

GUGGENHEIM

NEWS RELEASE

***Doris Salcedo* Opens at the Guggenheim Museum on June 26**

**Major Retrospective of the Colombian Artist Surveys Three Decades of Work
Addressing Social Injustice, Memory, and Loss**

Exhibition: *Doris Salcedo*
Venue: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York
Location: Tower Levels 2, 4, 5, and 7
Dates: June 26–October 12, 2015
Media Preview: Thursday, June 25, 2015, 10 am–12 pm

(NEW YORK, NY – May 4, 2015) —From June 26 through October 12, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum will present the first major retrospective of the searing, deeply poetic work of the internationally influential artist Doris Salcedo (b. 1958, Bogotá). Over the past three decades, Salcedo has created sculptures and installations that address the traumatic history of modern-day Colombia, as well as wider legacies of suffering stemming from colonialism, racism, and other forms of social injustice across the world. Installed within all four of the Tower Levels of the museum, the exhibition will occupy approximately half of the Guggenheim’s gallery space and will feature the artist’s significant bodies of work from the late 1980s to the present.

Doris Salcedo is organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and curated by Madeleine Grynsztejn, Pritzker Director, and Julie Rodrigues Widholm, Curator, with support from Steven L. Bridges, Curatorial Assistant. The Solomon R. Guggenheim presentation is curated by Katherine Brinson, Curator, Contemporary Art, with support from Susan Thompson, Assistant Curator.

This exhibition is supported in part by the Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation.

The Leadership Committee for *Doris Salcedo* is gratefully acknowledged for its support, with special thanks to Chair Tiqui Atencio Demirdjian, as well as to Peter Brandt, Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson, The Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation, Jill and Peter Kraus, Becky and Jimmy Mayer, Cindy and Howard Rachofsky, Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro, Jerome and Ellen Stern, the Walentas Family Foundation, Marilyn and Larry Fields, and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Additional funding is provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy of Colombia.

About the Exhibition

Informed by in-depth research during which the artist solicits firsthand testimonies from victims of violent oppression, Doris Salcedo's sculptures and site-specific interventions forgo the direct representation of atrocities in favor of evocative installations fashioned from disarming materials and through intensely laborious techniques. By paradoxically giving form to that which is absent, she creates objects and spaces of quiet remembrance and communal mourning. Salcedo has written, "The only concern of my work is what happens to human beings assaulted by violence. . . . the only possible response I can give in the face of irreparable absence is to produce images capable of conveying incompleteness, lack, and emptiness."

From the outset of her career, Salcedo has employed the strategy of transmuting common domestic objects into vessels freighted with memories and submerged narratives. The earliest works featured in the exhibition incorporate hospital furniture that has been altered by the presence of animal fiber and plastic doll parts. The skeletal frames of hospital cots also are used in the installation *Untitled* (1989–90/2013), in this case arrayed in bleak formation with eleven stacks of crisply laundered white shirts. The shirts, which might otherwise evoke the comforting harmony of a well-run home, are impaled by steel rebar in an image of violent incursion. These sculptures are, in part, oblique responses to tragic situations in Colombia, but their embodiment of the experience of irreparable loss achieves universal resonance.

Her seminal work *Atrabiliarios* (1992–2004) creates a chapel-like environment in which a series of wall niches enshrine worn shoes. Covered with pieces of semitranslucent animal fiber sutured to the wall with large, uneven stitches, the shoes are only partially visible, giving them the hazy remove of a fugitive memory. In one of the galleries the artist will configure sculptures from her celebrated body of work dating from 1989–2008, comprised of pieces of domestic furniture that have been suffused with concrete, as if muted and immobilized by the weight of grief. Other series that conjure the complex operation of mourning and memory include *La Casa Viuda* (1993–95), in which the artist combined disjunctive architectural elements with scraps of fabric and fragments of bone, and *Unland* (1995–98), in which mismatched tables are forced together, their surfaces populated with an intricate mesh of thread and human hair.

