

1. El hueco (The Pothole)

Caption: *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. Cement, bricks, construction materials, and water. Site-specific installation. 2025. Photograph: Juanita González, GSF Archive, Idartes.

Vertical photograph and project cover

Caption: *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. Cement, bricks, construction materials, and water. Site-specific installation. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Santiago Reyes Villaveces

March 6 – May 4, 2025.

Galería Santa Fe

Photograph: Juanita González Cardona and Santiago Reyes Villaveces

Networks

www.santiago-reyes.com

https://www.instagram.com/santiago_reyes_villaveces/

<https://elhueco.intervalo.space/>

Collaborators

Team: Daniela Acero, Camilo Martínez, Eider Martínez and Brayan Rojas

Acknowledgments

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Acknowledgments: Julia Roldán Ruiz, the Reyes Villaveces family, Leonardo Sierra, Miguel León, and Diego Parra.

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Double-page photograph

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1.1 Curatorial Text

Fragments of Potholes

Potholes in Bogotá lie scattered across its streets, on main avenues, along the sidewalks we walk, and even at the threshold of our homes, they are part of everyday life. They emerge in the city's landscape, but also in its narrative. Potholes turn into art, into literature; they are history, and they create stories.

For a year, I devoted myself to reflecting on these holes, on the city's roughness, on those unruly voids that shape both Bogotá's identity and our own. I asked myself how we occupy them, how we tame them. I saw holes transformed into urban sculptures: marked with sticks, branches, ribbons, tires, or paint. Holes that become planters, trash bins, caves. Holes that become city. I covered Galería Santa Fe with a blanket woven from fragments of potholes, and I believe the best way to narrate this installation is also through fragments: snippets of texts, voices, and sounds from those who have sought to domesticate *El hueco*.

"Bogotá is a city that lives under the urgency of construction work—in a state of permanent building and demolition—, where education—literally— enters through the pothole,"¹ wrote Lucas Ospina. In that sense, "Each pothole is also a possibility of seeing what we did not want to see: the unvarnished history of our way of inhabiting".² "The installation turns the gallery floor into a fragmented landscape that evokes the city",³ the one of the spitting tile, the tire announcing the absence of the manhole cover, the chromatic and material layers of asphalt, from glossy black to clay, passing through sand."⁴

"*El hueco* is a window into Bogotá's geological past. It allows us to see the layers of sediment accumulated over millions of years, the very soils we walk on today: deposits of ancient lakes, traces of

¹ L. Ospina. (2025). ArQUITORTURA bogotana: "El hueco". *Gaceta*. <https://gaceta.co/contenidos/arquitortura-bogotana-el-hueco/>

² W Radio. (2025). the exhibition that presents Bogotá's potholes as a work of art. Radio Interview. <https://www.wradio.com.co/2025/03/29/la-exposicion-que-muestra-los-huecos-de-bogota-como-una-obradle-arte-horarios-y-lugar-para-asistir/>

³ C. Osorio. (2025). "El hueco: A poetic portrait of Bogotá's urban chaos. *El País*, América Colombia. <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2025-05-03/el-hueco-un-retrato-poetico-al-caos-urbano-de-bogota.html>

⁴ I. C. Díaz. (2025). El hueco. *Esfera Pública*. <https://esferapublica.org/el-hueco/>

plant life."⁵ The truth is that "the city of Bogotá is settled on a plain which, if we look at it in geological terms, is the result of millions of years of transformation. (...) Geological time is abysmal, and *El hueco* is a fissure where that comes to the surface. (...) The Bogotá savanna was once a lagoon. Monserrate was its shore".⁶

The Fierce and the Tame

"The fierce is what resists, what overflows, what remains beyond control. The tame is the way we inhabit it, care for it, ritualize it. (...) In Andean thought, the fierce is not something to be conquered, but something to be lived with. And the tame is not submission, but relationship."⁷ "Bogotá is a fierce city that requires taming; hence Reyes Villaveces turns to the affective in order to re-signify the pothole."⁸ "In a park near my house there is a pothole next to a bench made of red bricks. It is like a well (...) simply an endless hole."⁹

