

# ALMA PEARL

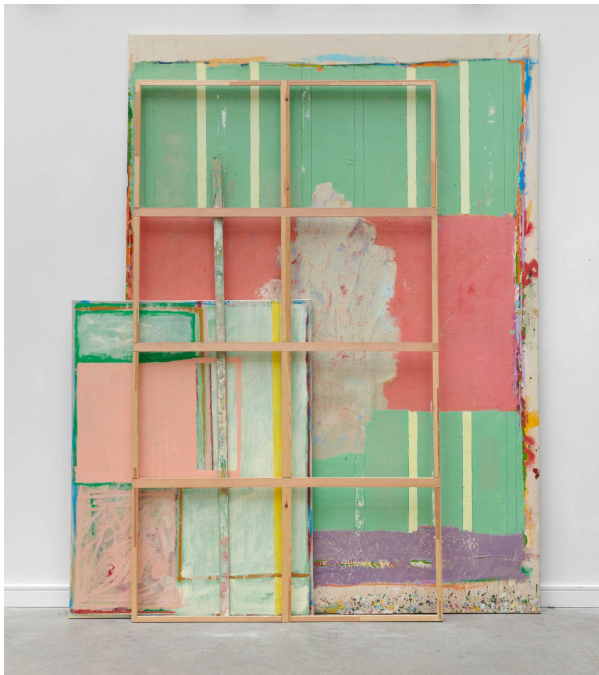
## Jhonatan Pulido: *Un respiro y dos parpadeos, or one breath and two blinks*

8 September–21 October 2023

Private view: Thursday, 7 September 2023, 6 - 8 PM

Unit T, Reliance Wharf  
2-10 Hertford Rd  
London N1 5ET

Wednesday–Saturday, 12-6pm



Jhonatan Pulido, *Colcha de retazos*, 2022, Oil, spray paint and wooden structure on canvas, 275 x 240 cm © Jhonatan Pulido

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*"The walls, those that for centuries have protected us, have also divided us. Those that keep thousands of secrets under each layer of colour, those which for years have harboured the story of a remote place that is now thousands of miles away."*

—Jhonatan Pulido

We are thrilled to announce *Un respiro y dos parpadeos, or one breath and two blinks*, our debut exhibition of works by Jhonatan Pulido who is now represented by the gallery. On view from 8 September to 21 October, with a private view on 7 September, the exhibition will span the entirety of the gallery and will comprise a suite of new paintings and works on paper alongside a recent installation.

From the Meta province in Colombia, the work of Jhonatan Pulido (b. 1988) originally stems from a desire to synthesise his country's evolving socio-political context in the wake of the devastation left by Colombia's Civil War. Pulido's vibrant and lyrical compositions with bright-pastel qualities speak to the artist's exploration of abstraction through the lenses of time, memory, place, and the experience of conflict. Alongside Pulido's socio-cultural contexts and content, the artist's dynamic and highly

resolved paintings are rooted in the liminal space between abstraction and representation. Colour-fields of yellows, bright reds, oranges, and other high-keyed colours overlap and interact with each other as text is concealed and buried underneath through a tactile application of form and colour. While the ultimate result is abstract, these works also reference the multi-layered and richly coloured residential and commercial walls of buildings in his native Colombia as they receive interventions of political messages and then are reworked by those who live and work within these dwellings.

The exhibition takes its title—*Un respiro y dos parpadeos, or one breath and two blinks*—from a painting with the same name, which references a particular moment in the artist's childhood memories. The phrase refers to a colloquial measurement of time, in the artist's lived experience, that it takes for guerrillas and paramilitary groups to spray-paint graffiti on walls following an act of terror.

The graffiti-like text, often included in his canvases, is buried, covered and hidden behind fields of colour though present nonetheless. These painterly acts function as both an attempt to exorcise, re-appropriate and control intimidating messages that trigger fear or trauma, while also displaying protective and healing properties of text, painting and colour.

If the large-scale works in the exhibition constitute a direct reference to civil unrest, the smaller format paintings *Chico*, *Pola* and *Manzana* reference a somewhat more recent exploration and effort for the artist to reference a disparate range of source imagery tied to Colombian culture in beer brands, local social culture, alongside corporate and DIY advertising that also adorns his native architecture. These canvases, set in vivid and realistic hues, delve into the artist's lived experience in Colombia while setting an exacting agenda for negotiating place, memory, and trauma in paint that is an exuberant engagement with the medium and a thoughtful account of place and the artist's past.

Alma Pearl will accompany the physical exhibition with an online presentation running concomitant with the show.

### **About the Artist:**

Jhonatan Pulido (b. 1988, Granada Meta, Colombia) is a Colombian painter based in London. He studied fine arts at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia between 2009 and 2014 and Painting at the Royal College of Art from 2017 to 2019. Drawing on his personal experiences and memories from growing up in rural Colombia, the artist creates artworks as an act of memory. His paintings reflect upon Colombian architecture, the traditions of rural communities, and the relations of these to socio-cultural conflict. Engaged in exploring pictorial decisions in contexts that come out of the conventions of art, Pulido seeks to reflect on the role this approach and its materiality performs in everyday contexts and historical grounds. His approach here is situated where value lies more in a negotiated functionality rather than advancing the idea of art for and in itself. His work places particular emphasis on components of popular Colombian architecture and the logic that it follows as inherited through history.