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**angelica teuta** | forest houses tent shelters forest

**Angelica Teuta** (Medellin, 1985) is an artist from Colombia, holding an MFA from Columbia University in New York (2015) and a BFA from National University of Colombia in Bogota (2007). She creates site-specific installations using colorful light projections, low-tech machinery, digital video and sound, in order to build up interactive, experiential spaces and surrealistic ambiances that act as metaphorical, poetic “windows”. Angelica Teuta’s large-scale installations have been exhibited, among others, at the Museum of Modern Art in Medellin and at the Museum of Modern Art in Bogota, at the Fotogalleriet in Oslo and Fisher Landau Center for Art in New York. Her video work was presented at international festivals in Toronto, Berlin, Bogota, and Kecskemet in Hungary, among others. In 2016, Teuta took part in the Summer Academy program at the Zentrum Paul Klee in Bern, Switzerland, under the guidance of Thomas Hirschhorn.

Forest houses tent contains forest  
surrounds shelter occupies wilderness  
engulfs dwelling reveals landscape  
envelops structure inhabits woodland  
shelters sanctuary.



Forest houses a tent / Tent shelters a forest, 2016

Collages

50 x 70cm, Paper BKF rives (tan), 250 gr, acid free recycled paper, ink, white charcoal, black and golden ink, graphite and neutral PH glue







*A forest holds a tent.  
A tent holds a forest.  
A tent and a forest are home.*

I have tried to write this text so many times. Every time I start with the sentence “Forest houses tent shelters forest” I can’t avoid getting caught up in the loop of this image. It absorbs me, clings to me. Not only the image and the word, but what captures me the most is the idea of hiding in open space; the forest, it’s almost like embracing the abyss in all its infinity.

The image of Sombra, Angelica’s dog, inside the tent, is what shakes me. Sombra is quiet, peaceful, calm, serene, and she rests in the tent, in the middle of the living room, as the first one who inhabits the work. When I visit Angelica’s studio, Sombra greets me by barking a little, she then retreats, avoiding me just to hide in her new favorite spot. I don’t blame her. I too would run away from everything just to be able to set up home in this place.

The tent is stretched out, contained and covered, and lets sunbeams enter, creating the feeling of home, and provoking the same curiosity as when leaning out through a strangers’ window and finding a house inhabited by a family. The feeling gets stronger as Angelica confesses that the blanket which covers the tent was embroidered by her mother.

The shelter and the tent are maternal containers. I think about the space which protects us before we are born, the first space that gives us warmth before we get thrown into the abyss. Both the tent and the shelter are in Angelica’s studio home, one in the living room, the other in the working space, both part of her habitat.

Looking into the shelter is a performative exercise, a gesture that involves leaning instinctively, bending the body, casting a look, orienting your gaze, entering. The gesture leads me back to a memory: the image of a dining room, which you can see from a bus while passing by. Your curiosity makes you want to reach into the house: the family sits around the table, coca-cola in the middle, a movie playing on the TV, the wind moves the curtain, and family members’ voices almost bring you inside.

This family picture causes a dissonance between the familiar and the unknown, a feeling that makes me think about the idea of home. The trap of leaning out a window and being curious is something inevitable for those who see Angelica’s works. It is something beautiful and sinister at the same time, thinking like Umberto Eco, and linking sensation with the sublime.

Every work, every meeting is an invitation to discourse, to accomplish a gesture that we are thankful for. An invitation to inhabit a world which is constantly looking for a way to erase us from every space, all the time. The only thing we can do is try and move away from each other, from humanity, from what is natural, from home, from the world that doesn’t let us exist.

“When everybody leaves, I’ll leave my shelter”, this is what I imagine Sombra’s thought was before I left to let her be in that new home.

