

María Berrío: *The End of Ritual*

Exhibition: 21 November 2024–18 January 2025

16 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW



María Berrío, *The Spectators*, 2024
Collage with Japanese papers
and watercolour paint on canvas
233.7 x 299.7 cm
92 x 118 in
© María Berrío
Courtesy the artist and Victoria Miro

Victoria Miro is delighted to present new works by Brooklyn-based artist María Berrío. *The End of Ritual* depicts moments of disquiet articulated within densely populated interiors, spaces where the old world meets the new and a restless dynamic unfolds between performers and spectators in and out of the frame.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication featuring new writing on the artist by Siddhartha Mitter, who comments, ‘Never before has Berrío drawn us so close, invested her figures with this physical power that projects out and scrambles our sensory field. It’s almost aggressive – an interpellation. The tumult on canvas proceeds from a compositional method but addresses the tumult of the world.’

Berrío is celebrated for works that draw upon aspects of mythology and folklore to create narratives that address contemporary issues of identity, agency, and survival, particularly those experienced by women and children in the face of overwhelming ecological, economic or geo-political forces. These new works take place in often crowded interiors, where some characters appear governed by mysterious forces, while others go about their business unconcerned. For the first time, she has collaborated with dancers – from the New York City-based GALLIM contemporary dance company – who, supplied with masks and costumes from the artist’s collection, were invited to improvise movements which fed into Berrío’s working process.

Aspects of fantasy, masquerade, history and our frenetic present are woven together, while the artist's blending of Japanese papers and watercolour, tender and tactile but always with the turbulent splice of collage as a resounding echo, further articulates the work's fractured narratives. The results are something like a vibrant, surreal folktale or, as Mitter defines in his essay, 'the fabric of dreams – no longer their unfurled narratives, but the rough and hectic machinery of their making, the way in which signs, memories and allusions escape the category fetters of the rational mind and collide in unquiet sleep.'

About the artist

María Berrío was born in Bogotá, Colombia in 1982 and lives and works in Brooklyn. Major solo exhibitions include María Berrío: *The Children's Crusade*, ICA Boston, USA (2023) and María Berrío: *Esperando mientras la noche florece (Waiting for the Night to Bloom)*, The Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida, USA (2021). Recent institutional group exhibitions include *Spirit in the Land*, Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA (2023), travelling to Pérez Art Museum, Miami, USA (2024) and Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, Jacksonville, USA (2024–2025); *Women Painting Women*, The Modern, Fort Worth, Texas, USA (2022); *A Natural Turn*, The DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, USA (2022); *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, USA (2021); *Labor: Motherhood & Art in 2020*, University Art Museum at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, USA (2020).

Works by the artist will feature in the forthcoming exhibition *Forbidden Territories: 100 Years of Surreal Landscapes*, on view at The Hepworth Wakefield, UK (23 November 2024–21 April 2025); the exhibition will subsequently travel to The Box, Plymouth, UK (23 May–7 September 2025) and Museum Arnhem, The Netherlands (11 October 2025–22 February 2026).

Berrío's work is in permanent collections including the Albertina, Vienna, Austria; Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR, USA; Dallas Museum of Art, USA; Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, USA; Ford Foundation Center for Social Justice, New York, USA; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, USA; Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), Boston and Miami, USA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), USA; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, USA; Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, USA; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, USA; Pérez Art Museum, Miami, Florida, USA; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, USA; Speed Art Museum, Louisville, USA; Weatherspoon Museum of Art at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, USA; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China.

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