

Electronic Press Kit
Panama Pavilion
La Biennale di Venezia 2024



Panama unveils Tracce: Nel Corpo e sulla Terra
At the 60th International Art Exhibition
La Biennale di Venezia 2024

Preview: 17,18,19 April 2024

Exhibition: 20th April – 24th November 2024

Panama Pavilion Location: Calle S. Biasio, 2131, 30122 Venezia VE, Italy

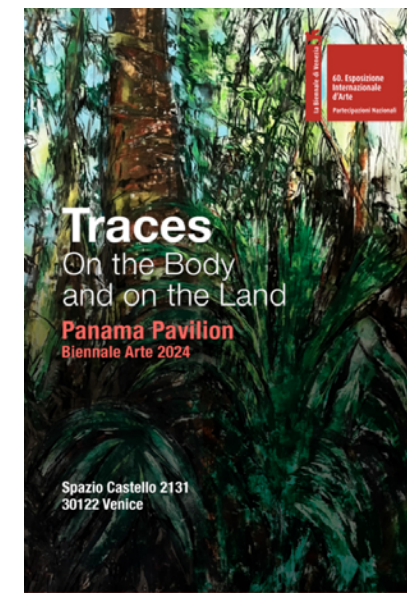
Venice, 17th April 2024 - Panama is delighted to unveil a major group exhibition of work by four of Panama's leading contemporary artists Brooke Alfaro, Isabel De Obaldia, Giana De Dier and Cisco Merel for the Panama Pavilion at this year's 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia.

Running from 20th April – 24 th November 2024 the exhibition titled “Tracce: Nel Corpo e sulla Terra” will echo the current migration crisis with a particular emphasis on the Panamanian context, specifically the massive movement of migrants through the “Darién Gap”, a dense tropical jungle between Panama and Colombia and the only land route connecting South America to Central America, which in 2023 alone, was traversed by over 500,000 migrants and asylum seekers. Interpreted by the artists through the use of drawings, paintings, collages, glass sculptures and installations, the works will come together as artistic testimonies of an often-ignored reality.

The artists for Panama's Pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024, commented: “We feel deeply honoured to have been asked to participate in the inaugural Panama Pavilion at the Venice Biennale Arte 2024. The generosity, hard work and tenacity of those who have contributed to making “Tracce: Nel Corpo e sulla Terra” possible has been immense, and we're all profoundly proud of what has been achieved.”

The exhibition will see De Dier explore the history of the numerous migrations of Afro-Antilleans to Panama in the early 20th Century and how they have influenced national identity. Alfaro paints scenes of human beings in hostile conditions, whether crowded into boats on turbulent seas or in dense tropical jungles. De Obaldia will create an immersive jungle in an installation that combines landscape, sound effects and glass sculptures of human beings, while Cisco Merel reflects on the mirage of a better future by shaping mud-covered surfaces into a large sculptural artwork.

Ana Elizabeth Gonzalez, Monica Kupfer and Luz Bonadies, the Curators of the Panama Pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024, commented: “It has been a privilege to organize the first-ever Panama pavilion for La Biennale di Venezia. Panama's contemporary art will earn well-deserved recognition through an exhibition that reflects the nation's strategic position as a place of transit, trade, and cultural contact. The Pavilion aims to highlight Panamanian artists, to establish a connection between art and the current crisis, and to create an echo within the viewers as they consider the lives of others who are forced to carve out their own arduous journeys- the kind that leave indelible traces on the body and on the land.”



