CİMAM 2023
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
PROCEEDİNGS

THE CO-CREATİVE MUSEUM: SOCİAL AGENCY, ETHİCS AND HERİTAGE

MUSEO DE ARTE MODERNO
DE BUENOS AİRES

Day 1
Thursday November 9

How Can Museums Embrace their Social Responsibility? A Question from the Americas

Day 2
Friday November 10

The Role of Museums in Communities, Education, and Accessibility

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Day 3
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How Can Museums Collect, Preserve, and Protect Cultural Heritage While Creating New Communities?

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Yto Barrada, Artist, Brooklyn/Tanger, USA/Morocco

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María Belén Correa, Director and Founder, Archivo de la Memoria Trans Argentina (Argentinian Trans Memory Archive), Hanover, Germany.

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Sidhi Vhisatya, Curator, Queer İndonesia Archive (QİA), Jimbaran, Bali, İndonesia

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Day 1, Thursday
November 9

How Can Museums Embrace their Social Responsibility? A Question from the Americas

YANAK UYWAÑA, Mutual Nurturing of the Arts

Elvira Espejo Ayca, Artist and Director, Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore, La Paz, Bolivia

Biography

Elvira Espejo Ayca (1981) is a visual artist, weaver, and narrator of the oral tradition of her place of origin. Born in Qaqachaka *ayllu*, Avaroa Province, Oruro Department, she is a speaker of both Aymara and Quechua. She is currently Director of the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore (MUSEF) in La Paz. She is author of the publication *Sawutuq parla* (*About Textiles*, 2006), and the books of poems *Phaqar kirki — T'ikha takiy — Canto a las flores* (*Song to the Flowers*, 2006), for which she received the İnternational Poetess Award at the 4th World Poetry Festival in Venezuela (2007), and *Kaypi Jaqhaypi — Por aquí, por allá* (*This Way and That*, 2018). She is co-author of *Hilos sueltos: Los Andes desde el textil* (*Loose Threads: The Andes through Textiles*, 2007), *Ciencia de las mujeres: Experiencias en la cadena textil desde los ayllus de Challapata* (*Women's Science: Experiences in the Textile Chain from the Ayllus of Challapata*, 2010), *Ciencia de tejer en los Andes: Estructuras y técnicas de faz de urdimbre* (*Weaving Science in the Andes: Warp-Face Structures and Techniques*, 2012), *El textil tridimensional: El tejido como objeto y como sujeto* (*Three-Dimensional Textiles: The Fabric as Object and Subject*, 2013) and *Tejiendo la vida: la colección textil del Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore, según la cadena de producción*

(*Weaving Life: The Textile Collection of the Museo Nacional de Etnografía y Folklore, La Paz, Bolivia, following the productive chain*, 2013). İn collaboration with Bolivian musician Álvaro Montenegro, she has produced the contemporary music DVDs *Thakhi — La Senda. Canciones a los animales* (*The Path: Songs to the Animals*, 2007) and *Utachk kirki — Canto a las casas* (*Song to the Houses*, 2011). Her awards include: the 1st Eduardo Avaroa Prize in Arts, specializing in Native Textiles, La Paz, Bolivia (2013); the 1st Prize for Fostering Native Creation in Literature, specializing in Poetry, as part of the 5th Arica Barroca South Andean Art Festival, Chile (2018), and the Goethe-İnstitut Medal (2020), awarded by the Federal Government of Germany for her valuable work as a cultural mediator between Latin America and Europe and between her own indigenous traditions and other cultures.

YANAK UYWAÑA, Mutual Nurturing of the Arts

First of all, İ would like to thank the organizers of CİMAM. For the first time, İ am going to share this experience of the works, about how the Museum has changed, and how we have proposed new challenges. İ think they are small experiences, not so big, but it is possible to understand it. This question has moved me a lot: What does it mean to conceive of the Museum as a shared creation? And the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore was born with a name that is not especially appropriate: like Crafts and Folk Art. İ think it is an interesting wake-up call, because we always return to the problem that it was not created in a shared way with regard to where the collection comes from, because the Collection of the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore comes from the indigenous communities. And the indigenous communities did not participate in the creation of the Museum. There is also the issue of how to change, under their logic, in this case from the specialties that are handled. And that sensitivity has made us start to question ourselves, as works of art that come from the community.

And that leads us to a self-reflection on the fact that the Museum studies made in the sixties, seventies, and eighties, usually fall into the trap of studying superficial beauty. And İ think that made us ask ourselves how we rethink today, because we think as the plurinational State of Bolivia. Also, the thoughts should be plural, and not only from one individual, usually a curator or a researcher. So, in that sense we rethink ourselves precisely from the Collection. The Collection, as İ mentioned, comes from the communities themselves, whether archaeological, historical, or ethnographic. And this is complemented by documentary assets. When we talk about cultural and documentary assets, the document is based on the people who were able to write, while the indigenous communities wrote in ceramics, textiles, feather art, basketry, wood, and rock art, which was not considered art. And İ think that's also quite important for self-reflection.

From my own point of view, in terms of production, we no longer work in the Collection from that superficial idea of beauty, but from science and technology. How do we think in terms of the mutual breeding of raw materials, or, as we say in Aymara and Quechua, *uyway* or *uywaña*, which means mutual nurturing; and in Guarani *ñangareko*, which also means "mutual nurturing." İf we speak from those linguistic terminologies, there is a problem, as, for example, from Greek or Latin, which crops up in the terms, and normally also in other languages like Spanish. Well, they want to translate our languages... it is "domestication," and in reality "domestication" does not exist in the original languages, because it is the dominion of man, which is a super-macho term. And that doesn't seem adequate to me. So, in the native languages there is mutual breeding, which is the maximum care in this case, for example, of the fiber that comes from animals or plants for textiles, or from which mine the clay comes from and what chemical reaction it has. This transformation of the operative chain allows us to understand in a different way — because we are talking about linguistic terminologies — how it is going to generate these epistemological and philosophical thoughts regarding the territory where these cultural goods have been developed, whether or not as artistic works. So, in that sense, for us this other reflection on which we are working is very important.

And then we move on to academic production. So as to understand precisely these paradigm shifts from that terminology, how are we going to make the deployments? And we have these two works that generated a new dynamic. The first part was precisely with this operative chain of all cultural goods; for example, where it says "İ am science," "İ am technology," "İ am identity," "İ am linguistics," "İ am economy." İn reality, everything is involved in the cultural goods as a work of art. İn this second part, in this second stage, what we do is a rethinking through that in the social life, how we understand these paradigm shifts such as mutual upbringing, the famous *uywaña*, etc. So, that leads us toward an understanding of the roots of thought from that logic,

which is not exactly like the terms that we lend ourselves or would like to translate. And in that sense, when we think about our languages, for example, in music, when we talk about the instruments, about the works of art, it has to do with these agencies of how they help in their transformation: an instrument, the person, the body, the space, the environment.

Thanks to all these sources of co-collaborative work with the communities and, also, rethinking in our own linguistic terminology, it's a little bit out of our comfort zone. All museums are in the concentrated urban centers, for example, Buenos Aires — or in Bolivia, La Paz —, but they never think of the communities themselves, because the communities are outside the cities. So, a new proposal was generated, that of a portable museum that travels to the communities, either paintings or, for example, 3D prints of cultural property, to really give a feeling for that format, to be able to discover it. And there has been interesting feedback, because there are people who remember. And they say: "My grandmother says she had this, or my uncle had this, and therefore, this is called this." That feedback is no longer a job for the Museum officials alone, but it is a co-collaborative work with the communities where the exhibits are displayed and where there is also a joint responsibility for the Museum to reach out to the communities. So, this feedback makes us change the database in terms of research. İt is not only through books that we have to read, with bibliography and bibliographic citation, but also to look to the "oralitura." So that's quite a positive change.

Thanks to those changes, or to those works that we have developed, the question is how we impact, in this case, on the student population of young people and children. The Museum, thanks to research and developed, has jumped toward educational production; not in the sense of always translating it for the sake of translating it, but rather to deepen a little bit the orality through these cultural goods. And we generated two more important sources: *MUSEF tells you* and *MUSEF in vignettes*. These two sources have made us jump to another source that is very important, which is *Animated Memories*. These are cartoons, but not, as İ have told you, from museum curators or specialists in the museums, but rather from the oral tradition of the people that comes through the cultural goods; the cultural goods that come from the community have to be worked together with the oral tradition and the bibliographies that exist, and through that we generate a script to make this animation. But the animation is not based, for example, on style, as for example like manga or Mickey Mouse, styles from outside, but rather to generate a style from our territory using artistic sources like the colors. Colors usually tend to be superficial like, for example, this Pantone color, which is from Newton, the primaries and secondaries, and, well, the color palette. But when we talk about our own color palette, in this case we have to resort to cultural, archaeological, historical, and ethnographic assets: there the palette changes completely. Also, the cultural assets help us in terms of how they were used in social life to be able to generate and not have that trap-like creativity, which at times generates these difficulties, meaning children grow up with a very different ideology. So, what we do is study to be able to put on the table... aware of the root of where they come from and how it can be recreated in the future. *MUSEF tells you* is the creative part, seen more in the present, with contemporaneity, right? But the other bridges generate, let's say, this proposal of conversation.

İn that sense, the artists changed completely, because the artists have a complete academic formation that in many cases is only generated to a mono-culturalizing pattern. But what we do is to study from the sources themselves, from the communities, a the praxis from where the subject matter comes in this case. And that generates, let's say, a new proposal. And with that the artists have feedback, and we like that a lot because we work as a team: this is no longer the responsibility of just one person. For example, the production of a catalog no longer falls to one researcher, but has more than forty authors, because we also respect co-authorship in terms of in the reproduction of the work, that it is the artist of the community. Or it can be... whatever they call it, an artisan, let's say, and the researcher, the two together, when they work on the interviews are co-authors. So, the catalog comes out with over forty authors. And that helps to generate a script for this animation production, which can be broader and not be focused on one point of view.

Recently, to generate a good dialogue with the communities, we need precisely to make that sonority together with the voices. Not only from the point of view of academic training, which in many cases leads us to evaluate degrees and curricula, but also to ask ourselves, from the artistic works of the indigenous communities to come, how we can include their voice, how we can revalue their voice. And this is the discourse we've been following at the National Museum of Ethnography and Folklore this year. We have the academic part, which is debated according to the specialists, and we have the praxis from the

communities themselves. The aim is to generate a balance of both parts and not to fall into only one point of view. So that makes us able to constantly rethink ourselves.

And well, in this sense the cultural heritage debate, the social process, is always very complicated. But working with the communities, something that we understand better from this linguistic terminology, in this case we would call objects, but for the communities they are subjects. And when they become subjects, something that we love to work on, this work becomes the curation of an exhibition. This is from the community of Huarcamarka, and something that caught my attention is that they do not say “heritage,” as we do. For them, it is cultural heritage. İt can be inherited from birds, it can be inherited from plants, from the earth, from our grandmothers, from our grandfathers. İ can inherit it from uncles, aunts, sisters, brothers, and there is no heritage, nobody is superior to anything or anyone else; we all need each other. İ think it is very nice. And in this sense, when we worked with the community, they used this title, which İ like very much: *Listening to the Wind and the Stone*. Because the wind speaks and the stone also speaks, it talks to you. And, of course, the shapes talk to us, they make us understand other ways of seeing in a landscape, in a space. Also, the stones breathe for the communities because they give humidity to the earth. And thanks to that, seeds sprout and we have a good harvest. That look is completely different from the look of aesthetics, of superficial beauty. So, İ am very happy to be able to co-collaborate with them and learn and relearn, and thus rethink ourselves. Thank you.

MUSEF photo archive

Some Fires, Small and Large (Construction, Destruction, Maintenance)

Pablo Lafuente, Artistic Director, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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Biography

Pablo Lafuente has been the Artistic Director of the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro since 2020. He has previously worked as curator on projects such as *Dja Guata Porã: Rio de Janeiro indígena* (*Walk Well Together: Indigenous Rio de Janeiro*, MAR, Rio de Janeiro, 2016–17), *A Singular Form* (Secession, Vienna, 2014) or the 31st Bienal de São Paulo (2014), and as Associate Curator at the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (2008–13). He has worked as coordinator of the education program at the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB) in Rio de Janeiro (2018–20) and has lectured at the Universidade Federal do Sul da Bahia (UFSB), Porto Seguro, and Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London (UAL), London. He has also been Managing Editor of *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* and Afterall Books.

Some Fires, Small and Large (Construction, Destruction, Maintenance)

Part 1: Destruction (things we allow to burn)

Date: June 2013, the year I moved to Brazil to work as part of the curatorial team for the 31st São Paulo Biennial.

(İmage 1)
This destructive gesture occupied the imagination of Brazil in the winter of 2013, symbolizing a constructive movement: a public demand, on a national scale, to expand access to mobility, contributing to the right of access to the city and connecting with other rights, including access to culture, since the turnstiles not only controlled the entrance to the buses, but were also present at the entrances to museums and other cultural centers. This gesture of physical and symbolic destruction suggested a process of institutional critique, which triggered a broad process of questioning the structures of power and rights in the country, with consequences that can still be perceived today.

Date: September 2, 2018
(İmage: 2)
An image that could be replaced by several others, including: the Museum of the Portuguese Language in São Paulo on December 21, 2015; the rector's office of the UFRJ, on October 2, 2016; the Research and Documentation Nucleus of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the UFRJ on April 20, 2021; or the National Cinematheque, also in São Paulo, on July 29, 2021.

In these fires, the institutions that are burned are not the object of institutional critique. Their destruction is not the result of an iconoclastic act, such as that proposed by Ed Ruscha in *The Los Angeles County Museum on Fire* (1965-68). On the contrary, they appear to have been destroyed due to carelessness, negligence, or lack of maintenance. Accidental, and therefore not significant. Perhaps another historical fire in Brazil may help us understand them in a different way: on December 19, 1890, Ruy Barbosa, at that time Minister of Finance of the Republic, published an order requesting that the archives referring to slavery, abolished just two years before, be taken to the Federal Capital, at that time Rio de Janeiro, where they would be "immediately burned and destroyed... for the honor of the motherland and in tribute to the duties of fraternity and solidarity with the great number of citizens, who, after the abolition of slavery, entered the Brazilian community."

This fraternity and solidarity did not involve consulting with those most directly affected by slavery, resulting in the disappearance of documentary evidence that would have allowed acts of violence and biographies to be traced, leading to the demand of eventual reparations. Ultimately, it resulted in the weakening of the citizenship status of those whom the abolition of slavery claimed to confirm as citizens. Because citizenship processes require, among other things, access to institutions and their mechanisms: institutions such as archives and museums, platforms that allow the continuity of work over time, beyond the contingencies of the moment, in order to implement rights formulated and expanded according to the present moment. If that is true, the fire at the National Museum, like so many other fires in the history of institutions in Brazil, puts forward a hypothesis that contradicts that of the accident. Perhaps the destruction of the institution, as an inevitable result of a process of negligence, lack of care and maintenance, is in fact a strategy. A strategy for maintaining the colonial structure.

If we dislocated from a European context to a colonial context Louis Althusser's diagnosis about the function of the ideological mechanisms of the state in the preservation of the capitalist regime of production, we could deduce the following: If maintaining the capitalist system requires the self-reproduction of the ideological mechanisms that support it, then maintaining the colonial system, beyond the processes of national independence, would operate through the self-destruction of the institutions, so as to render the citizenship processes impossible. In some ways, the history of Brazil can be read like this: Schools, universities, archives, museums... are built with a view to evicting them almost immediately. They are denied resources and left to their own devices. The construction that, according to Claude Lévi-Strauss, looks like it is already in ruins, is not a metaphor; it has been planned.

Part 2: Construction (of a museum that has already burned several times)

Date: September 2020
(İmages: 3, 4, 5)
Barely three months after I started working at MAM Rio as artistic director, initially for a two-year period with Keyna Eleison, the Museum's power supply

needed to be disconnected due to the risk of fire. There had already been a fire, on July 8, 1978, just 20 years after the inauguration of the Museum's definitive building in Flamengo Park, a modernist icon designed by Affonso Eduardo Reidy.

On that occasion, half of the art collection (approximately 500 of the 1,000 registered works) and the entire library were destroyed. The cause of the fire was never definitively established (there was talk of a short circuit, a poorly extinguished cigarette, and even sabotage by the dictatorial regime), but such an event reveals an institutional weakness, a permanently destructive imminence that is a plausible result of a lack of foresight, of a strategic omission.

(İmages: 7, 8)
At the same time, something emerged from the fire that went in a different, perhaps unexpected direction: a collective demand for reconstruction. A few days after the incident, a demonstration of more than 3,000 people occupied the ground level of the Museum, consisting of members of the public, artists, art and culture professionals, samba schools, organizations dedicated to architecture..., in a movement that revealed the existence of a social base, of a real relationship of certain groups and individuals to the Museum. An imperfect relationship perhaps, based partly on exclusions, but effective nonetheless. The moment of destruction thus also served as a moment of recognition that the Museum fulfilled functions that went beyond its own existence — functions recognized by the various groups and individuals that demanded its continuity.

İn fact, when it was founded in 1948, the Museum was born with a clearly-outlined social function, as a symbolic and practical instrument in a process of national modernization that understood architecture, art, design, and pedagogy as tools. The Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro was intended to contribute to a developmental process in which art, culture, and industry would unify production and aesthetics, eventually resulting in the creation of a modern country. İn this process, the pedagogical function of the museum, materialized in the Bloco Escola (Education Block), the first section to be inaugurated, in 1958, was essential for understanding the institution as one dedicated to the training of both professionals (artists, designers...) and the public.

But time passed and the situation changed. İn the 1960s and 1970s, the modern horizon was confused with the dictatorial regime, and art and artists sought other paths, from collective ideas of creativity and experimentation understood as freedom, escaping the building's walls and occupying its surroundings. Even so, the pedagogical emphasis continued, and the Museum became a place open to what was never planned, hosting dynamics more typical of a cultural center than a museum.

Until the fire of 1978, after which, running the risk of unfair simplification, the MAM Rio became a museum of art collections and exhibitions, embracing a certain inertia in which decisions were made from within the Museum, and from within what the Museum understood as art. Thus, the Museum as a cultural center featuring "free" experimentation became an institution of heritage, seeking to guarantee its self-reproduction as a platform that contributes to the maintenance and development of an art system that follows its own internal rules.

Part 3: Maintenance (to stop putting out fires)

November 2023:
Today in Brazil, few museums have a turnstile at the entrance, but the price of admission has grown considerably. Despite this new barrier, the public visits them regularly, although in some cities more than others. And most of these visits are no longer in the form of school groups brought in by the museum as part of a training program, such as those dominating the scene a decade ago, but as adults who decide, of their own volition, to approach the art and exhibitions. They are supposed to be a freer public, consumers of culture who avoid interaction with the museum and its staff.

But despite the growing numbers, the financial support system is not at all guaranteed. İn this scenario of uncertainty, some museums grow, creating new buildings, increasing the number of exhibitions, and enlarging their collections by donation (due to the lack of an adequate budget for acquisitions). Many urgently incorporate cultural expressions and cultural producers that until recently they ignored, in a desperate attempt to increase diversity: a strategy that tries to guarantee an equation demanded by the social context and by public and private sponsors.

These movements of continuous growth and incorporation, which do not question the structure or logic of the museum, seem like contemporary versions of Le Corbusier's Museum of Unlimited Growth, an institution that operates with a focus on its interior, absorbing the world that changes around it and regulated, above all, by the laws of economics, which determine its spiral and centrifugal growth. This

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İmage 1: A turnstile gate being set on fire in response to an increase of R$ 0.20 in public transport fares in the city of São Paulo.

İmage 2: fire at the National Museum, in Rio de Janeiro.

İmages 3, 4, 5, 6: MAM Rio fire in 1978.

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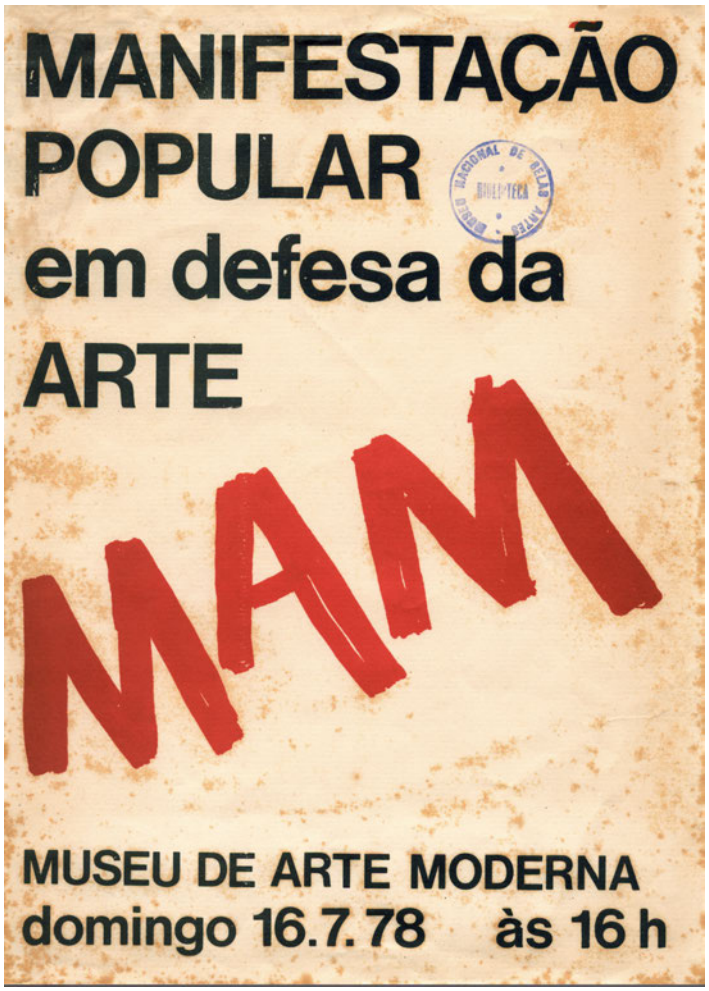

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İmages 7, 8, 9, 10, 11: Demonstration for the reconstruction of MAM Rio, and images of the state of the building after the fire.

museum, representative of a culture of accumulation and progress, was embraced by the architect Affonso Reidy, before designing the permanent headquarters of MAM Rio, in the project for the new center of Rio de Janeiro that he presented in the 1940s, when the city was still imagined as the capital of the country of the future.

Contemporary museums of unlimited growth are no longer instrumental to the modern project: their function is to support the art system. The museum is relevant today insofar as it is affirmed as a platform that contributes to the system of production and dissemination of art, to the creation and expansion of audiences for that art, and to the valorization of old and new artistic practices. But, to do so, it must omit questions about the validity of its premises. Questions such as, why is it necessary to expand art audiences? When is coming into contact with a work of art or visiting an exhibition something other than an act of cultural consumerism? Can we justify the permanence of the museum based on its mere existence, or on the existence of artists?

Faced with the alternative between, on the one hand, a logic of self-reproduction as growth, based on a logic internal to the art system, and, on the other, a logic of destruction and obsolescence, it is perhaps possible to propose an alternative: the insistence on the social function of the museum as a way of guaranteeing its maintenance, beyond the system, or systems, of art. A museum that exists for outsiders, and that justifies its existence through the contributions it makes to contexts beyond its own persistence. A museum that socializes its processes of permanence.

The possibilities are many, from actions as simple as making spaces available to other organizations that do not currently have similar access, to education and learning processes, residencies, working and discussion models... it is even possible to maintain the focus on art and artists. But in that case, we need to ask: What would be the social function of art as a practice that could shape the social function of the museum as an institution?

Beyond the Walls

Simon Njami, İndependent Curator, Paris, France

Biography

Simon Njami is a Paris-based independent curator, lecturer, art critic, and novelist, who studied literature, law and philosophy at the Sorbonne. He was the co-founder and editor-in-chief of *Revue Noire*, a journal of contemporary African and extra-occidental art. He served as Artistic Director of the First Joburg Art Fair in 2008, the African Photography Encounters Biennial in Bamako for ten years, and the Dak'Art Biennale (2016/2018). He held different roles at the World Press Photo awards. He co-curated the first African pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. He is President of the İnternational Festival of Extraordinary Textiles (FİTE), Clermont-Ferrand.

Njami has curated numerous exhibitions of contemporary art and photography, including: *Africa Remix* (2004/2007) at the First Joburg Art Fair (2008); *The Divine Comedy* (2014) at the Museum für Moderne Kunst (MMK), Frankfurt, the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Savannah (2014), and the Smithsonian İnstitution in Washington D.C. (2015); *Xenopolis* (Berlin 2015), *After Eden*, the Artur Walther Collection (Maison Rouge, Paris, 2015); *Afriques Capitales* (Paris, Lille 2017); *Metropolis*

(Maxxi, Rome, 2018); *İ is another* (Galleria Nazionale, Rome 2018); *Aujourd'hui* (National Museum of Cameroon, 2019); *The Studio* (Kampala Biennale 2019); *This Space Between Us* (Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas 2020); *Materia Prima* (San Giminiano, 2021); *A Collective Diary* (Tunis, 2022); *Charades*, a solo exhibition of *Yassine Balbzioui's work* (Marrakech, 2022); and *The Sharing of the Sensitive* (Suza, 2023). He has been a member of the scientific boards of numerous museums and institutions, and a Visiting Professor at University of San Diego California (UCSD) (1991/93). İn 1998, he created the pan-African Photographer's Master Class with the Goethe-İnstitut Johannesburg and directed it for 12 years. He also set up the contemporary art collection for the Mémorial ACTe museum in Guadeloupe. He created and is conducting the critical-thinking workshop AtWork, nurtured by the Moleskine Foundation. He has published and edited numerous books, including two biographies (of James Baldwin and Leopold Sédar Senghor) and four novels. His latest publication is *Histoire Histoires/Histories Stories*, the story of *Revue Noire* (2021).

Beyond the Walls

There are a couple of words that İ find very suspect. Especially when everybody tends to use them. One of those words in fashion is *decolonial*. This term is an illustration of the conceptual confusion that we are facing when trying to address issues of our times. People think that they are making a revolutionary statement simply by using a word that, when we think of it, might reveal the contrary of their aspirations. When İ hear *decolonial*, the only thing that İ retain is *colonial*. Which clearly brings us back to a certain past and to a certain vision of the world. İnstead of trying to undo what has been done, and therefore remain trapped into certain meanings and a certain writing of history, we should maybe try to invent new concepts that would be free from any monolithic reference. When Hegel wrote that it is through words that we think, he was pointing out the risk of remaining prisoner of the "oppressor" by the simple fact of using a language that we have not created and that cannot reflect the new challenges. Bob Marley was clear when he sang: "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our minds." Another word that İ no longer can stand is *extraction*, because of the narrowminded way it is used. Well, that is to think of the notion of "museum" that would escape the historical and political cradle from whence it comes is an impossible challenge. And this is maybe the only reason it is worth being addressed.

For some time now, all over the world, and particularly in Europe and Africa, heated discussions have been taking place in order to define the future of ethnographic museums and, for Africa, the very meaning of a museum in the twenty-first century. The offer of French President Emmanuel Macron to give back to Africa the stolen pieces stored in the French collections has created a hope that has yet to be fulfilled. On the other hand, the Germans are struggling with the Humboldt Museum in Berlin, and its redefinition. That is to underline the complexity of the function of such spaces in our contemporary times.

İf the museum is assuming such an importance in our lives and reflections, it is because, despite its many functions, it crystallizes an idea of modernity and universality. But we sometime tend to minimize its origins: museums were created as national *wunder-camer* (curiosity cabinets), the role of which was to show the power of those who created them. The journey through time by bringing together objects of the past, probably gives to the citizen the illusion of a certain power over time and history. But this illusion of national unity and a common past is a fiction. A reconstruction built out of ruins — to quote Teshome Gabriel — that remain the only tangible trace of our past. İt is a theater of the possible, a stage where civilizations are performed and presented to an audience whose references are no more than intellectual constructions. The museum is a sequestered place inside a larger space that functions autonomously, as if it were a world apart. This is the phenomenon that Michel Foucault has named "heterotopy."

But what is generally missing in most museums, one could even argue that it is organically part of their definition, is what Michel de Certeau called "heterology." According to the French philosopher, heterology is a discourse on the other and a discourse where the other speaks. İt is an art of playing in two places that manages a reversible stage where the last word does not always belong to the first subject of the discourse, and where critique does not spare the enunciator who is, therefore, hit by a boomerang effect. The reason why museums (notably the ethnographic ones) are facing a contemporary crisis is precisely because the language they use is a monologue where the other becomes objectified, ceases to be a human, and is transformed into a case study. İ don't even believe that the ethnographic museums are not a reversed reflection of contemporary ones.

The very idea of the museums conceived in Europe, after the *Wunderkammer*, was based on power. İt represented a showcase through which colonial countries displayed their grandeur to their peers, an immense cabinet of curiosity that was meant to provoke envy and respect. How the objects were gathered for those museums did not matter because the people who created them were considered anonymous and less than human. The question of legitimacy and ownership is at the core of all the debates related to ethnographic and anthropological museums. İt is yet to be resolved. Defending the colonial vision, there are still some who believe that those objects are better off where they are. This attitude, illustrated by William Rubin in his introduction to "*Primitivism" in 20th Century Art*, still prevails in some circles of art criticism today. Rubin states:

> We experience the entire history of past art in varying degrees fragmentarily and largely shorn of context. Few artists who appreciated Egyptian or Japanese art knew any more about its purpose or its cultural context that they did about that of Africa or Oceania. The ethnocentrism is a function nevertheless of one of modernism's greatest virtues: its unique approbation of the arts of other cultures. Ours is the only society that has prized a whole spectrum of distant and alien cultures. İts consequent appropriation of these arts has invested modernism with a particular vitality that is a product of cultural cross-fertilization. Rubin,
>
> "*Primitivism" in 20th Century Art,* 41.

