

CHIE BCHUSQUA

We Chew Coca Leaves

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Para mi familia: esto lo hago pensando en ustedes, con mucho amor, y honestidad.

Suaz guan amiscua!

TABLE OF CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
LIST OF FIGURES.....	5
ABSTRACT.....	6
PROJECT REPORT	
INTRODUCTION.....	7
REALITIES OF THE COCA LEAF.....	9
Coca: mambe, chusqua, chacchar, mascar.....	9
Commercialization of coca and the war on drugs.....	10
HISTORICAL CONTEXT	11
Colonialism then imperialism now	11
Indigenismo.....	13
MATERIAL CULTURE & LANGUAGE.....	14
Language and autonomy.....	14
SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION IN A GLOBAL SENSE.....	15
INSTALLATION.....	16
A SOUVENIR SHOP.....	16
Re-creating the commercial kitsch.....	17
Faking the fakes.....	18
THE SACRED SPACE.....	19
INFLUENCES.....	21
Ai Weiwei on action.....	21
Music as empowerment	21
Nadin Ospina on culture.....	23
CONCLUSION.....	24
TECHNICAL STATEMENT.....	25
FIGURES.....	27
REFERENCES.....	39
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	40

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , sacred space, audience chewing coca leaves.....	27
Figure 2: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , commercial space, Coca-Cola & Inca Kola.....	27
Figure 3: Diagram showing scale of cocaine to coca leaves in regards to production.....	28
Figure 4: La Paisana Jacinta & El Negro Mama.....	28
Figure 5: Hilaria Supa Huaman.....	28
Figure 6: Indigenous guard escorting Sgt. Garcia out of indigenous territory.	28
Figure 7: Shakira Pepsi poster.....	28
Figure 8: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , building installation.....	29
Figure 9: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , inside the commercial space.....	30
Figure 10: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , ceramic pigs for sale	30
Figure 11: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , masks of “pre-Columbian art”	31
Figure 12: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , authentic pre-Columbian pottery.....	31
Figure 13: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , detail of authentic pre-Columbian pottery.....	31
Figure 14: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , bronze figure.....	32
Figure 15: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , sacred space wood detail.....	32
Figure 16: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , sacred space, El Mambe.....	32
Figure 17: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , detail of coca leave vessel.....	32
Figure 18: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , El Mambe presenting, holding and chewing coca leaves.....	33
Figure 19: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , detail of coca vessels.....	34
Figure 20: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , detail of curved wall in sacred space.....	34
Figure 21: Ai Weiwei <i>Sunflower Seeds</i>	34
Figure 22: Nadin Ospina <i>Chac Mool III</i>	34
Figure 23: Original <i>Chac Mool</i>	34
Figure 24: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , Sacred space inside view.....	35
Figure 25: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , exhibition repection.....	35
Figure 26: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , computer design, sketch-up	36
Figure 27: <i>Chie Bchusqua</i> , construction images.....	37

Summary of Project in Lieu of Thesis
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WE CHEW COCA LEAVES

By
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Chair: Anna Calluori Holcombe

Major: Art

This paper discusses the historical and current issues that contribute to appropriation of a culture and art. Touching on topics of Colonialism and *indigenismo*, this paper aims to present the reader with a historical context of events in relationship to these ideologies while tying them to a work of art. In this context, the souvenir shop is presented as the physical place where colonial mentality still dominates. It also presents a place where one can move past the colonial mindset and engage in the self-reflection of identity. The following paper explains the project *Chie Bchusqua* and its context in the world, on the how and why it exists.

“El conocimiento no siempre es útil y valioso, ya que si no se vive experimentando, practicando, recreando, evaluando, se queda reducido a un conocimiento acrítico. Por eso es importante llevar a la par la teoría y la práctica para transformar la realidad y sobre eso ir solucionando las dificultades de la vida cotidiana” - Alicia Chocue, maestra bilingüe ex-gobernadora del resguardo de Pueblo Nuevo

"Knowledge is not always useful and valuable; if you do not experiment with it, put it into practice, recreate it, evaluate it, it diminishes into mindless knowledge. That is why it is important to bring together theory and practice in order to transform the reality and solve the difficulties of daily life " - Alicia Chocue, bilingual teacher, former governor of Pueblo Nuevo reservation.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout my education, art making, art theory and art education have been viewed primarily from one perspective. Object driven arts have been separated, not from the maker, but from the life of the viewer, creating a separation between what is craft and what is art. This language of thought places the things we make as exposed objects that can evoke questions, appreciation, love, rage etc. Being critical is one of the things that Western art education emphasizes. I believe that if being critical is positive, then we must become critical of how we learn what art is, what it does for us and what is its function in society. I content that history does not follow a straight line, but is a large tapestry of interwoven threads, overlapping designs, complex craftsmanship and most importantly a work in progress. In school I was taught that to be a man one must have short hair, Spanish was the language of respectable people, and that a *tunjo*¹ is not something of artistic importance such as Michelangelo's *David*. Furthermore, working with clay belonged in “*el campo*” (the rural area) and was not a serious profession for one to follow.

The global voice of Latin America has been represented mostly, if not always, by the dominant westernized society. Since the time of the Spanish arrival, the consequence of such encounter as it was in 1492, left many scars on the land and the people, both physical and psychological. Since then the

¹ *Tunjo*; A small votive figure or object used as offerings in temples, caves, lagoons, and other sacred places.

people of the Americas have shown a resilience and resistance to disappear physically, spiritually and mentally.

From a sacred substance to an abused substance, the coca leaf in Latin America, especially in Colombia, has gone from being an important part of Amerindian culture to becoming an icon associated with cocaine and the war on drugs. The unifying and stabilizing effects of coca chewing on Andean culture contrast markedly with the disruptive and convoluted phenomenon of cocaine use in Western societies.² As a medicinal and ritualistic plant the coca leaf has been used by people of the Andean region for over 8000 years³; as a commercial commodity it has been used by many societies (such as the main ingredient in *Coca-Cola* ®), for example, for just over 100 years. As an illegal distilled substance known as cocaine the coca leaf has been extracted and consumed by dominant societies for merely the past 40 years.

