

HERITAGE GALLERY

# SITIO EL OLIVAR

Colección Museo Arqueológico de La Serena



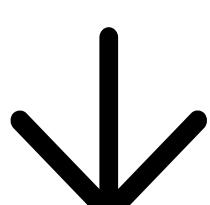


Archaeology is an encounter with life and death, it allows us to walk territories both emotionally and geographically, crossing times and spaces while bringing a seeming past into the present. In this journey, it is possible to find different images that are part of a living history, which is manifested in the small cracks and crevices we can see in ceramic objects, photos of the ground and its layers, as well as in the shadows of the vegetation, the rocks of hills and on the seashore.

These images are present today in the memory of the Diaguita people who live in the Central Valley of Chile's Norte Chico.

These images evidence a knowledge passed from generation to generation. They are family memories around the table with *churrascas*, goat cheese and green tea.

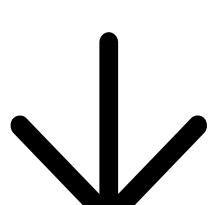
These images speak to us of their demands for justice and recognition.

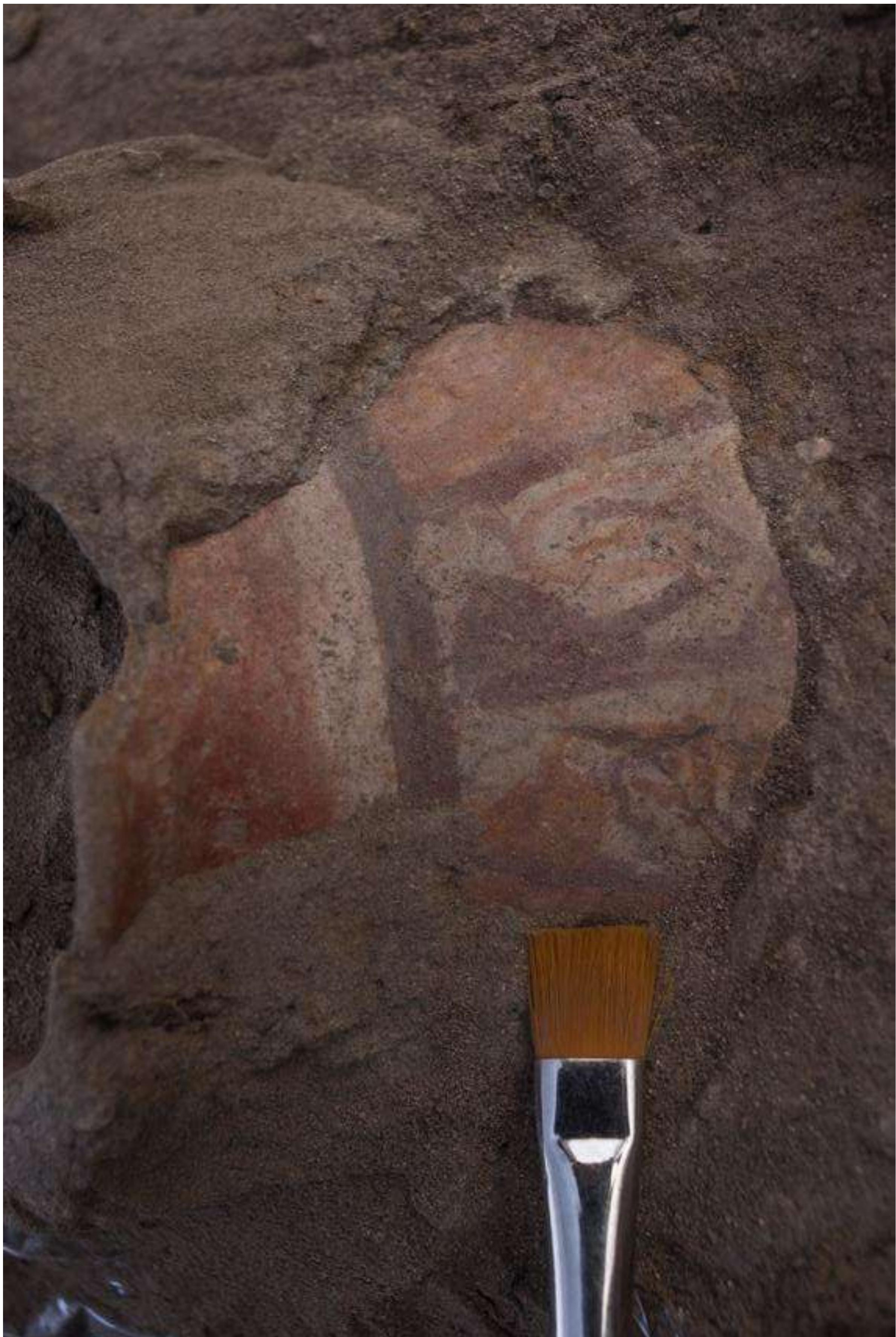




Let's imagine that we are there, between the Choapa, Elqui and Limarí rivers: in the Central Valley of Chile's Norte Chico.

