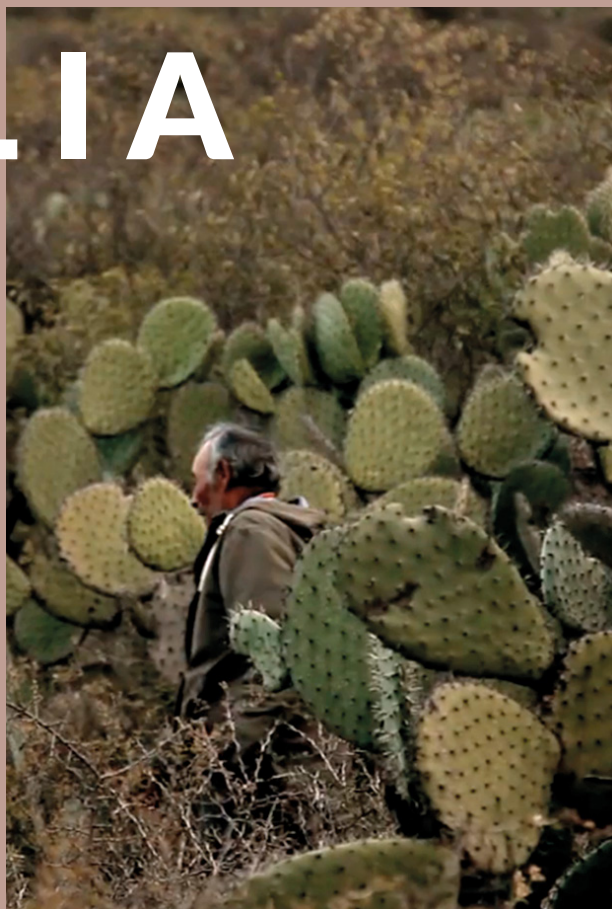


BLINDSIDE Gallery

TER- TULIA



Curators
Claudia Hogan
and Carla Serrano

01.07.2020
18.07.2020

BIENVENIDOS

Ya sea en una mesa familiar, en el bar con los amigos o entre colegas de trabajo, el acto de conversar es parte de nuestra vida diaria. Más aún, nuestras conversaciones influyen en la forma en que vemos nuestra propia realidad. En cualquiera de sus múltiples formas (imágenes o palabras, libros o películas), los discursos que nos compartimos tienen el poder de dirigir nuestra mirada hacia sitios desconocidos, y hacerla ver con mayor profundidad. De ahí la importancia de conversar nuestro presente, de forma abierta y desde distintos puntos de vista. Esta es la esencia de Tertulia, una muestra que, más allá de exhibir piezas audiovisuales, establece una charla con espectadores de México y Australia en torno a temas globales, urgentes, que nos hablan de nosotros mismos, individual y colectivamente.

Lejos de encontrarse fuera de lo común, el contenido de los temas responde a nuestra cotidianidad. Entre otros, la exhibición habla de la cultura que se niega y se degrada a sí misma desde un racismo internalizado, a veces inconsciente; del futuro de una Tierra asolada por la extinción debido a la destrucción del medio ambiente; de una sociedad segregada por la ignorancia en torno a la diversidad de género; de retratos y autorretratos satíricos; de rincones cuyos límites se difuminan hasta transformarse en un segundo espacio, donde una puede sumergirse.

Hay algo que sí se erige fuera de lo ordinario: la mirada de cada uno de los artistas que conforman Tertulia. Miradas que son ventanas desde donde observamos nuestro acontecer bajo una nueva luz, una más transparente.

La conversación se enriquece con la contribución de narradores y poetas reaccionando ante las piezas. Procedentes de ambos países, artistas visuales y escritores plasman en Tertulia un complejo y vibrante vitral donde el espectador, además de ahondar en las cosmovisiones de ambas culturas, se ve reflejado, se ve identificado, se vuelve capaz de conversar consigo mismo y, por lo tanto, con el otro.

Este trabajo de curaduría ha sido posible gracias a la acertada visión de Carla Serrano y Claudia Hogan, gestoras del arte representando a México y a Australia respectivamente. Mediante una insuperable selección y gestión de las obras, nuestras curadoras han logrado transportar los temas que están sobre la mesa de cualquier lugar, en cualquier país, hasta nuestros ojos; nos han convocado a esta Tertulia con espectadores, artistas, lectores, quien sea.

