

Carolina Caycedo (lives in Los Angeles) was born in London to Colombian parents. She transcends institutional spaces to work in the social realm, where she participates in movements of territorial resistance, solidarity economies, and housing as a human right. Carolina's artistic practice has a collective dimension to it in which performances, drawings, photographs and videos are not just an end result, but rather part of the artist's process of research and acting. Through work that investigates relationships of movement, assimilation and resistance, representation and control, she addresses contexts, groups and communities that are affected by developmental projects, like the constructions of dams, the privatization of water, and its consequences on riverside communities.

She has developed publicly engaged projects in Bogota, Quezon City, Toronto, Madrid, Sao Paulo, Lisbon, San Juan, New York, San Francisco, Paris, Mexico DF, Tijuana, and London. Her work has been exhibited worldwide with solo shows at Vienna Secession, Intermediae-Matadero Madrid, Agnes B Gallery Paris, Alianza Francesa Bogotá, Hordaland Kunstsenter Bergen, 18th Street Arts Center in Santa Monica, and DAAD Gallery in Berlin. She has participated in international biennials including Sao Paulo (2016), Berlin (2014), Paris Triennial (2013), New Museum (2011), Havana (2009), Whitney (2006), Venice (2003) and Istanbul (2001). In 2012, Caycedo was a DAAD Artist-in-Berlin resident. She has received funding from Creative Capital, California Community Foundation, Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Harpo Foundation, Art Matters, Colombian Culture Ministry, Arts Council UK, and Prince Claus Fund.

Caycedo is part of *Made in LA* at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, and is currently artist in residence at the Huntington Library, Art Collection and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California.



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COSMOTARRAYAS / COSMOTARRAFAS / COSMONETS
2016 - 2018

Since 2012, Carolina Caycedo's ongoing project *Be Dammed* has examined the ecological, economic, and psychological impacts of dams built along waterways, particularly in relationship to development in Latin American countries, such as Colombia, where she grew up, Brazil, Mexico, and Guatemala. Recognizing water as a living entity, a public space, and a human right, the project has taken a number of different forms, including installations with sculpture, textiles, and video; group performances she has dubbed "geochoreographies," which straddle protest and art; and handmade books with drawings and texts relating indigenous rituals and mythology, as well as workshops, civil disobedience, and pedagogy. Caycedo's *Cosmotarrayas*, is a series of hanging sculptures assembled with handmade fishing nets collected during the artist's field research in riverine communities affected by the privatization of water. The nets are then adorned or filled with a variety of objects that she acquires in a range of locales or that come from her personal archive. Some of the nets were given to the artist by friends or acquaintances in the sites she visits, while others were purchased in local markets or commissioned by the artist. The *Cosmotarrayas* works are embodiments of people the artist has met during her travels and their stories of dispossession and resistance; the series operates as a connector between her activism and community involvement and her studio practice.

The net, with its combination of porousness and strength that comes from its rhizomatic structure, reflects the inherent connectivity among beings. The word "atarraya" translates to "cast net" and comes from the Arab word "atarrahar," which means to throw. While a dam is a solid structure that is impermeable and unmovable and is built by corporations and governments to control the flow of water, the artisanal fishing net is permeable and flexible, allowing the river to flow through it, and is woven by hand. Caycedo's work argues that we must reimagine and reorient our relationship to water, to resist notions of the river as a resource to be exploited and, rather, to understand it as a living thing that has an almost endless capacity for giving and sustaining when cared for. To throw a fishing net affirms the river as a common good.





Installation view.
Made in LA-2018.
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.





Installation view.
Made in LA-2018.
Hammer Museum,
Los Angeles.

WATER PORTRAITS
2015-2018

River and waterfall images are mirrored, altered and remixed to create a series of portraits that conjure bodies of water as living entities, and as active political agents in environmental conflicts, rather than resources for human extractivism. The fabric as surface becomes a fluid and malleable structure, that allows for diverse installation forms; it's performative potential opens a space for interaction and experimentation, the Water Portraits can be wrapped around the body, submerged in water, hanged, stretched or crumpled among other actions. The textile and cinematographic imagery builds upon indigenous medicinal and shamanic visions, inviting the viewer to experience and find their own images; calling for a decolonization of the gaze by un-learning euro-centric and patriarchal artistic formal formats, such as the landscape, a chance to challenge our relationship to 'nature'.

Esto No Es Agua / This Is Not Water, 2015

One channel HD Video. Sound and Color.

Sound by Daniel Pineda.

