

WORKS  
MARCOS AVILA FORERO

# Works

(selection)

*« am like one of those people who always has a stone from their house in their pocket to show people what home is like*

**Bertolt Brecht**

The works of Marcos Avila Forero (born in Paris, 1983, lives and works in Bogotá and Paris) are immersed in the complex and sometimes violent reality of political and social situations he presents not as an impartial observer, but by introducing into his work the elements that constitute it (materials, stories, symbols). His works thus bear witness to an encounter, a story or a journey. They are micro-fictions made of flotsam and jetsam, that seek less to demonstrate or document, and more to bring into opposition times and places that never should have met.

**Daria de Beauvais**

## FROM THE MOUNTAINS

The series of photos entitled *From The Mountains* (2017), are framed within this same circumstance that makes us travel to realities that often seem invisible and where the victims of violence and oppression of the government are found. In this project the artist depicts the phenomenon of contemporary guerrillas and reminds us, once again, the reality that many peasant communities are forced to live due to the government attacks (or lack of attention and protection), binding together strategies of resistance in armed struggles as a method of political action.

In order to come back from the oblivion to which they have been subjected, the peasants resort to weapons as a form of revolutionary fight. From then on bullets become part of their lives. Marcos Ávila Forero endows his stories with a poetic dimension by reusing the gunpowder from the bullets, necessary for the armed confrontation until that moment, to enlighten the photographs and, therefore, to light up to those portrayed. The result is a sublime illumination of the images, uttering an exaltation of the figures that pose. By way of using portraiture, Marcos Ávila Forero gives a historical dimension and enhances the figures of these forgotten people and their repressed claims.

ADN Galeria



**From the mountains**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed, gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France





**From the mountains. Familia Varela**

2017

Analog photography black and white on  
baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed,  
gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France



**From the mountains.**

**Alias Paola, Armancio y Camilita**

2017

Analog photography black and white on  
baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed,  
gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France



**From the mountains.  
Mediomundo Rigoberto y Maria**

2017

Analog photography black and white on  
baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed,  
gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France



**From the mountains.  
Alias Federico y Johana**

2017

Analog photography black and white on  
baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed,  
gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France





**From the mountains. Alias Yasbleidi**  
2017

Photographie argentique noir et blanc sur  
papier baryté, 120 x 120 cm, cadre en  
chêne, cartouches de fusil

Edition de 3 + 2 EA  
Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France



**From the mountains.  
Alias Juliana y Manuel**  
2017

Analog photography black and white on  
baryta paper, 120 x 120 cm, oak framed,  
gun cartridges

Edition of 3 + 2 AP  
Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art  
contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France

## ANOTHER VERSION OF 'THE PERSIANS' BY AESCHYLUS

This project appeals directly to the current situation in the Middle East taking Pasolini's documentary, *Appunti per un Orestiade Africana*, as a principal source of influence which shows in the same title an imposed westernized perspective: "Africa is not a nation", as the students from the movie point out, "but a continent". Which Africa is referring to, then, Pasolini ?

Having seen the film first and then, read the tragedy, Ávila Forero investigates the relationship between *The Persians*, written by Aeschylus, and the Syrian issue trying to operate from a "perceptive transformation" in order to query the figure of the invasive subject and the point of view from which historical narratives are written.

*The Persians*, first Greek tragedy relating a contemporary success, the battle of Salamis between Greeks and Persians, stands out for being a clever exercise of political propaganda. Aeschylus, from the winning army (Greece), decides to expose the facts from the side of the defeated, the Persians. This way, and under the (false) pretext to praise the dignity of the beaten, actually performs an ode to the victorious Greeks, depicted with total admiration as the "free people".

On this basis, *Another version of "The Persians" by Aeschylus* raises the possibility of creating a space through the construction of an impossible object : a loudspeaker, means of communication and social claim tool that is, simultaneously, a boat that challenges politically imposed boundaries. This hybrid object is the instigator of an assembly by experts in geopolitics, analogue equivalent to the chorus, that suggest the research and reflection materials for its activation as a scenic object.

Through the performatic exegesis of these documents and the tragedy itself, Nawar Boulboul, exiled Syrian activist and dramatist, reinterprets Aeschylus' play and activates, as reproduced in the installation videos, the chimeric object that, in the near future, will be activated again by new agents.

ADN Galeria



**Another version of “The Persians” by Aeschylus**  
2017

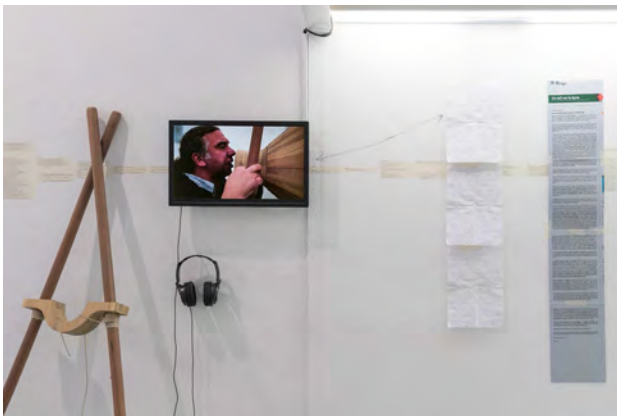
Walnut sculpture and installation, 214,8 x 214,8 x 130 cm, unique piece

Paint, printed and written papers, polaroid photos, posters, drawings, books, soundtracks, unique pieces

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France

Photo © Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France and © ADN Galeria, Barcelona, Spain







**Another version of "The Persians" by Aeschylus 1**

2018

Documentary video of a performance, color, sound, 6'40"

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France



**Another version of "The Persians" by Aeschylus 2**

2018

Documentary video of a performance, color, sound, 1'33"

Production Le Grand Café - centre d'art contemporain, Saint Nazaire, France

## ARCHIVES

For Marcos Avila Forero, his archives act as the sketchbook or notebook that come along with his artworks in his exhibitions. They are the material of the off-set and highlight it. Documentaries or journalisitic, if the portraits exposed tell us about the wings of creation, they are mostly a tool to understand and comprehend the context in which the artist created the serie *Estenopeícas rurales, restitution of the memory* (2015) : the Colombian countrysides and the home return, after a long exile, of the inhabitants who fought - armed or not - to defend their rights to land.

In this work, the artists ponders upon a question, that is asked sharply and more accurately as the peace treaty with the FARC is signed. He deploys artworks that complete each other about the Colombian peasant world and its armed fight in his individual exhibitions *Les choses qui vibrent* at Grand Café in Saint Nazaire and collective, *Medellín, une histoire colombienne des années 1950 à aujourd'hui*, at the Abattoirs de Toulouse, where he shows a triptych of *Estenopeícas rurales*.





A flag that symbolised the dignity of the peasant who can labour his land, this image became a symbol of the farmer uprisings in the region of Sumapaz.

**Archive - Dignidad agraria**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 50 x 60 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP



From this very moment, the radio has announced that the government refused the bilateral cease fire proposed by the FARC-EP, who decided on their own an unilateral cease fire.

**Archive - Manos sobre la mesa**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 60 x 50 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP



In the region of San Luis de Ocoa, Don Enrique and their family had to flee from their farm, because their housing, located in the crest of a mountain, was demanded by the paramilitaries, who used it as a watching point, thus fighting area.

The paramilitaries withdrew 7 years after. Don Enrique decided then to come back trying to recover his farm. *Without his family in order not to jeopardize them.*

On this image, he ripped the moss gathered by the desertion, and explained to me, at the same time, absent mindedly, how he thought about repairing the cracks on the walls and roof.

**Archive - Rasgando musgo - casa recuperada**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 50 x 60 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP





This place, hidden in the mountains, is located above 3 500 meters high, the peasants of the union trade Sintrapaz brought me to that place, as they wanted to show me where many of their companions were tortured, and for most of them, disappeared.

