

Julia Isídrez: *Mud is everything* at Nottingham Contemporary

Fri 9 Oct 2026 – Sun 10 Jan 2027
Private View: Thu 8 Oct



Julia Isídrez. Photo by Baro Brizuela and Juana Barreto. Courtesy of Gomide&Co and Julia Isídrez.

Nottingham Contemporary is excited to present the first international institutional solo exhibition of Julia Isídrez (b.1967, Paraguay).

Julia Isídrez's clay sculptures trouble and enlighten many issues that define cultural debate today – from indigeneity and identity politics to craft. Isídrez grew up in Itá, Paraguay, where Guaraní ceramic techniques have been passed down through generations and are amongst only a few practices that can be traced back to pre-Hispanic times. Through this inheritance, Isídrez learned under the guidance of her mother Juana Marta Rodas, who in turn learned from her own mother. A knowledge not just of making, but of being – with clay, people and more-than human lives.

Yet the world is never still, and neither have Guaraní practices remained fixed. They have shifted alongside turbulent times and changing pressures – colonialism, sociopolitical shifts, globalisation, and destabilised climates and ecosystems. As specific forms and functions declined from daily use, replaced by objects made from glass, plastic or metal, the nature of the ceramics changed too. The spout of a water jug transformed into the gaping mouth of a lizard; a

handle morphed into the elongated neck of a llama. Juana Marta Rodas began to thread a pathway in this transformation that has been followed and taken even further by Isídre.

Working with local clay and employing ancient Guaraní techniques like coil building (colombino), wood oven cooking, pigmenting with coal and the use of two different types of earth to make the clay, the subject matter of Isídre's work is anything but traditional. Her ceramics depict hybrid dinosaur-like or pluri-headed spherical amphibians. These fantastical creatures are chimeras, the unattainable beings of Isídre's imagination and dreams rooted in popular traditions, folklore and the worlds around her.

The exhibition at Nottingham Contemporary will bring together key examples of Isídre's work across forms and scale, made over the course of her practice, and will be accompanied by a dynamic live programme of events and a new publication with contributions from Salma Tuqan, Damián Cabrera, María Wills Londoño and Katya García-Antón.

For more information about Julia Isídre and other exhibitions at Nottingham Contemporary, please visit [our website](#).

Julia Isídre: *Mud is everything* is curated by Salma Tuqan and Niall Ó Faircheallaigh, assisted by Klara Szafrńska.

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The Nottingham Contemporary Commissioning Circle: Nissreen Darawish, Gabriela Galcerán, Il Posto, Rafik&Najoua, Hamza Serafi and Mercedes Vilardell

Notes to Editors:

Currently showing (until Sun 13 Sep 2026): [Chico da Silva: *And the soul is for the birds*](#) and [Augustas Serapinas: *Physical Culture*](#).

[Julia Isídre: *Mud is everything*](#) is showing alongside [Sarah Cunningham: *Midnight Sun*](#).

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About Nottingham Contemporary

Nottingham Contemporary is one of the leading centres of contemporary art in Europe. Since opening in 2009, we have welcomed over 2.5 million visitors – with free admission for all – to our highly ambitious programme that has featured hundreds of artists and cultural practitioners from across the globe.

Our programme champions international art and artists who invite us to imagine the world in new ways, and empower different perspectives into the most pressing cultural, social, and political questions of today. We support artists at different stages of their careers – from first-time solo shows in the UK to surveys of renowned or overlooked figures – and regularly present significant thematic exhibitions and major artist-curated projects. Nottingham Contemporary was shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019. Nottingham Contemporary is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

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