El hueco is a process of 'taming' that seeks "to transform the fierce urban territory into a tame, inhabitable, sensitive, and therefore meaningful space (...) turning potholes into an affective experience of territory, promoting a new way of inhabiting and sensing the city."¹⁰ "What is proposed is not a denunciation or complaint, but an invitation to look slowly, to touch with the body, to listen with the feet."¹¹ "*El hueco* is a love letter to Bogotá".¹²

"To bring the street into the gallery is an act of cultural and spatial transposition that confronts the tension between the public and the private, between the everyday and the institutionalized."¹³ María Wills seems to have moved between the fierce and the tame: "Living in Bogotá means understanding that the pothole is our fetish. (...) Full of scabs and scars, we see in its sidewalks the aesthetics of crossed times and tastes, and we understand that the urban experience of where we live

⁵ M. J. Duzán. (2025). "El hueco". Interview with Natalia Pardo, Catalina González, and Santiago Reyes Villaveces. [Podcast]. *A Fondo*. https://open.spotify.com/episode/3peWLTkdEvWkKlu46NevCS?si=wqdA_jzCTB2A7A1Hssgf_w

⁶ *Idem*.

⁷ *Idem*.

⁸ P. Peña Ospina. (2025). Taming the fierce: *El hueco* by Santiago Reyes Villaveces. *Arteinformado*. <https://www.arteinformado.com/magazine/n/amansar-lo-bravo-el-hueco-de-santiago-reyes-villaveces-7479>

⁹ Guest Book. (2025). Exhibition "El hueco", Galería Santa Fe, Bogotá.

¹⁰ *Idem*.

¹¹ Laud. (2025). "*El hueco*": *Rubble, cracks, and puddles*. <https://laud.udistrital.edu.co/cultura/el-hueco-escombros-grietas-y-charcos>

¹² Osorio, *op. cit.*

¹³ Uncut Critique \[Elkin Rubiano]. (2025, 12 de marzo). *El hueco: Proposal by Santiago Reyes Villaveces for the Luis Caballero Prize*. [Video] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_j-IOUinRk

is sad, is poor, but makes us who we are as a collective.”¹⁴ When Elkin Rubiano left the gallery, “while walking toward my university (...), the textures, colors, and pavements of the street along that path struck me with a surprisingly sharp clarity. (...) After having been attentive to the exhibition, my perception was immediately transformed for a moment.”¹⁵

“It is this sense of estrangement that invites (...) one to pause before what usually passes unnoticed, to contemplate it attentively and ask why it is there.”¹⁶ “The nation’s capital, still trusting its promises even after modernity, devouring, swallowing, and spitting out, the one we do not want to see within the artistic space, bursts into this edition of the Luis Caballero Prize and, without disguise, reveals that, as it is inside, so it is outside.”¹⁷ “*El hueco* does not represent collapse: it stages it, choreographs it, inhabits it from within.”¹⁸ “The potholes are not only symptoms: they are signs. Signs of a city that reveals itself from below.”¹⁹ “This type of work does not seek to resolve, but to render sensible. Not to construct, but to excavate.”²⁰ “It reminds us that, even in fragmentation, there exists the possibility of recognizing ourselves in our shared vulnerability.”²¹

“Choreographer Nicole Morel activated the installation through movement, transforming the hostility beneath her feet into a playful companion.”²² “From geology to dance, what is activated in *El hueco* is a way of imagining the present as sedimentation.”²³ *And so art and science intersect:* (...) science as the administration of uncertainty,²⁴ art as the speculation of the possible!”²⁵ “Under this logic, the installation takes on meaning by appealing to the body of spectators and citizens, for it introduces ‘the body into the equation of experience as a sphere that exceeds the linguistic system and compels attention to perception as another mode of cognition and signification.’”^{26, 27} “This approach proves

¹⁴ M. Wills. (2025). [Instagram post] https://www.instagram.com/p/DHW-msss-sD/?img_index=1

¹⁵ Uncut Critique, *op. cit.*

¹⁶ S. Cembrano. (April 14, 2025). The Pothole as Iceberg. *Gaceta*. <https://gaceta.co/contenidos/el-hueco-como-iceberg/>

