

Raúl Silva C. (Lima, 1991)

He holds a degree in Visual Arts from PUCP (Lima, PE), an MA in Critical Theory in Art Praxis from the [Dutch Art Institute](#) of ArTEZ University (Arnhem, NL) and an MA in Contemporary Art History and Visual Culture from UCM, UAM and the Museo Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, ES). Raúl Silva, works as an art researcher and visual artist, he is professor of Research Project I at Centro de la Imagen (Lima, PE) and main editor of the art critic website [Mañana](#). Currently, he is part of the recently formed editorial collective Big Dumb Object, with which he has obtained the [Curatorial Research Residency 2023](#) from Centro Huarte (Navarra, ES) and the Publication Support 2024 from the Government of Navarra and Centro Huarte (Navarra, ES). Thanks to this fund, he will publish the book *Una piedra cae en el aliviadero*, a research project on the visual culture produced around water the canalization in the Basque Country and Navarra.

Silva has been winner of [Secuencias/Vegap](#) (Madrid, ES) in 2024, has obtained the [Premio Generación 2024](#), awarded by Montemadrid and La Casa encendida. He has been resident in 2023 at the [Centro de Residencias Artísticas de Matadero](#) (Madrid, ES). His recent exhibitions include [Rayos de sol de Sudamérica](#) at Crisis Galería (Lima, PE) in 2023, [Relatos de un tiempo subvertido](#), organized by La Parcería in Espacio Cómplices (Madrid, ES) in 2023, [The coordinates are concealed](#) at Imaginary Z (Hanzou, CHN) in 2022, [Circular Gestures](#) at Unanimous Consent (Zurich, CH) in 2022 and the presentations of *For future's sake* at Fujifilm X Space (Shanghai, CHN) and Crisis Galería (Lima, PE) in 2021. She has also been Honorable Mention of the ICPNA Contemporary Art Prize 2018 (Lima, PE), and Honorable Mention of the National Painting Competition of the Central Museum in [2018](#) and [2022](#) (Lima, PE).

In recent years, his work has focused on Peruvian historical memory, its colonial past and, mainly, its relationship to the processes of global technification, explored mainly through writing, digital design, painting and video. His most recent research explores the relationship between the export of guano as a natural fertilizer during the second half of the 19th century; an event that can be understood as Peru's entry into the network of global capitalist transactions of that time. From a speculative work, the research seeks to associate this fact with the processes of technification of the distribution of goods of the capitalist present, already extended from vector technology.

Lives and works in Madrid, ES
r.silva0117@gmail.com
www.raulsilvacuevas.com

RAYOS DE SOL DE SUDAMÉRICA/ (Rays of Sunlight from South America)

In 1851, Peru financed the construction of the first passenger and cargo railway line in South America, linking Lima, the capital, to the port of Callao. A symbol of development and national identity, the project marked the beginning of the construction of an extensive network of railway connections that would streamline and expand the market inside and outside the country in the following years. The economic system was transitioning to a capitalist model and the country had become aligned with a vision of progress and modernisation, using as collateral a somewhat unusual element: vast mountains of fertiliser produced by birds that had accumulated on the islands of the Pacific coast. Known as “guano”, this element had attracted the interest of the industrial powers that were battling with a problem of soil fertility due, on the one hand, to the separation of the big cities and the countryside and, on the other, to the growth of the working-class population. This gave Peru the liquidity it needed to access loans, which would subsequently attract new investors and consolidate new negotiations with industrial countries, using its own natural resources as its currency.

This seminal historical period, which connected Peru to the world, was marked by trading processes that were mediated by slow technologies, as it took two and a half months by boat to connect the port of Callao to the port of Liverpool in England. Commodities, letters and photographs were transported to distant destinations and became part of an increasingly complex global fabric. Today, nearly 170 years later, fibre optics and satellite networks transport information across the Atlantic Ocean at a speed of nearly 200,000 kilometres per second.

This enormous contrast explains the acceleration of trade. Catch the living manners as they rise at a global level. But not only that: it also explains why production and distribution processes have become invisible. Today, the visible face of these transactional processes—digital communication networks—seems to have acquired an immaterial pure form, driven by the coordination of computer vectors that can be used to produce graphical vectors.

These are perfectly drawn lines of coordinates that can be extended infinitely. Today, they are used to design all digital interfaces. The principles of the vector are apparently perfect for representing the logic of infinite growth demanded by the age of progress and the market in the current system. Thus, while the ideal form of capital is managed through the concepts of infinite progress and consumerism, its material form is sustained by the finite nature of the planet.

Graphical vectors seem to have become the ideal medium for disseminating a universal mandate of the visibility of the globalised world, with corporate images, the graphical identity of major franchises and the construction of commercial networks all at our fingertips and all drawn from the outline of a perfect synthesised graphical form. Meanwhile, behind all this, exploitation and inequality uphold that same economic model through transnational underdevelopment. To extract guano in the mid-nineteenth century, nearly six hundred coolies arrived from China in the capacity of semi-slaves, and the guano quarries that promised prosperity and constant extraction for more than a thousand years dried up in less than sixty. A postage stamp commemorating the centenary of Peru’s first port illustrates this apparently contradictory relationship between nature and technology. It shows a railway line decorated on both sides with guano birds

