



Photo: Tangrama.

National Salon of Artists:  
*Saber Desconocer*  
(To Know Not to Know)

September 6–November 3, 2013  
Medellín, Colombia  
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First held in 1940, Colombia's longest-running and best-known platform for contemporary art, the National Salon of Artists, presents its 43rd edition (SNA43) in the city of Medellín from Friday, September 6 to November 3, 2013.

Saber Desconocer (To Know Not To Know) features approximately 100 installations, sculptures, videos, audio works, photographs and paintings by as many artists from throughout Latin America and abroad.

All the featured work will be explored through the lens of two themes: saber, the importance of tradition, territory, and knowledge developed in one place; and desconocer, the need to escape from place and the quest for the unknown.

"We see this biennial as an opportunity to redraw the line between the 'local' and the 'international' in a way that is often skirted in today's large contemporary art exhibitions," says artistic director Mariángela Méndez.

An initiative of the Colombian Ministry of Culture, Saber Desconocer will occupy three venues in the heart of Colombia's second largest and most innovative city, Medellín: the Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín (Medellín Museum of Modern Art); Museo de Antioquia (Museum of Antioquia) in downtown Medellín; and, across the street from the Museo de Antioquia, the nearby Antioquia building (the former administrative offices of the Colombian merchant fleet), which is being renovated to accommodate site-specific works.

#### **On view**

The exhibition section in Saber Desconocer exploring the idea of the 'known' as manifested in tradition, indigenous art, identity, and craft will occupy a wing of the Museo de Arte Moderno. In many works here, traditional artifacts will be placed in conversation with contemporary art forms, as in a commissioned installation by José

Antonio Suárez Londoño that juxtaposes a series of the artist's new drawings with a number of los Alzate ceramics (fake pre-Columbian pottery produced by one enterprising family in the late 19th and early 20th centuries) and in Dutch artist Vincent Vulsmá's series of computer-generated Jacquard-woven textiles, which will be placed side-by-side a weaving reflecting the methods and artistry of the Kaxinawá people of Brazil and Peru.

On the opposite side of the museum, the concept of 'not knowing' will be explored in an unsettling, performative 'drawing' by Jorge Macchi (Argentina), in which a spinning and bouncing ceiling fan spills marks and dust onto the blank canvas of a wall; in the

Colombian artist Mateo López's ghostly, life-sized paper furniture; and in fellow Colombian Bernardo Ortiz's room installation of restrained, abstract, and minimalist drawings.

More works by artists whose practice is similarly animated by doubt, ambiguity, and the desire for suspension are featured in the Museo of Antioquia. Jean François Boclé, a Martinique-born artist who lives in Paris and Brussels, will recreate Everything Must Go! (2004), a vast room installation partially but precisely filled with thousands of inflated blue plastic bags; Benvenuto Chavajaya, an artist from Guatemala, will contribute a floor installation comprised of river stones tenuously tethered by embedded rubber flip-flops, and Fabienne Lasserre, a New York based Canadian artist, will present a series of discrete geometrical yarn sculptures that are designed to lean lightly on the walls and floor.

Specially commissioned solo projects will be installed across the street from the Museo de Antioquia on four floors of the Edificio Antioquia, the now-abandoned headquarters of Colombia's largest shipping company. On the street level visitors will encounter a pop-up heladería, or ice cream parlor, designed of bricks, shards, and patterned concrete blocks in the vernacular style of Medellín by Alejandro Mancera. Higher up they will find a make-shift garden of patio furniture, tropical plants and fountains by the Puerto Rico-born Radamés Juni Figueroa. The Edificio also will serve as the site for informal artists talks, readings, concerts, performances, and video screenings.

The curatorial team is comprised of Mariángela Méndez (Colombia) as artistic director; Florencia Malbrán (Argentina); Javier Mejía (Colombia); Rodrigo Moura (Brazil) and Óscar Roldán-Alzate (Colombia).

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