

nara roesler

gerardo rosales
fable chaser
curated by luis pérez-oramas

opening
november 7, 2024

nara roesler rio de janeiro
rua redentor, 241

gerardo rosales:
fable's chaser
luis pérez-oramas

The work of Gerardo Rosales (USA, Venezuela-1967) stands out for its forest imagery, thorny, homoerotic, fantastic, in which animal and human figures intertwine at the same time in acts of love and hunting. *Latinx and queer*, active for two decades in the United States, Rosales is part of a global generation of artists identified by a figurative approach to nature and sexuality in which species and genders multiply in an incessant mutual confusion. Rosales accounts for this phenomenon through a masterful handling of *ornamental* nets, in which his recurring characters emerge - the bear, the butterfly, the snake, the bird, the coyote, the donkey, the trees, the phallic flower.

Irony is fundamental here: textual irony - in titles that are both suggestive and polysemic, such as "Butterfly tigre": a voracious and poisonous snake, but perhaps also the feminine and animalistic name of a prostitute, who actually represents an innocent motherhood framed by a bloom of colorful butterflies; but also figurative irony manifested in the constant reference to fabulous narratives, typical of a childhood imaginary in which, surreptitiously, sexual ambiguity and gender conflict shine through.

If, on the one hand, the raw truth of an alternative sexuality seems to be neutralized in the rich figurative embroidery of the images, on the other hand, the apparent harmlessness of the children's universe reveals, as if behind camouflage, the rawness of the hunt, of homoerotic desire, the

disturbing ambiguity of the bodies, fantastic Siamese figures that come together in acts that are both subtle and sexual, where the boundary between animality and human animality is broken.

Phallic and flowing snakes; flying birds or giant insects; dense forests of flaming fruit, in the midst of which acts of fertilization, genital secretions, flowering and gestation are hidden, Rosales' universe is both raw and poetic, lyrical and explicit. His ultimate goal, perhaps, is to question a certain ideology of innocence with which we humans of our time have turned childhood into an original fantasy. Against this, Rosales' works remind us, through the luminous beauty of their ornamental latticework, that there never really was an unknown origin or an age of innocence; that humanity has always, forever, been marked and destined by possession and desire, by its exultation and its anxiety, by its little daily death and its instantaneous and provisional paradise.

Among all the images that Rosales cultivates in his garden of disturbing and apparently innocent figurations, perhaps that of hunting stands out: a figurative and poetic license to talk about seduction and *cruising*, predation and trauma, the fate of species that seek and consume each other. An ancient echo survives in these very recent works, an old patina of hidden antiquities. In front of them, we can evoke the tombs of Tarquinia, for example, the one called *The Bulls*, which depicts, in styles that couldn't be more surprisingly close to Rosales'

plastic resources, the scene in which Achilles, on horseback, observes Troilus, hidden behind a hill, before killing him.

It's not just the heroic presence of the natural elements, the schematic figuration of the characters in Tarquinia's tomb that reminds us of Rosales' work. It is also the hunt, the act of looking expectantly at the prey, behind which lies not only the possibility of violence, but also the very archaeology of vision and, with it, the end of the innocence that has marked the existence of human beings from the very beginning: "From the very first brushstroke," writes Pascal Quignard, "the background and the figure appear together. They oppose each other like two polarities. In active predation, in the leap of carnivores attacking their prey - in the projection of all beings that project themselves onto their poles - the background and the sudden, admirable body that moves and separates from it are uncoupled. Hunting is the background of art. Wakefulness is the background of contemplation. Hunger is the backdrop to desire. Carnage is the backdrop to admiration".

Innocent is he who forgets that in the garden of innocence a hunter was already watching us.

Erizos, 2024
acrylic and gouache
paint on canvas
120 x 151 x 3,5 cm
47.2 x 59.4 x 1.4 in





