

# Perfect Trouble

QUEERING NATURECULTURE

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WAVE HILL  
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**DIANA SOFIA LOZANO**  
*Blueberry Dream, 2022*  
Courtesy of the artist



## PERFECT TROUBLE: QUEERING NATURECULTURE

Botanists and horticulturists refer to flowers that bloom with both male and female reproductive organs as “perfect.” Beyond these perfect flowers and plants that change their sex or self-pollinate, abundant examples exist in nature that can be described, in contemporary human terms, as bisexual, transgender, nonbinary, intersex or queer. Thousands of plant species, non-human animals and fungi, show that sexual and gender identity is inherently mutable and fluid. As such, strictly essentialist understandings of identity not only oversimplify the rich complexity of the self but also misrepresent nature itself. Greenhouses and gardens, for example, are carefully cultivated spaces where plants are propagated, pruned and grown in controlled environments; nature here is fashioned by human hands. Rather than attempting to untangle nature from culture, *Perfect Trouble: Queering Natureculture* revels in the messiness.

Recognizing that the natural world encompasses remarkable gender and sexual diversity, the artworks in *Perfect Trouble* challenge the way that nature is used to uphold standards of normativity. They draw attention to the arbitrary division between nature and culture, as well as other theoretical binaries. By exploring queerness as both inherently natural and socially constructed, the exhibition pushes back against conservative arguments that queerness is “deviant,” while also rejecting reductive biological discussions of sexual and gender identity. Instead, *Perfect Trouble* looks at the in-between and intertwining space of nature and nurture and the constructed boundaries that divide the natural world from the fabricated environment.

Diving headfirst into a tangle of scientific and social theory to better understand how one might inform the other, the title *Perfect Trouble* references not only the botanical term for hermaphroditic flowers but also Judith Butler’s seminal text, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990). In this text, Butler tackles our presumptions about biology head-on, explaining that our methods of differentiating between the sexes are always linked to socially imposed gender markers. In this way, Butler asserts that biological sex is as much

**SEBA CALFUQUEO**

*Simbiosis*, 2021, from *Serie Esporas (Spores Series)*

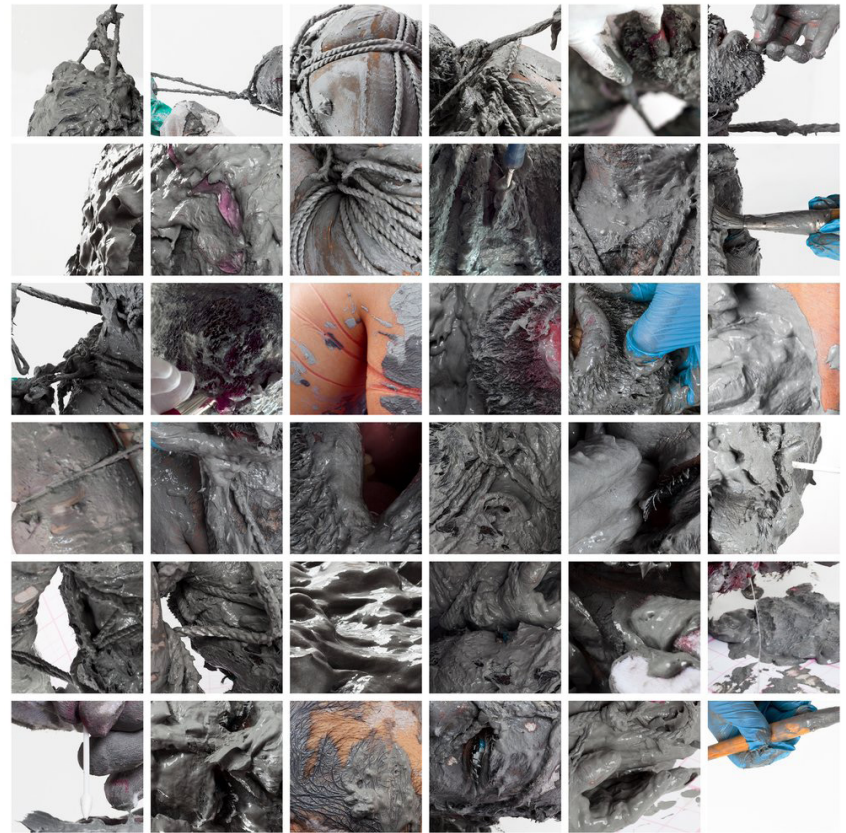
Photo: Diego Argote. Courtesy of the artist

of a social construct as gender; it too can be changed and exists on a much wider spectrum than is typically considered. Taken in this context, the trouble in *Perfect Trouble* refers to the imperative to “queer” our worldview with regards to the biological and the natural. Here, queer is used as a verb, meaning to defamiliarize or make strange in order to shift perspective. This way of thinking is a perfect form of trouble-raising because it opens a more holistic understanding of humanity and ecology. What radical avenues emerge when we consider pruning plants or fertilizing the soil as no different than gender affirming care, such as top surgery or hormone replacement therapy?

The term “natureculture” was first coined by Donna Haraway in 2003 to address this entanglement and point toward a more symbiotic relationship between humans and nature in which the two continuously reinvent each other. Central to this exhibition is Haraway’s emphasis on hybridity and the mutability of the self that is assembled from various parts. This composite image is perhaps most obvious in the work of **Young Joon Kwak**, whose *Aggregate Body (Wall Grid I)* is an abstract collage of limbs, tools, flesh and clay, reminding us that our bodies, identities and selves are forms that, like the human-made environment, can be reshaped and reconceived.

