

CARLOS CASTRO ARIAS

Carlos Castro is a multimedia artist who chronicles his time. In his work he appropriates and recontextualizes found objects and images from his environment in order to create narratives that recover the ones suppressed over time or ignored by history. Castro lives and works in Tijuana, San Diego and Bogota

Works
(2017- 2009)

The Black Box (2017)

This piece departed from a found school bus that was set on fire; its ruined aspect portrays the memory of a body, allowing to reflect on the abandoned object and therefore to rethink its use and significance. In it, Carlos Castro Arias created a video installation where music and images work as a mantra, wrapping the body in sounds and pictures that have an anecdotal relationship where the shame of the body is presented.

The video was created in collaboration with the filmmaker Andres Borda and the music composer Daniel Castro. The sound of the piece was elaborated using the actual bus as a musical instrument; the metal chairs as percussion, the window frames as violins, etc; all this constructing a 7 minutes composition.

The arrangement of the stage resembles settings in institutions, such as schools and the churches, where rows of subordinates face a solemn structure. The screen, elevated and dogmatic, attracts the attention of the spectators as a place that has been consecrated.



The Black Box (2017)
Burnt bus, video projection and sound.
7 min video.



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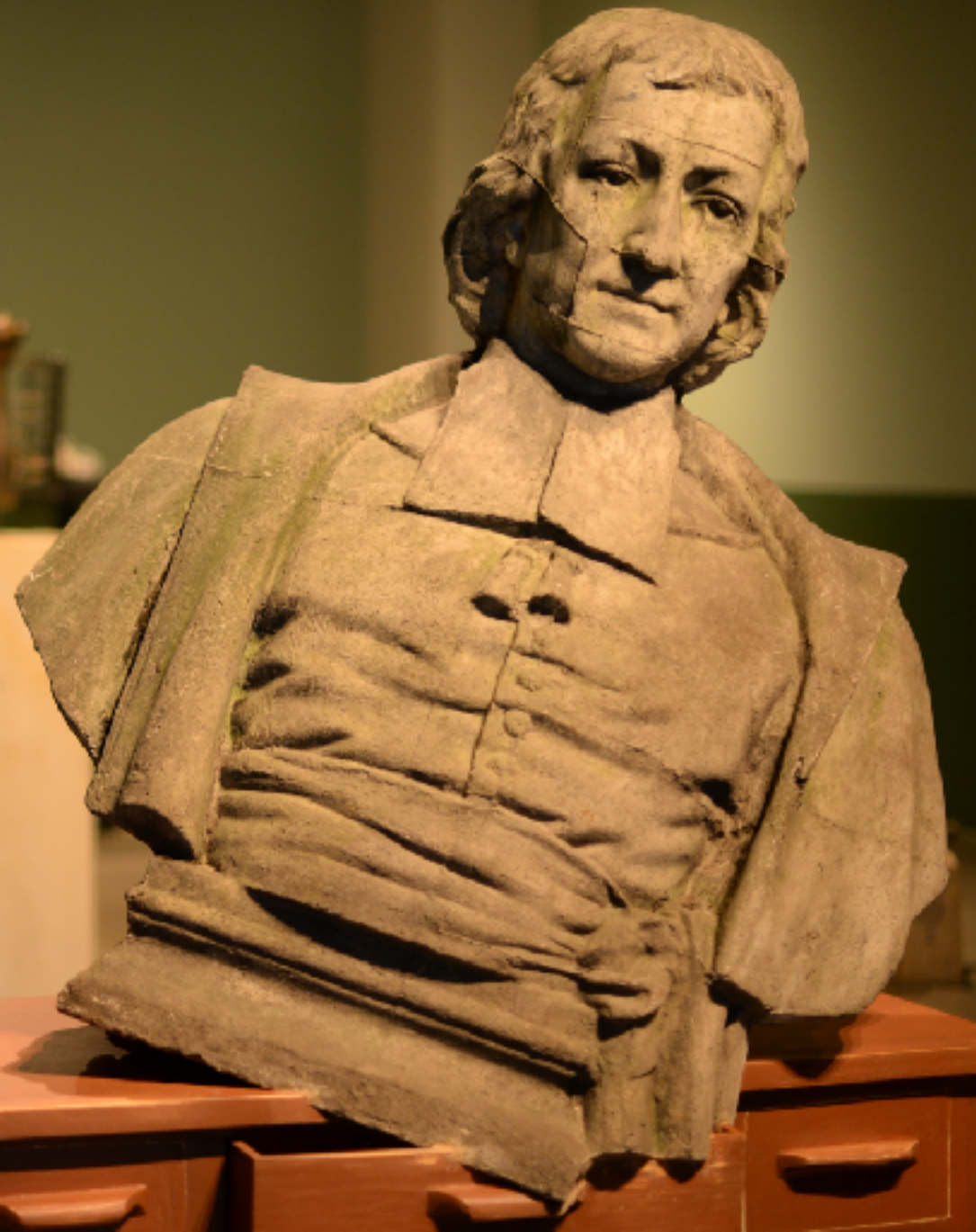
The Dead Things