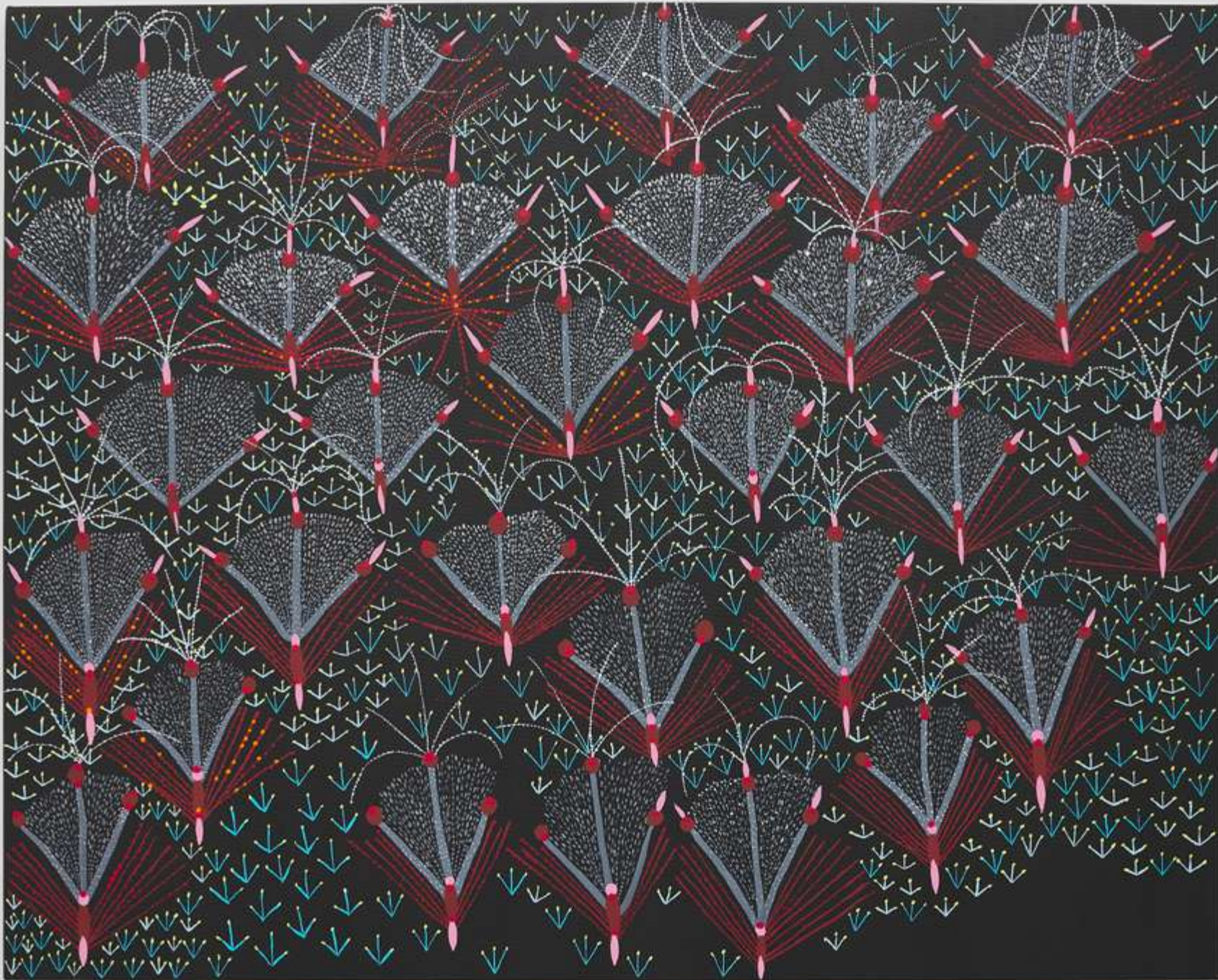


exhibition view
Rio Chiquito
Houston at Partnership Tower, 2024.
Houston, USA
Photo: Alex Barber

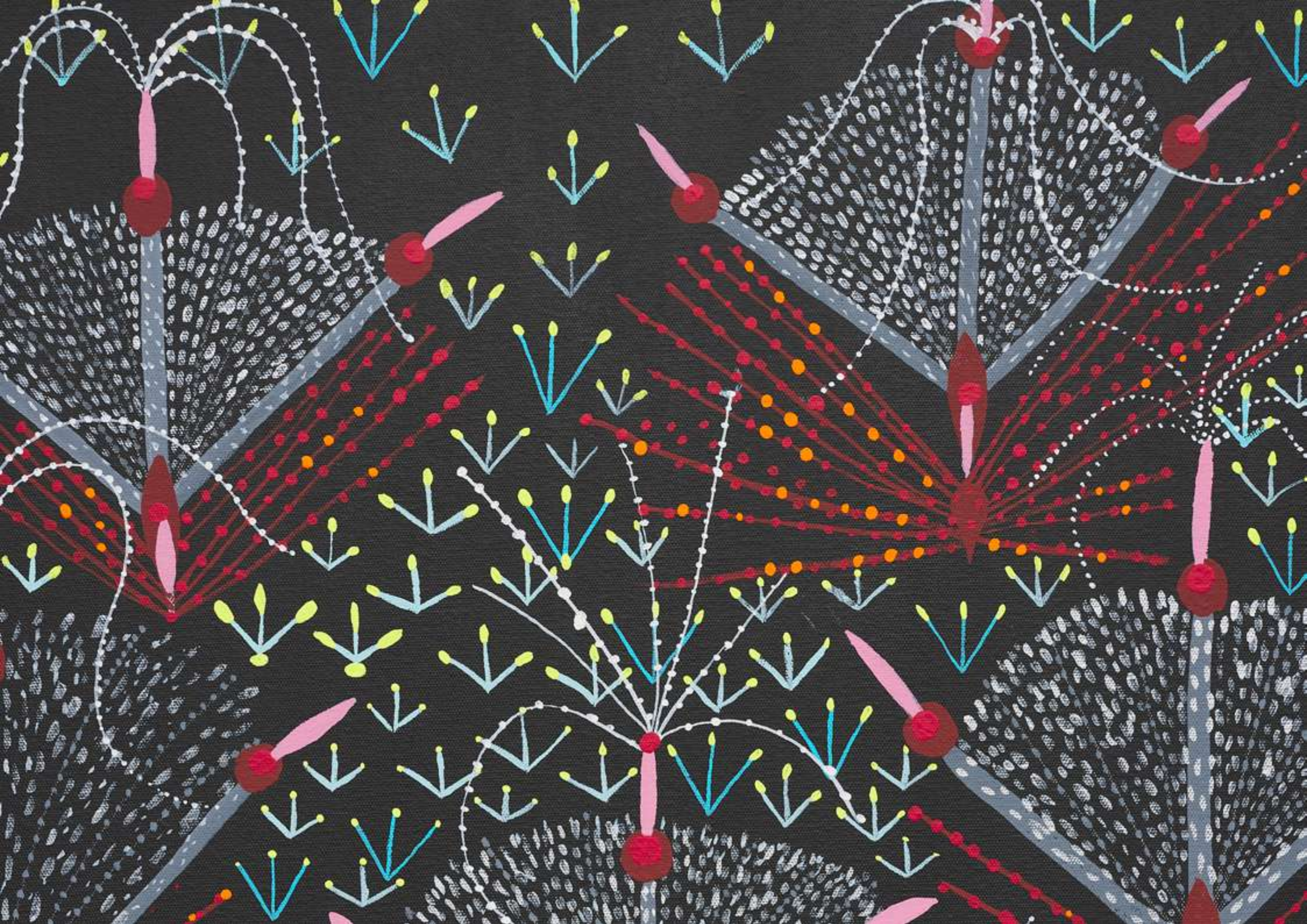


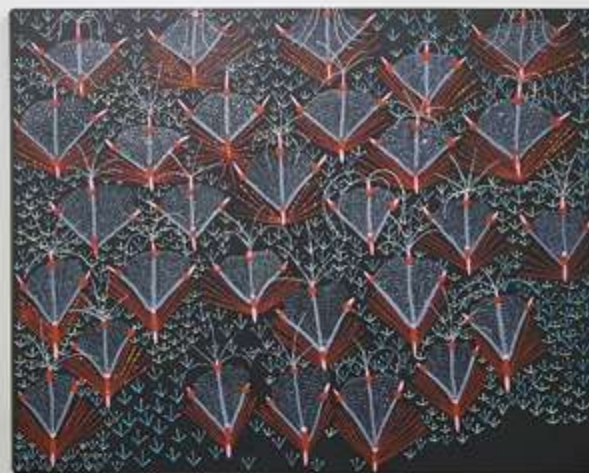
exhibition view
Rio Chiquito
Houston at Partnership Tower, 2024.
Houston, USA
Photo: Alex Barber