¹⁷ Díaz, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Laud, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ *Idem.*

²⁰ *Idem.*

²¹ A. Villasmil. (2025, April 26). Inhabiting the Fissure. Santiago Reyes Villaveces: El hueco. *Artishock*. <https://artishockrevista.com/2025/04/26/santiago-reyes-villaveces-el-hueco/>

²² *Idem.*

²³ Duzán, *op. cit.*

²⁴ Cembrano, *op. cit.*

²⁵ Cembrano, *op. cit.*

²⁶ I. Depetris Chauvin y N. Taccetta. (2017). Affective Turn and Visual Arts: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Latin America. *Journal of the Argentine Association of Film and Audiovisual Studies* (16), 359.

²⁷ Peña, *op. cit.*

significant, since the emotional questions the Cartesian epistemological tradition that enthrones reason at the expense of the body.”²⁸

The city thus becomes a fragile shell over a deep body, filled with stories we are only beginning to read. “To inhabit uncertainty may be the most powerful form of knowledge.”²⁹ “Art has the capacity to establish points of contact between different ways of knowing and understanding the world.”³⁰

“‘El hueco’ is an immersive experience of Bogotá’s infrastructure. It was like walking through the neighborhood and stumbling upon the pothole that gazes back at me.”³¹ And indeed, “Despite the dangers that life brings, we will always be able to emerge from the pothole.”³² “The exhibition *El hueco* becomes a space where the fierce and the tame meet, where the installation opens a place for encounter with.”³³ “Art as a space for trauma, for speaking what is unspoken, for exposing cognitive dissonance and its holes.”³⁴

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²⁸ *Idem.*

²⁹ Duzán, *op. cit.*

³⁰ Cembrano, *op. cit.*

³¹ *Guest Book.* (2025). Exhibition “El hueco”, Galería Santa Fe, Bogotá.

³² *Idem.*

³³ Laud, *op. cit.*

³⁴ Ospina, *op. cit.*

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1.2 Public Program and Mediation

Caption: Opening of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. March 6, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Cement, bricks, construction materials, and water. Site-specific installation. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Guided Visit “The gentleman at home: Challenges of site-specific, unprecedented creation.” Santiago Reyes Villaveces (artist) and Catalina Rodríguez (Manager of Visual and Plastic Arts). March 15, 2025, 3:00 p.m. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: “Amance”, activation of the exhibition by the choreographer and artistic director of Antipode, within the framework of *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. March 28, 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

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Caption: Guided Tour with the Artist and Launch of the Book *Bogotá contada 11*, as part of the exhibition *El hueco* by Santiago Reyes Villaveces. March 29, 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: “Deep Time and Street,” a conversation between Santiago Reyes Villaveces, Dr. Catalina González Arango (paleoecologist), and Dr. Natalia Pardo (volcanologist) within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco* by Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 5, 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Artbo Fin de Semana. Guided visits with Santiago Reyes Villaveces within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*. April 26, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. 2025.

GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: *Freestyle* contest at the Festival El hueco, within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 12, 2025, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: *Freestyle* contest at the Festival El hueco, within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 12, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: *Freestyle* contest at the Festival El hueco, within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 12, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Talk and multisensory activation Artbo Fin de Semana, “Walking in Bogotá with Visual Impairment: The Art of Dodging Potholes”, with Santiago Reyes Villaveces and Jefferson Ramírez (communicator and mediator with visual impairment), within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*. April 27, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Talk and multisensory activation Artbo Fin de Semana, “Walking in Bogotá with Visual Impairment: The Art of Dodging Potholes”, with Santiago Reyes Villaveces and Jefferson Ramírez (communicator and mediator with visual impairment), within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*. April 27, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Workshop-visit for school groups. “Writing the City: Between Potholes and Stories”. Expanded Classroom strategy within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 27, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

Caption: Workshop-visit for school groups. “Writing the City: Between Potholes and Stories”. Expanded Classroom strategy within the framework of the exhibition *El hueco*, Santiago Reyes Villaveces. April 27, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 2025. GSF Archive, Idartes.

