

ISHMAEL RANDALL WEEKS  
SELECTED PORTFOLIO

# ISHMAEL RANDALL WEEKS

Born in Cusco, Peru in 1976.

Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY and Lima, Peru

Ishmael Randall Weeks graduated from Bard College in 2000 and attended Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2007. His work has been exhibited in various galleries and museums both in Peru and internationally, including Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, England, United Kingdom; MoMA P.S.1, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Lima, Peru; Spanish Culture Center of Buenos Aires (CCBBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina; The Drawing Center, New York, United States; Museum of Art of Lima (MALI), Lima, Peru; Macro Museum | Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Rome, Italy; National Museum, Lima, Peru; The Museum of Arts and Design, New York, United States; Museum of the Bank of the Republic, Bogotá, Colombia; The Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena, Bologna, Italy; The Drawing Room, London, United Kingdom; Museum of Fine Arts, Mexico City, Mexico; the Bronx Museum, New York, United States; and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, United States. His work has also been included in the Havana Biennial, the IX and the XIV Bienials de Cuenca, the 6th edition of (S) Files Biennial in El Museo del Barrio, New York and 2010 Greater New York and MomaP.S.1, amongst others.

He has received numerous residences grants and awards from various institutions, including the Rockefeller Foundation, the MACRO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rome, Italy; the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, New York; NYFA, New York; Art Matters, New York; Kiosko, Santa Cruz, Bolivia; and La Curtiduria art center in Oaxaca, Mexico.

A reflection on the relationship between architecture and its social context is at the heart of Ishmael's work. Enlisting architecture as a metaphorical structure, it addresses the impact of man on the landscape and his interface with it, combining this with an investigation on urbanization and references from the history of architecture. Using both the language of sculpture and a variety of graphic means, the work examines the crises and legacies of modernism, juxtaposing modernist architectural icons with the informal of indigenous architectures of Latin America (including favelas, adobe structures, vernacular architecture and the often reused stone masonry of Inca structures). A closely allied theme is the economy of scarcity, improvisation and, as a corollary to this, a concern with ways of living within the landscape that preserve its environmental integrity; where reclaiming and reusing materials features as the methodology behind much of the process. Ishmael's work thus forms a critique of the abuses of power and self-interest of the political establishment, and highlights the alternative forms of community living, education and knowledge that exists in parallel.

## MATERIA COMUN, 2019

(Collaborative project with Ximena Garrido-Lecca)  
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Lima, Peru

“At the dawn of modernity, the Dominican friar Tommaso Campanella dreamed of a city so perfect that its design corresponded directly to the Copernican solar system, all its walls were to be covered with all the knowledge of its time, so that its inhabitants could access it whenever they wanted. He called this utopia The City of the Sun.

A few centuries later, and in the (very same) land of the sun, two of its best young artists, Ximena Garrido-Lecca (Lima, 1980) and Ishmael Randall Weeks (Cuzco, 1976) intend to cooperate between themselves to construct an ephemeral version of it, here and now, with the help of the public of this exhibition. As you hear this: whoever reads this is invited to roll up their shirt, put their feet in the mud and collaborate on the project.

In doing so, the active spectator will find that the mixture, with which the tapestries that will form this citadel are made of, are unique, since they are made of magical earth” from the town of Chilca (Cañete) and of local newspaper paper pulp. If in the original design the walls contained all the knowledge of their time, here we perceive the critical distance, forged in our era, between information and knowledge. It is suggested that, from the very materiality of the clay of its buildings, that the life of this city is marked in equal parts by the voracious influx of everyday information (sometimes reliable, sometimes false) and esoteric beliefs. In other words, their walls have, as seems to have our present life, something of a magic and represent an unleashing of information, which in turn is sedimented to form a collective consciousness and national identity.

Campanella’s design contemplates on the center of the city a temple dedicated to the sun. There will be, therefore, for a few months, yet another temple of this sort in this country. However, it is evident that, when deciding to concretize it, the artists installed, rather, at the very center of the design of their exhibition, a suspicion: Will we be able, here and now, to work towards a common ideal? To what extent will we be able to forge, in these following months, all together, the same common ground? And, as is evident, beyond the scaffolding and material deployment of it, the real matter of this exhibition is nothing but the latent question about the possibility of developing a common utopian project.

It is the hope that, with their feet in the mud, and by working together, in the middle of this magma of magic and information, the public will come to understand that forging a common ground is not a utopia, for this and concrete reality are always made up of the same mud”

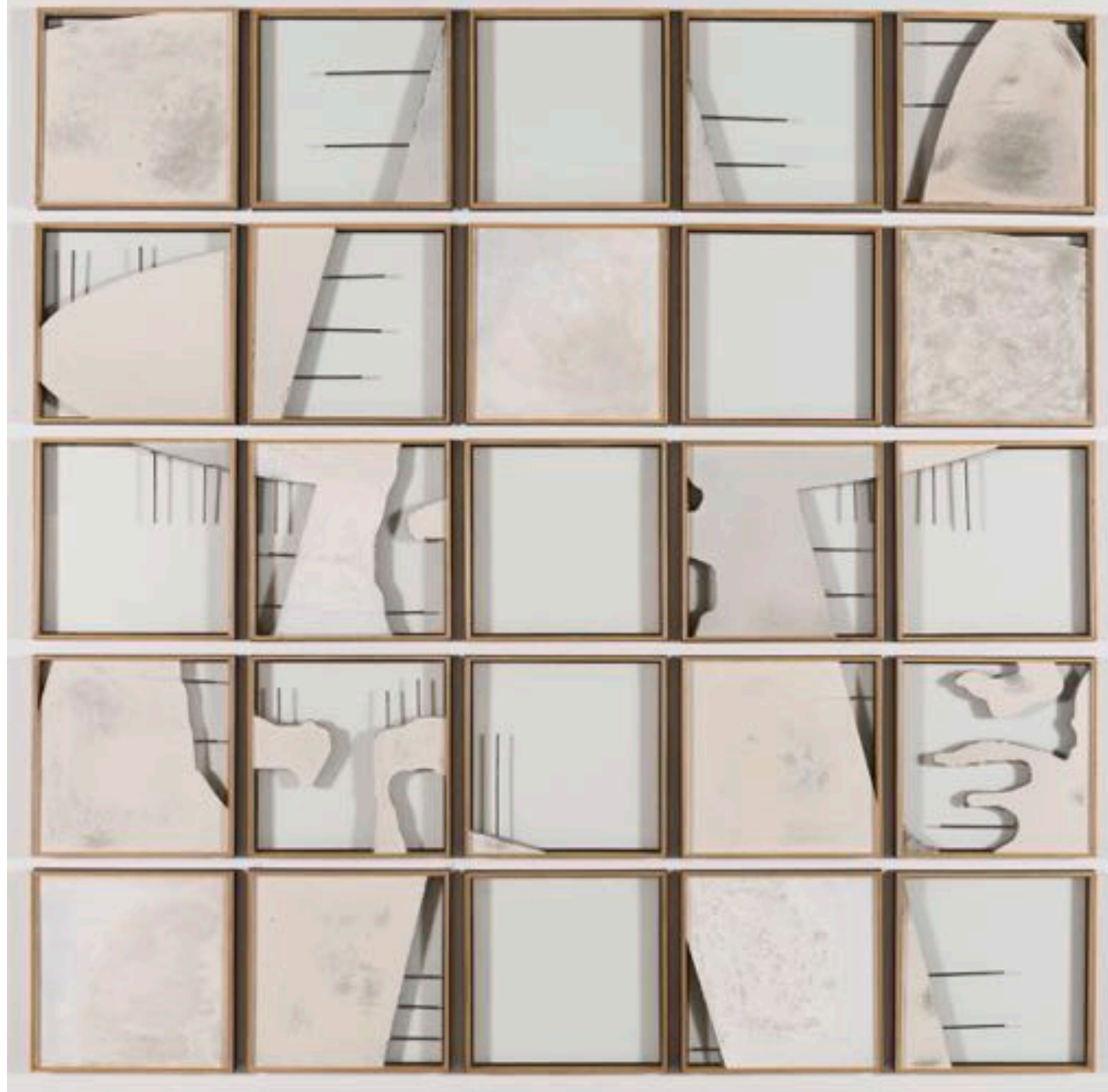
Exhibition text by José Falconi







BASEL, 2019  
Basel Art Fair, Miami, USA



Tupac, 2019  
Metallic grout, iron, wood and glass  
262 x 262 cm



## CUÑA, 2019

Arroniz Galería, CDM, Mexico

Sculptures and two-dimensional works made of adobe, mineral substrates, mud and metal structures constitute a world that emerges from history and memory and that navigates between contemporary, archaic, tradition and folklore including narratives from the Mesoamerican worldview, anthropology Politics and archeology.

