

BOTÁNICA APOKALÍPTICA
Elsa Muñoz
Pecha Projects | April 11 - July 11, 2025
VIP Opening Reception April 11, 2025



Elsa Muñoz, Superbloom, 60" x 72", oil on canvas, 2024

For Immediate Release:

Columbus, Ohio – March 14, 2025 – **Pecha Projects**, the newly launched curatorial space founded by **Michelle Brandt**, founder of [Brandt Gallery](#), is proud to present ***Botánica Apokaliptica***, a solo exhibition featuring a new body of work by **Elsa Muñoz** and curated by **Michelle Ruiz**. Expanding on her *Controlled Burn* series, Muñoz explores themes of destruction, beauty, and botanical futurism, delving into how nature endures and transforms in the face of environmental upheaval.

The exhibition features nine *Fire Follower* paintings, depicting flowers that bloom in the aftermath of wildfires, supernatural messengers revealing cosmic truths. Drawing from the etymology of “apocalypse” the Greek *apokálypsis*, meaning “a revelation.”

Alongside these works, Muñoz debuts her *Future Flowers* paper sculptures, envisioning plant species that might evolve in response to climate shifts. These hybrid organisms, blending floral and marine characteristics, draw from the biological concept of chimerism, imagining a world where marine life adapts to land-based survival.

For over a decade, Muñoz has examined ecological transformation, from her *Controlled Burn* series, which portrays forests undergoing prescribed fires, to her *Fire Follower* paintings, inspired by the regenerative flora that emerged after California’s record-breaking 2020 wildfires. **The exhibition also reflects on present and future environmental crises, including the 2025 LA wildfires, underscoring nature’s resilience amid devastation.**

“Learning about fire-following plants and their ability to thrive in the harshest conditions gave me hope for the earth’s future,” says Muñoz. “Even if that future doesn’t include us.”

Muñoz integrates poetry into her exhibition, engaging in a dialogue with **Joy Harjo’s *Map to the Next World***, a poem that calls for a reconnection with ancestral wisdom and a renewed acknowledgment of the

earth's sacredness. **In response, Muñoz presents her own poem, printed on sheer organza fabric, 11 feet tall and 4.3 feet wide.** Suspended from the gallery ceiling, the ethereal installation becomes a hauntingly beautiful presence, echoing Harjo's themes while reflecting on nature's intelligence and the wonders of the world to come.

Botánica Apokaliptica offers a meditation on nature's capacity to transform and persist. The work inspires deep reflection on the fragile yet tenacious beauty of the world and the possibilities that lie beyond collapse. This exhibition delicately illuminates themes such as destruction, migration, plant technologies, beauty, indigenous plant medicine, and botanical futurism.

About the Artist: Elsa Muñoz (b. 1983) is a Mexican-American artist born and raised on the South Side of Chicago. She currently divides her time between Chicago, Illinois, and Madrid, Spain. Her work explores the intersection of deep ecology, ecomysticism, dreamwork, spirituality, and healing. Muñoz earned her BFA in oil painting from the American Academy of Art in 2006. She has presented 11 solo exhibitions, including at the National Museum of Mexican Art and the Union League Club of Chicago, and has participated in numerous group exhibitions across the United States. She was recently awarded a SPARK Grant from the Chicago Artists Coalition and received the Helen and Tim Meier Foundation for the Arts Achievement Award. Her work is held in notable collections, including DePaul Art Museum (Chicago), the National Museum of Mexican Art (Chicago), and the private collection of Martin Castro, Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights under President Barack Obama.

About the Curator: Michelle Ruiz is a Chicago-born curator and cultural worker with over 17 years of experience in visual arts management. Specializing in advancing BIPOC artists, she focuses on art acquisitions, civic engagement, and social impact initiatives. As the founder of Elle Art Consulting, Ruiz curates collections for corporate and residential clients and manages large-scale projects for artists. She previously served as Program Coordinator for the US Latinx Art Forum and Project Manager & Corporate Art Curator at Gallery 1871, specializing in healthcare, hospitality, and corporate art collections. Ruiz is a board member of Connecting Dots for Latinx Professionals, a 2025 Mujeres de HACE Entrepreneurs Program fellow, and the 2024 Leadership Institute Fellow for the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures. She holds a B.A. in Visual Arts Management from Columbia College Chicago, with certificates in Art as Global Business from Sotheby's Institute of Art and Arts & Cultural Strategy from the University of Pennsylvania.

Pecha Projects: Pecha Projects is an art space dedicated to fostering experiential artistic endeavors. It serves as a platform for artists and curators to explore and expand the boundaries of their work. Pecha Projects was conceived as a space that embodies the connectedness and healing found through the arts. Inspired by a visit to Michoacán, Mexico, where founder Michelle Brandt experienced a cultural ceremonial festival of the Purépecha people, whom she descends on her mother's side, the gallery reflects the rich visual and auditory experience of that moment. This experience became the foundation for Pecha Projects, a space where the intersectionality of art and culture can thrive. In addition to supporting experimental practices, the gallery is committed to presenting culturally significant exhibitions and programming that highlight diverse narratives and artistic traditions.

Gallery Hours: Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1 - 5 p.m. And by appointment. **Email** brgalleries@gmail.com to schedule an appointment.

Press Contact: Michelle Brandt, Director, Brandt Gallery / Pecha Projects - p. 614.223.1655