5 min 20 sec

This Is Not Water is a water portrait of the *Las Damas* waterfall in the town of Garzón, Huila in Southern Colombia. It acknowledges bodies of water as active social agents in environmental conflicts; inviting us to revise and decolonize our contemplative and utilitarian relationships towards landscape. The soundtrack is composed by manipulating the waterfall sounds, and mixing it with sampling of a traditional indigenous *millo* reed flute.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/rkkh364asagkI5d/CuerpoDeAgua-CRUZmedia3.mov?dl=0>



Water Portraits installation view at El Origen de la Noche,
Museum National University, Bogota, 2016



This is Not Water (Still)



Water Portraits.
Installation view at Geometries, 2018.
Agricultural University, Athens.
Courtesy of the Onassis Cultural Centre-Athens © DimitrisParthimos.



Installation view at Working for the Future Past, Seoul Museum of Art, 2017



Installation details A Universal History of Infamy, Los Angeles County Museum of Art LACMA, 2017

SERPENT RIVER BOOK 2017

Artist Book, 72 page accordion fold, offset, printed canvas hardcover.

Serpent River Book is a 72 page accordion fold artist-book, that combines archival images, maps, poems, lyrics, satellite photos, with the artist's own images and texts on river bio-cultural diversity, in a long and meandering collage. The fluctuating publication can frame many narratives. As a book it can be opened, pleated and read in many directions, and has a performatic potential to it, functioning as a score, or as a workshop tool. Serpent River Book gathers visual and written materials compiled by the artist while working in Colombian, Brazilian, and Mexican communities affected by the industrialization and privatization of river systems.

The book is part of the ongoing body of work 'Be Dammed', that investigates the effects of extractivism on natural and social landscapes, exploring the power dynamics associated with the corporatization and decimation of water resources.

<http://www.lacma.org/video/serpent-river-book-carolina-cavcedo-universal-history-infamy>



TO STOP BEING A THREAT AND TO BECOME A PROMISE

2017

2 channel HD video, Sound and Color.

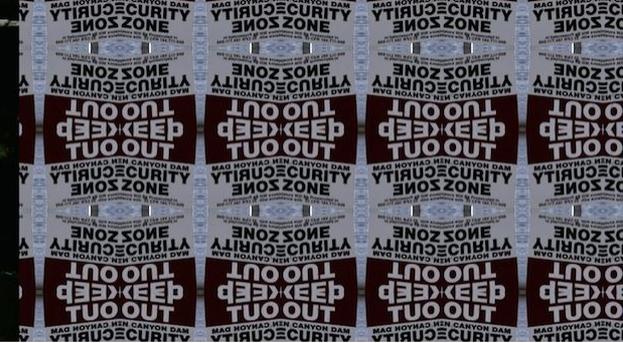
Sound by Daniel Correa.

8 min 3 sec

Weaving footage from diverse hydrographies such as the Colorado, the Yaqui, the Xingu, the Spree and the Magdalena Rivers, the two channels contrast the indigenous and rural 'campesino' lifestyle, with the extractivist approach to water and land, by juxtaposing encountered perspectives and understandings of what a territory is, and how it may be inhabited. Along the video, the indigenous perspective casts visual spells on the extractive one, making it wobble, shake, unfold, and eventually transforming it into a spiritual vision.

<https://vimeo.com/229184854>

pass: promesa





GENEALOGY OF STRUGGLE, 2017

Each year becomes the most dangerous year on record for environmental defenders. In 2017 more than half of those killed came from just three countries, Brazil, Philippines, and Colombia (where I grew). We honored them by installing an inclusive shrine or altar, built upon a comprehensive and historical list of those killed, disappeared, tortured or criminalized in the Philippines, as well as some key activist figures from different struggles across Latin America.

This installation was part of *Almost There* at the Vargas Museum in UP Dilliman, in Quezon City. The customized candles were used during a candle-light vigil that took place in the Sunken Garden at UP Dilliman campus. During this public vigil, family members of the victims, such as Mica Ortega (daughter of Gerry Ortega), Nelson Salvador (husband of Delle Salvador), and fellow Philippine activists from Karapatan, Kalikasan, AGHAM, Justicia, NUJP, CWERC, and Tubaw Music Collective, rallied about those fallen in their home country, as a way to trace and weave a genealogy of resistance and emancipation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oy1kXwINuVA>



Vigil documentation, UP Dilliman.