Two mosaics titled 'Mexican Formalisms' take up fundamental motifs of Mexican architecture: the metal latticework developed by Manuel Felguéz for the National Museum of Anthropology of Mexico City, is arranged in a fragmented and irregular way seeking to establish an open dialogue between the viewer, Latin American modernity -represented by the building erected by Pedro Ramírez Vázquez- and the past in the pre-Hispanic tzompantli or Altar de los Muertos that served as a model for the architectural detail made by Felguéz.

Randall Weeks' concern about the concepts of time, history and ideology adopts more figurative nuances in his sculptural work where he reveals his immediate references: Russian constructivism and Vladimir Tatlin, Matías Goeritz and popular culture. On one hand, a golden brass structure – made from the repetition of simple geometric figures – holds carefully placed concrete plates that contain fossilized textures of handmade fabrics and at the same time rests on an identifiable traditional element: a duffel, woven carpet very common in Mexico and Central America made from the collection of dried palm leaves. On the other, 'Crisol', a large-format sculpture made from pre-Hispanic figurines agglomerated and located on a brick platform, is proof of a false archaeological treasure that was sliced into a dozen bodies for its apparent historical classification and study relevant. Similarly, sedimentary plates full of arbitrary materials and colors that dissected simulate small excavations, also function as a sculptural journal that marks the time with patterns of materials specifically collected at those sites.











## USHNU SERIES, 2019

Contemporary Art Fair, London, UK

These works (in their relationship to architecture, metallurgy, ceramics and weaving) are products of social systems. They are integrated into social uses within the mental and material culture where they should be understood like a means of communication involved in the social practice and that can be used to transform and store social information revolving around ideology, cosmology, etc.

The works presented are a depiction of Peruvian culture and its social and physical scenery. Combined, they create a landscape where the ancient and current history of the country is exhibited for the public to experience.

**Ushnu para Tatlin III, 2019**  
Mud bricks, bronze, copper, chalcopryrite,  
metallic grout, woven carpet  
137 x 134 x 65 cm







**Ushnu para Tatlin II, 2019**

Mud bricks, bronze, copper, chalcopyrite,  
metallic grout, woven carpet  
137 x 134 x 65 cm









**Column I, 2019**  
Ceramic, Cooper, Photo Tranfer  
190 X 35 X 45 cm



**Columna, 2019**  
Ceramic, Cooper, Photo Tranfer  
190 X 35 X 45 cm





**Sin título, 2019**  
Grout, Cooper, Rattan, Wood  
100 X 55 cm





**Codigo atemporal, 2019**  
Grout and cochineal, black mud and “concrelisto” cement,  
Caracas ochre and pigment, glue, metallic grout 1000  
41 X 34 cm





**Codigo atemporal, 2019**  
 Grout and cochineal, black mud and "concreliso" cement,  
 Caracas ochre and pigment, glue, metallic grout 1000  
 41 X 34 cm







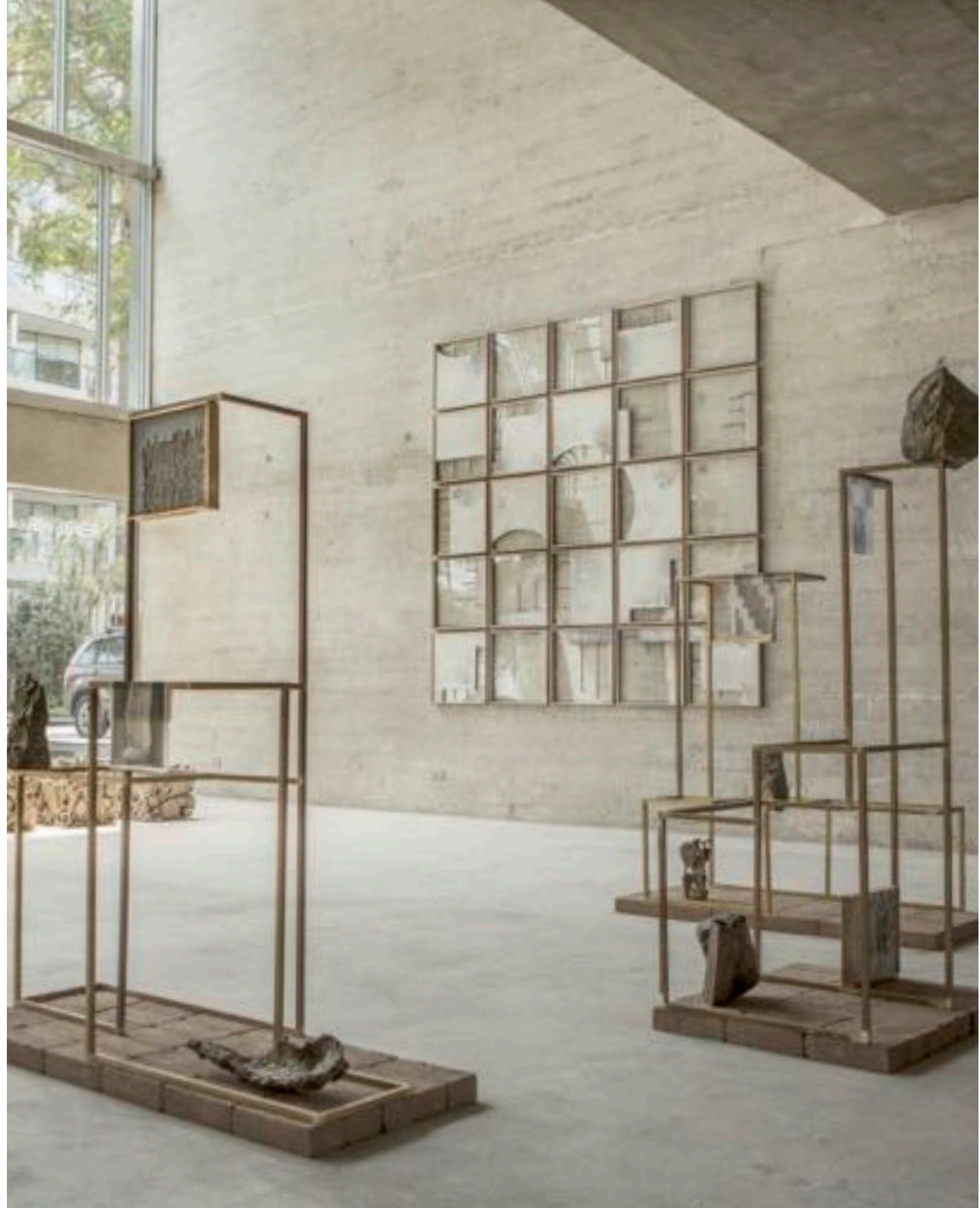
## FORMALISMOS ANDINOS, 2019

Revolver Galería, Lima

In the Incan order, the world was composed of three planes, Hanan Pacha (the upper world) Kay Pacha (The world the current world) and Uku Pacha (The world of the dead). In Quechua, Pacha also signifies time and space.

