

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DELCY MORELOS

El oscuro de abajo

14 October – 21 December 2023

Opening reception: Saturday, 14 October, 6 – 8pm

Delcy Morelos and Humberto Moro in conversation: Tuesday, 17 October at 5.30pm

“In Andean ancestral traditions, the human being is living earth, I am a body, I am earth. In the exhibition space, the earth expresses itself; it is the center and mirror of what we are.” –Delcy Morelos, 2023

Galerie Marian Goodman Paris is pleased to announce *El oscuro de abajo*, Delcy Morelos’ inaugural exhibition with the gallery, and the artist’s first solo presentation in France. *El oscuro de abajo* opens a few weeks following *El abrazo*, her first U.S. solo presentation at Dia Art Foundation in New York. For her Paris exhibit, the artist presents a large-scale installation using earth, the material at the heart of her work since 2012. The exhibition also includes pictorial works on textile, natural fiber, and paper, created over the last two decades. Brought together, these works outline a practice rooted in ancestral Andean cosmivision and the aesthetics of Minimal Art. Morelos’ abstract works, with their formidable evocations, inspire rumination on the interplay between human beings and earth, the human body and materiality.

In her early works, Morelos focused primarily on painting, applying natural red pigments to paper. Her chromatic research directed her attention to the intersection between body and violence. Over time, her material investigations extended into ceramics and textiles, and this work, along with her continued use of natural materials such as earth, clay, fabric, and plant fibers, led her to gradually develop a more sculptural practice, and, more recently, large-scale multisensory installations.

Textiles serve as both medium and metaphor for Morelos: in her vision of the world, plants, the soil, meteorological phenomena and living beings are all interconnected, forming the common fabric which we cohabit. Through its screened surface, *Obstáculo* (2006), a painting on cotton canvas on the first floor of the gallery, a terrestrial horizon presented in brown and beige tones, unfolds. The work from the series *La doble negación* (2006) was created on cotton mesh, to which the artist applied successive layers of acrylic pigment. The intersecting lines of the four works on paper *En la trama personal* (2004) suggest an enlargement of a fabric, while the colored marbling is reminiscent of organic matter. Here, the artist establishes a correlation between the woven pattern and the human body, echoed as well in *Agua salada organizada* (2014). Each of the six vertical elements is made up of several layers of burlap superimposed on each other and painted in different variations of brown. The work, whose title alludes to the composition of our bodies, which are 65% water, represents our own materiality.

Downstairs, visitors will find themselves confronted by *El oscuro de abajo* (2023), a large-scale immersive installation specifically designed for a subterranean space. Composed of earth mixed with cinnamon and cloves, the work occupies a large part of the walls, floor and ceiling, precisely delineating a cavern in the space, a sanctuary into which we are invited to enter. A small corridor left in reserve on the floor leads into the heart of this abstract, monochrome, rough landscape. The olfactory invitation becomes more prominent, reinforcing a meditative feeling of symbiosis with the work.

“I create an experience for the human senses with images, smells, silences, tastes, textures. I like synesthesia and I am moved by the alchemy that awakens different emotions in each person. I speak to the human body, I take it through a sensory threshold to the dimension of the sacred, to the void, to the primordial terrestrial womb.”

Earth gradually became the primary symbolic medium for Morelos's large-scale installations, after she witnessed the violence caused by land dispossession in her native region of Colombia. For the artist, whose traditions are indigenous, the material is also a tribute to Mother Earth, which she sees as a living, founding entity, the cradle of the cycles of life, death, and rebirth. The addition of spices indirectly echoes an ancestral Andean rite, where offerings of food were made to the goddess Pachamama at the end of a great harvest. Collectively, these large-scale installations reflect our current ecological concerns. Morelos restores the earth to its primordial place in a semblance of modern ritual.

Further exploration of her work continues in our second space, 66 rue du Temple, with a series of ink and watercolor drawings on paper produced between 2009 and 2021, which the artist is unveiling for the first time. The non-figurative and monochrome motifs are mostly based on tangled and dotted lines, resembling imaginary rhizomes. Less geometric, the forms within the works seem to evoke cells observed through a microscope, the body once again making a foray into abstraction.

A conversation between Morelos and Humberto Moro, Deputy Director of Program at the Dia Art Foundation, will be held at the gallery on Tuesday 17 October 2023 at 5:30pm. Admission is free, subject to availability and advance booking (parisrsvp@mariangoodman.com).

The Dia Art Foundation, at its Chelsea site in New York, presents a major exhibition from 5 October 2023 to July 2024, which will include two new commissions *Cielo terrenal* and *El abrazo*. The show will be accompanied by the first bilingual publication in English and Spanish dedicated to Morelos's soil-based works, edited by Kamilah N. Foreman, Alexis Lowry, and Zuna Maza. The Pulitzer Arts Foundation in Saint Louis, US, is preparing a solo exhibition of the artist's work from March to August 2024.

Born in 1967 in Tierralta in the department of Córdoba in Colombia, Delcy Morelos studied at the Cartagena School of Fine Arts. She lives and works in Bogotá.

Morelos's work was recently exhibited at the Arsenale within the main exhibition "The Milk of Dreams" of the 59th Venice Biennale (2022) as well as in the Aichi Triennial in Japan (2022). Past solo exhibitions include shows at Museo Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2022); Santa Fe Gallery Bogotá, Colombia (2019); Fundación NC-Arte, Bogotá (2018); Röda Sten Konsthall, Göteborg, Sweden (2018); at Fundación Fuga, Bogotá, Colombia (2015); Barranquilla Museum of Modern Art, Colombia (2006); Gt Gallery, Flax Arts Studios Residence Program, Belfast, Northern Ireland (2006); Santa Fe Gallery, Bogotá, Colombia (2004); and Museo de Arte de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia (2002).

She has participated in many group exhibitions in international institutions such as "Something (you can't see, on the other side, of a wall from this side) casts a shadow," SOMArts Cultural Center, San Francisco, USA (2018); "Medellín, une histoire colombienne des années 1950 à aujourd'hui", Musée des Abattoirs, Toulouse, France (2017); "Du som jag, Havremagasinet", Boden, Sweden (2016) and Sami Center for Contemporary Art, Karasjok, Norway (2017); 7 Mercosul Biennial, "Grito e escuta", Porto Alegre, Brazil (2009); "MDE 07, Espacios de hospitalidad", Medellín, Colombia (2007); ES2002 Tijuana/II International Biennial, Tijuana Cultural Center CECUT, Mexico (2002), and the VI Havana Biennial, Cuba (1997).

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