

**LUZ CARABANO**

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LUZ CARABAÑO

“Luz Carabaño’s Tiny Cosmos in Paint” by Renée Reizman  
Hyperallergic, October 9, 2023

Art Reviews

## Luz Carabaño's Tiny Cosmos in Paint

Carabaño's rippling, organic shapes curve into ethereal portals that feel like they could transport viewers into another dimension.



Renée Reizman October 9, 2023



Luz Carabaño, "garabatos" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 9 1/2 x 11 inches (all photos Renée Reizman/*Hyperallergic*)

LOS ANGELES — Luz Carabaño's tiny paintings need room to breathe. Their swirling surfaces, evoking nebulae, swamps, or glazed confections, seem to be incubating in their skewed canvases. Soon, it feels, the scenes will burst from their frames and overtake their blank surroundings.

***Encuentros*** (Encounters) at Hannah Hoffman Gallery is heavy with possibility. The exhibition title foreshadows the physical experience of studying Carabaño's small paintings (all 2023), which can be as narrow as three and one-quarter inches tall, as in "vuelo," a slim work that looks like a minty block of fudge, with its glossy surface and uneven ridges. Yet the title also proposes that these scenes are brief encounters with a latent world. The artist's rippling, organic shapes curve into ethereal portals that feel like they could expand and spill over their canvas, consuming the gallery at any moment, transporting admirers into another dimension.

Carabaño works in oils on custom-made canvases, which are formed into imperfect blocks and rectangles that look like they were drawn freehand before assuming their three-dimensional structure. Some of these irregular frames match the gallery's preserved architecture, such as "ojo rojo," a white painting with red streaks that reminded me of peppermint candies. The canvas tilts upward on each end and collapses towards the middle, a loose approximation of a chevron. The shape is similar to a large hole in the gallery's drywall, which reveals white brick from the ancient building's exterior.



Installation view of Luz Carabaño: *encuentros* at Hannah Hoffman Gallery. Wall: "breath" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 4 1/2 x 46 1/4 inches; floor: "segundo juego del suelo" (2023), aluminum, 27 3/4 x 69 3/8 inches

The surfaces are unusually flat for oil painting, which makes them blend into bleed into their surroundings. They look as if Carabaño sands them down, removing any bumps or texture left by the paintbrush. Lines are blurry and borders amorphous, but they are precisely laid down to suggest spiderwebs ("web") or a monstera leaf ("jardim"). Carabaño also lets the paint delicately spill over the sides of the canvas. In "holograma," a purple block with energetic gray and green lines, the wraparound effect is especially subtle, yet the painting appears faded against the wall, ready to spread and melt into the drywall.

Carabaño's preoccupation with portals comes through in two flat aluminum sculptures, which are colossal compared to most of the paintings. "Juego del suelo" and "segundo juego del suelo" — their titles roughly translate to "floor games," a term to describe playground layouts for hopscotch or foursquare — are placed on the ground, seemingly ready to swallow any bystander who happens to step into their silver surfaces. These playful pieces, despite their cold, metal forms, evoke lava. Avoid stepping on them, or you'll be thrust into the Earth's core.

Despite favoring miniature paintings, Carbaño knows how to maximize her environment. With jagged canvases, organic gestures, and delicate details, she creates work that alludes to larger worlds. A close encounter with a couple small, whirling streaks of green can bring the entirety of the cosmos to our imagination.



Luz Carabaño, "web" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 11 x 9 1/4 inches



Luz Carabaño, "vuelo" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 3 1/4 x 10 1/8 inches



Luz Carabaño, "ojo rojo" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 8 1/2 x 9 7/8 inches



Luz Carabaño, "jardim" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 4 x 7 1/2 inches



Luz Carabaño, "holograma" (2023), oil on linen stretched over shaped panel, 10 1/2 x 9 inches



Installation view of *Luz Carbaño: encuentros* at Hannah Hoffman Gallery. Wall: "rayos" (2023), oil on linen stretched over four shaped panels, 264 x 5 inches; floor: "juego del suelo" (2023), aluminum, 35 7/8 x 97 1/2 inches

***Luz Carbaño: encuentros*** continues at Hannah Hoffman Gallery (2504 West 7th Street, Suite C, MacArthur Park, Los Angeles) through October 21. The exhibition was organized by the gallery.



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LUZ CARABAÑO  
“LUZ CARABAÑO | THAT BETWEEN OBJECT  
AND UNDERSTANDING” By Annie Bush  
Flaunt Magazine, September 29, 2023

**F L A U N T**

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**LUZ CARABAÑO | THAT  
BETWEEN OBJECT  
AND  
UNDERSTANDING**

ON VIEW NOW AT HANNAH  
HOFFMAN GALLERY

*Written by Annie Bush*



Luz Carabaño, ramo de marzo, 2023 Charcoal on pink and red Izumo Mingei Mitsumata paper Seven drawings in 14 x 12 inch frames.