<https://panamapavilion.org>
IG: [@panamapavilion](https://www.instagram.com/panamapavilion)

**For more information,
please contact**

Tatiana Alvarez

E-mail: talvarez@museodelcanal.com

Notes to Editors

For all additional press information and Pavilion photography please see our [PRESS KIT Here](#)

Panama presenta Tracce: Sul Corpo e sulla Terra
Alla 60 ° Mostra Internazionale d'Arte
La biennale di venezia 2024

Anteprima: 17,18,19 aprile 2024

Esposizione: 20 aprile - 24 novembre 2024

Padiglione Panama Luogo: Calle S. Biasio, 2131, 30122 Venezia VE, Italia

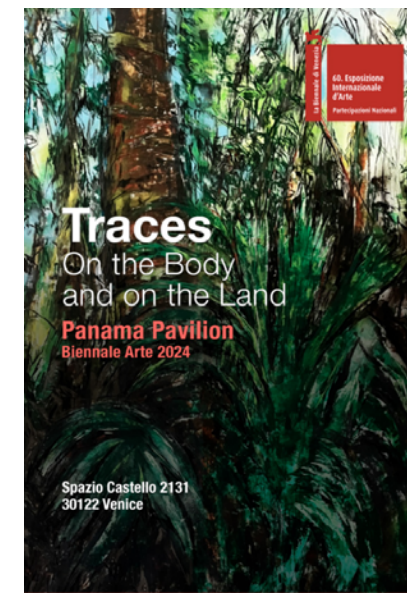
Venezia, 17 aprile 2024 - Panama è lieta di presentare una grande mostra collettiva di opere di quattro dei principali artisti contemporanei panamensi: Brooke Alfaro, Isabel De Obaldia, Giana De Dier e Cisco Merel. Gli artisti esporranno nel Padiglione di Panama alla 60 ° Mostra Internazionale d'Arte- La Biennale di Venezia.

In corso dal 20 aprile - 24 novembre 2024, la mostra dal titolo "Tracce: Sul Corpo e sulla Terra" farà eco all'attuale crisi migratoria con un'enfasi particolare sul contesto panamense, in particolare il massiccio movimento di migranti attraverso il "Tapón del Darién", una fitta giungla tropicale tra Panama e la Colombia (l'unica via di terra che collega il Sud America all'America Centrale), che solo nel 2023 è stata attraversata da oltre 500.000 migranti e richiedenti asilo. Interpretate dagli artisti attraverso l'uso di disegni, dipinti, collage, sculture in vetro e installazioni, le opere rappresenteranno testimonianze artistiche di una realtà spesso ignorata.

Gli artisti del Padiglione Panama hanno commentato: "Siamo profondamente onorati di essere stati invitati a rappresentare il Padiglione inaugurale di Panama alla Biennale Arte 2024 di Venezia. La generosità, il duro lavoro e la tenacia di chi ha contribuito a fare "Tracce: Sul Corpo e sulla Terra" possibile è stato immenso, e siamo tutti profondamente orgogliosi di ciò che è stato raggiunto".

La mostra vedrà De Dier esplorare la storia delle numerose migrazioni dalle Antille africane a Panama nei primi anni del XX secolo e come queste abbiano influenzato l'identità nazionale. Alfaro dipinge scene di esseri umani in condizioni ostili, sia stipati in barche su mari turbolenti sia in fitte giungle tropicali. De Obaldia creerà una giungla immersiva in un'installazione che combina paesaggio, effetti sonori e sculture in vetro di esseri umani, mentre Cisco Merel rifletterà sul miraggio di un futuro migliore plasmando superfici ricoperte di fango in una grande opera d'arte scultorea.

Ana Elizabeth Gonzalez, Monica Kupfer e Luz Bonadies, i curatori del Padiglione Panama, hanno commentato: "È stato un privilegio organizzare il primo padiglione di Panama per la Biennale di Venezia. L'arte contemporanea di Panama guadagnerà un meritato riconoscimento attraverso una mostra che riflette la posizione strategica della nazione come luogo di transito, commercio e contatto culturale. Il Padiglione si propone di promuovere gli artisti panamensi, di stabilire una connessione tra l'arte e la crisi attuale, e di creare un'eco all'interno degli spettatori che potranno conoscere, attraverso le opere, la vita di esseri umani costretti a impegnarsi in propri ardui viaggi: viaggi che lasciano tracce indelebili sul corpo e sulla terra."



