

Matèria Francisca Valador

A partir daqui só há dragões (From here on, there are only dragons)

29.04.2025 -
27.06.2025

Matèria is proud to present A partir daqui só há dragões, Francisca Valador's debut solo show at the gallery. Opening on April 29, the exhibition, part of the program celebrating the gallery's 10th anniversary, offers a comprehensive view of the artist's evolving practice, where the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and installation dissolve into a cohesive whole.

The exhibition's title – A partir daqui só há dragões (From here on, there are only dragons) – refers to a phrase once used on Medieval maps to mark uncharted territories. This notion of the unknown, of things gradually revealing themselves over time, is at the heart of Valador's approach to Matèria's space.

Showcased is a new series of small-scale paintings on stainless steel supports, a material that alters how light interacts with the surface of each work. At first glance, the gallery may appear empty, but as the eye adjusts, the paintings begin to emerge alongside delicate, intimate sculptural presences that shift between visibility and invisibility.

In these delicate scenes with bright colors, botanical shapes and animals emerge and interrupt the horizon, evoking abstractions and suggesting something beyond. This interplay between vitality, reconstruction and harmony of forms, brings to life surprising contrasts created from everyday objects.

This sensibility characterises Valador's broader practice, where collected elements—flowers, seeds, fruits, and insects—are carefully arranged to create new narratives. Paraphrasing the artist's words: "Pequenos fragmentos, juntos, tornam-se construtivos de um todo"— "small fragments, together, become the building blocks of a whole". When brought together, these objects acquire symbolic weight, echoing the tradition of still life painting while preserving a conceptual openness. Despite their modest scale, they suggest a broader scenario, respecting the proportions of the depicted motifs and imbuing them with deep symbolic meaning, inviting the viewer to reflect on the relationships between the objects and the spaces they inhabit.

Following the group exhibition 10 on Paper, Matèria continues its 2025 program, celebrating the gallery's 10th anniversary. This series of exhibitions reflects its vision and approach, highlighting a dual focus: both the discovery and promotion of emerging artistic voices and the presentation of curatorial projects that explore the work of its represented artists in conversation with the contemporary art landscape.

Francisca Valador (1993, Lisbon) lives and works in Lisbon. She studied painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon and holds a Postgraduate Course in Artistic Practices and Pedagogical Processes at Maria Ulrich, Lisbon.

Since 2016, she has participated in various projects and exhibitions, including: HOMEWORK #3, Galeria Madragoa, Lisbon, PT (2025); AS PRIMEIRAS FLORES SÃO AMARELAS, ARBAG - Artist run space, Lisbon, PT (2024); DRAWINGSSSSSSS, curated by Maria Chiara Valacchi, Studiolo, Milan, IT (2024); It was night and a deer crossed the road, Casa do Comum, Lisbon, PT (2023); Porta entreaberta, Travessa do Guarda-Joias 9, Lisbon, PT (2023); Algum desenho a partir de Gaëtan. Works from the Alberto Caetano collection, Casa da Cerca - Contemporary Art Center, Lisbon, PT (2023); Oneiroikos, Brotéria, Lisbon, PT (2022); COLLETTIVA #1, MONITOR, Petreto, IT (2022); Depois do banquete, Teatro Thalia, Lisbon, PT (2022); Manta Ray, Matèria, Rome, IT (2021); Dip me in the river, drop me in the water!, Pedro Cera Gallery, Lisbon, PT (2021); Chain Reaction #6: Las Palmas - Apophenia, Culturgest, Oporto, PT (2021); A Longa Sombra, Maus Hábitos, Oporto, PT (2021); Homework, Madragoa Gallery, Lisbon, PT (2020); I Will Take The Risk, AZAN Tomaz Hipolito Studio, Lisbon, PT (2019); Subterrâneo (collab with Eduardo Fonseca e Silva), Geological Museum, Lisbon (2018); The dog is very confused, FOCO Gallery, Lisbon, PT (2018); Corda Bamba (collab with Eduardo Fonseca e Silva), Ateneu Comercial, Lisbon (2016).

She was awarded the Flechada - New Support Program for First Solo Exhibitions, FLAD (2024) and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Visual Arts Grant (2023).

Based in the neighbourhood of San Lorenzo in Rome, Matèria opened its doors to the public in 2015. The gallery proposes an exhibition programme that touches upon all aspects of Contemporary Art. Since its founding, Matèria's purpose has been the furthering and development of the work of its selected group of Artists. The gallery programme features four exhibitions per calendar year, conceived and produced directly with its artists and often in dialogue with the space through a site specific approach. Matèria's gallery shows strive to further the research and experimentation aspects of artistic practice, with the results of this approach often showcased in a growing list of Italian and international art fairs.

Matèria represents the work of Fabio Barile, Karen Knorr, Mario Cresci, Chen Xiaoyi, Giuseppe De Mattia, Sunil Gupta, Marta Mancini, Joachim Lenz, Francisca Valador, Stefano Canto, Bekhbaatar Enkhtur, Eduardo Fonseca e Silva and Maïmouna Guerresi.

Francisca Valador
A partir daqui só há dragões
(From here on, there are only dragons)

29 April 2025 - 27 June 2025

Matèria | Via dei Latini, 27 - Roma
materiagallery.com

Matèria

Hours
From Tuesday to Saturday
from 11 am to 7 pm

Contact
contact@materiagallery.com

Press enquiries
press@materiagallery.com
Roberta Pucci
robertapucci@gmail.com
mob: +39 340 817 4090
Chiara Ciucci Giuliani
chiaracgiuliani@gmail.com
mob: +39 392 917 3661