







Fotografías: Gustavo García Solares





The Biennale in Resistance

2019

The Biennale in Resistance of this edition

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Guatemala, Guatemala.

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In Central America spaces for young political participation through art and social innovation are few and limited. Both artists and groups have great ideas that look forward to have high impact in social changes. Sadly, the lack of formation opportunities, project abilities like: design, management, and ad-ministration, reduce the chances of making this possible.

The Center of Artivism and Innovation (CARTI), aims to support groups and organizations from Central America to develop more efficient management, administration, and communication processes, by en-hancing their capability for sustainability.

# 44

Proyecto 44 is an activism group. It came into existence in Guatemala inspired by the revolutionary movements of October 20th, 1944. It uses art as a platform for communication, exposing or making visible subjects of social interest. It also practices a methodology which uses contemporary art to mediate conflicts at a social level, this is why every action is performed in a public place. In order to reach a solution, mediation is vital, and that is why we need to talk about it.



## MAYA JURACÁN

Professor in Language, Literature, History, and Social Sciences specialized in Contemporary Art, co-curator of the “21 Bienal de Arte Paiz, Más Allá” (2018). She leads the education program in visual arts at Fundación Paiz, Guatemala. Curator associate of the Remembrance House of the Center for Legal Action in Human Rights [CALDH, for its abbreviation in Spanish]. She works from a Guatemalan historic memory point of view. Shaping localized dialogues based on the understanding of the territory, with subjects such as community feminism as a tool to think about the space as a streaming epistemological connection, the body in relation to this space, the time, the movement, and memory.



## DANIEL GARZA-USABIAGA

Doctor in History and Art Theory by the University of Essex (United Kingdom), has postdoctoral studies by the Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. He was a curator for the Modern Art Museum and chief curator of the Museo Universitario del Chopo in Mexico City. He has curated over 40 expositions in Mexico and abroad, as well as collaborating in editorial projects of the Getty Research Institute, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art in Varsovia, and Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlín, among others. He has published books about the work of Mathias Goeritz (2012) and Wolfgang Paalen (2018). He was the artistic director of Zona Maco. Currently, he holds the position of Artistic Director for the “XIV Bienal FEMSA, Inestimable azar” (2020).





## LUCIA IXCHIÚ

Native Mayan – K'iché, diverse feminist, human rights activist, artist, cultural manager, and community journalist. She was born in Totonicapán, Guatemala. She became activist and journalist because of the massacre that took place on October 4th, 2012 at the Alaska Peak, Totonicapán. Lucía is part of the university student movement since 2012, she was part of the Upper University Council of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala from 2014 to 2016; she supported the democratization process of the University Student Association “Oliverio Castañeda de León” from 2012 to 2017; active member of the movement “USAC es Pueblo”. She is also co-founder of Festivales Solidarios, broadcaster and part of groups such as: the indigenous news “Maya K’at” from the Guatemalan Federation of Broadcasting Schools, the “Somos Una Abya Yala” network, “Latinoamérica rompe el cerco”, “La Internacional Femi-nista”, and the diverse feminists encounter “ELLA”.

## NUMA DÁVILA

Urban creature, born and raised in Guatemala City, moving between poetry and anthropology. She is part of “Cuirpoétikas”, a group that discusses sexual and body incidences. She is a writer and activist.



## GUSTAVO GARCÍA SOLARES

Audiovisual creator, photographer, musician, and activism project manager. He has experience in strategic communication, video documentary, and photography for youth social projects in Central America, Africa, the Middle East, among other places with Action Aid Denmark's Global Platforms. He develops strategies for the projects' processes in CARTI and helps youth collectives with branding, design, documentation, and action promotion. This to ensure the impact, acknowledgment, and relevance in local and international context.





### GABRIELA MORALES

She has worked with youth and social movements since 2001, as well as coordinating and managing projects about sexual and reproductive health, gender, leadership, political participation, and activism at a Latin-American level. Gabriela conducts and educates groups on project management and learning strategies, contributing to organizations so that they develop clear objectives and be assertive on reaching their goals.



### ILYANA OROZCO

She has administrative and finance experience in social projects since 1997. She has worked in projects with Latin American coverage on subjects such as youth, native people, and entrepreneurship in rural areas, among others. Ilyana manages the projects' funds, educates and mentors groups and organizations in administrative – financial procedures for a budget management that aims at self-sufficiency and sustainability.

## MARIO QUIYUCH

Visual artist and cultural manager. In 2008, he started his studies at the Escuela Superior de Arte majoring in visual arts with a specialty in painting, besides that, he also received different workshops with national and inter-national artists. He started working for Fundación Paiz in 2012, from volunteering process and venues coordination to the artistic production, carrying in his career path 5 Paiz Art Biennales and one BAVIC Central American Biennale. Mario has worked in productions of national and international artists. He is the co-founder of Asociación Colectivo Contraste; he continues to coordinate with the association the school festival "Así es mi Guate", that is carried out at the Fine Arts Theatre, as well as the national body paint festival that is performed in the context of the Historic Center Festival.



## RODRIGO VILLALOBOS FAJARDO

Writer, editor, music lover, and photography enthusiast. He has published the poetry books entitled "Poemas de un disquete de tres pulgadas y media" (Testigo Ediciones, 2017) and "Tulipanes de plástico" (POE, 2018). Currently, he manages the Testigo Ediciones Editorial, contributes as columnist on the digital medium "Diario de Los Altos", and has executed the post of archival researcher. Furthermore, he manages activism projects as artistic director and is co-director of the cultural magazine "La Fábrik/". When he is not reading he shares his own stories, poems, and essays in his blog "Poesía tenue y tinta para amar".



## JACOBO CASTAÑEDA

Art director, illustrator, and audiovisual artist. He has specialized in artistic, cultural, and entertainment projects. He worked at publicity agencies and graphic studios. In 2012, he founded “BAIOLUX Labs” with which he does personal projects, art exhibitions at an international level, and commercial projects. Among some of his acknowledgments and awards, stands out his honorific mention at the Madrid Design Biennale in 2012, and being named one of the best 30 students on the 30th anniversary of the Design School of the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala. Moreover, he has been featured in two graduate theses as case study so as to analyze his graphic technique and conceptualization process, as well as mentions in printed and digital magazines in both national and international levels. Jacobo is a technology, science fiction, new media arts, experimental music, and capoeira enthusiast.



## JOSUÉ ALVARADO CAXAJ

He was born at the IGGS in Pamplona. A natural born documentalist, he has worked in graphic design, film, and video editing. His work at CARTI has led him to activism projects at a Central American level, he has also created short films. Josué is a great photography enthusiast and fan of smiling at life.







Photograph: Gustavo García Solares



**For starters, why in hell a biennale? The most logical answer is <<to have a moment in which different visions of art and artists exist, so that the whole country speaks and breathes art>>.**

**Therefore, we need to think about what kind of art we are referring to. We have to destroy the imaginary wall between art and political activism in order to have a broader and complete spectrum of our region. With open wounds and the resistance that rises from tenderness in despite of the oppression, as a sense of community that continues to make us believe in the utopia of such craved systemic change.**

**As a result, in our personal quest we have come across many texts and pieces that wander around those broken borders, between what is art and what is social. Nevertheless, is with practice that I came to understand that the border is found just in the words, as we lessen our own context by theorizing everything so emphatically.**

According to Elvira Duanganian art as a social development goes through the human being and does not necessarily rise in a gallery, but from many spaces because it does not develop in one particular person, but rather in several dialogues. There is the bet! Not in inclusion, but in diversity uprising.

Lorena Cabnal mentions in *Feminismos Diver-sos*, that it is like a great tapestry made from different threads, because it is a social event of art that breaks through historic memory, public space, diverse identities, and native people, searching for a fine intersectional identity whose existence questions the spaces we occupy.

“To whom is it directed?” they asked the other day... and the thing is, that it should not have a target audience. Maybe art that is consumed and recognized has a target audience, but it could hardly be called art if it responds to a specific market. This biennale in resistance is different. Something is going on. Something is happening and is being lived in this time and space.

At the same time, a group of writers and curators talked about Wilfredo Orellana’s sound installation, while some kids were trying to find the animals they could hear on the top of the trees. This was a space of an encounter of recovery. A generation’s narrative, an evolving structure.

As we are talking from a real space, even with our losses and failures we are capable of embracing an artist that is not pursuing the desired white cube. This is about going hand in hand with those whose main interest is to restore the social structure.

And, how was a biennale in resistance proposed if from the beginning it was a contradiction of itself? Well, the first step is to erase the social dichotomy in order to obtain a strategic compre-

hension, because it was not a biennale that responded to the curators’ practice, rather sustained diverse dialogues. A base such as community feminism, helped us to find the model. We called it community curation, therefore, a proposal from different places for a linkage process, it has its limits, but with each step new questions arose and that kept us away from falling into the dogma.

What pieces? What places? Which halls? Which galleries? Part of our context was to understand that one of the venues served as a dining as well. Another example is, that one time, a journalist arrived when all the pieces had been taken down for a quinceañera stage to be built. There was also a case in which a diversity party took place and displayed on its walls, with pride and for several weeks, the title <<The Biennale in Resistance – Our Other Stories>>. Understanding the context was to understand that what we were proposing was not a fragile practice. It is an identity that rises by itself and fragility is the ambition of comparing ourselves with a world of art that is not ours. Something that does not belong to us.

The BiR team was constantly defensive towards the tenderness of how we presented ourselves to the rest and how we were perceived; so, when ego peeped out violently, they made sure to let us know. A shared construction did not mean that everyone would be listened to or included. This shared construction was understanding the simple fact that everybody’s voice has a battle, and that empathy was a tool that most of the time made us remain in silence or join it.

At no time this biennale looked to become a brand, it rather chose to walk by everybody’s side, respecting the space that everybody built, and in this way reach a more diverse art, one suited for our lives.

So, I ask again, “then, for what in hell a Biennale in Resistance was useful?”, to make friends, to denounce, to create a community, to accompany processes, to take care of each other, to respect one another, to get to know each other, and to defend the tenderness that we have left.

Maybe every other battle has been already won, but the cultural one, we still have that one!



# The Venues



Casa Celeste (Guatemala City)

## Ciudad Imaginación (Quetzaltenango)



Guatemalan National Library “Luis Cardoza y Aragón” (Guatemala City)

# 1. Espacio/C (Chichicastenango)

# 2. Culture House "4 de Noviembre" (Guatemala City)

# 3. Casa Roja (Guatemala City)

1.



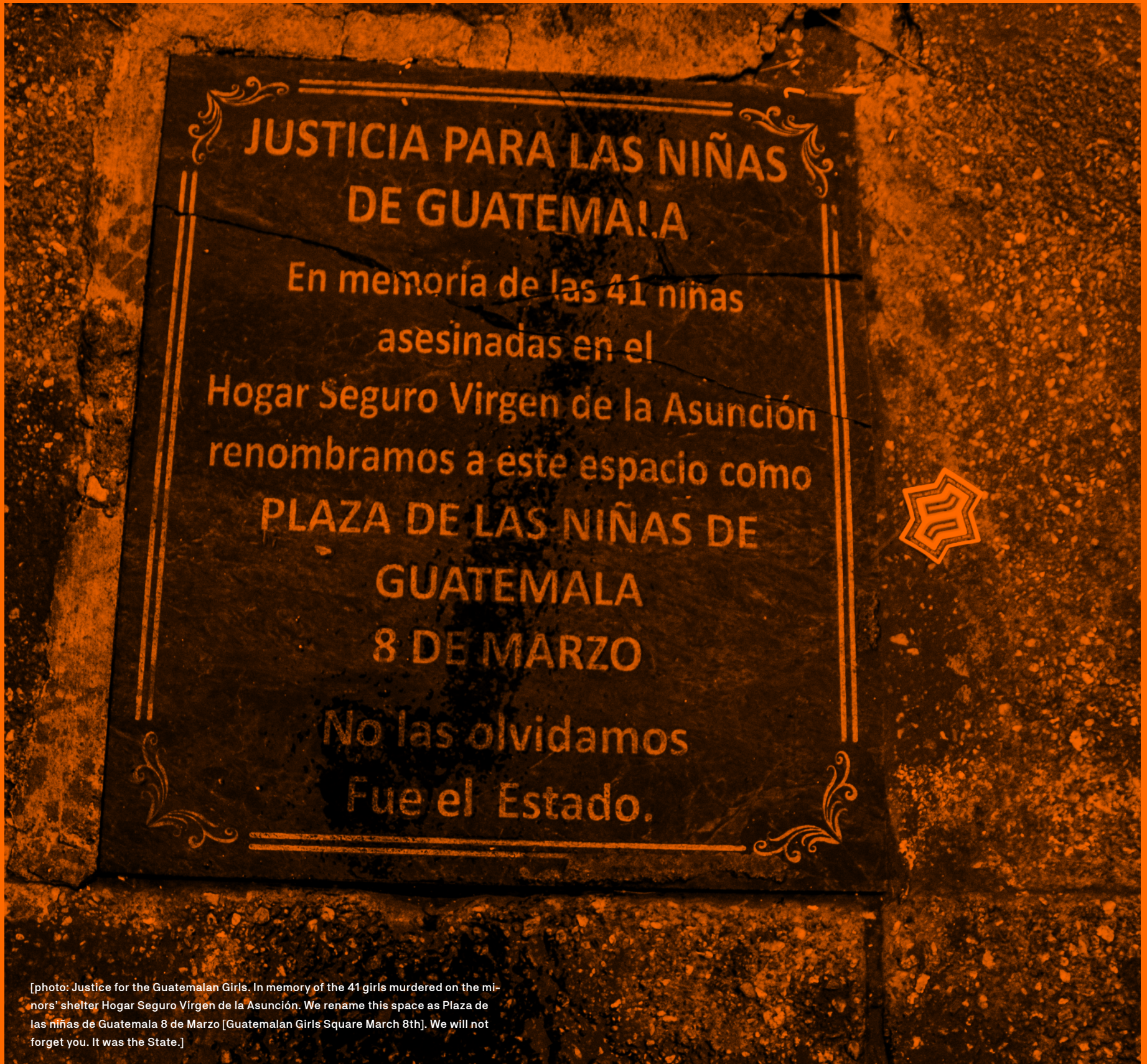
2.



3.







[photo: Justice for the Guatemalan Girls. In memory of the 41 girls murdered on the minors' shelter Hogar Seguro Virgen de la Asunción. We rename this space as Plaza de las niñas de Guatemala 8 de Marzo [Guatemalan Girls Square March 8th]. We will not forget you. It was the State.]

