

Rivers flow out of my eyes
 curated by Madelon van Schie
 March 23 - May 4, 2019

Francisca Aninat, Edgardo Aragón, Marcos Ávila Forero, Adriana Ciudad, Voluspa Jarpa, Arturo Kameya, Tamara Kuselman, Neyde Lantyer, Ícaro Lira, Aníbal López, Ana María Montenegro Jaramillo, Carlos Motta, Enrique Ramírez, Naufus Ramírez-Figueroa, Mónica Restrepo and Maya Watanabe



"The past has not been conquered and continues to affect the present," said the former president of Argentina Néstor Kirchner, roughly twenty years after the Dirty War (1976-1983) had come to an end. Not only Argentina, but a great number of Latin-American countries are contending with the undeniable consequences of political and social shocks. The region's recent history has been marked by collective traumas and social division resulting from violence, civil wars and dictatorial regimes. Investigating the legacy of this past - as well as acknowledging it, representing it and dealing with it - thus constitutes an important mainspring for many contemporary artists in Latin America.

How does the violent past influence the present, and how can this be expressed in an artist's work? These questions were my point of departure for *Rivers flow out of my eyes*. The exhibition, comprising work by artists from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru, relates in various ways to disruptive periods. Collectively the works shed light on a phenomenon that has fascinated me for some time, namely the ever-changing idiom with which artists relate to the past.

In her book *Eruptions of Memory* (2018) the French-Chilean theorist Nelly Richard writes about a 'completed past' as opposed to a 'past being completed', one which is continually being interpreted in new ways and is thus able to withstand rigid standpoints and apathy in the present. On the basis of this idea *Rivers flow out of my eyes* provides a context for a broad range of reflections on periods of political repression and violence. A merely critical and investigative approach is avoided here. Instead the selected works show an emphatic use of ambiguity, fiction, humor, absurdity and poetic images.

The title of the exhibition has been taken from an *Alabao*, a funeral chant sung by the female inhabitants of Timbiquí in southwestern Colombia, with whom participating artist Adriana Ciudad spent a period of time. Within this context the phrase refers to a process of mourning as well as to the passing of time.

The arrangement of *Rivers flow out of my eyes* likewise involves a certain development. Three successive stages, each with a different make-up of artworks, indicate a progression from concrete to more poetic contemplations. In the first period, for instance, there is a focus on themes such as protest, social division, breaking with silence, mourning and memory. The second selection deals with the interpretation and representation of the past. The inheritance of trauma, but also the body and landscape as the bearers of memories, are among the subjects that surface here. In the final phase of the exhibition we see artworks that involve a more cryptic and associative approach. As such the arrangement reflects a natural process of detachment with respect to the past. At the same time, it reveals the innovative and sometimes unexpected ways in which traumatic periods continue to resonate in visual art.

Curated by Madelon van Schie at the request of tegenboschvanvreden, *Rivers flow out of my eyes* is consistent with the gallery's outlook, which embraces the exploration of new forms of presentation and collaboration.

Madelon van Schie (1982, Amsterdam) studied art history at Leiden University, Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires and VU Amsterdam; and Latin-American Studies at the University of Amsterdam. In addition to other activities, she works for the Defares Collection, ProWinko ProArt and the Vigas Foundation.