

From the Mountains: Relating with the Body-Territory from a Migrant Positionality

Artistic Research at the PhD_in_Practice, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

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Conclusions:

The mountains are still present even from a distance in the body-territories of Colombian migrants in Europe. This generates a positionality that relates to mountains and their marginalized inhabitants. For an ethical and activist artistic production, this means searching for non-hegemonic forms of Dialogue aimed at generating a decolonial process of healing.

Introduction:

In 2016 the Colombian government and the FARC signed a treaty to end the internal armed conflict. The new Colombian government has not respected the agreement. The consequences have been increased violence against civilian leaders and an increase in extractive enterprises in previously inaccessible regions. This exploitation of nature (which in Colombia is generally referred to vernacularly as “mountains”) follows the logic of global value chains, displacing raw materials from the territory and transforming them into capital gains, especially for the benefit of the global north.

The body-territory represents the idea of synthesis between territories and humans. The concept originates in the indigenous and decolonial ontologies of South America, especially by communitarian- and decolonial- feminisms. The Body-Territory exemplifies the need for a holistic understanding of humanity



with a deep connection to nature, emphasizing the interconnectivity and vulnerability of life. This artistic research broadens this concept's scope, reflecting it in the experience of migration from Colombia to Europe and the movement of nature/capital through value chains. I formulate this problematization with the question: How to re-relate with the mountains?

Methodology:

From the positionality described above, I am building a methodology/aesthetics of Dialogue based on the concepts of Feeling-Thinking (Fals Borda), Adjacency (Campt), the importance of Dialogue in the construction of a Socially Engaged Art (Helguera) and the traditional forms of collective work. This methodology is the own critical reflection on the standard practices of extractivism and other forms of hegemony in artistic discourse. At this moment, I am creating a body of artistic work through video-performance, dialogues presented in the form of a sound installation, and the development of a collaborative radio program about the situation during the COVID-pandemic with local radio stations in different regions of Colombia.

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