Chie Bchusqua brings into awareness the complex state of the coca leaf, while at the same time presenting its original and most significant role in Amerindian and Andean culture by creating a place for it both in the traditional and the contemporary sense. This installation asks the public to consider their own misconceptions about the coca plant and its function, and to bring into question their own relationship to the coca leaf within the relationship of material culture. Connecting ceramic material culture and architectural space to the coca plant, *Chie Bchusqua* also aims to bring an awareness of the consumption and commercialization of the plant, while presenting the audience with its original use, the unapologetic act of chewing coca leaves (figure 1) (figure 2).

² Pacini, and Franquemont, *Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*, (1986), 5

³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-11878241>

REALITIES OF THE COCA LEAF

Coca: *mambe, chusqua, chacchar, mascar.*

Coca is the word, which we chew, we think and then we speak of. It humanizes us, brings us to understand the great thought that is consciousness. It is important to begin by mentioning coca's symbolic importance to the cultures in the Andes and beyond. For over 8000 years the coca leaf has been use in medicine and ritual by the indigenous people of west South America.⁴ This long-term use of the leaf has shaped countless cultures of the Andes and west Amazon to have a unique relationship to the plant. The leaf becomes a symbol of Andean unity, of resilience and permanence, because even through colonial times it took on a new role for the marginalized indigenous society as a liberator from pain and a facilitator of endurance during harsh working environments.

Its traditional use as medicine and ritual comes mainly in the form of chewing, which can be said in many ways, such as *mambe, chusqua* (Colombia), *chacchar, pijchea* (Peru and Bolivia), *mascar, masticar coquear* (elsewhere). The fact that chewing coca leaves has so many distinctive linguistic realities illustrates the presence and permanence of it in Andean culture. In a new transformation of meaning, coca epitomizes the way native Andeans are entangled in the meshes of an international economy whose politics and morality affect their lives in ways they can neither imagine nor resist.⁵

⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-11878241>

⁵ Allen, *The hold life has , coca and cultural identity in an Andean community*, (2002), 21

Commercialization of coca and the war on drugs

As I meet people, especially here in the United States, the conversation typically goes like this – I introduce myself, and likely because of my accent or appearance, I am asked, “Where are you from?” I respond that I am from Colombia and immediately I can sense their neurons firing up, connecting and speaking to each other, as they reach the most inner parts of the brain where memory is kept and all things associated with Colombia come to mind. Often their next question to me is, “Oh, you know where to get that good cocaine, right?”

Cocaine has been a dominant topic in Colombia since the early 1980’s and has played a very integral role in representing the people. All cocaine entering world markets is derived from coca leaves produced in South America, most of which are processed in Colombian, creating a staggering increase in demand for cocaine for recreational use. This has a devastating impact on South American economies, politics and, most tragically, on indigenous cultures⁶. The transformation of coca to cocaine creates a product that ignores the traditional benefits of the plant in its natural state, and creates a substance that only focuses on obtaining the primary alkaloid that gives the plant its effect and concentrates as a fine white powder. In order to make 100g cocaine it typically requires the distillation of 30kg of coca leaves under kerosene, sulfuric acid, potassium permanganate, acetone and hydrochloric acid. (figure 3)

Another current use of the coca plant in global society is its use in Coca-Cola. For over one hundred years the Coca-Cola Company has used the coca leaf as one of its main ingredients. While the original process involved utilizing the leaf without chemical changes, the current process, is still taking using coca and is taking place in the Stepan Company plant in Maywood, New Jersey⁷, takes the leaf and de-natures the coca leaf and removes the alkaloid that produces the effects of the coca leaf, known

⁶ Pacini, and Franquemont, *Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*, (1986), 5

⁷ http://www.naturalnews.com/032658_Coca-Cola_cocaine.html

as cocaine hydrochloride. The use of the coca plant in Coca-Cola creates a market for the leaf in a commercial setting. And while the eradication of cocaine involves the fumigation and prohibition of coca plantation, the exportation of the coca leaves is legal as long as it ends up in a plastic container as a black carbonated bubbly beverage. In turn, the use of coca as cocaine begins to mirror the use of coca in Coca-Cola. The social impact of the Coca-Cola and cocaine is felt mostly in indigenous communities where cultural survival is difficult as a result of both of these commercial products. Cocaine has caused unrestrained violence that drug lords are able to employ in a variety of areas, frequently with political protection.⁸ Coca-Cola's affordability and successful advertisement campaign increased its popularity and consumption therefore aiding to the increase in diabetes and obesity. Lastly, cocaine cannot exist without the coca leaf, Coca-Cola could have not been made with the coca leaf, and together they cannot be understood without their historical context, colonialism and imperialism.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Colonialism then and imperialism now

In a dreadful way, colonialism has been the story of our lives. The Colombian people see it, hear it, feel it, and without thinking, allow it. Standards of beauty, the practice of religion, how we perceive people's actions to classify them as either backward or progressive are all funneled through the lens of the colonial mind. In Colombia, as well as most of Latin America, western ideologies and practices have been the norm for hundreds of years. This has led to the misconception that indigenous people and culture are stagnant, learned in history books and forever frozen in time. Popular culture has been able to use and appropriate certain aspects of indigenous culture for its own benefit. A case in point, are *La Paisana Jacinta* and *El Negro Mama*, (figure 4) both characters played by Peruvian comedian actor and

⁸ Pacini, and Franquemont, *Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*, (1986), 93

creator Jorge Benavides. These characters aim to represent the rural “serrana” a stereotype of a highland Andean woman, and the Afro Peruvian man. Racist, derogatory, ignorant and simplified portrayals of people bring humor to some and at the same time, frustration to others. The moment someone takes action to address the problem of racial and social inequality, as Hilaria Supa Huaman (figure 5) an indigenous activist did, we are reminded that the issue lies deeper than merely in a television show. On Twitter, Hilaria received countless comments from supporters of the show, tweeting comments such as, “Chola of shit, why do you want to get rid of the Paisana.” Situations such as the one with Huaman’s refusal to accept racism as a norm appear in similar contexts in Colombia with similar results.

