

# centrepoin collective

Centrepoin Collective proposes an inclusive and multicultural vision on photography. We are an emerging collective of international artists seeking to initiate, develop and deliver exciting and innovative visual arts projects and exhibitions. It is currently formed by artists from Mexico, Spain, France and the United Kingdom, most of which are based in the UK.

[www.centrepoincollective.com](http://www.centrepoincollective.com)



Susana Sanroman  
Roxana Allison  
Santiago Carrion  
Pablo Allison

September 2011 (4)  
August 2011 (1)  
July 2011 (2)  
June 2011 (2)  
May 2011 (2)  
April 2011 (2)  
March 2011 (2)  
February 2011 (3)  
January 2011 (2)  
December 2010 (1)  
November 2010 (1)  
October 2010 (5)  
September 2010 (2)  
August 2010 (2)  
July 2010 (7)  
June 2010 (2)  
May 2010 (4)  
April 2010 (4)  
March 2010 (2)  
February 2010 (3)  
January 2010 (2)  
December 2009 (1)

LINKS

TUESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2011

Up & Coming: Carlos Saladén-Vargas



**Centrepoin Collective** - I sense a very honest and tender look to the portraits. Can you give me a brief insight about your motivation to conduct this project and also, which countries did you visit while producing the work?

**Carlos Saladén-Vargas** Thank you. The main motivation behind these images is the way 'third world' cultures are represented in mainstream western media, as 'others'. These 'others' are people shown as primitive and miserable, with corrupt governments and starving societies, in short, in need of help. I understand that this is a very hard agenda to tackle but I thought of going back to basics, to start by pointing at the people from these cultures. I really don't see this exercise as a particular view of South America. I think I wanted to use South America as example so other 'third world' cultures ( like African, Indian ) could see themselves in my work, talking to a bigger audience

I only visited two countries, Colombia and Venezuela, I travelled by road and I intentionally focused on people living in the countryside rather than cities. I am happy that you use words like honest and tender to describe the images. I wanted to use a very basic approach, a bit typological but also very relaxed, I only shot one frame per subject, I believe this one-shot approach translated into a very respectful dynamic between them and myself.

Centrepoin Collective in Spanish  
artcoup  
livingartroom  
Festival of Culture



TO VIEW OUR WEBSITE:  
<http://www.centrepoincollective.com>



CC- Although the present situation in Latin American countries is of a lot of social unrest, violence, drug issues among many other problems, there are also many positive aspects that seem to be disregarded. For instance, I have noticed many photo-essays focusing on gang culture, poverty, corruption and the list goes on. Could you give me your take on this insatiable appetite for photojournalists or documentary photographers to disregard the positive elements that Latin America is also built of ?

CS-V-Yes but we have to see the bigger picture, it is about 'photojournalism' and 'documentary ' being used to create products that can be sold and marketed through mainstream channels, you cannot sell a pink elephant by showing a photo of a blue one, can you?

CC- I understand that this series of portraits attempt to break with stereotypes in terms of culture and representation of subjects ( identity ), can you explain a bit more about why it is important for you to re-construct Latin American identity today ?

CS-V- I don't like to use the word 'identity', I feel it's a term loosely overused to the point that it has become a cliché, I rather say it is important to re-construct representation, and not only for Latin America but also for the 'first world', representation today is utterly divorced from everyday life and the people. It seems that mainstream representation speaks ( in first person ) only to a few.



CC- You incorporate elements that have been building the 'democratic' society in Latin American countries today. From a policeman, family members, workers and the military force among other aspects. How do you believe that the rest of the World, specifically 'industrialized societies' perceive Latin America?

CS-V- Good question, I'm not sure how they perceive Latin America, as it really depends who you ask, I have met many people that get thrilled about Latin America and come with joyful memories from when they lived over there, they were always on business assignments or consulting for multinational companies so those guys really had a great time I suppose... now if we think about ordinary people, then we have to consider that their perception can only be that which is constructed and strengthened through mainstream imagery and responds to certain interests.

CC- My first reaction when analyzing the images was of a slight confusion. I initially thought that the images were about Latin Americans living in the USA. Later I discovered that the project was about people living in Latin American countries. From an aesthetic angle, which was your strategy when choosing the elements you wanted to depict in the project and what you thought was irrelevant and out of context?



CS-V- Really? What a surprise, maybe it was because the first image you saw was of a police man wearing some kind of texan hat? I think it was just a very opportune ( or unfortunate?) coincidence. I decided to photograph certain people: people that I particularly find excluded from the realm of representation. Aesthetically I wanted to play with the idea of using the landscape and surroundings as a secondary but very

important layer, they don't shout-out-loud 'hey look! we are in the third world!' at least not in the way that you are used to see in mainstream imagery. If you look closely you realise that this secondary layer anchors the images in a very special way

CC- I see that you focused the project on portraits rather than on the topography of the space. Why do you think it was more important to photograph people rather than the landscapes?

CS-V- I wouldn't say it is more important to photograph people over landscape. They are equally relevant to the point that they are connected.

CC- Have you received the responses you aimed to hear from audiences when presenting the work at exhibitions?

CS-V- Well, this is a very difficult question, I really don't know the answer... What is that phrase I've heard before? If I managed to touch just one soul, then it was well worth it... or something like that.

CC- Will you be going further with the work, traveling to other Latin American countries?

CS-V- Yes definitely, I'd love to, but I think I might have to leave that for sometime in the future, at the moment I am concentrating in developing my work using what I have around me...



All images © Carlos Saladen-Vargas

Carlos' work is informed by an interest in the socio-political functions of photography and critically engages with issues attaching to spectatorship and installation of large-scale photographic projects.

Born 18 October 1979 in Venezuela, Saladen-Vargas is the co-founder of Photo-Soup, an international collaborative project that allows artists to disseminate their work and ideas without the restrictions imposed by mainstream curatorial agendas. To view more of his work please go to: <http://www.8302.net/csfoto/>

POSTED BY CENTREPOINT COLLECTIVE 

LABELS: CARLOS SALADEN-VARGAS, CENTREPOINT COLLECTIVE, EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHERS

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

