

elementar

/ə : fa-zer jun-to

Ministry of Culture
and Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo
present

06.15.2023 —
08.13.2023

curatorship
Cauê Alves
Mirela Estelles
Valquíria Prates

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MINISTÉRIO DA
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elementar /ə : faʒər juŋtə/

[Elemental: Making It Together]

mam



1st Round of Poetic Experiences with babies and children, and Kindergarten teachers of the Municipal Secretariat of Education.

The Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo [Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo] has one of the country's most important collections of Brazilian art. In addition to being available on the MAM website for consultation and research, the collection is exhibited periodically at partner institutions and at the museum building located in Ibirapuera Park. In the year in which MAM celebrates seventy-five years of cultural and artistic activities, exhibiting the works that the museum conserves is a way of sharing its history and publicizing the collection, which contains more than five thousand works.

Elemental: Making It Together, curated by Cauê Alves, chief curator of MAM, Mirela Estelles, coordinator of the education department at MAM, and researcher Valquíria Prates, is an exhibition of the museum's collection that invites the public to reflect on the meanings and possibilities of working together. The exhibition highlights the educational experiences that have been memorable throughout MAM's trajectory, especially over the last three decades.

The exhibition addresses essential issues for art that are linked to MAM's identity, such as the participation of different audiences who are invited to engage into meaningful experiences. Thus, MAM São Paulo contributes to the collaboration between curatorial practice and education while promoting Brazilian modern and contemporary art. This is certainly another step towards achieving some of the museum's strategic guidelines: to be a democratic, plural, and affectionate institution.

Elizabeth Machado

President of the Board of Directors, Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo



OPAVIVARÁ!
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005)

Espreguiçadeira multi
(cadeira de três lugares; sofá de
praia; cadeira conversadeira)
2010

The catalog for the exhibition *Elemental: Making It Together* is organized around an ensemble of texts and quotations which, upon relating directly or indirectly to each other, construct constellations of meanings.

The first step towards realizing the idea of making something together is the comprehension of the other. Rather than being a mere object, the other must enjoy the same status as the self, the same rights, even when having distinct skills, competencies, and responsibilities. Language and dialogue, be it verbal or nonverbal, are fundamental for interlocution to take place, so that in turn something shared can be forged. Reciprocity is fundamental for the idea of making something together, even if the world is not perceived identically by myself and by others.

The natural and cultural environments are intertwined. The elements of earth, air, water, and fire are all over our environment and are also present in artistic production. In each of the exhibition's nuclei it is possible to find natural and cultural elements. We and the environment are interconnected, we are part of nature and constituted by the very same elements. We are part of a whole, along with other species and cultures. And art can contribute to our feeling of belonging in the world or at least in a collective, and also toward feeling others within ourselves.

At MAM, we call poetic experiences the exercises of artistic creation conceived as pedagogical processes in our mediated visits and publications on MAM's social-media channels, which are put together for teachers to use in the classroom and for families to experiment with at home, and also for people to be inspired by and make together. In mediated visits, different readings of the world are triggered and allow the production of meaningful views on the issues that a work of art can bring. The dialogues that take place between visitors and the education team instigate a sensitive and critical look over different contexts. This reflection leads to the exercise of creative experimentation, which allows for imagination and new possibilities.

The exhibition was conceived by MAM's curatorial team together with the museum's education department, drawing from works in the collection, shared knowledge and practices, as well as the poetic experiences brought about by the art education team, and which are present in each nucleus of the exhibition.

The show is structured through six nuclei: **1.** Narratives: Flows: Connections: Transformation **2.** Territory: Environment: Contexts

3. Communication Networks: Communion: Resistance
4. Traces: Record and Time **5.** Transmutation: Exchanges and Transformation **6.** Games: Rules: Intentional Ways of Taking Part. Each nucleus complements and articulates the other fluidly, that is, they do not form rigid nuclei, seeing as many works could inhabit more than one nucleus at a time. MAM's Education team, in dialogue with the curatorship, created lists of mediating words to pave the way for expanded access to each nucleus, featured in the catalog as clues in maps for possible drifts through the artworks and poetic experiences.

The exhibition design created by Tiago Guimarães articulates itself from an axis parallel to the wall of the offices of the museum's technical teams, and it also installs a space for making something together, with the necessary furnishings to accommodate various artistic and educational practices within the exhibition. The graphic design by Vânia Medeiros, who also designed this publication, integrates itself into the exhibition through a visual identity wherein words are formed in curves, insinuating fluid movements, and employing colors that remind us of highlighter pens used for marking words and phrases. Both professionals possess a number of experiences and collaborations in different areas, with an emphasis on the fields of art and education and their correlations.

The first part of the catalog, titled *Elemental: Making It Together*, compiles texts and curatorial entries about each of the nuclei in the show, proposals for poetic experiences, and quotations from authors related to the exhibition's central themes. In addition, the catalog features referential texts that expand the debate. They are gathered in the second part of the publication, titled *For Reading Together*. These selected texts extend the curatorial team's invitation to instill readings, whether individual or collective, around participation, collaboration, politics, and affections related to the common and the community.

Writer and community leader Antônio Bispo dos Santos presents and shares the modes of life of the *quilombolas* [members of rural communities in Brazil formed by descendants of enslaved black peoples], with practices based on orality and land cultivation as a form of belonging to the territory and establishing senses of community.

The reflections of teacher and craftswoman Cristine Takuá point to the complexity and the creativity that is inherent to everything

that is living, interweaving ideas that cross through aspects of the memory, history, and philosophy surrounding life and the forests.

Educator Fátima Freire discusses the construction of the group and the methodological instruments for the establishment of shared space and references. Although the text is mainly focused on formal education and school groups, the curatorship's proposal is to relate it to education in museums.

The essay by artist and researcher Gandhi Piorski, *Brinquedos da extroversão* [Extroversion Toys], explores children's relationship with the act of playing, the construction of intimacy with the many natural materials and elements, in addition to addressing imagination, the body, and the sensory experiences that shape us.

The text by philosopher Paul B. Preciado reflects on the establishment of modern museums in Europe, their links to patriarchy, and the transformations undergone by this type of institution over the last few decades from a perspective of institutional critique.

In addition to promoting an encounter with texts, artworks, and poetic experiences, this catalog is also an invitation to something elemental, the condition of making something together. Here, the reader's participation is most welcome, and the texts shall be annotated, highlighted, and understood in a wide array of ways as part of the graphic design.

The research developed in *Elemental: Making It Together* contributes to the debate and the reflection upon the notion of alterity—insofar as it presupposes difference—so that it may embody more than merely tolerating the other. It is about trying to imagine the possibility of putting ourselves in someone else's place and of participating in the public sphere by engaging in collective activities, and in collaboration whenever possible.

Cauê Alves
Mirela Estelles
Valquíria Prates

Elemental: Making It Together

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Elemental: Making It Together





To make something together is a matter of choice and principle. Situations of making together challenge us to experience the many senses of belonging and participation, whether that is through notions of living together, or through the cooperation or collaboration made possible by collective work. It involves a set of strategies that can be turned into methods or not.

The artistic and educational works and experiences that make up the exhibition *Elemental: Making It Together* are part of the collection of the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo [Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo]. The institution values the ecology of knowledges that constitute its collections of artworks and educational experiences, linked to myriad repertoires and creative processes of artists and nonartists.

Elemental is that which inherently resides in the nature of things, in their essence, it is the basic component of the world and its matters. Artists deal directly or indirectly with earth, water, air, and fire, natural elements that compose the most varied

materialities, poetics, and processes in life and the arts.

As elaborated by Richard Sennett, working in cooperation presupposes disposition and receptivity. The show's exhibition design encompasses poetic experiences and a "Space for Making Together," in addition to propositions carried out with artists and educators.

In the museum, "making together" is elemental. It also represents the possibility of proposing situations and establishing ways of relating to the collections and different audiences through convivial experiences. It involves that which is artistic and the knowledges that art sets in motion, bringing together people who devoted their attention, presence, and openness to the connection that generates meaning.

See photos of the exhibition held at MAM São Paulo (Milú Villela Room).



artificial/

dialogue

deterioration

stret

cycles

penumbra

emergency

absence

ephemeral

Narratives: Flows: Connections: Transformation

illusion

possibility

essence

overlap

impossibility

delivery

texture



Pedro David
(Santos Dumont, MG, 1977)

Brasa
(from the series "O jardim")
2011

Which verbs and conjugations can we use for fusing lived stories?

The foundations of making something together are collectively agreed upon and constantly revised. The decision of making choices is up to each individual, employing connections as a central element.

Earth, water, and air are linked in such a way that it does not seem necessary to completely separate them. Me, mine, you, yours... Personal, possessive, demonstrative, relative, interrogative, or indefinite, pronouns move through all narratives of making something together. We and others acting for the construction of meaning. When me(s) and you(s) become a first-person plural, no one ceases to be first-person singular in the complex balance of presences and bodies.

"The history of pedagogy is certainly aware of its extravagances. And these, as much as they derive from the very strangeness of the pedagogical relation, were often more instructive than the most rational propositions. However, in the case of Joseph Jacotot, what is at stake is much more than simply an article, among so many others, in the great museum of pedagogical curiosities. For it represents a lonely voice which, at a vital moment in the constitution of ideals, practices, and the institutions that still govern our present, emerged as an unprecedented dissonance—like one of those dissonances from which it is no longer possible to construct any form of harmony for the pedagogical institution, and thus it is necessary to disregard it in order to be able to continue building schools, setting up programs and pedagogies, but also as one of those dissonances which, at certain moments, may still be necessary to listen to, so that the act of teaching never entirely loses the awareness of the paradoxes that provide its meaning."

“But in its most basic form Living-Together is also temporal, and here we need to tick this box: ‘living at the same time as...,’ ‘living in the same time as...’= contemporaneity. For example, I can truthfully say that for twenty-seven years, Marx, Mallarmé, Nietzsche, and Freud lived together. What’s more, it would have been possible to orchestrate a meeting in some Swiss town or other, in, say, 1876, giving them an opportunity—the ultimate sign of Living-Together—to “talk together.” Freud would have been twenty at the time, Nietzsche thirty-two, Mallarmé thirty-four, and Marx, fifty-six. (We might wonder which one of them is the eldest now). The point of that fantasy of concomitance is to alert us to what seems to me to be a very complex, insufficiently studied phenomenon: contemporaneity. Who are my contemporaries? Whom do I live with?”

"Vermittlung—"mediation" in German—signifies a transfer from one party to another, the pragmatic transmission of a message. It also stands for attempts at reconciling parties who disagree on something: nations, for instance, or people in conflict. Although there is an abundance, even an overproduction, of traditionally didactic activities within art institutions today, I believe that now is the time to think more and harder about the mediation of contemporary art. About whom we as artists and curators want to communicate with, and the associated questions of how art actually functions in contemporary culture. It is a seeming paradox: an excess of didacticism and simultaneously a renewed need for mediation."

"The liberty I enjoyed during my childhood years to experience a deep connection with that which we perceive as nature afforded me the understanding that I am also part of it. Therefore, the first gift that this liberty gave me was that of confounding myself with nature in a broad sense, regarding myself as an extension of everything, and having the experience of being a collective subject. This means sensing life in other beings—in a tree, in a mountain, in a fish, in a bird—and implicating oneself. The presence of other beings not only adds to the landscape of the place I inhabit but it also modifies the world. This potency of perceiving oneself as belonging to a whole and hence being able to modify the world could represent a good educational idea. Not for an imaginary time and place, but for the point we find ourselves in now."

“Mediation ... a concept that was glimpsed at by scholars such as Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Dewey, Freire, Rancière, among others, who establish a close relationship between art and life. In commonsensical, everyday reality—possibly due to influences from general legal use—it can be observed that the concept may be understood as a ‘bridge’ between opposite sides. Going beyond this idea, ‘being in the middle’ implies in the fields of education, art, and culture, the complex position of ‘being in between,’ which allows for a network of multiple provocations and possibilities for the relationships between the subjects, objects, spaces, and contexts involved. A potent and tension-filled territory that encompasses strangenesses, surprises, shock, indignation, affinities, preferences, resistances, openings, dialogues, exchanges, broadened perceptions, empathy, alterity. Hence, if human beings are considered historical and social beings immersed in their culture, mediation should be understood as interaction and dialogue that values and lends voice to the other, expanding horizons that embrace the singularity of subjects in educational processes within the school domain or outside of it. We can call it ‘cultural mediation’.”

"To elaborate your life narrative and, from that point on, to separate the materials, understanding what the formation was in order to subsequently work on the organization of the meaning of these materials in constructing a story, your story, constitutes a practice of performance of the subject, who becomes an author upon reflecting on their life in its temporal globality, in its lines of force, in its acquired knowledges, or in the marks of the past, as well as in the perspectivation of the challenges of the present between revisited memory and the already-updated future, since it has been induced by this temporal perspective. In a word, a subject-turned-author takes the stage upon reflecting on their existentiality."

#poeticexperience

Self-Portrait with Elements of Nature

How do we see ourselves vis-à-vis the universe we are?

How do we identify ourselves as part of nature?

In the poetic experiences from the MAM Education team collection, self-portraiture constitutes an instigating exercise in the process of investigating identities, including the possibility of exploring relationships with elements of another nature.

Starting from a reflection on how we inhabit spaces and how spaces inhabit us, the experience of creating self-portraits was an invitation to take part in an investigation to become aware, in a sensitive way, of our relationship with the different elements present in the nature surrounding us. A game of looking at the world to see yourself!

As part of the proposal of creating self-portraits, everyone is invited to collect different elements from nature, such as leaves, flowers, seeds, bits of bark, branches. The more diverse the assortment, the greater the possibilities for experimentation.

In the shapes, textures, and colors gathered, it is possible to find the elements necessary to compose and express the characteristics of the person that we want to show to the world.

After collecting and selecting the elements that most directly connect with your intentions, place each one on a surface to compose a face: your image.

Take a photograph of your self-portrait: a visual poetry, a confession of secrets, a record of a moment within the many transformations you have already experienced.



Amanda Falcão
(São Paulo, SP, 1994)

Autorretrato com elementos da natureza
[Self-Portrait with Elements of Nature]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 1'24"
Script, production, and editing: Amanda Falcão

#poeticexperience

Stories in the Garden

The video series *Histórias no Jardim* [Stories in the Garden] invited the public to have playful experiences and interact with the works of the MAM Sculpture Garden through storytelling.

One of the proposals was *A Árvore de Tamoromu* [The Tamoromu Tree], inspired by the indigenous tale of the Wapixana people, in which a lazy *cotia* [a small rodent, also known as agouti] ventures into the forest and finds a huge tree that bears all kinds of fruits and vegetables, attracting the attention of the *curumins* [children, in the indigenous Tupi language] and adults.

"When the *curumins* saw that tree with all those fruits hanging from its branches, they ran back to call the whole tribe.

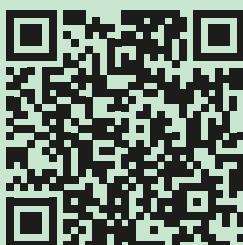
'We want all the fruits! Let's chop down the tree!'

'Cut down the tree for what, eh?!' said the *cotia*.

The *cotia* wanted to chase after them, but her belly was so full that she couldn't even walk properly, she had to stand there watching everyone head off with their axes.

When they found the Tamoromu Tree, they were enchanted by its beauty. On the branches of the amazing tree hung all the fruits they already knew and others of which they hadn't even heard. The tree was so tall, but so tall that they couldn't even see the top of it. The tree was so big, but so big, that even if the whole tribe held hands they would not be able to embrace its wide trunk.

But even so, even in the face of so much beauty, they took their axes and started chopping..."



Ana Luísa Lacombe
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1963)

A Árvore de Tamoromu [The Tamoromu Tree]
2022

Stories in the Garden – video, 11'30"
Storytelling and interpretation: Ana Luísa Lacombe



Tarsila do Amaral
(Capivari, SP, 1886 – São Paulo,
SP, 1973)

Paisagem
1948



Leda Catunda
(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

Paisagem sobreposta
2001

memory

invasion

preservation

map

Territory: Environment: Contexts

genocide

originary

abandonment

record



German Lorca
(São Paulo, SP, 1922 – 2021)

Ibirapuera
1998

More than a geographical extension or an area occupied by a nation, a territory is also a delimited location where social relations establish themselves and it is hence a collective construction that transforms and unfolds itself over time. The environment, on the other hand, surrounds and enfolds us completely, and thus it is impossible to be outside of it. The environment is the medium where we live and where we forge relationships with the world and with others. It is that which enables the many different life forms, in the same way as it is precisely within it that difficulties, whether biological or cultural, are manifested. We behave differently according to the environment in which we find ourselves. Contexts are the circumstances that occur in a particular situation. The context makes all the difference for the meaning of an action; it is linked to a conjuncture and a particular point in time when a fact occurs. Ibirapuera Park, however, can be regarded as both a territory and an environment, and it can also provide a context for the concatenation of circumstances for an action.

"Since the madness in question is diagnosed as an alteration in the relation to the world, is it possible to detach the term 'world' from its association—an almost automatic one, to be sure—with the term 'natural world'? We would have to be able to introduce an opposition, not between nature and culture this time (since the incessant vibrations between the two are what drives us crazy), but between Nature/Culture on one side and, on the other, a term that would include each one of them as a particular case. I propose simply to use the term world or 'worldling,' for this more open concept, defining it, in an obviously very speculative fashion, as that which opens to the multiplicity of existents, on the one hand, and to the multiplicity of ways they have of existing, on the other."

"Ideology is a logical, systematic, and coherent set of representations (ideas and values) and of norms or rules (of conduct) that indicate and prescribe to the members of society what they should think and how they should think it, what they should value and how they should value it, what they should feel and how they should feel it, what they should do and how they should do it. It is, therefore, an explanatory body of representations and practices (norms, rules, and precepts) of prescriptive, normative, regulating nature whose function is to give the members of a class-divided society a rational explanation for social, political, and cultural differences, without ever attributing such differences to the division of society into classes. On the contrary, the function of ideology is to erase differences, such as those relating to class, and to provide members of the society with the feeling of social identity, finding particular referential identifiers of all and for all, such as, for instance, humanity, liberty, equality, nation, or state."

"We have always been close to the water, but it seems we have learned very little from the utterances of the rivers. The exercise of listening to what the water courses communicate began to produce in me a sort of critical observation of the cities, especially the large ones, spreading over the bodies of rivers in a way that is so irreverent to the point that we no longer harbor any respect for them ... This grandfather-river of ours, called Rio Doce [literally, Sweet River] by whites, whose waters run less than a kilometer from my backyard, sings. On silent nights we hear its voice and we speak to our music-river. We like to give our thanks to it because it gives us food and this amazing water, it broadens our vision of the world and confers meaning to our existence. At night its waters flow fast and noisy, their whispers gliding down the rocks, forming rapids that make music and, at this moment, the rock and the water implicate us in such a marvelous way that enables us to conjugate the we: we-river, we-mountain, we-earth. We feel so profoundly immersed in these beings that we allow ourselves to leave our own bodies, to leave the sameness of anthropomorphy, and experience other forms of existence. For example, to be water and experience the incredible potency it holds for taking different paths."

"... a research practice is implicated in our own life. The 'choice' of a research practice, among others, relates to the way we were and are subjectified, to how we enter the game of knowledges, and to the way we relate ourselves to power. Thus, we don't choose that which best suits us from an array of methods, but rather, we are chosen (and this expression often carries a bitter taste) by that which was historically possible to be announced; which acquired meanings for us and which also signified us, subjectified us, subjected us."

#poeticexperience Urban Archipelagos

If you carefully observe the places you go or the corners of your house, is there any little plant growing in the middle of the gray immensity of concrete?

Are there flowers growing through the cracks? The leaves of these plants, are they thin or thick? What is the size of the largest and smallest plant you found? Do you recognize any of their species?

Archipelago is a group of islands that are born from the same geological formation, they are sister islands that live close to each other. The participants of this poetic experience were invited to imagine an urban archipelago where plants and flowers would grow, timidly but stubbornly, in contrast with the gray city. A place where common plant species were found on the streets, sidewalks, in every nook, hole, or crack.

Stemming from this thoughtful observation, they created an archipelago of images, photographing all the plants that grow between the cracks in built spaces. At the end of their investigation, they cataloged the images comparing the differences between the plant species that were found.