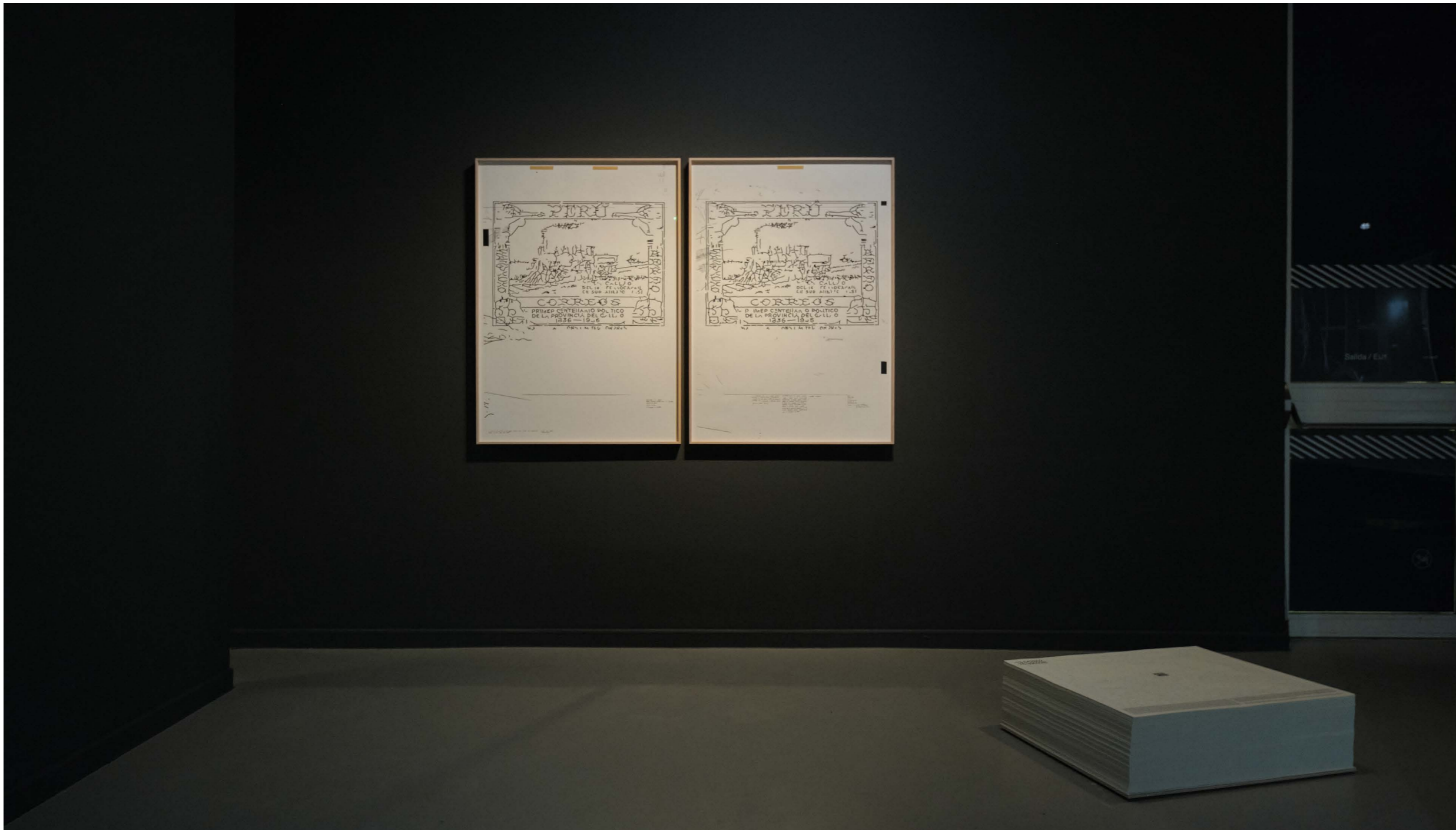
Rayos de sol de Sudamérica proposes a revision and digitalization of the historical archives of the extraction of guano from the Chincha Islands and its vectorization for the elaboration of a series of performative and material activations. The center of these interventions is the production of a series of macro videos of the printed vectors. The camera advances zenithally following the lines to simulate the advance of a railway line. The proposal seeks to pose an opposition between the digital and the materiality within the extractive imaginary of guano. The graphic vector as an ideal model breaks down the moment it materializes in a printed form, since its possibility of infinite enlargement is annulled when it is opposed to the material reality.





Con la capacidad de ordenarnos a todos.

Still of *Catch the living manners as they rise* (*Alcanzar las formas vigentes mientras surgen*)



