



PORTFOLIO

Gabriela Estrada Loochkartt



Statement

I am a Mestiza artist based in Chicago. My sculptures, weavings, and performances embody ways of thinking where care is activated as a form of healing against systems of domination. My ecofeminist research is tactile and smeared with earth. My work listens to the Mothers of Earth and the Grandmothers of Water. My practice is a ritual of reparation that resists the erasure of feminine lineages and entities, both human and non-human. My pieces are invitations to honor the Earth as a sacred womb, denouncing the patriarchal and colonial systems as the origin of the exploitation of wombs, seeds, waters, and territories.

As the seed of my practice, I built a house on an Andean mountain. It was a years-long exercise in listening to the land, rejecting the mindset that reduces it to a resource-commodity, or a piece of private property, and instead embracing a relationship of acknowledgment, honoring that we are only a small component of a living ecosystem.

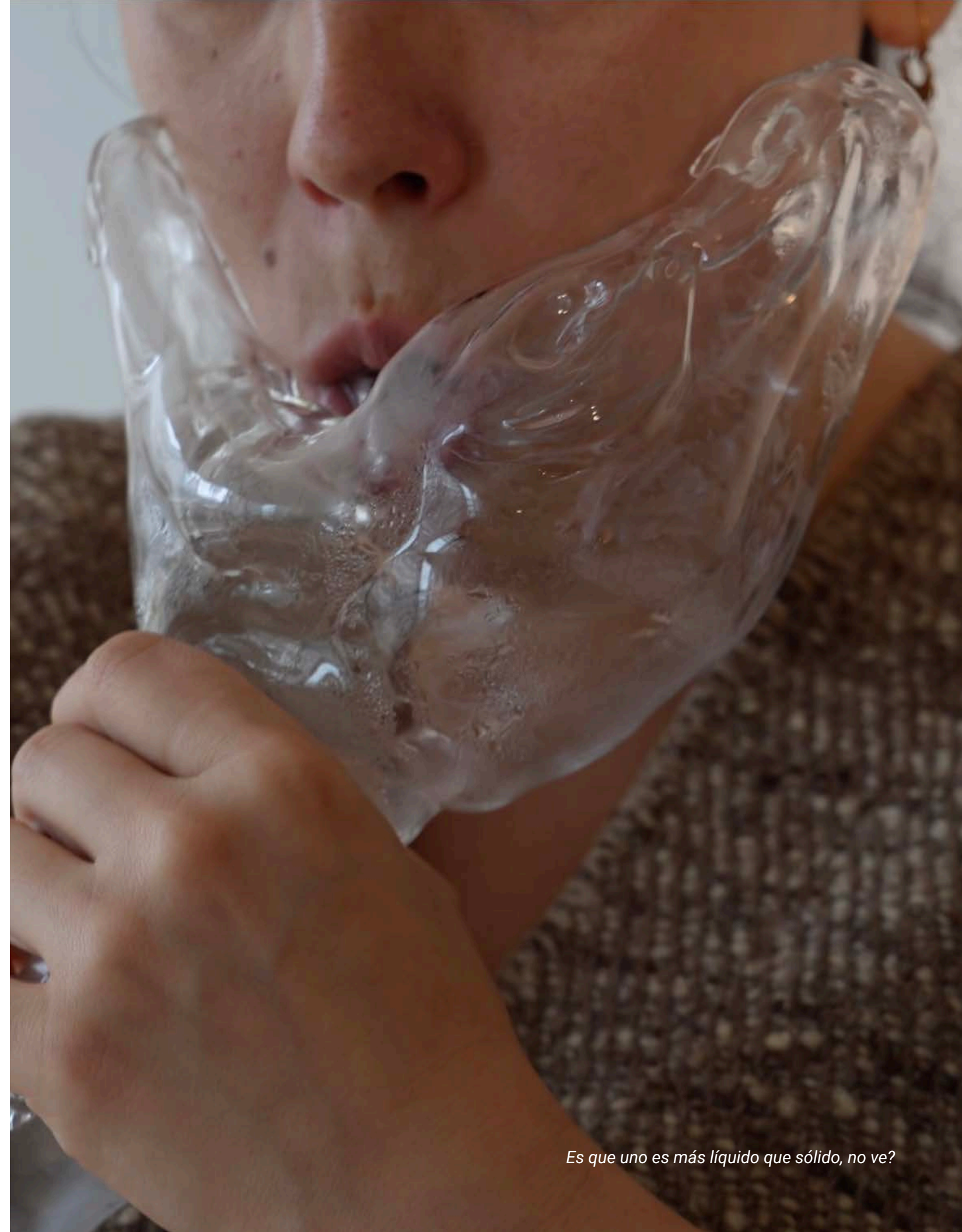


*Es que uno es más líquido que sólido, no ve?*