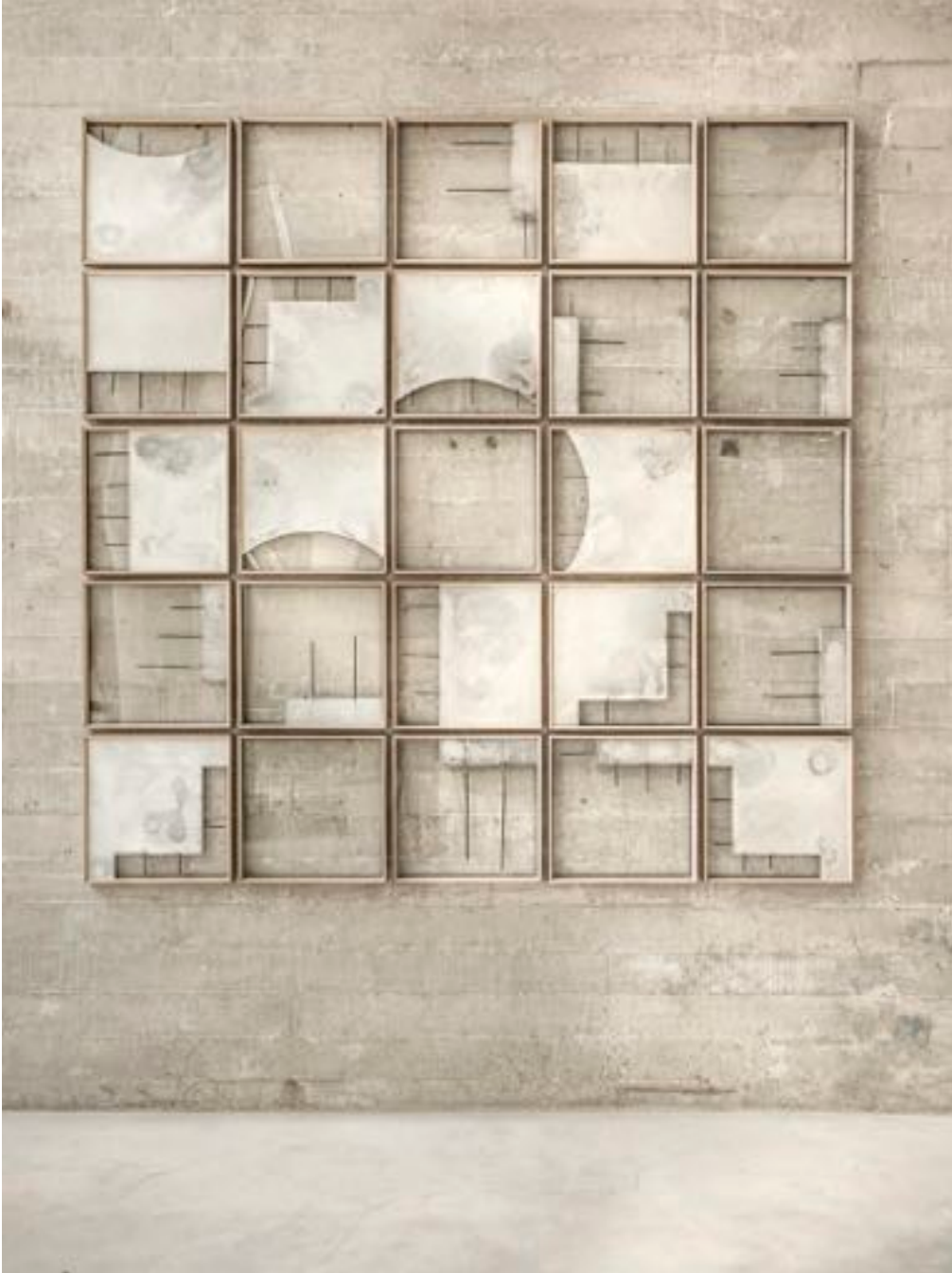
The artifact of the Ushnu and the organization of the elaborated spaces together create a platform, with the object of producing a uniformed conscientious collective. These series of works are part of a series of investigations towards a “sculptural place,” in a physical sense, where approximations can be made to merge conflictive historical aspects or the autonomous and mystical with that of social purpose. The titles combine the quechua word Ushnu, that describes the most sacred of Inca platforms; places strategically on the Ceque system, the word Construct; a hard to define hypothetical within scientific theory, which is something that we know exists, but whose definition is controversial or difficult, and the word Revestimiento; to cover, to clothe, to simulate. The grouping of the sculptures create a contemplative environment that relates to the body, our relationship to time and space within the context of memory, and spatial and political definitions merged within the Constructivist movement (specifically the works of Vladimir Tatlin and Kazimir Malevich) with the works of Peruvian historical artists Eduardo Eielson and Emilio Rodríguez-Larraín. These Sculptures -in their relationship to architecture, metallurgy, ceramics and weaving- are products of social systems. They are integrated into social uses within the mental and material culture where they should be understood like a means of communication involved in the social practice and that can be used to transform and store social information revolving around ideology, cosmology, etc.

The works make use of a series of elements and devices such as brass, adobe mud bricks, metallic grout and copper electroplated objects, creating, at times, objects that appear to be museum display pieces from a culture that is no longer: contemporary remnants found on old archeological sites in Lima. The pieces seem to play with the notion of tool or weapon, making an allegorical reference to our beginnings - beginnings that are the future as well as the memory. In Peru, for instance, it is common to “metalize” the memory of a time by submitting an object, (usually baby shoes or other precious mementos)-to an electro plaque of copper, thus creating specificity where the object loses its functionality, formally, but gains its trophy recognition. Other elements used such as photo-transfers and found objects present the viewer with a template for a discussion in reference to energy and memory - a shrine of sorts that philosophically and structurally look at Malevich and Tatlin to allude to a constructed art with a social purpose. Economics, the environment, education and the dialectics of demarcation and decoration are clearly referenced.









Chacana, 2019  
Metallic grout, iron, wood and glass  
262 x 262 cm





**Ushnu para Tatlin III, 2019**

Mud bricks, bronze, copper, chalcopyrite,  
metallic grout, transfers  
137 x 134 x 65 cm





Materia, 2019  
Tile fragments  
800 X 13 X 13 cm









Huacas, 2019  
Ceramics  
40 x 166 x 118 cm





**Codigo atemporal 10, 2019**

Grout and cochineal, black mud from the Pantanos de Villa, black mud and  
"conrelisto" cement, Caracas ochre and pigment, glue, metallic grout 1000  
41 X 34 cm

ARCO, 2019

Perú país invitado (curated by Sharon Lerner), ARCO Madrid











## VOCES MONUMENTALES, 2018

XIV BIENAL DE CUENCA

The origin of the word “monument” comes from the Greek *mne-mosynon* and the Latin *moneo*, *monere*, which means ‘to remind’, ‘to advise’ or ‘to warn’, suggesting a monument allows us to see the past thus helping us visualize what is to come in the future.’ Benigno Tenesaca, Esperanza Tacuri, Jose Farfan, Guillermina Lituma, Victoria Benenaula y Cecilia Albarracin are a few of the people that work daily (some have been there for decades) in and around the Parque Calderon in Cuenca. The united voices in these “conversations in the park” are recollected testimonies of their personal lives, perspectives on labor and in the end form part of the *Vox Populi* of a city inserted in the debate about public space and its patrimonial aestheticization. The vitrines that hang parasitically on their vending and work carts contain mementos, books, images and objects that were chosen based on a criteria that allude to a personal narrative within the collective. The Sculptural work in the MAM weaves together these voices and takes its key from the humble monument made in Cuencan pink marble to the Coronel Luis Vargas Torres who was executed on that spot the 20th of March, 1887. Vargas Torres was one of the confidant men of General Eloy Alfaro as well as being the military and political leader of the process that led to the Liberal Revolution. The Execution was directed from Quito with the complicity of the conservative local authorities. Curiously, the now named Parque Calderon in a certain moment received, via decree, the name of Plaza de Vargas Torres, but was absolved by the conservative elite of the time.









## EXTRACTIONS, 2018

Federica Schiavo Gallery, Milan

The show takes an interest in a continued dialogue within geographic, architectural, and cultural space that has a particular reference to time as a marker for the confluence of past, present and future. Within the research aspects of Randall Weeks' work is an acute interest in the specificity of source material as a valuable tool to weave meaning into transformative states with a particular focus on archeology and museology.

The works in the show present Metalized Memory, a four parts installation with specific crafted wood display cases containing copper-plated contemporary objects sourced from pre-Colombian archaeological sites that elicit a museological gaze disrupting the distinction between debris, artifact and art object; a wall and floor mounted brass structural work titled Wind Variations Construct holds fragile naturally eroded 1960's bricks from the abandoned utopian construction sites in the desert. Alongside these works are photo-transfer images that brought together pay tribute to constructivist form and commercial consumerism.

