

To provide you with more insight into the development of this exhibition, we're sharing a conversation between the artist and a correspondent. The correspondent was not familiar with the artist's work and, like you, has discovered through this dialogue the often invisible choices made during the creation of this project, as well as in the artist's general working process.

**June Crespo**  
in conversation  
with  
**Eloise Sweetman**  
As part of the  
exhibition  
**THEIR WEFT,  
THE GRASS**

## June Crespo

June Crespo (Pamplona, 1982) lives and works in Bilbao. She obtained her BFA from the Basque Country University (Bilbao) in 2005 and completed a two-year residency at De Ateliers (Amsterdam) in 2017. Her solo shows include *Vascular* (2024) at the Guggenheim Bilbao Museum; *they saw their house turn into fields* (2023) at CA2M, Madrid; *Acts of Pulse* (2022) at P420, Bologna; *entre alguien y algo* (2022) at CarrerasMugica, Bilbao; *Am I an Object* (2021) PA///KT (Amsterdam); *Helmets* (2020) Artium, Basque Museum-Center of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz; *No Osso* (2019) at Certain Lack of Coherence, Porto; *Ser Dos* (2017) and *Cosa y tú* (2015) at CarrerasMugica gallery in Bilbao.

Recently her work has also been shown in groups such as: *L'écorce* (2023) at CRAC-Alsace; *The Milk of Dreams* (2022) at the Venice Biennale; *Fata Morgana* (2022) Jeu de Paume (Paris) and *The Point of Sculpture* (2021) at the Fundación Miró (Barcelona).

## Eloise Sweetman

Through extensive research in curating and writing, Eloise Sweetman has delved into themes such as the interplay between not knowing and intimacy, as well as the roles of intuition and emotion in curatorship. Currently, her focus lies on the concept of "lingering" as a metaphor for exhibitions. Each exhibition is approached as a unique research site that informs subsequent projects. Sweetman particularly enjoys developing a deep understanding of artworks over time and collaborating with artists across multiple exhibitions. Sweetman draws inspiration from the artist's relationship with the site, found or industrial material, and the ways they break hierarchies of form. Often, her exhibition texts emphasise how artists disrupt conventional exhibition structures through their work.

Aside from her independent work, Eloise Sweetman is the co-founder and co-director of Shimmer, a curatorial studio in the Port of Rotterdam, alongside artist Jason Hendrik Hansma.

May 22, 2024

Dear June,

It is a thrill to write to you. I admire your work very much. Your approach to space, material, and intuition speaks to me in many ways. Also, I love the flowers you bring into your work, which are delightfully unexpected. Thank you for making your work as you do.

Lately, I have been thinking about 'contrapposto'<sup>1</sup> in Renaissance sculpture and 'Tribhaṅga'<sup>2</sup> in Indian sculpture. Both create a curve in the sculptural body to evoke movement, which is achieved by opposing positions to create harmony. I was thinking that, in some way, your sculptures are also creating movement through opposing positions. Positions could be spatial, ideological, or material. There is also an incredible tension in your pieces that must be restrained by the lashing straps for if they are released could, or would, consume anyone standing too closely. And yet there is such lightness through the drapery, veiling, and clothing of other pieces to give them protection from the view.

How do you relate to your sculptures? Am I anthropomorphising them too much?

Wishing well,

Eloise

<sup>1</sup> *Contrapposto* or *contrapost* is a term from the visual arts that describes a particular posture of a painted or sculpted figure. The right leg carries the full weight, the left leg is relaxed.

<sup>2</sup> *Tribhaṅga* or *Tribunga* is a standing body position or stance used in traditional Indian art and Indian classical dance forms like the Odissi, where the body bends in one direction at the knees, the other direction at the hips and then the other again at the shoulders and neck.

May 29, 2024

Dear Eloise,

Thank you for this exciting beginning of our conversation, sorry if sometimes I am not able to respond very fluidly. I guess I will feel more comfortable expressing myself in English after a few emails...

The references to 'contrapposto' and 'Tribhaṅga' introduce a movement that has already activated my mind towards a wish to incorporate some curves into sculptures I am planning to make in the next months.

