

LAMAS

LATIN
AMERICAN
MEDIA
ARTS
SYMPOSIUM

2023

 FRIENDS HOUSE,
60 LOWTHER AVENUE,
TORONTO, ON

OCTOBER 4-7 2023

WWW.ALUCINEFESTIVAL.COM/LAMAS-2023

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ABOUT SOUTHERN CURRENTS

Southern Currents Film & Video Collective is a Toronto-based non-profit dedicated to celebrating Latin American arts in all forms. It was founded in 1993 and was born of a collective awareness of the need for proper representation and preservation of Latin culture in Canada. In 1995, Southern Currents staged the first Latin American film festival of Canada, aluCine Latin Film + Media Arts Festival which, for more than two decades, has presented a panorama of challenging and unique Latin American films by Latino artists living in Canada and abroad.

We are committed to championing underrepresented voices in the works and artists we feature. We remain committed to programming and promoting community-oriented events that raise the profile of independent Latin arts in broader communities, and to developing a public appreciation for the wide scope of Latin Canadian arts activities.

At the time of our founding, we were the only arts organization focusing on Latin film and new media in Canada. This primacy and firm establishment has allowed us to forge solid links with a large number of artists and organizations, which in turn has translated into strong programs, a loyal audience, and broad networks.

1161 St. Clair Avenue West. Suite 22.
Toronto, Ontario. M6E 1B2.
Charitable Number: 896725355RR0001
(Registered under Southern Currents)
www.alucinefestival.com



TEAM

Director
Sinara Rozo



Programming Director
Nicole Cartier Barrera

Production Assistant
Pablo Rincón Díaz

Social Media Manager
Catalina Villamizar

Communications Intern
Elijah Gibbons



Fundraising & Partnerships
Coordinator
Felipe Castillo Camacho

Design Team
Lorena Tenorio
Jessica Zuluaga

Press and Media
Isabel Inclán



Documentation
Magda Arturo



SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY

October 4

2:30-3:30 PM

Opening Reception

3:30-5:00 PM

**Ecologies:
Spaces of Visibility**

PANEL

5:00-6:30 PM

**Carving Out Space:
Co-Creating Session on
Artists and Community**

ACTIVITY

THURSDAY

October 5

3:30-4:30 PM

**Elephant Woman:
Helena Martin Franco**

PERFORMANCE

5:00-6:30 PM

**Archival
Visitations**

PANEL

VENUE AND ACCESSIBILITY

Friends House, 60 Lowther Ave. Meeting Room.
Toronto, ON. M5R 1C7

Friends House is accessible to wheelchairs via the e-door at the back, north east entrance off of the parking lot. On the ground floor, one of the three available washrooms is accessible to non-motorized wheelchairs.

FRIDAY
October 6

3:30-4:30 PM

**On Loss:
Migrant Relationalities**
CONVERSATION

5:00-6:30 PM

**Poetics
of Arrival**
PANEL

SATURDAY
October 7

3:30-4:30 PM

**Political Praxes of Memory:
Diaspora Media Art Archives**
PANEL

5:00-6:30 PM

**Sounds of
Migration**
COLLECTIVE
LISTENING

**All events are free, and open to the public.
Please register in advance.**

Southern Currents cares deeply about the health, safety, and comfort of our community. We are closely monitoring and adhering to provincial regulations and announcements regarding health, and understand that they may be subject to change.

If you have any questions or concerns about health and safety at our festival, please do not hesitate to contact us at lamas@alucinefestival.com.

WELCOME LETTERS



SINARA ROZO PERDOMO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SOUTHERN CURRENTS

As we celebrate our 23rd anniversary, Southern Currents is proud to introduce an initiative that reflects on two decades of Latino Canadian media art production, embedded within the broader context of Canadian film history. This milestone underscores the profound impact of our 23-year journey as a pioneering media arts organization.

I welcome you to the first Latin American Media Arts Symposium (LAMAS), a gathering that unites scholars and artists to explore and discuss the myriad perspectives that shape the artistic productions and discourses of Latin American and Canadian Latin American media art as a whole.

Over the course of four enriching days, media arts practitioners and scholars from Ontario and across Canada will engage in critical conversations about the current state of media arts practice, specifically within the context of Latin American artists in Canada. We will also collectively envision the multiple trajectories that our future holds.

LAMAS promises a one-of-a-kind experience, bringing together artists, community leaders, academics, grassroot organizations, scholars, and the public. Together, we will delve into the power of media art as a tool for raising awareness and exploring the issues central to this event. We will feature experienced and emerging scholars who will present research delving into the history and contemporary practice of Latin American media arts. Furthermore, we will showcase artistic programming, including a collective listening experience and a live performance.

LAMAS stands as a pivotal step toward realizing our artistic vision for the years ahead—a vision that positions Southern Currents as a stable and vital organization, both a spokesperson for and a reflection of the Latin American experience in Canada. Our aim is to unlock innovative ideas, ignite discussions, foster dialogue, and facilitate engagement among contemporary Latin American artists, curators, academics, and the broader community. Our goal is to paint a vivid picture of the evolution of independent Latin Canadian media arts and its ongoing evolution.

