

Interconnectednesses

Recipes for nourishing the soul

PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO

pa:dʒa: pa:pa: i: tʃo:clo:

by

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A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts

in

Interdisciplinary Master's in
Art, Media and Design

Room 118, 205 Richmond St. W., March 11 to March 16
Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026

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ABSTRACT

Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. Pallar, Papa y Choclo, is an exhibition supported by this thesis paper that invites viewers to reflect on the interconnected relationships between living things, seeds (Nature), artifacts/objects (Culture) and Human beings (social interactions). Through the lens of art, immigration, language and memory, I delve into the history of these three staple foods to explain their importance as elements of identity. I recall my childhood memories to clarify my personal connection with these seeds and with the land where we come from. Using material made of staple food from Peru, I recreate some containers using shapes and symbols informed by Pre-Columbian civilizations. As a metaphor of the encounter of the south with the north, the containers represent ancient knowledge coming from South America, and the wood, supporting the containers, represents this land, Toronto. The exhibition features sculptures, assemblages and installations that formulate two layers with four elements. The first layer, worked before the exhibition, has three elements: the first element is the connection between the seeds and the Pre-Columbian cultures; the second element is my personal connections to these seeds; and the third element is the connection with nature that I unveiled as a result of my research. In a second layer, during the exhibition, I explore how seeds find connections between objects and human beings. It is intended to make the viewer involved in an experience in which the seeds coming from the Southland are part of each one who assists and interacts with the works. Eating some seeds and listening to their names, viewers would be nourished by their taste, turning each one of us into a container, carrying them with us. After the exhibition, the seeds will be recognized because this research is translating their story, and they will stay in our mind, our tastes and our memory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been living in Toronto since 2024. I was born in Lambayeque, in the north of Peru, and was raised in Lima. My parents are from northern Peru. My father is from Lambayeque (the coast), and my mother is from Ancash (the highlands). They both speak Spanish. My maternal grandparents, who lived in Ancash, spoke Quechua, but my mother no longer speaks it; she only understands a few words. Having my roots coming from my parents from the north of Peru, the seeds I carry are based on my mother's and father's heritage and the land where they were born. I declare myself to be a Peruvian mestizo, with heritage from both the native peoples and the Spanish, and my identity is the result of the colonization process that took place in Peru. Therefore, I am a first-generation immigrant settler in Canada from a Spanish-speaking Peruvian family. Based on that positionality and as a Spanish speaker, I acknowledge that some words could differ and be influenced by my cultural background and my mother tongue, Spanish.

I acknowledge the different readings/practices connected with the word Indigenous. In Canada, I hear and understand this word used to refer to the current communities that are the original inhabitants of the land. When I am back home in Peru, the word's meaning is focused on linguistic, ancestral identification and agricultural roots. The examining committee also acknowledges that this piece of scholarship is also about words, how words become seeds, and how this word - Indigenous - sounds differently in both territories.

I acknowledge that I have just begun to learn about this land and the traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the Credit, Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg, and Huron-Wendat, as well as the Indigenous

knowledge that helps me find community and strengthen my art practice. This is a journey that I started in September, 2024. I respectfully acknowledge that I am continuously learning about the cultural heritages of Pre-Columbian Peru and how they relate to civilizations across the Americas. I would also like to respectfully honour Peruvian lands, the seeds as cultural heritage, and their stories forgotten through time.

I am grateful to have my partner by my side and my daughter supporting me from afar. They have helped me believe that I can move forward and achieve what I am seeking through this exhibition.

I acknowledge, with care and gratitude, my peers with whom I discussed and shared critiques, allowing us to learn together and accomplish this exhibition as a learning community. I am grateful for learning the importance of reciprocity, not only through theoretical and historical research but also through lived experience, especially in conversations and discussions with my supervisors, Peter and SJ. I am truly thankful to both of you for sharing your wisdom and for guiding me to understand the knowledge of this land. I also thank the faculty members of OCAD University; your knowledge, wisdom, and creativity as educators and artists have been invaluable to me.

DEDICATION

To my father who supports me to study art.

To my mother who believed I could make art and was my first merchant.

To my older sister, Ada, who supported me and pushed me to travel to the world of imagination and beyond.

To my brother who trusted me completely.

To my younger sisters who help me with my daughter and love despite the distance.

To my daughter who is my energy and had to sacrifice my company, my presence.

To my lovely wife who supports me and lifts my soul when I am falling down. Thanks for being the reminder of the taste of what I should look for in my exhibition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright Notice	1
Abstract	2
Acknowledgments	3
Dedications	5
Table of content	6
List of figures	7
Looking for ingredients	10
Remembrances and Unveilings	14
Inheritances and Practices	16
Real treasures	19
Pallar/pɑ:dʒɑ:r	22
Papa/pɑ:pɑ:	28
Choclo/tʃɔ:clɔ:	32
Recovering and Honoring memories	36
Making the containers	41
The Translator	47
The Receiver	49
Final Thesis Exhibition	65
Rooted in The Future	72
Works cited	74

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Chart of the timeline of Pre-Columbian cultures.....	19
Figure 2. Drawings of the Mochicas' ceramic vessels.....	24
Figure 3. First work made of found wood.....	25
Figure 4. Second work, inspired by Pallar and its different names.....	26
Figure 5. Exhibition of The two first works at the first stage of my project.....	26
Figure 6. Illustration made by Guaman Poma de Ayala (papa).....	27
Figura 7. Two packages of Chuño	29
Figure 8 <i>Relics II</i> (Work in Progress).....	30
Figure 9. Illustration made by Guaman Poma de Ayala(papa).....	33
Figure 10. Types of Peruvian Maize.....	34
Figure 11. Places where Peruvian Maize is grown.....	34
Figure 12. Drawings of five types of Peruvian maize.....	35
Figure 13. Works made on disposable plates and sculptures made with cardboard.....	36
Figure 14. Studio and explorations with Choclo	37
Figure 15. Process of making the first containers.....	38
Figure 16. Making mold with Choclo	39
Figure 17. Mold made of cornstarch.....	39
Figure 18. Process of mixing the ingredients and kneading the dough.....	42

Figure 19. Process of putting together each piece and refining.....	43
Figure 20. Engraving the container.....	44
Figure 21. <i>The Sound of childhood memory</i> (work in progress).....	47
Figure 22. <i>Lost in my name: Pallar</i>	50
Figure 23. <i>The ship of Mr. Pallar</i>	51
Figure 24. <i>Relics I</i>	52
Figure 25. <i>Pick Up</i>	53
Figure 26. <i>Pick Up</i> -Detail 1.....	54
Figure 27. <i>Pick Up</i> -Detail 2.....	55
Figure 28. The fallen trunk of <i>Juglans nigra</i>	57
Figure 29. <i>Caring the Impermanence</i>	58
Figure 30. Mold of the big corn.....	59
Figure 31. <i>Relics I</i>	60
Figure 32. <i>Relics I</i> (Details).....	61
Figure 33. <i>The sound of a Childhood Memory</i>	62
Figure 34. Gallery view. View of the curation-Graduate Thesis Exhibition	64
Figure 35. <i>Pick up</i> (Detail)	65
Figure 36. Viewers interacting with the two <i>Queros</i> tasting cancha	66
Figure 37. Public interacting with the small <i>Aribalo</i>	67

Figure 38. Viewer interacting with the largest *Aribalo*68

Figure 39. Viewers interacting with the *Queros*.....69

Figure 40. Viewer interacting with *The sound of a Childhood Memory*70

LOOKING FOR INGREDIENTS

When I arrived in Toronto on August 20, 2024 from my home country Peru, the first weeks were mostly about walking around and becoming familiar with this new place. In order to settle in, I visited some places in downtown, tasted different types of food as well as visited several places to buy groceries. As any immigrant, it is not easy to leave behind habits and customs overnight. In that sense, my arrival to Canada made me feel a sense of loss of the familiar. For instance, the seasons and weather conditions in Canada are completely different from Peru. I left Lima in the winter season, and it was mostly cloudy after arriving in the summer season in Canada. These summer days meant that the duration of daylight was longer than in Lima where the sun set at 6. In Toronto, at 8:pm, it was still daylight. The taste of food is different, and the stories I was told when I was living in South America felt significantly different in their telling. Once in Canada, I felt a lack of belonging; mostly due to the different apartments we visited to stay. However, I had some encounters that made me think about the connections between this place and my homeland of Peru.

Staying in Toronto, one of the first things I started to miss was the food and the sound of my name. In English, Hugo is pronounced differently, and the food in this land tasted differently. Therefore, I looked for ingredients coming from Peru to prepare my own meal. In a kind of mundane ritual going to buy ingredients everyday, I found a few products like **beans, maize** and **potato**, that come from Peru. I was astonished by their names. I ran into a Peruvian maize, called "Inca Corn". As a Peruvian, the word "Inca" resonated with me since I know "Inca" was the last Pre-Columbian civilization that inhabited Peru, before and during the arrival of Spaniards to this place now known as America. Looking for other products from my place of origin I came across

a package of beans tagged like “Lima Bean”. Identifying the shape, and its colour, plus the word “Lima” on its grocery store labels, the word “Lima” brought some familiarity to my mind since Lima is the capital of Peru.

Being in Toronto, where the primary language used is still English, the names of the products I found here were different then when I experienced them back home. For this reason, I felt a sort of disassociation between the name of the products and the references to their origins. Even though their packages, in Canada, read “Product of Peru” their names are not the same. The encounter with the seeds made me think about the nourishment and ingredients for food that my mother used to cook. The seeds made me reflect on the connections between different communities and countries; connections made through the act of cooking, the use and consumption of these staple foods, despite the different names they are tagged in Canada. Somehow, cooking and language were giving me the first clue to delve into the purpose of my research.

Levi Strauss in his essay, *The Culinary Triangle* explains how there is a universal pattern in any kind of language in the use of vowels and consonants. Additionally, he asserts there are truly universal forms of human activity like language and cooking. “There is no society without a language, nor is there any which does not cook in some manner at least some of its food” (Counihan and Van Esterik 40). In this regard, language becomes a necessity when we have to express our ideas and communicate with each other, while food is a basic necessity that has to do with survival. Food has to do with cooking and has a special connection with our cultural identity (Montanari 93) because it could take us back to the place where we tasted it. It takes us to special territories since food is indeed territorial (80). In that sense, the experience of tasting food lives in our memories and could become a reminder of home. When I was in front of those staple foods, I craved the flavor of those seeds that I

ate since I was a child. Those seeds switched on so many memories about the country and my mother cooking; and reminded me where I grew up. I felt we both the seeds and I come from the same place, the same land.

My MFA research helped me understand aspects of the great and lasting relationship between countries from South to North of the Pre-Columbian civilizations. In these civilizations, these seeds work as a catalyst for building memories. These staple foods have a direct connection with the cultural history of my home country, and they have a direct connection with who I am as well. **Maize** has a particular connection with my childhood memories since I remember accompanying our father to the fieldmaize and picking up the maize ears. My mom, who was at home, used to use maize to cook *tortillas* and *humitas*, which is a tamale-like dish for breakfast. For lunch, she used to prepare *pepian* de Choclo, which is a sort of stew made of maize. Lima bean is connected with the place where I was born. Based on the purpose and intention of my research, I will call these living things by the names I know in Peru: **Pallar** (lima bean), **Papa** (potato) and **Choclo** (Maize). These names have a special connection to the lands where they originated, and using their names here will help me (us) honor, value and care for the seeds that Indigenous people domesticated and heritaged for all of us who continue to benefit from their generosity.

Here I introduce these living things with the names I know them, with phonetic symbols in English, taken from The Cambridge Dictionary 2026, in an attempt to help mostly non-Spanish speaking, to reproduce the sound ¹ each time it is read.