Que continúe la plática.

Por Alejandro del Castillo

WELCOME

Talking is part of our human nature. At the family table, in the workplace or among friends, dialogues are constantly influencing the way we perceive the world. These conversations have the power to lead our thoughts to unknown places and enable us to see our past views from a new perspective; some of them entail the seed of more complex and powerful forms of expression, such as literary pieces, songs, street art, movies, protests, expositions... all of them enrich our culture and mutual understanding. Hence the premise at the heart of Tertulia, a visual exhibition showcasing pieces from Mexico and Australia that openly discuss our present from different points of view, addressing global issues that concern us all individually and collectively.

Among other topics, Tertulia is about a culture that denies and degrades itself due to internalised and unconscious racism; a wasted land, ravaged by the mass extinction of species; a society being segregated by ignorance and intolerance of gender diversity; an intervened space whose physical limits become inhabitable, submersible.

These questions are addressed from the unique eye of each of our artists, lenses that are windows from where we can observe a multilayer portrait –sometimes satirical, always transparent– of our own humanness. In addition, the conversation is enhanced with the eager contribution of narrators and poets reacting to the artworks. Coming from both latitudes, visual artists and writers capture in Tertulia a vibrant, colourful stained-glass displaying large scale discussions, where viewers are reflected, self-identified, able thus to converse with themselves and their society.

This curatorial work has been possible thanks to the accurate vision of Claudia Hogan and Carla Serrano, cultural and arts managers representing Mexico and Australia accordingly. Through a peerless selection of the artworks, they have managed to bring the topics currently talked on anyone's table, in any place or country, to our eyes. We are gathering here to keep the discussion going and to share views with artists, readers, dentists, poets, whoever.

Let the conversation carry on.

By Alejandro del Castillo

A LETTER TO TERTULIA

Tertulia is a curatorial project that has developed out of a close friendship and working relationship between Carla and I. We met just over two years ago during a curatorial internship that was promoted within our Master of Arts Management. We had moved to Melbourne around the same time for the same course, though while I travelled from Perth, Western Australia, Carla made the somewhat heftier journey from Queretaro, México. Being in a new city, our networks were fairly limited and we found mutual comfort in each other's company, despite our somewhat shy initial interactions. Neither of us realised at the time that we would find so much common-ground across our interests, values and aspirations that would lead to many collaborative projects and an ongoing friendship.

Throughout our many conversations, we have often shared views to consider the cultural and artistic climates of our two countries of origin.

Within these exchanges, reflecting on pressing issues that are topical within a global perspective, we found that our cultural positionings helped frame and inform the nuanced understandings between us.

This dialogue and exchange, we realised, was at the heart of the exhibition we were planning. Thus, the curatorial framework of Tertulia was born.

A tertulia is a social gathering initiated in Spain, traditionally consisting of artists, literati and poets. These individuals would come together to talk about current affairs, showcase their work, and give collective feedback.

In similar vein, this exhibition brings together the works of artists from Mexico and Australia in the attempt to open discussion around a number of issues raised through the varied individual, cultural and artistic lens of each artist. Furthermore, Tertulia considers the multi-faceted use of technology across the various mediums of moving image work to bring about such contemporary discussions.

