
Galeria Belard is pleased to present our new solo exhibition, *Jardins*, by London and Lisbon based Portuguese artist, Joana Galego. Bringing together a series of paintings and collages whose visual narratives dissolve the boundaries between space and time, this show questions again and again what it means to care, and, inevitably, to become closer. Punctuated by suggestions of intimacy, affection and secrecy, *Jardins* offers a singular perspective on the human experience as an inseparable part of a larger universe, represented by landscapes that the artist simultaneously remembers and imagines.

When we think of a garden (*jardim*), we imagine a collection of meticulously organized, domesticated, natural elements, often limited by a border. This idea of limit is something that deeply fascinates the artist, for whom painting has always represented the possibility of escaping, yet remaining — a jump over the fence. Galego thinks of a garden the size of the world, the world itself as a garden. In this constant alternation between the wild and the domestic, in that invisible border, caring is a unifying and predominant element. "Burying your fingers into the ground as if caressing someone's head, or vice versa."

Her work in the studio can also be compared to gardening — ideas, often taking the form of drawings, are seeds thought out for months, germinating to originate paintings that, through a constant overlapping of layers and an attention to the accidental and unexpected, can take years to appear.

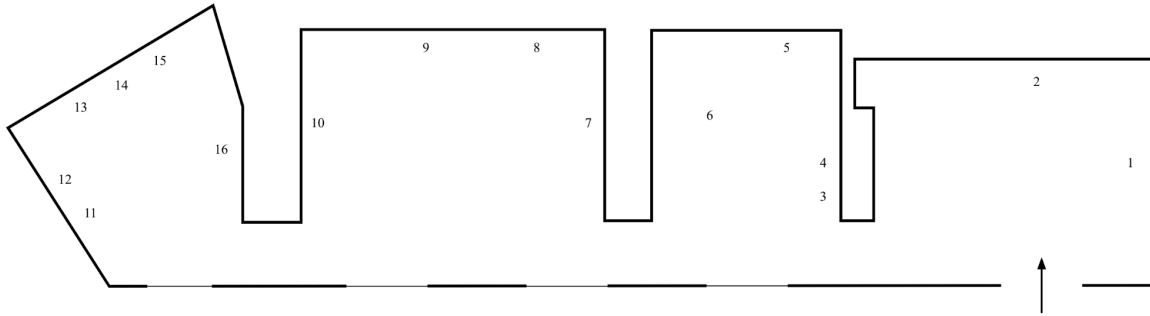
In her artistic creation, Galego finds a deep expression of her personal experiences, combining drawings from observation, imagination and memory. With references such as Paolo Uccello's painting, *Hunt in the Forest* (c. 1470) or the work of Paula Modersohn-Becker, the artist attempts to create images that allow, in her own words, "to be present in two places. Or more than two, for example when I paint in London from a drawing I made in Indonesia, thinking of Portugal. The possibility of bringing all those places together. Maybe it won't show, but that's what happens in the studio. The garden loses its limits."

More focused on questioning rather than affirming, Galego's creative process is born predominantly from drawing, and from a belief in this medium's immense potential for all kinds of magic, including time travel. Collage appears later, as an accomplice of several internal contradictory dialogues, since its multiple reformulations allow the artist to infinitely edit a composition. Much like in a puppet theater, there are changes of scale, protagonists are introduced or removed and complete changes of scenery occur depending on the narratives that consequently emerge.

A method as intrinsically tactile as what is sought in many of these works also — a reduction of the walls that divide us, in an act of mutual recognition —, to care for an infinite garden.

Joana Galego (1994) graduated with a Painting BA from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon in 2016 and subsequently attended the Royal Drawing School in London where, in 2017, completed her Postgraduate degree in Drawing. Her work has been exhibited in numerous group shows in London and Portugal including the Trinity Buoy Wharf Drawing Prize for which she was shortlisted in 2019. Solo exhibitions include: *Mole Lunar Sinal* at Soho Revue (London, 2023), *Spring and All* at the Royal Drawing School (London, 2019), *O Lugar Indeciso* at Museu das Artes de Sintra (Portugal, 2016) Galego has been awarded prizes including the Sir Denis Mahon Award from the Royal Drawing School (2017). She has undertaken artistic residencies in the USA and Portugal and her work is held in numerous private collections. The artist has been a member of Lewisham Arthouse since 2020 and is currently living and working in London after participating in the Jatim X Biennial in Eastern Java and the IFA Residency with the Royal Drawing School in Modinagar, India.

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| 1. Paciência, 2019
Oil, acrylic and modeling
paste on canvas
40 × 35 cm | 8. Trabalho, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
36 × 25.5 cm | 15. Um brinco, 2024
Watercolor, acrylic and collage
on paper
43.5 × 32 cm |
| 2. Com a minha cara muito
quente, 2019
Oil and acrylic on linen
170 × 121 cm | 9. Cena de caça, 2024
Acrylic and dry pastel on
canvas and linen
200 × 152 cm | 16. Com a montanha na língua,
2024
Acrylic on canvas
26 × 20.5 cm |
| 3. Ainda não nos conhecíamos,
2024
Acrylic on canvas
36 × 25.5 cm | 10. Cuidar, 2019
Oil, acrylic and modeling
paste on canvas
47 × 26 cm | |
| 4. É preciso parar, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
36 × 25.5 cm | 11. Tempo livre, 2024
Watercolor, acrylic, dry pastel,
oil pastel and collage on paper
46 × 34 cm | |
| 5. Manali, 2024
Monotype, natural pigments
and acrylic on canvas
110 × 71 cm | 12. Nocturno, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
60 × 50 cm | |
| 6. Enquanto regava o jardim,
2024
Monotype, natural pigments
and acrylic on canvas
80 × 42 cm | 13. Pedido, 2024
Watercolor, acrylic, dry pastel,
graphite and collage on paper
45 × 37 cm | |
| 7. Dar pão aos patos, 2024
Oil and collage on coarse linen
112 × 92 cm | 14. Comi todas as sementes, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
60 × 50 cm | |