Urban Archipelagos

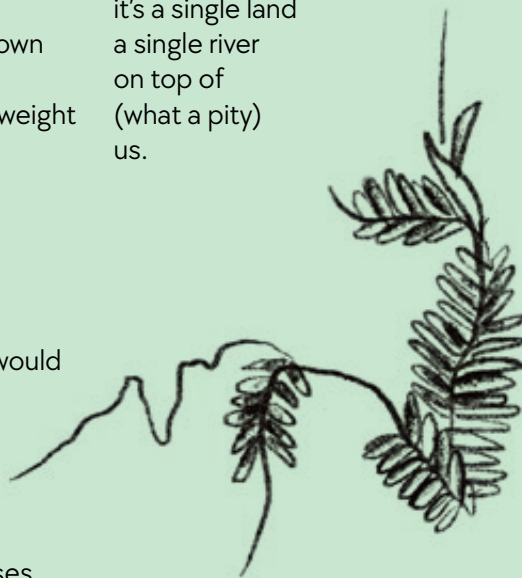
Barbara Jimenez

What if the axis of the world rotated?
And the rivers ran from the earth to the sky?
Before they spread across the firmament
They would break through the concrete
Crumble the asphalt
They would make a channel out of the
building that crushes them
And those who live in it, what should they do?
Become fishes,
Become tadpoles,
Become peacock bass
In order not to also be crushed
And rather be carried away by the previously
captive current

What if the axis of the world rotated?
And the things that were cemented down
came back up?
What if the huge earth that bears the weight
Of all the cobblestones
Of all the concrete
Of all the asphalt
Changed places with them?
All of this plaster
Would sustain the earth?
And those who live on top of it, what would
they do?
Become an armadillo,
Become a jaguar,
Become an agouti
Not to be buried together
And live from now on among the grasses
What if the axis of the world rotated?

And what's on top went down
And what's underneath now shines
And if what was covered,
cut,
buried,
curtailed,
repressed,
Now became surface and breath?

There's something coming over there
There's something surfacing there
And it seems alone
It seems small and fragile
Like a weedy growth
But underneath
it's a single land
a single river
on top of
(what a pity)
us.



Amanda Falcão (São Paulo, SP, 1994)
Amanda Santos (Mogi das Cruzes, SP, 1993)
Barbara Jimenez (São Bernardo do Campo, SP, 1991)

Arquipélagos urbanos [Urban Archipelagos]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 2'
Script: Amanda Santos and Barbara Jimenez
Production and editing: Amanda Falcão
Images: MAM Education team

#poeticexperience Ibirapuera Waters

Anyone who has already visited MAM and walked around Ibirapuera Park has probably already passed by one of the rivers that cross the park. Maybe he or she enjoyed a beautiful afternoon on its banks.

The bodies of flowing water that constitute Ibirapuera's rivers travel a long way to reach the park and carry on to different destinations after passing through its grounds. The audio guide "Ibirapuera Waters" is an invitation to embark on the journey of these rivers and learn about their stories. Each track is accompanied by a map that highlights points in Ibirapuera Park, where MAM is, emphasizing the Sapateiro and Caaguaçu rivers.



Rios e Ruas (José Bueno and Luiz de Campos Jr.)
(São Paulo, SP, 2010)



Águas do Ibirapuera [Ibirapuera Waters]
2022

Audio guide made in partnership with the Rios e
Ruas project
Direction, production, and creation by Rios e Ruas
and Estúdio Laborg



Rodrigo Matheus
(São Paulo, SP, 1974)

Cortina de Vento
(from the series "O mundo em
que vivemos")
2008



Marcelo Cidade
(São Paulo, SP, 1979)

Transestatal
2006

encounter

affection

coexistence

soul

self
agile

will

construction

breath

Communication Networks: Communion: Resistance

childhood

community

camouflage

freedom

dwelling

ancestry

repair



Rodrigo Braga
(Manaus, AM, 1976)

Comunhão I
2006

Making something together requires generosity in the processes of listening and learning. It summons us to make visible what we have and what we lack in communication networks that involve partner forces and competitions, personified in figures of collaboration and antagonism. At the collective level, processes of communion and resistance are instituted—the ideas, decisions, gestures, acts, and worldviews. It may also be necessary to break with former agreements and bring into play possible friction caused by the participants' different rhythms. Making something together presupposes breaking protocols and requires us to catch up with our real desires, which leads us to construct meanings for all that we find important to accomplish. In addition to demanding greater flexibility and complexity in uniting interests, intentions, and efforts, it can provoke attraction, repulsion, courage, or insecurity in relation to the possible results, making evident the limits of our knowledges.

"Indigenous peoples have been showing the world what it means to be sustainable for many centuries. The relationship with other beings in the forest is a relationship of respect. We are part of a big web, where everything is connected, everything is related. Ancestral knowledge and practices are totally connected to these plots of the great web of life."

"We humans live aesthetic experiences in all the relational domains that we deal with. It is due to the biological foundation of the aesthetic experience, as well as to the fact that everything we experience as human beings pertains to our relational existence, that art is intertwined with our social existence and our technological present in all periods of time. I affirm that the emotion that constitutes social coexistence is love. And love is the domain of these relational behaviors through which another being emerges as a legitimate other in coexistence with someone else. Once different technologies open and close different relational dimensions, they offer different possibilities for social and nonsocial coexistence"

“Earth is another element that attracts children in their play... . When lived through concretely, these processes are bearers of knowledge which, once incorporated, will be important indicators in future learning processes that involve children’s capacity for abstraction. The handling of clay, whilst adding seeds, flowers, twigs, stones, and other elements found during walks across vacant lots, where nature still presents itself with its natural vegetation, manifests singular expressions, whereby a harmonious aesthetic emerges in different formats.”

“We are living in a world where we are obliged to dive deep into the earth to be able to recreate possible worlds. It so happens that, in the narratives of a world where only human beings act, this centrality silences all other presences. They even seek to silence the enchanted beings, reducing to mimicry that which we call ‘spiriting,’ suppressing the experience of the body in communion with a leaf, with lichen, and with water, with wind and fire, with everything that activates our transcendental potency and which supplants the mediocrity to which human beings have been reducing themselves.”

"It is by living lucidly the tense relationship between authority and freedom that one discovers the two need not necessarily be in mutual antagonism."

"Being completely involved in what is being made, and the interests and ideologies gradually give shape to what is being created. 'The maker,' as a participant, values the doing as much or even more than the thing done, and he does not eschew moments of resistance and tension, but rather, he prefers to cultivate them, not as an act of will but because of their potentialities, extending an experience that is unified and total to living consciousness."

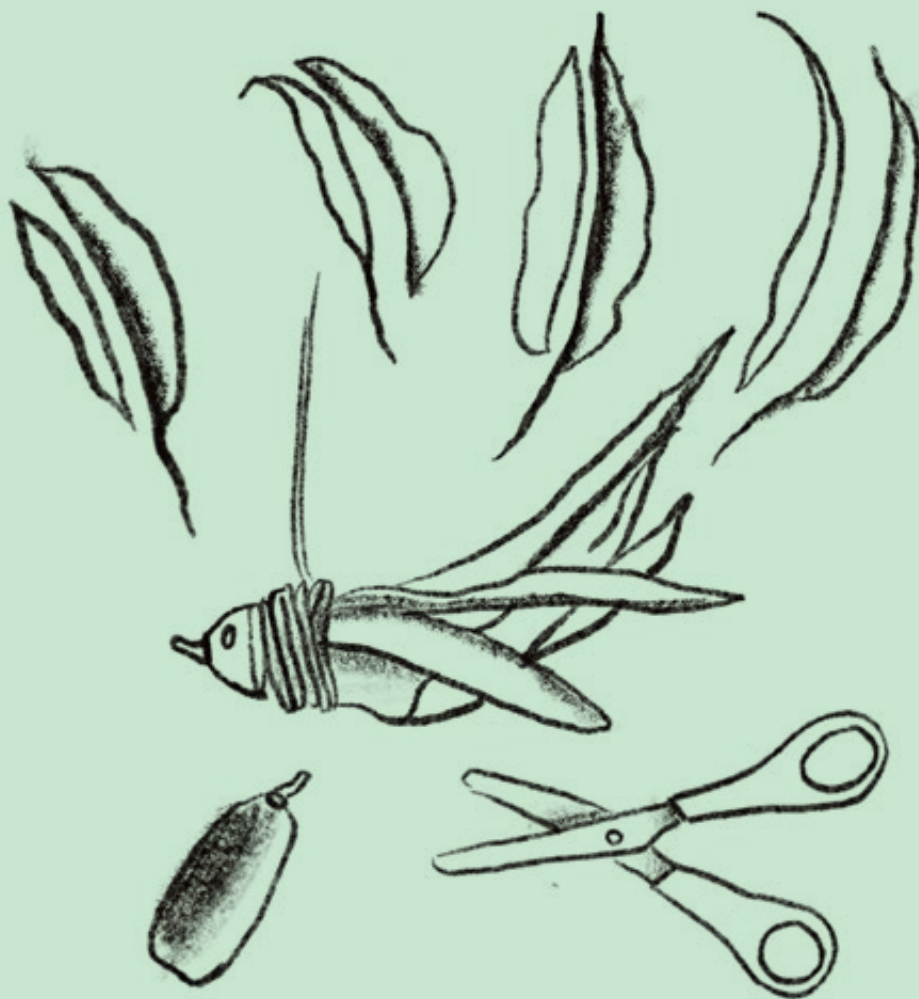
#poeticexperience

Nest Atelier: Making Birds With Elements of Nature

Who has already heard the singing and chirping of birds when visiting the MAM Sculpture Garden?

For this poetic experience, the participants carefully observed the birds that fly around the paths between the artworks, trying to identify, from their calls and songs, clues as to where their nests might be and their displacements around the area.

After their observation, they collected leaves, flowers, twigs, seeds, sticks, and other materials to create birds, using string, adhesive tape, scissors, felt-tip pens, and paint, developing *gambiaras* [make-shift, improvised solutions] that allowed the birds to perform other flights...



Amanda Falcão (São Paulo, SP, 1994)
Amanda Santos (Mogi das Cruzes, SP, 1993)

Ateliê Ninho: criação de passarinhos com
elementos da natureza [Nest Atelier: Making
Birds with Elements of Nature]
2022

Poetic experience – video, 54”
Script: Amanda Santos
Production and editing: Amanda Falcão

#poeticexperience Home of the Rufous Hornero

If you were a bird, what would your home be like?
Is there room for earth, clay, and other forms of
connecting with nature in the places where we live?

Among the houses built out of clay, there are small dwellings that we can find in trees and even on lamp posts, built by the bird that bears the Portuguese word for clay [*barro*] in its name and has a reputation for being a builder: the *joão-de-barro* [rufous hornero].

This poetic experience invited participants to build clay houses in a modeling workshop.

Soil, water, straw, and tree twigs were some of the materials used to construct the houses. Mixing soil with water, the molded clay gradually received the twigs and straw, which helped give the houses more structure. When they finished modeling, they waited for the pieces to dry, a process that took a few days.

The cracks that sometimes appeared after this process were then filled with clay.

Once ready, many of the sculptures were hung in the houses of their creators, some of them receiving a visit from birds that sought to feast on the fruits often left inside the clay houses as an invitation to the birds to share and partake of that moment.



Amanda Falcão (São Paulo, SP, 1994)
Amanda Santos (São Paulo, SP, 1993)
Cristina Fernandes (Pau dos Ferros, RN, 1992)

A morada de João-de-Barro [Home of the Rufous Hornero]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 1'49"
Script: Cristina Fernandes and Amanda Santos
Production and editing: Amanda Falcão

#poeticexperience

Between Webs and Threads

A loom is a tool used in the art of weaving wool, present since ancient times in the history of many civilizations, invented from the desire to transform natural fibers, linen, and wool into warm clothing to protect from the cold. Native peoples often see spiders as the great weaver of the forests, which, from a simple thread, are capable of weaving, creating networks, unraveling, and remaking their webs.

As opposed to pieces created on industrial looms, the handcrafted work of weaving by hand invites us to experience a different relationship with time and the way we consume clothes and other woven items.

This poetic experience was an invitation to experience the art of weaving.

After preparing materials such as cardboard, pencils, scissors, ruler, string, yarn, or various ribbons, the participants separated two pieces of cardboard: a larger one, to be their loom (marked with vertical and horizontal lines, with a distance of two centimeters between them), and a smaller one, to make their needle.

The lines were cut vertically to receive the threads. Then, each person took a string and tied a knot at one end, securing the knot to one of the first teeth of the loom. Then, they passed the string between the teeth, stretching it tightly. These were the “warp” threads on each person’s loom. When they had gone through all the teeth, they cut the string and tied a knot to secure it, as they did at the beginning.

The needle, a smaller piece of cardboard, had a triangular shape at one end and, at the other end, a hole to pass the weaving thread through. Everyone cut a piece of wool, passed one of its ends through their needle, and tied the other end with a knot to one of the first warp threads. Only then, with the loom ready, was it possible to start weaving, interspersing the weft thread over and under the lines on the cardboard loom, going first in one direction and then going back with the needle, always remembering to intersperse passing the wool over and under the loom threads.

Whenever the thread ran out or someone wanted to change color, all that had to be done was to attach the leftover thread from its weft to one of the warp threads on the loom, fastening one thread to another as done at the beginning and repeating the process until the weft completed the space of its loom. When the weaving was fully completed, it was possible to bend the teeth of the loom and remove it easily, carrying out the same movement on both sides and adjusting the threads of what was woven into trims and finishings created by the participants.



Amanda Falcão
(São Paulo, SP, 1994)

Entre tramas e fios [Between Webs and Threads]
2021

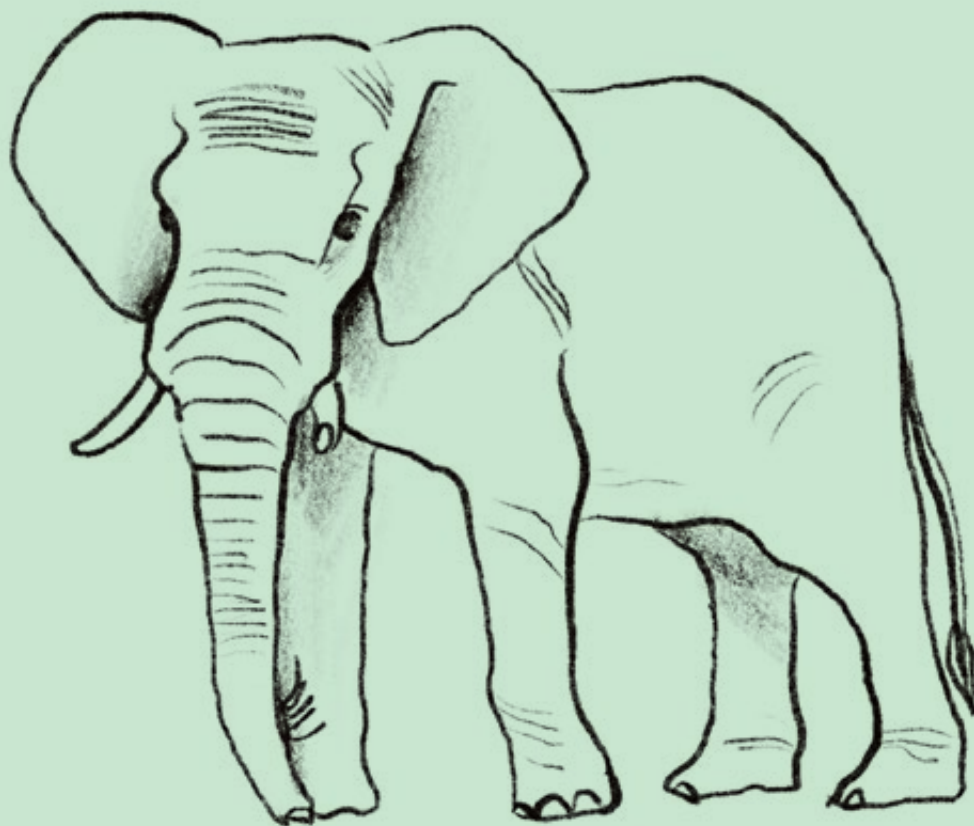
Poetic experience – video, 4'39"
Script, production, and editing: Amanda Falcão

#poeticexperience

The Five Wise Men and the Elephant

Inspired by an old Eastern tale, Ana Luísa Lacombe recounts the story of five wise men who lived in a village and, despite being recognized as very “wise,” competed among themselves for the position of the one with the most wisdom.

“The fifth wise man, the one who was blind, hearing all the others, approached them together with a child who was his guide and asked the youngster to draw the animal on the ground. Then he ran his fingers along the outline of the drawing and saw that everyone was somewhat right, but also wrong and deluded at the same time. And he said, ‘This is how men see the truth, they take a part as though it were the whole and remain fools....’”



Ana Luísa Lacombe
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1963)

Cinco sábios e o elefante [The Five Wise Men and the
Elephant]
2022

Stories in the Garden – video, 3'48"
Adaptation and storytelling: Ana Luísa Lacombe
Audiovisual production: Opaco Filmes



Claudia Andujar
(Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 1931)

**A jovem Susi Korihana thëri em um
igarapé — Catrimani, Roraima
(from the series "A floresta")
1972-74/2019**



Lia Menna Barreto
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1959)

Manhã de sol
1994

object

distortion

subversion

invention

illusion

Traces: Record and Time

fiction

displacement

remnant

meaning



Regina Silveira
(Porto Alegre, RS, 1939)

Masterpieces (in Absentia: Calder)
1998

To materialize the invisible, to say the unsayable, to mark that which could go unnoticed is part of the dynamics of making something together, which presupposes working in pairs, at least.

What we learn from the other marks us in ways for the making of something together, impacting our choices, even when we are alone. Recording is a way of ensuring that what happened remains documented, be it on the sand, on a wall, or on paper. The record is a way of perpetuating an action that time tends to erase. How to record that which continues to reverberate in space and time after the encounter with the other? Even that which leaves no visible trace can remain in our memory. Encounters with the other help us see what is hidden. Like a mirror, that object that exists outside of us and which reflects and reveals who we are.

"In addition to material and institutional reasons, cultural forces today work against the practice of demanding cooperation. Modern society is producing a new character type. This is the sort of person bent on reducing the anxieties which differences can inspire, whether these be political, racial, religious, ethnic, or erotic in character. The person's goal is to avoid arousal, to feel as little stimulated by deep differences as possible.... Cultural homogenization is apparent in modern architecture, clothing, fast food, popular music, hotels... an endless globalized list. 'Everybody is basically the same' expresses a neutrality-seeking view of the world. The desire to neutralize difference, to domesticate it, arises... from an anxiety about difference, which intersects with the economies of global consumer culture. One result is to weaken the impulse to cooperate with those who remain intractably Other."

"In what way do the time periods and intervals noted on calendars also mark and expand the conception of a time that simultaneously bends forwards and backwards, always in the process of prospection and retrospection, of simultaneous remembrance and becoming? Spiraling is what, in my understanding, best illustrates this perception, conception, and experience. The compositions that follow seek to contribute to the idea that time can be ontologically experienced as movements of reversibility, dilation and contention, nonlinearity, discontinuity, contraction and distension, the simultaneity of present instances, past and future, as ontological and cosmological experiences that have as a basic principle of the body not the repose, as in Aristotle, but rather, movement. In the curved temporalities, time and memory are images that reflect one another."

"Faith is always the starting point of doubt. Faith ('certainty') is the state of mind before doubt. Effectively, faith is the primordial state of mind. The 'naive' and 'innocent' spirit believes. It has 'good faith.' Doubt puts an end to the naivety and innocence of the spirit, and although it may produce a new and better faith, this new faith will no longer be 'good.' The naivety and innocence of the spirit dissolve in the corrosive acid of doubt. The climate of authenticity is irrevocably lost. The process is irreversible. Attempts to regain authenticity (original faith) by spirits that have been corroded by doubt are nothing but frustrated nostalgia. These are attempts to regain paradise. Once doubted, original 'certainties' can no longer be authentically certain. Methodically applied doubt may possibly produce new, more refined and sophisticated certainties, but these will never be authentic. They will always conserve the sign of the doubt that was their midwife."

"The moment we choose to love we begin to move against domination, against oppression. The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others."

“... a concept that arose or was adopted in Latin America to summarize the ideal of a life lived in common among groups that are culturally, socially, or politically very different, a viable life together, a stable, possibly permanent, ‘living together’, desirable in itself and not only for its effects. ... To live together is to come to live side by side among different people without the risk of violence and with the expectation of fruitfully harnessing our differences. The challenge of living together is basically the challenge of tolerating diversity, and this finds its clearest manifestation in the absence of violence.