The exhibition will also feature two of Salcedo's most recent major installations, both of which draw on overtly funereal symbolism yet propose a sense of magic in the apparent impossibility of their materials. In *Plegaria Muda* (2008–10), viewers are surrounded by a labyrinthine arrangement of units formed from pairs of tables, one inverted on top of the other, through which blades of real grass improbably sprout. The tables approximate the size of human bodies, and together they recall a mass grave, their verdant surfaces suggestive of nature's power to both heal and erase. *A Flor de Piel* (2012) is an enormous shroud created in homage to a nurse who was tortured and murdered in Colombia. Its undulating fabric is painstakingly stitched together from chemically preserved rose petals—a material replete with romantic associations that at the same time mimics the appearance of flayed skin. A similar dichotomy between horror and fragile beauty charges Salcedo's most recent series, *Disremembered*

(2014). Woven from innumerable strands of silk thread and burnt needles, these works take the form of garments that would harm rather than comfort or protect the wearer.

The presentation will also feature a short film documenting the artist's remarkable site-specific public projects and architectural interventions over the past fifteen years, including iconic works created for sites such as the Plaza de Bolívar in Bogotá and Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in London. Representing this pivotal aspect of the artist's practice, *Doris Salcedo's Public Works* (2015; 25 min., 40 sec.) will be screened throughout the duration of the exhibition in the New Media Theater on the museum's lower level.

Doris Salcedo is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue featuring scholarly essays by Elizabeth Adan, Associate Professor of Art and Design, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; Katherine Brinson, Curator, Contemporary Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Madeleine Grynstejn, Pritzker Director, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; Helen Molesworth, Chief Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Julie Rodrigues Widholm, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and Doris Salcedo. A hardcover edition priced at \$50 will be available at the museum store and online at guggenheimstore.org.

Following its New York presentation, the exhibition will travel to the Pérez Art Museum Miami in 2016.

Education and Public Programs

Details about the public programs presented in conjunction with *Doris Salcedo* are posted on guggenheim.org/publicprograms. Highlights include:

Film: *Doris Salcedo's Public Works*

Daily, 11 am–5:30 pm

New Media Theater

A short video documenting the artist's site-specific public projects and architectural interventions is screened continuously in conjunction with the exhibition. Free with admission.

Symposium

Friday, October 2

On the occasion of the exhibition, scholars and writers join Doris Salcedo to address issues of trauma, memory, and loss. \$15, \$10 members, FREE students with RSVP. More information will be released closer to the date and will be available at guggenheim.org/calendar.

Curator's Eye Tours

Free with museum admission.

Friday, August 14, 12 pm

Tour led by Assistant Curator Susan Thompson.

Friday, September 11, 12 pm

Tour led by Curator Katherine Brinson and will be interpreted in American Sign Language.

About the Artist

Doris Salcedo was born in 1958, in Bogotá, Colombia, where she continues to live and work. She holds a BFA from the Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (1980) and an MA in Sculpture from New York University (1984). She has served as Director of the School of Plastic Arts, Instituto de Bellas Artes, Cali, Colombia (1987–88), and as Professor of Sculpture and Art Theory, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá (1989–91). Salcedo has presented solo exhibitions at the Casa de Moneda, Bogotá (1985); New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (1998); Tate Gallery, London (1999); Camden Arts Centre, London (2001); Tate Modern, London (2007); Instituto de Arte Contemporânea e Jardim Botânico, Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2008); Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City; Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden; and Centro de Arte Moderna José de Azeredo Perdigão, Lisbon (all 2011); and at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo (2012). She has participated in group exhibitions at the São Paulo Biennial (1998); Liverpool Biennial (1999); Documenta, Kassel, Germany (2002); Istanbul Biennial (2003); Turin Triennial (2005); MoMA P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; The Menil Collection, Houston (both 2008); and Hayward Gallery, London (2010). Salcedo has received numerous awards and honors, including a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Grant (1995), Ordway Prize (2005), and the Ninth Hiroshima Art Prize (2014).

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). The Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that celebrate contemporary art, architecture, and design within and beyond the walls of the museum, including the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative. More information about the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation can be found at guggenheim.org.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Admission: Adults \$25, students/seniors (65+) \$18, members and children under 12 free. The Guggenheim's free app, available with admission or by download to personal devices, offers an enhanced visitor experience. The app features content on special exhibitions as well as access to more than 1,500 works in the Guggenheim's permanent collection. Additionally, information about the museum's landmark building is available in English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Verbal Description guides for select exhibitions are also included for visitors who are blind or have low vision. The Guggenheim app is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Museum Hours: Sun–Wed, 10 am–5:45 pm; Fri, 10 am–5:45 pm; Sat, 10 am–7:45 pm; closed Thurs. On Saturdays, beginning at 5:45 pm, the museum hosts Pay What You Wish. For general information, call 212 423 3500 or visit the museum online at: guggenheim.org

guggenheim.org/social
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