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Denver Art Museum welcomes spring/summer 2024 with *The Awake Volcanoes: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra* *The Chilean artist's first solo show in a U.S. museum features nearly 200 paintings, drawings and prints*



DENVER – December 6, 2023 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) will present *The Awake Volcanoes: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra*, the first solo show in a U.S. museum for the Chilean artist, known for her recent participation at the Venice Biennale and being the recipient of the prestigious Käthe Kollwitz Prize for 2023. Curated by Raphael Fonseca, the DAM's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art, *The Awake Volcanoes* will be on view from April 7 to July 21, 2024, in the Gallagher Family Gallery on level 1 of the museum's Hamilton Building.

The Awake Volcanoes highlights paintings, drawings and prints by Vásquez de la Horra, who resides in Berlin, Germany. In her work, she explores notions of fantasy, desire, fear and pleasure to explore the relationship between the human body and the world around it. Drawing is central to her practice, reminding viewers that it is a flexible and dynamic medium that is still essential to contemporary art making.

"Throughout the last decade, the Denver Art Museum has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to engaging with artists and creatives connected to Latin America, and the collection has been a pillar of the museum's program," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "With the keen eye and dedication of Raphael Fonseca and the generous gifts and support from John and Sandy Fox, Craig Ponzio and others, the museum is creating more opportunities to engage with and learn about the rich artistic contributions of contemporary Latin American artists, bringing their perspectives and stories to our community."



Vásquez de la Horra was born in 1967 in Viña Del Mar, Chile, growing up during Augusto Pinochet's 17-year military regime and leaving her home nation to study in Germany in the 1990s. Her drawings often include symbols from different cultures, and her female figures perform contrasting roles in narratives that deal with freedom, spirituality, and nature. Vásquez de la Horra's works frequently show female bodies melding with surrealistic landscapes, and her practice is known for its poetic and artistic experimentation that weaves the absurd with the affirmation of affection and pleasure.

"Silhouettes of human bodies, mountains, volcanoes and words appear throughout the work of Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, delving deep into shared and untold histories of trauma, desire, fantasies and taboos," Fonseca said. "She is Chilean-born and has lived in Germany for several decades, creating her own artistic language, immersed in Latin American history as well as traditional European artistic traditions. With a nearly 40-year career, she works daily and continues to surprise those who have followed her for decades and those who have recently encountered her practice."

At the DAM, visitors to *The Awake Volcanoes* will see drawing presented as a flexible and essential medium in contemporary artmaking, while gaining a wider understanding of Latin American artists and their creations. Visitors will be encouraged to explore feelings and moments of fantasy, desire and fear, as well as themes of mortality, rebirth, sexuality, myth and ritual, and to examine the violence and subjugation experienced by different people globally.

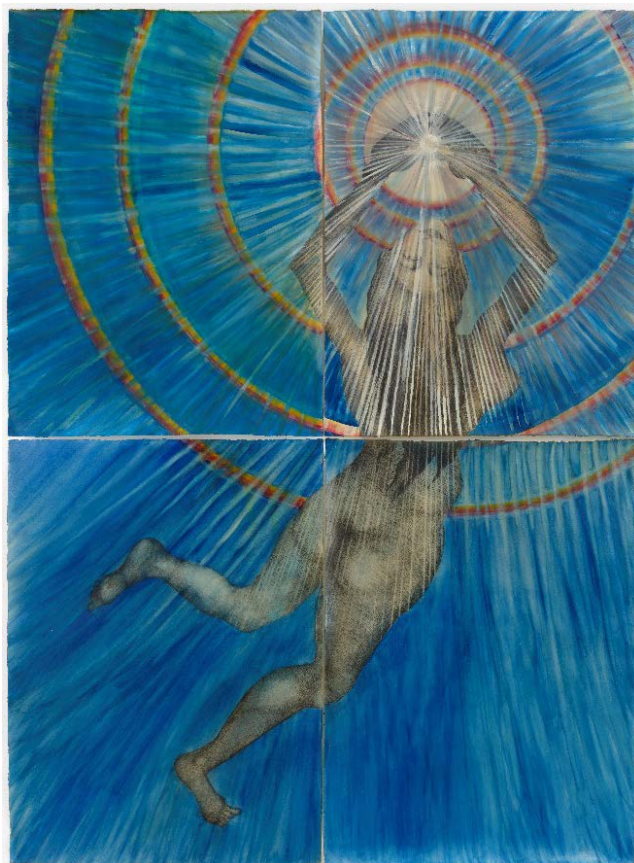
The exhibition is divided into four sections: *Late un fuego allí dentro: There's a fire inside*, which explores the relationship between body and landscape; *Botánica de la evolución: Botany of the evolution*, pays close attention to the cycles of life; *Los pensamientos: The thoughts*, asks in what ways does an image dialogue with writing; and *Aguas profundas: Deep waters*, offers a coexistence between humans, spirituality and our surroundings.

The Awake Volcanoes features 193 artworks spanning her four-decade career, including surrealistic drawings, paper sculptures and photographs. Her art explores mythologies, fantastical and hybrid botanicals, diverse geographies and text, with writing in Spanish, English, Italian, Latin and German, expanding the possibilities of meanings for each artwork.

"Her work invites all of us to expose the mysteries and intimacies of our shared experiences, as she keeps expanding the territory she explores artistically, combining history, memory, dreams and imagination," Fonseca said.

The catalog, co-published by Scala Arts Publishers, includes an introduction and four brief essays by Fonseca that convey Vasquez de la Horra's artistic background in Chile and Germany. Throughout, Fonseca explores the artist's forays into mythology, botanicals, geography, and text that create layered and complex meanings in her drawings. The Chilean artist Cecilia Vicuña also contributed a poem. The catalog is generously illustrated and includes a checklist of works in the exhibition.

The Awake Volcanoes: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra is organized by the Denver Art Museum. Support is provided by the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS Colorado.



Planning Your Visit

The most up-to-date information on planning a visit to the Denver Art Museum can be found online under the [Plan Your Visit](#) tab. Use this page to find details on ticket pricing, public transit options and access information. General admission for museum members is free every day. Youth aged 18 and under receive free general admission every day, thanks to the museum's Free for Kids program. Free for Kids also underwrites free admission for school and youth group visits.

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations.

For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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Image 1: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, *Erupciones (Eruptions)*, 2019. Graphite pencil, watercolor, gouache (opaque watercolor), and wax on paper. © and courtesy of the artist. Photo: Eric Tschernow.

Image 2: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, *El ideal de un Calavera (The Ideal of a Skull)*, 2012. Graphite pencil, watercolor, and wax on paper. © and courtesy of the artist. Photo: Cordia Schlegelmilch.

Image 3: Sandra Vásquez de la Horra, *Saludos a Olorum (Greetings to Olorum)*, 2021. Graphite pencil, watercolor, and wax on paper. © and courtesy of the artist. Photo: Eric Tschernow.