Between the 12th and 14th of July 2012, after being told by indigenous leaders and communities that they did not want any armed forces in their territory, neither guerrilla nor military, Sergeant Rodrigo Garcia was picked up and carried outside Cerro Berlin in the town of Toribío, in Cauca Colombia. (figure 6) During this event images were captured of the incident taking place, followed by an interview that showed Sgt. Garcia in tears and humiliated by the event. Pictures and videos of the interview spread around YouTube and Facebook causing a massive support for Sgt. Garcia and an array of racial slurs, towards the indigenous *Cauquenos* such as, “Coca growing Indians they are just doing a favor to the guerrillas, damned anti-patriots” and “get rid of those damned guerrilla Indians, we need more military presence.”

Events like these show how the nation engages in the practice of *Indigenismo* ideology and consumes the history and culture of indigenous people. Native culture is presented as national patrimony while ignoring the contemporary issues that indigenous people face. It is a mentality that cares only about the outside form of indigenous representation and not the inner meaning. While it is accepted to utilize the music and art of indigenous people to represent yourself or a nation, the lives of indigenous people are not respected. In contrast, the idea of defending your land, revolution against injustice and being autonomous are viewed as negative antipatriotic acts of terrorism.

Indigenismo

Indigenismo is considered a political and social ideology where the ideals of indigenous cultures, both present and past, are utilized in a way to create an alliance with marginalized peoples. It also emerged in different places of Latin America through different times, but the most common thread between each emergence was the presence of the elite in regards to the control of the indigenous ideological movement. During the mid-1930's *indigenismo* emerged in Mexico as a way for *criollos*⁹ to distinguish themselves from the European Spanish culture. This ideology created the affirmation for cultural appropriation within a nation in order to answer the question, what does it mean to be Mexican? The answer came from the so called "primitive past". The use of Aztec iconography and history merged in a contemporary setting created a false and removed representation of indigenous people.¹⁰ This ideology stretches from the United States and all the way throughout the southern Andes, and it is one that calls out against imperialism, foreign capital and the dominant western cultural heritage. But this ideology is critiqued by Allan Knight in the book, *The idea of race in Latin America*, where he points out, "The Indians (indigenous people) themselves were the objects, not the authors of *indigenismo*".¹¹

The term "Indian" carries many negative connotations to Native Americans. In Colombia for example, it has the connotation of someone who is brutish, does not have manners and is poor or uneducated. For those who are identified as Indian, this label causes a push to reject their own identity. Recently, it has become popular in the Americas to be indigenous. Popular culture uses indigenous American culture, selling it, playing it and wearing it as an appropriated pattern on their backpacks, for example. But truth is that people outside of the indigenous community want to be indigenous, and they begin to represent indigenous culture without the burden of being themselves Indians.

⁹ Criollo, a person from Spanish America, especially one of pure Spanish descent.

¹⁰ Lauer, *Andes imaginarios: Discursos del Indigenismo 2*. (1997), 42

¹¹ Knight, *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*. (1990), 77

MATERIAL CULTURE & LANGUAGE

Language and autonomy

In 1770, King Charles III banned the practice of the *Muysca*'s¹² native language. Two hundred and twenty one years later this ban was lifted in the new Colombian Constitution of 1991. Two years after I was born, my native language became legal, but because of this ban having lasted over two centuries, the *Muysca* language, had become officially extinct, this is according to scholars, books, and Wikipedia. However, the language remains alive within us, the landscape we live in and the memory of our elders. *Muyscubun* literally means the language of people and is not the only the language that we are rebuilding and maintaining, but a world view of our own existence. When an individual loses his or her language, they lose the bridge between their inner self and the outside world, as anthropologist Wade Davis puts it, "A language is not just a body of vocabulary or a set of grammatical rules. A language is a flash of the human spirit. It's a vehicle through which the soul of each particular culture comes into the material world. Every language is an old-growth forest of the mind, a watershed, a thought, an ecosystem of spiritual possibilities."

I view language as transcending mere words and manifesting itself into materiality, into clay. The practice of my *Muysca* visual language becomes essential to my existence. To express my native language visually is as important as to express it orally.

¹² Muyscas: Indigenous people of the Antiplano Cundiboyasense of Colombia.

SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION IN A GLOBAL SENSE

“**Third World**” are all the other countries, today often used to roughly describe the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The term “**Fourth World**,” coined in the early 1970s by Shuswap Chief George Manuel, refers to widely unknown nations (cultural entities) of indigenous peoples, “First Nations” living within or across national state boundaries.¹³

The concept of 4th world is something new to me, by looking at the relationship of nations with the indigenous people living in the territory; I am able to grasp this idea very well. I think what I have learned in regards to being labeled, is how true this label becomes the moment I acknowledged its own reality as well as the measurements to calculate such labels. In Colombia we experience this daily, we see ideal beauty in posters, novellas, and movies. Also, we hear and see the successful ones on television, and the Internet. National identity sometimes is created under absurd circumstances such as the personal achievements of an athlete or an artist, whose only connection with the rest of us (Colombians) is our nationality. In Colombia we are constantly told what is good and bad from outside sources that have no connection to us. As a result we consume foreign products good or bad and then as the Colombian pop recording artist Shakira suggested, we ask for more. (figure 7)

We are told we are *tercermundistas*, people of the 3rd world. This classification is mostly based on the perception of a country’s political and economic stability. The focus of economics as a measure of progress or national stability fails to acknowledge other important aspects of development such as education, the aspirations of its people, morality and creativity. I do not believe we are *tercermundistas*. We have our own development that follows different norms, and we should look at development from our point of view.

