

**Württem  
bergischer  
Kunst  
verein  
Stuttgart**

**A Wandering Body:**

**Sergio Zevallos in the Chaclacayo Group**

October 18, 2014 to January 11, 2015

Press conference: Friday, October 17, 2014, 11 a.m.



## Introduction

Württembergischer Kunstverein is presenting the exhibition *A Wandering Body. Sergio Zevallos in the Chaclacayo Group* from October 18, 2014 to January 11, 2015.

The show, initiated by Kunstmuseum Lima (MALI) and added to by Württembergischer Kunstverein, gives visitors a comprehensive insight into the oeuvre of the artist Sergio Zevallos, born in Lima in 1962, consisting of drawings, collages, photographs, installations and performances. The focus is on those works which he developed in the 1980s and 1990s as a member of the Chaclacayo group (1982–1994).

Zevallos' works, showcased by the Kunstverein at the group show *Subversive Practices* in 2009 and this year at the *31st Biennial of São Paulo*, revolve around the relations between body, sexuality, religion, and sociopolitical relations of power and violence – the latter above all in the context of armed political conflicts in Peru in the 1980s.

For this purpose he appropriates motifs from Christian and Andean iconography, folk art, and the mass media, combining them with a queer aesthetic praxis.

Together with Helmut J. Psotta and Raúl Avellaneda, the other two members of the Chaclacayo group, he has created works based on their own bodies and the simplest of materials, works which opposed their social environment marked by violence, machismo, death and homophobia by means of bodily, aesthetic and sexual disobedience.

Zevallos' works from this period include performances that borrow from the choreographies and requisites of Catholic rites and processions; blasphemous overpaintings of prayer cards, particularly with motifs of Saint Rose of Lima; photoseries of cultic actions ranging between torture, ecstasy and sacrifice; drawings in which body organs and objects, heavenly and diabolical creatures, the human being and animals are inextricably interwoven – and much more.

Images of Saint Rose of Lima, America's first martyr, canonised by Pope Clement X in 1671 in the course of the evangelisation of South America, feature repeatedly. In countless overpaintings, collages and photographic reenactments, they are pervaded with monstrous, violent and obscene allusions and transvestic scenes. Seen as symbols of the religious and state legitimization of oppression and violence, Zevallos negotiates them between iconoclasm, appropriation and revaluation.

The martyrdom of the lives of the saints, acts of extreme violence in Peru, and colonialism, but also the exploitative practices of neoliberalism in the 1980s in the so called "underdeveloped" countries or problems such as HIV/Aids, and homophobic violence all play a role in Zevallos' works.

Photoseries such as *Suburbios* (suburbs) from 1983 revolve around funerary and sacrificial rituals, the motif of the bride of god, militarism, the inquisition and fascism – themes that are woven together in different variations. The photo-scenarios of *Suburbios* were shot in barren landscapes, urban non-places or unfinished and abandoned buildings. The requisites that feature in Zevallos' joint photoseries and performances include doll's heads and skulls, veils, hats, ribbons, plastic film, creatures made of tights and stuffing, texts and newspaper articles, and much more.

The works of Zavallos and the Chaclacayo group were exhibited at the ifa gallery in Stuttgart, among other venues, in 1989. The current show at Württembergischer Kunstverein focuses on Zavallos' works, setting out, in particular, to reformulate the performance-based installations carried out in Lima, Stuttgart, Berlin, Dresden and other places in the 1980s and 1990s.

The exhibition was curated by Miguel A. Lopez, who already showcased Zavallos' works at the Kunstverein in 2009 as co-curator of *Subversive Practices*.

The show is accompanied by a catalogue (Spanish/English) with texts by Miguel A. López, Beatriz Preciado and Fernanda Carvajal, among others, and a discussion with Jaime Higa, Miguel A. López, Frido Martin, Alfredo Márquez and Sergio Zavallos.

## The Chaclacayo group

The 1980s in Peru were profoundly marked by the brutal armed fight between the Maoist movement “Shining Path” and the state. One consequence of this guerrilla war was massive terror directed against the rural population throughout the country, but particularly against the Andean and indigenous communities of the south highlands. The Chaclacayo group was formed in 1982 in response to these acts of extreme violence and the accompanying sexual, homophobic and racist discrimination. At that time, the German artist Helmut J. Psotta was a professor at the Art School of the Catholic University of Lima; Zevallos and Avellaneda were among his students.

