

Editor's Picks

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Exhibitions

Christine Howard Sandoval at Parrasch Heijnen

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Christine Howard Sandoval, *Niniwas- to belong here* (installation view) (2022). Single-channel video with audio, 9 minutes and 1 second; edition of 3. Sound design in collaboration with Luz Fleming. Image courtesy of the artist and Parrasch Heijnen.

Walking into Christine Howard Sandoval's exhibition at Parrasch Heijnen immediately transports you into the artist's perspective. A large video projection, which was filmed with a bodycam mounted to Howard Sandoval's head, spans the first gallery. The camera looks down over her body as she walks barefoot across the caked earth around Mission Soledad, a Spanish mission in the Salinas Valley that settled on Chalon/Ohlone land. Howard Sandoval's methodical, first-person tracing of the land reads as a type of reclamation, a connection to her Indigenous identity wherein memory—as well as trauma—are rooted first and foremost in the body.

Sculptural mounds made from paper and rich brown adobe span the next gallery, recalling vernacular architecture and the ancient craft of basketry. The fragility of the paper forms belies the rigid strength of the dried adobe, which maintains a soft, malleable appearance even as it weaves complex, lattice-like layers. In *Split Metate, between two worlds* (2022), the woven mound is split into two mirroring shapes that nestle together but never touch—a profound representation of a severed relationship with the land.

Howard Sandoval extends her exploration of adobe and paper to large drawings in which she uses tape to apply the clay in regimented lines and grids. The caked adobe clings to the paper substrate and chips away in certain areas, leaving behind a ghostly print. Reminiscent of Agnes Martin's minimal explorations of land and meditation, these drawings seem to be studies of land that has been segmented and ordered, like crop circles and neat squares of farmland viewed from an airplane. But the exhibition's title, *the green shoot that cracks the rock*, suggests the potential for the land, and those connected to it, to rebel against the oppressive order that has all but overtaken it.

–Lindsay Preston Zappas