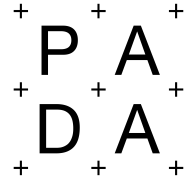


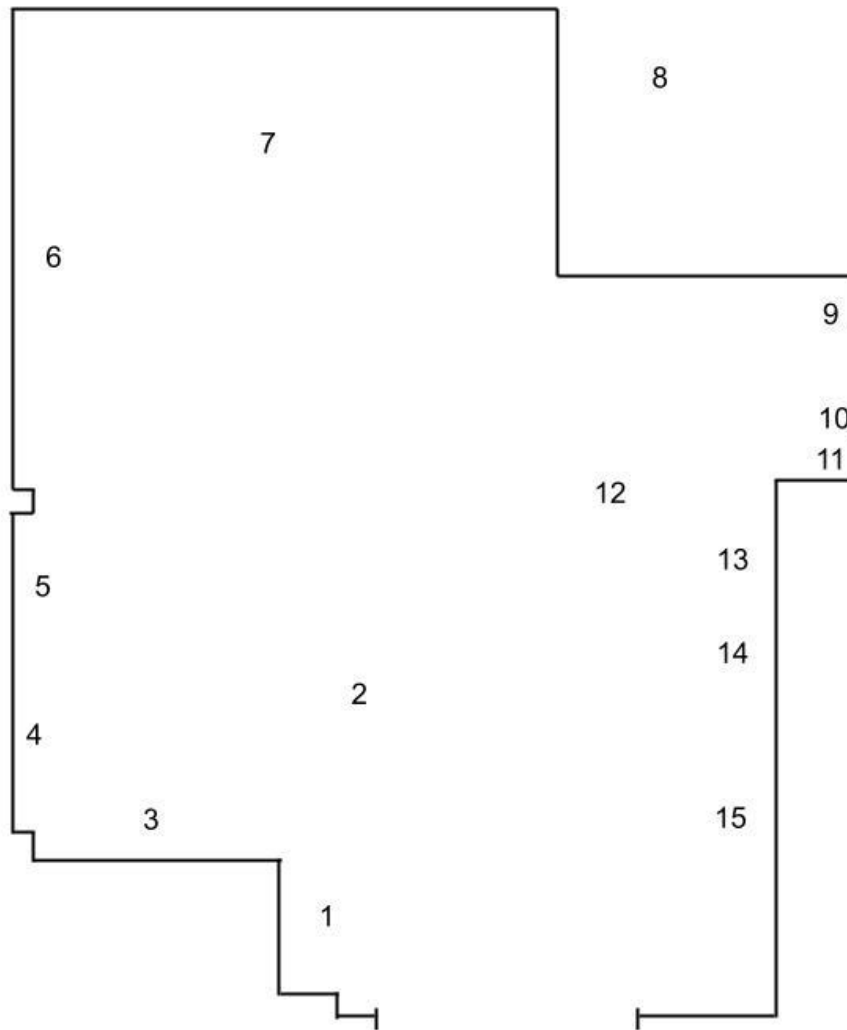
MARS BLUEBERRIES

Curated by Manon Klein with Denise Wieslhuber



In 2004, NASA's Opportunity rover (Curiosity's big brother), made an intriguing discovery: small blue spheres rich in iron on the soil of the Red Planet. Since then theories have piled up but none has yet been verified. Could they be witnesses of ancient waters, volcanic eruptions, meteorite debris, shock waves? As if to reassure oneself in front of this flood of hypotheses, scientists named these hematite concretions after a common fruit. And so there were blueberries on Mars. Strangely, a few places on Earth teems with similar million years old formations – Barreiro is one of them.