By staging something as ordinary as Bogotá’s potholes, what is imperceptible on the plane of sensibility was unveiled: the street as a common good, life stories, the geological history of the earth,

and the relation between the way we inhabit the street and both individual and collective identity. These themes resonated with everyone, regardless of age, origin, condition, or profession.

The installation fostered an unusual relationship between behavior in public space and behavior inside the gallery. It invited visitors to wander freely, to pause, to observe and touch, evoking the daily gestures of those who traverse the city. At the same time, it offered a place of contemplation that encouraged critical reflection, as is common in exhibition spaces.

The activities focused on the multiplicity of perspectives, disciplines, senses, and artistic media through which *El hueco* could be observed, narrated, and felt. This series of activations not only accompanied the exhibition, but also expanded it and made it habitable.

The program unfolded a cartography rich in formats and sensibilities. There were guided visits, workshops with school groups, multisensory visits, and scientific talks; dance activations, the launch of a publication, and a *freestyle* rap contest that re-signified the potholes as poetic fissures and platforms of collective expression. Of particular note was the conversation “Deep Time and Street” with paleoecologist Catalina González Arango and volcanologist Natalia Pardo, which explored the geological past of the Bogotá savanna as another layer of the urban fabric. This confluence of knowledge revealed that the pothole is not merely a void, but an open archive of physical, geological, and political memories.

The multisensory visit, led by mediator with visual impairment Jefferson Ramírez, in the company of the artist Santiago Reyes, awakened the senses and brought forth the challenges faced by blind and deafblind people in the city. With the help of canes, textures, smells, and tactile sensations, visitors toured the exhibition with special focus and attention. By placing the everyday at the forefront, they found in the exhibition something especially meaningful. Several commented that they felt “the exhibition was made for them.”

Equally significant was the participation of children and adolescents through the Expanded Classroom program. Two effects proved particularly striking: on one hand, the way participants appropriated the work through play and movement; on the other, the profound reflections and emotional connections that arose from the sensory experience, with written and oral exercises they themselves called “poetry of the everyday.”

The interaction of citizens with the work, as well as the conversations and actions generated by the public and mediation program, provoked a shift in perception of the everyday, both in a critical and an aesthetic sense. Spectators were able to discern the sculptural character of a pothole and to awaken awareness of the geological memory of the streets. They also reflected on the political power of art

and of the pothole as representation and social history of the common good. After all, in the words of Jacques Rancière, “The politics of art does not consist in transmitting messages, in reflecting an ideology, but in reconfiguring the field of the sensible possible.”

1.2.3 Activities

Opening of the exhibition *El hueco*

Santiago Reyes Villaveces, Galería Santa Fe

March 6, 2025.

This exhibition opened the thirteenth edition of the Luis Caballero Prize. The artist entrusted with inaugurating this cycle of shows was Santiago Reyes Villaveces, who presented an immersive installation in which potholes became the main protagonists. With this work, Reyes constructed a scenario that dialogues with the dynamics of the city’s construction.

Guided Visit “El caballero en casa: Desafíos de la creación inédita situada (Gentleman at home: Challenges of Site-Specific Creation)”

Catalina Rodríguez (Manager of Visual and Plastic Arts) and Santiago Reyes (artist)

Galería Santa Fe

March 15, 2025.

The activity focused on discussing the challenges and meanings of conceiving and materializing a site-specific installation within the framework of the Luis Caballero Prize, which in its thirteenth edition returned to Galería Santa Fe.

Dance Activation: Amance

Nicole Morel (Swiss choreographer and dancer, Antipode)

Galería Santa Fe

March 28, 2025.

Activation by the choreographer and artistic director who works on the relationship with built spaces and the challenges they impose on living beings and the environment. During the activation, the artist explored the playful character of the ground, despite its apparent hostility, engaging with it as if it were a companion.

Guided Tour with the Artist and Launch of the Book *Bogotá contada 11*, with the participation of the authors.

Galería Santa Fe

March 29, 2025.