Through LAMAS, we remain steadfast in our commitment to promote our artistic community, introduce Canadian audiences to a diverse range of Latin American ideas within a professional framework, and create meaningful dialogues between communities and among artists and communities alike. Additionally, we aim to bolster Latin American representation in Canada by providing a platform for Latin American artists to contextualize their work and forge a supportive network that nurtures their artistic practices.

Above all, our deepest aspiration is to inspire a new generation of artists from our diaspora. With urgency and vitality, we seek to unite media arts organizations and initiatives from across the country.

I take immense pride in our dedicated staff and volunteers! Gracias for your talent and continuous support.

Sinara Rozo Perdomo

NICOLE CARTIER BARRERA
PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR
LATIN AMERICAN MEDIA ARTS SYMPOSIUM



At the centre of our expectations as organizers of this event is the possibility of offering multiple opportunities for dialogue. We desire to prompt conversations where participants can contribute their lived and creative experiences to a multivocal discussion, in the hopes that we reproduce models that are at odds with certain academic formats that give preference to public demonstrations of individual rigour and knowledgeability. Encounters imply proximity, which can shake the possibilities that an individual and a community might have thought of as available.

Not the outspoken axis of the Symposium's discussions, but an underlying uncertainty that brings us together on this occasion, is the question of the *idea* of Latin American identity.¹ When discussing Latin American arts in Canada, are we referring to the constellation of works produced by members of the Latin American diaspora, or to the products of creative and research processes taking place in, or looking at the region? How do we, as artists, critics, and scholars, by adhering to certain discursive and aesthetic codes, participate in the construction of a nostalgic portrayal of a territory and a culture? In what forms do we celebrate the nature of an "entangled surplus subjectivity, full of tugs, pressures, and pleasures,"² over a sometimes-misleading notion of a well-rounded authenticity?

Another foregrounding element for this Symposium is that of our host territory. As some of us meet here in our condition as first or second-generation immigrants, we encounter the reality of standing on colonized land. The question of who is entitled to take the floor, when the ground's original occupiers were displaced, or who might speak up, when an exercise of silencing has already taken place, is one not to underestimate. We wonder what forms of solidarity can take place among newcomers and the original custodians of so-called Canada, and what pieces of the histories brought through immigration can be weaved into local epistemologies.

Finally, we hope to speculate about the technologies and methodologies that are implemented in such processes of exchange. We expect to reflect on how film, media arts, performance, as well as curatorial and writing practices, not only reflect processes of migrant context-making, but how they participate in it, and in the threading of new networks of relationality.

Thank you to everyone who offered their guidance in the conceptualization of this gathering, and to the dedicated team of people who made it possible. To our guests and audience members, welcome to the first edition of this Symposium.

Nicole Cartier Barrera

¹ Walter D. Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, John Wiley & Sons, 2009.

² Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Duke University Press, 2003, XV.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Southern Currents acknowledges that we operate on the traditional territory of many Indigenous nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. We acknowledge them and any other Nations who care for the land (acknowledged and unacknowledged, recorded and unrecorded) as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land, referred to as Tkaronto.

THANK YOU

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of our funders, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Department of Canadian Heritage. LAMAS has been generously supported by the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration Program (CERC) and the Where We Stand Project at Toronto Metropolitan University; The George Brown College School of Media and Performing Arts; The Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University; the Image Centre at Toronto Metropolitan University; Hemispheric Encounters; Sensorium: Centre for Digital Arts and Technology, School of the Arts, Media, Performance, and Design at York University; Performance Studies (Canada); the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) at York University; OCAD University; Onsite Gallery; the University of Toronto Centre for Culture and Technology; the Latin American Studies Program at the University of Toronto; and Lokaal.

Thank you to those who guided the process of conceiving, planning, and producing this Symposium: Lauren Fournier, Laura Levin, Tracy Tigwell, Adriana Rosselli, Jimena Ortuzar, Berenice Villagomez, Luis Van Isschot, Kevin Coleman, Rachelle Sabourin, Kristen Gergely, Natalie Alvarez, Susan Jama, Ryan Rice, Alexandra Gelis, Trent Scherer, Ramon Delgado, María Camila Arias, Scott Richmond, Luisa Isidro, Dot Tuer, Divya Mehra, Fatma Hendawy Yehia, Jorge Lozano, Barbara de la Fuente, Ulysses de Paula, Catalina Villamizar, Elijah Gibbons, Kevin McIntosh, Pablo Rincón Díaz, and Lizz Otero. Special thanks to all speakers and participants for contributing to this space.

