

Seattle, WA
October 7, 2025



Priscilla Dobler Dzul: Water Carries the Stories of Our Stars

Ja'e' ku bisik u k'ajláayil k Eek'

El agua lleva las historias de nuestras estrellas

October 18, 2025–April 19, 2026

Water Carries the Stories of Our Stars marks interdisciplinary artist Priscilla Dobler Dzul's debut solo museum exhibition. Organized by the Frye Art Museum, this show features an entirely new body of work that integrates sculpture, textile, and video to chart urgent themes of cultural identity, environmental destruction, and interconnectedness across two regions: Yucatán, Mexico, and Tacoma, Washington.

"My debut solo museum show, and most ambitious project to date, brings together new works to bridge Tacoma and Yucatán through a multidisciplinary narrative rooted in the

revitalization of cultural and ecological legacies,” shares Dobler Dzul. “At its core, the work is about water—how it connects us across borders and sustains life—as I reflect on the consequences of its loss for my communities in the Pacific Northwest and Mexico.”

Drawing from her multicultural upbringing, Maya heritage, and a years-long project of rigorous research, Dobler Dzul’s work reflects her personal and artistic exploration of labor, land, and language. Working with Maya elders, the artist draws on both centuries-old and contemporary techniques. Integrating materials sourced directly from her homelands, such as Pacific Northwest clay and natural fibers and pigments from the Yucatán, she surfaces the ecological crises affecting the two landscapes, with particular attention to the degradation of their living waters. Her practice serves as both artistic method and cultural communion; collectively, the work forges new pathways in storytelling.

Some of the new work developed for the exhibition was created in residencies at facilities across the Pacific Northwest, with collaborative support from the University of Washington’s 3D4M (3-Dimensional Forum) Program in the School of Art and Tacoma’s Museum of Glass.

Through the exhibition’s multimedia presentation, Dobler Dzul illuminates Maya cosmology as ancestral and futurist understandings of the stars and natural world. The Maya were masterful astronomers who mapped the heavens with extraordinary precision, viewing celestial bodies as ancestral spirits and divine guides. As in Maya belief, for Dobler Dzul the sky and water are spiritually intertwined: portals between worlds, carriers of memory, and conduits for stories passed across generations.

A major focus of the exhibition is the ecological crises affecting both of her home regions, specifically the impacts of water contamination and loss caused by industrial pollution and tourism. Using clay, wood, and natural fibers and pigments, she depicts hybrid animals, human figures, and lush plant life that speak to the cyclical rhythms of nature and the interwoven relationships that are threatened by contemporary society’s general disregard for the natural world. Videos capture the artist’s labor-intensive process as she performs in Washington wetlands and Yucatán cenotes, unfolding across the seasons to reveal natural beauty, cycles of rebirth, and painful truths of ecological decline.

The exhibition also addresses the power of Indigenous voices, highlighting the ways Maya communities actively disrupted, and continue to disrupt, the visual culture of post-revolutionary Mexico (which often normalizes settler colonial narratives and marginalizes Indigenous voices), asserting their agency in shaping cultural landscapes. Dobler Dzul collaborates with Maya elders to integrate cultural practices across her work. With her inclusion of the Yucatec Maya language—appearing in select artwork titles and a poem she authored for one of the videos—she extends the space-time continuum of ritual, ancestral memory, and contemporary storytelling.

Among the ceramic sculptures newly created for the exhibition are works that also function as whistles, like those used for ceremonies of war during the pre-Columbian era. Their call also conjures the sounds of nature mostly obscured by the present conditions of urban life. For Dobler Dzul, this represents the critical juncture at which we now stand: hand-in-hand with environmental destruction and species loss goes the disappearance of language and the audible record of these spaces and life-forms. As she urges, “We have to make whistles and go to battle. If we don’t hear the birds or the winds, now we have to scream.”



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Priscilla Dobler Dzul (born 1985, Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico) is an interdisciplinary artist and storyteller who reimagines Indigenous myths and revitalizes artisanal crafts. Working across textile, sculpture, painting, and video, she creates alternative narratives that challenge dominant perceptions of labor and power. Her practice bridges centuries-old and contemporary approaches, offering vivid, multilayered perspectives on identity, heritage, and transformation.

Dobler Dzul's work has been exhibited internationally at venues including ARCOMadrid ArtFair (Madrid); Material Art Fair (Mexico City); Decentered Gallery (Puebla, Mexico); and Nome Gallery (Berlin). Across the United States, her work has been displayed at MadArt, King Street Station, the Olympic Sculpture Park, the Northwest African American Museum, and the Consulate of Mexico (Seattle); AIR Gallery and NARS Foundation (Brooklyn); 601 Artspace and 125 Maiden Lane (New York); Project for Empty Space (Newark); Untitled Art Fair (Miami); and Orange County Center for Contemporary Art (Santa Ana, CA).

Priscilla Dobler Dzul: Water Carries the Stories of Our Stars is organized by Tamar Benzikry, Director and Curator of Learning and Engagement.

Generous support provided by the Hayward-Hughes Family, the Raynier Institute & Foundation, and Frye Members. Media sponsorship provided by KUOW.

Seasonal support provided by 4Culture.



Additional thanks to the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Washington's 3D4M Program in the School of Art.

Images: Priscilla Dobler Dzul. *Nuestros cielos una vez estuvieron llenos de estrellas / Our skies were once filled with stars* (detail), 2025. Jute fiber, cotton thread, western red cedar wood, natural pigments. 48 x 115 in. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Mel Carter; Priscilla Dobler Dzul. *Vessels of Knowledge (doce)*, 2023. Clay and henequen thorns. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: AJ Lenzi

About the Frye Art Museum

Founded in 1952, the Frye is Seattle's free art museum, bringing together art and new ideas within a stunning Olson Sundberg Kundig-designed building in historic First Hill. The museum connects Seattle with the art and artists of our time. We collect, exhibit, program, and build community around a wide range of modern and contemporary art, with a special focus on amplifying the voices of living artists. Learn more at fryemuseum.org.

Press Contact

Ingrid Langston, Director of Communications & Strategic Planning
press@fryemuseum.org