WEPRESENT

Photography

Morvarid Reyes Talebzadeh
The only thing we know is that the swarms are unpredictable

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Twice a year, thousands of people of the Tairona region take to the streets and the forests in the dead of night to pursue swarms of bush crickets. Photographer Morvarid Reyes Talebzadeh travelled to Colombia's Sierra Nevada del Cocuy/El Güicha and followed the locals. Here, she talks to writer Bruno McCarthy about the perils of the trade, and about the incredible opportunities and rewards possible for those who take part.

"It's difficult, in terms of subject matter for a project. I think some people look it's about grasshoppers and are like, 'Well, I'm not sure I'm into that.'"

Though they're generally referred to as grasshoppers, Morvarid Reyes's new project, *Tierra Roja* (Red Earth), focuses on bush crickets, which are a different insect altogether. (Fun trivia: it's an insect, not an arachnid.) The creatures are called Cubian extensions in the Spanish language, where she photographed herself and worked the 5 years until the last summer of 2015. Of course, the project's not about insects having bush crickets. It's also about the meaning of mythology and ecosystems, the fraught confluences of tradition and technology, climate change, exploitation, and magic.

The trapping of pollen has long been a traditional source of both food and income in the Sierra Nevada, and the practice has been passed down from father to son for centuries. Once a colonial idea, the Colombian sombrero/pollen sieve also dates back centuries, an essay drawn from the ground to crash or to sell. There's also hysteria's so many by organized groups rushing out of ever evolving ways. There are traps for pollen, secured lights, to which the grasshoppers are attracted, and employ cords and bandbags to collect the insects. Once before falling, confused, is cords where they can be scooped into sacks and sold.

In one of these texts included in Morvarid's project, Fortunio Bonanfina, chairman of an association which represents the trappers, with cliff developments in harvesting techniques dated back to a colonial trapping, even once Bonfina's father in 1950s, when the sieve was made of wooden sticks and the bags were made of cotton. Today, the sieves are plastic and of distant metal tanks. Lemonia have been substituted for high-powered fluorescent bulbs, the glass broken once burning the fluorescent exposed.

Since 2017 Morvarid has followed the trappers from the streets of Colombia to the forests along the Sierra Nevada as they pursue these elusive insects. "There are a lot of myths, legends and factors that people take into account," Morvarid explains. "Some people in the east during the day followed by mothers, but there are also people who go out at night. Some people are Pro, Pro, Pro, Pro, Pro. Some people are Kiss. Some of what is done, some kiss so. This only thing that we all know is that [the creatures are] unpredictable."

> "It was really important to have Colombian voices telling their stories."

The result of this extended period of work is a book, *Corrupta* that feels remarkably like a work of anthropology. Morvarid's photographs are accompanied by interviews with over figures of the trappers from an array of backgrounds. "The interviews create texture in these high-power illustrates that even with these pieces either With the human and it's signature, sweat, tobacco," she explains, where asked about the issue of the images. Morvarid's work has a distinctively anthropological sense, but it hasn't. That's have the MFA degree in photography, after all.

Corrupted shares spotted with nearest-based textual dramas, the text ever-looking like a photographic journal, with sepia-toned interviews interspersed with the pictures. Of course, there are the lighter sharing through foliages, environment of wi-fi DSLR distortion scenes. The images hint at the process of trapping, but also at the mechanisms of the trade: tacks of living crickets, cash exchanges, and the magnetic-shrouded cellophane first-authors, trap sentence in hunter. But the images tell only a part of the story.

Morvarid intentionally edited pieces of words to emit the more explanatory shots whose sources have not been the principal focal shot. "I tried to ask the interviewee so that trappers suggested things, or asked questions," she explains. Some of these questions are presented by the project's curses, which derive from the complexities of trapping from Colombian perspectives, something Morvarid felt was crucial. "For example, the Kiss, the Pro, the Pro, the Pro

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