Is it not terrible, that an object's worth is entirely dependent on an individual's experience of the object? One of life's greatest tragedies and most magnificent triumphs, it seems, is that one can never truly and exactly impart their specific experience of an object upon another. This great discrepancy between object and experience—and the moves made to negotiate the disparity—serves as the primary impetus for most art, music, prose: how does one exactly eloquately convey their own fraught understanding of an object through experience? Venezuelan-born and Los Angeles-based artist, **Luz Carabaño**, is mired in these representational complexities. Her latest exhibition, *encuentros*, on view at **Hannah Hoffman Gallery** through October 21, deals in the intricacies of articulation.



Luz Carabaño, breath, 2023 Oil on linen, stretched over shaped panel 4 1/2 x 46 1/4 inch

Toying with the realm of the unfamiliar, *encuentros* suggests shape, flirts with it, prods it and interpolates it, but never consigns it to recognizability. Instead, the exhibition fixates on the cerebral: where much art communicates experience, *encuentros* facilitates it. Throughout the installation, Carabaño has manipulated the sculptural elements and shapes of the canvases on which her paintings rest, allowing content and form to converse with one another in a language of its own making. The gallery

itself, enforces a hyper-awareness of one's own presence within the space. The incident of being, the occurrence of communication, and the process of cognition—the most commonplace parts of lived experience—are made foreign in *encuentros*, imparting upon the viewer a heightened sense of that original discrepancy, that between object and understanding.



Installation view. Courtesy of the artist and Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles. Photography by Paul Salveson.

Luz Carabaño, Annie Bush, Art, Flaunt Magazine

LUZ CARABAÑO

“Artist of the Week: Luz Carabaño”, Interview with Milo Christie

Lvl 3, July 31, 2022



## Review

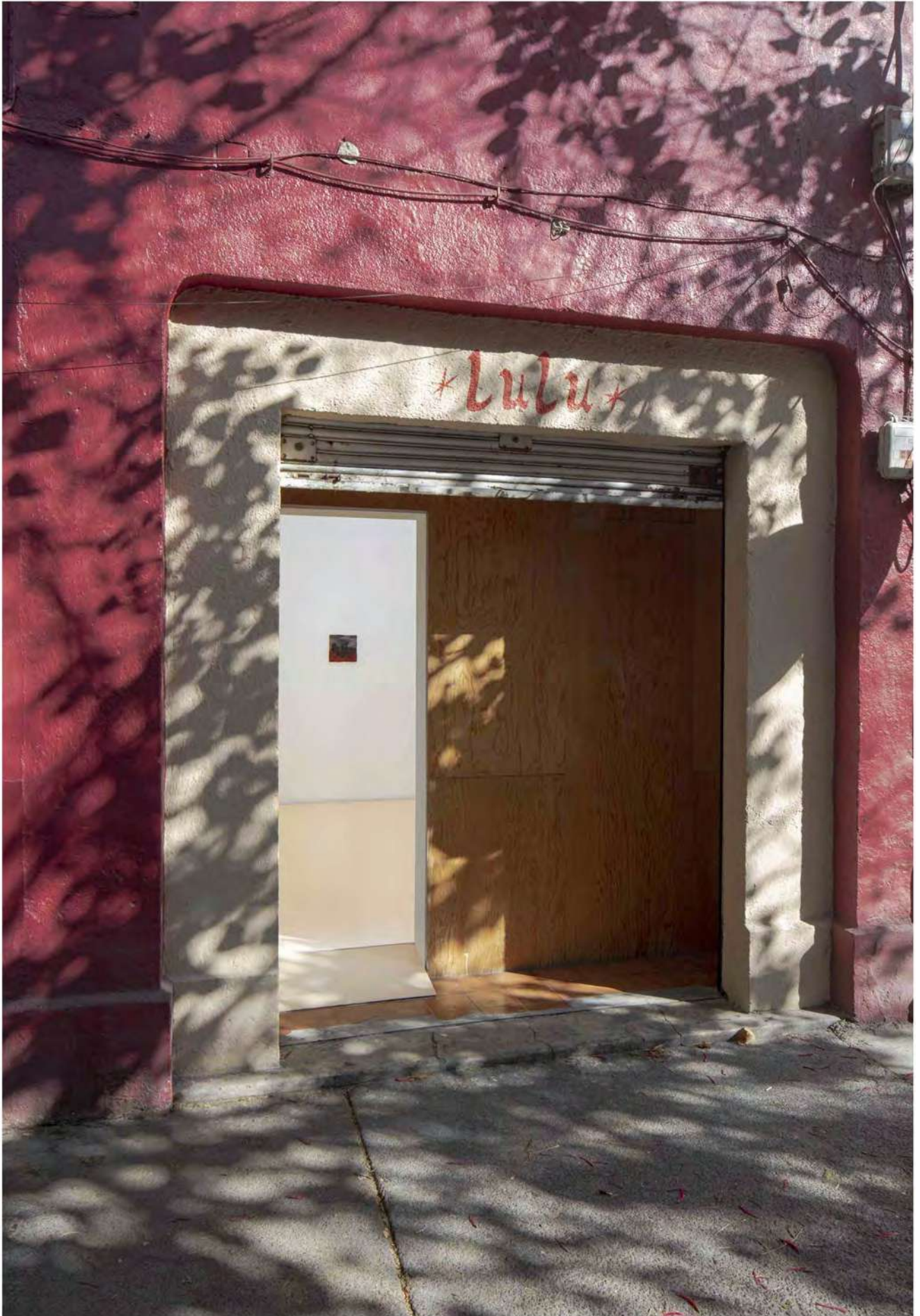
### Sweet Holograms: Luz Carabaño's Exhibition 'sombras' at Lulu

