

O čem samnajo krokodili?

What Do



Dream  
About ?

Museum of Contemporary Art

Metelkova

4.7.-29.10.2023

Moderna galerija, Ljubljana,

2023



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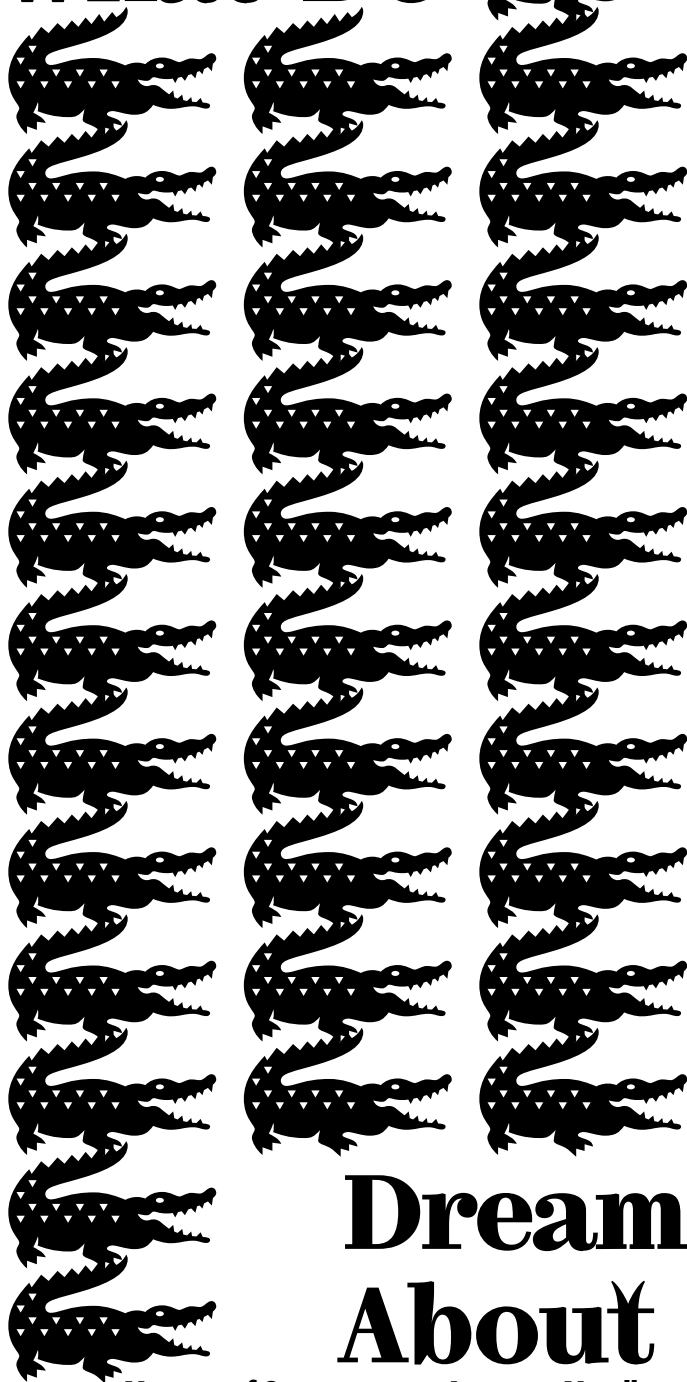
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# What Do



# Dream About ?

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Metelkova

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Moderna galerija, Ljubljana,

2023



# What Do Crocodiles Dream About?

The exhibition has been envisioned by Bojana Piškur, Daniela Berger, Riksa Afiaty, Shada Safadi with Akram Al Halabi, May Herbawe, Cristian Inostroza, Essa Grayeb, Hani Zurob, Lab Laba-Laba, Moelyono, Noor Abuarafeh, Papuan Voices, Paraparabuku, Patricia Domínguez, Roy Villevoye, Udeido Collective, Veronika Kusumaryati & Ernst Karel.

The exhibition brings together voices, cosmologies, ecologies, and human and more-than-human beings from diverse parts of the world: Gaza, Jerusalem, Jisr al-Zarqa, Ljubljana, Majdal Shams, Puchuncaví, Ramallah, Santiago, West Papua and elsewhere. The exhibition and the process of working together have been based on a set of rehearsals, conversations, and envisionings that started some years ago. We began questioning the idea of knowledge, and the ways images and objects from non-Western parts of the world are appropriated by so-called “expertise” and consequently detached from the communities that created them. Because of these processes of capture they have lost their original meanings and the purposes they once had in the world. We nurture the idea that everything on the planet is intertwined and life in all of its dimensions cannot be separated: humans from nonhumans, nature from culture, object from subject, mind from body.

As the title of the exhibition suggests, one of our main references in this work has been the crocodile. Not only has the crocodile always had a special meaning in the cosmologies of many communities around the world, but it has also played a central role in their cultures. The western colonizers of the

previous centuries considered crocodiles as creatures that needed to be exterminated, and thus, in a specific way, crocodiles represented the *colonized other*. Such an example can be found in Palestine, where the crocodile was declared extinct in 1935. Elisabeth Bentley writes about how the story of the last Palestinian crocodile is intertwined with the violent histories of colonial resource extraction, racialized labor exploitation, and dispossession of the indigenous peoples. For all of us involved in this exhibition, the crocodile represents a powerful figure that resists capture – the crocodile is our companion of sorts. The varied imaginations and multiple horizons embraced in the exhibition have also made us rethink the concept of “imperial violence,” which continues to be a constitutive part of art institutions and their methodologies. Thus, the crocodile’s dream for us symbolizes the (lost) kinship with other cosmologies, knowledges, and times.

The exhibition is comprised of three interconnected parts. In the chapter *Going with the Tide*, Riksa Afiaty presents a selection of films by Papuan Voices and the moving images, artworks, and initiatives of filmmakers, artists, a library, anthropologists, and an educator, specifically Lab Laba-Laba, Roy Villevoye, Udeido Collective, Paraparabuku, Veronika Kusumaryati & Ernst Karel, and Moelyono. The chapter compiles thoughts and voices to revisit history and investigate various forms of aesthetic presentation to critically understand the power structures at play in West Papua. We reclaim the aesthetic to make leaps of the imagination to support the idea of liberation. Politics, religion, science, and any other form of knowledge have bored us for far too long, and this leap is a configuration to imagine a liberation (without a state, without control, without policing) that arose from the condition of coloniality and is related to self-determination.

Daniela Berger’s chapter *Less Condor, More Huemul* takes its name from a short article published in 1925 by the poet Gabriela Mistral. That text was about the Chilean national coat of arms, which bears the images of two iconic animals for the local culture. On the

one side, there is the condor, a huge, strong bird of prey that lives high in the Andes, and on the other, the small and humble huemul, a quiet and gentle deer, already at risk of extinction a hundred years ago. These two creatures, as opposed forces, governed the Chilean identity that was run according to a strong slogan: by reason or by force. The words honor, patriotic, patriarchal and masculine describe a country whose basis is strength and survival by struggle, which in the last fifty years has been closely associated with the radical neoliberal system and notions of capitalist productivity, “progress,” and so forth. What if, said Mistral, we focused on the “gracefulness” of the humble, peaceful huemul that lives at one with the forest? What do we gain if we go against speed, hyper-progress, extreme digitalization, and stop the annihilation we are subsumed by? The proposals of the artists Cristian Inostroza and Patricia Domínguez point towards this “direction of the affective,” where people heal the scars of the lands and look towards nature to relearn the real power of plants to forge a different future, one that cares about all sentient beings.

In the chapter *Birds, They No Longer Want to Migrate*, which is part of her long-term research project, Shada Safadi has created a spatial installation combining birds from her hometown Majdal Shams with stories and myths that have played an important part in the collective memory of the community where she has lived since childhood; the clouds and the shapes they form above the Golan mountains and the various interpretations of these shapes; the role and the meanings of the endemic plants and seeds. She has also invited Akram Al Halabi, May Herbawe, Essa Grayeb, Hani Zurob and Noor Abuarafeh to be part of that habitat. Safadi furthermore presents how a company that possesses political and economic power has developed a plan to build a wind farm – 110 wind turbines to generate alternative energy along the ceasefire line in the Golan. The wind turbines have become, in Safadi’s words, “the invasive green,” colonizing the land and destroying human and non-human beings alike under the pretext of ecology, threatening bats, bees, and especially endangered birds and their migratory routes.



# exhibition participants

Akram Al Halabi

Cristian Inostroza

Essa Grayeb

Hani Zurob

Lab Laba-Laba

May Herbawe

Moelyono

Noor Abuarafeh

Papuan Voices

Paraparabuku

Patricia Domínguez

Roy Villevoye

Shada Safadi

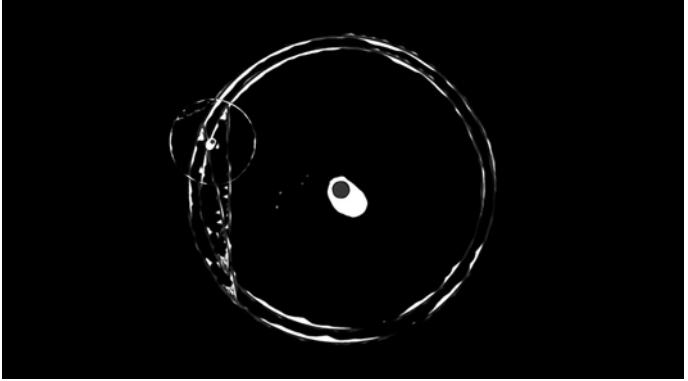
Udeido Collective

Veronika Kusumaryati

© Ernst Karel



# Akram Al Halabi



**Whisper**, 2018  
video 3' 40''

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Surreal scenes from the Golan Heights. The video work (*Whisper*) and the sound work (*The Red Star*) are works that re-display a familiar place through narratives, memory, legend, and daily life practices in the Golan. They offer a synthesis of many symbols, which come from personal memory and the memory of a place. Scenes formed from the depths of memory: anger, silence, cruelty, lightness, childhood, humor... Between those complex feelings, images and scenes show anxious, abstract, and surreal moments. If anger sometimes appears silently, then sarcasm and humor have a loud, surreal voice.

AKRAM AL HALABI was born in the Golan Heights in 1981. He studied Fine Art in Damascus in 2005, and received a One World Scholarship from the Afro-Asian Institute (Vienna) in 2007. He finished his studies with an MA from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna in 2012. He has participated in various exhibitions along with his continued academic study of art. His work has been collected by many art institutions and private collectors in both Europe and the Middle East.

# Cristian Inostroza

## **Huemul Stencil**

image of the huemul on  
the Chilean coat of arms  
looking at the Wüñelfe  
(a Mapuche indigenous star)  
stencil on wall

## **Huemul Poster**

poster, QR codes

## **Huemul Performance**

performative reading that takes  
place on a box filled with soil

## **Sewing the Land**

video, 5' 38"

## **Transborder Palín**

video, 3' 35"

## **Resentimiento** (Resentment)

stencil on wall, video  
documentation of the  
action in Chile, 5' 09"

## **Zamera**

collective action and  
documentation

## **To Liberate**

installation; coins, 2 framed  
photographs (30 × 15 cm  
each), video, sound, plinth/  
shelf; variable dimensions

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

CRISTIAN INOSTROZA (b. La Granja borough, Santiago, 1984) is a multimedia visual artist. His work is born alongside the local social movements of the last fifteen years and from critical thinking about the official Chilean history, using artistic practice as a political tool. He has exhibited his works in the main spaces of the country and in multiple international exhibitions, focusing his research on the cultural manifestations of those who inhabit the peripheries of the cities of Chile,

in its popular and indigenous traits. He has a BA and MA in visual arts from the Universidad de Chile, is currently the Artistic Director of the Periférica contemporary art festival and street interventions, and an academic at the School of Visual Arts at the Universidad Diego Portales. He works in presentations at the Congress of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) in Vancouver, in the public program of the Biennial of São Paulo, exhibitions at the National Museum of Fine Arts and street interventions as part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the military coup with various social organizations.



# Essa Grayeb



**The Secret Garden, 2020**  
wall installation:  
text and illustration  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

The essay tells the story of the botanist Fadwa Hassoun who, during her research on wild plants in Palestine, discovered a connection between the plants shown in the illustrations for Lewis Carroll's novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and a list of weeds in a document titled "Weed Control" from the British Mandate era. Hassoun proposes that Carroll used these weeds as a way to criticize Victorian Britain without encountering censorship.

This text-work was included as part of the artists contribution to the exhibition book entitled *Weed Control*, which was published by the Qattan Foundation in Ramallah in 2020.

ESSA GRAYEB is a Palestinian visual artist based in Jerusalem whose practice traverses a range of media,

primarily photography, moving images and installation. Some of Grayeb's works are made from objects, footage, and sounds that already exist, which he appropriates and manipulates while constantly weaving in and out of reality and fiction. Grayeb's work delves into narratives of the past and their contemporary interpretation, and they originate from exploring elements connected to historical moments within the collective memory and forgetfulness, and their manifestations in popular culture. Grayeb earned his MFA from Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in 2022, following his BFA in 2019.

# Hani Zurob



**ZeftLand** series (2018–2019)

**ZeftLand no.08**, 2019  
tar, tree branches and  
mixed media on canvas

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Everything in this material embodies *zeft*.<sup>\*</sup> How could I forget the sea of Gaza, which practically turned black, and the skies over our cities which grew dimmer day by day. How am I supposed to get rid of the *zeft* in which I have lived, if I have not tried to dive into it?

I was obsessed with the material while also feeling discontented with it, like someone who has fallen into a tar pit, without escape. This led to further research into its visual aesthetics. Now able to control it, I could paint with it in a way I was unable to in the past.

In *ZeftLand* I wanted to discover how to transform the character of the sacred space to that of *zeft*. I minimized the distance between the subject and the concept to focus on the continuous destruction of this land. And it was the land that pointed me towards using a living material, like tree branches, twigs, and dry flower petals.

These works are thus conceptual approaches to the scale of destruction, fire, and pain. I have been

confronted by the sacred and the cursed, both on earth and in the work of making art. I have found myself asking – is there any difference?

*\*Zeft* in Arabic means *tar* in English. And the word *zeft* is used in the Arab world in general and Palestine in particular as a contemptuous term to express a wide range of emotions, from a discouraged state of mind to one of repulsion. Sometimes it points to bad luck as a way to describe an awful situation.

HANI ZUROB is a contemporary Palestinian artist who currently lives and works in Paris. He is known for his vivid paintings, which are often informed by the personal events that have shaped his life. His artworks present these events through a personal perspective and a conceptual context that reflect the broader circumstances of his life. His art transcends both borders and geography. Zurob works in many materials, allowing the concept behind a particular work to determine his choice of media. His work is found in several private and public collections internationally, including in the British Museum in London; the Arab American National Museum (AANM) in Dearborn, Michigan; the Williamsburg Art & Historical Center (WAH Center) in New York; the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA) in Paris; and the Imago Mundi – Luciano Benetton Collection.

# Lab Laba-Laba



**The Return of Si Titik**, 2015  
digital, 28' 9"

COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

In 1982, seeing the popularity of *Si Unyil*, the State Film Production Center (PPFN) made another series of puppet-story films entitled *Si Titik*. Titik is a girl who has been in a plane crash and ends up living in the forest, playing and teaching animals to read. The message conveyed by the *Si Titik* films is to preserve the environment. Unfortunately, only eight films were produced in the series between 1982 and 1984.

In March 2015, Lab Laba-Laba cleaned up six original negative film reels marked "Return from the Film Vault of Perum PFN Laboratory" (Perum PFN has since changed its name to the State Film Production Company). Without knowing what the film reels contained, Lab Laba-Laba asked for Sinematek's help to scan them. However, because the film vault of the PFN Public Corporation Laboratory had been neglected for around twelve years, some of the reels were quite badly damaged, so that only two could be scanned. After

watching the results, it became clear that the reels contained one of the *Si Titik* films.

In May 2015, Lab Laba-Laba continued their search for other materials from the *Si Titik* series, finding three sound reels from *Lagi* in the Film Vault of Perum PFN Laboratory. Three other *Si Titik* films have now been scanned at the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI), entitled *New Friends, New Citizens* and *Standby*.

*The Return of Si Titik* remains a work in progress, although some of it was shown at the OK Video: New Order festival in June 2015.

LAB LABA-LABA is a group of celluloid film activists from different backgrounds which was formed in 2014 and is based in the Laboratory Building of the State Film Production Company (Perum PFN). Apart from being busy organizing screenings, discussions, workshops and exhibitions about celluloid, Lab Laba-Laba is actively collecting data and cleaning the collection of celluloid films belonging to Perum PFN, which the group found in the film vault of Perum PFN Laboratory.

# May Herbawe



## **You Got Fooled**

lenticular print, 40 × 50 cm

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

A work that simulates the impact of linguistic colonization and its unconscious effects on the colonization of the imagination of the individual. At the entrance to Jisr al-Zarqa there is a sign that has always borne the name of the Valley of Crocodiles, where the Tannim River flows, and this name is a direct translation from Hebrew letters into Arabic ones. It means *crocodile*, but is written with the same letters as those for the word *dragon* in Arabic. Finding out that Jisr al-Zarqa's crocodile might have resembled a chameleon and had nothing to do with a dragon was a shock, and showed how the linguistic influence had colonized and limited my imagination.

### **Where Did the Crocodile Go?**

This ongoing research deals with the historical myths from the village of Jisr al-Zarqa, where the last Palestinian crocodile was seen alive. These myths have been passed from generation to generation. The research process consists in collecting the oral history

and myths about the crocodile in addition to the oral history of the village itself and how it endured as the last Palestinian village on the Palestinian coast after the Nakba war. Based on this oral history, the truth about the village's origins is reestablished, highlighting the parallels of its existence with that of Kabara, Haifa, which is not mentioned in Palestinian history, and discussing the classification and discrimination of villages by both the Palestinian community and the Zionist existence. Palestinians do not accept the citizens of Jisr al-Zarqa for a variety of reasons: some of them buy into the Zionist story about the inhabitants of Jisr al-Zarqa having been brought from African countries to dry out the harmful marshes for the white Ashkenazi settlers; others believe that they helped the Zionist army occupy Palestine, thus betraying their homeland; still others claim that they are savages who used to rob people, steal, and eat crocodiles. So far, the research has found four crocodiles that were taken from the village and transported to Germany, the UK, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv, and several archival documents about the resistance of the Jisr al-Zarqa village during the Nakba war. The current stage in the research is studying the colonizers' interest in crocodiles from Palestine and the zoological colonizing of Palestinian animals in general.

