

From One Life to Another Affective Thresholds and Astonishing Matters

This exhibition focuses on Ana María Devis's most recent project (2025–2026), while simultaneously enriching readings of her oeuvre through the presentation of two earlier series: *Guachaca* (2023) and *Symbiotic Relations* (2020–2021).

In 2025, Devis bore witness to an invasion of fungus and bacteria caused by an unnoticed water leak in an apartment in Bogotá, Colombia. There, fungi, bacteria, and yeast spread across every surface, orchestrating their own choreographic reconfigurations—mysterious and beyond human control. Germinating from a photographic record of the space, as well as from an exercise in somatization realized through intense manual practice, this series reveals the hidden activity of the microscopic world through a detailed, affective, and speculative study of its forms.

The central piece of the exhibition consists of a work of embroidery over a dye-sublimated photographic print on fabric. Its dimensionality, color, and abundant detail are grounded in a speculative supposition: what might have happened had the microbial and fungal growth continued to proliferate without interruption.

These two textiles are counterparts of the same image of a bed overtaken by fungi, bacteria, and yeast, discovered in an apartment in Bogotá after nearly a year of human absence.

The two textile works divide the original image into two parallel processes that, in tandem, continue to expand the conceptual material of the colonized bed. The original duvet, now hanging from the upper floor, was transported to the exhibition space and biologically neutralized to halt microbial growth and eliminate biological risk. The embroidered fabric, displayed at the center of the gallery, embodies the fictional proliferation of the microorganisms—a work that took more than a year to complete, in collaboration with embroiderer Rocío Neme and mycologist Tatiana San Juan.

The light filtering through the torn duvet and the stains on the white fabric bear witness to the traces left by the microbial colony that once thrived

there. As in many of Devis's processes, residue is appropriated as a material charged with meaning: here, the duvet acts as both as a freeze frame of a metabolic process operating outside the forces of human will, and as a witness to an infinite cycle of life and death that continuously transforms matter without end.

In parallel, the embroidered fabric continues the cycle through speculation, somatization, and imagination. Together, the two embroiderers transformed their conversations about the astonishing discovery of the mycelial invasion into an intricate work that imagines what might have happened had fungi and other organisms continued their expansion. This extreme detail, characteristic of Devis's graphic language, invites the viewer's eye to lose itself in each mark and material element, contemplating the infinite possibilities contained within each organic, minute, and meticulous stitch.

The video from the series *From One Life to Another* follows the journey of the dye-sublimated photograph on fabric, now suspended among trees in a new living environment: the landscape surrounding the artist's mother's home. Deep within the Colombian tropics, this site is an affective space for Devis: one she has incorporated repeatedly into her long-term processes, and the place where she first began to metabolize the astonishing encounter she experienced with the microscopic universe. Through this video, the artist records the first stage of the somatic process she undertook to understand her relationship with the image printed on the fabric, establishing a play of scale between the micro and the macro.

The acoustic landscape accompanying the video—a 5.1 surround-sound composition created in collaboration with musician Antonio Ponce de León—invites viewers into the exhibition's immersive universe. A resonance with other bodies and rhythms: an open and fragmented soundscape that distills the domestic, the natural world, and the spectral within a single composition.

Likewise, the visual traces of microorganisms bear formal correspondences with Devis's earlier works, which also draw on organic forms and residues as primary sources. The intricacy of the compositions and the color palette employed in *Symbiotic Relations* (2021) are surprisingly reminiscent of the patterns found on the colonized sheet. In a video from this same series,

Devis imagines the lives of these creatures, accompanying them with sound and movement. This work, also included in the exhibition, reveals not only the coherence that exists between distinct processes throughout Devis's practice, but also expands upon her sustained attention to the minute and the ephemeral.

In *Symbiotic Relations*, Devis created an ecosystem of 42 fictional creatures made from residual and organic material: branches, makeup-removal pads, hair, sticks, lacquer, wire, makeup, and reptile skin multiply like a cell in mitosis—forming a network of residues, affections, and journeys that envelop the feminine universe within the animal and plant worlds.

Created over the course of two years, the creatures inhabiting *Symbiotic Relations* encompass vestiges not only of the material world but also of the taxonomic one as well. Each bears an absurd and unpronounceable name, such as *Rasuntisanollamas*, constructed from a list of emotional, abstract, and objective attributes: makeup-removal pads contribute the syllable RA from the word *respirar* (to breathe); makeup itself is represented by S, for base (make up foundation); UN refers to the uniformity of matte hairspray; TI to the plastic in synthetic hair; SA to the pink tones present in the strands of hair with which they are woven; NO to the luminosity of the areca palm; LLA to the vanilla scent found in the names of commercial makeup products; and MAS for the scales of the common iguana. While these creatures were originally exhibited within an imagined natural habitat, in this video installation, Devis imagines their lives and movements through unsettlingly nonhuman sonic elements.

Another series included in the exhibition is *Guachaca* (2022–2023), drawings on handmade paper, rapidograph drawings, and impressions made with residues collected from the Guachaca River on Colombia's Caribbean coast.

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