woodpecker

/'wʊd,pekə/

A woodpecker's tongue is a highly specialized tool: long, slender, and often equipped with barbs and sticky saliva to extract insects and larvae from deep crevices. It is so well adapted that the hyoid bone wraps around the skull to support its extension. The paintings are suspended and connected to each other with yellow cords, forming a single continuous hanging structure. The reversible paintings can be detached, unscrewed, and hung on a wall to offer another point of view.



Hollow Bones 3, 2025
Canvas, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
41 x 70 x 4.5 cm

Side A

Mandarin Duck

/'mand(ə)rɪn dʌk/

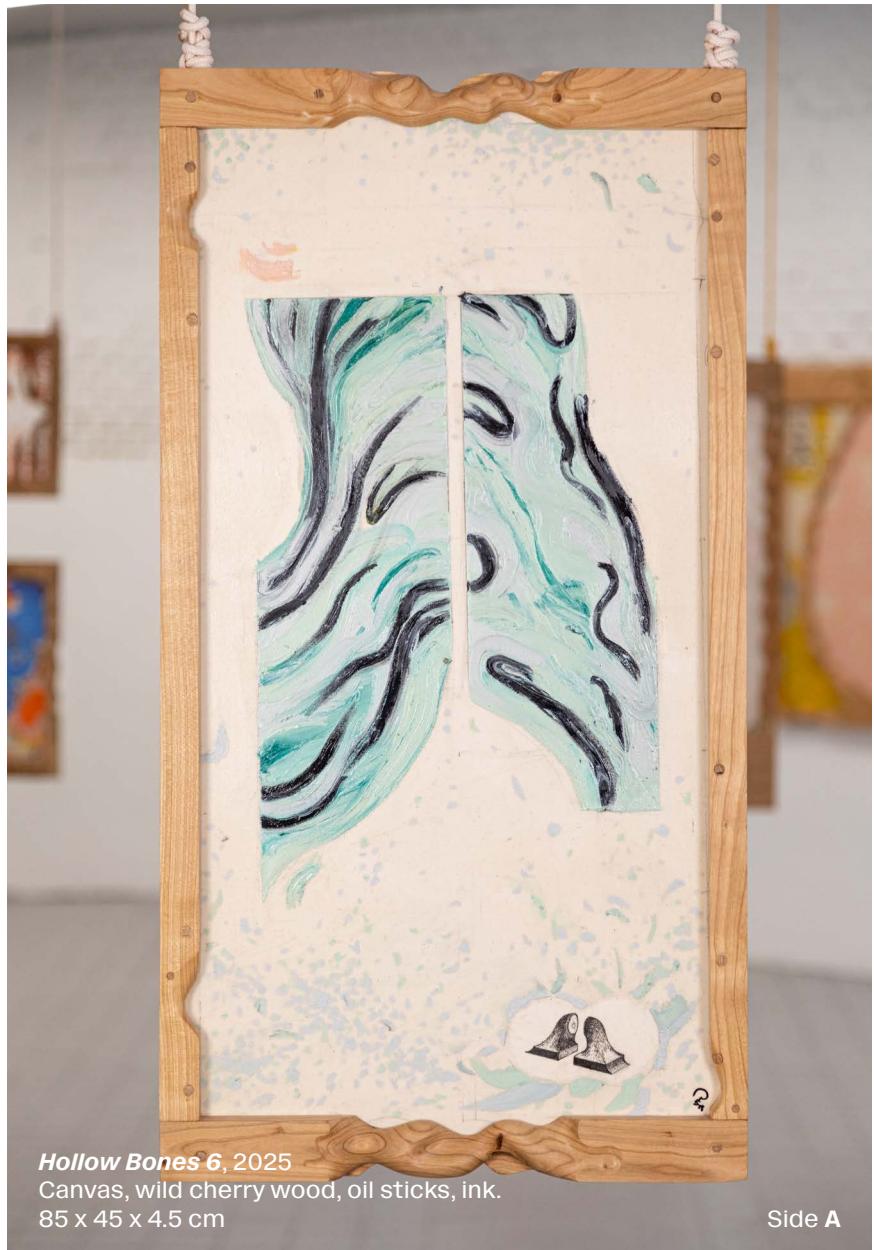
The mandarin duck is famed for the male's ornate plumage—bold crests, layered feathers, and vivid bands of color that make it one of the most striking waterfowl species. Unlike most ducks, they nest high in tree cavities, and the ducklings must leap to the ground shortly after hatching, guided only by their mother's calls. Found near quiet lakes and wooded wetlands, these graceful birds move with a calm, sculptural elegance that has inspired artists and naturalists for centuries.



