



# BELÉN ARELLANO

MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTIST AND FACILITATOR



# ARTIST STATEMENT

I am committed to use art and arts education as tools to foster equitable and loving societies.

My practice centres on themes of intersectional feminism, ancestral knowledge and decoloniality.

Through tapestry weaving, participatory art, ethnography and arts-based research, I aim to encourage critical reflection and foster meaningful dialogue in my audience.

Weaving is my primary artistic medium, but I also work with painting, digital art and music.

I firmly believe in the power of the arts and education as tools of change to create equal and diverse societies.





# VISUAL ARTS WORK



SUEÑO TEJO

2025



EMPOWERMENT THAT COMES FROM WITHIN

2025



VIVAS NOS QUEREMOS

2025



**VISUAL ARTS WORK**



**ANA CACHIMUEL MUJER MAIZ**

2024



**CHAKIÑAN SEMILLA**

2022



**GRECIA ALBÁN**

2024



# VISUAL ARTS WORK



**HATUN CHUMBI**

**2018**





## SUEÑO TEJO TAPESTRY WEAVING 2025

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In the spring of 2023—my first in the United Kingdom—the long-held dream of making music and joining a musical group began to surface, like seedlings breaking through the soil at that time of year. I realised that a dream can take shape when it is nurtured with care and attention.

I began learning music with Viento Suelto, a gaita ensemble in London, and with Las Witchas Collective, a women's collective from Abya Yala. Within these two communities that welcomed me with love, I experienced how an individual dream can grow in sisterhood, nourished by the shared dreams of others.

This tapestry emerged from that experience. Its title—Sueño Tejo explores the idea of what you think, dream, feel, and long for grows like roots in your mind, but also takes shape in the garden of your dreams—is a reminder of the power of dreaming and of tending to what your soul desires, what your spirit calls for.





## EMPOWERMENT THAT COMES FROM WITHIN VAPESTRY WEAVING 2025

This tapestry reflects my personal journey of self-recognition and the process of embracing womanhood. It acts as a gentle reminder of self-love and the profound connection between my body and my sense of home. The serpents embody the cyclical nature of bodily rhythms – the passage of time, transformation, and renewal. Drawing on goddess and priestess-like iconography inspired by prehistoric Valdivia figurines and the Snake Goddess from the Palace of Knossos in Crete, the central figure represents women reclaiming power over their own bodily experiences — an empowerment that rises from within.



**VIVAS NOS QUEREMOS  
PATCHWORK  
2025**



Vivas Nos Queremos is an artwork made in a workshop lead by Juana Ruiz Hernández, that expresses the anger and resistance of women in Latin America, or Abya Yala, in response to the violence they face in their daily lives. It is a work grounded in intersectional feminism, aiming to raise awareness about the specific forms of violence experienced by Indigenous women—violence they are determined to end.





Ana  
Cachimuel  
Mujer maiz



## ANA CACHIMUEL, MUJER MAIZ DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION AND SOUND 2023

Ana Cachimuel has been the initiator of the SinchiWarmikuna collective, that's why I interpreted Ana as the corn woman, not only because corn is a very important being in her culture, but also because corn is made up of many grains and Ana , like the cob, unites people in the community, especially women, to work for a common purpose. It is from her idea of uniting women that Sinchi Warmikuna was created. "Ana Cachimuel is a woman who inspires the women in her community" (Grecia Albán, Colectivo SinchiWarmikuna, 2023), or when Bautista said: "Anita has been like a beautiful inspiration to lose that fear, so she tells me yes It is possible, she is brave, she inspires me a lot to continue with music and grow on this path" (Carolina Bautista, Sinchi Warmikuna, 2023). Based on these ideas of women "growing", I wanted to develop the idea of women as plants and decided to represent Ana with the following illustration.



Scan me to listen the testimony of Ana Cachimuel.

NOTE: you might need to download Sound Cloud app.





