Tracing Back

Natalia GONZÁLEZ MARTÍN

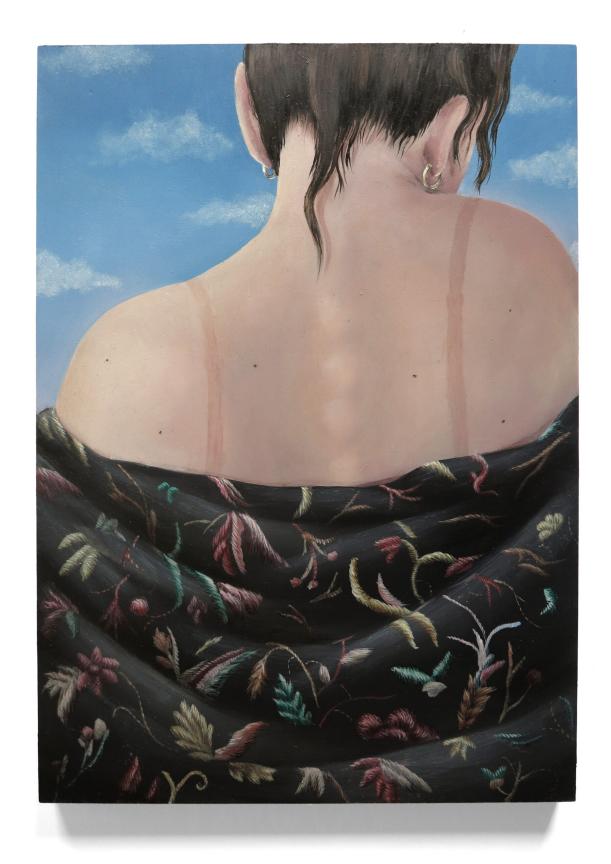
"During the pandemic, I was able to focus on my own research, which resulted in a new dimension to the painting series I am now working on."



Waiting, 21x30cm, Oil on board, 2021



Fig, 30x42cm, Oil on board, 2021



Mantilla, 30x42cm, Oil on board, 2021

Biography

Natalia is a Spanish artist focusing on adapting traditional techniques and formats from icon paintings. Through this, she explores the traces we have been left with from traditions that have prevailed over mainland Europe for centuries and their capacity to continue to exist through time. She is also the co-director of Subsidiary Projects, an artist-led space to promote the work of emerging artists.

Interview

The names would be abbreviated as "Isabel" (Isabel DIERINGER) and "Natalia" (Natalia GONZÁLEZ MARTÍN).

(□□□□□□□"Isabel"□"Natalia")

Isabel:

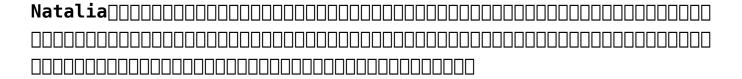
How did you organise your work and life during the pandemic?

Natalia: With the lockdown measures, many artists weren't able to access their studios, which has translated into adapting our domestic spaces and consequently our practice, to create. In my case, the main difference is in the scale of the work, which has been reduced considerably to fit in my home studio.

Isabel

Isabel: What is different from before the pandemic?

Natalia: Before we could discuss our work and other artists' IRL, now studio visits have been reduced to zoom calls which isn't the best tool for the appreciation of some mediums. That dialogue has been lost in some ways but enhanced in others. Instead of discussing the work itself, I find myself sharing tips or advice with other artists that I haven't even meet in person yet — however, I am eager to be able to see art in person again and talk about more formal elements.



Isabel: What is the biggest change you have been through or found? In other words, what is your Covid-pivot?

Natalia: Isolation has brought a lot of introspection for everyone, now that my time wasn't packed with different events or appointments constantly I have been able to focus a great part of my day on research, which has really given a new dimension to this new series I am working on.

Isabel

Isabel:

What is your most proud creation since the pandemic started?

Natalia: For the past two years, I have been developing the same series of work, however, I am currently working on the development of a solo presentation and creating new pieces where all of these ideas meet.

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Isabel: When did you start this project/artwork?

Natalia: The works for this particular exhibition which will take place in September have been in the making since November 2020. I have been able to explore the ideas and subjects that I had been developing during the past years.

Isabel

Isabel: What inspired you to embark on this project/start creating this artwork?

Natalia: I had created a solid trajectory of works that were all related to the same subjects, a solo exhibition of these was the most logical progression.

Isabel

Natalia

Isabel: What does this artwork mean to you?

Natalia: It has been an exploration of Spain and its traditions. I have been visiting old photographs, stories, folk songs to develop these. During a time where I could not visit my family and my country, this series of work has been almost therapeutic.

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Isabel: Has the pandemic had an impact on your work/work plan? (Was there any change in your thinking focus?)

Natalia: I have always balanced my practice with another job, but with the money, I was saving from not having a studio I decided to focus solely on my art career. This has been the best decision I could have taken as my work has evolved much quicker than it would have if I had had a part-time job. It is not easy to do this and in my case, I needed the world circumstances to change in order to take this step.

Isabel: If this applies, is there any funding for freelancers or artists in your city or in your country?

Natalia: The Arts Council has offered a lot of support for artists and art organisations during this time. Galleries, art magazines and other organisations have also been incredibly supportive by offering grants, free studio spaces or exhibiting opportunities.

Isabel

Isabel: Have your feelings about art now changed from your first encounters with it, or rather before the pandemic? If so, how?

Natalia: The pandemic has allowed me to realise the importance of a strong online presence. Social media has been key to connect with galleries, artists and collectors from all over the world, which helps expand our networks.

Isabel

Isabel: Do you think the arts will mostly remain/move online after the pandemic?

Natalia: I still believe it is important to experience art in person, some art mediums cannot be translated to an online format, however, some artists have evolved their practices to fit the digital realm, a very clear example of this are NFTs, and the hunger for innovative digital proposals is undeniable.

Isabel

Natalia	

Isabel: How do you see the relationship between technology and art?

Natalia: This pandemic has definitely changed the way we approach art and technology, the differences between the two have become more blurry and I think this is a great opportunity towards a more 21st-century approach to art and its market.

Isabel

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