

IQ Nexus Journal

<https://iqnexus.org/journal/>

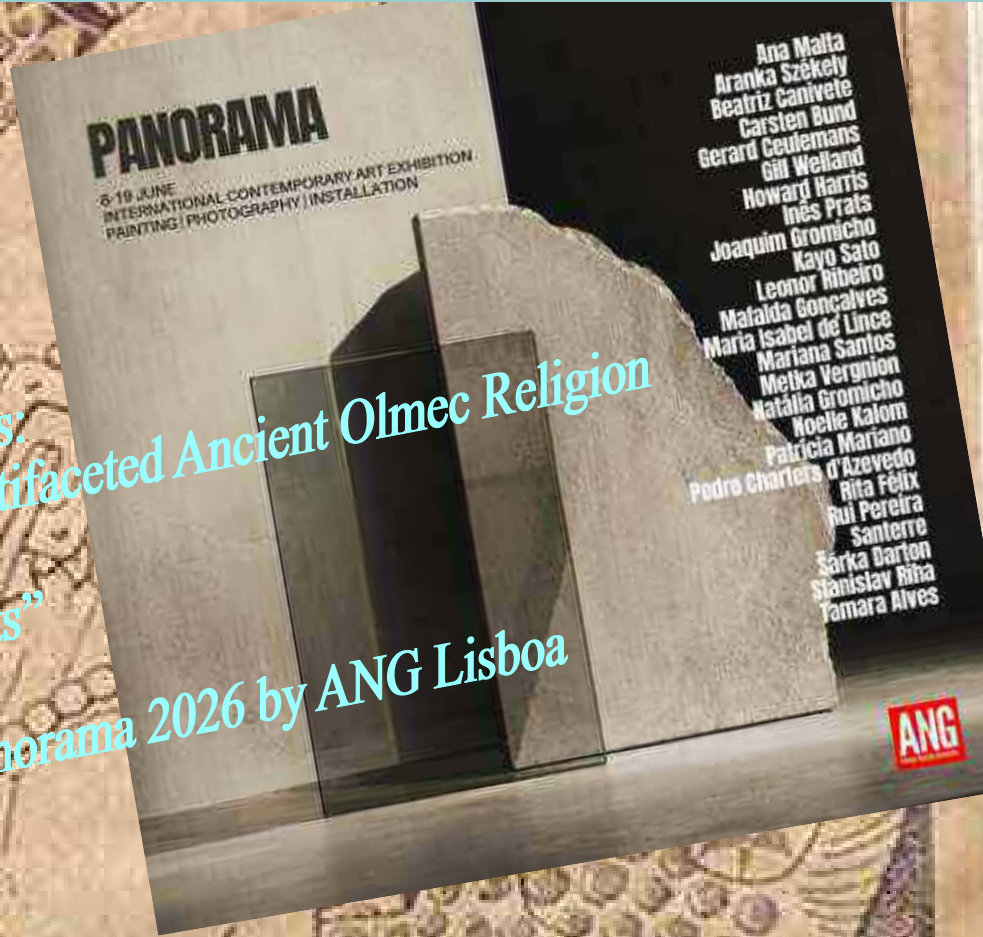
Vol. XVIII, No. 2; June 2026

Featuring:

*Birds, Stones, and Jaguars:
Piecing Together the Multifaceted Ancient Olmec Religion*

“The Truth About IQ Tests”

International art show Panorama 2026 by ANG Lisboa



- Ana Malta
- Aranka Székely
- Beatriz Canivete
- Carsten Bund
- Gerard Ceulemans
- Gill Welland
- Howard Harris
- Inês Prats
- Joaquim Gromicho
- Kayo Sato
- Leonor Ribeiro
- Mafalda Gonçalves
- Maria Isabel de Lince
- Mariana Santos
- Melka Vergnion
- Matália Gromicho
- Noelle Kalom
- Patricia Mariano
- Pedro Charters d'Azevedo
- Rita Félix
- Rui Pereira
- Santerre
- Sarka Barton
- Stanislav Rina
- Tamara Alves



Inside

*7 Fine Arts
music, poems, visual, gallery
Science & Philosophy
papers, essays, dialogues, reviews*

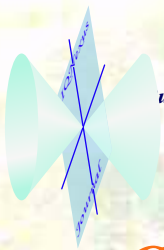
Online Journal publishing the works of the members of IIS & ePiq Societies, members of WIN

IQ Nexus Journal editorial staff

ublisher/Graphics Editor & Web Administrator..Stanislav Riha

English Editor.....Jacqueline Slade

IQ Nexus founder.....Owen Cosby



Contact us at infinimag@gmail.com

Website; <https://iqnexus.org/journal/>

Non-members' contributions are welcome and every new contribution has to be accompanied by an introduction from the contributor.

IQ Nexus Journal

was created to publish creative endeavours for members of the IIS and ePiqs, web based societies as well as guests of other societies and invited non members..



This issue features creative works of:

Listed alphabetically;

Alena Plíštilová

Anja Jaenicke

David Udbjorg

Edgar Allan Poe

Jaromír M Červenka

Jirina Riha

Lao Tzu

Marie F

Stanislav Riha

COVER PAGE

PANORAMA art show by Atelier Natalia Gromicho and Birds, Stones, and Jaguars:



The Bilingual-Mayan inscription of Comalcalco and decipherment of the La Venta celts and Olmec iconography allows one to understand much about the ancient Olmec religion and its cult associations. Specifically, the major sources of information on the Olmec religion are La Venta Monument 13 and the Book of Chumayel.

Republished from Ancient Origin Unleashed to promote the magazine.

<https://www.ancientoriginsunleashed.com/>

*Special thanks to **Jacqueline Slade** for her great help with English editorial work and **Owen Cosby** For reviving and restoring Infinity International Society and establishing IQ Nexus joined forum of IIS and ePiq and later ISI-S Societies for which this Journal was created..*

"Even though scientist are involved in this Journal, I and all involved in the IQ Nexus Journal have tried to keep the content (even though it is a Hi IQ Society periodical) on an ordinary human level as much as possible. In fact, is it not the case, that - to be a human being is the most intelligent way of life?"

Stanislav Riha

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Edgar Allan Poe*

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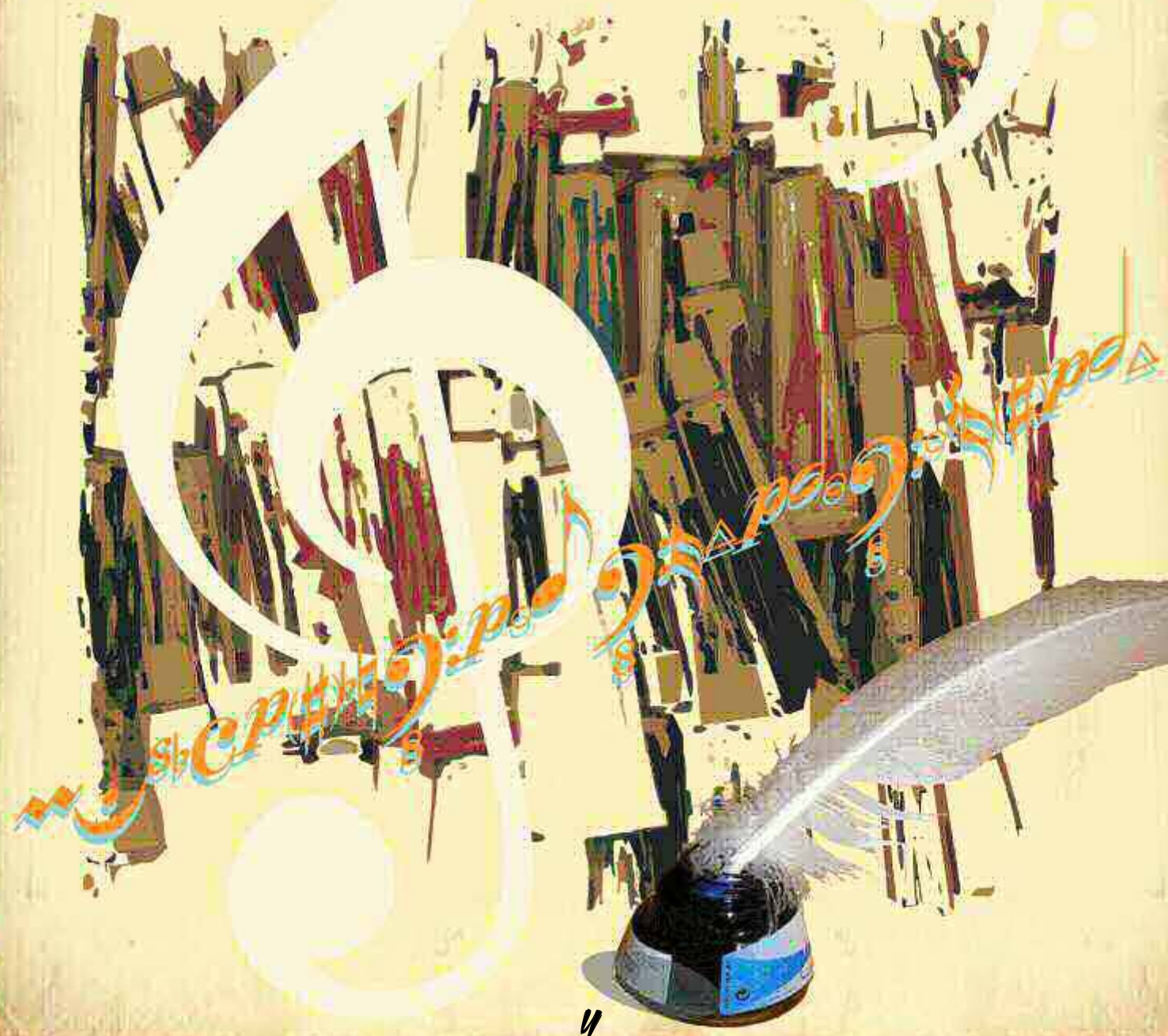
*The Truth About IQ Tests
By Maria Clara Rossini and Luiza Lopes*

