

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TANIA PEREZ CORDOVA: SMOKE, NEARBY

April 15 - August 20, 2017



The **Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago** presents the first US solo exhibition of Mexico City-based artist Tania Pérez Córdoba. Exploring the idea of forms becoming memories, objects growing into experiences, and sculptures turning into events, Pérez Córdoba's work confronts audiences with partial narratives: what the artist has chosen to show within the formal frame of her work is intended to make you think of what is outside of it. By embedding a stranger's SIM card in a porcelain block or an active debit card in a wood-fired clay platter, Pérez Córdoba's sculptures contain traces that connect them to an active life elsewhere. As the exhibition title suggests, if there is smoke nearby, then something is burning—even if you cannot see the fire. On view from April 15 – August 20, 2017, **Tania Pérez Córdoba: Smoke, nearby** is organized by MCA Associate Curator José Esparza Chong Cuy.

Pérez Córdoba views her practice as one that expands and evolves outside the walls of the gallery. Many of the sculptures presented in the gallery also exist outside of it as part of a larger network of actions, environments, and associations. *We Focus on a Woman Facing Sideways*, for example, presents someone's earring suspended in cast bronze in the gallery. The woman left without the other earring is therefore also a part of the work.

Through the subtle display of clues and traces of life, Pérez Córdoba's work connects viewers to the everyday lives of others. Each object is meant to trigger an emotional connection between us and the real-life lender of the SIM card, debit card, or earring. Her sculptures also include strangers' contact lenses, shirt and dress patterns, and necklaces.

Pérez Córdoba engages viewers by calling upon them to fill in the blanks, putting together what is and is not shown. In *Call Forwarding*, the presence of an active SIM card in a permanent encasing signals to all the missed calls this stranger has received since the artist removed the card from his or her phone. In this work, Pérez Córdoba re-routes a set of social relations by asking the viewers to become storytellers. Her sculptures are simultaneously personal and public, familiar and generic, intimate and expansive.

Tania Pérez Córdoba's recent solo exhibitions include *Handhold* at Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna, Austria (2016), and *Entre el veintiséis de marzo y el nueve de mayo* at Proyectos Monclova, Mexico City, Mexico (2015). Her work has been featured in group exhibitions at the Tamayo Museum, Mexico City, Mexico (2017); the 11th Gwangju Biennial, Gwangju, South Korea (2016); the 2015 Triennial: *Surround Audience* at the New Museum in New York (2015); the 9th Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2013); and at the Kunsthalle Basel, Basel, Switzerland (2011). Pérez Córdoba runs *Juan de la Cosa/John of the thing*, a publishing project based in London and Mexico City, with writer and artist Francesco Pedraglio. She earned her BA in Fine Art, Studio Practice and Contemporary Critical Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, and lives and works in Mexico City.

Tania Pérez Córdoba: Smoke, nearby is the latest in the MCA's acclaimed **Ascendant Artist Series**, which features exhibitions that present the most relevant new artists working today.

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Image: Tania Pérez Córdova, *They Say It's Like a Rock*, 2015. Courtesy of Tania Pérez Córdova.

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