

**Daniella Portillo**

*Lost in Memory*

Sept 21 - Oct 14

59 Amwell Street, EC1R 1UR, London

Visentin Fine Art LTD is proud to present *Lost in Memory* - the first solo show of El Salvadorian artist Daniella Portillo in the United Kingdom. The exhibition is presented at 59 Amwell Street in London, UK and it includes 13 paintings on wooden panel.

In *Lost in Memory*, Daniella Portillo transfigures emotional landscapes of El Salvador to conjure feelings of longing and separation. Saturated palettes, scratched brushstrokes and mystical interplays of light and darkness denote the artist's impressions of her native land, stretching the poetic sensibilities of form and movement to the threshold of abstraction.

Portillo's paintings retrace a personal story of longing and emigration started in 2004, when she and her family left the country and moved to the US. A visit to El Salvador in 2018, almost a decade and a half later, triggered a desire to make a study of the view from her grandfather's home, whose emotionally-charged landscape would soon transform into fields of subconscious exploration.

Without sketches or photographs, the artist begins by laying down a light layer at the base of the painting, followed by areas of primary colours to signal the presence of forms she wishes to represent. Working over it with paint and varnish, Portillo scrapes and sands the surface back, repeating the process until light starts shining from within to achieve expressive effects.

In the scenes portrayed, Portillo reveals geological features but conceals their nature in a misty atmosphere. With the exception of a few paintings, it's unclear whether the image shows crests of waves, expanses of land, a tropical storm, sulphuric landscapes or all of the above. In *Untitled* (2023), for example, dark watery masses evaporate into the liquid transparencies of a misty wall of clouds, while exclamations of red vertical light betray the presence of volcanic territories in the distance.

In this ambiguity lies the essence of the artist's work: Daniella Portillo reaches into the immeasurability of the horizon and endows the scenes with higher emotional sensibility, where poetic haziness prevails over topographical detail and refracted memories of El Salvador are washed in the spiritual mystery at the roots of life.

Daniella Portillo (b. 1997, El Salvador; Lives and works in New Jersey, USA) received her BFA at The Cooper Union in New York in 2020.