

UPSTREAM
GALLERY



CRISTÓBAL LEÓN
& JOAQUÍN COCIÑA





León & Cociña

Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña (both 1980, Chile) have been working together since 2007. They were educated at the Universidad Católica, Santiago de Chile. León also studied at UDK (Berlin) and De Ateliers (Amsterdam). With their experimental films, León and Cociña create a new interpretation of the religious symbolism and magical rituals that are deeply rooted in the traditional culture of Latin America. For the production of their films they combine different techniques such as photography, drawing, sculpture, dance and performance.

An unpolished cinematographic language characterizes the stop-motion films of León and Cociña. The papier mâché figures and innocent-looking drawings strongly contrast with the heavy topics such as religion, sex and death the films deal with.

León and Cociña won several awards and their films are selected regularly for international film festivals. Their work is frequently exhibited in museums and biennials in Latin America, but it has also been presented at venues such as the Whitechapel Gallery, the Guggenheim, KW Berlin, the Venice Biennial 2013 and Art Basel Statements 2012 with Upstream Gallery. Their first full-length film '*La Casa Lobo*' premiered at the 68th Berlinale in 2018, where it was awarded the Caligari Film Prize.





Video Overview

In each videowork of the Chilean duo, a friction fundamental to human psychology can be seen: being captured between body and mind. It never becomes totally clear. Underneath the beauty and innocence of the characters hides a lot of abject elements, like faeces, blood and genital parts. Strong emotions play up: fear and hatred for the unknown, loss, loneliness. An sinister atmosphere is combined with the gentleness of a children's story.

La Casa Lobo

La Casa Lobo is the first monumental feature film (74 minutes) by León & Cociña. The film is full of unpolished and dark stop-motion animations, with which they create a new interpretation of the religious symbolism and magical rituals that are deeply rooted in the traditional culture of Latin America. The film tells the story of Maria, a young refugee stationed in southern Chile after escaping from a sect of German settlers. The film is inspired by Colonia Dignidad, a secretive and controversial sect in southern Chile established in the sixties by German immigrants. León & Cociña tell the story as if they were part of the sect. They pretend to be Colonia Dignidad's animation film company and make the film as an indoctrinating fairy tale.

For the incredibly time consuming production process, a nomadic studio project has traveled for four years between museums and institutions worldwide, including Modern Art Museum Buenos Aires, Contemporary Art Museum of Chile and the Media Arts Biennale in Santiago de Chile.

La Casa Lobo premiered at the 68th Berlinale in 2018, where it was awarded the Caligari Film Prize. Since then it was selected for several film festivals around the world where León & Cociña won many awards and prizes, among which the Best Animated Feature Film at FicMonterrey (Mexico), Best Latin American Film at Quito Latin American Film Festival (Ecuador), Jury Distinction at Annecy Film Festival (France), GNCR Prize Special Mention at FidMarseille (France) and the Special Mention of the Jury at Future Film Festival Bologna (Italy).









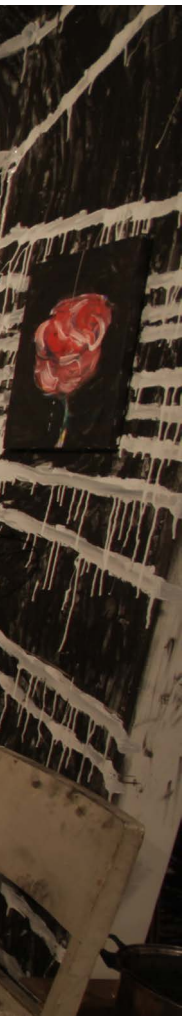
La Casa Lobo, 2018
video, animation
75 min



Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña at work
at the set of *La Casa Lobo*







La Casa Lobo, 2018
video, animation
75 min



Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña at work at the set of *La Casa Lobo*