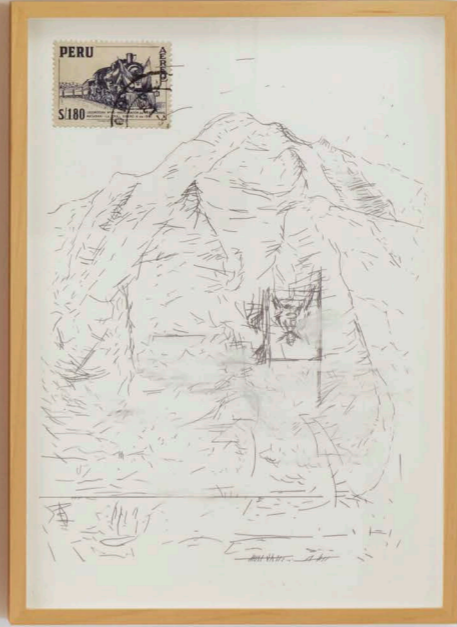
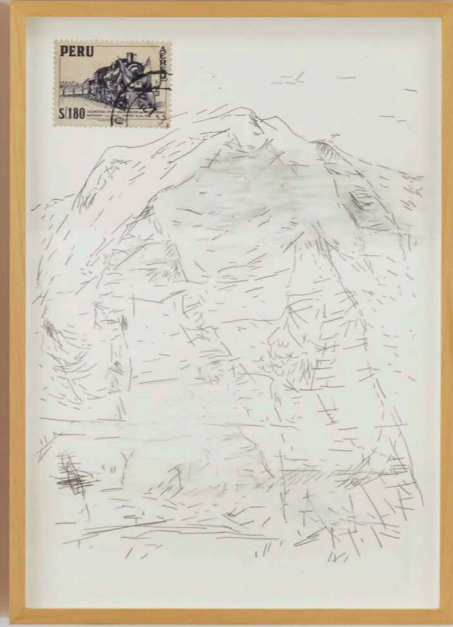
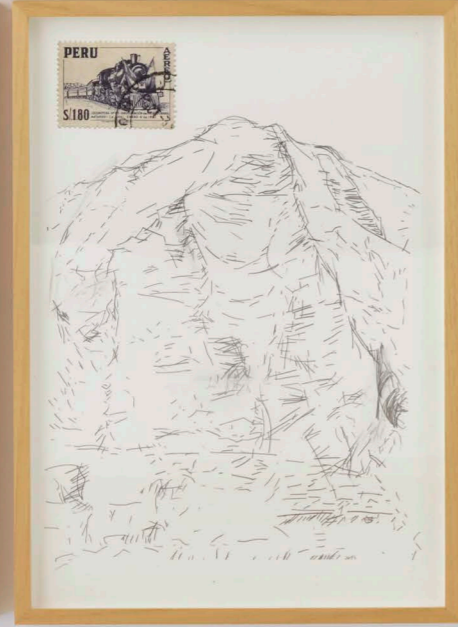
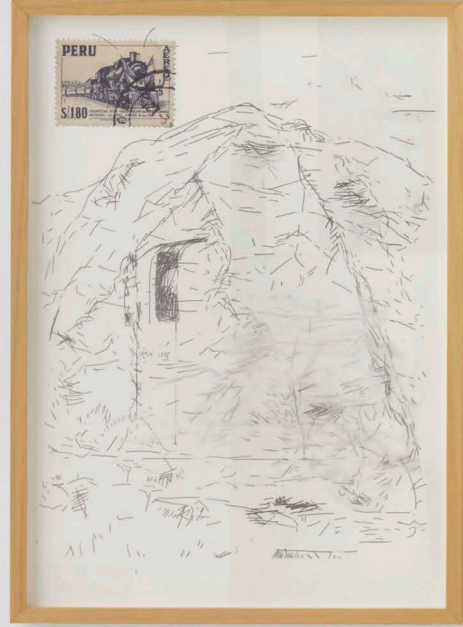
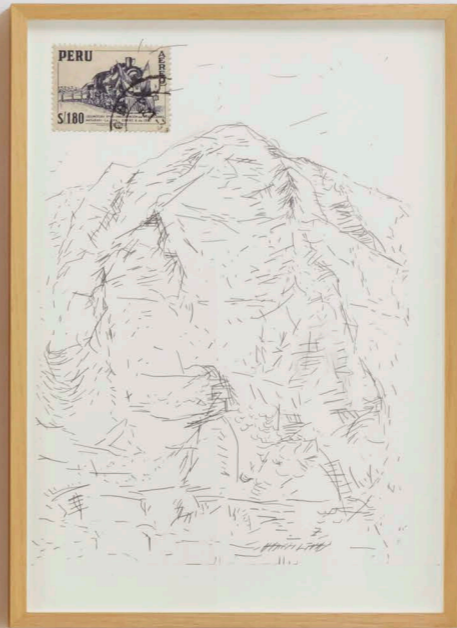
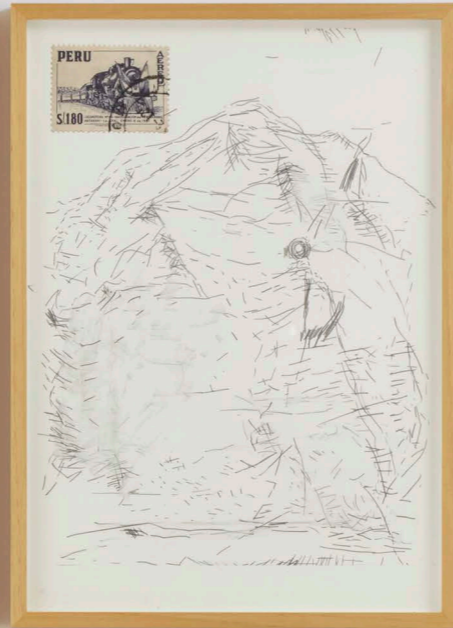
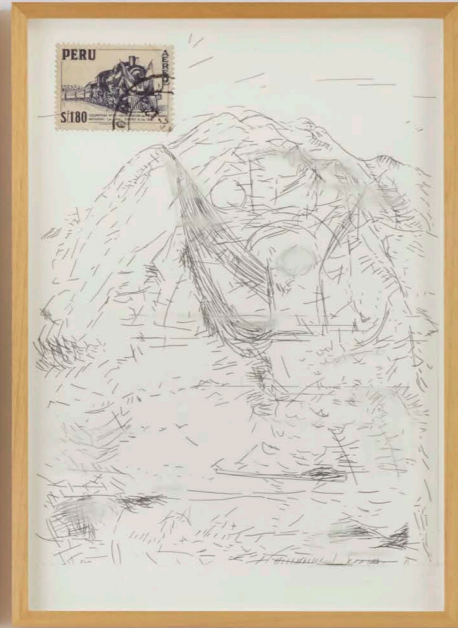
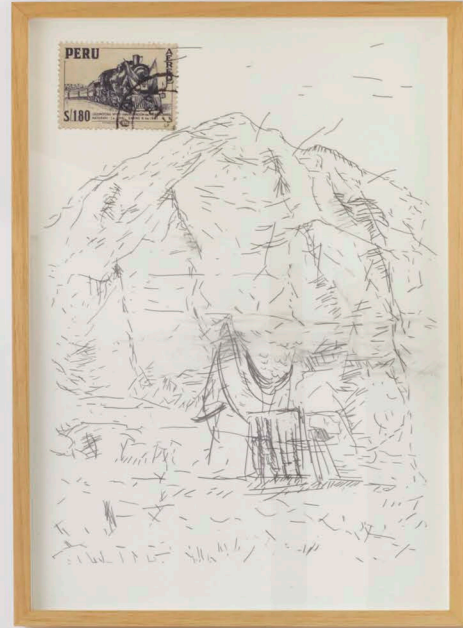
Photographic record of the exhibition *Generación 2024* [©La Casa Encendida Maru Serrano, 2024]



Photographic record of the exhibition *Generación 2024* [©La Casa Encendida Maru Serrano, 2024]