Tolerating diversity today implies:

- A transformation of identities and their reproduction mechanisms, so that, in order to have a strong identity or to preserve it, it is no longer necessary to deny the identity of the other, it is no longer necessary to exclude them.
- The acceptance of the fact that the options that different groups or different traditions offer in the face of the most important questions (religious, philosophical, political questions) could be considered—from some angle—equivalent and, more recently, the acceptance of the possibility and utility of different projects of society coexisting in the same society.
- The expansion of the scope of agreements (many themes, such as those related to sexuality or domestic tasks, are no longer regulated by customs and become objects of agreements between couples, for example).

Absence of violence implies:

- The exclusion of violent actions, through shared rules (legal or cultural) or rules fixed or internalized autonomously and unilaterally (moral-personal).
- The universalization of rivalries to peacefully resolve conflicts (solve problems, reach agreements).”

"I think the true work of love is just so hard. It requires integrity, that there be a congruency between what we think, say, and do. ... so I think that people would rather settle for a counterfeit of love than to actually do the work of love. Because the work of love is first and foremost about knowledge and knowing a person. It is not easy to get to know somebody. ...

I think that societies begin with our small units of community, which are family—whether bio or chosen. I am often amazed when I meet people that I see have been raised in loving families because they're so different and they live in the world differently. I don't agree that every family is dysfunctional—I think we don't want to admit that when people are loving, it's a different world. ... It's not that they don't have pain, but they know how to handle their pain in a way that's not self-negating."

"The refusal to feel takes a heavy toll. Not only is there an impoverishment of our emotional and sensory life—flowers are dimmer and less fragrant, our loves less ecstatic—but this psychic numbing also impedes our capacity to process and respond to information. The energy expended in pushing down despair is diverted from more creative uses, depleting the resilience and imagination needed for fresh visions and strategies. Furthermore, the fear of despair can erect an invisible screen, selectively filtering out anxiety-provoking data. In a world where organisms require feedback in order to adapt and survive, this is suicidal."

"*Amarração* [literally, a 'tying up'] is the effect of enunciating multiple understandings in a single saying, through the most different forms of textuality. In this way, the *amarração* will never be normatized because it is inapprehensible. Even if the enigma is unraveled, this feat is only possible through the introduction of a new enigma, a new *amarração*. In other words, its untying is always temporary and partial, given that the deciphering that unravels it may be only part of the enigma's construction, and this disentanglement is only possible by adding a new enigmatic verse to the previously formulated one. In this sense, the notion of *amarração*, just like that of *macumba*, can be understood as an ambivalent and unfinished polyphonic phenomenon."

#poeticexperience

What Can a Shadow Turn Into?

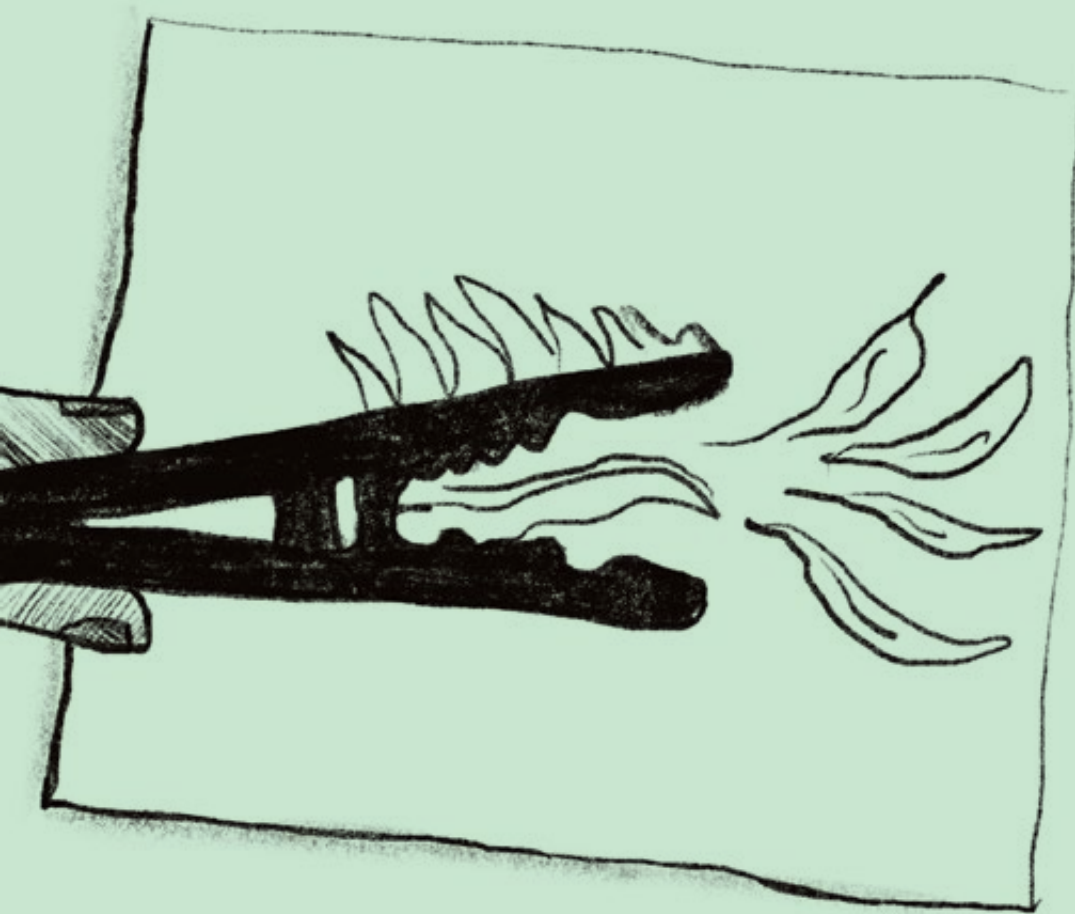
The artist Regina Silveira, in her work *Masterpieces (in Absentia: Calder)*, attempted to fix the shadow of an object and let the public imagine what it had become. A monster, an insect, a spaceship?

Where there is light, there is shadow. There is the shadow of our body on the ground, of the lampposts on the streets. From trees to ants, everything has its shadow. The invitation made to the participants of this poetic experience was to play with their imagination, by observing, on a sunny day or under a lamp at home, how the shadow of our body or of objects transforms itself into figurative or abstract images, sharp or distorted, changing when the position of the objects in relation to the light shifts.

In a second gesture of creation, the shadows were recorded using: a light source (lamp, flashlight, lampshade), a blank sheet of paper, pen, pencil or chalk, and tape.

The sheet of paper was fixed to the place where the light source was directed, on a wall or the floor.

After choosing an object or the hand itself, the participants alternately moved toward the paper and away from it to observe the shapes projected on the paper. Some of these shapes were outlined with a pen and later colored or textured according to the objectives of the person who created them.



Laysa Elias
(São Bernardo do Campo, SP, 1993)

No que a sombra pode se transformar? [What Can a
Shadow Turn Into?]
2022

Poetic experience – video, 41”
Script, production, and editing: Laysa Elias

#poeticexperience

Collection of Experiences

Not all the elements that make up nature are visible or palpable, and such characteristics show us how plural and diverse nature can be. In this experiment, the idea was to collect elements that seemed impossible to keep at first glance, but that, by expanding our perception, could inspire us to find poetic and creative possibilities.

The experiment began by getting any type of envelope, and then investigating which elements of nature are a part of your home, your school, your street, or the places you pass through. Are there spaces illuminated by the sun or covered by the shadows of plants and trees? What is the shade of green of your plants? Is it possible to notice a cool breeze at a window?

Next, the participants thought of ways to collect and store such phenomena of nature in envelopes. Would they fit?

After collecting and storing them, the envelopes were sealed with glue or tape, and their identification was written on the outside.

Some people handed their envelopes to a friend and invited them to live the same poetic experience of creation.



Amanda Santos (Mogi das Cruzes, SP, 1993)
Laysa Elias (São Bernardo do Campo, SP, 1993)

Coleta de experiências [Collection of Experiences]
2020

Poetic experience – video, 30”
Script: Amanda Santos and Laysa Elias
Production and editing: Laysa Elias



10/1 Thomaz

Thomaz Farkas
(Budapest, Hungary, 1924 –
São Paulo, SP, 2011)

Untitled
1940s



Luiz Braga
(Belém, PA, 1956)

Pegadas
1985

tracks

story

connection

shadow

space

Transmutation: Exchanges and Transformation

evidence

reflection

worlds

void

exu



Frans Krajcberg
(Kozienice, Poland, 1921 –
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2017)

Untitled
1981

The notion of transmutation is linked to the conversion of one element into another, a type of modification or alteration in the structure of something. Various mutations may create a transmutation. In alchemy, one seeks the transmutation of a common and ordinary metal into another that is noble and rare. If transformation presupposes displacement, going from one place to another, or an element changing its state, from liquid to gas for example, in transmutation the formation of new elements takes place. In the act of exchanging, however, there is a substitution for something equivalent. In exchanges, we offer something and we receive something else of similar value in return, that is, there is reciprocity. But in general, we only exchange something for something that we do not have. When breathing, we exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide with the environment. In photosynthesis, water, carbon dioxide, and light are converted into oxygen. Exchanges are fundamental both for maintaining balance and for life on the planet.

"One of the first things we discover in these groups is that personal problems are political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for a collective solution. I went, and I continue to go to these meetings because I have gotten a political understanding which all my reading, all my 'political discussions,' all my 'political action,' all my four-odd years in the movement never gave me. I've been forced to take off the rose-colored glasses and face the awful truth about how grim my life really is as a woman. I am getting a gut understanding of everything as opposed to the esoteric, intellectual understandings and *noblesse oblige* feelings I had in 'other people's' struggles. This is not to deny that these sessions have at least two aspects that are therapeutic. I prefer to call even this aspect 'political therapy' as opposed to personal therapy. The most important is getting rid of self-blame. Can you imagine what would happen if women, blacks, and workers (my definition of worker is anyone who has to work for a living as opposed to those who don't. All women are workers) would stop blaming ourselves for our sad situations? It seems to me the whole country needs that kind of political therapy. That is what the black movement is doing in its own way. We shall do it in ours. We are only starting to stop blaming ourselves. We also feel like we are thinking for ourselves for the first time in our lives."

“Political groupings and executive authorities appear to be totally incapable of understanding the full implications of these issues. Despite having recently initiated a partial realization of the most obvious dangers that threaten the natural environment of our societies, they are generally content to simply tackle industrial pollution and then from a purely technocratic perspective, whereas only an ethico-political articulation—which I call *ecosophy*—between the three ecological registers (the environment, social relations, and human subjectivity) would be likely to clarify these questions. Henceforth it is the ways of living on this planet that are in question, in the context of the acceleration of technological mutations and of considerable demographic growth.”

“In addition to where each one of us is born—in a ranch, a village, a community, a city—we are all installed in the larger organism that is the Earth. That is why we say that we are children of the earth. This Mother constitutes the first layer, the womb of the experience of conscience, which is neither applied nor utilitarian. It is not a life manual, but an inseparable relationship with one’s origin, with the memory of the creation of the world and with the most comforting stories that each culture is capable of producing—which are called, in certain literature, myths. Mythologies are alive. They continue to exist whenever a community insists on inhabiting this poetic place of living a life-affecting experience, despite the other harsh narratives of the world. This may not have a very practical meaning for the competing with others in a world in dispute, but it makes perfect sense in valuing life as a gift. There is nothing more important than life... .”

"The term aesthetic constitution shall be understood here as the distribution of the sensible that gives form to the community. Distribution means two things: participation in something in common and, conversely, the separation, the distribution of the shares. A distribution of the sensible is therefore the way in which the relationship between something shared in common and the dividing of exclusive parts is determined in the sensible."

"... Art can come from a subject, a material, a reality, whether abstract or representative or conceptual. It can be about real life, about how we see, touch, experience, feel. Art and politics have, in common, the ability to move people.... Art can come from art, just as it can come from life. Knowing this leads us to want to know more about its production, distribution, and the impact of works of art with social implications, in the context of our culture and history. We define social implication broadly as any work of art that deals with sexism, racism, ecological damage, and other forms of human oppression. Historically, politicized artists and artists implicated in social transformations have been denied mainstream attention and coverage and thus our interaction with them has been limited. We have to know what we are doing."

"The city was invaded by industry and production and transformed the logic of collective life into private life. It should be noted that the records about the Mayas and Aztecs show a culture with a lot of urbanity, but in an expanded sense. They do not exactly evoke the city, but a way of being and belonging to a collective dynamic. In this sense, the Xinguano peoples [from the Upper Xingu region in Brazil], in their garden-cities, also have a lot of urbanity. When Davi Kopenawa narrates the alliances between humans and the *xapiri*, the spirits of the forest, he is talking about the same thing. We have to reforest our imagination and, in this way, maybe we can get closer to a poetics of urbanity that restores the power of life, instead of repeating the Greeks and the Romans. Let's grow a forest, suspended gardens filled with urbanity, where a little more desire, joy, life, and pleasure can exist, instead of slabs covering creeks and streams. After all, life is wild and it also erupts in the cities."

#poeticexperience

The Skeleton Woman

Inspired by tales passed on from generation to generation, Ana Luísa Lacombe tells the story of a father and his daughter, which begins at the top of a cliff. In a kind of symbiosis with nature, the unfolding of this story shows the relationship of a girl and her transformation process with the natural cycles of life and her encounter with an adventurous fisherman.

"He curled up in his coat and slept and dreamed. No one knows what he dreamt of. I don't know either. I don't even think he knows. But a tear trickled from his eyes and shone in the moonlight that pierced the ceiling. The skeleton woman saw it, and standing up awkwardly, she took that tear and drank it. Although it was salty, it was as if she had drunk the sweet water she had waited for for so many years. Then, she put her hands on the man's heart—*tum tum, tum tum, tum tum*—and she pierced his chest with her hands and held his heart in her hands—*tum tum, tum tum, tum tum*—and she sang: *O nanana, O nanana...* What became, my skin, my flesh, my blood, my nail, my eyes, my breasts... *O nanana, O nanana...* And her body was coating itself with flesh, muscles, veins, blood—*O nanana, O nanana*. Now she also had a heart beating inside her, so she released the fisherman's heart and nestled her body next to his, and the two of them slept together throughout the night."



Ana Luísa Lacombe
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1963)

A mulher esqueleto [The Skeleton Woman]
2022

Stories in the Garden – video, 10'23"
Retelling and interpretation: Ana Luísa Lacombe
Audiovisual production: Opaco Filmes

#poeticexperience

Have You Ever Tried Recycling Paper Manually?

Paper, for the most part, is manufactured from cellulose, a material extracted from the wood of tree trunks.

Although paper is widely used in everyday life, little is said about its manufacturing process, which requires the cutting down of several trees, affecting our ecosystem.

What are the possible ways to review the logic of consumption in our society and propose new uses for materials that would otherwise be discarded?

To reuse and transform the matter from discarded paper, in this poetic experience, a manual and handmade recycling technique was proposed, with the investigation of natural pigments and textures, from mineral or organic materials.

To begin, a basin was set out where water and the scrap paper separated for recycling and already cut into pieces were placed. The mixture was left to soak for twenty-four hours. After the fibers had softened, the participants took a portion, filled it with water, and beat the pulp in the blender, adding natural pigments (spices, coffee, leaves, flowers, fruits, soil, etc.), after beating the pulp well. Next, the pulp was placed in a basin with a little water, for further dilution, and only then a printing screen was dipped in to collect and spread the fibers evenly. Some people used an embroidery hoop with nylon or other fabrics, such as unbleached cotton, instead of the screen.

The material, on the screen, was left to dry in open air, and the sheet of paper was only removed from the frame when it was completely dry.



Amanda Falcão
(São Paulo, SP, 1994)

Já experimentou reciclar papéis manualmente?
[Have You Ever Tried Recycling Paper Manually?]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 2'14"
Script, production, and editing: Amanda Falcão



Laura Vinci
(São Paulo, SP, 1962)

Folhas avulsas #3
(detail)
2019



Pedro Motta
(Belo Horizonte, MG, 1977)

Treme Terra
1998/2008

culture

intersection

Games: Rules: Intentional Ways of Taking Part

technology

languages



Chelipa Ferro
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1995)

Totó treme terra
2006

Games are linked to enjoyment, to playing, to learning an ability, or, at least, to an experience lived. Whether physical or mental, games always presuppose rules that circumscribe how our bodies can act and with what aim. In some games, luck is fundamental; in others, technique is essential. Apart from the solitary games in which the player competes against themselves, the opponent is the one who allows the game to exist. But to win the game one has to choose a side, form teams, work together. Those who enter a game know that they will not always achieve victory. And losses teach us and indicate ways to overcome failure. It is common for games to arouse our imagination, fantasies, and not infrequently they are linked to passions. Certainly, games reveal a lot about the relationships between people and the world. Games fascinate us because they are unpredictable and can make us reach ecstasy. And even if it is not reached, another game can always be started.

"Cooperation can be defined, drily, as an exchange in which the participants benefit from the encounter. This behavior is instantly recognizable in chimpanzees grooming one other, children building a sandcastle, or men and women laying sandbags against an impending flood. Instantly recognizable, because mutual support is built into the genes of all social animals; they cooperate to accomplish what they can't do alone."

“To work in communities is not populism. Paulo Freire used to say that in order to work in communities it was not necessary to regard them as holders of truth and virtue, but it meant, above all, respecting their members. He used to say that the error of sectarians of community programs was not denying or rejecting arrogant academic intellectuals, but rather their disregard for theory and the need for intellectual rigor. Another difference between modernism and postmodernism in relation to creativity in education is that modernist teachers thought that simply art-making in itself was enough to develop creativity. Contemporary theories of art education show that seeing art, analyzing works of art or art’s fields of meaning, reflexively experiencing art and its extension in different mediums, images, and objects of distinct categories also highly develops the mental functions responsible for the creative process. To permeate the school learning environment with art, creating galleries in schools, or populating their gardens with art results in a reflexive gain. The visual culture that surrounds the education of children and young people must evoke present-day values of the culture in which they are being educated, and issues and themes of their choice, providing them with the development of critical capacity. On the other hand, to strengthen their cultural ego, it is also necessary to steer them towards a critical view of the culture of their ancestors.

When culture is critically reevaluated, it enlivens the creative process. Bringing awareness to a community’s culture activates the emerging creative process of collectivity.”

"The ability to freely engender connections, a confrontation with knowledge that displays unbound and limitless imagination for questioning systems of power, seeking alternatives, and thus entering into negotiation with oneself to find new ways of doing things in our daily lives.... art is a way of doing things, not something you make.

A title that makes explicit reference to our conviction that thinking is performative, that knowing is inseparable from doing, and that which we learn and unlearn is directly reflected in our way of acting in the world."

"Life denotes a function, a comprehensive activity, in which organism and environment are included. ... air breathed, food taken, ground walked upon ... lungs respiring, stomach digesting, legs walking. ... the deeds enacted, the tragedies undergone; and it is the human comment, record, and interpretation that inevitably follow. Objectively, history takes in rivers, mountains, fields and forests, laws and institutions; subjectively it includes the purposes and plans, the desires and emotions, through which these things are administered and transformed."

“... the central problem of an education based upon experience is to select the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences.”

"From the sphere of the rite and, therefore, of performance, the crossroads is the radial point of centering and decentering, intersections and deviations, text and translations, confluences and alterations, influences and divergences, fusions and ruptures, multiplicity and convergence, unity and plurality, origin and dissemination. Operator of performative and also discursive languages, the crossroads, as a third place, is a generator of diversified sign production and, thus, of plural meanings. Within this concept of crossroads it is worth highlighting the kinetic and gliding nature of this enunciative and performative instance of the knowledges instituted in that very locus."

"First of all, in one of its most current meanings, and also one of the closest to its true meaning, the term 'game' designates not only the specific activity it names but also the totality of images, symbols, or instruments necessary for that same activity or for the functioning of a complex whole. ...