# What in hell is <<The Biennale in Resistance>>?

The art platform is aimed to be used as a generator of dialogues in the community, with a capacity of highlighting social problems, topics, and practices.

We conceive 'art in resistance' as the art that represents a complaint or critique. The art that shows the governmental and corporate impositions, but also all of the art that revitalizes, embodies and generates dialogues that support the people's resistance, in order to find a common fight. <<The Biennale in Resistance>> is a contradiction just by existing, and challenges traditional ways from its conception: confronting the white cube, as well as the dynamics of the world of art, and at the same time, it suggests alternatives of resistance for the problems that affect us as Latin American people.

## Context

A constant state throughout Latin America history is that it keeps living between confusion and violence of its political and social development. Resistance has been a constant for centuries of expropriation, looting, poverty, and helplessness. Such repression has been fed by the psychosis, and adopted by the disrupted mechanisms through the media, which are led by dirty governmental and corporate strategies that turn us into a mixture of problems that, sometimes, seems to be unbeatable.

We are united not just by geographic dimension and turbulent history, but by our cultural interaction and the State model that rules us as well. Throughout the years, the people, the students, and artists have used every type

of tools to express their unrest and disdain for the corrupted and repressive established conditions.

This is why we believe that we found the key to know that we are not alone, and being able to recognize that the Latin American fight is one. This would promote the generation of dialogues and discussions that will bring us together to create proposals, not complaints.

There is a common narrative that, as Latin Americans, we should be able to put together. Our perspectives, duties, and knowledge can abandon the construction, questions, and possibilities of comprehension and change.

We conceive 'art in resistance' as the art that represents a complaint or critique. The art that is capable of showing the governmental and corporate impositions, but also all of the art that revitalizes, embodies and generates dialogues that support the people's resistance, and that is looking to find a specific and unified fight.

Within this logic political art makes an appearance, as well as activism, useful art, socially compromised art, and all of its denominations.

## **The Open Call**

With this call we invite individuals, groups, civil organizations, non-profits, artists, intellectuals, curious minds, students, and any person who inhabits Latin America to develop their way of resisting through art.

We invite you to break the limitations of the white cube and for you to take your message of resistance to spaces where art is not considered a means of change. In order to participate you have to send a PDF that has the following information:

- An explanation or statement about the piece, project, or action. The date it was made or a proposal for it to be conducted, theme, and documentation of no more than 5 photographs.
- Resume or portfolio of the artist or group.
- With what kind of organizations do you think that your work generates dialogues and why?
- This information must be sent via e-mail to [info@labienalenresistencia.art](mailto:info@labienalenresistencia.art) with the subject stating that you wish to participate.

Call closing date: July 24th, 2019.

<<The Biennale in Resistance>> will grant production awards to the best three pieces that create a dialogue per se with its social context, and that are capable of creating direct bonds with other organizations so to generate

a project, action, or a piece in their country of origin. The exhibit will be implemented in Guatemala during October, 2019.

<<The Biennale in Resistance>> is a project of Proyecto 44 and CARTI (Center of Artivism and Innovation) that looks to promote other narratives and question the ways of doing and creating art, visual art curatorship, and social manifestations of our region and time. <<The Biennale in Resistance>> itself is a project in construction of which a theoretical, practical and critique proposal is expected towards the art of resisting.



Photograph: Gustavo García Solares

## Hearts, livers, and throats: To the Street!

By Gustavo García Solares

Guided by creative or desperate flames – perhaps, they are the same – the art of resistance is the inevitable. This art shines a lot in a region that is as problematic and dynamic as Latin America. Despite all of the effort to stop it, it comes out through the cracks as magma. What is better than artistic expression to synthesize and channel it through this crucial incandescence? The problem is that sometimes we believe that is just through marketed spaces that we can be featured. Through this lens everything looks a bit cloudy. And even worse, some of the most creative brilliant minds accept this condition.

I never felt that match and acknowledgement with other people and causes, nor I felt a shared relief in an immaculate gallery. Neither blend in with other voices or danced with someone to the rhythm of something greater with a glass of wine in my hand.

I truly believe that while we keep on creating, promoting, and presenting pieces of art for some, following foreign protocols, and exclusionary spaces, the artistic expression of high quality will keep on being represented by the white cube, cocktails, and that boring pretension that

evades any kind of responsibility and interaction with the context and its transformation.

Our true challenge was to propose and establish the conditions so that an option would come out of it. But, where can we show alternatives that are uncomfortable not just to validated art but to the people that decide to favor injustice every-day as well? Where do we invigorate the way of protesting to promote political participation and the transformation of our own community?

Where can we open our hearts, livers, and throats?

Well, on the street!

\*And it was right there where the tire turned into flames. \*

The street was always there. Waiting for us. Uneasy, dangerous, attractive, and unpredictable. The pan ready to cook anything and everything we throw at it. We did not have any guarantees, nor did we want them. We just were truly convinced that it was on the street where at some point we found a song, a mural, an interaction, or perhaps a phrase, that told us a story that we did not know existed, that shook

us from the ground, and that twisted our insides. A mirror that made us leave that fast-asleep sensation of our daily lives.

We did not discover anything; the perfect stage was already there. And the proposals we received and that were part of this just reinforce what we suspected:

Art in public and open spaces is a mean that allows us to find and accompany each other. Alternatives can be reached on the reality we inherited. It is okay, and it is necessary to tell conventions to fuck off. There are other important stories that need to be questioned, learnt, and shared.

The art of resisting is around the corner, waiting for you. Boost yourself and go to the street.

# Shooting the intangible

(2017)

Óscar Orlando Pérez Méndez, Juan Carlos Recinos, and Marvin Recinos Girón

Colectivo Morula

**ESA**

Shooting the intangible was a moment of street artistic action whose main objective was to conceptually question the presence, design, processes, and esthetic result of the so called “Monumento a la Transparencia” [Monument to the Transparency], but not just by questioning it, but also reframing it, completing it, and subsequently changing its social meaning.

Why should I question the meaning and implication of social monuments that embellish our cities?

Photograph: Courtesy of the artist



# Essential CR “Project Caramel”

(2019)

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Claudio Corrales, Jonathan  
Torres, and Pablo Bonilla

In which situation do you consider  
necessary to perform impairment  
practices?

As a critique of the economic waste that the government of Costa Rica had for the exhibition named “La fuerza y la universalidad de las esferas” [Spheres strenght and universality] of the artist Jiménez Deredia, which was presented on one of the most important avenues of San José, Costa Rica. From that, a group of artists created their own exhibition concept made of candy: coconut caramel, which were called “Bolas Deredia” [Deredia Balls]. They were installed in a public space allegorizing about the media and financial manipulation background that existed behind the elite interest about the author’s piece.



Photographs: Courtesy of the artist

# Reducing distance, increasing contact

(October, 2019)

Colectivo Improvisación de Contacto  
Guatemala:

Nicole Kast, Melani Soria, David Pellecer, Elizabeth Paz, Melissa Leiva, Jeanette Soria, Alejandra Garavito, Luis Melgar, and Juan Ochoa



"Movement from a Movement" invites you to be part of the two workshops about improvisation, the game, peace, and tenderness. The workshops will be given on the Sixth Avenue of the Historic Center. Open spaces to be explored by movement and a physical space where we can move, allowing us to reflect about our ways of generating contact. A safe space to reach out to tenderness without distinction of gender, race, age, or motor skills. The session is divided in a guided part, with dynamics to call up on curiosity, and an open space (JAM) for a collective improv in a public space.

As 'contact' with the interior or exterior,  
what are the possibilities to play in the  
space I live in?

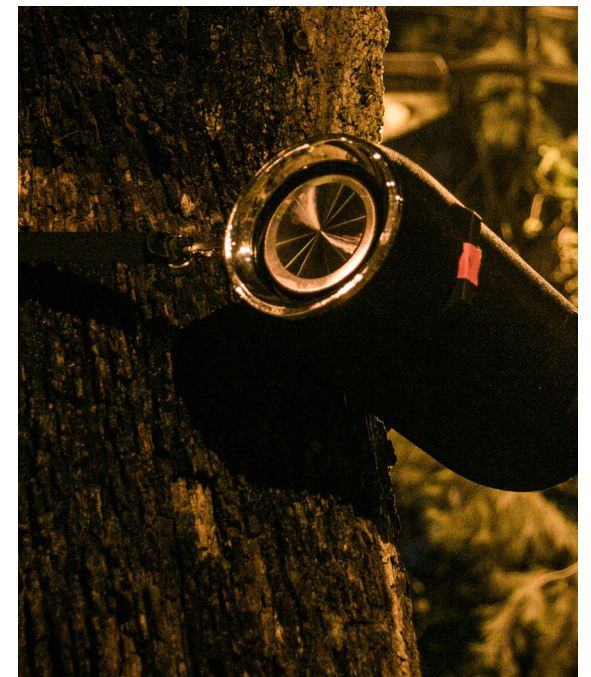


Photograph: Josué Alvarado





Photographs: Gustavo García Solares



# The roar, the fire, and the silence

(October, 2019)

Wilfredo Orellana-Pineda

**GUA**

This is a linear narration of the burning and deforestation of the Peten forests, divided in four moments: the forests' voices, sounds and noises of the animals of the Peten's forests and the people that live there; the fire, the sound of it consuming forests; the logging, the sound of the trees being chopped; and the silence that is left after the fire and logging.

Do the forests belong to us or are they just an extension the land that is useful for the interest of others?

# The Beach

(October, 2019)

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Mario Santizo

## GUA

This piece consists of a stage located in front of the Spanish Cultural Center in Guatemala that will be a replica of the scenery: of the image of the Discovery of America, based on the educational sheets that we use for the kids in elementary school, but unlike them, the replica will be empty, without the characters, and everybody will be invited to participate in the recreation of the iconic image of this event.

What is the purpose of this, and what is the importance of using the American Discovery subject for a piece of art and for the culture of a country such as Guatemala?



Photographs: Gustavo García Solares



# National assortment

(September, 2019)

National assortment is an urban intervention project that consists on publishing digital drawings. People from the street turned into printings on the urban context of the city as random appearances. These characters have a virtual origin, they were all re-drawn from the Street View platform of Google Maps.

What determines what is public in a time where the street is a virtual space as well?

David Pimentel

**PER**

Photograph: Gustavo García Solares



# Absence is evidence

(Since, 2016)

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This project aims to create a space for reflection about the femicide issue, as the pinnacle of a series of violence to which women of this society are object of.

Why is this body violated and overridden? Why have we normalized violence in our relationships?

Susana Sánchez Carballo

**CRI**

Photograph: Gustavo García Solares





# Being defensive

(October, 2019)

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Esvin Alarcón Lam

**GUA**

Being defensive is a performance interpreted by dancers dressed up as armadillos. The choreography takes place in the Civic Center of Guatemala City, and, as a matter of fact it takes one of its murals as a reference, the one by Roberto González Goyri “La Nacionalidad Guatemalteca” [Guatemalan Citizenship], which shows, among other scenes, a little group of people with some kind of armor that resembles the one of an armadillo, and are defending themselves with modern shields that were designed by the artist over 50 years ago. This performance offers a reflection on how we move in the city, generally, being defensive when we perceive someone else as a possible offender. In this way and quite literally, these modern shields remind us about the need of always being protective of ourselves. These shields will always be displayed like armadillos in the tropical forest. The choreography whose music is the city noise, is developed during the rush hour, on the bureaucratic center of the country, and right before the sun goes down, right when everyone finishes working directing themselves to their den.

Historically, shields have been a symbol of defense, but have also been used to declare to the enemy of the kingdom that the people are defending it. The shield has always been important. Nevertheless, modern shields are abstract, therefore, hard to read.

Do we know what we are defending? From who we are defending ourselves and why?

**Performance: Ben Arévalo, Ghandy Anabí Coxaj Carrera, María José L. Escobar, Julio Esquite/ ChinoDancer, Naomi Hernández Hernández, Vanessa Hernández, Leonel de León, Alejandra Mazariegos, Gudiel Ramos, and Lourdes Sierra.**

Photographs: Gustavo García Solares





Photograph: Gustavo García Solares



## Daily Resistances

By Numa Dávila

The call to become part of the Communal Curatorship for the first edition of the Biennale in Resistance in Guatemala has been an invitation to collectively experiment the relationship between what is personal and the political. For some days a group of activists, curators, artists, and anthropologists re-lected about the resistances and their narratives in the arts, activisms, and social sciences, to establish the intersectional bases from where a curator-ship for this premier event could be done. An event that gathered over eigh-ty proposals of artist of Latin America and/or Abya Yala.

Being able to dialogue between each other, with the artists, the stories that go through their pieces and our interpretations – soaked with experiences and sensations that connect us, or not, from a Latin American perspective –. It was a complete experience, that of joining looks and feelings, as well as debating points of view; giving a place to debate and feel, which just confirmed to me that the collective practice reproduces the complexity of the realities and relationships we live, and places us outside the artistic bubble in which the discussion about aesthetics –still- thrives.

To problematize from the daily life and the aesthetics subjects who are profoundly historical and structural such as the forced disappearance, sexual harassment, religious fundamentalisms, racism, migration, climate change, sexual non-conformity, right for abortion, cybernetic notions of reality, and defensive body strategies in hostile cities, was an exercise of reflection of articulating the oppressions that are behind these issues starting from our

«Examining the bond between a body that I call mine, in a land that we fight for all to have.».

–Alejandra Garavito.

bodies, in order to not treat them like isolated facts but as interconnected facts in a historic system of domination that annihilates life and diversity.

Because of it, we find among our proposals a strong diversity: strategies to hack Cyber-Army, non-binary gender, oblivion, and promising questions that articulate issues like the fight for water, and how can we consider the notions of “resistance” and “relocated” from and with a multiple species experience? [2]

The job of this Biennale as means of joining discursive groups, full of chatter, symbolic, poetic, political, cultural practices prompt to change the rhythm of the Biennale so that in one month we could observe in private and public spaces, how daily resistances imply strength, tension, allegation, but also joy, creativity, well living, pleasure and tenderness.

1 Alejandra Garavito. Coming home / body, home, territory. The Biennale in Resistance, 2019. The artist travels 22 miles by foot, from Kaminaljuyú to Palín, Escuintla. A path that her grandmother was not able to finish, as she was a victim of forced disappearance in Guatemala during war times.

2 Wilfredo Orellana. The roar, the fire, and the silence. The Biennale in Resistance, 2019.

# Faceless voices

(October, 2019)

Djassmin Morales / Elda Figueroa

**GUA**

Performance: Julio Canel.

A man “preaches” in a public space: compiled phrases, remarks, and expressions by anonymous people (mostly women that have suffered from street harassment).

As an analogy of ambulant preachers who transmit a message, that becomes annoying for those who listen due to its tone or the particular way of speaking, it is uncomfortable, but most of the time is ignored or neglected, just like street harassment.

Can we keep on normalizing strangers that say obscene words to us and demonstrating an inexistent superiority? Do we keep on making them believe that our body belongs to them? Is our body a magnet that attract street harassment?



Photographs: Josué Alvarado

# Na tua Cara / In Your Face

(October, 2019)

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Gala Berger

**ARG**

**Performance: Gala Berger, Ivan Requena/  
Ivanka, and Heber Leiva/La loca.**

Photographs: Josué Alvarado

«Na tua cara» >> reenacts the story of police violence a Latin American trait. The piece asks the public to be part of it, as a victim, of the daily abu-se generally committed against the most precarious towns in the region.

On this play it can be observed the sexist and patriarchal culture in which these violent events that surround us are based on, as well as the institutional violence and racial construction processes, but it is also about how to perform rehearsals in order to create a bond that will let the broken social structure be rebuilt believing in sustaining, spreading, and establishing a public counter space. In a context that generates an answer towards a world that looks for eradication, debt, border's reinforcement, racism, and structural violence of a patriarchal society that is white and heteronormative. An answer that helps living after a loss, that can reactivate the memory and work as a safe haven.



# Let's EvASScuate Down Town

Inova Walker Morera

(CRI)

The resistance of harassed and violent bodies begins in the appropriation of unsafe places. Public art is important for this resistance because it reminds us that places are for us to inhabit and transform. Art evASScuates and frees us.

Are public and leisure places truly ours, or do we need to appropriate them? Is enjoying our bodies through dance delightful, or unsafe in these spaces?

[Photo: Let's EvASScuate Down Town. For the right of enjoying our bodies that enjoy dancing in a leisure space that is violent until we make it safe, taking care of each other and looking after one another, embracing our freedom from the hips.]



Photographs: Courtesy of the artists

# Feminist micro-party: we heal, we dance, we resist

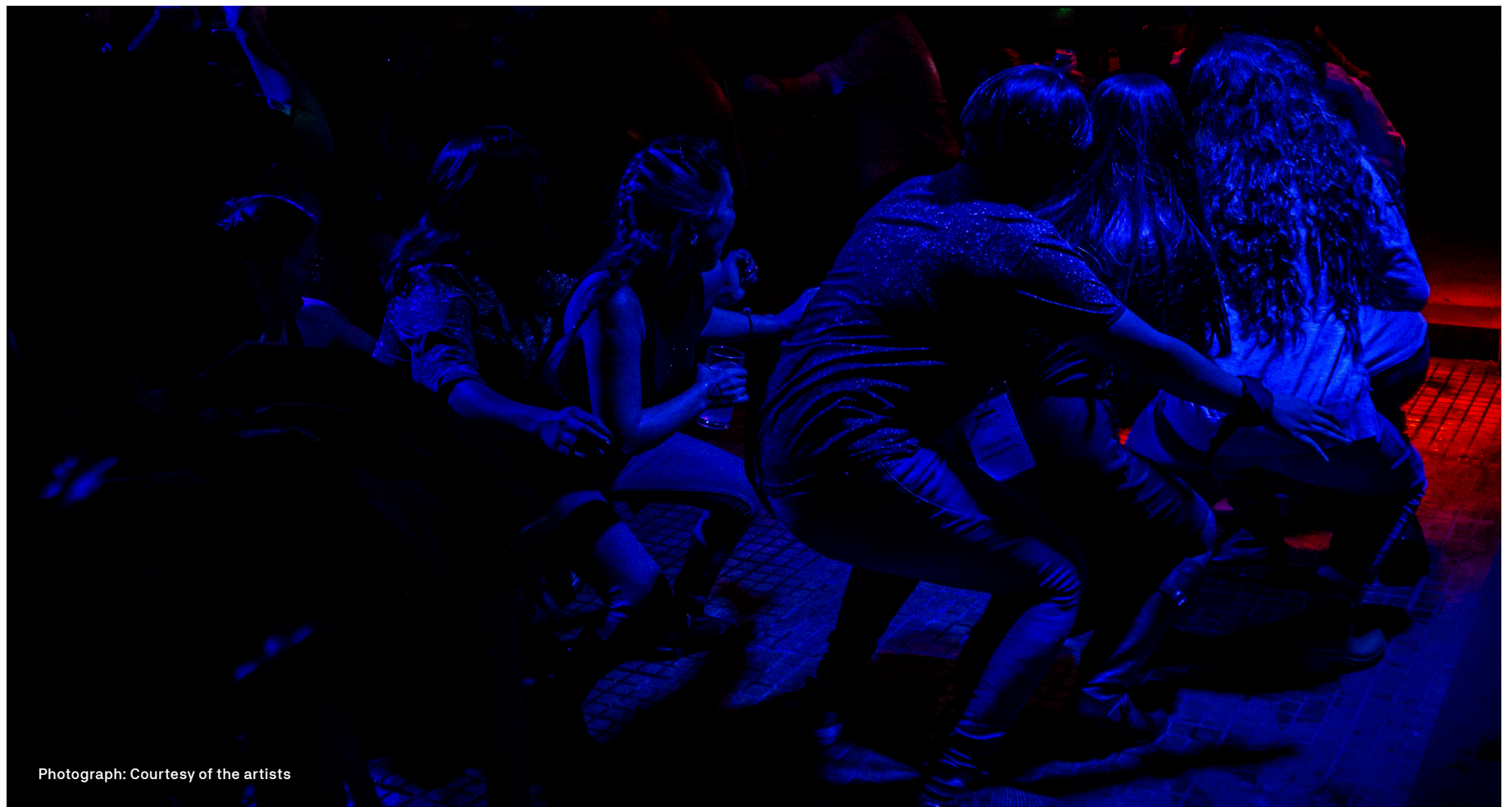
Red de Anarkiperreo  
Guatemala

**(GUA)**

We have reflected on different matters like, how can we use dance to recover our bodies from pain, traumas, and resistance? How can we position the question of healing in our feminist and sexual diversity spaces? And, how can we create/ negotiate for truly safe spaces to dance perreo? The Anarkiperreo is just one answer, a journey of many that we still have to cover. It is also a metaphor to recover something that was denied to us, starting from

the colonizing processes of denying the body and sexuality, and making it independent from radical tenderness and evasscuation.

Do you agree with the standards that have been imposed to you from the beginning? Do you think that your body is just a tool to serve the oppressive system?



Photograph: Courtesy of the artists

# 1. Training workshop for transvestites in resistance

## 2. “The Transvestite Contention” Party: Transvestites in Resistance

The Transvestite Contention is a space that emerged in Guatemala with the intention of promoting locally contextualized and politicized transvestism, as well as a variety of performance media like theater and video performance. After two months of collective work, an intense 2-day meeting workshop took place aiming to exchange, cultivate emotions, and political reflections based on personal experiences. This process concluded with “Transvestites in Resistance”, a performance party where each proposal of performance was presented.

The Guatemalan artistic scene lives a “drag” renaissance with the rising of different artists, spaces, and self-managed groups that cultivate these practices within the LGBTQ+ community. Immerse in this context where intrigue and competitiveness between performers is common, the need of cultivating politicized and innovative transvestism practices that respond to the urgency of the neoliberal political, fundamentalist, militant guatemalan context, as well as promoting the sense of collaboration and solidarity among members of the scene.

Is your space as inclusive as it seems to be? Do you even know how the reality is for those bodies that are violated by tenderness?

### Transvestite Contention (GUA)

Facilitators: Miguel Díaz / La Lola Rizo and Luis Morales / Niebla Púrpura.

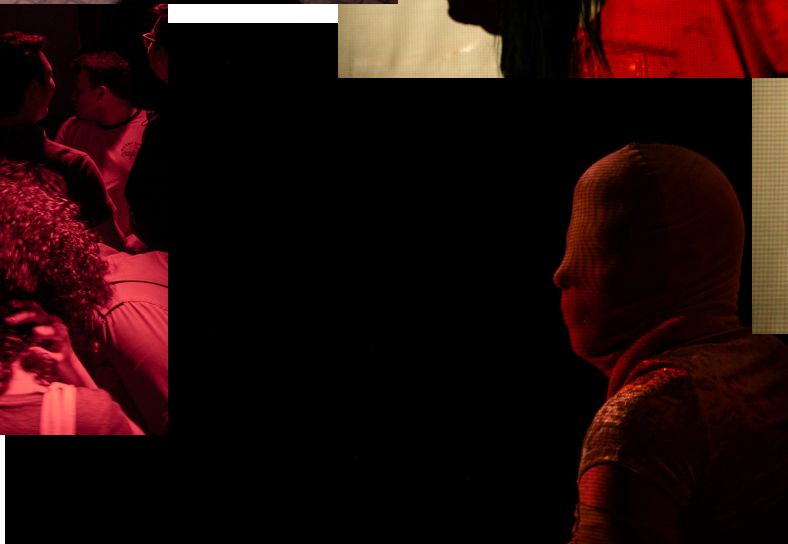
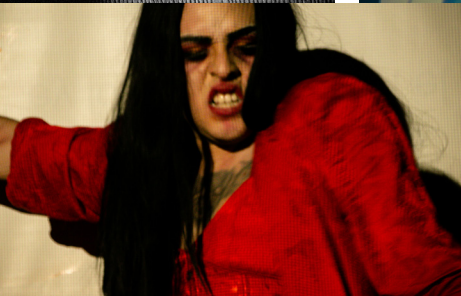
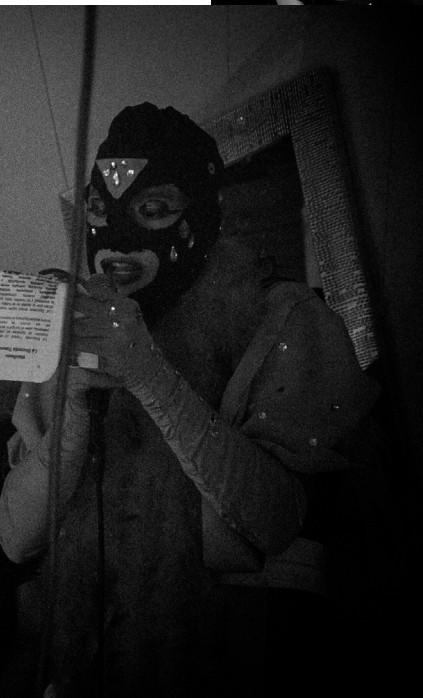
Artists: Amelie, Christina X, ENYEL, Ivanka, La Loca, La Lola Rizo, Lolita Vasquez, Nauxea, Niebla Purpura, Susodicha, Peppe Pig, and Purificación Carpinteiro.

Photographs: Gustavo García Solares

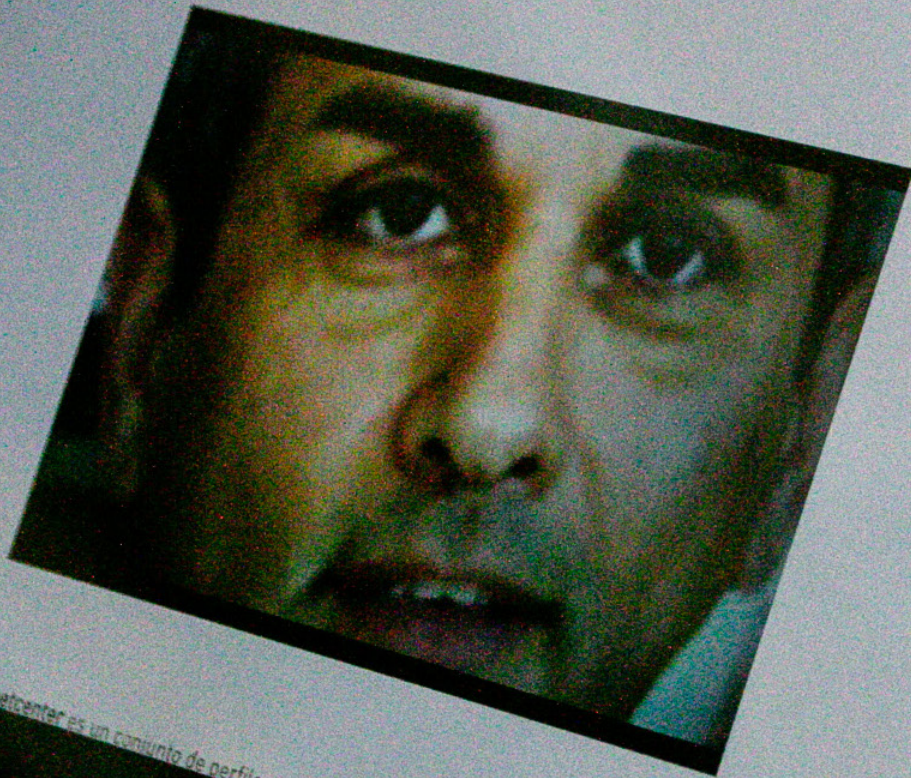
(2019)

(2019)





NET.~~ART~~center  
esto  
NO ES  
ARTE



Un netcenter es un conjunto de perfiles falsos, influenciadores y robots que buscan

[Photo: Net Art Center. This is not art.]

Photograph: Gustavo García Solares



# A Biennale Against Disaffection

By Daniel Garza

**INNOVA-**  

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**TION**  

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For someone who writes from an everyday and professional context, foreign to Guatemala City, The Biennale in Resistance was a lucky lesson when it comes to enthusiasm. As a matter of fact, this impulse is easily perceived as something different in the artistic context of the city (again, from my perspective) and I believe it is reflected on the energy that has created a scene and vital ecosystem almost without any support or institutional endorsement. Besides enthusiasm, generosity was also tangible. It was embodied on the support and commitment of multiple agents that made possible an international event of this kind with limited resources. This mindset is, without a doubt, political: the possibility that things can proceed in a radical manner, different from the usual, is presented (in this case the procedure of a contemporary art biennale).

My participation in the Biennale in Resistance started when I was invited to be part of the curatorial selection committee; a dialogue process that was very rewarding in different aspects. At a curatorial level, this dialogue took different directions: deliberation about the pieces, speculation about possible connections between proposals subjected to selection, as well as possible venues or settings for them to be exhibited. After the selection process, I got back to the city for some projects montage and the opening of the biennale. The places to showcase art were not the usual, like a gallery. Assembling exhibitions in non-conventional places is always something thrilling and “plastic”, in a way, in the sense of considering the conditions and characteristics of the context and space. It is also a resistance to the ideological implications that, inevitably, museum figures carry with them, or the “white cube” widely known. Although some projects chosen for this biennale were showcased in closed environments, most of them consisted on public actions and events that disrupt-

ted temporarily some dynamics and logic of the spaces and daily life of the city center.

From my point of view as curator and researcher, it was enriching to know from up-close the work of several local artists, as well as from other producers of different places of Latin America, particularly Central America. The Biennale in Resistance had that transnational aspect, a characteristic that tends to be only in institutional initiatives with the budget needed to present a program that takes into account international artists. Several of the projects gathered on this biennale showed shared regional problems that can be used to alert about similar political and social processes. Ensuring a meeting and dialogue between several artists from different parts of the region, this event added a trans-national character that, for many years, has characterized the kind of connections between different artistic scenes in Latin America. It is worth to mention that various international artists, as well as cultural managers and agents traveled to Guatemala to be on the setting and opening of the biennale, greatly motivated by the enthusiasm that excelled.

Going back to the matter of enthusiasm, it is not completely arbitrary and is done to specify such attitude. Close to its Greek root, enthusiasm in this context is understood as an impulse pierced with stamina and eagerness, a push and pull motivated by desire, a fantasy, or even a utopia. In this way, the enthusiasm that defined the Biennale in Resistance was motivated by the possibility of creating an international biennale far away from the well-known frameworks and institutions, in an independent manner and with limited resources. Conceiving a similar event to many other periodical initiatives of exhibition, but at the same time, completely different. According to Leon Trotsky, et al, to foreshadow and pointing out the possibilities, alternate order, is an essential artistic attitude for

a progressive, independent, and revolutionary practice. The remarkable manifest that he wrote with Diego Rivera and Andre Breton in 1938, points out that these kind of radical practices are not only about established dialogues, a priori, in plays or projects but with certain attitudes that motivate its production, in which can also be found rejection to imperative models or institutional rules, free, friendly, and creative association, as well as supportive and fraternal internationalism. From my perspective these topics echoed too, with the proposal and development of the Biennale in Guatemala.

As a personal conclusive note, it was amazing to collaborate in this project that taught me so many things. I appreciate the invitation and the experiences. Besides, it is always a pleasure to be in Guatemala.

# Fog beings

Aurora Chaj, Cristina Chiquin, Galilea Bracho, and Gilberta Jiménez.

Fog beings is a journey through creative nature, the gaze, the land, the voice, and the body turn into a territory for resistance. Women draw lines where they were not any before and they cross it to become a new shape and to have new lives, because women's nature persists and prevails.

Do you know the importance of a woman in a society like ours? Do you understand the concept of "woman" as vulnerable and fragile or as transgressor and inventive?

Colectivo Lemow

## GUA



Photographss: Courtesy of the artists

# Nudity

(2017)

Despite of being a population allegedly ruled by a constitution, laws, and rules that are drawn from it and that counts with religious beliefs imposed on it, most of the population finds itself isolated from its involvement in society ... if it can be called that.

Why is there fear to nudity? Who is more affected in the population?



# Corruption

(2018)

This is not a new word, but from it a lot of words are derived, words that can lead people into chaos, specially people from rural areas, that because of those reasons cannot access to a better human development, despite of many governments that rule, but just under certain orders.

Why is the trees' foliage the map of the Republic of Guatemala?



René Leonel Vásquez

**GUA**

Photographs: Josué Alvarado

# Resistance and independence

(2019)

## Colectivo LocoSAPIENs

Camilo Rojas (representative).

(COL)

Photographs: Josué Alvarado

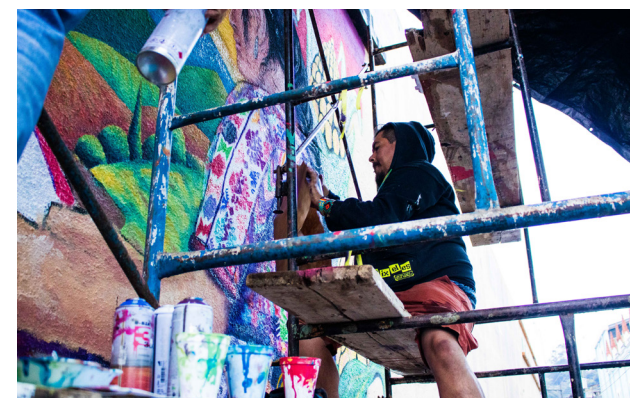
Murals as a resistance tool make sense when they are done by a community, not just from the setting but from its planning. Adding, as well, some technological aspects that bring the piece and message to life. The video mapping over the mural is a response of social, communal, and political resistance over the power displayed by the system. This visual and technological element gives life to walls, leans on the community's expression portrayed in the mural to lighten its message and bring the work of art, that is usually reserved for big stages and overwhelming budgets, to the territories that are isolated from the art circuit.

The proposal created a communal and collective mural in San Pedro Sacatepéquez, from some experimental labs, an identifiable message was able to be expressed through mixed painting techniques. After finalizing the

mural, video mapping projections that incorporated elements of the community were done, to hand it over as a piece that captures the essence in the region and its population.

The topic came up in the community and truthfully exposed the reality and social needs within it, respecting its architecture and surroundings, it was displayed next to the main square of San Pedro Sacatepéquez.

How much can an artistic and community exercise bring the people together?





Ximena Rodas  
**(GUA)**

## Sheer City

(2019)

In Guatemala City there is a huge difference between land prices. Hoping to merge the most expensive area with the least expensive one, I have printed two images, taken from google, in acetates and superimposed them, creating what I call the “true” urban scene.



Photographs: Josué Alvarado

## Guatemala City

(2019)

Paintings of the “prettiest” areas of the city are created, but adding to them elements from settlements. These less privileged areas are not just included, but they are given importance when placed over some of the most exclusive buildings of the city.

Google “Guatemala City”. Is it the true city what you see?

## Proyecto Hábitat

(2018)

Fredy Jeremías Araujo /  
Ernesto Cartagena

**(ESA)**

In these poor countries most of the goods thrown away as waste turn into valuable resources; not because of the brand or uniqueness of the item, but because of how accessible they are compared to new products. Proyecto Hábitat shows valuable goods in a social reality that lacerates humans’ life, restricting them in their social, cultural, and economic conditions, and, above all, their human dignity.

Do you find the North Triangle in Central America a fertile ground for waste consumption from industrialized countries?



Photographs: Courtesy of the artists

# Come back

(October, 2019)

Allan Raimundo

**(GUA)**

A dock was built on the Constitution Square. It became a meeting point to talk about abortion.

Why should the State  
create laws about women's body?

Photographs: Josué Alvarado





# Net.center

(2019)

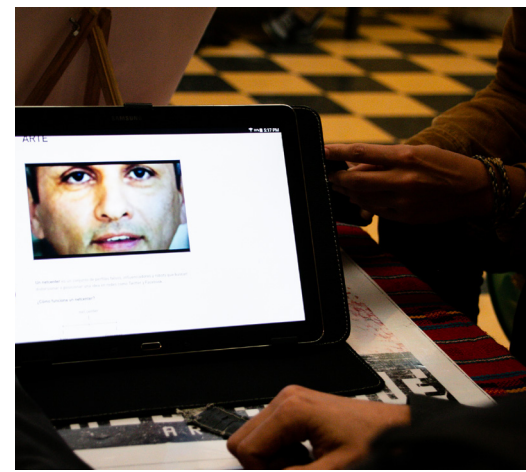
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Bryan Castro

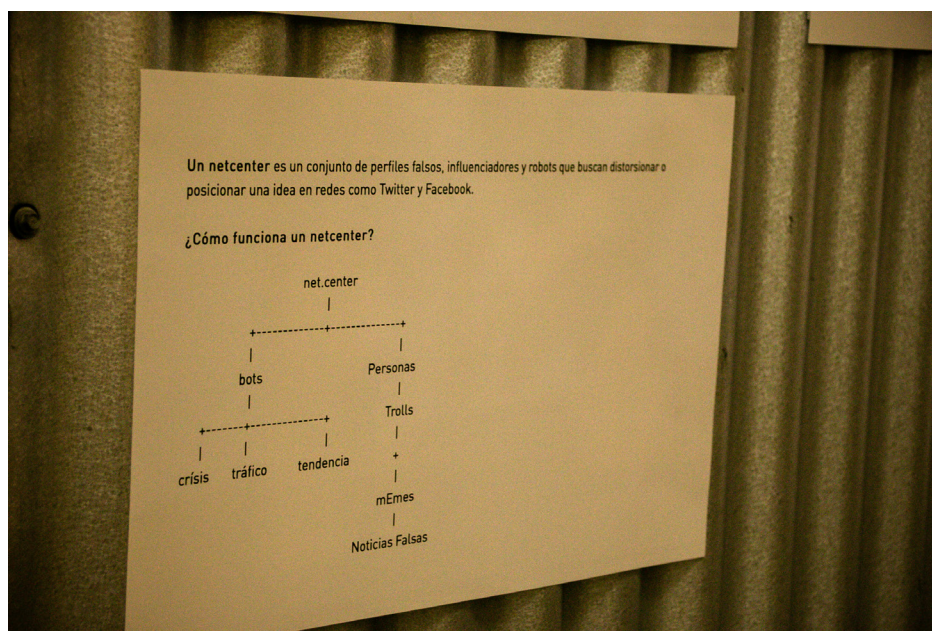
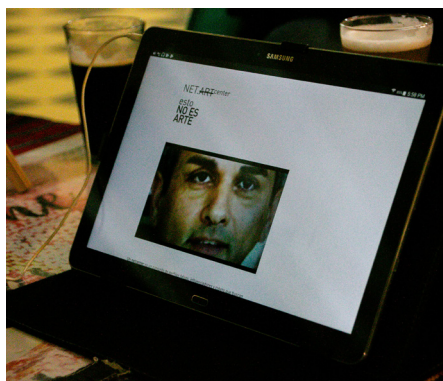
**(GUA)**

Net.center is a facility where people is able to interact through social media the way a netcen-ter normally would, aiming to place ideas and manipulate in a wicked manner the perception of things in the internet, with pieces that can be considered art, or maybe not.

Who controls what I do on Facebook?



Bryan Castro



[Photo: Netcenter is a group of fake profiles, influencers, and robots that look to distort or place an idea in social media like Twitter and Facebook. How does it work? Net. center. Bots. Crisis/Traffic/Trends. | Net.center. People. Trolls. Memes. Fake News.]

Photographs: Gustavo García Solares



Photograph: Gustavo García Solares

# Historic memory

## Creativity for remembrance

By Lucía Ixchíu

To be in the privileged position of curating contemporary art, most definitely never was one of my aspirations. I started in this world as an outsider, judgmental, and controversial. When I was approached to build from another point of view a collective and communal curatorial practice, I thought it was an interesting idea and I let myself live the experience of seeing, smelling, and feeling what was called The Biennale in Resistance. How art can be created and done from another place, telling our stories, those who are not exposed in big galleries.

I became part of the music, cultural management, and art industry over 18 years ago. My personal and creative process has evolved just like my own history. The idea of creating art in resistance to defend our territories, to talk about political prison, and historic memory came up as a profound need to transform pain and letting it out from the body. It was the transformation of pain from a massacre into a music festival and diverse arts. It was returning bullets from a murderer state, colors, music, and poetry.

We started by constructing with certainty that we would fight from another point of view in order to transform our histories. What we never imagined was that we would be healing and decolonizing, not just our thoughts but actions too, given that the most rooted heritage we have as a colonized society are the guilt, suffering, and agony as a banner of struggle and our political actions.

Creating art with political content is an intrinsic matter, even when the one who creates it says that it is not political, without knowing it is. Not having a political stance is a stance itself. The journey of making a biennale from another point of view, took us back and question us, generated the possibility of positioning more recent glimpses of this country's history. We are picking up our pieces and memories permanently. It is well said among our ancient healers that the body has memory, and that a lot of our experiences

and actions are found in it, not just in our memories and thoughts. All of our aches have a meaning and a reason why.

History from over 500 years ago and more recent history of 60 years ago. It is embedded in this territory. Thru colonial deprivation and by the absence of those who have been snatched away, because of war and forced disappearance, land swept away, massacres, entire communities moved, assassinations, sexual abuse, all of these illnesses from extractions, neoliberal, and capitalist deprivation.

This first edition of the Biennale in Resistance was built as a big web shaped with several memory threads. Starting with dance and movement, there was transgression, you were not the face you showed but the ones underneath, the ones that will never be in shops or markets. This biennale was on the streets, on walls, and will be in our history.

This is the reason why we paint, put wallpaper on, to not forget, to communicate, so the walls become canvas that tell our stories. Fights from creativity, so the history of this country is not forgotten, a history composed with little pieces of our histories. We create, delegating with defiance, to not forget and to heal.

With this collective effort we opened something. We opened the possibility of creating a world of diverse and alternative art, that has the capability of communicating beyond egos and elite pretentions. Art for those who want it.

The memory does not belong to anybody. The memory of this country falls under everyone, but does not belong to us. It will be there. It exists despite of us, and it will continue that way.

# Split Stone: Carrying Bulks

(2016)

Antonio Bravo

Video NTSC, 4.36 min.

**(MEX)**

Split stone was a long encouragement process that proposed the re-identification of a territory with seasonal agriculture. It proposes an empathy reconstruction of jobs on the land and about land.

Carrying bulks is an action that alludes to the search of concentrated memory in the stones of a land full of grass, that thirty years before was land for crops for family consumption and livelihood. Carrying bulks represents the effort and resilience of keeping a small part of the land's memory, metaphorically, it being concentrated on the stones that fit in the palm of a hand.

What global repercussion causes a small farm that stops working the land?

Photograph: Josué Alvarado



# Wagic

(between 2018 and 2019)

Cristina Núñez /  
Museo del Mundo

**(GUA)**

Wagic aims to generate a critical reflection around the notion of "Art" that has been installed in the American continent, as of modern and colonial heritage. This way, this piece invites us to question the differences and issues that exist between "Art", "Craft", and "Popular Art".

For you, how should Art be exactly?