As soon as they began working together, the group decided to turn their backs on Lima’s art scene, moving in to a house in the Chaclacayo district in 1982. The aim was to work in the greatest possible freedom, free from the repression that was prevalent in the city.

During these years they created an unusual experimental oeuvre replete with iconoclastic, blasphemous, ritual, sexual and transvestic gestures and acts that comprised drawings, paintings, photographs, sculptures made of rubbish, installations sprawling over floors and walls, performances and processions. The group’s first and only exhibition in Peru was held at the Lima Art Museum (MALI) in 1984. It was supported by the local Goethe Institute.

Faced with social rejection and economic limitations, the group finally decided to leave Peru in 1989, emigrating with all of their works and materials to Germany, where they continued to work as a collective until 1994.

Between 1989 and 1990 they presented the show *Images of Death. Peru or the End of the European Dream* at various German institutions – at the ifa gallery in Stuttgart, Badischer Kunstverein in Karlsruhe, Museum Bochum, and Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin. The group also featured with a number of performances at festivals, in museums and theatres, including the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin and Festspielhaus Hellerau in Dresden until 1994.

In these performances the group set out to demonstrate the tangled links between colonialism, the economic consequences of the Second World War, the dictatorships and armed conflicts in Latin America, racism and sexual violence, and the demise of communism in Europe.

After disbanding in 1995, all of the group’s works were placed into storage in various German towns. Parts of the oeuvre only returned to Lima thanks to the many years of research conducted by Miguel A. López, Emilio Tarazona and others and the exhibition *A Wandering Body. Sergio Zevallos in the Chaclacayo Group* at Lima Art Museum in 2013.

Today Sergio Zevallos lives in Lima and Berlin, Raúl Avellaneda in North-Rhine-Westphalia. Helmut J. Psotta died in 2012.

## **Sergio Zevallos – Short Biography**

born 1962 in Lima; lives in Lima and Berlin

Sergio Zevallos studied from 1980 to 1982 at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima. 2003 he received the „Research Grant in Photography” of the Erna and Victor Hasselblad Foundation, Gothenburg.

Zevallos participated in numerous exhibitions at international art institutions such as ifa-Galerie in Stuttgart, Badischer Kunstverein in Karlsruhe, Museum Bochum, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, and Akademie der Künste in Berlin (1989, *Todesbilder*), Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart (2009, *Subversive Practices*), Museum der Moderne in Salzburg (2010, *Collection Annette and Peter Nobel*), White Box and El Museo del Barrio in New York, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid and Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo MUAC-UNAM, Mexico City (2012-13, *Perder la forma humana*), the 31st São Paulo Bienial (2014) and Secession in Vienna (2014, *Utopian Pulse – Flares in the Darkroom*).

Zevallos has taught seminars at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, the Universidad Autónoma de México, the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts, and the Free University of Berlin. His work forms part of important collections such as those of the Museum Bochum in Bochum, Germany, Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen, Denmark, Peter Nobel Collection, Zurich, Switzerland, and the Museo de Arte de Lima, Peru. He lives in Berlin and Lima.

## Credits + Events

### **A Wandering Body:**

#### **Sergio Zevallos in the Chaclacayo Group**

October 18, 2014 – January 11, 2015

### **Press conference**

Friday, October 17, 2014, 11 a.m.

### **Press contact**

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### **Press release and press pictures**

<http://www.wkv-stuttgart.de/en/press>

### **Opening**

Friday, October 17, 2014, 7 p.m.

### **Exhibition tour and artist talk**

Saturday, October 18, 2014, from 2 p.m. on

### **Free guided tours**

Each sunday, 3 p.m.

### **Curator's tours**

Wednesday, November 26, 2014, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, December 10, 2014, 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 11, 2015, 4:30 p.m.

