EXHIBITION TEXTS

GEOGRAPHIES OF THE TRUTH

Museo Casa de la Memoria
2017

GEOGRAPHIES OF THE TRUTH

The truth is as complex and diverse as the Geography of Colombia.

The geography of Colombia is a rich and complex composition of mountains and rivers, deserts and oceans, moors and jungles. Nature around us reveals a double-faced surface: beauty and complexity, because the truths of our violence lie hidden in these places. The truths have one and a thousand faces at the same time, appearing and disappearing in faces and hands of people, in crevices of mountains and rivers that beset us. The truth of our violence is deep and cloudy as Colombia’s view: full of folds, colors and sounds being reflected in the murky river of time.

On the tour through this geography, we find out marks left by violence in lands and bodies. These marks are transformed into scars and questions. They are attempts to unveil, among voices and silences, what and why happened. Searching for the truth, people insist on telling us, inviting us to join together and recognize each other in the humanity of our faces.

This historic moment entitled Geographies of the Truth [1] invites us to border the truth and to go into its mazes to figure out its complexity. It invites us to understand the truth as a collective construction, a call for everyone to share a version, a piece, to listen to the truths that want to pronounce their names before dying.

[1] Museo Casa de la Memoria got close to these searches constructing the exhibition contents through participatory methodology: creation-reflection laboratories, interviews, surveys and documentary research.

IN-VISIBLE

Getting closer the phenomenon of violence, we discover kidnapping, enforced disappearances, homicides, mutilations, massacres, forced displacements, sexual violence and victimization; all these hard and brutal actions. Some questions emerge: How have these facts been possible? What are the reasons? What are the invisible plots?

Violence goes further, it has deeper roots. We consider violence as a tree [2] mixture of visible and invisible parts. Trunk is visible: direct violence, victimization, physical and verbal...
aggression. Two large roots are invisible: structural violence and cultural violence, they are intertwined, causing, nourishing and holding the visible part of our violence.

The first root of structural violence is nourished with the lack of institutional presence, economic inequality, lack of opportunities, unsatisfied basic needs, and unequal distribution of land, among others. The second root of culture violence is nourished with certain ways of behaving and communicating, ideologies, beliefs, prejudices. These actions are evident in the exclusion, non-recognition of difference, and the loss of the value of human life.


LINES AND TRACES

The Geography of Colombia is a surface folded, unfolded, and cracked, many shapes revealed through mountains making furrows, hands sowing the field, stories of crop, exploitation and spoil. It is a territory of multiple faces and cultural traditions, as a wide range of colors painting the different skins of the human being. It is a maze of migratory paths and journeys, rivers crossed by travelers, fishermen and bodies; clouds and storms, echo of the voices crying, telling, singing and keeping silent.

Voices and silences searching for, digging the geography to open their layers up, bordering deep secrets hidden and insinuated from the inside to the surface. On the earth facing the sun, time and rain, the marks of the conflict appear. On those traces, those who search for the truth are going back and forth. They return again and again on the steps of those who impose boundaries, tear the geography, break into the everyday and exclude the other tearing the social fabric apart.

Day after day, hundreds of people and organizations in Colombia and the world are always searching for in order to understand what happened to their lives by facing violence and the reasons of the horror; to put together, piece by piece, the evasive and clear truth.

VOICES AND SILENCES

In this experience, it is possible to observe everyday searches and how hard are the doubts around the truth. Several voices appear starting dialogues and encounters, building senses from different positions and edges. We invite you to interact with these simultaneous dialogues that are assembled and disassembled, as hidden geographies in our Colombian territory and in ourselves.

These voices come from participatory methodologies carry out by the Museo Casa de la Memoria to explore The Geographies of the Truth and build memories about the search processes. The methodology included:
Creation-reflection laboratories with victims, social and artistic organizations, and people in reintegration process;

Interviews with members of the government, academics specialized in transitional justice, public security forces and groups of legal defense of Human Rights;

And surveys of museum visitors and citizens.