Llantén Garden, 2024
acrylic and gouache
paint on canvas
120 x 151 x 3,5 cm
47.2 x 59.4 x 1.4 in





Bejuca Rosada, 2024
oil paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in



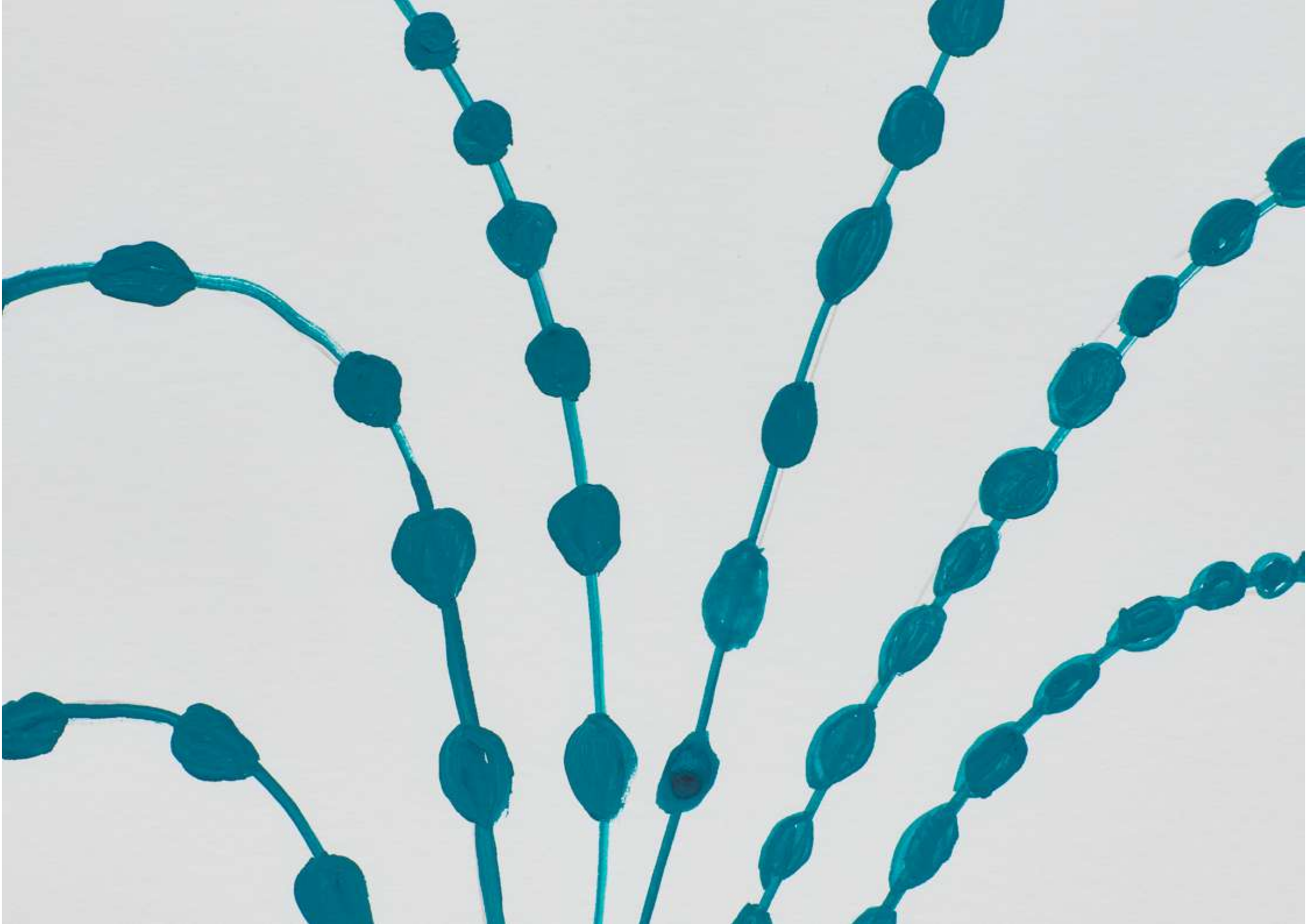
Bromelias, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





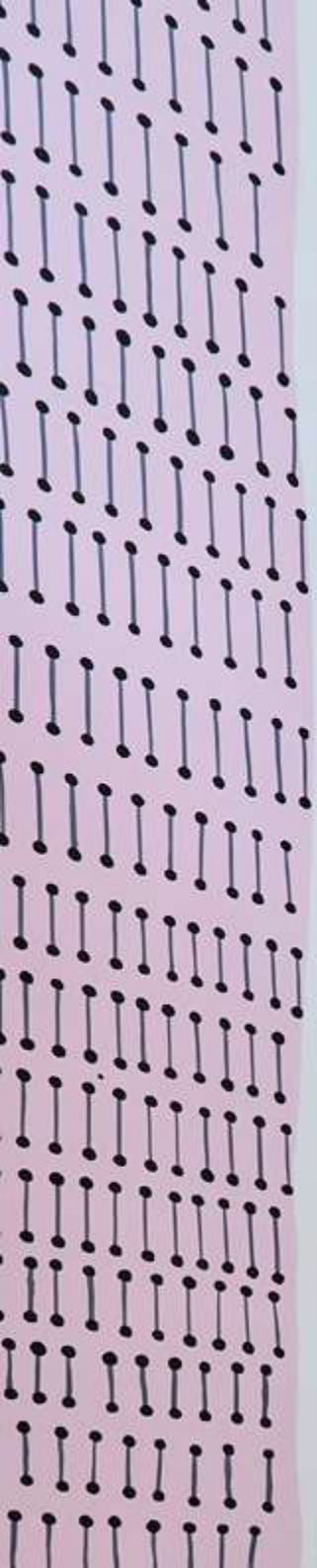
Penca Beads, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