LAMAS IS A
PROJECT BY
SOUTHERN CURRENTS



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Latin Film + Media Arts Festival

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Lokaal
coworking for creators



DAY 1

WEDNESDAY

OCTOBER 4

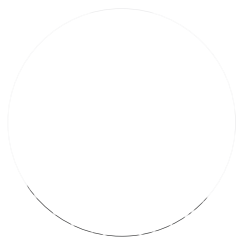
ECOLOGIES: SPACES OF VISIBILITY

With speakers Laura Levin, Diana Sanchez,
Tamara Toledo, and Luz Sierra.
Moderated by Dot Tuer.

Panel

3:30 - 5:00 PM

What spaces do Latin American voices occupy within the Canadian art scene? How and where do their practices, discourses, and histories circulate? This panel invites four guests to discuss the ecosystem of Latin American media art in Canada, informed by their experiences working for, as well as directing academic, commercial, and artistic institutions: Laura Levin, director of the research-creation group Hemispheric Encounters and Sensorium: Centre for Digital Arts and Technology; Diana Sánchez, former programmer at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF); Tamara Toledo, director and curator of Sur Gallery, and Luz Sierra, researcher and archivist on the digital archive project Archivo at Sur Gallery. The guests will share their experiences promoting the visibility of Latin American artists in Canada through different formats, as screenings, exhibitions, digital archives, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and transnational projects.



Diana Sanchez has over 25 years of experience in the International and Canadian film industry. She previously served as TIFF's Senior Director of Film, where she oversaw the organization's Festival and Cinematheque programming strategy, after collaborating at TIFF as a programmer for over 17 years. In 2011, Diana was the founding artistic director of IFF Panama (the International Panama Film Festival) where she created a launching pad for films from Central America and the Caribbean. She has also held programming and industry roles at several film festivals and organizations, including LALIFF, the Rotterdam Film Festival, Miami Film Festival as well as director of programming for Houston Latin Wave. She has participated in several film festivals and national film fund juries both in Canada and abroad. Diana is currently consulting for several state and private film agencies while teaching at the University of Toronto where she holds a Master's Degree in Cinema Studies. Her

latest film series, (co-curated with Jennifer Baichwel) entitled *Visions at Work* screened at the Fondazione MAST in Bologna from March through April 2023.



Laura Levin is Associate Professor of Theatre & Performance and Director of Sensorium: Centre for Digital Arts & Technology at York University's School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design. She is author of *Performing Ground: Space, Camouflage, and the Art of Blending In* (Ann Saddlemyer Prize) and Co-Editor of *Performance Studies in Canada*, with Marlis Schweitzer (Patrick O'Neill Award). She is also former Editor-in-Chief of *Canadian Theatre Review* and Editor of *Theatre and Performance in Toronto* and *Conversations Across Borders*, a collection of dialogues on performance and border culture with performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña. Laura has led and collaborated on several research-creation projects that explore political performance, site-specificity, archives, and digital technologies. Most recently she has served as dramaturg on *Jess Dobkin's Wetrospective* (2021) and SpiderWebShow's VR production, *You Should Have Stayed Home* (2022). Laura is Director of Hemispheric Encounters, a SSHRC-funded partnership project that brings together artists, activists, and scholars across Canada, the US, and Latin America to study "hemispheric performance" as a research-creation methodology, a pedagogical strategy, and a tool for social change.



Tamara Toledo is a Chilean-born Toronto-based curator and is currently a PhD candidate at York University in Art History & Visual Culture. Toledo is co-founder of the Allende Arts Festival and of Latin American Canadian Art Projects. She has developed various art projects and has curated numerous exhibitions for over twenty years offering spaces and opportunities to artists of the Latin American diaspora. Projects include the Latin American Speakers Series, Sur Gallery, Art of the Americas Series, Mentorship Program for Emerging Latinx Artists and Curators, Archivo, among others. Toledo has presented her work at various conferences in Montreal, New York, Vancouver, Chicago, Mexico City, and Toronto. Her writing has appeared in *ARM Journal*, *C Magazine*, *Fuse*, *Canadian Art*, and the *Latin American and Latinx Visual Culture Journal* of the University of California. She is presently the Director/Curator of Sur Gallery, the only space dedicated to contemporary Latin American and Latinx art in Canada.



Luz Sierra is a Puerto Rican-born art professional based in Toronto. She specializes in photography collections and Circum-Caribbean photographic history. Her focus is on creating accessible tools to enhance community history and engagement through photographs and archival material. She holds a BA in Photography with a minor in Western Art History from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. In 2022 she finished an MA in Photography Preservation and Collection Management from the Toronto Metropolitan University. Luz's master thesis project was to intellectually organize a finding aid for the Montgomery Collection of Caribbean Photographs at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto. The thesis outcome was to expand the collection searchability and accessibility by translating the tool into the Spanish language. In October 2022, Luz began to work as a researcher and archivist on the digital archive project Archivo with the director and curator Tamara Toledo at Sur Gallery in Toronto.