by Mariel Vela

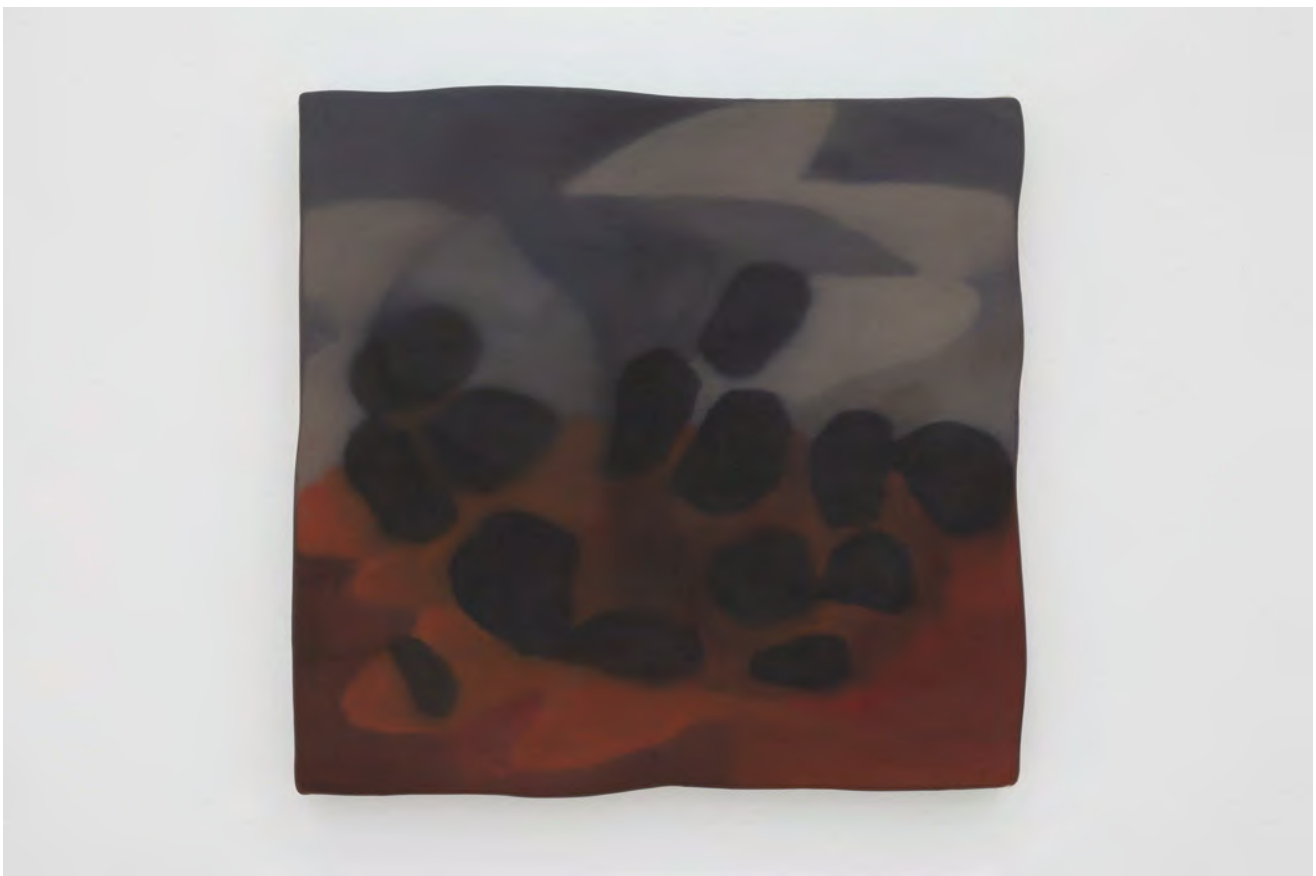
Whenever I try to think about painting I feel a strange incompetence. There arises the suspicion of an unresolved mystery, as well as the obligation to carry out an analysis beyond the pleasure of experience, to contextualize the paintings within a current scene of which I am unaware. The anxieties of the historian are not the same as those of the painter. Before sitting down to pull apart this text, I decided to reread Amy Sillman—a painter who writes—in order to feel encouraged.