¹ The sound of the word "Pallar" in English is a bit difficult to reproduce because the double L in Spanish has a different sound.

PALLAR

pa:dʒa:r

PAPA

pa:pa:

CHOCLO

tʃo:clo:

REMEMBRANCES AND UNVEILINGS

I was born in the north of Peru, in **Lambayeque/ la:mba:ieke**; in the countryside,

Where I touched the grass

Where I learned to listen and smell the rain

Where I learn to listen to the river and jump into its water

Where I knew the pebbles, collected them and felt their skin

Where I played with trees, climbed its branches, touched their leaves and logs textures

Where I played with the ground and learned to make my toys

Where I knew nature.

I remember there were years of dry seasons and years of heavy rain; when my parents decided to leave our home place and move out all together. As a child, I did not understand it. Later, I knew my father had lost his crops due to heavy rain and floodings caused by El Niño, which “is a global-scale atmospheric phenomenon, that causes changes in tropical Pacific sea surface temperatures (SST); particularly along the eastern equatorial Pacific upwelling zone and off the coast of Peru, including changes in the warm, nearshore current known as El Niño, whence the phenomenon takes its local name”(Garcia Herrera et al.). My memories of the north of Peru are not many since when we moved out to Lima, I was a six-year-old boy. However, I recall the place because of memories of me playing with the mud after the rain had gone, making my own toys with sticks of wood and other materials. I remember also, that by that time, my sister taught me how to draw. “*Just watch and trace*”, said my sister, while she traced some lines as an example. “*See the shape in the figure and again trace a line,*

see and compare, see and trace” were her instructions, and I still remember vividly the outcome since it was a drawing as part of my homework assigned by my teacher. I had discovered that I was able to draw a shape, and I always thought that that had been my first encounter with Art.

In **Lambayeque**, we used to live in a big farm house embraced by vast greenery. When my family moved out to the south, **Lima**, the capital of Peru, we lived surrounded by big buildings and the noise of the city. During my high school days, I used to spend hours having fun drawing with ballpoint pens on paper and painting with enamel paint on plywood. When I felt like drawing, I would grab cardboard or wood, wires or metal. There were no rules or definitions to draw. I discovered I was able to spend hours drawing, refining my skills, and I always thought that this had been my second encounter with Art.

I studied Art at the Fine Arts School in Peru. After that, I ruled out all my craft-making from an early age. I had learned about Art History and the theory behind Art, which made me consider previous skills merely for decorative purposes and far from making Art. I was taught that Oil painting was the medium used to make Fine Arts. What I had discovered in Art School was that I was able to master a technique, and I always thought that I was making Art; however, that Art was enclosed in a medium reserved for the Western culture paradigm.

This research focus on seeds originating from Peru, helped me question what I had been doing as an artist. Until this moment, I was working with everything I had learned in the Fine Art School. The seeds inspired me to recover the craft, and they helped me to reach back into the land where I come from. The skillful activities like drawing with pens, which I had put aside, have now become tools to research and make new artistic connections.

INHERITANCES AND PRACTICES

Peru was proclaimed independent of the Spanish empire in 1821, and after two centuries of independence, the legacy of Spanish colonialism still causes a sort of division or disconnection. We were unable to overcome the encounter between two different cultures, which, since the very beginning, brought violence in which the settler exploited the native (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* 36), which had left some colonial wounds and scars that nowadays are expressed through racism, discrimination, exploitation, poverty, and inequality. All of this is a result of the way the Peruvian society was formed, as Aníbal Quijano asserts: “La sociedad peruana se formó como un sistema de dominación social por la superposición de los portadores de la cultura occidental española, sobre los portadores de la cultura incaica” (53).²

Another colonial heritage we can find encrusted in the Peruvian social structure is some expressions used in Peru; unfortunately, these expressions are often used in a negative way. For instance, in the Spanish language, the word “Cholo” is used to identify and name someone coming from the highlands, who has an Indigenous appearance. With a pejorative meaning, the word ‘Cholo’ is used to discriminate and racialize someone by the colour of skin, ethnicity, or place of origin. Quijano defines the word “Cholo”, during the colony, in this way: “en la sociedad colonial peruana, “cholo” era una palabra que servía para designar al grupo de mestizos cuyos rasgos físicos eran predominantemente indios” (56).³ During the last years, working as a

² (“Peruvian society was formed as a system of social domination through the superimposition of the bearers of Spanish Western culture over the bearers of Inca culture.”; my trans. 53).

³ (“In Peruvian colonial society, “cholo” was a word used to designate the group of mestizos whose physical features were predominantly Indian”; my trans. 56).

teacher in Peru, it was common for me to listen to students treating each other by using the word “Cholo” as an insult.

Being criticised and racialized as an inferior people, ‘Cholo’ is also called someone who speaks Quechua⁴ or someone who mixes Spanish with Quechua. “Since the time of the Spanish Conquest, Spanish has reigned as the dominant, high-status, and official language in the Andean region, while Indigenous languages generally have been both stigmatized and stigmatizing”(Hornberger and Coronel-Molina). That is the way in which a colonial heritage is perpetuated, diminishing Indigenous people; as Frantz Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* writes:

Every colonized people-in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality-finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards (18).

Peru exports metals like copper and gold, as well as multiple agricultural products, not only **Pallar**/pa:dʒa:r, **Papa**/pa:pa:, and **Choclo**/ tʃo:clo:. During colonial times, American countries such as Peru became the land of supplies for Europe. As Galeano asserts: “In the mid-seventeenth century silver constituted more than 99 percent of mineral exports from Spanish America” (22). When Spaniards arrived in Cuzco, Peru, they looted every piece made of gold to melt it and turn it into bars. Also, they dismantled the walls of the temples covered and decorated with gold that suffered the same fate (20). Spaniards extracted the

⁴ Quechua is an Indigenous Peruvian language.

precious metals like gold, silver and copper which became the medium of payment in commercial dealings. And, at the same time, the products cultivated in Peru and American lands became commodities of Spaniards' trades, increasing their economy, their power.

In Peru, in primary and secondary school, we are taught that the colonial settlers brought many European products to our country. We are taught that Spaniards looted the precious metals like gold, silver and copper from the Incas empire. Paradoxically, we complain about the way Spaniards took the gold of the Incas as if that were the only treasures we have, and at the same time, we admire the products they brought. As Frantz Fanon states in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* "The settler's world is a hostile world, which spurns the native, but at the same time it is a world of which he is envious. We have seen that the native never ceases to dream of putting himself in the place of the settler—not of becoming the settler but of substituting himself for the settler" (52). When we are 'wishing' to be foreign, we admire what comes from Western culture and do not see the valuable things we have. Instead of crying for those precious metals taken by the Spaniards during colonial times, we should care about those products that come from Peruvian lands; products that still make significant contributions to the entire world. Even though the Spaniards took the gold pots and objects from Inca civilization, and used the staple food as commodities, the evidence of Inca culture still survives in their constructions made of stone, in "the Incas's colossal architecture" (Galeano 20), and in their symbolic elements like the *Chacana* that reflect their knowledge and understanding of the world, as well as in the products they domesticated in their lands and what we consume nowadays.

REAL TREASURES

In the 16th century, Peru was inhabited by the Incas who had built an “extensive empire before the arrival of the Spaniards” (Bennett 17), and “When the Spaniards invaded Latin America, the theocratic Inca empire was at its height, spreading over what we now call Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, taking in part of Colombia and Chile, and reaching northern Argentina and the Brazilian jungle” (Galeano 43).

Inca society was based on intensive agriculture with more than forty domesticated plants, such as **corn, bean, potato, cotton, quinoa, oca, olluco, mashua**, among others that have existed in that land since ancient times, and nowadays are still grown by the population of the Andes. These agricultural products were not only domesticated by the Incas, but also these domesticated plants, as well as the agricultural techniques, had long been established in the Central Andes (Bennett 93). In that regard, the staple foods such as **Pallar**/pa:dʒɑ:r, **Papa**/pa:pa: , and **Choclo**/ tʃɔ:ɔɔ: , that I found in Canada, were also consumed during ancient times by Pre-Columbian cultures. There were many Pre-Columbian cultures in Peru before the consolidation of the Inca empire (See Figure 1). Cultures such as **Chavín, Paracas, Nazca, Moche, Huari** among others (Rostworowski 3), who had these staple foods: **Pallar**/pa:dʒɑ:r, **Papa**/pa:pa: , and **Choclo**/ tʃɔ:ɔɔ: , as part of their menu.

The Pre-Columbian societies not only worked with pottery to create their artworks, but also used metals like copper, tin, gold, and silver (Bennett 99), in which they rendered their crops, developing quite sophisticated works of art. The early Spanish were greatly impressed by the amount of gold and silver work in the common possession of the Inca (100). However, all artifacts of gold, silver and copper that the Inca

civilization had were taken, looted, mostly by its precious metal value, and the same happened with Indigenous food products, being commercialised in other countries.

Year	Periods	North Coast	Northern Highlands	Central Coast	South Coast	Central Highlands	Altiplano of Titicaca
1500	Inca State	Inca	Inca	Inca	Inca	Inca	Inca
	Regional States	Chimu	Local Kingdoms	Chancay	Ica-Chincha	Chancas	Aymara Kingdoms
1000	Wari State	Northern Wari	Wari	Pachacamac	Southern Wari	Wari	
500 A.D -0- B.C.	Regional Developmental Period	Mochica and Gallinazo	Cajamarca and Recuay	Lima	Nasca	Huarpa	Tiwanaku and Pucara
	Formative Period	Salinar Cupisnique	Huaras Chavin	Ancon	Paracas	Rancha Chupas Wichqana	Kalasitasaya Chiripa Wankarani
1000	Archaic Period	Huaca Prieta	?	Paraiso Encanto	Otuma Chilca	Cachi Piki	?
5000	Hunter-gatherers			Canario		Jaywa	
10000		Lithic Period	Pajjan	Lauricocha Guitarrero	Arenal Chivateros Oquendo	?	Ayacucho Pacaicasa
20000							

Figure 1. Chart of the timeline of Pre-Columbian cultures. Chronological chart containing the time in which

pre-Columbian cultures developed before the Inca Empire. Source: Rostworowski, María. *History of the Incas Realm*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999. *Google Books*,

https://books.google.ca/books?id=Pf09_ohMYQQC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.

Accessed 20 12 2025.

The legacy of Indigenous civilization can also be recognized by the way they organised and constructed their cities. The development of agricultural architecture was made to domesticate a variety of staple foods. In addition to that, the cornerstone of the Incas economic system and social structure was Reciprocity. According to John Murra, during the Inca society, there were different forms of reciprocity, one of which was *Ayni*, a

Quechua word (22). *Ayni* was a way of loan that had to be paid with the same service offered. In this system, on an agricultural work day, the beneficiary should provide hospitality in a festive way with special food, music which is an appropriate reciprocal gesture. Thus, “It will be returned in very similar services; a day of *ayni* will be returned in a day of *ayni*, and very clear standards as to what a day is—on both sides” (26). This system of reciprocity was not only focused on the interactions of human beings but also in relation to nature, plants and land.

In the Inca society, the cloth had an important role in their social system, one that reinforced the practice of Reciprocity. John Murra, in *The Lewis Henry Morgan lectures* at the University of Rochester 1969, asserts that weaving was the most valuable thing, being this art medium a catalyst of reciprocity practice. “It is a very important aspect of reciprocity because cloth was the object of highest value in the Andes. The greatest artistry was involved in weaving and therefore all the social obligations surrounding the giving and receiving of fibers and weaving were very important” (42). While for Spaniards the commodities with the highest value were gold, for the Incas, the commodities with the highest value were cloth and staple foods. The Incas exchanged clothes for staple food in their communities, putting into practice reciprocity.