Dot Tuer is a writer, curator, and artist, whose work explores the intersections of cultural memory, decolonial histories, and visual storytelling in a hemispheric context, with a focus on performance, photography, and new media art. She is the author of *Mining the Media Archive* (2005) and *Frida and Diego: Passion, Politics, and Painting* (2012) and of numerous museum catalogues, book anthologies, and journal essays. Since the 2000s, Tuer has divided her time between Corrientes, Argentina, and Toronto, Canada, where she is Professor of Visual and Critical Studies at OCAD University. A selection of her writings can be found at <https://ocad.academia.edu/DotTuer>.

CARVING OUT SPACE: CO-CREATING SESSION ON ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY

Activity

Moderated by Creato.

5:00 - 6:30 PM

Fernanda Sierra Suarez, Valeria Duarte, Fiorella Martinez and Amelia Lara, the Creato leadership team, will host a space of conversation and collective creativity where participants will reimagine the future of our creative communities in Toronto. The need for more meaningful creative collaboration spaces and community-building opportunities –where people can gather, learn from one another, and develop systems of mutual care and professional growth – is evident, and we need to enable open inclusive and safe spaces where diverse perspectives can

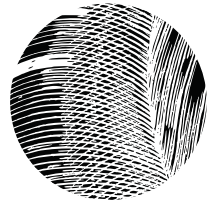
participate, discuss and create collectively. The team behind Creato will facilitate this collaborative experience while sharing their story and reflecting on their journey as an independent, volunteer-led organization engaging with Latin American creative communities –particularly youth, emerging and newcomer artists– since 2020.



Creato is a network of Latin American creators, artists, arts workers, creative entrepreneurs, designers, and community organizers across Canada looking to connect, share knowledge, and resources, and support Latin creative expression. The team behind Creato organizes community-building events, professional development programs, opportunities, and events for creative entrepreneurs as well as community member spotlight campaigns that support and highlight the diverse expression of this community.

This space will be moderated by the Creato leadership team: Fernanda Sierra Suárez, Valeria Duarte, Amelia Lara, and Fiorella Martinez.

DAY 2
THURSDAY
OCTOBER 5



Performance

3:30 - 4:30 PM

ELEPHANT WOMAN:
HELENA MARTIN FRANCO

*Je suis un tourment artistique,
je suis une être composite.
Je suis un freak show hypothétique.*

A less-than-human, beyond-the-mythical figure embodies the disappointments rooted in the migrant experience and the hurdles of escaping the stereotypes delineating diasporic identities. Montréal-based performer Helena Martin Franco's persona, the

Elephant Woman, disturbs the space she occupies—the colonial space, an always already violent ground, where individuals and communities are classified within a hierarchical system of value.

The elephant woman arises from a failed affair: that of the migrant and the local, the alien and the native. An inevitable heartbreak, resulting from inequitable power relations traversed by guilt, disenchantment, and taboos burdening a body whose slippery and unclassifiable nature renders it disquieting. Martin Franco embodies a fiction, a chimera, a fantasy that overflows the flesh and spoken language.



Helena Martin Franco was born in Cartagena. She lives and works in Tio'tia:ke-Mooniyang-Montréal since 1998. She holds an MA in visual and media arts from UQAM. She is a member of several feminist contemporary art collectives, including L'Araignée (collective of diffusion of contemporary art), La Redhada (network of women artists from the Colombian Caribbean), CAVCA (Community of Visual Artists of Cartagena and Bolivar) and Las meninas emputás! (Feminist collective, anti-colonial activist from Cartagena). Her transdisciplinary practice explores the blending of different artistic processes and the hybridization between traditional and new technologies. Her artistic practice invites dialogue about gender-based violence, immigration, and artistic censorship. Winner of the POWERHOUSE PRIZE in 2018, her work has been presented in the Dominican Republic, Lithuania, Spain, New Zealand, Colombia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran, Argentina, Cuba, and Canada.

ARCHIVAL VISITATIONS

With speakers Camila Salcedo,
Jorge Ayala-Isaza, and Kevin Coleman.
Moderated by Patricio Dávila.

Panel

5:00 - 6:30 PM

Are archives the detritus of historical processes? Are they evidence of official narratives or, contrarily, their liabilities? Who chooses which material traces linger in time, where they are preserved, and with whom they are shared? Camila Salcedo's interdisciplinary practice, in particular her work with the Textile Museum and the Gardiner Museum's collections, approaches material objects, sometimes fragmented and incomplete, as starting points for speculative futures. In his ongoing work with UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, Jorge Ayala-Isaza seeks to entangle canonic history and proposes creative approximations

to repositories of history. Kevin Coleman's investment in a photographic representation of victims of the 1928 Massacre of Banana Workers in Colombia ponders on the corporate techniques of erasure, and possible revindications of overlooked histories.

With the moderation of Patricio Dávila, the participants will speculate on how, by working with fragments of material history and moving along the interstices of historical voids, alternative readings of the past can be drafted, and less predictable forecasts of the future can be speculated upon.