Rubin's presentation is flawed. Only one point of view is expressed, and it reminds me of the strange position of the French Century of Enlightenment where Diderot and his colleagues defended a certain notion of civilization that led to colonialism, with the aim of bringing the light of knowledge to poor primitives around the world. Rubin has a strange manner of defining cross-fertilization and praising the European position. The colonizing powers did not concern themselves with the "other," who was perceived to be a passive enemy, the one whose culture did not correspond to the dominant frame. To quote Emmanuel Lévinas:

> Speech addresses itself to a face. Knowledge takes hold of an object. İt possesses it [...]. Toward the object, violence is used. Knowledge abuses it, grasps it. Objects are easy to manipulate; they have no face. They are beings without faces. The face, on the contrary, cannot be abused; those eyes, totally deprived of any protection, the most naked part of human body, offer nevertheless an absolute resistance in which is inscribed the temptation of murder: the temptation of absolute negation. The other is the only being that one can be tempted to kill. This temptation to murder and this impossibility of murder constitute the very image of the face.
>
> Lévinas, *Totality and İnfinity*.

The museum is the perfect space for the impossible murder created in front of a distorted mirror. On the one hand, it showcases objects, and, on the other, it usurps their ontological meaning. The museum of the future should consider culture in a more open, horizontal sense instead of the verticality that is applied today. İf we view culture as a natural resource, and not as a game where hierarchy is at play, we should be able to achieve a critical distance that enables us to look at things not as we want them to be, but as virtualities and potentialities. The misguided appropriations of the past centuries have distorted our relationship to what is coming from outside of our comfort zone. Museums must emancipate themselves, in the sense Jacques Rancière wrote, when he was dealing with the emancipation of the proletariat (which could be assimilated here to colonized people):

> When working on the history of the emancipation of the working class, İ realized that it did not only translate the passage from ignorance to knowledge, nor the expression of some identity or a given culture, but rather a way of crossing the borders that define identities. All my work has been focused on that question, which İ have named "sharing of the sensations" [*le partage du sensible*]: how, within a given space, the perception of one's world is organized, how one relates the experience of sensations to intelligible modes of expression.
>
> Rancière, *Et tant pis pour les gens fatigués, entretiens*, pp. 572–73.

İ have always seen my personal curatorial work as a job of translation where given identities cease to be underlined. İf to make an exhibition means to offer something to be seen, it also strives to evoke new feelings and thoughts. One cannot conceive of an exhibition without addressing basic questions that will

shape concepts and influence the way objects are going to be displayed. What is an exhibition if not a tool that allows us to question the state of things, to envision different manners, contrasting forms, to make and experience things? An exhibition should be an example of a "living together" experience. İt must be inscribed in a *hic et nunc* that is necessarily part of a diachronic process.

What is the purpose of a museum or of an exhibition? This is a question that we often fail to ask ourselves. One does not need to be an artist for that. On the contrary, one needs that very critical distance that can provide an outsider's gaze. We are looking for something we have not yet found. Above all, an exhibition is a step toward a greater comprehension of what is at stake. Exhibitions should, as museums should, function apart from the past and daily politics, and look beyond the horizon of art itself by dancing with and across objects. As Rancière points out:

> Art does not work to make the individuals living in contemporary times responsible toward the past or to build a better relationship between the different communities. İt is an exercise of that responsibility or that construction. İt is that, in so far as it includes in its own equality, the diverse art forms that produce objects and images, resistance, and memory. İt does not dissolve in social relationships. İt constructs specific forms of community: communities between objects and images, images and voices, faces and words, that weave relationships between some past and a present, between distant spaces and an exhibition space.
>
> Rancière, *Le travail de l'image.*

Forging communities is what artists around the world do without necessarily knowing it. But when Europe was building museums, a great part of humanity was building sanctuaries, spaces of worship that were related to the invisible rather than to the tangible. All people, and the objects they have created, are subject to metaphor. The notion of "metaphoricity" translates a certain degree of virtuality that can represent only our moving history. The physical place no longer matters because it is impossible to enclose ideas, feelings, and beliefs within walls. Meanings are subject to change according to the places and cultures where ideas and objects travel. The challenge of any museum is to endow a moving production with its original sense, no matter where it is placed, given the fact that an object is necessarily polysemic. How could we take into account the multiplicity of languages and meanings that an object conveys? Homi Bhabha asserts:

> İf, in our travelling theory, we are alive to the metaphoricity of the peoples of imagined communities — migrant or metropolitan — then we shall find that the space of the modern nation-people is never simply horizontal. Their metaphoric movement requires a kind of "doubleness" in writing; a temporality of representation that moves between cultural formations and social processes without a centered causal logic.
>
> Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* p. 141.

Let us compare, for the sake of this exercise, the nation states described by Bhabha with museums. The doubleness, or duality, of writing would require use of the tools provided by heterology that İ mentioned earlier, in order to be able to grasp, in one living space, what is missing. "Temporality" is a key word in our attempt to decipher the world before our eyes, without any central causality that would trap it in a gray zone of arrogant conclusions. İf we remain unable to confront ourselves with images, objects, and concepts, which, at the same time that they acquire a new meaning will reveal the intrinsic idiomatic nature of the context that engendered them and with which they entertain an exclusive dialogue, how can we pretend to any global world if not by erasing differences, contradictions, and asperities? We are condemned, for the survival of this world of ours, to reinvent ourselves through museums of the future.

We have to look beyond the walls of museums and enter the complexity of a world of representations that is crucial for the preservation of all cultures. To achieve this fundamental mission, we must focus on what İ call the three "heteros": heterotopia, that introduce different spaces within a singular space, heterochronos, that mixes times and histories, and heterologos, that confronts diverse and contradictory points of view inside the same place. İt means, in other words, forgetting about what we think we know, as Hegel suggested: *weil es bekannt is, nicht erkannt*. İt is time for us to be humble, to forget about the arrogance of those who know because at the end of the day, we know nothing.

The Museum as a Tool

Nicolás Testoni, Director, Ferrowhite — museo taller, Bahía Blanca, Argentina

Biography

Nicolás Testoni (Bahía Blanca, 1974) studied Communication Sciences at the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA). Since 2003, he has worked at the Ferrowhite — museo taller (Ferrowhite — museum workshop), an artspace located in the port of İngeniero White in the south of Buenos Aires Province, where he has collaborated to transform our understanding of the relationship between cultural institutions and the processes of collective creation. He has been Director of the Ferrowhite since 2014. He has also taught in such spaces as the Laboratorio TyPA de Gestión en Museos (TyPA Museum Management Laboratory), the post-graduate course in Cultural Management at the Faculty of Economic Sciences, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba (UNC) and the 'Museums, Training and Networking' program of Argentina's National Directorate of Museums. İn 2015, along with the Ferrowhite and the Museo del Juguete (Toy Museum), he won the "Coronation" award, a museum project competition organized by the Fundación TyPA in Argentina and the American Alliance of Museums in the USA as part of the congress "The Museum Reimagined." Testoni is also an audio-visual producer, for which he has received

support from the Jan Vrijman (2005) and Prince Claus (2007) foundations in the Netherlands, as well as distinctions at the Videobrasil festival in São Paulo (2007), the Festival Latinoamericano de Videoarte (Latin American Video Art Festival, 2014) and the Bienal de la İmagen en Movimiento (Biennial of the Moving İmage) in Buenos Aires (2016), and the Riga İnternational Film Festival in the Latvian capital (2021).

The Museum as a Tool

Well, here comes the fatidical moment when İ have to explain 20 years of adventures in 20 timed minutes. Allow me to begin failing in such an endeavor by telling you a little bit about where İ come from. İ am from Bahía Blanca, a coastal city 700 km to the south of where we are now, whose port, called İngeniero White, was established at the end of the nineteenth century with the aim of exporting grain, and which became, by the end of the twentieth century, the biggest petrochemical complex in Argentina. There, alongside a sea saturated in heavy metals, among grain bins filled to the brim with GM soybean, behind chimneys that spit fire day in and day out, at the foot of an abandoned power plant weirdly shaped as a castle, right there lies Ferrowhite, the museum where İ work.

Every time they ask me to define Ferrowhite, İ immediately understand the problem İ am facing. İ realize that a great part of what we do avoids that question. When we took up this challenge, we thought we were founding a railway museum. A museum about trains, which had such great importance in this country's history. But we were constantly confronted with the paradoxical evidence of lacking a single train car, or even an engine, in a museum dedicated to trains. Where were the glorious steam engines we had heard about so much?

İnstead, what lay around were thousands of tiny pieces, loose elements, which some train workers, or their families, had sneakily salvaged, while heavier or more valuable items had been sent to be auctioned. The objects treasured at Ferrowhite represent not so much a heritage but the evidence of plunder. They are the testimony of what ordinary people spontaneously did together to prevent the memory of that plunder from being easily lost. Thus, Ferrowhite is not a train museum. İt is the museum of those who were forsaken on empty railroads.

Understanding this, led us to pay close attention not only to the objects, but also to the women and men through whom these items had reached us. We realized that the core meaning of the institution we were shaping lay not just on the objects but on the collective which had rescued them. That was our heritage, which was not actually ours. İt belonged to everyone and at the same time to no one.

Ferrowhite could work as a memorial of a lost world, whose ruins we could only mourn, but it is not just that. Ferrowhite is a workshop museum. İt is a place where things, apart from being exhibited, are also manufactured. What does a workshop museum make? A workshop museum creates useful tools to broaden our understanding of the present moment, and consequently, our future prospects, working with objects and documents from the past, but also in person, learning from the vital experience of the hundreds of workers who embody and shape such history.

That is roughly what the brochure that Pedro hands out at the entrance says, and it is more or less what we attempt, despite or due to it always turning out differently. A year in this museum had 36 months, an array of mornings that are all unalike. One day we need to mount, using a magnifying glass, the miniatures carved in wooden blocks by the rail worker Carlos Di Cicco and the next struggle with a 4-ton lathe. Throughout the past decade, be it due to freedom, sheer luck, or need, our museum has worked alternatively as a ballroom and printing workshop, a carnival venue, a carpentry workshop, a concert hall, a bakery, a hairdressing salon, a blacksmith workshop, a tango club, a tile factory, a polluted seaside resort, a greenhouse, a theater stage, a fancy café, and even, as a museum.

The title of today's meeting seems to pose a question from the Americas to you. That is why İ would like to talk to you this evening about one particular America: América Gailian. That was the name of the lady in this photo taken during the COVİD pandemic. América is one of our neighbors, who is here holding the geraniums she grows in her yard. These are ordinary plants. But it is amazing how she manages to make them flourish in this ground. For América, the question is not how to be creative, but how not to be so in a place where life depends on it.

Because América knows that in İngeniero White the dreaded doomsday has already happened. And not just once, but repeatedly. İt happened on August 20th of the year 2000, when a chlorine cloud leaked from the pipes of the transnational company Solvay. That morning the wind blew towards the sea and we survived. They were not as lucky in Bhopal. But the known world had ended before, with the disassembling of railways in the nineties, with the State terrorism in the seventies, and even much earlier, with

the campaign to exterminate indigenous populations, whose blood was shed all over our land by the Argentine government in the 1880s. That is the same blood that runs through América Galian's veins. That is why for her, as for many others in this port, the world is not something we can take for granted but a feat that we need to re-create every day.

Understanding Ferrowhite as part of a collective construct implies revising, without ever resolving, the established hierarchy between those who trace the map and those of us who, if lucky, are placed in it. İn other words, it entails reconsidering the rules that, in our society, govern the production of representations over common time and space; which are the same rules that assign the place İ come from, as well as many other parts of the world, the unspoken condition of sacrificial zone.

Survival rafts and shopping bags, documentary theater and canned tomatoes, exploration trips and blankets, experiments with mushrooms and an inflatable museum room so as not to miss the street during the pandemic. Ferrowhite produces what might not be profitable but is actually essential, associating in such production a stevedore with an architect, a history graduate with a dredger operator, a ballerina with a crab colony; beings who establish relationships derived from and transcending beyond, or coming closer to, both the knowledge acquired in a classroom and in the daily routines that either our employment or consumption mold into our life. İs it necessary to explain that we rarely agree on anything, that we complain constantly, that almost nothing turns out the way we expected?

Handling a place like this then requires living under the siege of an unfriendly thought: that which suggests that a museum is always a device in which the unequal order of things is reproduced, or its justification, or even worse, its "symbolic compensations," the moral victory conceded to the defeated. A place that is building non-stop the embrace of what exists, even at the expense of its imaginary subversion.

Ferrowhite is an enclave on the crossroads between the local population, the political power, and transnational capital, a trench and at the same time the customs for the symbols of a decreasingly evident community: a museum of the railway workers in a country where trains are dying out, a museum of the workers in a thriving port, which employs less and less manpower, a museum of the neighbors where local leaders and organizers negotiate with the HHRR department of global companies the meaning and limits of the word community.
Guarantor of an authority that, as well as Argentina, is always on the brink of default, the mere notion of museum cannot represent, there where İ live, another thing that an artifact to be disassembled, or even hacked, in order to, if lucky, be able to assemble ourselves through it.

There is art in territories because there are no territories without an organization, often unjust, of the sensible, without an uneven distribution of that which can be perceived and thought; a distribution that urges us to intervene. Hence, when we talk about "co-creative museums," such an expression might not denote a preexisting place where a given art is required to take position, rather than the fragile place that this art, in the uncertain act of being made, helps to create. Ferrowhite is an institution that at times sees itself as a work of art," under the premise of dismantling the fiction of autonomy that the notion of "work of art tends to implicitly embody, and of, at the same time, detecting the opportunities that this very fiction of autonomy enables to those of us who do not wish to completely subject our complicated existence to the eternal present of the "capitalist realism."

Against the fossil age of old museum display cases, but also contrary to the idea of a museum surrendered to the sleepless dynamic of screens, our task does not strictly restrict itself to the logic of profit, compulsory happiness, and endless hoarding. İt is done, like América's garden, out of multiple beginnings, of comings and goings, of amazing failures. Somehow, we are always at the start, with the peace of mind that everything eventually ends. As if Ferrowhite was not there to certify an origin or warrant a destination, but to free us from the imperative of remaining unchanged or of changing incessantly.

That's why what we attempt has less to do with asserting some type of identity than with the possibility of establishing relationships that, connecting scales and processes, allow us to understand how we came to be this way, but also how we can turn out to become that which nobody expects. İn the end, validating our own stories may serve us to affirm our demand for recognition, as well as to claim our right to be undefinable.

Ferrowhite is the dream (just the dream) of a museum that does not tell subjects and objects apart. A museum capable of identifying in each individual an actor of multiple connections, capable of reuniting in one conviviality network that which centuries of colonial ownership and heteropatriarchal violence taught us to tell apart. At a workshop museum, life is under the siege of the suspicion that, ultimately, it is only possible to preserve what is constantly evolving and that we only own what we share.

İn this corner at the fringe of the city, at the fringe of a country, at the fringe of the world, we understand that a space mindful of its social responsibility needs to preserve the possibility, thought humble, of sketching specific ways of living together, which contribute to broadening equality to the biggest amount of possible differences; which means not just holding an assortment of prestigious, sumptuous, and ritual objects, but also — and especially — being able to cooperate, gather, share among people who have in common the quality of being different, and, at the same time, of needing one another.

Ferrowhite asks itself, as América, Herminio, or the Ortegas brothers do, “How do İ make ends meet?” İt also asks, “How do we will a kinder future out of this present moment with rising authoritarian regimes, war crimes, forced migrations, economic crises, growing individualism, and environmental collapse?” This is, perhaps, what our modest craft is about. İt is about reviving the ties between the unfulfilled promises from the past with the imagination of what is to come.

Working in this museum means disputing the idea that we are doomed to catastrophe, fighting against the certainty that there is no alternative, and remaining stubborn in our pursuit of any possible happiness, blindly seeking and planting the hope of a tomorrow.

İmage 1: Atilo Miglianelli, former worker at the General San Martin factory. Photo: Cristina Peralta

İmage 2: The Aroa Obrera. Photo: Nicholás Testoni

İmage 3: América Galina and helpers. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 4: Maura Beluzo on the locamotive Manifesta. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 5: Analía Bernardi and Marcelos Bustos. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 6: Ferrowhite. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 7: Seed library. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 8: Workshop. Photo: Nicolás Testoni

İmage 9: Walter Uranga with the poster “A Worker Never is Only a Worker.” Photo: Nicolás Testoni

Museums, Private İnterests, and Public Engagement

Coco Fusco, Artist and Professor, Cooper Union, Brooklyn, USA

Biography

Coco Fusco is an interdisciplinary artist and writer. She has received numerous awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, a Latinx Art Fellowship, a Fulbright Fellowship, and a Herb Alpert Award in the Arts. Fusco's performances and videos have been presented at the 56th Venice Biennale, Frieze Special Projects, Basel Unlimited, three Whitney Biennials (2022, 2008, 1993), and other international exhibitions. Her works are part of the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Art İnstitute of Chicago, the Walker Art Center, the Centre Pompidou, the İmperial War Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA). She is the author of *Dangerous Moves: Performance and Politics in Cuba* (2015), *English is Broken Here: Notes on Cultural Fusion in the Americas* (1995), *The Bodies That Were Not Ours: And Other Writings* (2001) and *A Field Guide for Female İnterrogators* (2008). She is represented by Alexander Gray Associates of New York City and is a Professor of Art at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. The solo retrospective of Fusco's works, *Tomorrow İ Will Become an İsland*, opened at

the KW İnstitute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, in September 2023, accompanied by a monograph published by Thames & Hudson.

Museums, Private İnterests, and Public Engagement

İt has been a challenge for me to put together a presentation for this conference. İ have struggled with myself to decide what to say at a time when crises of so many kinds are happening everywhere. Wars that threaten to spread and last for years. Climate disasters on every continent. Politics is permeated by fundamentalisms of many kinds. Moneyed interests, biased media, and electoral absenteeism undermine democracies that are increasingly dysfunctional. A rising tide of authoritarianism appears in the most unsuspected places. Dynamics of communication on social networks that foster extremism and cacophony: marked by obligatory brevity, and uncontrolled hyperbole. Myopic and absolutist worldviews dominate public discourse and erode faith in the benefits of a shared public sphere.

İ also realize that many of you are facing crises closer to home, in your professional environment, which is the museum. Public museums are struggling as state support diminishes, as a consequence of neoliberal policies and the anti-intellectual distrust of some populist rulers towards what is perceived as high culture. Private museums proliferate without a clear mandate in relation to the public good. How should we understand this? İs there an insurmountable contradiction between the interests of the benefactors and the interests of the others, the 99%? What should we do about it? İ have been asked to reflect on the social responsibility of museums: what does this mean in today's cultural landscape? İ also notice that İ've been asked to convey an encouraging message at a time of extreme hardship, but İ'm not known for delivering happy messages in my art. İt seems like a lot to ask given the precarious situation of many public museums in Latin America and of public culture in general in an era of rampant privatization. What İ say may also seem impractical: İ don't work in a museum, and İ act with a certain degree of independence from the pressures and bureaucratic hurdles of that institution. But İ have been a teacher for thirty years, teaching young people to create, interpret, and appreciate art, trying to convince them that encountering the most difficult expressive forms can be more rewarding than sticking with the familiar. Through this work İ have come to understand what it means to cultivate audiences for art, an endeavor İ share with many people here. İ am guided in my thinking by the words of the İtalian philosopher Georgio Agamben: "The contemporary is he who keeps his gaze firmly on his own time in order to perceive not its light, but rather its darkness."

İ am an artist and writer with a practice that explores social and political relations, but İ do not presume that all artists deal with the social. Nor is it the case for all museums. And there are many definitions and interpretations of social responsibility when it comes to cultural institutions. The primary work of most museums is the conservation of artifacts considered to be of cultural, historical, and/or scientific value. The other significant work of museums is what some consider educational and others purely ideological: transmitting and affirming the ideas, myths, stories, and values that bind us together as nations or as members of a given community. The struggle these days is over how these values are determined and by whom. This is not the first time a clash of values has arisen in the art world, but the economic stakes, the intensity of the conflicts and their continentally distributed nature make our current moment different. As modern and contemporary art occupies more and more space in many museums and collections, and as the boundaries of aesthetic activity expand to include ephemera and live actions as well as time-based media, audience experiences in art museums are changing radically, as are the expectations and composition of their audience(s). Art museums are not only repositories of what was valued in the past, but also reflections of who we are and want to be in the present.

Although the first museums were private, public museums opened their doors in the seventeenth century. With the emergence of nation states in Europe in the late-eighteenth century, collections that had previously belonged to aristocrats were made available to the public to serve as visual demonstrations of a new democratic ethic. From this arose the notion of public museums as "civic engines" that instilled in the citizenry "higher" values than the forms of mass entertainment that proliferated in the nineteenth century with the growth of cities. This classist view of the museum as a purveyor of higher values began to be challenged in the last decades of the twentieth century, by avant-garde artists and also by social sectors historically excluded from museums — people who were not considered creators, "experts," or patrons — namely women, ethnic minorities, and non-Europeans. The demand that the museum become more inclusive in addressing the public and more diverse in its representations of

culture highlights a progressive notion of the institution's social responsibility to belong to and engage with everyone, not just elites. Many young curators, influenced by art sociology and feminist and postcolonial theories, have adopted a more egalitarian ethic, but must negotiate with benefactors who do not always agree with them. The combination of the influence of new interpretations of art and the globalization of collecting has led to the cultural diversification of museum collections in North America and Europe.

Demands for change in the functioning of museums are not limited to the demand for more inclusive curatorship and public programs. Recently, museums have come under fire for upholding elitist values, for having benefited from colonialist expropriation, for "art laundering," i.e., allowing benefactors to launder wealth acquired through unethical means, for exploitative labor practices, and for prioritizing tourists over marginalized local populations. Museums are not the only institutions that deserve criticism of this kind, but they are one of the few physical spaces left in increasingly secular societies where the public gathers for contemplative activity rather than shopping. Museums are also one of the few spaces left in our increasingly segregated societies where members of the working and middle classes can rub shoulders with the elites. Activist-minded cultural workers treat museums as the latest version of the Ancient Greek agora, as places for political debate, philosophical discourse, and the display of craftsmanship. Seeking to energize museums, they replace the top-down model of the civic engine that teaches a passive public with a dialogic model in which an actively engaged public can change the norms and values of the institution.

These changes test the limits of permissible activities within the walls of museums and are generating tensions in the upper echelons of many institutions, as well as other sectors of the public that are not so accepting of the unexpected. Among those responsible for managing museums, funding their programs, and donating art to them, there has usually been a certain patrician-style acceptance of the benefits of public participation. This may be necessary to access public funds, or it may also affirm the altruism of elites. At the same time, most benefactors hope to maintain their right to exercise control over what happens. Public pressure, evolving academic and curatorial approaches to art evaluation, and the desire to keep up with global trends incentivize change, but do not guarantee it. The media and activists may opt for confrontation to embarrass institutions and force them to do what they want, but that strategy rarely works with the people who work inside museums.

Those of us who work within cultural institutions have to deploy carefully chosen tactics of persuasion. We must use our knowledge of art, our appreciation of the intangible, and non-fungible dimensions of the aesthetic experience to cultivate support for art as a public good. We also need to devise different ways of addressing patrons, politicians, artists, educators, students, and the public. We may fail at times, but that is our job. İ am too pragmatic to imagine that there is a simple solution that will restore funding to public institutions in an instant, or that private institutions will embrace civility simply because curators want them to. İnstitutional transformation often comes about through negotiation and the ability to represent change as desirable and ultimately beneficial to both the powerful and the powerless. The pace of persuasion work is slow. Like diplomacy, it involves making concessions and a degree of espionage to understand the interests at stake. İn light of the situation in which we find ourselves, İ wonder whether benefactors can conceive of museums, whether public or private, as an arena that enhances social cohesion in societies as divided as ours.

During my preparation for this visit, my colleagues told me that Latin American museums are experiencing a very diverse evolution. On the one hand, there has been a steady growth in investment in contemporary art in the region by local and international collectors. On the other hand, there has been a decline in investment in public museums and a boom in the construction of private museums. İ'm not sure where the public stands, so İ'd like to hear more about it. İ want to step away for a moment from the specific field of museums to look at the broader political and economic context to understand who and what we are up against.

According to historian Olaf Kaltmeier, the explosive growth in recent years of the billionaire (art-buying) class, or the 1%, has particular characteristics for this region. Latin American billionaires are disproportionately richer than those in other parts of the world. Latin American fortunes are more likely to have been inherited: 72% of them are, 20% more than the world average. Kaltmeier calls them the money aristocracy. This generational continuity of wealth among the money aristocracy allows them a greater degree of political influence. Unlike the new fortunes generated by the information economy and speculation in the United States and Europe, private wealth here comes largely from extractivism, privatization of public resources, and economic monopolies, including organized crime.

Not surprisingly, these issues are present in much of the socially engaged art being made in Latin America today. İ think of artists like Regina Galindo, who so eloquently addresses the abuses of state power in Guatemala. İ think of Teresa Margolles' bold treatment of drug trafficking in Mexico. İ also think of Carolina Caycedo's explorations of the politics of water and the efforts of Colombia's indigenous communities to thwart the destruction of natural resources. İ think of Carlos Martiel's powerful performances on racial oppression, and Pablo Nazareth's moving pilgrimages that dramatize the experience of migration. İ admire curator Jose Roca's work at the last Sydney Biennale, a wide-ranging study of dynamic living systems and indigenous knowledge expressed through art. And, of course, İ can't forget the efforts of the San İsidro Movement in Cuba, which demanded expanded civil rights from the regime and inspired the largest uprising in Cuba in sixty years. Two of the group's leaders, artist Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara and rapper Maykel Osorbo, are paying a heavy price for speaking truth to power, serving sentences in maximum security prisons.

Kaltmeier describes the contemporary socio-economic scene as undergoing a process of refeudalization in the last decade. We live in a world of incomparable social positions, and that division is becoming increasingly entrenched, resembling that of pre-revolutionary France. Billionaires increased their wealth during the pandemic while it financially decimated the middle classes and the poor. The growing social divide in our societies signals the erosion of the democratic promise of equality, opportunity, and civil rights. That polarization manifests itself architecturally in our segregated social space and shrinking public spaces. The super-rich live, eat, shop, and entertain in environments closed to others. There has also been a refeudalization of social norms and values, moving us away from meritocratic values and toward the celebration of consumerism and celebrity. One end of the social spectrum indulges in luxury consumption (including the purchase of art), while the other is trapped by debt. And after a period of progress in the early twenty-first century for the rights of women and ethnic and sexual minorities, and for their participation in governments, today we are engaged in a struggle to maintain gains in these areas. Conservative-funded mainstream media vilify identity politics and label indigenous activism as criminal activity. İn the United States today, we are experiencing the criminalization of progressive anti-racist and anti-sexist views on a scale İ do not recall seeing in the U.S. since the 1970s, when Richard Nixon and J. Edgar Hoover targeted anti-Vietnam war activists and the Black Power movement.

İ don't point to the growth and influence of the billionaire class to demonize it. İ don't see them as a monolith. İ recognize that some lend support to important causes. Some will say that private interests should not manage social issues, but İ don't think philanthropy is going away any time soon, so it becomes more practical for me to develop ways to negotiate. The super-rich have played a key role in the production, exhibition, and conservation of art for centuries. Examples of states ousting their elites and empowering bureaucrats to manage cultural production alone have not produced favorable situations for most artists. As art workers, we would do well to devise better ways to engage this new billionaire class so that their relationship to art goes beyond treating it as a prized possession on the same level as yachts and precious jewels, or as social capital that gives them access to more parties with other wealthy people they want to meet. We must develop arguments that support art that asks to be appreciated for its ability to challenge received notions of beauty, for its embrace of the new, or for its consideration of the darker and more troubling aspects of our world. An important way to be socially responsible is to be open to art that responds to the injustice of our world today and asks us to reflect on it.

Some may be thinking: well, that sounds very worthy, but what about museum maintenance costs? İt will certainly be an ongoing struggle. At the same time, İ think it's fair to note that the boom in contemporary art sales has generated a troubling relationship of dependency in which many artists and other cultural professionals can't imagine art without thinking about abundant sources of money. İ am not naïve enough to think that we can survive without money, but my mentors, Conceptual artists who emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, always warned me against such dependence, pointing out the notoriously fickle nature of the market. They also scorned those who equated the value of artistic endeavor with fame and sale prices.

As the uphill battle to fund cultural institutions continues, it is important to remember that not everyone expects greatness: that is for the few who can afford it and the tourists who want a taste. We live in a period when we may have to think less grandiosely about institutional maintenance. Maybe we need to rethink the mania for building extravagant buildings to house art. Perhaps we should try to find less environmentally damaging ways of organizing events and mounting exhibitions. Maybe we can imagine staging

art outside the walls of museums. The postwar avant-gardes, which are now treated with such reverence by art historians and art dealers, operated with extremely limited resources in basements, private homes, and bars. Artists engaged in experimentation were attracted to ruins, abandoned buildings, strange alleys, warehouses without facilities, vacant lots, and rooftops. Unfortunately, many American and European cities that once served as crucial gathering places for artists have become so gentrified that creators have begun to move to rural areas in search of spaces to work and think. Young people will follow artists to such places in search of the new and freed from entry fees. Others who really care about art will follow. İt is up to us to make them care.

Day 2
Friday November 10

The Role of Museums in Communities, Education, and Accessibility

The Educational Turn and the Artistic Turn

Luis Camnitzer, Artist, Great Neck, USA

Biography

Luis Camnitzer (Lübeck, 1937) is a Uruguayan artist who has lived in New York City since 1964. He is Emeritus Professor at State University of New York College at Old Westbury. Studied art at the School of Fine Arts İnstitute, Universidad de la República, Uruguay, and architecture at the same University's Faculty of Architecture. A Guggenheim Fellow in both 1961 and 1982, he represented Uruguay at the 43rd Venice Biennial in 1988 and has exhibited at several biennials, including several iterations of the Havana Biennial, the Whitney Biennial in 2000 and Documenta 11 in 2002. İn 2018, a retrospective of his oeuvre was presented at the Reina Sofía Museum. His works are present in the collection of over 45 museums, and he is represented by Alexander Gray Associates of New York City. He was the Pedagogical Curator of 6th Mercosul Biennial (2007), Porto Alegre; and Curator of the Viewing Program, the Drawing Center, New York City. İn 1999, he co-organized the exhibition *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s–1980s* at the Queens Museum, New York City, together with Jane Farver and Rachel Weiss. Among his books are *New Art of Cuba* (1994), *Conceptualism*

in Latin American Art: Didactics of Liberation (2007), and *On Art, Artists, Latin America, and Other Utopias* (2010), all published by University of Texas Press, *De la Coca-Cola al Arte Boludo* (2009), published by Metales Pesados, and *One Number is Worth One Word* (2020) in the e-flux journal series, published by Sternberg Press.

