

---

E X T R A G A L E R Í A

---



ADÁN  
VALLECILLO

---





**ADÁN VALLECILLO**



**ADÁN VALLECILLO**  
1977, Danli, Honduras



---

Adán Vallecillo is a multidisciplinary Honduran artist academically trained in Art and Sociology in Honduras and Puerto Rico.

The methodology of his artistic practice is polyhedral and is nourished by carrying out in-house research projects that combine sociology and visualization. From a socio-aesthetic commitment, Vallecillo highlights a multiplicity of strategies that enhance and redefine the materials, actions and objects used in his works. He has participated in dozens of collective and individual exhibitions in America, Europe and Asia.

He has also participated in international Biennials such as: Cuenca, Ecuador 2022, FEMSA Biennial, Mexico 2020, Cuenca 2016, Mercosur 2015, Montevideo, 2014, Venice 2011, Central American 2010, Havana 2009.

He has participated in residences such as: Flora Ars + natura Bogotá 2018, LARA Panamá 2017, Beta Local, San Juan, Puerto Rico 2016, illy SustainArt, Venice, Italy, 2013 World Award, among others. His work can be found in the following collections: Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona, Bronx Museum, New York, Daros Latin America, Zurich, CIFO, Miami, Florida, Sayago and Pardón, Los Angeles, CA, Teorética, San José, Costa Rica, Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Collection, New York- Caracas, MoLaa Museum of Latin American Art, California, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, San José, Costa Rica, Saxo Bank, Denmark, LARA, Singapore, among others.

Adán received the Mid-Career Artists Award 2020 from CIFO, USA.

---



# **BODY OF WORK**

---

# PRIMAVERA SILENCIOSA

## Galería Luciana Brito, Sao Paulo, Brasil

### 2023

---

“Nuestra madre, la Tierra, nos regala el oxígeno, nos arrulla para dormir, nos despierta por la mañana con el sol, deja que los pájaros canten, que las corrientes y las brisas se muevan, crea este mundo maravilloso para compartir...”  
— Ailton Krenak<sup>1</sup>

Primavera Silenciosa is the result of a curatorial research developed over eight years in places with a high indigenous population, starting in Guatemala—where more than 60% of the population is indigenous and home to an exceptional variety of ethnic groups—and expanding to the diverse territories and cultures of the continent. The title of the exhibition is inspired by Rachel Carson’s book of the same name, published in 1962, which adopts a delicate and poetic allegory to warn of the tragic results of an environment devastated by pollution (especially from the chemical industry): the story foresees a future in which birds will no longer sing. From the perspective of Western thought, i.e., of European or Anglo-American origin, the book by the American biologist represented the beginning of a concern for environmental impact at a time when the term had not even been coined, which was very innovative for the time. However, considering other frameworks of thought, it is clear how much the preservation of the environment has been a reality among indigenous peoples for centuries, both in the Americas and elsewhere. It is perspectives of this kind that the exhibition proposes to center.

Despite being so varied, the many indigenous ways of life share an intrinsic connection with their respective land—their ecosystem. In them, coexistence is a fundamental component, through the so-called cosmovisions: a term widely recognized in the context of indigenous cultures that synthesizes the understanding of the environment as a non-hierarchical connection with human beings. From these worldviews emerge ways of relating to nature and spirituality, where rituals and festivities structure the lives of entire communities, all intimately integrated with the environments to which they belong. Ancestral indigenous traditions have resisted throughout Abya Yala<sup>2</sup> (America), transmitting these cosmovisions for centuries through the most diverse practices of living. In them, resistance to time is guaranteed to a large extent by the practices of preservation of space.

Comparing indigenous worldviews with the forms of life that dominate the planet today reveals an obvious contrast: in short, it is a matter of the difference between human beings being part of nature or its exploiter<sup>3</sup>. In response to the second option, today the signs of destruction are undeniable: the polar ice caps are melting, sea levels are rising and forests are burning all over the world. In the face of such destruction, a return to non-exploitative practices is urgently needed. Scientists and academic thinkers, in their urgent calls to address the environmental crisis, now

reaffirm and echo proposals that were always in the mouths and practice of indigenous communities around the world—if only we had wanted to listen. We are in the Anthropocene, and the so-called end of the world of which Ailton Krenak speaks is not far away, but we humans consider ourselves the center of the universe and do not remember the words of two thinkers that resonate to this day: Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his saying that “the world began without man and will end without him”, makes us think about the vulnerability in which we live; and the clear scientific position of astronomer Carl Sagan, who posited that “extinction is the rule”. Survival is the exception”.

It is against this background that Primavera Silenciosa takes shape: the exhibition is articulated in three axes, a central one that addresses the various ways in which the artists talk about sacred matters, preservation, regeneration, environmental impact, chaos and disasters, while the oneiric is present as a way of seeing the invisible, as well as the diverse worldviews of the continent. Here, the knowledge transmitted orally and from generation to generation through practice finds in art a form of manifestation. Due to the context of their experiences, indigenous artists in Latin America tend to develop works with a remarkable symbolic density, and their research reveals, in aesthetic expressions, components of extreme historical importance in terms of the record of their ancestry and their relationships with the environment. The second axis addresses issues of exoticization, racialization, silencing and attempted extermination of indigenous people and, along with them, their worldviews and knowledge so intimately linked to nature. Finally, another axis deals with land extractivism, water privatization, diseases, garbage accumulation and recycling, and industrialization, all products of the Capitalocene, which Andreas Malm describes as “the geology not of humanity, but of capital accumulation”, which is the main cause of the issues of the environmental crisis.

The exhibition builds on indigenous perspectives and extends beyond them, proposing the coexistence of approaches that, whether indigenous or not, have at their core creative processes that open space for a relationship of listening and contemplation of nature. In them, the celebration of plurality leaves room for a critical vision, and for the strengthening of ways of understanding and inhabiting the world that relate, in a healthier and more sustainable way, with the environment that surrounds them. Thus, the exhibition proposes to sharpen the senses to hear, see and feel ways of relating to the world that stem from ancestral knowledge, yet are often silenced. It invites us to reflect on this silencing, as the overwhelming Capitalocene and racial extermination.

Although the artistic expressions presented in Primavera Silenciosa span a wide geographic scope in Latin America, the works form a unit by carrying with them an important common element: the focus on the specificities of their local contexts. The works presented here are based on traditions of intrinsic connection to the spaces to which they belong and with which they coexist, a factor that drastically differentiates them from the traditionally Western culture of standardization and domination. Thus, Primavera Silenciosa brings together artistic expressions produced by artists from diverse communities, and the celebration of plurality, which arises from this specificity (whether of a place, a people, or an element

of a people's cultural identity), can be appreciated in various works in the exhibition.

The paintings of Paula Nicho (Maya Kakchiquel) and Diego Isaías Hernández (Maya Tz'utujil), both from Guatemala, carry with them the particularities of their local landscapes. Their mountains, rivers, textile patterns and agriculture, and even the collective imagination of their peoples—Nicho, approaching her works in a more dreamlike manner, portrays her dreams of being a flying woman and covering the hills of the Guatemalan highlands with looms. On the other hand, Hernández's depictions are infused with apocalyptic visions of environmental disasters, many of them childhood memories, such as the 1972 earthquake in Guatemala and the recent Hurricane Agatha in 2022. Tz'aqaat, a duo composed by Cheen Cortéz and Manuel Chavajay (Maya Tz'utujil), presents a video that retells Cheen's recurring dream where she encounters the goddess of weavers. This makes present what Karen Shiratori suggested in a beautiful synthesis about the dream life of Amerindian peoples: the dream is conceived as an event—it is not about symbolism or representation, things really happen, the vital image (utupë) of people shifts to another plane.

In the quest to find solutions to the current environmental crisis, an invitation is made to observe what and who have always been there, albeit silently or silenced. An invitation to look more consciously at what surrounds us: in nature's cycle, the ability to adapt, resurface and regenerate has always been present. Spring itself is there to remind us of this in the simplest of ways. In this context, the work Hummingbird by artist Donna Conlon (Panama) highlights the theme with grace: a hummingbird is viewed from very, very close and is embraced by a human hand that holds it, but does not move during the entire video, until the bird, initially without apparent vital activity, comes back to life and takes flight. With a similar macro vision for small living creatures, Rochelle Costi's (Brazil) videos reveal a vision of the exercises performed by the artist in a process of searching for connection with her environment during the period of isolation experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, Manuel Chavajay portrays the many atmospheric and energetic differences of the same landscape he has experienced since birth, and embroiders in his paintings the moons that appear in his dreams. Manuel's deep sense of belonging to his territory is crucial in his life, just as for Traces of Diogenes, his body's connection to non-human biomes is indispensable in the quest for healing from Mother Earth. "Nature is all we need to save the world," said Henry Thoreau, and artists like Rastros de Diógenes highlight its importance through their performances and artistic actions, as well as in their educational project Terreiro Afetivo.

While most of the works address themes related to ecology as well as worldviews, the exhibition is also concerned with presenting key works for the integration of indigenous worldviews through a more critical approach to the historical events of white supremacy and extermination of the race, while at the same time highlighting exoticization and self-exoticization. In this context, the Poyón Collection, by brothers Angel and Fernando Poyón (Maya Kakchiquel), assembles a large number of objects loaded with elements of identity specific to their places of origin. These objects, when exhibited as if they were part of a museum collection, invite us to reflect on the active efforts that lead to the preservation or destruction

of cultural heritages, as well as possible phenomena of trivialization and appropriation of these cultures. Another artist, Marilyn Boror Bor (Maya Kakchiquel), enters the scene to reinforce the question of identity: her work *Edicto Cambio de Nombre* details the exchange of indigenous names for European names, while a process of mourning is represented in the gallery through the tombstones of people who symbolically ceased to exist. And finally, Paz Errázuriz (Chile) traveled to the tip of the American continent to find the few Kawéskar survivors, photograph them and leave her image as a testimony of the abominable genocidal exterminations of all the nomadic indigenous peoples of southern Chile after 1877. Through these portraits, she shows that the knowledge and understanding of the southern territory they inhabited was also lost with them.

While the current condition of the world makes evident the importance of returning to indigenous ways of thinking and living, it is also important to consider the risks of exploitative and extractive practices vis-à-vis these communities. Considering how indigenous artists are represented and positioned in the context of the visual arts is therefore fundamental. In this way, works that explore issues concerning indigenous identity, as well as their various forms of cultural appropriation, are carefully introduced in this exhibition to highlight a deeper reflection. In this sense, both the Poyón brothers and Marilyn Boror present a plot twist: in the collection, many objects show a degree of cultural distortion and appropriation. It is proposed, therefore, to reflect not only on what indigenous perspectives offer, but also on how they can be incorporated in a non-indigenous cultural context. What then can be constructed from this exchange, as well as from the latest indigenous developments towards processes of reparation and/or reconciliation? How to learn from, be inspired by, or incorporate these practices without slipping into the trap, well-known since Brazil has been Brazil, of feigning the discovery of what has been there from the beginning?

We are at a time when the power of capital and nature are forced to strike up a dialogue in order to survive. Human beings, whom Bruno Latour called “arrogant slaves of the empire of transcendence,” have already exploited the Earth to a point of no return. There is no turning back from the extinction of humanity. And it is important to note that we are not talking about the planet itself. Nature has an incredibly fast regenerative capacity, and a great proof of that was during 2020 and 2021, when humanity was in confinement during the Covid-19 pandemic: animals started to regain their territories, the waters of the seas and rivers were cleaned, air pollution levels decreased. The creation of the “Capitalocene” as a concept was used to “emphasize that the growing ecosystemic devastations should not be attributed to the human species, but to capitalism”.

From this point of reflection, Héctor Zamora (Mexico) addresses social constructs and their relationship with urban construction. In the video presented, *Nas Coxas*, tiles made on human thighs carry the uniqueness of the craft and the shape of the body that was its support, while criticizing the processes of industrialization that have impacted many areas of society and the environment.

Donna Conlon and Jonathan Harker (Panama) address the striking accumulation of glass in a recycling plant. Although there is a positive

aspect to recycling, we cannot overlook the evidence in relation to the indiscriminate accumulation of waste that we, humans, generate daily. While considering this, we can also reflect on the massive waste that the capitalist world produces to continue developing our consumerist society. In the site-specific work by Adán Vallecillo (Honduras), who joins Harker and Conlon in their critique of consumerism and capitalism, the artist captures pigments extracted from the locality in portable and collectible discs, made from what many tend to ignore in their surroundings and which constitutes a serious environmental problem: garbage. He also presents the video *Bonanzas Efímeras*, the documentation of a performance that addresses mineral extractivism and the presence of contaminant heavy metals, such as mercury and cyanide, which cause skin diseases, among others. The paintings used as carpets in this performative action refer to the layers of the earth and its fragility in terms of ecosystemic imbalances. The use of painted and superimposed patches in the construction of the works is a metaphor for the constant need for repairs in the Latin American territory, where mining exploits the territory without any regard for environmental impact standards. The same theme worked by Naomi Rincón Gallardo brings us closer to the encounter with the end of life, through the pre-Hispanic mortuary song *Tzocuicatl* and fragments of bodies found in infertile lands.

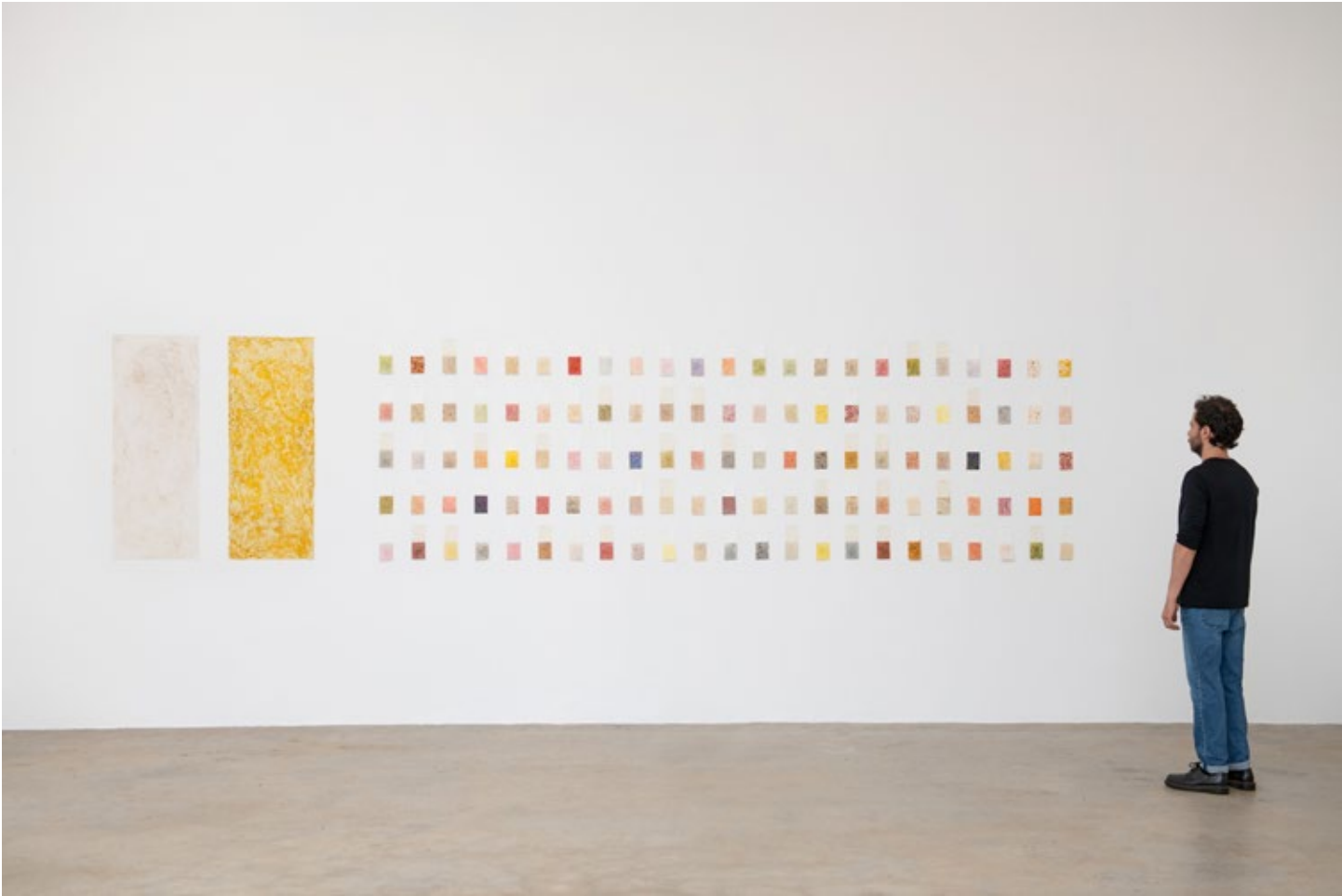
Throughout the works in the exhibition, the awareness-raising exercises proposed by *Primavera Silenciosa* reveal how much coexistence can allow: do we see ourselves as the center of the world or as part of a larger whole? When we manage to hear, see and feel the whole of the world more vividly, we can identify the importance that lies in every gesture, in every trace left by every being. At this point, the question is: do we see ourselves as simply one among billions, with a limited capacity for action, or, on the other hand, do we embrace our capacity for impact as part of a collective and face the power of our own transformative actions?

— Alexia Tala, Agosto 2023













---

Pintura Mural  
2023

---

Organic fruit pigments sourced from local markets on paper and wall  
Varying measurements

---

---

# INJERTOS

## Galería Extra

### 2023

---

The Injertos project, commissioned to Adán Vallecillo for the XIV FEMSA Biennial 2020, and now presented at Galería Extra, is based on the video *El Fuerte, El Aventurero y La Loca*, filmed in avocado plantations and industrial processing plants in Michoacán, Mexico. The images coexist with a narration in Purépecha that does not correspond to what is illustrated in the video. The oral narration narrates the life of Rudolph Hass and how he developed and patented the Hass avocado, a product of great international demand that continues to be cultivated at the expense of other endemic species.

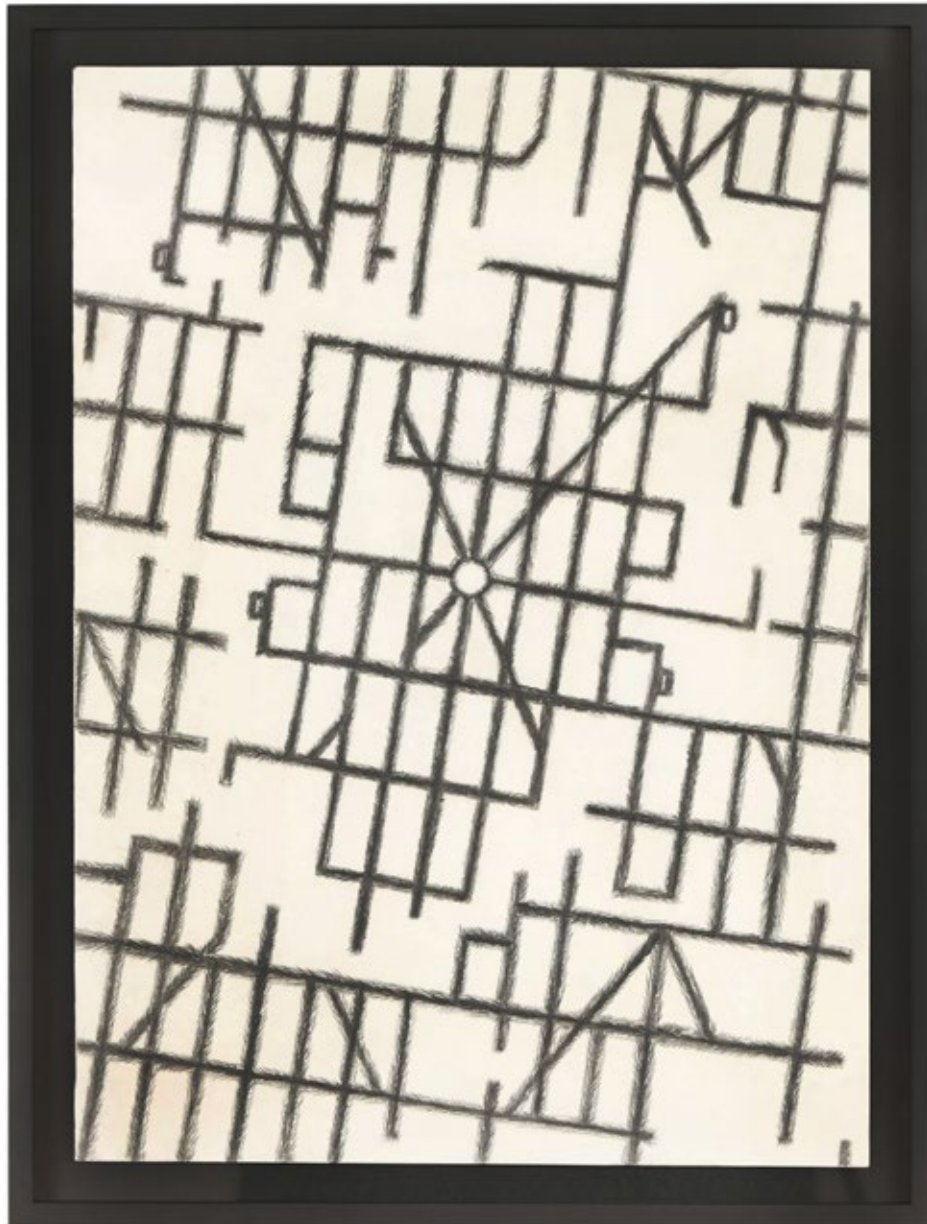
This process of fierce industrialization is explored by Vallecillo through graphite drawings or wall pieces such as *Reticulares Cifrados*, made of or deriving from plastic grids from avocado storage boxes - most of which would otherwise end up as industrial waste.

