



★ MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY
a meeting ground for cultures of the world

COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES, contemporary images

17/09/13- 02/02/14
West Mezzanine

Curator of the exhibition

Christine Barthe, head of photographic collections at the musée du quai Branly

★ MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY
là où dialoguent les cultures

NOCTURNES
de **COLOMBIE**
IMAGES CONTEMPORAINES

www.quaibrantly.fr

Exposition
17/09/13 - 02/02/14

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* INTRODUCTION BY STÉPHANE MARTIN



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With the exhibition **COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES**, the musée du quai Branly presents four major Colombian artists: **Juan Manuel Echavarría, Oscar Muñoz, José Alejandro Restrepo and Miguel Ángel Rojas**, each of whom employs different uses of photography to offer an examination of the use and significance of images.

The four artists that we are exhibiting are not merely photographers; their relationships with images are complex and can be compared with other practices of contemporary art. The images are manipulated, endowed with movement, incorporated into installations or blended with other media. In this way, the works reveal the immense breadth of photography, its malleability and its capacity to step outside the frame. **They provide another vision of contemporary Colombian society and its convulsions.**

Through their experiences, these visual artists also encourage us to question the paradoxes of our own societies.

COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES manifests the determination shown by the musée du quai Branly since its opening in 2006 to defend the **pluralistic languages employed by photography.**

It is therefore entirely natural that this exhibition has been scheduled to take place at the same time as PHOTOQUAI, the Biennial of World Images, created in 2007 by the musée du quai Branly and presented on the banks of the Seine and in the museum garden. A central role of this event is to promote photographic art. PHOTOQUAI presents the **future of photographic creation through artists who are relatively unknown in Europe and who originate on the continents represented by the museum's collections.** It is in this spirit that Spaniard Frank Kalero, artistic director of the fourth edition of PHOTOQUAI, has surrounded himself with an international team of artistic correspondents who make it possible to firmly confirm the biennial's mission of seeking new artists. **From Nepal, Iraq, Mozambique, the Philippines, Ukraine, Panama and further afield, the 40 guest artists from 29 countries each present a relevant and personal view of their society. This event at the musée du quai Branly represents the first chance for the majority of these artists to be viewed in an international context.**

While the PHOTOQUAI biennial and its complementary exhibitions highlight non-European photographic creation over several months, we must not forget that the musée du quai Branly pursues its commitment to this field throughout the whole year. Far from relegating this medium to merely its documentary function, our collections reflect the wealth of its uses and are enhanced every year by new works. This is why the PHOTOQUAI RESIDENCIES were created.

Every year, the musée du quai Branly hosts and supports photographers whose projects are linked to cross-cultural dialogue and which are consistent with a personal aesthetic trajectory. Following the residencies, their works are added to our collections.

These many bold proposals invite us once again to broaden our view of our pluralistic world, in line with the musée du quai Branly's programming for each new season.

*INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTINE BARTHE



Other than their Colombian nationality, what do the four artists who are presented in COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES – Juan Manuel Echavarría, Oscar Muñoz, José Alejandro Restrepo and Miguel Ángel Rojas – have in common?

These are four artists who belong to roughly the same generation. They were all born a little before or after 1948, the year of the assassination of the very popular liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán and the bloody riots that accompanied the act. From that date onwards, violence in Colombia has been a constant fact of life. The work of these artists, who have always lived in this climate of violence, is thus impregnated in a more or less visible fashion with this issue of the culture of violence. In addition, these artists are not only – or not at all – photographers. **They come from a variety of backgrounds and artistic disciplines, but each of the four – and it is this that principally links them – has chosen a particular use of the image, whether filmed or photographic.** They thus share a view of the image, through very different works and practices, which is not limited to a single medium.

And does this explain the desire of the musée du quai Branly to particularly highlight the contemporary Colombian scene and its photographic practices?

Since we launched PHOTOQUAI, the biennial of photography that exhibits only non-European artists, I have striven to examine the question of Latin-American photography. In France, we are very little acquainted with this field. We know a few names; the visible part of an immense iceberg, while there is in fact a major photographic tradition associated with the continent. During my research trips, I have had the opportunity to see exhibitions by **Oscar Muñoz and Juan Manuel Echavarría in the United Kingdom**, and I have consulted publications in Zurich by the Daros Foundation, which is very active in the field of Latin-American art. I also decided to travel to Bogota and Cali, to see what was happening on the Colombian artistic scene. I could see for myself that there were artists deserving of, or already having, international recognition, and yet whose works were not exhibited in France.