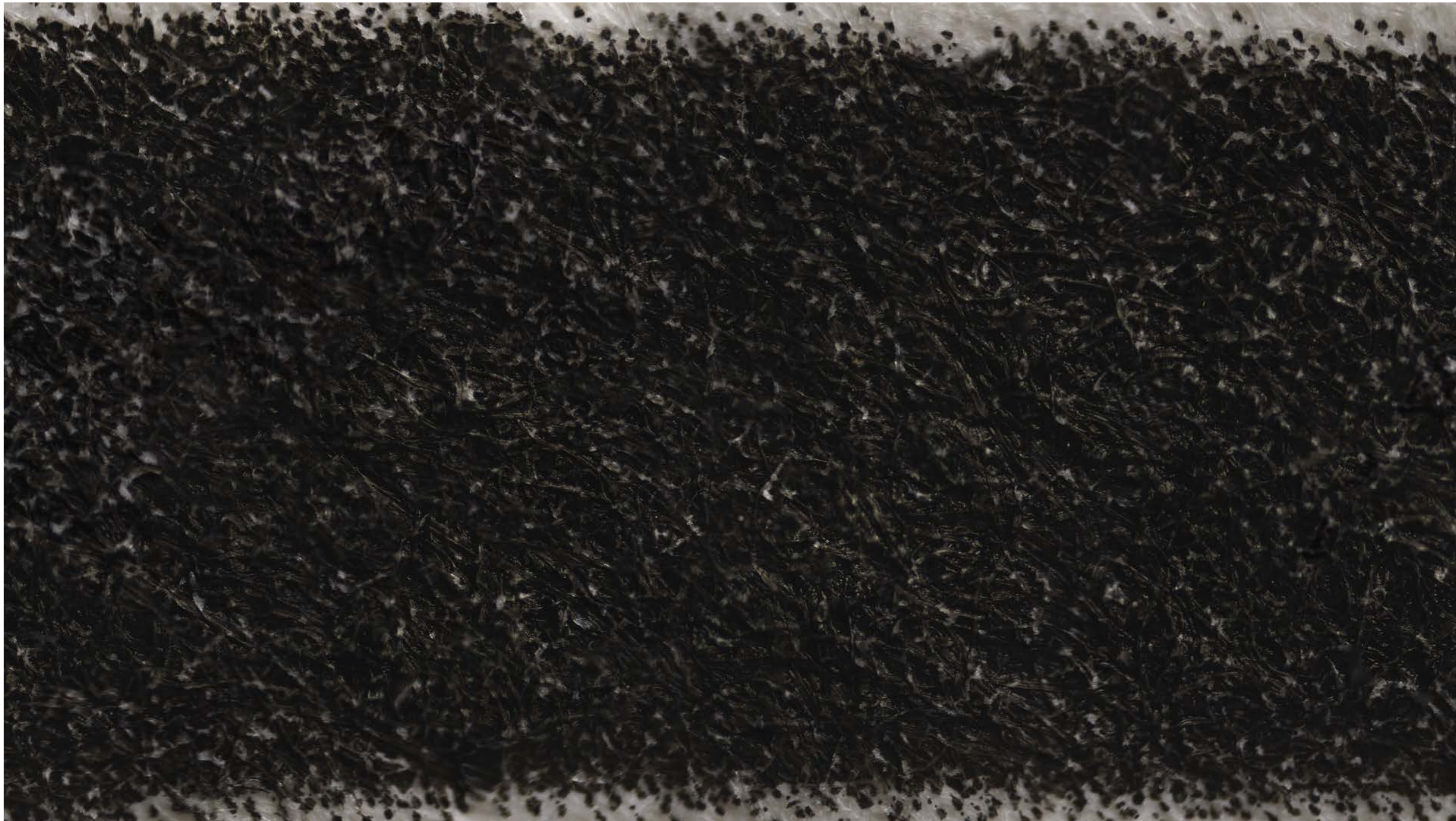
Photographic record of the exhibition *Rayos de sol de Sudamérica* [©Crisis Galería Juan Pablo Murrugarra, 2023]





Photographic record of the exhibition *Rayos de sol de Sudamérica* [©Crisis Galería Juan Pablo Murrugarra, 2023]





Still of *Islas de Chincha*



Las Islas Chincha son tres en número, conocidas como Islas Norte, Centro y Sur, y están situadas en la longitud 79° oeste, y latitud 131° sur. Distan unas noventa millas del Callao —el puerto de Lima, la capital del Perú— y son de tamaño pequeño, la Isla Norte, que es la más grande, tiene menos de una milla de largo y media milla en la parte más ancha.

El único valor de estas islas consiste en los enormes yacimientos de guano, que se han ido acumulando durante siglos. El valor de este yacimiento era bien conocido por los antiguos peruanos; y para asegurar un suministro continuo los incas emitieron una orden, hace muchos siglos, que prohibió la destrucción de las aves.

Se han expresado algunas dudas sobre si los enormes montones de guano son realmente producidos por los excrementos de pájaros y otras materias animales. El análisis químico ha probado que con referencia al guano recibido de las islas ese es el caso. Además, un examen minucioso de todo el montón no deja duda del hecho de que todos los depósitos consisten en excrementos de pájaros, cuerpos de focas, etc.

(...)
Aunque durante muchos siglos fue de uso diario en el Perú, a nadie se le ocurrió exportarlo a otros países hasta alrededor del año 1840, cuando los Señores Quiros, Allier, y Cia., una casa comercial nativa de Lima, determinaron enviar una consignación a Inglaterra. Teniendo gran fe en el éxito de su empresa, propusieron al Gobierno Peruano comprar los depósitos en las tres islas, y se llegó a un acuerdo para la venta hecho por 200.000 dólares, o alrededor de £40.000. Antes de que se completaran las escrituras, llegó al Gobierno la noticia del éxito del primer envío, y la venta se abandonó de inmediato. El Gobierno hizo contratos que dieron amplias ganancias a comerciantes emprendedores, mientras mantenían la propiedad de las islas en el Estado.

