


PSYCHO- TROPICS

BELONGING
ELSEWHERE



NATALIA ALMONTE
YAZMANY ARBOLÉDA
EDWARD CABRAL
OJOS CARIBE
JILL COHEN-NUÑEZ
PATRICIA ENCARNACIÓN
NICOLE MOURIÑO
CHRISTOPHER PAZ-RIVERA
ESTEFANIA VELEZ RODRIGUEZ

CURATOR:
SOFÍA SHAULA REESER DEL RIO

**PSYCHO-TROPICS:
BELONGING ELSEWHERE**

**PSICOTRÓPICOS:
PERTENECIENTE A OTRO LUGAR**

03.15.2024-04.27.2024











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Looking Forward: Celebrating 2024-2025 Open Calls

As part of EFA Project Space’s 2024-2025 Open Calls for Exhibitions we are excited to include *Psycho-tropics: Belonging Elsewhere*, curated by Sofia Shaula Reeser del Rio, as our first accepted proposal for the theme of “Folklore.” For this opportunity, the selected candidates are awarded an honorarium, a budget for production and materials, content support, a publication, and administrative and logistical assistance to organize the exhibition at EFA Project Space.

We are committed to exploring the theme for the 2024-25 Open Calls by hosting exhibitions that vitalize roots and origins through works that harness raw materiality and are not filtered through a globalized lens. During this time, we will also focus on community engagement and public programs that celebrate personal narratives, memories, traditions, and ceremonies.

As a reflection of EFA Project Space’s mission, which dedicates the space to local and diverse artistic communities with an emphasis on socio-political critique, *Psycho-tropics* brings together artists that support each other not only within their practices, but also as immigrants residing in New York City. The exhibition focuses on the migrant experience and the progression from rooted lineages to present-day metropolitan life. What does it mean to move, to change, and how is our perception altered? Both the curator and the artists are in dialogue about this, offering a transformation of

perspectives. Their explorations are echoed in new works created specifically for *Psycho-tropics* along with works that are being shown in NYC for the first time or recreated to fit the gallery space. The exhibit is also accompanied by a series of thoughtful, hands-on public programs that invite people of all ages and backgrounds to participate.

We are thankful to curator Sofía Shaula Reeser del Rio for taking on the challenge of creating a lively and passionate experience for the viewers and the artists. We would also like to thank all of the artists for coming into the gallery, making it their home, and sharing their care and generosity for the space. We would like to express gratitude to the publication designer, Tirza Ben Porat, as well as Sabeena Raj Khosla for her content and copy editing expertise, and to Nicole Delgado for the wonderful translation of the catalog into Spanish. Further appreciation to art preparators Fred Maass and Collin Leitch for their professional support in putting this exhibition together, as well as to Clarissa Passarinho, EFA Project Space's Spring Intern for her commitment and care. A heartfelt mention to the thoughtful deliberation of our 2024-2025 Open Calls panelists, William Chan and Rebecca Pristoop, who are both in sync with Project Space's intentions, history, and mission. Last but not least, I'd like to thank Agustina Markez, Gallery Manager, and Charlie Fischetti, Gallery and Outreach Coordinator, for their dedicated and thoughtful work.

We are excited to welcome more Open Call exhibitions in 2025.

Sincerely,
Naomi Lev
EFA Project Space Director and Chief Curator



Curatorial Note

by Sofia Shaula Reeser del Rio, Curator

“The intellectual tradition of the West is very individualistic. It's not community-based. The intellectual is often thought of as a person who is alone and cut off from the world. So I have had to practice being willing to leave the space of my study to be in community, to work in community, and to be changed by community.”¹
—bell hooks

As a curator deeply engaged in the exploration of contemporary art and culture, I find that re-evaluating the curatorial mindset is not only imperative but also invigorating. It allows for delving deeper into the complexities of the art and artists I am engaged with, leading me to perceive my practice more as a visual storyteller who poses open ended questions. To do this, there is a commitment to embrace a decolonial framework and challenge dominant narratives and power structures. Moreover, my approach is informed by an interdisciplinary perspective, drawing insights from environmental sciences, yoga, psychology, radical pedagogies, and philosophy. This broader outlook compels me to consider the interconnectedness of humanity and confront the complexities of our existence, much like the intricate root systems that bind trees to one another

1 bell hooks and Thich Nhat Hanh, "Building a Community of Love," *Lion's Roar*, March 24, 2017, <https://www.lionsroar.com/bell-hooks/>.

and to the earth. I am reminded of our transient and transformative nature, the importance of making physical and metaphorical space, and the significance of coming together to share our diverse perspectives. These deeper connections shape our perceptions of the world and inform my curatorial practice.

For *Psycho-tropics: Belonging Elsewhere*, I brought together the work and practice of eight contemporary artists and one collective living and working in New York City, and the exhibition emerges as this kind of collective endeavor, weaving together burning questions, intimate reflections, and shared inquiries into a dynamic tapestry. As such, it serves as a platform for artists to engage in dialogue and foster connections among old friends and new acquaintances, while inviting viewers to commune and learn from one another.

