

Marela Zacarías

*Aletheia*

June 11 - July 18, 2026

Biennu Steinberg & C is pleased to present *Aletheia*, an exhibition of new works by Mexican artist Marela Zacarías, marking her first solo exhibition with the gallery. Known for her large-scale installations of hand-painted sculptures, Zacarías draws inspiration from global textiles, architecture, and social histories to create works that explore movement, materiality, and layered narratives.

*At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is.*

*T.S. Eliot, Burnt Norton*

Like life, time is often said to unfold: the common expression expresses our common understanding of both. And that which unfolds must by necessity have been folded, so that if time (like life) unfolds, then it (or they) must previously have been folded. Yet that which is folded must, again by necessity, have been previously unfolded. The cycle is endless; what goes around, comes around. As a result, such folding and unfolding — of time, of life — come together in their ineluctable continuum to yield a kind of fold entirely its own, a fold in the sense of a safe place, a still place, amidst yet not partaking of the antonymic churn of opposites. This is something other than folding or unfolding; this is enfolding.

Enfolding — the impulse, the gesture, the act, the fact — is fundamental to the works that Marela Zacarías has created and brought together in her exhibition *Aletheia*. On the most immediate level, Zacarías's flowing forms are nothing if not fold, their gorgeous and preternaturally smooth surfaces bending this way and that, at once onto and away from themselves, creating thrills of lift and fall, like a fast moving vehicle crossing the crest of a small hill. For all the sense of movement they convey, however, these works are not kinetic; they harness their flux into fixed form, the way a whorl harnesses a whirl, action become object. In this way, Zacarías's forms, while not overtly figurative, do not seem purely abstract either; they seem to channel the waves and energies that course less visibly through our so-called 'real' world, the physical world where rivers flow, where eddies swirl, where moons wax and wane, where air currents heat and rise and cool and fall, where light bends with gravity's pull, where sound goes on forever.

But at the same time, many of Zacarías's own forms envelop other forms: hence the deeper sense of enfolding that impregnates the works in *Aletheia*. These enfolded objects — seashells, children's toys, handmade textiles, traditionally dyed yarn — are not of Zacarías' own making, but they are of her own election. They nestle in nooks and crannies, they drape gently over and around billowing volumes, they rest in gentle embraces, they take and find shelter. Moreover, there is an almost uncanny harmony between enfolding form and enfolded object, a harmony of shape, line and color (Zacarías's use of color is never less than exquisite.) They are made for each other.

Like the sculptural forms that hold them, many of these enfolded objects embody movement. But in the case of nearly all the objects, the embodied movement is specific; it is the movement of spinning, of turning around a fixed point. It is in the lightly patinated helix of the nautilus shell, in the finely crafted spinning tops of the wooden children's toys, in the unspooling spools of brightly colored yarn. Thus here again there is an insistent sense of what goes around, comes around, and a sense of a stillness amid all that coming and going, amid the whirls and swirls and twirls and curls. It again seems to summon universal waves and energies, like those shared by cosmic dances and mitochondrial double helices.

One thinks of Clotho, the first of the Fates, with her distaff and spindle, spinning unspun fibers of flax into the divine thread of human life, a thread that will later be measured and cut by her sisters Lachesis and Atropos. But Clotho will not cease to spin.

It is here that the enfolding that is fundamental to Zacarías' *Aletheia* begins to operate on yet another level. *Aletheia*, the word, is usually translated from ancient Greek as meaning a kind of truth that has been revealed, a reality that has been disclosed or unconcealed. But it must be remembered that a river runs through that word *aletheia*, the river Lethe, the river of forgetting, the river that must be crossed when an individual life's thread has been cut so that the thread of life itself may continue to be spun; it is both a river of death and a river of life. Thus, just as folding and unfolding form a continuum of opposites that yields the stillness of enfolding, so in *aletheia* — and in Marela Zacarías's *Aletheia* — the continuum between forgetting and unforgetting, between time present and time past, between creation of the new and the enfolding of the old, between life and death, yields its own stillness: the stillness of understanding that what goes around, comes around.

George Stolz

June 2026

Marela Zacarías (b. 1978, Mexico) is known for her large-scale installation work of hand-painted sculptures. Constructed from wood, wire mesh, and plaster, her undulating wall-mounted forms are painted with geometric patterns drawn from global textiles, architecture, and social histories. Evolving from a background in mural painting, Zacarías' work extends into space with a strong architectural dialogue, reflecting her interest in movement, materiality, and the layered narratives of place. Her work is held in major collections in the U.S. and internationally, including NYU Langone, Washington State's Art Collection, and Seattle Tacoma International Airport Permanent Art Collection. She holds a B.A. from Kenyon College, Ohio, and an M.F.A. from Hunter College, NY, as well as an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts from Kenyon College. Zacarías lives and works between Brooklyn, NY, and Mexico City, MX.

Selected solo exhibitions include: San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, San Luis Obispo, CA (2023); Brattleboro Museum, Brattleboro, VT (2014); Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY (2013); Selected group exhibitions include: Mexican Cultural Institute, Washington, DC (2019); BRIC Arts, Brooklyn, NY (2016); British Society of American Art, Brooklyn, NY (2014); El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY (2011).