

THE NEW FACE OF COLOMBIA

LA CARA NUEVA DE COLOMBIA

1st NOVEMBER - 19th NOVEMBER 2016

Curated by Sandra Higgins



**183-185 Bermondsey Street
London SE1 3UW**

abps@project-space.london

0203 441 5152

Designed by Devyn Maher

© 2016

Message from the Ambassador



EMBAJADA DE COLOMBIA

3 HANS CRESCENT, LONDON SW1X 0LN
TEL: 020-7589 9177 FAX: 020-7581 1829

GREETING FROM THE AMBASSADOR NÉSTOR OSORIO LONDOÑO

Colombians' contribution in the field of arts has been very note-worthy in the last years. The Embassy of Colombia in the UK is delighted to support "The New Face of Colombia – La Cara Nueva de Colombia" exhibition as it gathers the artwork of talented artists who have strong relationship with Colombia. The exhibition, curated by Sandra Higgins, is a perfect scenario to understand the identity of Colombians.

NÉSTOR OSORIO LONDOÑO
Ambassador



CANCILLERÍA



Embajada de Colombia en el Reino Unido

Foreword

My interest in Colombia and its art and culture was first awakened some years ago through my friendship and professional relationship with the distinguished Colombian artist Ofelia Rodríguez. Ofelia exhibited in my London gallery in 1990 and through the ensuing years we continued to work together frequently exhibiting her work and sharing our mutual love of the fantastic surreal creations she produced, inspired by her Colombian heritage. Subsequently, when she invited me in 2013 to visit her and her husband, Rurik Ingram, at their home and her studio in Cartagena, I leapt at the chance to experience what had captured her imagination. Ofelia and I travelled to Santa Marta for an exhibition of her work at the Bolivarian Museum of Contemporary Art. I then went on to Barranquilla, where she was born, and afterwards I visited Bogotá, Medellín and Cali.

Since 2013, I have returned to Colombia annually. Last year I decided to live there for seven months in order to meet many more artists throughout the country. While in Bogota, I was asked to curate an exhibition for the Colombian/British artist Omar Castañeda titled “Panela: the New Gold of Colombia” at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Bogotá. During my stay I had the privilege of travelling extensively throughout all of the regions of Colombia and thus have met and become friends with many more Colombian artists whom I admire greatly.

This exhibition is in many ways a culmination of my visits and my observations of Colombia artistically, socially and politically. As the title I chose for this exhibition suggests, it is a look at the changing structure of Colombian society, it is the NEW FACE OF COLOMBIA now emerging as a vital source of creativity in the arts which I personally know it to be. Any country, I feel, is a product of the art and culture it reflects from within and this can be a powerful source for change and a positive national image.

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge my dear friend Ofelia Rodríguez for the inspiration she has been not only to me but for many Colombian artists today. Secondly and equally important to me, I would like to thank the many Colombians who made me feel so welcome and have become my friends.

As the old slogan says, *the only risk in Colombia is wanting to stay.*

Sandra Higgins
Independent Art Advisor and Curator
London
2016

Introduction

Robert Mykle is an American award-winning author and an avid explorer and adventurer of Colombia. His latest book, the non-fictional “En busca de Caño Cristales,” was published in Colombia this year in Spanish. Robert currently lives in Florida, while still making frequent trips to South America, Europe and Asia.

Living in Colombia for fifteen years I was lucky enough to see many changes: politically, socially and culturally. It was during the 1980s and 1990s that I was most familiar. While much of the art of this period was over influenced by European and American counterparts a number of artists broke out with native originality such as Alejandro Obregón, Juan Antonio Roda, Edgar Negret and Fernando Botero whose paintings and sculptures stress the beautiful landscapes of the country and its indigenous cultures; the seas of Obregón reflecting his adopted home of Barranquilla and Botero with his plump people doing everyday tasks and being simply Colombian.

Many of the artists like Roda and Luis Caballero’s art pictured La Violencia that was racking Colombia at this time but the artists, like the country, have always been resilient and they are survivors and it reflects in their art.

Today it appears peace is breaking out and while there will be bumps in the road, the future of Colombia has never seemed brighter and the same can be said for the new crop of artists. Exhibitions like The New Face of Colombia are the important vehicles for incubating the new talent and could foster a new Botero or Obregón.



Reflections on Colombia...

Participating Artists...

Omar Castañeda... In the current world geopolitical landscape where migration is at the centre of the turmoil, building bridges instead of walls is a complex and delicate task, even if those are metaphoric connections. Once settled in a foreign country, often there is a long period where the mind is split between those two lands: the host and the homeland. Complications arise when the feeling of being a permanent foreigner doesn't subside with time. Feeling as though one foot is in each country, the complete sense of belonging is gone.