-13.642802,
-76.399228

3. La cantidad de guano exportado de estas islas llegó a 490.657 toneladas en el año de 1857, dando empleo en ese año a 620 barcos. Aunque la cantidad de exportaciones varía en grado considerable, la importancia del comercio es muy grande. Según el informe presentado por el Ministro de Hacienda al Congreso el septiembre pasado, los ingresos derivados del producto neto del guano para el Estado ascendieron en 1860 a 16.053.908 dólares, y en 1861 a 16.923.757 dólares; o, a cambio de 42½ por dólar, a £2.809.433 18s. y 42.961.306 11s. 7d. respectivamente.

Previamente a la visita del Sr. Rucker al Perú prevaleció una gran diferencia de opinión en cuanto a la cantidad de guano que aún quedaba en las islas. Como este asunto era de inmensa importancia para estimar el valor de la garantía a disposición del Gobierno para propósitos de préstamos, etc., además de ser de gran interés para nuestras comunidades navales y agrícolas, sugirió al Gobierno el nombramiento de una comisión para inspeccionar las islas. Esta sugerencia fue considerada favorablemente y la inspección fue organizada bajo su superintendencia personal, en la que Federico Blumé, Esq., fue nombrado ingeniero en jefe. Los resultados de las encuestas aún no se publican; pero el ingeniero informa que la cantidad que queda en las tres islas supera los siete millones de toneladas, lo que, con un ingreso neto medio de 6 libras esterlinas por tonelada, da un valor total de 42.000.000 libras esterlinas. El Sr. Rucker estuvo y presente cuando se realizaron algunas de las perforaciones y, en un caso, con una profundidad de 105 pies. Se comprobó que era guano sólido!

Nuestras ilustraciones, a partir de fotografías en posesión de los Sres. Rucker, Offor, and Co., dan una buena idea de cómo se embarca el guano. Los trabajadores empleados son de tres clases: trabajadores libres del Perú, Chik, China, etc. Los chinos trabajan con contratos de siete años de servicio a un precio muy bajo; y sumado a ellos también los conviccos de los distintos distritos del Perú.

El guano se recoge del lado del montón comenzando desde arriba. Los trabajadores son pagados de acuerdo con el trabajo realizado, a razón de 1s. 6d. por tonelada. (...)

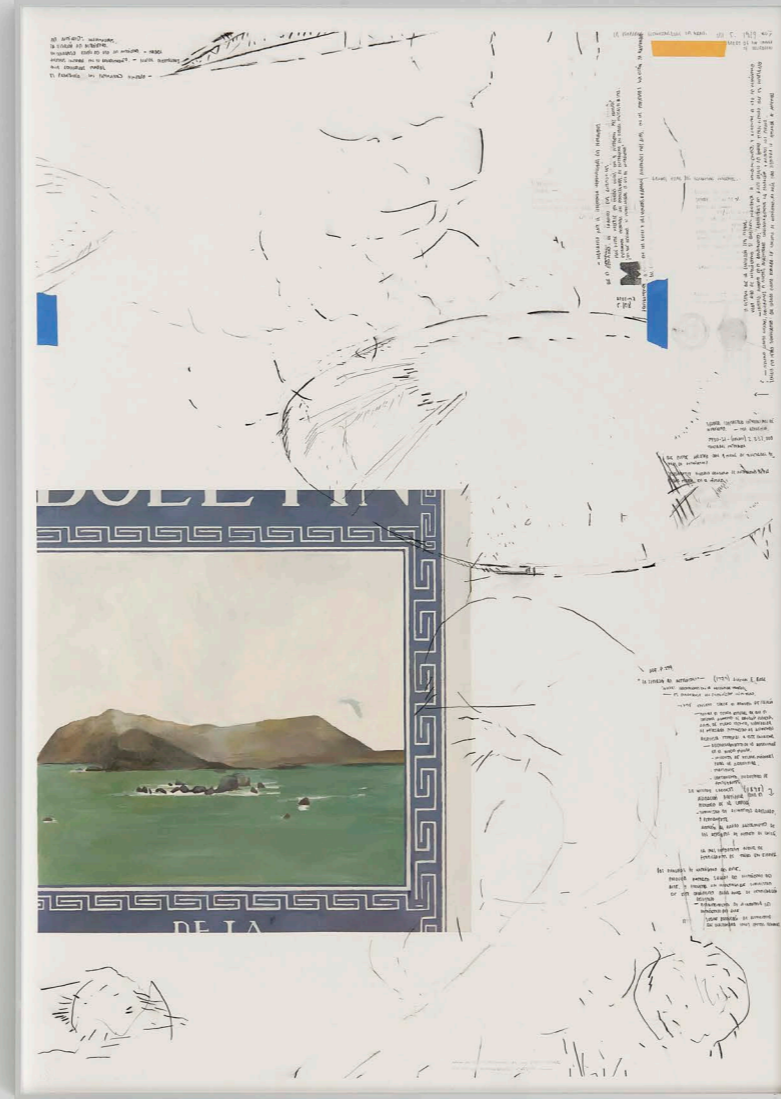
4. (...) A éstas se agregan una variedad de esas islas celebradas dentro de la región sin lluvia de la costa peruana, y que proporcionan el material fertilizante más rico conocido para la agricultura. La extensión superficial agregada de las tres islas de Chincha, de las cuales damos ilustraciones amplias, incluyendo vistas de las varias flotas de naves que esperan el guano, y el modo de transportar a bordo de las naves, es cerca de siete millas cuadradas, y se designan como Norte, Centro y Sur. Con el tiempo, estos bosques de las islas Chincha tendrán un interés peculiar, ya que es más que probable que los depósitos de guano pronto sean barridos por la demanda creciente del elemento. La estimación original del tiempo —mil años— que este depósito de las islas Chincha bastaría para satisfacer las necesidades del mundo, está destinada a resultar falaz: La demanda ha llegado a ser tan grande que ya se ha extraído la mitad del depósito de la isla más grande, y lo más probable es que en veinte años se haya agotado el suministro.