On the other hand, Juan Manuel Echavarría speaks to us very directly of the situation in his country, in an extremely informed and well-documented manner: he goes out into the field and acts as a mediator, enabling us to hear the voices of sites and people, whether witnesses to, victims of or participants in violence. For example, we have his photographs of empty schools, deserted by displaced populations, which act as testimonials.

José Restrepo uses images from television or from archives, which he transforms by means of montages, to examine the constitution of memory and of history. As for Miguel Ángel Rojas, by photographing locations and meeting places, by documenting his own life as a homosexual in Bogota in the 1970s, during a period when it was definitely not tolerated, he speaks to us of the prohibitions of Colombian society and of what it means to be clandestine within one's own country.

Where does the title COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES come from?

I didn't want a title that was too educational or illustrative, and I thought of a novel by Roberto Bolaño, the famous Chilean author of *The Savage Detectives*, which is entitled *By Night in Chile*. The theme of the night was not unrelated to some of the works that we are exhibiting, and is very evocative. In addition, the title *By Night in Chile* is an homage by Bolaño to the Colombian writer José Asunción Silva, who wrote a number of melancholy poems. COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES thus takes on a certain literary and symbolic significance.

Does the exhibition present the works of the four artists separately, or are they intermingled?

We envision COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES as a suite of four individual sections that respond to each other. The works of these artists are rather complex and we felt that presenting them interspersed with each other might lead to confusion.

We will be opening the exhibition with Echavarría, who takes the role of a witness and border escort to immerse the visitor directly in the Colombian context. In addition, Echavarría examines extensively the notion of the word. As does Restrepo, the next artist in the exhibition, by whom we present a number of video pieces. These lead us into the Colombian televisual world, questioning in parallel the bastardised heritage of Catholic imagery in the daily life of this society.

The very dark works of Rojas comes next, followed by those of Muñoz, which are on the contrary practically dazzling, almost white and at the same time very tenuous.

The exhibition thus begins with work of a literary, if not literal character, by Echavarría, to end with the work of Muñoz and its strong metaphorical dimension. We are thus suggesting a very specific way of looking at the exhibition, but I feel that the visitors will themselves perceive links and echoes between the works.

How do contemporary Colombian visual artists position themselves with regard to the artist Fernando Botero, who is known throughout the entire world?

The majority of these artists consider Botero to be an artistic calamity. He has the image of an official artist, to whom whole museums are dedicated, and whose work occupies the entire field, masking the essentials of interesting artistic practices.

And what is the situation with Colombian institutions of contemporary art?

We see a paradox; chaos has reigned in the country for 60 years and yet artistic life has never really stopped. On this level, Bogota does not have the power of São Paulo, but there is nevertheless a major contemporary art fair and some very good galleries, such as the historic Valenzuela-Klenner Galeria, which has been playing a major role for a long time, while the Museo de Arte del Banco de la Republica has an extremely dynamic and open policy. On the international stage, in biennials and exhibitions of global scale, we see an emerging generation of Colombian curators such as José Roca and Juan Gaitan. During the 1970s, the town of Cali housed a community of artists, including Oscar Muñoz, who exhibited and met in an alternative venue known as Ciudad Solar. But it must be said that the drug traffic of the 1980s stifled many artistic initiatives. That's why many artists questioned on the issue defend the necessity of a better artistic education. The four photographers and visual artists exhibited here are involved in actions or organisations with this as an objective.

Interview by Thomas Jean for the *COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES* special pull-out published by *Beaux-Arts magazine*

* THE EXHIBITION

* Juan Manuel Echavarría

Born in Medellín (Colombia) in 1947, Juan Manuel Echavarría now lives in Bogotá. After a number of years as a writer, he turned to photography in the 1990s and had his first solo exhibition in the United States in 1998. Since then, he has contributed to many exhibitions and film festivals, mainly in the Americas and Europe.

Echavarría's work bluntly addresses the everyday shaping of memories of recurrent traumatic events. Combining photography and video with investigative techniques, he digs deep into the Colombian countryside, scene to a host of little-known dramas. The need to record emerges as a core aspect of several of his works, based on encounters with victims, witnesses and even perpetrators of violence. In a number of pieces, the artist himself intervenes as witness or intermediary, giving shape to spoken word or traces left behind. His interest in words –spoken, written, or sung– is evident in many of his works, suggesting the enduring influence of his experience as a writer.



