SOIL IS AN INSCRIBED BODY. ON SOVEREIGNTY AND AGROPoETICS

EXHIBITION 31.08.–06.10.2019 Thur–Sun 14:00–19:00

INVOCATIONS 13.09.–15.09.2019

GUIDED TOURS IN SAVVY TONGUES
05.09.2019 15:00 With Jasmina in Romanian
06.09.2019 16:00 With Elena in English
13.09.2019 17:00 With Marleen in German
20.09.2019 18:00 With Abhishek in Hindi
25.09.2019 16:00 With Elena in Italian

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SOIL IS AN INSCRIBED BODY. ON SOVEREIGNTY AND AGROPoETICS is the second chapter of our long-term investigation THE INVENTION OF SCIENCE. The project is funded by Hauptstadtkulturstiftung and the Foundation for Arts Initiatives. Uriel Orlow’s contribution is kindly supported by the Swiss Art Council Pro Helvetia.

SAVVY Contemporary
THE LABORATORY OF FORM-IDEAS
SOIL IS AN INSCRIBED BODY. ON SOVEREIGNTY AND AGROPOETICS

SOVEREIGNTY AND AGROPOETICS

SOIL IS AN INSCRIBED BODY. ON SOVEREIGNTY AND AGROPOETICS


Staying alive – for every species – requires livable collaborations. Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination. Without collaborations, we all die.

Anna Tsing: The Mushroom at the End of the World. On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins

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GROUNDING:
BUILDING ON PLANETARY DEVASTATION

The land, now, (...) it is the storm becalmed.

Amílcar Cabral1

We begin with the recognition that the Earth is wrenched. This is not a metaphor. It is literally our ground. The Earth is wrenched because its soil – that thin layer of earth at the surface of the planet upon which we depend for life – is contaminated, eroded, drained, burnt, exploded, flooded and impoverished on a worldwide scale.

Shela Sheikh and Ros Gray2

Soil is and remains a space of struggle and conflict. Globally, the devastation of landscapes, consumption and exhaustion of natural "resources", vanishing of species and ecosystems, and the proliferation of wars and cultural genocides have left their marks on the land for centuries. And yet, local communities across geographies and spaces are experimenting with forms of collectivisation, and autonomy as rejections of the capitalist and colonial model of agriculture. It has become clear that most of the discourses around the patterns of exploitation of the palm oil industry and the land grabbing politics performed by local governments through foreign investment. Agrarian law and coloniality are inherently linked in Indonesia, which translates into arbitrary and unclear situations, allowing opaqueness and the perverse liaison between law and coloniality are inherently linked in Indonesia, allowing opaqueness and the perverse liaison between

Elia Nurivista's Sucker Zucker installation in the exhibition ponders on sugar and its history, opening up narratives of material extraction, slavery and exploitation. It renders evident the geographical divide between a world of raw materials, cheap labour, trading companies, and consumption. The artist is conducting research in Indonesia, exploring the patterns of exploitation of the palm oil industry and the land grabbing politics performed by local governments through foreign investment. Agrarian law and coloniality are inherently linked in Indonesia, which translates into arbitrary and unclear situations, allowing opaqueness and the perverse liaison between corporations, multinationals, politicians, and local speculators. As Elia puts it herself, "Mostly the foreign investment was stimulated by the spectacle of colonial fantasies of conquest and discovery, including risk, virility, and violence. This fantastic or spectacular form of investment, transnational in nature, in turn colluded with Indonesian corrupt government practices, mostly in the time of new order (1966–1998) under the term of "developing" the country."


Coloniality was and is always not only imposed on human beings, but also on the more-than-human, on plants and the making of the binaries of “nature” and “culture”. It inscribes itself even into the soil through the decomposed traces of its past and continuing brutality, bodies and bones left and kept, others removed and repatriated. The botanical sciences of classification and plant modification emerged alongside the establishment of plantation economies, made possible by the transatlantic slave trade. Historian Londa Schiebinger suggests that botanical gardens were set up as “experimental stations for agriculture and way stations for plant classification and plant modification” and “became institutional test sites of “improvement”.

There is a green thread from this colonisation of more-than-human, vegetation, its conversion into capitalist resources and land dispossession, to current forms of agricultural biotechnology. In this exhibition, Uriel Orlow’s Soil Affinities and Luis Berrios-Negrón’s Wardian Table confront us with the politics of transplantation and reflect on the geopolitical and economic movements of plants for agriculture, between colonies and European imperial powers. Drawing upon the entanglement between modern botany and colonialism, the film Linnaeus and the Terminator Seed by Pedro Neto follows Marques Queiroz’s obsession with classification and indexation of life forms with the politics of contemporary transgressions.

Extraction has moved to the genetic scale and the realm of intellectual property in the engineering of genetically modified organisms. Among them, we conversed with, followed, and methodologies, but also bridged ecofeminist and materials of soil transformation, witnessing and measuring practices that ignore the separation of entities and the more-than-human, into the soil through the decomposed traces of its past on plants and microbial life, and in the making of the human beings, but also on the more-than-human, plants, animals, and people.

Acclimatization for domestic and global trade; they emerged alongside the establishment of plantation of classification and plant modification others removed and repatriated. The botanical sciences and continuing brutality, bodies and bones left and kept, into the soil through the decomposed traces of its past on plants and microbial life, and in the making of the human beings, but also on the more-than-human, plants, animals, and people.

Neves Marques connects the modern obsession with accumulation and profit – the rapid displacement usually spatially transported labour […] moving material into the soil through the decomposed traces of its past on plants and microbial life, and in the making of the human beings, but also on the more-than-human, plants, animals, and people.

[…] plants, animals, and people.

The logic of the Plantationocene is embedded across all relationality. In the exhibition installation Chorus of Soil points to these (ge)traumatic residues of memory that remain attached to material as it travels and transforms.

While we are writing this text, the Amazon rainforest is burning at an unprecedented scale. The government of Brazil is accusing NGOs to have started these fires, and has declared this emergency a domestic affair, where no international interference will be accepted. In these same days the Waorani indigenous community in Ecuadorian government in a court battle, rendering a land sale that was unknowingly being signed by the tribe null, and saving millions of acres of rainforest.

To change the narrative of the Anthropocene, “the Age of Man”, Marisol de la Cadena proposes the concept of the anthropo-not-seen. Rather than referring to a “regime of non-visibility” and passivity, the anthropo-not-seen brings to the fore the antropogenic, the human arts of construction — sometimes through benevolently offered assimilation — the anthropo-not-seen included and continues to include, a silent war waged against entities and world-making practices that ignore the separation of entities into nature and culture.

Acrogroecology, wherever it is practised, is about resistance and resilience, according to food justice activist Mama D Ujuaje. Questioning techno-scientific epistemologies and agriculture as a biopolitical tool, this exhibition wants to ask: How could entangled anti-colonial and environmental alliances nurture each other, for example, the solidarity and socio-political movements of the Black Fraternal Organisation (OFRANEH) in Guinea-Bissau? How could these alliances and solidarity networks evolve and shape the new worldviews and hegemonic scientific concepts of cultivation in sustaining relations of belonging. Narrating and giving a different sensibility to these struggles through art became an important way to make visible (and fast) environmental violences.

To continue supporting each other’s struggles and providing an open platform for the exchange of knowledge and strategies, we conceived of a participative and generative radio format using a Telegram group “hack” put together in collaboration with Archipel Stations Community Radio (Monal de Paul Antunes) and radio agoraphobia (Udo Noll). The outcome of this experiment will be featured live during our invocations programme, and will become a public platform with a continuous stream on Archipel Stations Community Radio, within the framework of this group, the agropeoples, are invited to share their stories, experiences, dreams, singing, and situated knowledges in different languages and formats.

Across the project we sought to work with a positionality that Macarena Gómez-Barris describes as “submerged perspectives”; she urges us to see “social ecologies that reorganise and refute the monocultural social imperative.” In the following, we think through our engagement with the materiality of soil and agriculture as entanglements by reference to what we call patterns of epistemological and ontological dispersal:

Soil is the inscribed body and erosion is the scar left by historical violence. Filipa César

We take a cue from what Filipa César named “Amilcar Cabral’s agroecotics of liberation” to articulate how political theory can be informed and subverted by agricultural practice. Cabral is most known as leader and Secretary-General of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC), and was assassinated by Portuguese agents in 1973. As Filipa César suggested, Cabral’s politics as an agronomist for the Portuguese academy can be read as a subversive strategy that germinated in his political formation and militancy, to advance “the liberation struggle from inside, using colonial resources to inform and strengthen the liberation movement.”

Can we engage with some of Cabral’s studies and writings on soil epistemology to analyse and enlighten current struggles against monoculture, soil transformation, capitalism, and neo-colonial extraction across the globe? César compares Cabral’s methodology to Fred Moten and Stefano Harney’s concept of the Undercommons, a practice that underpins their own edifice through clandestine activities that exceed the limitations and desires imposed by the capitalist agenda.

Can we read some of the current experiments that merge agrarian traditions of self-sufficiency, contemporary art, and ecological practices as heuristic systems of knowledge production and sharing?

Boubà Touré and Raphaël Grisey’s contributions to the exhibition show the ongoing work of the self-organised Malian agricultural cooperative Somankidi Coura, founded by former African migrant workers and activists in France. Touré was one of the cooperative’s co-founders and documented its development from the very beginning. They highlight the connections between liberation struggles and collective practices of care in permaculture through seeking to narrate one’s own narratives of empowerment.

15  Stefano Harney & Fred Moten: The Extractive Zone (2017): XV.
14  Ibid: 261.
13  Filipa César’s writing on Cabral, particularly her text The Extractive Zone (2017): XV.
11  Filipa César: “Amilcar Cabral’s agronomy of liberation” Reading Amílcar Cabral’s Agronomy of Liberation (2017): XV.
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Thinking of and working with what we call edaphic agency (that is, of the soil) we engage with the intelligence of microbial life and plants as social beings capable of care, relationality, and intentionalness. As such, we continue the puzzle posed by Astrida Neimanis in No Representation Without Colonisation, where she speculates that life is a wordless identity that is more–than–human in relationships of cultivation, we document and make the terrain for xenophobic arguments and paranoid constructs of “the other”. In the exhibition, Cedric Nunn’s Unsettled signs of images of memorial sites, geographical formations, and agricultural fields reveals the longevity and resilience of the resistance of the Xhosa people against Boer and British colonisers in South Africa over the course of more than 100 years.

Artist Leone Contini, who is traversing art, activism, and anthropological research, works on the phenomenon of migrant agriculture in Italy, addressing how purist and ideological approaches to traditional farming cultures are nourishing nationalist xenophobic attitudes. In his work, he engages with practices of resistance developed by Chinese farming communities in Tuscany who are objectified by local authorities, media and citizens. They are responding by developing parallel food circuits contravening local legislation.

It is crucial to emphasise that many of the struggles we have learned from, be they from Guinea–Bissau to Palestine and Syria, are carried and pushed forward by women, noting what activist Miriam Miranda described in the Honduran context as follows: “everywhere throughout Honduras, like in all of Latin America, Africa, Asia, women are at the forefront of the struggles (...) not only with our bodies but also with our ideas, our projects, our proposals. We don’t only birth children, but ideas and actions as well.”14 This goes hand in hand with the deep historical–material connection of enclosures and the pressures that happened simultaneously to and was supported by the subjugation of women and reproductive labour and the instrumentalisation of “witchery”, as argued by Silvia Federici in Caliban and the Witch.

Thinking and doing agroecologically becomes an act of manifesting healing and repair in the face of environmental, patriarchal violence, and the weaponisation of agriculture. Soil as the earth’s vulnerable skin can hold geotrama but also point to the possibility of collective care, healing and living. Holographic images that move between history and geography creates a space for poetry and images of ritual sites in West Cameroon, linking both geo– and geopolitics to a metaphorical space of belonging. Agroecology is poetic but also resistant in its relating, it is an attempt towards building a culture that values soil and the predominantly female, black, and indigenous people who have taken care of the Earth, and continue to do so. As D A P I E N S E N explores her work, connecting with the Earth this sense is also about unearthing stored memories and wounds that have been left open.

Throughout the project we are working to form the ground up, thinking both in terms of the agroecological initiative and the agroecological initiative that is to be, in the words of Claire L. Gordon, “living out the gestures of temporality and enclosure” (1999). As such, this project is an attempt to think agroecology as a project of resistance that can be made possible when bringing together practices of radical pedagogies of learning.

We recognise what Zoe Todd describes as that “we are just an invasion or economic policy itself perpetuating the exploitation of Indigenous peoples.” (Zoe Todd: “An Indigenous Feminist’s Take On The Ontological Turn: ‘Ontology’ Is Just Another Word For Colonialism,” 2014). That is, of the soil, we engage with the intelligence of microbial life and plants as social beings capable of care, relationality, and intentionalness. As such, we continue the puzzle posed by Astrida Neimanis in No Representation Without Colonisation, where she speculates that life is a wordless identity that is more–than–human in relationships of cultivation, we document and make the terrain for xenophobic arguments and paranoid constructs of “the other”.

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We learn from a poems of dormancy and germination to think with edaphic agency about what it means to lie in waiting, touching, and sensing the surrounding matter. It is easy to fetishise the caring relationships of cultivation at the root of agricultural practices, but Vilém Flusser’s “Gesture of Planting” points to the “unnatural”, perverse nature of this gesture, which forces nature to deny itself. Agriculture here is always already an act of “not only planting and harvesting but above all greedily and jealously watching”19. Planting is a gesture at the foundation of claims of ownership, it is “a powerful and violent gesture”. We need to look critically at both the farmer and the curator in their roles as carers and the audiences who experience the potentiality of these acts, rethinking the struggles and the challenges that arise.

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01 TIME FLOWS IN ALL DIRECTIONS, WATER FLOWS THROUGH ME

Sound installation and sculpture, 2017

Dina Amro’s sound installation at the entrance of SAVVY Contemporary and her performance during the public programme of the Invocations bridge a past to future sovereignty over water resources to a very different prospect for the future of Palestine. The piece titled time flows in all directions, water flows through me takes field recordings of haphazard rain summoning songs about rain and summoning songs with women from various locations, but intentionally stitches these conversations together with the performer’s own writing and production. The piece presents the possibility that this sovereignty over rain, expressed in the traditional rain summoning songs sung in the field, research, can be extended to mean sovereignty over time, and that their revival is one way of forging an alternative future whereby linear progress and colonialism is confronted with the temporal sovereignty of humanity and liberation. The text murmurs of the rain summoning songs included in the installation have been painted by Abdul Razzaq Shaballout. D IN A无人机 is working in the field of sound practices in the Palestinian context. Her work is informed both by research material she gathers in Palestine, and from the sound and written reports of songs historically and politically engaged such as those by artists and writers like Dirar Kalash, Jumana Manaa, Emily Jacir, and Kareem Samara. She focuses on imagining the possibilities of how Palestinians can regain sovereignty, specifically over their water resources, and uses sound as a medium to explore this theme. She is currently completing a master programme at Goldsmiths College, University of London, focusing on sound and visuals, A B D U L R A Z Z A K S H A B A L L O U T is an artist from Homs, Syria, based in Berlin. He was a lecturer in painting at Damascus University and has exhibited at Kadist Art Foundation, Beirut and Times Museum, Guangzhou. As a writer, he is the editor of the anthology Brazilian antropologia and anthropology, The Forest and the School: Where to Sit at the Dinner Table? (2015) and the author of two short-story collections, most recently Moffer na América (2017). He has written for magazines such as e-flux Journal and The Baffler, and has published books in texts by Archive Books, Verso Books, MIT Press, and the HKW. Together with artist Mariana Silva he is the founder of inhabitants, an online channel or exploratory video and documentary reporting.

03 SUCKER ZUCKER

Mural / Sculptures 2019

The shape of crystalline sugar resembles the material of diamond or jewel stones. They share colours, shapes, and histories marked by slavery, labour exploitation and material extraction. The history of sugar reveals one of the biggest migrations through enslavement and industrialisation, involving many parts of the world: from the African continent, the Caribbean and Asia to Europe. This operating model of commodity production continues today in the context of how the world is divided geographically between the raw material sources, cheap labour, trading companies and the consumption models they are fostering; and thus leads to commodity exploitation. Murals painted by Abdul Razzaq Shaballout. E L I A N U R V I S T A is an artist whose practice focuses on food production and distribution and its broader social and historical implications. Food in various forms – from the planting of crops, to the act of eating and the sharing of recipes – are Nurvista’s entry points to explore issues of economies, labour, politics, culture and gender. Her practice is also concerned with the intersection of food and commodities, and their relationship to colonialism, economic and political power, and status. She runs Bukadapan, a food study group that undertakes community and research projects. Her social research forms the background of her individual projects, presented through mixed media installations, food workshops, group discussions and texts.

04 MOTHLABA WA RE KE NAMILE

Film, colour, sound, 7 mins 30 secs 2016

This video was shot on location in Shadi’s home village of Lofthukane in Mahikeng, Northwest Province, South Africa. It references a mask used on enslaved people in order to prevent them from committing suicide through the act of consuming soil. The work focuses on this act of eating soil to commit suicide which has been overlooked as a form of resistance. The film also makes reference to the challenges on land dispossession, belonging and displacement entangled in these questions of sovereignty over one’s life and death. L E R A T O S H A D I lives and works in Berlin. Her artistic practice explores problems and assumptions projected onto the Black female body and how performance, video and installation can create a space to engage with those preconceived notions, making the body both visible and invisible. Shadi questions how the white cube of the gallery and the museum can be symbolic of spaces of exclusion. How does the location and architecture affect the body that is performing in it? Why is it important to center, not just include, the Black woman’s narrative as a main feature of narrating experience? Shadi participated in The Parliament of Bodies, the Public Programs of documenta 14 and was awarded with the AFRICA’SOUTH! residency program (New York) in 2017.

05 CHORUS OF SOIL

Sculptural installation, soil, seeds 2013

BINTA DIAW is a Senegalese–Italian visual artist. Her research focuses on the creation of installations of various sites and works about social phenomena like migration, contemporary colonial narrations, anthropological, and social aspects in the European context, her body’s relationship with nature, and the complexity of her identity. She is pursuing a degree from the Academy of Art and Design of Grenoble, in France, and was a team member of SAVVY Contemporary in 2018. In the last two years, she has developed her research through an intersectional feminist methodology based on a physical and personal experience: herself, as a social body and her position as a black woman (being born in Italy to Senegalese parents) from the point of view of second-generation migrants.

06 UNSETTLED – ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF RESISTANCE BY THE XHOSA PEOPLE AGAINST BOER AND BRITISH

Photographs 2014

Cedric Nunn’s Unsettled series reveals the traces of the resistance of the Xhosa people against the British and Boer in South Africa, as well as the outcomes of lost wars and the erosions the land suffered since 1779 to 1879. The Xhosa people were subjected to nine wars of aggression over a one hundred year period, first by Afrikaner settlers and then British colonialist and settler forces intent on conquering the Xhosa and their territory. There is little to memorialise this act of aggression and resistance. The series looks at the land as it speaks of being occupied, desired, destroyed, lost and won. In the images we see both the states and states it is found in today, by the victors and the vanquished, and as well as the continuing collaborations and beauty, which stirred the souls of the inhabitants and the land of the invaders.

Cedric Nunn’s second contribution from the series Biowatch Agroecology Farmers documents the work of Biowatch, a South Africa based non-governmental organisation of groups of rural women in the Eastern Cape and Natal. The collective practices engages in agroecology, a return to ancient farming techniques and a focus on seed sovereignty. Heimoop seeds form the heart of their practice as they cultivate, nurture and plant precedented European settlement and domination of their region. This project, a seed as well, propagates itself through the region, buoyed by its own success, and promises to reverse the harm even planting both the bad and pesky seeds were subjected to in the quest for endless growth and profit by the imperial settler colonial project and its associated economy and politics.

C E D R I C N U N N is South Africa born and based, of fourth generation mixed-race parentage. He began making photographs in Durban in the early 1980s. He soon moved to Johannesburg and joined the photographic association and agency

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Arafpi in 1982 and was a member until it closed in 1990. He has continued to work independently as a documentary photographer, showing his work in galleries and museums in South Africa and abroad. Nunn has taught photography at the University of the Witwatersrand’s Wits School of Arts. He was previously Curator of Photography at the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg. In 2011, he won the first FNBA Joburg Art Fair Award. Nunn lives in Hillcrest, KwaZulu-Natal and Johannesburg.

Soil Affinities

Installation Wooden boxes, 4 videos, lightbox, archival pigment prints 2018

Soil Affinities makes its starting point in Parisian suburb Aubervilliers’ 19th century market gardening past which ended when factories started to take over and relegated agriculture to small workers’ gardens for the underpaid factory labourers. Around the same time, in 1899, after the infamous Berlin conference which divided Africa between the European powers, the French colonial department created a colonial test garden in VicenNES, Paris. In specially designed transport boxes—the so-called Ward crates—plants would be shipped from the Americas to Paris and from there to a series of newly set up test gardens in Dakar, Saint Louis and elsewhere in West Africa. Over time those same gardens also started experimenting with and distributing European staples for the growing French settler population. This eventually led to large scale commercial cultivation of vegetables in West Africa after independence from France in 1960 with multinational companies creating industrial farms in Senegal producing almost exclusively for Rungis, one of the biggest wholesale markets in Europe, just outside Paris. Soil Affinities translates this history of networks of terrestrial connections between plants and people, across different geographies and temporalities, through video, photography, and other objects gathered in France and Senegal, allowing them to speak for themselves as well as cross-fertilise each other.

U r i e l  O r l ow

lives and works between London and Lisbon. His practice is research-based, process-oriented, multi-disciplinary including film, photography, drawing and sound. He is known for single screen film works, live performance and multimedia installations. Interested in the harmonic complexity of biological forms and processes, his work addresses connections and cooperation: from microorganisms to social systems, and from traditional art languages to collaborative agro-ecological projects and actions.

08 Extremadura Looted

Installation, film, poster and books 2019

In 1960 a group of young cultural workers from different disciplines decided to engage in field work in Extremadura (an autonomous region in western Spain), looking at the escalating dispute between local farmers, villagers and power plant owners. They created a power plant in the area. It was one of the first times that Franco’s development policies were being contested in the streets, and, pertinently, from the very core of his regime: creation of the Extremadura region. Extremadura’s invaded land originated after the Spanish Civil War as part of a new hydraulic policy, establishing irrigated land in former arid plains. The multidisciplinary group developed a thorough research and analysis of the region, which created a historical portrait of the social exploitation of the region, which was an almost inner-colony. The book, Extremadura Looted, was published in Paris by printers in exile, and formed the last blow to the power plant project that was finally abandoned.

For more than two years, INLAND has been researching and working with the historical, political and conceptual framework that made possible the publication of Extremadura Looted / Extremadura Saqueada. In this installation, a video shows a collective reading by INLAND members of a re-enacted and partly fictional series of texts and oral documentation. This is accompanied by the original multidisciplinary group of researchers 40 years back, with footage from newborn villages that later fought to the power plant plans. For INLAND, this ongoing work rethinks the conditions in which cultural politics could constitute an alternative potential now – engaged in a rural context, combining research and mobilisation. The products, such as the re-designed poster announcing the publication made in collaboration with Diagora; graphic tools in rural struggles and aim to bend inherited extractivist and imposed development logic.

I N L A N D is a platform for collective agricultural, social, and cultural production, and a collaborative agency. It was created in 2009 by Fernando García-Dory as a project about the possibility of an organisation that engages territories, culture, and social change. INLAND funds works at process-oriented practices, institutions, to open spaces for land-based collaborations, economies, and communities-of-practice as a substrate for cultural forms. Appearing in different configurations in different countries, INLAND builds a collective and collaborative agency within the collective. INLAND publishes books, produces shows, and makes cheese. It also consults the European Union Commission on the use of art within European agriculture. INLAND is a research and nomadic peoples movement, and is recovering an abandoned village in an undisclosed location for collective artistic and agricultural production. It has been invited to the National Art University in Buenos Aires; the National Art University in Extremadura, Spain; the Koch–Grüngberg Wax Printing Museum, and worked with the Koch–Grüngberg蜡印制作博物馆，以及与Koch–Grüngberg Wax Printing Museum合作。It was published in Paris by printers in exile, and formed the last blow to the power plant project that was finally abandoned.

Fernando García-Dory’s work engages specifically with the relationship between culture and nature. Interested in the harmonic complexity of biological forms and processes, his work addresses connections and cooperation: from microorganisms to social systems, and from traditional art languages to collaborative agro-ecological projects and actions.

09 Manio Kreuzberg, Germany

Sharon Foreman is from the UK and her artistic practice is in collaboration across many communities and forms. She is interested in the harmonic complexity of biological forms and processes, his work addresses connections and cooperation: from microorganisms to social systems, and from traditional art languages to collaborative agro-ecological projects and actions.

10 C a r t o g r a p h y o f A n E x p e r i m e n t: Open Sky

Installation, newspaper publications, text and painted palace 2017–in progress

The ongoing boom of agroindustrial biotechnology started in Argentina in 1986, when the genetically modified (GM) crop was commercially released for cultivation: Monsanto’s Roundup Ready glyphosate-resistant soybeans. Since then, the monoculture model is spreading to other areas in Argentina and elsewhere. The idea is to create independent laboratories, without taking precautionary principles into consideration. Cancer, malformations, DNA-damages, chronic diseases and other health problems are said to be significantly increasing, especially in areas close to GM-plants. There are parts of the world that show up in food products on the Argentinean market, and glyphosate, the most widely used ingredient of the pesticides, has even been linked to the health problems involved with GM-organisms, being approved and commercial grown in the fields for more than 20 years already, have neither been sufficiently studied nor discussed. But just as the negative health and socio-environmental consequences of this model are multiplying, the resistance and alternatives are growing, too. This research is about the environment and agricultural situation in Argentina and beside environmental and social contexts in Latin America and Europe, these technologies are being developed by companies like Bayer-Monsanto, Syngenta, BASF, etc.

J u l i a M e n s c h (Buenos Aires) studied at the National Art University in Buenos Aires and obtained her Master’s degree in Theater and Performance in Hito Steyerl’s class at the UKD, Berlin. She develops her practice based on long term research, reading fiction and theory, visiting archives and territories, doing research and self-exploring. Her work is a combination of research, installation, public events, photography, video and lecture performance – from which she opens collective dialogues about political and social contexts and future possibilities. Her research and work on Latin American history, socialism and communism in Latin America and Europe, and with environmental sociopolitical conflicts in Latin America with focus on the condition of the continent as exporter of nature since the Spanish conquest.

A n a H u p e is from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and lives in Berlin. She dedicates her practice to building a counter-memory of colonial imagery. Marcel graduated from PPGAV–UFRJ (2016), with one year research at UdK Berlin. In 2019, she is part of the Goldtraum Project Berlin. In 2018, she was at residency Vila Sul, Goethe Institut Salvador, Bahia, Brazil and won the Prêmio Foco by Jasper Cullen as well as with her residency "Artista x Artista", in Havana, Cuba. Her most recent solo exhibitions are Women of the Fourth World (2017, Paço das Artes, São Paulo, and G. Mario Kreuzberg, Berlin), A lot of Future for one single memory (Fundas, Brazil 2017) and Readings to move the center (2016, CCBB, Brazil).

Readings to move the center (Fundaj, Brazil 2017)
At the moment, she is working on a project about the growing resistance and alternatives creating new narratives about the politics of memory, migration and architectural. The book Where is Rosa L. (2001–2006) and the film National Motives (2011) study the ghosts of exploiting political registers. She is currently working for the Centers of Berlin and Budapest. Through documentary, fictional or essayist forms, Grisey’s films and installations deal with contemporary social and political issues such as migration and postcolonialism. His ongoing artistic research Sowing Somankidi Coura – a Generative Archive, was exhibited at the Kunsthall Trondheim, Norway; Den Fries Copenhagen, Denmark; Contour Biennale Mechelen, Belgium; Kåda Yaraa, Theatrical Festival, Senegal; and Laboratoire d’Aubervilliers, France, among others.

A C A B I N O F S T O R I E S Installation, 13 branches, photographs, drawings, poems 2019

This installation creates a story hut made of the textures of tree branches. It assembles photographs of ritual sites and landscapes in Cameroon, such as migration and postcolonialism. His work has dealt with contemporary social and political issues such as migration and postcolonialism.
Donwahi in Abidjan was met with much acclaim. For Hervé, being an artist is a way of existing in the world, closely connected with his spirituality. His imagination makes cultural, personal, and social memory visible in his own artistic practice.

15 A PRACTICE OF LIGHT AND DEATH Installation, projection, fermentation jars 2019
Fermentation is the loose or precise activation of working with microorganisms – fungi, bacteria and other colleagues that collaborate to create our foods. Zayaa Khan, in A Practice of Light and Death, explores bacteria as ancient ancestors that have remained constant while the world around us has changed, in flux, in steadiness. They move with time in an infinite way, through story and presence yet within an ancient future. The disposal and discrimination of these invisible colonies has created a fear and an attempt at microbial genocide as antibiotics, biocides and toxic chemicals became the norm in our homes, foodscapes and cities. With war terminology used against what may as well be imagined worlds we are taught to see but not feel. Yet delving into this invisible world through care, encouraging probiotic potentials to foment a culture of regenerative practice within the home offers an opportunity for infinite learning and spiritual sovereignty.

16.01 MAPPING AGROPOETICS Reading, installation, floor painting 2019
Mapping not only geographies but also experiences, podcasts of artistic, ecological, and modified. The plants were then to be returned to the colonies where human and non-human labour could be further exploited, and bio-commodities extracted. The case-study showcases the miniature greenhouses, whose work focuses on ecologies of radio – as a natural phenomenon, an artistic medium, and a site for intervention. "Pirates and the Datscha Radio Berlin team, and the SENSING environment design group, and is an associate member of the M.I.T. Council for the Arts."

16.02 THE RETURN OF AMILCAR CABRAL Sana na N’Hada et al. Film 1974
This collective film was the first production realised and accomplished by Guinean filmmakers after the liberation of Guinea Bissau from Portuguese colonialism in 1974. Sana na N’Hada mentioned that the film was made "in order to return to the capital of our country. This event was edited with Guinean songs, and archival material framing Cabral addressing freedom fighters during the guerrilla war. The convocation of lament in this film is a gesture to provoke a multiplicity of returns.

17 ARCHIPEL STATIONS COMMUNITY RADIO interested in the work of Community Radio contributes to the project with an open call for podcasts, workshops, dialogues, and sounds relating to themes that explore agroecological practices as forms of care and thought. The work is informed by the science of agronomy. F I L I P A C Ê S A R is an artist and filmmaker whose work focuses on ecologies of radio – as a natural phenomenon, an artistic medium, and a site for intervention. "Pirates and the Datscha Radio Berlin team, and the SENSING environment design group, and is an associate member of the M.I.T. Council for the Arts."

WARDIAN TABLE: Sculpture, birch multiplex, polycarbonat, mixed media 2019
WARDIAN TABLE Sculpture, birch multiplex, polycarbonat, mixed media 2019
WARDIAN TABLE is a social pedestal, designed for nourishing seeds and cuttings of medicinal plants (dans) that have been used and grown under a particular light frequency. The structure was produced in collaboration with TIER (The Institute for Endotic Research) in 2018 as a prototype for the re-enactment of Meret Oppenheim’s A Cup of Mente, a Rusty Nail. Why intransitive? with non-binary performance artist Callum Harper. It was conceived to remain as permanent display infrastructure where the Cabralian Agrarian is invited to establish workshops, and other collective and pedagogical activities. Their work focuses on ecologies of radio – as a natural phenomenon, an artistic medium, and a site for intervention. "Pirates and the Datscha Radio Berlin team, and the SENSING environment design group, and is an associate member of the M.I.T. Council for the Arts."

19 HOW TO RETURN TO EARTH WHEN IT TURNS ITS BACK ON YOU Installation/performance, dollhouse, bathtub, soil, prints 2019
How can we connect with our ancestors through the soil? How can we heal the wounds that are left in soil? How can we retrieve stored memories? How is the
How to Return to the Earth When it Turned its Back on You investigates these questions through an experiment: recreating a dream as a process of REM-membering – reassessing the message of a dream as one uses a historical or ancestral archive. The installation bridges the invisible gaps of connection between individuals by making the intangible (dreams) a tangible form of releasing trauma. By staging a “Grand Dream” – a dream that dissolves the separation of the past, present and future that feels more like a memory than a product of sleep – Mia Harrison aims to engage with the healing of generational traumas that are not just held within the lineage of our genes but the lineage of the Earth. The reactivation will be through the five-senses, allowing the artist and the public to submerge themselves the subconscious that is covered in earth. MIA Imani Harrison is a Pacific Northwest native interdisciplinary artist and arts writer who currently lives in Berlin. Harrison interrogates the ways that disenfranchised communities can heal individual, communal, and societal trauma by creating works that live in-between the worlds of art and science. This “third-way” mixes unconventional methods (dreams, rituals) and science (ethnography, geography, psychoanalysis) to collectively dream new ways of being.

— AGROPoETICS READER

This reader is a collection of writings by artists, theorists and activists that further open up the questions around the commons, cooperative forms of organisation and the materiality of soil that have driven this project, including texts by Marisol de la Cadena, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Yeremisi Aribisala and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa amongst many others. It is prepared and edited in collaboration between the SAVVY Contemporary project team and The Institute for Endotic Research (TIER). The paper used in printing is recycled. Parts of the publication are printed with riso printing, which does not emit greenhouse gases and uses vegetable soy based ink, that allows easier recycling in the future.

THE INSTITUTE FOR EN DOT IC RESEARCH (TIER) began in 2015 as a fictional institution understood as a habitable sculpture. TIER’s program challenges the processes of producing and presenting art through encounters, workshops and interventions. TIER is co-directed by Lorenzo Sandoval and Benjamin Busch. The institute is dedicated to research about forms of generation and presentation of subject matter related to the endotic – an antonym for exotic. French writer George Perec used it as a conceptual tool to approach everyday life in one’s own immediate surroundings. With this idea, he proposed to preserve the fascination that comes with the act of exploring while also avoiding to produce the figure of the other. Considering that an institute is an organisational body created for a certain purpose, TIER takes the form of an institute to produce a host for a multidisciplinary approach for knowledge production. The purpose of this institute is to create a body of work operating from the endotic. The endotic is a subtle but powerful tool to generate a situated practice of an institution.
FLOORPLAN

01 TIME FLOWS IN ALL DIRECTIONS, WATER FLOWS THROUGH ME Dina Amro & Abdul Razak Shaballout Sound installation and mural 2019

02 LINNEAUS AND THE TERMINATOR SEED Pedro Neves Marques Film, colour, sound, 15 mins 2017

03 SUCKER ZUCKER Elia Nuristani Mural/Sculptures 2019

04 MOTLHABA WA RE KE NAMILE Lerato Shadi Film, colour, sound, 7 mins 30 sec 2016

05 CHORUS OF SOIL Binta Diaw Sculptural installation, soil, seeds 2019

06 UNSETTLED – ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF RESISTANCE BY THE XHOSA PEOPLE AGAINST BOER AND BRITISH Cedric Nunn Photographs 2014

06.01 The rugged heights of the Amathole Mountains, which served as a refuge for embattled Xhosa warriors.

06.02 The Great Fish (Inxuba) River, streaming through the Great Fish River Nature Reserve in which the bush served as a tactical retreat for Xhosa militants.

06.03 The burial place of the prophetess Nongqawuse, whose vision was to cause the Xhosa to destroy their cattle and grain stores in the belief that their dead would arise and the world would be reborn anew – without settlers and colonialists.

06.04 Egazini Memorial to warriors slain in the failed 1819 attack on Grahamstown. The contested site of Makanas Kop on the horizon, now with reconstruction and development houses.

06.05 Looking north towards the Amathole Mountains from Grahamstown.

06.06 Farmland in the Somerset East region close to the Great Fish River, or Inxuba River, as it is known to the Xhosa who fought nine Wars of Resistance.

06.07 The fruits of dispossession; soil erosion due to over-crowding and over-grazing in KwaNdlambe Village, Peddie.

06.08 BIOWATCH AGROECOLOGY FARMERS

07 SOIL AFFINITIES Uriel Orlow Installation, boxes, film, photographs 2018

07.01 Detail of a 1919 stained-glass window from the church Notre-Dame-des-Vertus in Aubervilliers

07.02 Historical photographs showing the loading of Ward crates with ‘useful’, ‘economic’ plants in the colonial garden in Vincennes.

07.03 Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research, Dakar (6’ 30”)

07.04 Former colonial garden, Vincennes (France); former Sor text garden, Saint-Louis (Senegal) (8’ 18”)

07.05 Workers Gardens, Aubervilliers (8’ 44”)

07.06 Commercial Farm SCL, Saint-Louis, Senegal & International Market of Rungis (12’ 23”)

08 EXTREMADURA LOOTED INLAND Installation, film, poster and books 2019

09 MANIök RIEBE ICH DIR, SCHWESTERCHEN Barbara Marcel & Ana Hupe 2-channel video installation 13 mins & 43 mins 2015-2019

10 CARTOGRAPHY OF AN EXPERIMENT UNDER OPEN SKY Julia Mensch Installation, newspaper publications, text and painted ceramic plate 2017-in progress

11 TRÜMMERBERG Leone Contini Sculptural installation, rubble 2019

12 SMALL THINGS Yen-Chao Lin Film, color, 16mm to HD 1:55 mins 2019

13 SOWING SOMANKIDI COURA – A GENERATIVE ARCHIVE 13.01 SOMANKIDI COURA Slideshow 1977-2015 Bouba Touré

13.02 BOUBA TOURE, 58 RUE TROUSSEAU, 75011 PARIS, FRANCE Film 2008 29 mins Bouba Touré

13.03 COOPERATIVE Film 2008 72 mins Raphael Grisey

14 A CABIN OF STORIES Hervé Yamguen Installation, wood/tree branches, photographs, drawings, poems 2019

15 A PRACTICE OF LIGHT AND DEATH Zayaan Khan Installation, projection, fermentation jars 2019

16.01 MAPPING AGROPOETICS OF LIBERATION Filipa César & Ahmed Ismaldin & Ali Yass Reading, installation, floor painting 2019

16.02 THE RETURN OF AMILCAR CABRAL Sana na NHADA et al. Film 1974

18 ARCHIPEL STATIONS COMMUNITY RADIO

19 WARDIAN TABLE Luis Berrioz-Negrón Sculpture, birch multiplex, polycarbonate, mixed media 2019

20 HOW TO RETURN TO EARTH WHEN IT TURNS ITS BACK ON YOU Mia Imani Harrison Installation/performance, dollhouse, bathtub, soil, prints 2019
SAVYYY Contemporary - The laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks - a space for conviviality. SAVYYY Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. SAVYYY Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. SAVYYY 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.


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FONTS Grow (through a generous partnership with DINAMO Foundry, abcdinamo.com) Neutral (carvalho-bernau.com)