

## ***Ceremony. An Exhibition by Claudia Fernández***

Since the 1990s, Claudia Fernández has been examining the legacy of traditional Mexican objects and their assimilation into diverse cultural contexts. On many occasions, she uses specific handcraft techniques to re-contextualize them into new objects that offer an alternative language and point toward the social role of such practices. Her research in this context has led her to collect a wide range of handmade objects and folk art, which are representative of diverse cultural regions of Mexico. This collection exemplifies the different methods of production that reveal, each in a different and unique way, the social and economic systems that prevail in different communities across the country, while reflecting how a community can be formed through a combination of shared meanings and aims that emerge from day-to-day practices.

The objects that form this exhibition are the result of specialized work and creativity, while the techniques and materials employed synthesize diverse forms of contemporary life. The aims of this research and of the exhibition project are to increase the value of the included objects as well as to reactivate and relaunch workshops that are in the throes of extinction or which have been lost along with various ancestral production techniques. Within her selection, Fernández includes diverse ways of manufacturing the same object, as well as contemporary reinterpretations; in this way, the original object becomes a reference for the manifestations that, far from remaining static, continue to be produced and form part of contemporary everyday activities.

The variety of origins of the objects in the exhibition allows us to read the country's territory through the diversity of its regional cultures, rather than in the way we would normally do so, viewing the geographical division of the country's states. From that reading, the intrinsic relationship that exists among the cultural production of those regions and the use of natural resources that are found in their environments becomes apparent. The extinction of a natural resource signifies the extinction of material cultural production.

*Ceremony* is also an exhibitiv exercise that puts two different practices into action: Presenting pieces as objects of historical and visual value, showing the skills that each technique requires, and using them to create connections between individuals, which lead to new social dynamics that are related to the way in which we get to know, disseminate and consume this legacy.