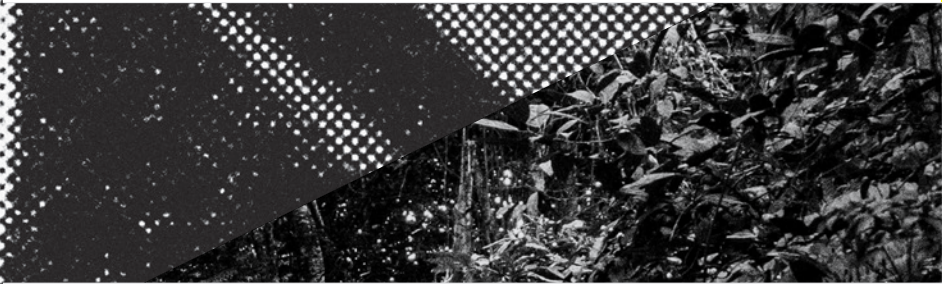


still



I sing

Though
it's dark

still I sing

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*The land is still dark
In the peasant dawn
But planting is a must.
Night was deeper,
Now morning is coming.
The song made of fear
Lost all its value:
It doesn't fool solitude.
It's time now for a simple
Constant song of truth.
Time to be merry:
Life is built day by day
With bread and song.
I feel in the air
The scent of ripe wheat:
Time of harvest.
I see miracles like
A blue rain on the cornfield,
Beanstalks bursting into flower
Fresh sap flowing from the rubber trees
In the distant riverside stand.
The time to love is almost here.
I pick up the fiery sun in the ground
And plow the light within the sugarcane:
My soul in seating on its pennant.
A dawn full of hope.
The land is still dark (it's clearer now),
Working is worthwhile.
It is dark but I sing
For morning is coming soon.
(It is dark but I sing)*

Madrugada camponesa,
faz escuro ainda no chão,
mas é preciso plantar.
A noite já foi mais noite,
a manhã já vai chegar.
Não vale mais a canção
feita de medo e arremedo
para enganar solidão.
Agora vale a verdade
cantada simples e sempre,
agora vale a alegria
que se constrói dia a dia
feita de canto e de pão.
Breve há de ser (sinto no ar)
tempo de trigo maduro.
Vai ser tempo de ceifar.
Já se levantam prodígios,
chuva azul no milharal,
estala em flor o feijão,
um leite novo minando
no meu longe seringal.
Já é quase tempo de amor.
Colho um sol que arde no chão,
lavro a luz dentro da cana,
minha alma no seu pendão.
Madrugada camponesa.
Faz escuro (já nem tanto),
vale a pena trabalhar.
Faz escuro mas eu canto
porque a manhã vai chegar.
(Faz escuro, mas eu canto)

What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.

Doc: Of course, there is a word that designates this body, and that you can use to call me, to talk about me, that is clear. But at the same time – and this is what captivates me – here we arrive at the crucial center – I’m also the one that escapes the name – that is my job, my task, it is what I’m called upon to do: to create uncertainty. To embody the margin.

Z: Is laughter an expression of uncertainty?

Doc: It is absolutely an expression of a certain limit. It shows that limit, by crossing it.

Brandon La Belle, “Interview with a Clown”
(Correspondence #9, 34th Bienal de São Paulo)

This is it.

For our generation: those of us inhabiting cities in the West, where wars or conflicts occur in a faraway land. Those of us living in the Global South, where politicians seem to respond to a parallel dimension, whilst the communities they vow to serve are no longer afraid to take to the streets to claim their rights within this vividly experienced dimension. Year-long protests in Hong Kong, the *Estallido social* in Chile and marches against the dispossessions in Sheikh Jarrah in occupied Jerusalem are just three cases in point. Those of us waking up to dystopian political regimes, like those carried out by nation-states leaders such as Donald Trump, Viktor Orbán and Boris Johnson, it’s reminiscent of a sort of *operetta*, only before seen in Silvio Berlusconi’s Italy. Those of us who contend the demilitarisation of borders and the restoration of the human condition to all human beings. Those of us exhausted by famine, environmental devastation, social inequality, oppressive neoliberal governments and structural racism. Those of us worldwide whose breathing stopped – for a few seconds – both literally and metaphorically the evening of May 25th 2020, and since then have claimed resolution and punishment for murders we did not witness.

For us, whose future was postponed for a few months during that year, giving us the chance to own it – or, at least, in our imagination – to reinvent it. For all of us, this pandemic has been and will be a defining moment.

Under these conditions of possibility, the formulation of the 34th edition of the Bienal de São Paulo occurred. And, as such, there was no escape from reality. The project was conceived as an analysis of the speculative nature of art as a field of knowledge and experience production. As such it prompted to claim exhibition-making as a methodological approach to vernacular aesthetics and forgotten epistemologies, holding space for the artists’, curators’ and authors’ responses to it. It aimed to generate readings and interpretations of artworks under different conditions of display, including the physical exhibition throughout distinct spaces of the pavilion, as well as other platforms such as publications and partnering venues. With such premises in its inception alongside the evidence of a world at the edge of a new medical, social, economic and political paradigm, this exhibition could not be – should not be – based on the same prerogatives that typically would have involved a project of this magnitude.

Of course this was not the only large-scale art event affected by the unique conditions of our time. However, whilst some international events proceeded with a barely IRL – in real life – public, others tried to catch up with global audiences online. We’ve witnessed projects re-inventing formats, at times readapting them to the dissolution of the “here and there.” This edition of the Bienal continued its journey with

Correspondence #20
19 Aug 2021



Caullen Smith. Image posted on Instagram on 29 May 2020

existing mechanisms – exhibitions in various venues in the city – and new platforms across the digital world in order to remain both in place and in the moment – attached to a reality forever more and more a part of the rest of the world. The truth of the matter is that whilst the world was getting out of the first and second Covid-19 lockdowns, terrifying news from Brazil continued to report daily deaths equivalent to the falling of transcontinental aeroplanes. But that did not restrain poetry – reality did not stop art or its displays – at least for some time. And that scission in communal temporality – from that initial portal that Indian author Arundhati Roy so beautifully narrated as defining the pandemic – became even more pertinent than the prerogatives of the curators, the framework under which the exhibition, but also the book that you are about to read, was formulated.

This volume contains responses to that epic, unprecedented time. As the curators and the rest of the team embarked on a Bienal edition like no other, we collectively decided we could not produce the usual catalogue. We needed to capture the essence of the moment, and harvest something that would overcome the present-ness of the matter and its unavoidable consequences. Thus in addition to images referencing artists' works, biographies, essays and dialogues, we requested other sorts of material: images representing an artist's practice in their own eyes – at times words or artworks of other artists – and visual references offered by the curators for a representation of the un-representable. There were tons, more than the ones included here, I am afraid – almost impossible to reproduce or financially unreachable. Many were incredibly vivid, priceless. Material for another book, for another time.

To what was ultimately gathered we added extraordinary contributions, conversations, poems and pamphlets. We offer you the chance to read and see this material from multiple vantage points and terms embedded in this kaleidoscopic set of imaginaries. They echo the observations that writer and PUC-Rio professor Ana Kiffer makes palatable in her reading of the archive and art display as “moving away from the concept of a gathering of objects of curiosity, or visions of beauty,”¹ and becoming a “sort of attic of the future, whose function is to shelter what should be born, but is not here yet.”² In this respect, I almost imagine the central staircases and corridors of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion as strips of an analogical film, towards which the physical materiality of the works add a reformulated and augmented reality – or a version of it, anyway. The complex beauty of the works on display, the assertiveness of their claims, and the profound debt they pay by giving visibility to certain stories and agents, is translated into these pages in a number of ways from visual presence to critical interpretation.

The *statements* are subtle entry points to some of the curatorial frameworks and narratives that audiences will encounter in the exhibition space. The *correspondences* by curators, artists and writers take us back in time to the germinal seeds of the project. These letters written amongst us have served to make public the exhibition's processes and discussions over the past two years. A number of images will be familiar to those who have engaged with *Tenteio*, the second publication of the Bienal, which introduces the list of participating artists through an unintended visual essay. *Tenteio*'s images are here displaced and featured in reference to other possible nuances – visual and beyond. This publication is also an exercise of returning to a single plane, maintaining aspects of a three-dimensional visual language throughout the Bienal and its partner venues ultimately formulated as a mediation – an institutional framework – as its author, artist Vitor Cesar, observes in his Correspondence #11. The tone of overall book is at times sombre, at times evocative – but always engaging, overtly political.

1

See pp. 252–257 of this book.

2

Achille Mbembe, *Brutalisme*. Quoted by Ana Kiffer, p. 253 of this book.

One could argue that the Bienal format proposes an exercise of art history writing, in which a draft of possible episodes of a speculative History of Art are narrated. A draft that if created with a certain sensibility and blended with the immediate context, offers local entrepreneurship – its agents and institutions – the proper dose of international counterparts. It should put in the value of human capacities and financial means so that some green can grow after the event has passed by. It should reflect upon something fundamental to that particular ecosystem, and relevant to the field of art at large. For the audience, it should be unique and memorable, yet accessible and familiar – as I believe this edition of the Bienal to be. Some of the multiple avenues we explore in this volume will be disrupted, discarded or augmented in the exhibition, but make no mistake: they will just be other interpretations and dialogue – as opposed to *the* interpretation, per se. They are the expression of a certain definition, a certain narrative, a certain limit. As Doc, the Clown from Correspondence #9, notes, “it shows that limit, by crossing it.”³ All is permeable, mutable, ever-changing.

Not so long ago, I was reading a reflection on the myriad of defining stories that would have taken place in the last eighteen months. The number of occasions someone would have understood in the suspension of time that we experienced: the possibility of amending, reinventing or changing their present – and possibly their path to the future – once and for all. How many *New Year's* resolutions were there, how clairvoyant the conclusions to *Groundhog Day* journeys that would have filled notebooks and diaries. Leaps of faith, farewell hugs, moments of impossible nervous laughter, frustrations and overwhelmingly heavy silences. And then, I remember when I was a child. For a while between the mid-1970s and the end of the 1980s, we used to travel every two years from one Spanish city to another. A black family of five, starting a home in every new place. My mother making the effort of adjusting rooms to what we did not know at the time was called nostalgia. Reflecting on this from the perspective of an adult, it was hard.

For a child, for my brothers and I, it was an imposed and extreme change to our world. With the first and second moves, one suffered. Those initial ruptures had to do with loss, with what is left behind; lingering to what was no longer there, no longer possible. Then, not so long after, these changes of universes – new school, new neighborhood, which for a 7 or 13-year-old girl were almost everything – became a strange platform for *fabulation*, for newness. I cannot speak for others, but for me it became an opportunity for reformulation, for change, for embodied renewal. A strange pursuit evolved for changing the aspects of things that would have not worked in previous cities, that would have gone wrong with this or another friend.

“It is harmless” – I thought.

Of all the possible me's that could have been impersonated, I decided for the transient one, the one who could not be labelled or fixed, that offered herself a constant right to be one and multiple, unique yet permeable, open to change, committed to endless transformation. It was somewhat of a relief. That feeling that nothing was there forever, that all was mutable – certainly, happiness was, and thus so was sadness, and fear.



*Cette photo.
J'aurais voulu la publier.
À l'envers, et uniquement le détail.
L'œil...*









ARTISTS

UNWANTER

GOD P\$A\$MS

ONE BE\$\$ts

achiever

HEART RITIST

CONQUOROR



Notes on *Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness*

"Japan has lost the power to connect the principle or theory and reality. I think literature's value is in making those connections. That's the mission of literature. Morals are significant."

Kenzaburo Ōe

Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness was published in 1969. In this short novel, Ōe reflects brilliantly on the complexity of the father-son relationship as he attempts to make sense of the convictions and actions of the wartime generation, particularly his own father. In earlier writings Ōe has focused on the lingering national traumas of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but here it is the lifelong sense of obsession and profound sense of guilt that finds intense literary manifestation. *Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness* is an admission of failure, a desperate cry for help

from a father to his son, from one generation to the next. It is a highly personal, intimate and poetic lament by one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century.

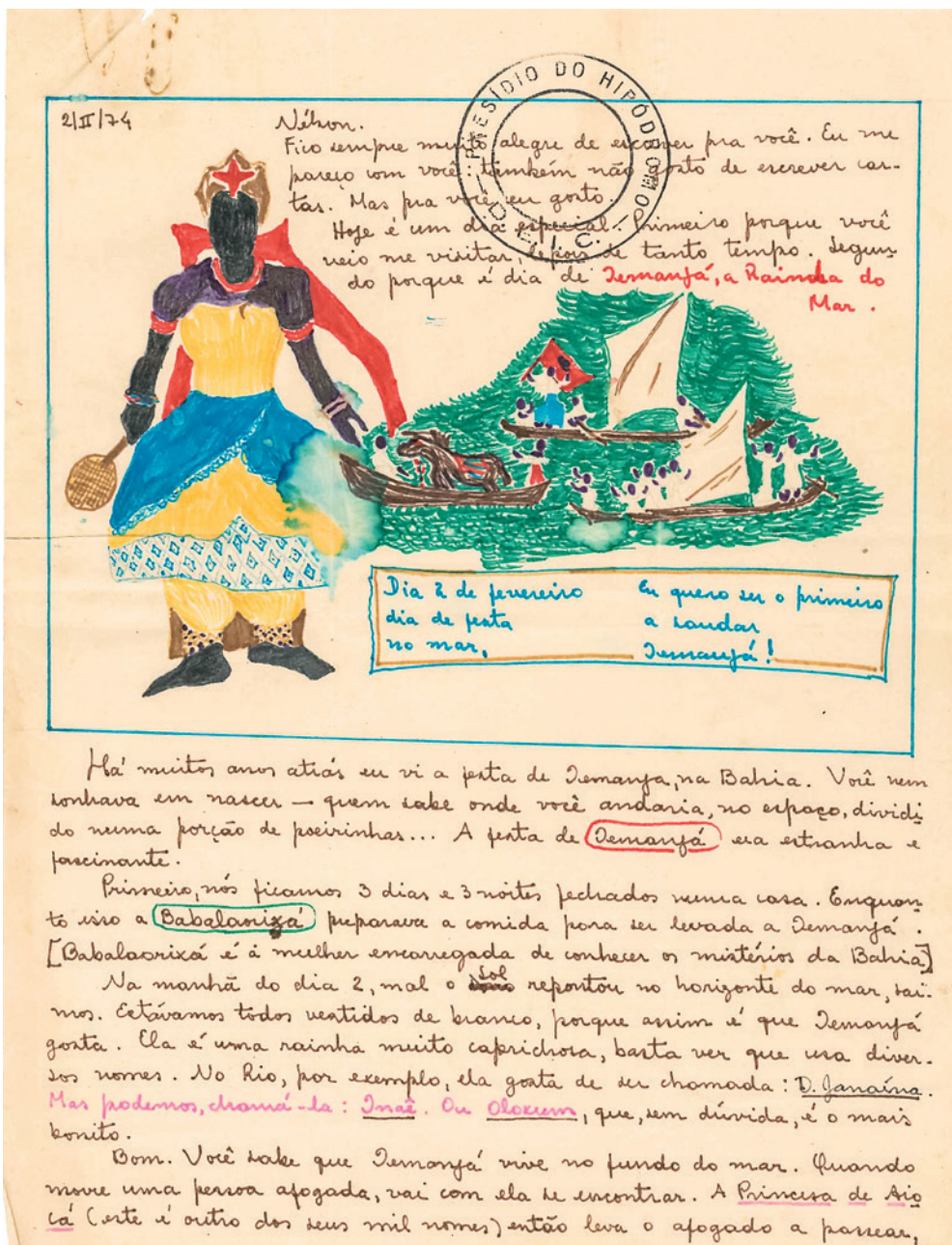
Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness is a performance where I transform myself into a sandwich man and walk around the city, preaching, begging, asking strangers to teach me to outgrow my madness. It is a cathartic work, where I lament the miserable failures of my generation, and ask for help to the new one.

Contra a restauração como estratégia da sobrevivência. Hoje nos encaminhamos para um tempo de reavaliação das próprias forças. Mais claramente, poderíamos dizer que cada um procura reencontrar-se são apesar da sua pequena, reduzida condição. Isto não deve, entretanto, levar a pensar que, agindo deste modo, é mantida a mesma diferença que caracterizou o nosso trabalho. Sobretudo não deve ser esquecido que os tempos duros não são a simples redução dos tempos de abundância. Nenhuma redução pode conter a diferença.

Nenhuma redução pode conter a diferença.

ANTONIO DIAS





Joel Rufino dos Santos. Letter to his son, Feb. 1974

Some teachers teach us more than what the school curriculum dictates. Joel Rufino dos Santos must have been one of those teachers, someone capable of transforming the present's understanding and generating new desires for the future when talking about past events and ideas. In the early 1960s, Rufino dos Santos was part of a team, led by Nelson Werneck Sodré, responsible for writing the *História Nova do Brasil* [New History of Brazil] series, a set of textbooks the authors defined as the "Structural Reform in History Teaching." Rewriting and retelling the country's history was part of a nation-building

project aimed to eradicate illiteracy with the Paulo Freire method as well as implement structural reforms, which included land democratization, fiscal justice, and the right to housing. It was during these years that Thiago de Mello wrote the poem “Madrugada camponesa” [The Peasant Dawn]: “The land is still dark (it’s clearer now) / Working is worthwhile. / Though it’s dark, still I sing / for morning is coming soon. / Though it’s dark, still I sing.”

It is difficult not to ponder about the kind of country we would be living in today if João Goulart had not been deposed. But our history is a different one. And the 1964 civic-military coup interrupted the political project geared towards a more egalitarian Brazil, beginning more than twenty years in which the State arrested, tortured, and executed men and women who fought for this ideal.

Thiago de Mello was no exception. Nor was Joel Rufino dos Santos, arrested in 1972, when his son, named Nelson after Werneck Sodré, was eight years old. During the two incarceration years due to no other charge than the content of his writings, Joel sent his son the letters gathered here. Written in prison, reviewed by censors, stamped, mailed, held in Nelson’s hands, silently read, read aloud by Teresa Garbayo dos Santos, kept safe for years, reread, and finally, these letters are made public. Letters that speak of love, nostalgia, daily life in prison; letters that talk about the history of this country, which help to understand the present and forge desires for the future. Like the works around them, these letters point to the cracks that allow us to evade censorship and escape imprisonment, either physically or imaginatively and creatively. They are worth reading. Because they can, as Thiago de Mello writes in the introduction of the book that brings these letters together, “cleanse the adhesions of deceptions that damage our lives, hurt our intelligence and stain the childhood that throbs in man’s chest.”







End of bus lane
巴士專用綫
到此為止

Subway to cross
Nathan Road
請用隧道
橫過

CITYBUS 城巴
銀行中心
Bank Centre
彌敦道 Nathan Road
N21 N21A
Cityflyer
城巴機場快線
A21 往 紅磡車站
to Hung Hom Station

The morning is coming

1. There was a point in 2020 – when the ocean of uncertainties brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic led to the conclusion that the 34th Bienal de São Paulo could not be held that year – at which we posed an eccentric idea. What if the show whose development had begun many months before, under the title *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing], instead of being postponed until next year, were held in a fragmented way, condensed into various small and mid-sized exhibitions distributed among the institutions in the network that had already been brought together for this edition of the Bienal? Those exhibitions could feature works, relationships, and statements that were already delineated, and could be held gradually, according to the limits imposed by the health measures and respecting the pace at which each partner institution was interested in holding one or more of these chapters. The perspective behind this idea considered that the needs ushered in by these new circumstances could be met less through a return to the models and formats that had existed before the pandemic, and more through institutional support and opportunities for encounter with art, even if in lighter and more localized formats.

As imagination flies quickly, in that same conversation we speculated that this show, spread out in time and space, would not need to be considered an edition of the Bienal de São Paulo, in strict sense, but something that was born from it and which would bear the name *Faz escuro mas eu canto*, which was gaining more connotations with each passing day. The 34th Bienal would therefore be the one held when the conditions allowed, it would feature new artists and works, and would be called *Porque a manhã vai chegar* [Because the morning is coming]. This is the interlinking of the two final lines of the poem “Madrugada camponesa” [The Peasant Dawn], by Thiago de Mello: “Though it's dark, still I sing / because the morning is coming”, and it would be meaningful if the next edition of the show brought elements that would help to fabulate and to fight for the dawning the poet had envisioned.

This speculative thinking, however, soon changed course. The following conversations shed light on the importance of preserving the aim to hold the 34th Bienal within its traditional pavilion, even if a long postponement were necessary, and we began to discuss other ways of demonstrating that the plans for the show had been

transformed by the gravity of the situation. This resulted in the experimental show *Vento* [Wind], in dozens of digital public programs, and in countless reflections that impacted this Bienal's final design and even the formalization and presentation of the artworks.

There was, moreover, a conceptual problem in that formulation. Who in a sound mind could state with certainty that the morning is coming? The destructive potential of human existence has far outpaced the demonstrations that we are able to change behaviors, ideologies, institutions, power structures, social pacts, and models of production in order to preserve life – whether human life or that of the other beings which constitute the vitality of this planet. In the Brazilian context, from which this Bienal is indissociable, this balance has been even more discouraging, to the point where the current government policies are seen as a threat to the nation's people and to the world's future. In September 2021 the promise of the morning is still seen as something distant, as far away or even farther than it was in mid-2020.

I will therefore discuss why questionings concerning Brazil's present, past and future are so very important to the conception of this Bienal. To this end, it will be necessary to maintain a certain distance and to reflect on the specific character of the relationship between the various editions of the Bienal de São Paulo and their respective periods.

There is an essay by Aracy Amaral called “Bienais ou Da impossibilidade de reter o tempo” [Bienals, or On The Impossibility of Retaining the Time]. Written in 2001, on the occasion of what she saw as the disappointing celebrations of the event's 50th anniversary, the text refers to various moments of the Bienal's equally tumultuous and renovating history. The title summarizes the always incomplete promise associated to art biennials around the world: to retain the present time. This is perhaps the aim most often attributed to events of this sort: to register their moment and to spotlight the most innovative and incisive contemporary production from various parts of the world. It is natural that this would also be an expectation associated to the Bienal de São Paulo, the first undertaking aimed at emulating the formula of the Venice Biennale. But it seems to me that, since the outset, the motivation of the event created in this South American metropolis has also borne another vocation: to be a forward-looking and mnemonic machine.

It is easy to perceive the forward-looking sense of the creation of the Bienal in 1951, as it resulted from the alliances between intellectuals and businesspeople that its director Ciccillo Matarazzo knew how to forge and to deepen in the 1940s and 1950s. Such alliances were aimed at updating and internationalizing the city's cultural debate, with the goal of taking advantage of the moment of global reshuffling of forces in the aftermath of World War II, coupled with the accumulation of capital in a city at the helm of the national industrialization process and which aimed to legitimize itself as a political and symbolic leader of the country's directions. To mention only initiatives in which Ciccillo himself was involved, this alliance resulted in the creation of the Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia (TBC), the Companhia Cinematográfica Vera Cruz and the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), the latter of which was responsible for implementing the Bienal. Each of these initiatives wished to construct frameworks for the future, whether through the debate and circulation of new ideas, through experimentalism, or through institutional maturation. From then until now, the meaning of the future has been transformed various times. The (many) limits and contradictions of the intentions of that generation became apparent, while there were cycles of active dismantling of the Brazilian institutionalities. Still, something of this vocation remains engraved in the event's identity.

The mnemonic function of the Bienal de São Paulo was defined in successive stages. In its first editions, the event's currentness involved a chronological paralysis, since what appeared as new to the Brazilian context constantly came from the vanguards of the first half of the century. The most striking example of this is the 2nd Bienal, which, in 1953, held the largest exhibition of European modern art ever held up to then outside its continent of origin (surpassing even the initiatives of the United States). The so-called special rooms of that year included those of Oskar Kokoschka, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee and Piet Mondrian, in addition to a broad retrospective show on cubism organized by the French representation. The success of that undertaking was ambivalent: on the one hand, it was associated to an educational potential that would be reiterated throughout the years by "historical sections" and the like; on the other, at that moment, it was

the proof of the contemporaneity of an action that sought to transform the directions of art on the continent.

There was, moreover, a potential underlying the Bienal's opening to the past. The history of Brazilian art – and of Brazilian culture – was worked on by the show's successive editions in a decisive way, both through its recurrence to historical delvings as well as through the essayist character of the readings that could be presented in its condensed and cyclic timeframe. In this sense, we must remember the editions organized by Mário Pedrosa in 1961 and 1963, the show *Tradição e ruptura: síntese de arte e cultura brasileiras* [Tradition and Rupture: The Synthesis of Brazilian Art and Culture] in 1984, the so-called "Bienal da Antropofagia" [Anthropophagy Bienal] of 1998, the institutional critique proposed by the edition curated by Ivo Mesquita in 2008, and even the Bienals of 1994 and 2006, in which Nelson Aguilar and Lisette Lagnado, respectively, and with different interpretations, made the legacy of Hélio Oiticica into a fulcrum for thinking about contemporary art. With these and other "historiographic experiments" made in the form of an exhibition, the aim was not only to reverence the past, but to exercise memory as a tool for intervening in the present in order to open new paths to the future.

Those are the elements that have made the Bienal de São Paulo into what I have called here a forward-looking and mnemonic machine – which in no wise diminishes the event's relevance as a seismograph of the art of its time, even while it constitutes its singular character and its structural link with Brazilian culture.

2. *Faz escuro mas eu canto*. Is it necessary to describe this darkness? The reader who heard this title for the first time in 2019 knew exactly what to associate with the sense of danger and lack of perspective implied in darkness – not only in Brazil, but everywhere. And anyone reading this text now knows even better. What could not be foreseen was that, in the months following the choice of this poetic line, written in 1963, as the title of a show to be held in 2020, this darkness would become ever so much thicker.

I will refrain from listing tragedies here. There have been so many. I will only state that the problem is larger than the Covid-19 pandemic alone – the effects of the outbreak of an unforeseeable virus are growing

exponentially when combined with structural violences and with projects of power based on disinformation, which treat death as a State policy. I also believe that in the future it will not be difficult for someone to learn about the shadows of these years; they will be painfully described in the books that are to be written.

But I sing. I sing now in this dilacerated present. I sing because I remember what brought me here and I sing because I want to be in other places. Take memory from me and I will not know what to sing; take tomorrow from me and I will not learn any new songs. I sing, someone sings, we sing. Because there was a yesterday and there will be a tomorrow.

3. I do not know exactly whether the mnemonic work involved in the realization of the 34th Bienal was primarily a way of responding to the brutality of these times, a resource to stitch together artworks and poetics of contemporary artists, or an unfolding of the Bienal de São Paulo's character. Perhaps all of these, perhaps none of them, it does not really matter; the fact is that, from this point of view, it is possible to discuss some of its key aspects.

Resorting to memory as a tool for addressing the present was already announced in Thiago de Mello's poem, which brings to mind the meaning of the artistic actions in periods of obscurantism and the possible parallels and differences between the present time and the period in which the poem was written, published, and transformed into a song. Comparing the 1960s to the beginning of the 2020s, the most evident parallel is found in the rise – both inside and outside Brazil – of projects of power of the extreme right. The most striking differences include the displacement of the ideological discourse of the largest press outlets into the digital circuits of the social networks controlled by algorithms, coupled with the shift by which the emphasis on the idea of dictatorship is updated to that of necropolitics.

The three actions that had been planned to take place in the pavilion before the large group show would have deepened this perspective. *Palabras ajenas* [The Words of Others], a literary collage by León Ferrari made in 1967 as a profound study of the rhetoric of war and violence justified as a defense of peace and harmony, was to have gathered dozens of readers in a marathon oratory of more than eight hours. Ferrari's work had the Vietnam

War as its historical backdrop, but the main effect of the montage constructed by the artist is to interweave the discourses of that time with those of World War II and, much further back, with the text of the Catholic Bible. Although the presentation of the work was canceled due to the pandemic, it was present through a video and documents in the intermediary show *Vento* [Wind], in a proof of concept which confirmed that the effectiveness of Ferrari's mnemonic work is multiplied today as a prophecy of the twisting paths by which religion, common sense, sophism, and hate create toxic linkages.

A multiplicity of historical times were also condensed into Hélio Oiticica's work *A ronda da morte* [The Death Watch]. In 1965, Oiticica had seen from up close the rise of one of the first militias of Rio de Janeiro, the Scuderie Detetive Le Cocq death squad, whose namesake was a police detective killed in the shootout with the bandit – and Oiticica's friend – Cara de Cavalo, considered the country's number-one enemy and brutally executed. More than a decade later, having returned to Brazil after living abroad in the darkest times of the military dictatorship, Oiticica perceived that, despite the announced process of political opening, there was a great deal of state and parastate violence in Brazil. Connecting different historical cycles, he was one of the first voices to rise in criticism against the prevailing chorus of "redemocratization," denouncing how the institutional violence waged by the regime had aggravated a much older, wider and deeper wound – that of the premeditated genocide of the black, poor, and marginal population – and this was far from ending. Conceived as a "parangolé area" in which a celebration driven by flashing lights and dance music was surrounded by men on horseback, *A ronda da morte* was designed as both a mourning and a struggle.

In 2019, we imagined that it might be the time to finally implement the plans for this work, as the program of genocide that Oiticica spoke of is unfortunately still a current reality in the country, blatantly apparent in the asymmetric applications of law, as reflected in the racialization of the penal system and in the shamefully constant massacres and executions, especially of young black males. The death squads and the militias also persist. Even though the social and racial stratification in the country protects

and allows certain sectors of society to continue dancing as though everything were all right, a brief foray outside the elite districts of the large cities is enough to perceive that death has never stopped lurking about.

We therefore planned that the last performance leading up to the 34th Bienal's group show should be *A ronda da morte*. This would not have been a simple process, as Oiticica's instructions were open-ended, leaving a wide margin for interpretation, with many challenges for translating it to the current time. This process, however, was interrupted, and *A ronda da morte* will continue as an unrealized idea; but the causes for the suspension allow for a reconsideration about the presence of death. On the one hand, Covid-19 broke protective bubbles that had allowed parcels of the population to illude themselves about their safety; on the other, the behavior of many politicians and businesspeople brutally intensified the pandemic's effects on urban outskirts, communities, indigenous villages, and prisons. Death is universalized as a common threat, and at the same time it is aggravated as an unequal reality – and Brazil was converted into a perverse laboratory where this logic reaches obscene effects. At this point, *A ronda da morte* does not need to take place in the Bienal pavilion, because it is already everywhere. There just isn't any music, or sounds of horses' hooves.

There was, however, a moment in which the pavilion was taken over by singing. In February 2020, when news about Covid-19 still referred to the other side of the planet, South African artist Neo Muyanga joined in a group effort with the São Paulo artist collective Legítima Defesa and artist Bianca Turner to stage the brand-new performance *A Maze in Grace*. That was the first public instance of the 34th Bienal, and the empty space around the pavilion's multistory central span was full of visitors that followed the unpredictable movements of the performers, who moved along the building's various floors, unfurling a large sail, dancing, reciting quotations, dates and statistics and, above all, singing a reconstructed version of the Christian hymn "Amazing Grace", originally written by John Newton in 1772.

"Amazing Grace" is a song that arouses deep feelings, which bonds groups together. Especially in countries that mainly speak the English language, this hymn is always sung after great tragedies. In a broad way, it is also associated to black music and to the narratives of the

abolitionist struggle. Little is said, however, about its author. John Newton worked in the slave trade, forcefully bringing enslaved people from Africa to the Americas. After various near-death experiences, he said that he had undergone a divine "enlightenment" and became an Anglican pastor and abolitionist. Thus, not only was one of the most eloquent songs of group bonding associated to the history of black music and black struggle authored by a white slave trader, but the song's popularization throughout the 19th century probably owed much to the economic interests of British neocolonial politics, which was then pressuring countries like Brazil to abolish slavery. This does not diminish the song's potential as a means of group bonding, but it does position the song itself as a field of disputes. In this key, for example, one of the most sublime lines of the composition reveals its cynical facet: "[I] was blind but now I see" – after all, who could have been truly blind to the crime of slavery?

When Muyanga subverted the original song and treated the central span of the Bienal Pavilion as the hold of a large ship, transmuting the central sculptural pillar into a mast, he also updated the discomfort of this question to the present: how is it that we remain blind to the history of this song and, more importantly, how is it that we remain blind to the structural racism that continues to mark the existence of the descendants of the African diaspora? Together with the uneasiness of this questioning, the action featured the vital force and eloquent power of the actors and dancers of the artist collective Legítima Defesa, who prevented the overall performance from being only a lament, making it also a forward-looking speculation about the protagonists of a desired future.

4. Although there are many other aspects that condense past, present and future in the design of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, the available space here only allows me to list some of them. The show's extension in time and in space, having a network of institutions with a wide range of profiles and sizes as a vector of interlocution and realization, refers to the Bienal's origin as one of the city of São Paulo's various points of opening to experimentalism through its artistic institutions. Seventy years ago there were four or five points in this network, but today there are dozens, configuring a diverse constellation, though concentrated in the

metropolis's center-west region. Moreover, this initiative pointed to the need for a joint effort by this system in face of the current forces aimed at stifling every sort of educational and cultural institution committed to the construction of more democratic futures, which only intensified with the pandemic and the interdiction of the free use of public spaces and venues of shared social coexistence. Without intending to be a solution, the institutionalizing gesture proposed on the basis of the Bienal was aimed at rehearsing choreographies for the future.

The cancelations and postponings that arose since the moment of the conversation reported at the beginning of this text are what gave rise to the most incisive action that we were able to design and deploy – the show *Vento*, during one of the less restrictive phases of social isolation in 2020. Foregoing the construction of exhibition panels and distributing few works within a giant area, this experimental exhibition contrasted with the understanding of the Bienal pavilion as a center of fairs and conventions. With its free use of the pavilion, *Vento* brought a reminiscence of the uses and counter-uses of this space in the 1970s, when the Museu de Arte Contemporânea of the Universidade de São Paulo (MAC-USP), directed by Walter Zanini and headquartered at the back of the pavilion's third floor, expanded the imaginable possibilities regarding the sorts of encounters that could take place between contemporary art and this architecture. This nod to a little-known past also involves a looking ahead toward a future in which large scales can be taken as an opportunity for ushering in breaths of fresh air, rather than for the spectacular accumulation of attractions, information and merchandise.

There is, also, the curatorial strategy of organizing the artworks and themes of this Bienal around what we call “statements”: objects, images, documents that do not fit specifically into the category of artworks and which are steeped in history. Pointing to things that happened centuries or decades ago as much as to recent events, these statements are the materialization, in the 34th Bienal's exhibition space, of what I referred to above as the forward-looking mnemonic machine. The connection of each of them with history becomes evident upon the reading of the text that introduces them; the most important one, however, takes place in what cannot be put into words: in the relation that

arises when the narrative of the statements is unfolded in the same setting as the works by the artists. This is where the approximations, interpolations and projections become possible, in dynamics similar to those described above in greater detail in the juxtaposition of the actions by Ferrari, Oiticica and Muyanga.

Moreover, when artworks already presented in different stages of this Bienal are featured again in the space of the group show, in conjunction with some works that have taken part in previous editions of the event, this gives rise to possibilities for reiterating and transforming the readings of the same work in different temporalities.

5. My greatest expectations concerning a synthesis between reminiscence and a forward look in the development of the 34th Bienal lie in the way in which we have tried to deal with difference and identity. Nearly always using the writings by Édouard Glissant as a compass, we have tried to bring about encounters between different artists, poetics and works based on the premise that Glissant's concept of Relation is more important than that of equivalence, and that opacity is an indispensable defense against the brutality of transparency imposed by the colonial gaze. The way in which Glissant navigates between past traumas and desires for the future would itself merit an entire text, but it is possible to register here one thrust inspired in the posture of this Antillean thinker: it will not be possible to simply defeat the colonial ideology by playing on its own terms; it is necessary to shred the premises that create an illusion of legitimacy for the legacy of the conquerors – purity, originality, superiority, the single root.

Perhaps this is why the presence of artists linked to what they themselves call “contemporary indigenous art” has become so significant for this Bienal. Perceived by many as a link with a decimated past, they bear witness to an ongoing struggle, while in the apparent paradox between “art” and “indigenous” they also experiment with a complex principle of creation that can perhaps engage in the dismantling of fictions and farces of epistemological purity, ethnic suprematism, and colonial blindness.

Then, yes, the morning is coming.

Translated from Portuguese by John Norman











Santa Luzia Meteorite, found 1921. Goiás, Brazil. Collection: Setor de Meteorítica – Museu Nacional / Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

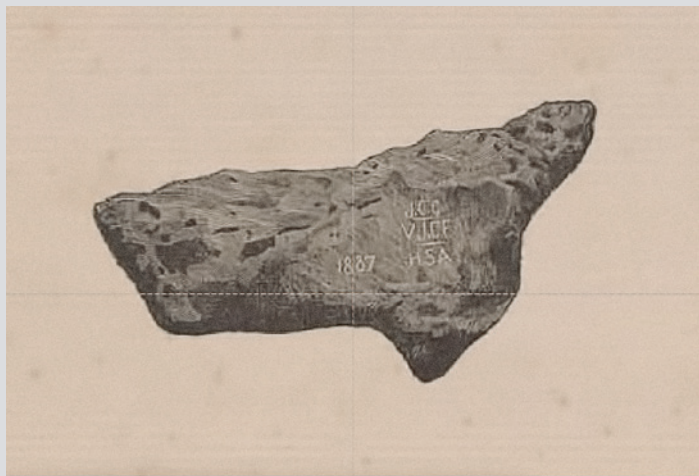
On the night of September 2, 2018, a fire engulfed the National Museum's headquarters in Quinta da Boa Vista in Rio de Janeiro and destroyed almost all of its historical and scientific collections. About twenty million items collected over two hundred years turned into ashes. Working tirelessly through the rubble, the museum's rescue team spent the next few months identifying and cataloging pieces that, in different ways, had gone through the fire. Three of them are displayed here, at the beginning of a Bienal that wants to speak, among other things, about the value and importance of resisting, of moving

forward incorporating transformation as an integral part of living and reconstruction as a task of critical reinvention. It is an intentionally reduced group of items as their role is essentially metonymic: these pieces are parts which represent a whole, including other pieces that, for many reasons, could not be exhibited here.

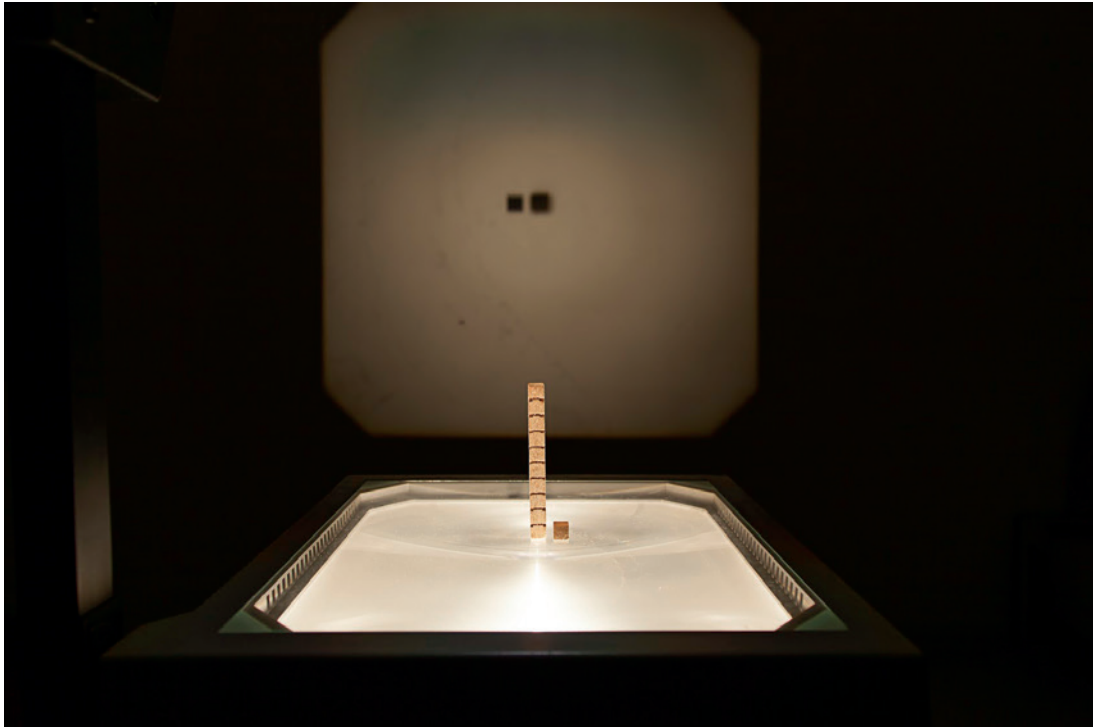
The first of these objects is a stone that changed from amethyst (violet variety of quartz) to citrine (yellow variety of quartz) with the fire's heat. This change in the mineral's structure is evidence that the temperature in the museum must have been around 450°C for several hours. By indelibly absorbing the heat, the stone became a clue, and its color a witness to what happened. It has been transformed, yet it is the same stone. It remains the same because it knew how to transform itself.

The second object is a *ritxòkò*, donated by Kaimote Kamayurá, from the Karajá de Hawaló village, on Bananal Island, Tocantins, to help rebuild the collection. Symbolically, it replaces a doll lost in the fire, emphasizing how much the meaning of some objects transcends their presence and even their physical existence. If museums are in charge of preserving objects that tell the story of forgotten or decimated traditions, a living community, on the contrary, preserves the objects' uses, manufacturing processes, and the stories and songs that give them meaning. Offering a contemporary piece to the museum, Kaimote Kamayurá acts as a representative of an original people who decide to actively contribute to the reconstruction of the National Museum's collection, implicitly criticizing the colonialist practice of subjugating the knowledge of one people to another.

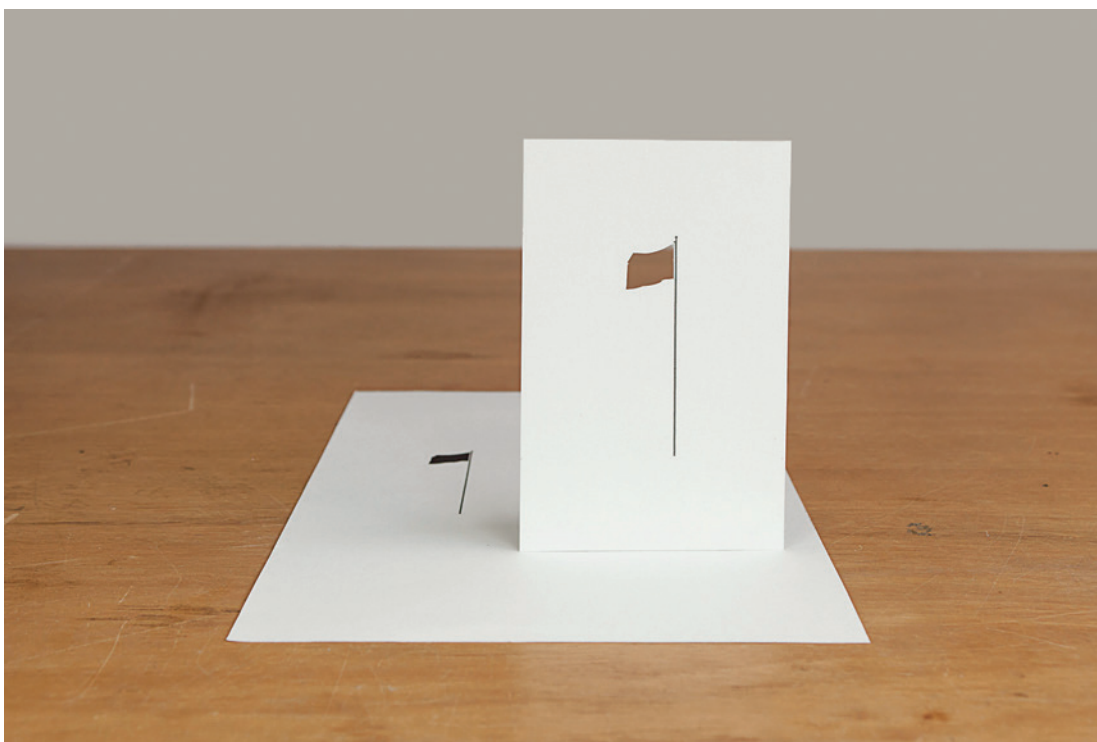
The last of these objects, Santa Luzia, is the second-largest meteorite found in Brazil in 1921 in Santa Luzia (currently Luziânia), Goiás. Fragments of asteroids, comets, or planets, when entering the Earth's atmosphere, reach temperatures above 1,000°C, sufficient, in many cases, to completely consume them. The fragments that survive, called meteorites, bring to our planet the memory of a journey through hardly conceivable times and spaces. Tempered by its passage through the atmosphere, the Santa Luzia emerged completely unscathed from the National Museum's ruins.







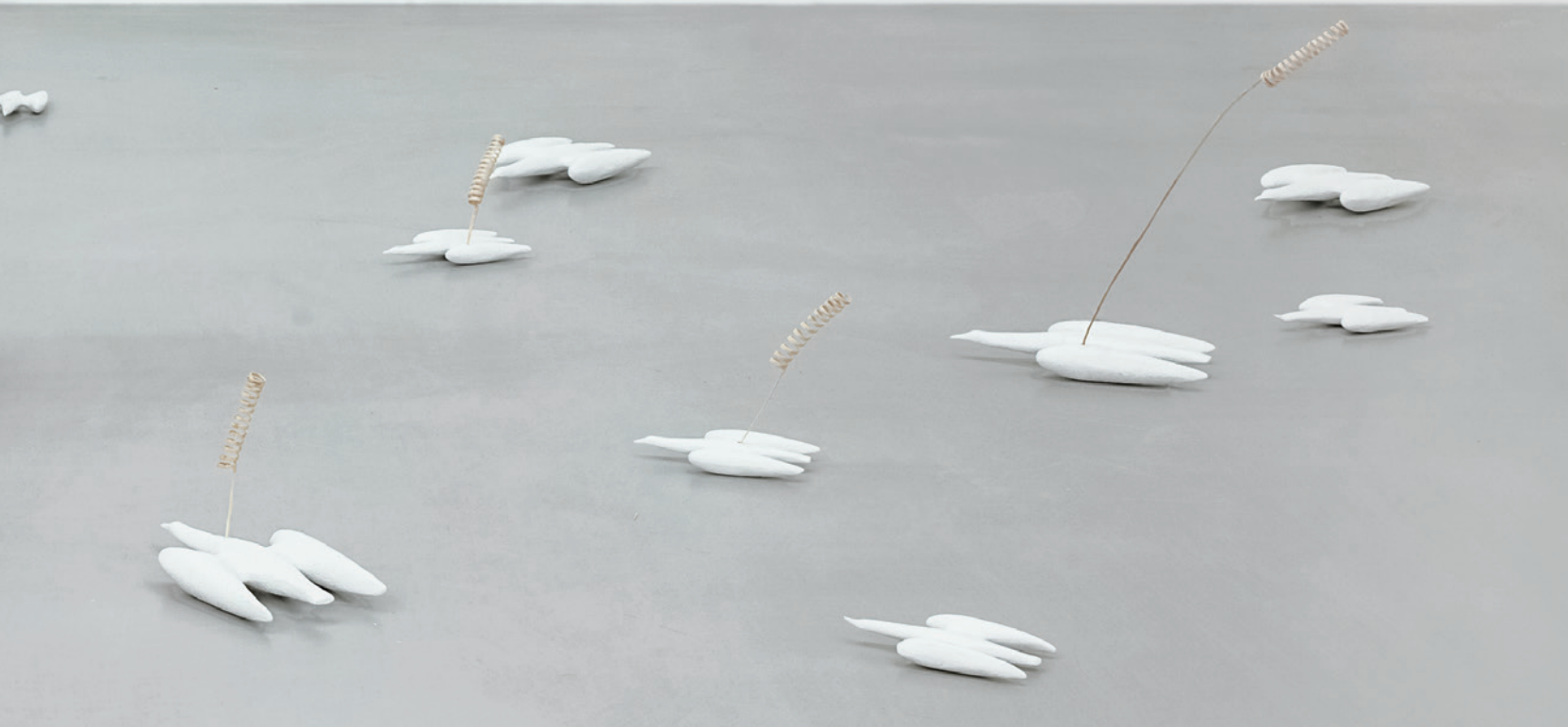
Educação pela noite
384.403 km, mingunte
60 satélites em linha
vistos de Volta Redonda.



Curva de montanha,
rodopio de rio,
bando de pássaros

cortados por uma linha reta.









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In the process of accumulating my own sound effects library, specific to the investigation of earwitness testimony, I have come across many descriptions in which earwitnesses explain the sounds they heard in the negative: "It didn't sound like a punch," or "Not at all like gunshots," or "It doesn't sound like something is hitting a body."

These witnesses know what it was that they heard. They do not say, "I did not hear a punch," but that the punch they heard "didn't sound like a punch," meaning the sound that we expect it to make, which is often conditioned by sounds they've heard on TV or at the cinema. Currently, one of the most popular punch sound effects for the screen is created by dropping a phone book to the ground.

For many of us whose primary experience of violence is cinematic, this particular punch sound has become what we imagine and expect a real punch to sound like. Yet witnesses to real assaults, suggest that punches sound quite different. "It didn't sound like a punch, but a lighter being thrown to the ground and popping," said a witness in an Oregon Courthouse, while another witness to the same punch said it sounded like "the noise of a cinder block falling on concrete."

A New Zealand witness said of a blow he overheard that it "sounded like an egg cracking," and a witness in Hastings described hearing an assault as like a "watermelon smashing". These are but a few examples I have encountered where witnesses first negate the sound we expect to hear, only to then describe the real sound in terms of alternate, imaginary sound effects of their own devising.

Our experience and memories of acoustic violence is completely convolved with the production of sound effects, to the extent that watermelons, eggs, cinder blocks, leather handbags, a rack of trays and a cigarette lighter are not simply objects that describe an event, they are themselves devices by which memories are encoded, stored, recalled and retrieved.

Rope

Braided thick together, the rope fishermen use for seining has the elasticity of a spring, creating a mosaic pattern as you coil it like a snake.

The rope employed in the Inca Empire to describe numbers with knots later became a memory medium that is still with us today.

Wires, like USB cables sitting around your house, are conductors that directly transmit electric signal, generating some magnetic field as you wind it into a coil.

Even the messy skein of wires connecting piled-up audio equipments, or the cat's cradle you play with a cable, can generate some magnetic field.

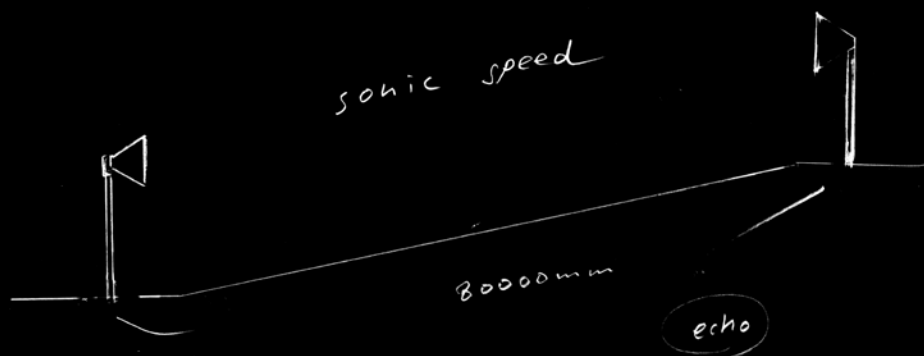
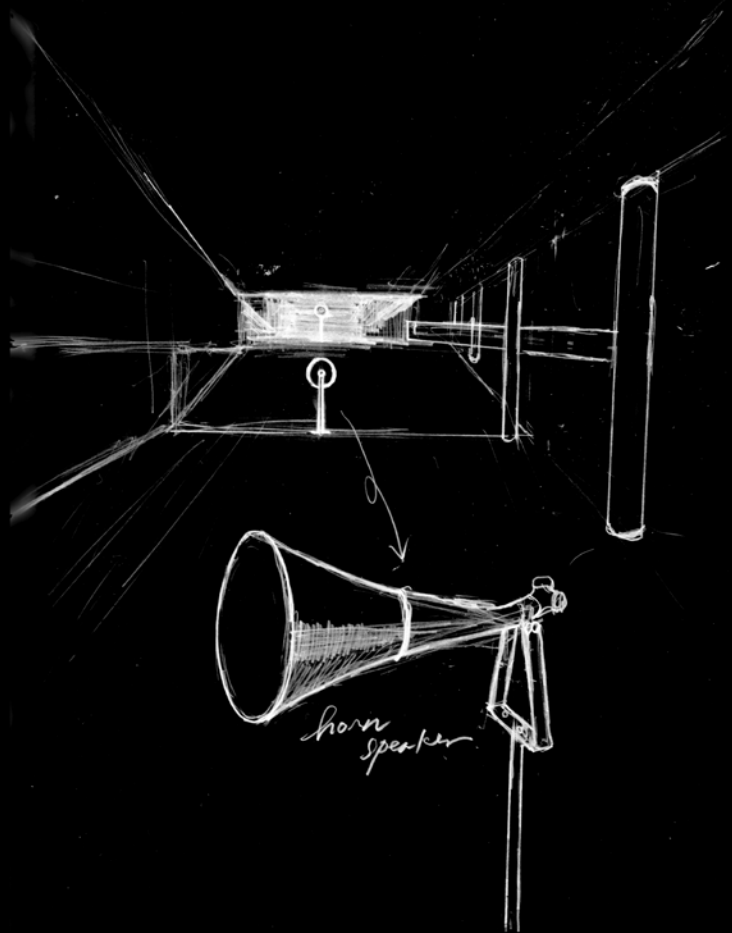
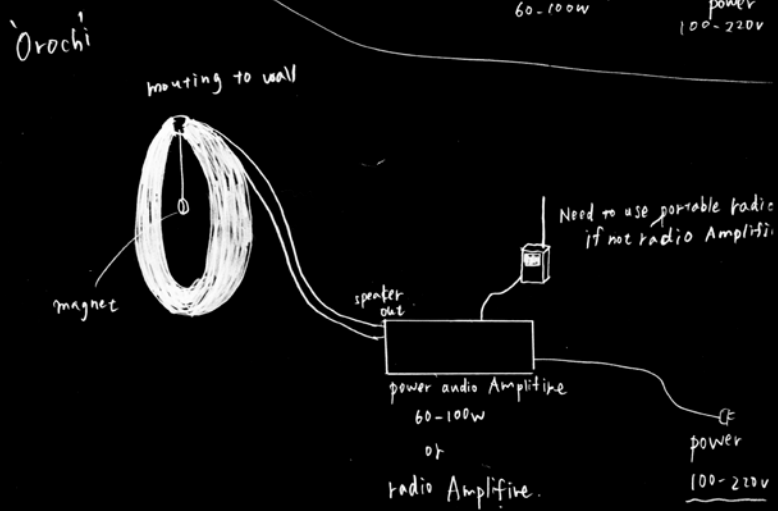
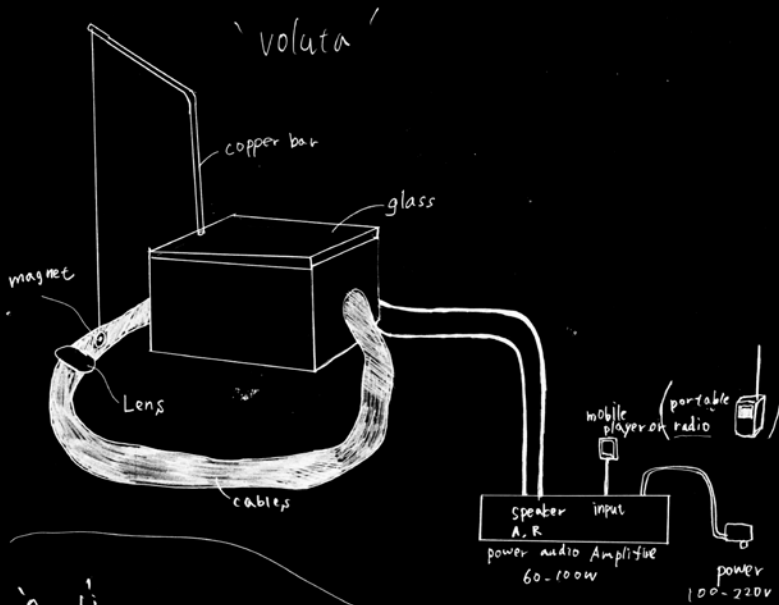
A rope, a simple thing in itself, starts emitting a different energy when knotted, bound, rolled or extended.

Whether it is *shimenawa*, the straw festoon that demarcates the inner sanctum of a Japanese shrine, or the electric wire of a telephone pole, randomly tangled up on a street.

I wrap an electric cord around a glass, or spin a spoon on the edge of a table. In this way I go on looking for that omnipresent energy.

“Orochi” means serpent.

At an electronic communication device factory, a grotesque apparatus hangs from the ceiling, resembling the skeleton of a dinosaur, or the shape of a serpent. Closer inspection revealed it to be a bundle of electric cords, made of dozens of red, blue and yellow strands twisted together. The men who worked at the factory called this “monster” “orochi,” I learned. This was Japan in the mid-1950s, when people still vaguely believed in fantastical things.





Revista Manchete, 21 April, 1960. Unknown authorship

The Capela de Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Brancos [Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary of the White Men], most commonly known as Padre Faria Chapel, is a small church in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, whose bell tower bears a bronze bell cast in Germany in 1750. On April 21, 1792, this bell was the only one in the colony to toll in open disobedience to the official order that forbade homage to the crown's enemy. The bell tolled as regret for Tiradentes' execution, the only *Inconfidência Mineira* [Minas Gerais Conspiracy] participant whose death sentence was not revoked. With the independence of Brazil

and the Proclamation of the Republic, the Minas Gerais' martyr was declared a national hero. And the bell that tolled in his homage became a symbol of the struggle for the country's sovereignty and, in 1960, on another April 21, it was taken to Brasília, hoisted beside a replica of the cross used in the first mass held in Brazil, and tolled for the new capital's inauguration. On that occasion, President Juscelino Kubitschek acknowledged in his inaugural speech the desire to greet "the past and future of our country through two events linked by one common idea: that of making Brazil affirm itself as an independent nation."

What does it mean to look back at that bell so symbolically charged by the colonial history, to feel the time that continues to settle on it, to reflect on how much time it spends basically in silence, despite the peals that resonate from time to time? How many peals and chimes would have to be heard today to mark each death caused by the State – like Tiradentes' –, or by an ommissive government that insists that our patriotic duty is simply to forget our past?

Over the 34th Bienal's expanded exhibition duration, some works will be presented more than once, in different contexts and moments, to emphasize that nothing remains the same: not a bell, not those who hear or look at it, not even the world it inhabits. This bell's history and image have already marked their presence in the *Vento* [Wind] exhibition at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion in November 2020. And some of the works now surrounding the bell have also been exhibited before in the same building, in important moments of Brazil's and Bienal de São Paulo's recent history. To rescue and show them again is a way to reaffirm the desire to build the 34th Bienal based on a *poetics of repetition* inspired by Édouard Glissant' thought, whose writings also spiral back to the same ideas, repeating concepts that are, however, never the same because both the writer and the reader are never the same either. Gathered around the bell, works created in different times and places allude in a more or less direct and poetic way to the return, like tragedy or farce, of dark moments and to the need to resist them with ideas, bodies and songs.

To choose utopia, as the poet Thiago de Mello did, one must believe in a better, optimistic future. The Covid-19 crisis we are currently going through has imposed a forced and arbitrary halt to the conception of a future, which is now even more uncertain, blurred and always shifting. But if we cannot look forward without getting dizzy, perhaps the current pandemic is an invitation to take a sharper look at the present. Thinking about the present, thinking about the current dramatic present, is a basic instinct, rather than a duty. Succeeding, however, is such a difficult undertaking that it seems almost impossible. The present is the result of our history, a set of personal, national, and continental histories that cannot be easily summarized. After the rise and collapse of Marxism – the last totalizing philosophy to have experienced worldwide success and diffusion, involving the intellectual and the worker, ruler and oppressed, privileged and victim – no theory or theorist has proved capable of providing a clear system of ideas that could convincingly describe the eternally mobile and circumstantial absolute that is the present.

The present, the here and now, has been accepted as a state of emergency, exceptional, urgent; in fact, life cannot and must not be postponed until tomorrow. Kierkegaard spoke of a moment, or a *now*, and in every religion the “conversion” of one’s whole life has always been embraced as commonplace. But moral and religious conceptions are always as peremptory as they are oscillating and paradoxical: is the truest life now or in the future, in this life or the hereafter? It is possible, and even utopian in itself, to think of this constrained time as an invitation to take an interest in the present moment, to define it, to look for its flaws, its hidden existences. Revisiting the present in order to better inhabit it necessarily implies looking back; at this stage our horizon seems on hold. Here, in this moment, as I am writing and you are reading, we are products of a past history. Which history? Is there only one? There is, of course, the history imposed by a certain tradition in search of domination: an *official history*, which we have been fed since school and is anchored in the deepest recesses of our consciousness as being unique and true, without any possible discussion. Yet, there cannot be only one history for there are as many histories as there are living people. Carlo Ginzburg, a pioneer of microhistory, has made it his life’s mission and struggle to bring the flaws and hollow stories of official history to light, the anecdotes that have gone unmentioned in this machine of time and memory.

Eight human faces scattered among geometric patterns, each bearing slits for eyes that peer, not entirely benignly, out of the front and back surfaces. Renamed the “Shigir Idol,” this object was found in a peat bog in 1890, and for a long time the dating of this wooden sculpture was under scrutiny. Recent tests using advanced technology yielded a remarkably early origin date of roughly 11,600 years ago, a time when Eurasia was still transitioning out of the last Ice Age. The sculpture is more than twice as old as the Egyptian pyramids and Stonehenge, as well as, by many millennia, the first known work of ritual art. This surprisingly early dating makes the find the earliest monumental wooden sculpture in the world. It has no direct parallel, which hinders the interpretation and contextualization of this finding. Thomas Terberger, an archaeologist and head of research at the Department of Cultural Heritage of Lower Saxony, in Germany, noted:

Ever since the Victorian era, Western science has been a story of superior European knowledge and the cognitively and behaviorally inferior “other.” The hunter-gatherers are regarded as inferior to early agrarian communities emerging at that time in the Levant. At the same time, the

Correspondence #16
20 Apr 2021




Shigir Idol. Photo: *The Siberian Times*

archaeological evidence from the Urals and Siberia was underestimated and neglected.

This sculpture and the recent studies concerning its dating challenge the ethnocentric notion that pretty much everything, including symbolic expression and philosophical perceptions of the world, came to Europe 8,000 years ago by way of the sedentary farming communities in the Fertile Crescent.

The present is so present and mobile that any effort to fix it can only obtain limited and partial results. Once our certainties are undermined, both present and future utopias will become necessary tools.



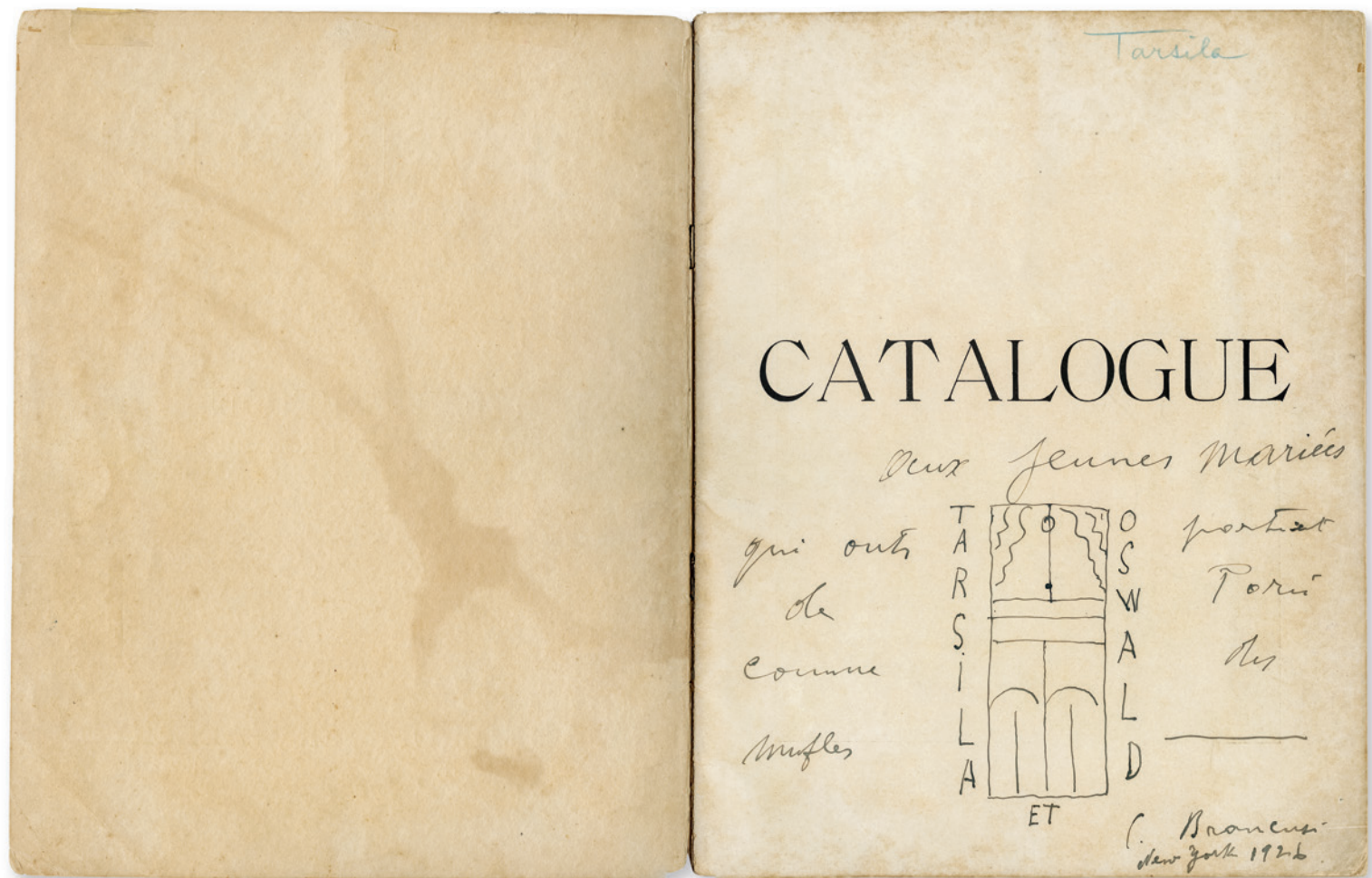


My Vernicle o
tu amor me condena
es la indecisión
la confusión
de querer y no querer
del desear y no poder
es el luchar
contra esta máscara
que nos aferramos
a llevar pero
que ya no tiene
sentido
que sigas llevando
esta ilusión
a cuestas

My Vernicle o tu amor me condena, 1998
Colografía, 100 x 75 cm







Constantin Brancusi. Dedication on the catalog of the exhibition at the Brummer Gallery, New York, 1926. Collection: Pedro Corrêa do Lago

In September 1926, Constantin Brancusi arrived in New York to accompany the installation of his second exhibition in the United States together with Marcel Duchamp, the exhibition curator. The arrival of the two, and above all of Brancusi's works, has mythical contours, and goes beyond the scope of art history. The US customs officials, who refused to catalog Brancusi's sculptures as works of art – especially one of his iconic *Bird in Space* – and classified them under the "Kitchenware and Hospital Instruments" category, seized his work. The episode started a famous legal process, which would last for the next two

years and have testimonies from various abstract art critics and defenders. In the end, Judge J. Waite declared that “whether or not we are in sympathy with these newer ideas and the schools which represent them, we think the fact of their existence and their influence upon the art worlds, as recognized by the courts, must be considered,” confirming that the conception of art that had been in place for centuries had been replaced.

A few days after Brancusi’s arrival in New York, Tarsila do Amaral and Oswald de Andrade, whom the sculptor befriended in Paris, married in São Paulo. It is worth imagining the scene: sitting in one of the wooden boxes where the sculptures traveled, Brancusi receives the news and, pausing the exhibition installation, dedicates a catalog that had just come off the press to the newlyweds, whom, however, he jokingly scolds for the rude way they left Paris without saying goodbye. The catalog’s yellowed page, with its unpretentious and affectionate dedication, condenses countless correspondences, relationships, exchanges, and comings and goings, such as the attraction Paris exerted on artists from all over the world in the 1920s; the penetration of modern art in the United States, which would culminate in the shift from Parisian centrality to New York from the 1940s onwards; the increasingly massive circulation of artworks through their reproduction; and the alliances and networks that Brazilian artists established with other professionals from an avant-garde environment that had become global.

Within the scope of an exhibition built from countless dialogues, exchanges, and discussions in and from various places over the world, it is essential to emphasize how art can bridge the gaps between different contexts, moments, and cosmovision and is always open to being re-signified by the changes that time and history impose. In this regard, both this *statement* and the works surrounding it point to possible encounters and frictions between works from very distinct contexts and periods and serve as a metonymy of the 34th Bienal, of its desire to establish unsuspected and illuminating relationships without giving up preserving the opacity of each of the works.



filas 40,5 x 45 cm
estudo = 18 x 22
colagem aquosa aprof.



óxido de ferro + massa red

Pastel drawing:

clay: 32+52

óxido = 23+45+75

estudo = 44

verde = 16+36

azul = 34+22+37

single zinc plate 1 Wein

Venda Volpi 1. + branco de zinco

diversos:







Édouard Glissant and a Parliament of Black Authors and Artists

The demand for the right to opacity is a move away from absolutist truths, fixed identities, histories, literatures and philosophies written with capital letters. The consent to everyone's right to opacity illustrates the desire for diversity, relationality of people, plants and ideas that seek to assemble all the differences of our planet, without a guarantee of ever succeeding.

Opacity, that which only manifests itself in an unstable and diffracted state, through light and obscurity, and leads to Édouard Glissant's concept of Relation, the contact and *mise-en-relation* of differences, the retelling and relaying of unpredictable outcomes from such combinations, combats binary oppositions and the impositions of transparencies, which annihilate or silence the voices of minorities everywhere.

But the new and perhaps contradictory voices of the oppressed will continue to emerge and require to be decolonized and liberated. As Glissant puts it, there is a subterranean logic, a solidarity of intuition that links all these quests for a decolonial liberation:

"Nelson Mandela is an *écho-monde*. Wherever oppressors, in one form or another, impose themselves, those who are oppressed represent, through their very resistance, the guarantee of such a future, even if it is fragile and threatened. Meaning well has nothing to do with it but, rather, the demand for totality, that every form of oppression tries to reduce and that every resistance contributes to increasing." (*Poetics of Relation*, p. 202).

Per aspera ad astra

I started writing this text in March 2020 during a train trip, the last trip I made before the implementation of the restrictions designed and redesigned to try to contain the expansion of the pandemic that continues to spread ever since.

Traveling on the rails, I thought of this text as a continuation of the conversation we had left unfinished, at the point in which we had agreed that modern man is defined by a way of looking, a gaze. And it is not important to know whether it was step by step, from the mountain to the tower and from the crow's nest to the zeppelin, that men and women became used to the panorama – like giraffes got used to the tall treetops – and ended up believing themselves bigger than the world. Or, on the contrary, if it was the dream of seeing the world at their feet that made humans commit to building elevated platforms and optical instruments that would make the illusion more realistic.

In any case, we should heed more to illusionism deceptions, study the sleight of hand, the misdirection, the mirror box. It is said that after that encounter on the beach, on a rainy day of rough seas – after that encounter we would like to imagine to have happened in the jungle, by surprise –, the navigators, full of tricks, showed their mirrors. The story I was told is one of cleverness and innocence, wisdom and ingenuity: newcomers exchanging paltry mirrors for valuable pieces of gold.

Behold, gold is the most malleable metal we know. Inadequate for manufacturing weapons and other tools, it ended up being used for making ornaments and ritual objects – always treated with the care that less rigid materials require. However, at some point, at some place, owning adornments and performing rituals became more admirable or frightening than having and using tools. And gold became the most valuable metal of all.

Upon reaching a land full of gold, they lost their minds. They gave up everything in exchange for this gold. They gave up their language, their landscape, their parents and children, even the image of civilized and civilizing men they liked to see reflected in their mirrors. They even gave up their mirrors – planes in which everything can fit, surfaces capable of capturing the entire world. If I could go back in time, even knowing what I know, I would hand it over again: all our gold for a mirror.

During this noisy sea encounter, they forgot to learn that not all mirrors are the same. The many words in Amazonian languages that we can translate as "mirror" do not emphasize its ability to reproduce images but rather the shining, shimmering or dazzling properties.¹ The mirror's greatest power does not reside in letting us admire our own

1

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "A floresta de cristal: notas sobre a ontologia dos espíritos amazônicos", in *Cadernos de campo*. São Paulo, n. 14/15, 2006, pp. 319-338.

reflection but in allowing us to change the direction of light, deflect its course, redraw its path, and lighten the shadows.

■ From the mountain to the tower and from crow's nest to the zeppelin, navigators that we are and sight-lovers, we arrived at the pale blue dot. Launched to study the solar system in 1977, the spacecraft *Voyager 1* had completed its primary mission and was preparing to enter interstellar space on February 14, 1990, when NASA, 6 billion kilometers away, commanded the ship to rotate its cameras and record one last image of the Earth. The planet measures less than a pixel in the photo, a tiny, faded dot in the vastness of space and between light beams created by the camera lens. Modern man's schizophrenic vertigo: while believing to be the mechanical eye that sees the planet as a speck of dust, he is a body among billions of bodies that disappear.

Seeing things from above not always shows more or better. When booking a ticket, it is hard to figure the relationship between the seats and the windows in the train's floor plan. And it is impossible to imagine what the landscape will look like from each number in each wagon. On this trip from Malmö to Stockholm, even though the ticket says 24 *fönster* [window], what I have on my right is a metal plate upholstered in a fabric with thin stripes in neutral tones. The landscape passes through a ten centimeters gap between the front seat (in which the same colors are arranged in a checkerboard pattern) and this plate covering the space where there should be a window temporarily mine.

It is March 5, and the sun also finds some gaps between the clouds. But it is too early for trees to have leaves. I only see green in conifers (a name that groups the species in a cone shape, as expected) and in the less confident tone of some grasslands.

However, as in double-exposed photographs or, better, as in these children's books in which illustrations on transparent pages are superimposed onto those in opaque pages, completing and transforming the image and the story, I see in those trees all their leaves: the ones not yet born, and those already gone.

And many others. I see in those trees a tangle of other trees. Unlike Funes, Jorge Luis Borges' famous character who, from immobility, becomes capable of perceiving and remembering, with absolute precision, each leaf of a tree, with its tonal variations, different sizes, exact position, I only see trees. An overlapping of trees that I have seen passing before in bigger windows, on roads with more curves. And the trees that were waiting for me (and maybe are waiting still) always in the same place. The guava tree that was already there when I arrived, the neighbor's pink *ipê*, the white one that I planted, the po-

megranate we planted together, the *sibipirunas* in the square in front, many years before. The platans that also lost their leaves, even earlier, even further south.

■ Perhaps the most beautiful part of Glissant's book² is the beginning. An account that leads us to imagine the slave ships' holds. Not so much the violence on the bodies, not even the wound in the soul, but the intellectual rupture that it means, or, better, that we can try to imagine it would have meant, to face this inexplicable departure from a known landscape.

The boats these men and women made and used in their rivers, and in the seas that had also been theirs, were low and open. From there, one could see the water up close within reach of the oars and touch, the sky in the distance, the horizons of the world. From there, one could recognize the trees, descry the fish, name the birds. All things, those that pass and those that wait, continued to exist as the boats floated at a speed the body controlled or at least knew and could feel like its own.

As the ship moves away from, say, Uidá – a place where each piece of porcelain found in the sand seems to want to tell us part of a story, and each shell seems to hold more sounds than that of the sea –, as the ship departs away from the coast, a rift opens between each of these women and men, locked in the holds, and their landscape. The relationship with the whole known world, the scenery of the actions that until then had defined us, becomes the relationship with the memory of that world. It is not possible to go back to the relatives or the predators that wait at the edge of each path – or to the birds that our steps startled – any more than in dreams.

"Who gave birth to me was the belly of the ship," says Roberto Mendes and José Carlos Capinam's song, which ends up with the promise "I will learn to read, to teach my comrades."³ It is in this languageless darkness that *banzo* is born. A new way of inhabiting the world is born in this dark that lasts longer than ever seen, and they are removed without choice from everything whose name they know. Now, these same names no longer refer to the tree that can be seen again every morning, nor to its sisters near and far, from here to the horizon, but to a tree that exists only as a memory. The tree is no longer the rough trunk walked on by a line of ants, but the blurred and faded memory of overlapping trees, and the same happens to the differences, which little by little become less defined, between those and the trees that did not exist until then.

■ It is about this rupture in language that Glissant speaks, to me, about this mismatch in which all known words cease to correspond to

2

Édouard Glissant,
Poetics of Relation. Ann
Arbor: The University of
Michigan Press, 1997.

3

Roberto Mendes and José
Carlos Capinam, "Yáyá
Massemba", in Maria
Betânia, *Brasileirinho*.
Biscoito Fino, 2003.

something tangible and start to refer to something we have lost. Between each sound the mouth can produce and what these sounds evoke, there is now an insurmountable distance, one without time marked by days and nights, without a landscape that gradually tells us about such farness. And, for each of these sounds, new imprecise correspondences emerge. For *idin*, other larvae; for *okê*, other mountains; for *aisan*, other diseases; for *irora*, many other pains.

There is an irreparable degree of violence in this machine of alienation and annihilation that the States and their elites set in motion. There is an unimaginable degree of laceration in each of these strays. We, who have always – or almost always – had a choice, cannot approach these pains other than like blind people fumbling in the dark or avid audience walking in the pitch dark of the cinema. We cannot shout the same screams, and if we keep quiet it is another silence. But of words emptied like lost gloves, without the things they used to name and that have been lost – of those gloves either too small or too big to house the unknowns that surround us now; of the new words that cannot seem to say what they want to say – of this rupture between names and things we can speak. And we can speak in this language that we have inherited, marked by insurmountable distances and faulty approximations.

“For if this experience made you, original victim floating toward the sea’s abysses, an exception, it became something shared and made us, the descendants, one people among others. Peoples do not live on exception. Relation is not made up of things that are foreign but of shared knowledge.”⁴

Let us then imagine the debarkation. Not the horror of the chains, the shouts of command, the broken hopes of holding a company. Let us only imagine the balance that seems to be on dry land, reverse seasickness, and the blindness of eyes dazzled by the sunlight – this one is, for sure, the same. Let us imagine walking along streets paved with hot stones, with your bare feet and your senses dazed. And as the body gets used to the horizon, the light, the smells, the hunger, we begin to discern the landscape’s elements. We distinguish flying feathered beings and call them what we called our birds; we distinguish furry quadrupeds and try on them the names of animals we know, in an attempt to find suitable matches, however loose; we distinguish almost hairless bipeds and call by our own names those who do not believe, nor want, nor can be like us.

That is how the languages we speak today are born, through that collision. From a double effort that, on the one hand, seeks to move the tongue to account for a new world and, on the other, insists on finding uses for words we refuse to forget. From this relationship between the known, destined to fade, and the unknown, that we need to own.

Above all, our ability to speak is born from the disjointed fragments, from seeing the splinters and shards breaking away in the moment of the crash to never return to the earth.

We learned that what we say can only be said like that, shattered, reflected by mirror fragments from different worlds. We already know that in other languages, and even in ours but in other ears, our speech is translated, betrayed, brought close. We learn that our speech is not pure, whole, complete, when we finish pronouncing the last syllable with clear diction. With or without the sound of waves breaking on the sand, each statement reaches its final form in the eardrum and is also built along the trodden paths of labyrinths.

