

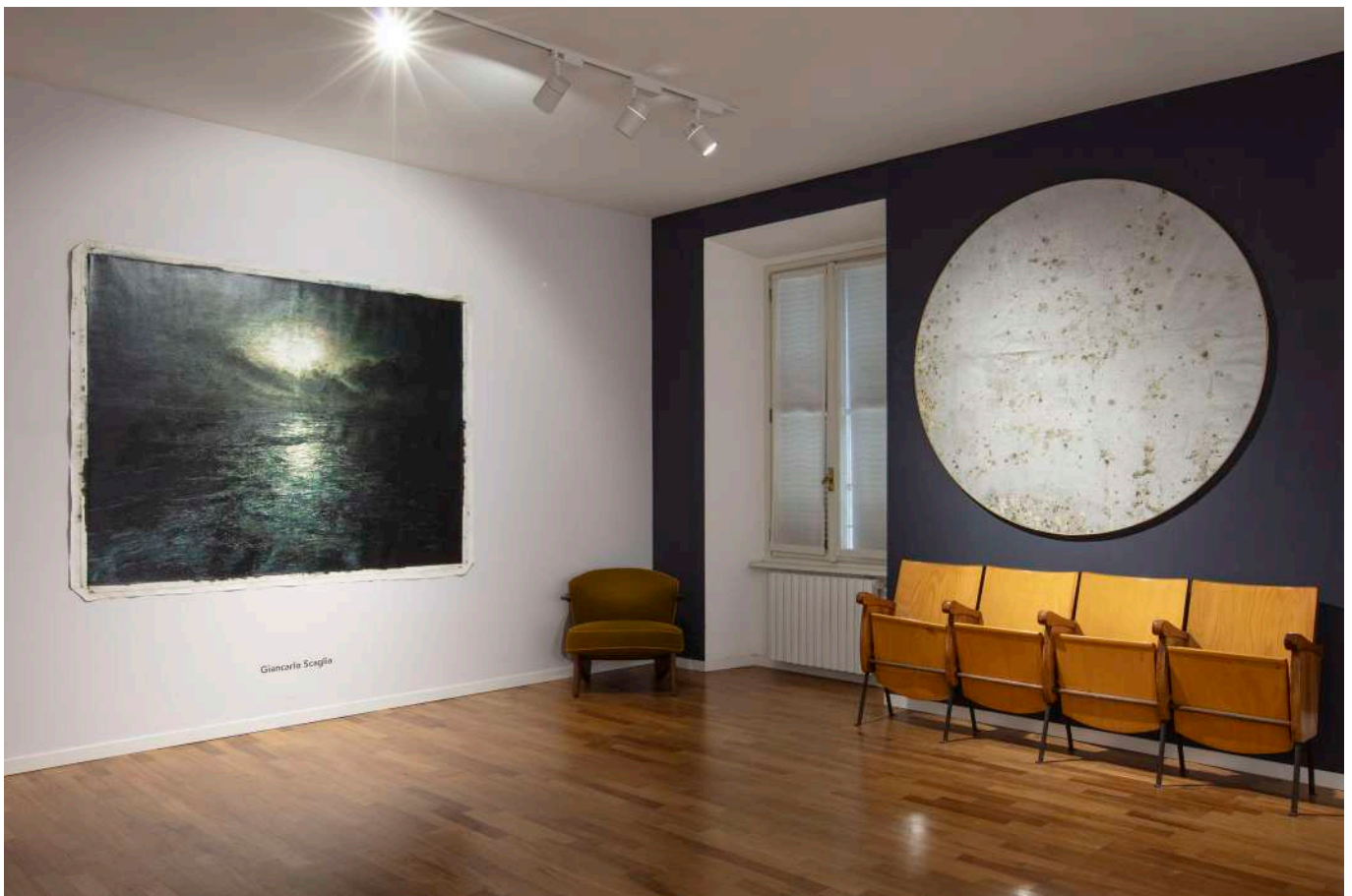


Giancarlo Scaglia

*89 secondi a mezzanotte,
Luna nera di Saturno*

WIZARD GALLERY

Installation views







BIO

Giancarlo Scaglia

Giancarlo Scaglia, through a practice that merges historical investigation, material experimentation, and reflection on collective memory, takes us on a journey through the most significant and controversial chapters of his native country's history.