***Sitio El Olivar* is a curatorial work between the Museo Arqueológico de La Serena of the Undersecretary of Heritage and CCLM, which focuses on the history and various excavations of this sector to present a current reflection in conjunction with representatives of diaguita communities, who continue to weave time in space. In this exhibition, past, present and future intertwine, at the same time that they relate to our memory as we walk through it.**

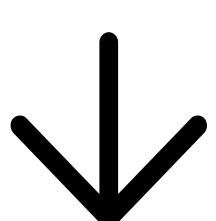




*Archaeological recovery at Sitio El Olivar, FUN 6 and FUN 8 areas*

Nicolás Aguayo, 2015-2017

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## **DIAGUITA PEOPLE PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES AND ASSOCIATIONS**

### **Llastay Elquinos Diaguita Indigenous Association**

District of La Serena, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

### **Fuerza Indígena Tekirke Autonomous Diaguita Community**

Sector of Las Compañías, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

### **Warmayanay Anagrice Autonomous Diaguita Community**

City of Ovalle, Limarí Valley, Coquimbo Region

### **Amack Tambillos Diaguita Community**

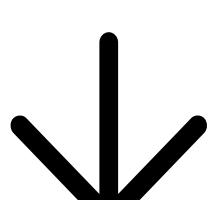
Tambillos, Province of Elqui, Coquimbo Region, Chile

### **Apus del Elki Diaguita Community**

District of Vicuña, Elqui Province,  
Coquimbo Region, Chile

### **Clara Patxi Kakana Autonomous Diaguita Community**

Limarí Valley, Coquimbo Region





**Kutún Amack Unock Autonomous  
Diaguita Community**

Las Rojas, Elqui Valley, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

**Zapam Zucum Autonomous Diaguita Community**  
City of Ovalle, Limarí Valley, Coquimbo Region

**Titakin de Las Cardas Diaguita Community**  
Las Cardas, Province of Elqui, Coquimbo Region

**Yacurmana de Potrerillos Bajos  
Diaguita Community**

District of La Serena, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

**Domingo Taucán Community**

District of La Serena, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

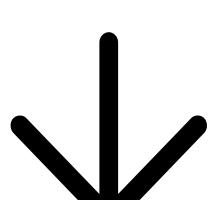
**Hasali Community, Diaguita Amakay  
Kakan Association**

District of Coquimbo, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region

**Diaguita Maray Indigenous Community**  
City of Ovalle, Limarí Valley, Coquimbo Region

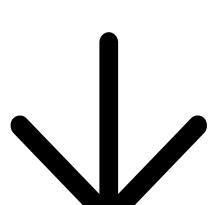
**Troncal Elke Cañiguanti Community,  
Elke Association**

District of Coquimbo, Province of Elqui,  
Coquimbo Region





We invite you to walk this exhibition while thinking about all those actions we perform to dig up, discover and add information to our knowledge; to remember those moments of curiosity in which we search, in boxes or closets, for lost materials of our history as if they were written in diaries; to see how those searches provide us with important pieces of our personal and collective stories; as if they were speaking to us, warning us to pay attention: what is outside is also inside!

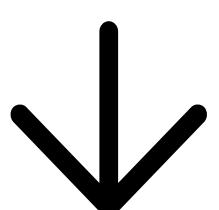




## EL OLIVAR

El Olivar is an archaeological site of a residential and funerary nature with about seven centuries of continuous settlement. It is located about 2 km east of the coastline and between 2 to 4 km north of the city of La Serena. Its vast area is estimated in at least 35 hectares, and given its occupational density and temporal depth, its study is essential to understand the El Molle, Áimas and Diaguita cultures in pre and post Inca times. Of its nearly eight centuries of continuous pre-Hispanic occupation, the most intense corresponds to the Áimas and Diaguita cultures. The site also houses middens from the El Molle culture (0-800 A.D.) that show the extensive cultural history contained in this area.

