

## Lucía Pizzani: *Faunal Succession*

Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea: 25 March - 30 May 2026

Opening event: 21 March, 5-8pm



Venezuelan-born, London-based artist Lucía Pizzani presents her first institutional UK exhibition at Focal Point Gallery in Southend-on-Sea. Through a series of new installations and in collaboration with artists Cecilia Bonilla, Jaime Gilli, Javier Weyler and local community groups and schools, Pizzani reimagines the Essex coast through a 'deep time' lens, linking geological transformation with contemporary questions of climate change, migration, and social transformation.

*Faunal Succession* is formed of three environments that merge installation, sculpture, painting, sound, and community participation. Each space references the geological strata of coastal Britain and its living organisms, combining scientific and poetic interpretations of the landscape. The exhibition title refers to the principle of faunal succession: the observation of chronological patterns in fossils that allows geologists to accurately date sedimentary rock layers. For Pizzani, this physical manifestation of 'deep time' becomes a framework for rethinking contemporary human and ecological crises, revealing borders and national identities as constructed and recent concepts.

The first installation examines chalk as a significant material in relation to British identity. The politicisation of England's coastline has transformed its white cliffs into imposing physical

and symbolic borders. However, chalk also functions as a visual record of deep time, formed from the accumulated remains of microscopic organisms over millions of years when the British Isles were connected to larger land masses and borders did not exist. Sculptural installations made of chalk from Chafford Gorges fill the centre of the gallery, having been painted, engraved, carved, and merged with dried plants, which refer to the spread of plants around the world during colonialism, and combined with fleshy folding ceramic forms. The surrounding gallery walls will feature faint bodily marks, made by the artist imprinting her limbs, head, and hands onto the wet plaster in a solitary performative act. The resulting traces appear reminiscent of fossils, which reveal the behaviours of ancient organisms.

The second environment is focused on amber, a fossilised tree resin prized for its jewel-like shine, and for how it preserves small organisms and plants within it. In the gallery space Pizzani will create an amber 'time capsule' of flora and fauna, within which a forest of ferns emerges from clay vases, patterned with imprints of fossils, and carved into using dried root vegetables sourced from South America. A series of collages reflecting on hybrid beings, created during workshops with the local migrant community, in collaboration with the charity Welcome to the UK and led with artist Cecilia Bonilla, will be displayed alongside. A sound piece created collaboratively with musician Javier Weyler, with recordings made during these workshops, will be played in the space. The sound piece features overlapping voices including the artist's own, the gallery staff's and other artists', all reading short poems by Pizzani constructed using excerpts from *Observer's Book of Sea and Seashore* (1962), a geological book by I.O Evan. The diverse accents, ages, places and genders of those reading invite a plurality of perspectives into the words, originally intended to convey supposedly objective scientific truths.

Artist Jaime Gili has created large paintings on cut canvas, using naturally occurring iron oxide pigment, which interact with ceramic pieces by Pizzani to form a mural that will be visible from the square outside the gallery. This work references William Smith's 1815 geological map, a foundational but extractivist view of Britain's landscape. The geological map has been reinterpreted by the artists, inspired by Gili's collaboration with local schoolchildren, for whom English is an additional language, in a series of 'subjective mapping' workshops. These workshops challenge conventional, resource-oriented mapping, instead emphasising experiential and emotional understandings of place. Other new works collaboratively created during these workshops, will also be displayed as part of the exhibition.

*Faunal Succession* travels to KARST, Plymouth, from 12 June to 1 August 2026 and Mostyn, Llandudno in Spring 2027.

This exhibition is generously supported by the Lucía Pizzani Exhibition Circle: Victoria and David Law (lead supporter), Maria Sukkar (lead supporter), ERA FOUNDATION, Launch Pad, Aude Fourcade, Leslie Ramos and Thomas Forwood, Flavia Nespatti, Shelley Tichborne, Erica Wax, Sophia Paulina Wilhelmsen and those who wish to remain anonymous.



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## NOTE TO EDITORS

### Press contact

Alicia Lethbridge, [alicia@sam-talbot.com](mailto:alicia@sam-talbot.com)

### About Lucía Pizzani

Lucía Pizzani (Caracas, 1975) works across photography, sculpture, ceramics, performance and installation to explore the interrelationships between historical narratives and processes of metamorphosis in the natural world. She holds a BA in Communication Studies from Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (Caracas), a Certificate in Conservation Biology from CERC at Columbia University (New York), and an MFA from Chelsea College of Arts (London).

Recent solo exhibitions include *Clay, Seeds and Other Ancestors* at Frieze No 9 Cork St with APSARA & Frieze Studios, (London, 2025), *Trópico Pasado* at Galleria Doris Ghetta (Ortisei, 2025), *Rites, Seeds and Refuge* at Cecilia Brunson Projects (London, 2024), *Morada Vegetal* at Abra (Caracas, 2023), *Merunto: In the House of Spirits* at Bosse & Baum (London, 2022), *Tiempo Membrana* at Hacienda La Trinidad (Caracas, 2021), and *Coraza* at Fundación Marso (Mexico City, 2019). Recent projects and commissions include presentations for the Amazon Biennial (Belém), Frieze Sculpture (London), West Middlesex Hospital in Twickenham with Chelsea and Westminster Foundation Trust (London), Harewood Biennial (Leeds), Magasin3 Museum of Contemporary Art (Stockholm), Palazzo Bolani for *Planet B: Climate Change and the New Sublime*, curated by Nicolas Bourriaud (Venice), the Serpentine Galleries' SEEDS programme (London), and *Cabilla*, curated by Sol Calero at TEA Museum (Tenerife). Pizzani's work is held in public collections including Tate, Magasin3 (Stockholm), the Essex Collection of Art from Latin America (ESCALA), and the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (CPPC). She lives and works in London where she is a studio artist at Gasworks. [luciapizzani.com](http://luciapizzani.com)

### About Focal Point Gallery

Focal Point Gallery is south Essex's only public contemporary art gallery, open to all. Offering an exciting and ambitious programme of largely free workshops, talks, outdoor film screenings and offsite projects, we also present four major exhibitions a year featuring both international and local artists. We believe in building a community and a safe space to enjoy art and the creative process, where everyone is valued. Our aim is to inspire curiosity by producing and presenting thought-provoking art made today that explores our locality, sense of self and the importance of communities through investigating current concerns that resonate internationally. FPG is located on the ground floor of The Forum in Elmer Square, 100 metres from Southend Central Station. We are wheelchair accessible and there are additional materials available to enhance your visit, e.g. large print information sheets, family activity sheets and dedicated quiet times. More information can be found on our website. [fpg.org.uk](http://fpg.org.uk)

Opening hours: Wednesday to Saturday 11am to 5pm.

Focal Point Gallery, Elmer Square, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 1NB

+44 (0)1702 534108, [focalpointgallery@southend.gov.uk](mailto:focalpointgallery@southend.gov.uk)