

Ayuujkjä'äy ëy Konk.

A fable based on a Mixe myth, at MACBA

- ▶ An artistic project by Mariana Botey and Brian Cross, Taka Fernández and Dr Lakra, brought together by curator Pablo Arredondo Vera, on the legend of King Kondoy, the foundational myth of the Mixe people.
- ▶ The Mixe people, also known as Ayuujkjä'äy, have never been conquered. They speak one of the last surviving languages of the Mixe-Zoquean family, Ayuujk, and are governed by the principles of communal land ownership and work.
- ▶ DJs Dr Lakra and Brian Cross, two of the exhibition authors, will play a selection of Latin-American and Caribbean music, with special emphasis on the new musical expressions of the Ayuujk people.
- ▶ The exhibition has been produced by Hacer Noche–Promised Land, in collaboration with MACBA, with the participation of University of California San Diego and the Casa de la Cultura Oaxaqueña.

Title: *Ayuujkjä'äy ëy Konk. A fable based on a Mixe myth.* **Opening talk:** Wednesday 9 November, at 6.30 pm, with Mariana Botey, Pablo Arredondo Vera and Elvira Dyangani Ose, Director of MACBA. The event will include a performance by DJs Dr Lakra and Brian Cross. **Exhibition dates:** 10 November 2022 – 26 February 2023. **Organisation and production:** Hacer Noche–Promised Land, in collaboration with MACBA, with the participation of University of California San Diego and the Casa de la Cultura Oaxaqueña.

PRESS DOSSIER, PHOTOS, VIDEO

<https://www.macba.cat/es/sobre-macba/prensa/rueda-prensa-mixe>

Never conquered, the Mixe are an indigenous people from Mexico living in the eastern highlands of the Sierra de Oaxaca and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. They are also known as Ayuujkä'äy, 'the people of the flowery language', a term derived from their native tongue, Ayuujk, one of the last surviving languages of the Mixe-Zoquean family. Linguistically, they are the closest relatives and natural heirs of the Olmecs, the Mesoamerican mother culture. The Mixe communities are governed by the principles of communal land ownership and work, while, artistically, they practise pottery, textiles and especially music. In 1997, the Centro de Capacitación Musical y Desarrollo de la Cultura Mixe (Centre for Musical Training and Development of Mixe Culture, CECAM) was created for the purpose of teaching, sharing and promoting their culture. A key autonomous, indigenous school in Mexico, the CECAM plays a seminal role in the regeneration of Mixe culture. Originally focused on music, it has subsequently been extended to other artistic disciplines, especially literature. The Mixe musical tradition, centred on brass or wind instruments, includes not only Mixe *jarabes* and *sones*, but also traditional Oaxacan and Mexican music, as well as music from the Western philharmonic canon. A remarkable feat and source of inspiration, the dialogue with the CECAM authorities has been crucial for the understanding of the Ayuujk principles of autonomy.

Ayuujkä'äy ëy Konk. A fable based on a Mixe myth is an installation **curated by Pablo Arredondo Vera, bringing together three artistic projects by Mariana Botey and Brian Cross, Taka Fernández and Dr Lakra.** Through documentary, bibliographic and iconographic research, as well as field work and interviews, the exhibition addresses the myth of the guardian deity of the Mixe people, Kondoy or the 'good god', and his immemorial pilgrimage through the Oaxacan landscape, to connect us with the experiences of resistance of a people who have never been conquered. Analysing and reflecting on all this material makes it possible to explore the basic structure of the myth and its social, territorial, political, spatial and topographical implications.

Installed as an immersive diorama, the exhibition at MACBA is composed of a medium-length film; a series of twenty pictorial panels portraying scenes from Mixe mythology; a monumental totem; and a large-scale intervention in the corridor leading to the gallery space. Produced by the Hacer Noche–Promised Land Festival, in collaboration with MACBA, with the participation of University of California San Diego and the Casa de Cultura Oaxaqueña, the project previously opened at the Hacer Noche Festival in Oaxaca. Ultimately, the exhibition sets out to address a new interpretation of history and the current condition of global art, by putting forward a new theoretical reformulation of transindigenisms as catalysts for modern and contemporary art in the Americas. The Mixe communal way of life and the work of CECAM are some current examples of such practices.

During the opening, Mariana Botey, artist, Art historian and critic, and Pablo Arredondo Vera, curator of the exhibition, will present the project in conversation with Elvira Dyangani Ose, Director of MACBA. DJs Dr Lakra and Brian Cross, two of the exhibition authors, will play a selection of Latin-American and Caribbean music, with special emphasis on the new musical expressions of the Ayuujk people, characterised, throughout colonial history, by their appropriation and reformulation of foreign musical rhythms and styles, from the more traditional polka and waltz, to rap, hip-hop, cumbia and vallenato, among others.