*Here, we are in a very cold and moist region, they (the police) denuded the prisoners and wet them to let them die cold.*

**Archive - Càrcel Sumapaz**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 50 x 60 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP





**Archive - Casa perdida 1**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 50 x 60 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP



**Archive - Casa perdida 2**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 50 x 60 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP





**Archive - Doña Emérita cocinando**

2017

Analog photography black and white on baryta paper, 60 x 50 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP





**Archive - El guia - Cesitar**  
2017

Digital color photography on baryta paper, 60 x 80 cm  
Edition of 15 + 3 AP





This peasant headed behind the mountain, where he hid this coca leaves plantation. In the past, he tried grow banana but did not succed selling it. : *I do not even manage to get it out the region !* He explained to me, on the way, that he tries now to grow cocoa.

**Archive - Raspachin**

2017

Digital color photography on baryta paper, 60 x 80 cm

Edition of 15 + 3 AP

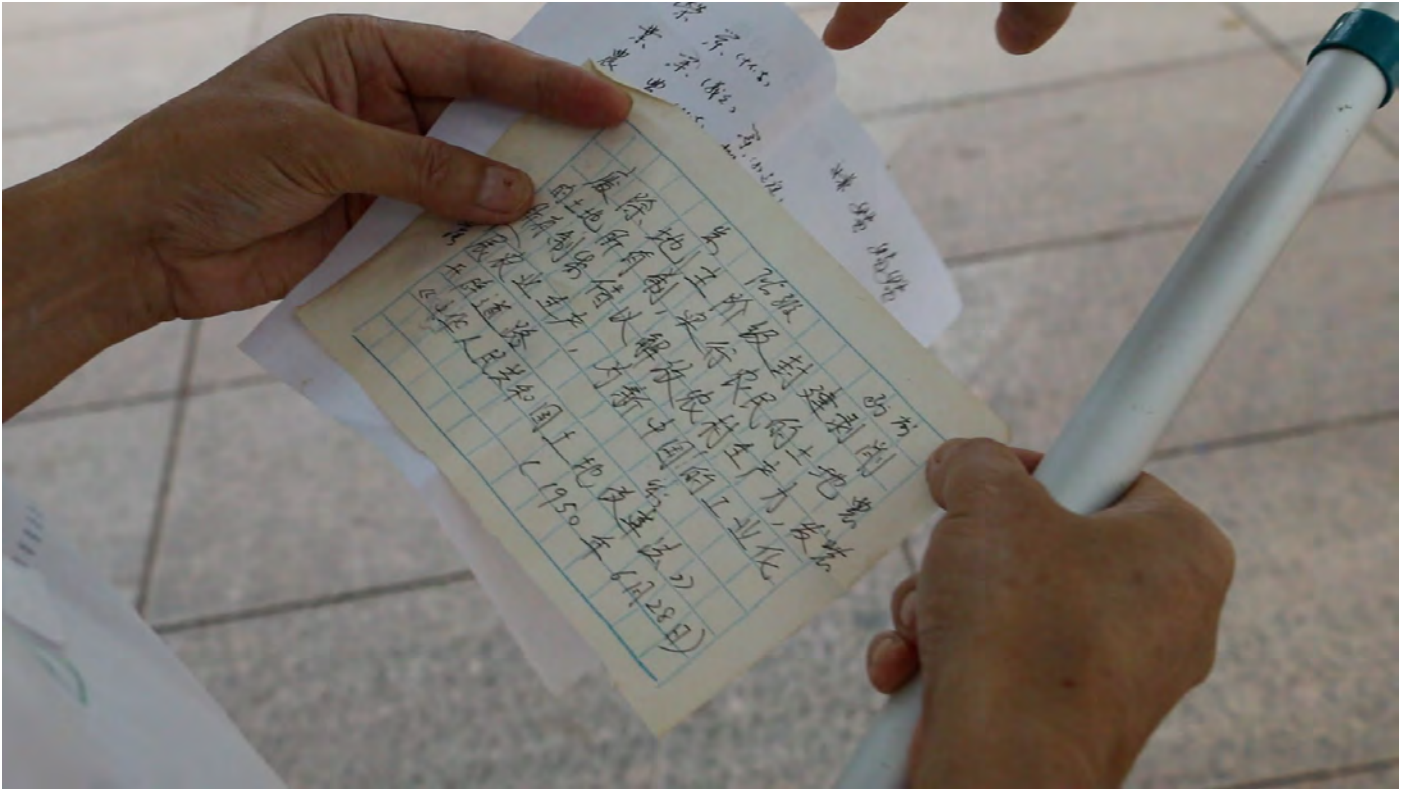


## JUNE 28TH 1950, THE AGRARIAN REFORM

Macros Avila Forero has contacted a Chinese calligrapher, specialized in the « cursive-chaotic » style — the same used by Mao Zedong for his poems — and asked him to take some water from the Yangzi river, in order to use it, employing a particular technique consisting of writing directly on the floor, only with water, to retranscribe the agrarian reform that occurred in China, just after the revolution in 1950.

This reform has a very important echo in the peasants claiming and the current popular uprisings. The Ideograms on the ground evaporate in a few minutes, and by disappearing, the nature of the act itself gives to this reform an invocatory aspect. The action acquires then a protesting value.









**June 28th 1950 The Agrarian Reform**

2017

HD video, color, sound, 8'11'

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

**June 28th 1950 The Agrarian Reform Dishu**

2017

HD video, color, mute, 8'11'

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

## **ESTENOPÉICAS RURALES** - Restitutions of the memory

Since its until the contemporary protests, the social conflict both civil and armed in Colombia is strongly bound to needs for viable agrarian policies for the populations farmers. Since the historical period of "La Violencia" and until our days, the region of the high "cundiboyacense" plateau was transformed into one of the main locations of these protests.

A cluster of farmer families houses, was or still is used as spaces of revolt, of secrecy, disappearance... are transformed into pinholes devices (dark rooms), with the aim of getting a single photosensitive image. Each house, transformed into a huge camera, gets a picture, on a large scale, of the cultivated landscapes and the mountains of the high cundiboyacense plateau.

The kind of the resulting B&W image evokes photographic archives of the "La Violencia" era, but reveals contemporary landscapes, which distinguish themselves by the absence of persons\*. A video documents the social context of the place, presenting the images of the houses, but shown only from the outside. By this way, the landscapes, in which stand those houses and their stories, are revealed. However, we can not perceive the interior of those houses. Each house will remain as the dark space of the story it evokes.

\* This process of dark room requires extended times of, which causes the disappearance of the bodies in motion.

Once, a farmer disappointed not to appear on the image, asked me about what he had to do to be in. I answered him he had to pose for twenty minutes without moving.... he decided then to do so, him and his son....

These farmers fight to keep and cultivate their lands. The analogy between the insistence of their fight with the will to appear on the photography is quite touching.



**Famille Barreto Bonilla - San Luis De Ocoa**

2015

Tryptich

Pinehole camera photographs, black and white

52 x 42 x 3 cm with frame each piece

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Famille Franco y Loma - Ubaté**

2015

Tryptich

Pinehole camera photographs, black and white

52 x 42 x 3 cm with frame each piece

Edition of 5 + 2 AP





**Famille Garcia - Lado oriental del rio Ariari**

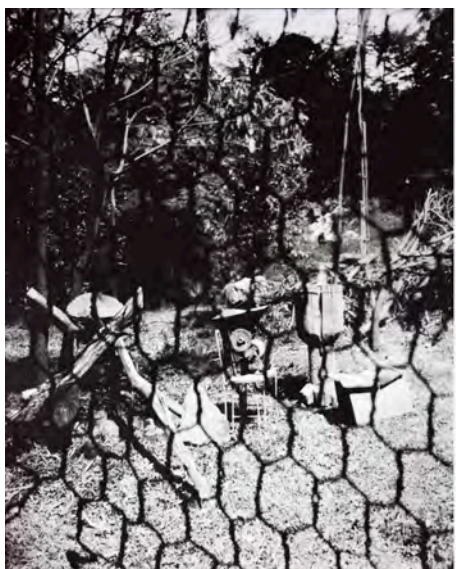
2015

Tryptich

Pinehole camera photographs, black and white

52 x 42 x 3 cm with frame each piece

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Familia Rincon - San Luis De Ocoa**

