

Ecology – how we relate with others and our environment – is the cornerstone of my work. I experiment with nature-culture practices and narratives to reflect on our interconnectedness with all of life. This can take the form of sound and voice works, artist books, spatial interventions and performative experiences, artist residencies, workshops or bespoke support for individuals and organisations. I see my work as gestures or offerings that provide time and space for people to reflect, connect with, (re)create, celebrate, (re)value, harmonize or simply observe our place in the world.

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*To calm the mind, to relax the cells,
to stop for a moment the overdose of information;
to allow ourselves to find comfort for the great changes
in the past and in the future;
to mourn the loss of nature.*



Ocaso Mallorca live reading and lullabies, April 2025, as part of the exhibition HEARTH in CCA Andratx.

Ocaso Mallorca, 2025

Installation with sound, texts and hammocks

Ocaso (Sundown) is a space for rest and reflection on our place in the world, at this critical turning point on Earth. An immersive installation in which overflowing, sounds of lullabies for humanity interweave with site-specific stories about the past, present and future of nature in the place where the work is installed. Simple, hand-woven hammocks invite visitors to relax, listen and read the stories aloud to themselves or others in the space.

Initially created for the XIII Havana Biennial in Havana, Cuba (2019), *Ocaso* has been installed in various iterations since: Berlin, Panama, Santiago de Chile, and most recently, Mallorca. The stories are written or edited for each place, while the hammocks and sound remain the same.

Ocaso Mallorca was presented in the CCA Andratx from March to May 2025 as part of a group show curated by Sylvia Sánchez-Montoya called HEARTH.

[Link to Ocaso](#)



SUELO Field Guide, 2025

SUELO is a methodology designed to reconnect with the places we inhabit, through the concept, metaphor and materiality of soil as sustenance, home, land and territory. It seeks to rearticulate the natural and cultural value of a selected place, create networks of collaborative solidarity, and promote regenerative practices of collective co-creation for a better present and future. It is based on Estudio Nuboso's pilot project of the same name in 2014 and has become a large part of my practice.

The methodology uses the image of a soil profile to reveal the layers of history and present of a place, upon which the future is co-created. It addresses the diverse associations, uses and multifaceted effects that soil has on our lives, culture and livelihoods. It takes note of the possible spheres of action: from the microcosm to the macrocosm; from the body, home and garden to the planet.

This **SUELO Field Guide** helps the facilitator or implementer of the methodology to design a path of inquiry (for themselves, a group or a community) that will unfold over a chosen period of time.

Text and SUELO diagrams by Ela Spalding
 Edited by Julieta Ledezma
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 with illustrations by Dominique Ratton Pérez



SUELO Mallorca, 2025 - open ended

Invited by Es Baluard Museu to rethink the Balearic territory through their project Biennial B, I was invited to host SUELO Mallorca in 2025. This experiential program seeks to articulate and share the natural and cultural value of the island to rethink its present and consider a more regenerative future for the Balearic Islands. Through four field trips over four days and at different locations, we connect with the island's deep past, with ecological initiatives and experiences connected to all the senses.

Cumulatively, these experiences will provide a multisensory impression of what Mallorca has been, is, and can be. SUELO offers an opportunity to exchange knowledge, (re)discover and celebrate forgotten practices or particularities of the place, and learn about and share stories, creative practices, other economies, and other ways of living here.