## GRECIA ALBÁN DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION AND SOUND 2023



This illustration was created for the Encuentro Intercultural de Mujeres Artistas, organised in collaboration between the Ecuadorian collective Sinchi Warmikuna and Las Witchas Collective (London). The work is inspired by the reflections of Ecuadorian artist, singer, composer, and cultural organiser Grecia Albán (Cotopaxi, Ecuador), whose practice explores cultural identity, the value of *mestizaje*, the preservation of the Kichwa language, and the use of art to question dominant cultural narratives across Latin America. Grecia, who is also my singing teacher, shared her identification with a rare jungle orchid—an image that became the central visual motif for this piece. The illustration celebrates the sonic and sisterhood ecosystems created by women artists and honours the cultural exchanges that took place during the gathering.





## CHAKIÑAN - SEMILLA ACRYLIC ON CANVAS 2022

•Chaquiñan-semilla (seed path) is the name of a textile's pattern in many of Matilde Lemas garments. This was hand down by Marcos Lema, Matilde Lema's grandfather, when she was only 12 years old. Chaquiñan-semilla symbolizes the main food source in the life of Matilde and probably in the life of many people within the Indigenous Kichwa Otavalo community in Peguche/ Ecuador. This represents the seed of maize, a food that has fed people in the community for centuries and with which Matilde prepares delicious and varied recipes in her daily life. Corn not only accompanies during the most important celebrations of the year, but also marks an order in the agricultural calendar of the entire community. On the other hand, this design also represents the small paths that the people of the community travel on foot, and that thanks to them the people stay connected and united. This is an identity design for Matilde and the whole community, which not only represents the life nourishment but also the permanence of identity and memory on a personal and collective level.



# HATUN CHUMBI TAPESTRY 2017



•In 2017, I spent a year living in Otavalo, a nation which is well known for their textile and commercial productivity for centuries, having contact with artisans and trading entrepreneurs to learn the traditional textile techniques, not only as a theory, but also experiencing it through my own body. I adopted the chumbi- traditional belt used nowadays mostly by Otavalo women- to narrate the history of weaving as an intersectional object in the social, economic and cultural construction of this nation. The chumbi which I create change its usual function and I replace it as a large-scale sculptural object.

The Hatun Chumbi combines the traditional ornamental iconography from Otavalo and figurative images of the historic process of weaving in this community. I tried to inquire the collective memory and the meanings of identity through the artistic and traditional practice of weaving, which is also told through the oral tradition.



Scan me to listen the stories that inspired this tapestry.





