

Tania Pérez Córdova: Generalization

Sep 23–Dec 11, 2023

SculptureCenter

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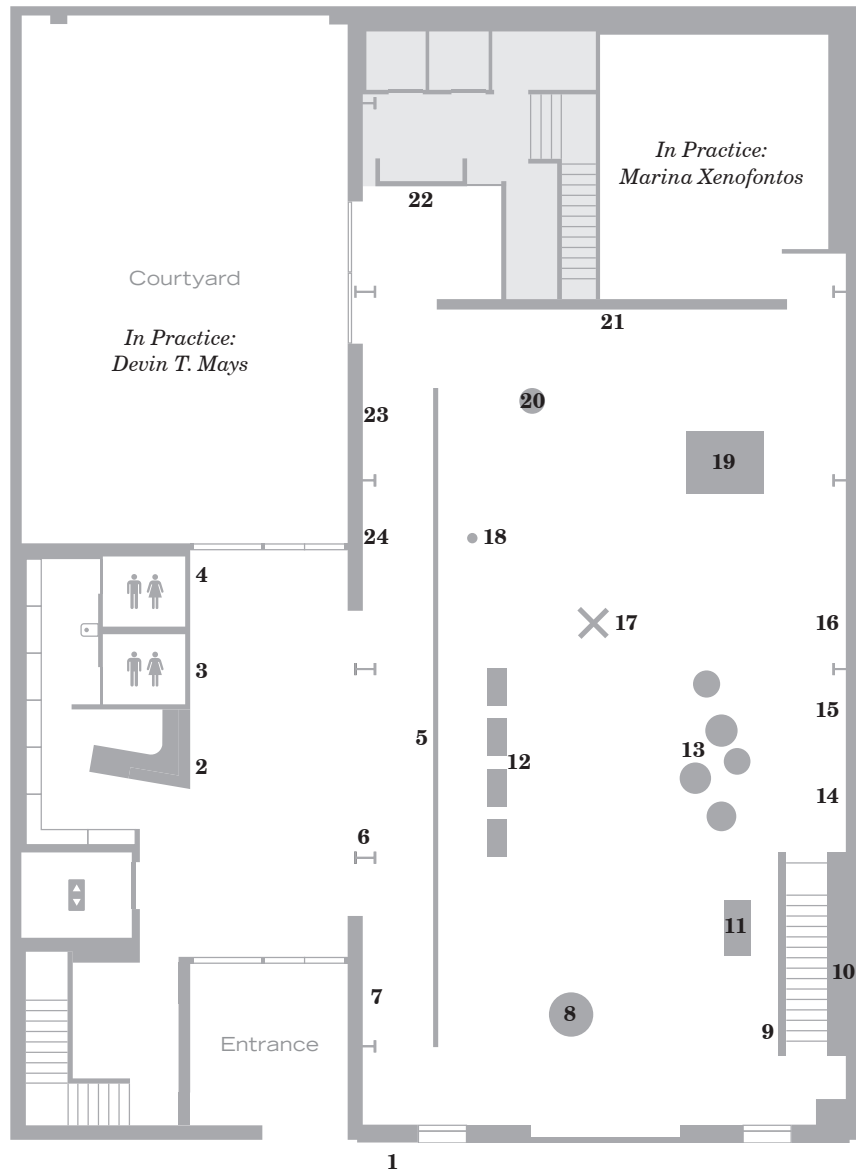
Generalization is the first survey of artist Tania Pérez Córdoba (b. 1979, Mexico City) in a United States institution, featuring a selection of twenty-four works made over the past ten years, as well as objects specially commissioned for this occasion. The exhibition presents a reading of Pérez Córdoba's work through issues that her artistic endeavors have sought to address: the passage of time, the nature of materials, the gaze of the other, the imminence or possibility of an action, the way in which we assign value to objects, negative space, and more recently, the insufficiency of discourse. *Generalization* is the artist's most significant and comprehensive exhibition in the U.S. to date, providing audiences with a first opportunity to survey the breadth and depth of the last decade of Pérez Córdoba's idiosyncratic and innovative works across media.

Primarily using materials that are historically related to sculptural practices—like metal, ceramics, plaster, glass, and marble—her work interacts with everyday objects that bear an intimate relationship with the human body, such as clothing, jewelry, cigarettes, or contact lenses. Alongside Pérez Córdoba's sculptural work, *Generalization* presents a program of barely perceptible performative actions that occur periodically within the galleries, creating relationships between action and object, where speculation and possibility are the gravitational centers. One of the horizontal axes that intersects all of the artist's production is the idea that objects are nothing more than events occurring in other temporalities and scales—things don't exist, but happen. Following this frame of thought, geological time, a stranger's mind, or the microscopic world become variables in her artistic work.

