

#9.0 Colibrí

José Montealegre

03.05 – 07.07 2019

EN

Convent presents *Colibrí*, a solo exhibition by José Montealegre (°1992, Tegucigalpa, Honduras).

In his sculptures and installations Montealegre creates fictional worlds that are informed by his interest in subjects such as archaeology, philosophy and science fiction. By thoughtfully combining and layering certain aspects related to these interests, the artist offers the viewer an inhabited and inhabitable environment that is deliberately designed to encourage emotional, intellectual and physical involvement.

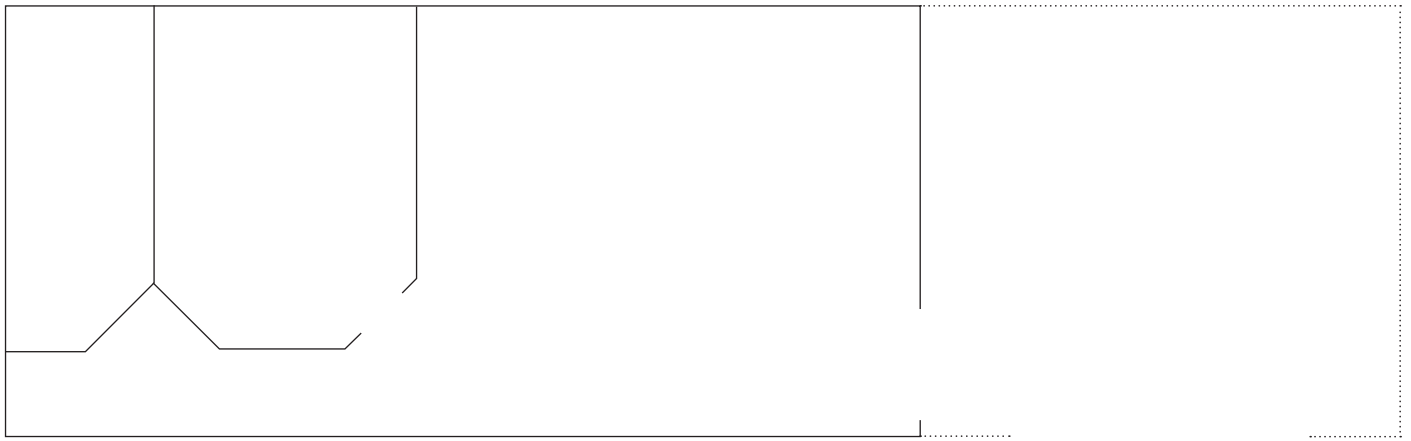
Especially for the exhibition at Convent, Montealegre created works on a larger scale and presents them in a room-wide installation, alongside already existing sculptures. By enlarging the size of the work, the artist aims to increase the involvement of the viewer, making the visitor and his actions part of the work. In a similar manner to what the Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica (1937–1980, Rio de Janeiro) called the 'Supra-Sensorial', Montealegre's installation allows the viewer's different senses to be activated and get seduced into empathic connections. Sentiments related to discovery, like curiosity and exploration, are easily provoked through the hiding of elements within the deceivingly alluring sculptural landscape or by manipulating the point of view of the spectator. Concurrently, however, the visitor is also directly confronted with the impact of his own presence on the work. Because of the fragile nature of the sculptures and certainly due to the loose-lying ceramic tiles covering the entire floor, one is constantly reminded that every action has repercussions which may have a permanent impact on a place, object or situation. Even when only "passively" looking at something, we are still shaping it in some way since we try to interpret it with our personal frame of reference. In various ways time seems to be visually

manifested in this sculptural installation. Most evident of course is the fact that the work is constantly mutating under the influence of the visitor. On another level, the physical state of the different sculptural elements is reminiscent of ruins. In combination with the poses of certain figures, which seem like they were suddenly interrupted during an activity, evokes the feeling of being on an archeological site where time stands still. Contrary to this, it is conspicuous that both the branches and trunks of the trees seem to be made out of bones. This opens up the possibility to read the work as being in a state of irreversible decay as well as perceiving it as a world in the process of being created.

The framed works on paper that are included in the installation deal with Montealegre's questioning of authenticity. At first sight all these prints look like they were torn out of an old book or a magazine. Nevertheless they were entirely conceived by the artist. By imitating the effects of time, the artist creates extremely convincing "forgeries" that confront us with the manipulability of narrative.

José Montealegre lives and works in Frankfurt am Main, where he will soon graduate from the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Städelschule. *Colibrí* is the artist's first solo exhibition in Belgium.

Many thanks to the artist, Gavra, Woningbouw Merckaert & Pauline Scharmann. With the generous support of the city of Ghent and Duvel Moortgat. If you would like to support Convent, please do not hesitate to contact us via info@conventartspace.be.



Prints from the series *Contradicciones*

Lost City, 2019

Digital print on matte paper, digital print on found book page, paper clip, staples, artist made frame

Colibrí (I - IV), 2019

Digital prints on found book pages, artist made frame

Nuevo Mundo, 2019

Silkscreen print on found book page, artist made frame

Sculptures

Broken Tower with Vaulted Ceiling, 2018

Ceramic tiles, cement, air-dry clay, metallic wire

Discovery, 2018

Ceramic tiles, cement, air-dry clay, metallic wire, copper engraving plate, copper miniatures, ceramic miniatures

Life in the Tropics, 2018

Ceramic tiles, cement, air-dry clay, metallic wire, copper wire, copper miniatures, ceramic miniatures, hat

Movement in the Nightclouds, 2018

Ceramic tiles, cement, air-dry clay, ceramics

Sculptures from the series *Malezas*

E. Pisotasea (Cola de perro), 2019

Metal, air-dry clay, laser-cut canvas

M. Reus (Palo de máscaras), 2019

Metal, air-dry clay, laser-cut canvas, ceramic masks

G. Deliciosa (Ojos de Noche), 2019

Metal, air-dry clay, laser-cut canvas

H. Turbilicia (Rocosa), 2019

Metal wire

I. Redondea (Dedo roto), 2019

Metal, air-dry clay, laser-cut canvas