For the past three decades, Doris Salcedo (b. 1958) has created sculptures, installations, and public interventions that address the experience of loss due to political violence and the importance of remembering and mourning. As a fundamental part of her process, the artist collects testimonies from those who have suffered at the hands of others. Her minimal, sculptural forms—meticulously crafted in her Bogotá, Colombia, studio—are informed by these personal accounts. Using common materials such as wooden furniture, concrete, rebar, clothing, grass, and rose petals in uncommon ways, Salcedo conveys how trauma makes daily life strangely unfamiliar. Her artwork attempts the difficult task of recovering individual dignity for the many victims, giving presence to the absent body, los desaparecidos (the disappeared), the marginalized, and those who remain invisible in the eyes of greater society.

On this occasion, her first-ever retrospective exhibition, the MCA brings together the largest presentation of Salcedo’s work to date. The exhibition follows a loosely chronological trajectory from the earliest Untitled works to the debut of the newest series, Disremembered, as well as the US debut of the major installation Plegaria Muda. The exhibition also includes an MCA-produced documentary featuring the artist’s major public artworks, many of which were site-specific and temporary. Salcedo’s artworks, in their myriad forms, do not offer answers to the many issues they raise but instead invite contemplation about our shared humanity.

The exhibition is organized by Curator Julie Rodrigues Widholm and Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn, with the support of Curatorial Assistant Steven L. Bridges.