Conceptual in nature, Pérez Córdoba's sculptural practice offers compositions and dynamics which poetically point to places that exceed the objects themselves and the space that hosts them. Beyond the paraphrasing of known narratives, the enigmatic objects created by the artist reveal the potential of less-prescribed narratives: ones that are open and don't determine the viewer's experience. On the contrary, these narratives allow for the possibility of a story to have personal and profound implications for onlookers, while at the same time allowing them the possibility of imagining what happens outside their own experience: an oscillation between specificity and generalization.

Tania Pérez Córdoba: Generalization (Oct 1, 2022–Feb 23, 2023) at Museo Tamayo was the artist's first solo exhibition in a Mexican institution. The New York iteration of the exhibition at SculptureCenter establishes an active dialogue with its previous form at Museo Tamayo. The iterative nature of the exhibition further extends the artist's interest to reflect on site-specificity, materiality, wear, and entropy.

Works in the Exhibition



Ground Floor Plan

Ground Floor

- 1 *A Roof Into a Roof*, 2018
Un techo en un techo
 Aluminum fragment of a roof that was cast, melted, and recast into its own mold
 2 x 33 ½ x 22 ¼ inches (4.8 x 85 x 59 cm)
 Courtesy the artist and Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna

In the series *Objects Into Themselves*, the artist took on the task of making objects while somehow undoing them. The series began with a brass trumpet Pérez Córdova bought from a man busking in the street. She first produced a mold of the object, then cut the trumpet into pieces, melted it and poured it back into its own mold. The result was unsettling, described in her own words as “an object that somehow remained the same while being something entirely different.” This series continued with other metallic objects made of a single material, like a corrugated piece of roof (*A Roof Into a Roof*, 2018), a chandelier (*A Chandelier Into a Chandelier*, 2023), and fragments of chain-link fencing. As a version of their own previous forms, all these objects became poetic agents, maps of everything that is lost or modified in the process of being reconstituted—a whole process leading towards a disappearance, undoing while doing.

- 2 *In Other News*, 2022
En otras noticias
 Recent news transcriptions
 Commissioned by Museo Tamayo
 Courtesy the artist

In Other News, 2022, is a live reading presenting a continuous flow of recent world events, a collection of headlines rewritten to abstract from any specificity (names, spaces, times), resulting in a single line that has the tension of a story. The work serves as a review of the world outside of the gallery during the time of her exhibition. It functions as a

backdrop to a collective experience which, as in most of Pérez Córdova’s work, describes an ongoing narrative that deviates and reconfigures into new forms as it unfolds. At the same time, the juxtaposition of events, almost unintentionally, evinces the contradictory nature of social and political events and their intersections across geographies and socio-political spheres.

**In Other News* will be performed at SculptureCenter on Sat, Nov 4, 2023 at 5pm.

- 3 *They Say It’s Like a Rock*, 2015
Dicen que es como una roca
 Glass from a window facing south, Nag Champa incense
 8 ¼ x 11 ½ x 9 ½ inches (21 x 29 x 24 cm)
 Private collection

Like most of Pérez Córdova’s work, *They Say It’s Like a Rock*, 2015, and a related set of glass works started from a daily situation that evolved into a production methodology. For this series, the artist removed all the windows of her studio and brought them to a glass workshop, where she folded each one into a sculpture. The narratives embedded in the material—its history, provenance, and location—together with the unpredictability of the production process ended up being as important as the final objects she created. The uncertainty of the process of folding glass pushed Pérez Córdova to think of shapes in relation to the most basic mix of gravity, weight, and time. The final sculptures are often placed in dialogue with other elements—a broken bracelet, a soapy liquid, or, here, burning incense—creating through their interaction a narrative microcosm. Through the years, this series developed to include institutional commissions in which Pérez Córdova transformed museum windows into sculptures, translating

