

# ÉRAMOS SEMILLAS / WE WERE SEEDS

CURATED BY JOSE LUIS BENAVIDES

JULY 7 - NOVEMBER 11, 2023

OPENING: JULY 7, 6 - 8 PM

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

As an organization (of non-native people) we here at Stove Works recognize that we reside on stolen land. We acknowledge that the land which we use to grow our own community of acceptance and learning has traditionally been inhabited by Muskogee and Yuchi tribes, as well as later by the Cherokee Nation who fought and died to keep the land from being seized by white colonizers who then forcibly removed them. This acknowledgment is a tool to bring awareness also to the present role of inequality and cultural dissolution surrounding the history of Native people in Tennessee as a whole. They are still here, strong, and relevant. We support Indigenous and Native people as well as their lives and reverence in this country.

We are urging the support of NARF (Native Americans Rights Fund) to help tribes to safeguard their land rights; water rights; hunting, fishing, and gathering rights; resource rights; and environmental rights. As times are changing it is most important that we do some part in recognizing the value of human life. Recognition of the Muskogee and Chickamauga Cherokee people is our small part in the grand plan of rewriting history and bringing awareness to the true ancestry of our nation. This is not a valiant effort to raise our prowess but a necessary step as non-native people occupying stolen land. This is our duty.

If you would like to help support Indigenous communities follow the link below to donate to NARF: <https://www.narf.org/support-us/>

## **CURATORIAL BRIEF:**

The title for this exhibit stems from a common protest slogan in Spanish, “Quisieron enterrarnos sin saber que eramos semilla / They tried to bury us without knowing we were seeds”. This exhibition broadly explores the theme of “environments” and “the environment” to grapple with the concerns of Latinx, Latin American, and Caribbean peoples of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, and their distinct national identities, languages, and histories. *Éramos Semilla* explores the legacies of environmental racism, how local and historic racial climates create anti-blackness in Latinx communities, how coloniality compounds natural disasters, and how inhospitable environments for people with disabilities are actively being challenged. The works explored here engage questions of memory and the home as sites of resistance through indigenous practices, affirmations of queerness, femininity, and ancient language practices, alongside contemporary inquiries into moving image, the body, and voice as forms of decolonial praxis. The artists here embody truths. For them, decoloniality is not a metaphor, a theory, or an idea but a constant and uphill battle, a lifelong goal, an attainable and sustainable movement, a process, a way of life, and radical action.

## **PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:**

Ana Garcia Jácome, Chalet Comellas, Cristina Molina, Ebony Bailey, Giselle Mira-Diaz, Haylie Jimenez, Jesús Hilario-Reyes, Jorge Bordello, Lorena Barrera Enciso, Lorena Cruz Santiago, María Sosa, Noé Martínez, Oli Rodriguez, Edra Soto, and Sadie Woods

## ***Malitas: Women, Disability and Medical Violence***

Ana García Jácome, digital video, 19:41, 2023

This project addresses sexist and ableist violence in the health institution and how it impacts the everyday experiences of women with disabilities: their physical and emotional wellness, and how society interacts with them. The intention is to bring together narratives that run from the personal to the political and thread the past with the present, demonstrating how this is a systemic problem has been normalized throughout history. The project departs from personal experiences with different medical institutions and makes connections with the experiences of other women, documents, and images of different historical periods, where the medical gaze, gender, and disability intersect.

**Ana García Jácome** is a Mexican visual artist based in, Mexico. She graduated from the School of Arts and Design of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (FAD, UNAM) and obtained an MA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with the support of the scholarship program of Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo. She works with different media such as drawing, writing, and video. Her practice addresses the social construction of disability and looks for ways to rearticulate its narratives. Her work has been presented in different exhibitions, festivals, and screenings in Mexico, the USA, the UK, and New Zealand.

