



Arquitecturas (columna azul), 2023, nail polish on found photograph, 8.8 x 12.7 cm

Arquitecturas

April 2 - May 2, 2026

Curated by Alexis Fabry

Bienvenu Steinberg & C is pleased to present *Arquitecturas*, an exhibition by Colombian artist Johanna Calle and her second solo show in New York. Curated by Alexis Fabry, the exhibition centers on two recent bodies of work, *Arquitecturas* and *Abstractas*, in which the artist intervenes small format chromogenic prints drawn from anonymous photographic archives, by applying nail polish or by removing parts of the surface emulsion, furthering her ongoing conceptual exploration of drawing, photography, and archival material.

Arquitecturas reflects a shift in Calle's practice toward additive intervention. Through the precise chromatic application of nail polish layers, she reconfigures the visual structures embedded in these images, isolating architectural elements and spatial rhythms. Calle has described her works as "photographic drawings" concerned with defining characteristic color ensembles, particularly those associated with vernacular architecture. Rather than reconstructing or embellishing the image, the interventions frame color as a historically situated system—shaped by specific social, architectural, and material contexts, and increasingly subject to erosion and loss. The use of nail polish is essential to the process. The brilliance of the colors used, and the surface effects of the lacquer evoke the visual codes of advertising and popular culture associated with gendered routines of self-presentation.

In *Abstractas*, Calle reaffirms her longstanding engagement with absence, erasure, and archival instability. Most of the recognizable elements in the image are erased. "My work in these photographic drawings consists of identifying groups of colors characteristic of the analog color photographs of the second half of the twentieth century. I am particularly interested in the palette of colors typical of the 1960s and 1970s (used, for example, in textiles, decoration, automobiles, walls, floors, etc.). At the same time, this project is an exploration of the patina of time as it can be observed in the photographic emulsions of those years, an examination of how the special alchemy of the chemical components of paper and the effects of time and light impose changes on colors as developed and on the representation of the colors of an age. By isolating the colors from their original referents and defining them as abstract forms, I construct an image in which photographic color is one of the predominant factors." (Johanna Calle)

Johanna Calle (b. 1965, Bogotá) lives and works in Bogotá, Colombia. She studied visual arts at Universidad de los Andes and received an MFA from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London. Her work has been exhibited internationally at institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York ; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston ; Museo de Arte del Banco de la República, Bogotá ; and Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá. Her work is included in major public collections such as Museum of Modern Art, New York ; Tate Modern, London ; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston ; The Blanton Museum, Austin.

Alexis Fabry is a Paris-based curator, publisher and advisor, founder of Toluca Fine Art and Toluca Editions. He has published two monographs on Johanna Calle and has included her work in several institutional exhibitions such as *Periódicos de Ayer* at Museo de Arte Miguel Urrutia, Bogotá (curated with María Wills) ; *Sol Negro. Mujeres en la fotografía. Colección Anna Gamazo de Abelló* (Mexico City, 2019) ; and *América Latina 1960–2013* at Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (2013)