For now, the preceding analysis allow the game to be defined as an activity which is essentially:

- 1) free: given that, if the player was obligated to it, the game would immediately lose its attractive fun and joyful nature;
- 2) separate: circumscribed to limits of space and time, rigorously and previously established;
- 3) uncertain: since its course cannot be determined nor its result obtained in advance, and since it is mandatorily left to the player's initiative a certain freedom in the need to invent;
- 4) unproductive: because it does not generate goods, wealth, or new elements of any kind; and, unless there is a change of ownership within the players' circle, it leads to a situation identical to that from the beginning of the game;
- 5) rules-based: subject to conventions that suspend ordinary laws and momentarily establish new legislation, the only one that counts;
- 6) fictitious: accompanied by a specific awareness of another reality, or of frank unreality in relation to normal life."

"... civilization presupposes limitation and mastery of the self, the ability not to confuse its own tendencies with the ultimate and highest goal, but to understand that it is enclosed within certain bounds freely accepted. Civilization will, in a sense, always be played according to certain rules, and true civilization will always demand fair play. Fair play is nothing less than good faith expressed in play terms.... To be a sound culture-creating force this play-element must be pure. It must not consist in the darkening or debasing of standards set up by reason, faith, or humanity."

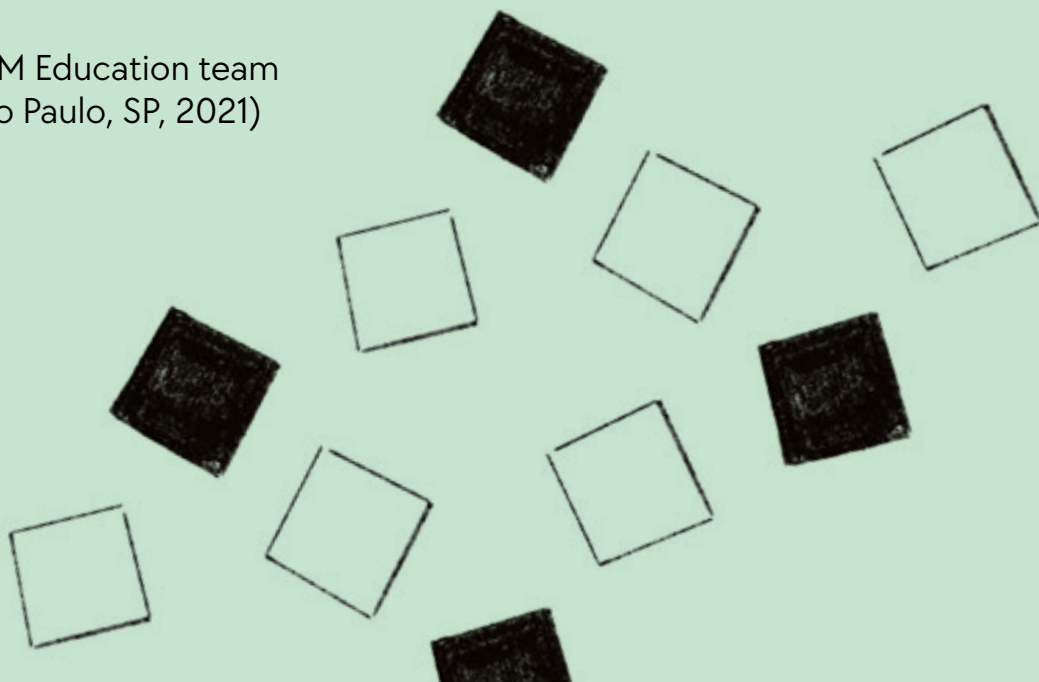
#poeticexperience MAM World on Minecraft

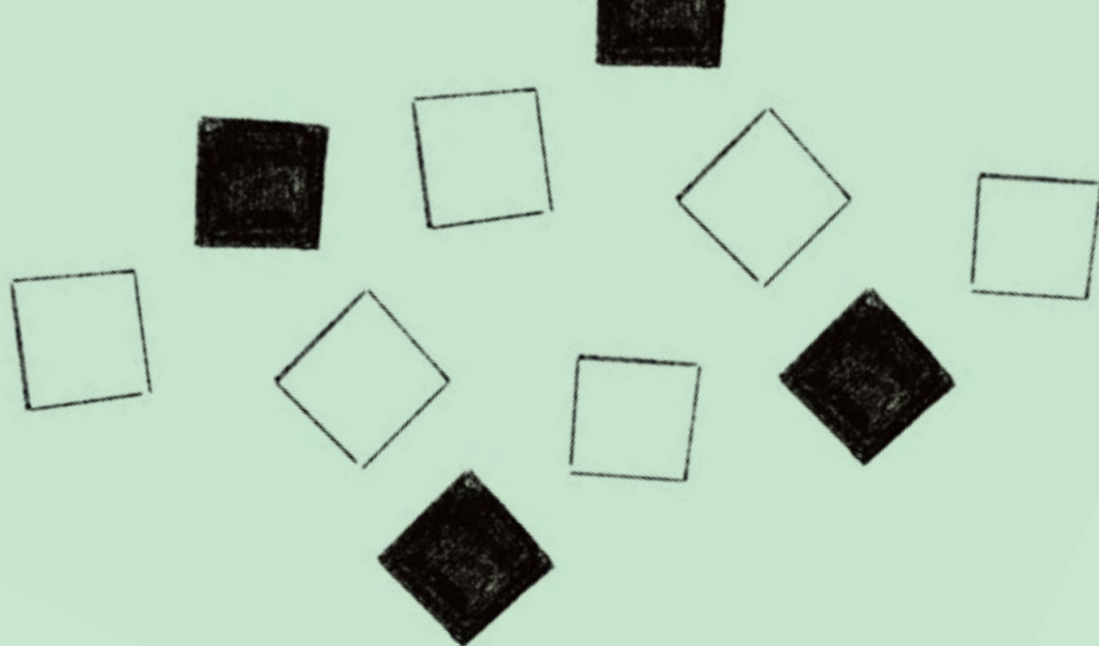
MAM World on the educational platform Minecraft: Education Edition is a virtual world that allows us to experience other types of contact with the museum and the artworks that are part of the collection.

The project offers unique experiences to players by combining art, education, and games, with reproductions of the museum's venues and artworks in the collection, pedagogical games, playful activities, and proposals for lessons.

Made in partnership with Microsoft and Africa advertising agency, the project, aimed at schools, students, artists, and those interested in art and videogames, presents an innovative form of dialogue with the audience through reproductions of MAM's internal and external environments, including its main building and the Sculpture Garden, and artworks from the museum's collection.

MAM Education team
(São Paulo, SP, 2021)





MAM Education team
(São Paulo, SP, 2021)

MAM no Minecraft [MAM on Minecraft]
2021

The game and lesson plans created by MAM
Education team are available at:
<https://mam.org.br/mam-no-minecraft/>



Amanda Falcão (São Paulo, SP, 1994)
Luna Aurora Souto (São Paulo, SP, 1999)

**Composição tridimensional: brincando com a
perspectiva MAM no Minecraft**
[Three-Dimensional Composition: Playing
With the MAM Perspective on Minecraft]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 2'2"
Script: Luna Aurora Souto
Production and editing: Amanda Falcão



Amanda Falcão (São Paulo, SP, 1994)
Amanda Santos (Mogi das Cruzes, SP, 1993)

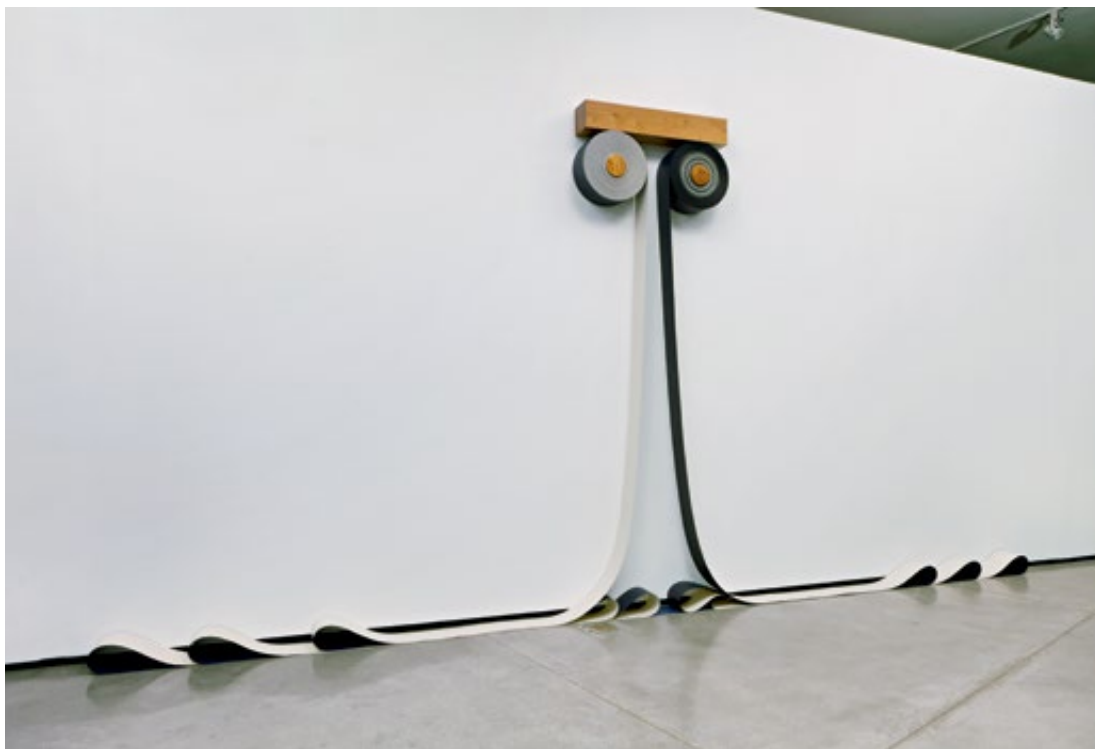
Estampas padronizadas no MAM no Minecraft
[Patterned Prints at MAM on Minecraft]
2021

Poetic experience – video, 2'29"
Script: Amanda Santos
Production and editing: Amanda Falcão



Paulo Bruscky
(Recife, PE, 1949)

**Expediente: primeira proposta para
o XXXI Salão Oficial de Arte do
Museu do Estado de Pernambuco
1978/2023**



Artur Lescher
(São Paulo, SP, 1962)

O Rio
2006



The background of the entire image is a solid light green color. Overlaid on this background is a repeating pattern of white chevrons (V-shapes). These chevrons are arranged in a staggered, interlocking fashion, creating a sense of movement and depth. Some chevrons point upwards, while others point downwards, and they are distributed across the entire frame.

For Reading Together

We Belong to the Land

This text was originally published under the title “Somos da terra” in the magazine *PISEAGRAMA* 12 / *Posse*, 2018, p. 44-51. Available at: <https://piseagrama.org/artigos/somos-da-terra/>

The English version “We Belong to the Land” was translated by Brena O’Dwyer with collaboration from Carmela Zigoni and it was published through a partnership between PISEAGRAMA and Futuress in 2023 as part of the Travessias – Crossings project. Available at: <https://piseagrama.org/in-english/we-belong-to-the-land/>
<https://futuress.org/stories/we-belong-to-the-land/>

Antônio Bispo dos Santos

Writer and *quilombola* leader from the Saco do Curtume community in the Brazilian state of Piauí, he is the author of *Colonização, quilombos: modos e significados*, published in 2015.



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When I provoke a debate about colonization, *quilombos*, and their means and meanings, I don’t want to position myself as a thinker. Instead, I want to position myself as a translator. My elders taught me orally, but they also put me in school, to learn the written language, so that I could translate the contracts we were forced to undertake.

I went to the school of written language at the age of nine, but ever since I started talking, I was also schooled by craft masters in the activities of our community. When I went to school, at the end of the 1960s, the oral contracts were being broken in our community and replaced by written contracts imposed by the white colonialist society. I studied until I was thirteen, when my community assessed I was ready to be a translator.

In the 1940s, there was an extensive land regularization campaign employing legal contracts written by the State. This happened in the State of Piauí, but also all over Brazil. The law defined those who occupied the land without legal contracts as *posseiros*, literally people “taking possession” of what was otherwise considered “empty” and “unproductive.” The law gave us a name, objectifying us. We were not *posseiros*, we were people... What did that mean to us?

When the law says we are *posseiros*, it fulfills a critical role for colonialism. Colonialists need to name the people they seek to dominate. Sometimes we do the same without realizing: when we name our dogs, for example, but we don’t give them surnames. Colonialists name things, but they refrain from providing surnames because that means providing power. The name objectifies, the surname empowers. So, by calling us *posseiros*, they put us in a

situation of subordination, forcing us to fulfill the contracts that very term imposed upon us.

Among our people, contracts were held orally because our relationship with the land was established through cultivation. The land did not belong to us, we belonged to the land. We did not say "this land is mine," we said "we are this land." There is an understanding among us that the land is alive, and that if it can produce, it should also rest. We did not want to own land deeds, but the State imposed it upon us. If we could choose, our lands would remain as they were—relating to the free fulfillment of life.

The *quilombola* ownership over the land is based upon words, trust, and relationships—not upon writing. When the State came to demarcate the land, my grandfather refused it. He said "How can we demarcate something that is already ours?" Thus, the whites came, bought the land, and we lost our right over it. Even the elders who had initially agreed to demarcate their lands ended up losing them, as there were no estate inventories when they died.

Most of the lands belonging to traditional communities in Brazil are considered spoils, as no one has a deed to them. If today we register and obtain deeds to them, we only do it because it is imposed upon us, and there is something grave about it. To obtain a deed to the land we need an anthropological report—even when the law states that being *quilombola* is a self-declaring identity—and an agronomic report. That is sophisticated use of State intelligence to identify and profile resistance. Why would we need an anthropologist to diagnose us, to understand our customs, traditions, and culture? Because, in the present day, the greatest threat to the system are traditional communities and peoples, as we are the owners of knowledge that is transmitted spontaneously and orally, with no charges.

Our people did not know how to read and did not know how the deeds worked, and therefore they lost the ability to live in their own lands. That is how our people decided that one of us should learn how to read and write, in order to face this situation. I was trained for that and do such work still today. That is why I say I am not a thinker, I am a translator of my people's thoughts. And for my people, I am also a translator of colonial thinking. When we discuss colonization, *quilombos*, their means and meanings, we are also trying to

understand what makes the colonialists think the way they do, and what we must think so as not to behave like them.

Our people were brought here from Africa, unlike our Indigenous friends, who were attacked in their own territory and could at least speak their own language and farm their own seeds, who could still be in a dialogue with their own environment. We were taken from our territory to be attacked on Indigenous peoples' territory. That is why we needed, and still need, to be very generous—and we have been successful at it. Even if we were brought to their territory, we never fought the Indigenous people for land. We dispute with the colonialists the territory that was taken away from Indigenous peoples, and that hurts us. But we need to do it, or else how are we going to live?

To the colonialists' surprise and to our own happiness, when we got to the Indigenous territories, we found out we had similar ways of life. We found a similar relationship to nature. We found a great confluence in ways of living and thinking. That made us stronger. We made a great cosmological alliance, even if we spoke different languages. By means of our ways and attitudes we understood each other.

My elders guided me to try and comprehend why the colonialists were doing that to other peoples. I read the Bible, I read what they wrote. And in the Bible, in Genesis, I found a good explanation. "Jehovah God said to the man, why have you disobeyed me? The earth will be cursed because of you. You shall only eat by the sweat of your brow. The land will offer you thorns and weeds. And all your descendants will be perpetually cursed."

At this moment, the Bible's colonial god—Euro-Christian, monotheistic—deterritorialized his people. When he cursed the land to colonialist people, he said that his people could not even touch the land. When he said that the land would offer them weeds and thorns, he said that the people could not eat either the fruits or the leaves or anything such land offered. When he said that these people had to eat by the sweat of their brow, at that very moment he created work as an action of synthesizing nature. At the same time, he also created a disease that I call cosmophobia—the fear of the cosmos, the fear of god. The monotheist Euro-Christian subject feels hopeless.

As *quilombolas*, we had to learn to live with that god. We even learnt to accept him. Because if he is a god, he must be good. So, in addition to our gods and goddesses we now have this other god. And that was when the colonialists started to lose, because they only have one god, and they still had to share him with us. We, on the other hand, have several gods and goddesses. As they only have one god, they only look in one direction. So their vertical gaze is linear; it does not curve. That is how they think and act. As we have several deities, we are able to look and see divinity in every corner. We see things in a circular way; we think and act in a circular way, and for us there is no ending; we can always find a way to start over.

Our way of thinking allows us to better dimension things, movements, and spaces. Circular spaces can fit more than rectangular ones. This enables us to live well with diversity and always think that the Other is important. We understand the need for other people to exist.

The Afro people invented *capoeira*. Euro-Christians invented soccer. If there is a game at the Mineirão Stadium, there might be forty thousand people in the stands and twenty-two people in the field. Let's say Cruzeiro is playing against Atlético Football Club, and Neymar Jr. is watching the game. He came all the way from France to watch the game. At a certain point, the soccer team Neymar is cheering for is losing, and he asks to play. Can he? Why can't Neymar play for the team he is cheering for? Why can't he enter the field?

Now, let's see the other side. There is a capoeira circle. A person from France is watching; they have never seen a capoeira circle before. There are fifty people playing capoeira, and that person who doesn't know how to play asks to join. Can they? Capoeira is played in spinning circles, sambas are sung in circles, drums are played in circles, the Umbanda and Candomblé religious rituals are held in spinning circles... Everything is constantly spinning for us. On the other hand, everything for the colonialist is linear, limited to a single direction.

Our *quilombos* are persecuted precisely because they offer a different way of living. It is not because of the color of our skin. In the Church documents that I evaluated, the permissions for peoples to be enslaved do not mention these peoples' skin color; they mention their religion. Pope Nicholas V papal bull states that the pagans and

the Saracens should be enslaved. It does not refer to Black, white, or Indigenous people. It refers to pagans, to the peoples who have a cosmology. These are peoples who have continued to eat the fruits of the trees. The peoples who disobeyed the Euro-Christian god. These are peoples who feel no obligation to work. They do not rely on the sweat of their brow to eat because nature offers them food.

We think that the concepts of "good living" and "welfare" are very similar to the concepts of "living organically" and "living synthetically." Good-living is living organically; to have welfare is to live synthetically. We understand that there is organic knowledge and synthetic knowledge. While organic knowledge is a type of knowledge that develops "being," synthetic knowledge is a type of knowledge that develops "having." We are operators of organic knowledge, and colonialists are operators of synthetic knowledge.

When the god of white people said that the earth was cursed because of Adam and Eve and that they would eat by the sweat of their brow, he said they could not enjoy nature as it presents itself. Soon, they would need to synthesize everything. And so, they went out into the world synthesizing—including themselves. Much of white thinking is synthesized. The thought produced in academia is synthetic thought. It is a type of knowledge geared towards the production of things. The thought operationalized by writing is synthetic thought, disconnected from life. On the other hand, our thinking, moved by orality, is organic.

"Being" has little value in synthetic knowledge, even though it creates "having." "Having" is the creature that devours its creator. People act in order to "have." Even biology is becoming synthetic. Soon there will be meat without the need of cows...

In our understanding, we are experiencing the possible end of the Euro-Christian, monotheist, colonialist, and synthetic world at this exact moment in time. This world is coming to an end. This is why we are going through such despair and confusion. But, incredibly, we are also experiencing a new confluence.

I work with the concepts of "confluence" and "transfluence." Confluence was a straightforward concept to develop because I only needed to observe the movement of waters, through the rivers

and through the earth. It took me longer to develop the concept of transfluence because I had to observe waters moving through the skies. It took me a long time to understand how a river that flows in Brazil is in confluence with a river that flows in Africa. I realized this happens through the rain, through the clouds—through rivers in the sky. If it is possible for freshwater in Brazil to get to Africa through the skies, the skies can also carry our people's wisdom to Brazil.

That is why even when they try to take away our language and our ways of life, they cannot take away our cosmos. They cannot take away our wisdom. That is why we managed to re-edit ourselves wisely, without harming the true owners of this territory, our Indigenous earthlings. We were able to do that because even though we were forbidden to go back, we met our elders in Africa through our cosmology. This is what we call transfluence.

Both *quilombolas* and Indigenous people only became legal subjects when Brazil's most recent Constitution was enacted in 1988. Until then, being a *quilombola* was considered a crime, and Indigenous people were considered savages. The 1988 Constitution states that we have the right to gain title to our lands through writing—which is an aggression, because through writing we can only become landowners. But our elders taught us how to deal with this kind of aggression.