The principle of Reciprocity was not only a practice restricted to the Inca civilization. In fact, it was also common in other parts of America. The evidence is reflected in the agricultural practice that survives until now, called The Three Sisters. It comes from ancient Indigenous cultures, still practiced today, from the place now known as America, and into the lands that make up what is now known as Canada. Three Sisters are planting together three staple foods. They are **corn, beans, and squash**. Since each crop provides a benefit to

the others when they are sown together. This is an example of how we should find a balance between the land and nature (Kimmerer 129). In my project, the three elements, **Pallar**/pa:dʒɑ:r, **Papa**/ pa:pa: , and **Choclo**/tʃɔ:clɔ: are like the sisterhood that supports my Master's thesis research. These three elements help me find connections between where I am now, Toronto, and the land where I come from (here and there). These seeds have their roots in the past, the present and extend them to the future. Even though the gold and copper of the Incas, looted by Spaniards, are considered precious metals, in my exhibition and in my research, I assert that our real treasures are **Pallar**/pa:dʒɑ:r, **Papa**/pa:pa: , and **Choclo**/ tʃɔ:clɔ:. These living things have been in different parts of the world since ancient times. They carry a memory that belongs to a territory.

When I found the seeds in the supermarket in Canada, I felt they were claiming a space for landing, and that is what I will provide them through the exhibition.

PALLAR

pa:dʒɑ:r

Pallar is a Quechua word that means "Recoger" ("to collect"; my trans. Calvo Perez 1255). **Pallar** is known as the **Lima Bean** because the boxes where the seeds were exported, during colonial times, were marked as "Lima, Peru" (Gavilan-Figari et al.), taking part of its name from the capital city of Peru, Lima (Swamy). **Pallar** has been grown on the northern coast of Peru for thousands of years (Mischler). They are a familiar agricultural product of the **Mochica**. The **Mochica** culture of the north coast flourished from the third century B.C to six century A.D. between the departments of Lambayeque and the valley of Huarney. (Salas Garcia 131).

The **Mochicas** spoke the **Mochica** language. And even though **Pallar** is considered **Quechua**, its root is the **Mochica** language. **Pallar** was domesticated and cultivated on the Peruvian coast 7300 years ago. (319).

According to Rafael Larco Hoyle among the products Mochicas cultivated are: “maíz, los frijoles y pallares, el maní, la papa, los camotes” yuca, zapallo, chirimoya, guanábana, pacaе, granadilla, lúcuma, pepino, coca y algodón“ (4) ⁵

The Pre-Columbian cultures in Peru had different languages. Nevertheless, at the arrival of the Spaniards, the predominant and most widespread language was Quechua. When the Spaniards arrived in Peruvian lands, they were impressed, “consignarán su asombro ante el gran número de idiomas diferentes: tiene el suyo cada provincia, cada valle; a veces hay dos o tres en un solo valle, dirán” (Torero 104) ⁶For that reason, many Peruvian agricultural products named in Spanish have their roots in **Quechua** language. In that sense, there are many **Quechua** words embedded in the Spanish language in Peru as part of our vocabulary. We repeat the **Quechua** words every day without knowing where those words come from.

The Mochicas, who were expert artists in ceramic and metal works, created vessels decorated with remarkably realistic portraits.”The modeled and painted pottery vessels reveal minute details of the world of the Mochica. The local flora and fauna are reproduced so accurately that the species can be identified. Sculptured head jars are so individual that they are properly called portraits” (Bennett 41). Also, Mochicas represented in their ceramics the legume “**Pallar**” that had a special meaning for their culture in such a way that they created

⁵ (“corn, beans and lima beans, peanuts, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cassava, squash, cherimoya, soursop, pacaе, granadilla, lucuma, cucumber, coca, and cotton.”; my trans. 4).

⁶ (“They will record their astonishment at the great number of different languages: each province, each valley has its own; sometimes there are two or three in a single valley, they will say.”; my trans. Torero 104).

figures and illustrated their potteries with that bean. “The Lima beans depicted on Moche vessels are always carrying characteristic patterns on them” (Mischler). In this Indigenous civilization, this seed was not only part of their staple food but also had a ritualistic and symbolic function. What the Moche represented in their ceramic was, “ Moche annual life cycle: Ritual combat → blood sacrifice → appeases god → grants new fertility → beans grow → determine next combatants” (Mischler).

Even though the origins of **Pallares** are in South America, its consumption has spread all over the Americas and other continents. Spanish colonial settlers took the legume as a traded commodity and brought it to Europe during the 16th century (Swamy). Being cultivated in other continents like Europe Asia, Africa nowadays, “**Pallar**” has different names in America like **Ib** or **Ibes** (Mexico-Maya area), **Ixtapaca** (Guatemala, Maya area); **Juruna** or **Futuruna** (Honduras); **Torta, Pallar, Haba Pallar** o **Habichuela**, (Ecuador) and **Faba** in Brazil (Martinez-Castillo and Peralta Idrovo). Also, in Europe it has different names like **bean (Lima), Burma bean, butter bean, haricot bean, Madagascar bean, sieva bean, sugar bean**(England); **Haricot de Lima, Haricot du Cap, Pois du Capin** (France); **Mian dou** (China); **fava-Belém, feijão-de-Lima** (Portugal) and **bakla, Lima bean, butter bean, sieva bean, sugar bean, Madagascar bean, butter bean, Java bean** in India (Swamy), among other names. Thus “**Pallar**” has lost part of its identity since in Europe and North America this bean is not related to the territory where it originated.

After researching and reading the story of **Pallares** and **Mochicas**, I started drawing the vessels of Mochicas (See Figure 2). My intention was mostly to study the shape of vessels and figure out what these

cultures had made to transcend time. In doing so, I take back my drawing skills to incorporate them as part of my art practice. For that reason, I used blue, red pens and pencil on paper.

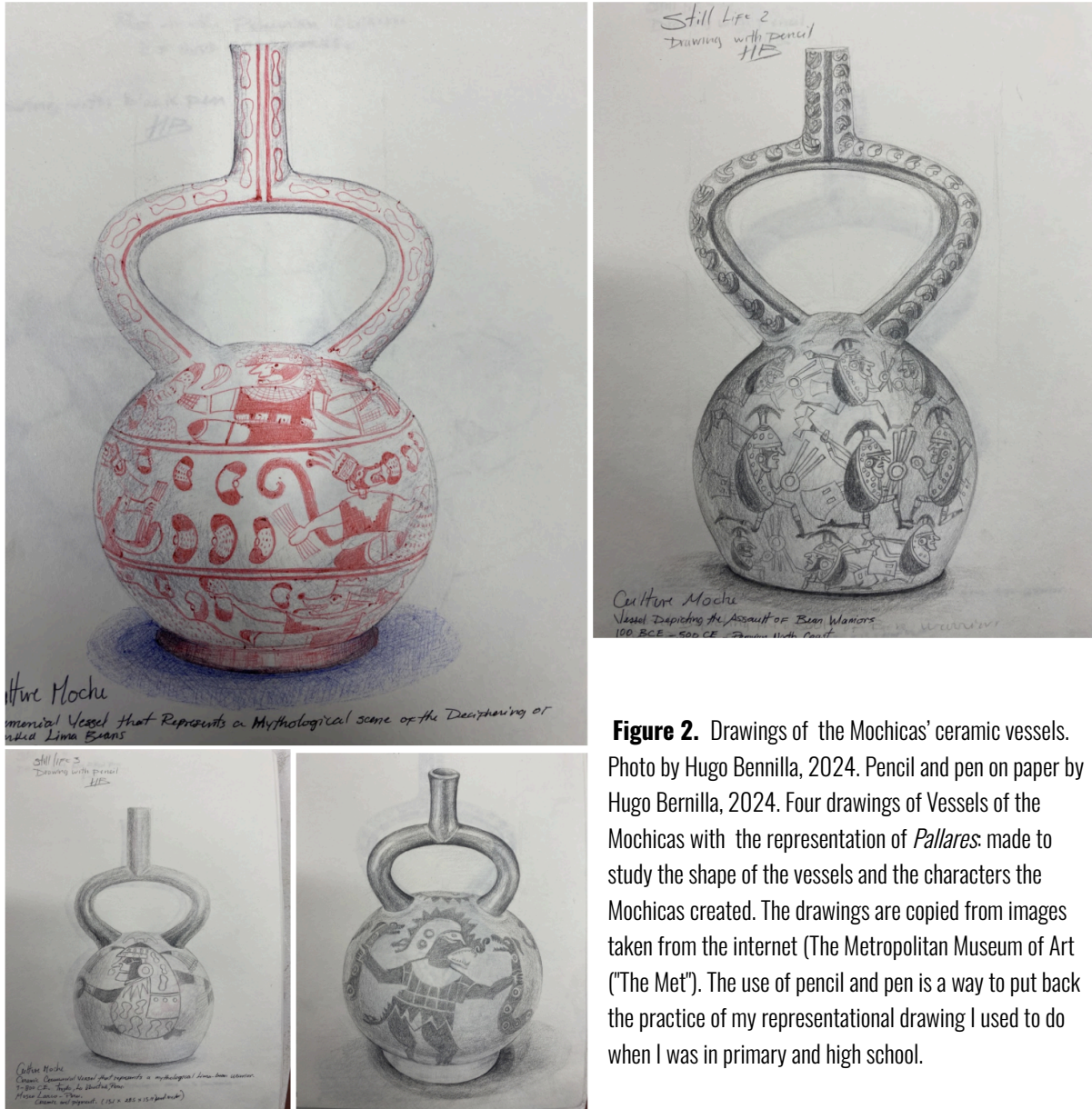


Figure 2. Drawings of the Mochicas' ceramic vessels. Photo by Hugo Bennilla, 2024. Pencil and pen on paper by Hugo Bernilla, 2024. Four drawings of Vessels of the Mochicas with the representation of *Pallares*: made to study the shape of the vessels and the characters the Mochicas created. The drawings are copied from images taken from the internet (The Metropolitan Museum of Art ("The Met"). The use of pencil and pen is a way to put back the practice of my representational drawing I used to do when I was in primary and high school.

This part of my research taught me to change the intention of my drawings in my art practice. Instead of using drawing as a means of creating aesthetic works, I use it as a tool for learning about Mochica's pottery and Pallar. After this process of research, I decided to avoid the outcomes of my drawings as aesthetic objects

and used the medium to learn new languages that take me beyond the boundaries of my own practice. These artifacts created by the Mochicas taught me the connections to the seeds and the land. This is how I found the sources of knowledge from the land where I was born. They took me to the past to find out its origin, then they brought me back to the present to honor them, and showed me how to use them as the nourishment for creating my project. For my exhibition, I made two works: "**The ship of Mr Pallares**" (Figure 3) "**Lost in my name: Pallar**" (Figure 4) that are made with wood, plaster, seed and paper clip, both inspired by the **Mochica** Art. At this stage of my research, these two works made me reflect on the use of material to replace the plaster.



Figure 3. First work made of found wood. *The ship of Mr. Pallares* (Work in Progress). Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025
Informed by the Mochica's symbols of Pallar. *The ship of Mr. Pallares*, found pine wood and MDF, cornstarch and seeds. 35 x 45 x 30 cm. 2024. Presented in *The International Student Art Exhibition 2025. Neither Here Nor There* Great Hall, 2nd Floor OCAD University, 100 MCCAUL ST July 10, 9 to 7 July 11, 9 TO 5 Opening reception: July 10, 1pm.



