

Sandra Vásquez de la Horra

Reading the Waves

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

September 10 – October 29, 2026

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present *Reading the Waves*, an exhibition of new work by Sandra Vásquez de la Horra. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery.

With drawing as the foundation of her artistic practice, Sandra Vásquez de la Horra creates a poetic visual universe that depicts the interconnectedness of the human body and the natural world. Taking inspiration from spiritual mythologies, folklore, religious iconographies, and Latin American popular imagery, she incorporates her anthropological interest in diverse healing practices and indigenous knowledge to promote a greater awareness of human interdependence with nature. By dipping her works in beeswax or creating accordion-like sculptures, Vásquez de la Horra transforms the paper while maintaining its transparency, creating movement and lightness in the spaces they inhabit.

For this exhibition, Vásquez de la Horra presents an immersive scenography using spatial interventions, suspended structures, and leporellos to examine the intersection of art, spirituality, and ecological consciousness. In the main gallery space, a circular installation of monumental drawings creates a dialogue between the art, the architecture, and the surrounding landscape. The cardinal points and the sun guide the orientation of the chapel-like installation, demonstrating the integration of landscape, body, and spirituality. Greeting the sun, the stars, the rivers, and the ocean becomes part of a larger gesture toward nature – an invitation to transcend our own limits.

A central focus of this new body of work is the idea of reading signs in the natural world. As children, we subconsciously observe and interpret environmental and meteorological phenomena. Over time, we realize that these are ephemeral and beyond human control. For Vásquez de la Horra, clouds, rainbows, and waves illustrate this expanded consciousness of the natural forces that shape our lives. Large-scale triptychs depict Olokun – the Orisha of the deep ocean – in addition to marine animals and crustaceans. In the large gallery space upstairs, a suspended leporello features Yemanyá, the Orisha of the ocean and rivers, paying homage to the nearby Hudson River. Viewers are able to experience the work in the round, fully seeing the two sides of the paper sculpture. Other works in the exhibition further emphasize the essentialness of water and its profound mysteries.

Works in the small gallery space upstairs highlight our spiritual and physical connection to the earth through plants and their auras. A large triptych portrays Pacha-Mama, the mother goddess whose universal energy sustains and connects all life. The beeswax that envelopes all the works further links the practice to the organic world – offering the paper both a protective covering and an alchemical transformation.

Sandra Vásquez de la Horra was born in Viña del Mar, Chile, in 1967 and currently lives and works in Berlin. She studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf before attending the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne. Vásquez de la Horra has had recent solo exhibitions at Haus der Kunst, Munich (2025-2026); Denver Art Museum (2024); traveled to Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago, Chile; Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires MALBA; and Institute of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; Akademie der Künste, Berlin (2024); Sächsische Akademie der Künste, Dresden (2021); and Museo Novecento, Florence (2019); and group exhibitions at the 59th International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2022) and the Drawing Biennial, London (2019), among others. Her work is included in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; Museum Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf; and The Philadelphia Museum of Art. She is the recipient of the Käthe Kollwitz Prize (2023); the Hans Theo Richter Prize (2021); and The Guerlain Prize (2019).

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