¹³ (<http://www.nationsonline.org>)

INSTALLATION

Understanding how art exists in the context of contemporary society both western and non-western led me to create *Chie Bchusqua*. I present two realities that exist and affect cultural identity. One is how indigenous culture is presented, consumed and sold as commodity and the other a true essence of an indigenous culture, in this case the *Muysca*. The latter is not concerned for how it is viewed by outside eyes, but a concern for its own existence. The installation is divided into two physical spaces united by the architectural form of a two-story building (figure 8). This division shows the interconnectivity between the reality of the authentic and the fake, the original and the appropriated. At the same time as these spaces are architecturally connected, they are conceptually separated, a souvenir shop on the first floor juxtaposes a shrine to the coca leaf on the second story.

A SOUVENIR SHOP

Mugs, bags, bracelets, pins, and other items are present in the souvenir shop that reference colonialism and *indigenismo* in physical way. Whether it is the bastardized fusion of generic Pre-Columbian reliquaries manifested in the form of tribal masks, the “authentic” *mochilas* (Colombian woven bags) or the “authentic” pre-Columbian antique pottery sold, these items speak the same language as many souvenir shops in Colombia, a language that says nothing meaningful and communicates using nonsensical words. (figure 9)

I utilize the souvenir shop to bring into reality the commercialization of coca alongside material culture. And I carefully considered how to create this commercial space. In doing so, I visited different places that evoke the same visual language as my desired commercial space intended. These include places such as La Tienda, a Gainesville Latin restaurant, and La Aurora, a Latin market also located in Gainesville. They seem to be the ideal examples. These two stores became my real-time visual

references, meaning that while I enjoyed some freshly prepared *chimichangas* with some delicious room temperature Inka Cola[®], I was also paying attention to the environment and how the merchandise was arranged. And while La Tienda and La Aurora have a souvenir aspect to their business, it is important to acknowledge who their target audiences are, and how they differ from a typical souvenir shop in Colombia.

Their main target audience is Latino and Hispanic people living outside their home country. Thus the items begin to act as memory signifiers and the merchandise references nostalgia. But are they selling the idea of the place, a bastardization of a place or the real place? *Charros* and *Mariachis*, stereotypical Mexican figurine sleeping on the ground, masks of *luchadores*, traditional woven backpacks, name bracelets of Latin American countries, places like these freeze in an instant and merge everything into a Latino melting pot surrounded by glass panels and tags.

Re-creating the commercial kitsch

With this installation my studio practice shifted from creating single coiled built objects, to rapid production of the same object using ceramic molds and casting slip. I find that based on what I am aiming to create the appropriate process will follow. It makes sense that if I am to speak about the mass produced object, industry and culture that I must embark in that journey. I start by referencing images of what I want to reproduce, for instance the popular kitsch ceramic *piggies*, sold in souvenir shops. (figure 10) I strove to replicate them as truthfully as possible in order to create multiple accurate copies. I find that in this process creativity takes on a different role. I am not able to choose what kind of pig it is, what style it is sculpted in, what scale and material, but I am creatively free to choose how I will make the mold, how will I paint them and what tools I will use to simplify the process. I create these parameters that are focused on the quickest and most effortless production of these examples of excessive material culture.

Clay slip casting day and night, in between classes and assignments turned my clay studio practice into a monotony of actions and reactions. I am no longer walking in circles around a large coiled figure, layering inch by inch of thick groggy clay, instead I am waiting 30 to 45 minutes for another *piggy* to be dry enough so I could take it out of the mold.

During this time I am not claiming it was a living hell, but things were starting to feel warm around me. The one thing that kept me sane through this process was knowing that I was working on one part of a bigger project. That these *piggies* would help bring into context everything else around them.

Faking Fakes

An important purpose of my shop is not economic gain or financial stability, but to bring into a gallery setting a place that exists outside the context of fine art. I did not invent a shop that speaks of colonialism; there was no need for that since these already exist. In the souvenir shop, I present the audience with replicas of replicas. These objects (the ceramic objects and the bronze piece) are not copies of original works from the ancient Americas, but instead copies of fakes, or rather conceptual copies of fakes. More sophisticated than the copy is the pastiche, or *pasticcio*. (figure 11) Instead of copying the decoration of a particular piece, the forger selects and then assembles the borrowed elements into a new creation, which, while imitative of the style, does not exactly copy any single known work.¹⁴ Ceramics masks showing Maya, and Inca iconography merged into one single object, reproduced and slightly altered each time, in order to create a sense of uniqueness, reflected how indigenous cultures can be simplified and generalized as one.

¹⁴ Bruhns, and Kelker, *Faking the Ancient Andes*. (2010). 21

Next to these masks one finds Pre-Columbian Art for sale, specifically ancient Andean pottery. These vessels and pots are treated surface-wise to look old and worn, as if they had been made hundreds of years ago and were recently dug out by *huaqueros*.¹⁵(figure 12) However, rather than contributing to the forgery of Ancient Andean art, I chose to blatantly carve into the each piece of pottery the words “Authentic Pre-Columbian Art” as a way to negate its authenticity as an artifact and assert its reality as fraud. (figure 13) Lastly, one single figure stands out from the rest, its golden and metallic, calling to the reference of gold, mimicking the styles of Colombian and Peruvian ancient iconography, weighing two pounds and with sharp unclean edges, this piece becomes the most expensive item for sale, priced at \$360.00, but the buyer must be careful, for if not the sharp edges are bound to cause some injuries. (figure14)

THE SACRED SPACE

The second floor presents the necessary elements for the creation of a sacred space where the coca leaf can be present and shared. I treat the clay and construction materials with the same consideration as the coca leaf; the unfinished quality of the space evokes the urban manifestation of buildings in towns like Raquira, la Peña, and the side hills in southern Bogota. This aspect of architecture is unfinished in order to carry the idea of the possibility of continuing to build further upon it. This type of architecture is in a state of progression, similar to the Muysca language, which is in a state of construction. At the same time, the architecture is linked to the coca leaf by presenting it as the understructure of what is below.