Figure 4. The second work, inspired by *Pallar* and its different names. *Lost in my name: Pallar*. (Work in Progress) Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025. *Lost in my name: Pallar*. Found pine wood and MDF, metal clips and plaster, porcelain clay and seeds. Presented in *The International Student Art Exhibition, 2025. Neither Here Nor There* Great Hall, 2nd Floor, OCAD University, 100 MCCAUL ST. July 10, 9 to 7 July 11, 9 to 5 Opening reception: July 10, 1pm.



Figure 5. Exhibition of The two first works at the first stage of my project: both inspired by the *Mochica* culture and *Pallar* (Work in Progress) Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025. *Lost in my name: Pallar* and *the ship of Mr Pallares* presented in *International Student Art Exhibition 2025. Neither Here Nor There* Great Hall, 2nd Floor, OCAD University, 100 MCCAUL ST. July 10, 9 to 7 July 11, 9 to 5 Opening reception: July 10, 1pm.

PAPA

pa:pa:

In Peru, **papa** (potato) is used in almost every dish we prepare. There are different types of Native **Papas** and they are identified by their shapes, flavors, textures. According to The International Potato Center (CIP) this tuber was domesticated around 8,000 years ago, and there are more than 4000 grown in the highlands of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador (The International Potato Center). Being a crucial ingredient of Peruvian gastronomy nowadays, **Papa** (potato) was domesticated by Pre-Columbian cultures in South America. In terms of the name, it is important to know that “The early sixteenth-century Spanish invaders of South America, when they encountered the new root in Colombia, spoke and wrote of it as ‘Papa’ (Salaman 126).

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Figure 6. Illustration made by Huaman Poma de Ayala, in which explains how the month of June sowed Papas. Source : Guaman Poma de Ayala, Felipe. *Nueva cronica y buen gobierno*. vol. 2, Caracas, Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980. *Internet Archive*, <https://archive.org/details/guaman-poma-de-ayala-felipe.-nueva-cronica.-tomo-ii-ocr-1980/page/8/mode/2up>. Accessed 4 12 2025.

During that time, in Ecuador and in El Collao it was called the same. **Papa** is a word from the **Quechua** language. “There is no doubt that ‘Papa’ is Peruvian, and neither a borrowed word nor one invented by

the Spaniards; in fact it was at the time of the Conquest the official native term for the potato” (127). Huaman Poma de Ayala in his book *Nueva Cronica y Buen Gobierno. vol. 2*. illustrates the month of June as the month when people make *Chuño* and sow Papa (460). (See Figure 6)

In Toronto, I bought yellow potatoes, red potatoes and white potatoes, but I could not find other types. In another supermarket I found a native Peruvian potato, called ***Papa Amarilla*** which is a yellow, small and tasty one, specially for making soups. However, it was completely frozen, making it impossible to work with it. I had left a couple of potatoes at my desk to work with them, but after a week, they started to sprout. I was still interested in doing something with potatoes as a way of honouring that seed. I had thought about the possibility of casting its shape with plaster to capture its form. Nevertheless, the idea of working only with the shape did not convince me; maybe the answer could be making something to preserve the potato and prevent sprouting. I found ***Chuño*** in a small grocery store in Toronto. In Peru, we know it as ***Chuño***; ancient civilizations had found the way to preserve food. “Thus, by the discovery of the potato, the cultivation of frost hardy types, and the preservation of foodstuffs, man solved the problem of how to live at great altitudes, and thereby attained the mastery of a continent” (Salaman 11).

At the beginning, I was interested in making my work with the proper material made of ***Papa***. I used to think I would like to use native Peruvian ***Papas***. In this second stage of my project, I will honour and value what the Incas were able to create, not with the Native ***Papas*** but with ***Chuño***, which I found in that small grocery shop. The owner of that shop is a Spanish-speaking woman. In her store shelves, there were many ingredients tagged with their original names. I found “***Chuño blanco***” and “***Chuño negro***”. The woman, from El

Salvador, did not know what that product is for or how it is cooked. The name of “Chuño blanco” is translated in the tag like “Whole white dried Potato” and “Chuño negro” is “Whole black dried Potato.” (See figure 7).



Figure 7. Two packages of Chuño: “whole white dried Potato”, whole “black dried Potato”, bought in a small shop in York, Toronto. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026.

The knowledge of drying **Papa** (potato) to preserve it, was probably in continual use since 2,000 years ago, and is a common food today throughout Peru, South America. The process of making **Chuño** is not easy and takes many days, as the British physician, biologist, Redcliffe Nathan Salaman states:

The method in use to-day is precisely the same as that described by the early chroniclers. Actually the procedure varies somewhat according to the kind of Chuño required. The potatoes are spread out on the ground and left there during the night to freeze. If they are making tunta, or white chuño, also called 'moray', for which *Solanum Ajanhuiri* is especially grown, then, before the sun rises, the potatoes are covered with a layer of straw; but if it is the common sort which is desired, they are left uncovered. In either case men, women and children turn out next day and 'tread' the tubers with their bare feet in order to squeeze the water out of them (40).

This knowledge is not easy to apply since the technology is in relation to the land where it is made, taking advantage of the local climate. As John Murray explains:

In the First World War, the Germans, confronted with a blockade by the Allies, tried to reproduce, in Germany, some of the preserves made of potatoes that are routinely made in the Andes by the average peasant. But of course, the ecological conditions were not the same. Ch'uño would never be made in Germany, although they did try very hard. All of twentieth century German chemistry and techniques could not do what Andean peasants had been doing for thousands of years (7).

When I came across **Chuño** I knew I had to do something with it, discarding the idea of working with **Papa**. I saw **Chuño** as precious pieces that carry knowledge from hundreds of years ago. I make a container for these dried potatoes; however, people would not see the **Chuño** directly, but just the container.

Then, I used corn husks to braid some small strips and tie the Chuño together, hanging them on the wall, but what stood out most was the strip of husk. Eventually, I decided to use cornstarch to make a small case for each piece of chuño and tie them with the thin strips of husk. (Figure 8)



Figure 8. *Relics II* (Work in Progress). Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Small pieces of circular shaped cases made of cornstarch with chuño.

CHOCLO

Tʃo:clo:

I have a close connection with this seed that is known as **Maize** or **Corn**. I knew **Choclo**, where I was born and lived during my early childhood. My father had fields to grow fruits and vegetables, mostly Maize.

I remember accompanying our father to his farmlands

I remember running in a field maize, picking up the *Choclos*

I remember collecting the ears of *Choclo* and filling the bags with dry kernels

I remember peeling the husk of *Choclo*

I remember my mom cooking *humitas*

I remember my father saying "I'm going to the *Minca*," joining a group of neighbors.

Minca, the word my father used to say in Spanish, is a **Quechua** word. According to Guaman Poma de Ayala, *Minca* means: "trabajo comunal, por turno" (491).⁷ *Choclo*, derived from *Chhocllo*, is another Quechua word embedded in Spanish in Peru, meaning "Chhocllo: Mazorca de maíz verde" (González Holguín 108)⁸. Thus, we call maize the ripe corn. During the Incas' time, Maize was called *Sara* (Quechua word). "Sara: maíz" (Guaman Poma de Ayala 494) meaning maize in general. Among these two words **Sara** and **Chocclo** the latter is still used as part of the Spanish language. Additionally, in Peru we call **cancha**⁹ to the toasted corn and the sports field. **Cancha** is eaten as a snack and mostly served as a side dish with *ceviche*¹⁰, in Peruvian restaurants. The

⁷ ("community work, in shifts"; my trans. 491)

⁸ ("Maize: tender corn cob"; my trans. González Holguín 108)

⁹ **Cancha** is a common word in Peru that is used to refer to toasted corn and a field of sport. According to the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy it has two meanings: derived from the word *Quechua* "kancha" that means enclosure, field. The second meaning also derives from *Quechua* "kamcha" meaning, toasted corn or beans eaten in South America.

¹⁰ Ceviche is a popular dish in Peru, made of raw fresh fish, red onion, lemon and chilly.

Quechua words referred to above are just a few words that belong to the heritage of Pre-Columbian civilization in Peru, which still survives as a kind of resistance to colonialism. However, most of us do not recognise those words as part of Indigenous culture; the reason could be in the way we listen to them, our positionality.

Dylan Robinson, in his book *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*, explains how listening is never neutral since each person listens from a specific positionality that depends on our culture, identity and relationship to colonialism. Regarding the quechua words embedded in Spanish, we do not listen to the sound of those words because our positionality is dominated by colonialism, "Hungry listening". As we set our positionality of Hungry listening, we do not hear the depth of Indigenous words, sounds or songs as Dylan Robinson explains: "Hungry listening prioritizes the capture and certainty of information over the affective feel, timbre, touch, and texture of sound" (38).

Peru's Indigenous chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala illustrated, in his manuscript *The First New Chronicle and Good Government*, in 1615, how the Incas sowed Sara and explained that September was the month to do it (468), (See figure 9). Therefore, during the empire of the Incas, Sara (Maize) was a crucial element in their culture. It was considered a sacred plant, as it can be seen in the Inca ceramic or metalworks that represented the maize with natural characteristics. "Although much of Inca artistic production in metal is anthropomorphic and zoomorphic in nature, only the corn cobs are typically seen to truly bear any claim to naturalism" (Floyd)

The origin of **maize** is placed in Central America, and there are some special types of maize that originated in Peru. **Maize** originated in Mexico more than 8000 years ago, then it was domesticated in Central America and

South America. There are five types of **maize** originated in Peru and are grown, currently as a result of Peru ecological conditions, soils, and climates (See Figure 10 & 11). They include Chullpi, Piscorunto, Sacsá, Giant Cuzco, and Purple. (Salvador-Reyes and Pedrosa Silva Cleric).

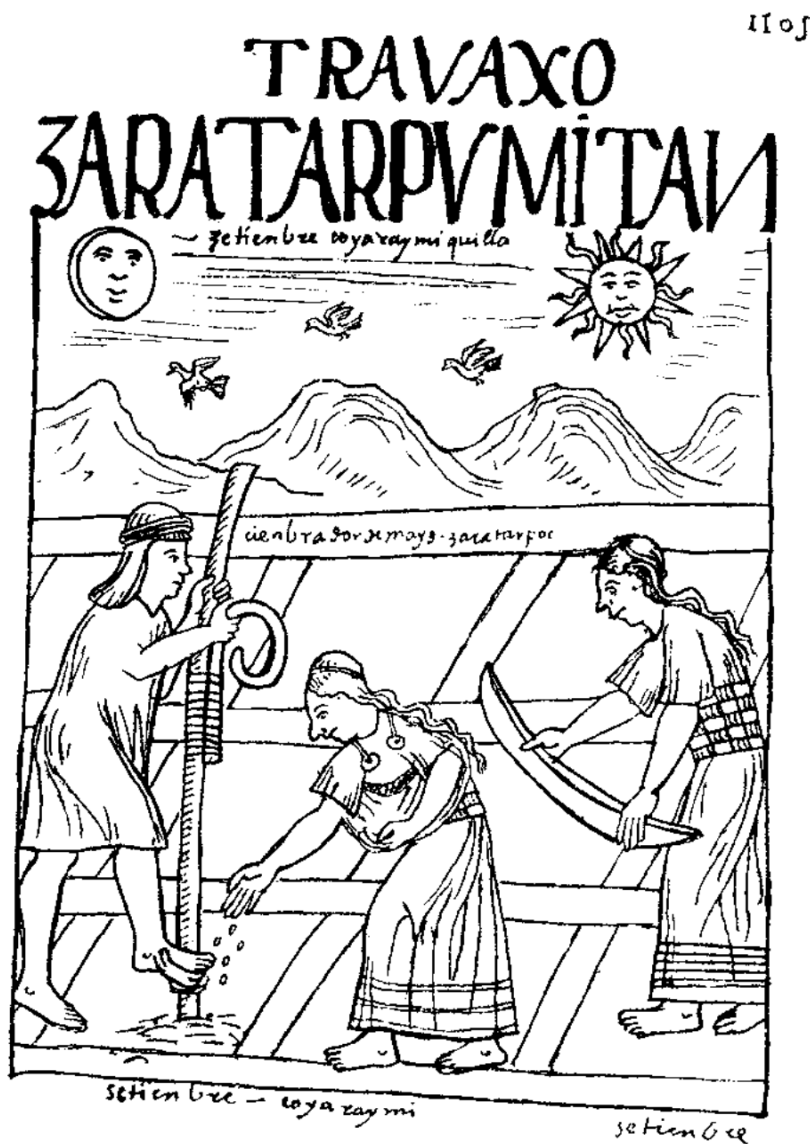


Figure 9. The drawing, made by Guaman Poma de Ayala, illustrates the month when the Incas used to sow Sara, heading the page as