La «O» (1/23), La «O» series



Orquis lugubris, Corte de Florero series



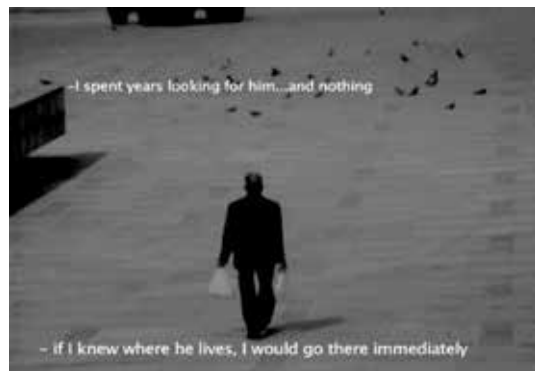
Guerra y Pa

* José Alejandro Restrepo

José Alejandro Restrepo was born in Bogotá in 1959. He abandoned medical studies in favour of art, nonetheless retaining an interest in science. After training as a printmaker, he found his vocation in video, becoming one of his country's pioneers of the medium in artworks and performances.

A major concern for Restrepo is the legacy of Iconoclasm in today's 'image war', in which the artist cannot avoid responsibility: 'The Byzantium battle concerning images was not just a religious matter. It was above all, as it is now, a question of power, point of view and truth: images do not have power because they are true, they are true because they have a certain power. This is why they are a much coveted prize of war' (J. A. Restrepo, *La religión catódica*, Universidad nacional de Colombia, 2011).

A substantial part of Restrepo's work revolves around the incessant collection of images, mainly from television news and entertainment programmes. Filtering this material through repeated viewing and interpretations, he isolates fragments which he then reassembles: 'I think history could be written like a Dziga Vertov movie, with that kind of montage and editing, without having to turn to linear stories or fraudulent and sentimental narratives.' (Interview with C. A. Jaramillo, 2004).



El Caballero de la Fe

2011

7 min

Courtesy Ignacio Liprandi Arte Contemporáneo, Buenos Aires, Argentine

* Miguel Ángel Rojas

Miguel Ángel Rojas was born in Bogotá in 1946. After studying architecture he took up painting, drawing and printmaking in the 1970s, and photography in 1973. In the 1990s, he began making videos and installations.

Since the outset, Rojas has worked in a highly original vein, initially combining influences as diverse as the photorealism of the 1970s and Conceptual Art, then cutting free of them to create a truly protean oeuvre. He developed a distinctive photographic method, opting for a distanced approach to intimate subjects, then adding personal comments with the abruptness of subtitles.

'I must tell you that at the beginning of my career as an artist (...) I took two key decisions. The first was to adopt my own reality as a major theme in art. That was crucial to the origin of my work. In those sordid spaces of my darkest desires, I found the strength to sustain myself as an artist. (...) The other decision was to use photography as a tool to document my life, at a time when photography was not a medium considered as part of the great canon of the plastic arts. This forced me –enabled me– to invent all kinds of processes to overcome the limitations.' (N. Gutiérrez, Miguel Ángel Rojas, *esencial: conversaciones con Miguel Ángel Rojas*, Editorial Planeta Colombiana, 2010).



Del Oriente vienen los héroes [gritando], Faenza series

* Oscar Muñoz

Oscar Muñoz was born in Popayán in 1951. He studied drawing at the Academy of Fine Art in Cali, where he now lives. He recently founded Lugar a dudas (Room for doubts), an alternative promotion and research space for contemporary art.

The artist focuses on the genesis of images: the circumstances of their appearance and disappearance and the processes that shape them. For this he uses such elemental substances as water, air and coal.

The photographic image plays a core part in this, together with the portrait and its printed reproduction. Muñoz's oeuvre as a whole can be seen as an ongoing investigation of the idea of memory loss. Alluding to the current social context in Colombia, he asks, 'How do people in Colombia create memories, construct their memory out of daily events? What is forgetting, how does this relationship to the past work? (...) The war began at the end of the 1940s. That is, even before I was born, the war already existed. (...) It's as if we were living in an eternal present or in a past present.' (Hans-Michael Herzog, *Cantos cuentos colombianos: arte colombiano contemporaneo*, Daros-Latinamerica, 2004).

Looking beyond this context, the Muñoz oeuvre offers sensitive experimentation with the forms of memory, a metaphorical meditation on the perception of time.