Camila Salcedo is a Venezuelan-born interdisciplinary artist currently based in Toronto working primarily in textiles, arts education and curation. Their most recent curatorial endeavour is a current project called Mending the Museum alongside art historian and writer Karina Román, through which they are commissioning ten artists to respond digitally to the idea of “fragments” from the Textile Museum and Gardiner Museum’s archives. Other recent curatorial projects include listening and making: a (Zoom) call and response (2022) at the Textile Museum of Canada, Subtle Technology’s Curatorial Mentorship (2022), Vtape Curatorial Incubator: V16 “Living in Hope” (2020), Memorial: Work by Artists of the Venezuelan Diaspora (2020) at Xpace Cultural Centre and The Khyber Centre for the Arts. They also curated a number of exhibitions and programming in Halifax at the Anna Leonowens Gallery and Eyelevel Artist-Run Centre between 2016-2018.



Kevin Coleman (Ph.D. History, Indiana University, 2012) is Associate Professor of History at the University of Toronto, where he conducts research and teaches on capitalism, visual culture, and the politics of Christianity in modern Latin America. He is the author of *A Camera in the Garden of Eden* (2016), a study of the spectacle and practice of citizenship in the banana plantations of Honduras. He is co-editor of the books *Capitalism and the Camera* (Verso: 2021), which brings leading theorists of photography together in disagreement over the status of the photograph in our era, and *Coups d'état in Cold War Latin America* (Cambridge University Press: forthcoming), as well as special issues of the *Radical History Review and Photography and Culture*. He is lead investigator on the SSHRC-funded *Visualizing the Americas* project and director of the documentary film *The Photos We Don't Get to See* (2023). He has penned three peer-reviewed manuscripts on the life and historical memory of the slain archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero. His research has been funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the Fulbright-Hays Program.



Jorge Ayala-Isaza is a media artist and scholar. His creative practice explores archival and historical research to create documentary films, photography, installations and Mixed Reality projects that explore memory, identity, and resistance issues.

Jorge is currently a Media and Design Ph.D. student at Toronto Metropolitan University, researching new approaches to data narratives. He holds a Master's degree in Documentary Media and a Bachelor's in New Media from Ryerson University (Canada). He has also studied at the Hochschule der Medien in Stuttgart (Germany) and interned at the Cinematheque of Cuba (Havana). He's based in Toronto (Canada) and works as a freelance interactive media programmer and producer.



Patricio Dávila is a designer, artist, researcher and educator. He is Associate Professor in the Department of Cinema and Media Arts in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design, at York University. He is also core member of the Vision: Science to Applications (MISTA) project at York University. Patricio is also co-director of Public Visualization Lab/Studio (PVLS). PVLS is a networked lab and studio (York U, OCADU, TMU) and focusses on how visualization can operate as a critical design and media practice. A priority for PVLS is to understand the ways that the representation of data is political as well as analytical and creative. A basic premise that guides PVLS's projects is that visualization is an assemblage that arranges people, things and processes and as such demands a commitment to ethics, accountability and meaningful participation.

Patricio's research and practice focuses on the politics and aesthetics of participation in the visualization of spatial issues with a specific focus on urban experiences, mobile technologies and large-scale interactive public installations. His research focuses on developing a theoretical framework for examining data visualization as assemblages of subjectivation and power. His recent publications include *Critical Visualization: Beyond the Representation of Data* (Bloomsbury UK) and *Diagrams of Power* (Onomatopée NL). His curatorial projects include Multiplex Essay Film Festival and the *Diagrams of Power* exhibition, research events. In his creative practice, he has created mobile applications, locative media projects, essay videos, new media installations, and participatory community projects including: *Atmospheres*, *Passing Through the Heart*, *Fabulous Ones*, *Receipts*, *Shadows!*, *Powers of Kin*, *Chthuluscene*, *Tent City Projections*, *The Line*, and *In The Air Tonight*.

DAY 3
FRIDAY
OCTOBER 6



ON LOSS:
MIGRANT RELATIONALITIES

Panel

3:30 - 4:30 PM

With Helena Martín Franco
and Alexandra Gelis.
Moderated by Claudia Arana.

In this space, artists Helena Martín Franco and Alexandra Gelis will convene with curator Claudia Arana to discuss their artistic inquiries in relation to their experiences of migration. While Martín Franco focuses on the embodiment of diasporic discontents and miscommunications between the newcomer and the local, Gelis wonders about the possibilities of mourning in the distance, and the role of human and non-human relationality in expressing and processing a deterritorialized grief.

The conversation will touch on pressing aspects of today's migrant experience, such as the interweaving of globalization, interconnectivity, racialization, and colonialism.

We invite our audience to join us for Martín Franco's performance *Elephant Woman* on October 5, and visit Gelis' installation, *Migrant Superpositions: Convertirse En*, in Onsite Gallery.



