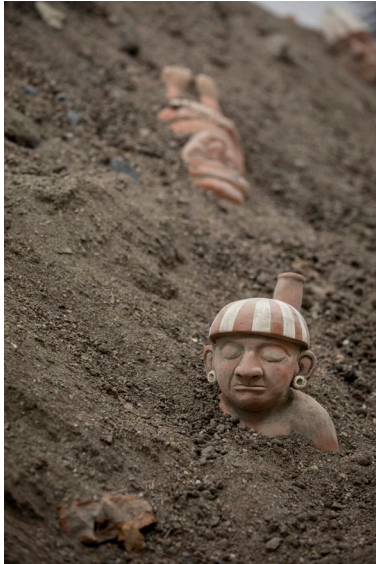


Press Release

Claudia Martínez Garay, *WAKCHAKUNA / We Who Share Everything and Nothing* at Nottingham Contemporary

Sat 25 May – Sun 8 September 2024



Claudia Martínez Garay, *The Creator (detail)*, 2019.

Courtesy of the Artist and GRIMM, Amsterdam | London | New York.

Installation view, Istanbul Biennial, The Seventh Continent, 2019

Photo credit: David Levene

Nottingham Contemporary is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in an institution in England by Peruvian artist Claudia Martínez Garay (b. 1983 Ayacucho, Peru), who delves into her indigenous ancestry and the socio-political history of Peru in order to tell lost narratives from one of the world's oldest civilizations. This major new commission celebrates the artist's diverse practice with a new site-specific installation, her largest and most ambitious to date.

Martínez Garay studied printmaking in Peru, and her process of carving out, stencilling, and layering images in site-specific murals or free-standing sculptural objects exemplifies the influence of this early artistic training. Her practice, which encompasses painting, sculpture, video and installation, references pre-Columbian knowledge and her Andean heritage, and is inspired by historic images, propaganda, stories and sounds from her home country.

With her new commission, titled *Wakchakuna*, Martínez Garay addresses current debates around the belonging, originality and repatriation of stolen and looted objects that make up the 'world' collections in many UK museums; and speculates on the blank or erased spaces left by colonialism and conflict. The artist explores her complex relationship with Peru, revisiting her installation *El Creador* (2019) - a work inspired by the belief in the afterlife of the Moche civilization, which flourished in northern Peru from about 100 to 700 AD - alongside new research into collections of historical and archaeological objects from the Americas within UK national collections.

The new work draws from the Quechuan term 'Wakcha', meaning 'to be poor': not in the Western sense of material wealth but meaning to be orphaned, without family, without belonging, without a

community, and where one's origins are made difficult to trace. The work is a further exploration of *El Creador*, which consists of metal printed drawings of native Andean plants and ceramic replicas of Mochica ceramics held in European museums. A site specific installation, *Wakchakuna* consists of topsoil, sand and rubble, a collection of around 25 ceramic replicas and prints on aluminium featuring animals that were sacrificed by the Mochicas and buried with the deceased as offerings. Martínez Garay sees these as "orphaned objects", who were separated from their funerary context, broken apart, faked to be sold, or stolen without a trace of where they come from, the origins are unknown and untraceable even while they have been unearthed and revealed.

Claudia Martínez Garay said: "Imagine how the ancient Peruvians would feel seeing our world today. Modernity has shamelessly disregarded their traditions and beliefs. Offerings and artifacts were stolen and stashed away in Europe, lost and robbed of their purpose. But just as the ancient cultures couldn't foresee our present, Europe can't conceive a future deprived of these artifacts."

The subtitle of the exhibition is a direct quote from John Berger's *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*.

Martínez Garay's exhibition at Nottingham Contemporary coincides with her first solo exhibition in Scotland, opening at Dundee Contemporary Arts on 23 August – 17 November. A presentation of her work will also be shown at [GRIMM](#) London during Frieze Week 2024.

For more information about Claudia Martínez Garay and other exhibitions at Nottingham Contemporary, please [visit our website](#).