As a British and Colombian artist, I have chosen to use Panela (the sugar cane) as the medium for my work. To me it is a metaphor for a lost empire, a war about to finish, myths and celebrities and all of that under an almost anthropological lens. It is my attempt to bridge two cultures that actually have no physical borders but a vast ocean between them.



Gwen Burnyeat... When I first started to work in Colombia I was captivated by the complexity of the armed conflict, but also by the extraordinary resilience and generosity of people who had lived in the midst of war, yet had managed, like the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, to build peace from the grassroots by imagining how to create human and economic solidarity. This has inspired me to write my book and to produce my film, as a way of communicating with the world about the light of hope from Colombia.

Participating Artists...

Piers Calvert... Colombia is a rich web of people, traditions, wildlife and geography, much of which have been ignored or forgotten by the outside world, who have kept their distance in recent decades.

Great things await those adventurous and creative types who today make the effort to venture out into little-documented areas, speaking to the locals, learning from them and exploring further. A treasure trove of inspirational material awaits them there beyond.



Lorena Cervera... In 2014 I won a scholarship by Ibermedia to attend a course in Creative Documentary at the Universidad del Valle, in Colombia. This episode changed my life irreversibly. Here I delved into cinema as a tool to think, act, and transform.

I fell in love with a country that, to me, has been distracted by war for too long without addressing its main problems: poverty and inequality. Thus I decided to contribute to social change in Colombia through making a documentary film about the ambitions of young girls from underprivileged backgrounds who dream of becoming musicians, doctors, teachers. My aim is to help to make their voices heard, their stories seen, and their dreams come true.

Participating Artists...

María Cárdenas... Colombia is always an inspiration, and it has always been an influence. The natural style that people have, always shines through, as well as the warmth of family and friends. The making skills learned at home from an early age, and the sense of style and poise learned by observing fellow Caleñas has been so important.



Andrés Beltrán... Colombia is not only my homeland. It is also the place where my passion to film was born. Moreover it is a place full of new ideas and people with the will to change their reality. That is why film, literature, arts and music, become so important to us. They give people the opportunity to build a new reality.

Álvaro Diego Gómez Campuzano... In Colombia the art of fishing with “Atarraya” (fishing net) exalts the customs and traditions of the community, strengthening the ties with our ancestors. It is a vestige of cultural and artistic tradition left in oblivion. Through weaving man manages to find the opportunity to transform their existence, as a net between people that gives life solution for development. When the Atarraya is launched into space in circular motion, she creates vibrant intersecting contours; that seems as an energy source constantly changing. Colombia is a symbol of resilience, a nation that adapts to adverse conditions, that despite the conflict, war and lack of opportunities. The people seeks to build with their hands an historical, cultural and artistic identity.





Visions of Colombia...

Omar Castañeda... Panela: The Golden Age

Omar Castañeda

Contemporary: no longer produced or used; out of date,
Metal, sugar cane (panela) Gold 24ct,
11x7x6cm, 2016