IQ NEXUS



7 Arts

Music Sculpture Painting Literature Architecture Performing Film



SSGA



The Artists
alphabetically

Alena Plisfilova
Anja Jaenicke

David Udbjorg
J M Cervenka
Jirina Riha

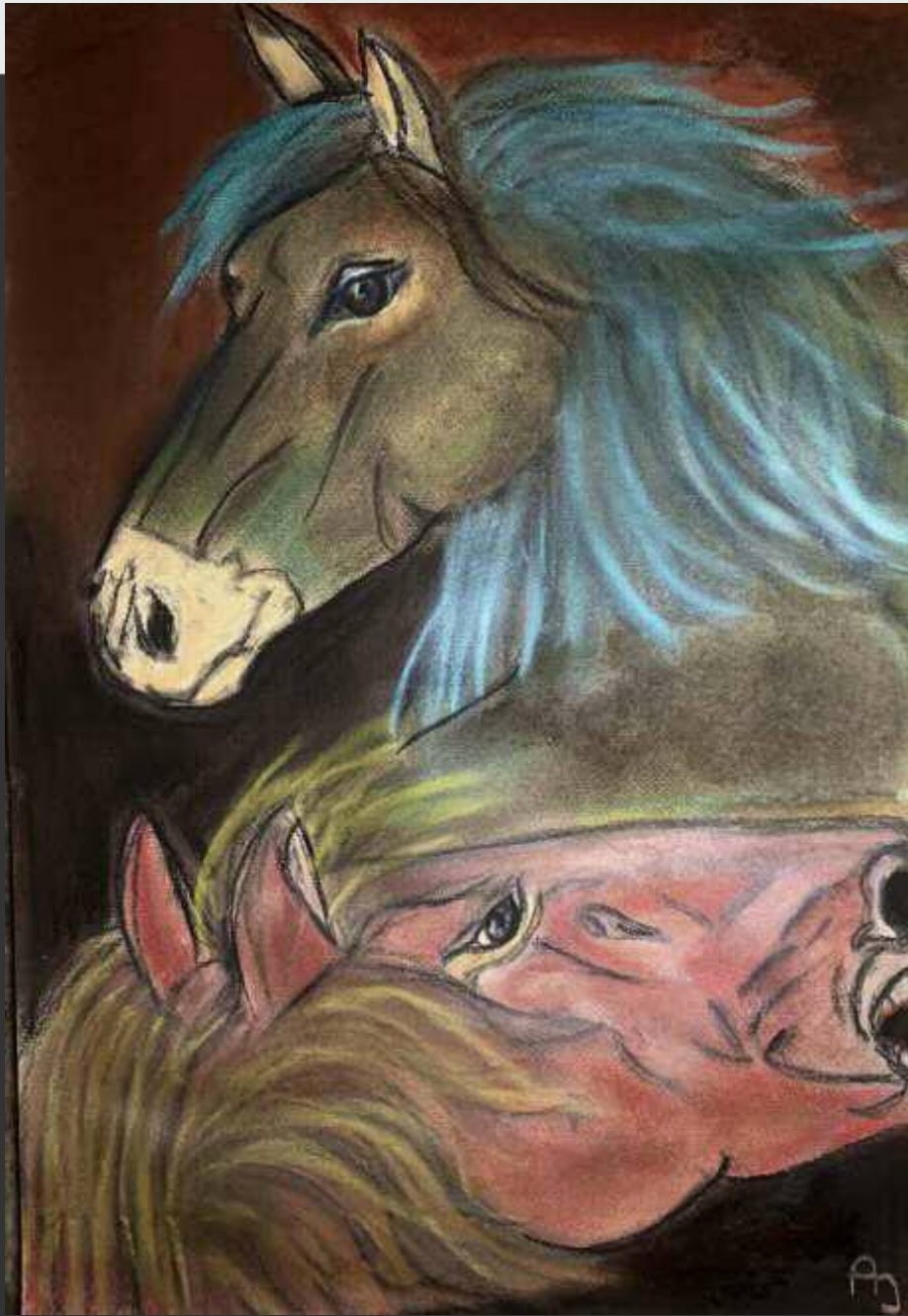
Maria F
Standa Riha



Ala Plisilova
photography



Ala Plisilova
photography



Anastsios

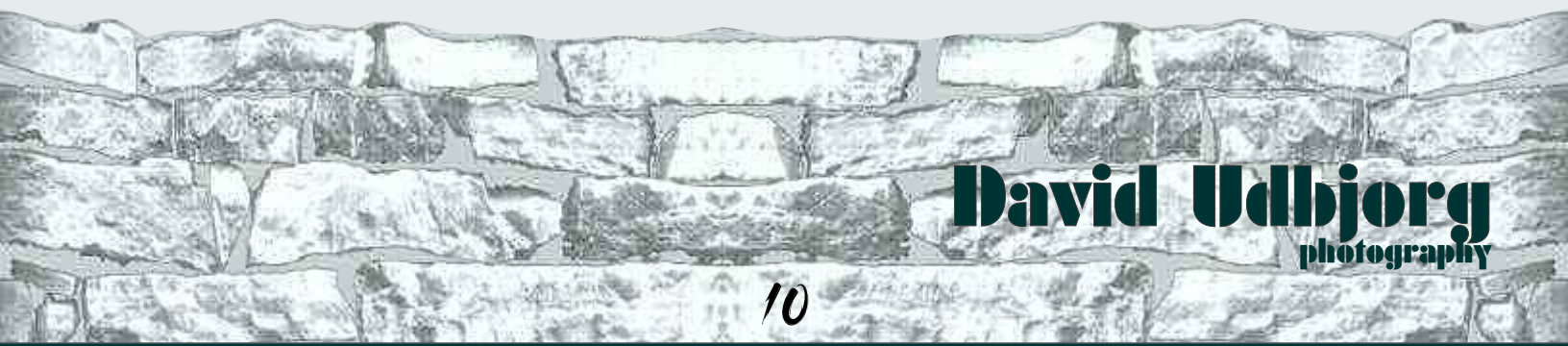


Anja Jaenicke
painting

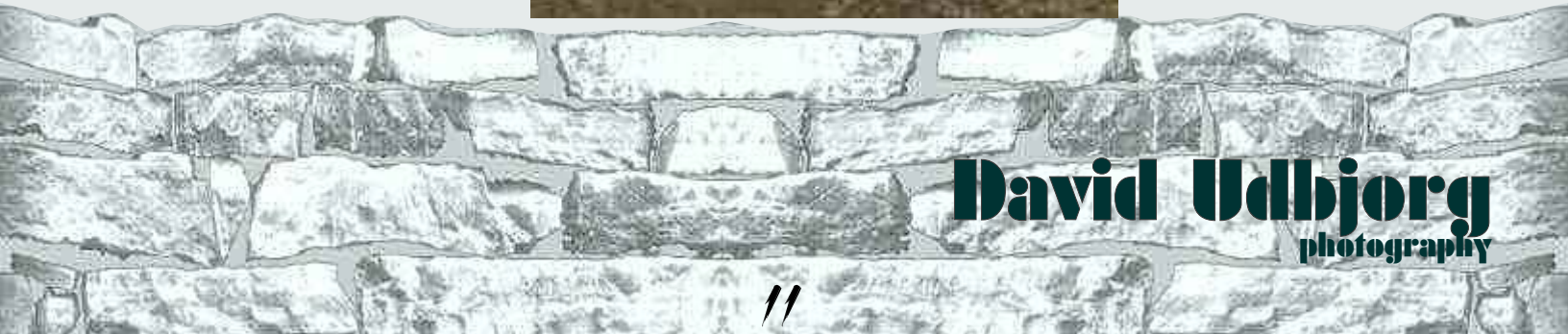


William Sidis

Anja Jaenicke
painting



David Udbjerg
photography



David Udbjerg
photography

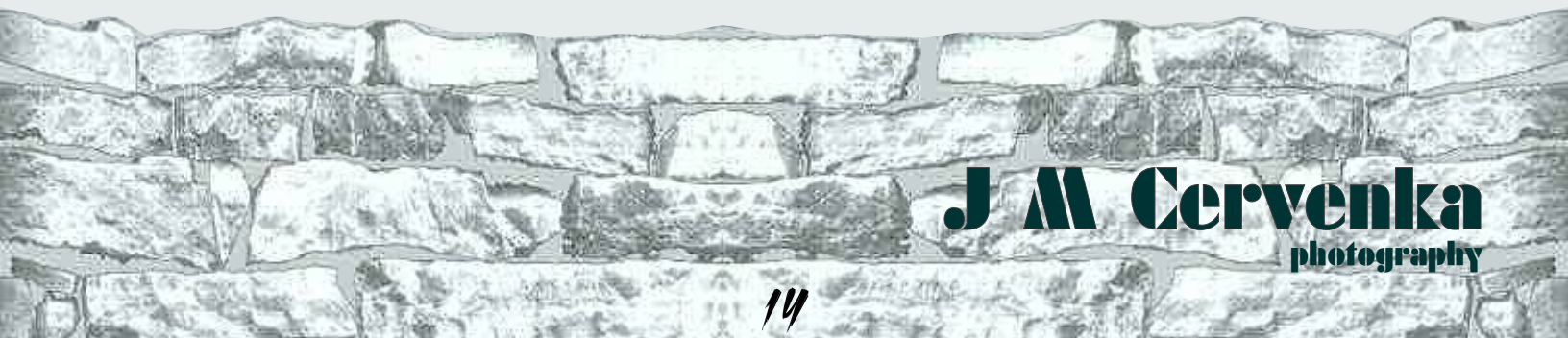
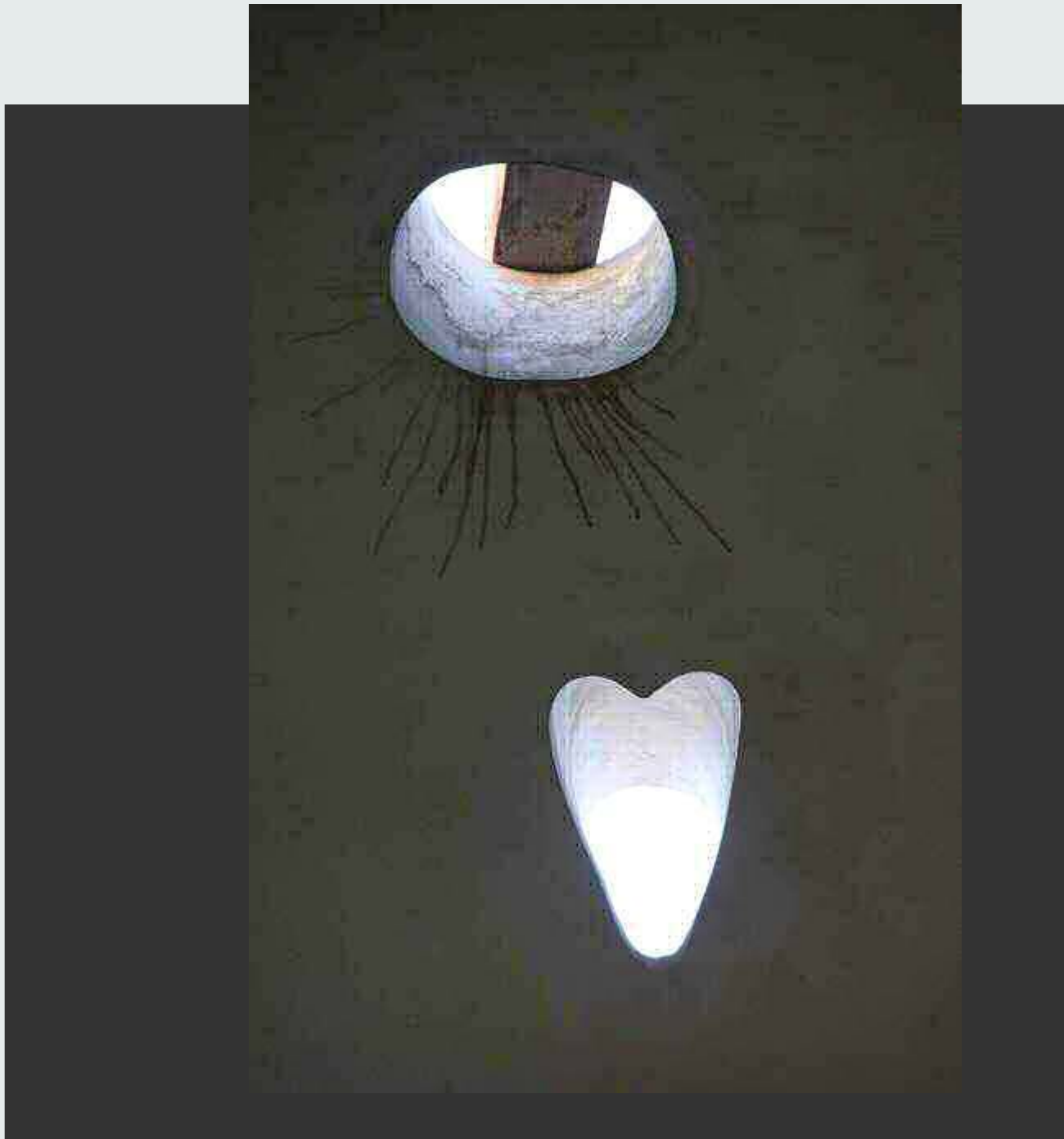


The Art of Rembrandt

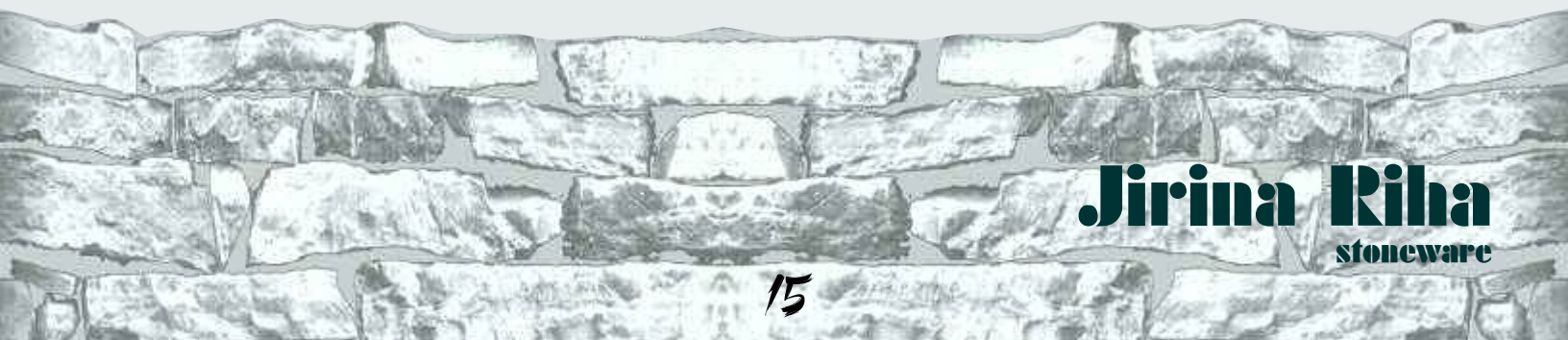
Art from the past



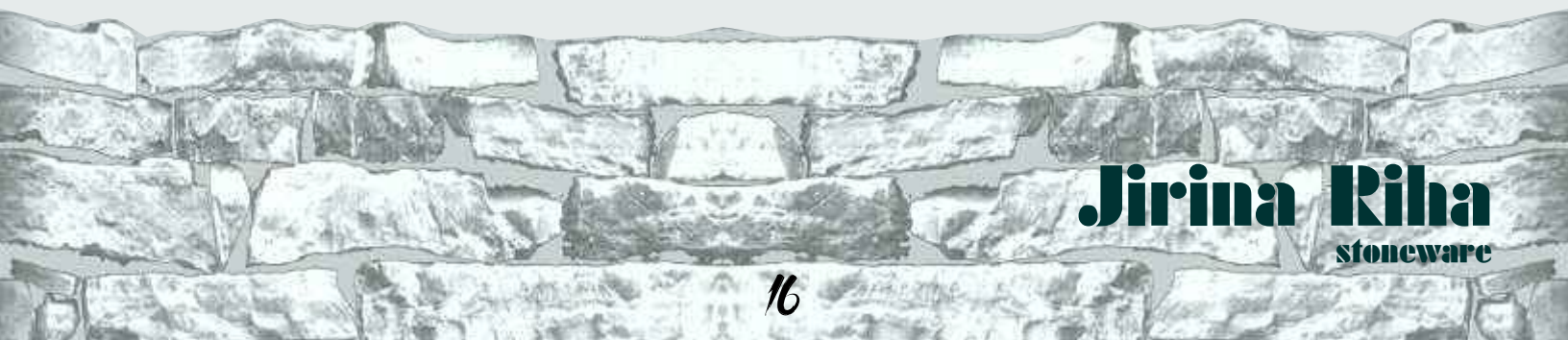
J M Cervenka
photography



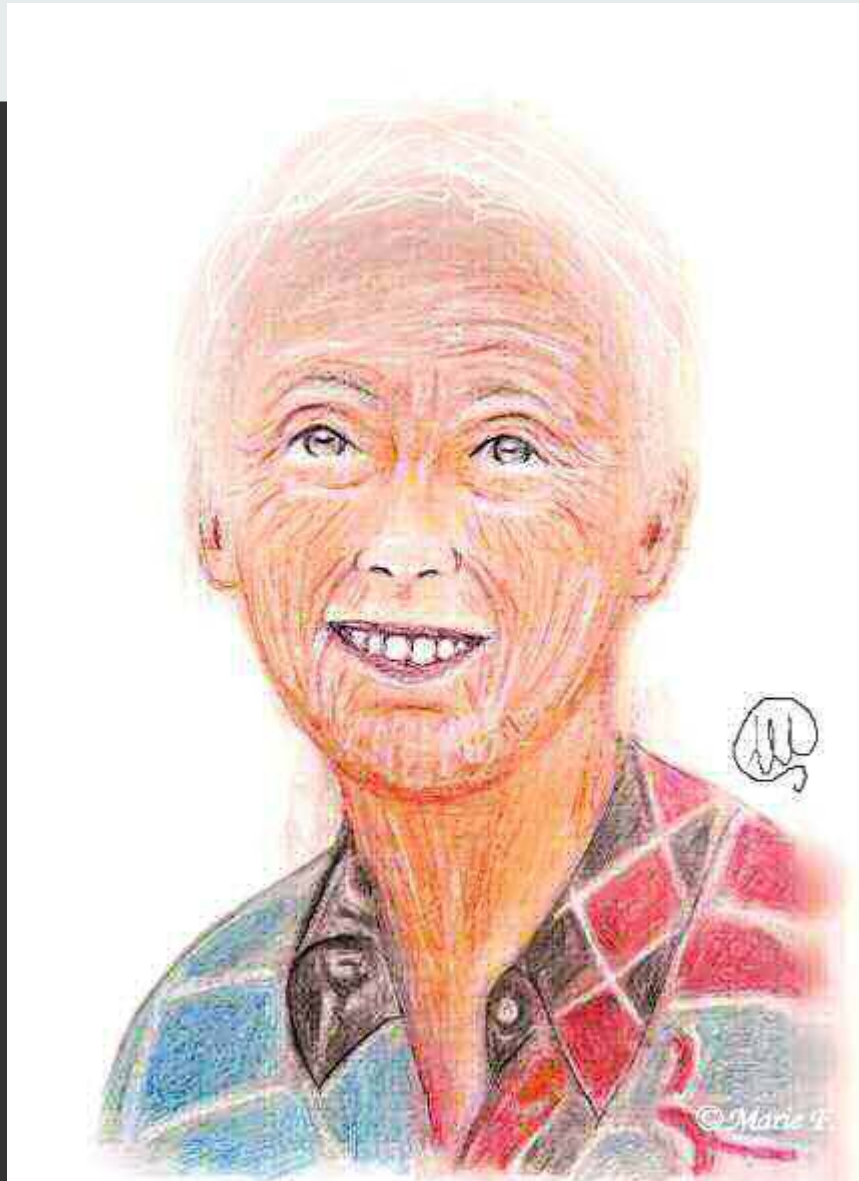
J M Cervenka
photography



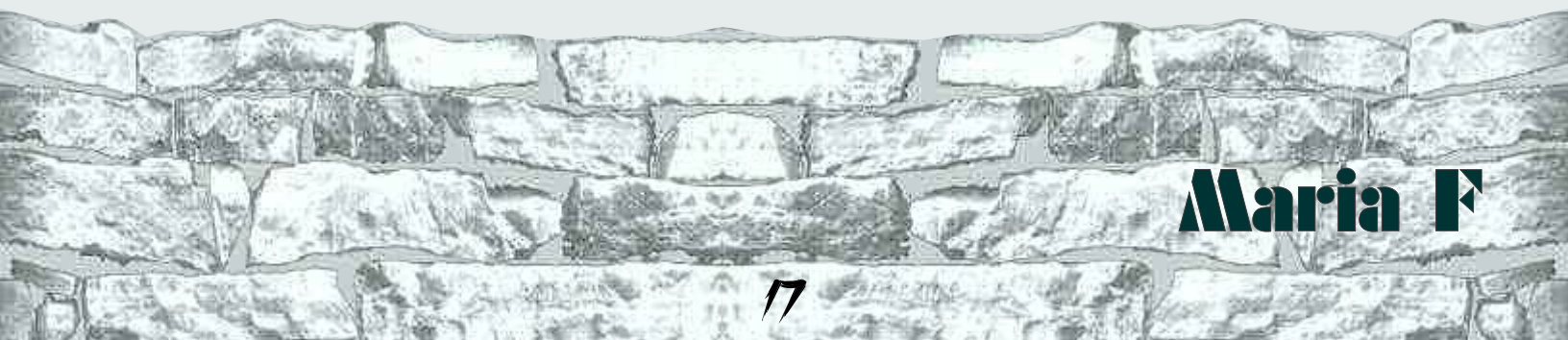
Jirina Riha
stoneware



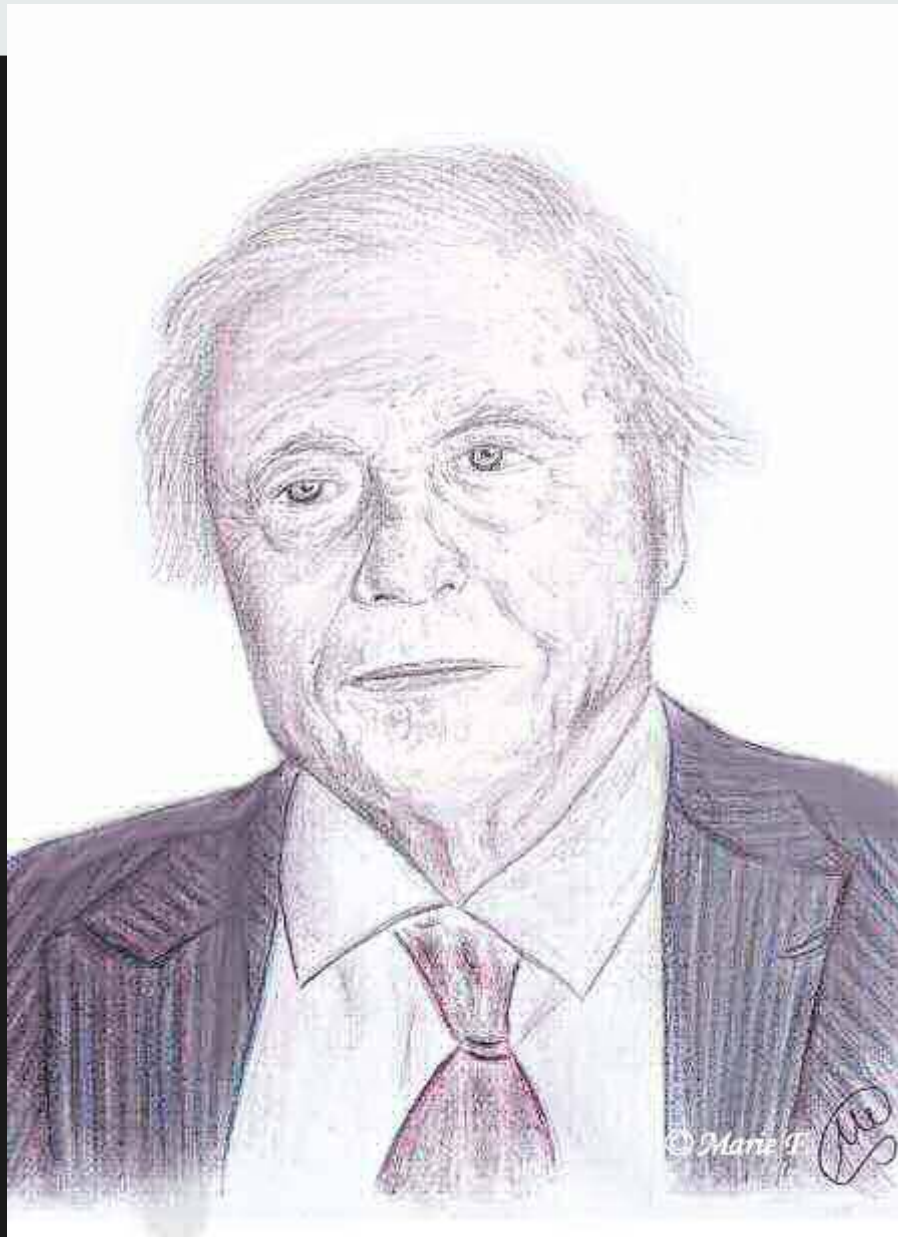
Jirina Riha
stoneware



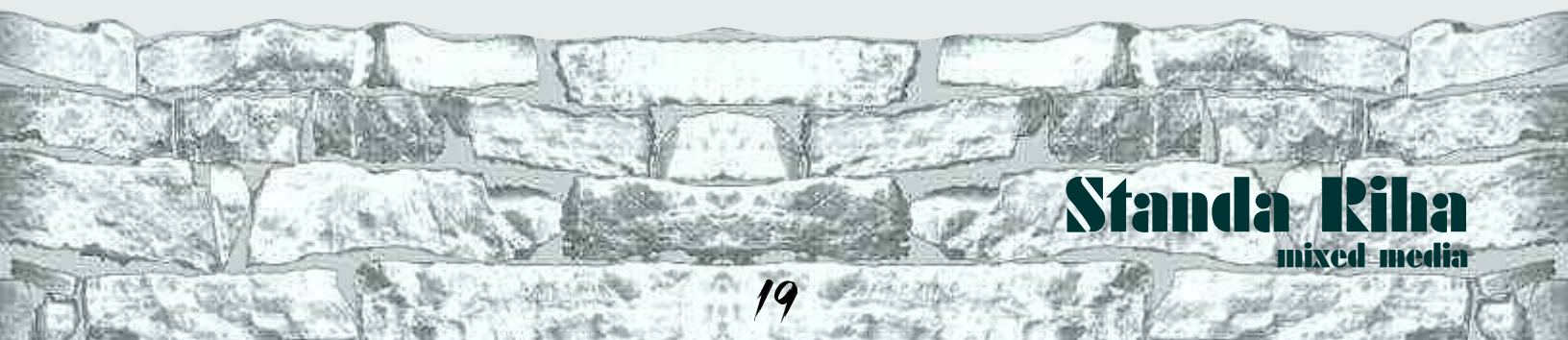
Jane Goodall



Maria F



Sir David Attenborough



Standa Riha
mixed-media



Standa Riha
mixed media



PANORAMA

A Journey Through International Artistry

A CULTURA ESTÁ MAIS PRÓXIMA

Avenidas

Rego, Avenidas Novas

Quinta Alegre

Charneca, Santa Clara

Turim

Benfica

Casa do Jardim da Estrela

Estrela

Boutique da Cultura

Carnide

Coruchéus

Alvalade

Um Teatro em Cada Bairro

É uma rede de espaços culturais de proximidade em Lisboa

Ana Malta
Aranka Székely
Beatriz Canivete
Carsten Bund
Gerard Ceulemans
Gill Welland
Howard Harris
Inês Prats
Joaquim Gromicho
Kayo Sato
Leonor Ribeiro
Mafalda Gonçalves
Maria Isabel de Lince
Mariana Santos
Metka Vergnion
Natália Gromicho
Noelle Kalom
Patrícia Mariano
Pedro Charters d'Azevedo
Rita Félix
Rui Pereira
Santerre
Šárka Darton
Stanislav Riha
Tamara Alves