MAY HERBAWE (born in the village of Jisr al-Zarqa in 1995; now based in Jerusalem) works in the media of installation, photography, and video art, highlighting hidden social issues by using her body and elements from her daily life. Herbawe studied photography, earning a BFA from the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. She took part in *The People of the Sea* exhibition (2016), won the Karimeh Abboud Award in 2016, and a GPU Mention in Turkey's DASK photography competition in 2017. She participated in the *Maktoob* exhibition held at Al Housh Art Gallery in East Jerusalem (2017), *The Cities* exhibition at the Birzeit University Museum (*Weeds Control* installation, 2018), and the *Limitless* group exhibition at the Walled Off Hotel Gallery (2019), and won the Al Markaz art residency in 2020 and the Intimacy in the Apocalyptic Phase residency in 2023.

# Moelyono with Children in Keerom



**When I Grow Up**, 2005  
series of drawings, 14.8 × 21 cm

In 2005, Moelyono was invited by Wahana Visi Indonesia Area Development to participate in the celebration of National Children's Day. A few days earlier, Pak Moel and the children had held a meeting with

singing and *mop* (the sharing of jokes and other forms of humor amongst Papuans). “A lively and spontaneous *mop* makes children feel free and everyone laughs. In my opinion, *mop* is the medium that is my entry point – it can be friendly and relaxed so that my position is on the same level as the children, like a friend playing with them,” said Moelyono.

During the learning process, Moelyono asked the children to draw pictures of the context they lived in. The children were encouraged to draw a circle which then became a face, and to freely describe the situation in their environment and express what they wanted to be when they grew up.

Keerom is a district in Papua, directly bordering Papua New Guinea (PNG). The stories and objects that the children produced were memories of what they had seen or been impressed by. In some drawings, “soldiers,” “rifles,” and “morning star flags” can be immediately recognized, which, when presented or present in the adult world, become images closely related to violence and separatism. In some images we found what the children wanted to be when they grew up: a doctor, soldier, police officer, teacher.

MOELYONO was born in Tulungagung, East Java, in 1957. He went to the Yogyakarta Art Institute (ISI), Faculty of Design and Fine Arts, Department of Painting. Since 1989 he has been active as an artist, and five years ago he started working in several non-governmental organizations collaborating with communities in Tulungagung, Pacitan, Ponorogo, Wamena, Jayapura, Keerom, Sentani-Papua Poso, Tentena, Ambon-Sulawesi, Singkawang, Ngabang, Hedgehog-Kalimantan, Alor, P. Rote, Kupang-NTT, and Malina-Timor Leste. He has written two books – *Pak Moel Guru Gambar* (2007) and *Art of Awakening* (1997) – and won a number of awards: the Bintang Budaya Foundation Prize in 2012; the Life Time Achievement Award, Biennale IX, Yogyakarta, in 2007; the Art Prize of the Governor of East Java in 2007; the 1989–1992 Ashoka Fellowship Innovators for the Public Award from the Ashoka Indonesia Foundation; and a scholarship from the painter Affandi in 1978.

# Noor Abuarafeh



**Am I the Ageless Object  
at the Museum?**, 2017  
video and mixed media  
installation

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, SUPPORTED  
BY A M QATTAN FOUNDATION

The video is based on a narrative that was written in parallel with several visits to different zoos in Palestine, Switzerland, and Egypt. The film is the last episode of a long-term project in which each of the episodes deals with the concept of the museum from a different perspective. The video deals with the construction of the zoo and its historical relation to the museum, and the relation between museums and cemeteries, where these three components are related to the discipline of history and present it in very similar aesthetics.

NOOR ABUARAFEH, who lives in Jerusalem, got her BFA in Jerusalem in 2011, then followed a one-year independent study program (under the Home Workspace program) at Ashkal Alwan in Beirut. In 2016 she got her MA from the department of Art in Public Sphere at ECAV in Switzerland. Her recent works explore elements related to imagination and history, the ways history is

documented, read, and perceived, and the possibility of reading the future through both elements. By using public and personal archives (oral histories, photographs, interviews and books) the artist examines these elements by questioning the distance between reality and fiction and the relation to lies, stories, rumors and memories. Abuarafeh's works appear in different media, such as video installations, tour performances, photographs, and videos. Most of the works in her practice are text-based, which in many cases she describes as novels that take other shapes than the form of a book. Abuarafeh has participated in different exhibitions in Palestine and abroad, such as at the Kunsthal Nord in Denmark, Maxxx in Switzerland, Tokyo Wonder Site in Japan, Gallery One in Canada, Instant Video Festival in France, Mosaic Room and Chapter 21 in London, the Cairo Video Festival in Cairo, and YAYA in Palestine.



# Papuan Voices

## A selection of films by:

Agus Kalalu, **Mama Mariode**, 4:50, Sorong, 2017 •  
Andreas Wahyu & Rosa Dahlia, **Gereje**, 8:35, Asmat, 2014 • Asrida Elisabeth, Harun Rumbarar, Bernad Koten & Yosef Levi, **The Caretaker of Isio Hill**, 30:31, Nimbokrang, 2017 • Asrida Elisabeth & Harun Rumbarar, **Victor Mamboron (Un)Freedom of the Press in West Papua**, 11:31, Jayapura, 2017 • Cristian G. & Tigor Kogoya, **Unsung Heroes**, 15:18, Makki, Lanny Jaya, 2019 • Dery Prananda & Kartika Pratiwi, **The Black Orchid**, 11:17, Indonesia, Australia, 2017 • Elis Apyaka, **Different Technique, Same Taste**, 13:00, Jayapura, 2022 • Fransiska Pigay, **Papuan Children Learn**, 20:16, Waena, 2017 • Harun Rumbarar, **Yimnawai (Feast for Ancestors)**, 22:09, Arso, 2022 • Helena Kobogau, **The Lost Area**, 8:34, Timika, 2019 • Immanuel Hindom, **Monce's Truck**, 26:40, Arso, 2017 • Kristina Soge & Denis Tafor, **We Live from the Forest**, 13:00, Keerom, 2021 • Ottow Wanma, **Life in Forest of Mobak**, 8:36, Raja Ampat, 2017 • Wenda Tokomonowir, **Love Letter to the Soldier**, 6:51, 2011

PAPUAN VOICES is a community of filmmakers in the land of Papua that focuses on producing short documentaries about the people and land of Papua, with the aim of telling stories about Papua from the perspectives of the Papuans themselves. Papuan Voices was formed in 2011 when EngageMedia, Justice Peace and Integration of Creation (JPIC, MSC Indonesia), and the Secretariat for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (SKPKC, Franciscan Papua) worked together and began training filmmakers in Papua. Papuan Voices has produced various types of documentaries and has

conducted training to produce filmmakers in the land of Papua. Since its establishment, the community has held a number of activities such as workshops, film festivals, and road show screenings, as well as engaged in film distribution at the local, national and international levels. This selection tells stories about the indigenous Papuan people defending their environment, future, and culture, including access to natural resources and customary territories, and shows various cultural practices and situations that are experienced from time to time, with the hope of sharing the voices and images of our reality in West Papua, to counter the official state-made narrative. Currently Papuan Voices are spread across nine regions in the land of Papua: Jayapura, Keerom, Wamena, Merauke, Sorong Raya, Tambraw, Timika, Biak and Manokwari.



