

**Sol Calero**  
***El Autobús***

*First conceived for a solo exhibition at TATE Liverpool and later reconstructed at the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma in Helsinki*

Expanding upon the themes surrounding tourism first developed in her exhibition *Agencia Viajes Paraíso* (2017), *El Autobús* is a handmade simulacrum of a tour bus, a static structure activated by an audio tour and video installation surrounded by Calero's oneiric tropical wall murals. Inspired by travel and public transportation in Latin America, where richly decorated buses are a popular means of transit, the installation recreates a chaotic reality where, for locals, the bus is a necessary part of the daily commute, while tourists use them in pursuit of exotic adventure. The tourist sets out in search of the authentic, yet acts as its perpetual undoing—authenticity constantly receding as they approach.<sup>1</sup> Here in *El Autobús*, the clash between expectation and reality is apparent: the traveler knows they will arrive nowhere, yet boards nonetheless.

The bus tour is narrated in English by the fictional Juan Pedro Enrique Hernández González Pérez (voiced by fellow artist Juan-Pedro Fabra Guemberena), who guides the visitor-cum-tourist through an unnamed region rife with legends, political allegories and violent turmoil, all seamlessly blended together by the charismatic host despite numerous logistical problems that arise. Meanwhile, the omnipresent drone of the moving bus's engine can be heard rumbling through speakers and subwoofers installed in the floor, creating a hypnotic environment in the oversized vehicle. Screens fixed to the back of the bus seats broadcast a series of videos filmed by Calero on various bus trips through unnamed destinations, daunting landscapes whizzing by at high speed.

With *El Autobús*, Calero employs the fictional journey as a means of exploring desire, projection and self-mythologies, calling upon the trajectories of magical realism as a narrative and aesthetic tool to articulate the many contradictions implicit in Latin American daily life.

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<sup>1</sup> See Hakim Bey, *Overcoming Tourism*