Whilst wandering around the city, **Mále Uribe** picked some of these iron fruits along with an iron oxide pigment commonly named caput mortuum, in reference to the worthless residue of oxidization in alchemical processes. Her compositions of purple remnants and remains play on scale and repetition to confer a sense of order that still embraces imperfection. A similar feeling emanates from **Clarissa Falco's** apian world. By exploring hives' hexagonal shapes, she gave rise to a model of a planet and its space station at the crossroads of Futurama and Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*. Facing this cosmic landscape, where resin looks like rocks, rocks look like sponges and insects are of metal with a shimmery shell, viewers are led to rethink their own relationship to the environment. **Cecilia Sebastián de Erice's** work also speaks to the way we live as well as to our perception of reality, as may hint the multiplicity of interpretations within her oil and ink on dirt, oscillating between the appearance of an uncharted territory, a camouflage pattern, or a plant's roots interlacing with one another. Her paintings bring together unconscious energies and intimate memories taking shape on canvas as shattered colors and raw gestures. Inspired by cave paintings as much as wall graffiti, **Anouk Van Zwieten** also relates to untamed postures. With their primary colors, primitive signs and simple titles, her artworks are misleadingly naives. They compose an ode to finds and ruins and evoke the nonsense of absolute erasure. **Hannah Benassi** shares this interest for scratched surfaces, specifically for the layers of colours they reveal: shades and shadows shifting on walls become infinite sources of inspiration. She captures organic qualities in man-made landscapes and fluidly translates them with her paintbrush onto the canvas, subtly balancing between density and transparency. Portuguese architecture and hues inspired **Sara Marlowe Hall** a collection of textured plastered tiles, sometimes exhibited as paintings, sometimes discreetly offered to façades. Besides, the ferry rides she embarked on sparked new thoughts on landscapes and the subconscious, on bodies of water and blur – reflections performed through her layering technique. Her acrylic on canvases became windows on moving landscapes, presented in their purest state, as color fields melting seas, skies, walls and hills. **Jesús Crespo** creates windows of its own or, rather, their shutters, out of the doors of a dresser. Two profile portraits appear as you open them, seemingly mirroring each other. Behind this apparent playfulness, the artist engages with metaphysics, instinctively letting his artworks enter our reality if not creating a portal to another one. In this sense, they are not sculptures or installations but more a form of performative paintings. Finally, **Brendan Sullivan's** installation stands as a curated display in itself: it is, at once, a corner of a room where drawings and sculptures cohabit and a scaled-up book with a cryptic story. In turns of turning pages, visitors turn around the work, hunting for hints. Guided by a clay candle, their rotation, or revolution, lets them see the other exhibited artworks under a new light, through see-through curtains and ethereal gates.



1. Cecilia Sebastián de Erice, **The other one**, 120x114 cm, Oil and acrylic on canvas.
2. Mále Uribe, **Residuum**, 100x135x7 cm, Caput mortuum, cement, wood, acrylic paint.
3. Clarissa Falco, **Leela's trip installation**, 260x190x100 cm, Mixed media: wood, iron, plastica, stone.
4. Sara Marlowe Hall, **Reflections1**, 123x183.5 cm , Acrylic, mix medium on canvas.
5. Sara Marlowe Hall, **Reflections 2**, 123x183.5 cm, Acrylic mix medium on canvas.
6. Hannah Benassi, **Banana Cafe**, 123x183.5x3.5 cm, Modelling paste and acrylic on canvas.
7. Brendan Sullivan, **Floating in the corner**, 229x152x137cm, Wood, panels, acrylic, paper, canvas, cellophane, clay, foam, vellum, wire, tape, flashlights, rock.
8. Jesús Crespo, **Shutters**, Diptych, 63,5x45 cm each piece, oil, acrílic, cupboard doors, metal hinges, screws.
9. Mále Uribe, **Mars blueberries**, 33x33 cm, Caput mortuum, iron, cement.
10. Mále Uribe, **Aima I**, 20.5x20.5 cm, Caput mortuum, cement.
11. Mále Uribe, **Aima II**, 20.5x20.5 cm, Caput mortuum, cement.
12. Anouk Van Zwieten, **Finds and Ruins**, 228x61x9,5cm, Wood, acrylic, pastels on canvas.
13. Anouk Van Zwieten, **Cloud**, 55x40cm, Textile paint and acrylics on canvas.
14. Anouk Van Zwieten, **Sad**, 55x40cm, Textile paint and acrylic on canvas.
15. Cecilia Sebastián de Erice, **Liquify: oil**, 70x60cm, Pigment and ink on canvas.