Bogotá contada 11 brings together five stories that explore the localities of Tunjuelito, Suba, Usaquén, San Cristóbal, and Sumapaz through the voices of Laura Acero, Lina Alonso Castillo, Juan Fernando Hincapié, Lizeth León Borja, and Juan Nicolás Donoso. Each text offers a literary vision of the territory, while weaving together personal experiences, memory, and fiction, celebrating the city's diverse richness.

Conversation “Tiempo profundo y calle (Deep Time and Street)”

Santiago Reyes Villaveces, Dr. Catalina González Arango (paleoecologist), and Dr. Natalia Pardo (volcanologist)

Galería Santa Fe

April 05, 2025.

The conversation proposed an intersection between art and science to reflect on the geological and ecological history of the Bogotá savanna and its impact on today's urban landscape. Throughout the session, the concept of “deep time” was explored as a tool to think about the territory beyond the present.

Freestyle Rap Contest *El hueco*,

Santiago Reyes, Malinche, Paloma Dark, Chispa MC, JM Serna, ÑKO, and Polirritmia

Galería Santa Fe

April 12, 2025.

The *freestyle* rap contest brought together artists from the urban music scene, who, through rhyme and improvisation, shared anecdotes, commentaries, and narratives that emerge in the city and resonate with the exhibition *El hueco* by Santiago Reyes.

Dance Activation by Performing Arts Students from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana

Galería Santa Fe. April 22, 2025.

Students: Santiago Rey Polanía, Juan David Corzo Muñoz, Sara Estefanía Castillo Quiñones, Juan Esteban Calderón Pérez, Juan Pablo Sáenz, Gabriela Ramírez Ortega, Ana María Forero Barón, Laura Andrea Cepeda Cancelado, Sarah Rodríguez, Elisa Londoño, Natalia Orozco, Laura Celis, David Esteban Valencia, Gabriela Meza, Juana Díaz, María José Lugo Escobar, and Silvia Daniela Jerez Guatibonza.

Sensing with the body, traversing and inhabiting the city through movement were the central elements of the activation carried out by the Javeriana University students within the framework of the exhibition. The proposal invited participants to be guided by the space, to cross through it with the body as a sensitive and critical tool.

Mediation. Week of School Visits and Workshops: Expanded Classroom series: “Escribir la ciudad: Entre huecos y relatos (Writing the City: Between Potholes and Stories)”

Mediation School

Galería Santa Fe

April 22 – April 30

As part of Expanded Classroom, students visited Galería Santa Fe to celebrate Language Day with the exhibition *El hueco* by Santiago Reyes Villaveces. Through a guided tour and workshop, they explored contemporary art as a medium for narrating different aspects of the city. They used materials such as rubble or stagnant water to inspire writing exercises, taking potholes as triggers of urban stories.

Guided Visits as Part of Artbo Fin de Semana

Santiago Reyes and Mediation School

Galería Santa Fe

April 26, 2025.

Within the framework of Artbo Fin de Semana, the Mediation School and artist Santiago Reyes Villaveces conducted guided visits. These sessions fostered spaces for dialogue and exchange with attendees to reflect on the act of moving through the city, the habitability of the territory, and the political and social implications of potholes that mark the urban landscape. The experience highlighted how each citizen plays a fundamental role in the collective construction of Bogotá.

Mediation. Talk and Multisensory Activation “Caminando en Bogotá con discapacidad visual: El arte de esquivar los huecos (Walking in Bogotá with Visual Impairment: The Art of Dodging Potholes)”

Accessibility and Inclusion series

Santiago Reyes Villaveces (artist), Jefferson Ramírez (communicator and mediator with visual impairment), and the Mediation School team at Galería Santa Fe

Galería Santa Fe

April 27, 2025.

As part of Artbo Fin de Semana, Galería Santa Fe presented the talk and activation “Walking in Bogotá with Visual Impairment”, a dialogue between Santiago Reyes Villaveces and Jefferson Ramírez on urban accessibility. The activity proposed a reflection on how people with visual impairments experience the urban environment and offered a sensory exploration of the installation *El hueco*, engaging with the space through touch, sound, and movement. It invited participants to rethink art and the city from an inclusive perspective.