Much of Kwak’s work focuses on queer bodies and how they have been represented to expand the ways we think about and interpret bodies of all kinds. Kwak makes these fragmented bodies of mixed materials to explore an intermediate space of recognition, distinction and transition. Organizational structures that render the body legible are abandoned in favor of more radical possibilities for existing in a community where we are not defined primarily by our physical traits. Additionally, the ropes in the images hint at the power dynamics of desire in bondage subculture, as well as the viewer’s identification with the objectified body in the photographs. Bronze sculptural works in the exhibition represent human body parts encrusted with snails, which have the capacity to self-reproduce, possessing both male and female sex organs. Kwak pays homage to the Banff Springs snail, significant because it appears as a biological anomaly: its shell curls in the opposite direction than that of most other snails. Often unseen and subject to strict regulations with human interaction due to its endangered status, the example of the Banff Springs snail allows Kwak to think through questions regarding the simultaneously invisibilized and hyper-surveilled treatment of non-normative bodies.

By portraying bodies that cannot be reduced to marginal identity categories, Kwak opens new strategies for imagining non-binary genders. This attempt to expand our personal frame of reference and relate to other bodies stems from



**YOUNG JOON KWAK**

*Aggregate Body (Wall Grid I)*, 2018

Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles

a desire for intimacy, for people to find ways of feeling more connected to one another. In this way, Kwak’s work reflects on the debilitating experience of isolation in a world in which we are reduced to a series of hierarchical identity markers.

Touched upon in Kwak’s work, this loneliness is at the core of **Rachel Youn’s** anthropomorphic plant sculptures. These works assemble synthetic plants, discarded electric massagers and other found objects to create whirring cyborgs buoyant with yearning. The motors in the appliances turn the fake plants kinetic, bringing the plastic to life. Flailing against restraints and sometimes running out of energy altogether, these sculptures evoke Frankenstein’s monster, an uncomfortable yet beautiful hodgepodge of parts. And like the fabled creature,

**RACHEL YOUN**  
*10,000 Hours, 2022*  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sargent's Daughters



these sculptures are plagued by a failure to realize the impossible standards of personal satisfaction and acceptance. In sourcing objects, Youn gravitates toward devices that were once desired for their ability to provide care and comfort by simulating human touch. However, just as societal expectations are often elusive and designed in ways that immigrants, queer people and other marginalized communities fail to meet, these appliances also fall short of impossible standards.

In this way there is a deep tragedy to Youn's work, but it is undercut with absurdity and comedy, as Youn gives a second life to these mishmash-objects. The artist uses humor and the awkwardness of their contraptions to help others relate to the work. This allows for more complex emotions so that we can see beyond ourselves and connect on a personal level with the nonliving.

In the context of the garden, Youn's use of fake plants combined with their prudent meditations on self-care attunes us to the meticulous level of maintenance involved in tending the flora that grows here. Wave Hill's controlled environment becomes particularly apparent, and notions of the wild and the cultivated, the real and the fake, as opposing forces are almost irrelevant when the relationship between humans and plants is revealed to be entirely symbiotic.

**Diana Sofia Lozano's** work is informed by her familial knowledge of plant hybrids – the naturally occurring, the genetically modified and the fantastical. Like Youn, Lozano crafts speculative plant species that gesture toward the unattainable. Her artistic creations imitate biological organisms and systems to show how identity is constructed through gender, sexuality and power dynamics. Lozano is interested in revealing failures in taxonomic classification to deconstruct and redefine the limitations of identification practices that were employed by settler colonists in the Americas to make the unknown conform to their world views. Lozano's sculpture, *A Fruiting Body is Responsible for Which of the Following*, depicts a hybridized, aberrant plant form spilling spores onto the floor; the speculative species blooms or fruits in opposition to rigid boundaries, expectations and groupings.

Lozano's floral-inspired specimens represent highly adapted composite beings that possess tools for survival. They reference *Boliviana negra*, also known as "La Millionaria," both colloquial names for a mutant strain of the coca plant that resists lethal herbicides deployed by U.S. military forces in South America. While the chemicals are an attempt to combat cocaine production, they have instead been detrimental to the surrounding vegetation and Indigenous communities who have traditionally used coca for its medicinal properties. Lozano has imagined creatures that can camouflage themselves with geospatial mapping patterns created by surveillance technologies used by U.S. intervention projects. These

patterns are incorporated into the surfaces of the works, which function as a way to evade the destructive motives of intervening forces.

**Erin Johnson's** short film *There are things in this world that are yet to be named* features an Australian bush tomato whose unpredictable sexual expression disqualified its entry into systems of botanical classification for decades and challenges norms of the plant kingdom. Unlike most plants, it does not conform to fixed sexual binaries, perplexing botanists like Dr. Tanisha Williams and Dr. Christopher Martine at Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA. They gave it the name *Solanum plastisexum*; *Solanum* for the nightshade family and *plastisexum* for moldable, changeable sexual expression.