Cecilia Sebastián de Erice (b. 1996, Spain)

My work tries to explore an infinite intermediate area where external and internal realities amalgamate. An area that Winnicott saw as a transition space, where an individual can assume the identity of a fictional character, intertwined with his own, without fear, consequences, or retaliation. This space, where painting is a product of an ongoing investigation into the medium itself, and where the nature of an uncontrollable automatism of unconscious elements that swarm indecisively in each thought, is what I use as a means of transition to potentially understand the acts of the painter. I believe that it is up to painters to decide what painting is and will be.

Mále Uribe (b. 1988, Chile)

'My research and art practice are focused on building new meaningful relationships between our natural and productive landscapes. All my projects arise from a New Materialist approach, a philosophy that celebrates the agency of materials from non-hierarchical relationships with the human world, where dualities and modernist categorizations blur into non-anthropocentric and interspecies modes of perception. By understanding materials as vibrant and autonomous entities that carry a transformative power, I aim to create spaces, sculptures and surfaces that promote a conscious and more imaginative relationship with our natural and built environments, where myths, chemical properties, industrial processes and microworlds merge.'

Clarissa Falco (b.1995, Italy)

'In my practice I perceive eroticism as one of the most powerful gears of the machine that generates desire. For this reason, my works create a close link between the female body and the mechanical apparatus. The body, especially the female one, is distorted by the mechanisms of societal domination. During the creation of my sculptures, I wonder about what would happen if the internal and external mechanisms of the society made machines stopped working? What if, and will they become sterile? Or would they simply turn into some other bodies? Variation plays a vital role for the survival of human species as it is created as a movement of techno-nature. By this term, I mean that the autopoietic arrangement configures itself as the modifying power of its species and the entire environmental context.'

Sara Marlowe Hall (b. 1991, UK/USA)

'My practice is driven by the investigation of color, material, and surroundings. I often reference landscapes, figures, and shapes seen in passing or filtered through the lens of nostalgia. Inspired by my travels and everyday surroundings, I use raw pigments, acrylic and plaster to achieve new effects of color and texture. In my recent works I intend to evoke a rich and often nostalgic, sensory experience. My research explores the multi layering of surfaces of the earth and how they evolve through drawing and sculptural paintings. I am interested in the feeling of a landscape and what that can create for an individual person. The emotional impact of color fascinates me; different hues will prompt different depths of feeling. Each person's reaction to a color is singular. I want viewers to connect to their own memories and feelings inside of the works I've created.'

Hannah Benassi (b. 1997, Scotland)

'My work is informed by the process of combining edited and organised research with the fluidity of intuitive mark-making. Gathering resources from travel opportunities, I capture source material that explores the relationship between organic and human-made qualities. The repetitive process of deconstructing and reconstructing my artistic content is significant to my practice as a whole, where I create simplified forms that are used as tools for composing new abstracted compositions. Working primarily with paint, my work explores the use of clay, oil bar, cloth, and pasted papers. This multi-media approach is influenced by my collated use of abstracted information, where I am interested in creating structural forms in soft settings.'

Jesús Crespo (b. 1989, Spain)

Jesús Crespo's painting experiments with the relationships between metamorphosis, dissolution and extrapolation of images. His pictorial reasoning develops a work that combines different visions and creates a new meeting space between effect and discovery. Ambiguity is a common place for his creations, in this territory his painting transcends the limits of the painting and it is the viewers who complete the work contributing their own interpretation to the symbolic game of his work.

Brendan Sullivan (b. 1986, USA)

"My work explores a lightly surreal head space of memory and depression, through humor, loose narrative and occasional poetic language. The pieces often depict an internal landscape, where flattened spatial plains are playfully pushed against and occasionally used as props, to filter the outside world through a language of recurring symbols made in drawings, paintings and sculptures. The more recent sculptural work uses scale and perspective to draw the viewer into the work and allow for small, personal discoveries."

Anouk Van Zwieten (b. 1991, Dutch)

'My paintings are the material reflections of events that I observe and experience in daily life. In transition, forms appear on canvas and new forms are generated through rapid personal associations and interpretations. Beneath every layer exists another painting, like the unconscious; not immediately visible but present.'