Cúmulus: 10+ years of Estudio Nuboso

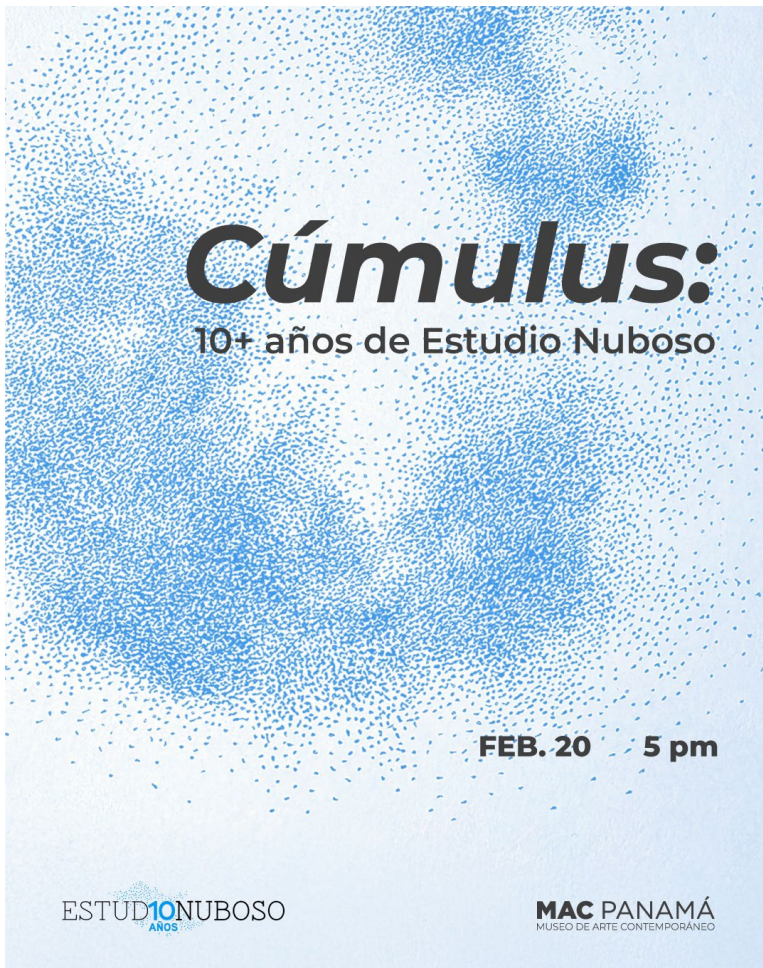
at MAC – Contemporary Art Museum of Panamá
from February 20th to August 10th, 2025

Cumulus is the meeting, union or sum of many non-material things. And cumulus is also a type of cotton-like cloud that can form in rows or in groups, which can often be seen on sunny days. Depending on the effects of other atmospheric factors, like instability, humidity, and thermal gradient, cumulus are precursors to other types of clouds, which can lead to precipitation.

Estudio Nuboso is an initiative born more than ten years ago in Panama founded by artist-facilitator Ela Spalding (Panama, 1982) as an organization of art and ecology dedicated to encouraging a better relationship between humans and the natural contexts we inhabit. Through a collective and flexible work structure that organizes residencies, workshops, publications, exhibitions and audiovisual projects, Estudio Nuboso has been concerned with creating space and time to connect with the environment, and with human and more-than-human communities, focusing on the care, research and regeneration of the Panamanian tropical ecosystems. Throughout this time, Estudio Nuboso has been generating a cumulus of collaborators, gathering allied particles that join forces depending on the project, and then reorganize themselves in diverse configurations. The exhibition shows the work of 20+ artists produced through Estudio Nuboso over the last decade.

Co-curated by Juan Canela, Jennifer Choy, Mana Pinto and Ela Spalding.

www.estudionuboso.org





Forces, 2022

Music album

Forces is a compilation of songs and field recordings written and collected between 2012 and 2020. In varying degrees, they refer to our connection with nature and also to the human obstacles that seem to consistently get in the way of us having more harmonious relationships with each other and our surroundings. The songs are a raw expression and reflection of my ongoing research and engagement with ecological topics in both my work and personal life.

Forces, as a performance can link into different topics / forces of nature such as *Forces in Soil* (part of the public program of the exhibition *Soil Conversations* at Galerie im Körnerpark, Berlin) in which the songs were performed alongside field recordings, soil sounds and a performative reading of ecological texts.

[Link to the album](#)

Vida, 2020

video art

Visuals: Laura Fong. Sound: Ela Spalding. Duration: 5'03"

[Link to Vida](#)

Two friends who share time between Panama and Berlin found themselves on opposite sides of the world during the covid-19 pandemic. Based on their voice notes to each other, they created this first collaboration reflecting on the effects of the crisis on family life as well as society as a whole.

Vida is a personal response to how to approach life today as mothers and humans.





