

Carmen Argote

As Above, So Below

Los Angeles–based artist Carmen Argote (b. 1981, Guadalajara, Mexico) traces, layers, and transforms diverse materials sourced from her surroundings. At the heart of her interdisciplinary practice is a continuous conversation between her body and the location in which she is working—often responding to the various cultural, economic, personal, and historical narratives within a particular site. Informed by this dialogue, many of her works bare vestiges of her interactions with her environment. Working with materials seeped in symbolic significance—such as coffee, pine needles, avocado, and cochineal dye—Argote’s work sheds light on the constantly shifting surface of urban landscapes and her own experience as a Mexican immigrant in the United States.

For her first solo museum exhibition, Argote presents a selection of new and recent works, the majority of which were created during two residencies in Guadalajara, including one in the former home and studio of renowned Mexican muralist José Clemente Orozco. As is typical with her practice, Argote responded to the surrounding architecture and agriculture, incorporating the varieties of fruit and plants in Orozco’s central courtyard and gardens, as well as other locally sourced produce as raw materials. The exhibition’s title, “As Above, So Below,” comes from an aphorism associated with sacred geometry and tarot that construes the terrestrial world as a reflection of the celestial one. The title speaks to the transformative quality of Argote’s work, in which native plants, natural pigments, architecture, and the artist’s body interact with one another alchemically, giving rise to something else entirely.

This exhibition is curated by Margot Norton, Curator.

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