Like in previous projects by the artist, in *Reticulares Cifrados* he resorts to industrial objects that lend themselves to the articulation of abstract solutions. Each piece is a non-figurative composition, and at the same time, it is a documentation of contemporary industrial entropy. In this way, it presents a different way of understanding realism in addition to focusing on the plastic integration of the works with the architecture of the space.

Finally, *Injertos* includes 3 sculptures made with other objects from the avocado production cycle: *Bólido Conjuero*, *Danaus Plexippus* ( *Mariposa Monarca*) and *Encapuchados*. The latter features 2 industrial avocado cleaning brushes, half-covered with a pair of socks printed with the fruit. The piece not only reveals the scope of the consumer culture around the avocado that appears in different merchandise, but also evokes certain social issues surrounding its cultivation.

— Daniel Usabiaga, Curador





---

Entropía Industrial No. 3  
2023

---

Graphite on 250 g cotton paper  
53.5 cm x 74 cm

---







---

Danaus Plexippus (Mariposa Monarca)  
2023

---

Plastic nets, plastic bags and avocado crates  
30 cm x 40 cm x 46 cm

---



---

Encapuchados  
2020

---

Avocado cleaning brushes and socks  
28 cm x 33 cm c/u

---







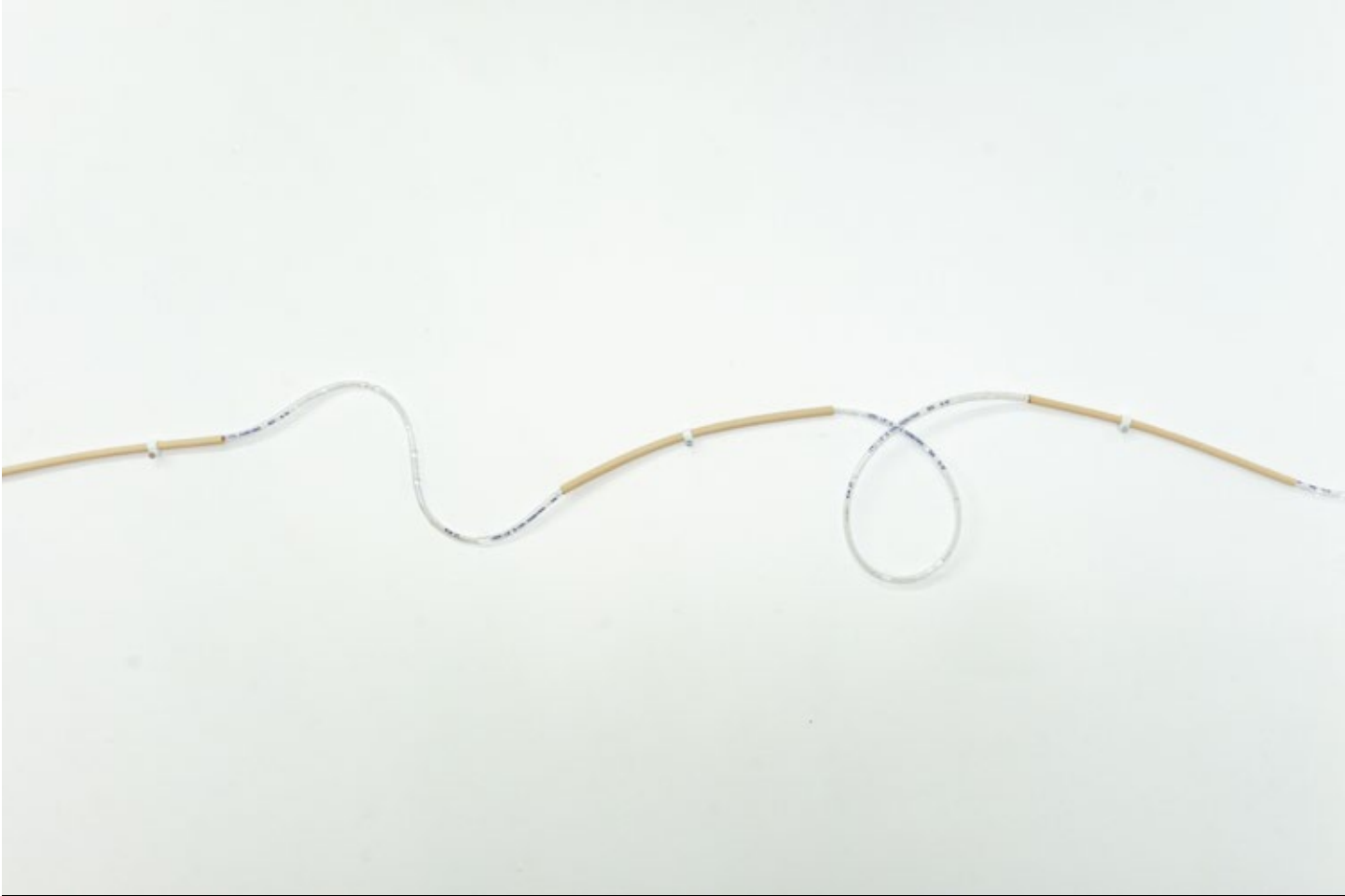
---

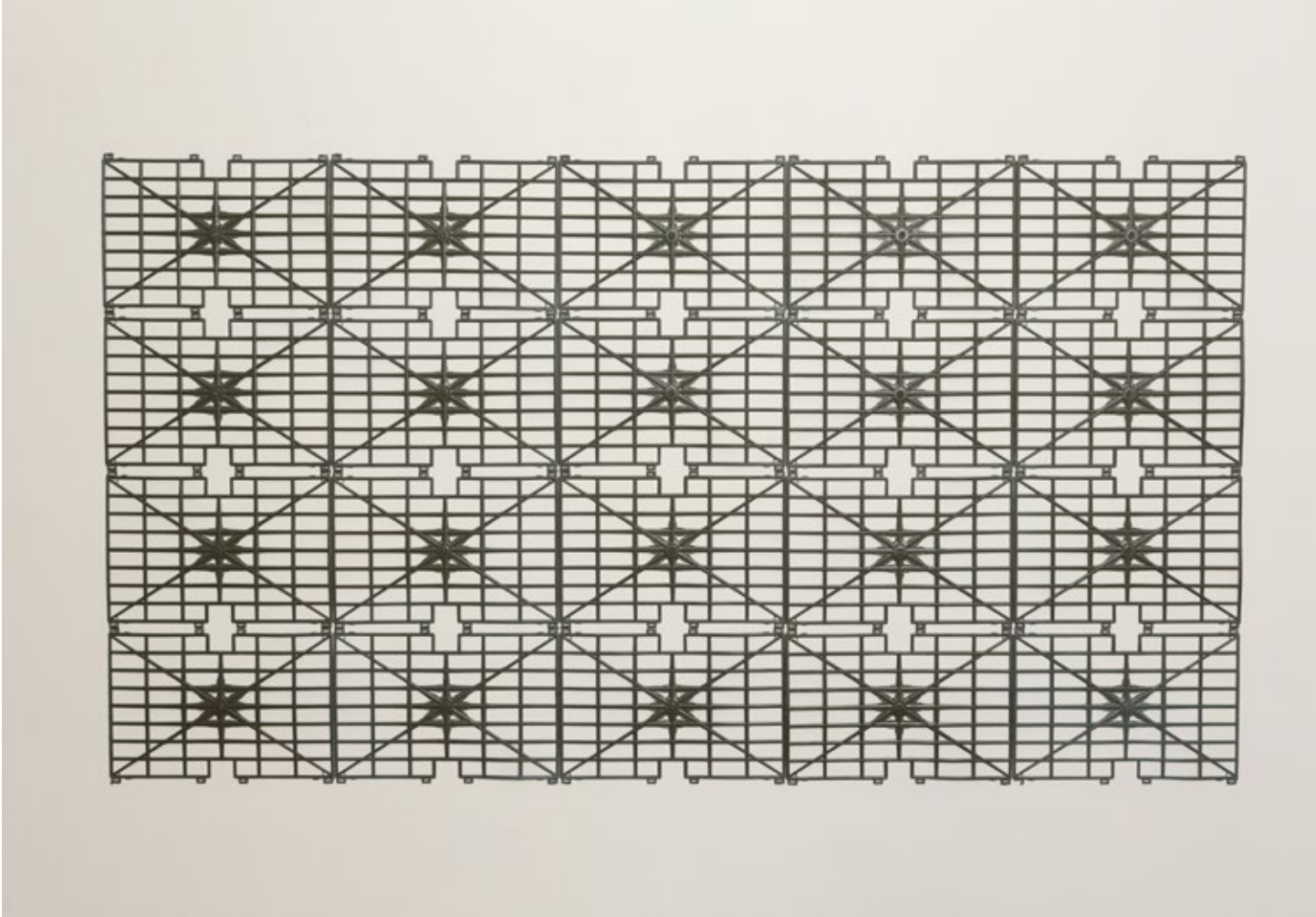
Tacámbaro  
2023

---

Plastic irrigation hose and metal, plastic staples, and straws made from avocado seeds  
Variable measurements

---





---

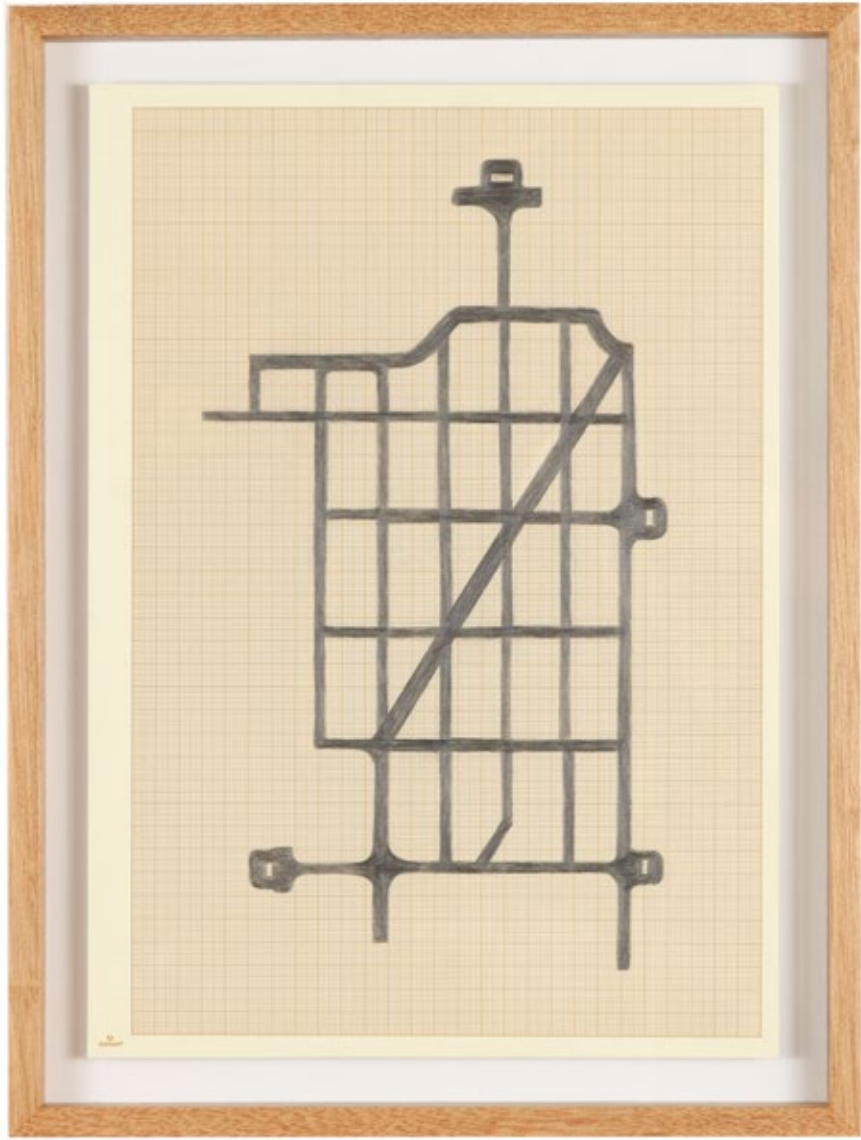
Reticular Cifrado I  
2020

---

Plastic netting sourced from avocado crates  
145 cm x 215 cm

---





---

Trivial 10  
2023

---

Graphite on Canson graph paper  
29.7 x 42 cm

---



---

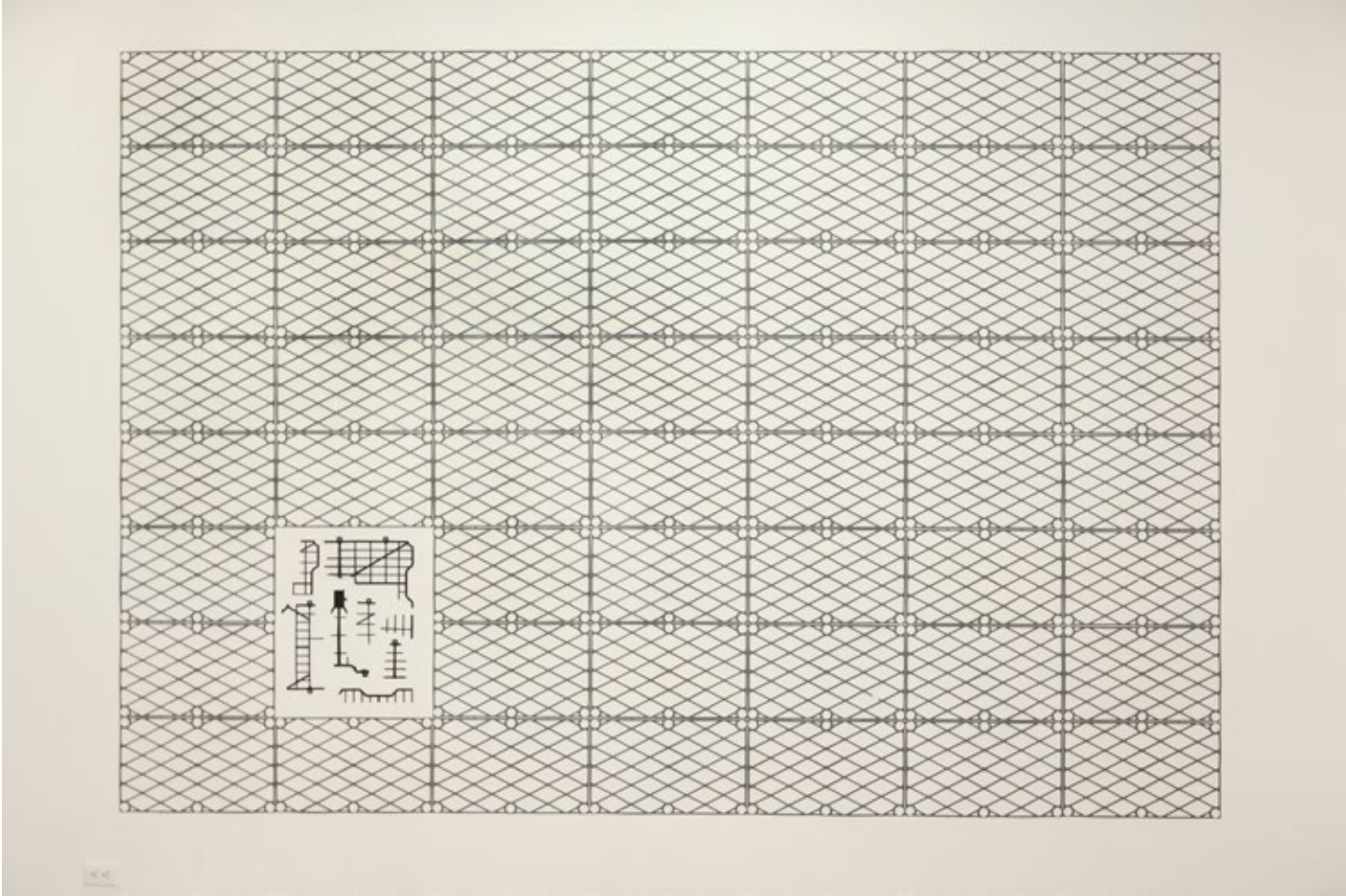
Bólide Conjuro  
2023

---

Plastic bag and pine needles  
26 cm x 50 cm  
Ed. 3 + 1 P.A.

---





---

Reticular Cifrado II  
2020

---

Plastic netting sourced from avocado crates  
243 cm x 353 cm

---

---

# COLECCIÓN CIFO

## Museo de Arte contemporáneo, Monterrey, México

### 2023

---

Through trade and colonization, Chocolate has become a marker of identity in countries such as Switzerland, allowing its massive consumption to spread around the world. It is important to note, however, that the use and domestication of cocoa plants, and the invention of chocolate itself, has deep seated origins in Mayan civilizations, making chocolate economically and socio-culturally essential for the people of Mesoamerica.

Filograma introduces a new field of research in my creative process about the relationship between raw and manufactured materials. The focus of attention has been cacao and its cycle of production, circulation, and consumption.

It is a mural of 740 clay tiles generated from the industrial design of the classic chocolate bars, which have been distributed in the form of a large mat and painted with a pure chocolate bath. I am interested in the ancestral relationship between both materials (clay and chocolate) to ironically reveal the pre-Columbian background of these elements. That is why I use geometric forms of manufactured products, which popularly appear detached from their historical and socio-cultural implications.

The project stems from a cross-cultural journey from Mesoamerica, Ecuador, and Switzerland while referring to an important discovery of the oldest chocolate samples found to date. It was in the Sula Valley, in northern Honduras, and is estimated to date back to 2,500 or 3,000 years BC.

How did we own and experience this exchange of goods?

A Theobroma Cacao bean hides a transnational web of multiedged human relationships. Therefore, I am interested in how the unequal transaction of world trade and its various uses appears dissociated from the cocoa plants, which have opened up a whole cultural universe for us since ancient times and that continues to renew itself to this day.

In that sense, the Brownies Monterrey installation extends those historical explorations of cacao to another in-situ project produced for the CIFO show.

It is a work composed of 48 blocks of ashlar stone, which imitate the popular brownies. These stones, widely used since colonial times in the northern city of Monterrey, Mexico, are coated with gourmet chocolate and each one has been placed on its respective waxed paper.

The installation highlights the psychotropic combination of chocolate so present in contemporary popular culture, while striving to bring attention to recent police investigations to dismantle drug trafficking networks in schools and colleges in the state of Nuevo León.

—Adán Vallecillo



















---

# BUENAS COMMODITIES

## Diablo Rosso, Ciudad de Panamá

### 2023

---

From the balcony of the studio of Adán Vallecillo (Danlí, 1977), the view opens up to a horizon broken by La Tigra National Park and the tall peaks of Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. It takes about half an hour to get there from the city center. Inside, at the top, about five meters high and attached to one of the metal beams of the roof, a huge honeycomb of wasps. “Those are harmless,” Adán tells me, while I take pictures of the honeycomb, which looks like a strange clay pot.

Last January 28, in Panama City, the Diablo Rosso gallery inaugurated Buenas Commodities, their second solo exhibition by Adán Vallecillo. Our conversation took place a week before the pieces were shipped to Panama, while the artist finished preparing the exhibition in his studio. Trained as a sociologist, Vallecillo has produced works that address territories, subjects, and social groups affected by the capitalist practices of the new millennium, with an optic that nonetheless moves away from literalism. “My work does not propose any “should-be” or moral indoctrination. Quite the contrary,” he clarifies. He claims a use of irony rather than denunciation. This can be seen in the series *Vasijas* (Vases), made from high-quality Swiss chocolate wrappers that were erased and painted over, leaving only some of their original graphics exposed.

