

Jill Magid  
«The Proposal»  
4 June – 21 August 2016



Through an artistic practice that is at once visual, textual, and performative, Jill Magid forges intimate relationships within bureaucratic structures – flirting with, seducing, and subverting authority. Her projects probe seemingly impenetrable systems, such as the NYPD, the Dutch Secret Service, surveillance systems, and, most recently, the legacy of architect Luis Barragán, and unsettle these forms of power.

Magid's works often take the form of elliptical love letters that draw out human qualities in agents of control. These charged encounters are founded on mutual trust, but are also fraught with ethical complications and social asymmetries. Through her works, the artist reframes the complexity, potential intimacy, and absurdity of our relationship with institutions and power.

The solo exhibition «The Proposal» at Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen presents a climactic moment within Magid's extended, multimedia project «The Barragán Archives» which examines the legacy of Mexican architect and Pritzker Prize-winner Luis Barragán (1902–1988). The multi-year project poses piercing, radical, and pragmatic questions about the forms of power, public access, and copyright that construct artistic legacy.

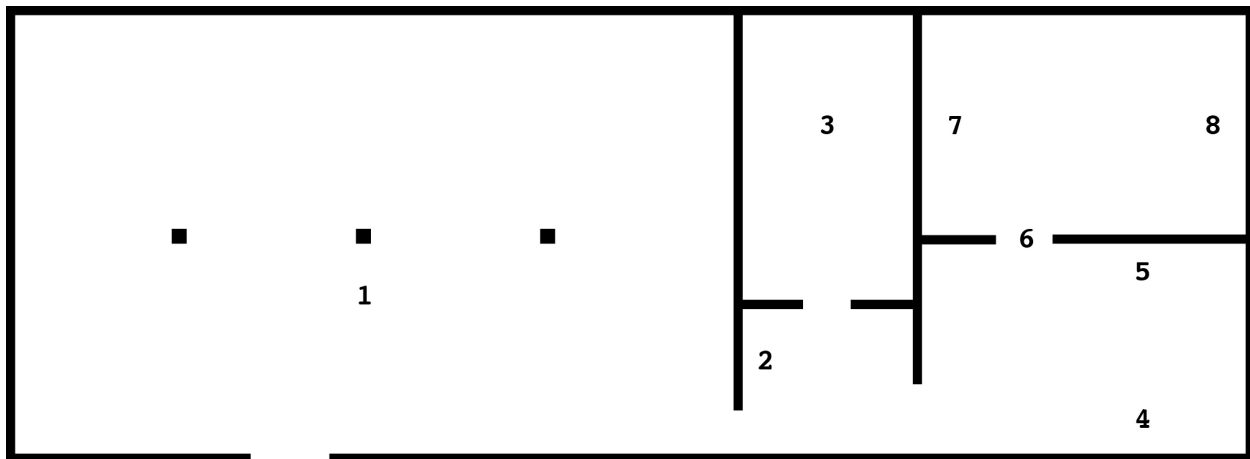
In his will, Barragán split his archive into two parts. Along with the vast majority of his architecture, his personal archive remains in Mexico at his home, Casa Barragán, which is now a museum and UNESCO World Heritage Site. In 1995, Barragán's professional archive, including the rights to his name and work and all photographs taken of it, was purchased by Rolf Fehlbaum, the Chairman of the Swiss furniture company Vitra, who, so it is said, gifted it to his fiancé, Federica Zanco; she now serves as Director of the Barragan Foundation. For the last twenty years, the archive has been publicly inaccessible, housed below Vitra corporate headquarters.

Since its launch in 2013, Jill Magid's project The Barragán Archives has encompassed major installations and performances at art spaces, galleries, and established museums. In each case, Magid structured the exhibitions as opportunities to push the narrative forward, and to embody – within the work – the distinct legal copyright parameters within the countries in which it is shown.

«The Proposal» reaches a thrilling and unexpected salvo in Magid's long-term engagement with Luis Barragán, Barragan Foundation, Barragán's descendants, the Mexican Government and the indispensable creative legacy that binds them. Through the public exhibition of «The Proposal», Jill Magid presents Federica Zanco with the gift of a two-carat diamond grown from the cremated remains of Barragán's body and set into a ring, in exchange for the return of his archive to Mexico. The exhibit serves as both a poetic counterproposal to Fehlbaum's offer of marriage to Zanco, and a sweeping disruption of the decades-long stalled negotiation.