Malojillo, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





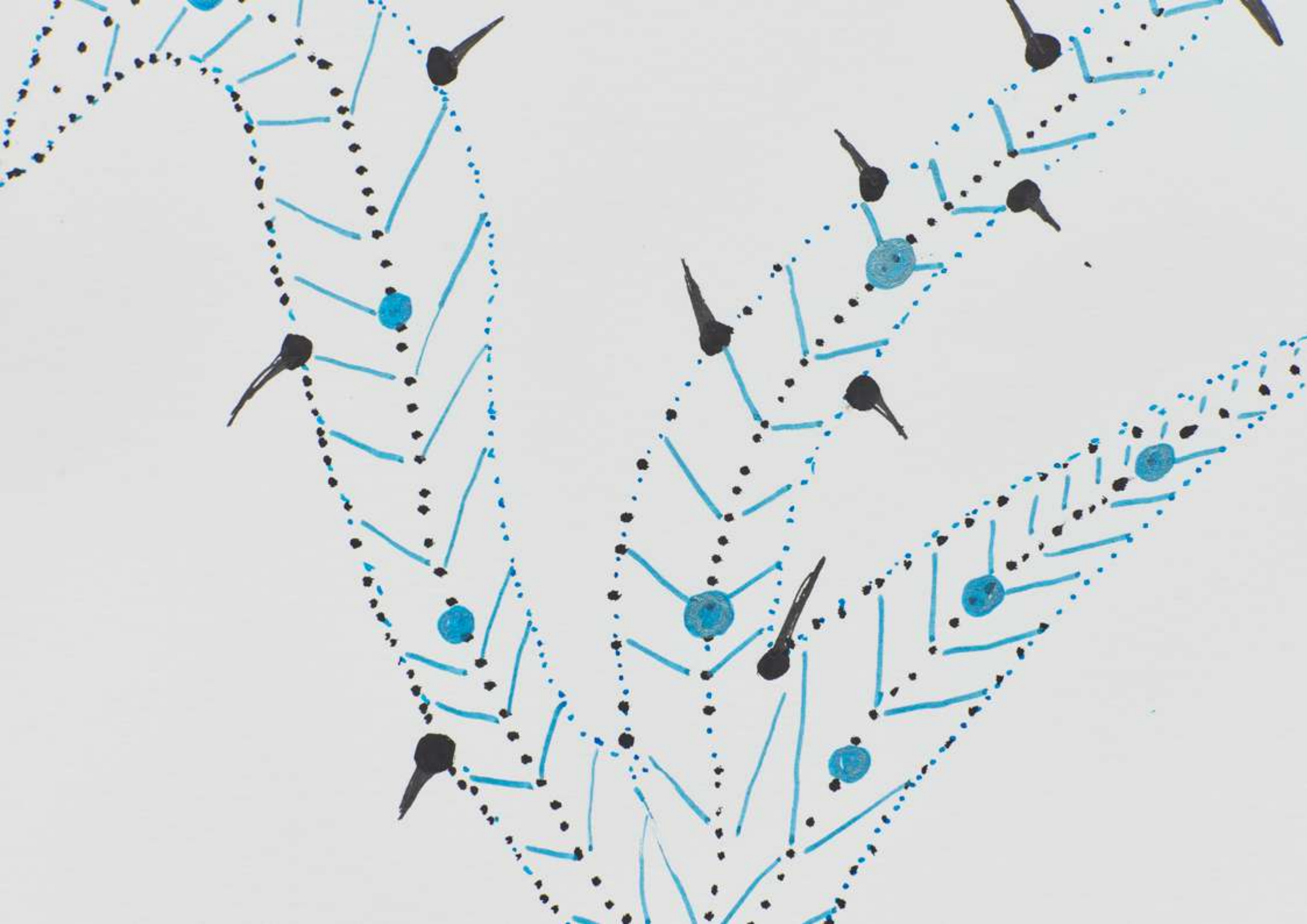


Planta 1, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
30,5 x 23 cm
12 x 9.1 in



Savila, 2024
tinta acrílica sobre papel
27,9 x 35,6 cm





exhibition view
PAC Art Residency, 2023
Houston, USA



Frailejones, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





Purple Hunter, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
60,4 x 45 cm
23.8 x 17.7 in







Acacia, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
31,2 x 23 cm
12 x 9.1 in





Hormiga Culona, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
31,2 x 23 cm
12 x 9.1 in