**Gris García** (1986, Monterrey) is an artist from Mexico and an independent curator. Her work is centered around contemporary practices and hybrid productions that emerge from dialogues and correspondences with others. She studied Visual Arts at the UANL, Mexico. She has exhibited in México, Spain, Russia, Colombia and Canada. She has also completed an MA in Artistic Research and Production at the UB, thanks to a grant offered by FONCA CONACULTA, and has been part of MACBA's PEI (Independent Study Program), a Master's program in Museum studies and critical theory. She has curated projects such as Balmes 88 for a3bandas and Las condiciones posibles, and most recently, Casa Entera. She was a curator-in-residence at Lugar a dudas between September 2014 and March 2015. She is part of TuerCo., a multidisciplinary team providing technological advice for artistic projects. She is currently a teacher in curatorial and critical studies at the ITM University in Medellín, Colombia.









Mom's tent, 2016

Handmade blanket, patchwork crocheted cover, pine wood, foam, sound, fake sleeping-breathing cat and sound.

Handmade crocheted blanket: Maria Elena Echeverri (mother)

Wood fabricator: Julian Carvajal

Sound: Valeria Jonard

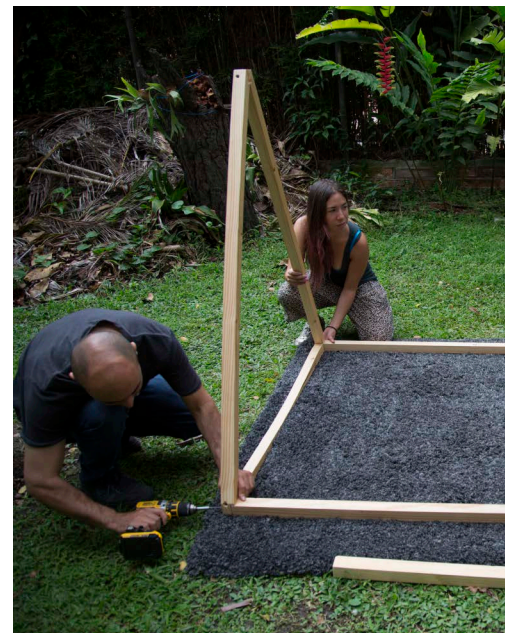


















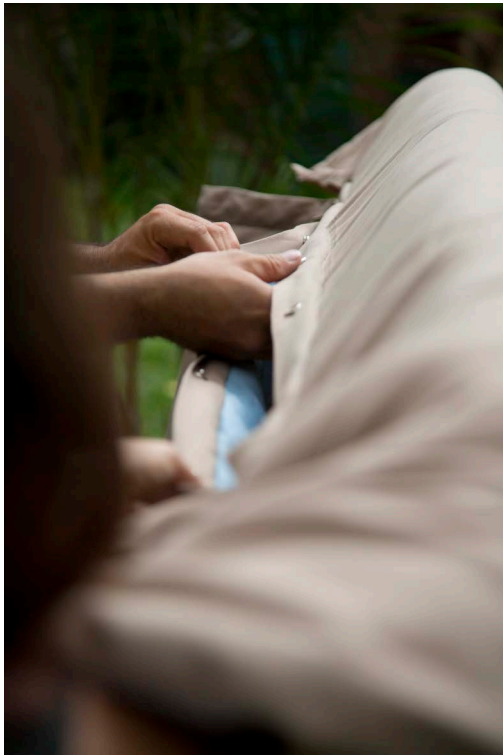


Forest / tent blanket, 2016  
Fabric cut-outs, thread, buttons and fabric glue, 160 x 120cm































Nightfall horizon, 2016

Quadriptych

50 x 70cm

Pecsia gray paper (250gr), dark blue vinyl and blueberry paint

















**Conversation between the artist and the architects: a collaborative project [DOME]**  
**Medellin, Colombia, November 2nd, 2016**

**Sebastian Monsalve:** To start off, I would like Angelica to tell us a little about the idea behind the project you are preparing for Warsaw.

**Angelica Teuta:** “Forest houses tent shelters forest” is part of a long-term project called “Emotional Architecture”, which I have been working on since 2013. In this case, I focus on approaching architecture from the perspective of informal knowledge, I pursue my interests in vernacular architecture and “do it yourself” (DIY) structures, as well as explore the human urge to create shelters, using the relevant example of blanket forts built by children. For me, a shelter holds an emotion or an affective state brought about by its space, and I emphasize it with the use of symbolic structures and archetypal images.