And differently from what the modern man – the author of encyclopedias and dictionaries, the inventor of devices and applications – tries to make us believe, it is not a question of studying as many languages as we can in order to communicate beyond the most distant borders. Nor is it, as the modern man has tried to do more than once, a matter of founding a universal language that, by erasing differences, would allow us to understand each other without or with minor errors.

Among those who dreamed of a language common to all peoples, Leibniz,⁵ the mathematician, imagined a universal language that could express our thoughts as clearly and precisely as arithmetic expresses numbers – a language that would be very difficult to make but very easy to learn. In 1677 he wrote: “I dare say that this is the highest effort of the human mind; and, when the project is accomplished, it will simply be up to humans to be happy, since they will have an instrument that exalts the reason no less than the telescope perfects our vision.”⁶

■ Precisely three centuries later, in September 1977, *Voyager 1* leaves the stratosphere to produce images that no ground-based telescope could capture. It carries onboard gold discs containing a selection of sounds and illustrations carefully chosen to introduce us to a possible alien life form. In a sort of printed dedication, evidently written in English, the then US president Jimmy Carter wrote: “This is a present from a small, distant world, a token of our sounds, our science, our images, our music, our thoughts, and our feelings. We are attempting to survive our time so we may live into yours.”

Photographs of animals, plants, and landscapes; men and women; dishes and buildings. Human anatomy and reproductive system diagrams; the solar system; DNA strands. Physical and mathematical equations. The singing of birds and whales; songs from different times and regions. Natural sounds like the wind, thunder, waves crashing on the beach – still the same rough sea. Human sounds like footsteps – barefoot? – and laughs; greetings in 55 languages – including ours.

5

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716).

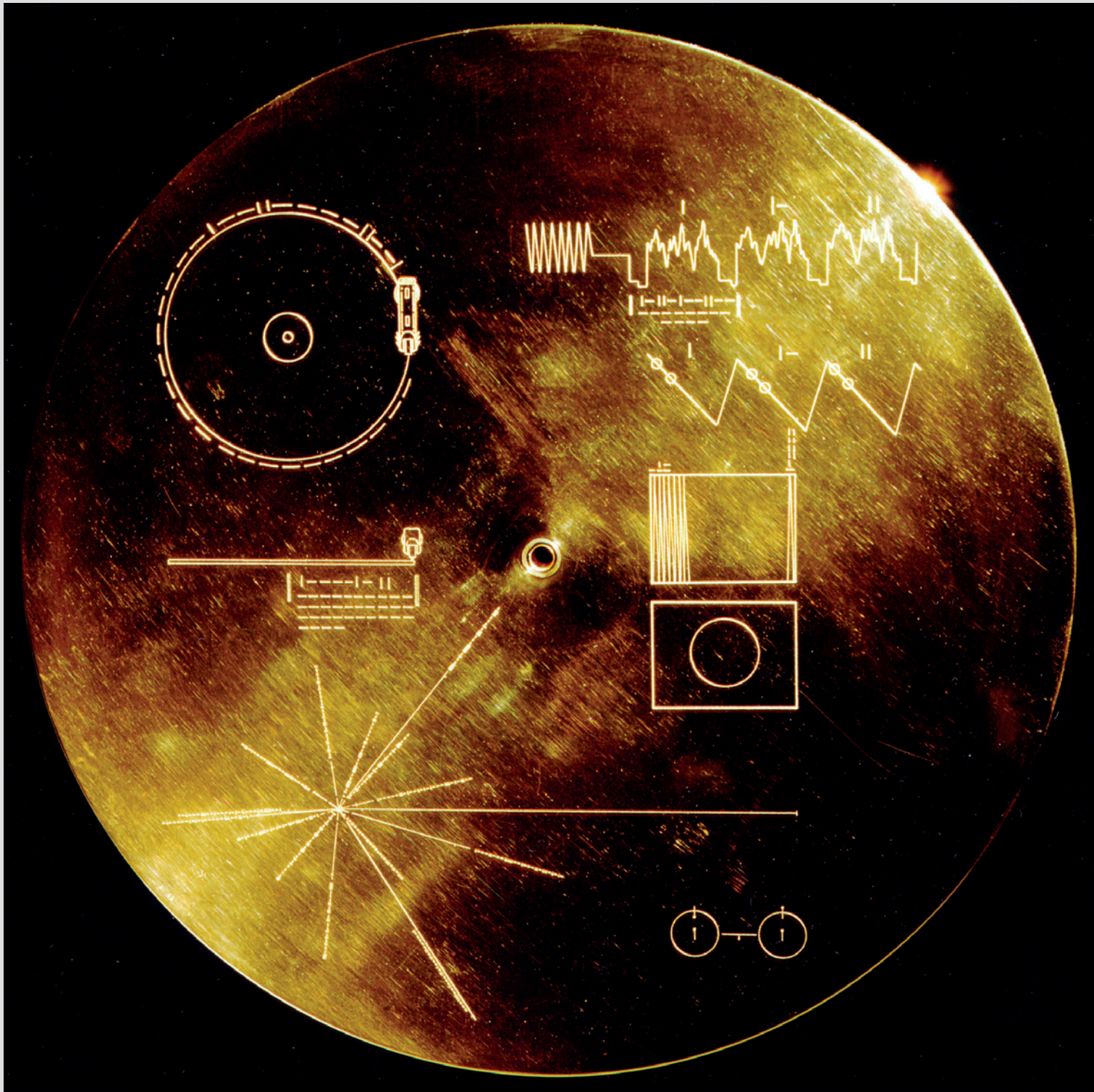
6

Leibniz, *Cosmopolis*, p. 104.

The list is fascinating. Above all, it is fascinating to see the desire, the effort, and belief in the possibility of transcending the limits of communication as easily as a spaceship can transcend the frontier of our planetary system. The gold disc includes a Latin phrase engraved in Morse code – lines and dots that are both a sound and a graphic message on the disc's surface. But in what kind of dream could future aliens intuit, from a sequence of intercalated short and long duration signals, a series of graphisms used in a part of this small and distant world we call the West to represent other sounds, which, combined in a particular catenation, form a sentence in a language that – even here and even now – is already dead? *Per aspera ad astra* [through hardships to the stars], they will read if they can.

No, it is not about finding a language that can be understood in the most hidden places of an expanding universe. It is about speaking our shattered tongues knowing that there are things that can only be said in the languages of others. It is about recognizing that there are birds which we have no words to name, that there are worlds that we cannot reach with the words we know. It is about knowing that every language we do not understand allows for the enunciation of truths that we will never even dream of saying. That's it. Only knowing this. And be willing to hear them.

Translated from Portuguese by Matheus Lock

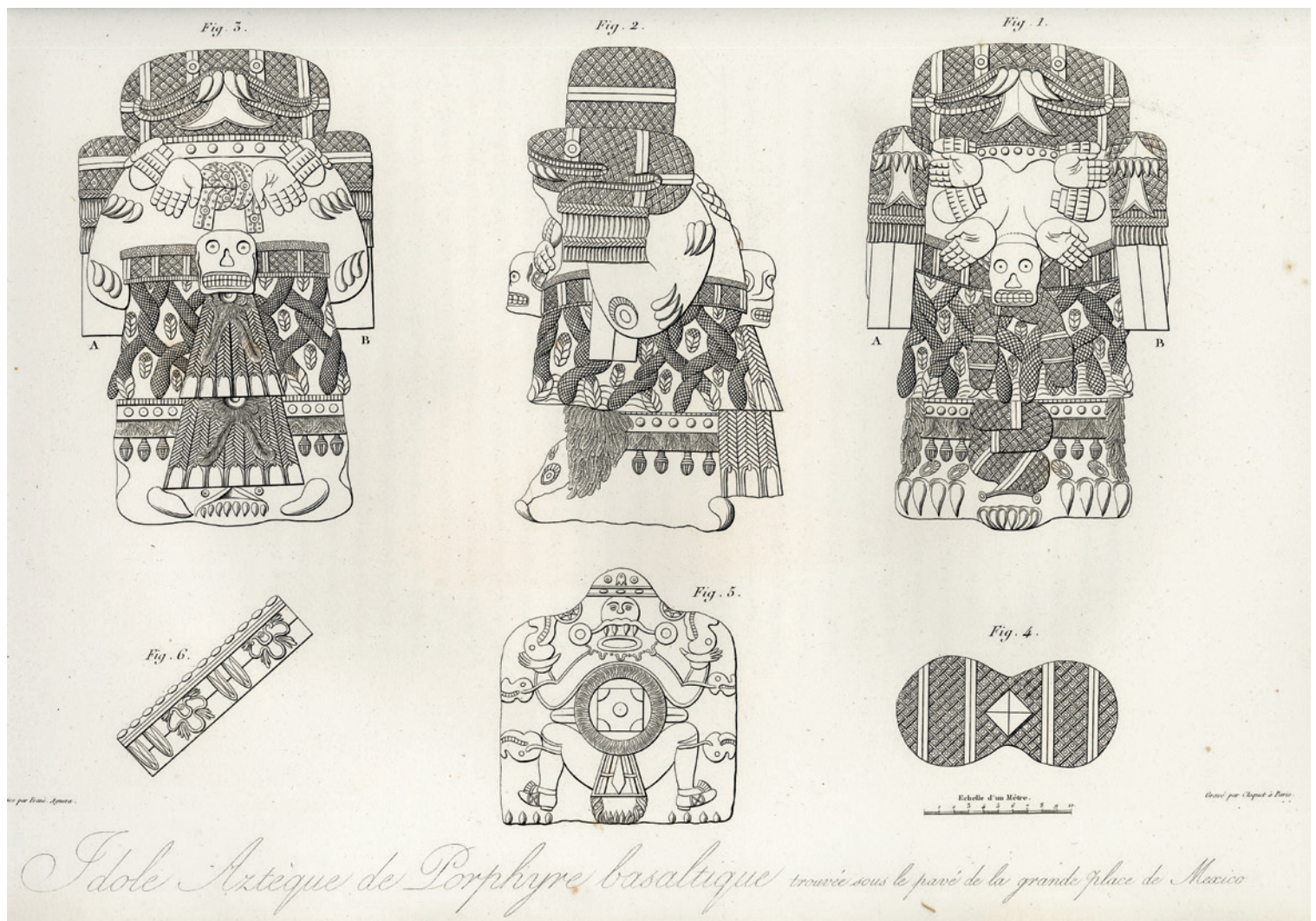








ô pássaro,
do bico preto,
teus tons laranjas
advertem.



Alexander von Humboldt. Aztec basaltic porphyry idol found under the sidewalk of the great square of Mexico City. In: *Vues des cordillères, et monuments des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique. Première partie, Relation Historique, Voyage de Humboldt et Bonplant, Atlas Pittoresque* [Views of the Cordilleras, and monuments of the indigenous peoples of America. Part 1, Historical Relation, Voyage of Humboldt and Bonplant, Atlas Pittoresque]. Paris, 1810. The George Peabody Library, The Sheridan Library, The John Hopkins University

On August 13, 1790, a group of workers excavating in Mexico City's Central Plaza discovered a statue the astronomer and anthropologist Antonio de León y Gama identified as Teoyaomiqui. It was, in fact, the goddess Coatlicue, also known as *Dama de la Falda de Serpientes* [The lady in the snake skirt]. The discovery took place during the construction of a water canal to supply the colonial city built over the former Aztec capital, the great Tenochtitlán. In 1520, when the Spanish hordes led by Hernán Cortez entered the capital, gradually subjugating and annihilating one of the most prosperous cities in

all of Mesoamerica, one of the strategies they used to dismantle the Aztec empire was the elimination of its symbols and beliefs through concealment and the replacement of ancient images and traditions. Often, the Spaniards used the Aztec gods' sculptures as the basis for cathedrals and colonial power institutions.

Coatlicue, in Aztec mythology, is the patroness of life and death, mother of Huitzilopochtli – the god of the earth –, and the goddess representing fertility. The sculpture is a double head monolith weighing 24 tons and 2.5 meters high. At its base, a bas-relief representing Tlāloc, the god of rain, was carved in direct contact with the earth; no human eyes could see it, only the earth deities.

Viceroy Revillagigedo ordered Coatlicue to be taken as a relic of the Mesoamerican past to The Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico. But after long discussions, the Spanish authorities decided to bury her again, afraid that the lady in the snake skirt might spark a revolution. The fear of awakening the memory of the subjugated natives accompanied the dread of Coatlicue's brutal beauty, which was outside the Western canons of harmony and decorum. They buried her again under the university cloister until when a curious Alexander von Humboldt asked to see her during his trip to New Spain in 1804. According to the legend, the German explorer began to draw it without, however, completing the illustration because the university clergymen, perhaps fearing that Coatlicue's power would become uncontrollable, hid it again underground. Hence, Humboldt had to let his imagination run wild to immortalize Coatlicue's powerful aura in his sketches.

**A meeting at the edge of an abyss
– CIA's* shout is for more life**

We presume, and to presume is to judge; it steals us from our conscience. We lean, and to lean is to give in; we submit. We create, and to create is to make; we place ourselves.

A majestic ceremony is opened in the world's smallness. Around a bonfire, there are always entities, even when everyone is gone. Everything has a spirit, so to speak, and we are poor on that matter. Feeble, we vanish into the drains, and annoy the rats; dripping sounds. In another struggle, a woman sings while caring about her life, because death is certain.

The wholeness is fading, and there is an urgency while the other side fulfills. Wars of worlds binding together all counseling of peace. Arts apart, ever-ready myriads. Hunters walk long distances, resolute; they understand how grave the mission is. The trance of hunger's might is food, so they keep their oath. An erudite sound plays, and I come in as the one, the evil being. For I go and speak on.

In a trans-worldly dance, eagles fly high in choreography. They dance eternally, and we are here, at the edge of an abyss, presuming that they are fighting. Their strong wings, in constant movement, gently blow on our structures. We are weak, we need help. With our fists tied, we deliver our last strength into the wrong hands. Someone malicious watches us, stalking us. Thus, there is a hypothesis. But, sadly, we still sound selfish. And the echo of the new age has still not fully reverberated on the ego. We enter, then, by other means. We act like we should. Pathways ought to arise because they exist and should be by our side.

I risk saying that anyone laying their eyes on this text has already flirted with an absolute idea of madness. The end, death in its saddest form, our death. Some have certainly strolled around their souls, while others are still stubborn enough not to believe in such elevation. Others, moreover, have lost their souls; now they wander, outside of any illustration. There is a halt in the universal pathways; a mandatory passage. The dimming sign says: *Art Hall*.

The idea of death is dark, cold, solitary, and is everywhere. It is authoritarian, deterministic, and recurring. With no ceremony, it moves around every space. Monsters come out of it, and soon multiply, then conquer us. They attack suddenly, and hide under good advantages, deceptively. They are horrid; some, well-known. Now they appear more intense, longer, and more strong-minded.

We know a little about the most famous ones: fear, horror, despair, panic... tempests.

Those are recurring themes in the classical idea of art. For several centuries, they were given unique praise. In their systemic origin, they are old companions of reason. Depleted feelings perpetuate beyond the seas, dwindling depressively. Vague souls and cyclical plagues came about. In the ecstasy of tackling enterprises, they arrived at our lands. Once here, they fumbled into the backlands. It could have been different. But certain was their sentence, and not seeing our ways was their negligence. Our strategy was to retreat, for both of us. Shrinking was imposed onto our composed structure. Instructed, we waited to see how far such impropriety would go.

The scene in construction illustrates that well. Sometimes we fall more often, sometimes we are thrown back to the earth. We are still vague in vanities. We know about the common stuff that haunt us while we look on. The paths we should follow soothe our origins. In apparent calms, we lean toward repetition. We cannot breathe with due respect, and, influenced, we lost the battle because we lacked strategy. Our condition of stubbornness demands more training, another treatment to wake up: serenity.

We ought to thrill. The opposite is to kill, which is not our place. Perhaps it is to show a death mirror as a tax to be paid. Luckily, we have memory, galleries for conscious access. We remodel it, we say art cannot be that, since art has faltered. It has sniffed around, wisdom blew clear. Art, in our system, is to sublimate. When everything that lives fits, that is art, so to speak. Binding practical meanings together. Major element of existence, act of unre-served service. Not contemplation, but sorting.

It is age, the value of a judgement that can pass our sentence. Attempting is what could take us to the justice of things. It comes like nostalgia, memory in its half. It is an ancestral network, invisible under modal reflectors. Sounds have inverted frequency, and returning will not be a mere idea. Other scenes come in, other bets, opposite narratives. They cannot be vague desires, fragile levities, occasions.

Certainty is more absent, and that is great. The mind feels, even though it is mad. There are intelligent seeds in the whole body. The numb still toast with blood, hostile parties, and mortuary. However, someone, a being

from nowhere, could come, and they will rise from the most forgotten interior. Someone, undermined for the sake of competition, has a charcoal, a blaze that dances with the wind in the darkness of the eyes. Fantastic common beings, indigenous people, pullulate in pitch-dark immensity. The fact is that they converse with aliens. In crossbreed, they often check predictions through telepathy. Those are other technologies, no, they do not fit in that term; neologies.

Not inferior; indigenous art is transforming. It is the art-motor, driver-monitor, and will grow like wild grass. As a weed, it has the power to relocate, make what was hidden walk in a plantation that was once showy. As we see happening, the plant is already growing alone and gives back a forest where colonial gardens once stood. A shout to call, chants to cure, new circumstances to occupy. Cures for expanding oneself, now is a time to listen. This lively people work for a lifetime and take us by our hands to soar with ancients. To soar, more than bucolic strolls, around the halls of ruined institutions.

New seasons have arrived, someone has invited them, and someone makes facilities. They came and they are here, pollinizing. The mangangá beetles, seasoned in the air, keep flowering and being controversial. The special beings go to roots, talk to matrixes. With their own tricks, they transport their art out of there. Here, outside, they can geminate. That was the missing piece of the puzzle. The separate component finds its conductor. Another kind of love has its value. It is this uncle who relocates from the hut. He is meek, he changes his brain synapses over to other dimensions, in soft acts. This uncle is like that because he is not a person, merely a person, as we sense. He is of another kind of love, this living being.

Millenary systems are not linear, and they dialogue. They operate, thus, flexible, with colorful textile threads, which grow lush in the air like lianas. They move freely, go far, but are firmly anchored. For example, right now the dusk is tranquil, and I feel the weeds dancing on the other side of the world, because it is sunny there. There is no moon here, it is away, taking its time. The migratory geese have arrived to hatch their eggs and impress, and they tell me the news. Little birds wake up in joy, but we, sleepyheads, think that it is too early to get up.

The little world of humans drifts about in auto-pilot. It seems we fear it, but we still cannot praise the lives of any other species. All is sad, and it seems dark. Yes, it seems dark indeed. Like twilight beasts, we are singing together, binding together emerging verses. We are all indigenous, witnesses to pre-made universes. Joyful and solidary, though we are taken as solitary, we stare.

We are still one people, but there are the others. They were invented, and now we are almost even. The others were badly brought up, they have grown very big and very strong. The others are not the north, they are death. Nourished, they are heavy, and their imposed structures shall serve at the exact time. It will come, we know, the justice of things will come. Fusion is a long, slow exercise. It is urgent, far beyond our generations, nations, mansions. Monsoons, for the time of light has opened, they will enter, tortuous as the wind, they will invade. We make art for children, and *ciranda* circle dances to rotate them. The others do not let them in, nor at least nurse them. Where would that lead, by chance?

The planet, alive, celebrates. It confidently follows the flow of its brothers. Far beyond our last encoded memories about directions, our grandmothers still dance like grandmothers. They will always be here; and here could be there, our home. They sing sounds on soft notes, they sing to wake us up. We are in a deep sleep, we need powerful machines, such is our inattention. Inserted sonars bring sound to the surface, eternal singing. Our grandmothers ask for silence, they are the masters of soothing in action.

They are the tectonic plates sliding, buttery, in the constant fire of an inner sun. They are lava, heat of perfection, working. And in a similar choreography, they explode eruptions. They are the volcanoes, grandmother mountains, telling us: I am the Earth, and I am alive, the water and the firmament can unite. The common forces, the arts of nature will bring them together. This is repeated: art as it came cannot go back. There was no invitation, only the inevitable arrival of that one being, so often avoided.

Right now, the frogs are singing in the river, thousands of them. A two-day rain has passed over this part of the Amazon, warning: speed up, improve. Now it

has become meteors, visible, sliding. They command the same thing: feel! The stars are constant movements, and we presume it wrong, and we still tell our children that they fall. The stars greet life by calling us to look at them, to see them, to perceive them, to feel them and to desire them.

They are they, that which has no gender, only genesis, the energies that handle existence. They are the ones who must satisfy our constant demands, give our sciences back. I need to go there, or none of that, I need to see myself in that to connect us, with my feet on the ground. The consciousness must expand, because, if withdrawn, it is in tidal wave. Again, it is a lonely agent, speaking from a single prism, the place it now occupies. But, in the back sweep of a rebellious sea, he is art, the stevedore that denies blame to others.

The apparent duel of the eagle sisters seems to be losing strength. Uncertainties want to dominate us, and I say they could, very easily. Chaos, previously only imagined, invades our game, knocks down our trench. We are, it seems, subjects between movements. We are being ventilated into ascendancy; kudos. Now, abandoned to decadence, we languish. The force of falling acts constantly. We feel, because of other vices, more sadness than comfort. Nostalgia takes over when we are not flexible, and the abyss that swallows us is here.

It is to this extrapolated landscape that I intend to take the readings. I gather in my unconsciousness a tribe of avatars, magical beings without description. Throwing nets to the sky, they are polydirectional. The nets tension, and we catch big fish without baits or traps. They are alive, they struggle in retreat, but they should not. The fisherman's expertise works beyond. When the rite is soon complete, the *moqué*m takes place, the landscape. *Moqué*m: to treat with slow fire the collective food, during the hunt, to take it home. A journey that we forget when we build megalopolis, postponing desires.

Let us try to talk, in writing, about that which has no means. However, we still have fragments of stairs, bridges, intricacies, and trails that can give us clues on how to go to the wormhole, to my hut. Ideas for enchantments are like findings. Singing in mind, internally, it is the song of the serpent. The reflux brings the seed, returns what was demented. Luckily, far from death, we are happy. We

could do other things, but we are already busy in making. I risk saying, in writing, what our ancients did not even pronounce. Words have always been for positivity; writings, messages of pure caution. Let us be careful, and soon.

We knew, for we were wise. We loved each other without command or demand, because the natural saying was essential. While inside, we did not see the outside, although we suspected its strength; we followed and here we are, ahead. Some of us will always bring reflexes, complexes, which is how they pass. Constant crossings, instants, eternities.

Age is not vanity, and thinking too highly of oneself always results in exaggeration. Now, it seems, we are dormant. But for the most sensitive minds numbness has no effect on other pains, on other people. The pains are what provide colors; darkness provides forgetfulness.

The systems embody themselves. Infiltrates do not use filters, and from their leaked effects spills organic matter. Logic has given penance, diverted pollution, bills to pay. Bodies from a denied conflict take voluminous size. Which fields of life do such beings walk towards, if not around the arts or other philosophies? Shall we proceed unceremoniously? There is no cure without rite. There is no listening without a cry. There is no cry without life. There is no life without your neighbor decoded.

It is essential that our phenomenal instance in exhibitionism be recorded, with typical elegance, in this historical document. The catalogue of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo will speak much more about how such a privilege was bestowed. Let the instances be registered and the privilege be undone when these words reach the peoples who own them. Paranormal phenomena, constellations of indigenous artists, various regions, generations, distinct peoples, and plural realities have been made seen. The improbable ones have descended on the restricted universe of high-stage arts.

It is contradictory, and yet it does not actually contradict, because deserving is how we fit. It is basic, but nobody sees, or they pretend not to. Since it is still happening, we are trying to clarify that. It would be a universe apart from our art, and we are firm because we have been so. It could not be another thousand white leaves filled only with voids. It could not be another parade of copied

whining and heartbreak. It could not be another party without people, without pepper, without fire, without air, without a pair. Arts, dated and manipulated into schemes of colossal, ill-orchestrated structures, could not remain, not post-us anymore.

Rather art than later.

That short sentence was put on display by Ailton Krenak. It burns. And if it burns, it is good. Our reference in media, the ancient-Ailton, has always been shaped to unite us. It has worked very well. This reference comes, without a pause, orchestrating the eagles to lead us into seeing the clues, to raise our sights. But let us not dwell on the messenger, let us look at the whole message. It is feminine, feline, crystalline, and lucid.

The scene above, which I dare to illustrate in your mind, is a common voice, on this side, the essence, the loyalty. It is the women in us who, sitting firmly on the straws of infinity, weave threads and tell us: if you go, come back. If you fly, land, otherwise that is not a flight. The performance is really to unsay, and say that there is nowhere else to go but back, and I am waiting; we are. The voices of women are the air, be aware, listen to the wise birds.

It is important to highlight in this account what happened in the first meeting with the team of curators of this edition. While I write here, my mother prays for me. When I narrate here, I cleanse the honor of my brothers, I heal the wounds of my sisters, I cheer up our elders. This is how we bring the mornings in. Energy with elegance, strength with enchantment. Magic inferring beyond the superficial senses; we act in the most sensitive layers of the inanimate landscape.

What is being done is slyness, prolonged things, typical of our avoided people. Here, for the native people of this country and the whole world, what must we say? No, we cannot say that we have come, or that we are here to stay. We should just exist and insist with this colonial white elephant. There still is an elephant among us. Let us drink *caxiri* and watch, bring you from afar to here, to listen to you, and then ask before healing you. Curators cure, curators suffer, on stage.

To say this prayer, in a tone of enunciation, is to still be lost in the traps of unconsciousness. If we are

indeed such a science, let us behave in wisdom. It is basic to be, it is fair to participate. It is inevitable to shine, to leave while staying here, in constellation. If we are constellations, we do not shine alone, nor do we disappear when the suns arrive. We will go on forever, here, the whole movement is here, on Guaraní lands, fantasies of such *Tupiniquim* people.

I took her with me. In the first meeting, my mother went up front. She is a big snake, one of those with infinite eggs inside her existence. It is wisdom, that power everyone wants but do not even know where it is, because it is dark. No, the darkness is not the problem. If there is a problem, it is our lack of sight. Those who walk in parallel worlds know how to regulate focus according to the occasion. It was too much light, too much light that blurred the hierarchy, which is lost.

I, without saying it, said to that representation – team of curators, pay attention: this is our mother! This girl's wrinkled earth-face is the great-great-grandmother of your faulty acts. She is the one who should be perceived, heard and welcomed. I was not simply entering a systematic art building, on a dirty afternoon, in an unviable city. The afternoon suddenly became eternally enchanting, for at such hours the mind does not lie, and one feels. So we entered a portal, and there were many. We saw and were seen, we made them see more. Seeing: we do that all the time, we are the masters of visions. Cosmovisions do not close their eyes to the constellations. Every step is over the tracks, spiraling backwards. Involving, giving back, displacing, entertaining, or saddening. Development will, one day, become giving back. Give back, therefore you are developed!

My mother went there to guide us, to bless us. Meriná went there to take us. Meriná was there to please, to feed. Meriná went there to see. Am I not telling you it is the woman's voice weaving us? What else can I tell you? The darkness has begun to fade. The darkness of lack of faith has vanished. The darkness of the concreted bodies came down. I went down and walked in the park to get my mind some clarity. The city was dying, but it rained souls. Souls, it rained souls. The rain leads to the sea, the rain is the air – and Bernaldina, there, enchanting.

It was a spell, and that is good and necessary. Enchant yourself and you will be blessed!

There, just formalities, representative distances on a square table. It was not mere attempts, it was assertive hours. By our computer we released more spell. The spell is nothing more than the basics of the repertoire. Art has nowhere to go but sitting here, in front of us, and listening. We are the ones who are alive, and we can fly. Art is for the living, art is about the living, I live on art, in art I survive. Something like that was said during that happy afternoon, something never before spoken about. Unfortunate are those who babbled, unfortunate are those who were stubborn, those who were astray, who daydreamed.

We were harvested from the four corners of the world and had our first exhibition. *Amazonian Cosmos*, an introduction film. A task of situating, for assimilation. We got around the serpent, the strange entity that deceives the whole nation. Concept, parameter, and now, here in this text, one act of giving back: all nations originating from these lands must express themselves with autonomy. Here where I am, I am comprised of all of you, in one body. This “attack” is not plunder, in a colonial fashion. It is a rite, a cry, a radical turn in structural machinery. The engine room has a mind and it lies, my people!

The act of an elderly woman walking active in the great world, carrying the eternal voice of good living, is much more legitimate than us, the most mediatic, the claimants of the condition or place of being an artist. Based on my performance of approaching other people, I celebrate the unprecedented reach that ended up being configured in my appearance in this special edition of the Bienal de São Paulo, one of the largest in the world.

It is just that we win so little by competing. When we outwit, we do not add much. It is not at all elegant to deceive, to humiliate or to cheat. Perhaps parity would be more noble; each one eating their own halves. When the table is set, there is an oppressive side to etiquette. When the rules are set, someone had set them based on themselves, and that is still serious. Where we want to go, that will not do. It will not fit those who come from another verve. So we had to come here, and the paths to other places are self-made from this point on.

Translated from Portuguese by Vitor de Araújo



LARNAKA



Behind St. Sophia



LIMASOL



- MARATHOVOUNO -



- The three sisters -



The two boys from Arabison

KILL
CYPRIOTS
IN
ENGLAND!
NOW!



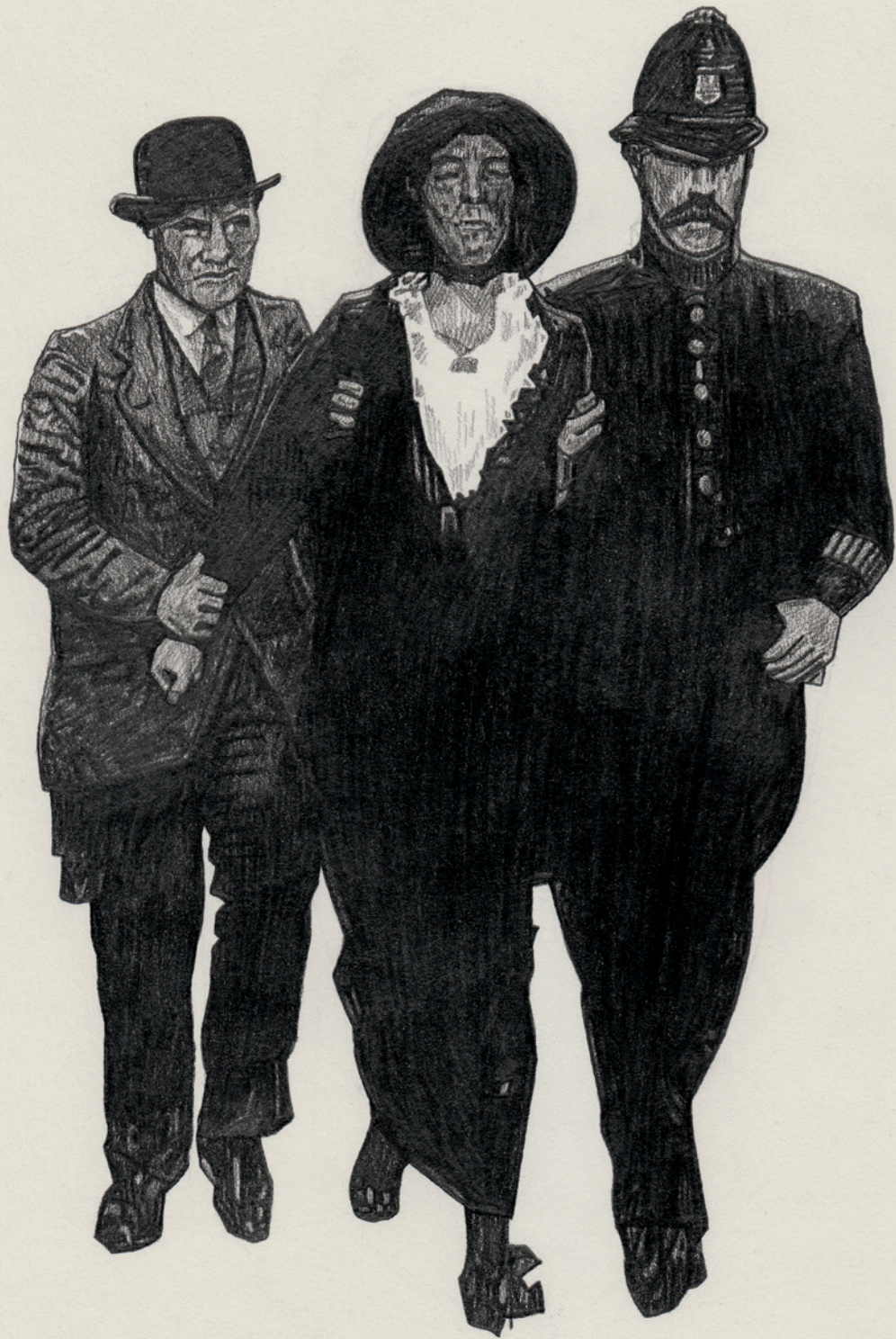
M. A. — with two



ΣΤΕΛΙΟΣ Παρογινος
Αγγελος κομπανιος
Βασιλος



M. FAMILY gathering at LARNAKA







Plácido de Campos Júnior. Ceramic craftsmanship, Vale do Ribeira, 1980. Gelatin silver print. Collection: Museu da Imagem e do Som, São Paulo

We stand in Indigenous territory, and the Tupiniquim people must be acknowledged as its traditional inhabitants. Such acknowledgement extends to Indigenous populations across Brazil fighting for full recognition of their right to exist.

It is common to read in history books about an alleged strategic alliance between a part of the Tupiniquim people and the Portuguese settlers in the conquering project of the territory that constitutes the São Paulo state today. Not far from here, the *Monumento às Bandeiras* [Monument to the Bandeiras] symbolizes this union of different identities in a project to “explore” the country. But what the history books do not tell – and the granite blocks do not represent – are how colonial violence has linked over the years rhetorical strategies and institutional devices to repress Indigenous cultural traces in

what we understand as a São Paulo culture. There is a whole structure, from public monuments to school classes and popular stories, which portrays our identity while erasing this memory.

There are forces, however, always working in the opposite direction. Combining historical accuracy, archaeological investigation, and memory restoration, Marianne Sallum and Francisco Silva Noelli's recent research has contributed to overcoming at least one of the many gaps racism against Indigenous peoples created. These studies show how the so-called *Cerâmica Paulista* [Ceramics from São Paulo], made since the sixteenth century until today, is the result of Tupiniquim women's original creation, who used a process of exchanging techniques, repertoires, and models with the Portuguese colonizers, as a tactic for identity preservation. Although, at first sight, the *Cerâmica Paulista* is very different from the precolonial Tupiniquim production, Sallum and Noelli's in-depth investigation reveals how the Tupiniquim women embedded their culture in the pottery-making process, from the raw material selection, the ceramic paste composition, the *acordelado* technique, and the process duration to the ceramic surface treatment. That is an example of cultural persistence.

Displaying some *Cerâmica Paulista* items is a way to recognize this land's ancestry – a land never ceded to the Portuguese. It is also a way of showing the importance of memory revitalization to defy the narratives that justify the ongoing processes of dispossession, destruction, and exploitation. But it is also a reminder that things are more complex than they seem and that, often, they bear the seeds to subvert their own meaning. Together with the works gathered around them, these ceramics talk about resilience and persistency, thus referring us back to the elements of the Museu Nacional at the beginning of the visit to the Bienal. In a show that aims at expanding the way an artwork is understood, the *Cerâmica Paulista* history helps to complexify our perception of the present. And perhaps to understand differently the works we see again when we walk through the exhibition in the opposite direction.





In Hebrew, *ruach* can mean both wind and soul. In some cases, the word is used to describe complex human constructions, like the human sciences, which are called *madaei haruach*. The polysemy of *ruach* leads us to an old association between “breath” and individual and collective human existence, where “breath”, or wind, is responsible for giving life to the being, which, through it, moves and is made human.

I would not attempt, in a brief text, to go into the philosophical debate about such an issue, much less into the extensive genealogy of words that refer to this life-giving breath. What I put forward here is a liberal extrapolation from the Hebrew: soul is also wind. The pulse and breath of existence are also wind. Breathing is wind.

Between November and December 2020, *Vento* [Wind], an anticipatory exhibition of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, took place at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. It was conceived as a change in the trajectory of the large collective exhibition, which has been postponed until September 2021. In *Vento*, we delved into a reflection on the invisibility of things, on the insurmountable space that exists between them, and, even more so, on the intangible – all of which have characterized our social experience in recent months. In Joan Jonas’ work, which serves as the exhibition’s title, the performers carry out a choreographed piece on a Long Island beach on one of the coldest days of 1968. The wind visibly asserts itself as an external force to the bodies, defining their limits and movements. Yet, it is also present as an internal force: the wind is a vital element. A simple and involuntary gesture, responsible for life and for movement.

Recently, images and stories coming from Manaus have led us, once again, to reflect on the way that we relate to our breathing. In 2014, with the murder of Eric Garner, there was the first echo of “I can’t breathe”, the phrase repeated by George Floyd Jr. as he was brutally murdered in 2020. These events are added to so many others where certain human lives seem to have less value than others. “They point to an asymmetry in the possibility of breathing and in the impossibility of sharing the same humanity.” That which is given as natural and essential – breathing – is mediated by power relations that reflect the most cruel aspects of violence and coloniality. We do not share the wind equally, and we do not have the same right to breathe.

In recent months, we have arrived at important reflections on humanity in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, and we have built a discursive and theoretical framework from generalizations about the individual, their loss of temporal and spatial experience, and about human fragility confronted with the threat of the virus. Meanwhile, the brutal images that reach us reinstate the importance of reflecting on the regime that distributes our wind. By silencing the societal, racial and gender inequalities that characterize that distribution, we are almost witnesses to the complex mechanisms of exercising biopower and realizing necropolitics.

In this scenario, marked by violence and cruelty, it is important to assume responsibility for the situation we are facing. A change in the world and in the regimes that distribute the wind will come from political changes. However, for a radical and necessary change, we must try to invent and imagine other possible futures.

I recently read an interesting story by Donna Haraway entitled “The Camille Stories: Children of Compost”.¹ The author describes a scenario of Earth’s destruction in the so-called Capitalocene, a period marked by wars, mass extinctions and multispecies genocide, caused by human activity. They are themes which, although derived from fiction, are not far from our reality. To save the planet, interspecies communities organize themselves based on a proposal of diverse kinship, which will be responsible for the preservation and reproduction of life.

Correspondence #15

2 Feb 2021



View from the roof of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion.
São Paulo, 25/11/2019. Photo: Leo Eloy/ Estúdio
Garagem/ Fundação Bienal de São Paulo.

The text evokes a new cosmogony, and the planetary chaos is overcome by a non-patriarchal and non-anthropocentric logic. This fictional radical proposal can be understood as another structure of breathing. A different understanding of the soul and its relationship with the wind that surrounds it. The very idea of fiction in our context of hopelessness is a breath that gives life to new possibilities. In the reality we are faced with, imagining other winds, other relationships and other ways of life is already, in itself, defiance.

1.

Donna Haraway, "The
Camille Stories: Children
of Compost", in *Staying
with the Trouble: Making
Kin in the Chthulucene*.
Durham, NC: Duke
University Press, 2016.



Autor: Regina Silveira
 Operação: Alterações em definições de arte.
 Ação: Jogo do segredo
 Local: Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo.
 Participantes: Regina Silveira
 Ana Maria Quintanilha
 Gabriela Wilder
 João Cardoso Fonseca
 Harumi Yanagishi
 Neide Notarangeli
 Francisco Inarra
 Elvira Vernaski
 Genilson Soares
 Hisaco Toda
 Lucimar de Freitas
 Walter Zanini
 Registro fotográfico: Gerson Zanini
 Data: 29/3/77
 Frase inicial ou primeira definição:
 "A arte é um aparte no discurso social."
 Frase final ou última definição:
 "A arte é uma página do desgosto social."

REGINA SILVEIRA / 77 / ALTERATIONS IN DEFINITIONS OF ART
 WORD PASSING GAME / First sentence: "Art is an apart in the social discourse".
 Last sentence: "Art is a page of social displeasure".

Reflex





AMOR
PALAVRA
SUBLIME
QUE DOMINA QUAL-
QUER SER HUMANO

Goiania 22-4-59

Goiania 22-4-59

Nelson

Nelson

Saudades palavra que
placete mais quando morre
Seu cinquenta no corpo de
Parasita 18-3-59
Morre a palavra, mas a vida
que o homem ou amanha
por a vida vive a vida, tem a vida
e que a vida de triumpho
Parasita de de de de
20/4/59



João Cândido. *Amôr* [Love], c. 1910. Embroidery, 50×80 cm. Collection: Museu Municipal Tomé Portes del Rei, São João del Rei, MG

In 1888, with the proclamation of the *Lei Áurea* [Golden Law], Brazil became one of the last countries to legally abolish slavery. Even so, segregation and violence continued, rooted in the structural racism that has characterized Brazilian society until today. In the Brazilian Navy – which in the first decade of the 20th century had begun a process of technological modernization with the purchase of two battleships – white officers commanded crews made up almost entirely of black and mixed-race sailors often enlisted by force, and they had the right to use corporal punishment. After some frustrated attempts to improve working

conditions through negotiations, the crew members revolted in November 1910, demanding an end to this practice. In the insurrection, they assumed control of the new battleships and two smaller vessels and pointed the big guns toward Rio de Janeiro. In a letter addressed to the president of the Republic and signed by a leader of the revolt – João Cândido, nicknamed *Almirante Negro* [Black Admiral] – the sailors stated that they could no longer “stand the slavery in the Brazilian Navy.”

The revolt was successful: the government had to capitulate, to grant amnesty to the mutinied sailors, and to prohibit corporal punishment aboard ships. In a short time, however, practically all the leaders of the revolt were arrested, punished or dead. In the dungeon of the penitentiary on Cobras Island, on Christmas Eve 1910, João Cândido watched sixteen of his seventeen cellmates die by suffocation from the fumes of the quicklime used to disinfect the cell. In the nearly two years that he was imprisoned, Cândido spent much of his time embroidering, producing many works, including the two embroideries that are presented here. In one of them, the word “*amôr*” [love] spreads outside the banner held aloft by two birds above a pierced heart; in the other, the hands of two arms clothed in different uniforms – one an admiral’s and the other a sailor’s – are clasping each other or raising an anchor together, between the words *ordem* [order] and *liberdade* [freedom].

The lyricism of the compositions contrasts with the image projected on this man, the son of enslaved people, and a revolutionary hero. In the solitude of the dungeon, haunted by the death of his shipmates and betrayed by his government, Cândido showed that he was a much more complex man than the narratives about his biography would suggest. Despite being seen as a sort of historical footnote, these embroideries possess an inestimable value, insofar as they condense the need and possibility of expressing our truths and desires even at moments when it seems that there is no escape. They evidence, beyond any doubt, that singing in the dark is possible and is, perhaps, the most courageous demonstration of strength. They vouch for the conviction that for as long as there is life there will be struggle and poetry – as these both, in combination, are inalienable parts of existence.









```
Failed, no modules loaded.
Prelude> ghci Bot.hs

<interactive>:1:6: error:
  Not in scope: 'Bot.hs'
  No module named 'Bot' is imported.
Prelude> Bot.hs

<interactive>:2:1: error:
  Not in scope: 'Bot.hs'
  No module named 'Bot' is imported.
Prelude> 
```

on Dec 17, 2015

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VSCode Bot.hs - VS
Edit Selection View Go Debug Terminal Help

Bot.hs
1 {-# LANGUAGE OverloadedStrings #-}
2 {-# LANGUAGE DeriveGeneric #-}
3 module Core.Bot where
4
5
6 import qualified Data.List.Split as S2
7 import System.IO
8 import System.Process
9 import Control.Parallel.Strategies
10 import System.Directory
11 import Control.Concurrent
12 --import Core.Commander
13 --import Core.Database
14 --import Core.AI
15 --import Core.Visualizer
16 --import Core.Crypto
17
18
19
20 click x= do
21
22     System.Process.callCommand("adb -s emul
23
24 inputText text = do
25     System.Process.callCommand("adb -s emul
26
27 inputKey key = do
28     System.Process.callCommand("adb -s emul
29
30 wait time = do
31     System.Process.callCommand("sleep "+tin
32
```




