



la Biennale di Venezia

56. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali

## “Gold & Water: Metallic Constellations”

For the first time in the history of the Venice Biennale, Ecuador opens its own independent pavilion thanks to the initiative of a young multidisciplinary artist, relevant to the Art History of Ecuador, Maria Veronica Leon, currently living in Dubai (Cube Arts Gallery), who has been distinguishing herself in Paris since 1998 for her works (drawing, painting, printing, video art, video poetry, performance, digital books, and digital photography).

Gold intensity and water translucency has always been one of her favorite subjects. For the 56th International Art Exhibition, she explores gold and water through a new proposal: “**Gold Water: Apocalyptic Black Mirrors**”, a true manifesto in favor of life and art.

This committed artist deplores the excesses, exaggeration, intoxication and drifts of industry, which penetrates to the very heart of nature (1) and alters ‘water vibration energy’ and the ‘symbolic, historical and cultural significance of gold.’

‘Water, as governed by regulations that meet the needs of our western industrial civilisations, encompasses the most ancient representations that, still today, bear their influence on our opinions. Water mythology and symbolism engraved in our subconscious contribute to our perception of water’. For the French semiologist Jules Gritti ‘Our technical and industrial civilisation, owing to its inherent shortages and pollutions, may exacerbate need, anguish and appetite in talking signs.’

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 as a leading-edge kitchen, though with a new identity. 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. 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. Several videos show the images of a water bottling plant: shuffled rhythms on a metal background give rise to stars that open and transform like new galaxies. Another video shows virtual and incandescent gold in an everlasting fight against water and evokes chaos. Gold as an economic index will turn into a promise of beauty.

1. ‘Ecuador, country of solar forces, is a piece of incomparable nature. Its coasts licked by the Pacific, its flank crossed by the Andes mountain range. The Galapagos Islands inspired ‘The Origin of Species’ by Charles Darwin’.

Ileana Cornea, art critic and curator

Paris, January 2015