I relate most of my vertical freestanding sculptures with standing positions. I see them like vertical channels or axes with which I resonate. The feeling of extension that goes through, crossing living bodies, plants, trees... a sort of growth.

Actually, this is the idea of a body as a channel. It also happens in horizontal shapes suspended by tensioned straps perpendicular to the wall. I guess it is not about lying or standing.

To sum up: I think I relate with my works in a body-to-body relation. Articulated materials act somehow as entities with a certain presence, and I identify them with certain parts or levels of myself. I can perceive the resonance of them in my muscles, bones, membranes, skin... whether they are in tension or relaxed, soft or stretched...

I can feel the pleasure of releasing the tension you mention, of letting textiles fall.

Not sure if I replied to your question...

My best wishes,

June

June 3, 2024

Hi June,

I hope you are well.

What I love about the contrapposto / Tribhanga idea in relation to your work, is that there is a movement, but also there needs to be an "engaged" leg and a "relaxed" leg to achieve harmony. Can you tell me about your new work? I am so curious!

I imagine that releasing the tension and letting textiles fall must feel pleasurable. I would love to learn more about your process in the studio. How else do you perceive resonance and come to experience the body-to-body relationship in your work?

Wishing you a wonderful week!

Eloise

P.S. I am trying to experience that same feeling of letting material fall, I have not found the right material to capture that sense of bounce or unfurling just yet. What textile works best in your experience?

P.P.S. Let me know if you want me to ask one question at the time! :)

June 27, 2024

Hi June,

I am just following up on my previous email with this image of contrapposto and diaphanous drapery which made me think of your veils.

Wishing you a wonderful day,

Eloise



Veils (winter) 2022. Photo: Ander Sagastiberri

June 28, 2024

Dear Eloise,

I hope you are well. Here is the continuation of the previous email, and I will get back to further reply about the images!

The new work is kind of a continuation of the show *they saw their house turning into fields* at CA2M in Madrid in 2023. At that time, I wanted to work with the wall as a liminal element and support of works coming out and somehow pushing themselves from the wall. The forward movement of the pushing shapes was held to the wall by tensioned straps.

In that show, there were different gestures in relation to the wall: perforations, partially hidden works, a mural with an image of a textile with epidemic references...

Mainly, I reduced the show to different variations of enlarged flowers as a motif cast in aluminium and steel. The flower I chose at that time was the Strelitzia, a botanical element that by increasing its scale I could easily relate with the diameter of pipes and hidden circulation systems.

The objects I depart from are usually an excuse to look at or being looked at by their shapes. I make different connections and perceive how they affect me physically, for example how the object remains balanced by the force of the straps or the angle relative to the wall.

In the process of that exhibition, I cast some leaves of an Acanthus that I was not able to use. Now, I have started to work with them as a support for lighter materials. The accumulation of shells made of metal and resin mixed with translucent textiles gives me the impression of a flower blossoming.

On the one hand, I find the relation to the human scale very important, also the position of the work, vertical or horizontal, as equivalent to different basic positions like standing or lying down.

Often I perceive the works as autonomous entities that stand or have a presence in front of me and make me more conscious of my own presence. Usually I need to walk around the works to truly understand the work in movement. The perception is a negotiation of visual, tactile, and self-perception of my own body in relation to the sculpture.

:) I am going to ask the technical names of the textiles I used...



Hereby, I reply with a glimpse of a new work in progress...

I hope you have a great weekend!

June

July 10, 2024

Dear June,

So good to hear from you. Thank you so much for sharing a peek into your studio and new work. Wow!!!

I relate to your need to walk around the artwork to understand it. As a curator, I think in movement and find it necessary to feel my body in space to develop a spatial understanding of the artwork in conversation with the location; if the artwork is not there yet, to imagine it as an anchor point. Sometimes to even pretend to interact with the work and then move, helps me feel the entirety of the exhibition. Perhaps I need to lie down, sway, turn. Somehow it feels more natural to understand the "thinking" of the artwork rather than to understand the thinking of the artist.