*Vasijas III* (human scale), for example, works with the faces of the peasants involved in the cocoa harvest. Originally, each chocolate included the portrait of one of these workers on its wrapper, as a way of reminding consumers of the excellence of the product they are holding in their hands. This is because, as the Swiss company itself recognizes: “Honduras is considered one of the countries of origin of cocoa. Cocoa was cultivated by the Mayans more than 3,000 years ago and consumed on special occasions. This tradition is still evident today in the high-quality consciousness of cocoa producers”[1].

As a way of ironizing that story, *Vasijas III* (human scale) displays the laughing eyes of a worker whose face is hooded in the brown background of the wrapper, leaving only “Honduras” and the fair trade seal. With cunning humor, the work tells us that, rather than a real improvement in the living conditions of its workers, the company only seeks to ensure standards of excellence. This irony dismantles the discourse of “fair trade”, which the woman in *Vasijas III* (human scale) seems to laugh at, holding up the sign of a country that tells her nothing, because she knows that very little of those profits will reach her pockets.

There is a great declaration of autonomy in this gesture. Something similar to the ironic resources that writers Adela Zamudio and Hilda Mundy employed in the early twentieth century to dispute the discourse of the modern Bolivian nation, seeking not a denunciation, but “the desacralization of the project [itself] (...) and, BUENAS COMMODITIES Diablo Rosso, Ciudad de Panamá 2023 therefore, of History”[ii]. Similarly, the covered face of the woman in *Vasijas III* (human scale) is a “trick of the weak” that ironizes the great discourse of fair and sustainable trade, where, as Claudia Zapata reminds us, the demand for “the native [and] the ethnic (...) mobilizes for the benefit of capital a profoundly colonialist conception of indigenous peoples”[iii]. Instead of disputing subalternity through discourse, this work prefers to remain silent, preserving eyes that, from a dark shade of brown, watch and mock the spectacle that is the Chocolate trade.

In *Vasijas I* and *Vasijas II*, meanwhile, the shape of the wrappings and the variation of earth tones seem to refer to the colors of chocolate and pre-Columbian pottery,

this time in a sort of flat, two-dimensional modeling that evokes the spiritual value of cacao in Mayan culture. "I am interested in studying the conversion of sacred plants such as tobacco and cacao into merchandise. How they are alienated and stripped of their original rituals and meaning," Adán acknowledges. An alienation that today is deepened in the discursiveness of sustainable development, which "far from going against the grain of extractivism, constitutes its complement"[iv].

This critique of certain models of production takes another turn in the series *Torsiones*, dedicated to the maquilas. One afternoon, years ago, Vallecillo found a bag full of spools of thread outside a gate in Tegucigalpa, from which a line of women were coming out. He asked one of them about the spools: "The garbage truck passes by and takes them away," she replied. Determined, the artist put the bag on his motorcycle and brought it to his workshop, thinking: "I'm going to do something with this someday". A long time later, trying to replicate the thread's tracing on the spools, he began experimenting with graphite. He mounted a spool in a drill, but as soon as contact was made, the spool flew off. It was when he noticed the result that the shape appeared: an abrupt tracing, reminiscent of the merciless violence of the maquila. "When I read *2666* by Bolaño, it blew my mind," Vallecillo admits. Today, almost twenty years after the publication of this novel, the maquiladora industry continues to be a space of extreme precariousness, sustained mainly by young women, who are exposed, as in the book, to the constant danger of femicide. Within Central America, it is precisely in Honduras where the industry is strongest, with twelve-hour shifts that pay about 300 lempiras a day (about twelve dollars)[i]. "The women who came out of the shed," Adán tells me, "were employees of a clandestine maquiladora, one of the many in Tegucigalpa. The big maquiladoras in the north use them to meet their production standards".

One of the most impressive pieces in the show is *Torsión XXV* (maquila): a black metallic structure with seven trays that mount a total of 116 intervened spools. The repetition of the lines, each time different, seems to propose similar violence, whose patterns also recall Mayan or Mochica pottery designs or the abstract writing of Mirtha Dermisache. It is as if each vessel could be read by turning it on its axis, to thread a story of common images: the bruises on the skin of the maquila workers, their vital trajectories that have become body, flesh, under the anonymity of serialized precariousness and death.

With *Torsión XXIII* (maquila) the reflection on the maquiladoras expands to a global context. In 2013, during a residency process in Italy, Vallecillo learned about the collapse of the Rana Plaza textile company in Bangladesh, where 1130 people died. He then decides to remove all the tags from his clothes and hang them on a triangular structure, made of thread. The simplicity of this piece establishes a perhaps more direct dialogue with the subject, but no less eloquent for that. The triangle configures a map of the productive structure of the maquila. At the upper vertex, an aseptic, illuminated panorama, a space of silence. This is the place where the merchandise is received. There, the light whitens the sign of exchange, mirroring the asepsis of stock market speculation and credit card purchases. The lower vertex, meanwhile, represents the assembly of textile products. There, violence weighs on the Asian and Central American hands that sew the colored labels that replicate the racial, ethnic, and generic heterogeneity of this industry. Deregulation, inequality, and precariousness are markedly the signs of the maquila, which often takes advantage of migrants without access to a formal labor contract. Despite its simplicity, this piece reads as a sharp denunciation of globalized precariousness. A picture of castes shows that modernity can be a straight line, nailed on top of the people. A reminiscence, in short, of the vortex with which "the abstract, in capitalist society, functions concretely"[i].

However, as I walked through the workshop, it was the works on tobacco that most aroused my curiosity. "At the project level, this is the first one that takes on an autobiographical character," Adán tells me, as he takes some tobacco leaves



of different colors out of some plastic bags. Then he lights a cigar and we share it. The aroma is intense and dizzying. He warns me not to swallow the smoke and tells me that, years ago, with the help of master blender Bayron Duarte, he got hundreds of molds to press cigars in a tobacco factory in Danlí, his hometown, near the Nicaraguan border. They were going to be thrown away, so Vallecillo preferred to keep them and spend a long time experimenting with them. This is perhaps his usual method, which led him to disassemble, cut, and assemble various ways these handmade wooden molds in the workshop of artisan Alfredo Trejos in Danlí, with excellent work on cedar, pine, laurel, and granadillo, all native woods of Honduras. “What surprised me was the marquetry of the interior pieces, which show a very high level of craftsmanship. I wanted to discover these hidden internal structures and expose them.

Nearly three meters long, Tabaca I is a construction made of open tobacco molds assembled in four levels. On the second level, the five-color cigars follow a symmetrical pattern, which crosses the entire piece. “They are high-quality cigars, on the market they can go for \$25 each,” notes Adán, as we talk about the fetish of tobacco cigars as a sign of lineage even for the workers in this industry, who in the past used to spend a percentage of their meager salaries to smoke the same cigars as their bosses. “Today it is an industry run by men, but where mainly women work as workers. And it is curious because the tobacco cigar is a very macho object, phallic even in its shape: some little phalluses.”

It is when I see the Indios series that I understand the autobiographical sense of Adán’s work. A group of abstract sculptures, made of cigars and molds. At times, they look like totems of an unknown culture. From another perspective, the difference between the woods makes one think of a stratigraphic profile, where the colors reflect the different times accumulated in the earth. Something similar occurs in these works: it is as if in the striations and changes of tonality of the wood one could retrace the brutal history of the Honduran working class, the precariousness of the tobacco workers—to this day threatened with temporary contracts, without social security, and minimal safety precautions[i]— as well as the precious artisan tradition of these molds and the artist’s childhood in the eastern region of the country. Adán tells me that the smell of cedar, the predominant wood of the molds, reminds him of his grandmother. For this reason, in a corner of the workshop, he keeps the back of the bed that traveled from generation to generation to him, who as a child slept every night with the scent of cedar over his head.

I asked Adán if he had read Cristina Rivera Garza. When I look at these sculptures, I can’t help but think of some of the Mexican author’s works, where she traverses in long comings and goings the strata that memory sediments. A work with form, textual matter, and territory, but also with the forms that emerge when going beyond the outer layers of matter, such as the cells found inside a honeycomb or the patterns of marquetry hidden in the molds abandoned as industrial waste. Something similar, too, to what Rivera Garza proposes with her concept of “geological writings”, whose eagerness to delve into a past “of layers and strata [where] histories of colonial and epistemic violence adhere to bones and flesh, to crops, laboriosities and resistances”[i] has a dialectical relationship with Vallecillo’s notion of “implied abstractions”. In a recent text, Adán questions the usual separation between abstraction and political practice, pointing out that, in the maelstrom of the times we live in, “abstracting is, in its own right, an important exercise of subversion”[ii]. In doing so, he seeks to transcend a certain dependence on representation in Latin American art, where the premise that “if the content of art is social, art acts directly on reality”[iii] is often taken for granted. Moving away from this commonplace, Vallecillo’s work attempts to recover a productive use of abstract language, which, in order not to fall into academicism, must be “filtered through concrete political practices”[iv]. In *Buenas Commodities*, the practice consists of probing the origin of various consumer objects and industrial waste materials. An exercise that, instead of fetishizing a certain identity or



social content, questions the very intelligibility of how contemporary capitalism operates, tracing the hidden trajectories in the conversion of these materials -wood, cocoa, tobacco- into waste or merchandise and recovering the visuality of their internal structures. A gesture that builds an abstract autobiography, but is deeply involved with the real.

Adán tells me that he has not read Rivera Garza, but says that producing this series led him to family and territorial stories that form a hidden narrative. Something that remains beneath the form of the works and only emerges with attention. "I'm interested in simple forms because people often underestimate them," he clarifies. "But they are windows, they take you elsewhere." He then tells me that, nowadays, wooden molds for pressing tobacco have been replaced by plastic molds, imported from China.

On the terrace of the workshop, as the sun sets, I put my cigar aside and take my copy of *Autobiografía del algodón* out of my backpack. "I'll give it to you," I tell him. "You'll like it."

— **Simón López Trujillo**

[i] Extracted from the introductory text by Gisela Heffes for *Escrituras geológicas* by Cristina Rivera Garza. Available at: <https://www.iberamericana-vervuert.es/FichaLibro.aspx?P1=209324>

[ii] Adán Vallecillo. "Implied Abstractions." In Cecilia Fajardo-Hill (ed.). *Remains-Tomorrow: Themes in Contemporary Latin American Abstraction*. Berlin, Hatje Cantz, 2022.

[iii] *Ibid.*

[iv] *Ibid.*

[i] Lino Carménate Milán et al., "Poverty, health and work in tobacco growers in the Jamastrán Valley, El Paraíso, Honduras". *Rev. Med. Hondur.* 79(4), 2011, p. 191.

[i] Enzo Paci cit. in Alberto Toscano, *La abstracción real. Filosofía, estética y capital*, Santiago de Chile, Palinodia, 2021, p. 20.

[i] Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval. "Globalization and Transnational Labor Organizing: The Honduran Maquiladora Industry and the Kimi Campaign." *Social Science History* 27(4), 2003, p. 554.

[1] Retrieved from the website of "Projekt Honduras", part of the "Naturaplan" program, with which the Swiss brand COOP seeks to "promote fair trade" in various parts of Latin America. In each case, the face of a worker, the name of the country of origin and the percentage purity of the cocoa used are shown. For more details, see: <https://www.coop.ch/de/unternehmen/naturaplan/projekte/projektschokolade/honduras.html>

[ii] Virginia Ayllón. "Estado y mujeres en la obra de cuatro narradoras bolivianas". *Recial* 7(9), p. 8.

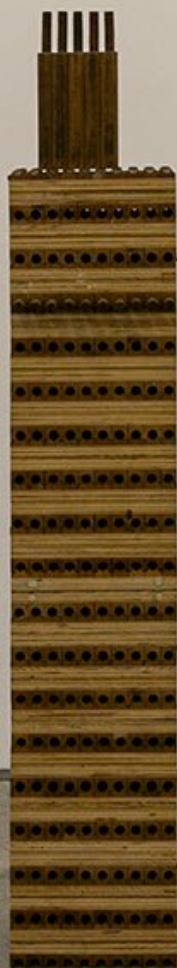
[iii] Claudia Zapata Silva. *Crisis of multiculturalism in Latin America. Conflictividad social y respuestas críticas desde el pensamiento político indígena*. Guadalajara, Calas, 2019, p. 72. [iv] *Ibid.*

















---

**VICTORIA REGIA**  
MAC, Lima, Perú  
2013 - 2022

---







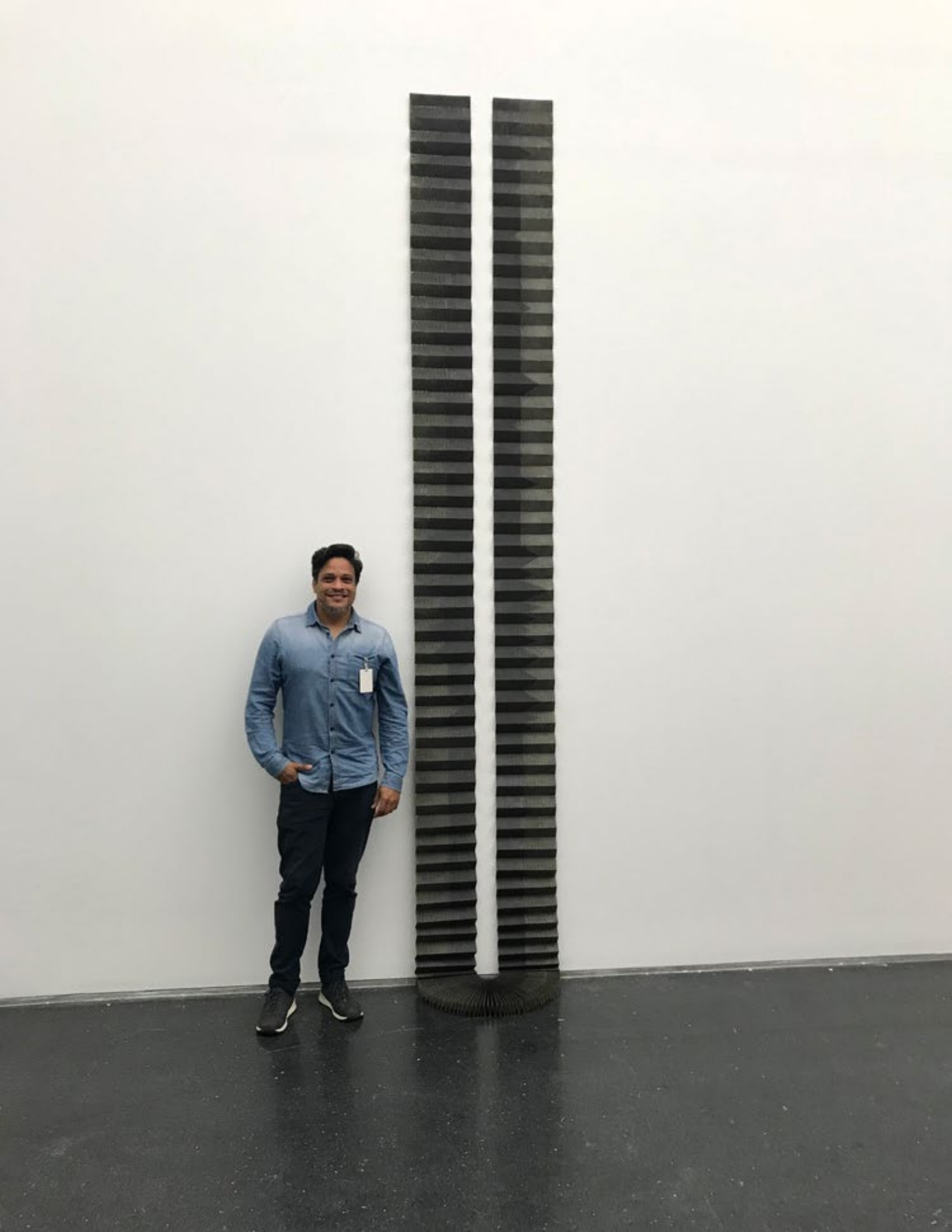


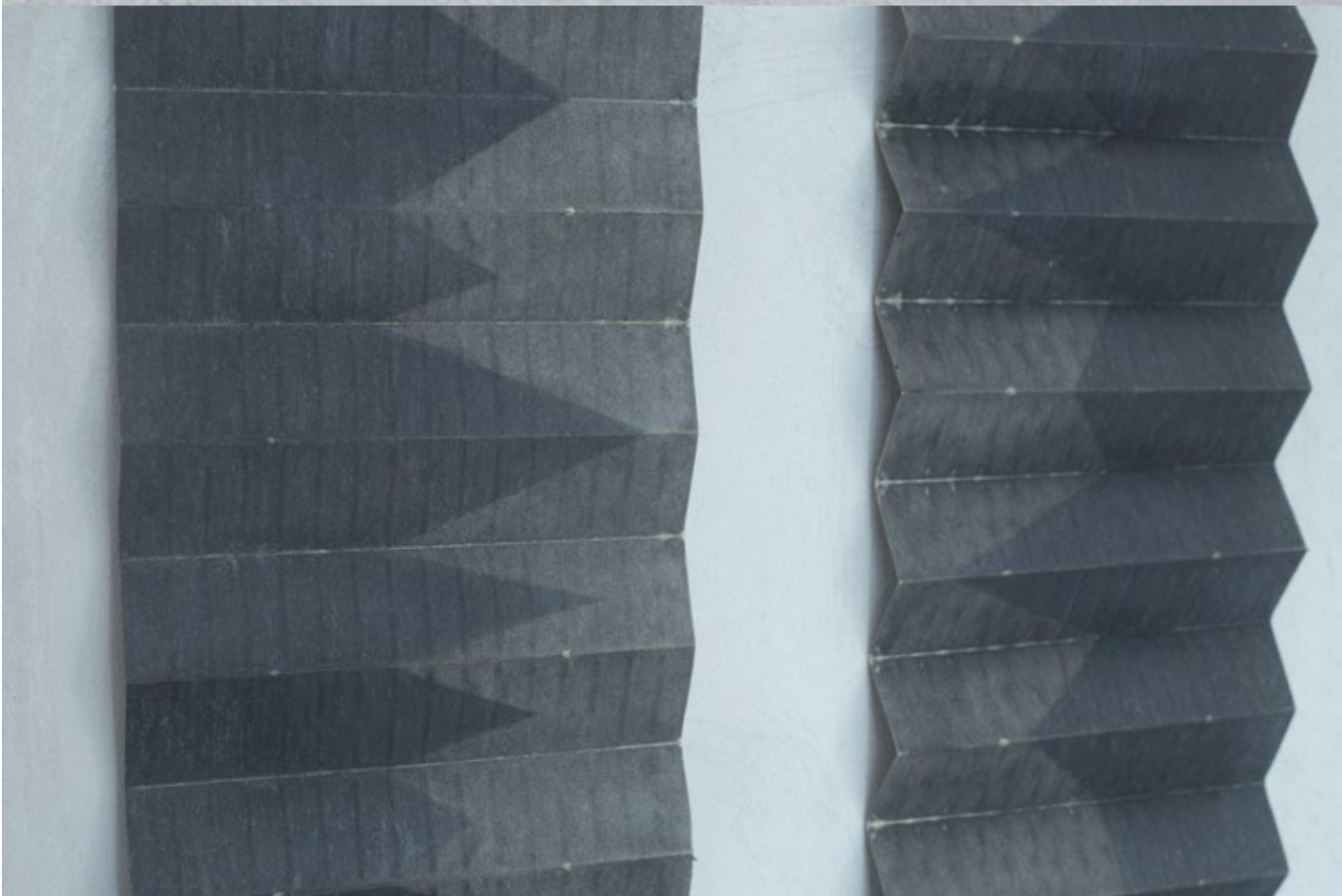
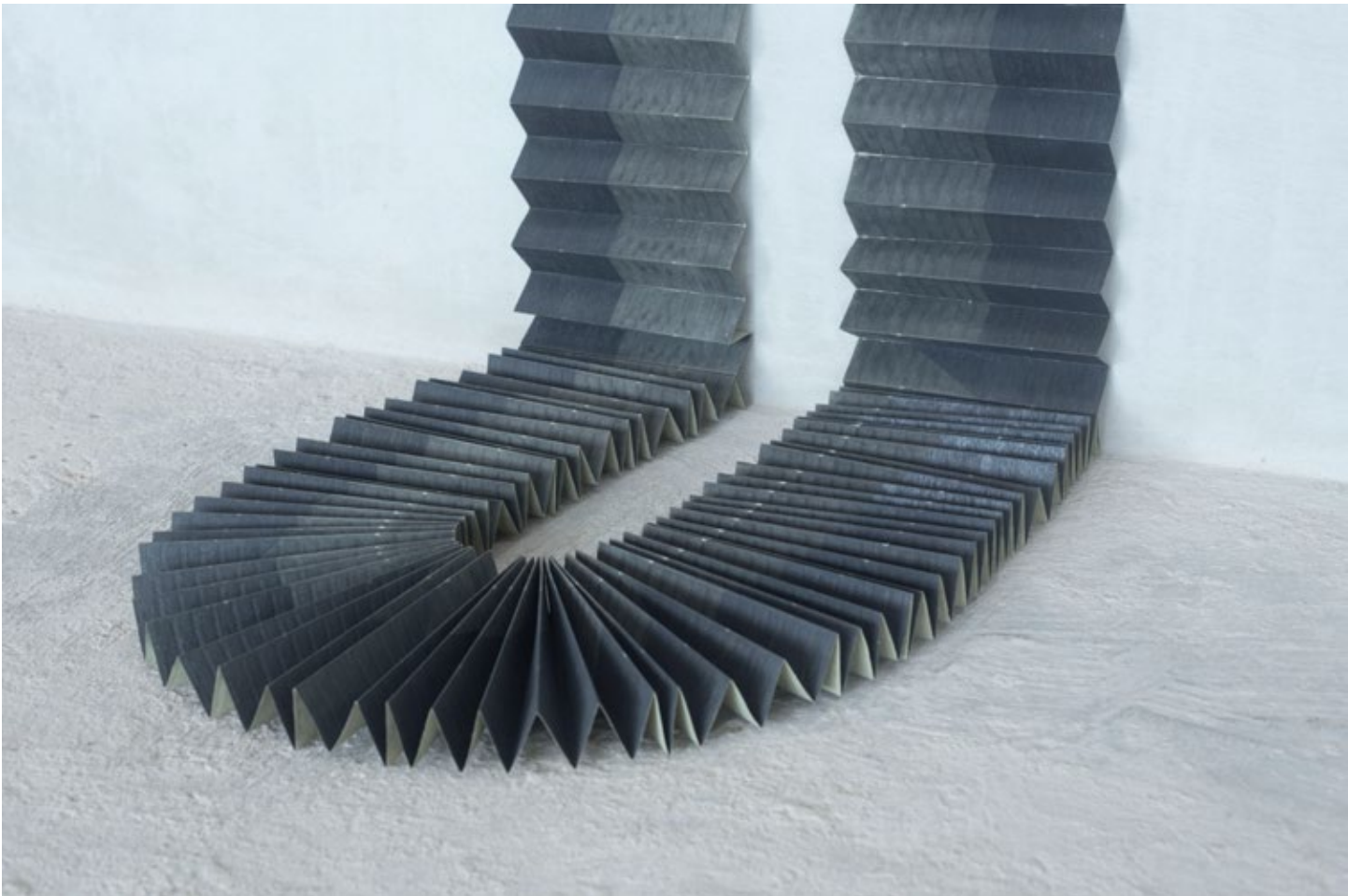
---

# **SATURACIÓN 00**

**Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora 1990s-Today, MCA  
Chicago, USA  
2023**

---







---

**HIPERCAPNIAS**  
Cuenca Biennial, Ecuador  
2021

---











---

# RESIDENCIAS

## LARA (Panamá) y Flora ars+natura (Colombia)

2018 - 2019

---

As recommended by Walter Benjamin:

Do not steal anything of value and do not appropriate spirited formulations to yourself. But the rags, the waste: Do not seek to make an inventory of these, but rather let them come into their own in the only way possible: by using them.