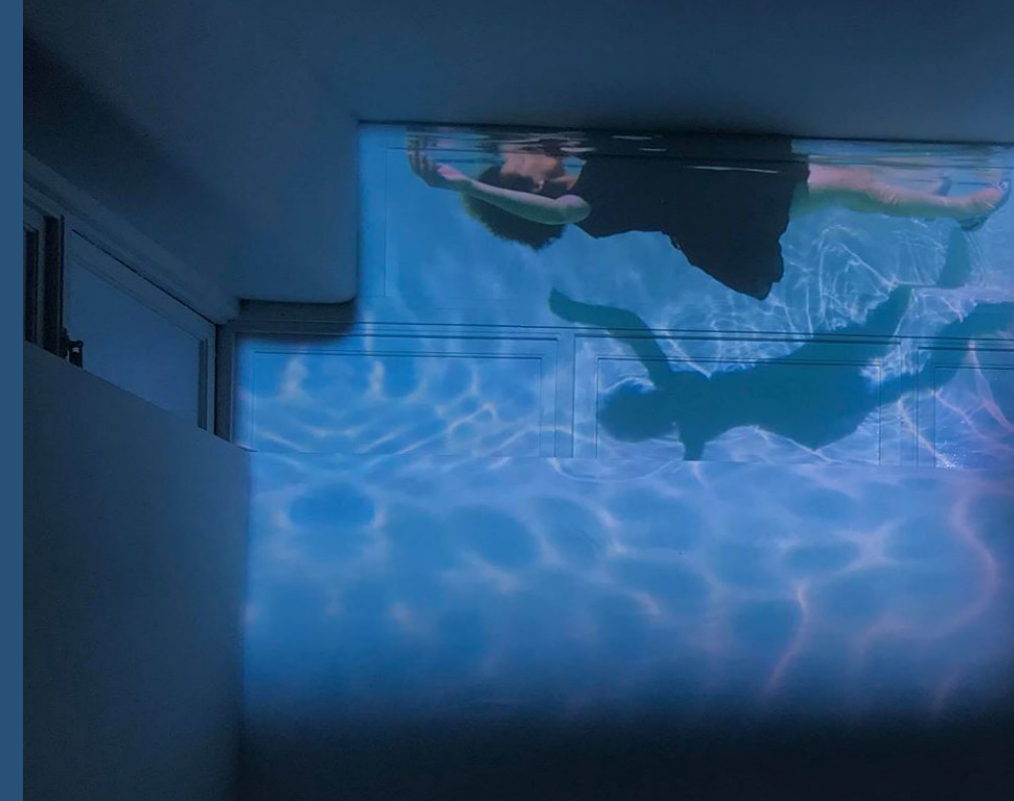
Whilst the exhibition showcases works emanating from two countries of vast distance, the points of discussion are bound by their signalling of deeply human experiences and outcomes.

Topics referring, but not limited to, humanitarian and ecological concerns, internalised racism, gendered discrimination and stereotyping, resilience, extinction, and cultural barriers. In the gallery, Tertulia embraces conversation, and in turn the act of listening, through the positioning of works to formally and conceptually talk to each other through shifting perspectives.

In this catalogue, the dialogue is opened further through the contribution of talented poets and writers who provide personal and newly contextualised responses to the artworks and themes at hand. These responses are written in a mixture of Spanish and English.

Now I invite you, reader, to listen with new ears, find and carry on your own reflection within the many voices brought forth, and in turn contribute to this borderless tertulia.

Exhibition Co-Curator Claudia Hogan



Yandell Walton

SUBMERGED

Climate change, influenced by human habitation, sees disruption in natural water levels, such as droughts, floods and rising seas caused by melting ice caps. Therefore, water is a very real gauge of our ever-changing and increasingly damaged planet.

As an artist I am motivated by creating work that stimulates individuals both intellectually and emotionally, focusing on the impermanent nature of the world around us. The projection installation *Submerged* depicts a body of water within an architectural space encompassing a figure.

The work addresses issues surrounding the transient nature of the world through a tension between the natural and built environment and hints at a future where human life can't exist in spaces we inhabit now.



BLINDS



PUSH

Projection installation
Duration: Continuous loop

Are you there?

Don't leave your shadow behind

Are you there?

She dresses in black
silver slippers to avoid falling

The water is tepid
She takes the slippers off
dips her toes

Walk away Are you there?

Water is a lullaby
keeps her calm
like her mother's arms

Are you there?

The black dress cinches her waist

Water is a lullaby

The sound of mother in the kitchen making honey toast & chamomile tea

Wake up sleepy head

mother has stopped waiting

Are you there?

Water is a lullaby

Close your eyes

everything shall pass

Water is a lullaby

Mother's arms

rocking you from side to side

'Will everything be alright, mother?'

'Lullabies don't have happy endings'

Silver slippers

Black dress floating in the water

Are you there?

Water is a lullaby

Ophelia, there is still time

Her (or after submerged)

By Gabriella Munoz

**Dalia Huerta
and Ivan Puig**

CÂSUCKA

Set in a dystopian future, CÂsucka is an experimental short film that follows the story of a man, who represents the last of his race. We often consider extinction in the animal kingdom, but what is the impact of considering this in terms of human cultures?



**Short film, video
Duration: 11:00 minutes
Courtesy of The Mexican
Institute of Cinema (IMCINE)**

__ *Un día más en la vida del último hombre en este mundo desbastado* ...

le escucho murmurar irónicamente un cactus a otro cuando el pasaba...se dio cuenta que hacía mucho tiempo que no sonreía, en ese momento intentaba recordar cómo era la vida antes.