Helena Martín Franco was born in Cartagena. She lives and works in Tio'tia:ke-Mooniyang-Montréal since 1998. She holds an MA in visual and media arts from UQAM. She is a member of several feminist contemporary art collectives, including L'Araignée (collective of diffusion of contemporary art), La Redhada (network of women artists from the Colombian Caribbean), CAVCA (Community of Visual Artists of Cartagena and Bolívar) and Las meninas emputás! (Feminist collective, anti-colonial activist from Cartagena). Her transdisciplinary practice explores the blending of different artistic processes and the hybridization between traditional and new technologies. Her artistic practice invites dialogue about gender-based violence, immigration, and artistic censorship. Winner of the POWERHOUSE PRIZE in 2018, her work has been presented in the Dominican Republic, Lithuania, Spain, New Zealand, Colombia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran, Argentina, Cuba, and Canada.



Alexandra Gelis is a Colombian-Venezuelan-Canadian media artist, curator and researcher. Her practice is research-based, process-oriented and multi-disciplinary, including film, photography, drawing, and media installation with custom-built interactive electronics and sound. She is known for single-screen film works, and modular immersive non-fiction-based installations. Her projects incorporate personal field research as a tool to investigate the ecologies of various landscapes by examining the traces left by various socio-political interventions. Gelis has worked collaboratively with communities around the globe. She has extensive research on the relationship between plants/people and power in the context of colonization and globalization. From her plant-based research-creation, she explores, documents, and re-creates ecologies that take shape between plants and people, and between plants and their multi-species interrelationships. The idea of plants as political allies in various contexts of struggle (against colonialism, displacement in war, and migratory and racial regimes) is central to her concept of "Migrated Plants". This investigation takes into account the fundamental autonomous behaviour of the "Migrated plants". Her innovative installations, exhibited widely (<https://www.alexandragelis.com/>) are featured in a recent book, *Alexandra Gelis: Seed* edited by Mike Hoolboom and Clint Enns. She has exhibited internationally in North and South America, including the Walker Art Center, Europe, and Africa.



Claudia Arana is a Latinx Independent Curator and Cultural Connector whose work resides at the convergence of in-between and mixed cultures that emerge along physical, political, and social borders. Nurtured by a Mestizo background, her practice explores themes of memory and trauma, race, diasporas, equity, and representation. She studied Art Theory and Critical Thinking at the School of Visual Arts and Advanced Critique at the International Centre of Photography, both in New York. Recently she worked with the City of Toronto as the ArtworxTO West Hub Curator for the 2021-2022 Year of Public Art in Toronto.

POETICS OF ARRIVAL

Panel

5 : 00 - 6 : 30 P M

With speakers José Andrés Mora,
Anahí González, Luísa Cruz, and Derek Sands.
Moderated by Francisco-Fernando Granados.

Arrival, a fracture between a here and a there, a then and a now. As the body is displaced, so are the stories it fosters, the values it embodies, the networks it can aspire to be a part of. In these processes of transformation, expectations and desires are re-calibrated through encounters with others, and languages become tools for the mediation of difference. Artist José Andrés Mora's text-based practice, through which he seeks to build a sense of belonging and home, will enter into conversation with Anahí González's photographic work, which delves into the representation of Mexican immigration and labour in North America. Filmmakers Luísa Cruz, from Brasília, and Derek Sands, from Walpole Island First Nation, will present their collaborative work which contemplates the possibilities of coding newcomer experiences through a lens of Indigenous land ethics.

The panel will be moderated by artist Francisco-Fernando Granados and will tackle notions of belonging, self-representation, opacity, and arrival. What are the implications of self-identifying or embracing the label of a diasporic artist? To what extent do our nationalities frame our practices within an interpretative lens, and how can we play around stereotypical representations of otherness? What forms of language (oral, written, corporeal, affective, visual) lay the ground for dialogues between newcomers and locals?



José Andrés Mora (he/him) is a Venezuelan-born artist living in Canada. Mora graduated from the Nova Scotia College of Arts and Design (2013, BFA in Interdisciplinary Arts) and the University of Guelph (2020, MFA in Studio Arts).

Mora's work elicits a sense of disconnect deeply tied to his experience as a member of the Venezuelan diaspora. He has exhibited across Canada since 2013 in notable galleries and public programs such as *Nuit Blanche* (2014), *Birch Contemporary* (2019), *Trinity Square Video* (2020), *Dalhousie Art Gallery* (2020), *Artspace Peterborough* (2022), *Art Metropole* (2022), the *Digital Arts Resource Centre* (2022), and *The Plumb Gallery* (2022). Recently, Mora presented a solo exhibition show at *Maison de la Culture* (Montréal, 2023) and group projects at *TAP Artspace* (Montréal, 2023) and *Latcham Arts Centre* (Stouffville, 2023).