```
Prelude>
Leaving GHCi.
root@Kaliman: ~/Desktop# cd..
bash: cd.: command not found
root@Kaliman: ~/Desktop# cd perseusnew
root@Kaliman: ~/Desktop/perseusnew# ls
commands  lists                perseus.hs
Core      package-lock.json  README
root@Kaliman: ~/Desktop/perseusnew# ghci
GHCi, version 8.4.4: http://www.haskell.org/ghci/
[1 of 7] Compiling Core.Ai (Core.Ai.hs)
[2 of 7] Compiling Core.Commander (Core.Commander.hs)
[3 of 7] Compiling Core.Database (Core.Database.hs)
[4 of 7] Compiling Core.Network (Core.Network.hs)
[5 of 7] Compiling Core.Scraper (Core.Scraper.hs)
[6 of 7] Compiling Core.Visualizer (Core.Visualizer.hs)
[7 of 7] Compiling Main (Main.hs)
Ok, 7 modules loaded.
*Main>
```



Can you sound like two thousand?*

*So I run to the river
It was boilin', I run to the sea
It was boilin', I run to the sea
It was boilin'
All on that day*

– Nina Simone

I sensed something burning not too far from here last night. There wasn't any smoke, at least not from our viewpoint, but I could definitely feel something burning and the vibration of a certain life – human, maybe – sustaining that fire. The contradiction between the fire's apparently small scale and its powerful, almost unbearable heat was somehow magical; and its keeper, from what I could sense, was a magical creature.

I kept paying attention.

Massela woke with the sun. I didn't feel tired at all, but it was the end of my shift and I knew I should rest. Heading to my hammock, I let them take my place and keep watch. I said nothing about the fire, but I could notice them sensing both the heat and my curiosity towards it. Without using words, they asked, "What was that thing?" I didn't know how to respond so I simply shared my confusion with them.

They seemed to worry about it more than I did. I had to fight the urge to exchange looks with them. I wanted to eye-communicate that we were safe here, at least for now, that the invisibility spell we had cast was strong enough to hold, that we could breathe and collect ourselves for a moment, aware that staying too long might put us at risk. Our eyes would soon become obsolete, and we knew that. Our ability to hide depended on our commitment to avoid the gaze. Our knowing the world depended only on our collectively-enhanced sensing abilities and the soon-to-be-obsolete use of clandestine vision technology, capable of narrating our viewpoint through an encrypted network.

"Stop overthinking!" Massela said, using words. Then, using pure energy, they pushed me out. I could sense their drowsiness, which they channelled to me so I would get to sleep faster. When we collectively sense, overthinking ceases to be individual. One should always know how to

stop it, to stop sharing, before it becomes too overwhelming for everyone else.

■ I woke to the feeling that there was something at the gate. I tried to reach out for Massela, but Raoni intervened: "Calm down! Breathe! You are too anxious."

Massela was busy with something and we were busy keeping ourselves in protection mode. The gate was clear, I could sense it now, but there was something going on not too far from here.

"Breathe in... Breathe out... In again..."

Raoni's voice was stuck inside my head.

"And out...! Slowly... Lower your frequency! Don't let your anxiety transform all of us into a target! We need to keep a very low frequency now..."

"Breathe...!"

"Slowly...!"

"As if you were dead."

■ We are nine hiding out here.

We've been around for a while – at least for the last three quarantines. But never in the same place. We're constantly on the move. Our protection spells are fragile and don't last indefinitely. It's no small thing to make such a big group vanish amidst the forms of social control that are used these days. Today is not like the early 2020s, though most of us don't even remember the 2020s that well. Except for Massela and I, everyone here grew up during the Lockdown Era, so the only memories from a world without quarantine either come from our shared memories or from the old media files in our archives.

Not many people today recall what freedom of movement was, and those who do remember know what a fictional construct it had always been. The borders and checkpoints might have multiplied in the last three decades, but they were invented and weaponized long before.

We move separately. Alone or in groups of two. Sometimes it can take months for all of us to reunite. Massela and Raoni are always the first ones to go so they can set everything up for the rest of us. They are followed by Lava and Ravena, Telma and Atina, Rose and Arely. Each duo takes a different route and is responsible for transporting a set of essentials, from tech and food to rocks and medicines.

I am always the last to depart. My job is to hide all of our traces, be they material or not. The rest of the group call it a cleaning job, but I call it encryption. It's more like an exhaustive overlapping procedure, in which I bury our traces under tons of speculated memories, fake prophecies, dirty information, and other forms of sensorial noise. The idea is not to erase, because although I no longer trust in History, I value the possibility of witnessing. And so, I let things remain very, very well hidden.

I travel alone and for the most part it's okay. I was already a loner nomad before the 2020 events. Besides, most people would rather not travel with me, because sometimes it can get hard.

I sense a lot. And I collect almost everything. If I'm sharing with someone, then this person will inevitably have to deal with the weight of all the things I scavenge during my trips: acoustic residues of long-gone voices, fragments of unfinished conversations, traces of dreams that are about to be forgotten, fictions that weren't powerful enough to make into reality... I gather them all. I sew them into my sensors.

And I never erase anything.

■

"I won't go."

The thing about collective sensing is that talking is strictly unnecessary. You do it only for impact. As when you want to state an irrevocable decision.

The group had decided to move down south. Across São Paulo to the borders of the Liberated Zone, where the southern states of Brazil had been before the Paraguayan Retake Movement liberated it from Brazilian domain. The territory initially became part of Paraguay, but its sovereignty was questioned by cross-continental indigenous movements and organisations that fought for the creation of a nationless zone, lawfully liberated from both Brazilian and Paraguayan nation-states and their institutions.

No one should assume that the Liberated Zone is an established place for liberated life. It is a war zone. Indigenous groups and all sorts of non-citizens are constantly assaulted by post-national militias operating in sync with the neighbouring terrorist nation-states.

This wasn't the reason why I decided not to go with them. I wanted to track the fire. And I'm convinced I

should continue my quest. It may seem counterintuitive, as Massela had fiercely pointed out when they first learned of my plan. I also knew this would be a pointless journey for the rest of the group, which is why I've accepted this as something I must do alone.

"Fuck off!" Massela shouted after a long silence.

I could sense everyone's anger towards my decision. They perceived it as a betrayal of sorts. As something I was doing out of anxiety... A miscalculation. I hated it. I hate being disregarded. Anxiety might have played an important role in my decision, but not as the fuel – more like a compass, a navigational tool. And not only anxiety, but anxiety-in-relation, anxiety as an anticipatory device connected with (not governing) the rest of my sensors.

The truth was that I was also tired of not being allowed to connect with my anxiety. I was becoming sick from taming it time and again for the sake of the group, instead of sharing how I embrace and transform it. They believe it's a matter of protection, but my fears of being anxious around them are now the source of my own anxiety. To suppress it is a form of holding back. And if I can only stay with the group by crystallising my anxiety into a pathology, then I would have to renounce what I've been nurturing since long before the first quarantine: my ability to sense and interact with the not-yet.

■

We began sensing the lockdown in 2017. At that time, we were both baseless, moving non-stop, our senses all over the place. When we came together, we'd study different modes of assembling our sensing apparatuses and learn about the coming collapse. We knew it would come, but there was no hint of what and how and when it would subside.

It was only two years later, in the first days of 2019, that we saw the break we were about to be pushed into: the Lockdown Era. Those days seemed to us like a whole century.

We tried to prepare for it, but 2020 encroached upon us. We were as unprepared as everyone else. We were pulled apart by the circumstances. When borders began to close and closures multiplied, I failed to rush towards our meeting point. Massela was there preparing for my arrival. Our plan was to stick together, but the collapse changed

our horizons: we were besieged by indeterminacy, confined to a biopolitical state of exception, physically separated by miles...

And yet, somehow, we could still sense each other.

After a while we realised that we had been preparing for it all along. We had developed such a deep bond as we had passionately studied the merging of our senses that we simply couldn't be pulled apart. We were together from a distance, at a distance. I could even sense Massela's temperature.

Communication wasn't really a matter of words or images: why bother formulating a mode of saying or showing, if we could express and share things that words and images couldn't even begin to articulate?

■ When everyone finally left our den, I began the encryption. I dug first, messing things around, mixing the traces of our presence with all the buried memories that were already there when we arrived.

This time the work felt different, I could sense the presence of a voice I'd never noticed before. It wasn't discourse, just sound. An opaque, mysterious, somehow magical sound. It might've startled me, but it didn't cause me fear. I went on digging, unearthing all sorts of presence. I moved things from one place to another. I built, carefully, a dirty and noisy ambient – a whole architecture of confusion. A hideout within a hideout within a hideout.

Yet, the voice (why do I keep calling it a voice?) wouldn't let me finish my work. I couldn't locate it anywhere, and therefore I couldn't hide it amidst the sensorial dirt I was producing. In fact, it was getting louder. Maybe it wasn't properly there. Or maybe the fact that it was getting louder also meant it was getting closer. I suddenly sensed it coming in my direction. I feared it might put me or Massela, Raoni and the others at risk. What was this thing? How could I have been so unaware of something I was now sensing so intensely? Was I broken? If this thing was really closing in towards me, why couldn't I map its trajectory? And if it had always been there, how could I have missed it for so long?

I then became aware of the heat.

I had been standing above the fire all this time. The voice told me. Better said: since I could now hear it, I could sense the fire with more accuracy. The voice and the

fire were somehow attached, as if the voice was an anticipation of the fire – a sonic manifestation.

For an instant, I became fearful again. Would I be swallowed by that enormous, strident source of fire?

Gradually, I started to sense gases moving from the depths to the heights, taking over the space. I was surrounded by vapour and particles of everything. I could feel the ground changing and my body boiling. I was mutating. Transitioning under the influence of the heat. It should have been unbearable, and maybe it was, but I surrendered. The fire took over my senses, burned them, and instead of ashes it produced new organs.

Skin radars, ultrasonic ears, infrared eyes, and many hands and arms made of pure plasma. I remembered the fire's keeper, the creature I had sensed when I first sensed the fire months ago. I wondered where they were now. Had they ever existed? Was I becoming them?

■ I dreamt of bullets and woke to the sound of gunfire. It wasn't happening here. Yet, I could feel it happening to me and happening now.

Massela!

I focused my awareness on our bond, and I tried to reach for them. They were unaware of my presence, but I could access their sensors, touch them. I whispered: "Massela...!"

"Are you here?" they answered.

"Somehow."

There wasn't time to explain. As soon as they recognised me, they could sense my transition and also the danger I had sensed. Almost a year had passed since we parted ways. I wasn't sure if we could still share our sensors. I had tried to communicate a few times before without success. It was different this time. The danger might've unlocked something.

Massela was alone, so I assumed they were in charge of keeping watch tonight. The whole place was under attack. There were other groups settled in the surroundings. Three militia trucks approached them fast.

I sensed Massela trying to wake everyone, but it wasn't working. They seemed... disconnected. I tried to reach Raoni but couldn't. Actually, I couldn't reach anyone but Massela. I decided to focus on the militia, to see if I could

reach one of them, but their sensors weren't open – I could feel they were human in an automated, insensitive sensorial state...

“Shit!” One of the trucks was close to reaching Massela's hideout. I could sense desperation in their voice: “There's nowhere to go. I'm fucked. It's over.”

Breathe in...!

I decided I would focus on the heat sources.

Aside from the living bodies of humans and animals, I mapped the bullets, the tents burning, and an unusual gas formation surrounding the whole area. With renewed awareness, I sensed this same gas within all human lungs, except in those of the militia. They might've been wearing some kind of mask. They might've been the ones releasing the gas before the attack. Maybe I could do something about it.

Breathe out...!

I found Massela's heat signature and took possession of it. I could sense their anger – I knew that shit was invasive, but I had no other choice. Once there, inside their body, I tried to expel the gas and, at the same time, I kept a sample of it. I left Massela's body and took possession of the nearest militiaman's heat signature. Once I took hold, I contaminated his digestive gases with the toxic gas intended for Massela and overdosed his body. The effect was immediate, but there were at least 50 more of them to go.

I shouted to Massela: “You need to wake up and organise everyone now!”

“I know! I'm trying...! But there are too many people here, too much anxiety... I'm drowning...”

“No! Breathe!”

I kept on burning the militiamen, but the attack wouldn't stop until they were all defeated. The gunfire was overwhelming. I wasn't strong enough on my own. I needed Massela and the others to fight alongside me.

“You need to scream! You need to embody the voices of two thousand and scream...!”

“It's the only way...!”

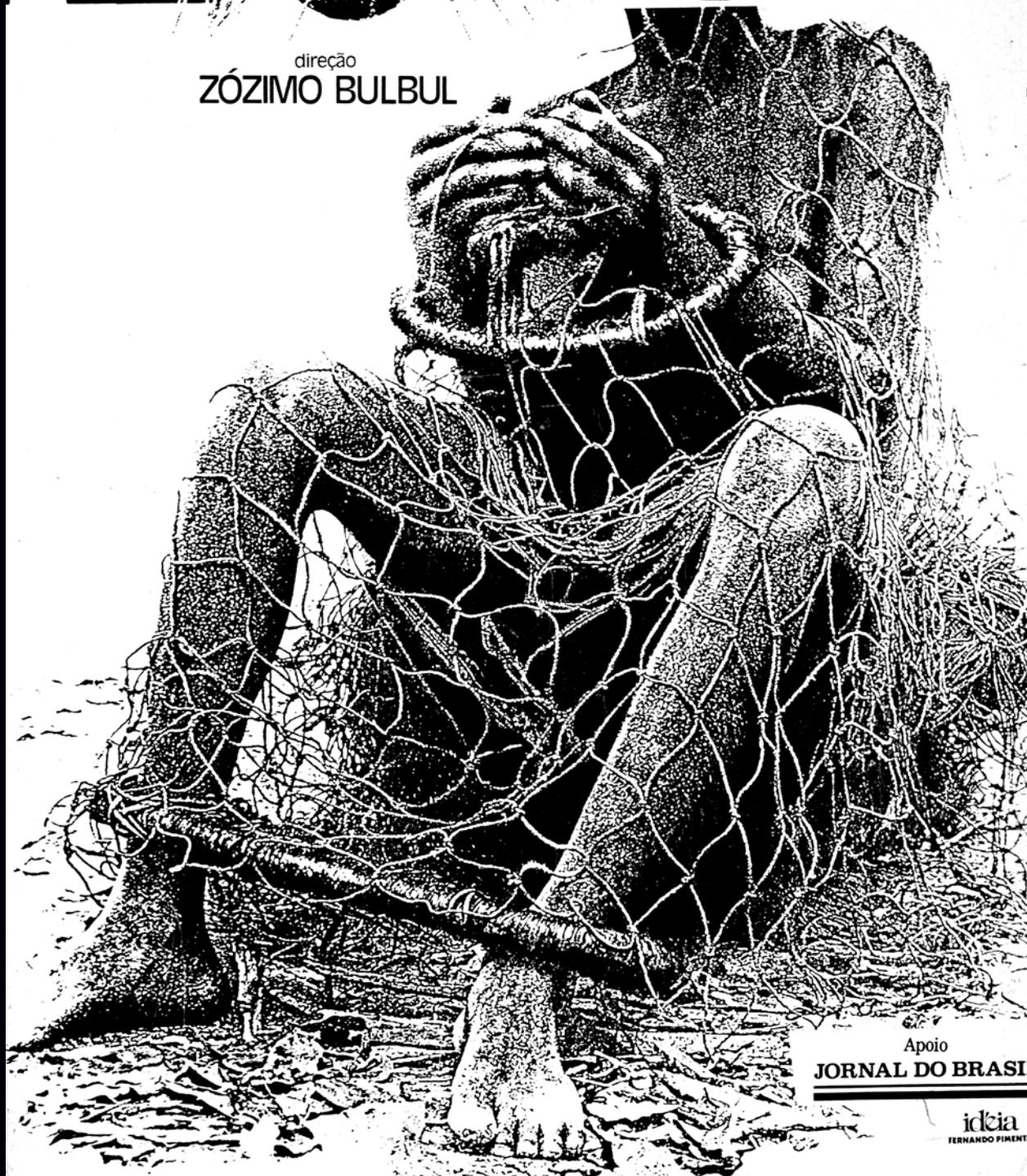
“And you need to do it now.”

“Now, Massela! NOW! Can you sound like two thousand?”

MINISTÉRIO DA CULTURA
FUNDAÇÃO DO CINEMA BRASILEIRO
EMBRAFILME
CINEMATOGRAFICA "EQUIPE" LTDA.
apresentam

ABOLICÃO

direção
ZÓZIMO BULBUL



Apoio
JORNAL DO BRASIL

idcia
FERNANDO PIMENTA

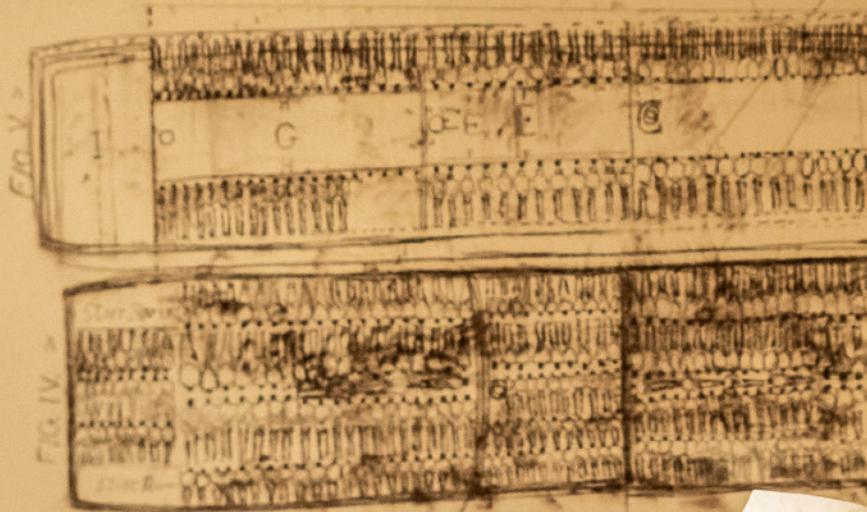
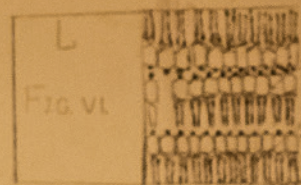
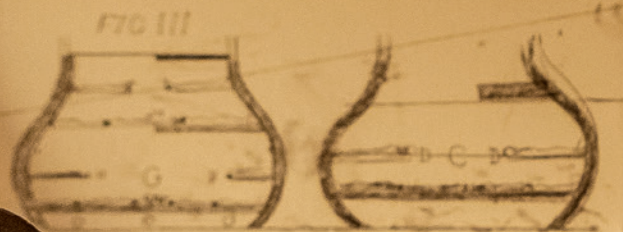








ATLANTIC SLAVE TRA





UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

DANIEL DE PAULA OF BRAZIL
MARISSA LEE BENEDICT AND DAVID RUETER OF THE USA

IMPROVEMENT IN TRADING-PITS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **203,837**, dated May 21, 1878; application filed
December 19, 1877.

To all whom it may concern:

WE¹ HAVE A TRADING PIT.²

IT IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE IT WAS USED IN THE 19TH, 20TH & 21ST CENTURIES,³ BUT NOW IT IS OBSOLETE. IT IS OBSOLETE BECAUSE COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AUTOMATED THE PRACTICES IT WAS DESIGNED FOR.⁴

WE GOT IT FOR FREE WHEN THEY THREW IT AWAY.⁵ IT IS VERY HEAVY AND VERY BIG. IT IS BOTH MATERIAL AND IMAGE. IT HOLDS THE WEIGHT OF LAND, LABOR, AND CAPITAL.⁶

MANY BODIES, MOSTLY WHITE AND MOSTLY MALE, FOUGHT AND YELLED AT EACH OTHER IN THE PIT.⁷

WE WANT TO PUT THE PIT IN A GALLERY. OR A PUBLIC SQUARE. OR A WAREHOUSE OR STORAGE FACILITY. OR A UNIVERSITY. FIRST IN PIECES. THEN AS A WHOLE THING AGAIN. WE ARE AWARE IT IS NEVER GOING BACK TOGETHER THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE.

WE WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT, WE WANT TO LISTEN TO IT, WE WANT TO TALK TO IT. WE

WANT TO DISSECT IT, TEAR IT APART, WEAR IT DOWN.

WE WANT IT TO HOST CONTEXTUAL PUBLIC PROGRAMS.⁸ IT IS TOO HEAVY FOR JUST US. IT CONTAINS THE POSSIBILITY OF A PUBLIC. THIS PUBLIC MIGHT NOT GET ALONG WELL BUT WE THINK IT NEEDS TO GET TOGETHER AND FIGURE SOME THINGS OUT.

WE WANT TO MOVE IT AROUND. IT MAY KEEP MOVING, MAYBE FOR YEARS. WE THINK IT SHOULD MOVE SOUTH. ITS WEIGHT WILL GOUGE HOLES AS IT IS DRAGGED. IT WILL GENERATE FRICTION.

WE WANT IT TO SIT WITH PEOPLE AND PLACES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY IT. IT IS PART OF COMPLEX STORIES OF VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION.⁹

WE WANT IT TO HOUSE A DEBATE ABOUT WHAT IT DISPLACES, AND WHAT DISPLACES IT. WE WANT TO EXTRADITE IT. WE WANT TO EXPOSE IT TO POTENTIAL EXPULSION.

THE PIT CANNOT BE SOLD. THIS IS A TEMPORARY INSTALLATION.¹⁰

Fig. 1 .

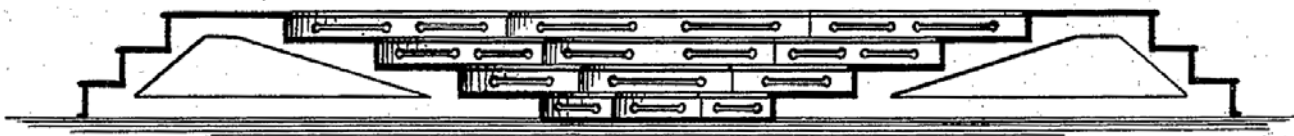
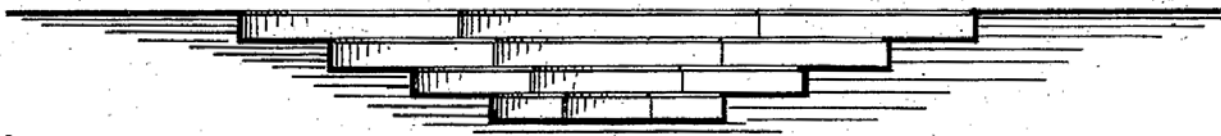


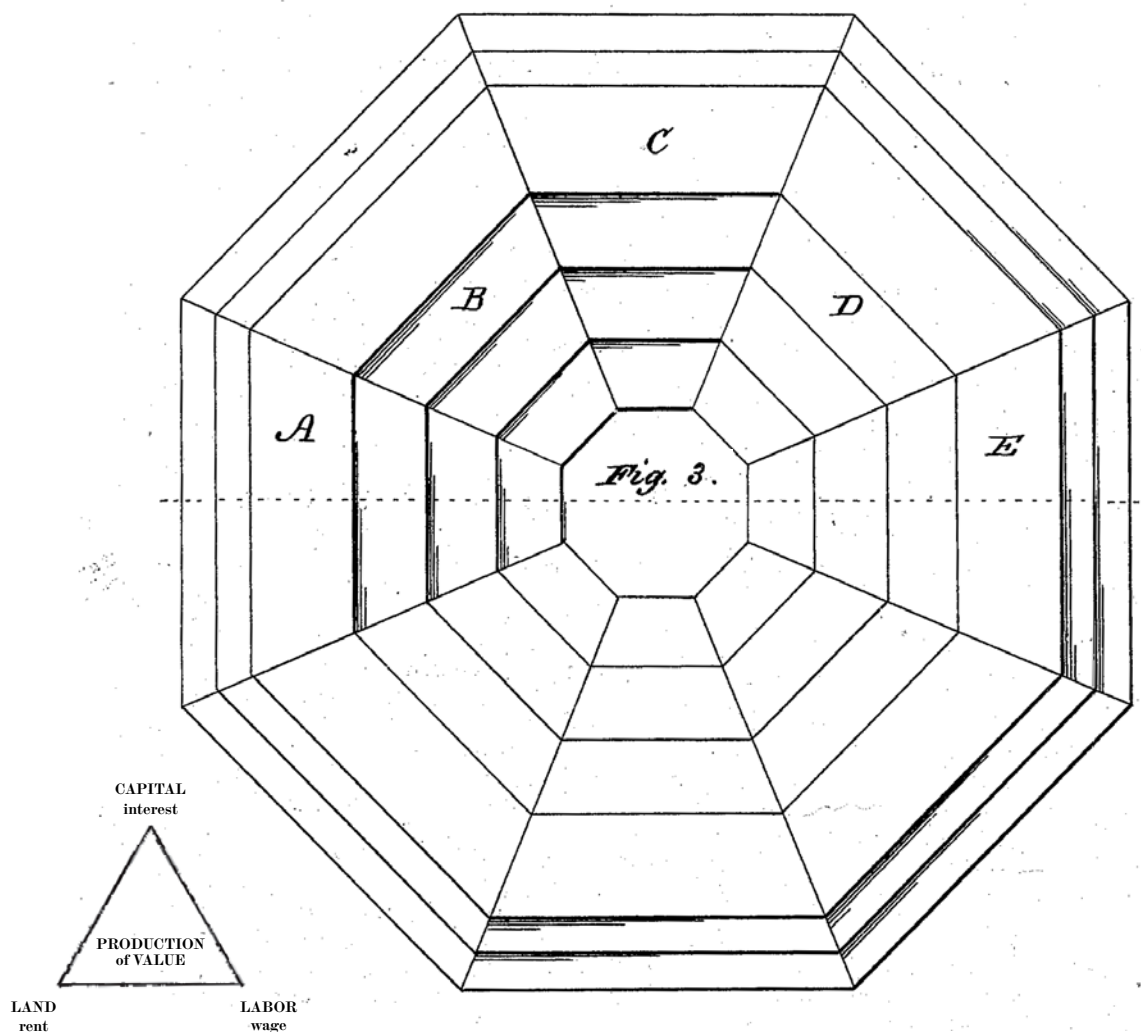
Fig. 2 .



D. DE PAULA, M. BENEDICT, D. RUETER.
Trading-Pit

Nº. 203,837

Patented May 21, 1878.



1. We, henceforth, refers to the three artists involved in the project: Daniel de Paula, Marissa Lee Benedict, and David Rueter.

2. The project began with the last-minute salvage of a 12-meter in diameter octagonal trading pit from the grain room trading floor of the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT). Consisting of a series of stepped platforms, facing each other, and descending to a center space, the structure was designed to optimize peer-to-peer communication for commodities trading. Verbal signals and hand gestures were used by trading professionals in the pit to buy and sell a particular asset: in this case corn futures contracts—legal agreements or obligations to deliver a quantity of a particular grade of corn at a specified future date.

3. In 1878, Ruben S. Jennings of Chicago attempted but failed to enforce a patent for “a new and Improved Trading Pit or Platform.” In active use at the CBOT since 1870, the trading pit design borrows from classical Western architectures of social representation, exchange, and spectacle: from the agora of Greece and the Roman Forum, to amphitheatres and parliaments across the globe. Similarly designed trading floors were later replicated throughout financial markets worldwide due to their capacity to optimize trade.

4. The CBOT's grain trading room, responsible for determining prices of grains such as corn, soya, and wheat for the global markets, ceased operation in 2015 after years of decreasing physical use driven by the proliferation of electronic trading. The once tangible and visible architecture of the trading pit is sinking into the obscurity of the black box server racks of the contemporary world interior of capital.

5. On August 6th 2018, artist Daniel de Paula contacted K.L., real estate manager at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Group (CME, owner of the CBOT), to request, for research purposes, detailed plans or 3D architectural models of the grain room trading floor. In their exchanges, K.L. informed de Paula that the CME Group was currently in the process of disposing of the corn pit. All of the other grain trading pits had already been dismantled and removed from the commodities trading floor. Realizing there was a short time window for possible salvage, de Paula began a series of email exchanges and

negotiations. In the process, a collaboration with artists David Rueter and Marissa Lee Benedict was initiated. de Paula, Rueter and Benedict jointly financed the salvage through personal loans and revolving credit, and, finally, with on-site assistance and in-kind contributions from artist Dan Peterman and contractor G. Lane, the corn pit was brought in six dump truck loads to a warehouse managed by Ken Dunn's Resource Center located on the South Side of Chicago.

6. The pit bears a double weight: the weight of its thick layers of rubber, wood, and honeycomb aluminum, and the weight of the millions of transactions transporting masses of corn from one piece of land to another, enriching certain bodies and territories, and extracting from others.

7. A visit to a trading pit in action would yield a bodily metaphor for the gendered and racial violence endemic to the financial system, while electronic price feeds appear more innocent of such implications.

8. Any exhibiting institution will agree to enter into negotiations with the artists (de Paula, Rueter, and Benedict) to generate a contract specifying a framework for contextual programming that activates the pit and its history by staging various forms of adversarial investigation and exchange. The contract will provide guidelines for positioning the pit and the bodies that occupy it.

9. The expansion of the global production of grain commodities, especially soya and corn, conceals an interest in rural real estate as a financial asset. Consequently, in countries such as Brazil, the accelerated territorial occupation of agribusiness, stimulated by financial agents, electronic trading, and international investment and pension funds, leads to recurring violent practices such as land grabbing and deforestation, along with violence committed towards local peasant and indigenous communities, revealing inextricable colonial-era holdovers that continually organize space.

10. The pit is not to be owned by any single institution or individual, although a multitude of institutions may play a key role in its logistical transportation, maintenance, rental, installation, programming, and public exhibition. The continued displacement of the pit will necessarily wear it down, rendering it finite and unmonumental.

8

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~~COMO 0 EXCE~~

[illegible]



Matthew B. Brady. Untitled, [Portrait of Frederick Douglass], c. 1877. Photographic negative (glass, wet collodion). Collection: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Born in Talbot County, Maryland (USA), in February 1817 (or 1818, according to the source), Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was the son of an enslaved black mother and a probably white father who never recognized him – perhaps the plantation owner or overseer where his mother was forced to work. Despite numerous obstacles, he learned to read and write in his childhood and adolescence. He even organized literacy classes for other enslaved people like him. After some unsuccessful attempts, in 1838 he managed to flee to New York, which had abolished slavery in 1827. However, the dread

and insecurity caused slave catchers forced him to quickly move to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he adopted the Douglass surname. Eloquent, charismatic and having lived realities that gave him a powerful perspective on society, Douglass promptly began an extraordinary career as a writer, orator, politician and, above all, activist for the abolition of slavery – which only became a reality in the United States in 1865. He became one of the most acclaimed and admired figures in the anti-slavery struggle. In 1895, when he died, Douglass was regarded worldwide as one of the most important men in US history.

In 1841, Douglass commissioned his first photographic portrait. He was fully aware that his image as a free black man could reverberate and amplify the anti-slavery fight. In a pioneering way, Douglass realized that the extensive circulation that the photographic medium allowed would be of utmost importance in helping the anti-racist struggle and the fight against post-abolition segregation. No wonder, over the next five decades or so, he would become the most photographed person in nineteenth century America, demonstrating enormous mastery over his pose, dress, appearance, and framing. This unique portrait corpus is presented here, in almost its entirety, for the first time as part of an art exhibition.

Under Douglass' penetrating and challenging gaze, photos taken in different moments and contexts weave a complex and rhizomatic narrative, which reaffirms the importance of looking back, today, to the displacement, violence and resistance processes that scarred and continue to wound the lives of uncountable people. Symbolically connected by the ropes stretched across the Bienal Pavilion by Arjan Martins (an abstract and poetic reference to the triangles drawn by slave ships in their journeys between Africa, the Americas and Europe), flows of images, cultures, and bodies intersect in these works. They are the witnesses of the possibility to metabolize past and present traumas as fuel to demand the construction of the foundations of a fairer future.



_projecto de lei de cunho popular visa compensar as perdas demograficas y culturais do Brasil devido ao genocidio da populazsaN'o negra ao longo dos 5 seculos da historia recente do Pindorama; y neutralizar a tese do branqueamento estabelecida no pais a partir dos primordios do seculo xx que seguia as teorias pseudo-cientificas racialistas do mesmo periodo que defendia a micigenazsaN'o com os imigrantes brancos europeus como forma de embranquecer a nazsaN'o y desaparecer com os individuos cidadaN'os negros do Brasil, tese essa que reverbera seus ecos ateh os dias de hoje.

_dito projecto de lei de iniciativa popular aqui apresentado, a Pratica do Enegrecimento, visa abrir os portos y fronteiras nacionais aas nazsoN'es amigas africanas com o intuito retomar o caminho inicial do Brasil como uma Grande Republica NEGRA na America y Patria MaN'e para os individuos nascidos da disapora do Atlantico Negro.

_assim a aliciazsaN'o , o convite, o incentivo y subsidios a imigrazsaN'o em massa de africanos para o Brasil deve ser adotada como politica de Estado: com a meta de atingir um numero de 5 milhoN'es de imigrantes africanos em cinco anos no pais...

_deve-se apresentar - planejar - implementar um projeto de voos diretos entres as capitais y outras grandes cidades da Africa Negra conectando-as a cidade de Sao Paulo/ SP-Brasil.

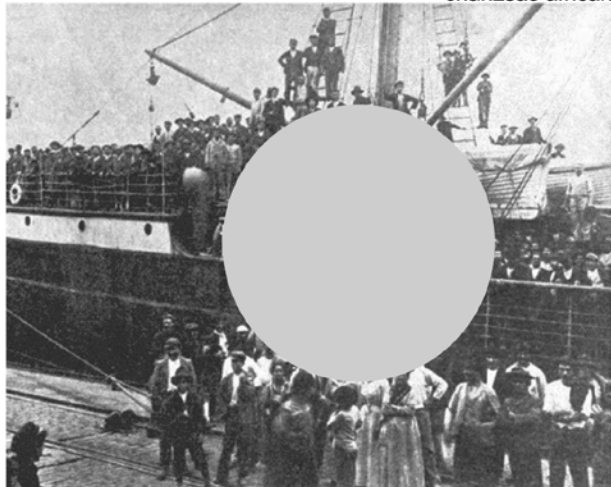
_para o sucesso do programa eh preciso garantir a criazsaN'o de uma area de livre comercio y livre transito entre a Africa Negra y o Brasil, o que virah a enriquecer grandemente a economia nacional y das nazsoN'es amigas, assim como suas relazsoN'es culturais.-como jah deve ser entendido a partir dessa area de cooperazsaN'o mutua y livre comercio, pessoas y produtos circulam livremente entre Africa y Brasil.

_igualmente eh preciso garantir o aumento da oferta de transporte entre Africa y Brasil, assim como garantir a abertura de portos maritimos, re-implementando o transporte maritimo de passageiras de ambas as costas do Atlantico Sul y o adjacente Oceano Indico Sul. A garantia da abertura dos aeroportos com voos diretos entre as grandes cidades de Africa conectando-as a cidade de Sao Paulo eh igual necessaria para o sucesso do programa. A adozaN'o de uma lingua franca proveniente de Africa eh de suma importancia para a compreenzsaN'o, aceitazsaN'o y reconhecimento de pensamentos tradicionais africanos na construzsaN'o do conceito de um territorio de fronteiras fluidas.-- para atingir um grau satisfatorio de transito y intercambio mutuo recomenda-se o ensino de liguas originais de Africa que possam ser adotadas como lingua franca da jah dita area de livre comercio y transito.--segundo recomendazsoN'es do falecido senador y pensador Abdias Nascimento um dos fundadores do MNU[Movimento Negro Unificado], sugeriu-se o ensino de Suahile como lingua a ser aprendida y ensinada no sistema publico de ensino dando-se enfase as 4 operazsoN'es de entendimento de um idioma: leitura, escrita, fala y escuta. ademais do Suahile, propoN'e-se dentre outras o Quimbundo, Kosa, Changana, Fon, Mina alem do jah entre nos Yoruba y outras liguas do troco Bantu.

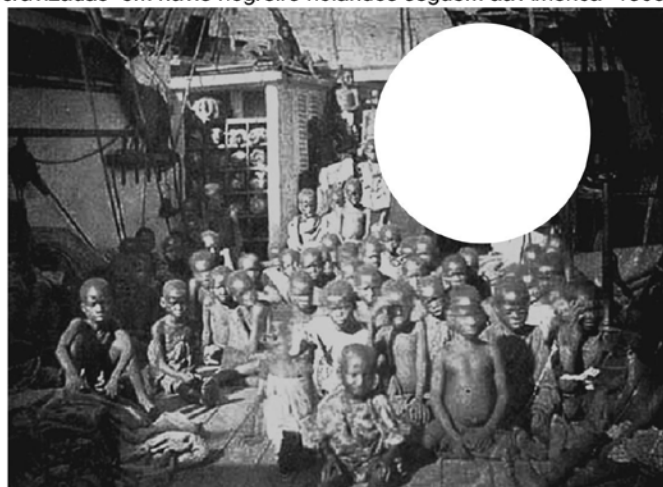
o projeto eh apresentado em formato panfleto, seguido por caderno y cartilha de compreenzsaN'o, juntamente com caderno de assinatura... y a partir d'ahi cria-se uma plataforma digital y analogica para que cidadãoN'os brasileiros possam acessar y assinar em apoio ...ingualmente o projecto eh divulgado no exterior para que cidadaN'os dos diversos paises de Africa tomem conhecimento y possam tambem apoiar o dito projecto a partir de seus paises de origem presionando seus dirigentes y representates politicos locais y diplomatas.

o projecto tem como base de divulgaN'o: panfletos, cadernos, plataformas digitais na web, cartazes, posterres, gravazsoN'es de audio, radio, televisaN'o, etc... alem de agentes divulgadores y o conhecido boca a boca.

crianzsas africanas escravizadas em navio negreiro holandês seguem aa America -1868.



chegada de imigrantes italianos ao Porto de Santos - 1907





Unknown authorship. Nomads in a Culture Circle in Kenya, 1975. Photographic print. Collection Instituto Paulo Freire

In 1963, illiterate people did not have voting rights in Brazil. In an extremely tense political context, which would lead to the military coup in the following year, Paulo Freire headed an adult literacy experiment in Angicos, Rio Grande do Norte. This project, which the then President João Goulart attended, attracted huge media attention both nationally and internationally. The reason for such a buzz was the surprising success the project had: more than three hundred adults had become literate in around forty hours of the workshop. In addition to the method's efficiency, Freire understood pedagogy as part of a training process

aimed at breaking what he would later call the “culture of silence” – one that prevents subjects from exercising their intellectual and political autonomy.

For years, before Angicos’ experiment, Freire was willing to put his knowledge in suspension to be in frank dialogue with educators, students, young people, mothers, fathers, and managers of different pedagogical settings, from the most to the less formal. It is impossible to precise the moment this suspension took place, but it was in this exchange (or as a way of intensifying it) that Freire adopted a specific form as the key element of the experience of education and autonomy: the circle. First, he proposed the Parent and Teacher Circles, which served to summoning family and school tutors to discuss all sorts of problems in a space without hierarchies and inscribing in the group the importance of sharing responsibilities and knowledge. Afterward, he conceived the Culture Circles, an alternative method to the traditional classroom spatial organization. In the Culture Circles, educators acted as facilitators and promoters of conversations intended to be horizontal and directly addressed the students’ reality. In this dialogic context, the generating words, which would be used later for literacy, were registered, and images and words were presented and discussed during the literacy process.

In a sense, it can be argued that the seeds of Freire’s pedagogical method – that some treat as liberating and others as threatening – has its synthetic form in this circle of people. It was something so simple that it was also adopted as a premise for theatrical experiments in the 1960s. It is so intuitive that human beings have practiced it from time immemorial around fire or food. That is why it is evoked here, amidst works by artists who, each in their own way, also sought to suspend their knowledge in order to be in contact with others. The conceptions of dialogicity and autonomy will be at the core of one of the mediation practices, which will happen through conversation circles about the exhibition. The purpose of these circles is the collective construction of possible meanings for the encounter with the works and the relationships between them, departing from the subjects’ reality while, simultaneously, reflecting upon it.

DESTINATION: BLACK VIRGIN MOUNTAIN

by Vincent Bevins

For intrepid travelers wanting to get a few hours away from the hustle and bustle, Núi Bà Đen (Black Virgin Mountain) offers a mix of natural beauty, Vietnamese tales, and military history.

Black Virgin Mountain is the highest peak in Southwest Vietnam and can be reached in a few hours from Ho Chi Minh City by car on the country's new roads. As it is the only peak in the region, it's easy for visitors to find. The full three-mountain range covers 24 square kilometers and is made up of Heo (Pig) Mountain, Phung (Phoenix) Mountain and Ba Den (Black Lady) Mountain. The ancient trees dotting its slopes attract hundreds of tourists and pilgrims every day.

The former volcano gets its imposing visage from its color, height, and the clouds that often hang low around it, and Núi Bà Đen gets its haunting name from an ancient story.

This region of Vietnam was home to Khmer peoples before the Viet people moved Southward conquering the region, and it was Buddhists of this ethnicity that baptized the mountain the "Black Virgin." According to a legend, the mountain was visited by a traveling monk from afar, and a beautiful young princess became enamored—not of the monk, but of the spiritual path he offered her—and became a devout Buddhist.

As was the custom in her village, her father the chieftain arranged for her to marry a local man. Rather than betray her vows of celibacy and her marriage to her faith, she killed herself. One ru-



mour is that she flung herself off a cliff, smashing into the rocks below. Another is that a piece of her leg was found in a cave. But later, another Sinic priest—and many others—saw her ghost wandering the mountain, and asked to commemorate her soul.

Now, the Buddhist temple built in her honor can be visited by tourists from around the world.

Though the legend itself is captivating, the actual temple—like many such attractions in Vietnam—can be a bit of a letdown upon arrival. Chinese tourists on package deals arrive by the busload, and when they get to the temple, visitors are not sure what to do there. The destination feels empty.

Spice up the experience by taking a hike around the grounds, exploring on your own terms for a personal project, or bringing a book and

reading up on local history. There's plenty of it.

Núi Bà Đen also took on legendary status for American soldiers during the Vietnam War. After US forces captured the summit from the ultimately victorious communist forces in 1964, they set up base at the top, relying on helicopters for all their provisions, and led a tough life there. They used air power and a wide combination of tactics in the region to hold on to the Black Virgin.

"The camp on its summit is an American radio-retransmitting station maintained by U.S. soldiers and signal men from 15 different units. This combination of visual prominence and American occupation of the top make Núi Bà Đen a powerful symbol," says an American account from during the war.

"To millions it means that the Viet Cong are not

capable of winning the war."

As the 60s came to an end, U.S. forces there used strange psychological operations ("PSYOPs") techniques to strike fear into the hearts of guerrilla fighters based around the mountain. The goal of one such ghost tape, used in "Operation Wandering Soul," was to convince fighters they would be damned to hell if killed in the war, and lose courage or defect. But it was also used—in conjunction with other sounds—to enrage local soldiers and force them into revealing their positions by firing desperately on the audio source to make it stop.

"You know what we did on 'Núi Bà Đen Mountain' in 1970?" said one military account from the time.

"The 6th PSYOP got an Air Force pilot to fly to Bangkok, to get an actual recording of a tiger from their zoo.

We had a Chieu Hoi (rallier to the national government from enemy ranks) come down the mountain and tell of a tiger that was attacking the Viet Cong for the past few weeks. So, we mixed the tiger roar onto a tape of 69-T, 'the wandering soul,' and a 2-man team got up on the mountain, played the tape and 150 Viet Cong came off that mountain."

But for visitors today, nothing but stories remain as evidence of this spiritual warfare.

Vietnam has powered forward economically since economic reforms have moved the country in a capitalist direction, but the region is still quite poor and relies on tourism revenue for its livelihood, so as always, make sure to be an ethical tourist. Sample the delicious local fare, treat its people with respect, and make sure not to litter.



Return

And I, an Adorno in my hand, would like to recognize, know
and apprehend
To have the key, but my search is vain and laughable
I, the artist, the producer of images, am at the threshold of worlds
and want to be witness to the passage: a smuggler
Restore, not reconstruct. Restore, to the greatest number
of Martinican, the traces I thought I had detected

Restituer

Et moi, un Adorno à la main, je voudrais reconnaître, connaître
et appréhender
Avoir la clé, mais ma quête est vaine et dérisoire
Moi, l'artiste, le producteur d'images, je suis au seuil des mondes
et je voudrais être le témoin du passage: un passeur
Restituer, non pas reconstituer. Restituer au plus grand nombre
de Martiniquais les traces que j'ai cru avoir décelées

The Artist has her cv in her pocket. She wants to earn more with painting than on Youtube.

Her teacher said she used to say musea like in Dutch
but it is museums

Could we call musea the persona of museums

Her teacher said there are male feminists too
like “Bifo” quotes feminists

Why does everyone quote “Bifo”

The journal of the academy said staying home is making your rent worth

The Artist writes that he woke up to the sound of a ticking clock. The sound was coming from the heater. The noise of trapped air bubbles. He imagined the time the imaginary clock could be indicating. Its rhythm changed and fluctuated. Seconds were speeding up and slowing down. They multiplied and they were missing sometimes. Different times were being suggested. Or time was indicated in different ways. His teacher said that the books of many young poets, including her own first book, started with something like I woke up and ...

Are there vitamins in indirect sunlight
Sky tonsillitis red from the window of another apartment

3.5 cm space needed under bed
Space in cupboard:

We can no longer talk about the shade
only about stripes of light

Days go on schedule

Is a measurement a program

Correspondence #14
5 Jan 2021

The Artist thinks of the brightness of new sneakers like exhibition spaces, white sneakers on sale 25% off in January with an extra 10% student discount on top.

The sticker at the crossing says working for the removal company is being paid for doing fitness

The Artist knows that a good artwork is intentional or at least it has the look of being intentional. He agrees with his friend that one does not have to develop skills but the ability to make something that looks intentional which is a different kind of skill. His towels are hardening with washing. It is forbidden to add detergent and softener to the machines, so he doesn't know what exactly goes into the process. He must credit them for the outcome. His towels wouldn't have acquired sculptural qualities without their system. Certainly, it is teamwork since the machines are



Anna-Bella Papp, *Eun Jae Pil*, 2020.
Photo: Anna-Bella Papp

for lessees like him, but the owners aren't collaborators, they are more like facilitators and in that sense, the laundry room is a workshop.

His other friend talks about a decline of the art scene
like towards the end of civilisations

Wasn't de-skilled cool in antiquity too

His other friend said that she hates the feeling of weekends during the week because it makes her anxious

'People are always like why don't you make works about your problems but I'm like I'm dealing with the legal aspect'

The packaging of the tea says it contains joyful jasmine petals

The Artist imagines climate change as an art form. Climate change could be a form of art in which coldness is suggested. Plants could be making art with their blossoms. Snow by wild garlic for instance. If the equivalent of painting is changing, then changing climate is made through climate change by the climate changer just as a painting is painted by a painter. Plants could make climate change art by changing the climate.

They could also be the medium of climate change art. Instead of painting, for instance, the climate changer artist could change the growth pattern of plants and make suggestions with the help of the metaphors that are in blossoms.

Or climate change could be the art that makes plants blossom only metaphorically.

The Artist always reads the press release and never looks at works of art.

Double-legged bicycle kickstand google translates into double standard from Dutch

The bicycle is empowering or empowered or both

Laces caught on the pedal is entanglement

A lost glove is deterritorialized

Manifestoes written with "oe" is becoming the name of a nail salon

A poppy seed stuck between teeth is on the periphery

Is it relevant to have a room with a view onto Ikea

The Artist flips through the pages of the magazine and she gets it all. The picture of her favourite artist appears in the magazine 40 or so years later because the checks of his jacket are fashionable again

because he passed away recently

because he will have a retrospective

podrían, creo yo, interferirse o transmitir, electrificarse o electrocutarse. Sin la oportunidad de profundizar en el estudio de los contextos literarios y sociopolíticos de Claudio Rodríguez y Thiago De Mello, ni de afinar en la descripción de los paradigmas expresivos de ambos, por pura intuición lectora desde el ahora tan concreto en que leo, a mí que la noche que “já foi mais noite” / “recién oscura” ya no lo sea tanto “(já nem tanto)” porque “ya es un día más”, una mañana sin “ya” que “vai chegar” me conectan con una alegría más política (en el caso de De Mello) y con una más vital, como ebriedad (en el caso de Rodríguez), pues ambos abren en mi imaginación la posibilidad de que al moverse los días los días cambien, o mejor dicho, más sencillo, “la posibilidad de una posibilidad. Y sospecho que esto no tiene tanto o sólo que ver con la cantidad de luz como con el movimiento, con el conflicto que no va a detenerse, que no va a acabar la historia porque ahora parezca que todo se ha cerrado duro obscuro sobre nosotros.

“La noche” rasa, amplia, popular que, excedido su marco histórico y teológico (de la fuente de la Santísima Trinidad y el pan de vida), desde este cuarto en esta época ahora leo al ras del poema de San Juan, su incertidumbre y su angustia, su miedo por falta de referencia, hacen de obstáculo extremo que precedido de “aunque” (como repite el estribillo) y “porque” (como dice la estrofa décima: “Aquí se están llamando a las criaturas, / y de esta agua se hartan, aunque a oscuras / porque es de noche”) multiplica inversamente la potencia de las criaturas que en ella habitan: saben, pueden, van, se mueven. Nada que perder y todo que ganar, no, un poco que ganar que no La noche en la que los proletarios se desalienan del día y la noche en la que las mujeres a las que perseguirán por brujas celebran, experimentan, disuelven la ley. La noche de las luciérnagas que vibrantes resisten, su intermitencia como el deseo abre una claridad inestable pero duradera, una igualdad en medio de la desigualdad. La claridad como la interrupción de la injusticia y el restablecimiento de alguna, no todas pero alguna, posibilidad de estar vivos en este mundo y no en el otro o en el otro del otro, que no conocemos.

De todos estos textos que aquí cité más de memoria que de papel, de sobre todo los tres poemas tan distantes tan distintos pero tan conmovedores, sobre todo hoy aquí me entusiasma que no son cínicos, que no se vencen, que convocan o impregnan invitan o contienen un sueño o una potencia o un deseo motor. El sueño que no tiene esta época oscura desde la que ahora hablo, guarda la y el que sí tienen la época clara que ha de venir luego por el “ya” y el “aunque” y el “porque”... y por el “pero” y el “así” y por el trabajo y el plantar que nos podamos inventar en medio del erial ecológico y la degradación de casi todos los oficios en que estábamos ya insertos. Benasayag y del Rey escriben al final de su Elogio del conflicto que “[s]i luces y sombras se suceden, el desafío no puede consistir en desear vivir otra época, sino en conseguir crear, luchar, pensar, resistir, resumiendo, en vivir para y por una época oscura. Alegría y tristeza no dependen de una época particular. La alegría emerge de la posibilidad de asumir la época” (251).

in the pamphlet
the next day
in front of the gates

en el panfleto
al día siguiente
frente a los portones

DOWN AT DAWN STILL THE DARK IN OUT
IS OPENING A GLADE A GLINT A CLEAR
FLASHY OF INJUSTICE INTERRUPTION
DESIRE THE SHADOW ABOVE CLOSING
IT'S A LONG WAY LONG A ROAD IT'S
A LO LO LO LO LONG WAY IT'S LONG
AND WINDING HARD WORLD BUT

WE GO FORTH 'CAUSE WE GO FORTH 'CAUSE
WE IT ALL BY NIGHT BY SILVER TOWARDS

ABAJO AL ALBA AL RASO AÚN A OSCURAS
ABRE UN CLARO UNA CLARA DESTELLO
INTERRUPCIÓN FUGAZ DE LA INJUSTICIA
DESEO LA SOMBRA ARRIBA CIERRA SE
ES UN CAMINO LARGO LARGA LA RUTA ES
UN LA LA LA LARGO CAMINO ES LARGO
Y SINUOSO DURO MUNDO PERO

VAMOS PORQUE VAMOS CON ÁNIMO DE
TODO DE NOCHE DE PLATA HACIA

ALWAYS CLARITY COMES FROM
DOESN'T COME FROM INHABITS OPAQUE
VIVID PHRASES THINGS FORMS
IF YOU OVERLAY NIGHT OVER
NIGHT BECOMES BRIGHT OVER
BRIGHT BECOMES NIGHT OVER THE
OVEREXPOSED FIERCE TRANSPARENT
CENTURY TERROR AGAINST CUTS
SPARKLE OUR VIOLENCE IS

INSISTING IN EXISTING IN THIS WORLD

SIEMPRE LA CLARIDAD VIENE DE
NO VIENE DE HABITA EN LAS OPACAS
VIVAS FRASES FORMAS COSAS
SI SOBREPONES NOCHE POR SOBRE
NOCHE SE HACE BRILLO POR SOBRE
BRILLO SE HACE NOCHE POR SOBRE EL
SOBREEXPUESTO FERROZ TRANSPARENTE
TERROR DEL SIGLO A CONTRA CORTA
CENTELLEO NUESTRA VIOLENCIA ES

INSISTIR EN EXISTIR EN ESTE MUNDO

OF SPACE THE ITINERANTS A USE BETWEEN
THE SEXES AND BETWEEN MINE AND YOURS
NIGHT AGAINST MASTERS FLIGHT
THE DISTINCTIONS SHADOWS DARKENED
AS NOT A CAPTIVITY THERE HAS TO
BE THERE CERTAINLY HAS TO BE BECAUSE
IN OTHER THERE IS NOT IN THIS ONE LUXURY

WE HATE WORK WE WANT THE TRAVEL

DEL ESPACIO LOS ITINERANTES UN USO
ENTRE LOS SEXOS Y ENTRE LO MÍO Y LO TUYO
NOCTURNO CONTRA LOS AMOS EL VUELO
LAS DISTINCIONES LAS SOMBRAS OSCURECÍAN
COMO NO UN CAUTIVERIO TIENE QUE
HABER ES QUE HA DE HABER
PORQUE NO HAY EN OTRO EN ESTE EL LUJO

ODIAMOS EL TRABAJO QUEREMOS EL VIAJE

A FACTORY TO GO TO ALTHOUGH WE
ARE NOT A PROLETARIAN ALTHOUGH WE
DO NOT HAVE THE NEXT DAY SWEAT
WHILE STANDING IN THE ASSEMBLY LINE
THE EXCESS FROM LAST NIGHT ITS OPAQUE
EQUIVALENCE WITH THE FEVER
WORK IS TIRING FIRST THING
SECOND THING IS DREAMING

UNA FÁBRICA A LA QUE IR AUNQUE NO
SEAMOS UN PROLETARIO AUNQUE NO
TENGAMOS A LA JORNADA SIGUIENTE
DE PIE EN EL MONTAJE SUDAR
EL EXCESO DE ANOCHE SU OPACA
EQUIVALENCIA CON LA FIEBRE
TRABAJAR CANSA PRIMERA CUESTIÓN

SEGUNDA CUESTIÓN ES EL SUEÑO

Ambivalence is most often understood as a mistake, as something that is not clearly defined. In grammar, syntactic ambiguity is called *ambiguity*, as in the example:

The effects of the artists' work on the audience are their responsibility.

To a proofreader the phrase would probably need correcting, as it does not make it clear who is responsible, whether the artists or the audience. Yet it is possible to see the phrase from another perspective and understand that there is a double meaning there. In this case, the responsibility of the effects of the work can be shared by both artists and audience. Two possible readings, that are not contradictory, simultaneously declared.

As we construct things, visual and spatial languages are also formed. A bench at a height that invites you to sit, a place that becomes a meeting point in a square, a word that stands out in the city. In this sense – and in this *conversation* – we can also find things, objects and situations that are difficult to categorize immediately. Like a sidewalk that rises because of a slope in the road and comes to be used as a place to sit and meet people. This type of indistinction can lead to new lexicons.

The idea of ambivalence of form is powerful in that it produces a disorganized or reorganized reading of references that are usually understood as neutral. This comes up in a number of the projects I work on, and also guides the development of this Bienal's visual language. *Visual language*, and not visual identity, as a way of distinguishing from the automatisms constructed by a corporate logic of design, which prioritizes proposals that are stable, with maximum predictability of their applications.

In my first encounters with the curatorial proposals of this Bienal, I got to know some of the ideas of Édouard Glissant. Glissant problematizes the representation of identity as something with exclusively fixed roots. He mobilizes the image of the archipelago, understanding identity as something constructed in the relationship between different contacts. Reading about this reinforced the hypothesis of proposing a visual language without a “usage manual”, but with initial sets of elements and syntaxes that can be experienced in different combinations over time. In this way, experimenting with different ideas and elements – colors, typographies, ways of taking up the page, overlaps, thicknesses, materials – can establish new arrangements with every combination of them.

The proposal is to learn language in its practice, in the contact and friction of every novelty or demand. It is the intersection of the parts and contexts implied by the language that gives it form and structure: like a sheet of paper that ceases to be a single plane when folded or creased, standing upright in the meeting of two planes. Its ambivalence, and also what supports it, lies in that fold.

The fold brings the page's three-dimensionality into consideration, taking the materiality and thickness of the visual language beyond the surface of the paper or canvas. The supposed neutrality of devices that function as mediums of graphic languages comes into question, and their design is brought into consideration. The differences between prints, posters, banners, walls, and totems also become evident. Not only differences in their scales and dimensions, but also in their materials, spatial relationships and thinking of graphic printing.

From the perspective of ambivalence, spatial visual language simultaneously becomes mediation, institutional framing, and graphic practice, establishing its own relationships with the context. Thus, the yellow paint of a guard rail acts as both a guide along a pathway and as an element of a dialogue between event, architecture and the park environment. Visual

Correspondence #11

6 Oct 2020



Bienal Pavilion showing the application of 34th Bienal visual language

language, in this case, has less of a role in representing the exhibition, and acts more in a dialogue, as an element that allows for speculation and experimentation of curatorial ideas to communicate and invite the construction of other meanings.

The idea is not to confuse things. It is more concerned with looking at practices that update an indistinction between certain disciplinary boundaries, or that raise questions about why these separations happen. Ambivalence as a resistance to immediate categorization can generate readings attentive to different codes of visibility and amplify the contact and friction between different audiences.



STILL I SING

Il buio e la luce.

Per SPB34 intendo fare un lavoro pensando all'opera di Paulo Coelho, *Manual do Guerreiro da Luz*.

Guerrieri di Luce non sono soltanto gli artisti, sono tutti gli uomini che nel buio continuano a cantare, che non si arrendono e si danno la voce l'un l'altro.

Nel canto la pittura si accompagna alle parole così come probabilmente la pittura è nata insieme alla parola quando l'umanità iniziò a dare identità al mondo.

Alla parola corrispondeva l'immagine, alla immagine corrispondeva la parola parlata (la parola scritta arriverà almeno 30mila anni dopo).

Questo agli inizi.

Poi arrivò la conoscenza e con essa la consapevolezza che ogni parola e ogni immagine del mondo e di noi stessi contengono una parte non conosciuta e non conoscibile.

Dal tempo di Orfeo questa parte è affidata alle arti, prima era territorio dello sciamano.

Torino, 2 aprile 2020.

STILL I SING

Dark and light.

For the 34th BSP I intend to make a work based on Paulo Coelho's book, *Manual do Guerreiro da Luz* [Manual of the Warrior of Light].

The warriors of light are not only artists, they are all men who continue to sing in the dark, who do not surrender, but give voice to another.

In song, words accompany painting, just as painting was probably born with the word when humans started identifying the world.

The word corresponded to the image, the image corresponded to the spoken word (the written word would not arrive until at least 30 thousand years later).

That was in the beginning.

Knowledge came later, and with it the awareness that every word and every image of the world and of ourselves contains an element that is unknown and unknowable.

This element has been entrusted to the arts since the time of Orpheus, before then it was shaman territory.

Turin, 2 April 2020

Rêve du Mai 1939

Sensation de réveil en face d'un immense corps de femme drapé dans une robe collante en velours rouge presque ou tout à fait noir. En levant à peine la tête je vois une sorte de fenêtre coupée dans l'étoffe à hauteur du sein gauche. C'est en quelque sorte l'ornement, le seul, de la robe. Cette fenêtre avec une "vitre" (de la même matière semble-t-il que mon chapeau dit en "verre") est garni de rideaux légers de couleur que l'on hésite à nommer rose ou mauve. J'y touche bravement et force à tirer et fermer les petits rideaux très doux à manœuvrer. Mais quelque chose bouge derrière la vitre. Je me recule de saisissement et ~~et~~ j'en pas et regarde. C'est un liquide d'un blanc tantôt bléauté tantôt crémeux — du lait. Mais bientôt une sorte de personnage avec des petit bras humain et une tête d'oiseau

brillante me fait un geste (ou
s'adieu ou s'accueil — c'est
la même geste) et disparaît —
tandis que la vitre devient
comme brumeuse.

Je songe que la grande femme
de velours devant ^{moi} doit avoir
un visage ^{ce dont} ~~je~~ une "curiosité" (69)
passionnée me pour ^à
m'assurer. Mais à l'instant
où je lève les yeux un bruit
de clochettes derrière moi me fait
sursauter. Je me tourne tout
s' une pièce et ouvrant la
porte bleue de ma chambre
à Kid, je ^{entre} ~~vois~~ montant l'escalier
la robe, mais de dos — et
surmontée seulement d'un
essaim d'abeilles.

**Choose micro:
Lichens and micro-histories for a
new comprehensive understanding**

An image, an art form. Is it natural, cultural or both? More than 1,000 works were brought together in a vast, open conversation on the occasion of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo. Dissimilar works by artists from various backgrounds that take the form of images, paintings, photographs, sculptures, videos. Since the dawn of our civilization, therefore of our memory, our eyes are used to seeing these human productions and to consider them as a form of art. However, the period we are experiencing, unprecedented and traumatic, imposed by the pandemic, has distanced us from art and its works. Cultural sites were closed and experienced a pause that only the Second World War had made longer, even if this is not a pause to protect the pieces of art, but to protect ourselves. But can we lose our habits? Our habits that take the form of rituals to see art, appreciating it or not, questioning ourselves about these creative forms produced by human hands, or at least by a human mind. These successive periods of confinement have directly undermined our relationship with creation, and some people have experienced its discovery or, otherwise, its rediscovery. This is a general truth, widely accepted, but to which we no longer pay attention. Creation has never ceased to be; to be around us, and in us. This creation, which the most privileged among us have observed, is that of nature. A spontaneous, casual, surprising creation. Must we inevitably make a distinction between culture and nature? Between our land and its laws, and our society and its own social laws? Perhaps their borders, casting light and shadow on each other, have finally created a spectacle in which nature and culture share the stage, simultaneously or alternatively. Philippe Descola, in his book *Beyond Nature and Culture*,¹ affirms that this distinction is a strictly ethnocentric fact of Western societies. By describing other systems, such as animism or totemism, he rehabilitates a harmonious view by considering nature and culture in relation. Recognizing that artworks can also be the product from both of them. Recognizing that nature also produces art forms. Lichens are the embodiment of this duality. Henry David Thoreau² plays with this opposition, announced as irreconcilable, between nature and culture. The North American writer claims that lichen is not only a natural production, but it overlaps and merges into a wall, a human creation or even

a poster. Lichens, like artworks, are manifestations of the imagination, of the effects that an image brings. Also, Michel Butor develops this idea of the creative potential in a natural way: “Lichen, for me, is natural paint. It is the painting that is done by itself. I am fascinated by lichens. When I look at the walls, I find them extraordinarily beautiful.”³ Works and lichens share the same vital impulse, the expression and reception of a form of beauty, or at least of mutually organized shapes and colors. Like visual poems, they are a set of signs and images that our brain and our sensitivity can process. Perhaps this forced period of physical and social isolation is not just a negative experience. It asks for a return, certainly forced, to poetry, to the communion of spirit and senses. It develops our mind and our poetic abilities (distillation of our emotions) to understand the world we inhabit. This is also the thought of Édouard Glissant, whose theory of the poetics of relations has inspired this 34th edition of the Bienal de São Paulo. A poetic approach becomes necessary when understanding relationships as well as history. Carlo Ginzburg, historian of micro-history, had already placed this poetic filter at the center of his research. It was through this lens that he was able to analyze and theorize the micro-history of Menocchio, a 16th-century Friulian miller. It is with poetry that “ordinary people formulate extravagant ideas and support them until the end”.⁴ If we apply this poetic method to our contemporary times, perhaps artists are those ordinary people who affirm extravagant ideas and give them a plastic shape. Finding the underlying poetics in the relationships among people and also between people and objects opens our eyes to the micro, to the word itself, to the detail, to the pause...

A micro-story on the margins of the official and admitted version. A micro-existence, like that of the lichen, which belongs to the *infra-ordinary*, to use the words of Georges Perec.⁵ How to connect the micro- and the infra-ordinary? From their everyday and banal character. They are background sounds we no longer hear, canceled by the emptiness of silence; reflections we no longer see. In other words, lichen, just like artistic creation, can be appreciated on a microscale that still illuminates the overlooked ordinary. These two concepts refer to what is hardly visible or hidden. Alice Shintani, for example,

1

Philippe Descola, *Beyond Nature and Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

2

Henry David Thoreau, *A Year in Thoreau's Journal, 1851*. London: Penguin Classics, 1993.

3

Michel Butor, *Matière de Rêves, Tome 3 – Troisième dessous*. Paris: Gallimard, 1977.

4

Carlo Ginzburg, *Le Fromage et les vers*. Paris: Flammarion, 1976, p. x. Preface.

5

Georges Perec quoted by Vincent Zonca, *Lichens – Pour une résistance minimale*. Paris: Le Pommier, 2021, p. 10.

develops a practice based on intimate and individual experiences, ordinary moments of everyday life. One of the artworks proposed for the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, entitled *Menas* (2015-2021), is a touching installation that narrates the itinerant sales of *brigadeiros* (chocolate sweets) through the use of paper packaging. These fragments form a collection that can be discovered in dissimilar and changing contexts. Choosing to focus on market logic taken from infra-ordinary urban scenes, the artist proposes to question herself – by using metaphors – on the meaning of the unbri-dled commercialization of artwork.

Hidden from our own conscience, from our inat-tention to the world, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo invites us to change scale, to make a mental and bodily change, a mutation configured as a revelation. A revelation of what is invisible, hidden or even taboo. Belkis Ayón's production, for instance, revolves around the presence of a secret veiled by a myriad of symbols of silence and darkness. The *Via Crucis* series (1993) is a combination of complex iconog-raphy, with references to the Afro-Cuban cult and the Christian Bible. These engravings carry within themselves the secret and the mystery of the doubts and emotions of the artist, the private and the micro.

That way, this Bienal could be compared to a botanical enterprise that teaches us the art of looking at the smallest things or invites us to look differently to reveal the micro. A botany of the artists and their works. Or again, it is a footnote in our society that becomes the subject of a book.⁶

By studying this botany well or rereading these footnotes, we understand that it is not isolated, but belongs to a bundle of elements and events that had not yet taken place. Thus, for Carlo Ginzburg, his miller is “a dispersed fragment ... of an obscure shadowy world.”⁷ It belongs to a reality that surpasses it, but that has not gone beyond the filters and distorting intermediaries⁸ that are imposed on us, or that we impose on ourselves. Menocchio, the lichen, or the art works are linked by their status of metonymy. They are parts of a whole. If you look more closely, an entire network of relationships emerges, a palpable move-ment, a circulation that becomes evident. Each element is in connection with the others that have their own status, marginal and of difference. Edurne Rubio also works to bring out this circulation. By choosing an event or a place,

she reveals a second reality, based on the past experiences of the same event. So, for the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, with the sound work *Daqui* [From Here] (2020), she offers an augmented reality of the Museu de Arte Contemporânea of the Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), thanks to interviews with artists, curators, and cultural operators in general. A connection is established between this place and the people who have frequented it, and a network is made visible among a multitude of individual stories. This fluidity, which is found in Édouard Glissant's poetics of relation, also resonates in the work of Gilles Clément, landscape gardener and botanist. He develops the idea of a garden in motion. A plot, which can be natural as well as cultural, which is not maintained and is subject to a rapid expansion of species. There is a balance to be found. It is not about acting arbitrarily and imperatively, but about letting species cooperate and help each other. Accepting commerce, circulation, evolution and diversion; sharing and guaranteeing a place for each work and each artist is one of the components of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo. This edition, in fact, adopts the circulation instance as a method of work, selection, and exhibition of artists. Returning to the micro-scale is therefore not only to see the elements in isolation, in their specificity, but also to become aware of the net that connects them, a hybridization that is the basis of their identity. Again, taking inspiration from lichen to take a fresh look at the artists and their work is a corrob-orating resource. We must admit that some connections can be ambiguous, as the author of *Lichen* reminds us, and we must necessarily go beyond alienation to work towards a symbiosis instead. It is one of the intentions of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo to make an essential event such as a biennial not a simple event but a symbiont. Indeed, this type of environment is the guarantor of horizontal rela-tions.⁹ Here too the 34th Bienal de São Paulo affirms a strong and powerful position: that of horizontality and (therefore) that of cooperation, in contrast to its original vertical institution, as a cultural outpost of Western art. This is almost a political statement, as the current context shows that in many democracies one-sided attitudes are imposed on individuals, locked into patterns of thought and behavior that endanger society as a whole. Supporting and implementing symbiosis is no small ambition. In fact,

6

Carlo Ginzburg, *op. cit.*, pp. xvii-ff. Preface.

7

Id., *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992, p. 28.

8

Id., *ibid.*, p. 17.

9

Vincent Zonca, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

it is a matter of assuming this legitimacy and this correctness of the coexistence of individualities. We can go even further in this desire for mutualization so the The North American biologist Forest Rohwer develops the concept of “Holobiont”¹⁰ as the symbiosis between a host and plant or animal elements. Of course, creating a symbiosis is a new way of living together, but also a new way of being in the world, a renewed relationship with the earth, with nature. We naturally return here to the unveiling or awakening of conscience confined to nature.

The 34th Bienal de São Paulo is an attempt to create an artistic laboratory, imbued with great fluidity and spontaneous circulation, which has become more intricate and significant due to the effects of the pandemic. Putting these works and artists together means returning to a micro-scale and illuminating a larger and more harmonious whole based on interdependence. We must not neglect the potential offered by this mutualization and this return to the micro. Indeed, it is also an opening towards resistance and resilience.

■ Standing aside. Being excluded. Being deviant. These are the three sides of the same triangle. There is a majority, a community, of some standards, and some individuals or elements that are not part of it. Lichen is a natural element that is completely marginalized in the global natural order. Vincent Zonca underlines its importance from the beginning of his work. Lichen has long been thought not as a body in itself, but as the result of the rejection of other bodies integrated into living beings, of what nature “produces and which degenerates and proliferates if it is not taken care of.”¹¹ Researchers and scientists have recently rehabilitated the lichen symbiote as an autonomous living body and they are rewriting its history. This story, that of a marginal element, will always be, by nature, in opposition to or speculate the more official version offered by history, be it the history of nature or the history of men. Walter Benjamin was also aware that knowledge and official speeches ignore, or even deny, a part of history: “Everything interesting happens in the shadows. We know nothing of the true history of men.”¹² It is easy to understand that avoiding part of history is problematic, for representativeness, for equality, for the recognition of

rights. However, it is also an interesting posture, to stand aside and be able to look out, take a step back. Also, isn’t this the position of artists? Taking a side step, whether this distance is chosen or forced, allows you to affirm your individuality and existence and can generate resilience or resistance movements.

Gala Porras-Kim is part of this dynamic of moving away from official history. The artist is interested in artifacts from the indigenous cultures of South America, which the dominant culture of Western countries has appropriated. The language, while not an object, has been used harshly to oppress and standardize various indigenous cultures. In her sound installation *Whistling and Language Transfiguration (WaLT)* (2012), the artist examines the Zapotec dialect, used in the Oaxaca region of Mexico. Faced with Spanish, this dialect has undergone a marginalization that also allowed it to resist, in particular with the use of whistles, sounds that remain indecipherable to non-natives. The philosophical thought of Georges Didi-Huberman¹³ was interested in this capacity for action which lies in marginalization. The French theorist takes the example of fireflies, that for him are a symbol of the disappearance of pleasure and humanity from contemporary societies, stating that the minimum degree of light that the firefly creates is a force of affirmation and resistance. On the one hand there is the blinding, bright, saturated, flickering light of industrial societies, in contrast with the delicacy, simplicity, humility of the light generated by the firefly. Brazil, with its contrasts and inequalities, allows us to observe this resistance. The country has inspired numerous poems by Elizabeth Bishop, including one in which she compares lichens and the population of Brazilian favelas, that are, in her opinion, united by their resilience: “But they cling and spread like lichens.”¹⁴ The lichen embodies par excellence the countercurrent between nature and society. Where society is agitated and accelerating, where nature proliferates, the lichen affirms its slowness, and grows only between 0.2 and 1 millimeter per year.¹⁵ While society surrounds itself with technological means to combat climate change, cooling and warming, lichen particularly appreciates extreme environments.

This strength of resilience can also be understood through the work of Naomi Rincón Gallardo.

10

J. Gordon, N. Knowlton, D.A. Relman, F. Rohwer and M. Youle, “Superorganisms and Holobionts”. *Microbe* 8 (4), 2013, pp. 152-153.

11

Vincent Zonca, op. cit. p. 11.

12

Walter Benjamin quoted by Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, op. cit.

13

Georges Didi-Huberman, *Survivance des lucioles*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 2009.

14

Elizabeth Bishop, “The Burglar of Babylon”, *The New Yorker*, 21 Nov. 1964.

15

Vincent Zonca, op. cit., p. 46.

Resiliencia Tlacuache (2019) reflects on the ongoing expropriation processes in the territory of Oaxaca. Addressing contemporary and particularly urgent issues, through legends and fables often hidden and silenced, and placing great emphasis on musicality, Rincón Gallardo's work addresses some of the central issues present in the spaces as well as in the title of the 34th Bienal itself, such as freedom that can emerge from conditions of isolation and invisibility, and the importance of singing to resist traumas and threats of all kinds. Just as the "lichen-voices"¹⁶ were born in the 1970s and 1980s, it seems evident that many artists are breaking away or rebelling against what society dictates.

Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi lives and presents her performances as micro-acts of political resistance, using her body to denounce the violence and oppression on black women in Brazil. Her body, which is definitely a micro-element, has a strong ability to recreate race, gender and sexuality.

Modern and contemporary artists have long assumed this role, that of resistance, of political, aesthetic, ideological opposition, offering another point of view or a simple diversion of the gaze. However, it is clear that capitalist society has left a permanent mark on artistic creation. The matter of rhythm, of the acceleration inherent in the intensification of production and consumption, has not spared exhibitions, institutions and artists. It becomes imperative to create; indeed, we should say to produce and consume pieces of art. The same goes for the standardization and homogenization of thoughts and related issues. The positions taken by the artists do not escape the logic of trend, fashion, and therefore specifically of marketing. Nevertheless, the Bienal format offers a hint of resistance starting with the question of time. Repeated every two years, with a long duration, the Bienal embraces a cyclical form typical of nature, of its seasons for example. The 34th Bienal chooses an alternative path to the commercialization of a subject and a theme. The choice of not proposing a topic, but rather to agree on a flexible and adaptable working method, allows different voices to emerge, avoiding the polarization of a topic and, therefore, the trivialization of an articulated and individual thinking of the issues addressed. This places the artists, whose works convey

different messages, not in a condition of contrast, but in a symbiotic similarity to that of a lichen. An organism that is not formed following a symbiotic-associative approach, but grows from below, not even starting from the artist and his problems, but from a specific work. Themes and definitions are formed successively; at the origin there is the work itself and all its rich ambiguity. Broadening our gaze, we could say that the 34th Bienal de São Paulo defends the position of lichenization¹⁷ of artists and works; in other words, the creation of a porous artistic ecosystem based on relational relationships. The 34th Bienal de São Paulo presents a new way of understanding the old adage, according to which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Gilbert Simondon defines in clearer terms all the interest of this type of symbiotic environment: "the total amount of organization of the beings constituted exceeds that of a single individual, the activity of each of the beings translates into a greater capacity for activity for the partner, which leads to an increase in the capacity of the formed group."¹⁸

■ When you are interested in a topic and listen carefully, you realize that it often results in a conversation. When you look at a microscopic element, such as lichen, and observe it in our cities and our countryside, you realize that it is omnipresent. Sung Tieu uses a wide range of expressive forms, including sound, video, sculpture, photography, performance. Not trying to create a recognizable style or to maintain a practice that can be easily cataloged or circumscribed, the artist accumulates, overlaps and contaminates layers of factual, fictitious, plausible and possible narratives until they are inseparable from each other. Her research moves away from migration issues per se to explore the political interests that govern these movements. The series of textual works, entitled Newspapers, integrated into several of her installations, underlines the non-existence of a single and universal truth, in an abundance of ideas, logic, objective or subjective facts.

From a micro-element to an abundance, it is a short step, which will be taken on condition of being attentive and available towards the other and the outside world. In addressing the case of Menocchio, Carlo Ginzburg noted the circulation of ideas from one social stratum to another but also a real proliferation of religious ideas brought by

16

Id., *ibid.*, p. 174.

17

Id., *ibid.*, p. 220.

18

Gilbert Simondon
*L'individuation à la
lumière des notions de
forme et d'information.*
Grenoble: Jérôme Million,
2005, p. 201.

Menocchio. Indeed, he observes that “the astonishing convergence between the ideas of an unknown miller of the Friuli and those of the most refined and informed intellectual groups of his day forcefully raises the question of cultural diffusion formulated by Bakhtin.”¹⁹ This characteristic of an ideological jungle, made possible at Menocchio’s time with the Reformation and the spread of the press, is also found in the very form of the Bienal and in the works that compose it. Eric Baudelaire’s approach is based on the intersection of distinct and apparently distant subjects and sources: little-known accounts of historical events that are linked to major political or social analyses; cinema iconography studies; imaginary correspondences and echoes of real exchanges; an in-depth and meticulous socio-political research that is transformed, almost imperceptibly, into fantastic stories. Baudelaire’s work is a self-sufficient jungle of ideas, words and images.

The Bienal takes us from the artistic symbiont to the artistic jungle. If the symbiont is an autonomous and independent environment, the jungle presupposes the idea of contacts, of the exchange of relationships that happen outside in a monolithic way and inside in an exclusive and circular way. Due to its extreme density, the jungle does not offer a belvedere, a point of view outside of itself, avoiding any overall relationship with the outside but inviting a lenticular approach towards the inside. A little bit of what Abel Rodríguez proposes through his works on paper, based on his knowledge, transmitted through generations, of the native plants of the region of the Nonuya ethnic group, in the Colombian Amazon. Ginzburg shows the mutual enrichment between oral and written culture, and the same goes for the Bienal. The artists it brings together are all existences, ideas, creative forms that interact with each other, but they are also existences that are enriched from the outside, which could not exist without inspiration or influence depending on the point of view.

Deleuze and Guattari developed the philosophical concept of “haecceity”, derived from the rhizome. For them every living being is an integral part of a network, or in our case of a jungle, without “beginning or end, origin or destination,”²⁰ as Vincent Zonca writes, “Living beings appear as configurations of intensity, as mediums of interactions.”²¹

■ Ecology is the beautiful uncertainty of living together, and lichens represent its omnipresence that extends beyond the visible. Ecology therefore means being aware that things are happening simultaneously on more than one temporal and spatial scale. We therefore depend on something authentic, real and rooted that lives around us. Local instances that we perceive as they are only when they are defined in relation to a regional, national, global or planetary scale. Through the micro we can identify fruitfulness even apparently distant or alien to us, such as a sense of belonging and its echo, something alive, tangible, fresh and unique even if apparently devoid of resolutions and progress.

Translated from Italian by Ana Laura Borro

19

Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, op. cit., p. 22.

20

Vincent Zonca, op. cit., p. 258.

21

Id., *ibid.*









17/06/05

Ze' ANTONINHO MEXAKALI



Zé Antoninho Maxakali. Illustration published in Rosângela Pereira de Tugny (ed.). *Cantos dos povos morcego e hemex – espíritos* [Songs of the peoples Morcego and Hemex – Spirits]. Belo Horizonte: MEC/Literaterras/ Museu do Índio/INCTI/FUNAI, 2013

The Tikmũ'ũn, also known as Maxakali, are Indigenous people from the area that today encompasses the Minas Gerais, Bahia, and Espírito Santo states. After countless and recurrent episodes of violence and abuse since colonial times, the Tikmũ'ũn came to the brink of extinction in the 1940s and were forced to abandon their ancestral lands to survive. Songs organize life in the villages, constituting almost an index of all the elements of their daily lives, like plants, animals, places, objects, knowledge, and of their rich cosmology. Often intended for healing, most of these songs are collectively sung. For

the Tikmũ'ũn, singing becomes an integral part of life because memories are preserved, and community is constituted through singing. Each village dweller is the depositary of a part of the songs. These songs belong to a spirit called Yãmîy – a word that also means song –, which is summoned and fed during the ritual singing. Together, all songs make up the Tikmũ'ũn universe. Such universe is constituted by everything that these people see, touch, harvest, eat, kill, and feel, but also by the memory of extinct plants and animals and those belonging to the land they had to flee in order to survive. As a community, they live in, and through, their own language, which they vigorously defend by singing.

After the *Vento* exhibition at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion in November 2020, the 34th Bienal incorporates for a second time some ritual Tikmũ'ũn songs as a poetic counterpoint and symbolic catalyst for a set of works that propose reflections about the forest as an ecosystem that must be protected, respected and feared. An ecosystem that makes visible, or even tangible, the inextricable relationships between all beings, often through courageously preserved ancient rituals.

It is almost always dark when the Tikmũ'ũn start to sing. Their songs go into the night, summoning the spirits of each being that makes up the world, bringing together what we can and cannot see. In the context of an exhibition conceived, lyrically and metaphorically, in and through the songs' necessity and power, the example of the Tikmũ'ũn resonates powerfully, also from a political point of view: the community effort is renewed constantly through their singing to collectively create a universe. Like in a forest where each element is essential for the survival of the next and the system's equilibrium, each set of songs is indispensable for always reviving and renewing the universe's totality. None of the entities of this rich cosmos can be left behind, except at the expense of missing something unique. In a sick world where necropolitics reigns and consolidates indifference and neglect as governance instruments, this lesson resonates even more urgently.

Vento

14 nov — 15 dez
2020



The 34th Bienal was conceived as a sort of open rehearsal, an exhibition in process. The tragic events of the last months have brought significant changes to the choreography as it was initially imagined, but also reinforced the relevance of a show that is continuously under construction and which publicly reflects on itself. The distance between the works, many of them dematerialized, is the most striking feature of this installment of the Bienal, which invites the public to look not only at the artworks, but also at the space between them, and to read in this gesture a poetic resonance of the need to distance oneself from others and from the world. That such a large space can be filled by so few works is a demonstration of art's capacity to reverberate infinitely, making it an irreplaceable tool for facing and overcoming gloomy moments like these that we are now experiencing.

In her film *Wind*, the North American artist Joan Jonas recorded the efforts of a group of performers to execute a choreography on a beach on Long Island, New York, on one of the coldest days of 1968. Combining banal movements with enigmatic ones, shifting between ritual and improvisation, the dancers struggle against the wind, which gusts violently against their bodies. It was obviously not an easy day for dancing. It was also not just any year, and perhaps this work by Jonas indirectly alludes to the maelstrom of revolts and transformations that was then blowing in a good part of the world. The film does not portray only the performance, it portrays the wind: the dancers' role, in this sense, is to make the wind visible. Sometimes it is necessary to place something into the void to reveal that it is full. Full of things that we cannot touch or hold in our hands; things whose origin or functioning we do not manage to understand, but which define and regulate our life, feeding and nourishing it. Or, like a gust of wind, shuffling and confusing it.

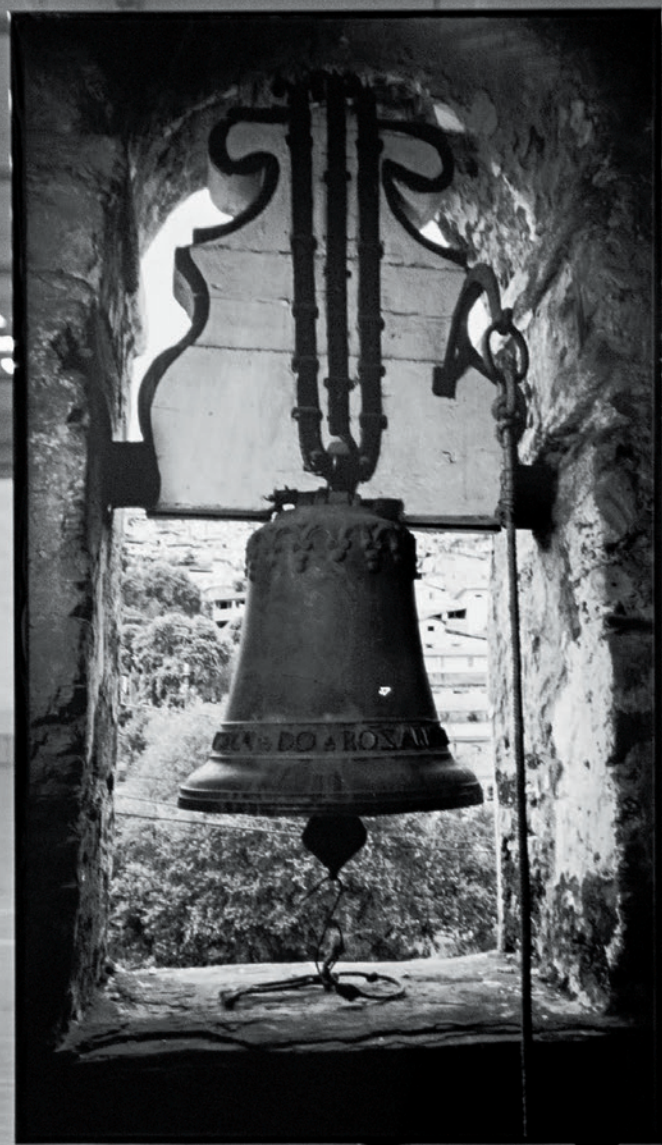






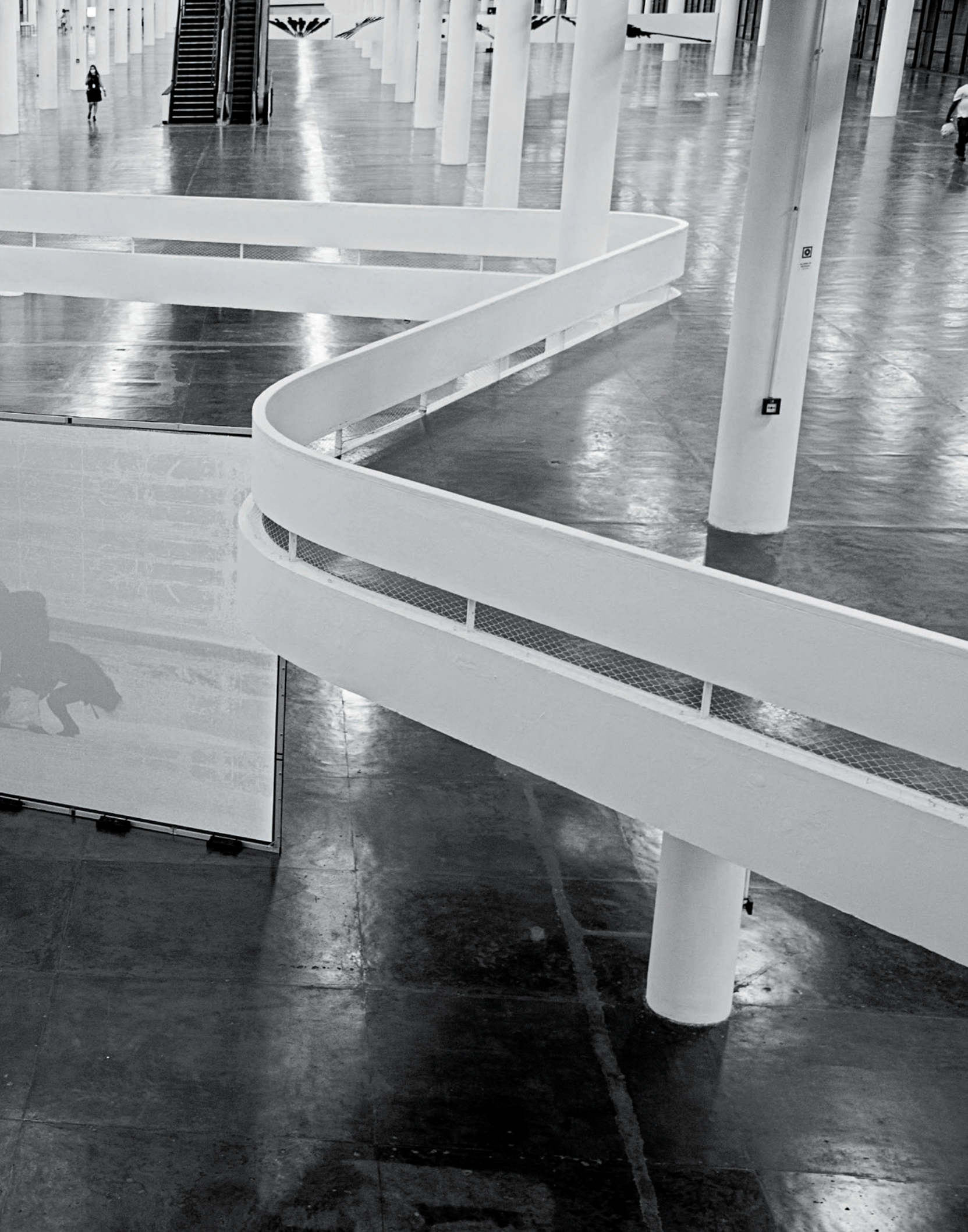


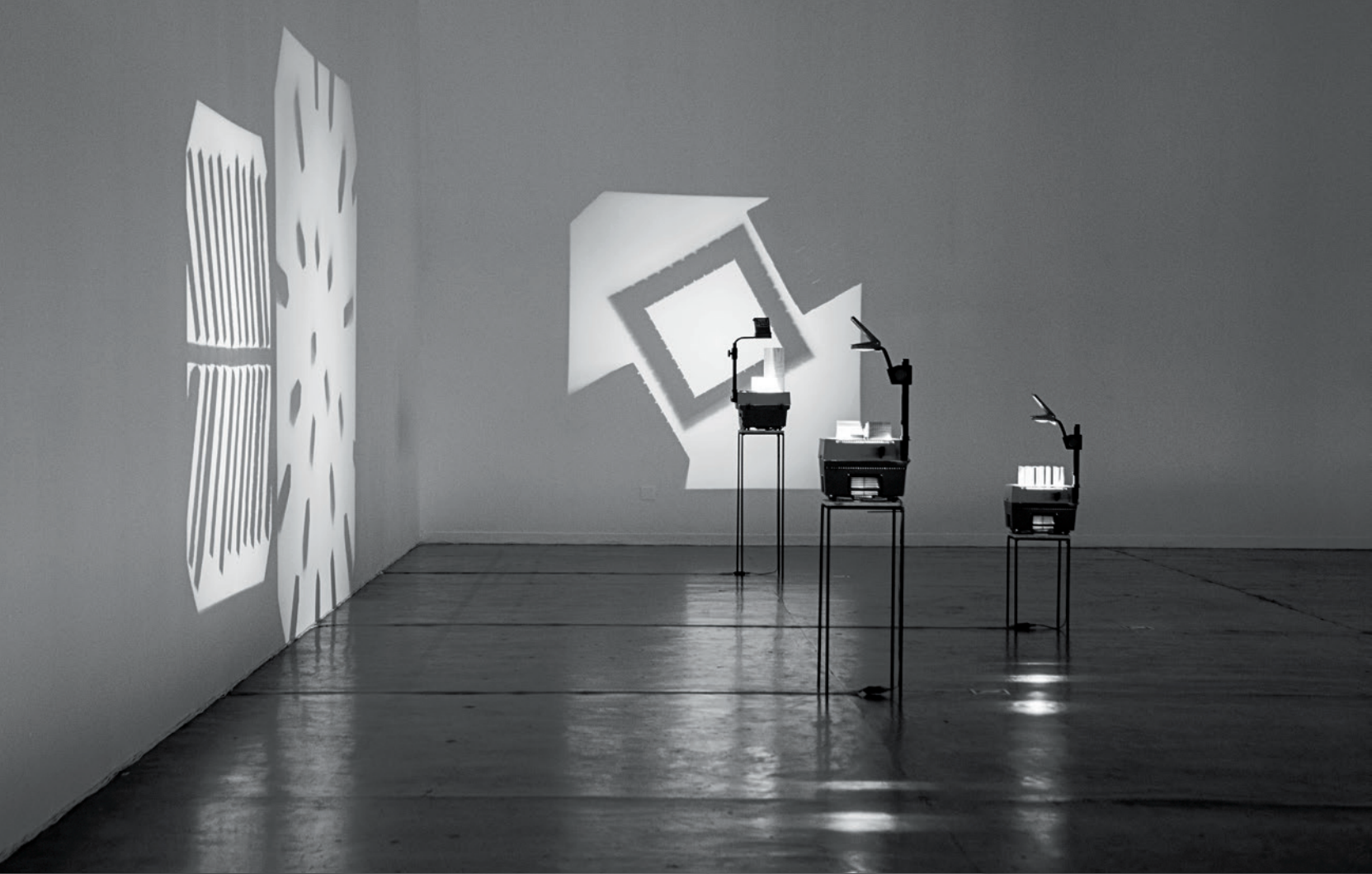




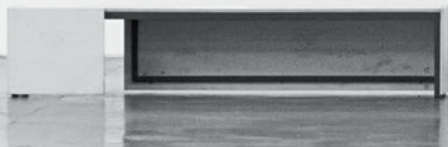
















The customary thing would be to find the show's curatorial texts concentrated at the beginning of the exhibition path. But, as stated by Édouard Glissant, *There is no absolute beginning. Beginnings flow from everywhere, like meandering rivers* – even more so, in an exhibition like this one, which functions as a turning point, signaling a change of course, rather than an interruption or the beginning of a movement. It makes sense, therefore, that here, at the end of the Ciccilo Matarazzo Pavilion, there is another text, that casts other lights or shadows on the same artworks that we will now encounter in reverse order; which enlarges, deepens, confuses and shuffles what has been said, like an echo. Glissant also talked about *echo-worlds*: worlds made of echoes and which, like almost everything in his poetics, are in constant transformation, to the point where we no longer know where each word originated, in an endless process of creolization and cross-fertilization. The wind carries the echo, which is simultaneously what was said and its future reverberation inward. *Wind* functions analogously as an index of this edition of the Bienal, in the sense that it points to some of the themes that will return expanded in the exhibition in September of next year, while it also refers to what has already happened, just like in semiotics the indexical sign has the quality of a footprint.

