

WORKS LIST

Clockwise from left to right

Roadmap

2019

Tumbleweed branches

Captives

2019

Tumbleweeds, acrylic tubes, ventilation systems

Exodus

2019

Achiote seeds

Chapuletas

2016

Digital video

Runtime: 1'52"

Transfusion

2019

Paper and wire

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Juana Córdova is well-known for her subtle, but poetic, responses to our natural world using unexpected materials. For the duration of her residency at Artpace, she focused on two species of plants from the Americas: achiote (*Bixa Orellana*) and the tumbleweed (*Russian Thistle*). The tumbleweed arrived in the Americas in a shipment of flaxseed from Russia, and in the western United States conditions were perfect for its propagation. Achiote originated the Amazon jungle and its presence extends into the tropical regions of Central and South America.

Achiote are seeds from a shrub that are typically dried, ground, and used as a spice or dye in cosmetics, textiles, and gastronomy since the Pre-Columbian era. It is well-known in Ecuador and is used in ritual practices of Tsáchilas or "colorados," indigenous people of Ecuador, for its associated curative properties. The artist chose to use achiote because of its characteristic color (the natural color code is E160b) which historically has been used in food and clothing. *Exodus*, installed the southwest corner of the gallery, is composed entirely of achiote seeds which speaks both literally and figuratively to the spread of both flora and people.

For a number of works in the gallery, the artist used tumbleweeds, a plant that once dry, breaks from its roots and travels with the wind, disseminating its seeds. Tumbleweeds carry with them their own connotations in popular culture as icons of the American West and metaphorical representations of western expansion, contrary to their actual Russian origins. Córdova states, "I see tumbleweeds as a symbol of freedom, a plant that travels through deserts with the help of the wind. It is a species that detaches from the land and scatters its seeds aimlessly."

Córdova's attention to the history and behavior of botanical life that spreads from its origins to abroad is germane in border states such as Texas. Myriad connections can be made between the journey of these plants and those of immigrants who leave their homes, in search of better conditions and relief from wars and poverty.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Since 1995, Artpace has welcomed more than 230 artists through its renowned International Artist-in-Residence program. Annually, Artpace hosts three residencies, which each feature one Texas-based artist, one national artist, and one international artist, who are selected by a notable guest curator. Each eight-week residency culminates in a two-month exhibition on site. The mission of this program is to provide artists with unparalleled resources that allow them to experiment with new ideas and take provocative risks.

Artpace San Antonio is a nonprofit residency program which supports regional, national, and international artists in the creation of new art.

As a catalyst for artistic expression, we engage local communities with global art practices and experiences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support for the International Artist-in-Residence Program comes from Artpace members & donors and:

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ABOUT ARTPACE

INTERNATIONAL

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Chronicles of Uprooting
Juana Córdova

Summer 2019 International Artist-in-Residence

In residence May 28–July 22, 2019

Exhibitions on view July 18–September 8, 2019

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Juana Córdova was born in Cuenca, Ecuador in 1973, where she studied and obtained her bachelor's degree in Visual Arts. She was elected as Ecuador's representative at the VIII Cuenca Biennial (2004) and has had several solo exhibitions *Las Manos en la Masa* (2006) at Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca at El Comercio Foundation. One of her most recent exhibitions, *A la Orilla* (2016), shown at the Municipal Museum of Modern Art of Cuenca, exhibited a panoramic view of her work.

During her twenty-year career, the places she has lived have influenced the topics she approaches. From the city or the countryside, her work explores the role of the individual in contemporary society and its relationship with nature. Her installations and objects express her deep concern for the environment.

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