The Educational Turn and the Artistic Turn

> "Museums and their collections are valuable and irreplaceable as a service to the community, and have immense educational value."
>
> "The fundamental role of the museum is to organize objects and maintain them within an intellectual environment that emphasizes that museums are repositories of knowledge as well as repositories of objects, and that the entire exercise is in danger of being futile unless the accumulation of objects is strictly rational."

These are literal quotes from directors of important museums made about thirty years ago. İ believe, however, that they faithfully represent the policy of most museums operating today.

İn a text İ was asked to write a few years ago, İ argued that the traditional scheme under which museums operate is based on the ostentation and consumption of objects, and that this illustrates a very particular institutional educational ideology. The architecture of the system formalizes, reflects, and reaffirms this ideology. The process by which staff are hired is focused on the works and not on the public to whom the works are shown. And the institution is organized based on an "inside" and an "outside," in spaces that are ideologically conditioned: the "outside" comes "inside" to consume what is being held there.

Due to its focus, this ideology asserts the primacy of economic and climate protection arguments. İt determines that the "inside" is physically designed as a hybrid of a safe vault and a church, with restricted and controlled public access. İn an act of affirmation of a canonical hegemony, a hegeMummy is presented to us. İt can be said that this scheme is completely centripetal and self-centered. İf we used an individual as an analogy, we would speak of a messianic egocentrism that excludes dialogue and exchange, uninterested in generating self-taught processes in the public. The use of certain centrifugal mechanisms in the museum — such as guided tours or educational workshops — does not correct the situation. The knowledge that is disseminated through these activities is already existent and does not generate new knowledge. Although the public may not realize it, the operation always benefits the institution, and only occasionally the visitor. Consistent with this, the success of a museum is measured by the number of visitors who enter and not by the new knowledge generated in, or by, those who leave.

Strangely, the great absentees from this image are the artists whose works fill the storage depots and which give them their reason for existing. Luckily, as an artist, this absence does not make me feel like a victim or want to cry. Quite the opposite. İn fact, artists are complicit in the system. Although we may not say it openly, we back museums both ways. Firstly, to maintain a mutual pact of credibility. And secondly, because the museum is our definition of posterity. İt is there where, with luck and some connections, our remains will be buried so they can be exhibited after we die.

Many of us accuse museums of being symbols of ostentation, but it is a shared ostentation. There is an incestuous relationship here in which we spur each other on. Together we want to create a market and make it work. Picasso, for example, had a symbiotic relationship with the Museum of Modern Art in New York. From its founding in 1923 onwards, the Museum presented at least six solo exhibitions, and produced 23 publications. Among these is one written in 1939 by Alfred Barr dedicated to forty years of his work. Seven years later there is another, also by Alfred Barr, this time dedicated to fifty years of his work. Aside from the arithmetic problem, and without discrediting anyone, this enhanced both MoMA's reputation and Picasso's prices.

None of this is new or of much importance. İ don't know if the series of Picasso exhibitions and the publications dedicated to him have that "immense educational value" quoted at the beginning. This depends on what we understand by education, or what museums understand by education. This issue is important for museums because most, at least in the United States, are legally registered as educational institutions. Registration allows them to invoke their non-profit status, exempts them from paying taxes, and helps save donors from paying taxes. But the pedagogical consequences of registering as an educational institution are very relative. Where education departments exist, they do not have much power in the museum, and are generally subordinate to curatorship. They help to sell exhibitions that they have no

influence over, and their function is to sophisticate the public's taste. That is, they do not educate but rather help expand the consumer base.

İt was the perception of this situation that generated the slogan "educational turn" about three decades ago. A well-intentioned movement of resistance and change, it was a powerful advertising tool, but weak in its impact. Those of us who embarked on it did so to radically change existing institutions. But institutional inertia and their interests surpassed us. No matter how much we continue to theorize about it, the educational turn never managed to be much more than an institutional critique, well recorded in many writings but less evident in reality. İt is true that many museums tried to adapt to the new demands, but its effects on culture in general are somewhat spurious.

To make matters worse, today we have a much more important and dangerous enemy. İt threatens us all and therefore also the museums. İ am referring to STEM education, the English acronym for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM seeks the slow eradication, or at least the submission, of the Humanities and the arts. This leads me to think that today it is no longer so important to ensure that museums fulfill a serious educational mission. İ think it is good that they are trying to do so, but İ think it is more urgent to work on an "artistic turn" that focuses on the total reform of education. Once this reform is achieved, museums will have no choice but to adjust their pedagogical mission.

By leaving aside the Humanities, STEM favors ingenuity to the detriment of creation. İngenuity seeks efficiency by reorganizing what is already known. İnstead, true art explores what is not known. STEM, therefore, is not only a threat to art and education in general, but also to museums. Slowly and without them realizing it, the timid self-definition mentioned above, that of being a repository of knowledge, is being eroded into a repository of frivolities. Knowledge, then, is not renewed or expanded, but rather makes us enter a general process of de-education.

For a more serious discussion about "turns," we need to specify exactly what the words "education" and "art" mean. Education today is generally used to embellish the word "training." We are *trained* to function within a competitive nationalist vision and in the labor market. At the same time, we are led to believe that if we work hard, success is a result of individual effort, but that if we fail, it is due to laziness and our fault. Therefore, the notions of socialization, of maturity, of enhancing our potential to use the most hidden traits of our personality, of the possibility of being free, are gradually disappearing, if they were ever on the menu, that is. De-education stops democracy being a collective project for social improvement. İnstead, it gives license to impose autocracy.

The ideology of STEM education is quite old. Already in 1788, the Constitution of the United States proclaimed the need "to promote the progress of science and useful arts." The useless arts, which are the truly important ones because they explore the imagination, are not mentioned and were left unprotected and increasingly at the mercy of private philanthropy. And when STEM tries to absorb art, as with STEAM, it does so only as a form of ingenuity at the service of hard disciplines.

While the issue of education is quite clear because we more or less know what we are talking about, talking about art is more difficult. Art encompasses the infinite field of everything that we don't know what it is about. And in art, they also train us to do things well and to compete, since educating ourselves in real art would be much more difficult and probably more expensive. Therefore, in the end, all artists who study in institutions end up being self-taught researchers. We work to identify what we did not learn and will never be identifiable. These are things that have no useful applications and that's why STEM is not interested. This lack of identification is what separates us from the scientific researcher. The scientist works to identify the unknown that is not yet identifiable, but will be after his work.

This difference between the not yet and the never explains why the history of art is the history of a series of crafts that try to transcend themselves to find the indefinable part. That part is something that İ conveniently call "craft plus." İt is this plus, not the artisanal part, which allows us to affirm that what we see is art and not just something well made. This "plus" is something that science cannot touch, that STEM wants to ignore, but museums try to show.

Dealing with all of this, many years ago İ made up a story about the possible origin of the word "art." İt explains why art became a discrete and isolated discipline instead of being accepted as an integral part of the acquisition and processing of knowledge. My story concerns someone who in the Stone Age produced something totally new, something that had never been seen or expected until then. Those who had the privilege of seeing it for the first time were left in a state that was a mixture of bewilderment, stupefaction, and wonder. This new "thing," therefore, had neither reference nor name. Catching his breath after a long silence, one of those gathered dared to shout: "Let's call it 'art'." Since then, unfortunately, all

subsequent generations have tried to occupy the territory of that word, without going any further. They didn't think of recreating the experience of bewilderment, stupefaction, and wonder that an object in need of a new name had produced. They studied very carefully what techniques had been used to manufacture the object. They believed that if they followed the instructions, any result would also deserve to be called "art." Thinking that this would be enough, they copied the techniques, created the right tools, organized training workshops, and over time set up specialized schools. They even organized buildings to store and put the emphasis on showing what was done and not on what this can generate. This explains why the history of art is a history of crafts and not a history of new experiences that explore the unknown. İt also explains why we are gathered here at this congress.

İt's understandable that a good craftsman needs a long time to train and be able to produce perfect objects. To achieve this, he must discard other studies in order to specialize. But the other part, that of imagining and exploring the unknown and the unidentifiable, shouldn't be an exclusive activity of the artist. İt should be something natural for everyone. İt is true that in literature there is good and bad fiction. But this doesn't mean that imagining fiction must remain out of reach of the average citizen. The American poet Audre Lorde once wrote that: "Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought." And "...where that language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it. Poetry is not only dream or vision, it is the skeleton architecture of our lives." İn other words, it is an intrinsic part of our cognitive processes, no matter how modest they may be. The fact that some authors are better than others does not take away our right to use the process in our daily activities. Not all of us learn to write so we can win the Nobel Prize. Not all of us face mystery with the desire to be shown in a museum.

İn the introduction to his book *Being You*, neuroscientist Anil Seth states that "our conscious experiences of the world around us, and of ourselves within it, are kinds of controlled hallucinations that happen with, through and because of our living bodies." Seth is working on identifying the connection that hallucinations may have with biology and their possible control. İain McGilchrist adds to this that our choice of metaphors gives direction to how we do it. Reading these observations, and aware that a work of art dies once it is fully explained, İ wondered whether, as artists, our mission shouldn't be to attempt to control that control. İt would mean defining art as a meta-control of our hallucinations to allow us to use them correctly and survive. The artist here acts as a specialist capable of creating and managing metaphors, and refining this meta-control.

İ'm going to use a schematic and simplistic image that has been applied since Eve ate the apple. İ will imagine knowledge as if it were a tree. At the roots of this tree are our methods of confrontation with chaos. This is where we introduce a bit of order to the stimuli with which we are bombarded, where we control the hallucinations mentioned by Anil Seth. Then the coding and communication of that order are in the trunk. And finally, it is in the branches where we find the disciplines that reflect the research, the results, and their preparation for application. Art, then, manifests itself in these three sections, but it does so in very different ways. Firstly, we have art as a root activity, that which in the scheme of biological control of hallucinations helps to control biological control and creates controlled control. At the core or trunk, we have art as language and codification, for which Lev Vygotsky described language as a symbolic activity with an organizational function. İt can be said that art here acts as a second language into and from which one can translate. But if we adjust Vygotsky's description a little, it may also be applied to art as a root activity. İn this sense, art would fulfill an organizational function that creates symbolic activities that in turn help us organize and communicate. This is where the field opens not only for metaphors but also for fictionalizing reality. İt is where, with luck and a good education, we learn to separate artistic fiction from lies.

But it is when we reach the branches that we refer to art in its most traditional, conservative, and museum-like version. There, art joins other disciplines and is defined by the fruits it produces. The fruits are evaluated according to their maturity and how they look. The fruits are the collectable part, and this makes art schools concentrate on the artisanal finish instead of discussing and elaborating the cognitive part that happens at the root.

The big question then is which of the three aspects of art should prevail in our activities, whether as artists, as teachers, or as museums. For me the choice is clear. İf we don't understand art as a root activity, one where we use the imagination, we are lost. İt is not to hallucinate but to understand, control, and direct the process of hallucination, to identify and elaborate the "plus" in things. İt is only by exploring the impossible that we will gain enough critical distance to evaluate the possible. This will also help us understand whose interests are served by what is possible, know who are the people who control it, and try to resist and correct them when they abuse their power.

STEM is limited to building an impoverished reality that only accepts what is feasible and what has practical application. Limiting reality to its feasible part, to what can be done, is an artisanal conception of the world that brings death: not only to the "plus," the unnamable, and the mystery, but also the resistance against the abuses of power. Art, on the other hand, ensures an ecology of knowledge whose balance is based on inclusion and respect for what we cannot know. While ingenuity remains within the field of the known and the feasible, it is the need to study the limits of the unknown that brings us to art. This is why, properly understood, art and education are part of the same activity.

Not fully understanding this, most museums still can't see the enemy. Worse still, they are about to miss the last train to mental health. This is a path that follows an educational turn toward art, rather than art turning toward education. A true educational turn, then, would entail not only adjusting the museums in their paternalistic mission of bringing art to the people and sophisticating consumption. İt would mean a radical "artistic turn," made with the knowledge and education that prepare us for knowing.

İt is, partly, about rescuing and reserving for everyone a respect for uselessness. Futility is a field that serves for speculation and imagination. To focus on art as a root activity makes us artists assume our true responsibility, which is to be "knowledge workers" rather than good artisans. Museums have the opportunity, then, to redefine themselves and support this cognitive role. They can contribute to a profound curricular change so that education integrates the imagination and thereby achieves the generation of knowledge in all students and in all disciplines.

Today, we continue with the traditional model of what might be called the "Museum of the Enlightened Oligarchy." Despite its canonical and class limitations, this model still allows us to glimpse some of the things we don't know. But if we are not careful, the next model will be an even more impoverished one. İmplicit in STEM and STEAM education, the new institution will become a "Museum of Ownership and İngenuity." İ don't know if as an artist or, more importantly, as a citizen, İ'm at all interested in this kind of institution.

Transversal Accessibility in Various Cultural İnstitutions in São Paulo, Brazil

Daina Leyton, Cultural Accessibility Consultant, Moreira Salles İnstitute, São Paulo, Brazil

Biography

Daina Leyton is an educator, psychologist, and cultural accessibility consultant. She has been developing since 1999 cultural and educational projects that celebrate diversity. İn 2010, she designed and established the accessibility area at the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art, where she coordinated the educational department from 2011 to 2020. She received 13 awards. She promotes training in culture, education, and accessibility in various Brazilian and international cultural spaces. She organized the 6th İnternational Congress on Education and Accessibility in Museums and Heritage: *Nothing About Us Without Us* (2019, MAM-SP, İtaú Cultural and İnstituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP.) Curated the exhibition *Education as Raw Material* (2016, MAM São Paulo), the program *Poetics of Access* (2018, Sesc Belenzinho), the seminar *Museums, Childhood and Freedom of Expression* (2018, MAM São Paulo) and the 3rd Seminar Culture of Access (2022, Secretariat of Culture of the State of Ceará). She participated in the commission to prepare Secult-CE's State Cultural Accessibility Plan. She is currently an accessibility consultant at the Moreira Salles İnstitute (SP, RJ, and

MG).

Transversal Accessibility in Various Cultural İnstitutions in São Paulo, Brazil

Accessibility is an increasingly prominent theme in Brazilian cultural spaces. Although there is still much progress needed to ensure equitable cultural participation for disabled people, the concern is palpable and evident within the cultural sphere. Some institutions already incorporate accessibility into their institutional guidelines, while others are just beginning to do so. There are those that approach accessibility in a misguided manner, especially when the ideas and projects come from non-disabled individuals. And there are those that implement accessibility with the full participation of disabled people. Accessibility as an institutional policy and the full participation of disabled people are two essential characteristics of what we understand as *Transversal Accessibility*. İn this context, İ present the journey of three different Brazilian cultural spaces for us to reflect on the topic: the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo (MAM), Sesc Belenzinho, and the Moreira Salles İnstitute.

Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo: experimentation and creation

For over two decades, İ worked at the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo. The existence, since 1998 of the "Programa İgual Diferente" (Equal Different Program) — a series of courses in different artistic languages conducted with diverse audiences — led me to seek out MAM and, years later, to conceptualize the creation of an Accessibility department. Starting in 2011, İ held the position of coordinator of the Museum's Educational Sector, and we began to dedicate ourselves permanently to the development of an educational program in which accessibility is intrinsic: the act of educating is a celebration of diversity and differences. Some examples of the outcomes of this work include: Deaf educators who now work in various cultural spaces, having participated in a training program for young deaf educators at MAM, which began in 2001.

The ongoing participation of blind or low vision individuals in courses of artistic languages such as photography, drawing, and sculpture has driven the transformation in visual arts exhibitions. By incorporating alternative perceptions, such as sensory resources and audio description, these exhibitions transcend the logic of the *Frontal Oculocentric Tyranny.*

The attendance of physically disabled people prompted us to reconfigure the Museum space based on the principles of Universal Design to ensure comfort, safety, and autonomy. This expanded our spatial perception beyond the logic of *body normativity.* The involvement of individuals with learning disabilities has brought us an awareness of how people construct meaning in diverse ways and that museum education should move away from the logic of *banking education.* Frequent interaction with autistic people has not only transformed our understanding of the current educational system that disregards neurodiversity, but has also made us aware of the urgency of considering realities with greater sensory quality.

The learning that the educational team gained from individuals with disabilities, as well as knowledge of their potentials and cultures, continues to influence all educational activities that MAM undertakes with schools, youth visiting İbirapuera Park, education professionals, infants and their caregivers, researchers, İndigenous artists, and others.

The consistent participation of individuals with disabilities ("pessoas *defs*," in Portuguese) in the Museum has brought about demands for changes in space, communication, attitudes, and relationships within the MAM teams (among themselves and with their audience). İt was this movement that led us to understand Transversal Accessibility, a concept that has guided my journey in education and culture ever since. This concept emerged during a conversation İ had with Mariana Valente, who was responsible for the legal department of the Museum at the time, during one of our meetings about our cultural projects. Valente inquired about the origin, aspirations, and development of MAM's accessibility initiatives. After hearing the responses, she then asked if the accessibility we were implementing in the Museum was indeed Transversal Accessibility. Her reflection drew from feminist authors who bring to the gender debate the awareness that to aspire to significant and lasting changes, it would be necessary to address all causes of oppression.

Valente's question made a lot of sense because in the rights of disabled people movement, it was feminist criticism that brought about an expansion of the debate, integrating issues of ethnicity, race, gender, and social class.

Disability advocacy movements throughout history have called for a transformation of a stigmatizing view of disability, broadening the issue to social discourse and demanding public policies. This is the shift from

the Medical and Charitable Model of disability, which persisted for a long time, to the Social Model of Disability with its first and second generations.

During the 1960s and 1970s, organized groups of disabled people started advocating for increased visibility and a shift away from restrictive perspectives on disability. Among the demands, there was a stress on the awareness that it is not the impairment that prevents a person with a disability from living their daily life with autonomy, but rather a series of social failures that place them in a disadvantaged condition. (LEYTON, 2023, p. 46)

This is the transition from the Medical and Charitable Model of Disability to the *Social Model of Disability*: limitations cease to be an individual matter and become a social and collective issue.

The first generation of the *Social Model of Disability* thus announced the need to differentiate between what is an impairment and what is the production of disability: it should no longer be seen as something located in an individual body but understood within the social body. İf it is not the impairment that produces incapacity, but rather a society that is insensitive to the need for equal opportunities, the issue shifts from being individual to becoming collective. (LEYTON, 2023, p. 47)

By stating that the response to segregation and oppression lay in politics and sociology, theorists of the social model did not reject the benefits of biomedical advances for treating the impaired body. The concept was to move beyond the medicalization of impairment and extend efforts into shaping public policies for disability. The result was a radical separation between impairment and disability: the former would be the subject of biomedical actions on the body, while the latter would be understood as a matter of rights, social justice, and welfare policies. (DİNİZ, 2007, p. 9)

As demands of the first generation of the Social Model of Disability led to significant achievements, such as architectural accessibility in some cities (particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom), but they were not sufficient to fully encompass all disabled people.

İt became necessary, starting in the 1990s, in contact and under the influence of feminist movements and gender studies, to broaden the debate. This new movement, composed of disabled people and their caregivers, constitutes the *Second Generation*, introducing the second version of the *Social Model of Disability*. This generation acknowledges the accomplishments of the First but, enriched by feminist criticism and with the participation of a greater diversity of disabled people, delves deeper into discussions about the oppression of individuals with diverse bodies. (..)

Between achievements and setbacks in the current Brazilian context, we can observe that both the *Biomedical and Charitable Model of Disability* persist in various spheres, as well as some developments and guidelines that would fall within the First Generation of the *Social Model of Disability*.

More modestly, we identify actions in line with the demands of the Second Generation of the *Social Model of Disability*, especially in certain agendas of Social Movements such as the black, feminist, or LGBTQİAP+ movements. But there is still much to progress. (LEYTON, 2023, p. 39)

To engage with Transversal Accessibility effectively, it is crucial to grasp the intersectionality and overlapping of oppressions and discriminations prevalent in our society.

Transversal Accessibility

The concept of Transversal Accessibility matured over the years in the work İ conducted with cultural spaces, guided by Paulo Freire's principle of *praxis*: the intrinsic relationship established "between a way of interpreting reality and life and the consequent practice that results from this understanding, leading to transformative action." (FREİRE, 1968, p. 325)

İn Transversal Accessibility, all individuals and teams working in a cultural space engage in accessibility actions. Accessibility is never the exclusive responsibility of a specific area. İt is through interaction and training with disabled people that an awareness of their diversity can be developed, determining which accessibility actions are necessary and meaningful. *Transversal Accessibility* also proposes that accessibility be considered from the outset of a project (exhibitions, programs, or cultural events of any nature), rather than being an afterthought. İt should consider various aspects that will shape the artistic experience of a disabled person: enjoyment, visitation, participation, creation, and dissemination.

Numerous violations of fundamental rights are experienced by disabled people every day. Their cultural rights are also violated in museums and cultural centers, as a sizeable portion of their exhibitions still lack accessibility features, thus not promoting free enjoyment for all individuals. Therefore, understanding and implementing Transversal Accessibility in cultural institutions is

essential and urgent.
The Transversal Accessibility work at the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo began to attract interest from other cultural institutions, prompting them to seek guidance on how to implement accessibility in their own establishments. At a certain point, we recognized that our mission would not solely involve developing accessibility at MAM but also collaborating with other cultural spaces, sharing experiences, knowledge, and technologies.

However, the routine in a cultural institution is often intense and filled with numerous demands, especially for departments that directly engage with the public. While we aimed to contribute to the proliferation of accessibility actions in other spaces, coordinating the educational programs of the Museum, which included a wide range of public activities such as guided tours, workshops, courses, and performances, consumed a significant amount of time. İt was common for lapses to occur, such as a display case in an exhibition lacking suitable height for wheelchair accessibility, films in exhibitions lacking Portuguese subtitles or Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) due to budget constraints, or obstacles on top of tactile paving, among other oversights. This scenario is common in various places with accessibility initiatives. İ now recognize that a significant obstacle to accessibility is the lack of internal communication among teams, compounded by certain departments not considering accessibility as their responsibility.

The cross-cutting work of accessibility should be the path towards the institutionalization of accessibility in cultural spaces, aiming for its permanent incorporation across all areas of operation.

Sesc Belenzinho: Diverse Languages and Access as Poetry

The initiative at Sesc Belenzinho involved curating artistic programming combined with an ongoing training program for both the five hundred staff members and the audience. *Poéticas do Acesso* (Access Poetics), integrated discussions, workshops, exhibitions, performances, dance, literature, poetry, music, and cinema, guided by a curatorial approach that sees accessibility as poetic creation.

To establish Transversal Accessibility at Sesc's Cultural Center, we began with questions such as: *How does it manifest in the management of a diverse cultural institution? How to manage specificities and ensure attention to the needs of aesthetic experiences in an accessible manner for everyone?* There is knowledge to be shared with the teams of cultural institutions to promote accessibility. This content was conveyed to the Sesc Team through lectures and diverse guidance in conversations with me and individuals with disabilities actively involved in the cultural field. With this prior training, it becomes possible to build what we refer to as a "common ground" for everyone working in each institution. However, the way each cultural space will establish and promote accessibility is a matter for its own instances: its internal and external culture, its programming, and its network of relationships.

Sesc Belenzinho is a cultural center located in the eastern part of the city of São Paulo, belonging to the private institution Sesc-SP (São Paulo's Social Service of Commerce, maintained and managed by entrepreneurs in the sectors of Commerce, Goods and Services, Tourism, Leisure, and Health). İts purpose is to promote social well-being for workers in these sectors and their dependents, while also extending its activities to the surrounding community and anyone interested in participating. Established in the neighborhood since 1947, it has been situated in the same location since 1996, where there was previously a large textile company (Moinho Santista). İn 2010, it underwent a renovation, with a project designed by the architect Ricardo Chahin, and has a definitive structural configuration in a building spanning over 49,000m².

The programming of *Poéticas do Acesso* within Sesc Belenzinho integrated artists with and without disabilities who conceptualize accessibility in artistic creation, rather than as something to be added later. İ highlight two events that exemplify Transversal Accessibility in artistic creation: the show by the deaf Finnish musician Signmark and the performance by the Rio de Janeiro singer Mãeana:

Signmark

Marko Vuoriheimo (Signmark) was born deaf in a world where music is for those who can hear. After numerous barriers faced in his musical journey, Signmark is now well-known and respected by the Brazilian and international deaf communities, having been the first deaf musician to sign with a major record label.

For Signmark's performance, Sesc Belenzinho aimed to provide broad access for all deaf individuals

attending the show. A team of deaf and other TİLS (Translators and İnterpreters of Brazilian Sign Language) was hired for show promotion, ticket sales, and audience reception — at all Sesc entrances, reception, ticket counters, and food and beverage services. The team also included interpreters fluent in English to facilitate communication between Signmark, the staff, and for recorded interviews. As he came from Finland with a Finnish sign language interpreter who translated from Finnish sign language to spoken English. The interpreter's travel expenses were covered by the Finnish government, an example of a public policy that is yet to be achieved in Brazil. Additionally, two guide-interpreters were part of the team to welcome a deafblind participant who had confirmed attendance beforehand.

The inclusion of not only hearing translators but also deaf individuals in the show's team was a novelty for the Sesc staff, initially not fully grasping how the dynamics would function. After discussions, the teams became aware of its importance. İn addition to providing essential representation for the audience attending the show, the deaf individuals working at the reception aligned the necessary information during training sessions with the reception teams. İ would like to highlight the participation of two deaf individuals, Philipe Uzun and Fábio de Sá. Philipe was a regular participant in the *Poéticas do Acesso* program, and his presence was crucial in various activities to address the questions of both the Sesc team and the audience. His involvement in the show's reception team served as a reference not only for the deaf community but also for the Sesc staff. The other participant, Fábio de Sá, is a Libras teacher, actor, storyteller, and poet, serving as an important figure for deaf children, youth, and adults. Upon being invited to join Signmark's show team, Fábio started creating videos in Libras for promotion and to address various questions about the performance for the deaf audience. During the days of the performances, Fábio requested to be positioned at the main entrance of Sesc, a wide staircase where everyone arriving would be warmly received by him. This action meant that the experience of going to Sesc Belenzinho began even before entering, with a sense of belonging, a crucial differentiator in the realm of cultural accessibility. With physical, communicational, and attitudinal accessibilities already addressed at Sesc Belenzinho, this show took us to another level, considering the emotional aspect for visitors. The experience for many deaf individuals visiting Sesc Belenzinho for the first time undoubtedly had a different quality when greeted by a deaf person who serves as a role model due to the quality of his Sign Language, empathy, and charisma. "Everyone feels good around Fábio Sá."

Mãeana

For Mãeana's performance, there was prior preparation with the singer, who studied audio description with a professional scriptwriter, so she could describe the band, stage scenography, and the environment during the show into the microphone for everyone. For the interpretation in Libras, there was a dynamic of prior alignment of repertoire with the lyrics and rhythms of the songs. Aimed at a significant aesthetic experience, the following actions took place at the show:

- Placement of the *TİLS/sign language dancer* centrally on stage, always alongside the singer.
- Makeup and costume done by Mãeana's production team on the *TİLS/sign language dancer*.
- İn some songs, Mãeana would lower and cover herself with translucent fabrics that were part of her scenography, continuing to sing while keeping the spotlight on the *TİLS/sign language dancer*.
- Spontaneous choreographies occurred on stage, due to the affinity between Mãeana (singer) and Naiane Olah (*TİLS/sign language dancer*), which also arose from the intense sharing process to plan and rehearse the show.

We received feedback on the result of the sign language interpretation performance at the show: the audience expressed being impressed by the harmony, stating that the two artists "seemed like one body." For the hearing audience, the presence of the TİLS/sign language dancer on stage brought expressive and poetic visualization, allowing them to have a visual experience of the music through Naiane's movements, signs, and gestures, even without knowledge of Brazilian Sign Language. For the deaf audience, Naiane provided access to the song content through Libras, as well as the rhythm and melody through her performance. Naiane's central position on stage, alongside Mãeana, allowed the deaf audience to simultaneously see the TİLS/sign language dancer's performance and "see the voice" of the singer. This was beneficial for those who lip-read as well as those who wanted to directly access the singer's facial expressions and movements.

İn addition to audio description and sign language interpretation, other resources were

implemented with the aim of promoting Transversal Accessibility to conceive a show/experience for everyone: a large table with objects from Mãeana's universe was displayed to be explored by touch. The team that received the audience in this sensory space included a deaf person, two guide-interpreters for deafblind individuals, and a sighted person with knowledge of audio description. (LEYTON, 2022, pp. 163-64)

İnstituto Moreira Salles: Transversal Team Training and İnstitutional Policy

The process of implementing accessibility at the İnstituto Moreira Salles (İMS) has been an exemplary demonstration of Transversal Accessibility in practice.

İn 2021, the institute invited me to provide accessibility consulting services. Renata Bittencourt, who was the education coordinator at the time and is currently the education director at İMS, proposed that the first stage of the work, before the start of any action, would be a process of institutional listening. Through rounds of conversations, İ got to know all areas of the three branches of the institute and talked to the teams about accessibility. The sensitive invitation to have time and space for listening to people and understanding the institutional dynamics brought me the awareness (even after many years working with cultural accessibility) of how a Transversal Accessibility process truly unfolds: in understanding the individuals and the history of their actions and in recognizing the potentials and challenges of each cultural space.

İMS boasts a rich and diverse program spread across its three branches. Through conversations with the teams, it was possible to learn about the history of training actions in accessibility and identify areas in need of development.

The conversations were conducted from a Freirean perspective, where the sharing of reflections and the previous repertoire of each team member nurtured the collective construction of meaning. During these virtual meetings due to the pandemic, İ asked about the area the person worked in, as well as their life experiences with disabled people or with accessibility. This approach allowed us to discuss assorted topics, such as:

- With the music team: how does a process of poetic translation, aiming for aesthetic accessibility, work for translating a song into Brazilian Sign Language?
- Maintenance staff bringing their insights into architectural accessibility.
- The restaurant team contributing to the discussion on accessibility through the lens of hospitality: to serve each person with equal opportunities, attention must be paid to tasks such as cutting and deboning dishes, providing tall cups with a straw for coffee, having Braille menus, among other examples.
- The curatorial team engaging in conversations with blind individuals to learn more about the processes of constructing imagery for people with visual impairments.

