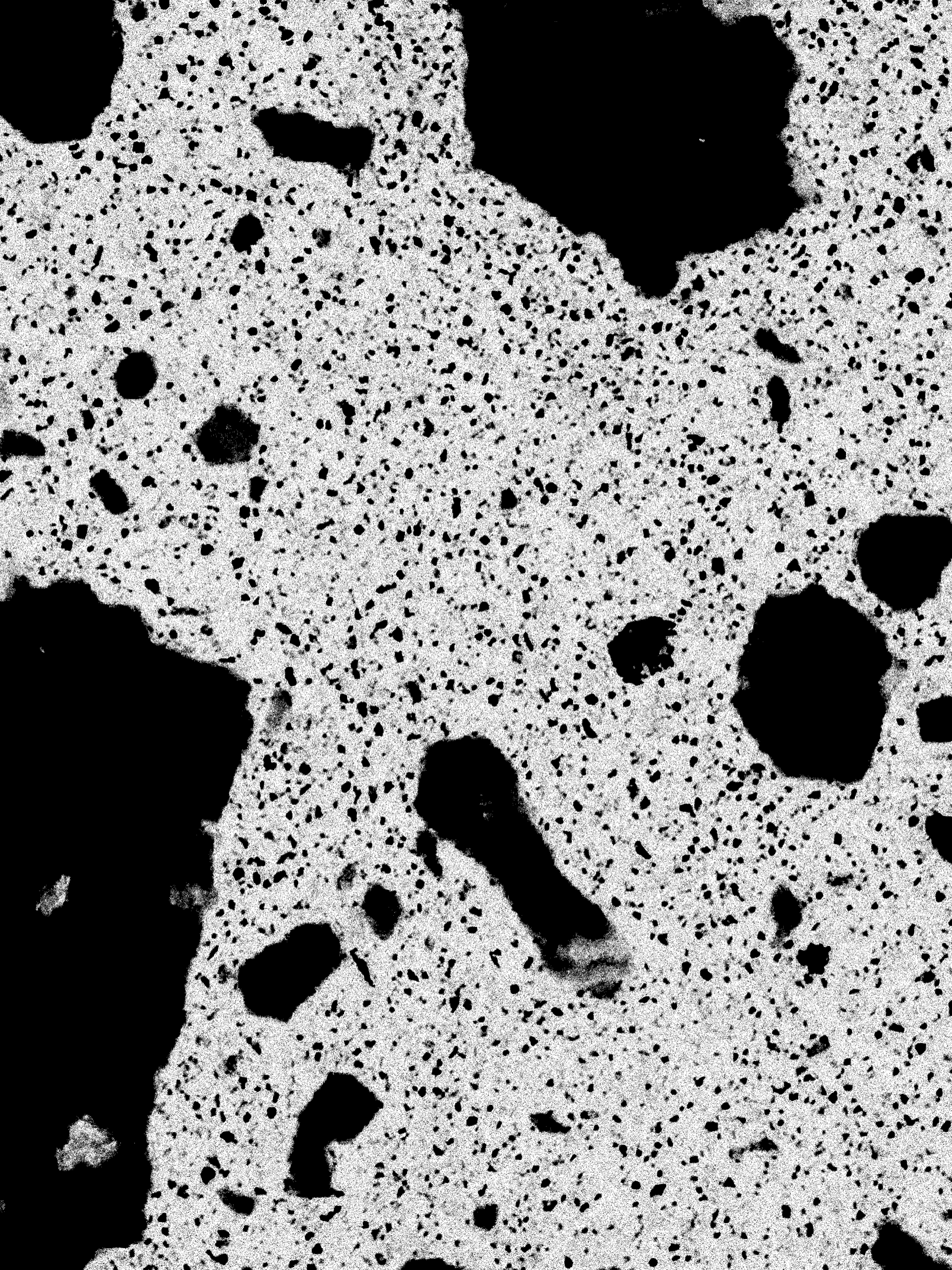


PIEDRAS VIVAS

Tezontle

PEANA PROJECTS



Christian Camacho-Light

In their debut solo exhibition, *Piedras Vivas*, Mexico City-based collaborative duo Tezontle offer works that function between found object and sculpture, cast and form, archaeology and invention. Revealing traces of their fabrication, the works in the exhibition point to the active and composite nature of national and cultural narratives, history being always as much an aggregate of fiction as that of reality.

Enacting a quotidian archaeology, Tezontle collect objects in and around Mexico City, which then find themselves variously arranged on their studio's worktable. These smaller, found objects share space with larger-scale sculptures produced via a manual and labor intensive casting process.