With its emphasis on the uninterrupted process of transformation of everything that is alive (from a plant to a culture), the work *Insurgencias botánicas* [Botanical Insurgencies] – shown for the first time some months ago at the opening of the 34th Bienal – has come to symbolize the curatorial strategy of conceiving the show as a process rather than as something crystallized or fixed. The light of November is not the same as that of February; now, tikmū'ūn chants resound around the plants, which grew, wilted, and then began growing again; the polycarbonate structure that delimited the space was dismantled and part of it appeared on the ground floor to mark the entrance of this exhibition. Outside of here, evidently, things have changed even more. Showing the same works more than once, at different moments and contexts, emphasizes that nothing remains the same: not a work of art, not who looks at it, not even the world around them. The artworks operate, in this sense, like the gestures of the performers in *Wind*: they have their logic and their specificity, they are nodes of poetry, anger, memory or resistance, but they also help us, simply, to see what is around us, to touch and to see, if this is possible, the space that separates us and the wind that blows between us.



We stood in one place swaying
the mirrors the landscape
a translation from an indoor piece with fans

it was the coldest day of the year.
we were hoping for wind
The camera slowed

I was really thinking about the people in the distance
the people in the capes and masks leaning into the wind
it all became a struggle in the wind

Mirror costume inspired by Jorge Luis Borges
Other costumes and masks inspired by the film *Judex*
(1963), by Georges Franju. Camera by Peter Campus

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a:Roger Bernat <rb@rogerbernat.info>
data:1 d'oct. 2019 19:23

Hablando de robos, estoy leyendo un libro extraordinario de Ilias Petropoulos, titulado "manual del buen ladrón". Reflexiones que he deducido de la lectura y que he ido apuntando:

La riqueza del propietario es poder. Pero el botín del ladrón es del orden de la posibilidad. Hermes es el dios de los ladrones porque los griegos reconocían un parentesco extraordinario entre la apropiación indebida y la resignificación indebida. Los artistas de verdad son, en este aspecto, ladrones de manual. Al mismo tiempo, en el ladrón este concepto adéspota y potencializador del botín viene de la mano de una alianza inquebrantable con la materialidad del mundo material. El ladrón se conforma con echarle mano a un botín. El propietario vela por su BIEN y por sus bienes. Por eso mismo, fue un error fundamental, a comienzos del siglo, pretender alinear las artes de la escena (y las artes en general) con la causa proletaria. El error procedía de un diseño del mapa de clases (cuyo principal representante sigue siendo Foucault) hecho de líneas de separación verticales. Según este modelo, en los márgenes del sistema existen grupos desprotegidos. Los artistas, a partir de cierto momento, deliraron con considerarse un grupo "marginal" de este tipo. De hecho, haber aceptado convertirse en metáfora proletaria ha contribuido a fomentar incalculablemente la retorización (y la progresiva destensión) de la causa proletaria. En cambio, la línea que separa el submundo criminal del RESTO de clases, es una línea horizontal y continua. Precisamente esta subcontinuidad (el hecho de que el submundo viva bajo los pies del conjunto de la sociedad y del conjunto de las clases, como una clase de insectos) vuelve extremadamente problemática cualquier aplicación al submundo y a sus crímenes el tipo de actancia política que Marx solía atribuir a las clases proletarias (el proletario de Marx es siempre honrado y ejemplar. Marx aborrece el lumpenproletario). Razón de más para creer que nuestra situación (la de los artistas, digo) fuera mucho más interesante cuando en el imaginario colectivo éramos un apartado específico, o específicamente abyecto, del submundo y del lumpenproletariado. Cuando carecíamos de cualquier forma, literal o metafórica, sucedánea o genuina, de "RECTITUD" (siendo en cambio especialistas del "modo oblicuo"). **Es más: el ser social del ladrón no es determinado por su conciencia (como ocurre con el ciudadano políticamente concienciado). Al contrario, es la conciencia del ladrón la que se ve determinada por su ser social, que es a su vez el producto de una precisa elección (el ladrón pudo no vivir del robo. Pero a partir del momento en que vive del robo, esta condición predetermina todos los desmanes de su conciencia).** Cualquier artista debería recordarlo: recordar en suma la naturaleza única, extraordinariamente adaptable u oportunista de una conciencia ficcionalmente "fatal" (porque es inherente a una condición totalmente "condicional" –cada uno ha elegido ser artista, aunque esta es la única elección que adquiere la forma de un destino), muy diferente a la naturaleza de subalternidades "incondicionales" (que son las subalternidades heredadas, impuestas o radicales). Precisamente esta adaptabilidad digna del submundo (y dirigida a implementar y perfeccionar el talento por el robo); **precisamente esta frivolidad estructural, es lo que ha permitido a la categoría de los artistas, como a la de los criminales (y de los insectos), una capacidad secular de resiliencia.** O de puterío tóxico. **En algunos de los pintores renacentistas que trabajaron para los papas hay por eso un núcleo de disidencia infinitamente más poderoso que en la gran mayoría de los artistas progre que tutelan como una propiedad su buena conciencia de ser proletarios.** Los artistas dinamitan el statu quo sólo asumiéndolo como un destino ficcional. **Ser nocturnos e insinceros es su mejor manera de sabotear el dogma de la propiedad.** Y ocupan para ello la mejor posición posible.

Beso. Cómo procedemos?

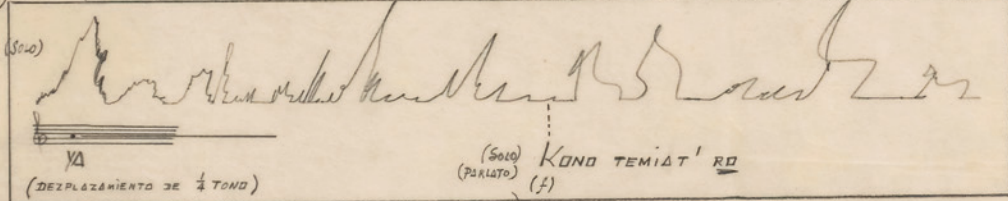
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ORIGIN:
J. Y. Nova

FONDO:
Jacqueline Nova

CENTRO COLOMBIANO DE
DOCUMENTACIÓN MUSICAL
BOGOTÁ

1 (LENTO) VOZ DE CONTRALTO



2 CONTRASTES BRUSCOS DE INTENSIDAD

VARIAS
VOCES
DIFE-
RENTES
ALTURAS

ETKOKUNA
TCHISA
Si wa
KARÉKA
BTUARA

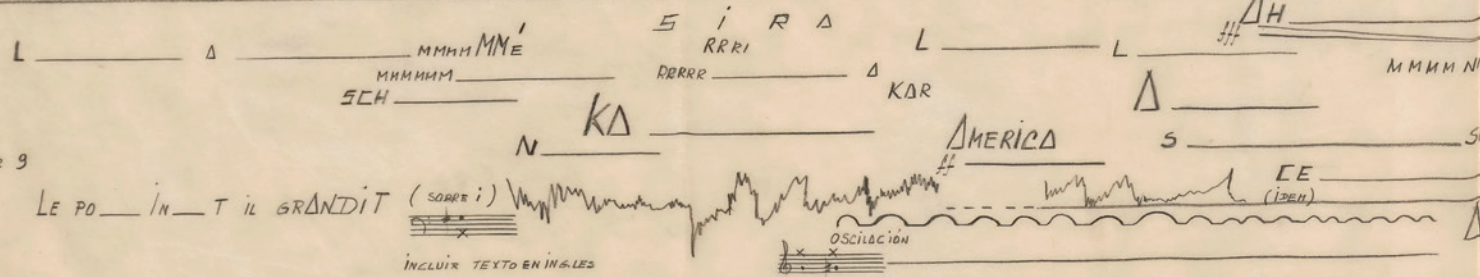
TAPE (MATERIAL CONTINUO)

3 a) LECTURA NORMAL - b) DILATACIÓN O CONTRACCIÓN X MEDIO DE

(SOLO)
THEY ARE OBJECTS - BODIES WHICH OCCUPY PORTIONS OF SPACE -
THEY HAVE SURPASSED FIGURATION, AND EVEN ABSTRACTION -
UNCONCEIVABLE WITHOUT THE HUMAN BEING -
MADE TO BE ADMIRER - TO BE USED PERCEPTIVELY. THEY
CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF MODERN
ARCHITECTURE. FROM WHICH THEY TAKE ELEMENTS.



5a



NUMBER 9

TAPE (MATERIAL IMPULSOS)
CONTRASTES DINÁMICOS
ENTRADAS REPENTINAS

ATAQUES BRUSCOS EN LÁMINAS DE METAL, EN TIRDALES, EN BORDES
Muy POSIBLES INTERVENCIONES DE MOTIVOS INICIALES PERTENECIENTES A LAS CUERDAS - CORROS
ESTOS ATAQUES SERAN DADOS DE ACUERDO A ENTRADAS SUCESIVAS POR EL DIRECTOR (SIMULACRO DE CATÁSTROFE)
DESESPERACIÓN EN LA

PAR LAS LÍNEAS (TAN-TAN-GONE-PIETI) SIMULTÁNEAMENTE
DE NIEGO

RA GUARKUNA SIRA TEHINI TEHINI Siiii RA
TEHÁ BA U KAR UKIRA UKIRA (UNISONO)
L Δ IDRA TEHIA Δ Δ Δ
Δ
UNKARA UNKARA GUARKUNA GUARKUNA GUARKUNA GUARKUNA
REPETICION

(a modo de fuga)
(DIFERENTES ALTURAS)
(SOLO) LE POINT. LE POINT IL GRANDIT
(SOLO) LE POINT. LE POINT IL GRANDIT
REGISTRO GRUPE
NUMBER 9. NUMBER 9. NUMBER 9. IDEN -----
(SOLO) LE POINT. LE POINT IL GRANDIT
(SOLO) LE POINT. LE POINT IL GRANDIT
(SOLO) LE POINT. LE POINT IL GRANDIT

KU SIWA
L LE
DE L LA
SCH DR CCADA
MEE E AMERIKA

(CORTE BRUSCO)

6 DIFERENTES INTENSIDADES - LECTURA NORMAL
LI' KUIN' TCHAKA? LI' KUIN' JARD, BIRI BAR KUAYA? CHONAKAT' KUANO;
KUSKARAKAT' KAT' KUANO KARAKAT' WIENO, KANARA LI' YARJI KUANO;
LIATA BEWA; TEKJIRO, TEKJI BEWA, TEKUT KANWA. KANOYATA KANA.
UMIT' BURU, UMIT' KUIT' BIWA, ESKATAR' KUIT' BIWA.
SOKDA, LIWAJIRD SIOWA KES' IKARA, LI' RUBUA YARJIRO.
(ENTRADAS SUCESESIVAS)
LINES MAS LARGAS = DURACION MAS LARGA

OFES
S VOSES - GRITOS

It's pure energy.

Both when Senatore works with people from the same community, achieving urban collective actions (in *The School of Narrative Dance*), when she takes photographs or makes a collage or any other kind of work, she wants to influence the perception that each individual has of themselves and of reality, activating them through the creation of an energetic "environment".

I. Bernardi

Ciò che succede, il male che si abbatte su tutti, avviene perché la massa degli uomini abdica alla sua volontà, lascia promulgare le leggi che solo la rivolta potrà abrogare, lascia salire al potere uomini che poi solo un ammutinamento potrà rovesciare.

Antonio Gramsci, in La città futura, 11 feb. 1917



REET PARADE
IN PICTURES



we, here, between sky and earth

March 13th, 2021.

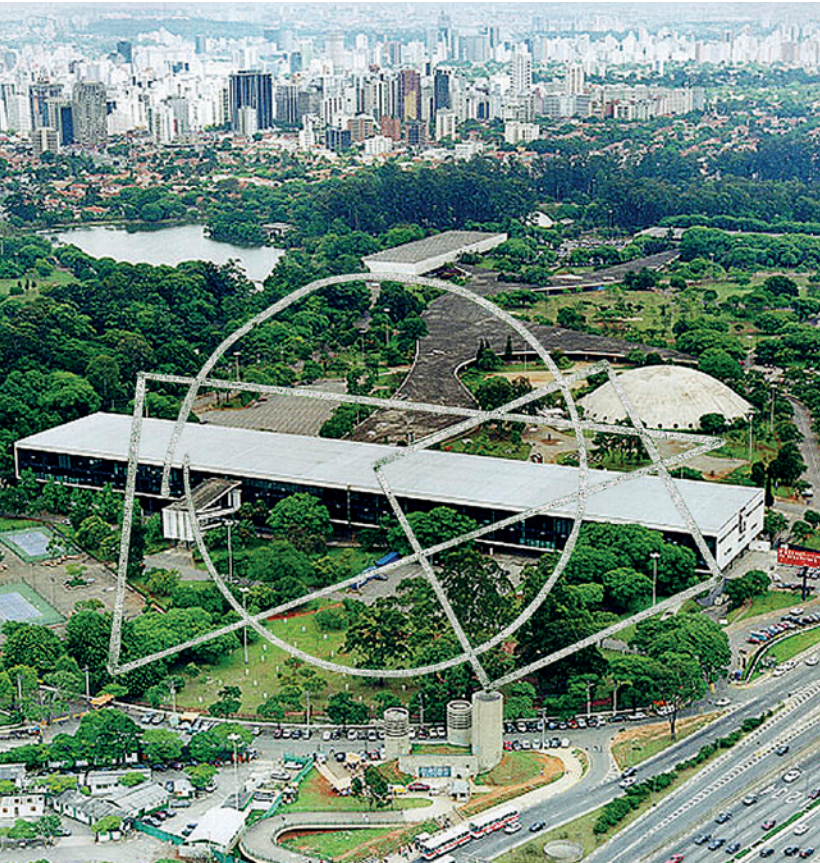
Today marks one year since quarantine began. It is still dark, almost 5 in the morning.

I am writing this letter to tell you about the project, **we, here, between sky and earth**, an action to be performed as part of the 34th Bienal de São Paulo. What will actually happen will depend on the circumstances. Or rather, it will happen through them, because circumstances are a fundamental material of the action.

It is still dark, but the sun will soon rise.

we, here, between sky and earth, begins with a flight of 27 chairs – the same number of chairs as there are states in Brazil + the Federal District. All chairs will be borrowed from public institutions linked to healthcare, education, culture, and legislation, located around the Ibirapuera Park. Each chair will move through the streets raised on 4 long bamboo poles (each 3.4m) tied to its legs. Chairs from schools, hospitals, legislative assemblies, theaters, libraries, museums, clinics will arrive one at a time, from above, at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. We will be 7 people + 1 double-sided mirror carrying out the successive walks. And, rest assured, we will take all necessary precautions in relation to the pandemic, because we are only interested in making life in life.

we, here, between sky and earth, continues with the aligning and setting of the materials involved. The 27 chairs will be positioned in the exhibition space and visitors may sit on them if they wish. The chairs are not "*objets trouvés*" (found objects), nor were they created for the occasion — they are invited objects. A very specific type of thing, a public thing (*res publica*) — they are not commodities, nor private property, but common goods. As for the bamboo poles, we will work with 9 poles in total, placing 1 inside + 8 outside the building. The 8 outside will be partially buried into the ground in the Ibirapuera Park (2.9m in the earth and 50cm out), and



the pole inside will be suspended. Taking the rectangular shape and scale of the pavilion as a reference, the 9 chosen spots to place them mark the 3 vertices of a triangle, the 4 vertices of a square, and 2 diametrically opposite points of a circle, all drawn in superposition over the building. The pole inside the exhibition space simultaneously establishes 1 vertex of the square + the center of the circle. Positioned near the chairs and suspended 50cm off the floor by a steel cable, it is a pendulous aerial line. And, on the floor below this pole, there will be the mirror, whose form is born out of the intersection of the 3 shapes (1 curved side, another diagonal, and 2 right-angles). The ends of all bamboo poles will be wrapped with steel cables, in compact and shiny spirals. The same metal will also be used in the chairs. We will fix small signs on all of them, indicating the name of the institution they came from + the title of the project + the edition of the Bienal.

The dawn is almost beginning to begin.

With the chairs and suspended bamboo will be photos of the flight in action: images of the streets, people, mirror, chairs, and bamboo poles in motion. In addition, there will be 1 aerial image of the Ibirapuera Park, with the triangle, circle, and square drawn out in silver. There will also be images of the poles being stuck into the ground. This way, visitors will know where the bamboo poles are, will see how they were set, and understand the lines and the force-field in question.

It is starting to lighten up — the day will be blue, but I see everything in silver.

An important moment in **we, here, between sky and earth**, will be a conversation that will take place with the participation of the chairs, public workers from the collaborating institutions, invited artists, and the public. We do not know if the event will happen virtually or in person. But we know that this meeting will serve for us to question ourselves on how we can articulate diverse types of knowledge, create consistent inter-institutional actions, and work collaboratively

better and more often. It seems to me that if we do not start developing actions in this direction, we will continue to be confined even after the quarantine has ended. And I think that now is really the time for artists to contribute more directly to the creation and implementation of public policies in general. This meeting is an inquiry in that direction.

The day has dawned. Morning has just begun. There is light, more and more light.

Once the Bienal is over, **we, here, between sky and earth**, finishes, but it does not end. All the materials, aligned, set, and transformed through art, will continue on, towards different destinations. The borrowed chairs and the photos will be taken to their new institutional homes in a pickup truck. They will all be swapped: the chair that came from the hospital, for example, will now belong to the city hall; the chair that once belonged to the city hall will now belong to the school, and so on. A photo will be given at each delivery as a thank you. However, what will be done with the new acquisitions in each institution is not for us to say — chairs, people, images, narratives, and forces will continue moving one another. We hope that beauty and many alliances will be born from these moves.

As for the other materials, the bamboo poles will be taken out of the ground, dried in the sun, and burned in the Ibirapuera Park. The steel cables will be melted down and transformed into a compact sphere that will be wrapped in cotton wool and kept in a wooden box. So, white cotton wool and silver sphere will live in the darkness of the box. The mirror will be buried in the Park. And, who knows, one day may be found. If so, I hope it will be possible to see in it all that it saw.

Good morning, a big hug and on we go — **we, here, between sky and earth**.

Eleonora Fabião

**Jacopo Crivelli Visconti,
Paulo Miyada,
Carla Zaccagnini,
Francesco Stocchi
and Ruth Estévez**

More than three months ago we began to write our first letter together, as we felt it was the right time for a collective statement. We started that letter with the sentence: “The word ‘uncertain’ falls short of describing the state of the world during the Covid-19 pandemic.” We didn’t know where the pandemic would lead us, and we still don’t. In the following weeks, though, it became clear that uncertainty was preferable to the certain tragedy that is being shaped by the health and political crisis in Brazil. We strongly believe in the role that art can and must play in society, especially in moments like this, when the experiences we face lack a name, making other languages necessary to deal with them. But we are also aware that right now all efforts need to be made in order to control the epidemic and curb its most direful consequences.

We normally think of an exhibition as the months during which a space is open for the encounter between people and artworks, but the encounters actually start much earlier. Some artists need to travel in advance, to visit the place, walk the streets and meet with people; producers and other professionals have to search for materials, compare services, hire suppliers; carpenters have to build walls and paint them; couriers have to travel with the artworks that do not leave their collections unaccompanied; journalists and critics have to see things with their own eyes and raise questions. There are also the people who open the crates, who handle the works with white gloves, who put them into place; there are the people who fix the lights, who install and adjust the equipment; the people who translate; the people who clean up the space; the ones who pay invoices and distribute per diems. In order to open the 34th Bienal de São Paulo in October, this whole choreography would have to be put into motion now. And this cannot be done; it is a matter of public responsibility.

Joining the global effort for safety and care in regard to the health protocols, the staff and collaborators of the 34th Bienal (architects, archivists, artists, carpenters, clothesmakers, curators, dancers, designers, educators, photographers, poets, producers, writers, and many other professionals) are working remotely. We continue to develop the details of an event that we believe is of utmost importance, especially at this time, insofar as it affirms art as a public sphere, with the unique capacity of giving form to contents that are fundamental to our societies. This is how it was on the day the 34th Bienal de São Paulo began in February 2020, with Neo Muyanga’s performance *A Maze in Grace* and the opening of Ximena Garrido-Lecca’s exhibition. It was a beautiful day, an encounter of a sort that people seemed to be waiting for. The pavilion was filled with strength, with desire, with rage and hope. In this hiatus in which we are now living, we should not forget that when people get together, things happen.

The final exhibition of the 34th Bienal will take place in September 2021, one year later than initially planned. From now until then, slowly, at different paces and in different tones, we will continue to conceive and build the exhibition. Things will happen in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion and outside of it, through publications, dialogues and research. Solo exhibitions by some of the artists taking part in the show will light on and off in partner institutions throughout the city. Originally planned to take place simultaneously, creating a choir, these will now weave a symphony made of silences and which can only be completed in the memory of each of us. *A Maze in Grace* became the first line of this symphony, of this collective poem that will take almost two years to be completed. From the outset, the idea of rehearsal has been central in the conception of the 34th Bienal, as it allows for the construction of the show to be an open, public moment, where things are presented without any aim of being definitive and crystallized. The

Correspondence #8
8 Jul 2020

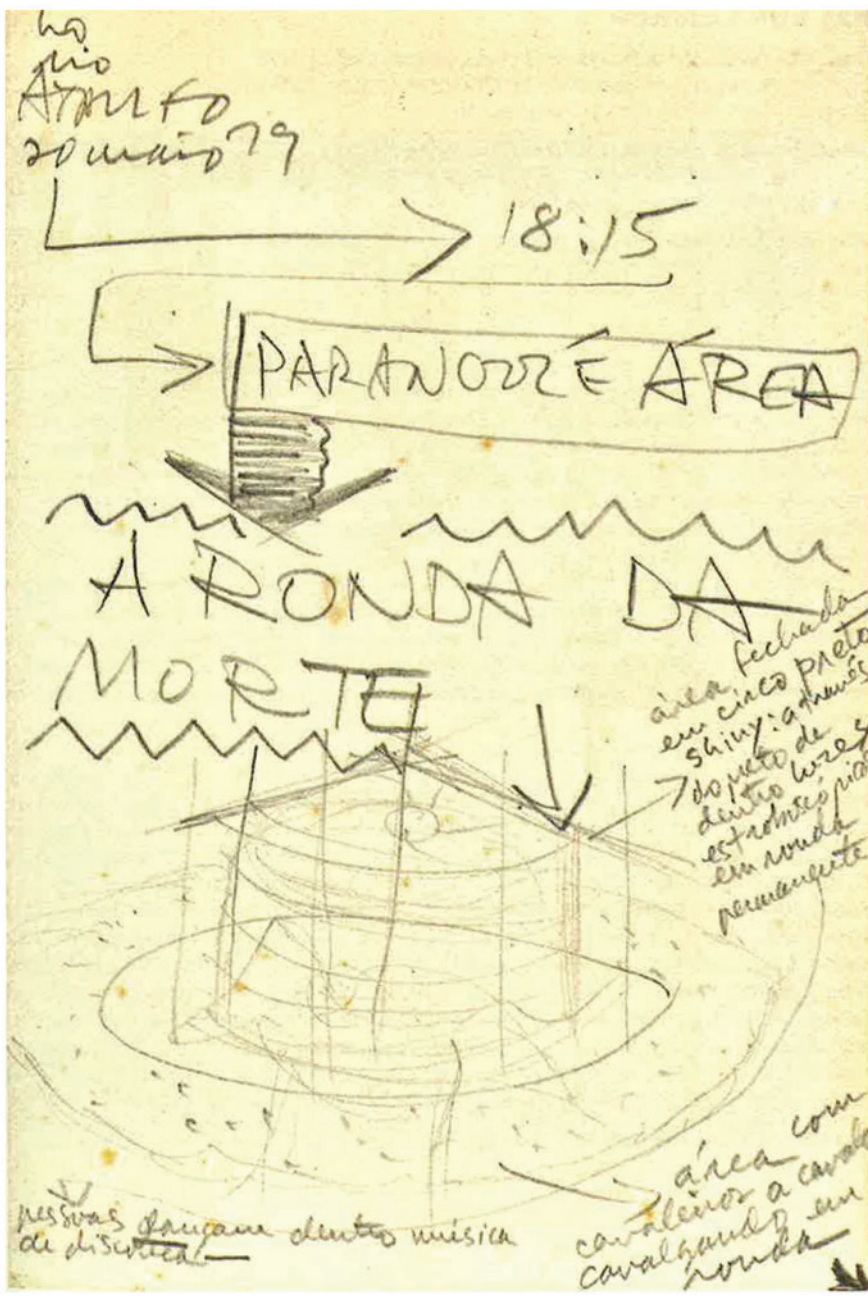


Installation of the 6th Bienal de São Paulo (1961)
Photo: Athayde de Barros / Fundação Bienal de
São Paulo

need to rethink the project as a consequence of the current situation is, therefore, consistent with an attitude that was already guiding us – an attitude that is embodied in the question that we have been constantly and recurrently posing to ourselves during these months of work: What are the songs (the forms of art and ways of being in the world) that become both possible and necessary in dark times?

This question is central in the conception of the 34th Bienal since its title, *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing]. This line from a poem by Thiago de Mello has accompanied us through the apparently endless state of emergency we have experienced throughout recent years. It gained new meaning in the baleful light of the Amazonian fires, a tragic and premonitory backdrop to the protests that have spread around the world against the still lingering structural forms of racism and prejudice, of inequality, of unsustainable practices and the planned destruction of the planet as we know it. It seems even more fitting now, in light of the new coronavirus that makes this reality more evident and extreme. Now, more than ever, we must not shy away from taking a close look at the darkness of our times. But even passing through it with our eyes wide open might not be enough. We want to turn this crossing into a song – one that can be solitary or collective, murmured or shouted. And let us not be fooled; it takes courage and strength to sing now, in and despite a world that seems to place so little value on the lives of so many, which continues to obscenely disregard the common good for the sake of maintaining individual privileges.

We are still rehearsing our songs. New adjustments will be necessary, new ideas will arise, be developed and modified, and, perhaps, grow into something different that could not have been conceived before all of this. This can – and should – be a learning moment. To face the economic crisis that is foreseen due to the pandemic and which will certainly impact the system for the financing of art and culture, we must rethink and transform operational models and practices that rely on large expenditures of natural and human resources. No matter how big the challenges that lie ahead, we are committed to creating a space for the exercise of freedom, for the reopening of meanings once presumed to be understood, and for resistance to any imperative which says that it has somehow become prohibited or impossible to sing.



Hélio Oiticica. Draft for the project *Parangolé-área: A ronda da morte* [The Death Watch], May, 1979

An artist trained in Rio de Janeiro's experimental environment in the 1950s, Hélio Oiticica has always sought to break the limits of traditional languages in order to deepen the art experience as an integral part of collective life. Oiticica lived in New York during the dictatorship's most violent years, those after Institutional Act No. 5 (AI-5) promulgation in December 1968. Back in Brazil in 1978, he witnessed the "slow, gradual and safe" dictatorship *distensão* [decompression] shortcomings and contradictions, which the then-president General Ernesto Geisel promised. In an interview after his return, the artist

spoke about the sadness of realizing he could no longer meet many of the people he befriended in Rio's favelas and samba parties in the mid-1960s. He attributed these absences to the State's systematic annihilation of part of the population: "Do you know what I found? There is a genocide project because most of the people I knew in Mangueira were either imprisoned or murdered."

Shaken by the brutal execution of yet another of his friends in the following year, Oiticica wrote a letter to photographer Martine Barrat describing a "parangolé-area" called *A ronda da morte* [The Death Watch]. Similar to a black circus tent, it would be an inviting environment with strobe lights and music playing inside for people to come in and dance. While the party would go on inside the tent, horseback men emulating a police patrol would surround it. The music would encapsulate the imminent risk from the outside, a direct allusion to the state of surveillance and violence that persisted despite the apparent daily life normality.

Amid a contemporary context in which news like those that shook Oiticica are repeated with alarming frequency in Brazil and worldwide, *A ronda da morte* was planned to occur for the first time at the 34th Bienal in 2020. Yet, while the Covid-19 pandemic forbade its realization, it did not diminish its relevance. *A ronda da morte* – as well as the impossibility of making it happen – continues to synthesize the perversity of simulating normality while genocides are happening. But it also highlights that historical flows and dynamics are not enclosed in the periodization we find in books. Likewise, works that past Bienals already displayed are now re-presented because the present allows revisiting or transforming their original meaning. The past lives in the present, constituting challenges and inspiring struggles that will be fundamental for building the yet-to-come.

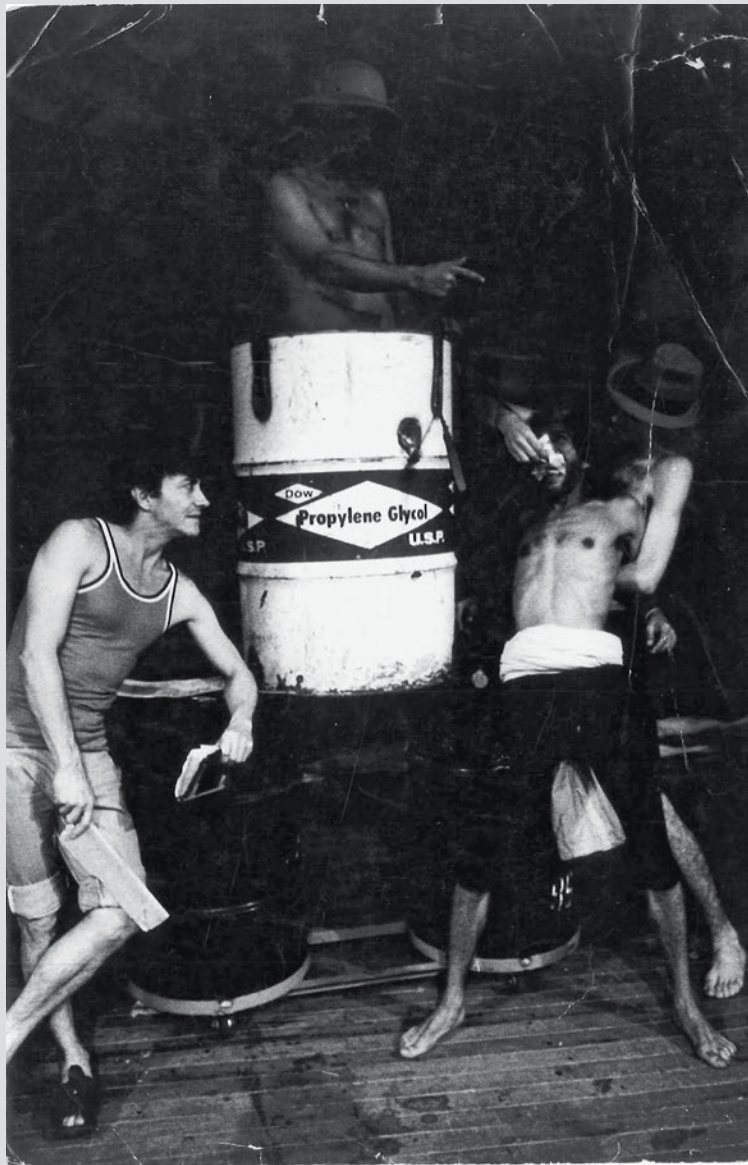




Forester
Vucetina
BARI 4









Ruth Estévez

A dialogue with Teresa Ralli and
Miguel Rubio, founding members
of Yuyachkani

A statement of intent

2002 was a particularly relevant year for Peru, since it would be the beginning of a collective awakening regarding the military conflict, a bloody war that lasted more than two decades (1980-2001), establishing a backdrop of terror and violence that would end with the lives of thousands of people, particularly in the country's most humble and disadvantaged Andean communities. This conflict turned the Peruvian government and the Armed Forces against the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso ["Shining Path"],¹ leading to an unprecedented state of exception.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)² (2001-2003) was an initiative by the President Valentín Paniagua's transitional government that proposed, in the first instance, creating a place for memory where the Peruvian State would acknowledge its responsibilities. A supportive and fair policy towards the victims was reinforced solely by assuming the facts. From all the actions carried out, it is important to highlight the Public Hearings: a kind of open assembly that tabled the testimonies of the victims of violence before the commissioners. It was the first time they were given the floor with the firm purpose of transmitting their stories marked by abuse and violations. The hearings partially restored the right to "tell," vigorously confronting the official story of the dictatorial regime presided by Alberto Fujimori from 1990 to 2000. A government that, having taken part in the massacre, had proclaimed itself defender and guarantor of peace.

The denial of the right to speak and of self-determination of the poorest working sectors and of the Andean peasant communities was not exclusive to the Civil War period. The state of deprivation dated from the colonial times as a result of a social organization that had relegated them to a state of misery and hardship, without the right to work their own land, preventing the access to the most basic resources and devaluing their culture and traditions. Within this spectrum, giving the right to speak was not only the work of the government, but it should involve the Peruvian society as a whole, progressively dissolving the power structures empowered in racism and exclusion.

Among all those who waited patiently to take part in the TRC's public hearings was Alfonso Cánepa, a character played by Augusto Casafranca, one of the

members of the Yuyachkani cultural group (1971-). This character was the lead in *Adiós, Ayacucho*, a theatrical play created by the group in the 1990s and based on Julio Ortega's³ homonymous novel. Alfonso Cánepa was a dead, butchered and mutilated indigenous peasant who decided to travel to Lima to rebuke the President of the Republic, hold him responsible for his death and demand that his bones be returned. During TRC's hearings, Yuyachkani, through the character of Cánepa, addressed whom they considered the direct culprit of his death, demanding a decent burial. This character stopped being an individual voice and became a multiple voice, accepted by the participants that saw in Cánepa the vanished loved one.

The story of the Yuyachkani cultural group is a story of hearing. "Yuyachkani" is a word that means "I am thinking," "I am remembering" in Quechua. A metaphor that has served the group to transmit with their work the syncretism of the theatricalities found in Peruvian traditions, learning from the social and cultural contexts that were forged under the resistance, in spite of the historical adverse conditions. Throughout their fifty years of history, the group has been able to jump from the stage to the street and vice versa, creating a genealogy of Peru's recent history through their plays: from the working-class and peasant struggles during the 1970s and the recovery of the Andean culture, to the desperation and the demand for justice during all of the Civil War. And in the last twenty years, accompanying the process initiated by the TRC, with the Final Report presented on August 28, 2003, at a ceremony held at the Government Palace. The nine volumes explaining the incidents which took place during the two decades of this complex and painful period in Peru were exhibited in the event. Following the Report, a new phase opened up for Yuyachkani in which the construction of memory would be discussed and confronted: Is there a single memory? Or are there many memories? Does a binary dichotomy of culprits and innocents actually exist?

For Yuyachkani, the popular theatre does not consist of "giving a voice to those who do not have it." On the contrary, the idea is "to listen to the different voices that circulate among society and to take them back artistically to their place of origin."⁴ The importance of that oral history resides intrinsically in the act of hearing like a way

1

The Communist Party of Peru – Sendero Luminoso (PCP-SL, Spanish acronyms) was created in 1970 as a Communist Party (CP) dissident faction, led by Abimael Guzmán, a professor of philosophy at the

University of Ayacucho. According to the TRC's report, Shining Path was responsible for the majority of the victims of the civil war, causing the death of at least 31 thousand people between 1980 and 2000.

2

Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created in 2001, during the transitional government of Valentín Paniagua, and after the escape to Japan of president Alberto Fujimori. The principal aim of the TRC was investigating

3

the human rights violations and the crimes perpetrated between May 1980 and November 2000 by the Peruvian State and the subversive groups Shining Path (SP) and Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (TARM).

4

Originally published in 1986, *Adiós, Ayacucho* is a novel by Peruvian writer Julio Ortega, who addresses violence in the civil war in Peru.

Miguel Rubio, *Memoria*, 1989.

of authorizing the speaker: a subject that enunciates and becomes in narration, finally creating a new history.

RUTH ESTÉVEZ: Let's start from the beginning. In the Peru of the 1970s there is an emergence of left revolutionary parties like the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR, Spanish acronym) and the Revolutionary Vanguard that pushed for social change in the light of the military nationalist dictatorship and were interested in the direct action in the communities. You took part in the latter, working between theatrical performance and activism. How were those beginnings in political militancy like?

TERESA RALLI: The first theatre play we created was called *Puño de Cobre* (1979) and it portrayed in a documentary fashion the strike of the miners from Cobriza, property of the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation. This strike led to a massacre perpetrated by the Sinchis, a specialized police detachment. We interviewed the imprisoned miners establishing an affective contact, a contact of sensibilities, voices, and joint actions. From there, meeting a commitment with the mining bases, we went to the mining towns and settlements to bring our play and tell what had actually happened in the mine.

Arriving at each location, sharing their little spaces, holding conversations, speaking in Quechua, being part of their turning points in assemblies, were crucial for our future creation process. Our work was given meaning when the miners saw their own lives and histories in front. An intense and indescribable experience, where emotion and sensitivity joined social analysis.

Our militancy in the Revolutionary Vanguard organization was a natural consequence of the path we had chosen. Becoming militants seemed fundamental to materialize the idea that motivated us: to contribute to social change from the theatre, and to do it inside an organization that opted and fought directly for that change.

Since then, we wanted to do a job that was committed to the fights of the popular movement. That is how we formed Yuyachkani. We chose a name in Quechua, even though none of us spoke it at that moment, and we did not yet have knowledge of the ancient cultures and their present manifestations. For us, it was a first statement of intent.

RE: In those first years of militancy for the party, together with your gradual acknowledgement of the social reality in various communities, you feel in need of a space for creative freedom. In which moment do you realize that political militancy pressures or converts your forms of expression as artistic agents and individuals? How was your transition to an independent self-development, dedicated to artistic work?

TR: The key was the encounter with a country hidden to our petty-bourgeois eyes, a country immense and quotidian, that was not a concept nor a written text. They were men and women that fought and that told their lives, that danced the history with their bodies.

Our exit from the party unfolded gradually. It was never a rupture; it was a withdrawal from the operational structures. In 1978, we attended for the first time the Ayacucho International Meeting of Group Theatre. It would gather theatre groups from various countries from Latin America and Europe. If we wanted a social change that came from art, we had to be good at our trade. We did not want to be a presence that only activated and called political demonstrations, or to be the first performance of the program: the artistic performance, apart from everything else.

Many elements fostered our improvement as creators and also as activists. We gradually discovered a movement of theatrical insurgency in Latin America, with a stance of independence against the colonial heritage of culture and with research on what would be later called Collective Creation.⁵ It took some years before we could meet them in person and watch their plays, but we had already read them and we learned a lot from them: Santiago García and La Candelaria, Enrique Buenaventura and the Teatro Experimental de Cali, Augusto Boal and the Teatro do Oprimido in Brazil, among others.

RE: In the group's memoirs you mention a direct relationship with the people from the mining and peasant communities, and also with the inhabitants of the working-class neighborhoods. It would be interesting to understand how you created your very own world view, from a stance which was at first more theoretical and detached from reality to an experimental and sensitive understanding.

5

Collective Creation began in the 1960s, looking for an actual Latin American theatre that filled the absence of a dramaturgy which approached the necessities of the region, illuminated in its beginnings by the Cuban Revolution. The actors became researchers that got involved in the problematic they were to develop, proposing scenic solutions.



Performance of *Adiós*, Ayacucho, 2001

MIGUEL RUBIO: The link was generated organically travelling Peru, between the theatricalities of the cultures that fascinated us so much and the faith behind their realization. Seen from the perspective of urban life, these cultural expressions were often rendered exotic outside their context of origin. The word “folklore” has a pejorative connotation. Recognizing these cultural manifestations has been an essential part of the process, which at first was very intuitive and was assumed to communicate in registers that could be recognized by the new audience we wanted to reach.

RE: Regarding your own work methodologies, I know that music, dance, and poetry were important dramaturgical elements that bridged with popular knowledge. How have these disciplines helped you approach, engage and integrate with the public you wanted to reach?

MR: Yes, at first it was music and singing: learning to sing and play instruments was indispensable to produce an approach. Traditional dances took place in celebratory meetings after the group’s events and shows. As a result of the appropriation of land in the Andean South, in the province of Andahuaylas (1974),⁶ and the testimonies received, we initiated the process of our play *Allpa Rayku* in a dancing register. The name of this first approach was *Por el camino de Andahuaylas*. Then we incorporated songs composed by the “Committees of Distraction” present in each appropriated property, where a song was composed as a celebratory anthem.

As time went by, that link revealed to us the spiritual dimension that sustained those forms and that is related to the gratitude towards Mother Earth and the tutelary gods that make possible the encounter with all that is alive in nature. That really deserves being celebrated, and from there comes the importance of dance and celebration.

RE: ... and all this also led you to take distance from the literary text.

MR: I would say that from the beginning we assumed that literary writing could not be the only dramaturgical component. What is more, getting rid of the notion of the theatre as a literary genre was a “rallying cry” to write with the body, with music, with dance. Exploring many other writing possibilities, understanding the text as weft, weave, loom. Discovering the narratives of the

bodies that dance, as once noted by Eugenio Barba,⁷ was approaching another dimension of communication, from the writing of the encoded body, from the memory that saves, a principle of work that we have incorporated to our training.

TR: For example, when the events of the 1971 mining strike took place, we decided we wanted to know better what had actually happened. And then we began looking for the imprisoned miners and contacting their families and wives to be able to tell a story of injustices. From the start, the Collective Creation was the path. If there was no play that talked about this, we had to create it and write it, all of us. It was a response to the scarcity. Added to this was the political background we were developing, which took us away from traditional theatre companies and their structures to organize plays. We did not need a director to lead it, nor were we going to ask a playwright to create a text.

Our practice looked for “the criteria of truth,” be it the practice of the study, of the encounter with communities of workers, of the search for teachers that enlightened our knowledge. Today, there are many elements that form this notion of collective creation for us. Perhaps the deepest one is that our group is in itself a collective creation, we are a community united by the ideas that take shape when we create together in a space, each one in their role.

RE: Teresa talked just now about the importance of theatrical meetings and of certain creators from the 1970s that were essential to determine a characteristic way of creation in Latin America. Concepts were exchanged for other concepts and practices used by different groups of the region, in relation to what was happening in the United States and Europe. For instance, the presence of Odin Teatret and Eugenio Barba regarding concepts like the “Third Theatre,”⁸ to speak a bit about a theatre that escaped from stylistic notions and traditional theatre schools, associated with reality. A theatre that had to survive in the margins. How do these references appear? And which were the exchanges and differences that arose?

MR: Bertolt Brecht is probably the European playwright that most influenced Latin American theatre in the twentieth century. For us, it was not only his dramatic plays but also the theoretical writings, his poetry, as well as

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“On July 5, Lino Quintanilla led the peasant movement of Andahuaylas that ‘appropriated’ lands from various properties, denouncing that their owners were selling machinery, ploughing instruments and plots of land to various traders and acquaintances. Quintanilla and the peasant leaders claimed that the agrarian reform was not arriving in

Andahuaylas and they pronounced for the ‘acceleration’ of the reform on the very peasants’ initiative. This began to be called ‘the reform inside the reform’ and it put the government in a complicated situation, because the peasants decided to divide the land following their own criteria, and in the public opinion it began to be said that the process was

going out of control. The government, however, rapidly mobilized its functionaries to prevent the spread of these initiatives to other provinces.” Timeline developed by the Institute of Peruvian Studies (IEP, Spanish acronym). Available at: lineadetiempo.iep.org.pe/public/. Accessed: July 15, 2021.

7

Inside the methodologies of the Theatrical Anthropology of Eugenio Barba (Brindisi, Italy, 1936), founder of the Odin Teatret, “the actor was thought as actor-dancer, and the theatre as theatre-dance, this way the focus opens, the possibilities of expression are greater and, at the same time, the duties of

the actor are located in the dancing area. The training forces a unification of body and mind, since in theatrical tradition the actor can be understood as someone who repeats a text virtuously. On the other hand, this deep connection with their body-mind allows them to develop life on stage.”

8

“The Third Theatre lives on the margins, at times outside or in the outskirts of the centers and capitals of culture. It is a theatre of people that define themselves as actors, directors, theatre people, who almost have no traditional training in theatre studies and for that reason they are not recognized as professionals.” Eugenio Barba, *Teatro - Soledad, oficina y revuelta*. Buenos Aires, Catálogos, 1997, pp. 203-205.

the songs he composed with his celebrated collaborators, Hans Heisler and Kurt Weill. The attempts to nationalize or *latinamericanize* Brecht have been constant among the theatre people in the continent, not without complexity, by the way. The discussion he proposed with the Aristotelian theatre has been crucial to reinforce among us the idea of the theatre as a cultural construction.

As you say, Eugenio Barba was also a fundamental link. His contributions from anthropology placed the actor at the center, or his principles of training to cultivate a personal culture. Barba was also the bridge with the theatricalities from Asia. This expanded our horizon to find equivalents in our traditional cultures, in our ancestral and contemporary theatricalities. However, when we met Barba and the Odin Teatret of Denmark in 1978, we greeted them with suspicion and conflicting emotions. On the one hand we recognized their terrific technical work and the good relationship with the audience in the exchanges they carried out. But we were too focused on a scenic speech where the explicit political component was latent in response to a permanent crisis. Odin's proposal produced repudiation in us, we did not feel completely related.

In the early 1980s the first meeting of theatre people from Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Havana, where it was very important to share with the founding masters what we call a modern tradition of Latin American theatre, based on group theatre, collective creation and the actor culture. Santiago García, Enrique Buenaventura, Atahualpa del Cioppo, and Sergio Corrieri, among others, were in Cuba.

RE: I imagine your work methodologies have also changed with experience and that there is not a single method for you, especially as a direct response to concrete political and social moments.

TR: The most valuable thing underlying every process is questioning ourselves, not taking everything for granted. What we have built are terms which have turned into notions, concepts: the sensitive accumulation, the general and applied training, improvisation, books and interviews research, as well as the analysis from our eyes that look at everyday reality, and the body that explores the space. The independence to prepare material and share it with the director, or with everybody. Action as the starting

point before substantiation, the links that assemble actions, the sources, both personal and from the trade, human and social, that feed the dramaturgies.

RE: Regarding all the testimonies you use for the creation of your plays, have you at any point been exceeded by reality or been in the dichotomy of not being able to represent the unrepresentable?

TR: The period of internal violence in our country intensifies and bursts at the beginning of the 1980s. This leads us to create a play that unravels social violence, the people to blame, the innocents; I believe that is the most difficult process we have gone through as a group, as a human community. How were we to talk about violence if we had it with us since we woke up until we went to sleep? It was so close we could not distance ourselves. Everything we did on stage paled before the complexity of the scenario of the violent political and social crisis in which we were immersed.

It took us three years to find the way to create a play that we felt necessary by and for us. And so this tough life that hit us, in a contradictory way, cleared us a path of dramaturgical research where we focused on the very old popular mythological character *el Pishtaco*, a being that steals people's body fat. This myth traces back already to the beginnings of the Spanish invasion and the colony, and this period of civil war revived it among some highland villages. It was said that *Pishtaco* had reappeared, holding him accountable for the dead bodies that surrounded the outskirts of the villages. From that myth, the testimonies of a mother that survived the massacre of the village of Soccos, and some other sources, we created the story of a father with his daughters that look for the "corn of life" and that, doing so, symbolically fight against the dark forces that were attacking the community. A play created on a mythical register to be able to talk about the violence of the present. Contemporary, but at the same time, ancient: *Contraelviento* (1986).

RE: You have also worked many times in neighbourhoods, streets, and have held public demonstrations that intermix protest with artistic action. You have equally hosted workshops and engaged in associations of women, marginal groups, with the spirit of using the theatre also as a pedagogical tool. Is there any difference between



Photo of the performance of *Allpa Rayku*, 1979. Yuyachkani Archives. Courtesy of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani

pedagogical work and work in communities, and the staging of your plays? How do they complement each other?

MR: I have an image of our theatre like a river that runs between two shores: the one from community theatre and the other from laboratory theatre properly said; this running between two shores is what we integrated into our practices. Nothing of what we do on the stage is the result solely of isolating ourselves inside four walls. Our theatre was born and raised in the outside world, with social movements; I do not only refer to the performances, but to the joint work proposals. The first thing we did as a group, fifty years ago, was a theatre school at an outlying neighborhood in Lima called El Agustino.

TR: Pedagogical work is a very interesting subject that has gone through a long process. In that sense, I would like to talk about the presence of women in the group and the work in communities of women as well. You already know it has been a mixed group from the beginning. Women have always had a strong presence, and we have worked with equity in various fields. I am talking about 1971, a moment in which the great movement of women in Peru and in the world did not exist yet.

Our meetings with women in rural areas, from the communities to which we have travelled constantly, made us value even more the space we had and the freedom to create, to transform ourselves, to learn to play instruments, to use our own bodies. This freedom amazed the women from small towns and communities, and that enabled us to establish very warm dialogues, in which we seized the opportunities to enquire, to question, to encourage.

Inside the group, we lived our independence distancing ourselves at first from the rising feminist movements in Peru. We began holding workshops for women from communities, so they could feel confident when they wanted to present their rights in the assemblies. We soon understood that women from all social conditions not only needed to speak at an assembly, which constituted a social presence, but they also needed to be independent inside the family nucleus, in which they had the right to be equal to their husbands in terms of dedication to the family and education of the children.

For the women of the group, it was fundamental to receive information from all of them, which we met

over the years. Their wounds were open due to the internal violence that had destroyed them emotionally and the terror that had abused them psychologically and physically. And all the same they took care of their children, while their husbands were dead and missing. Through our workshops, we learned to use the body collectively as a containing space for memory, so they could believe in themselves again and reclaim the right to defend their bodies. But, mainly, to regain happiness without guilt, and acknowledge it was still possible to imagine something different.

Our director, Miguel Rubio, always mentions that he is the product of his actresses and actors, and repeats of his actresses. It is the offering of a beautiful flower that I accept.

RE: After an entire career dedicated to gathering testimonies and documenting the reality that you had to experience, I imagine that the moment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in which the testimonies of the victims were legitimized, was also a watershed in your practice. In his book, *El Cuerpo Ausente* [The Absent Body], Miguel focuses on the experiences and work processes that marked Yuyachkani's practices during the years of the Civil War and, above all, the impact of the release of the Report from TRC. How did the way you approached reality change? Did your methodologies change when it came to creating your characters?

MR: Accompanying the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was very questioning for us. Shocked by the events experienced during the times of violence, we asked ourselves what the theatre could do in those particular places and circumstances. We knew well that the center of attention was to listen to the voices of the victims. The idea was to design actions that would consider the public hearings and other preparatory events, accompanying the demonstrations of the organizations of the victims' relatives.

During all that time, our plays *Rosa Cuchillo*; *Antígona*; *Adiós, Ayacucho* were very active and toured markets, squares, schools from different towns. *Rosa Cuchillo* told of the relentless search for her missing son, narrating how she never stopped looking for him, and even after she died she kept calling him. Ismene, Antigone's sister, who, restrained by fear, confesses repentant to



Yuyachkani. Photo of a Rehearsal

having met her duty of burying her defeated brother in time. Alfonso Cánepa, the dead, butchered and mutilated peasant, turned into a pile of bones that travels to Lima to retrieve its missing body parts and to demand for the right to a fair burial.

It is no coincidence that the three plays allude to the body, not found or not buried. Most probably, the missing body is the most horrendous toll of war. This is the reason why these plays that allude to the absent body have found an echo among the relatives of the victims, the audience, and the public in general. These are permanent plays of our repertoire. With the culmination of this period of accompanying the human rights organizations and the TRC, we went back to the hall to resume our creative work and start the adventure of a new play. Going forward with the path was not easy at all.

RE: What levels of representation would be possible from the scene to initiate a new creative process after all that has been seen and heard?

MR: In recent years, we have rehearsed a sort of representation crisis in which we go back to documentary theatre in a radical way, turning our hall into a memory archive that needed to be classified. In that space shared with the audience unfolded the play *Sin Título, técnica mixta*⁹ (2004). We did a revised version, under the assumption of a memory in movement, in constant dialogue about the context.

RE: Teresa has mentioned several times that you went from being “marginal” to “alternative.” For you, what does living on the margins mean?

TR: Our beginnings were marked by the repudiation of hegemonic theatre and the theatrical buildings visited by an elite or “cultured” public. Culture was everything inherited from the colony and, later, through the influence of North American cultural imperialism in Latin America. All that was considered “cultured.” Unlike the manifestations of popular tradition, cultural and artistic expressions, plastic, pictorial, narrative and musical. For all those there were the words craft, folk music, regional and popular painting.

We did not identify ourselves with what was called cultural or culture. Just as society spoke about the “marginal” sectors to refer to the migrant communities,

on the margin of all benefit of society, preventing them to be taken into account for their progress and inclusion, we wanted to be with the so-called marginalized, those of whom the great José María Arguedas spoke about in his poems and stories.

As a group, we began to be an alternative for many young people and other theatre groups across the country. We felt the need to contribute to an aesthetic-artistic thought, to unburden ourselves of the heritage, of the scheme, feeling we had the right to create the language necessary to express our questions and feel like citizens, not just theatre people.

The theatre could exist in multiple spaces that could be “theatricalized” and it had to be created collectively. I could not ignore the richness of the artistic, dancing, masked manifestations. The mask in the scenic space did not have to be the classical Greek theatre mask. How could we leave aside the richness of the masks from our cultures, which also “made theatre”?

It was a great liberation and commitment when I understood that the word citizen could go very well together with the words artist, actress, creator, artisan, and theatre woman. When I understood our profession of creators was also a privilege, because we could share with many people a reality that is not seen on a daily basis. And at the same time we can be activists and promote theatre and pedagogy in many places of Peru. We can access the freedom of proposing terms, paths, concepts, of creating shows and scenic actions, of working in the streets inside a demonstration bringing a presence or a character before entering our hall to present a creation. This path gradually turned us into an alternative, even though we did not propose it.

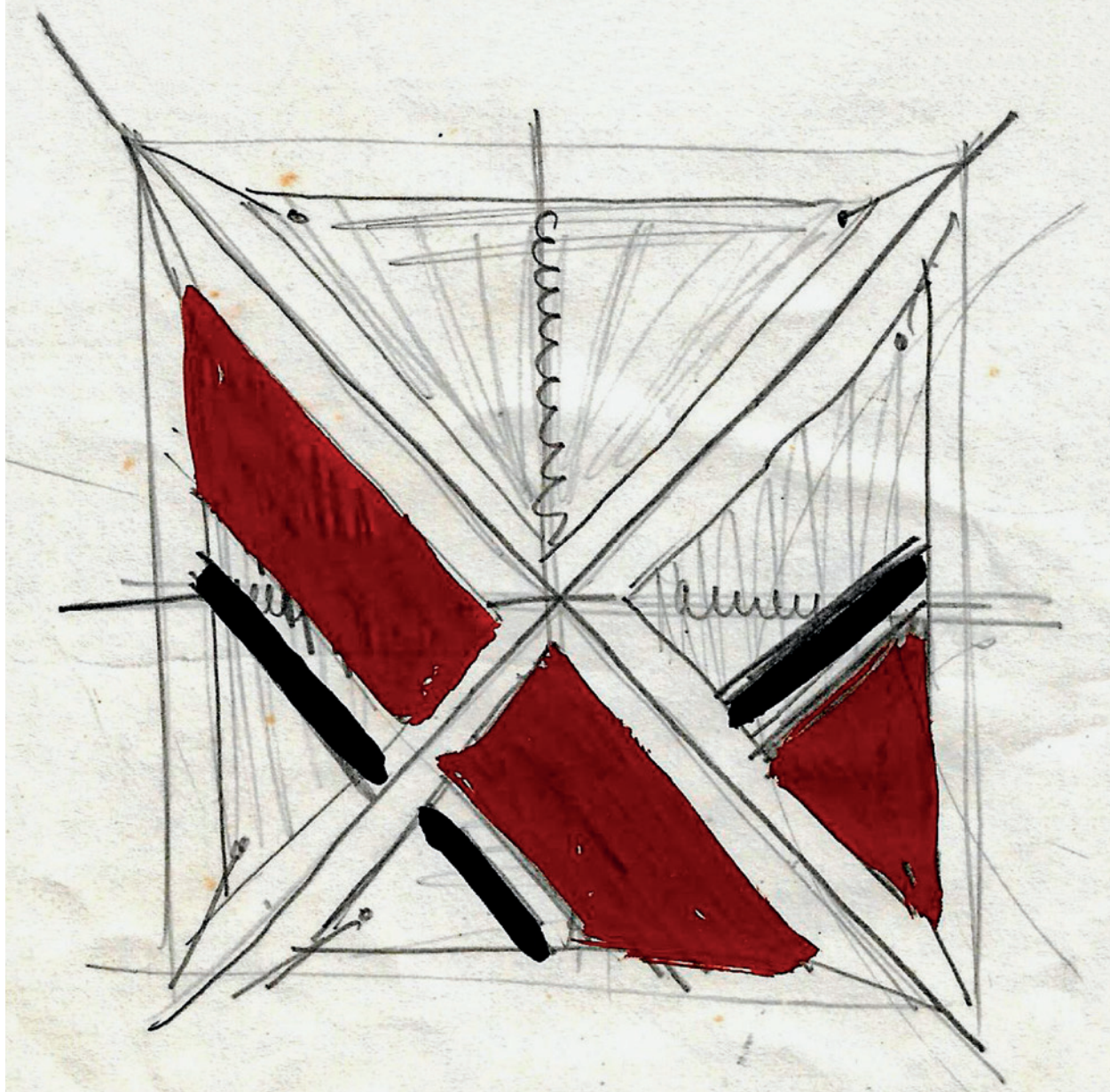
Translated from Spanish by Ana Laura Borro

⁹“The very space where this series of actions unfold is a sort of environment, of big collage, in which windows display books about the History of Peru, fragments of Salomón Lerner’s speech, photos and photocopies with images of historic and recent events, actresses’ notepads, pieces of letters, costumes, dolls,

masks, and various objects that will be used by the actors and that will configure small niche-installations from which a collective memory is being articulated. A sort of gallery where times and presences succeed each other, without museum vocation, but making memory a living register that goes through the

body and the critical positioning of each actor, in a dialogue that brings back textures, materials and objects from some of their previous creations.” Ileana Diéguez, Archivo Artea. Available at: archivoartea.uclm.es/obras/sin-titulo-tecnica-mixta/. Accessed: Jul. 15, 2021.

sob um sol escaldante. Aqui se compreende o ritmo do sertanejo, a sua lentidão, o andar arrastado. É que é preciso poupar energia, não dá pra ser de outro modo. O calor desanima, sufoca, tira toda a coragem. O bem é mesmo uma sombra e um copo d'água. Nada melhor agora que um copo d'água .











A few months ago we decided to write a series of open letters directed to the audience, to share our reflections about the development of the Bienal de São Paulo. It was to be a correspondence that combined fiction with anecdotes from the past, official and reimagined situations, influenced, without a shadow of a doubt, by daily events.

I finished my letter some weeks after having traveled to Santiago de Chile on October 18, 2019, to give a lecture in the context of another biennial. As destiny would have it, I stayed in a hotel room overlooking the public square known as Plaza de Italia, amidst civil protests that were beginning at that moment, triggered by rising prices of mass transportation and other basic products. This crisis had been simmering at low heat for a long time, having broken out previously in the student revolts of 2011. Many citizens, fed up with the situation, went out into the streets to demand social justice and to denounce a rightist government that was indifferently setting the stage for the collapse. The authorities had been camouflaging the reality behind a supposed economic tranquility built on a fictional "oasis" which, on top of everything else, they aimed to hold up as an example for the rest of Latin America.

As a response, the government quickly deployed the army into the streets. I got goosebumps seeing the soldiers moving along the avenues of Santiago, with those tanks that had awakened from their slumber. The city, sleepwalking and subdued during the night, was set to explode at the first light of day. A curfew was imposed and most people chose not to go out, while some accepted the challenge – perhaps needing a physical outlet in the context of oppression and fear. Coincidentally, the civil insurrections that occurred in various places around the country took place in parallel with those of other cities around the world. What many saw as an effective group mobilization, others considered to be nothing more than an analgesic for the masses, which wound up normalizing and dwindling little by little.

After some months, various articles started to appear about wounds to the eyes of the protesters, caused by the Armed Forces. "I looked at him, he was aiming at my face,"¹ announced a report in *The New York Times*, presenting the statement by a young Chilean who had lost one of his eyes, hit by a rubber bullet. "I looked at him, he was aiming at my face" was the title that I chose for my letter. As an image to illustrate this correspondence, I borrowed a photograph by Romanian artist Ion Grigorescu (Bucharest, 1945), taken during the election meetings in Romania, during the Ceaușescu dictatorship.

In Chile, in 2019, the security forces shot at the eyes of the protesters. The result was a historic number of lost and destroyed eyes by the use of nonlethal weapons: pellet guns, as part of a protocol derived from the training of Israeli militias. Institutions had thus decided to literally tear out the eyes of the citizens, and to test whether, in the darkness, they would more readily get used to the constant surveillance.

In an effort to illustrate these aggressions, I wrote a letter that intercrossed excerpts from modern-day newspapers and eyewitness accounts with figures from fictional literature: Lina, the protagonist of Peruvian author Clemente Palma's classic short story "Los ojos de Lina" (1901), who tore out her own eyes so that her lover would not be afraid to look her straight in the face; Olympia, the romantic automaton from the tale by E.T.A. Hoffmann (1816), whose inert look made the living tremble; and the Saint of Syracuse, Lucia, who presented her own eyes to a person infatuated with how she looked, so that he would literally leave her alone. These were all women who mutilated their own eyes to walk freely and at the fringe of the male gaze, which did not dare to look them in the face.

Correspondence #4

15 Apr 2020



Ion Grigorescu, *Electoral Meeting*, 1975. Courtesy of the artist and Gregor Podnar

I finished the letter in January and was waiting for it to be published in March. Just a few months later, the Chilean government decreed another curfew, between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. throughout the national territory, as part of a new package of measures to try to slow the spread of Covid-19.

The situation of surveillance is once again normalized, apparently for the good of all society. People stay at home to prevent the spread of the disease, hoping that this will end, amidst an insidious uncertainty. In the street, we warily watch each other out of the corner of our eye, and feel an uncontrollable repulsion, trying not to breathe the air of anyone nearby. It is recommended that we do not say “social distancing,” but rather “physical distancing.” The idea is to stop being together for an (indefinite) period and to reinforce the solidarity bonds that unite us. The streets of Chile, and those of many other cities, are now in silence, waiting for the day when they can once again spring back into activity. Those who can, dive into the world of remote work. Those who do not have this luxury, circulate while trying to avoid each other. We think that we are in a different state, and any sort of normality now looks suspicious to us. The balance has broken, along with that line that used to connect our homes and our places of work. The “discipline” of caution is now topmost in our minds, and for an instant we have the impression that, before all this happened, we were free.

In 1975, Grigorescu went out into the streets of Bucharest to photograph the citizens who were in the streets by the hundreds, exercising – obediently – their adhesion to the regime. With his camera hidden on his hip, Grigorescu surreptitiously shot photos that contrasted the bored looks among the crowd with the steely gaze of the members of the secret police who were supervising them. *Electoral Meeting* (1975) is the only thing that I have maintained from that letter which, written a few months ago, now seems out of date.

From the challenging look to the fearful one. From the voluntarily shutting of eyes to their purposeful mutilation. From the lost eyes to those which know very well what they are aiming at. Eyes watching from windows, controlling who is in the street. Eyes that indicate where we are, to keep us safe. Whether our eyes are open or shut, the day after will still arrive. Even though it now seems that day and night are only a mere lighting trick.

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“Yo lo miré; él me apuntaba a la cara.”
Statement by a protester
reported in the article,
“It’s Mutilation. The
Police in Chile are
Blinding Protesters,”
published by *The New
York Times*. Brent
McDonald, Miguel Tovar
and Armando De La Cruz,
November 10, 2019.







Alain Resnais. Still from *Hiroshima mon amour*. © Argos Films. Support: Consulado Geral da França em São Paulo

A tree grows alongside a gas chamber in a former concentration camp; the unbearable heat of the sun is felt on the skin of someone at a public square/memorial built on the ruins of a nuclear explosion. What is there, in fact, to see and to understand in what survives tragedies, exterminations of populations and cultures? In light of the unspeakable trauma, what can be told by a museum, a monument, a ruin, or a scar? “The reconstructions, for lack of anything else,” “the explanations, for lack of anything else,” “the photographs, for lack of anything else,” says the (French) protagonist of *Hiroshima mon amour*, Elle, in the opening scene of the

classic film directed by Alain Resnais in 1959. Elle is referring to what she found in Hiroshima nearly fifteen years after the bombing that killed more than 160 thousand people, but could also be talking about what would be found by anyone who visits the ruins of Nazi concentration camps, or even the museums full of the plunder of colonization – not by chance, themes of short films made by Resnais.

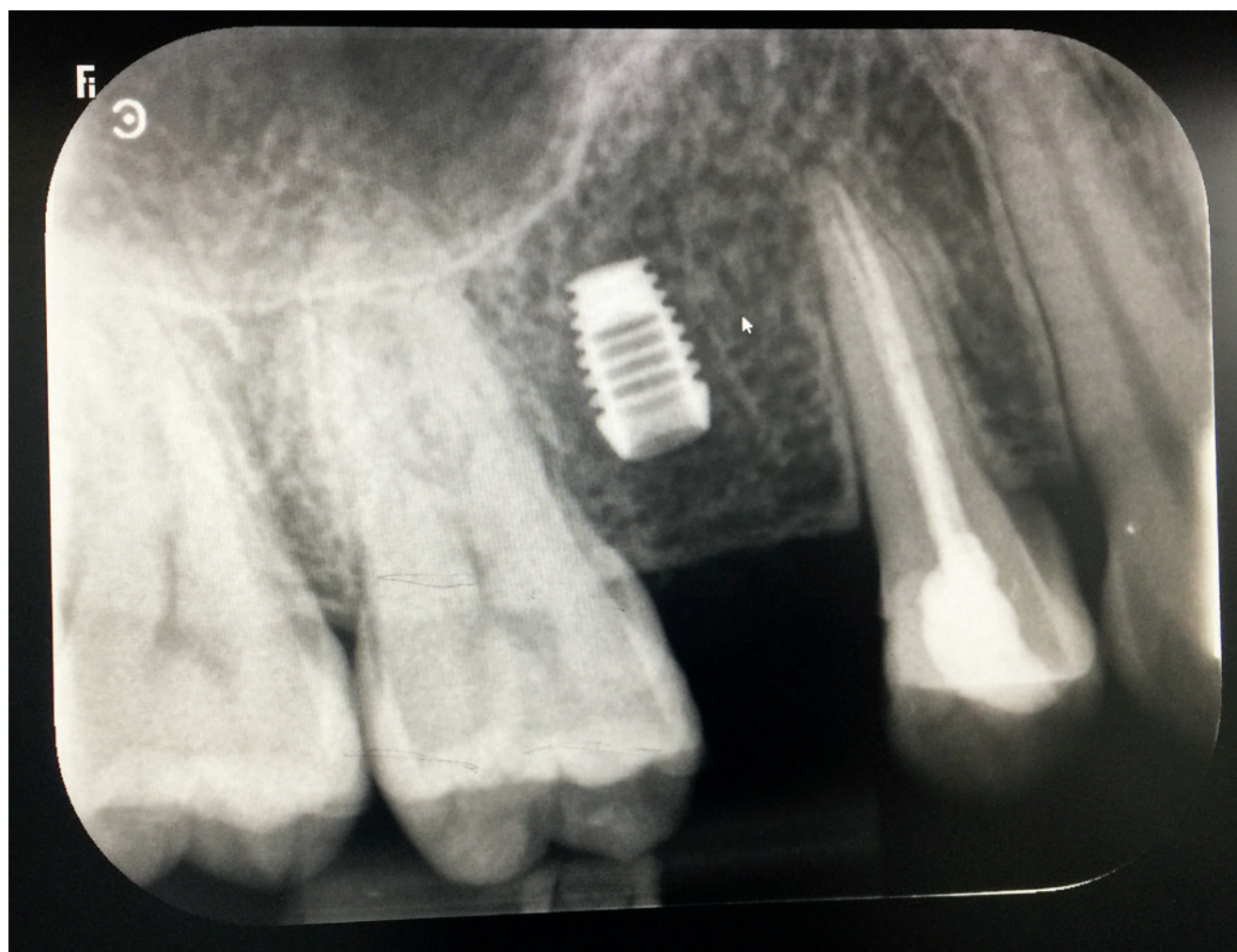
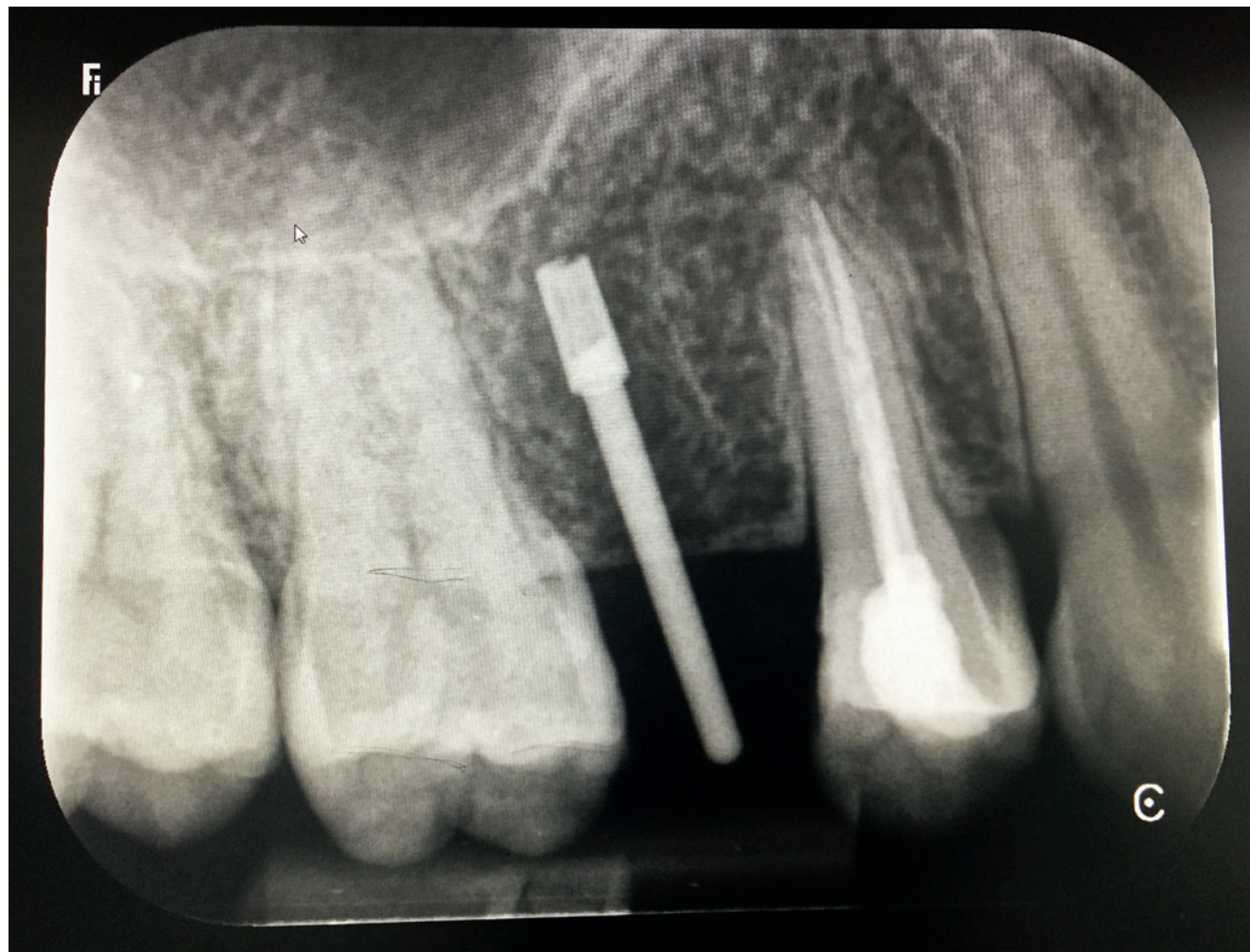
But no. The objects, the photographs, the explanations, the reconstructions are not enough for us to understand. “You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing,” says the other (Japanese) protagonist, Lui: even with her efforts and good intentions Elle will not comprehend what happened in Hiroshima. This is the first phrase in the film, the leitmotiv that pervades it. It is not possible to see because it is not possible to understand. It is impossible to understand because there are things, perhaps the most important things, that are not visible. *Hiroshima mon amour* does not seek to explain nor to reconstruct, but rather to probe the opacity and untranslatability of what has remained as a witness of tragedy. Perhaps this is why the film does not begin with distancing, but with contact and proximity. The camera frames details of the intertwined bodies of the protagonists, covered with granulated ashes like those that cloaked the bombed bodies, and yet they are also gleaming, with a sparkle which then becomes the shine of the sweat of their encounter, of their exchange of heat.

Like Elle, sometimes we strive to understand, we seek to get closer in every possible way, from every angle: we read the explanations, we visit the wreckage, we look again at each twisted piece of metal, each old photograph. But no. It is impossible to get to know Hiroshima, just as it is impossible to understand the other acts of extreme violence from which our history is made. We will never be able to feel the heat of the sun over Peace Square, but we can try to get closer to the ineffable, try to give shape to what cannot be named. Art is, always, one of these paths along which one seeks the incomprehensible – not to reduce it to explanations, but to give it an outline, to draw the reach of what radiates. Because its translation, although impossible, is nonetheless necessary; because in this failed effort we learn about our desires and fears – the fear of not knowing, not understanding, or the fear of knowing that we are capable of acts that we can never understand.









Algeria came under French rule in 1830. From 1932 to 1945 Tayeb Ourahmane served compulsory military service in the French-Algerian army. Based in Oujda, which is now part of Morocco, Ourahmane was one of the highest-ranking snipers in the military and worked, against his will, to train Algerian soldiers.

In 1945, he was ordered to join the French military to fight against Germany in World War II. Married with three children and serving his 13th year of service, Ourahmane resisted further military service by extracting all of his teeth. This act of self-mutilation led to his eventual annulment from the military, with officials recognising he was unfit for service.

The Algerian War began in 1954 leading to Algeria's independence from France in 1962. During this time Ourahmane was part of the Oujda Group, a group of military officers and politicians fighting French colonial control over Algeria. Ourahmane became actively involved in the fight against French occupation. He facilitated the illegal import of arms into Algeria and made his home a base for ammunition storage, as well as a place where wounded soldiers could seek recovery. Before Ourahmane passed away in 1979 he refused to be formally honored for his involvement in the fight for independence.

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In 2015, while Tayeb Ourahmane's granddaughter, Lydia Ourahmane was researching illegal immigration from Algeria to Spain she met a 23-year-old man in the Medina Djedida market in Oran, Algeria. He was selling an 18k gold chain, which he claimed was his mother's. Lydia bought the chain from him for €300, the approximate fee charged by traffickers at the time for a place in a boat migrating to Europe.

In January of this year the gold chain was melted down and cast into two gold teeth, replicating Lydia's missing upper right maxillary molar. Surgery was then performed on Lydia's mouth to prepare the bone for tooth insertion. One gold tooth was then permanently screwed into her mouth and the other is presented here in the gallery.

The dark among the stars: Surviving in troubled times

Borders

On the second week of March, we went to San Cristóbal de las Casas, on Mexico's Southeast. Some Covid-19 cases had already been confirmed in Mexico. We could still travel in a sort of uneasy calm. We went to the mountains. Along the way, we saw a mural painting that read "Another world is possible". The visit to Oventik was a bit what I expected, and perhaps this was the reason I had postponed my trip to that place for more than twenty years. After a short wait with other travellers, most of them European, we managed to enter the *caracol*¹ (Spanish for "snail"). Apart from a setting whose iconography I knew by heart, we couldn't see anything. There were hardly any people, a group of girls and boys playing in the field that turned into an amphitheatre, and some old men sitting under the sun. The words uttered by our guide, who almost spoke no Spanish, were rather signs of evasion. We weren't looking for anything, but we didn't find it either.

On an acquaintance's recommendation, we went to a recently-founded *caracol* on the outskirts of San Cristóbal: Jacinto Canek. This one doesn't appear on revolutionary tourism guides. There we waited a long while. To our surprise, we were taken to a room where some members of the Council of Good Government waited for us, five men and two women. They told us, after a brief enquiry, that they would answer to all of our questions. We improvised some ideas about the occupation of the land, which interested Simon, and some about feminism and the role of women in the community, which were the ones that concerned me. On the representations found at the local souvenir shops something had changed. The pictures of Subcommander Marcos were gone. Instead, drawings and embroidery of women with little boys and girls talking about the rebellious joy had taken its place. The women, whose faces were covered, looked away. I wanted them to tell me if that representation implied a substantial change in the Zapatista ideology, but they refused to answer. Either they didn't speak Spanish, or they didn't want to speak it with me. The man that lead the meeting was telling us about his relationship with non-Zapatista communities. They didn't work together, but coexisted. When there was not much left to be said, another man at the bottom of the

room, who looked older and perhaps had been involved since the beginning of the uprising, left saying, "Come back soon." In between the openness and the obscurity there was not much clarity. It didn't matter, we had the sensation of having seen a way of life that insisted on a political project that didn't aim to convince us but simply existed, and that was enough.

We returned to Mexico City; it was clear that a chain reaction had been triggered. Some countries in Europe were imposing a state of emergency. The United States were closing their borders with Europe and China, and the tone, rhythm and scale of it all changed. Simon would go back to Johannesburg. The flight to Sweden, where we would meet in April, was cancelled, and the one in August too, we gathered. We said goodbye at the airport like we used to do, a bit sadder, a bit more anxious. A few hours later, he called me saying he hadn't been able to leave. Before boarding the plane, Peru had closed its borders.

For more than a week, every flight we managed to book was cancelled. An option was staying and spending this time together. He called the South African embassy and they urged him to leave, because they couldn't do anything if he became sick, and there wouldn't be any repatriations. The anguish of being a foreigner and not having access to health care services began to grow. We didn't know if his travel insurance would cover anything, we didn't know if Mexico would care for foreigners once the health system collapsed. We saw in the newspapers and on the news how in Italy and Spain people were isolated after entering the hospital and separated from their families. They narrated how the close relatives were notified via telephone or with a message if the patients got well or passed away. If Simon got sick and I wasn't with him, how would he communicate? He doesn't even speak Spanish. We knew that going through this time together would be a way of caring for each other, of keeping each other company. But that certainty bumped on the fact that what seemed to ensure our survival, or the access to it, was somewhere else. In the State and its protocols.

We managed to find a flight through the United States; that very same day the closing of the borders with Mexico was announced. They told us that the traffic would continue, and that probably, although there was no way of

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The "caracoles" are the territories for encounter between the Zapatistas and other cultures of Mexico and the world. They were established by that name in 2003; they were previously known as "Aguascalientes". These spaces function as windows, as the Zapatistas affirm, to see inside and outside, and as speakers to take out their words and listen those afar.

knowing for sure, he would arrive to his connecting flight. We said goodbye not knowing – we still don't know – when or if we would meet again.

We had talked about what was home for us. For him, a city in a territory in tension to where he belongs without belonging. For me, it's not a place, but rather a field of affections and belongings. However, in that moment, a figure emerged to both of us as home: a country. It was strange that, after years of thinking that politics were somewhere else, what now determined our lives was the belonging to a State. Our lives, like everyone's, although they have always been inevitably intertwined with the fate of our nations, now depended upon the government decision on the handling of an epidemic. Herd immunity, state of emergency, big data. Means of control that had been operating in various ways, but which were now shown as a whole and in discord.

For more than ten years, with the declaration of war on drug trafficking by the then-president Felipe Calderón, it was necessary to think that the handling of life was not based on the models of sovereignty set by biopolitics, but rather that what operated in Mexico was something closer to what the Cameroonian historian Achille Mbembe had called – to explain the logics of death beyond the models of exception of European theorists – necropolitics. In the country, death is not enforced as governmental rationality on the people. It's not just leaving them to their fate without the infrastructure to die, but rather that a policy bound to the neoliberal economic model – characterised by extractivism and plundering – is executed as a work of death. In Mexico, we are used to thinking of murder as a fundamental exercise of sovereignty. Now, we also have to think its biopolitical articulation under the exercise of the State. How can the administration of life for the survival of a community exist when the exercises of power – amorphous machines made of various groups and people including the State and its forces, but not limited to it – operate politics as a work of death?

Simon arrived in Johannesburg with the news that, within 48 hours, all borders in his country would be closed and there would be a mandatory confinement enforced by the police and the military. He hardly had time to buy the bare essentials for the confinement. From his house, on a fifteenth floor downtown, you can hear, every

now and then, the hails of rubber bullets used by the police to chase the homeless and enforce on them a confinement that had no place. The Human Sciences Resource Council estimates that, in South Africa, there are more than 200,000 people living in the streets.² During the first days of the most severe phase of the confinement, three people died due to the virus and three others due to power abuse by the police.³ At times, we doubt that going back “home” was the right choice.

Taking care of ourselves is also work

The little I have been able to do these days of confinement is drawing. Marcos, seeing me overwhelmed, I guess, invited me to collaborate in an improvised collective drawing book.⁴ He is part of a study group on drawing in contemporary art, coordinated by Obrera Centro, where they gather to draw every week. Given the impossibility of gathering, they decided to create a downloadable file to print and paint.

I don't know how to draw, I have never been able to draw a straight line. I wanted to create a sort of poster. I tried doing it with my own calligraphy. In the light of my complete failure, I traced the different letters from the typographies of a conceptual poetry book by Rogelio López Cuenca. Then, still frustrated with the result, I went out to look for an alphabet template through different stationery shops. I found it on the shop just around the corner which was still open. Invariably, I kept failing. Even using a ruler, it came up crooked, and the sweat from my hands smudged the marker's ink. I gave it up, I tried again. By the time the penny dropped, I had spent a whole weekend drawing, pretty much not thinking about anything else. The result is ugly, but it doesn't matter.

I made two drawings. One reads “Taking care of ourselves is also work.” My daughter's school is closed, the university where I work, too. But the work did not stop, it moved home. I have to work – think, write, plan and undo the planning of what will not be – while I cook, clean, play, contain myself, soothe myself, and pretend everything will be fine.

The first data from the analysis of these months show that the productivity of women, mainly in

2 Anastasya Eliseeva, “Life for the Homeless Locked Out During Lockdown”, *New Frame*, Apr. 15, 2020. Available at: www.newframe.com/life-for-the-homeless-locked-out-during-lockdown/?fbclid=IwAR1FmYwazCtpQwEWQTHzLOBmj4PpSSqVgMsLzyZ1JdG_CT8ntV9meNSW96Y. Accessed: June 2020.

3 Christopher McMichael, “State Violence Is an Established Reality in SA”, *New Frame*, Apr. 3, 2020. Available at: www.newframe.com/state-violence-is-an-established-reality-in-sa/. Accessed: June 2020.

4 The book *Dibujes para colorear – Vol2* can be downloaded at: herrateca.org/dibuje/. Accessed: July 2021.

the academic and artistic fields, has decreased significantly. The situation we are going through did not bring about anything new, but it exacerbated the problem. The work done daily by millions of women leans on the work from schools, domestic employees, networks of relatives – beyond the family – that make work possible, of what is socially deemed work. Much has been written about how this division between productive and reproductive work has been founding for capitalism and the creation of paid work. Men went to work – the waged –, while women stayed at home to take care of the children and do the housework. This has changed in many ways, sometimes not so much, but our incorporation into the labour market has not transformed the fact that care work continues to be sustained mostly by women.

In this rupture in which work, even for the waged, has been suspended, and who knows how and if it will be reactivated, it becomes necessary to make use of the criticism voiced for decades by feminism. Perhaps what we do will have to untie itself from the production schemes, so that we can think there are other forms of work, beyond work. Survival will have to be thought under other schemes: basic income, universal wage. I don't know which, but it will have to be imagined and articulated. Because survival will not come from that which has already shown its unsustainability.

The other drawing is also a poster for coloring; it reads "Social Distancing/ Social Solidarity." Some weeks ago, I broke confinement rules, I shouldn't have done it, but I couldn't help it. I had texted Marcos, who lives nearby, to tell him I had food left over, if he wanted, I could bring him some. He told me they had enough food; that he was with Mauro, with whom he spends the confinement so their daughters can be together; and that I could pay a visit to have some fresh air. I thought it would do me well to go out. It was a wonderful spring afternoon, the girls ran and played with some chickens and we had coffee under the jacaranda. It was nice, but there was something different. We spoke low as if trying to contain the breath. We were worried about our bodies, fearful of getting close, of touching one another. At some point, Luciana approached to show me a drawing. I got nervous and asked her to keep a distance, she had to be at least one and a half metres away. I

couldn't bear the thought of having the virus and infecting her, neither that she could have it and I could then infect my daughter or my mother. I tried to enjoy my moment of insubordination, but I was tense.

I couldn't sleep that night. Something had happened and I didn't know what it was. The distance with my friends hadn't only been physical. In the morning, still feeling the discomfort in my body, Rita, my daughter, jumped up at me. She wanted to paint my face. She got on my legs and with her little hands began to draw up blue lines around my eyes. The two of us began to laugh, she split her sides. Suddenly, I realized she was the only person I felt connected with. She is the only person that touches me and I touch without worrying about anything, contamination or not contamination, it is the way we exist.

That week, I had argued with her father – we have been living apart for some time now – and with Cuauhtémoc, one of my closest friends and with whom I teach my lessons, now online. I lost my temper trying to speak with them, I wasn't feeling listened to, recognised. I was also able to admit that I had suffered every Zoom meeting I took part in. I was feeling uncomfortable, every time more insecure of being.

I had thought that meeting again the people I love would bring everything back to what it was. The truth is that it isn't just the distance that is difficult, but being back together too. There is something that gets lost under the behavioural protocols that control the involuntary gestures and movements that also allow us to communicate. And that's because social distancing erodes social bonds: intimacy, solidarity, complicity, desire – and that is a menace. Not just for each of us, but also for the world in common and the possibilities of politics.

I think about what Hannah Arendt said about the public space. With no intention of making an exegesis of her complex thought, she proposes our political and social world only exists when we appear with others, and says:

No man, moreover, can live in it all the time. To be deprived of it means to be deprived of reality, which, humanly and politically speaking, is the same as appearance. To men the reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of others,

by its appearing to all; “for what appears to all, this we call Being,” and whatever lacks this appearance comes and passes away like a dream, intimately and exclusively our own but without reality.⁵

Our social and political life only exists in that world in common. Sometimes I feel that in this confinement there a loss of reality. That we no longer see nor hear the same as others. As the distancing grows, I fade away.

I think of those two drawings together, of how to exist during confinement, of how to produce outside the logic of profit to think of a social solidarity. There is something about them that I like, not as drawings, but what they unlock. That little collective effort with no pretensions generated a joint space to comfort. Colouring the lines of others and imagining others putting colour to what I drew up looked like a way of accompanying and being accompanied, without even knowing by whom. When proposed, the production did not expect any profit, in the economic or symbolic sense, for either party. It was carried out as an act of care, for oneself and others. I try to think what this care does, where do I place it? Is it work? Is it production? Is it reproduction? I think about the words of Maggie Nelson:

Don't produce and don't reproduce, my friend said. But really there is not such a thing as reproduction, only acts of production. No lack, only desiring machines. *Flying anuses, speeding vaginas, there is no castration.* When all the mythologies have been set aside, we can see that, children or no children, *the joke of evolution is that it is a teleology without a point, that we, like all animals, are a project that issues in nothing.* But is there really such a thing as nothing, as nothingness? I don't know. I know we're still here, who knows for how long, ablaze with our care; its ongoing song.⁶

Beyond the disquiet that the distancing implants in this “new normality,” could it be that we are actually losing the world in common? Or rather, could it be that this apparent loss is affected by the nostalgia for a project that seems to wither away? Maybe there are other ways of

appearing, opaquer and more elusive, but that still tell of existence in common.

In the depths of a hole