1.3 Visitor Testimonials

- “From potholes, plants are born. To potholes, life arrives. Through potholes, pleasure is felt. Without potholes, roads feel dull.” (Visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “You brought the city into art, and art into the city.” (Visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “Thank you for this reminder of what the texture of our streets is. In Mexico—where I am from—and in England—where I live—there are potholes. Perhaps potholes unite us more than urban textures. I loved it!” (Mónica, visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “An astonishing immersive experience. I arrived in Bogotá two days ago and encounter the city’s eclecticism through this installation. What a beautiful sensory immersion.” (Dominica, visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “It is a peculiar and immersive exhibition, though not as much as walking through the city itself, yet still an engaging and somewhat tragicomic experience, because of what potholes represent (corruption, neglect, accidents, twisted ankles, and even deaths).” (Visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “Sometimes falling into the pothole is the best way to find stability. That is why I want to keep falling.” (Visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “The work places me in a reality that speaks to two truths: 1) As a foreigner who rarely comes to Bogotá, this work situates me more in the Bogotá reality, its habitat, its streets, its ground, than in the geological terrain on which the city was built. Perhaps it was a mistake to expand a city over such a beautiful savanna. I knew there were many potholes, but I had felt them differently. From this perspective, the critique is that, no matter how much is patched, rebuilt, or disguised, due to the architectural foundations of the soil or subsoil, *el hueco* will always reappear. 2) While stepping on different parts of the work, I could only think sadly about Colombia’s political and cultural reality: a constant instability that seems endless.” (Visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “It makes visible the challenges faced by people who move around in wheelchairs. When people say the streets are not that bad, I tell them to spend a whole day moving with a person with a disability. Thank you for making it public.” (Azul Torrentti, visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).
- “An incredible way of inhabiting an urban dilemma and feeling the hypersensitivity of moving through paranoia, danger, and instability. The Global South is a stage of unplanned growth in every sense, driven not by idealization but by immediate survival. It is a space that speaks of malleability and the impossibility of trivial or communal self-management without the half-imposed presence of a

government that is either incapable or blind to contextualized ways of seeing.” (Antonio @umor.mandarino, visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).

- “The exhibition *El hueco* makes me think not only about my relationship with the streets of my city but also about my memories: a tile reminds me of someone, a crack reminds me of a moment, a pothole reminds me of... life, my life.” (Luisa, visitor to the exhibition *El hueco*, Galería Santa Fe).

1.4 GSF Radio, A Way to Discover the Stories of the People and Collectives that Shape the Network Galería Santa Fe

Fragments that Open Listening: Voices from the XIII Luis Caballero Prize

During the sixth season of “Conversations with the Nominees of the XIII Luis Caballero Prize”, María Catalina Rodríguez Ariza, Manager of Visual and Fine Arts at Idartes, was invited to talk with Santiago Reyes Villaveces, creator of the project *El hueco*.

Listen to the full podcast.

“For me, applying to the prize meant just that: establishing a dialogue not only with the prize itself but with all past editions, and surely with those to come. In this sense, I connect it to how I understand art. For me, art is a historical discipline, and as such it implies a dialogue with those who have been, those who are, and those who will be. From that definition, the proposal to return to Galería Santa Fe interested me as a way of making a project that would recognize its relationship with Bogotá, and that its conception as a site-specific project would be fully carried out, both in its architectural dimensions and its discursive space, that is, in relation to the story being told.

I would say that a site-specific project is like fixing up one’s own house, in the sense that one has chosen or custom-made what belongs in that house, not only according to the architecture of the space of the house, but also to one’s own personality, something that makes the house one’s own, unlike the neighbor’s apartment, which is architecturally identical. It is that interrelation between how architectural aspects, inherent to the place, connect and dialogue with the proposal you want to develop, or the way you want to inhabit that house.

In the end, this is a sculptural installation project revolving around a very concrete object, or non-object, which is the pothole. What does it mean to sculpt a pothole? What does it mean to make a pothole? It is about giving shape to that void: a pothole is something that is not, an absence. And also, I believe the project works not only with the idea of the pothole as object but also as experience, how we live in a pothole: this is a pothole. It is about generating ways of inhabiting that absence, that lack of neatness or linearity. That is why the installation is full of holes, tunnels, passages, and open portals. There are a series of very concrete gestures.”