El Frontón Island refers to a tragic episode that occurred in 1986 on the Peruvian island of El Frontón, where a group of political prisoners was brutally killed. By evoking the sites of the tragedy, the artist makes the violence concealed within the natural landscape perceptible. *Golden Aérea*, on the other hand, is a series of mixed-media works on Japanese paper, characterized by golden, shimmering surfaces. Scaglia thus prompts a reflection on the symbolic and cultural value of gold—a key resource in the colonial history of South America—transforming it into a visual metaphor for the traces the past leaves in the present.

He studied Visual Arts in Lima, the city where his artistic career began. His work has been shown in numerous interna-

tionally recognized venues. Notable solo exhibitions include *Stellar* and *El Frontón* at Corkin Gallery, Toronto (2015), and *Stellar* at Bendana | Pinel Art Contemporain, Paris (2014). He has also participated in major biennials and triennials such as the X Bienal do Mercosul in Porto Alegre (Brazil, 2015) and the IV Poly/Graphic Triennial in San Juan, Puerto Rico (2015). His works are held in both private and public collections, including the Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI).

INTERVIEW

With Giancarlo Scaglia

This body of work effectively conveys the complexity and deep richness of El Frontón's political history, from its exploitation by the guano industry to its later transformation into an Island prison. What inspired you to focus on this particular chapter of Peru's history, and did it have a personal impact on you?

I am interested in depicting the landscape, one that symbolizes freedom and nature without human alteration. That is why I decided to focus on marine landscapes, and it was the reason for going to Frontón Island. The history of Frontón was the main reason I chose to focus on this island.

In my opinion, it is an island with a dense history and a charged political background, but also a landscape that is less altered by humans compared to other landscapes. From there I began — to see and understand that it was a place that had been destroyed by humans, but over time nature was recovering. With buildings falling apart, the climate getting better, the birds actively flying, Frontón is becoming more of an island and less of a prison.

This part of the history of the prisons at El Frontón did not affect my family personally, but it left a deep impression on me. Seeing the prison walls marked by bullet holes, I began to transform these bullet marks into constellations. I found myself searching for symbols that could represent the past and the future.

Was the contrast between abstract expressionism and representational landscape an intentional narrative choice, or did it emerge intuitively during the creative process?

The act of working on the island began with the landscape—more formalist paintings—and then shifted toward working with stellar elements. I used photographs taken in negative of the prison walls to reframe them, to recognize them, and turn them into something poetic. Reflecting on it now, it became a process of technical freedom.

The aerial paintings and the intervention works with bird droppings were ways to liberate composition and technique. I placed golden papers on the island and allowed the birds to dry them out—through that gesture, I gave up

control of the paintings and placed them in the hands of the island itself. These works also register the passage of time, showing how nature slowly reclaims the land—revealed in something as subtle as the accumulation of bird droppings. So yes, I believe the contrast between abstract expressionism and representational landscape was both an intuitive and intentional narrative evolution. Both modes share the same pictorial conditions. In a way, the birds live on the island—they drink its water, eat its fish. Conceptually, they continue to use the same palette. The birds are, in that sense, the landscape I paint.

The muted, opaque colors in your work create a sense of uncanniness and obscurity, alluding to the island's shifting environment. Was this your intention, or were you aiming to convey something else through your palette?

The island carries a very strong energy because of everything that has happened there. It's a place where not much had happened before, but in the 1980s—specifically in 1986—there were major massacres. Frontón was a penal colony for 100 years, but in the pre-Columbian period, it was a site of indigenous rituals.

I see these compositions of bullet marks and relate them to constellations, as if they were stars. That structure is meant to speak across time—about the past, the future, and the present.



I can feel that weight.

The colors I used were metallic. I chose metallics because of the theme of landscapes influenced by a studio of light, where only the moon and the sun affect the sea. I was interested in colors resembling metallics—not for their shine, but for their shifting tones.

