

CAROLINA CAYCEDO COSMOTARRAYAS

The interdisciplinary art of Los Angeles-based artist Carolina Caycedo (b. 1978, London) is grounded in vital questions related to asymmetrical power relations, dispossession, extraction of resources, and environmental justice. Since 2012, Caycedo's ongoing, multivalent project *Be Dammed* has examined the wide-reaching impacts of dams built along waterways, particularly those in Latin American countries such as Brazil or Colombia (where Caycedo was raised and frequently returns). *Be Dammed* takes several different forms—from the workshops and collective actions that she refers to as “geochoreographies,” to installations of sculpture, video, or handmade books—many of which incorporate indigenous forms of knowledge. These various projects grow out of what Caycedo refers to as “spiritual fieldwork” and her intimate relationships with individuals and groups in different riverine communities adversely affected by the privatization of waterways.

This exhibition comprises the culmination of one component of *Be Dammed*, a series of hanging sculptures titled *Cosmotarrayas* (2016–20) that are assembled with handmade cast fishing nets and other objects collected during the artist's field research. *Cosmotarraya* combines the words “cosmos” and “*atarraya*” (Spanish for net) to form a compound that conveys the centrality of the net in the life of those who fish. Each *Cosmotarraya* is linked to specific people, rivers, traditions, and cultures, from the Kayapo people of Pará in northern Brazil to the Yoruba river spirit Ósun. Likewise, each net is connected to an individual body, woven by hand with a needle made to the thickness of an individual fisherperson's fingers. *Flying Massachusetts* (2020), which Caycedo realized for this exhibition, is meant as a land acknowledgement to the indigenous groups who traditionally inhabited Greater Boston. The material qualities of the fishing net—they are porous, malleable, handmade, and embody ancestral knowledge—offer a potent counterpoint to the brute-force infrastructure of dams, which disrupt the natural flow of rivers, dispossess people of their homes, and threaten their way of life. Indeed, many of the fishing nets are entrusted to Caycedo by individuals no longer able to use them. For Caycedo, the *Cosmotarrayas* are talismanic objects that cast visual spells: they embody the continued resistance to corporations and governments seeking to control the flow of water, create visual narratives that counter the supposed neutrality of dams, and raise consciousness about land, history, and culture.

The exhibition is accompanied by a multimedia essay tracing the genealogy of the cast fishing net in Caycedo's work. Access the essay and additional content at icaboston.org/Cosmotarrayas, by scanning the QR code below, or in the Mediatheque.



Carolina Caycedo: Cosmotarrayas is organized by Jeffrey De Blois, Assistant Curator and Publications Manager.

Carolina Caycedo: Cosmotarrayas is presented by Max Mara.

MaxMara

All exhibition texts are accessible at www.icaboston.org/exhibitions/carolina-caycedo-cosmotarrayas, or by scanning the QR code below.



#CarolinaCaycedo