Photograph: Josué Alvarado

# Constraining Practices

Jeffry Ulate Castro /  
Oscar Figueroa Chaves  
**(CRI)**

This proposal consists on the photographic documentation of the action of placing a simulated brick wall made from men's blazers fabric stitched together in front of Pentecostal Churches in Costa Rica. This is a resistance action to the ideological expansion of the international politics from the US, where the idea of the construction of a wall is inverted in regards to the current dividing politics between the US and Latin America.

The blazers were bought at "American" second hand stores, which is donated by Americans to charity and that Latin America sells in stores of Cristian wear, such piece (the men's blazer) is used as an elegant garment between pastors as a visual asset to represent the "Gospel of Prosperity".

This exact practice was replicated prior to the Biennale in Resistance, in front of some Guatemalan churches, and the photographs were unified with the ones from Costa Rica. These are the samples selected for the catalogue.

Are your beliefs as authentic as they profess to be?



Photographs: Gustavo García Solares

# Re/writing Re/reading

(September, 2019)

Marilyn Boror  
(GUA)

In the Guatemalan Native Towns, the tradition is to elaborate garments through knitting and weaving. This garment is thought from wisdom and knowledge embodied with their own written concepts and distant meanings from colonial paradigms that give privilege to Latin letters.

The European invasion on the continent started in 1492, plus the globalization and ancestral knowledge depreciation, has forced the original towns of America to communicate according to the rules that are supposedly global and/or universal from the Old World.

The traditional garment of the original towns is a visible example of resistance, an analogy between texts that invasion and colonization could not erase and burn. The industrialization of these garments has reached the markets as well, with embroidery and designs from the indigenous towns using techniques like lamination, computerized printing, among others. This affects the economy of the weavers because, for example, they take approximately a month and a half to make a Güipil [traditional blouse]; unlike machines that in one day can make the same Mayan designs several times and at a low cost.

Rewriting over a written canvas, thinking with a logic to not place original towns in subalternity and acknowledging that indigenous thinking tools are suitable to develop a critique that is originated from other perspectives that coincide in an esthetic practice that produces meanings that are not rooted to written word.

Are garments an extension of the scenery, text, and history of original towns?



Photograph: Oscar de León

# Memories of Repression

(2019)

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Aiza Samayoa  
**(GUA)**

The aim of this project is to rebuild memories of a past full of political violence and repression.

Why is it important to show social conflicts in an art project?

Photograph: Oscar de León





# Coming home / My body, my home; my home, my territory

Alejandra Garavito Aguilar

(GUA)

In Guatemala a body can disappear. It leaves an instantaneous void, untraveled roads, dreams yet to be dreamed. My grandmother and my mother, as many others on these lands, were used, mistreated, dumped, forced to exile. When a territorial home is lost, your body turns into your home. The project asks you to review your personal encounters and discords between Body/Home/Territory; the vindication of a body who is alive, dense, sturdy that moves in relation to other bodies that have left open spaces violently and untraveled roads; looking at the vehicle that I call my body, striving for land to belong to all. A journey from the military detachment Santa Ana Berlin to the archaeological area of Kaminaljuyú – Mount of the Dead – (211 Km).

When you own again your Body/Home (first territory), can you own again the spaces you live in (geographic territory)?

Photographs: Gustavo García Solares





# Shock

(2019)

Lucía Rosales  
(GUA)

The goal was to showcase the participation and the work of women during internal wars in Central American countries, especially in Guatemala. It is important to recognize (the so called) “elevated” women because they were, are, and have been an essential part of transmission, from person to person, for the history of war in Guatemala. It is them who have been cultivating consciousness in new generations to develop other ways of thinking and criticism towards situations that are result of the repression.

This piece is the result of family heritage of Con-treras women, a lot of them participated in the 80's war in Guatemala, and still suffer from the consequences of the decisions they took in the name of building a different country.

If history has erased women, does historic memory really exist?

Photographs: Gustavo García Solares



# Guatemalan resent anti-history

Photographs: Josué Alvarado

(October, 2019)

## DAREX (GUA)

A series of digital photomontages that portray crucial characters for the country with iconic images in which their roles are reversed on the historical path.

To what historical period would you go back? If you could, would you have the courage to change something or would you limit yourself to contemplation?



Photograph: Josué Alvarado

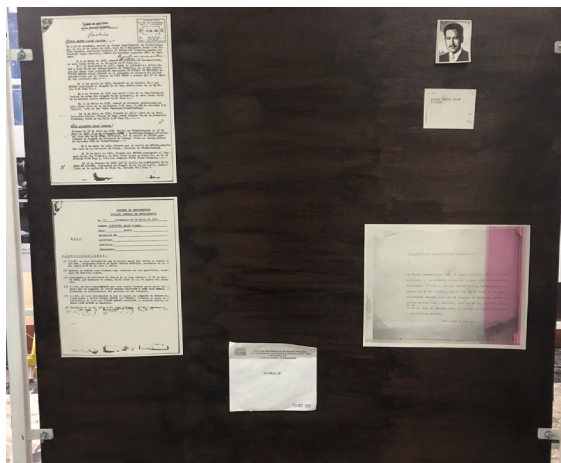
Mishad Orlandini

**(GUA)**

Researching and rewriting the historic memory is still a pending matter in Guatemala. This piece represents resistance to oblivion, silence, and impunity. In moments where the Police National Archive -AHPN [for its abbreviation in Spanish]- is endangered, it is worth mentioning the importance of the conservation, research, and input that those archives bring to the collective memory.

Constructing and reconstructing a family's history allow us to know the wounds and voids, not just at a personal or family level, but at a Guatemalan historic level. Even when painful, the truth is the beginning of healing.

This was a research and recovery of the family archive and of documents that belonged to the grandfather and uncles of the artist, as well as information gathered from the AHPN. This is data that has put together and reinterpreted the history of a family.



# Fragmented and confronted memories



Would you have the courage to ask a close family member to tell you about the truth of what happened during a time of conflict?



Photograph: Gustavo García Solares

# The place you live in

## Populating spaces

By Wilfredo Orellana

We walk through the sixth avenue until we arrive at the 18th street, where people said a performance would happen. We tried to pay attention, but with everything that happens in that corner, we could not find it. We thought that maybe it had not started yet or perhaps it was rescheduled. Above all that noise, a preacher's voice stood out because of what he was saying. We came closer to hear all the insults he was ranting. We joined him in the distance for a couple of blocks. In a sense, I believe that it was what was said would happen. Julio Canel was replicating phrases gathered by Elda Figueroa and Djassmin, phrases from people who had suffered from street harassment that were. Faceless voices who were heard then because another voice was replicating them by screaming into a megaphone. Stories exposed in a Hebraic grammar, so familiar that goes unnoticed, as if they were hiding in biblical stories to be seen, confused, or maybe cracking those stories revealing their logic.

Stories about harassment were taking over the ears of the people who were at the sixth avenue. The apparent usual masculine body, exclaimed with anger biblical shaped stories that felt disturbing because of the violence in them that was not common, not just because of its frequency but for the different levels of severity of them as well. Julio Canel's performance as a preacher was so good that the ones who paid attention seemed amazed, confused. That concealed allegation, that besides its ab-

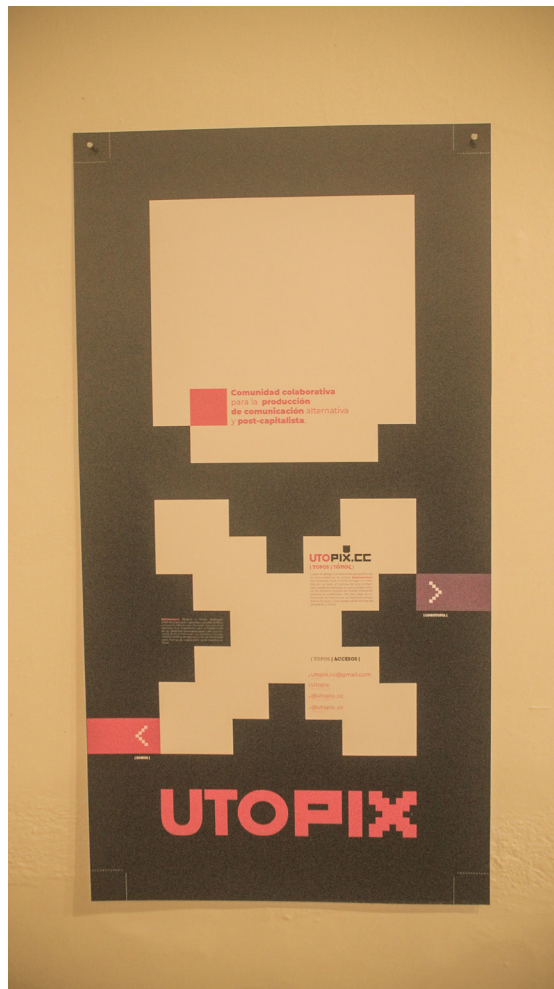
use of the biblical literary genre and preaching performance, and now that I think about it, the fact of hiding yourself in order to show yourself tends to be how public space is understood. How is public and private space conceived, or how can you differentiate them? How does public space affect private space and vice versa? How is public space privatized? What if public space is at times lived with intimacy, or if intimacy, something that is not shared, barges in what is private and deprivatization happens, does it turn public?

It seems like space is a metaphoric category of order, or more precisely ordering. Spaces should always be tidy, a determined biopolitical order that institutes a determined attraction of relationships that are semiotic-materialistic, as space of what is public, what is private, art, whiteness, etc. Furthermore, this problematic determination of relationships as of metaphysical categories, silenced voices, or getting home/body, home/territory seem to show how broken are the public and private, that at the same time present how they can be confused at moments from one another. When something private becomes public, and its differences become blurry as if the border between them were double binds, estuary differences. Public privacy, popular intimacy, because not private (for oneself) nor public (belonging to the people) is enough to write about the actions that they present. When a space is known as public or private, silenced voices and getting home, apparently are not

private nor public, in this sense perhaps they do not even happen in space. Meaning that they do not answer completely to relationship tidiness that define space and time. Maybe that is why voices come out as if they were hiding in allowed grammar, perhaps that is why it was hard for Alejandra Garavito to walk among cities that have been called impassable. These actions are making art walk through places that are impassable, saying what was not always allowed to be said, to not be within the definitions of the public, the private, there is something in them that escapes space.

This is what I find worthy in some pieces of the Biennale in Resistance, how intentionally and unconsciously they slip away from movements order that are not just resisting, bearing, holding on, repelling, they are opposing. They also find other ways of continuing with the problem, as Donna Haraway's writing, but don't come in, as Fred Moten writes his black aesthetics. They are not -not- between the conventional practices of art, nor the instructional comprehension of space. They run with their own ways of messiness, usual relationships of time and space, as Amílcar Dávila writes, making public relationships of art creation, histories, lives. As those who Alejandra Garavito works with, walking the space that bodies leave behind, among bodies, for 35 Km, completing the journey that was interrupted for her grandmother. Alejandra wrote that this work invites you "to check the bond between the body that I call mine, in a land that we fight for all to have". What looks like an invitation to question the way of inhabiting from-as bodies and flesh, from ownership. The contradiction of a common land but private. Ownership, private or public do not feel like words that bring us together at all times to our embodied flesh experiences. A thicker intimacy than the categories appear to show on Alejandra's trip. Intimacy of a shared wound, offered on her captured journey that escapes from the paths. These are just two of the actions in this Biennale that overgrow not just artistic space, but streets, orders, and bodies as well. It shows that a lot of ethical-aesthetical movements act as a shared common haven.





# Logotopia

(June, 2019)

UTOPIX  
(VEN)

Photographs:: Gustavo García Solares

The Utopix community challenged itself to build a collective identity for the Productive Laborer Arm [EPO, for its abbreviation in Spanish], in collective modality and within the formation framework. The challenge consisted in gathering within a month a group of people that would work closely in the graphic design, visual community, fine arts, illustration, street art, and popular communication of an emblem as core of the brand identity device for the EPO. In order to make it, a formation process about visual identities of the popular field was done. On this workshop the foundations were set for the visual identity of the organization, while the participants familiarized with the creation of visual identity projects for popular field organizations, in a formation space that we have named LOGOTOPIA.

How useful can visual communication and graphic design be for the construction of a new society?

# Artists in Context

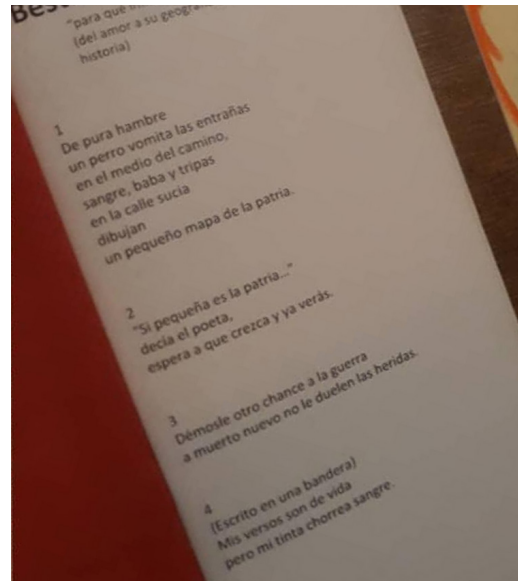
It is a curatorial proposal from Gladioska García Solís and Moisés Mora that was especially conceived for the Biennale in Resistance (Guatemala, 2019). This selection shows the vision of 7 Nicaraguan artists in the most resent Nicaraguan context. The artists who were exhibited are: Federico Alvarado, Milena García, Emilia Yang, Darling López Salinas, Moisés Mora López, and el Colectivo Malagana/Macula.

Does every artist act accordingly to their context?

## Nicaraguan Venue

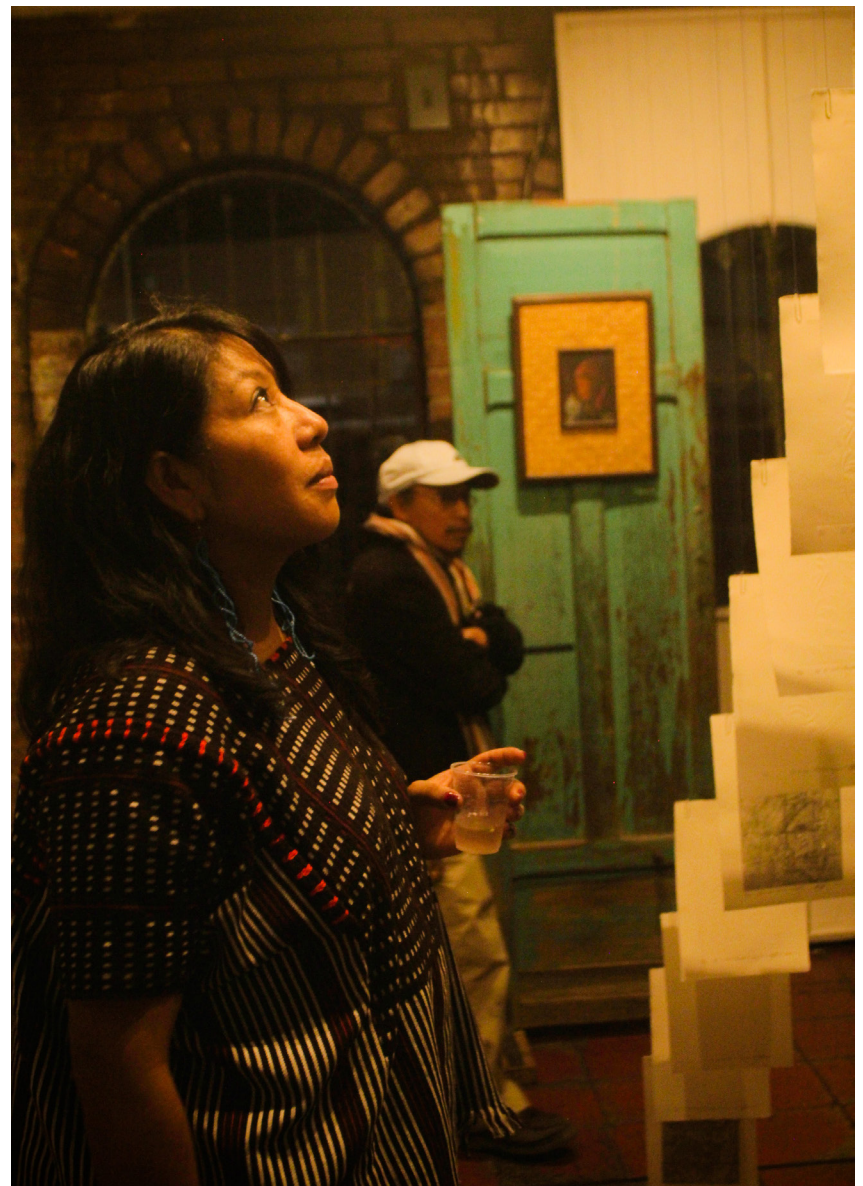
### (NIC)

[photo: National Brutality. "why would we need hell if we have the homeland" (from love for its geography to hate of its history). 1. From starvation a dog vomits its insides in the middle of the street, blood, spit, and guts; in a dirty street they draw the map of the homeland. 2. "If small is homeland..." the poet said, wait for it to grow and you will see. 3. Let's give another chance to war. A new dead body won't hurt from wounds. 4. (Written over the flag) My verses are from life, but my ink drips blood.]



Photographs: Courtesy of the artist

We know your names  
**(GUA)**



Photograph: Gustavo García Solares



Photograph: Gustavo García Solares

# We know your names: the practice of naming art from another reality

By Diego Ventura Puac-Coyoy

Knowledge, from a white point of view, always represents a vision with certain characteristics that come from trains of thought from colonial times, as well as patronizing visions of structures that watch any kind of knowledge that is not academic, from a scope, as if they were watching an ant farm or in presence of an experiment.

The reality of Mayan communities in Guatemala, is the result of long historic processes inherited from a complex and comprehensive world view. Perhaps the most important characteristic of this worldview whose origin is Ma-yan is the transversality: the ways it passes through the body and all of its stages and in every moment.

In a lot of ways that Mayan-ness as a whole goes through our bodies, irrational for modern and contemporary science. Science that worries about health, but not for our health (like the experiments with syphilis in 1946 or the current imposition of transgenic seeds).

Evidently, science as we know it, answers to needs that are not ours. That same science, tends to avoid anthropological, sociopolitical, and historical processes and reports. That way in which the Mayan-ness goes through our body and mind, history, love, and economy, is a live recording inside all of us Mayans that live in this territory and others, and that inexplicably turns into a resistance for the “development” of the western, voracious, and memoryless world.

We know your names is a collective practice of memory preservation of our communities, specifically of the Maya-K'iche' territory of Chuwila (San-to Tomás, Chichicastenango). Formal education processes have modernized us to practice a profession but have not granted us practices that encourage critical thinking, remembrance, and history reconsideration, that at the same time, sentence ancient knowledge and practices, that even when they are still widely followed, are not seen as meaningful oc-

cupations, or have precarious wages within the same economic system in which education is immersed at.

Ancient occupations and practices weigh in strongly in different fields that compliment each other: spirituality, economy, politics, body, territory, joy, love, etc. This intersectionality helps you understand the occupations like something completely necessary and complementary between the members of a community. Hereby is the possibility of naming art from other perspectives: the ones from native towns.

For the Biennale in Resistance, Espacio/C feature an exhibition of contemporary art with objects, audio, documents, painting, and engravings, all of them from different points in time and made in different cultural and linguistic communities of Mayan origin. The sample cohesiveness started from the contemporary engraving of Marilyn Boror Bor, from the Kaqchiquel group of San Juan Sacatepéquez. Among the occupations listed were: musicians, weavers, clerks, mayors, butlers, and construction workers. In the western classification all of these “professions” are tied to the arts. For our communities understanding, these are occupations that are acknowledged by the members that occupy a certain moment in time and space, and in some occasions of our lives. For example, we ask for talent, goods, or services from the weavers of musicians, which in every case will be compensated.

Here, compensation is important, and it has a name: Toj, which means payment, tribute, or fine. Money itself is the minimum value that can be paid to someone who practices an occupation, the reason is that it is acknowledged by the community that this job is part of the social structure. But what happens with these contemporary payment/compensation practices? Little by little, they decrease, because of the imminent and detached comparatives with graduates and doctors. There are some Mayan communities that put first a high school diploma or a university degree over ancient knowledge, others (like Chichicastenango) put first commercial activities over pro-

fessional ones. To some extent this is what has preserved the compensation and acknowledgment logics of ancient occupations.

The variety of occupations belongs to a practice of analogies that the west defines as:

- Dancers: people who are required for a ritual similar to betrothals, to dance and act in a very theatrical way, performing acts like “el baile del torito” or “el palo volador”. Related to classic dance or opera.
- Weaver women: textile memory guardians and the identity of the communities. Perhaps the most complex occupation of all, also one of the most longstanding ones that dates back to pre-Hispanic times. Related to high couture, textile art, embroidery, Gobelins manufactory.
- Musicians: archaeological evidence exposes the music sophistication and how attached it was to the Mayan governors and lords’ courts. The model remains current through wind and percussion of rituality and religiousness in the communities.
- Construction workers: although they are associated with architecture, construction workers are not acknowledged as such by western culture. Maybe the most known case is that of Agatón Boj in Quetzaltenango, master constructor of the Centenary Municipality Theater of Quetzaltenango, a French-like theater of classic lines. A wide sector of society does not recognize Agatón Boj as the architect of such building.
- Mayors and Butlers: part of the power and public services of the indigenous municipalities. They volunteer and take charge of civil/private and criminal law.
- Clerks: clerks are associated with writers, essentially to chroniclers. Clerks gather information and take track of time of different Mayan eras. Currently, in Mayan townships and municipalities, legitimately and legally composed

within the legal constitutional framework, and in the life of Mayan communities. Within this category can be found painters and draughtsman.

It is important to understand this last category as it is the one who supports the sample: the category as artist does not exist as such. There is not even a word that defines these occupations, and it can be observed in the registry and preservation of the memory. Is art a practice of memory? Does it go beyond technique and form? Everything indicates it does. Words can live in a güipil [Mayan blouse] and the memory dresses us with them. We are living memory, a complex code and words of memory and the future.

These other possibilities of understanding art and the capabilities of it, are at the same time other possibilities of curating art, of approaching it, exhibiting it beyond the four walls of a 19th century room of paintings and culture. Maybe it is time to transgress the white cube, but not the one on the gallery or museum, but the one in urban centers to other places.

At the same time these possibilities grant the capability of understanding our ambitions. Which is the way of artistic actors? (understood as curators, artists, museum directors, etc.). Is there a wider community of artist outside the centers? Are there possibilities for art outside what is conceived as the contemporary circuit? Do actors have the courage to question it?

In a great measure, The Biennale in Resistance has made palpable these curatorial and artistic questions and practices. The community practice and that of go back and see beyond the white cube, beyond ambitions, and beyond the cannon of a biennale. Not going beyond the cannon, is like preaching inside our own church, with the same adepts, in a repetitive comfort zone until exhaustion.

Receiving applause from the same hands or recording the applause.

Is there a difference?

<sup>1</sup> This statement does not pretend to dismiss or discard science breakthroughs and their great contribution to medicine and communication technologies, among many other things. We also acknowledge that many of recent findings belong to our ancestry practices and knowledge that they already had, and at times it has been a meeting point.



# PRESS RELEASES

# The art of resisting, a different bien-nale (Diario de Los Altos)

By Rodrigo Villalobos

<https://diariodelosalto.com/2019/08/30/el-arte-de-resistir-una-bienal-distinta/>

The Biennale of Art is usually seen as an elitist movement or an idealization of wanting to demonstrate that there is a refined taste (and gentrified) of a predominant sector. This is not the case of today's news, there are pleasing exceptions to the rule, because the rule, after all, is for breaking it or to resist it. Let's get to know the Biennale in Resistance.

"The Biennale in Resistance is a contradiction in terms," with this premise that introduces yourself to this big artistic event, even during the presentations made by members of the organizing team. The project has begun and it has been known in Guatemala City, Comalapa, and Quetzaltenango, but also through social media like Facebook and Instagram, favoring to spaces mobility and dialogues in the country.

Constantly, an echo is made from this idea: the resistance is the answer to social standards; every kind of art responds to a culture, to a historical context, to an ideological position and, sometimes, makes the truth invisible as a matter of particular interests. Therefore, one of the key objectives for this dynamic is to get a wide overview from the social reality inside the Latin American region.

The resistance, the creativity, and the diversity of social expressions also play an important role for those who have been involved in participating in this biennale. Recently, the summon has been closed and the list of participants is wide, with Guatemalan, Costa Rican, Salvadorian, Nicaraguan, Mexican, Colombian, and Peruvian artists, during October all of them will exhibit their works in the Historical Center of Guatemala City, as well as in Quetzaltenango and Chichicastenango.

The collectives involved in the organization of the Biennale in Resistance are CARTI and Proyecto 44, two groups known for their support to the national activism, these young people promote and support the art in all its manifes-

tations. From their perspective, they explain that the exhibition seeks the destructuralization of the white cube as the meeting point, and to draw dialogues from this environment.

This is a risky and profound proposal, even for the lack of background in these artistic and curator dynamics. The selection was a complex process, according to the explanation given by the organizing team, because of the variety and amount of the proposals received from every part of Latin America. However, the challenge has taken form through the community curators, which is a way to deinstitutionalize the narrative of the selection made, and allows to bring together the pieces and artists in an equitable and unprivileged way.

It is clear that much is expected from this biennale, because another of its characteristics is the multidisciplinary nature of the event itself. The result of this curatorial process is: murals, documentation, workshops, audible and visual assembly, between others.

With such variety of artistic expressions, more than thirty artists invited and different cultural motivations of resistance, it is clear that in October we will see an artistic melting pot more interesting, with the ability to interact and read innovative and original proposals in the first edition of The Biennale in Resistance.



# The Biennale in Resistance:



## We need new ways of constructing, because it's worth it

**The Biennale in Resistance 2019, Guatemala (Terremoto)**

**By Marga Sequeira and Mariela Richmond**

<https://terremoto.mx/la-bienal-en-resistencia-2019-guatemala/>

The Biennale in Resistance (BiR) is a proposal from Proyecto 44 and CAR-TI (Central de Artivismo e Innovación [Center for Artivism and Innovation]), led respectively by Maya Juracán (activist and curator) and Gustavo García Solares (audiovisual communicator and narrator). From the plurality of their projects, they created community curatorship narrative with Numa Dávila (Guatemalan anthropologist that works from her body and identity as a non-binary person), and Daniel Garza Usabiaga (Mexican historian and curator) for the conception of the action network and works that shape this event in different parts of the city of Guatemala, Quetzaltenango and Chichicastenango. Thus, during the month of October 2019 more than 40 artists from Latin America, especially Central America, were summoned to the Resistance: Colectivo Loco Sapiens (Colombia), Djassmin Morales / Elda Figueroa (Guatemala), De Mendoza Taca (Guatemala), Mariano González Chavajay (Guatemala), Rafael González Chavajay (Guatemala), Aiza Samayoa (Guatemala), Marilyn Boror (Guatemala), Colectivo Mórula (El Salvador), Antonio Bravo Avendaño (México), Colectivo Lemow (Guatemala), Anarkiperreo (Guatemala), Allan Raymundo (Guatemala), Luis González Muy (Guatemala), Fidel Caté Tuc-tuc (Guatemala), Miguel León (Guatemala), Esvin Alarcón Lam (Guatemala), René Leonel Vásquez Maldonado (Guatemala), Discordia Travesti (Guatemala), Alejandra Garavito Aguilar (Guatemala), UTOPIX (Venezuela), Inova Walker Morera (Costa Rica), Darex (Guatemala), Fredy Jeremías Araujo / Ernesto Cartagena (El Salvador), Misha Orlandini (Guatemala), Gala Berger (Argentina), Bryan Castro (Guatemala), Susana Sánchez Car-

ballo (Guatemala), Mario Santizo (Guatemala), Wildredo Orellana (Guatemala), Lucía Rosales (Guatemala).

Aspiration or satire?  
.....

From Costa Rica, The Bienal en Resistencia was understood as a grand event: the open-call, the organization, the work selection, the venues, the internal and external communication, the desire to include views from all of Latin America, a month of activities, working from a community curatorship, prioritizing the public space and to place Central America as a space of enunciation. All of these ambitious elements present the biennial as a space with experience and, clearly, a large budget.

Simultaneously, the word resistance, placed together with the word biennial implicates a subtle noise. Subtle for it is easy to intuit that it makes reference to the inclusion of proposals and discourses that tend to be exempt from these hegemonic and legitimate spaces. Nevertheless, when arriving at Guatemala, this subtle noise transformed into a roar. It was perceived that this was not a "grand event": the budget was narrow, the work force small and the venues were alternative spaces with diverse conditions and, even, turbulent.

The question arose as to whether it would be an aspirational exercise, which was intended to lead the practice towards the hegemonic discourse of the contemporary art system, despite not having the management and economic resources that, an event called "biennial", must have according to

the parameters of said system. The answer came quickly when we became aware that the true Resistance was the context. The Resistance consisted of dreaming about the project, managing it and materializing it. Resistance is doing the same, because living and working in a territory like Guatemala, where life constantly faces vulnerability, violence, difference or repression, implies developing skills and strategies to do what cannot be done or has never been done. Resistance, in addition to exposing the current situation, implies certain ways of creating, constructing and thinking that do not necessarily respond to aesthetic or market logic, but instead appeal to concrete possibilities and that are the result, precisely, of a summon.

From the periphery, always

Imagine the opening cocktail, the formality and neatness of the walls, as necessary elements of a biennial, corresponds to a western and modern logic. These “artistic” logics that we assume as universal, work in some contexts, but if we enter the complex question of what defines art, we would have to take into account the particularities of each context in which the experience of art develops. In Guatemala, the discourse of this project needed other spaces and other logics to be expressed, because the most formal spaces are not interested in assuming the needs and intentions of a biennial that aims to “tell our stories from the resistance”, as the artistic editor, Rodrigo Villalobos, mentions.

The greatest achievements of the BiR have to do with the space where the body and the gaze are placed. The first intention of deinstitutionalizing art, or hacking it and making it available to anyone, became a powerful resource for linking bodies, spaces, themes, disciplines and contexts. From this premise, it is recognized that the venues must be accessible and proximate spaces for any public, that the public space in turn becomes the meeting space and that not only the visual arts are sufficient to build a curatorial discourse. It was necessary to recognize their own, know what resources they had available and to have clear expectations that they were not going to fulfill.

We observe enormous courage in positioning Central America as a discursive and generating space. At this time, where geopolitical issues place us as a leading space for great threats, asking ourselves about the Latin American reality from this thin strip, although full of aspirations, is also to state that there is still much to learn from Central America. Thanks to the BiR, we

are reinterpreting the concept of biennial, learning to translate it, to appropriate it and bring it to everyday life.

Community Curatorship

This conscious exercise of taking control of our own forms of management also implied a transformation in the curatorial process. The BiR insisted on the possibility of telling “our other stories”, of placing non-hegemonic corporalities and native peoples in some art system, their own art system. For this to happen it was necessary to deconstruct the figure of the curator. Maya Juracán, inspired by the community feminism of Julieta Pare-des [1], proposed the exercise of a community curatorship. If the curatorship has been that exercise of power, of unidirectionality on the decisions in the selection and exhibition process, the community curatorship worked as a dialogue between the views of those who were linked to the art system and those who were external agents of the same. This collaborative exercise allowed us to reflect the open-calls’ proposals from different points of view beyond the visual codes. Gustavo, for example, comments that he favored the figure of a less visible creator and gave more importance to the collective he represents and to having the possibility of placing himself in the public space. Naming curator someone who does not favor an aesthetic criterion when selecting a piece, was only possible through an exercise of mutual recognition and trust: based on common criteria to think about resistance, the other gazes, outside of the “artistic”, also become important.

Daniel, Gustavo and Maya agree that a large part of the collective process was organic, that the different knowledge and places of action allowed for observing diverse elements in the proposals, that each person looked at specific things and that as a whole allowed for another curatorial exercise, another creative and collective process. If there is a deconstruction of an artistic language, if there is a questioning of the concept of biennial, or the selection of spaces/works/actions, they are precisely a consequence of this dialogic, participatory and affective work that involved questioning the exercise of authority within the curatorial criteria. As Maya concludes: “Art as a social exercise requires a larger figure than that of the curator”.

The Biennale with Cumbia [La bienal con cumbia]

This community logic extends to everything that operates on this platform. Networks and collaborations are the greatest resource available and it’s what allows the project to exist. Many people join with their own resources and collaborate from what they can contribute, mainly with their enthusiasm, commitment and solidarity, creations from a common goal. The involvement of artists from outside Guatemala City and the country it-

self, was an example of this collaboration, as well as the use and identity of the spaces used as venues.

The main venue opened on October 1st: Casa Celeste, a space that in its daily life hosts diverse events: corporate, community or personal. On the day of the inauguration, 8 huipiles woven by women from San Juan Sacatepéquez hung in the center of the room—a piece by Guatemalan artist Marilyn Boror—among them, dancers from the Colectivo de Improvisación de Movimiento de Guatemala [Guatemala Movement Improvisation Collective], wore shirts with faces of defenders of the earth, a dance in common, a movement of some with others, from the woven body to the absent body of those who nurture the spirit of resistance. After the opening ritual, the complete exhibition dances to the daily rhythm of Casa Celeste, between cumbias, salsa and merengue, but adding to its walls the documentation of activist pieces of the collectives composed of Claudio Corrales, Jonathan Torres and Pablo Bonilla; Oscar Figueroa and Jeffry Ulate, both from Costa Rica; the Colectivo Mórula from El Salvador and the artist Aiza Samayoa, from Guatemala.

Espacio Cultural 4 de Noviembre and Casa Roja, in addition to being premises that function as a coffee house and small format restaurant, are safe spaces for people of the LGBTIQ community. In Casa Roja, the collective exhibition ARTISTAS EN CONTEXTO [Artists in context] was held, a show that we what consider necessary for this historical moment: “Nicaragua has experienced in the last two years one of the most complex political crises in our recent history. With a post-war generation, we, the children and grandchildren of the Revolution, meet with a reality of the dead, missing and a massive migration that has fragmented Nicaragua that once was presented as the safest country in the region”. This exhibition is shaped from diverse opinions, letting us see the stories that are embroidered beneath the surface, underground stories that contradict the official speeches of power.

In the Espacio Cultural 4 de Noviembre, a project that stands out is the curatorial project of the Museo del mundo [The Museum of the World] based on the women artisans of Livingston, the Garifuna area of Guatemala, an investigation that links artisan work with day-to-day work on the coast through what its creators call “educational collecting”. The need for discussing folk crafts in the BeR demonstrates the lack of archives and institutions that manage the research and visibility of these types of practices in this area

of the country. The Museo del mundo has as a macro-objective, to generate didactic materials that map the artisanal work of various areas of the world.

The National Library of Guatemala is an old building in the center of the city. In the main lobby, a sequence of panels exhibits two shows that are intertwined in their installation: a rescue project of the Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional (AHPN) [The Historical Archive of the National Police], which the Guatemalan art-educator Misha Orlandini narrates, and a project to invent the memory, created by the Guatemalan collective DAREX (whose name means, duet of experimental art). Orlandini, uses information from the ANP and her family archive to reconstruct a part of her grandfather’s life, and consequently an era of Guatemala. She uses both files for with one completes the other’s gaps. Her grandfather was persecuted, monitored and marked by the police between 1955 and 1983 in the context of the armed conflict. Her uncle was persecuted, kidnapped, tortured and killed. The opening of the AHPN showed how common these practices were and the structure that operated them. The need to know and understand what had happened led many people to consult these files and find information about their families.

For its part, Anti-historia [Anti-history] is the first exercise of the DAREX collective, an exploration that aims to show a polarized contemporaneity with Cold War arguments, simply pursuing an ideological disqualification. According to the duo: “It is not a yearning for a country, but a proposition of questions that tries to appeal to empathy and to question the ideological positioning of individuals from the place where the historical seizures left them frozen”.

In Guatemala, under the new government, archives of this type are at risk; information is evidence, say the authorities. Therefrom, the importance of activating the archives and thinking from memory as an engine to express narratives that have been made invisible, to give rise to other ways of looking at these documentary circuits and to transform them into intersection nodes that demonstrate the past that summons us.

Espacio C, in Chichicastenango, is a small room attached to a restaurant, which takes advantage of the customers to link and bring together the exhibitions they host.

Knowing these spaces and these exercises, showed us that radical self-criticism is not necessary, but that what is necessary is to create together, in Resistance, in the unknown or unthinkable, in the streets and inhabited spaces, with and from the body, with those who want and can collaborate, from dialogue and horizontality, with an economy of affec-

tions, with ease, leaving the centralized territory, outside the white cube, working with the invisible, with the irregular, with what from intuition, desire and need can be built.

We decided to focus this report of the biennial on its venues, since our stay in Guatemala was short and did not cover the entire month of actions proposed by the biennial; we were unable to recognize and document in its totality all the ephemeral spaces that were built in the different performative actions and activations within the framework of this vital Resistance. In two more years, hopefully making use of the powers of the art system, we'll be attentive and open to what the second edition of this hybrid and pulsating exhibition will bring.

In the link of the biennial, more information about the artists, spaces and actions involved.

[1] The community feminism “inscribes in the ancestral struggles of women in front of the patriarchy, it is born in our contexts, in our bodies, in our circumstances, in the dreams that we want to build [...] It has to do with an autonomy concept [...] It has an epistemic matrix of its own, that arises from our history, of large memory, of the recovery of the female ancestors' fights. It distances from the modern-libertary epistemic matrix. [...] It thinks from the common identity, the collective body, the side to side”. (Julieta Paredes, Feminismo comunitario, Asamblea Feminista Comunitaria, UNIFEM, Bolivia, 2010: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrivDMI1qDU>)

# Stepping out of the box to live in resistance

(La Cuerda)

During October will hold the Biennale in Resistance, a space that gather more than 40 artists coming from, at least, ten countries from Latin America, whom, outside of the white cube (Galleries and places, usually used for exhibitions and presentations of work of art), go out to the street to become the ideal platform of the diverse artistic expressions that, at the same time, exposes the issues of the continent.

Maya Juracán, from Guatemala, alongside the Mexican Daniel Garza, guided the curatorial team which created an alternative concept based on the telling of their own stories. "We got the whole concept for bringing together pieces, works of art, performance to spaces far away from the white cube," said Rodrigo Villalobos, member of the organization. He also explained that they based themselves on the "community curatorship", inviting all to the horizontal dialogue about bodies and territories.

For this first edition, that originally was conceived by Proyecto 44 and CARTI, at least 15 venues were set up in the Capital City, Quetzaltenango and Chichicastenango, breaking the stereotype that art can be just appreciated by an elite sector. "This is of the people and for the people, also, this is why it is multidisciplinary." Added the interviewee.

Women, certainly, have been the cornerstone of this project. "From the conception it was created with the ideals of Julieta Paredes [artist and Bolivian artist and community feminist], to understand here and now, to give our-selves our time from our bodies, to understand the time and space that we

By Rosario Orellana

laCuerda   
miradas feministas de la realidad

<https://lacuerda.gt/2019/10/09/salir-del-cuadro-para-vivir-en-resistencia/>

occupy, to give its proper space for the historical memory. In this collective process, we were accompanied by Lucía Ixchú and Numa Dávila, that help to made every decision." Said Jucarán.

According to Julieta, the vision of this Biennale is intersectoral. "On the selection, you could see the diversity of attitudes, of talking bodies, and telling other stories that usually art does not tell," added.

The agenda invites to see every work, to analyze every perspective and to give voice to situations that connect us to our environments and realities. For example, Djassmin Morales with Elda Figueroa, address the problem of street harassment; through their performance, they hope to visualize, demonstrate and to raise awareness about this violence, after being victims in multiple occasions, "some of them more intimidating than others," said the artists. "That is why we solidarize with all of them, because we know that fear and shame have made us quiet and resign ourselves to this matter," concluded.

# The Biennale in Resistance invites you to question and dialogue from an artistic perspective (Prensa Libre)

By Alejandro Ortiz

In its first edition, the Biennale in Resistance (BIR), pretends that the selected works create dialogue from the thematic elements of protest and criticism. The Biennale gathers more than 40 Latin American pieces that seek for artistic speeches in resistance. In the different venues, the audience could have an approach to photographic, audiovisual, literary, and performative expressions.

The public could attend to any of the 13 venues that are located in three departments: Guatemala City (Casa Celeste, Casa Roja, National Library "Luis Cardoza y Aragón", Casa de la Cultura 4 de Noviembre, Sports Center San Pedro Sacatepéquez, Santa Catarina Park, Civic Center, Pizza 502, Casa de la Memoria, Central Park, and Pasaje Rubio), Quetzaltenango (space Ciudad de la Imaginación), and Chichicastenango (Espacio C).

"This is of the people and for the people; it is the representation for the ones who before did not have a voice." With this statement, Rodrigo Villalobos, -art editor of the first Biennale in Resistance-, embraces the holistic concept of the platform. The biennale faces from different artistic disciplines current topics like the political power, the visibility of



<https://www.prensalibre.com/vida/escenario/la-bienal-en-resistencia-invita-a-cuestionar-y-dialogar-desde-el-arte/>

the bodies, the indigenous people work, the belonging to the LGBTIQs community; among other topics.

For the selection of the pieces, was developed an exercise denominated Community Curators. Through this action, a team was made up composed by anthropologists, artists, communicators, activists and art curators, "to create a space which gives room to opinions from various perspectives."

In total, 90 pieces were received, and 42 were selected coming from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Venezuela and Colombia. Once the selection was completed, in words of the art editor of the project, a family of artists with similar questioning was consolidated.

## Questioning the contexts

Rodrigo Villalobos defines the disciplines that take part on the first BIR like art "that goes through the horizontal dialogue. In this way, the actions inside the Biennale are also presented as concerns that lie in Latin America. "If we talk about art in resistance, we should talk about protest even though the work is simple", suggests Villalobos.

This logic, includes, Shooting the Intangible from Colectivo MÓRULA. It is about a photograph that shows the Monument to the Transparency (erected in El Salvador by the government) which pays tribute to the honesty and state responsibility. The sculpture is formed by two extended hands. In the collective's proposal, both hands were complemented by another hand that points at them with a firearm.

Óscar Pérez, member of the collective and visual artist, remarks that the image exhibited in the Biennale in Resistance conveys the meaning of the positions in society, where it is appropriate to question the

balance of power. The work in question pretends to object about the state's transparency when, at the same time, the corruption prevails from the dominant sectors.

On a similar note, -tainted with politics- the Guatemalan Misha Orlandini presents *Fragmented Memories*. The work put together photography, books, and her grandfather's briefcase, who was put on and watched by security members from 1955 to 1983. The work is a family construction that Orlandini considers as meaningful to her as it is for her family.

Most of the pictures exhibited that are part of the artist's family archive, were compared with some from the Historical Archive of the National Civil Police, those were taken by an Orlandini's aunt, who used to work in the institution. Misha considers that her proposal for the Biennale in Resistance is a reconstruction process that has allowed her to know the wounds and holes in her family, and in the country's history as well. "Even though it hurts, for me, it's the beginning of healing", says.

#### New Ways

To Misha Orlandini, who also acts as art curator, the Biennale in Resistance narrative does not answer to interests on contemporary institutional spaces, reason to make the diffusion of another voices. On the same way, she talks about the directors and national curators, who have been able to show what Guatemala is making from another perspective.

Regarding to the method of the project, Orlandini emphasizes the selection that has been mediated by the Community Curators. The artist says that this has revealed a "more horizontal and collaborative" management in comparison with other spaces with similar nature.

Óscar Pérez, from Colectivo MÓRULA, goes along with the Guatemalan Misha Orlandini's insight. "I consider that the BIR is relevant because it makes the artists and collective's work visible in the Latin American region, through dialogical alternative proposals which are created outside of what is traditional - cultural and artistic communities; in this case, galleries and museums," specifies.

The Salvadoran believes that this kind of cultural management gives a more organic interaction to the public. He considers that those are based on the dialogue which at the end, empowers them from the works. "Empower-

ment is important because it can make changes that moves us to vindication," concludes Pérez.

#### Show up on street

Because this project seeks to present questionings to any person - without distinction of any kind- Rodrigo Villalobos marks the importance of avoidance to held the Biennale in a specific space. The activities of the Biennale in Resistance take place in public spaces as the National Library, Casa Celeste, Casa de la Cultura 4 de Noviembre, Sixth Avenue (zona 1), Central Park, among others.

Each one of these, says the art editor, have a lot of daily visitors and allow the constant interaction between pedestrians and the pieces. In this way, the BIR separates itself from the denominated white cube, a concept that consists of the context breakdown in art exhibitions in galleries or closed spaces for a better appreciation of them; thirteen works in the Biennale take part in public spaces, between them there is performance, sound interventions, facilities, mapping projections, among others.

Another characteristic of this proposal has to do with the documentation of the activities. Until October 30th, you can have a look on the videos of each one of the actions on street. The projections are held in Casa de la Cultura 4 de Noviembre; besides these real-time recordings, there are also set up exhibitions in such space, as well as in Casa Celeste, Casa Roja, and the ve-nues in Quetzaltenango and Chichicastenango.

# Interview | The Biennale in Resistance GASTV

GASTV®

By Pamela Ballesteros

<http://gastv.mx/entrevista-la-bienal-en-resistencia/>

Located in Guatemala, the first edition of the Biennale in Resistance (BIR) positioned topics that concern the Latin American region from an artistic perspective. For a month, the BIR worked the community bond through exhibitions, actions, and critical manifestations in public spaces of Guatemala City, Quetzaltenango, and Chichicastenango.

The program presented over forty multidisciplinary proposals from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Peru, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Argentina, and Guatemala. While the narrative lines were defined by a collective curatorial practice led by Maya Juracán and Gustavo García.

In retrospective, Maya Juracán talks about the experience and the reflection surrounding the proposal of resistance art.

I would like to start by getting to know this proposal's background and origin, and from what local reality it is developed.

Since 2011 a proposal named Proyecto 44 was created, it strived to denounce, tell other story, or highlight events in the country and set another narrative.

The project consisted in actions made through public art, and in 2016 a public art teaching program was activated with CARTI (Center for Artivism and Innovation), even when everything worked out, we noticed that the tool was

already known and that what we wanted to do was to gather all of the resistances that already exist. To talk about art in activism, and activism in art.

Thereby, the idea of the Biennale in Resistance emerged. A biennale whose premise was to be a contradiction of itself, one that wanted to challenge the spaces of the white cube, but at the same time wanted to use them to tell our other stories.

As of this approach, both the curatorial team as well as the artist selection shared different disciplines and geographies. How was the exchange of this network of contemporary proposals?

In the curatorial selection there were several people, that in one way or another had been active in social manifestations. From there we concur to cultural pertinence, and we seek for the biennale to have personality, that did not just consist of curatorial practice, but for it to answer to the needs of the context.

From the beginning we thought of giving priority to public art, and in Proyecto 44 experience, the reaction was pleasing for the great number of projects that we received, not only from contemporary artists, but from activist groups, diverse communities, and projects that had been executed in other countries as well. In addition to visual artists that proposed practices in public areas.

For example, the performance Being Defensive, from the Guatemalan artist Esvin Alarcón activated and reinterpreted the mural named La Nacionalidad Guatemalteca [Guatemalan Citizenship] from Roberto Gonzalez Goyri, located in the Civic Center. With dancers that would take the area's traffic as well the public facility of Mario Santizo by surprise. This action took place in front of the Spanish Cultural Center on October 12th, Day of the Hispanic,



bringing back to the memory the arrival of the Spaniards, but at the same time it invited the passer-by public to rebuilt history with flags or costumes.

The Transvestite Contention took action in this space as well, a drag-biesties group that narrated a different conquest. Both projects portrayed the inter-sectionality that we were looking for. “Construction is not made individually, but by everyone in society. A society from which there is no model, that society that has to be invented. The community is the proposal”<sup>1</sup>. Tell me about the importance of activating this proposal in the biennale.

First, we had to think about the biennale not just from the art community, but from everyone who lives within this cultural context, that is why it was essential to acknowledge diversity in order to construct this community.

We do not say “work in society”, but “make a community”, which means to know and acknowledge the spaces we live in, not just arriving to a community and practice “art”, rather acknowledge the locals so that they raise proposals according to what the space needs. Art as a social event can generate communication networks who are effective, artistic, social and able to open dialogues.

For example, Come Back, was a facility created by Allan Raimundo. It was a dock to which women were invited to sit down and open dialogues, or the sound intervention of The Roar, The Fire, and The Silence by Wilfredo Orellana that gathered the community in a park of the sector so they could listen together to sounds of the Jungle in Petén being devoured by a fire.

On the other hand, for the Colectivo de Improvisación de Guatemala’s piece a giant rope was used on the street, and people were invited to jump it, an action that can be turned into a metaphor for this biennale.

Moving on with the topic of community, on their recent participation of the International Book Fair of Oaxaca, Gladys Tzul, Guatemalan activist, talked about the confrontation communities have been having with the State for the preservation of their land. One of the exact BIR’s allegation thrusts is the political power. Which is the reflection regarding original towns work?

From the beginning it was clear to us that we could not talk about resistances in Guatemala without considering original towns and communities. That is why we invited Lucía Ixchiú to be part of the curatorial panel. Lucía is a journalist and cultural manager that has worked for years with the Festi-

vales Solidarios [Charitable Festivals] and, between many resistances, demonstrates advocacy of land and clearance for political prisoners.

We also had projects made from the communities who were completely independent and organic in their creation, like We Know Your Names, an exhibition on the municipality of Chichicastenango, in charge of the curator Diego Ventura that looked to tell stories about the different occupations that were lost during Colonization. This through historical archives, the art collection of a Quiché family, and contemporary engravings of the Guatemalan artist Marilyn Boror.

In the same way the project at the community of San Pedro Sacatepéquez, the weaver women, local artists, and the group Locosapiens de Sibaté, Cundinamarca of Colombia in conjunction with Mario Quiyuch, worked on a mural and video mapping that represented the community.

In the future we would like to present more proposals that question the State or that expose the communities’ struggle for defending their territory, but we understand that it is our first edition, and that next time it will be an initiative that we will follow.

In another place in Guatemala I reached to Lorena Cabnal’s writings about community feminism and her fight for (self)liberation from the body as political subject. I think about this because the biennale follows a feminist narrative. I would like to develop this idea; I would also like for you to tell me about the proposals that were presented surrounding it.

Lorena Cabnal and Julieta Paredes were the cornerstone to conceive a communal curatorship. The artist Lucía Rosales comes to mind, during her performance she had written in her body the phrase “If the historic memory does not recognize women’s work, it is not historic memory”, she calls out patriarchy and chauvinist behavior of the Guatemalan war about women.

In order to practice the type of healing that Lorena Canal talks about, we understood that first we had to acknowledge and name ourselves, and art is a tool for it. For example, the Guatemalan artist Alejandra Garavito was undergoing a healing process during Body, Home, Territory, an action in which she had a 35km journey from Kaminaljuyú to the township of Palín, in Escuintla, a journey that her grandmother was not able to complete as a victim of forced disappearance during war times in Guatemala.

A lot of women projects denounced, called out, and highlighted violence over our bodies. The Costa Rican artists Susana Caballo and Inova Walker denounced femicides and sexual violence on the streets of Guatemala with

their pieces. Faceless Voices, from Jazmin Morales and Elda Figueroa used an actor as an evangelical pastor that screamed narratives of street harassment. Or Marilyn Boror, that talked about resistance from the political practice of traditional garments of the original towns.

Besides that, Aiza Samayoa told a Guatemalan story linked to genocide. Mishad Orlandini narrated the story of her own family through a historical archive. The group Colectivo Lemow (composed by film makers, communicators, and artists) expressed resistance through music, photographs, and painting; or Gala Burguer with her performance of Na Tua Cara. Moreover, all the women that made themselves accountable from their own spaces like Ximena Rodas, whose drawings are a critique towards the structural elite of Guatemala City; and Cristina Nuñez, that from Honduras redressed the space for popular art.

All of these projects were intrinsically connected to our practice of acknowledging the space we live in and the violence that goes through our bodies as women. It could have ended in a great cumbia event, an exclusive micro party from the group Anarkiperreo for women.

Latin America is going through a convulsive protest process. From the experience of placing this biennale in this context, I have two questions: why is it important for artistic language to pair with this reality? And, what critical distance should it take to avoid opportunist or condescending paths?

We firmly believe that artistic language is not just the one that dialogues in the artistic medium, instead art is a daily consumed article that can be consumed through street art, banners, slogans, or objects. That is why we read that artistic language is separated of social reality, the neoliberal capitalist power practices have separated them, so that we read art just within the white cube, but it is not like that.

It is crucial for us to acknowledge our privilege and acknowledge that art is not an exclusive medium for artists, but it must pair with social messages. We must be critical with the space we live in and question if the proposal pretends to use subordinates as artistic language or to fight alongside with them. That art for art has specific dialogues, but we understand it as a platform of social events that acts in the reality in which we live. We do not have

the absolute answer, we are always questioning processes, something that is necessary in our process of art deconstruction.

I think about other places with similar goals like the Cuban #00Bienal, or the Mexican Bienal FEMSA, practices that have decentralized artistic circulation towards the public space. In your experience with the Biennale in Resistan-ce, how collective and decentralized work would be stimulated?

We believe that practices of collective and decentralized work exist already, but they are not acknowledged by mass media or artistic institutions. The reality is that we are not inventing sweet water, but we are making evident these actions. For example, in Guatemala a march for water took place. All the communities arrived at the historic center with buckets or pails of water, and at a moment everybody laid down in the staircase of the presidential house. For us it was a performance and what these projects do is to try and destroy the imaginary wall between political/civil manifestations and art.

To deepen into the conversation about Latin American resistance, what literature or artistic references do you recommend to look up?

**Sociología de la imagen. Miradas ch'ixi desde la historia andina, de Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui**

**Feminismos diversos: el feminismo comunitario, por Lorena Cabnal.**

**Arte y resistencia política en (y a) las sociedades de control. Una fuga a través de Deleuze.**

**La responsabilidad política del arte, por Maya Juracán.**

**Hilando fino desde el feminismo comunitario, por Julieta Paredes.**

**¿Quién escribe la historia del arte?, por Maya Juracán.**

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<sup>1</sup> Julieta Paredes C., Adriana Guzmán A., El tejido de la rebeldía. ¿Qué es el feminismo comunitario? La Paz, abril 2014.

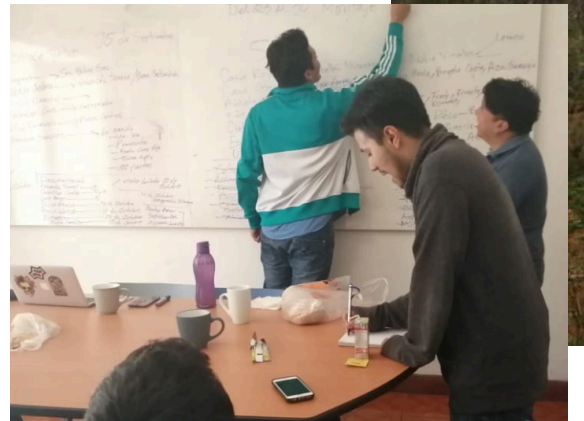
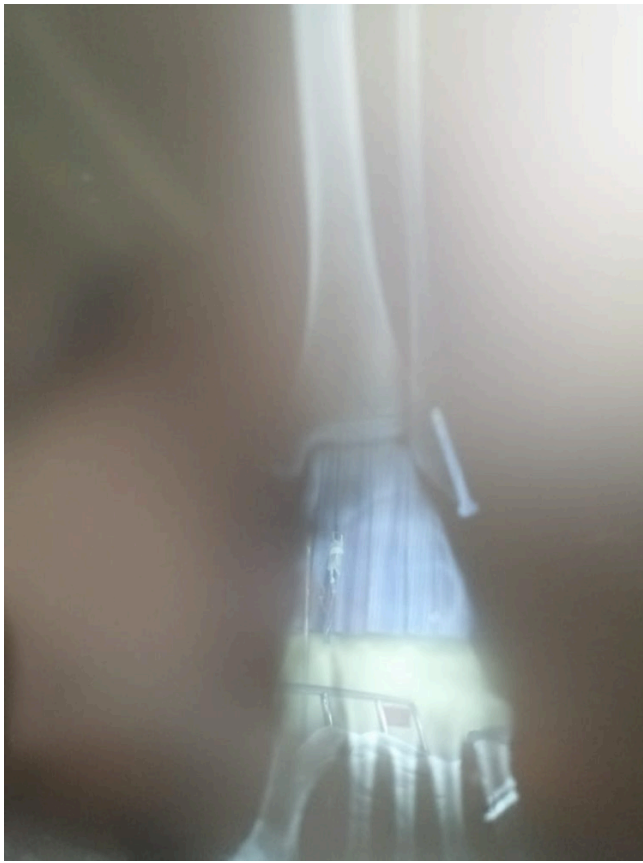
THE MAKING OF















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Nothing was easy, nevertheless, from now on, we would do it a thousand times. There we go with a minimum budget, but leaving big footprints behind!

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We are sure of something, we will continue, and not because we are strong but because we are not alone. Thank you!

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# **THE BIEN- NALE IN RESISTAN- CE**

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