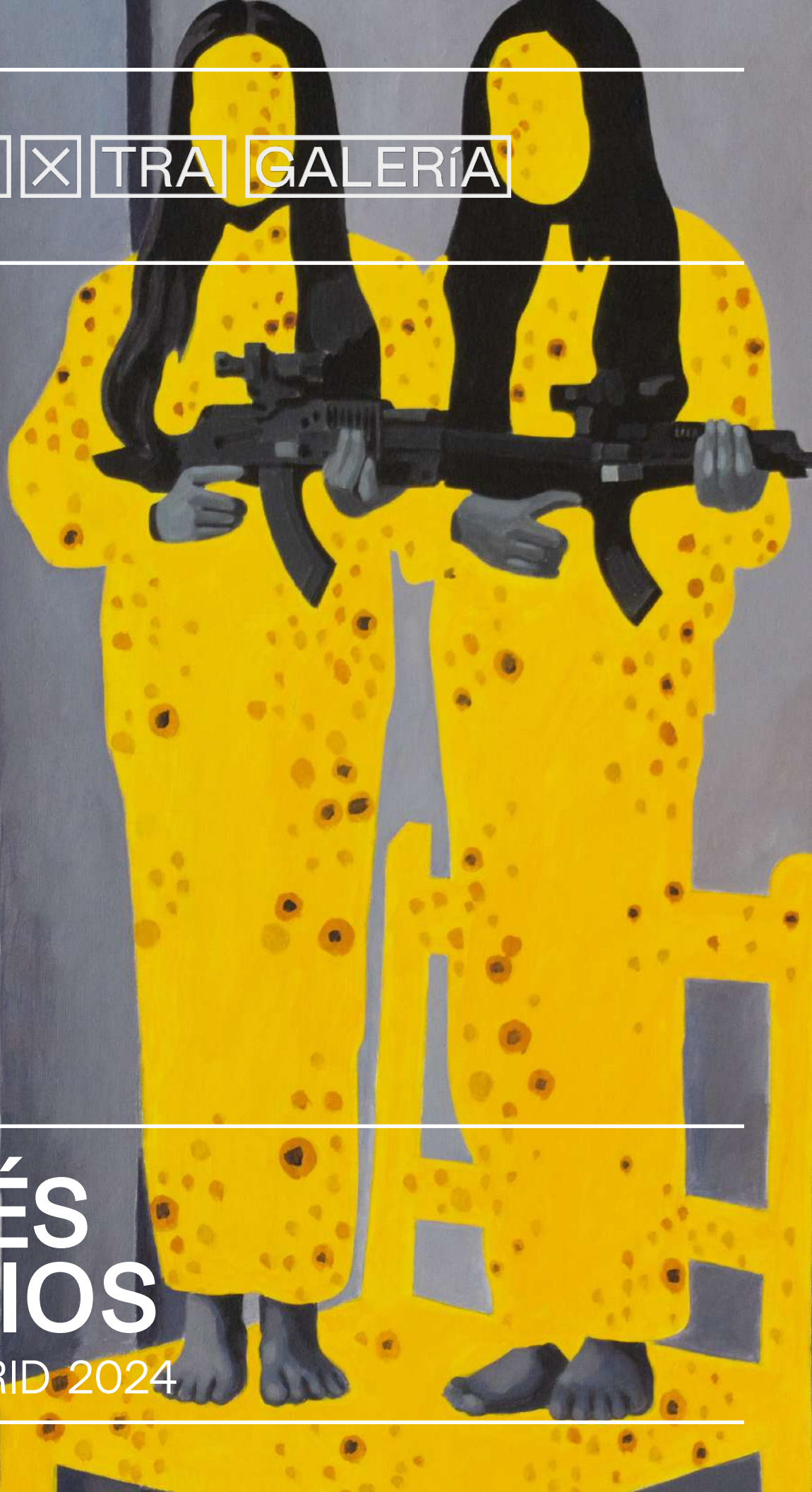
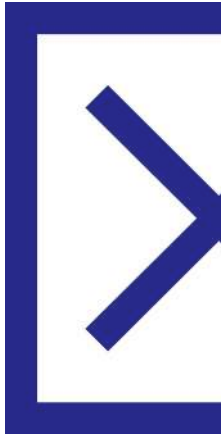

E X T R A G A L E R Í A

MOISÉS
BARRIOS

ARCO MADRID 2024





MOISÉS BARRIOS
AVAILABLE WORK
PABELLÓN 9 | BOOTH 9NLM07

ARCO MADRID 2024
NUNCA LO MISMO:
LATIN AMERICAN ART
SECTION CURATED BY MANUELA
MOSCOSO AND JOSÉ ESPARZA
CHONG CUY





MOISÉS BARRIOS

Guatemala, 1946.

Moisés Barrios began his training in woodcut and intaglio printmaking at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Spain. At an early point in his career, he worked in graphic design and advertising in Costa Rica and Spain, and this time would end up defining his graphic and pictorial production. He was a founding member of Grupo Imaginaria in Guatemala.

Barrios has had individual exhibits at the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (Costa Rica), Teor/ética (Costa Rica), Casa de América (Spain), and at art galleries such as Equilátero (Costa Rica), Engramme (Canada), Sol del Río (Guatemala), El Laberinto (El Salvador), Galería Imaginaria (Guatemala), among others. He has participated in group shows hosted by the Centro Wilfredo Lam (Cuba), Museo de Arte Moderno (Mexico), Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art (USA), Harris Museum (UK), Museo Universitario del Chopo (Mexico), Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (Costa Rica), Taipei Fine Arts Museum (Taipei), Galería Klaus Steinmetz (Costa Rica), Centro Cultural de España (Guatemala) and biennials including the Bienal del Arte Paiz (Guatemala), Bienal de São Paulo (Brazil), Bienal Centroamericana (Costa Rica), and the Bienal Nacional de Lima (Peru).

His work is included in diverse private collections, as well as notable institutional collections including at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Spain), the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (Costa Rica), the Smith College Museum of Art (MA, USA), the Museo de Arte Moderno Carlos Mérida (Guatemala), Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei (Taiwan), y the Essex Collection of Art from Latin America (UK).

Barrios' practice centers on a fascination for pictorial elements, graphics, and advertisements. Though faithful to painting and printmaking, he has pursued photography as an auxiliary method to support his representational work. He focuses on addressing themes of colonialism and post-colonialism, generally tied to the exploitation of natural resources. Specifically, he focused on an investigation of the impact of the presence of the United Fruit Company in Central America and the Caribbean, both in the political, economic and social spheres and in symbolic and cultural practices. The landscape of the Pacific coast and the highlands of Guatemala are recurrent in his work, as spaces that explore the relationship between nature and the subjectivities, identities and histories of its inhabitants. He is considered one of Guatemala's most outstanding artists.

ABOUT THE WORK

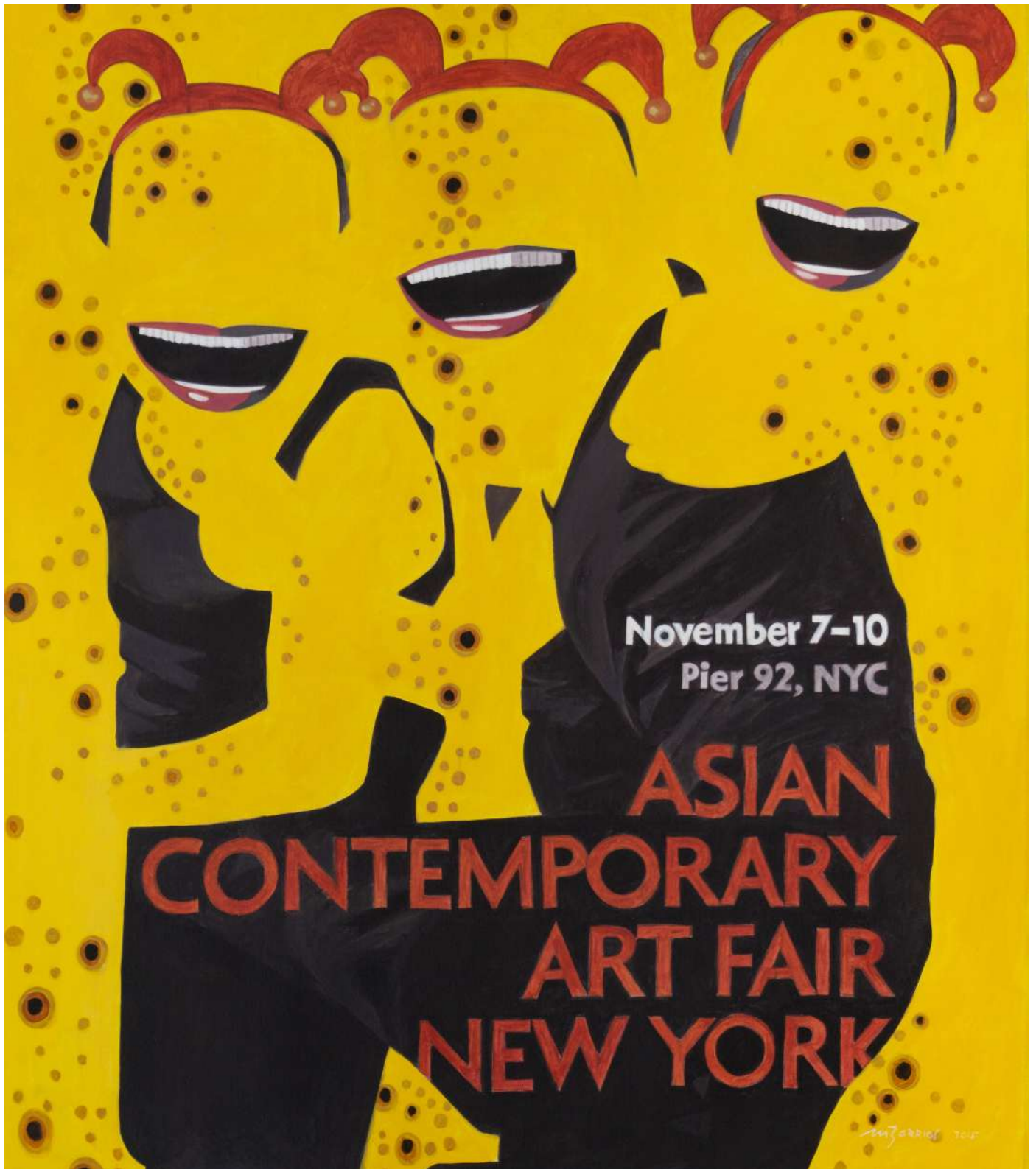
Moisés Barrios' work stands as a visual and conceptual testimony that delves into the complex relationship between the United Fruit Company and Guatemala. In the 20th century, the United Fruit Company not only dominated the production and export of bananas, but also exerted an inordinate political and economic influence in the region, exacerbating inequalities and generating social tensions. Moisés Barrios' work masterfully addresses the complex narrative of the banana as a symbol of exploitation, resistance and collective memory.

The recurrent presence of banana aesthetics in Barrios' work goes beyond the seductive visual appeal of the fruit. In *Bananópolis*, the pieces start and unravel with an invasion of black stains that spread over human figures, magazine covers, advertising signs, and objects, invading every surface in their path. The humorous facade of *Bananópolis*, through some key destabilizing element, quickly opens the way to an inherently political content.

In his *Vitrinas BR* series, Barrios dismantles the stylized and romantic aesthetic associated with the Banana Republic brand. The brand name Banana Republic originates from a term used to describe tropical or subtropical countries, especially in Latin America, that relied heavily on the export of a single product, such as bananas. Although its initial focus was heavily influenced by military and safari aesthetics, the name Banana Republic contributed to the brand's narrative, evoking images of faraway and exciting places.

The storefronts that Barrios recreates reveal layers of artificial construction and simplification of reality. This approach directly challenges exoticization by evidencing how certain cultural and geographical elements are selected and stylized to fit a fashion narrative, thus highlighting the artificiality of representation.

The banana is thus revealed as a powerful symbol that encapsulates the contradictions of Guatemala's industry and history. Moisés Barrios explores the duality of its meaning: the fruit as a source of wealth for the few and as an emblem of exploitation for the many.



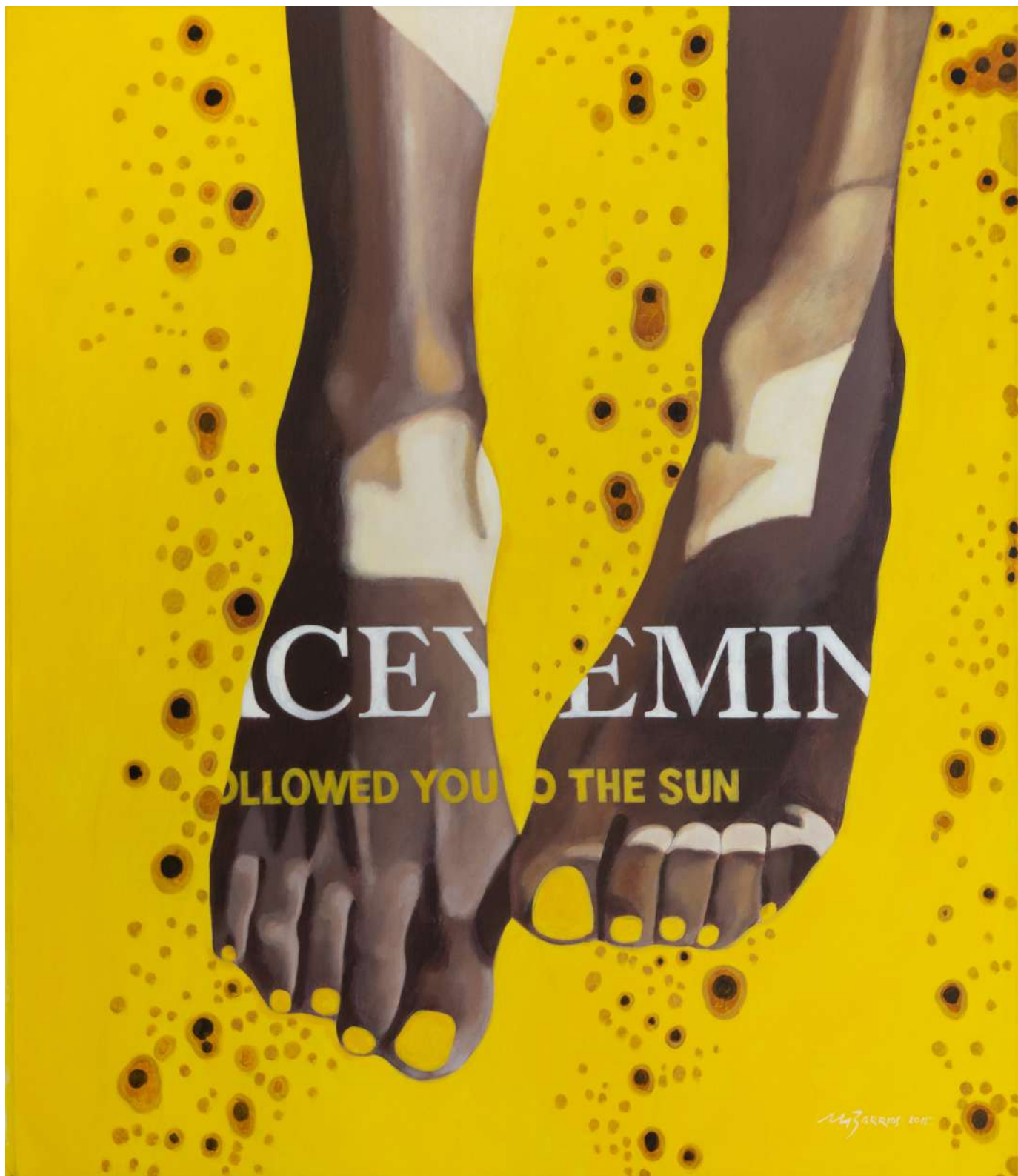
From the series *Bananópolis: Asian Contemporary Art*
2015
Acrylic on canvas
125 cm x 109 cm



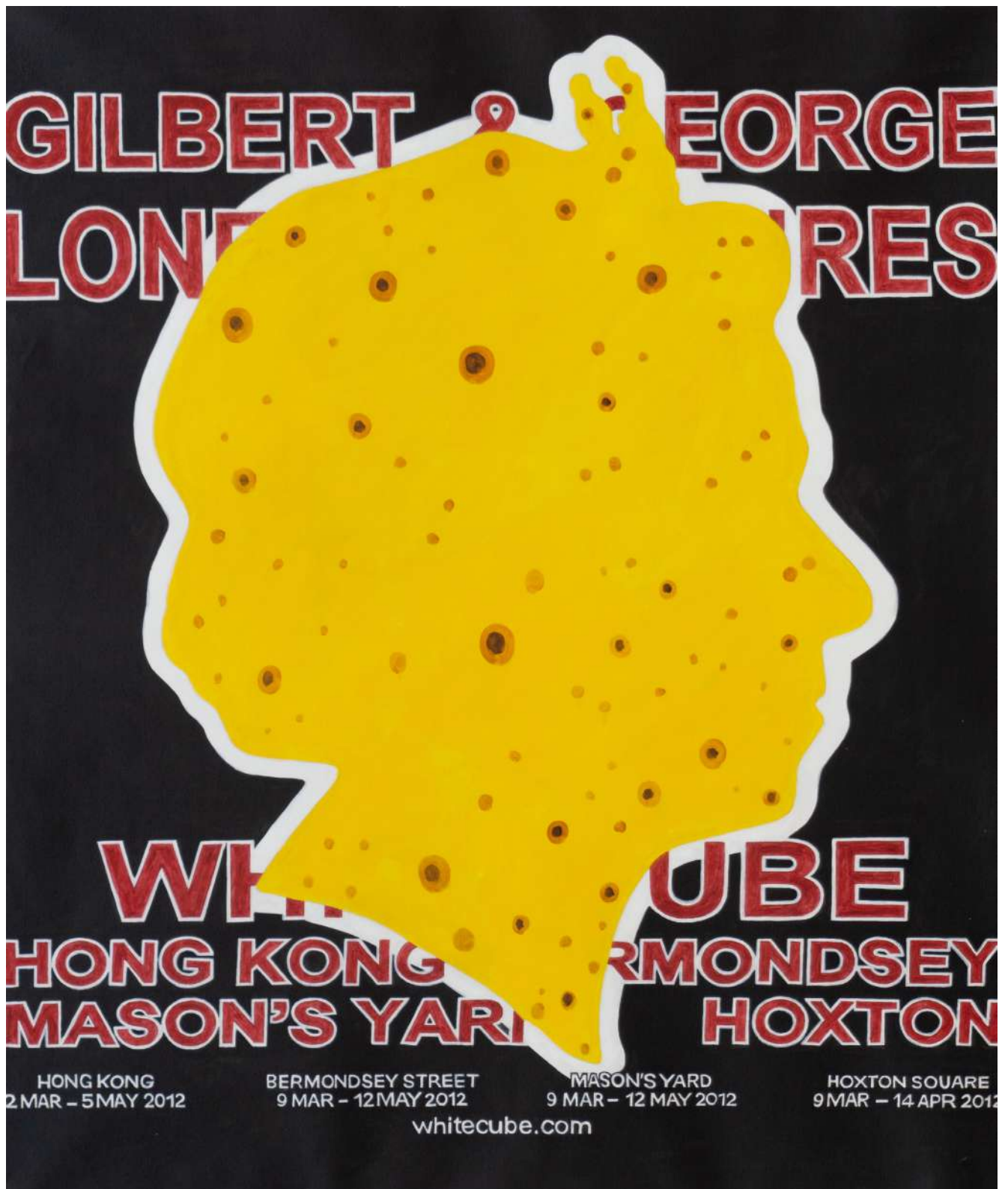
From the series *Bananópolis*: Andy
2015
Acrylic on canvas
130 cm x 110 cm



From the series *Bananópolis*: Marina
2014
Acrylic on canvas
130 cm x 104 cm



From the series *Bananópolis*: Tracey
2015
Acrylic on canvas
125 cm x 108 cm



From the series *Bananópolis*: Gilbert and George
2015
Acrylic on canvas
130 cm x 110 cm