I had an uncle named Antônio Máximo; he was the operator of a great defense art called Jucá. He taught me that, at times, we need to turn enemy weapons into defense, so we don't turn our defense into a weapon, for if we do that, we are only able [to] attack. And those who can only attack are bound to lose.

People in the cities, with all their weapons, cannot live in peace; we, on the other hand, live in peace without weapons in our communities. It is clear then that weapons do not solve problems. That is why my uncle Antônio would tell us to turn weapons into defense. Mother Joana, one of my great teachers, used to say that the vessel for giving is the same for receiving. Therefore, if I point a gun at someone, it is because I am afraid of that same gun. Thus the dispute has no end.

When we discuss land titling through writing, that does not mean we agree with it. We adopt one of the enemy's weapons and transform it into a defense mechanism. It is not land titles that determine if

we are *quilombolas*, but rather our relationship with the land. In this regard we and Indigenous peoples are conjoined. We converge in our territories, because our territories are not just made of earth, but of all the elements.

The State of Piauí practically does not exist for the rest of Brazil. When I say I am from Piauí, people ask me where that is, as if it was not mapped. It is not on the maps that fit into certain people's minds. It is said that there are no Indigenous people in Piauí, just as it is said that there are no *quilombos* in the State of Roraima. But in Piauí today three Indigenous peoples are fighting for their self-identification, their self-recognition, and the demarcation of their lands. And who are their partners? The *quilombolas*. Ours are continuous territories.

In Piauí, there is a great alliance between *quilombolas* and Indigenous peoples, both from the perspective of regularizing ownership of the land and re-editing our cultural expressions, based on organic knowledge. Organic knowledge re-edits itself, while synthetic knowledge recycles itself.

We are not losers. I do not work within the logic of "victimology." I have no right to be a victim. I am a winner; my people have won. My great-grandfather had three sugar mills; I was raised in abundance. I have no slavery scars in my memory, but I do not disagree with those who evoke the scars of slavery. I, however, do not work with that image; I work with the image of the winner. Even if they burn what is written, orality can't be burned; even if they burn symbols, meanings can't be burned; even if they burn bodies, ancestry can't be burned. Our images are also ancestral.

Several *quilombola* communities in all corners of Brazil are being attacked in the same way as historical *quilombos* such as Palmares, Canudos, Caldeirões, Pau de Colher were attacked and destroyed in the past. The Brazilian Army is in Rocinha, a favela in Rio de Janeiro, practicing ethnocide just as they did with Palmares, Canudos, Caldeirões, and Pau de Colher. The government of President Getúlio Vargas was one of the most ethnocidal governments we have ever had. He killed and burned the people of Caldeirões in the State of Ceará in 1936. He killed and burned the people of Pau de Colher, on the border of the State of Bahia, in 1941. But even so, we did not stop fighting.

Our relationship with world images is based on the logic of the emancipation of peoples and traditional communities through countercolonization. It is not based on the logic of class struggle, for class struggle is European and Christian-monotheistic. I do not treat traditional peoples and communities as Marxist categories: workers, unemployed, revolutionaries. That language is not ours. That is the Euro-Christian-colonialist language.

Some thinkers from Piauí wrote very well about the *quilombos*, but they adopted a Marxist perspective, which bothers me. I think of our journey as starting inside the slave ships. When the first slave ship left Africa, that was when the first *quilombo* was formed. The first *quilombo* was inside the ship, with people reacting, throwing themselves into the sea, fighting, and dying. That is when the first *quilombo* was formed. Marx was not even alive at that time! What does Marx have to do with this? The Palmares community was already struggling two hundred years before Marx wrote anything. I think Marx has his importance in Europe. As we say back in the sertão "to each their own."

The Landless Workers Movement (MST), for example, is a wonderful thing, one of the greatest inventions ever made, but it is a colonialist organization. You only need to travel through most Brazilian States to see that the MST coordinators are usually white men from the South of Brazil. Why? I do not believe that other States are unable to produce their own coordinators. If you go to Piauí, you will find the MST coordinator drinking *chimarrão*, a typical Southern mate drink! Well, in Piauí we drink *cajuína*, a beverage made of cashews! Of course, the MST contribution is essential. However, from a political standpoint, the MST is mono, linear, and vertical. They want to be the only movement representing rural people. We, the *quilombolas*, don't want to be "the only ones."

Since the beginning of colonization, from 1500 to 1888, when the abolition of slavery took place, the African people were regarded and treated [like] nothing more than slaves, and what they said and thought was not a part of Brazilian thinking. From 1888 to 1988, our cultural expressions, such as capoeira or samba, were considered crimes. This is colonialism. To colonize is to subjugate, humiliate, destroy, and enslave the trajectories of people with a cultural matrix, an original matrix different from one's own.

What does it mean to counter-colonize? It means re-editing our trajectories taking into account our own matrices. And who can do this? Ourselves! Only those who think in a circular way and through a polytheistic cosmovision can re-edit the *quilombola* people's trajectory. Not white intellectuals such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos, although he plays a vital role in that process. At least to the extent that he says it is necessary to undo what his people, the colonialist people, have done. This is enormously generous. At least he is not saying we need to get more sophisticated and do more.

We are debating counter-colonization. For us, *quilombolas* and Indigenous peoples, this is the agenda: counter-colonization. The day universities learn what they do not know, the day universities agree to learn Indigenous languages—instead of teaching them—the day universities agree to learn Indigenous architecture and to learn about the plants of the *caatinga*, the day they are willing to learn from us as we once learned from them, then we will have a confluence. A confluence of knowledge. A process of balancing the different civilizations of this place. Counter-colonization.

Creative Beings of the Forest

Text originally published in the collection *Cadernos SELVAGEM*, by Selvagem Ciclo de Estudos, in partnership with Dantes Editora, in 2020. The English version was revised and translated by Ana Loureiro Jurema and Gerrie Schrik, and it is available at <https://selvagemciclo.com.br/cadernos/>. All rights reserved.

Cristine Takuá

Philosopher, educator, midwife apprentice, and Indigenous artisan, she lives in the village of Rio Silveira, where for twelve years she taught at the Indigenous State School Txeru Ba'e Kuai'. She is currently the coordinator of the collaborative action *Escolas Vivas* [Living Schools] in partnership with *Selvagem, Ciclo de estudos sobre a vida* [Savage, Cycle of Studies on Life]. She is also the representative of the indigenous education nucleus within the São Paulo State Secretariat for Education and a founding member of Fapisp (Forum for the Articulation of Indigenous Teachers of the State of São Paulo). She is the director of the Instituto Maracá, a partner in the shared management of the Museu das Culturas Indígenas [Museum of Indigenous Cultures] in São Paulo.

Talk presented at the *Biosphere* conversation circle during the *Selvagem*, cycle of studies on life, at the Teatro do Jardim Botânico [Theater of the Botanical Garden] in Rio de Janeiro on November 13, 2019.
Transcribed in Portuguese by Camila Vaz.

I am going to start my talk with a chant because I believe that these creative encounters bring joy to the soul and chanting helps me, at least, to organize ideas.

[Guarani Chant]

Well, I wanted to share some of the thoughts that I have been thinking over the years and listening to you all, I got a strong energy inside me. I feel that the great mistake of science—and as Ailton says, “of this humanity we think we are”—was to have turned our backs, to have hidden, I believe, denied the knowledge of the world’s indigenous peoples, the great complexity that exists in the knowledge of the forest, which I will not call here “science of the forest” because these traditional knowledge and practices of the forest are beyond science, as if it were a “metascience,” I do not know.

This great complexity that exists in the forest has been in dialogue for many centuries with a strong creative power of plant and animal beings who, like us, have resisted for many centuries and created formulas to continue walking on this planet.

Listening to you, scholars, and researchers with your questions and concerns, I am led to think about the concealment of (indigenous) wisdom, and its absence at universities, for example. Thirteen years ago I dared wanting to study philosophy at university and I realized that the creative dialogue with plant and animal beings is not present in “universities”—which are all but universal.

When I went to study at the university, I was a little scared because it seemed they said that only men think. In the history which was portrayed to me from the birth of philosophy in Greece,

men produced thought, systematized their knowledge left in historical books which they rarely put into practice. We notice this, even today, in the lands where “their people” live.

This really startled me and made me, when I left that university, continue to dialogue—at least trying to dialogue—with the creative beings of the forest. And I am calling them “creative beings of the forest” because of a story that a very special woman to me, a healer, the grandmother of my grandchildren, told me one day: a long time ago Nhanderu, as the Guaraní call him, who is our supreme father, had two daughters: Takuá and Ka’á. They were two beautiful women. He took and transformed these two women into two beings: Takuá became bamboo—which today is used for many things such as making baskets, making medicine, making different types of artistic productions; and Ka’á became a plant known to many as yerba mate [*Ilex paraguaiensis*], which the gauchos call *chimarrão*¹. Ka’á has become a very powerful plant. For the Guaraní people, Ka’á is a plant that brings many messages, brings strength, enlightenment, brings healing, in many different ways of what healing is.

1. The *chimarrão*, or mate (from the Quechua “mati”) is a characteristic drink of the Southern Cone culture, legacy of the indigenous culture, produced by the infusion of yerba mate plant ground in boiling water at approximately 70 degrees Celsius, in a gourd with a pump (T.N.).

When she told me this story, I started to really feel it, observing this mostly female dialogue with Ka’á and Takuá today. This is how I began to reflect even more on these creative dialogues in the forest, on the knowledge and complex philosophies that have inhabited the lives of the traditional ancestral peoples of the Earth for many centuries. Yet this traditional knowledge is not able to dialogue directly with this university, which writes so much and seems to pay little attention to the subtlety of the various forms of knowledge transmission.

Memory is also a point I have been thinking about. Davi Kopenawa Yanomami always says that white people write a lot and that they have a tireless habit of writing things down so they will not forget. Traditional peoples however, are not in the habit of writing on paper to keep their recollections.

On my father’s side I am Maxakali. The Maxakali are an incredible people of resistance, they guard chants of the most diverse forms of animals, of yãmiy beings that exist in the forest. There are more than thirty-five bee chants.

2. *Cerrado* is a Brazilian biome, characterized especially by the savannah biome (in the international sense), but also by seasonal forest and grassland. The *Cerrado* is the second-largest Brazilian domain, extending, in its nuclear area, over a territory of 1.5 million km². The “Brazilian savanna”—is a form of vegetation that has several physiognomic variations throughout the large areas that occupy the country’s territory (T.N.).

Today, some eight or ten species of bees are found in the Atlantic Forest and *Cerrado*² that inhabit Minas. But children know the chants of the more than thirty bees, without ever having seen them. The ancestral memory, which sustains this ancient wisdom, is very complex. So, I keep thinking about this memory, about this strength of creative dialogue with plant and animal beings and I also think of the dream, because I am an educator.

I went to study philosophy and later, when the educational institution opened in my community—where I live today, in the Rio Silveira village, which is in the middle of the Atlantic Forest, on Boraceia beach, on the north coast of São Paulo [state]—I have started talking at school about dreams. The school institution that was created, which previously did not exist within the communities, is causing the children to refrain from dreaming. The time imposed by institutions—time to leave, time to arrive, time to have lunch—makes children lose their natural flow of life. So it is this attention and care that we all must have with children: what is the purpose of school in our life? In our societies there were no schools and there are no mental hospitals, nurseries, retirement homes—none of these locking away or standardized ways of imparting knowledge or molding people. And I have noticed that throughout history it seems that people want to bring these institutions inside the knowledge of traditional peoples.

People are very sick, it seems to me. Sick in the sense of a void: like a tree that is hollow inside. That is just wood on the outside, but inside it is hollow. It seems to me that many are hollow inside. Because, throughout history as well, the faith monoculture, the food monoculture, the mind monoculture are making people uniform, lose their sense of understanding the very fruition of life, the very complexity of these creative dialogues which place us in another location, which place us in a natural relationship with other beings.

Why have human beings distanced themselves so much from other beings? Why do scientists today have to keep thinking: will we have to leave this planet? Indigenous peoples have been around for centuries: creating formulas, recreating formulas. Resilient, sustainable, regenerative ways to continue this creative dialogue. And I believe that we will not give up. That is why I talked about education: because I believe that the regeneration of Gaia,

about which Fabio [Scarano] talked a lot, can happen through education. Not this Western, square, institutional education, but a sensitive education.

Guarani has a term, a concept, that is called Tekó Porã. So I think of an education that tries to dialogue with this concept of Tekó Porã, which would be like a good and beautiful way for you to be and to remain in the territory. Well, but how are we going to be doing great and in good shape in the territory if the river is dead, if, as Ailton says, the mountain has been eaten? Rethinking—and recreating new forms of existence—is a bit of a painful thing. Changing habits is like shedding your skin, you need courage. Like a mother when her first child is born and starts breastfeeding. The pain in the breast is intense, it feels like sticking a needle in the nipple because it hurts to breastfeed the child. Many give up: “it hurts a lot, I can’t take it.” And then you give up breastfeeding the child. Changing habits is like this pain: a pain of courage. You know you have to breastfeed your child, because by breastfeeding the child will be healthy. Change habits and have the courage to retrace your steps. It may be painful at first, but it represents a change in ethics that you will carry along on your journey.

I keep seeing a lot of people talking about the Amazon, that the environment needs to be preserved. At the time of Belo Monte,³ many people raised the “Belo Monte no” flag. Lots of activism, but lip service. It is useless to raise a banner “long live the Amazon” if you continue to feed what is raping the Amazon.

So when I talk about changing habits, and that this hurts like shedding your skin, I say that it is past time for us to start having the courage to really create an equilibrium—I even call it a certain pact—which would be for you to manage to equilibrate the breath of love which comes out of our mouths when we speak—our ideas, our concerns, our dreams—to equilibrate that word-breath with the cadence of our feet, of our walk on Earth. Because it is no use for my mouth to go there and my foot to come here. This balance between what we say and where we are going is what needs to guide our courage and ethical commitment to ourselves, our children and all other beings.

3. Belo Monte [Beautiful Hill] is a Brazilian hydroelectric plant in the Xingu River basin, near the municipality of Altamira, in the north of the state of Pará. Also called “Beautiful Monster” by social groups which denounce the Brazilian’s energetic policy connected to the capitalist globalization of territories, provoking socio-environmental damages (T.N.).

4. *Sumaúma* is a large tree of the *Bombaceae* family, whose scientific name is *Ceiba petrandia*, of white wood, lives in regions with high humidity. The indigenous peoples consider it the “mother of the trees,” its tubular roots at certain times burst, irrigating the entire area that surrounds it. Its height, size, and beauty stand out in the immensity of the forests (N.T.).

The universal arrogance of man and the different laws that we have today: human rights, children’s rights, rights, human... rights! And the paca? The agouti? The ant? The bee? The *samaúma*?⁴ And all the beings that live in the forest? We are not going to invite them here to talk to us—all the more so that I do not think they would come. When will we be able to retrace our path and dialogue with these beings that are there? The otter is there on the riverside, thinking how its children will be able to play on the riverside that is rotten because of our feces, of everyone’s greed, consumption, consumption, and consumption. These are the things I have been reflecting on over these years and trying to dialogue with my students, with the people I live with, in the sense of these ethics and commitment to what we really want.

The great web that involves life, this great interaction of relations between animal and plant beings, has been completely disrupted. Human beings have broken all forms of interactions on this web. How to weave now, and pick up the thread which has been lost is an urgent commitment for all of us. No more writing, no more formulating. You have to practice now, all together, no matter how hard it is.

Talking with the midwives and with the healers, they have been saying that the forest spirits are very angry and they see everything all the time. But could science be dialoguing with the spirits of the forest? Does science understand that it is not enough to just write? That you have to feel, that you have to perceive, that you have to interact with all other non-human forms?

5. Xeramōi can be translated as “my grandfather.” For the Mbya Guarani, the leaders are the eldest, they are the wise ones because they have more experience and knowledge of the culture and spheres of life. The Xeramōi can also be Pajés, who are the community leaders responsible for imparting the tradition to the youngest (T.N.).

At the beginning of this understanding, of this multicultural grouping which took place in the Americas, a few centuries ago, this monoculture deed arrived. With the cross and the sword monoculture came. However, many creatives—and Ailton is one of them who I admire a lot, as well as others, Carlos Papá, txai Ibã, Davi Kopenawa Yanomami, and the xeramōi⁵ here Dua Buse—resist by passing on their knowledge, practicing creative dialogues in the forest. A meeting like this makes me very happy. See that each one of you is really concerned with imparting knowledge in the sense of a broad dialogue, because it will not do any good just talking about it here and there.

I think that Gaia's regeneration is possible in the sense that we begin to rethink the principles which guide our children's lives. The technology that is developing, that is swallowing everyone, why do people allow it? Why do people want to communicate so badly with others who are far away and cannot stop to feel "what did I dream of today? Have you dreamed today?" If we start listening to our dreams, I believe it is possible for us to start empowering ourselves and build up the courage to change our habits.

The earth is much stronger than us, it is a great sacred mother. The forest is a great father, with all its plant beings, animals—visible and invisible beings. We are the ones who are small, we are just a small grain in the midst of this great immensity of knowledge that exists in the forest.

So, I wanted to share some of my concerns with you and say that we are all in the same boat. We need to learn to row. If we can all row in the same direction, maybe we will advance. Move forward in the sense of respect, and that one day, for instance, such a university will be able to respect, and equilibrate the several forms of knowledge, even if it does not understand them.

Guarani also has a very complex concept called *arandu*. Many people translate *arandu* as wisdom, but *arandu* is much more than wisdom. It would be, more or less, me trying to dare translate *arandu* as "the person who has the sensitivity to feel his own shadow." Reaching this *arandu* is what the great xeramõi, the great sages, seek when they concentrate on their *petynguá*, which is a sacred pipe, and tobacco.

Tobacco is a very sacred plant, just as yesterday during the opening there was talk of ayahuasca, which various peoples call by other names, like the Huni Kuin who say *nixi pae*, and several others... *penty* with *corró* as the Maxakali say.

Tobacco is a very sacred plant, a plant that communicates with you and takes you to meet *arandu*. But society, with this mania for domination, control, accumulation, turned tobacco into a carcinogen product. When I see written on a cigarette box label "be careful, this kills"... The great shamans teach us that tobacco cures. But in the bar, at markets, they say that tobacco kills.

This inversion of values, and the disrespect for the sacred being that is tobacco, makes me think about this ethic, this commitment to various beings. Why was tobacco marginalized? Why does tobacco cause cancer, as some say? I know some 110-year-old Guarani today, active chanters, healers, who use tobacco very wisely.

This makes us stop and think: what is our relationship with sacred beings? With the water? With tobacco? With all beings? I leave this question to you.

Aguyjevete.

Methodological Instruments for Group Building

Text originally published in the book *Quem educa marca o corpo do outro* [Those Who Educate Mark the Other's Body] (Cortez Editora, 2008) by Fátima Freire. All rights reserved.

Fátima Freire

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When I read the title I chose for this text, my body's first movement is to feel challenged to ask some questions that can guide my reflection process.

For example:

"What is a group? How do I build one?"

The word "group" is one of the newest in Western languages. It is an Italian technical term from the fine-art lexicon; it appears in French, English, and German at the end of the 17th century meaning an ensemble of people painted or sculpted.

It is only in the mid-17th century that the word "group" acquired the meaning of a gathering of living people. From the 19th century on, its use expanded and then began to designate several other realities, such as school group, mathematical theory of groups, psychological study of restricted groups.

As an educator, my "cognitive curiosity" about how to work in a group and even how the group is built has always been linked to the process of teaching and learning.

It was guided by this curiosity that I began to realize that most of the learning situations experienced especially in the school space takes place in group situations and not in dual ones. That is, when we are in the classroom, we are teaching for a collective and not for single students.

As I intensified my listening to the report of the educator's practice, and enriched it with classroom observations, the difficulties that the educator "experiences" when they are in a group became more evident.

The most obvious concern:

Organization of time and space.

The communication process.

The existence of subgroups.

And, above all, the lack of or little involvement of its members with the contents and proposals to be worked on.

1. Didier Anzieu,
*The Group and the
Unconscious*
(Routledge, 2014).

When we begin to build a group, the fact that we still don't know the people makes us feel threatened by the curiosity that the others have in relation to us and the image that they may have of us.

The situation of being in a group, in fact, makes us feel anguish and fear in our bodies, and that grips us, as it is a fear associated with the loss of our individuality. It is as if we feared being devoured, swallowed by each and every member of the group. Fear also represents people's resistance to constituting a group.