Hollow Bones 2, 2025
Silk, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
31 x 70 x 4.5 cm

Side A









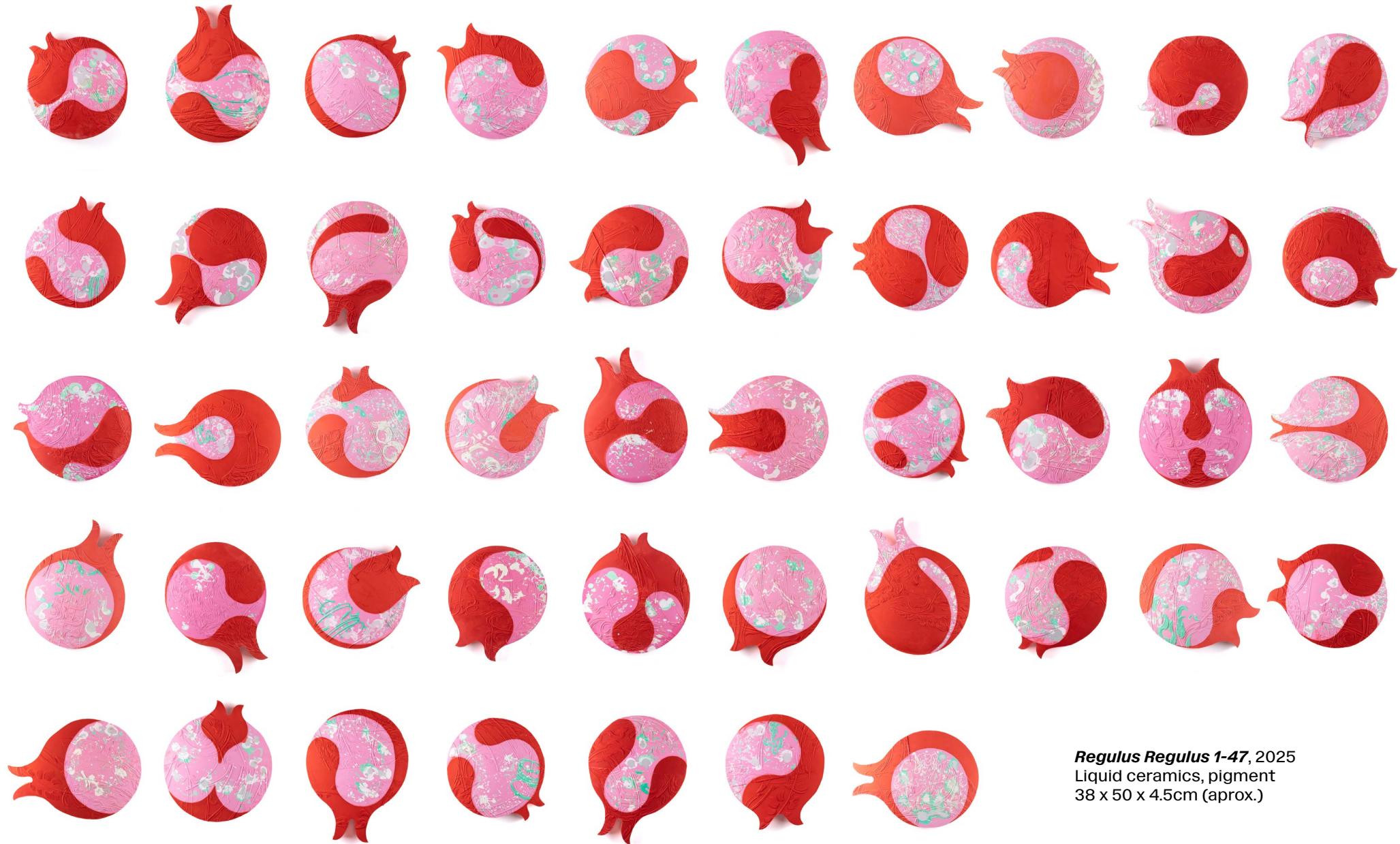
Hollow Bones 11, 2025
Silk, wild cherry wood, oil sticks, ink.
85 x 75 x 4.5 cm





Regulus Regulus, 2025
Wild cherry wood, liquid ceramics, pigment.
30 x 38 x 92 cm





Regulus Regulus 1-47, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment
38 x 50 x 4.5cm (aprox.)



Regulus Regulus 6A, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment.
38 x 50 x 4cm



Regulus Regulus 7A, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment.
38 x 44 x 4cm

