

# Patricia Iglesias Peco & Pablo Edelstein

## *Materia Medica*

September 13 – October 25, 2025



François Ghebaly New York is proud to present *Materia Expandida*, a two person exhibition of paintings and historic ceramic sculptures by Patricia Iglesias Peco and Pablo Edelstein.

*I find that it is not possible to translate any sculptural or pictorial idea in ceramics, but, rather, one has to think and create in the material itself.*

Pablo Edelstein in a letter to Lucio Fontana, 1949

“Materia expandida” translates to English as, approximately, “expanded matter.” Unlike the terms “material” or “medium,” matter indicates something more fundamental, composed of elementary building blocks and characterized by basic, inalienable attributes. These ideas of essence, as well as the artist’s ability to wield them, serve as key points of departure for the two-person exhibition of the same name, which unites the intersecting practices of Patricia Iglesias Peco and Pablo Edelstein, a renowned Argentine visual artist and Peco’s late mentor. In meditations on nature, cyclicity, and personal philosophy, the exhibition pays homage to the essential shared, collaborative spirit of artistic practice across time and memory.

Set throughout the New York gallery space, *Materia Expandida* joins Peco’s sinuous polychrome paintings with examples of Edelstein’s recurring horse and bull motifs from 1968 to 1997. Edelstein was a sculptor and teacher whose work combined observational study from the natural world with an expressive, indefatigable exploration of material identity. Widely exhibited throughout Argentina and South America in his lifetime, Edelstein worked in painting, engraving, drawing, collage, multimedia assemblage, and ceramic sculpture most notably—each in the pursuit of giving form to “living architecture[s]” and the intrinsic voice of the medium.

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Edelstein studied sculpture under vanguard Argentine-Italian artist Lucio Fontana in the 1940s, at a time when the ceramic medium was just newly entering the lexicon of the fine arts establishment and the avant garde. The two would become lifelong friends and correspondents in letter writing, sharing ceramic techniques, personal news, and reflecting on the trajectories of their individual practices and larger movements in the arts in Argentina. Edelstein observed of Fontana in a 2002 interview, “seeing [him] work, I became aware for the first time of the importance of the gestural technique.” Alongside an emphasis on the rough-hewn simplicity of material guiding form, this technique would define his own approach and inevitably find its way into his teaching.

For Peco, who began study at Edelstein’s atelier in Buenos Aires as a teenager, the impact of his instruction and philosophy was immense. In her own work, which draws together elements of canonical still life and literary allusion in vivid rhapsodies on metamorphosis, duality, and the organic world, ideas about gestural directness and material experimentation remain pivotal. The intuitive, almost sculptural manipulation of paint and surface (not unlike three-dimensional ceramic technique) is an essential component of her image-making, emphasizing tension between figuration and abstraction and imparting her work with characteristic sensuality through the visual evidence of her own choreography on canvas. In sheer, atmospheric violets and deep umbers, oxides, and ochres, Peco’s work in the exhibition dialogues with the crystalline glazes and earthen finishes of Edelstein’s ceramic forms, and remains true to a kaleidoscopic painterly perspective that’s all her own. In a 1987 letter to Fontana’s widow Teresita, Edelstein reflects, “I would like to emphasize that the moment I met Lucio, I was certain that I had found a teacher...in whose company I would receive unexpected lessons and revelations.” The same can be said in *Materia Expandida*.

Patricia Iglesias Peco’s (b. 1974, Buenos Aires, Argentina) practice is tuned into the vibrancy of the natural world, imagining rambunctious gardens of flora and fauna rendered in oil paint—vegetal bodies caught in whirling gestures of bloom and decay, a choreography of endless beginnings. A playful undulating tension pervades Iglesias Peco’s strange compositions, which appear simultaneously grotesque and beautiful, repulsive and alluring. Flowers appear as more than familiar metaphors but vessels for the artist to exercise her formal interest in painting and color theory.

Iglesias Peco holds a BFA from the Savannah College of Art and Design and the School of Visual Arts in New York. She has participated in several solo and group shows including the Santa Barbara Museum of Art; François Ghebaly, Los Angeles and New York; James Cohan, New York; Gladstone Gallery, New York; Del Vaz Projects, Los Angeles; La Loma Projects, Los Angeles. Iglesias Peco lives and works in Los Angeles, California. Peco’s work is held in the collections of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and the ICA Miami. In 2026, she will be included in a group exhibition at the Buffalo AKG Art Museum.

For over thirty years, Pablo Edelstein (b. 1917, St. Moritz, Switzerland; d. 2010, Buenos Aires, Argentina) was a professor and Dean of the Culture Department at Argentina’s National School of Fine Arts. Edelstein exhibited around the world, with solo exhibitions at important South American galleries and institutions including Isabel Anchorena Art Gallery, Buenos Aires; Perlotti Museum, Buenos Aires; Maldonado Museum of American Art, Maldonado; Rómulo Raggio Museum, Buenos Aires; and Rubbers Gallery, Buenos Aires. His work has also been exhibited at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the Museum of Architecture and Design, Buenos Aires; Sívori Museum, Buenos Aires; Weiterbildungszentrum, Düsseldorf; Casa Argentina, Rome; and the National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires. The latest, from November 2023 and March 2024, was an anthological review of Edelstein’s work at the Museum of Art, Tigre, Buenos Aires, and featured over 70 artworks. Edelstein was the recipient of many prizes and awards, among them the sculpture prize at the Salón de Mar del Plata, the gold medal at the Salón de la Sociedad Hebraica Argentina, and the Konex Award for Ceramics. His work is held in private collections and museums in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Spain, Germany, Austria, the UK, and the US.