A shelter offers protection to some, but at the same time it can seem claustrophobic to others, combining the feelings of confinement inside and nostalgia for the outside. As an artist, I am always overcome with this sense of emptiness when I have to inhabit a white-cube gallery. In general, I occupy the space with a “scenography” representing fictional natural environments, creating an outdoor landscape which resonates with my inner feelings. The dome, which is the structure we built, has this literal dimension of a shelter – when visitors enter the structure, they find refuge in a forest of colors and are captivated by the space inside, which also alludes to the outside. An observer, looking at the structure from the outside, only sees human figures trapped in a cage of fiction. Neither of the two know what is happening to the other until they swap roles – it is a matter of perception.

**Sebastian Monsalve:** The origins of architecture are closely linked to the need of building shelter from inclement weather. Today, much more complex relationships exist and take priority over that basic necessity. However, if you find yourself anywhere in South America or in the so-called third world, you will see that the most fundamental human needs are not always met. People need to survive, suffering from lack of food and education. Those who live in such conditions start building shelters to meet their most basic needs, and in these cases the architect is relegated to the background, losing relevance. There are, and there always will be, basic human needs that need to be addressed. As architecture develops, mankind will always seek a manner to survive any way possible, resorting to basic capabilities. It is something very complex and it is not trivial, it is a very important topic. Here in Medellín, for instance, if we go to the north-eastern districts, we will see how the urban space is created to fit the everyday life of those who inhabit it. Somebody might have a basic knowledge of something and everyone will intuitively look at how they use their skill in that area. The discussion is really often about how important the role of the architect is in terms of influencing the shape of the city. At the end of the day, architecture in those cases defines 30% or 40% of the city and the rest can be constructed informally.

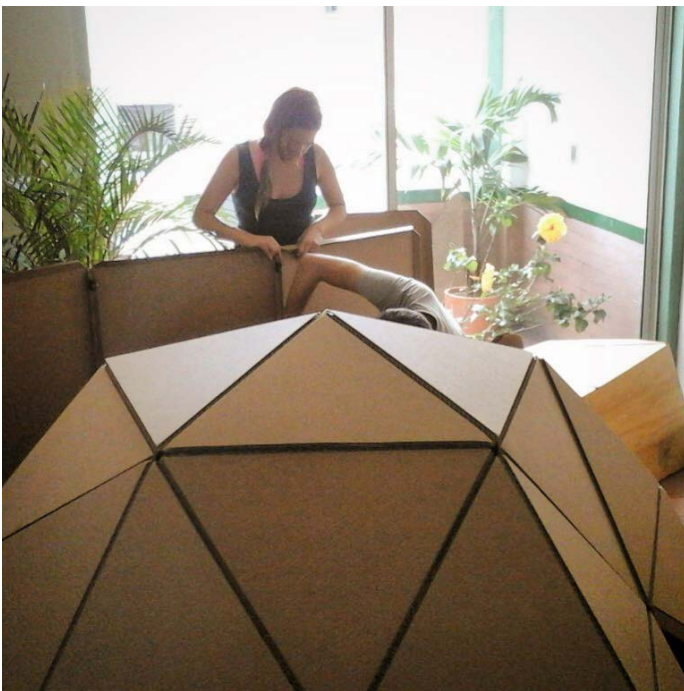
**AT:** Yes, I totally agree – this concerns us and we grow with it, and therefore I think that the project feeds off on this reality. However, humans are not only guided by purely physical and basic personal needs within space, but they also seek to fulfill the needs which stem from their psyche and their emotions. Before the exhibition in Warsaw I will build some shelters together with the residents of a shanty town in Buenaventura, which will have social and emotional dimensions. The project in Poland with the Kasia Michalski gallery is not meant to be a strictly social project, but it focuses on the emotional function of the shelters.



