

Mariana Castillo Deball, *Petlacoatl II*, 2018.

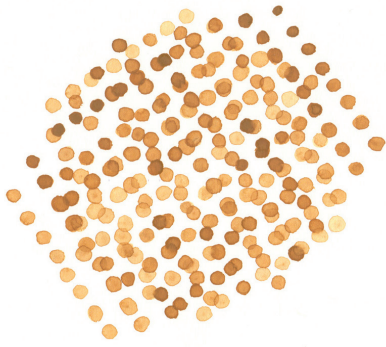
**Logan Center Exhibitions presents  
Mariana Castillo Deball: Petlacoatl**

**CHICAGO (October 25, 2018)** - Logan Center Exhibitions is pleased to announce *Mariana Castillo Deball: Petlacoatl*, on view at the Logan Center Gallery from November 16, 2018 to January 13, 2019. Mariana Castillo Deball, the Fall 2018 Tinker Visiting Professor in the Department of Visual Arts (DoVA) at the University of Chicago, explores representations of cultures through material artifacts, and her research-based practice draws on a range of fields that includes anthropology, archeology, and ethnography. In considering how cultural objects are staged, mediated, and valorized in the present, Deball creates a thoughtful dialogue between our contemporary moment and ancient history.

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For her first solo exhibition in Chicago, Deball will present a new series of watercolor drawings, as well as extruded metal sculptures, modular concrete tiles, and plaster sculptures that respond to the *tonalpohualli*, a 260-day calendar system used in pre-colonial



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Mesoamerica. The *tonalpohualli* marked time through twenty distinct periods that each last thirteen days and was a tool for divination as well as a visual representation of spatial coordinates and ritual practices. At the Logan Center Gallery, Deball draws specifically from the visual organization of the Codex Fejérváry-Mayer, a pre-colonial manuscript in which the 260 days of the *tonalpohualli* are represented by circular spacers along a ribbon that flows around the border of a central panel. The ribbon forms a cross shape across the page and each arm stands in for one of the cardinal directions, which are also indicated through distinct colors: red for the east, yellow for the north, blue for the west, and green for the south. In addition to responding to the iconography, visual schema, and color of the calendar in her drawings and floor sculptures, Deball uses perforated aluminum strips to make literal the visualization of spatial measurements and extends the structure of the *tonalpohualli* into the space of the gallery.

“By introducing archeological and anthropological artifacts into the realm of visual art, Deball produces stunning installations that ask us to reconsider how these objects and iconographies speak to our contemporary moment,” said Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator.

The title of the exhibition is taken from the Nahuatl word meaning “mat woven of snakes pointing in all directions.” The symbol of the *petlacoatl* was often included in ancient Mesoamerican divinatory calendars, and it functioned as an omen that presaged either the impending demise or rise of a ruler. For the artist, tools for measuring time and telling fortunes, such as the *tonalpohualli* and *petlacoatl*, are emblematic of the material and immaterial connections in indigenous knowledge systems between bodies, both human and nonhuman, and the world. Deball’s installation at the Logan Center Gallery extrapolates from these systems to explore sculptural practice expanded through space and time.

“Both the *tonalpohualli* and the *petlacoatl* represent three-dimensional space in two-dimensional forms. Deball references this connection by creating dynamic sculptures and drawings that engage the space of the viewer within the gallery setting,” said Umolu.

*Mariana Castillo Deball: Petlacoatl* is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and curated by Yesomi Umolu, Exhibitions Curator with Katja Rivera, Assistant Curator and Alyssa Brubaker, Exhibitions Coordinator. The exhibition is made possible by support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Reva and David Logan Foundation, and friends of the Logan Center.

## **Related Programming**

### **Opening Reception and Artist's Tour**

**Friday, November 16, 6pm (Logan Center Gallery)**

Deball will give an artist's tour of the exhibition at 6:30pm.