- the architectonic features of art institutions into objects of display.
- 4** *Fog*, 2018/2023
Niebla
Volcanic ash, sealer
Dimensions variable
Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
- 5** *Name, Phone, Email, Postcode*, 2023
Nombre, teléfono, email, código postal
Anti-hail mesh, industrially destroyed private information, binder
Dimensions variable
Commissioned by SculptureCenter, New York
Courtesy the artist
- 6** *Live Chat*, 2012
Glass, highlighter
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist
- 7** *Things in Pause (Speaking to a Stranger)*, 2013–16
Cosas en Pausa (Hablando con un extraño)
Porcelain, borrowed SIM card, suspended phone
19 x 16 ½ x 2 inches (48 x 42 x 5 cm)
Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
- 8** *Woman Next to a Fountain*, 2018
Mujer junto a una fuente
Braided human hair, fiberglass replica of a plastic container, water, water pump, shampoo
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna
- 9** *Chasing, Pausing, Waiting*, 2014
Persiguiendo, deteniendo, esperando
Black marble, blush, bird droppings, cigarette ash
5 ½ x 11 x 5 ¼ inches (14 x 28 x 13 cm)
Collection of Ricardo Guajardo
- 11** *Memory of a Room*, 2022
Memoria de un cuarto
56 x 42 ½ x 1 inches (142 x 107 x 2 cm)
Approximations in scale, bronze poured into sand
Commissioned by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
Collection of Joanne Gold and Andrew Stern
- These bronze contours function like echoes of personal and collective memories that the artist has been collecting throughout the years. Their shapes are drawn directly into casting sand and their final forms record each spill of the material. With titles such as *View to a Square from a City that Was Once a Capital*, 2022, and *Memory of a Room*, 2022, this series reflects on the relationship between inside and outside, public and private space, and engages the viewer's gaze by activating new narrative relationships through architectural details that are both ambivalent and ordinary.
- 11** *A Speech of 5,200 Words*, 2022
Un discurso de 5200 palabras
Copper and 5,200 drops of artificial saliva
Dimensions variable
Commissioned by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- In *A Speech of 5,200 Words*, 2022, the artist uses a liquid material, in this case artificial saliva, as a metaphor of the production of speech, and a material agent with the ability to represent a given situation.
- 12** *All Our Explanations*, 2022
Todas nuestras explicaciones
Concrete, melting ice, carbon steel, various materials
Dimensions variable
Commissioned by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
Courtesy the artist
- Pérez Córdova is interested in tracing relations between discourse and matter, where liquids are a metaphor for the way in which things acquire a certain shape. In the installation *All Our Explanations*, 2022, the artist makes a series of casts from human heads—all from anonymous 3D models accessible in an online bank—which she then fills with water and freezes. The newly revealed negative spaces embody a repository of the mind.
- 13** *Short Sight Box*, 2020
Miopía
Imprint of a series of holes, earth, roots, plaster, mesh, enamel paint, erased coins, chain
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- Short Sight Box*, 2020, traces the relationship between the gesture of carving a hole in the dirt, and the mark it creates in the landscape. The artist made a series of molds from the holes she carved in a plot of land, and which subsequently she turned into sculptural bodies. These residual elements resulting from the artist's body's interaction and space, describe a constellation in which a form generated through subtraction acquires a visible shape.
- 14** *Strelitzia reginae (20% chance of rain)*, 2022
Strelitzia reginae (20% posibilidad de lluvia)
Artificial plant, epoxy clay, gold-plated brass chain
57 x 36 ¾ x 27 ½ inches (145 x 93 x 70 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- 15** *Amoena (90% chance of rain)*, 2022
Amoena (90% posibilidad de lluvia)
Artificial plant, epoxy clay, gold-plated brass chain
76 ¾ x 30 ¾ x 39 ½ inches (195 x 78 x 100 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- 16** *Philodendron Monstera Deliciosa*, 2022
Pierced synthetic leaves, 14k-gilded silver chain, steel
126 x 11 ¾ x 15 ¾ inches (320 x 30 x 40 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Art: Concept, Paris
- 17** *A Chandelier Into a Chandelier*, 2023
Un candelabro en un candelabro
Brass chandelier that was cast, melted, and recast into its own mold
33 x 34 x 34 inches (84 x 86 x 86 cm)
Commissioned by SculptureCenter, New York
- Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- 18** *Iron Rain*, 2016
Lluvia de hierro
Graphite crucible, zinc
11 x 11 x 10 ¾ inches (28 x 28 x 27 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- 19** *You, Me, Us, You, Them*, 2022
Tu, yo, nosotros, ustedes, ellos
Marble, personalized cosmetic contact lenses, one or more people wearing contact lenses of a color different from their natural eyes
1 x 64 x 69 inches (2.5 x 163 x 175 cm)
Commissioned by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Art: Concept, Paris
- Contact lenses have had an allegorical presence in a number of Pérez Córdova's works. They are objects that can sharpen the gaze, and as objects themselves they carry a specificity related to whoever wears them (in this case, the color and prescription of the contacts). Suspending many single lenses in a liquid in the cavities of a marble surface, the artist generates a multiplicity of points of view that coexist in a sculptural space. The work is completed with the potential to encounter another viewer's gaze, and to see a matching colored contact in one eye.
- 20** *Portrait of an Unknown Person Passing By*, 2019
Retrato de una persona desconocida pasando por ahí
Glazed ceramic, person wearing a dress occasionally
Vase: 35 ½ x 19 ¾ x 19 ¾ inches (90 x 50 x 50 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- The relationship between the unknown and the accidental plays an important role in Pérez Córdova's work. Through a series of chance encounters, the artist reproduced the pattern of an unknown person's dress on the surface of a large ceramic vase. A person wearing this dress occasionally walks through the