**El Olivar is past, present and future.**

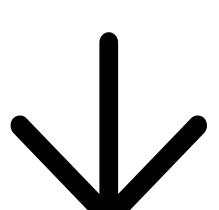




*Archaeological recovery at Sitio El Olivar, FUN 6 and FUN 8 areas*

Paola Gonzalez, 2015-2017

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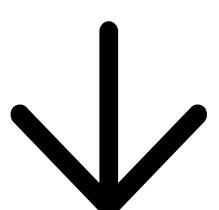




## LOOKING ON A SCALE

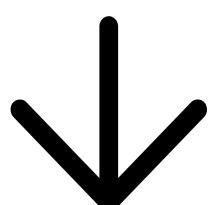
Looking from height gives us perspective. Every time we look at an image, our experiences, as well as our visual and sensory repertoires, alter the way we see things. Depending on where we are, the moment we are living and how we are feeling, we build new images, which are our own and unique. This image of El Olivar site shows the transitional nature of this region, as it is located between desert and temperate Mediterranean zones. From the air we can see an intermediate state of land, with unique landscapes interrupted by mountain ranges.

**The word “transition” refers to an idea of change expressed in scales.**





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Paola Gonzalez, 2015-2017  
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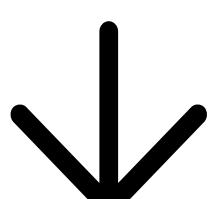


## DIGGING

Let us think of the land and its various layers as a book of many pages that we read, look at and leaf through, coming across new experiences and ideas. Flicking through this book would be like digging for information: the further we go, the further and deeper we go, the more likely we are to learn more about its content.

Digging involves a physical exercise: approach the display cases carefully, look at the projections from near and far, crouch down to see the images in the center of the room. Use your body to observe, as if it were a sensitive instrument at the service of curiosity, an organic tool.

**Digging involves an exercise of memory.**

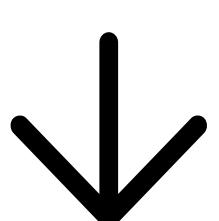




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Nicolás Aguayo, 2015-2017

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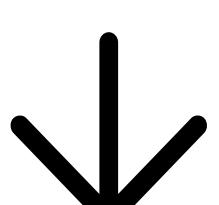
## WAYS TO MAKE HISTORY

The wise grandmothers of Elqui tell us that the first devastating alluvium that destroyed the Elqui Valley occurred in the time of the ancients. The grandmothers say that the only people who survived were those who took refuge on the tops of the hills, which eventually became part of them. All their knowledge comes from the crossroads between the land and the sea.<sup>1</sup>

In the Diaguita people, as in other native peoples, memory and culture are manifested in the different ways of inhabiting the territory.

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1. Documentary *El arte del tiempo*, directed by Emilia Simonetti, 2022

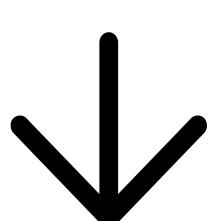




*Archaeological recovery in the Brillamar settlement*

2010

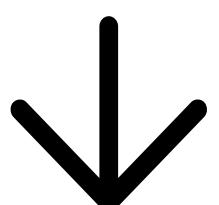
©Gabriel Cantarutti and Gloria Cabello





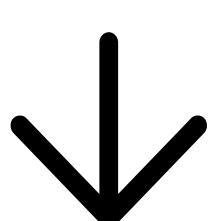
## ARCHAEOLOGY AND PEOPLES

Traditionally, official channels of information have placed certain knowledge and ideas above the voices of indigenous peoples. Although legally constituted as native people in 2006, the Diaguita still face invisibility. The voices of the communities and associations that participated in this exhibition express that this is due to the lack of knowledge and appreciation of the living Diaguita people, as well as the ambiguity of the role of different actors of society in current indigenous issues in Chile. As long as indigenous cemeteries continue to be considered heritage objects of the past, the silencing of the native peoples will continue to be endorsed.





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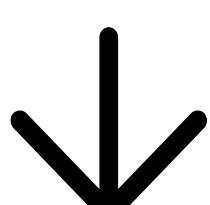


## HERITAGE AND PROGRESS

In 2015, while construction was underway to expand the Pan-American Highway connecting Chile from north to south, the work was halted four kilometers north of the city of La Serena, when machines discovered human bodies buried just a few centimeters deep.

The site has suffered a series of unwanted alterations due to illegal excavations and unplanned urban growth. The scenario surrounding the rescue and enhancement of this important archaeological site is complex, as the heritage that has been discovered, both that which is still there and that which has remained in storage for months, is in danger due to lack of commitment and will.

Today, the Diaguita people, through their organized indigenous communities and associations, are in a process of visibility and strengthening of their memory and culture, which they are strongly defending.

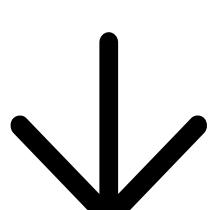




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CENTRO  
CULTURAL  
LA MONEDA