In the film, the camera traverses the greenhouse where Williams, Martine and their team delicately study *Solanum plastisexum* specimens. These scenes, along with footage of the Australia section at the Huntington Botanical Garden in Pasadena, CA, become the setting for intimacy, care and inquiry. The film explores the double bind of taxonomy. On the one hand, naming enables study and conservation and challenges existing systems of classification. On the other, it creates new categories that determine the limits of future study.

**DIANA SOFIA LOZANO**

*A Fruiting Body is Responsible for Which of the Following*, 2022  
Courtesy of the artist



**ERIN JOHNSON**

*There are things in this world that are yet to be named*, 2020  
Courtesy of the artist

In her writing, Butler takes up the philosophical and social implications of naming, asserting that it is how bodies come into being as social subjects. Before being named or called upon, a body might be considered unmarked. Upon entering the social world, however, the body becomes gendered, racialized and named. With Butler's view in mind, Johnson's film helps us draw a connection between the development of scientific and social practices of naming as frequently oppressive methods of stratification. We see clearly through the story of *Solanum plastisexum* that those who do not fit into such normative categories are so often othered, discarded or ignored.

Johnson's video also includes excerpts from renowned science writer Rachel Carson's letters to her lover Dorothy Freeman, reflecting on her unfulfilled desire for an openly queer life, as well as her urgency in addressing environmental crises. As Carson is dying of cancer, she asks Freeman, "Who but you cares what I am doing every hour of the day?" and notes that the "hours are running away and there are still so many things that I want to say to you." These sentiments mirror those of the botanists as wildfires ravage Australia, destroying ecosystems where *Solanum plastisexum* grows.

**Seba Calfuqueo's** artistic practice spans performance, video, installation and sculpture. She is a Mapuche trans artist (b. Santiago, Chile) who draws deeply from her heritage to examine the social, cultural and political dynamics that impact Indigenous communities in Chile and Latin America. Embracing Indigenous

modes of collective thinking to break down the divide between the human and non-human, she also tackles the violent colonial legacy imposed upon Indigenous societies to shed light on complex issues such as feminism, queer theory and environmental rights. In so doing, her work boldly challenges stereotypes within Mapuche culture and contemporary Chilean society.

Featured in *Perfect Trouble* are photographs from the 2021 *Serie Esporas* (*Spores Series*) (p. 2) and the 2023 *Serie Natura* (*Nature Series*) that present amalgamations of the body within elements of nature: lichen, moss, soil, mountains and sky. The titular “spores” reference an asexual reproductive cell capable of developing into a new individual, while the merging of human and nature embodies a collective consciousness. The video performance *Las Quilas* (2021) also proposes a symbiotic relationship between the human body and nature; here the body exists as one with the quila, a perennial hermaphroditic bamboo in Indigenous Wallmapu (the Mapuche territory). Considered an invasive species, the quila can proliferate when trees disappear, protect the soil from erosion and resist silviculture, the human cultivation of forests for timber production and agriculture. *Las Quilas* proposes a disarticulation of binary ways of

thinking, upholding the integration of the human body and nature as a force with the potential to resist colonial systems based on resource extraction.

The video *Kowkülen* (*Liquid Being*), 2022, opens with an epigraph highlighting Chile’s 1981 Water Code, which, enacted during Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship with the support of the U.S., established private water rights allocated through market transactions with minimal regulation. Featuring the artist’s body bound in blue rope and submerged in the waters of the Cautín River, subtitles alternating between Mapudungun and English narrate concepts of embodiment, binarism, gender, sexuality and the enduring connection between water and life. In Mapuche cosmology, water embodies a living spirit, rejecting the Water Code that attempts to sever the inherent connection between land and water.

*Kowkülen* also delves into the artist’s personal journey, navigating discrimination as an Indigenous individual and diverging from dominant heteronormative ideologies. While the rope evokes the Japanese art of Shibari bondage, its blue color, in Mapuche culture, symbolizes the purity of the universe and its sacred essence. Through this nuanced narrative, *Kowkülen* prompts reflection on the multifaceted intersections of identity, nature and societal norms.



**SEBA CALFUQUEO**  
*Kowkülen* (*Liquid Being*), 2022  
(video still)  
Courtesy of the artist

Bondage here can also be understood as the importance of “Itrofill Mongen,” a phrase repeated in the video that affirms a bond to the natural world, a foundation of Mapuche traditional wisdom that acknowledges the significance of respecting all life forms in a holistic manner.

Indigenous practices are imbued throughout Calfuqueo’s work and her relationship with queerness. Her works along with those of **Sofia Moreno** and **Christopher Udemezue** depict queer and trans people as part of the earth, history and cosmos, exploring connections between queerness, religion, colonialism and the soil. Moreno’s striking colored pencil works blend Mesoamerican mythology, art historical references, and soft, childlike aesthetics with queer eroticism, joy and violence against the backdrop of fantastical landscapes and botanicals. All of Moreno’s exhibited drawings are self-portraits; it is fundamental to her practice that she centers her own body in her work, not unlike Calfuqueo and Udemezue. This imperative, however, transcends simple questions of representation. For Moreno, self-portraiture is an important mode of directing the consumption of her body by the viewer, while simultaneously acknowledging the violence that accompanies such visibility for trans women, especially in a world where attacks against trans women are at an all-time high and sanctioned by anti-trans legislation..