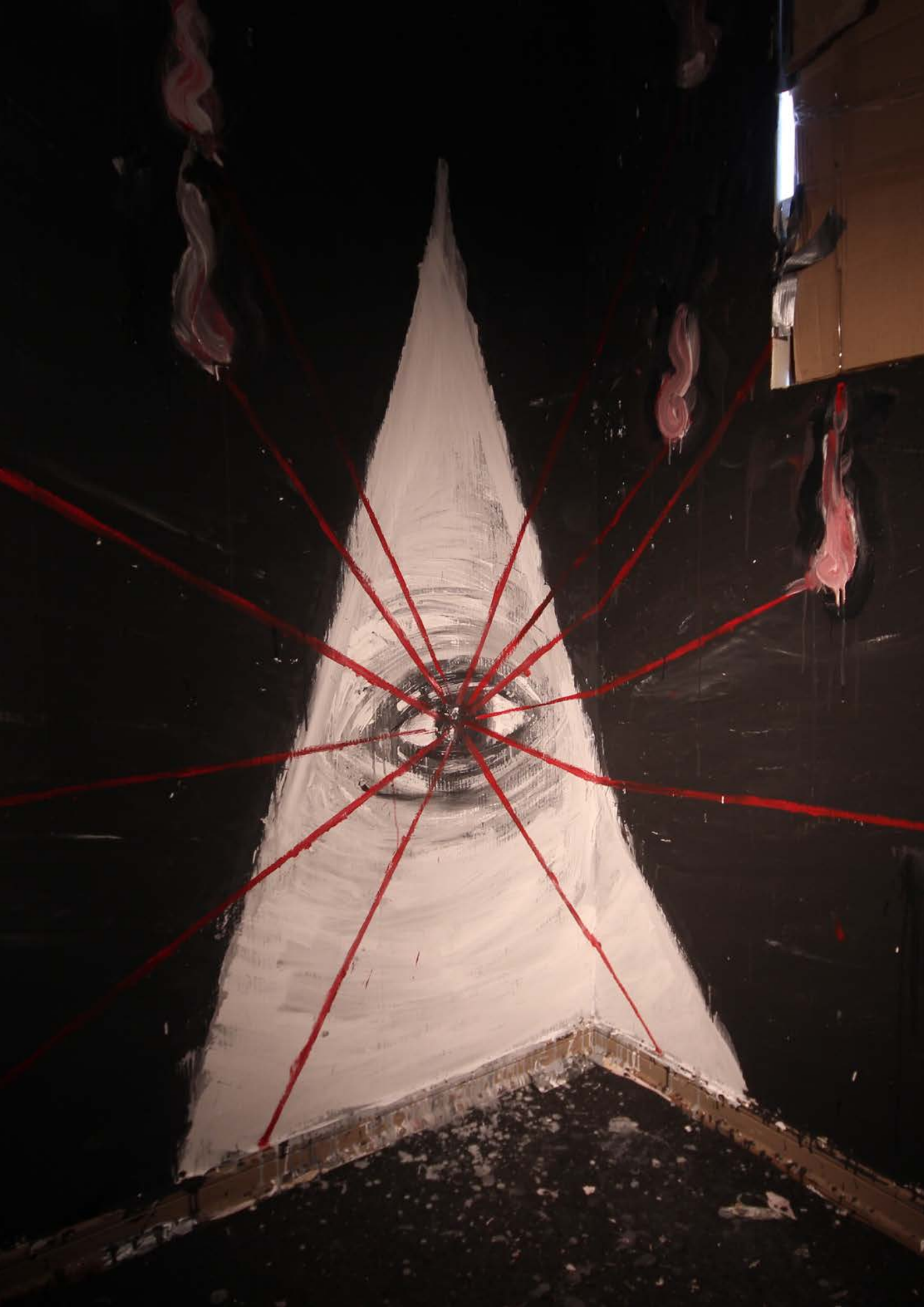


Los Andes

Los Andes was shown at the 55th Venice Biennale as a part of the Latin American – IILA Pavilion.

In *Los Andes*, a restless primal spirit takes possession of an office room. Drawings appear on the walls, plant-like forms sprout from the computer and overgrow the desktop. As it finds its way through the office space, the mysterious entity transforms into the limbs of a giant and dissolves again.





Los Andes, 2012
video, animation
4 min









El Arca, El Templo and Padre, Madre

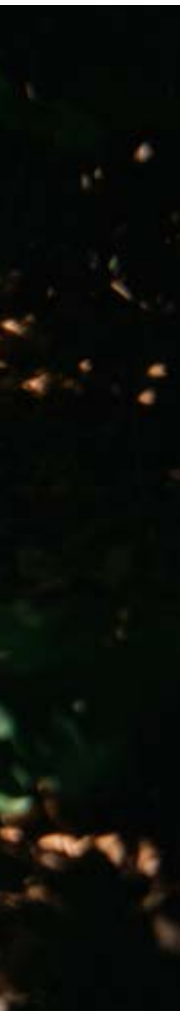
In 2010 Cocina and Leon made *El Arca*, *El Templo* and *Padre, Madre*. The three films combine the naivety and playfulness of papier-mâché, manufactured costumes and stop-motion with the reality of the human body with its low malleability. Heavy themes such as the ritual, sex and death effortlessly shade off into innocence, intimacy or banality. The videos pull the viewer along into a current of strong associative images, successive scenes from a mythic narrative that never really takes on its definitive shape. These recent works are considerably rawer, more intuitive and disquieting than previous work such as the fairy-tale like *Lucia* and *Luis* (2007-2008).

