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Jessica Kairé (Guatemala, 1980) is a Guatemalan-born artist living and working in New York. She is also the co-Founder and co-Director of NuMu (Nuevo Museo de Arte Contemporáneo) in Guatemala City, an egg-shaped museum that aims to satiate the lack of other contemporary art institutions in the city.

Kairé combines various media, including sculpture, food, ceramics and performance to create works that often solicit public participation. Her work addresses issues related to the Guatemalan and Latin identity in general and specific subjects of her native country: violence, underdevelopment, and tropicality as well as gender issues and her Jewish background.

Her work has been exhibited in various museums such as: Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles; Museum of Fine Arts (MFAH), Houston; Museo del Barrio, New York; and BIENAL 12 Online, Bienal do Mercosul, Brazil.

Perdidos. En medio. Juntos (Lost. In between. Together)

22 Bienal de Arte Paiz, FUNBA, Antigua Guatemala

2021

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Monumento plegable (Monumento Juan Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán)

Folding monument (Juan Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán Monument)

2021

Upcycled canvas, ribbons and cotton thread, shelf and photograph

Dimensions variable

Hanging: 274 cm / 108 high approx.

Folded: 61 x 41 x 13 cm / 24 x 16 x 5 in

Shelf: 84 x 41 x 3 cm / 33 x 16 x 5 in

Photography: 4 x 6 cm / 2 x 6 in

Weight: 13 lbs approx.

First Sunrises on Earth
Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City
2021

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Warm Up (River Stones)

2020

White stoneware, black slip, wooden tray

19 x 27 x 2 cm / 7.5 x 10.5 x 0.5 in



Jessica Kairé
Warm up (twig)
2020

White stoneware, red iron oxide
10 x 2 x 5 cm / 4 x 0.79 x 2 in

Before Wearout
2020

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The artists investigates the notion of maintenance by practicing simple actions of self-care while quarantined far from home in Kochi, Japan, due to the international lockdown caused by coronavirus. Playing with "wear" as a noun and a verb, my actions acknowledge both the newness and consistency of my surroundings in a time when everything has changed.





Before Wearout

2020

Single channel video

8:08 min

Ed. 1/5 + 2 A.P.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/557357025>

Password: Kaire

Monumento plegable (Monumento a la revolución de octubre de 1944)
Folding monument (Monument to the October Revolution of 1944)

2020

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Folding monuments is a new body of work consisting of a series of soft sculptures that contemplate the value and currency of existing monuments in our present day surroundings, by considering their socio-political and historical backgrounds. Each work is a scale replica of an existing monument and contains one or more ribbons that, when pulled, raise the work to its full form and when released, allow it to collapse on the floor. Alternately, the works may be ironed and folded to be displayed on shelves.

The work shown here is based on a monument located in Guatemala City (view image on next page), built to commemorate the 1944 Revolution, an important event in Guatemalan history which marks the overthrowing of dictator Jorge Ubico and the beginning of the "Democratic spring", led by presidents Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán.

Installation views: Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City.
Photography: Margo Porres







Monumento plegable (Monumento a la revolución de 1944)

Folding monument (Monument to the 1944 Revolution)

2020

Upcycled canvas, ribbons and cotton thread, shelf and photograph

Dimensions variable

Unfolded: 193 x 43 x 43 cm / 76 x 17 x 17 in

Folded: 50 x 41 x 13 cm / 20 x 16 x 5 in

Shelf: 72 x 41 x 3 cm / 28 x 16 x 1 in

Photography: 4 x 6 cm / 1 x 2 in

Weight: 6 lbs approx.

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Anti-zika ponchos (pair).
Created for visitors to wear during the event.





Anti-zika
2016
Mesh fabric
Dimensions variable

Degustación (Arquitectura Sefardí)
Tasting (Sephardic Architecture)

2015

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Tasting (Sephardic Architecture) consisted on the presentation of handmade bread pieces produced with silicone molds made by the artist, which replicate fragments of the architecture of the Maguen David Sinagogue, located in Guatemala City and built between 1930-1938. During the opening of the exhibition, the public was invited to taste the bread along with za'atar and olive oil.





