

MAC

Press Release

VAL

Les humeurs

Exhibition of Juliana Góngora starting on 21 Octobre 2017

Opening on Friday 20 October, 6:30pm

Currator Valérie Labayle assisted by Fati Konaté

On the occasion of the 2017 France-Colombia year and its residency program, MAC/VAL invited Juliana Góngora (born in 1988 in Bogota, where she currently lives and works) for a production residency from May to July 2017. She has drawn connections between her personal experience, her place as a woman within society and her first encounter with France, especially Val-de-Marne.

Event organized in the framework of the 2017 France-Colombia year



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Juliana Góngora graduated from the fine arts faculty of the National University of Colombia in Bogota (2014) where she now teaches. Through her sculptures, videos and installations, she explores the functionalities and transformation possibilities of matter. Often using clay, stones and bricks, she produces poetical artworks that subtly evoke the fragility of transformation and balance. Going beyond matter-related issues, her pieces tackle the fragility and violence within human relationships. Her recent salt works entitled *Labor* and *Lavanderas* are references to her family story. She created a salt wall of the same dimensions than that of her grandparents' traditional home in El Espinal while alluding to the activities of these women working with salt, a resource associated with purification rituals in Colombia.

For the MAC VAL exhibition entitled "*Les humeurs*", Juliana Góngora has used salt and clay as her main media. Handkerchiefs filled with salt and soaked with water are tied and hung from the ceiling, dropping stalactites like tears running on a clay ground. She also transformed her father's folding bed into a salt and water filter. She draws our attention on the effects of her media: as it expands, salt alters fabrics, crystalizes and stiffens materials. Salt is a substance that "preserves" and, by extension, "takes care of".

During her residency at the MAC VAL, she explored materials as well as her surrounding, questioning the place of women, labor, the monumental and the underground in our society. She contributed to the revival of exploratory walks in Champigny. These nighttime walks aim at identifying places where women feel secure in order to bring change to a dominantly manly urban space organization. These walks started in Quebec and spread over the world. In France, they were initiated by the Ministère de la Ville and several towns of the Val-de-Marne took part in the initiative (Arcueil, Champigny, Ivry-sur-Seine etc.). This is how Juliana Góngora embodies the female action of "taking care of", "paying attention to": a way to "be careful with others". She explores the concept of labor and gives it shape through handkerchiefs that refer to the expression "by the sweat of one's brow": the handkerchief is an object traditionally washed, ironed and folded by her family laundrywomen and given to the working men. During her last trip to Europe, Juliana Góngora was fascinated by the overlapping of historic layers as well as monumental and underground cities like direct or indirect metaphors of the human body. The exhibition "*Les humeurs*" recalls both these states of the mind and body. In this show, Juliana Góngora proposes a metaphor of the cycle of life.



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1 Juliana Góngora, *Les humeurs*, detail, 2017. MAC VAL Production- Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne. Photo © Juliana Góngora.



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2 Juliana Góngora, *Les humeurs*, detail, 2017. MAC VAL Production- Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne. Photo © Juliana Góngora.



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3 Juliana Góngora, Preparatory sketch for the exhibition «*Les Humeurs*», MAC VAL 2017.