Plinth, 2024
acrylic paint on canvas
40 x 30 cm
15.7 x 11.8 in



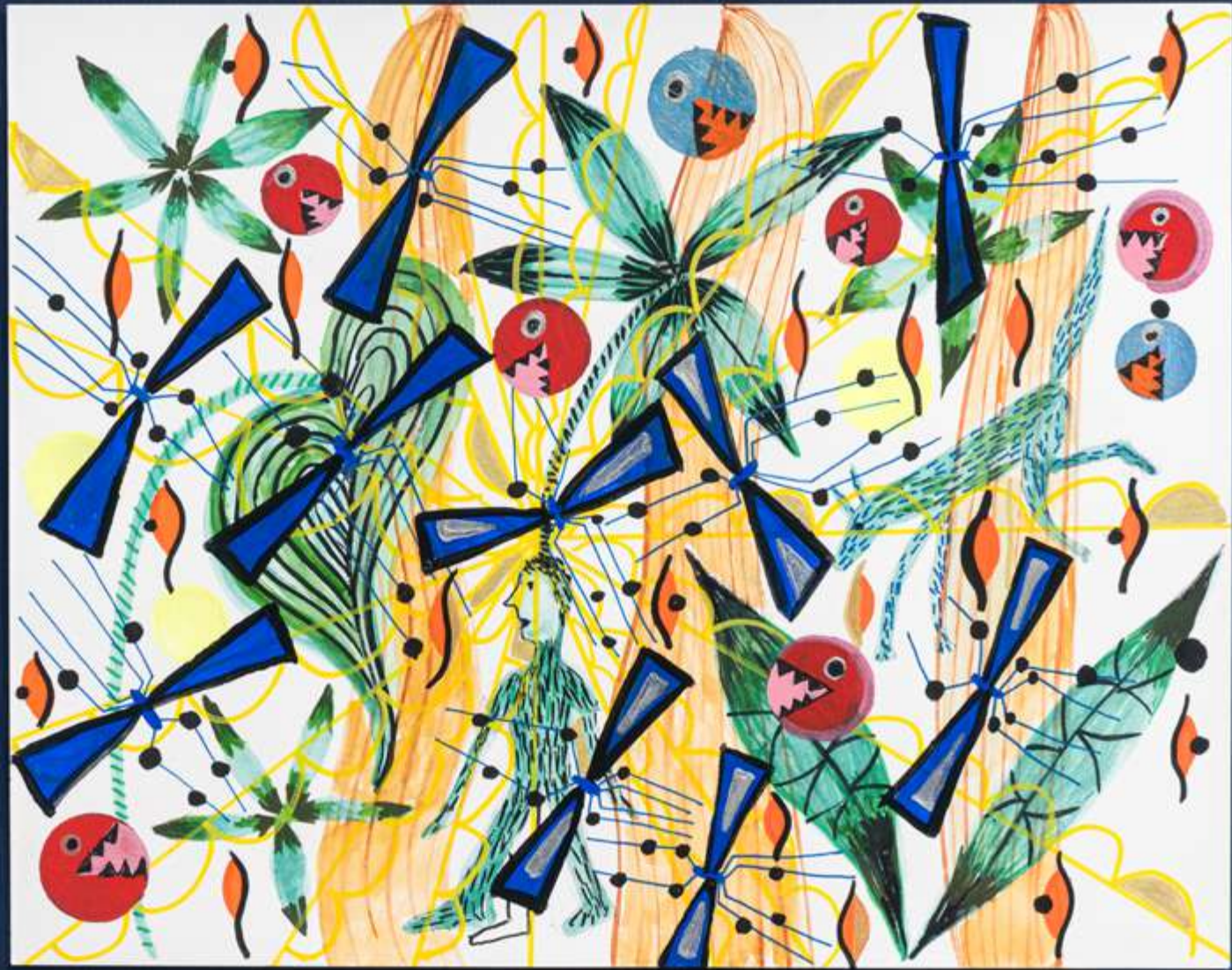






exhibition view
Gerardo Rosales *Juicy Jungle*, 2023
Bill Arning Exhibitions
Houston, USA

Camino Ciego, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





Culebra y Llantén, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
30 x 23 cm
11.8 x 9.1 in





Romulus and Remos, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in







Yuca Amarga 2, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in



exhibition view
Houston Airport, 2024
Houston, USA





↑ U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Estados Unidos, División de Aduana y Protección Fronteriza



Arcangel, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in





Culebra de dos cabezas, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in





Arbusto sobre el río, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in





Mariposa 5, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
14,3 x 21 cm
5.6 x 8.3 in





Mariposa 2, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
16,5 x 22 cm
6.5 x 8.7 in





Mariposa 3, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
15,5 x 22,5 cm
6 x 8.9 in

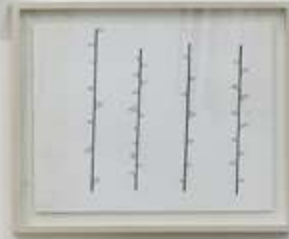




Mariposa 1, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
14,3 x 21 cm
5.6 x 8.3 in







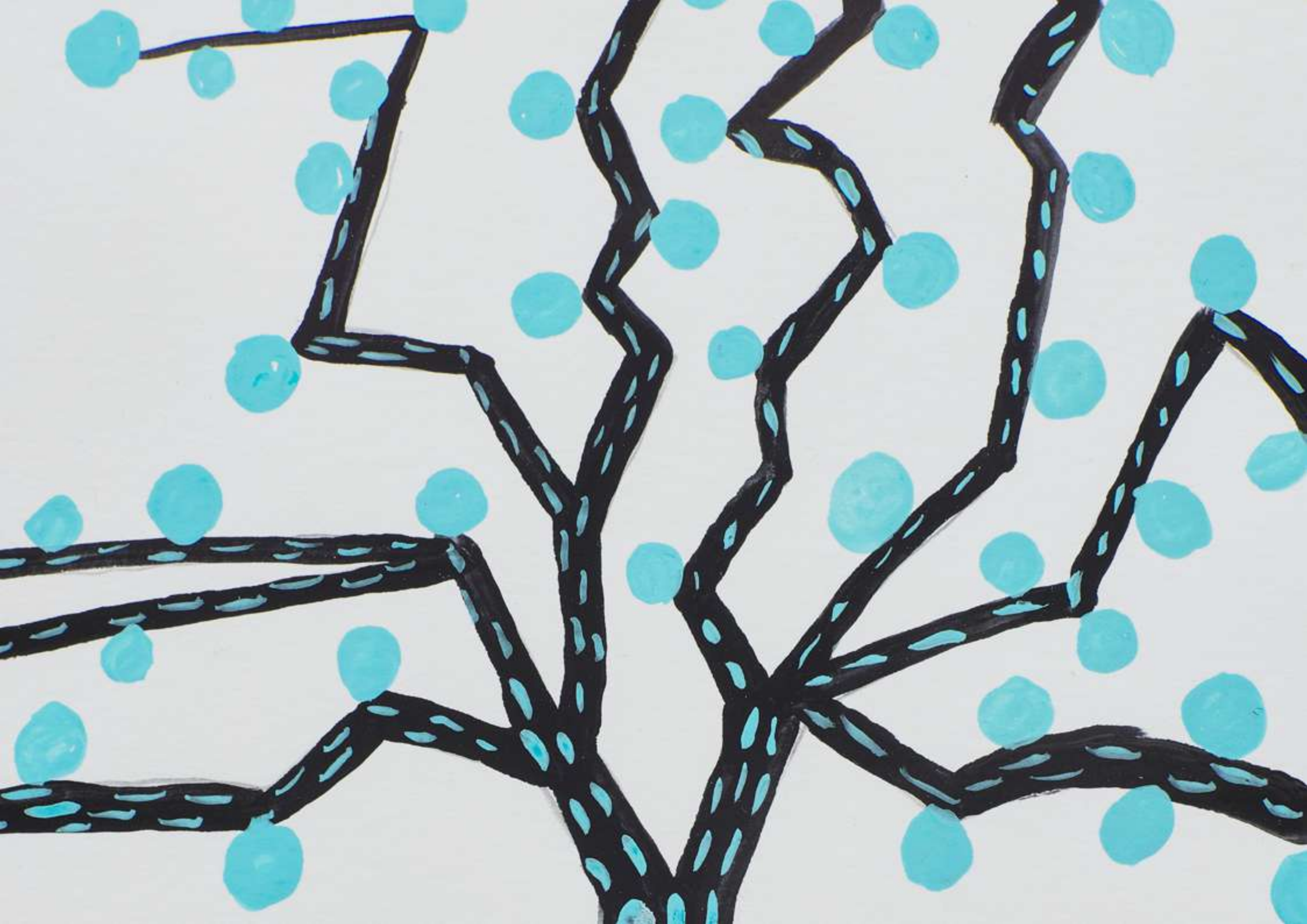
Mariposa 4, 2024
tinta acrílica
sobre papel
16 x 22 cm