As we look at the works produced by these artists, we are prompted to reflect on the histories we share and the narratives we construct. They each challenge us to question the dominance of Western mindsets and colonial value systems and urge us to envision alternative ways of being and knowing. Navigating these paths of resistance and resilience also challenges us to rethink the ways we name and define our work and actions. Amidst the weight of this struggle, we seek spaces of respite, love, and rebellion. How do we redefine and reimagine our roles within these ongoing narratives? Perhaps it is through embracing not only the notion of artworks as more than mere objects in time but also joy—a joy that embraces grief, loss, and forgiveness as essential parts of the human experience. This ongoing process is integral to these artists, and the exhibit becomes more than just a place to display their

pieces, as it also serves as a space for them to converse nonverbally, like trees in a forest. This idea, embodied in the works showcased in *Psycho-tropics*, transcends boundaries and offers healing, humor, innovation, and reflection.

Through the practice of art-making, we reclaim our agency and assert our value in a world that often seeks to diminish our contributions. It is not a plea for acceptance, but rather a reminder that we are actively shaping a world where harmony with our environment is possible, where solidarity prevails, and where our collective spirit thrives. We are space shifters, carving out paths toward a brighter, more inclusive future, despite the anxiety-driven society that promotes a disconnect from our natural state of rootedness.

Psycho-tropics: Belonging Elsewhere

by Sofia Shaula Reeser del Rio, Curator

Psycho-tropics: Belonging Elsewhere is a collective inquiry into transformation and resilience, engaging with the complexities of cultural liminality and the dynamics between individuals and their environment. As the show unfolds, it becomes an exploration of the diasporic psyche, delving into societal norms, cultural dynamics, environmental factors, historical legacies, and diverse migrant narratives. A communal table welcomes engagement by allowing visitors to contribute to a zine-like catalog to nurture narratives and welcome alternative perspectives, with artists and curators also sharing materials that have influenced their practice.

Each artist involved in the exhibit spotlights liminal spaces—honoring rituals, migrations, community, and belonging. Through their auto-ethnographic research and reflections on environments, they draw from urban and rural landscapes, redefining our relationship and connections to these spaces. They explore themes of belonging and grounding, fostering a dialogue between everyday life and the exchange of cultural traditions, thereby reflecting on the interconnectedness of self and community. As such, *Psycho-tropics* offers nuanced explorations of the diasporic psyche, prompting an engagement with the forces that shape our perceptions, emotions, and identities. It serves as both a mirror and a catalyst for change.

The exhibition features work by Natalia Almonte, Yazmany Arboleda, Edward Cabral, Ojos Caribe, Jill Cohen-Nuñez, Patricia Encarnación, Nicole Mourino, Christopher Paz-Rivera, and Estefania Velez Rodriguez, presenting a multifaceted perspective on the evolving dynamics of belonging in contemporary society. As bell hooks profoundly reminds us, "Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation."¹ Through their diverse practices and perspectives, these artists affirm this, inviting us to embrace the richness and multiplicity of our worldly experiences.

Delving into the influences of decolonial practices, the artists reconstruct and challenge prevailing notions of Americanness, reshaping narratives and reclaiming heritage. **Patricia Encarnación's** artwork confronts the enduring effects of colonialism on Afro-diasporic communities and disrupts racial and class stigmas with Dominican culture. In their series *El Negro Detrás de la Oreja* (2021-23), the objects celebrate "Dominicanidad" while challenging the stigmas around it. Through her work, Encarnación highlights the vibrant heritage of African and Taino ancestry, emphasizing their survival through the practice of syncretism. Furthermore, her collaboration with Ojos Caribe, a collective of three artists—Gina Goico, Yelaine Rodriguez, and herself—originating from the Dominican Republic, underscores a commitment to pluricultural narratives, diversifying the notions of Caribbean basin experiences and forms of expression. Encarnación's films from

1 bell hooks, *Killing Rage: Ending Racism* (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 1996), 256.

her series *Tropical Limerence* (2017-2023) explore and propose alternative lenses to further question the exoticization of the tropics, their inhabitants, and landscapes. The series is intentionally replaced midway through the exhibition to host a series of short films curated by Ojos Caribe which focus on the theme of radical love. This planned alteration expands the notions of limerence on the tropical body and landscape, showcases various perspectives and narratives within the Afro-diasporic experience, and highlights the collaborative nature of Encarnación's artistic endeavors.

Ojos Caribe has mounted itinerant video screening events since 2022. The collective showcases films of moving images created from the Caribbean, insular regions, and its diasporas, expanding the understanding of Caribbeanness beyond geographical and geopolitical coordinates. With four editions, Ojos Caribe uses their platform to comment on and document these regions with a critical, cultural-political, and sensitive eye.

Similarly, **Christopher Paz-Rivera's** vibrant artworks offer a mesmerizing exploration of the cultural interplay between the experience of coming and going to and from Puerto Rico and New York City, and offers multiple perspectives from those in the diaspora. With intricate patterns and distinct color combinations that emulate the woodgrains in panels used for his work, Paz-Rivera evokes a psychedelic experience for viewers, serving as a metaphor for the exhibition's theme of altered spaces and realities. By depicting his dog in a field of grass in front of a "ring of fairies" on one panel, and peeing on the sidewalk in New York City in front of a broken police barricade on the other, he

captures the essence of cultural tensions and fusions, inviting contemplation on the fluidity of boundaries and the complexity of human experiences. Through their explorations of liminal spaces and migration, the artists in this exhibition invite us to further consider the multiplicity of identity and belonging.