**SM:** But the project is deeply rooted in construction too!

**Alejandro Vargas:** I think that this is where the architect steps in—when a shelter is no longer a necessity but acquires a different purpose. The architect has some abilities, which allow him to endow the shelter with a different dimension.

**AT:** Of course! I know that I need to call you when I decide to build a dome structure inspired by cardboard construction manuals that parents send each other to create a shelter for their children to play in. However, I wanted to translate those structures into wood and acrylic. In addition, for the first time, it had to be a structure which could be taken apart and transported in a wooden crate. And how do you feel when an artist gives you precise instructions to follow regarding the exact final appearance of the structure?



First mock-up, scale 1:1, cardboard. Angelica's studio



Finished dismountable structure made of pine wood. Location: Angelica's studio. Sebastian Monsalve, architect and Juan Camilo Ortega, builder

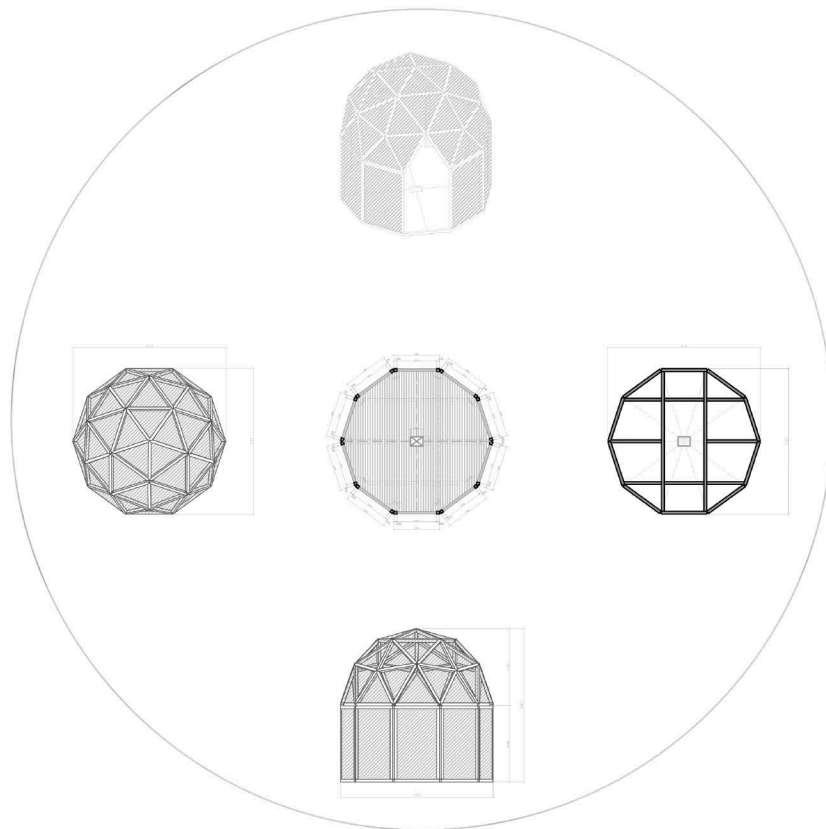




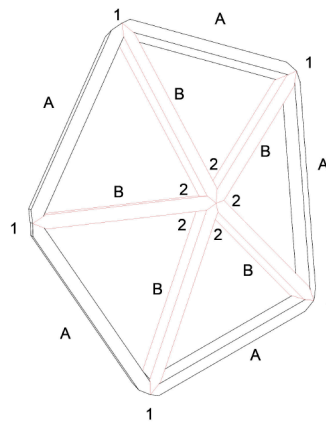
The process of fastening colourful translucent adhesive vinyl pieces onto acrylic plates. Angelica's studio

**AV:** Well, in my case, I feel that architecture is somehow stuck and that such interdisciplinary projects make it progress. The relationship between architecture and art, architecture and engineering, or architecture and medicine can trigger the development of new processes and products. Contemporary ideas appear when different efforts are combined and when hybrids between various professions are created.