lcao, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in





Conego a campo traviesa, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
17,7 x 12,6 cm
7 x 5 in



Hyde & Seek, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
12,6 x 17,7 cm
5 x 7 in





Camino Espinosa, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
30,5 x 23 cm
12 x 9.1 in

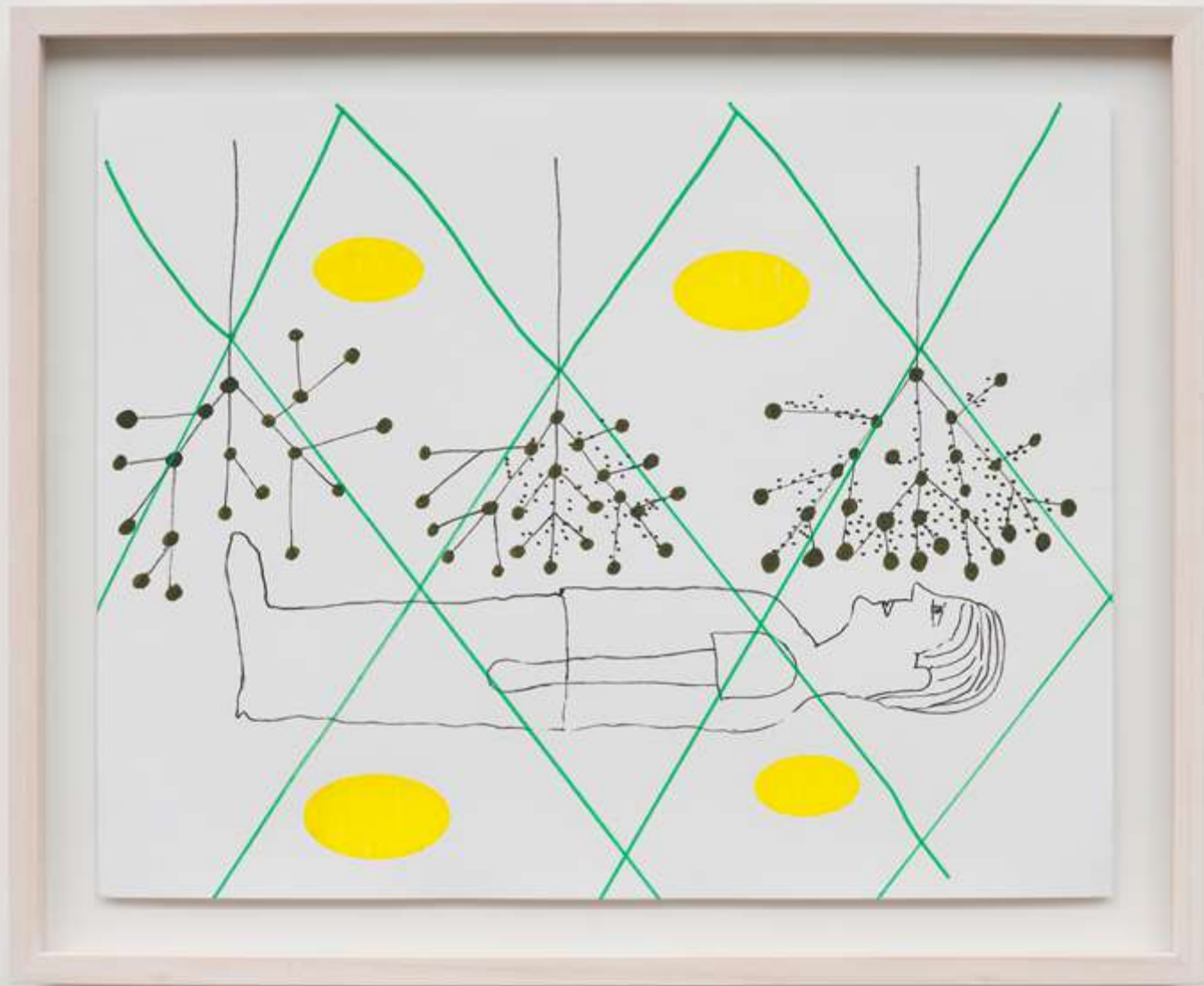


exhibition view
Buffalo Bayou
