

LA ISLA DE LAS SIETE CIUDADES

HUGO DEVERCHÈRE

Hugo Deverchère

born in 1988 in Lyon, France
lives and works in Paris

exhibition

from 14th March
to 10th April

opening

Sunday 14th March
2pm-6pm

galerie Sator

KOMUNUMA

43 rue de la Commune de Paris
93230 Romainville

OPENING HOURS

Wednesday - Saturday
11am-6pm

and by appointment

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The “Isla de las Siete Ciudades” is the name of a phantom group of islands that was once believed to be situated off the coast of the Iberian Peninsula between the 15th and the 16th centuries. Over the course of this period, the archipelago changed name, shape, and position, with successive Spanish, Italian, German and Turkish maps showing it gradually drifting out into the Atlantic Ocean. It appears a final time in the Caribbean before vanishing altogether, as its history blends with other myths, like that of the Seven Cities of Gold. It left behind tales of magical worlds and dreams of precious gems.

This exhibition is based on a deliberately anachronistic research project which seeks out the origins of this legend as well as looking to its ramifications for our contemporary mythologies, at a time when the recent discovery of exoplanets has reactivated and transposed the fantasy of unexplored worlds to the cosmos. Bringing together various fields of research, including geology, microbiology, astronomy, archaeology and alchemy, Hugo Deverchère activates processes that allow for the emergence of a new world and the evocation of a territory that has vanished – or that has yet to be found.

During his residency at Casa de Velázquez in 2020, Deverchère set out to find natural environments that could correspond to the vague descriptions of this fictional territory. This exploration enabled him to assemble the raw visual material of this exhibition, consisting of chemical, organic and mineral elements. In this reverse study, it was no longer a question of proving the existence of a hypothetical territory but rather of locating the manifestations of its imaginaries in the real world and to bringing them into being.



Here we discover a sensitive environment where the works form a series of clues that trace out a shifting geography, a journey through the different scales of landscape that are observed and dissected by multiple tools from microscopes to telescopes.

These installations allow the materials gathered by the artist in his exploratory research to encounter and interact with one another. Processes of growth, crystallization, development, transformation and decomposition play out over the duration of the exhibition, recreating geological and chemical phenomena that usually take place over epochal time scales.

The exhibition immerses us in possible states of material and their fluxes. It unveils imperceptible strata of landscape which, through their metamorphoses, generate a new territory that is both possible and imaginary.



(image 1)
 La Isla de las Siete Ciudades
 Artefact #03 - 2021
 water, salts, rock, aluminium, glass, pumps, cooling system
 40 x 40 x 180 cm
 © Maurine Tric

(image2)
 La Isla de las Siete Ciudades
 Event #02 - 2021
 pigmentary print on hahnemühle Photo Rag Ultra Smooth paper, oak frame
 154 x 229 x 4 cm, edition : 5 + 2 A.P
 © Hugo Deverchère