Gabriela Estrada Loochkartht is a Colombian artist based in Chicago. She graduated with honors from the Art Department at Universidad de los Andes (Colombia, 2020), where her thesis project received Meritorious recognition. She graduated with an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she was awarded the Joan Livingstone Scholarship.

Her solo exhibitions *Ventre Tierra* (2023), *Conversaciones con la Tierra* (2022), and *La palabra casa tiene dos techos* (2021) were presented in Colombia at La Cometa, Policroma, and SGR galleries. Her work has been shown at the X International Biennial of Contemporary Textile Art (Mexico), Casa Diego Rivera Museum, Museo La Tertulia (Colombia), ARTBO International Fair, and venues in the U.S. such as the National Museum of Mexican Art, Compound Yellow, Mayfield Space, Co- Prosperity, Elastic Arts and Comfort Station. She was recently nominated for the Sara Modiano Award and collaborated with Artesanías de Colombia in the *Arte Vivo initiative*. She participated in the Mundo Común residency in the Colombian Amazon. She is participating in *Conocer el mundo con la Boca sin que te piquen las espinas* an exhibition for the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) by Femsa collection.



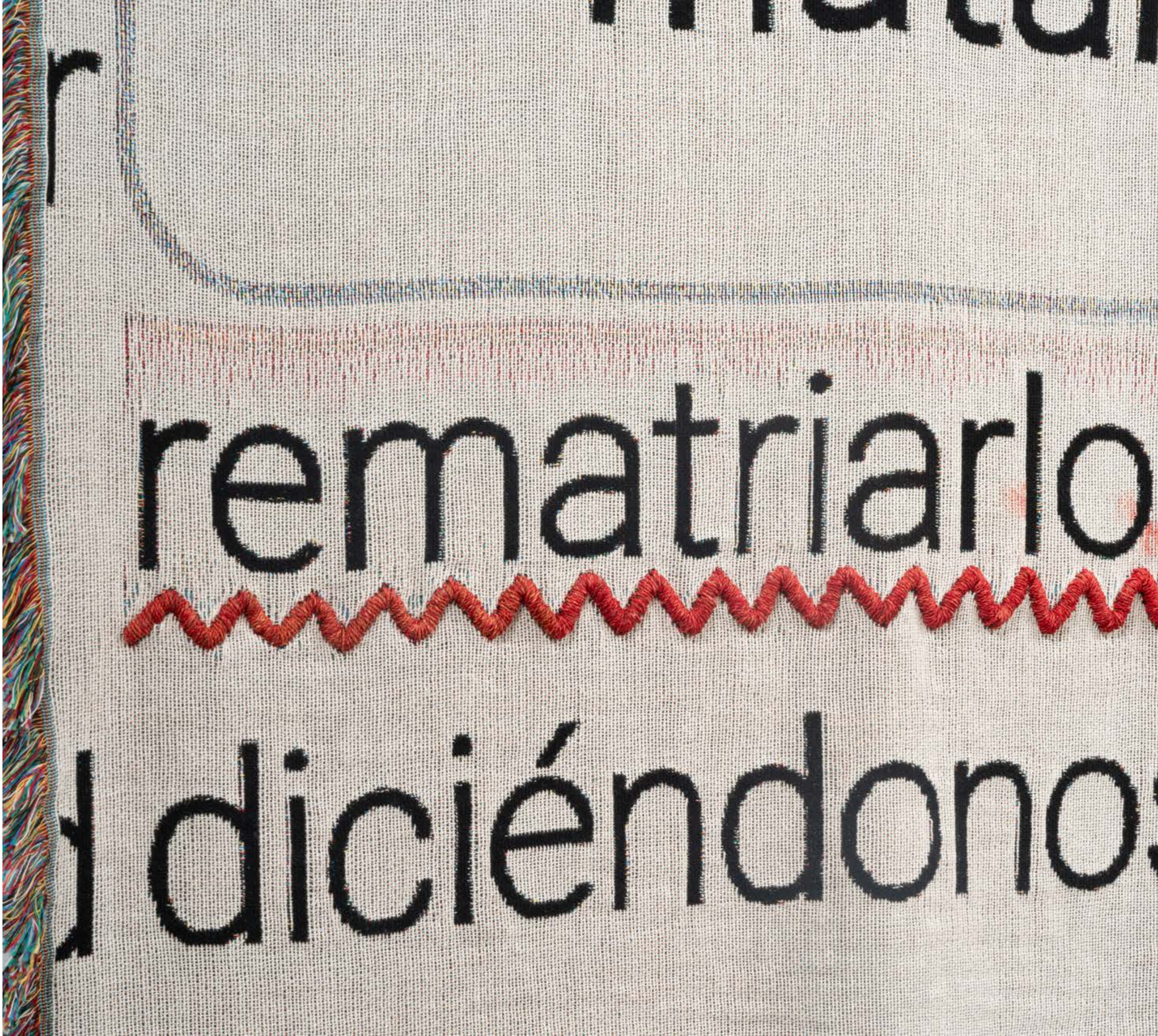
*Es que uno es más líquido que sólido, no ve?*