***Recipes for the loss of a sense of belonging, alchemical transmutations... ¡Salud!***

Chalet Comellas, digital video, mixed media installation, audio composed by Mark Baker, 12:15, 2023

8 mixed media panels, saffron, salt, Cuban coffee, turmeric, oil on paper, 16 in. by 20 in., 13 artist booklets, 1 monoprint on Arches paper

In preparing and consuming foods that are connected to her Cuban American matriarchal lineage, Comellas creates temporal memorials and actively performs the role of officiant in a ceremony of remembering and memorializing multiple generations of her female family members whose identities were often relegated to their roles in the kitchen and other domestic spaces. Through an intersectional lens, she attempts to better understand the concentric circles of loss that surround these women; the loss of the individual, the effects of that loss on the collective, and the loss of a variety of cultural practices which serve diasporic individuals and communities.

In the context of her family matriarchs, they lived in spaces that had to be imagined and reimaged. A placeless state of being, where they performed identity outside of the space they were born. Cultural scholar Stuart Hall describes this as existing in an intermediate state; it's a place neither here nor there, and commonly influenced by the constant hegemonic pressure of cultural assimilation. In this installation, Comellas aims to engage the viewer with the idea of loss, be it spiritual, material, or cultural. Through the metaphor of alchemical processes, she acknowledges the potential to develop a completely new and unique cultural space, one created through the transmutation of the self, through physical and metaphysical processes.

**Chalet Comellas** (b. Tampa, FL) lives and works in Nashville, Tennessee. Her studio practice employs expanded forms of painting, sculpture, video, sound, and digital media to engage viewers visually and sonically. Through these experimental time-based frameworks, and the use of audio-visual archives, she illuminates the interplay between materiality, spirituality, and technology.

## **Ghost Orchid: Fever Dream**

Cristina Molina, HD video, 7:30, 2021

In *Ghost Orchid: Fever Dream* the elusive flora *Dendrophylax lindenii* is personified as an apparition, oracle, and provocateur that positions the viewer as an orchid hunter trespassing the swamp. Throughout the video, the Ghost Orchid delivers poignant and sage-like monologues about climate change, humanity's dominion over the wetlands, and its impact on species' survival. Rendered as a fever dream, footage of dancers donning a ghost orchid costume is cut to atmospheric singing and field recordings made in the South Florida Everglades. Drawing from true stories of orchid hunters and their desperate obsessions with capturing ghost orchids in the wild, the videos are paced and structured so that they appear and disappear throughout the space, never to be fully grasped.

Singers: Tanzanight. Costume Fabrication: Savanna L. Stephens + Ryn Wilson. Dancers: Rebecca Allen, Vanessa Centeno, Ann Glaviano, Andrea Peoples, Abby Russell, Katherine Schepker. Stage Lighting Design: Matthew Ishee + Steve Schepker.

**Cristina Molina** is a visual artist who hails from the subtropics of Miami and currently lives and works in New Orleans—two environmentally precarious sites that have influenced her research on identity, loss, and disappearing landscapes. Spanning performance, video installation, photography, and textile design, Molina's artwork is set amongst vulnerable terrains both real and imagined. Using the language of magical realism, her works centralize little-known narratives to upend dominant histories. From 2014-20 Molina was a member of the New Orleans artist-run project, *The Front* where she curated artwork and co-organized *The Front's* annual film festival.

## **Jamaica and Tamarindo: Afro Tradition in the Heart of Mexico**

Ebony Bailey, HD video, 20:00, 2019

This short documentary investigates Mexico's Afro tradition through two of the country's most popular ingredients. The jamaica flower and tamarind are iconic ingredients in Mexico, but their history comes from a place much further away. In *Jamaica and Tamarindo: Afro Tradition in the Heart of Mexico*, we meet five people to explore African heritage in Mexico City, an identity that challenges preconceived notions of racial history and heritage in Mexico.

## **Atolito con el dedo**

Ebony Bailey, HD video, 4:26, 2020

Gratitude to the Black townspeople of Costa Chica de Guerrero y Oaxaca. And to the Diablos Mexico City dance group. This video is the first single by Aguaje Ensemble made in Costa Chica, and showcases the Afro-Mexican peoples of the region from a Black perspective. *Atolito con el dedo* is a song by musical group Aguaje Ensemble. Video and Editing by Ebony Marie Baley. Script by Zurisadai Martinez Trani, Isaias Martinez Trani. Actors: Josefa Saguilan, Isaias Mtz. Lopez, Alma Delia Trani Saguilan, Gema Baños Colon. Musicians: Miller Tolentino, Hector Moreno. Audio Engineer: Marcos Olivares Tran.