Hence the importance of making this situation explicit in order to overcome it and create a "space for containment" where everyone can talk about their fears and fantasies; where they can make common discoveries, build knowledge, experience emotions, challenges, and activities such as laughing, eating, and playing together.

As the existence of the "space for containment" gains shape and strength, the fear of being swallowed by the other is overcome, and the resistance to forming a group decreases. These are the first moments in which we witness the use of the word "we" referring to the group.

When I ask teachers for a definition of a group, they usually come up with: "A group of people gathered for common goals." However, having common goals does not guarantee people constitute themselves as a group; other conditions are necessary for the group to be built.

The first is to have a specific task that lends meaning to its existence and, moreover, to have a person to coordinate it. A group without a specific task and without a coordinator does not become a group as such. A headless group risks remaining immersed in a spontaneous movement of the people who constitute it without, therefore, achieving a type of active organization of each and every one of its members.

The presence of a coordinator is fundamental for the construction of the group since, at the beginning of the construction process, they occupy the position of "spokesperson" of the group's desire to constitute itself. The coordinator announces the possibility of the existence of the collective, even when the collective is not yet built.

In the group construction process, the coordinator acts as if they were a “radio announcer” broadcasting a soccer game. That is, they express everything that is happening in the group—the contributions, difficulties, and abilities of the different members—so that the representation of the collective (the relationship whole/part) can, little by little, become a presence in the bodies of the people in the group.

The coordinator narrates not only the individual actions of the members but also their thoughts, desires, fantasies, fears. However, their relationship with the group is asymmetrical, so that they live their role as co-thinker of the group. Their specific “mission” consists precisely in reflecting with the group, and never for it, on the relationship established by the members among themselves and on the specific task of the group.

At the beginning of the group-building process, what we usually have is a cluster of people. Figuratively, it is amorphous, because at the beginning of the process, the individual spaces of each person are not yet “situated.”

The “face of the group” arises from the way in which each one feels “situated” in the group when taking their place and playing their specific role. That is, the group ceases to be an amorphous and formless mound and starts to have a face and identity.

The group-construction movement is a slow process and requires everyone who wants to constitute themselves as a group to have a loose, free-flowing body. Having a loose and free-flowing body in this construction process is important because it implies being able to configure it, locate it, perceive it, and discover the different places that the body can occupy in the configuration of the group. A body that is not located, not perceived, is a shapeless body, a body that did not feel free enough to allow itself to be marked by the other.

Bodies usually talk. And while talking, they express anxieties, fears, joys, waves of anger, contained desires, and also secrets. Sometimes, the “disease” settles in the group when the group doesn’t talk about what is veiled and not appearing, the secret of the group. You have to denounce to be able to announce. I denounce the secret in order to be able to announce a knowing about it, in order to be able to know that I am part of the secret, the mythical secret of my

origin as a desiring being, of being the other's desire. It is only when I discover that my origin was conceived in the desire of others that I can make their desire mine and assume myself as a differentiated being. The situation of learning and speaking takes us, therefore, to the point of origin of each one of us; a point of origin that is one of splitting, of separation, of loss.

The marks of our origin that we carry in our bodies feed and lend mobility (or not) to our processes of symbolization and creation. Hence the importance of language in the process of creation and transformation, as it places our body at a distance from the act, thus enabling access to desire. Desiring is the form we use to recover what we lost, what was forbidden to us.

As an educator concerned with training educators, I was marked by the thought of Pichon Rivière, above all by his concept of an operating group. An operating group is one that has a good communication network, which develops effectively in its task. Each member has a specific role assigned, but with a degree of plasticity that allows them to assume other functional roles.

2. E. Pichon-Rivière,
El proceso grupal
(Buenos Aires: ed.
Nueva Visión, 1999).

Throughout my work trajectory, and driven by the need to seek answers to the difficulties encountered in the day-to-day practice of group experiences, I used methodological work tools that could guide and feed my practice.

One of these instruments is the "group's common frame of reference."

We all have a frame of reference that represents the set of knowledges, attitudes, and values that we have been building throughout our life history. It is on this that we always rely when we make decisions, create meanings, and when we work on our relationship with the world and with ourselves. The frame of reference works as if it were our luggage, our equipment, which we always carry with us. No matter where we go.

The construction of the group's common frame of reference is one of the first movements of the coordinator's body when the construction of the group begins. This construction process has as a background the content of the referential frame of each member of the group. The construction of the group's frame of reference is

fundamental; it is a basic condition for the existence of a communication process between the members.

It is based on the common denominator of the different individual frames of reference of the members that the group's common frame of reference is built, and this represents the common support on which its members rely to build meanings—the common vocabulary—and to make group decisions.

In fact, when the coordinator creates a circumscribed space and allows everyone to talk about themselves, position themselves, and make their contributions, they are structuring, and building the group's frame of reference.

The common frame of reference represents the thoughts, ideas, the way the group perceives reality and deals with it, as well as its actions, desires, fantasies, projections, and fears. Therefore, the construction of the group referential scheme permeates all moments of the history of this scheme, as it is enriched at each encounter with the different contributions of the individualities of its members.

It is in the process of constructing the group's frame of reference that members find their "place" and locate themselves within the group. The places we occupy are, therefore, linked to the roles we assume in the group.

The phase of construction is very rich in possibilities of readings and dialogical responses for those who coordinate the group. The construction of the frame of reference also allows each member to recognize, during the trajectory covered in the group and with the group, that their individuality is being assured, allowing them to feel part of a whole that is, at the same time what they are, but also greater than what they are.

It is in the experience of each meeting mediated by the specific task of building the group's frame of reference that we learn to get to know the other, their way of thinking, feeling, the ease or difficulty of expressing themselves, their fears and fantasies.

Learning how to get to know the other implies, in turn, a desire and curiosity about the other. It is driven by this curiosity that, when

educated, we manage to create an internal space for listening to the other.

Another instrument that is part of the construction of the group is what I call the "Red Thread of the Group."

I have always wondered why the choice of the red color and not of any other. Today I know that it is linked to the notion of life, of libido, of the blood that runs through the veins; in other words, passion. The red thread is, in fact, the trajectory of the group's life history. It is woven in moments of the construction of knowledge, permeated by conflicts/confrontations, sadness, discord, pain and anger, misunderstandings, as well as moments of joy, laughter, generosity, and love. Its texture gains more and more consistency and strength with each meeting, so that each member of the group realizes that they are connected to the other and that all of them, together, form a whole.

The construction of the red thread makes it possible to learn to be in tune with the other. As they are all united by the same thread, it is enough for one to move it, by "pulling" it, for it to have repercussions on everyone's body. Thus, each member gradually realizes the need to be attentive to their movements, their interventions, their speeches; finally, they start realizing the importance of being "occupied" with the other and "attentive" to them.

At the beginning of the construction of the group, the red thread is visible. However, as the construction work is strengthened, the red thread begins to lose visibility, ending up invisible. Its "invisibility" has to do with the process of internalizing the other.

When we belong to a group whose red thread is invisible, we are helped without asking for help, we feel heard, understood, and seen, and we really feel like we belong to the group.

The pendulum movement of the group is another methodological instrument that helps the coordinator in the construction process. It is the constant movement that the educator performs between the coming and going from the individual to the collective. When we work on the individual aspect, our action is focused on the subject's verticality; we are dealing with the life story, with each person's way

of being in the world. When we work collectively, our action is focused on the horizontality of the subjects; we are dealing, above all, with the “place” that those subjects occupy in the world, as well as with the here and now that they occupy in the group space.

We are, as Merleau-Ponty rightly says, beings situated in the world because we have a history, built in a time that is, in turn, historic. Therefore, we are “beings in a situation,” we occupy spaces. It is exercising the living experience and the crossing of these two movements, the individual and the collective, experienced in the different moments of the group’s life, that the group’s history is built. It is as if it were woven with the individual threads of each person’s life story, both in their individual and social dimensions.

I usually call “group mandalas” the moments where pendular movements come together both vertically and horizontally.

When the vertical line of each member fails to reach the horizontal line of the group, the members feel displaced, not integrated, not belonging to the group.

The coordinator must be aware of the moments of “vertical descent” of each member, so that, when this descent takes place, each one can find the “ground” represented by the horizontal line of the group and, thus, can feel that they belong to the group, even if they think and feel differently about a certain subject, in relation to the others.

Another methodological instrument used in the construction of the group is the rituals.

Every educational act bathes in the waters of rituals. We educate the other through rituals that mediate our action.

During the process of group building, the coordinator and members create rituals that represent the journey taken in building the group’s history. The rituals thus provide the “face” of the group; they are, therefore, bathed in its culture and its meanings. It is for this reason that each group is a group, since it has different rituals and life stories.

On the other hand, the rituals are fundamental in the organization of the group when they establish the times, spaces, and commitments

of each and every one. In this sense, it is as if the life of each group were trapped in a symbolic plot. A symbolic plot that is built by the exchange of the members' unconscious and intentional actions throughout their history; and it includes rituals, agreements, implicit and explicit regulations, established customs, as well as the attributions of the different "places" of each member.

Role rotation is another methodological instrument used in the construction of the group.

When we make "our entry into the world," our body is marked by the unconscious desire of our parents, a desire that situates the place we are going to occupy in the family group to which we belong. Therefore, our first social experience is lived within the primary group, which is the family.

When we are in a group, at the same time that we assume different roles, according to our own life history, we also assign roles to the members. It is in this way that the structure of the group is built, based on the interplay of the roles assumed by its different members and the roles that were delegated to them.

The role we assume when we find ourselves in secondary groups (work, team, school) is, in turn, marked by the way we were introduced into the life of our family group. This means that, when we are in a group, we tend to assume the same role again. We run the risk of living, in the group, the roles in a crystallized, stereotyped way, if there is no work on the part of the coordination to introduce the possibility of a "rotation" of these roles.

The practice of role rotation is important because it makes it possible to work on the stereotypes and labels that mark the person's body and hinder their process of change and transformation. The choice of the word "rotation" to indicate the change of roles is not random, since it reminds us of how a volleyball team works, whose rule is the rotation of places occupied by the players. That is, each and every one has the possibility of "experimenting" in the different places of the court space, and, for that, it is necessary to assume different postures, according to the place that they are occupying at a certain moment of the game.

Three roles are important in group structuring: the spokesperson, the leader, and the scapegoat.

The spokesperson

The spokesperson is the one who has as a characteristic the ability to capture what is happening in the group at a given moment, an ability that allows them to announce/denounce their fantasies, anxieties, needs. Due to their sensitivity, they verbalize the unsaid, so that the latent content in the group takes shape, gains "a voice"; emerges. The spokesperson, when they speak, is not speaking to themselves; they bring in their speech the words of the group.

The leader

There are two types of leaders in the group: the leader of change and the leader of resistance.

The leader of change is the one who is always open and willing to accept the task to be performed by the group; they are the ones who motivate and at the same time mobilize the others to take on the challenge of carrying out the task. Their way of acting is to seek solutions to conflicts and be open to the new, the unknown.

The leader of resistance, on the other hand, is the one who is always against carrying out the task, representing the counterpoint of the leader of change; they are the ones who try to delay the growth of the group by going back in discussions, referrals, and achievements that are already made; they are always wanting to resume what has already been settled and defined. Their proposal is to provoke all possible questions, to "freeze" the group's involvement in carrying out the task.

The scapegoat

The scapegoat, in turn, is a receptacle for everything that the members do not want or cannot contain within themselves; they become, in this way, the "deposit" of the fantasies, anxieties, and fears of the group.

I'm a group when:

- I have the other internalized in me.
- There is someone who guides me and points out the starting path, the different shortcuts, and allows me to discover the point of arrival.
- I realize that I am being seen and accompanied in my individuality.
- I realize that I can contribute with my practice to enrich the group.
- I perceive the whole as important as the part in their relationship of interdependence and containment.
- I feel represented in the group.
- I feel belonging to something bigger than myself.
- I sustain the challenge of living the very fact of not being a group yet.
- I am open to dialogue.

I am open to getting in touch with my not knowing and
that of the group. _____

I dare to assume my knowledge. _____

I manage to share, share with the other. _____

I really live with the other. _____

I realize that I can learn from the other. _____

I dare to interfere in the other's process. _____

I live happily and lovingly with the other. _____

I can perform unbiased listening, with an
open/empty mind, when listening to the other. _____

I can position myself in relation to what
I think and feel. _____

I fulfill the commitments made in the group. _____

I prepare myself to receive the other. _____

I miss the other. _____

Extroversion

Toys

Text originally published in the book *Brinquedos do chão: A natureza, o imaginário e o brincar* [Nature, Imagination, and Play] (Editora Períópolis, 2016) by Gandhi Piorski. All rights reserved.

Gandhy Piorski

Visual artist, researcher of children's practices. Piorski is a theologian and holds a master's degree in Sciences of Religion. He conducts research in the areas of cultures, symbolic productions, anthropology of the imaginary, and philosophies of the imagination. In the field of visual cultures, he discusses the narratives of childhood, its artifacts, toys, and languages, creating exhibitions and other curatorial projects, and proposing interventions.

The child's search for the intimate constitution of matter is expressed, in almost all of their play, by the four elements of nature. However, in the toys of telluric imagination, that is, of or related to the earth, we find the child's impetus for colonizing the world is imbued with even greater yearning. The child's act of pouring themselves into matter is the desire for that which is yet to be revealed or discovered. About children's curiosity, Bachelard declares:

1. Gaston Bachelard,
*Earth and Reveries
of Repose: An
Essay on Images
of Interiority.
The Bachelard
Translation
Series* (Dallas:
Dallas Institute
Publications, 2011),
5–6.

This is the curiosity of children who break their toys in order to see what is inside. Incidentally, if this breaking and entering kind of curiosity is in truth natural to humankind, is it not surprising that we do not give children toys with depth, toys that really reward deep curiosity?... We regard this as simply the need to break and destroy; we forget that the psychological forces in action here are aiming to get away from all that is external in order to see something else, to see beyond and within, to escape, in short, the passivity of vision.... A toy with an internal structure would provide a normal outlet for inquisitive eyes, for the will to look that needs an object's depths. Yet what upbringing fails to do, imagination will always manage to accomplish.¹

Among the toys of nature built by the child themselves, there are even more elaborate solutions regarding the eagerness of discovery and the practice of deep looking. This search for intimate materiality first unveils itself in the crude forms of the materials, in modeling and building toys. Initially, the child has no greater interest in the toy's appearance, not even the ones made of soft matter which are easy to model. The crudeness of form and appearance is the synthesis of an almost completely imaginary formulation, which is content with its own imagination's narrative. Matter is only a medium receiving mutable modulations. Imagination, however, conveys an impression, an aesthetic halo, a magic power to bodies and materials. It inhabits objects, lending them being. It enlivens a demiurgic concreteness, a mystique that entifies things, originating and keeping them in the metaphysics of fascinum. The mundus of the child does not wither in profane spatiality—it is an ever-renewed mystery.

The child is not impressed by formal superficiality. On their part, there is always a greater interest in the substance and a lesser one

in the result. In the first seven years of life, the child indulges in the voluptuousness of the imagination, requiring only a few gestures and having not yet acquired the expertise of the body and of technique, in an economy of expression, they are content with it. It is essential and unsuspecting, consensual to their imagination, to submit to the predominance of images over matter, to their control over the material world. Imagination takes root in the plasticity of appearances. It wants to deprive it, to undo it, to go into the direction of its core. It turns forms into vessels, into channels that lead to intimacy.

The search in nature for light or heavy, flexible or slender, plastic or hard materials demands in itself an accurate, sharp gaze. This material search imprints notions of particularity, revealing the nature of the material seeing as the rock, with its weight and texture, is an intimate part of mountains, boulders, stones, and pebbles from streams. The corncob—used as a doll's body—is the central core from which the kernels are removed; the rough and light cylinder is a crude raw material for numerous toys. The beeswax is the beehive's primary construction material, which will be macerated with a pestle.

Modeling small oxen in clay follows the same principle of penetration and maceration applied toward all intimacy of soft matter. Afterwards, boys also bake the mud in small, improvised bonfires or over the flames of the woodstove, lending fixity to the material form according to their wishes by sensing its intimacy and being aware of its forms of manipulation.

Anatomic desire

From the most radical curiosity for the intimate emerge toys that evoke strangeness vis-à-vis the aseptic mentality of pedagogy. It is all about a kind of play that comes from the entrails, with toys collected from animal cadavers, also captured for experiences in anatomic dismemberment.

In clandestine laboratories, out of the sight of mothers, fathers, and teachers, in hiding places for free investigation, the entrails of frogs and lizards are wrenched up and mangled, or even—in dreams that unravel in backyards—guinea pigs' bones are buried in distinctly

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

marked little graves. There are balls made of turkey jowls and natural rubbers, pigs' and sheep's bladders, and even small farms made from bones of oxen, fish and chickens. These practices used to be very common in the Brazilian sertões [desert backlands of northeastern Brazil], but they also date back to ancient times, since early accounts have already shown that Inuit children entertained themselves with seal bones.

This investigative behavior of exploring shape, which envisions in animal entrails a profusion of bodily images, miniature farms, cowboys, horses, and dolls, is an invasive gaze that dissects geometric intimacy. It is the primary need for raiding and for anatomy as already expressed by Bachelard:

Alchemy too will often surrender itself to this simple dialectical perspective of inside and outside. It often sets out to turn substances inside out, just as gloves are turned inside out. If you can put the inside on the outside and the outside on the inside, says the alchemist, you are a true master.²

Clearly, the discernment of the alchemist or poet is different from that of the child in their natural impulse for the discovery of play, but the imaginary substance that moves the inside-out gaze is the same. They are children in their alchemical imaginary pronouncement.

Just like a slingshot, the imaginative impulse launches the child before the mirrors of their anatomophysiology. Nature's structure refracts itself, and mirrors its foundations (bones, saps, stones, tree trunks) as a sensory impression on the child's structure that is just taking shape. The foundational image of the world is body-building food for them. It is a vitalizing imagination.

Nourishing the child's senses with fundamental forms, primitive materials, and stuff-sustaining substances is to strive for a pedagogy with internal repercussions. It is working much farther with the echo than with the sound *per se*. It is making yourself available to accompany the effect imprinted by the formal life of nature into the child's being, to the degree of its reach. Forms have their effects on bodies. Bodies are also the result of their interaction with other bodies and forms. The corporeality of an Inuit person,

who walks on the ice and lives in a white-canopied surrounding, involves very different perceptive refinements and subjective paths from the corporeality of a jangadeiro [a jangada boatman. Jangada is a traditional wooden fishing boat typically used in northeastern Brazil]. If we create sensory porosity, perceptive ability (tactile, auditory, visual, olfactory, gustative), forms can touch us from body to soul. This applies even more in the case of natural forms, as they are akin to the body, derived from the same biochemical ballast.

Imagination of the immense minimum

In this journey of exteriorization towards matter, the child is provoked by morphology, by the external appearance of the material, figurative materials of their soul. Formats that engender the creation of small universes, such as miniature farms and houses and little dolls, which demonstrate the capacity of miniaturizing telluric play. A play that sizably redimensions spaces and reverberates in echoes of spatiality in the child's being. What is small becomes infinitely larger within one's internal landscapes. Places lose their fixity of size, growing exponentially, increasing their proportions, and imprinting in the child's memory a superspace, a fantastic space, the space of dream—in the expression of Durand, the image's profound topological character. The great ability we had as children to absorb and amplify a familiar topology or everyday spatiality occurred not only because we were small, and the sizes sprang on us in larger proportions, but also because the imaginative potency of the child, their geometric imagination, models and redimensions the world, deepening spaces.

3. Bachelard, 9.

Thus, on account of the plastic power of the child to model the world, returning to a childhood place almost always brings us the feeling that it was larger—a dimension that future remembrance transforms into saudade [nostalgia and longing] for being. "The things we dream never keep their dimensions and are not stabilized in any dimension."³

The child permanently transforms, alternates, changes, and adapts so that the interiority may be molded in intimacy with the intimacy of the experimented exterior. In the interior of the world, the child

reencounters their interior world. Inside small things, there lives a world of the immense which the imagination conserves without reserve for whoever may reach it. In the telluric play, this is a primordial condition of the restless act of consubstantiating oneself with the dimensions. Thus, the proportions of smaller spaces are seductively transformed into a cosmos, in a very particular ambiance of intimate solitude.

