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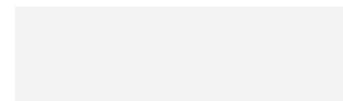
Textile atelier Hechizoo presents 'Voyages/Explorations' at New York's Cristina Grajales Gallery

DESIGN / 13 NOV 2013 / BY STEPHANIE MURG



It all started with the canoe. Jorge Lizarazo, founder and creative

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director of [Hechizoo](#), acquired the humble wooden vessel in the course of working with indigenous communities in his native Colombia. Once used to transport coca leaves on the Putumayo River, it is now an ocean away, covered in thousands of glass beads and hovering over New York's Cristina Grajales Gallery as the centerpiece of 'Voyages/Explorations', a solo exhibition of work by Hechizoo, on view until the end of January 2014.

'We took the canoe as an element through which we wanted to give these people back their dignity,' says Lizarazo, dressed in a chunky Hemingway-style fisherman's sweater that hints at his passion for weaving and textures. 'The family of 12 that made this canoe was displaced by violence from the region.' After applying each bead by hand to create intricate geometric patterns on the canoe, they held a going-away party for it.

'The canoe became not just an experiment and a voyage of materials but also a very profound, emotional search as to what did it mean,' says Grajales, who met Lizarazo a decade ago when he walked into her gallery seeking representation and bearing enchanting textiles (in Spanish, Hechizoo sounds like the word for 'enchantment' or 'bewitching'). This is a very important moment for Hechizoo. Lizarazo and his atelier are taking more risks, learning more about materials, mixing materials in unexpected ways and breaking the boundaries of what's possible.

The recent creative surge is apparent in the handmade rugs, tapestries and sculptural objects that transform the gallery into an exuberant Amazon landscape. It's inhabited by tree-like installations in industrial rubber; a wall of engraved-metal leaves; illuminated natural-fibre columns; and a knitted-metal enclosure that hints at Lizarazo's architectural training (after graduating from University of the Andes in Bogotá, he practiced in the offices of Santiago Calatrava and Massimiliano Fuksas).

He points out reeds from the Amazon embedded into an undulating copper and bronze panel lined in crystal rods before slowly circling the work - his most recent - which arrived via FedEx hours before the exhibition's opening reception. Although it appears to float from the ceiling, it is one of the heaviest pieces he has ever created. 'Here I wanted to make a rug that goes up, becomes a tapestry and then becomes an architectural space, so that a person can walk through it and become part of the piece,' says Lizarazo. 'The show goes from one journey to another.'



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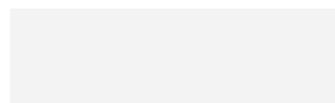
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INFORMATION

'Hezichoo:
Voyages/Explorations' runs
until 31 January 2014

ADDRESS

Cristina Grajales Gallery
10 Greene Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10013

TELEPHONE

1.212 219 9941

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