The fifteen minutes long animation-epos *El Arca* (2011) starts with a scene that could be the big bang or the apocalypse. References to psychoanalyses and the Bible play a central role in the work of León and Cociña. In *El Arca* an astronaut finds a girl in the woods. The girl changes into a woman. After the astronaut gives her an injection they eat two apples together. After a second injection the astronaut makes the girl unconscious and operates her. He dies after he has given her his own genitalia.

In *El Templo* a child, played by an actress wearing a fabricated penis, shatters all her dolls after she caught them having sex in a forest overwhelmed by birdsounds. The contrast between the natural environment and the grey concrete spaces is significant.

In *Padre, Madre* a voiceover plays the leading role: 'These are your parents. You are in front of a magical mirror, and in front of this mirror you must clean yourself.' What forces this mantra us to do when we at the same time look at a variation of absurd, cruel, unheimisch and morbid allegories about expecting children.





El Arca, 2011
video, animation
15 min

El templo, 2011
video, animation
15 min









Padre, Madre, 2011
video, animation
8.23 min





Sculpture and Painting

Different sculptures and other pieces are born from the production and the chaos of the studio that is used as filmset. As in their films, every object and piece of waste can be absorbed by the sculptures and objects. "We imagine that these parts belong to an exhibition that was cursed and destroyed. They are remnants of lost works, the last state of the works before becoming stone or moss." In 2015, the artists started making paintings in addition to these sculptures. They often depict protagonist Maria. Objects, drawings and paintings are made by both artists in a studio synergy. They have the rule that everything that comes into the studio can be changed, destroyed and rebuilt.



Apocalypse Now, 2016
oil and acrylic on canvas
70 x 95 cm



Ana, 2016
mixed media
25 x 16 x 19 cm





Exhibition overview of *Bones*, solo exhibition by Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña at Upstream Gallery, 2017



Inside Maria, 2016
mixed media
55 x 25 x 20 cm



Maria Verena, 2016
mixed media
55 x 33 x 20 cm





Exhibition overview of *Bones*, solo exhibition by
Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cocifña at Upstream
Gallery, 2017