In the sacred space, wood and drywall contextualize the room, clay becomes material culture and the coca leaf is the essence for all these elements to come together. (figure 15, 16, 17) This space was

¹⁵ Huaquero: a term associated with grave robbers.

made while thinking about autonomy in the choices of expression. The sitting figure is there to visually teach the viewer what to do with the coca leaf, while at the same time functioning as a vessel for the leaves. *Mambe* written on its chest, a quid of coca leaves in its cheek, and a bandana with the symbol for a sacred place written on it, all these elements tie the figure to my Muysca culture. (figure 18)

This figure is made was made in a traditional pose, sitting upward chewing coca leaves. It is a tradition that has remain alive for centuries. In the Muysca tradition when one sits and chew coca leaves, it is because at the moment he/she is about to speak, and teach. The hands and feet are rendered to a more realistic sense, while the head and torso are more styled. This goes back to the use of visual language and the choices made in the making of the figure. I learned from *Tunjos*, and that influenced my early life as a sculptor. The features on the face recall the style of *Tunjos* in my own way of expression, while the body references a vessel.

This particular figure was not done to traditional scale but it was made on a monumental scale measuring over 4 feet sitting down. It is because my intention was to make it more relatable to the people approaching it. At the same time, there are different amounts of physical realness rendered on the body. At the same time occupying more physical space in the room, this allowed it to have a relationship of it and the space as an inhabitant and less as an object. The scale also calls for a sense of permanence and stability that objects don't easily convey.

On each side of the figure one finds a vessel with a plaque placed in a symmetrical way to create an inviting space. Each vessel is filled with coca leaves and written in both Spanish and English are welcoming words. (figure 19) The sacred space is a reflective one, minimal of visual distractions, compared to what is below it, and elevated physically from the foundation below in order to physically offset the routine of walking on a singular plane. The curved walls create a softness to the room as to mimic a pair of arms extending out to embrace the visitor. (figure 20)

I view material culture as words and stories lasting eons. In this sacred place our history is present and living, and the history of the coca leaf continues. A place where visual language and aspirations come together in order to continue passing down the knowledge of *Muyscubun*, and the respect of the coca leaf.

INFLUENCES

Ai Weiwei on action

In my artistic practice I strive to bring theory and practice together, to create works that not only speak but also act. I am inspired by Ai Weiwei's works, specifically the ones that combine theory and practice in a very poetic manner. His incorporation of culture and politics into contemporary art in a western and non-western context is very refreshing. The act of filling the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, London, with millions of handmade porcelain sunflower seeds not only brought awe while encouraging thoughts and questions to those experiencing the installation, but financially assisted 1600 artisans from the city of Jingdezhen by employing them over a period of two years. Utilizing the sunflower seed as symbol to bring into a place the history of a country and its people, the seed recalls the times of hunger during the Cultural Revolution, but also the symbol of Mao's party, for then the people were the sunflowers and Mao was the sun. Uniting a traditional practice (ceramics) to a contemporary setting, *Sunflower Seeds* (figure 21) inspires me to be more involved with my community in Colombia, be more active in a physical way and create works that produce physical change. This notion of art creating change, whether temporary or permanent pushes me to continue making.

Music as Empowerment

Music has played a big role in culture on how it influences individuals to shape the society they live in. I have always been surrounded by music, whether being taught to play the flute by my father or

constantly listening to music while working, playing and listening to music helped shaped the person I became. I am influenced by music just as much as the visual arts, groups such as *Calle 13*¹⁶, *Drezus*¹⁷, and *Grupo 4+3*¹⁸ carry a message of empowerment through their lyrics, and to me they say what I visually want to create, the celebration of self and culture with a hint of rebellion. Songs like *Latinoamerica*, *Red Winter* and *Himno de la Guardia Indigena*, speak of uplifting their respective audience, promoting identity, education, and autonomy.

<p><i>Latinoamerica</i> Calle 13</p>	<p><i>Red Winter</i> Drezus</p>	<p><i>Himno de la Guardia Indigena</i> Grupo 4+3</p>
<p>Soy lo que dejaron, soy toda la sobra de lo que se robaron. Un pueblo escondido en la cima, mi piel es de cuero por eso aguanta cualquier clima.</p> <p><i>English Translation</i></p> <p>I am what they left All the leftovers of what was stolen. A village hidden in the summit, My skin made of leather to endure any weather.</p>	<p>Before you take a stand Remember to get educated. Once you understand the message Go and share it with your neighbors. Basically we getting taken hostage for our land, till we sell it out for profit now they got the upper hand, but trust me we can stop it, I'm thanking the four sister, dear Mr., Harper we're all coming to get you.</p>	<p>Compañeros han caído, pero no nos vencerán. Porque por cada indio muerto, otros miles nacerán. Pa' delante compañeros, dispuestos a resistir. Defender nuestros derechos, así nos toque morir</p> <p><i>English Translation</i></p> <p>Comrades have fallen, but we won't be defeated. Because for every dead Indian, a thousand more will be born.</p> <p>Forward comrades Ready to resist And defend our rights Even if we must die.</p>

¹⁶ Calle 13, a Hip hop/rap group from Puerto Rico.