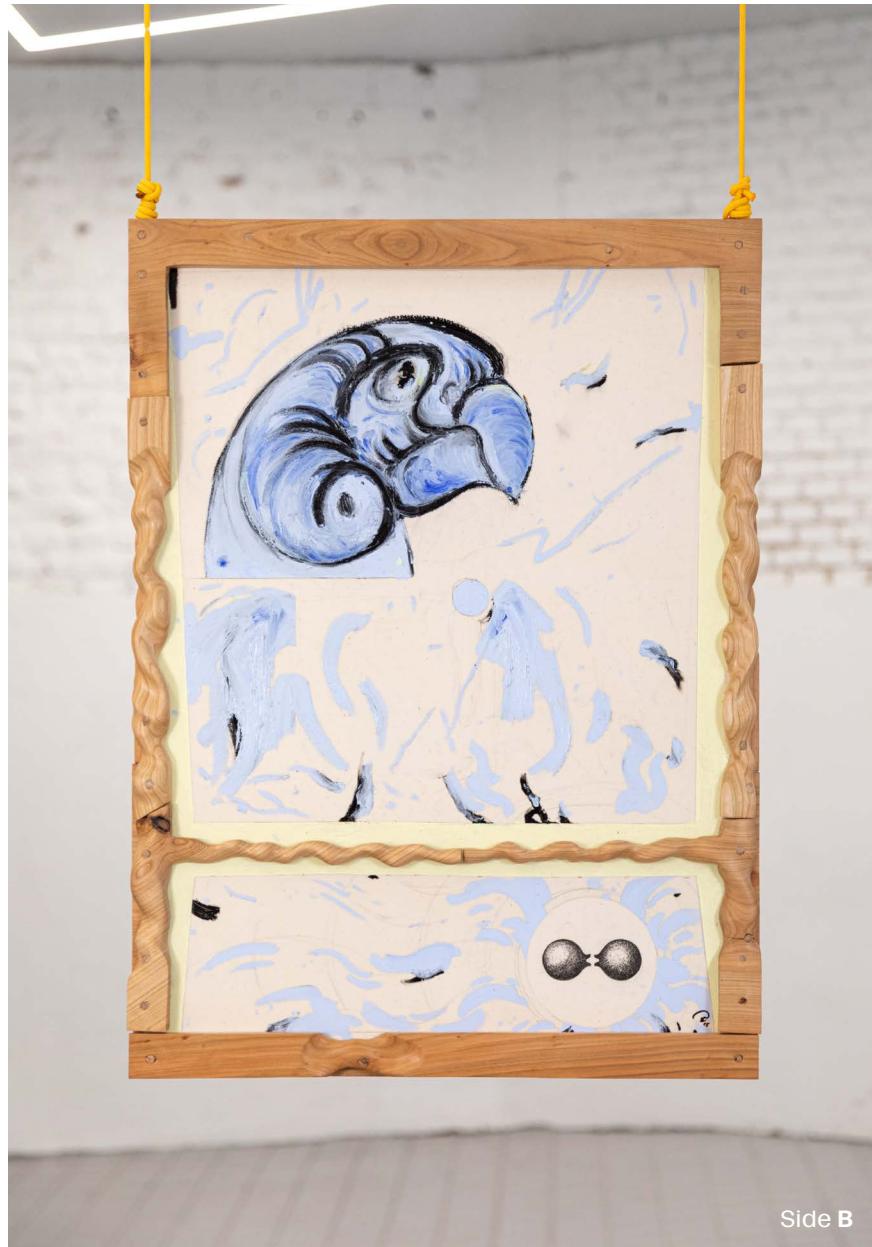


Regulus Regulus 15A, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment.
38 x 44 x 4cm