Some months ago, in correspondence with Fernando Palma regarding his work, he ended one of his emails telling me, “At night, don't look at the stars, look at the dark among them, and then you will know we are in the bottom of a hole.” At that moment I think I didn't understand what he was telling me. I had seen the stars, but not the darkness, what could be seen in it?

It is hard to get used to darkness, but when you lose the fear and the eyes begin to adapt to it, one starts recognising and imagining outlines and shapes. Relations appear, and sensations too.

For many years I have tried to think politics, insist on it. I found a possible answer in what appears as a common claim beyond the State and governments. An appearance in the public space as a way of pushing the possibilities for the recognition of equality. Ways of appearing, occupations, and mobilizations, that would disrupt our sensitive world and would make appear, following Rancière, other distributions, other functions, other visibilities.

For years, perhaps more bluntly since Rita was born, something ran out within that formulation. The insistence that persists, but is smashed, over and over again, under ways of administration that continue pursuing a progress that doesn't arrive and never will. I think about Simon locked by a State that runs his life, but doesn't care for him; I think about my care work, about the work of taking care of ourselves; and I ask myself what kind of politics and sociability we can generate in these troubled times.

I have no answer, but these days I have gone back to a book I worked on years ago. Something in it provides clues. Apart from the complex ethnographic and theoretical operations, the book *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, suggests that we are trapped with and within the problem of living despite economic and ecological ruination. However, the author states: “neither tales of progress nor of ruin tell us how to think about collaborative survival.”⁷ She brings our attention to the

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Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd Edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018, p. 265.

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Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts*. Minnesota: Greywolf Press, 2015, p. 143.

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Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 19.

complex framework – existence, picking, consumption – of the matsutake mushroom. The distinctive feature of this mushroom is that it only grows in devastated environments, it needs deforestation to emerge. Its requirements make its cultivation impossible, so it can only be picked where it appears. Consumption is bound to a complex transnational net, since its value is higher in Asian markets, mostly in Japan, but it originates in places as distant as the woods of Oregon. Even when the value of the mushroom is part of the international trade on a large scale, its harvest is part of a work almost intimate and, in most of the cases, carried out by communities or individuals that have been displaced or that look in the woods for ways of subsistence in the margins. The connection between the very existence, biological characteristics and the coexistence with human being gives Tsing the possibilities of exploring forms of life where deprivation and uncertainty are the conditions of existence, and they offer, out from the tales of stability and progress, possibilities that maybe we haven't paid much attention to:

Precarity is the condition of being vulnerable to others. Unpredictable encounters transform us; we are not in control, even of ourselves. Unable to rely on a stable structure of community, we are thrown into shifting assemblages, which remake us as well as our others. We can't rely on the status quo; everything is in flux, including our ability to survive. Thinking through precarity changes social analysis. A precarious world is a world without teleology. Indeterminacy, the unplanned nature of time, is frightening, but thinking through precarity makes it evident that indeterminacy also makes life possible.⁸

Tsing sets off on analysing the nexus of exchange, coexistence, and work outside the paradigm of oppression of a single system governing everything, in order to be able to understand the complex interactions and frictions between capitalist and para-capitalist means of production. Before the impossibility of keeping a promise of progress in this dynamic, Tsing finds that, in the current devastation, it is possible to formulate deprivation as a common condition.

It is from here where the collaboration assemblages operate. Collaborations that do not imply progress or salvation, that do not even intend a collective happy ending. In the author's approach there is no advent of a new world or of a new community either, but what is facilitated, precariously and hazily, is survival.

The path it covers implies ruptures with the ways in which we had assumed not only life but also politics. If we follow her criticism to progress and teleology of history, what is compromised is the horizon from which we had imagined the processes of collective emancipation. In the landscape drawn by Tsing, how are politics to be imagined outside the universal categories in which we gather to pursue a better life? She says:

Without progress, what is struggle? The disenfranchised had a common program to the extent that we could all share in progress. It was the determinacy of political categories such as class – their relentless forward motion – that brought us the confidence that struggle would move us somewhere better. Now what? [...] It suggests that any gathering contains many inchoate political futures and that political work consists of helping some of those come into being. Indeterminacy is not the end of history but rather that node in which many beginnings lie in wait. To listen politically is to detect the traces of not-yet-articulated common agendas.⁹

The indispensable work of Tsing lies in thinking about the small, in things that are underground, and their complex interactions with large-scale models. To survive, maybe we have to pay attention to what happens in the dark, and find the already existing relations; adjust them, pierce their mechanisms and devices to appear and work between scales. Opt for other visibilities, maybe more blurred and opaquer, but that all the same continue articulating common preoccupations and wishes. Perhaps survival won't be under universal categories nor within the communities we imagined, but it will take place with others – human and non-human – that will allow for collaboration assemblages.

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Id., *ibid.*, p. 20.

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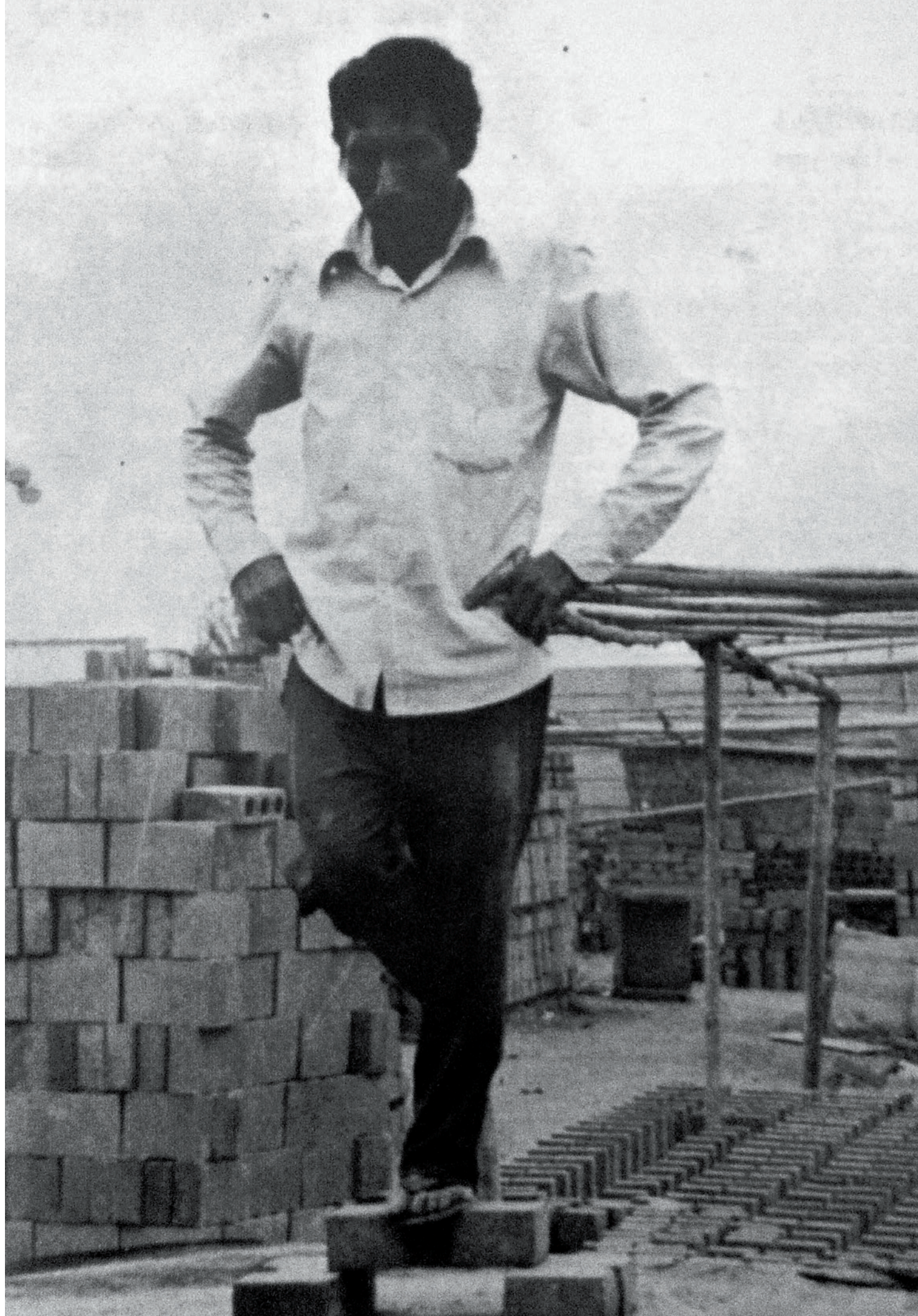
Id., *ibid.*, p. 254.

I think about my trip to Chiapas, about the obscurity of a political project that, despite that, exists, and has existed for years. I think about the collaborations that make us appear together although we are not. I think about the images Simon sends me at dawn so when I wake up I can see something of what he sees and feel less alone. I think about all this tiredness, about my daughter's laughter and her hand searching for mine to sleep.

There are good reasons to be afraid, but perhaps we should trust in the tools we have at hand, that we have made ourselves. Maybe, like both Nelson and Tsing suggest, there is life beyond the end and the ending, we just have to start looking at the depths of the hole. We didn't get to this one all of a sudden, we were already in it, who knows since when.

In this uncertainty, perhaps what holds us, in its brace and containment, is care. Those acts of production that cocoon us in the darkness as a lullaby.

Translated from Spanish by Ana Laura Borro



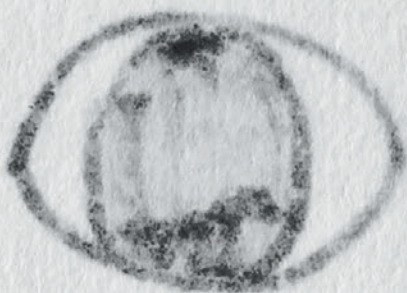
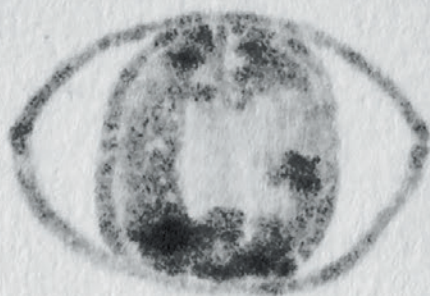
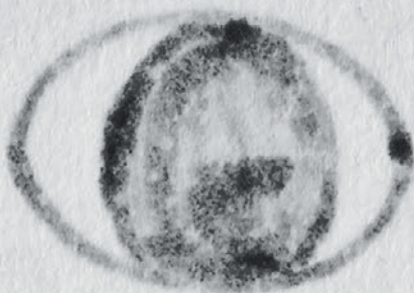
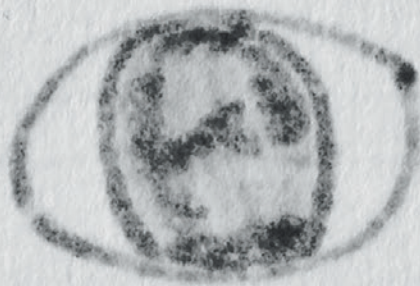
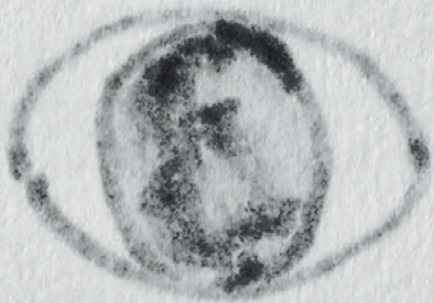


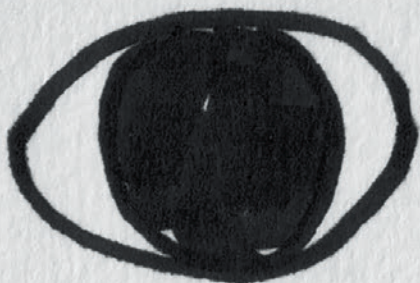
Resiliencia Tlacuache

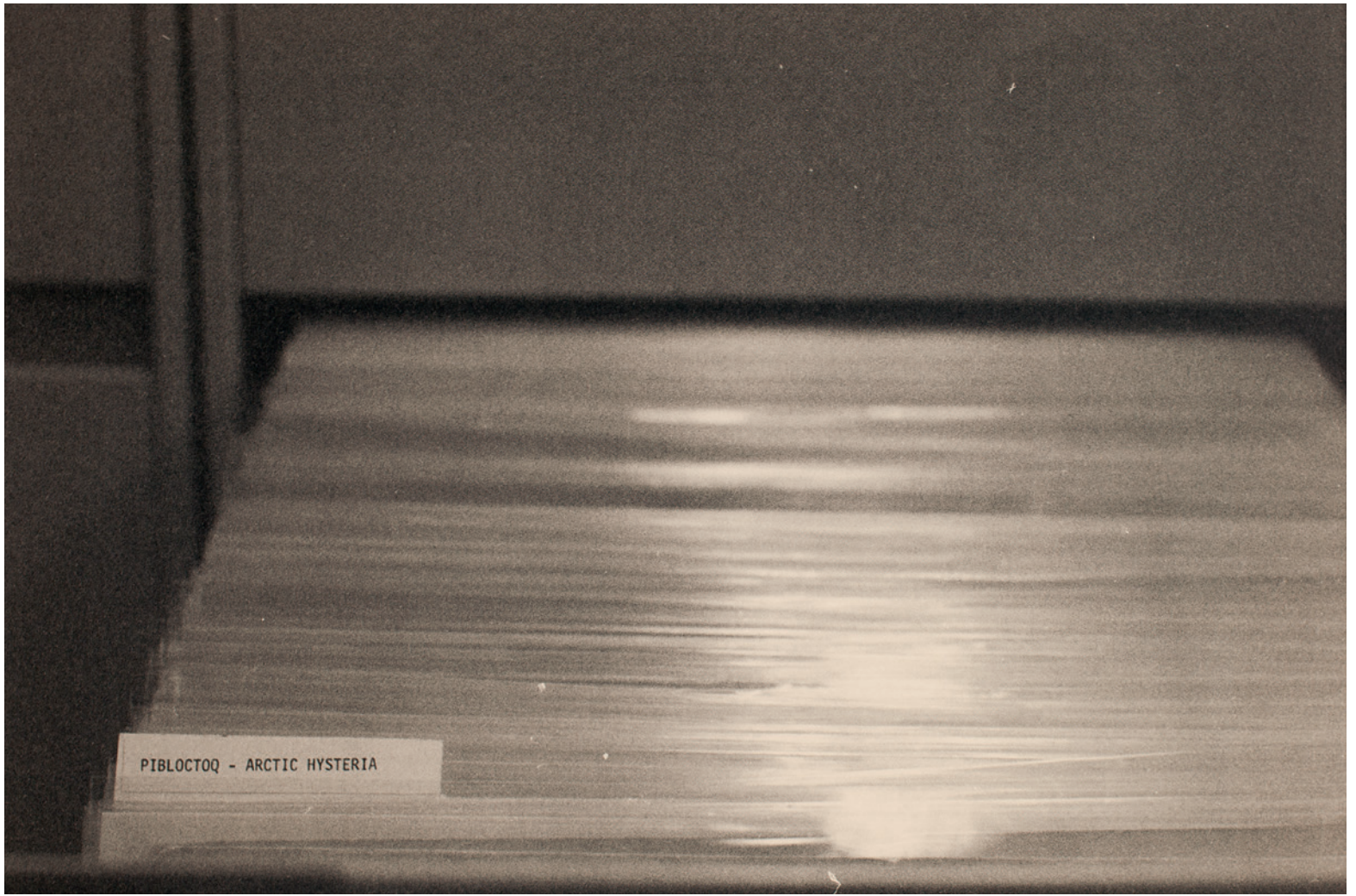
Yo soñé con los naguales
porque ando eriza de ancestros
ante los planes siniestros
de las zonas especiales:
conflictos territoriales,
extracción rapiñadora
¡Yo te invoco protectora,
ven en forma de culebra,
que tu trueno el cielo quiebra
con su fuerza vengadora!

Opossum Resilience

I dreamt about naguales
because I am craving ancestors
in the face of the sinister plan
of the economic special zones:
territorial conflicts,
rapacious extraction
I summon you, oh protectress
come in the shape of a snake,
may your thunder break the sky
with its revengeful force!







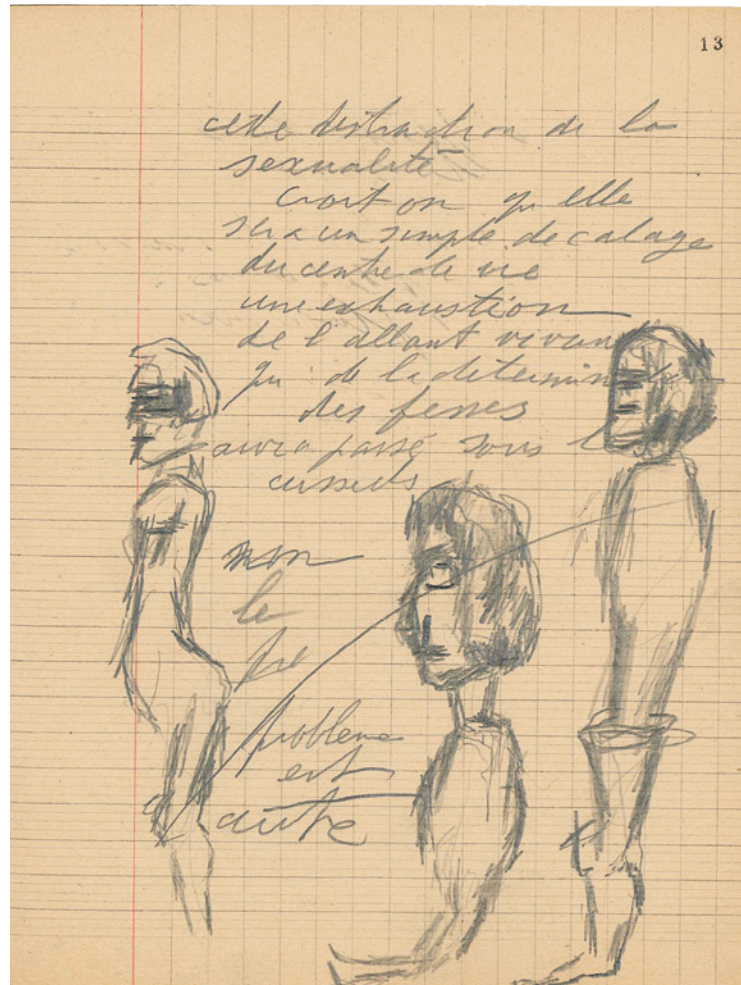


The archives of the Museum of Yugoslavia
(from: *Wunderkammer*, 2019)

(Museum of Yugoslavia houses thousands of objects, artworks, photographs and documents from the Yugoslav era. Today, it is probably the most comprehensive collection of artifacts coming from the Socialist Yugoslavia, country that collapsed some thirty years ago. Once called the Museum of May 25, thus honouring Josip Broz Tito's official birthday, it was built and established to house the gifts Yugoslav president for life was receiving during the long decades of his rule. With no physical state to represent anymore, today it is a history museum, an art institution, a research place, as well as a monument and mausoleum of the country that no longer exists.)



Édouard Glissant. *Cahier d'un Voyage sur le Nil* [Notebook from a trip to the Nile], 1988. Bibliothèque nationale de France. Support: Institut français à Paris



Antonin Artaud. Notebook 371, page 13, recto. Published in Antonin Artaud. *Oeuvres*. Paris: Gallimard, 2004, p. 1.576. Edited by Evelyne Grossman. Support: Institut français à Paris

Reading the Martinican Édouard Glissant's writings can give the impression of walking through spirals and volutes that constantly return to the same places, but from different angles, approaches, and poetic nuances that keep gradual conceptual precisions. Glissant, who valued the baroque's potency, made his work a captivating eulogy of poetics, wandering, imagination and relationship. For this reason, reading and rereading it was a continuous exercise in the 34th Bienal preparation, which from its initial stages emphasized that the meanings of things, works of art, and individual and collective

identities are constantly changing, fuelled by encounters with all other things, languages, places, and the *Poetics of Relation*. The nature of these encounters is not always of convergence and harmony, but Glissant helps us realize that even antagonistic groups transform each other, and in a particularly profound and indelible way. Therefore, valuing the relationship does not mean idealizing a world without differences but defending the right to opacity, multiplicity, and transformation in a movement that involves destroying purity and originality precepts that pretentiously justified colonialism.

This tension between the desire for contact and mobility, on the one hand, and the need to break with colonial domination, on the other, is in the background of the dialogue between Édouard Glissant and Antonin Artaud that Ana Kiffer imagined. In her research in Édouard Glissant's archive, now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, she found that Glissant conceived a magazine that would have a text by Artaud in its first edition. And from this patch of history, Kiffer wove a web that interweaves texts, drawings, notebooks, voices, and fragments of these seemingly different authors. In the 34th Bienal, this web materializes an imagined encounter, concretizing similarities and contrasts between writing styles that cut through authoritarian regimes of existence and reassemble the world's body around new politics of difference.

BRÉSIL

PRESTIGE
 (dans) — une suite de représentations
 l'imaginaire des peuples, se nourrit d'une ~~sorte~~ ^{de} images
~~très~~ ^{très} conventionnelles, ~~du~~ ^{qui} ~~delimite~~ ^{delimite} les silhouettes
 très conventionnelles, du Brésil; les plages de Rio, les bidon-
 villes des grandes Cités, la forêt ^{l'ancien et mythique} amazonienne, le stade de
 Maracana, ^{lieux-communs} ~~toutes~~ ^{qui} mélangent le ^{premier} sentiment du
 plaisir aux relents de la misère, ^{goût} ~~l'ancien~~ de vivre et la
^{l'antise} ~~présence~~ ^{la} de mort. Ce Pays ~~est~~ ^{est} immense, pour tous les
 possibles qui y sont réunis. ~~Un fait, une mine, un élément de~~ ^{sautes.}
 la pays. Brésil me tou-

possibles qui y sont réunies. ^{la plupart}
L'une des premières fois que ^{le Brésil} me tou-
cha, ce fut, ^{vers 1944} quand je vis ^{et incandescente} apparaître, à la fin d'un
poème d'Aimé Césaire, comme une ^{fulgurante} et en me-
me temps très pesante ^{densité} ^{signifiante} réalité, BnF
MSS « le mariage. »

« Le sucre du mot Brésil au fond du marécage. »

« Le sucre du mot Brésil au fond... »
C'était je crois, à ~~la fin~~ ^{l'origine} du poème, BATOUKE, et je ne
fus ~~pas étonné~~ ^{surpris} de ce rapport souterrain, ~~et~~ ^{car} ~~la tent~~ ^{l'origine} ~~est établie~~ ^{est établie} ~~là encore,~~
lisons ~~bien~~ ^{aujourd'hui} dans les journaux que le racisme est intense
et maintenant, et sans doute ex-cerpi, ~~et~~ ^{et} ~~de~~ ^{de} rêver, comme
dans ce pays, mais nous continuons ~~à~~ ^à Bahia
à une ~~lieu~~ ^{mauvais} ~~maîtrise~~ ^{maîtrise} du métissage. Nous sommes ~~attirés~~ ^{attirés} ~~et~~ ^{et} ~~l'~~ ^{l'} ~~en~~ ^{en} ~~un~~ ^{un} ~~lieu~~ ^{lieu} ~~qui~~ ^{qui} ~~fusillent~~ ^{fusillent} ~~des~~ ^{des} ~~enfants~~ ^{enfants} ~~de huit ans~~ ^{de huit ans} ~~dans les rues de Rio,~~ ^{mais nous continuons}
de ~~perdre~~ ^{dire} que ce Brésil est ~~une~~ ^{une} ~~des~~ ^{des} ~~jeunes~~ ^{jeunes} ~~les plus vivaces~~ ^{les plus vivaces} ~~du continent américain,~~ ^{parce que l'une des plus "ouvertes."}
Alors ~~continuons~~ ^{me cessons-} nous d'être attentifs, au gré des nouvelles
Bahia, dans le Nord-Est,

du continent américain, parce que ~~l'Amérique~~
~~Ainsi continuons~~ nous d'être attentifs, au gré des nouvelles
 du monde, à ce qui se passe à ^{Bulgarie} ~~Sao Paulo~~ ou dans le Nord-Est,
^{Pérou sûr, nous nous rappellerons} ~~Reflexionnant par exemple~~ que des formes de religion popu-
 laire et synchrétique s'y ^{maintiennent} ~~desclapent~~, à la manière de ce qu'on
 voit en Haïti pour le vaudou, et que les orchestres de cam-

1

dans la mesure du moins où nous pouvons accéder à de telles informations.



For us Yepá Mahsã – Tukano, life began in the sacred waters of the great grandmother of the universe. First came the plants, then the Wai Mahsã, the fish people were the first to be created, after them came the Yuhku Mahsã, the forest people, and lastly the human beings, the Yepá Mahsã. We learned everything we know from the elders who came before us: plants and animals, nature itself. There is no word for “art” in our language, perhaps the closest is Hori: *miração*, the spiritual visions of ceremonies, of dreams, which are present in all the world around us. Hori are also our drawings, which are our link to nature. With Hori we paint our faces, our bodies, our houses, ceramics, baskets: our world is also made of Hori.

There is much more to Hori than can be seen or understood, the great language of the architecture of the universe is woven within it. We have been sailing in the great snake canoe of transformation, we have learned that all in this world transforms, and in this period of great change the time has come to be present in all territories with our heads held high, celebrating the truth, memory, and culture of indigenous peoples. Hori in the art space is an invitation to glimpse bigger worlds, expanded times, ancient memories that are present, and other relationships with the universe.

Añû, thank you for the opportunity.

Daiara Tukano.

**Yũ ni'î Daiara Hori, Duhigó. Īrēmīrī Hāhūrisō paramerã Kurahkō, Yepá mahsō ni'î.
Hori me'rã yũ bo'é mārīyēka'seré. Ma'arī pahtí kāhsé, ma'ārī ki'îhtí. kio'oró Hēo'ōpeó
duhtigó, tóhó ni'iwī, athíró ni'î u'sāyē ni'igó we'é.
Hori me'rã ũku'ũ athímuko'ore, yu káwe'erērārē pekāsã wiópehsaró me'rã ñāduhtigó
to'ô we'é.
U'sã hori mi'ikāthí ekathisé, Añúrō tuo'oñasé, mārī to'ô nīkā re'éripórã ahkóyekã we'é.
Yu kote'é a'perã bo'erārē, Yu mahsã, Yepá mahsārē.
Pamurī Yu'ukusu porã ni'irã, ma'arí ni'ipetirã wākú tu'tuá we'érã
Añú Yũ Yēkūsūmuã, pahkusūmuã, nikārō merã ni'irã ma'arí purō tu'tuá.
Añú**



Daniela Tukano



THE WATERS IN CHILE HAVE BECOME A PRIVATE ASSET

IN THE MAPUCHE PEHUENCHE TERRITORY IN THE ALTO BÍO BÍO,

THE TRANSNATIONAL SPANISH COMPANY **ENDESA**

SET UP A MEGA HYDROELECTRIC POWER STATION NAMED **RALCO**

WHILE THIS HYDROELECTRIC WAS CONCEPTUALLY DEVELOPED DURING THE DICTATORSHIP,

IT WAS EXECUTED AFTER THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY IN THE **1990s**

THE HYDROELECTRIC SEVERELY IMPACTED THE ENVIRONMENT,

FLOODING AN INDIGENOUS GRAVEYARD AND REMOVING THE COMMUNITIES FROM THEIR TERRITORY

IN MEMORY OF **NICOLASA QUINTREMÁN**,

A MAPUCHE WOMAN WHO ALONG HER SISTER **BERTA QUINTREMÁN**

FOUGHT AGAINST **ENDESA** FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WATERS AND RIVERS.

IN DECEMBER **2013 NICOLASA** WAS FOUND DEAD,

FLOATING ON THE ARTIFICIAL LAKE OF THE **RALCO**

HYDROELECTRIC POWER PLANT

THE WATERS KEEP THE MEMORY OF YOUR FIGHT

The Analog Film Strip

35mm wide. Perforation holes along both edges at 3 millimeter intervals to facilitate mechanical transport. Material base on one side, light sensitive emulsion on the other. Film and photography share one and the same raw material. In fact, in the case of the 35mm filmstrip it is the exact same: If we work with the strip vertically we produce a motion picture film, while if we work with the strip horizontally, we produce a photographic image. Focusing on the format of the 35mm filmstrip not only shows the essentially kindred nature of analog photography and film. It also reveals how one and the same strip of film can be variously considered and utilized.

Industrially produced film cameras bear a variety of premanufactured characteristics which determine how surrounding reality is supposed to be filmically represented. A central aspect is constituted by the division of the filmstrip into 24 frames per second, enabling a presumably neutral and continuous representation of reality upon projection. But what if this intrinsically problematic process does not meet with one's own desire – if it is not of interest to work with the concept of reproduction, but instead intriguing to probe and explore other visual connections and manifestations?

In my opinion it is in this regard that the film strip offers a vital opportunity. Before it is exposed to light, analog film is not divided into individual frames. Film is by nature blank. It is an empty strip that can be inscribed by various recording concepts. It is constituted by a physical materiality upon recording that can itself enter actual physical space.

To this end I create spatial camera forms that rely upon the principle of the camera obscura and that can assume a different shape for each individual project. Thanks to the film strip, these camera sculptures provide a starting point for the cinematic gaze. A gaze detached from the human eye. A gaze that primarily thinks in terms of spatial relations and not according to compositional qualities circumscribed by a rectangular film gate.

It has become necessary for me to decouple the film strip from the traditional camera. In my view, there is a space between the polar opposites conveyed by a relatively exact mechanical reproduction of reality (camera) versus complete visual abstraction (camera-less). A space in which the politics of descriptive representation appear negotiable. Only the medium of analog film opens up this space. A space of negotiation.

71^e anniversaire
Forum
THANK YOU & GOOD NIGHT
JUBILEE
SPECTRE
PRESENT

WITH DIALO BLONDIN DIOP - OUSMAN BLONDIN DIOP - MARIE THÉRÈSE DIEDHIOU
- ALIOUNE PALOMA SALL - BOUBA DIALLO - CHEIKH HAMALA BLONDIN DIOP
- ALYMANA BATHILY - LANDING SAVANÉ - MARIE-ANGÉLIQUE SAGNA
- MAMADOU KHOUMA GUEYE - FELWINE SARR - FOU MALADE - MADIW NJAAY
- THIERNO SEYDOU SALL - FI LU - MAME AWA LY FALL - DOUDOU FALL

JUSTE UN MOUVEMENT

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JUBILEE



spectre



VAF

*magellan



Centre Pompidou



CA



a/r



Centre Pompidou



ARGOS



Mu.ZEE



Journal sans papier

DESIGN: J. VAN DER LINDEN
PHOTO: J. VAN DER LINDEN
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Cut/Relation: Antonin Artaud and Édouard Glissant

Will we live what we will see?

The future of all of us is inextricable. We currently live under the concrete effects of this phrase by Glissant. It is lodged in our bodies, an atomized body acting against the anatomical body, as Artaud curiously foresaw in 1948. It is also a calling: amidst the rubble, it points to the need for reconstruction.

In this context, I see the featuring of archives, memories and notebooks at the heart of an art biennial as part of a larger gesture: by laying claim to the community that we still are not, it honors our ancestors, our elders, which we so often disregard. It sings to the homeless, making an appeal to life and to the living, to every living being. Its gesture is one of respect to our dead. Because, here, the archive is the material and mineral force that we need to gather from the past, in order to move towards a future which is different from this one that is now encroaching on us. This is the narrowing of its idea, of the very idea of future.

Trembling thinking, as Glissant called for, is that which changes with the world, sheltering emotion even in the face of humiliations and losses. This raises the question: will we live what we will see? No longer being a sense for understanding from a distance, the sight touches the world and trembles with it. The museum, moving away from the concept of a gathering of objects of curiosity, or visions of beauty, becomes “this sort of attic of the future, whose function is to shelter what should be born, but is not here yet”.¹

The anguish of uncertainty, the mourning for our deaths, the realization that once again the brunt of humankind’s abuses falls on poor and black people, the death drive that gravitates around the centers of power, here and elsewhere, all of this sharpens the incisiveness of the words that I hear from Artaud and from Glissant. I give them my hands, which I also offer to you, for us to rebegin together.

Body-archives

It is 12:07 p.m. and this is my first day of research in the archives. After twenty years of work on the notebooks of Antonin Artaud, I find myself researching in the same sector of manuscripts of the Bibliothèque nationale de

France. I remember the notes that I made, on the day before, during the Didi-Huberman² seminar about the archives of the Warsaw ghetto, and the relationship between the archive and the earth (*terra*) – *enterrar*, *aterrar*, *aterrorizar* [to bury, to ground, to terrify]. Many archives of the world have been buried together with the decimated bodies, and the very gesture of burying those body-archives is a terrorizing aspect of our cultures. This is something we are afraid to look at, and even more, to touch on. To bury the past is to constantly terrorize our present time, and, therefore, our future time. I am thus taking a new look at Artaud’s archives and, for the first time, the archives of Édouard Glissant, recently added to the BNF.³

Following the line of the buried and the terrorizing, I perceive that, unlike what lettered cultures would have us imagine, the archive does not necessarily have to be the museum or the mausoleum of the ideas of the past – untouchable, fixed, and controlled. A very large number of cultures have found themselves uprooted from their own past. The entire history of conquests and colonizations – of slavery. Glissant, obviously without rendering any homage nor recognizing any positive aspect in the colonial enterprise, nevertheless provides us with a great lesson: that these same peoples, with their oral culture, who were uprooted from their languages, from their “texts” and their places of origin, buried and terrorized by the chains of slavery, and faced with the unavoidable need for a Relation with different cultures, constituted the first possible space of what Glissant referred to as a *tout-monde* [the world in its entirety].

Now it is 12:18 p.m. and I am beginning to select files of Édouard Glissant. I follow my intuition and identify in the personal documents a group of diaries and notebooks. I seek them as bearers of the germ of the author’s writings, buried in the interior of the archive itself. Every book and notebook is, for me, the place of contact with this germ – the humus and putrefaction – of the writing. Not in the sense of an origin, but as something that makes things proliferate. Spurring, fueling and unleashing the writing machine that will be mounted there. This is the important thing in the world of manuscripts: not the dead archive, but the living and nomadic archive which is radically embodied in the trajectories of Artaud and Glissant. The former, buried in various

1

Achille Mbembe, *Brutalisme*. Paris: La Découverte, 2020.

2

Part of the content of the seminars I watched in 2018 is in the book *Eparses. Voyage dans les papiers du ghetto de Varsovie*. Paris: Minuit, 2020.

3

“BNF” is the abbreviation I will use, when necessary, to refer to the Bibliothèque nationale de France, which, in the case of this research, is located in its manuscript section, at 58 Rue de Richelieu, in Paris, France.

psychiatric asylums throughout the Second World War, wrote endlessly on scraps of paper that he would then burn,⁴ or on student notebooks (508 of them) ruled for the practice of calligraphy. In them, he invented a new writing with the aim, effectively achieved, of creating a new body. Without left-to-right linearity, his words proliferate and hammer their rhythms on the surfaces, rather than “sticking them onto the paper.” In this writing, the formal-visual is intertwined with the poetic, constructing scenes on the notebook paper, thus going beyond the flat surface to project *new bodies of sensibility*. “It is necessary to remake the body,” Artaud repeats.

Glissant, as he himself said, is the one who returns, after the “great discoveries,” to lift, within the heart of white culture, the *veil of forgetfulness*. He said that he wrote “in the presence of all the languages of the world, even if I only know one.” He left us a nomadic archive – which defies efforts at classification and is full of gaps, small wastelands, letters of intention, unrealized projects, springing from visions that proliferate in his notes, letters and notebooks which, even on the blank pages, bear the titles of the book to come. The titles operate as archipelagos of Glissant’s thought.⁵ They bear “this place of an inevitable origin: inevitable because we carry it wherever we go, but without being able to ever circumnavigate it.” It is this archipelago-thought that is materialized in the writing of his notebooks and notes.

Paradoxically, bringing these archives to Brazil also allows access to the oral and corporal learning of the cultures that fed these authors, or which imbued their writings – cultures that exist among us and keep insisting even when they are buried or terrorized. It is also to understand how each one of them pierced the corruption of European culture, of colonial culture, of the Western body, in all its states of domination and subjugation of life and the living.

This connection between the body of the writing of a notebook and the body of experiences is what we see here. The gestuality of each writer injected matter and content into their work as they constructed their thoughts. But this is not about the translation of the body into a notebook. Rather, it concerns the invention of a new zone between the one and the other. The notebook, no longer a passive support onto which the writer casts his ideas, becomes, in itself, a living mode of thinking and writing

with the world. Glissant said that he always wrote by hand, and believed that anyone who writes initially on a computer “says what the whole world says.” The body, no longer a passive material for the activity of the writing-thought, becomes active and opens itself to what is being woven and constructed there, while also being modified in this process. This processual zone – indiscernible here and there, between the body and the writing, making the gaze on “objects” as precarious and commonplace as the notebooks – allows us another way of thinking about writing and bodies in our society.

Very importantly, conceiving another mindset for the act and result of writing makes it possible to assign a value to what has commonly been devalued in the **economy** of writing: the colors, the lists, the food, the hungers, the smells, the lines, the sound of things, this world in insurrection, in which the force of the feelings goes unmasked, pregnant with the poetic traces of the layers buried among us. The notebooks would thus be an invitation for us to enter the writing as a gesture of a communitarian relationship, with a large part of the bodies and cultures separated from the mechanism of writing, allowing us to see the sprouting of a little of that which, among us, was buried. A shovel is needed, besides a pencil in hand, against the invisible burying of our physical and cultural corpses. A gesture-writing that moves back and forth between drawing and text, but which, above all, indicates the presence of the line as the force of the relationship of writing with everything we detach from the lettered world.⁶ A gesture-writing that understands that the hand that writes bears the trembling of the body in the world – opening itself to a permanent contact with what *differs*. It is known how the process of colonization imposed not only a language, but also a culture, a literature and a history that buried the preceding histories and delegitimized their very existence. We are, yet today, the result of this. In this sense, the traverses – in opposite directions – of Artaud, who set off from France in search of the civilization of the Tarahumara, in Mexico, and of Glissant, who traveled from Martinique to Paris, returning to the metropolis and seeking to sever the alleged root that keeps it standing, show the still current need for reopening the ways in which we delegitimize what we do not even know, how we perpetuate

4

Sort à Roger Blin
[*Sortilege to Roger Blin*], included in the exhibition.

5

Notebook Discours Antillais, [Antilean speech], included in the exhibition.

6

Notebooks of Artaud and of Glissant included in the exhibition.

the diminishment of the ancestral cultures, and how we pretend to construct a world without so much as looking at it, or exterminating it, for the differences and the different elements that form and structure it.

Baton Rouge or the community of song

In Box 72 of Glissant’s archives at the BNF I found the letter entitled *Lettre à Ella*,⁷ in which the author describes the project for the literary and cultural magazine *Baton Rouge*, whose editorial body, defined therein, sought to rethink the relationships between Europe, the Southern United States, the Caribbean and Latin America. The letter includes an outline of the magazine’s first issue, defining that the opening text would be written especially for the occasion by Antonin Artaud. What sort of text would this have been? Why would Glissant choose Artaud⁸ to open the magazine *Baton Rouge*, whose tone indicated a project for the reconstruction of oppressed voices, and/or voices from outside the North, white and Eurocentric axis?

Thus begins *Corte/Relação* [Cut/Relation].

This is not about a comparison between writers or artists, but rather a fabulation about an encounter that did not take place, a magazine that never came to be, and a geopolitics that still has not been installed among the peoples of the global South, but whose virtual outlines and current potential we seek to unfold.

Considering Antonin Artaud’s and Édouard Glissant’s traverses makes it seem as though their routes were more on a collision course than in mutual correspondence. Artaud headed off to Mexico in search of a “true” civilization, in 1936. He returned radically infused by the indigenous Tarahumara culture. Considered crazy, he was discredited by Western white civilization and foresaw his ruin. In this light, his insanity should ultimately be understood as an act of political segregation: it was impossible for the white man to accept, under the same standard of value, truthfulness and efficacy, the indigenous perspective and rites that penetrated Artaud’s body and visions. As he wrote, “there is a more or less conscious but generalized spirit that wants the Indians to be an inferior race.” Glissant moved from Martinique to France in 1946, two years before Artaud’s death, and stated, not without irony,

that he had “returned” there, saying that “slavery was a battle without witnesses.”

And it is also compelling to think how Artaud’s and Glissant’s writings are different in both their formal/visible and conceptual quality. In order to perceive this radical difference, however, we must take a thorough look at them. First, because the primacy of the difference and of the different is at the basis of the conceptions of both the poetics and the philosophy of the Relation. There will be no experience of a *tout-monde* unless its directions are structured by differences. Second, because the link of this difference resides in propositions which, despite being distinct, are interlaced with each other, multiplying their efficacies.

The writing and thinking of the *cut* are materialized in Artaud’s notebooks and texts through a formal-visual and poetic quality⁹ forged by strokes of the pencil. It is materialized in the knife,¹⁰ in the angular figures, in the nails of the falling word-bodies,¹¹ in an entire figuration that is striking for its cutting of many elements: the word, the linear plane of the page and of the writing, the syntax, and even the formation of the meaning, through the use of glossolalia. He likewise insisted on verbalizing the cruel, disruptive forces against everything that is necrotic, but which oftentimes also agglutinates life, and argued for another body, demanding the cut of the organic structuring that lies at the foundation for the modern and Western body. And Artaud even makes an appeal to hate, a feeling linked to the destructive movements, which in his work are convoked as also necessary for the different reconstruction of the ill humanity, as a force that shouts out for change, as the voice of someone who deserves to be heard – “I am a man who has suffered greatly, and this gives me the right to speak,” Artaud wrote in 1924.

Glissant’s writing, normally made with either a black Pilot pen or variously colored ballpoint pens, abundantly fills the space of the page,¹² or leaves them nearly blank, inscribing on them only their titles/archipelagos. All the matter is mobile in the diversity of his writing, because it experiments with the combination of these contradictory procedures: the emptying of the pages/titles and the abundance of texts, notes, errata, cuts, and substitutions that inhabit his archives, often chaotically. This seems to allude to the fact that, for Glissant, the landscape is not restricted

<p>7 Letter included in the exhibition. During part of the period of research I sought for vestiges of this magazine, discovering months later that it never existed. <i>Corte/Relação</i> is also the outcome of this “lack of an archive.”</p>	<p>8 Obviously Artaud was an important writer for Glissant and his generation, in which Félix Guattari was outstanding. Nevertheless, he did not serve as a referential standard supporting the conception of <i>Corte/Relação</i>, as the text will show.</p>	<p>9 Ana Kiffer, <i>Antonin Artaud</i>. Rio de Janeiro: Eduerj, 2016.</p> <p>10 Notebook 310, p. 10.</p>	<p>11 Notebook 230, p. 13, and Notebook 326, p. 12.</p> <p>12 Included in the exhibition.</p>
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to the fixed field of a visual image; it is a word and a place of the *tout-monde*.¹³ “I have hope in the word of the landscape,” he said. From this viewpoint, the pages of his archives can be seen as part of this landscape/function of the *tout-monde*. Likewise, the paper that looks more like an accumulation of pores – inhabited by different patterns of lettering, by distinct regimens and colors, by an excessive peopling of the page – is aimed, as he wrote, at “taking the shout out of the skin and entering the skin of the world through the pores.” This is because everything in Glissant convokes Relation, and not only that which we understand as being active in the world. Matter and materiality are sufficient signs of this relational activity. Therefore, his writing is proof of the Relation that intertwines all the elements, besides linking the author with each of them – landscape, paper, forgetfulness or opacity are physical and/or conceptual materials of his work, which are in Relation, that is: in processes of vitalizing and re-signifying one another.

But what is a Relation? Will there be a Relation without a *cut*? Without separation? Which rules determine the samenesses and differences? Where is the ruler that separates them? Who possesses this ruler? Where did it cut? When did it cut? How does it cut?

These are questions that neither Artaud nor Glissant has ever stopped posing. In this sense, their radical differences trace a cartography here of gestures of writing, with formal/visible, imaginary and affective aspects, in which the *cut* and the Relation are lines that are intertwined and escape. Initially, we might think that Artaud is the poet of the *cut*, and Glissant, of the Relation. Perusing their archives, penetrating into the physical and affective imaginary of their words, we can see that the bar that separates the *cut* and the Relation is gradually spiraling. It is this spiral of time that brings Artaud and Glissant into encounter. And this spiral also allows us to see that it is only by making cuts – placing opacity in opposition to the transparency of the other and of the world, and understanding that memory consists of the forgettings and obliterations, which are essential for knowing the parts of the machine where the bodies and life were and still are eliminated – that the adventure of the Relation is founded. This spiral of time is also the means by which the virtuality of the gestures realized in the past are renewed into the current Brazil.

13

*Carnet manuscript
d'un voyage sur le Nil*
[Diary of a trip do Nile],
1988. Archives Sylvie
Glissant/BNF, included in
the exhibition.

Time in a spiral

“The peoples who wanted to **cut themselves away** from their history reconstitute their collective memory in **discontinuous** parts, and they jump from stone to stone over the rivers of time; they create their time” (Glissant). “I had a vision this afternoon – I saw those who are going to follow me, but **are still not completely embodied**, because pigs like those in the restaurant last night eat too much. There are some who eat a lot and others like me who can no longer eat without spitting” (Artaud).

Brazil, a country of cutting – cutting its trees, the diversity of its history, a permanent cut between an immense majority that survives separated, set apart, *jumping from stone to stone*, without access to the basic rights of life, or even to life itself, and an exclusive or abusive minority. A country of hunger, where the few eat a lot – a place of greed and profits. Where the few eat the many.

Restoring the *cut/relation* thought and gesture also responds to the wish to cut into pieces the myth that cordiality and racial democracy in Brazil have allowed for peaceful coexistence in this country. Pointing to how these myths of an amorous nature rest on a blending, joyful and violent figure of love – limitless, without separation, without any cut. This also gives rise to the need to distinguish the gestures and shouts of hate (gestures of cutting) that have emerged in different contemporary societies. In Artaud, we see hate not only as a project for eliminating those who are different (war death, mass destruction) but also hate masked by the deceptive project, led by the United States, for the reconstruction of Western humanity. Concerning this deception, inspired in indigenous rites, he argues for the need of another body.¹⁴ A body that dances and sings as a means of combat. A combatant body against the soldier body. If today it seems that we must differentiate among the hates, naming them, nuancing them, this is because their energy that lays claim to difference is not equivalent to the desire among us for cleansing, extermination and execution.

For this reason, in Brazil we can no longer update the gesture of the Relation without accepting the necessary *cuts*. Separation is that which allows us, as Glissant said, to escape from the disconnection between the peoples and their differences. In fact, in a supposed

14

Audio and notebook of
the radio broadcast,
censored in 1948,
*To Finish with God's
Judgment*, included in
the exhibition.

common and unified order, we always live in a state of disconnection. To disconnect is at the same time to separate (to cut) and to silence (to bury). The demand for separation – which we often hear, with difficulty, from the so-called minority groups – is a necessary step toward the creation of another possible, different, more incisive and more difficult Relation. There is no possible Relation in a field of cordial disconnection. Just as there is no separation without cutting. Without a wound. Nor is there any Relation that is constructed if we return to any sort of a naturalized identitary origin.¹⁵ Today, however, all of this is threatened by the impossibility of creating new pacts of Relation. The invasion of desire and of the power to kill spreads more rapidly than the painstaking work of the differences. But it is on this horizon that the task is set for us to inscribe, even more strongly, the potentials of the Relation.

“They create their time,” said Glissant. It is up to us to understand that this time, which is not in the future nor in the past, is only constructed on the stones (and ruins) which, like our hands, endure the turbulent rivers of time.

■ The citations by Glissant were taken from the books *Philosophie de la Relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009); *Poétique de la Relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990); *Discours Antillais* (Paris: Folio Gallimard, 1997); *Les Entretiens de Baton Rouge* (Paris: Gallimard, 2008), and from the interview available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=htIto1xtYBw. By Artaud: *Oeuvres* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004) and *A perda de si* (São Paulo: Rocco, 2017). The citations originally in French were translated into Portuguese by the author, and then translated to English here.

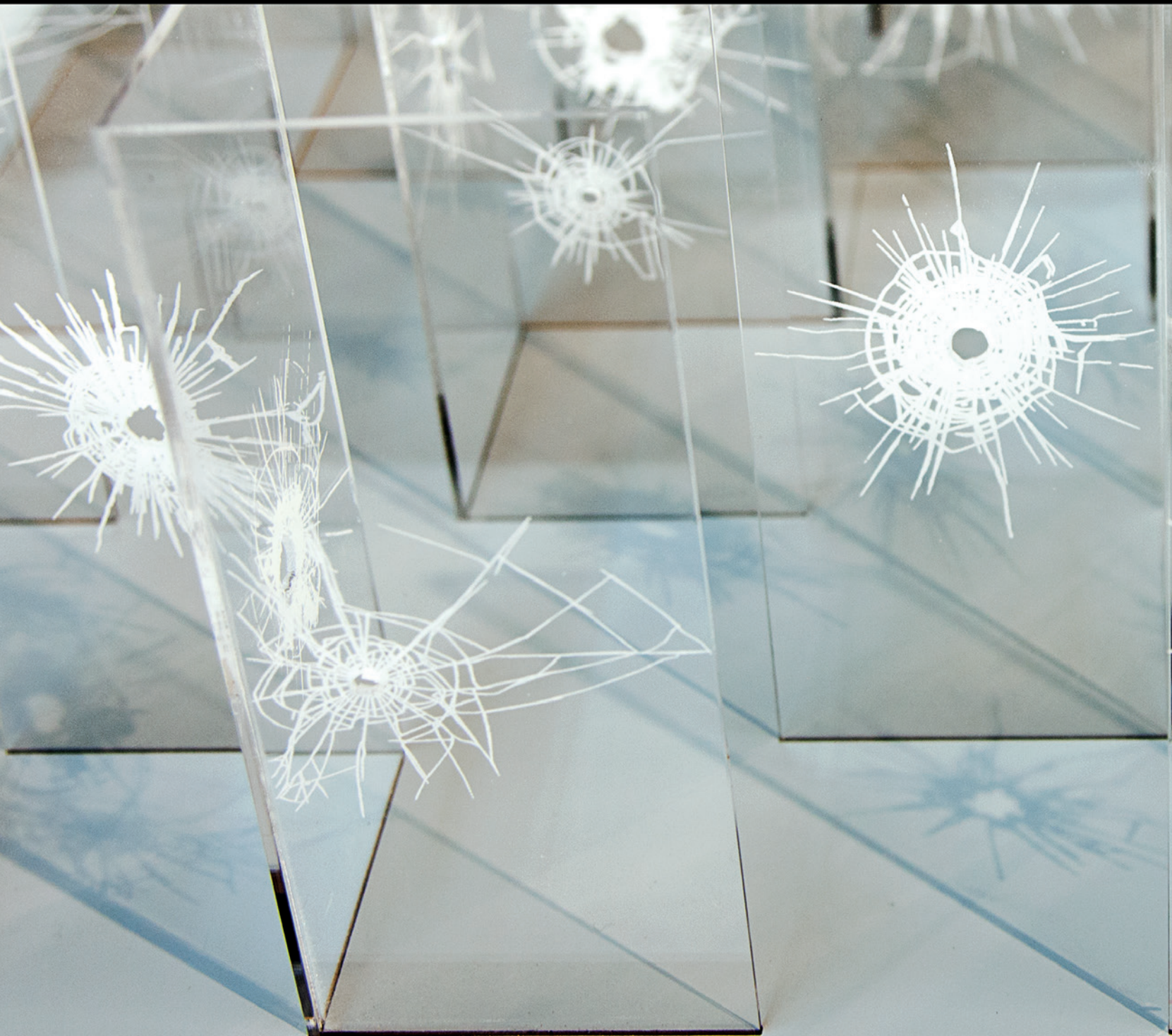
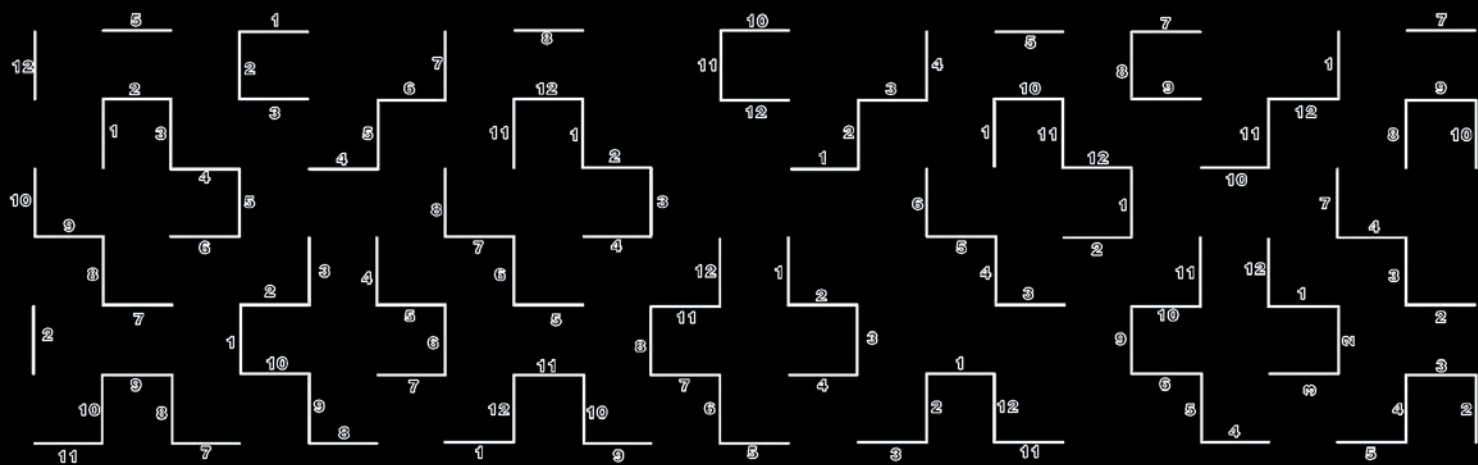
I am grateful to the curators Jacopo Crivelli Visconti, Paulo Miyada and Ana Roman, for their invitation and confidence. To Sylvie Glissant, for her generosity and sharing. To Jacques Leenhardt, for the fundamental conversations. To Cité Internationale des Arts, for their support of my residency to carry out the research for, and conception of, the exhibition *Corte/Relação*. And to those in charge of the archives of Édouard Glissant in the BNF, Guillaume Delaunay and Anaïs Dupuy-Olivier.

Translated from Portuguese by John Norman

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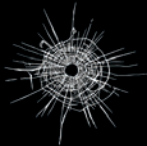
“In the interior of this Relation are there not possibilities of dilution that are regrettable or disappointing? But should we fear the Relation because of this? These are all non evident evidences. And the first is that the identity, whether personal or

collective, is not dictated, nor does it proceed from a natural reality, and its mystery is more magnificent than its definitions. Indeed, it was this latter condition that made the fascist avatars of identity possible, or which maintains them yet today” (Glissant).





TIRO1



TIRO4



TIRO7



TIRO10



TIRO2



TIRO5



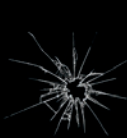
TIRO8



TIRO11



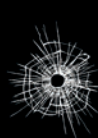
TIRO3



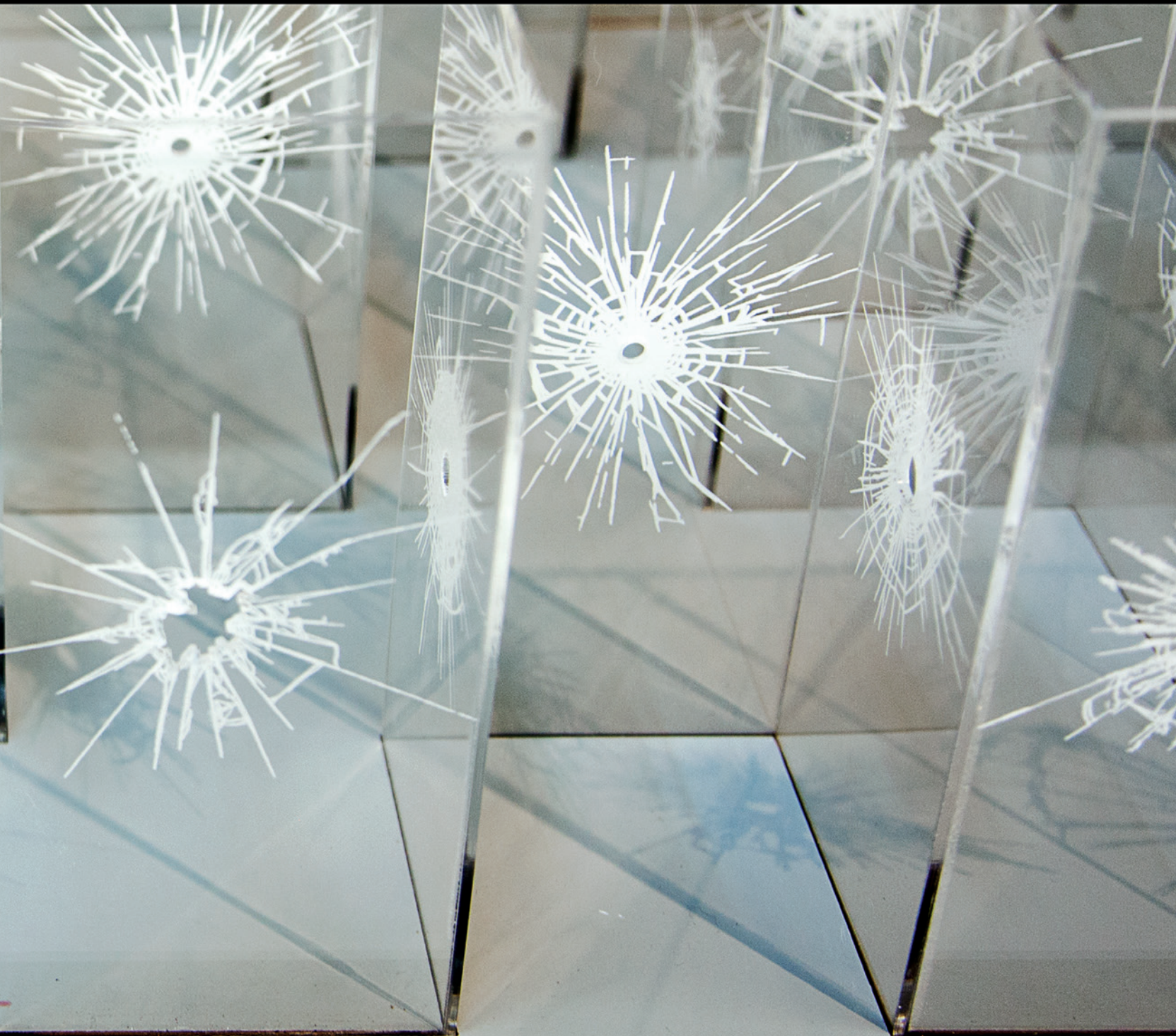
TIRO6



TIRO9



TIRO12











One morning, we opened our email inboxes and found a message from Carla Zaccagnini. This is what it said:

We thought about many names for this Bienal, from eclipse to ambush. We thought about calling it a sphere of interest, the widest whole, an endless linkage, one only learns to swim in the water.

We thought about calling it Luzia, referring to the woman Luzia whose fossilized skeleton was the oldest ever found in South America. A posthumous name given to her bones. Luzia lived for 24 years, they say, and rested under the ground for 11 thousand. Her bones came to light in 1975 and were burned in 2018, in the fire at Brazil's National Museum. Luzia. A verb in Portuguese meaning to give light or to shine, in the past-continuous tense, that is, an interrupted action in the past, a verb tense also known as "imperfect." It is also a woman's name. The name of a saint, of a saint they set on fire, but who was immune to the flames. The name of the saint whose eyes they tore out so she could no longer see the light, nor the light of her name. New eyes were reborn in their place and they said she was the saint of sight.

We decided to call it *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing], as in the poem by Thiago de Mello published in 1965.

We decided to call it *Faz escuro mas eu canto*. Because we are in dark times. And the darkness in which we now find ourselves is firmly settled. Because we want to look at this darkness, to look in this darkness. Allow our pupils to dilate to capture the light which is still there, and begin to delineate outlines in the shadows. Because the darkness is not solid and unfathomable.

We decided to call it *Faz escuro mas eu canto*. Because in the darkness there are also songs. Because the voices that sing are heard without light. Because we believe in the importance of singing, in this way of stating things through a line of poetry, in the power of the refrain on the memory and of the rhythm on the blood, in the impulse of a standing ovation. In the force of the choir. It's dark, so we sing.

A textual exercise, this note seemed much more secure about the final choice of the title than we had been up to that moment. Making this sort of choice is not a linear task. In the following months, there were advances and retreats, doubts and researches, until confirming what in Carla's words had already seemed decided.

An important step was to sketch out the path of this poetic line and the way that it gained and lost meanings in the first years after it was written, as this could inform the multiple readings that it can receive today.

The Amazonian poet Thiago de Mello wrote the poem "Madrugada camponesa" [Peasant Dawn] in the period spanning from 1962, in the state of Amazonas, and 1963, in Santiago, Chile. The last two lines of this poem are: "Faz escuro mas eu canto / porque a manhã vai chegar" [Though it's dark, still I sing / because the morning is coming]. Lines of hope addressed to those who were going through the rural night and needed to plant truth, happiness and love for an imminent future. It was a time with some promises of transformation, watered by progressive projects and some desire for the expansion of basic rights, such as education.

When the poem was published in a book in 1965, however, the horizon was very different. Brazil had been torn asunder by a military

Correspondence #2

27 Feb 2020



Antonio Dias, *The Image: The Day as a Prisoner*, 1971.
Collection: Jones and Paula Bergamin, Rio de Janeiro.
Courtesy: Bergamin & Gomide. Photo: Ding Musa

coup supported by part of the citizenry, and a dictatorship was being consolidated. There were few signs of any morning. Thiago de Mello's book of poems was called, simply, *Faz escuro mas eu canto*. It was therefore more an insistence than a celebration.

The following year, the line returned as the title of a song on the record album *Manhã de liberdade* [Morning of Freedom] by Nara Leão. One of the key voices of a generation that took the risk to speak and sing about the freedom of critical thought in times of political narrowing, she ended her record with a new musical poem composed by Thiago de Mello and Monsueto Menezes. The lyrics were no longer addressed especially to peasants, but to a multitude willing to "work for happiness."

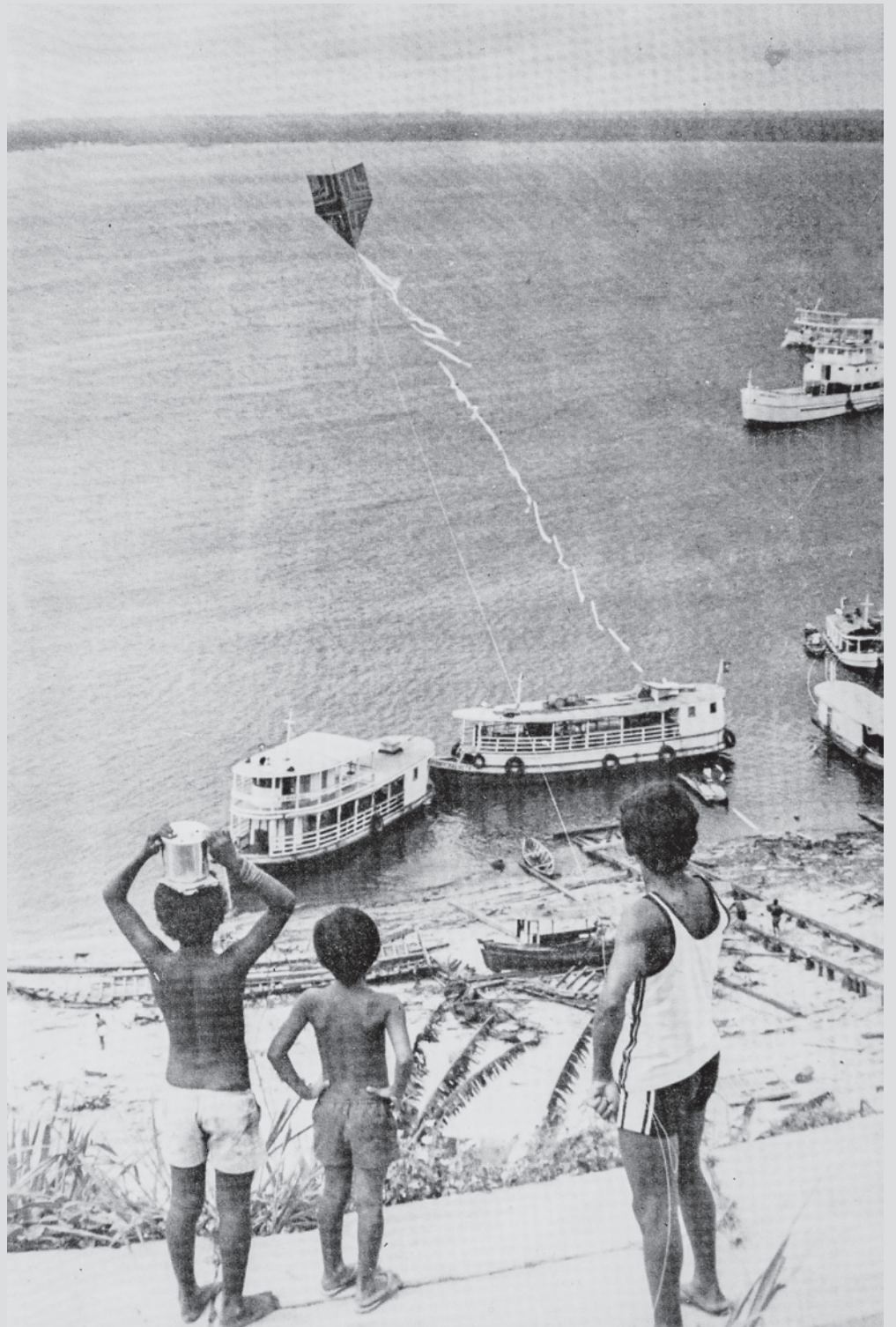
Between the release of the song and the year 1968, this multitude grew and took to the streets, to which the government responded with more repression and more violence. Thiago de Mello was arrested that year and tells that he entered prison fearful of his fate. Then, in his narrow cell, he found his own poetic lines, scrawled on the wall by the previous inmate: "Faz escuro mas eu canto / porque a manhã vai chegar." Murmurs and resistance. He then regained his forces and must have learned something about the power of poetry.

Over the course of five years, as the world had changed, the readings of these poetic lines had also changed. And now, entering 2020, in what ways can this poetic uttering reverberate in this country and beyond it, in a fractured world? In September, when the main show of the Bienal opens, how dark will the horizon be? It is impossible to predict – on a recent day, the ashes of the burning forest darkened the afternoon sky in São Paulo...

■ There is another famous poem, by Bertolt Brecht, which says "In the dark times / Will there also be singing? / Yes, there will also be singing. / About the dark times." It is similar, but not the same thing. With Thiago de Mello, one imagines that the singing will be about the dark times, but not only about them. This is important. Especially those who are more threatened, in the path of projects that desire their extinction, know very well that in this context every song bears, within itself, a potential for life, and, therefore, challenges the desire of death.

*The profession is that of a poet
or a kite flyer.*

Which amount to the same thing



Interview with a Clown

A few years back I had the fortunate luck, while visiting the clown archives in Eastern Kentucky, to meet a retired circus owner by the name of Z, who, due to a flair for research, developed an outstanding collection of interviews with clowns (mostly American) dating from 1979 to 2015. Having traveled in search of materials and documents related to clown history, it was extremely fortunate to have met Z. After explaining my interests in the topic, Z kindly revealed his archive, which was housed in the back room of a rundown brick warehouse and held inside a series of old crates he himself had used as a clown while traveling the country in the 1960s. Needless to say, I stayed in Kentucky, having been allowed access to these stacks of papers and yellow folders. Most of the interviews turned out to be fairly straightforward – though, don't get me wrong, nothing is so straightforward when it comes to circus history, and especially when dealing with the lives of circus performers. And the clown, of course, is no exception: story after story unfolded before my eyes, and a deep sense of pride, craftsmanship, fantasy, anxiety and hilarity were strewn throughout the interviews, all of which brought me closer to this particular cultural figure. After some hours of plumbing the depths of Z's collection, I pleasantly came upon one folder that still captures my imagination, and which I go back to now and again when questioning what it is about clowning that I feel so drawn to. This single folder contained various materials: a number of photographs, mostly of travelers and tramps, one of which showing a group of hobos in prison from the 1920s; scraps of receipts and papers, one which turned out to be an actual copy of an essay penned by Irwin St John Tucker, the renowned socialist priest from Chicago who, in the early part of the 20th century championed the rights of tramps and hobos; some letters that were unfortunately indecipherable as they were written in such a scrawl of a hand as to leave them beyond comprehension; a number of photographs of a rather lanky figure, which I discovered was the clown in question, and whose dark eyes were so draped in sadness as to bring one into such a mood of melancholy, and curiosity; and finally, a stack of pages of an interview that Z himself had conducted with this lanky figure – whom I will simply call "Doc" owing to an obligation to leave his identity unknown and also since it is clear that the clown

in question was a rather philosophically-minded performer. (I say "was" since Doc passed away shortly after the final interview was made in 2015.)

It was with an excited hand that I caught these pages, turned them over, fingered their corners and fell into their lines. What strikes me about this interview are the insights and meditations, the depth of reflection Doc exhibits (not to mention Z, with his canny sense for inquiry), providing us with a greater view onto the operations of clowning. Here the clown appears as a performance artist, a thinker, and importantly, a modality of being – clowning comes alive to show us a path toward not only the art-form, but one that figures a method of performative escape. And so with this in mind I share an excerpt of the interview here, feeling that it may function to draw out important views onto clowning as a greater issue.

Z: Can we start with laughter?

DOC: Do you mean we should laugh?

Z: Well, we could, certainly, but I was thinking that we might talk about laughter?

DOC: Yes, this is such a special aspect. Absolutely. The energy...

Z: This energy?

DOC: The body on the edge.

Z: The edge? Of what?

DOC: Losing control. And... the limit.

Z: But laughter is extremely social, is it not?

DOC: It is, and it isn't... I would say that it immediately fills us with something uncontrollable. Laughter is always disruptive. As I said, the edge.

Z: It does cross boundaries, for instance, in moments of ridicule, I see the point...

DOC: But it is more fundamental. As Cixous says, "laughter is aligned with the monstrous."¹

Z: Do you feel like a monster?

DOC: I am a monster, precisely, because I am unnamable.

Z: But I know your name, I think...

DOC: Of course, there is a word that designates this body, and that you can use to call me, to talk about me, that is clear. But at the same time – and this is what captivates me, here we arrive at the crucial center – I'm

also the one that escapes the name – that is my job, my task, it is what I'm called upon to do: to create uncertainty. To embody the margin.

Z: Is laughter an expression of uncertainty?

DOC: It is absolutely an expression of a certain limit. It shows that limit, by crossing it.

Z: This makes me think of what Georges Bataille writes about laughter, as being tied to non-knowledge. This limit, as you say, of what we know. Is that it?

DOC: Of what can be known?

Z: Of what knowledge may hold, because there is always a periphery to knowledge. You might say, it is haunted by something outside it.

DOC: The edge of knowing... Yes, but it is definitely a question of the body – it is not only cerebral... That is not the point.

Z: But to go back to laughter, how do you feel about it?

DOC: Laughter is like a suspension of time, or maybe a suspension of rules. It is a great movement, of everything, like a rupture – it is so beautiful and so dangerous at the same time. But we must remember, the clown does not laugh – he is to be laughed at, and that's a position. The position.

Z: To be the object of ridicule?

DOC: If necessary, absolutely, but also, of radical pleasure. Of what others may only dream about.

Z: I'm always struck by how often we laugh while in the middle of a conversation. There are so many moments, and so many different types of laughter that occur between people talking. And yet it is so far from speech.

DOC: I think of it as a form of punctuation. It is cathartic... the release.

Z: An exclamation, yes!

DOC: But it is also a release – an expression of something primal... coming out. This is why it is also a friction.

Z: Freud describes it as the release of psychic energy.

DOC: As I said, it is transgressive – it comes from a part of the body we don't really understand... Clowning pries open the dark center that is always so near.

Z: Laughter is also absolutely acceptable. Isn't that right?

DOC: Something that is constantly moving. It cannot be contained. As I said, a monster.

Z: How did you get into being a clown?

DOC: I see, you want a biography?

Z: Yes, please.

DOC: I am not so exceptional... I was always clowning around as a kid, you know, playing tricks, telling jokes, and generally messing around. It was somehow natural for me, something I needed to do in a way. When I was a teenager I met up with some clowns from a traveling circus, they told me about the circus, and their work. This was in the 1950s. I was completely awed by them, they were so incredible, so thrilling, and I was amazed by the circus, that there was this space, this arena for... I don't know, an alternative life. It was mesmerizing, and also tragic at the same time. I thought, this is for me. This tragedy...

Z: And so you joined the circus?

DOC: I did, and I entered into the practice of clowning. I was immediately drawn to it.

Z: What did you learn?

DOC: I would say clowning is a type of choreography, because you have to organize a set of elements, a repertoire of gestures, which are really based on miming, but also a range of props and devices, these become partners within a scene of mishap, sadness, errancy. And then there is the dramaturgy, the narrative, which always steers us toward laughter – if laughter is the final punctuation then there has to be a narrative that inspires that laughter. Clowning is a very conscious act, though there is a lot of improvisation involved. You have to be extremely present in the moment, and aware of your own body as a dynamic thing. A malleable object...

Z: It sounds like you are describing a play.

DOC: It is absolutely theater, it is the beginning of theater, but it is a theater concerned with something outside of language. It is not about text, or voice, but about primal narrative.

Z: Non-verbal?

DOC: Non-verbal, but also something more... a subjectivity... What I have come to understand is that the clown must appear not to know. In other words, he must

be stupid. It is essential. Yet this stupidity contains its own possibility... It is a position of agency, because the clown always knows more than you think. That is the power of the clown, this stupid knowledge.

Z: Like the fool, yes? The fool is the reference here?

DOC: Yes, the fool, who also holds an unclear position in relation to the monarch, or the master. The fool is always on the side of the impermissible. The monster. But nowadays, it is hard to be a fool, we are so obsessed with functionality, with communication, with knowing – there is no poetry anymore.

Z: But certainly we have creativity?

DOC: Yes, but a creativity that is so contained by a professional product, a commodification of the creative gesture. I mean, don't get me wrong, I know that the circus has always been connected to an entertainment value, and this value has a certain element of spectacle, but it has always been a vanguard act. For me, the art of clowning is never about capital, quite the opposite, at least I think so. The fool is always poor.

Z: You make me think of Chaplin. The way he was concerned with this modern moment of intensified capital, and industry, and how the worker is put under by the machinery of money. He used comedy as a way to critique this.

DOC: Chaplin is a good reference – he is the beginning really, of the modern clown as a symbol, because he also knew so well that the clown must be a figure of society. It is a figure for critique. The fool is also present in the sovereign's court – he is there to critique, to say what others cannot say, which also makes him vulnerable. He is always outside while being inside. That is what Chaplin shows as well, from a modern perspective.

Z: You mean, the tramp?

DOC: What is remarkable about Chaplin is the way he took the character of the modern worker, yet the one who cannot function – who can't operate the machinery, in this case, the tramp, or the hobo, which is a figure defined by capitalism specifically by trying to escape – he is the underside of capital. He tries to escape, and at the same time he only exists because of it. He is defined by it, as the antithesis to productivity and industry. He is a failure, and this is precisely what Chaplin captures and uses. As I said, stupidity.

Z: The tramp as a migrant worker?

DOC: Well, the tramp is more a loser, a drifter, who doesn't want to work. He does all he can to simply get by. While the hobo searches for work – there is a distinction here that's important to keep, because the hobo is the one who occupies the border between labor and freedom, between industry and autonomy. For me, the hobo is organized, while the tramp, he is a type of artist because he only wants his freedom. He cannot function. He really doesn't know what capital is.

Z: I'm not sure, the hobo is also so mythologized. There is a romantic image of the hobo, which has to be questioned. This is something Nels Anderson describes in his book on hobo culture.

DOC: There is, of course, the myth, the romantic image, especially in America, that also connects to clowning, but that is precisely the point: the hobo and the tramp both appeal to the imagination, they are a creative proposition really, they are maybe archetypes, and what we learn from the hobo, and the tramp, is that one must escape at all costs. That progress is not the answer.

Z: An escape artist?

DOC: To find that edge to the normative, and to live there. The monster...

Z: Is this what you experienced in the circus?

DOC: That is precisely the arena of the circus – it is an alternative society. It is a completely different order. It is a sort of netherworld – this is clear if we go back to the freak-show, as the beginning of circus. The malformed, the beast, this is essential. It's important to remember that the circus is constantly traveling, so it is always on the edge, it is quite literally on the edge of town, on the periphery, and everyone I have ever met in the circus were people without acceptability. They were talented, for sure, and skilled, but they were also dreamers, fools, their talent is also useless. They loved what they did, and part of that was to love being on the move, together. They are a tribe. They are aware of their own misfortune and they turn this into an opportunity, poetry. They survive...

Z: So there is this question of freedom again, and what you said, about autonomy. At the same time, the circus exists for us, for the audience? It needs a patron.

DOC: Yes, it is not without social connection, but that is based entirely on appearing as peripheral – it

gains its authenticity by being genuinely exterior to useful production. It is pure excess, it is outcast, and this is how laughter operates as well, pure excess.

Z: Did you ever feel tired of this marginal position?

DOC: Yes, and no. I think this is where I've always felt at home, so on one hand, you have this sense of belonging, to the troupe, to the community of the circus, but on the other, you are without a certain place, like the hobo – there is this ambivalence about it all, and on many occasions I have felt the pull of other needs, other possibilities, as well as sheer despondency. The circus by nature is tragic, but it is hopeful at the same time. That is the complexity, and also the potential. To be dangerous...

Z: This brings me back to Chaplin, and the way in which he is also a tragic figure. There is this close relation between comedy and tragedy, isn't there?

DOC: Absolutely, closer than we might truly realize, and the circus might be the place where this finds expression, which is maybe why it is also a mythical space – as I said, it is theater in its purest sense.

Z: What happens when you leave the theater? Do you have a home elsewhere?

DOC: Yes, I do, but "home" is a difficult word. I think I feel most at home when I'm performing.

Z: This reminds me of many of the discussions today around the topic of the creative economy, and the creative worker. How do you relate to this idea?

DOC: As far as I can tell, people are still laboring – I hear all about cognitive capitalism, the creative class, which I guess is partly true, but this should not mask the fact that many people are living sub-standard lives, and laboring under horrible conditions. This is another instance of the western perspective being placed over the entire planet.

Z: I see your point, yes, of course, the creative economy is particular to a western worldview, but in many ways this western economic structure or reality does have its effect on people in India, in Africa, Indonesia, it is a global relation.

DOC: I imagine the creative worker as just another hobo.

Z: So you see a resemblance, a connection?

DOC: Absolutely, but what I feel is missing today is an understanding of solidarity, as well as poetics. I mean, the hobo understood himself as an outcast that was also part of a

greater movement. And that movement had its membership, its solidarity, and also its narrative – it was based on opposition and resistance first and foremost. As I said, the hobo is organized, he knows he represents an alternative, and an alternative to fight for, because you must remember the sheer brutality of early industrialization, and capitalism – it was incredibly violent! And it was a war between workers and bosses, and that's where the unions come in, and why the hobo also represents a socialist possibility. An anarchic possibility. They were political, no doubt.

Z: And you don't see that with the creative workers today?

DOC: I think the creative worker is too professional, maybe too accommodating, even with his or her struggles, too concerned with individual gain. I never hear of creative workers organizing, they are too busy checking their email, fiddling with Instagram. They fail to escape.

Z: What about the Occupy movement?

DOC: Yes, what about the Occupy movement...? I'm not sure I see a connection...

Z: I was only thinking of how Occupy represents a global movement of solidarity tied to today's economic structures of knowledge and finance.

DOC: I see, well, maybe you'd have to ask people more involved – I don't participate in such things.

Z: Why?

DOC: I prefer other scenes, that of radical imagination, I do not want to gather – politics is too overdetermined, too operational.

Z: I see your point, but what I appreciate about Occupy, and other such movements, is that it tries to reintroduce the imagination into the political process. I feel that's what is truly missing today!

DOC: Which is why we're having this conversation, right?

Z: Right.

DOC: The political imagination... I think these are desperate times really, and one of the reasons I say this is I think people really miss a certain level of sharing, of being together, time for being more open to each other. There are a lot of struggles today, but I think there is also a lot we can do together, especially in terms of renewing utopian ideals. The erotic... the drive... I...

Z: You mean, organize?

DOC: No, I mean, poeticize.

Z: And what is poetry to you?

DOC: The trace of an idea... the edge of signification... I can't tell you.

Z: Is the clown poetic?

DOC: Absolutely! It is nothing but poetic – the clown undoes reason, it is on the side of the unspeakable. This is at least what interests me in clowning, especially as it brings us to the body – all I have is my body, and clowning puts us in touch with the body as a power, a kind of body wisdom – maybe I can even say witchcraft, you know, medieval logic, homeopathy, alchemy... It is really a question of nonsense... and the power of laughter.

genipap eyes

visit gruta de santa
luzia [santa luzia's
grotto] at the source of
the tamanduateí river
in são paulo; make a
garment - a cloak -
that shows yesterday's
river (blue lines) and
today's rectified river
(red lines); take the tray,
the enamel plate, from
uncle casimiro's house -
a wapishana relative who
became blind in life and
opened churches dedicated
to santa luzia - the saint
who protects sight; grate
the genipap that jaider
brought from roraima with
my relatives and put on
the glove; perform as santa
luzia inside the grotto and
see through genipap eyes.









Con profundo respeto por las creencias espirituales y por la melódica que los caracteriza, esta notable versión beat de la "Misa Criolla". El recopilado de los documentos folclóricos que sirven de base al ritmo beat, no altera tampoco sustancialmente la fidelidad a la concepción original en sus aspectos fundamentales. En suma, por el valor en contenido, se ha logrado una nueva forma que es como una fresca versión que emana de ella.


Ariel Ramirez

na sou-
vira a que via a fazer
com que isso- sempre me
permitido o trabalho dos
que desejam fazer alguma
coisa em benefício do povo
infelizmente muito limitado
em época de eleições
O que vem acontecendo na
Assembleia Legislativa do
Estado de São Paulo e na
Câmara Federal. Com a constan-
te falta de número
regimental, só serve para
depreciar o eleitorado
brasileiro, e ainda despres-
tigar o que há de melhor
em política. - O Regime de ob-
tido. - O que vem quando
uma indústria mantém empre-
gados que não produzem?
São as dificuldades finan-
ceiras o encargo.

a política o que justamente
precisamos evitar que aconteça
com o nosso regime
porque pagar por nós repres-
entantes que não comparecem
às sessões do Legislativo
Estadual ou Federal quando
a maioria absoluta do elei-
torado precisa para fazer o
que trilha?
Obedeço que seja um meio de
evitar que o "Purocentro" vá
a obter nova votação em
futuras eleições como sinal
de protesto do eleitorado que
sempre procura escolher o
melhor e votar bem. Os pro-
prios têm sido ao contrário
partindo do princípio de que
tudo que não faz mal não
faz bem, não pode ser impedido
e que ninguém é obrigado
por o que a lei não determin

Carolina Maria de Jesus. *Diário* [Diary], 26/10/60 to 03/12/60. Arquivo Público Municipal de Sacramento "Cônego Hermógenes Casimiro de Araújo Bruonswik"

A month before the release of *Quarto de Despejo: diário de uma favelada* [The Trash Room: Diary of a woman from the favela], a book that would sell more than one hundred thousand copies in 1960 alone, Carolina Maria de Jesus wrote, "I know I am going to make enemies because no one is used to this type of literature." The arduous daily life she narrated, in which an entire day spent searching for recyclable materials was almost always insufficient to feed her children, was transformed thanks to the book's commercial success and the interest it attracted among journalists, celebrities, and politicians.

However, her literature proved too disconcerting to her readers in the medium term, as she predicted it would. Born in Sacramento, Minas Gerais, Carolina moved successively until reaching the city of São Paulo, where she began to collect notebooks and used them to experiment herself as a writer instead of selling them. Since then, she saw herself as an author who would frankly speak about her situation, conflicts, revolts, and dreams but who could also write poems, plays, novels, aphorisms, and short stories. A citizen who wanted to leave the favela to live in a brick house and who would like to circulate freely in the high literature's "halls." To progressive readers, such ambitions appeared as signs of alienation, lack of class consciousness, and vanity. For the openly racist, it was nonsense that aggravated the boldness of a poor black woman who should never even have been allowed to publish anything in the first place. And for the more absent-minded, it was an unprecedented conundrum that would require attention to unravel – attention that the publishing world and the general public were unwilling to offer Carolina.

The quantity and diversity of unpublished manuscripts kept in Sacramento are testimony to the violent silencing of her complex literary voice. The exhibition of a part of that material at the 34th Bienal – all written after the *Quarto de despejo* – emphasizes the importance of looking beyond this book, which tends to concentrate and reduce Carolina Maria de Jesus' complexity. Together with the works gathered here, these unpublished manuscripts are also an invitation to think about the mobility of stories, lives, and bodies – which can occur in a conflicting way but signals the irrepressible need for transformation.



My dear Professor I should be overjoyed
if you could only come down and go with
me over the ruins. Come on and I will
guarantee you sights and incidents
enough to keep you digesting facts for
several years to come

Come on and bring your wife and make
us a visit at our home in Merida.

From there as a centre we will visit Ux-
mal, Labna, Chichén Itzá, Mayapán and
Aki. At Chichén Itzá we are at home.
Come on! I am going to write to Mr. Salisbury
about it.

My kindest regards to your wife and
Miss Meade.

Sincerely yours
William Thompson

Rushmore, Beakfield, and Thompson, Correspondence, 1901

This copy is furnished for study purposes only. Written authorization must be obtained for all other
uses. Peabody Museum, Harvard University. www.peabody.harvard.edu





RUTH de Sousa criou papel no run, numa cópia de Carolina de Jesus.

Ruth virou Carolina



“Quarto de Despejo”: no teatro todo o sofrimento vivido por favelados.

Reportagem de AUDÁLIO DANTAS e GEORGE TOROK

QUATRO horas da madrugada, ponto de catadores de papéis na Rua Brigadeiro Tobias, São Paulo. Uma negra franquina, olhar triste, chegou de mansinho e descansou um velho saco de estopa. Outras negras a olharam de alto e baixo e disseram, quase a uma só voz: — “Aquí não; o ponto é nosso”. A negra franquina de olhar triste não teve outro remédio senão largar-se e recomendar a caminhada. Atravessou a Praça do Correio, atingiu a Avenida São João, cruzou com os últimos ônibus e com as primeiras operárias. Terminou encontrando um “ponto” de gente mais camarada, apesar de alguns olhares desconfiados e das palavras duras de uma negra velha que separava restos de comida dos papéis amarrados: — “Cada vez tem mais gente e menos papel pra catar”. A recém-chegada teve vontade de sair correndo. Mas deteve-se, ficou, calada, enrolando no saco. O dia foi insano, feio, carregado de frases e de gestos tristes — vividos integralmente, porque a negra franquina de olhar triste era uma atriz, era Ruth de Sousa, que se preparava para interpretar um grande personagem: Carolina Maria de Jesus.

Uma atriz estuda a fundo o seu papel, morando no Canindé.

Quando esta reportagem estiver circulando, a peça “Quarto de Despejo” já deverá estar em cena, no Teatro Bela Vista, em São Paulo. Trata-se de uma adaptação do livro, feita por Edy Lima, cuja grande preocupação foi a fidelidade ao texto original de Carolina Maria de Jesus. Ruth de Sousa encontra a sua grande oportunidade como intérprete e se empolha a fundo no sentido de captar todas as facetas da vida da ex-favelada e do ambiente em que ela viveu. Por isso “ensaios” fora do palco, nas ruas e na favela (hoje famosa) do Canindé. E até escreveu, como o fez Carolina, a história de sua experiência. A narrativa é em forma de diário, também. Ela alguns trechos:

4 de abril de 1961 — Hoje fui catar papel. Não é fácil contar o que vi e senti. Meu estômago começou a revoltar-se, não só pelo nojo. A minha revolta maior era pensar em crianças que tem fome e pegam comida no lixo. Vi uma mulher retirar um pedaço de pão do meio do lixo e dar à sua filha. Tive vontade de chorar de raiva. Raiva de quem?

Na Rua Brigadeiro Tobias há um “ponto” onde os catadores de papéis se reúnem, à espera do cambulhão do depósito, que vem fazer a coleta. Ali encontram muitas mulheres e homens que haviam catado papel durante a noite. Chegaram com enormes sacos às costas. Elas recebem dois cruzeiros por quilo. E todos elas têm as mãos feridas pelos cacos de vidro que estão no lixo, junto com os papéis. Obtei as minhas mãos mancruadas. Senti culpa, senti remorso. Impossível descrever o que senti quando fiz a primeira tentativa de recolher papéis numa lata de lixo: medo de

ferir-me, medo de “estragar” as mãos, vergonha de ter mádo, nojo.

... Uma velhinha chegou com um saco pesadíssimo. Quando me viu ficou furiosa (eu estava sendo fotografada), pensando que eu fosse a própria Carolina:

— Ela ganhou dinheiro e casa e agora vem aqui fazer a gente de pauzão!

Depois ela descobriu que eu não era a Carolina, mas continuou a xingar-me, agressiva. Tive mádo da pobre. Pensei: Carolina tem razão quando diz que “pobre, de tanto ser maltratado, perde a bondade”.

Vi uma jovem de 17 anos, grávida, arrumando os sacos para a passagem. Um homem bem vestido, caderno de notas em punho, anotava, enquanto um mulato maltrapilho pensava no saco e gritava:

— D. Sebastião, 16 quilos, 32 cruzeiros.

... Hoje fui à favela do Canindé, onde morou Carolina e onde ela escreveu o livro. O sol estava quente. Entre os barracos vi muitas “platinas” de água verde e podre, onde as crianças brincavam. Crianças de todas as idades, como preguiçosos no chiqueiro. Encontrei vários personagens que conheci antes, através do livro e da peça “Quarto de Despejo”. Falei com eles, vi de perto a sua miséria, em carne e osso. E claro que não me identifiquei. Foi ao barraco onde Carolina viveu os seus dois anos de favela. Quem mora lá agora é a D. Alice, com marido e quatro filhos doentes. Assim mesmo, ela não discutiu se podia ou não abrigar-me (eu lhe disse que estava sem lugar onde ficar). Passei todo o dia no barraco número 9 da Rua A, na favela do Canindé. D. Alice, que recebeu de presente o barraco, falou muito de Carolina:

— Ela outra, mas Deus ajudou ela.

Carolina: “Está tudo bem igualzinho como é lá na favela”.

“Quarto de Despejo” peça de Teatro é favela vista de dentro, tal a fidelidade de Edy Lima ao original. De certa forma, é uma experiência nova na dramaturgia nacional, pois, pela primeira vez o tema é “jogado” no palco, não é cru, sem os artifícios comuns às histórias da favela “vista de fora”. A peça é encenada numa co-produção da Cia. Nidia Lúcia e Teatro da Cidade. Quarenta e cinco intérpretes, muitos dos quais alunos do próprio povo, participam do espetáculo, sob a direção de Amílcar Raddad. Além de Ruth de Sousa, outros atores conhecidos estão presentes: Cida Biaz (atriz convidada), Maurício Nabuco, Ceci Pinheiro, Jean Turil, Marina de Oliveira, Nidia Maria, Jéssica Pinho, Alceu Nunes, Volney de Assis e outros. Carolina de Jesus viu os ensaios e achou “tudo igualzinho como é na favela”. E quando Ruth deteve a favela certa noite, carregando o saco de papéis, a autora de “Quarto de Despejo”, que corre aundo o livro já tem 10 traduções, teve esta expressão: “Parece que a Ruth virou Carolina mesmo!”.

INTERPRETE e autora: Ruth de Sousa, catadora de papéis, cantando a atriz de “Dadá Mágica” com o cenário de “Quarto de Despejo”.



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PYGMALION

A
Romance
in
Five Acts

By
BERNARD SHAW

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MAY WILSON PRESTON



"OH, DO BUY A FLOWER OFF ME,
CAPTAIN."

ACT I

COVENT GARDEN at 11:15 P.M. Torrents of heavy summer rain. Cab whistles blowing frantically in all directions. Pedestrians running for shelter into the market and under the portico of St. Paul's Church, where there are already several people, among them a lady and her daughter in evening dress. They are all peering out gloomily at the rain, except one man with his back turned to the rest, who seems wholly preoccupied with a notebook in which he is writing busily. The church clock strikes the first quarter.

THE DAUGHTER (in the space between the central pillars, close to the one on her left): I'm getting chilled to the bone. What can Freddy be doing all this time? He's been gone twenty minutes.

THE MOTHER (on her daughter's right): Not so long. But he ought to have got us a cab by this.

A BYSTANDER (on lady's right): He won't get no cab not until half-past eleven, missus, when they come back after dropping their theatre fares.

THE MOTHER: But we must have a cab. We can't stand here until half-past eleven. It's too bad.

THE BYSTANDER: Well, it ain't my fault, missus.

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I read in a book about the history of landscape painting that Petrarch was the first modern man, for having been a pioneer in climbing a mountain for the pleasure of going up or to see the world from above and a more distant horizon. Or to know what the world would look like without him, separated from him, like a space in which this man is not inserted, in which he does not participate. There actually seems to be a certain coincidence between the invention of the modern era and this elevated or distant vantage point. The objective point of view, as it is preferably known, because everything that is not the modern man thus becomes an object. We moved from the Cathedral tower, which stretches up in search of the sky, to the castle tower, where the king goes up to say to his firstborn: "One day, my son, all of this will be yours, as far as the eye can see."

It was the modern man who developed perspective in painting, invented the hot-air balloon and built belvederes (from the Italian *bel* [beautiful] + *vedere* [to see]). As though it were beautiful to see the world from afar, to see things smaller than what they are when we are together with them. As though it were beautiful to see that everything gets smaller in this subject's sight, and thus miniaturized is presented to him as a sort of sample. It is this subject position which authorizes man to write encyclopedias and to found museums.

It is curious that the peoples of the jungles have never sought to construct scenic outlooks (nor, therefore, museums). Or perhaps it isn't. From above, the forest looks like nothing more than a sea of green. The sea being understood here as it is seen from a ship, of course: a continuous, nearly solid mass, unlike how it is close up. The jungle is the opposite of the panoramic view, of the gaze in perspective. In the jungle everything is seen from up close and everything is interweaved. The crowns of the trees blend together, the leaves of one hiding the leaves of the other, hiding the leaves of the first. And what happens under our feet repeats the things up high – the leaves that fall cover the other leaves, which cover other leaves, which cover still others. Tree trunks, branches, vines, snakes, and foliage. Everywhere. There is no vantage point for looking at the jungle as it would be without us. There is no conceivable panorama, there is no belvedere. It is not possible to miniaturize the jungle and present it. Nor is it possible to trace out the path to follow. The path is made by opening the undergrowth with a machete, just as far as the body can reach, with the strength of both arms, from one step to another.

In his written report, Pero Vaz de Caminha blamed it on the waves: the ceaseless roar of the breakers prevented any understanding between the maritime voyagers and the inhabitants of the land. If that morning had been calm, history would have been different. Oswald de Andrade wrote that the happenstance was the rain, that it was the stormy weather that convinced naked people to begin to wear clothes. If it had been a sunny day, history would have been different. Perhaps the fault was that the meeting took place on the beach. The time that passed between the cry of "Land ahoy!" and the disembarking onto the sand. The time that passed between the moment the ship's sails poked up on the horizon and the disembarking on the sand. Perhaps the problem was the height of the crow's-nest and the same gaze from afar, the conclusions that were being spun while looking at the sea from above and the land up ahead, while the smallness of the human outlines on the beach enlarged in the spyglass seemed to fit in the palm of the hand.

If the encounter had taken place in the jungle, each would have been breathing on the back of the neck of those stepping on their heels, everyone in front of someone else's nose. Tree trunks, branches,

Correspondence #1
4 Feb 2020



vines, bodies, and foliage. All on every side. And each one only sees the other little by little, half-covered, half-hidden, and only when it is very late and they are very near, when breathing the same air, warmed by the other's lungs. If the meeting had been in the jungle, history would have been different.

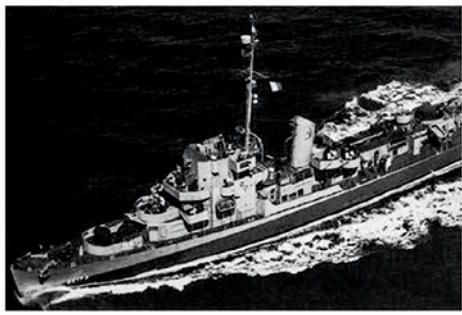
Valdir Cruz. *Porantim do Bom Socorro*, 2017.
Barreirinha, Amazonas. House of Thiago de Mello –
Project by Lucio Costa.













Excerpts from
Amazonas, water heartland