**Ebony Bailey** is a documentary filmmaker from Central California whose work explores cultural intersections, diaspora, and social movements. Her documentaries have screened at film festivals and universities in the US, Latin America, and Europe. She has produced visual media for organizations such as Mijente, LA Times, NPR and Africa is a Country. Bailey is a recipient of the Latino Emerging Filmmakers Fellowship with Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB).

## **Happy Hour, La Hora Feliz**

Edra Soto & Sadie Woods, digital video, 31:49, 2020

Colliding their affinity for organizing, hosting, and deejaying social gatherings; Soto and Woods present Happy Hour, La Hora Feliz. In this video, the artists used music and performance to point to resistance mantras, romanticized food diets, and pop culture movements. Growing up in Puerto Rico during the 80's, Soto looks at the hybridized Puerto Rican diet as strongly influenced by mainstream American culture. Soto looks at romanticized processed foods that became centerpieces and traditions of Puerto Rican entertainment as a fantasy created by marketing. Growing up Afro/Latina in Chicago during the takeoff of hip-hop, electro, and the proliferation of musical styles, Wood's practice zeros in on anthems and mantras that can be excavated to take on socio-political proportions and become a call to arms for listeners to remember times of resistance. For them, the affects, aspirations, and struggles of cultural experience are coded in music.

This video was part of a selected project proposal submitted to Sin Cinta Previa with Chuquimarca by Edra Soto and Sadie Woods for the SCP+C 2020 open call, juried with the help of Santiago X and funded by the 2019 Propeller Fund Grant. The video's graphic design was done by Jose Rosa; visual assistance by John H. Guevaral; edited and directed by Jose Luis Benavides.

**Edra Soto** is a Puerto-Rican born artist, curator, educator, and co-director of the outdoor project space, The Franklin. Soto instigates meaningful, relevant, and often difficult conversations surrounding socioeconomic and cultural oppression, erasure of history, and loss of cultural knowledge. Growing up in Puerto Rico, and now immersed in her Chicago community, Soto's work has evolved to raise questions about constructed social orders, diasporic identity, and the legacy of colonialism.



Soto has exhibited extensively at venues including El Museo del Barrio (NY), the Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago (IL), ICA San Diego, (CA), and the Whitney Museum of American Art (NY). She has been awarded the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant, the Efroymsen Contemporary Arts Fellowship, the Illinois Arts Council Agency Fellowship, the inaugural Foundwork Artist Prize, the Bemis Center's Ree Kaneko Award, and the US LatinX Art Forum Fellowship among others. Soto exhibited and traveled to Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Cuba as part of the MacArthur Foundation's International Connections Fund. Soto holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a bachelor's degree from Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño de Puerto Rico. The artist lives and works in Chicago.

**Sadie Woods** is an award-winning post-disciplinary artist, independent curator, and deejay. Her work focuses primarily on social movements, liberatory practices, cultural memory, and producing collaborations within communities of difference. She also deejays under the moniker Afrodjia, focusing on the diasporic music and culture of the Americas and the Global South. Woods has participated in national and international artist and curatorial residencies, including ACRE; Arts + Public Life; Bemis Center for the Arts; Chicago Artists Coalition's HATCH Projects; Comfort Station #pertodela, US/BR; Ecole du Magasin-Centre d'Art Contemporain, FR; High Concept Labs; Hyde Park Art Center; Independent Curators International, NY/SN; Ragdale Foundation; Wave Farm, NY.

She has exhibited and featured her work at Chicago Cultural Center; Experimental Sound Studio; EXPO Chicago; Heaven Gallery; Hyde Park Jazz Festival; Krasl Art Center, MI; Lit & Luz Festival, US/MX; Millennium Park Pritzker Pavilion; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; New Gallery of Modern Art, NC; Washington Project for the Arts, DC; Weinberg/Newton Gallery.