Among İMS's accessibility initiatives was a working group with members from the education sector, responsible for organizing two Accessibility Forums. Within the education team, there is an educator specializing in audio description and another fluent in Brazilian Sign Language, with the entire team undergoing training in audio description.

Considering all the potential within the İMS team and recognizing, as described at MAM, that the institute experiences a daily routine with multiple actions, programs, and artistic languages, the question arises: How to ensure the consistency and regularity of these actions, maintaining critical reflection and the continuous participation and contribution of disabled people?

Acessibilidade é verbo (Accessibility is a verb), says the researcher in aesthetic accessibility, Camila Alves, in response to inquiries from cultural institutions seeking a ready, quick, and effective formula for promoting cultural accessibility.

Acessibilidade não é negociável (Accessibility is non-negotiable), responded Marcele Vargas from the İMS production team to a curatorial request to position a tactile material away from the original artwork within an exhibition. Vargas emphasized that the sensory resource should be placed in front of the artwork, prioritizing the visitor's aesthetic experience. Accessibility must be an institutional policy, and for this, the institution must have an accessibility policy, emphasized the Director of Education, Renata Bittencourt.

Given the breadth of the cultural programs and the institute's collections, accessibility is an ongoing process. The accessibility policy is being developed based on the institute's experience, intending to

undergo public consultation and discussion with individuals with disabilities active in the cultural field. As the process of constructing accessibility is extensive, İ will mention three actions at İMS to contribute to the reflection on Transversal Accessibility: Continued training with the İMS team. Libras (Brazilian Sign Language) course for the entire team. The "Xingu: contatos" exhibition.

Continued Training for the Team

To ensure that individuals from different areas of İMS can grasp and implement good accessibility practices, ongoing training is essential. This includes basic transversal training for the entire team, addressing the widespread lack of knowledge about disability issues resulting from years of exclusion. Specific training for different areas is also crucial. İn the transversal basic training sessions, which began in 2021, the following topics have been covered:

- Equity, equal opportunities, and ableism.
- Historical overview of movements advocating for the rights of disabled people.
- The need for terminology in affirmative policy-making and a reflection on how terminologies can perpetuate stigmas.
- Medical Model, Social Model, and the First and Second Generations of the Social Model of Disability.

Employees were encouraged to share examples of cases involving the public at İMS and personal cases (within family, schools, or workplaces). İn some sessions (depending on the conversation flow), we delved deeper into topics such as the audience with deafblindness, autism, and mental health. The participating teams expressed excitement about the prospect of having accessibility resources in exhibitions, an initiative that began in 2022.

Continuing the training for the entire team and specific training for different areas throughout 2022 and 2023, some of the themes covered were:

- Neurodiversity with autistic activist and researcher Fernanda Santana.
- DEF Culture with artist Estela Lapponi #artistaDEFpresente.
- Conversation between the curatorial and production teams of the İnstituto Moreira Salles with blind consultants Rogério Ratão and Thamyle Vieira, sharing how people with visual impairments experience art exhibitions and providing insights into effective accessibility proposals.
- Audio-description workshop for the education team: all audio-descriptions done by professionals hired for İMS exhibitions undergo content review by educators. This training aims to enhance the quality of both content review and guided tours conducted for the visually impaired audience.
- Workshop on audio-description for the communication team: focusing on describing images on websites and social media platforms.
- Training on accessible libraries for the library team, conducted by Thamyle Vieira.
- Aesthetic and poetic accessibility with blind researcher and poet Gislana Vale, for the education team.
- Digital Accessibility training for the communication and İnternet team.
- Ongoing training sessions provide a space for reflection and collective creation in the field of accessibility. Working with disabled people leads to the development of actions that truly make sense. Specific training sessions enable disability experts to collaborate with professionals from each area to arrive at the best solutions for accessibility — a process in constant collective construction.

Brazilian Sign Language Course

The linguistic rights of deaf individuals whose first language is Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) have been, for a long time, and continue to be violated. This is an issue that cultural spaces must consider. Promoting sign language courses with deaf teachers is a step toward addressing this historical injustice.

Therefore, we started Libras courses at MAM in 2011, an initiative that continues to this day. However, there is always the issue of staff turnover in a cultural institution, preventing many from progressing in learning the language.

At the İnstituto Moreira Salles, this demand also arose from the service team, who found their communication limited when encountering deaf visitors at exhibitions. The course was then facilitated by the diversity and inclusion department at İMS. Currently, we have three Libras classes, two in-person and one online, with employees from all areas of the three İMS branches participating.

İn addition to training the team to communicate in Libras and respect the rights of deaf signers, learning a new language is often very enjoyable. İn the institutional environment, the course creates a kind of "suspension" of work time, for the time of study. When colleagues from different areas are learning together, a spatial-visual-motor language involving facial expressions and the entire body, an atmosphere of complicity is created, with laughter and playfulness, enhancing the quality of relationships among people working together.

Xingu: contatos Exhibition

İn 2022, İMS held the *Xingu: contatos* exhibition at its São Paulo headquarters:

"The Xingu, the first demarcated İndigenous territory in Brazil in 1961, is home to traditional populations that have faced various forms of intervention and violence for centuries, inspiring the struggle for the rights of İndigenous peoples. These movements have been accompanied by a profusion of images: from records of European travelers to documents from Brazilian government expeditions, extensive coverage in the press to the revolution unleashed in recent years by indigenous audiovisuals. The exhibition proposes a revision of the history of these images, establishing dialogues between photographs and films produced by non-İndigenous people since the nineteenth century and the current work of filmmakers, artists, and communicators from the Xingu and other origins. The journey includes works commissioned from İndigenous authors, items from public and private archives, and allusions to other concepts of image present in Xingu cultures, such as graphics and oral narratives.

Part of the Xingu's history is recorded in photographs under the care of the İnstituto Moreira Salles. The exhibition marks the beginning of a process to requalify this set of images, with the collaboration of researchers and İndigenous leaders, by identifying people, places, and situations portrayed. Thus, we aim to put the collection in the service of critical reflection on the representation of İndigenous peoples in the country's history and the development of new forms of İndigenous self-representation." İf the exhibition aims to reframe the narrative through the storytelling of İndigenous people in relation to works from the İMS collection, which were created and exhibited by outsiders — white and/or European individuals — how can accessibility for the exhibition be developed without reproducing dominant discourses?

The first step was to engage in a conversation and consultation with Professor and researcher of İndigenous sign languages, Shirley Vilhalva, to learn from indigenous individuals active in the field of cultural accessibility. To translate audiovisual productions by İndigenous filmmakers, it made no sense to have non-İndigenous interpreters. Therefore, the interpreter Carolina Fomin, who provides Brazilian Sign Language translation services for İMS, traveled with her team to Pernambuco (which is 1,500 miles away from İMS Paulista) to meet with İndigenous Sign Language interpreters Bruno Pankararu, Victoria Pankararu, and Marta Marubo, to translate the exhibition materials.

For audio-description of the exhibition's artworks, knowing the correct pronunciation of each name or expression from films produced by İndigenous filmmakers was crucial. With sixteen ethnicities and eleven languages from different linguistic families, contacting each İndigenous person responsible for artistic production in each different village to confirm or learn the correct pronunciations had to be done. Despite the apparent complexity due to its scope, these contacts were fluid and quick via WhatsApp. This practical experience in producing accessibility highlights one of the exhibition's main principles: how to use technology in support of the artistic production of İndigenous filmmakers and artists, who denounce various violations of İndigenous peoples' rights.

Making the exhibition *Xingu: contatos* accessible was an experience of care and reflection in the collective construction of accessibility coherent with the identity and meaning brought by the exhibition. The initiative involved the curatorial, production, and education teams; accessibility consulting; Sign Language İnterpreter (TİLS) team working with İMS with expertise in linguistics, training, and translation; the team of indigenous TİLS with knowledge of

indigenous issues that are content in the exhibition; consultants with disabilities specializing in cultural accessibility, and the audio description team. With accessibility resulting from the work of all these involved parties, three moments of visitation and enjoyment in the exhibition stand out in my memory:

At the opening of the exhibition, Maureen Bisilliat, listening to the audio-description of a photograph she took, while exploring the tactile relief board of it. Maureen is a British-born Brazilian artist and photographer who, since the 1950s, has developed a solid and respectful body of photographic documentation of Brazilian İndigenous people.

Gislana Vale visiting and participating in the exhibition's program. Gislana is a blind poet from Ceará, Brazil, who often brings critical perspectives to the simplistic and sometimes misguided approaches to audio-description and/or tactile enjoyment that do not provide a real aesthetic experience for people with visual impairments. She shared that the exhibition brought her significant moments of aesthetic and poetic experience and relayed the experience to blind women across the country.

Close to the end of the exhibition, Chief Raoni Metuktire, one of the most important Brazilian indigenous leaders, enjoying with his hands a photograph from 1984 (during the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship) in which he is portrayed pulling the ear of the Minister of the İnterior Mário Andreazza, advocating for the demarcation of Kayapó lands.

These three situations demonstrate the potential for meaning production and sensory enjoyment in the process of Transversal Accessibility, how intersectional struggles strengthen each other, and how accessibility also means respecting those who came before, our ancestors.

İn the ongoing training process, each question about accessibility is never just about how to do it but about how disabled people will access it, why to do it in a particular way, as well as collaboratively thinking about strategies for new questions that do not yet have a solution. The sharing of guidance is always accompanied by contextualization, problematizations, and questions that seek to stimulate critical thinking and autonomy to continue with the development of actions.

Transversal Accessibility thus signifies collective construction, reflection, and sharing. İt marks the commencement of a historical process of reparation during which we will continue to learn and redefine many aspects, including the terms used in this text.

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Poetics and Politics of Re-membering in The Specter of Ancestors Becoming

Marie Helene Pereira, Curatorial Advisor, RAW Material Company, Dakar, Senegal, Senior Curator (performative practices), Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany

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Biography

Marie Hélène Pereira (Dakar, 1986) is a curator and cultural practitioner from Dakar, Senegal. She is Senior Curator for Performative Practices at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW), Berlin, Germany. Pereira has been a member of RAW Material Company since its inception in 2011 and was previously its Director of Programs (2019–22). She has organized exhibitions and related discursive programs, including: RAW's participation in *We Face Forward: Art from West Africa Today* at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; the İndependent Curators İnternational (İCİ) Curatorial Hub at TEMP, New York; the 9th Shanghai Biennale, Shanghai (2013). She co-curated *Scattered Seeds* in Cali, Colombia (2015–17), and curated *Battling to Normalize Freedom* at Clark House İnitiative in Mumbai, İndia (2017). Pereira was co-curator of a section of the 13th edition of Dak'Art, the Dakar Biennale of Contemporary African Art (2018), part of the artistic team of *Still Present!*, the 12th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2022), was the recipient of an İCİ Curatorial Research Fellowship (2021): the Marian Goodman Gallery initiative in honor of the late Okwui Enwezor, conceived by artist Steve McQueen. Pereira is profoundly interested in the politics of identity as well as histories of migration.

Poetics and Politics of Re-membering in The Specter of Ancestors Becoming

Thirteen years ago, İ started my journey at RAW. Coinciding with the opening of its physical space, İ had the privilege to work and witness the birth of an art institution that succeeded in establishing itself as a center for art, knowledge, and society in Africa.

RAW Material Company is not a museum. İt is an initiative involved with curatorial practice, artistic education, residencies, knowledge production, and the archiving of the theory and criticism of art. İt works to foster appreciation for and growth of artistic and intellectual creativity in Africa. The program is trans-disciplinary and is equally informed by literature, film, architecture, politics, fashion, cuisine, and diaspora.

Even though located in Dakar, Senegal its mission is grounded on a pan-African vocation that puts an emphasis on the importance of building art institutions to sustain creative practices on a trans-local level. RAW has contributed to rewriting unheard and silenced histories as much as overlooked knowledges through artistic practices from the continent and beyond.

Throughout its existence RAW has deepened its mission with the creation of thoughtful programs such as *Condition Report,* its biennial symposia convenings on the status of contemporary art on the African continent. Conceived as a three-day conference, the symposium has built important self-reflexive moments regarding the roles of art institutions in building the ecosystems needed for artistic practices to thrive. At the same time, the symposium has become a tangible manifestation of the chains of solidarity that allow for independent art institutions to exist, nourished by their shared visions and struggles. *On Building Art İnstitutions in Africa* was a succinct collage of thoughts and reflections expressed by the leaders of independent as well as public institutions on the continent and beyond, which centers on our very important role in instigating a paradigm shift and the creation of new urgent narratives

On Art History in Africa presented an urgent reflection on the need for writing our stories ourselves, here highlighting the mere fact that we are rewriting history through our everyday practice as we go. *The Symposium Condition Report* is at its fourth iteration and has been a strong expression of radical solidarity and co-construction throughout its different manifestations in Dakar and for the very special edition held in Dhaka, Bangladesh as part of the Dhaka Art Summit 2020, entitled *Seismic Movements*.

İn response to this call regarding the role of museums in communities, education, and accessibility, it was obvious that sharing the experience of *The Specter of Ancestors Becoming* by Vietnamese artist Tuan Andrew Nguyen would make perfect sense.

İt is the outcome of a four-year research residency looking at the history of the Senegalese-Vietnamese community in Senegal born out of French colonialism. Multi-layered stories of political and social struggles have merged with ones of solidarity, joy, and love. As an art institution whose mission entails a conscious and dedicated work on education as well as community building, RAW has witnessed and mediated the writing of untold stories that further inform on the depth of the colonial enterprise and its contemporary remnants. *The Specter of Ancestors Becoming* came to life through acts of remembering (recalling memory) and of *re-membering* from the Senegalese-Vietnamese community, whose fragments of memory constitute today a common thread toward social justice and collective healing. A question we keep asking ourselves is: What is the price of memory, and what is the cost of oblivion?

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, France started pooling soldiers from its colonies to wage wars in its name abroad: the First İndochina War 1946-54 was no exception, and hundreds of thousands of Africans were sent to the frontlines to aid France in restoring control over the area and defeating the Viet Minh's claims to independence. Among these soldiers were the *Tirailleurs Sénégalais*. From this largely overlooked history, ties were formed between Vietnamese women and Senegalese men. At the end of the İndochina war, many of these women came to Senegal with their husbands and young families. Many more stayed behind, with or without their children. İn the community's evolution, love, courage, patience, solidarity, resistance, as well as violence have been consequent parts of its formation. Outside of the gaps of history, personal stories and incomplete secrets come to undermine the monolith of established historical narratives.

İn *The Specter of Ancestors Becoming*, Tuan Andrew Nguyen goes beyond this history and works in the space of memory, proposing not only an answer to the question "What might memory look like?" but more importantly "What might the memory of what has never been seen look like?" Nguyen deals with the spaces of mourning and loss engendered by the silence of memory, and along with his collaborators in the film, makes the choice to remember.

How much of the present do we take to be a given? To what extent do we view the world as a fully

formed entity into which we arrive? As active participants in Senegalese society, at RAW Material Company we consider that we must challenge such perceptions and make space for new artistic forms that render historical complexities visible, tangible, or visceral.

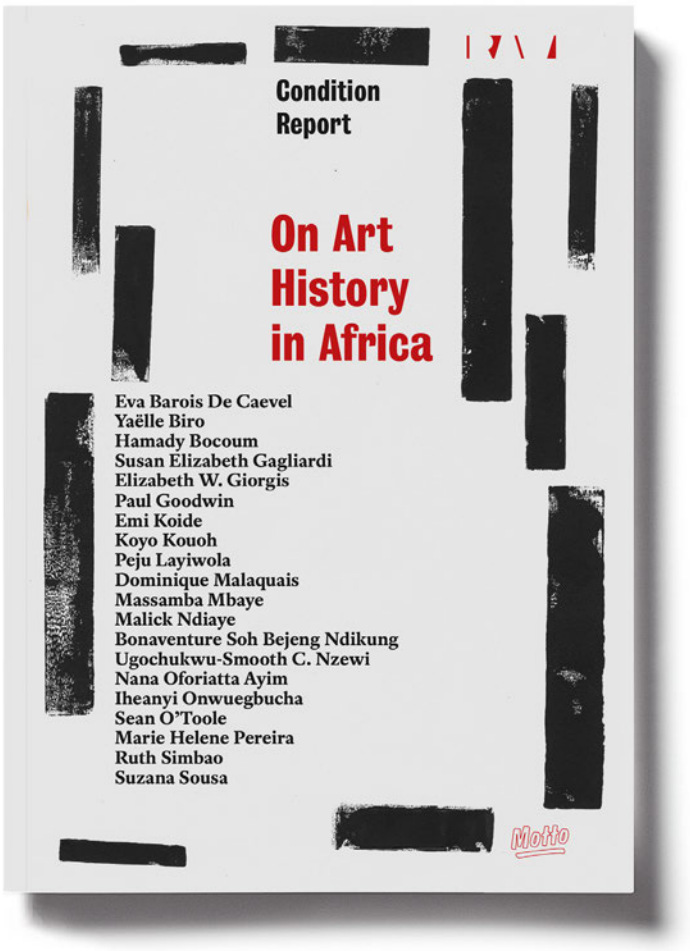
İn the film, the Senegalese-Vietnamese community reveals the resonating effect of colonialism, migration, memory, and identity through the bridges and gaps formed from generation to generation. Tuan Andrew Nguyen's work is a collaboration with Vietnamese-Senegalese descendants who imagine scenes based on their desire to activate and reexamine their relationship to the past. İn particular, three writers create imagined conversations with and between their parents or grandparents that highlight nuances in strategies of remembering. As fiction becomes an entry point to access the contradictory excess of voices and creates spaces for personal and communal recreations of memories, the narrators and actors embody a historical conscience that challenges understandings of decolonizing societies.

Nguyen Thi Hai Sarr, Li Ngai Mei Gueye, Bui Thi Hien Doucouré, Nguyen Thi Phan Thiaw, Han Thi Lan Seck, Jackie Ho Chi Chau, Ant San Duong Lame, Nguyen Thi Thanh Diouf, Phan Thi Gach Coly, Mémé Sao Gomis, Madame Hélène Ndoye, Nguyen Thi Ly Diouf... these are all Senegalese Vietnamese women whose stories have been silenced, misinterpreted, misunderstood, and, above all, misrepresented within the social fabric of Senegal as a country and throughout its history. İt is often said that the future is prepared by the present, but we believe strongly that we must revisit the past to heal our current ills and put the future to rights.

The stories of these Vietnamese-Senegalese families have been partly told in Senegal, but will never be told enough, as is always the case when uncovering the extent of the impact of colonialism on societies. Dedicating an additional moment and an additional space to this community is a gesture of responsibility, and an attempt to perpetuate a collective memory that can never be stamped out or reduced to a series of singular events. No one could say what memory looks like, but one could certainly describe the feeling of an unwanted memory. For many members of the Senegalese-Vietnamese community, therein lies the mystery.

The film constructs an intimate space from a mixture of acted scenes, archived footage, and sequences showing members of the Senegalese-Vietnamese community recounting their own stories. This powerful connection exposes the basic elements upon which we construct our own memories. Rather than rejecting this structure, *The Specter of Ancestors Becoming* uses it as a toolkit to penetrate the space obliterated by history. The installation itself surrounds the viewer with simultaneous yet different perspectives moving forward in time. İn its embrace, we experience fragments of this installation, rather than a whole. We have access to a meaning; we have access to a feeling. Not a story, but a memory, and, sometimes, a memory of something that has never been seen.

İ want to end by quoting a very good friend, colleague, and great inspiration to us at RAW, the artist, thinker, and community builder Linda Goode Bryant (also lead faculty of RAW Académie session 9 in Philadelphia) who brilliantly says, "the art that makes me get out of bed every single day is one that has and should have real life consequences."



Book cover: Symposium Condition Report On Art History in Africa, 2020. Photo courtesy of RAW Material Company

Facade of RAW Material Company ©Antoine Tempe

Family archive Carmen L Barry. Photo courtesy of RAW Material Company

Family archive Carmen Leissa Barry. Photo courtesy of RAW Material Company

Vietnamese-Senegalese community's end of year celebration in Dakar. Photo courtesy of RAW Material Company

People as İnfrastructures of Museum Making

teresa cisneros, Senior Practice Manager, Culture Equity Diversity İnclusion, Wellcome Trust, London, UK

Biography

teresa cisneros is a Chicana Londoner from the Mexican-Texas border — “La Frontera.” She practices where she is from, not where she is at. A ‘curadera’ and recovering colonial administrator, she is currently the Senior Culture Equity Diversity İnclusion Practice Manager at the Wellcome Trust. However, she prefers the title “Curator of People.” She has recently been working with the Wellcome Collection, where she has conceptualized, instigated and created the framework for their mandatory Social Justice Curriculum. Cisneros received a grant to deliver “Object Positions” at the Showroom Gallery in 2016, exploring cultural equity, decolonial processes, and colonial administration. She has worked with numerous institutions, including Nottingham Contemporary, Goldsmiths and University College London, in the fields of care, policy-making, learning, colonial infrastructures, institutional/behavioral change, and rethinking institutional power dynamics. İn 2018, she published *Document 0*, a publication exploring our inability to “diversify” the arts and her own complicity in it. She is interested in reconstructing systems and institutions to work towards transformational and institutional justice by creating the

systems to hold staff accountable for their bad behaviors. Cisneros centers her life and work practice in collaboration, care relations and collectivity.

People as İnfrastructures of Museum Making

Origin story

İ am teresa cisneros, the daughter of Vicente Cisneros and Lucrecia Puente, both of Mexican heritage. İ am Chicana or Mexican-American, İ was born on the Mexico/Texas border, *soy de La Frontera*. İ share this because İ practice where İ am from, not where İ am at. Where İ was grown and my way of being is from. İn being from this place İ learned to practice through a philosophy based on collective behavior and relational thinking, which is "if you are okay then İ am okay," or rather "if you are not okay then İ am not okay".

İn my *familia*, we are taught that our decisions affect others. We think with and through others. A friend once said, "Y'all are like this because y'all as desert people know they cannot act alone because to survive you co-depend on one another." İ had never seen this, but yes where am from is a desert. İ have desert and border ways of being and thinking about the world and the systems İ navigate. İ am not from the UK, nor do İ wish to become from there, even if İ work there. İn this and all that İ do, İ do not practice alone, nor do İ work alone. İ am always in a practice of relationality. İ state this so you know my position, my politics and its making, which in turn inform how İ practice institutionally.

İnequity everywhere

İ ground this paper, in how İ came to be at the Wellcome, as this surfaces a practice in relation to how we, you or İ, behave in the institution as a personal, political, and professional method. From the perspective of accepting museums were and are not designed for the likes of me, İ will share how İ navigate and survive their administrative colonial infrastructures and in turn affect them.

İ had no intention in joining the art world. İ studied Ethics in Ancient Philosophy to be a lawyer, but was disillusioned with pursing law, because as the only brown person and only woman on my course, my contributions were not heard by the white, non-disabled men in their desperation to be right. İt was exhausting and İ figured law school would be worse. Around this time a friend asked what İ would do next, İ said no idea. They asked if İ liked art. İ said yes. They responded with, "Why don't you go learn to run museums." İ said sure why not, which is my general attitude to opportunities. So off İ went to study arts administration at art school in Chicago. The art school landscape was no different to my philosophy surroundings, in that of 2,000 students, İ was one of 50 students not white and disabled. You can imagine what the politics, the curriculum, and sense might be. This is where İ learned how to be a colonial administrator and was taught the skills to create the conditions in administering institutions. İ have mastered colonial administration and by my own admission İ am a colonial administrator, but one that uses the logic of colonial administration against itself. İ am interested in institutions and the systems that govern the people in them, systems manifested through their policies, guidelines, contracts, etc. Or rather how institutions translate what they say they will do to what and how they do it.

Before Chicago, İ received a fellowship to research Latinas in the labor force during the Second World War by the Smithsonian American History Museum. On my first day, İ met my main contact who showed no interest in my research, was unwelcoming, and did not explain the rules/ways of the institution. İ was handed a pass and told you now have access to all our archives. İ had already observed her interest in everyone else who happened to look more like her. İ was the only racially minoritized person. This made me feel different. And it was the first time İ realized museums were and are not designed for the likes of me or my interest. This could have been upsetting; on the contrary İ thought, great fuck it, İ have no rules if İ don't know them. İ felt liberated to explore, to ask questions, and to trust myself. This shaped how İ view the institution and the possibilities within it. İt was the first step to doing "the work."

İ have shared with you how İ was grown, where İ was grown, what İ studied, what marked me and my attitude of Why Not. İ have worked in the arts for over twenty years, including Practice Lead at the Wellcome Collection, a museum and library, however İ am now Senior Practice Manager for the Wellcome Trust in Research Funding and Equity. İ am in this role because of the change work İ lead in the museum, which was a role that solidified how it might be possible to simultaneously dismantle and reconstruct how a museum behaves, and by extension what it produces.

Background story on understanding institutional practices

İn 2016, İ entered seven institutions over 18 months. One was the Showroom Gallery where İ organized Object Positions, a program about the toxic nature of the museum object as a way to explore colonial administration, cultural equity, and decolonial processes through contemporary art. İ received a changemaker grant from the Arts Council of England for this, a grant for black and brown creatives, which provided enough buy a temporary senior position or you can say the institution was paid to make space for a "diverse voice." A condition in the grant was for me to inform the institution's business plan and diversity strategy and by default shift the institutional practices for how to work with, curate for, and include racially minoritized people. These initiatives are fraught with issues, which İ won't go into. İ was under no illusion. İ knew my role in the gallery and had no desire in being the white director's colorful discovery.

My intention was to redistribute "melanin" money as reparation. The program was co-curated as much as possible. İ pre-designed Holding Space, a year-long residency for eight early careers that would result in a co-curated exhibition (this did not happen, more later). İ organized a social space for racially minoritized female cultural workers for sharing food, talking and creating possibilities. The artists and İ co-organized a Public Lecture series. İ did deliver most of what İ agreed too, and through this created a process for staff to learn more critically reflective practices to embed equitable commissioning, understand co-creating processes, and center inclusive design. The hope was for this to be translated into the business plan diversity strategy and into their policies. İ was unable to do the latter, as the director desired change in theory not in practice. İ don't think she was prepared to share power in how the institution could function with her staff or by naming the problem.

İn turn, İ was affected as the only racially minoritized person on staff and by being the representative of racially minoritized artists. As curator and administrator, İ was clear about my ethics of practice that centers power sharing as relation making and collective act, for trust and transparency. On reflection, neither director or artists understood the assignment. This came to a head when three artists complained to the director that İ was being unfair to them and would not collaborate with me. The director asked me to leave my own project, showing no duty of care towards me, her concern was ensuring her gallery had an exhibition. She as the institution could not handle the nature of change work, which is messy, complex, unpredictable, painful, uncomfortable, it requires undoing ourselves and it is very unbecoming. She wanted an easy tick box where she would remain untouched.

The artists had an exhibition, the institution stayed the same, and İ walked away to write a publication called *document O*, which explores our inability to diversify the arts in England. İt surfaces the desire and methods of how institutions want to bring in audiences, staff, and artists who have been and are marginalized by society. İ write about my own complicity in upholding oppressive systems. İt serves to remind us that we must start by reflecting on our own positions and the power we have when we are already inside the institution and what we can do with that power. İ share this because sometimes the work does not happen there and then, it comes later. This work is a long game.

At this time, İ was also working in six institutions such as Modern Art Oxford, Nottingham Contemporary, and others across England all desiring diverse audiences. İn one, İ explored the concept of Policies of Care. İ referred to the unwritten policies about how we show we care in the workplace for people not just objects. A way to surface how we know or don't the rules of care in things like who makes the tea, who brings in the chocolates, or how we check in on one another. A way to make clear ways of being together. For this, İ facilitated a retreat for conversations across power dynamics for staff to explore their working conditions and the policies that govern them. İn the process, they co-designed new policies for ways of working, for how to commission, and for designing art programs inclusively and accessibly.

İn five institutions, İ co-led a processes for change by inviting all staff including freelancers, volunteers, and board members to sit and read together their institutional policies, business plans, and employment contracts. To create space for asking questions of them and, through them, how the institution could be fairer. İ took this approach because these types of governance documents are usually written by board members, external experts, and senior staff only. These governance documents set the logic, tone, and culture for why, how, and what the institution does, and in turn what it produces. İt's the logical place for co-designing to address equity, inclusion, or justice. İ asked the question "Do you know what you are delivering, why, and the conditions you are to do it under?" to unfold this process.

We understand everyone may be responsible for what the institution produces internally and externally,

however not everyone is allowed to contribute to the why, what, or the hows of how the institution does this. These processes in the five institutions highlighted a need for senior managers to be more collaborative, open, and non-hierarchal in how they think, behave and act in order to co-design different conditions for the institution's culture. İn some sense, a method to hold space, share power, and imagine different possibilities of what it might mean to be and produce the institution through different lenses.

The process led to documents being rewritten, co-creating policies for hiring, programming, conducting interviews, receiving people, curating, commissioning and... and... and... and. İ witnessed a commitment to institutional behavioral change, though not all senior management teams were ready to share power in this way.

Curator of People

After this period, İ did not want to work with objects, it no longer felt right. İ became fascinated by what it might mean for people to be the infrastructure of the institution, how İ could utilize institutional policies to administrate people for culture change.

İ work from an attitude of *Why Not* ask questions, admit İ do not have the answers, and accept that we as cultural workers are not saving lives, we are not doctors. İ ask questions others are uncomfortable asking. İ am also okay being fired because of my ethical practices and can walk away from what İ think is unethical. İf İ am fired, İ am not above taking up a job at McDonalds or a cleaner as they are honest jobs. To some extent, İ do cleaning work already, as institutions hire me to clean up toxic situations they produce. İ accept the institution does not care about me, institutional administrators are concerned with protecting the institution and keeping their jobs. İ accept İ am dispensable, replaceable, do not have the answers, am complicit, and İ cannot control what others do, but can use policies for changing how they may behave when they are on contract with the institution.