Notes to Editors:

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Exhibition Credits:

Curators

The exhibition is curated by Katie Simpson, assisted by Niall Farrelly

About Claudia Martínez Garay

Claudia Martínez Garay (b. 1983 in Ayacucho, Peru) studied printmaking at the Pontificia Universidad Católica of Peru (PE) and was a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam (NL) from 2016 to 2017.

Recent solo exhibitions include, Ghost Kingdom, GRIMM, New York, NY (US) and Ayataki, Artpace, San Antonio, TX (US) in 2022; Caminos de Liberación, GRIMM, Amsterdam (NL) in 2021; Ten Thousand Things, Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing (CN) in 2020. Selected group exhibitions include, Devenir Tierra, 80m2 Livia Benavides, Lima (PE); Sediment Spirit, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich (UK); Vessel and Veil, David Castillo Gallery, Miami, FL (US); Echoes of Our Stories, Quinta do Quetzal, Vidigueira (PT); The Measure of the World, RADIUS, Delft (NL) in 2023; Cassandra's Complex, basis e.v., Frankfurt (DE); Who Tells a Tale Adds a Tail: Latin America and Contemporary Art, Denver Art Museum, CO (US); Museum Arnhem, Arnhem (NL) in 2022; No Linear Fucking Time, B.A.K., basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht (NL); All Eyes | We are the collection, AkzoNobel Art Foundation, Amsterdam (NL); Plural Domains, Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL (US); Fragments of Sphere, Project Space on the Inside, Amsterdam (NL) in 2021; 1 Million Roses for Angela Davis, Kunsthalle im Lipsiusbau, Dresden (DE); The Faculty of Sensing: Anton Wilhelm Amo, Kunstverein, Braunschweig (DE) in 2020; Imagined Communities, 21st Contemporary Art Biennial Sesc_Videobrasil, São Paulo (BR); the 16th Istanbul Biennial titled The Seventh Continent, curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, Istanbul (TR); Immortality, 5th Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art, curated by Xiaoyu Weng, Ekaterinburg (RU); Diplomacy at Yeh Art Gallery, St. John's University, Queens, NY (US) in 2019; Taning Y/Our Passion, Aichi Triennial, Aichi (JP) in 2019; Pro-Regress, curated by Cuauhtémoc Medina, the 12th Shanghai Biennial; and Triennial: Songs for Sabotage, New Museum, New York, NY (US) in 2018.

Her work can be found in the collections of AkzoNobel Art Foundation, Amsterdam (NL); AMC Art Collection, Amsterdam (NL); Fundación Studie e Recherche Benetton, Treviso (IT); Central Reserve Bank of Peru, Lima (PE); Cisnero Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, FL (US); Denver Art Museum, CO (US); THE EKARD COLLECTION; Hochschild Collection, Lima (PE); KADIST Collection, Paris (FR) and San Francisco, CA (US); KPMG Art Collection, Amsterdam (NL); LAM museum, Lisse (NL); LOOP Collection, MACBA Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona (ES); Micromuseo al fondo hay sitio, Lima (PE); Museo de Arte de Lima, MALI (PE); Museu Olho Latino, Atibaia (BR); Museum Arnhem (NL); Sifang Art Museum, Nanjing (CN) among others.

About Nottingham Contemporary

[Nottingham Contemporary](https://www.nottinghamcontemporary.org) is one of the leading centres of contemporary art in Europe. Since opening in 2009, we have welcomed over 2 million visitors – with free admission for all – to our highly ambitious programme that has featured hundreds of artists and cultural practitioners from across the globe.

Our programme champions international art and artists who invite us to imagine the world in new ways, and empower different perspectives into the most pressing cultural, social, and political questions of today. We support artists at different stages of their careers – from first-time solo shows in the UK to surveys of renowned or overlooked figures – and regularly present significant thematic exhibitions and major artist-curated projects. Nottingham Contemporary was shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019. Nottingham Contemporary is supported using public funding by Arts Council England and regularly funded by Nottingham City Council and through our partnerships with the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University.

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