The exhibition *The Language of Dead Things* brings together fragments of political and religious sculptures, found objects and contemporary ruins that Carlos Castro Arias uses to reflect on personal memories and episodes from his early years at school and at the church; situations that surely have also happened to many others to which they can relate to.

In this project, the artists wants to give a new life and interpretation to these obsolete objects, also seeking to create reflections about the body as an individual and collective entity, and how it is shaped by educational and religious institutions.



The Language of Dead Things (2017)
Partial view of the exhibition.



Untitled (2017)

Concrete sculpture, metal, Artist's desk in his school stage



God (2017)
Concrete sculpture, metal and
cardboard box



Bogota (2017)
Acrylic and human fat



God. (2017)
Concrete sculpture and fountain.



Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough (2017)

Bronze sculpture, xylophone, electric motor, sensor and stone base.

When the sculpture rotates it plays the melody that entitles it.



Mosaic (2017)
23 oil paintings on canvas



I am not a man, I am a people. (2017)
Resin, metal, acrylic and live fish



I am not a man, I am a people. (2017)
Resin, metal, acrylic and live fish

NOVA ET VETERA



Nova Et Vetera (2017)
Installation, laser cut text, water pump, ink.

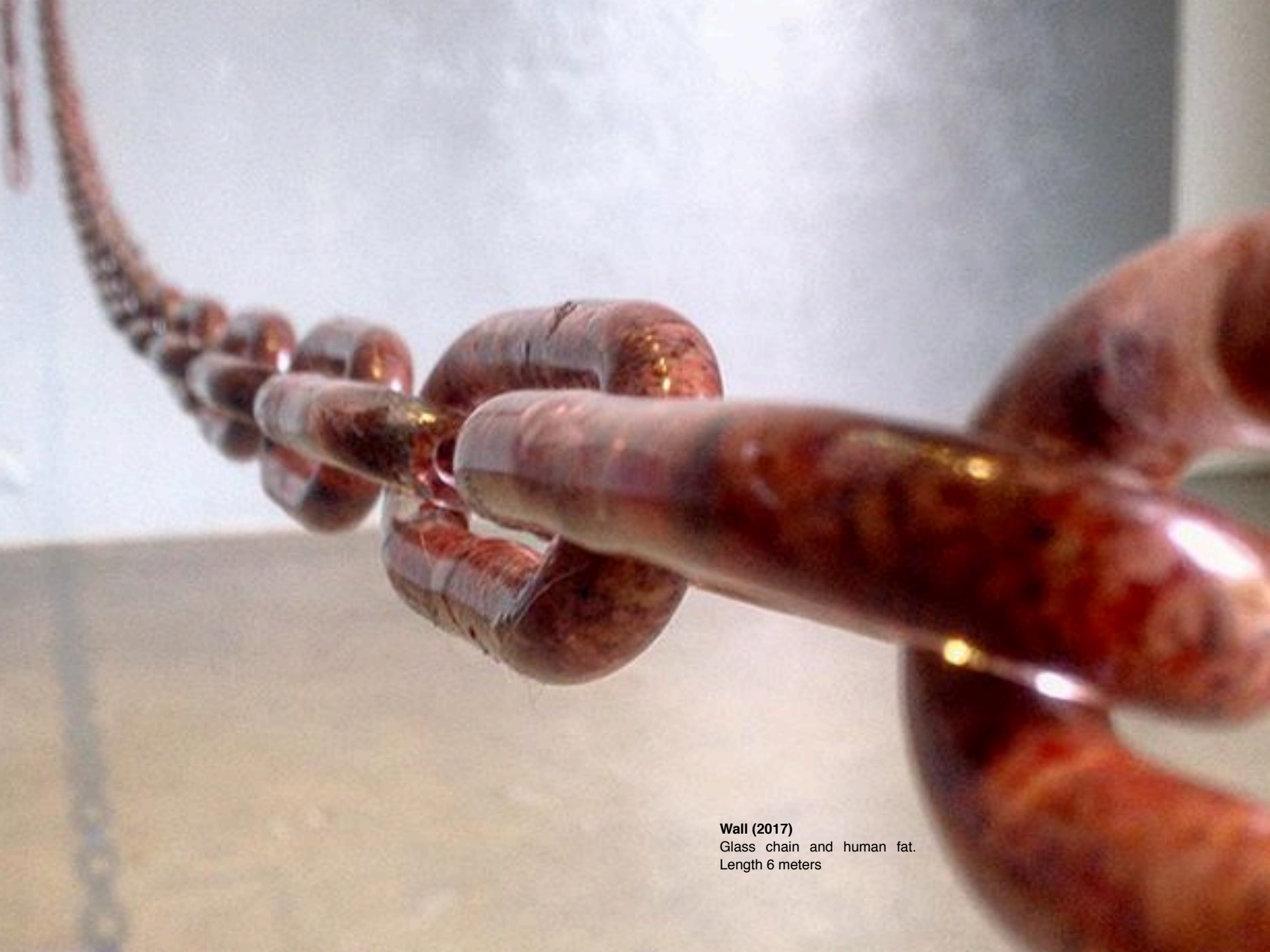


Nova Et Vetera (2017)
Installation, laser cut text, water pump, ink.

NOVA ET VETERA



Wall (2017)
Glass chain and human fat.
Length 6 meters



Wall (2017)
Glass chain and human fat.
Length 6 meters



Wall (2017)

Glass chain and human fat.
Length 4 meters

Mirage and Penetration (2016)

Mirage and Penetration is a contemporary review on landscape that has as a reference XIX century engravings made by European travelers to South America. The images of these explorers were intended to reveal a new and mysterious world to be discovered. This series explores the relationships between landscape and architecture and how historical representations of landscape can be reinterpreted when being reshaped in a different medium and moved from being two-dimensional images to large-scale 3D pieces.



Mirage and Penetration (2016)
Laser cut wood embedded in the gallery walls



Mirage and Penetration (2016)

Laser cut wood embedded in the gallery walls