Omar Castañeda

Every man has property in his own person

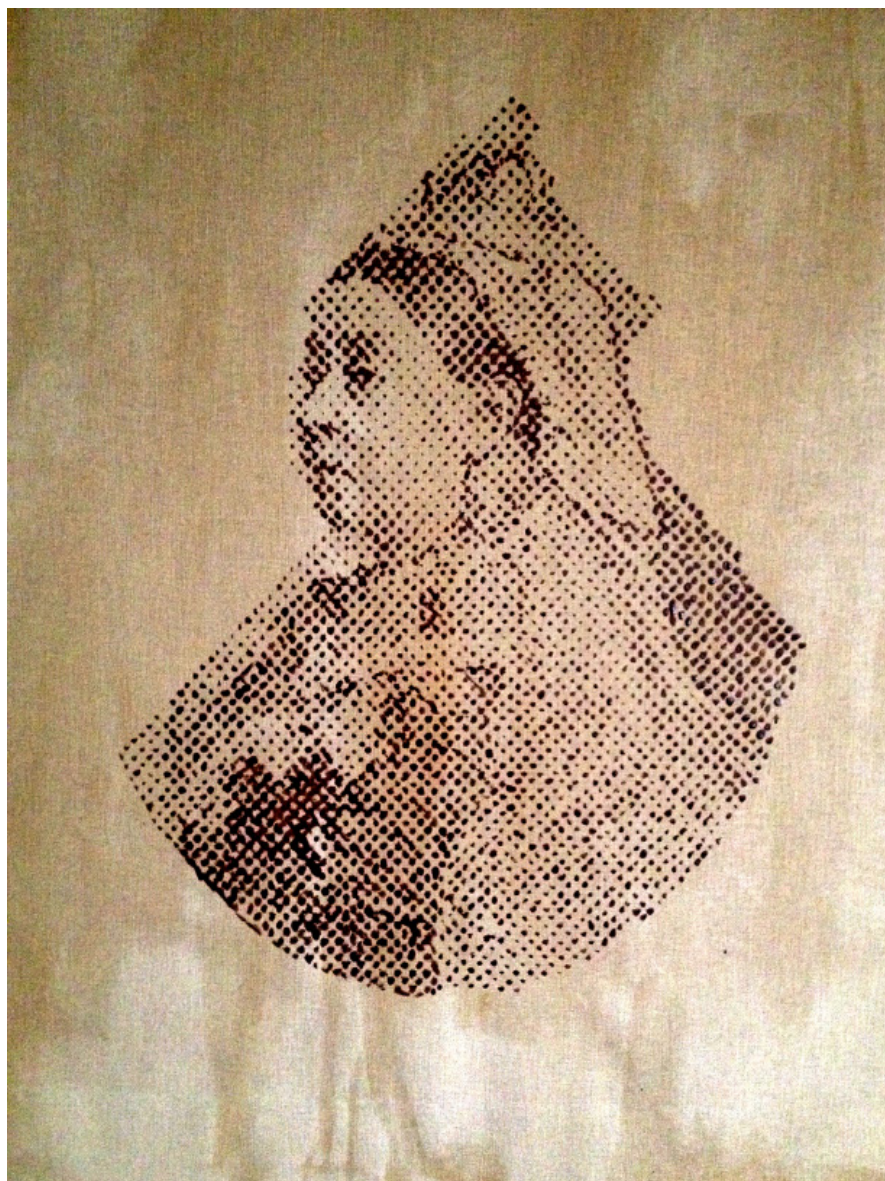
Paper, Sugar cane (panela) and Gold 24ct ink on cotton paper

34 x 24 cm

2016



Omar Castañeda
The Garden of Delight - Queen Victoria
2.50 x1.75 mts
sugar cane ink on canvas
2016