**SM:** We see the work as a collaborative effort, not as a task completed following strict instructions. When you call us, we need to answer a simple technical question as to how the artistic process works. We believe that when we start working with somebody from a different profession, the interesting thing is to see how the final result is developed and improved by means of a dialogue and meaningful discussions. Therefore, we saw your work in terms of an aesthetic need, a haptic need to acknowledge a specific space. It was interesting for us to see how we can not only help to quickly arrange the transportation and installation of the piece, but also how we can improve the installation, its dimensions, height and proportions in the process. In this way, the real conceptual intention behind the project can materialize. In turn, we also understand how the artistic process work, and this creates a collaborative atmosphere. It makes us think about the approach of the architect and of the artist to a work of art. In dialogue, we can generate more knowledge and raise questions, which can lead to other questions about the future, addressed either jointly or separately.







## GEODESIA

### CARACTERÍSTICAS

Estructura desmontable ubicada en espacio interior, construida con listones de madera (pino) de 2" x 2" (3.8 x 3.8 cms) y recubierta con acrílico de 3mm de espesor tanto al interior como al exterior de la estructura. Se compone de dos cuerpos, uno interior de base (decágono regular) y uno superior que constituye una geodesia a partir de 6 pentágonos unidos.

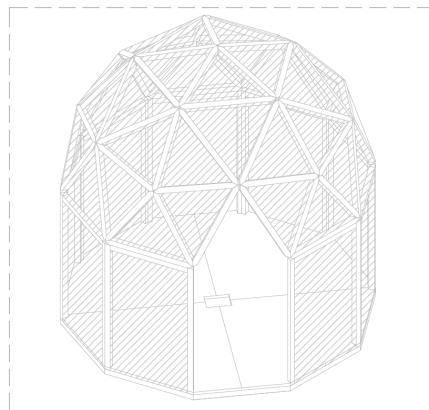
### DIMENSIONES

(Figura circunscrita - 2.01 m de diámetro)

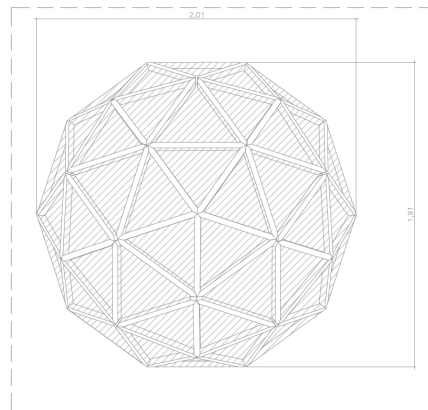
Altura: 2.01 m

Ancho: 2.01 m

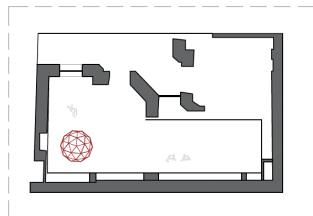
Largo: 1.91 m



Isométrico General. Esc. 1:20



Planta General. Esc. 1:20



Localización en galería. Esc. 1:200

Acrílico 3mm intermedio

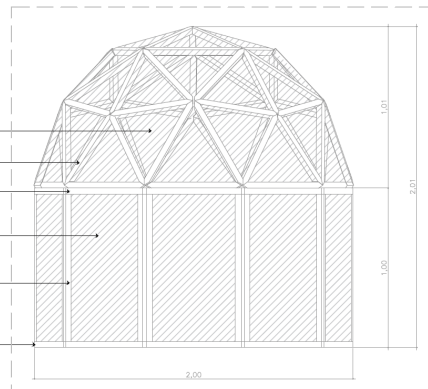
Listón de madera 2" x 2"

Soporte en Listón de madera, 2" x 2" (3.8x3.8 cms)

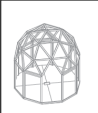
Acrílico 3mm intermedio

Soporte en Listón de madera, 2" x 2" (3.8x3.8 cms)

Base en listones de madera de 2"x2" + recubrimiento (material a decidir)



Fachada General. Esc. 1:20



ESPACIO DE TRABAJO  
Ar. Angélica Tzuc  
Ar. Juan Carlos Ortega  
Ar. Alejandro Vargas M.  
Ar. Sebastián Monsalve O.

