

Flora Incognita

Celebrating 15 Years of Espace_L

David Elia, Marius Margot, Vivianne van Singer,
Heberth Sobral and Vasilis Zografos

Opening on September 17, 2026

Exhibition from September 18 to October 24, 2026

Opening hours: Tuesdays to Saturday from 11 to 6pm, and by appointment

Born in Rio de Janeiro and based in Geneva, Leticia Maciel has developed a curatorial practice shaped by movement between cultures. Since founding Espace_L in 2011, she has cultivated a space for artistic exchange between Brazil and Europe, bringing together contemporary practices from different cultural contexts. Over the past fifteen years, the gallery has become a place where diverse artistic voices meet, challenge one another, and generate new forms of dialogue.

The title *Flora Incognita* evokes the unknown or yet-to-be-classified plant world. Here, it becomes a metaphor for artistic practices that resist fixed categories and invite new ways of seeing. The exhibition embraces the idea of the Wild Garden as a space where diversity grows freely, without rigid order or predetermined hierarchies, and it reflects Leticia Maciel's curatorial vision and the philosophy that has shaped Espace_L since its foundation. Like such a garden, it develops through proximity rather than taxonomy. Diversity is not illustrated; it is cultivated.

Ceramics forms a central thread within the exhibition. In the works of Heberth Sobral, Vasilis Zografos and David Elia, clay becomes a material of memory and transformation. Shaped by earth and fire, it echoes the exhibition's reflection on encounter, migration and continual reinvention. Alongside his ceramic works, Elia's cyanotypes investigate botanical archives and historical systems of classification, while Vivianne van Singer explores the transformative qualities of colour and perception, and Marius Margot imagines speculative vegetal ecologies where nature and fiction converge, resonating with the exhibition's idea of *Flora Incognita*, a vegetal world that remains open, mutable and continually reinvented through fiction.

David Elia investigates the intertwined histories of botany, science and cultural exchange through archival research and historical systems of classification. By connecting botanical imagery with the legacies of industrialization, colonial trade and cultural hybridization, his work reveals nature as a field of continual transformation, where memory, ecology and cultural history coexist.

Marius Margot's paintings introduce recurring vegetal forms derived from the visual vocabulary of video games. These fictional organisms inhabit imagined ecosystems where the organic and the digital converge. Expanding the narrative space of the paintings, they invite viewers to imagine unfamiliar forms of life.

espace_L

art contemporain

Vivianne van Singer explores the expressive potential of colour as a transformative force. Her work evokes organic processes through subtle chromatic relationships, transparency and light. Colour unfolds as a dynamic field of perception, where atmospheric variations and delicate tonal transitions continually reshape the viewer's experience. Her work suggests that transformation can emerge through perception itself, revealing the living qualities of colour as an ever-evolving visual language.

Heberth Sobral constructs exuberant visual worlds in which ceramics and painting intertwine. Playmobil forms merge into hybrid landscapes that dissolve the boundaries between nature and imagination. Inspired by Afro-Brazilian visual culture, his works propose fluid ecosystems where material, image and symbolism coexist.

Working across painting and ceramic assemblage, Zografos constructs imagined landscapes where archaeology, nature and cultural memory become inseparable. Ceramic fragments, porcelain figurines and found objects are brought together into new visual constellations that blur the boundaries between natural history and cultural invention. Rather than preserving the past, his works reactivate it, proposing memory as a living terrain that continuously generates new relationships.

Ultimately, *Flora Incognita* proposes espace_L itself as a wild garden: a place where artistic practices rooted in different histories, geographies and sensibilities encounter one another through openness rather than classification. The exhibition reaffirms a curatorial vision grounded in openness, curiosity and the conviction that contemporary art flourishes through, dialogue and unexpected affinities, where differences are cultivated.