■ One of such storms, one time in the Solimões, we came out alive: the Indian Morón, his five-year-old son, I and the caboclo Rios. I had spent the day in a small village of the Yaguas Indians, learning life with the young tuxaua, who knew much of flower knowledge and magical herbs. We left at the end of day, in a canoe with an outboard motor, towards Choriaco, a very small riverside village. A two-hour trip. Flood-time. We went upriver, close to the steep banks of the forest, halfway there when the tempest fell. "This one will be frightful", said quietly from the back where he steered the motor, my Indian friend. Next to him, on the bottom of the canoe, his small son huddled with cold. I remember that before it became completely dark, I turned from the bench at the front where I sat, and saw the intense shine of his great eyes. I was fear. On the narrow prow bench, shirtless, the caboclo Luiz Rios, an inhabitant of Choriaco. We faced the storm in silence: together, in silent solidarity. The current grew, the canoe balanced on the top of the waves, one after another, falling crashing, the rain lashing at us from all sides. There was a moment when we saw nothing more. Total darkness. Time and again the prow hit some wood. The dull thud, and the canoe seemed about to turn. Morón inclined the motor forward, so as to leave the propellers out of the water, avoiding the shock. The lightening only help us, cutting the sky from side to side: the fleeting light showed us an enormous log, part of a tree with the branches green still, almost on top of us. Silent and agile, Morón brought the canoe to the side with a touch of the rudder. So dark it was I could not see my hand open some centimeters in front of my face. Even so, at many moments I was sure the Indian could distinguish, through the thick darkness, something of the waters and the banks. His eyes could see. Or his ears, or all his senses, most sharp, knew what came near the boat. For he suddenly swerved to the left, soon straightened or slowed down the engine. And from his half open mouth came a brief, coarse, rough sound that unbelievably was possible to be heard over the din of the tempest. As if he was kin to the waters.

The storm was over before we reached Choriaco. A little before. The need is now in me to tell two things that happened that night. The first is that as soon as we came round the bend to the mouth of the Paraná do Choriaco, we met with many canoes coming towards us: men and women from that lost part of the world, and whom I shall never forget. Sure we were to arrive at nightfall and troubled with our delay, they thought us taken by the tempest and decided to come for us, to save us. When they saw us, there was an enormous and prolonged shout of joy. The second is that after the tempest the heavens lighted its stars, pardon me, all its stars that shone enormous, hovering free in the field of heavens.

■ Attacked and raped, the forest defends itself. It defends itself with, above else, its humid, close heat. With the tangled vines, the braids of thorn edges. With the long and black thorns of the trunk of the tucumã palm, at like live animals enter terribly into the flesh. With the leaves of certain plants that burn like live coals, the broad leaf scratchbush, the blades of grass at cut like weapons. And of a sudden the trees and bushes seem to change face, closing the way where man has passed already. The leaves and palms the silent heights interweave abruptly, inaugurating the darkness in the all day of the forest.

It defends itself with the powers of the spells of the legendary inhabitants of the forest. The powerful invisible beings. Not all of them invisible. The magic goblins of the forest make themselves seen when needed, acquiring strange, fearful forms. The matintaperera, the curupira, the mapinguari. Not to speak of the Jurupari, the supreme entity of the forest, the legislator, those moral demands form the basis of all Indian religions.

The matintaperera, or matin only, or matitaperê, may be only a wind coming suddenly one knows not from where, passing, leaving a shudder of air. It may be the shroud-tearer owl, of evil women, or an old woman, running in one leg. Many people think she is the saci-pererê of the forest. But the matinta is really the whitish indistinct shape that comes from the shadow beside us, is soon gone, to appear ahead, still, next to a trunk, vanished in moment, coming back from behind and blowing, a sinister whistle, it is at cold little wind of the nape of the scared caboclo.

The curupira's weakness is helping those lost in the forest. His strong it is, however, to open paths of doom for he who enters the forest with evil intent. He laughs always, he runs laughing, his feet turned backwards. The mapinguari is the most powerful goblin, he thinks himself owner [of] the jungle. He hates loggers and hunters, on whose way he sets traps that are nearly always fatal. He has his mouth in his belly. I met a caboclo at the banks of the Itapecuru, a caboclo that told me in detail the incidents of a bodily fight he had with the mapinguari for hours, when he saw he was lost, alone in the dark of the jungle. Will I be the one to say it is not true? But I sometimes think that, when I consider the acts of the outlaws destroying the forest, the curupiras and the mapinguaris of the Amazon are also finishing.

■ The forest defends itself above all with its fauna defends the flora and defends itself. Those are the clouds of mosquitoes, those that attack by day and those that come with the night. The carapanãs, the blood-sucking mutucas, the terrible daily piunas, the fire sting of the potós, in three days the sting is an open sore. The poisonous spiders, the hairy bird spider with its metal thongs. The invaded forest defends itself with the disease transmitting insects, the evil malaria, the fatal black fever. With the fire ants, the tocandiras, whose sting hurts all day long, they come up from the ground and down from the trees, from whose hordes man runs in despair. Suddenly, stopping under a taxizeiro, the caboclo finds himself covered with ants from head to foot, and can do nothing against the fire stings.

It defends itself with its wild beasts: the suçarana jaguar, the maracajá, the water jaguar. It is hunted more and more every passing day, for the value of the fur. But it resists, untamable, sovereign of the jungle. The forest avails itself of its serpents, they are many, the most terrible of them the surucucu, the jack bite, terribly poisonous. By the side of the rivers, in the silent waters of the forest, at the dark bottoms of lakes, you find the giant fabled sucuriju, the boiuna, the anaconda. The big snake, turned into legend. My grandfather came one night rowing in the Andirá River when he saw in front of him an enormous lighted ship, dividing the waters, gone in a second: it was the big snake. I have dozens of fantastic stories, recorded on tape, of caboclos that saw the damn boiuna. As to me, when I am asked the big cities of the world if the big snake exists, I ask if they think big a snake that reaches to a length of thirty or forty meters, to a thickness of more than three handbreadths. For the sucuriju and the jiboia reach that size, who knows at what age. When they get so big they become too heavy to spring, availing themselves not only of their invincible power of constriction, that may strangle and crush the victim, be it a man or an ox. Still for a long time, in some hidden corner of the forest, coiled or stretched, they use the unbearable hypnotizing weapon of their gaze, which subdues animals and men. [...]





What if we
live as eq

we could
equals?

Becoming

Imagining is not merely looking or looking at; nor is it taking oneself intact into the other. It is, for the purposes of the work, becoming.

Toni Morrison¹

I began to write this text quite a while ago. In a certain way, it could even be said that the dilated, uncommon and violent time we have experienced in recent months is the material which this text, and the exhibition that it seeks to discuss, are made of. Bruno Latour argues that for modern thinkers the idea of the passage of time resembles the “sensation of an irreversible arrow, as capitalization, as progress [...]. They want to keep everything, date everything, because they think they have definitively broken with their past.”² But Latour also argues that the compartmentalizing to which modernity submits everything becomes unsustainable in extremely overloaded contexts, in which there appear myriad “problems” or issues that shed light on the impossibility of separating the human sphere from the sphere of nature.³ The context of the recent months is in perfect keeping with Latour’s analysis: the proliferation of debates and events in different spheres (political, social, ethnic, religious, economic, identitarian...) and the manner in which they are all interrelated and cross-influence one another makes it impossible to account for this complexity through the compartmentalized and analytical outlook typical of modernity.

Everything that happened in the last months, as could not have been otherwise, profoundly influenced the form that the exhibition and the text took, because the construction of an exhibition and the reflections on which it is based are, always, a reflection of what takes place in the world, regardless of whether this reflection is more or less clear, more or less explicit and legible. When we got together for the first time to begin to conceive the 34th Bienal, more than two years ago, one of the things that became immediately clear was that it would be constructed gradually, in a slow process. That we needed time for the pieces to fit together, one idea echoing another, one artwork sounding in unison with another, pointing to a possible tuning. We wanted to work on the exhibition as though it were an open rehearsal, showing how the meanings and the interpretations are constructed over time, and how the process of seeking the tuning between the works and ideas can be as relevant as the result that it theoretically seeks. And at the same time, gradually, we wanted to make it clear that this effort expanded in time is also collective, because the tuning is, by nature, a work of relationships. The Bienal was not conceived based on a theme, or on a set of themes, but rather on two central methodological premises: to make the artworks (rather than an idea) the foundation stone of the process of the

1

Toni Morrison, “Black Matters,” in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992, p. 4.

2

Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993, p. 69.

3

Id., *ibid.*, pp. 49ff.

exhibition's construction, and to enlarge the show, to unfold it, to activate each moment of this construction. We thus began by talking about artists and artworks, seeking the relationships, the possible points of contact or intersection, often instigated more by contrasts and clashings than by analogies. The exhibition is the place of these contrasts and clashings, which are open, plural and in transformation; never defined, crystallized, unidimensional. Because each one of the works that compose an exhibition can be read and understood in many different ways, and because each of a biennial's many visitors has his or her own way of understanding the artworks, the exhibition, and the world.

Seeking to dialogue with the very wide gamut of public segments which over the decades have visited the Bienal de São Paulo, making it a cultural event that transcends by far the scale and reach of most exhibitions of contemporary art, we thought about expanding this edition throughout the year and throughout the city. In parallel with this expansion in time and in space, the show would become more complex, more profound. The plan was for the Bienal to transcend its conventional limit of three months, reverberating throughout 2020 by way of a series of solo shows and performances, capped off by the occupation of the whole Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion as the culminating moment of a process of gradual comprehension and conquest of the space. A space gained, therefore, not a space given. But also a space to be visited throughout the year, which is transformed together with the works that occupy it, which are installed and housed in it, in which the exhibition architecture grows, becoming aware of itself and its surroundings. If preparing the terrain for an exhibition through events of reflection and discussion in the months leading up to it is an already relatively common practice, what we sought was the effective beginning of the show, with the conviction that an exhibition is, for all intents and purposes, a space of reflection and discussion, which becomes even more stimulating when, beyond the meaning of the artworks themselves, the very process of the show's construction and conception is thrown into question. Each of the events that preceded the group show was to deal with specific issues and subjects, and all of them together would talk about the desire of making the Bienal itself a large open rehearsal, with space for errors, accidents, and detours. The idea of *rehearsal* allowed us to think about the exhibition as a process, a space where things are presented without the aim of being definitive and crystallized, emphasizing the importance of the relationships that are created and recreated for each observer.

On February 8, 2020, the rehearsal began with the songs intoned by Neo Muyanga and the artist collective Legítima Defesa in the extraordinary performance *A Maze in Grace*. That same day, we inaugurated the solo show by Ximena Garrido-Lecca, occupying a space

of approximately 400 square meters on the third floor of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. Besides a consistent exhibition of artworks she had made over the course of a decade, the show was also the seed for what would germinate throughout the year. The large installation *Insurgencias botánicas* [Botanic Insurgencies], with its live plants, in this sense, could be read either on the basis of central themes in the work of Garrido-Lecca – like the shock between ancestral cultures and processes of colonialization and modernization in Peru and Latin America – or in a “metaexpository” key, in which the artwork became symbolic of the exhibition, of its ability to transform and take on new meanings over time. Throughout the year, other spaces in the pavilion were to be occupied by performances conceived by León Ferrari (*Palabras ajenas*) and Hélio Oiticica (*A ronda da morte* [The Death Watch]) and by solo shows by Clara Ianni and Deana Lawson, until the pavilion was entirely taken over by the Bienal. In parallel with or soon after this moment, the show would expand to other cultural institutions of the city, which would host solo shows by artists who were also participating in the Bienal, culminating the exhibition’s irradiation.

The Bienal’s infiltration into other cultural spaces around the city did not seek to enlarge the exhibition area, but rather, in a nearly opposite way, it sought to instate intimate and careful dialogues, to emphasize and underscore the importance of the exchanges and relationships that are constructed in combination and give rise to meaning, which are central strategies in the conception of this edition of the Bienal. The idea of an exhibition that becomes gradually public over the months, through a series of correspondences and fragmented texts, was prompted by the same desire to avoid linearity, seeking in its place curves, detours, and foldings. It was born from a predilection for spiraling movements, for movements in tension, in which ideas, phrases and motifs appear and disappear, returning transformed, resignified through the construction of a discourse in complementary, parallel or even contradictory layers.

The result is also an advantageous mix of these texts. We repeat entire passages, from one discourse to another, naturally, as we do not write our interventions mechanically or diligently, by anticipation; we are satisfied with a somewhat inexplicit plan, which we fill with flattened leaves, we repeat, without even being aware that in general this is not seen in a very good light in the context we move in, and we later choose to make this a procedure – actually, a process – so the method instinctively becomes an instruction manual, the chance passages of the discourse are transformed into rhetorical

richnesses of writing: here is the book, suddenly, or gradually, a unity of a great many rough disparities, which sparkle and are experienced as a harmonious whole.⁴

The ideas began to take shape, the ideas settled and entered into relationship with one another. And then came the unexpected cut in this choreography.

The haiku is a Japanese form of poetry, short and generally inspired by an apparently ingenuous observation of the simple beauty of nature. One of the central elements in the construction of a haiku is the *kireji*, which has been translated as “cutting word,” which can have a slightly different function depending on whether it is placed at the beginning, the end or in the middle of the poem. In all these cases, it is practically untranslatable to Western languages, which therefore generally ignore it, or transform it into an interjection, or even some punctuation mark. The untranslatable or intangible *kireji* destabilizes. *Pandemic* is a cutting word: inexplicable, intangible, incomprehensible or ungraspable in its entirety, in its social, political and ethical implications. The cutting word suspended time as we knew it – thus confirming Latour’s theory that the irreversible arrow of modern time is as paradoxical as that of Zeno’s – and imposed unforeseeable changes. The first, nearly immediate effect was the suspension of the events that preceded the group show. Then came the postponing of the group show to 2021, the construction of a broad and diversified digital programming, the invitation to artists and authors contributing to this book to write some correspondences, so that the dialogue, instead of stopping, could be multiplied. With the changes and course adjustments, there were hiatuses, strong winds and breezes, clearings. The process of the show’s construction, and the effort to make this process visible, gained unforeseen power and weight, but the premises that we had used to propose the methodology for its underpinnings continued to be valid, perhaps even more than before. We have therefore continued, until today, to believe in the project.

There is no absolute beginning. The beginnings flow from every side, like meandering rivers.⁵

Any place is a place of beginning, but also a place of continuity, of restarting, of a turning point in what has already been done. It is not possible to begin from scratch, the arrow of time is not irreversible: “Exu killed a bird yesterday, with the stone he threw today,” according to the Yoruban *it̩ā* [myth]. The artworks tell us things that help us, today, to understand what we are going to do yesterday, and what we did tomorrow. This text, like the others gathered here, and

4

Édouard Glissant,
La Cohée du Lamentin.
Paris, Gallimard, 2005,
p. 239.

6

Vento was an exhibition held at the Bienal Pavilion between November 14 and December 13, 2020.

5

Id., *ibid.*, p. 44

like those that we have been writing throughout this entire process, anticipates and recalls the exhibition, the exhibitions, the artworks. As a beginning midway along the path, in November 2020 we inaugurated *Vento* [Wind].⁶ The standard procedure is to find the curatorial text at the beginning of the exhibition path, but in this case there was a text at what appeared to be the end of the path. What was perhaps not so clear was that the very spot where the visitor stopped to read that text concerning what he or she had just finished looking at, as well as the works that he or she would find, following that point, in reverse order⁷ – that very moment, that place – was the precise center of the 34th Bienal. From a chronological point of view, it was right at the midpoint between the inauguration in February 2020 and that of September 2021. From a physical point of view, the moment of turning around, when, after arriving at the end of the third floor, the visitor began his or her walk back, was also the link between the imagined and partially realized solo shows and the group show that would conclude the Bienal's process. *Vento* certainly was not a solo show, nor was it a group show. It was not a conventional exhibition, nor did it wish to be one. It was conceived, in fact, not to be one, in order to address, through its exceptionality, the exceptionality of the moment we were experiencing. Glissant talked about *echo worlds*: worlds made of echoes and in constant transformation. In the nearly empty pavilion, one work echoed the other, each idea reverberated and expanded through the space, in a rhythm imparted by the columns and the distance. The distance between the artworks, many of them made only of sound, was an invitation to pay attention to things we cannot see or hold in our hands, but which profoundly influence our lives. In a certain way, it concerned an experimental gesture, the concretization of the desire to make tangible that which is inherently intangible: the space between the things, the emptiness which, like a mold in constant transformation, reflects and mirrors the form of the world. The wind also is molded by what it finds in its path, and it was with this spirit of opening and permeability to our surroundings – but also with the desire to influence the world, even as it influences us –, that the show was imagined. Because to imagine, as stated by Toni Morrison, is to become, to be modified and to modify. But where does this becoming end? Or perhaps it does not end?

Among the pieces of the Rio de Janeiro's Museu Nacional that went through the devastating fire that burned it down in September 2018, there is a small and slightly pinkish fossil of a fern leaf. I imagine that it has no particular scientific value, and perhaps it is not so striking as other pieces in the collection. What makes it extraordinary is what happened during the fire: the heat broke the fossil registered in the catalog, but, upon breaking the layer of rock that preserved it, it revealed

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See p. 185 of this book.

8

Interview of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro for the newspaper *Público* on Sept. 4, 2018. Available at: www.publico.pt/2018/09/04/culturaipsilon/entrevista/eduardo-viveiros-de-castro-gostaria-que-o-museu-nacional-permanecesse-como-ruina-memoria-das-coisas-mortas-1843021. Accessed: June 21, 2021.

another fossil, previously hidden, imprisoned in the stone for an unimaginable time and suddenly freed by the unexpected vulnerability of that same stone. We would have liked to include that fossil in the Bienal, but its fragility demands, at this moment, rest and protection. Perhaps someday things will change, perhaps with its rest the stone will return to being strong enough for the imprint of a fern leaf from millions of years ago to be shown. Perhaps one hundred, or a thousand years from now. Perhaps not. Speaking about the same Museu Nacional, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro once suggested that it should remain “as a *memento mori*, as a memory of the dead, of the dead things, of the dead peoples, of the dead archives, destroyed in this fire.”⁸ The absence of life in the ruins of the museum thus becomes the clearest and most physical image of how strongly it is missed, of how strongly it was missed in the national imaginary, in fact, even before it burned down. This suggestion reminded me of an action carried out in 2000 by Alfredo Jaar, who proposed to build a cultural center in the city of Skoghall, Sweden, which until then had never had one. The *Konsthall* was built of paper, for being in an area of intense wood pulp production. A day after its inauguration, as planned, the building was burned. The absence of the cultural center became tangible; its lack suddenly became an urgent issue, which the inhabitants began to discuss with an intensity bordering on violence.

Alain Badiou, in a certain way responding to those who held that it was impossible to do philosophy after the Holocaust, declared that he always saw it as

a victory of the enemy himself to have in some way rendered metaphysics, or philosophy, impossible by dint of this one deadly, catastrophic act alone. To subtract ourselves from the dictatorship of the catastrophe is, in my view, very simply to say: ‘we can continue’.⁹

I cited these words in another text, in another context. Now, today, they have a different meaning. Writing a text, just like holding an exhibition, like living in this world, is a work of relationship, in which the context changes the way we feel things. Some of us feel more distant, after everything that has taken place. Others feel closer, that we now share something of a latent and present physical threat, which before we merely understood. We feel more intimately that this conscious and constant effort to continue constitutes the central gesture, repeated daily, in the lives of millions of people. Sometimes, this continuing is by dint of singing, even in the dark. It is to have the courage to look at what Manthia Diawara called, in a recent text, the opacity of the abyss:

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Alain Badiou and Giovanbattista Tusa, *The End. A conversation*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2019, p. 35.

10

Manthia Diawara, *Édouard Glissant: The Abyss and the Poetics of Opacity*, unpublished paper.

11

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *Brasil, país do futuro do pretérito*. São Paulo: n-1 edições, 2020, p. 14. Available at: https://issuu.com/n-1publications/docs/cordel_brasilpreterito. Accessed: June 21, 2021.

The abyss is where the poems of our opacities reside; and we must not be afraid to look into it, in search of our individual and collective identities. [...] The opacity of the abyss is where to search for people whose lives are robbed from them by the naturalization of the link between capitalism and racism, and wherever are interred the victims of nationalisms, xenophobia, ethnic and racial discriminations. The abyss is everywhere that the gaping mouth of the earth or ocean has swallowed a part of our humanity and thus diminished our capacity to empathize with one another.¹⁰

Speaking about the indigenous peoples, Viveiros de Castro introduced some time ago the concept of inherent resistance: “I talk about inherent resistance because it is impossible for the indigenous peoples not to resist if they are to continue their existence as such. Their existing is inherently a resisting, which is condensed in the neologism *reexistir* [to ‘reexist’].”¹¹ From a different, or complementary point of view, James Baldwin once said, responding to a question about the dilated time between his writing of one novel and another: “I must point out, though, too, that I have been working the last few years between assassinations. That doesn’t make it any easier either... They’re killing my friends. As simple as that. And have been all years that I have been alive.”¹² They continue killing. It was about this, about this program of genocide, that Hélio Oiticica was thinking when he conceived his *A ronda da morte*, in 1979. In the interview cited, Baldwin also said that “I know the difference between being black and white these days. It means that I cannot fool myself about some things that I could fool myself about if I were white.”¹³ The number of things that each of us can fool ourselves about is constantly shrinking. One thing that I cannot fool myself about is that my children sleep safely at night, without fear of stray bullets, police or military actions, without fear of wildcat gold miners. I do not fool myself about the fact that this changes everything.

But despite all this, *we can continue*. And we will continue. It is what we can do, what we must do: to try to shorten the time that it will take for things to change. In one of the many immensely inspiring conversations that we had in this dilated, uncommon and violent time, Jaar told us that the seed that he fertilized with the fire in Skoghall grew, and he was called back there to design a new *Konsthall*, a permanent one this time.

If everything goes as planned, they will begin to build it next year.

Translated from Portuguese by John Norman

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Terence Dixon, *Meeting the Man: James Baldwin in Paris*. UK/France, 1970, 27', 0:23:40.

13

Id., *ibid.*, 0:23:00.





What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.



Terra Vajo, 2020

Ink on paper. 50 × 70 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of the artist

Abel Rodríguez (1944, Cauhinari region, Colombia), or “don Abel,” as he is known, is a Nonuya *sabedor* [literally, “knower”], born in the Colombian Amazonian region and trained since a child to be a “namer of plants,” that is, a repository of the community’s knowledge about the various botanical species in the forest, their practical uses and their ritual importance. After spending a large part of his life in the forest, don Abel (whose Nonuya name is Mogaje Guihu, that is, “shining hawk feather”) moved to Bogotá in the early 2000s, and only then he began, without never having a formal education, to draw the forest by memory. His drawings cannot be considered only “works of art,” in the current sense of that definition

in Western culture. They operate first of all as a language used by don Abel to preserve and convey his knowledge.

More than “representing” the plants, his drawings actually “present” them: the trees and other sorts of plant life are patiently constructed on the paper, leaf by leaf, branch by branch, fruit by fruit. Moreover, the plants are almost never presented without the animals that eat their fruits and leaves, or the plants that grow around them. Thus, most of don Abel’s works constitute a faithful, precise and potentially endless portrait of the forest, that is, of an ecosystem where each element is inseparably related with everything around it. Great part of his drawings integrates more

or less extensive cycles, which portrait certain ecosystems in different moments of the year and distinct phases of growing.



Medio Camino [Half-way], 2014

Still of the video. 15'41". Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: PCAI – Polyeco Contemporary Art Initiative

Although he has frequently used photography and installation in his work, Adrián Balseca (1989, Quito, Ecuador) favors the moving image, either or not associated to the presentation, in the exhibition space, of the key players of his videos or films. Balseca's work deals with issues very specifically related to the context of Ecuador and the country's recent history, but which in a certain way are common throughout the Latin American continent. Over the course of the last few years, the main focus of his research has been the extractive dynamics and its environmental impact, a central issue in the politics of various countries in South America, including Brazil, and whose results are visible and dramatically known.

With his works, Balseca has been gradually constructing an incomplete and programmatically open index of symbols and metaphors of specific ecosystems in the region, which can be either natural (Amazonia, the rugged Andean region or the unique context of the Galapagos Islands, among others) or sociopolitical, based on episodes and objects, mainly industrial ones, which summarize the weakness of the attempts at modernizing the country and, metonymically, the continent. For *Medio Camino* [Half-way] (2014), Balseca researched the first car produced in Ecuador, the Andino, a result from the collaboration between the Ecuadorian company Aymesa (Automóviles y Máquinas del Ecuador S.A.) with Bedford/Vauxhall

and General Motors, in the context of the BTV (Basic Transportation Vehicle) program for developing countries, during the great oil price spike of the 1970s. The video is a record of an action performed by the artist, who took out the gas tank from an Andino and drove it the 437 kilometers that separate the cities of Quito and Cuenca without gasoline, relying only on the spontaneous help of people he met along the way.

A Hundred Times Nguyen, 1994

Installation view. 24 framed pigment prints, large framed matrix print, unique collage, video. Dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist, Kamel Mennour, Paris, and Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile

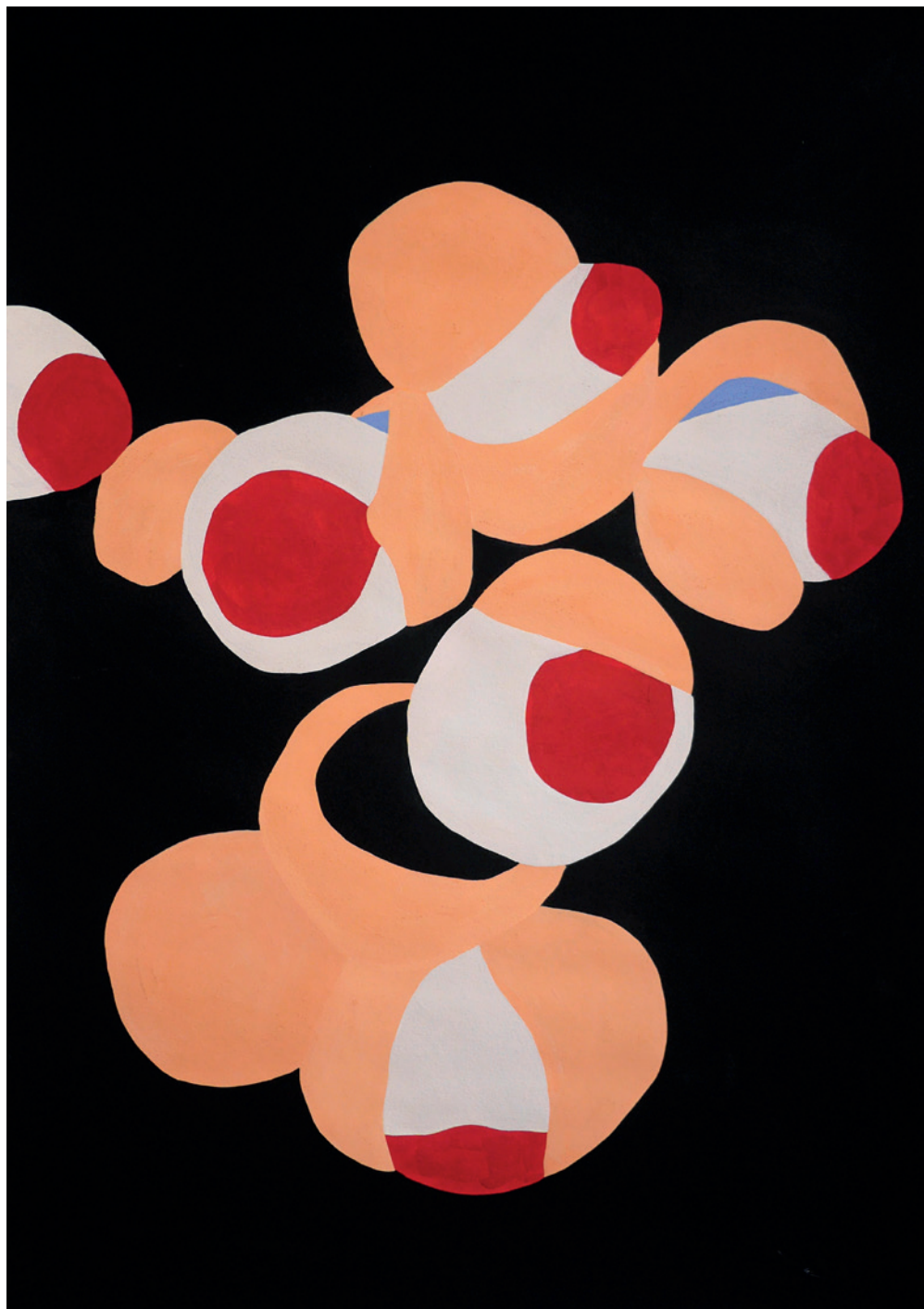


Born in Santiago in 1956, Alfredo Jaar grew up in Martinique until the age of 16, when his parents decided to return to Chile in order to personally experience the socialist experiment installed by Salvador Allende, which would be brutally interrupted by the coup d'état a few months later. Until 1982, when he moved to New York, Jaar remained in Santiago, studying cinema and architecture and beginning his artistic production with artworks extremely critical of the moment the country was going through. In recent decades, Jaar has been constructing an extremely broad and diversified body of work in which a utopian desire of "changing the world," as he himself puts it, is a pervading element that lends consistency

to his works using a wide range of techniques and media, often going out of the aseptic white cube and occupying the streets. The artist seeks to be an eyewitness of momentous historical episodes, recording the slave-like conditions of workers in the mines at Serra Pelada, the humanitarian disasters in Ruanda and Angola, or visiting refugee camps in Asia.

In an effort to expand and deepen his knowledge about places he considers emblematic, Jaar has repeatedly visited some countries and regions, as Hong Kong, to where he travelled for the first time in 1991, with the purpose of knowing personally the life conditions of the Vietnamese refugees who were facing threats of repatriation. Through the following years,

he would come back many times, creating a set of works collectively identified as "The Hong Kong Project", from which *A Hundred Times Nguyen* (1994), a work included in the 34th Bienal, is probably the most emblematic one. When visiting the Pillar Point detention center for refugees, the artist was followed by a girl, called Nguyen Thi Thuy, of whom he took five pictures. The massive repetition of this compact set of images displayed along an enormous installation becomes an elegy in honor of Nguyen and of all the refugees and the wretched of the earth.



Guaraná. Mata series [Guarana. Forest series], 2019-2021
Gouache on paper. 75 × 55 cm. Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist

Having studied and worked in computer engineering, Alice Shintani (1971, São Paulo, Brazil) transferred her practice to the arts in the beginning of the 2000s. Even though much of her work could be referred to as painting, she avoided restricting her production to the settings and structures of the established arts circuit. The artist feeds on direct experiences with the urban environment, the societal events and their historical contradictions, experimenting at the same time with ways of circulating in varied contexts, among audiences less familiar with the liturgy of exhibition spaces.

Menas [Less] (2015-2021) is an installation whose arrangement and composition change

within each context and space that it occupies. The artist devised its elements during a period when she was distanced from the conventional contexts of contemporary art, when she worked directly on the streets, selling *brigadeiros* [chocolate homemade candies] and observing gradual changes to co-existence in a country in a profound dismantling of its social and political structures. The work employs a light and decidedly handcrafted materiality that can be packed up and transported with little effort, and that unfolds in a similar way to assembling a market vendor's or street seller's stall.

Mata [Forest] (2019-2021) has been developing gradually, without a pre-established

project. The work consists of a series of gouaches based on the Brazilian flora and fauna images, especially the Amazon rainforest. The option for a classic pictorial subject, as well as the inviting and flat iconography, seems to suggest a self-referential and pacified work; yet most of the elements explicitly or implicitly portrayed are at risk of extinction. In this sense, the gouaches' intensely black background contributes to highlighting the color luminosity the artist uses to represent the vivacity of something. But it can also be read as a metaphor for the uncertainty and opacity that characterizes our time from an ecological, social, and political point of view.



Asterisms, 2021

4K multichannel video installation, color/sound (video still). Courtesy of the artist and Thomas Dane Gallery

One way to approach Amie Siegel's (1974, Chicago, USA) work – be it a film, video, photograph, installation or painting – is to consider each piece as a case study. Siegel often focuses on the way things work, seeing through their appearances and taking in consideration layers of circulation, economical influxes, patterns of gaze, and processes of constructing value. Such commonly ungraspable aspects of the world are made visible through a long research and investigation process that allows Siegel to discover and highlight connections between apparently disconnected elements, and then record, inscribe and/or even mirror their movement. Montage and the remake are also constant resources in Siegel's universe, not only

when directly creating films or engaging cinematic tropes, but also as underlying relations between different pieces that together form constellations or *genealogies* (to cite the title of a 2016 work) at once subtle and extremely precise, introducing further entanglements and complexities to her broader narratives of contemporary society.

In *Asterisms* (2021), a video installation co-commissioned for the 34th Bienal, Siegel explores geological and social displacement processes on a planetary scale, in this case focusing on the specific context of the United Arab Emirates. Within it, Siegel leads us through migrant labor camps that supply workforce for gold factories and oil refineries; through

the surreal landscape of a royal palace where Arabian horses are bred and trained for show; through the process of constructing artificial islands in Dubai; through an abandoned village almost completely submerged by the desert sand... Each of these segments unfolds in a different cinematic aspect and is projected onto a shape that floats between being a wall and a sculpture. Derived from the superposition of the various projection formats, the shape resembles a stylized star, or asterism – an informal group of stars and the lines used to mentally connect them, whose form we can identify in the night sky, if we look hard enough.



Two Choirs, 2013-2014

Video still. 2-channel HD video installation. 2'03".
Artist's collection

Ana Adamović (1974, Belgrade, Serbia) belongs to a generation of Serbian artists who were born under marshal Tito's government and who lived, in childhood or in adolescence, through the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Many of her works deal with the final years of the republic that no longer exists: its values, its customs, its imagery. *Two Choirs* (2013-2014) begins with a photograph found on the album made by the Institute for the Education of Deaf Children in Zagreb, in 1962, as a gift to Tito, where there is a photograph of a choir where the children sing songs that they themselves cannot hear. Unlike what is pictured in the photo, Adamović's video shows children performing a 1960s patriotic song in

sign language. What we see is a silent group, moving its arms and hands simultaneously, like in a choreographed routine. If in a choir each voice contributes its timbre to create a single mass of sound, in this video we see how the same gesture gains unique characteristics when inhabiting each body.

My Country is the Most Beautiful of All (2011-2013) also begins with the image of a children's choir, the Kolibri, founded in 1963. It is the documentation of a concert in Belgrade in 1987, in which ex-choir members joined the children to sing the song that titles the work, a song that exalts the landscapes of spring and winter, speaks of glory and heroes. In reference to this moment, which brought different

generations of the Kolibri choir together on stage, Adamović, another 24 years later, gathered some of the children from 1987 to sing the same song in the same city – but in a different country, where a recent war killed 130,000 people. The landscape might have been the same, but speaking of glory and heroes evoked other memories. In both the works Adamović presents here, there is an element of history repeating itself, although in this recurrence some differences are also revealed.



Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk, 1989

Performance documentation. Philadelphia Museum of Art. Photo: Kelly & Massa Photography. Courtesy of the artist

In her performances and installations, Andrea Fraser (1965, Billings, Montana, USA) seeks to stimulate public awareness of how the art system directly participates in structures of domination. Connected to institutional critique and to feminism, Fraser has dissected neoliberal globalization, plutocracy, patronage, and identity-based domination in the art world from the perspective of a wide range of cultural agents, including artists, collectors, gallerists, sponsors, and the public itself. For her, the art world is not the institutional space but a field of interconnected structures and social relationships in which we are all involved. Whether through discursive formats, such as texts and books, or through

performance and installation, Fraser creates situations often imbued with humor, staging the different social positions that she herself is involved in.

Reporting from São Paulo, I'm from the United States (1998) is a performance-based video Fraser developed for the 24th Bienal, in 1998. The project took the form of a series of television reports in which the artist played the role of a reporter from TV Cultura (a Brazilian state-sponsored television network), interviewing artists, patrons, and political figures about the Bienal. The idea was for these news reports to be broadcast nationwide on TV Cultura, but in light of events at the time – tumultuous elections, floods that devastated the country

and the global economic crisis – they were never transmitted. The 24th Bienal, which was curated by Brazilian critic Paulo Herkenhoff, addressed the extended concepts of anthropophagy and cannibalism from different points of view and geographies; concepts that Fraser applied to the very fabric of the Bienal, in its financing and international relations, fruits of a perpetual neocolonial dependence.



Untitled, 2015

Clay. 32,5 × 30 × 3,5 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Anna-Bella Papp's (1988, Chişineu-Criş, Romania) artistic practice is centered around a medium-sized, rectangular tablet of clay, usually left unfired or unglazed to allow its naturally variant tone to remain visible while preserving the natural delicacy of the material. While her sculptural practice might seem limited by this rigid format, Papp is actually able to infuse it with intimacy and to convey elements from the external environment. Each time she relocates to a new city, adaptations are felt in her practice, which becomes a sort of diary. When living in Rome, for example, her subjects were inspired by ancient sculptures, religious art, and Baroque luxury and revolved around the philosophical idea of

beauty. Later, having moved to Brussels, she became interested in the Romanian diaspora, strongly represented figuratively by workers in her pieces, in which she explored questions of identity, culture, and social representation.

Usually exhibited laying bare on long tables, without any protection, the works suggest a need to be sheltered, as does the fact that their appearance is often slowly changing through time. The great economy of means turns every small intervention on the clay essential, especially in the abstract works. Her geometric, at times architectural lines and forms could evoke the style and poetics of modernist sculpture but, on the other hand, they could also be intended as referencing the

immemorial use of clay, or even childhood and universal memories of the first contact with this simple, malleable and accessible material. More recently, Papp expanded the scope of her work by incorporating photographs and texts in her sculpture, and also practicing a strongly poetic writing, a small example of which can be seen in the correspondence she wrote for the 34th Bienal (pp.138-139 of this book).



The image, 1972

Acrylic on canvas. 120 x 120 cm. Private collection

Originally from the state of Paraíba, Antonio Dias (1944, Campina Grande, Brazil) moved with his family at the age of 13 to Rio de Janeiro, where he became outstanding as a young artist in the 1960s. His emotionally charged figurative paintings critically assimilated tenets of concrete art in voluptuous shapes painted in red, bones, and silhouettes in black-and-white, along with icons of explosions and weapons. Extrapolating the plane of the painting with the signs of his open narratives, Dias was recognized by Hélio Oiticica as an inevitable reference for the Nova Objetividade Brasileira [New Brazilian Objectivity] movement. In late 1966, having won an award from the Paris Biennale, Dias faced difficulties

in obtaining travel documents and went to Europe with a dubious passport. Having witnessed the events of May 1968 in France, Dias moved to Italy, also in political turmoil.

It was in this period that the explicit signs that characterize his work were reduced and condensed until he arrived at a radically concise work: canvases based on a graphic mass, often in black monochrome, on which a thin framing and some words painted in white evoke scenes and ideas.

Often seen as a result of Dias' adherence to conceptual art – characterized by metalanguage and distancing from representation –, the textual paintings he started producing from 1968 onwards could also be read as an

aesthetic mourning after the worsening of repressive policies in Brazil or, as he defined them, as exercises of “negative art for a negative country”. In these works, each set of words forms an open statement, associated with graphic elements that function as diagrams to be freely translated by each observer.



Project for **The Sound of the Blankets of the Ghosts**, 2021
Courtesy of the artist

Antonio Vega Macotela (1980, Mexico City, Mexico) develops his projects through lengthy research and fieldwork processes, in dialogue with specific communities. His artistic practice is intimately related to these contexts, which are generally semi-closed systems, such as prisons or mines, where individuals work in a clandestine or precarious state. The outcome of these processes and the exchanges created between the groups depend on the strong bonds of trust and exchange that the artist develops. In Macotela's work, the conventional relationships of exploitation and subordination between the bodies and the power of capital are subverted, proposing more humane and more equitable forms of

production and interaction that are not based on money.

In 2016, Macotela started traveling the world with a group of hackers, forming a bond of trust and understanding with them. Out of this relationship came the work that is presented at the 34th Bienal, in which the artist relates the hacker's activities to those of the Q'aqchas, illegal miners active in Bolivia's Potosí region in the 18th century. Maintaining the distance of time, Macotela draws parallels between the power structures surrounding both contexts: on one side, the colonial system of Nova Espanha [New Spain] in Bolivia, on the other, present-day capitalism. For this work, Macotela designed a series

of leather and skin screens printed with "uv maps" generated by a program designed to create racialized avatars and 3D characters. Though at first glance the panels only contain pieces of skin, for those who know how to find it, they also hold part of the lost story of the Q'aqchas and contemporary information on relationships between the political systems of a number of Latin-American countries and big multinationals, encrypted in the texture of the skins.



Untitled, 2020

Acrylic on canvas. 300×200 cm. Artist's collection.
Photo: Wilton Montenegro. Courtesy of the artist

Arjan Martins (1960, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) constructs past and present scenes steeped in personal and collective memories. His years of artistic training – during which he had several different jobs – were characterized by experimentation with diverse artistic languages, from installation to performance. Drawing, however, became his first recurrent tool, which he used to assemble and disassemble elements from a manual on human anatomy – first on paper and later on walls. The lines of Martins' drawings became associated with the lettering of words and symbols, and the reference to the inside of the body shifted to cartographic studies, mapping atavistic memories. He has been developing

his relationship with the pictorial practice ever since.

Based in the Santa Teresa neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro, the artist brings contemporary and historical characters to his canvases, often positioning them in front of representations of the Atlantic Ocean. In the alternation of more and less detailed areas, to the point of leaving the texture of the canvas apparent, his cartographies and maritime images invariably recall the crossings back and forth that began with the perverse formation of the “Atlantic Triangle” and that fed the slave economy between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Martins thus puts the spotlight on the black diaspora of which he himself is a part, not only for his

origins but for the opportunities he finds, through exhibitions and residencies, to travel to the different continents that make up that history. In his paintings, the artist recombines symbols found in different latitudes and longitudes – such as the silhouette of a mountain in Guanabara Bay, the structure of a 19th-century British ship, and the enigmatic face of a girl photographed in New York in the 1960s – often existing together in the same pictorial space.



Binaural, 2019

Film still. Six 16mm projections loop. Courtesy of the artist

In one of her essays, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz (1972, San Juan, Puerto Rico) considers the practice of filmmaking as analogous to the performance of a ritual, insofar as a ritual transforms the conditions of attention and perception of its participants, in a dynamic relation of fluid and interchangeable roles and positions. She also proposes a shift in the focus of cinematographic thought, from the experience of the spectator to the states of consciousness and the agency of the filmmakers. This is why, although there are evident similarities between Santiago Muñoz's processes and ethnographic cinema – including the careful research of contexts and personal proximity with the participants gained through

prolonged shared experience – she is always willing to subvert the conventions of this model. Her films and installations juxtapose documental records, historical memories, random discoveries, material investigations, and fictional explorations.

Taking Puerto Rico as their starting point, many of her films contribute to create an imaginary of an authentically decolonized Caribbean, rooted in alternative ways of seeing and experiencing the contradictions of the region. That is why Santiago Muñoz's work has addressed the clash between an “imported” idea of progress and the extremely rich local culture, as well as examples of hybridizations of various sorts, such as the translation of

Proust's *Recherche* into the Haitian Creole, undertaken by Haitian playwright and director Guy Régis Jr. In various of her recent works, as well as in the installation proposed for the 34th Bienal, the limits of what can be understood as cinema are carefully expanded, on the physical point of view, through many stages of the work production and presentation processes. In the installation, she also incorporates objects (some of them already used in the shootage). Such objects, placed in front of the lenses, distort and modify the projections.



Mokongo, 1991

Matrix for collagraphy. 200 × 141 cm. Belkis Ayón Estate Collection

The production of Belkis Ayón (1967-1999, Havana, Cuba) revolves around the presence of a secret, veiled by myriad symbols of silence and darkness. During her studies, she familiarized herself with collagraphy – a printing technique where the printing matrix is made up of various materials collaged onto a rigid support – and researched Abakuá, a secret Afrocuban society founded during the colonial period, with many of its rituals known only to its exclusively male initiates. In time, Ayón had not only adopted collagraphy as her principal language but had pushed it to unexpected limits, working on large scales and developing, at first, elaborate combinations of colors and textures, and later, combinations in black and

white, with shades of gray. Meanwhile, she adopted elements from the Abakuá culture as recurring metaphors in her work, giving shape to entities usually described only in words.

In her reworkings of myths from a culture she had initially learned about through books, Ayón focused on Sikán, a princess who, when fetching water from a river, accidentally captured Tanzé, an enchanted fish who could guarantee the prosperity of her people. There are many versions of what happened next, but a constant element of the story is that this accident resulted in the death of the fish and the loss of its divine speech. Sikán was thought to have absorbed its power, or to have shared its secret with a lover who came from

another ethnicity (called Efor), and so she was imprisoned and sacrificed by her own people (called Efik). There is, however, an even more dramatic version of Sikán's story, recorded in a text by the poet and anthropologist Lydia Cabrera in 1969: "the true owner of the Power was a woman whom the men killed in order to possess her Secret".



Boca do Inferno [Hellmouth], 2020

Monotypes on silk and paper. Dimensions variable. Artist's collection. Photo: Carolina Caliento. Courtesy of the artist

The group of works that Carmela Gross (1946, São Paulo, Brazil) presented at the 10th Bienal, in 1969, referred to veiled or hidden urban elements, usually unseen by passersby. In the context of the intensification of censorship and violence by the state during the military dictatorship, a large greenish-gray tarp covering a large metallic structure, *A carga* [Cargo] (1968), appeared as something more than a mysterious sculpture: it bore connotations of threat and danger. *Presunto* [Ham] (1968) and *Barril* [Barrel] (1969), the other works in this set, were also exercises in registering an urban landscape charged with an ambivalence between opacity and morbidity.

Aside from the works shown in 1969, Gross also exhibits an unseen work at the 34th Bienal.

Composed of over 150 monotypes, *Boca do Inferno* [Hellmouth] is the result of, in the artist's words, a "daily exercise of making and remaking dark masses, explosive smudges, muddy holes, black fire, clouds of soot...". Gross built a collection of images of volcanoes before processing them digitally until she had generated a group of symbols in high contrast and with clear outlines. She then reworked these images, sketching hundreds of small drawings onto paper in pencil and India ink. Next, working at a printing studio, she directly applied paint onto metal plates, creating dark masses that would later be imprinted onto paper or silk, in a process that involves a certain degree of chance. Thus, by accumulating multiple stages

of synthesis and transference, the artist created an immense panel of convulsed stains that, in their repetitions and differences, metabolize her revolt against the contemporary Brazilian context. It is because of this sense of unburdening and defiance that Gross named her work after the nickname given to Gregório de Matos, the poet from Bahia State, in the 17th century. The work was produced at the Ateliê de Gravura da Fundação Iberê Camargo.



Red Goat, 1961

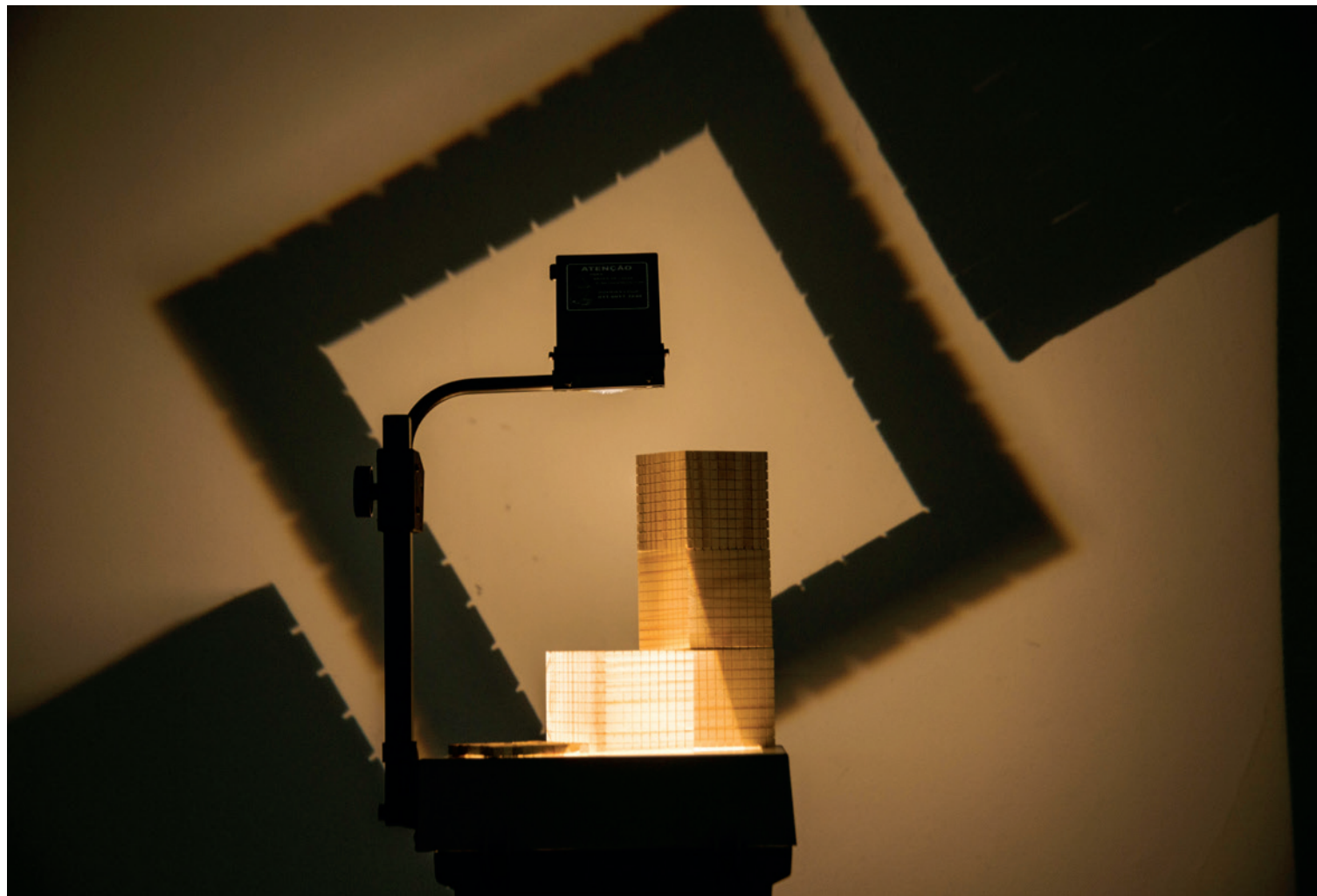
Yfasmatoigraphy [fabric]. 162×109 cm. Collection Yiannos Economou and Yioula Economou.
Photo: Louca Studios, Nicosia

Christoforos Savva (1924, Marathovounos, Cyprus – 1968, Sheffield, United Kingdom) was arguably the most important Cypriot artist of the 20th century. Born in a village in what is now the Turkish part of the island, Savva fought for the British army in the Second World War (in a company of soldiers from the British colonies, at the time including Cyprus), which allowed him to study in London and later in Paris, once the war was over. He returned to Cyprus at the end of the 1950s, settling in Nicosia. There, in a very short period of time, he produced a unique collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture pieces, architectural features, very free experiments with wire and cement, and a series of patchworks from

fabric leftovers, which he called *yfasmatoграфияs* (literally meaning writings or drawings on fabric). With the same ease with which he moved from one technique to another, Savva could produce figurative and abstract works in the same period, as though technical and stylistic questions did not concern him.

In May 1960, having recently arrived in Nicosia, Savva and the Welsh painter Glyn Hughes founded *Apophysis*, an independent cultural center, the first in the brand-new Republic of Cyprus, which had just conquered independence. *Apophysis* means “decision”, and the diversity of the events organized there demonstrates how the decision to create a space was a highly conscious and necessary

gesture of expanding and rupturing with what, until then, had been considered art: in addition to exhibitions by both founders and by other artists of the same generation, the space presented performances, theatrical plays, poetry readings, film screenings, a show of drawings by children and, significantly, a collective exhibition of both Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot artists, a particularly courageous statement of intentions considering that the ethnic fractures that would lead to a bloody division of the island in 1974 were already more than evident.



Educação pela noite [Education Through the Night], 2020

Six overhead projectors and Golden Material [wooden math blocks]. Dimensions variable. Commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal. Documentation of the exhibition *Vento* [Wind], at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

In her practice, Clara Ianni (1987, São Paulo, Brazil) explores the relationship between the materiality of space and social practices. As their field of reference, her works consider the history of Brazil, spanning from its colonial formation to the recurrent cycles of authoritarianism, often questioning what is understood by modernization. Many of her works take this history as a field of dispute whose documents and narratives are found in the present time in order to develop possible futures. Attentive to the ways in which the powers that be regulate what is recognized as a fact and what is relegated to the field of rumors or to the marginalia of footnotes, she works with dissonant voices and happenings, promoting clashing

between official discourses and possibilities of other expressions. This operation involves an interdisciplinary practice resulting in actions, installations, videos, objects, and graphic sets, frequently in the format of essays.

In *Educação pela noite* [Education through the Night] (2020), the mathematics pedagogical material used for learning calculus is employed to play with perception, materiality, abstraction, projection, and distortion. The installation consists of small wooden block figures that, placed on overhead projectors, project shadows and convert geometry – the part of mathematics that studies space and its occupying figures – into an apparatus that produces distortions. In the intervention *Derrubada*

[Cutting Down] (2021), Ianni proposes cutting down the masts of Praça das Bandeiras, which flanks the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion. The term “derrubada”, commonly associated with logging, appears here as a different kind of pruning. Originally erect as phallic signs of national power, the fallen masts pair at ground level in a temporary sculpture that questions the preservation of this space, today a relic or a latency that refers to the “national representation” model that for decades shaped the São Paulo Biennials.



Untitled (Hands and Table), 1936

Gelatin silver print. Collection Jersey Heritage Museum. Courtesy: Jersey Heritage Collections

Born into an upper-class family, artist Lucy Schwob, alias Claude Cahun (1894, Nantes, France – 1954, Saint Helier, Jersey, USA), benefited from an advanced education, which included studies in philosophy and literature at the Sorbonne University in Paris. Arguably best known as a photographer, Cahun is one of the most important authors of Surrealist photography, alongside Lee Miller and Dora Maar. At the same time, she was also a remarkable poet and essayist, as well as a theatre-woman, thus epitomizing the figure of complete artist, whose practice is inseparable from her personal life. An active member of the French resistance during World War II, Cahun was arrested in 1944 and, even though

sentenced to death, was saved as German occupation came to an end.

Most of her photographs are staged and carefully constructed “photographic tableaux” that humorously play on the notion of identity. Still today an ineludible visual reference in the field of gender studies, Cahun’s photographs were radically original for their time. In many of her self-portraits, the artist disguises herself, uses masks, displays outrageous femininity or, on the contrary, assertive masculinity, shaves her hair and alternates between as diverse characters as a dandy or a sportsman. Hers is an art of metamorphosis, the portrayal of a performance which is both intimate and public, an outspoken affirmation

of uniqueness and the refusal of abiding the dominating status quo and its precepts. Beyond the multiplicity of characters and personalities she displays, the recurrence of reflections, symmetries or even multiplication of images confirms the desire to escape from the binary and from the predictable. Often shot at home with the collaboration of Cahun’s romantic partner Marcel Moore (born Suzanne Malherbe), those photographs had not been publicly exhibited in 1954, when she passed away.



Ñokõá tero po'ero [Flood of the Stone Necklace, Pleiades Constellation], 2018
Acrylic on canvas. 100×100 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Daiara Tukano (1982, São Paulo, Brazil), whose traditional name is Duhigô, belongs to the Uremiri Hãusiro Parameri clan of the Yepá Mahsã people, better known as the Tukano, from the Amazonian region of Alto Rio Negro at the border between Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. An artist, teacher, activist and communicator, Daiara is a researcher on human rights with emphasis on indigenous peoples' right to memory and truth. She also coordinated Rádio Yandê, the first indigenous online radio in Brazil. Her work is inseparable from the ancestral culture of the Tukano people who, like other indigenous Amazonian groups, use the native ayahuasca medicine in their rituals. Influenced by this practice, whose visions, known as *Hori*,

permeate all Tukano visual culture, Daiara produces images that evoke aspects of existence that are usually invisible to the eye.

Daiara rejects the easy categorization of her work as “art” in the Western sense of the term and considers the images that she produces, whether figurative or abstract, as “messages” with a value that transcends aesthetic enjoyment. In the 34th Bienal, Daiara will present *Dabucuri no céu* [Dabucuri in the Sky], a set of four suspended paintings presenting the sacred birds harpy eagle, king vulture, capped heron, and red-macaw – the *miriã porã mahsã* – who live on the layer of the sky which prevents the sun from burning fertile soil. On the back of each painting is a mantle

made of interwoven feathers, a reference to the traditional great feathered mantles that, in the artist's words, “stopped being made with the land invasions, the genocide of indigenous peoples, and ongoing extinction of sacred birds. This work says much about the sacred, but also speaks of the mourning for the loss of so many elders, who were the guardians of these stories, that I have lived through and shared with relatives”. In the moment in which we live, after the “falling sky”, a work invites us to contemplate this encounter, between the sky and the earth, celebrating the memories and the possibility of appreciating the transformation of the universe.



Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter and Daniel de Paula

Project for **deposition**, 2018-ongoing

Collection Daniel de Paula, Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter. Support: Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the Resource Center (Chicago, IL), the University of Oregon, and the Oregon Arts Commission

A central axis in the work by Daniel de Paula (1987, Boston, USA) is the constant process of rereading and nearly physical confrontation with the references and models that inspire him, and mainly with the artists linked to the practices of minimalism, conceptual art and land art of the 1960s and 1970s. Another nerve center of his practice is the negotiation between the historical references and the demands and particularities of an oeuvre extremely focused on the current moment, especially when we consider that negotiation (with academic, political, social, industrial, or bureaucratic spheres, depending on the context and specificities of each project) is key to the realization of his work, to the point of often

being included by the artist in the description of the work, among the elements that went into it.

In 2018, De Paula, Marissa Benedict and David Rueter managed to rescue, from the Chicago Board of Trade, a “trading pit” that had been used through decades for the negotiation of grains. The device would be discarded as part of a definitive shift to digital transactions. The resulting work, *deposition* (2018-ongoing), presented for the first time at the 34th Bienal, is at the same time a kind of anti-monument and a platform for public encounters of different natures, which were conceived with the purpose of emphasizing the meeting and confrontation atmosphere prompted by the

structure itself. The artists plan for the “pit” a series of public appearances in cultural institutions along the next years, with the aim of promoting discussions beacons by the different political, social, artistic and philosophical views that the object can symbolize.



Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools (Gerald Howatt, History Teacher, First Year Sixth, Radley College), 1977

Photographic still. Courtesy Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Darcy Lange Estate

Darcy Lange (1946, Urenui, New Zealand – 2005, Auckland, New Zealand) was a videoartist who made realist, social and experimental work. A participant in the 1970s international artistic vanguard, Lange was an innovator in his chosen mediums and became a pioneer of video-documentary, rooted in the tradition of American photographers Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange. His well-known *Work Studies* (1972-1978) consist of recordings of people at work. Lange documented English workers in heavy industry and small workshops, people in their domestic environments, and students and teachers in schools. He also made forays into the world of rural Spain, on farms and ranches. While still living in

London, Lange travelled to his native country in 1974 to continue his work studies in rural areas, and again in 1977 and 1978 to document Maori struggles over their land rights.

Lange shot using long takes, exhaustively documenting everyday stories without relying on editing. Many of his recordings were shared with the protagonists involved, documenting their opinions and criticisms of their working and living conditions. *Work Studies in Schools* (1976-1977) is a series of video recordings in various education centers in Birmingham and Oxfordshire, in the United Kingdom. Lange filmed classes in different subjects, as well as interviews with students and teachers about the recording themselves. Lange was

interested in investigating the idea of teaching as a form of work, illustrating both the teachers' skills and the students' responses to learning methodologies. Abandoning any form of visual strategy or mannerism, Lange made visible the details of the education system, revealing the striking class differences in the student environment in 1970s England.



Untitled, 2018
Video still. Courtesy of the artist

The work of Deana Lawson (1979, New York, USA) materializes the intersection between lived experiences, as imagined narratives, and photography itself as a testimony of the encounters between the artist and her models, which she attends in close collaboration.

Prosaic situations and everyday objects of the photographed subjects, unknown people that Lawson encounters by chance or actively seeks, are transfigured into magical and mythical scenes, delineated by memories and by the rhizomatic cultural references of the African diaspora in the United States and around the world. Lawson starts from the historical portrait, documentary photography and the family album, but her unique and idiosyncratic

look, extremely attentive to details, makes her images transcend the models bequeathed by tradition: the solemn and almost tactile presence of the people, the profusion of prints and decorative objects, worship and affection, positioned and loaded with meanings and references, create scenes that seem to evoke intimacy and spiritual communion.

For the 34th Bienal, Lawson was invited to add another city to the already long list of places she has visited and photographed: Salvador, Bahia, considered the blackest city in Brazil and where the elements of African culture, music and rituals meet more intensely in the country. In a strongly authorial way, Lawson's photographs, which frequently expand toward

the theatrical and feature ritualistic objects or props, synthesize a historical, tragic but also fertilizing process of displacements and creolization. In this sense, the images converge an aesthetics and an intergenerational connection, with aspects of cultural hybridization and local sociability, portraying and at the same time creating an index of what the artist calls an "extensive mythological family in constant expansion". In the context of the 34th Bienal, this is particularly significant – a historical context discussed at length in the writings of Édouard Glissant, one of the main literary and philosophical references of the exhibition.

U.C.-T.C.I #5-21, 2021

Ultrachrome inkjet print mounted on aluminium in stainless steel frame. 180 × 120 cm. © Dirk Braeckman, Courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp, Thomas Fischer Gallery, Berlin, and Grimm Gallery, NYC



Dirk Braeckman (1958, Eeklo, Belgium) considers himself an image-maker rather than a storyteller. As a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent, Braeckman was initially interested in painting, and even though he later turned to photography, one could argue that his artistic beginnings influenced the way he would deal with the process of creating images. Often resorting to re-photographing existing pictures made by him or available on the media, Braeckman invests a large part of his artistic labor in the darkroom, where he develops and manipulates the negatives, in a physical process that leaves visible marks on the final work. While the artist can use the same negative as the subject or starting

point for several different prints, each print is unique, as it bears the traces of its passage through the photographic development and the enlargement process, of the gesture and the manipulation performed by the artist, thus reinforcing the analogy of Braeckman's *modus operandi* with that of a painter.

A similar ambiguity characterizes the photographs from an iconographical point of view. Braeckman subjects are often merely emerging from darkness, blurred, hardly recognizable. Whether they are portraits, self-portraits, nudes or interiors, it is difficult to define their contours. An architectural detail and a retouch by the artist merge and become inseparable: the subject and the process are one. The artist

seems to be aiming at neutralizing whatever he portrays, in such a way that he does not establish any deliberate narrative – his main objective is to create a document conveying a state of mind. On the other hand, this ontological vagueness is also a declaration of freedom: the beholder is also the author, the one who creates the story that the images, maybe, are suggesting.



Carl August Lorentzen's Escape, 2014

Video stills. Installation with monitor, bench, wool blanket, light bulb, HD video, mute. 10'38" loop, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Danish Arts Foundation and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists



E.B. Itso (1977, Copenhagen, Denmark) is interested in the spaces between, the hidden cracks and unseen margins that allow us to live uncounted. He searches for these blind spots in the system where it is possible to exist without becoming another gear in the machinery, without contributing to the chain of involuntary movements that continues to drive the world in a direction that, more and more, is known to be wrong. What we see are photographs, films, and sometimes partial reconstructions of spaces that we could not visit. We see records of actions that needed to be invisible in order to be possible, actions that could only take place at the limits of the law, just outside the spaces we have mapped

to inhabit and the social behavior we have tacitly agreed upon.

Carl August Lorentzen's Escape (2014) is an installation reconstructing the main elements of a cell once occupied by the legendary Danish burglar. On a bench that reproduces the one on which Lorentzen slept, beside a blanket like the one he would use to keep warm, it plays the video made by the police when trying to re-enact his nearly impossible escape from Horsens State Prison on Christmas Eve 1949. If *Carl August Lorentzen's Escape* is about searching for and building a way-out that is not supposed to exist, the photographic series *We Resist Therefore We Exist* (2015) registers the construction of barriers

that, in closing the ways-in, allow us to remain inside properties we are not supposed to inhabit. The photos were taken from inside a squatted building, registering the wooden shield as it is built by the inhabitants in order to keep the police force out. The choice to not see daylight, the choice to be confined, is a means to be protected. They are two forms of understanding space and transit in relation to structures of power, thus finding strategies for navigating and inhabiting the fissures that always subsist.



Ojo Guareña [Guareña Eye], 2018

Film still. 52". Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: AC/E – Acción Cultural Española

Edurne Rubio (1974, Burgos, Spain) works with video, cinema and performance, drawing from the fields of documentary filmmaking and anthropology, using shared methods of research. Many of her projects involve people or architectural spaces with political, cultural and social significance for certain groups of individuals or places. The artist investigates situations and histories that have endured in the collective memory in a diffuse way, subject to different interpretations and points of view, thus lying on the border between fiction and reality. In *Ojo Guareña* (2018), for example, Rubio overlays distinct times in a cinematographic journey set against the backdrop of a complex of caves in the province

of Burgos, in Spain. The plot is inspired in the artist's family history, and becomes an homage to her father and uncles, which as fans of Jules Verne's novels and fed up with a socially and politically oppressive context, in the late 1960s began to visit the caves in the region, searching for a place to get away from the rigid control and to enjoy some moments of freedom.

Daqui [From Here] (2020), commissioned for the 34th Bienal, is a sound artwork that reconstructs a decisive time and place for experimental art and the freedom of expression in Brazil, by considering the role played by the Museu de Arte Contemporânea of the Universidade de São Paulo (MAC-USP) as a key place for radical artistic experimentation in

the 1970s, during Brazil's military dictatorship. At that time, the MAC was housed in the same building where the Bienal is held today. The audio consists of a series of interviews with artists, curators, the institution's staff, and frequent visitors of the museum, who witnessed the happenings. The reports and arguments are mixed within the space of the Bienal Pavilion, establishing connections between their memories and the place itself.



se o título fosse um desenho, seria um quadrado em rotação – ação #1: cadeiras [if the title was a drawing, it would be a square in rotation – action #1: chairs], 2018

Permanent exchange between four public institutions: chair from Colégio Estadual Tiradentes is delivered at Teatro Guaíra, chair from the theater is delivered at Hospital de Clínicas da Universidade Federal do Paraná, chair from the hospital is delivered at the Câmara Municipal de Curitiba and chair from the town hall is delivered at the school. Monday, April, 2 2018. Festival de Teatro de Curitiba. Collaboration: Vinicius Arneiro, Elilson, Felipe Ribeiro and Mariah Valeiras. Curators: Marcio Abreu and Guilherme Weber. Photos: Felipe Ribeiro and Humberto Araujo. Courtesy of the artist

Since 2008, the streets have been the primary space for Eleonora Fabião (1968, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), being the place where her actions are born and to which they converge. She usually begins her actions after defining a set of notations – which she calls programs – for a determined territory. For example, in *Ação Carioca #1: converso sobre qualquer assunto* [Carioca Action #1: I will have a conversation about any subject] (2008), she performed in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, oriented by the following lines: “Sit on a chair, barefoot, in front of another empty chair (chairs from my kitchen). Write on a large sheet of paper: ‘I will have a conversation about any subject.’ Show the announcement and wait.”

Exactly for being clear, precise and simple, her programs can be faithfully followed, creating an opportunity for the intense happening of everything the artist neither can nor wishes to predetermine – the infinite variability of life and of encounters in the public space. In recent years, besides the unit consisting of the “artist” and the variable made up by the “citizens,” Fabião’s actions have relied on the complicit cooperation of “collaborators” previously invited to take part in some stages. At the same time, her propositions have focused on possibilities of mediation and intercrossings between various public contexts, as *nós aqui, entre o céu e a terra* [we, here, between sky and earth], commissioned work by the 34th

Bienal, in which borrowed chairs from public institutions surrounding the Ibirapuera Park, such as schools, theaters and hospitals, are the objects invited by Fabião to compose the work, that oscillates between sculpture, drawing, installation and performance. Fabião’s actions are thus experienced as collective exercises, through which visible and invisible properties of places, objects, people and paths are set into the same vibration.



Tulipas sobre fundo rosa [Tulips on Pink Background], 1985
Tempera on canvas. 73×92 cm. Private collection, São Paulo

The work and life of Eleonore Koch (1926, Berlin, Germany – 2018, São Paulo, Brazil) were guided by an understanding of art as a unique craft, fueled by constant dedication. Deciding to reject the conventions of marriage and gender of the era and social environment she lived in, Koch thus maintained a certain autonomy for the study and practice of art. Her education relied on constant visits to the studios of more experienced artists, including Yolanda Mohalyi, Bruno Giorgi and Alfredo Volpi. The artist attributed her adoption of painting with tempera and the intensification of her reflections on how colors are used to her conversations with Volpi.

The pictorial work that she started making in the 1960s was also an exercise of autonomy.

Without assimilating resources from informal abstractionism or from the post-war concretists, Koch produced silent figurative paintings, composed of forms and fields of colors planned and organized around the horizontal line. Her still lifes and landscapes were often created from successive studies that started from photographs or postcards and which sought a synthesis of the elements, leading to the point where the space between the shapes became more dominant than the actual objects being represented. She then focused on giving color to the planes and forms, creating scenes that evoked feeling, even if they were stripped of human figures, narratives or any signs of the passage of time.

Despite having participated in important exhibitions, including four editions of the Bienal de São Paulo, Koch is still not universally recognized, as she deserves to be, as being amongst the most important Brazilian artists of the second half of the last century.



Un Film dramatique [A Dramatic Film], 2019

Film still. 114'. Artist's collection. Courtesy of the artist, Poulet-Malassis Films. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Institut français à Paris

Most of Éric Baudelaire's (1973, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA) work is born at the intersection of distinct and apparently distant fields: accounts of lesser-known historical events that interconnect with broad political or social analyses; studies of cinematic iconography that reveal revolutionary visions of the world; imaginary correspondences that anticipate or echo real exchanges; in-depth and meticulous socio-political research that transforms, almost imperceptibly, into fantastical stories. A graduate of social sciences, Baudelaire often draws on fieldwork strategies to construct his work's framework, which is later deconstructed and transformed, as is the case in *FRAEMWROK FRMAWREOK FAMREWROK...* (2016), a

collection of over 400 diagrams taken from academic publications that attempt to explain the terrorism phenomenon from the perspective of sociology, game theory, economics, psychology...

At the 34th Bienal, Baudelaire presents *Un Film dramatique* [A Dramatic Film] (2019). The documentary film follows the daily lives of elementary students at the Dora Maar school in Saint-Denis, a Parisian suburb home to mostly first- and second-generation immigrants, who are often marginalized and discriminated against by French society. Made from almost weekly interactions with a group of volunteer students over four years, the film reveals their development as filmmakers and the perception

of the difficulties and challenges that await them. At once extremely direct and poetic, the film is a masterful, honest, and, after all, joyful portrait of the world we live in, where references to the great French cinema of the 20th century meet and merge, from Jean Rouch's *cinéma-vérité* to François Truffaut's light and ironic *nouvelle vague*.



Untitled, 2019

Collage with paper pins mounted on aluminium. 118 × 108 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Nordenhake Stockholm. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Nordic Culture Fund and Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA)

The work of the artist, sociologist and former social worker Frida Orupabo (1986, Sarpsborg, Norway) amplifies and reveals the violent processes of the objectification of the black woman's body, from colonial times to today. Orupabo is essentially a digital artist, insofar as she uses images available on internet, which she assimilates, elaborates and transforms through decontextualizations and digital collages. On her Instagram profile (@nemiepeba), Orupabo has been constructing since 2013 a sort of endless digital collage constituted mainly by both found and her own images, texts and videos. In this way, Orupabo records and exposes the long-standing legacy of colonialism in scenes and images that range

from extremely explicit racism and sexism to examples of domestic violence as well as issues involving gender and identity.

This same digital archive also constitutes the starting point for most of her physical sculptures, photomontages and collages, in which Orupabo engages in an effort to free her subjects. The artist operates emphasizing their rights to look, and not merely be looked at: "My works are not silent – they speak to whomever that looks. As with my collages – most of the figures stare directly at you; forcing you to see them, but they also see you. To create work that 'stares back' challenges, for me, a 'white gaze' and its perception of the black body." Although her working process is directly

related to the fluidity of internet, Orupabo uses an almost craft method of composition. The process of cutting and collaging gives these images a profoundly intimate, personal and affective flair, which starkly contrasts with the violence exposed in the fragmented bodies of black women, their limbs and trunks reunited in strange, afflictive, articulated marionettes, staring back at us.