In Our Hands, 2018-2020

Photo collages / e-book and card set in tin box / workshop series

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, humans have changed environmental systems at a rate greater than at any other time in history - so much so that a new geological era, the Anthropocene, has been named in our honor. The choice to continue our relationship with the environment and nature in destructive or constructive ways is in our hands.

Mudras are hand postures that can influence our mood, attitudes, and perception, as well as deepen our awareness and concentration. They are an integral part of some yoga practices and other well-being traditions. This particular selection of mudras is based on the work of Gertrud Hirschi who has published various books on the topic.

In Our Hands offers an opportunity to bridge the gap between ourselves and our environment, and to point to a connection between our state of health and the state of our planet. The series of 24 images is intended as a toolbox to help us take more care of ourselves, better care of each other and of nature - to protect it, restore it, learn from it, or just to be in it and appreciate it.

The e-book and card set have been published in English and Spanish. The workshops have been held in person and online both in English and Spanish.



Workshop during the Climate Care Programme at Floating University, Berlin 2019



BALANCE

Instructions:

Make two half-moons with your hands. The base of the hands, the thumbs and the tips of the fingers are together. Rub the fingertips together so as to activate the points of contact. Then separate the fingers slightly and rub the bases of the hands together. Hold the hands at the height of your chest. Bring the fingertips together during the inhale and the bases of the hands during the exhale, creating a light rhythmical movement with every breath. You can focus on the root chakra.

Effect:

This mudra promotes mental balance and stabilises mood swings. All of life experiences highs and lows: the tides, the weather, as well as ourselves. This mudra - like walking, singing, sharing our feelings, eating regularly, establishing healthy patterns of activity and rest - can help us to go through the ups and downs like waves instead of spikes. Take things as they come with ease.

BALANCE



Songs for Limón, Songs for Colón, Installation detail X. Bienal Centroamericana, Limón, Costa Rica, 2016



Songs for Limón, Songs for Colón, 2016

Sound intervention with a jukebox

Conceived for the X. Bienal Centroamericana in Limón, Costa Rica, curated by Tamara Díaz Bringas.

Songs for Limón, Songs for Colón is a luminous jukebox that creates a solidarity musical bridge between the cities of Limón (Costa Rica) and Colón (Panamá). The actual medium of the work was the sound waves of the calypso music that the jukebox played. It provided the perfect excuse for activating the installation site as a social meeting space around the ideas behind the work. Horizonte Rocola - as we named the space - came to life through cleaning, painting, collecting books and stories, with workshops, concerts and various formats of exchange in collaboration with the temporary local collective Islas Resonantes.

Panamá Caribe, 2015

Participatory performance in the city of Colón, Panama

Video documentation of the gesture as well as video portraits of the cultural groups.

Commissioned by curator Sebastián Calderón Bentin for INTEROCEÁNICO, the Panamanian contribution to the cultural event *Fluid States: Performances of UnKnowing*, organised by Performance Studies international (PSi).

Panamá Caribe is a symbolic gesture for the 100th anniversary of the Panama Canal and the celebrations that should have taken place to honour the historical and cultural importance of the city of Colón (the Caribbean side of the canal) for the identity and development of the whole country. Built for the construction of the Canal in the early 1900's, Colón had a period of great splendour. In time, mostly inhabited by black communities of caribbean descent, Colón has suffered from racial discrimination demonstrated by low interest and care from the central government, and decades of high unemployment and crime rates. In the face of a new development plan for the city that systematically erases its history and its people, *Panamá Caribe* suggests the idea of a different approach that could have the potential to boost the city's economy through its true wealth: its people and its culture. The work was created in connection to the anniversary celebrations of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915 in California. These celebrations were part of a (successful) scheme to stimulate the economies of San Francisco and San Diego, using the occasion of the completion of the Panama Canal as the driver.

[Link to video](#)



Panamá Caribe, Video stills, *Fluid States: Performances of UnKnowing*, Colón, Panama, 2015

*During a Caribbean sunset, a gesture was performed
suggesting a festival overlooking the sea,
with synchronised swimming,
synchronised festivities and parallel stories.*

*Five cultural groups showed three historical periods of Colón in one time and space.
Their actions and colourful flags honour the role of Colón in Panama's history
highlighting its present, with all the power and beauty of its natural and cultural heritage.*