This project begins in Panamá. It was an opportunity that led me to travel and retrace a great part of the periphery of the capital city and the reverted areas of the Panama Canal.

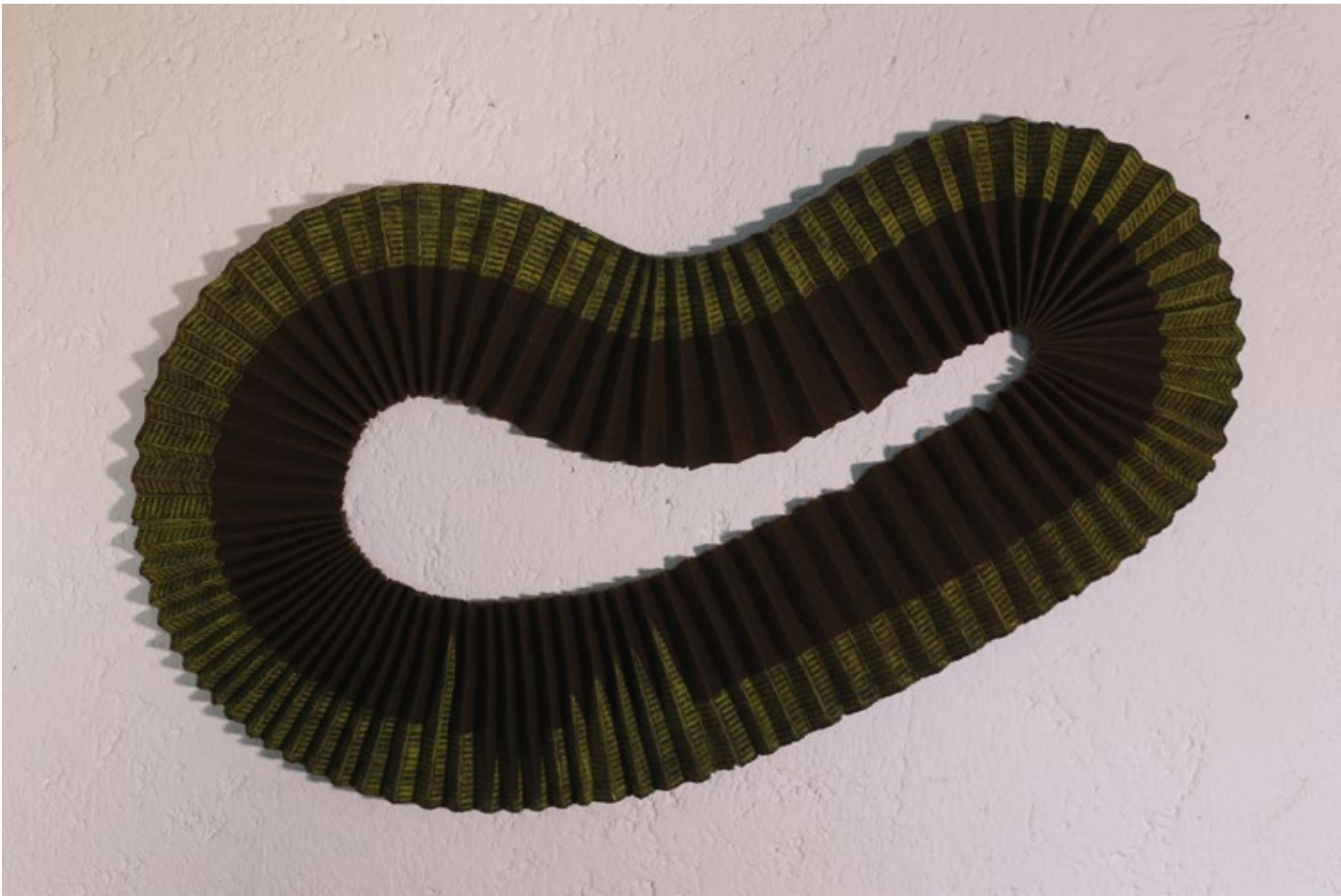
From the beginning of the project, I was interested in knowing the fate of the waste generated by the Panama Canal. As a response to this interest, I generated two parallel bodies of work: one involving oil filters from the machinery used for the last expansion of the Canal (Expandibles y Fuselajes) and another consisting of an installation with concrete and brick debris from the first construction period of the Canal (Fósiles). I used the shells of the oil filters to create sculptures, and at the same time I took advantage of the paper membranes inside them; in Fósiles, the concrete stones and bricks eroded by water were placed on geometric concrete bases as an installation.

In a new stage of exploration, during a residency at Flora ars+natura Bogotá, I collected air filters for cars. These filters contain a paper membrane that resembles an accordion which functions as a receptacle for the internal emissions of the engine. I have used them as a medium to create a series of sculptures and drawings, some of them retractable, which when contracted hide in the gaps of the membrane, and on the reverse, when expanded, they are fused with the smoke and oil that remains embedded in the filter. Similar to the work I have conducted previously through other investigations, I am interested in triggering a pragmatic archaeological process where the deteriorated materials I have collected acquire a preponderant aesthetic dimension that does not nullify their origin. On the contrary, this re-utilization of the material allows me to raise some questions about the implications of the accelerated cycles of production, consumption and waste that are so typical of our times.

By taking advantage of the paper membranes that are housed inside the filters, subtle abstractions appear that mimic the corrugated ergonomics of the material.

The visual result is a set of pieces that by the disposition and identity of the materials, as well as by their visual references, try to encourage suspicion about the apparent neatness of things, as well as to reverse the sense of the abstract geometric tradition whose aspirations decontaminated from the social environment that I would like to question.



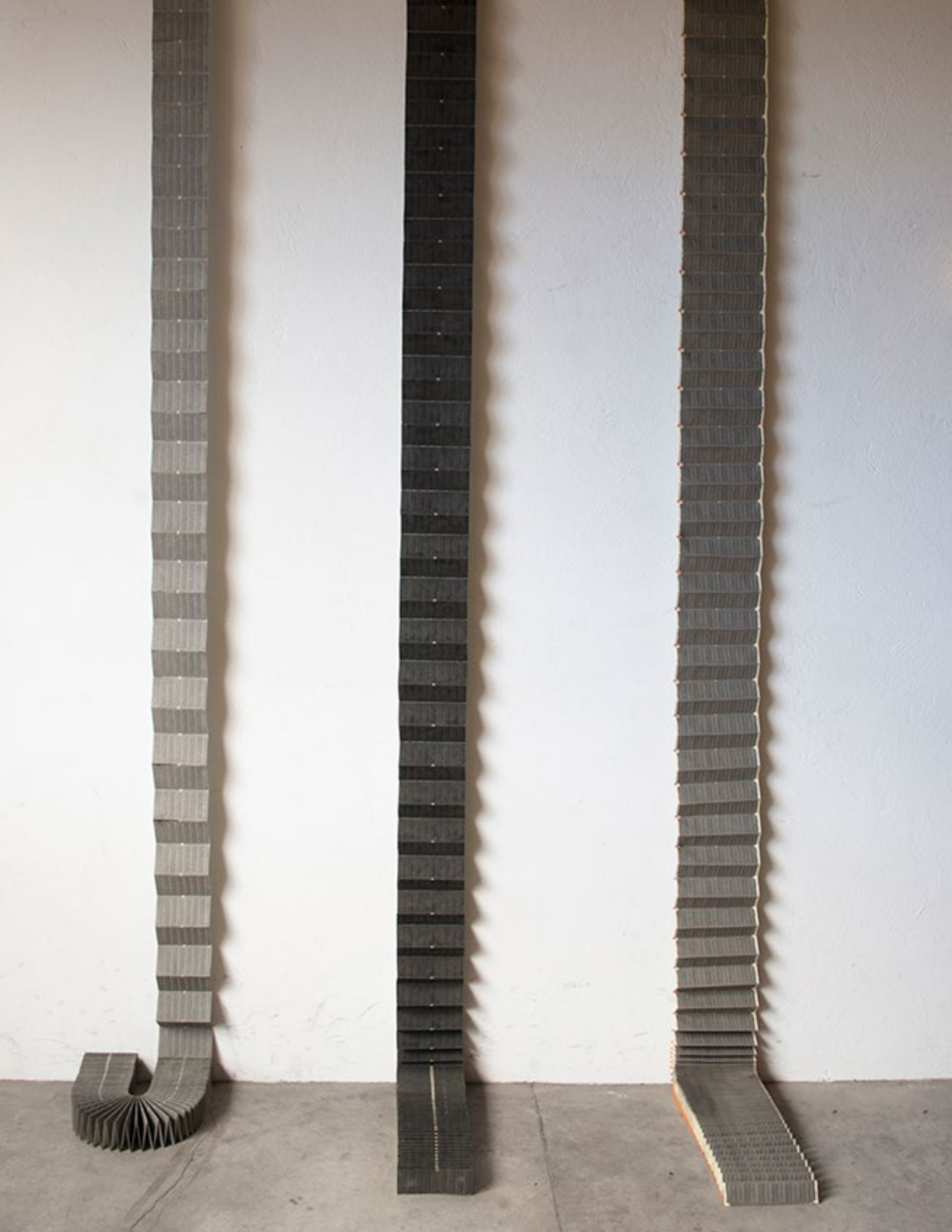




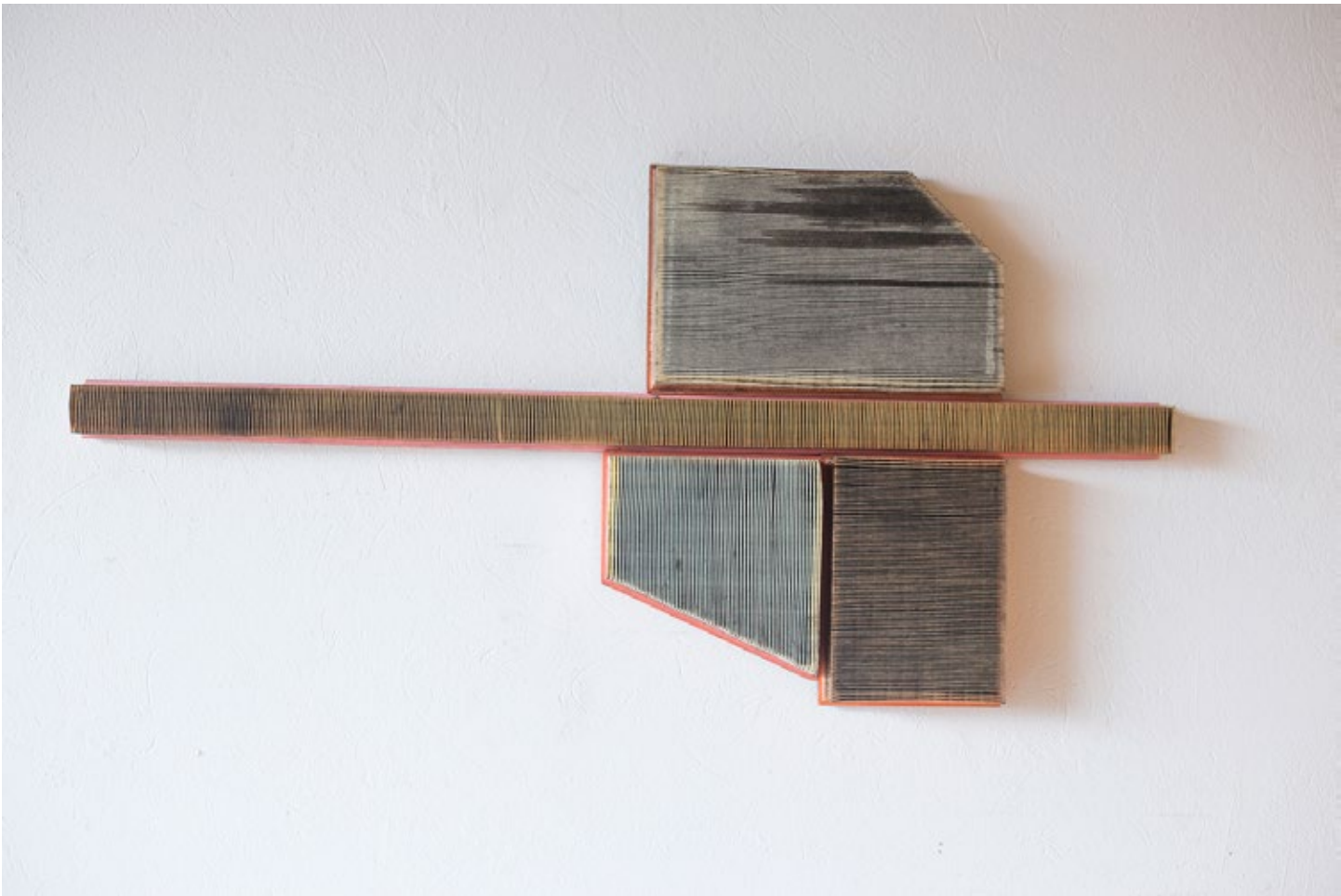




















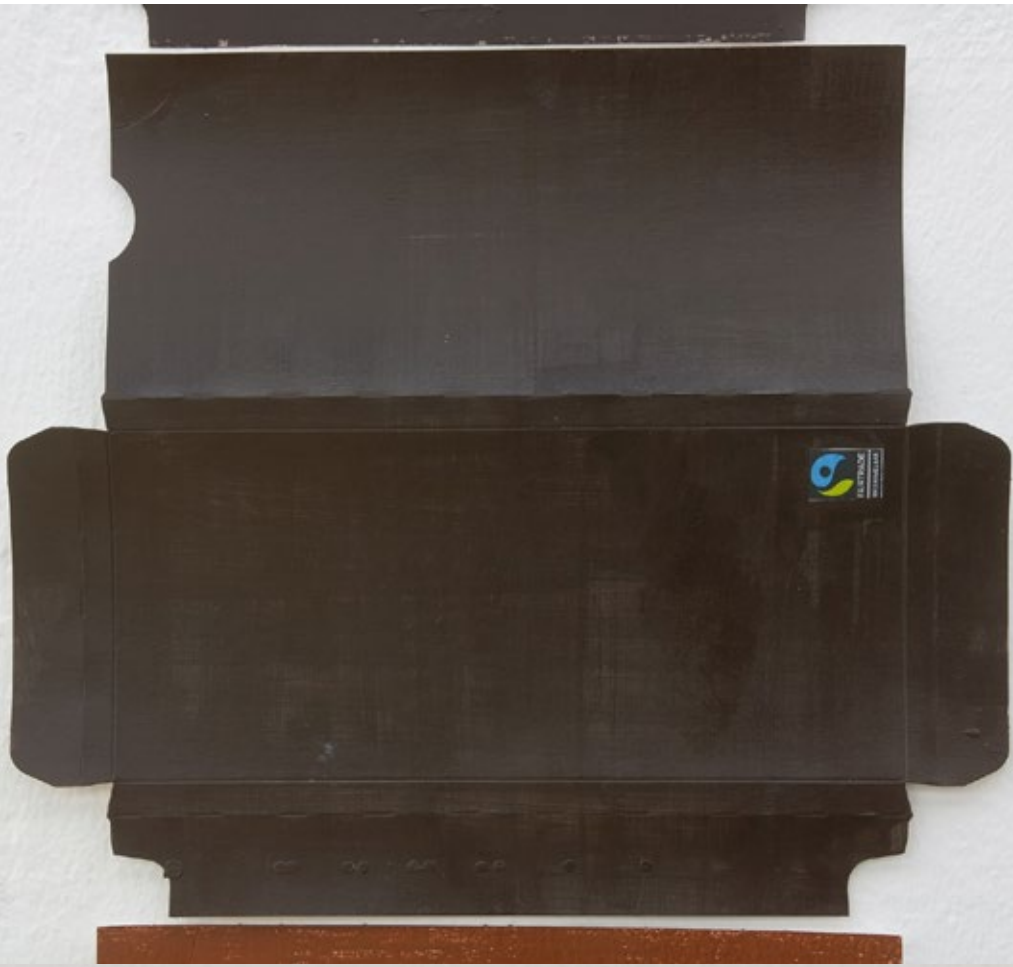
---

**CAMUFLAJES**  
Centre d'Art Neuchâtel  
2019

---





















---

# FIRST DAY OF GOOD WEATHER

Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany

2023

---

Life rarely gives us the sharp contours we expect. We probably all agree with this, even more so if you ask sociologists who examine the lack of a set definition of social behavior and its change over time. Artist and sociologist Adán Vallecillo investigates the history of territories through interaction with people, often destroying stereotypes, revealing much more nuanced realities than we want to believe, and turning social phenomena into works of art.

One of Vallecillo's many projects consists on an exchange with the self-proclaimed commodity traders on the streets of Venice. He exchanged the very basis of their illegal work—a white cloth where they place their goods—for what is considered the base of an artist's work, a white canvas.

— Sandino Scheidegger









---

# MATERIA REMOTA

## Museo para la Identidad Nacional (MIN), Honduras

### 2016

---

In this world there is  
dense, heavy matter,  
greasy like oil,  
light, weightless matter,  
fresh as a feather,  
through which the wind passes  
without disrupting any structure

— Anahi Ferreyra

In a simple manner, we can say that matter is everything that occupies a space and generates a certain sensoriality; we can see it, touch it, smell it, feel it. For Plato, matter was nothing more than a receptacle susceptible of any form, and for modern philosophy, it had a reality in itself, a “unique reality”; there was no difference then, between form and content. Materials (like words) tell us something, they deceive us, they tell us stories, they question us, they speak to us.

Remote Matter (Materia Remota) is an Aristotelian term, used to refer to a kind of ultimate matter of which all reality was made. But what do we understand by reality, or rather, what reality mobilizes Vallecillo? Is it possible to trace the winding paths of a reality, a history, a country or a body through certain materials?

Faced with the prevalence of a system that insists on disciplining the object of art in the framework of a spectacle, where the gaze continues to follow the conventions of aesthetic preciousness, Vallecillo's work is situated in that tension that is as macabre as it is intelligent, developing a sort of Economy-Politics of matter.