Hatun Chumbi, 2017



**SOCIALLY ENGAGED WORK**



**BANNERS OF RESISTANCE  
WORKSHOP**

**2025**



**COMMUNITY MURAL AT  
RENEWAL PROGRAMME**

**2025**



**AHGANI BANAT AND  
BULLERENGUE WORKSHOP**

**2025**



**SOCIALLY ENGAGED WORK**



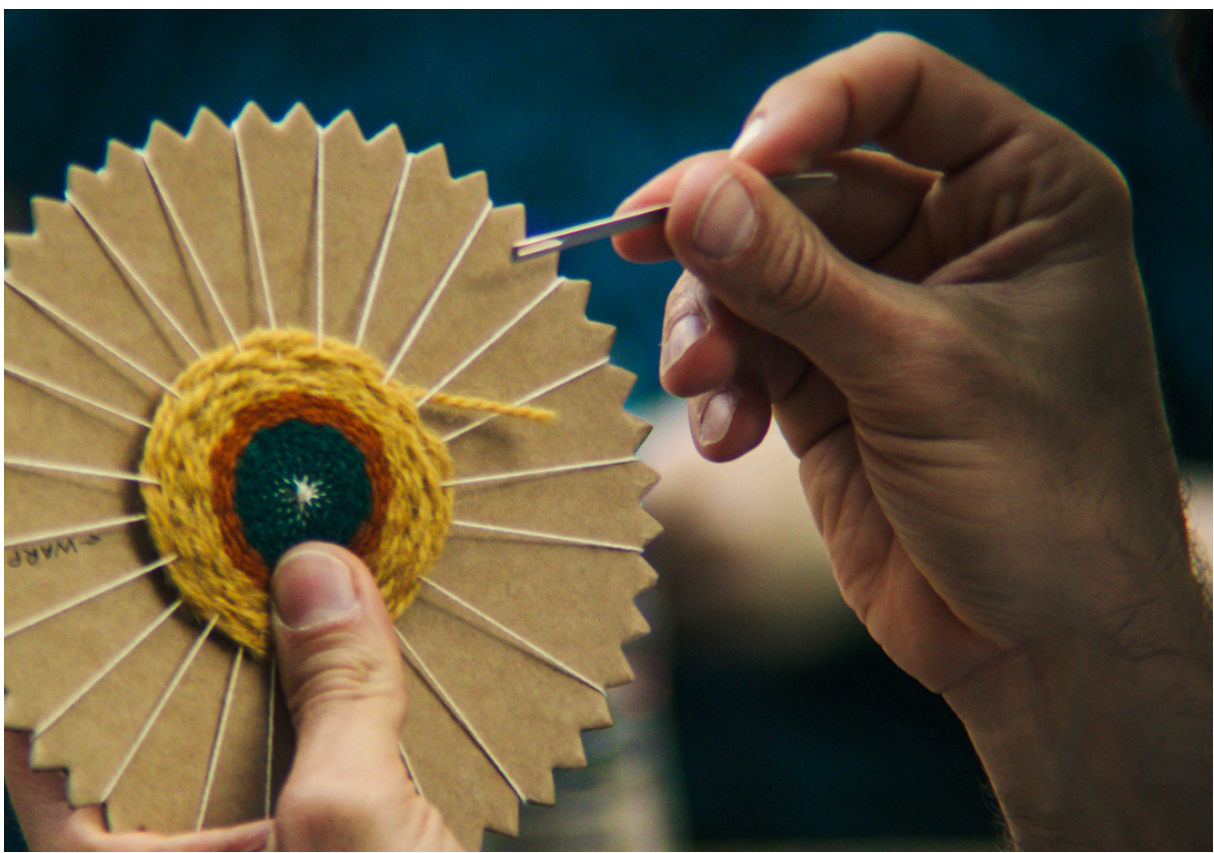
**HILOS DE RESISTENCIA**

**2025**



**ONIONS AND...**

**2025**



**CIRCULAR TAPESTRY  
WEAVING WORKSHOP**

**2024**



# VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORK



## SENSATIONART WITH LAS WITCHAS COLLECTIVE

2023



## CANCIÓN DE LA ABUELA WITH LAS WITCHAS COLLECTIVE

2023



## DECOLONIZING THE BODY PROGRAMME

2024



# **VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORK**



## **COLLECTIVE MURAL**

**2022**



## **MASK MAKING WORKSHOP**

**2021**

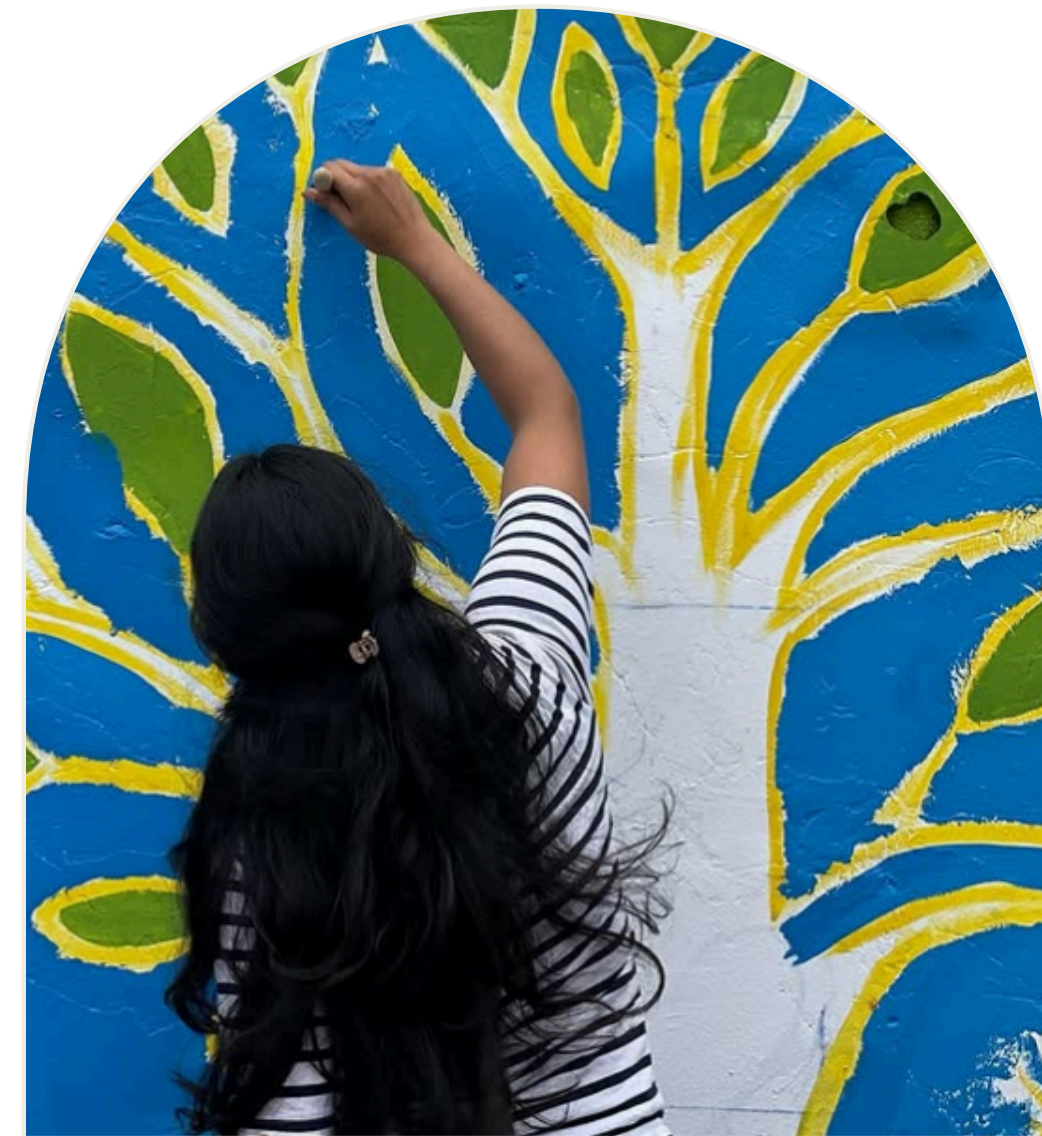




## BANNERS OF RESISTANCE WORKSHOP 2025

In Banners of Resistance, participants came together to share stories of struggle, resilience, and empowerment. Through collective dialogue, these narratives were transformed into powerful messages and collaboratively woven into textile banners. Facilitated by Belén Arellano in collaboration with Noria Collective, the workshop created a space for collective creation, solidarity, and the reclamation of voice through banners making and symbolism.