fertile with theatrical
scenes of dreams

A GENTE RIO 2016

A set of works developed in Brazil, based on the Itaipu Dam, the second largest hydroelectric plant in the world, and whose process of land expropriation was a catalyst for the emergence of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST); the Belo Monte Dam on the Xingu River, whose process of environmental licensing has been marked by a series of irregularities and profound indigenous resistance; the Bento Rodrigues Dam, which collapsed, releasing hazardous waste from the mining company Samarco and causing an unprecedented environmental disaster in Brazil; and, lastly, Vale do Ribeira, where indigenous, caiçara, and quilombola communities resist against the construction of 4 dams. Caycedo visits these sites and, back at the exhibition, armed with satellite images, documents and drawings, discusses the monumental environmental impact that these projects have on their surroundings. The depositions, personal accounts and objects, such as fishing nets brought by the artist, point to the accumulated knowledge of the communities with which she works and which, as a collective body, are resisting the extinction imposed on them by these development-oriented projects.

Images still of A Gente Rio, HD Video, sound and color, 29'. <https://vimeo.com/182080245>





A Gente Rio Paraná, A Gente Rio Xingu, A Gente Rio Watu, 2016
UV print on aluminum dibond. 900 x 300 cm
Installation view at Incerteza Viva, 32 Bienal Sao Paulo



Installation view at Incerteza Viva, 32 Bienal de Sao Paulo

RIVER BOOKS 2016 - 2018

These hand drawn books are stories that interpret the social, political and spiritual context of particular rivers in dispute across the world. They have an accordion format and are handbound by the artist. The riverbed is used as the central element of the written and visual narration. The text is based on indigenous and local knowledges and histories, as well as actual environmental conflicts; it is often written in first person, embodying the voice of the river.



where the public is called on to endure restriction of freedom



Documentation stills of performance at Entre Canibales, Instituto de Visión, 2016

BEYOND CONTROL 2013 - 2017

The choreographed movements of *Beyond Control* are constructed from visual and theoretical relationships that exist between the construction of dams, the containment of bodies of water, and the physical, legal and psychological control of the social body.

The performance explores gestures and choreographies of power, including those used by the police or the army to contain and break masses or manipulate individuals in public space. It also builds movements based upon the necessary conditions in a river for the operation of a hydroelectric dam, such as current strength and waterfall height. The performance is scripted for an enclosed space, and ends with the damming of the public into a corner of the room.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ddm3qw6g1x25z3n/Beyond%20Control%20Subtitles.mov?dl=0>





YUMA, OR THE LAND OF FRIENDS

2014

Digital print on acrylic glass, satellite images.

580 × 473 cm



A photo-montage using 3 satellite images of different stages of the construction of El Quimbo dam in Colombia, gives detail of the environmental devastation produced by the mega-infrastructure, while making a critical comment on the perspective of power or the 'view from above'. The dam's construction required the redirection of the Magdalena River, the main fluvial artery in the country, affecting a vast area and displacing the indigenous population of the region. Through this case, Caycedo investigates the destructive cultural and environmental consequences of erecting dams, as well as the desire to master the course of nature and the complicity of state power in quelling social unrest.

View and detail of installation at 8th Berlin Biennale, Dahlem Ethnographic Museum.

GEOCHOREOGRAPHIES

2014 - 2018

In this research *geochoreographies* is the name which the artist gives to actions that use the body as a political tool, understanding that geography and territory are part of it. As such, the bodies of water are likened to the social body - each has its own choreography, whether in the rituals of artisanal fishing or in the mass demonstrations that occupy the streets. The reality of socio-political transformations is challenged with images and performative actions developed alongside riverine communities. In the process, activities are proposed, dialogues initiated, and tools supplied for the creation of other narratives regarding the impacts of these projects.

The first iteration of *geochoreographies* was with the collective Jaguos por el Territorio in 2014, focusing on a specific region, the Upper Magdalena River in Colombia, and on a specific colonization – the El Quimbo Dam. This project aimed to raise awareness about public rural spaces and ecosystems as intrinsic to the bio-cultural diversity of Colombia, highlighting the significance of public, accessible rivers and riverbanks. It presented choreographic performances, which were the outcome of regional workshops conducted with the local youth in locations where traditional, everyday activities associated with riverbanks and rural life take place.

The project set up a model for community emancipation and creative re-appropriation of the territory, which not only counterbalances the negative (social, cultural, ecological, archaeological) impacts of the construction of El Quimbo Dam but also inspires other communities nationwide. It engaged a wider population in the collective processes of challenging dam construction in Colombia in an effort to decentralize creative manifestations around geographical cultural centres and cultural elites.

“We are constantly misinformed,” says artist Carolina Caycedo. “Art can work towards the recognition of power structures, like nation-states and transnational companies, that monopolize concepts such as sustainability, progress and development. This infrastructure is turning a public body of water, a public rural space into a privatized resource; a process of rural, geographical, and ecological corporatization.”