Painting new realities for trans femme survival and desire, Moreno’s work draws heavily on ancient and spiritual imagery, presenting a blended passage of time in which trans femme liberation is omnichronous – existing at once in the ancient past, the present and the far future. In this way, Moreno centers the transexual femme body as a new religious icon, where the term “Goddess” takes on a double meaning as a reference to contemporary gay lingo. She juxtaposes tangible colonial and anti-trans violence with a softer playfulness that celebrates herself, her body and her sexuality. Here, the use of colored pencil becomes particularly significant. Such childlike materials heighten this juxtaposition while also rejecting an art historical tradition shaped by and for cisgendered white men.

The use of unconventional mediums is equally important to Moreno’s sculptures, which are made of materials sourced from her own life that are imbued with gendered significance. She has been known to incorporate syringes, used to administer hormone replacement therapy, as well as pleasers, highly sexualized platform heels often worn by sex workers. By preserving these objects as artworks, Moreno turns them into relics, or totems, to be admired and revered. Under the sheer organza of Moreno’s *Torso Transfemenino* (*Transfeminine Torso*), exhibited in *Perfect Trouble* alongside Moreno’s drawings, clay ribs protrude from white cotton tank tops often worn by working class men. By overlaying these



**SOFIA MORENO**

*Autorretrato con vestida involuntaria* (Self-portrait with Involuntary Dress), 2023

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Jonathan Leib

garments with organza, Moreno takes ownership of these traditionally masculine symbols and transforms them. The ribs in this piece blend with the fabric seamlessly, blurring the distinction between the supposedly natural body and its accoutrements.

Udemezue’s works perform a similar role by filling in a queer history erased by colonialism and its religions. His creative practice is fundamentally centered around healing, drawing inspiration from his ancestral Jamaican heritage and queer Black perspective, Caribbean spirituality, personal mythologies and a longing for connection. Udemezue’s interdisciplinary work encompasses photography, installation, performance and sound, alongside collective platforms that emerge from shared experiences nurtured through storytelling and programming.

Udemezue crafts portrayals of queer resilience amidst a tropical and political climate that opposes the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals on religious grounds. He delves into the divine essence of queerness through research-based explorations of Iwa (spirit) within Haitian Vodou, a syncretic religion blending elements of Catholicism, Western and African religions. Within the Black diaspora, Vodou





**CHRISTOPHER UDEMEZUE**

*a tenderness when I was low and a touch on the side of my waist on days like today. a voice? something brought us to this space, 2024.*

Courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

reveres ancestral spirits and patron saints, encompassing entities linked to transgender identities, homoeroticism and bisexuality. Moreover, Vodou recognizes tutelary deities who safeguard and guide homosexual individuals and includes gender fluid spirits; men may channel female spirits and women embody male spirits as mediums. This fluidity not only underscores the interconnectedness of gender and spirituality but also challenges conventional notions of identity and expression.

Featured in *Perfect Trouble* are works from two series from 2024, *In this moisture* and *where the guinep peels lay*. The series *In this moisture* captures the artist in states of ecstatic transformation through photographs incorporating acrylic, resin and natural elements such as soil, branches, feathers and sand found in Bickersteth, Jamaica, his family's place of origin. In *the refraction* (p. 22), for example, the artist's body pulsates in a state of becoming. And in the work entitled *Where lies the seeds of the dead I shall bring forth echoes that gather in the light*, a hand and head raise upward in divine pose, traveling from underwater to celestial bodies. The unstretched canvases mottled in gold leaf bulge from the wall under their own weight, suggesting a corporeal release from the built environment. Using resin to both hold the body's experience and to embalm the psychic energy of a place within its reflective surface, the work's erotic, syncretic and spiritual undertones both complicate an easy read and create a reflective surface for the viewers to see themselves in.

Udemezue's poetic titles enhance the materiality of language and how linguistic fusion links bodies to their environment and shapes cultural memory and transmission. In the series *where the guinep peels lay*, framed atmospheric photographs capture queer Black bodies bathed in red hot and pink hues staged within tropical scenes composed of real and synthetic flora, symbolizing the Jamaican home of the titular guinep fruit. The fruit's peels are a metaphor for the hints or clues left behind at a scene. Enraptured in stages of passion, the figure in *and she said... sonje figi sa a...* (Haitian Creole for "remember this face") (cover image), gazes at the viewer with eyes the color of rage demanding to be seen. In contrast, *in a tenderness when I was low and a touch on the side of my waist on days like today. a voice? something brought us to this space*; two young Black men are pushed toward each other by a hand emerging from outside of the scene. To whom the hand belongs is ambiguous, suggesting that the "something" that brought them to this place may be a ghost from pre-colonial history or queer African spirits or deities who guide the young men to give into themselves.

While both bodies of work are rooted in Udemezue's ancestral, tropical culturoscapes, each conveys distinct stages of being. Infusing queerness into

the fraught Caribbean geographies and histories of colonization, his works unfold as chapters that summon past histories, using nature and storytelling devices to memorialize the queer divine.

**Pyari Azaadi** also honors this idea of divinity by depicting her queer loved ones as South Asian deities. Born in India and now living in the U.S., Azaadi examines constructions of national, religious and gender identity and markers of cultural significance to show how marginalized individuals, particularly queer BIPOC, can hold space and agency within oppressive systems. Her work employs the mythology and aesthetics of South Asian art and culture as lenses for viewing contemporary socio-political concerns. Through her art, Azaadi confronts misogyny and patriarchal systems by creating a new pantheon that is both mythical

**PYAARI AZAADI**

*Holy Family*, 2015–17

Courtesy of the artist



and sacred, reflecting her intersectional feminism. Inspired by friends who have had children through in vitro fertilization (IVF) or adoption, Azaadi's sculpture *Holy Family* imagines what motherhood could look like without patriarchy. In this work, a lesbian couple embraces lovingly while breastfeeding their children. One figure holds a human infant while the other holds a flower-headed baby. The flower-child hybrid is symbolic of the labor of women who birth so much change into the world, depicting "alternative" families as perfectly natural. The swing represents traditional Hindu depictions of families, while also referencing the swinging maiden with two suitors in Rococo artist Jean-Honoré Fragonard's 1767 painting, *The Swing*, as well as British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare's sculptural reinterpretation, *The Swing (After Fragonard)*, a contemporary critique of Fragonard's iconic scene. *Holy Family* updates the notion of family by subverting the imagery of heteronormative, patriarchal, religious idols and resonates strongly in the current climate of threatened reproductive rights for women and queer couples in the U.S., India and other parts of the world.

In the work of Moreno, Udemezue and Azaadi, queerness – so often degraded as profane – is made sacred, asserting that queerness has always and will always be here, as eternal as the soil and sky themselves. This assertion proves to be more important than ever at a time when queer- and transphobic rhetoric is weaponized to fuel heteronormative ideology, not to mention the disproportionate rates at which transgender women, especially those of color, suffer violence or homicide. In 2024, as of this writing, the United States has passed 15 anti-trans bills not including the hundreds that are currently active in legislation. These bills have served to legitimize anti-trans violence and discrimination with devastating consequences. The artists in the exhibition bring awareness to the brutality of systemic marginalization, and through their work, celebrate and uplift queer ways of moving through life to show that we are all – individually and collectively – reflected in the natural world.

– Afriti Bankwalla, Gabriel de Guzman and Rachel Raphaela Gugelberger

*Perfect Trouble: Queering Natureculture* is organized by Gabriel de Guzman, Director of Arts and Chief Curator; Rachel Raphaela Gugelberger, Curator of Visual Arts, and Afriti Bankwalla, Curatorial Administrative Assistant.

A very special thank you to the artists who shared their visions and the galleries who lent their work: Pyaari Azaadi (formerly known as Jaishri Abichandani), Seba Calfuqueo, Erin Johnson, Young Joon Kwak, Diana Sofia Lozano, Sofia Moreno, Christopher Udemezue, Rachel Youn, Commonwealth and Council, Proxycy Gallery, RYAN LEE Gallery and Sargent's Daughters. And much gratitude to the installation team who manifest the ideas into reality: Jake Alfieri, Michael Holden, Ming Jer-Kuo, Javier Maria, Henry McEachern, Lulu Meng, Harold Robinson and Chi Fung Wong.



**PYAARI AZAADI** (she/her)  
 (formerly known as Jaishri Abichandani)  
 Born Bombay, India; lives in Brooklyn, NY  
 Photo: Courtesy of the artist

Pyaari Azaadi is a Brooklyn-based artist and curator, who immigrated to NYC in 1984. Azaadi's interdisciplinary practice focuses on the intersection of art, feminism and social practice. Her work has been featured in exhibitions internationally, including her critically acclaimed 2022 solo exhibition at Craft Contemporary in Los Angeles, CA. Azaadi's work has been featured in group exhibitions at MoMA PS1, the Queens Museum, the Bronx Museum of the Arts and Asia Society, all in in New York; 798 Beijing Biennial and Guangzhou Triennial in China; Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM), Valencia, Spain and at the House of World Cultures in Berlin, Germany. Her work is in the collections of the Burger Collection Hong Kong; Asia Art Archive, NY and Saatchi Gallery, London, UK. Azaadi was an artist-in-residence at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, NY, and is an honoree of the Brooklyn Arts Council and the Asian Self-Help Association for Women. She is the founder of the South Asian Women's Creative Collective (SAWCC) in New York (1997) and London (2004). In 2019, Azaadi organized a trilogy of exhibitions to inaugurate the Ford Foundation Gallery in NYC: *Perilous Bodies*, *Radical Love* and *Utopian Imagination*, centered on the visions of BIPOC artists. She earned an MFA from Goldsmiths College, University of London. [www.jaishriabichandani.net](http://www.jaishriabichandani.net)



**SEBA CALFUQUEO** (she/they)  
 Born Santiago de Chile; lives in Ngulumapu, Wallmapu (Chile)  
 Photo: Azul Gattas. Courtesy of the artist.