Casting allows Tezontle to think monolithically, through the simultaneously whole and composite, drawing connections between both disparate aesthetic disciplines and cultural generations. The result are geological artifacts untethered to a sole temporality.

Looking to Pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican artifacts and mid-twentieth century Mexican architecture, Tezontle combine these historical reference points in the production of a hybridized culture, one in which excavated and imagined past alike hold sway. Populated by monolithic, geometrical forms equally suited to both ancient and modern aesthetic landscapes, this

mixed culture is distinctly Mexican, married by shared terrain. Tezontle themselves borrow their moniker from a reddish volcanic rock native to Central Mexico, first used by the Mexica civilization to construct dwellings and monuments, and later by Spanish colonialists who built their own settlements with the rubble of Tenochtitlan. Buildings erected in the twentieth century bore a mixture of tezontle and concrete—that most characteristically modern of materials—as a newly modernized Mexico looked to the Pre-Hispanic past in order to envision a national future.

In *Piedras Vivas*, artworks disclose their tools and methods of fabrication, intended sculptures displayed alongside empty molds and synthetic materials their organic referents. Like a puzzle, the viewer is led to make connections between positive and negative space, nature and facsimile, reconstructing the duo's process as though exhibition space was archaeological site. *Risco*, for example, is a monolithic slab comprised of concrete mixed with an aggregate of imitation tezontle fabricated by the artists. On a shelf nearby, the actual stone sits. Another work, *Crater*, sees a ruddy, ovoid form in relationship with its mold, a hollow bearing the stains and colors of previous castings. Placed within the gallery, this unintended artwork becomes a sculpture in its own right. Additional molds, used to

produce other, absented sculptures, are positioned on a plywood worktable, recalling its correlate in the duo's studio. Leaving behind dents and impressions like ghosts, the molds evoke history through suggestion and void.

A series of pebbles, both found and fabricated, also play between simulacrum and referent, though now more directly engaging issues of scale. The found pebbles are presented on a concrete shelf, some held tightly together with an industrial rubber band. Displayed in this way, the objects come to resemble magical talismans or ancient artifacts, or perhaps the sort of Mesoamerican souvenirs of dubious origin readily found and purchased in local street markets. Alongside these objects are sculptures cast in pigmented concrete, which echo the pebble forms in larger scale. These *Piedras* are installed resting upon and held upright by their mother molds, which take on the role of plinths, extending their support outside the studio and into the space and time of exhibition.

Mapping an archaeological landscape of their own design, Tezontle yield a past that sits alongside our present, filling with fantasy gaps lost to memory. If history is the mold through which we fashion our collective future, Tezontle's work leads us to consider that its aggregates are a mixed bag, and a culture's monuments those which it resolves to make for itself.



Tezontle

Risco, 2017

Pigmented concrete, found stone, wood.

35.83 × 15.75 × 7.09 in.

91 × 40 × 18 cm



Tezontle

The last cast, 2017

MDF wood, car filler, concrete.

33.07 × 23.62 × 7.87 in.

84 × 60 × 20 cm



Tezontle

Abrazo, 2017

Found stones, steel bracket, pigmented concrete, rubber band.

7.09 × 14.96 × 5.90 in.

18 × 38 × 15 cm



Tezontle

Cabeza, 2016

Pigmented concrete, steel bracket and obsidian plate.

7.09 × 14.96 × 5.90 in.

18 × 38 × 15 cm



Tezontle

Jardín de dedos, 2017

Concrete, found stone, steel bracket, prehispanic chisel.

7.09 × 19.69 × 13.78 in.

18 × 50 × 35 cm



Tezontle

Crater I, 2017

Pigmented concrete.

31.50 × 31.50 × 3.94 in.