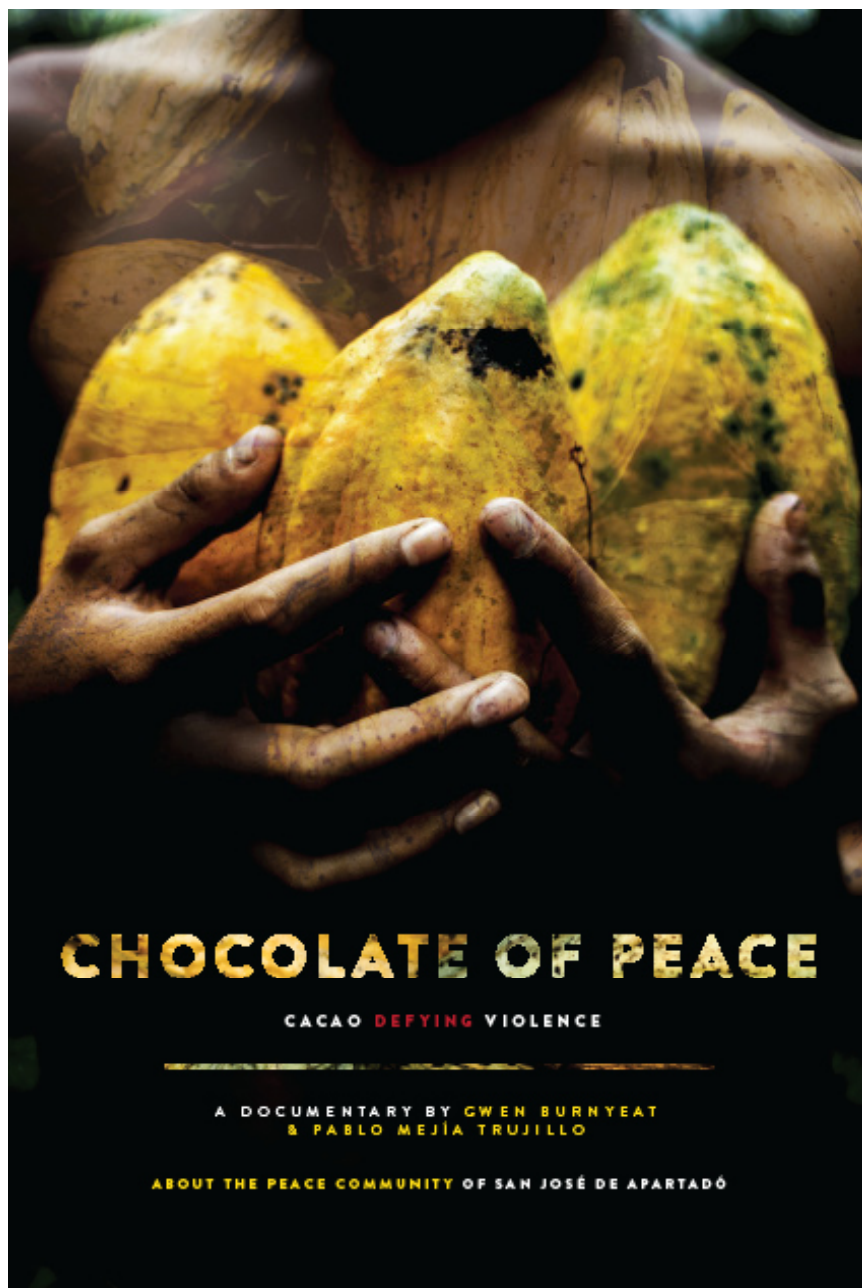


Gwen Burnyeat... Chocolate of Peace

Gwen Burnyeat

Poster for the documentary video Chocolate of Peace

2016



CHOCOLATE OF PEACE

CACAO DEFYING VIOLENCE

A DOCUMENTARY BY GWEN BURNYEAT
& PABLO MEJIA TRUJILLO

ABOUT THE PEACE COMMUNITY OF SAN JOSÉ DE APARTADO

Gwen Burnyeat

Brigida González and the painting of the Mulatos massacre,
2016



Piers Calvert... The Way We Are Now / Muzo

Piers Calvert

Miner

2015



Piers Calvert

Left: Miner and Right: the iconic and mythical mountains Fura and Tena straddling the Rio Minero, and under which legendary deposits of emeralds are said to lie.

2016



Piers Calvert

Guardianes del Bosque

166 x 125 cm

2012



Claudia Fischer... As the Tree Under the Hurricane

Claudia Fischer

Poster for the documentary film *As the Tree Under the Hurricane* (Anti & Mindhiwa)
2015

ATI ANA MELISA VILLAFANA MINDHIWA MARGARITA VILLAFANA
DIRECTION-PRODUCTION-CASTING-EDITING-CLAUDIA FISCHER
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY NATALIE GANFERT-CARLOS ALMENDROS-OLIVERIO VILLAFANA
SOUND MIXING ALEXANDER VARGAS FINAL SOUND MIX RICARDO ESCALLON
PRESS AND MARKETING MARÍA FERNANDA HARRINGTON-IVÁN DARIO HERNÁNDEZ GRAPHIC DESIGN JUANITA CARRILLO-RANTIGO MENDOZA



A DOCUMENTARY BY CLAUDIA FISCHER

AS THE TREE UNDER THE HURRICANE

- ATI & MINDHIWA -



 Palmigraías Colombia
Financiamiento

 KIN
- TO

Claudia Fischer

Still shot from the documentary video As the Tree Under the Hurricane (Anti & Mindhiwa),
2015