## **Tradición Ancestral / Ancestral Traditions**

Giselle Mira-Diaz, digital video, and mixed media installation,  
05:25, 2023

Tradicion Ancestral is a body of work that explores how traditional foods are a vital link to familial and cultural ties in the diaspora. As an immigrant who could not return to Colombia for over a decade, Giselle and her family made food as a form of comfort and connection to an inaccessible country due to unjust immigration laws.

The traditional foods become a form of resistance and resilience by documenting the action of making and recording instructions through video and text. The small book contains the recipe for making Colombia Tamales. Giselle made the paper from Banana Leaves and Acaba pulp. The same banana leaves are used to wrap the tamales before cooking. The sculptural representations of Colombian tamales are encapsulated in resin to preserve the Banana leaves from drying out. These ephemeral sculptures will begin to collapse, dry out and fade with time as the organic material cannot be archived for a long-term collection. This work reflects the ephemeral ties many immigrants, migrants, and displaced people utilize to connect to their roots. Food is integral to cultural identity, and it has the power to connect and transcend borders.

**Giselle Mira-Diaz** is a first-generation Latinx lens-based artist and arts educator. Giselle's work explores the complexity of immigration, hybrid cultures, heritage, and Latinx identity through various mediums, including photography, experimental video, and paper-making. Her passion is to promote equality and social justice through her collaborative art practice. Giselle has a BFA from OCAD University and a Masters of Arts in Art Education from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is currently working on an MFA in Photography at Columbia College Chicago and works as a Museum educator at the Museum of Contemporary Photography.

## **Lovers Lane - Apollo the Gemini AMV**

Haylie Jimenez, digital video, 2:09,, 2021

An animated music video for Apollo the Gemini's song "Lovers Lane" (available on Spotify), created with crayon on paper.

## **Teen in the System**

Haylie Jimenez, digital video, 5:01, 2022

This animated memoir is presented in collaboration with the organization ConTextos and Darron Jackson, created with crayons on paper.

## **Dial Now**

Haylie Jimenez, digital video, 02:02, 2023

"Dial Now" by Anthony Medrano is a heartfelt poem speaking to Tony's experience with love, loss, and change. Medrano is a Chicago interdisciplinary artist working in mediums including tattooing, writing, and painting.

**Haylie Jimenez** was born in Orlando and raised in Chattanooga, TN. Haylie later moved to Chicago to attend the School of The Art Institute of Chicago (BFA 2020). Her work depicts and centers around black and brown queer femmes, in everyday settings based on her lived experiences. Her practice consists of drawings, printmaking, and animation. She is interested in drawing as a form of documentation and in the various ways drawing styles are informed and how lived experiences inform style as well as subject matter. Finding BIPOC Queer community in Chicago and her long-lasting relationships with friends and family in Tennessee was and is a pivotal influence for her work which surrounds the importance of belonging, collective care, self-expression, and moving through hardships to times of joy together within these communities.

## Untitled

Jesús Hilario-Reyes, digital video, 4 videos of various lengths, 2022

This currently 'untitled' work is an amalgamation of 3-Dimensional scans of dance floors after a night of transportive dancing. These include specifically clubs and rave spaces at the center of queer communities. This work operates as a digital quilt, while simultaneously existing as a landscape, as well as a sort of mapping-archiving gestures of queer utopia and generating ephemera as evidence.

All of these scans have been taken along the artist's travels, as a renowned deejay, with the moniker Morenxxx. Although these spaces exist geographically, this work actively seeks to dismantle any sort of pinned geographic location, the specificity of these spaces is not important. In fact, the artist argues that this work creates a non-space, documenting gestures of disappearing utopias and dwindling safe spaces. This notion is further exemplified in the eclipsing animation of the quilt.

This work is influenced by traditional Black American quilts, that historically archive or code messages that assisted enslaved peoples' journeys toward liberation. And thus, amidst the lasers and foggy blurs of queer nightlife, these ideas of liberation are deeply desired while simultaneously disembodied.

**Jesús Hilario-Reyes** (b. 1996, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is an interdisciplinary artist with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts Studio from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Recently a recipient of the Drawing a Blank Artist Grant, the Leslie Lohman Museum Fellowship, the Lighthouse Works Fellowship (22), and the Bemis Center Residency (22) program. Jesús has exhibited/screened/performed most notably at e-Flux, Gladstone Gallery, The Kitchen, MCA Chicago, Black Star Film Festival (PN), and Mana Contemporary.

