

# Susanne S. D. Themlitz

## *Natural History*

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GALERIA VERA CORTÊS opens “História Natural” (*Natural History*), a solo exhibition by **Susanne S. D. Themlitz**, in which the Portuguese-German artist presents new works in drawing, painting, and sculpture. The body of work that the artist installs in her Lisbon gallery articulates the beginning of her research, funded by a **grant from the La Caixa Foundation**, which will culminate in an exhibition at the **National Museum of Natural History and Science** next year, and the visual imagery that runs through Themlitz's work, where references and everyday objects intersect with a plastic and literary universe. The installation at the gallery, with its hybrid sculptures evoking both human and animal figures, and its drawings and paintings in which we recognize characters, spaces, and forms that seem to create a fantastic and enigmatic narrative, invites the viewer to wander among bodies and scales on a fantastic and enigmatic journey. Susanne S. D. Themlitz has been represented by Galeria Vera Cortês for over twenty years and this is her third exhibition at the Alvalade venue. Among her recent solo exhibitions, "The Language of Silent Things" at MARCO in Vigo (2024-25) stands out, where the artist occupied the museum's various rooms, revealing the multidisciplinary that characterizes her practice and the complexity of her formal and symbolic universe.

Susanne S. D. Themlitz (Lisbon, 1968) is an artist of Portuguese and German nationality who lives and works in Lisbon, Sintra, and Cologne. Between 1987 and 1995, she studied drawing and sculpture at Ar.Co – Centro de Arte e Comunicação Visual in Lisbon, studied at the Royal College of Art in London, and completed a master's degree in visual arts at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. She has exhibited regularly since 1998 and is represented in several institutional and private collections.

Over the years, her work developed into a poetic universe of great symbolism, in constant dialogue with art history, literature, natural sciences, popular traditions, and children's stories. These references seldom become explicit in the imaginary landscapes and hybrid figures with which Themlitz creates environments of silent theatricality that summon the viewer, turned into an active participant in scenes where the visible and the hinted dialogue and enhance each other in the space of imagination and fiction. The links between reality and the unconscious real, the landscape as a place of human inscription, memory and forgetting, metamorphosis and the passage between states, the borderline zones where things become uncertain and mutually contaminate each other, the interstitial spaces that open the way to dream and fantasy—sometimes to dormancy—are themes cherished by the artist. Her sculptures and installations open towards parallel worlds where domestic or industrial objects are transformed and combined with natural elements, and mutant, introspective and almost always faceless beings, surprisingly plausible in their otherness and singularity, as well as with drawings and paintings that mix the descriptive detail of graffiti, stamped paints and collages of various materials such as newspaper clippings or wallpaper. Photography and video complement Themlitz's transdisciplinary approach to artistic media, as well as written work sometimes in the form of artist's books. Through the images and sensations generated in the viewer by her works crosses the unthought and the resistance to verbal codification, to which also contributes the search for unusual ways of occupying spaces, through elevations or suspensions that distort the axes of vision or which allude to the underground and the subterranean world where certain species breathe and thrive; as well as the subversion of proportions and scales, deformed and inverted through macrocephaly or the atrophy of bodies and the use of lenses and glass.

At the center of Themlitz's work lies an intention, sometimes humorous, sometimes melancholic, to create images and objects that are all the more effective when viewers allow themselves to be drawn into a suspension of disbelief enabling them to access other modes of perceiving reality.

The exhibition opens on Thursday, **20 November**, between 6 and 9 pm.



Susanne S. D. Themlitz, *Grown-Up*, 2025

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