María Cárdenas... La Guayabera de la Paz

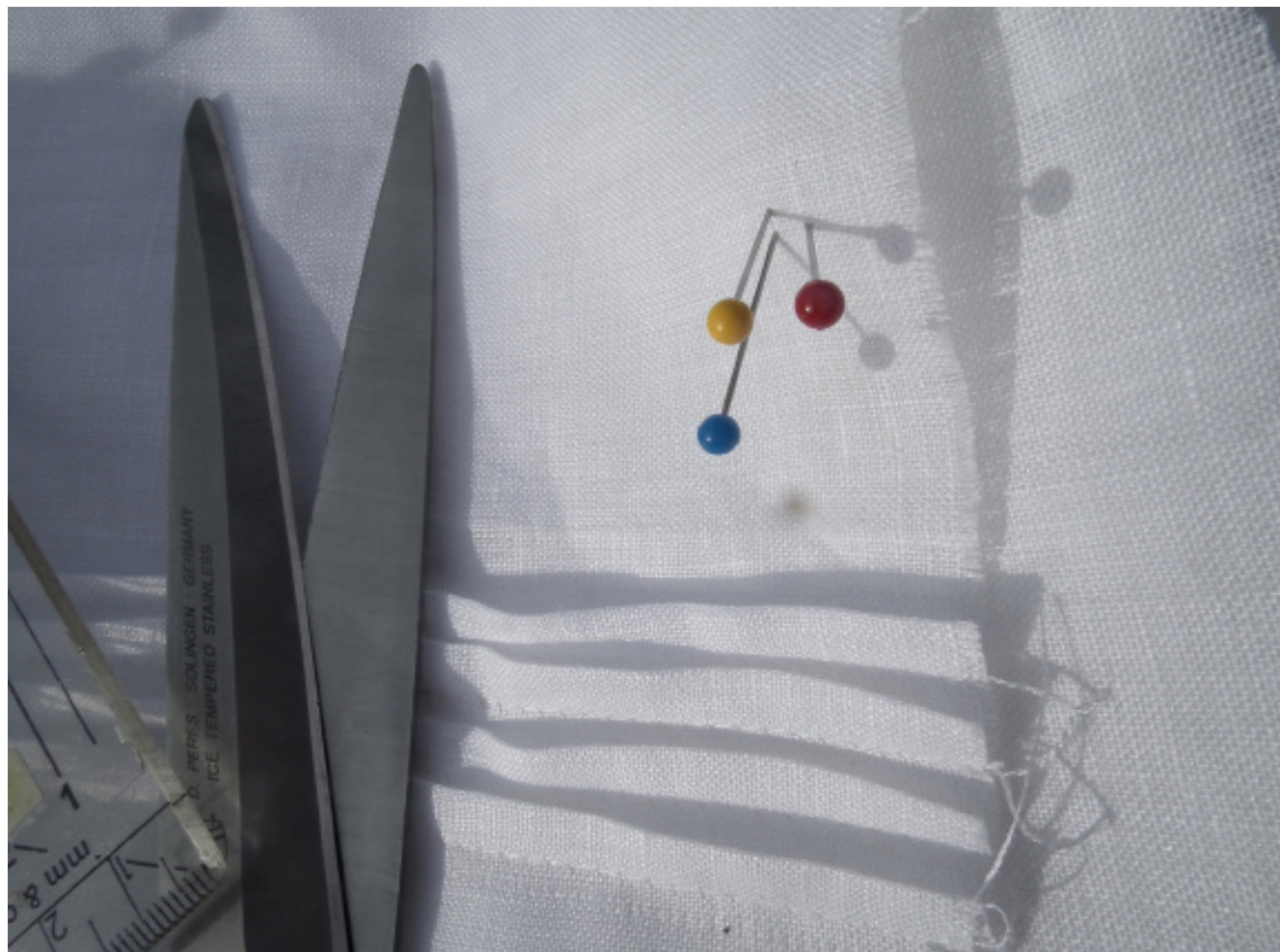
María Cárdenas

55cm x 40cm x 30cm each

2011



María Cárdenas
55cm x 40cm x 30cm each
2011

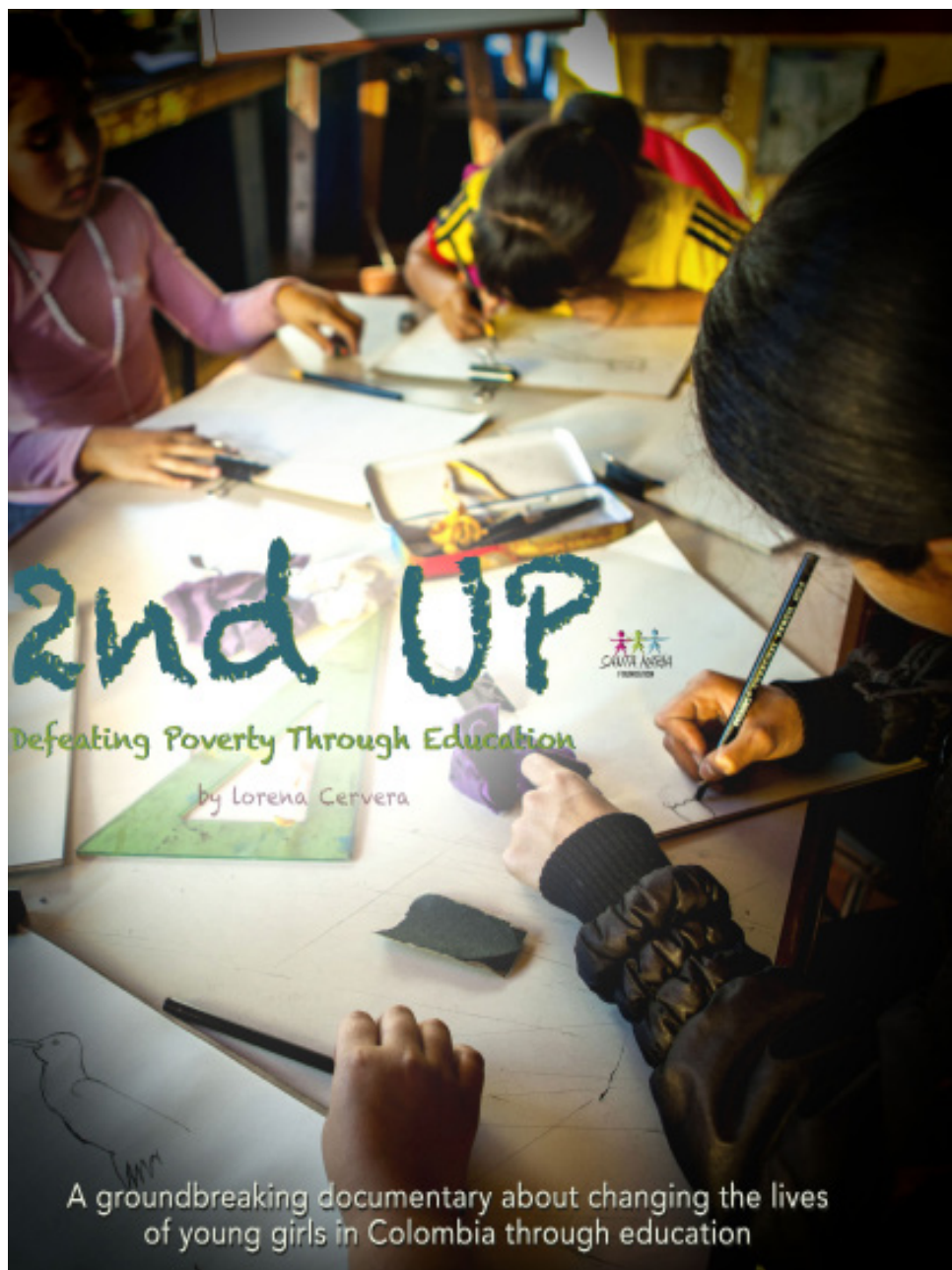


Lorena Cervera... 2nd Up

Lorena Cervera

Poster from the video documentary, 2nd UP

2015



2nd UP



Defeating Poverty Through Education

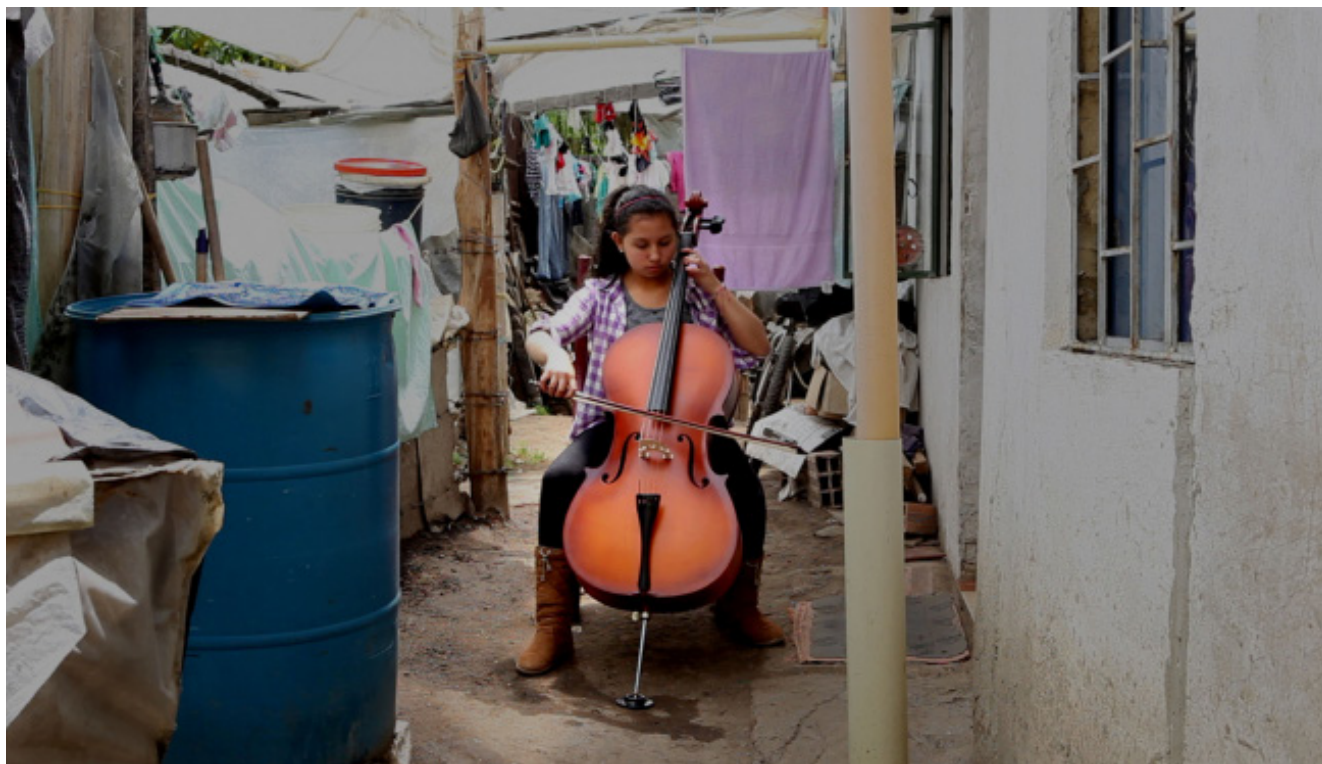
by Lorena Cervera

A groundbreaking documentary about changing the lives
of young girls in Colombia through education

Lorena Cervera

Erika

2015



Erwin Goggel... Palenque de San Basilio

Erwin Goggel

Poster from the video documentary From the Palenque de San Basilio
1986-1985

"Del palenque de San Basilio"




Andrés Beltrán... El Librero

Andrés Beltrán

Poster from the video film El Librero

2013



EL TRUENO EN LA PLAYA PRESENTA "EL LIBRERO" DIEGO GARCÍA ISABEL LUYANDI + FABIÓ ACOSTA MÓNICA EDU. JAMES
DIRECTOR DE ARTE ARMANDO MESAS DIRECTOR DE FOTOGRAFÍA CAMILO PARRALES PRODUCTOR POR FELIPE LINARES + ANDRÉS BELTRÁN
MÚSICA COMPUESTA POR FELIPE LINARES GUION Y DIALOGO POR ANDRÉS BELTRÁN TODOS LOS DERECHOS RESERVADOS 2013. 

Andrés Beltrán

Still shot of Diego Garzon as the Bookseller in “El Librero”
2013



Álvaro Diego Gómez Campuzano... Atarraya

Álvaro Diego Gómez Campuzano

photo credit: Juan Pablo Benavides

La Boquilla Fishermen

2016



Álvaro Diego Gómez Campuzano

Atarraya Launching - Relief

La Boquilla