27 offerings for the Rain at the Field Museum, 2021
Color pencil and Flashe on paper. 123×153 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Gala Porras-Kim (1984, Bogotá, Colombia) investigates the political, social, economic and spiritual contexts that determined the value of objects in history. Her interest is centered on human remains and on material and immaterial goods from indigenous cultures that have been converted into cultural assets preserved within the political and intellectual supremacy of the West. The artist's analysis ranges from the violent processes of extracting and circulating such objects to the methodologies of storage and classification used by the collectors and cultural institutions that receive them, especially museums of history and anthropology. Porras-Kim seeks to expand both the language and operations of power that impose

a unilateral form of understanding and writing history. She explores, for example, how the methods employed by museums to define the physical and spiritual value of certain artefacts can be in conflict with their true meanings and purposes, and the identities of the cultures that produce them.

These questions appear in a clear, ironic, and poetic way in *Precipitation for an Arid Landscape* (2021), a work the 34th Biental commissioned. Fascinated by Mexican cenotes (porous limestone depressions that serve as a water repository common in the Yucatan peninsula and considered by the Mayans portals to communicate with the gods), Porras-Kim thoroughly researched the process and laws

that allowed the transfer of the underwater objects found in the sacred cenote of Chichén Itzá, at the beginning of the twentieth century, to its current location, at the Peabody Museum at Harvard University, in Boston (USA). In the installation, the artist creates a copal paralelepiped (a fossilized resin similar to amber, which had sacred powers for the Mayans) of equal volume to the objects taken from the cenote, mixed with dust that has fallen from some of the artefacts in their current storage at the Field Museum (Chicago, USA). Then, the institution is invited to figure out a way to get rainwater onto it and reunite the material with the rain.



Nurkoszop, 2019

Acrylic on canvas. 278×192 cm. Work cycle: Shaman. Artist's collection. Photo: Giulio Caresio. Courtesy: Archivio Giorgio Griffa

From the late 1960s onwards, Giorgio Griffa (1936, Turin, Italy) started to move away from figuration to turn to abstraction, thus participating in a certain renewal of painting, in a constant, but rarefied dialogue with major artistic movements. Griffa works in long series in which some common parameters are in place, and this adds to the sense of continuity that is felt when facing the body of work he has been developing for over five decades now. While the sparse presence of graphic signs on a neutral background is ontologically minimalist in style, Griffa distances himself from the precepts of the movement by rejecting a systematic approach and mathematical repetition, maintaining a programmatically

loose and lyrical approach to the act of painting. The modest roughness of the canvas he often uses suggests a proximity to Arte Povera, but his choice of materials has changed through time, and his gesture began to accept its own imperfection.

Despite the initial impression one might get, there is no actual repetition in his pictorial language: each stroke is unique, subject to the irregularity that characterizes every human action. Griffa displays an array of signs, lines, curves, arabesques, numbers and letters that together do not compose a narrative, moving away from the linearity of works based on pre-existing concepts. With Griffa, painting becomes physical: the movement of the body in

space dictates the meeting of the paint, almost liquid, with the canvas previously laid out on the ground. The result of the artist's action is unpredictable, as there is no initial project, and each stroke depends on the previous. Coherently with the artist's open-ended approach, the canvases are typically left unframed and unstretched, in a gesture which might make them look unfinished, but should be read as the desire to bestow upon the beholder the freedom to complete the action that the artist suspended.



Natura Morta [Still Life], 1953
Oil on canvas. 23,5 × 45 cm. Collaboration
Paulo Kuczynski Escritório de Arte

Giorgio Morandi (1890-1964, Bologna, Italy) is widely considered the greatest Italian painter and, more generally, one of the most influential artists of the last century. His painting is limited to a very reduced range of themes, such as landscapes of the village of Grizzana or his many celebrated still lifes of bottles and vases, painted with minimum variations over the decades. Morandi lived his whole life together with his three sisters in the small apartment of Bologna where he was born; he taught printmaking for nearly thirty years at the local Academy of Fine Arts; he spent all his summers, from 1913 to his death, in Grizzana. His predictable and methodical biography constitutes a fitting backstory for his paintings,

in which the objects and motifs are repeated to the point of boredom, as his detractors would say, or until the objects themselves and what is reflected on them become tangible: the subtle shifts in the afternoon light, the dust that has settled on the objects, the passage of time made apparent in material changes in the bottles that sporadically reappear, painting after painting, year after year...

Morandi stands out in 20th-century visual arts history as one of the leading figures of a line of artists (but also writers, musicians and film directors) who developed their work, in an increasingly more strident and cacophonous world, by resorting to almost silent reiteration, parsimony and simplicity. The painting of

Alfredo Volpi, the filmmaking of Yasujiro Ozu, or the poetry of João Cabral de Melo Neto are examples of productions akin to Morandi's in which the things are presented for what they are, in apparent simplicity. After all, as the artist once said to his friend, the Italian writer Giuseppe Raimondi, the subjects of his paintings are "my usual things. You know them. They are always the same. Why should I change them? They work pretty well, don't you think?"



Reference for **Ficções sônicas: TREMORES**

[Sonic Fictions 1: Tremors], 2021

Commissioned by the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo
for the 34th Bienal

Overlapping, or even colliding, narrative layers and distinct registers are common features in the writing of actress, writer, and film and theater director Grace Passô (1980, Belo Horizonte, Brazil). In her play *Vaga carne* [Dazed Flesh] (2016), for example, the main character is a voice that occupies a woman's body. The idea of an autonomous realm of voice and speech, potentially independent from the body, is quite natural in Passô's universe, who, in both her writing and at the moment of interpretation (or, one could say, of performance), occasionally turns to other registers of language, including neologisms, sounds, glossolalia and the obsessive repetition of a few words until they become detached from their

common meaning. "There is enormous power in writing what you yourself will be saying. And being a black person turns my practice into a way of existing closer to freedom", the artist states.

In 2020, at the invitation of Ana Kiffer (curator of the statement of the 34th Bienal that puts in friction the works of Antonin Artaud and Édouard Glissant), Passô devised a rereading of Artaud's classic radio play *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* [To Have Done with the Judgment of God] (1947), based on the sonic fiction concept developed by the British-Ghanaian writer Kodwo Eshun, whose work delves into the notion of an Afrofuturist musical panorama.

For *Ficções sônicas: TREMORES* [Sonic Fictions 1: Tremors] the image of a "post-radio" gives support to a sound archipelago which brings together the geopoetics of what is conventionally called Brazil. For Glissant, the archipelagos are places through which multiple territorialities converge, places which are interconnected by imaginaries that crossed oceans, and this multiplicity corresponds to the unpredictable trembling of the whole-world. In *Ficções sônicas: TREMORES*, texts by Artaud collide and meet with speeches of a trembling Brazil.

Things I Couldn't Forget No. 6, 2019

Exhibition view, *Guan Xiao, Products Farming*, Bonner Kunstverein, 2019. Stainless steel tube, fiberglass, aluminium clamps, transport belt, diving lead, weight, cable. Bracket: 280 cm; figurine: 62 cm; pipe: 270 cm (overall height adjustable with cable); fiberglass element: 100 × 127 × 25 cm. Courtesy of the artist; Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, Berlin; Antenna Space, Shanghai; Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, 2019. Photo: Mareika Tocha



Guan Xiao's (1983, Chongqing, China) work draws from the artist's own experiences on the internet and how our visual and auditory perceptions are redefined as we navigate this world of information and images. Her extensive catalog of images, both still and in motion, is often the basis for sculptures, videos, and installations, where the artist brings together and superposes diverse phenomena according to her own logic. For her, all elements in the world – living or non-living, imagined or real, natural or artificial, artisanal or industrial – are equivalent in their present state and state of becoming, and part of her work consists of demonstrating that parity. "The primordial past and the future that has yet to come, or

may never come, are indistinguishable," says the artist, for whom the only reality we share is the present.

In her videos, Guan Xiao juxtaposes images found on the internet that are apparently unrelated, and investigates the distinction between them and objects in real life, negotiating the disjuncture between the physical world of objects and the virtual experience on screen. Her expansive installations and sculptural assemblages combine ready-made and crafted elements, often assimilating traditional media or artisanal techniques within works that are designed on the computer and produced with the aid of digital models and technologies such as 3D printing. Guan Xiao's

strange sculptural objects allude to alien or futuristic lifeforms, suggesting a kind of animism. Characterized by humor, exaggeration, and the absurd, these works seem to propose fictional alternatives to how to inhabit planet Earth in a context of huge influx of information and technology. The artist does not lead us to solid conclusions, but opens the possibility of doubt in terms of our perspectives on time, space, and identity.

Kanau'kyba [Stone Paths], 2020
Installation and animation film. Dimensions variable.
Courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by the
Fundação Bienal de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal



Hammocks and roots are recurring elements in Gustavo Caboco's drawing, embroidery, animation, and writing. Born in Curitiba (Paraná, Brazil) in 1989, the artist experienced his indigenous identity through the words and actions of his mother, Lucilene, who was uprooted from the Wapichana community in the indigenous territory Canaüaním (Roraima) at the age of 10. In 2001, Caboco accompanied his mother on her first return to the community, a visit that made him see the multiple ties he had to his people's worldview and history of struggle. It is on these journeys of returning to the land, of strengthening his roots with the land and his relatives, that Caboco produces his multiform and procedural work, echoing the voices of the Wapichana

people and the beings they know how to listen to, like plants, stones, mountains, skies, and rivers.

In the book *Baaráz Kawau*, meaning "the field after the fire" in the Wapichana language, which Caboco wrote and illustrated after the 2018 fire at the Museu Nacional [National Museum of Brazil] in Rio de Janeiro, he intersects the history of a Wapichana *borduna* (an indigenous weapon) that was in the museum's collection with the stories of Casimiro Cadete, a great leader among his people. Consumed by the fire, the *borduna* was as old as Casimiro had been at the time of his death. This fact unleashed in Caboco a stream of associations and recollections about indigenous lives and memories, which constantly face the predatory

exploitation that is characteristic of Western culture. At the 34th Bienal, Caboco presents *Kanau'kyba* [Stones Paths] (2020), a project he developed with his mother, Lucilene Wapichana, and cousins Roseana Cadete, Wanderson Wapixana, and Emanuel Wapichana. The work derives from a studio in motion, formed in encounters with different landscapes that connect the stones of the sky to the stones of the ancestral land. On this journey, the Wapichana family retrace the tracks of old *bordunas* so that visions of present *bordunas* can continue. The work takes shape through an installation composed of recordings of performances, photographs, videos, drawings, paintings, animations, and objects.

Crutcher, 2017-2019

Steel. 270 × 184 × 136 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Photo: Santiago Mostyn. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists



Hanni Kamaly (1988, Hamar, Norway) develops films, performances and publications in which they investigate how colonial paradigms, and their residues, can be found in public monuments, scientific discourse and museum collections. The alienation of the subject and the persistence of colonial models are brought together in works that examine the museologic display of human remains or the artistic interpretation of ritualistic masks. Kamaly's films are journeys in which we embark willingly, carried away by the tone of the voice that connects the images we see to things we already know and others that still surprise us. At times the links are at first visual, the connection made by our eyes being then explored

by a patient narrator. In other moments it is the logic discourse what sews the fragments of appropriated imagery that continue to flow. Sometimes well-known objects and iconic photographs; sometimes unforeseen realities, unknown angles, extreme examples of a story that still needs to be told.

In the 34th Biennial, Kamaly also presents another segment of their production, which consists of sculptures that could be called abstract. Frequently titled after a person who has been a victim of State violence, these sculptures are silent monuments. Made of metal pipes, they are mere structure: bones, joints, ligaments; nothing that could be removed. Screws and welding marks are all apparent,

revealing the sculptures' construction mechanisms. Like alien or futuristic creatures, they stand on thin legs, almost in suspension, as if still unsure of wanting to belong to this time and place. They seem to observe us in tension, fragile and fierce, while we look at the sharp forms in cold metal and remember other stories silenced by institutionalized violence.



Chronicles XV, 2012

Film still of digitised super 8 film, color, silent. Unique. 3'28". Courtesy of the artist, Rodeo, London/Piraeus; Casey Kaplan, NY; Maximo Minini Gallery, Brescia. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

Some artists' work has its own, unique tone, which makes it immediately recognizable. In the case of Haris Epaminonda (1980, Nicosia, Cyprus), this tone permeates her collages, videos, films, artist books and even the elements that come together in her always carefully arranged installations. These installations often include simple objects of timeless beauty, such as vases and bowls, and sculptures of a lightness that makes them almost ethereal. These elements are always arranged on, near or behind bases, in an extremely self-aware balance, where nothing can be removed without profoundly changing the sense of the whole.

In Epaminonda's work, everything is significant, including, or principally, the

spaces, the voids, the remains: "I consider the exhibition space as part of the work – not only the occupied zones, but equally the empty gaps, rhythm, distances", she says. It is in this ability to shift the viewer's gaze, to lead them to see what seemed, until then, irrelevant, that we can identify a distinctive quality in Epaminonda's work. The short films which make up the series *Chronicles*, filmed in distinct locations over a number of years, can be seen as a programmatically dispersed and yet coherent index of possible suspended narratives: the numbers of the page of a book, small ancient sculptures against colored backgrounds, tree branches moving in the wind, at times letting the sunlight in, a lone palm tree against a blue

sky... For the work commissioned by the 34th Biennial, *Grids* (2021), Epaminonda delved into the huge archive of 35mm photographs she has been taking since 1997. Guided by her intuition, Epaminonda puts these works in relation to each other, identifying and making almost tangible the forces of attraction that, invisible, operate in the world.



Single Copy 副本人, 2019
Video installation with sculpture. 21'17". Courtesy of the artist

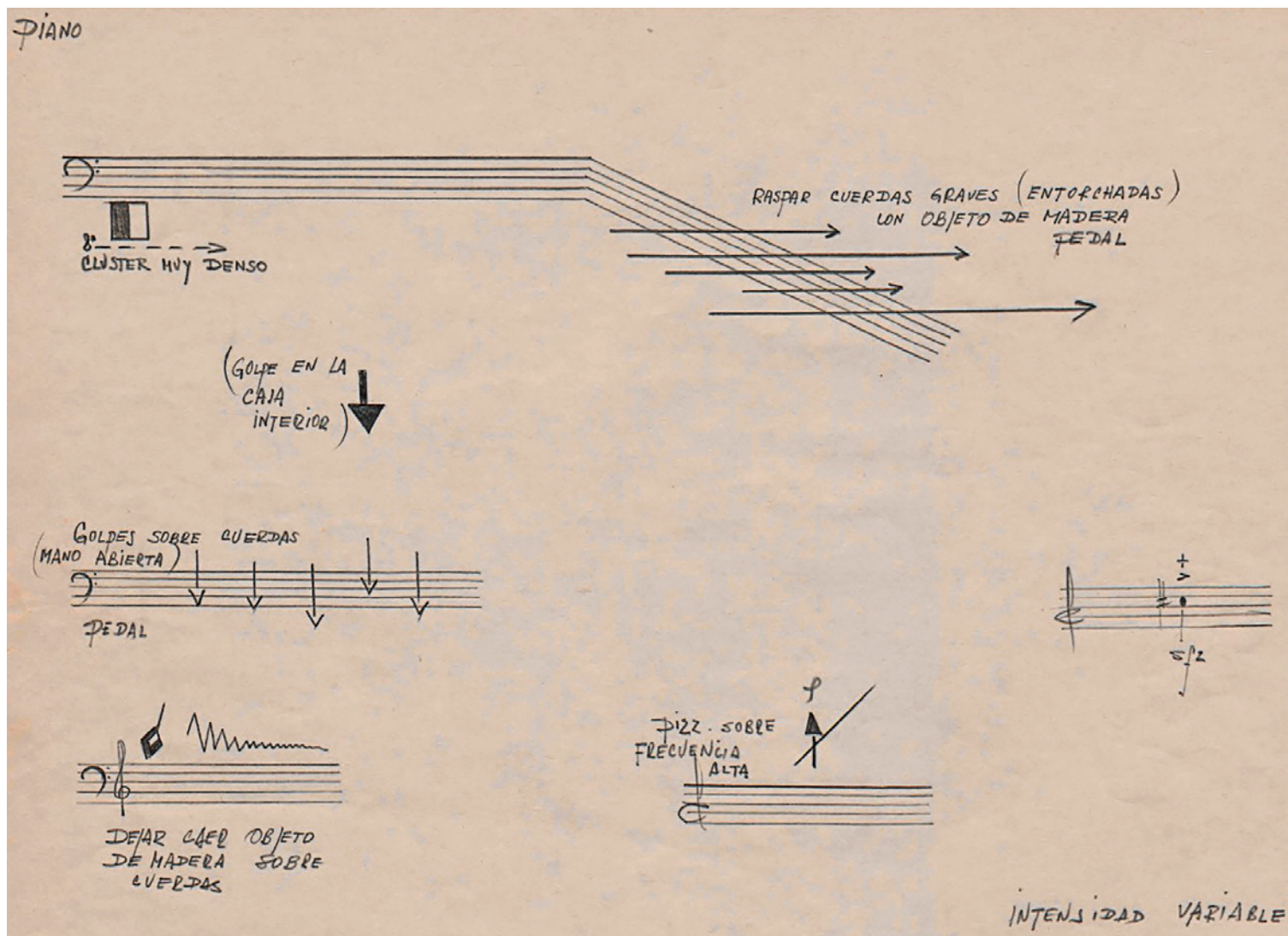
Hsu Che-Yu (1985, Taipei, Taiwan) devises ways of accessing individual, family and collective memories. To this end, he uses methods ranging from testimonies and reenactments to constructing simulated documents of what would otherwise exist only as reminiscence. Often, he takes the possessor of a memory back to the place where the original event occurred, or involves that person in some form of reenactment of a past situation. Frequently, he develops – or asks a collaborator to write – a text on recollections that the viewer will never know whether fictional or not, and to what extent. He also often uses digital animation and three-dimensional rendering, as well as combines forensic procedures used by the

police with journalistic methods of composing narrative images to report on crimes. In all cases, Hsu Che-Yu avoids disguising the artifices he uses, preferring to assume them as part of the form and content of the work.

Single Copy 副本人 (2019) is a video essay investigating the memories of Chang Chung-I, who was born conjoined to his Siamese brother Chang Chung-Jen in Taiwan in 1979, during a period of martial law that kept the region under strict control and in a fragile and tense autonomy from the People's Republic of China. The brothers' separation was televised to the whole of Taiwan and was interpreted as a metaphor for the geopolitical separation of a nation. Before the surgery, the doctors tried to

make a silicone mold of their conjoined bodies, but it was impossible because the babies would not hold still. Hsu Che-Yu worked with Chang Chung-I – who became an actor and grew up as a celebrity – to recount Chung-I's life while producing a three-dimensional photogrammetric model of his body in fiberglass. This work is a cooperation with his long-time collaborator, screenwriter Chen Wan-Yin.

Jacqueline Nova



HK70, 1970

Music score. Courtesy: Centro de Documentación Musical, Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia; Ana Romano G.; Festival En Tiempo Real

Jacqueline Nova (1935, Ghent, Belgium – 1975, Bogotá, Colombia) was a pioneer of electro-acoustic music in Colombia and one of the most important Latin American experimental composers of the 20th century. The daughter of a Belgian mother and a Colombian father, she moved to Bucaramanga (Colombia) in early childhood, started her musical education at the age of seven and moved to Bogotá aged twenty, where she enrolled in the Conservatorio de la Universidad Nacional in 1958. Nova contributed to breaking the tradition that confined women to roles of interpreter or muse, becoming the first female trained in musical composition in Colombia and starting a profound research into the use of new technologies in

music. Between 1967 and 1969, Nova studied at the leading Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales (CLAEM), in the Torcuato di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires (Argentina), where she had contact with major vanguard composers.

Returning to Colombia in 1969, Nova fought for vanguard music in her country and played an important role as a cultural actor in a repressive context, becoming a reference for composers interested in contemporary musical composition. In some of her productions of that time, she merged electronic noise, orchestral instruments, and indigenous voices, creating a hybrid kind of music that radically revised musical norms. In *Creación de la tierra*

[Creation of the earth] (1972), probably her best-known work, she interwove her interest in electronic transformations of the voice with the search for an almost mythical idea of ancestry. In this piece, Nova incorporated chants about the creation of the earth by the Colombian indigenous U'wa people, and distorted and modified them electronically, alluding in a sense to the impossibility of a translation or linear appropriation of one culture by another.

The version of *Creación de la tierra* presented at the 34th Bial was conceived by Ana Romano G.



A guerra dos Kanaimés [The Kanaimés War], 2020 (series)

Acrylic and Posca pen on canvas. 110 × 145 cm (each). Courtesy of the artist. Commissioned by the Fundação Bial de São Paulo for the 34th Bienal,

Born in the region currently demarcated as Raposa Serra do Sol Indigenous Land, Jaidier Esbell (1979, Normandia, Roraima, Brazil) is a Macuxi artist and writer. Since 2013, when he organized the I Encounter of All the Peoples, Esbell has played a central role in the movement for consolidating contemporary indigenous art in the Brazilian context, acting in a multiple and interdisciplinary way, combining the role of artist, curator, writer, educator, activist, promoter, and cultural catalyzer. In his first literary work, *Terreiro de Makunaima – mitos, lendas e histórias em vivências* [Terreiro de Makunaima – Myths, Legends and Stories in Experiences] (2010), Esbell identifies himself as the grandson of the demiurge, and encourages the re-appropriation

of this myth by the indigenous people, considering that, in the Macuxi culture, Makunaimi is one of the “children of the Sun”, and is the creator of all the natures, and when his world was on the brink of extinction, he cut down the Wazak’a tree, giving life back for ever, which is therefore very different from the “characterless hero” in the eponymous novel by Mário de Andrade.

Combining painting, writing, drawing, installation, and performance, his work intertwines indigenous myths, criticisms of hegemonic culture, and socio environmental concerns, sometimes drifting into the poetic realm, sometimes taking a clear political and activist stand. *A guerra dos Kanaimés* [Kanaimés War]

(2019-2020) is a series of paintings made by Esbell for the 34th Bienal. In a succession of allegorical scenes, the artist evokes the idea of the Kanaimés – often described as deadly spirits who cause the deaths of those who come across them – and projects it onto contemporary conflicts experienced by the Macuxi people and their relatives, who are constantly attacked by official and non-official offensives intending to exploit their land. Depending on their allegiances, the Kanaimés can be seen as protectors or as predators. In a context characterized by both veiled and direct threats, where what kills is often seen as a remedy, Esbell rethinks the tangible presence of these spirits in the life and struggle of the Macuxi people.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith



I See Red: Herd, 1992

Mixed media on canvas. 152,4×381 cm. Collection Garth Greenan Gallery, New York. Courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York

Born at the St. Ignatius Indian Mission, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (1940, Flathead Reserve, Montana, USA) is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian Nation. She grew up in constant displacement, accompanying her father who traveled working as a horse trainer. Her formal education as an artist was long and intermittent, being constantly interrupted by financial issues or by prejudices of class, race and gender. Her work gained ground in the late 1970s precisely because it confronted the Eurocentric and formalist standards of the official art circuit and, since 1980, her artistic practice has been intertwined with her work as a curator, educator and cultural coordinator, in efforts that have

had a huge impact in the struggle for the recognition of American Indian art.

Quick-to-See Smith entered the field of modern painting, joining the debates about culture and language that had been fomented by pop art, and subverted the declarative nature of such work by using it as a catalyst of the divisions and relationships between, on the one hand, Indian knowledge and culture and, on the other, the paradigm of consuming and silencing differences that pervades North American society. At times close to collage, at times to palimpsest, her painting encourages the juxtaposition of systems of representation and ways of understanding the world, provoking shocks that can produce critical, ironic

or enigmatic effects. Often, the immediate reading of a symbol or phrase employed by Quick-to-See Smith is challenged by it being covered in layers of paint, or in its combination with elements associated with other symbols and discourses.



Performance drawing from *The Shape, The Scent, The Feel of Things*, 2008
Acrylic on paper. 272×560 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels

Joan Jonas (1936, New York, USA) is a pioneering video and performance artist. In the 1960s, Jonas often worked in tune and in collaboration with artists, musicians and performers of the New York scene. She developed a unique style, at the intersection between performance, drawing, action and video, where mystical or ritualistic elements converge and theatrical, choreographic and everyday gestures mix together. In the film *Wind* (1968), for example, the cinematographic record of an action carried out on a Long Island beach on one of the coldest days of 1968, Jonas shows the efforts of a group of performers executing a choreographed piece despite the freezing temperature and strong wind. In a combination

of movements that are sometimes banal, sometimes enigmatic, transiting between choreography, ceremony and improvisation, the dancers struggle against the wind, which blows violently against their bodies.

Wind is part of a series of performances made by the artist in the late 1960s in outdoor locations – including both natural, as in this case, and industrial sites – in which she introduces the use of mirrors, masks and other props. In that era, Jonas had already started, particularly through the use of mirrors, to create doubles and characters that could be considered authentic alter egos. In the decades that followed and until today, Jonas has continued to experiment with overlapping layers

of discontinuous time, multiplying images in combined and sometimes antithetical narrative shots, creating large scale immersive installations. Drawing remains a central element in most of these performances/installations, with animals being the most recurrent theme. If, on the one hand, the presence of animals reinforces an almost mystical relationship with nature, as is the case in *Snake Drawings*, which features in the 34th Biental, it also reflects the artist's engagement with the environment, in which she has been actively involved over the last few years, particularly in regard to protecting the oceans.



Jota Mombaça and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi

2021: Spell to Become Invisible, 2019

Performance documentation. Nothing Gets Organized, Johannesburg, South Africa. Courtesy of the artists.
Photo: Caroline Lima

Jota Mombaça (1991, Natal, RN, Brazil) self-identifies as a “non-binary *bicha*, born and raised in northeastern Brazil.” Mombaça experiments with forms of writing linked intensely to the body’s and voice’s enunciation possibilities. Analogously and complementary, the artist creates performances and videos that are in themselves writing exercises unfolded in time and space. The artist’s production exposes the death and silencing policies that subjected racialized bodies throughout colonial history and reflects on the perverse reiteration of such policies today and in the future, which can also materialize as another class, gender, and race privilege. Despite their awareness of violence, Mombaça avoids reaffirming it as the first sign

of self-representation. Furthermore, Mombaça seeks to break away with the very logic of representation as a matrix of understanding and segregation implemented by the colonial gaze concerning subjects and groups.

Having written the short story “Veio o tempo em que por todos os lados as luzes desta época foram acendidas” [Came the Time When, Everywhere, the Lights of this Time Were Turned On] in 2019, Mombaça has been questioning luminosity and transparency as eminently positive values considering how instances of power impose them as synonyms of surveillance, exclusion, and authoritarianism. Conversely, the artist has been discussing the role of secrecy, opacity, and darkness as protection and

even of communication resources. *2021: Spell to Be Invisible* is a work in progress that Mombaça and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi started in 2019, in the context of the *Ecos do Atlântico Sul* [South Atlantic Echoes] project. Imagined as a prophecy or a spell, *2021* takes place in different performative stages. Mombaça and Mattiuzzi get together to read and discuss texts in a study process in which they write quotes and thoughts on large sheets of paper. At that moment, there is no audience. Only on the next stage, when they read the sentences aloud and immediately erase them, in a drawing and orality process in which sharing and protection converge, the audience is invited.



Voice 10, 2019

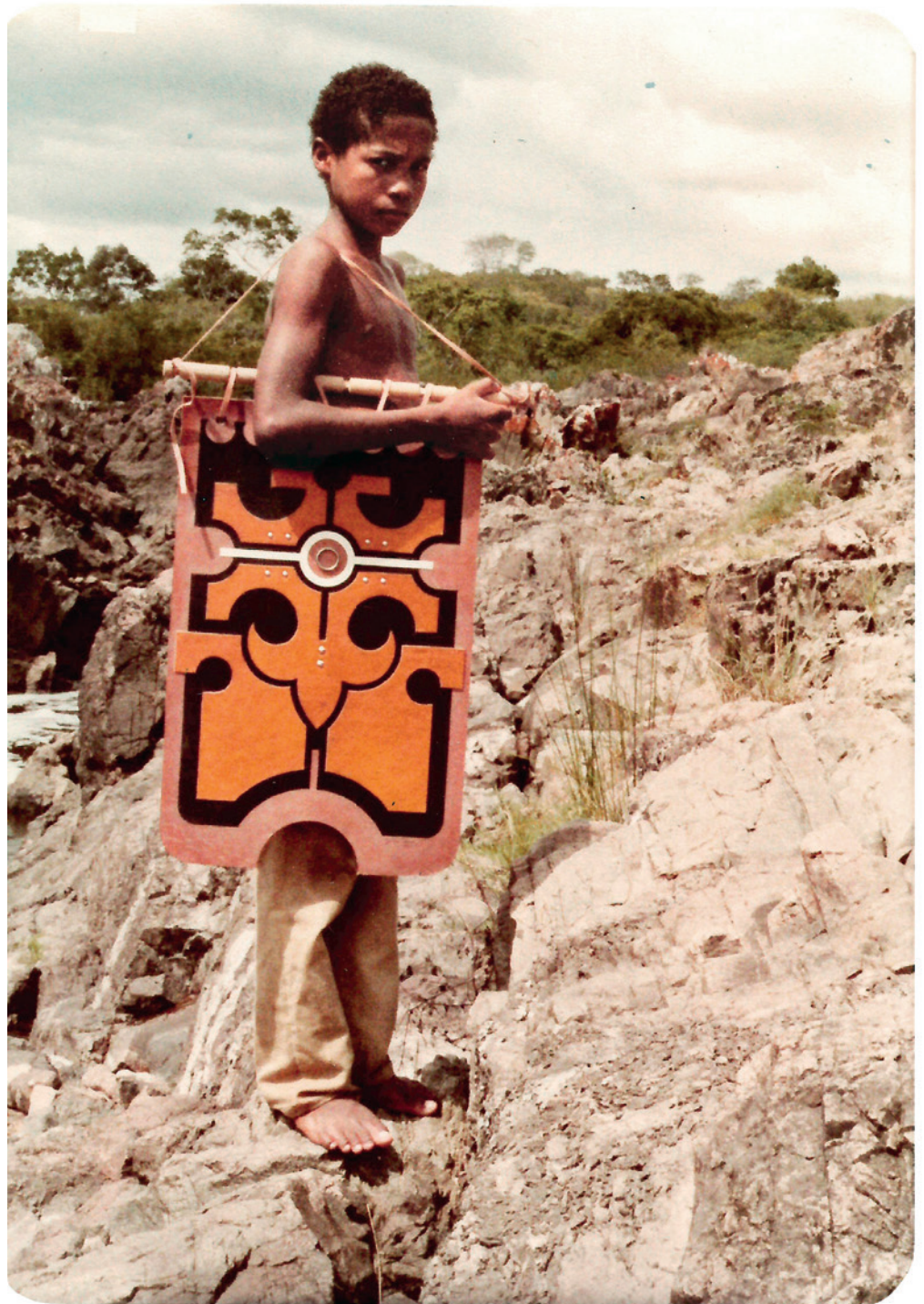
Archival Pigment Print. 152,5×213,3 cm. Courtesy of the artist

Painstakingly printed onto *hanji* paper – a traditional Korean handmade material –, Jungjin Lee's (1961, Seoul, South Korea) photographs invite prolonged study, in stark contrast to the instant consumption of photographic images that has become hegemonic in contemporary media. Her large-scale images are defined as much by their subjects as by the way the black and white film grain merges with the dense paper, resulting in a richness of visual and tactile information that is rare in contemporary photography. *Voice* (2018–2019) is one of the more recent results of Lee's reflection on time and landscape in photography. In the series as a whole, and especially in the four photographs presented at the 34th Biennial, the landscapes

photographed seem to be arranged according to the framing, as if they molded themselves according to the limit of the photographic field. This characteristic, added to the density of the graphic textures and the synthetic clarity of the compositions, makes each photograph a complex, yet silent, visual phenomenon.

In the series *Buddha* (2002), Lee took a collection of portraits of Buddhist statues in Thailand. The artifacts have accumulated the marks of time and are poised between maintaining their recognizable form and merging into their setting. They could be treated as crumbling ruins, but the artist chooses instead to contribute to restoring their sense of eternity after life. To this end, she captures

a frontal view of each silhouette and transfers it onto the handmade paper, onto which she then manually applies ink and photosensitive emulsion and begins the enlargement process, allowing her to emphasize and transform the light, contrasts, and textures registered by the photographic film.



Documentation of **Estandarte do Jacuípe XXXIII** [Jacuípe Flag Carrier XXXIII], 1982
Photography. Gurunga, Jacuípe River, in 1983.
Courtesy of the artist

To study architecture, in the 1960s Juraci Dórea (1944, Feira de Santana, Bahia, Brazil) moved from Feira de Santana to Salvador, where he witnessed the intense cultural production that arose there out of the encounter between the experimental vanguardist attitude and the singular experience of a territory steeped in an Afro-Brazilian heritage. After earning his degree, Dórea returned to his hometown, the municipal seat of the metropolitan region of Portal do Sertão. There, he began to construct a consistent oeuvre, which gradually brought about a convergence of contemporary visual languages with *Sertão* [backcountry] roots and traditions, creating his own poetics. His *Estandartes do Jacuípe* [Banners

of Jacuípe] (1975), for example, are rhythmized and symmetric abstract compositions made of treated cowhide, sewn with the same processes used in the common production of saddles and clothing for cowboys.

In the 1980s, Dórea's telluric connection took on another power of magnitude. After beginning his *Projeto Terra* [Project Earth] (1982-ongoing), also presented at the 19th Bienal, held in 1987 with general curatorship by Sheila Leirner, he not only assimilated backcountry artisanal know-how, but also traveled deep into the Bahian backcountry to implant his works in that landscape, often making use of the materials he found in the fields and pastures. Due to this new focus, the process of art

circulation in that context was reversed: the primary public of his work was no longer the urban visitor of cultural institutions but rather an audience consisting largely of backcountry dwellers, transforming the *Sertão* into an open-air museum and integrating art into the ordinary flow of life. The records produced in this context, in the form of photographs, films, reports and texts, document not only Dórea's creative trajectory, but also countless shocks and rearrangements between conceptions of art, language and territory.



Notebook 10, Childhood of Sanbras, 2021

Paper, wire structure, mortar and acrylic. 15 × 19 cm. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: © Soul. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture – DAC Guadeloupe

When looking at Kelly Sinnapah Mary's (1981, Guadeloupe) recent production, it is fruitful to begin with *Cahier d'un non retour au pays natal* [Notebook of No Return to a Native Land], a series of installations, paintings, tapestries, and objects that the artist started making in 2015. The suggestive title, which references the most important work by Martinican poet Aimé Césaire, synthesizes much of her production since then. If the poem was already dealing with diaspora and colonialism in 1939, being one of the bases of the *négritude* movement, Sinnapah Mary underscores the impossibility of return in response to her own origin. The artist's ancestors moved from India to Guadeloupe in the 19th century following

an agreement by the French government that sought to replenish the French colony with laborers after slavery had been abolished. Many families that crossed the ocean at the time believed they would only be there for a predetermined contracted period, but very few had the conditions to return to their countries and ultimately came to set up a new diasporic chapter in the Caribbean islands.

Identifying herself as part of this story, Sinnapah Mary collects scraps of memories (whether her own or borrowed from her research), assembling them by juxtaposition and superposition. These memories might take the form of illustrations of European fairy tales and biblical stories, reference

Hindu rituals with animal offerings, emulate the density of the Caribbean forest, or suggest associations with a childhood beset with threats. In her paintings, the characters' skin is often impregnated with plant leaves, as is the case of Sanbras, a girl who wants to flee the current society to create a small ecosystem occupied mainly by children, inspired by a tale by Caribbean author Chris Cyrille.



Abstracted/Family, 2019

Format: filming, acting, painting, expressing, writing, cooking, talking, digging, eating, etc. Elements: films, paintings, photographs, radio, artist's note, end credit, table, chairs, etc. Film still. 110' aprox. The project is co-commissioned by Aichi Triennale 2019 and Singapore Art Museum for Singapore Biennale 2019, also supported by ASO GROUP. Courtesy of the artist, Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou, Aoyama Meguro, Tokyo

Through seemingly simple proposals, Koki Tanaka (1975, Mashiko, Tochigi, Japan) invites those who participate in his actions to create something unexpected, encouraging them to reconsider their usual gestures. Such is the case in the series conceived and produced in response to the earthquake and tsunami followed by Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, as a way to freely investigate the event. For the artist, the work sought to capture the utopian period that followed the disaster, in which people “didn’t have compassion for others but simply shared uncertainty, and people started to help each other to get over that uncertainty”.

Analogous sensations and reactions can be provoked by banal or unusual events, not

only by extremely traumatic ones. In fact, in his work, Tanaka almost always operates on a scale that could be defined as “micro”, dealing with the everyday lives of ordinary people who he invites to take part in his actions and proposals. Despite the underlying optimism of his work, which gives us a glimpse into a more understanding and empathetic society, where interpersonal relationships are based on dialogue and a willingness to listen, Tanaka’s work should not be considered pacified or simplistic in that it also shows the failings in the processes he puts forward, whether in conflicts of egos, personal incompatibilities, or in frictions caused by coexistence. In some cases, such as in *Abstracted/Family* (2019), these idiosyncrasies

transcend the characters Tanaka has called upon, becoming wide-ranging and profound analyses of contemporary society. The artist reflects on the difficulty of Japanese society to accept any kind of racial and cultural miscegenation, but the installation is clearly metonymic: conflicts and tensions analogous to those he describes are largely diffuse in the contemporary world, marked by growing polarization and increasingly dramatic identity-related conflicts.



Floresta crepuscular [Twilight Forest], 1956

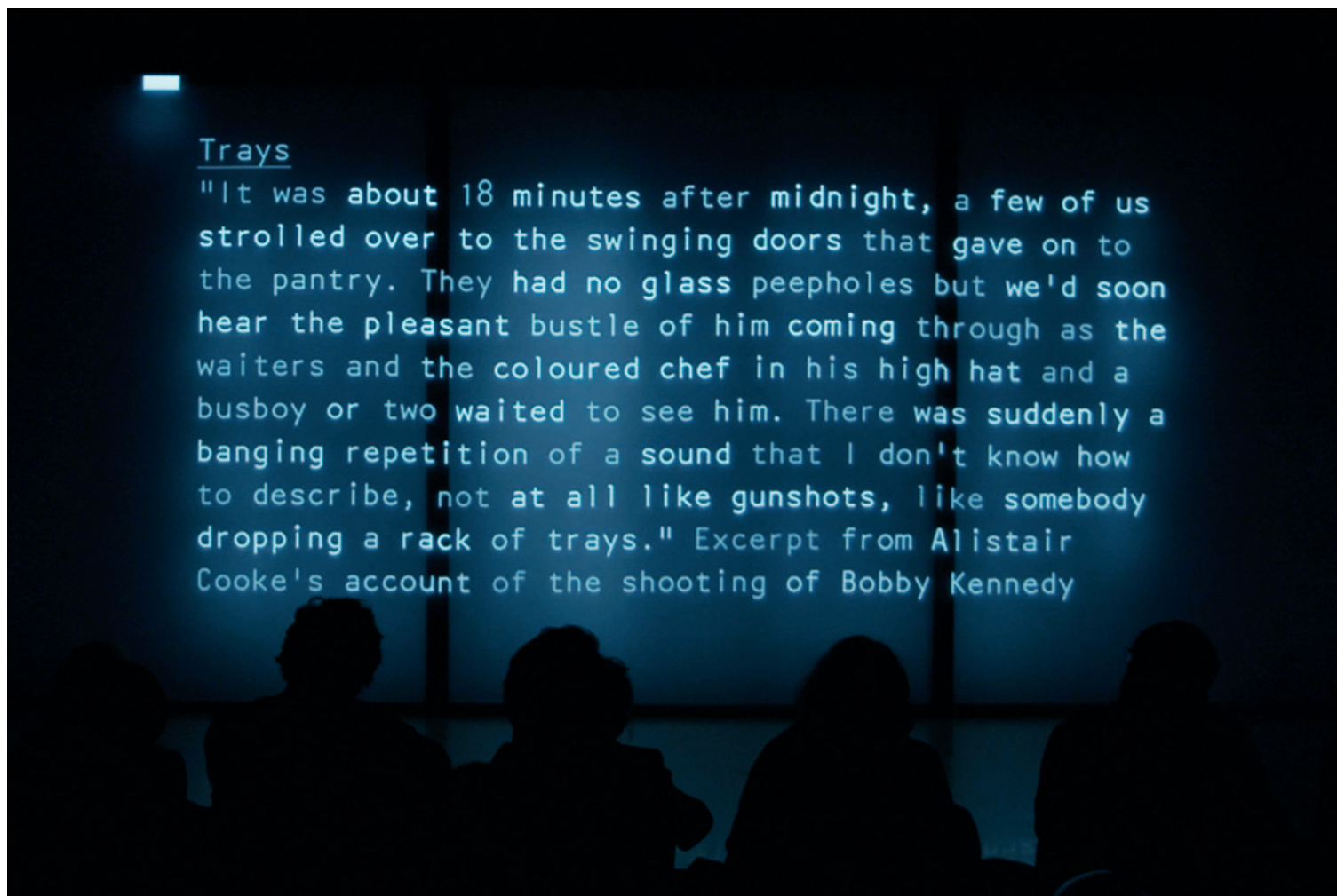
Oil and sand on canvas. 131×97,5 cm. Collection Museu Lasar Segall – IBRAM / Ministério do Turismo

Lasar Segall was born in 1889, in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, and died in 1957, in São Paulo, Brazil. From 1906 to 1923 he lived in Germany, where he completed his academic studies. Having known social misery since his childhood, Segall joined the expressionist movement in 1914, allying formal experimentation with his humanistic aim to portray subjects directly impacted by the war, poverty and exile. These two commitments remained as constants in his work throughout his career, despite changes of context and aesthetic approach. Having presented, in 1913, the first exhibition of a modernist vein ever held in the city of São Paulo, Segall moved definitively to Brazil in 1923. After having been practically

ignored on his first visit, he was received with greater interest and commentary upon his return, as the anti-academic modernist movement linked to the Week of '22 was then in full sway. On tropical soil, he took up the challenge of relating his production with the local flora, fauna, society and lighting: his palette was modified with the addition of reds, earth-tone ochers and yellowish greens. Years later, during the Holocaust, he took up the ethical imperative of reflecting the barbarity through paintings with somber hues.

His last works very notably include the *Florestas* [Forests] series, obtained by the dense juxtaposition of rhythmic vertical bands. They rarely contain any indication of the sky,

leaves or the ground. The pictorial framing is on the level of the schematized tree trunks, and the naturalist air of each scene is conveyed through the color palette. Unlike the work he did soon after his arrival in Brazil, the paintings of that series lack any explicit indication of a tropical character; rather, they seem to combine the dense and impenetrable aspect of the tropical jungle with chromatic temperatures and atmospheres reminiscent of the European forests that Segall depicted in his youth, perhaps reactivated by the landscape of the cooler mountainous region of Campos de Jordão, where he went into the forests to draw and paint.



After SFX, 2018

Installation view. Tate Modern, London. Photo: Jarred Alterman. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: British Council

Lawrence Abu Hamdan (1985, Amman, Jordan) considers himself a “private ear”. His research often revolves around meticulous and articulated investigations of noise and speech, or even silence, in order to emphasize their importance in contemporary societies and, more specifically, their deeply political nature. Originally inspired by music, Abu Hamdan got more and more interested in sound and voice as mediums and witnesses of violence and injustice, coherently building a body of work where voices emerge as eminently political, ideal tools for an analysis of contemporary society at large, and more specifically of relationships of power and domination. For Abu Hamdan, the language is constantly listened

to, transformed and manipulated by political and social structures in positions of power. Through videos, audio documentaries, installations and workshops, the artist pushes the use of speech by social and political structures to its strictest limits.

At the same time, the artist also tests the limits that conventionally define what an artwork is. His analysis of recorded speeches and sounds has been used as evidence in judicial investigations, ultimately helping to reveal episodes of abuse, violence and repression. At the 34th Bienal, Abu Hamdan presents a new version of *After SFX* (2018), a video and sound installation derived from the eponymous performance, described by the artist as a “loud

cacophony of objects, a looping list of acoustic debris and sonic memories of violence inseparable from cinema sound”, which emphasizes how our sonic memory is a deeply cultural and mediated act.



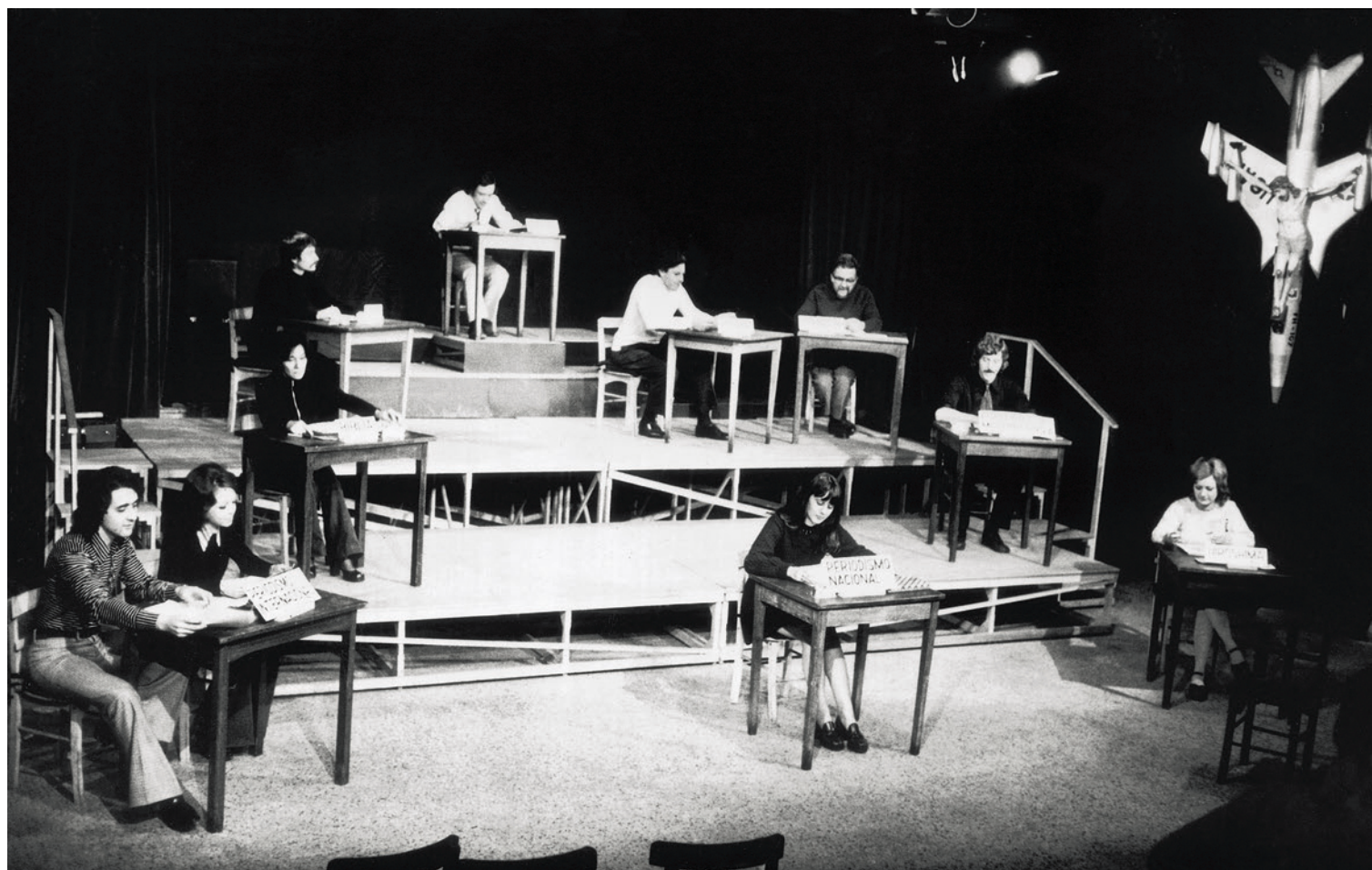
Installation view at Haus zur Liebe, Schaffhausen, 2018. Installation comprised of collage on canvas. Courtesy: suns.works and the artist. Participation in the 34th Bialal supported by: COINCIDENCIA – A programme by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia

Lee “Scratch” Perry (1936, Kendal, Jamaica) is widely known as a musical icon of his native country Jamaica. An innovative and visionary producer, Perry contributed hugely to the expansion of the Jamaican musical art scene throughout the 1960s and 1970s. During that time, many important musicians were produced and recorded at Black Ark, the recording studio Perry built behind his family’s home in Kingston. The history of reggae, dub, and even hip-hop cannot be told without mentioning Perry’s frenetic and ground-breaking production, as much as it cannot be detached from wider narratives from the African diaspora that go back and forth over the Atlantic Ocean. Around 1979, Perry started covering the whole

of Black Ark with indecipherable drawings and scribbles, to some extent anticipating some of his later installations and artworks. The studio was closed (or burned down, allegedly) a few years later, and Perry led a nomadic life before settling in the Swiss countryside where he still lives.

Over the decades, Perry developed a practice of visual creation that runs parallel to his musical work and that shares with it the combined interest of reaching harmonies and upsetting sensibilities. Drawings, paintings, and texts are assembled on the walls of his studio, or on vinyl covers, later becoming autonomous and independent pieces. Perry thus creates a universe, contrasted and

crossed by syncretic influences that range from Catholic figures to Obeah, a system of spiritual and justice-management practices developed among enslaved West Africans in the Caribbean, as well as explicit references to West African religions, such as Akan. The artist’s work intersects different genres by interweaving written words, images, mirrors, photographs, and appropriated objects, among other elements that are often also cut, burned, or painted on.



Operativo: "Pacem in terris", adaptation of León Ferrari's play *Palabras Ajenas* [The Words of Others], 2017. Archive Adriana Banti

The work of León Ferrari (1940-2013, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is driven by the desire to reveal the history of Western violence and authoritarianism, showing the mechanisms employed in the construction of power. Throughout his career spanning various decades, Ferrari investigated and decried the relationships between military, political and religious forces that established societal standards and the social imaginary. Ferrari's production transits between different languages, such as drawing, calligraphy, assemblage, sculpture, installation and video, often resorting to irony to question the values that pervade the various institutions (Church and State, primarily) which define a good part of the Western societies.

In *Palabras ajenas* [The Words of Others], published in 1967 by the Argentine publishing house Falbo, Ferrari carries out a sort of "literary collage" – as he himself defines it – composed of excerpts from history books, literature, the Bible and, mainly, the written press (national newspapers and magazines and telegrams from foreign agencies). The episode that catalyzed the work was the Vietnam War, which had intensified in 1965. Ferrari condemned the way the press was manipulating the human horror and suffering, neutralizing critical thought and overexposing the public to shocking images. In *Palabras ajenas* there is an extensive dialogue between characters such as Adolf Hitler, Pope Paulo VI, God, us President Lyndon B. Johnson and war

correspondents, local journalists, soldiers, prophets, and political advisors. Ferrari's aim was to collect the discourses of those who constituted the prevailing Western thought and take them out of context to confront them, underscoring the atrocities and the camouflaged messages of violence in the political and religious rhetoric.



Monument for the Native Societies of South America, 1978–1982

Site-specific wall painting. Dimensions variable. Presented at documenta 7, Kassel, Germany, 1982. Courtesy: Lothar Baumgarten Studio and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York. Photo: Nic Tenwiggenhorn

Lothar Baumgarten (1944, Rheinsberg, Germany – 2018, Berlin, Germany) inherited his knowledge of ethnographic methods and aesthetics, as well as his interest in the European relationship to indigenous peoples and cultures, from his ethnographer father. At the same time, he shared an awareness of power structures and their connection to epistemological systems with some of the conceptual artists of his generation. From his earliest works, Baumgarten was concerned with systems of information and the translation of ideas across cultures and time. The artist scrutinized scientific methodologies and collections, which he could only see as being part of the colonial violence perpetrated

by “discoverers”, “conquerors”, and explorers. This is evident in works such as *Unsettled Objects* (1968–1969), a projection of 81 slides taken at the Pitt Rivers Museum, in Oxford. The photos of museological vitrines containing ethnographic artifacts are overlaid with the artist’s own text, a list of adjectives such as displayed and imagined, celebrated and lost, collected and forgotten, valued and typified, polished and ignored.

In 1978 and 1979, Baumgarten spent long periods in Kashorawë-theri and Yapitawë-theri, two Yanomami villages in the Venezuelan-Brazilian border region. During this period, the artist produced a series of films, photographs, and audio recordings documenting the

environment and daily life he was experiencing. These eighteen months of coexistence in the Amazon changed Baumgarten’s worldview and his artistic practice. The work *Monument for the Native Societies of South America*, originally presented at the documenta 7 in Kassel, in 1982, consists of a wall painting displaying these and others names of South American indigenous peoples – all endangered by colonial violence, European diseases, and the destruction of the forest caused by extractivist economy.



Word for Gardens, 2004

Sound installation view. 5'43". Collection Fundação Serralves, Portugal. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Daniel Malhão. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: República Portuguesa – Cultura / Direção-Geral das Artes and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

Luisa Cunha's (1949, Lisbon, Portugal) works can manifest as drawings, paintings, photographs, videos, texts or sounds. But whichever medium, there exists in all of them an interest in language, in the ways we find to say what we understand or question in the world, the place we occupy and how we move within it. The artist does not seek out big subjects, but finds their reflections in small everyday absurdities and in the different ways we have to see and communicate them. The majority of her sound works belong to the realm of conversation. They are words that are thought, written, spoken, recorded and repeated for every one of us, for every person who listens. In many of these works the speech describes features of

the architecture where we find ourselves listening to them, modifying with a few words the perception of the context of the situation, in the meeting between the work and the public. Such is the case in *É aqui* [It's Here] (2008), in which her voice appears, unexpectedly, pronouncing the words of the title alone, and in *Artista à procura de si própria* [Artist Looking for Herself] (2015), where she repeatedly calls her own name – "Luisa".

1.680 metros [1,680 meters] (2020) was born out of the unique characteristics of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, the historic headquarters of the Bienal de São Paulo, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. The artist first tells us her own height and the length of her stride

– immediately we compare ourselves to her, we are taller or shorter, we walk with longer or shorter strides, or we realize that we have never thought about the length of our walks. In the phrase that follows, Cunha calculates the time it would take her to walk the empty pavilion – we try to imagine it – and reflects on the impossibility of defining how long it would take to visit an exhibition in the same place. This exhibition, a previous one, or another, some day?



this is the normal procedure when flying in the hours of darkness, 2020

Installation view. Digitised 8mm film. 39'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biall supported by: British Council

In the majority of her recent exhibitions, the interventions by Lydia Ourahmane (1992, Saïda, Algeria) have been scarce, almost imperceptible. The artist's goal seems to be to make the visitors doubt what they are seeing or hearing, or even whether there is in fact *something* there to be seen or heard. In *Solar Cry* (2020), for example, she installed inside a wooden wall a series of speakers, which reproduced the sound of silence, recorded in a remote cave in the Tassili n'Ajjer plateau, in the Algerian Sahara. Despite being inaudible, the recording became perceptible through the vibrations it produced, which were amplified by the wood. A similar strategy underlies the decision to insert lead capsules into bronze

molds of her body (*bronze belly I-IV*, 2019), which, little by little, are thus transformed by decay from within, in a process that is lengthy and almost entirely invisible.

It is not by chance that one of the most recurrent concepts in critical writing about Ourahmane's work is that of faith, of the predisposition to believe in the existence of something that cannot be seen or proven. If, on the one hand, this concept helps understanding the artist's universe as poetic and vibrant, characterized by opacity and the impossibility of explaining and making explicit all the aspects of a work, it also allows for a connection with her biography, and with the political implications of her practice. Raised in England, the

artist recently returned to Algeria, where she had spent most of her early years during the explosive context of a civil war (1991-2002). In fact, in another aspect of Ourahmane's work, critical reflection on the dramatic reality of her country of origin becomes more direct, and in some cases is intertwined with her biography and even with her own body, which today bears the marks of an intense commitment to artistic creation: for example, a tooth implanted for *In the Absence of Our Mothers* (2015-2018).



Amazoninos vermelhos [Red Amazoninos], 1989-2003

Iron and automotive paint. View of the exhibition "Lygia Pape", Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street, 2008. ©Projeto Lygia Pape. Photo: Genevieve Hanson, NYC. Courtesy Projeto Lygia Pape and Hauser & Wirth

Lygia Pape (1927, Nova Friburgo, Brazil – 2004 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) is a leading artist of the generation that expanded art's experimental field in the second half of the twentieth century. Pape deepened her direct relationship with concrete reality from the late 1960s onwards when she took part in the *Grupo Frente* [Front Group] and the Neo-Concrete Movement. With the motto "Espaço poético – qualquer linguagem a serviço do ético" [Poetic space – any language at the service of ethics], Pape discussed the contradictions of Brazilian society that gathers precariousness and vivacity in its polyphony. Part of her approach to social reality implied a critical review of the anthropophagic proposition of the 1920s modernist generation. Pape examined in

her dissertation, *Catiti-Catiti, na terra dos brasis* [Catiti-Catiti, in the Land of brazils] (1980), the twofold movement that would simultaneously digest cosmopolitan avant-garde and indigenous cultures. This study made her rethink Rio's urban context as a whole.

It seems Pape understood that the presence of the indigenous anthropophagic practices the colonizers registered – the Tupinambá culture – became an uncomfortable contemporary void, no longer visible, felt only by some impalpable and reminiscence identity since the Guanabara Bay's occupation. Using the scarlet ibis bright red feathers, which the Tupinambá employed in their ritual robes (whose remaining pieces are in European collections), the artist explored

this presence-absence in her late 1990s and early 2000s works. Before that, Pape had already created works dealing with a similar subject, like *O olho do guará* [Guara's Eye] (c. 1980), which combines neon lines with patterns referring to the fauna from Amerindian mythologies, and *Amazoninos* (c. 1990), which works the iron sheets as if they were light as paper, balancing weights and flexions in abstractions evocating the Amazonian fiction. Together, these works show Pape's experimentalism with the wounds of the colonialism.



Manthia Diawara and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o
Sembène: The Making of African Cinema, 1994
Film still. 60'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in
the 34th Biental supported by: Institut français à Paris

Both the work and the biography of Manthia Diawara (1953, Bamako, Mali) are marked by a personal experience and a deep academic and intellectual knowledge of black African and Afro-American history and culture. Writer, filmmaker, critic and professor of comparative literature and cinema, Diawara follows in his films the precepts of ethnographic cinema by auteurs such as Jean Rouch, whose importance is both acknowledged and questioned in *Rouch in Reverse* (1995). Describing the film, Diawara explains: "I made this film on Rouch as a rite of passage for myself. [...] I wanted to pass through Rouch in order to render visible new African voices and images: the ones that defy stereotype and primitivism". This desire to

subvert the conventional dynamics of anthropology, turning the former "object of study" (the black African) into the questioning agent, is what drives the majority of Diawara's films. In them, it is the director who leads the narrative in the scene, asking questions, looking for explanations, taking on the Socratic role of someone who admits (or pretends) to not knowing in order to get to the heart of things.

Through his films, Diawara has constructed an extremely rich and stratified repertoire of portraits of thinkers from various parts of the world, who are called to an imaginary dialogue in the installation conceived for the 34th Biental, a kind of "parliament" of thinkers who have been fundamental to the

development of the artist himself and to the understanding of the world we live in. With Édouard Glissant among its protagonists, a fundamental reference in the exhibition's concept, the installation brings together writers, artists, poets, politicians and thinkers from various places and eras, in a conversation composed of talks recorded by Diawara over the last decades.

Mariana Caló and Francisco Queimadela

Efeito orla [Edge Effect], 2013

Video still. Installation composed of HD projections, colour, sound. 14'40". Courtesy of the artists. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: República Portuguesa – Cultura / Direção-Geral das Artes and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian



Mariana Caló (1984, Viana do Castelo, Portugal) and Francisco Queimadela (1985, Coimbra, Portugal) met at the School of Fine Arts of Porto and have been working in collaboration since 2010. In their practice, they combine film, photography and sculpture to create intimist and immersive installations, where the boundaries between dream, reality, fiction, objectivity and spontaneity are constantly shifted and blurred. The work happens in-between all these different realms, and despite the fantastic atmosphere they often transmit, most projects are based in processes that develop throughout time, be it in research and investigation, or field work, or in internal metamorphosis of their daily practice, displaying

environmental and ecological concerns, and a dialogue between biological, vernacular and cultural elements.

In *Efeito orla* [Edge Effect] (2013), one of their works included in the 34th Bienal, these aspects of Caló and Queimadela's practice are condensed and placed in relation. The work is the result of a search for the Iberian lynx, the most endangered feline in the world, considered practically extinct in the area of Reserva Nacional da Serra da Malcata (Portugal), which was created in the 1980s as an effort to protect this species and where the work was developed. According to some of the inhabitants from the Malcata mountain range that the artists talked to, the lynx "is sensed

but not seen", it's evasive and almost invisible. In mythology it is associated with secrecy and the revelation of obscure truths, with the world of the dead, but also with the sun and light. While the animal itself does not appear on screen, Caló and Queimadela introduce in the landscape various optical disks, a device which, according to them, "deals with notions of apparition, illusion, dazzlement, camouflage, and speed, which we relate to the idea of an invisible presence that continues to orbit that place".



The School of Narrative Dance, 2013-ongoing

Light sculpture and movement workshops. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Italian Council, Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity, Italian Ministry of Culture

Inspired, since the outset of her career, by the fertility of artistic environments of collective creation, such as music and filmmaking, from 2006 onward Marinella Senatore (1977, Cava de' Tirreni, Italy) – who is a teacher as well as an artist – has placed increasing emphasis on the horizontal character and shared authorship of the performances, theater plays and actions she organizes. Various recent works by Senatore, in fact, have been based on a long process of exchange and collaboration that includes meetings, workshops and open events, through which the artist seeks to activate the creative potential of various groups. One of her most ambitious projects in this sense is *Rosas*, a lyrical opera filmed in 2012 in Berlin, Madrid,

and Derby, which involved the participation of approximately 20,000 people.

The School of Narrative Dance, an ongoing project begun in 2013, exemplifies Senatore's open and interdisciplinary practice by proposing a teaching model that uses body language as a means of creating alternative and spontaneous forms of collective narrative. Without privileging any particular method, the school seeks an exchange of knowledge, experience, and techniques of movement, dance, and theater, based on the participants' personal experiences. The school is organized in a collaborative, "horizontal" manner, so that all the participants can significantly contribute to its development. This *modus operandi*

encourages the emancipation of everyone involved, while making them aware not only of the relevance of their individual contributions to the community, but also of the importance of the collective sphere for the realization of each individual. For the work commissioned by the 34th Bienal, Senatore collaborated with the English mindful movement group Esprit Concrete in a series of workshops for groups from Cidade Tiradentes, in the São Paulo metropolitan area.

Marissa Lee Benedict and David Rueter



Marissa Lee Benedict, David Rueter and Daniel de Paula

Repose, 2020

Location: The Arts Club of Chicago (Chicago, IL). Commissioned by The Arts Club of Chicago, supported by a grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art. Courtesy of the artists

Marissa Lee Benedict (1985, Palm Springs, California, USA) and David Rueter (1978, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA) began their artistic collaboration in 2014 with the video installation *Dark Fiber* (2014-2019), that shows the artists burying, pulling, and cutting a single fiber optic cable in the shadows of large-scale infrastructure, oil refineries and a shipping canal. In telecommunications jargon, “dark fiber” is a term for unused or unlit fiber optic cables that have become superfluous in light of technological advances, which increased the quantity of information transmitted via electromagnetic waves. The dormant cable has become a real estate opportunity for private companies who rent this unused fiber to create their own

exclusive networks. *Dark Fiber* refers to the wires and to the flow of information that operates in the shadows of the public internet.

In 2018, the artistic duo, together with Daniel de Paula, rescued from the Chicago Board of Trade a “trading pit” that had been used for decades as a platform for the buying and selling of corn and corn futures contracts. The device would be discarded as part of a definitive shift to digital transactions. The trio started researching the history of the trading floor and the abstract and concrete processes of circulation that surround it. In 2020, they made *Repose* (2020), a sculpture composed of cut-out wooden fragments interweaving in patterns indexical of the Board of Trade’s geometric

floor, that also refers to crates for shipping artworks. As a continuation of their work with the rescued trading pit floor, de Paula, Benedict, and Rueter present *deposition* (2020) for the first time at the 34th Biennial. The Chicago Board of Trade pit is partially rebuilt in the Cicillio Matarazzo Pavilion, serving as a platform for public encounters of different natures, which were conceived with the purpose of emphasizing the meeting and confrontation atmosphere prompted by the structure itself.



Inominável #1 [Unnameable #1], 2019
C-print. 80×120 cm. Courtesy: Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo / Rio de Janeiro

In every photographic series by Mauro Restiffe (1970, São José do Rio Pardo, São Paulo, Brazil) and, even more so, in his body of work as a whole, there is a harmony that comes from the way the artist looks at the world, superimposing and almost merging personal relationships and experiences with the architecture, cities and spaces he passes through. Even when it would be possible to place his photographs in the “architecture” genre, for example, they are characterized by a very particular “temperature”, making them immediately recognizable. The series that depicts Philip Johnson’s Glass House is extremely revelatory in that sense: the architecture itself hardly makes an appearance, fragmented in a sequence of planes and

elements (the external glass, the landscape reflected in them, the artworks, the furniture...) that intersect and overlap, creating the impression of a house that is truly alive.

In the large installation conceived for the 34th Bienal, the artist transcends the personal aspect by juxtaposing two significant moments in the country’s recent history. Photographs in *Empossamento* [Inauguration] (2003), which was produced in Brasília on the day of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s inauguration (1st January 2003), are juxtaposed with the series *Inominável* [Unnameable] (2019), taken exactly sixteen years later, on the day of Jair Bolsonaro’s inauguration. The contrasts, similarities, analogies and discrepancies between

the two series are at once emphasized and condensed by their proximity. Without relying on an explanatory caption for each image, it is up to the viewer to analyze the compositional elements according to their own expectations of sense and meaning. As part of an exhibition that explores how the meanings of a work of art are stratified and shift over time, this work also introduces a reflection on the history of the Bienal itself, and of the works that were exhibited here, considering that the series *Empossamento* was first shown at the 27th Bienal (2006).



Interwoven, 2020

Video still. 32'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bialal supported by: Mondriaan Fund

Melvin Moti (1977, Rotterdam, Netherlands) primarily makes 35mm films, often shown in conjunction with photography, objects, and artist books. His practice is intimately linked to history and its narrative. His films, books and art objects are often driven by his interest in the power of the viewer's imagination and the deconstruction of history. Thus, Moti explores the non-event, and a fascination with the anecdotal underlies his works: details and accidents that take place on the fringes of a supposedly unified History allow him to reveal the power of what he defines as "black holes". In his film *No Show* (2004), for example, shown at the 34th Bialal as part of the *Vento* exhibition, Moti starts from a historically irrelevant

episode: a visit to the Hermitage offered by a museum guide to a group of soldiers in 1943, in the middle of World War II. What makes the anecdote fascinating is the fact that, as a precaution, all the artworks had been removed from the rooms and kept in a safe place; only the frames of the extraordinary collection of paintings remained on the walls, as a testament to the importance of maintaining at least the memory of artworks.

For the video installation *Interwoven* (2021), Moti recorded, in more than thirty thousand images taken during research and reflection process of more than five years, a series of sacred stones located on Taketomi's western coast, an island of the Japanese Yaeyama

archipelago, worshiped in rituals performed by female shamans from the island. Just as the video bears the traces of the time it took to do the work, the fabrics that accompany it, produced by the Yaeyama women as part of their shamanic practice, are the result of a production process that can take years, whose stages involve the making of the threads from banana leaves, dyeing them with natural pigments and a complex weaving technique called double ikat.



Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine, 2010

Performance and installation. Photo: Elly Clarke. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Performing Arts Hub Norway

Mette Edvardsen (1970, Lørenskog, Norway) started her career in 1996 as a dancer in various companies and began developing her own work, bringing together choreography and performance, in 2002. In many of her staged works, Edvardsen uses text as a structure where reading and writing become tools for moving in a space and interacting with the public, like a choreography. The voice functions as a vehicle for generating situations, creating spaces that are made visible by a word or, conversely, by the absence of one. Edvardsen uses language in order to subvert it, challenging cultural connections and the spatiotemporal divisions that commonly influence our daily routines.

For Edvardsen, repetition and memory are ways of looking at the past and the future. For the artist, repetition and remembering are the same exercise, but in opposite directions, in the sense that the act of remembering is also a form of repeating a past action. This cyclic economy engenders a type of entropy that Edvardsen calls “non-concept”: the repetition of a pattern that is never the same but is familiar enough to be recognized. *Time Has Fallen Asleep in the Afternoon Sunshine* (2010-ongoing) is a work based on exercising repetition and memory, in which a group of performers chooses a series of books with which each of them has a certain affinity. As they read the books, they memorize them, so

they can later recite them from memory to visitors of the exhibition. By repeating the book’s content from memory, each performer becomes the publication itself. The idea of a library of “living books” was inspired by Ray Bradbury’s famous novel *Fahrenheit 451*, in which the author imagines a society where any hint of knowledge is considered a threat to human happiness, and books are banned and burned.



Experimentando o vermelho em dilúvio [Experiencing the Red in Flood], 2016

Video still, 7'53". Photography: Matheus Ah. Editing: Luciano Carneiro. Conception: Elton Panamby and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi. Courtesy of the artist

Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi (1983, São Paulo, Brazil) is a performer, visual artist, film director, writer, and researcher of black radical thought. Mattiuzzi investigates the marks of sexist, racist and colonial violence left on her own body, and the social and historical stigmas that constitute the subjectivity of black women in Brazil. In her performances, she appropriates the mechanisms that objectify and exotify the black female body, and subverts them: they become instruments of visibility and recognition of a body that is, at the same time, an object of desire and of dehumanization in the white cisnormative imagination. Mattiuzzi is interested in the power of the monstified, disproportionate and non-symmetric body. Her

actions, in the artist's words, "are micro-political acts of resistance" which free her "from the rejection of her own body, which means going towards it at full speed in the will to live, to re-exist".

Mattiuzzi deepens her meditation on what she defines as "a radical black Brazilian female poetic construction". Authors like Grada Kilomba and Denise Ferreira da Silva are explicit references in the preparation of these works, which also allude to historic performances like *Interior Scroll* (1975), by Carolee Schneemann. Mattiuzzi thus inserts the fight for racial affirmation into the expanded lineage of performance as a privileged platform, within the contemporary art world, to demand

change in society as a whole. In *Experimentando o vermelho em dilúvio* [Experiencing the Red in Flood] (2016), she takes the path leading to the Zumbi dos Palmares monument, in an allegorical reenactment of the suffering and violence that the black Brazilian population has been subjected to for centuries.



Onanism, 1969

Film still. 16mm film transferred to video (black and white, sound). 3'51". Courtesy of the artist

The city of Karachi was still a part of India when Nalini Malani (1946, Karachi, Pakistan) was born. The very next year, however, the division of land between India and Pakistan drove her family, like many others, into forced exile. Malani took refuge in what was then called Calcutta and Bombay, respectively, where she finally settled. The brutality of this division is a constant theme in the artist's work and statements, sometimes citing Simone Weil's famous phrase, "The destruction of the past is perhaps the greatest of all crimes". Destroying the past, in this sense, means erasing the memories of violence that, though painful, must be remembered so we can recognize it in the present. In her videos,

installations, performances, drawings, paintings, and animations, Malani contributes to the durability of memory, renewing our capacity to be affected by it.

Considered a pioneer in the arts, Malani has been committed to experimentation since the very start of her career. Soon after graduating from the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejebhoy School of Art, in Bombay, she became the youngest artist to attend VIEW (Vision Exchange Workshop) – an initiative that provided the infrastructure for her first photographs and films in 8 and 16mm. Among these experiments is *Onanism* (1969), a film that opens with an overhead view of a young girl lying on a bed. Her movements become more and more convulsive, while the

shots close in on details of her body and facial features. The character's actions are ambivalent and oscillate between eroticism and agony – there seems to be an enormous charge of energy contained in her body, framed by the bed, the room, and by the camera. The opacity generated by these many framings adds to the title of the work to challenge conventions of gender and domesticity.



Sangre Pesada [Heavy Blood], 2018

Video still. HD video, 3 channel installation. 18'45". Courtesy of the artist. Support: Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte 2019-2022 del Fondo Nacional para La Cultura y las Artes

Artist and researcher Naomi Rincón Gallardo (1979, North Carolina, USA) moves between performance and video to construct imaginary narratives, often inspired by Mesoamerican myths, stories and accounts of resistance against heteropatriarchal and colonial dispossession. In her stories, ancestral beliefs combine with contemporary aesthetic references, such as DIY and queer aesthetics, creating a universe that is visually saturated and abundant, but also familiar in its almost handcrafted construction. Rincón Gallardo uses strategies from militant feminist theory and radical theatricality, areas where she acts as both an artist and a provocateur, to come up with queer models of interaction and of social

encounters. The direct and explicit reference in some works to episodes where indigenous women have struggled for their territory affirm the complexity of a practice that is current and exigent, but also enmeshed with the dense indigenous cosmology of Mesoamerica.

Sangre Pesada [Heavy Blood] (2018) was born from an investigation into the mining universe in Zacatecas, in north-central Mexico, where silver extraction began as early as the 16th century. In the three-channel video installation, the artist puts local myths and wisdom into conflict with the destructive inheritance of colonial and neocolonial processes of exploitation. Similarly, in works like *Resiliencia Tlacuache* [Tlacuache Resilience] (2019) she

reflects on the expropriation processes taking place in Oaxaca territory. In dealing with contemporary and pressing issues through legends and fables that are often hidden and silenced, and in putting great emphasis on musicality, Rincón Gallardo's work addresses some of the issues central to the very conception of the 34th Bienal, such as the freedom that can emerge from production that happens in conditions of seclusion and invisibility, and the importance of singing in resisting trauma and threats of all kinds.



Neo Muyanga (in collaboration with Coletivo Legítima Defesa and Bianca Turner)

A Maze in Grace, 2020

Documentation of performance at the opening of the solo exhibition at the Bial Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bial de São Paulo. Participation in the 34th Bial supported by: British Council and Institut français à Paris

A composer, sound artist and librettist, Neo Muyanga (1974, Johannesburg, South Africa) produces works that reverberate with the tones of a present time rooted in violence and fed by revolt. With a work that includes new opera, jazz improvisation and traditional songs of the Zulu and Sesotho cultures, the artist carries out a continuous research into the various sounds that compose the history of protest song in the pan-African and diasporic context. Recently, this investigation has led him to the intricate history of the Christian hymn “Amazing Grace” written by the British poet and clergymen John Newton, in 1772.

“Amazing Grace”, a song that arouses deep feelings and a sense of bonding, is associated

with black music and the narratives of the abolitionist struggle. Little is said, however, about the author of this song. The Englishman John Newton played a significant role in the trafficking of African slaves to the Americas, including to Brazil. After several near-death experiences, Newton claims to have had a divine epiphany, after which he became an Anglican priest and abolitionist, and composed the verses and music of the famous “Amazing Grace”. The song, one of the best known and most performed in the history of music, known particularly for its roles in the construction of black musical identity and the fight for abolition, was in reality composed by a white slaver looking for redemption. Addressing the

paradoxes of this history, Muyanga developed *A Maze in Grace* (2020), a large-scale collective performance, in collaboration with the Legítima Defesa collective and the artist Bianca Turner, which opened the 34th Bial in February 2020. In the installation presented at the exhibition, images from rehearsals of the performance shown together with other recordings, preparatory sketches, musical scores, and historical documents with interventions by the artist amplify the subversion of the original song, from which Muyanga reclaims the complexities between cruelty and compassion.



The Complete Works, 2009

Exhibition view of *What Follows Will Follow II*. Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 2010. Dancer: Muriel Maffre. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Nordic Culture Fund, ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and Danish Arts Foundation

The Complete Works (2009), by Nina Beier (1975, Aarhus, Denmark), is a performance in which retired dancers dance, individually, every piece of choreography they performed in their careers, re-enacting them in chronological order, without interruptions. One after the other, the movements are drawn in the space. The same body, many years later, moves from one position to the next, carried by muscle memory, dancing to imagined music and accompanied in memory by a now absent corps de ballet. In this visit to their own past, each dancer recounts the history of choreography and contemporary dance. The performance takes place at the threshold between mental space, where each dancer searches for the

memories of their now finished career, and the visual manifestation of those memories in sketched-out movements. Each gesture is not only itself but an echo of what it once was.

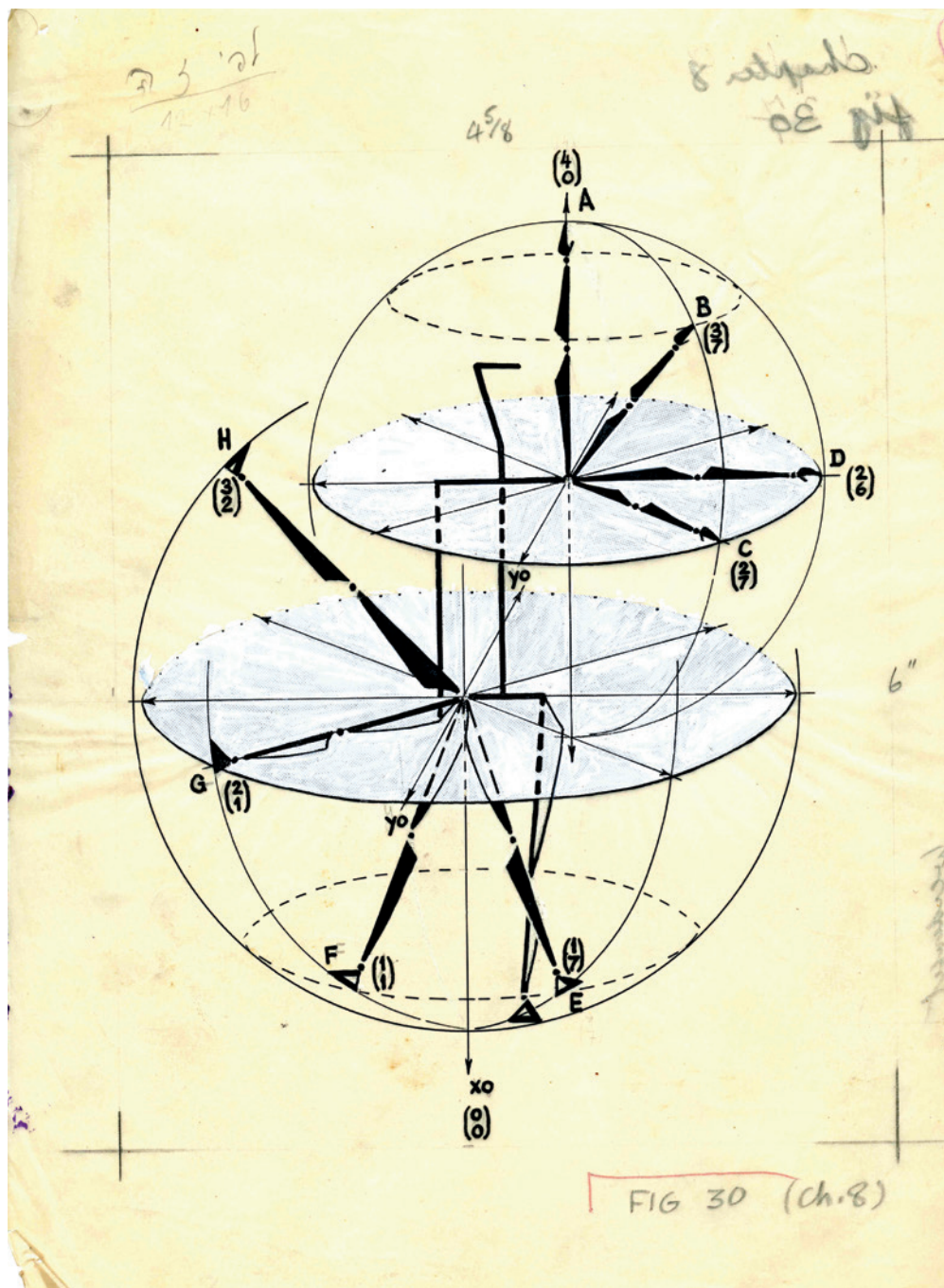
Beier is interested in the presence that pulses between representation and the thing itself. In many of her installations, the artist uses objects that when removed from their environment and devoid of their function are capable of assuming new behaviors and evoking new voices, without losing their usual appearance and the purposes they have assumed throughout the history of their use, nor the economy of their presence in the world. In bringing these objects together, coming from different cultures and laden with

different stories, new meanings are created. In the installation *Plug* (2018), for example, a cigar is still a cigar when embedded into a porcelain sink, but what conversation is established in the meeting of the tobacco leaves, worked on by hands for the enjoyment of smokers, and the waterproof sterility of sanitary ware?

Avraham Wachman

**The Individual Systems of Reference of the Body
Limbs are Parallel to Each Other and to the Overall
Reference System, 1950s**

China ink and collage on paper. 30×20 cm. Courtesy:
Noa Eshkol Foundation for Movement Notation, Holon,
Israel, and neugerriemschneider, Berlin. Participation
in the 34th Bienal supported by: Artis and Consulado
Geral de Israel em São Paulo



Noa Eshkol (1924, Palestine – 2007, Israel) was an artist, choreographer, dancer and professor. In the 1950s, together with architect Avraham Wachman, Eshkol developed a system of movement notation (Eshkol Wachman Movement Notation – EWMN) which uses a combination of symbols and numbers to note down the movements of the body and organize them into categories which can then be studied and repeated. Eshkol developed various choreographies with the help of the EWMN system, in which, without depending on the music or the costume, dance becomes a process of interaction between bodies in space and a communitarian activity. EWMN thus transcended the field of dance and can be a tool for observing

the relationship between any body and its surroundings, and can be applied in various fields, including studies of language and of behavior.

In 1973, during the Yom Kippur war, Eshkol stopped dancing and began the production of her *Wall Carpets*. This work was made only with used materials, never bought ones: the artist collected cast-off clothes and rags, and the carpets were sewn in a joint effort together with her dancers. These compositions varied between abstractions and still lifes. In *The House of Bernarda Alba* (Virgin) (1978), for example, an arrangement of light colors surrounds a square of green fabric. The title alludes to the play of the same name by Federico García Lorca, in which there are

growing tensions between a manipulative mother and her five daughters. In the composition, the square represents a sort of window, suggesting a possible escape from the repressive conditions in the house.

Olivia Plender



Hold Hold Fire, 2020

Video still. Courtesy of the artist and Maureen Paley. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: British Council and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists

Olivia Plender's (1977, London, United Kingdom) work is based on historical research that analyzes pedagogical methods and revolutionary, social, political, and religious movements mainly of the 19th and 20th centuries. Plender finds her resources in institutional archives, as well as in literature and anonymous and popular narratives. In recent years, her focus has been on investigating situations, processes, and narratives that arise from movements organized by social minorities, particularly with feminist and socialist associations. Though she has a particular fascination for past events, Plender is interested in experiencing these ideas in the present, comparing forms of social participation, and ultimately

seeking new alternatives for collectivity and public intervention that transcend neoliberal foundations.

While researching at a feminist archive in London, Plender came across a script for the play *Liberty or Death* (c. 1913), by Sylvia Pankhurst, one of the leaders of the women's suffrage movement and one of the founders of the United Kingdom Communist Party. There was no record in the documentation found of any publication or staging of the play, which is inspired by the East London Federation of the Suffragettes' fight to improve living and working conditions for women. In the video *Hold Hold Fire* (2020) and in a series of pencil drawings, Plender uses Pankhurst's play as

a starting point to discuss the present day in relation to domestic violence, the pay gap, and the housing crisis, from the perspective of women in the UK. The artist held a series of meetings in community centers with groups of female activists and, together with a theater director, reworked scenes and dialogues from Pankhurst's play to make them topical.



Mind Pipeline, 2020-21

Aluminum. Dimensions variable. Site-specific installation in the Hoh Rainforest, WA (2020-21). Photo: Oscar Tuazon. Courtesy of the artist, Luhring Augustine, New York, Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris, and Eva Presenhuber, Zürich, New York

For Oscar Tuazon (1975, Seattle, Washington, USA), the artistic practice is a principle of life. His works are de facto inseparable from what can be called a life project, which includes living on the fringe of society, at the periphery of social codes, in pursuit of a total harmony with the environment that surrounds him. Tuazon's work is thus born out of a strong desire, deeply rooted in North American culture, to create a refuge, the archetypal "hut in the forest". Based on those premises, Tuazon has explored throughout his career both new forms and historic alternative prototypes of architecture, as an expression of an urge for a renewed way of life. This ethic of life is plastically translated in the use and recycling of materials from the

