

ARTIST STATEMENT

MARIA V

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My art is a socially-engaged art practice that focuses on researching the human and natural ecologies that form, shift, and influence beliefs and truths. I draw from the disciplines of geology, geography, biology, and digital technology, aiming at more deeply connecting human beings to the natural and urban environments. I work with geographical data, virtual and augmented reality technologies, and natural elements like soil, rocks, and trees.

I am inspired by Guy Debord's idea of Psychogeography, which describes the psychological experience of exploring the city and illuminating forgotten, discarded, and marginalized aspects of hyperlocal communities. I construct sculpture installations, often site-specific, using found materials consisting of soil, plants, trash, or trees. I take on the role of a scientist or biologist, I immerse myself in field research—collecting data, observing the natural and urban environment, using the studio as a laboratory, and experimenting with forms and theories that inform my art practice.

The artform produced by my research is a response, an acknowledgement, an offering, a feedback, a correspondence between me and the urban environment. In my attempt to connect and better understand my current human ecology, I search for, and research social structures and constructs that have influenced human's thoughts and beliefs, I deconstruct them, analyze them, and reassemble them back together searching for congruency between what I see, believe, and what I know to be true.

I follow my deep connection to the land and nature and I search for, and create participatory art experiences that may compel the public to temporarily abandon their ordinary perception of the city streets, wander about, and further explore the boundaries or their psychological geography. These explorations often result in the revival, or re-enchantment of the urban landscape, as well as the re-assessment of our place within the larger natural environment.