

G A S W O R K S

***La Escuela*: a collaboration between Seth Pimlott and organisations from the Latin American community of South London**

Launch Date: 20 April 2018, 6:30 – 8:30pm
Screenings: Saturday 21 April and Sunday 22 April, 12 – 6pm

Gasworks presents *La Escuela*, a film by Seth Pimlott developed in collaboration with organisations from the Latin American community of South London. The project will launch with a special event at Gasworks on Friday 20 April, 6:30pm – 8:30pm.

La Escuela celebrates the transmission of cultural identity between generations: it is an exercise in reconciling the past whilst imagining the future and appreciating the lives and experiences of others.

Seth Pimlott is the inaugural Gasworks Participation Artist in Residence, a programme which supports London-based artists to develop a piece of work in collaboration with local community groups. The programme aims to incorporate the artist's own practice as a means of developing a cohesive project with an overall output at the end of the 6 – 12 month residency.

Between September 2016 and 2017, Seth Pimlott ran workshops with community groups including La Escuela Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a Spanish-language Saturday School in Kennington; Sin Fronteras, a young women's support and political advocacy group organised by the Latin American Women's Rights Service; Cali Swing Dance School, the largest salsa academy in the UK ; and activists from the Pueblito Paisa campaign in Seven Sisters. The workshops explored the intersection of personal biographies with national histories, including the violent conflicts that forced some families to flee abroad. Collective and creative engagement with these histories became the basis for reimagining personal narratives, which has informed the story told in *La Escuela*.

The film takes the form of a school assembly, incorporating and reinterpreting the complex musical and aesthetic heritage of the community. The lead character is Mariana, a female spirit, an avatar of the intellectual and imaginative work of the women involved in the project. She guides us through a story of migration, hardship and the coming together of communities in the face of the systemic forces that threaten them. Three individuals from the participating organisations play Mariana at different stages of her life: as a young child growing up in Colombia, as a teenager arriving into the UK, and then as an adult who has established a life and set up La Escuela Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

"Mariana's film is very important for us because it shows the greatest cause of the Colombian mass emigration and the consequences that are suffered by the people due to indiscriminate violence.

Collaborating in the different stages of the filming has been very interesting and satisfying for the children, teachers, youth and adults who participated, as well as for me. The film has fulfilled my dream of uniting different generations, cultures, Latin American projects and British entities in a common goal: to foster union, understanding and tolerance of people of different ages, gender and cultures in favour of a harmonic multicultural society." - Marlen Cabezas, Head teacher at La Escuela De Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Supported by Arts Council England.

Information about the participants:

About Seth Pimlott

Seth Pimlott works with groups of collaborators, exploring something personally relevant to the people he works with: the history of an idea, a private interior world, or unresolved anxieties and experiences tied to their circumstances and identity. Collectively, creatively engaging with these concerns, this process places a certain faith in the power of the imagination to master one's own narrative. Seth graduated from the RCA in 2016, and is the inaugural participatory artist in residence at Gasworks. He is a recent recipient of the Pete Lloyd Lewis Award, and was selected for the New Contemporaries exhibition for 2017/2018.

About Gasworks

For over twenty years Gasworks has played a unique role in the contemporary visual arts sector by working at the intersection between UK and international practices and debates. It does this by providing studios for London-based artists; commissioning emerging UK-based and international artists to present their first major exhibitions in London; and developing a highly-respected international residencies programme, mainly working with artists based outside Europe and North America. All programmes are accompanied by events and participatory workshops that engage local and international audiences with artists and their work. Gasworks' Participation Programme aims to widen access to contemporary art for local communities through interactive projects such as workshops, residencies, commissions and events.

Gasworks is also the hub of Triangle Network, an international network of small-scale arts organisations and projects that support and disseminate the work of emerging artists through artist-led workshops, residencies, exhibitions and outreach events. Gasworks and Triangle Network are registered as a charity in the UK under 'Triangle Arts Trust' and all their activities are free to the public.

La Escuela Gabriel Garcia Marquez

The Gabriel Garcia Marquez School is a Spanish-speaking complementary school that bears the name of the writer and Nobel Laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez. The goal of the school is to help Latin American immigrant children in London to better cope with the need to adapt to a new country and educational system and to positively address language and cultural barriers, creating bridges of communication and understanding.

The Gabriel García Márquez Saturday school is well known in the Latin American community of London and has helped many of its alumni achieve better academic results in the British education system than they otherwise would have been able to achieve. The school curriculum provides a wide range of subjects, both academic (including the Spanish language) and artistic to help children develop in many areas. However, his main achievement has been to provide students with greater confidence and identity that they have brought with them to the British culture.

Sin Fronteras

Sin Fronteras (No limits) is an artistic and political group run by and for young Latin American women in London. As young Latin American immigrants they cross visible and invisible borders, challenging prejudices through art and activism. Sin Fronteras is a project organised by the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS).

Cali Swing

Cali Swing is the largest Cali Salsa Dance Academy in the UK with more than 80 dancers, from 4 years old up, that compete at Salsa championships across the world.

Marta Hinestroza

Marta Hinestroza is a human rights lawyer, folkloric dancer, and leading voice of the campaign to prevent the regeneration of the Latin Quarter in Seven Sisters, Pueblito Paisa.

Chebeto Requena

Chebeto Requena is a multi-instrumentalist and vocalist, and virtuoso Cuatro player.

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