# Maria Gaspar

Illinois | Social Practice
Chamberlain Award Program 2017

## Artist Statement

My art practice negotiates visibility, belonging, and the politics of location. Using installation, sculpture, performance, sound, and participatory actions, I examine historical narratives and spatial codes, both individually and collectively. By challenging understandings of geography and place, I work to mediate, subvert, and reveal the familiar or unnoticed. The color brown is persistent in my work. It acts as signifier of isolation, displacement, and dis-belonging, relative to my family's immigrant experience from Mexico to the United States. In my large-scale community-based projects, the durational, long-term, and collective are important elements. These projects require me to spend significant time in a community and cultivate tender relationships with a group of participants. Therefore, I consider the balance between choreography and improvisation as critical forms of engagement within my projects. Through interdisciplinary and interrogative approaches, my work manifests the crises within division of power and seeks to propose counter narratives.

## While At Headlands

While at Headlands, I will be researching and developing an artist book that digs deep into issues of walls as dividers, separators, and barriers. Through writing, sound, and drawing, the artist book will bring together my community-based practices around contested geographies, power, and spatial justice, especially at a time of heightened xenophobia,