As for the murals, using black was the simplest way to work and to transform the walls into constellations. The guano paintings, working in gold, are a return to the traditional painting palette—a way to reference the moon, the sun, and their reflection on the sea.



Knowing that you are from Peru, your last name really stands out. Scaglia is a last name I will say is very italiano than Peruvian. Do you have Italian roots?

Peru is a place with a mix of cultures, especially along the Peruvian coast. There are many cultures, such as African, Asian, and European. There is a very large Italian community.

Since I was a child, I've been immersed in Italian culture. My father's family has Italian origins—my father's father is Italian. Not only that, I'm part of an Italian unit, and my daughter is Italian.

How has living and working in Peru shaped your practice?

It has been fundamental. When I finished school and decided to study art, I had the opportunity to work outside my country, but I chose not to. If I had something to say or something to focus on and critique, then the perfect place to do it, for me, is Peru. That's why I decided to study and stay in Peru.

Latin America is a region with many similarities—similar conflicts, similar changes

in government, and similar revolutions. I believe it's a very rich context for an artist to develop in.

Can you tell us a bit more about your creative process when making these emotionally charged works, especially the ones that incorporate guano?

After doing my first show on my Frontón project, I didn't have these pieces yet. My process was to work on the island and then continue working in Lima. When I returned from doing a show in France, months had passed. The day I got back, I started to smell that sea breeze again—calming me, like an addiction. I wanted to understand this addiction I had to the smell of the island. I wanted to understand what was calling me back to the island and taking away that anxiety.

I realized that what I was smelling was guano. That's when I came to the conclusion that my addiction was the guano. For that reason, I began to leave fabrics and papers on the island to see how nature would begin to intervene—reflecting how nature reclaims everything that is left

behind. I left these pieces in nature and gave absolute freedom, both in terms of composition and color, and in how they would develop depending on where they were left. It was about letting go and recovering.

For the paintings made about the sea, I started by making sketches of what I was seeing and doing color tests based on what I observed on the island. This was very important because the colors of the island are always changing with the light. The color tests were a way to capture the real colors of that specific moment. I also took photographs to capture the details I wanted to paint later in the studio.

When you visit El Frontón, which holds so much emotional and historical weight, how do you travel there? Do you have to take a certain kind of boat or route?

In a very slow boat. I bought a boat from a fisherman, and from there he took me to the island. It was a kind of exchange—I helped him with something, and he helped me with this.

During these visits, how long do you usually stay on the island?

No more than three days, because there isn't really a place to stay—there's no water, no electricity, nothing. When I go, I sleep out in the open air, looking at the sky and surrounded by the island's nature.

Do you feel most inspired when you're outside at night, just looking up at all the stars?

Yes. When I started working with the stars, constellations, and star GPS, I tried to find connections or reflections of the constellations I was seeing on the island and translate them to the stone remains of the destroyed buildings and the ground. From there, I began to create star-related things to these stones.

What kind of thoughts or feelings come up for you when you're standing on the island?

It feels the same as what happens to me when I'm on a plane. No signal or internet — it feels truly wonderful. It's a flowing and current place, really, because it forces you to be in the moment and make use of your time. There's no real way to get sidetracked from one's work. It's a place I love.

Was your time on the island a transformative experience for you?

Being a gallerist, it has given me the perfect place to return to and develop my practice as an artist. An island far away that completely disconnects me from other parts of my life.

During the moments I've spent on the island, I've developed a strong connection with it. When I'm there, it's a true disconnection.