It is then a matter of creating fictions that glimpse stories associated with marginalization, with the exploitation of bodies and resources, not as an apology for misery, but as an attempt to take art to a less comfortable place, a place where it is necessary to “get your hands dirty” because there is no other way to speak.

Behind the monochromatic rubber and the apparent order, there was a massive protest. The geometric composition of the pasty green reveals a certain stench. The playful construction of chewing gum in color and abstraction hides saliva and histories. Poverty, environmental pollution and the gray deterioration of the city are the product of the symbolic and tangible fluxes of capitalism at a global scale. Protest, stench and saliva are then those very forms of symbolic subversion, an inversion of capital, a “Side B”.

Now, for Vallecillo, behind this Economy-Politics of matter, there is no politically correct discourse of truth. It is not a selectionist work, thus distancing itself from certain forms of artistic activism or political art that attempt to represent or metaphorize a given social reality. In this case, what this interweaving of materials and their transmutation into aesthetic objects creates is, so to speak,

Vallecillo's way of being that factory worker who writes poetry hidden behind a boiler during working hours, or as Ranciere mentions: that worker who plays cards at night, while seeking revenge on the factory boss's cats that keep him awake at night.

That is to say, it is not about representing, but about presenting. The point is that his work weaves together an evolution of materials that are both symbolic and economic testimonies, or rather symbolic insofar as economic, of a reality that challenges us all, and this is where Adán's work acquires that universal character, insofar as it is specific.

Materia Remota proposes a journey through the recent work of Honduran artist Adán Vallecillo, presenting a selection of various series that responds to our intention of thinking about the relationship between materials and reality.

The exhibition includes works from the series: Pintura-Mural; Civilizaciones; Histologías and Tectónicas; several of these pieces are unpublished and respond in some way to the artist's recent investigations and suspicions; the exhibition undoubtedly has a certain Latin American slant, presenting aesthetic experiences that are situated on this side of the world. The culture of the patch— for example— is a cultural construction typical of the precariousness of resources, which is invented and becomes culture “thanks” to the material conditions of these countries. The contamination of Lake Amatitlán— part of the series “Pintura-Mural”— is another clear example of how these materials and their visual transmutation are a consequence of these realities, with this, what Vallecillo does is a work of development of realities, dialectic inversion of visualities, symbolic sabotage of the state of things.





















BUTYL TUBE  
EVERWEAR

K-15

TR13







---

# 32 con 8

## El Lobi, Puerto Rico

### 2016

---

Adán Vallecillo's inaugural exhibition at El Lobi, a space directed by artists Vanessa Hernández Gracia, Tony Aponte and Melissa Sarthou, led viewers to think, what needs, other than functional, do objects respond to? "32 con 8; the limits of the machine and movement" investigated how practical items undergo a continuous mutation and expansion towards a cultural system, starting from a technological system. The artist rescued obsolete items from the defunct Impresora Nacional de Puerto Rico and re-presented industrial objects as aesthetic objects that signify the signs of passing time. From 1971 to 2014, the Impresora Nacional printed leftist newspapers such as Claridad as well as materials for the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, which advocated for the island's independence. Thirty-two black-and-white pages and eight color pages was the maximum capacity of the printing press. Vallecillo, who studied art and sociology, uses the term 'implied abstractions' to describe his artistic practice, in which abstraction is associated with the social, political and economic factors related to the objects, before the artist intervenes in their selection, formation and presentation.

"32 con 8" identified with the critical juncture of Puerto Rico by making the invisible visible for the betterment of society while sharing the voices of those who have lost agency. Vallecillo's exhibition took place while he was participating in The Harbor, a residency program at Beta- Local, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and promoting critical thinking and contemporary artistic practices in Puerto Rico. His project developed in a more serendipitous way, through the contacts of Sofía Gallisá Muriente, co-director of Beta- Local, and the interests of poet Nicole Delgado who participates in Beta-Local's research and production program called la Práctica. Gallisá Muriente contacted Carlos Jiménez, who for many years worked at the Impresora Nacional, to see if there were materials in the abandoned facilities that Delgado could use for her graphic experimentation center in Santurce, called La Impresora. Jiménez agreed to meet with Gallisá Muriente and Delgado at the old plant, and they invited Vallecillo, who, upon entering the workshop, was deeply impressed by the loss of a forty-three year political struggle.

His brief search for objects at the Impresora Nacional with a plan to make an exhibition had surprising and appealing results: "32 con 8" was a fascinating example of how he brings to his discipline a sense of poetry, the vulnerable beauty of materials, and a deep feeling for the color, shape and texture of common industrial objects. The Rotativa presented two rows of seven offset printing blankets in shades of fat, indigo, cerulean, seaweed green, olive green and chartreuse. The Rotativa suggested a basic sample taken from the depths of the ocean and moments in the history of abstract painting. The difficult thing to believe was that people had been shot because of what was printed on those banners. In Otro PR, Vallecillo, like the workers at the Imprenta Nacional, took a negative and made a positive. A thirty-six-page grid of black film on a bright yellow matrix for a printed pamphlet detailed the deplorable health and education conditions in Puerto Rico.

Pueblo Trabajador suggested a figure at rest. The artist curved two jagged black rubber bands and placed one inside the other to form a ninety-degree angle across the floor and up the gallery wall. Vertebral, another allusion to the body, was a six-foot broken line of small wood and carbon blocks.



This simple gesture showed the remarkable aesthetic attention to the forgotten, the useless and the commonplace in everyday life. *Flora Tropical*, a grid of twenty-four prints in tomato red ink on celery green paper, was made at La Impresora de Delgado. Vallecillo used the poet's risograph, a digital duplicator, to print a detail of the ubiquitous Puerto Rican office décor, an image of a flamboyán that was affixed to the wall of the Impresora Nacional.

The cornerstone of "32 con 8" was an audio recording of a conversation between three former employees of La Impresora Nacional— Carlos Jiménez, Jorge Rodríguez Escribano and Víctor Sánchez— who reflected on their experiences with Diego de la Cruz, a family friend and former Practica participant who works with La Impresora, Vallecillo and Delgado. Artist Omar Obdulio Peña-Forty helped with the sound recording, and Gallisá Muriente included short excerpts from the recollections in his in-depth article on Vallecillo's project published in *El Rojo*, Claridad's online newspaper. The co-workers' conversation was an enlightening reminiscence of solidarity. Together, they developed an independent political, industrial and commercial enterprise that generated the need to acquire the tools to be free, and applied their collective values in their respective personal, familiar and community lives. The audio recording reminded viewers of all those things that we can do without. A future transcript of the conversation would transcend the confines of "32 with 8."

— Cheryl Hartup

*Published in ArtNexus 101 (June-August 2016), Page 113.*





MECI

del pehoie  
APLE CI MIZSEI

frederigo con udo y per-pot

manillar conbe-otico  
metallico A-quadro

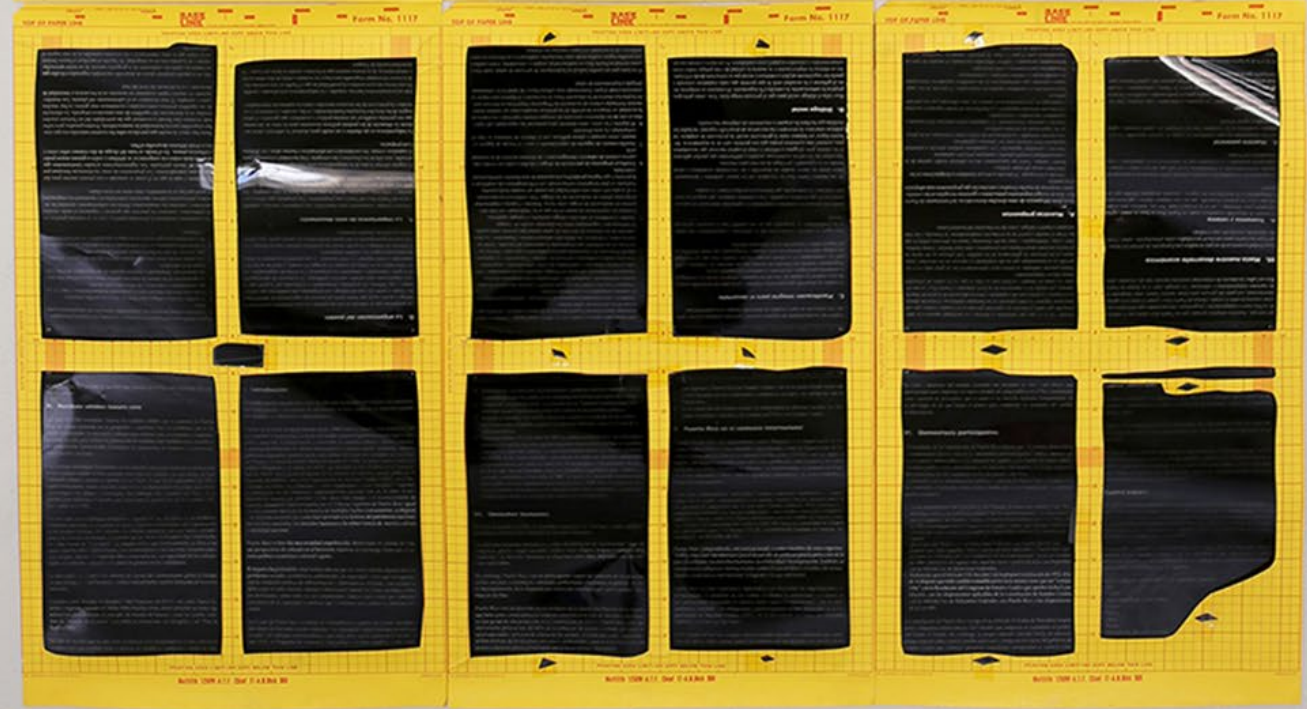
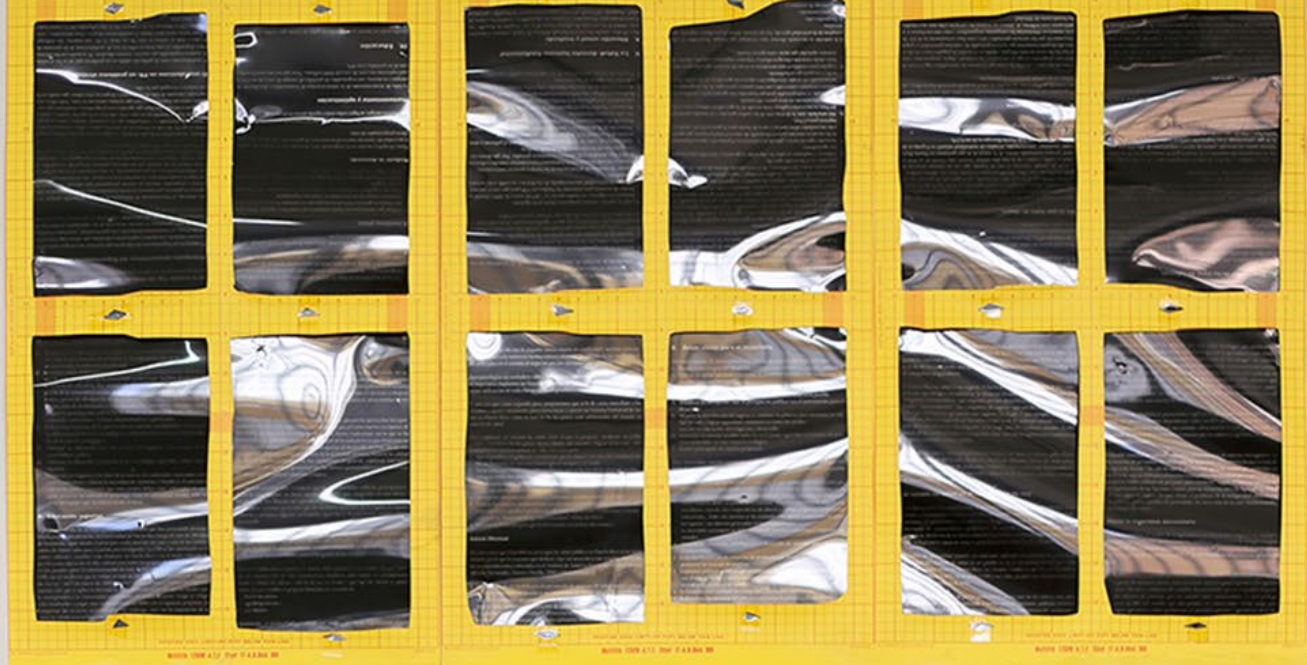


PICK & SAVE  
the todo y para todos



MECI

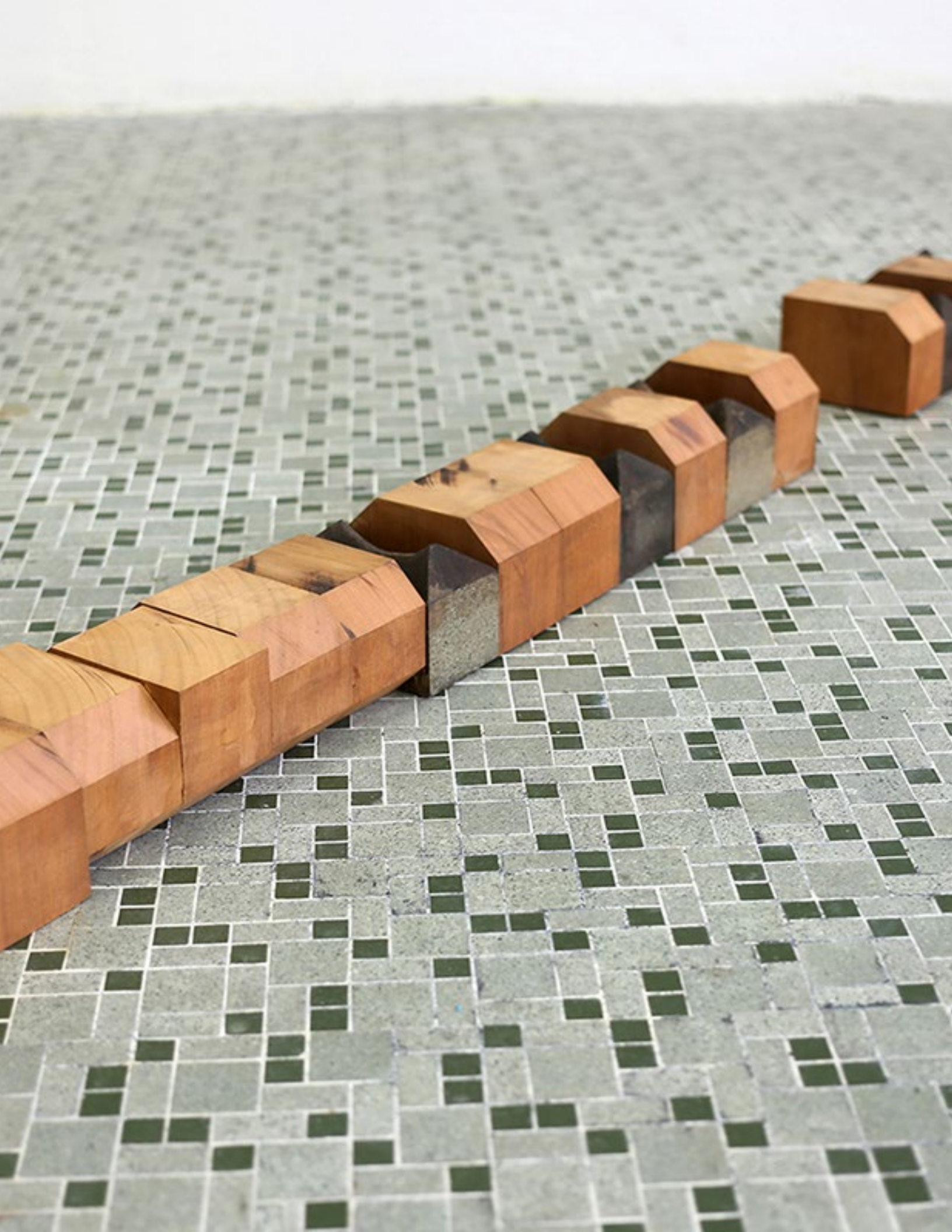














---

# RESIDUAL

## PM 8 Gallery, Spain

### 2015

---

Residual is the second solo project by Adán Vallecillo (Danlí, Honduras, 1977) in PM8, a new body of work developed in Venice during the illy SustainArt & Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa Residency at the end of 2013. This specific proposal is articulated around a set of pieces that manifest Vallecillo's concern for the deteriorated fragility of a city loaded with multiple contradictions, and whose urban-architectural decay is an external sign of its inner ennui.

After participating in La Biennale de Venezia 2011, the new encounter with this overwhelming environment means a new experience that becomes a particular journey. A personal journey that began under the spell and the weight of centuries of history and art but that also transited with gravity through its real social conflicts.

Adán's exploratory and performative practice led him to analyze in depth this new context, which although very different from his own, presented many coincidences with the situation he left behind in his country. The artist has often been interested in social and political issues in order to create a critical discourse, but also in an effort to generate honest analytical thinking through his work. His recurring interest in the social dissensions he observes in society is once again reflected in this new project, but here the artist cannot escape the sensorial influence of the city, each piece is permeated by its atmosphere, its light, its colors, and also by the oppressive sense of its tradition strongly rooted in its innards.

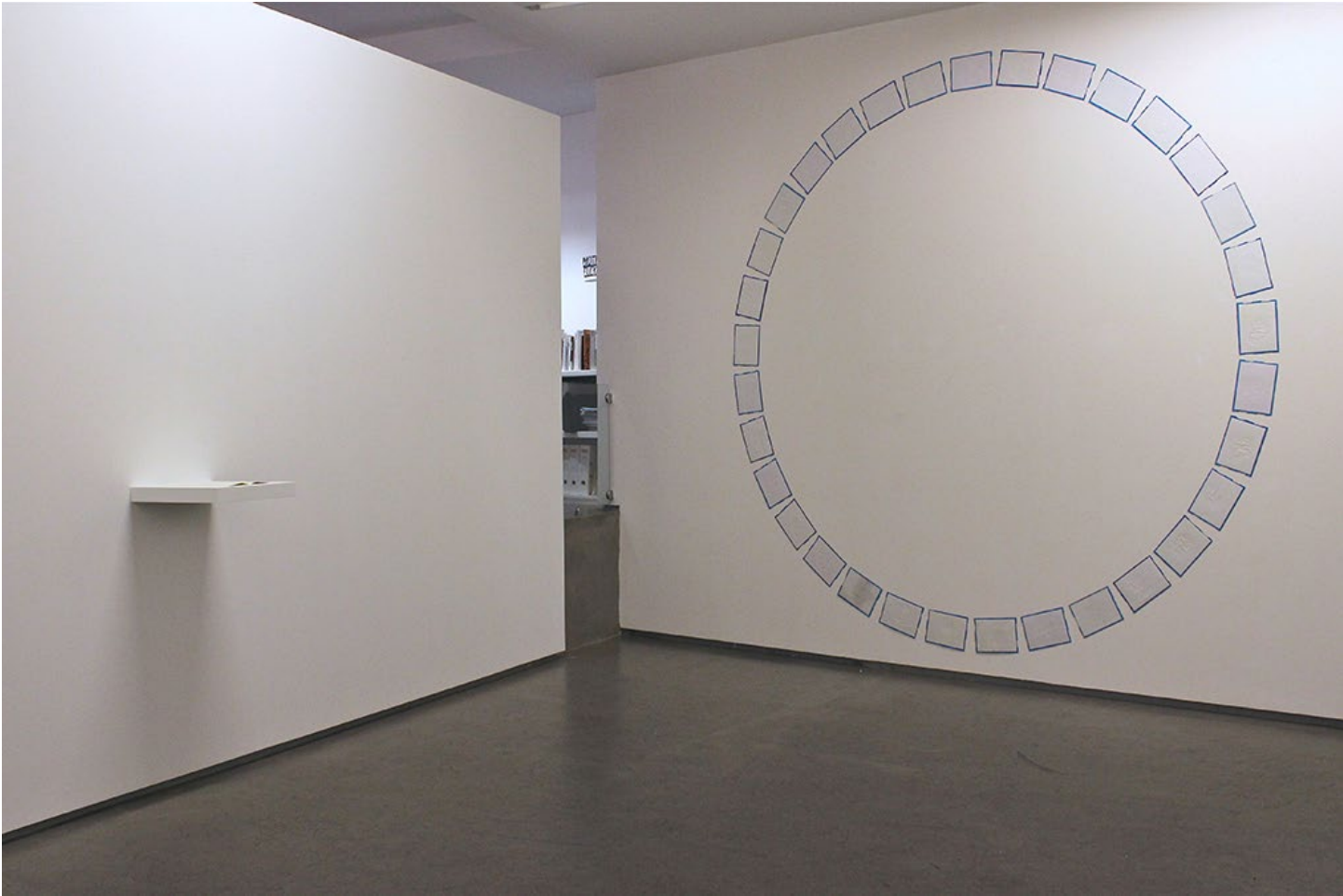
Vallecillo focused the attention of his research on the covert context of the place. With acute precision he scrutinized the social deficiencies that seem evident and visible to all. Disharmonies unobserved by most visitors who seem blinded by the many architectural wonders they encounter in their organized itineraries. Upon his arrival, the artist was instantly drawn to what Venice was getting rid of: the people, mostly illegal immigrants, who sold goods on the street and with whom he soon began to converse, the trash left behind by the hordes of tourists who erode the city in an endless procession walking to the must-see places, and finally by other debris he finds in various streets, historic buildings and different corners of the urban landscape, in an attempt to give visibility to all these hidden layers of the city.