VOTOS BUENOS

Foto:

Nombre:

Código:

Impresión:

Foto:

Nombre:

Código:

Impresión:

OBSERVACIONES

CONTIENE:

Planta general

Fachada general

Isométrico

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Technical sketches and drawings for geodesic dome. Architects Alejandro Vargas and Sebastian Monsalve

**AT:** I would like to stress a difference in the project's conceptual approach. I am referring to the sentimental sketches vs. the technical blueprints on the basis of which the piece itself is developed. Both of them are equally important. It is not the purpose of my sketches to create a blueprint or a technical drawing of the piece. They can be made before or after the "product" - the idea behind the sketches is to explain what I want to achieve with this structure, both conceptually and psychologically.

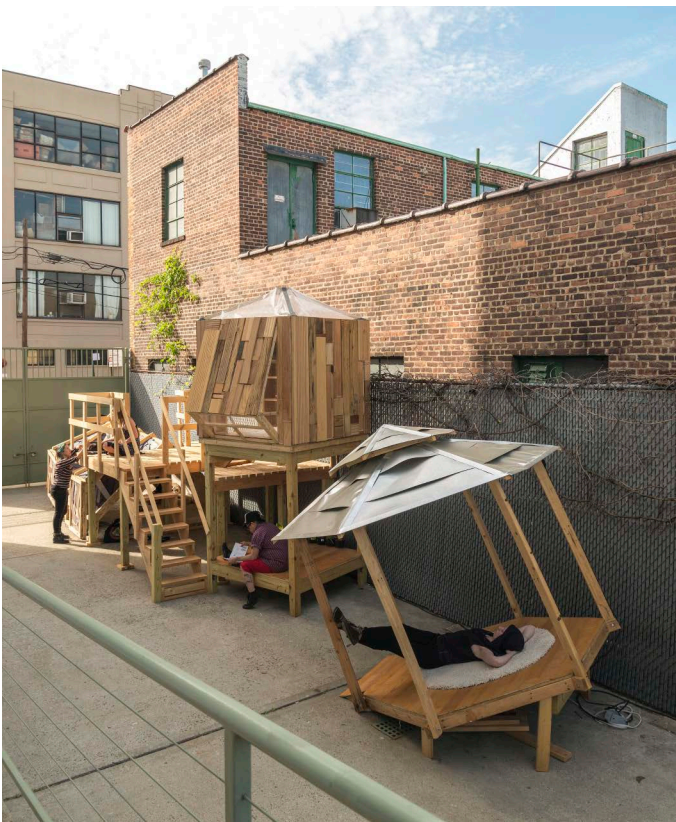
**AV:** Regarding the emotional layer, it is ultimately up to the people who visit and experience the piece; they are the ones who decide how to move, walk in, sit down or where to stop. The essence

is in observing how people occupy the space and in noticing that sometimes the things one expects do not actually happen. Emotional architecture is an approach which also needs to take into account this living part, and not knowing what is going to happen next.

**SM:** In terms of our collaboration - what made you interested in working with us?

**AT:** I got to know you because Alejandro attended the “Architectures of Desire” laboratory which I ran at the Museum of Modern Art in Medellín. It was surprising to see that an architect could be interested in what an artist was saying. Alejandro lent me the book “Primitive Future” by Sou Fujimoto (2008), which contains a more contemporary take on the idea of architecture, starting from a nest and a cave as examples of the first primitive forms of shelters. I am interested in working with any professional who is curious about the artistic process.

**AV:** Something that I would like to learn from that process is the role of a work of art in the contemporary world. A work of art not seen as an immaculate, distant element, but something which provides an opportunity to reclaim art for the people in the broad sense of the word – making it approachable and endowing it with a social function. I am especially interested in those of your works which are out in the streets rather than the ones confined to museums. I would also like to see how the ones that are in museums and galleries could be replicated and left somewhere else. I also think that there is a wealth in spaces and emotions, and that these installations will change depending on the context.