1. Imagen vectorial realizada a partir de la fotografía de Alexander Gardner, "Fleteros chinos impulsando guano — gran montón — de las Islas de Chincha", publicado en *Roll of America from South America* (1863).
2. Fragmento traducido del artículo "The Chincha Islands", del *Illustrated London News* (1863).
3. Fragmento traducido de la Introducción de Rays of sunlight from South America (1865).
4. Imagen vectorial realizada a partir de la fotografía de Alexander Gardner, "Fleteros chinos impulsando guano — gran montón — de las Islas de Chincha", publicado en *Roll of America from South America* (1863).
5. Imagen vectorial realizada a partir del sello postal Perú (Anno) (1914).



5.
6.

LOCACION DE LA AUGURACION DIA 17 DE JUNIO DE 1860
MAGARANT - Co. JYAV EI DO G J3 I. 01
HICUS ILC KE PS 2-2



—Work in progress (2024)

IMAGEN DEBIL, CICLO PERMANENTE/ (Weak image, permanent cycle)

The title *Weak Universalism* comes from the homonymous text made by Boris Groys and published in 2010. In this text, Groys reflects on the visual imaginary produced by the avant-garde as a reduction of the sign that reaches an image so simple, timeless and weak in formal terms, that it adopts the sufficient conditions to survive the timeless transformations of the modern world. This is a type of universal image accessible to anyone who can observe it.

This project approaches this idea of universalization as a tension built from the conflict to which every act of domination or interculturality is subjected. Historically, war or continental conquest —whatever its horizon— has not only become a dispute for economic and political domination, but also for the domination of the imagination. The consensuses or impositions that result from these conflicts go through a dispute for the consolidation of a new visuality. Many times, these results can be progressive, organic syncretisms of two or more forms of visual tradition; but many times they are also aggressive processes that imply a cultural eradication and extermination.

In 2016, a fire in the Church of San Sebastian in Cuzco destroyed, among many works, six large-format diptychs made by the indigenous painter Diego Quispe Tito. These immense paintings in the form of lunettes that decorated the walls of the temple, were commissioned in the middle of the 17th century with the objective of serving for the evangelization of the indigenous population. Engravings sent from Europe had been distributed among the new continent to be used as models of paintings that disseminated the new model of the world and the new way of understanding history for the indigenous people. The natural world was no longer a divine space, but a pagan polytheism that had to be condemned in order to point to a god that was not in nature, but beyond it. The aforementioned series by Diego Quispe Tito was set in this context and told in images the life of St. John the Baptist, a religious preacher of the first century B.C. who used the sacrament of baptism as the center of his religious movement to initiate people into Christianity.

The interesting thing about this series of paintings was that the painted flora and

fauna correspond, not to the European natural imaginary represented in the original engravings, but to the local indigenous imaginary. Animal species, wild flora or even their chromatic palette respond to another way of understanding the world. However, this process of syncretism, which could be understood as a form of resistance to the mandate of representation brought from Europe, can also be understood as a domination of the local traditional imaginary that places the story of the Christian god at the center. That is to say: what finally condenses the image is cultural domination. And this occurs because these new images anticipate the European architectural and cultural infrastructure over the indigenous ecosystem now represented.

These religious images maintain in the background a tension between civilization and nature, a marked distinction that materially anticipates a transformation of the new continent and the progressive disappearance, now total, of the indigenous culture. The failure of the Spanish viceroyalty as a political project in the 19th century did little to prevent what was already naturalized and inevitable: the introduction of the American continent into the logics of the modern world. Also with that, its geopolitical location in the stratification of the globalized world. This is another layer of a larger dispute for the progressive transformation of the world and the homogenization of the imagination; this time subject to the growth of late capitalism. What Quispe Tito's series represents is now nothing more than a specific moment of tension suspended in history.

The project consists of producing a series of pictorial works based on the series of paintings whose photographic record is archived in PESSCA (Project on the Engraves Sources of Spanish Colonial Art). For the elaboration of the paintings, I have decided to make manual reproductions in oil on wood of the six diptychs that make up the missing series. However, this reproduction process will be carried out with the application of some instructions according to the type of image to be presented. My first guideline will be to erase all information that is not landscape or architecture; with the intention of representing images that only contemplate the tension that exists between these elements. The second slogan is to eliminate the elements of flora and fauna added by Diego Quispe Tito to the European visual model. And, the third slogan, consists of eliminating all reference to the European imaginary placed in the paintings.