¹⁷ Drezus, Hip hop rapper from Saskatchewan, Canada

¹⁸ Grupo 4+3, a musical ensemble from Cauca, Colombia

Nadín Ospina and his *indigenismo in art*

Colombian artist Nadín Ospina is well known for his work that combines North American popular culture and Pre-Columbian aesthetics in an attempt to criticize and/or comment on contemporary Colombian culture. Works like *Chac Mool III* (figure 22) depict the classical forms of a *Chac Mool* (figure 23) Maya sculpture mixed with the iconography of the popular cartoon character Mickey Mouse. Ospina works with the recreation of pre-Columbian artifacts while re-contextualizing them to a contemporary setting.¹⁹

Ospina talks about how the Colombian people are always looking outside Colombia for answers or for inspiration. He goes on to say that the Colombian individual pretends to be something else rather than Colombian. The Colombian upper class wants to be French, the middle class wants to be North American, while the popular class wants to be Mexican, but nobody wants to be Colombian.²⁰ With this in mind one can see that Ospina understands a cultural structure that has been created, and one that he is critical of. This criticism is towards a society that over-consumes and one that comes to view the outside powers as more influential.

The idea of concentrating your efforts, knowledge, and experiences within a nation or a culture and not allowing outside forces, nations or cultures to interfere may seem as narrow minded. But one must consider the context that Colombia has been under, and how for most, if not all of the time the nation has looked outside for answers, rarely we look within our own boundaries to solve problems our problems. *Indigenismo* brought a false sense of pride, one that was based on materiality and not on the core of ideas or the essence of a culture, of how we view the world.

¹⁹ Herzog, *Cantos cuentos Colombianos: Arte Colombiano contemporaneo*.(2005) 23

²⁰ Herzog, *Cantos cuentos Colombianos: Arte Colombiano contemporaneo*.(2005) 26

CONCLUSION

*“As rain drops and fog gather high in the mountains to condense and unite becoming streams,
streams that met up gathering force to flow as mighty rivers,
rivers that speed up and slow down,
collecting memory so that they then can dive into a massive ocean,
for here they will rest.*

*Until that warmth radiating energy that is our sun, picks each and every particle of memory, takes it up
to the skies to refresh the mountain, with a mist and a calm cooling wind of thought.”*

Divided into two physical spaces, *Chie Bchusqua* is the result of my experience and influenced of the experience of others. Implementing Post-Colonial theories and a critique of *Indigenismo*, I created a space that speaks of misuse, plundering, cultural misappropriation and falseness in the context of a souvenir shop. Here we experience the reality of how Colonialism remains present today and shows how it influences the decisions and perceptions of culture and people.

Taking eleven steps towards toward the second floor brings one to the true nature of what is below, a place of thought where the coca leaf, the space and clay can exist in unity. As we aim to move past Colonialism, the focus is on not only what is lost, but on what is left in order to assure our place in time and space. (figure 24)

In the poem above, I refer to the cycle of water as a cycle of thought, *Chie Bchusqua* becomes this, a gathering of philosophies, theories and practices condensed into an installation to flow as information to those who experience it, in the hopes that they carry that information and turn it into mighty rivers repeating an endless cycle of self-consciousness. (figure 25)

TECHNICAL STATEMENT

The entire project required an interdisciplinary approach. From 3-D rendering programs, to commercial construction materials, this project married a design and function within ceramic objects, sculpture, and architecture.

The Building

This research involved a series of investigations regarding construction material, techniques, building codes, and permits. I looked at several online documents and videos on how to create simple structures like, sheds or balconies. My background in drafting and architectural design came in handy to plan out and design the structure, but the physical nature of building it was still new to me. I started by creating sketches and then moving on to a floor plan of the desired structure. I found that using Google Sketch-up really help in figuring out the overlook of what I was trying to build. With Google Sketch-up, I was able to create a detail plan of the building down to every stud and sheet of plywood that I would use. (figure 26)

After designed were completed, the project was proposed to my committee as well as to the manager of the office of Building Code and Management, American Disabilities Act, and Environmental Health and Safety. A budget was created and sent to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarship in order to request funding for materials. Upon approval, construction of the building began. Utilizing standard construction materials such as OSB plywood, wood studs, screws and drywall, I created the building offsite in sections. Making each individual wall independent allowed it for easy storage and transportation while ensuring a site specificity assemblage during the installation. From stairs, railings and walls, to the required size for each floor truss, every element present in the design and construction of the building had to follow residential code.(figure 27) Upon inspection of the building the next step of bringing the ceramic work could be followed.

The ceramics

In regards to the ceramic works, there were two different techniques implemented. Slip-casting and press molding was used to create multiple copies of different objects, and although the casting slip varied (earthenware, stoneware, porcelain), the firing temperature remained the same, at cone 04. The reason for different slip recipes was only based on convenience and based on what was available.

Hand building techniques such as coil and pinching were implemented in order to create a large scale figure alongside two small vessels. These three items (the figure and two vessels) were created using a specific clay recipe formulated to mature between cone 4 and cone 6. Underglazes and glazes were well used in the decoration of both the figure and the vessels. The figure was fired in a gas kiln to cone 4 (2124F/1162C) with a small reduction atmosphere. The vessels were fired at cone 6 on electric kilns, and all three were once fired, meaning they came in the kiln bone dry and were fired to their final temperature.