Degustación (Arquitectura Sefardí) Tasting (Sephardic Architecture)
2015

Installation comprised of glazed ceramic tiles, table, bread, za'atar,
olive oil, plates and knives
Dimensions variable

¿Me escuchas? (Atol con el dedo)
Can you hear me? (Atol con el dedo)
2015

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Can you hear me? is a series of televisual gatherings via Skype that took place between two or more collaborators based in different geographical locations. Each gathering consisted of devising identical parallel meals and settings in both locations, therefore creating a continuous translocal space mediated by the screen. In this way, the platform disrupted our corporeal, spatial and temporal awareness through the hyperbolization of a now conventionalized mode of "face-to-face" interaction.

This iteration of *Can you hear me?* was realized between Guatemalan participants in two distinct locations -The New School (New York) and Ciudad Imaginación (Quetzaltenango, Guatemala) - who prepared and ate the same meal "together".

A collaboration between Daniel Perera and Jessica Kairé.
Photography: Livia Sá (New York) / Alba Carrasco (Guatemala)





¿Me escuchas? (Atol con el dedo)
Can you hear me? (Atol con el dedo)
2015
Performance documentation

Degustación (Arquitectura Colonial)
Tasting (Colonial Architecture)

2014

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Tasting (Colonial Architecture) consisted on the presentation of artisanal chocolates produced with silicone molds which replicate fragments from the architecture of the ruins of the former Concepción monastery, built during the colonial period and destroyed by the 1773 earthquake. During the opening of the exhibition, the public was invited to taste the chocolates.

Production and installation views: Concepción 41,
Antigua, Guatemala.

Image credits: Concepción 41





Degustación (Arquitectura Colonial)

Tasting (Colonial Architecture)

2014

Installation comprised of chocolate, concrete blocks.

Dimensions variable

Así es la vida en el trópico (Such Is Life in the Tropics)

2012 - 2013

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Such is life in the tropics is a series of videos, workshops and sculptures, in which a variety of tropical fruits and vegetables are transformed into self-defense weapons, only to be eaten later. This body of work responds to the violent atmosphere that Guatemalans have endured on a daily basis, as a result of a civil war which lasted from 1960 to 1996.

This workshop iteration was realized via Skype between participants at Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo (Costa Rica) and the artist's home in Brooklyn, New York.



Such Is Life in the Tropics (Nunchuck Workshop)

2012

Single channel video

11:57 min

Ed. 1/5 + 2 P.A.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/557860388>

Password: Kaire



Such Is Life in the Tropics (Mallet)

2012

Single channel video

2:46 min

Ed. 1/5 + 2 P.A.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/252775781>

Password: Kaire

Confort (Esculturas)

Comfort (Sculptures)

2013

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CONFORT is a series of soft sculptures in the shape of warlike objects such as grenades, knuckles and bullets. The works speak to the violent atmosphere that permeates daily life in Guatemala, as a result of a civil war that lasted over 30 years. By simulating colorful, mass produced toys, the sculptures use playfulness in an attempt to disarm the public's silence in relation to the war, and as an outlet for our constant state of angst in encountering new forms of violence on a day to day basis.









Confort (Esculturas)

Comfort (Sculptures)

2011

Embroidered velvet fabric, synthetic fiberfill and thread

Series of 7 objects

Dimensions variable

Oy!
2010

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Oy! is a performance in which I placed nearly fifty kippot - plural for kippah, a cap usually worn by male Jews during religious ceremonies - on my head, one after another. I then sat still for a lengthy period of time holding the stack of caps on my head. This action gradually altered my posture due to the objects' weight, alluding to my personal experience as a Jewish descendant. The present video is one of three iterations of the work.

Image credit: Roni Mocán



Oy!
2010
Single channel video
35:10 min
Ed. 1/3 + 2 A.P.

Link: <https://www.jessicakaire.com/oy->

Confort (Objetos transicionales)

Comfort (Transitional objects)

2008

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Commissioned and produced for the group exhibition
"Horror Vacui / 1ra Muestra de Performance y Accionismo
en Guatemala" at Centro de Formación de la Cooperación
Española in Antigua, Guatemala.





Confort (Objetos transicionales)

Comfort (Transitional Objects)

2008

Fabric, poly-fill and thread

Set of 8 wearable sculptures

Dimensions variable

Shiva
2008

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In various venues located across downtown Guatemala City, I covered multiple wall mirrors with white cotton fabric along with an instructional label suggesting passersby not to look at their reflection or appearance for seven days straight.