Hence the disturbing figure of Venice as an excuse to delve into the roots of a system that perpetuates an unchanging urban structure that does not conform to the needs of its real population. A place bewitched by the transcendence of its cultural legacy but unable to cope with the dizzying pace of the present, the hunger of travelers and the multiple demands that await its temporary visitors, ready to consume one more product. During his Venetian itinerary, Adam read some writings by Wolfgang Scheppe, especially influenced by one of his most ambitious books, Migropolis, a work in which the philosopher analyzes the contradictions of Venice and its evolution into a place of mass consumption.

Tourists in Venice do not usually go to other areas outside the places that everyone recognizes, they do not want to know the reality of the city, the truth behind the curtain, they want to experience the idea of what Venice is or should be, but not what the real Venice is. Adam as a visitor and as a foreigner perceives another truth, he sees other parallel worlds lying there on the set of this shadow theater, whose history seems to have melted into an element of pure appearance. A place that in its long drift has become almost a brand without identity, a sort of theme park that subtracts its true soul and humanistic importance.

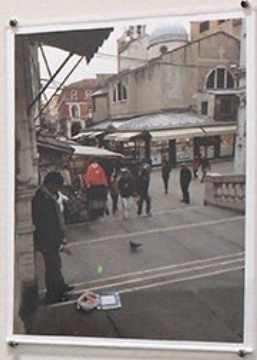
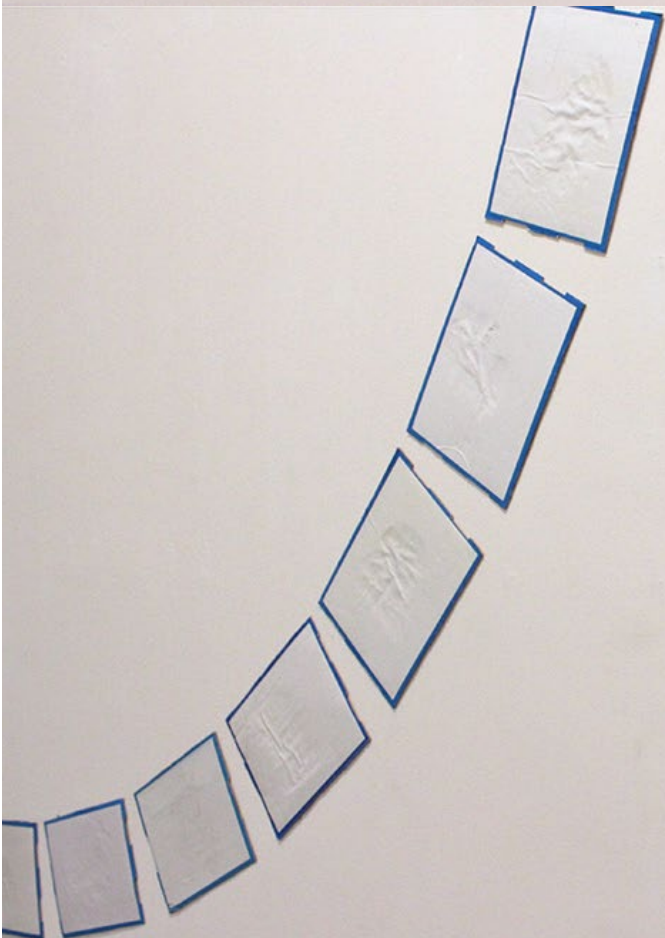
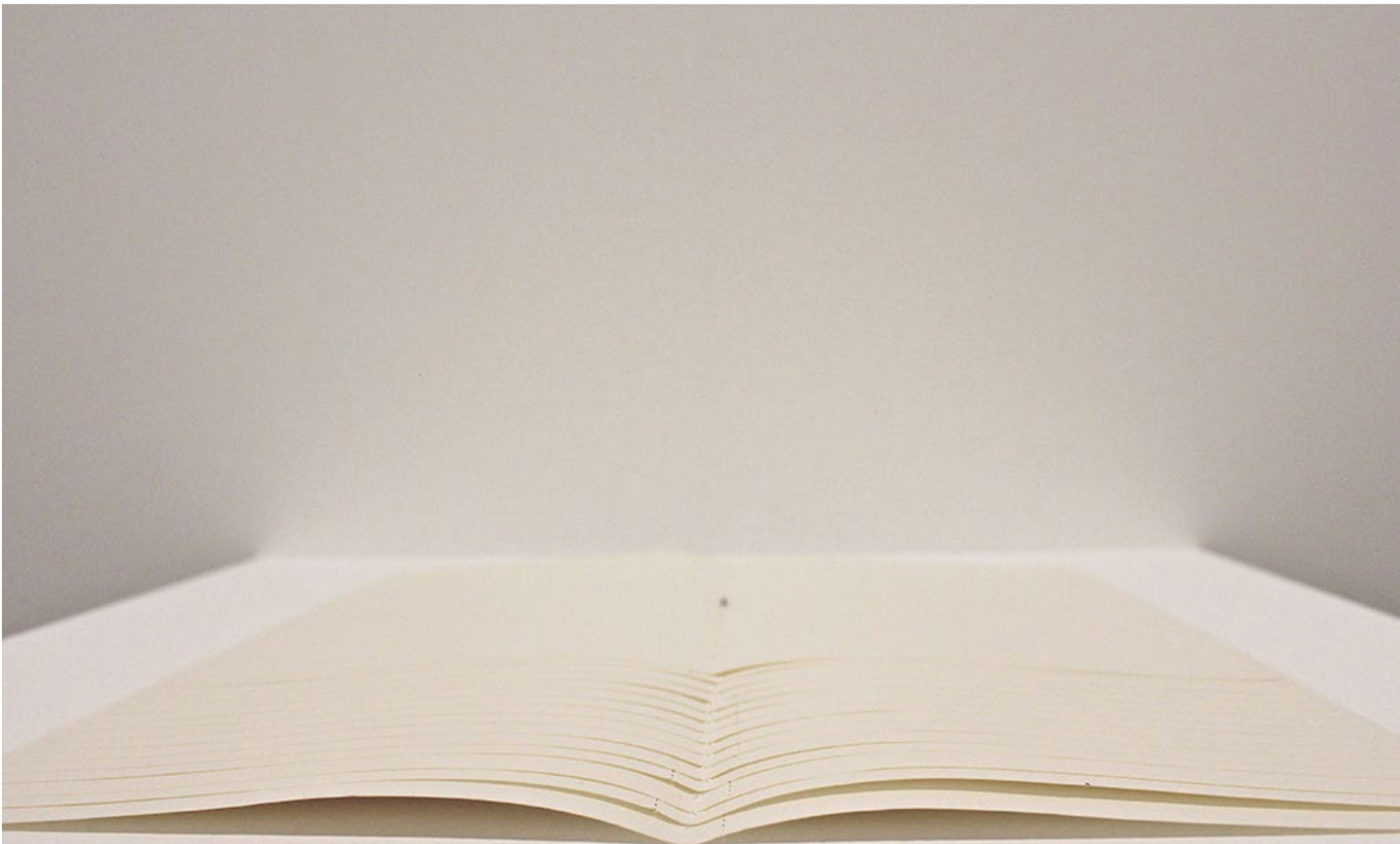
One could say that the project that Adán Vallecillo carried out in Venice is a metaphor of what happens in our society: we live by clichés, we create a façade without wanting to go beyond. What matters is the memory of the experience, not the experience itself. We do not have time. We rush emotionally and physically building a fictitious reality, which could fit into that ideal imposed by social networks and other forces of our society.

— **Francisco Salas**















---

# EARTHWORKS

80m2 Livia Benavides

2015

---

We come from the earth and to it we return... is a belief shared by many religious practices, whether ancestral, syncretic or Western. However, the world does not relate to the earth in the same way. For most Western cultures, the earth has ceased to be a sacred place. The physical and spiritual connection to land and territory has been lost. For others, the land is the origin of life, the most basic way to connect with history and with the spirit world, with the invisible; the relationship with the land is a necessary ritual. For the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, the concept of the sacred unites all religions, giving us a cohesive social identity.

Collective ritual as an everyday action occupies a central place in the formation of cultural identities. The practices and rituals of ancestral societies, rooted in religion, persist in the rituals of modern societies, although these have been distorted and transformed by technology. Geophagy, the practice of ingesting earth, is an ancient ritual that is still maintained in Western society. In one way or another, we all eat earth.

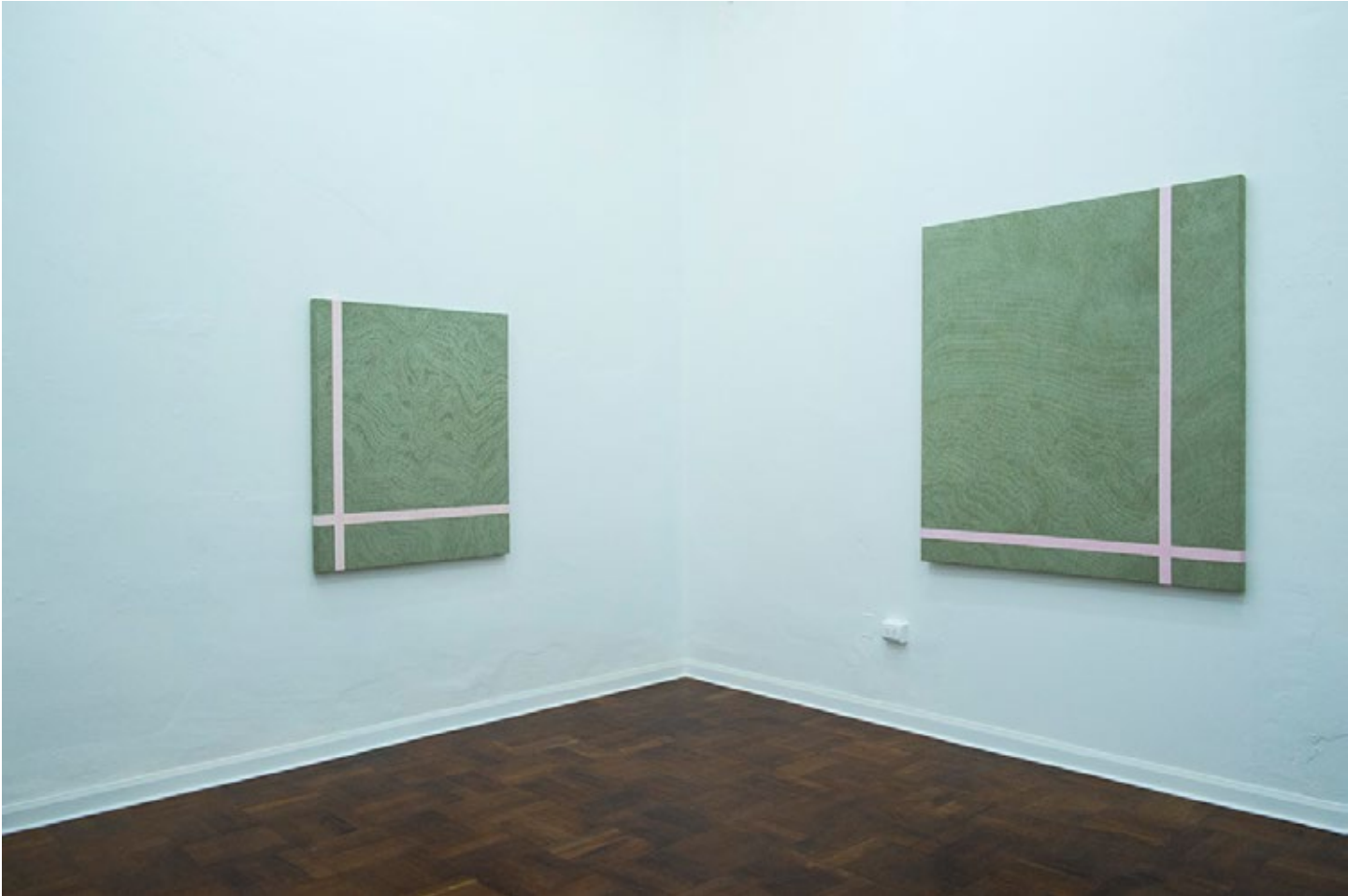
The exhibition Earthworks by artist Adán Vallecillo brings together a body of work in sculpture, painting, video and drawing that stems from research conducted in Haiti on geophagy— the ingestion of bonbons terres (earth candy) or pan biscuit (bread cookies). Vallecillo, who uses ethnographic and anthropological methods to develop his artistic work, conducted field studies in the border region of Hinche (Ench in the Creole language), where the most important battles of the Haitian revolution and resistance took place, and where the mines from which the earth used to make the bonbons terres is extracted are located. Using and juxtaposing materials and objects collected in Hinche, Vallecillo raises questions about the relationship between the healing rituals of modern society and ancestral spiritual practices through the aesthetic codes of Western art history. The earth used to make the bonbons terres and the green-colored mud that is separated during the process of sifting the earth before its preparation becomes raw material to develop a critical reflection on geopolitical processes represented in the land and the territory.

— Carla Acevedo-Yates



















---

# **PINTURA MURAL**

**República Dominicana, México, Honduras, Brasil, Italia,  
Colombia y Guatemala  
2010 -2014**

---

Residue is simultaneously divine  
and satanic. It is the midwife of all  
creation and its most formidable obstacle.

**— Zygmunt Bauman**

Pintura Mural is a nomadic project carried out in 7 cities, consisting of the collection of pigments found from organic and inorganic waste that was later used to make gradations, pantones and monochromes directly on walls. It is a different way to learn about and reflect on the effects of disproportionate population growth, and to visualize some of the best kept secrets of the neoliberal economy and its waste production chain.



































---

# CHOCOBANANAGAME

Christinger De Mayo, Switzerland

2014

---

“El grano de cacao es un fenómeno, pues en ningún otro lugar la naturaleza ha concentrado tal riqueza de valiosos nutrientes en un espacio tan reducido”.

— Alexander von Humboldt

The cocoa bean is a freak of nature, for nowhere else has nature concentrated such a wealth of valuable nutrients in such a small space. Alexander von Humboldt When we Swiss travel abroad, we are associated with four things: watches, banks, cheese and chocolate. These things, which are emblematically important components of our identity, are based on very different components. The Italians' and the Fuggers' idea to organize money trafficking on an international scale was expanded by us with a few tricks and the guarantee of State stability; the immigrant refugees from France brought important know-how for the fine mechanics of the watchmaking industry. Cheese is a genuine and indigenous Swiss evolution, based on a local resource: milk. A

dán Vallecillo's (1977, Danlí, Honduras) first solo exhibition with Christinger De Mayo addresses the theme of the history of chocolate and its hidden connections between Mesoamerican history, colonization and fortunate Switzerland. However, his works and interventions are never didactic or overtly political, rather they convince through a sensual experience of a part of the world which seems far away, of which we only know little but with which we have been aligned for hundreds of years.

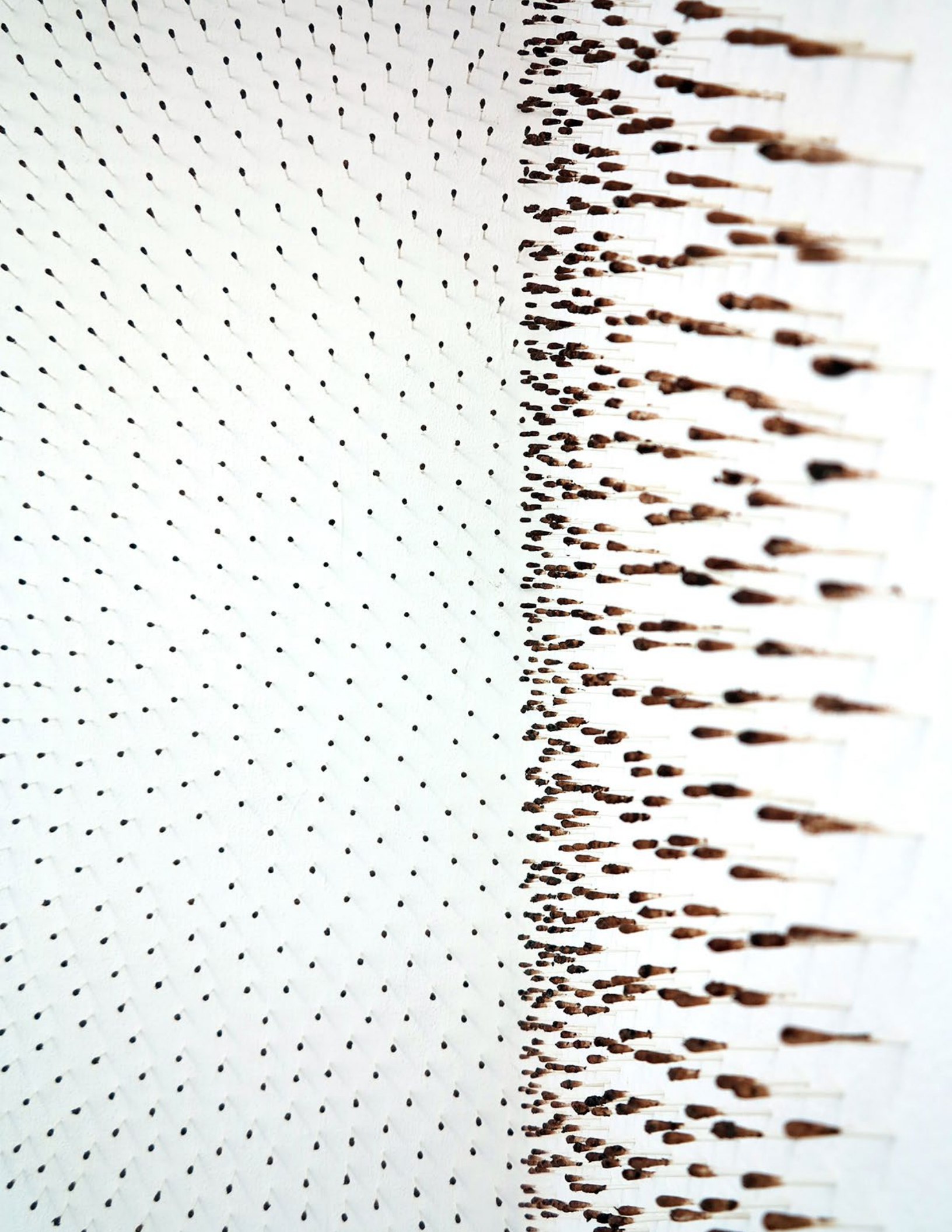
Switzerland likes to think that it has no colonial past, as it never actually possessed overseas colonies. However, through our mercantile interests, we were deeply immersed in the mechanisms that define a colonial circulation of goods. The raw material for our chocolate comes from Mesoamerica, where the fruits of the cacao tree, its pulp and kernel were prepared as a cultic beverage by the Mayans or even earlier cultures. In addition, cacao played a vital role as currency in the economic system and in politics. Products from Honduras, Adán Vallecillo's native country, have not brought much fortune to the country, as can be seen from its recent turbulent history during the Twentieth Century. Bananas, cocoa, coffee and tobacco were and still are grown under difficult conditions. For the peasants of this violence-ravaged country, profits are not enough for a humane existence. Only a rethinking of consumers in processing countries like Switzerland could lead to a change in their living conditions. In “Chocobanana Games” the fault lines and clandestine connections between Switzerland and Honduras become visible: the architecture of the Maya is reflected in the topography of a chocolate bar.