WIPC

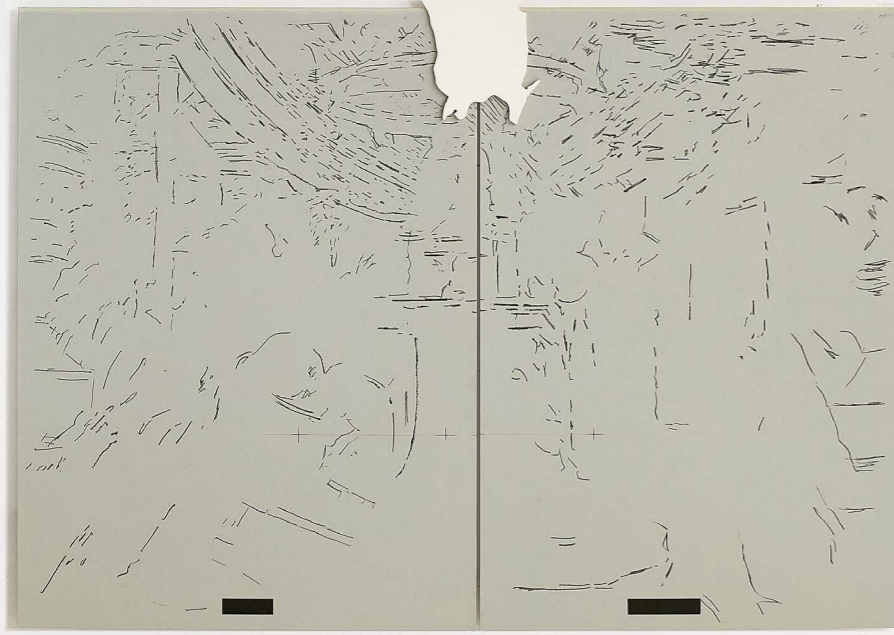
17/37

2024

162x134.5 cm

Oil and graphite on wood and paper

E/





WIPC





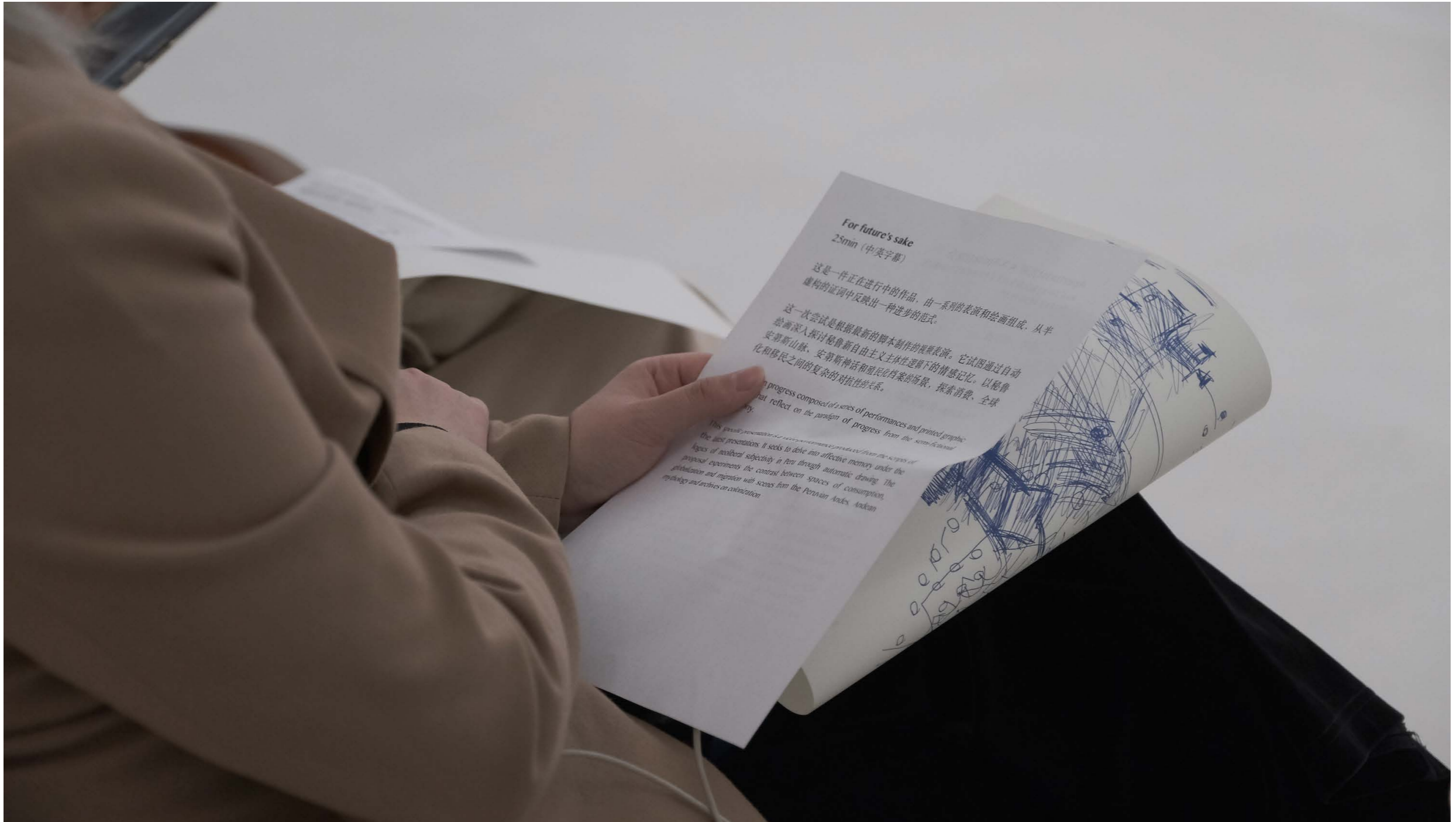
POR EL BIEN FUTURO/ (For future's sake)

The common sense about the differences between rural and urban areas in Peru has been built from a tension between the idea of backwardness and progress, from the paradigms of modernity and in a context of strong social and economic inequality. These relations have been historically produced since colonization, and have become more complex since the second half of the twentieth century through migratory flows from rural areas to the country's capital. However, their relationship has also been traversed by a political class struggle with important milestones such as the agrarian reform and the internal armed conflict in the 1980s.

Por el bien futuro proposes a series of exercises in testimonial writing and fiction that have materialized in drawings, performance and video-performance. The textual proposal narrates the migration of my parents, their relationship with commerce and their will to progress. These testimonies are contrasted with reflections that view with skepticism certain ideas of progress inherent in me. In the course of the performance, I compare these reflections with my own artistic practice and with the exercise of automatic drawing.



Photographic record of the exhibition *Circular Gestures* [©Unonimous Consent, 2022]

Photographic record of the video-performance *Por el bien futuro*

Photographic record of the video-performance *Por el bien futuro*



Still of Por el bien futuro

LOS DIOSES NO ESTÁN EN LA NATURALEZA/ (*Gods are not in nature*)

The literary word, as a unit, is unstable; it corresponds to a sociocultural structure that determines its meaning and transforms it. Following this, a text becomes a crossroads of textual surfaces: multiple writings where the meaning is given not only by its independent and contextual meaning, but by its use in history: its past meanings, its authors, its addressees. The intertext is just that: constituted by a set of multiple quotations, identifiable, connected in a non-linear way in the present and finally expressed in a circular way in time.

Under these conditions, I think about the possibilities that exist when applying the meaning of this concept (intertextuality) to an image from a nominal character. I was interested in reviewing the historical conditions that have produced certain types of images and how a look from the present changes their meaning.