<https://panamapavilion.org>
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Per ulteriori informazioni, contattare:

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Notes to Editors

Per tutte le informazioni aggiuntive sulla stampa e le fotografie del Padiglione consulta il nostro [PRESS KIT](#) Qui



Pavilion Press Photography

For all additional press information and Pavilion photography please see our

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Traces
On the Body and on the Land
Panama Pavilion



Photo Credit: Sebastian Icaza



- Brooke Alfaro -

Panama pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024

BROOKE ALFARO (Panama, 1949). One of Panama's most prominent artists, Brooke Alfaro became known initially for his images of lifelike figures painted in a surrealist and irreverent tone, in works created with admirable academic skills.

He had his first solo exhibition in 1979, which has been followed by countless exhibitions both in Panama and abroad. By 1990, his paintings --which often mocked religious or political themes-- became populated with agglomerations of human figures, usually in cramped boats, at sea, in jungles or other natural, often threatening, environments.

From the beginning of this century, Alfaro expanded his artistic endeavors to include the production of video works, which earned him multiple awards, including the first prize in the First Latin American Video Art Competition in Washington, D.C. in 2003. In addition to being an artist, Brooke Alfaro is a social and environmental activist, focusing primarily on education and ecology

**For more information,
please go to**

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Archipelago - Brooke Alfaro





**Hibiscus Saint -
Brooke Alfaro**



**The Earth Shook and the Sea Raged -
Brooke Alfaro**

- Isabel De Obaldia - Panama pavilion Venice Biennale 2024

ISABEL DE OBALDÍA (Panamanian born in Washington, D.C., 1957). Although she was initially trained in graphic design and cinematography, the much-admired Panamanian artist Isabel De Obaldía is known for her drawings, paintings, sculptures, and videos.

She has exhibited over four decades in numerous solo exhibitions and group shows in Panama, Europe, and the United States. In 1989, a time of political turmoil in Panama, she created memorable works of protest against the dictatorship. In the 90s, she discovered the practice of glass sculpture, a medium in which she has achieved recognition for her extraordinary large-scale pieces, usually of male figures, wild animals, torsos, and heads.

She has been exhibiting with the Mary-Anne Martin Fine Art Fine Art Gallery in New York since 1997, and recently, in 2022, she was invited to the 58th Carnegie International, the world's second oldest biennial. In both her two-dimensional and glass works De Obaldía expresses a remarkable concern for the natural world, as well as for human beings and their often-difficult sociopolitical circumstances.

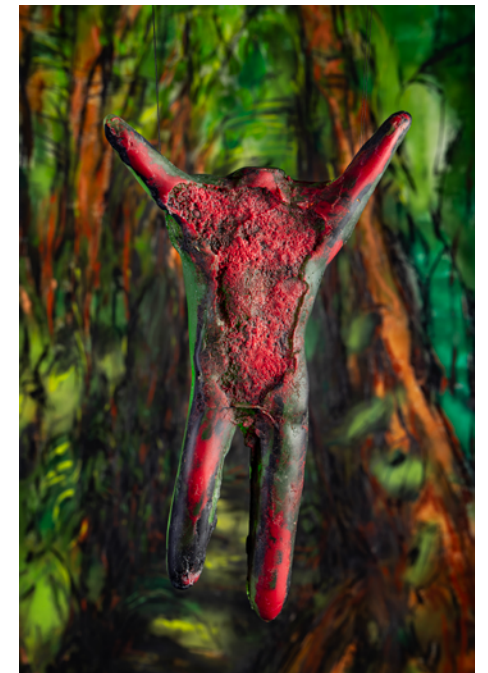
**For more information,
please go to**

<https://www.isabeldeobaldia.com>

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Traces
On the Body and on the Land
Panama Pavilion



Selva - Isabel De Obaldia

Photo Credit: Sebastian Icaza

- Cisco Merel -

Panama pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024

CISCO MEREL (Panama, 1981). Cisco Merel's work reveals an interpretation of themes such as popular art, architecture, and social contrasts, in striking installations and abstract paintings of geometric shapes and intense colors, which he produces with the incorporation of clay, pigments and stainless steel.