2016



Biographies...

Omar Castañeda... has an MA in Fine Arts from Saint Martin's Art College in London as well as a degree in Fine Art from The Andes University, Bogotá, Colombia.

Although he has lived in England for over a decade, he still remains close to his Colombian heritage. This is the reason why he keeps exploring subjects and materials related to his native South America. His main inspiration and resource when creating art is food. By using common natural elements as metaphors he dissects the past of towns and regions, tells personal stories and recreates armed conflicts, both current and past.

...

Gwen Burnyeat... is a British anthropologist based in Colombia and the UK. From September she will be a Wolfson scholar at UCL researching the anthropology of the Colombian peace process. She has been lecturer in political anthropology at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, where she also obtained a Master in Anthropology. Her research was on the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, and was the basis of the documentary *Chocolate of Peace*. Her thesis will be published as an academic book in English in 2017 by Palgrave Macmillan.

...

Piers Calvert... is a freelance photographer who has spent four years living in Bogotá and working throughout Colombia. His work has taken him across the country, from its deserts to its jungles, in particular spending much time working with the indigenous communities in the country's various jungles and documentary projects involving coffee, cacao and emeralds.

He first went to visit the Muzo emerald mines in 2010, and has since returned several times, most recently in late 2015 for the branding and launch of the newly established Muzo Emerald company.

...

Claudia Fischer... is a Colombian artist graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris. Since seventeen, she has been working in many art fields. Claudia worked as painter, conservator of easel, mural, fresco and paintings; conservator of wood sculpture, wood artifacts and altarpieces; designer of furniture, art director for TV series, and art director and production designer for movies, all of it between France, Italy and Colombia. Also, she is a co-founder of projects to protect and create employment for the artisans women in Colombia.

...

...

Lorena Cervera... Cinema has always been an important part of Lorena's life. She was born in Valencia (Spain), in the bosom of a family that managed a former cinema, where she spent the major part of her childhood. But she was more interested in reality than in fiction thus she studied Journalism at the University of Valencia.

In 2008, she moved to Barcelona to study a Master in Television and Documentary at Pompeu Fabra University. She also won two competitions: one with UNESCO and another with Talencia to direct short documentaries.