### **In Conversation: Mariana Castillo Deball, Daniel Ricardo Quiles and Yesomi Umolu**

**Monday, November 26, 6pm (Logan Center Terrace Seminar Room)**

Join us for a conversation between Mariana Castillo Deball, Daniel Ricardo Quiles, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory & Criticism at the School of the Art Institute, and Yesomi Umolu, Exhibitions Curator, as they discuss the artist's project at the Logan Center.

*Co-presented by Logan Center Exhibitions, the Open Practice Committee in the Department of Visual Arts and the Center for Latin American Studies, University of Chicago.*

### **Gallery Talk: Claudia Brittenham**

**Thursday, Jan 10, 6pm (Logan Center Gallery)**

Claudia Brittenham, Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Chicago, leads a gallery talk that focuses on the use of ancient Mesoamerican codices in the exhibition.

### **About the Artist**

Mariana Castillo Deball works in installation, sculpture, photography, and drawing, exploring the ideologically constructed conditions under which artefacts appear in today's culture. She takes on a kaleidoscopic approach to her work, culling information from various disciplines such as archaeology and science, and, through research and collaboration, creating works that arise from the collision and recombination of these divergent languages. Solo exhibitions of her work have been held at the SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia, USA (2018); Galerie Wedding, Berlin, Germany (2017); San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, USA (2016); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Oaxaca, Mexico (2015); Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Germany (2014); CCA, Glasgow, UK (2013); Chisenhale Gallery, London, UK (2013); Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City, Mexico (2011); and Museum of Latin American Art, Long Beach, USA (2010). Group exhibitions include the 8th Berlin Biennale, Berlin, Germany (2014); Documenta 13, Kassel, Germany (2013); and the 54th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2011).

### **About Yesomi Umolu, Logan Center Exhibitions Curator**

Yesomi Umolu is Artistic Director of the 2019 Chicago Architecture Biennial and Exhibitions Curator at the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago. She directs a program of international contemporary art in the Logan Center Gallery and contributes to a number of strategic committees that drive the development of contemporary art, architecture and urbanism on campus. In addition to her curatorial role, Umolu also holds the position of Lecturer in the Humanities Division. She is a 2016 recipient of an Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Curatorial Fellowship.

Specializing in global contemporary art and spatial practices, Umolu recently curated *Candice Lin: A Hard White Body, a Porous Slip* (2018), *Cinthia Marcelle and Tiago Mata Machado: Divine Violence* (2017), *Kapwani Kiwanga: The sum and its parts* (2017) and *So-called Utopias* (2015) at the Logan Center Gallery. Prior to joining the Logan, Umolu held curatorial positions at the Edythe Broad Art Museum at MSU; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis and the European biennial of contemporary art Manifesta 8. Her other notable exhibitions include: *Material Effects* (MSU Broad, 2015), *John Akomfrah: Imaginary Possessions* (MSU Broad, 2014), *The Land Grant: Forest Law* (MSU Broad, 2014), and *The Museum of Non Participation: The New Deal* (Walker Art Center, 2013).

Umolu has been a visiting lecturer, critic and speaker at a number of international universities including Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills; Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London and University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, among others. She currently serves on the curatorial advisory board for the United States Pavilion at the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale, commissioned by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Chicago.

### **About Logan Center Exhibitions**

Logan Center Exhibitions presents international contemporary art programming at the Logan Center Gallery and throughout the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago. Reflecting the spirit of inquiry at the university, Logan Center Exhibitions focuses on open, collaborative and process-based approaches to cultural production. Working closely with artists, students, scholars and community members, Logan Center Exhibitions presents innovative exhibitions by emerging and established artists; supports ambitious new commissions and research projects; disseminates knowledge through publications; and facilitates connections through talks and other public programs.



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### **General Information**

Logan Center Exhibitions is located at:  
The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts  
University of Chicago  
915 E 60th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
t: (773) 834-8377  
[arts.uchicago.edu/logan/gallery](http://arts.uchicago.edu/logan/gallery)  
[Facebook.com/LoganCenterExhibitions](https://www.facebook.com/LoganCenterExhibitions)  
Instagram @LoganCenterExhibitions

### **Gallery Hours**

Tue-Sat, 9am-9pm  
Sun, 11am-9pm  
Mon, closed