Look closely at Carolina Caycedo’s Yuma, or the Land of Friends and think about the marks human beings make on the landscape.

Ages 4–8
We encourage adults and kids to create together.

In this artwork, Carolina Caycedo cut and pasted together three photographs taken from outer space of the Yuma (Magdalena) River in Colombia. The pictures show the natural flow of the river and the human-made structures built to control that flow. Carolina was especially concerned with negative effects of the El Quimbo Dam. You can see those effects in the sand-colored marks in this artwork. The structures humans made changed the way the river flows, making it stop or pool where it used to run free.

Exploring mark-making can help us think about the human and natural forces that impact our landscapes.
LOOK
Start by looking back at *Yume*. Trace the marks in the picture with your finger.

First, find long, flowing marks to follow.
Then, find short, jagged marks.
Finally, find marks that look splotchy or tangled.

MAKE
Use paint to explore the impact of different kinds of marks.

Materials:
- Thick white construction paper
- Blue, black, and white paint
- A paint brush
- Paper plate
- Cup of water

Steps:
1. With blue paint, make long flowing marks. Think about how rivers move.

2. On your paper plate, put some blue paint and add a little bit of white paint to it. Use that to paint long flowing lines that are far apart.

3. On your paper plate, put some blue paint and add a little bit of black paint to it. Use that to paint quick, short, hard marks all around your page, interrupting your long flowing lines.

5. Using the color of your choice, get as much paint as possible on your brush and make some big splotchy marks.

7. Continue to add different marks to your painting using different motions and colors.

8. Stop whenever you feel finished.

TALK
How did the different kinds of marks change your painting? What happened to the painting as you added more and more marks? Why did you decide to stop?

Imagine your painting is a picture of the world from space. Is the land in your picture healthy or unhealthy? Why?

We all make a mark on our world, and we can choose to make a mark that works with the flow of nature or gets in its way. What is one small action you can take to help work with the Earth?
Installation view, Carolina Caycedo: From the Bottom of the River, MCA Chicago
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Photo: Nathan Keay, © MCA Chicago