

Press Release

## Softer Concrete

David Batchelor, José Pedro Costigliolo, Judith Lauand

22 May - 25 July 2025



Detail: David Batchelor, *CV Tapestry 02*, 2024, wool tapestry, 220 x 258 cm

Cecilia Brunson Projects presents *Softer Concrete*, a Viewing room exhibition featuring David Batchelor (b.1955, Dundee), José Pedro Costigliolo (1902-1985, Montevideo) and Judith Lauand (1922-2022, São Paulo).

The exhibition marks the third iteration in the gallery's ongoing collaboration with London-based artist and colour theorist David Batchelor. Batchelor draws inspiration from urban environments. He responds to the city – its shapes and forms, its planes and edges, and not least its colours. This puts him in kinship with the pioneering abstractionists of Latin American modernism – many of whom received their first UK exhibitions at Cecilia Brunson Projects.

Since 2020, Cecilia Brunson Projects has worked with Batchelor on a series of commissions, realising his characteristically vibrant and angular aesthetic in textile media for the first time. The series forms, in part, an unexpected, playful reinterpretation of the Concrete movements of Latin America, an enduring source of inspiration for the artist. At the centre of the exhibition is a new tapestry which Batchelor produced with the Taller Mexicano de Gobelinos, Guadalajara, Mexico. A transposition of one of his paintings into a monumental and collaborative work, hand-dyed and woven in wool, it subtly undermines the mechanistic overtones implied by the 'Concrete' label, replacing them with material warmth and manual intimacy.

Batchelor's iconic *Concretos* are an ongoing sculptural series, which nod to the same traditions of Latin American modernism and use concrete as a neutral base for endless adventures in layering, pattern and process. New works, incorporating references to garden railings and gate scrolls, are installed outside in the gallery courtyard, a fitting home for this ornate and sinuous sculptures.

The exhibition brings Batchelor's work into conversation with Judith Lauand, an artist who made pivotal contributions to São Paulo's Concrete movement from the 1950s as the only female member of the avant-garde Grupo Ruptura, and who came to geometric abstraction through her initial training in tapestry. With this knowledge, we may read her prints as threads of colour which disappear and re-emerge as if embroidered into the composition. A painting by José Pedro Costigliolo, a founding member of Uruguay's Grupo de Arte No Figurativo, is rendered in hand-mixed tempera paint, his composition of colliding shapes retaining a human touch.

In this grouping, Batchelor's playful reworking of his own hard-edged abstraction brings into focus a sensibility that has always been present in Latin American Concretism, which developed, beneath its superficial purity, a fondness for rhythm, tactility, poetry and wit, and the experiential presence of the work.

*About Cecilia Brunson Projects:*

Founded in 2013, Cecilia Brunson Projects is the leading London gallery championing Latin American art. The gallery's specialist programme places overlooked historical voices in dialogue with burgeoning contemporary talent, often for the first time. Our mission is to platform exceptional Latin American artists across generations and increase awareness around their role in shaping global art movements.

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