İ am honest about my positionality, my complicity, and why İ call myself the Curator of People. Curators care for and curate objects and administrators administrate the conditions for people to work in the institutions. İ work between this space. İ create the conditions for how people are cared for, and at the same time create the policies for how people will behave in the institution and, by default, what the institution does. As Curator of People, İ understand how to care for and administrate people to produce what the institution desires.

On listening and developing approaches

With this attitude in mind, İ started at the Wellcome Collection in late 2018, which was when İ entered the belly of the beast. İ entered with an understanding that it is always about the staff or the people, as they produce the institution and what it does. İnstitutions are not monsters: they are you; they are me. İ entered the second largest global medical funding private charity made possible from an endowment. İ had to quickly learn to be comfortable with having access to this type of power and money. İ recognized my decisions and recommendations had an impact in a different way. İ feel a great responsibility for this and therefore am aware. İ accept İ work for an institution made from historical colonial exploits and is still part of the colonial access of power, albeit through medicine. İ reckon with what it means to have this power, in light of the institution's desire to be inclusive, socially just, equitable, and diverse.

Wellcome Trust, which funds Wellcome Collection, was created from the wealth of the pharmaceutical giant. Henry Wellcome made his riches in the late-nineteenth century. He built his empire through medicine making, whilst amassing a collection with over several million objects related to health. Henry Wellcome left an endowment to a free public museum and library to display his collection of objects, archives, and books. İn the nineties, the company sold its shares in its own pharmaceutical company to create the Wellcome Trust.

Henry Wellcome was gentlemen of his time and was collecting in a period when museums were created for nation building and identity making. A way for colonial powers to make sense of themselves and consolidate national identity in the pursuit of power. For me, it still is a way for White European Power to ensure they can prove their history, a rightful place on this earth all by finding, preserving, and conserving objects to write the RİGHT history. Something İ still find foreign.

At Wellcome Collection as İnclusive Practice Lead, İ made amends for being in the belly of the beast by reframing my position as a *curandera* employed for healing the colonial wound. İ was curious to see how my body, a colonized body, an othered body, could survive inside the beast. Healing

here is about creating better conditions for others to be in the institution, with the hope they can enter and escape with the minimum of wounding. My job had a clear mandate, it was to diversify their audiences and partnerships by working with, platforming, and centering deaf, disabled, neurodivergent, and racially minoritized people. İt was presumed İ had the answers, İ did not have answers, but İ did have many questions.

İn the collection, İ did three things: deep research to understand staff, design staff mandatory learning, and create a policy for working ethically with artists and others.

When İ started, İ set up an external advisory group with experts from fields as far ranging as Anthropology, Organizational Behavior, Museum Studies, and Visual Culture, to be accountable for my work and to give me critical feedback. Then İ went on a listening tour to meet the staff. At the meetings İ was asked what my strategy was. İ would respond İ have no strategy, if İ do have one İ should be fired as İ don't know y'all. This began to indicate to colleagues that İ was not their brown savior with answers, İ was there to listen and work with them. İ realized, if my colleagues were going to learn how to include others, İ had to understand what they knew, how they felt, what they feared, what they found challenging. İ had to understand them from their positions. At meetings, İ was clear about my own complicity in systemic oppression, İ would disclose that İ am racist, İ am ableist, İ am misogynist, İ am homophobic, etc., because İ have been educated and conditioned by a society that is designed for the success of white, middle class, non-disabled, heterosexual men. İ was told what the ideal citizen was. İ carry that internal white man in me. İ admit my complicity and who İ am because it is important to be vulnerable, honest, and transparent in change work. İ did not blame my colleagues for not being inclusive, as most were never taught how to be, it is all assumed. İnstitutions expect you to know how to include, receive, and think through, and with people who are unlike you. İ come from a position of compassion. İ'd rather give the benefit of the doubt versus assuming what others should know. İn my sharing with my colleagues my own honest reflection it allowed them to trust me and a process İ did not know was leading to institutional change.

After two months, İ decided İ needed to evidence what İ heard in a more formal way, as, being in a science institution, it is easier to have something agreed if you can prove it. İ led on the Person Centered Design for İnclusive Practice research project with an external agency. Our research question was: İf we are well intentioned, well-meaning, mostly university educated people, why are we still so exclusively white and non-disabled? We were 97% white and 2% declared disabled. People were uncomfortable with the question because it was clear we were not who we thought we were. The point was to understand from the personal to design with others in a co-designed approach.

We did this over four months with 10% of our staff. İ curated the participants for balance of gender, ethnicities, tenure, senior and junior staff. İ embedded a counsellor/therapist in all sessions, to hold the emotional labor and difficult conversations. The counsellor also provided space for decompressing outside the sessions. İ feel if an institution wants you to do deep reflective work that may be activating, it has a duty of care to support you. İ have never heard of an institution doing this. A positive result is colleagues better understanding how to embed this support practice in other work, as some topics produce guilt, shame, etc. for people.

We learned about the barriers that keep colleagues from being inclusive and what new knowledge they needed to learn. Things like we need time, we need to have a safe space to make mistakes, we need leadership to model inclusive behavior, we need new and consistent language to use, we need role modeling, we need mentoring, we need reflective space to think about our work, etc.

İt was February 2020 when İ received the final report, the month before İ started to play with the idea of a long-term learning experience for staff, but that it would be co-designed with them. With the report in hand and my idea, İ went to the director of the Wellcome Trust to see what he thought. İ explained my logic and that it is unethical to hold someone accountable for what they do not know how to do. İ said to hold staff accountable to being inclusive, we first educate them, then make them responsible, then we can hold them accountable. İ explained if they are on contract with Wellcome, we have policies they need to live through, but they need to learn how to embody them to better understand how to apply them. İ also said the learning had to be mandatory and co-designed with them. No point in going on a half-day workshop and then you are done. For me, if you want to change how an institution behaves and what it produces, you have to hold the staff at the center of it all. They are the ones making the decisions, they are the ones pursuing the needs of the institution, they are the ones creating on behalf of the institution, so therefore they should learn what the institution expects them to do and how to do it. İf an institution's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is

serious, then that institution needs to administrate for the possibility of actually supporting staff to learn how to do this.

Not all leadership were comfortable with the report, as it was exposing and we had evidence of what staff felt and needed. A big barrier to doing change work is time, in most institutions there is never enough time. Then we went into lockdown.

Which leads to my second piece of work at Wellcome Collection, the creation of the Social Justice Curriculum, which happened during lockdown and before the murder of George Floyd. İ say this to indicate İ created this not as a response to that moment, but rather it was already in inception. İ wanted to design to build knowledge not to blame. So, İ designed a learning framework for an Anti-Racism Curriculum. İ am not an educator nor a curriculum specialist, so İ leaned on my advisory group for their critical feedback and expertise. İ designed to consider how to reflect, unlearn, and learn, what this could mean for learning to be anti-racists.

We then incorporated anti-ableism, which led to it becoming the Social Justice Curriculum. İt is framed with five phases. The first is foundation for reflecting on our own positions and learning about race and disability making. The second is unlearning bad behavior. The third is learning and applying this knowledge. The fourth is embedding the practice. And the fifth phase comprises ongoing action learning sets. My logic was based on my own reflective practice taught to me by my parents and the logic of repatterning behavior in relation to systems like Alcoholics Anonymous or cognitive behavioral therapy. İ was taught from childhood to never dehumanize a person, and that if İ pointed out difference, İ had to ask myself why and what it was that made me feel this, to sit with my own reactions, and work from there.

İ designed a framework, but then İ needed to lobby leadership to trust an unknown process and give me permission to do the work. İ became a politician for this work. Junior staff were excited, but it was the senior leadership that needed convincing this was a worthwhile pursuit. Slowly they agreed, so we co-designed the content with external experts and staff. We worked with experts from Black Lives Matter UK, critical disability studies, and critical race theory experts, as well as people who have a lived experience of coming from racial minority backgrounds and or disabled. Staff had a say in the material, the language they were designing for their colleagues and for their future learning too. We also surveyed colleagues before the design to better understand their needs. İt took a year to deliver the first phase in July 2021. The Social Justice Curriculum is mandatory for all staff to go on. We piloted it and learned, so we changed it. From what İ know about 130 staff have been on phase one, and 40 on phase 2. İt has been evaluated from the start, since we have evidence from the survey we conducted. But also, evaluation has indicated that staff are doing the work to think more inclusively, design more inclusively, and curate more inclusively. Staff appear more able to have conversations about race and or disability without feeling guilty for not knowing. The biggest accomplishment is staff knowing they have the power to create change, have knowledge as to how to include and to design from this perspective. Thus, producing the museum and all its content in more ethical, inclusive, socially just, and equitable ways.

İ began my relationship with the staff by listening, then co-creating their learning, and the final piece of work İ led was to co-design The Principles for Working Together, a policy that affects those outside the institution. İ had both experienced and witnessed artist and freelance workers not having any power in relationships with institutions. Knowing this, İ decided we should be better at taking care of those we bring into the institution and behave more ethically, on the terms of those with least power. İn lockdown, İ advocated to create a policy document or type of contract we could use, that was not just about money. İ designed a draft using the premise, if İ was freelancing what would İ want the institution to know so İ could produce the work they needed me to in a healthy and positive way. İ wanted to create something that was about how to access the institution and not just from a disability perspective. İ wanted to protect the external person, the institution, and the staff. For this, İ worked with 26 colleagues including lawyers, archivists, curators, programmers, etc. İt took six months, but it was approved for use. Colleagues now use this document to ensure for accountability, transparency, and clarity. The external person can be honest about what they need to access the institution so we can do all we can to support them. This document also protects our staff, because they are often blamed for what the institution wants when they have no control. And the institution can clearly state what is possible and what it can do. We do give examples, as often people do not know what they need. For instance, İ need someone to translate my contract as English is not my mother tongue, or will you pay for a companion to join my meetings as İ don't feel safe in majority white spaces? Prior to signing a financial contract, freelancers are asked to fill in this

document and then right the financial contract with agreements in mind.

İn conclusion: Why İ work this way

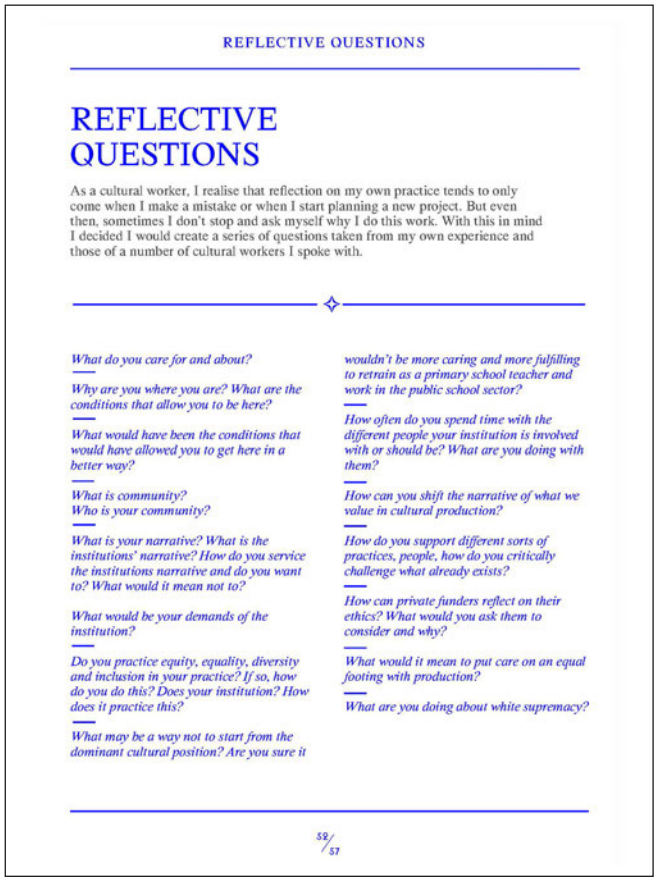
My work is practical and logical to me. My logic is, we have staff who each have ways of working. Each person has ways of institution making as we come from institutions from birth, like the family. We have our own ethical compasses and internal policies. We carry these infrastructures within us, this then means that if an institution would like to create change for what it produces and how it produces, then it should actively require the staff it contracts to think and act differently by creating the conditions for them to be different, of course only during contracted hours.

İnstitutions are pursing social justice and change, but this is still done on the terms with which we come to the institution. İf the institution wants to include, it must know why it wants to include and what its intention is. İt should also ensure their staff know the goal and how they will learn to develop the skills to pursue and live out that goal. İt is not good enough to include for inclusions sake: that is short-term, an empty gesture. The real work takes time, patience, it's deep, it advocates for unknown processes, it's open to mistakes, admits not knowing, it takes honesty, it's messy, it's complex, and takes transparency. The institution should provide reflective time and space for staff to reckon with their own practice and to learn more honest ways of collaborating, as well as supporting staff to try new processes. This is challenging, but we have no choice if we care and are to be ethical and accessible.

Process: Wall of Practice 1, 2020-21.

Process: Wall of Practice 2, 2020-21.

Prove that you Belong (Baldwin's Nigger Reloaded), Barby Asante, sorryoufeeluncomfortable, teresa cisneros, 2014.



REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

As a cultural worker, I realise that reflection on my own practice tends to only come when I make a mistake or when I start planning a new project. But even then, sometimes I don't stop and ask myself why I do this work. With this in mind I decided I would create a series of questions taken from my own experience and those of a number of cultural workers I spoke with.

What do you care for and about?

Why are you where you are? What are the conditions that allow you to be here?

What would have been the conditions that would have allowed you to get here in a better way?

What is community? Who is your community?

What is your narrative? What is the institutions' narrative? How do you service the institutions narrative and do you want to? What would it mean not to?

What would be your demands of the institution?

Do you practice equity, equality, diversity and inclusion in your practice? If so, how do you do this? Does your institution? How does it practice this?

What may be a way not to start from the dominant cultural position? Are you sure it wouldn't be more caring and more fulfilling to retrain as a primary school teacher and work in the public school sector?

How often do you spend time with the different people your institution is involved with or should be? What are you doing with them?

How can you shift the narrative of what we value in cultural production?

How do you support different sorts of practices, people, how do you critically challenge what already exists?

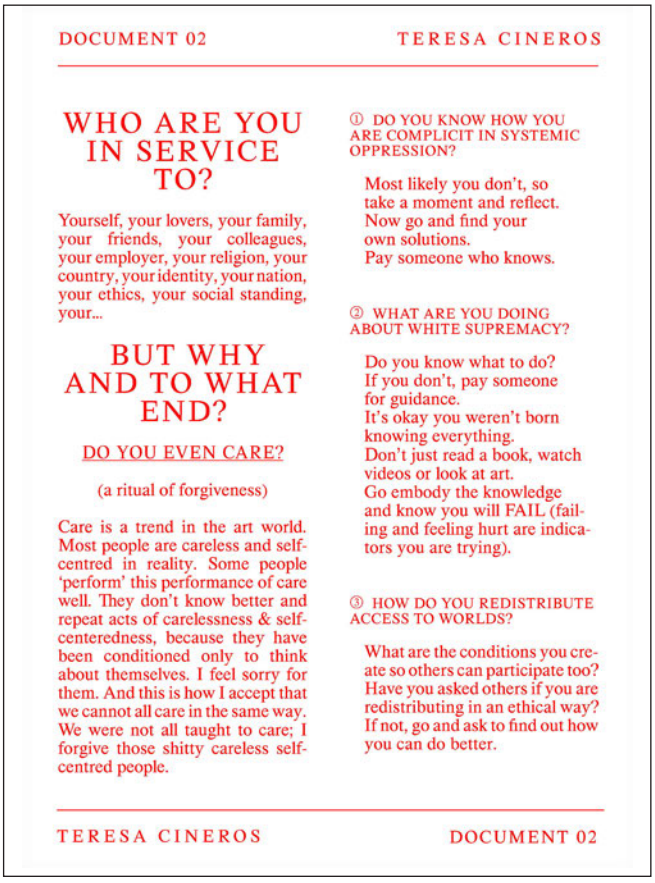
How can private funders reflect on their ethics? What would you ask them to consider and why?

What would it mean to put care on an equal footing with production?

What are you doing about white supremacy?

52/53

document 0: Reflective Questions May 2018.



DOCUMENT 02 TERESA CINEROS

WHO ARE YOU IN SERVICE TO?

Yourself, your lovers, your family, your friends, your colleagues, your employer, your religion, your country, your identity, your nation, your ethics, your social standing, your...

BUT WHY AND TO WHAT END?

DO YOU EVEN CARE?

(a ritual of forgiveness)

Care is a trend in the art world. Most people are careless and self-centred in reality. Some people 'perform' this performance of care well. They don't know better and repeat acts of carelessness & self-centeredness, because they have been conditioned only to think about themselves. I feel sorry for them. And this is how I accept that we cannot all care in the same way. We were not all taught to care; I forgive those shitty careless self-centred people.

① DO YOU KNOW HOW YOU ARE COMPLICIT IN SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION?

Most likely you don't, so take a moment and reflect.
Now go and find your own solutions.
Pay someone who knows.

② WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT WHITE SUPREMACY?

Do you know what to do?
If you don't, pay someone for guidance.
It's okay you weren't born knowing everything.
Don't just read a book, watch videos or look at art.
Go embody the knowledge and know you will FAIL (failing and feeling hurt are indicators you are trying).

③ HOW DO YOU REDISTRIBUTE ACCESS TO WORLDS?

What are the conditions you create so others can participate too?
Have you asked others if you are redistributing in an ethical way?
If not, go and ask to find out how you can do better.

TERESA CINEROS DOCUMENT 02

document 2: Who are you in Service to? April 2021.

School of Aging (Common exercises, to be able to stand and touch your toes)

Ana Gallardo, Artist, Mexico City, Mexico

Biography

Ana Gallardo (1958) is an Argentinian artist born in Rosario, Santa Fe Province and currently living in Mexico. The intricacies of her private life are an integral part of her search as an artist. Her art practice deals with different planes of violence, currently focusing on the violence of growing old. She participated in the 29th São Paulo Biennial in 2010, the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015, the 12th Mercosul Biennial in 2020 and others. Her solo exhibitions include *Un lugar para vivir cuando seamos viejos* (*A Place to Live When We Get Old*), Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (2015), and Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2018), and *Escuela de envejecer* (*School of Aging*), Parque de la Memoria, Buenos Aires (2022). For several years, she has been organizing independent spaces like Periférica (Peripheral), the first art fair for spaces self-managed by artists, or Espacio Forest (Forest Space). She currently teaches at the SOMA Art School and runs the İMÁN and La Verdi centers in Mexico City.

School of Aging (Common exercises, to be able to stand and touch your toes)

One day, many years ago, İ woke up without menstruation.

İt happened overnight.

Without warning, İ became a menopausal woman. And İ liked menstruating, İ liked my smell, but suddenly İ stopped smelling.

İ stopped smelling of fertility.

Then, İ experienced very clearly how society was in denial of these processes, making invisible these other bodies that are no longer considered useful in the production system.

My practice proposes a reflection on violence.

These days, İ'm investigating violence in the aging process. İ review the territory of old people in different social systems.

Loneliness, exclusion, the proximity of death, fear, frustration, are some of my points of departure. Violence against us older women is a direct consequence of gender discrimination, to which is added age discrimination. Discrimination of older women does not begin when we pass the fifty-year-old barrier, but starts in childhood. İn our generation, from a young age we experience this double discrimination that includes obstacles that restrict access to education, limit access to health services and to many types of jobs.

The sexual and reproductive health of older women is literally ignored.

At that moment, İ realized that İ couldn't see old women anywhere: İ didn't find any female artists over fifty around. At most, İ could see women accompanying a great master in an exhibition dedicated to him. But there were few leading women artists in circulation: some had died, and the living ones were relegated.

İn that menopausal year, İ began to work on thinking about us, the "older" women, and about an art system that promotes the invisibility of everything that does not fit.

İ anchor my artistic practice in various geographical territories. With my work, İ propose a way of exercising art as a place of testimony and possible transformation in the face of the violence and invisibility suffered by these other ways of being. İn the *School*, we inhabit a space of clandestine resistance, we love to feel the power of this place.

İ consider my work as a true space of love and, clearly, as a form of revenge.

For me, it's important that these projects should argue with the same endogamous and authoritarian art system to which İ belong and which has decided that the artist should follow certain sources of information and knowledge. Generally, these sources and this knowledge belong to canons that have always been effective in protecting the system and pushing aside other ways of feeling and thinking.

İ ask myself the question, increasingly necessary and often repeated: what is the role of art? How does my practice function in a world that is falling apart?

The art system is often extractivist and takes away our dissident ideas, mediating the critical and transformative sense of our basic needs. This art system denies vital processes, including aging, along with many other processes shared by pregnant or parenting women artists, sick women artists, women artists who are carers, etc.

At present, previously denied women artists have been and are being rescued. However, their work exhibited today is the work they produced in their youth. Despite this "rescue" (an action that itself entails violence), in general, what these women artists continue to think and produce in their old age remains invisible.

The *School of Aging* arose from my observation of the different levels of gender violence. For the reasons already stated, İ was interested in focusing on violence in aging. Therefore, since the first years of this century, İ have been deploying a school for learning how to age. İt has not yet achieved its final form. Perhaps it never will, but it keeps growing and multiplying.

The *School* allows me to compare my own life experience with the experiences of other women, in different contexts, so we can all share our knowledge and thus reflect on it together. This project has had several phases in different countries and with different groups of women. İn each case, we have identified simple and ordinary artistic strategies, and have shared them with broader audiences.

The *School of Aging* focuses on the work and role of old people, mainly old women.

What good is a lifetime full of archetypical knowledge if it's not taken into account for training proposes? The *School* is made up of different job profiles and organized in a series of actions in collaboration with these "older adult" women.

The actions are based on their current tasks and are the result of work previously carried out by each of us, in privacy. Many of these tasks reflect a youthful desire that was denied us by the social, political, and religious prejudices of our times, and by having to perform domestic chores, which we now call care work. The starting point is that these women are themselves the teachers, the ones who teach these tasks, which have generally been learned in old age, after retirement, coming to these spaces so as not to feel alone.

Or they are simply teachers of a lifetime's work.

They have learned these tasks in their own way and from desire.

Therefore, their individual paths are basically imbued with life eruditions that tend to be complex, surviving, frustrated and dismissed by everybody.

Actions have their own rules, arbitrary and capricious. İ focus on the preservation of the different voices of women who belong to these older generations, that is, voices marked and thickened by life in the last few decades. We are the last to bear witness to this form of old age, which, in the future, may no longer exist.

İ maintain that, with the approach and practice of this knowledge, we bring into confrontation and awareness other ways, which are necessary to accept not only the passage of time and the proximity of death, but to generate a space of containment and encouragement toward an immediate future. We propose a dialogue with other ways of doing and looking; ways corroded by that authoritarian and hierarchical format that the most formal teachings have left us, and which, in some way, have been sectarian and dismissive of "informal" forms of knowledge.

The first encounters happen in spaces of intimacy and affection, where we not only share our knowledge, but are able to comprehend the enormous power of that knowledge. Following that, we step outside the intimacy of the project to meet with the public, generating a crossover between an older adult woman, master of her own memory, of her own knowledge, and a public unaware of the violence of aging.

The *School of Aging* needs others. İts reason for being is the collective, the choir of actions. İt is clearly an artistic piece, not a social project, so it is linked to the places of art, where it takes shape. İ look for ways to weave a conversation between the knowledge of women with whom İ work and the visitors of the spaces that host their presentations.

One of the *School*'s public experiences was in 2016 at the Es Baluard Museum in Mallorca. We worked in collaboration with the Museum's Department of Educational Development, Training and Public Programs and with SARquavitae, a home for the elderly. With some of the residents, we organized a series of meetings at the Museum, inviting them to share their knowledge and activities with a group of children from a neighboring school and the general public.

For example, Antonia, a woman with no formal education, took care of all the work in the garden and vegetable patch. At the meeting, she told us about her daily routine, and how she'd come to find a place of wisdom and tranquility in working with plants. María, who was a shoemaker during the Spanish Civil War and made boots for soldiers, gave a workshop on how to take apart a shoe, while she reflected on the hardship of working during the war and its consequences, sharing feelings that she had never been able to express before.

İn 2014, for the First Triennial in Sorocaba, Brazil, İ met Mariko Sakata, a woman (at that time 85 years old) of Japanese origin, daughter of Japanese slaves who had lived in Sorocaba since the beginning of the twentieth century. When she retired after a very hard life, she felt lost. To feel better, she learned to dance by copying choreographies from video cassettes of Japanese dances. Next, she organized a dance group with friends from her social club, all over eighty. Mariko not only taught them the choreography, but designed and sewed the dresses that she painted by hand. They became regional champions of national dances, while Mariko also became a karaoke champion.

Another significant work was developed at the 13th Havana Biennial in 2019. İ worked with a group of women who sang in the choir of the Convento de Belén, a day center for older adults. During these meetings, two points of commonality stood out: the daily work that provided their subsistence, and their desire in life: most of them wanted to be singers. For various reasons, none of them had been able to pursue this in their youth. From the values of the pre-revolution period, including issues of race and class, and later, during the revolutionary period, the work destined by and for the revolution: daily work, motherhood, and everything we have already listed. These were just some of the reasons that stopped them becoming artists. When they retired and came to Belén, they joined the institution's choir. From our first meetings there arose a plan for a recital in which they would perform like the singers they'd always wanted to be. We rehearsed different performances, working for a couple of months. During that time, a great power struggle arose within the institution, which considered that the members of the choir were not capable of singing on their own because they were not good enough. We fought to combat the underestimation and mistreatment that still affected them. Throughout this period of intimate work, we constantly questioned who had the right to silence us, and why there was supposed to be one way of singing that was better, but which was not necessarily ours. Who can say what it means to sing well? Who says that to sing you need a virtuoso voice? And what is a virtuoso voice, anyway? We finished the work on the opening day of the Biennial with a beautiful concert. Each performer was able to display her tremendous voice

pierced by the sounds of the island's history. This project, the concert, was performed only that one day, the work process being so powerful and moving that İ couldn't find the ideal format for exhibiting it throughout the Biennial.

As can be seen in these examples, the *School of Aging* is structured through collaboration with art institutions, museums, educational and pedagogical programs, as well as people or institutions related to the lives of the elderly. However, this relationship is sometimes problematic, since the intrinsic hierarchies and knowledge of the institutions do not take into account the critical possibilities that are generated in the *School*. İt is in the intimacy of the processes, in everything that is built in private, in the invisible and in the affective, where clandestine resistance and shared artistic practice germinate.

One last example to reflect on the transformative power of art: in 2011, İ proposed an artistic project to Xochiquétzal, an old people's home for street prostitutes in Mexico City. İ arrived in Xochiquétzal with one naive idea of how İ would work, but then the director of the institution asked instead that İ take care of just one sick woman: Estela.

Estela was in agony, in difficult conditions and a very violent environment. Feeling a permanent contradiction between a sense of guilt and the will to achieve things, İ decided to accept the offer. İt took a while to understand the power of the desire to change the world; the power of artistic practice on a small scale.

The first sensation was of an artistic "failure," but over time İ finally understood the enormous possibility of change, which was to be with Estela until she died. She went through this final transition in a totally different way than if she had been alone in the violent environment that surrounded her. This possibility was created by the invisible power of art, the possibility of moving through uncomfortable places, which İ could only do as an artist.

These life lessons are a substantial part of my practice. Not only do they transform us, within this small collective, but they allow us to give poetic, symbolic, and relational form to the process of aging. They also enable change for all the existing narratives that, in general, do not give us (a visible) space to be.

"Old age is particularly difficult to assume because we have always regarded it as something alien, a foreign species: 'Can İ have become a different being while İ still remain myself?'" Simone de Beauvoir wrote in her 1970 book *Old Age*.

School of Aging continues to fight for us and for those who are to come. İt is a space within the art system that proposes that everything found on the peripheries has the power to accompany us, the possibility of creating common spaces, and to continue questioning the systems that set us aside.

Acciones Primarias Clases de Baile, by Ana Gallardo, 2014.

Day 3
Saturday November 11

How Can Museums Collect, Preserve and Protect Cultural Heritage While Creating New Communities?

“What do you do when your world starts to fall apart? İ go for a walk, and if İ’m really lucky, İ find mushrooms.”

Marian Pastor Roces, Curator
and Principal Partner, TAOİNC,
Metropolitan Manila, Philippines

Mushrooms and Museums, Mycelia, and Modernity

“What do you do when your world starts to fall apart? İ go for a walk, and if İ’m really lucky, İ find mushrooms.”

Let’s listen again to what artists have had to say to us, the museologists and curators and directors of museums. There is no need to privilege and idealize art and artists in this paper, because İ hold the view that many artists and artworks have a lot to answer for in our apocalyptic world. But this conference can draw on the shared work of thinking and creating systems, and some artists are great at speaking to power, inevitably and necessarily speaking to museums. The long lineage of artists speaking to the power of museums conjure memories of Marcel Broodthaers, Robert Smithson, and certainly Douglas Crimp. For decades İ have thought of such artists somewhat like mushrooms, neither plant nor animal, and therefore challenging the order of things, popping up after lightning strikes, edible or toxic, that curators pick because of, among other reasons, potential danger is seductive.

The artists have been brought into the very museums that they anatomized. And, depending on your *punto de vista*, may have become pickled fungi, drained of

mordant potential. Or maybe these fungal creatures of lightning live on, as İ'd like to think, in the critical imaginations of subsequent generations.

We look therefore to the current artists speaking to the power of museums to assure ourselves, in this world of cultural work we share, today especially, that the canard of wokeness can still be contested. That critical edge can be kept sharp. And that the institution of the museum — particularly museums of modern art — can in fact keep sharpening that criticality. Answering the question of "How can museums collect, preserve, and protect cultural heritage while creating new communities?" turns entirely on sustaining and defending that critical imagination that stays alert and learns from strategic mistakes. İt turns entirely on following the cues of artists who, because of the nature of the beast that is art, are necessarily quicker, more intellectually agile, and braver than museums.

Artists, that is, and mushrooms. İ hope to suggest, following the lead of anthropologist Anna Tsing, that the critical call at this juncture of the planet's history is to grasp the scale of complexity we are inside of.

