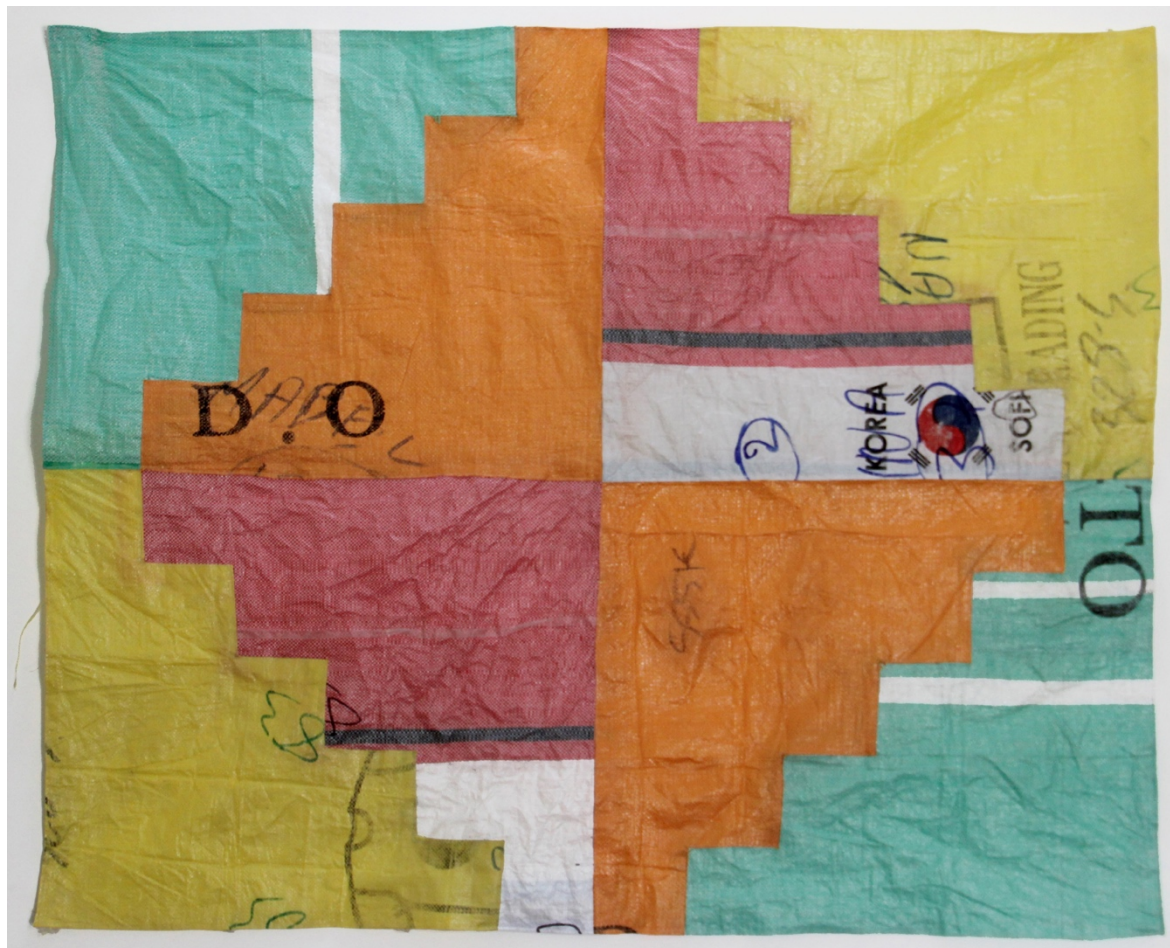


HERLITZKA + FARIA

# Candelaria Traverso: Chakana

August 8 - September 18, 2019



*Serie*, 2019. Patchwork on synthetic burlap. 120 x 144 cm

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**A Point of Chaotic Energy in the Global Flux. Candelaria Traverso**

The deafening noise of shouted-out offerings and bargaining: a din invading everything. Amid the narrow aisles that barely leave a passageway for the fair's crammed stands, the walk through is anything but a path allowing for introspective reflection. On the contrary, everything calls heightened attention to itself: outlandish decorations amid the cluttered merchandise and a hallucinatory repertoire of products that hawk themselves like overlapping pop-ups in some illegal but ubiquitous 'deep web.' A mix of cultural atavisms and the unstoppable tendency toward an anomalous future so close to science fiction that it defines the transnational perimeters of an irrepressible mixed-race, or *chola*, aesthetic. The combining of popular culture with an *arrivisme*, by now hardly a novelty, of emerging bourgeoisies that reorganize the map of economic power in the Andes region. In this tangled space, close to fever pitch, Candelaria Traverso has found the emotional and intellectual core of her work. She found it in the proliferating overlap of social technologies of highly dissimilar yet intermeshing times. And in a well calculated position of observation, an intermediary place somewhere between the distance of the ethnographer's gaze and the interested closeness of autobiography.