— Damian Christinger



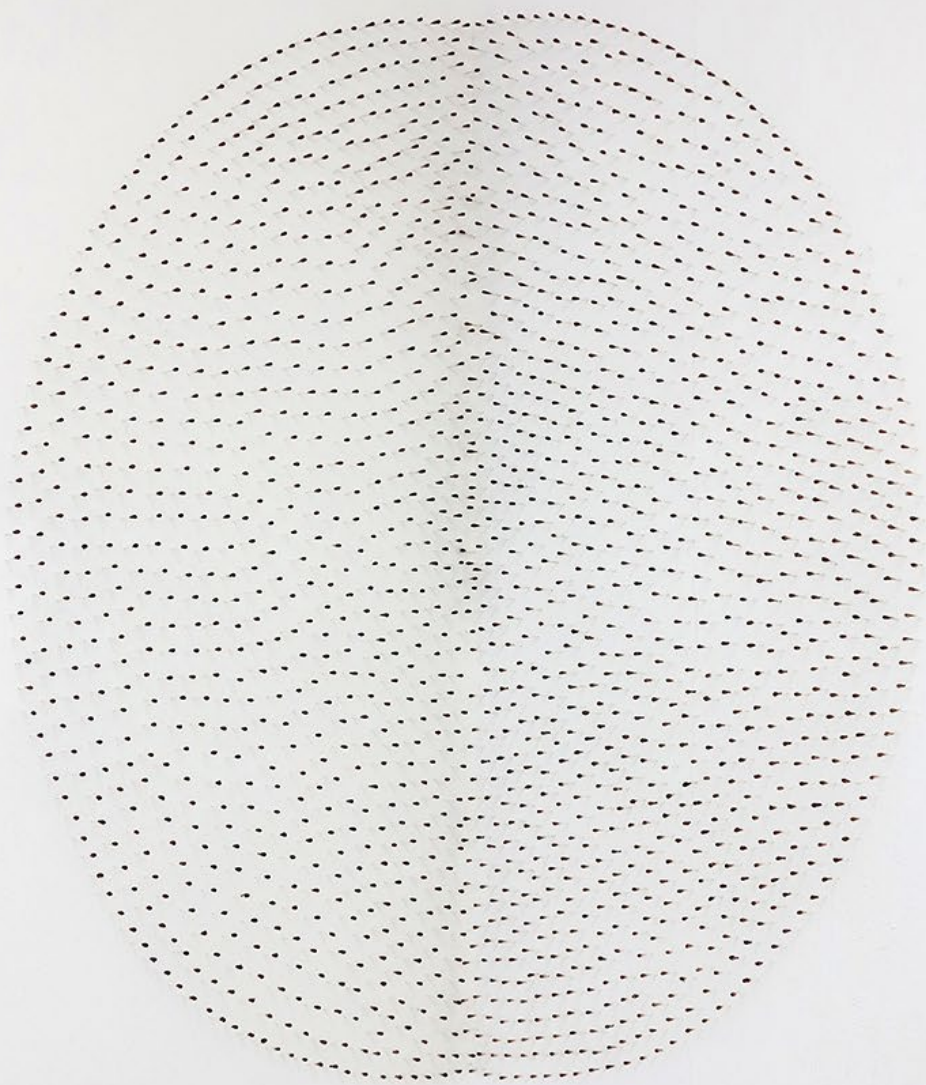
























---

# CHARTER CITY

## Museo de Arte y Diseño (MADC), Costa Rica

### 2012

---

#### Vallecillo vs. Haussmann (in the tropics)

Charter City, the “model city” project with its own laws and governance that has recently been admitted to the Honduran Congress, could have been an extreme example in Mike Davis’ chapter Haussmann in the Tropics. In a review of urban processes in which the state intervenes on behalf of foreign investors, landowners and local elites, he states, “As was the case in 1860s Paris under the fanatical reign of Baron Haussmann, urban development today continues to struggle to combine maximum private profit with maximum social control.”[1] In the midst of spatial segregation, the model city extends privatization to the entire urban territory and its social relations, challenging the very notion of a city.

Transforming metaphor into raw material, a desire of Cildo Meireles, now also implemented by Adán Vallecillo, is one of the main successes of his work. That is why I prefer to enter City Charter through its materiality and refer to an example; in Segmentario, patched scrap tires filled with valves are grouped together, devices that allow opening and closing, connecting and disconnecting, modulating or isolating the passage of liquids or gases; they become an almost ominous presence in Vallecillo’s pieces. If the valve is one of the essential control tools in industry, its proliferation in small sections is truly disturbing.

The work using manufactured industrial material points to the relationship of dependence on industrialized countries, while at the same time it operates on the physical properties and common uses of the material. Expanded polystyrene, for example, used as a thermal insulator, functions as a refrigerator in Cuba Libre and as a constructive base in Hipérbole.

But, in each case, I establish different relationships with the same element: if the former makes me focus on its impermeable condition, the latter underlines its lightness. Then, I see the tall foam buildings topped with steel clocks and I wonder why we have a model of a city here. Polystyrene responds with its ability to absorb impacts.

The increasingly sharp border between violent and safe places aggravates social and spatial segregation. At the same time, a city of people and common good is relegated to the background by public policies aimed solely at producing and policing private spaces. The safe city, that of condominiums and housing developments, is based on walled spaces, electronic surveillance devices and private security guards. Monografía records a long sequence of security company signs in Tegucigalpa, and Masterguetto piles up padlocks attached to the same walled column, as a superb means of protection. Risk appears as a structural condition and not as an anomaly.



The disorder of the spatio-temporal measure has a poetic and critical effectiveness in the work of Adán Vallecillo. In the piece that gives title to the exhibition, an extensive meter of carpenter's tape curves in space. The city chart is configured as an inexact, rather arbitrary system, incapable of accounting for reality. Faced with the failure of measurement, the meters are armed with telescopic mirrors at the ends. Like a prosthetic optical measuring instrument, reflection continues where sight is not sufficient. This similar dislocation suggests *Tres Tristes Trópicos*, with palm trees on a hydraulic platform.

The exhibition is ultimately formed in the tension between abstract space and the everyday object. For my part, I understood the enormous power of this work by Adán Vallecillo to think about the conditions of the city through Henri Lefebvre. The abstract space— says the Marxist philosopher— coincides with capitalism and its urban codes and homogenization of experience. In Adam's works, abstract space is both present in the same configuration and denied by objects with memory, debris, traces of lived experience, everything that rejects normative order or homogeneous rational space. Thus, the city proposed by the artist builder is also a space of struggle, as perhaps announced by the bugs with valves or the piece *Atari*, whose title refers to the Japanese word that, in the game of go, warns the adversary that a dangerous move has been made.

**—Tamara Díaz Bringas, 2012**

1 Mike Davis, *Planeta de ciudades miserias*, Foca, Madrid, 2007, p. 136.

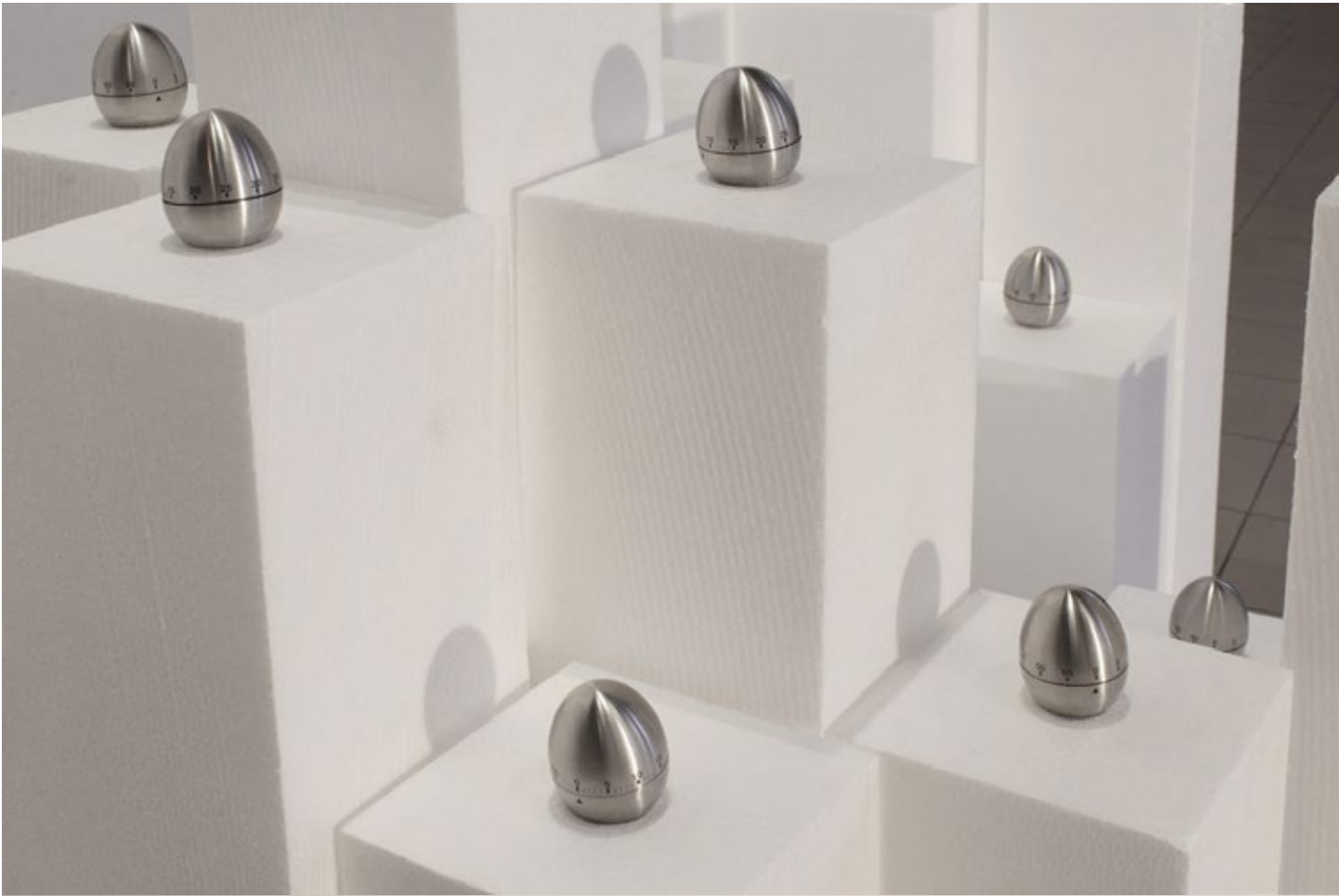
2 “¿Mis títulos? He sido seleccionado como el “artista devastador”, Haussman citado por Walter Benjamin, *Libro de los Pasajes*, Akal, Madrid, 2007, p.154.

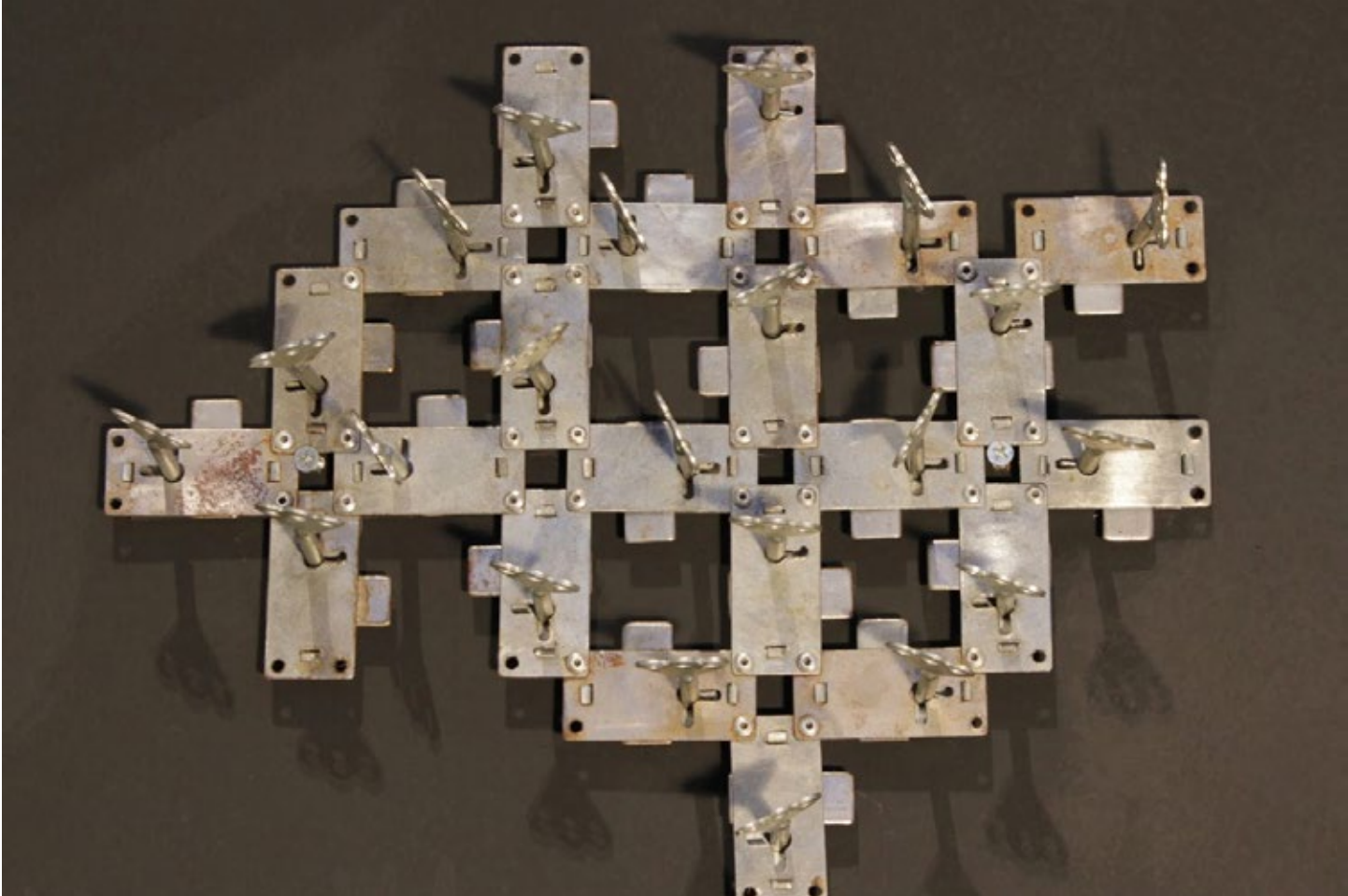






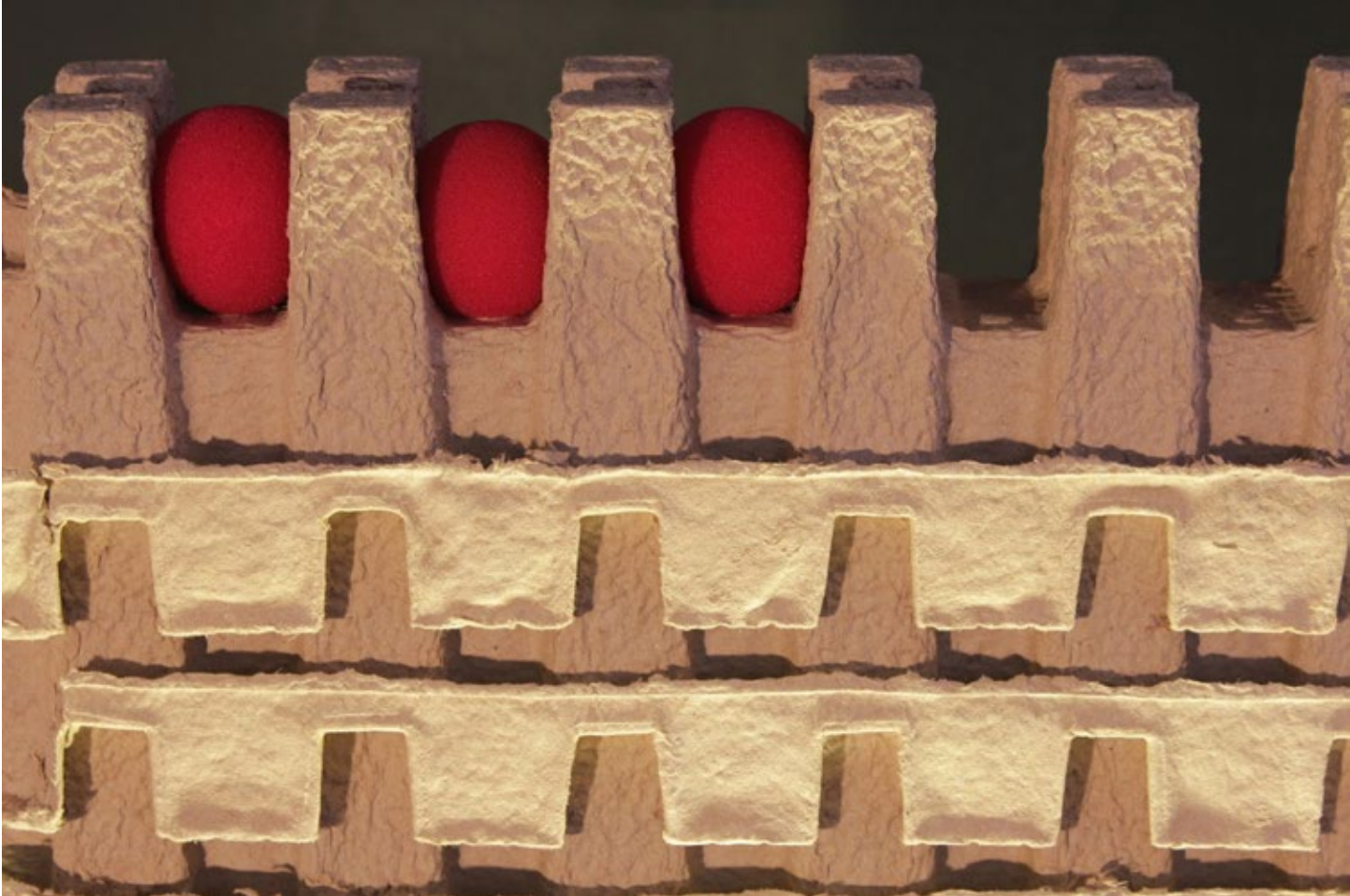




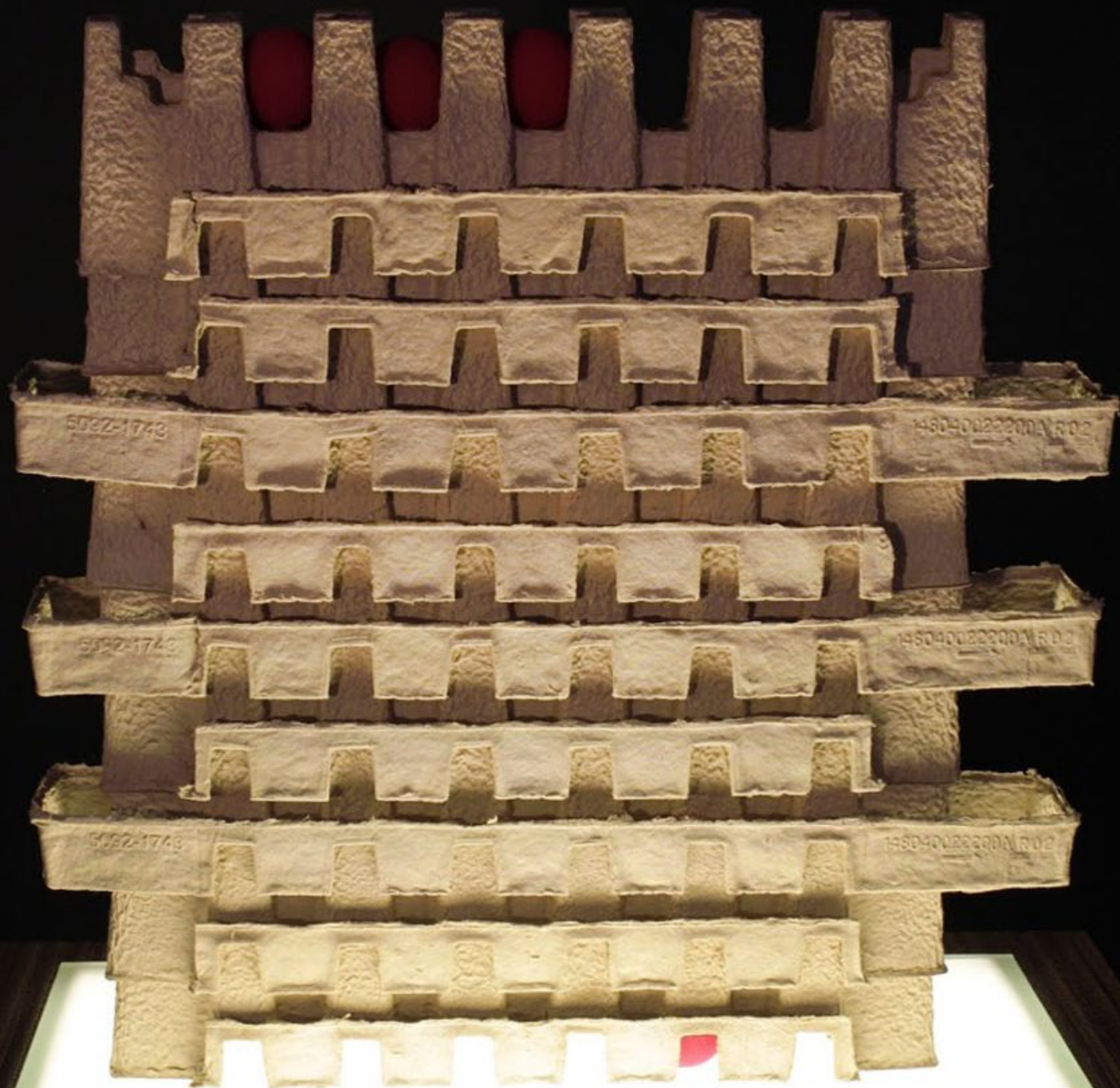












---

**TOPOGRAFÍA I**  
CIFO Collection  
2011

---









---

# SOCIEDAD ILÍCITA

## Centro Cultural de España en Tegucigalpa, Honduras

### 2008

---

This time it is Sociedad Ilícita, a name in itself contradictory (though not irrational) because it takes— as a force of sense— anomies from the periphery to the center, from exclusion and reclusion to the heart of society, an organism considered aprioristically “normal”, “correct” and “unitary”. Sociedad Ilícita is a hybrid that is in charge of putting on a public billboard a noisy reality, that is, the undesirable, the immoral and the un-normal. In other words, it is like an arrow aimed at hegemony, homogeneity and eurythmy. This is another title proposed by artist Adán Vallecillo to refer to a set of creative devices called discourses, messages, works, objects or interventions; it doesn't matter. And all this without worrying much about the adversity that such neologism could cause within the territory of the natural language. Of course, the idea does not go this far. It is an ironic meaning that intends to “imprison” the vassalage of the contemporary world.