Two wall mounted works from the series Excavation Annotations are compositions based on textile works from the Nazca culture, but where those textiles are digitally altered and colored and then transferred onto acrylic gel whose material consistency feels much like papyrus or hide. These works hang delicately on steel bars and sit alongside copper and silver plates, minerals and other objects that take into account different monumental time frames.

Within these sculptures and materials is a closely allied theme of economic scarcity that concerns itself with memory, identity and ways of living within the landscape rooted in a push and pull of fragility over security.







**Excavation Annotations, 2017**

Mineral with crystal, steel plate, copper plate, silver plate, copper  
Plated wood, phototransfer on gel  
104.3 x 64.9 x 25.1 in/265 x 165 x 64 cm



**Metalized Memory 2017**

Four cachimbo wood showcases, electroplated copper objects

64.9 x 19.6 x 19.6 in/165 x 50 x 50 cm



**Mappamondo, 2017**

Copper, brass, cachimbo wood, fossils, concrete, pencils  
17.7 x 76.6 x 11.8 in/45 x 195 x 30 cm





**Concrete transitions, 2017**  
Acrylic gel transfers, concrete  
14.1 X 11.2 X 0.7 in/36 x 28.5 X 2 cm



Untitled (Empty), 2017

Cachimbo wood, brass, glass

28.7 x 76.6 x 11.8 in/73 x 195 x 30 cm

## ANNOTATIONS, STRIATIONS AND SOUVENIERS, 2018

Van Doren Waxer, NY

Marking a continuation of Randall Weeks' interest in the temporal dimensions of geographic, architectural, and civic space, the exhibition focuses on the confluence of past, present, and future, with a particular reference to archaeology and museology. In the center of the gallery will be two I-beams that each measure the artist's body length: one is cast with sand from a pre-Columbian pyramid site, and a second is made from the brick-dust of a modern building. A metallic-grout cast of a tin roof and a series of hanging wall sculptures also alludes to the relationship of materials to the body, mental and topographical landscapes, and architecture. Brass structural elements hold wind-eroded bricks alongside layered sandblasted posters depicting ancient archaeological sites in Peru – sand dunes, pyramids, burial grounds – upon which the cities have been built and urbanized. Maintaining his ongoing use of found and transformed materials, also on view is a selection of objects sourced from these archaeological sites cast in copper. Transformed from abandoned detritus into permanent objects and presented in vitrines, these works elicit a museological gaze that disrupts the distinction between debris, artifact, and art object. Randall Weeks' artistic practice is aligned with art historical movements such as Arte Povera, Minimalism, and Constructivism, particularly in their intersection with a conceptual mark surrounding humanity and its condensation.









**Wind variations, 2017**

Eroded 1960s bricks, brass, phototransfers on gel  
78 x 180 x 20 in/198.1 x 457.2 x 50.8 cm



**Wind variations (details), 2017**  
Eroded 1960s bricks, brass, phototransfers on gel  
78 x 180 x 20 in/198.1 x 457.2 x 50.8 cm







**Two i-beam, 2017**

Condensed newspaper, glue, brick, dust from construction sites, sand from archeological sites

I-beams: 9.6 x 9.6 x 70 in/24.3 x 24.3 x 177.8 cm

Blocks: 13 x 8 x 6 in/



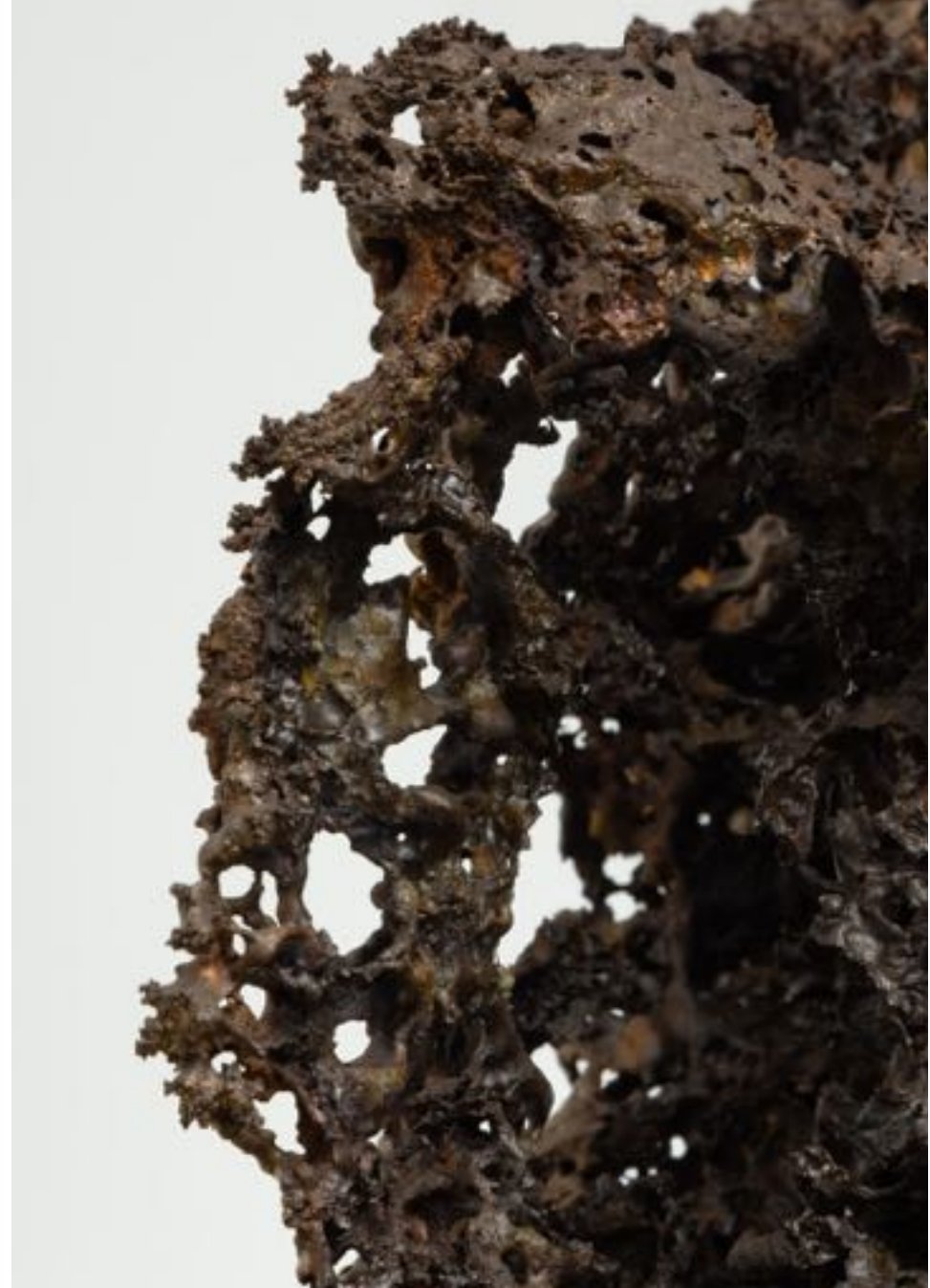


**Striation 1, 2017**  
 Sandblasted posters, wood dowels  
 19 x 27.5 x 3 in/48.3 x 69.9 x 7.6 cm



**Striation 2, 2017**  
 Sandblasted posters, wood dowels  
 19 x 27.5 x 3 in/48.3 x 69.9 x 7.6 cm





Untitled (remnant), 2017  
Cachimbo wood, glass, brass, copper  
19.5 x 19.5 x 65 in/49.5 x 49.5 x 165.1 cm





Souvenirs, 2017  
Cachimbo wood, glass, copper  
31 x 39 x 6.5 in/78.7 x 99.1 x 16.5 cm





Epitaph, 2017  
Metallic grout  
34 x 67 x 20 in/86.4 x 170.2 x 50.8 cm



## TRIBUNA, 2018

### MALI in situ

The sculptures, Apacheta and Tribuna are both part of a new series of work that reaffirm Randall Week's interest for exploring - through evocating abstract images- the tension between the natural space and ideas associated to modernity and progress. The artwork that first receives the visitor is Apacheta, a spiral staircase of more than seven meters high, placed in the center of the Palacio de la Exposición's entrance, unifying, visually, the space's first and second floor. This monumental piece will be connected to a motor that will keep it turning on its own axis. The viewer will be able to appreciate, in some of the staircase steps, silver rocks and crude copper pieces, rotating counterclockwise to the external structure; these give the piece a particular rhythm and tempo. The artwork's title refers to the practice - original to the Peruvian Andes tradition of stacking stone mounds in Andean trails to cement memories or as symbols of devotion. These, however, also seem to evoke the restoration of vernacular shapes in opposition to a purely modernist conception of sculpture as an autonomous esthetic object. While the rotating movement seems to refer to a cyclical time, its shape may also be associated to the basic structure of a DNA molecule or to technologies utilized in territorial exploitations.