Four Muisca tunjos (pre-Columbian gold pieces) are trapped in the Art Institute of Chicago. They arrived from the Altiplano Cundiboyacense. The navel of this territory is the Guatavita Lagoon. Colonial enterprises have attempted to empty this body of water twelve times in search of Muisca gold. Water resists the assaults of modernization and greed. The legend of El Dorado as a gold-conquering enterprise is also the utopia of capitalism, the birth of the money god, and the way modernity carved its path through sacred bodies.

These sculptures are accompanied by a performance in which I chant to summon the lagoons and the mountains. Through this chant, I generate a drop of water, born from the vapor of my own body.

*¿Es que uno es más líquido que sólido no ve?*  
*We are more liquid than solid, don't you see?*  
Mist of breath, video performance, cotton Amazon weaving, wool from Boyacá, achiote, amazonian chambira, video, letter from the king of Spain, glass, Water, my mother's words about Water, Amazon inflatable pool, gold leaf, and vinyl  
2025





En misceas sobre la laguna de Cuatovi  
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ntes de la conquista no existían lo  
e matarlos ⊗ ! : s  
e rematriarlos le crece automática  
d diciéndonos que son un error. Re  
del Dorado en la laguna de Cuatovi



Es que uno es más líquido que sólido, no ve?





*Es que uno es más líquido que sólido, no ve?*



*Colectivo Polvos Rojos*  
(with Pablo Lazala Ruiz)

We are two Colombian artists who migrated from Bogotá to Chicago. We met outside our mother territory in studios stained by red powder: Achiote (a tropical seed from the “global South”) and red chalk powder. Gabriela chews and stares into Achiote to invoke secular prayers of the maternal language, while Pablo draws omens with red chalk, engaging with spaces’ rituals and the ideologies that haunt them.

Our practices pose urgent questions about migration, territorial acknowledgment, and food sovereignty. Our material explorations denounce the patriarchal-colonial-capitalist system’s power and domination, which has made us forget that Earth is a sacred womb. We challenge the ideals of “progress” that have affected our territories and Latin American diasporas.

*Polvos Rojos* collective invites people to remember the importance of having soil in the mouth.

*Buscando visa para un sueño*  
(Searching visa for a dream)  
Performance, Stanchion and knives  
Duration: 30 min  
2025









Chicha under the snow



"...The everyday life of Western societies and their culture operates on the basis of matricide: the erasure of the mother's power and agency, reducing her to a reproductive body meant to increase the labor force. Children inherit the father's surname; this is how lineage is traced.

This may seem like a trivial fact, but the inability to name the line connecting great-grandmother, grandmother, mother, daughter, granddaughter renders invisible and dissolves a relationship born from the gut, from the flesh, from the most primary cellular level.

The linguistic erasure of the female lineage is a form of oppression that seeks to weaken women's agency in the world and their ability to associate with one another..."

This is an excerpt from the curatorial text of the exhibition *Matrilineaje*, curated by María Adelaida Samper at Policroma Gallery, Medellín, Colombia.