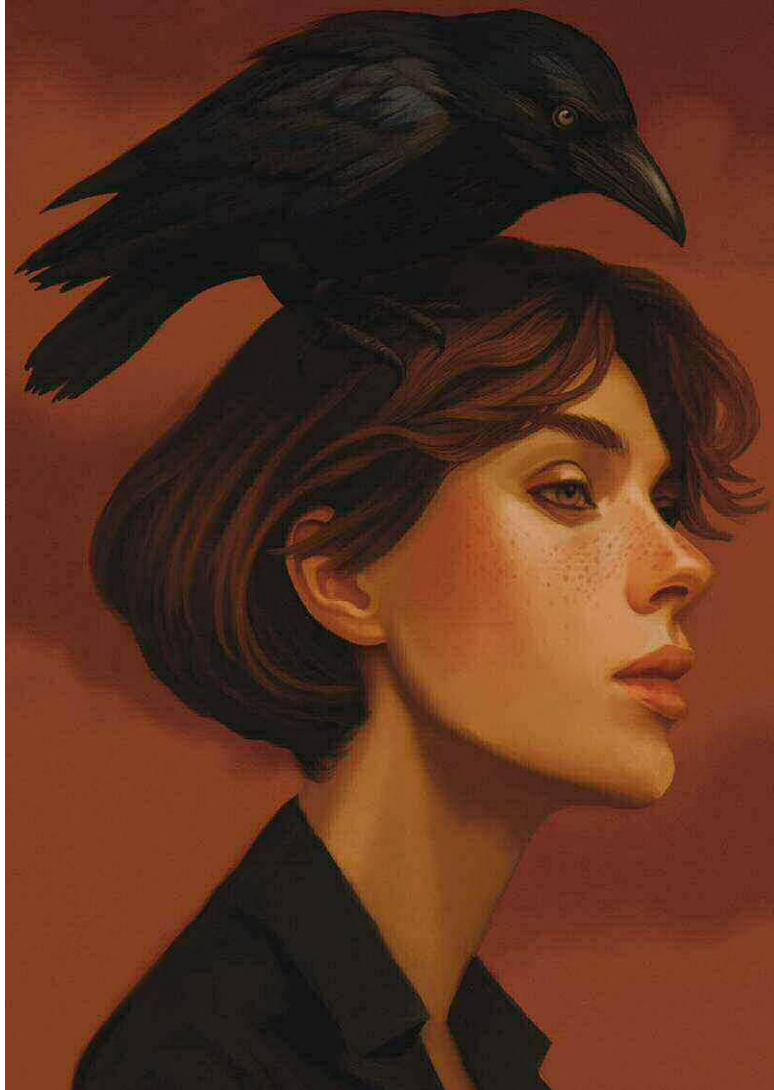
Inês Prats

Stoneware | 39x38cm



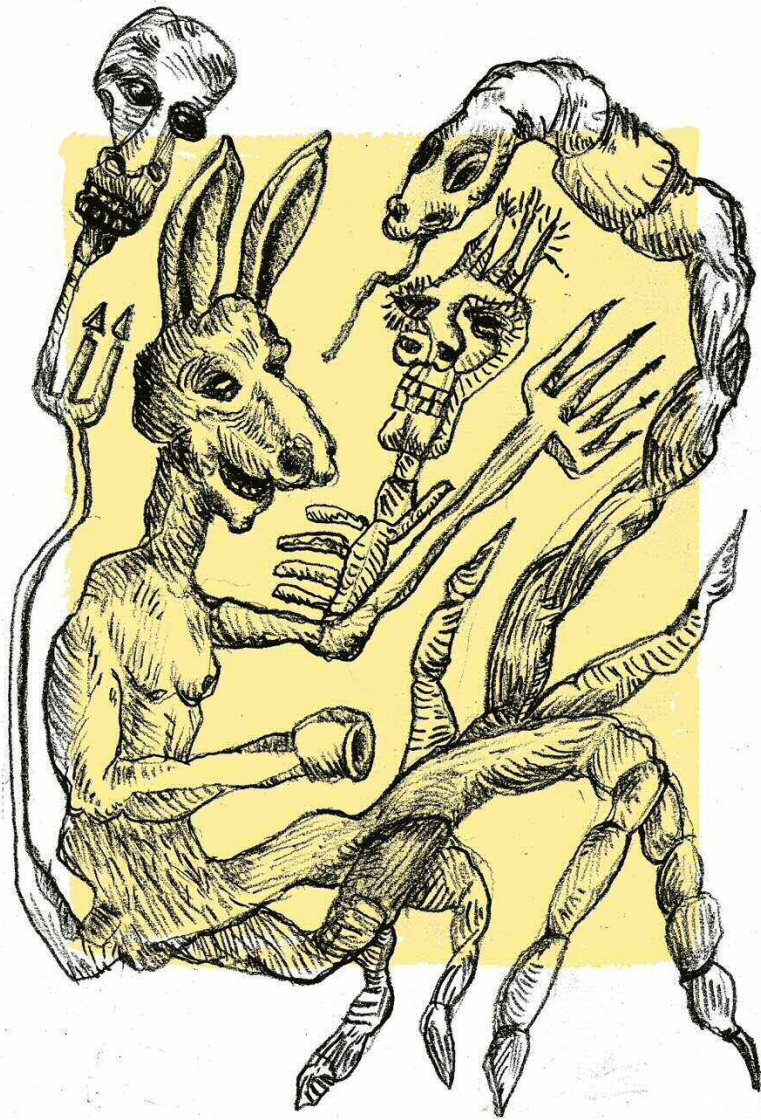
Beatriz Canivete

Portuguese Cravings | Graphite on paper | 21x29cm



Patrícia Mariano

Asa Negra | Glicée Print | 30X42cm



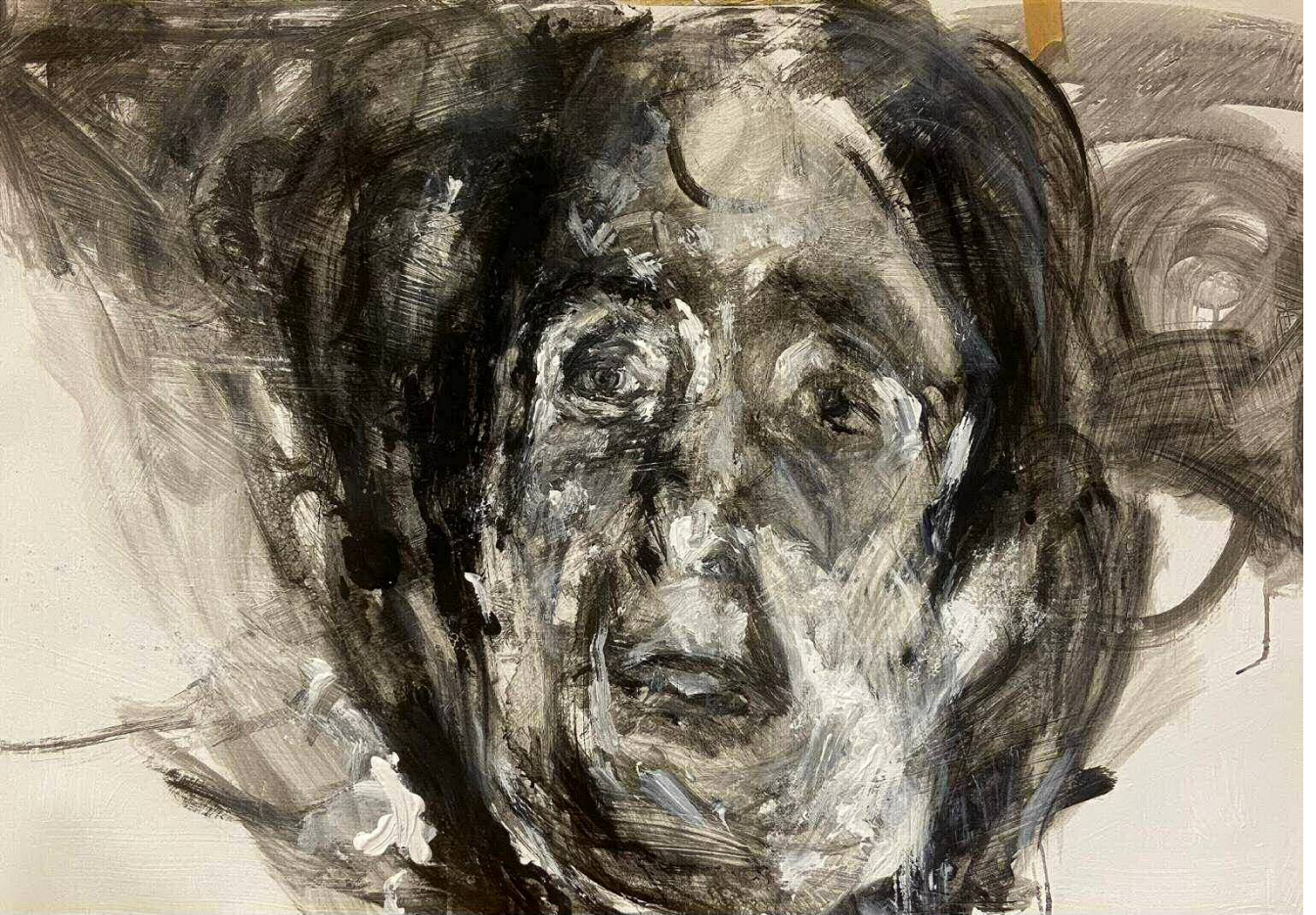
Rui A. Pereira

Gentle touch | Linocut | 84x59cm



Tamara Alves

In my dreams we are the wolves | Watercolor on paper with layers of paint and resin on wood | 70x100cm