‘War lasted a few years for the world, but centuries for those who lived it’ (Azriel Bibliowicz)

TEMPORARY ISSUE

Time of search processes is not a chronological and sequential, but discontinuous, differential and relative. Each person lives it in a different way. During the processes there are times when a victimizing action happens, someone asks or asks himself, it is years for searching and understanding. The search is a way to resist the oblivion, to gather evidence of a truth always changing, to get a possible calm when some piece of the expected truth is found out.

ENCOUNTERS

‘Something will happen, but where and what.
Someone will encounter you, but when (and who)’
(Wisława Symborska)

Final reflection

After the encounter with the diversity of the truth, modeled by the geography of our Colombian territory, by knowing the hands and faces of those who confront their searches, two questions remain: what has been our role in this history? What is our role as citizens in the history to come?

CURATORIAL TEXTS AND DATASHEETS

Main text of the work by Sergio Gómez

*It is by lending his body to the world that the painter changes the world into paintings*

(Maurice Merleau Ponty)
Museo Casa de la Memoria looks like a huge closed block from the outside. A disturbing aspect reinforces this perception: mountains around block the entrance of sunlight by erasing the reflection of landscape through the windows. The lost landscape is replaced by other inside: geographies unfold on different surfaces revealed to us because of the light: roads leading to imaginary territories, immaterial bodies, rivers flowing cyclically.

Works by the artist Sergio Gómez inhabits spaces of Museum to put us in front of our own perception. His work, always in relation to others, is asking us what we see, what are its nature and sense. In that way, we activate snapshots that inhabit our memory. Gómez has explored the photographic image as an entity that expands, constituted by memory and thought, not only by capturing the reality. His work is an interesting confluence of images and spaces, making the viewer to bring out self-portraits of his inner being.

In the exhibition Geographies of the Truth, with another question about perception, this work questions a unique perspective; it unveils the possibility of assuming a position regarding the movement, body and its senses, allowing us a dialogue from different territories. In order to reaching agreements on the truth, we can move our body in different positions, we can see, touch and feel to provide our version of the experience by trying to build a story that includes everyone.

**Video: These waters dragging the untold**

The river  
always there  
it flows  
even if we do not look at it  
it runs  
while we are here.

What does the river drag during continuous and no return flowing?

**Video: Delikatessen**

On water and earth  
body and landscape
river and what it drags
your voice announces
its own
restlessness.

**Laboratory: Play Time**

Play Time

Transform the experiences in the Central Hall.

¡Explore – destroy – scatter – restore what comes to us through our senses!

We invite you to expand this laboratory, to make up other processes and to give life to new meanings through your traces and your memories.

**Introduction: Panels on the Street**

*1820 geographies*

Life unfolds on these surfaces, searches are released, and encounters take place. These 1820 geographies made of earth, paper, light and skin are memory and oblivion. They conserve and turn to ashes the evidences of human barbarity and sweetness.

We are in the middle of movement of the surfaces, from one crumpled to another cracked, from one carved to another worn, from one visible to another hidden, from one calcified to another soft. We are there motivated by desire or consciousness, determined by chance.

The artist Sergio Gómez invites us to find ourselves crossing the boundary between one surface and another, making a journey throughout the landscapes, wondering... What do rivers carry away? What lies on or beneath earth? What is the aroma brought by the wind? Which territory is unreal or real?
TECHNICAL DATA SHEETS

External installation

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975

Earth
2017
Installation on the facade of the Museum
Museo Casa de la Memoria

Video-installation: empty

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975

Double face
2017
Video-installation
Variable dimensions
Museo Casa de la Memoria

Video in central hall

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975

These waters dragging the untold
2017
Video
Length: 1:30 min.
Museo Casa de la Memoria

Video: Temporary Exhibition Hall

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975

Delikatessen
2017
Video
Length: 1:30 min.
Museo Casa de la Memoria

Book

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975.

1820 Geographies
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Book
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Panels on the Street

Sergio Gómez
Medellín-Colombia, 1975.

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