## **El Mago / The Wizard**

Jorge Bordello, Multimedia projection over medical privacy screen, 4 x 2 meters approx., 2023

## **Pastilla / Pill**

C-Print. 70 x 80.

## **Esquites**

C-Print. 70 x 80 cm.

El Mago / The Wizard is a medical thriller that combines elements of the documentary record, clinical archive and found footage. This video uses personal testimonies to recreate the power dynamics to which a human body with HIV is subjected once the disease is detected by the health system. The installation reproduces a loop in which someone is constantly examined for their behavior, but is also waiting in bureaucratic limbo for a blood sample to be taken. Like the Wizard of Oz and Nosferatu, the installation is a mirage yet to materialize. Behind the curtain is a machine, a doctor without a body. In front of the curtains, the specter of HIV/AIDS in the body.

**Jorge Bordello** (b. 1989, Tlaxcala, México) is interested in the intersecting points between document and fiction, the family archive and the national narrative, and the link between the body and public life. Specifically, he understands the recycling of audiovisual content as a way of conserving, cataloging, and parasitic programming of the historiographic process. He has a degree in International Relations from ITESM and is a Library Science student at UNAM. He was chosen by the National Photo Library System for their 2012 Photo Essay program and by the Image Center to take their 2016 Photographic Production Seminar. video work has been exhibited in spaces such as the New Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), MACBA (Barcelona), Museo de Arte Moderno (Cuenca), and Museo Tamayo (Mexico City).

## **Una Mexicana Que Fruta Vendía / A Mexican Woman Who Sold Fruit**

Lorena Barrera Enciso, digital video, 02:25, 2015

A ripening metaphor of the body as fruit playfully moves along decaying found footage through this attempt to materialize a sticky pregnancy fantasy with the artist's longing to return home.

## **Agua de Limón**

Lorena Barrera Enciso, video, 2015

A study of juicy empty pleasure, at first a color exercise, transforms the banality of customs and flavors into something visually beautiful, while ultimately useless, like limeade with glitter.

## **Manos**

Lorena Barrera Enciso, digital video, 22:10, 2023

This video is offered up as un apapacho –a word from the indigenous language, Nahuatl, origin meaning to caress with your soul– at the end of a long work shift. Manos is a short experimental documentary about the lives and experiences of Latin American immigrants working in the service industry of New York City. The piece observes an industry that relies on the fragmentation of bodies through the testimonies of friends, friends of friends as well as the filmmaker. In doing so, it creates a collective archive of experiences resisting erasure.

**Lorena Barrera Enciso** is a Mexican interdisciplinary artist. Her film work observes the inherent choreography of the body in motion and the sense of longing that is inarticulate and exists without spoken language. Through her experiences as a brown migrant body, she explores the fabrication of identity and invisible labor in the context of the United States. The tactile quality of her work yearns for intimacy and favors exposition methods closer to the warmth of community and alternative to the big screen. However, her work, like her, is a body of many homes. Lorena has been part of the Artist in Residence program at Pioneer Works (Brooklyn, NY), and her work exhibited at Roman Susan Gallery and the Gene Siskel Film Center (Chicago, IL) among others. She is currently based in Queens, NY.

## **Spiraling Toward the Sun for You and Me**

Lorena Cruz Santiago, mixed media installation, trellis, 3 cellphone videos, various lengths, 2023

For years the artist has contemplated the significance of the ID cards issued to her grandfathers during their time as Braceros. As young men from an indigenous town called San Juan Mixtepec in Oaxaca, Mexico, they were ideal candidates for the exploitive Bracero guest worker program that began in the U.S. during WWII. The photographs of them on the ID cards are the only photos she has seen of them as young men, meaning they are simultaneously sentimental photos and political ephemera.