David Elia

Born in 1982 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Lives and works between Rio de Janeiro and South of France

David Elia investigates the intersections of art, science, and cultural history through works that explore plants, landscapes, and archival material. A central pillar of Elia's practice is the application of *Werner's Nomenclature of Colour* (1814). The standard scientific manual used by Charles Darwin. Elia utilizes this historical index as a conceptual tool to bridge early scientific taxonomy with the legacies of historical trade. His practice examines the histories of botanical exchange, industrialization, colonial trade, and cultural hybridization, constructing new narratives that connect ecology with collective memory. Educated at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and the Domus Academy in Milan, Elia recently developed research on Rio de Janeiro's urban forests during the TAL Residency (2026). His work is held in the collections of the Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (NMNM), the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, the Museum of Arts & Design in New York, the François Pinault Collection, and the Elton John Art Collection.

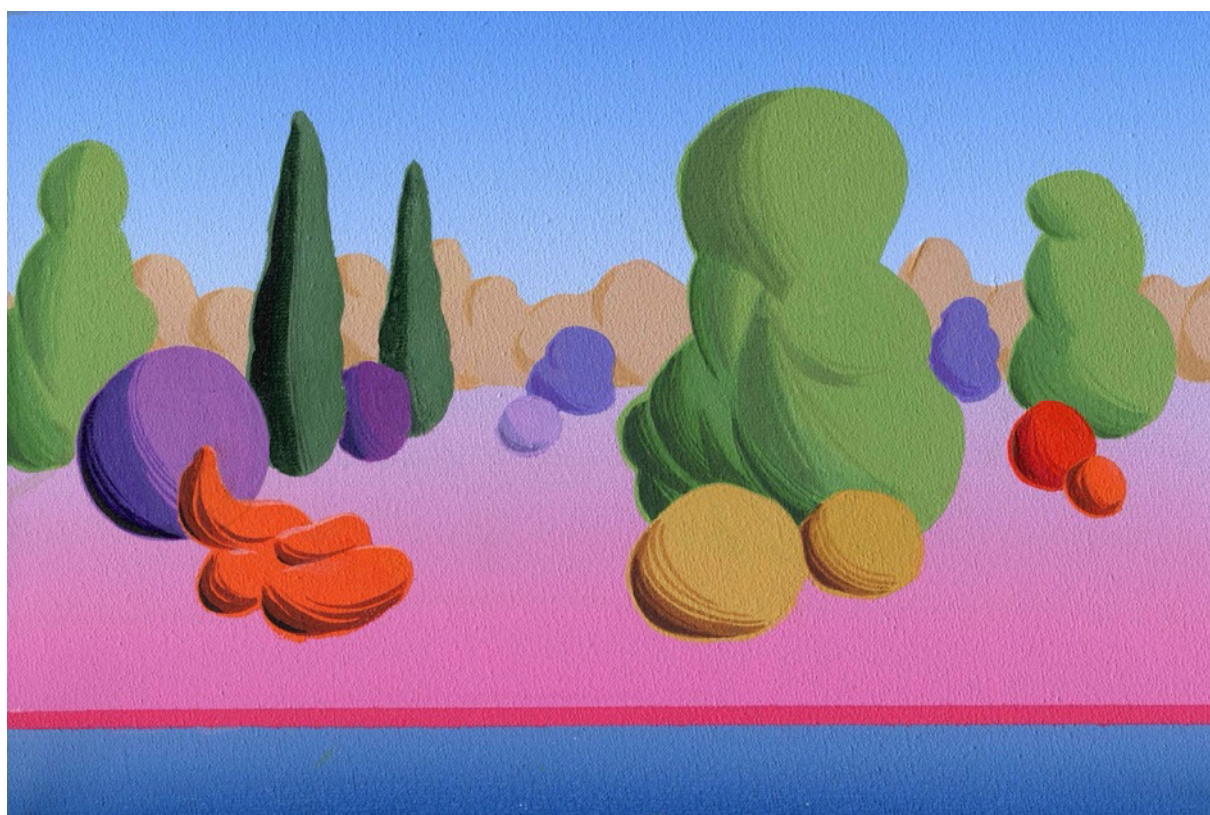


Chita Hybrida Collection made in collaboration with Zoe Hillyard 2019
Fabric wrapped on Terracotta and sewn together with golden thread, gilding
25 x 20 cm incl. lid

Marius Margot

Born in 1989 in Geneva. Lives and works in Geneva.