Your approach to the flower by zooming in and making it larger to find its details is fascinating. And its movement in blossoming is so beautiful. Which makes so much sense since movement is so present in the making of your work. The Strelitzia and the Acanthus are such otherworldly plants, and both symbolise immortality, what draws you to flowers like these ones?

With warmth,

Eloise

August 9, 2024

Dear Eloise,

After working for a long time departing from existing objects and shapes I was attracted to, I felt I needed to challenge myself going a step further in the transformation of forms I come across with. I started simplifying or translating the forms of existing objects by modelling in clay, by making cuts in blocks of polystyrene, etc. Later I did the first trials of changes in the scale through 3D scanning and 3D printing.

At some point I was looking for shapes which I would not recognise after an enlargement operation. Before I decided which kind of flower I wanted to work with, I spent months (almost a year) picking flowers. I gathered petals, seeds, roots... I observed them. And I would start to 3D scan many different common flowers and to include them in SketchUp models of different spaces, to relate them to columns or other architectural elements and decide which scale should work.

Finally, I decided to start with the Strelitzia because looking at its shape it really did not look so much like a flower to me. I imagined it expanded to 7m long and I immediately relate its stem with pipes and other hidden systems of circulation, the passage from the stem to the "head" recalls a sort of neck or knee, and its "head" has a certain animal appearance. I liked its synthetic form but its complexity in its associations, not to speak about the distribution that makes the plant an artificial good.

The Acanthus came later. I casted a part of this flower a year and a half ago, but I was not able to use it until now, when I could relate with it with more distance. Right now I am finishing a mould of an enlarged Iris. Even if its shape has more direct relation with what we can understand with a flower, the mould it is producing a lot of images, mostly referring to the inner body.

I will send you some images later from the studio!

June



August 14, 2024

Dear June,

Thank you for sharing your process and photo also! The work could be an anatomical model of hips! I can't wait to see this new work! Will it be part of the show at 1646? What is your approach for this exhibition?

Wishing you very well,

Eloise

August 23, 2024

Dear Eloise,

What you can see in the photo is the process of making the mould, but what will be in the show is a first cast of resin made using this mould.

I do not know yet how it will stay standing. If vertical upside down, horizontal, in suspension or leaning...

The title *their weft, the grass is a verse* of the poem *First Dream* written by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. It is a continuation of the title *they saw their house turn into fields* (previous verse of the same poem) Marc Navarro and I chose for the show held by CA2M in 2023. I like the idea of transformation and the inner/ out relation the titles suggest.

As shown in the title selection process, the show at 1646 will be connected to the aforementioned exhibition.

In that sense, I continue exploring with works coming out of the wall. With volumes that push ahead, or cross the walls, held by tensioned textiles or straps. There is also a combination of different typologies of elements coming from organic shapes and industrial air circulation tubes.

For this exhibition, I focused on following my intuition and trying out new things. I don't have that much distance to reflect yet and some of the works will be finished during the installation responding to the exhibition space and the encounter between the works.



August 27, 2024

Dear June,

Thank you for sharing this with me. The title immediately caught my attention when I first saw the announcements of the show. The way your work evolves and changes from piece to piece, and from one exhibition to another, is a beautiful way to reflect on the history of your art and exhibitions. I appreciate how you use the exhibition space as an extension of your studio, allowing the work to interact with its intended environment.

I also came across a quote by Zen Master Dōgen that resonated with me: "Flowers fall even though we love them." I believe he is expressing the idea that things come to an end, even when we try to hold onto them with our love. It speaks to the concept of impermanence, which I find intriguing in your work. Despite its solid and tangible presence, there is an underlying sense of transformation, especially with your use of strapping that introduces tension into the pieces, acknowledging that they are in a constant state of change.

Best of luck with the exhibition! I am excited to see it, and I hope we have the opportunity to meet in person soon.