Santiago Reyes Villaveces

1.5 Recommended Readings from the Documentation Center of Galería Santa Fe

In dialogue with the exhibition *El hueco* by artist Santiago Reyes Villaveces, the Documentation Center, a space dedicated to accompanying exhibitions with analysis and interpretation of the projects developed at the Gallery, presents a bibliographic selection that broadens the possibilities for reading and reflecting on the project.

This curatorial selection proposes a journey through texts that address notions of territory, memory, urban geography, and material transformation, in tune with the themes that run through the installation. The selected bibliography invites us to think of the city as an organism in constant transformation, where disorder, residue, and the subterranean reveal deep tensions between the natural and the constructed. Through historical, critical, literary, and visual approaches, this selection enriches the experience of contemplating the work, offering tools to question and reinterpret the contemporary urban landscape.

Title: *El reino de este mundo*

Author: María Elvira Escallón

Year: 2000

In *El reino de este mundo* (*The Kingdom of This World*), María Elvira Escallón addresses memory, loss, and reconstruction. Focusing on installation, she uses rubble and bricks from a demolition and transforms these remnants into a form of resistance. The materials acquire new meaning, evoking what is inhabitable and human in the face of time and urbanization.

This catalogue documents a gesture of resilience and a critique of the construction–destruction cycle.

María Elvira Escallón is a renowned Colombian sculptor, photographer, and installation artist. Her work explores memory, ruin, oblivion, and abandonment, often linked to Colombia's sociopolitical context.

Title: *Bogotá Contada 11*

Authors: Lina Alonso Castillo, Juan Fernando Hincapié, Lizeth León Borja, Juan Nicolás Donoso, Laura Acero

Year: 2024

Bogotá Contada 11 brings together five personal stories that explore different districts of the city through intimate and sensitive perspectives. The narratives reflect on what it means to grow up in places such as Tunjuelito or Suba, evoke the bricks of San Cristóbal as foundations of homes scattered throughout Bogotá, and portray territories marked by violence and illegal control, such as Usaquén. They also reveal the deep bond between peasants and the land they inhabit. This edition offers a literary cartography of Bogotá, intertwining memory, territory, and personal experience.

[Consult the book here](#)

Title: *Estar en la calle, llevando la casa*

Authors: Trixi Allina Bloch

Year: 2013

In *Estar en la calle, llevando la casa (Being on the Street, Carrying the House)*, Trixi Alina Bloch develops a site-based research project on the ways of inhabiting the city, exploring the margins of art through drawing, walking, and everyday observation. Her proposal links art with ethnography, turning walking through the city into a form of sensitive thought. The body that moves, observes, and traverses carries a symbolic house with it, a way of being and perceiving the urban landscape from intimacy. This essay invites reflection on public space as a lived experience and as a territory of subjective construction.

[See the book here](#)

Title: *El río que corre: Una historia del río San Francisco y la avenida Jiménez*

Authors: Jimena Montaña Cuéllar

Year: 2023

El río que corre (The Flowing River) is a historical, territorial, and sensitive exploration of the San Francisco River and Avenida Jiménez, a road that paradoxically conceals the riverbed that gave rise to it. Jimena Montaña Cuéllar retraces the ancestral origins of Bogotá, its streams, and its savanna, and reveals how urban development has ignored and buried the city's hydrographic geography. The author not only reconstructs the river's past but also reintegrates it into the present as a living memory, still latent beneath the concrete. It is an invitation to look at the territory through what flows, even if it can no longer be seen.

[See the book here](#)

1.6 Artist Profile

Santiago Reyes Villaveces is a visual artist and professor. His practice encompasses sculptural works, installations, and listening devices that explore the relationships between power, matter, and territory. He has exhibited in Colombia, Brazil, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States. He holds an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art (London) and a BA from Universidad de los Andes. He has received distinctions such as the Túnel de Escape Grant, the Matteo Olivero Award (Italy), and the Moving Image Grant (Lithuania). His work draws on collaborative processes, archival research, and material explorations within complex social and ecological contexts.