

STANDING IN THE CRACKS OF MULTIPLE HISTORIES

SAVVY CONTEMPORARY WITH TERRA FOUNDATION

STANDING IN THE CRACKS OF MULTIPLE HISTORIES invokes the essential telling of the convergence of stories across intersections, instigating conversations through the arts around the cracks and ruptures embedded in, and caused by, American history and its hegemonic narratives. This research project uses the arts as a plurivocal medium to trace the ancestral genealogies and counter-narratives of indigenous and diasporic communities within, and beyond, the imperial reach of the United States.

We call on interdisciplinary artistic contributors to lead us from a genealogical understanding of their own lived experience, and reflect with us upon the manifold worlds within our own composed of intergenerational memory. The project takes Maria Lugones' work on building coalitions against multiple oppressions as a point of departure, by posing a query on the types of "agency" needed for resilient empowerment against systems of domination, which have come from American colonialism and imperialism around the world. We echo her question:

"How much and what sort of 'agency' do we need to move with others without falling into a politics of the same, a politics that values or assumes sameness or homogeneity [...] Attempting to stand in the cracks and intersections of multiple histories of domination and resistances to domination?"¹
Maria A. Lugones

¹ Lugones, Maria A. *Pilgrimages Peregrinajes, Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.,

**SAVVY CONTEMPORARY
THE LABORATORY OF FORM-IDEAS**

The project holds an inclusive space of listening to silenced pasts, inviting heterogenous and hybrid stories of artists and practitioners as a means of resisting homogenous narratives, where subjectivities of struggle and epistemological diversity have been excluded from Western canons of history, and art history, alike. Across the ongoing philosophies of decanonization and unlearning at SAVVY Contemporary, we extend our premises in this sonic and corporeal series to seek alliance against such structures of omission. We recognize cracks as crossings and openings. We see them as pathways that can allow us to build bridges across our differences and towards joined strategies of liberation, while simultaneously, refusing the universalizing trap of a "sameness" that Lugones warns against.

The multi-limbed project features pairs of micro-residencies and digital contributions across two years, with three iterations per year: each comprised of combinations of sonic, performative, and discursive interventions in collaboration with SAVVY's radio pillar SAVVYZAAR, dedicated to the sonic as a space of healing, catharsis, and rebellion.

We ask, how can we enable agency across diverse forms of dissent and against forces of subjugation? How can we invite and unfurl archives birthed within multidimensional and even paradoxical complexities of terrain and body – allowing their entanglements to create roots of underground networks, rising from soils and growing steadily despite their breaks? How can we encourage the shaping of entwined roots that climb in non-linear turns and twists, and strengthen each other from below?

It is by living in the cracks of imposed structures, and breaking through them, that intersections of multiple

histories of resistances are harnessed. Through these invitations to think, create, and join distinct threads into a multiplex tapestry, we assert the survival of a mestiza consciousness, Gloria Anzaldúa's dynamic and transgressive mythos countering dualistic dominion-oriented paradigms in order to acknowledge a hybrid whole. She writes, mestiza consciousness, "though [...] a source of intense pain, its energy comes from continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect of each new paradigm", ² encouraging the dissolution of binary thinking to embrace cross-pollinations of relation across identities and cultures.

We look toward the roots of communities and cosmologies that have been, or continue to be, under the influence or threat of the United States and turn to artists, and each other, as narrators of our own stories, rather than observers of histories told and mistold by hegemonic throes. We call upon the continued birthing of worlds within worlds and the rising of transfigured forms amidst splits: where (dis)identifications³ morph self, community, and place as a result of resilience or sheer need, due to being sites of violence in land or body through colonial time.

Let us understand diaspora as displacement, and societal fractures as teachers, where refusal of the imposed "given", as in the feminist practices of Sadiya Hartman and Adriana Cavarero, can be forms of world building. It is by honoring liberation movements and traditions as as deeply rooted in present community engagements and struggles, that we can continue to be carried by them. We lean on past protests and the learnings of our ancestors whose strategies and wisdoms are situated in vulnerable archives, and yet, remain open to our shared activations:

"To believe in the world, therefore, is the task that those who seek to inhabit our world otherwise carry out in the wake: in the wake of the world we have lost, of the worlds we have brought to an end as a result; in the wake of the devastation that [...] modern dreams of progress and [...] imperial projects of world-monification have brought about; in the wake of the dreams that have never come to pass; in the wake of the world quakes that make our desolate world quiver, that make us hesitate, that make our reasons tremble; in the wake of realities fantastical, divergent and abandoned, risking ourselves from moment to moment, casting our lot with the fragile indeterminacies opened up by divergent worlds in this world."⁴

Martin Savransky

What are the terrains and stories of resistance across the United States and the Americas which tell us stories of resilience, that show us broader landscapes than those buried and made absent? Together with The Terra Foundation of American Art, we invite a pluriverse of perspectives, as in Savransky's callings: finding empowerment through sonic and corporeal conjunctions in the cracks of various histories, within and beyond the weights, fissures, punctures, and scars of imperialist hierarchies that are in need of troubling.