«The Proposal» elegantly and forcefully rejoins the divergent paths of Barragán's professional and personal archives. Probing Barragán's official and private selves, and the unique interests of the multiple individual, governmental, and corporate entities that have become the archives' guardians, Magid directly engages complex intersections of the psychological and the judicial, national identity and repatriation, international property rights and copyright law, authorship and ownership, the human body and the body of work.

*«The Proposal» is commissioned by San Francisco Art Institute, where it will be on view from 9 September until 15 December 2016. A publication will be launched by Sternberg Press, San Francisco Art Institute, The Vera List Center for Art and Politics and The New School. Further, a documentary about «The Proposal» directed by Jill Magid and produced by Jarred Alterman will premiere on TheIntercept.com as a part of a commission by Field of Vision in fall 2016.*



**1 *The Offering (Tapete de Flores)*, 2016**

Artificial flowers, natural flowers, dyed sawdust, salt, glue  
8 m (in diameter)

Fabricated by Mario Arturo Aguilar Gutierrez and Elesban Ernesto Sandoval Díaz of Arte en Flores, Barrio la Asunción, Iztacalco.

Tapete de Flores, part of the Ofrenda ("offering" or altar) set up on the Day of the Dead in Mexico to celebrate family members who have died, represents the shared path between the living and the dead. The "carpet of flowers" at Sankt Gallen was installed by Mario Arturo Aguilar Gutierrez and Elesban Ernesto Sandoval Díaz of Arte en Flores, who annually make the Tapete de Flores in the Pantéon de Dolores, Mexico City's largest cemetery.

**2 *El Bebedero at Las Arboledas* by Armando Salas Portugal, 2013**

Monography, frame  
24.1 x 17.8 x 2.2 cm  
Courtesy: Private Collection

Unable to reproduce photographs of the architect's work because of copyright restrictions, Magid framed a book on Barragán, published by Vitra and the Barragan Foundation in 2001. It hangs on the wall like a readymade.

**3 *The Exhumation*, 2016**

HD video  
6:07 min

Directed by Jill Magid. Filmed and produced by Jarred Alterman. Commissioned by Field of Vision as part of a larger project in collaboration with the artist.

On September 23, 2015, 530 gr of Luis Barragán's cremated remains were removed from the *Rotonda de los Jaliscienses Ilustres* (Rotunda of the Illustrious People of Jalisco) in Guadalajara, Mexico, and were given to Jill Magid, who then delivered them to Algordanza in Domat Ems (CH), where they were transformed into a diamond.

**4 *The Artist Vitrine*, 2016**

Vitrine, documents  
89 x 54.5 x 148.5 cm

**a. Diamond Certificate by Algordanza** confirming that Algordanza, Switzerland, received Barragán's ashes and have transformed them into a uncut blue diamond.

**b. Gemmological Report** Laboratory-grown diamond report from GGTL Laboratories, dated March 30, 2016.

**c. Official confirmation letter of the Reception of Human Remains**  
Letter to Jill Magid from Algordanza confirming the receipt of Barragán's remains, dated October 1, 2015.

**d. Algordanza Order Form (2 pages) remitted to Algordanza by Jill Magid**  
Order form to transform Barragan's ashes into a diamond with the inscription, *I am wholeheartedly yours*, dated June 4, 2015.