2015

Tryptich

Pinehole camera photographs, black and white

52 x 42 x 3 cm with frame each piece

Edition of 5 + 2 AP





**Famille Vivas - Cabuyaro**

2015

Tryptich

Pinehole camera photographs, black and white

52 x 42 x 3 cm with frame each piece

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Collection FRAC Corse, France



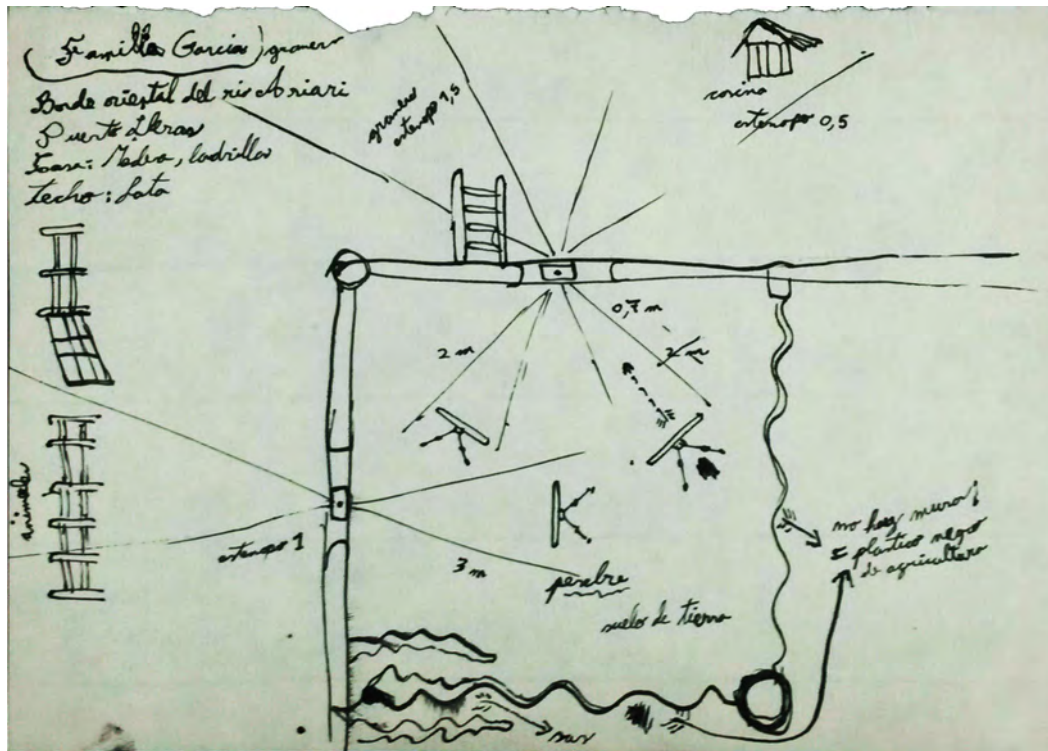
Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