He studied Fine Arts in Panama and in international workshops and residencies in New York, Paris, and Leipzig. For more than ten years, he collaborated with the Carlos Cruz Diez Workshop in Panama City. He has presented more than fifteen solo exhibitions in Panama and abroad since 2005. Merel creates paintings and sculptures, both small and large, for both private and public spaces, using a variety of materials ranging from canvas and wood to synthetic polymers.

In his works, he manages to reinterpret everyday experiences through colors, shapes and sensations that generate reflections on the systems and social situations of our times.

**For more information,
please go to**

<https://ciscomerel.com>

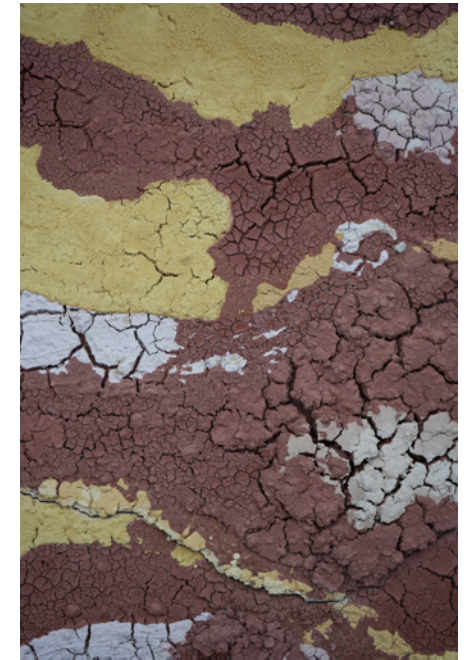
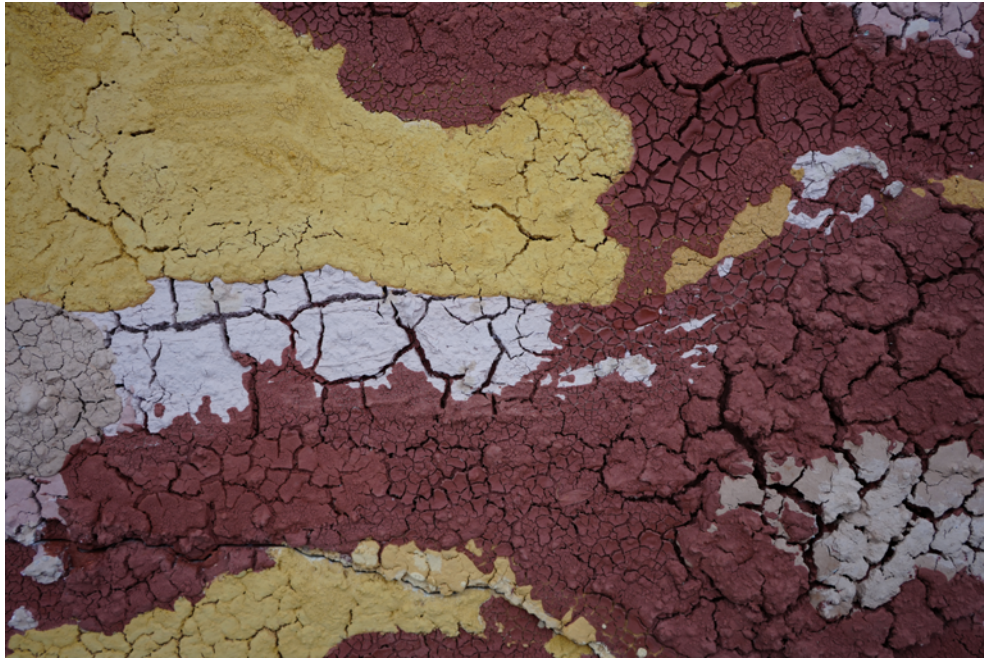
<https://panamapavilion.org>

IG: [@ciscomerel](#)