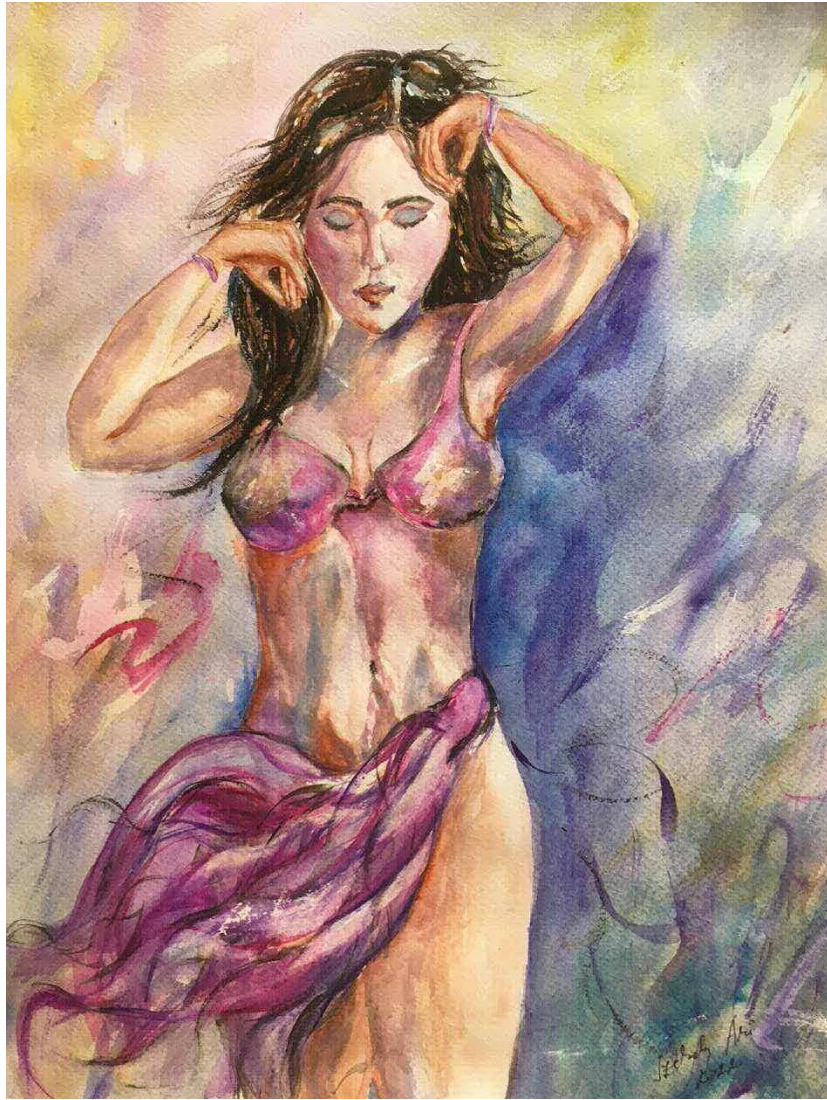
Rita Félix

knock knock, LET'M IN | Mixed Technique on paper | 80x60cm



Leonor Ribeiro

This Bitter Earth | Digital Photography | 100x70cm



Aranka Székely

Reverie | Watercolor | 40x50cm



Horward Harris

Peppers | Sublimation on Aluminum with an Acrylic Overlay | 91x76cm



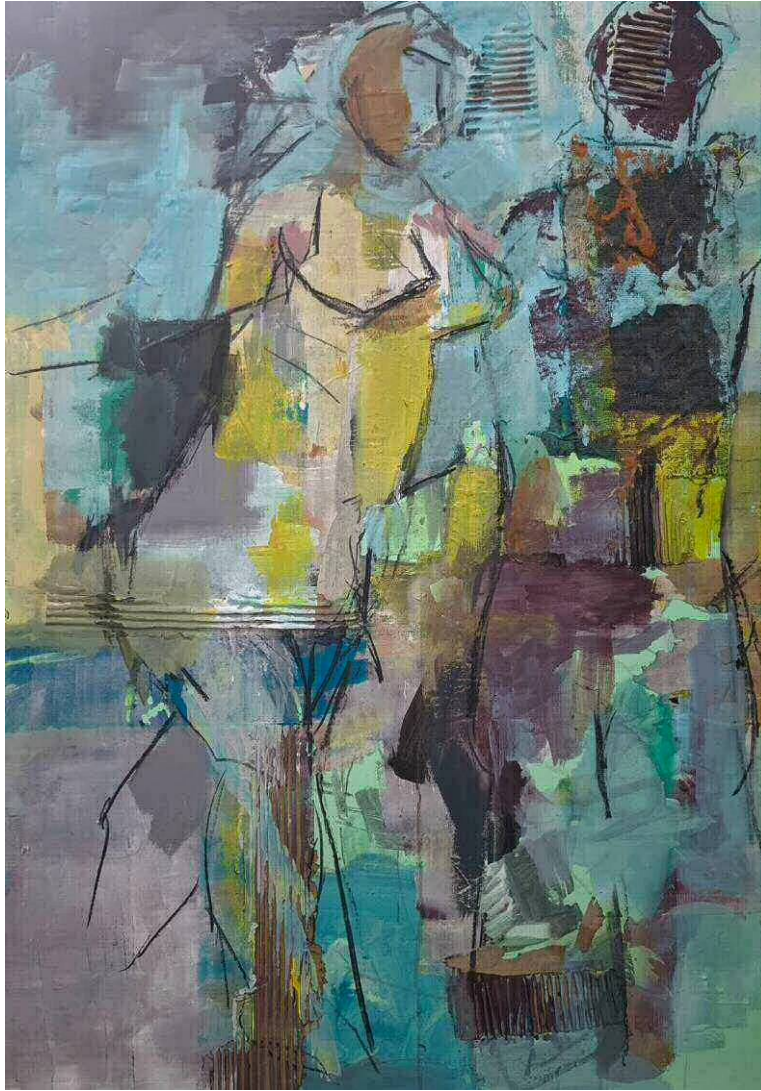
Joaquim Gromicho

Serie # Nature / Summer 2025 | IR Light 720 nm Fine Art Print | 40x60cm



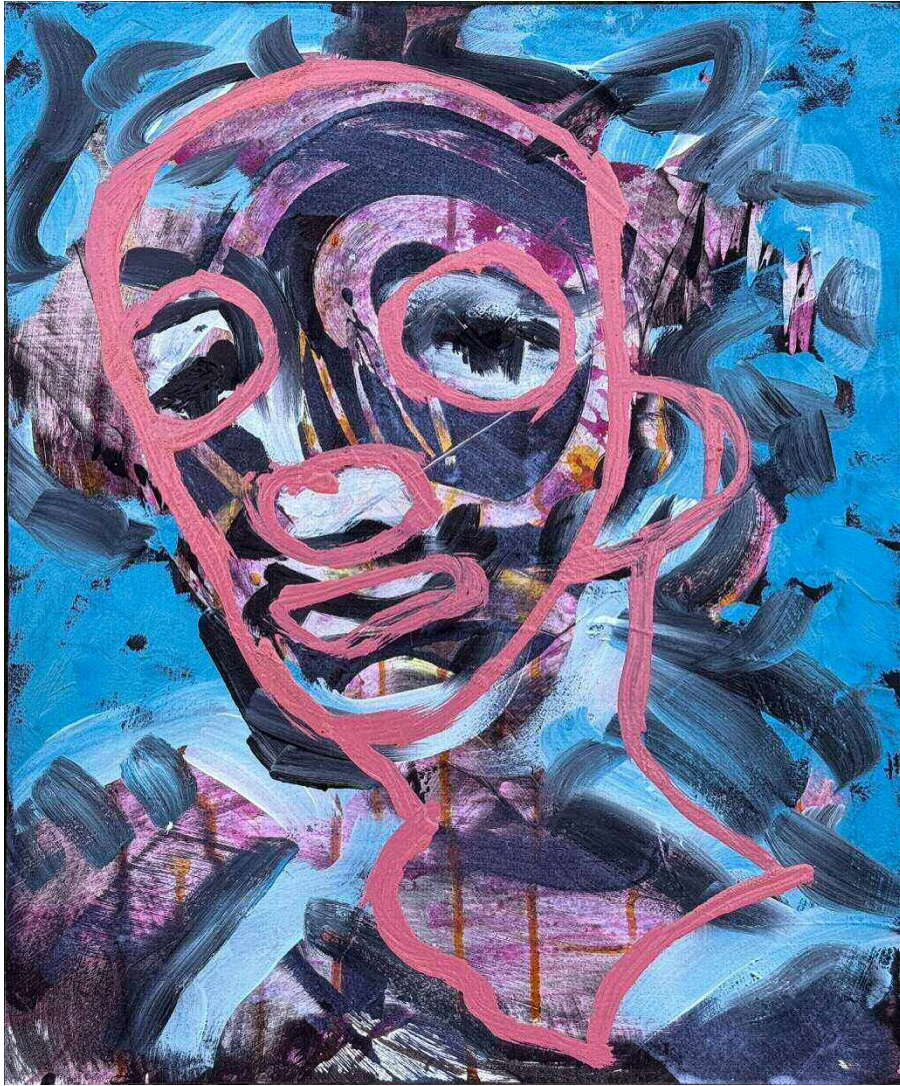
Ana Malta

Perfume da Terra | Watercolor | 56x38cm



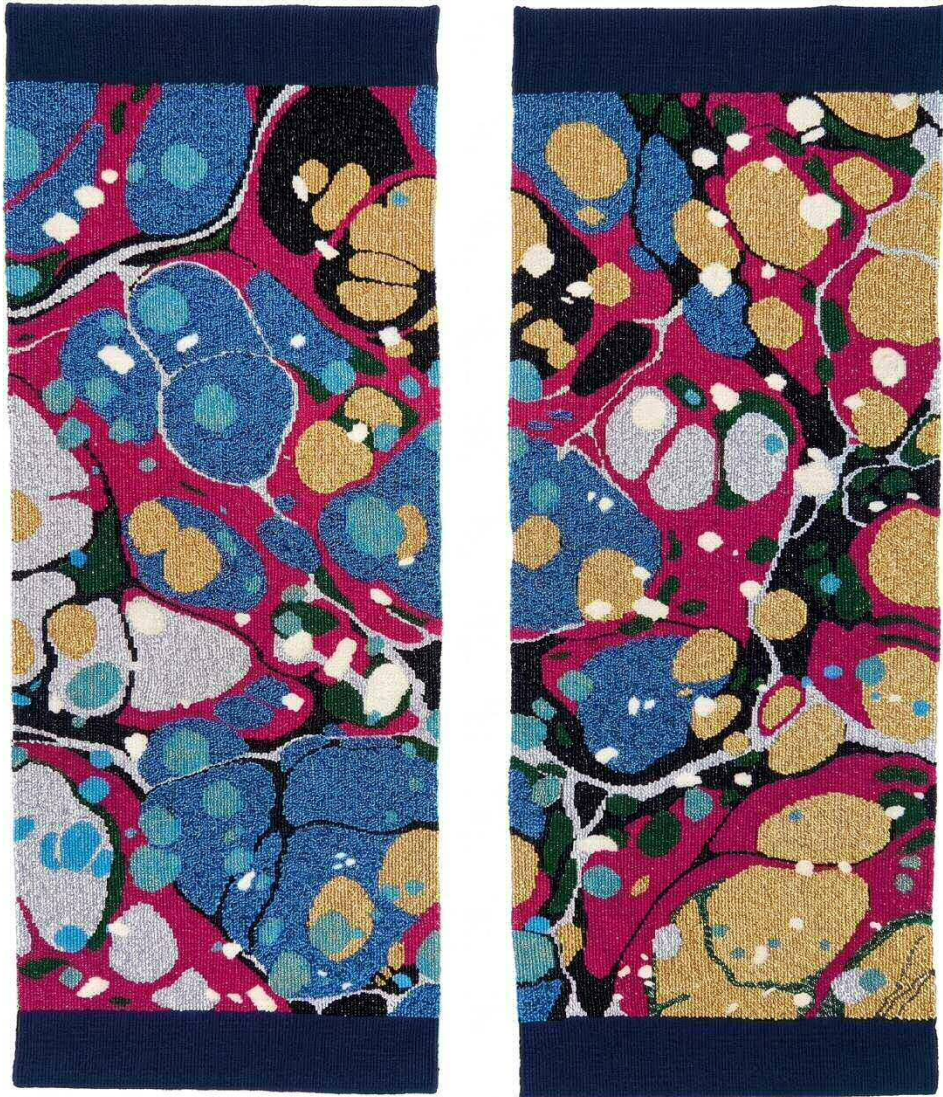
Pedro Charters d'Azevedo

Entre paredes e água | Acrylic and mixed media on canvas | 115x81cm



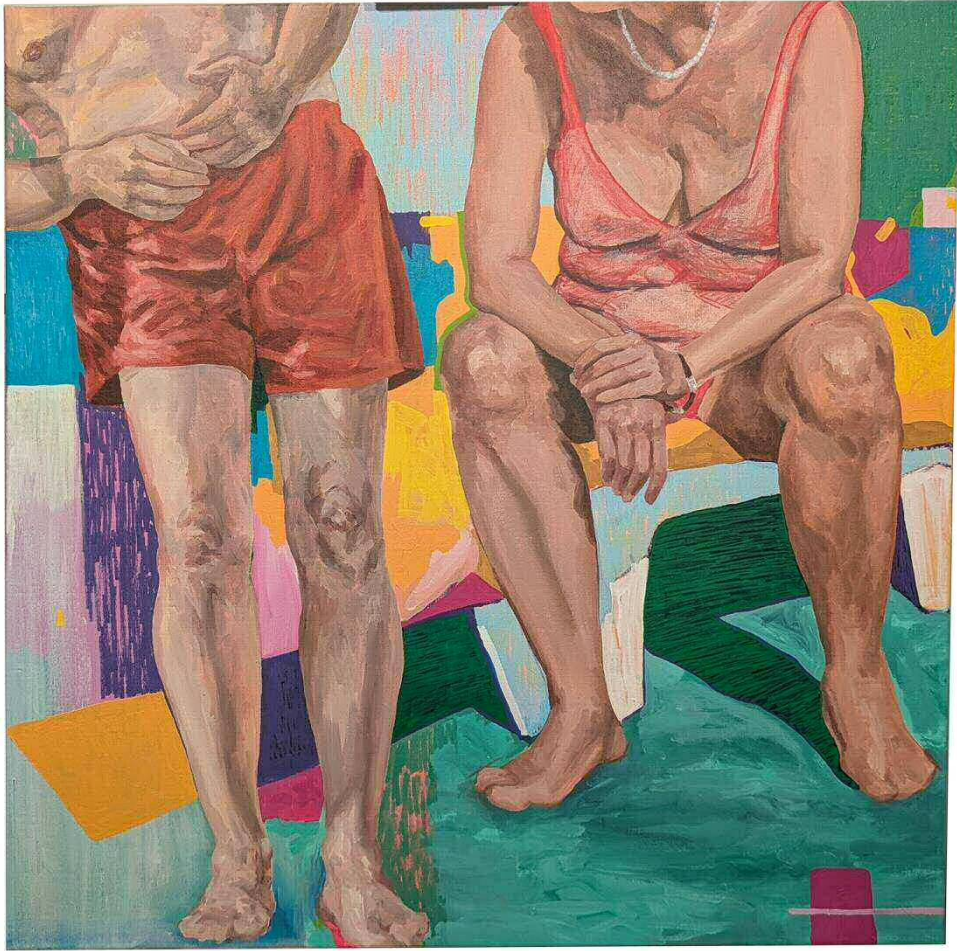
Carsten Bund

Portrait | Oil on wood panel | 61x51cm



Kayo Sato

Pulsation of Genesis | Tapestry | 90x105cm



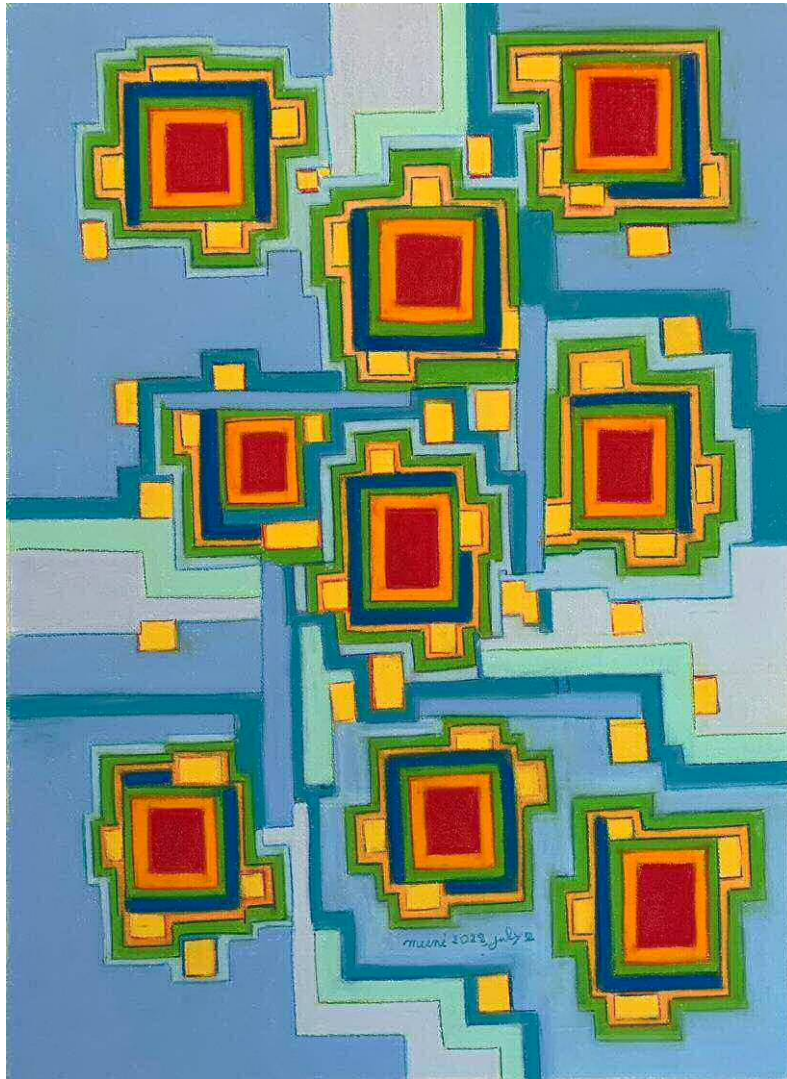
Mafalda Gonçalves

Nurture | Acrylic on canvas | 100x100cm



Maria Isabel de Lince

Trail of Light | Oil on canvas | 100x190cm



Gerard Ceulemans

Starry Night | Soft Pastel | 72x52cm



Gerard Ceulemans

Steam boat | Soft Pastel | 72x52cm



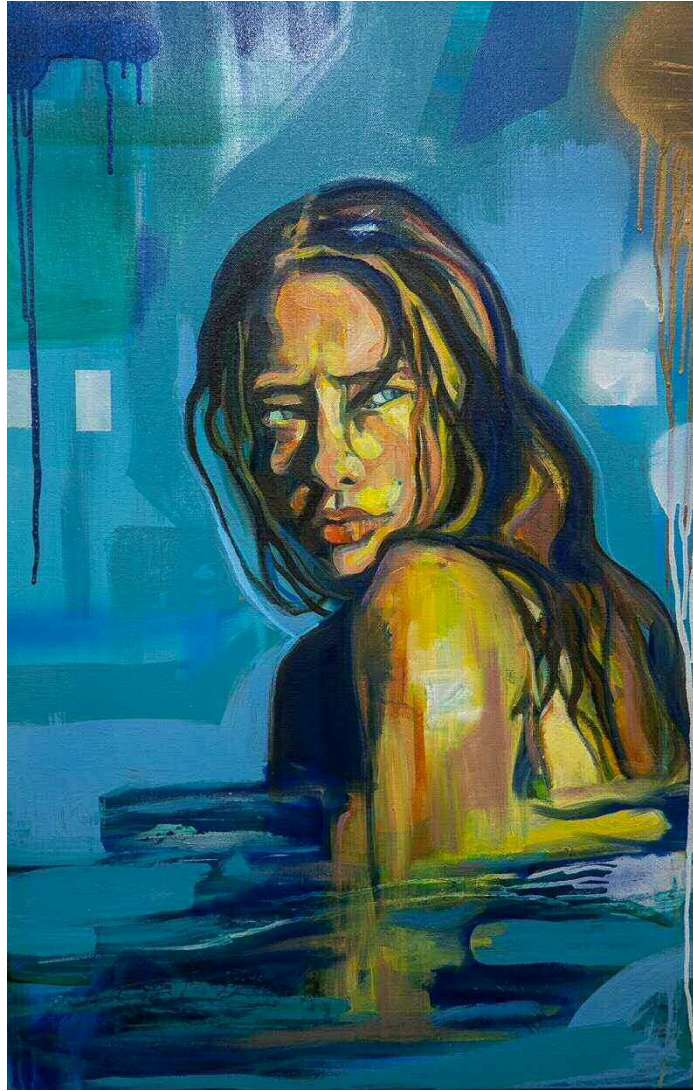
Santerre

Foxy mama | Acrylic on canvas | 100x91cm



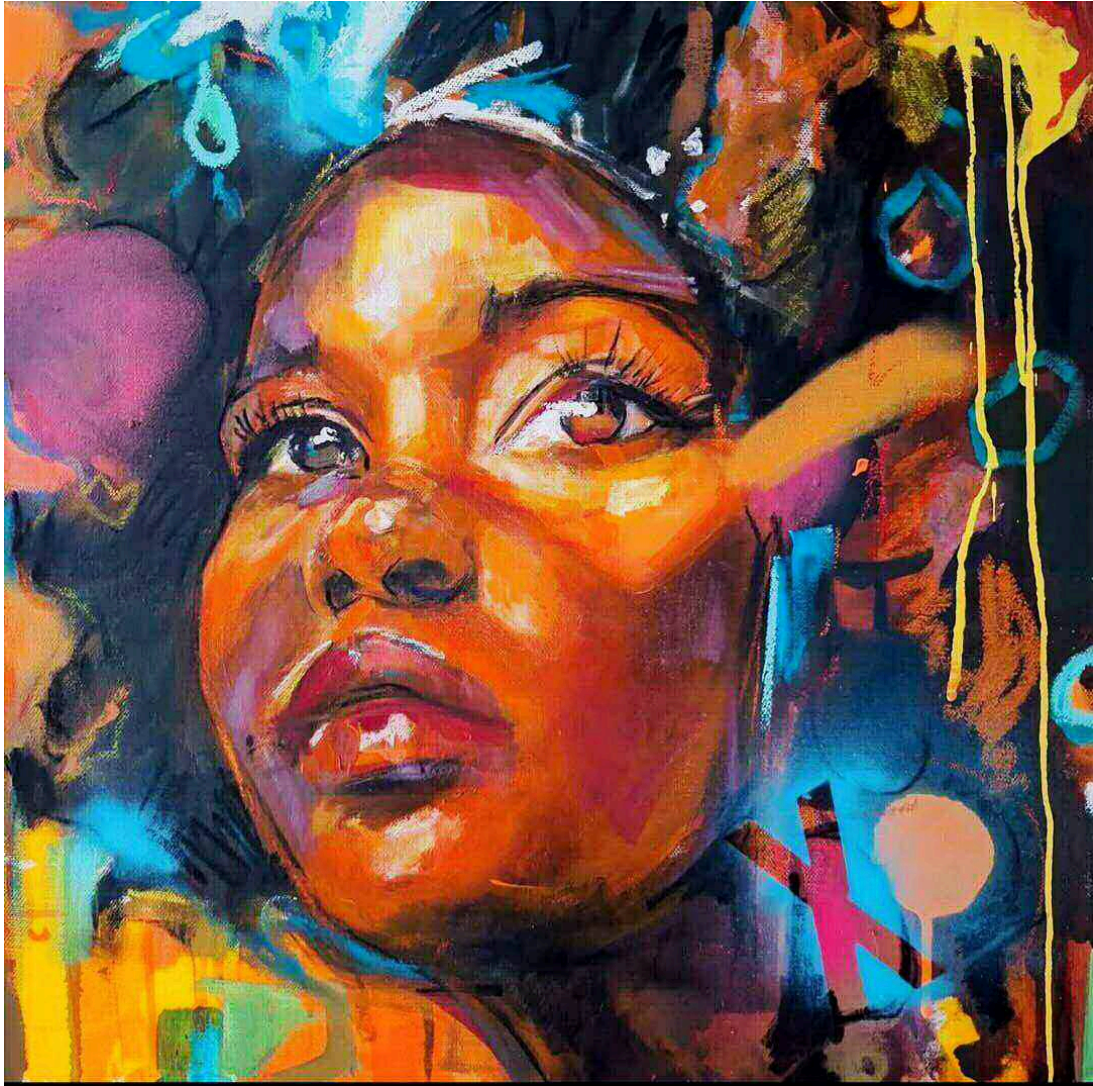
Santerre

Flybot | Acrylic on canvas | 100x100cm



Gill Welland

Ocean Eyes | Mixed Media on canvas | 90x60cm



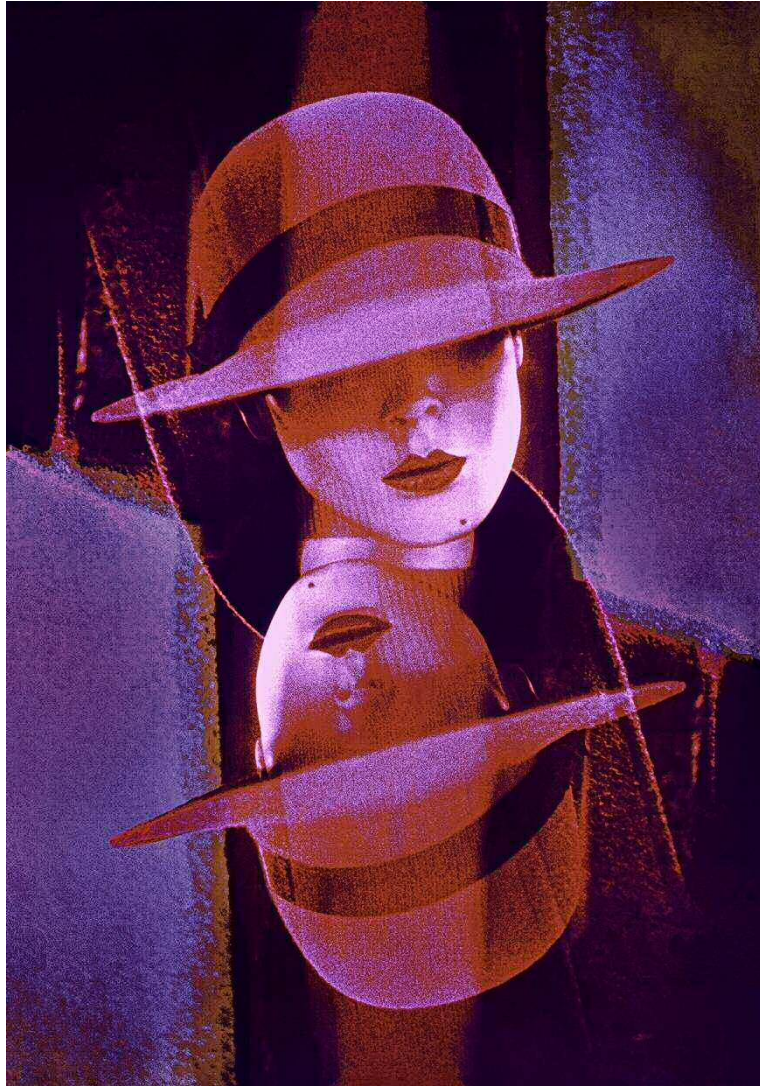
Gill Welland

XO One Voice | Mixed Media on canvas | 60x60cm



Metka Vergnion

NY from series "Passers-By" | Mixed Media | 100x70cm



Metka Vergnion

"Duality", from the series "Portraits" | Mixed Media | 100x70cm





Fly Away Venus is a series of six works by Šárka Darton exploring themes of transformation, femininity, and transcendence. Created with ink and gold leaf on handmade Somerset paper, the works combine delicate textures with luminous surfaces, balancing fragility and radiance.

Rather than depicting Venus as a fixed figure, Darton presents her as a shifting presence — fragmented, suspended, and in motion — suggesting freedom, desire, and impermanence. The contrast between fluid ink gestures and reflective gold leaf creates a contemplative atmosphere where myth, memory, and emotion quietly intersect.



Natália Gromicho

A noite na cidade | Acrylic on canvas | 200x200m



Natália Gromicho

Um barco em Tóquio | Mixed Media on canvas | 200x120cm



Noelle Kalom

Ancient | Mixed Media | 61x61cm



Noelle Kalom

Holding | Mixed media | 61x61cm



Stanislav Riha

The other side | Acrylic on canvas | 81x51cm



Stanislav Riha

Shannon falls | Mixed Media | 71x41cm



Mariana Santos

In the Face of the Unknown | Acrylic on canvas | 80x120cm



Mariana Santos

Waiting | Acrylic on canvas | 80x120cm

ADVOCACY FOR CREATORS

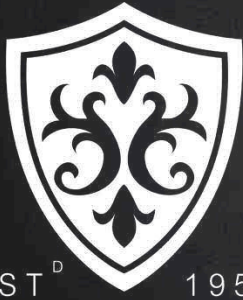
This exhibition is supported by SPS-Barrilero, a leading Iberian law firm created through the 2025 strategic alliance between Portugal's SPS Advogados and Spain's Barrilero. With more than 30 years of history and over 350 professionals across Portugal and Spain, the firm provides highly specialised, innovative, and client-focused legal services throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Our practice areas:

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FAMILY WINES



Ana Malta was born in Vila Franca de Xira, Portugal. She exhibits about 400 collective and individual exhibitions in Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Brazil, the United States and Japan, where he won numerous awards and distinctions. She is cited in several national and international art publications. About her technique, Her palette is chromatically bright and pluripigmented. Her works speak of the burning of Life in Nature, from a non-figurative expressiveness of the surrounding natural environment, with an imagery reference that presents the Elements of Nature in plastic dialogue with Man.

Aranka Székely The Romanian-born but naturalized Hungarian artist Aranka Székely is in some ways close to Chagall's dreamy expressive intentions, because for her, painting means finding a space away from everyday life in which to write a different story, made up of beautiful feelings and unforgettable moments that belong to pleasant and carefree days. In fact, her career as a doctor puts her constantly in contact with human suffering, so painting becomes a way of going beyond what is daily in front of her and instead letting flow all that is beautiful in life and that is much more in tune with her inner inclinations. The almost absolute protagonist of Aranka Székely's works is the woman, in all her facets, so sometimes a mother, sometimes a lover, sometimes simply herself in the many facets of her personality, almost as if her protagonists were an alter ego of the artist who from work to work chooses to highlight a side of her personality."

Beatriz Canivete, a Portuguese artist based in Évora. "My work focuses on drawing, mainly using graphite and coloured pencils, through which I explore line, detail and expressiveness. My illustrations addresses portraits, self-portraits and everyday scenes, depicting people who inspire me or who leave marks on my personal journey. Through drawing, I create intimate visual records of time, relationships and moments that shape my artistic identity.

Carten Bund "I see myself as a traditional expressionist painter formed in Berlin during the 1980s. The work and teaching of Bernd Koberling—and the wider community around him—left a lasting imprint on my approach to gesture, color, and the physicality of materials. While painting remains my core discipline, I have explored digital art since the late 1980s and, today, extend that inquiry through AI model development. This technical practice is not a substitute for painting; it is a parallel method for probing structure, chance, and emergence. Across media, I pursue intensity and clarity: a distilled image that carries the weight of lived experience."

Gerard Ceulemans is a self-taught painter. He likes crafts, meditation, alternative medicine. He practiced also acupuncture. In his paintings he combines vibrant colors in a mix of abstract, impressionistic styles. He likes painters like Hundertwasser, Klimt, Van Gogh and Gauguin and others. I create healing art, calming, uplifting and leave viewers with some happiness.

Gill Welland Influenced by strong female artists such as Frida Kahlo, Niki de Saint Phalle, Paula Rego, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, my work explores themes of identity, resilience, and self-defined femininity. Each portrait draws from personal experience, observed moments, and imagined narratives, forming part of a wider visual conversation about connection, strength, and the shared realities of women. Through my work I aim to create work that feels honest, emotionally present, and unapologetically real. My work centres on contemporary portraiture and figurative painting informed by the everyday experiences of women. I am drawn to bold colour, layered surfaces, and using mixed media as a way of expressing emotion, energy, and lived experience. My paintings often balance figuration with abstraction, allowing the work to evolve intuitively through processes of building, scraping back, and reworking.

Howard Harris is a Techspressionist artist who has long been fascinated by visual perception and design. The Denver, Colorado, USA native earned a BFA from Kansas City Art Institute and a MID (Masters Industrial Design) from Pratt Institute in New York, studying with internationally renowned design theorist Rowena Reed Kostellow. Harris has spent over 35 years combining design and technology, winning many prestigious professional awards. Now, his creative energy has turned to his lifelong passion, photography. With an iconoclastic streak that had seen him consistently forging new directions in design, he was bound to approach the photographic image in an unconventional way as well. In 2017, Harris was granted a United States Patent titled Apparatus and Method of Manufacturing for a Layered Artwork, proving the uniqueness and inventiveness of his photographic work. Since then, his work has appeared in numerous books and publications, including ARTtour International Artists of the Decade, Contemporary Art Curator Magazine's Art Leaders of Tomorrow: Defining the Future of Art, International Contemporary Masters, and Top 10 Contemporary Artists, among others. He has also been awarded the Artists for a Green Planet Artist of the Decade, the International Prize Raffaello, the International Prize Giulio Cesare, the International Prize Leonardo Da Vinci, and the International Prize Caravaggio, among others. He served as a trustee of The Kansas City Art Institute and was honored with the Who's Who Worldwide Lifetime Achievement and the USA Small Businessperson of the Year awards. His work is exhibited internationally and represented by galleries in the United States, the U.K., and Europe.

Inês Prats "I believe that a large part of happiness is being free to do what fills our soul. That's where my brand comes from, which I hope to continue nurturing with art and love. Each piece is entirely handmade, making them unique and unrepeatabe. The doilies I use are mainly made by my grandmothers and great-grandmothers, and the clay used is, whenever possible, locally sourced. I seek individuality in each piece and let gesture and intention define it. They are not regular, much less perfect, like us and our days. I find inspiration in the organic nature, in the unknown and abandoned world of the seabed, and in everything that inhabits my imagination. The main theme of my creations is, without a doubt, memory, and it is in this journey of trying to materialize an emotion that my pieces are being born. Ceramics has this ability to show us Time, the Process. It demands patience and acceptance, and a lot of detachment! It's no coincidence that many say it's therapeutic."

Joaquim Gromicho Show the duality of scenarios that photographic space has gotten so a new vision of what surrounds us, in some way by this timeless dimension in reality does not exist. In some cases there may be a close familiarity with photography by this display places that are known by the observer, but immediately conjugations, overlaps and interactions of light and color space refer to other key conceptual thus giving a new language will photographic image. In the dialogue between architecture, the natural and the human there is an impression of light, form and scale thus making the perception of work as surreal. This effect transcendent image overlay are no limits to the real, is this duality that holds the aesthetic enjoyment of the work.