A hiding place, a secret laboratory, the cabin of a tin truck, a doll's bed in the penumbra of a dollhouse room: they are all widely redimensioned places sustained only by the dynamic nature of the imagination. Matter, in itself, does not accommodate such dimensions: it is simply the medium for the work of plasticity, of enlargements, of geometrical shrinking, for the psychological intra-engineering that prepares the being for material life.

The flora and play

The botany of playing arouses an imagining of beauty. There are myriad ornaments, garlands of flowers and leaves, petals stuck on fingernails, goblets made of lilies, and earrings made of nearly blooming poppy buds, among other toys that denote a gaze of intimacy for what is delicate and minimum in forms and colors.

Between so many thorns, the flower is now the world, it is the plot, a narrative of perfectly elastic substantiality. The rose-colored stamens, delicate and rectilinear, perched on a white plume shell, of such strange, pure whiteness, immediately gain an exuberant, sidereal, or submarine spatiality. Small multi-colored brushes poised on small recesses between the various petals, as if floating, wearing exotic hats from celestial generals, receive an ontological halo (personality of being), producing impressions about life. Strange impressions, to say the least, of a boundless imagination. Thus, there emerges an imagination of experiences of beauty in nature. Bachelard says:

How contemptuously do philosophers of this kind disregard childhood dreams, the dreams that never grow up despite all the efforts of our upbringing, thus condemning human beings to remain, as they put it, "on the phenomenal plane." ... [P]hilosophers will often add the aphorism "Everything is but appearance."

4. Bachelard, 7.

... How can this ocular skepticism find so many proponents and prophets when the world is so very beautiful, so deeply and profoundly beautiful, so beautiful in its depths and in all its matter? How can we not see that nature has depth?⁴

5. João Amado, *Universo dos brinquedos populares* (Coimbra: Quarteiro, 2002), 19, our translation.

Girls from successive generations have recognized such depth of nature. It is not rare to find narratives of girls brought up in nature who extract from the most varied flowers, especially the coral vine, urucú, and anise, dyes to paint nails and color the body, since, according to Bachelard, the dye is a "truth from the depths." The imagination of play is the imagination of play from across time, it dates back to a time before Iberian antiquity, to which João Amado alludes when referring to ornaments with flowers and petals:

The variety of this kind of toys is infinite, as infinite as the materials used in their production. Among these materials, I note the flowers (which were used to make garlands, geranium petals onto fingernails, fuchsias as earrings), leaves (from which little shoes were forged from fig tree leaves, pockets and aprons were made out of bean plants, etc., etc.), stems, shoots, and branches (of which I recall juncus fiber hats), fruits (of which I highlight the cherry earrings, pumpkin masks, glasses made with nuts, necklaces of galls... of crowberries... of butcher's-broom shrubs...), corn beards.... Let us image a child who adorns themselves with all the panoply of materials, from head to toe, reclaiming traditions and rituals that arise, in some cases, in the depths of time, from the remotest agrarian cults.⁵

6. Amado, 57, our translation.

The work of the German photographer Hans Silvester denotes an immemorial experience of peoples who ornament their own skin with the skins of nature. He portrayed the peoples of the Omo Valley, in Ethiopia, where youth and children live a good deal of their days experimenting, uniting, joining their bodies to the body, to textures, dyes, and colors from nature. The toys made from flora reflect the delicate lives of fruits and petals. The flora, in turn, made into toys and transmuted in the imagination, refracts the vast field of beauty in the soul. So many animals recreated from fruits, seeds, and flowers! Small oxen made of sticks and spikes from the momordica fruit, from green mangoes, maroon cucumbers, mangarás [blossoms from the banana tree], and from melon and

watermelon rinds. Small guineafowls feed from open pear-tree seedpods. Little ducks appear due to the plethora of wild flowers floating on quagmires that abound [the state of] Maranhão's western plains. Propellers are made out of an infinite variety of seeds and flowers like toys from the air. There are also dolls made of daisies, poppies, Iberian figures made from chickpeas and sugarcane leaves, and from cobs of maize from the Americas.

The imagination generously shows the child that the forms found in the flora contain the forms of life and of all beings, including chickens, ducks, oxen, pigs, cocks, horses, fish, humans, stars, sun, among others. The morphology of telluric play creates a sense of kinship, similarity, and unity to existence.

From the sonorous and musical flora, there emerge whistles from variegated types of sugarcane stalks and bamboo culms, crackles and snaps echo from banana tree leaf sheaths, small, resounding coconuts from the macaúba palm tree, thrown by boys from Cariri [a region in the state of Ceará] with their slingshots. Added to singing spinning tops made from small coconuts from palm trees. From the flora's sound-related curiosities, João Amado describes the European nu...nu:

7. Amado, 38, our translation.

The nu...nu seems to me the most ingenuous thing that could ever be imagined, and which I first encountered in the memory of the peoples of the Manigoto village, a county of Pinhel [in Portugal]. It is made out of a gallnut with two holes, one on each side, from which the core is removed. On top of one of these holes, a flimsy silk alveolus is glued with saliva, which can be found under the loose stones of walls and is produced by a type of spider that inhabits their interior (pele de caga-bichinho). By softly placing the lips onto the silk singing "nu...nu" vibrations are produced that amplify the sound and lend it a fluty tone.⁷


Children's toys enable the free exploration of the gaze, the probing and the investigation of nature, the encounter with the integrity of its forms, with its occult individuality in its contours and textures, with the intimacy of countless ways of being. For the imagination of material things, in and at play, every individual body is the space of being, an ontic territory of interior life, shaping the intimate firstfruits of the child.

When Subordinates Enter the Museum: Epistemic Disobedience and Institutional Critique

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If at the dawn of the French Revolution, the (art) museum was a nascent institution, inventing itself among aristocratic salons and painters' studios, we can say that, for the 21st century, the museum already has a history. It would be possible to imagine a museum of museums, dedicated to chronicling the futurity of this strange institution. We could fantasize about the existence of a museum of past museum audiences, a museum of ancient exhibition techniques, or a museum of obsolete collections. It would be a museum that would include all the museums of the past, similar, perhaps, to that "Musée à croissance illimitée" [Museum of Unlimited Growth] that Le Corbusier imagined in 1939. As from the Second World War, and mainly after the 1970s, the museum entered a vertiginous process of change: subjected to the drifts of neoliberal capitalism and the criticism of the various movements fighting for the representation of political minorities, museums are changing. What are the lines of force that are marking this process of change? How does that which they decided to call the "public" stand in relation to the two spaces that until now have dominated the museum institution: on the one hand, and in terms of heritage, the collection, and, on the other, as a device of representation, the exhibition?

Throughout this seminar, I will question the relation of the museum institution with the notion of public (or publics), and that which has been traditionally referred to as public programs, linked to departments of education or of activities, and which over the last few years seem to have gained increasingly more space in the realm of cultural production. What is the complex relationship of hierarchy and even political rivalry between the exhibition space and that which is commonly called "activities," the public program, or that which Belén Sola called "mediation"? I am referring to that set of programs that were situated in a subordinate or marginal position within the museum institution, which appear as a footnote to the exhibition or collection, or as a supplementary element that supposedly should serve to capture new audiences and improve the relationship with the local context of the city where the institution is located...

I propose to analyze here the relationship between collection, exhibition, and public and educational programs, not from the perspective of their function or purpose, but from that which we could call the semiotic-political architecture of the museum institution. This would be one of the frames of reference to which this seminar could point: a critical review of the institutional architectures or the architecture of knowledge and power of the museum institution, which is inserted in the division and separation of a series of departments and materializes itself

through the allocation of a budget and the concession of a space (physical, social, virtual, and symbolic). Behind the administrative, departmental, economic, and architectural division, an even stricter division is hidden in terms of the production of meaning, of signification per se, and, from my point of view, of that which is even more important: in terms of the production of subjectivity, of the production of political subjects.

I will begin with some hypotheses.

The museum as a performative social machine

The first of these hypotheses, contrary to what one might imagine, is that the museum is not a neutral space of representation, to which a curator, a director, or a working team can give content. The museum is a performative apparatus that produces both the object and the subject it claims to represent. A museum of “national” art does not represent national history. On the contrary: it aims to produce the nation through the creation of a collective fiction that we call history, producing it performatively, through a set of devices and mechanisms, two of which became dominant and hegemonic as from the 19th century: the collection and the exhibition. An exhibition, for example, is a language that presents itself as enunciative, which intends to show, describe, but which constructs what it represents. Therefore, it is a question of paying attention to this set of production practices that are hidden behind the enunciative dispositif of the exhibition.

The museum is at one and the same time a performative machine that also works as an apparatus for verifying and legitimizing an enunciation or statement. The museum, as an institutional space, has the power to legitimize formulations put forward within the institutional space as being true, in the same way that, for example, the psychiatric hospital constructs the difference between normality and mental deviation, the school invents the difference between capacity and incapacity, and jails ensure the difference between the normal citizen and the criminal. This is the potential and the risk of the museum.

The museum produces the public that it intends to represent

The second hypothesis, closely related to the first, is that the public is not something that is out of the institution, that exists or that even exists prior to the museum, and that the museum can simply capture with a set of “audience-management techniques,” to use the language of the contemporary neoliberal museum institution. It is said that there are a series of publics that are in the city, and that what the public programs team or the curator has to do is try to attract these publics and bring them closer to the museum. What I am going to attempt to demonstrate to you today is that the public does not exist, it does not exist prior to the museum institution, but it is the museum institution itself that constructs the public. What may preexist is the audience, the audiences, these, yes, can be measured in quantitative terms and thus reflect the success of an event, an exhibition, or the museum, not as an institution, but as a cultural industry. The audience is a numeric variable in cultural marketing. However, what matters here is not the audience, but the public. Insofar as the latter and the institution are co-constitutive, the institution does not exist before the public, nor does the public exist before the institution. This is precisely the central task of an institution: to build a public as a political subject. But what public built the museum of modernity?

The museum as an alterization device

It is necessary to relocate the genealogy of the museum in the general history of modernity and, for that, it is necessary to attend to the political dimension of this institution. The museum is part of the network of disciplinary institutions invented at the beginning of modernity and which functioned as operators in the construction

of the dominant Western subject of modernity: the bourgeois, patriarchal, and colonial subject. This process begins with the colonial expansion of Europe in the 15th century and crystallizes around the 19th century, with the construction of what Michel Foucault called an archipelago of total institutions. Foucault calls these institutions total or totalizing because, he says, they function through the logic of inclusive exclusion. It is not that the other is excluded, but that the other is included as "other." The museum is an alterization device that builds identity and difference. I think this is one of the keys that allows us to understand the political complexity of the multiculturalist strategy of including the so-called "diversity" of publics in the museum.

Frequently, the confusion of our struggles has to do with not knowing our own history. I am not referring only to minority histories (and when I say minority I'm not talking, as Deleuze and Guattari teach, with regards to a statistical question, but of an index of oppression) that have been erased from the dominant narratives: someone can conclude a master's or a doctorate's degree in the History of Art without ever having studied feminist history, the history of practices or theories of decolonization. It is urgent to relocate the museum within its own political genealogy as one of the institutions of normalization, one of the total institutions, not so different from other modern institutions of seclusion and enclosure: the prison, the psychiatric hospital, the school, the factory, the domestic sphere. Understanding this relationship allows for a first approximation to the problem of the public and their capture or inclusion: contrary to its image of openness, the museum is a cloistered institution, which constantly manages its limits, which closes, segments, separates, distinguishes, classifies, hierarchizes; an institution that alterizes. As part of an archipelago of social domination, the museum builds a visual and sensory grid of power that orders bodies, disciplines taste, and shapes imagination.

From the aristocrat and his studiolo to the bourgeois colonial public

However, different from other disciplinary institutions, in the case of the museum, as well as the function of enclosure, cutting, and taxonomy, that of aesthetic enjoyment, the education of taste, and the invention of collective devices linked to imagination and sensibility are added. Here lies the paradox: the museum is not an apparatus that normalizes by watching and punishing, but by educating and entertaining. And what is the pleasure that the museum produces? What subject constructs this aesthetic learning? Let us remember that the museum was invented as a republican and bourgeois extension of an aristocratic space. The museum emerged from the studiolo, a space for the construction of male, Christian, Western, aristocratic subjectivity and, therefore, a space in which the solitary virile body was intimately close to the artwork. The studiolo was also a space for self-knowledge and aesthetic delight, for moral learning, a space tremendously connected, in its origin, to the estates and to the ways of producing meaning both in the Church and in monarchical, aristocratic, and colonial hierarchies. The studiolo was a system of representation based on private property, the male gaze, and enjoyment.

The modern museum was invented at the time when bourgeois classes were rising, modern nation-states were being founded, at the end of a whole process of republican emancipation that culminated with the beheading of Louis XVI. This also meant putting an end to a practice of producing subjectivity that was linked to the solitary encounter of the ecclesiastical or aristocratic representative with the work of art, the meaning, the truth, or the beauty. The French Revolution brought about irruption into palaces, into the spaces of the aristocratic domesticity of the French monarchy, and the opening of this aesthetic territory to the gaze of a new subject: the bourgeois. It is important to remember here that, given the usual image of the Enlightenment, the process that led to the invention of the museum is not only the result of the secularization of religious knowledge or the democratization of aristocratic

goods but also of accumulation and colonial spoils. This is, without a doubt, as Walter Dignolo points out, the darkest part of the Age of Reason. When the royal collection was made available to citizens with the invention of the Louvre, this aristocratic space with restricted access was transformed into a space that was redefined as public. But be aware, here "public" means managed according to the principles of the republican State.

This new space, supposedly public and democratic, was, in reality, a bourgeois, masculine, and colonial domain. Women, children, non-white bodies, workers, non-Christians, and Indigenous people were excluded from this space, or rather, they were included insofar as they were objects of knowledge and representation. They were alterized. They were "the other." The museum built what was ours and of others, our history and theirs, the normal and the pathological, the beautiful and the grotesque. Far from being excluded, the other is included as an object of consumption and visual and discursive enjoyment. Accomplice to the processes of racialization, sexualization, and exclusion of the working classes, the modern museum was the institution through which the white colonial bourgeoisie invented, for the first time, a global aesthetic.

What characterizes the museum as a colonial disciplinary institution is that it has no outside. The public is not outside the institution, it is inside the institution and constitutes it. For example, racial or colonized subordinateness is fully present within the museum institution, but as an ethnographic object. The modern museum is that realm of alterizing representation that we could call, together with Walter Dignolo and Silvia Rivera, a space of epistemic and aesthetic oppression.

A museum is a collective architecture of memory, a space for the pedagogy of the gaze and the politicization of taste. Far from being a neutral space, it occupies a strategic place in the construction of hegemony and subordinateness. Lucy Lippard, Tony Bennett, Douglas Crimp, and Michael Warner have taught us that the museum is a colonial and capitalist institution whose mission is to write history and build the imagination of the hegemonic class. The History of Art is its legitimizing aesthetic discourse. The exhibition is its central device of representation, and the vertical wall, the space in front of which the gaze of the male, white, valid, and dominant subject is constructed.

The modern museum has as its aim to distribute pleasure and social discipline, to teach how to see, and to produce identity and difference. It is crucial, for example, although this is a story that I will not be able to recount in detail here, [that there is] a distribution of the various social classes in the museum or in the circus, in the museum and in the prison, in the museum and in the psychiatric hospital, and, moreover, within the art museum and the anthropological museum, which creates hierarchies between the objects produced by the masculine bourgeois subject as "art" and those produced by the so-called popular classes or the racialized bodies as simple samples of folkloric practices or "fetishes." Add to this the complexity that with the invention of universal exhibitions as from the end of the 19th century, the modern museum fully enters a new mercantile space of circulation and attribution of value to commodities. The museum is situated in this colonial economy as a factory of value and meaning.

An heir to the Gutenberg revolution modernity invents a silent and scopic (as opposed to oral and tactile) museum public, an individual male subject who knows himself and his own history through visual confrontation with the work of art. The white, vertical wall where the artwork is hung is the mirror in which the modern patriarchal and colonial subject is reflected. This is not insignificant, because one of the problems of the present-day museum is how to work with orality, with a public that is not silent, that has something to say, that does not maintain a dual and frontal relationship with the artwork and that is a collective public. One of the revolutions that is taking place with these publics also has to do with the transformation of the press into this digital and collective machine for the production of meaning that is the internet, which has opened up extraordinary escape routes within the museum.

Despite it being true that the process of "democratization" (previously we could say racialization and sexualization) of 19th-century museums was linked to the transformation of an aristocratic subject into a bourgeois subject, it seems clear that the subject of the contemporary museum can no longer be a masculine, silent, visual, bipedal, white, and bourgeois subject, that does not belong to the working classes, who builds and comforts his gaze in the production of a certain sexual pleasure and libidinal retribution that is heterosexual and heterocentric. What I have tried to do so far is to desacralize, perhaps even build a less utopian image than the one we usually have of the

museum as an inclusive space, a democratic space of sensorial and aesthetic emancipation. Firstly, place it in connection with other modern spaces; then, relate it to the processes of bourgeois and colonial democratization and mercantile expansion and, therefore, understand the museum in relation to colonial spoliation and plunder. We know that, in the first exhibitions, the European bourgeois public was presented with all kinds of objects, as well as human bodies, which had been usurped in the colonization not only of the Americas but also of India, Africa, etc. Without this huge collection of capital, the modern museum cannot be understood. Therefore, it is this collection that will produce a set of taxonomies. For example, the difference between the art museum and the anthropological museum or the ethnographic museum. These same taxonomies are the ones that will also produce the dominant and hegemonic subjects, as well as the peripheral subjects of modernity; therefore, at the same time that modernity produces the bourgeois heterosexual white subject as the fundamental subject both of the aesthetic experience and as a producer of knowledge and truth, there are also subordinate subjects who are not seen as agents of this aesthetic experience, but who are objects of aesthetic experience. Behind the supposed inclusion of the universalist humanist museum of the 18th and 19th centuries, there is a hidden machine that produces hegemony and subordinateness.

Epistemic disobedience and institutional critique

The transformation of the museum as from the 1970s has to do with the political future of those who had been objects of hegemonic institutionalization processes and “excluding inclusion” within the museum. It is a process of empowerment of these subordinate subjects who had been alterized by disciplinary institutions: the prison, the school, the domestic institution, the psychiatric institution, and the factory, as well as by the museum.

Nancy Frasier and Michael Warner analyzed the processes through which the subordinates of modernity, the feminist, sex-libertarian, and anti-colonial movements were constituted as “counter-publics” and questioned the museum institution, its universal narrative, and its

functioning. The “institutional critique” of the 1960s is characterized by the questioning of the hegemonic enunciation of the museum. Those who had been the object of alterization in the museum and the institutions of modernity progressively began to become agents of enunciation. The danger is looking at these processes only in terms of identity politics and subjects who seek to be represented within the institution.

It is necessary to be aware of the potential that the museum has as a social machine, as an institution that produces subjectivity and truths. It is necessary to see the museum not as a creator of “audiences” but as a space for the institution of publics capable of criticizing the epistemic modalities with which the museum itself constructs them. What the contemporary museum needs is epistemic dissidence and not the inclusion of differences. It is not a question of including “more” women, more non-white, or more homosexual artists, but of questioning the patriarchal, colonial, and heterocentric epistemology with which the museum constructs us as subjects. Therefore, to work today in a contemporary museum is to resist. The fatigue and wear and tear of those who, like us, work in cultural institutions come from trying to use the museum against its own political genealogy, and this is a constant exercise in resistance and dissent that often ends up costing us our jobs.

This political genealogy of the museum institution which we have been carrying out allows us to analyze the relationship between the collection, the exhibition, and the public program in terms of race and gender: taxonomically, the collection and exhibition would embody patriarchal and colonial sovereignty, before the public program as an acquiescent space to which the tasks of care, social reproduction, and knowledge would be delegated. In other words: the collection authorizes, the exhibition produces, the public program reproduces. The collection is heritage and value. The exhibition, market. While the public program seems to be in charge of care. The collection is the paterfamilias. The exhibition is the firstborn son. The public program is the mother or, in the words of Rita Segato, the black wet nurse. What would the emancipation of the public program involve in face of the exhibition or the collection? What effects would the depatriarchalizing and decolonization of the museum institution have?