## COMMUNITY MURAL AR RENEWAL PROJECT 2015

The Community Mural was a collaborative art project inviting participants from the Renewal Project to co-create a vibrant mural for their shared space. Led by artist Belén Arellano, the workshop offered a joyful and creative moment of togetherness—painting, connecting, and celebrating community spirit. The mural, located in Manor Park Oasis, embodies the project's essence: getting involved, growing, building, and bringing colour and people together.





## AGHANI BANAT AND BULLERENGUE WORKSHOP 2025

Bullerengue and Ahgnani Banat was an intercultural workshop exploring rhythm, voice, and collective expression through traditional music. Developed in collaboration with Noria Collective and artist Tabidee (@tabideee), the sessions connected Bullerengue—an Afro-Colombian musical tradition—with Ahgani Banat (Sudanese folk music performed by women). The workshop created a shared space for dialogue around identity, resistance, and solidarity, celebrating women's voices and the power of community through sound.





## HILOS DE RESISTENCIA-THREADS OF RESISTANCE IN COLLABORATION WITH ANABELLA VALENCIA 2025

A cultural gathering that combines political discussion and art in an Afro-Ecuadorian cultural space, La Casa Fundación Ochún, in the city of Quito. This served as a powerful tool to raise awareness, mobilize, and educate on the eradication of racism and systemic violence, especially in the context of the tragic murder of four children in Guayaquil—Steven, Ismael, Nehemías, and Josué—in December 2024. Participants did a textile banner of solidarity for the families of the children to be use in protest for justice.

