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Press Release

Exhibition: ¿?

Site-specific installation and works on paper by María Isabel Arango

Opening: Wednesday 21st January 2015, 6-9 pm

Exhibition dates: 22nd January to 7th March 2015

Patrick Heide Contemporary Art is delighted to present the first solo exhibition of Colombian artist María Isabel Arango entitled: ¿?.

Born in Medellín in 1979 but mainly based in London since 2008, Arango intelligently and poetically transforms the seemingly perpetual conflict of her home country into art works that dig deep in the psyche of the human condition while bearing a considered formal stringency and material sensibility.

Informed by her own experience, Arango examines the conflicts of societies with a history of violence and its effects on local and global communities.

The message of the series presented, ¿? and *Broken Language*, deals with one of the most pressing contemporary issues in the current cultural climate, the traumatic past of conflict zones and how to come to terms with it.

Arango's title-giving series ¿? is based on the daily investigation, collection, and transcription of selected Colombian print media between 2010 and 2014.

For the ongoing series Arango gathered news clippings that are then transcribed through the erasure of all its words, leaving only the punctuation marks and layout markings. The content of the media is withdrawn while reshaping and recharging it. The accounts are no longer present, but their traces bear the psychological imprint of the deleted text.

Twelve drawings of transcribed newspaper pages will map out the downstairs gallery space, their formalistic compositions giving a transfigured account of a country's troubled past.

In the upstairs gallery a part of Arango's *Broken Language* series will be displayed. Again María Isabel Arango collects newspaper articles about the violent incidents in her home country. These are subsequently shredded and soaked in water to make a pulp. Once pressed the "recycled" hand-made paper has converted into innate sculptural objects that still show glimpses of its deconstructed events. Several thick sheets from the *Broken Language* series will be hung suspended in space spanning across the room.

During the course of the exhibition, María Isabel Arango will be featured artist of the gallery's booth at the 11th edition of ZONA MACO in Mexico City (with Sarah Bridgland), Latin America's most important art fair. Two installations from Arango's most intricate and complex series *Cumulation* will be presented as central installations.

María Isabel Arango gained her MA in Drawing from the University of the Arts London, where she is currently completing a PhD.