Cada mañana hacia la ronda y se encargaba de que cada uno se mantuviera en su sitio, cada uno donde su dueño lo había dejado, la cubeta donde ella lavaba la ropa, el martillo de Don Matías en su lugar, la maceta... todos lo esperaban ansiosos. El solo había construido una compleja red de objetos importantes diseminados en lugares estratégicos y mantenía una severa rutina diaria donde pasaba a visitarlos y de alguna manera... conversar un poco con ellos.

Los temas de los que hablaban eran variados: La ausencia de animales, La escasez de agua y la falta de colores eran sus favoritos y todas esas ausencias le oprimían el pecho de igual manera hasta ahogarlo. Caminaba sobre los pellejos de un planeta enfermo lleno de senderos que lo llevaban ante la maldita puerta. Al final estaba esa tenebrosa boca negra esperándolo. Mal oliente... intentaba seducirlo siempre que pasaba.

Ella despacito se los fue tragando a todos, uno a uno ellos fueron acercándose escuchando su ronroneo hipnótico y todos habían desaparecido en la hedionda negrura, todos menos él.

No aún. Siempre que pasaba por allí soñaba con zambullirse en sus labios y terminar con todo, eso sería lo más correcto. La única razón por la que no lo hacía era para no darle el gusto, no formaría parte de su último mo bocado. ¿Y si los suyos estuvieran del otro lado esperándolo? Esa idea le provocaba un sudor frío que le corría por la espalda.

_ *Nadie podría ser feliz allí abajo pensaba.*

Los recuerdos de su esposa lo acompañaban, ya había olvidado su rostro, solo lograba escuchar su dulce voz y eso lo atormentaba aún más porque estaba seguro que con el paso del tiempo el polvo seguiría barriendo cada día algo más de su memoria. Por suerte estaba la cubeta de Lewa allí... esperándolo.

Pero el viejo no estaba completamente solo... estábamos también nosotros allí con él mirando el cielo tan cerca que podíamos sentir su amargo aliento a plomo.

Cășucka
Por Gonzalo Varela

Tu mirada está partiendo el cielo
en dos fragmentos rancios, sin tiempo.

En uno, tus zapatos
se empolvan entre los cactus, con cada paso.

Tropiezan con un candado, con una ventana en la tierra
(el marco de una ventana, quiero decir; quizá un espejo).
Un pocito. El recuerdo de Lewa. Una botella de vidrio.

Cosas que ya nadie usa, que ya nadie nombra.

En el otro, una parvada se ha ido, ¿a dónde?,
si todos los lugares están aquí dentro.
Sólo hay que levantar la vista:

una maceta cuelga de la viga.
Contiene un universo flotante,
en el que una plantita da flores
cuyo fruto se comen los gusanos;

la vida transcurre sin mucho ruido,
La vida es una silueta inmóvil.
Siempre muda.

¿No estará disecada?
Alguien tose.

Ojos de ciervo. Ojos de lémur. Ojos futuros
que te miran desde su ausencia; son historias
enterradas
en las placas blancas de un museo.

Flores
a las que ya no puedes arrancarles un respiro.

Aspiras. Tu cigarro se consume lentamente.
Mira arriba; se repite la partitura del cielo
(estribillo macabro): dos alas principales.

En una, el torso de la mula se infla de aire,
sosegado; sin olor a muerte. En la otra
alguien retaca tu cuerpo de aserrín.

(Nadie espera escuchar aleteos.)

En ambas, solo hay significados
envueltos torpemente en sonidos,
atesorados bajo la tierra de tu memoria;

filamentos incrustados en el tejido de un papel
donde todavía palpita un trazo de esperanza:

que no muera la última boca,
el último espécimen,
alguien
que pueda pronunciarlos,
parirlos de un soplo.

¿No estaremos ya tras el cristal de una vitrina?
Te escucho toser.

Mira sus pezuñas, frente a tus pies.
La distancia son unas cuantas piedras.
Derrámales agua, evoca a los tuyos,
los que están allá, al otro lado; te digo,

la distancia son unas cuantas piedras y
su quietud es el ritual que abre la tierra.
Su caminar unifica los fragmentos.

Vete soñando que alguien canta
en voz alta –una y otra vez,
una y otra vez– tu nombre

para que no desaparezcas.
Y con tu mirada el cielo.

