

THE SEAMS BETWEEN MEMORY AND PROVISION

G A R D E N G A T H E R I N G 29.05.2025 13:00-23.00

W I T H Kathleen Bomani Maima Elvia Descanse Humenda Isma Gane Gintz Daniellis Hernandez Calderon Mark Mushiva Emeka Ogboh Yvonne Phyllis Zina Saro-Wiwa Catherine Shi Tamufor +++

A T LOBE Block

CONCEPT Sagal Farah and Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh
CURATION Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh Sagal Farah Billy Fowo
PROJECT MANAGEMENT Anna Fasolato
GENERAL MANAGEMENT Lema Sikod
COMMUNICATION & TRANSLATION Anna Jäger
DESIGN Aziza Ahmad
PUBLIC PROGRAMME PARTNER LOBE Block
INTERNSHIP Kyle Colón Angel Fan

ALIMENTARY LONGINGS is generously supported by the Arts for Climate Lab.

PROGRAME

13.00 Lunch by Catherine Shi Tamufor

14.00 PRESENTATION, FILM
SCREENING & CONVERSATION
Graveyard Grown
Isma Gane Gintz
followed by a CONVERSATION
with Sagal Farah

15.00 PRESENTATION

"Inkaba yam ilapha!": (My Umbilical Cord is Here):
Farmworkers on Land, Home and Belonging
Yvonne Phyllis
followed by a C O N V E R S A T I O N with
Mark Mushiva and Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh

16.30 COFFEE BREAK

17.00 PRESENTATION & GIN
TASTING

Illicit Gin Institute
Zina Saro-Wiwa
followed by a CONVERSATION
with Kathleen Bomani

18.30 Dinner by Catherine Shi Tamufor

19.30 SONIC OFFERINGS

No Food For Lazy Man

Emeka Ogboh

followed by a CONVERSATION with
Billy Fowo

20.30 POETRY READING Afro-Accelerationism

Mark Mushiva followed by a C O N V E R S A T I O N with Mark Mushiva and Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh

21.30 PERFORMING, LISTENING
& DANCING
SIRA – Songs for the End of the World
Zina Saro-Wiwa

INTRO

How do we feed ourselves in a world where food has become a mechanism of control? How do we reclaim sustenance – as cultural memory, as future possibility – in landscapes marked by extraction and erasure?

A LIMENTARY LONGINGS is a public programme exploring food, farming, land reclamation, drink, and spirituality as sites of resistance and reconnection. Through dialogues, workshops, and communal practices, we interrogate the entangled histories of ecology, colonialism, and survival – asking how provision can be both an act of remembrance and a strategy for autonomy.

IMPULSES

Colonial Appetites: From the nutmeg wars of the Banda Islands to the sugarcane fields of the Caribbean, food crops have been instruments of empire. We examine how imperial logic transformed land into inert matter and severed relationships of reciprocity.

Seeds as Time Capsules: Urban gardens like Berlin's Himmelbeet and ElisaBeet defy monoculture by saving seeds - preserving biodiversity and cultural lineage in soil once meant for graves. What does it mean to grow food in cemeteries, where life and death, memory and sustenance, are intertwined? Can we reimagine cemeteries as classrooms for decay and renewal? Can we confront the reality that scarcity still forces the living to compete with the dead for land. The fantasy of "returning to nature" is a fraught one. Colonialism did not merely extract resources - it severed entire ecosystems from their cultural and spiritual contexts, rendering land terra nullius: empty, inert, and ripe for domination. Today, as climate collapse accelerates, the impulse to "restore" what was lost often clashes with the irreversible realities of modernity.

We invite you to a full-day programme planted by SAVVY Contemporary in the beautiful garden at LOBE Block where we gather to confront some of these contradictions. Through acts of breaking bread, listening to music, performances, and discussions, the program will aim to answer core questions such as: How do we nourish ourselves in systems built to starve us? Can food sovereignty exist within cities built on colonial wealth? How do the excesses of the imperial core impact the possibilities of sovereignty in the global south? How do we honor grief while planting futures? When survival depends on interdependence, how do we relearn reciprocity?

PROGRAMME & CONTRIBUTORS

13.00 Lunch by Catherine Shi Tamufor

CATHERINE TAMUFOR affectionately known as Shi, is a Berlinbased chef from Cameroon whose cooking is deeply rooted in family tradition and love. At SAVVY, we have been blessed with her nourishing care for many years. Growing up in Cameroon, Shi's passion for cooking blossomed at her mother's side, working as a caterer who would bring both nourishment and joy to people's plates. Completing formal catering training in Germany, Shi balances her role as a teacher at an African and POC daycare - where she cooks a special meal once a week, cherished by the children, their families, and the staff alike – with her work as a caterer, as well as an event decorator for weddings and birthdays. Specialising in Cameroonian dishes, such as fried chicken and plantains, puff-puff, jollof rice, and peanut butter stew, she has catered for school openings, camp events, arts events, and private celebrations.

Shi describes cooking as a calling and a means of delivering happiness and connection to communities across Germany. Shi dreams of expanding her catering business globally, to share her tastes of home and heart with the wider world.

13.45 WELCOME &INTRODUCTION by the curators

14.00 PRESENTATION, FILM
SCREENING & CONVERSATION
Graveyard Grown
Isma Gane Gintz
followed by a CONVERSATION
with Sagal Farah

Graveyard Grown is a work-in-progress by Isma Gane Gintz, currently artist in residency at SAVVY within this project. The filmmaker was invited to think about the ways in which

life in the city alienates its inhabitants from the natural world. To think about how the urge to reattach ourselves to nature manifests itself, either through the ways we eat, the places we situate ourselves, and the lifestyles we inhabit. Alongside Daniellis Hernandez Calderon, he was invited to a residency to explore the efforts by private actors to capitalise upon these urges as well as to look at the structures that emerge as a result of these efforts. On the other hand, they were also invited to think about the more collective approaches to remedying this apparent disharmony between the urban and the natural and to explore this recurring question: Does the "green-space" exist as an interruption within urban space? If so, what is the content of this interruption? What are the efforts at a community-centred approach at "green" interventions within the urban from the Schrebergarten to collectively-run produce markets – actually constitutive of? Is this a contradiction which is inherent to life within the metropole, or representative of an accelerating shift towards capitalist modernity which transcends life in the city? We are then thinking through the ideas of isolation and collectivity and the ways in which these can be the basis on which we understand the different manifestations of these impulses. These are not fixed categories and one can sometimes blend into the other.

ISMA GANE GINTZ is a Franco-Senegalese filmmaker and media educator. After getting a start in socio-political activism while studying Philosophy at La Sorbonne in Paris, he documented the Nuit Debout movement and managed a theatre production company during years of french political turmoil before moving to Berlin in 2016.

Inspired by 1960's revolutionary cinema and the films of Stan Brakhage, he began his filmmaking practice with experimental works mixing painting and analog processing techniques. While working part-time in the film industry, he also directed a few music videos and collaborated with many artists and associations

such as painter Alexandre Diop, poet and singer Steve Mekoudja, or the Wedding-based Each One Teach One. In 2020, he began working as a media educator at a refugee housing center in Berlin-Marzahn. In 2021, he directed a first short film named *Pulverfass*.

Currently, he runs animation film workshops on the topics of biodiversity and colonial history in partnership with schools from the Neukölln area. As a cinematographer, he recently completed his first feature film, *Einhornjagd*, by director Häly Heinecker, with whom he previously filmed the series Pen in 2022. The film is expected to premiere in 2025.

15.00 PRESENTATION

"Inkaba yam ilapha!": (My Umbilical Cord is Here): Farmworkers on Land, Home and Belonging Yvonne Phyllis followed by a CONVERSATION with Mark Mushiva and Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh

"Iphi inkaba yakho?" (Where is your umbilical cord?) is a question of place in relation to belonging and personhood. To ask "ningobani na" (Who you are, in plural) instead of 'ungubani na' (who you are, in individual terms') is central to how Black people in South Africa connect the self to their community, their history, their culture and the knowledge of their ancestors. The question 'iphi inkaba yakho?' can also be interpreted as where is your home? Where are your people? Where were you born? Which land are you from?

Y V O N N E PHILLIS is a researcher and writer on land. She works as a researcher for the Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research and is the director of The Forge, a Pan-African cultural space in Johannesburg, South Africa. She has directed a film about farm workers in South Africa, produced by The Forge, titled Nyarha Farmworkers and was a researcher for the film titled Mathonga Elizwe: Spirits of the Land, directed by Tsogo Kupa and produced by Mnqobi Ngubane. She is currently completing a PhD at The University of Johannesburg's Sociology Department on the topic "Inkaba yam ilapha": Farmworkers, Land, Home, and Belonging in South Africa.

16.30 COFFEE BREAK

17.00 PRESENTATION & GIN
TASTING Illicit Gin Institute
Zina Saro-Wiwa
followed by a CONVERSATION
with Kathleen Bomani

Zina Saro-Wiwa will present *Illicit Gin Institute* – a project which works with local spirit-making to explore issues of economic sovereignty, identity, power and indigenous environmentalism.

ZINA SARO-WIWA is a multimedia artist that lives and works in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Born in Nigeria and raised in the UK, Saro-Wiwa works with video, photography, sound installation, curatorial projects and even distillation to unpack her responses to her complex family heritage and map the spiritual ecosystems that she believes should form an intrinsic part of our social and political responses to pressing environmental questions. The central meditative focus of her practice is her homeland of Ogoniland located in the polluted oil-producing region in Nigeria. From there Zina runs a foundation called The Mangrove Arts Foundation. Through this foundation she runs art, sound, food, drink, research and film projects that attempt to transform the fate of the oil-cursed Niger Delta. Saro-Wiwa is a 2017 Guggenheim Fellow in Fine Art and she was one of Foreign Policy Magazine's Global Thinkers of 2016, recognized for her work in the Niger Delta. Her work can be found in the collections of MoMA, New York, The Smithsonian Museum of African Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston among others institutions.

K A T H L E E N B O M A N I is an artist and researcher exploring the ecological and spatial legacies of plantation systems. A self-described "plantation baby" with lineage rooted in cotton, coffee, and tea, she is currently researching sisal cultivation in East Africa. Her work reveals how colonial extraction continues to shape landscapes, bodies, and memory.

18.30 Dinner by Catherine Shi Tamufor

19.30 SONIC OFFERINGS

No Food For Lazy Man

Emeka Ogboh

followed by a CONVERSATION

with Billy Fowo

Through a selection of songs and anecdotes, this session will reflect on food, music, migration, and sociopolitics within African and African-diasporic societies. Taking cues from

the commonly known Pidgin English adage "No Food For Lazy Man", the artist Emeka Ogboh, in conversation with Billy Fowo, will discuss some of his past projects – notably one with a similar title done in 2015 at Galerie Wedding – and artistic practice at the intersection between food and music.

EMEKA OGBOH is an artist who engages all five human senses to explore the interplay between memory, history, and identity. Through immersive installations and culinary creations, Ogboh examines how personal and collective experiences are translated into sensory encounters, offering a unique lens to address issues such as migration, globalization, and post-colonialism. In recent years, Ogboh has extended this practice into music, releasing his debut album, Beyond the Yellow Haze, on Ostgut Ton's A-TON sub-label in 2021, followed by 6°30′33.372″N 3°22′0.66″E on his own Danfotronics label in 2022. His work has also been showcased at major international exhibitions, including documenta 14 in Athens and Kassel (2017), Skulptur Projekte Münster (2017), the 56th Venice Biennale (2015), and the Dakar Biennale (2014).

20.30 POETRY READING

Afro-Accelerationism

Mark Mushiva
followed by a CONVERSATION
with Mark Mushiva and Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh

The artist will present the aesthetic and political programme of African Accelerationism through spoken word and a theoretical unpacking. The talk will provide a first entry into African Accelerationism and its potential to mobilise new forms of resistance by fostering insurgent African futurities.

M U S H I V A is a Berlin-based Namibian technologist, street poet, and multidisciplinary artist. His work focuses on making games, cinematic 3D worlds, and wearable AI devices that try to subvert the colonial legacies of today's technologies. Mushiva currently works as a computational researcher at the investigative agency Forensis / Forensic Architecture, where he explores the environmental impacts of German colonialism in Namibia.

21.30 PERFORMING, LISTENING & DANCING

SIRA – Songs for the End of the World Zina Saro-Wiwa

Listening session and performance of the debut album by SIRA* (the musical alter ego of visual artist Zina Saro-Wiwa) that explores the impact of the idea of the Apocalypse and how to transcend it.

ALIMENTARY LONGINGS. THE SEAMS BETWEEN MENDORY AND PROVISION

in exchange for a string of islands and two continents you gave us a string of beads and some hawk's bells

— Olive Senior, "Meditation on Yellow"

What does it mean to feed oneself in a world that has made food itself a mechanism of control? How do we reclaim provision – as sustenance, as cultural memory, and as future possibility – in landscapes shaped by extraction and loss?

Reaching into the relations between history, ecology, and the power structures that determine which ways of living are allowed to continue, and which are severed, this project looks at memory and provision as inseparable entities. Grown, eaten, or named: all sustenance carries the weight of histories, of dispossession and of resilience.

A LIMENTARY LONGINGS is a multiformat programme centred around a residency, public engagements and ongoing research – exploring food, farming, land reclamation, drink, and spirituality as sites of resistance and reconnection. Through dialogues, workshops, and communal practices, we interrogate the entangled histories of ecology, colonialism, and survival – asking how provision can be both an act of remembrance and a strategy for autonomy.

The programme began with a residency hosted by SAVVY Contemporary in Berlin, featuring curator Daniellis Hernandez Calderon and filmmaker Isma Gane Gintz. It continued with the co-organization of a Pan African Street Food Festival in St. Louis,

Senegal (November 2024), in partnership with Group for Action and Critical Study (GAEC-Africa). The next chapter unfolds in Berlin on May 27 and 29, 2025, with a symposium which will be hosted between SAVVY Contemporary (May 27th) and in the sunny garden of LOBE Block (May 29th).

Inspired by Paulo Freire's dialogical and participatory pedagogy, this project is a living framework, shaped through collective, continuous reflection and action. What is the role of art in the preservation and dissemination of traditional and ancestral knowledge systems and how might it help us in this case to look into food and food crops as disregarded media? How can we reframe food and food crops as overlooked mediums of cultural, economic and ecological significance?

NTERVENTIONS

In *The Nutmeg's Curse*, Amitav Ghosh uses the history of nutmeg to illustrate the extent to which colonial violence was not simply content with the extraction of resources, but sought to achieve complete subjugation of the earth and soil². The spices of the Banda Islands, the sugarcane of the Caribbean and the cotton of the American South all became instruments in the making of a global economy that dismembered existing ecologies and relations in the name of imperial conquest. Land was redefined as dead matter, passively awaiting exploitation.

¹ Senior, Olive (1994) Gardening in the Tropics, Bloodaxe Books.Oxford University Press, 2004.

² Gosh, Amitav (2021) The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis, University of Chicago

The ecocidal effects of imperial conquest were not limited to the material world but spilled over to knowledge systems. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer stresses this point by reminding us that indigenous naming systems are living archives of reciprocity and the naming of plants in the spirit of kinship ingrains a reciprocal relationship of communion and trust.³ Imperial interests, which demanded that plants were to be catalogued, harvested, and commodified, stripped away this intimacy and any sense of reciprocity. On the one hand, an interdependence that refuses the systems of monoculture, on the other, methods that treat land as a passive surface rather than as an active participant in the cycle of life.

Imperial logic won out. Today, there is a growing tendency to challenge the transactional and extractivist mode of relating to nature which is not only the dominant mode, but is in fact the defining quality of modern society. In the west, fantasies of a return to nature coupled with a bourgeois fetishism of an imagined indigeneity of relation are coming up against the core contradictions of modernity and the limits of neoliberalism. The imperial logic of yesterday persists today in a society that maintains its desacralised and instrumentalised relationship with the natural environment. If we accept Walter D. Mignolo's suggestion that "there is no modernity without coloniality and that coloniality is constitutive, and not derivative, of modernity",4 how can we situate that understanding within the context of a city like Berlin? What do the attempts to interrupt the monologue of urban sprawl have to say to us?

Urban gardens that reclaim unlikely spaces exemplify the ambition of relational thinking. In Berlin, the community gardens Himmelbeet⁵ and ElisaBeet⁶, green interruptions to the city's concrete, are also reminders that soil and memory are intertwined. These gardens are planted in - and beside cemeteries - sites of remembrance, grief and growth - and provide spaces where provision and memory coexist in daily practice. Seed sharing and saving as part of their practice, defies corporate patents and state-imposed monocultures with the premise that it not only protects biodiversity, but also cultural lineage. These seeds and pollen are time capsules, embedded with knowledge about local climates, soils, frequencies from their surroundings, and histories of their adaptation to harsher climates. Léopold Sédar Senghor's "rendezvous du donner et du recevoir", of "giving and receiving", underpins their practice. His philosophy of cultural exchange as mutual generosity

mirrors the labour of gardeners who give to the soil and to one another without a guarantee of harvest.

At these cemeteries, physical spaces, junctions where the act of digging into soil comes with hope and grief alike, the concept of necropolitics articulated by Achille Mbembe, comes to mind. Cemeteries mark the societal boundary between life and death, between inclusion and exclusion and Mbembe's argument that power is exercised through the capacity to dictate life and death is laid bare in these gardens. Cultivating food in a cemetery circumvents the finality of death as a political tool and insists that life and death remain entangled, and the seams of this entanglement, however obscured, can never be completely hidden.

Community gardens and urban farming initiatives that have emerged in cities from Berlin to Cape Town do more than feed their communities – they attempt to rebuild disrupted relationships with land and reassemble fragmented histories of care and offer resistance to the architectures of food inequality. Yet, there exist many foundational contradictions impossibilities which are deeply ingrained in the very dilemma that such endeavours set out to challenge or respond to. The cemetery is a liminal space, wherein the mysteries of life lurk preferably undisturbed. In Berlin, the cemetery is a calm and docile space, occupied by the occasional passerby or family member paying respects to their departed. It is a fixed plot of land, ruled by silence and often burdened by the enormous weight of a collective memory which must itself face constant excavation. They must now also contend with the urges of the living, who clamour for space - to live, to plant and to grow.

The project Burb in Sweden expands on this by integrating children's education and cemetery ecosystems, Burb's pedagogy acknowledges decay and renewal as part of the same cycle, which makes lessons in biodiversity in these spaces a beautiful shift from the perception of cemeteries from passive monuments to active spaces of life and learning.8 This however should not obscure the fact that resourcefulness is often borne of austerity and lack. Cemeteries are liminal spaces in that they are representative of the margins between life and death, however they are also the margins to which the living are subjected in the face of capital driven urban expansion. In short, the living, who aspire to reconnect to the land, to productivity, to the soil, are sent to the cemeteries, wherein they must contend for it not just with the dead, but with each other.

Patterns emerge: memory and provision are inseparable, so how does provision move beyond memory into the necessary conditions for (our) future autonomy? If our provisions are to emerge from the soils within which our collective memories were also sowed, what should we reap when the sprouts surface?

³ Wall Kimmerer, Robin (2013), Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants, Milkweed Editions.

⁴ Mignolo, Walter D. (2011) The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options. Duke University Press.

