

Son del Pueblo

Of the People

Project by Maria Thereza Alves



Protest by the community against the Valle de Xico Community Museum's closure

All photos : Courtesy of Valle de Xico Community Museum

Son del Pueblo

The Valle de Xico Community Museum in the State of Mexico is committed to reclaiming pre-colonization indigenous artifacts and promoting cultural activities. It was founded in 1996 and is supported by the local indigenous community. Throughout the years there has been constant harassment by the local government of the museum, and threats against its members for preserving indigenous culture.

On February 11th, 2019, just a year after the museum had reopened in its official space, after long due renovation works, the municipal government shut down the museum. In the official letter sent by the municipality no reason was given for the closure of the museum.

The museum members and the board of directors have no access to the collection, or their documentation section. The community no longer has access to their art. The museum is under federal jurisdiction and thus the community considers this closure by a municipal authority to be an illegal act.

It is 2020 and the museum remains closed.

Valle de Xico Community Museum and I have collaborated since 2009 on several projects including *The Return of a Lake* for dOCUMENTA (13). The museum has asked for dissemination and supportive actions for their situation.

Son del Pueblo is a project in response to this request.

Invited contributors are requested to make a ceramic work based on the Community Museum's collection. Images of the work will be posted on Instagram and the museum's website as well as Alves's website.

The image can include the contributor and should include the work in the context of the studio or home of the person who has made the work. We will also publish the name of the person (can be first name only) and city of residence.

Send the photos to: **studio@mariatherezaalves.org**

The ceramic work does not need to be glazed or fired in a kiln.



Genaro Amaro Altamirano in the Museo Comunitario in Xico

The Museo Comunitario of the Valley of Xico is an initiative of the local community as an active defence of their indigenous culture.

It is responsible for saving almost five thousand pre-invasion artifacts from oblivion or destruction as there is no other institution in the municipality interested in protecting this cultural heritage.

The artifacts are donated to the museum by members of the local community who find them in the surrounding area. Genaro Amaro Altamirano is one of the founders and chronicler of the region.

Since the presentation of Alves's *The Return of a Lake* in dOCUMENTA 13, the museum's program has expanded and an artists's collective, Xico-arte, has been founded.



Alves with members of the Community Museum in 2009



Members of the Community Museum during the museums re-opening in 2018



During the re-opening of the museum after renovation in 2018



Activities with school children organized by the museum



Closure of the museum in 2019

Translation:

To whomever is considered the director of the Museum:

Through this missive I send cordial greetings and take the occasion to bring to your attention by the instruction of C. Francisco Fernando Tenorio Contreras, Constitutional Municipal President (mayor), that the properties known as the Hacienda and El Granero are closed to the general public and for whoever does not identify themselves as a public employee of this administration.

Yours, attentively...



The official letter sent by the municipality

Artifacts from the Valle de Xico Community Museum



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



14.



15. *The Sky Beholder*, Portrait of an astronomer,
Classic Aztec Period from the 14th/15th century



16.



PLATO CON DECORACION ESGRAFIADA
MOTIVOS SIMBOLICOS DISEÑADOS EN
"PANELES".

17.



18.



19.



20.



21.



22.



23.



FRAGMENTO DE YUGO EN
PIEDRA VERDE DE LA
SIERRA MADRE ORIENTAL,
PROCEDENTE DEL ESTADO

24.



25.



26.



27.



28.



29.



30.



31.



32.



33.



34.





MAQUETAS Y FRAGMENTOS DE FIGURINAS DE
CALDERON, MOQUELLOS

SOBRE ZOOMORFO DE VILLA DEL C
ESTADO DE AYACUCHO