Edward Cabral, working with charred bread and clay, presents a series of works that deals with the long shadow of history by engaging with indigenous stories and animist traditions regarding the soul. By intertwining ancient rituals and modern symbolism, Cabral's historically-sound sculptures, inspired by antiquity, offer profound insights into cultural development and its transformation. He achieves this by identifying and re-evaluating symbols from both his Mexican and Eastern European roots and exploring them through contemporary contexts to foster a deeper understanding of their origins and significance.

In contrast, **Yazmany Arboleda's** painting *All The Spaces We Have Yet To Inhabit* (2023) looks at issues surrounding the prioritization of healing and care. Through an examination of color and its gender associations, Arboleda challenges the status quo and fosters understanding through playful forms. Arboleda's emphasis on compassion and love is evident in other projects he's a part of, such as *The People's Bus* (2020), in which he repurposed and transformed a decommissioned Rikers Island inmate bus with an intent to reshape how we learn about policy reform in urban spaces and to offer other ways of engaging with it by promoting community involvement. This work required deep collaboration with immigrants in the city and local grassroots organizations. Through these endeavors,

Arboleda invites us to reconsider societal norms and envision a future rooted in care and inclusivity.

Expanding on this effort to cultivate spaces for healing and connection, **Jill Cohen-Nuñez's** installation in the exhibition reflects a deep inquiry into the themes of memory and ancestral heritage and encourages contemplation to foster meaningful connections amongst individuals and within our environment. Rooted in a profound sense of grief, Cohen-Nuñez's installation establishes a poignant connection between her artistic practice and that of traditional altar spaces. By integrating elements from their Caribbean and Jewish ancestries with personal mythology, they explore a variety of rituals and spiritual customs, with the aim of constructing environments that not only provoke contemplation but also facilitate open communication and dialogue.

Relatedly, we can engage with Frantz Fanon's examination of the effects of colonization and the enduring legacy of trauma as a way to assert agency in shaping our collective future. These perspectives have the potential to deepen and enrich our understanding of the complexities of belonging and displacement and guide us towards a society that is more inclusive and empathetic. **Natalia Almonte's** site-specific installations offer a poignant illustration of this concept. Almonte's works unearth the psychological impact of Puerto Rico's political neglect and provide profound reflections on Puerto Rican identity and collective trauma. Through her exploration of "melancolonia" and "Chronic Islandism," terms coined by her, Almonte challenges conventions of storytelling and meaning-making and urges viewers to critically examine

systemic inequalities and injustices perpetuated by colonial powers. With a unique blend of found objects, collaged video footage, and sculptures, her installations evoke an alternative emotional and physical reality, drawing inspiration from Dadaist and Constructivist poetry traditions. In conjunction with the contributions of other artists, Almonte's installations contribute significantly to our understanding of belonging in a society driven by anxiety, and one that exacerbates the experiences of those subjected to transient, unstable states, and displacement.

Continuing with this cacophony of elements are **Estefania Velez Rodriguez's** paintings, which border on abstraction and harness the juxtaposition of ruins and built environments. Drawing attention to the interplay between decay and structure, Velez Rodriguez offers a reflection on the intersection of history, nature, and human intervention, capturing the essence of locations such as Chapultepec in Cuernavaca, Mexico, and Playa de Ponce in Puerto Rico. Through abstraction and texture, Rodriguez prompts us to reflect on the passage of time, the resilience of nature, and the layers of meaning within these environments.

Nicole Mouriño's artistic evolution since 2009 has been marked by a thoughtful transition in materials, driven by considerations of motherhood and their personal connection to urban landscapes. Exploring the significance of botánicas in connection to her family's history, Mouriño captures the essence of botánica and bodega shop windows by using charcoal, polymer, and oil paint. Her compositions serve as touching reminders of resilience within the Caribbean and Latin American diaspora in New York as a way to reconsider

the importance of these spaces as vital centers of cultural preservation and empowerment.

All together, the works in the exhibit underscore Édouard Glissant's concept of "tout-monde," which envisions a world where cultural boundaries are blurred, and diverse identities coexist harmoniously. Glissant's notion transcends geographical borders and celebrates the interconnectedness of cultures and peoples, advocating for a global community that embraces and acknowledges diversity. By utilizing this concept, the artists in *Psycho-tropics* invite viewers to re-imagine the idea of belonging as one that is not confined within national or cultural boundaries and is rather a fluid and inclusive concept that surpasses these traditional definitions. In doing so, they challenge us to confront our preconceived notions of identity and encourage us to embrace the multitude of lived experiences.