Mirage and Penetration (2016)

Laser cut wood embedded in the gallery walls



Mirage and Penetration (2016)
Laser cut wood embedded in the gallery walls

Old News of the Present (2014)

The project Old News of the Present is composed by light boxes that hold vintage-looking stained glass fragments, drawings, and sculptures that create a dialogue between images of the ancient and present day. These works emerge from the artist's experience in the Bronx area of Bogota; this area is full of contrasts: within a block it hosts a national monument called The Voto Nacional Church, a military battalion's barracks, a public school, and at the same time it is the center of drug trafficking and consumption in the city. The pieces that composed this project depart from historical and current images related to the location and they synthesize anthropological, aesthetic and symbolical aspects.



Old news of the present
Overview of the installation



Old news of the present

Traditional stained glass. Grisaille and lead cane



Democracy
Knives seized by Bogotá's police



Cradle
Found pigeon nest



Capador
Wind instrument, handmade seized crack pipes



Untitled
Human teeth, paper bag



Surreptitious

Recycler car and diorama with Indian tomb



Surreptitious

Recycler car and diorama with Indian tomb

Accidental Beauty (2013)

The starting point for this series is an in-depth investigation of Los Martires, a district of Bogota. The area is full of contrasts due to drastic changes the city has undergone in the last century. One of the landmarks of the area is a church called Voto Nacional, dating back to 1916, which commemorates the consecration of Colombia to the Sacred Heart of Jesus after the end of a civil war. The Voto Nacional church is at the epicenter of a turbulent zone, where there is a military battalion, a public school and a tolerance area for the sale and consumption of drugs, nicknamed “The Bronx.” The series consists of works that were born from the functional and symbolic recontextualization of objects found in the area and images taken throughout the experience, that seek to synthesize formerly neglected anthropological, aesthetic and historic aspects.

Visual references of the place that inspired the project





Accidental Beauty

General view of the exhibition
Santa Clara Museum 2013



White Chapel (2013)

Remains of police car, carved wood, brick and sound system.