Houston, USA

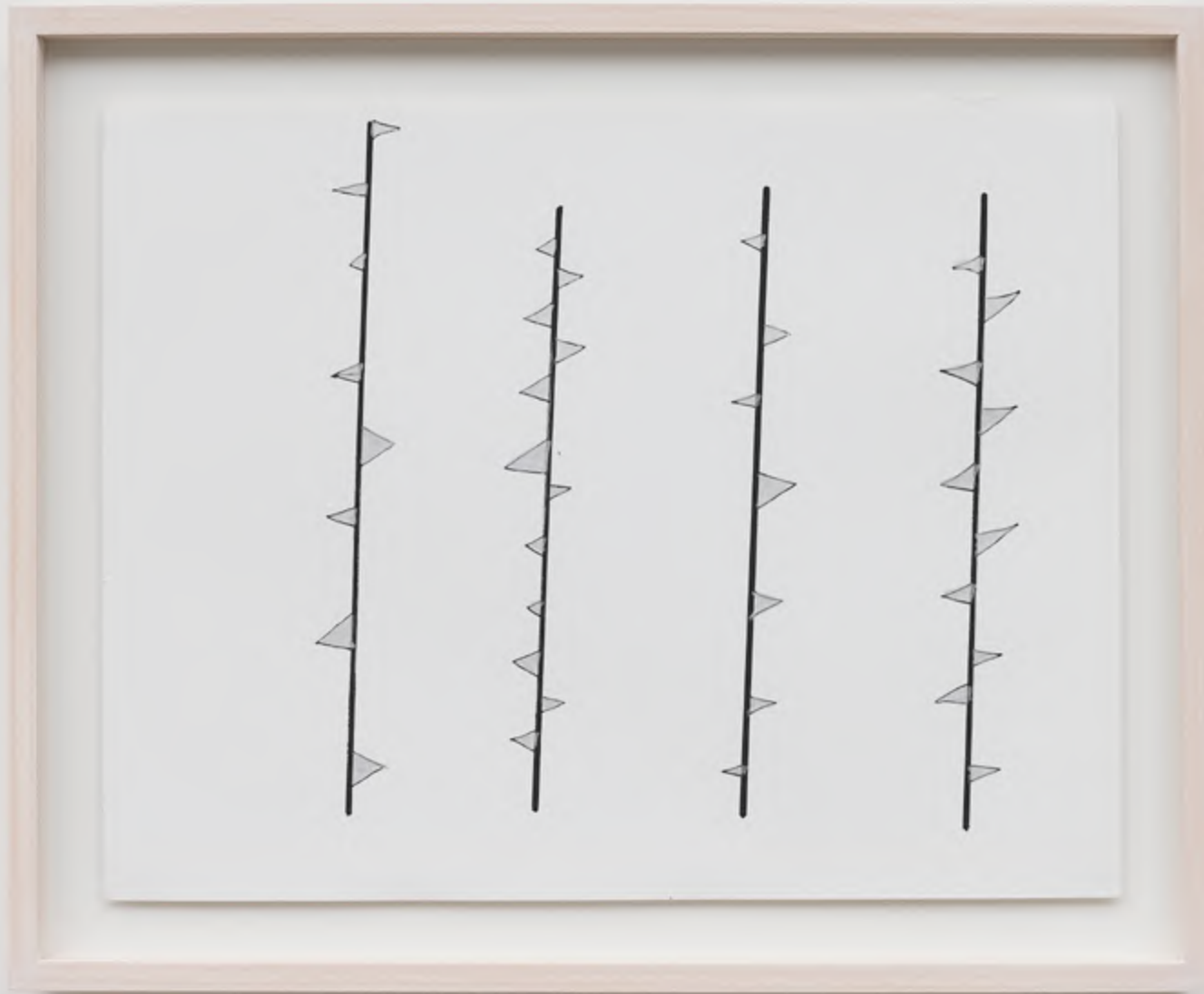




Lineas Cruzadas, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in



Fence-A, 2024
acrylic paint on paper
27,9 x 35,6 cm
11 x 14 in

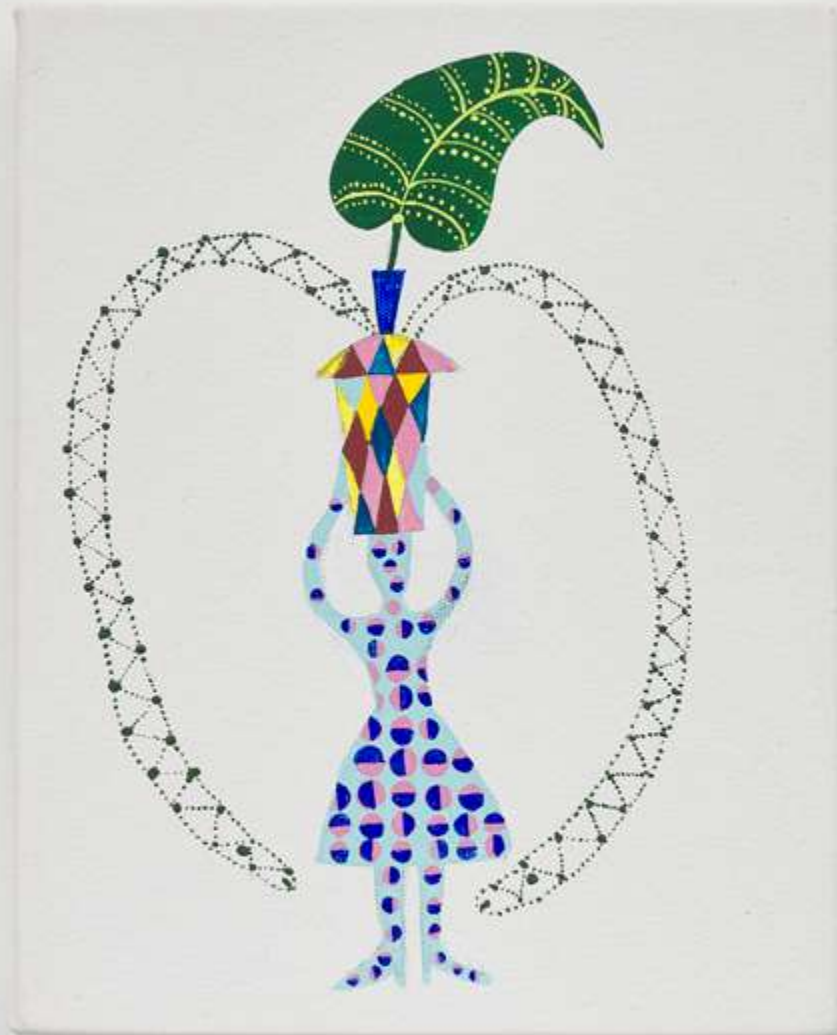


Narcissus, 2024
acrylic and gouache paint on canvas
151 x 120 x 3,5 cm
59.4 x 47.2 x 1.4 in





Equilibrium 21, 2024
tinta acrílica e guache sobre tela
23 x 28 x 4 cm
9.1 x 11 x 1.6 in





