

SANDRA MONTERROSO (b. 1974, Guatemala)

Sandra Monterroso began her artistic career in performance art in 1999. She earned a B.A. in Graphic Design at Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala in 2001, followed by an M.A. in Design from Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico in 2004. In 2020, Monterroso earned a PhD in Art Practice from the Academy of Arts in Vienna, Austria. She has represented Guatemala in more than twelve biennials, including the 56th Venice Biennale, the 12 Havana Biennial, and the Frestas Art Triennial in Brazil. Monterroso lives and works in Guatemala City.

In her work, Monterroso explores the dynamics of indigenous culture in the postcolonial era, gender issues, and other constructs of power across media including tapestry, painting, video, installation, and performance. As Isabel Villanueva notes, “With her thought-provoking and beautiful artworks, Monterroso is trying to unravel the threads or knots that the colonial and patriarchal tradition have left in Guatemala's contemporary social fabric.” Her influences include Cindy Sherman (U.S.A.), Gina Pane (France), Carolee Shneemann (Germany), Ana Mendieta (Cuba), and Marina Abramović (Yugoslavia), as she explores issues of identity and relational dynamics between genders and cultures. As Monterroso explains, “Behind the silence and the paradox of modernity and coloniality, I start taking as a symbolic reference more particularly the Mayan q’eq’chi’ language as an inheritance from my grandmother, whose linguistic structure is completely metaphorical.”

Monterroso’s work is included in the permanent collections of Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; Yes Contemporary, Miami, Florida, USA; Museum of Contemporary Art and Design, (MADC), Costa Rica; Essex Collection of Latin American Art, London, United Kingdom; Ortiz Gurdíán Foundation, Managua, Nicaragua; Fundación Paiz, Guatemala; and many private collections.