## 5 ***The Family Vitrine, 2016***

Vitrine, documents

89 x 54.5 x 247 cm

- a. Notario Público Número 8** The Notario Público is a thirteen-page notarized document that includes records of all communications between the Barragán family and the Government of Jalisco, and between members of the Jalisco Government on the subject of the Barragán's family official request to remove "a symbolic portion" of cremated remains of their heir, Luis Barragán, from the *Rotonda de los Jaliscienses Ilustres*, Guadalajara.
- b. Carta Responsiva** Two-page document in which the Barragán family states that it is their free and indubitable will to designate Hugo Barragán Hermosilla as their representative so that he can carry out all administrative procedures to exhume 25 percent of Luis Barragán Morfín's ashes from the *Rotonda de los Jaliscienses Ilustres*. The remaining ashes are to be returned to tomb.
- c. Municipal Agreement** The Municipal Agreement is a letter from Hugo Barragán Hermosilla to engineer Ramiro Hernandez requesting permission for the Barragán family-heir and owner of the mortal remains of the architect Luis Barragán Morfín to remove a small and symbolic amount of ashes from the urn. The procedure had also received approval and authorization from the government of Jalisco.
- d. The Family Agreement** Agreement between Jill Magid and the Barragán family regarding *The Proposal*, signed by Jill Magid and Hugo Barragán Hermosillo on September 23, 2015.
- e. Family dinner approval** Agreement signed on at *The Family Dinner* by the Barragán family and Jill Magid on July 19, 2014.
- f. Invitation for The Family Dinner** *The Family Dinner* (2014) was a performance held at Museo de Arte Zapopan (MAZ) in which Magid invited eighteen of Barragán's heirs, asking them for permission to access the architect's cremated remains and transform them into a diamond, which would then be set into a ring and offered to Federica Zanco in exchange for the return of the Barragán archive to Mexico. Along with the invitation reproduced here was a double-sided card with photographs by Armando Salas Portugal. Over the images, which are restricted by copyright, Magid printed the logo of the Barragan Foundation in silver foil.
- g. Letter to the Barragán family from Hugo Barragán Hermosillo** on occasion of the then forthcoming *The Family Dinner* at MAZ.

## 6 ***Barragán's Corridor, 2016***

Drywall, paint

194 x 119 x 189 cm

Inspired by the corridor, which Barragán built to the height of his body, between the vestibule and living room in the architect's home, Casa Barragán.

## 7 ***The Archivist Vitrine, 2016***

Vitrine, facsimile of the Proposal Letter to Federica Zanco (4 pages)

89 x 54.5 x 247 cm

Letter from Jill Magid to Federica Zanco outlining details of *The Proposal*. It was given to Zanco on May 31, 2016, at the VitraHaus Café, located on the Vitra Campus by Jill.

## 8 ***The Proposal, 2016***

2.02 carat, blue, uncut, diamond with the micro-laser inscription *I am wholeheartedly yours*, silver ring setting designed by Anndra Neen, ring box, related documents.

*Courtesy: the artist; LABOR, Mexico City; RaebervonStenglin, Zurich; Untilthen, Paris*

**About the artist:**

Jill Magid (\*1973, Bridgeport CT, USA) lives and works in New York. She studied at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge MA, USA and Cornell University Ithaca New York NY, USA. Her performances and exhibitions have been commissioned and presented by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the New Museum, New York; among other venues. The project *The Barragán Archives* has encompassed installations and performances at Art in General, New York; Performa 13, New York; Yvon Lambert, Paris; RaebervonStenglin, Zurich; South London Gallery; Museo D'Art Zapopan, Guadalajara; Art Basel Parours; and Labor Gallery, Mexico City.

**Events and Educational Program:****Opening**

Friday, 3 June 2016, 6 p.m.

**Guided Tour I/Introduction for Teachers**

Tuesday, 7 June 2016, 6 p.m.

**Art for Young and Old – Inventing stories together**

Sunday, 19 June 2016, 2 p.m.

Admission: Regular admission for adults/CHF 5 for children from 5 years-old; registration until 16 June: [beck-woerner@k9000.ch](mailto:beck-woerner@k9000.ch)

**Art Snack – Short guided tour and a snack**

Thursday, 30 June 2016, 12.30 p.m.

Admission: CHF 10/members CHF 7; no registration required

**Drawing Afternoon – For children from 4 to 8 years-old**

Wednesday, 6 July 2016, 2 p.m.

Admission: CHF 5; registration until the previous day at: [info@k9000.ch](mailto:info@k9000.ch)

**Art Lunch – Guided tour followed by lunch**

Thursday, 18 August 2016, 12 noon

Admission: CHF 25/members CHF 22; registration at [info@k9000.ch](mailto:info@k9000.ch)

**Public Guided Tour II**

Sunday, 21 August 2016, 3 p.m.

**Workshops for School Classes**

From 6 June on we are offering workshops at the exhibition.

More information: [www.k9000.ch](http://www.k9000.ch) (Art Education/Workshops for Schools)

**High-resolution images can be found in the press kit on our website (Information/Press). For further questions please contact Giovanni Carmine ([carmine@k9000.ch](mailto:carmine@k9000.ch)) or Maren Brauner ([brauner@k9000.ch](mailto:brauner@k9000.ch)).**

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Opening times:  
Tues to Fri 12 noon – 6 p.m.  
Sat & Sun 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.