AgroArte was born 15 years ago with the aim of showing resistance to the Escombrera - the dumping ground of the city, located in Comuna 13 - also used as a site for hiding and secretly burying the bodies of more than 300 persons that disappeared during the execution of the military operations that took place in Comuna 13. The Escombrera remains as a site of impunity and AgroArte insists on undertaking actions against this injustice.

We initially started with musical activities and cultivation of plants and right next to this polemic dumping site, collaborating with women from the very same neighborhood. Two hectares of land were appropriated through horticulture, covering 60% of our alimentary needs. Some time later, we were obliged to leave the area because of the rising violence in the district. This brought us to San Javier, our current “headquarter”, that has been our strategic refuge for the past 8 years. Here, projects that reclaim memories, the reconstruction of social networks and community empowerment have been undertaken through the use of horticulture and arts.

Carrying out these activities led to the founding of AgroArte as a project that seeks for resistance and justice through horticulture and arts, constructing alternative scenarios where children, adolescents and grown-ups have the opportunity of creating and managing their very own territory-based projects.

Union Entre Comunas

The projects that began 15 years ago, is now based on various side-acts that are born out of everyday concerns: Semillas Del Futuro is focused on youth from 6 to 15 years and aims to improve the outlooks of youth through educational activities. Unión Entre Comunas is a network between different districts of Medellín that joint by horticulture and hip hop. Yo hago custodio del hip-hop colombiano is an album that contains the “agricultural rap” songs that have been created throughout the abovementioned projects. Jardines Resistentes is an initiative of appropriating space through the cultivation of new plants. Plantas de memoria are memorials that have been constructed in cemeteries and places of fear with the aim of giving a new significance to sorrow through the acts of cultivating new plants.

Under these premises two methodologies have been constructed. Firstly, Agroarte, that seeks to empower the local community, appropriate its territory and create new social networks. Secondly, Cuerpos Gramaticales that is focused on reclaiming and conserving memories as a way of creating dialogues and putting a foundation to social construction.

After a decade of undertaking social projects we have a growing need of exchanging our experiences with the Academy and other actors that would allow us to spread our knowledge as sowers of new territories.