

MUSE GALLERY PHILADELPHIA

ATACAMA | MY INSPIRING DESERT

JACQUELINE UNANUE | Abstract Painting | Solo Exhibition

Celebrating 40 years of Exhibitions (1983-2023)

Curated by Gloria Garafulich-Grabois

With nominal support of the Embassy of Chile to the United States and the Consulate General of Chile in New York

Invited Artist: Ricardo Guajardo-Romero

April 5- 30, 2023

First Friday: April 7, 5-8 pm | **Artist Reception:** Sunday April 16, 1-4 pm

Closing Reception: Sunday April 30, 2-4 pm, with an Artist Talk, and a Video Presentation

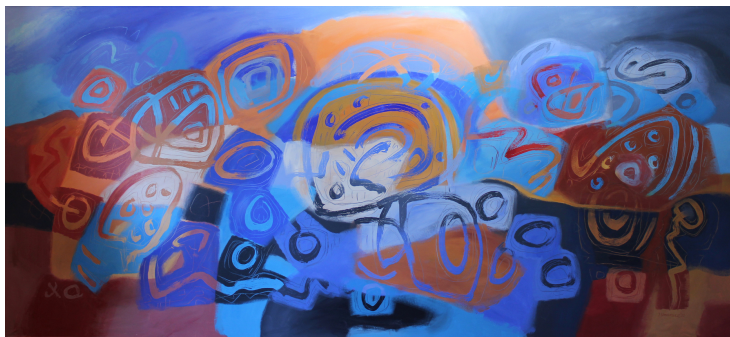
Gallery Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm

Muse Gallery: 52 North Second Street, Old City, Philadelphia PA 19106

215. 627. 5310 | www.musegalleryphiladelphia.com | [@musegalleryphila](https://www.instagram.com/musegalleryphila)

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Jacqueline Unanue Jacquelineunanue@yahoo.com (For additional images)



1



2

1-Still Atacama VI, acrylic on canvas, 2022, 65"x143" | 2-Atacama I, 2016, acrylic on canvas, 57"x67"



3



4



5

3- Still Atacama VIII, acrylic on canvas, 2023, 16"x20" | 4-Jacqueline Unanue | 5-Still Atacama VII, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 18"x24"

Muse Gallery Philadelphia is proud to present **Atacama—my inspiring Desert**, a solo painting exhibition of the work by Chilean artist Jacqueline Unanue, inspired by the Atacama Desert in Northern Chile. Some of her recent work features colorful large-scale acrylic paintings. Unanue has invited her husband Ricardo Guajardo-Romero, also an artist and designer, to create a painting for this specific exhibition.

The exhibition at Muse Gallery includes a total of approximately 20 works of the **Atacama series**, created during 2016-2017; as well as from the **Still Atacama** series, which was created during 2022-2023. Both series are inspired by her previous trips taken with her husband in 1980-1995, and subsequently in 2016 and 2018, to archeological sites especially rich in rock art, in the Atacama Desert. Her husband, is originally from this Northern region of Chile.

I wanted to celebrate my 40-year anniversary of exhibitions showing my Atacama Desert series, as it was my first inspiration at the start of my career as an artist. That inspiration began in the early 80's while doing research for my book entitled: "El Arte Rupestre Chileno, un encuentro con el Hombre Primitivo" ("Chilean Rock Art, An Encounter with the Primitive Man"), which was my project to obtain my degree in Graphic Design in 1982. The book, an object d'art, composed of 12 extensible big sheets, and my own poems, was printed in silkscreen by my husband's Raimi Design studio, and exhibited in 1983 in galleries in Viña del Mar and in Santiago, Chile.

My work, for these two series has been consciously inspired by the outstanding geography, and the magical environment in this world-famous Desert. I return to my research and inspiration in rock art, as I used to do at the start of my artistic career in the 80's and 90's. I am also inspired by other magical places, such as two saltpeter centers found in the Tarapacá region of the Atacama Desert, which were abandoned, and that in 2005 were declared World Heritage sites by UNESCO. They are [Humberstone and Santa Laura](#).

In spite of being inspired by the geography of the Desert, I still feel the importance of integrating music in my creative process, as it gives me direction for my own pictorial composition. As remarked by Alvaro Gallegos—a Chilean journalist and classical music specialist—I have been inspired by the music of two Chilean contemporary composers: René Silva and Carlos Zamora, whose music – in a very fortuitous coincidence- have also been inspired by Northern Chile, its extraordinary Desert and the traditional religious celebrations of the region.

Through my free brushstrokes, and by a vibrant and varied color palette I aim to interpret the mystical environment, and the silence of the Atacama Desert. With my palette of ochre, brown, dark red, gray and black colors I am transported to the Desert, its arid soil, and at the same time to the rich mineral tones that are found in the mountains. The blues suggest the Desert's mystical air and pristine sky. The vibrant palette chosen is an extension of the bright colors of the costumes the local people wear for their religious celebrations, capturing the movement of their dances.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jacqueline Unanue is a Chilean American artist of Spanish descent, who has resided in the United States since 2000. She studied design at the Universidad de Chile of Valparaíso, and received formal training in drawing, painting, art history and textile art. While a student, she became interested in the rock art found in Chile where she met world-renowned archaeologist, Hans Niemeyer, who soon became her mentor. She traveled extensively through Chile's Atacama Desert, doing on-site rock art research. She also

traveled to Spain to study the pre-historic paintings of the Altamira caves in the Basque Country, which being the home of her paternal ancestors.

Unanue has received numerous awards and grants and has widely exhibited her work in Chile, Spain, Finland, Ecuador, and Argentina, as well as in galleries in Washington DC, Philadelphia, Annapolis, Chicago, and New York. Her work can also be found in many private and public collections in the Americas and Europe. She resides in Philadelphia with her husband, and is represented by Muse Gallery, Philadelphia.

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ABOUT THE INVITED ARTIST

Ricardo Guajardo- Romero is a designer and artist with studies in architecture as well. He was born in Northern Chile, and has resided in the United States since 1999. He traveled extensively through Chile's Atacama Desert, doing on-site rock art research and photographic documentation. In Chile he received an Honor Award in the *VIII International Biennial of Art*, in Valparaíso, 1983. He co founded Raimi Design, a Philadelphia-based studio dedicated to textile design, exhibiting them in New York international art fairs.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Gloria Garafulich-Grabois was born in Chile and is a citizen of the United States and Croatia. In 2018 the Government of Chile awarded her the grade of Dame of the Order of Merit Gabriela Mistral. She is President of the Gabriela Mistral Foundation, Inc. based in New York; Founder & International Director of the Chapter in Chile of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and is a member of the International Jury of the Mondial Art Academia in France.

For more information: <https://musegalleryphiladelphia.com/exhibitions/jacqueline-unanue/atacama-my-inspiring-desert> & <https://musegalleryphiladelphia.com/artists/jacqueline-unanue>

ABOUT MUSE GALLERY

Established late in 1977, the Muse Gallery is an artists' cooperative dedicated to encourage and promote its members' artistic expression through abstract, conceptual and representational forms. Reflecting an aesthetic that awakens awareness, the Muse Gallery affirms the shared experience of art between the artist and the community.

www.musegalleryphiladelphia.com | arts@musegalleryphiladelphia.com