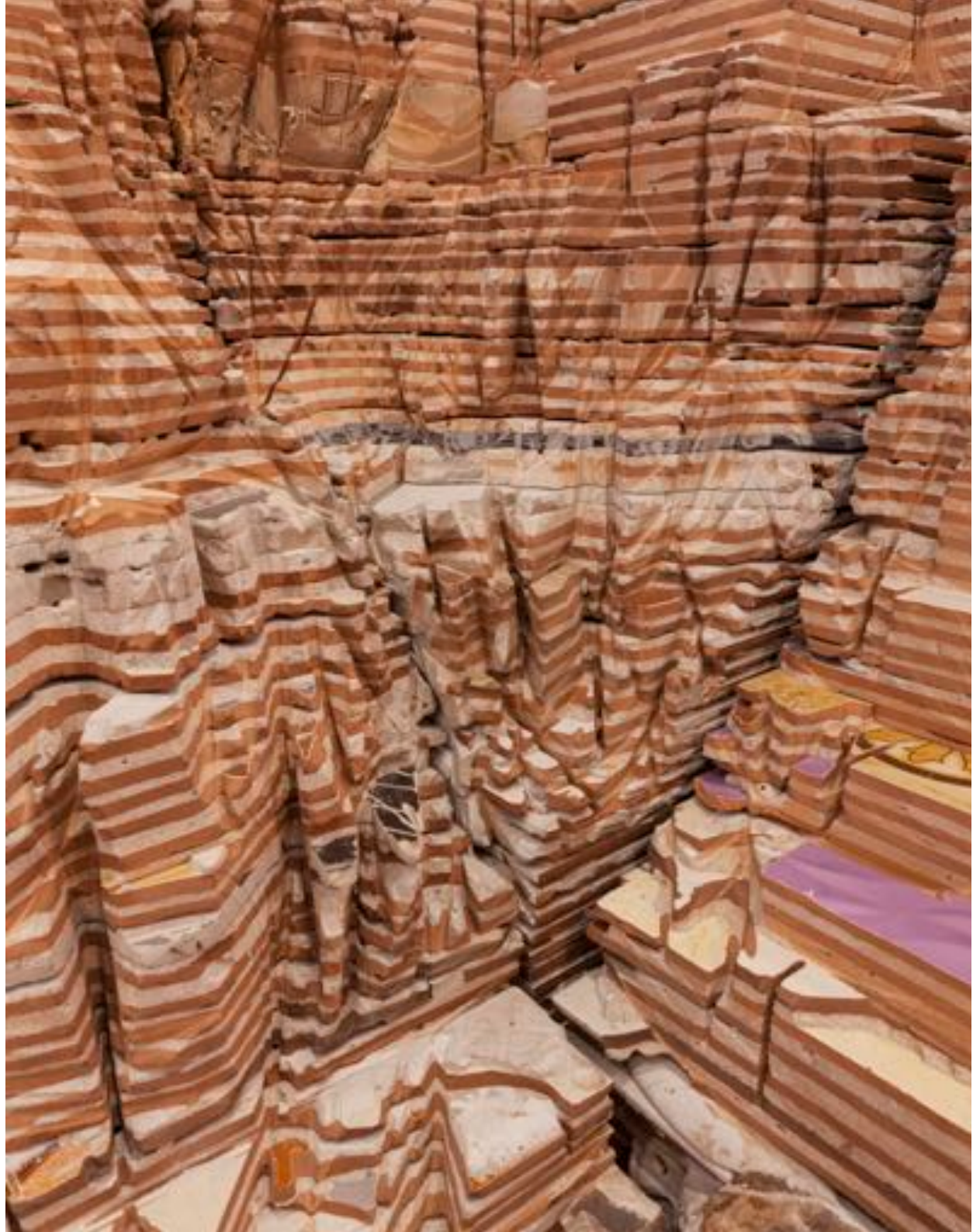
The second art piece, placed in the center of the MALI's Lobby area, gives the name to the exhibition. Tribuna is a sculpture made from four carved modules that refer to a chacana or Andean cross, which distribution generate four narrow passageways that invite spectators to the artwork's inner space. This sculpture, made from more than fifteen tonnes of piled, stratified and subjected to abrasion majolica, also carries, inserted between its tiles, books about Peruvian economy, labor, education and urbanism. The sculpture takes us back to the idea of frayed foundations or to an accidented geography eroded by the passing of time. This also acquires new connotations within the actual context, associated to the human management negligences and also to devastation as a result of ecological imbalances.

Text by Sharon Lerner

#### Tribuna, 2017

Tiles, books and steel

258 x 258 x 94 in / 655 x 655 x 240 cm







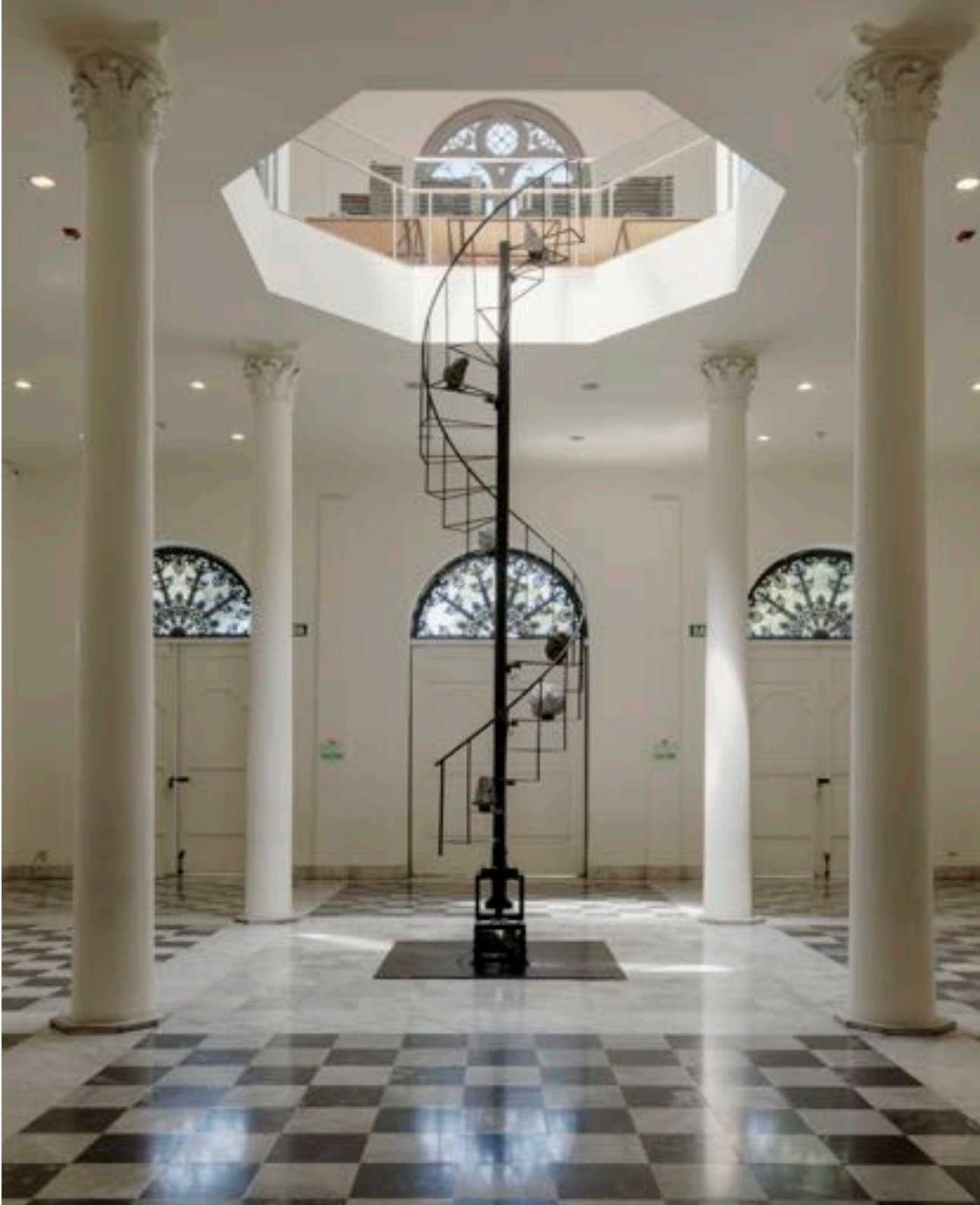












Apacheta, 2017  
Steel, 6 motors, raw copper and silver minerals  
59 x 59 x 275.5 in / 150 x 150 x 700 cm