80 × 80 × 10 cm



Tezontle
Detalle Crater I, 2017



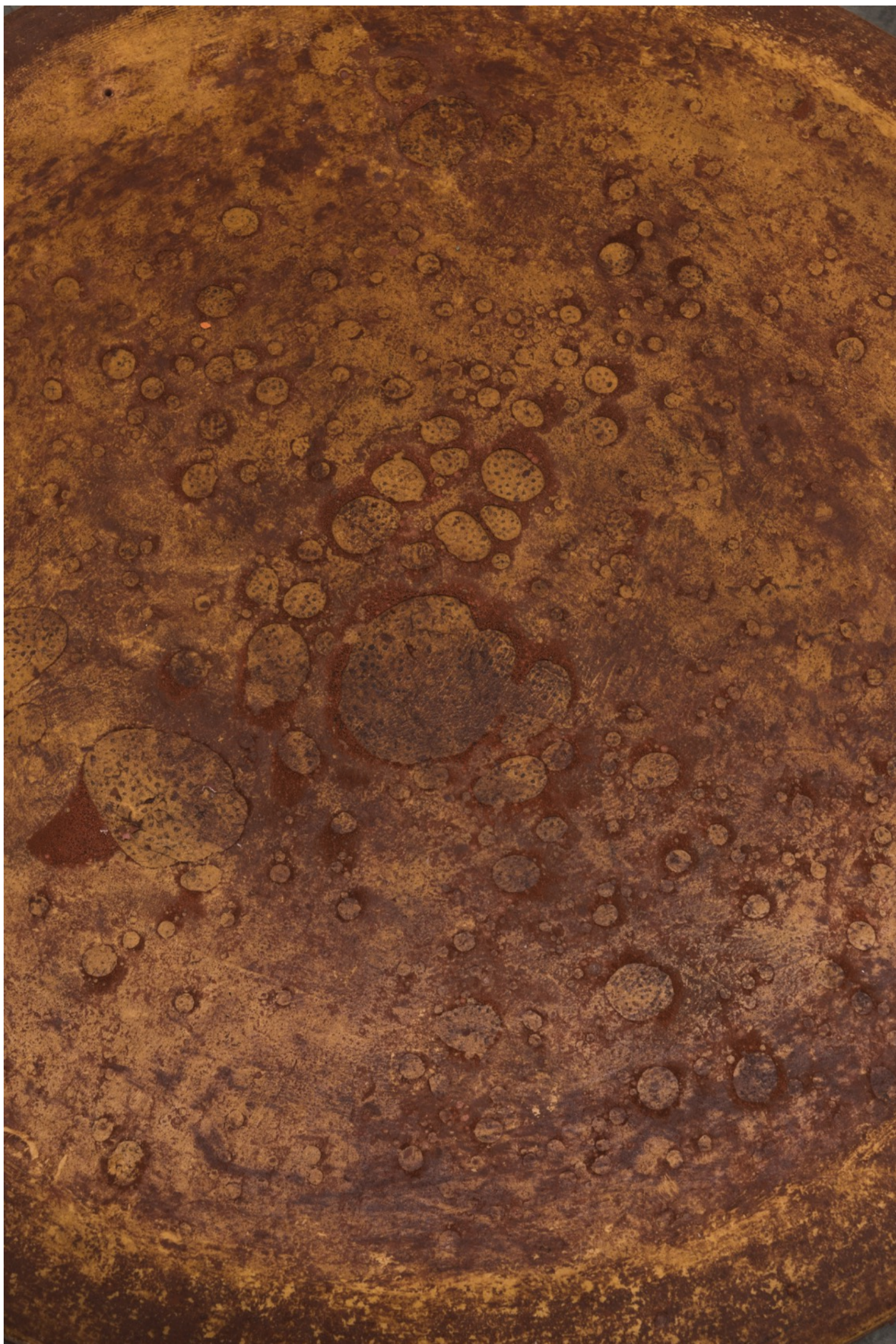
Tezontle

Inserto 2017

MDF wood, pigment, steel.

33.46 × 33.46 × 3.94 in.

85 × 85 × 10 cm



Tezontle
Detalle Inserto, 2017



Tezontle

Molde contención, 2017

MDF wood, pigment.

47.24 × 47.24 × 5.90 in.

120 × 120 × 15 cm



Tezontle

Volcán 2017

Pigmented concrete.

35.43 × 33.07 × 23.62 in.

90 × 84 × 60 cm

ed. 1 of 5 + 2 APs



Tezontle

Piedra ligera I, 2017

Fiber glass, steel.

47.24 × 11.02 × 7.87 in.

120 × 28 × 20 cm



Tezontle

Piedra ligera II 2017

Foam.

62.99 × 17.72 × 15.75 in.

160 × 45 × 40 cm



Tezontle

Mesa de Trabajo 2017

Wood, found stones, pigmented concrete, various objects.

70.87 × 70.87 × 5.90 in.

180 × 180 × 15 cm



Tezontle

Piedra 1 (Abrazo), 2017

Pigmented concrete, rubber band.

47.24 × 23.62 × 23.62 in.

120 × 60 × 60 cm

ed. 2 of 5 + 2 APs



Tezontle

Piedra 3 - Piedra en su molde, 2017

MDF wood, pigmented concrete.

51.18 × 25.59 × 17.72 in.

130 × 65 × 45 cm

ed. 1 of 1 + 1 AP



Tezontle

Piedra 4 (Punta de piedra), 2017

Pigmented concrete.