Anahí González (she/her) is a Mexican artist based in London, ON. Her practice explores visual narratives about Mexican labour for/within Canada to decenter the United States narrative concerning Mexican migration. She is a Research Associate of The Creative Food Research Collaboratory, contributor editor of The Embassy Cultural House, and an Art and Visual Culture Ph.D. candidate at Western University. Her work has been included in exhibitions and screenings in Mexico, Canada, Norway, Spain, and France.



Derek Sands (Ojibway, Potawatomi, and Miami) is a Walpole Island First Nation member and an Indigenous filmmaker. His film journey started when he realized the teachings, language, and elders were disappearing and found purpose in documenting what remained. His first documentary film *Ziidbaatogeng* (2020), featured an Aamjiwnaang First Nation family teaching and sharing the Sugarbush traditions. The film also featured narration from the remaining fluent Ojibway speakers from Bkejwanong. His current project, *All Sacred Things* (2023), focuses on a group of indigenous college students and their journey of reconnecting to their culture, which inevitably leads them to experience the once almost extinct Ojibway Spirit Horses. The short documentary has been nominated for the Art Film Spirit Award from Toronto Film Magazine and has been selected in three film festivals since its first screening on June 4, 2023. Derek was recently accepted into the Media and Design Innovation Ph.D. program at Toronto Metropolitan University, where he was one of six successful students. Derek has been in a mentorship program with legendary documentary filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin. He has worked as director observer/BTS and director for the upcoming Crave original comedy series *The Trades*. You can find Derek on Instagram @indigital_films and his website: www.indigitalfilms.com

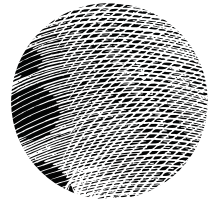


Luísa Cruz is a filmmaker and producer from Brasília, Brazil. Her films, informed by her lived experiences in South and North America, aim to be critical and poetical intersections on migration and settlement, nature and culture, and memory building, both in the documentary and experimental genres. She has a BFA in Film Production from York University and is an incoming MA student at TMU's Communication and Culture program.



Francisco-Fernando Granados was born in Guatemala and lives in Toronto, Dish With One Spoon Territory. Since 2005, his practice has traced his movement from convention refugee to critical citizen, using abstraction performatively, site-specifically, and relationally to create projects that challenge the stability of practices of recognition. His work has developed from the intersection of visual arts training, working in performance through artist-run spaces, studies in queer and feminist theory, and early activism as a peer support worker with immigrant and refugee communities. This layering of experiences has trained his intuitions to seek site-responsive approaches, alternative forms of distribution, and the weaving of lyrical and critical propositions. His exhibition project ‘who claims abstraction?’ is currently on view at Simon Fraser University Galleries in Vancouver. An accompanying book created with SFU and Publication Studio Vancouver, titled ‘who claims abstraction (with a difference)?’ will be released in July 2023.

DAY 4
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 7



POLITICAL PRAXES OF MEMORY: DIASPORA MEDIA ART ARCHIVES

Panel

3:30 - 4:45 PM

With speakers Gabriela Aceves Sepúlveda,
Zaira Zarza, and Sarah Shamash.

Grounded in different expertise—Sepúlveda as a media artist and historian, Shamash as a scholar and filmmaker, and Zarza as an art historian and curator—the speakers navigate the interplay of memory, feminist strategies, and cultural narratives, and delve into Latin American diaspora media art archives. By adopting feminist, collaborative research-creation, and archival intervention practices, they discuss pressing questions: whose narratives remain untold within the Canadian context, and how can migrant archives fill in those gaps? How do gendered perspectives delineate the contours of media art histories? How can curatorial, archival, and pedagogical practices reshape cultural landscapes? With an unwavering commitment to fostering dialogues on identity, diaspora, and artistic expression, Aceves Sepúlveda, Shamash, and Zarza forge strategies that pave a path for critical engagement with Latin American diaspora media art archives, forging connections between past, present, and future narratives.



Sarah Shamash is an Assistant Professor of Critical and Cultural Studies at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Her work as a media artist comprises a wide variety of formats; they have been shown in curated exhibitions and film festivals internationally. She is currently co-curating the exhibition, *Diaspora Dialogues – Archiving the Familiar* (October-December 2023) at Sur Gallery with Tamara Toledo in Toronto; the exhibition focuses on feminism and Latin American diaspora media artists. Her scholarly research examines Latin American and diaspora film and media cultures with a focus on Brazil. She lives on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh First Nations in Vancouver.



