

Morning Glory



This writing tries to make and to be memory. Constructed in voices and with different registers, this text seeks to tell the story behind the creation of a particular work. *Morning Glory* was a work for public space that won the Faena Award for the Arts (2022) in its first edition in Miami. It was a delirious work, made in a short time and for a short time. Like a meteorite, it arrived, exploded, happened and disappeared. That is why I am about to recount the story of its process, and at the same time, to tell how something is done in art, how it is to think by doing and thinking with others, a matter specific to the artistic profession, but which remains hidden before the marvelous effects that the works provoke in their spectators.

For me, processes are relevant, which is why I spend so much of my time working in education. I once read that Virginia Wolff hoped that death would catch her doing something: “immersed in our usual occupations, among girls and good companions, who do not protest, do not lament”(p.133). Working, making art and doing with others, that’s my daily life. This story is part of those daily routines, but it also tells of a unique, special event that is worth to be told. Thus, with the voices of others I am weaving this text: with my voice, the voice of Vicente Donoso, architect with whom I built the project, and the voice of Consuelo Pedraza, an artist and friend who rewrites my words and improves the prose. I also go after those records that help me remember and reconstruct what happened: my notebooks, emails, whatsapp messages and even open tabs. Other things were lost along the way, but the preserved remains allowed me to put together the following story.

We all know everything together.
Adolfo Reyes.

*Tentacularity is related to the life that is lived
along the lines—in the richness of the lines—not
in the points, not in the spheres.*
Donna Haraway.

I. I have a garden

I have a garden that I take care of and that has taught me many things. When I arrived at my house there was a gardener named Amable. He initiated me into conversations with plants and taught me that each one has its own language. He believed that the phases of the moon and the divinities of the sky connect with what happens here on earth, he prayed when planting and was careful when pruning or pulling up something. For years I watched him work, we talked and little by little I understood the language of my garden. He was kind like my father. Sixteen years have passed in which I have seen my garden mature, I have read and learned, convinced that plants have much to tell us about our human agency. I think of the plant intelligence that Mancuso mentions and the ability they have to solve problems, I think of their roots, those mind-fingers that are sensing as they move around creating supportive and collaborative networks. I think of their slow and cautious movements, how they use the wind to reproduce or how they grow looking for the sun. I think of Haraway's tentacles and Deleuze's rhizomes.

Despite everything I learned in my garden, it was not until 2022 that plants—and particularly flowers—were introduced in my artistic work. In May of the same year I held the exhibition [*Objetos Personales*](#) (*Personal Objects*) at the Galería Patricia Ready (Santiago, Chile) and for the first time I presented two paintings of flowers. They appeared accidentally—or perhaps they were hidden in the garden of my mind—, my desire was to mix two materials that in principle repel each other, the clay that needs water, with the encaustic wax that requires oil. The combination of two improbables was suggestive to me, similar to Carson's eroticism, materials that seek each other producing a series of encounters and misencounters. At that time I was drawing abstract forms, filling my notebooks with what I thought were amoebas or other invertebrate beings, but which inevitably took the form of petals and leaves. The key moment was more of a coincidence: I had to paint the ceramic pieces and the choice of colors was determined by what I had available. I wrote down in my notebook the names of the colors: *Salvia* and *Jade*. I don't usually paint, but these pieces were acquiring a pictorial language and the act of naming them helped me to know what to do, where to move the wax, how to add the pigment, what strokes, shapes and sizes. I have always been struck by the names assigned to colors. While I was painting I was also reading and curious: for many people sage is a sacred plant, for me it was the plant in the garden that I could touch and smell, it had green and gray tones just like jade. Jade is the stone that when polished becomes translucent, for the pre-Hispanic cultures of Mesoamerica it was the stone of creation, it was life, fertility and power. *Salvia* and *Jade* were simple presences that embodied powerful senses. The plant and the stone were the models for my painting.

On April 10, in the middle of *Objetos Personales*, an e-flux newsletter arrived announcing the Faena Art Award. The call was to imagine sensitive monumental projects located on the beach in Miami; speci-



fically, on the beach where the Faena Hotel¹ is located. The invitation showed an evocative image of the beach and said:

“In this edition Faena invites multidisciplinary artists to imagine site-sensitive works that rethink time-based practices and dialogue with Faena Beach while engaging with the cultural and urban conditions of the city of Miami.

Times have changed, and concepts such as “home” as a sense of belonging have taken on significant relevance in our lives. Our relationship with the urban environment has become more significant, and with it the sense of belonging that public art can activate. What we call “home”, what looks like “home”, what makes us feel “home” defines us physically and emotionally, as individuals and as a community. We are progressively shifting our ways of seeing, to ways of experiencing and relating to nature and our immediate environment more consciously and in coexistence”.

The idea of making a work on and for the beach had been on my mind for some time. I have done projects that include beaches and sinuous soils, *Humus* and *Orillas* to name a few. To this was added my desire to draw topographic works. I remembered a folder on my computer where I collected ideas and images related to forms that emerge from the ground and that I had called *Sandwalks*. The name refers to the path that Charles Darwin had at his home in Kent. After his voyage aboard the Beagle, Darwin confined himself to his house to think and made it his daily routine to walk along a sand path he called the *Thinking Path*. I refer to this image frequently and I always find it relevant and refreshing. The folder had images of any kind of path, a golf course, Tarkovsky’s polaroids, a beach in Mar del Plata, parks from different countries, etc. I felt that ideas and intuitions were already macerating in my head, and excited by the possibility of a creative challenge, I decided to apply.