As Aurora Levins Morales eloquently states, "Our radical soil is the history, the lineage, the stories of resistance, resilience, and reclamation that nourish us." Through the works of the artists featured in *Psycho-Tropics: Belonging Elsewhere*, we are invited to explore these fertile grounds, cultivating radical narratives that address dominant paradigms and reclaim agency in the face of adversity. By welcoming our diverse perspectives and narratives, we sow the seeds for interconnectedness to complicate history and embark on a transformative journey of self-discovery and understanding.

THE
ARTWORK

OBRAS



altar beam

As part of the installation *wait in the garden*, 2023/2024

Cedar wood, cherry wood, stone, dimensions variable



well

As part of the installation *wait in the garden*, 2020

Maple plywood, glass, dimensions variable



of: a guardian

As part of the installation *wait in the garden*, 2020/2024

Bronze, stone, dimensions variable



untitled

As part of the installation *wait in the garden*, 2024

Walnut, redwood, soapstone, stone, dimensions variable

untitled (guardian) 2

As part of the installation *wait in the garden*, 2023/2024

Raku stoneware, stone, dimensions variable



Wick, 2023

Carbonized pastry, epoxy resin, wire, 9 x 10 x .75 inches



Raven & Wren, 2024

Carbonized bread, epoxy resin, aluminum wire, 33 x 44 x .75 inches



Bucrania, 2024

Ceramic, red ochre, 14 x 13.5 x 3.5 inches

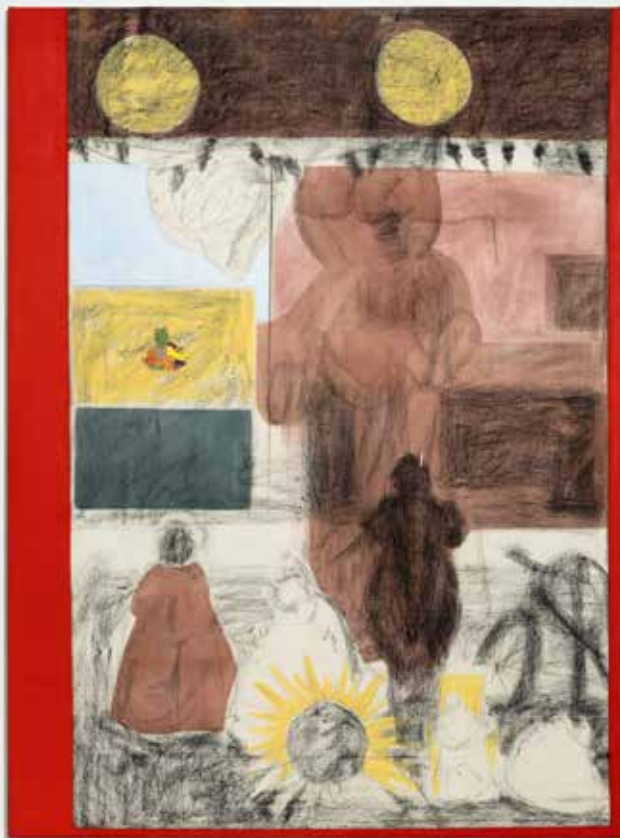


Ingress, 2024

Bread, PVA glue, wood panel, epoxy resin, 72 x 24 x 2 inches



All The Spaces We Have Yet To Inhabit, 2023
Acrylic on red oak wood, 48 x 48 inches



Cosa de tu Padre, 2022

Charcoal, polymers, oil on canvas, 72 x 52 inches



Sera's Botanica, 2019
Charcoal on canvas, 71.5 x 137 inches





Small Rocks Tagged Neutralized Red and green, 2022
Liquid pigment dispersions, chalk, acrylic binder on canvas
16 x 12 inches