You can find the full performance video at this link:  
<https://www.gabrielaviridiana.com/dios-tiene-una-madre>

*Dios tiene una Madre*  
*(God has a Mother)*  
Video performance and Achiote seed  
Duration: 10:14 min  
2024

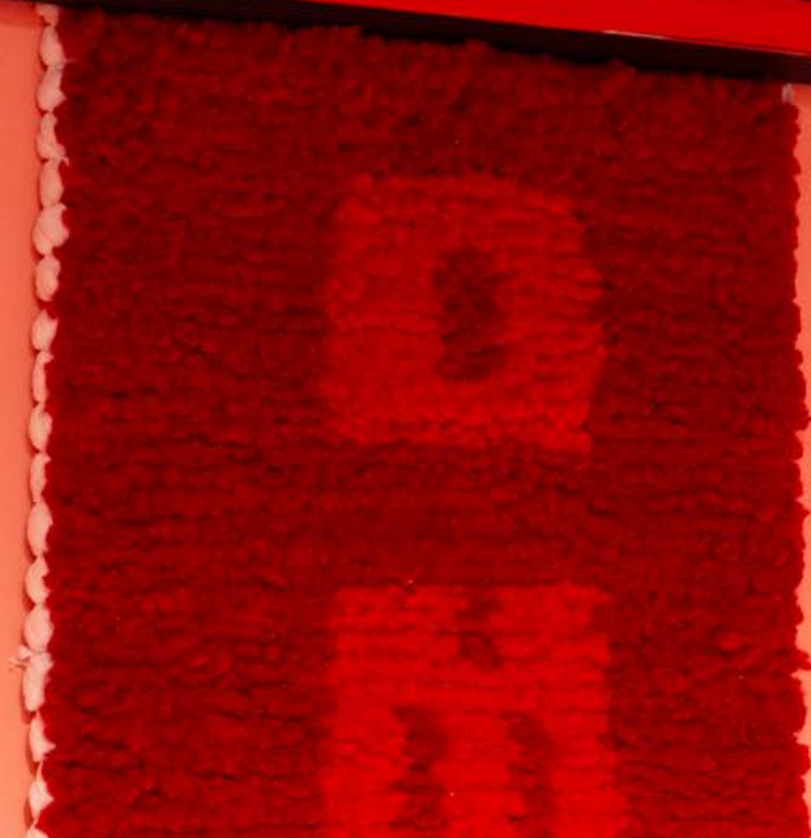






*Dios tiene una Madre*







“...Embracing ephemerality, they reflect on the remnants of our existence: what lingers after we are gone; meditating on the impermanence of both art and life itself, inviting us to return to the seed, the womb; and unlearn the systems that have disconnected us from nature and each other...”

This is an excerpt from the curatorial text of the exhibition *Entre Ritos y Portales*, curated by Sofia Gabriel at Co-Prosperity, Chicago, IL.

For this performance, I activated a seed that I had woven and placed at the navel of the gallery, allowing the achiote that lived beneath it to expand, opening the womb of the space. Throughout the performance, I was chewing and spitting achiote. The act of chewing is a way of letting the *Mother* enter me, of becoming a vessel, a conductor of her message.

*El apellido materno es el ombligo*  
*(The maternal last name is the navel)*  
Performance, Achiote seed and weaved seed  
Duration: 30 min  
2024







*El apellido materno es el ombligo*



This performance marks the beginning of my research on the rematriation of the four Muisca Tunjos that are trapped inside the Art Institute of Chicago. If the Tunjos cannot return to their sacred place, to their Motherland: the Guatavita Lagoon, how can I bring the Lagoon to the streets of Chicago?

Through this action, the streets surrounding the Art Institute of Chicago were marked by two red lines of achiote, and the museum was enclosed in a red circle that brought the Laguna de Guatavita to the Tunjos.

You can find the full performance video at this link:  
<https://www.gabrielaviridiana.com/spells-for-rematriation>

*Spells for rematriation*  
*Performance, Achiote seed and ceramic seed*  
Duration: 1:20 min  
2024





