

MAUREEN PALEY.

EDUARDO SARABIA

Prologue

15 September – 22 October 2023

Maureen Paley is pleased to present *Prologue*, a new exhibition by Mexican American artist Eduardo Sarabia that will be installed both at the gallery and at Studio M in Shoreditch.

His work investigates the consequences of global economic forces on local culture and considers how state violence, drug trafficking, late-stage capitalism, and neo-colonial hierarchies permeate ties between the United States and Mexico.

This new exhibition departs slightly from these concerns and reflects on the total eclipse of the sun that will be visible across Mexico on 8 April 2024 and considers how this event defies the politics and geography of national boundaries. *Prologue* is the first in a series of exhibitions in which Sarabia prepares us for this astronomical event. The final exhibition will take place in the Mazatlán Museum of Art where the path of the eclipse commences. Across ancient cultures, the total eclipse of the sun holds significance and is often perceived as the birth of a star and the initiation of new life. The ability to view the eclipse from Mazatlán, a city within the state of Sinaloa, holds resonance for Sarabia, whose family heralds from this territory and much of his legacy and intimacy with the earth comes from this naturally rich landscape.

Since 2019 he has introduced autobiographical and spiritual components into his work alongside more socially embedded iconography. He has built a visual language that deploys both long-standing symbols from ancient mysticism and a personal lexicon of images that are drawn from his life. Recurring motifs for Sarabia include the quetzal, a bird native to Mexico that is also his power animal or spirit guide, and the ceiba tree that was worshipped by the Maya people as a symbol of perpetuity – bridging heaven, earth, and the world below. More recently images of hands have been used to signify the hidden knowledge accessible via palm reading that is itself an ancient practice he is drawn to.

The main gallery space will be painted with green vines that frame woven textiles, ceramic vases and works on paper. Sarabia has explained that when he was growing up in Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, residents would paint flowers and branches on the front of their houses to stop the tagging of properties with graffiti. These botanical images thus became a mode of refuge, indicative of the multiple paths that can be taken in our existence and evoking the tree of life. In the other gallery spaces new paintings will be presented alongside ceramic works produced using traditional techniques local to Northern Mexico. These are made at studio Ceramica Suro in Guadalajara, Mexico, the city where Sarabia now lives.

Eduardo Sarabia (b. 1976, Los Angeles, USA) currently lives and works in Guadalajara, Mexico. He received a Bachelor Degree from the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles, USA.

Selected solo exhibitions include: *This Must be the Place*, Dallas Contemporary, Dallas, US (2023); *Eduardo Sarabia: Tú Eres Otro Yo*, CAC Málaga, Málaga, Spain (2022); *El Toro y Otros Relatos*, Museo Universitario del Chopo, Mexico City, Mexico (2019); *Drifting on a Dream*, The Mistake Room, Los Angeles, California, USA (2017); *Plumed Serpent Party*, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico (2016); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico (2014); Instituto Cultural Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico (2014); *Eduardo Sarabia: Moctezuma's Revenge*, ASU Art Museum, Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, US (2014). In 2021, he participated in *Desert X*, with site-specific work shown in the Coachella Valley, California, USA. In 2018, he participated in our *Condo* presentation at the London gallery.

For further information please contact Lauren Williamson: lauren@maureenpaley.com

MAUREEN PALEY 60 Three Colts Lane, London, E2 6GQ **STUDIO M** Rochelle School, Friars Mount House, 7 Playground Gardens, London E2 7FA