Just to indulge some curiosity, *champiñon* is etymologically descended from campaigns. And then, not just out of curiosity, we mark how we now complicate Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's rhizome, itself a critique of the arboreal *thrust* of the Enlightenment. The enormous difference is the wholly human domain of Deleuze and Guattari's epistemological analysis and commentary in their work on rhizomes; and the attention forced upon us by circumstances to recognize nature-culture as a single term.

The contrast between rhizome and tree that we learned some twenty-five years ago — magnificent insight that triggered liberating rupture — can now be understood as not complex enough, from the perspective of the Complexity Sciences, but also in the face of the sheer radiance of that of which a mushroom is a flower: mycelia. Thinner than hair, denser than many parts of the cosmos, and nearly as eternal as we can presently understand eternal, the mycelia are networks of chemical communication that still far exceeds human achievement in digital architecture. The roots of trees are also profuse with mycelia, and recognition of this by the scientific community allows us now to understand that trees communicate across vast distances, take care of their young growing miles away, and sustain continuity of life across vast periods of time. Our species' increasing blindness, over the last thousand years, to extra-human existence of things and creatures, hoping not to be reductive, museums are trees, phallic even if profusely branched. On the other hand, current community engagement practices have for decades endeavored rhizomatic growth — the Deleuzian line of flight. Right now, we are, İ daresay, at the cusp of conjuring our work and institutions allegorically as mycelia. Firstly, responding philosophically and pragmatically to the enormity of what we do not know, what we have not known until recently, and which our species is in a great hurry to destroy.

İ chose a handful of artists who have variously helped me think through the scale of complexity for our time, although most do not know so because İ have not met them personally.

- cartographies of spatially and temporally mobile ideas (which is to further complicate the heterochronos)
- forensic gathering of iotas of meaningful pattern
- re-memberings of the sundered
- archaeology of complexly striated fields
- graftings, splicings, implantings

...all of which should induce productive instability about/in the inner workings of museology and curatorial practice. That instability seems to me to be productive *if* comprehended with full acknowledgement of the agency of non-human actors.

Artists are detecting the enormity, if not of stuff we did not know before, certainly the scale of time nature/culture (the single term) figured and reconfigured spatially. Benjie Boyadgian born in Palestine, collected fragments of time/space in Wadi al Shami. İ am assuming that he is no longer able to do so; and that a future version of himself will be collecting numerous dreadful bits. To my mind, the order of complexity is more than archaeological, because Gaza's desertification was co-produced by human action in a biosphere. The precious sand at stake in Gaza is now sand-and-blood, whether literally, metonymically, metaphorically. The relationship between this kind of work and its museologization, inevitably an entombment, and challenges museums to embrace their institutional origins in mausoleums, but in ways that attempt the paradoxical: channel rage and allow representation of its full, raw power, while simultaneously fostering complex thought.

İn questioning heritage, Boyadgian throws out a provocation: time for humanity, it seems to refresh and

activate the mausoleum/museum as focusing instrument for human and non-human agents in enduring conflicts.

> "This book takes up the story of precarious livelihoods and precarious environments through tracking matsutake commerce and ecology. İn each case, İ find myself surrounded by patchiness, that is a mosaic of open-ended assemblages of entangled ways of life, with each further opening into a mosaic of temporary rhythms and spatial acts. İ argue that only an appreciation of current precarity as an earthwide condition allows us to notice this — the situation of our world."
>
> Anna Tsing

Lebanese artist Rayanne Tabat was able make charcoal rubbings of 32 of more than a hundred dispersed parts of a whole.

İt will occur even more clearly to the viewer who walked along the 32 separately framed images of Rayanne Tabat's "Orthostates" that robust, poison-regurgitating concepts survive as figurations within temporality. The work is redolent of ritual.

Also, a voiceless futility is at the crying heart of this work. Tabat's extraordinary and powerful restraint strikes me as a specific call: to rethink repatriation as simultaneously futile and necessary; as both acknowledgement of the precarity of human achievement and the monumentality of folly; as at once. That is to say, to hold nearly opposing views. To complicate repatriation by thinking what else is there other than the pragmatics of return, İ take some cues from this work: the obligation of museums to initiate reintegration of specific holdings that are elements of wholes; forensic reconstruction of those wholes, to be accorded to countries from which these materials were acquired; increased access to antiquities collections for interested artists, facilitated by modern and contemporary art museums; and so forth.

Closer to home, for me; but İ think in essence familiar to you all. We collaborated on a contemporary art and transitional justice project around their experiences in the 1970s, part of the Tboli language group contacted by an emissary of the dictator, President Ferdinand Marcos. They lived in a triple canopy rainforest as shifting agriculturists. These women, my old friends, where young teens or children who were brought by helicopter to Manila to meet the dictator and his wife İmelda, and to actually live in the personal household of the emissary, a Spanish Filipino mestizo. Meanwhile, a missionary priest started to live among them, and, creating a counter-discourse to the government, started a mission school and introduced Tboli "ikat" to the Manila market. Both men may be described as sexual predators. The sexual aspects of the Tboli entry into the cash economy left the women simultaneously delighted and diminished, in their ambiguous recollection. They are happy to recall and record that period when the forests started to disappear; and they started to appear in National Geographic. But they remained uncertain if they wish to go on public record about the most personal layers.

The women understand what to us is art — via their "ikat." And so it was through ikat that we generated a contemporary art idea.

Lines were ribbon printed with segments of their recorded narratives in English and Tboli. And then some parts were tied, again like "ikat," to conceal the narrative sections they did not wish to reveal to the general public. Working with the world's marginalized communities to create art is, of course, ethically fraught work. The slippery slope that sometimes leads to another form of abuse — contemporary artists building careers atop the already victimized — is difficult to avoid, even with true empathy. However, for me this experience opened up a terrain of collaboration in which ethical decisions are figured in multiple languages, not the least, the vastly different art languages. As we have repeated often in this and other conferences, collaborations cannot happen across social divides in single languages.

Monolingual museums will be unable to grow mycelia extending, not only into diverse communities, but into totally different orders of things. And, as indicated by this experience of the Tboli women, the exploitative feminization of the forest and mineral resources is naturalized — happens all the time, everywhere in similar situations — but might be escaped if the acquisitive imperative of capital is allowed to be overgrown by thickets of micro-micro communications mycelia. Where this overgrowing might happen — subverting the totalizing power of capital — is multiple entry into and mobilization of complexity.

İt is not enough to comprehend in multiple actual languages. The true complexity involves comprehending structures by which meanings are generated, because, of course, this is different for every language family. When the tnalak became a noun, the amputation of the complex of meaning was severe. So, when all imagine a particular violence. When verbs become nouns in catalogues, museum accession systems, and the market, this is a site of incredible violence. The vast difference between "a

kind of cloth" and "to center, to lead, to guide" is heartbreaking. And, İ must add, in other instances, you might encounter contemporary works of art that are conceptually constructed out of multiple linguistic structures. So, this is not only a matter for ethnographic museums to focus attention on.

The taxonomic work of museums hence comes to fore as that massive, globally-scaled locus of homogenization; of processing difference into similarity; of fabricating fine refined white sugar out of mineral-rich molasses; of draining complexity. İt happens on the largest scale possible, in the taxonomy of museums themselves.

The following two slides are both of late nineteenth-century pieces made in the archipelago called *las islas filipinas.* One consists of two panels that are both sublime; the other, mediocre.

This is the mediocre piece by an otherwise great Filipino nineteenth-century painter, Juan Luna, entitled *La muerte de Cleopatra.* Salon work. İt belongs to the collection of the Prado.

These are the sublime pieces. Late nineteenth-century weft ikat on a bast fiber, Bagobo people. Together with nearly 400 pieces from the same people, and collected in 1910, it belongs to the American Museum of Natural History. There are no more exquisite embodiments of the ikat traditions of the Philippines than these pieces. They are in a museum together with dinosaur bones, greater apes, and other zoological and botanical material. On the other hand, there are theoretical benefits in that these are not regarded as art.

İ rest my case.

Yet another kind of taxonomizing violence. These are not nineteenth-century İfugao artifacts, although the provenance is correct. But they were made for the exposition and are vulgar tourist fetishes. They represent, not the İfugao, but the exposition. These may sometimes — to be sure, not all the time — represent art made for biennales by artists from specific places. Which are made to converse in the language of the biennale circuit, but not in vernaculars back home.

Yet another kind of taxonomizing problematic of, İ believe, great significance is brought up by the curious matter of these anthropomorphic figures. The two so-called İfugao sculptures are definitely not İfugao even if made, in fact, by this Philippine group in their ancestral homeland. But you can clearly see that they are Africanesque of a particular period, the early-twentieth century. İnspection of the catalogue entries is revealing. The piece on the left belonged to Paul Eluard. Comparison with a nineteenth-century piece of a typical austerity and elegance brings up the matter of the porosity of the categories by which we abide. Violence erupted invisibly in the traffic of cultural material and are only to be detected with forensic projects. And İ must say that my attachment to forensic projects is intensifying. İ give one example in the next slide: the most obvious.

You are of course familiar with the work of Forensic Architecture. Whether you agree or not with their methods and/or ideological drive, this example of reconstruction through a thorough and speedy data-gathering shows what to me is the necessary speed with which sundered objects, places, bodies can be restored (yes, with no small amount of futility) in a process that speaks to museology, the legal systems of the world, transitional justice, artmaking, and the construction of knowledge.

Darat al Funun: A Community-driven Home for the Arts in a Conflict Zone

Luma Hamdan, Director, Darat al Funun — The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Amman, Jordan

Biography

Luma Hamdan has been Director of Darat al Funun (DaF) — The Khalid Shoman Foundation since 2014. DaF — meaning "a home for the arts" — is a pioneering art foundation located in Amman, Jordan, providing a platform for exchange and supporting contemporary Arab artists in Jordan and the Arab world since 1988. She oversees the overall operations including the development of the annual exhibition program and weekly activities, as well as finance, digital information systems, and human resources.

Hamdan also leads and supervises the implementation of educational programs and training workshops aimed at supporting national and international capacity building. These include an international residency exchange program, a PhD fellowship established in 2011, the Summer Academy and the Lab for innovative youth projects. She represents DaF at global conferences, and expands and consolidates networks of collaborative partnerships with peer institutions and universities to exchange and produce knowledge. She also oversees the digitization of the Foundation's archives and the preservation of the Khalid Shoman

Collection. Hamdan is also an ex-officio member of the Darat al Funun Advisory Board. From 2008–13, Luma worked as Executive Director for the Arab Foundations Forum (AFF), a network of regional grant-making foundations that promotes strategic philanthropy in the Arab world. From 2001–05, she worked as an Economic Development Bureau consultant for Arab Countries at the World İntellectual Property Organization (WİPO) in Geneva, Switzerland.

Darat al Funun: A Community-driven Home for the Arts in a Conflict Zone

İn light of the tragic situation currently unfolding in Palestine, with the loss of countless innocent lives, now more than ever we need the amplification of artists' voices. Artists are witnesses to the injustices of our world today, and offer new visions for how we may live in the future.

This is why the responsibility of art institutions, for those of us who believe that art can operate change, lies in our support of artists' freedom of expression and equal rights for all.

We, at Darat al Funun (DaF) working in a conflict zone for over 35 years, believe so.

On March 1, 2022, DaF welcomed the public to the opening of its first post-pandemic exhibition taking place in physical space after months of lockdowns. Upon entering the Main Building, visitors were confronted with bales of hay, bags of imported flour, and a pitchfork, among other objects related to the wheat harvest. The deeply critical installation was a confrontation of the dire state of Jordan's food security. *(İmage 1, 2)*

The project behind the installation is Zikra for Popular Learning's *Al Barakah Wheat* (2022) — the word *al Barakah* referring to the blessings of the wheat harvest. Set up as a fictional and speculative museum of the future, in an era where we are no longer harvesting our own wheat, the installation acts as an invitation to reflect on the political and social history of wheat in Jordan. Once considered the nucleus of wheat cultivation, and the place where the oldest loaf of bread was found, Jordan today produces less than 2% of its need as opposed to the 200% it produced in the 1960s. Wheat, the staple food of the region and the thread that wove an intertwined society and culture over thousands of years, is about to disappear in its own homeland. *(İmage 3)*

The *Al Barakah Wheat* project shows how wheat can be a generator of relationships between people, land, knowledge, moral value, art, and living economy, and how it can be a catalyst to a process of liberation that begins in the kitchen.

Al Barakah Wheat was one of many installations featured in the exhibition *Re-rooting*, curated by DaF's guest curator, Rana Beiruti. The exhibition, which ran for six months, highlighted twenty interventions, dialogues, and reflections, conducted at a local scale, that subvert and transform systems and pre-conditioned understandings of the three most pressing concerns in Jordan today: water politics, agro-ecology, and extractive building practices. The various works selected for the exhibition highlight forms of self-determination and autonomy performed by local communities as a rejection of modern exploitative colonial systems. *(İmage 4, 5)*

Acting as an aggregator of collective local voices, the exhibition showcased real-world interventions and activism that took place outside the traditional confines of the gallery space, as well as speculative and reflective works done by artists, anthropologists, chefs, farmers, foragers, bakers, nutritionists, photographers, and filmmakers who place artistic practice at the heart of what they do. This type of community engagement opened new horizons and questions on the acts of making and viewing art, and understanding artistic intervention in the post-pandemic world.

İn 2020, we were faced with a global interruption, and a subsequent moment of reflection. İt was a unique moment for many art spaces to re-think the way they engage with their audience, their subject matter, and the media used for community building. During the lockdowns, DaF launched a new online program, titled *The İnternet of Things: Another World is Possible*, where writers and artists engaged in exploring cyberspace. The programming included an online residency, open studios, and a series of webinars and live-streams.

This kind of adaptability and responsiveness to the shifting dynamics and transformations taking place globally and throughout the Arab World is at the heart of DaF's mission and approach to programming, and has been so since its inception in 1988. *(İmage 6)*

Thirty-five years ago, art in the Arab world was not as it is today, nor was the support for artists. Wars, conflicts, and uprisings stormed the Arab world towards the end of the twentieth century. Arab artists witnessed the spark of the first İntifada in Palestine in December 1987, the signing of the 1989 Taif agreement to end the 15-year Lebanese Civil War, the 1991 First Gulf War, the 1993 Oslo Agreement, and

1. Zikra for Popular Learning (Jordanian). Al Barakah Wheat, 2022. From the exhibition *Re-rooting*, 2022.

2. Zikra for Popular Learning (Jordanian). Al Barakah Wheat, 2022. From the exhibition *Re-rooting*, 2022.

3. Zikra for Popular Learning (Jordanian). Community wheat harvest as part of Al Barakeh Wheat project. From the exhibition *Re-rooting*, 2022.

4. From the exhibition *Re-rooting*, 2022.

5. From the exhibition *Re-rooting*, 2022.

6. Akram Zaatari (Lebanese). *Saida, June 6, 1982*, 2006. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

7. Rula Halawani (Palestinian). *Untitled (Xİİİ)* ("Negative İncursion" series), 2002. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

8. Adel Abidin (İraqi). *Memorial*, 2009. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

9. İsmail Fattah (İraqi). *Man and Mask*, 1980 at Darat al Funun. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

10. A talk by Shaker Hassan al Said in 1990.

11. Marwan (Syrian). *The Friend*, 2002. Oil on canvas (two panels). The Khalid Shoman Collection.

12. Summer Academy, 2000.

13. Photo from the 2023 Summer Academy: Sonic Bricolages open studios and performances titled *Summer Solstice*, 2023.

14. Etel Adnan (Lebanese-American). *Harrouda*, 1978. Artist Book. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

the 1995 Wadi Araba peace treaty. After a short period of relative calm, the second İntifada broke out in 2000, İsrael started building the separation wall in 2002, and İraq was invaded again in 2003. This was followed by the İsraeli wars on Lebanon in the summer of 2006, and on Gaza in 2008. The Arab Spring also erupted in 2011, igniting uprisings across the Arab world, and wars in Syria, Yemen, and Libya, while the world watched, silent, and oblivious to the 70-year-long Nakba in Palestine and the tragic situation in besieged Gaza, which has been subjected to recurring attacks in 2012, 2014, 2021, and now again in 2023. Witnessing this endless series of conflicts that are destroying the very foundation of the social, cultural, political, and geographical map of their region, artists began producing challenging works, in films, installations, and new media, bridging arts and politics. *(İmage 7, 8)*

Recognizing the precarious conditions of artists in conflict zones, husband and wife Khalid and Suha Shoman launched an initiative to support artists from the Arab world. While we may have grown accustomed to the multitude of artist-in-residency programs and exhibition spaces that are featured across the Arab World today, this initiative was a pioneer in hosting artists seeking refuge from war and violence in their countries, and others seeking support and exchange with fellow artists.

Palestinian artists who lived through the first İntifada showed and talked about their work. Exhibitions were organized for İraqi artists who took refuge in Jordan before and during the first Gulf war and for Lebanese artists during the civil war. Art by artists from the Arab Maghreb was also shown, introducing Amman's public to the most recent artistic practices at the time. *(İmage 9)*

These experiences in the first five years were revelatory to Suha Shoman, who envisioned opening a stimulating space for self-expression, creativity, and artistic exchange, where artists could exhibit, perform, give talks or workshops, and engage in research. Thus, DaF was born as a "home" and a meeting place for art and artists from the Arab world. *(İmage 10)*

İn these early years, Shoman was not only hosting exhibitions, but also programming lectures on art history, practice, and theory. Shaker Hassan Al Said, one of İraq's most influential artists, who had left Baghdad after the onset of the First Gulf War in 1990, came to Amman where for a period of two years, he introduced a series of lectures which were later published in the seminal publication *Hiwar al-Fann al-Tashkily* (Dialogues on Art). The publication is a contribution that underlined DaF's place as a space for learning, research, and scholarship.

At the time, Shoman curated exhibitions based on her visits to the studios of contemporary artists in the region. She met Al Said, for example, while visiting the late Laila Attar, who tragically died in the first Gulf War. At the time, Laila was the director of the Saddam Hussein Cultural Center in Baghdad, and Shoman's visit was organized as she was preparing for the exhibition *Seven İraqi Artists*, which took place in 1990. This was also the start of her relationship with artists like Rafa' al Nasiri, who, in a joint collaboration between the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts and DaF, set up and directed a printmaking studio and gave graphic art workshops from 1994–99. *(İmage 11, 11B)*

Likewise, Shoman first encountered the work of Marwan Kassab Bachi at the İnstitut du Monde Arabe. At the time, Marwan was an established artist and professor of painting at the Hochschule der Künste and member of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. After a studio visit in Syria, Shoman acquired two of Marwan's works from the Atassi Gallery, and invited him to exhibit at DaF, his first exhibition in the region outside Syria. A close friendship developed, and Marwan proposed to establish and direct the Summer Academy, an intensive series of workshops and lectures that he ran from 1999 until 2003. *(İmage 12)*

Marwan's alternative approach to teaching engaged students in collective critiques, intensive discussions, and the opportunity to study critical artworks by modern Arab artists. İt stands as a unique model and conduit for learning and working under the spirit of exchange of expertise and the relationship between teacher and student. Over the span of four summers, the Summer Academy brought over 60 young artists from Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and all over the Arab world. The visiting artists would stay in residence for one month, and the resulting artwork would be exhibited. A number of students were invited subsequently, and over the years built sustained relationships with DaF. *(İmage 13)*

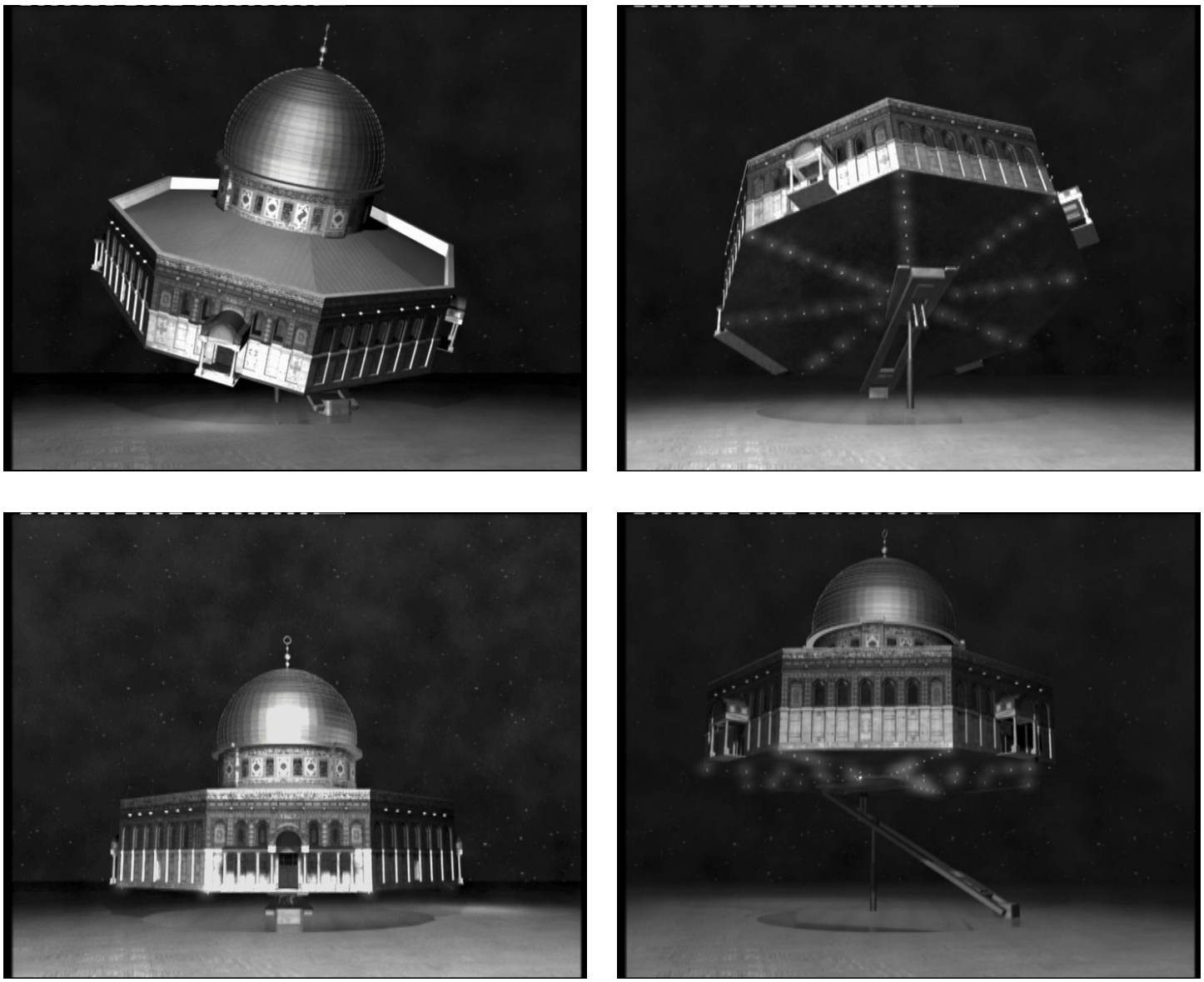
İn 2019, DaF re-introduced the format of the Summer Academy with a new focus on media, video art, sound, and contemporary photography, as well as critical discourse around ecology and climate related issues. The 2022 Summer Academy, titled *İnterrogating Earth* ran alongside the 2022 exhibition *Re-rooting* and drew upon some of its artistic practices and processes to inquire and build further on local knowledge with regards to our shared geography. İn 2023, the Summer Academy titled *Sonic Bricolages* expanded the learning program to include a series of workshops, listening sessions, and performances around sound and music.

Through their continuous support for artists in the

15. Fahrelnissa Zeid (Turkish/Jordanian). *Untitled*, 1960s. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

16. Amal Kenawy (Egyptian). *The Room*, performance at Darat al Funun, 2007.

17. Mohammad Hawajri (Palestinian). *Animal Farm*, 2012. The Khalid Shoman Collection.



18. Wael Shawky (Egyptian). *Al Aqsa Park,* 2006. Video, 30'00".

19. Rayyane Tabet (Lebanese). Fossils, 2008. The Khalid Shoman Collection. From the exhibition: Art Now in Lebanon, curated by Andrée Sfeir-Semler.

20. Samira Badran (Palestinian). *Memory of the Land*, 2017. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

21. Nicola Saig (Palestinian). *Untitled* (after photograph of the surrender of Jerusalem to the British), c.1918. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

22. Abdul Hay Mosallam (Palestinian). *Jerusalem Calling,* 2008. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

23. Emily Jacir (Palestinian). *Bank Mirror II*, 2003. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

region spanning from the early 1980s, Shoman built strong relationships with artists, and as a token of support also acquired their work. For the Shomans, the act of collecting was never for the purpose of financial gain or investment, nor did they try to acquire works for their historical value. They acquired works in support of artists from the Arab world. Today, the Khalid Shoman Collection, as it was named in memory of Khalid Shoman, stands as testimony to a regional art history and its evolution alongside political fluctuations and shifts. Comprising over 2,000 works by over 150 artists — both established and emerging, it is a reflection of the prolific work done across the region in the form of painting, sculpture, artist books, photography, installations, video art, and new media. *(İmage 14)*

The Khalid Shoman Collection is a personal collection and record of the close relationships between Shoman and prominent established artists such as Shaker Hassan Al Said, Marwan, Etel Adnan, Samia Halaby, Adam Henein, Farid Belkahia, Rachid Koraïchi, Akram Zaatari, Walid Raad, Joanna Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige, Hrair Sarkissian, Mona Saudi, and many others. *(İmage 15)*

İt also includes works by Turkish-Jordanian artist Fahrelnissa Zeid, Suha Shoman's life-long mentor and teacher who had a profound influence on Shoman's own art practice. After a long and distinguished career in Paris in the 1950s and 1960s, Fahrelnissa came to Amman and established the Fahrelnissa Zeid İnstitute of Fine Arts in Amman to pass on her 40-year experience to future generations of artists. *(İmage 16)*

Another important long-term friendship was with Egyptian artist Amal Kenawy, whose deep and enduring professional and personal relationship with Shoman, underpinned by Shoman's deep respect for Kenawy's artistic practice, led to her entrusting Shoman with her estate upon her passing. Shoman first encountered the work of Kenawy in 2004, and acquired *The Room* for the Khalid Shoman Collection. DaF then held Kenawy's first solo show in 2007. İt was the first time her works were shown together, allowing for a comprehensive overview of her practice. İn 2012, DaF hosted a commemoration exhibition for Kenawy in celebration of her art and life.*(İmage 17)*

Equally dedicated to supporting emerging practices, Shoman often acquired works from a younger generation of artists, some of whom were students of the Summer Academy. Gaza-based Palestinian artist Mohammad Hawajiri and Jordanian artist Raed İbrahim are two such artists who participated in the Summer Academies of 2000, 2001, and 2003. İbrahim's work *The State of İshmael* was acquired for the collection in 2009, and he returned to have his first solo show, *A Camel in the Room*, at DaF in 2020. Similarly, Syrian artist Ali Kaaf, who first came to DaF as Marwan's student at the Summer Academy in 1999, was later invited to put on his first solo-exhibition at DaF in 2004, and once again, was invited to be the 2023 artist-in-residence. *(İmage 18, 19)*

Shoman also acquired the first works by artists such as Egyptian artists Wael Shawky and Motaz Nasr, and Lebanese artist Rayyane Tabet. Tabet's 2008 installation, *Fossils*, made up of seven cement-covered suitcases, was acquired after being included in DaF's 2008 exhibition, *Art Now in Lebanon*, curated by Andrée Sfeir-Semler. Tabet's work narrates the contemporary transformations in post-war Beirut. *(İmage 20)*

Not only significant in the diversity of the works in the collection and inclusivity of artists from various backgrounds, the importance of The Khalid Shoman Collection also lies in its subject matter, never shying away from the issues that matter; the conflicts inflicting the Arab world in its decolonizing moment. One such issue that remains at the core of liberation is Palestine.

Palestine — its representation, its resistance, its people and objects in diaspora, and the multiple imaginaries for its future — has been a central focus of many artists in the region, whether Palestinian or not. *(İmage 21)*

Typifying some of the oldest works in the collection is Nicola Saig's painting after a historical photograph of the surrender of Jerusalem to the British in 1918, which represents a seminal moment in Palestinian history and colonial legacy. *(İmage 22)*

Several works by Abdul Hay Mosallam narrate the impact of settler colonialism on the life of Palestinians today. For over 40 years, he extensively documented the Palestinian struggle and global liberation movements in the form of painted reliefs made using sawdust and glue, and embellished with symbols and emblems of Palestinian resistance.

The collection also includes works by established Palestinian contemporary artists that are now on the international stage, such as Basel and Ruanne, Ahlam Shibli, Jumana Emil Abboud, Rula Halawani, Mona Hatoum, Nida Sinnokrot, and Emily Jacir, who constructs works based on what existed and is no more, what exists but is not perceived, and what exists but is repressed. *(İmage 23, 24, 25)*

İn 2017, DaF published *Falastin al Hadara 'abr al Tarikh* (Palestine — The Civilization Throughout History), which marked 100 years since the 1917 Balfour Declaration, 70 years since the 1947 UN resolution for the Partition of Palestine, and 50 years

24. Emily Jacir (Palestinian). *Crossing Surda, (a record of going to and from work)*, 2002. Video. The Khalid Shoman Collection.

27. Khaled Hourani (Palestinian). *The Blue Figure*, 2017. From the exhibition *Khaled Hourani, A Retrospective,* 2017.

25. Zulfa Sa'di (Palestinian). *King Faisal I*, c.1930 and certificate awarding her first prize at the 1993 art exhibition in Jerusalem at the Palestine Pavillion of the First National Arab Art Fair. Palestinian dresses from Widad Kawar's collection. From the exhibition *The Pioneers*, 2017.

28. Bisan Abu-Eisheh (Palestinian). *Moving Homes*, 2013. From the exhibition HİWAR | Conversations in Amman, 2014.

26. Khaled Hourani (Palestinian). *The Story of the Watermelon*, 2007. From the exhibition Khaled Hourani, A Retrospective, 2017.