Marius Margot explores the intersection of nature, fiction, and digital culture through painting. A graduate of the Haute école d'Art et de Design (HEAD) in Geneva, where he completed both his Bachelor and Master of Arts, Margot develops imagined plant forms inspired by the visual language of video games. These fictional organisms populate speculative ecosystems in which the organic and the digital merge, expanding the narrative potential of painting and inviting viewers to envision unfamiliar forms of life. His practice resonates with the concept of *Flora Incognita*, presenting a vegetal world that remains open, mutable, and continuously reinvented through fiction. Margot Margot has received several research grants from the City of Geneva and the Fonds cantonal d'art contemporain (FCAC). He recently completed a research residency in Japan (2026). His work has also been featured in publications such as Cahier (2025), alongside Christian Gonzenbach and Vincent Kohler.



Surface 20, 2026

Acrylic on canvas

20 x 30cm

Vivianne van Singer

Born in 1957 in Como. Lives and works in Geneva.

Vivianne van Singer studied in Lausanne, in the United States (Toledo University, Fine Arts Department), and in Geneva, at ESAV (École Supérieure d'Art Visuel). She has divided her time between her artistic practice and teaching contemporary art history in Switzerland (Valais School of Design and Higher Art School, Valais and practice preparatory classes in CFPAA Geneva. Today, the close link between theory and practice, research, creation and transmission are intimately connected in her life.

She regularly presents her work at the Espace L Gallery in Geneva and has participated in most of the collective in particular at the CCCB (Barcellona), at the Tavel house (Ginevra), at the Mucem (Marsilia), and at the Benaki Museum (Atene), Openbox (Milano), OSM Besançon and Nantes.

For Vivianne van Singer, colors occupy diverse territories: real, imaginary, or symbolic. At the heart of the artist's approach, in her research, lies the unsettling, unexpected, and intense aspect that color reveals in the various realms it traverses.

V. van Singer finds these colors in ready-made objects, in the works of past artists, and even in her own environment. She then invents strategies to reveal them as she has perceived them.



Vivianne Van Singer

Du bout des doigts Bouquets et jardins, 2016-2018

Dessins, crayons de couleur, papier aquarelle

29,7x21 cm

Heberth Sobral

Né en 1984 à Minas Gerais, Brésil. Il vit et travaille à Rio de Janeiro

Heberth Sobral has always been drawn to the visual arts. He began his artistic career by studying photography, an experience that led to an invitation from Vik Muniz to work as his studio assistant. Sobral's practice explores everyday behaviours, thoughts, and actions through a culture shaped by the representation of memory. His works reflect on controversial social and cultural issues, using familiar objects and materials to evoke personal and collective recollections, inviting viewers to engage with the work through their own memories. Working across a wide range of media, including ceramics, painting, drawing, banknotes, woodcut prints, and dolls. Sobral has developed a distinctive visual language that transforms ordinary objects into powerful artistic statements.

Seeking to move beyond the simplicity of geometric forms, Sobral's work engages with deeply human and emotional dimensions. His use of diverse materials and his ability to evoke both personal and cultural memories recall the experimental and participatory spirit of the Neo-Concrete movement. By appropriating everyday objects and reimagining them as works of art, Sobral encourages viewers to enter into an active dialogue with his practice, embracing one of the fundamental principles of Neo-Concretism.



Untitled 2025
ceramic assemblage
10x10 cm

Vasilis Zografos

Born in 1965 in Greece, currently lives and works in Thessaloniki

Vasilis Zografos creates assemblages of porcelain trinkets and coastal ceramic fragments, merging cultural replicas with accidental finds shaped by nature. His works forge a dialogue between two “archives,” forming a visual language in which familiar forms convey transformed meanings to those willing to decipher them.



Untitled 2025
Assembly
15 x 10 x 5 cm