Cone 4 clay recipe	
Hawthorne bond	18
Red Art	31
OM4	18
Coarse grog	11
Fine grog	22
Red Iron Oxide	.5% of dry mix



Figure 1



Figure 2

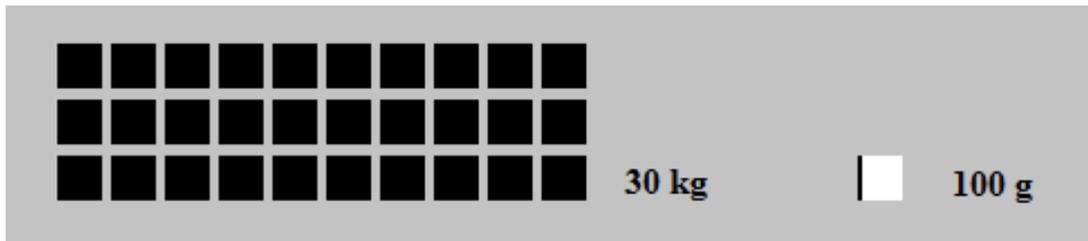


Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



Figure 12

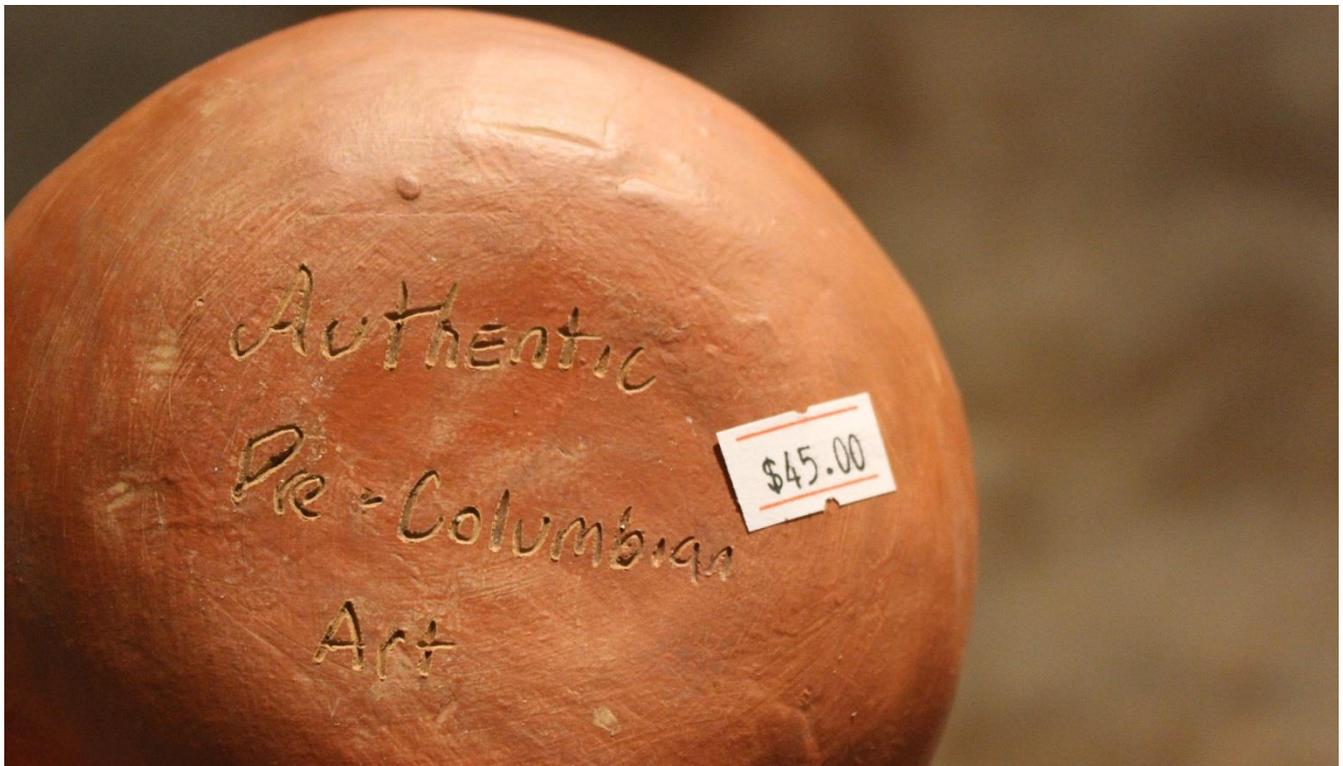


Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

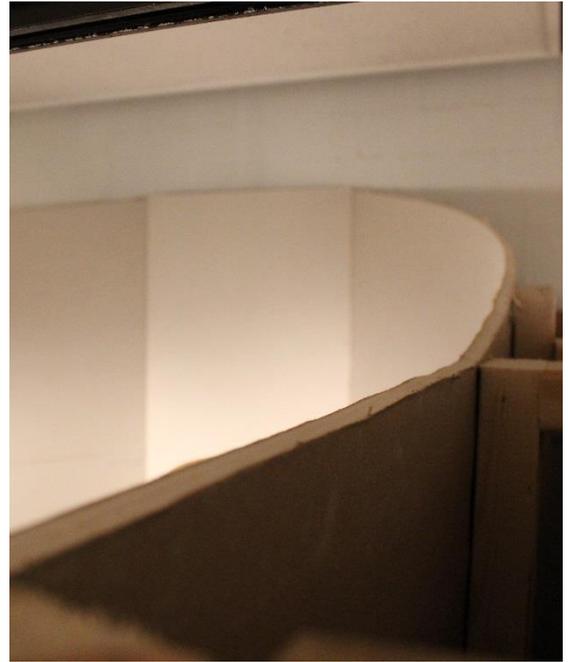


Figure 20

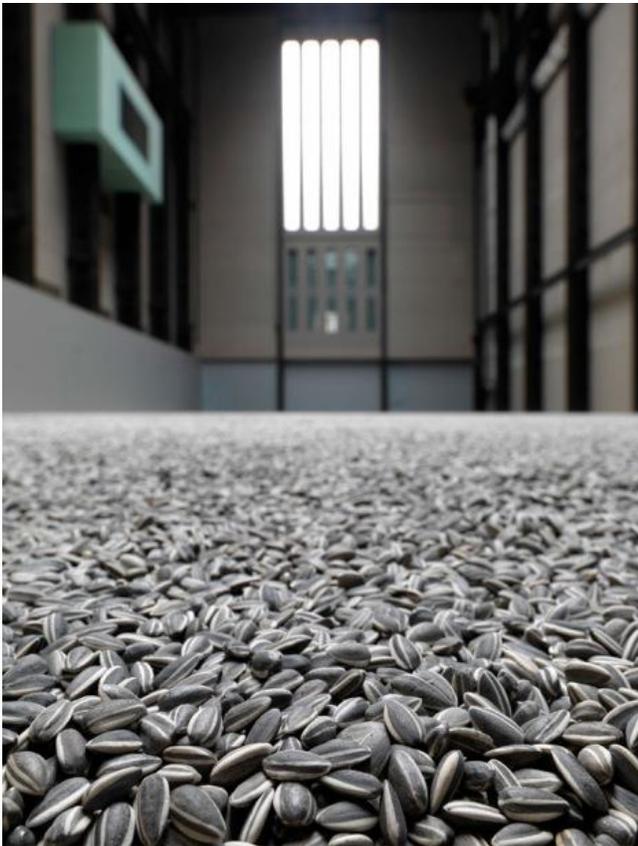


Figure 21

