

**Nottingham
Contemporary**

Julia Isídrez

Mud is everything

Easy Read Guide



How to use this Guide



In this guide, hard to understand words are underlined. We explain what these words mean after they have been used.

The guide starts with an introduction about the exhibition.

After the introduction, there is a section of the guide telling you about different themes in the exhibition.

You can use the contents page to find out which page of the guide information on each theme is found at.

The contents page is on the next page and tells you what page number to turn to for each section.

The page numbers are written at the bottom of each page.

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Introduction



This exhibition is a display of artworks by an artist called Julia Isídrez.



We are showing works by Julia at Nottingham Contemporary from 9 October 2026 to 10 January 2027.



Julia is an artist from Paraguay.



Julia makes artworks out of clay. Clay comes from the earth. Clay is a bit like mud, but when clay is put into a special fire it becomes very hard. This means clay can be used to make things like pots and vases. We usually call things made from clay ceramics.



Julia's exhibition is called Mud is everything. This is something Julia said when she was talking about making artworks out of clay.



For Julia, mud and clay are special. Julia thinks things which come from the ground like mud and clay hold memories of people, animals, plants and the land.



Julia thinks clay can connect us to nature, animals, the people who live around us, and the people who lived before us.

Julia's life as an artist



Julia was born in 1967 in a town called Itá in Paraguay.



Julia learned how to work with clay from her mother who was an artist called Juana Marta Rodas.



Juana learned how to use clay from her own mother.



This way of passing on skills and information from mother to daughter happens a lot in the place Julia is from.

Special ways of working with clay



Julia lives in an area of Paraguay where lots of Guaraní people live. Guaraní people are an Indigenous group who live in Paraguay and other countries in South America. Indigenous means the first people to live in a place before anyone else arrived.



The Guaraní people have lots of special ways of working with clay which Julia has learned.



This includes:

- Finding the right clay in the ground



- **Shaping clay using your hands**



- Using a technique called coiling to build shapes out of clay. Coiling is an old way of working with clay where you roll clay into sausage shapes and stack them up on top of each other to build pots and sculptures.



- Firing objects made from clay in kilns which are outside. Firing is the special way of cooking clay to make it hard so it stays in the shape you've made and can be used. Kilns are special ovens that clay is cooked in.



A long time ago clay was used to make most things people used for eating and drinking and cooking. This included things like jugs to keep water in, bowls to eat from, pots to cook with and containers to keep things in.



As time passed, new things like glass, metal and plastic became available to make things for eating and drinking and cooking. This meant that clay was used less and less.



Because clay was being used less for things that are used in everyday life, artists began to play with clay more in different and fun ways.



These artists kept the traditions of clay alive by continuing to use the special tools and methods to make things. Traditions are the special way of doing things that are passed down from older people to younger people.

Julia's artworks



Julia makes ceramic sculptures that look like animals.



Most of Julia's works don't look like animals that we'd recognise. They are animals from Julia's imagination. This means she made them up or dreamed of them.



Some of the animals in Julia's works come from important stories from Paraguay where Julia lives.



Some of the animals in Julia's work have strange features. Features are the things that we describe about someone to explain what they look like. This includes things like how tall they are or the colour of their hair.



The animals might have:

- really big mouths



- lots of heads



- really round bodies



- really long necks



The artworks on display in our galleries have been made by Julia across a lot of years. Some of the artworks were made by Julia when she was much younger, and some of the artworks are from the last year.



The artworks have been displayed in groups in the gallery on a winding path. This is meant to feel a bit like you've met groups of animals on a forest path.

For More Information



You can find out more about what we do by looking at our website here:

nottinghamcontemporary.org



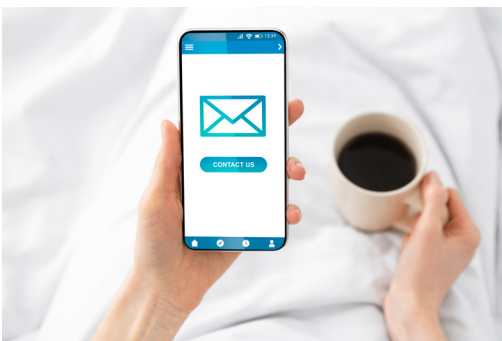
If you would like to help us show more artworks in the future, please think about giving us some money.

We suggest £5 as a good amount.



If you need more information please contact us by:

**Post : Nottingham Contemporary
Weekday Cross Nottingham
NG1 2GB**



Phone: 0115 948 9750

**Email:
info@nottinghamcontemporary.org**

Image Credits

Image credits tell us who took a photograph. The image credits for the photographs you have seen in this easy read guide are shown below.

We have to write these in the way they are written below because of special rules. You don't need to read this part of the guide unless you want to. This part of the guide doesn't tell you anything more about the artworks in the exhibition.

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2. Julia Isidrez, *Armadillo Juana*, 2024. Photo by Estúdio em Obra.

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1. Julia Isidrez, *Kure Ka'avy*, 1990. Photo by Edouard Fraipont. Courtesy of the artist, Gomide&Co, Jessica Silverman, Olney Gleason

2. Julia Isidrez, *Eucarcho*, 2017. Photo by Edouard Fraipont. Courtesy of the artist, Gomide&Co, Jessica Silverman, Olney Gleason

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4. Julia Isidrez, *Cienpies*, 2024. Photo by Filipe Berndt. Fernanda Feitosa and Heitor Martins Collection

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1. Julia Isidrez, *Legarto Canon*, 2024. Photo by Estúdio em Obra. Courtesy of the artist, Gomide&Co, Jessica Silverman, Olney Gleason

2. Julia Isidrez, *Pelota com relieve tres cabezas*, 2023. Photo by Edouard Fraipont. Private Collection.

3. Julia Isidrez, *Oveja*, 2024. Photo by Estúdio em Obra. Courtesy of the artist, Gomide&Co, Jessica Silverman, Olney Gleason

4. Julia Isidrez, *Foca*, 2024. Photo by Edouard Fraipont. Courtesy of the artist, Gomide&Co, Jessica Silverman, Olney Gleason

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