Linea del destino

2006

Video

2 min, silent

Courtesy of the artist, Mor. Charpentier, Paris



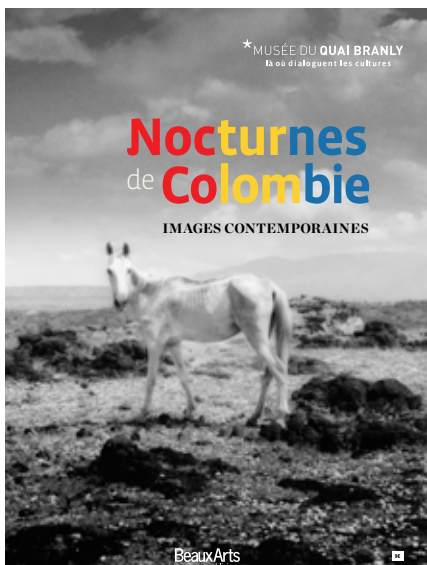
El Testigo, Impresiones débiles series

* EXHIBITION CURATOR

* **Christine Barthe** is head of photographic collections at the musée du quai Branly. She is in charge of acquisitions of early and contemporary photography. She was the curator of the following exhibitions: *Le Yucatán est ailleurs, Expéditions photographiques (1857-1886)* de *Désiré Charnay*, *Camera Obscura* in 2007 and *Patagonia, Images from the edge of the world*. She has also taken part in the design and production process of PHOTOQUAI since 2007, with contributing research materials focused on Latin America. She is a member of the editorial board of anthropology and art history journal *Gradhiva*

* **Exhibition design : Gaëlle Seltzer** studied architecture in Paris and Berlin. She worked for the Pylone agency, most notably on projects such as *Starwars* at the cité des sciences, or *Gauguin, the Douanier Rousseau* at the Grand Palais. In 2007 she created her own agency, "17 avril", and then in 2010, the agency "Studio Gaëlle Seltzer" englobing a larger range of expertises. Of note, she created the scene design for the following exhibitions: *Artistes d'Abomey / Présence africaine*, musée du quai Branly, 2008 ; *Reflets d'or*, musée de Cluny, 2008 ; *Portraits d'un siècle*, Gallimard, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, 2011 ; *La Comédie Française s'expose*, Petit-Palais, 2011 ; Massimo Berruti, prix de la Fondation Carmignac 2010, Chapelle de l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts and *The Philippines, Archipelago of exchanges*, musée du quai Branly, 2013.

* AROUND THE EXHIBITION



*COLOMBIAN NOCTURNES special pull-out

Copublished by *Beaux-Arts Magazine* and musée du quai Branly
44 pages, €9

*PHOTOQUAI catalogue

General catalogue of the 4th edition of PHOTOQUAI, including all the events. Copublished by musée du quai Branly and Actes Sud. Bilingual – 232 pages, €27

*Tours

- **One-hour guided tours** are proposed to adults every Saturday at 7pm from 21 September 2013 to 1 February 2014.

Full price €6 / reduced rate €4. Activity requiring an entry ticket to the museum.

- **Storytelling visits** of an hour are proposed to families from the age of 12, disabled access on Sundays at 3pm, September 22th and 29th, October 13th and 27th, November 17th, December 8th and 22th 2013, January 12th and 19th 2014. **Full price:** €8 / reduced rate €6. Activity requiring an entry ticket to the museum.

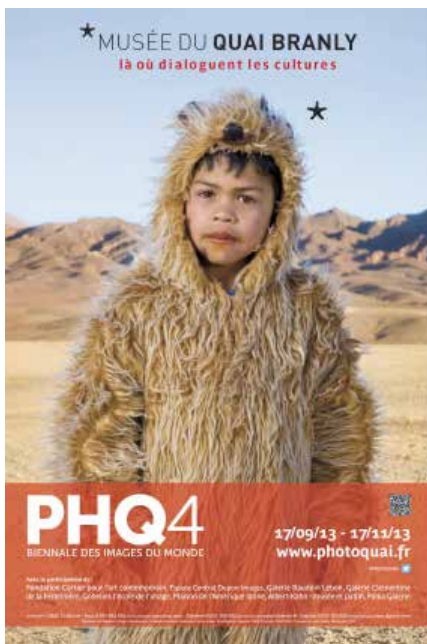
*Round table in the Salon de Lecture Jacques Kerchache Saturday 21 September at 5pm

Focus on Latin American photography

Round table with Frank Kalero, artistic director of PHOTOQUAI, and the curators of three exhibitions on Latin American photography: one at the musée du quai Branly and two in partner institutions la Fondation Cartier and la Maison de l'Amérique latine. **Christine Barthe**, curator of NOCTURNES DE COLOMBIE, Contemporary images, presents four major Colombian artists.

With **Leanne Sacramone**, associate curator of *America Latina 1963-2013* which brings together over seventy artists from eleven countries; and **Christine Frérot** whose exhibition focuses on the works of Cuban artist Marta María Pérez Bravo.

* PHOTOQUAI, 4th BIENNIAL OF WORLD IMAGES



Avec le soutien de



The fourth edition of **PHOTOQUAI, “PHQ4”, biennial of world images**, created in 2007 by the musée du quai Branly, will take place from **September 17 2013 to November 17 2013**.