## Dessin préparatoire Don Hermano - Ubaté

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece



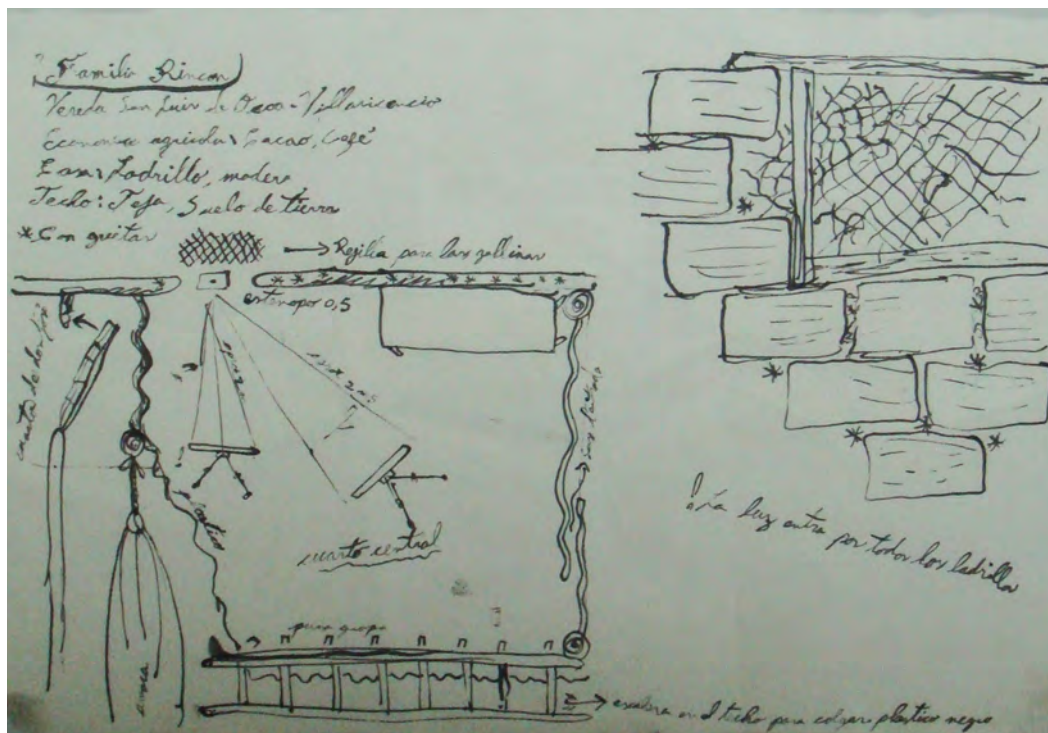


Dessin préparatoire Don Emilio - Rive orientale de la rivière Ariari

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece

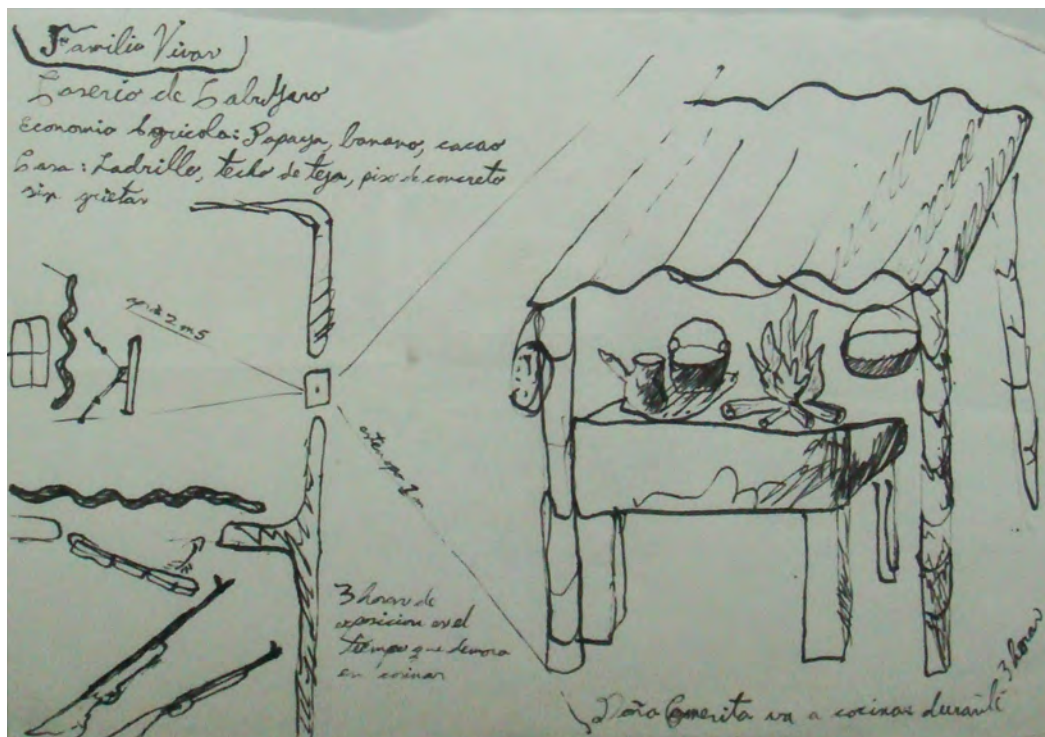


Dessin préparatoire Rincon - San Luis De Ocoa

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece

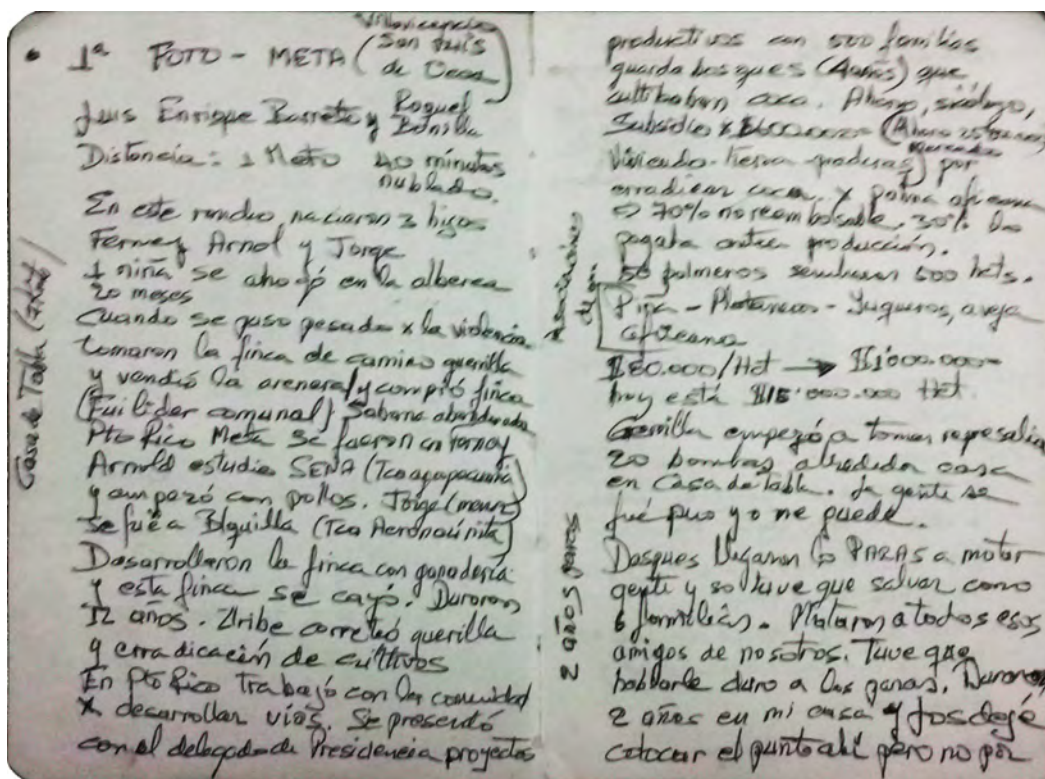


Dessin préparatoire Vivas - Cabuvaro

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece



Notes Témoignages Don Luis - San Luis De Ocoa

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece





**Dessin préparatoire**

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece



**Dessin préparatoire**

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame, 25 x 19 cm

Unique piece



**Dessin préparatoire**

2015

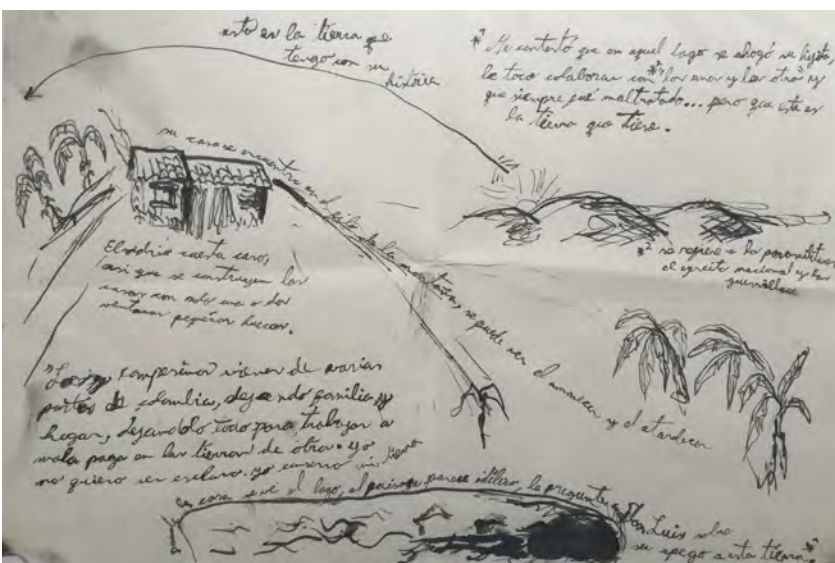
Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame,  
25 x 19 cm  
Unique piece



**Dessin préparatoire**

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame,  
25 x 19 cm  
Unique piece



**Dessin préparatoire**

2015

Drawing on paper, glass, white tape frame,  
25 x 19 cm  
Unique piece





**Estenopeicas rurales - Casa de Don Luis**

2015

HD video 16 : 9, color, sound, 5'48"



**Estenopeicas rurales - Los fusiles de Don Gilberto**

2015

HD video 16 : 9, color, sound, 2'40"



**Estenopeicas rurales - Mision ad hoc**

2015

HD video 16 : 9, color, sound, 7'00", 3 videos together, edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Stenopé A - 0,5**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé B - 0,5**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé A - 1**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé B - 1**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé A - 1,5 - 2**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé B - 2**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece



**Stenopé**

2015

Perforated aluminium plaque, glass,  
white tape frame, 11 x 12 cm  
Unique piece

**TAL CUAL UN TRIOFIJO** - Pinehole photographs of rural conflicts

50 years ago, in the Colombian mountains, a group of farmers organized and took arms to defend themselves from the oppression, they abandoned their farmers' condition, became underground and guerrilleros. It is the beginning of the civil war in Colombia.

A photograph was taken at the precise moment when they made their first declaration, not as farmers who defend themselves, but as an insurrectionary group with a political project.

This image has been collectively memorized, but the time broke its link with its political reality. And the characters who feature in it are all dead by now.

I recomposed the scene of this document, in real scale, by cutting the various depths of the plan. The moment of the photography is then completely staged.

A big construction, a massive block, made by transport pallets and without any access, stands in front of this scene. It is a camera obscura, which takes photographs of this scenography.

50 days of exhibition time were necessary for the image to be printed on the argentic paper. The aestheticism of the image revives the historical document, the depth of field is reachable, even though the cutting might be strange. The document seems real ... but its status is suspect.





**Tal cual un triofijo**

2015

Sextuples, pinhole camera photographs in argentic, black and white, glued on Dibond  
155 x 125 cm (6 pieces together)  
Edition of 5 + 2 AP



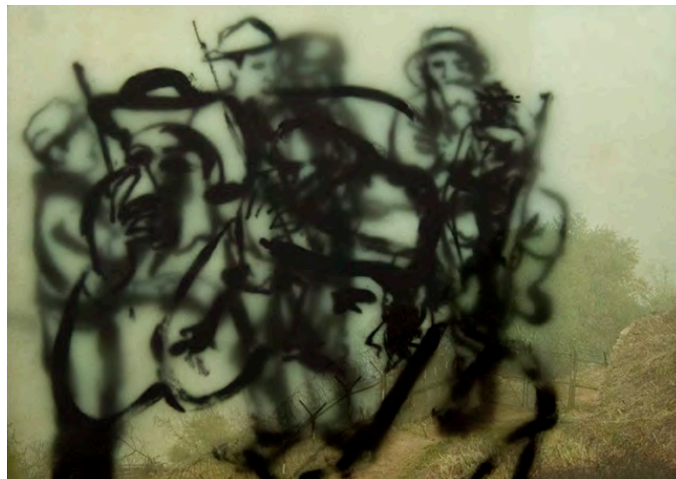
**Estenopéicas de conflictos rurales**

View of the exhibition at the Chateau des Adhémar, Montélimar, France

Photos © Chateau des Adhémar



**COLINA 266, OLD BALDY (THE OLD BALDY MOUNT)**



**Colina 266 - Old Baldy**

2015

Tryptich, photographies, drawings on rice paper,  
lightboxes

48 x 36 cm each photo

Unique pieces. Photos © Roberto Ruiz





**Colina 266 - Old Baldy**

2015

Color photography, frame, 100 x 150 cm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

In 1951, while in Colombia, began the civil war we know today, and when the Colombian Communist Party began to be forbidden of electoral participation, the Colombian State decided to send a battalion of 1070 men to support the fight against the communism during the Korean War. At that time, the financial deficit of the country was so high, that the government had to ask the United States to finance the journey. It was the beginning of the Cold war.