. . . .

“(…) the gods are not in nature, but beyond it” is a fragment taken from a text by architect Wiley Ludeña (*Notas sobre el paisaje, paisajismo e identidad cultural en el Perú, 1997*) where he paraphrases and recontextualizes Lynn White’s approach (in *The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic*

Crisis, 1967) on the process of evangelization and how it affected man-nature relationship. This slogan that erupts during the colonization process becomes an imperative that distances the indigenous people from the divine cult of nature, directing them to a position of domination and domestication of their natural environment. This will perhaps be a historical milestone to address a separation between countryside-city, nature-civilization and the socio-cultural changes and ideological divisions that occurred in later years in relation to the ideas of progress and modernity in the Peruvian context. In this project I seek to establish a tension between the imagination of the rural and the urban, traversed by the idea of progress and modernity from the use of the territory and its exploitation.

All the visual and textual information present in the exhibition has been produced from the transcription, recording and reproduction of physical and virtual archives; all of them reproduced to scale with a team of people, premeditatedly omitting certain visual or textual information.

All the images selected are representations associated with the Peruvian territory made from the 17th century to the present day.



Photographic record of the exhibition *Los dioses no están en la naturaleza*, 2019



Photographic record of the exhibition *Los dioses no están en la naturaleza*, 2019



Photographic record of the exhibition *Los dioses no están en la naturaleza*, 2019



Photographic record of the exhibition *Los dioses no están en la naturaleza*, 2019





GANIN

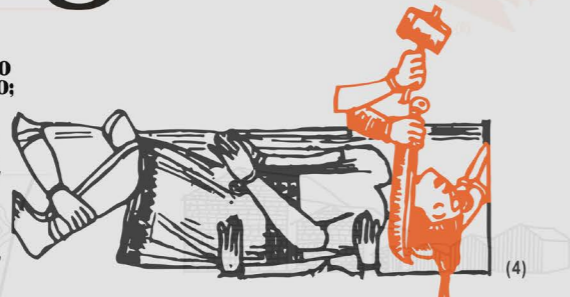


...a la conquista del futuro y del progreso. (1)

Entre el hábito y el cambio... el cambio;

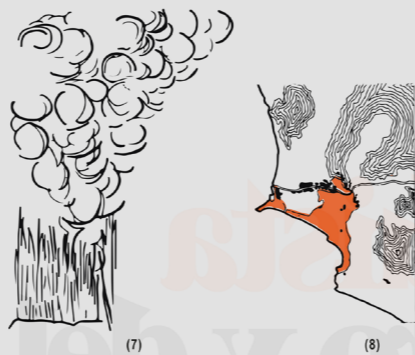
Entre la seguridad y el riesgo... el riesgo - Entre el pasado y el futuro... el futuro - Entre lo conocido y lo desconocido... lo desconocido - Entre la continuidad y el progreso... el progreso - Entre permanecer y partir, partieron. (2)

• tenían que competir, pero no solo contra personas sino también contra el sistema.
• para vivir, comerciar, manufacturar, transportar... (3)



una idea nueva (5)

El nuevo rostro del Perú (6)



(7)



(8)



(9)



(10)



LAS CIFRAS NO ENGAÑAN

...ha contruido por su propio esfuerzo e iniciativa TRES VECES MÁS VIVIENDAS (11)



(12)



(13)

(1) Degregori, Carlos Iván (1986) Extracto de: Del mito de Inkari al mito del progreso, p. 61 En: Cambios culturales en el Perú. Serie diversidad cultural 3 (2014) (2) Franco, Carlos (1991) Extracto de: Etnohistorias en "los modernistas" de la migración a la plebe urbana, p. 24 En: Cambios culturales en el Perú. Serie diversidad cultural 3 (2014) (3) De Soto, Hernando (1985) El otro sendero, p. 12 (4) Ilustración elaborada a partir de la lámina IV de: Descripciones de Atahuatpa a partir de un dibujo de Guaman Poma. En: Osojo, Juan M. (2000) El héroe entre el mito y la historia - Inkari y el mestizaje andino (8) Texto propio de la publicidad. Fuente Perú. Publicadas en: Ocho Semanario de Actualidad 27 de octubre, 1980 (8) Título del capítulo 2 de: Matos Mar, José (1984) Descubrimiento popular y crisis de estado. El nuevo rostro del Perú en la década de 1980. Estado por el Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP). (7) Imagen realizada a partir de una acuarela elaborada en: Mooren, Pablo, Jiménez Solís, Arturo, Fianko Irma (1997) Tráfico del Perú. Batallas Jaime Martínez Compagnon. Anuario S. XVIII, p. 164. (8) Fragmento del Gráfico El Perú oficial no podrá oponerse... De las batallas de 1957... a las 598 de 1984. En: Matos Mar, José (1984) Todo empezó en San Cosme. Cuadernos N. 528. 03 de diciembre, 1984, p. 33. (9) Imagen realizada a partir del gráfico: Los Andes, el Callejón, la sierra de La Pampilla y la sierra del Rímac, puntos críticos del artículo Línea vial, ilustración original: Mario Madrid. En: Cuadernos N. 528. 03 de diciembre, 1984, p. 25-29 (10) Gráfica realizada a partir de la pintura Retorno de Egipto (1980) de Diego Chape Tiso. (11) Gráfica y texto extraído de la publicidad Las cifras no engañan. En: Equo - X, 27 de junio, 1988, p. 7. (12) Gráfica elaborada a partir de: Una vida al servicio del Perú. Ilustración original: Paaco Cisneros, p. 33. (13) Fragmento del Gráfico El Perú oficial no podrá oponerse... De las batallas de 1957... a las 598 de 1984. En: Matos Mar, José (1984) Todo empezó en San Cosme. Cuadernos N. 528. 03 de diciembre, 1984, p. 33.



GANIN

37/37

2019
355 x 240 cm
Oil on openwork wood
Untitled (Scenario 2)