Shiva
2008
Installation, mirrors, white fabric
Installation documentation

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Jessica Kairé

Born in Guatemala City, Guatemala, 1980. Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY, USA

Education

BA Bachelor in Art, Cum Laude, Hunter College, New York, NY, USA
Design, Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala City, Guatemala
Visual Arts, Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Tasting: Sephardic Architecture, Plato's Cave* ay EIDIA, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2008 *Comfort*, Centro Cultural Metropolitano, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Group Exhibitions

- 2021 *Perdidos. En medio. Juntos: Universos de la materia (Lost. In the Middle. Together: Universes of Matter)* ,21 Bienal de Arte Paiz, Guatemala City, Guatemala. Curated by Alexia Tala y Gabriel Rodriguez Pellecer
Primeros Amaneceres en la Tierra (First Sunrises on Earth), Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City, Guatemala
2020 *The Gardeners*, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City, Guatemala
Somos aunque nos olviden (We Are Even if They Forget Us), MÉXICO - INTERNACIONAL, Torre de Tlatelolco, Antigua Torre de Relaciones Exteriores, Centro Cultural Universitario Tlatelolco, México
2018 *SITElines Biennial: Casa tomada (Taken House)*, curated by Jose Luis Blondet, Candice Hopkins and Ruba Katrib, SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM, USA
Video Sur, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
A Domestic Life, curated by Jose Esparza Chong Cuy, Salón ACME, Mexico City, Mexico
2017 *NuMu*, Commonwealth & Council, Los Angeles, CA, USA
A Universal History of Infamy, curated by Jose Luis Blondet, Rita González and Pilar Thomkins Rivas LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, USA

- Home-So Different, So Appealing*, curated by Chon Noriega, Mari Carmen Ramírez and Pilar Thompson Rivas, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, USA
- Home-So Different, So Appealing*, LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- Guatemala from 33,000 Kilometers: Contemporary Art from 1960-Present*, curated by Miki García and Emiliano Valdés, MCASB Museum of Contemporary Art of Santa Barbara, California, USA
- Weapon of Choice*, curated by Isabella Villanueva, Anya and Andrew Shiva Gallery, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NY, USA
- 2016 *2da Gran Bienal Tropical (2nd Great Tropical Biennial)*, Loíza, Puerto Rico. Curated by Stefan Benchoam, Radamés "Juni" Figueroa, Pablo León de la Barra, Jesús "Bubu" Negrón and Marina Reyes Franco
- Net[]Work*, 18th Street Arts Center, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- 2015 *Objeto-espacio (Object-space)*, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City, Guatemala. Curated by Jorge De León and Gabriel Rodríguez
- Guatemala Después, Sheila C. Johnson Design Center, Parsons The New School for Design, NY, USA, and Ciudad Imaginación, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala
- 2014 *Playing with Fire: Political Interventions, Dissident Acts, and Mischievous Actions*, El Museo del Barrio, NY, USA
- Flow: Economies of the Look and Creativity in the Contemporary Art of the Caribbean*, Inter-American Development Bank Cultural Center, Washington DC, USA. Curated by Elvis Fuentes
- El Museo de la Luna (The Museum of the Moon)*, Espacio S1, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- El rayo que cayó dos veces (The Lightning That Struck Twice)*, Concepción 41, Antigua, Guatemala. Curated by Jose Luis Blondet
- In Situ*, Espacio S1, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 2013 *Aproximaciones al espacio (Approximations to Space)*, Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo, San José, Costa Rica
- Dependencia In-dependencia (Dependence Independence)*, Galería Sol del Río, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala
- Cinco Días (Five Days)*, Centro Cultural de España, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala
- Proyectos Ultravioleta Presenta*, Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, San Jose, Costa Rica