The 266 Hill, located in the Demilitarized North Korean Zone (DMZ), was named "The Old Baldy" (the old bald mount), because all its vegetation was shaved by the tens thousand heavy artillery missiles sent by both factions... it is here the " Colombia Battallion" fought.

Both access, and taking photos of the DMZ are strictly forbidden, I traveled all the DMZ, from the South Korean side, trying to get at least an image of the 266 Hill.

... The photos, I was able to get, show only landscapes that hide my real aim under the fog.

A video describes the 266 Hill : On a light table are displayed a series of drawings that recover the photos of the DMZ. Those drawings obey to the stories and testimonies of the "Colombia Battalion", dominating the fog of the photography, but the effect of the back light provoked by the light table hides the images.

**ATRATO** - Riverside residents get back their traditions and make an instrument of the river, an “accustomed violence” which is transformed in music



The Atrato is a river, a highway which crosses the forest of Chocó in Colombia, and in this context, one of the main arteries of the armed conflict in this country.

This work is the result of an action which the artist led in this zone with a group of local residents of afro-Colombian origin.

Supported by a research team (anthropologists, ethnomusicologists and musicians), he suggested to several inhabitants to realize an action in several stages :

- He suggested at first to them to recuperate one of their former customs, lost today, consisting in striking the surface of the river in a particular way, in order to produce a sound of bass which could ring out on relatively long distances “it was so that we hear it from the village”.
- Then, with the help of masters of percussions from the village, they worked with this sound, in order to reproduce, inspired by local rhythms, some music.
- To conclude, the artist incited them to make, with this new technique, a composition which could make the analogy with the sounds of the explosions, the knocks of burst and impacts of bullets which are often heard on the river, expressing by doing so the experience of the “accustomed violence” of the armed conflict.





This project served later as pilot experiment in a program of recovery of the heritage led by government and independent local organisations.

**Worked on site :** Corporalotéca (Research programme in anthropology and ethnomusicology of the Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó), ICEMA (Institución Comunitaria Etnoeducativa del Medio Atrato), Secretaría de Educación Departamental del Chocó.

**Have participated :** Paneso family, Cuesta Arriba family, Cuesta Torres family, Renteria family, Perea Borges family, Cuesta Romaña family.

**Direction :** Marcos Avila Forero.

**Image :** Maria Melissa Vargas Ojeda, Daniel Avila Forero, Marcos Avila Forero.

**Edition :** Marcos Avila Forero.

**Thanks to :** Faustina CUESTA ROMAÑA "Doña Meya", her family and son, Francisco ASPRILLA CUESTA, to the team of Christian missionaries of Quibdó, to the priest Marcial, to Eliana María FIGUEROA, and "Beto".

#### **Atrato**

2014

HD video, 16 : 9, color, sound, 13'52", edition of 5 + 2 AP, English and French version  
Collection Centre National des Arts Plastiques - Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, France

#### **Atrato récit**

2014

HD video, 16 : 9, black and white, mute, 5'32", edition of 5 + 2 AP, French version  
Collection Centre National des Arts Plastiques - Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, France

**PALENQUEROS** - Five drums transformed by their performance into a travel



I asked a group of artisans depository of traditionnal knowledges from the Dordogne region in southwestern France to read into the Palenque culture in order to make two sets of five traditional Palenqueros drums. Echoing the way the cutters “read” hides, I draw the history of the Palenqueros on the parchments.

The Palenqueros are the descendants of groups of runaway slaves that settled in rebel territories in South America. These communities have survived, reasserting their culture through their drums, which were originally Bantu - an african people - and thus already once adapted.

By asking to those French artisans to make these Palenqueros drums I reproduced an already existing protocol and followed the cartographic logic of the historical past of these objects.

Indeed the Dordogne region was one of the main supplier in raw materials for the colonial galleons and the port city of Bordeaux was at the heart of the 18th century black slave trade. Moreover, Palenqueros are the descandants of groups of runaways slaves and many of the Bantu were sold into slavery.

Asking artisans from the Dordogne region to make Palenqueros drums meant to be played by Bantu musicians (who are today one of the largest groups seeking to immigrate to Europe) and to travel along the black-slave trade route is thereby a way of closing a “loop” of human imigration and cultural intermingling.





Tanners from the leatherworkshops prepared the raw skins into parchments according to the traditional technic the colonists used to prepare hides on which they would draw their cartographies. On those skins I transposed the history of the palenqueros.

To stretch the drums heads, craftsmen handmade similar hemp ropes as the ones they used to use for galleons sails rigging. The bodies of the drums are made of chestnut staves, as the ones that were originally used to transport merchandises.

As the Bantu musicians will have to adapt their beats and read into the codes and conventions of the Palenque music - the same way the French artisans had to read into the colonial history as well as the Palenque craftsmanship in order to make these drums - they are not only to be considered as an artistic creation meant to be exhibited, but also as instruments and objects of study.



**Palenqueros / Un Pechiche para Benkos**

2015

HD video 16 : 9, sound, color, 5'16"

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Palenqueros / Tambour Quitambre hembra joué par Abdallaye**

2013

HD video 16 : 9, sound, color, 6'58"

Unique piece





**Participated to the research and manufacturing :** the artisans of the Maroquinerie Nontronnaise, the artisans “cordeliers” from Varaigne, the “mérandier” Marcel Camus, the tanners from Bodin-Joyeux, the cabinetmaker Jean Christophe Dubuisson, the cutler Sébastien de LaVille, the luthier Philippe Mousnier.

**Helped on site :** the Centre Permanent d’Initiatives pour l’Environnement, the Pôle expérimental des métiers d’art of Nontron and the Périgord Vert, the Maroquinerie Nontronnaise, Laure Dangla from the Parc naturel régional Périgord-Limousin.

**Production :** Fondation d’Entreprise Hermès.

**Palenqueros, Pechiche drum, Tambora drum, Yamaro drum, Quitambre macho drum, Quitambre hembra drum**

2013

With the Fondation d’Entreprise Hermès

2 sets of 5 drums

Tanned leather in parchment, crafted hemp rope, chestnut staves, burnt oak wedges

Variable dimensions

Unique pieces

Pictures Tadzio © Fondation d’Entreprise Hermès

Production Fondation d’Entreprise Hermès

Collection Fondation Hermès

**ZURATOQUE** - Ten testimonies on jute yarn bags, transformed into shoes by ten families forced to move by the violent armed conflict in Colombia