Similarly, she has only seen photographs of her parents in their youth through bureaucratic photos meant to identify them as foreigners. These circumstances indicate that cameras were first wielded toward her family members as a means of control. FaceTime is a medium that allows her and her parents to collaboratively make images during calls. Through this, she is able to involve her parents in the work instead of turning them into subjects. As they proudly show off their garden, her parents hold the camera phone showing her the progress. The videos featured in this show are made by turning the Live Photos from those calls into short videos. Each video includes snippets of their conversation which provide glimpses of their communication composing images.

This project spurs the beginning of a growing archive; one which turns her parents into image-makers, creating images that aren't bound to subjugation. Through this simple gesture, they attempt to achieve a sense of indigenous visual sovereignty.



**Lorena Cruz Santiago** is an artist working across photography, video, and installation informed and inspired by her family's indigenous origins in Oaxaca, Mexico. Her work covers topics of migration, assimilation, labor, and more recently, collaborative image-making with her parents as a form of indigenous autonomy. Cruz Santiago holds a BFA in Photography from Sonoma State University (2016) and an MFA in Photography from Cranbrook Academy of Art (2019). She has been an artist-in-residence at ACRE (Steuben, WI), Ox-Bow School of Art and Artists' Residency (Saugatuck, MI), Pocoapoco Residency (Oaxaca City, Oaxaca, MX), Oak Spring Garden and Foundation Residency (Upperville, VA), Darkroom Detroit (Detroit, MI) and Chalk Hill Residency (Healdsburg, CA). Her work has been included in shows at El Comalito Collective (Vallejo, CA), Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts (Grand Rapids, MI), Cranbrook Art Museum (Bloomfield Hills, MI), and ACRE Projects in Chicago, IL. She is currently based in Detroit, MI.

## **Presagio Funesto / Dire Omen**

María Sosa, digital video, 2020

The people of Lake Texcoco caught a strange bird that looked like a crane. They took the bird to their king, Moctezuma. The bird's head was perforated in its middle. In the bird's head, the Huey-Tlatoani saw the constellation, and an omen, Mastelejo, and warriors who rode on a kind of deer without horns poised for combat. This video piece is projected on the head of that bird, which Moctezuma saw as a mirror, to offer a look at the passage of 500 years after the arrival of the colonizers, where images of colonial archives and news up to 2019, whose images are impressively similar, showing that racial and class subordination it is a methodology of continuous and present domination. We can rear our heads of the bird that Moctezuma looked at, where he learned that the apocalypse of his world and civilization was approaching, to give way to our daily apocalypse.

## **Nos Han Enseñado / They Have Shown Us**

María Sosa, digital video, 09:04, 2020

This video poem collects quotes from great feminists such as bell hooks, Audrey Lord and María Lugones to weave ideas with the body and images. The artist wonders about the colonization of the gaze and the aesthetic and sensitive implications that this has, developing in the daily reality of a world fragmented by racial violence and gender.

**María Sosa** (b.1985, lives and works in Mexico City, MX) holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolas de Hidalgo. Her work develops from research about colonial pasts and how they shape contemporary racial, sexual, and social dynamics in the American continent. Throughout her practice, Sosa pays particular attention to the eradication of knowledge surrounding non-western ways of life and prehispanic cultures. Her work has been exhibited at Fundación Casa de México, Madrid (2022); Laboratorio de Arte Alameda, Mexico City (2021-2022); Tale of a Tub, Amsterdam (2021); Arewá, Madrid (2021); Servais Family Collection, Brussels (2020); Lasécu Artothèque, Lille (2019); FilmFront, Chicago (2018-2019); Native Crossroad Film Festival, Norman (2018); Festival Internacional de Cine, Morelia (2018), where she won the Eye to the Best Short Film of Michoacán Award; and International Performance ArtWeek, Venice (2016).

## **La Obsidiana y El Mar**

Noé Martínez, HD video, 05;41, 2020

In this piece, the artist raps poetically in Nahuatl, the most widely spoken indigenous language of the Western hemisphere. He uses reconstruction as an aesthetic operation. He makes a case study that emerges from his personal history to critically position himself in the face of current social phenomena. By doing so, he focuses on the political potential of memory.