Spectators are welcomed to get inside the car while the music piece played.

Duration 6 min.

Musical arrangements Daniel Castro



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Potencies (2013)

Music boxes, knives confiscated by the Bogota's police. The machines reproduce traditional religious melodies.



ROOT (2013) Two pieces

Confiscated or bought crack pipes. Wooden base, air generator and electric motor.

Wind machines that reproduce the Colombian indigenous traditional ritual melody: *Nos Cedron*



Son of God (2013)
Human bones and bronze. Wooden base



Son of God (2013)
Human bones and bronze. Wooden base



WHITE CHAPEL (2013)

Remains of police car, carved wood, brick and sound system.
Bolívar Plaza, Bogotá

Breathing through the wound (2011 - present)

Breathing through the Wound makes reference to the images created by the Chorographic Commission, active between 1850 and 1862, intended to represent the occupations and trades of the time. Some of these activities may seem absurd or even brutal today, but they were valid means of subsistence during the colony and the beginning of the republican era.

Based on the style of these images, Castro creates a series of watercolors portraying self-sustaining jobs that are commonly found today, such as windshield cleaners or pedestrian overpass sweepers. These are unsolicited jobs paid for by pity. These activities seem to lead nowhere: someone hits the wheels of a car with a stick and asks for a few coins; the volunteer pothole-filler does his job, but in a few days, the hole is back to the same conditions or worse.

Castro's watercolors are metaphors for the passage of time, the repetitive nature of everyday life that seems to lead nowhere, and allusions to futile activities and vicious circles that are intrinsic to the human condition.



Watercolors, wooden frame.
Paper from the late 19th and early 20th century



Michael Jackson en parque de Rio de Janeiro - Brasil

Watercolors, wooden frame.
Paper from the late 19th and early 20th century



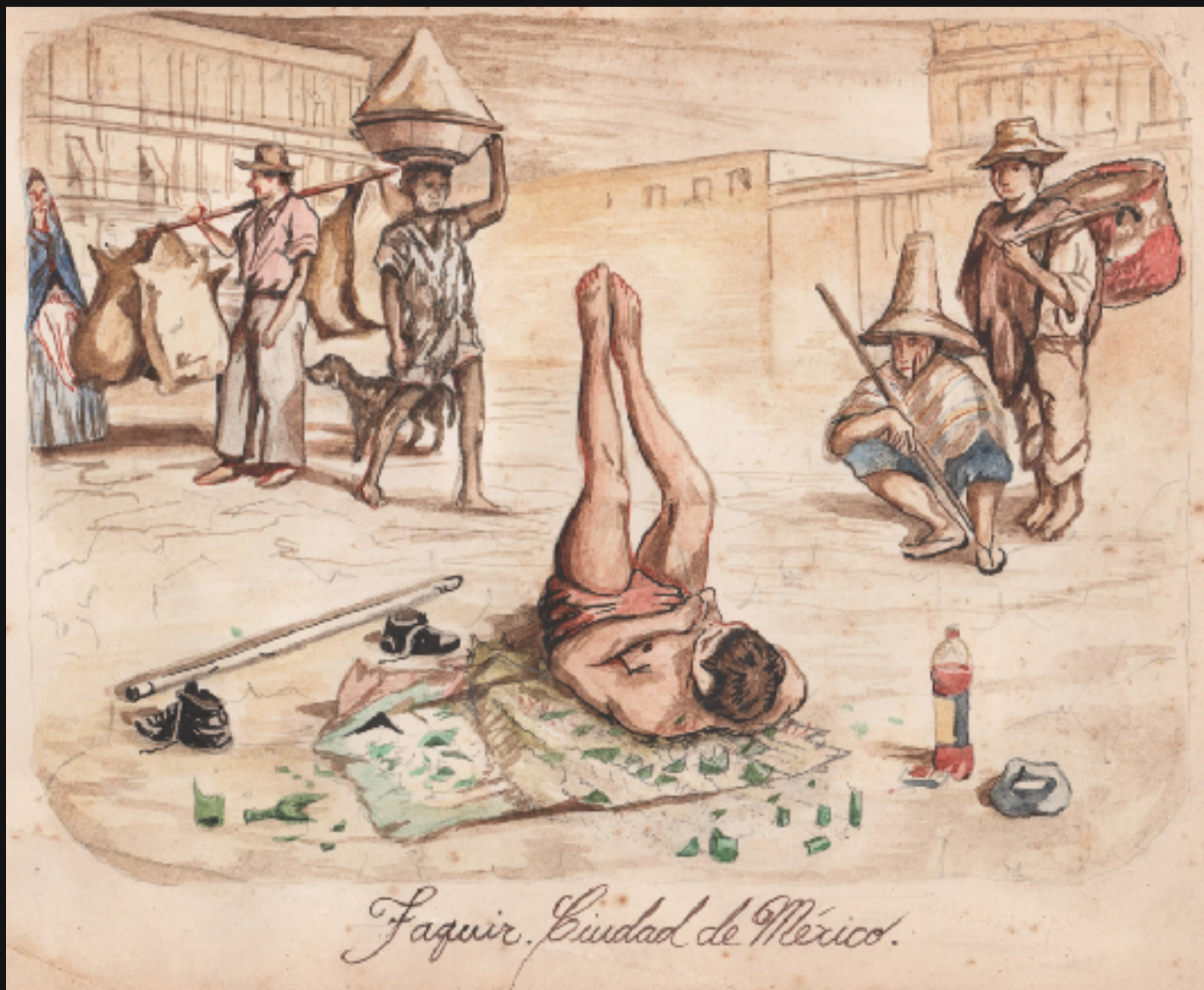
Watercolors, wooden frame.