El Sandwalk de Darwin. Su «sendero de pensar» serpentea entre la sombra de las zonas arboladas para luego bordear un prado soleado. A menudo le acompañaba en sus paseos diarios su fox terrier Polly. (Fotografía del autor, 1974)

1 Faena is a district specializing in the creation of unique environments anchored in cultural experiences and socially responsible projects that integrate residences and hotels with art and eclectic spaces. Founded by Alan Faena, the district promotes a lifestyle of cultural inclusion for the benefit of an entire community, and comprises hotels, shopping, healing and wellness, cutting-edge art and culture, as well as original entertainment.

The cultural universe is created through Faena Art, a non-profit organization that organizes, produces and hosts interdisciplinary art experiences. As a catalyst for innovative, site-specific and immersive practices, Faena Art builds bridges between the public and the experiential, making art accessible to all. Thus, in 2012, the Faena Art Award was founded, which affirms Faena’s commitment to support artists at any stage of their career and serves as a platform for continuous reflection on the present moment and its changing nature. The 2022 edition was held for the first time on the beach in Miami and featured the outstanding jury composed of: Cecilia Alemani (Curator of the 59th Venice Biennale); artist Alexandre Arrechea; Caroline Bourgeois (Chief Curator of the Pinault Collection); cultural placemaker Ximena Caminos; Chus Martínez (Director of the Art Institute of the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel); José Roca (Artistic Director of the 23rd Biennale of Sydney) under the curatorship of Direlia Lazo.

At that time I contacted Vicente Donoso, a young architect with whom I have worked on previous projects. In 2021 we applied for a competition at the invitation of the Ministry of Public Works for the remodeling of the courtyard of the Jorge Teillier School in the Araucanía Region, where we designed an undulating floor for students, plants, animals and water. In 2019 Vicente designed and built the beach for the *Humus* exhibition I did at the Museo de Artes Visuales in Santiago. Before that I had taught a course at the university on art, territory and landscape; that's where we met. I knew I wanted his company to venture into this project; determined, I told him about the call and invited him to collaborate, starting the project: *Morning Glory*.

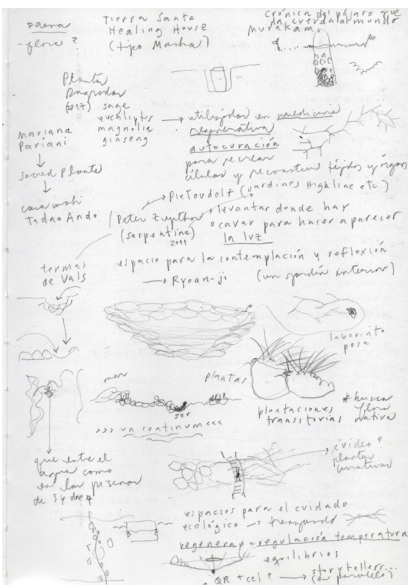
II. First notes

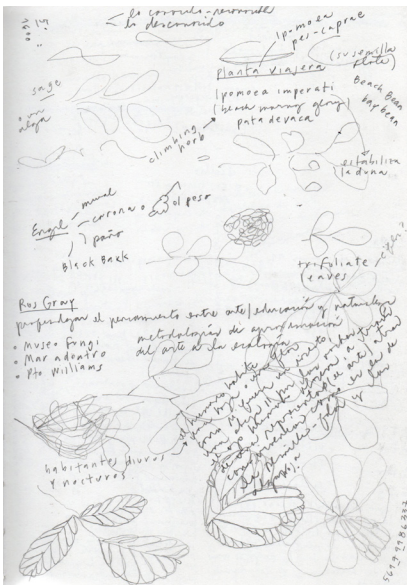
I remember the day I made the first sketches, it was a Saturday morning, possibly the first days of June. From that morning there is a sheet in my notebook that records the drifts of creative thinking, especially when an idea is germinating.

The sand on the beach made me think of sinuous, concave and convex shapes. I drew irregular curves in my notebook and remembered the quarry structure that the architect Peter Zumthor built at the *Vals Thermal Baths*. Immersed in the cave, I remembered the book *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* by Haruki Murakami, and how its main character descended into the depths of a well to reflect. I assimilated the feeling of the novel's protagonist with what one might feel in the Ryoan-Ji gardens in Kyoto. I wrote down the phrase "inner garden" in my notebook next to the word "spaces". This word began to have depth and my mind began to search for surnames for it: spaces for contemplation; for ecological care; for regeneration. Zumthor came back to my mind, this time from the hand of Piet Oudolf and the garden they designed for the Serpentine Pavilion in 2011, a space for reflection that they called *Hortus Conclusus* or *Closed Orchard*. It was probably there, among gardens and spaces, that Google introduced me to the *Tierra Santa Healing House Spa* at the Faena Hotel, and specifically, to the illustrations made by the Argentine designer Mariana Pariani about the plants used in medicinal and regenerative practices. Among her list of sacred plants was my beloved sage.

There were the plants and the sand, the concave and the convex, the gardens and the spaces with last names. The desire to dig began to recur and my notebook became filled with drawings of possible combinations: among the drawings appeared a note with an asterisk that said "look for native flora". Another page had notes from a talk on Donna Haraway's tentacular thinking and underlined: "learning to live with the present"; "travels"; "paths"; "weft" and, "for changes in education and art".

In the midst of my mental wanderings, Vicente sent me a document entitled *Dune Restoration and Enhancement for the Florida Panhandle*, in which I read for the first time about *Morning Glory Beach*. Captivated by its popular name, I proceeded to investigate. Scientifically named *Ipomea pes-caprae*, *Beach Morning Glory* is a creeping





perennial vine that grows on beaches and coastal dunes in tropical and subtropical areas. Its success as a colonizer is attributed to its high potential for oceanic dispersal, its seeds travel and float through the sea unaffected by saline water, arriving and inhabiting any coastline with ease. In addition, it is vital for the conservation of the coastal habitat, its long and strong stems form a mantle over the dunes that acts as a protective mesh against natural disasters. It stills the movements and holds together the substrate that gives way to the formation of humus, being the home and place of insect procreation. *Beach Morning Glory* reminded me of what I learned in my garden and what Amable taught me. I was surprised by its resilience and while I was drawing it I thought about how many relationships a simple plant can generate with its environment.

The next page of the notebook shows an idea. The stroke and the repetition reveal the insistence for an exact type of drawing. Leaves, flowers and stems compose the sketch together with a phrase that says "the human inhabits a leaf or a flower as if it were an insect".

On June 24, I sent an email to Vicente with a watercolor sketch made on a sketchbook, not in my usual daily notebooks, which shows the seriousness and definitive nature of the idea. This drawing would accompany us during the whole work process and would be in charge of revealing my intentions: to create an architectural space by enlarging the scale of the *Beach Morning Glory* so that it could be inhabited, replicating in turn, two processes associated with the beach that I could not get out of my mind: digging and modeling. Digging the sand forming concave and convex spaces, and modeling those cavities from cushions filled with the same sand.



III. The fabric proposal

There is a moment in the design process of a project of this type when a translation must be made, a transfer from one language to another, from an abstract world to a concrete one so that the work comes to life. On the one hand, there is the artistic language and on the other, the architectural language. First the idea is conceived in an ethereal way, and then it changes dimension and becomes material. From the language of art, Paula gave weight and meaning to the idea and I translated that language into the language of architecture where the idea acquires measures, materials, heights, colors, shadows, etc. The field of encounter between one language and the other, the medium that supports and allows dialogue between one and the other is the landscape; the beach. It was there where, under the three premises mentioned, we dialogued with Paula to give life and form to the work.

I think that in the case of *Morning Glory*, that process of translation developed in such a way that it allowed us to make something appear that was already there. As if Paula's and my act was actually the translation of an invisible language of the landscape, which is waiting to be revealed, it is nice to reach that space where the work unfolds itself and one is an instrument of that revelation. The process is also evidence of this, despite the setbacks and difficulties that seemed to dismantle everything, things happened at the right time, executed by the right people, to move forward and become real.

The first exercise we did was to scan Paula's watercolor of *Beach Morning Glory* and place it digitally over an aerial photo of the beach as seen in plan. Paula had the idea of the deck chairs in mind, and as I scaled the watercolor to fit that idea I realized that the coastline is very wide, and that the work needed to be much larger to take over the landscape and have a presence on the beach. It was thanks to that aerial perspective that we arrived at the right scale, the landscape gave us the keys.

The creation of the project was divided into two dimensions that were interwoven: design and material research.

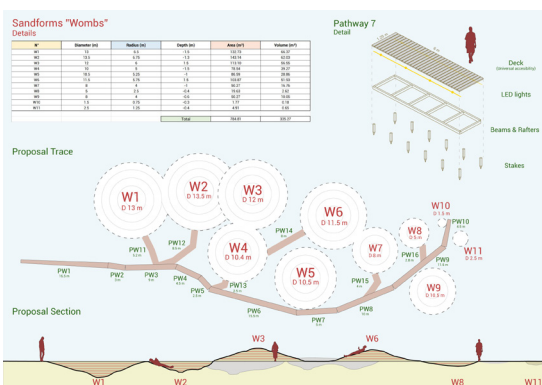
There were two very different lessons learned from the design. On the one hand, I understood that something cannot be imagined if it is not incarnated in its materials; when it comes to modeling, it is important to use the means that are closest to the expected result. This appears as a warning today when the computer, in its immateriality and perfection, makes it seem that everything is possible. Projecting an idea with the most similar medium and elements allows us to better understand its forms, dimensions and limitations. A work of concave and convex spaces modeled with sand admitted little drawing, my first instinct was to fill a box with sand and start modeling with clay small leaves the size of my hand. As satisfying as the exercise was, I realized that I had to take a step back and return the idea to its proper language: architecture. Here was my second lesson, to trust Vicente's work and transform myself into a spectator, to sit and observe how these small objects, still rooted in my mind, were being modeled and refined from the architectural language. One of the most notable differences between art and architecture is scale. From art it is difficult to think in architectural scale, for example, I imagined the sand cushions as real loungers, approximately 2-3 bodies in size and that I could make them in my workshop, but I soon realized that it was impossible.

I was learning to deal with the scale when Vicente pointed out that the beach was 90 meters wide, and added: "nothing that does not take care of at least 60% of that surface is a good answer to the call". I agreed with him, his sentence was clear and convincing, but I knew I was approaching unknown terrain. That's when I turned to my father. My dad is a builder, for him neither scale nor construction challenges involving large dimensions are matters of concern. At the call for help, my father began to visit us during our work sessions, which usually took place in the afternoon and extended well into the evening. Sitting with us, he helped us to think and became an integral part of the work team. The accompaniment and trust that his presence meant was essential to dispel fears and, instead, face the process like someone who builds a brick wall.

Together with my father and Vicente's translations, we came up with a design that measured 50 meters long with 12 spaces that would be modeled by these sand-filled cushions. While they were fine-tuning the details, I dedicated myself to the material research. We needed a textile material with environmentally conscious manufacturing processes and with the least possible environmental impact, not only because of ethical and sustainable production logics—which are implicit in our ways of thinking and conceiving the world—but also because the idea was to make the given appear. I have tried to sustain this maxim over time and it is one of the operations of contemporary art that most interests me, that the artistic object could manifest itself with the available resources, in this case, a flower and sand.

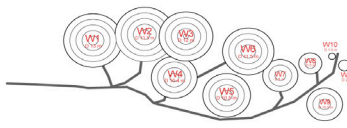
The textile research led me to learn about a significant process for the conceptualization of the work. There is a type of material called [*Netplus*](#), a totally recycled polyester fabric. Old fishing nets are discar-

The application was sent during the last days of July. The project's title was *Learning Wombs*, a name that I found suggestive and in line with what was being developed. On August 11 I received an email from Direlia Lazo, curator of the Faena Prize, indicating that the jury had questions regarding the maintenance and activation of the project. We stayed in contact, talking and answering the doubts that arose. On August 24 I received a call from Direlia Lazo together with Nicole Comotti (Executive Director of Faena Art) and Ximena Caminos (representative of the jury) to inform me that the project Learning Wombs had been selected among 395 proposals from 72 countries.





Ipomea pes caprae



Scaling and tracing



Final form definition



IV. First trip

Surprised and impatient, I woke up from the call ready to work. The project was to be inaugurated on November 29, so we only had three months to manage, produce and assemble. The first thing I did was to contact Piedad Aguilar, a visual artist dedicated to textile art and an ideal candidate for making the sand cushions. At the same time, I continued with the *Oceanworks* team. It was urgent for me to give reality to the ideas and to see the feasibility of each part of the project. But unfortunately, reality was not on our side.

I remember the latent anxiety and uncertainty of those weeks. Piedad was out of the country, which prevented her participation in the project, and *Oceanworks* explained to me that the production process of the fabric was carried out in China and took months to manufacture. This added the time factor to the dilemma, complicating the financing of the project. No quotation considered the move from China to Miami, raising the budget beyond imagination. I tried to stay calm while Vicente calculated the weight of each cushion, the largest one had to withstand 15 tons of sand, was that possible? I realized I didn't have all the constructive answers. I began to draw. Notes at the bottom of my notebook indicated "Wanted person with experience in textile manufacturing." "Wanted supplier of recycled fabrics". Together with Vicente, we drew non-stop. The problems increased and the days passed between the excitement of the idea and the constructive challenge. In spite of everything, during those weeks I met and talked with many people, I noticed that with very little explanation the project became clear and called for immediate interest. Everyone I talked to tried to help me within their possibilities. And so, with mixed feelings and more complications than assurances, I traveled for the first time to Miami on September 19. My insecurity calmed down when I met the work team, a group of efficient and coordinated people. Rafael Olarra had a unique way of putting me at ease, Nicole Comotti was able to solve any problem, Elizabeth Brady transmitted security and confidence, Sol Alonso radiated calm with her sweetness, and of course, my dear Direlia, a curator-doer and connected to life like no one else. I spent most of my time with Direlia, who had organized a very full visit agenda: we went to the beach, the Everglades wetlands and the Botanical Garden, We spent hours in the car, talking, getting to know each other and realizing that we had more in common than we could have ever imagined. We also laughed and I think it's worth mentioning. Laughing with someone is not only sharing something in common, but it is something that is born spontaneously, it comes from some deep connection that we don't really understand. The semiotologist C. S Peirce said that the locus of the soul was not necessarily related to a body but rather in intersubjective relations, as when I am able to communicate a feeling to a friend and that feeling is slipped into him: "do I not live in his brain as in mine, in the most literal sense?"(p.498). Creative processes are like that, polluting, and can never—at least in my case—be clean and executive. They involve relating and exchanging with others, thinking together with others. Thinking together with Direlia and the rest of the work team was simple and comfortable, they seemed to anticipate the problems and



have a range of solutions. Confident, we began to devise plan a, b and c. In between, I got to know the city, the soft and wet soils left me in awe. The water found its way to the surface and it seemed that human labor was reduced to the tedious task of re-drying with sand, cement or whatever could make a city. I still think about the stubbornness of water. We had not solved the issue of the fabric, but I was no longer worried as before, I trusted the work team and I knew that despite the difficulties everything would be fine. Clinging to that confidence I returned to Santiago de Chile and on the way back I left thinking about the activation program.

As soon as I landed I received a call from Rafa. The man of solutions does not find more options, he told me that he does not see the project feasible, coming from him it was definitive, "I think it will not work" he said. Friday, September 23rd at 18:00 hrs.

V. The wooden proposal

From then on, with all the changes that took place, the design process became a problem of scales, from the widest to the closest. In the aerial view, which is around the 1,1000 cm scale, the work was a piece arranged in the landscape that needed a size, once resolved, it goes to the 1,500 cm scale where the orientation of the piece, distance of the existing elements and the general measures are resolved. In the 1,200 cm scale the size of each of the places (*Leaves* and *Flowers*), the separation between one and the other, the length and width of the path are resolved. The human scale is already palpable. From here on, the matter becomes concrete. The 1.50 cm and 1.25 cm scale implies considering real materials, possible construction systems and other aspects that bring the work into the real world. The plan view is no longer enough, isometry is used to account for the 3 dimensions of each of the spaces and elements to be built. The height and depth were key to give identity to each of the spaces and generate particular moments when walking along the beach. Due to city restrictions, the depth at which it was possible to dig was very

The next morning I put into practice what we at Nube Lab try to mobilize: creativity as an energy that helps us to face challenges in a positive and efficient way, far from closed and definitive solutions. It was time to make decisions and recognize that the fabrics were rather an obstacle that prevented us from moving forward and limited the number of possible actions. It was then that, together with Vicente, we asked ourselves: where is the essence of the project? The conclusion was three minimal aspects: (1) The project is a topographic work composed of full and empty spaces. (2) The work seeks to be a space to be inhabited in a reflexive and participatory way. (3) The work should be manifested with the available resources.

The fabric was not a minimum within the project, it was rather a facilitator, a material that helped us to model the expected shape. Putting on cold clothes and understanding this issue opened a new panorama of possibilities. The loosening of a material is not easy, even more so when it supports a path of sustainable decisions and practices, but obsessing over it could imply more losses.

Discarding the fabric, new ideas began to emerge. The main one came from the hand of Isamu Noguchi's playgrounds, that was our horizon, modulations with earth that build a habitable landscape. To this imaginary was added an idea sketched by my father at the beginning of our conversations, to strengthen the presence of the wood that was on the path. The beach already had shy wooden paths that were erased by the sand, these reminded me of Darwin's *Thinking path* and my computer folder. Everything began to take shape again, the path presented a constructive system that made sense with the image of the playground, the project became evident and feasible: to raise the work exclusively with wood and sand. That same day we talked to Direlia and Rafa, who were enthusiastic to see the solution.

Everything then took on an accelerated pace. On Monday night we met with Vicente in my studio, printed the image of the flower and

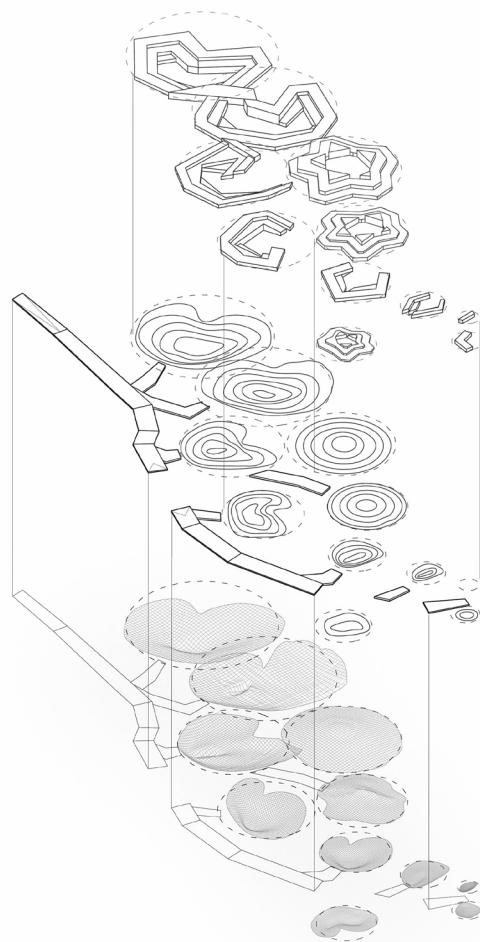
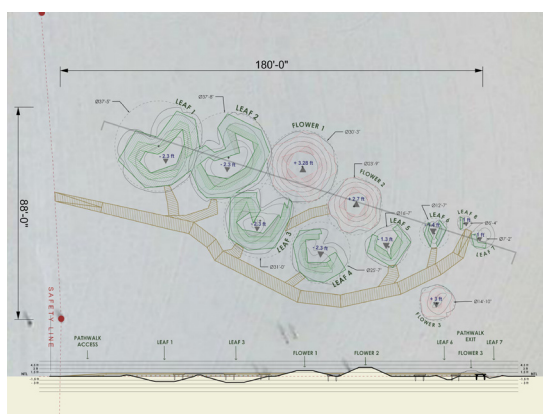
limited, only 1 meter. This meant that the work, seen in the larger scales, did not have so much presence in the vertical axis, and it was not until we approached the human scale that this verticality appeared, where the available meter became very important and each centimeter was key to give particularities to each of the living spaces.

One of the most complex challenges of the design process was to readjust the system of measurements with which we worked. For architects, measurements are very important, and there were even those like Le Corbusier, Da Vinci or Alberti who invented their own measurement systems in the search for a mathematical relationship between the measurements of man and nature. Centimeters of difference can make a space have very different qualities.

In the USA the system of measurements is feet and inches, and it was a requirement for the elaboration of planimetry to be detailed in that system. At first it was like learning a foreign language, and I had the calculator on me all the time. Fortunately, when we got to the concrete scale it became easier because in both countries we share the scale of presentation of wood, 2"x 5" pine is the same here and there. Common ground for Jerry and me allowed us to understand each other and make clear decisions between the two of us. Jerry's experience in sand construction helped to solve key aspects such as the support of the pieces, reaching an ideal result in constructive and economic terms.

began to draw. We drew until we were satisfied with the result, sent the new proposal to the jury, it was quickly approved and we went back to work. Drawing, managing and quoting. By the first days of October we had a plan with the final measurements of 54 x 26 meters, a new approved budget and Jerry Torres in charge of the construction. From there the work was divided in two: Vicente was in charge of drawing and managing with Jerry, and I was in charge of reading, researching and planning the program and the printed publication. But since the processes are neither clean nor executive, there was a cross contamination between the architecture and the program, which meant that one nurtured the other.

Finally, the project was called *Morning Glory*, taking the name and shape of the flower; the work consisted of an art and architecture intervention that, through its form, invited people to be and walk along the beach, transforming the stems into paths, and the leaves and flowers into spaces to be. Each of these spaces, in turn, would host an activity associated with the time spent on the beach. By the end of October there was a tentative program and a communication plan developed with the design team.



VI. Second trip

Once the general plans were ready with the details of each of the pieces, they were shipped to the United States and Jerry began construction with his team at *the farm*. From time to time Jerry would send photos and we could see how *Morning Glory* was taking shape. When Paula traveled for the second time to receive the award, she was able to visit Jerry's workshop and see the pieces to return with the doubts that involve getting into the smallest details. In this type of case, where deadlines are very tight and time is running out, decisions must be made very quickly, with Paula's visit we were able to observe aspects that would need to be resolved later and we had to think about them in order to make the right decisions. How to hide the led strip for the lighting? How to paint the work to give it depth and make it look like it came from the beach?

November 9th was my second trip. This time with Manuel Vicuña, my partner, who accompanied me to receive the award. We arrived in the middle of a storm. From the hotel room I could see how the falling water was changing the shape of the beach, flooding everything. It was not something strange, these things happen. But when you come from a dry country like Chile, specifically central Chile, the mental habit is to interpret the experiences by how you have lived them, so the impression led me to fantasize about terrible scenarios. I looked at this scene and imagined how the concave spaces that we had devised to be, could be catastrophically transformed into pools of water and sand. I saw the deluge, the flood and chaos.

The following night, accompanied by Manuel and jury members José Roca (Colombian curator) and Alexandre Arrechea (Cuban artist), we went to the Faena Art Gala, where Alan Faena - the creator of an entire cultural district in Miami - gave me with the award.

The next morning, with Direlia, we went to Jerry's workshop on the outskirts of Miami to visit the construction site. The construction had started weeks ago and every now and then we received pictures and videos. The trip and getting out of the city made me think about how little we know about Florida. Certain images of Miami are so pregnant that they have reduced the idea of the place, when in reality it is a diverse territory with abundant vegetation and a welcoming climate. We passed through different landscapes to get to Jerry's place. There we met Rafa and went through the progress of the work, choosing colors and seeing details. The way Jerry was interpreting Vicente's plans was impressive. And the way he, Rafa and Direlia were working emphasized to me that we shared the same vision of what we were doing; it was a collective construction where each part contributed something, and none seemed to be more important than the other. My drawing was the guide. Vicente's was the measurements. And Jerry's construction was its materialization in real scale.

That day an article about the award appeared in [Forbes](#). Days later in e-flux, and there the project became public.



VII. A few weeks away

Back in Santiago and with the prize announced, there was no time to lose and no margin for error. The program was not yet finished and inside me were mixed my readings of Cobain about the beach, Mancuso about plant intelligence and Haraway about tentacular thinking, also Wolff with her journeys and Marcel Mauss with his gestures of reciprocity. All these readings and thoughts began to take on meaning, braiding themselves into this new form we were creating. When I toured the work in Jerry's workshop I realized that it contained a story that ran very differently than usual. We walked on the beach walking along the seashore, in its horizontality. This narrative instead ran through it, starting from the access to the beach from the hotel and ending at the seashore. I liked how this narrative invited us to approach the beach in a different way, so I based myself on it to generate the program.

I learned long ago that you cannot have full control over things, even less so when it comes to a project of this scale that requires collective work and many wills that must act in coordination. The program was ambitious, with activities for the general public, school children, young people, volunteers and scientists. Direlia had warned me that during the week of Art Basel in Miami the rhythm of the city was altered, making it impossible to drive around, schedule events, and even more impossible to mobilize such specific groups. Since I had been putting creativity into practice as a basic principle in the face of challenges, I wasn't worried about changing plans, so I prepared to activate the space not only collectively, but as an extension of my workshop. I gathered materials that I usually use such as ceramics, ropes and fabrics. My plan was to inhabit the spaces of the work and think-doing about all those ideas and readings that had remained invisible but were implicit in the project and in the program.

With the program ready, I returned to the frenetic rhythm of production, with a temporality so dissimilar to that of the previous reflection. At the same time, the press and catalog work began, together with the Faena Art design team. The catalog was intended to explain the history of each space, starting with the path and ending with the two small wooden sections closest to the sea, which were the buds of the flower, which we colloquially call the "lovers' benches". Vicente, on his own, talked daily with the construction team, fine-tuning the details that appear as you get closer to something, as in an infinite zoom.



VIII. Third trip

At our last meeting in Chile, we went over all the points that needed attention, the activities we were going to do, the logistics of our stay, and we turned ourselves in.

It was arranged for me to leave a few days before Paula to guide and supervise the installation of the pieces on the beach. Sunday, November 20 flight to Miami. On Monday morning I was met there, I packed my things and we left with Direlia to the beach to see the site where the pieces were being left. The first thing that surprised me was the scale and the quartering that had been done in the workshop.

In the design process, I did not plan on transporting the pieces from the workshop to the beach, and it was Jerry's decision to section each of the macro pieces into 5-6 smaller pieces that would allow him to load them onto a truck and trailer to take them to the beach. It took him 10 trips to move them all, which was an indication of the scale of the project. The next step was to delimit the space where the piece was to be positioned, fence it off and begin the layout of the work. The path was the main axis of the project, so we started from there. The first pieces were placed and that guided the layout of the *Leaves* and *Flowers*. To place the pieces of the *Leaves*, we had to dig with machinery some tremendous holes in the sand, reach the indicated depth, and place one by one each section that formed the *Leaf 1*. It was like putting together a puzzle in 3 dimensions. The malleability of the sand helped a lot to level the pieces correctly, when one of the pieces was too high, with a shovel, sand was removed and leveled. When it was lower than another, it was lifted by hand and sand was shoveled under the supports. The construction team did an exceptional job in the assembly and assembly of the pieces where the joints were

On the third trip we arranged for Vicente to arrive a few days earlier to begin, together with Jerry and the team, to the construction and assembly of the work on the beach. I would join them a few days later, accompanied by my daughter Elena, to the final part and the activation work of the program. Jerry already had the 11 pieces that made up the work ready, so the duty on the beach consisted of moving the sand, modeling the spaces with excavations and installing the pieces. From Santiago I received the information of a small inconvenience that had stopped the construction, a bureaucratic problem they mentioned, but nothing to worry about. From a distance I could only get excited, they told me that Jerry had had T-shirts made with the image of the watercolor. That drawing with which it all began.

I arrived in Miami on Thanksgiving Day, the city was at a standstill for the celebration. I met with Vicente and Direlia, who told me the extent of the small inconvenience: work was stopped due to a neighbor's complaint, permits had been suspended and the problem had escalated to the state level. Added to this was the inopportune timing of the festivities, the next day was Friday after the national holiday and therefore unlikely that the offices would be open, leaving only Monday to manage and assemble. Tuesday at 6 p.m. was the opening day.

This problem, for the first time, was out of our control. It was not a matter of a couple of decisions to be made, it depended on an external force. The counterpart of this situation was a mobilized energy so great that it only compares to the magnitude of the problem. The Faena Art team followed the complaint protocol suggested by the city inspectors and each one executed the plans they considered pertinent. First thing Monday morning we met up with Direlia, Rafa, Vicente, Elena and Elizabeth at a café in the Faena District. With my daughter we will never forget the scene of Elizabeth talking over the loudspeaker with a representative of the State, patiently but with determination, explaining the urgency of the situation and the conditions under which we had to work to arrive on time. She made it clear that this problem not only affected us —both Faena Art and the work— but also the city. On Tuesday at 6 p.m. the *Morning Glory* project opened, and with it, the Miami Art Week where 15,000 people had confirmed their attendance, among them, the Mayor and the authorities of Miami.

A few hours after that call, we were given the authorization. We went from the adrenaline of management to joint production. We had 30 hours to get everything ready. Against the clock, Jerry and his team organized themselves in shifts to work non-stop, Vicente accompanied them, making sure that every part he thought of and drew in his plans adapted to the sinuosities and irregularities of the sand. Near the work there were two other installations on the beach: an immersive digital work by *Random International*; and a light sculpture by Antonia Wright & Rubén Millares. At 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 29, the work was assembled and ready for its inauguration.

imperceptible.

Everything was going according to plan, a good part of the pathway was installed and *Leaves 1, 2* and part of the *3* were already installed-which by the way were the largest and most complex-, but the municipality stopped the work due to complaints made by some neighbors. Of the 9 days we had programmed for the installation and assembly, including lighting tests and reserve days in case of any problem, we were able to work 3 days until the stoppage. We were detained for 5 days and were authorized to continue with 36 hours left until the inauguration. There was

no time to lose.

Thanks to the fact that the first leaves were the most complex, we were able to find a method of assembly that already worked for us, so we installed *4, 5, 6,* and *7* with much greater efficiency and speed. Unlike the *Leaves* that were sinking into the sand, the *Flowers* were sticking out, which also helped in the mishap, making them quick and easy to install. Behind was a team repainting to correct the details and another wiring the

lighting.

Jerry's team is to be congratulated because with all the pressure of having the work ready and ready to go by 6 p.m. on Tuesday, November 29, everything was executed with precision day and night to reach the finish line. And we got there, not the way we would have liked, but we got there and we delivered. *Morning Glory* was alive, ready to support the large number of people who visited the inauguration.





IX. The activation

We had done it. The piece was out of my imagination and it was exciting to see the process of it all the way to being there, on the beach. The only thing we didn't get to test properly was the lighting work, but it looked good anyway. Before the inauguration we met with the jury, we talked, we took pictures, and only then, with the whole team gathered, we began to enjoy the achievement. Little by little people began to arrive, we recited the prepared speeches, people multiplied and the space became active.

As the first activation of the program, we contacted a percussion group that provided rhythm to the opening night. Some people gathered to dance, others walked or sat and talked. Without realizing it, I adopted an anthropological attitude. I was obsessed with seeing the behavior of the people in contact with the work, because that is exactly what it was about, to experience the beach in a different way, and that night I saw how everyone experienced the beach in their own way. Hours later we returned to the hotel to rest, the next program activation started first thing in the morning. Upon entering the room we found that each hotel guest had been given a chocolate with the watercolor of the project drawn on it. A touching detail.

Following the implicit story of the program—which replicated the route from the access to the beach to the seashore—the second event took place in the spaces closest to the hotel. On Wednesday, when the sun rose and set, we held breathing sessions led by Stephi Wald. The experience brought together neighbors, workers and even a group of joggers who spontaneously joined in. The sessions invited us to connect with the present and forget about what is happening in our heads to take root in time and space. I was thinking about that moment in between the breath that Paul Celan calls *Breathturn*, “the sensitive experience of the silent and motionless instant between inhalation and exhalation” (Gadamer, p.20); I was concentrating on that culminating moment because in it I found a continuous process of exchanges, inhaling and exhaling are the most modest form of reciprocity. During the session, I saw how people sat, lay down and arranged themselves to be there, present.



In the next two activations I used the space as a workshop. On Thursday morning I brought some ceramic cups to make textures in the sand replicating the action of full and empty; the concave and the convex. Present in my mind was the book *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* by Ursula K. Le Guin. The author molds the story to exchange the figure of the hunter for the figure of the gatherer, this gesture puts the hunting arrow to rest and instead makes concave spaces appear, containers for water, food or seeds. I was obsessed with the thought of how something so simple could change the history of humanity and I found the principles of *Morning Glory* in the container function. The little cups had the scale of my hand, which allowed me to generate a dialogue with the spaces of the work and repeat the action until I got tired of it. I felt I was rehearsing the thought, putting it into practice. So, first thing Friday morning, I brought ropes and set up on the path—or stem—of *Morning Glory*. Inspired by Darwin's drawings on branching, I set out to weave the ropes, plotting with the movements of the roots and Haraway's tentacularity in mind. As pleasurable as I found the exercise, I did not consider it an accomplished action and, therefore, made no record.

That same day in the afternoon the fifth act was performed. We were already closer to the sea and the work had been in contact with people for a few days. It was time to have an experience that reminded us that we are capable of capturing the environment through all our senses, and to abandon sight as our main organ for a while. At sunset we had a jam session with *Gerardo Rodriguez Jazz Quartet*. A jam session is a musical improvisation that involves being present and attentive. As it got dark and the night appeared, the sight was left without much to do, activating the body and the ear. It was an overwhelming night, we listened, danced and shared with many people who came there for different reasons.

It seems that the activation program was still ambitious, or perhaps I needed to live it to realize that, with the day-to-day movement, it was impossible to do everything. The last two acts did not take place, but I would still like to include them in my thoughts and aspirations, in case I could implement the project and its program again. The sixth act focused on circular economies and, specifically, the ability of salt

One of the things I most appreciated about this work was its autonomous capacity to develop. The work was giving us the keys to the landscape and despite all the setbacks and difficulties, it managed-with us as instruments- to flourish on the beach in Miami. Very similar to how the *Beach Morning Glory* plant unfolds in nature. This autonomy is also reflected in another aspect, unlike a conventional house-type construction, where each space is designed for a specific purpose and what happens is within a more or less limited framework of actions. In *Morning Glory* that framework of actions had no limits. Paula's and my work was a support for multiple activities to take place. Some of them were planned in the activation program designed by Paula, but many others were never imagined by us. The work was loaded with what people wanted to do in it. The morning athletes, yoga practitioners, children running and jumping from one flower to another, the man in a wheelchair, the jazz session, the photos for Instagram, and so many others that we did not even see but that they lived and that gave even more meaning to the work. Objective accomplished and expectations exceeded.

to be a clean, renewable energy source. My plan was to have someone from the sciences accompany me to the spaces closest to the sea, and to show or tell me how they are experimenting with blue energy, the energy released when fresh water comes into contact with salt water and which occurs naturally at the mouths of rivers. On the other hand, for the seventh and last act, I wanted to sit down and talk with retirees who dedicate their time to volunteering. I wanted to know their motivations, why after a lifetime of paid work they had decided to give their time for free to others. I was thinking of the tequio, that form of collective work of Mesoamerican indigenous cultures, which saw in exchange a communitarian principle. I wanted to invite to inhabit the spaces closest to the waves, and to imagine that in the face of the storm we are mobilized more by the value of exchange: by collaboration.

Many more things happened than we could foresee and organize, beyond the design, the plans or the expectations themselves. Little by little we learned some anecdotes, for example, Ananda Morera, in charge of accompanying and safeguarding the work, told us about a man in a wheelchair who visited the space every day. Accompanied by his partner, they had lunch, talked and contemplated. On the last day Ananda approached them to ask about their motivations, to which he replied that he had never been so close to the sea. This testimony left me thinking about the value of works that combine art, architecture and education, because outside the activation program, the work from its very design was intended to be lived, inhabited. *Morning Glory* was filled with a universe of different actions: Prada's production company wanted to film a commercial, a couple took their first photographs as newlyweds, a family went with suitcases to say goodbye to the beach, a group of skaters found a place to meet, etc. I wanted to go many times, day and night. I would sacredly go before going to sleep and always saw someone doing something different. Perhaps that is the value of a work that coexists ephemerally with the public space: the emotion of the event and the novelty prevent it from being absorbed by the blindness of everyday life.





X. The possibility of redoing

One of the recurring conversations during the design and redesign of the project was the possibility of donating the work so that it could be installed permanently—or at least for an extended period of time—somewhere independent of the beach. Nicole started talking to state agents to see the possibility of extending the permits, far from that, my dream was that it would be installed again in a public park and that the vegetation would begin to take over every nook and cranny until it formed a large moss in the shape of the flower. Sadly none of that happened. Once Miami Art Week was over, the permits expired and it was impossible to arrange a donation due to the speed required for dismantling. The work was taken to a warehouse, dismantled and the wood reused.

Still, I write this story in order to leave a conceptual and constructive memory, so that what has been done can be done again. Certainly, the product of collaborative work between art and architecture is the creation of large-scale works, renewed aesthetics for public space, and experimental construction systems, to name a few. But it also leaves as a result the inputs for the reproduction of the work, making possible the reduction of costs in favor of sustainable processes.

And despite the fact that the work was only active for six days, multiple were the conversations, contacts and outreach, which allows me to imagine that it is possible that *Morning Glory* will appear again. I hope that, like the flower, it will find a place where it can contribute to the regeneration of the territory through the experience that only art can offer.

XI. Recommendations

If there were a chance for *Morning Glory* to exist again, there are several things I would change in order to improve the experience for all stakeholders in the process: builders, managers, artists and users/inhabitants.

The first thing to consider is the assembly and transportation of the pieces. I think it is important to rethink and design a practical way of subdividing each *Leaf* or *Flower* into 4 or 6 independent pieces, avoiding the mismatch between them. With a good assembly system, not only the assembly of the work is simplified, but also its disassembly, avoiding losing pieces in the process. This allows its conservation and facilitates its transportation, giving it the ability to move around different places. I like to think of the mobility that the work can acquire and the analogy it keeps with the traveling seed of the *Beach Morning Glory*.

The second thing to consider and improve is the lighting of the work. Whether it is the one that is installed in the skeleton of each piece, or the external lighting that bathes the work in colors. There are many things that I didn't get to try or think about at the time. Now I imagine that with the lights you can simulate the effect of movement of plants, the wind or a breathing rhythm.

Finally, I would like to improve the way the work is shown to the public. Although the activation program proposed different approaches to the work, perhaps it was also necessary to add other mediation tools. For example, through a QR code, more information can be given about the plant, its characteristics and its importance in the ecosystem it inhabits. Or also, an aerial view of the place where the work is located can be shown, giving the user/inhabitant a perspective in height, creating a relationship of scales where it is reflected as an insect among the leaves and flowers. The organization of Faerna Art took care of many elements of the mediation for which I am very grateful, anyway, and if a future allows me to think about it again, there are still things to enhance.

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