

## **Gustavo Vélez Curriculum Vitae**

**"My work seeks a striking harmony between each line, bringing meaning, value and logic to dreams. They are creations that blend with the subtle air and dance, from beginning to end, while enjoying the changes in each movement.**

**The challenge is to achieve that the hardness and heaviness of the materials while attaining a touch of delicacy and transparency, for the sculpture to become light and for geometry to float in space like a provocation of the infinite, like cosmic energy".**

Gustavo Vélez's passion for sculpture started at an early age. Since he was a child, Gustavo was certain of what destiny had for him: Art. After finishing high school, which he alternated between sculpture studies at the Institute of Fine Arts and the Eladio Velez School in his hometown of Medellín, he decided to travel to Florence (Italy) as an existential choice. He attended the Lorenzo de Medici Academy in Florence and concluded his training in the workshops of Pietrasanta (Italy), a place he has visited for over 20 years and where his sculpture studio is currently located.

### **Asia**

Gustavo Vélez's work has been presented in Asia for over a decade. Exhibitions, participation in art fairs, as well as the installation of sculptures in public and private collections in China, Japan, Korea, the United Arab Emirates and Singapore speak on the stretch of his broad career in this continent.

In Japan, he has exhibited in galleries in Tokyo, Utsunomiya, Iwaki and Yokohama. Gustavo has been a promoter of cultural exchange with artists from Japan and Korea for several years now. For this reason, in 2008 he was invited to the exhibition on the occasion of the centenary of bilateral relations between Japan and Colombia.

One of his monumental sculptures (Flying, Korean White Marble) is part of the Art Valley Sculpture Park collection in Seoul, Korea.

In China, Velez has exhibited in renowned museums such as the Museum of the Imperial City of Zhengzhou and has monumental sculptures placed in cities like Shenzhen and Nanjing, among others. Also, there are several monumental sculptures making part of important art collections.

### **Europe**

His works have also been exhibited in Fairs, Galleries and Museums in France, Italy and Spain.

In Italy, he has already established a solid trajectory as an artist present in Pietrasanta, a city in Tuscany, where he arrived in 1996 and where he creates most of his marble and bronze works.

In 2013, he was chosen for the solo sculpture exhibition that takes place in this Italian town, home of worldwide renown sculptors and artists like Igor Mitoraj, Luciano Vanji, Novello Finotti, Gio Pomodoro, Fernando Botero, Manolo Valdez, among others. With this exhibition Gustavo became the youngest artist to intervene in the emblematic Piazza del Duomo and the Chiesa di Sant'Agostino with sculptures in bronze, steel and marble that were up to seven meters high and eight tons in weight.

In July 2015, he was invited, together with sculptors Igor Mitoraj and Fernando Botero, to the "Homo Faber" exhibition, in which Vélez participated with monumental works that embellished the Parco della Versiliana during the warm Italian summer.

His works have been exhibited in solo shows at museums such as the Marino Marini in Pistoia, Italy and the Bernard Boesch in La Baule, France. His works are also part of the permanent collection of the Museo dei Bozzetti in Pietrasanta, Italy.

During this summer his sculpture "Núcleo" will be appreciated in the iconic "Marina di Pietrasanta" as part of the event "Omaggio agli Artigiani" and also he will have a solo exhibition in the center of Forte dei Marmi as well as in Oblong Contemporary Art Gallery.

Currently, he is preparing a monumental exhibition for an important art avenue in Switzerland: Bad Ragaz and also for Vaduz, the capital city of Liechtenstein.

## **America**

In the American continent, he has participated in fairs and exhibitions in the United States, Ecuador, Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, Colombia and Peru.

In 2011 and 2012, his sculptures could be admired in the Archaeological and Contemporary Museum of Guayaquil, the Museum of Modern Art of Cuenca and the Museum of Modern Art of Quito, in Ecuador. As well as in the Museum of Art of Tolima (Colombia).

The maquette of his work "Hipercúbicos," which is part of the permanent collection of the Museo Dei Bozzetti in Pietrasanta, was showcased in the "How a Sculpture is Born" exhibition, at the Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, Alabama (USA).

His inclination towards monumentality and an invitation to exhibit in his native country, led him to create the exhibition "Gustavo Vélez Cartagena de Indias" inaugurated in December 2015, with 17 monumental sculptures, mostly made by the artist in Italy, and 30 medium format works. The exhibition was open for three months in the main squares of the Historical Center and museums such as the Museum of Modern Art of Cartagena, the

Historical Museum and the Museum of Fortifications, becoming the largest exhibition of monumental sculpture ever seen in the city.

In the past few years, he has had solo shows around some of the most important cities in Latin America. Additionally, he's been included in a variety of public art projects one including a four-meter high sculpture in the corporate office of Apple technology company located in San Diego, California.

During October 2022 and April 2023 he had a group of monumental sculptures that were exhibited in the Dominican Republic in emblematic sites that are a World Heritage by the UNESCO, as well as in the Museum of Modern Art of Santo Domingo and the iconic cultural spot of Altos de Chavón at Casa de Campo.

### **Auctions**

Over the past five years premier auction houses Sotheby's and Phillips have included Vélez's sculptures for Latin American art auctions in New York and his works have been successfully auctioned.

### **Awards**

In 2013, Vélez received the "Order to the Great Knight," distinction granted by the Congress of the Republic of Colombia and in April 2014 he was awarded the "Order of Democracy Simon Bolivar" in the grade of Official Cross, for his achievements as a sculptor and the worthy representation he has made for Colombian art abroad. He has also been honored with the "Golden Star of Antioquia Culture" and the "Order of Merit don Juan del Corral" Gold Degree for his contributions to culture and the visual arts.

The most recent recognition made in his artistic career is the "Medal of Educational and Cultural Merit Porfirio Barba Jacob" Gold Category awarded by the Mayor's Office of Medellín, Colombia.

### **Selection of works in Collections**

Gustavo Vélez's works are part of collections around the world at notable locations like the Hiki Hospital in Utsunomiya and the Akasaka Palace Building in Tokyo, Japan; the Raffles Hotel in Shenzhen and the Ritz Carlton in Nanjing, China; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Guayaquil (Ecuador), Casa de Campo (Dominican Republic), Art Valley (Seoul, Korea); Dei Bozzetti Museum (Pietrasanta, Italy), the Trump Ocean Club in Panama City, the BHD Bank and The Museum of Modern Art in Dominican Republic and the Apple headquarters in San Diego (California, USA), among others.

In Colombia, his sculptures can be seen at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, the Sabaneta Metro Station and the Santo Domingo MetroCable Station in Medellín, in the main parks of

municipalities such as Bello and Fredonia, as well as in the Tolima Governor's Office and the Tolima Art Museum in Ibagué.