Paper from the late 19th and early 20th century



Arreglo de la calzada de Transmilenio de la Av. Caracas con 72

Watercolors, wooden frame.
Paper from the late 19th and early 20th century



Faguir. Ciudad de México.

Watercolors, wooden frame.
Paper from the late 19th and early 20th century

Searching for what is not yet lost (2011)

Carlos Castro is interested in the day to day. Urgency, spontaneity. The open sewer that we do not see. The temporary solution that will (not) work. The patch that works like a toxic relationship, like an addiction that cannot be cured. Humanity beyond social classes. The endlessly repeating self-sustaining jobs that are useless. Unlike most tragedy-obsessed Colombian artists, Castro understands that in Colombia there is no Genesis or Apocalypse, only eternal cycles of return. The widow deals with her grief and moves on with her life. Native plants sprout from sewers. Personalized knives form an army, a legion, a war machine. Scattered things are reunited and reconstructed. And the possibility of generating a fruit, a seed. A new beginning. In 300 teeth, 300 individual stories. A social structure, a construct of shared exchanges. The Capitoline she wolf, founder of civilizations, turned into a stray dog, daughter of civilizations. The stray dog, in the end, also a mother. Who are her children?

Santiago Rueda Fajardo



Harvest (2011)
Human teeth, corn



Buscando lo que no se ha perdido (2011)
Exhibition view at LA Gallery Bogotá



Legion (2011)

Giant music box that plays a traditional war melody. In the piece there are inserted confiscated knives by Bogota's police in the downtown area.



Empire. (2011)
Taxidermed stray dog, bronze sculpture



Exhibition Our place (2012)
Partial view of the installation at Mac Niteroi
Museum , Rio de Janeiro



Exhibition Our place (2012)
Partial view of the installation at MAVI museum,
Santiago de Chile

What does not Suffer does not Live. (2010)

Political figures commemorated in bronze monuments are meant to perpetuate national heroes and to represent ideals like sovereignty and a nation's power. These authoritative images present in public places are often surrounded by pigeons, considered to be urban plagues by many. By examining the paradoxical relation between political monuments and this unwanted species, this series reveals how ideologies and social groups interact and clash in specific places over time.



Video:
<http://vimeo.com/28043260>

What does not Suffer does not Live. (2010) Video installation.
The video documents the transformation of a statue of Simon Bolívar constructed with pigeon food located in Bogotá's main plaza for 12 hours.
4 min loop



What does not Suffer does not Live. (2010)
Video installation.

The video documents the transformation of a statue of Simon Bolívar constructed with pigeon food located in Bogotá's main plaza for 12 hours. 4 min loop



What does not Suffer does not Live. (2010) Partial view of the installation.
Oil on board Exhibition view of the San Francisco Art Commission



What does not Suffer does not Live. (2010) Partial view of the installation.
Oil on board Exhibition view of the San Francisco Art Commission



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Mother (2012)

Photograph of the artist with his newborn daughter