Small Rocks Tagged Light Pink, 2022

Liquid pigment dispersions, chalk, acrylic mediums on canvas
16 x 12 inches

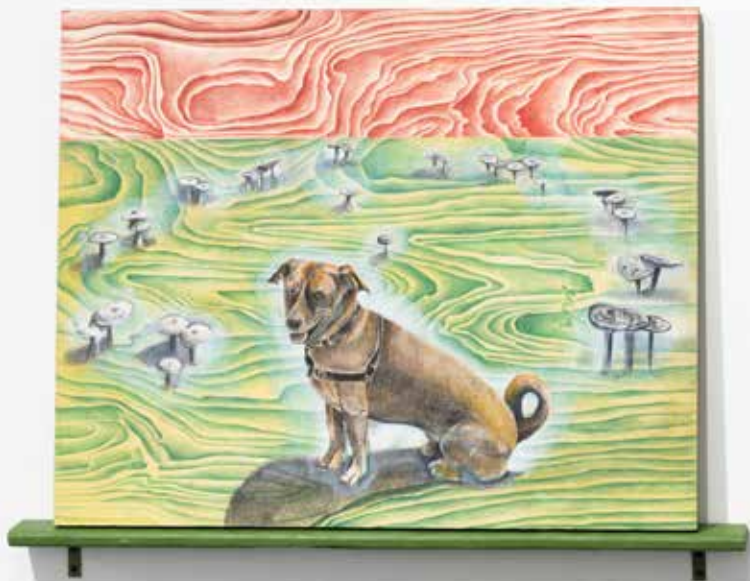


Chapultepec #4 - Red, 2023

Oil paint, raw pigment, walnut oil on canvas, 40 x 40 inches



Threshold - Umber, 2022-2023
Oil paint on canvas, 43 x 36.5 inches



Junti circle (Hato Rey Landscape), 2024

Colored pencil, acrylic on wood panel, wood shelf, L brackets

25 x 34 x 2.5 inches



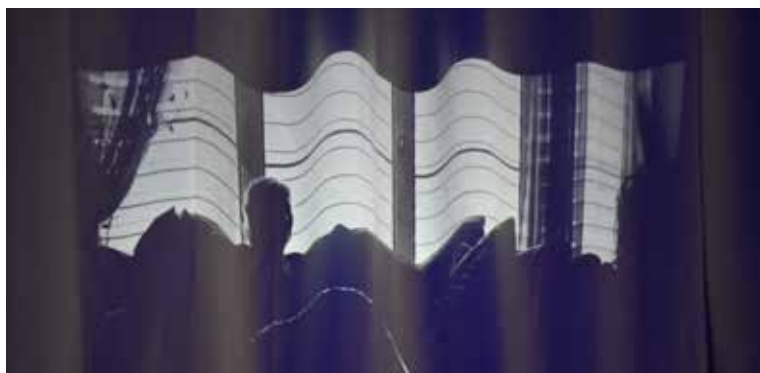
Junti police (Flatbush Landscape), 2024

Colored pencil, acrylic on wood panel, wood shelf, L brackets
36.5 x 28 x 2.5 inches



Chronic Islandism, 2019/2024

Video installation, monoprint, photo transfer, mixed media,
dimension variable







El Negro Detrás de la Oreja (The Black Behind the Ear), 2021-22023
Series of 9 ceramic terracotta objects, dimensions variable



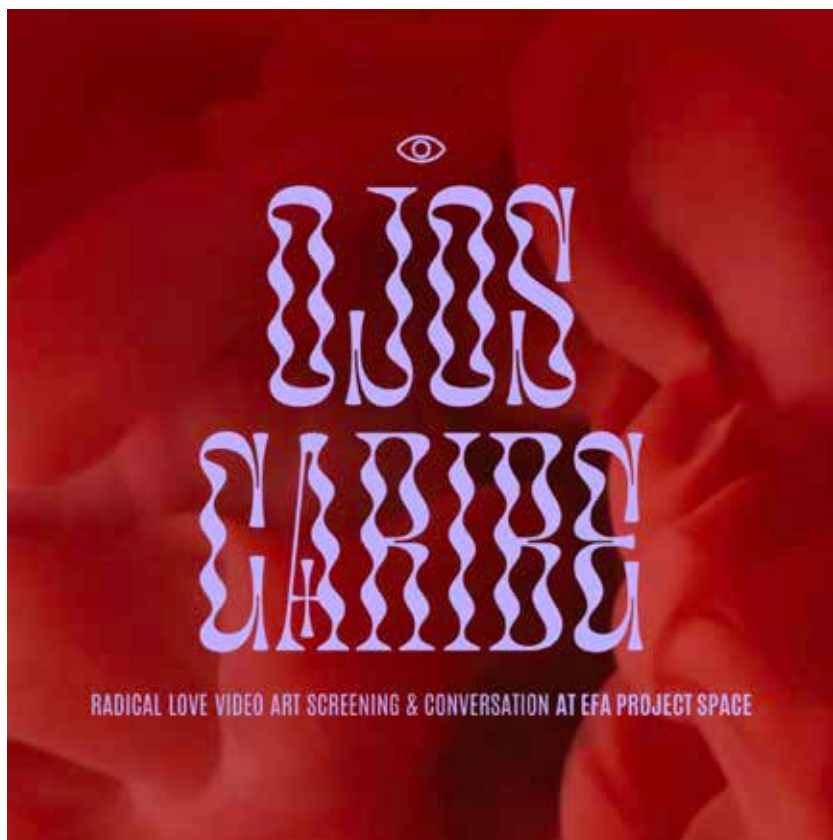


Tropical Limerence III: Martinique, 2023
Series of ceramic objects, dimensions variable



Tropical Limerence, 2017-2023

Series of 4 videos, total run time: 13:38 minutes



FOUNDED BY PATRICIA ENCARNACIÓN, GINA GOICO, YELAINE RODRÍGUEZ
Ojos Caribe Film Series, 2022-Present

PUBLIC
PROGRAMS

PROGRAMAS
PÚBLICOS

Hand-Building with Air Dry Clay Workshop with Jill Cohen-Nuñez

Saturday, March 23, 2-4 PM

We learned the basics of how to coil-build a pot.



Dibujarte/Draw Art with Nicole Mouriño

Saturday, March 30, 12-2 Pm

A family-friendly drawing workshop which used the artworks in the exhibition as inspiration. Participants learned how to work with charcoal on newsprint and canvas while interpreting sculptural works by Edward Cabral, Jill Cohen-Nuñez, and Patricia Encarnación.



Jurutungo: Concrete Poetry Workshop led by Natalia Almonte

Saturday, April 6, 3-5:30 PM

This workshop explored the concept of Concrete Poetry, historically defined as an arrangement of linguistic elements in which the typographical effect is more important in conveying meaning than verbal significance. There were no rules, just interpretations. The intention was to free ourselves of what we should do, of what is expected, of what the finished product could be, and let ourselves embrace the unknown in order to discover something about ourselves that we did not know yesterday.

Catalog Launch with Ojos Caribe Screening & Cake by Edward Cabral

Thursday, April 11, 6-8 PM

Catalog launch, screening with Ojos Caribe, and a special cake decorated by Edward Cabral.

Materials Workshop with Estefania Velez Rodriguez

Saturday, April 13, 12:30-2 PM

This workshop, facilitated by Estefania Velez Rodriguez, explored different ways of using organic materials to make pigments.



**Death Cafe Ceremony
with Jill Cohen-Nuñez Hosted by
Anastasia Corrine and Nancy Huang**

Saturday, April 13, 5-8 PM

An afternoon of Ceremony was held by the Death Cafe with Jill Cohen-Nuñez, and was hosted by Anastasia Corrine and Nancy Huang.

Where and how do we allow ourselves to grieve and mourn? Expressing grief is a survival mechanism: the way we mourn reflects the way we live. The Death Cafe, a BIPOC-centered event, was an opportunity for people to come together and share thoughts, fears, and dreams about mortality, and plan for the future. Death Cafe was an offering for a present and future committed to love and dignity for the living, the ill, and the dead. We aimed to create intergenerational spaces dedicated to the safety and celebration of people of all abilities. We gathered to discuss death and dying in a nonjudgmental space, build a collective altar, and enjoy light refreshments.

Natalia Almonte

(b. 1988, Puerto Rico) is an artist and independent curator based in Brooklyn, New York. She holds an MFA in Fine Arts from Parsons School of Design (NY), and an MA in Art History and the Art Market: Modern and Contemporary Art from Christie's Education (NY), where she was granted the Alumni Association Award for Contemporary Art Connoisseurship. Almonte has exhibited in group shows in New York, Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, and Greece, as well as solo shows in Puerto Rico and Seattle. She has also done residencies in France, Mexico, and the United States.

In 2018, Almonte, alongside artist Nicole Economides, co-founded Paradoxluxe, a collective that critically engages with the reductive representations of Greece and Puerto Rico. They co-curated exhibitions at the Arnold & Sheila Aronson Galleries in Manhattan, The Real House, an ephemeral artist house in Brooklyn, New York, and at The National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. An exhibition curated by the artist is projected to open in the of Fall, 2024 at The Leonardo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The artist coined the term “melancolonia” to describe when colonialism transcends the island body to the collective psyche. Almonte's site-specific installations encompass video, sound, light, text, found objects, and sculptures that reconfigure memories, archival material, and contemporary culture. She emphasizes Puerto Rico's cycle of neglect while simultaneously maintaining that a chronic state of dissonance and subjectivity is actually a space of infinite possibilities.

Yazmany Arboleda

(b. 1981, Colombian-American) is New York City's inaugural People's Artist at the Civic Engagement Commission. An architect by training, Yazmany activates communities with large-scale art projects that seek to build heartfelt connections that lead to meaningful relationships. He believes that art is a verb, not a noun. Over the past two decades, he has created public art projects with communities in India, Japan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, Afghanistan, Spain, Colombia, and the United States. He has collaborated with Carnegie Hall (NY), the Yale School of Management (CT), and the United Nations. He is a co-founder of limeSHIFT, the Future Historical Society, Remember 2019, and the Artist As Citizen Conference. He is currently the Senior Artistic Advisor for the Community Arts Network. Arboleda is also the artist who led *The People's Bus*. Formerly utilized to transport individuals detained on Rikers Island, it has undergone a transformation in collaboration with the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the Mujeres en Movimiento. This metamorphosis, shaped with input from New Yorkers, has turned the bus into a mobile community center, designed to engage people in NYC's civic life through beauty and joy. Described by Arboleda as a "gymnasium for the human imagination," *The People's Bus* serves as a shared space for exercising creativity and envisioning a future where all New Yorkers care for each other. It aims to establish a storytelling tradition that places the heart at the center. Collaborating with The Clemente, Materials for the Arts, Brooklyn Navy Yard, Queens

Museum, and partnering with Territorial Empathy and Mujeres en Movimiento, *The People's Bus* is set to contribute to the cultural landscape of the city.

Edward Cabral

(b. 1987, Lafayette, Indiana) is a multimedia sculptor, chef, and lecturer who lives in Brooklyn, NY. He received his B.A. in Visual Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2011. His work has been exhibited at Williams College Museum of Art (MA), Roots and Culture, Heaven Gallery (IL), Alexander Gray Associates, The Drawing Center, Carracci Art, and Superhouse (NY). He has been interviewed in *Mold Magazine*, *Architectural Digest*, and *CakeZine*, and has appeared on the History Channel, Disney+, and The Food Network.