Regulus Regulus 20B, 2025
Liquid ceramics, pigment.
38 x 50 x 4cm

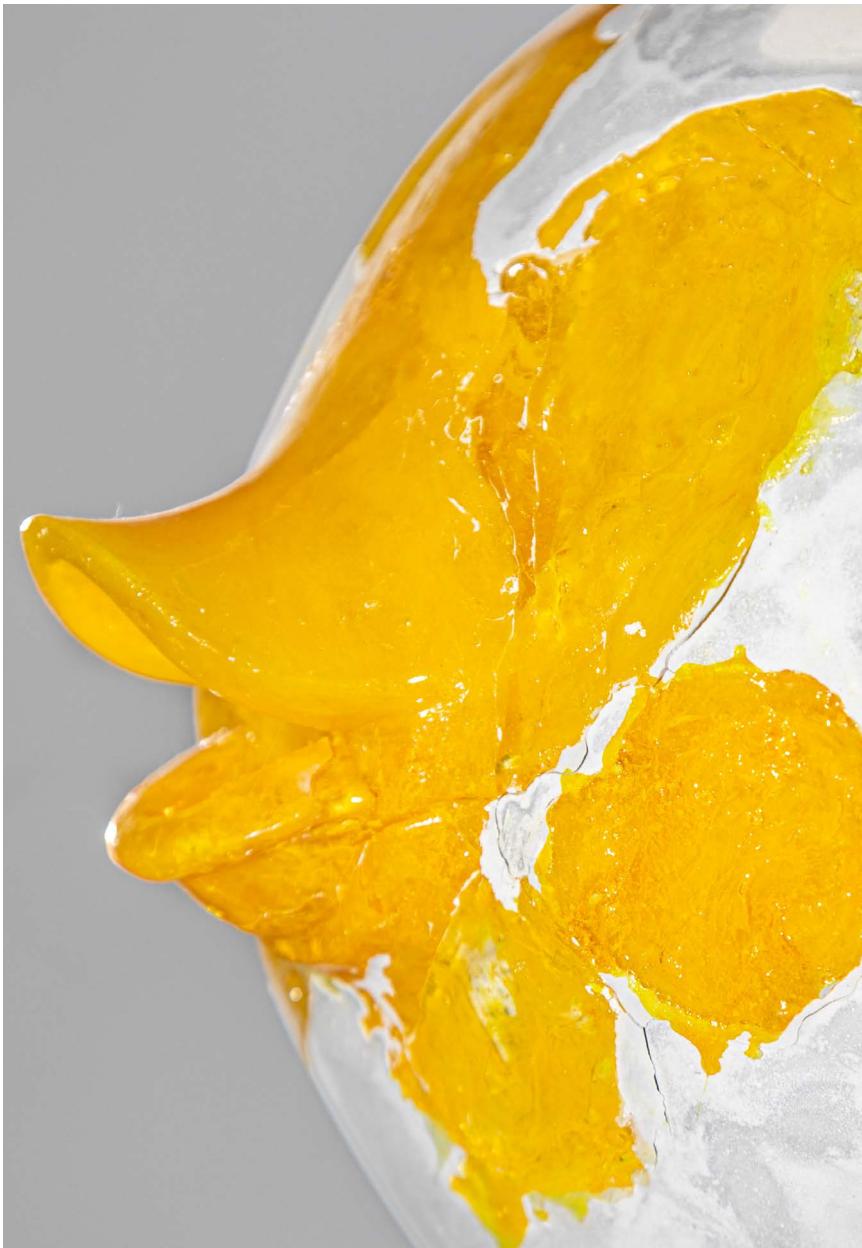
Bird's Study





Anser Anser 1, 2025

Glass wax, liquid ceramics and pigment.
20 x 20 x 28 cm





Anser Anser 2, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm







Anser Anser 4, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm





Anser Anser 5, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm





Anser Anser 6, 2025
Liquid ceramics and pigment.
21 x 22 x 28 cm

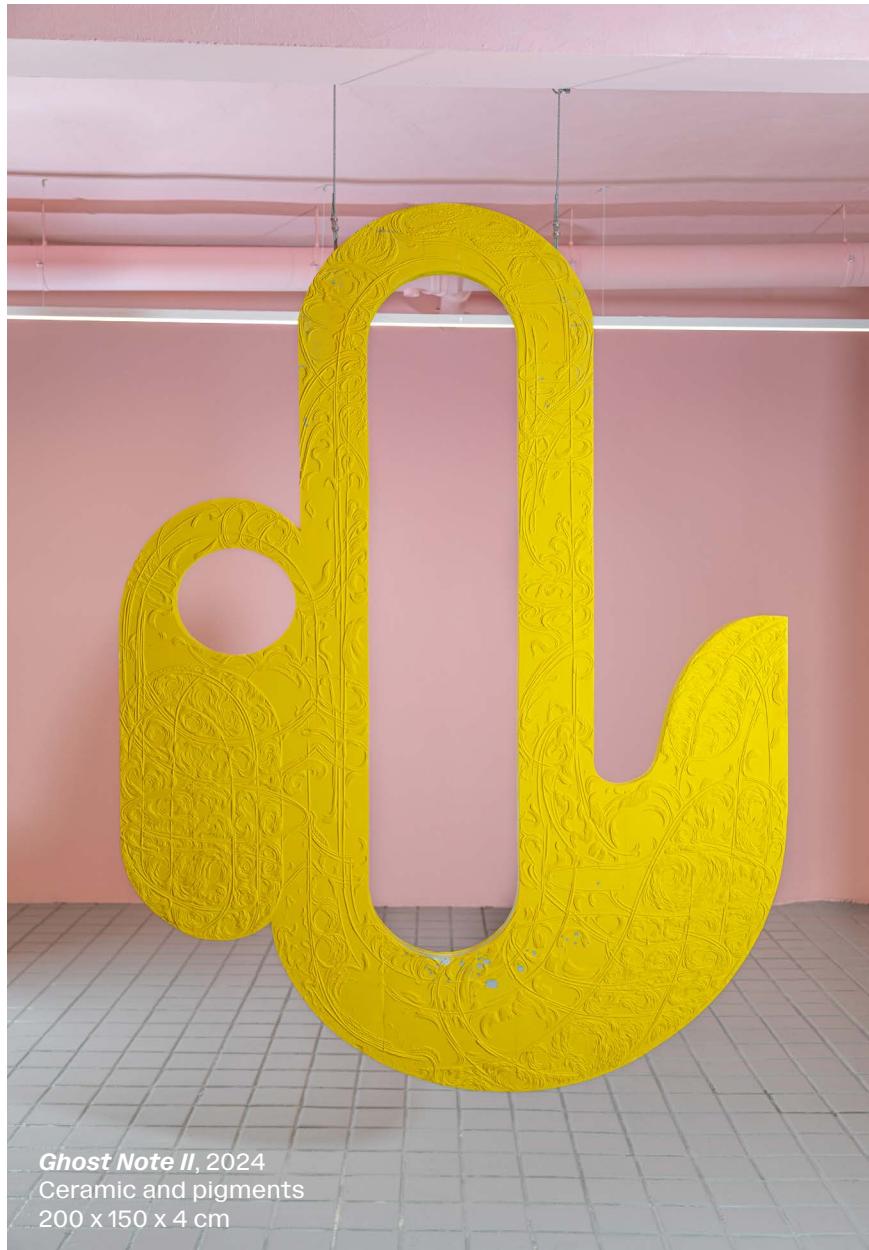