gallery space, sparking a dialogue between the object and its double. The possibility of this encounter is as essential to the piece as the encounter itself. The sculpture functions as a prelude to an event occurring at any moment; a déjà vu, a distant memory or a premonition.

- 21** *View to a Square from a City that Was Once a Capital*, 2022
Vista a la plaza de una ciudad que alguna vez fue capital
Approximations in scale, bronze poured into sand
1152 x 113 ½ x 1 ¼ inches
(386 x 288 x 3 cm)
Commissioned by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City
Courtesy the artist and Tina Kim Gallery, New York
- 22** *Strike*, 2018
Huelga
Bread baked with cigarette butts
Dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Art: Concept, Paris
- 23** *A man flexing his biceps to show off his strength*, 2012/2023
Un hombre flexionando su bíceps para mostrar su fuerza
Orthopedic foam, muscular man
6 ¼ x 12 ½ x 1 ½ inches (16 x 32 x 4 cm)
Courtesy the artist and Galerie Art: Concept, Paris
- 24** *A Pot Into a Pot*, 2018
Una olla en una olla
Iron pot that was cast, melted, and recast into its own mold
13 x 10 x 4 ¾ inches (33 x 25 x 12 cm)
Courtesy the artist

Routines

All Our Explanations, 2022
Pour water into sculpture and freeze overnight.
Unfreeze during daytime.
Mop as needed.

Woman Next to a Fountain, 2018
Turn on water pump daily.
Change water, add shampoo weekly.

A Man Flexing His Biceps to Show Off His Strength, 2012/2023
Occasional visits from a muscly man.

You, Me, Us, You, Them, 2022
Hydrate marble indents with saline solution daily.
Occasional visits from people wearing contact lenses different to their natural eye color.
Replace contact lenses as needed.

Portrait of an Unknown Person Passing By, 2019
Occasional visit of a person wearing a dress.

A Speech of 5,200 Words, 2022
Transfer artificial saliva from one container to the other once daily.
Replace liquid every two weeks.

They Say It's Like a Rock, 2015
Light an incense stick daily.
Clean ashes as needed.

Short Sight Box, 2020
Occasionally drop a coin.

Chasing, Pausing, Waiting, 2014
Extinguish a cigarette during closed hours weekly.

Live Chat, 2012
Replace fluorescent marker weekly.

In Other News, 2022
Collect news headlines daily.
Collective reading on November 4th, 2023.

Public Events and Programs

Opening Reception
Sat, Sep 23, 2023
6–8pm

In Other News: Performance and Book Launch
Sat, Nov 4, 2023
5–7pm

Join SculptureCenter for a performance of Tania Pérez Córdova's *In Other News* and a conversation with the artist and exhibition curator Humberto Moro marking the release of the artist's new monograph.

Publication

Generalization, a new, bilingual monograph on the work of Tania Pérez Córdova edited by Humberto Moro with managing editor Junni Chen, Director, Tina Kim Gallery, and published by Gregory Miller & Co will be available for purchase in SculptureCenter's bookstore from October 2023. The publication includes contributions by Magalí Arriola, Director, Museo Tamayo; Elena Filipovic, Director and Chief Curator, Kunsthalle Basel; and Humberto Moro, with an interview between the artist and Jovanna Venegas, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art, SFMOMA, as well as a text by Pérez Córdova. It is illustrated with never-before published images of Pérez Córdova's recent exhibitions at Museo Tamayo, Mexico City (2022); Kunsthalle Basel (2018); and MCA Chicago (2017).

On View Concurrently

Julian Abraham "Togar": Too good to be OK
Sep 23–Dec 11, 2023

In Practice: Devin T. Mays
Sep 23–Dec 11, 2023

In Practice: Marina Xenofontos
Sep 23–Oct 23, 2023

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Tania Pérez Córdova: Generalization is organized by Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, and is curated by Humberto Moro, Deputy Director of Program, Dia Art Foundation (former Deputy Director and Senior Curator, Museo Tamayo).

Sponsors

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