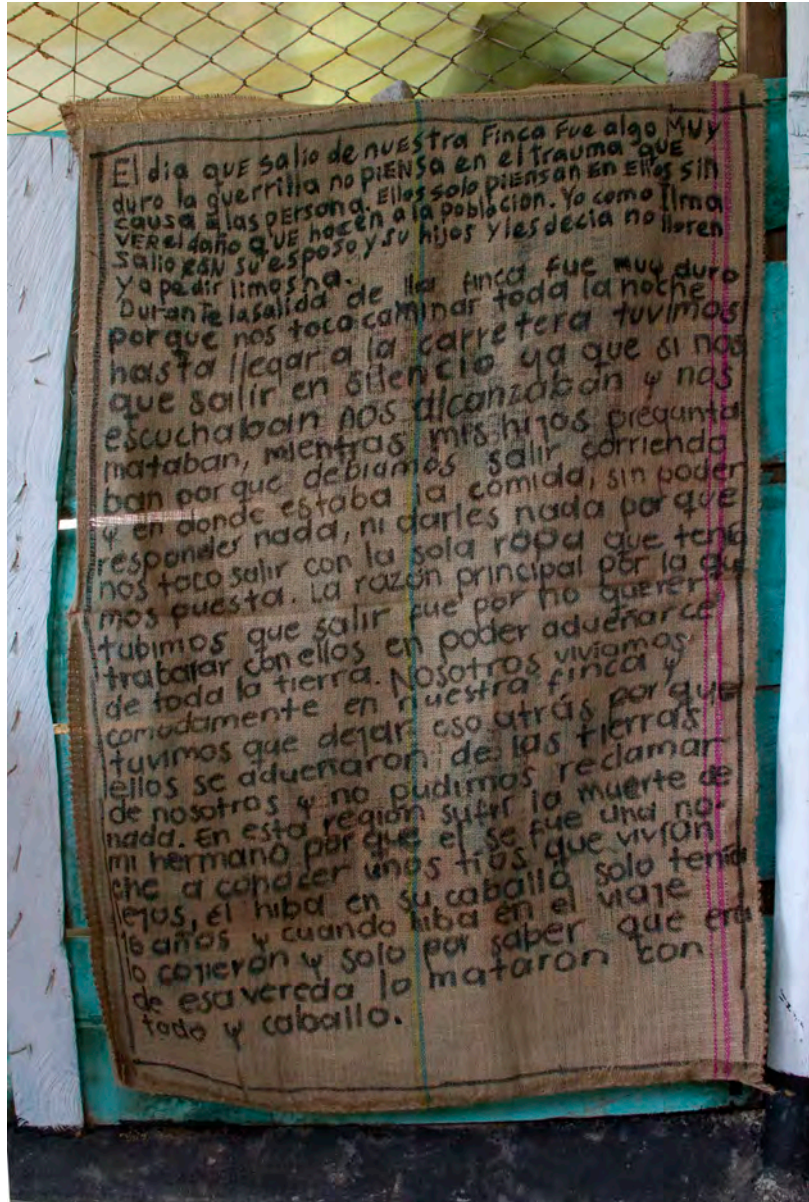


Zuratoque, a shantytown in the Santander region of Colombia, is the subject of this project. Some 350 families live there, most of them displaced by armed conflicts in the countryside. This work is the result of our encounter.

Ten of their testimonies are exhibited: life-size photographs of a jute bag onto which the story of a family who had to flee the countryside is written. I asked each family to fray the jute bag and use the resulting yarns to weave a pair of "alpargatas" - traditional sandals. Each piece is titled after the surname of the person who weaved his or her story into a pair of sandals.

Two of the accounts were sung, they are thus presented orally.





*Costal #4, ASINTA ROJAS Family*

The day we had to leave our house was a really tough day. The guerilla does not think of the trauma they cause, they only think of themselves and don't take into account the damages they cause to the population. I, Ilma, went out of the house with my husband and my children telling them not to cry. We ended up begging for alms.

When we had to leave our farm it was really harsh because we had to walk all night long to reach a road. We had to remain silent while fleeing because if they had heard us, they would have caught up with us and killed us. Meanwhile, my children were asking why we had to run away and if we had food. But we couldn't answer anything nor feed them anything as we had to leave leaving everything behind but the clothes we were wearing.

The main reason we had to flee for is that we didn't want to work with them so they could seize our land. We used to live modestly in our farm but we had to leave everything behind without being able to claim anything.

In this same region I also had to endure the death of my brother who went by horse one night to visit members of our family who live far away. He was only 16. They caught him during his trip and killed him and his horse for the sole reason that he came from our village.

Translation by the artist

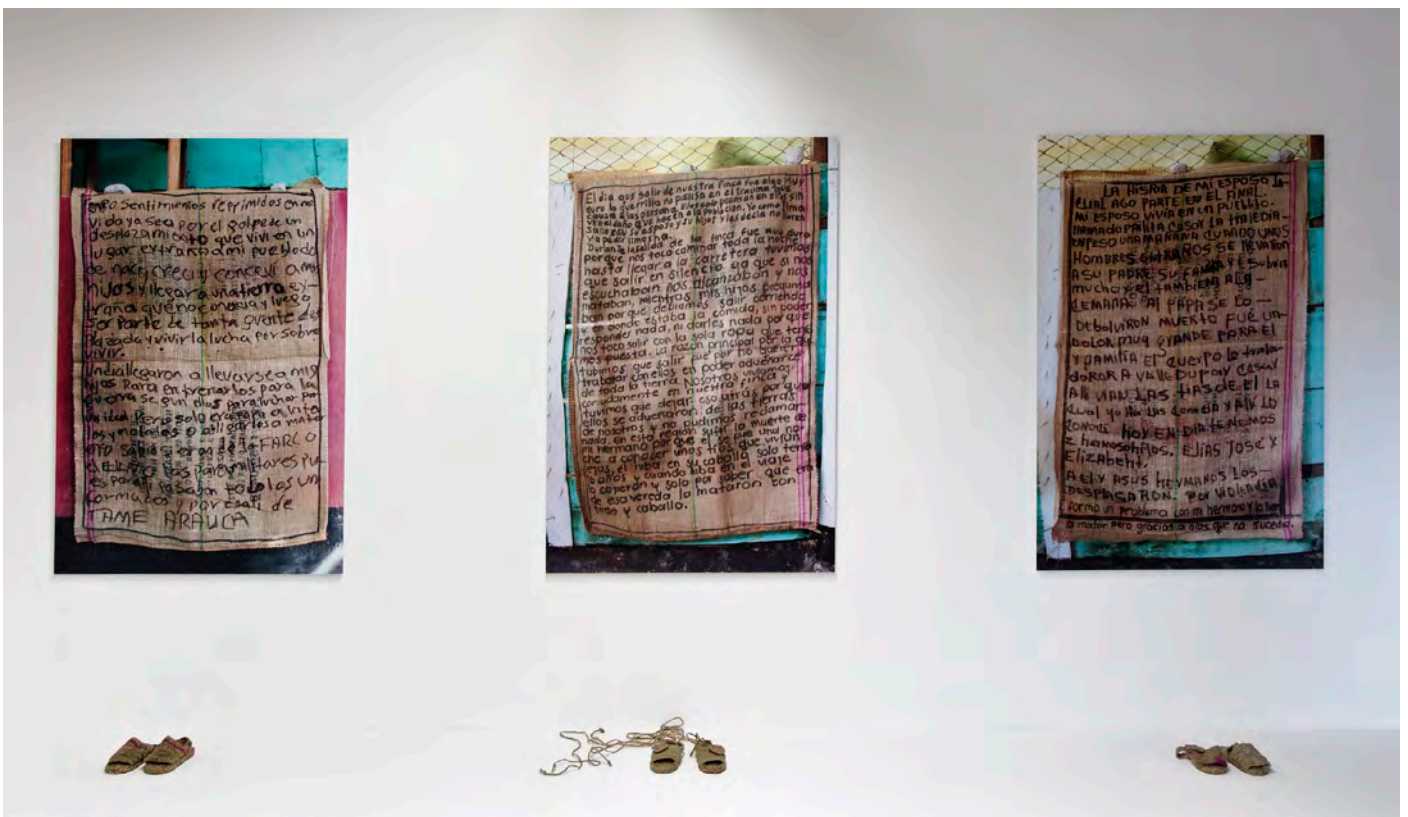


**Gave their testimonies and made the alpargatas :** Alza Medina Family, Russo Cañas Family, Castellanos Family, Asinta Roja Family, Lena Barrios Family, Sanjuan Family, Jubinao Family, Galeano Carrillo Family, Sanabria Leguizamo Family, Cortes Cortes Family.

**Helped to realise the capacitations :** Ipes organism, Coopertative Vivienda&Entorno, Daria Quiñones Preciado and the fondation Fundarte, my siblings Sara y Daniel.

