

Sol Calero

Cabilla

Cabilla is the Spanish word for the cast-iron rods used in construction to reinforce concrete. The standardisation of this industrial element has made it ubiquitous. However, in Venezuela, cabilla is also used to refer to something that is good, strong, consistent, excellent, optimal. The word is thus materialized as a demonstration of how ideological imaginaries become the infrastructures in which we live.

The oil boom and intensive agricultural processes put Venezuela at the forefront of modernism in Latin America. Mass migration from the Canary Islands produced an economic transfer but also led to an exchange of images that inform different utopias and dystopias in both places.

This curatorial and installation project by the Venezuelan-Canarian artist Sol Calero was conceived in conjunction with the support and collaboration of a number of artists whose careers and lives are connected to Venezuela. The project traces the history of forced migrations and the feeling of rootlessness that reveals the flipside of modernity and the possibility of a shared identity.

The walkthrough begins in a house, thus reverting the entry to the exhibition from inside to outside. Visitors then immediately come across works by Lucía Pizzani and Christian Vinck depicting domesticated nature. Pizzani's collage focuses on the relationship between the flora and fauna common to Venezuela and the Canaries, underscoring parallels that have ecological resonances in the history of both regions. This is further echoed in Vinck's paintings of canaries, birds endemic to the Canary Islands that also fly over Venezuela.

The second gallery addresses the exploitation of natural resources, through the work of Ana Alenso and her evocative use of materials from the mining and oil industries. This is followed by installations by Rubén D'Hers and by Armando Rosales, exploring tensions between places, sounds and mobility in a more abstract redolent fashion. Cabilla concludes with ArchivOlares, a wide-ranging archive of Venezuelan folklore and music that helps us to understand the country's cultural history while inviting us to undertake an exercise in memory and at once a voyage of discovery. The archive room also provides access to a music piece by Ernesto Paredano, which revisits the ethno-musical recordings of Oswaldo Lares, mixing traditional Venezuelan music from rural areas with electronic backings.