*Espejo*, 2019. Patchwork on synthetic burlap. 280 x 350 cm (detail)



This investigatory process began through personal involvement. Being the grand-daughter of a seamstress, she has had a familiarity with the world of textiles that has helped her approach to this territory and the bonds with carnes and fair-goers that support it. In this universe Traverso began to notice the condensation of successive civilizing apparatuses, ranging from the exchange that bound together the various ecological strata of the Andean area before its colonization, to the logic of commercial fairs which Spanish dominion left imprinted on Latin America, and on its present-day reality, furrowed with worldwide fluxes that unite points as different as Catamarca, La Paz, Istanbul, Miami, Seoul, Delhi, or Singapore. In the context of that informal and planetary trade, Traverso has been focusing, like someone probing into a symptom, on the circulation of used clothing. This practice, forbidden by some governments, for instance that of Bolivia, gives us an unusually clear view of the global inequality that sustains current modes of production. The bundles of clothing wrapped up in bags of plasticized burlap show, with their brands printed by the traveling salesmen, routes in which the same areas of the planet punished by the terms of exchange now receive used the clothing they produced for the central zone of the planetary scheme.



*Prendas*, 2016-2019. Pencil on paperl. 21 x 15 cm each

In the reflection on these trends, emblems have presented themselves in her work, emblems that have the ability to invoke the extension of these drifts that are at once planetary and regional. Thus the Chakana [Inca cross -- trans.] has appeared repeatedly in the vocabulary of her work as a sedimentation, a synthesis. The Andean cross, as is well known, distills multiple meanings both in the ways of compartmentalizing time and the reproductive life processes and various strategies for bringing intelligibility to a system of ascents and descents in Andean cosmogony. Yet this symbol also represents a set of

reciprocities that have enabled the development of communities that were complemented through exchanges among the coastal, mountain, and valley regions of this striated area of the Andes. In the sequence Traverso has laid out, this dimension of traffic and mutual contact seems to be underscored, to stand out against the plurality of meanings contained in this insignia.

There is a final aspect to her recent operations that I want to single out. The act of compressing, as you do when you travel, a heap of used clothing, garments that have passed over broad regions of the planet, has made a place for a series of blocks. These forms were later covered over with adobe, assuming the form and texture of bricks. Yet there, where we might find a folkloric reference to the earth and the processes of its habitability, lies hidden the underlayer that results from the deterritorialized traffic that becomes the filler for these modules. If we could ask these bricks, they would surely be able to tell us about their nomadic inside, their capacity to be a point of energy, a chakra, of some planetary body without essence or precise location.

Federico Baeza

Federico Baeza holds a Ph.D. in Art Theory and History (UBA). He is a researcher, professor, and curator, specializing in contemporary art.





*Mantamundi*, 2016. Patchwork of clothing, labels, embroidery. 210 x 360 cm (detail)



**Candelaria Traverso** was born in 1991 in Córdoba, Argentina, spent her childhood in the province of Jujuy, and returned to her native city to continue her studies at the UNC (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba), where she graduated in Visual Arts. She currently lives in Catamarca. In 2017 she moved to Buenos Aires, where she worked in the program Agentes de CIA [CIA Agents] and the Beca ABC (ABD Fellowship). She also took part in the program Artistas x [por] Artistas [Artists for Artists]. She has had various shows in Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and the northwest of Argentina, among them, “Lxs Chacras” (Castillo Arte Contemporáneo, Catamarca, 2018); “Made In” (Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, 2018); and “Entrelazos” [Interweavings] (Laboratorio, Buenos Aires, 2017). She has taken part in art residencies, such as Residencia Sala Taller [Residence Gallery Studio] at the EAC (Espacio de Arte Contemporáneo) in Montevideo, Uruguay (2018); Muela, a residency for artists of the NOA, the Argentine northwest region (2016); La Paternal Espacio Proyecto (LPEP) in Buenos Aires (2016); Residencia Yungas, coordinated by Raúl Flores in Tucumán, Argentina (2015); and others. Her recent works were chosen for and displayed in the prize competitions of the Williams Textile Art Foundation [Fundación Williams de Arte Textil], at the Museo Benito Quinquela Martín (2016) [in La Boca, Buenos Aires]; at Proyecto A (2017); at the Bienal de Arte Joven [Young Artists' Biennial] de Buenos Aires (2017), and in the sculpture prize competition of Salón Olmos, Córdoba, Argentina, when she won second prize for her piece “Chakana.” She took part in the Mercado de Arte fair, Córdoba (2017 and 2018). Her work "Periferia" (2018) has entered the collection of the Museo Reina Sofía [Madrid].