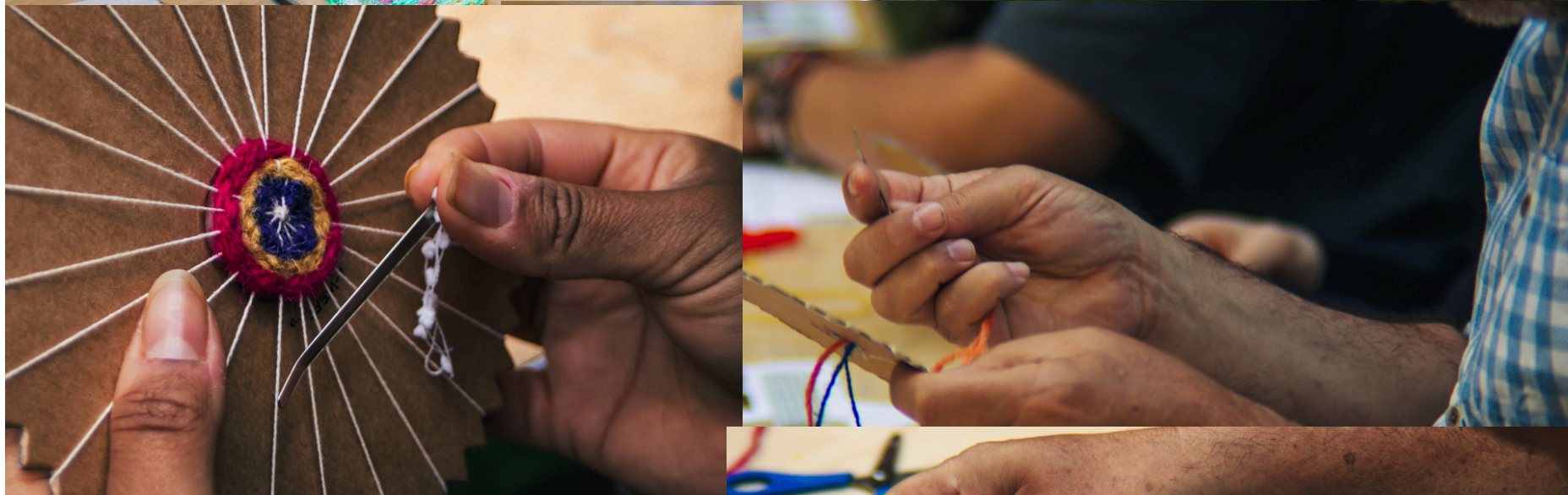




## ONIONS AND... IN COLLABORATION WITH ELIZABETH SALAZAR 2025

Onions and... is a hands-on, eco-conscious workshop that transforms humble kitchen waste—like onion skins—into contemplative textile art. Rooted in ancestral dyeing practices and circular craft, participants explored natural dyeing, forage for materials, and co-create a communal tapestry using slow, meditative weaving techniques. The workshop fostered connection, creativity, and a renewed relationship with waste as a source of beauty and transformation.





## CIRCULAR TAPESTRY WEAVING 2024

This community workshop at the Barbican Centre was an opportunity to learn tapestry weaving using a circular frame and to reflect on the symbolism of the circle and its relationship to community. We covered basic tapestry weaving techniques, exploring textures and colours. Participants started a circular tapestry and took their pieces home to continue working on them.





## SENSATIONART WITH LAS WITCHAS COLLECTIVE 2023

Sensationart, rediscovering your senses for collective art creation was an art and community-based workshop that aimed to explore the senses of the participants for the creation of a collective and multidisciplinary artwork. The workshop induced the exploration of all our senses, vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch. I lead the drawing with your senses part of the workshop.





## CANCIÓN DE LA ABUELA WITH LAS WITCHAS COLLECTIVE 2023

"Canción de la Abuela" was a collective creative journey in which participants remembered and honoured our grandmothers—as well as our broader lineages: the mountains, apus, and sacred beings that have given us life. It was a caring and meaningful space where participants had time to remember, visualise, and share memories, along with the wisdom passed down by our grandmothers—wisdom that continues to nourish our identities rooted in Abya Yala.