- Neo-Domesticities*, Brooklyn International Performance Art Festival, Glasshouse, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- Voces y Visiones: Highlights from the Collection of El Museo del Barrio*, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, USA
- Pláticas // Color & Unrest*, a series of public conversations and a survey of recent Latin American video production curated by Proyectos Ultravioleta, TEOR/ética, San José, Costa Rica
- Victory*, two evenings of performance, IV Soldiers Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- No Wave Performance Task Force: Love*, Panoply Performance Lab, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2012 *Color & Unrest*, curated by Proyectos Ultravioleta, Art Bus, NY, USA
- En la curvatura del tiempo: Arte y mujer (In the Curvature of Time: Art and Woman)*, Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- Convivir/Compartir (Live Together/Share)*, XVIII Bienal de Arte Paiz, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- Valoarte*, Group exhibition and auction, San Jose, Costa Rica
- Proyectos Ultravioleta Presents...*, Christinger de Mayo Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland
- How to Make Homemade Weapons for Self-Defense*, Free workshop at Lawn School, in collaboration with NurtureArt, Tompkins Square Park, NY, USA
- Toys & Games With A Twist*, Longwood Art Gallery, Bronx Council on the Arts, NY, USA
- Así que se vaya (So It Goes)*, Kamin & Proyectos Ultravioleta, Quetzaltenango / Totonicapán, Guatemala
- Por azar/Coincidencias en el arte (By Chance/Coincidences in Art)*, Artecentro Graciela Andrade de Paiz, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 2011 *El Museo's 6th Bienal: The (S) Files*, El Museo del Barrio, NY, USA
- Tropical Grenade*, Special Edition, exhibition & sale at La Tienda, Museo del Barrio, NY, USA
- ETNIA Latin American Art Fair*, Espace Wallonie, Brussels, Belgium
- Así Que se Vaya*, traveling exhibition, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Belgium (Brussels, Liege, Nivelles and Tournai), Holland and Luxembourg
- Encuentro Internacional de Medellín (MDE11), Medellín, Colombia

- Me asusta pero me gusta/Arte actual de Guatemala (It Scares Me But I Like It/Actual Art In Guatemala)*, Proyectos Diablo Rosso, Panama City, Panama
- Ciudad como escenario e idea (City as Scenario and Idea)*, Galería Kilómetro Cero, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- 2010 *De Guatemala a Guatepeor*, Proyectos Ultravioleta at Proyectos Sauna, Bogotá, Colombia
- Los padres, la distancia y el speed (Parents, Distance and Speed)*, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City, Guatemala; & artist's apt. in Brooklyn, NY, USA
- Push/Pull*, DUMBO Arts Festival, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- Duality (Jewish Latin Artists)*, 92Y Tribeca, NY, USA
- Bushwick Open Studios*, Sentinel Gallery/Papa B Studios, Brooklyn NY, USA
- 2008 *Los Desaparecidos / Horror Vacui (The Disappeared / Horror Vacui)*, Primera muestra de performance y accionismo, Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- Juannio*, group show/benefit auction, Museum of Modern Art, Guatemala
- Crema fresca (Fresh Cream)*, Galería 9.99/proyecto, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- Comfort*, Centro Cultural Metropolitano, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- XVI Bienal de Arte Paiz*, Centro Cultural Metropolitano, Guatemala City, Guatemala
- XI Festival del Centro Historico*, Guatemala City, Guatemala

Other Projects

NUMU Nuevo Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (New Museum of Contemporary Art). Guatemala's first Contemporary Art Museum
<http://elnuevomuseo.org>

Fellowships, Grants, Residencies, Prizes, etc.

- 2015 Artist in Residence, 18th Street Art Center, Santa Monica, CA, USA
- 2013 Mentor, New York Foundation for the Arts, Immigrant Artist's Project, 2013 Mentoring Program.
- Bronx Recognizes Its Own (BRIO) Fellowships*, Panelist, Bronx Council for the Arts, NY, USA

2010 Nominee, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation Subvention Grant
(nominated by Rosina Cazali), Miami, USA
Scholarship Recipient, Grandchildren Zabar Undergraduate
Scholarship, Hunter College, New York, NY, USA
Mentee, New York Foundation for the Arts, Immigrant Artist's
Project, Mentoring Program, NY, USA
Affiliated artist, APT, Mexico City (Artist's Pension
Trust)

