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Exhibition dates: June 28 - August 16, 2025

ILY2 is proud to announce *the ephemeral and the enduring*, an exhibition of recent work by Portland-based artist mars ibarreche. Composed of over 45 small-scale collages, each with their own vibrant intimacy, the exhibition is a lyrical meditation on rupture, repair, and the manufacturing of meaning. This is ibarreche's debut solo show with the gallery, and an Opening Reception will take place at ILY2 Portland on Saturday, June 28th from 3:00 - 5:00pm.

ibarreche's wide-ranging practice spans poetry, fashion, public murals, and oil painting—but collage has remained a constant throughline. To produce these works, they employ a tactile, improvisational process: slicing and layering pulp paperbacks, packaging materials, and salvaged ephemera into compact compositions that are both formally and linguistically charged. Ragged typography and vivid color fields collide with crisp, familiar shapes and biomorphic curves, forming intimate arrangements where softness and sharpness coexist. Each collage invites the viewer into a world of visual language that is both deeply personal and structurally complex. Hand-cut letters spell out broken phrases - *Cry You*; *Beautiful Transformations*; *Elegant Rebellion* - that hover between proclamation and vulnerability, in what the artist calls "temporary / accidental poems."

Formally, the pieces echo the urgency and DIY aesthetic of zine culture and wheat-pasting, while maintaining a quiet, reflective intimacy. ibarreche's work emerges from a long lineage of queer collage practices that view fragmentation and rupture as a generative form of agency. From the surrealist photo-montages of Claude Cahun and Hannah Höch, to the textual assemblage of Mina Loy, to punk zines and contemporary hybrid forms, collage has remained a powerful tool to reconfigure fixed narratives and resist schematic binaries. As scholar David Getsy writes, collage's very structure mimics the "undercutting of the stability of identity and of the dispensation of power that shadows the assignment of categories and taxonomies." In this tradition, ibarreche's assemblages intentionally hold contradiction: irreverent and devotional, joyful and grieving, direct and obscure. The works celebrate the potentiality of a world full of "endless meaning." In the artist's own words: "everything is always falling apart so it can be put back together. we are all parts of each other put together in different ways."

In an age of overload and disposability, *the ephemeral and the enduring* invites a different kind of attention—one that values observation, reinvention, and care. Each piece holds its own internal rhythm, with surfaces abraded by both ibarreche's folding and scoring, as well as the lived imprint from years of circulation. There is a distinct physicality here—a sense of time embedded in every crease that anchors the collages in the world they were scavenged from. Their visual logic draws equally from street signage and subconscious association, rendering the act of recomposition as both aesthetic gesture and emotional labor. Rather than offering resolution, these works embody resistance and relation—reminding us that rebuilding is itself an act of hope.

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