From the series *Bananópolis*: Sin título
2015
Acrylic on canvas
130 cm x 110 cm



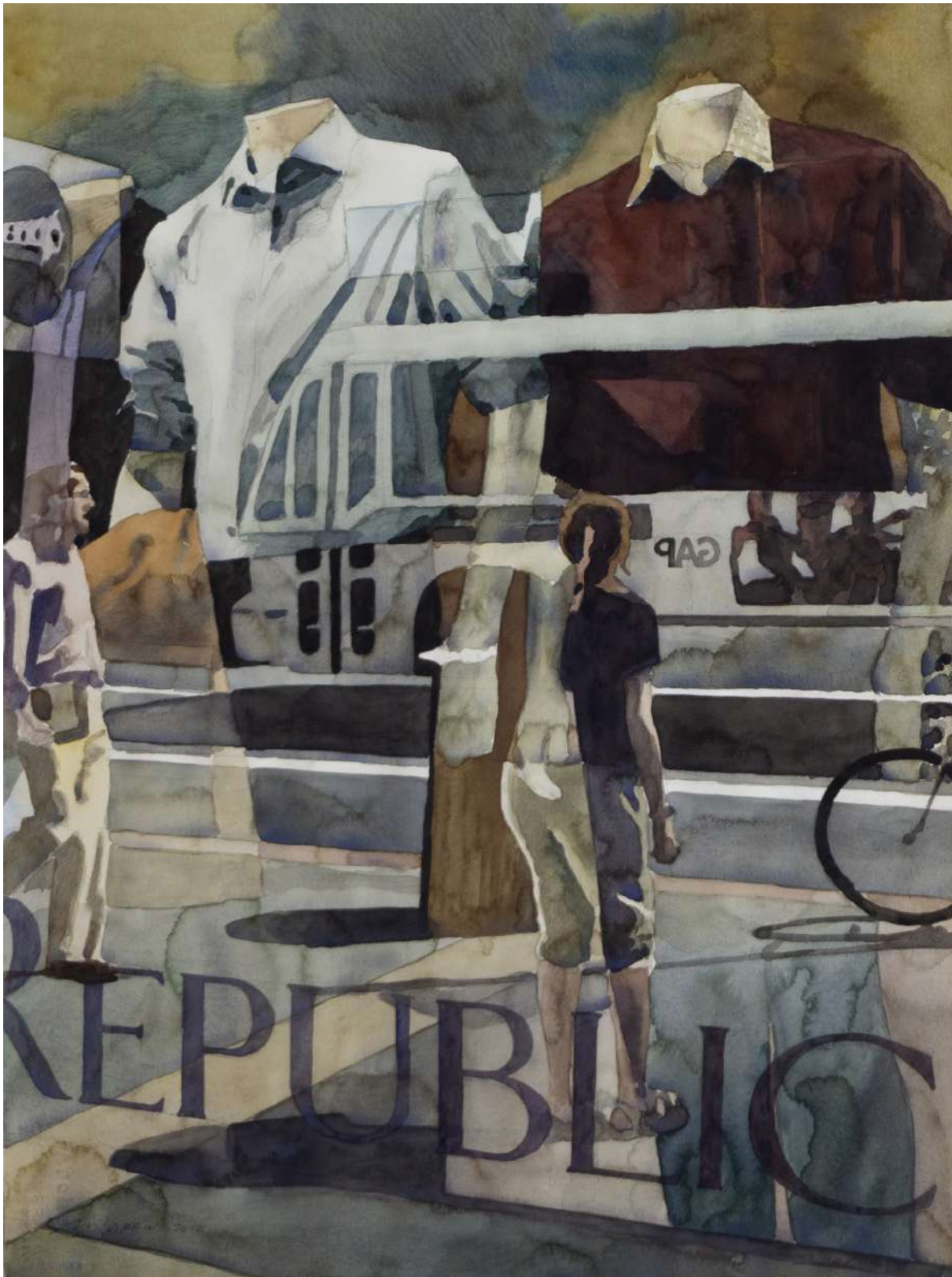
From the series *Vitrinas BR*
2012
Watercolor on paper
56 cm x 76 cm