Vallecillo has been able to inherit from democratic art that vocation for risk, suspicion and stalking, as a kind of stand against the escalation of representations, exclusions and social displacements that annul man's existence. In the current stage, vast in everything, one has to explain the scourge by the omnipresence of Capitalism. If we want to grasp the facts and deduce through them its force, regularity and effect, we cannot lose sight of it, even when we are talking about the intimacy of an isolated individual. This fulminating reality, of course, does not have the same meaning for everyone. There are those who think that this is the best of all possible worlds because of the “experiences” that derive from its wealth and power. And, on the contrary, there are those who imagine man in their own likeness, without self-consciousness, or to put it another way, without memories or hopes. Such is the case of the majority.

But the social circumstance is not the social self. Nor the ideology about reality, reality itself. Nor the current society, the whole of humanity. The representations that the dominant power offers, in addition to the terrible damage they cause to human subjectivity, only serve to make the dominion grow. When it comes to man and nature there is no other reason if not utility, used as labor force and raw material, or to be more precise, as merchandise. It is here where we have the ideas of Vallecillo, who, criticizing the illicit, unveils the matter “saying” that man— the exploited man, of course— is a simple guide, but not in the sense of being the “sight” of the blind, but the physical and mental support of the bourgeois man. With respect to this it is necessary to say that besides not working, he also does not feel the need to invent, discover and create disinterestedly, something that separates him irremediably from God. For the same reason, the bourgeois does not care about the existence “at grass level”, the hunch of his vassals and the pain of their souls. However, the man-man is more than his circumstance. He can stand upright, and better than Samsa (the Kafkaesque character), he can reach the door, open it wide, and go out and out.

Man has to become critical, one of the many paths that leads to the



truth and at the same time makes man true. Art lends itself to this cause. Hence its risk, suspicion and stalking. Hence its indignation. The power to make an alternative. A value. A vision. I say this because, looking at it closely, seeing ourselves in it, Sociedad Ilícita does not seem to come from any other ideological consanguinity. It is a strong and merciless conceptual platform, but never dogmatic or pamphlet-like. Let us also say that in its passages there is no room for anything other than radicalism, in the truest sense of the term: going to the essence of reality. Vallecillo's work is already well within this matter. That of getting muddied in the viscera of man. Because for him it is there where horror, violence, tenderness and love are presented in a complete and simultaneous way? For this moment we must point out something else, and that is that his "aestheticisms" and "contemplations" are less, and as Duchamp wanted, the concepts more.

For the same reason, his exhibition is a refracted structure, or better, a distributed form. Seen in this way, it would be a risk to propose to look for a closed sense for each "section", obviating the relationships between them. obviating the relationships between them and those deriving from the "artistic complex". For the same reason, each artistic section, so to speak, refuses to "tell" us the facts in their absolute and visible phase. Each work is a representation of a cause, a detail or a premonition. It is a matter of relativizing everything so that it is the public who carries out the signic "reconstruction". The work insinuates, beats, flickers, underlines, but it is not everything. The other part is the experience, the experience and the sensibility of the subject, of that seeker of open dialogues. With this premise I will soon be on the lookout for this aesthetic itinerary, certain that there are nooks and crannies that are still unthinkable.

Espacio Político Pagado is a work with a sonic value, a place to listen to the fall of the blade as a threat, a warning and even a memory. That is why the listener cannot refrain from looking beyond the inner circle of the city to the violent times of the ghettos, the concentration camps and the prisons. But the image is unstoppable: the city, the nation and the world can feel the same threat in unison. The work, in the face of this, is hardly a fiction, an ungraspable thorn if we are to consider the variation of the air, the disdain of routine and the lack of retentiveness. This simple speaker "says" all this in a simple voice, as if it were the whisper of a self-absorbed streetwalker.

Panóptico is another "exterior" work, a further strand of Vallecillo's stalking. Undoubtedly, there are several detours, but one of them must be related to the power of surveillance. That is why it is called thus: pan-optic, to see everything, total vigilance. The eye of a landowner, perched on a high tower, so that no one dares to go outside the field. Then the same thing happens—the game is to look at the whole for the parts: the cart is used not to refer to the construction men, but to the hard work, to the hot sun that hits their backs. But not this sun, but the physical and spiritual obfuscation produced by the nooks and crannies, those territories called factories, maquilas, industries, haciendas, etc.

Without entering the galleries we can still see Escafandra, an old black and languid dress, put between a rock and a hard place, as they say in the country. It is a question here of returning to the theme of power, with its abstract measure of things and beings. A clicker is the beginning of this work, an instrument that, as if it were

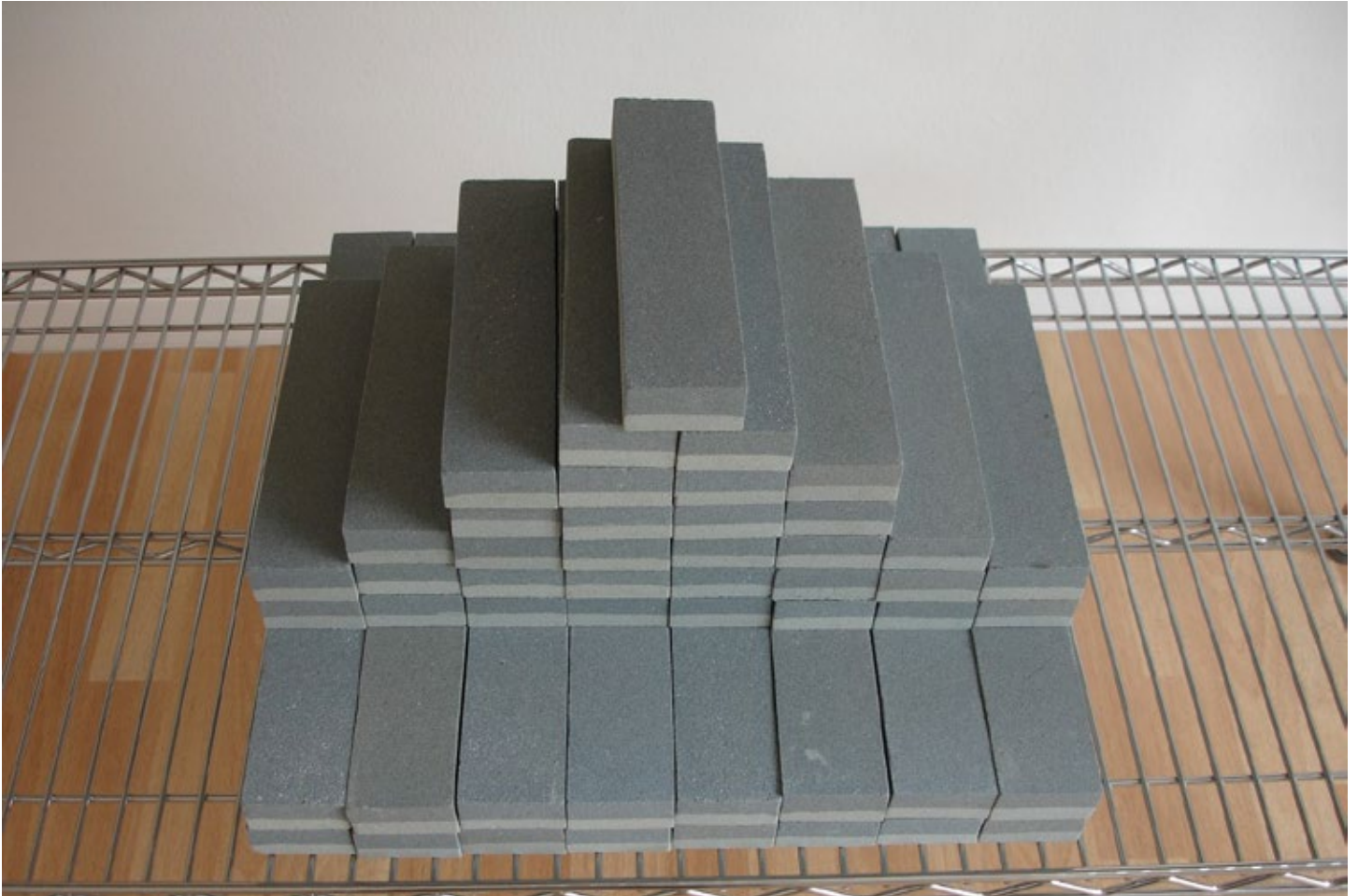
a pacemaker, can even program death, that vital state that never ceases to be symbolic in its turn. Hedonism and nihilism can be understood as faces of this same way, pruritus of the same social cancer. And that of the umbrella. Some hint of escape; or that somersault that we are always postponing. It is no coincidence that his thing is to point to the sky.

This Illicit Society is the same one we suspected some time ago, but without the intelligent and sensitive body that Art offers. This already existed as a reality and concern; as a daily theme. However, we lacked the aesthetic form of Adán Vallecillo. For this reason we considered waiting. Afterwards, it only remains to assume that this station is not the end of the track, but another newly paved stretch.

— Ramón Caballero

















# Experimento

- 1) En un recipiente de agua fría introduzca algunas ranas.
- 2) Coloque el recipiente sobre una estufa. Al principio los animales examinan su entorno con curiosidad, entonces aproveche para ir subiendo la temperatura lentamente.
- 3) Las ranas, animales de sangre fría, se adaptan a la nueva temperatura. Mientras tanto, en aras de la demostración científica, continuamos calentando el recipiente. Los animales colaboran. No parecen sentir molestias. Quizá encuentren que el agua está un poco caliente, pero continúan adaptándose.
- 4) La temperatura del agua es cada vez más alta. Las ranas, con una capacidad de supervivencia pasmosa, continúan tranquilas, quizá ligeramente nerviosas en su nuevo ambiente.
- 5) Finalmente, a partir de los 90 grados centígrados, los sistemas de adaptación de los animales colapsan y entonces mueren de repente, completamente cocidos.



---

**HOSTIAS**

Daros Latinamerica Collection, Switzerland

2007

---





# ADÁN VALLECILLO

Danli, Honduras, 1977

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Alvéolas y Detritos. NADA Miami 2023, Miami, FL, USA.
- 2023 Injertos. Galería Extra, Guatemala City, Guatemala.
- 2023 Buenas Commodities. Galería Diablo Rosso, Panama City, Panama.
- 2019 Hipercapnia. Galería Diablo Rosso, Panama City, Panama.
- 2019 Sobrenatural. Galería Extra, Guatemala City, Guatemala.
- 2019 Materia Remota. MIN, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2016 32 con 8. El Lobi, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2015 Movimiento de Tierras. Galería 80m2, Lima, Peru.
- 2015 Residual. Galería PM8, Vigo, Spain.
- 2014 Interpelaciones. Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros, Mexico City, Mexico.
- 2014 Chocobananagame. Christinger de Mayo Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland.
- 2013 Adonde Va... Palazetto Tito, Dorsoduro, Venice, Italy.
- 2013 Pintura Política. Galería PM8, Vigo, Spain.
- 2013 Sala Eccepolis. Luis Miro Quesada, Lima, Peru.
- 2013 Frescos Fetiches. Centro de Artes Visuales, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2013 Charter City. Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2013 Sedimentos Ex-Teresa. Arte Actual, Mexico City, Mexico.
- 2011 Dis-tensiones. Galería 80m2, Lima, Peru.
- 2008 Sociedad Ilícita. Centro Cultural de España, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2007 Denominaciones y Retroskopías. Teorética, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2006 El Poder de la Asepsia. Fundación Image Art Factory, Belize City, Belize.
- 2005 Panópticos. Antiguo local de Galería Portales, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 1995 Sugerencia, Textura y Volumen. Galería Paradiso, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Primavera Silenciosa. Luciana Brito Galería, São Paulo, Brazil.
- 2023 Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora 1990s-Today. ICA, Boston, MA, USA.
- 2023 CIFO Arward. Museum of Contemporary Art MARCO, Monterrey, Mexico.
- 2022 Forecast Form: Art in the Caribbean Diaspora 1990s-Today. MCA, Chicago, IL, USA.
- 2022 Los ríos pueden existir sin agua pero no sin orillas. MAC, Lima, Peru.
- 2022 El sonido de las voces que se hunden. CCET, Honduras.
- 2022 Muestra Colectiva. Diablo Rosso Gallery, Panama City, Panama.
- 2021 15 Bienal de Cuenca. Ecuador.
- 2021 Entre Formas. Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico.
- 2021 Cubo Negro. MADC, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2020 Bienal FEMSA. Inestimable Azar, Michoacán, Mexico.
- 2020 Historias de Abstracción: Arte Latinoamericano Contemporáneo en el Contexto Global. Phoenix Art Museum. Phoenix, AZ, USA.
- 2020 El Castillo de las Junglas Imposibles. Art & Château 2020, Burgundy, France.
- 2020 Stones: Meditations on Resistance and Healing from Central America. The Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University. Richmond, VA, USA.
- 2019 Nature Distante. CAN Neuchâtel, Switzerland.
- 2019 Centroamérica: deseo de lugar. Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC), Mexico City, Mexico.

2019 Al Dictado. Arte y Conflicto en Centroamérica. CCET, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

2019 Portadores de Sentido. Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico.

2019 World Art Tokyo. Tokyo International Forum, Japan.

2018 Exposición Anual. Flora Ars+ Natura, Bogotá, Colombia.

2018 Estados Migratorios. CCEL, Lima, Peru.

2018 Al Dictado. Arte y Conflicto en Centroamérica. MAMM, Medellín, Colombia.

2017 8,000 Años Después. Liberia, Bogotá, Colombia.

2017 First Day of Good Weather. Sies + Höke Galerie, Düsseldorf, Germany.

2016 Everyday Alchemy. Galería Von Bartha, Basel, Switzerland.

2016 Everyday Reflections in Abstraction. The Space, Irvine, CA, USA.

2016 Bienal Internacional de Cuenca. Ecuador.

2016 Trienal Poligráfica de San Juan. Puerto Rico.

2016 Bienal de Mercosur. Porto Alegre, Brazil.

2016 Monochrome Undome. Sayago & Pardon Collection, Irvine, CA, USA.

2016 Turn on the bright lights. Center of Performing and Visual Arts, Ramapo College, New Jersey.

2015 Impulse, Reason, Sense, Conflict. CIFO Art Space, Miami, FL, USA.

2015 Bienal de Montevideo. Uruguay.

2015 Mirroring. Galería PM8, Vigo, Spain.

2015 XX Bienal de Arte Paiz, Guatemala City, Guatemala.

2015 Bienal de Cartagena. Colombia.

2015 El día que nos hicimos contemporáneos. MADC, San José, Costa Rica.

2015 De su largo llanto se formó El Amazonas. Sala Raúl Porras, Lima, Peru.

2014 Uncertain Identities. Carroll Fletcher Gallery, London, UK.

2013 Alternatives Histories. Christinger de Mayo Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland.

2013 You will never walk alone again. Radiator Gallery, New York, NY.

2013 California-Pacific Triennial. Orange County Museum of Art, CA.

2013 7ma. Bienal de Curitiba. Brazil.

2012 Caribe: Encrucijada del Mundo Museo del Barrio. New York, NY.

2011 Demolición Construcción. Córdoba, Argentina.

2011 (S) Files. Bienal del Museo del Barrio, New York, NY.

2011 Entre Siempre y Jamás, 54 Bienal de Venice, Italy.

2011 Miradas Sin coordenadas. La Casona, Galería 80m2, Lima, Peru.

2011 Ex Teresa Arte Actual, Triangulo C-S-C, video arte de América Latina. Mexico City, Mexico.

2010 Muestra Internacional de Performance. Mexico City, Mexico.

2010 Bienal del Istmo Centroamericano. Managua, Nicaragua.

2010 I Trienal del Caribe. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

2010 Bienal de Artes Visuales. Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

2010 Bienal de Pontevedra. Spain.

2010 Centroamérica Unida por el Arte. El Sitio, Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala.

2009 Migraciones. Mirando al sur. Centro Cultural de España, San Salvador, El Salvador.

2009 Lamanchadetomate (Exhibición de Apertura). Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

2009 Pintura. Proyecto Incompleto. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española, Antigua, Guatemala.

2009 Décima Bienal de la Habana. Fortaleza de San Carlos de la Cabaña, la Habana, Cuba.

2009 Nostalgia de Futuro, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Valencia, Spain.

2009 Migraciones. Mirando al sur. Centro de Cultura Hispánica, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

2009 Migraciones. Mirando al sur. Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española, Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala.

2008 Bienal de Artes Visuales del Istmo Centroamericano, Museo para la Identidad Nacional, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.



- 2008 Valoarte, Museo del niño, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2008 Bienal de Artes Visuales de Honduras. Museo para la Identidad Nacional, Tegucigalpa Honduras.
- 2008 Diezpliegues. Centro Cultural de España, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2007 Antología de las Artes Plásticas, Salón de invitados. Galería Nacional de Arte, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2007 Sub-versiones de la pintura, Obras de la colección del MADC. Galería del Auditorio Roberto Sasso, Universidad Veritas, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2007 Exhibición Anual de Arte Latinoamericano. Museo de Arte Latinoamericano (MoLAA), Los Ángeles, CA.
- 2007 Landings 5, Museo de la OEA, Washington DC.
- 2007 Puntos de Vista. Museo de Arte contemporáneo BOCHUM, Bochum, Germany.
- 2007 Landings 4. Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (MADC), San José, Costa Rica.
- 2006 Límites, Estrecho Dudoso. Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2006 Antología de las Artes Plásticas. Galería Nacional de Arte, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2006 V Bienal Centroamericana de Artes Visuales. Museo MARTE, San Salvador, El Salvador.
- 2006 I Bienal de Artes Visuales. Exposición Núcleo. Museo de la Identidad Nacional, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2006 I Bienal Nacional de Artes Visuales. Museo de la Identidad Nacional, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
- 2006 Landings Tres. Centro León, Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic.
- 2006 Concurso Centroamericano de Artistas Emergentes. Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica.
- 2006 Landings II. Centro de Artes Visuales, Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico.

## **AWARDS & RESIDENCIES**

- 2020 Prize Mid-Career Artist, CIFO Grants and Commissions.
- 2018 FLORA ars+natura, Bogotá, Colombia.
- 2017 LARA (Latin American Roaming Art), Panama City, Panama.
- 2015 La Práctica, Beta Local, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- 2013 Illy SustainArt Award, Fundación Bevilacqua la Masa Venice, Italy.
- 2011 Demolición Construcción, Córdoba, Argentina.

## **ART COLLECTIONS**

- The Bronx Museum of Arts. New York, NY, USA.
- Phoenix Art Museum. Phoenix, AZ, USA.
- Daros Collection. Zurich, Switzerland.
- CIFO Foundation. Miami, FL, USA.
- Teorética. San José, Costa Rica.
- Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros. New York, NY, USA.
- Museum of Latin American Art. Los Angeles, CA, USA.
- Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica.
- Saxo Bank, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- LARA Project, Singapore.
- Novartis Collection. Basel, Switzerland.

---

**E X T R A G A L E R Í A**

---

**SILVIA DE TRES  
DIRECTORA  
+502 5527 6519  
SILVIA@EXTRAGALERIA.COM  
WWW.EXTRAGALERIA.COM**