After her studies, she worked on feature films and documentaries, such as "Doctor Moises Broggi: Ethical Science" and "Querida Doña Elena," both produced by TV3. In 2013, she moved to London, where she worked as a DOP and editor for several documentaries, such as "I Wasn't Always Dressed Like This" and "War is Beautiful." In 2014, she won an Ibermedia scholarship to complete a course in Creative Documentary at the University del Valle, in Cali, Colombia. Currently, she teaches documentary filmmaking at University of Essex.

...

...

María Cárdenas... María Cárdenas is a third generation tailor, born in Cali, now living in Northern Ireland, the home of Irish Linen.

Maria's designs are based on well defined shapes, developed over years. Many of the influences go back to her early tailoring days in Cali, where she learned everything from her mother, who had a great skill and a subtle sense of style. Maria has been invited to show her work in Europe, London and Dublin, as well as New York, Boston and Philadelphia. She was part of the Best of British Fashion Showcase at the UK Ambassador's in Dublin just before the Queen's visit in 2011.

...

Erwin Goggel... was born in 1949 in Sopó, Colombia. In 1976, he finished his studies in Cinema in the Schauspiel Akademie, in Zurich, Switzerland. Mr. Goggel was selected for the official competition at 1998 Cannes Film Festival, "Buscando a Miguel» (2007), "Retratos en un Mar de Mentiras» (2010); and as documentary filmmaker, "Del palenque de San Basilio" (2003), best film at 2004 Cartagena Film Festival.

...

...

Andrés Beltrán... is a Colombian writer and director. He was born on May 12, 1986 in Cali, Colombia. He studied Audiovisual Production in the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá. During those years, he wrote and directed several student short films that were selected in International Film Festivals such as FICCI (Cartagena International Film Festival) and the Bogotá International Film Festival.

In 2010 he started a Master in Creative Writing at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, which he completed in 2012. In 2013 he moved to London to study a Master in Cinematography and Post Production at the University of Greenwich.

He has written and directed several short films in Colombia and the United Kingdom, which have been part of the official selection and awarded in International Film Festivals. Some of his works are Andrés Beltrán's Black Series, El Librero, The Undertaker and Fiesta.

...

...

Álvaro Diego Gómez Campuzano's.... art is a symbiosis of ancestral and contemporary expressions, linked to the concept of nature through sculpture, painting and installation.

Alvaro studied Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the Universidad Javeriana of Bogotá. He has studied ceramics, textiles, and metals and casting. Some of his Individual exhibitions: 1986 Alejandro Otero Museum, Caracas, Venezuela; 1990 Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá; 1991 Gallery Negret, Bogotá; 1992 Center of Applied Arts in Geneva, Geneva Switzerland; 1993 Dorottya Gallery. Budapest; Hungary; 2000 Gallery Diners, Bogotá; 2001 Gallery Wall, Bogotá; 2008 Skandia Cultural Center, Bogotá. Recent Collective exhibitions: 2011 Collection of Art & Art My Own Gallery, Gallery Milan, Italy; He has also exhibited in Italy, Lithuania, Spain and Denmark.

...



***With Thanks to our Corporate Sponsor
and Charitable Supporters and
Individual Patrons...***



MUZO

EMERALD COLOMBIA



CANCILLERÍA



TODOS POR UN
NUEVO PAÍS
PAZ EQUIDAD EDUCACIÓN

Embajada de Colombia en el Reino Unido





Acknowledgements ...

Put simply exhibitions such as this would be impossible to organise without the support of friends and colleagues. I would especially like to thank **Yvonne Velásquez**, my Cultural Events Coordinator who worked tirelessly to make sure our programme came together in order to provide three weeks of Colombian related talks, charity presentations, musical entertainment and our Private View opening. She liaised with our sponsors and created an amazing public outreach campaign.

Our video, mini- film festival was imaginatively organised by **Lorena Cervera** resulting in over 15 videos to be shown at the gallery at a variety of times throughout the exhibition. Many of these films are from emerging Colombian filmmakers whom she juried and selected for invitational participation in the exhibition..

To **Robert Mykle** for his insights about his time spent in Colombia and his contribution to the goals of our exhibition.

Of course, a huge thank you to our catalogue designer, **Devyn Maher** for her patience and technical skills which made this such an attractive catalogue.

To all the volunteer social media and promotional helpers thank you for getting our message out about the show.

Especially I would like to thank **Colombian Ambassdor H.E Néstor Osorio Londoño** and his Cultural Attaché **María del Pilar Mira Pontón** for their continued enthusiastic support of our exhibition and the platform it can be for the future.

Finally, a huge thanks to the Director of Art Bermondsey Project Space **Mike von Joel** and the Gallery Director **Serenella Martufi** for the wonderful opportunity to exhibit in this important space.

Muchas gracias amigos,

Sandra Higgins