**Noé Martínez** (b.1986, lives and works in MexicoCity, MX) is a visual artist and filmmaker who graduated from Escuela Nacional de Pintura, Escultura y Grabado (“LaEsmeralda”), Mexico City. His work functions as a case study that emerges from personal history, making use of ethnographic methodologies and research of the various histories of indigenous communities of the American continent. His work has been presented at the Orange County Museum of Art, Santa Ana (2020); The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2019); 21 Bienalde Arte contemporáneo SESC Videobrasil, Sao Paulo (2019); FilmFront, Chicago(2019); Native Crosroad Film Festival, Norman (2018); Festival Internacional de Cine, Morelia (2018), where he, with María Sosa, won the Eye to the Best Short Film of Michoacán Award; and International Performance Art Week, Venice (2016).

## **Tepalcates de sueños**

RojoNegro, HD video, 4 videos, various lengths, 2023.

Tepalcates de sueños are a series of performances decanted from the dream exchange of the artists María Sosa and Noé Martínez, who have cultivated for more than ten years their effort to map the pre-Hispanic world to understand the colonial imaginary of the present. The performances arise from the cultivation and dialogue between the link of past and present dream knowledge, archival material, and the body as a container of history to carry out an act of healing and resistance against colonial hegemony. Tepalcates de sueños is an on-site exhibition by RojoNegro, Commissioned for the Swiss Institute that features video, a musical composition, and a cascade of paintings portraying animals, plants, bodies, and landscapes.

**RojoNegro** is the artists duo of María Sosa and Noé Martínez who investigate indigenous knowledge to postulate the body as a tool for memory recovery and construction of meaning and individual identity. and collective. They participated in the collective exhibition, *Las estrellas me iluminan al reves*, at No Man's Gallery, Ámsterdam, Países Bajos (2023). Prior, they exhibited, *Tepalcates de sueños*, in Mexico City at project *Offsite* (2022), commissioned for the Swiss Institute of New York (2021); and *Volví a ver animales en la noche*, Fundación Alumnos 47, Mexico City (2019); and *Cuatro propuestas de sentir pensar*, at International Performance Art Week, Palazzo Mora, Venice, Italia en 2018.

## **Papi's Pregnant**

Oli Rodriguez, digital video, 11:17, 2023

This is an excerpt of the forthcoming film *Papi's Pregnant* which chronicles the filmmaker's conception and navigation of getting pregnant as a transmasculine identified person. The film follows Oli Rodriguez's conception and navigation of getting pregnant as a transmasculine identified/non-binary person. Beginning in Chicago, IL, and expanding to Los Angeles, California, while living and working in both places, Oli journeys to find supportive medical care by focusing on the experience of going off hormone replacement therapy (HRT), figuring out ovulation with options to conceive, and the pursuit of a donor while visualizing a burgeoning medical field of trans pregnancy along with hilarious, frank conversations with queer, chosen family, and their biological Puerto Rican/Sicilian family.

**Oli Rodriguez** is an interdisciplinary artist working in video, photography, performance, installation, poetry, and writing. They are an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at California State University. They are a Diverse Voices in Docs (DVID) fellow for the Kartemquin Films and the Community Film Workshop (2020). They have screened, performed, lectured, and exhibited works internationally and nationally. Their intersectional research and interdisciplinary projects conceptually focus on queerness, gender, appropriation, performative interactions, visualizing familial and other representations of the AIDS pandemic, while referencing historical movements in gender, racial and feminist histories.

## **ABOUT THE CURATOR**

**Jose Luis Benavides** (Chicago, US, 1986) is a Latinx and queer photographer, moving image maker, and lecturer at Vanderbilt University, an adjunct lecturer at Tennessee State University, and for the City Colleges of Chicago. Working primarily with a range of personal archives, his work explores issues relating to gender, sexuality, culture, and migration. His experimental documentary film, *Lulu en el Jardín*, tells the story of his lesbian mother's coming out in Chicago during the 1970s. His work has screened at Reeling: The Chicago LGBTQ+ International Film Festival, US (2020), and other festivals around the world. As an experimental artist, documentarian, and video art programmer he opens conversations, space, and time for diverse perspectives from feminist, queer, and Latinx artists for the virtual archive [SinCintaPrevia.com](http://SinCintaPrevia.com).

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