



Dane County/Kassel, Germany Exchange Interviews **EUARCA+22** Angelica Contreras

In a few sentences, how would you describe this opportunity to others? What were some of the main activities that you did there?

I heard about EUARCA+22 Art Camp through Dane Arts and when the call was shared I went right ahead and applied. The process was pretty straightforward. I had never applied to any sort of residency or artist camp prior to this and I felt it was time to further professionalize my own practice and find a space without distractions to reflect on my work, learn from others and the environment.

How did you learn about this opportunity? What initially made you interested?

This was my first residency/art camp experience, so I had no prior knowledge to expect. I was pleasantly surprised to meet a friendly community of artists from different countries, speaking different languages and working on different mediums.



Prior to traveling, what did you know about Kassel and/or Germany?

I had heard of Documenta but didn't realize it took place in the city of Kassel, Germany. It's truly a great city to visit. I was impressed by all the organization and funding that went into an event of this caliber. It's amazing to see such interest and openness to the arts in this country.



How have you shared this experience with others since returning?

I was very excited to be invited as a guest artist speaker at the elementary school I work at. I made a small presentation about my work and included some slides about EUARCA+22. I explained what artists do, what inspires us, our process, etc. The children were very curious and asked many questions about my trip to Kassel. My intent is to further share my work and process with the community, so they understand the importance and possibilities that the arts can bring to their lives.

What is your professional background?

I studied visual arts in Mexico at the University of Guadalajara and later completed a masters degree in art education at the same university. I paint mostly mixed media with themes of identity, tradition, and popular culture. I've shown my work in exhibitions both in Mexico and the U.S. I currently live in Madison where I continue to create and showcase my art.

How did this experience influence/contribute towards your professional/personal/artistic life?

Euarca+22 brings artists from different parts of the world that have different points of views and work in work in diverse media, so it will be a great opportunity to research and reflect on the type of work I want to create in the future. As artists we tend to isolate ourselves, so this experience has allowed me to open myself to new mediums and languages and overall to the possibilities of art and its importance as a social and communal practice.

Kassel-Dane Sister County Taskforce