“Sara Tarpuy Mitán”(time to plant corn). Source: Guaman Poma de Ayala, Felipe. *Nueva cronica y buen gobierno*. vol. 2, Caracas, Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980. *Internet Archive*,

<https://archive.org/details/guaman-poma-de-ayala-felipe.-nueva-coronica.-tomo-ii-ocr-1980/page/8/mode/2up>. Accessed 4 12

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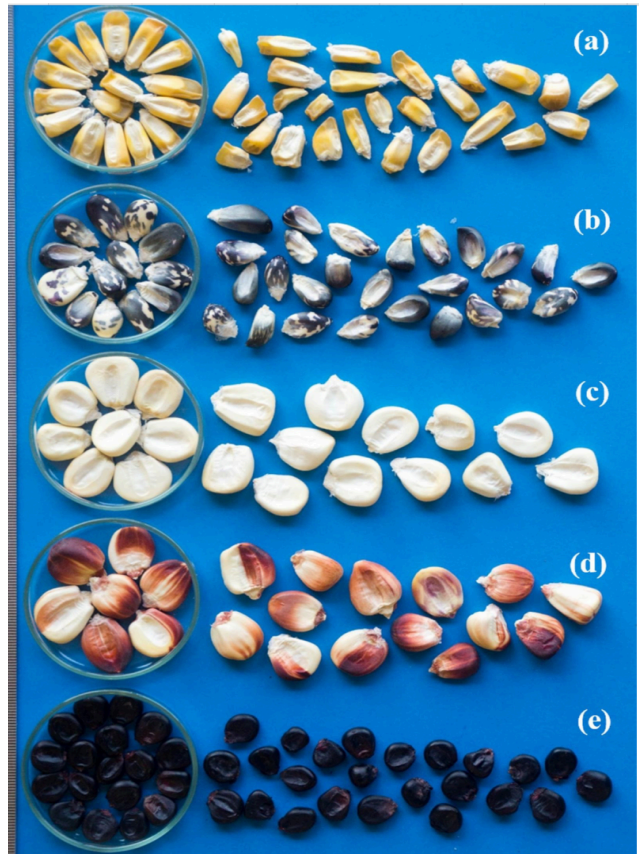


Figure 10. Types of Peruvian Maize. a) Chullpi b)Piscorunto c)Sacsá d) Giant Cuzco e)Purple. Source: Salvador-Reyes, Rebeca, and Maria Teresa Pedrosa Silva Cleric. "Peruvian Andean maize: General characteristics, nutritional properties, bioactive compounds, and culinary uses." *Science Direct*, vol. 130, 2020. *Scencedirect*,

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0963996919308208?via%3Dihub>

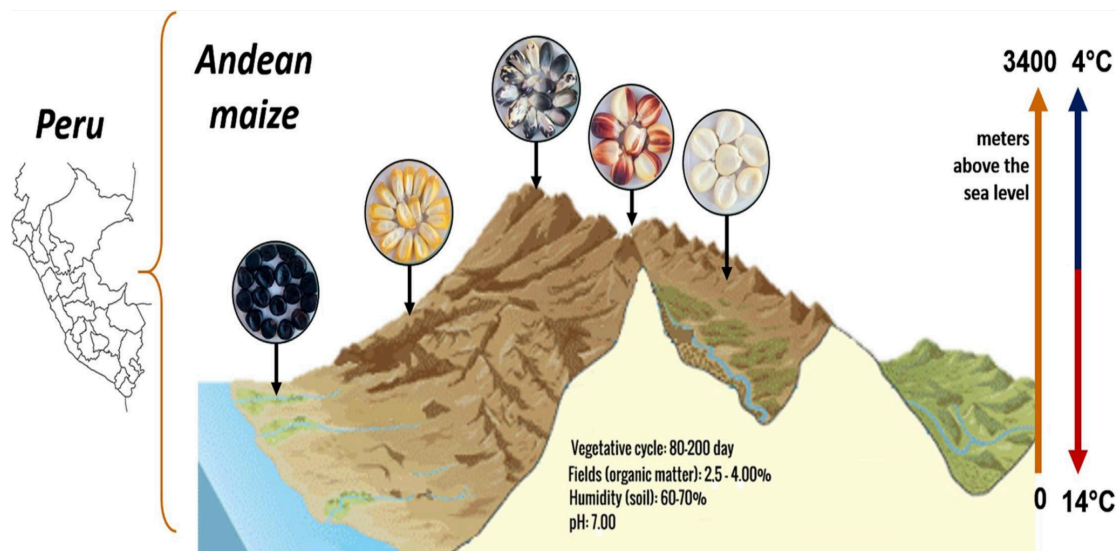


Figure 11. Places where Peruvian Maize is grown. From *Peruvian Andean Maize: General characteristics, nutritional properties, bioactive compounds, and culinary uses*. Source:Salvador-Reyes, Rebeca, and Maria Teresa Pedrosa Silva Cleric. "Peruvian Andean maize: General characteristics, nutritional properties, bioactive compounds, and culinary uses." *Science Direct*, vol. 130, 2020. *Scencedirect*,

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0963996919308208?via%3Dihub>

After researching the three staple foods and finding out the connections they have with the communities in America since ancient times, thinking about the past and valuing what those ancestors made, I decided to use the seeds in their natural appearance and take some symbolic elements that Pre-Columbian civilizations and ancestral artists created in response to their epistemological and ontological perspective.

RECOVERING AND HONORING MEMORIES

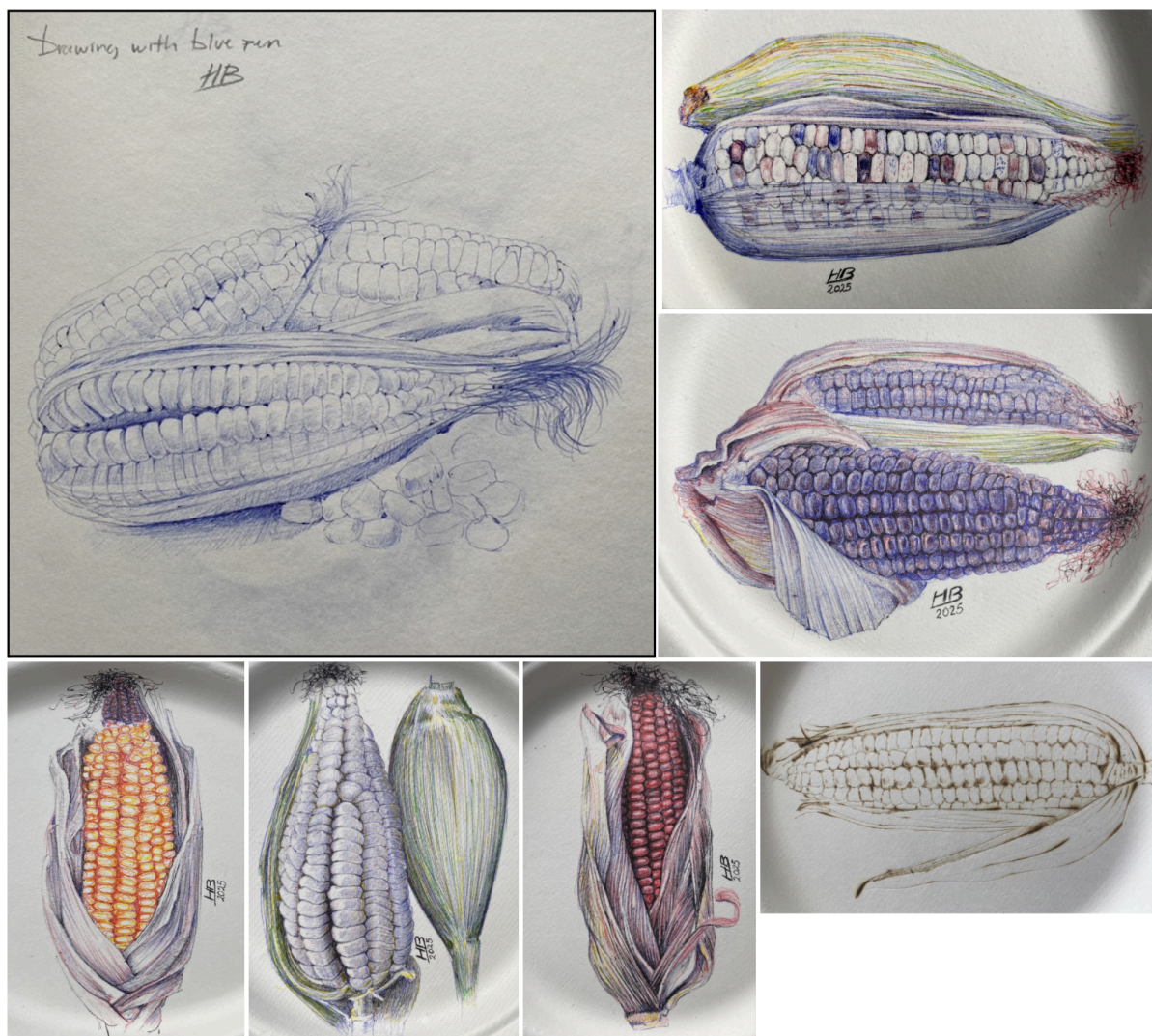


Figure 12. Drawings of five types of Peruvian maize. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

Coloured ballpoint pen, heat tools on paper, and disposable plates representing the five types of Peruvian maize domesticated in ancient times Peru and currently are still cultivated.

I drew *Choclo* with a blue pen to honor the drawings I did when I was in high school. I drew the five types of maize from Peru and had fun with it by using coloured pens as I did when I was in high school. I burned the disposable plate to find a different medium. (Figure 12) At this stage of my project, I was using cardboard and recycled materials like disposable plates. (Figure 13)



Figure 13. Drawings made on disposable plates and sculptures made with cardboard. Photo by Hugo Bennilla, 2025. Drawings with colour ballpens and heat tools on disposable plates; and two corn cobs made of recycled cardboard with a rusty metal appearance: copper, bronze rust. Patina made with metallic acrylic painting.



My intention of using disposable plates was to reflect on the consumption of fast food instead of healthy food. I thought I could stress the importance of the consumption of natural resources. However, using that cardboard was very counterproductive to my purposes since the viewer wouldn't connect the images drawn on the disposable plates with my intention. With these works, I found out the importance of the material to convey the purpose of my project.

In time, I started to explore and experiment with the proper material. I decided to buy packages of corn in the supermarket and start to experiment with *choclo*.

So I observed a *choclo*, I peeled it and saw each layer of husk, felt its texture, and touched its silk.

I photographed different moments, expecting to find some revelations or encounters. (Figure 14)



Figure 14. Studio and explorations with *Choclo*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025. Photographs taken with a DSLR camera to study the *choclo* and how the perception is affected by the light and the ways of drawing the maize.