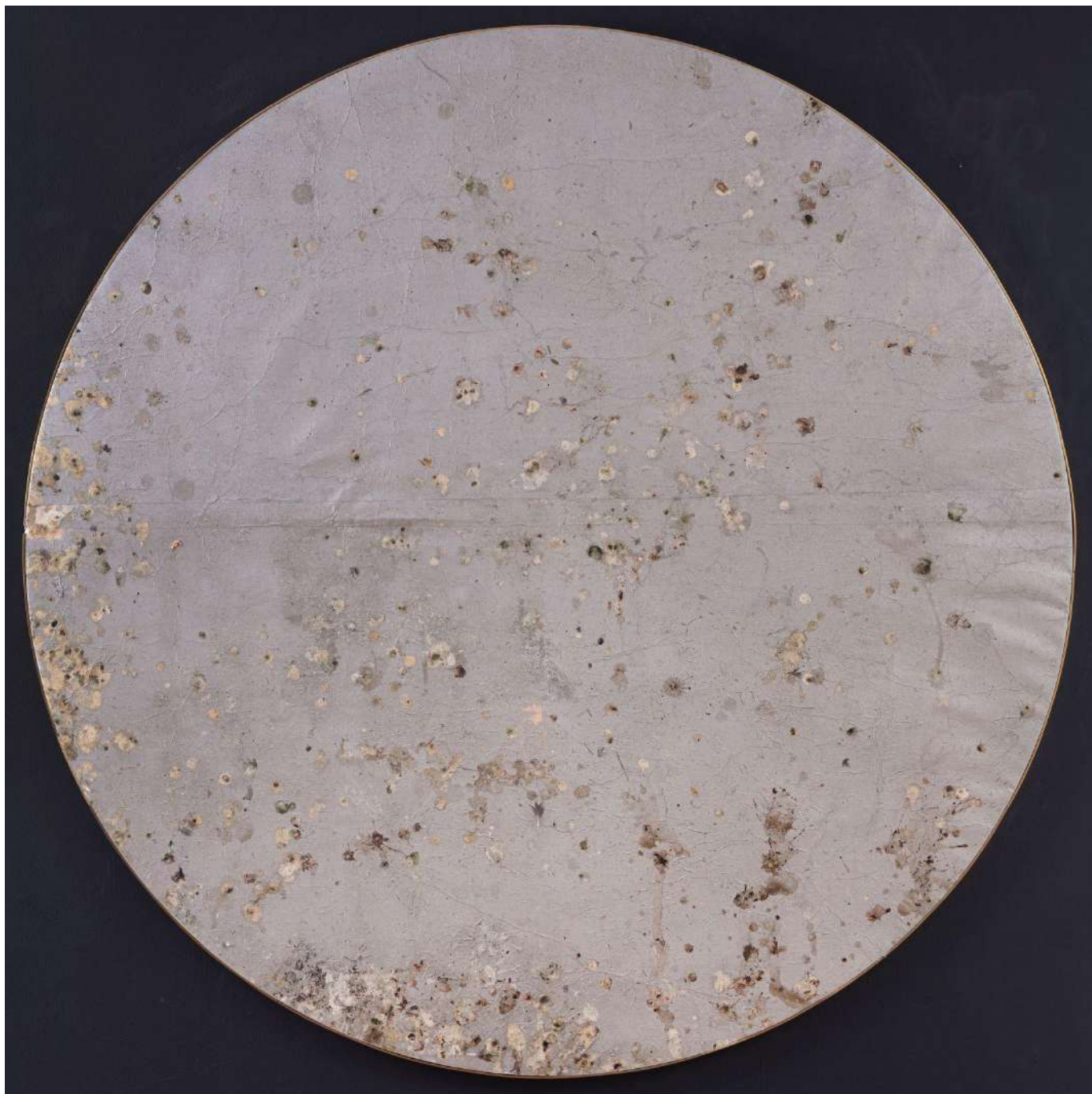
Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Oscura III***, 2025
Oil on canvas, 164 x 212 cm, 59 1/2 x 78 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, **Silver X, 5 am**, 2025
Oil on Canvas, 49 x 59 cm, 19 1/4 x 23 1/4 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, **Silver**, 2025
Oil on canvas, 89 x 100.5 cm, 35 x 39 5/8 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Titano (luna di Saturno #1)***, 2025
Silver pigment on cherry paper and guano on jute,
168 x 168 cm, 66 1/8 x 66 1/8 in, 168 cm diameter



Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Disco lunar 1***, 2025
Kozo paper, ink and brann on canvas
90 x 90 cm, 35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Disco lunar 2***, 2025
Kozo paper, ink and brann on canvas
90 x 90 cm, 35 3/8 x 35 3/8 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Golden Aérea (pinturas del cielo #17)***, 2025
Golden pigment on cherry paper and guano on jute
190 x 190 cm, 74 3/4 x 74 3/4 in