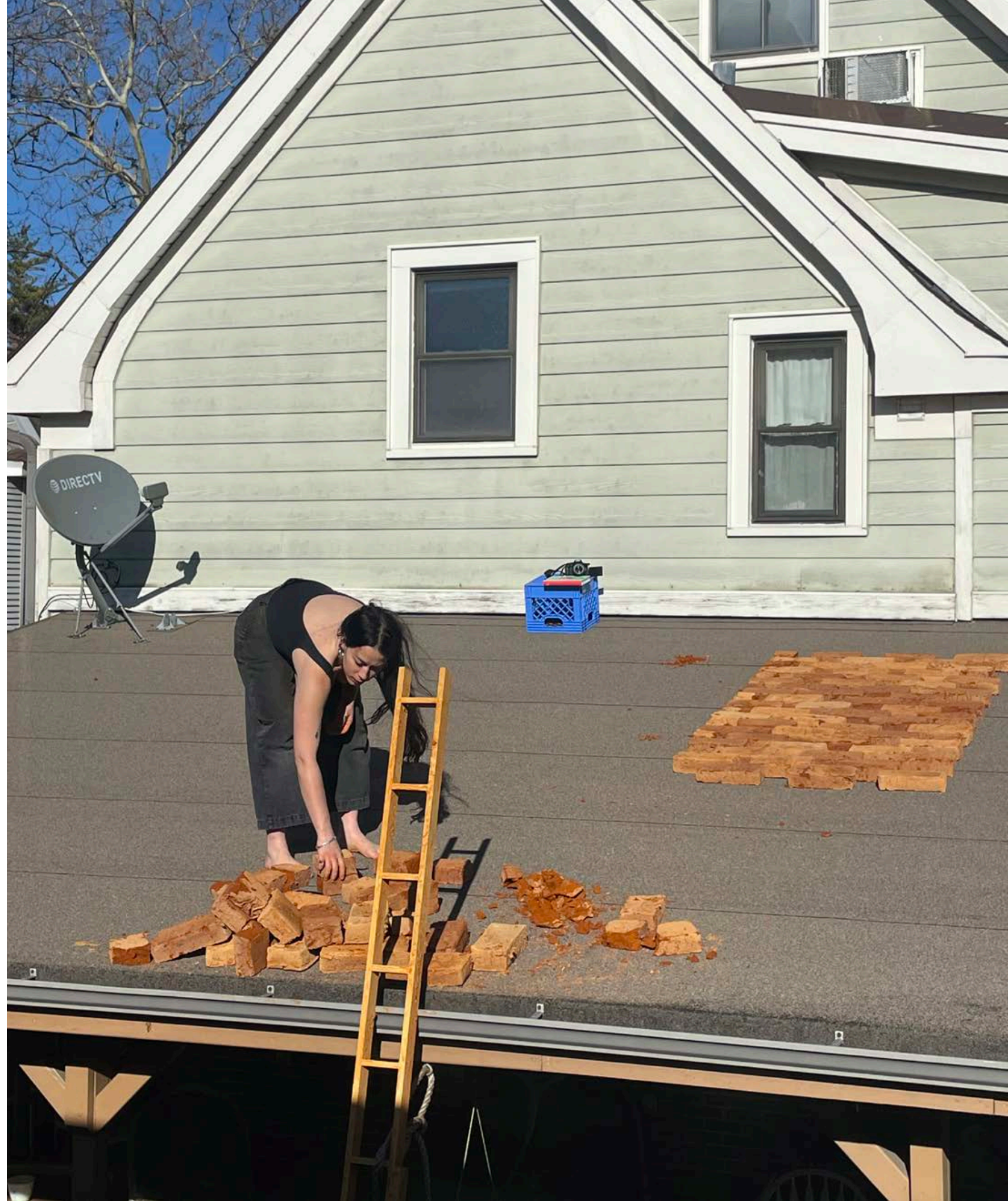




This performative action is born from the need to ground myself in a land where I am considered a legal alien by law. To ground myself, I must carry the weight of 100 bricks made with achiote seed powder. The achiote fertilizes the earth and takes the shape of a horizontal wall (a fallen wall), a bed where I lie.

What does it mean to build an edible brick-wall?  
What does it mean to digest a wall?

You can find the full performance video at this link:  
<https://www.gabrielaviridiana.com/single-bed>



*Single bed - wall*  
Achiote, panela, lime, ladder and video performance  
Duration: 14:26 min  
2024





Single bed-wall



“...It would be easy to enter this exhibition and fall into a sort of dream that invites us to return to a primitive state. To feel that we are in a cave, in a space that exists outside of time or from a time long ago. Still, the artist’s gesture to create this “Earth Womb” for herself and for us is not a tender or naïve gesture... It is a scold. While she shakes us, reminding us that there is something profound inside of us that we have forgotten or that, by will or by habit, we choose to ignore. She also carries out a determined act of care toward something non-human: toward the seed, toward the female lineage that engenders life: the grandmother, the mother, the seed, the earth, the mountain...”

