

## **Artist Statement (2020)**

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The variety of forms that the human-nature relationship may take in different times, places, and cultures is the central theme that animates my artistic practice. I have mobilized different mediums and techniques in this pursuit, including painting, interior design, landscaping, the repurposing of antiques, the design of hand blown glass objects, and more recently ceramics. Throughout this process, integrating live plants in my creations has been a powerful source of inspiration. I find that contemplating their fragility, their resilience in the face of constant abuse, and the generosity of their shapes, colours and textures unsettles some of the most problematic aspects of contemporary life –a line of interrogation that I seek to raise with my publics.

My current work consists in the creation of miniature worlds displayed in box frames and under glass domes in the French wedding-style. The centerpieces of these microcosms are white porcelain objects that build on the simple idea of the flowerpot, at the juncture between the functional and the artistic. Covering these round volumes with lightly glazed leaves, petals, and stems connects me to the time when I lived in Bogota, Colombia and created the Planta Baja brand, frequently featured in the media for my matching of plants with antique (trumpets, teapots, typewriters, etc.), and winner of the Adidas White Space Project in 2012. It also reaches far deeper to childhood memories of my mother preparing giant wedding cakes covered in pastillage icing in the city of Pasto, Nariño.

My current creations incorporate moulded animal or human shapes, such as hands, heads, children, or endangered animals species. Other creations are built around similar characters in hand blown glass, based on my designs and executed by Colombian artist Pedro Conde. Yet other creations include copper plate figures from Indigenous and Catholic traditions. Although sometimes displayed empty, my microcosms are capable of hosting live vegetal life, such as mosses, airplants, aquatic plants, or orchids. White, gold, and green colours meet each other in endless combinations, evocative of South America's ongoing plundering since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This line of work has been featured at the 100 Vases show in Toronto during DesignTO 2020 ("Resilience") and the Gladstone Hotel's "Grow Op 2020" exhibition ("Unfamiliar Weather.")

While I constantly question how our societies take what is feminine for granted, my artistic practice is fundamentally hopeful. I love working with plants and believe that making people look at what is organic and fragile can inspire us to overcome the greatest hardships. My early work as an interior designer centered around finding new ways of bringing plants into everyday objects and living spaces. Designing glass objects opened up new possibilities because it allowed me to invent entirely new miniature spaces. My encounter with porcelain allowed me to embark on a journey towards the imaginary, to express things that are hard to express with words and to listen to in our busy daily lives.