Kayo Sato was born in Fukuoka, Japan. She received her Ph.D in fine art in 2006. She is a versatile and unique artistic innovator adept at working with fiber, including dyeing, weaving, and pleating. Her work is regarded as a contemporary art. The artist has exhibited her artwork throughout Europe, especially Italy, and is also active in regional promotion, cultural property protection, design education dissemination, and product production, etc. Kayo currently lives in Japan, working as an artist. While her style of art-making has changed over the years. She continues to enchant the viewer. "In my work, color is an important factor. My soul is in the color. So I dye the colors myself. I've always done that and will continue to do so."

Leonor Ribeiro I don't work with subjects, all my photos are made spontaneously. In all of my shoots I'm not guiding the model, we both create the dynamic through our connection and energy. I always choose to ask them to naturally be themselves and express what they feel at the time of the shooting so I can adapt to those expressions of natural feelings and capture them on camera. Sometimes, during those moments, specific images appear in my mind and I follow them. I love to go to places I've never been and let everything happen naturally. Like starting a trip that you don't know where it will lead you, you just follow the road, go with the flow and let it blossom. All of my photos are an exteriorization of my emotional being. In every photo, there's a fragment of the person I'm working with, their essence, their story, but also the part of me that resides in the other. When the button is pressed an energy, emotion and aura get frozen and the photo feels like creating my own diary. Photography for me is the purest way to speak what's going on inside me, my desires, my dreams, fantasies, fears, insecurities. I love working with people. I love to get to know them and see the evolution of their vulnerability, sensuality and connection with their own body during a photoshoot. As that dynamic is built between me and the model, I can observe and identify parts of myself that I'm not in touch with yet and allow them to fuse with those I already know. Some people are excellent when speaking about their work, I'm not one of them. If words are not my best ally, in this case, photography is.

Mafalda Gonçalves "I have a degree in Drawing from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Lisbon and I regularly approach portraiture through a monochromatic figurative style using vibrant colors, obtained from a palette of primary colors. I seek to explore the relationship between identity and memory through the use of old photographs of an unknown family as references. The preference for figurative work is due to the fascination of trying to capture the essence of something as complex as the human being in a place as ephemeral and subject to its immediate annulment as the street. My projects are always influenced by the place where they will be integrated, which is often the starting point for the creative process. My urban art work can be seen in various locations in Portugal, Spain, Germany, England and Italy. I have also participated in several exhibitions at a national level, in the 6th and 7th edition of the Prix d'Art Urbain Pébéo Fluctuart (2022 and 2023 Paris, France) and in 2023 at the Retronom Gallery in Erfurt, Germany."

Maria Isabel de Lince My work is based on the observation of nature, from its simplest elements such as a flower or a stream, to the most complex such as the sea, the sky, or a galaxy; and the phenomena that take place in it, from which, through a process of abstraction, I carry out my work. Color and light play a fundamental role in the development of my work due to their ability to produce sensations in the viewer; Combining visual elements derived from my perception of the natural, I seek to transmit through my paintings a message of peace and harmony, and awaken in those who observe them pleasant and heartwarming feelings that bring light and joy to their lives, and thus contribute to a peaceful, fraternal coexistence, and in harmony with the planet, raising awareness about the importance of caring for it and living in it as brothers.

Mariana Duarte Santos was born in 1995 in Lisbon, Portugal. She studied at an arts specialised high school and later went on to study drawing and printmaking at university. She's had group and solo shows in Portugal, Spain, U.S.A., U.K. and in Ireland. In 2019 she painted her first large scale outdoor mural and to date has over 50 murals throughout Portugal, Spain, Luxembourg and Ireland. Her work is figurative in nature, centered mainly around painting, drawing and printmaking but also influenced by other artistic areas such as cinema and literature. When it comes to public art, the themes she works on are mostly focused on concepts of memory, collective identity and local stories, thus archive pictures are key in her mural work.

Metka Vergnion The photograph "Duality" examines the layered and multifaceted nature of identity. Mirrored faces evoke a self that is both singular and divided-present yet elusive-inviting reflection on the coexistence of visible and hidden selves. Through subtle abstraction and deliberate composition, the work explores themes of perception, memory, and the inner life, revealing how identity is never fixed but always in dialogue with itself and the world. Metka Vergnion studied photography and film at ENS Louis- Lumière, Paris, and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions across Europe and Asia.

Natália Gromicho A gifted painter, in the purest sense, Natália has skillfully created a body of work that is simultaneously lyrical and mysterious, jubilant yet poetic. Employing these paradoxes, she skillfully applies her raw talent into different mediums and styles creating a sense of flux, depth and dominance. Natália's work takes elemental images, from nature and the landscape to culture and individuals she encounters on her travels, and transforms using dramatic ploys such as contrasts in scale, shifts in focus, mirrored reflections, staccato images, and multiple or layered surfaces. Sensory perception for Natália is a spiritual activity, one that leads to a heightened awareness of both nature and culture—this thought process points to a new kind of realism—one that is engaged with the actual processes of life. Yet, it also references the theoretical avant-garde conceptions of deconstruction emerging during Modernism.

Noelle Kalom “I am interested in the human tendency to find patterns and familiar forms in chaotic and random designs. My creative process is based on this innate impulse and each new painting holds its own path of discovery. I begin by applying thick medium gel to the canvas. Using a palette knife, I add several layers to create a messy, unplanned topographic foundation. Contrasting colors are brushed on to emphasize the nuances of the textured surface, and at this point pumice, beads or other media is often incorporated into the mix. It is through this process of layering that I begin to detect and highlight recognizable shapes and human features that form the painting’s composition. What slowly emerges is an abstract landscape in intense and shifting colors that reflect canyons, mountain ridges, rivers, and fields. In a nod to my passion for maps, the final painting invites the viewer to find their own path through this unknown territory.”

Patrícia Mariano is a Portuguese fine arts painter and mural artist, whose art can be found in many different walls and galleries. Mariano is a self-taught artist with an academic background in architecture and journalism, and with an extensive career in advertising as a creative copywriter. It was only until she was 30 that she decided to pursue her dream of working as a painter and to have her own studio. Since then she has done multiple solo and group exhibitions, as well as various urban art interventions. The artist work is nestled somewhere in between reality and dreams and could be described as imagined realism. Her figurative compositions, imbued with melancholic and metaphorical imagery, create a unique surrealist universe and atmosphere, where the use of symbolism has become her artistic identity.

Pedro Charters d’Azevedo’ work stems from a careful look at everyday life, specifically at the repeated practices that he integrates, which mark the spaces and objects used daily, realizing that they are inhabited/used. Charters expresses himself through painting as well as with any achievement/object that can express what he feels. He uses strategies that reveal the focus of his attention, which is, in fact, a dominant issue in his work and throughout his creative production. His works arise from the experimentation of attempts and his singular interests. As an artist, he constantly seeks ways, based on what he knows and is close to, to build propositions that present questions that give an account of what he understands and how he relates to the world.

Rita Felix *The Place Where i am*. This work arises from a need to capture and possess desire. The intense feeling of fascination, provoked by contact with certain photographic works, followed by the human instinct to possess. The drawing emerges in response to this problem; the only objective is to explore, not the image, but the will it provokes. The theme of self-representation appears through the exploration of desire, which is represented by the stroke, the stain, the mode of interaction with the support. Due to its personal and intimate nature, and consequently the temporal context, this work also becomes a path of transition between the academic and professional worlds. It should be noted, however, that intimacy is not synonymous with confession; this project intends to deny the expectations generally associated with self-portraits: the search for meaning, justification. The work presented here wants to evolve plastically, wants to create problems, with regard to the technical approach to drawing, in order to try to solve them. This is an exploration motivated by the desire to explore, with the goal of reaching new questions, not arriving at definitive answers. The intention is to discover new ways of reacting to problems, new ways of creating. Although it is a project within the Drawing discipline, photography also plays an important role, being a great driver of creation. It is through photography and the work of other artists that a crucial point of this work emerges: the portrait as self-portrait. The representation of the object of desire, altered by the will to possess and draw. The line of thought that guides this project arises from the challenges encountered in the practical aspect. These motivate its continuation, and the information that is collected, taken from contact with the work of other artists, including colleagues and teachers, who present new concepts and ways of seeing, all influence the work.