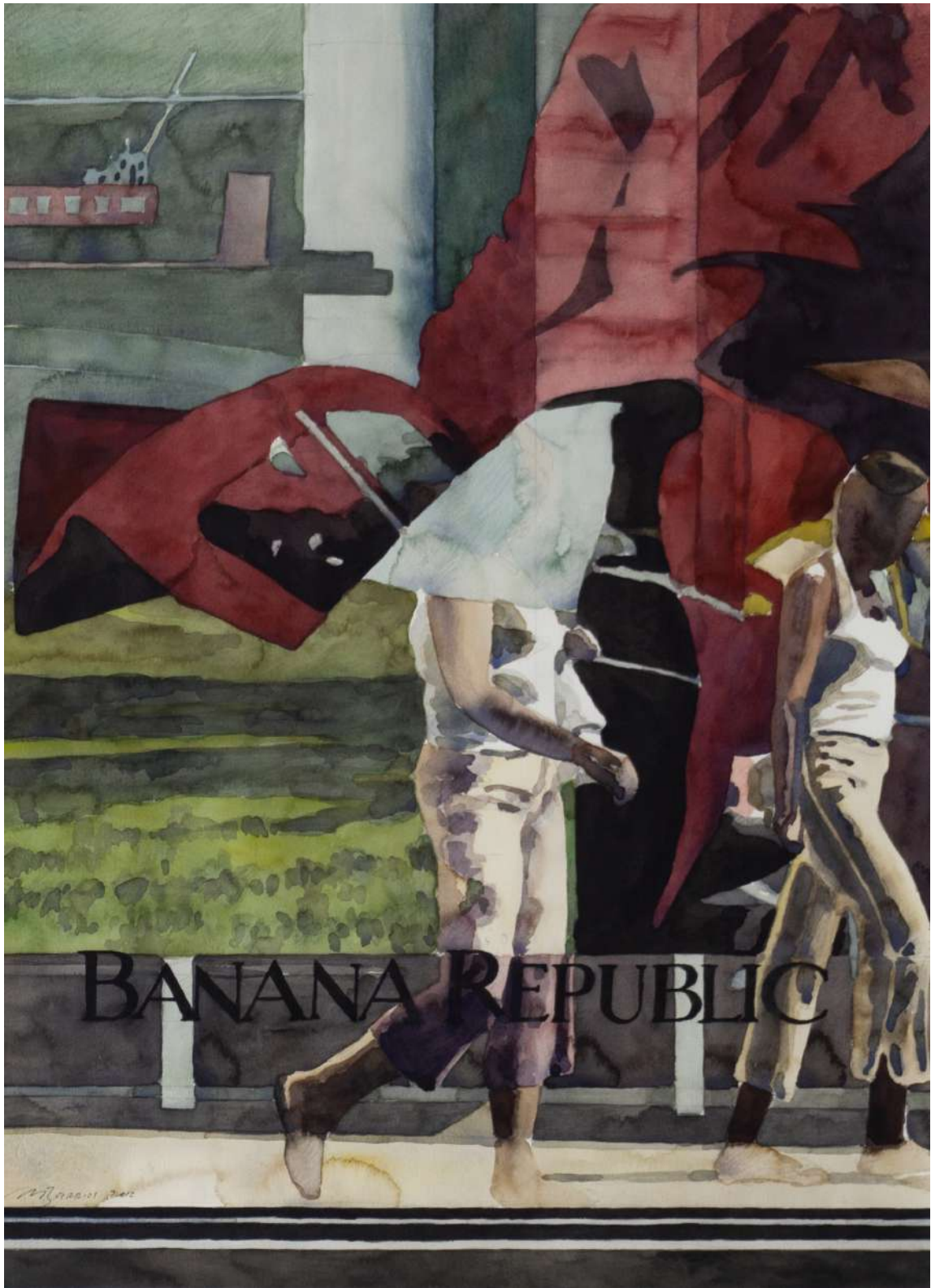
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Watercolor on paper
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Watercolor on paper
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Watercolor on paper
76 cm x 56 cm



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Watercolor on paper
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Watercolor on paper
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PAISAJES RECIENTES

Since the 1980s, Moisés Barrios has been committed to painting as a means to address themes that have been fundamental in the construction of the history of his country, Guatemala. One of those themes are natural resources—water and land as environments that ensure life, or become discursive epicenters of great political