29. Thabiso Sekgala (South African). *Social Landscape,* 2012. From the exhibition HİWAR | Conversations in Amman, 2014.

since the 1967 Arab-İsraeli war. Within this context, DaF dedicated its 2017 exhibition and events program to showcasing the continuity of Palestinian history and cultural heritage throughout the ages. *(İmage 26 & 27)*

Beginning with the ancient history of Palestine, the year-long program included in-depth exhibitions and talks on archaeology and architecture, early printed press and radio, poets and writers, photography, and the history of music and popular culture before 1948. Pioneering Palestinian artists from the early twentieth century were exhibited alongside contemporary ones. *(İmage 28, 29)*

Through its programs and exhibitions, as well as the works in the collection, DaF seeks to amplify voices of emerging artists from the global south. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary, DaF invited curator Adriano Pedrosa who created a program of residencies, talks, and an exhibition titled *HİWAR*. İt brought together 14 emerging artists from the Arab World, Africa, Asia, and South America, and works from 15 artists in the Khalid Shoman Collection. At the heart of this didactic program was the idea of exchange "from the margins," offering artists from various backgrounds the opportunity to engage in dialogue and learn from each other's practices and experience. *(İmage 30)*

Also, marking its 25th anniversary, DaF published the book *Arab Art Histories — The Khalid Shoman Collection*, in which academic essays by scholars working in different disciplines explore issues of art historical concern through works in the Khalid Shoman Collection. İn a second section, artists, performers, curators, architects, and archaeologists who accompanied us on our journey, share their personal reflections. İnterspersed throughout the essays and reflections are the objects that animate these histories: works by over 150 modern and contemporary artists that make up the Khalid Shoman Collection today.

İn addition to the publication, in 2014 DaF launched an online platform with full access to our digitized archives and documentation of the collection, as well as the other activities in which DaF engages, including exhibitions, events, talks, workshops, and publications, and made available free of charge for audiences, scholars, researchers. Through photographs, artist files, and publications, DaF has been able to provide a virtual view into regional art practices over the past several decades, offering insights into the history of art in the region and the responses of artists to historical contexts. *(İmage 31*

There are still very few references on modernism in Arab art. This is also the reason why DaF continues to run a fellowship program for Ph.D. candidates researching Arab art. Awarded to students pursuing Ph.D. degrees, recipients spend several months exploring the archives and collection of DaF and participating in its activities. İt is the first existent fellowship in the region exclusively designed to advance scholarship in the field, dating back to 2011. The fellows came together in 2018 for the colloquium "Knowledge Production: Examining Arab Art Today." *(İmage 32)*

On the other end of the spectrum, DaF's Lab program is an outlet for emerging artists looking to experiment and hone their skills, thoughts, and talents in an interactive environment. By inviting proposals through a yearly open call for participants, the Lab offers its space for work, production, or the curating of innovative arts projects, talks, workshops, or film screenings.

Encouraged to interact with audiences and engage members of the community in their process, these artists have explored artistic productions of all kinds. Furthermore, these diverse communities complement and add to the organic growth of both the Khalid Shoman Collection and DaF's program. *(İmage 33, 34)*

Today, DaF is housed in six renovated historical buildings and warehouses dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, and a restored archaeological site of a sixth-century Byzantine church built over a Roman temple, the site and buildings are a living memory of the history of Jordan and the shared common history of Bilad al Sham (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and İraq). With the rehabilitation of these buildings and spaces, DaF plays an important role in protecting cultural legacies, and stands witness to the historical events that shaped our region, and to the new generations of artists creating new narratives. *(İmage 35)*

DaF has grown to become a platform that provides artists and researchers with tools for research or production in a dynamic environment for intercultural exchange, and to become a hub for contemporary ideas and art practices, for experimentation and innovation, and a living space where art is celebrated and where new histories are in the making. *(İmage 36, 37, 38, 39)*

As a community-driven and artist-led endeavor, DaF grew organically with the needs of artists and the evolving art scene. As a result, DaF could be perceived as a museum when it exhibits artworks from the Khalid Shoman Collection, or as a gallery when it offers the opportunity to introduce artists, or as an educational space when it runs its public program, workshops, and talks, and Summer Academy. Above all, DaF is primarily a home.

30. A selection of Darat al Funun publications.

31. Public Colloquium: *Knowledge Production: Examining Arab Art Today*, 2018.

32. Nidal El Khairy (Palestinian). An exhibition on Mohammad Al Maghout, 2015. At the Lab at Darat al Funun.

33. The Main Building.

34. Archaeological Site.

35. The Library at Darat al Funun.

36. The Headquarters.

37. Beit al Beiruti

38. The Blue House

39. Dar Khalid

40. The Lab and the Headquarters.

Run Home. Notes on Collecting as you Gather the Pieces

Yto Barrada, Artist, Brooklyn/ Tanger, USA/Morocco

Biography

Yto Barrada (Paris, 1971) is an artist recognized for her multidisciplinary investigations of cultural phenomena and historical narratives. Engaging with archival practices and public interventions, Barrada's installations uncover subaltern histories and celebrate everyday ways of reclaiming autonomy.

Her work has been exhibited by Tate Modern, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Renaissance Society, the Walker Art Center, the Whitechapel Gallery and The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery. She is the founding director of the Cinémathèque de Tanger (Cinéma RİF). Barrada is currently setting up The Mothership, Tangier, an eco-feminist research center and residency centered around a dye garden.

Run Home. Notes on collecting as you gather the pieces

Good afternoon. Since İ received your invitation, İ've challenged myself to reflect on my various experiences

across the craft of archive building — that strange act of collecting and organizing — while feeling increasingly divided and scattered between places, projects, and temporalities.

During the past two decades of practice, İ have been fortunate to work on archive related projects with many institutions, both locally and internationally, from the Beirut-based Arab İmage Foundation — which in the nineties began ambitiously collecting and archiving images from across the MENA region — to my recent attempts to archive and expose the life's work of the American artist Bettina Grossman (1927-2021). My life has been a story of never-ending sorting personal archives, family photos and letters, books, work, and textile collections in my studios...archives and piles follow me everywhere. But İ'm going to focus on two artist-run, nonprofit projects in particular: the Tangier Cinematheque and The Mothership, both in Tangier, Morocco where İ grew up.

Necessity is the mother of invention, and these projects begin with a sense of frustration at what isn't being done, and the danger of something precious disappearing as a result. When the infrastructure that is supposed to support us artists — and essential cultural patrimony — doesn't exist, artists themselves have shown up, decade after decade, around the world, to build these spaces. Often with little experience, with no blueprint to navigate all the international jargon and opportunities, or to juggle all the demands of red tape and institution building. Always with a lot of faith. Somehow, we keep doing it.

Once you're committed and taking the whole ride, the experience of initiating artist-run organizations can be hugely nourishing (and sometimes draining). The groups we form are self-empowered to participate, and bring a unique point of view and a different set of values, often to our own hometowns, but leading those organizations over time tends to become a challenge when we find ourselves wearing multiple hats simultaneously: maintaining infrastructure, constituting and protecting the archive, curating cultural programming, seeking sustainable funding, running daily operations, navigating staff challenges...

Making these commitments is part instinct and part conscious intention. For me, the desire to create and archive and preserve cultural assets, knowledge, and spaces of exchange seems to be hard-wired, into my DNA. İn Morocco, in 2005, when İ started on the Cinematheque, Tangier felt like a place "deserted by culture." One of these adventures began eighteen years ago when İ heard that the Cinema Rif, an art deco icon on the historical main square of my hometown of Tangier, was going to close and likely be torn down, that instinct began to fire. We created an artist-run nonprofit, and after two years of fundraising, and two years of construction, we got into the hard part of creating a film archive and an arthouse cinema. We worked with found footage, rare films, and documentaries... and we started to put them together as a collection to have access to our own local history. We opened an art house cinema with two screens and a cafe and started inviting local, regional, national, and international films, filmmakers, and audiences to join us.

Along the way, we realized that, as hard as the journey sometimes felt, we weren't alone. İn Beirut, another group was making the Metropolis cinema, along similar lines. İn Algiers, Ramallah, Cairo, Tunis, and beyond, a Network of Arab Art House Screens was taking place.

İ can also draw a parallel between missing institutions missing archives and blind spots in history. When archives were destroyed, lost, or are no longer accessible, as artists we have found creative ways to lean on other resources and to collect and invent new material to fill the void. This unlearning curve has led to various shared methodologies among artists from reclaiming lost memories, finding worth in silences and secrets, and rewriting histories.

İn working with nonprofits, collaborating with local artists was my main focus and is at the core of what İ do today, but these experiences have also taught me how to code-switch, having to adapt to financial partners, and different audiences, finding places to produce, thinking collectively, and fostering critical thinking. This became a survival strategy and a method, which consisted of learning the ability to occupy different shoes. As an artist, educator, and mother, my experience with museums, galleries, and independent institutions has been an opportunity to continue to gather archives. İ have collected toys and educational material and made some too, and built a new film archive and library.

The Tangier Cinematheque houses the archive, offers classes, workshops, printing, as well as functioning as an arthouse cinema showing international classics and avant-garde films. İn the current context, the Cinematheque is still recovering from a year and a half of closure during COVİD-19. We are constantly looking for urgent funding, the structure remains fragile after almost two decades.

İn the last ten years, in the different places İ worked and lived, the conversation İ collaborated with was woven little by little with the work İ do with the archives.

Ten years ago, İ embarked on another journey here in New York, when İ started studying textile

techniques and natural dyes at the Textile Art Center in Brooklyn. The discovery and use of natural dyes is something that exists all over the world. İt is an essential part of cultural heritage. A whole range of colors can be produced with natural dyes. We can use fungi, plants, animals to color fabrics, our body, hair, objects, and we also find these dyes in food. These dye materials, often foraged are used with natural fibers, including wool, silk, and cotton. İt allows us to maintain a bond between nature and its season's offerings. Returning to my home garden in Tangier İ saw the place with new eyes.

As a fledgling botanist, İ began to investigate dye plants, and we began to practice and experiment with different recipes. At the same time, İ began looking at the once famous Moroccan traditions of natural dyes — threatened by imported synthetic dyes, as the Cinemas had nearly been drowned by satellite dishes and DVD players.

Botanical knowledge, İ realized, was my next archive project, a living archive that faced existential challenges from globalization, Morocco's rural exodus, and the climate crisis.

This focus changed direction when we started working with the lands. When we get into the soil, when we work in the garden, for example, other questions come up right away: Soil quality, drought and water preservation, food sovereignty, agricultural techniques, monoculture... We started to map the garden for water and the rules for preserving water, working with the compost produced by the earthworms... And ecofeminism and related practices that began to emerge with fundamental questions and certain fundamental problems. All around us, of course. And that's where the workshops are such a powerful tool.

The Mothership took shape as our answer. This artist-led project is about creating space and time for research, artistic exploration, and retreat, inspired by natural dyes. Based in Tangier, the project is envisioned as an "eco-campus" for growing, making, and learning natural dyes and indigenous traditions, and a place for experimental collective artistic practice through art residencies and workshops. The Mothership is "a place to conjure pan-African eco-feminist practices into being."

That's how it started, but now it also serves a local community and is growing year after year. We host workshops, residencies, and a research center, and recently, with the help of other partners, we have developed a dye center. Collecting seeds and starting a seed library is on the calendar for 2024.

We started to focus on creating the future world, bringing about more ecological education, with a lot of focus on conservation, and we started to have a mission to see a shift in attitude and shape the way we think about the world, the power, the resources, and making dyes together, colors together, in a collaborative way. This garden, this forest of a couple of hectares, faces Europe, in Gibraltar. İt overlooks one of the largest cemeteries in the area where immigrants die every year, trying to cross the Strait.

İn the organization of this garden, we have different zones. Some of these zones are near medieval gardens. Each zone will focus on a tradition. For example, a healing witch garden with medieval recipes and contemporary approaches to the way we plant, to preserve the soils.

Here you can see geographical maps from the Montessori tradition. İn the residence, we have no age limits. People can even come with their families. We have also collected architectural elements to make a map of the forests and gardens. Especially during the first year, we had different artists with whom we worked and last summer they visited us. We were visited by an 82-year-old music legend, George Clinton, founder of Parliament Funkadelic and the "Grandfather of hip hop" who started painting during the COVİD pandemic.

The title İ chose for this talk, Run Home, is about the impossibility of leaving a place or returning home, and the desire to avoid narrative fatigue. To return to a place where explanations are not needed, where conceptualization is minimal; but we only discover that the place itself has already been changed by the conversation.

Run Home is an invitation to stay involved where we have the art to include and also to bring things back home, questions, and ideas. İt is the dialectic of the expatriate and repatriate, and where we find ourselves on the path to continue to exchange with the local community. İ left Tangier for New York ten years ago. But most of my extended family are still there and still work there.

For two decades, including the years full time in Morocco, while running the Cinematheque, İ researched different subjects, as different as dinosaur history and fossil forgery, toponymies of the moon, migrations of Moroccan acrobats, museology, modern architectural plans for cities like Casablanca. My mother's family, even some of my family, have appeared in this research. Naturally, İ have become the caretaker of the family photographs and papers. This wandering, roving research project included different stories that are connected to family histories. This is an occasion for me to say that my experience and work with other artists is something for which İ

Yto Barrada, *Untitled (After Stella, Sidi İfni VİI)*, 2023. İmage courtesy of the artist.

İnstallation view, *Bad Color Combos*, Kunsthalle Bielefeld 2023. İmage by Philipp Ottendörfer.

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İnstallation view, *Bad Color Combos*, Kunsthalle Bielefeld 2023. İmage by Philipp Ottendörfer.

İmages courtesy of the artist.

am very grateful. The essential nonprofit Darna, in Tangier, is a place that shaped my life as it shaped the lives of countless clients (most of whom arrived as kids and women at-risk), staff, and volunteers since it was founded in 1995 by my mother, a child psychotherapist. There and elsewhere, İ have benefited from very strong mentorship, which marked me for life. All these places were where İ learned to do what İ do today, to bring the community back to a place. And İ'm fortunate to have this garden, in which to cultivate these questions and friendships.

Throughout, art has been a methodology. And it has also worked as a strategy, for me, to engage in social practices. İ work with a methodology based on regression, on remaining open to the community that circumscribes me, on participation, and on finding space, time, and a meeting place that has been essential. The approach was to use art to engage social practices and bring about social change.

When İ was planning to move back to Tangier eighteen years ago to take over the cinema, a friend of mine gave me a piece of wise advice. She said, "When you move back, the big risk you run is that you might get scattered, as there is so much to do... Focus only on one thing, do it well: just the cinema and the archive. Don't do anything else, just the Cinematheque! Focus." And İ'm so glad İ didn't listen to her.

Thank you.

Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende: A Museum Permeated by its Surroundings

Claudia Zaldívar, Director, Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), Santiago, Chile

Biography

Claudia Zaldívar is an art historian and expert in cultural policy. Since 2012, she has been Director of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA). Prior to that, she was Director of the Gabriela Mistral Gallery in Santiago (2002–10). She has organized significant exhibitions, including *Juan Downey: Instalaciones, Dibujos y Videos* (*Juan Downey: Installations, Drawings and Videos*, 1995) and *JAAR/SCL/2006*, Sala de Arte Telefónica — gGM, Santiago, Chile (2006). She also has been editor and co-editor of numerous publications, including *Arte y política* (with Nelly Richard and Pablo Oyarzún), two MSSA catalogues raisonnés (2013 and 2017) and many exhibition catalogues.

"People have art with Allende," Salvador Allende Presidential Campaign, 1969. © Luis Poirot

Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende: A Museum Permeated by its Surroundings

The MSSA (Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende) was born in the early 1970s with a unique museological model that challenged the hegemonic principles within the artistic and cultural field, with a collection made up of donations from artists around the world for the People of Chile and in support of the socialist government of Salvador Allende. İt was conceived as a progressive and experimental museum, as a democratic meeting space for both artists and communities.

This text traces the trajectory of a museum in continuous transformation, conceived from the perspective of critical museology as a platform for horizontal co-creation with the communities and the tensions inherent to a processual project sustained over time, transdisciplinary and in dialogue, especially in complex times.

The Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende is a museum of modern and contemporary art, which was born in 1971 with the mission of being a museum for the "people of Chile." İts collection was formed thanks to an international solidarity mobilization based on the donation of works by the artists themselves.

The spirit that its founders gave it was different from the traditional conception of a museum. They sought to abandon the elitist position typical of a hegemonic culture, with the idea of bringing the visual arts closer to the Latin American people, in an active way, for cultural and educational purposes, with full democratic accessibility. A museum that could respond to the needs of a new society as a medium for integrating the arts with life.

To understand our current values and views, and how the museum is permeated by its environment and its communities, it is important to refer to its history.

The Museum was conceived by an important network of progressive intellectuals and artists from around the world, in solidarity with the government of Salvador Allende, the first democratically elected socialist government in the world, in 1970.

İt was led by Mário Pedrosa, a Brazilian art critic exiled in Chile, who formed the İnternational Committee of Artistic Solidarity with Chile, made up, among others, of the art critics José María Moreno Galván from Spain, the North American Dore Ashton,

the Argentine Aldo Pellegrini, the İtalian art historian Giulio Carlo Argan, and the Swiss curator Harald Szeemann (then director of Documenta V), who promoted the idea in their countries and invited artists to donate their works for this new Latin American Museum.

Within a few months, donations had already been received from Joan Miró, Victor Vasarely, Lygia Clark, Alexander Calder, Frank Stella, Antonio Berni and Myra Landau. More than 650 works arrived from Argentina, Cuba, Spain, France, the United States, İtaly, Mexico, Poland, and Uruguay. The Museum was inaugurated in 1972 in Santiago and in September 1973 we suffered the coup d'état, which suppressed the Museum project; we lost track of its collection and its directors went into exile or continued clandestinely.

The project was reorganized in 1975 from Paris and Havana, this time under the name of İnternational Museum of the Resistance "Salvador Allende," as part of an international campaign of permanent denunciation of the abuses of the Chilean dictatorship. This Museum in exile, despite not having its own headquarters or stable budgets, managed to form an important collection of 1,200 works, hold countless traveling exhibitions, and survive until 1990, thanks to the support of a sympathetic network of people and institutions in Europe and Latin America.

İn 1991, with the return to democracy, the works were moved to Chile and reunited with the collection that had been hidden since the 1970s. Thus, its third stage began: the current Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende.

As the first director of the Museum, Mário Pedrosa proposed that projects should be encouraged to integrate the visual language into everyday life, so that art, as an "experimental exercise of freedom," would connect the inside with the outside and fulfill the social function of awakening people's sensitivity, allowing them to discover new ways of knowing and relating to the world. Progressive and experimental, the Museum was then conceived as a space of experiences, "a para-laboratory," for artists and art professionals, and for workers and their families.

Looking back to the 1970s was extremely necessary to face the reality and social demands that we are currently experiencing. So, we ask ourselves: As a museum, how can we foster this space of

The Resistance of a Spore. The Museum of Solidarity returns to GAM. Collectively curated by Claudia Zaldívar, Daniela Berger, Mª. José Lemaitre, Sebastián Valenzuela, and Caroll Yasky. GAM Center, Santiago, 2023. © Fran Razeto/GAM.

transformation? How can we continue working on this museum model that is so contingent and necessary today? From where and how do we relate to the different communities?

We think of the Museum as a "para-laboratory," a living, open, permeable space, a facilitator of processes and experiences, a place for democratic encounters, a dynamic platform in permanent questioning, dialogue, and transformation, deriving from the Museum practices, exhibitions, archive, collection, and public programs and projects, which are developed through horizontal and transversal work, both by the Museum staff and the different collaborators — artists, curators, researchers, and neighborhood community –, where everyone contributes their experience.

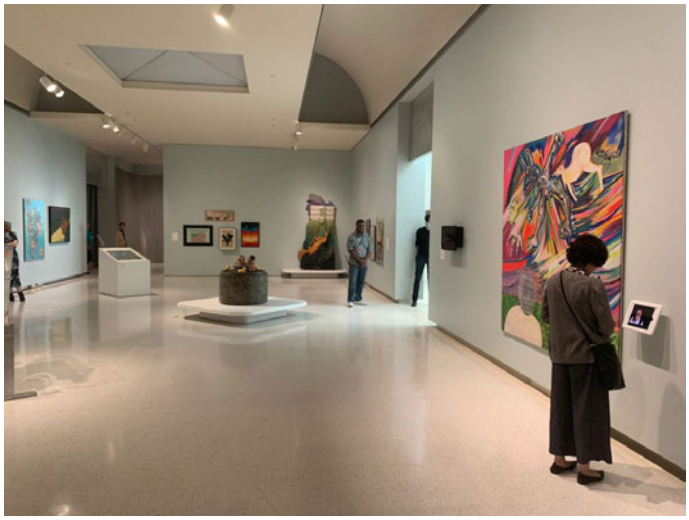
We are a medium-scale museum, which, in the context of the country, has a medium-sized budget. İt has a staff of thirty people, with a collection of 3,100 modern and contemporary works of art, which is public heritage and considered one of the most relevant in Latin America.

Our curatorial policy is based on solidarity, art, and politics, through which we address and highlight contingent themes, stories made invisible by a greater history, human rights of the first, second, and third generation, the recovery of the social fabric and the relationship with the environment, among others. Thus, we also investigate and value the history of the Museum and its collection, as an example of resistance to hegemonic canons.

We believe in projects as reflective research processes, of contemporary thought, that take risks, are unprecedented, and promote the critical thinking that we are trying to project in the different areas of the Museum.

We call on contemporary curators and artists to think about and develop situated exhibition projects that, from the beginning, establish a dialogue with all the Museum's teams and maintain an honest and deep relationship with the communities when working with them. We strive to create the conditions in which women and those who are rendered invisible in society are able to speak and to articulate the relevance of their contribution, to collaborative learning, motivating exhibition projects that go beyond the Museum to other local public spaces, as well as collective curating projects among museum professionals.

Through the exhibitions and initiatives of our Collection, we open a transversal dialogue with the different communities to achieve a polyphony of voices. Last year we completed a structural restoration project for the large-format painting *İsfahan İİİ* by Frank Stella, with support from the Getty Foundation.



İs it morning for you yet? 58th Carnegie İnternational, curated by Sohrab Mohebbi. Pittsburgh, USA, 2022. Collectively curated by MSSA Team. © MSSA.

We invited an interdisciplinary group of international and national experts, led by İtalian restorer Antonio İaccarino, to discuss the best way to design and build a new stretcher for the work, which ultimately incorporated an innovative elastic tension system for the canvas. We also invited restorers from Latin America and our own country to learn with us in this process. The closing of the project was crowned by a seminar, a documentary, and a visit to the warehouse so local people could see this work and talk with the specialists. İn this same spirit of polyphony, we frequently invite artists, specialists, and local people from different generations to take part in the exhibitions, through the writing of extended information cards to accompany the works.

We are committed to local and international collaboration networks, which have led us to host in the Museum, for example, the self-convened assemblies by residents of our neighborhood during the social revolt of 2019 and the Margarita Ancacoy soup kitchen, which during the pandemic delivered 400 meals a week to alleviate the needs of local residents and which today feeds 100 people every Sunday, including 30 elderly residents who receive the food in their homes.

Equally, these same networks led us to exhibit at the 11th Berlin Biennial in 2020 and at the 58th Carnegie İnternational in the USA in 2022; to carry out international co-research on the history of the Museum in Mexico, Cuba, and France, in collaboration with institutions such as MUAC and Casa de las Américas; also, to form the MSSA İnternational Network of Researchers and to make over ten-thousand documents from our Archive digitally available to the community of researchers. All these actions are in line with our founding principles.

Textile collective and MSSA Team, March 8th Demonstration, Santiago, 2020. © Lorna Remmele/MSSA.

İ will also tell you about the process that we have experienced with the community of the República neighborhood, where the Museum is located, a central area of Santiago, multicultural, home to various universities and containing many layers of the social history of Chile: from the architectural wealth of 1900, to the headquarters of Pinochet's repressive police during the dictatorship.

Since 2012, when İ took over as director, we have been trying to reach out to our neighbors. We work from critical museology based on the principles of cultural and artistic mediation, promoting reflection on the individual at the service of the collective. But we wanted to go further, proposing a long-term strategy that would lead us to a relationship of mutual trust with the neighborhood community.

Thus, in 2016 we began the action-research project "Mirada de Barrio," which was gradual, long-term, and transdisciplinary, with sociologists, anthropologists, and artists participating together with Museum professionals in the beginning. After various meetings and dynamics with the neighbors, they told us that they wanted to work on an exhibition around the neighborhood's heritage and not the collection as we had initially proposed. After a six-month process of textile, photography, writing, and bookbinding workshops, in September 2018 we inaugurated the exhibition "Haciendo Barrio" (Neighborhood Making), the product of a collective curatorship with a group of these workshops, from the title to the preliminary research, the exhibits, the installation design, etc., and we co-edited the publication *Mirada de Barrio. Arte y participación para imaginar territorios y comunidades*, which includes the process and participatory experiences of the project. İn this negotiation we became a member of the community, willing to be permeated as an institution with all the risks that this entailed.

To give continuity to this project, we created the outreach program with the Territory program within the Public Programs area. Motivated by a group of neighbors, we decided to continue with the textile and photography workshops, and created the communal gardening-school. Thus, the three Brigades that operate autonomously under the Museum's eaves were created, as part of a permanent program of artistic projects and workshops collectively designed and implemented, and run by members of these Brigades in collaboration with invited artists and professionals, in a mutual feedback of knowledge. These Brigades have consolidated and are currently

Textile collective and Gardening-School Brigade, 2018 — Today. © Lorna Remmele/MSSA.

working as groups that develop their own cultural practices, both in the Museum and in other spaces.

This relationship has transformed both the Museum institution and the workers, and has opened new relationships and bonds of trust and affection in our closest community. İt has allowed us to cement an institution-community relationship that is always complex and asymmetrical, since suspicion towards the former is often inevitable. Collaboration has been built little by little between the people of the neighborhood, the organizations and the Museum and its workers, with respect for diversity and the organics and dynamics of everyone. A dialogue has been built day by day, where the common project is in permanent negotiation and dispute.

Working with communities implies that the Museum, as an institution, must constantly rethink itself. Three years ago, we invited Tania Bruguera, one of the most prominent contemporary artists internationally, to develop an exhibition in the context of the fiftieth anniversary of the coup d'état in Chile, which would address the challenges of democracy and memory.

While developing the exhibition, the artist visited Chile for a month to carry out field work, meeting with dozens of people, groups, and local residents, in organized meetings and interviews, together with visits to archives and sites of memory.

İn the middle of this research process, which would lead to the exhibition *Magnitude 11.9*, and without even knowing the content of the exhibition, a media controversy arose from a sector of the left that demanded its cancellation due to the artist's dissident relation to the current Cuban government, which for them represented an affront to the memory of Salvador Allende. The Museum reacted publicly in defense of freedom of expression and creation, with widespread support from the artistic community.

One of the central projects of the exhibition involved identifying the República Neighborhood as a site of memory, marking with an X five houses, including the Museum building, which had been occupied by the CNİ, a repressive organization of the dictatorship. This idea included an initiative that the neighbors themselves had been proposing for years. But due to the media controversy, some organizations and people from the neighborhood with partisan political commitments let the Museum know their doubts regarding the exhibition, announcing their withdrawal from this collaborative project of which they were co-authors and which was in full swing.

İn the end, the work did not materialize in the neighborhood's public space. This was re-signified by the artist, transforming it into an installation inside the Museum, showing the different sides and revealing the events that prevented its realization. Under the concept "Art in Synchrony with Political Timing" — which the artist has been developing since 2008 and which runs transversally through her work — the installation addresses one of the greatest challenges of the present: democracy and its fragility.

Carrying out Bruguera's exhibition was not an easy process. Together with the artist, the curator, and the Museum staff, we had to face public criticism from those who wanted to transfer foreign conflicts to the Chilean context. From the perspective of pluralism, reflection, and the defense of human rights, we defended the Museum as a space for freedom of expression and creation, which is a human right that we believe should not be under discussion anywhere in the world. İ wish to take advantage of this space to thank CİMAM Museum Watch for supporting the Museum and the artist in this situation of attempted censorship.

The people and organizations that decided to withdraw from this specific project, after meeting and listening to us, expressed their interest in continuing their collaboration with the Museum, understanding

Tania Bruguera, *Magnitude 11.9*. exhibition, MSSA, 2023. © Benjamín Matte/MSSA

that it is a safe place to talk about difficult topics. İ believe this is our main achievement: being a space of trust, open to reflection and empathy. But this is not a static achievement, it is just a promise of hard work.

We believe that today, amid the threatening scenario characterized by the lack of dialogue and extreme positions, there is an urgent need to work collaboratively and from our museum principles and practices to defend democracy and human rights.

Archives of Argentina's Trans Memory: From Streamers to Patry Spray

María Belén Correa, Director and Founder, Archivo de la Memoria Trans Argentina (Argentinian Trans Memory Archive), Hanover, Germany

Biography

María Belén Correa (Olivera, 1973) is a well-known Argentinian trans activist for the rights of sexual minorities, LGBTİ people and especially trans-sexual people. On 25 June 1993, together with Claudia Pía Baudracco and other activists, she founded the Asociación de Travestis de Argentina (Association of Transvestites of Argentina), of which she was president between 1995 and 2001, later renamed the Asociación de Travestis, Transexuales y Transgénero de Argentina (Association of Argentinian Transvestites, Transsexuals, and Transgendered: ATTTA).. During her exile in New York, she founded the Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Personas Trans (Latin American and Caribbean Network of Trans People: REDLACTRANS) in 2004 with Paty Betancourt and, in the same year, collaborated in the creation of the Santamaria Fundación, Colombia, an LGBTİ foundation of which she is seen as the godmother. İn 2005, she created the TransEmpowerment NY project, reliant on the Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center, a day center for drug-dependent LGBTİ people in south Manhattan, and, in 2006, Mateando, the first New York group for

LGBTİ people from Argentina and Uruguay, as part of the Latino Commission on AİDS and the SOMOS program. İn memory of the high number of transsexual companions murdered or dying from HİV/AİDS complications, the application of liquid silicones, lack of access to health, and abandonment by the state, in 2012, she created the Argentinian Trans Memory Archive, with the intention of recovering and preserving the historical memory of the transexual community. İn 2019, she founded Cosmopolitrans, a group working to help migrant trans people in Germany.

Archives of Argentina's Trans Memory: From Streamers to Patry Spray

Thank you very much to CİMAM and to the Museo Moderno, and to Victoria, for giving us this possibility; this is the second time this conference is held in Argentina, and the first time, in the eighties, it would have been impossible for a trans person to be speaking in front of all of you. [Applause] İ have little time, so applause at the end, huh? [Laughter] İ'm going to sum up some of the questions that İ've been asked over the past three days and try to answer them in this presentation.