Rui A. Pereira has worked in different areas – literature, visual arts/exhibition curation, theatre, cinema, advertising, equipment and sculpture in public spaces – using design, painting, sculpture, illustration, engraving, screen printing and multimedia. He created the designs, covers, and illustrations for over a hundred literary works by Noam Chomsky, Mosh Lewin, James Anderson, Ignacio Ramonet, Borges Coelho, Mário de Carvalho, Mário Sacramento, Piteira Santos, José António Barreiros, Rogério Ribeiro, Paulo Fidalgo, Paulo Sucena, José Peixoto... for various publishers, such as Campo da Comunicação, Campo das Letras, Letras Paralelas, Círculo das Letras, Colibri, Labirinto de Letras, and L’Oriental Editrice. From May 2002 to February 2007, he was the image director of the Portuguese edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*. He was part of the artistic direction of the Jorge Vieira Museum from 1998 to the beginning of 2012. He performed the same functions until the beginning of 2014 at the Escudeiros Municipal Gallery in Beja, coordinating a traveling art exhibition project in numerous municipalities across the country, especially in the Alentejo region.

Santerre’s work is best left classified by the person looking at it. Into it. Through it. A clever, intuitive blend of surrealism, spirituality and social insight is carefully blended into every figurative expression. Every work explores the reality of the main subject while simultaneously representing a collage of engaging, thought-provoking, even irreverent images and an alternate intellectual or emotional road. A logical, visual exploration of things we feel we already know, yet have somehow forgotten. Recognizing the main subject is only the beginning; it is intuitively followed by the observation of images within; a playful, mesmerizing collage of fractioned ideas. The eye is another creature, is another face, becomes a tree. The flow of superimposed ideas is both linear and undetermined; the viewer can dive deep into the imagery or stay at the surface, though few resist the challenge. Both unpredictable and sincere, a Santerre vision is not so much a desire to put onto canvas the unpredictable images of dreams, as Dali so famously did, but instead provides the viewer with his or her own sense of suspended imagination and inner storytelling. Through his work – and true to his Montreal roots – Santerre takes the viewer for a ride into his bare, honest imaginary world, where the fantastic meets the grotesque meets the exceptional commonality of the pieces that become the final image.

Šárka Darton "My art is about looking and seeing; an investigation into the role of cognitive stimulation in the making and viewing of art. Each piece addresses issues of identity and the relationship between people and the spaces that they occupy. Working across various media, my pictures, prints, paintings and installations aim to create space, rather than occupy it. Contrasting transient and permanent imagery, figures and architecture, the viewer becomes incorporated into my work instead of just standing in front of it. We all effect, and in turn are affected, by that which we see."

Stanislav Riha In the last three decades, I have been creating wall-mounted, cast resin and aluminum, sculptures combined with canvas and gold leaf, and exploring of computer as a tool for both realistic and digital artwork. All my life, I love to create art full of emotions and feelings "soul," with the satisfaction of fun. The direction of the last two decades is aimed at understanding and, through artwork, expressing the human struggle of emotions and adaptations. In the period of the past ten years, I have been polishing my creative work into the Surreal-abstract style. The main moto of my artwork is; Just as in a good story, the readers have space to create their image; in a good picture, the viewers have a space to create their account. Since 2009, Editor-in-Chief of IQNexus Journal, In 2015 wrote a book "Judy and Bob Dialogues," published by FriesenPress, Victoria BC, Canada,

Tamara Alves is a Portuguese visual artist and illustrator, currently based in Lisbon. Has a degree in Arts (ESAD-IPL) and a master in Contemporary Artistic Practices (FBAUP) where her subject of research was "Public Activism in Urban Context". She has always been interested in a kind of work which is inserted in the world, fascinated with the streets aesthetics and urban context, in order to present her works of art in the street or in public spaces. Tamara Alves has been weaving a narrative that celebrates in a raw, poetic way the primeval vitality of strong sensations, of an animal becoming, of brute passion, as opposed to rational deliberation. Based on the idea that our instincts are what defines us, the artist invokes a universe of (female) human and animal figures in interaction with the natural landscape and objects imbued with a strong symbolic charge that invite us to embrace feelings as a wild and untamed driving force. A universe where love, always love (which is wound, pain, tears, but not less pleasure, joy, ecstasy), can be the fruit of an impact, an accident, growing within us like a wild flower.



Panorama 26

Collective art exhibition

Atelier Natália Gromicho Rua Nova da Trindade 5G, Lisboa

June 6th to 19th, 2026

Panorama

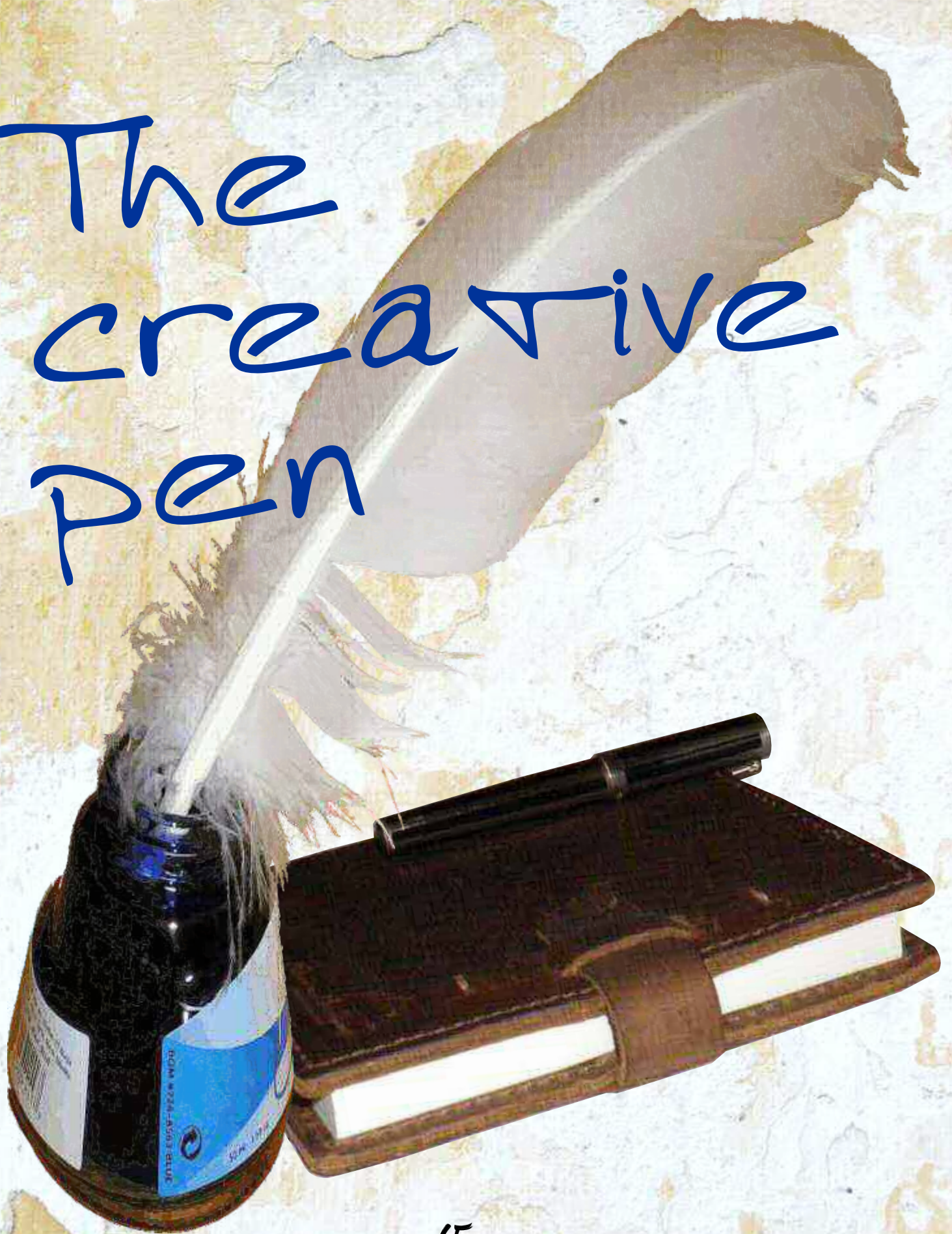
Curated by Gonzalo Madeira

Limited edition catalog of 100 units

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The creative pen



Wisdom of ancient Master

Tao Te Ching

Lao-Tzu 500 BCE

For governing a country well
there is nothing better than moderation.

The mark of a moderate man
is freedom from his own ideas.

Tolerant like the sky,
all-pervading like sunlight,
firm like a mountain,
supple like a tree in the wind,
he has no destination in view
and makes use of anything
life happens to bring his way.

Nothing is impossible for him.

Because he has let go,
he can care for the people's welfare
as a mother cares for her child.

no. 59

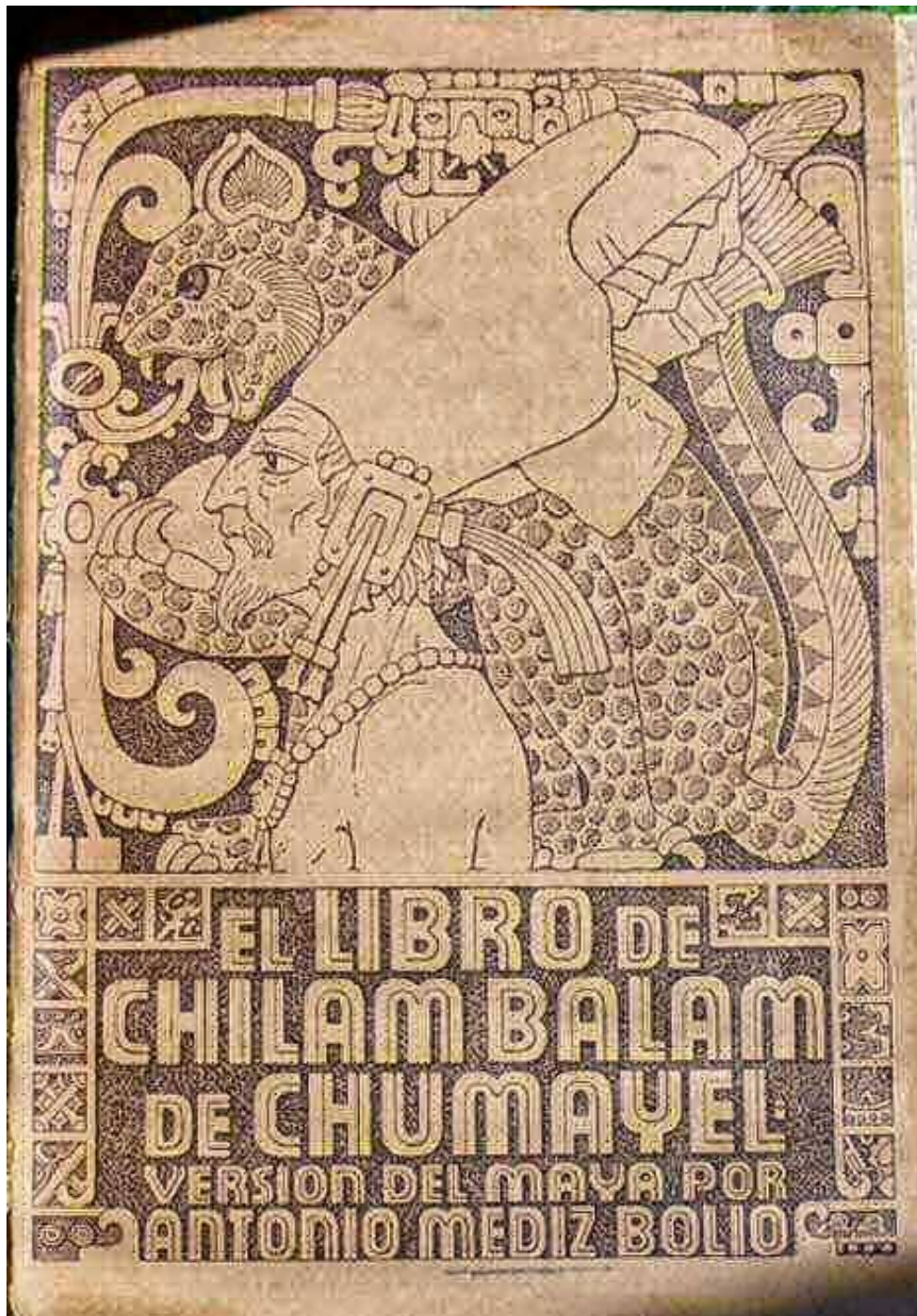
Birds, Stones, and Jaguars: Piecing Together the Multifaceted Ancient Olmec Religion



The Bilingual-Mayan inscription of Comalcalco and decipherment of the La Venta celts and Olmec iconography allows one to understand much about the ancient Olmec religion and its cult associations. Specifically, the major sources of information on the Olmec religion are La Venta Monument 13 and the Book of Chumayel.

The principal Olmec cult associations were those of the bird and the feline. These Olmec religious traditions passed on to the Maya. They are mentioned in the Book of Chumayel, which was translated by Brotherston. It maintains that the three main cult associations

that existed in ancient times were (1) the stone (cutters) cult, (2) the jaguar cult, and (3) the bird cult. In lines 4-6 of the Book of Chumayel, one reads that “Those with their sign in the bird, those with their sign in the stone, flat worked stone, those with their sign in the Jaguar-three emblems.”



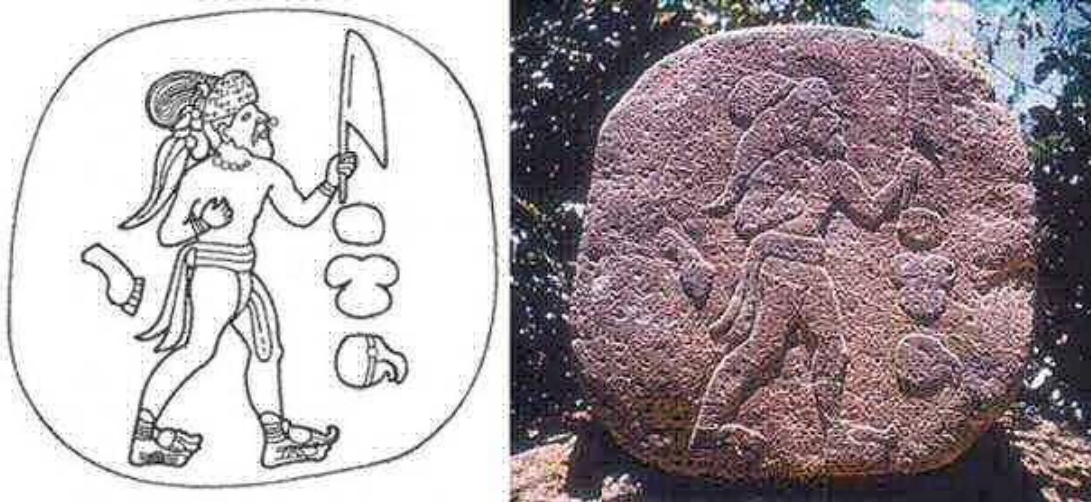
Spanish edition of the 'Book of Chumayel.' (Melinda Stuart/ [CC BY NC ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/))

Documents in Stone

The Olmecs left testimony to their religious traditions in their art. Their documents on stone indicate that the cult associations mentioned in The Book of Chumayel correspond to the glyphs depicted on Monument 13 at La Venta.

Monument 13 at La Venta shows a personage in profile. He wears a headdress and a breechcloth, jewels, and sandals. This image is accompanied by four glyphs listed one above the other. The glyphs include stone, jaguar, and bird emblems. Monument 13 at La Venta also has a fourth sign to the left of the personage - foot glyphs. This monument has been described as an altar or a low column.

- [Does the Cascajal Block provide evidence of a written language of the Olmecs?](#)
- [The Stone Head of Guatemala that History Wants to Forget](#)
- [Forgotten Stones: Secrets of the Megalithic Quarries](#)



Monument 13 at La Venta. ([ancient-wisdom](#))

In Olmec, the foot is called "se", this symbol means to "lead or advance toward knowledge, or success." The "se" sign of the komo (cult) represents the beginning of the Olmec initiate's pursuit of knowledge.

Reading from top to bottom, the symbols on Monument 13 are: a circle kulu/ kaba (stone), nama (jaguar) and kuno (bird). The interpretation of this column while reading from left to right is "The advance toward success--power--for the initiate is obedience to the stone

cutters cult, jaguar cult, and the bird cult". It is also interesting to note that the jaguar mask association dominated the Olmec Gulf region.

The Role of the Komo

The Olmecs believed that their ancestors transformed into birds and jaguars (felines). This tradition led to the origin of the two major Olmec cult associations - Kuno (Bird) and Nama (Feline). These associations were called Gyo/Jo.

The Nama initiatory society was organized to maintain order within society. The members of this Jo were to ensure ceremonial unity and defeat sorcery. The leader of the Nama Jo wore a mask which combined totems of the komo and horns. The mask represented immense spiritual power.