*I was talking to a famous art historian recently, and I asked him if he knew that different pigments weigh different amounts; and that if a painter were blindfolded and two different tubes of paint were placed in her hands, the painter would know which hand held a tube of cadmium red and which a tube of cobalt violet. The art historian said no, he didn't know that. This was a shock: it never dawned on me that an art historian might have beheld color, but never held color.\*1*

Amy Silman



I arrived at Luz Carabaño's exhibition *sombras* at Lulu with this quotation as a kind of slogan. "I'm going to hold the colors with my eyes," I thought. Upon arriving, I saw a painting looming in the background, framed by the gallery entrance. Two cement frames overlapped: first cherry red and then cream, followed by a metal curtain, and further in the background a light wooden surface, and then, finally, the ultra-white flash of the wall. The painting titled *bodegón* (2022)—minuscule compared to the proportion of all these frames—holds its own in such a way that it seems to have emanated all of this facade in order to crown itself. A sinister little queen. The upper part of the irregular canvas is a spectral violet cleaved by a burnt, ferrous, and very hot red from which blood oranges emerge. In the center are the black figures, like fruits or fourteen pupils of an opaque coal-black.



Luz Carabaño, *Bodegón*, 2022. Courtesy of Lulu

Bruno Enciso, who works at the gallery, led me inside. The raised platform, so characteristic of Lulu, is now painted in a color called *Langostino* that warms the space. Despite the fact that the tones of Luz Carabaño's paintings are cold, the shadows that appear in them imply the existence of a sun, or in this case, a sun-bathed floor. "A grayish tone would have created an atmosphere that was too wintery," Bruno says. The white walls on which they are mounted, all off-center, function as spaces for mobility that contrast with the exquisite tension of their linens. In *desplazamiento* (2022)\*2, the bluish lines encourage us to move left, despite being contained in the irregular edges of the frame,





Installation view, Luz Carabaño, Sombras, Lulu, 2023. Courtesy of Lulu

Going back to Amy Sillman, one of my favorite moments of her essay “On Color” is when she talks about the recipes, preparations, and techniques used in order to render certain surface treatments in painting: “Painters constantly discuss these surfaces, touch them, caress them, go over them with special sponges and scrapers, with brushes made of the hair of goat or mink or mongoose, with handles of hardwood or bamboo.”\*3. How does our relationship with a color or shape change when its texture is satiny, glossy, lumpy, or dusty? In the gallery text, Carabaño’s paintings are described as *almost hologram-like* and as *seeming to emerge and vanish*. The oil paint feels watery and delicately sprayed on the gesso, possibly thinned with turpentine.



Luz Carabaño, Cluster, 2022. Courtesy of Lulu

“It’s like frosting,” I say to Bruno as I approach the edge of the painting titled *cluster* (2022). From the side one can see the thickness of the sanded layers on the linen. “The other day someone told me that it reminded them of the glaze on cookies,” he replies. I think of the word “frosting” and how it probably comes from “frost”: a thin layer of ice on a surface. I also think of the word “cluster” and its synonym, “bunch.” A bunch of shadows, blackberries, thistles, African violets, a bunch of sugar that’s been melted and cooled. I then realize that this is the work I like the most because I want to eat it. I hold the sensation and keep it in that cleft between sensory curiosity and intellectual curiosity, for later.

– [Mariel Vela](#)

Translated to English by [Byron Davies](#)

\*1: Amy Sillman, *Faux Pas. Selected Writings and Drawings* (Paris: After 8 Books, 2022), 51.

\*2: See cover picture

\*3: Amy Sillman, *Faux Pas. Selected Writings and Drawings* (Paris: After 8 Books, 2022), 60.