Hall of Extinction
Por Alejandro del Castillo



Nasim Nasr

BESHKAN (BREAKDOWN)

“As a traditional form of celebration throughout Middle Eastern countries, the “Persian snap” (beshkan – نكشش) uses both hands to create a cracking/clicking sound familiar to the normal Western ‘single-handed’ clicking or snapping of the fingers. Historically, throughout the region when there is happy news to celebrate for any family or group of people the immediate reaction is beshkan.

While this joyous ‘dance’ of double-handed finger snapping celebrates happiness and good news in those particular cultures, to the unknowing viewer this visual performance of hands and fingers might be construed as something quite the contrary, seemingly aggressive and sinister. What visually can be viewed to one culture as the celebration of happiness can conjure images from a Western perspective of children playing war games.”

2013

Duration: 2:21 minutes



There is a white box sitting on a set of drawers in my bedroom. In the box is a ring a white boy gave me. My late grandmother told me when I was a child, before we left Alexandria, that I would grow up to be a beautiful aroosa. This means bride in Arabic. This also means doll. A child's plaything. Here, in this place, the ring should go on my left hand. But there, where I was born, it should go on my right. When I put it on right, I see my grandmother clicking her fingers. I put it on left and I see her tutting her tongue. My hand is small like hers. Her hand rubbed my mouth with soap after food. She made sure I was clean. The taste of lemon detergent reminds me of her palm hard against my lips. I could never click my fingers like she could.

My father has something of hers for me. Something she left before she died. He won't tell me what it is. It's for my wedding day, he says. Not a day before. Something for me to wear. It is a happy time, but things are done a certain way. The day she passed was the first time I saw my father cry. I think about my dress, hair, shoes, earrings. The costume is a custom. In Egypt you can always tell when a wedding is happening. Bagpipes squealing. Women's trills like fireworks cracking through the clouds. I want mine to be obnoxious. I want neighbours to make complaints. I want the world and beyond to know. I want to hear her ululate. For me, her aroosa.

Her aroosa
By Sara El Sayed

Ximena Cuevas

NATURAL INSTINCTS

This is a video of musical terror where I superficially (this is the beginning of a larger project) look at one of the Mexican phenomena that horrifies me the most: internalized racism, being ashamed of one's own roots. The fantasy of waking up white.



1999

**Super 8mm film transferred to video
Courtesy of Video Data Bank,
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Duration: 3:00 minutes**

I don't remember when my mother first told me of our family heritage;
I know I was young and old at the same time.
Too young to question why I was born into this culture
But not taught it from my beginnings.
Too old to feel I had a right to be angry.
Surely she kept it with reason.

Let us think but not speak of this
Intergenerational trauma,
Colonisation,
Internalised racism.
Let us think of your blackness being ripped from your body.
Mind and body filled with silence
Of being ashamed of who you are.

When I knew
That this body is one from the Wiradjuri land:
Feelings of surprise
of joy
betrayal.

These feelings that flowed through me daily,
And that I still carry with me now.
Daily, questioning my existence.
Why wasn't I aware of this before?
Why tell me now?
And what next?
I seek comfort in others like me
To know this internal struggle is not my own.

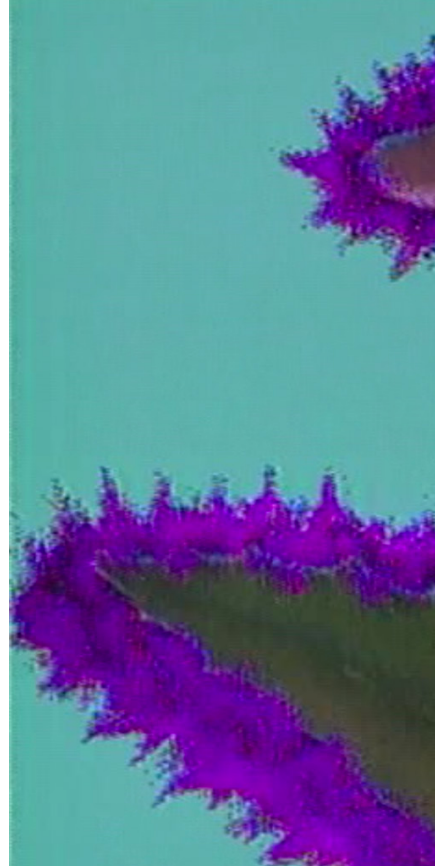
This time in our history is trying,
And this country tears Black bodies apart.
So I seek the guidance of my family spirit,
Of those passed before me who I can't ever know.
Our spoken words are lost,
And I will never know.
But this was dropped on me,
A child,
Too heavy
For me to carry alone.

