

Palimpsesto

Cristina Mejías

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The production of *Palimpsesto* was made possible through the funding by XXIII Propuestas de Ayudas a la Creación Visual VEGAP. *Palimpsesto* is composed by seven 23x43 cm photo-engravings on Zerkall artrag paper 300gr. Six of them have been edited with the digital chine colle layer method before printed onto Japanese Hosho 80gr paper. It is made up of five previous model executions, resulting in a total of forty-two photo-engravings.

The impressions realized onto the Japanese paper correspond to six photographic frames that portray distinct scenes from a video installation, *Vigilaban en la última luz la aparición del espejismo (They were observing the emergence of the mirage in the last light)*, 2018, that the artist contextualized and produced at the salt flats of Algaida (Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Cádiz). The installation undertaken against the backdrop of Sanlúcar de Barrameda and primarily composed of a video projection with a trammel net delimiting it. The installation examines the concept of mirage, understood as an optical illusion in which objects around us are reflected on a smooth surface (a road, the sea, a desert plain, etc), which returns a mirror image with the appearance of a liquid surface, full of ripples and in motion. The intention is to present the six locations that appear in the video projection on the salt mountain. In this form, the photo-engravings function as a palimpsest; conveying a fleeting image, projected onto the mineral before giving way to the following.

Sanlúcar de Barrameda is a municipality located on the left bank of the Guadalquivir river, facing the National and Natural Park of Doñana. Within this natural environment, Los Pinares de la Algaida is also to be found, a wood in which recent archaeological digs (1980) uncovered the remains of a pre-Roman civilisation, more precisely Phoenician, El Tesorillo. But it is also said of this pine grove to have contained Atlantis, the legendary empire Plato refers to in his work *Critias*. In it, the philosopher painstakingly characterises this island as a military power that existed nine thousand years prior to the age of Athenian lawmaker Solon, who, according to Plato, is the source of his tale.

The island, as it appears in said writings, was placed far beyond the Pillars of Hercules and it is described as being bigger than Lybia and Asia Minor put together.

Plato's description shows such detail that many historians have put forward numerous theories as to its location and existence. Among them, its siting at La Algaida. Artist Cristina Mejías decided to relocate for a few months to these island with this purpose, in order to approach the study of this territory through her searching of remaining digs but, foremost, in order to get acquainted to some of the narratives its inhabitants tell about this mythical island, among whom counts Manuel Cuevas, a great proponent and researcher of this theory.

“The citizens and the city which you yesterday described to us in fiction, we will now transfer to the world of reality”; that's how Plato referred to Atlantis in his *Timaeus*, a dialogue proceeding *Critias*. In between reality and fiction is where this island is still precisely situated, like a mirage: like something placed between the object and its representation, between the thing and its narrative. And that is how Cristina Mejías has conducted her research at La Algaida, by approaching the digs but also listening to the witnesses of the people living there. *Vigilaban en la última luz la aparición del espejismo* is a video installation built on the basis references about this peculiar place. On the one side, the salt flats belonging to the territory where Atlantis is said to be buried. Hills of white salt which are reminiscent of icebergs: above their surface emerges much less that what is hidden underneath their surface. On the other hand, the trammel nets, employed in the traditional art of fishing of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, used with a banner to mark a point in the sea which protrudes and waves along with its motion, but which also conceals its entire frame underneath water changing every second.

Palimpsesto, 2020

Preservation box containing two conservation trays for the photo-engravings.

60 x 55 x 5cm

The interior and exterior are covered by dark navy blue Saphir fabric.

Bronze cliché stamp on the cases.



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2020

Seven 23x43 cm photoengravings on Zerkall artrag 300 gr paper, six of them intervened with chine colle digital on Japanese Hosho 80 gr paper.

23 x 43 cm

Ed: 2/5



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Palimpsesto

2020

Photoengravings on Zerkall artrag and digital
intervention on chine colle paper

23 x 43 cm

Ed: 1/5



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BIOGRAPHY

Jerez de la Frontera, 1986

Cristina Mejías is a visual artist. She graduated from the Universidad Europea of Madrid and the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, with a degree in Fine Arts and a Master's degree in Art and Creation Research from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. In 2010, she moved to Berlin, thanks to a European scholarship, where she lived for four years. In 2014, she returned to Madrid where she currently resides and works.

Recently her work has been exhibited in places like The Goma (Madrid), Galería José de la Fuente (Santander), MACZUL Museum (Maracaibo, Venezuela), Teatro SAC (Barcelona), Galería Javier Silva (Valladolid), Sala Santa Inés (Sevilla), Mendoza Foundation (Caracas, Venezuela),

Ranchito ARCOLisboa, Matadero Madrid / Galerias Municipais (Madrid / Lisbon), Artothèque (Bordeaux), TEA (Tenerife), LABoral (Gijón), Fundación Cajasol (Seville), Centro Cultural de España/AECID (Rosario, Argentina/Concepción, Chile/Lima, Peru), CAAC (Seville) or CentroCentro (Madrid) among others.

In the last few months she has carried out an artist's residency thanks to an international grant at Tabakalera (San Sebastian) and at the Centro de Creación Contemporánea of Andalucía C3A, the result of which will be part of the group exhibition "Tocar la tierra".

Among the awards and grants she has recently obtained are Generation 2020 from the Casa Encendida (Madrid), the residency grant from Hangar Lisboa, the residency grant from Tabakalera (San Sebastián), the Iniciar-te award, she has been also a finalist in the Premi Ciutat de Palma-Casal Solleric, and obtained the residency production grant from Ranchito ArcoLisboa, as well as the residency production grant 'Correspondencias de Ultramar' in Caracas and Maracaibo AECID/Spanish Embassy in Venezuela, Creación Injuve 2017 award, XIX Call Luis Adelantado, Circuitos de Artes Plásticas XXVI, Joven Complutense award and TheGymProgramme in espacio Rampa among others.