

For the 2024 edition of the ARTISSIMA Art fair, Disegni section, Galeria MPA will present a solo project by artist Johanna Calle.

The show consists of selected works in which Calle continues her research into drawing, using unusual materials such as steel or wire mesh, and techniques such as typing and writing as lines on a drawing. Evocative, delicate, and of grand beauty and visual poetics, Johanna Calle's works address different themes related to social portraiture, the margins, everyday life situations in Colombian society, law and economics, history and social chronicle, as well as the conventions of language, and she translates them into images through her drawings.

In her work, the only perceptible colors are the ones of the materials used and the shades of the paper that serve as a base. The artist embraces this apparent lack of color, which conforms to an austere expression, seeking to connote more through the simplicity and forms she generates through her drawings. Each element carries a meaning, allowing her to construct an image that exploits its symbolic potential.

The spiritual symbolism of plants has transcended throughout history, giving them meanings beyond their physical existence. In this context, plants have become powerful metaphors for human life, manifesting concepts such as longevity, family connection, and the search for spiritual harmony. In this project Johanna Calle presents a series of works that explore the symbiosis that exists between humanity and nature; it is not only an artistic representation of elements of the Plantae Kingdom, but also a recognition of those beings that choose to be united voluntarily, or that somehow history has brought together.

In the works "Perímetros" (perimeters) and "Ramas" (branches), Johanna Calle transcribes the 2011 "Ley de Víctimas o Ley de Restitución de Tierras" (Victims' Law or Land Restitution Law) on notarial paper and old account paper with a typewriter. This law recognizes, for the first time, the existence of an armed conflict in Colombia. Calle explores the terminology and linguistic architecture of the law, focusing on the differences

between terms such as 'forcibly expropriated', 'displaced', and 'those who abandon their land'. According to Johanna, "This law is a transitional legal regime that establishes mechanisms to return the land to peasants who were forcibly dispossessed or who were forced to abandon their land for reasons of public order". The law seeks to address the consequences of the conflict, with a focus on the recognition and rights of victims. As the old land records were handwritten, misspelled, or illegible, they lent themselves to inaccuracies and manipulation of information, so one solution would be to provide evidence or improvements, including planting useful plant species such as fruit or timber trees. Often, these trees also serve to delimit the boundaries of their lands.