Seba Calfuqueo is a Mapuche artist whose work refers to her cultural heritage as a starting point in order to propose a critical reflection on the social, cultural and political status of the Mapuche within contemporary Chilean society. Calfuqueo's work also aims to bring visibility to issues regarding feminism and queer theory. Her work is in the collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Denver Art Museum, CO; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Artes, Argentina; Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid, Spain, KADIST collection, Paris, France; Museu de Arte Contemporânea do Rio Grande do Sul (MAC RS), Brazil; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile and MAC, Santiago, Chile. Calfuqueo participated in the 2024 Whitney Biennial, New York, NY; the 34th Bienal de São Paulo; 12th Bienal de Mercosur and 22nd Bienal Paiz. Calfuqueo is the winner of the Municipalidad de Santiago Award in 2017 and Fundación FAVA Award in 2018. In 2021 they were awarded by Eyebeam's Fractal Fellowships and in 2023 by Fundación Ama Amoedo's FAARA. [www.sebacalfuqueo.com](http://www.sebacalfuqueo.com)



**ERIN JOHNSON** (she/her)  
 Born Tucson, AZ; lives in Brooklyn, NY  
 Photo: Courtesy of the artist

Erin Johnson is a visual artist and filmmaker based in New York. Her immersive installations and short films explore notions of collectivity, dissent and queer identity. In her shape-shifting videos, constellations of artists, biologists and film extras address the imbrication of science and nationalism. Johnson's work has been exhibited or screened at Rencontres Internationales de Paris/Berlin; BIENALSUR 2023, Buenos Aires, Argentina; MOCA Toronto, Canada; Munchmuseet, Oslo, Norway; Sanatorium, Istanbul, Turkey; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Billytown, The Hague, Netherlands; REDCAT, Los Angeles, CA; and in New York City at Times Square Arts and e-flux. She is a current Working Artist Fellow at Pioneer Works (Brooklyn, NY) and recently completed the 2024 Winter Workspace residency at Wave Hill (Bronx, NY) as well as residencies at Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands; Lower Manhattan Community Council (LMCC), NY; Hidrante, San Juan, PR and Lighthouse Works, Fishers Island, NY. Johnson earned an MFA and Certificate in New Media from UC Berkeley and attended Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture. [www.erinjohnson.online](http://www.erinjohnson.online)



**YOUNG JOON KWAK** (she/they)  
 Born Queens, NY; lives in Los Angeles, CA  
 Photo: Joe Pugliese. Courtesy of the artist.

Young Joon Kwak is a Los Angeles-based multidisciplinary artist whose work spans sculpture, performance, video, sound and community-based collaborations. They have presented solo exhibitions at Arko Art Center, Seoul; Korean Cultural Center, Los Angeles; Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles; Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions; and Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre, Alberta, Canada. Group exhibitions and performances include those at Hauser & Wirth, New York; Antenna Space, Shanghai; CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco; 47 Canal, New York; Anonymous Gallery, Mexico City; Museo de Arte de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; The Broad, Los Angeles; and Le Pavillon Vendôme-Centre d'Art Contemporain, Clichy, France. Kwak is the founder of Mutant Salon, a roving beauty salon and platform for collaborative performances and installations with their community of queer/trans/POC artists and performers. They are also lead performer in the electronic-dance-noise band Xina Xurner. Kwak earned a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, an MA from the University of Chicago and an MFA from the University of Southern California. [www.youngjoon.com](http://www.youngjoon.com)



**DIANA SOFIA LOZANO** (she/her)

Born Cali, Colombia; lives in Brooklyn, NY

Photo: Courtesy of the artist and Proxycy Gallery

Diana Sofia Lozano is a Brooklyn-based artist whose work uses the language of botanical hybrids; the naturally occurring, genetically modified and the imagined. She is interested in deconstructing botanical taxonomic failures to reveal and redefine the boundaries

of colonial identificatory practices and geopolitical borders. Lozano has exhibited at Company Gallery, Wave Hill, Deli Gallery, Rachel Uffner Gallery and Proxycy Gallery, all in NYC; Guerrero Gallery in San Francisco, CA; New Image Art in Los Angeles, CA; Casa Prado in Barranquilla Colombia; Örebro Konsthall in Örebro, Sweden; Parallel in Oaxaca, Mexico; Arto Kyoto in Japan and Capsule Gallery in Shanghai, China, among others. She earned her MFA from Yale University in New Haven, CT. [www.dianaslozano.com](http://www.dianaslozano.com)



**SOFIA MORENO** (she/her)

Born Coahuila, Mexico; lives in Mexico City, Mexico

Photo: Courtesy of the artist

Sofia Moreno is a multimedia artist whose subjects include expressions of the sacred and profane, the body, sexuality, religion and socio-political issues within contemporary culture. Recent solo exhibitions include *Flores Nocturnas Blooming at Night* at Haas Fine

Arts Center, Eau Claire, WI, *Fantasia 94* at s+s project Mexico City, *Sentimental Archeology, an Auto-Glorification Memorial* at HG Chicago and *Botched Garden of Earthly Delights: III Acts* at Participant Inc, New York, NY. She has participated in group exhibitions in Berlin, Copenhagen, Amsterdam and across the United States. For over a decade, Moreno has produced multimedia art events with artists and peers via s+s project, a non-commercial, curatorial organization she founded and currently directs. In 2020, Moreno founded DNQ, a community arts organization aimed at supporting trans artists and activists living in Mexico by awarding mini-grants in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. She studied at El Centro College, Dallas, TX, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. [www.sofiamoreno.com](http://www.sofiamoreno.com)



**CHRISTOPHER UDEMEZUE** (he/him)

Born Long Island, NY; lives in Brooklyn, NY

Photo: Brian Goodwin. Courtesy of the artist.