phenomena. He studies events that emerged from the processes of colonization, independence and nation building, and puts them in context with recent sociopolitical phenomena.

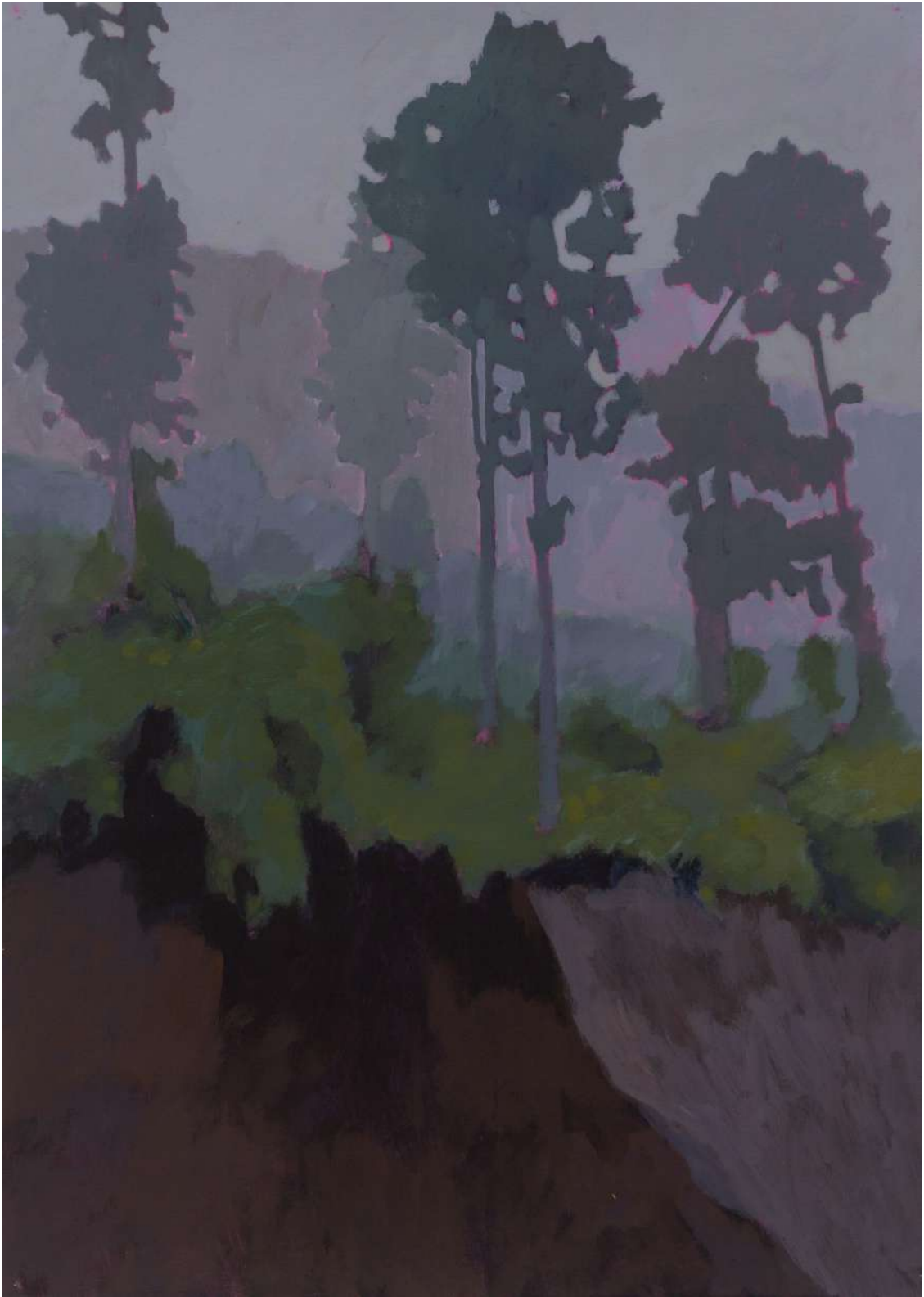
As a great container of that historical memory, landscapes have been one of the most recurrent motifs in the artist's career. Barrios considers them as an environment that exposes the symbols of the nationalist, utilitarian or power-based visions that have shaped it. When observing the work of Moisés Barrios, and specifically his landscapes, there is something in his way of painting that dislocates the legacy models of the tourist postcard, those that, historically, provided a regularized notion of contemplating and naming the "Guatemalan landscape" as one of the country's great local symbolic values.