Emotional architecture: shelter. 2015. Parking lot Fisher Landau Center for Art. Long Island, NY

**SM:** There is also a related social emotion there. I think that in the case of museums and galleries there is something which is created as completely reactive and pertinent to that space. It is a special interplay between structure, space and this emotion, and it plays an important role in the case of a museum



or gallery because it creates an interaction between the inside and the outside, and triggers an effect of distance from the exterior, providing a strong view of the space it is in.



Methods of preservation, 2015-2016. Museum of Modern Art in Medellin, Colombia

**AT:** I think that as a long-term project, “Emotional Architecture” has all those layers we are talking about. There is a social aspect which resonates with allusions to the community and open space, an internal vision of the relationship between the artist and the museum/gallery, which is my more usual “habitat”, a dimension related to the construction of nomadic structures with a practical use and also something biographical. This project will gain in strength and acquire a new form with its consecutive iterations, strengthening the areas I have just mentioned.

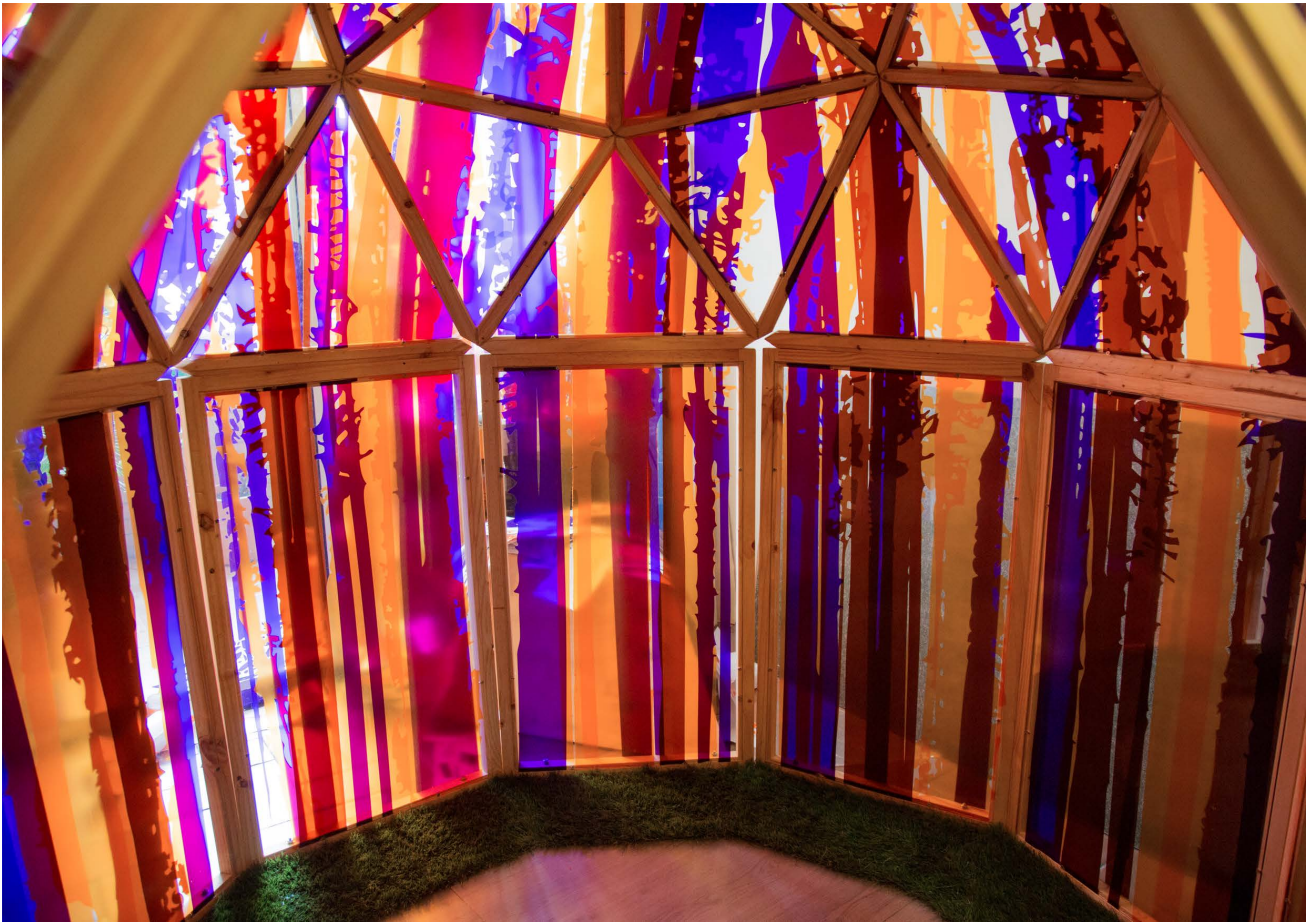
**Alejandro Vargas** (Medellín, 1991)