### **Entrance fees**

5 Euro / 3 Euro reduced

Members of WKV: free

### **An exhibition by**

MALI, Kunstmuseum Lima

### **in collaboration with**

Württembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart

### **Curator**

Miguel A. López

### **in collaboration with**

Hans D. Christ, Iris Dressler

A new installation has been realized in conjunction with the exhibition

### **Untitled, 2014**

On the basis of installations / performances of the 1980s of the Chaclacayo group

In collaboration with

María del Consuelo Guijarro Rincón (\*1986)

Nicole Ziegler (\*1984) and

Sergio Zevallos (\*1962)

**Supported by**

Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst des Landes Baden-Württemberg  
Kulturamt der Stadt Stuttgart  
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart  
ProLab, Stuttgart

## Works (Selection)

Courtesy: Sergio Zevallos



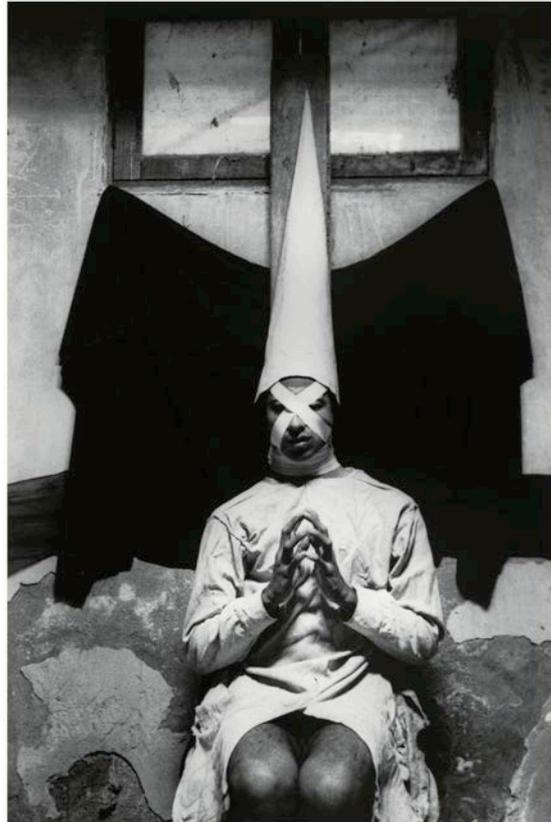
Self-portrait as Mater Dolorosa, from the series *Martirios / Suburbios* (Martyrdom / Suburbs), 1983, 4 photographs, b/w, 60 x 38,5 cm, each



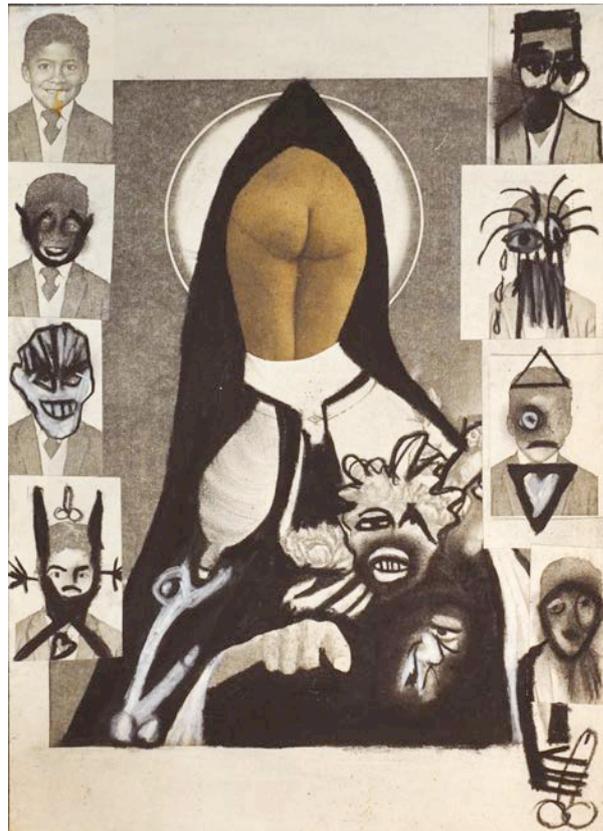
from the series *Ambulantes / Suburbios* (Wanderer / Suburbs), 1983, 60 photographs, b/w, ca. 14 x 9 cm, each



from the series *Ambulantes / Suburbios* (Wanderer / Suburbs), 1983, 60 photographs, b/w, ca. 14 x 9 cm, each



from the series *Celdas*: *Cholo, Celda, Muñeca, Nicho, Caja, Mesa* (Cells: Cholo, Cell, Doll, Niche, Box, Table), 1985–87, photographs, b/w, ca. 50 x 37 cm, each



from the series *Estampas* (Prayer Cards), 1982, drawings and collages on photocopies, divers formats between 18,7 x 24,2 cm and 35,5 x 25,5 cm



