PLANTS & HERBS

Meet Pedro Reyes, Mexican Artist Who Melts Guns & Uses Them to Create Shovels for Tree Planting

By bestfolkmedicine · 22/02/2020 · 3 min read



Weapons can lead to disastrous situations and Culiacan in Mexico is a good example of gun violence- the city has the highest death rate in the nation caused by firearms.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(122); });

This is why Pedro Reyes, a Mexican artist, decided to do something about it- he's repurposing weapons that are agents of death into agents of life- he's transforming them into shovels for tree planting and musical instruments!

He's focusing on the failures of modern day culture from a positive perspective and he doesn't believe in failure- he thinks it's only a result of our perspective.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(130); });
He's transforming weapons into shovels through his Palas for Pistolas campaign during which he asks residents to give their weapons and in exchange get a coupon which they can use to purchase electronic appliances or devices.

How Successful Is the Shovels from Pistols Campaign?

His campaign is going amazing- he's collected more than 1500 guns that he sent to a military base where they were crushed with a steamroller and then melted and transformed into shovels.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(131); });
The new shovels were then distributed throughout Mexico, including public schools and art institutes.

Some of these shovels even reached the Vancouver Art Gallery, the San Francisco Art Institute, and the Maison Rouge in Paris.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(132); });
Pedro teaches us that from a gun which exists to take or harm a life, we can make something positive- a shovel whose purpose is to help plant trees and create life.

He wants to motivate us to change our perspective and learn how to turn bad things into good ones.

Pedro Reyes Is also Making Musical Instruments from Guns

The amazing artist has also been turning guns into musical instruments.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(133); });
He's held several workshops and performances to encourage people to talk about guns.

He believes that art should address social problems like gun violence, despite their controversy.

Another of his projects is *Disarm* and he used guns to transform them into musical instruments. A government agency from Mexico gave the artists 6700 guns confiscated from drug cartels and he's repurposed them into violins, flutes, guitars, and percussions.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(134); });
Thanks to his team, he's been able to use programs like MIDI and Ableton Live to make self-playing instruments from guns.

> *Pedro Reyes' Palas por Pistolas is a series of 1527 shovels composed of the 1527 melted reclaimed guns used for tree-planting. His work signifies a passionate call for gun control + an end to the war on drugs.*
>
> *© Janet Jarman/Redux for @OpenSociety #DrugPolicyMuseum pic.twitter.com/3ATjS3Cm45*
>
> *— #DrugPolicyMuseum (@MofDP) May 12, 2018*

These programs give the instruments the ability to perform at music concerts with beforehand compositions.

The artist realizes that violence can't just magically disappear; however, he's hopeful that art and music will teach people about alternatives.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(135); });
He wants to motivate us to express our anger and dissatisfaction through a different method- with music instead of violence and guns.

He believes rock and roll gives a certain kind of catharsis and that an electric guitar has some magical aura!

Stop Praising Guns & Violence

Reyes said that weapons are being praised by media as sexy and cool. We see them in video games, TV shows, movies, etc.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(136); });
So, people who've been victims of gun violence need a chance to speak up and say that the effects of guns aren't sexy and cool at all-they're disastrous.

Want to learn more about the amazing work of Pedro Reyes? Check out his website pedroreyes.net.

Sources:

INTELLIGENT LIVING

LIFE GATE

THE PLAID ZEBRA

Read online: https://bestfolkmedicine.com/2020/02/meet-pedro-reyes-mexican-artist-who-melts-guns-uses-them-to-create-shovels-for-tree-planting/

Downloaded on 29/11/2026

DISCLAIMER: We do not provide medical advice and nothing contained herein shall be construed as medical advice. The contents such as text, comments, graphics, images, videos and other content contained on this site are for informational purposes only. Statements on this website have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration, and are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Always consult your personal physician before starting any fitness or exercise program or changing dietary habits. The content of this site is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It is not a substitute for a medical exam, nor does it replace the need for services or counsel provided by medical professionals.