He graduated from the National University of Columbia (2014), specializing in the development of urban projects. He is interested in studying the phenomena related to contemporary city space, exploring emergent needs and seeking to solve architectural problems and technical doubts by bringing together various disciplines and giving priority to the relationship between man, the city and the landscape. Since 2013, he has been working with the “Latitud, taller de arquitectura y ciudad” team, taking part in projects such as Parques del Río, UVA de la Imaginación and Parque educativo Vigía del Fuerte. He has been awarded with the First Prize in the Research, Theory and Critique category at the 1st Colombian Biennial of Architecture Students (2014), and received a special mention in the “Sunbrella, the future of shade 2016” competition for the project entitled “Occupying war”.

**Sebastián Monsalve Gómez** (Medellín, 1986)

He graduated in architecture from the National University of Columbia (2010) and holds a Master’s degree in Architecture in the Modernity from the same University. He is the co-founder of the “Latitud, taller de arquitectura y ciudad” (2012) group. He has been a lecturer, professor and an invited juror at Co-Arquitectura in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the 3rd Agua Ciudad Agua course in Montevideo, Uruguay, XXX ELEA in Arequipa, Peru; at the Catholic University of Córdoba, Argentina; in Medellín at the Landscape as Urbanism in the Americas event, Harvard SGD and URBAM 2016. He has won a number of prizes and distinctions, including being selected for publication at the 25th Architecture Biennial in Columbia. He was involved in the Carmen de Viboral educational park project (2016) and the Global Human Settlements Prize (Premio Global de Asentamientos Humanos) in the planning and design category for the city of Medellín for the project River Parks (Parques del Río, 2015), organized by UNEP, ONUHABITAT. He is also the winner of the second Talented Youth prize (Jóvenes Destacados), granted by the Medellín City Hall: Environmental Initiatives (2014).











Forest houses tent shelters forest: DOME, 2016

Pine wood structure, acrylic plates, sheets of plywood, translucent colored vinyl, screws, metal pieces, hardwood flooring, fake grass and digital video on tablet

Architectural design: Alejandro Vargas and Sebastian Monsalve

Wood fabrication: Juan Camilo Ortega

General assistance: Julian Carvajal

Cardboard sketch: Cesar del valle and Ariel Lacher

























Innermost nature. Exercise #1, 2016, plexiglass, translucent vinyl, pine wood, 72,5 x 50 x 9cm







# KASIA MICHALSKI

G a l l e r y

The catalogue was published on the occasion of the exhibition  
*Forest Houses Tent Shelters Forest* by Angelica Teuta at the Kasia Michalski Gallery  
November 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 - January 12<sup>th</sup> 2017

**All photos:** Theo Hensing

**Translations from Spanish:** Monika Grzyborowska, Kinga Kowalska

*I want to especially thank my mom for all the hard work, time and effort she put in the project "mom's tent". It is not her first collaboration with me but it is the first art piece that she has directly been involved in.  
Thinking of her and the role of moms who are close to me.*

*Angelica Teuta*

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