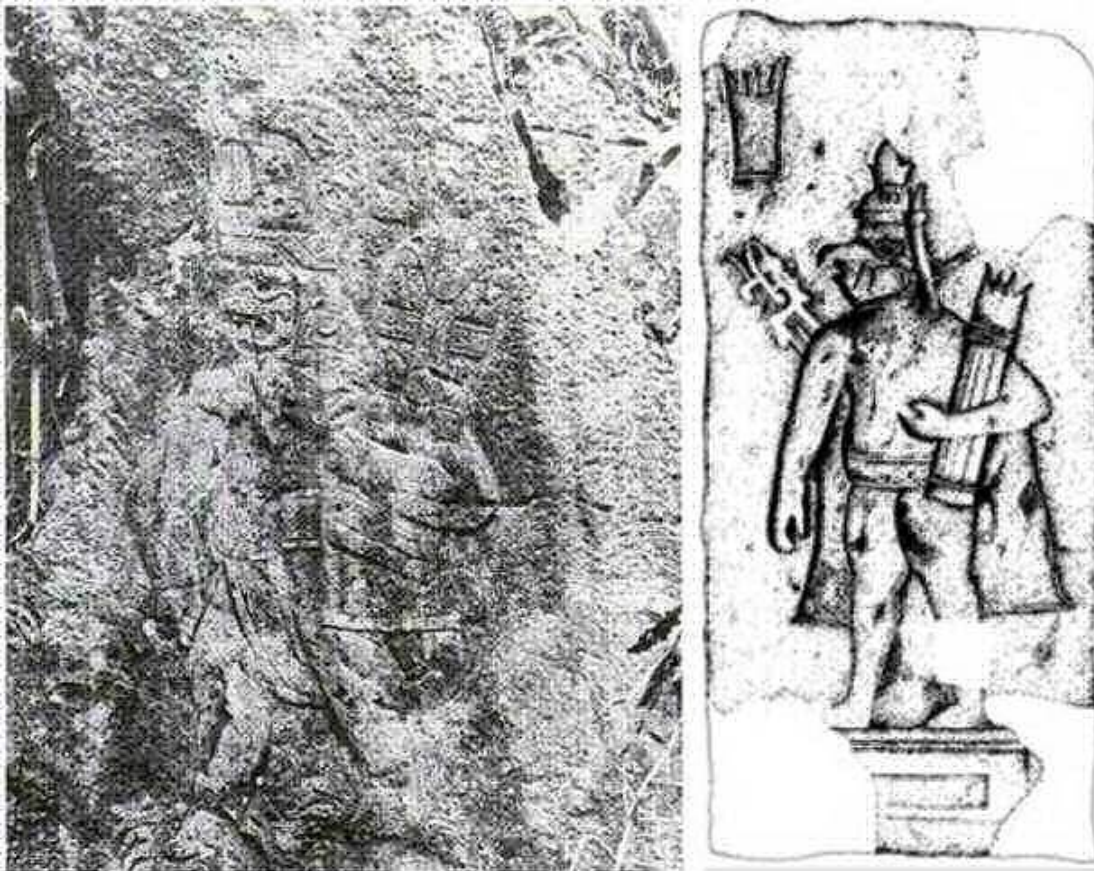
The komo was administered by sculptors. Their role was to guard society from people committing antisocial acts and protect people from malevolent spirits. The leader of the Jo cult association was the Komo-tigi 'chief of the komo.' The komo taught initiates leadership, self-sufficiency, military prowess, and scientific knowledge. The komo also acculturated Olmec children. Thus, the children in the komo were called tigi-denw: 'children of the tigi.' These children often served as tigi-tuguw "carriers of the torches." It is important to note that the image of the flame signified the luminous character of knowledge for the Olmecs. The torch-bearing children also belonged to the ntomo or n'domo. The ntomo association was charged with making the initiates "noble."



Sculpture of an Olmec child holding a torch. ([estudi-arte](#))

Bird and Jaguar Cults

In the central and southern Olmec regions, one finds that the bird mask association predominates - as typified by the Xoc bas relief of Chiapas, and the Bas Relief No. 2 of Chalcatzingo. Another bird mask cult association was located in the state of Guerrero, as evidenced by the human-bird figure of the stelae from San Miguel Amuco.



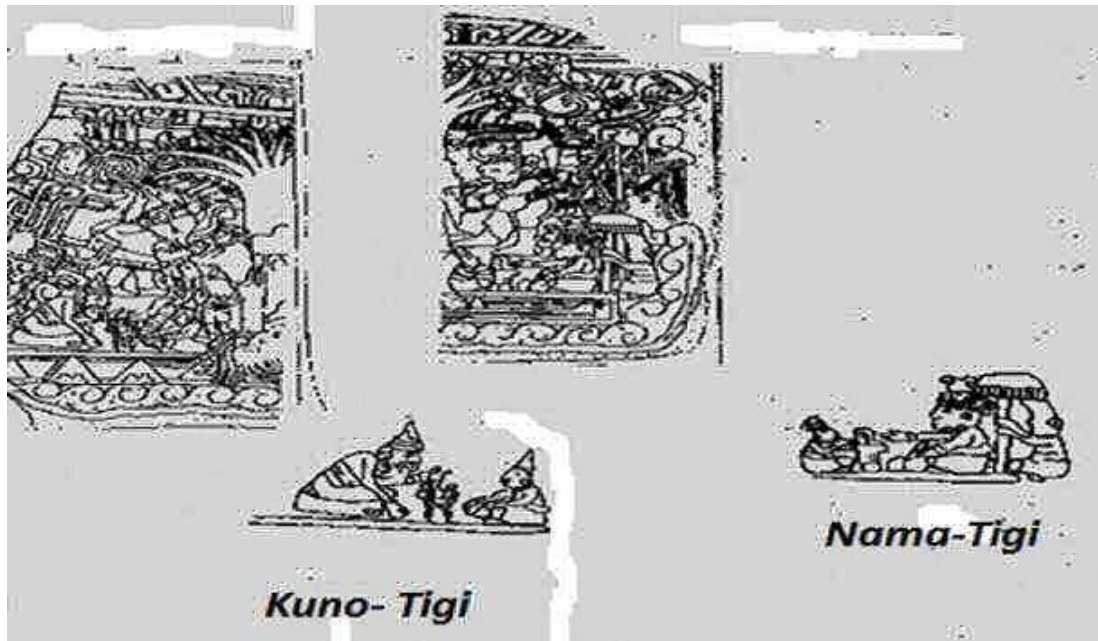
Left: Xoc Bas Relief from Chiapas. ([Book of Mormon Resources](#)) Right: Drawing of a human-bird figure from San Miguel Amuco. ([intrest.ru](#))

Izapa Stela No. 5 also depicts the Olmec cults. They represented the traditional leaders of the Bird and Jaguar cults on this stela.



A drawing of Izapa Stela No. 5. (Madman2001/ [CC BY 3.0](#))

The religious orders shown on Stela No. 5 are also mentioned on Monument 13. These Olmec cults were Nama, or the Human-Jaguar cult; and Kuno, or the Bird cult. The leader of the Nama cult was called the Nama-tigi, or Amatigi (head of the faith). The leader of the Kuno cult was the Kuno-tigi. These cult leaders initiated the Olmecs into the cults' mysteries.



The Olmec Cults represented on Izapa Stela No. 5. ([Author Provided](#))

Adults and Children in the Cults

The Kuno priest wears a conical hat. This hat is important evidence of ancient Mesoamerican religions. In *Africa and the Discovery of America* (1922, v.II: p.321), Leo Wiener asserts that the conical hat in Mesoamerica is associated with Amerindian priesthood and is a symbol of political and religious authority.

Acculturation of children was an important duty for the Olmec priesthood. As a result, one finds many depictions of children being provided knowledge by Olmec priests.

- [The mysterious civilization of the Olmecs](#)
- [Possible sacred maize object found in stream at Olmec site](#)
- [Olmecs, Ancient American Civilization with African Characteristics](#)



Children and Olmec priests. Bas-relief on the left side of Altar 5 from La Venta. (Ruben Charles/ [CC BY 2.0](#))

The child is very evident in Olmec art. To the Olmecs, childhood represented the primitive state of mankind, when man was pure and ignorant of nature. Thus, children also symbolize human beings when they left their creator's hands: uncircumcised and androgynous.

Adults respected children very much in the Olmec culture. This view is supported by the motifs on Altar No. 5 of La Venta - the Altar of Children. On this monument, one sees a person emerging from the stone altar with the glyph po gbe 'Pure Righteousness' on his headdress. He is carrying a babe in his arms resting on his lap.



A frontal view of Altar No. 5 from La Venta. (Ruben Charles/ [CC BY 2.0](#))

On the other side of the Altar of Children one can see two people, each with a different helmet style. These scenes suggest that the Olmec child was learning wisdom, as illustrated by the animated conversation between the child and the priest.

A priest and child are shown once again on the right-hand side. This time the priest has a snake on his helmet. Instead of carrying the child on his lap in this scene, the child is carried on the person's side and is wearing a jaguar mask. This indicates that once the child completed the initiation he was recognized as an individual to be respected and could give advice to adults.



Las Limas Monument 1, a greenstone figure of a youth holding a human-jaguar (were-jaguar) baby. This sculpture was found in Veracruz, Mexico. (O Cadena/ [CC BY SA 2.0](#))

In summary, the Olmec religion consisted of two principal cults: the Bird and Human-Jaguar cults. In addition to these cults, the Olmecs had an initiation tradition that

socialized the children into society. The tradition of child-initiation did not die with the Olmec people. It can be seen in Room 1 murals at Bonampak, for example, where a priest is depicted with a child - just like in Olmec iconography.



Detail of a Maya Bonampak mural. Note the priest and child on the upper right side.

[\(Boston University\)](#)

Top Image: Representation of the Olmec sky god "Itzamnaaj". Temple VI, Comalcalco, Tabasco, Mexico. Source: Alfonsobouchot/ [CC BY SA 4.0](#)

By [Clyde Winters](#)

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THE ISLAND OF THE FAY

By Edgar Allan Poe

Nullus enim locus sine genio est.—*Servius*.

"LA MUSIQUE," says Marmontel, in those "Contes Moraux" which in all our translations, we have insisted upon calling "Moral Tales," as if in mockery of their spirit—"la musique est le seul des talents qui jouissent de lui-meme; tous les autres veulent des temoins." He here confounds the pleasure derivable from sweet sounds with the capacity for creating them. No more than any other talent, is that for music susceptible of complete enjoyment, where there is no second party to appreciate its exercise. And it is only in common with other talents that it produces effects which may be fully enjoyed in solitude. The idea which the raconteur has either failed to entertain clearly, or has sacrificed in its expression to his national love of point, is, doubtless, the very tenable one that the higher order of music is the most thoroughly estimated when we are exclusively alone. The proposition, in this form, will be admitted at once by those who love the lyre for its own sake, and for its spiritual uses. But there is one pleasure still within the reach of fallen mortality and perhaps only one—which owes even more than does music to the accessory sentiment of seclusion. I mean the happiness experienced in the contemplation of natural scenery. In truth, the man who would behold aright the glory of God upon earth must in solitude behold that glory. To me, at least, the presence—not of human life only, but of life in any other form than that of the green things which grow upon the soil and are voiceless—is a stain upon the landscape—is at war with the genius of the scene. I love, indeed, to regard the dark valleys, and the gray rocks, and the waters that silently smile, and the forests that sigh in uneasy slumbers, and the proud watchful mountains that look down upon all,—I love to regard these as themselves but the colossal members of one vast animate and sentient whole—a whole whose form (that of the sphere) is the most perfect and most inclusive of all; whose path is among associate planets; whose meek handmaiden is the moon, whose mediate sovereign is the sun; whose life is eternity, whose thought is that of a God; whose enjoyment is knowledge; whose destinies are lost in immensity, whose cognizance of ourselves is akin with our own cognizance of the animalculae which infest the brain—a being which we, in consequence, regard as purely inanimate and material much in the same manner as these animalculae must thus regard us.

Our telescopes and our mathematical investigations assure us on every hand—notwithstanding the cant of the more ignorant of the priesthood—that space, and therefore

that bulk, is an important consideration in the eyes of the Almighty. The cycles in which the stars move are those best adapted for the evolution, without collision, of the greatest possible number of bodies. The forms of those bodies are accurately such as, within a given surface, to include the greatest possible amount of matter;—while the surfaces themselves are so disposed as to accommodate a denser population than could be accommodated on the same surfaces otherwise arranged. Nor is it any argument against bulk being an object with God, that space itself is infinite; for there may be an infinity of matter to fill it. And since we see clearly that the endowment of matter with vitality is a principle—indeed, as far as our judgments extend, the leading principle in the operations of Deity,—it is scarcely logical to imagine it confined to the regions of the minute, where we daily trace it, and not extending to those of the august. As we find cycle within cycle without end,—yet all revolving around one far-distant centre which is the God-head, may we not analogically suppose in the same manner, life within life,

the less within the greater, and all within the Spirit Divine? In short, we are madly erring, through self-esteem, in believing man, in either his temporal or future destinies, to be of more moment in the universe than that vast "clod of the valley" which he tills and contemns, and to which he denies a soul for no more profound reason than that he does not behold it in operation.

These fancies, and such as these, have always given to my meditations among the mountains and the forests, by the rivers and the ocean, a tinge of what the everyday world would not fail to term fantastic. My wanderings amid such scenes have been many, and far-searching, and often solitary; and the interest with which I have strayed through many a dim, deep valley, or gazed into the reflected Heaven of many a bright lake, has been an interest greatly deepened by the thought that I have strayed and gazed alone. What flippant Frenchman was it who said in allusion to the well-known work of Zimmerman, that, "*la solitude est une belle chose; mais il faut quelqu'un pour vous dire que la solitude est une belle chose?*" The epigram cannot be gainsayed; but the necessity is a thing that does not exist.

It was during one of my lonely journeyings, amid a far distant region of mountain locked within mountain, and sad rivers and melancholy tarn writhing or sleeping within all—that I chanced upon a certain rivulet and island. I came upon them suddenly in the leafy June, and threw myself upon the turf, beneath the branches of an unknown odorous shrub, that I might doze as I contemplated the scene. I felt that thus only should I look upon it—such was the character of phantasm which it wore.

On all sides—save to the west, where the sun was about sinking—arose the verdant walls of the forest. The little river which turned sharply in its course, and was thus immediately lost to sight, seemed to have no exit from its prison, but to be absorbed by the deep green foliage of the trees to the east—while in the opposite quarter (so it appeared to me as I lay at length and glanced upward) there poured down noiselessly and continuously into the valley, a rich golden and crimson waterfall from the sunset fountains of the sky.

About midway in the short vista which my dreamy vision took in, one small circular

island, profusely verdured, reposed upon the bosom of the stream.

So blended bank and shadow there

That each seemed pendulous in air—so mirror-like was the glassy water, that it was scarcely possible to say at what point upon the slope of the emerald turf its crystal dominion began.

My position enabled me to include in a single view both the eastern and western extremities of the islet; and I observed a singularly-marked difference in their aspects. The latter was all one radiant harem of garden beauties. It glowed and blushed beneath the eyes of the slant sunlight, and fairly laughed with flowers. The grass was short, springy, sweet-scented, and Asphodel-interspersed. The trees were lithe, mirthful, erect—bright, slender, and graceful,—of eastern figure and foliage, with bark smooth, glossy, and parti-colored. There seemed a deep sense of life and joy about all; and although no airs blew from out the heavens, yet every thing had motion through the gentle sweepings to and fro of innumerable butterflies, that might have been mistaken for tulips with wings.

The other or eastern end of the isle was whelmed in the blackest shade. A sombre, yet beautiful and peaceful gloom here pervaded all things. The trees were dark in color, and mournful in form and attitude, wreathing themselves into sad, solemn, and spectral shapes that conveyed ideas of mortal sorrow and untimely death. The grass wore the deep tint of the cypress, and the heads of its blades hung droopingly, and hither and thither among it were many small unsightly hillocks, low and narrow, and not very long, that had the aspect of graves, but were not; although over and all about them the rue and the rosemary clambered. The shade of the trees fell heavily upon the water, and seemed to bury itself therein, impregnating the depths of the element with darkness. I fancied that each shadow, as the sun descended lower and lower, separated itself sullenly from the trunk that gave it birth, and thus became absorbed by the stream; while other shadows issued momentarily from the trees, taking the place of their predecessors thus entombed.

This idea, having once seized upon my fancy, greatly excited it, and I lost myself forthwith in revery. "If ever island were enchanted," said I to myself, "this is it. This is the haunt of the few gentle Fays who remain from the wreck of the race. Are these green tombs theirs?—or do they yield up their sweet lives as mankind yield up their own? In dying, do they not rather waste away mournfully, rendering unto God, little by little, their existence, as these trees render up shadow after shadow, exhausting their substance unto dissolution? What the wasting tree is to the water that imbibes its shade, growing thus blacker by what it preys upon, may not the life of the Fay be to the death which engulfs it?"

As I thus mused, with half-shut eyes, while the sun sank rapidly to rest, and eddying currents careered round and round the island, bearing upon their bosom large, dazzling, white flakes of the bark of the sycamore—flakes which, in their multiform positions upon the water, a quick imagination might have converted into anything it pleased, while I thus mused, it appeared to me that the form of one of those very Fays about whom I had been pondering made its way slowly into the darkness from out the light at the western end of

the island. She stood erect in a singularly fragile canoe, and urged it with the mere phantom of an oar. While within the influence of the lingering sunbeams, her attitude seemed indicative of joy—but sorrow deformed it as she passed within the shade. Slowly she glided along, and at length rounded the islet and re-entered the region of light. "The revolution which has just been made by the Fay," continued I, musingly, "is the cycle of the brief year of her life. She has floated through her winter and through her summer. She is a year nearer unto Death; for I did not fail to see that, as she came into the shade, her shadow fell from her, and was swallowed up in the dark water, making its blackness more black."

And again the boat appeared and the Fay, but about the attitude of the latter there was more of care and uncertainty and less of elastic joy. She floated again from out the light and into the gloom (which deepened momentarily) and again her shadow fell from her into the ebony water, and became absorbed into its blackness. And again and again she made the circuit of the island, (while the sun rushed down to his slumbers), and at each issuing into the light there was more sorrow about her person, while it grew feebler and far fainter and more indistinct, and at each passage into the gloom there fell from her a darker shade, which became whelmed in a shadow more black. But at length when the sun had utterly departed, the Fay, now the mere ghost of her former self, went disconsolately with her boat into the region of the ebony flood, and that she issued thence at all I cannot say, for darkness fell over all things and I beheld her magical figure no more.

“The Truth About IQ Tests”

They work, but not in the way you imagine.

Understand the strengths and limitations of cognitive tests – and what it really means to be gifted

(By Maria Clara Rossini and Luiza Lopes, March 20, 2026, 10:54 a.m.)

On the eve of turning 39, designer Cícero Moraes did something he had never considered before: an IQ test.

The decision did not stem from curiosity about his intelligence. Months earlier, he had begun experiencing intense anxiety attacks with no clear explanation. His life was stable—marriage, work, and routine were all going normally—but something felt off.

Since adolescence, Cícero had not had similar episodes. When he mentioned what was happening to his wife, she suggested it might be a midlife crisis. Moraes began researching the topic. In search of answers, he delved into readings about highly sensitive people—individuals with particularly intense emotional and sensory perception.