**Future Old (after Kounellis), 2016**

Iron shelf, expanded polystyrene electroplated dishes  
39.3 x 78.7 x 11 in / 100 x 200 x 28 cm

This work is a sort of tribute to Jannis Kounellis work “Untitled”, 1983. In Kounellis’ work, that consist of a black iron shelf with various pieces of painted and stacked wood parts, there exists a negotiation between the elevation of an object in disuse and a direct reference to the poetics of of the historical and mythological between the cultural and the natural.

In Ishmael’s work, an adaptation of that emblematic work is presented, but making use of fragments of pieces of wood, old chairs, etc found on extensive walks as well as leftover styrofoam plates and cups found in the parks and beaches after Sunday parties. With the intention of trying to find something metaphorical or transcendental in the actual political discourse about human progress, Ishmael decides to submit these quotidian “trash” pieces to a sort of electrocution in the process of electro-plaque with copper-whose alchemical symbolism is of transformation, regeneration and fusibility-and later fuse this in a stackable, organizational manner with the black Kounellis shelves.





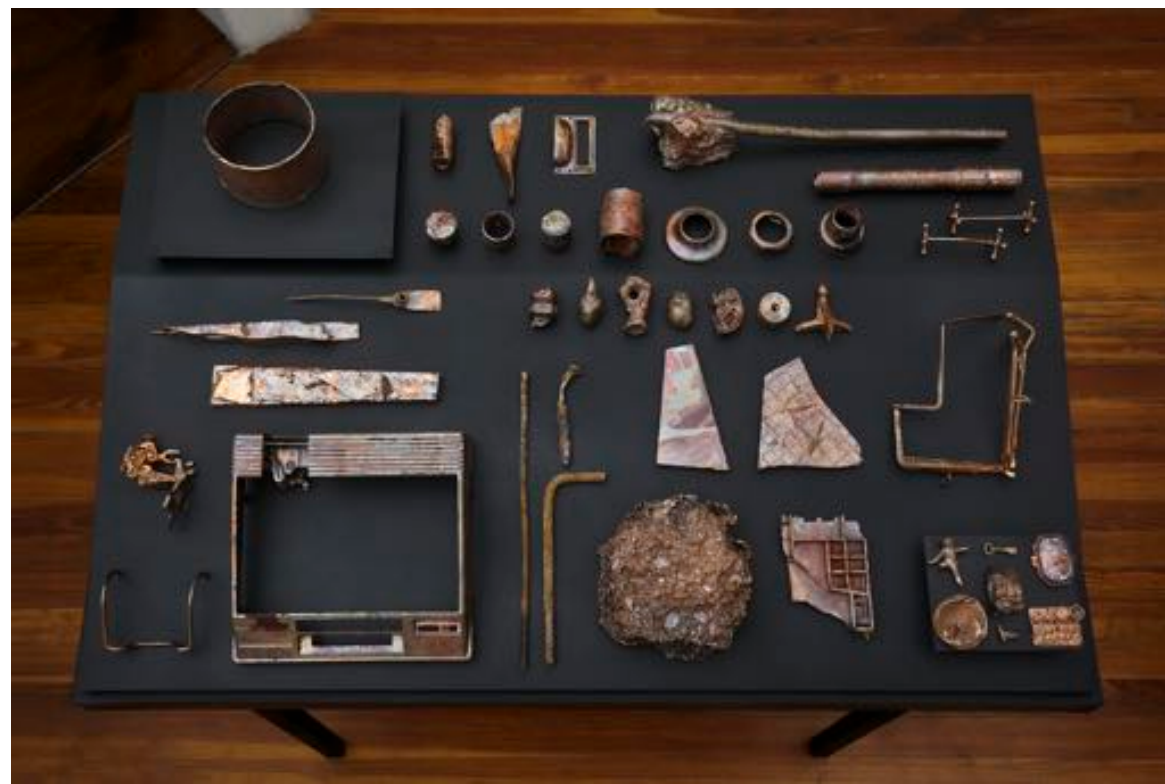
“What Ishmael Randall Weeks proposes, through the use of multiple resources taken from sciences such as archeology, is a perspective that seems to double points in history about themselves; establishing a contact between the most remote past and a future that does not end up being presented as definitive.

As he did in 2012 with “Museo del Relave” in Cerro de Pasco, Ishmael builds structures that refer to natural history museums, site museums and their direct predecessors: the cabinets of curiosities of the seventeenth century. However, it is not so much the construction of the museum as an institution that is aimed at, it is rather about placing our present under the archeology glass. The appearance of the museum works as the instance that allows the viewer to access these views of the past/present.

The other essential axis of this exhibition is the material as a vessel of history, as a trigger for connections between its uses, abuses and symbolic dimensions. Thus, the copper that homogenizes the objects arranged in black iron shelves refers both to the symbolic practices that the metal has raised and to its industrial uses. Eroded bricks, recovered from the same desert, are testimony to the passage of time and the intrinsic precariousness of large-scale buildings. The flimsy constructions/ collages made with architectural model material allude to the precarious housing of the Peruvian coast and its reflection, materialized in the huacas that are cannibalized in its path.

These material links are inserted in the museum form, even following their constructive patterns, as in the showcases that resemble the huacas that they symbolically contain. Thus, this museum that Ishmael erects is conceived as an experience that blurs the illusion of permanence in which we are immersed, placing ourselves outside our time.”

Andres Hare, exhibition text for Desierto at Ignacio Liprandi gallery, Buenos Aires, 2016



#### Metalizamos nuestras memorias, 2016

Contemporary objects electroplated, found at precolonial archeological monuments. seven lightboxes

cabinets: 53.1 x 39.3 x 25.5 / 135 x 100 x 65 cm each

lightboxes: 4.3 x 5.7 / 11 x 14.5 cm each







**Museo del viento, 2016**  
Iron structures, concrete bricks eroded by the wind  
13.7 x 53.1 x 6.6 in / 35 x 135 x 17cm





**Museo del viento, 2016**  
Iron structures, concrete bricks eroded by the wind  
13.7 x 53.1 x 6.6 in / 35 x 135 x 17cm



## CONSTRUCTIVE RESISTANCE, 2016

Steve Turner Gallery, LA

Exploring the legacies of modernism and Arte Povera, Randall Weeks will present a room-sized sculptural installation, *Ejercicios Para Un Nuevo Mundo V* (Exercises For A New World V) that consists of cranium-size chunks of raw mineral ore (silver, gold and copper) sourced from three mines in the Peruvian Andes. The stones have been drilled and attached to steel-pipe armatures that were bent into forms representing outdoor playground structures common to Latin American housing developments of the 1960s.

*Constructive Resistance*, 2016 (*Ejercicios para el nuevo mundo V*)

Steel and hand polished copper and silver raw minerals

92.9" x 92.9" x 78.7" in / 236 x 236 x 200 cm







**Paisaje/ Repisa amarillo (Landscape/Yellow Shelf), 2016**

Electroplated shelf with copper, polystyrene dish, electroplated extruded with copper, polished minerals and silver, copper and gold dust  
35 x 55 1/2 x 7 in / 89 x 141 x 18 cm







Paisaje/ Repisa roja (Landscape/Red shelf), 2016

Electroplated shelf with copper, polystyrene dish, electroplated extruded with copper, polished minerals and silver, copper and gold dust  
35 x 55 1/2 x 7 in / 89 x 141 x 18 cm







## CELOSIAS MEXICANAS, 2016

Celosías Mexicanas attempts to reveal a nation's identity. Various modules made from brick dust, encrusted with books and volcanic rock of Mexican origin, will discuss about the Mexican pluricultural, intricate history, one shaped by the mixture of the nation's modernity and its prevailing past. The project attempts to analyze Mexico's social structure, one eternally founded and cemented on its own debris, merging the historic value of its original cultures to its colonization, independence and revolution.