Agus Kalalu:  
**Mama Mariode**, 2017  
 COURTESY OF AGUS KALALU

Kristina Soge & Denis Tafor:  
**We Live from the Forest**, 2021  
 COURTESY OF KRISTINA SOGE & DENIS TAFOR

Elis Apyaka:  
**Different Technique,  
 Same Taste**, 2022  
 COURTESY OF ELIS APYAKA

Harun Rumbarar:  
**Yimnawai (Feast for  
 Ancestors)**, 2022  
 COURTESY OF HARUN RUMBARAR

# Paraparabuku



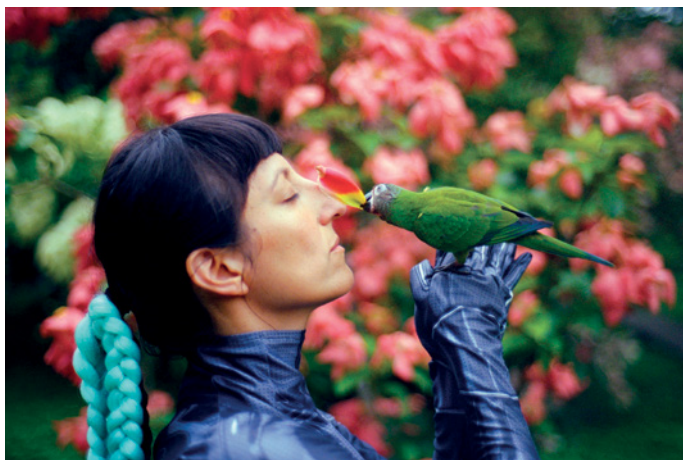
**Library, 2023**  
poster and index cards  
COURTESY OF THE PARAPARABUKU

This exhibition was inspired by a specific book about the land of Papua, which had also encouraged us to manage this library. The land of Papua has historical complexities, socio-cultural and political-economic events and situations that encourage each party to present their own version of the truth. We thus produced a list of various books about Papua, including volumes from the Dutch government, religious missionaries, liberation movements, churches, regional governments, police and military, corporations, academics, and civil society organizations. We would like to present several categories of books which we find especially interesting, such as those written during the years Dutch rule, books published by the Papuan liberation movement, books published by the regional government of Jayapura Regency, books published by PT. Freeport, Indonesia, a book published by Deiyai Publisher, and a book about women.

PARAPARABUKU started in the spirit of providing free books with themes and points of view that can help readers understand and see the development of the situation in Papua more critically. In our experience as

initiators, it is not easy to find books that are suitable for this project. The first books in the library came from the personal collections of the activists, books from fellow researchers who had completed their research on Papua, as well as donations from close friends who had helped support this initiative. In its development, we continued to voluntarily provide money to add to the collection and then decided to call for book donations from various parties, including in Jayapura, Yogyakarta and Jakarta.

# Patricia Domínguez



**Matrix Vegetal** (2021–2022)  
4K video, 21' 12"  
installation; 5 analogue  
photographs, 2 holographic  
projectors, leaves from  
Ljubljana, dimensions variable

COMMISSIONED BY SCREEN CITY BIENNIAL  
WITH THE SUPPORT OF CECILIA BRUNSON  
PROJECTS AND GALERÍA PATRICIA  
READY. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

Departing from the artistic interpretation of Patricia Domínguez's learning in Madre de Dios (Peru), *Matrix Vegetal* grows as an inquiry from experimental ethnobotany, South American quantum thinking, dream fiction, and organic connection technologies to expand the perception of the vegetal and the spiritual world.

As part of her research to realize this work, the artist spent a month of apprenticeship with Amador Aniceto, a healer and *curandero* living and practicing in Madre de Dios. Under his guidance, Domínguez activated an intimate process of connecting with the living, multi-species language and knowledge of the vegetal world. In order to realize this, the artist aimed at achieving a temporary disengagement from the “digital matrix,” activating an alliance with plants and the vegetal matrix instead, through patience and focus on

the present moment. In doing so, Domínguez establishes a connection with the more-than-human language of the Earth, and speculatively accesses a portal to the quantum world, revealing how plants and their multiple spirits operate. *Matrix Vegetal* also includes a video interview with Amador Aniceto, highlighting his personal view and experience of the plant world, prints and holographic projections.

PATRICIA DOMÍNGUEZ CLARO (b. 1984, Santiago). Bringing together experimental research on ethnobotany, healing practices, and extractivism, her work focuses on tracing digital and spiritual relationships between living species in an increasingly corporate cosmos. She holds an MFA from Hunter College, New York (2013) and a Botanical Art Illustration Certificate from the New York Botanical Garden (2011). She is currently director of the ethnobotanical platform Studio Vegetalista. Recent exhibitions include *Transmediale* (a collaboration with Suzanne Treister), *Butterfly Affect*, Fondazione Sandretto (both 2023); *Screen Series*, New Museum, New York; *Rooted Beings*, Wellcome Collection, London; *Abundant Futures in Troubled Times*, TBA21 C3A (all 2022); Gwangju Biennale, South Korea; *Transmediale*, Berlin; *La Casa Encendida*, Madrid (all 2021), *How to Tread Lightly*, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; *Madre Drone*, CentroCentro, Madrid (all 2020); *Green Irises*, Gasworks, London; (2019); among others. She was recently awarded a Botín scholarship (2022) and Simetría Award to participate in a residency at CERN (2021), and contributed to *Health in the Documents of Contemporary Art* series and Season 1 for TBA21 (both in 2020).