Many of these texts linked these characteristics to High Abilities/Giftedness (AH/SD), a condition generally defined by an above-average IQ. “I always thought being gifted meant that stereotype of the math genius capable of doing absurd calculations in their head,” says Moraes. “I never saw myself that way.”

He found descriptions that seemed familiar to him, such as difficulty ignoring environmental stimuli, heightened sensitivity to sounds or lights, and ease in perceiving changes in other people’s emotional states.

Curiosity led him to seek a neuropsychological evaluation. The battery of tests, which lasted weeks, included various instruments used to assess cognitive functioning—among them, the IQ test. Moraes scored 142 (the general average is 100), a performance better than 99.75% of the population.

The result allowed him to join international high-IQ societies, such as Mensa—the oldest and best-known, founded in England in 1946. In Brazil, the branch brings together more than 6,000 members. All must score in the top 2% of the Brazilian population on intelligence tests. The organization promotes meetings, lectures, and activities.

Before joining, Moraes imagined finding a group of brilliant minds discussing complex ideas and producing major projects. “I thought: if you gather a bunch of very intelligent people in a room, something extraordinary is bound to come out of it,” he says.

That’s not what he found. According to him, Mensa’s main role is not to bring together geniuses to propose solutions, but to create a space for coexistence among people who have a cognitive processing different from the norm. “When these people step out of the general world and enter an environment where almost everyone has similar characteristics, they feel embraced.”

At these meetings, Cícero says giftedness appears less as a spectacular talent and more as a different way of deciphering the world. Not everyone is a scientist, inventor, or academic prodigy. “There are all kinds of intelligent people,” he says. “Some are very productive, others not so much. Scoring high on an IQ test does not automatically mean you will revolutionize some field.”

The acronym “IQ” (for “intelligence quotient”) is part of popular culture—generally understood as synonymous with genius. But the story is not that simple. To understand what the IQ test actually measures, it is necessary to know the evolution of the concept of intelligence itself and the strategies science has used to assess human cognition.

(Image caption: Various measuring tools arranged side by side on a black background. You can see calipers, squares, protractors, compasses, rulers, tape measures, scales, oximeters, and thermometers. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

A Brief History of Intelligence

The word “intelligence” comes from the Latin *intelligentia*, derived from the verb *intelligere*, meaning “to understand,” “to perceive,” or “to discern.” For centuries, the term was used in philosophy and common sense to refer broadly to the human capacity to understand the world, reason, and make decisions.

At the end of the 19th century, however, some scientists began trying to turn this abstract idea into something that could be measured objectively.

One of the first to attempt this was the English statistician Francis Galton, cousin of Charles Darwin. For him, more intelligent people had an innate mental capacity linked to traits such as reflexes, muscle strength, or head size, which would be largely determined by heredity.

Galton founded the world’s first mental testing center. But after collecting data on various physical characteristics, he failed to demonstrate the correlation he expected between these factors and intelligence. He eventually abandoned that line of research.

The statistician was also the first to use the word *eugenics* in 1883. The term described the idea of biologically improving the human population by encouraging reproduction among people considered “superior” and discouraging it among those seen as “inferior.” He believed that differences in ability between individuals were mainly the result of biological inheritance and that, through selective reproduction, it would be possible to “perfect” humanity. Over the course of the 20th century, science abandoned this outrageous idea.

(Image caption: An old scale on a yellow background. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

The British psychologist Charles Spearman took another path. In 1904, he observed that students who did well in one school subject usually also performed well in others, even when the content was different. It’s the nerd in the class who excels in every subject. From this, Spearman concluded that there must be a general mental capacity behind the ability to do well in everything.

He called this capacity the *g* factor (from “general”). In addition, there would also be specific abilities—such as calculation, vocabulary, or memory—that would vary

more among themselves. (A student might always get 10 in math but around 7 in Portuguese, for example.) These were called s factors, which would add to the g factor.

The following year, psychologists Alfred Binet and Théodore Simon took a further step. The French duo published the first widely used intelligence test, the Binet-Simon scale. Based mainly on language exercises, its goal was to identify children with learning difficulties in schools.

The scale also adopted the concept of mental age, which estimated a child's cognitive development by comparing the tasks they could perform with those expected for certain ages. The test spread to the United States and began to be used in public schools, immigrant screening, and even in courts.

In 1912, the German psychologist William Stern coined the acronym IQ, short for Intelligenzquotient (“intelligence quotient” in German). The term refers to the calculation that divides the estimated mental age on the Binet-Simon scale by the person's actual age. The result is then multiplied by 100.

(Image caption: A yellow measuring tape on an indigo blue background. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

Over time, the tests were improved. Psychologist David Wechsler created a new battery of questions that assessed different types of abilities, both verbal and nonverbal, and for different ages. These are the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS). They were widely adopted and are still considered the gold standard for IQ tests.

But the debate about what intelligence is did not stop there. From the 1940s onward, other researchers began proposing more complex answers.

Psychologist Raymond Cattell suggested that it could be divided into two main types: fluid intelligence, related to the ability to reason in new situations and solve novel problems, and crystallized intelligence, which corresponds to knowledge accumulated throughout life.

Here is an example: in school you learned about past wars, which today are part of your crystallized intelligence. Now suppose (lol) you are living in a time of geopolitical tension. You identify common characteristics with other historical

contexts and can use fluid intelligence to draw parallels between the present and the past.

According to Cattell, while fluid intelligence tends to decline with aging, crystallized intelligence usually remains stable or even grows, as it depends on factors such as access to education, cultural stimuli, and teaching quality.

Decades later, one of Cattell's students, John Horn, expanded this proposal by suggesting that intelligence involves several broad mental abilities, such as memory and information processing speed.

In the 1990s, psychologist John Carroll proposed a hierarchical three-level model: at the top would be a general mental capacity, similar to Spearman's g factor; below it, various broad cognitive abilities; and at the base, more specific abilities used in particular tasks, such as lexical knowledge and attention control.

In 1993, these ideas were combined into a single model known as the Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) theory. It organizes intelligence as a hierarchical structure, with a general capacity at the top and various broad cognitive abilities—such as reasoning, memory, verbal comprehension, and processing speed—below it.

(Image caption: Chart of the Cattell-Horn-Carroll model of intelligence on a blue background. – Juliana Krauss/Superinteressante)

Modern IQ tests have been influenced by this theory. It has been used to interpret different cognitive abilities separately, allowing for a more detailed profile of each person's mental capacities.

“As test batteries [such as the WAIS and WISC] were reissued, they incorporated the CHC model to explain what is being measured,” says Ricardo Primi, coordinator of the Laboratory of Psychological and Educational Assessment (LabAPE). “Today they present the global IQ, but also second-level intelligence scores, such as working memory, crystallized knowledge, processing speed, among others.”

Understanding the Test

When you buy a ruler, you don't worry whether the numbers written on it are really one centimeter apart. There is a general trust that the ruler will measure what it claims to measure. This is only possible thanks to the National Institute of

Metrology, Quality and Technology (Inmetro), which establishes technical standards for measuring instruments.

The System for Evaluation of Psychological Tests (Satepsi) is the Inmetro of psychology. It is an agency of the Federal Council of Psychology that verifies whether the instruments (the tests) used in psychological assessments measure the intended variables. This applies, for example, to the psychotechnical test for the Detran (traffic department), which measures attention, reaction time, and other cognitive functions important for driving. It also applies to the Burnout Identification Scale, which indicates when there is physical and mental exhaustion caused by work.

IQ tests are part of this list, including the Wechsler Intelligence Scale, which consists of a set of subtests that assess different cognitive functions. It must be administered by a psychologist—forget internet tests—and usually lasts more than one session. The cost varies depending on the type of test and the professional. The WISC costs between R\$ 1,000 and R\$ 3,000.

(Image caption: Table with examples of exercises in cognitive tests on a gray background. – Juliana Krauss/Superinteressante)

For a test to be approved by Satepsi, it is important that it has construct validity (measures what it claims to measure), content validity (covers different facets of what it proposes to measure), and criterion validity (predicts or correlates with real-world outcomes). A person who scores well on an IQ test tends to have good academic performance, which is an example of criterion validity.

Tests also have an expiration date. Every so often (usually 10, 15, or 20 years), they must undergo a new battery of validation studies on a population sample. This is important to check whether the tests continue to function even in new historical and social contexts.

Using a test validated by studies is essential—but it is not everything. The clinical interview is also an important part of cognitive assessment. “Sometimes a complaint of inattention stems from anxiety, depressed mood, stress, or overload. These are variables that influence cognitive performance,” says Antonio Serafim, a professor who teaches intelligence assessment courses at USP. “It can give the

impression that the person is inattentive or has some deficit, when in reality there are other factors behind it.”

Considering possible “external” factors that may influence the test result, the psychologist should choose the best tool to evaluate that person. The subtests of the WISC and WAIS, for example, allow the professional to differentiate the patient’s cognitive abilities—someone may excel in processing speed but have difficulty retrieving long-term memories, for instance. In many cases, this information is more valuable than detecting a single number associated with general intelligence.

“IQ tests can help identify people with intellectual disability and think about a pedagogical program, or people with high abilities and giftedness,” says Serafim. “I usually advise not to include the score; just write ‘intelligence above average,’ ‘below average,’ and so on [...] The IQ score has always been a discriminator.”

What the Points (in IQ) Mean

To explain this topic, let’s use the test considered the gold standard in psychometrics. The Wechsler Intelligence Scale scores go up to 160. Various websites claim this would be Einstein’s IQ number, but that’s nonsense. There is no evidence that the creator of the Theory of Relativity ever took a cognitive test at any point in his life. This joins the list of myths about the scientist, along with the story that he failed math in school (also a lie).

The number is a way of quantifying performance on the cognitive test. The higher the score, the better the person performed compared to others. Tests are standardized so that the average IQ in any reference population is exactly 100. This is a legacy of William Stern, who established the intelligence quotient as the division between the actual result and the expected result for a person of that age, multiplied by 100.

Example: an 8-year-old child took the test and the result was equivalent to what is expected of an 8-year-old. $8/8 \times 100 = 100$, which is considered adequate. But if the child demonstrates ability equivalent to a 9-year-old, the result will be higher, since $9/8 \times 100 = 112.5$. The standard deviation is 15 points up or down, so they would still be within the average.

Thus, a 6-year-old and a 9-year-old can both have an IQ of 100, but it does not mean they had the same performance on the test. The 9-year-old “got” more right, since they have more vocabulary and repertoire thanks to their extra 3 years of learning. Today the concept of “mental age” is no longer used—the IQ tests use statistical methods to arrive at the final result.

This mathematical operation is called standardization. It can be done considering the person’s age, as in the example above, or according to schooling, social context, or test difficulty.

The Enem (Brazil’s national high school exam) itself uses similar logic: if in one year the questions are easier, the tendency is for all participants to perform better. Therefore, the scores are standardized downward, keeping an average similar to years when the test was more difficult. In the case of Enem, the average is always 500.

When we apply IQ tests in the real world, we observe that most people fall within the average of 85 to 115 points. As we approach the extremes, the percentage decreases, making it rarer to find people with very high or very low IQ. This distribution forms a Gaussian or normal curve. It is typical of measurements that take multiple factors into account. In the case of IQ, the result depends on a mix of schooling, environment, and genetics.

(Image caption: Graph of IQ distribution in the population on a gray background. – Juliana Krauss/Superinteressante)

Scores are periodically normalized through validation studies, in which the tests are applied to a population sample. This means that every so often we “update” the average so that it remains 100, even if people’s performance changes over time. And it has changed.

When analyzing test results, psychologist James Flynn noticed that the hit rate increased over the decades in various populations. This general improvement in IQ test scores was called the Flynn Effect. This means that someone with an IQ of 100 in the 1950s would have a lower score if they took today’s tests. And someone with an IQ of 100 today would perform better if they could take the test from the past.

There is no consensus on the reasons for this effect, but some explanations include the increased complexity of modern society and improvements in quality of life, since more people today have access to nutrition, health, and education. We know that part of intelligence is genetic in origin; but we also know that basic conditions are necessary for it to develop.

Tests are also updated to incorporate contemporary studies and theories about what psychology understands as intelligence. Some abilities are still being studied and validated and are generally not measured in IQ tests. One of them is emotional intelligence, a recent concept that describes the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions. Other abilities not measured (mainly for practical reasons) are olfactory, gustatory, and tactile intelligence, which relate to sensory perception.

The fact is that validated tests measure some cognitive abilities well established by science, such as visual processing, quantitative knowledge, verbal processing, among others. IQ tests are part of intelligence assessment, but they do not summarize it completely. Their importance lies mainly in helping to identify people who differ from the population average.

Scores below 70 points on the test may indicate intellectual disability, suggesting that changes in the learning approach may be necessary (schooling increases IQ scores). Scores above 130 are indicative of High Abilities/Giftedness (AH/SD)—which may also require differentiated education.

(Image caption: A square, protractor, and compass on a yellow background. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

What Giftedness Is (and What It Is Not)

Brazilian legislation defines gifted individuals as people who “present high intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotor, and artistic potential, either individually or combined.” The condition has little to do with the caricatured image of the “genius” who solves equations in their head and knows the flag of Kiribati by heart.

Scoring above 130 on an IQ test is an indicator, but not a certificate of giftedness. There are people who score higher and are not considered gifted, and the opposite also occurs. A set of evidence is necessary for identification—both

indicators that can be measured by cognitive tests and the individual's social context, developmental history, and behavior.

Some studies suggest that the intense cognitive processing typical of gifted people is usually accompanied by equally strong emotional intensity. Simple mistakes can cause disproportionate frustration. Even when they get almost everything right, they fixate on what they couldn't solve.

It is also common to experience a persistent feeling of social displacement. Interests different from peers, heightened sensitivity, and a constant need for intellectual stimulation can make it difficult to find someone to talk to.

According to Patrícia Schneider, psychologist and secretary of Mensa Brazil, "it's like putting an adult to dine with a group of teenagers: the interests don't match." Gifted people need more stimulation. They run the risk of losing interest in school or disguising their behavior to be accepted.

The picture becomes even more complex when giftedness appears alongside another neurodevelopmental condition—such as ADHD or autism. The phenomenon is known as twice exceptionality. One characteristic can mask the other: attention difficulties, for example, can hide high cognitive abilities (or vice versa).

That is why identifying this profile requires careful evaluation. Giftedness is not considered a disorder, but a form of neurodivergence. Specialists prefer to speak of identification, not diagnosis.

(Image caption: Two thermometers on an indigo blue background. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

Giftedness is very different from the extremely high scores that sometimes appear in the media—such as those attributed to mathematician Terence Tao (225–230) or writer Marilyn vos Savant (228). These numbers usually come from outdated scales or inflated estimates based on reports about the person.

Reliable IQ tests follow the statistical distribution seen earlier. Values around 160 are already extremely rare. And since there are few individuals in that range, it is difficult to gather large enough samples to calibrate and validate higher

measurements. Without sufficient data, statistical reliability drops. That is why there are no scientifically accepted measurements of IQ above 160.

The Ghost of Eugenics

How much of personality and human characteristics can be attributed to genetics, and how much depends on environmental factors?

The most accepted answer today is that between 40% and 60% of the difference in intelligence between people is genetic. This metric comes mainly from different studies with siblings. Identical twins, who share the same DNA, tend to have closer IQ scores than fraternal twins, who share only half the genetics. Even identical twins raised in different families tend to have similar IQ scores, especially when they reach adulthood.

The expression of intelligence is polygenic—that is, many small pieces of DNA add up to contribute to cognitive performance. One variant may give you a good dopamine pathway, providing greater motivation; or you may have genes favorable to the production of the protein BDNF, a kind of fertilizer for neurons that stimulates neuroplasticity. This is the brain’s ability to form new neural connections—something linked to learning and reasoning.

Genetics, however, is only half the conversation. “If the environment in which the individual is inserted lacks education, lacks nutrients early in life, is not favorable, the genetic capacity is not explored,” says geneticist Daiane Simão.

The debate between innate behavior and that influenced by upbringing was popularized by Francis Galton—the same researcher who coined the term eugenics. The mistake at the time was to bet everything on genetics and very little on the environment—even though both play important roles. “At the beginning of the 20th century, the eugenics movement was gigantic,” says José Roberto Goldim, a bioethics professor at UFRGS. “All the thinking that served as the basis for Nazi eugenic policy, which culminated in the 1930s, already existed.”

(Image caption: A scale representing justice on a yellow background. – Felipe Del Rio/Superinteressante)

Intelligence and IQ were at the root of eugenic thinking. In the United States, it served as the basis for the *Buck v. Bell* (1927) court decision, which ordered the

forced sterilization of women from a family considered unintelligent. The case set precedents for eugenic laws—which resulted in the sterilization of 60,000 people in the country.

Among the American elite, a movement nicknamed “new eugenics” is growing. It consists of in vitro fertilization even when the couple has no reproductive difficulties, so that parents can choose certain characteristics of the child. These range from excluding embryos with genetic diseases (such as Down syndrome) to selecting eye color, height, and cognitive ability.

Some assisted reproduction companies in Silicon Valley, such as Herasight and Nucleus Genomics, analyze the DNA of each fertilized embryo and provide the probability of each one’s IQ potential. Although there are studies associating genome segments with cognition, the result of gene interaction is complex—and has a considerable margin of error.

“When selecting characteristics, we are defining what is good for humanity. Today we decide on intelligence; in Nazism they decided on an ethnicity,” says Simão. “Is it a consensus that being intelligent is good for everyone? Or do people prefer to be, for example, happy? They are not synonyms, and we are not sure of that benefit.”

Herasight tests can cost US\$ 50,000 (R\$ 260,000). For Goldim, this turns embryos into products. “The essence of eugenic thinking is the same. Before it had a political and ideological purpose, and now there is commercial logic.”

The problem with IQ is not in finding scientific ways to define and measure human intelligence. It is in how the results are interpreted. Cognition tests are tools that can be used to identify and welcome neurodivergent people—but also to create a false sense of superiority. Use them wisely.

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Acknowledgments: Alexandre Valverde, psychiatrist; Felipe Novaes, psychologist; Marcelo Haas, psychologist; Julio Cesar Gonçalves Campos Filho, president of Mensa Brasil; Letícia Morais Bueno de Camargo, biomedical scientist and PhD in Pharmacology from the Institute of Biomedical Sciences at USP; Patrícia Rzezak, neuropsychologist; Priscila Zaia, psychologist