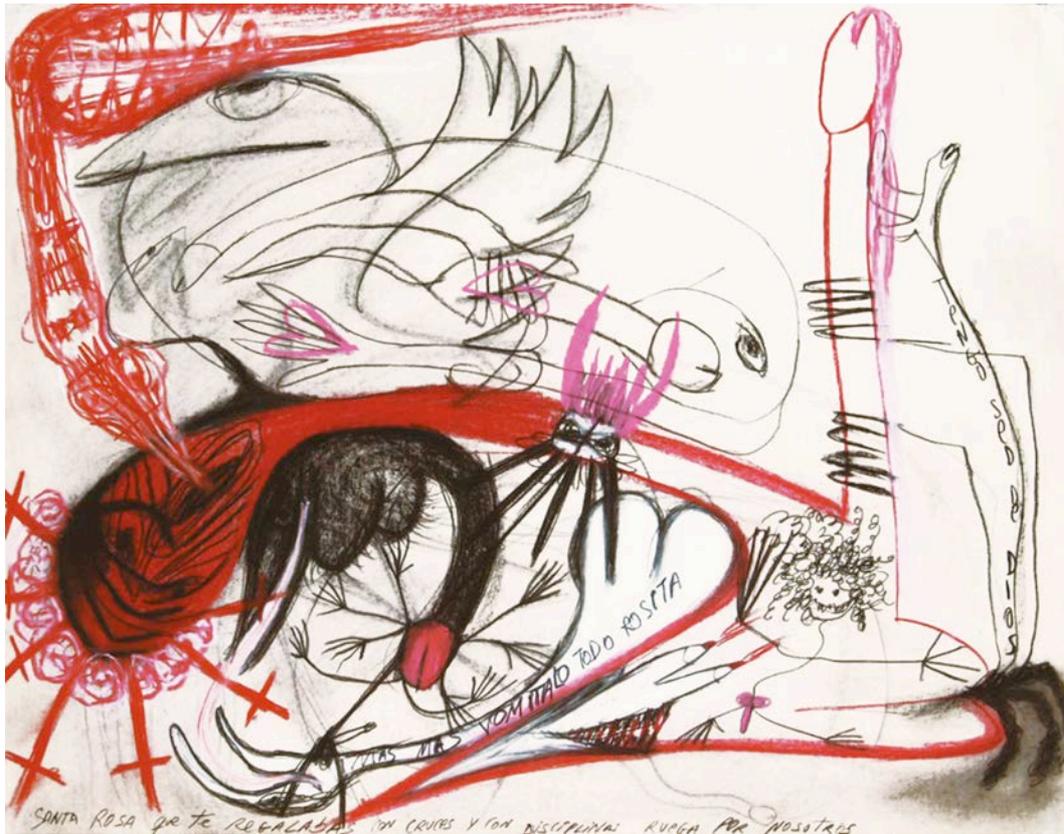
from the series *Rosa Cordis*, 1986, 18 color photographs, 50 x 37 cm, each



from the series *Symbolos–Huellas de un crimen* (Symbols–Traces of a Crime), 1985-86, 70 drawings, graphite on paper, ca. 28 x 21,5 cm, each



from the series *Que tu carne es el cielo recién nacido* (Miguel Hernández) [Cause your Flesh is the New Born Sky (Miguel Hernández)], 1983, color chalk, based on press photos, prayer cards, pornographic images and comic books



from the series Rosas (Rosen), 1982, color chalk, based on press photos, prayer cards, pornographic images, comic books, and poetry by Santa Rosa de Lima