Christopher Udemezue is an interdisciplinary artist who utilizes his Jamaican heritage, the complexities of desire for connection and healing through personal mythology and ancestry as a primary source for his work. He has exhibited his work at various galleries

and museums, including a solo exhibition at Anat Ebgi in Los Angeles, CA, and a two-person exhibition with the acclaimed sculptor Richmond Barthé at RYAN LEE Gallery in NYC. Udemezue's work has also been presented at Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, MO; Künstlerhaus, Vienna, Austria; Mercer Union, Toronto, Canada; MoMA PS1, New Museum, Queens Museum of Art, Bruce High Quality Foundation, Recess Gallery and The Shed, all in NYC, among others. As the founder of the platforms RAGGA NYC & CONNEK JA, he completed a residency at the New Museum where he presented *All The Threatened and Delicious Things Joining One Another*. Udemezue served as Co-Chair of the board at Recess Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, from 2021 to 2022. He earned a BFA from Parsons School of Design in 2008. [www.christopherudemezue.net](http://www.christopherudemezue.net)



**RACHEL YOUN** (they/them)

Born Abington, PA; lives in New Haven, CT

Photo: Courtesy of the artist

Rachel Youn is an artist who works in sculpture and installation, sourcing materials with a history of aspiration and failure through online secondhand shopping. They rescue electric massagers from suburban limbo, fastening artificial plants to the

machines to create kinetic sculptures that are clumsy, erotic and absurd. Youn has exhibited work across the United States and abroad, most recently at Night Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Sargent's Daughters, New York, NY; Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati, OH; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy; Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome, Italy; Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, MO; Soy Capitán, Berlin, Germany; Truman State University Art Gallery, Kirksville, MO; HAIR + NAILS; Minneapolis, MN; and Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis, MO, among others. Youn is a recipient of the Vermont Studio Center Fellowship and the 2020 Great Rivers Biennial Award. They earned a BFA from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis. Youn is currently an MFA candidate at Yale School of Art in New Haven, CT, and is represented by Sargent's Daughters, New York and Los Angeles, and Soy Capitán, Berlin. [www.rachelyoun.com](http://www.rachelyoun.com)



**CHRISTOPHER UMEZUE**

*the refraction, 2024*

Courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

## EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

**PYAARI AZAADI**  
(formerly known as  
Jaishri Abichandani)

*Holy Family, 2015–17*  
Mixed media sculpture  
31 × 28½ × 22½ inches  
Courtesy of the artist

*Leah Lakshmi, 2022*  
Mixed media sculpture  
28 inches high x 18 inches diameter  
Courtesy of the artist

**SEBA CALFUQUEO**

*Kowküten (Liquid Being), 2020*  
Video 4K  
Duration: 3:00 minutes

*Las Quilas, 2021*  
Video 4K  
Duration: 2:30 minutes

*Simbiosis, 2021, from Serie Esporas  
(Spores Series)*  
Digital photograph on Hahnemuhle  
Fine Art Baryta paper  
29½ x 19¾ inches  
Photo by Diego Argote

*Remedio, 2021, from Serie Esporas  
(Spores Series)*  
Digital photograph on Hahnemuhle  
Fine Art Baryta paper  
29½ x 19¾ inches  
Photo by Diego Argote

*Pillan, 2023, from Serie Natura  
(Nature Series)*  
Digital photograph on Hahnemuhle  
Fine Art Baryta paper  
29 ½ x 19¾ inches  
Photo by Diego Argote

*Abya Yala People, 2024, from the  
series Mínimo común denominador  
(Lowest common denominator),  
2014–present*  
24 ceramic figurines  
Dimensions variable

All works courtesy of the artist

**YOUNG JOON KWAK**

*Aggregate Body (Wall Grid I), 2018*  
Digital archival pigment print on  
adhesive fabric  
60 x 60 inches

*Aggregate Snail Vaginis, 2018*  
Bronze  
8 x 7 x 5 inches

*Snail Leg, 2018*  
Bronze  
13 x 4 x 1½ inches

*Trans-Creation Relic, 2017*  
Cold-cast aluminum, resin, soil,  
rocks, wood, spray paint and  
latex paint  
5 x 14 x 6 inches

*Uh, As if, 2012*  
HD video  
Duration: 2:22 minutes

All works courtesy of the artist  
and Commonwealth and Council,  
Los Angeles

## ERIN JOHNSON

*There are things in this world that are yet to be named*, 2020

Video

Duration: 7:20 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

## DIANA SOFIA LOZANO

*Blueberry Dream*, 2022

Color pencil and gouache on inkjet print, resin clay and acrylic paint  
46 x 40 x 5 inches

*Downward Drifter*, 2023

Steel, resin clay, wool roving, epoxy resin, aluminum wire and inkjet print of coca eradication geospatial data map on cotton  
62 x 8 x 11 inches

*A Fruiting Body is Responsible for Which of the Following*, 2022

Steel, resin clay, wool roving, epoxy resin and acrylic  
30 x 48 x 20 inches

All works courtesy of the artist

## SOFIA MORENO

*Autorretrato con vestida involuntaria (Self-portrait with involuntary dress)*, 2023