Inspired by this process of remembrance, participants created textile patchworks and collectively upholstered a chair, weaving memory into matter.





## DECOLONIZING THE BODY PROGRAMME 2024

This programme aimed to offer participants a theoretical, practical, and arts-based introduction to the decolonization of the body and its cycles, fostering an understanding and exploration of the topic. Its goal was to challenge and transform colonising mental structures that limit how the body and its cycles are experienced.

It supported the artistic creation of works reflecting participants' engagement with the theme decolonizing the body and its cycles. The programme also encouraged collaborative art-making through peer and group feedback, sustaining a collective artistic process that culminated in a group exhibition.

I co-organized the programme as curator, planning and delivering workshops.









## COLLECTIVE MURAL 2022

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As part of the Christmas programme at the British School Quito, I have organized a collaborative mural inspired in Ecuadorian indigenous culture, ecosystems and the main regions of the country. I have designed the sketch, drew it over the wall and students from KS3, 4 and Sixth Form painted and finished the mural.

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## MASK MAKING WORKSHOP 2021

The masks workshop at the Intercultural Community Center Yawar Wauki Yarina was inspired by the legend *La tórtola y el maíz*, which tells how the Andean gods and goddesses returned the maize seed to humans. Participants discussed the different religious perspectives present in their community and then selected an Andean goddess or god from the story to inspire the creation of their own masks. They later performed the story, embodying the characters they had chosen.



## EXHIBITIONS

2025

- Woven Worlds – Taking Tapestry into the Future, Barbican Centre Library, London, United Kingdom.
- An Island of Solidarity, Not an Island of Strangers, in collaboration with Noria Collective, Rich Mix, London, United Kingdom.
- Community Art Exhibition, Home, London, United Kingdom.

2024

- Decolonizing the Body, Bermondsey Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

2023

- Solo Exhibition, New Tribes Arts Development, London, United Kingdom.

2018

- Awashka – Historias que se tejen, solo exhibition, Fábrica Imbabura, Atuntaqui, Ecuador.
- Destejer la Historia: los hilos de la memoria, group exhibition, Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Quito, Ecuador.

## EDUCATION

2025

- Safeguarding Training with NSPCC Learning, London.
- Training on Popular Education, Consulate of Colombia in London.
- Workshop on Decolonial Feminism, Afrocolectiva.

2023

- Graduated with honours, MA Education in Arts and Cultural Centers, King's College London, United Kingdom.

2018

- BA in Contemporary Arts with a Minor in Education, Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador.



## ARTS EDUCATION PROJECTS

2025

- Lead the community mural at Renewal project.
- Co lead banners of resistances workshop in collaboration with Noria Collective.
- Co-organizer of the workshop and political discussion series *Hilos de resistencia*, at Casa Ochún, Quito – Ecuador.
- Co-facilitator of *The Voices We Carry: Bullerengue workshop*, London – United Kingdom.
- Co-facilitator of Onions and..., workshop series, London – United Kingdom.
- Artist Mentor at the *Artivism programme* – Skaped, London – United Kingdom.
- Facilitator of *Circular tapestry weaving workshop* with FEWP, Alternativa Festival, Casa de Artes Yarina and Home Community Exhibition, London and Quito.

2024

- Led the *Circular Tapestry Weaving workshop* at the Barbican Centre as part of the community programme, London – United Kingdom.
- Decolonizing the Body programme. Co organized with Skaped.

2022

- Summer Arts Camp facilitator at *Escuela de Arte Yarina*, Otavalo – Ecuador.

2019-2022

- Arts Teacher at British School Quito – Ecuador.

2018-2019

- Art Teacher at Colegio Alemán Quito – Ecuador.

2019-2025

- Independent tapestry weaving teacher.



## ART RESIDENCIES

2018

- Selected as artist in residence in the American Arts Incubator, Otavalo – Ecuador.
- Selected as artist-in-residence at American Arts Incubator, San Francisco – United States of America.



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