

8,337,283,136. Nervous Nature

MARÍA LUISA FERNÁNDEZ Villarejo de Órbigo, 1955

21ST NOVEMBER 2025 - 14TH FEBRUARY 2026

In the 1990s, María Luisa Fernández (Villarejo de Órbigo, León, 1955) produced the series *Artistas ideales* (Ideal Artists) as a reflection on the status of art and the artist. In this series, she transformed statistical charts –pie diagrams of participation, productivity, or relevance– into geometric wooden sculptures, painted with industrial colors. It was an ironic, critical, and absurd gesture: turning the cold rationality of statistics into sculptural bodies and symbolic objects, giving volume and material to the modern impulse to quantify the creative spirit.

Thirty years later, when revisiting this same series in 8,068,807,215. *Sangre en oro* (Blood in Gold, MUSAC, 2024) and now in 8,337,283,136. *Nervous Nature*, Fernández recontextualizes her own language to address the crisis of nature and the human subject itself. While in the 1990s she measured and represented the value of the artist in society, today she measures the saturation of the world and the planet's entropy; the numbers in the titles, corresponding to the ever-changing global population, have become a global diagram, an impossible chart of human excess. The disks and structures that once expressed competition or the idealization of the artist are now also charred woods and eroded materials. The geometry remains, but its surfaces now bear the traces of combustion: a sign of exhaustion and an alchemical gesture of deterioration. The carbonization of wood or the use of foam in sculptures whose decomposition is accelerated and visible are material testimonies of extinction, works that register the passage of time and the transformation of matter as traces of collapse.

Thus, the *Artistas ideales* series becomes an extended metaphor: what once measured the art system now measures the world system. Fernández shifts her critique from the institutional to the ecological and ontological. Her thinking maintains a precise and acute coherence, where the body of the artist, the social body, and the body of the planet are interdependent dimensions.

The form of the central work, *El diseño de la tragedia* (The Design of Tragedy), follows the Fibonacci sequence and its derivative, the golden ratio ($\phi \approx 1.618$), linked both to natural growth structures and mathematical models of expansion, including demographic ones. While in nature this sequence produces harmony, in the human realm it has become an out-of-control spiral: exponential growth that the planet can no longer sustain. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche speaks of the balance between the Apollonian (order, form, measure) and the Dionysian (chaos, excess). This duality is visually manifested here: the Fibonacci proportion as natural order (Apollonian), while the title number, 8,337,283,136 –the exact global population at the moment of writing– points to Dionysian overflow.

Now that we can measure everything –from atmospheric CO₂ to the sadness of a captive dolphin– what escapes is not the measure, but the meaning of the measure. Fernández, with her ironic and simultaneously harrowing gaze, relocates the gesture of the 1990s into the present, where measuring, in addition to being absurd, is now compulsive. And doing so reveals that this obsession with measuring the living and the affective leads to a new form of blindness: knowing everything without being able to change anything. Precision without soul as the archaeology of excess.

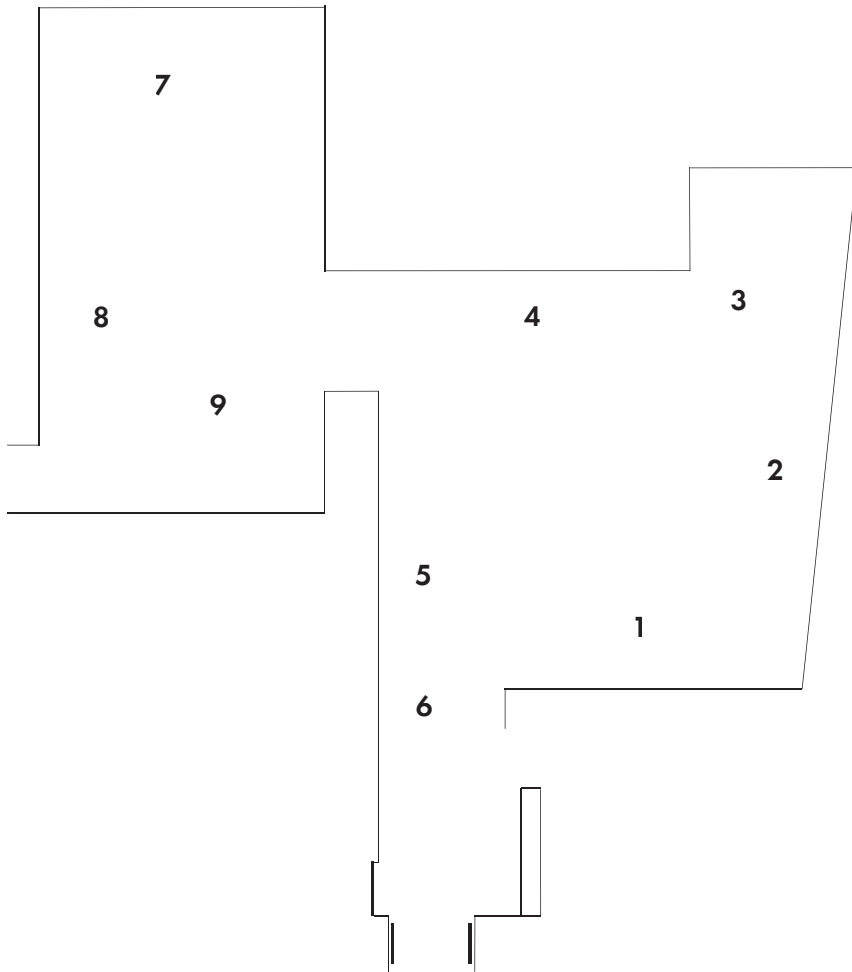
María Luisa Fernández lives and works in Pontevedra, Spain. She has participated in solo and group exhibitions at institutions including MUSAC, León (2024); Centro Cultural Conde Duque, Madrid (2023); Museo Patio Herreriano, Valladolid (2021); MACBA, Barcelona (2021); CA2M, Madrid (2020); IVAM, Valencia (2019); CGAC, Santiago de Compostela (2018); Museo de Bellas Artes de Bilbao (2018); Azkuna Zentroa, Bilbao (2016); MARCO, Vigo (2016); and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2013), among others.

Her work is part of institutional collections such as CA2M (Madrid); MUSAC (León); Fundación María Cristina Masaveu Peterson (Madrid); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid); Bombas Gens (Valencia); MACBA (Barcelona); Artium Museoa (Vitoria-Gasteiz); and Fundación La Caixa (Madrid), among others.

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1. *Artistas ideales* (Pequeñas), 2024

2. *Naturaleza nerviosa* (Serie), 2024

3. *Poética de la extinción* (Leona 1), 2024

4. *Artistas ideales* (Medianas), 2024

5. *Avaricia*, 1989-2015

6. *Corona dorada*, 2024

7. *Diseño de la tragedia*, 2024

8. *Poética de la extinción* (Leona 2), 2024

9. *Incontinencia, reserva*, 1989