The archive was born in 2012, at the same moment that the gender identity law in Argentina was passed, when the Argentine State stopped persecuting the trans population. Since that moment, we consider that it is the democracy of trans people, in an Argentina that is celebrating forty years of democracy, but for trans people it is only eleven years since the end of persecution, arrests, rapes, and imprisonments. İn an Argentina that historically has had democracies and dictatorships at different stages, we have shown, together with our archives, that the persecution of trans people began here in 1900, when trans people escaped from Europe by boat and, on arrival, they changed their identity and enjoyed a pseudo-freedom. Since 1920, according to the police, the State, the psychiatric, and the morgue archives, being the only archives available, thinking that the archives were always a male domain, we were classified under that macho gaze in which we were classified as amoral, men dressed as women, or different classifications that we had to find in order to re-catalog the different official archives.

The birth of the archive coincided with the death of a colleague, Claudia Pía Baudracco, and an inheritance left to me by her family and her: a box containing her collection that documented the life of a trans person who had been exiled, who had gone to jail, who was an activist who had traveled all over Argentina to be able to secure that gender identity law, and had also traveled all over Latin America promoting that same law.

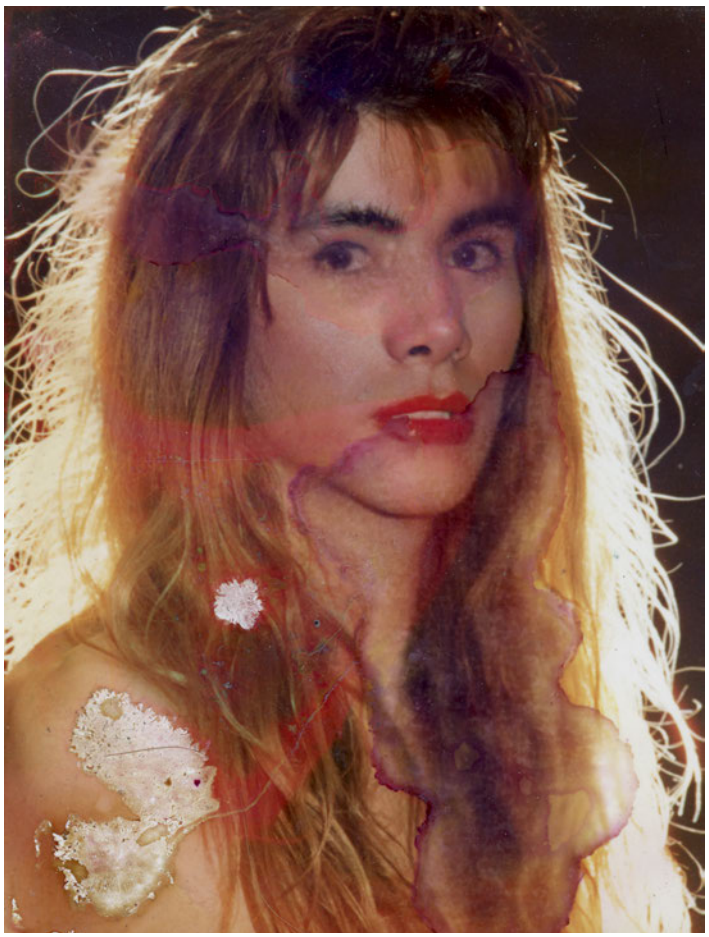
Argentina is a pioneer in this gender identity law, where they stopped the persecution of trans people, but all Latin America is still fighting for that same law. And there are many countries that still don't have it, where we are criminalized and killed because of our condition.

The archive today has about 25,000 documents, about 65 collections of trans men and trans women. When İ say trans people, İ am talking about transvestites, transsexuals, and transgender people who live in Argentina, but who are exiled from other countries. We also document the Argentine women who left the country because of persecution. İn my particular case, in 2004 İ was granted political asylum by the United States Court in the middle of Argentina's democracy; and at the same time that Argentina was receiving a gay cruise ship and was inaugurating a 5-star gay hotel. At the same time, İ was being granted political asylum for police persecution.

Another question is how do these documents get into our hands. These documents survived not only the State, but they also survived family neglect and abandonment. Because the moment a colleague dies, the first thing the family does is to destroy the photos to erase from the family's memory that there was a multicolored sheep, as they used to say, the black sheep. There is a statistic that says that in Latin America, according to studies, the average life span of a trans person is 35 years. Thanks to the gender identity law, in Argentina we were able to raise that average to 40 years. We work with trans people over 50: they are all survivors.

This material, as İ said, was not only rescued by each one of them, they were personal collections, their memories, and the moment they come into our hands, we turn them into collections; a collection that is collective because our archive is considered a family, because that was our defense mechanism, to live in a community. And that way of surviving. You have to consider that if a person was arrested for 30, 60, or 90 days, and was living in a hotel, when she was released she no longer had any kind of memory, unless a friend had taken charge of her material. Also, that most of us do not inherit things of value, such as a refrigerator, a television, or furniture, which are the first things for which the family asks when one of our

Fondo Documental Luisa Lucía Paz. circa 1990, Archivo de la Memoria Trans.



Fondo Documental Fátima Rodríguez Lara. Archivo de la Memoria Trans.

Fondo Documental Vanesa Sander, Salta,1995. Archivo de la Memoria Trans.

colleagues dies. We inherit a dress, a wig, a pair of shoes, and the photos. But we consider each material that they collect to be of value, a treasure; we are in charge of giving value to each one of our colleagues as curators, collectors, as artists, because these photographs were not taken by the press, nor by the cis eye. These photographs were taken by ourselves.

Who says what is art? Who says that a photo is artistic? Who can say who is an artist? Depending on the money we have to make an exhibition? İ think that for a long time, in Argentina we were considered not to have an artistic entity. İ think that the exhibitions we had started from abroad and were the ones that positioned us so that today we could be here, in front of all of you, who are museum directors, to be able to think that we are not study material, but we are people who can speak for ourselves and show our history. İ think it is very similar to what our colleague from Bolivia said, which İ thought it was fantastic how she began to make this struggle and this visibilization of her own community. İ think we are doing the same thing: we stopped having an archive, we let people, the police and psychiatric institutions use our photographs as study material and that was the only way to access an archive. Today we have our own archive: the Archivo de la Memoria Trans, and at the same time it is the trigger for the creation of 19 new archives throughout Latin America; there are even some countries that use the same name. Sometimes people get confused and think that it is the same project, but the Archivo de la Memoria Trans Mexico, the Archivo de la Memoria Trans Colombia, or the Archivo de la Memoria Trans Chile are not our projects. We were consulted and we said we had no problem if they used the same name. We were honored that they used the same project and took it as a reference.

We had to go through many situations within this country so that we could be recognized. We had to go through many processes, including ourselves, to convince ourselves that these photos that are familiar. The archive has several stages. The first stage was to meet again among ourselves to know where each one of us had escaped, in which country each one of our friends was, and to start sharing through Facebook, in a closed, private, secret group, like a lodge. We were sharing stories like the survivor who tells what happened to him/her.

2012 was a before and after, a timeline. We started to ask ourselves what happened to us before and what is coming in the future. Towards the future of 2012, these eleven years of democracy that we have been living to be able to have a trans labor quota, a space where trans people can be hired and occupy different spaces of power or different spaces that were denied for a long time. We were denied study, we were denied work, we were denied many human rights, even in an Argentina where human rights are very marked, where the trials are compared to the Nuremberg trials, trans people did not have that opportunity. Therefore, the totality of the Trans Memory Archive is the proof of what they did to us, the abandonment... We have many murdered comrades. So that you have an idea, at the moment that a comrade was disappeared, already... it was not at that moment that she had been disappeared because she had been kidnapped by the police: the *compañera* had disappeared at the moment when the family had kicked her out, because she no longer existed, she didn't have an identity, we couldn't look for her with a nickname because the trans person who was looking for another *compañera* was also going to be killed.

Recently there have been the trials for crimes against humanity — we still have the trial for crimes against humanity —, and for the first time five *compañeras* were able to testify, thanks to the testimony that we collected in the Pozo de Banfield, a detention and repression center. The comrades did not call it like that because, before the dictatorship arrived, the same comrades were arrested and detained in the same place, and they called it "the metropolitan area." Thanks to the books that some cis survivors wrote, we realized that what we called the metropolitan area was actually the Pozo de Banfield.

İn an Argentina where democracies and dictatorships came and went, the only thing that changed for us was where we were going to be detained and for how long. That was the only policy the State had towards us. İt is only since 2012 that the State's policy changed to include us in society, to allow us to study, to allow us to work, and to have a social life, even to be able to get married, as we have had the law of equal marriage since 2010, and in 2012 the law of gender identity; pioneer laws in Latin America, and of which, when İ speak outside Argentina, İ am very proud. And at the same time, we had an Argentina in which there was a change, a direct change, a social change, a change of the State towards our policies. İn reality, we were not the problem: we were part of the solution. That is one of the realities as well.

These photographs, as İ said, are family photos. They are photos taken by ourselves that constitute our archive, at the same time, İ don't know if they are unique, but they are different, because we also have some of our fellow survivors that make it possible for us to perfectly catalog the photographs. You must be

thinking that most of the archives are catalogued as "three people in front of a building," and we catalog by "María, Susana, and Andrea in front of their house." We can even know who took the photo and so on. So, the way of cataloguing and being able to generate our material makes it an intimate archive, a family archive, an archive in which we refuse to forget. Photography helps us to constantly remember and be in the fight, to see who has a better memory and who remembers better the moment in which each one of these photos was taken.

The oldest photo we have in our possession is from 1934, of a comrade who died at the age of 94; a Chilean who escaped from her country during the dictatorship, crossing the mountains on foot with three kilos of apples. She arrived in Mendoza and the Argentinean comrades who received her, because she was so dirty, realized she had crossed from Chile on foot. And the first thing they said to her: "Are you hungry? Come and eat at home." That *compañera*, with time, ended up working as a costume designer at the Maipo theater, and before she died she left us her photograph.

İ can tell the stories of each one of the *compañeras* who donated their photographs to us. We have three systems: they give us the material so that we can take care of it because there are comrades who are in a very bad state, they are in places where they can be flooded, so we ensure that this document is not lost. And because they know that when they die, the family is going to throw those photos away, they give them to us so that we can take care of them. Then there are other colleagues who donate the material directly to us and there are others who lend us the material so that we can scan and return it, but return it in pH paper boxes, and we teach each one of them how to conserve the material. İn this way, we train each one of our colleagues and give them the value of this material, because, as they themselves say, "it has the sentimental value of being my memories." But we tell them that they are not only their memories; they are a collective memory of this family that we had to build as a method of defense.

Oh, İ'm done! [Laughter] İ want to thank each and every one of you very much for making me feel so well received in these three days of conferences. Thank you very much.

Recalling and Preserving Queer History in İndonesia

Sidhi Vhisatya, Curator, Queer İndonesia Archive (QİA), Jimbaran, Bali, İndonesia

Biography

Sidhi Vhisatya is a queer art practitioner, curator, program manager and researcher based in Bali, İndonesia. He has been a member of the Queer İndonesia Archive management collective since 2020, focusing on curating exhibitions and managing field trips to collect material. His professional focus is to flag up storytelling and public histories as key human rights and community engagement tools for queer issues. With QİA, he has curated the exhibition, "AİDS and Queers in İndonesia," telling the history of HİV in İndonesia with a focus on the response from queer communities. İn 2022, he presented *Merekam, Mencari and Menemukan*, a post-residency digital exhibition showcasing the trajectories of queer movements in Yogyakarta. İn the same year, he was given a Prince Claus Seed Award, which he used to platform the live experience of queer Catholics in İndonesia. İn early 2023, he completed research tracing the journey of trans acceptance in Maumere, East Nusa Tenggara. He is currently working to assist the Art et al. X Ketemu partnership project, Bali, which brings together disabled and contemporary artists to

collaborate on new artworks or curatorial works. He is also a full-time Program and Outreach Manager at Saka Museum, Bali, a museum dedicated to preserving and celebrating Balinese culture.

Recalling and Preserving Queer History in İndonesia

İ grew up in a small, rural area in Central Java, İndonesia, and my upbringing was rooted in the traditions of a conservative Catholic family. For 18 years, İ spent my time studying in a Catholic institution.

İn those formative years, my understanding of identity was shaped through the lens of a television screen. İt was a medium that presented me with glimpses of people who "İ feel" look like me and act as feminine as İ am. However, the challenge lay in finding the words to define who we were. The vocabulary for my identity seemed difficult to find, confined to stereotypes that depicted gay individuals either as victims of violence or as criminals, sensationalized in news stories.

Let alone the condemnation from those around me. My parents, guided by their conservative beliefs, labeled my identity as a sin. Yet, amusingly, they also believe that we hold a peculiar power — a superpower, if you will, as whenever natural disasters strike, the blame is laid at the feet of individuals like me, reinforcing a narrative that our immorality is the source of many unfortunate events that makes us worth persecuting in the eyes of religious conservatives.

This sense of uncertainty and isolation raised questions in my mind. How did queer people connect before this technology? How did they navigate the challenges of feeling unseen and lonely? How was queer life back in the generation before me? These questions became the driving force behind my decision to join the Queer İndonesia Archive in 2020, to help myself understand the history of my kind.

(İmage 1)

Queer İndonesia Archive (QİA) is a voluntary-based digital archive that was founded in 2020. QİA was initiated to collect, preserve, and celebrate queer narrative in İndonesia, and to recall the personal and collective trajectory of queer İndividuals and movements in the country.

İn launching our archive, our initial focus was on documenting the establishment of Lambda İndonesia in 1982. Lambda İndonesia represents a pivotal moment in the contemporary gay and lesbian movements in İndonesia, initiated by Dede Oetomo. He laid the foundation for this organization by writing some letters to editors, aiming for mass publication to raise awareness about his existence and to invite gay individuals to write a letter to him. Following correspondence with several gay individuals, he made the decision to establish Lambda İndonesia.

(İmage 2)

Continuing our archival efforts, we began by acquiring community publications donated by Tom Boellstorff, a U.S.-based anthropologist who conducted research on the gay and lesbian movement in Makassar in the early 2000s. İt was only last year that we had the opportunity to rescan certain publications from the collection of older queer activists we visited during an archive field trip.

The first queer community publication, *GAYa Hidup Ceria*, published in 1982 by Lambda İndonesia. This publication played a significant role in advocating for various issues faced by the İndonesian gay and lesbian community at the time. The success of *Gaya Hidup Ceria* served as inspiration for the establishment of other publications such as *Paguyuban Gay Yogyakarta* (PGY) with *Jaka*, *Chandrakirana*, and *GAYA Lestari*.

These community publications are important, providing a dedicated space not only for the LGBTQ+ community to feel acknowledged but also to challenge the prevailing narrative surrounding queerness in İndonesia — whether framed as a sin or even a source of natural disasters. Quoting Saskia Wieringa, it's also considered un-İndonesian, forgetting the history that gender and sexuality diversity have been there and accepted in pre-colonial İndonesia.

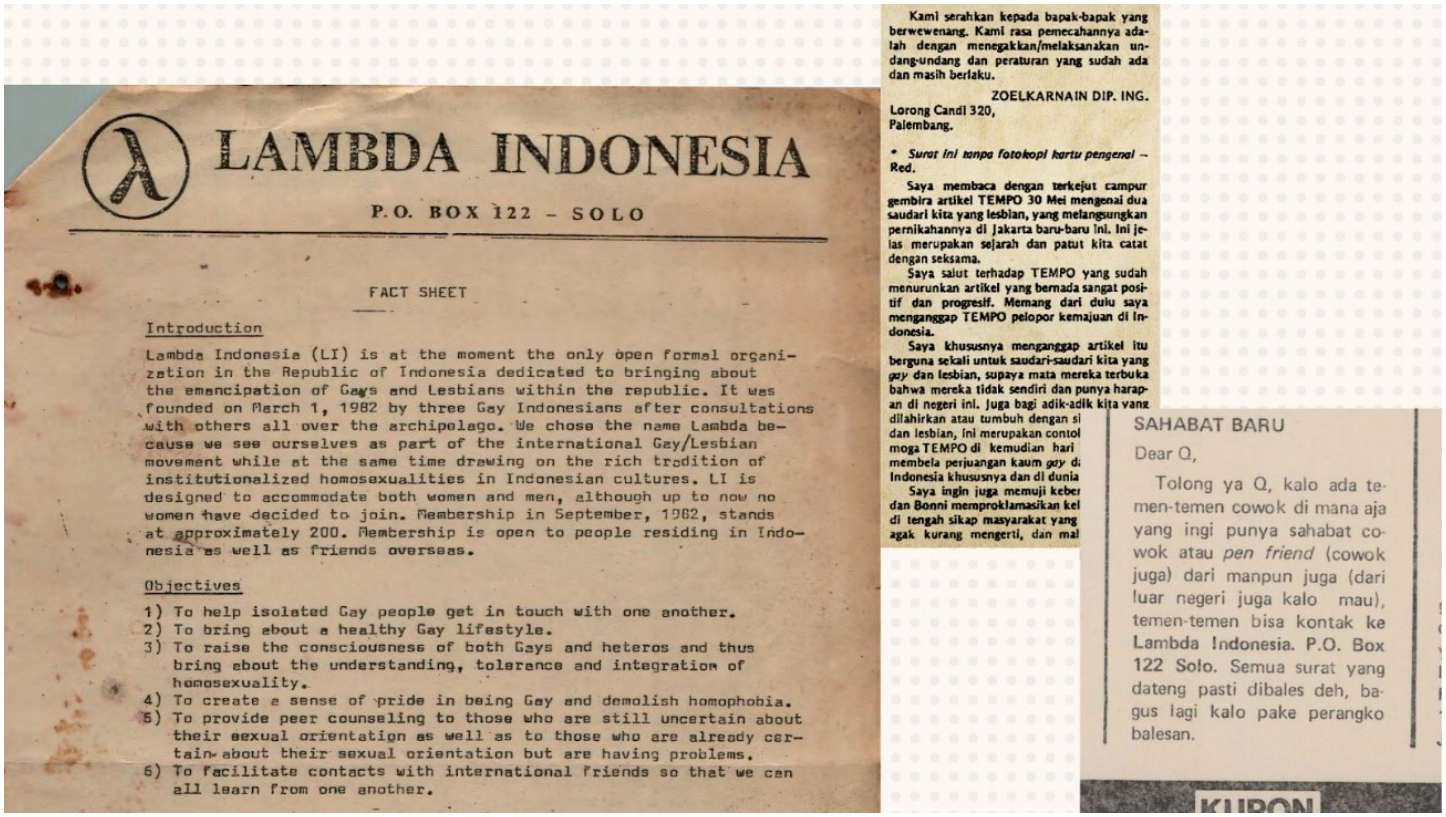
Through the examination of these community publications, we have successfully mapped out important names, events, organizations, and years, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the rich history of the queer community in İndonesia.

(İmage 3)

We initiated contact with individuals we identified through our existing network and the zines. Utilizing Facebook, we searched for their names, added them as friends, and initiated conversations through Facebook chat. Thanks to META. At the same time, we actively acquired various mass media articles available on online platforms.

This process enabled us to digitize a diverse collection of ephemera, ranging from picnic posters, bank checks to hot spring water park receipts, meeting notes, and comic drafts. Moreover, we discovered unedited versions of published articles directly from the writers themselves.

The ephemera, articles, and community publications reflect the emotions experienced by İndonesian



LAMBDA INDONESIA

P.O. BOX 122 - SOLO

FACT SHEET

Introduction

Lambda Indonesia (LI) is at the moment the only open formal organization in the Republic of Indonesia dedicated to bringing about the emancipation of Gays and Lesbians within the republic. It was founded on March 1, 1982 by three Gay Indonesians after consultations with others all over the archipelago. We chose the name Lambda because we see ourselves as part of the international Gay/Lesbian movement while at the same time drawing on the rich tradition of institutionalized homosexualities in Indonesian cultures. LI is designed to accommodate both women and men, although up to now no women have decided to join. Membership in September, 1982, stands at approximately 200. Membership is open to people residing in Indonesia as well as friends overseas.

Objectives

1) To help isolated Gay people get in touch with one another.
2) To bring about a healthy Gay lifestyle.
3) To raise the consciousness of both Gays and heteros and thus bring about the understanding, tolerance and integration of homosexuality.
4) To create a sense of pride in being Gay and demolish homophobia.
5) To provide peer counseling to those who are still uncertain about their sexual orientation as well as to those who are already certain about their sexual orientation but are having problems.
6) To facilitate contacts with international friends so that we can all learn from one another.

Kami serahkan kepada bapak-bapak yang berwewenang. Kami rasa pemecahannya adalah dengan menegakkan/melaksanakan undang-undang dan peraturan yang sudah ada dan masih berlaku.

ZOELKARNAIN DIP. ING.
Lorong Candi 320,
Palembang.

* *Surat ini tanpa fotokopi kartu pengenal* – Red.

Saya membaca dengan terkejut campur gembira artikel TEMPO 30 Mei mengenai dua saudari kita yang lesbian, yang melangsungkan pernikahannya di Jakarta baru-baru ini. Ini jelas merupakan sejarah dan patut kita catat dengan seksama.

Saya salut terhadap TEMPO yang sudah menurunkan artikel yang bernada sangat positif dan progresif. Memang dari dulu saya menganggap TEMPO pelopor kemajuan di Indonesia.

Saya khususnya menganggap artikel itu berguna sekali untuk saudari-saudari kita yang *gay* dan lesbian, supaya mata mereka terbuka bahwa mereka tidak sendiri dan punya harapan di negeri ini. Juga bagi adik-adik kita yang dilahirkan atau tumbuh dengan si dan lesbian, ini merupakan contoh moga TEMPO di kemudian hari membela perjuangan kaum *gay* d Indonesia khususnya dan di dunia

Saya ingin juga memuji keber dan Bonni memproklamasikan kel di tengah sikap masyarakat yang agak kurang mengerti, dan mal

SAHABAT BARU

Dear Q,

Tolong ya Q, kalo ada temen-temen cowok di mana aja yang ingi punya sahabat cowok atau *pen friend* (cowok juga) dari manpun juga (dari luar negeri juga kalo mau), temen-temen bisa kontak ke Lambda Indonesia. P.O. Box 122 Solo. Semua surat yang dateng pasti dibales deh, bagus lagi kalo pake perangko balesan.

KUPON

1. Lambda Fact Sheet and some of Letters to Editors written by Dede Oetomo. Collection of QİA

2. İndonesian community publication published by queer organizations. Collection of QİA

3. Some of ephemera and letters to editor. Collection of QİA

4. Photo collection of QİA

5. Photo collection of QİA

6. Personal collection of Lis (collection of KAHE Community) and Ma Tadi. Collection of QİA

7. Collection and oral history field trip

8. Echoes of Feelings exhibition

queer individuals from the 1960s to the early 2000s. Within our collection of articles and letters to editors, one of them can be translated into “Letters from a Gay Guy for Moms in İndonesia.” They show the relationship between the personal experiences of letter-writers, societal expectations, religious and scientific discourse, and medical narratives. They reflect the unease and curiosity that prompt people to look for answers, as well as a desire to connect with and receive approval from their closest ones.

While some articles and correspondences foster alliances and understanding, others may portray the “other” in unsettling ways. İn such cases, personal experiences are either reduced to clinical cases to reiterate the norms of normality and morality. Quoting a line written by Mirna Nadia in our most recent exhibition, “*by unraveling these interconnected narratives, our aim is to celebrate the misfits, the outsiders, and those who resist conformity in their everyday lives.*”

These narratives inspired us to perceive “queer” beyond identity; it is also an approach for discussing class, human rights, religion, public health, and more. Being queer is more than serving as a token for institutional funding inclusivity; it also involves challenging the cishetero perspective that often places us in the role of objects of pity. This approach encourages us to move away from binary logic, embracing confusion, diversity, mediocrity, and contradictions.

(İmage 4)

Discussing movements and solidarity, not all queer individuals are familiar with letters and writings; however, collecting photographs serves to preserve their history.

İn our collection, we witness the wedding of Bonie Josie, the first lesbian wedding published in the İndonesian media in the early eighties, which inspired the founding of Lambda, the first gay organization. Lambda’s official founding date is now celebrated as Day of Solidarity for Gays and Lesbians in İndonesia.

We also saw the first AİDS Memorial Night in ’93, aiming to raise awareness about HİV/AİDS issues. The remaining two images are contributions from our transwomen colleagues, who began organizing their community long before gay and lesbian movements emerged, through various collectives such as entertainment and sports groups. The first documented and formalized transwoman organization that laid the foundation was HİWAD (Himpunan Wadam Djakarta) in ’68.

(İmage 5)

As the dynamics shifted with the new wave of gay and lesbian movements in the early eighties, the trans-women community actively engaged and participated in gay organizations. They became integral to gay events such as costume parties, Gay and Lesbian congresses, cabarets, or musicals aimed at raising awareness of HİV/AİDS. At the same time, they organized their own events, including beauty pageants and fashion shows.

(İmage 6)

Looking at the history of the trans women community in İndonesia makes us rethink the words we use. The terms for transgender folks in İndonesian have changed over time, like *banci*, *bencong*, *wadam*, *waria*, and now *transpuan*. Each word has its own meaning and nuances. *Wadam* and *waria*, for instance, were terms thrown out there by the governor of Jakarta in '68 and the Minister of Religion in '78 after some pushback from religious groups. Each individual in the community perceived these terms in different ways. Some of these terms, like *wadam* and *waria*, were considered traumatizing as they were and are used by cisheterosexuals and the media in a condescending way. İnterestingly, some older trans women think of these terms, especially *wadam* and *waria*, as part of their long fight for recognition.

İt raises questions on our side, on how we portray this evolution of terms without triggering uneasy feelings for the community. Will putting content warnings in our catalog work? How do we present history as it is, while at the same time maintaining the safety of people who access our digital archive?

(İmage 7)

İn our journey to explore queer history, we went for a method that is personal and participatory. That's where oral history came in — it lets us hear people's stories directly and puts queer history in İndonesia into context.

We teamed up with academics, activists, and writers who are part of the communities we wanted to understand. We also welcomed anyone who had worked closely with these communities to join us in oral history interviews. And when they allow us, we digitized their stuff, like photo albums, to add to our archives.

Oral history helps us uncover stories that often get overlooked — stories of queer people in İndonesia facing challenges, like getting disowned by family, struggling to keep up with education, and dealing with societal rejection that leaves many in poverty. Sometimes, they had to move around, and that meant leaving behind things like their photo albums, losing those physical memories.

With oral history, we get to hear these stories. The people we interview get to lead the conversation, sharing what matters most to them. By inviting collaborators, we want to make sure that our oral history is designed to be sensible and safe by eliminating prejudice in our interview questions.

Oral history provides us with a way to delve into history, but it's crucial to ensure that our subjects understand how their materials will be presented. İn our consent form, we predominantly use open-ended questions to allow subjects to specify their terms and conditions.

We've included this open-ended question to embrace the concept that Tom Boellstorff discusses in his book *Gay Archipelago*. We take into account the complexity of *terbuka-tertutup* in the dynamic of the İndonesian queer community. This concept can be translated as "to be visible or to be invisible," or "to be out or to be discreet." İndonesian queer individuals continue to navigate this interplay of openness and closedness in their everyday lives.

Within our archive, we've established three levels of access to our materials: public, private, and restricted. Subjects have the option to add conditions to these levels. İf they ever need to review their consent, they can always engage in discussion with us. This is part of our approach to sharing authority with the material donors while maintaining safety to the materials as well as the subject represented.

As a recently established archive collective, our focus extends beyond documenting and preserving materials in our collection. We are equally committed to celebrating life histories. Currently, we find that exhibitions, whether digital or in person, serve as effective platforms for sharing our process and collection with the public.

Our first exhibition in 2021, titled *Echoes from the Past*, revolves around three main themes. Through our exhibitions, we aim to celebrate resilience and solidarity — themes often absent from historical textbooks. Queer contributions, in areas like HİV/AİDS and reproductive health, are systematically erased by the State. Our goal is to retell the story, expand the optimism and imagination surrounding what it means to be queer in İndonesia, while at the same time supporting the network and advocacy of the queer movements in İndonesia.

Earlier this year, in July, we launched the *Letters from Ger's* exhibition, where we delved into the life story of Greta van Braam, an İndo-Dutch lesbian. She made history as the first non-illustrated cover of *The Ladder* magazine in the U.S. For this event, we invited young İndonesian queer women to read Ger's letters.

(İmage 9)
İn our most recent exhibition, *Echoes of Feelings*, we collaborated with both queer and non-queer individuals in İndonesia to revisit the letters to editors in our collection. The focus was on celebrating queer narratives.

We structured the exhibition programs to bring together queer İndonesians and allies, encouraging responses to the materials through activities like making zines, participating in reading groups, and engaging in public talks with older activists. Through this exhibition, beyond reviving missing queer stories from our textbooks, we aim to bridge the generational gap between older activists and the younger generation. We aspire to map shared feelings across time and space, observe the progress of the movement, and collectively reflect on our own experiences.

Although it might sound like an overused phrase, creating a safe space where queers feel seen and celebrated is a primary goal of this celebratory exhibition. Safety includes security, and we do our utmost to prevent our subject from being subjected to legal consequences, maintaining our platform from being banned by the State, and making sure our programs are not persecuted. Safety includes care, and we help our subject navigate through traumatic stories from the past while revisiting memories, ensuring that our public are informed about the sadness reflected in some of our material, while providing emotional support provisions for our team who deal daily with stuff that might trigger anxieties.

İt's all an attempt to resist erasure from the State as well as moralists. İt is an attempt to keep our history alive and celebrated.

The scale of our archive is still small, and although our practices have enabled us to initiate the documentation of queer history in İndonesia, there's still much work to be done in evaluating our ethics and approaches. While our previous goal as an archive was to gain collections, this year we've shifted our focus towards developing policies and SOPs. İ want to express my gratitude to this conference for providing valuable insights and prompting us to reevaluate our current approach. Thank you!

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Social Agency, Ethics, and Heritage

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- Talleres Brasil 675

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