

Press Release

Drinking Mercury

Curated by **Naira Corzon Cortez**

On view:

October 17 - November 13, 2026

Tuesday - Friday 3pm - 7pm

Opening Reception:

Friday, October 16, 7pm - 9pm

Location:

Casa Passiflora, Calle Comercio 1432, La Paz, Bolivia

Featuring work by:

Viviana Mamani Cori - Nayra Corzon - Wara Vargas Lara - Mariel Terán

Drinking Mercury is an exhibition confronting the consequences of illegal gold mining around La Paz, Bolivia.

Mining cooperatives have proliferated across La Paz, Bolivia, including the zones surrounding the Hampaturi, Milluni and Incachaca reservoirs, which supply drinking water to more than a million people. Mercury used in artisanal gold extraction is entering the watershed. Forty extraction sites have been identified on the slopes of Illimani, the sacred mountain watching over La Paz, ancestral deity of the Altiplano, now scarred by open wounds. Authorities have failed to act. The gold rush continues. The water flows into homes, glasses and bodies.

Working across sound, video, photography and installation, four artists respond independently to this shared reality. **Viviana Mamani Cori's** video *Permissible Limits* interrogates how media representations mask environmental contamination. **Wara Vargas Lara's** photobook *All Rivers Flow into the Sea* documents the photographer's years of engagement with mining sites and gold extraction in the Bolivian Amazon and Milluni (La Paz), revealing how all water bodies are interconnected and contamination inevitably circulates through them. **Nayra Corzon's** installation *Archives of Moss and Other Papers* presents intervened books, including legal documents on environmental protection and Mother Earth laws, transformed into degraded, mined territories where moss and biological material overwrite text, dissolving the distinction between knowledge, contamination and terrain. **Mariel Terán's** electroacoustic installation *Earth Hands* invites the listener to hear a twelve minute piece featuring traditional Andean instruments while contemplating an earth mound. The installation explores the vibrant materiality of earth and matter's vitality even in territories of extraction and ruin.

Drinking Mercury was selected through apexart's Open Call. For more information and images visit apexart.org/cortez.php or contact press@apexart.org.

apexart - la paz, bolivia



Wara Vargas Lara, photograph from *All Rivers Flow into the Sea*, 2026

Naira Corzon (aka Nayra Corzon) is an artist and academic based in La Paz, Bolivia. Trained as a literary scholar (PhD), she is drawn to what escapes language: the sonic life of stones, the feeling of a mountain being excavated.

apexart's program supporters past and present Affirmation Arts Fund, The Buhl Foundation, the Eisenberg Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The William Talbot Hillman Foundation, Epstein-Teicher Philanthropies, Fifth Floor Foundation, Greenwich Collection Ltd., the Kettering Family Foundation, the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, LMCC, Mindel Family Charitable Annuity Trust, the National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Puffin Foundation.

#DrinkingMercury

291 church street, new york, ny 10013
t +1 212 431 5270 www.apexart.org