The units, created by the remains of pulverized bricks originally belonging to destroyed buildings from around Mexico City, will make reference to Pedro Ramirez Vazquez's architecture and specifically to one of his most famous projects, the Museum of Anthropology. By referencing this space, I will be able to address the use of ancestral history in Mexico's modern architecture.

The decadent structures will expose their own erosion, revealing the beauty within their porosities and fractures. Here, the pulverized brick will symbolize a resilient and surviving culture, one constantly amended and restructured, continuously re-building itself with fractions of its own history. The manual carving of Mexican books and minerals will refer to the nation's origin and pre-hispanic works, as well as recalling the country's recent architectural labor.

The encrusted stones make reference to the pre-columbian usage of the material, utilized in utilitarian, decorative, and cosmological ways, as well as ritually for the construction of temples and palaces. The minerals here, speak of the country's historic, architectonic and anthropological precedence. The volcanic rock showcases the passing of time and represents the terrain that nation's predecessors habited and worked on.

The books, on the other hand, make reference to the country's actuality. Carved scripts about economy, education and Mexican architecture act as traces of time, exposing the territory's constant cultural evolution. Their specific content lacks importance. These refer to Mexico's still present scars, books that force a lecture beyond their subjects and pedagogic codes. Eroded, but vital and unique, these represent Mexican particular processes of identity: a combination of the nation's errors, solutions and successes.

**Celosías mexicanas (detail), 2016**

Birch powder, resin, books and volcanic rock  
Variable measurements











# NECESITO ALAS PARA VOLAR, LAPIZ Y PIEDRA PARA ESTUDIAR Y FLORES

## PARA NUESTRA MUERTE, 2016

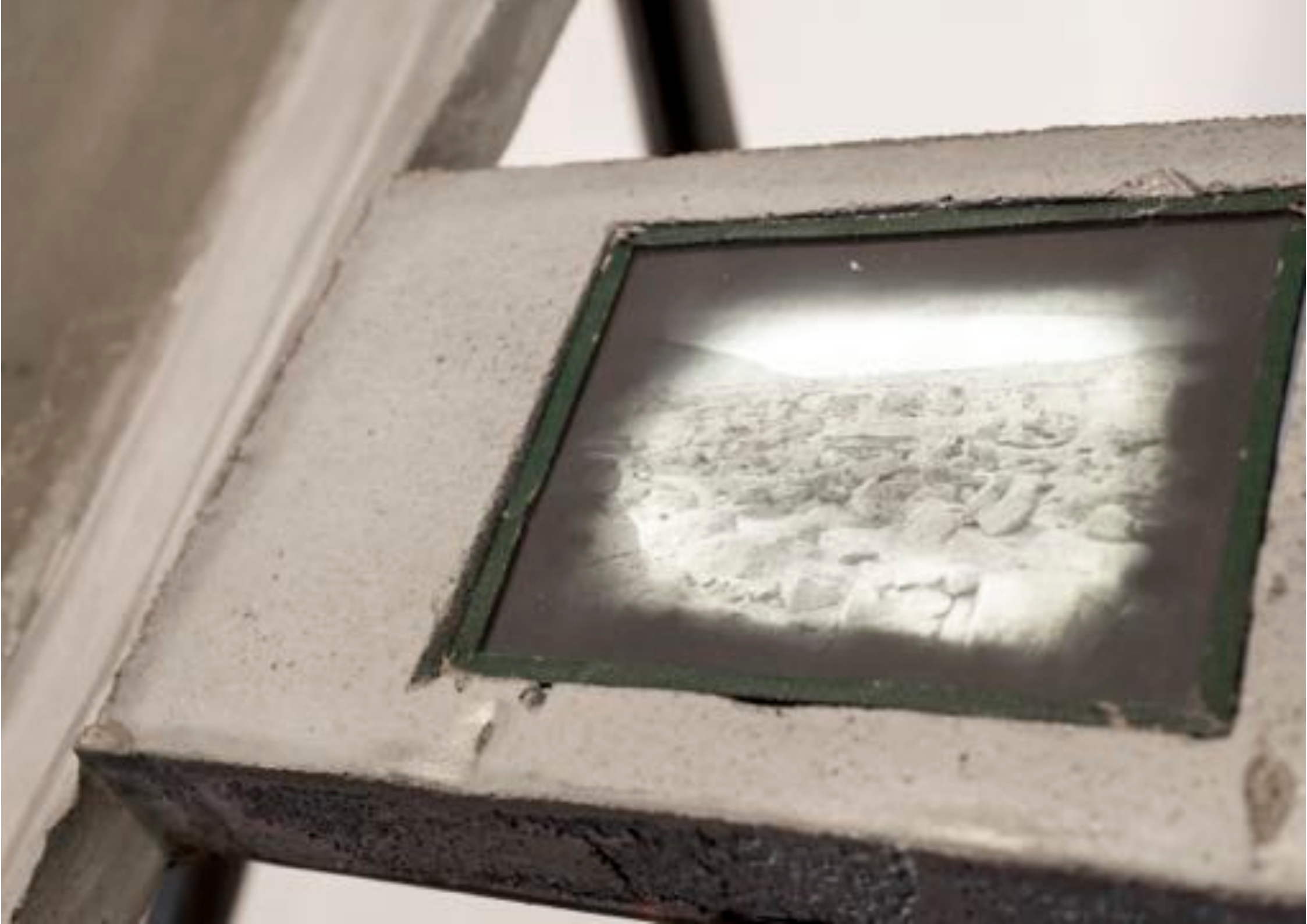
Lo Real Absoluto, Revolver Galería

We are first greeted by Ishmael Randall Week's "Necesito alas para volar, lápiz y piedra para estudiar y flores para nuestra muerte" installation. Three large sized cement structures shaped like paper planes and suspended on tripods, enclose the space not only because of their position, but because of the trajectories indicated by each piece. Even if the title and shapes take us back to an affective and ludic universe, the artwork's focus on the weight, volume and construction, lands a metaphor about a world filled with conditioning factors.

Translated extract from a text by Max Hernández Calvo  
Diario El Comercio, May 2016

Quiero alas para volar, lápiz y piedra para pensar y flores para nuestra muerte (detail), 2016  
Concrete, steel, electroplated wires and stones with copper, pencils, pieces of marble  
from headstones, eroded bricks and image of an archeological site  
Variable measurements











Quiero alas para volar, lápiz y piedra para pensar y flores para nuestra muerte (detail), 2016  
Concrete, steel, electroplated wires and stones with copper, pencils, pieces of marble  
from headstones, eroded bricks and image of an archeological site  
Variable measurements





# PARAISO, 2016

Bass Museum (Art Basel Public), Miami Beach

Huaca Paraíso, Landscape Intersection is a sculptural project created and based on hollow cell bricks that are placed on top of 16 shipping pallets and subsequently carved. The use of the bricks is prevalent in South America where stacks of them can usually be seen throughout the streets of most of the new developments. The end form of the sculpture is reminiscent of a “Huaca” (a pre- Colombian revered burial monument). The heaps combine to offer us the model of a city or one of those miniature reconstructions that await the visitor at the entrance of an archaeological complex. This perspective that sees the work as the miniature reproduction of something more vastly complex results, paradoxically, in the monumentalization of the whole. The materials are nevertheless few and raw, placing us in a zone of indistinction between minimalism and asceticism. The work disavows elaborate ornamentation and texture, providing a foil for its own intimations of monumentality. On the effort to build in this way, the grandeur of a vast complex of ruins and its intimations of a majestic past and the opulence of the present metropolis that allows to be seen in its totality, are displaced by the modest, tranquil, and hopeful dignity of the determination to turn a bleak or inhospitable desolation into a place invested with human significance. As a result of this displacement, we are left with a vision of the materials that await their assemblage, secure in their tranquil repose.