This is an excerpt from the curatorial text of the exhibition *Ventre Tierra*, curated by María Adelaida Samper at SGR Gallery, Bogotá, Colombia.

*Ventre Tierra*  
(Womb Earth)  
Earth, cow dung, cactus slime, straw  
Variable dimensions  
2023









Four years ago, Gabriela started building a house ... In this intimate territory, with no boundaries between the outside and the inside, nature grows freely, and its roots intertwine with those of the place to become stronger.

While conceiving her house, using her hands, and encountering the earth, Gabriela came to understand a connection between the mountain's feminine body and her own. Together, the woman and the mountain guard nature, transforming one another cyclically, both as containers and as the contained:

"Roots and threads connect the mountain, the house, and the uterus. The uterus is the first house where we live, where we nestle. To live in a house, you must nestle, just as to live in the mountain. The mountain is the uterus, the sacred place where we are protected and that we must protect."

This is an excerpt from the curatorial text of the exhibition *Conversaciones con la Tierra*, curated by Daniela Marin at La Cometa Gallery, Bogotá, Colombia.

*Conversaciones con la Tierra*  
(*Conversations with the Earth*)  
Earth, cow and horse dung, cactus slime, straw  
Variable dimensions  
2022









"...Nature has been seen by the patriarchy as property, as capital, as an external and invisible system that endlessly nourishes the unconscious man. This piece reveals the mountain as home, as body. Weaving the mountain I inhabit allows me to be inside it, to carry its skin, and to safeguard its memory. Entering the mountain is an encounter with the mother, to recognize ourselves as equals. We are beings who co-inhabit.

Two distant mountains embrace, brushing their skins and their scars. One is the mountain I inhabit in Sopó, and the other is Iguaque, where my grandmother once sought consciousness. The journey was taken by me and my partner. Barefoot, for two hours, we carried the skin of the mountain we live in, letting our feet brush against another mountainous body. We became the hide of one mountain and brought it into an intimate meeting with another..."

You can find the full performance video at this link:  
<https://www.gabrielaviridiana.com/el-roce-entre-las-pieles>

*El roce entre las pieles*  
(The rubbing between the skins)  
Performance, weaved mountain and video cassette  
Duration: 5 h  
2022









This is an installation I made in Mexico City. It wonders how to pack a home into a suitcase. It reflects on birds' nests and the water that leaks through the roof of my house. The fabrics were made using batik, dyed with the yellow soil from my land. It is a way of carrying the earth of my home inside a suitcase.

*Así me vaya tú no te irás de mí*  
(Even if I leave, you won't leave me)  
Earth, bee wax, cotton fabric  
Variable dimensions  
2022







Así me vaya tú no te irás de mí



Weaving ritual freezes the present. When weaving, we live with care, without desire for the future or to ascend. Weaving means creating a void that will touch a body. In weaving, the absence of something is evoked. A weaving allows a house to be carried from one place to another. Weaving makes the inflexible flexible.

*La palabra casa tiene dos techos*  
(The word casa has two roofs)  
Variable dimensions  
2021







La palabra casa tiene dos techos





La palabra casa tiene dos techos







*La palabra casa tiene dos techos*



"We fled the city. Today, we live in a little house in the mountains. We built it entirely with our hands. We returned to the elemental—to be illuminated by the light of the sun, the moon, and the stars. In the mornings, we don't wear shoes; it's magical to always feel the grass under the soles of our feet. The sun crosses the mountains at eight. Before that, there's light and a gray mist that dresses the mountain's gate.

There's a patch of the pasture that's yellow, burned from being our bathroom. When the sun hits the valley, the dandelions open. Butterflies enter the house and perch on our fingers. Our dogs come and go. In the afternoons, a hummingbird visits us while we eat lunch. Breathing in green fills us more completely. The house is yellow and crooked. The afternoon sun makes the wood creak and warms the living room, preparing it to receive the night.

At sunset, the sky turns pink and the mountain vibrates orange. The sun is no longer visible. The silent shadows of the moon emerge. The nights arrive cold, but the bed is always warm, filled with us and the dogs. Before falling asleep, we hear opossums walking on the roof."

You can find more information about the house at this link:  
<https://www.gabrielaviridiana.com/la-palabra-casa-tiene-dos-techos>

Casa  
Land, body and territory  
Variable dimensions  
2018-ongoing