Giancarlo Scaglia, ***Golden Aérea (pinturas del cielo #1)***, 2012
Golden pigment on cherry paper and guano on jute,
152 x 110 cm, 59 7/8 x 43 1/4 in

CV

Giancarlo Scaglia

Lima, Peru – 1981

Lives and works between Lima, Peru and New York, USA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025

- *89 secondi a mezzanotte, Luna nera di Saturno*, Galleria Wizard, Milan, Italy
- *Naturaleza y materia*, Galería La Mancha, Lima, Peru
- *EJES*, curated by Bernardo Mosqueira, Mexico City, Mexico

2022

- *NOCTURNAL*, Bernier/Eliades Gallery, Athens, Greece

2018

- *GOLDEN AÉREA*, Bernier/Eliades Gallery, Brussels, Belgium

2015

- *POÉTICA DEL RESTO – STELLAR I*, Luis Miró Quesada Garland Gallery, Lima,

Peru

- *El Frontón and Stellar*, Corkin Gallery, Toronto, Canada

2014

- *STELLAR*, Bendana | Pinel Contemporary Art, Paris, France
- *ARTISSIMA*, with Bendana | Pinel Contemporary Art, Turin, Italy

2011

- *WE WERE NEVER THE REVOLUTION*, Revolver Gallery, Lima, Peru
- *HELL IN CHORRILLOS*, AFA Gallery, Santiago, Chile

2008

- *TWENTY CENTURY BOY*, Lucía de la Puente Gallery, Lima, Peru
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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2024

- *PERSONAL GEOGRAPHIES*, curated by Dulcina Abreu, Galería El KM, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- *PERSONAL GEOGRAPHIES*, curated by Dulcina Abreu, The Andrew Freedman Home, New York, USA

2019–2020

- *Time for Change: Art and Social Unrest in the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*

2018

- *OLDER THAN SATAN*, Germán Krüger Espantoso Gallery, ICPNA, Lima, Peru

2017

- *NEXT STOP*, Sala Alcalá, Madrid, Spain
- *SUPERNOVA*, Revolver Gallery, Lima, Peru
- *POETICS OF THE REMAINDER – SUPERNOVA*, Patricia Ready Gallery, Santiago, Chile
- *INFINITE LANDSCAPE*, Revolver Buenos Aires, Argentina
- *THE LANDING OF PERUVIAN ART AT PATRICIA READY*, Patricia Ready Gallery, Santiago, Chile
- *PROYECTOS LA*, California, USA

2016

- *ENOUGH!*, Anya and Andrew Shiva Gallery, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, USA

2015

- *X Mercosur Biennial*, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- *IV San Juan Poly/Graphic Triennial: Latin America and the Caribbean*, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2013

- *SILVER*, Revolver Gallery, Lima, Peru
- *UNDER THE SUN OF DEATH*, Espacio Mínimo Gallery, Madrid, Spain

2012

- *41 REASONS WE STILL NEED SUPERMAN*, Arts University Bournemouth, Poole, UK
- *THE BURNING OF THE DEVIL*, Diablo Rosso Gallery / Proyectos Ultravioleta, Panama City, Panama
- *REVOLVER*, Galería 980, Bogotá, Colombia
- *ART ON THE MOVE*, Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

2011

- *RAW MATERIAL*, Atelier Subterranea, Mercosur Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil
- *DIFFRACTION*, Arróniz Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, Mexico
- *MIST*, 20 Hoxton Square Projects, London, UK
- *THE END OF THE BEGINNING*, Patricia Ready Gallery, Santiago, Chile

2009

- *THE END OF THE BEGINNING*, Santiago, Chile

AWARDS

2019

- Queen Sonja Print Award, Norway

2011

- First Prize, Arcos Dorados Latin American Painting, Buenos Aires, Argentina

2008

- First Prize, Emerging Artist Chandon Award, Buenos Aires, Argentina

2007

- First Prize, Passport for an Artist, Alliance Française, Lima, Peru



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