# Roy Villevoye



**Amún Mbes' Reenactment**, 2017  
metal, synthetic resin, silicone  
rubber, lead, vegetable  
material, human hair, wood,  
flag; approx. 425 cm high

COLLECTION OF THE VAN  
ABBEMUSEUM, EINDHOVEN  
PHOTO: ROY VILLEVOYE

The work is a life-size sculpture of a naked Papuan holding aloft an old-style Dutch flag. He stands quietly but purposefully, and presenting as such an ambiguous and complex figure – a twice colonized individual using the symbols of one occupier as a source of pride. The image starts as a historic reenactment. Papua became part of the Republic of Indonesia well after the latter's independence in 1945. The island was ruled by the Dutch from the second half of the 19th century until 1963. The Asmat area, however, was only “opened” in the late 1950s.

From an official Dutch post, a small party of government officials travelled into the area and distributed Dutch flags as a sign of connection. In rare documentation of these moments, one observes the greed and almost triumph with which the Asmat take up and proudly hold their flags. We can only guess what the flag means for people who survive on the base of a magic knowledge system. But at first it is an instrument of transmitted power, yet also an ambiguous image of Papuans' long entanglement with colonialism. Becoming part of the Republic Indonesia in 1963, the new economic exploitation of mineral resources and cultural oppression began, and led to the Papuan Free Movement and its contemporary demand for freedom and equality.

This sculpture could be both a historic reenactment as well as a performance, apparently in a direct way addressing a cluster of complexities. For example: for Papuans, nudity is a natural symbol of their identity, whereas for Indonesians it is often experienced as offensive and a reference to savage and backward people. Even a law has been passed that forces Papuans to dress “properly.”

ROY VILLEVOYE (b. Maastricht) studied at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam, where he currently works as a guest advisor; in the late 1980s he was also assistant to Sol LeWitt. After a successful career as a painter in that period, he started following a new artistic course; especially since 1992 when he began to travel frequently outside Europe, mostly to Papua, the former Dutch New Guinea. His encounters with the Asmat people inspired him to create a variety of works – first paintings, gradually also photographs and works in other media – about color, cultural codification and identity. The films he has been making since 1998 (some of them together with Jan Dietvorst) demonstrate an uneasy encounter and dialogue between two asynchronous cultures, beyond simplified notions of the Enlightenment, of progress, the primitive and the mythical. Villevoeye's work has been exhibited worldwide and has received several awards. He lives and works in Amsterdam.

# Shada Safadi



**A mare amulet, 2023**  
cyanotype prints,  
black and white digital prints  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

An amulet or an incantation written in a small booklet is carried to preserve its bearer and protect them from dangers, evil, diseases, and nightmares, and to make it safely to their destination. This work also expresses how certain communities turn to rituals of prevention through spells and talismans that can penetrate time and space to protect people and places. In my house one such amulet or talisman is called the mare *hirz*. In addition to such objects, water and salt are also put on the walls for protection.

**N of Qatana, 2023**  
cyanotype prints, black  
and white digital prints

**Birds, They No Longer  
Want to Migrate,  
The invasive green, 2020–2023**  
prints, video projection, iPad

**Gaze 1, 2020–2023**  
digital prints, cyanotype prints

**Gaze 2, 2020–2023**  
digital prints, cyanotype prints

SHADA SAFADI (b. 1982) is a visual artist born in Majdal Shams, a town in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. She is currently based and works in both her hometown in the Golan Heights and the West Bank. In her practice, she works across a diverse range of media including painting, sculpture, collage, photography, video, and print-making. In 2004, she completed a two-year program in painting and etching at the Adham Ismail Institute in Damascus, and earned her degree in painting from Damascus University the following year. Safadi is a founding member of Fateh Al Mudarris Center for Arts and Culture, located in the occupied Golan Heights, where she has participated in multiple group exhibitions, including her first solo exhibition in 2006. Safadi's artwork has been featured in exhibitions across various cities, including Damascus, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Berzeit, and Bethlehem. Her artworks have also been showcased internationally, at exhibitions in Umeå and London, and as part of the Syrian Cultural Caravan, which recently featured her work in France, Germany, Norway, Spain, and Belgium. In 2008, Safadi secured the third place in the Young Artist of the Year award for her work titled *In the Presence of the Crow*, presented by the A. M. Qattan Foundation. Furthermore, in 2014, she was an artist-in-residence for three months at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, and she was recently selected to participate in the art residency program at the Al Serkal Art Foundation in Dubai for two months.

# Udeido Collective



**The Timako Woo  
Chronicle, 2023**  
mixed media installation  
COURTESY OF UDEIDO

Udeido Collective touches on the philosophy of the crocodile as an important part of the culture of the Kamori people and many others in Papua, where crocodiles are seen as a sacred animal. Some communities even believe that their ancestors came from crocodiles. Udeido tries to respond to “the Crocodile Dream” on that premise, and thus to see the truth that humans came from crocodiles and the similarities between crocodiles and the indigenous people of Papua.

On a certain scale it turns out that the indigenous people have similarities to crocodiles, in that they have been hunted and need to hide, some are captured, their skin is removed and sold illegally. The reality is that Papua exports crocodile skin, and any day could end in bloodshed for a crocodile.

The crocodile is a metaphor of the situation in Papua. The reconstruction shows the Timako rite of summoning a crocodile, as a friend and an ancestor, as

one that lives side by side with the human and the non-human.

As a satire, Udeido depicts the canvas as a crocodile skin. Standing in front of the installation is a military spotlight, illuminating the target, the enemy or any potential suspects. The “skin” is the journey or an episode that occurred in the history of Papua, since the Dutch kingdom gave Indonesia sovereignty over the territory, through the arrival of the military, up until the issues of today and the imagination of the future.

UDEIDO COLLECTIVE addresses socio-political issues in West Papua by combining both historical and contemporary elements, creating in this way a new body of work that discusses various local and global conditions.