Dino, 2025

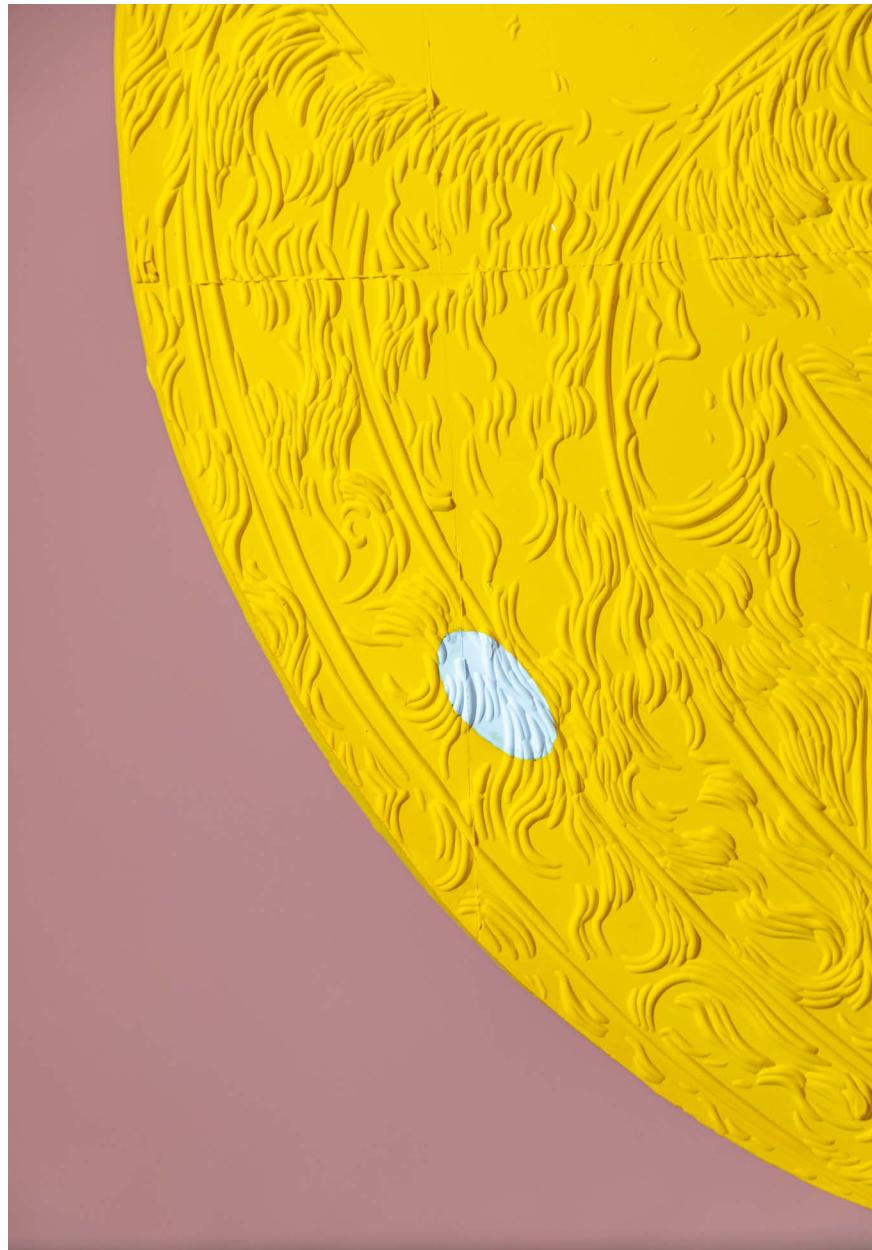
Glass wax, liquid ceramics and pigment.
37 x 21 x 26 cm







Ghost Note III, 2024
Ceramic and pigments
153 x 99 x 4 cm



Sketches



Sketch 8, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 4, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 3, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 7, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 6, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 5, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm



Sketch 2, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm

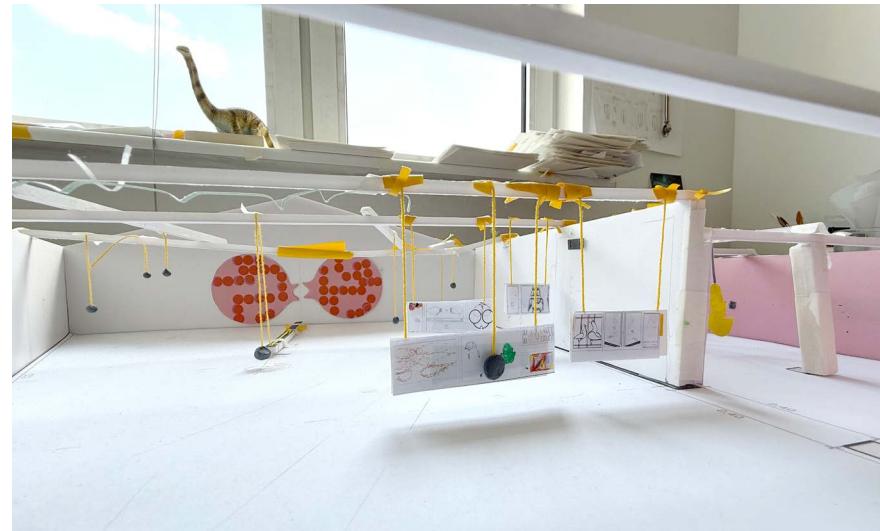


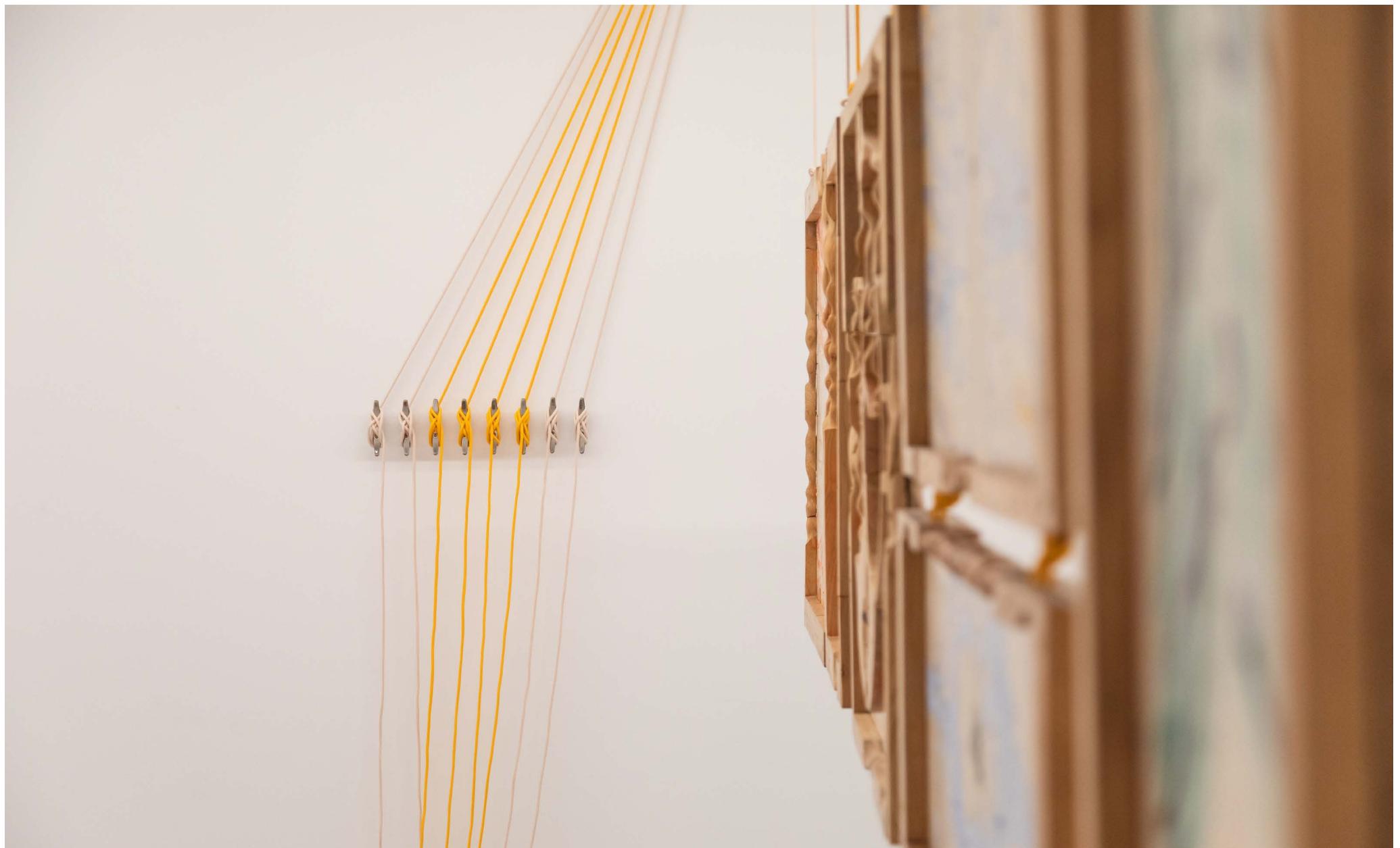
Sketch 1, 2025
Paper, pencil, pen.
39 x 30 x 4 cm