Untitled
by Makayla-May Brinckley

Ximena Cuevas

BLEEDING HEART (CORAZÓN SANGRANTE)

In this musical short, Cuevas collaborates with renowned Mexican actress and cabaret performance artist Astrid Hadad, who sings and performs a self written love ballad. Adorned in various traditional folkloric costumes and religious garments, Hadad satirically acts out the song's narrative of a woman's heartbreak using hyperbolic gestures. The work draws on familiar pathos with Hadad taking on the role of the victim. Using video montage, Cuevas intertwines the performance with animated landscapes that playfully incorporate nationalistic iconography. The work presents a humorous critique of the portrayal and masochism of Mexican womanhood and further constructs of femininity.



1993

Video

**Courtesy of Video Data Bank,
School of the Art Institute
of Chicago**

Duration: 3:48 minutes



He ate her heart,
And spat it back,
His eyes on fire
His tongue stained
black.

He scuttled round,
A desperate whirr,
With pinching claws
Encircled her.

She picked it up
Shook out its lids
Then stuck it back
Between her ribs.
Its beat felt wrong
The blood spilt out,
The veins had bent,
Turned inside-out.
A heart no more,
It nestles deep,
A pine-cone shard,
Cleavered meat.
'Oh me, oh my!'
She gasping calls,
'This blood will stain
My floors and walls!
This blood will show
Each passing lad
My heart's not mine,
My heart's been had.'
So on she walks,
Doomed now to scrub
The marks away
From a broken love.

Corazón Sangrante
By Scarlett Evans

Julia Barco

DUELO

Duelo, translating to 'grief' or 'mourning', is a moving mural that uses collated footage taken amidst the violence that has occurred in Colombia, particularly throughout the first decade of this Century. Barco wanted to produce a work which could serve as a memento mori, to foster contemplation and meditation on violence, and to serve as a place of memory, where mourning can be lived out.



Duelo has been re-adapted to fit the gallery space at Blindsight; It was originally produced as a 12 by 3 metres mural.



Its large scale seeks to immerse the viewer and encapsulate the scope of horror that has taken place.

2013

**Moving mural,
video installation**

Duration: 3:00 minute loop

DÍPTICO DE DUELO
By Rebecca Perich
(en respuesta al mural
DUELO de Julia Barco)

I. DESESPERANZA APRENDIDA
“Se sentía un olor como a carne quemada”, dijo el Señor Leyner. Tocará hacer empanadas, de molida, y de mechada. La sazón la darán los dolientes que traen la sal en sus caras. Maíz, agua y sal. Carne para el relleno. Tocará embalsamar la carne, tocará proteger los restos, y sellar en aceite hirviendo el ataúd de maíz y agua. Maíz, agua y sal. Huele a carne quemada. Tocará comerse a los muertos, porque ya no hay dónde ponerlos, ya no hay espacio en la tierra, el cementerio está lleno. “¿Tocará ser carne quemada?”, pregunta un niño a su madre. No hay por que temer a ser carne quemada, los sobrevivientes nos cuidarán: harán de nosotros empanadas.

II.
LETANÍA LATINOAMERICANA

You can hide in the church,
no bastará.

You can hide in the house,
no bastará.

You can hide in the farm,
no bastará.

You can hide in el caserío,
no bastará.

Señor alcalde,
Ten piedad de nosotros.

Señor gobernador,
Ten piedad de nosotros.

Señor Presidente,
Ten Piedad de nosotros.

UN, óyenos.
UN, óyenos.

UN, escúchanos.
UN, escúchanos.

Human Rights Watch,
Ruega por nosotros.

National NGOs that advocate for human
rights,
Rueguen por nosotros.

International NGOs that advocate for
human rights,
Rueguen por nosotros.

Ruegue por nosotros el que sea que esté
escuchando,
para que seamos dignos de alcanzar--
Para que seamos dignos de--
Para que--

¿Hay alguien ahí?

¿Escuchando?

¹ Leyner Palacios

² Masacre de Bojayá

CREDITS LIST

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