23.62 × 11.02 × 17.72 in.

60 × 28 × 45 cm



Tezontle

Piedra 6 (Extensión en su molde), 2017

MDF wood, pigmented concrete.

16.92 × 14.17 × 18.50 in.

43 × 36 × 47 cm



Tezontle

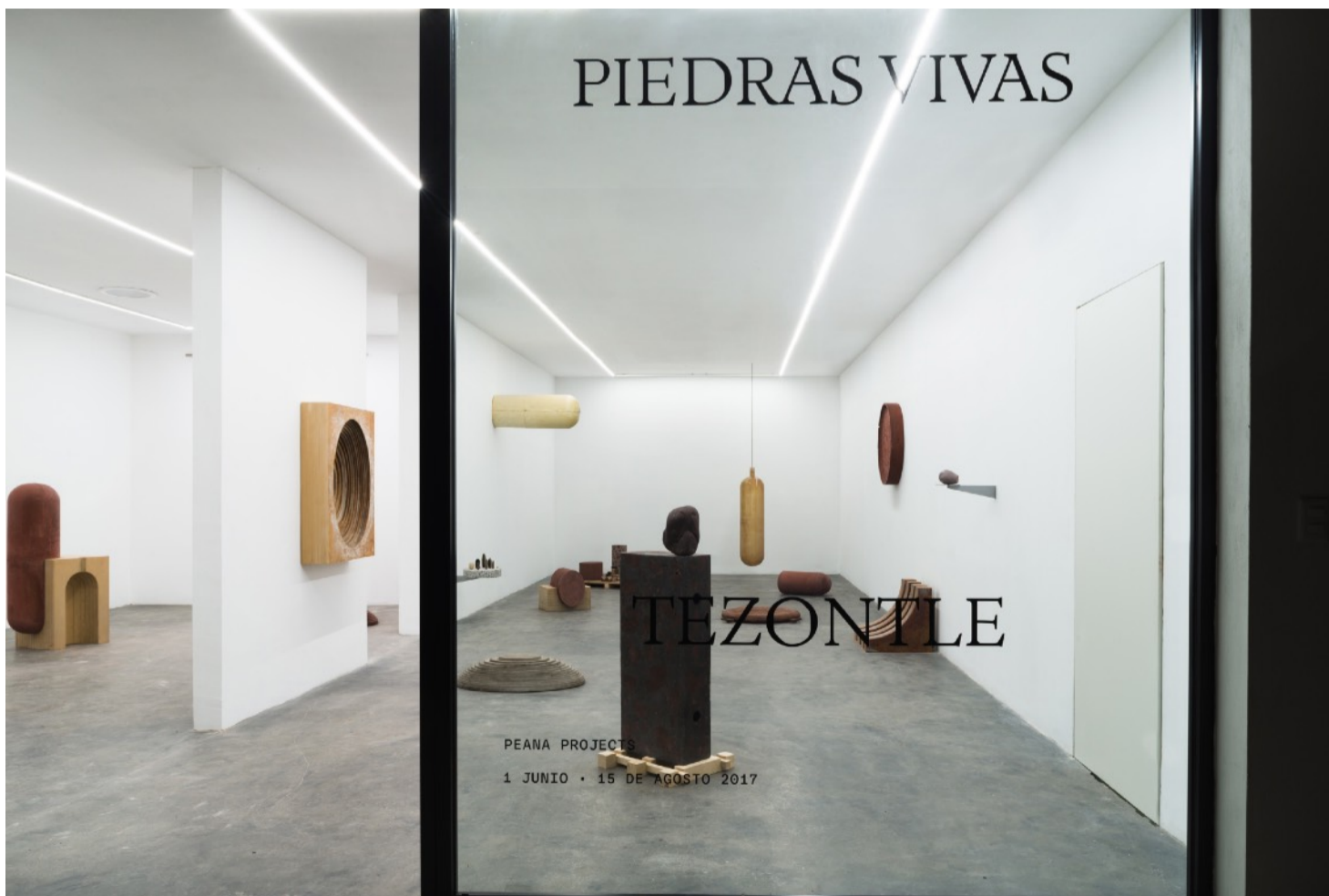
Ídolo 4, 2017

Pigmented concrete and tezontle stone aggregate.

15.74 × 11.81 × 11.81 in.

40 × 30 × 30 cm

INSTALLATION VIEWS



Tezontle
Installation view



Tezontle
Installation view



Tezontle
Installation view



Tezontle
Installation view



Tezontle
Installation view



Tezontle
Installation view