# Veronika Kusumaryati & Ernst Karel



**Expedition Content**, 2020

DCP, color and b&w, 78'

English and Hubula with

English subtitles

DCP SOURCE: CINEMA GUILD

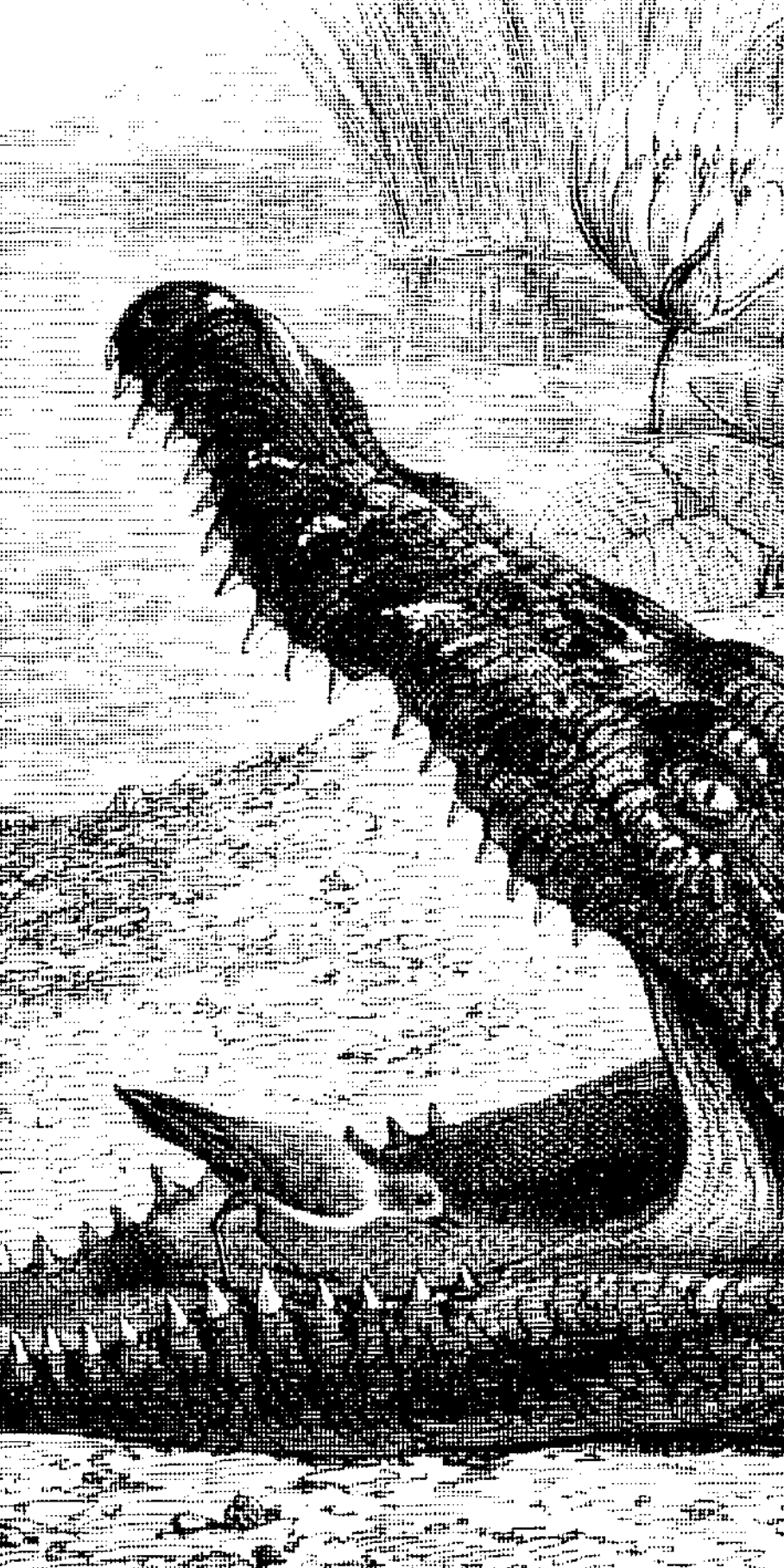
PRODUCED BY: SENSORY ETHNOGRAPHY LAB

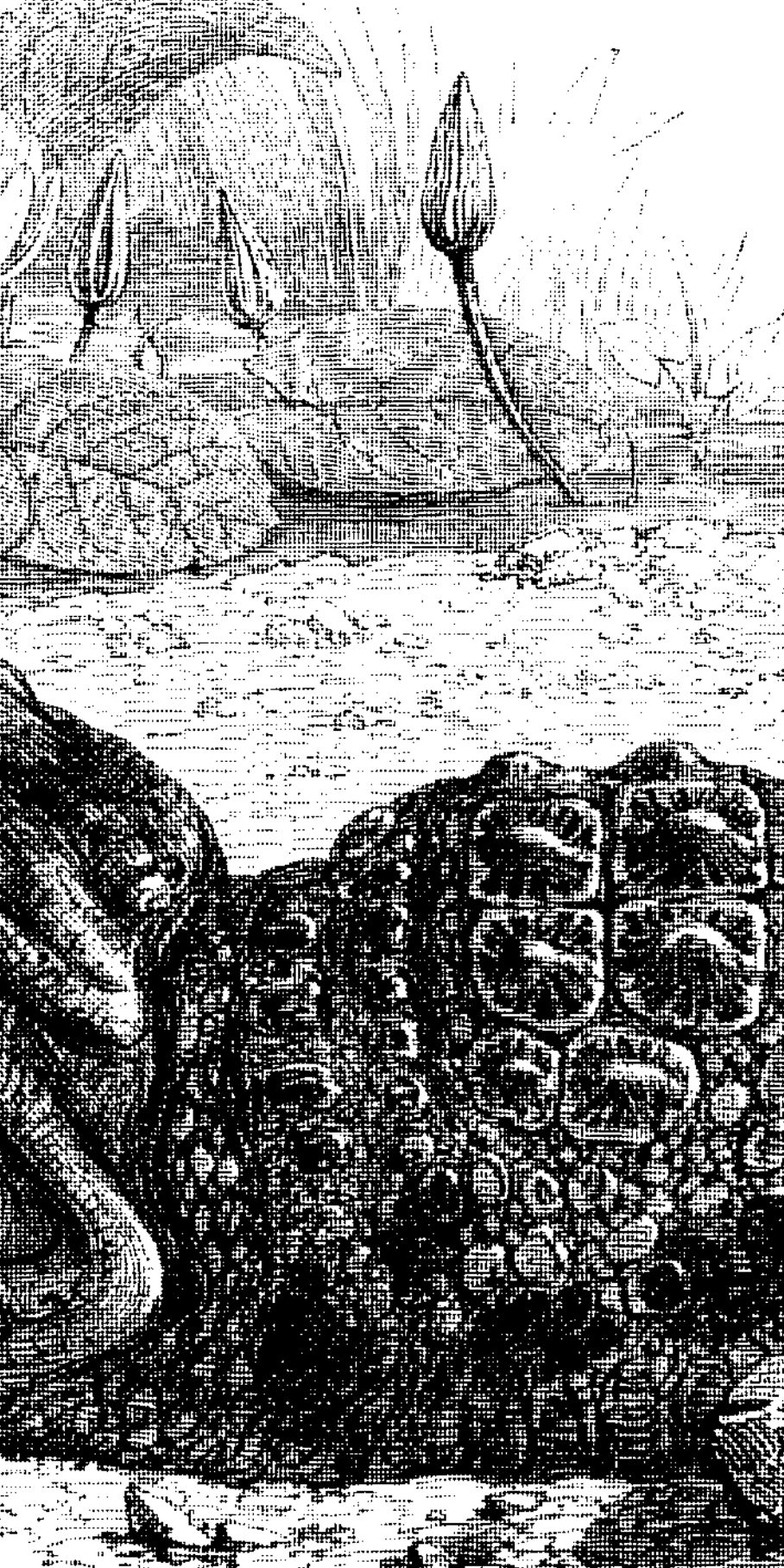
In 1961, filmmaker Robert Gardner organized the Harvard Peabody Expedition to Netherlands New Guinea (today West Papua). Funded by the Dutch colonial government and private donations, and consisting of several wealthy Americans wielding 16 mm film cameras, still photographic cameras, reel-to-reel tape recorders, and a microphone, the expedition settled for five months in the Baliem Valley, among the Hubula people. It resulted in Gardner's influential film *Dead Birds*, two photo books, Peter Matthiessen's book *Under the Mountain Wall*, and two ethnographic monographs. Michael Rockefeller, of the Standard Oil Rockefellers, was tasked with taking pictures and recording sound in and around the Hubula world. *Expedition Content* is