Ojos Caribe

is a curatorial endeavor and platform which has functioned as an itinerant video screening event since 2022, co-founded by artists and scholars Patricia Encarnación, Yelaine Rodríguez, and Gina Goico. Ojos Caribe showcases moving images created from the Caribbean, insular regions, and its diasporas. While Ojos Caribe looks at the Caribbean region, the platform understands Caribbeanness as an expansive and capacious descriptor that moves beyond geographical and geopolitical

coordinates. With four editions, the festival curates an insular lens that comments on and documents the regions with a critical, cultural-political, and sensitive eye. Ojos Caribe insists on the power of a nuanced and perceptive approach when exploring pluricultural narratives through the insightful vision of artists and filmmakers, inviting a deeper exploration of our diverse political, bodily, spiritual, and territorial landscapes in the Caribbean and its diasporas.

Jill Cohen-Nuñez

(b. 1992, Dominican-American) is an artist from the Bronx, NY. In 2023, they were awarded a New York Community Trust Van Lier Fellowship at Wave Hill and have received grants and scholarships from The Connor Merit Awards, Urban Glass, The Oki Doki Studio, and a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) City Artist Corps Grant. Cohen-Nuñez has participated in residencies at Haverford College (PA), The Newark Print Shop (NJ), Manhattan Graphics Center (NY), MASS MoCA (MA), Chashama, and Modern Art Foundry (NY). They have exhibited at the National Sculpture Society (NY), BronxArtSpace (NY), Center for Performance Research (NY), Fordham University (NY), BAAD! Bronx Academy of Art and Dance (NY), The New York Botanical Garden (NY), and The Jane Hartsook Gallery at Greenwich House Pottery (NY). They hold a BA in studio art from CUNY City College of New York.

Patricia Encarnación

(b. 1991, Dominican Republic) is an Afro-Dominican interdisciplinary artist and scholar. Her work depicts the effects of colonialism on different sociocultural strata within Afro-diasporic communities with a special focus on the Caribbean and Latin America. Encarnación explores being from the Caribbean by recontextualizing quotidian objects, landscapes, and aesthetics she was exposed to while growing up in her homeland.

Encarnación was a Van Lier fellow during her residency at Smack Mellon (NY) and has participated in multiple residencies such as MuseumsQuartier in Vienna and Konvent in Catalonia. Her artwork has been exhibited on platforms such as Documenta 15th, the Tribeca Festival Artist Program Award, the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) Art Fair, Afro Syncretic at New York University, and I am New Afro Latinx at Museum of Latin American Art, CA. Encarnación has been selected twice in the Centro Cultural León Jimenes in Santiago, Dominican Republic, obtaining the prize bestowed by the city of Cádiz in Spain for cultural immersion and a special invitation to a fellowship sponsored by the French consulate in Martinique as part of a Tropiques Atrium Caribbean art program. Recently, Encarnación participated in the 2021-2022 cohort at the Silver Arts Project residency at the World Trade Center (NY). Besides being an actively exhibiting artist, Encarnación has also delved into curatorial practices in spaces such as ChaShama and alternative galleries and community spaces in NYC, the Dominican Republic, and Miami.

Encarnación received an AAS degree in Illustration and Fine Arts from Altos de Chavón School

of Design in the Dominican Republic. This led her to receive a full scholarship to complete her BFA at Parsons School of Design in New York in 2014. She was recently awarded a full scholarship for the graduate program in the Caribbean Studies concentration in Museum Studies at NYU, where she graduated in 2022. Encarnación is currently based in the Bronx, NY.

Nicole Mouriño

(b. 1987, Miami, Florida) is a Cuban-American artist based in Brooklyn, NY. Mouriño received an MFA in Social Practice from Queens College (NY) in 2016, and a BFA in Painting from Pratt Institute (NY) in 2011. Her work has been exhibited at Sargent's Daughters, Shrine, BRIC, Carracci, and Sideshow Gallery (all NY), and included in curated presentations at Untitled Miami and Pulse Miami. Mouriño's solo exhibition, *Mama Dukes*, opens at Peep Projects in Philadelphia and will be on view March 11 - April 13, 2024.

Christopher Paz-Rivera

(b. 1982, San Juan, Puerto Rico) received his BFA from the University of Puerto Rico in 2007, and his MFA from Hunter College in New York in 2012. Paz-Rivera's work was included in La Bienal 2013 at El Museo Del Barrio (NY). In addition, the artist has exhibited at venues including Mishkin Gallery at Baruch College

(NY), Museo de Arte de Ponce, Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, Riverside Museum (CA), and Área Lugar De Proyectos, to name a few. In addition to his artistic practice, Paz-Rivera is co-founder of EMBAJADA, a prominent gallery based in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and has curated exhibitions at Rachel Uffner Gallery (NY), the Contemporary Art Museum Saint Louis (MO), Mishkin Gallery at Baruch College, to name a few.

Estefania Velez Rodriguez

(b. 1985, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico) is an American artist born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. As a dual-tongued individual, she utilizes the symbolic language of painting as a bridge between many cultures and spaces. Her work often uses abstracted landscapes as well as non-objective visual spaces that are somewhat open field and bright. Her landscapes meander and distort physical spaces like mazes which are meant to be misleading. Utilizing chemical reactions within painting, Velez Rodriguez experiments with raw pigments, spray materials, oil mediums, and acrylic polymers. Her painting language ruptures visual spaces to open the viewers' receptivity to fleeting spaces, times, and emotional presence.