Mounting Process

The paintings are suspended and connected to one another with yellow cords, forming a single continuous hanging structure. The reversible paintings can be detached, unscrewed, and hung on a wall to offer another point of view.

The piece *Regulus Regulus* is suspended in the same way. This installation method is inspired by the nesting behavior of the weaverbird, a small finch-like bird native to Africa and Asia, known for its intricate nests woven from grasses and plant fibers. The use of yellow threads refers to this act of weaving and connecting, symbolizing both construction and interdependence.











SELECTED SOLO/DUO EXHIBITIONS

MARC BIBILONI, Madrid 2025

Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur , CH 2024

HILTIBOLD Plattform für aktuelle Kunst, St.Gallen, CH 2023

Baustelle Schaustelle, Raum für Junge Kunst, Essen, DE

HILTIBOLD Plattform für aktuelle Kunst, St.Gallen, CH 2021

Bianca Barandun, Blank100, London UK 2019

Line in Sand, Unit 1 Gallery/Workshop, London, UK 2018

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery, Berlin, DE

2025

MARC BIBILONI, WORK IN PROGRESS, Madrid

Heimspiel, Triennial, Kunsthalle Glarus, CH

2024

Kunst Sarganserland-Walensee VIII+, Museumbickel Walenstadt, CH

AND THIS OLD WORLD IS A NEW WORLD, LA BIBI, Mallorca, ES

DIE GROSSE, NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, DE

AURA Kunstraum, Düsseldorf, DE

Kunst Sarganserland-Walensee VIII+, Museumbickel Walenstadt, CH

Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur, Jahresausstellung der Bündner Künstlerinnen, Chur, CH

«Grosse Regionale 2023», Kunst(Zeug)Haus, Rapperswil, CH

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

OHSH Projects, London, UK

2023

Into Distance, Kunsthause Essen, DE

The Ingram Collection, Rawlinson and Hunter, London, UK

2022

ESC Exhibition, Gallery VVOVVA, NL

Art Matters 5, Galerie Biesenbach, Cologne, DE

Heimspiel, Triennial, Kunsthalle Appenzell Ziegelhütte, CH

2021

The Ingram Prize 2021, Unit 1 Gallery/Workshop, London, UK

Fair Art Fair, Unit 1 Gallery/Workshop, London, UK

The Invitational I, Unit 1 Gallery/Workshop, London, UK

Floorr/Exh 7, London, UK

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

MK Calling, MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, UK

Spring Exhibition 2020, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, DK

2020

Kunstsalonen, Copenhagen, DK

Art on a Postcard Auction, The AllBright Mayfair, London, UK

To all our Absent Dialogues, Warbling 155A Gallery, London, UK

HIX Award, HIX Art Gallery, London, UK

2019

Creekside Open, A.P.T. Gallery, London, UK

Kensington and Chelsea Art Weekend, Unit 1 Gallery / Workshop, London, UK

Abstraction v Figuration, Kunstgenerator, Geneve, CH

Herrick Gallery, London, UK

2018

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Call me Bitter, Kaleidoscope Gallery, Sevenoaks, UK

2018

Zureta, traveling exhibition, Chinretsukan (TUA Exhibition Hall), University of the Arts,

Tokyo, JPN, The College of Fine Art of Shanghai University, CHN, NEON Gallery, Wroclaw, PL, Galéria

