

## Press release



### *Tales*

#### **An exhibition of photography by Sonya Hurtado**

**23 July 2016 – 8 January 2017**

Tales a series of twelve images by Hackney-based photographer Sonya Hurtado exploring the imaginary world of childhood opens on 23 July in a solo display at the V&A Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green.

Set in the context of fairy tales and children's stories, the images are conceived almost like paintings, intricate digital collages and thought-provoking messages clash in a riot of colour and fantasy. With inspiration from surrealism, film, graffiti and much more, the manipulation of shadow, light and colour creates a playful and at times almost sinister atmosphere.

Focussing on subjects that surround the process and make-up of childhood, Sonya creates art with a conscience. The work attempts to

explore and re-create the imagined world of a child. Loneliness, fear and drudgery create a marked atmosphere in the images. When discussing the motive behind creating her work, Sonya said, “We can’t always protect our children but we can help them to interpret their experiences in a way that helps them learn step by step to understand themselves and life.”

Born in Spain, with a love for drawing and craft, she moved to London in 1998 where Hurtado found her passion for photography during a course at Hackney Community College. “From the first moment, I loved the feeling of the camera and what could result,” Hurtado said. After completing her degree in Photography in 2013, she began developing an almost painterly technique using digital layering to create atmospheric scenes of childhood angsts.

An artist with unusual techniques, Hurtado prefers to work on her fantastical scenes in the dark and finds her inspiration for surreal photographic scenes whilst listening to very loud music. These 12 digitally-manipulated photographs examine how a child may struggle to come to terms with complex and baffling emotions and situations, borrowing imagery and narrative from familiar childhood stories and fairy tales.

Sonya Hurtado’s work finds a natural home in the V&A Museum of Childhood, which houses the national collection of childhood-related objects. Rhian Harris, Director of the Museum said *“When I first saw Sonya’s work I was struck by her emotive and atmospheric photographs. Her poignant and extraordinary images invite us to view the world of the fairy tales from a modern perspective. This brings to life these stories and fables for a new generation, whilst capturing the essence of the universality of them and childhood itself.”*

When talking on her exhibition at the Museum, the artist said, “*It is an honour to exhibit at the V&A Museum of Childhood, a space where children and adults can learn history through the world of children. ‘Tales’ investigates some of the stories that are steps in this history. These stories can give us insight on our journey through life and help us to understand it.*”

### **Note to Editors**

V&A Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9PA.

Nearest tube: Bethnal Green

Open daily: 10.00 – 17.45, last admission 17.30

**Free** admission

Switchboard: 020 8983 5200 [vam.ac.uk/moc](http://vam.ac.uk/moc)

### **Hurtado’s previous exhibitions**

Stories and Rabbits, Camden Image Gallery (2015)

Being Mum Being Dad, Hackney museum (2014)

Free Range, Middlesex University graduation show (2013)

AOP Students Awards exhibition (2012)

### **Images included**

*Pinocchio Heart* (2015)

*Red Riding Hood* (2015)

### **Further images on display**

*La lechera (the milk lady)* (2015)

*Sleeping Beauty* (2016)

*The Pied Piper* (2016)

*Snow White (2015)*

*Madame Butterfly (2015)*

*Alice in Wonderland (2012)*

*The Badger and the Fox, the tale of Mr. Tod (2012)*

*The moon's son (2015)*

*Rapunzel (2013)*

*Jack and the Beanstalk (2013)(tbc)*

*20000 under the sea (2012)(tbc)*