

● The Way Back
Maia Cruz Palileo

Sep. 25 – Oct. 7

Opening: September 25, 6 – 9 pm

Adress: 93 Piccadilly, London W1J 7NQ

Opening times: Every day, 11 am – 7 pm



Maia Cruz Palileo, The Way Back, 2018, oil on canvas, 150 x 119.5 cm

Marking the second iteration of his nomadic exhibition platform, Taymour Grahne is pleased to announce *The Way Back*, featuring new paintings and works on paper by New York-based artist Maia Cruz Palileo.

Deep reds and blues mark brooding skies and clear waters, coiling pythons and wading birds coming to life in shades of green and yellow. The banalities of everyday life sit side by side with the mysteries of great historical events, thoughtful faces and memento mori skulls nestled amongst slightly surreal landscapes.

The works of Maia Cruz Palileo have long examined issues of migration and belonging, and the complexities and nuances of what she refers to as a 'hyphenated concept of home'. However, where she has previously explored personal and familial histories, reconstructing memories and images from her family archive, these new works see Palileo reimagine the dominant colonialist depictions of Filipino culture. In doing so, she spent a month researching the paintings of Damián Domingo (1796–1834), Isabelo de los Reyes' 1889 book *El Folk-lore Filipino*, as well as photographs from the Dean C. Worcester Archive at Chicago's Newberry Library. The 19th century view of the Philippines, through the eyes of these folklorists, artists and American government officials, painted a picture of its subjects (through the eyes of natives as well as 'the other'), that, while poignant in places, was, more often than not, exploitative and dehumanizing.

Palileo has sought to recontextualize some of these stories, to 'pull them out and away from this historical framework'. Touching on events such as the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American war, her richly textured paintings take on a new depth of colour. With Domingo and the Worcester Archive as starting points, she has created a new visual library by extracting certain elements from Worcester's photographs (figures, plants, animals, interiors, boats, moons and mountains) incorporating them into graphite rubbings, which also served as starting points of her paintings. To combat the dehumanizing effect of the colonial point of view, Palileo looked to Domingo's lovingly detailed paintings to infuse her figures with care and dignity.

Here, we see folkloric beliefs melded with pre-colonial oral histories, Spanish and American imperialism, superstition and myth. They blend with history, real and unreal, presenting an uncategorizable gallery of figures and events. The result is a revived and reinvigorated blend of fact and fiction that re-casts these figures into a new light, opening up the narrative to multiple possibilities.

Maia Cruz Palileo (b. 1979) recently held her first institutional exhibition *Meandering Curves of a Creek* at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn. She received an MFA in sculpture from Brooklyn College, City University of New York and BA in Studio Art at Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts. Palileo has participated in residencies at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Maine, Lower

Manhattan Cultural Council, New York, Lower East Side Print Shop, New York, Millay Colony, New York and the Joan Mitchell Center, New Orleans. She is a recipient of the Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Program Grant, Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant, NYFA Painting Fellowship, Joan Mitchell Foundation MFA Award and the Astraea Visual Arts Fund Award. Her works have been reviewed by *ArtForum*, *The Financial Times*, *Hyperallergic*, and *ArtNet News*, among others.

Taymour Grahne is a London-based art dealer with a focus on contemporary art. In 2018 Taymour founded an itinerant exhibition platform primarily dedicated to showcasing emerging artists, in addition to championing artists senior in their careers who deserve more recognition for their work. Taymour presents solo and group shows in alternating spaces and places.

For more information, please contact:
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