Paraíso is a large installation based project, an extension of a longterm plan that I have been working on since 2010 when I built a sculpture titled Huaca, a Quechuan word that can refer indistinguishably to a multitude of natural locations of special significance, revered objects and burial sites. This project focuses on using contemporary construction bricks to address issues that relate directly to precolonial sites on the Peruvian coastline, and specifically within the urban centers. I collaborated with local brickmaking artisans and factories in the city of Lima. These create the materials that transform the urban landscape, and thus contribute to the endangerment of the over 50 Huacas [precolumbian funerary sites] around Lima, which are in constant threat by the city’s expansion. My plan was to reconstruct a Huaca for this project in wet clay then transformed and carved by bulldozers, in the same way as the invaded and destroyed original archaeological site of Huaca El Paraíso was: leveled by modern machinery.

A displaced installation, built to be separated in different parts much like archeological and construction sites are sectioned off. This will be exhibited in a way that sparks dialogue with the public, locating it within the boundaries of an institution, bringing into question the participation of both entities —public, institutions — in the fate of precolumbian sites.

Although Paraíso is a monumental work, it really is only a reproduction of a grandiose archaeological site that has been wiped out. This reenactment will be reminiscent of both architectural mockups, and the reconstructions that await visitors at the entrance of archaeological complexes. In contrast to the monumental reality of the original, this work’s somewhat contained dimensions are inseparable from the projection of a majestic and panoramic reality: that which is represented by Huaca El Paraíso before its disappearance in 2013.







Paraíso, 2015  
Carved bricks and shipping pallets  
283,4 x 236.2 x 82.6 in / 720 x 600 x 210 cm



## SOÑAR PARA MAÑANA, 2014

Revolver Galería, Lima

Where do we place our convictions? Where are the pillars placed, supporting us and our cities? And after that, how? If the foundations are made of eroded material questioning how much more can they bear, if the most resistant forms have been penetrated by the landscape that merges with them, forcing them to redesign themselves along with it, or otherwise succumb. This vulnerability of the material used by us to build, with all its historical and sensitive burden, allows us to draw a section across it, where its layers are exposed and the porosity of its surface shows the sum of our failures over time, mistakes where the improvement of techniques and elements, moved to zones closer to the equatorial line, has lost too much in translation and in the inconsistently implemented execution, resulting in plans whose phases are transformed into fractures of an intermittent construction.

The different states of that latent structure; anchored to the floor, floating or stacked, all feeble, hold the promise of keeping the cycle of things running; build to the sky and back to the floor, like all natural things. New ruins constantly been transformed inside a project of civilization and modernity that is destined to be a coordinate in History always settled on debris and never on fertile ground. And behind this project, humankind, as the often ignorant measure of all things, of all their intentions placed at the center, above and below of reclaimed land filled with their concepts, converted into buildings with a dual weight distributed from the underground to the social dynamics activated by their volumes; progress and wastage, like in physical exercise, like life itself and the systems that preserve it, sometimes desperately.

Text by Luis Navas, 2014





**Fosa, 2014**  
Ultra clear glass, uv glue  
180 x 180 x 250 cm







Todo es cíclico (All is cyclical) 2014

Ground bricks from demolitions in lima, cable  
118 in / 300 cm, circumference

## ESCOMBROS, 2014

Galería Arróniz Contemporáneo, Ciudad de México

Questioning the bedrocks of our conventions, Peruvian artist Ishmael Randall-Weeks attempts a personal answer through his second solo exhibition at Arróniz gallery where he converts the space into a construction site of thoughts. The surroundings of the building are transferred inside, where a conceptual token of the construction process is on view. The most resistant materials appear eroded, the foundations rickety and our acknowledgments disputed and transfigured into debris—which is the title of the show. Debris is also the title of a piece that presents light jet prints of ruins as civilisation's left over pieces. The reflection on the humankind's voyage through modernity and its indicative failure continues with an installation, floating in a circle over our heads, made of bricks collected from different demolitions around Mexico City. The vulnerability of the materials is made evident by the porosity of the surface, in the fractures of the intermittent construction. Or in the clear glass of the twenty-one beams of The measurement of meaning, which gives the sense of an unsteady structure where our concepts are deposited in a precarious way. In Pillars, four columns made of concrete and built-in books function as the framework of an imaginary building or the basis of our ideas, where the different layers of the materials reveal their historical and sensitive burden. Behind them, Landscapes I, III broaden our horizon. The most durable forms have been corroded by nature, forcing us to redefine our measures, improve our techniques, question our position, our progress and waste and, through a piece like Exercises for a new world, reconsider life itself and the different social dynamics.

Text by Klea Charitou

### Pilares (detail), 2014

Reinforced concrete, carved books  
Variable dimensions





Pilares, 2014  
Reinforced concrete, carved books  
Variable dimensions









**21 beams, 2014**  
Ultra clear glass, uv glue  
180 x 180 x 200 cm







**Ibeam, 2013**  
Cut and carved books about south american revolution, steel  
261.6 x 17.8 x 16.5 cm



**Quoin, 2012**  
Cast and sculpted daily newspapers, table, four works on paper  
Variable dimensions





**Mapping, 2012**

Parquet made by different types of woods, parquet samples, steel  
125 X 302 x 30 cm; 80 x 28 x 12 cm





## AUN SIN TITULO, 2011

Revolver Galería, Lima

In Ishmael Randall Week's *Huaca*, a series of hollow bricks forced into erosion by carving and sandblasting rest over a pair of wooden platforms. The title of the piece consists of a word in Quechua that can refer, indistinguishably, to a multitude of revered objects, natural locations of special significance, and burial monuments. For some the arrangement will bring to mind the funerary sites of the civilizations of pre-Columbian Peru, particularly those found in the coastal deserts. Others will see not an agglutination of walls hollowed by endless rows of niches, but the rooftop topography of a sprawling metropolis, each cell a minuscule abode. In the end, however, the heaps combine to offer us the model of a city or one of those miniature reconstructions that await the visitor at the entrance of an archaeological complex. This perspective that sees the work as the miniature reproduction of something more vast complex results, paradoxically, in the monumentalization of the whole—the work's reduction to ever smaller dimensions is inseparable from the virtual projection of a majestic and panoramic reality. The materials are nevertheless few and raw, placing us in a zone of indistinction between minimalism and asceticism. The work disavows elaborate ornamentation and texture, providing a foil for its own intimations of monumentality. Thus it is that the work can come forward as a commentary on the ongoing efforts to render vast tracts of the coastal desert fit for habitation—a commentary, that is, on the effort to build. In this way the grandeur of a vast complex of ruins and its intimations of a majestic past, and the opulence of the present metropolis that allows to be seen in its totality, are displaced by the modest, tranquil, and hopeful dignity of the determination to turn a bleak or inhospitable desolation into a place invested with human significance. As a result of this displacement, we are left, in the end, with a vision of the materials that await their assemblage, secure in their tranquil repose.

The burial complex and the panorama of the city eventually prove to be nothing but a veil concealing a building site. The trajectory can of course be reversed, since what matters is the multiplicity of objects that the work can be. Whatever the route one decides to follow, however, one eventually comes into contact with a pile of bricks. The meanings that envelop this work could thus be said to veil a disciplined multitude of cells.

Extracted from: *A Vailed Intimacy*, catalogue for the exhibition 'Bruma' at 20 Hoxton Square Gallery editor 20 Hoxton Square and Revolver Gallery, London 2011

### **Huaca, 2010**

Ladrillos erosionados, pallets de madera  
440 X 400 x 75 cm





# LANDSCAPE INTERSECTION, 2010

Federica Schiavo Gallery, Milan

Landscape Intersection was built and carved over a one month stay in Rome. The desire was to create a structured space that connected to the viewers on a physically overwhelming platform through their own loose associations to their school pasts. The four tables talk of school tables where the books were piled up and then methodically carved to mimic an eroded landscape.

Carved out of stacks of found and recycled primary and secondary Italian school books, the work Landscape Intersection gives the impression of a scale representation of a mountainous landscape. Sliced and quartered to reveal an intersection made up of hundreds of book spines, the nature of books' contents become eroded striations of text and colour that force a "rereading" of their constituent elements and pedagogical codes.

## Maquette for Landscape, 2010

Four wooden tables, steel, carved Italian school books  
300 x 180 x 300 cm