**Sung their testimonies :** Hugoberto Sanabria Leguizamo, Orlando Cortes Cortes.





## Alpargatas de Zuratoque

2013

10 pairs of handwoven sandals made of jute bag yarns  
10 digital color photographic edition on Classic RC paper, mat plastic coating glued on a 2mm Dibond slab,  
aluminum frame on CC, 150 x 100 cm each

Unique pieces

2 sung accounts - 2'59" et 2'21", limited edition

Modules Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint-Laurent

Photo © Aurélien Mole

Production Palais de Tokyo

Discovery Prize of the Amis du Palais de Tokyo 2012

Collection Fonds Municipal d'Art Contemporain de la Ville de Paris, France

**ARQUITECTURAS DE LA MEMORIA - Landazuri**  
**ÉDITION LES AMIS DU PALAIS DE TOKYO / GDM...**



He did not pronounce a single word for years, but suddenly, when he became an old man, he woked up in night. He walked in the patio muttering to himself, to tell everything to himself. As if, as he realized he was old, he would better be fighting to remember all the things he wished he forgot all his life (so much so, he became mute for seventeen years), rather than this abyssal feeling of losing everything.

Excerpt of the Tale, translated by the artist





## ARQUITECTURAS DE LA MEMORIA

*Landázuri*

Con el sonido de la cascara de un huevo quebrándose comprime la hoja de un solo gesto entre sus dos nudos la lanza con un impulso que pretende enviarla miles de metros lejos, si no fuera porque lo hace contra el suelo, como queriendo que aquel ultimátum se quebrantara en mil pedacitos polvorientos, tal cual una porcelana que más bien que atravesara el suelo y desapareciera en el limbo del centro de la tierra... Pero en vez de eso rebota, con ligereza y un ruido opaco, contra el tapete (al caso tenía un tapete).

## ARQUITECTURAS DE LA MEMORIA

*Landázuri*

- “Don Joaquín, concéntrese. Vuelva a contarme qué fue lo que sucedió”. Ya llevaba varios minutos cayado. Sentí que se estaba hundiendo en las profundidades de su propia selva. Dejándome solo en aquella tiendita repleta de baratijas: cestas, cabuyas, unas cuantas verduras añejas y algunas herramientas para laborar el campo... el polvo crepitaba como chispitas buscando la ventana, deseando explotar al contacto con la luz.

Capítulo cuarto: Tres cruces negras – 23

### Arquitecturas de la memoria

2013

Gluebacked photography on aluminium  
Timber framing, american box, 40 x 60 cm  
Edition of 30 + 3 AP

Tale

Edition Les Amis du Palais de Tokyo / GDM...  
Collection Artothèque de Brest (France)

## LA JARRE



***Région of Oriental - Closed border between Morocco and Algeria.***

*July, 13th 2012, trough this traditional jar in which we made a hole at the bottom to use as a speaker, a song written with verses in Malhoun was sung towards Algeria.*

*The sound echoed, crossing the border.*

*Each strophe asked people from the other side to bring their cattle loaded with goods.*

*The poem was sung for around 5 minutes.*

*At the third, Algerian police arrived, but could not interfere.*

*Almost at the seventh minute, we left.*

*At the same moment, 2 young Algerians crossed the cliff to join us, salute us and then going back home as soon as they could.*

*From the 10th and the 15th minute, Morocco police came but noticed nothing.*

**Account, part of the piece**





On those two lands are two mountains and two roads that stand alongside with a confusing likeness. As a mirror and its reflection, those two lands, those two mountains and those two roads are separated by emptiness. And a 50 years old diplomatic conflict. However, everyday consumer goods cross clandestinely the border from one country to another.

**“Jarre” holder :** Abdennabi Ketouy and Bernard Guillot

**Singer :** Salima Abdelhak

**Photographer :** Julie Annabelle Schimel

**Testimony :** Bernard Guillot

**La Jarre**

2012

Photograph, 80 x 120 cm

Tale

HD video, testimony, 1'16"

Edition of 3 + 2 AP

**70 RUE CURIAL (IN THE CORRIDOR OF ENTRANCE) -**

The scar of a gesture made by the idleness of the youngsters of my block







The young drug dealers from my apartment block imperceptibly left this mark, only by leaning daily against the wall, one knee bended to rest the tread of their shoes on the vertical surface. They unintentionally left on the wall a black stain that runs on its whole lenght. It is the mark of their idleness. Of the passing of time.

**70 rue Curial (in the corridor of the entrance)**

2013

Photograph mounted on aluminium

80 x 370 cm

Unique piece + 1 AP

**PAYSAGE ARMENIEN** - Painted fresco painted with coffee on a colonial style house  
in the coffe zone of Armeina in Colombia



Armenia is, in Colombia, an area affected by an earthquake in 1999 and years of violent conflicts.

I painted a fresco on the facade of one of the last standing house with a colonial architecture. The fresco was inspired by a photographic document taken in 1915 of the first deportations implemented by the Ottoman government in Armenia, the country.

To paint this fresco I used macerated, grinded and boiled coffee beans. The resulting color, sepia, evokes aged documents. The view thus shown can be misleading: it might be seen as a panorama of this picturesque Colombian village. A panorama depicting a chapter of local history. This "counterfeit" or simulated mise en abyme aims to create a bound between and confront two times and places that never should have met.





**Paysage Arménien**

2013

Triptych, Digital color photography, wood frame, glass

67 x 100 cm each photo

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Document :** b&w photocopy stained with coffee, 21x29,7cm, unique piece

Armenian civilians walk into a prison near Mezireh under the surveillance of armed Ottoman soldiers. Kharpert, Ottoman empire, April 1915. Wallstein Verlag.

**Allowed me to paint on their house :** Zuluaga Valencia Family, La buenaventurera de cigarillos.

### **Paysage Arménien**

2013

Drawing, black and white photocopy stained with coffee

29,7 x 21 cm

Unique piece



**CAYUCO** - Sillage Oujda/Melilla, A boat disappears drawing a map



Marocco is crossed by a road that runs from the small city of Oujda on the (closed) border with Algeria, to Melilla, a spanish enclave and one of the last step in their travel toward Europe for clandestine immigrants.

Over time the noose is tightening around those travellers with on the one hand a hardened and more and more violent border and on the other hand a closed one on diplomatic grounds.

I dragged a plaster reproduction of a "Cayuco", a fishing boat often used by immigrants to cross the Mediterranean sea, from one border to another following the same path as migrants do. Through the contact with the soil or tarmac the sculpture wore smooth thus leaving behind a white track, the drawing of its own wake and a reminiscence of this trip toward the Gourougou mountain.

The road ends on an encounter. An encounter with all the migrants who ended up here, hiding and waiting for the "right moment" to cross. In the meantime, from this overhanging spot, they can look at Melilla and its barbed border.

This installation recounts this journey, the landscapes I went across and the people I met. The remainings of the plaster craft are also exhibited, as an evocation of their own shipwreck.



**Dedicated to :** All the migrants who died the day after we left the Sidi Mâafa clandestine camp. All the migrants still hiding there or in the Gourougou mountain. All the migrants who gave us a bit of their time and shared their experience. Their daily life is just getting harder and harder.













**Helped to push and drag the craft :** Abdennabi Ketouy, Jawad Embarki, Salah Eddine, Mohamed Abdezis, Marcos Avila Forero, and all the other persons I met during this journey...

**Directed by :** Marcos Avila Forero. **Photography by :** Anne-Charlotte Finel.

**Editing by :** Marcos Avila Forero, helped by : Anne-Charlotte Finel, Chloé Camois, Elena Ragnérès, Melocoton Films.

**Cartography and on site support :** Institut de journalisme Panos, Fondation Orient-Occident, Médecins Sans Frontières Oujda, Salah Eddine, Hicham Baraka.

**Production support :** Association Réseau d'Art A-48, Gaudet Vision, Fat-Cat Films. **Support in France :** Coordination Des Sans-Papiers 75, Coalition Européenne des Sans-Papiers, Sissoko Anzoumane, Mwa Camara Abdallaye.

