

Christine Howard Sandoval

A wall is a shadow on the land

In a meditation on land, language and architecture, Vancouver-based Obispeño Chumash and Hispanic artist Christine Howard Sandoval re-considers the insidious meaning-making power of the archive in her solo exhibition *A wall is a shadow on the land*. Through the use of adobe, a desert building material made from clay, sand and soil and deeply connected to her own family's histories and practices, Howard Sandoval considers how land is and has been inhabited, the stories embedded in it and the potential futures it holds.

Howard Sandoval reconfigures the typology of Spanish mission architecture in a series of new adobe sculptures and large-scale drawings. Brought together with archival documents and the artist's own fourth-grade school report on the California missions, she works to dislodge the deep-rooted colonial fictions that narrate the histories of her ancestral homeland in Alta California. *A wall is a shadow on the land* points to the ways in which narratives of colonial erasure are rehearsed within the public school system, and how the ongoing physical presence of mission sites on unceded Indigenous land in the western US are markers of the systemic proliferation of the imperial project and its persistent conditions today.

To learn more about Christine Howard Sandoval's research, visit her online project on STTLMNT, an Indigenous digital occupation, at www.sttlmnt.org/projects/a-wall-is-a-shadow-on-the-land



Cover image: Christine Howard Sandoval, *The Eaters* (detail), 2020, adobe mud, masking tape, postcard, and steel

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- 1 **Archival—for Rosario Cooper and my 10 year old self**, 2020
digitized collage printed on vinyl
dimensions variable
- 2 **Arch—A Passage Formed By A Curve**, 2020
adobe mud, graphite on paper
60 x 96 inches
- 3 **Pillars—An Act Of Decompression**, 2020
adobe mud, graphite on paper
60 x 96 inches
- 4 **A wall is a shadow on the land**, 2020
adobe mud, graphite on paper
60 x 96 inches
- 5 **Mound—The Angle Of Integration**, 2018
adobe mud, graphite on paper
60 x 96 inches
- 6 **The Eaters**, 2020
adobe mud, masking tape, postcard, steel
dimensions variable

- 7a **Archival documents** [from bottom to top]
Fourth-grade mission report prompts
received by the artist, 1985 [reproduction]
Collection of the artist
- Artist unknown, "Digger Indian Lodges and
Hut," n.d. [reproduction]
Collection of Early Californian and Western
American Pictorial Material, UC Berkeley,
Bancroft Library
- Christine Howard Sandoval, "San Francisco
de Asis Mission," 1985
Collection of the artist

- 7b **Archival documents** [from bottom to top]
Field notes, "Corma," n.d. [reproduction]
Reproduced from Deborah A. Miranda, "Bad
Indians: a Tribal Memoir," Heyday, 2013
- Christine Howard Sandoval, "Glossary,"
1985 [reproduction]
Collection of the artist
- Christine Howard Sandoval, "Map of 21
Missions," 1985
Collection of the artist
- Jose Cardero, "Vista del Presidio de Monte
Rey," 1791-1792 [reproduction]
Collection of Early Californian and Western
American Pictorial Material, UC Berkeley,
Bancroft Library

