

Amalia Pica

Keepsake

4 October – 14 December 2025

Thurs – Sun, 11am – 4pm, or by appointment

Preview: Please join Amalia and our team on Sat 4 October 1.30-4.30pm for refreshments and a first look at the exhibition



This autumn, CAMPLE LINE is delighted to present **Keepsake**, an exhibition of new and recent work by Argentinian artist Amalia Pica that explores recurring interests in her practice: early years education, history and representation, memory-making, material culture, shared action, collective enjoyment and forms of common knowledge. The exhibition will open on 4 October and run until 14 December.

Pica was born in Argentina and has lived and worked in London since 2008, exhibiting widely internationally over the last twenty years. Her practice is diverse, encompassing sculpture, drawing, performance, video and installation, and often taking the form of temporary interventions or sculptural assemblages that draw viewers into collaboration or conversation. Pica has said about her work: 'I think about what links my work together more as a constellation than a progression. I'm constantly pulling from an array of strings.'

Pica's wider practice has often focused on communication and the many ways we try to make ourselves understood to one another and share meaning often across different cultural contexts. Using simple materials and found objects, her work frequently investigates moments of shared sentiment or common cause - working, playing, remembering, learning, protesting, resisting, commemorating or celebrating together – and the political potential of joy. Banners, placards and bunting regularly feature in her work, as do souvenirs, paperweights, trinkets and objects that become vessels for personal meaning. She has also described her practice as, in part, 'a quest for what other people know too.'



Amalia Pica, *Keepsake #15*, 2025, cotton and wool on linen, 135 x 135 cm. Photo courtesy of the artist and Herald St

Keepsake brings together a group of embroideries on linen alongside a new sculptural work by Pica in bronze, a new installation made with pressed daisy chains, and a new work *134 Years of Smoke* that Pica is developing in collaboration with filmmaker Rafael Ortega, comprising a still life painting of 1891 that Ortega found at a car boot sale in east London and a short video of its conservation treatment.

Seemingly disparate, these works each have a basis in some aspect of Pica's life - 'me being Argentinian, me being a mum, me having been an art teacher' - though not in any specific or anecdotal way: 'I am someone who works from the world. I don't make worlds myself. I'm constantly looking around and finding or drawing on things.'

Installed in our downstairs space, in a gilded frame is the small still life painting, featuring a bunch of what appear to be British wildflowers wrapped in newssheet from an Argentinian newspaper *La Nación* issued on 9 July - the date on which Argentina celebrates its independence. Painted in the European still life tradition, the painting immediately struck Pica, prompting a string of questions: who painted it, whether they were also Argentinian and living in London, why they might have painted it and for who, and its story since. On a monitor nearby, footage shows a conservator removing decades of nicotine smoke and dirt from its surfaces. Swabs used to remove the smoke from the painting's surface sit in a jar to the side. On a second monitor, a thin column of smoke is seen rising and curling somewhat hypnotically upwards across the screen.

Pica has said: 'The painting made me think about my earlier work, when I was still in Argentina, and very much influenced by being a primary school art teacher. Having to make decorative sets for independence day. Argentinian schools are still very busy reproducing nationalistic images - schools instilling pride - the promise to the flag every morning – patriotism – a set of images for everyone imposed from the top down...I began to reflect that my son is growing up in England in a totally different school system.'

Upstairs, Pica will install six bright abstract embroideries that are based on colourful expressive drawings made by her young son, which she and collaborators have stitched onto fabric and which point to the expressive freedom that young children have prior to formal education and the imposition of curricula on our learning and our ways of seeing the world. Of these works - entitled *Keepsakes* - Kate White has written: 'The title hints both at Pica's sentimental attachment to the original drawings as well as their connection to a specific point in time. Through the act of stitching, Pica embeds time into the works themselves, a metaphor both for parental labour and the desire to suspend time.'

A bronze work, entitled *Another One's Treasure*, 2025, has been cast from a junk model sculpture that Pica made using bits of old packaging from home. She has previously worked in bronze for its transformative possibility, mostly casting found and ready-made objects that are not readily associated with that material, such as shells, pinecones, household objects and small toys. Here Pica will place the sculpture alongside a page from an edition of *La Nación* published on 9 July 2025,

which she has used as wrapping – a nod to the paper depicted in the still life painting and at the same time recalling the ubiquitous re-use of newspaper in the packing of precious things and in children's crafts.



Amalia Pica, *Another One's Treasure*, 2025, bronze, newspaper, 40 x 30 x 17cm.

Lastly, upstairs, Pica will install *Daisy Chain*, 2025, a new installation comprising up to 40 metres of pressed daisy chain made collaboratively by members of CAMPLE LINE's team, visitors and local school children. Pica has recalled how her son came home from forest school having learnt how to thread daisies together, causing her to reflect on the way such activities, seemingly generations old and close-at-hand, produce a kind of cultural intimacy: 'the chain itself can be a metaphor for bringing people together or thoughts together.' She has also commented how her son might as likely pick up a discarded object as he would a daisy – in his treasuring of his finds, there being a kind of equivalence for him between a bottle top or ring pull and a flower, an acorn or seed.

Keepsake is supported by Creative Scotland and The Henry Moore Foundation. A newly commissioned essay by Alejandra Aguado, a curator based in Buenos Aires, will accompany the exhibition.

BIOGRAPHY

Amalia Pica was born in 1978 in Neuquén, Argentina and currently lives and works in London. The artist received a BA from the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes P.P. in Buenos Aires in 2003 and attended graduate school at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam.

She has had solo exhibitions at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York (2024); Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2023); Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2022); Brighton CCA (2022); Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2020); Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo, Seville, Spain (2019); The New Art Gallery, Walsall, UK (2019); Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth, Australia (2018); The Power Plant, Toronto (2017); NC Arte, Bogotá, Colombia (2017); Kunstverein Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany (2016); Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2014); List Visual Arts Center, MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts (2013); Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2013); Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Neuquén, Argentina (2013); Kunsthalle St. Gallen, St. Gallen, Switzerland (2012); Chisenhale Gallery, London (2012); Malmo Konsthall, Malmo, Sweden (2010); among many others.

Her work was included in the Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2016); The Ungovernables: New Museum Triennial, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2015); and ILLUMInations, curated by Bice Curiger, 54th Venice Biennale (2011). Public commissions include University of North Carolina, North Carolina; Semaphores, King's Cross, London; and Sipping colors, De Pijp Station, Amsterdam. She received the Zürich Art Prize (2020); Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award (2011) amongst other awards. She has had residencies at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, Boulder, Colorado (2017); Headlands Center for the Arts, Sausalito, California (2012); Uqbar Foundation at Casa Vecina, Mexico City (2011); Markus Lennikus, Baeurmarkt 9, Vienna (2010); and BijlAIR, Centrum Beeldende Kunst Zuidoost, Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam (2007).