Velez Rodriguez lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She received a MFA in painting from Brooklyn College in 2017. Velez Rodriguez is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute (NY), Rutgers Newark (NJ), Montclair State (NJ), and Brooklyn College (NY). She is represented by Praxis Gallery in New York

City. Selected recent solo exhibitions include: *Small Rocks Tagged*, Lipany Gallery, Fordham University New York, NY (2023); *Time is probably an illusion*, Praxis Gallery, New York, NY (2021); *False Catalog*, Auxiliary Projects, Brooklyn, NY (2019). Selected group exhibitions include: *Unstructured Play*, Below Grand, New York, NY (2023); *Pratt Faculty Show*, Schafler Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (2022); *Diasporic State of Mind*, Praxis Gallery (2022); *Like Apples and Knives*, Soil Gallery, Seattle, WA (2021); *Seeing Through The Spectrum*, University Of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AK (2019); *Now or Never Series*, Edda Jakab Studio Gallery VSC, Johnson, VT (2019); and more. Her work has been published in *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Artnet*, and *Revista Marvin*. She has a public mural project with the Arts and Cultural Grant of New York and Norte Maar, and was a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Artist Grant (2020).

Sofía Shaula Reeser-Del Rio (Curator)

(b. 1989, San Juan, Puerto Rico) is a scholar, curator, artist, and educator based in New York City from Culebra, Puerto Rico. Her work focuses on memory, ecology, and sustainability, exploring new approaches to art and social engagement.

Reeser del Rio has curated several exhibitions, with a special emphasis on supporting LGBTQ+ and female artists from Puerto Rico and the Latinx community. Recent exhibitions include *Off The Grid* and

AMIGXS Radicales at The Clemente Center (NY), and *Building Radical Soil* at the Latinx Project at New York University. She has also worked on notable exhibitions such as *Yoko Ono: Land of Hope* at Museo Memoria y Tolerancia (Mexico City, Mexico) and *NKAME: A Retrospective of Cuban Printmaker Belkis Ayón* at El Museo del Barrio (NY) to name a few.

Reeser del Rio holds a Masters from the Sur Escuela, University Carlos III of Madrid, Spain, and a BFA from Pratt Institute (NY). Actively involved with Mujeres de Islas, Inc., she is also certified as a postnatal doula and an Ashtanga and prenatal yoga teacher. Recipient of fellowships like the ESAP Latinx Curator Fellowship, Reeser del Rio currently serves as the Associate Director of Programs and curator at The Clemente Center (NY), with previous roles at Americas Society (NY), Museo Memoria y Tolerancia, Casa de Africa (Habana, Cuba), Sugar Hill Museum (NY), and El Museo del Barrio (NY).



COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

COMMUNITARIAS
CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUCIONES

COMUNITARIAS

Expanding upon the themes in *Psycho-Tropics: Belonging Elsewhere*, and the state of our world, we gathered questions to consider as community prompts to write, draw, or share during the exhibition, in this book, and long after:

1. What does "belonging elsewhere" mean to you personally? How do you navigate multiple cultural identities in your daily life?

2. In what ways do contemporary urban landscapes reflect or diverge from the natural environments they replace? How does this impact our sense of belonging?

3. Reflecting on the artwork in the exhibition, how do the artists explore concepts of migration, displacement, and cultural hybridity?

4. Consider the concept of "home" in relation to the artworks. How do the artists depict notions of home, both physical and emotional, and how do these depictions challenge traditional understandings of belonging?

5. How do the artworks engage with environmental issues, such as climate change and sustainability, and how does this intersect with discussions of belonging and identity?

6. Explore the role of memory and nostalgia in the artworks. How do the artists evoke a sense of nostalgia for a place or time, and how does this contribute to discussions of belonging?

7. Think about the concept of borders, both physical and metaphorical. How do the artworks challenge or reinforce borders, and what implications does

this have for notions of belonging?

8. Consider the idea of cultural memories and ancestral connections. How do the artworks reflect or reinterpret cultural traditions, rituals, and histories, and how does this inform our understanding of belonging?

9. Reflect on your own experiences of displacement or belonging. How do the artworks resonate with your personal narratives, and what insights do they offer into the complexity of human experiences?

10. Finally, consider the future of belonging. How can art and culture contribute to creating more inclusive and equitable communities, where everyone feels a sense of belonging?

EFA Project Space

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EFA Project Space, launched in September 2008 as a program of The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, is a collaborative, cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it and the communities that arise because of it. By providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists, curators and other participants to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

The program is based on Open Calls as well as invitational exhibitions and projects. It is a home for emerging, mid-career, as well as established curators and artists. We focus our attention on community engagement and public programming.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts is a 501(c)(3) public charity, dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools

and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. We are a catalyst for cultural growth, stimulating new interactions between artists, art professionals, creative communities, and the public.

EFA Project Space has received public funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, as well as from generous individuals in our community.

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