**Cayuco - Sillage Oujda Melilla**

2012

HD video 16 : 9, color, sound, 55'

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

French and English version

Collection Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain en Aquitaine, France



**À TARAPOTO, UN MANATI** - Two Cocamas families revive a myth on the Amazone river



Puerto Nariño, is a municipality located on the shore of the Amazon River, at the crossroad of the Colombian, the Peruvian and the Brazilian borders. There I met families of the Cocama community who told me the story of the Manati, a sacred and almost extinct animal living in the freshwater habitats of the Amazon Basin. I draw my inspiration from those stories that the young generation tend to forget about, to revive them in this new social context.

Following the indications of an old sculptor, we carved the shape of this sacred animal in wood. I then asked a young taïta - a person initiated into the magical rituals - to travel along the river to the Tarapoto's lake on its back. There he left it adrift along the currents.

**Sailed on the Manati sculpture :** the « taïta » Maku Zaugury.

**Sculptors :** Don Ruperto Azaguary, Maku Zaugury, Marcos Avila Forero, young Cocamas artisans I met while looking for the Catagua tree.

**Came with us and gave us advices :** Azaguary Family, Zaugury Family.

**Directed by :** Marcos Avila Forero. **Photography by :** Carolina Andrade, Marcos Avila Forero. **Editing by :** Marcos Avila Forero. **Helped by :** Julie Courel, Monique Bonaldi. **Production support :** Fondation Omacha, Ambassade de France en Colombie, ENSBA, Expéditiones Sin Fronteras, Collectif La Pieuvre. **Writing support:** Vanessa Triadou, Fanny Didelon



**À Tarapoto, un Manati 1. The Travel**

2011

Video installation HD, color, sound, 18'38"

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Multimedia Prize of the Fondations des Beaux Arts 2011, Loop Award 2014

Collection Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain PACA, France





**À Tarapoto, un Manati 2. The Testimony**

2011

Video installation HD, color, sound, 24'02"

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Multimedia Prize of the Fondations des Beaux Arts 2011, Loop Award 2014

Collection Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain PACA, France



**À Tarapoto, un Manati 3. The Construction**

2011

Video installation HD, color, sound, 26'47''

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

Multimedia Prize of the Fondations des Beaux Arts 2011, Loop Award 2014

Collection Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain PACA, France



**À SAN VICENTE, UN ENTRAÎNEMENT** - A commander says «burn!»  
and 18 guns draw a forest



During the guerrilla's trainings in the Colombian forest, the soldiers carve wood into the shape of a rifle with their machetes. They then train for months using those objects as guns and faking the sound of the bullets being shot with their mouth.

A recorder is hanged onto the wall that plays on a loop the sounds of one of those trainings. We can hear the guerrilleros shout: "BANG BANG ! RAT-A-TAT-TAT!", as well as their Major giving them the order to fire: "QUEMEN!" (translated by "BURN!" in English).

I comply with the command and burn the tip of eighteen rifles I carved out of wood with a machete, as would have done a guerrilla squad - that's to say eighteen soldiers. Afterwards I draw on the wall onto which is hanged the recorder my memories of the forest in which the training was recorded. To do so, I only use the burnt rifles holding them as a soldier would hold his.

Through this display, I bring together two different contexts thanks to the creative gesture they have in common. In both case the rifles are the main tools and can be considered as a creative gesture as they are individually sculpted out of a piece of wood.





**A San Vicente, Un Entraînement**

2010

Display on several days and installation

18 rifles made of carved wood, some partially burnt, unique pieces

Fresco painted with the burnt wood

Variable dimensions

Recorder and sound track

Limited edition



**LA BALSA MUÍSICA** - Five farmer families make a golden boat



I built this raft with the help of Tenjo villagers. We plaited the stems of corn plants we had harvested in a field cultivated according to the Muiscas traditions.

It is an exact replica of the Muisca Raft (Gold Museum, Bogota), an artistic figure of pre-Colombian gold votive, drafted by the Muisca culture around 600-1600. The piece refers to the ceremony of the legend of El Dorado. A legend that fascinated explorers since the days of the Spanish Conquistadors and made its way into popular culture. A legend that caused multiple massacres and inspired talented artists, writers, film directors, ...

This figure aims to remove the mystique surrounding this myth by confronting us to the economic reality of a culture whose main and sometimes only means of survival - whose "El Dorado", so to speak - derives from the corn cultivation.



**Remerciements :** La Guaïca members and their families.





*« This is the story of a great confusion. When the Spanish came in this region, they heard the stories of Muisca. The elders told about a sacred place where the Zipa made an offering to the Golden (El Dorado) on a boat... The Spanish actually looked for what they would understand : Gold. But El Dorado referred only to the corn's golden color ».*

**Edilberto Mendoza.**

**La Balsa Muísca**

2011

Ephemeral sculpture, corn plants, bamboo carrier  
370 x 200 cm

**ESTIBAS** - Transport pallets draw a mosaic with their sawdust







Shapes and forms line up on the ground. They are made out of the sawdust produced while carving out the pallets laying in the background. These pallets not only furnished the raw material of this installation, they are also the designed tool to shape it and reproduce it as they serve as stencils.

I got inspired by the wavering nature of pallets, at once hand-crafted and industrial object, to divert its function. Usually used as a support to carry heavy material(s), they become for this installation an information medium that conveys raw materials and their origin.

Indeed the patterns carved out of the pallets are all inspired by documents such as press photographs or botanical engraving from the colonial period. They each illustrate a different aspect or product of the rural economy, through a stylized representation.







**Estibas**

2010

Installation

EPAL pallet (120 x 80 cm), sawdust from the carved pallets

Variable dimensions

Unique pieces

## LA SUCCURSAL DEL PARAISO

*We call it «The Heaven's Annexe» because it's at once the most beautiful place in the world and where one is the closest to death»*

**Popular tale**



We only see the empty back of a truck. The violent tremors give us a slight glimpse of an off-camera: a dusty country road, or the shifting shadow of the trailer.

At the bottom of the frame a text scrolls. It's a letter and the writer is telling the story of his village. A village he can't go back to because of an armed conflict.

This video sets us in a suspended space, an in between leaving room for our imagination to fill in. We are given no information about the place the writer is writing from or about. Neither do we know whether the writer took place in the truck or not. It is up to us to imagine whether the truck is going to or coming from the region we are reading about. It is up to us to imagine whether the writer will go back there or not.





**La Succursal del Paraiso**

2010

Video, colour, sound, 5'

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

**BANANOS** - History written with scars



Several banana skins are lying on the floor, having been thrown there by the visitors. The black oxidization caused by the contact of the perishing fruits with the air gradually brings out engraved texts, until it covers the whole skin and thus phases the texts out.

This project is a reflection about the existence - or non-existence - of history through its transcription. The fleeting texts we are given to read are declassified American reports from the 40's as well as various accounts from local farmers. One way or another, all those memos have to do with the South American banana industry. They are thus unveiling, 50 years later, the human cost of those "banana republics".





**Bananos**

2010

Ephemeral installation, bananas, 3 photographs, 67 x 50 cm

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

**CANOA N°1**



Someone is building a boat out of cardboard boxes at sunshine on an empty beach. Once his work is completed, he drags his raft into the sea and vanishes into the dark. The video subtly captures the action while the sound of the waves intensify.





**Canoa ° 1**

2007

DV-PAL video, colour, sound, 6'30"

Edition of 5 + 2 AP

## QUENAS



The "Quena" is the traditional flute of the Andes. Traditionally made of bamboo or wood, its structure is really basic: a notch on one end, six finger holes and one thumb hole.

I carved quenás directly on bamboo's stems in the botanical garden of the Château de Malmaison so they would be both tools and vegetable able to engender interactions between the bystanders and the surrounding area.

The Château de Malmaison belonged to Joséphine de Beauharnais, empress and first spouse of Napoleon Bonaparte. It is well-known for its botanical collection.





**Quenas**

2007

In-situ display : carved bamboos, 2 photographs

67 x 50 cm each

Edition of 5 + 2 AP



**Quenas**  
2007

In-situ display : carved bamboos, 2 photographs  
67 x 50 cm each  
Edition of 5 + 2 AP