Additionally, I experimented and played with **maize** flour and cornstarch to figure out their possibilities. I began working with coarsely-ground-yellow cornmeal and cornstarch to recreate the containers, (See figure 15). This part of my process is like preparing ingredients to cook rather than material for artworks. Eventually, I was able to find out how to work with cornstarch to make vessels or objects. And most importantly, this process awakened my childhood memories connected with my mom and the land where I was born.



Figure 15. Process of making the first containers.
Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.
Piece 1, vessel made of coarsely-ground-yellow cornmeal (polenta)
Piece 2, Vessel made of cornstarch. The cornstarch help me to achieve better results in terms of getting a refined surface.

I was not happy yet with the objects I was making, so I decided to use the ear of maize as a mould to capture the texture of its kernel. I did not know what to do with mold made out of cornstarch, or what the

outcome would be; the only thing I knew was that my curiosity was guiding me, and together we were finding answers to the question What if... (Figure 16)



Figure 16. Making mold with Choclo (*Process View*). Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

First stage of using the corn ear as mold to capture the shape of its kernel with the dough made of cornstarch.



Working with corn dough as if it were clay is unpredictable. What I have to do is constantly monitor how it dries. As time passes by, the mold made from the corn cob twists and deforms while it is getting dried. That was why I used screws to prevent deforming, twisting, wrapping, and losing its shape.

(Figure 17)

Figure 17. Mold made of cornstarch. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

Use of screws to hold on the pressure on the material during drying, to avoid the shape of the corn cob get deformed,

After the exploration I made with different materials like coarsely-ground-yellow cornmeal, cornstarch, and cardboard, I found a way to work with the material. However, I have not yet defined what I could use as a complement, as support for the vessels. A good support could be wood as the support I used for the first works I had made.

MAKING THE CONTAINERS

I made ten vessels of cornstarch for my exhibition, **Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOLO** presented at Room 118, 205 Richmond street, *OCAD University, March 2026*. I had to prepare the cornstarch dough many times, and the act of preparing reminded me of my mother preparing the ingredients and cooking the *tortillas*. It reminded me of where I was born and how we used to use the **Choclo**. I repeated the same process each time I required more dough for another vessel. I did it over as a pattern, as my mother used to repeat the process, as a ritual, to have the ingredients to nourish us. Repeating this process of making the dough many times, took me back to my childhood and brought back memories I did not even remember. It made me recognize myself in this process. As Han asserts that “Repetition, as a form of recognition, is therefore a form of completion. Past and present are brought together into a living present. As a form of completion, repetition finds duration and intensity. It ensures that time lingers”(Han 8). Working with the cornstarch and the seeds made me think about my home. It took me where I came from, and I recalled the taste of **choclo**, the taste of home, that is the reason why I recognized myself in these staple foods.

I think I had never valued these seeds enough, despite having them around me, as staple foods in Peru. However, changing the geographical context and looking at it from a certain distance made me change my outlook. Now that I am away from home, without those staple foods around me, I started to miss the seeds, understanding how our identity is intertwined through the food; how the food can create and engage certain communities; how these seeds keep their sovereignty; how these seeds provide a space of feeling of belonging and create a territory of identity.

Working with these new materials took me to a space where everything was uncertain. The materials I was using to create the pieces for the exhibition were non-traditional materials that were made into vessels. With more questions than answers, full of uncertainty, I decided to play with the cornstarch and the dough as though I were playing with the mud when I was a child. Working with an unstable material was like trying to give shape and order to the chaos. It was time for me to keep on working with the unpredictability, trying to learn how to work with the cornstarch. And at the same time, I wondered how those Ancestors' artists were able to create knowledge to make vessels and domesticate plants. In this creative research, I started to realize I had to work with a material that transcends its function and think about new ways of using it instead of what it was made for.

Kristen Morgin who works in non-traditional processes, unfired clay, and found materials, reinforces my intention to keep on dealing with non-traditional material to create my containers. As Kristen Morgin says: "The fragility of my work is a kind of metaphor for mortality and a reminder that nothing is permanent and that precious objects do not always last" (Graver). Working with the material, kneading the dough, I see how it

changes from softness to hardness, from smooth to rough, from fragile to tough. Moreover, working with natural resources that decay due to the time, made me think about the permanent and the impermanent; the fragility of the material or resources.

Unlike clay, the dough that I made of cornstarch as a material to shape these vessels does not stand up on its own. For that reason, I had to include other materials like cardboard and aluminum foil. Additionally, I have to make each part separate and then put the pieces together once it has dried. Consequently, my process is divided into 4 stages. First, I make a mold of cardboard and use aluminum paper as insulation to avoid it getting stuck on the cardboard. Then, I mix cornstarch with vinegar, vegetable oil and glue to make the dough that



Figure 18. Process of mixing the ingredients and kneading the dough. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

that I would spread over the mold made of cardboard, (see Figure 18). Once the dough is dried, I put the pieces together and improve the finishes with fresh dough. Eventually, once the dough is dried, I refine the pieces by sanding it, (See figure 19). In a second phase of the process of working with cornstarch, once the piece is refined, I engrave or add other material like wire of copper or a strip made of corn husk, (Figure 20). Working on this project, I am recovering and putting together the experience I had when I played with nature: the mud, rainwater, stones or wood.



Figure 19. Process of putting together each piece and refining. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

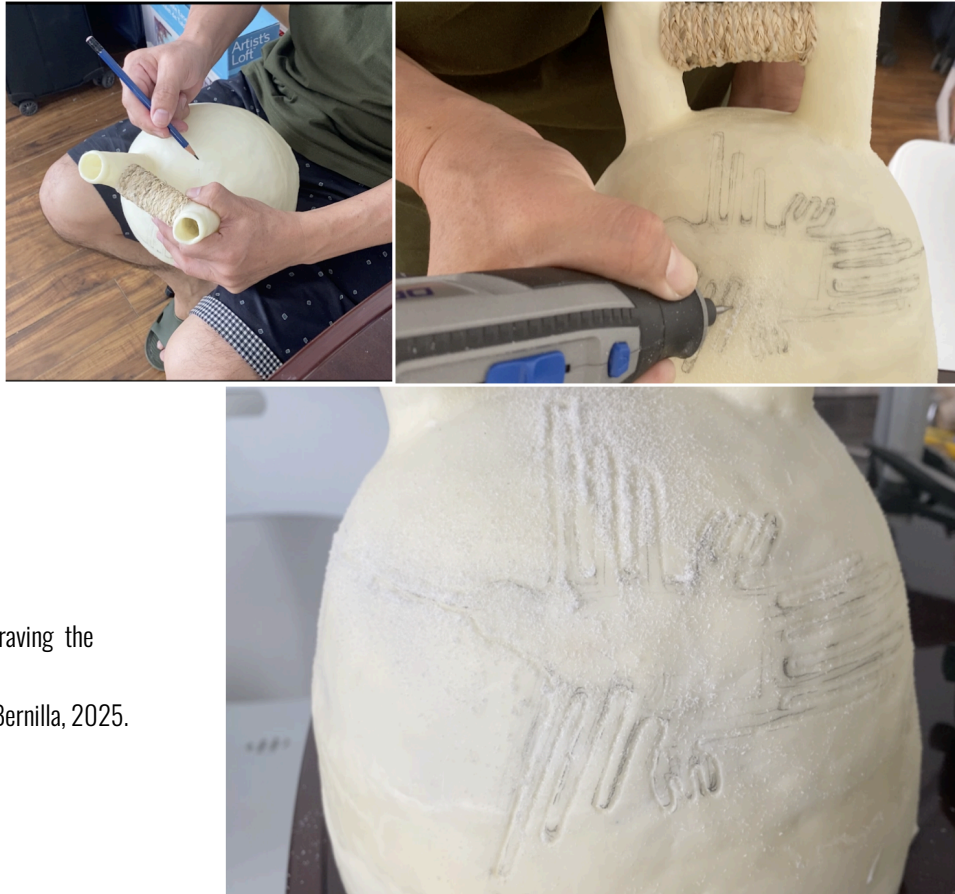


Figure 20. Engraving the container.
Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2025.

This process reminds me of the skills I have learned since I was a child. Working on these artworks is like recovering what I had put aside. It was like repairing and reconstructing the essence of my being. Overall, this research taught me the importance of nature in my practice and how art making must transcend the definitions. In that sense, the events contained in my memories that are connected with my emotions are crucial in this project. The work of Louise Bourgeois informed my practice in two aspects: memory and nature. The importance of memory from her childhood was crucial for her practice. "Her childhood memories were filled with the washing, restoring, and selling of these historic textiles" (Wye 91) and the forces of nature as she asserts: "Nature was one of the ways I communicated with the children," she said, "both through the animals and the plants. . . . If we observe life in the garden, we share the same love. It makes you very close" (147).

I find out that Art is mostly related to freedom, curiosity, intuition, playfulness and nature as a natural essence of every human being. As bell hooks would say: "For in that world, nature was more powerful. Nothing and no one could completely control nature. In childhood I experienced a connection between an unspoiled natural world and the human desire for freedom" (hooks 8). I see myself making Art as a way of life, as a path to solve and express ideas by exploring, disintegrating, constructing and composing the material in which our souls and memories take shape beyond a style or system.

By researching **Pallares**, I learned about Moche Art and how they create vessels to illustrate their container with the characters of **Pallares**, but mostly I learned how to honor those seeds that are living with us currently. In the same way, the portrait vessels of the **Mochicas** are crucial since they taught me how to make portrait vessels with corn starch. Furthermore, I use the shape of the **Nazca** ceramic design to recreate new containers with different materials. From the Inca civilization, I also informed my project by using the symbol of **Chacana** and the shape of their ceramics, like **Aryballo** and **Kero**. I recreate the base of the container, taking into account that "Inca ceramics are particularly distinctive and easy to identify. The vessel shapes are highly standardized. The **aryballos** shape is perhaps the most characteristic, with conical base, vertical side handles, tall neck with flaring rim, and animal-head nubbin on the shoulder. Other typical shapes are a shallow dish with a single, bird head, handle; a pedestal beaker, sometimes with a cover; and a single- or double-handled pitcher or bottle" (Bennett 99).

In addition to my skills and the concept, it is important to highlight the **materiality**, which is crucial to reinforce my intention and purpose in my project. In that sense, the encounter I had with the staple foods in

the supermarket helped me find connections. The **Pallar** in the supermarket triggered my curiosity and drove me to research its story and the cultures that inhabited the land where it was domesticated. The Pallares taught me about my Ancestor artists and the creation of this technology that transcends time. Thanks, **Pallar**, for reminding me of the land where I was born, discovering my connections with nature. Thanks, **Choclo**, for making me recall my childhood memories when I lived in Lambayeque, where my father's land is. Thanks, **Papa**, since your roots took me to find **Chuño** in Toronto to honor the Pre-Columbian cultures' knowledge.

Until this stage, the research I had done made me reflect on the importance of sources of knowledge. Engaged in my explorations and based on the theoretical framework I had developed, I came to define my role in this project. Besides the role as an artist, I declare myself as a translator and receiver.

THE TRANSLATOR

Using some elements of the Pre-Columbian culture's imagery and the cultural heritage, I make myself into a translator of that knowledge. In that knowledge, I now know that the seeds transcend time, and their names in **Quechua**, embedded in Spanish, were waiting for someone to tell their stories. These seeds turned me into a translator, not to translate what initially was intended by the Incas, but to extend our inheritance, their afterlife, into our future through research and creation. In this artistic project, the reason to remake those vessels is absolutely different than when the Incas created potteries. In this case, it is an attempt to understand what they were making, and continue with that legacy like a translation for the future. As Benjamin has pointed out, "For a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find

their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life” (Bullock et al. 254).