Color pencil on paper  
19 x 27 inches

*Torso Transfemenino*

*(Transfeminine Torso)*, 2023

Mixed media on cotton, acrylic and low fire clay of Chapantongo  
30 x 13 inches

Works from the series

*Mi Jardín Botánico (My Botanical Garden)*, 2023

All works listed below are color pencil on paper and 9 x 6 inches

*Mis piernas rodeadas de lirios (My legs surrounded by lilies)*

*Autorretrato, Norteña (Self-portrait, Northern)*

*Autorretrato con la abundancia (Self-portrait with abundance)*

*Autorretrato con los hijos de María Sabina (hongos alucinatorios [Self-portrait with the children of María Sabina (hallucinatory mushrooms)])*

*Autorretrato entre las rosas donde mi padre me hizo una diosa (Self-portrait among the roses where my father made me a goddess)*

*Autorretrato con flores rosas (Self-portrait with pink flowers)*

*Autorretrato con flor de muerto (cempasúchil) [Self-portrait with the flower of the dead (marigold)]*

*Autorretrato con Xōchipilli (Self-portrait with Xōchipilli)*

*Autorretrato entre nopales (Self-portrait among nopales)*

All works courtesy of the artist

## CHRISTOPHER UDEMEZUE

*the refraction*, 2024

C-print on canvas with acrylic, resin and objects found in Bickersteth, Jamaica  
55 x 41 inches

*Where lies the seeds of the dead I shall bring forth echoes that gather in the light*, 2024

C-print on canvas with acrylic, resin and objects found in Bickersteth, Jamaica  
41 x 56 inches

*and she said... "sonje figi sa a..."*, 2024

C-print  
36 x 48 inches  
Edition of 2 + 1 AP

*a tenderness when I was low and a touch on the side of my waist on days like today. a voice? something brought us to this space*, 2024

C-print  
45 x 30 inches  
Edition of two +1 AP

*Down by the manchineel tree*, 2024

Site-specific mixed media installation  
Dimensions variable

All works courtesy of the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

## RACHEL YOUN

*10,000 hours*, 2022

Shiatsu massager, artificial plants, wire stand and flower frogs  
39 x 21½ x 16 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Sargent's Daughters

*Sexy but not joyous*, 2022

Shiatsu massager, artificial flowers and broken tire jack  
30 x 32 x 22 ½ inches  
Courtesy of the artist and Sargent's Daughters



**SEBA CALFUQUEO**

*Abya Yala People, 2024, from the series *Mínimo común denominador (Lowest common denominator)*, 2014-present*  
 Courtesy of the artist  
 Photo: Jonathan Leib

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

*All programs are on site unless otherwise indicated.*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1-4 PM**

Spring Arts Opening Day. On view in Glyndor Gallery are the group exhibition *Perfect Trouble: Queering Natureculture* and Tao Leigh Goffe's Sunroom Project, *Plot and Provision: Crate-Digging*. Opening in Wave Hill House is Ruben Natal-San Miguel's solo exhibition *Nature Finds a Way*.

**TUESDAY, MAY 14, 6:30-8 PM (Online Program)**

Meet the Artists: A conversation with exhibiting artists Seba Calfuqueo, Young Joon Kwak and Sofia Moreno.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1-4 PM**

Death Cafe, guided by artist Anastasia Corinne (Wave Hill Winter Workspace 2024) and death doula Nancy Huang. Glyndor Gallery.

**\*SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 3-4 PM**

Plantwise Walk: Perfect Flowers, led by Jess Brey, Ruth Rea Howell Senior Horticultural Interpreter, Wave Hill. Meet at Perkins Visitor Center. Rain date: Sun, Jun 23

**\*THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 7-8 PM**

Juilliard-trained tenor and drag artist Jasmine Rice LaBeija presents an evening of electrifying vocals. Presented in partnership with Carnegie Hall Citywide. Great Lawn.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 1:30-4:30 PM**

Photography Portrait Sessions with artist Ruben Natal-San Miguel. Wave Hill grounds. Natal-San Miguel's solo exhibition *Nature Finds a Way* is on view at Wave Hill House through August 4. Raindate: Sun, Aug 4

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 2-3:30 PM**

Meet the Artists. Exhibition walk-through with artists Pyaari Azaadi (formerly known as Jaishri Abichandani), Diana Sofia Lozano and Christopher Udemezue. Glyndor Gallery.

**THURSDAYS & SATURDAYS AT 2 PM**

Public Gallery Tours. Glyndor Gallery.

\*Pride Month Events

**YOUNG JOON KWAK**

*Uh, As if*, 2012 (video still)

Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles



**Wave Hill**

4900 Independence Ave.

Bronx, NY 10471

718.549.3200

wavehill.org

#wavehill #perfecttrouble

Wave Hill is a public garden and cultural center in the Bronx overlooking the Hudson River and Palisades. Its mission is to celebrate the artistry and legacy of its gardens and landscapes, to preserve the magnificent views and to explore human connections to the natural world through programs in horticulture, education and the arts.

Director of Arts and Chief Curator: Gabriel de Guzman  
Curator of Visual Arts: Rachel Raphaela Gugelberger  
Curatorial Administrative Assistant: Afriti Bankwalla  
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**COVER**

**CHRISTOPHER UDEMEZUE**

*and she said... "sonje figi sa a..."*, 2024

Courtesy of the artist and  
RYAN LEE Gallery New York



**SOFIA MORENO**

*Autorretrato con flor de muerto (cempasúchil)*

*[Self-portrait with the flower of the dead (marigold)]*, 2023

Courtesy of the artist

Photo: Jonathan Leib