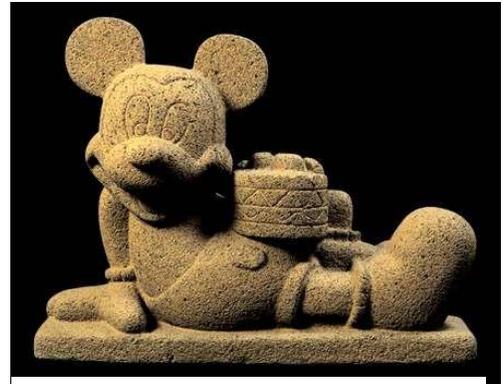


Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24



Figure 25

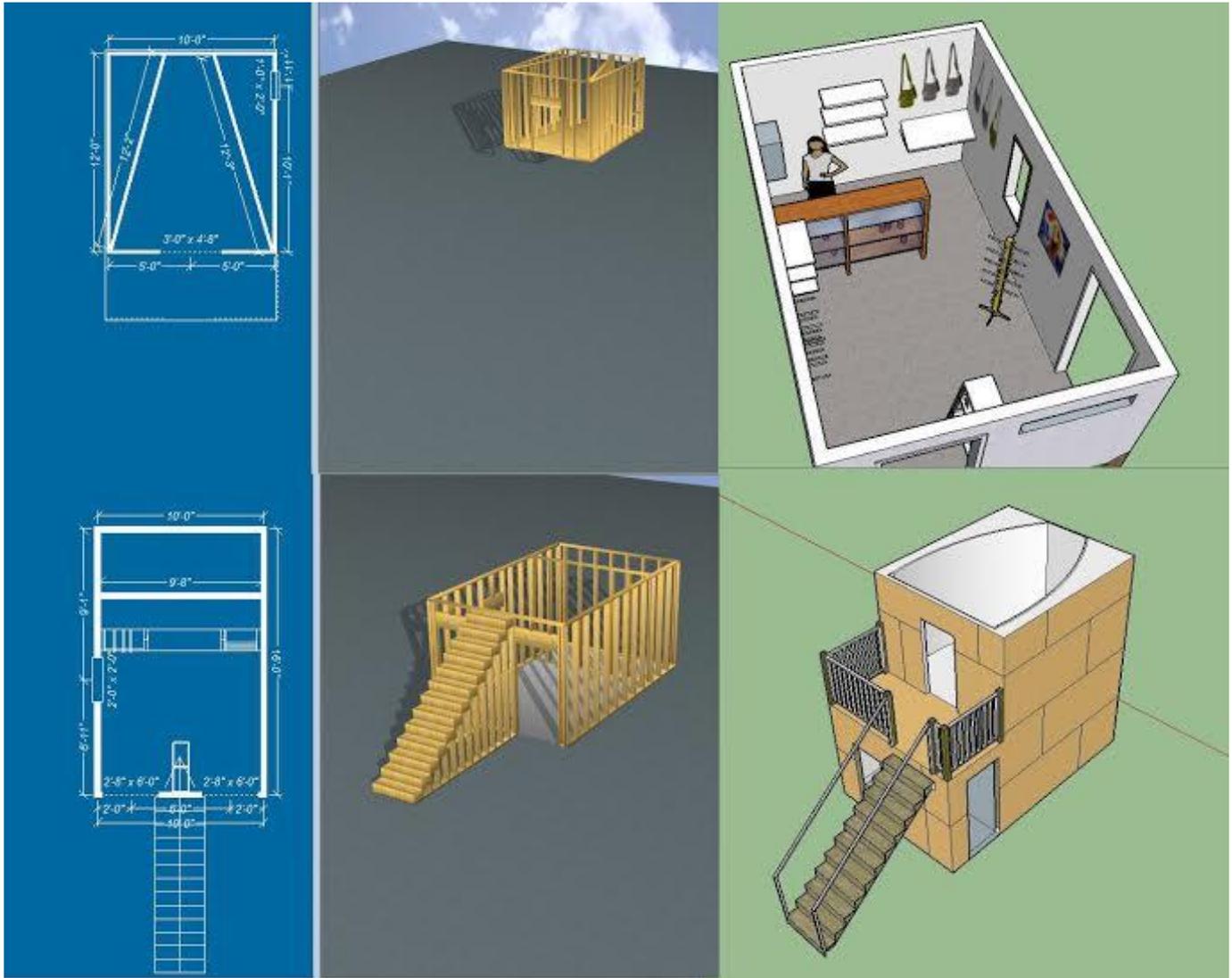


Figure 26



Figure 27

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mario Alberto Mutis Rodriguez was born in 1989 in Bogota, Colombia. In 2012 Mario received his BFA in Interdisciplinary Sculpture at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, and in 2015 his MFA in Ceramics at the University of Florida, Gainesville FL.