While the Incas created vessels to celebrate ceremonies with those staple foods, I honor and value what they cultivated and created with their Poetry. I consider this a way of creating an extension of what the Pre-Columbian civilizations created; I extend its life. Being in Toronto, I became a translator of the history of the



seeds. I turn into their voice, recalling their names in these territories. I am also a root of these seeds. Seeds that have travelled further than I could have ever imagined. All in all, this is my contribution as one who comes from the same land where those living seeds originated.

Figure 21. *The Sound of childhood memory* (work in progress). The last container I made. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Made of cornstarch with thinner walls to keep it translucent.

Thinking about the responsibility it brings to work with cultural heritage from my home country, wondering how the Incas made their artistic contributions that transcend time, I acknowledge that heritage with all due respect.

The process of working with the cornflour and after 10 containers I made during the last year, taught me to create my own vessels in less time. Now I know what would happen if I apply two or three layers of dough, or how to keep the original shape of the mold and prevent it from being deformed (Figure 21). Additionally, all vessels I made will contain something during the exhibition. I contain the history of these seeds, and my memories are connected to the land where the seeds come. However, in this journey, the voice of this seed must not only be contained but also expanded to find new and endless connections.

THE RECEIVER

Based on the way I have been working with cornstarch to make the vessels, and working with found objects to recreate and resignify the meaning of the material and the materiality, I see myself creating Art as an unpredictable and undefined process that is closer to the scientific principle of entropy.

The seeds I have found in Toronto made me think about the cultural heritage, but also the natural resources we should care for. These seeds recalled my childhood memories that are connected to nature. Nature, that I recognized in the rain, in the trees, the river, the pebbles, the mud; all of that reminded me of the importance of nature for all of us.

I made parts of my work with **maize** flour, and I used seeds. The complement for objects I made is wood (ready-made material, and found objects), and I try to keep its natural characteristics or at least with a

few interventions (Trunk and seeds). Somehow, I have been looking for the balance of nature and culture in my project. As an artist and an immigrant, I see myself as an extension of these seeds. I am the receiver that is connected to these staple foods to amplify their voice. I am the root of the seeds to find connections here, in this land, and everywhere I move. These seeds were my nourishment in my hometown in the past. They have travelled with me, and they are part of the material of my art practice, as a root that connects the past, the present, and the future.

After I researched the histories of these three staple foods and revisited my memories from my childhood, I reflected on my personal connections with these seeds, which became the roots that helped me make Art. Having all of this in mind, I was ready to organize my IAMD Graduate Thesis Exhibition. The exhibit is not the culminating part of my project; it is an ongoing process to extend the roots of the seeds and expand their voices through the receiver, the artist. Acknowledging the source of knowledge from ancient times that informed my exhibition, and how the inheritance of the Pre-Columbian civilizations preserved their knowledge through the seeds that are spread and connect different lands now, I exhibited 7 pieces. Based on my cultural identity, and intended to demonstrate the connections between Pre-Columbian cultures and the seeds, I showcased *Lost in My Name: Pallar*, *The Ship of Mr. Pallares*, *Relics II*, and *Pick Up*. I intended to honor the Pre-Columbian cultures that cultivated these staple foods. Based on my personal identity and the connection with the land where I come from, I exhibited the work *Caring for the Impermanence* and *Relics I*. Finally, thinking about myself as the root and connection to nature, I also displayed *The Sound of a Childhood Memory*.

Lost in my name: Pallar

Pine wood, MDF, metal and copper clips, cornstarch and seed. 12 x 51 x 16.5cm. 2026.

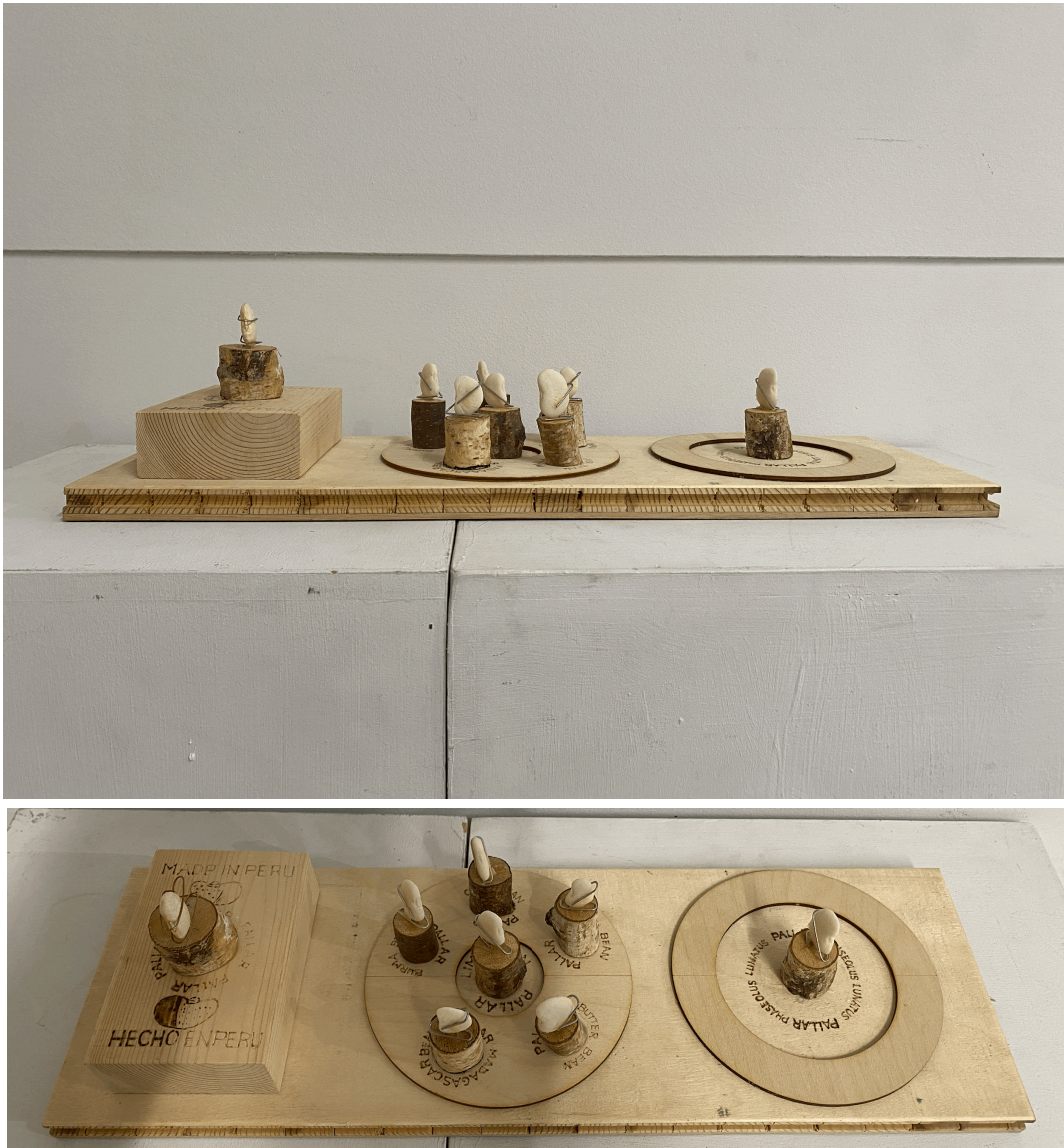


Figure 22. *Lost in my name: Pallar*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition¹¹.

I made this work using found wood and MDF. Astonished by the dissociation I had when I read the name of these beans in the supermarket, Toronto, I decided to retake the original name and become the voice of the seed. This work has a pedagogical function, trying to show where the name of this bean comes from. I used only one original seed and recreated 6 seed shapes with the cornflour dough. The shape of the seeds works as a

¹¹ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses**: Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

reminder of identity in spite of the different names. I wanted to make people aware of the names of this seed that is connected with the land of their origin. I kept the colour of the wood since it reminded me of the colour of soil.

The ship of Mr Pallar

Pine wood and MDF, drawing with a heat tool. 45 x 30 x 30 cm. 2026



Figure 23. *The ship of Mr Pallar*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.¹²

By using the iconography of the **Mochica** pottery, I engraved the **pallar** characters created by the **Moche** culture. Using found wood and MDF material I created this artifact as a toy that can be reconfigured in different ways each time it is disarmed. I thought of it as a time machine that travels to the future, carrying information to be decoded through its iconography. These two works, which I considered the first stage of my research project, helped me in two ways. First of all, it made me think about my art practice; decentering the

¹² Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

sources of information I used. These two works are informed by different epistemologies and ontologies.

Additionally, I found out the importance of the material to make connections with my artistic purpose.

Relics II

Pine wood, cornflour, husk of maize and *Chuño* (dried potato) 15 x 75 x 22 cm. 2026



Figure 24. *Relics II* .Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.¹³

¹³ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO.** Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

In *Relics II*, I brought back the technology used by the Incas to dry potatoes. With a pedagogical function, this piece shows the Incas technology as a way of heritage knowledge. Using cornstarch dough to recreate some agricultural structures created by the Inca, I used **Chuño blanco** (white dried potato) and **Chuño negro** (black dried potato), to tell the story of this process.

Pick up

Juglans nigra wood trunk, cornflour, copper, husk and grain of maize; toasted corn, speaker and arduino software 100 x 180 x 300 cm. 2026



Figure 25. *Pick up*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.¹⁴

This work is made of 5 wood logs (*Juglans Nigra* wood trunk) in their original state that support the six containers made of cornstarch, husk of maize and copper wire. This installation has 6 different vessels. There is

¹⁴ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

a couple of **Queros**¹⁵. As they are made in pairs, I made two pieces that fit each other, becoming only one.

Inspired by the typical shape of the Inca ceramics I made two **Arivalos**¹⁶. The small one contained purple corn from Peru and has the word Inca made of copper wire embedded in one of its sides.



The bigger aribalo also has the word Inca and a chacana symbol made of copper wire, both are embedded on each side. This aribalo contains a speaker. There are two more vessels, one of which is informed by Nazca pottery on which I embedded the shape of the Hummingbird (a geoglyph within the Nazca Lines)¹⁷.

Figure 26. *Pick up* (Detail). Small aribalo that contains purple maize. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition. *Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul.* PALLAR,P APA y CHOCLO. March 2026. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026

¹⁵ During the Incas empire Queros were made in pairs to drink *Chicha* (a fermented corn beer) to celebrate ceremonies. "The Inka used queros to co-opt traditional Andean norms of reciprocity and long-standing toasting rites to naturalize the new asymmetric labor relations between the empire and the peoples of the provinces" (Colleen 61). Queros had different sizes and were made of clay, silver or gold but mostly of wood. Quero, means "cup of wood", derives from Quechua (64)

¹⁶ The most typical shape of Inca ceramics is the arivalos, used to contain liquids. It has two loop handles, a wide flaring lip at the top of its slim neck, and a conical base that facilitates pouring and can be stuck in the ground. "These jars were often very large, as were the wide-mouthed jars with conical bases called chicha jars, since they were used to make a corn beer of that name. When vessels of either type were carried on the back, a rope was passed through the handles and secured around a lug supplied for this purpose". (Sawyer 62).

¹⁷ Nazca Lines are geoglyphs created by Nazca culture. It is located within the desert plains of the Nazca Region, to the south of Lima. Nazca existed from approximately 200 BCE to 600 CE. (Mardon 19).

The other vessel is informed by the **Mochica** culture¹⁸. This installation is an interactive piece that looks for connection with the viewer through a direct participation in which the dialogue and relational moments will



make the installation complete during the exhibition. In doing so, the first and last vessels play a crucial role; both will require the action of picking up.