⁵ himmelbeet Gemeinschaftsgarten, Berlin

⁶ ElisaBeet – Solidarischer Lehrgarten, St. Elisabeth II Friedhof, Berlin

⁷ Mbembe, Achille (2019) Necropolitics, Duke University Press.

⁸ BURB – Barn- och ungas rätt till begravningsplatsen, https://burb.se/, accessed 03.02.2025.

"(...) LET THE RAIN FALL OF ITS OWN ACCORD" - GOING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

In *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben argues that human activity has irreversibly altered nature and tipped the balance from interdependence to a confrontation with severe ecological consequences. In what is an otherwise dystopic narrative, McKibben concludes that he hopes for a time where the human impact that has gone as far as to shift weather patterns and the rhythms of seasons is minimised and we once again can "let the rain fall of its own accord". He hints at the dire need for our recalibration in a present that accepts ecological limits and relinquishes control – one where we cultivate systems that support, rather than dominate, the natural order of life and death.

In the presence of that hope and humility, we are reminded of the marine biologist and curator Ayana Elizabeth Johnson who asks "what if we get it right?"10 Rather than outlining distant utopias, she focuses her book with the same title, on tangible, community-driven climate solutions that are already in practice. Johnson firmly believes that the lived experience serves as the bridge between our ecological reality and the human imagination and is aware of the crisis, but changes the sound of the alarm and suggests that the solution(s) are most likely rooted in actual lives - in the lived experience of coastal communities, urban farmers, seed savers, artists, all creating networks of resilience. Echoing Kimmerer, she rightly asks how we can begin to move toward ecological and cultural sustainability if we cannot imagine what the path feels like, and takes us one step further by way of art.

The artist Zina Saro-Wiwa's work speaks to Johnson's core question as she looks through the lens of the oil palms of the Niger Delta in order to understand the journey that a crop goes through to transform from a source of indigenous sustenance into a global commodity. Her work proposes the oil palm as a first hand witness to histories of exploitation and endurance and imbued with a sense of agency reminiscent of Kimmerer and Gosh's writings.

A thread gently connects across these examples, and it returns us to the Jamaican poet Olive Senior's poem "Meditation on Yellow":¹¹

I want to feel though you own the silver tea service the communion plate you don't own the tropics anymore

The tropics that Gosh shows us were long a symbol of imperial appetite, of the alimentary longings of empire which are reclaimed in those lines. Reclaimed not just

as geographical spaces, but also as metaphors for ongoing struggle and agency.

One aim of A L I M E N T A R Y L O N G I N G S is to focus our ideas on how we imagine survival – not as isolated achievement, but as interdependence rooted in place. The seams show that the struggle for food security is beyond being a matter of mass need and production. It is about reconstructing (perhaps to some extent reverse engineering) the conditions for life to continue with dignity, reciprocity, and relation so we as participants in our food systems can remember our place within ecological and cultural cycles.

⁹ McKibben, Bill (1989) The End of Nature, Random House...

¹⁰ Johnson, Ayana Elizabeth (2020) What if We Get It Right, and All We Can Save: Truth, Courage,

¹¹ Senior, Olive (1994) Gardening in the Tropics, Bloodaxe Books.

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S A V V Y Contemporary—The laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks—a space for conviviality. S A V V Y Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. S A V V Y Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. S A V V Y Contemporary has established a participatory archive on German colonial history, a performance arts documentation centre, a library, a residency program, as well as educational projects with schools. The art space engages in its neighborhood's history and socio-political realities which are entangled with the reflections and discourses of the project.

S A V V Y Contemporary is Grace Baggott Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock Bona Bell Sagal Farah Anna Fasolato Billy Fowo Raisa Galofre Manuela Garcia Aldana Hajra Haider Karrar Daniellis Hernandez Calderon Anna Jäger Laura Klöckner Kelly Krugman Mokia Dinnyuy Manjoh Matthew Hansen Rafal Lazar Nancy Naser Al Deen Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung Abhishek Nilamber Matthias Rademacher Lema Sikod Meghna Singh Lili Somogyi Ola Zielińska

DESIGN Elsa Westreicher

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