Publications

- 2020 Di Liscia, V. (2020, April 9), *Finding Humor in Crisis*,
Gallery Photoshops Wild Animals in Its Closed Exhibition,
Hyperallergic
<https://hyperallergic.com/553644/finding-humor-in-crisis-gallery-photoshops-wild-animals-in-its-closed-exhibition/>
- 2018 Pérez Diez, G. (2018, July 16), *SITELines en Santa Fe se despide con una nueva y notable participación iberoamericana*
(SITElines in Santa Fe bids farewell with a new and notable Ibero-American participation), Arteinformado
<https://www.arteininformado.com/magazine/n/sitelines-en-santa-fe-se-despide-con-una-nueva-y-notable-participacion-iberoamericana-5992>
- Pérez Diez, G. (2018, August 21), *20 artistas iberoamerican@s trabajando con cerámica* (20 Ibero-American artists working with ceramics), Arteinformado
<https://www.arteininformado.com/magazine/n/20-artistas-iberoamericanos-trabajando-con-ceramica-6022>
- 2017 Marti, S. (2017, October 20), *The 20 Most Influential Young Curators in Latin America*, Artsy.net
<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-20-influential-young-curators-latin-america>
- Zara, J. (2017, September 26), *Art over easy: Guatemalan avant garde arrives in LA disguised as an egg*, The Guardian
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/sep/26/art-lacma-guatemala-nuevo-museo-egg-stefan-benchoam-jessia-kaire>
- Manifesto Espacio. (2017, August), *EJERCICIOS URBANOS 1: Local City Tours* (URBAN EXERCISES 1: Local City Tours), Josseline Pinto
<https://josselinepinto.com/PROJECT-1-LOCAL-CITY-TOURS>
- Haigney, S. (2017, June 9), *Los Angeles Museum Starts a Kickstarter Campaign for a Travelling Egg-Shaped Gallery*, The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/09/arts/design/los-angeles-museum-starts-a-kickstarter-campaign-for-a-traveling-egg-shaped-gallery.html>

Garnica, D. (2017, June), *Contra la violencia: Jessica Kairé* (Against Violence: Jessica Kairé), Magis

<https://magis.iteso.mx/nota/contra-la-violencia-jessica-kaire/>

Villasmil, A. (2017, January 27), *ARTE, PLAYA Y ECONOMÍA DE LA AMISTAD. LA SEGUNDA GRAN BIENAL TROPICAL* (ART, BEACH AND THE ECONOMY OF FRIENDSHIP. THE SECOND GREAT TROPICAL BIENNIAL), Revista Artishock

<https://artishockrevista.com/2017/01/24/segunda-gran-bienal-tropical/>

- 2016 González, R. (2016, January 25), *La historia del NuMu y Proyectos Ultravioleta contada por sus fundadores* (The History of NuMu and Proyectos Ultravioleta Told by Its Founders), Artishock

<https://artishockrevista.com/2016/01/25/la-historia-numu-proyectos-ultravioleta-contada-fundadores/>

- 2015 (2015, March 6), *Contemporary Art in Guatemala*, Curators International

<https://curatorsintl.org/events/contemporary-guatemalan-art>

- 2013 (2013, March 21), *Special Report: With a Professional-Development Seminar in Guatemala, NYFA Goes International*, The New York Foundation for the Arts

<https://www.nyfa.org/iap-newsletter-issue-43-69199324811>

Kairé, j. (2013, April), *Interviews and articles written by the artist*, C41 Fundación de Arte contemporáneo

<http://c-41.org/es/author/jessica-kaire/>

- 2012 (2012, August 21), *Featured Organization: El Nuevo Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Guatemala*, New York Foundation for the Arts

<https://www.nyfa.org/iap-newsletter-issue-39-69200037304>

De la Barra, P. (2012, August 19), *Welcome NuMu, A Museum in an Egg, Guatemala's Nuevo Museo de Arte Contemporáneo*, Centre for the Aesthetic Revolution

<http://centrefortheaestheticrevolution.blogspot.com/2012/08/welcome-numu-museum-in-egg-guatemalas.html>

- 2011 Cotter, H. (2011, June 16), *Artists Whose Vitality Flows From the Streets*, The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/17/arts/design/el-museos-bienal-the-s-files-2011-review.html>

- (2011, June 13), *Voices Choices*, The Village Voice, p21 and cover
- (2011) Diaz Casas, R. *The (S) Files*, Art Nexus Vol.10 2011: 156-157.
- 2010 (2010, February 19), Featured Artist: Jessica Kaire, New York Foundation for the arts
<https://www.nyfa.org/iap-newsletter-issue-4-69124070294>
- 2008 Cazali, R. (2008, April 30), *Blandos y casi ácidos (Soft and almost acid)*, El Periódico, Guatemala
- (2008, June), *El amor, la obsesión: los objetos / Sobreviviendo a Duchamp (Love, obsession: objects / Surviving Duchamp)*, Perspectivas Magazine #4

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