Figure 27. *Pick up* (Detail). Bigger Aribalo with a speaker. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition. *Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul.* PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLLO. March 2026. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026.

The first piece (two queros) will be full of two types of Cancha (toasted maize from Peru), for viewers to pick up and taste. While the last and largest aribalo will reproduce a loop recording of a female voice repeating five words: **pallar, papa, choclo, cancha, chuño**, as if it were endless. These words are rooted in

¹⁸ “Moche artists excelled at creating “portrait vessels,” so called because their striking naturalism seems to reflect an attempt to evoke specific individuals” (Ikehara-Tsukayama et al. 37)

Quechua, and we use them in the Spanish language in Peru. The only one who will listen to the voice repeating the words will be the one who gets close to the vessel, having to bend over to the mouth of the container to listen to the voice. However, the audio volume will increase if the vessel is lifted, allowing the words to be heard more clearly. This container has a device (a microsystem hardware -Arduino) that is activated by a pressure sensor. The volume will turn up once the container is lifted.

The containers I made of cornstarch, using symbols and elements informed by the Pre-Columbian cultures of Ancient Peru, represent the knowledge coming from the south. As a support of the containers, I decided to use wood, Juglan's nigra wood trunk, as a symbol of this land, the north. The wooden logs represent the land where I will exhibit my project as a way of acknowledging and honouring this land; as if the south and north joined to support each other in a reciprocal way.

I chose the Juglans nigra wood trunk as the plinth of my containers, as I felt a call from nature. By January 2026, I knew I had to use a special support for my vessels, not those plinths that are usually used in museums or galleries. My first option was stone (granite) to contrast the light and soft tone of the surface of the containers I had made. Another option I had was to fill the gallery floor with soil brought from the park, as a symbol of this land or using branches and leaves. Also, I had thought about the possibility of making the plinth out of cornmeal, a fake rock texture. However, to make the five large pieces would take me a long time since the material I work with has a slow process, and I only had two months to do it over. However, on January 9th, in the afternoon, I was making the containers in my apartment when a loud noise coming from outside scared me. A large tree branch had fallen into the doorway of the building, blocking the entrance, as a result of the windy day.

(Figure 28). As the branch was big, the next day someone came to remove it by chopping it. Impressed by the texture of the trunk I spent a long time observing the way that person was cutting it.



Figure 28. The fallen trunk of *juglans nigra* blocking the entrance. Picture taken to report it to the manager of the building. January 9, 2026. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026.

When I saw the rough texture of the *juglans nigra* trunk, which resembled a rock that made a contrast with the tone of the surface of my containers, I came to the conclusion that I would use those large wooden blocks as plinths. The texture of the logs is truly beautiful, so I decided to keep most of their natural texture. Since my containers have conical bases, informed by the Inca's *Aryballo*, I had to carve a bit of the center of some trunks so that my containers could fit into the *juglans nigra* wood trunk. The *juglans nigra* became part of my project as a host welcoming their guests.

Caring for the Impermanence

Cornflour, Juglans Nigra wood trunk. 110 x 35 x 35 cm. 2026



Figure 29. *Caring for the Impermanence*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition¹⁹.

¹⁹ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

Considering maize as a precious gift, a symbol of adaptability and resilience; In this work I wanted to play with the material, constructing and deconstructing. Thinking about the principle of entropy I imagined this piece melting and becoming a new living organism as time passes. Melting and decomposing its shape to become part of the trunk, surviving through time and adapting to new environments.



Figure 30. Mold of the big corn.(Process View) Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Retaking the process I had made with the real corn helped me create *Caring for the Impermanence*.

To make this piece I reused a work I had left out due to the material I was working with. All the objects I had made of cornflour dough had an even shape and smooth texture. I wanted to make different shapes. As in a previous attempt I had used real corn as mold to capture the shape of its kernel. I thought I could use the same process to make a big ear of corn. As the cardboard was the support that I was using to make the molds of my previous containers, I decided to use the big corn ear I had made of cardboard in the second term of the IMD Program and reuse it as a mold (See Figure 30).

Relics I

Found pine wood; stalk, silks, husk and cob of maize, cornflour and screws 35 x 150 cm. 2026



Figure 31. *Relics I*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition²⁰.

With this work, I want to value the importance of this plant. These pieces took me more than three months. This

work was the result of an exploration I made of the choclo. I used the same process as everyone when eating

²⁰ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO.** Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

Choclo. I went to the supermarket and bought packs of choclos. Next, I photographed the choclo in the process of cooking, exploring and observing its features as if I were to find a hidden treasure. Then, I used the choclo as a mold. I saved its husk in the refrigerator and left the silks to dry over its husk. After that, I cooked the Choclo and ate its kernels. Until that stage, my procedure was as any one cooking and eating a choclo. What comes after that is to throw away the leftovers; however, I saved the cob and each remaining piece to get it dried. Finally, I decided to reuse each part I had collected as evidence of the existence of that seed. I used them to create this work in which each part of the ear of choclo is considered a relic. With this work, I want to value the importance of this plant for humankind.



Figure 32. *Relics I* (Details). Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition. Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLLO. March 2026.

The Sound of a Childhood Memory

Cornflour, husk, light bulbs, speaker, steel cable. 50x 100 x 50 cm. 2026



Figure 33. *The Sound of a Childhood Memory.* Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition²¹

This work represents the water that is essential for growing any kind of root. This was the last piece I made and I put together what I had learned making the previous vessels. It reflects the connection I have with nature from a cultural heritage to a personal identity that has been nourished by the seed. This is a container that would help me to provide a sound experience to the viewer. By installing a speaker inside the container, it reproduces the sounds of nature that I edited using software. This piece will work as a background music to

²¹ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO.** Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

connect the pieces with the viewers through the sound and reinforce the intention of balance between nature and culture. This drop-shaped vessel has a light inside that helps viewers read the text that was engraved in one of its external wall sides.

I was born in the countryside

Where I touched the grass

Where I learned to smell the rain

Where I learn to listen to the river and jump into its water

Where I knew the pebble and felt its skin

Where I played with trees and climbed its branches

Where i knew the maize

Where I played with the solid

Where I make my toys

Where I knew nature.

FINAL THESIS EXHIBITION

Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**

Thesis Exhibition Presented at Room 118, 205 Richmond street, OCAD University, March 2026.



Figure 34. Gallery view. View of the curation of the *Graduate Thesis Exhibition. Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO*²². Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

This exhibition was not organized to show the result of my research. It was meant to extend the purpose and intention of my project by establishing and extending the connection between living things, seeds (Nature), artifacts/objects (Culture) and Human beings (social interactions). In doing so, the installation set in the center of the room invites the viewers to taste the toasted corn extending its roots through the taste of the

²² Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

viewers. The two *Queros* containing **cancha** were intended to give a welcome to the viewer; a way of reciprocity expressed through the hospitality providing **cancha**. As the door that allows the viewer to get to my



intimacy space, my home. This is a way of practising reciprocity since the exhibition with the participation of the viewer won't be completed.

Figure 35. *Pick up* (Detail) Two *Queros* containing *cancha*. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026. Presented in the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.

This exhibition is conceived as an extension, a root that prevents the seed from disappearing. The connection is achieved through the **cancha**, extending the life of the seed into unknown territories. In this way, the exhibition creates relationships between living things/seeds (nature), artifacts/objects (culture), and human beings (social interactions). The actions required of viewers are inspired by a common practice in my home country; when someone goes to a *cevichería*, the client is offered toasted corn as an appetizer while they wait. The words **pallar, papa, choclo, cancha, chuño** that come from the container, repeated in an endless loop, refers to the Quechua words that in Peru are often spoken without awareness of their origin in the Pre-Columbian cultures. During the exhibition, there were unexpected viewers who showed a strong connection with the container by participating actively with the installation.



Figure 36. Viewers interacting with the two Queros, tasting *Cancha* during the opening of the Graduate Thesis Exhibition. **Interconnectednesses:** Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**²³. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

²³ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses:** Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.



Figure 37. Public interacting with the small aribalo, peeping through its mouth, during the opening of the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.
Interconnectednesses: Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**²⁴. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

The most charming moment during the exhibition was when I saw people interacting with the aribalos. With the smaller one, the spectators tried to discover what was inside, handling it carefully. With the larger aryallos, they tried to listen to the audio. Then they lifted it to hear the voice and were amazed by discovering that the sound coming from the aryallo increased in volume.

²⁴ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses:** Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.



Figure 38. Viewer interacting with the largest aribalo, listening through its mouth during the opening reception of the Graduate Thesis Exhibition. **Interconnectednesses:** Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**²⁵. Photo by Hugo Bernilla, 2026

²⁵ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectednesses:** Recipes for nourishing the soul. **PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO**. Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla



Figure 39. Viewers interacting with the Queros, during the opening of the Graduate Thesis Exhibition.²⁶Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

During the exhibition a young couple tasted **cancha**, and said in Spanish language “esto me recuerda a casa” (“*it reminds me of home*”). That moment made me very happy because it achieved one of the purposes of my exhibition; to extend the connections with the visitors and activate emotions through the seeds. It reminded me also when I came across the seeds in the supermarket.

²⁶ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO.** Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.



Figure 40. Viewer interacting with *The Sound of a Childhood Memory*, reading the text engraved in one of the external walls during the Graduate Thesis Exhibition²⁷. Photo by Hugo Bernilla.

²⁷ Graduate Thesis Exhibition, **Interconnectedness: Recipes for nourishing the soul. PALLAR, PAPA y CHOCLO.** Room 118, 205 Richmond street, March 11 to March 16 Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2026. Opening reception: March 11, 4pm. Photo by Hugo Bernilla

ROOTED IN THE FUTURE

My MFA project delves into my cultural and individual identity, questioning my own practice and revealing new paths to keep the connections I have found in these seeds. Additionally, this project reflects the balance between what is made (Culture) and what is in its original state (Nature). Now I can say that I could point out what it means to make art for me.

Making art means to collect my memories from each corner of my mind

Making art means to take out what is contained in my being

Making art is to reveal the innermost part of my soul

Making art is to make my soul speak

Making art is to go beyond the logic of definitions

Making art is to live the experience of knowing through the material

Making art means navigating through the unknown, questioning the last stage

Making art means valuing the heritage knowledge while unveiling new ones.

I see myself in the near future, looking back to this exhibition and the way I honored the land where I was born and the place where I will display this work. I see myself in the near future, looking back to that land that provided me with what I needed to go ahead, to know nature, nourishing my soul during my early childhood and what took me to make Art. I can remember all of these childhood memories as a result of my research and after walking together with the three staple foods, I feel happy to be the voice of these living things. I have been working with ingredients. When we think about ingredients, we usually relate them to cooking. Cooking has to

do with culture and the place where we taste it. Most of the time, when I used to paint, I usually compared painting with cooking. In this research project, my approach in my creative process was different from the way I used to work before, making art more related to cooking. I have been working with physical ingredients (seed), cornstarch, and wood to honor this cultural heritage. Additionally, the ingredients of this project also include memories, nature, exploration, and entropy; therefore, the meaning of the word ingredients transcends its definitions. These physical and non-physical ingredients, together generate a synergy that connects viewers with their own memories and personal experiences, identifying themselves with the materials and the actions realized.

Overall, I made containers of cornstarch. I ate the seeds, and I drew the seeds. I read their stories. I touched and peeled their husks to make ropes. I know the maize, I ate the maize, during the exhibition, viewers tasted and ate the seeds. Now we are containers of their taste. Others listened to the names of the seeds. Everyone who participated in the exhibition, and listened to the voice repeating the names, are witnesses of the existence of the seeds. This witnessing extends the roots and achieves the interconnectedness that these seeds are able to make in any environment.

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