Following in the footsteps of the first biennial, PHOTOQUAI continues the original mission: to publicise new contemporary artists and to encourage exchanges and crossroads of world views.

PHOTOQUAI presents a look at unpublished or little-seen photographers in Europe who come from large geographical areas represented within the collections of the quai Branly: **South and Central America, Asia, Oceania, Africa, near and Middle East, Russia etc.**

A photographic journey that is **free to access, day and night**, PHOTOQUAI unfolds along the banks of the Seine, running alongside the Museum and, since 2009, continues on into the garden of the museum.

For this 4th edition, artistic direction has been entrusted to **Frank Kalero**.

Appointed by the musée du quai Branly, the artistic director infuses direction into the axes of the programming. With the help of eight curators, who are responsible on the ground for exploring and unearthing unknown photographic talent in Europe, Frank Kalero’s intention is to discover a selection of photographers from around the world.

The 2013 selection brings together 40 photographers from 29 countries who have never before exhibited in Paris.

In the gardens of the musée du quai Branly, there are multiple stories gathered together under the slogan “Look at Me». The body is shown to be a unit of measurement. Landscapes, objects, fashion or architecture all appear there as elements that accompany the human figure, a common denominator in all of these photographs.



The Car Poolers © Alejandro Cartagena



Local Fashion around Kard Luang Market – Chiangmai © Dow Wasiksiri



Cosmetic Girls © Hein-Kuhn Oh

* PHOTOQUAI ARTIST RESIDENCIES

LES RÉSIDENCES DE
P H O T O Q U A I
B H O T O O Q U A I

Since 2008, the musée du quai Branly has offered an annual programme to assist in the creation of contemporary photography in the countries of origin of its collections. During the photography biennial PHOTOQUAI it enjoys a particular prominence. This programme allows several contemporary artists from Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Americas to propose a project in connection with the dialogue of cultures, and consistent with a personal aesthetic trajectory.

The original photographic works created in this context all reflect a different perspective on the world. For the artists, it is a 'residence' outside-the-walls that can lead them from destinations that are far away or close: some remain in their own country, others come to France or Paris, or even go to the location that they have chosen for completing the project. For the public, it is an additional opportunity to discover a personal artistic work that provides new insight into contemporary art in the countries of origin of the collections of the quai Branly.

At the end of the creative period, the musée du quai Branly will make a print signed by the author and numbered a selection of photographs from each collection. **These prints include the collections of the musée du quai Branly at the end of the creative period.**

On the occasion of the 4th edition of PHOTOQUAI, the works of **Sammy Baloji (Democratic Republic of Congo), João Castilho (Brazil), Hugo Aveta (Argentina), Fiona Pardington (New Zealand), Cinthya Soto (Costa Rica)**, are presented in the atelier Martine Aublet from 13/11/13 to 26/01/13. The works selected for this first presentation of the PHOTOQUAI ARTIST RESIDENCIES serve to demonstrate **the dynamism of contemporary art in different continents via photography**. The selection is not based on a homogeneous geographical distribution, but takes into account the quality and the potential correspondences between the works produced. The selection suggests a journey starting with the prints of Cinthya Soto, so as to bring to mind from the outset the question of point of view in relation to the picturesque and the exotic. By doing this, it is possible to discuss photography with works that will both catch the eye of the visitor and make them question their perception of the picturesque landscape.

The works will lead on one from the other in relation to the object and its transformation through photography into an object of memory or one that underwrites the imagination.

Supported by the Fondation Martine Aublet under the aegis of the Fondation de France



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Projets de création artistique 2010 de l'artiste en résidence Fiona Pardington.
Titre de la série : *Whakaahua : The Pressure of Sunlight Falling*

* PRACTICAL INFORMATION : WWW.QUAIBRANLY.FR

PHOTOQUAI – la biennale

Heymann, Renault Associées

01 44 61 76 76

www.heyman-renoult.com

Agnès Renoult, a.renoult@heyman-renoult.com

Presse nationale et francophone

Eléonore Grau, e.grau@heyman-renoult.com

Presse internationale

Hélène Muron, h.muron@heyman-renoult.com

musée du quai Branly

Direction de la communication

Nathalie Mercier, directeur de la communication

33(0)1 56 61 70 20 • nathalie.mercier@quaibrantly.fr

Magalie Vernet, adjointe au directeur de la communication

33 (0) 1 56 61 52 87 magalie.vernet@quaibrantly.fr

Lisa Véran, chargée des relations médias

33(0)1 56 61 70 52 • lisa.veran@quaibrantly.fr