All Images from the Geochoreographies Series courtesy of Jaguos por El Territorio.



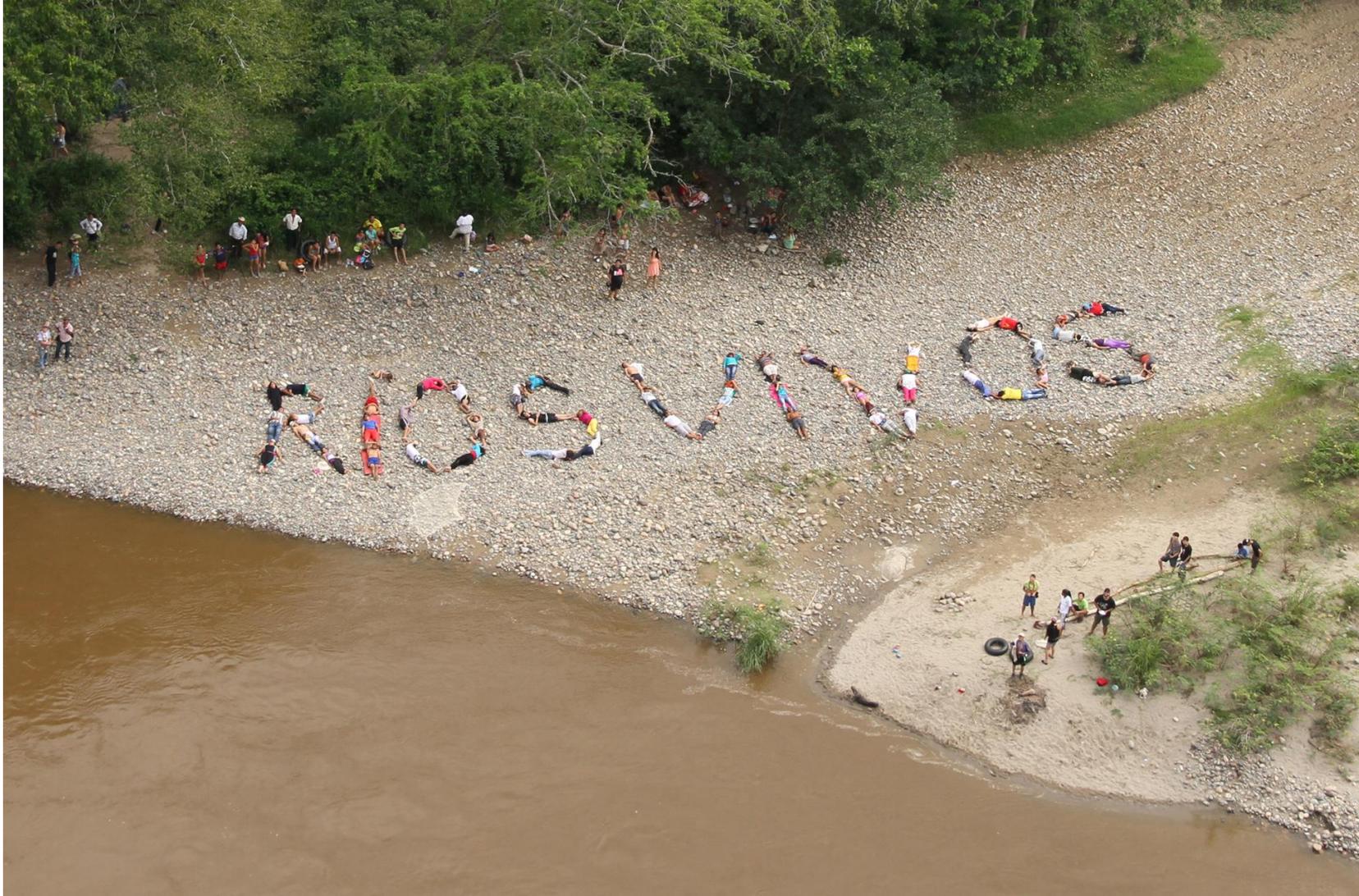
<https://vimeo.com/140867172>

<https://vimeo.com/139515750>

Water is Life, 2016
Geochoerography.
Incerteza Viva.
32 Blnal Sao Paulo.



Rios Vivos, 2014
Geochoreography.
Magdalena River.
Colombia.





Atarraya,, 2015-2018
Geochoreography
Image: ArtBo, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKRvZSxoHJO>