

Maria Thereza Alves

An Accounting

January 21st 2023 – March 4th 2023

Alfonso Artiaco is pleased to announce
Maria Thereza Alves' second solo show titled *An Accounting*.
Opening on January 20th at 7 pm, in the presence of the artist.

In the archives of Naples, ledgers.

Rows of numbers of wealth harvested for four hundred years in invaded lands.

In the archives of Naples, tributes lists.

Unpaid labor caretaking ranches, haciendas, farms, working in mines and building houses, stables, mills, ships, stores, workshops, corrals; building materials of wood, stone, lime, doors, beams, sculpted architectural elements; turquoise, amber, crystal; maize, legumes, chilies, salt, cacao, turkeys, poultry, eggs, fish, shrimps; raw cotton, cotton garments; firewood, rubber; jewelry, and gold - the preferred tribute after the invasion, levied from tens of thousands of people.

The final sums transferred to Naples.

Transferred to one family in Naples, who asked for even higher tributes, for even more land, for more hours of unpaid labor.

It was only in the early twentieth century that a member of this family wrote to ask what the land and people were like - there in Mexico where their harvested wealth was dwindling.

The town of Xico in the state of Mexico was a tribute payer to that family.

How to begin a dialogue in the midst of centuries of accounts?

With these words Maria Thereza Alves introduces her exhibition at the gallery. The artist wants to create a new dialogue on a persistent issue: the exploitation of the Xico community in Mexico in favor of the noble Neapolitan family Pignatelli Cortes who never cared for their overseas possessions, until their earnings began to decline. The exhibition is thus a focus on a theme not usually investigated here, *An Accounting*, and to do so Maria Thereza took inspiration from the Valle de Xico Community Museum and its collection, comprised of over 5000 artefacts found by local residents, and the Villa Aragona Pignatelli Cortes.

Maria Thereza Alves was born in 1961 in São Paulo (Brazil). She lives and works between Berlin and Naples. The artist has exhibited internationally since the 1980s, creating a body of works that investigates the stories and circumstances of particular locations to keep track of silent stories. Her projects begin as a response to local needs and proceed through a process of dialogue between materials, environmental realities and social circumstances. Her research is characterized by a strong social and political criticism that notes the moral and ethical commitment that the artist demonstrates towards the world in which she lives. The media she uses are radically multidisciplinary, conceptual and formalist. Well aware of the binomials present in the Western world such as: nature and culture, art and politics the artist deliberately refuses to recognize them in her artistic production. Maria Thereza chooses instead to create spaces of representation and visibility for oppressed cultures through relational and collaborative practices. Alves firmly believes that art is where there is the possibility to contradict the common tendency by allowing the categories of knowledge to prevent it from developing itself. The artist has recently exposed at documenta (15) in Kassel, Savvy Contemporary in Berlin, PAV and Castello di Rivoli in Turin and MACBA in Barcelona. In 2017, she was awarded the Vera List Award, which is assigned to artists engaged in the dissemination of important social issues.