

# IMPORT PROJECTS

KEITHSTRASSE 10 / 10787 BERLIN

## PRESS RELEASE

### Sierra Negra

#### ARTIST

Paul Rosero Contreras

#### CURATORS

Anja Henckel & Nadim Samman

[www.import-projects.org](http://www.import-projects.org)

[info@import-projects.org](mailto:info@import-projects.org)

–  
27.04 - 25.05.2017

OPEN DURING  
EXHIBITIONS  
THURSDAY-SATURDAY  
1-5PM

X

VERNISSAGE  
26 APRIL  
7-10 PM

Ecuadorian artist **Paul Rosero Contreras** explores the continuum between representing and altering a given landscape, while also probing the distinction between objectivity and enigma. Drawing on fieldwork in locations including active volcanos in the Galapagos Archipelago, Sierra Negra presents perspectives on evolution, experiments and mutation.

In Sierra Negra, **Paul Rosero Contreras** presents a series of installations regarding concepts of habitat, hybrid ecologies and symbiosis. Dragging research from historically distant paths, from the architecture of slavery to aspects of marine life, environmental science, and hydrocarbon derivatives, this exhibition displays a body of work exploring the post-human biological setting.

In his first solo show in Berlin, the artist offers a series of hybrid objects: Amplified natural phenomena shaped as monstrous sculptures stating new possibilities of life after an environmental cataclysm; on land and underwater field recordings, the invisible morphing into the tangible, new organisms in relation to geological activity.

(1) **Rubber Snails** (2016) documents a found habitat for marine snails located in a discarded tractor tire, observed in the Russian Black Sea. For the artist, this symbiosis between biology and industrial waste opens up vista through which to consider hybrid ecologies. Elsewhere in the exhibition, this conjunction inspires the vision of an artificial reef system.

(2,3) **Black Memories (After the Future of Life by Edward O. Wilson)** (2015) depicts an agglomeration of extinct flora and fauna – a biological memento mori. **Focalization** (2015) incorporates a map of South America, a regional map of Ecuador and, finally, another map of the Yasuni National Park – one the most biodiverse regions in the world, whose oil reserves were previously offered for 'sale' on the condition that no extraction would take place. The latter map outlines the proposed sites that would be kept undisturbed. At present the project is defunct and extraction proceeds.

(4) **Los Andes Pavilion** (2015) is a three-video loop incorporating recordings of the Cotopaxi and Tungurahua volcanoes in the Ecuadorian highlands, and the Sierra Negra volcano on Isabela Island, Galapagos. The works explore how human, animal and plant life are conditioned by the unsettling volcanic landscape. In the case of Sierra Negra, focusing on the correlation between seismic activity and the rise of new species; specifically, on the mystery of nature embodied the island's Pink Iguana, the only evidence of ancient diversification along the Galapagos land iguana lineage: a living transitional morphology and a symbol for adaption to unknown conditions.

(5) **Home, no home** (2012) a synthesis of research on the relation between human, habitat and injustice. The work focuses on life and architecture built by Europe's and America's slaves through a scaled version of a typical 17th century house made of the

scrapings of buildings related to slavery in Bordeaux, France, the third most active European port at that time.

(6) **Daule Meteorite** (2015) is a meteorite fragment collected from the alligator-filled Daule lake in Ecuador. The sculpture mixes two interpretive frames – astronomy and the site's local mythology. Local rice-field workers guided the artist to a location where they believe a part of this extraterrestrial object landed. The artist then confirmed this speculation using public access astronomical data. Conjoining narrative identity and scientific research, Rosero proposes a convergence of oral history, legend, and technical systems of observation. The group of framed serigraphic prints depict visualization systems outlining the shape, composition and structure of the meteorite.

(7) **Ensayo Sobre la Ceguera (Rolling and rolling)** (2017) is a proposal for an artificial ocean-reef. Based on the recycling of rubber tires recovered from beaches and seas in different countries around the globe, this project conjoins marine life and industrial waste within a mutant scheme.

(8) **Habit** (2015) and **The Opening** (2015) are part of an ongoing project visualizing seismic events along the Los Andes range that are associated with volcanic eruptions. The works translate invisible phenomena into material and visual form – toggling, conceptually, between the massive scale of mountains and their sonic landscapes.

(9) **Anticipation to an absence** (2014) is an artificially produced living forest made out of the mix of a biodegradable plastic filament and Lion's mane fungi (*Hericium erinaceus*) growing in agar. This piece references the regions in the Amazon jungle that are disappearing because of oil extraction. In order to produce this hybrid object, a Biological 3D Printer has been developed by the artist.

**Paul Rosero Contreras** (b. Ecuador, 1982) works at the intersection of scientific data, speculative realism and fictional narratives. His body of work explores topics related to geopolitics, environmental issues and the relationship between humans and living surroundings. **Rosero** received a Master's in Cognitive Systems and Interactive Media from Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain, as well as a MFA in Art and Technology at the California Institute of the Arts. His previous studies include Philosophy, Literature and Technologies of Communication. His cross-disciplinary interests involve photography, experimental sound material development and audiovisual performance. His work has been displayed worldwide as part of the Moscow Biennale for Young Art, Russia, Musee Quai Branly, Paris – France, Instituto Cervantes, Roma – Italy, Museo de Historia, Zaragoza – Spain, Galeria Virgilio, Sao Paulo – Brazil, Cuenca Biennale, Ecuador, 1st Antarctic Biennale, SIGGRAPH 17 Los Angeles, among other venues.

Unterstützt durch:

