

FEATURED ARTIST: HARRISON TOBÓN



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Harrison Tobón was born in Bogotá in 1983. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Visual and Fine Arts and his Master's degree in Art Education at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. In his work, he has explored the representation of urban space: how we inhabit it, how it interacts with its environment, and how it changes over time and as a result of human activity. His work is influenced by architecture, and he uses photography as a medium to objectify the gaze and obtain an image that he then translates using different techniques, from digital media to watercolor on paper.

As an artist native to the city, he has recreated Bogotá and followed closely the evolution of several areas of the city which are of patrimonial interest. He has also, however, painted cities such as Barranquilla, Miami, and Brooklyn.

Among his different ways of exploring urban landscapes, the artist has created small watercolor paintings of the façades of Bogotan houses, along with installations with the motifs that are often painted on them. By doing this—as he points out when describing this series, *Archivo sensible de arquitectura bogotana en vía de extinción* (“Sensory archive of endangered Bogotan architecture”)—he aims to preserve the images of the old houses of the Colombian capital, which are increasingly disappearing to be replaced by modern buildings. Similarly, he has used sculpture, drawing, and painting to portray, through an emphasis on color, the growing overcrowding of cities, as shown by the series *Construcciones cromáticas* (“Chromatic constructions”), some of which illustrate this issue.

On the other hand, in *Paisajes hechos a mano* (“Handmade landscapes”), the artist reflects on how buildings can make an essential element of landscape in painting disappear: the horizon. This reflection is also captured in *Lo humano en la montaña* (“Humanity on the mountain”), a collection that shows the Eastern Hills of Bogotá as seen through his studio window. In this series of paintings, we can observe the interaction of the natural landscape of the mountains with the materials and shapes of the urban landscape. Either way, his work suggests, at the same time, a reflection on how cities change, grow, and gentrify, and on shape, color, and material, and their potential to represent human habitats.

Tobón has exhibited his work in individual and collective shows in several museums, galleries, and exhibitions in Colombia. Some of them are ARTBO, Feria del Millón and BARCU in Colombia, and the Other Art Fair in New York City, United States. His work has also been included in the books *Soy Bogotá* and *El destino de los objetos: Un recorrido por la colección de Alejandro Castaño*.

This time, we harness his colorful and varied perspective of the meaning of cities to illustrate our special issue on multilingualism, including works from the series *Archivo sensible de arquitectura bogotana en vía de extinción*, *Construcciones cromáticas*, *Lo humano en la montaña*, *Paisajes hechos a mano*, and *Paisajes latinoamericanos*.

Works



Title: Calle 85 (series *Lo humano de la montaña*)
Technique: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 60 x 50 cm
 2023



Title: Cerro del cable (series *Lo humano de la montaña*)
Technique: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 60 x 50 cm
 2023



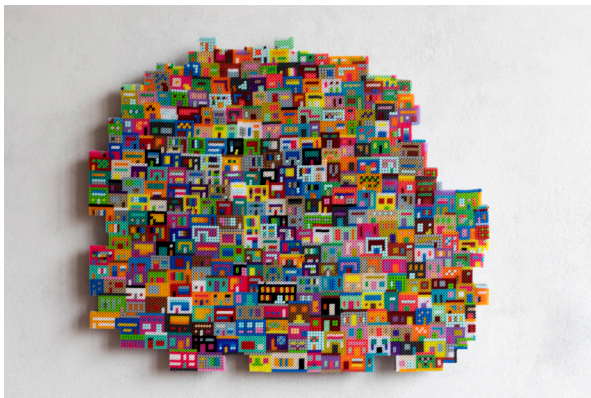
Title: La cabrera (series *Lo humano de la montaña*)
Technique: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 150 x 400 cm
 2017



Title: Paisajes hechos a mano
Technique: Acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 130 x 170 cm
 2016



Title: Construcciones cromáticas
Technique: Cement and dyed plaster, metallic rods painted with industrial enamel
Dimensions: 85 x 28 x 28 cm
 2014 - 2015



Title: Paisajes latinoamericanos
Technique: Hama beads on MDF
Dimensions: 50 x 70 cm
 2023



Title: Edificio García Barranquilla
Technique: Watercolor on paper
Dimensions: 70 x 50 cm
 2018



Title: Cerros orientales desde la Universidad Nacional de Colombia
Technique: Poster paint and acrylic on canvas
Dimensions: 170 x 220 cm
 2024



Title: Archivo sensible de arquitectura bogotana en vía de extinción
Technique: Watercolor on paper
Dimensions: 18 x 13 cm
 2015 - 2024



Title: Barrio 7 de agosto (series *Archivo sensible de arquitectura bogotana en vía de extinción*)
Technique: Watercolor on paper
Dimensions: 25 x 70 cm
 2016