“The Parliament of Bodies”, documenta 14

Lastly, I would like to briefly mention how at documenta 14, in Kassel and Athens, between 2016 and 2017 we attempted to question both the relationship between the public program and the exhibition and the hegemonic functioning of the exhibition itself in its ways of producing subjectivity. This was how the public program of documenta 14, “The Parliament of Bodies”, came into being. It was not the traditional program that comments on or expands the exhibition, nor a pedagogical or educational device. “The Parliament of Bodies,” formed by a series of societies that emerged directly from the cities of Athens and Kassel, was a device that aimed to criticize the patriarchal and colonial epistemology of the exhibition, using spaces of action and visibility as spaces of cultural activism.

It is necessary to establish a difference between the museum’s multicultural and neoliberal discourse of the 1980s and 1990s and the practice of epistemic disobedience on which we bet in “The Parliament of Bodies.” The neoliberal ethic supposedly invites for a reconciliation between the museum institution and a diversity of publics, making this diversity be represented within the museum institution. We then saw the entry of identity politics and their logic into the museum institution. Suddenly, people started arguing in favor of feminist or supposedly feminist exhibitions, the increase in exhibitions of female artists, but let’s not forget that we found ourselves, then, with policies that I would not call quotas, but an “inching quota,” something along the lines of “please, let’s exhibit a female artist once in a while. But without overdoing it. Let’s do an exhibition with a homosexual artist, an exhibition with racial issues, coloniality, about the Sahara... But just one, from time to time.”

I’m being ironic, but one has to understand that this is not an insignificant issue: this is the epistemological device through which the museum is currently being transformed, the transition from an institution of bourgeois modernity in which the museum appears as a universal museum, but in which the subject of enunciation is

only the Western heterosexual bourgeois subject, to a museum that manages differences by including them as identities, without modifying its patriarchal and colonial epistemology. It is not, therefore, a question of applying a timid policy of quotas, nor of subjecting the museum to an audience count following an identity criterion, but of subjecting the institution to a profound process of depatriarchalizing and decolonization. It is not about representing the differences, but about questioning the cultural and political dispositifs that produce and maintain hierarchies of power, knowledge, and action.





List of Artworks



Anna Bella Geiger
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1933)

Nº 26
1995

silkscreen and colored pencil on photo-copy glued onto paper

50,2 x 69,9 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 1996



Artur Lescher
(São Paulo, SP, 1962)

O Rio
2006

offset monotype on paper and wood

235 x 470 x 12,5 cm

Donated by Alfredo Setubal, 2006



Caio Reisewitz
(São Paulo, SP, 1967)

Jaraguá, 22
2007

full-color photography

64,5 x 51 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Fotografia
MAM São Paulo, 2008



Chelipa Ferro
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1995)

Totó treme terra
2006

foosball table, microphones, amplifiers,
speakers, mixing console, sampler,
electronic circuit, light junction box,
formica wood

220 x 297 x 160 cm

Donated by Ursula Erika Marianna
Baumgart, 2006



Claudia Andujar

(Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 1931)

**Maloca rodeada de folhas de bata-
ta-doce (from the series "A casa")**

1974-76/2019

print with mineral pigment on paper

102 x 68 cm

Donated by Renata Di Paula through the
Núcleo Contemporâneo MAM São Paulo,
2019



Claudia Andujar

(Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 1931)

**A jovem Susi Korihana thëri em um
igarapé - Catrimani, Roraima
(from the series "A floresta")**

1972-74/2019

print with mineral pigment on paper

68 x 102 cm

Donated by Renata Di Paula through the
Núcleo Contemporâneo MAM São Paulo,
2019



Dora Longo Bahia
(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

Clássico (Corinthians x Palmeiras)
2003

videos, full-color, sound, 26'12" each,
loop, and headphone

Donated by Idel Arcuschin, 2006



Edouard Fraipont & Cildo Meireles
(São Paulo, SP, 1972 & Rio de Janeiro,
RJ, 1948)

**Arte física — Mutações geográficas:
fronteira vertical (Yaripo)**
1969-2015

photographic print on paper

various dimensions

Acquisition Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2016



Edouard Fraipont & Cildo Meireles
(São Paulo, SP, 1972 & Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1948)

YARIPO / Fronteira Vertical
2015

video with sound, 10'52"

Concept (directing and photography):
Edouard Fraipont
Assistant: Miguel Escobar
Editing: Oswaldo Santana
Editing assistant: Daniel Polacow

Acquisition Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2016



Fausto Chermont
(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

Lugar nenhum
(from the series "Projeto Preservar
São Paulo, Serra da Cantareira, SP")
1990

b&w photography on paper

49,7 x 40 cm

Donated by the artist, 2003



Frans Krajcberg

(Kozienice, Poland, 1921
– Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2017)

Untitled
1981

paper embossing

72,8 x 59,6 x 5 cm

Donated by Companhia Souza Cruz
Indústria e Comércio, 1981



Franz Weissmann

(Knittelfeld, Austria, 1911
– Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005)

Untitled
1967

embossing on wood

80 x 80 x 3 cm

Acquisition MAM São Paulo, 1989



German Lorca

(São Paulo, SP, 1922 – 2021)

Ibirapuera

1998

b&w photography on paper

40,5 x 50,5 cm

Donated by the artist, 2000



German Lorca

(São Paulo, SP, 1922 – 2021)

Rio Pinheiros — Ponte Morumbi

1976

b&w photography on paper

40,3 x 50,7 cm

Donated by the artist, 2000



Jac Leirner

(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

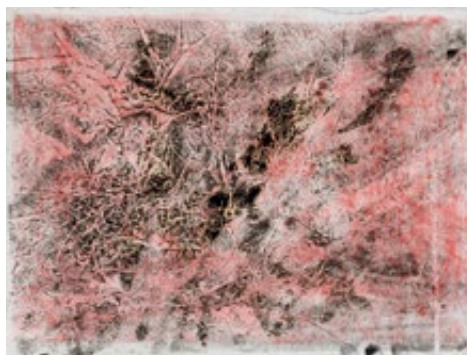
Pulmão

1987

cellophane paper (cigarette pack wrapping)
assembled in acrylic box

21,7 x 8,6 x 6 cm

Donated by Ricardo Resende in memory
of João Rezende, 1999



Jarbas Lopes

(Nova Iguaçu, RJ, 1964)

Untitled

2011

monoprint from wood matrix on
rice paper

47 x 62,5 cm

47,5 x 63 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 2012



José Leonilson
(Fortaleza, CE, 1957
– São Paulo, SP, 1993)

Ninguém tinha visto
c. 1988

acrylic and oily pastel on wood

144,5 x 85,3 x 0,5 cm

Donated by Eduardo Brandão
and Jan Fjeld, 2006



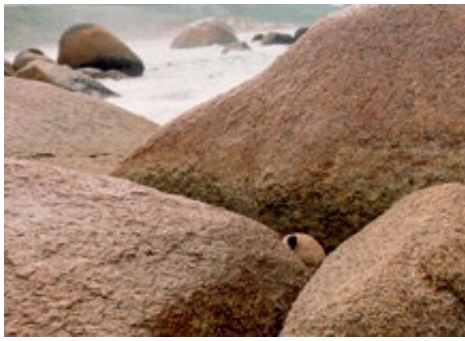
José Leonilson
(Fortaleza, CE, 1957
– São Paulo, SP, 1993)

Os cuspidores de fogo
c. 1989

acrylic, embroidery, and metal on canvas

41 x 27,4 cm

Long-term loan Eduardo Brandão
and Jan Fjeld, 2006



Julia Amaral
(São Paulo, SP, 1978)

Pedras-grito
2002

full-color photography

100 x 149,5 x 0,2 cm
30 x 45 x 0,2 cm

Donated by the artist — Panorama 2005,
2007



Laura Vinci
(São Paulo, SP, 1962)

Folhas avulsas #3
2019

brass and gold

various dimensions

Donated by Ana Eliza Setubal in honor of
the 70th birthday of Paulo Setubal, 2019



Leda Catunda
(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

A montanha
1985

acrylic, plush, and lace on tarp

198 x 149 cm

Long-term loan Eduardo Brandão and
Jan Fjeld, 2006



Leda Catunda
(São Paulo, SP, 1961)

Paisagem sobreposta
2001

spray paint on tarp pinned on wood

43 x 33 x 7 cm

Long-term loan Eduardo Brandão and
Jan Fjeld, 2006



Lia Menna Barreto
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1959)

Manhã de sol
1994

toys made of plush, wood, wicker, metal,
and nylon, bound by wool

140 x 190 x 53 cm

Acquisition MAM São Paulo, 1997



Luiz Braga
(Belém, PA, 1956)

Pegadas
1985

full-color photograph on paper

41,9 x 61,9 cm

Donated by Itaú, 2006



Luiz Braga
(Belém, PA, 1956)

Benevides
2007

full-color photography on paper

100 x 150 cm

Donated by the artist — Panorama
2007, 2007



Luiz Braga
(Belém, PA, 1956)

Árvore em mosqueiro
1991

full-color photography on paper

42 x 62 cm

Donated by Itaú, 2006



Mabe Bethônico
(Belo Horizonte, MG, 1966)

Paisagem
2002

flexography on variable surface

43,2 x 6,2 x 6,2 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 2002



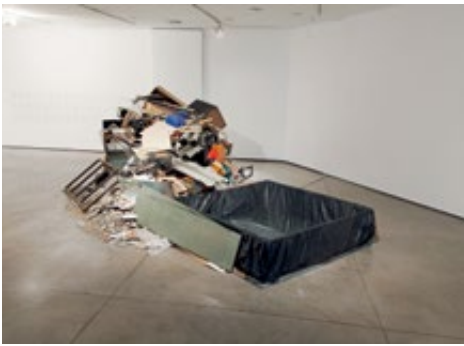
Marcello Nitsche
(São Paulo, SP, 1942 – 2017)

Bolha vermelha
1968

resin-coated nylon, galvanized sheet,
polyethylene conduit, and industrial
exhaust fan motor

272 x 533 cm

Acquisition: Fund for the acquisition
of artworks for the MAM São Paulo
collection—Pirelli, 2000



Marcelo Cidade
(São Paulo, SP, 1979)

Transtatal
2006

assorted debris, plastic, wood, bricks,
cement, alcoholic beverage, hose, and
water pump

variable dimensions

Acquisition Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2006



Marcelo Moscheta
(São José do Rio Preto, SP, 1976)

Untitled
2011

rock (matrix)

24 x 45 x 26 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 2012



Marcelo Moscheta

(São José do Rio Preto, SP, 1976)

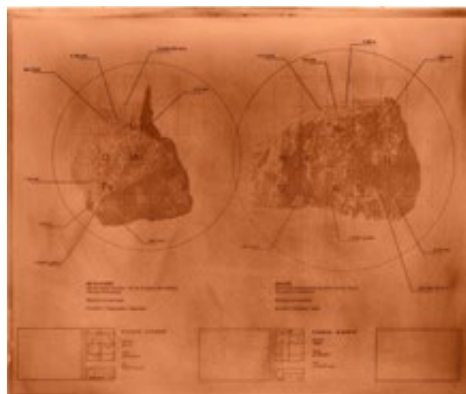
A line in the artc #8

2012

lambda print on paper on methacrylate
and styrofoam

59,5 x 79,7 x 8 cm (each)

Donated by Paulo Proushan through
the Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2016



Marcelo Moscheta

(São José do Rio Preto, SP, 1976)

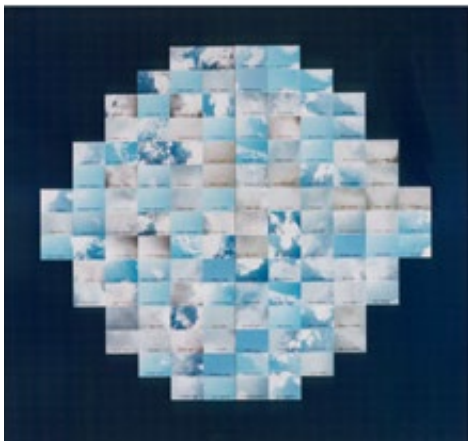
Análogos

2011

etching and silkscreen on phenolic paper

25 x 62 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 2012



Marcelo Zocchio
(São Paulo, SP, 1963)

Céu
1998

full-color photographs glued onto lac-
quered wood

208 x 219,2 cm

Donated by Galeria Vermelho and the
artist, 2005



Marcia Xavier
(Belo Horizonte, MG, 1967)

Luneta
2000

acrylic, aluminum, photographic print on
duratrans, and cold light

100 x 80 x 80 cm

Donated by Milú Villela, 2005



Marcius Galan
(Indianapolis, United States, 1972)

Sino
1998

steel and glass

34,5 x 28 x 28 cm

Long-term loan Eduardo Brandão
and Jan Fjeld, 2006



Marcos Piffer
(Santos, SP, 1962)

Praia de Toque Toque Grande
— São Sebastião, SP
1998

b&w photography

29,5 x 39,6 cm

Donated by DEICMAR S.A. Despachos
Aduaneiros Assessoria e Transportes,
2000



Marcos Piffer
(Santos, SP, 1962)

Mangue — Rio Itapanhaú — Bertioga, SP
39,7 x 29,5 cm

Rio Jaguareguava — Bertioga, SP
39,5 x 29,5 cm

**Rio das Pedras — Cambury
— São Sebastião, SP**
29,5 x 39,5 cm

1999



b&w photography

Donated by DEICMAR S.A. Despachos
Aduaneiros Assessoria e Transportes, 1999





Maureen Bisilliat
(Englefield Green, England, 1931)

Untitled
(from the series "As caranguejeiras")
1968/2002

b&w photography on paper

97 x 69,5 cm
97,2 x 65,5 cm
68,5 x 97 cm
65,5 x 97 cm

Acquisition Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2002



Motta & Lima

(São Paulo, SP, 1976, both)

Untitled

2019

digital print on paper

55 x 35 cm

Donated by the artists through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Fotografia
MAM São Paulo, 2019



Nelson Leirner

(São Paulo, SP, 1932 – Rio de Janeiro,
RJ, 2020)

Paramutt

2001

paper, plastic, stainless steel, and wood

40 x 198 x 10 cm

Donated by Milú Villela, 2005



OPAVIVARÁ!

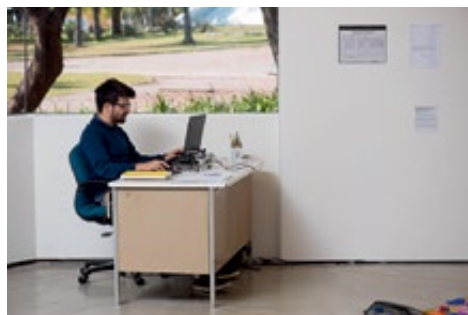
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005)

Espreguiçadeira multi
(cadeira de três lugares; sofá de
praia; cadeira conversadeira)
2010

aerospace grade aluminum, nylon,
and plastic

90 x 140 x 110 cm (each)

Acquisition Núcleo Contemporâneo
MAM São Paulo, 2010



Paulo Bruscky

(Recife, PE, 1949)

Expediente: primeira proposta para o
XXXI Salão Oficial de Arte do
Museu do Estado de Pernambuco
1978/2023

timesheet and office with
museum employee

variable dimensions

Acquisition Award Energias do Brasil –
Panorama 2005, 2006



Pedro David

(Santos Dumont, MG, 1977)

Brasa

(from the series "O jardim")

2011

photography on paper

154 x 193 x 8 cm

Donated by the artist, 2015



Pedro Motta

(Belo Horizonte, MG, 1977)

Treme Terra

1998/2008

digital output print (lambda)

47,1 x 71 x 0,3 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Fotografia
MAM São Paulo, 2008



Regina Silveira

(Porto Alegre, RS, 1939)

Masterpieces (in Absentia: Calder)
1998

adhesive vinyl and screw eye hook

325 x 1110 cm

Donated by Galeria Brito Cimino Arte Contemporânea e Moderna, 1998



Rodrigo Andrade

(São Paulo, SP, 1962)

**Paisagem brasileira – fim de tarde
com baobá**
2012

oil on canvas

180,5 x 271 x 6 cm

Donated by Rose and Alfredo Setubal,
2014



Rodrigo Braga
(Manaus, AM, 1976)

Comunhão I
Comunhão II
Comunhão III
2006

full-color photography

50 x 73,5 cm

I
Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Fotografia
MAM São Paulo, 2007

II and III
Donated by the artist, 2007



Rodrigo Bueno
(Campinas, SP, 1967)

Curupira pequeno
2018

acrylic on digital print glued onto
reclaimed wood structure and rope

47 x 42 x 10 cm

Donated by Rose and Alfredo Setubal,
2022



Rodrigo Matheus
(São Paulo, SP, 1974)

Cortina de Vento
(from the series "O mundo em
que vivemos")
2008

photographs, easels, and fan

various dimensions

Donated by Credit Suisse, with resources
from the Federal Cultural Incentive Law,
2011



Sandra Cinto
(Santo André, SP, 1968)

Estrelas azuis (para sol)
2008

acrylic and permanent marker on paper

183,5 x 275,5 x 6 cm

Donated by Rose and Alfredo Setubal,
2014



Sara Ramo
(Madrid, Spain, 1975)

Oceano possível
2002

DVD (digital video), 3'56",
sound, full-color

Donated by Credit Suisse, with resources
from the Federal Cultural Incentive Law,
2012

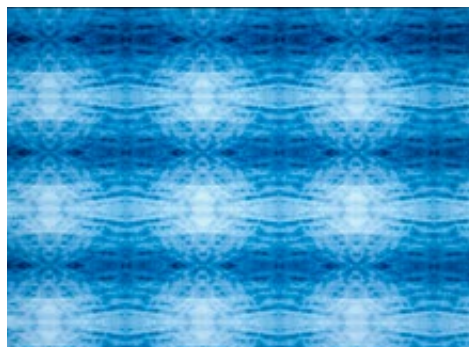
Sandra Cinto
(Santo André, SP, 1968)

Cavalo branco
1998

wood and painted metal

431 x 109 x 32,5 cm

Long-term loan Eduardo Brandão and
Jan Fjeld, 2006



Tadeu Jungle

(São Paulo, SP, 1956)

Iemanjá

2005

DVD, full-color, sound, 2'13"

Donated by the artist, 2006



Shirley Paes Leme

(Cachoeira Dourada, GO, 1955)

Untitled

1978

traces of smoke on paper

73 x 130 x 3,2 cm

73,2 x 103,2 x 4 cm

103 x 133 x 3 cm

Donated by the artist, 1998



Tarsila do Amaral
(Capivari, SP, 1886
– São Paulo, SP, 1973)

Paisagem
1948

oil on paper glued onto cardboard

29,5 x 38,5 cm

Donated by Carlo Tamagni, 1967

Tatiana Blass
(São Paulo, SP, 1979)

Delta Del Tigre — Naufrágio
2012

photograph and silkscreen on paper

30,8 x 40,8 x 3 cm (each)

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Gravura
MAM São Paulo, 2012



Thomaz Farkas

(Budapest, Hungary, 1924
– São Paulo, SP, 2011)

Untitled

1940s

b&w photography on paper

29,5 x 39,6 cm

Donated by the artist through the
Clube de Colecionadores de Fotografia
MAM São Paulo, 2005



Vulcânica Pokaropa

(Presidente Bernardes, SP, 1993)

Vita Pereira, Dodi Leal, Rosa Luz
2016-19

video, 7'19" | 9'7" | 8'52"

Acquisition through the Núcleo
Contemporâneo MAM São Paulo
and the artist, Panorama 2019, 2019

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Ding Musa (31, 178, 180, 187 [left],
196 [left])
Edouard Fraipont (114, 183 [left],
191 [right])
Estúdio em Obra (4)
Everton Ballardín (68, 182 [left],
193 [left])
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Luiz Braga (182 [right])
Marcelo Arruda (44, 45, 115, 170
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Marcelo Zocchio (186 [left])

Pedro David (18, 192 [left])
Pedro Motta (99, 192 [right])
Rafael Roncato (195 [right])
Renato Parada (6, 34, 83, 86, 102,
170 [left], 171 [right], 173
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[right], 184 [right], 185 [right],
186 [right], 187 [right], 188,
189 [sup.], 190 [right], 191
[left], 193 [right], 194 [right],
197 [left], 198 [left])
Rodrigo Braga (194 [middle left and
bottom])
Romulo Fialdini (30, 65, 175 [right],
181 [left], 183 [right], 197
[right], 198 [right])
Terraverde (48, 64, 82, 172, 190 [left],
194 [top left.], 199 [left])

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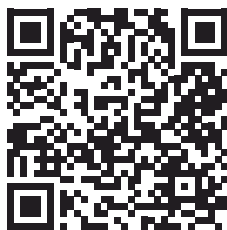
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