

Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof

Juan Ricaurte-Riveros

Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo

21.3. – 7.6.2026

Curated by Tobias Peper

Press Release

Hamburg, 15.03.2026

Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof is pleased to present *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, the first institutional solo exhibition by Juan Ricaurte-Riveros. Transforming the exhibition space into an immersive installation of video, sound, sculpture, and light, the exhibition unfolds as a layered narrative of greed, power, violence, and rebellious hearts.

The title phrase "Plata o Plomo" (silver or lead) comes from Colombian slang during the drug wars of the 1980s and 90s. To this day, Plomo is used analogously for bullets. For the artist, the phrase embodies the greed of Spanish colonists, conservative Creoles, liberal mestizos, narcos, large landowners, the pharmaceutical industry, and others whose claims to power have all left their mark on South American soil. Translated into a macro perspective, "Plata o Plomo" seems like the battle cry of a political-economic world order based on violence, suffering, and the right of the strongest, one that seems omnipresent again today.

The video *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo* depicts the artist as a weeping Virgin Mary, drawing on Latin American depictions of Mary. Much like during the Christianization of Europe, the Spanish colonial powers appropriated existing indigenous iconography and reshaped it within the Christian faith. This "hacking" of existing culture led to a process of erasing ancestral rituals, practices, and cultural identities, the consequences of which continue to reverberate in South American countries to this day. The costume and setting exude a camp and drag aesthetic. The saint's gold-and-silver robe is made of safety blankets, the crown of paper money, and the sea of flowers in the background is just plastic. Insignia of power and dominion are thus playfully subverted and transformed into humorous artifacts of themselves. The figure in the video remains silent. The spoken text comes from off-screen, delivered by two English and one Spanish voice. In verse form, Ricaurte-Riveros has written a narrative about greed, power, fear, resistance, and community that carries a deeply personal core. The tone shifts between incantation, resignation, turmoil, and introspection. Entrusting the text to three voices other than his own detaches the story from its original context and elevates it to a more universal level. At the same time, the resulting disconnect between text and image underscores the sense of alienation that runs through the text.

Golden and silver butterflies are scattered throughout the exhibition space like tiny treasures. Due to their life cycle, butterflies symbolize metamorphosis and change, beauty and transience in many cultures. While the voices in the video reflect on a vicious cycle of power, greed, and the suffering that results, the butterflies—as omens of transformation—spread hope for change.

An important aspect of Ricaurte-Riveros's artistic practice is the gathering and sharing of stories, food, time, and mutual attention. Accordingly, this space for community is an integral part of the exhibition, which will be brought to life through various formats throughout its run. At its center, various wild grasses grow on a crescent-shaped bed of earth.

List of Works

1. Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸²•Silver or Lead•Plata o Plomo, 2026
HD-Videoinstallation (Color, 5.1 Surround Sound, Spotlights), 3 × 30 min.

Credits Original Score: Julia Koch, Hye-Eun Kim
Voiceovers: Kameron Locke, Rebecca Clayburn, Diego Alejandro Quintero
Direction of photography, editing: Catalina Gonzalez Gonzalez Produktion
Production: Estafanía Morales Morales, Antonia Brandt Maske
Make-up: Insa Wagner
Gaffer: Bo Friedrich Metallarbeiten
Metal production: Sanna Leone
2. Mariposas Preciosas, 2026
Safety blanket
3. Pastizal Salvaje, 2026
Wildgras, Wild grass, soil
4. Corona de Divisas, 2026
Cardboard, tape, glue, paper money
5. Casco de Plomo, 2026
Lead

Please address press inquiries to nikolas.geier@kvhbf.de

The exhibition is kindly supported by

H F B K
Hamburg

HK Hamburgische
Kulturstiftung

**JEF – Not a
Foundation**

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Kultur und Medien



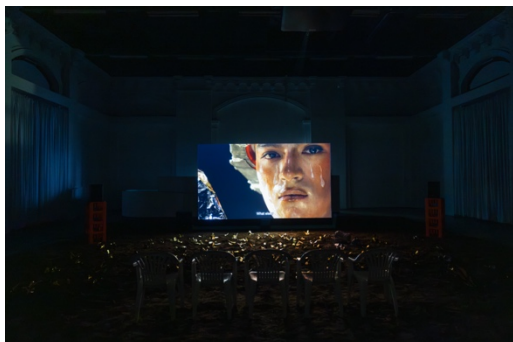
1_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
 photo: Fred Dott



2_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte_Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
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3_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
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4_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
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5_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
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6_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
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7_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
 photo: Fred Dott



8_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ð Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
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9_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ÷ Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
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10_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Ag⁴⁷ ÷ Pb⁸² • Silver or Lead • Plata o Plomo*, 2026,
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11_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Mariposas Preciosas*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
 photo: Fred Dott



12_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
 Juan Ricaurte-Riveros, *Mariposas Preciosas*, 2026,
 Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
 Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
 photo: Fred Dott



13_KVHBF_Juan Ricaurte-Riveros_2026_Fred Dott
Juan Ricaurte-Riveros
Pastizal Salvaje, 2026,
Installation view at Kunstverein Harburger
Bahnhof, courtesy of the artist,
photo: Fred Dott