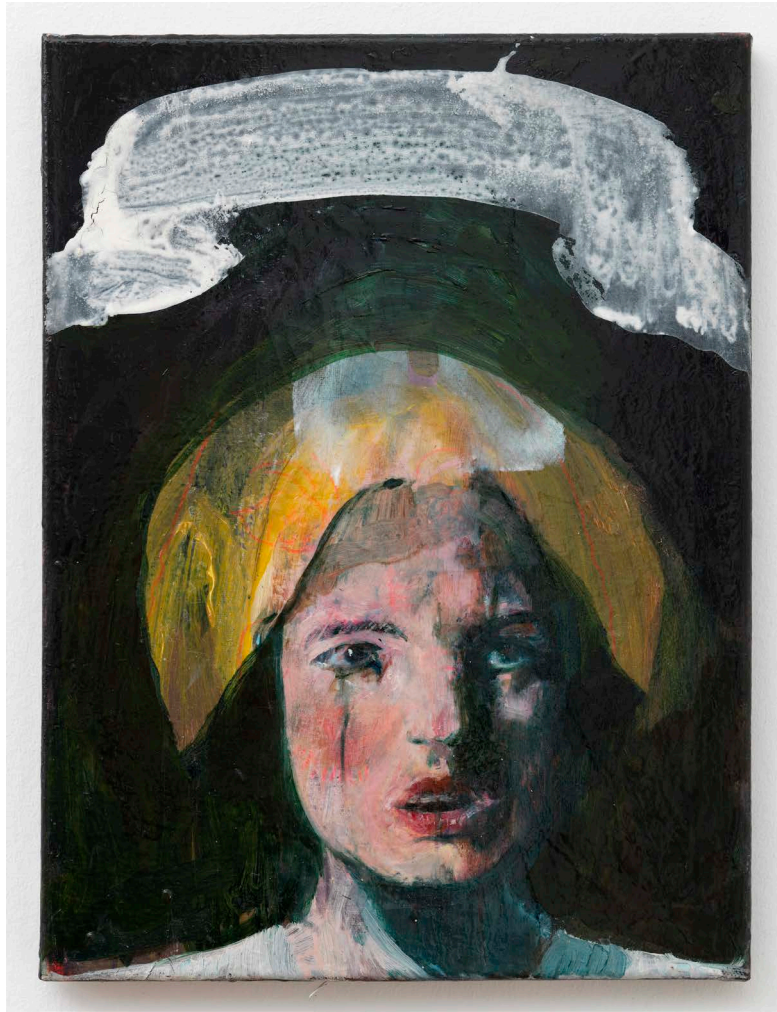


YOU
ARE WELCOME
BUT PLEASE
BE KIND



Maria as Paola, 2016
mixed media
27 x 17 x 25 cm

Bones, 2016
acrylic on canvas
100 x 70 cm



Maria as a Nurse, 2016
acrylic on canvas
40 x 30 cm



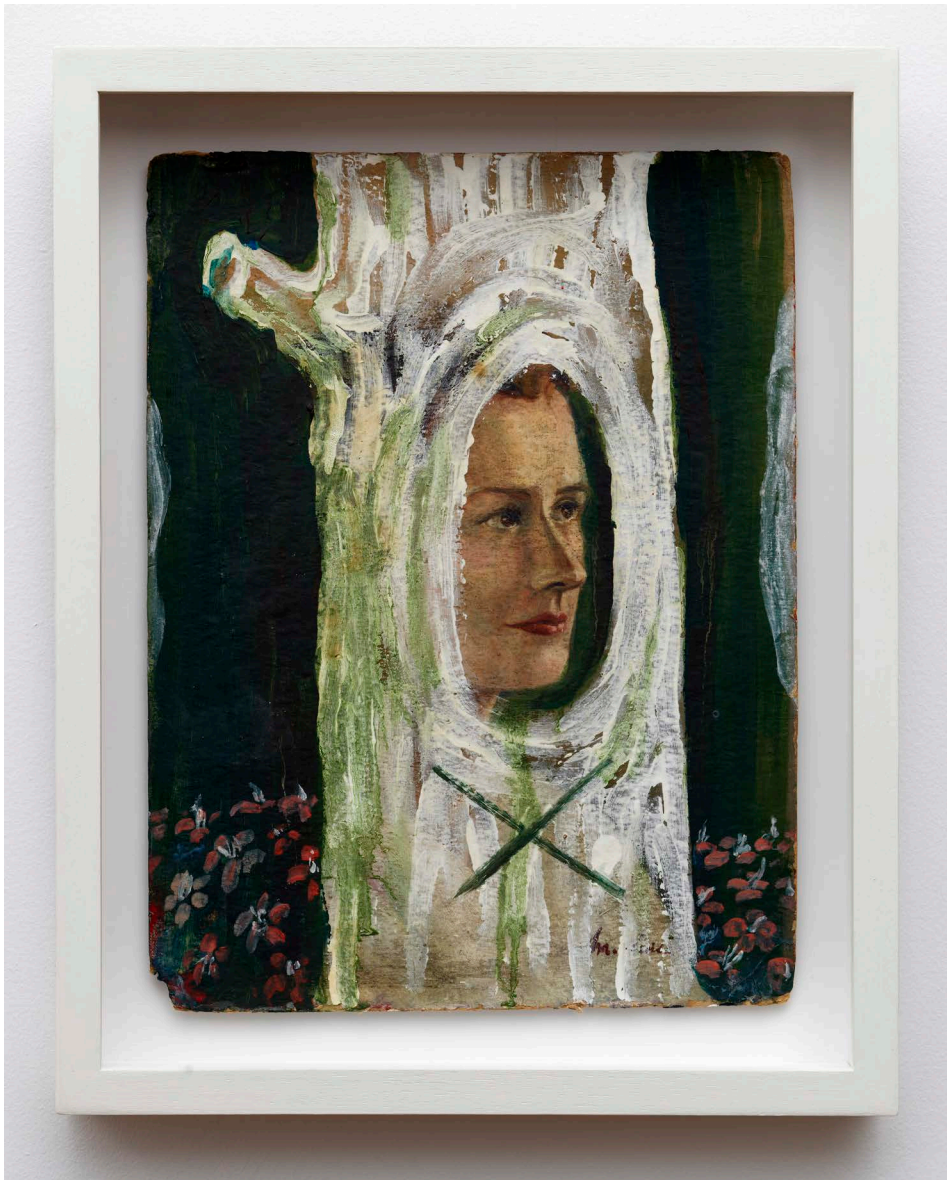
Maria, 2016
acrylic on canvas
245 x 140 cm



Pinocho, 2017
wood
106 x 17 x 15 cm



La Cosecha, 2017
oil on canvas
45 x 56 cm



Woman in Tree (3), 2016
acrylic on board
39 x 29 cm (framed)



Young Paul, 2016
mixed media
36 x 22 x 22 cm

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