an augmented sound work composed from 37 hours of tape, which document the strange encounter between the expedition and the Hubula people. The piece reflects on intertwined and complex historical moments in the development of approaches to multimodal anthropology, in the lives of the Hubula and of Michael, and in the ongoing history of colonialism in West Papua.

ERNST KAREL, born in Palo Alto, works with sound, including electroacoustic music, experimental nonfiction sound works for multichannel installation and performance, and postproduction sound for nonfiction film, with an emphasis on observational cinema. His work often focuses on the practice of location recording and composing with unprocessed location recordings. In the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard, Karel has collaborated with filmmakers and taught courses in reality-based audio.

VERONIKA KUSUMARYATI, born in Bantul, is a political and media anthropologist working in West Papua. Her scholarship engages with the theories and historiography of colonialism, decolonization, and postcoloniality. She has worked as a curator and produced documentaries that have been screened at various film festivals. She received her bachelor's degree from the Jakarta Institute of Arts majoring in Film and Media Studies. She is a member of the Sensory Ethnography Lab and currently a Harvard College Fellow in Anthropology.





# Curators

BOJANA PIŠKUR works as a curator in Moderna galerija / Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana. Her focus of professional interest is on political issues as they relate to or are manifested in the field of art, with special emphasis on the region of the former Yugoslavia and the global South. She has curated / co-curated a series of exhibitions called *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned* that were shown in Ljubljana, Gwangju, Rijeka, Podgorica, Skopje, Ramallah and London. Her latest projects include *Art at Work. At the Crossroads between Utopianism and (In)Dependence* (curated by B. Piškur, A. Mizerit, I. Španjol, Z. Badovinac) and *Exercises in a Collection*, both held at Moderna galerija, Ljubljana.

DANIELA BERGER PRADO (b. Santiago) is a mother, curator, art historian, and researcher. She holds a degree in Art History and Theory from Universidad de Chile, and an MA in Curating Contemporary Art from the Royal College of Art, London. She works both independently and has been the Curator and Head of the Exhibitions Program at Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende since 2016. Some of her recent curatorial and editorial projects include: *BODYSULPTURE, The memory from the urgency of the present* (MSSA Collection, 2023–24); *Red Remains of an Afternoon: Consuelo Lewin* (Museum of Contemporary Art Chile, 2022–23); *Ximena Cristi Catalogue raisonné*, as research coordinator and editor; *RED* (MSSA Collection 2020–2022); *Anchor 637 with Hugo Rivera-Scott and Others* (MSSA, 2019); research and editing for the collector's book *Francisca Prieto* published alongside the exhibition *The Three Dimensions* (National Museum of Fine Arts, UK-Chile, 2017–19); and *National Institute of the Uncertain Future*, an exhibition and publication about Chilean women artists (Cervantes Institute, Moscow, Russia, 2018; and Galería Espora, Santiago, 2019). She has also been Guest Professor of Ethics and Contemporary Art and Exhibition Practices at Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Santiago, Chile since 2015.

RIKSA AFIATY is an art worker living and working in Yogyakarta. She seeks to contemplate decoloniality in artistic practice and within a curatorial framework. She has been involved in exhibition making and programming in Jakarta, Maastricht, Ljubljana, Brussels and Gwangju. In 2020, she co-initiated a residency project called MARANTAU, which adopts the dynamics of movement, exile, distance from familiarity, and adaptation to work patterns and culture in new places. Her work questions what it means, in the words of Edouard Glissant, to errant and de-root. Today she serves as Chief of Programming in the Indonesian Visual Art Archive.

SHADA SAFADI (b. 1982) is a visual artist born in Majdal Shams, a town in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. She is currently based and works in both her hometown in the Golan Heights and the West Bank. In her practice, she works across a diverse range of media including painting, sculpture, collage, photography, video, and print-making. In 2004, she completed a two-year program in painting and etching at the Adham Ismail Institute in Damascus, and earned her degree in painting from Damascus University the following year. Safadi is a founding member of Fateh Al Mudarris Center for Arts and Culture, located in the occupied Golan Heights, where she has participated in multiple group exhibitions, including her first solo exhibition in 2006. Safadi's artwork has been featured in exhibitions across various cities, including Damascus, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Berzeit, and Bethlehem. Her artworks have also been showcased internationally, at exhibitions in Umeå and London, and as part of the Syrian Cultural Caravan, which recently featured her work in France, Germany, Norway, Spain, and Belgium. In 2008, Safadi secured the third place in the Young Artist of the Year award for her work titled *In the Presence of the Crow*, presented by the A. M. Qattan Foundation. Furthermore, in 2014, she was an artist-in-residence for three months at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, and she was recently selected to participate in the art residency program at the Al Serkal Art Foundation in Dubai for two months.

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Museum of Contemporary  
Art Metelkova, Ljubljana  
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