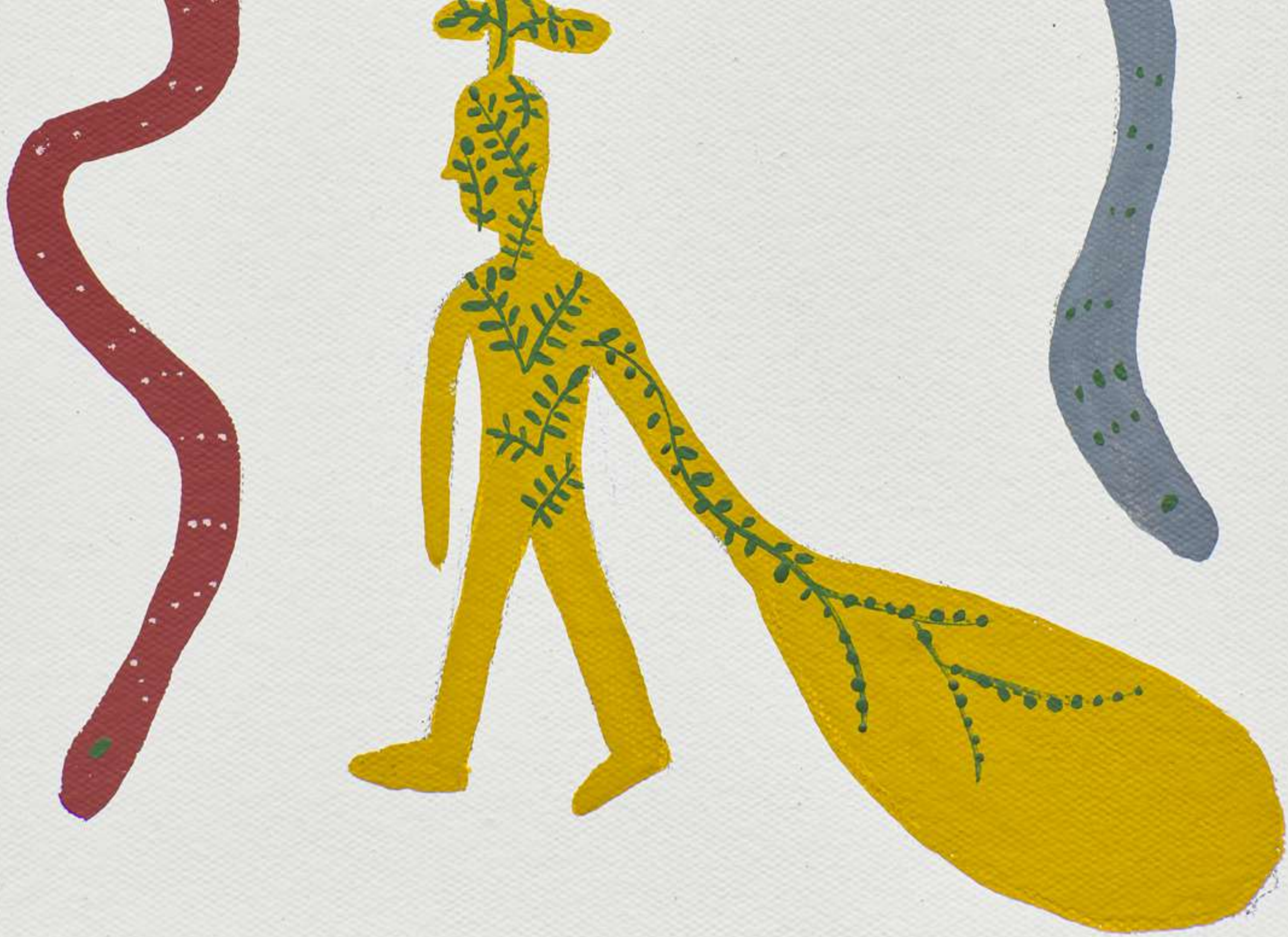
Equilibrium 20, 2024
tinta acrílica e guache sobre tela
23 x 28 x 4 cm
9.1 x 11 x 1.6 in





Equilibrium 22, 2024
tinta acrílica e guache sobre tela
23 x 28 x 4 cm
9.1 x 11 x 1.6 in





Los Caobos, 2024
tinta acrílica e guache sobre tela
22,4 x 28 x 4 cm
8.8 x 11 x 1.6 in





gerardo rosales

b. 1967, Venezuela

lives and works in Houston, USA

Having started his career as a self-taught artist, Rosales brings to his work elements characteristic of Latin American popular culture, such as real or legendary animals, textile patterns, popular festivals, everyday scenes, local botanical species and hybrid beings. The apparently popular and artisanal theme is combined with elements of pop culture and high-tech, such as video game characters, toys and graphic colors, thus combining different visual references, the fruit of the cultural exchange that runs through her career.

His compositions are intensely colorful, full of patterns and visual elements of a dynamic nature that highlight the narrative present in the works, an aspect that is reinforced by the elaborate linearity with which the artist constructs his compositions, some of them resembling textiles and embroidery.

A multidisciplinary artist, Rosales' pictorial work is a significant part of his production. However, he also develops works of a sculptural and installation nature and sometimes uses unconventional supports and materials, such as T-shirts and cans. Although many of her works have a childlike appearance, they carry with them complex discussions about sexuality, violence, social inequality and marginalized groups.

selected solo exhibitions

- *Rio Chiquito*, Museum of Contemporary Art Houston, Houston, USA (2024)
- *Ornamento y Delito*, Carmen Araujo Arte Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela (2022)
- *Undercover*, Galveston Art Center, Galveston, USA (2019)
- *Mind your Step*, Avis Frank Gallery, Houston, USA (2013)

selected group exhibitions

- *Withstand: Latinx Art during Conflicts*, Holocaust Museum, Houston, USA (2021)
- *Carriers: The Body as a Site of Danger and Desire*, Blaffer Museum, Houston, USA (2021)
- *Lo Politico*, Carmen Araujo Arte Gallery, Caracas, Venezuela (2014)

selected collections

- Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, New York, USA
- Bank of Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
- Ateneo de Valencia, Valencia, Venezuela

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