Medium, Bratislava, SVK

Super Super, Kingsgate Project Space, London, UK

2017

SHOW2017 - RCA, London, UK

Supercommunity, RCA Dyson Gallery, London, UK

Output, CGP London, Southwark Park Galleries, London, UK

P.P.S - Royal College of Art, London, UK

Edit Control, Hockney Gallery, London, UK

2016

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

RCA Secret, Dyson Gallery, London, UK and Art Dubai, Madinat Jumeira, Dubai, ARE

2016

Break Link, CGP London, Southwark Park Galleries, UK

Kunst in der Börse, Handelskammer Hamburg, supported by Lions Club Hamburg, DE

2014

Thomas Manns Beziehung zu den Künsten, Museum Buddenbrookhaus, Lübeck, DE

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

St.Gallen, Kunstsammlung des Kantons St.Gallen, CH

Katrin Bechtler / Stiftung

GRANTS

Kunstpreis 2024 des Bündner Kunstvereins Chur, Canton Grisons Art Association, CH	2024
Finalist, The Hopper Prize, US	2023
Art Council Grant canton Grisons, Wettbewerb für professionelles Kulturs-chaffen	2022
(grosse Projekte) Kanton Graubünden, CH	
Shortlisted, The Ingram Prize 2021 London, UK	2021
Art Council Grant canton St.Gallen, Werkbeitrag, Kanton St.Gallens, CH	2020
Innovate Grant Recipient Summer 2020, feature, grant and interview, US	
Shortlisted, Ducato Prize 2020, Sezione Arte Contemporanea, Piacenza, ITL	
Shortlisted, HIX Award, HIX Art Gallery, London, UK	2019
Swiss Culture Fond (Grant), BAK Kulturfonds, Stiftung Kulturfonds - Pro Arte/Gleyre, CH	

RESIDENCIES

LA BIBI Gallery Residencia, Mallorca, ES 2024

Riddergade AIR, Viborg Kunsthall, DK 2023

CCA Andratx Residency, ES 2022

Anderson Contemporary, four-month Artist Residency, London, UK 2019

Unit 1 Gallery Solo Residency, Unit 1 Gallery Workshop, London, UK 2018

***1.** Ghost Note, at the Bündner Kunstmuseum Chur, Switzerland, in 2023, was curated by Sophia Nava. This project allowed the artist to deepen her understanding of wood and the tools used to work it as a material for her practice. It required her to carefully consider which pieces could be combined into a single structure to ensure stability. The artist explained that it was an investigation into the phenomenon of memory—whether we can speak of memories without using forms or colors, and how we can gather or understand the verbalization of memory. Barandun based her work on her recollections of a flock of sparrows in her parents' garden.

***2.** The italics of the last words are mine. In that “shift from seeing to hearing” lies Barandun’s visual philosophy: she does not compose a record of birds and their forms, nor a treatise on ornithology, but rather a visual music. In the same vein, the British musician Cosmo Sheldrake, whose work is inspired by the sounds of nature, titled his third album Eye to the Ear (2024).

***3.** Liquid ceramic, a ceramic coating technology, was perfected through a NASA space program as a protective film against heat in rockets and, later, in the space shuttle. This inspiration led a Canadian manufacturer of coatings and paints to develop an exterior house coating that provided excellent protection against extremely cold temperatures.

***4.** “The bridge does not come to a location; rather, a location appears before the bridge itself.” The things that, as places, provide a dwelling are called buildings. They are so called because they have been created by the act of building. The bridge is a place. As such, it provides a space. The space provided by the bridge contains all kinds of locations at varying distances and proximities to it.” — From Building Dwelling Thinking, a lecture delivered by Martin Heidegger at the Darmstädter Gespräch in 1951 and published the following year by Neue Darmstädter Verlagsanstalt.

***5.** Barandun’s constant respect for and exploration of her working materials recalls Brancusi’s own approach. In her words: “Changing materials, discovering, experimenting, and constantly learning about different materials and processes is essential to my practice. (...) I am fascinated by certain materials—their textures, weight, feel, or particular surfaces. The more unfamiliar a material or process is to me, the more it attracts me. I am captivated by what happens when I combine or force two things to merge, when the material takes control and creates its own language.”

***6.** He did not merely feel passion for animals: he revealed their beauty and complexity and gave them a voice in a world that values them too little. Gerald Durrell saw each bird as an individual with its own peculiarities, not merely as a species. He believed that saving animals from extinction could not be achieved without a parallel respect and care for our fellow humans—what E. O. Wilson called “biophilia.”

***7.** Helen MacDonald, *H is for Hawk*, Grove-Atlantic Inc., London, 2016.

***8.** In this sense, we can say that Barandun’s Hollow Bones reveals the need to transcend limits—only then can we look back with understanding and affection toward the place from which we came.

***9.** Bradley Lehman, “Bach’s Extraordinary Temperament: Our Rosetta Stone, Part 1,” in *Early Music*, February 2005, vol. 33(1), pp. 3–24.

***10.** The title refers to Charlie Parker’s nickname, “Bird.” His work is often linked to the theme of birds and the freedom of their flight, as suggested by his nickname. His corpus includes pieces such as Bluebird, Chasin’ the Bird, Birds Get the Worm, and Parker’s Mood—compositions that capture the essence of bebop through intricate improvisations and complex chord progressions.

***11.** Birds do not fly to the Moon, but some—like the common swift—fly at altitudes of up to 4,000 meters on clear, moonlit nights to hunt; owls emerge at dusk and hunt by moonlight. The illusion of How High is the Moon does not arise because the Moon’s actual size or distance changes significantly, but rather because our perception of it does—due to a combination of objective factors, such as terrestrial objects providing a sense of scale, and subjective ones, such as our emotional state

M B
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