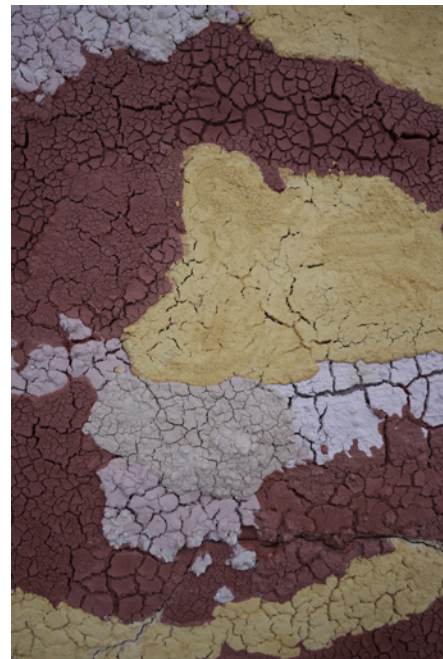


**Mirages of the Gap -
Cisco Merel**



Traces
On the Body and on the Land
Panama Pavilion

44. Exposition
Internationale
d'Art
Panama 2016



Mirages of the Gap - Cisco Merel

- Giana De Dier - Panama pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024

GIANA DE DIER (Panama, 1980). The Panamanian artist Giana De Dier explores the representation of people of Afro-Antillean descent in drawings and collages that she constructs with information, documents, and appropriated photographs from historical archives, oral histories, and family memories, as well as her own photographs.

She focuses mainly on images of women of Caribbean origin, assembling imaginary scenarios to commemorate the resilience of West Indian migrants who arrived in the country for the construction of the Panama Canal, while bearing witness to their contribution in shaping Panamanian identity. De Dier studied Visual Arts at the University of Panama. After her first participation in a group show in 2009 and her first solo exhibition in 2014, she has exhibited on a dozen occasions in Panama and abroad.

In 2022, she was invited to the prestigious 58th Carnegie International in Pittsburgh. In 2023, she was selected for artists' residencies at the Panama Canal Museum and the Delfina Foundation in London.

For more information,
please go to <https://gianadedier.com>
<https://panamapavilion.org>
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**Everything that is Noble
and True -
Giana De Dier**



Everything that is Noble and True -
Giana De Dier



Ana Elizabeth Gonzalez, Curator - Panama La Biennale di Venezia 2024

Ana Elizabeth González is the Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Panama Canal Museum, a position she has held since 2020. She has been responsible for leading the integral transformation of the museum in order to diversify its narratives, renovate its design and rethink and modernise its collection.

This has resulted in an enriched public programme which has tripled pre-pandemic audience attendance numbers, the creation of an artist residency; the continuous growth of their existing collection to over thirty five thousand artefacts, documents and works, and the establishment of an acquisition fund for new contemporary art works.

González previously worked as the Cultural Attaché of Panama in the U.K. and as Program Manager of the London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE contemporary art gallery and historical museum. She also served as Executive Director of the FAOU Foundation for Japanese artist Mariko Mori.

**For more information,
please go to**

<https://panamapavilion.org>
IG: [@anaatthemuseum](#)

About Monica Kupfer, Curator - Panama pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024

Mónica Kupfer is a historian, exhibition curator and art critic. She holds a PhD in Art History with an emphasis on Latin American art.

She was the first curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Panama and founding director of the Panama Art Biennial, an event held from 1992 to 2008. Since 1999, she has directed the Fundación Arte & Cultura, which promotes Panamanian art locally and internationally.

Kupfer has distinguished herself as an author and editor, as well as lecturer and juror in contemporary art events.

For more information,
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About Luz Bonadies, Project Director Panama pavilion La Biennale di Venezia 2024

Luz Bonadies is Communications and Marketing Manager at the City of Knowledge Foundation. From 2017 to 2020, she was Executive Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, where she led a radical transformation of the institution.

She has studies in Journalism, Social Communication and Marketing, as well as specializations in Project Management and Design Thinking for Innovation. She was Director of Magazines at Grupo Epasa and National Director of Publications at the National Institute of Culture.

She has excelled as a specialist in projects related to sustainable development and cultural management.

**For more information,
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<https://panamapavilion.org>
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Opening hours

Autumn opening hours: 10 am - 6 pm (from 1 October to 24 November - last admission 5:45 pm)

Closed on Mondays

Our nearest vaporetto is Arsenale

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