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## Colombia in London: Colombiage – A Festival of Colombian Arts and Culture

Posted by [Zoe Craig](#) in [World in London](#)



**Colombiage** is a London festival that celebrates contemporary Colombian art. 2011 will be its 5th year, and there are plans to make it bigger and better than ever. We spoke to **Landa Acevedo-Scott**, Founder & Artistic Director of Colombiage about the project.

"The first Colombiage was a one-day festival. It was on a Saturday – I remember it very clearly! It was a real experiment. We did it to see how people would respond. Three strands: music, literature and cinema. There were four events; it started at 2pm, with a literary event with Juan Gabriel Vasques, the writer. We held all the events at the **Riverside Studios** in Hammersmith, keeping it all under one roof.

"It was packed! There were a lot of Colombian people, of course, but also British people, which was great, because that is what we were hoping to attract. To introduce a different side of Colombian culture to lots of people has always been the hope of Colombiage.

"My favourite moment was working with **Manu Chao** last year. We had a big benefit concert last October at **The Coronet**. It was fantastic to work with such a high-profile figure, and one that was so lovely! He brought a lot of people together.



"For 2011, Colombiage will no longer be a one-day festival. We're quite an established brand now; we want to do things throughout the year, so people can have a chance to come throughout the year.

"This year we will still focus on cinema, literature, music, and we're branching out into theatre and the visual arts. We'll use different venues too. There'll still be things at the Riverside, but also at **Rich Mix** and at **Southbank**, and **Sabor** in Islington (for the literary evenings).

"The team behind Colombiage are mostly Colombians who've been working and living here for a long time. But it's not exclusive! There are Americans, French and English on the team. That way we have interests included from all over the world. They're people who have extensive experience in their specialised areas." Landa mentions that Colombiage is currently recruiting, and asks anyone who's interested in helping out to get in touch via the website.



Landa believes that there are two things that make Colombiage stand out. "Firstly, it's never been done before. Lots of the Colombian events that come to the UK are sporadic and traditional. This is more about the contemporary: the latest things, the latest releases. For example, we ran the first showcase of experimental Colombian cinema last year.

"Second, there's the education strand. With any country, people jump to conclusions, and develop perceptions. Our education programme aims to look at the problems in context; looking at Colombia's many contradictions through its culture."

Here's a video trailer for Colombiage 2009, which gives a great taste of what to expect from Colombiage. Visit [www.colombiage.com](http://www.colombiage.com) for more information, including more videos.

Where else can you find Colombian art, music and food in London? Let us know in the comments below.

Tags: [Colombia](#), [colombiage](#), [countries beginning with c](#), [festival](#), [manu chao](#), [rich mix](#), [riverside studios](#), [sabor restaurant](#), [southbank centre](#), [the coronet](#)

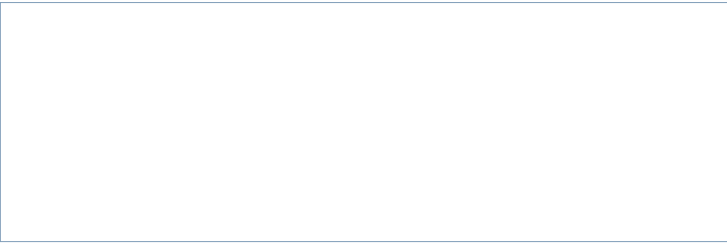
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