"a wider landscape [...] to draw a map [...] of a critical geography [...] without the mandate for conquest."⁵
Toni Morrison

As Morrison describes, we welcome the wide maps of critical geographies of peoples living under occupation or within the matrix of American power. How do conditions of dislocation, conquest, and exploitation echo in varied communities? How is racial and structural violence in the United States creating psychological illness, poverty, and addiction in response to resource extraction, labor exploitation, and disenfranchisement? How have artists and communities become handicapped or disabled from societal and interpersonal thriving due to the repercussions of colonialism, while persevering and protesting the system across generations? Where indigenous lands once reaped and sowed for the collective good, they have now been capitalized upon for greedy imperialist purposes. Let us find modes of refusal which persist defiantly and surge towards communal protection. We welcome a chorus of the stories in the cracks, of those who live undocumented or whose homes have become tourist destinations, duty-free regions, or sites of territorial control, hindered by exploitation for on-site or global extraction. What are the ripple effects of the continued subjugation of the Bahamas, of Puerto Rico, of Guam, Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti and all those who live on the borders or impositions of the United States, Mexico, and further? This continuous subjugation on the part of the US Government maintains Puerto Rico and Guam as colonial properties. Under US territorial control, the Virgin Islands have become a tax haven. Results of the Caribbean cicatrization since invasion which continue to scab, scar over, mend, morph, and endure.

Why are floods in Puerto Rico treated differently than those in the United States in regions more wealthy and white? How can we look towards phenomenons such as the neglect of African Americans during Hurricane Katrina in terms of asset-oriented injustice? We open with these weighted questions and call for further from our invited artists. These histories which are situated outside of Western hegemonic canons of knowledge production are also neighbors to "las nuevas

revolucionarias (the new revolutionaries, Anzaldúa), whose existential imperative of making ones' life intelligible and [holding] the moral agency to transform ones' lives",⁶ as pronounced by M. Jacqui Alexander. This research project engages with the realms of the sonic, discursive, and visual and their crossings. It is an aim to expand the narratives of American art history by drawing connections across communities who continue to fight towards healing, reparations, and collective dignity. Drawing upon the practices of artists and contributors of various mediums, disciplinary interests, and geographic terrains of relation, we come together to further develop their research and practices at, or with, S A V V Y Contemporary.

Working in this vein and alongside The Terra Foundation is a shared effort to foster intercultural dialogues and encourage transformative practices to expand narratives of American art and the histories embedded within it. STANDING IN THE CRACKS OF MULTIPLE HISTORIES invites artists, practitioners, scholars, activists, dancers, poets, and beyond. We invite practitioners living in the United States' indigenous and occupied territories, peoples displaced as a result of American conquest or captivity globally, or working abroad with diasporic roots coming from its terrains.

STANDING IN THE CRACKS OF MULTIPLE HISTORIES is a two-years research based project:

For the on-site micro residencies, and in conjunction with Terra's mission, we receive the practices of the trans-disciplinary American artists and contributors to further develop their work through researching and exchanging in Berlin with S A V V Y Contemporary as their host. The sonorous contributions encourage communications across the arts as their own knowledge systems which can bring attention to diverse histories, connections, and cross-generations of sovereign, joyous, and dialogical futures.

Over the course of two years, contributors are invited to share their work in S A V V Y or through S A V V Y Z A A R radio where sonic commissions and contributions from artists and community radios will be hosted. For those physically present in Berlin, the S A V V Y Contemporary team will guide two residents at a time through a two-week, on-site micro-residency and programme, with the contributors presenting their work in their chosen performative medium as a culmination, alongside a panel discussion with the curators. Within these micro-residencies, both emerging and established artists from varied geographies and realities, each with roots and connections to American contexts and influences, are paired. The aim is to enable grounds of exchange across distinct artistic practices, for a cross-pollination of alliances and experiences. These micro-residencies occur during other ongoing projects within the space, and aim to contribute to a wider discourse on contemporary art, connecting geographies and solidarities.

THE TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS ARE COMPRISED OF:

4 PERFORMATIVE INTERVENTIONS / WORKSHOPS (DOCUMENTED & ARCHIVED)

4 DISCURSIVE CONTRIBUTIONS (AIRING ON SAVVYZAAR)

4 SONIC INTERVENTIONS AT SAVVY CONTEMPORARY (AIRING ON SAVVYZAAR)

4 RADIOBOOKS / RADIO COMMISSIONS BY TRANSDISCIPLINARY ARTISTS (AIRING ON SAVVYZAAR)

4 COMMUNITY RADIOS INVITATIONS (AIRING ON SAVVYZAAR)

² Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands, La Frontera*. Aunt Lute Books, 1999.
³ "Disidentifications is meant to offer a lens to elucidate minoritarian politics that is not monocausal or monothematic, one that is calibrated to discern a multiplicity of interlocking identity components and the ways in which they affect the social." Muñoz, José Esteban. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
⁴ Savransky, Martin. *Around the Day in Eighty Worlds: Politics of the Pluriverse*. Duke University Press, 2021.

⁵ Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark, Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. Harvard University Press, 1992.

⁶ Alexander, M. Jacqui. *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred*. Duke University Press, 2006.

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