



la Biennale di Venezia

56. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

# PAVILION OF ECUADOR

at the 56<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

## “Gold Water: Apocalyptic Black Mirrors”

**Exhibitor Artist:** Maria Veronica Leon Veintemilla

**Collaborator:** Mathematician Lucia Isabel Vallarino Peet

**Curator:** Ileana Cornea

**Deputy Curator:** Maria Veronica Leon Veintemilla

**Commissioner:** Andrea Gonzales Sanchez

**Deputy Commissioner:** Paolo De Grandis, PDG Arte Communications

**Coordinators:** Roberto Rosolen, Carlotta Scarpa, PDG Arte Communications

**Supporters:** The Ministry of Culture and Heritage of Ecuador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador, Embassy of Ecuador in Italy, Acquad'or C.A, Boanerges Pereira Espinoza

**Running period:** 9<sup>th</sup> May 2015 – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 | 10 am – 6 pm (closed on Mondays)

**Preview period:** 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015 | 10 am – 8 pm

**Venue:** Istituto S. Maria della Pietà, Castello 3701, 30122 Venezia.

The Culture and Heritage Ministry of Ecuador in cooperation with the Embassy of Ecuador in Rome, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador is proud to announce artist Maria Veronica Leon as the representative for the Pavilion of Ecuador at la Biennale di Venezia, the world's most prestigious contemporary art biennial. Ecuador's official contribution to the 56th International Art Exhibition will be developed by Maria Veronica Leon, a relevant artist for Ecuadorian Art History and one of today most dynamic artists from Latin America. It is also thanks to the efforts of this artist that Ecuador will introduce for the first time its own pavilion at la Biennale di Venezia.

### THE EXHIBITION: “Gold Water: Apocalyptic Black Mirrors”

From the artist's experience in visual arts, music and dance for the four rooms of the Pavilion of Ecuador, Maria Veronica will create a multimedia landscape with her new video audio polyptych installations, incorporating drawings, video, photography, objects, and sound as interrelated visual techniques, that display, as she says, in a “techno-theater” where water element, as a life fountain proclaims a new state of mind. Maria Veronica herself creates the digital, shoots all the videos, edits them, paints and draws characters and symbols, writes the script, and designs the soundtrack.

Art and Science fuse through dynamic combinations of innovative explorations that materialize into a cutting edge, cautionary vision of the future of Humanity. “Gold Water: Apocalyptic Black Mirrors” is inspired by the state of two of the natural primary sources of wealth in Ecuador: Water and Gold, which are extracted from their original context to be critically re-examined through its history, society, economy and culture in relation to global economic values. Both elements, key to the future of humanity, are life sustaining, physically and economically, yet the paradox is that in order to extract gold water sources are often destroyed. In “Gold Water: Apocalyptic Black Mirrors” the convergence of Art and Science forges an artistic amalgam, a prophetic myth of a future dystopia created by man's annihilation of nature and his blind obedience to consumerism.

Starting from this perspective, the Ecuadorian artist explores the mnemonic traces of our relationship with water and gold. Her project is built around a strong symbol: the fireplace, which is cube-shaped like an hyper-utilitarian modern kitchen. The relevance of this realistic structure lays in its universality, thus enabling the artist to create an original work that metaphorically evokes humanity in the process of forgetting itself. This leading-edge kitchen is the receptor of new artistic dimensions that acts as the medium of a future dimensionality.

A wall of a series of micro-waves recessed into rails shows the images of a lost paradise recalling the walls of Plato's Cave. "Kaleidoscopic visions" introduces an unknown and mysterious dimension where industry appears as an altered state of reality; visual codes of geometric structures and messages powerfully collide and combust into a unique language of mystical spheres and progressive signs in transdisciplinary formats.

Several videos convert the scenario of a water bottling plant: shuffled rhythms on a metal background give rise to stars that open and transform like new techno-galaxies. Starting from the mechanization of this bottling landscape, this work features an industrial choreography where workers flow to the sounds with synchronized steps and movements. These workers are in charge of bottling the water for its future commerce and their robotic motions are repeated endlessly. This impressive metallic concerto gave the artist the first notes to create new codes for her "techno-constellations", or metallic visions to impose the last guideline of market demands that enclose the natural pristine virtue of water. Some of the images come from Maria Veronica's video work in Splendorous Waters Bottling Plant (Splendorous Waters or "Gold Water" are unique in Ecuador and the world in the middle of a tropical rain forest in the Ecuadorian Andes in La Mana, Cotopaxi Province were discovered in 1982).

Raising questions around gender Maria Veronica's practice traverses the boundaries of the social and the political, while also is related with aesthetic experience. She crosses disciplines and she explores interconnections between movement, words, numbers, and sound, within the framework of art and science. Her videos are concerned with creating new experiences through the relationship between the viewer's shock versus unusual projections, and with the way the message is mysteriously inscribed after the experience with the unexpected. It tries to change the viewer's perception about video and its observation codes, as well she is interested in creating realities that transform the nature of the object to place it in an unfamiliar context providing it a new identity.

Other videos show virtual and incandescent gold in an everlasting fight against water and evoke chaos. Gold, another capitalist symbol, object of desire, economic index will turn into a promise of beauty through a revolutionary nexus of creativity. She highlights the dimension of gold through an extraordinary digital cosmography. The splendour of a rare collection of pieces bathed in light operates in space with an identity adapted to an aesthetic of reversal and stimulates the visualization of authentic gold art in the next future. After a transcendental journey to Ecuadorian ancestor's practices with gold, where they used special techniques like hammered and embossing to elaborate unusual figures and gold masks with original physiognomies, -like bizarre extraterrestrial creatures bordering with space-, she places the genuine talent of pre-Columbian cultures within a cutting edge structure, to catapult new ideas and artworks stemming from this process to future cultural contexts, and onto the avant-garde international art landscape. In order to prefigure a new collection of gold in the contemporary art scene, the artist recycles these practices to work with "virtual gold," or artificial gold (acrylics, oils, gold leaf, gold sprays, etc.) giving us the illusion of having easy access to this metal but in actuality mimics only its appearance, its light and its powerful reflections.

The artist is conceived like a timeless creature, materialized by her own masks and acrylic chemical composition, that represents her Latin traces in a contemporary universal locality, with a developed consciousness of today and tomorrow's phenomena. Thanks to this new project that includes innovative features and "virtual recycling", and the image of this metal will undergo an unusual transformation to give to gold a true artistic value.

### **Press Enquiries:**



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