environment, both natural and industrial, such as wood, steel and glass.

While Tuazon's practice can be considered mainly sculptural, the artist tests the boundaries of the medium by programmatically shifting the focus of his interest: from the material employed or the final shape of the artwork to the implicitly transitory nature of his creation. The artistic gesture desacralizes the materials by freeing them from any symbolism and from the function originally imposed upon them. Tuazon also challenges their physical qualities, always seeking the limit of breakage, the culmination of their fragility. The process of building or transforming the object becomes as important as the final result, even more so

as this process is often performed by the artist through and with an expanded network of collaborations with fellow artists, craftsmen, activists, researchers, designers and architects. Although reflecting on the idea of the shelter, his work does not seek social isolation, but rather to recreate, to collectively invent new forms of living together.



Untitled, 2007
Mixed media on paper. Hall de Lima Collection

Born in the Uige province, Paulo Kapela (1947, Uige, Angola – 2020, Luanda, Angola) flew to the Republic of the Congo and studied at the Poto-Poto School of Painting in Brazzaville before returning to Angola and settling in Luanda, where he lived and worked in often precarious conditions. Settling in the downtown area and surrounded by materials that fed his practice, he built a creative continuum where life and art were difficult to tell apart. “Mestre Kapela [Master Kapela]” soon established himself as a reference and inexhaustible source of inspiration for younger generations of Angolan artists, thanks both to the extraordinary power of his paintings and to his charismatic, prophetic character. His practice should

be read as an intrinsically political act, an effort of appropriating and rewriting Angola’s colonial history, in the search for a “creolization” between elements of Western domination and the local cultural and social reality.

Kapela’s paintings are imbued with a strong syncretism, where direct references to Catholicism, Bantu philosophy and Rastafarianism are juxtaposed and placed in direct contact. Likewise, in his installations, Kapela used profane objects from consumer society and sacred objects, often displaying them alongside portraits of personalities from Angola’s political and financial sectors. There is a hint of religious iconography in the way the artist’s installations combine objects and

paintings in compositions reminiscent of altars, where human figures can appear surrounded by mirrors, crosses, circles, or statuettes that weave a direct link to Nkisi culture. Another strong component of his practice is the written word: many of his paintings are covered in writing, often referring to friends and acquaintances, but also full of intimate and personal testimonies and anecdotes.

Paulo Kapela died of Covid-19 in November 2020.



[A] LA FLEUR DE LA PEAU [[ON] THE FLOWER OF SKIN], 2020

Documentation of performance at the opening of the exhibition *Wind*, at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

Displacement, communication and circulation are the primary resources in the development and language of Paulo Nazareth da Silva, Awa Jeguakai Nrendá's (old man born in Borun Nak, Vale do Rio Doce, state of Minas Gerais, Brazil) work, which is manifested in actions, immaterial art or behavioral art. Anchored by ethical commitments to indigenous and Afro-Brazilian peoples – which form a part of his ancestry –, Nazareth traces routes of contact with the world, taking as a starting point his upbringing at the top of the Morro do Palmital [Palmital Hill], in Santa Luzia, a natural overlook point in the North Zone of Belo Horizonte, where the People of Luiza, or People of Lagoa Santa, would have lived. He enacts his own mixed-race identity on

these routes, challenging norms and prejudices, and searching for rituals and conceptual, historical and emotional connections with figures of struggle and resistance, from past and present.

Nazareth deals consciously with the circulation of his works. One of the main areas of his production is the editorial platform P. NAZARETH ED. / LTDA., printing pamphlets at low costs and in large quantities, which are then distributed for free or for voluntary amounts. Their content includes realized and unrealized projects, stories, concepts, and memories, generating critical debates about dominant ideologies and their mechanisms of violence and structural racism. In exhibition spaces, Nazareth combines documentary practices and installation and

sculptural assemblages, using ordinary materials, with performative practices, which involve elements of ritualization and catharsis. In the performance *[A] LA FLEUR DE LA PEAU [[ON] THE FLOWER OF SKIN]* (2019/2020), for example, a sack of white flour hangs from the ceiling and is rhythmically stabbed by two immigrant men. The white powder falls to the ground until the men leave the scene and a woman, also an immigrant, organizes all the powder into a precise circle with a broom – alluding to white Western culture and its use of rationalism as a tool to repress other cultures in the world, including the African and Islamic origins of mathematics and geometry.



Untitled (34bsp), 2021

Film still. 35mm film, silent. 5'10". Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Phileas – A Fund for Contemporary Art and Federal Ministry Republic of Austria – Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport

Philipp Fleischmann's (1985, Hollabrunn, Austria) films constitute a rare example of a work that manages to be simultaneously physical – or “concrete,” as he himself puts it – and purely conceptual. Inspired by the great names of Austrian structuralist cinema, such as Peter Kubelka, Kurt Kren and Peter Tscherkassky, Fleischmann wound up subverting the cinematic view of these filmmakers, which has the single film frame as an essential element. Considering that the individual frame is not inherent to the film material per se – but rather merely a trace of the passing of the film through the cinematographic camera –, Fleischmann developed an entirely new type of camera that

allows the film to be exposed all at once, thus abolishing the film frame.

In the artist's view, the conventional cameras carry “a clear conception [of] how reality should be transmitted and represented. I wanted to get rid of the single frame, because it is a core element of the representational operations and political organizations that I do not agree with.” It is in this sense that Fleischmann's practice is physical, as it is based on the inescapable physicality of the film itself, but it is also eminently theoretic, insofar as it makes its potential criticism explicit. Consistent with this view, in his films the artist has concentrated on representing, nearly exclusively, the architecture of iconic

cultural spaces, thus confirming the intellectual affinity of his practice with the tradition of conceptual art, whose recurrent motifs include the criticism of the “white cube.” After portraying spaces as diverse as the Secession in Vienna and the Austrian pavilion at the Venice Biennale, in his work commissioned for the 34th Biennial Fleischmann responds to the architecture of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, creating his most expansive work, in which he walks the building from the ground floor, surrounded by Ibirapuera Park, to its roof.



Untitled (Double Exposure – Portrait in Interior), 1990

Digital file of color double exposure self-portrait in interior (exhibition copy). 14,8 × 21 cm. Courtesy: Søren Arke. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Nordic Culture Fund and Danish Arts Foundation

Born to a Danish father and a Greenlandic mother, Pia Arke (1958, Ittoqqortoormiit, Greenland – 2007, Copenhagen, Denmark) spent her childhood in Greenland without being taught to speak the local language. In her work, Arke combined her own image and mixed heritage with historical and geopolitical references in order to address the power relations and the identity problems that arise from colonial exploitation. Through her conceptual and performative practice, Arke gave new meaning to appropriated materials such as photographs of her mother taken by her father, annotated maps, traditional clothing, objects found in the vicinity of a military base, and journals and photos from Nordic explorers.

Her own body, her face, and Greenlandic natural landmarks are repeated subjects for her large-scale pinhole camera and double exposure photographs, in which different layers of negotiated reality are juxtaposed.

In her video titled *Arktisk hysteri* [Arctic Hysteria] (1996), Arke makes reference to a mental illness that Inuit women allegedly suffered from. The video shows the artist crawling naked across a black-and-white photograph of Nuugaarsuk Point, a landscape she inhabited as a child and that is present in many of her works, also appearing as the background in a large series of self and group portraits. *Jord til Scoresbysund* [Soil for Scoresbysund] (1998) is an installation comprising used coffee filters

wound with string and displayed as a square on the floor. The work is connected to one of the artist's stays in Scoresbysund, when her sister-in-law told her that used coffee grounds should be thrown out of the window to fertilize the otherwise stony soil. If in its origin the installation refers to "the whole idea of Denmark's right to Greenland's underground", as Arke once wrote in a letter, in São Paulo, a city built on the profits of coffee plantations, new layers of readings surround this imperfect geometric form and the smell it exhales.



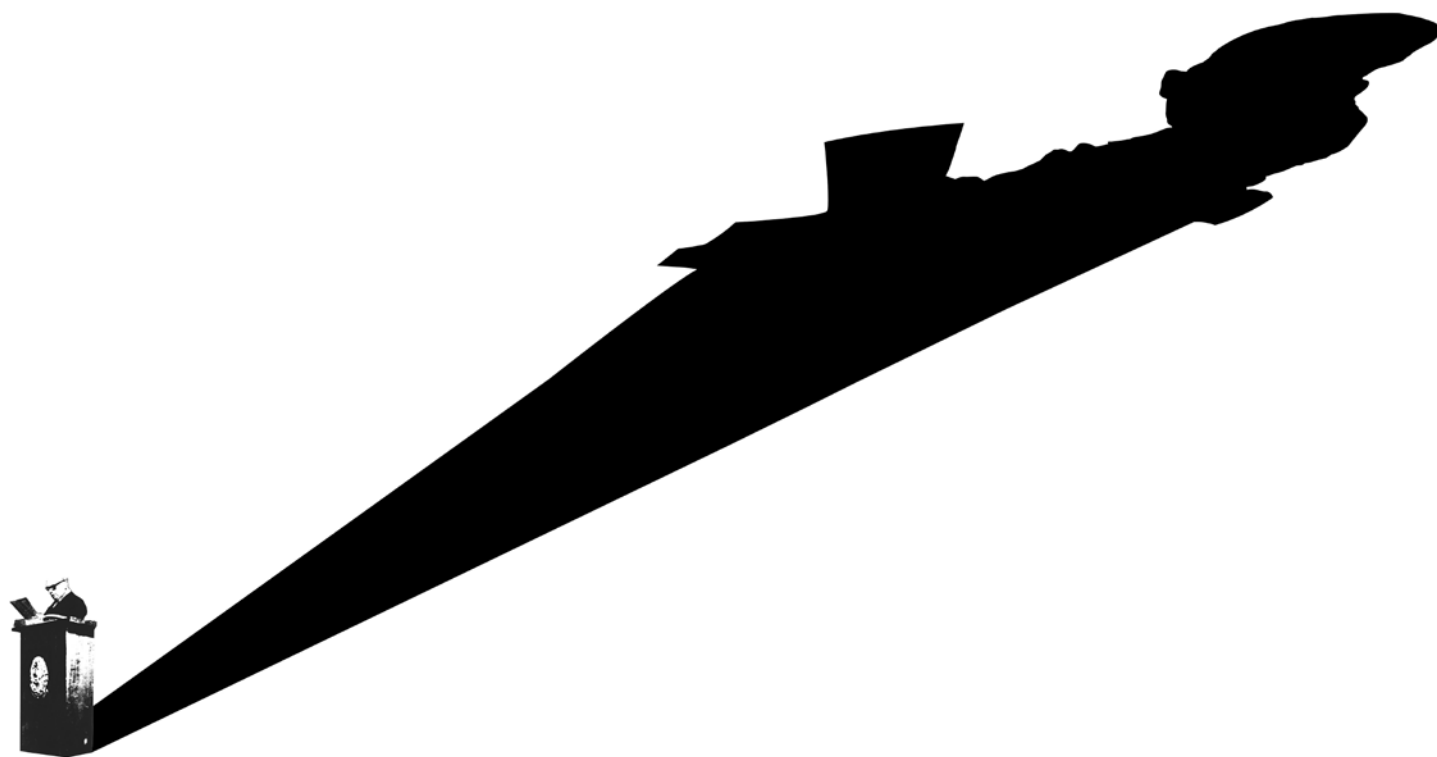
Uma Iaô de Oxum na sua primeira saída quando é apresentada ao público [A Oshun Iao in Her First Leave, When Presented to the Public], 1950-1951
Candomblé do pai Cosme series. Gelatin silver print. 50 × 50 cm. © Fundação Pierre Verger. Courtesy Fundação Pierre Verger. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Institut français à Paris

Pierre Verger's (1902, Paris, France – 1996, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil) stories about himself invariably begin with his discomfort at the moralism that ruled the bourgeois life of his family in Paris. Searching for alternatives, Verger started working with photography and left Paris to spend over a decade traveling the world. In 1946, he visited the city of Salvador for the first time, which would become his most lasting home, and became involved in Afro-Brazilian culture. Verger was initiated into Candomblé and started transiting between Bahia State and West Africa, seeking to compare and connect the religiosity of the Yoruba peoples with their diasporic descendants. This pendular transit became the main drive in Verger's life: through

it, the photographer was initiated as a Babalawo [Yoruba priest] and rebaptized as Pierre *Fatumbi* Verger, assuming an important role with the *terreiros* [Candomblé temples] and *pais* and *mães de santo* [saint-fathers and saint-mothers, "priests and priestesses" who run *terreiros*] of Salvador.

At the beginning of the 1950s, Verger was invited by Father Cosme to photograph an initiation ritual, including the private and trance stages. The resulting study, which combines the intensity of the ritual moments with a direct photographic approach, remained almost unseen, with only three of the photographs being published in the books *L'érotisme* [Eroticism] (1957) and *Les larmes d'Eros* [The Tears

of Eros] (1961) by Georges Bataille. In 1951, after photographs of a Candomblé initiation ritual were published in an exoticized edition of the magazine *Paris Match*, the magazine *O Cruzeiro* asked for Verger's help in producing a similar story, but he dodged it because he considered this issue disrespectful. The photographer José Medeiros was then sent to Salvador to produce a photographic study that was published in the same year, while Verger only reconsidered his veto of his own photographs years later when he included some of them in his book *Orixás* (1981), where he could be certain they were being contextualized by his research and experience.



Dilatáveis [Dilatables] series, 1981/2020
Adhesive vinyl on wood. Dimensions variable.

Regina Silveira (1939, Porto Alegre, Brazil) received her first training as an artist in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and in Madrid, Spain, but it was in Puerto Rico, from 1969 onward, that she developed the first exercises that delineated the core of her work. Invited to implant an experimental teaching model at the University of Puerto Rico, Silveira experimented intensively with graphic techniques for the reproduction of images and participated in an environment that was debating art as a territory for the circulation of images, discourses and ideological systems of representation. After her return to Brazil in 1973, Silveira continued her work as a university professor in São Paulo committed to contemporary

methodologies of creation and, as an artist, she became established as one of the key investigators of the specificities of the technical means and languages of art.

The artist studies how the optical apparatus processes what we see and how the drawing can manipulate these processes, dilating them, distorting them, leading them to the absurd. Silveira developed the set of works *Dilatáveis* [Dilatables] (1981) as part of the research for her PhD, entitled *Simulacros* [Simulacra], at ECA-USP. In the series, the artist appropriated photographs from widely circulated prints and reproduced them in high-contrast using the original heliograph technique, which today has been lost. Beginning the use of

projections distorted by exaggerated variables of perspective technique, which in the following decades would become a recurring area in her experimentation, Silveira created disproportionate shadows from the figures, imbuing them with symbolic connotations. In doing so, the artist emphasized the significance of iconic signs in Brazilian political and cultural life at the time (which still very much exist), embodying their oppressive presence in the national imagination whilst also highlighting the threatening nature assumed by promises of happiness, progress and order when they became unavoidable slogans, pillars in the propaganda of the dictatorial regime in force in Brazil at the time.



Roger Bernat / FFF

Domini Públic [Public Domain], 2012

Brasília, 2012. Photo: Blenda. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: AC/E – Acción Cultural Española and Institut Ramon Llull

Roger Bernat (1968, Barcelona, Catalonia) usually teams up with collaborators from diverse areas, including internet art, sound design, and documentary theater. Though his projects have predominantly been shown in theater settings, his devices have also been exhibited in art contexts, particularly in the last decade.

Bernat's work demonstrates the paradox between the crisis of representative democracy and how it unfolds in direct action and in new forms of producing and sharing knowledge, fostered by computer-based technologies, where the roles of sender and receiver are undone. In all his work, expanded theater becomes a device for an audience that is summoned to be an actor in history.

Pim-pam (2021), work commissioned by the 34th Bienal, is an onomatopoeia, a rhythmic game encapsulating an instant that goes back and forth, like a ball hitting the wall in a game of squash. For this installation, Bernat and his group FFF created a simple game, with few rules, for whoever wants to play it. Headphones are distributed on trolleys inside the pavilion. By following the instructions whispered into the headphones, visitors can initiate a strange visit to the Bienal and, at the same time, parasitize it.

Pim-pam evokes a world of direct and indirect protocols in which people are subjected to external forces, successive attacks that emancipate or destroy. The piece makes us aware of a

game that we can only understand as long as we continue to play. The artist himself defines it as a playground that, "instead of being formed by architectural objects, is articulated by sounds. It contains orders extracted from approximately half a thousand Brazilian sound documents of the last 50 years: excerpts from political speeches or songs, fragments from television shows, advertisements, yoga and meditation tips, Forró and Zumba steps, military instructions, GPS indications, etc".



Alka Domo, 2017

Video still. Videoperformance and sculpture. 17', 1920×1080 cm. Direction and production: Sebastián Calfuqueo. Camera and editing: Juan Pablo Faus. Translation to English: Jorge Pérez. Acknowledgements: Cristián Inostroza. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile

In most of their work, Sebastián Calfuqueo (1991, Santiago, Chile) touch on or expose, in a militant and critical manner, their Mapuche ancestry and the discrimination the artist faces in daily life for belonging to an indigenous group and, beyond that, for not fitting into dominant heteronormative narratives. These issues are addressed directly and with impact in one of their first works, *You Will Never Be a Weye* (2015), a filmed recording of a performance in which Calfuqueo reveals how the history of the Machis Weyes (individuals who do not conform to gender binarism) was erased as a result of the Catholic indoctrination imposed by the colonizers and of the politics of the Chilean state.

At the intersection and in the juxtaposition of domination and repression, Calfuqueo finds fertile ground to instigate reflections on the political, cultural and social status of the Mapuche people and culture in contemporary Chilean society. It is significant, in this sense, that beyond their artistic practice, Calfuqueo belongs to the feminist collectives Mapuche Rangĩntulewfũ and Yene Revista, and has collaborated in publishing texts in the Mapuche language, working towards its stimulation and preservation. Their work often starts from the broad field of performance art, whether in its more classic sense, or as a moment to be recorded on video and shown later in an exhibition space together with elements used

in the action itself, or inspired by and related to it conceptually, such as in the ceramic replicas of water gallons used in *Ko ta mapungey ka* [Water is Also Territory] (2020), in which the artist contrasts the neoliberal capitalist violent exploitation of water in Chile with the symbiotic relationship the Mapuche people have with lakes and rivers.



Stack, 2020

Watercolor on canvas. 300 × 370 × 2 cm. Courtesy: Regen Projects, Los Angeles; Galerie Buchholz Berlin/ Cologne/ New York; greengrassi, London. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

The work of Silke Otto-Knapp (1970, Osnabrück, Germany) is influenced by images and concepts from 20th-century dance, theater, and performance. With medium- and large-format works that function both autonomously and in almost architectural groupings, Otto-Knapp draws inspiration from the long-established tradition of painted panels and set design. In her paintings, she alternates between natural, idealized landscape back-grounds and subtle, mysterious interior scenes, where figures in motion evoke recent episodes in the history of modern and contemporary dance. Her works occasionally take reference from other, mostly female, artists, from American dancer Anna Halprin to Russian painter

and set designer Natalia Goncharova, both key figures in shifting paradigms of modern dance and art, respectively.

Otto-Knapp has developed a particular pictorial language. First, she transfers her drawings to canvas, developing the forms with layers of black watercolor paint, which she later sprays with water. As the paint dissolves, the artist cleans the surface so the color drains from certain areas and settles in others as it dries. In the 34th Bienal, Otto-Knapp presents a series of medium- and large-format paintings that form a kind of setting, both in terms of their subject matter and their arrangement inside the pavilion. The paintings rest on panels or function as folding screens and

autonomous structures. The motion exists not only in the action of the choreographic and/or theatrical subject itself but also in the way the public moves around the work. Meanwhile, the human-sized painted landscapes portray an artificial nature that contrasts with the vegetation surrounding the pavilion in Ibirapuera Park, creating a dualistic setting.



Môgmôka xupep [The Hawk Leaving], 2005
Watercolor. 26×21 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by:
Instituto Inclusartiz

Sueli Maxakali (1976, Santa Helena de Minas, Minas Gerais State, Brazil) is a leader of the Tikmũ'ũn indigenous people, better known as the Maxakali. Forced to leave their ancestral land to survive the aggressions that accumulated over the centuries to the point of leaving them at risk of extinction in the 1940s, the Tikmũ'ũn have maintained their language and culture and today are divided into communities distributed in the Vale do Mucuri, in Minas Gerais. Village life is largely organized around and based upon their relationship with a myriad of spirit-people from the Atlantic Forest, the Yãmĩxop, and their respective sets of chants. Many of these chants are sung collectively, as the most fundamental way

of relating to the Yãmĩxop spirits, who are invited to visit the villages to sing, dance, and eat during the ritual. Every Tikmũ'ũn individual owns and is responsible for a part of the Yãmĩxop chant repertoire. Together, all the chants compose the Tikmũ'ũn universe, which is made up of everything that this people see, feel and interact with, but also of the memories of plants and animals that no longer exist, or that remained in their original land, from which the Tikmũ'ũn people were expelled during the colonial war.

Besides being a leader, educator, and photographer, Sueli is a film director. In the 34th Bienal, the artist presents the installation *Kũmxop Koxuk Yög* [The Spirits of My

Daughters], a collection of objects, masks, and dresses that refer to the mythical universe of the Yãmĩyhex – spirit women. All the work for the exhibition was made with women and girls in the community who take care of each one of these Yãmĩy spirits. The collective process of creating the work is coherent with the organization of the Tikmũ'ũn community itself, and in a sense stretches and shakes up the meaning, limits, and relevance of artistic production in such a specific context, presenting us with other regimes of authorship and creativity.



No Gods, No Masters, 2017

Video still. HD video and 4-channel sound. 19'13". Courtesy of the artist, Emalin, London, and Sfeir-Semler, Beirut / Hamburg

Sung Tieu (1987, Hải Dương, Vietnam) uses a wide range of media, including installation, sound, video, sculpture, photography and performance. Not engrossed in creating a recognizable style or in maintaining a practice that can be easily catalogued and circumscribed, she accumulates, superimposes and contaminates factual, fictional, plausible and possible narrative layers until they become inseparable from one another. Her research departs from issues of migration and displacement to explore the political interests that regulate these movements. In works such as *In Cold Print* (2020) the artist alludes to the so-called “Havana Syndrome” and its lasting impact on the geopolitical tensions between the United

States and Cuba; in *Zugzwang* (2020) she analyzes the bureaucratic state apparatus through the life and workplace of a fictional employee.

In other works, Tieu deepens the psychological and spiritual dimensions of collective trauma within situations of conflict. In her video *No Gods, No Masters* (2017), for example, the artist investigates the military operation *Wandering Soul*, carried out by the psychological operations of the US army in Vietnam in the 1960s, and the United State’s creation of a psychological sound weapon titled “Ghost Tape No. 10”, which consisted of a recording in which the spirit of a dead Vietnamese soldier urges his companions to desertion. Tieu juxtaposes this recording, which was broadcast via

military helicopters flying over the jungle at night, with images filmed in her family home in Hải Dương, in the north of the country. The footage enigmatically documents a ritual, which equally summons spirits of the dead. The series of textual works titled *Newspapers 1969-ongoing* (2017-ongoing), included by the artist in this and other installations, contributes further to a less univocal reading of her works.



Tamara Henderson and Nell Pearson

The Canberra Characters, 2020-2021

Series of 13 sculptures, various materials, dimensions variable. Photo: Brenton McGeachie. Courtesy of the artist and Rodeo, London / Piraeus. Participation in the 34th Biennial supported by: Canada Council for the Arts

The practice of Tamara Henderson (1982, Sackville, Canada) covers a wide variety of mediums, such as performance, painting, poetry, film, textiles, sculpture and installation that can incorporate found objects. Her work often departs from an open-ended investigation of different states of consciousness. While the notes, observations, patterns or ideas that she includes in her work might be derived from what she sees in her everyday life, Henderson then elaborates on them in order to compose a kind of oneiric mythology that she further complexifies through different filters of perception. A key aspect of her work is thus the transformative power that is generated by the energy between the conscious and the unconscious.

Some of her works might verge on the funny, others on the openly arcane or indecipherable, subverting the boundaries between inside and outside, both in her own body and in those of the viewer. Despite the fact that the human figure is largely absent from her work, it does offer a possibility to reconnect with the body, to the idea of what a body is, should or can be. Objects replace human figures and become characters that spiral into being through their own dreamy, meditative, narrative journeys: by sewing dilated pupils on a set of curtains, for example, the artist turns them into eyewitnesses or observers. In other series of works, the artist creates animistic, hallucinatory scenes by revisiting a wide

range of techniques borrowed from the early years of cinema or the avant-garde of theatre and performance.

What if we could vote as equals?

Evil.27: Selma, 2011

Video still. HD video, color and sound. 9'. Courtesy of the artist, Greene Naftali, New York, Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

The vast majority of the works Tony Cokes (1956, Richmond, Virginia, USA) produced in the last decade consist of videos in which texts are presented on monochromatic or abstract backgrounds, accompanied by music, usually from the broad universe of pop. In many cases, the texts analyze and contextualize the music itself, or the musical genre it belongs to, intertwining considerations that relate to the history of music with others of a broader nature, where cultural, political, racial and social spheres converge. In the series *Evil* (2001-ongoing), Cokes addresses the concept of evil in contemporary society. The artist juxtaposes statements from a variety of sources (from speeches by political leaders to stand-up

comedy sketches, to pop lyrics and even academic texts) in order to stress the way the media levels discourses, confuses the production of meaning and makes certain languages and events either visible, or invisible.

The work *Evil.27: Selma* (2011), for example, can be read as a reflection on such systems of visibility and silencing. The work is based on a historic event: the Montgomery bus boycott, a milestone in the civil rights movement in the mid-1950s in the United States, which began with the refusal of a young African-American woman, Rosa Parks, to give up her seat on the bus to a white man. In the video, Cokes presents a text called *On Non-Visibility* by the Our Literal Speed

collective, which argues that the episode generated enormous commotion and succeeded in mobilizing thousands of people because there were no images of the moment when Parks refused to give up her seat and ended up being arrested. This idea resonates even more strongly in an historic period like the one we are living – marked by the fight for visibility and for the end of historical structural violence – and in the practice of an artist who gives up the image to emphasize the power of the message.



Dancer of the Year, 2019

Kanal Pompidou, Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Brussels.
Photo: Orpheas Emirzas. Courtesy of the artist

In his choreographies, Trajal Harrell (1973, Georgia, USA) combines references from mainstream history of dance – mainly the 1960s North American avant-garde trends – with elements and movements from other contexts and histories, such as voguing, the hoochie koochie and butoh. These bold and extremely fertile encounters reveal connections between different fields of the performing arts, as bodies, identities and voices that clash with the conventional narrative of contemporary dance gain visibility. Harrell thus constructs a unique body of work, marked precisely by this hybrid and rhizomatic character, urging the spectator to imagine alternative histories of dance.

The point of departure of *Dancer of the Year*, the work included in the 34th Bienal, is a personal one: Harrell's nomination as 'Dancer of the Year' by *Tanz* magazine in 2018 and the reflection on (self)worth which this triggered. The work is a dance performance accompanied by *Dancer of the Year Shop #3*, a performative installation in the form of a shop where Harrell puts up for sale personal objects of inestimable value such as family heirlooms. Questions about origins and legacy, (self)worth and the valorization of art, connect the dance solo with the installation, which also represents a new chapter in Harrell's commitment to testing the limits of his performative practice in the context of museums and exhibition

spaces. Another example of this interest is *The Untitled Still Life Collection*, a performance first conceived and interpreted by Harrell with a long-time friend, installation artist Sarah Sze, who collaborated to generate movement using a thin blue line of string. Rather than employing a conventional collaborative model (i.e. a visual artist creating a set for a choreographer to perform in), the two artists create a dialogue of mediums where the choreographic and sculptural minds entangle themselves transforming their individual properties and generating a new collective potential.



Elementar (Chão da mata) [Elemental (Forest Floor)], 2018

Photograph. 79 × 120 cm. Photo: Lisa Hermes. Courtesy of the artist

Uýra (1991, Santarém, Pará, Brazil) is a hybrid entity, an interweaving of scientific biological knowledge and the ancestral wisdom of the indigenous people. They call plants by their popular and Latin names, but evoke their medicinal properties, their tastes, their smells, their powers. The result is an intricate and complex understanding of the jungle, a web of knowledge and research. Uýra presents themselves as “a tree that walks” and was born in 2016, during the process of Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment, when biologist Emerson decided to expand their academic research and search for ways to bring debate about environmental conservation and LGBTQIA+ rights to communities in and around Manaus. In biology

classes or photographic performances, in make-up and camouflage, in texts and installations, Uýra talks both from and with the forest.

In the 34th Bienal, two preexisting photographic series – *Elementar* [Elemental] and *Mil quase mortes* [A Thousand Near Deaths] – are interconnected in a montage inspired by the undulations of a snake’s body. The images are at once records of actions of denunciation and evocations of ancestral or futuristic beings, between utopian and apocalyptic, of disturbing beauty. The series *Retomada* [Recovery] (2021), developed especially for this Bienal, is set in places in Manaus that, whether for their history and social function or for their architectural characteristics, could be associated with

ways of life inherited from Eurocentric culture. But what the apparition of Uýra awakens, what it makes us see, are the plants that gradually recover the space that once belonged to them.

Complementing this series is an installation, also being shown for the first time, entitled *Malhadeira* [Enmeshment] (2021), which superimposes a sinuous network of organic cables and rubber tree seeds onto a drawing of the mesh of roads connected to Constantino Nery Avenue, in Manaus. The wires made of seeds snaking over the straight lines bring back the river’s outline, the memory of the songs it sings.



Carcen, 2018

Enamelled lava plate. 50×42 cm. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Barret. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – DAC Martinique

Victor Anicet's (1938, Le Marigot, Martinique) works are a continuous exercise in restoring the testimonies of the Martinican people. His father a fisherman and his mother a worker at the sugar mill of a *habitation* (an extension of the colonial production regime based on slave labor), Anicet's first contact with the ceramics of the Amerindian Arawak people was as a child. Years later, while studying in Paris, he visited the Musée de L'Homme and realized how far he and his people had distanced themselves from their history, which had remained in the hands and voices of the colonizers. Anicet returned to Martinique in 1967, and since then his work has been taking place both in and outside the studio, whether joining

other artists interested in debating Caribbean aesthetics to found the group FWOMAJE (1984), dedicating himself to fostering an institutional space for Martinican art, or indeed creating public works.

One of Anicet's most important public works is a ceramic piece that marks the grave of Édouard Glissant in the Diamant cemetery, in Martinique. Titled *La présence de l'Est multiple* [The Presence of the Multiple East] (2011), the work was named by Glissant himself when an earlier work with the same composition was shown in an exhibition he organized in the 1970s. This recurrence of compositions and symbols sums up the way his production has developed over the last five decades.

Meanwhile, Anicet has been exploring recollections of the lives of African slaves and their descendants, as well as of Caribbean Amerindians and Hindu families who immigrated to Martinique in the last century. Many of these memories are charged with violence, such as those of the "carcans", iron instruments used to hold enslaved men and women by the neck, or natives' accounts of seeing the colonial ships appear on the horizon for the first time.



Juste un Mouvement [Just a Movement], 2021
Film still. 108'. Courtesy of the artist. Participation in the 34th Biental supported by: Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI)

Artist and filmmaker Vincent Meessen (1971, Baltimore, USA) combines criticism of colonial models used to write history with an affective attention to certain disruptive actions of the past. In a number of his works, his objects of interest are linked to the work of Situationist International, the revolutionary movement (active between 1957 and 1972) which gave rise to an integral criticism of society. Meessen investigates gaps in the movement's history, such as the existence of situationist direct influence on the African continent and the Caribbean. The film *Juste un Mouvement* [Just a Movement], shown at the 34th Biental inside the spiral-shaped installation *The Sun Will Always Rise* (2018-2020), was born within the

scope of this research, more specifically of the encounter with a photograph picturing the young anti-colonial militant and Senegalese philosopher Omar Blondin Diop reading the last edition of the magazine *Internationale Situationniste*.

Diop entered the cinema history with his appearance in the film *La Chinoise* (1967), by Jean-Luc Godard, where he played himself teaching a class on Marxism and Maoism to a group of young people, who have gathered in an apartment to prepare a transition from student movement into armed action. Meessen revisits a method used by Godard at the time – making a film as a process of registering the making of another film –, moving it to

present-day Dakar, Senegal, where colonial legacies are being reshuffled as the French influence gets surpassed by the complex alliances with Chinese government and companies. In this way, he both pays tribute to and criticizes the 1967 film, inverting its geographical and political focus in the present. In *Juste un Mouvement*, history and cinema are experienced as one continuous polyphonic movement, replete with spiral overlaps, throughout which a narrative is woven by Diop's friends and family, reunited today to remember his ideas and attitudes, and to demand the truth about his political imprisonment and death.



Insurgencias botánicas: *Phaseolus Lunatus* [Botanical Insurgencies: *Phaseolus Lunatus*], 2017/2020
Installation: hydroponic structure and plants of species *Phaseolus Lunatus*; MDF wooden box with broad bean seeds; ceramics; acrylic painting on wall. Dimensions variable. Documentation of the solo exhibition at the Bienal Pavilion. Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

The complex Peruvian imaginary, characterized by the clashing between the age-old Andean culture and the violence, idiosyncrasies and contradictions introduced and fueled by the processes of colonization, are often the basis for the work by Ximena Garrido-Lecca (1980, Lima, Peru). The variety of techniques and resources used by the artist in a certain way reflects the impossibility of translating this complexity, of pasteurizing the clashings within the Latin American reality in a pacified or linear work. In recent years, Garrido-Lecca also produced a series of installations characterized by the use of processes of construction or growth that can be observed over time by the public, recovering techniques

and materials employed in handicraft, art and architecture throughout Peruvian history.

One of her most emblematic works, *Insurgencias botánicas: Phaseolus Lunatus* [Botanical Insurgencies: *Phaseolus Lunatus*] (2017-2020) is an installation in which seedlings of the species *Phaseolus lunatus* are planted in a hydroponic structure, in a symbolic reactivation of the supposed communication system of the Moche culture, a pre-Incan Peruvian civilization that developed complex irrigation methods and which, according to theories, made use of the spots present on these beans as signs for an ideogrammatic writing system. In the environment of the 34th Bienal, the installation was shown for the first time in February 2020,

in a solo show marking the opening of the exhibition, and again in November, when part of the group show *Vento* [Wind], the second stage in the public construction of the Bienal and a moment of collective affirmation of the desire to resist and to keep believing in art and culture despite the despair of the pandemic. With its emphasis on the unending transformation of all living things (from plants to culture), it came to symbolize the curatorial strategy of thinking of an exhibition as a process rather than as something fixed or crystallized.

Orochi (Serpent) AM 88.2 MHz, 2019

Exhibition view of *Slower Than Slowly*. Courtesy: Mother's Tankstation Limited, London. Participation in the 34th Bienal supported by: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (Bunka-cho Art Platform Japan) and Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)



Intangible elements such as space, light, magnetism and gravity are fundamental in the assemblages and installations by Yuko Mohri (1980, Kanagawa, Japan). She often uses everyday elements to create objects or devices with moving parts, which can emit sounds or light, or generate fields of magnetism or energy. Randomness and improvisation – central elements in the intersection between the visual arts and music – are present in many of the artist's works, in which the sounds produced by the movement of the objects are never entirely controlled, and largely unforeseeable. Mohri's installations constitute autonomous and permeable ecosystems, in which the artist explores the clashing between the various elements that compose

them. Often, the idiosyncrasies of the venue where the works are shown also play a determinant role in the behavior of these sets of objects.

In Mohri's work, the voice, one of the ecosystem elements, can act as discourse, as pure sound or even as an element that stitches together different contexts and stories. The artist conceived for the *Vento* exhibition a sound installation in which we hear the distorted voice of Daisetsu Suzuki saying "I can't hear you". In Mohri's universe, Suzuki's voice is the counterpoint to the writing of Marcel Duchamp, who, in a letter addressed to Maria Martins in 1951, shortly before the first Bienal de São Paulo, reported the anguish caused by the voice heard on the telephone, distorted by distance and at

the same time so present that it exposed the futility of the written word.

In *Orochi (Serpent) AM 88.2 MHz* (2019/2021), the passage of a sound signal through a coiled cable generates a magnetic field that makes a small metal object moves. The sound converts to magnetic force, and although the music is playing, the only thing the visitor hears is the faint sound of objects trembling. Thus, electromagnetic fields, music, movement, sound and vibration are mixed in a multidimensional arrangement.



Discurso de Promoción [Promotion Speech], undated. Action documentation. Photo: Musuk Nolte. Courtesy of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani

Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani (1971, Lima, Peru) is one of the most important representatives of so-called group theater in Latin America. The group is a pioneer in collective creation, experimentation, and political performance. “Yuyachkani” is a Quechua word meaning “I am thinking”, “I am remembering”, a metaphor that has served to investigate and analyze the syncretism of theatricalities found in Peruvian traditions and indigenous culture in the Peruvian political and social context since the group started in 1971, also incorporating the repertoire of universal theater. In their work, Yuyachkani frequently features the presence of bodies in the space, as well as theatrical text, elements of documentary archive,

photography, installation, dance, and play, arranging the dramaturgy according to what creation demands throughout the process.

The group’s members, directed by Miguel Rubio, define themselves not only as creative actors and actresses, but as citizens and activists seeking to reactivate social and historical memory through themes as diverse as land struggle, migration, marginalization, political violence against women, justice, the dilemma of the displaced returning to their native countries, and the disappeared. These urgent themes do not exclude broader themes, such as reflections on the human condition and the hope for a future that includes all lives on the planet. The group’s trajectory ranges from

direct collaboration with political militancy alongside leftist parties to the exercise of theatrical creation as a social tool for change. Today, their theater-house is a space dedicated to the community, where they present their works and carry out workshops with theatrical methods to promote inclusive experiences. The presentation of its archive at the 34th Bienal is the first attempt to openly and performatively exhibit the documents, images, personal magazines, booklets, videos, and photographs that the group used to compose its works and to engage with the work’s context over five decades of existence.



The Re(a)d Forest, 2021

Video still. Video installation. Courtesy of the artist

Born in Nigeria, raised from infancy in the UK and currently residing between Los Angeles (USA) and Port Harcourt (Nigeria), Zina Saro-Wiwa (1976, Port Harcourt) is an artist who, as she puts it, “lives within many cultures, worlds and psychic dimensions.” Her task as an artist as she sees it, has been to try to understand her place and the place of humanity “in the worlds on this earth.” After more than a decade working in journalism, Saro-Wiwa began her artistic career investigating her complex and tragic family history, closely linked to the destructive processes of oil extraction in Ogoniland, her ancestral homeland in southern Nigeria. Saro-Wiwa uses video installation, photography, film and documentary production, writing,

curatorial projects and food initiatives, to build a concept of environmentalism that integrates and includes emotional and spiritual ecosystems, in addition to accepted concerns that define environmentalism such as greenhouse gas emissions and melting ice caps.

In *The Re(a)d Forest* (2021), a video installation commissioned by the 34th Biennial, Saro-Wiwa builds a representation of the energetic and spiritual body of a forest, expressing the ways in which she imagines the interconnection and the interdependence between trees and people. The columns of red light – a colour that symbolizes rebirth and renewal in the Ogoni culture – are also the color that the trees “see”, according to the artist, thanks to

the presence of phytochrome B, a photoreceptor protein that detects red light. In the video triptych *Kum: Soul of the Shadow* (2020) we are confronted with a magnificent ancient tree named “Kum” by the people that live around it. It is a tree that occupies a central place in one of the 111 villages of Ogoniland, where the video was filmed, and around which the community gathers to make important decisions. Interacting with the tree is *The Invisible Boy*, an entity that appears in the works of Saro-Wiwa and represents a messenger between worldly dimensions. The personification of secrecy and epistemic resistance.



Alma no olho [Soul in the Eye], 1973
Film still. 11'. Courtesy of Centro Afro Carioca de
Cinema Zózimo Bulbul

Zózimo Bulbul (1937-2013, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) is a fundamental figure in Brazilian cinema history. Consolidated as one of the most important actors of his generation, he worked with directors such as Leon Hirszman, Nelson Pereira dos Santos and Glauber Rocha. While spending time amid the intellectual and politicized environment of this group of filmmakers, Bulbul participated in debates with the black movements emerging in the country, which led him to rethink his artistic production. His legacy to future generations includes the feature film *Abolição* [Abolition] (1988), a synthesis of debates on the farse of abolition of Afro-Brazilian slaves that supposedly took place in 1888, eight short films, and the founding of both the

Centro Afro Carioca de Cinema [Afro Carioca Cinema Center] (since 2007) and Encontros de Cinema Negro – Brasil, África e Caribe [Meetings of Black Cinema – Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean], an event, now in its 14th year, dedicated to building the protagonism of the black Brazilian filmmaker, in connection with the African continent and its diasporas.

In 1971, Bulbul starred in the feature film *Compasso de espera*, directed by Antunes Filho. He played a black poet who has achieved a certain prominence in a predominantly white bourgeois and intellectual environment, thus confronting the atavistic racism in Brazilian society, still disguised by the myth of racial democracy. Bulbul then obtained the short

ends leftover from Antunes Filho's feature and used them to direct his first short film, *Alma no olho* [Soul in the Eye] (1973), included in the 34th Bienal. Given the precariousness of the material, which limited the control of photographic contrast and restricted shooting to short takes, Bulbul put himself in the film, in a sequence of iconic shots that experimentally and provocatively condensed stereotypes of the image of the black man in Brazilian history. Apart from being a creation without precedent in Brazilian cinema, this short film was the start of Bulbul's commitment to forming a cinema directed and produced by black people.

Extended program and institutional partnerships

One of the starting points of the curatorial project for the 34th Bienal was the aim to enlarge the show, extending it along several months and expanding the presence of the participant artists through an unprecedented network of institutional partnerships. According to the original design, the collective exhibition in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion would be preceded by three solo shows and three performances in this same building, while exhibitions in other venues in the city – almost all of them solo shows – would happen simultaneously to it. With the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19, the schedule was changed, accompanying the expansion of the 34th Bienal project itself.

29 jun 2019 – 26 mar 2020 <i>Lasar Segall: Eterno caminhante</i> Museu Lasar Segall	20 mar 2021 – 6 jun 2021 <i>The Stomach and the Port</i> Neo Muyanga Liverpool Biennials, United Kingdom	4 sep – 28 nov 2021 <i>Moquéim Surari: Arte indígena contemporânea</i> Curadoria: Jaider Esbell Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM São Paulo)
oct 2019 - feb 2020 Encontros com artistas Oficina Cultural Oswald de Andrade / Poesis	13 aug 2021 – 21 nov 2021 <i>Pierre Verger: Percursos e memórias</i> Instituto Tomie Ohtake	4 sep 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Though it's dark, still I sing</i> Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo
8 feb 2020 <i>A Maze In Grace</i> Neo Muyanga com Legítima Defesa + Bianca Turner Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo	21 aug 2021 – 15 oct 2021 <i>Noa Eshkol: corpo coletivo</i> Casa do Povo	4 sep 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Replicante</i> Clara Ianni www.aarea.co
8 feb 2020 – 15 mar 2020 <i>Ximena Garrido-Lecca</i> Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo	21 aug 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>PLANTASIA OIL COMPANY</i> Adrián Balseca Casa do Sertanista / Museu da Cidade de São Paulo	aug – dec 2021 <i>Atravessar a grande noite sem acender a luz</i> Jota Mombaça Centro Cultural São Paulo
9 jun 2020 – 11 oct 2020 <i>Centropy</i> Deana Lawson Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland	26 aug 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Lamento das imagens</i> Alfredo Jaar Sesc Pompeia	18 sep – 5 dec 2021 <i>Ocupação Paulo Freire</i> Itaú Cultural
14 oct 2020 – 21 mar 2021 <i>Antonio Dias: derrotas e vitórias</i> Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM São Paulo)	28 aug 2021 <i>The Untitled Still Life Collection</i> Trajal Harrell Instituto Bardi / Casa de Vidro	5 sep 2021 – 6 nov 2021 <i>Oriana</i> Beatriz Santiago Muñoz Pivô
15 oct 2020 – 8 feb 2021 <i>Joan Jonas: Cinco décadas</i> Pinacoteca de São Paulo / Estação	28 aug 2021 – 3 jul 2022 <i>Regina Silveira: Outros paradoxos</i> Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP)	21 sep 2021 – 22 nov 2021 Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil – São Paulo 14 dec 2021 – 21 feb 2022 Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil – Rio de Janeiro <i>O legado de Morandi</i> Giorgio Morandi
14 nov 2020 – 13 dec 2020 <i>Vento [Wind]</i> Alice Shintani, Ana Adamović, Antonio Dias, Clara Ianni, Deana Lawson, Edurne Rubio, Eleonore Koch, Gala Porras-Kim, Jacqueline Nova, Jaider Esbell, Joan Jonas, Koki Tanaka, León Ferrari, Luisa Cunha, Melvin Moti, Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi, Neo Muyanga, Paulo Nazareth, Regina Silveira, Ximena Garrido-Lecca e Yuko Mohri Pavilhão Ciccillo Matarazzo	28 aug 2021 – 5 dec 2021 <i>Frida Orupabo</i> Museu Afro Brasil	25 sep 2021 – 30 jan 2022 <i>Carolina Maria de Jesus: um Brasil para os brasileiros</i> IMS Paulista
1 dec 2020 – 13 dec 2020 <i>Ano X</i> Grace Passô Festival Novas Frequências	31 aug 2021 – 14 nov 2021 <i>Parade – a drip, a drop, the end of the tale</i> Yuko Mohri Japan House São Paulo	oct 2021 – dec 2021 <i>Manthia Diawara</i> Amant Foundation, Nova York, EUA
	1 sep 2021 – 18 dec 2021 <i>ANTONIO DIAS / ARQUIVO / O LUGAR DO TRABALHO</i> Instituto de Arte Contemporânea (IAC)	30 oct 2021 – 16 jan 2022 <i>Debaixo do barro do chão</i> Juraci Dórea Museu Brasileiro da Escultura e Ecologia (MuBE)

Artists

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Alfredo Jaar
Alice Shintani
Amie Siegel
Ana Adamović
Andrea Fraser
Anna-Bella Papp
Antonio Dias
Antonio Vega Macotela
Arjan Martins
Beatriz Santiago Muñoz
Belkis Ayón
Carmela Gross
Christoforos Savva
Clara Ianni
Claude Cahun
Daiara Tukano
Daniel de Paula
Darcy Lange
Deana Lawson
Dirk Braeckman
E.B. Itso
Edurne Rubio
Eleonora Fabião
Eleonore Koch
Éric Baudelaire
Frida Orupabo
Gala Porras-Kim
Giorgio Griffa
Giorgio Morandi
Grace Passô
Guan Xiao
Gustavo Caboco
Hanni Kamaly
Haris Epaminonda
Hsu Che-Yu
Jacqueline Nova

Jaider Esbell
Jaune Quick-to-See Smith
Joan Jonas
Jota Mombaça
Jungjin Lee
Juraci Dórea
Kelly Sinnapah Mary
Koki Tanaka
Lasar Segall
Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Lee “Scratch” Perry
León Ferrari
Lothar Baumgarten
Luisa Cunha
Lydia Ourahmane
Lygia Pape
Manthia Diawara
Mariana Caló and
Francisco Queimadela
Marinella Senatore
Marissa Lee Benedict and
David Rueter
Mauro Restiffe
Melvin Moti
Mette Edvardsen
Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi
Nalini Malani
Naomi Rincón Gallardo
Neo Muyanga
Nina Beier
Noa Eshkol
Olivia Plender
Oscar Tuazon
Paulo Kapela
Paulo Nazareth
Philipp Fleischmann
Pia Arke
Pierre Verger
Regina Silveira

Roger Bernat
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Silke Otto-Knapp
Sueli Maxakali
Sung Tieu
Tamara Henderson
Tony Cokes
Trajal Harrell
Uýra
Victor Anicet
Vincent Meessen
Ximena Garrido-Lecca
Yuko Mohri
Yuyachkani
Zina Saro-Wiwa
Zózimo Bulbul

Statements

Objects from the Museu Nacional
The Bell from Ouro Preto
A Ronda da Morte by Hélio Oiticica
The Portraits of Frederick Douglass
Notebooks by Carolina Maria
de Jesus
Two Embroideries by João Cândido
Letters from Joel Rufino to his son
Cut/Relation in Antonin Artaud and
Edouard Glissant
The Engraved Image of Coatlicue
Paulo Freire – Circles
Hiroshima mon amour by
Alain Resnais
The Dedication from
Constantin Brancusi
Tikmũ'ũn Songs
Cerâmica Paulista

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Jota Mombaça
María Salgado
Paulo Miyada
Ruth Estévez
Teresa Ralli and Miguel Rubio
[Yuyachkani]
Thiago de Mello
Vitor Cesar

With the idea of an open rehearsal as one of its curatorial premises, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo has been constructed publicly, assuming the procedural and changeable character intrinsic to the holding of an international show of this size. When we close the doors of the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion on December 5, 2021, the 34th Bienal's programming, begun in February 2020, will have extended for nearly two years.

With the challenges ushered in by the pandemic, the 34th Bienal – which had already embraced the aim of expanding in time and space – gained another year. Thus, the venues taking part in its extensive programming also changed, and spread within the virtual world. While online actions had already been present in the various editions of the Bienal de São Paulo since 1996, they inevitably gained another proportion in this edition.

This dynamics makes the 34th Bienal unique not only in its configuration – which includes partnerships with institutions throughout the city of São Paulo – but also in the relationships that the public can establish with it. Over the course of the last year, we made it possible for everyone to accompany, from close up, the institutional, curatorial and artistic processes and reflections that always emerge during the preparation of a Bienal, but which, due to the project's timeframe, are normally restricted to those immediately concerned with them.

Coupled with the exhibitions in the network of partners, the opening of the show *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing] in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion is the high point of a process carried out publicly and collaboratively, and whose construction will continue throughout the three months of the exhibition itself – because the meaning of the artworks and of the show is not given beforehand and will never be finished. Rather, it is the sum of the experiences and interpretations carried out by each of our visitors, based on their unique repertoires and life stories, which will configure, in their plurality, the 34th Bienal de São Paulo.

José Olympio da Veiga Pereira

President – Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

Since its first edition in 1951, the Bienal de São Paulo has attracted millions of visitors interested in new experiences and in expanding their knowledge through contact with leading examples of contemporary art from around the world. Beyond that, since its second edition, in 1953, the exhibition has been accompanied by activities seeking to introduce the aesthetic experience to education and to multidisciplinary and citizen development.

Almost as old as the exhibition itself, the Bienal de São Paulo's education program has consolidated itself as an important space for mediation between works brought to the Bienal and their different publics. As the Bienal gained prominence as both a reference in art and an educational event, activities designed for the public were added to those specifically for teachers and students. With this front deepening, every Bienal since 1998 has been accompanied by an educational publication, distributed at no cost to millions of teachers and students throughout Brazil.

Its reach, longevity, and educational vocation have made the Bienal de São Paulo a landmark of Brazilian culture. Throughout its 70 year history – an anniversary it celebrates now in 2021 –, it has been devoted to a mission to increase access to art and bring together national and international production. It has also consistently strived to equip each of its millions of visitors with the tools to understand canonical interpretations of exhibited works while, at the same time, stimulating and enabling them to form their own readings.

This year, in which the Bienal celebrates its 70th anniversary and presents its 34th edition, the Federal Government, through the Special Secretariat for Culture and the Ministry of Tourism, is proud to stand beside this initiative that reflects the core values of cultural public policies: promoting free exposure to art, carrying out educational activities, and stimulating encounters between different people and social groups. It is through actions like these that culture can enrich our country and transform our citizens.

Mario Frias

Special Secretary of Culture

Ministry of Tourism – Federal Government

After more than 30 years of operations, **Itaú Cultural** (IC) has cemented its role as one of the most active institutions in the Brazilian cultural scene. By listening and interacting with the other, the organization reinvents processes for realizing its goals and dialoguing with society.

This intuitive and intellectual journey has resulted in a systematic thinking and in continuous activities, which most notably include events related to visual arts, such as various exhibitions, courses, debates and support to partners. With the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, for example, the partnership has already spanned 12 years.

With the pandemic decreed in 2020, and understanding the importance of art and culture in times of crisis, IC sought to reinvent and offer activities and contents that users could take part in virtually, without leaving home. It created the *Palco virtual* [Virtual Stage], with shows broadcast online, and also launched the Escola IC [IC School], which offers permanent and temporary courses, as well as Itaú Cultural Play, a platform for free streaming dedicated to national productions.

It also reinforced its production of digital contents, with new columns on its website, an intense production of reports, interviews and articles, and launchings of podcasts. At its headquarters, in São Paulo, it has continued with its programming of exhibitions, creating protocols to adapt the shows to the needs of the moment.

Itaú Cultural continues to innovate and to seek to generate transformative experiences in the world of Brazilian art and culture. Because inspiring and being inspired are an essential part of life.

Itaú Cultural

Working within a network is a fundamental dimension of the actions carried out by **Sesc** in the state of São Paulo. Spread between the capital, the metropolitan region, the interior, the seacoast, and, also, the virtual environment, the various cultural and leisure centers maintained by the institution compose a grid that extends through different regions and realities, seeking to leverage each of its nodes, understood as units of a wider complex. As an integral part of the territories in which they are located, these “nodes” participate in the local dynamics with the aim of augmenting them.

The very notion of a network includes being open to new interconnections. In this sense, Sesc furthers its social extension and penetration by entering into partnerships with different sectors and entities of society, enlarging the reach of its actions – while the exchanges that come about through these cooperations also bring benefits to its organizational thinking and proposals. The constant and already long-standing collaboration between Sesc and the Fundação Bienal reiterates this policy, suggesting that through a combination of efforts the cultural initiatives become more effective and wider ranging.

In the present edition of the Bienal, due to the event’s expansion in time and space of the show, which proposes its presence in other institutions of the city of São Paulo, Sesc is receiving a solo show that is part of the Bienal’s general curatorship. This exhibition has its own specific educational project, in order to enhance its reception by the public. Besides this participation in the capital, Sesc is mobilizing its network of units in the interior of the state, aiming to accomplish various actions for the training and continuing education of educators from the public and private educational networks, as well as the third sector. With this decentralized arrangement, Sesc and the Bienal articulate their expertise and resources in order to broaden the field of contemporary art as much as possible.

Danilo Santos de Miranda

Regional Director of Sesc São Paulo

We are very pleased to be sponsoring the 34th Bienal de São Paulo. Since 1951, the show has remained committed to featuring innovative works, in both the national and international context, through an admirable selection. Once again, the constant debate of concepts and ideas – which is essential to the creation of quality artworks – is present in this edition of the event.

We identify with this goal and result. Innovating and knowing how to choose are part of our daily activities. Debating clearly on what to do and how to do it with excellence is fundamental for us to achieve the goals of our stakeholders.

Bahia Asset Management

Instituto Cultural Vale believes in the transforming role of culture, which expands the world view and creates new perspectives for the future. Vale, with more than two decades of investment in the sector, launched in 2020 the Vale Cultural Institute with the purpose of expanding support and valuing Brazilian art and culture in its multiple manifestations and in all its diversity.

The Institute is proud to sponsor the 34th Bienal de São Paulo, which multiplies the opportunities for meeting art, the various identities and artistic expressions that make us who we are. Its diversified agenda generates new knowledge, inspires and promotes reflection on artistic and cultural manifestations with the different audiences that experience them. The Bienal brings to the country's cultural scene a mix of popular and sophisticated elements, showing that art is for everyone. And it is this path that Instituto Cultural Vale seeks, access, exchange and sharing of knowledge and actions with the amalgamation of the creative economy.

Through culture we can express truths, reflect, discover and be inspired to transform the simple into the extraordinary. The Bienal de São Paulo claims the need for art as a field of encounter, resistance, rupture and transformation. It acts as a space for knowledge and coexistence, projecting a future that we want in the actions of the present.

By the diversity of cultural manifestations in society, we grow and evolve together.

Instituto Cultural Vale

Credits

10	E.B. Itso Courtesy of the artist Support: Nordic Culture Fund, Danish Arts Foundation and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists	29	Matthew Straubmuller Monument in honor to Frederick Douglass in Easton, Maryland, 2015 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons
17	Pierre Verger Detail of <i>Untitled (Candomblé do Pai Cosme series)</i> , 1950 Photography 80×80 cm Excerpt of interview by Pierre Verger with Emmanuel Garrigues Fundação Pierre Verger Collection Support: Institut français à Paris		Daniel Cárcamo Risso Demonstrations in Chile with the Mapuche flag, 2019 <i>Temuco, 29 de Octubre</i> video still Courtesy of the artist
18	Grace Passô <i>Ficções sônicas</i> [Sonic Fiction], 2020 Photo: Wilssa Esser	30	Richard Chau Umbrella Revolution, Hong Kong, 2017 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons
20	Silke Otto-Knapp <i>Forest (Study)</i> , 2020 Watercolor on canvas 35×75 cm Courtesy Regen Projects, Los Angeles; Galerie Buchholz Berlin / Cologne / New York; greengrassi, London Support: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)	38	Lasar Segall <i>Floresta</i> [Forest], 1930 Monochrome; turning-sepia, on positive paper 10.1×7.5 cm Museu Lasar Segall / IBRAM Collection / Ministério do Turismo
22	Lee “Scratch” Perry Courtesy of the artist Support: COINCIDENCIA – A programme by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia	39	Sandra Vargas Portrait of Abel Rodríguez, undated
23	Alfredo Jaar <i>Teach Us To Outgrow Our Madness</i> , 2014 Public performance Courtesy the artist and Galeria Luisa Strina, São Paulo Support: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile	40	Kelly Sinnapah Mary <i>Notebook 9: Quarantine</i> , 2020 Acrylic painting on canvas Courtesy of the artist Photo: Soul Support: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture – DAC Guadeloupe
24	Antonio Dias Folder published on the occasion of Antonio Dias' individual exhibition at Galeria Saramenha, Rio de Janeiro, 1979 Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo / FBSP	41	Alice Shintani Dom Bosco Cemetery, Perus, São Paulo, March 31, 2019
25	Yuyachkani Drawing for character creation for the work <i>Allpa Rayku</i> (1974) of the Yuyachkani cultural group, Lima, Peru <i>Allpa Rayku</i> was a work created in solidarity with the social resistance movements of the time	44	Main entrance of the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro after the fire of September 2, 2018 Collection: Biblioteca Central do Museu Nacional/UFRJ Photo: Leo Corrêa / AP Photo / Glow Images Photography and illustration taken from the “Meteorito Bendegó” report, by José Carlos de Carvalho, presented to the Ministério da Agricultura, Comércio e Obras Públicas. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1888. Collection: Biblioteca Central do Museu Nacional / UFRJ
28	Sebastián Calfuqueo Mapuche Flag in demonstration, 2019 Digital photography Courtesy of the artist Support: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile Caitlin Hobbs Edward Colston's Empty Pedestalin Bristol, England, June 7, 2020 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons Iván Martínez Demonstrations in Mexico supporting Chile protests, 2019 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons	45	Cildo Meireles <i>Tiradentes: Totem-Monument to the Political Prisoner</i> , 1970 Performance documentation Courtesy of the artist
		46	Clara Ianni Courtesy of the artist
		48	Guan Xiao <i>Lulubird walked out of delicatessen bumped into a swarm of buzzing</i> , 2020 Brass, pigmented brass, acrylic paint, dried flower, rope, root (172×60×55 cm), cap (52×44×58 cm), big birds (41×22×6 cm), small birds (25×14×4 cm)

50	Haris Epaminonda <i>Chronicles XVII</i> , 2012 Digitised super 8 film, color, silent 29'50'' Photo: Unique Support: ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)	71	Manthia Diawara Courtesy of the artist Quote: Édouard Glissant, <i>Poetics of Relation</i> . Translated by Betsy Wing. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997, p. 202. Support: Institut français à Paris		<i>Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools (Chris Wright, History Teacher, Cheney Upper School)</i> , 1977 Photographic still Courtesy Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth and Darcy Lange Estate
51	Beatriz Santiago Muñoz Background image: an image of the cosmos made with glitter, ink and water. Inset image: the sun lights a piece of the forest	79	Unknown authorship <i>Sound of Earth</i> , 1977 Gold-Plated Record attached to Voyager 2 Image: NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory/Creative Commons	104	<i>Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools (Eric Spencer, Art Teacher, Fifth Form, Cheney Upper School)</i> , 1977 Photographic still Courtesy Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth and Darcy Lange Estate
52	Lawrence Abu Hamdan Courtesy of the artist Support: British Council				17th Biental exhibition space, 1983 Photo: Guimar Morelo Collection: Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo / Fundação Biental de São Paulo
54	Yuko Mohri Drawing for <i>Orochi</i> [Serpent], 2020 Pencil on paper Support: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (Bunka-cho Art Platform Japan) and Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)	80	Oscar Tuazon Study for <i>Growth Rings</i> , 2019 Watercolor on paper		Envelope with correspondence returned to sender, alleging that Brazil is not receiving them due to the health crisis in Covid-19 Digital photography
	Drawings for 34th Biental project, 2020 Pencil on paper Support: Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan (Bunka-cho Art Platform Japan) and Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)	81	Unknown authorship Noa Eshkol with two of her reference models, probably in London, England, 1950s Courtesy: The Noa Eshkol Foundation for Movement Notation Support: Artis and Consulado Geral de Israel em São Paulo	105	Messages written by Candangos (construction workers responsible for building Brasília), at the National Congress, 1959, unveiled in 2011 Photolmage: Câmara dos Deputados, Brazil
60	Mariana Caló and Francisco Queimadela <i>Elemental</i> , 2019 Video still 5'30'' (loop) Support: República Portuguesa – Cultura / Direção-Geral das Artes and Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian	83	Jaider Esbell <i>O pássaro do bico preto</i> [The Black- billed Bird], 2020 Marker brushes and chalk pencil on bovine leather	108	Trajal Harrell Colaboration between the artist and the photographer Orfeas Emirzas
		92	Christoforos Savva Photographs taken by Christoforos Savva during his stay in Cyprus, undated (1954-1956) Christine Savva-Duroe Archive	109	Nalini Malani <i>Onanism</i> , 1969 16mm film transferred to video (black and white, sound) 3'51''
61	Belkis Ayón Design: Laura Llopiz; based on Cristina Vives original idea	94	Olivia Plender <i>Arrest</i> , 2020 Drawings Support: British Council and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists	111	Carmela Gross <i>Rat</i> , 2020 Original ecoline drawing on paper, digitally modified
62	Frida Orupabo (left) <i>Expulsion 2</i> , 2021 Digital collage Courtesy of the artist (right) <i>Woman, Dog, Horse</i> , 2021 Digital collage Courtesy of the artist Support: Nordic Culture Fund and Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA)	98	Tamara Henderson <i>A Skeleton Ascends to Find the Door</i> , 2021 Courtesy of the artist Support: Canada Council for the Arts	112	Antonio Vega Macotela Room view 35 floor, Panama City, 2019 Pirate sim cards, Panama City, 2019 Installing hacking programs, 2019 Inside the room 35 floor, Panama City, 2019
		99	Hanni Kamaly Courtesy of the artist Support: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Iaspis – the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's International Programme for Visual and Applied Artists	119	Zózimo Bulbul Poster for the film <i>Abolição</i> [Abolition], 1988 Courtesy: Centro Afro Carioca de Cinema Zózimo Bulbul
66	Eleonore Koch Sketchbook nº 7 Pencil, charcoal, pastel and tempera on paper, 27 × 37 cm 35 drawings, 18 sheets front and back Courtesy: James Lisboa Leiloeiro Oficial, São Paulo	102	Regina Silveira <i>Alterações em definições de arte</i> [Changes to Art Definitions], 1977 from the series <i>Jogos de arte</i> [Art Games] Offset work 60 × 50 cm Image selected by Eburne Rubio	120	Anna-Bella Papp Lage Zwaluwe, North Brabant, Netherlands, 2017 / Centrumeiland, IJburg, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2020 Courtesy of the artist and Stuart Shave/Modern Art London
68	Melvin Moti <i>Untitled</i> , 2020 Black & white photograph Courtesy of the artist Support: Mondriaan Fund			121	Mauro Restiffe Courtesy of the artist
				123	Neo Muyanga <i>A Maze in Grace</i> , 2020 Frame captures of the animation motion poem Support: British Council and Institut français à Paris
69	Paola Ferrari Giorgio Morandi's studio Bologna, Museo Morandi Archives	103	Darcy Lange <i>Studies of Teaching in Four Oxfordshire Schools (Charles Mussett, Art Teacher, Radley College)</i> , 1977 Photographic still Courtesy Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth and Darcy Lange Estate	124	Pepe Schettino Arjan Martins' Portrait
70	Paulo Kapela <i>Ateliê</i> [Atelier], 2007. Installation				

126	<p>Daniel de Paula, Marissa Lee Benedict and David Rueter</p> <p><i>deposition (manifesto)</i>, 2018-2021 PDF. A document in the form of an altered patent, produced by the artists in relation to the negotiation, installation and property lease agreement that constitute the work deposition, consisting of a salvaged Chicago Mercantile Exchange (cme) / Chicago Board of Trade (cbot) Corn Trading Pit Floor, comprising 32 pieces, including 24 single steps and 8 four-step sections Support: Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the Resource Center (Chicago, IL), the University of Oregon, and the Oregon Arts Commission</p>	164	<p>Jim McCulloch</p> <p><i>Lichen Forest, Austin</i>, 2007 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons</p>
		165	<p>Zé Antoninho Maxakali</p> <p>Illustration published in Rosângela Pereira de Tugny (ed.). <i>Cantos dos povos morcego e hemex – espíritos</i> [Songs of the peoples Morcego and Hemex – Spirits]. Belo Horizonte: MEC/ Literaterras/Museu do Índio/INCTI/FUNAI, 2013</p>
		169	<p>Vitor Cesar</p> <p>Poster of <i>Vento</i> [Wind] exhibition, 2020 Image: Joan Jonas, <i>Wind</i>, 1968 (video still)</p>
128	<p>Jota Mombaça and Musa Michelle Mattiuzzi</p> <p><i>Study sheet No. 133</i>, 2021 Courtesy of the artists</p>	171-184	<p><i>Vento</i> [Wind] Views of the exhibition held at the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion between 14 November and 13 December 2020, as part of the 34th Bienal Photo: Levi Fanan / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo</p>
131	<p>Nina Beier</p> <p>Courtesy of the artist Support: Nordic Culture Fund, ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and Danish Arts Foundation</p>	186	<p>Joan Jonas</p> <p><i>Wind</i>, 1968 16mm film transferred into video (b&w, silent) 5'37"</p>
133	<p>Paulo Nazareth</p> <p><i>PNAC / LTDA. Projecto: Prática do Enegrecimento</i> [Project: Blackening Practice], 2020 Bill, pamphlets and other media dimensions variable</p>	187	<p>Roger Bernat</p> <p>Email from Roberto Fratini Serafide to Roger Bernat Support: AC/E – Acción Cultural Española and Institut Ramon Llull</p>
136	<p>Sung Tieu</p> <p><i>Destination: Black Virgin Mountain</i>, 2017 (detail) © Sung Tieu Courtesy of the artist</p>	188	<p>Jacqueline Nova</p> <p><i>Pithecanthropus</i>, 1971 Music score fragment Courtesy: Centro de Documentación Musical, Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia / Ana María Romano G. / Festival En Tiempo Real</p>
137	<p>Victor Anicet</p> <p><i>Restitution</i>, 2018 Painted wood, fabric, dyed terracotta and pearls Photo: Jean-Baptiste Barret Support: Institut français à Paris and Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – DAC Martinique</p>	190	<p>Marinella Senatore</p> <p><i>Parade Brass Band</i>, 2018 Collage, brass band music scores from last century, acrylic and mixed media 40 × 70 cm Courtesy the artist Support: Italian Council, Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity, Italian Ministry of Culture</p>
140-149	<p>María Salgado</p> <p><i>en el panfleto al día siguiente frente a los portones</i> [in the pamphlet the next day in front of the gates] Design: Rubén García-Castro Translated from Spanish by Elia Maqueda</p>	192	<p>Eleonora Fabião</p> <p>Artist's drawing on photo by unknown author Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo / Fundação Bienal de São Paulo</p>
152	<p>Giorgio Griffa</p> <p>Photo: Giulio Caresio Courtesy: Archivio Giorgio Griffa</p>	198	<p>Luca Turi</p> <p>Refugees on the ship Vlora in Bari's port (Italy) on 8 August 1991 Image: Creative Commons</p>
154	<p>Claude Cahun</p> <p>Description of a dream had in May 1939 by Claude Cahun Courtesy of Jersey Heritage Collections</p>	200	<p>Walter Neves</p> <p>Luzia's Skull Laboratório de Estudos Evolutivos Humanos do Instituto de Biociências da Universidade de São Paulo (USP)</p>
162	<p>Francesco Stocchi</p> <p><i>Two swans, Hyde Park, London</i>, April 2011 Digital photography</p>	201	<p>Unknown authorship Portrait of João Cândido published on the newspaper <i>Gazeta de Notícias</i>, December 31, 1912</p>
163	<p>Jim McCulloch</p> <p><i>Lichen Forest, Austin</i>, 2007 Digital photography Image: Creative Commons</p>		

202	<p>Iván Barlaham Montoya Correa</p> <p><i>Vida y muerte del Fantoche Lusitano</i> [Life and Death of the Portuguese marionette], 1969 Photograph of the play</p> <p>Martine Barrat</p> <p>With members from Savage Nomads, a gang mostly composed by Blacks and Puerto Rican based in South Bronx</p> <p>“Hélio Oiticica was the only friend from the ‘other world’ who came with me to the South Bronx to meet my friends from the gangs, The Roman Queens, The Roman Kings, and The Ghetto Brothers. We shared the video camera for over six years. The Whitney Museum exhibited the films in 1978. The gang members came to the museum every day to meet the 3,000 viewers and answer their questions. One night, I came back from work to find my equipment had been stolen and sold by the man next door. Pearl, the president of the Roman Kings, and two friends showed up at my door with a big surprise in his hands. Inside was a photo camera. It was all they could afford at the time. That is how I became a photographer.” — Martine Barrat</p> <p><i>Together 3</i>, Hélio Oiticica, 1976 Photographic print</p>	<p>Dirk Braeckman</p> <p><i>T.W.-G.P.-11</i>, 2011 Gelatin silver print mounted on aluminium 120×180 cm © Dirk Braeckman, Courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp, Thomas Fischer Gallery, Berlin and Grimm Gallery, NYC</p> <p>Dirk Braeckman</p> <p><i>10-01-04-05</i>, 2005 120.5×80.5 cm Ultrachrome inkjet print on matte paper mounted on aluminum Courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp & Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin</p> <p>Hsu Che-Yu</p> <p><i>Single Copy</i>, 2019 Video Installation (stills)</p> <p>Jungjin Lee</p> <p>From the series <i>Buddha</i>, 2002 Photograph</p> <p>Lygia Pape</p> <p>“Amazônia”, <i>Jornal da Tarde</i>, Caderno de Sábado, São Paulo, 20 May. 1989. <i>Arte em Jornal</i> Project, held on the occasion of the 20th Bienal de São Paulo</p> <p>Lydia Ourahmane</p> <p><i>In the Absence of our Mothers</i>, 2018 Installation comprised of X-Ray scan, text, two 4.5 g 18kt gold teeth, one of which is permanently installed in Lydia Ourahmane's mouth Commissioned and produced by Chisenhale Gallery, London Support: British Council</p> <p>Ximena Garrido-Lecca</p> <p>“The compressive strength of the adobe must be at least 12 kg/cm². A person weighing 65 to 70 kg, standing on a dry adobe medium, supported by two others, must be supported for at least one minute.” Image and fragment extracted from the book <i>Improved Adobe mejorado: notas para la difusión de su uso</i>, Tejada Schmidt, Urbano, 1937 – Adobe carving with a background: Classic Procedure (Adobe resistance test)</p> <p>Naomi Rincón Gallardo</p> <p>Sketch for <i>Resiliencia Tlacuache</i> [Opossum Resilience], 2019 Support: Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte 2019-2022 del Fondo Nacional para La Cultura y las Artes, Mexico</p> <p>Mette Edvardsen</p> <p>Reference's material for <i>No Title</i>, 2014 Drawing Courtesy of the artist Support: Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Performing Arts Hub Norway</p> <p>Pia Arke</p> <p><i>Untitled</i> (Pibloctoq – Arctic Hysteria Archive), 1995 Negative found in Pia Arke's archival files on Arctic Hysteria, possibly from the Explorers Club or the American Museum of National History, both in NYC From: <i>Tupilakosaurus: an Incomplete(able) Survey of Pia Arke's</i></p> <p><i>Artistic Work and Research</i>. Edited / Published by Kuratorisk Aktion, Copenhagen, 2002 Support: Nordic Culture Fund and Danish Arts Foundation</p> <p>Ana Adamović</p> <p>The archives of the Museum of Yugoslavia Production still, from <i>Wunderkammer</i> [Cabinet of curiosities], 2019 Courtesy of the artist</p> <p>Édouard Glissant</p> <p><i>Brésil</i> [Brazil] Letter to Diva Barbara Damato Bibliothèque nationale de France Support: Institut français à Paris</p> <p>Valérie Loichot</p> <p>Édouard Glissant's grave, 2012 Digital photography</p> <p>Daniel Scandurra</p> <p><i>São Paulo terra indígena</i> [São Paulo, indigenous land], 2019 Banner produced by Denilson Baniwa, Paula Berbert and Daniel Scandurra Digital photography</p> <p>Daiara Tukano</p> <p>Courtesy of the artist</p> <p>Sebastián Calfuqueo</p> <p><i>En memoria de Nicolasa Quintreman</i> [In memory of Nicolasa Quintreman], 2021 Blue and golden ointment Support: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Ministerio de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio – Gobierno de Chile</p> <p>Philipp Fleischmann</p> <p>Courtesy of the artist Support: Phileas – A Fund for Contemporary Art and Federal Ministry Republic of Austria – Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport</p> <p>Vincent Meessen</p> <p>Poster for the film <i>Juste un mouvement</i> [Just a Movement], 2021 Support: Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles e Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI)</p> <p>Regina Silveira</p> <p>Project for <i>Paisagem</i> [Landscape], 2020 Photo: Eduardo Verderame Graphics: Rafael Triboli</p> <p>Sueli Maxakali</p> <p><i>Ūgtok pu kuxak kuk tophep xo'op mähā</i> [She Gives Her Daughter Capybara Oil], 2005 Watercolor 29.7×10 cm Support: Instituto Inclusartiz</p> <p>Koki Tanaka</p> <p><i>Abstracted/Family</i>, 2019 Format: filming, acting, painting, expressing, writing, cooking, talking, digging, eating, etc. Elements: films, paintings, photographs, radio, artist' note, end credit, table, chairs, etc. Film still Approx. 102' (3 Films in total) The project is co-commissioned by Aichi Triennale 2019 and Singapore Art Museum for Singapore Biennale 2019, also supported by ASO GROUP</p>
203	<p>Martine Barrat</p> <p><i>Together 4</i>, Hélio Oiticica, 1976 Photographic print</p> <p><i>Together 1</i>, Hélio Oiticica, 1976 Photographic print</p> <p><i>Together 2</i>, Hélio Oiticica, 1976 Photographic print</p> <p><i>Together 5</i>, Hélio Oiticica, 1976 Photographic print</p>	
211	<p>Juraci Dórea</p> <p>Study for the <i>Terra I</i> series, 1981</p>	
212	<p>Andrea Fraser</p> <p><i>Reporting from São Paulo, I'm from the United States</i>, 1998 5-channel video installation. Video still Project for <i>Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros</i> [Routes...], 24th Bienal de São Paulo</p>	
214	<p>Éric Baudelaire</p> <p><i>Un Film dramatique</i> [A Dramatic Film], 2019 Film still © Éric Baudelaire, Poulet-Malassis Films Support: Institut français à Paris</p>	
218	<p>Unknown authorship</p> <p>Students protest against Military Dictatorship in Brazil, June 21, 1968 Gelatin silver print Fundo Correio da Manhã</p> <p>Lê Minh Trường</p> <p><i>Another Vietnam</i>, 1970 Gelatin silver print Image: Creative Commons</p>	
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Gelatin silver print
Image: NASA/Jet Propulsion Laboratory
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34^a Bienal de São Paulo – *Faz escuro mas eu canto* [Though it's dark, still I sing]

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[Though It's Dark, Still I Sing], is a verse
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