With warm regards,

Eloise

**1. TW,TG (I) 2024**

Truck canvas, ventilation pipes  
331cm (h) x 590cm (w) x 88cm (d)

**2. TW,TG (II) 2024**

Truck canvas, ventilation pipes,  
fibreglass, epoxy resin  
353cm (h) x 123cm (w) x 99cm (d)

**3. TW,TG (Iris) 2024**

Polyester resin, fibreglass, asphalt,  
steel threaded rod, truck canvas  
463cm (h) x 70cm (w) x 127cm (d)

**4. TW,TG (Acanthus I) 2024**

Aluminium and stainless steel  
casting, carbon fibre, polyester  
resin, textiles, lashing straps  
394cm (h) x 99cm (w) x 170cm (d)

**5. TW,TG (Acanthus II) 2024**

Aluminium casting, lashing straps  
250cm (h) x 89cm (w) x 142cm (d)

**6. TW,TG (III) 2024**

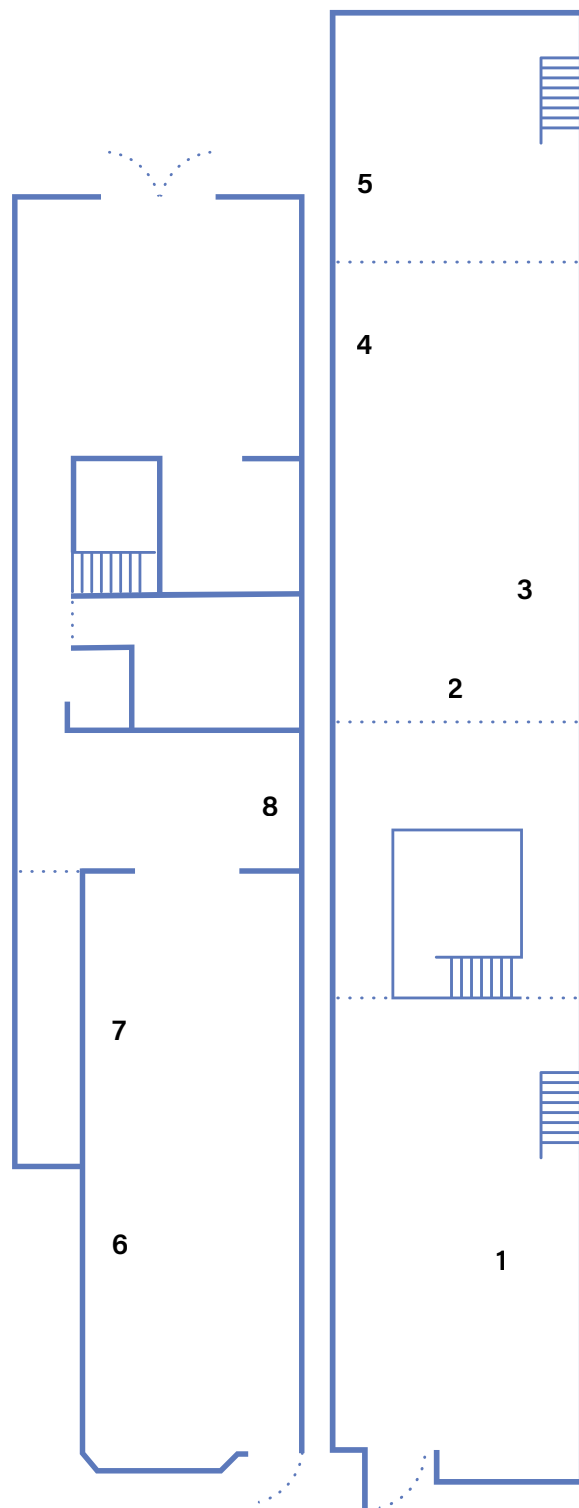
Reflective textile, steel, polyester  
resin and fibreglass, eyelets,  
metal rack bars  
280cm (h) x 266cm (w) x 33.5cm (d)

**7. TW,TG (IV) 2024**

Reflective textile, steel, elastic cord,  
eyelets, metal rack bars  
283cm (h) x 260 cm (w) x 30.5cm (d)

**8. TW,TG (V) 2024**

Fibreglass, polyester resin,  
textile, eyelets  
144.5cm (h) x 177cm (w) x 36.5cm (d)



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For more information about this and other projects,  
check our website or scan the QR-code:



# 1646.nl