The relationship that Moisés Barrios established with landscape painting and nature began with his frequent trips along the Pacific coast of Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica and the Caribbean. As a person who was acquainted with the sea at 17 years old, that landscape became an essential reference for his artistic work. In the tropical-literary order or as a metaphor for violent natural phenomena such as storms and hurricanes, the landscape was the generator of works that constantly referred to the abundance, misfortunes and barbarities of the region.





From the series *Paisajes recientes*
2023 - 2024
Acrylic on paper
70 cm x 50 cm



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50 cm x 70 cm



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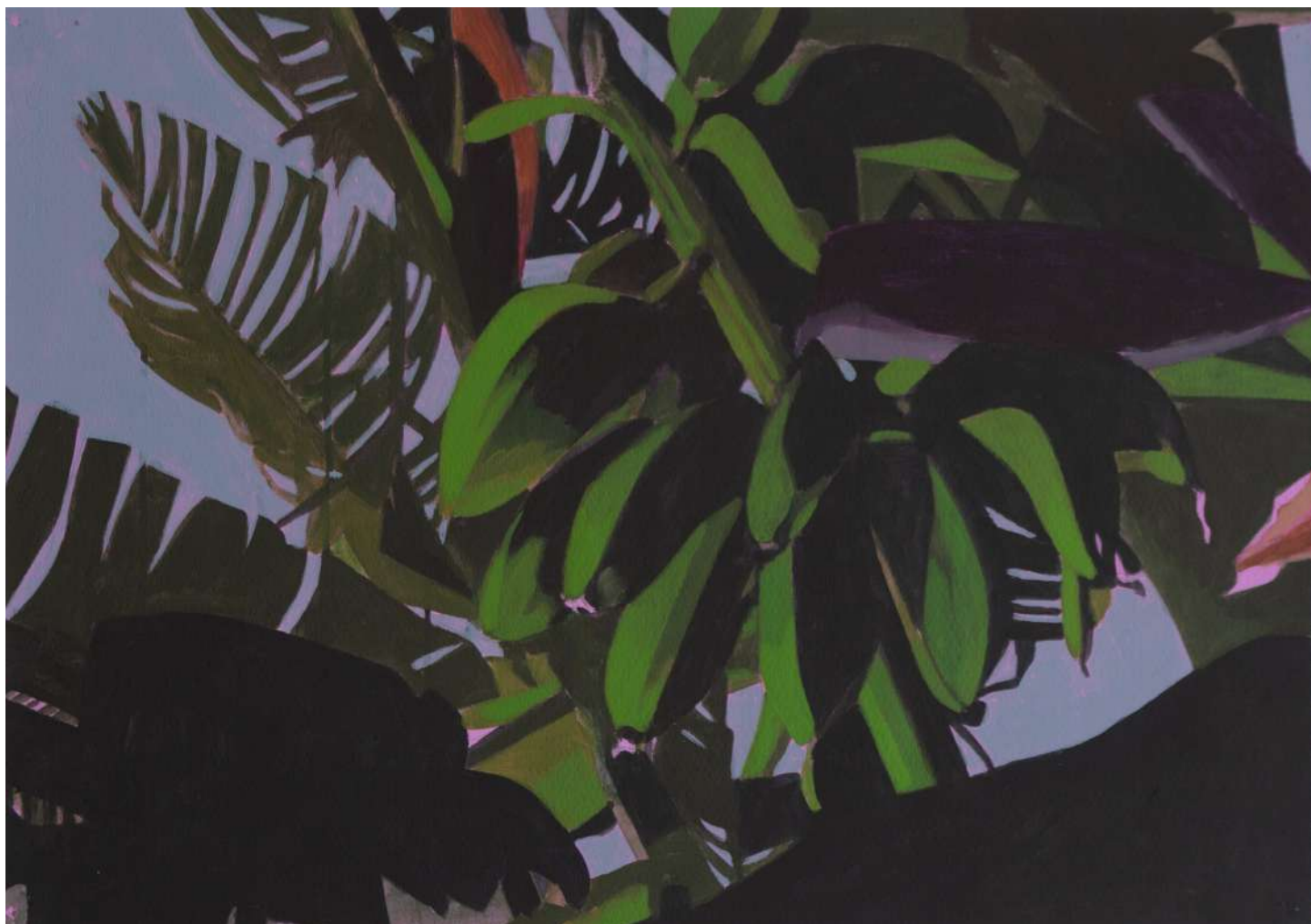
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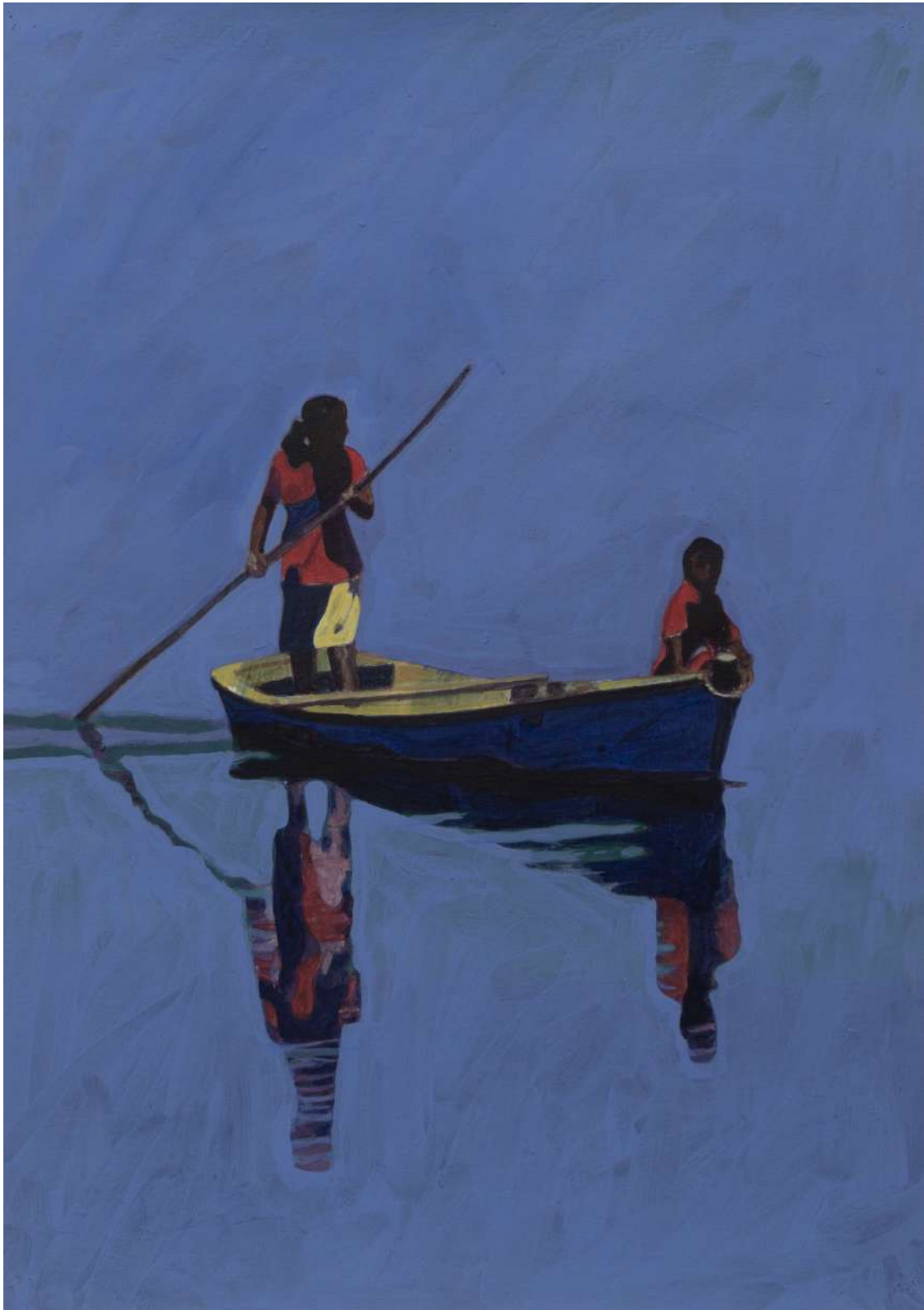
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