

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Concerning Unknown Women

Ana María Caballero creates a speculative museum for women whose names survived, but whose likenesses did not.



Concerning Unknown Women, Installation render, For reference only, Museum PARCUM, 2026

LEUVEN, BELGIUM (October 2026) — Created for [Threading Landscapes: Art at Park Abbey](#), which marks the reopening of the historic Park Abbey complex after fifteen years of restoration, Ana María Caballero's [Concerning Unknown Women](#) begins with the Abbey's archives.

The project begins with poems written to commemorate women entering religious life. Across different names and dates, these texts repeatedly describe women through the same prescribed ideals of devotion, obedience and renunciation. Individual lives disappear into a shared language.

The title *Concerning Unknown Women* evokes Giovanni Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris* (*Concerning Famous Women*, c. 1361–62), a collection of 106 biographies of notable women. Caballero turns instead to women whose names survived in the archive, but whose individual lives remain largely unknown.

Caballero responds to this absence through a series of imagined portraits of women named in the Abbey's records, created with the technical support of TITLES. Rooted in Flemish portraiture, the images depart from its conventions by showing the women reading, writing, studying, observing and making.

Historical research into the convents, abbeys, orders and beguinages the women entered informs how each is dressed. Habits, veils, fabrics and other details reflect the community and period recorded in the archive. The portraits do not propose historical likenesses, but offer each woman a semblance of self beyond the language through which she was preserved.



The portraits inhabit a speculative museum website conceived as an alternative archive. By borrowing the structures museums use to classify and preserve images, the site gives these imagined portraits a place within an alternative canon.



Literature is central to the project. A bibliography of writing by and about women across centuries provides another lens through which to read the Abbey's records and imagined portraits.

An accompanying video work follows a professor of early modern literature encountering the website for the first time. She brings a lifetime of reading, including the texts gathered in the project's bibliography, to the archive. Caballero's poem voices her internal monologue as she navigates the site.

The work turns the private performance of reading into a public one: the screen records how she reads, while the poem gives voice to what cannot be seen.

Concerning Unknown Women does not attempt to reconstruct lives that cannot be recovered. It asks what remains of a person when history preserves her name but little of

her self, and what happens when that life is read again.

[Press images](#)

ABOUT THREADING LANDSCAPES

Threading Landscapes: Art at Park Abbey marks a new chapter for Park Abbey and Museum PARCUM following the completion of a fifteen-year restoration of the historic monastic complex. The international exhibition brings together 24 contemporary artists responding to the Abbey's architecture, landscape, archives and nearly nine centuries of history.

Curated by Katya García-Antón, María Inés Rodríguez, Daniel Feldman and Ana Sokoloff, the exhibition includes Noor Abed, Leonor Antunes, Bianca Baldi, Rossella Biscotti, Ana María Caballero, Carlos Casas, Edith Dekyndt, Pierre Huyghe, Tarik Kiswanson, Guadalupe Maravilla, Hana Miletić, Amol Patil, Laure Prouvost, Cecilia Vicuña, Meg Webster and others.

24 October 2026 – 28 March 2027

Museum PARCUM, Park Abbey, Leuven, Belgium

ABOUT ANA MARÍA CABALLERO

Ana María Caballero is a Colombian-American poet and multidisciplinary artist whose work considers how poetry moves beyond the page. Working across books, performance, sculpture, installation, moving image and digital systems, she approaches language as both material and record.

Caballero's work is held in the collections of the Museo Reina Sofía, MACBA Barcelona, Fundación March, HEK Basel, the Francisco Carolinum Museum, the Ashmolean Museum, and other institutional and private collections.

She's the author of eight books, including *Material*, published by Trio House Press in 2026, and */Cuts*, forthcoming from Texas Review Press in November 2026. Her honors include the Lumen Prize, the José Manuel Arango National Poetry Prize, the Steel Toe Books Poetry Award, the International Beverly Prize, the Clay Reynolds Novella Prize, and an Academy of American Poets Award.

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