Gabriela Aceves Sepúlveda (b. Guadalajara, Mexico 1973) is a media artist and cultural historian focusing on feminist media art, research-creation and Latin American art and its diasporas. She is an Associate Professor in the School of Interactive Arts and Technology at Simon Fraser University (S.I.A.T.), which occupies the unceded territories of the Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Kwantlen, Katzie, the Kwikwetlem, and the Qayqayt First Nations. Gabriela is the director of the Critical Media Arts Studio (cMAS), a research-creation studio dedicated to exploring the intersections of technoscience, media arts and history through a feminist lens. She is the author of the award-winning book *Women Made Visible: Feminist Art and Media in post-1968 Mexico* (Nebraska Press, 2019) translated to Spanish as *Las mujeres se hacen visibles: Los feminismos en el arte y los nuevos regímenes mediáticos y la visibilidad en la Ciudad de México, 1971-2011* (Bonilla Artigas-CIEG UNAM, 2022). Her research has been published in the *Feminist Media Histories Journal*, *Leonardo Music Journal*, and *Media-N: the Journal of the New Media Caucus*, among others. Her current SSHRC-funded project investigates the role of self-identified women artists, curators and archivists as agents and innovators of arts, science, and technology in the Americas. As a media artist, she produces video installations, sculptures, digital projects, print media, and live performances investigating the body as a site of cultural, gendered and techno-scientific inscriptions. Gabriela is a member of *Art/mamas*, a Vancouver-based collective of artist mothers and *sono(soro)ridades*, a group of feminist sound artists, activists, and scholars interested in investigating sound's affective and political dimensions. She is also the Vancouver regional coordinator of T.F.A.P. (the Feminist Art Project) and is a member of the College Arts Association Committee on Women in the Arts. She has previously served as a board member of VIVO MEDIA ARTS and ACCESS art gallery in Vancouver, B.C., and C.A.F.K.A (The Contemporary Art Forum, Kitchener and Area) in Kitchener, Ontario. She was also a member of the REDHEAD Gallery in Toronto and the A.K.A. art collective based in Vancouver.



Zaira Zarza is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History and Film Studies at Université de Montréal. She obtained her Ph.D. in Cultural Studies at Queen's University and holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in Art History from the University of Havana. She was a Killam Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Alberta and a Cinema and Media Arts Sessional Assistant Professor at York University. As a programmer, she has worked at the Toronto (TIFF) and Cartagena (FICCI) international film festivals. She also directed the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) Film Festival, Boston, 2019. Zarza founded *Roots and Routes* (2015-present), a curatorial project that promotes film and media works by Cubans in the diaspora, and published the book *Caminos del cine brasileño contemporáneo* (Ediciones ICAIC 2010). Her current SSHRC-funded project focuses on Latin American documentary activism. Other research includes Latinx-Canadian cinemas and the economies of Caribbean film.

SOUNDS OF MIGRATION

Collective
Listening

5:00 - 6:30 PM

Led by Bernardo García, Luis Navarro Del
Angel, Luisa Isidro Herrera, Nicole
Marchesseau, and Johann Sander Puustusmaa.
Moderated by Pablo Rincón.

For the Symposium's closure, we invite the audience to join us for an embodied experience of deep and attuned listening. The activities will be led by the producers of three sound-based projects that, by looking at human and non-human relationality, approach notions of homecoming, nostalgia, and futurity. We will gather around this array of sonic archives that document, expand, and interweave the experiences of diasporic movements.

Sound Braid, a collaborative and multi-authored project by Luisa Isidro Herrera, Nicole Marchesseau, Johan Sander Puustusmaa, and Jillian Fulton-Melansonsound, explores sound, silence, and refusal as elements inherent to human experience. Bernardo García's interactive project parallels the routes of birds using Tommy Thompson Park as a stopover and those of immigrants arriving in Canada. Seis8s is a web-based computer language created by Luis Navarro that speculates on culturally situated music technology, specifically in the overlapping of algorithmic music and Latin dance music.



Bernardo García is a Mexican sound designer based in Toronto who has spent the last decade doing audio production and post-production for visual media. This includes working on projects like scoring two Mexican docu-series and being the sound designer for 20 nature micro-documentaries on a project for UNPD.

He has also worked on gallery-based audio installations, while also experimenting with sensors with the goal of creating interactive experiences. He's currently teaching Audio post-production at George Brown College.



Luis Navarro Del Angel is a new media artist whose artistic practice revolves around electronic Latin dance music using software and code. Luis is a member of Grupo D'Binis, an audiovisual electronic cumbia duo whose second half is the visual artist and McMaster student Jessica Rodriguez. He is also a member of the live coding Mexican collective RGGTRN and has presented at venues in Mexico, Spain (2014), France (2014), the UK (2016), Colombia (2018), Perú (2018), Ecuador (2018), USA (2019). Website: luisnavarrodangel.net



Luisa Isidro is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at York University. Luisa is particularly interested in researching topics related to transitional justice, gender-based violence, peace pedagogy, forensic anthropology, and political geography. Drawing on research on anthropologies of revolution, she aims to examine the aftermath of revolution in the former combatants of the FARC-EP in the Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR - in Spanish) in Caquetá Caqueta, Colombia.

Luisa is a fellow at the Civil War Paths Project of The Centre for the Comparative Study of Civil War at the University of Sheffield. Likewise, she is a member of The Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) Student Caucus and the current office coordinator of the Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS). In 2021, Luisa, Nicole, and Johan Sander created Sound Braid, which is an independent project that aims to engage with experimental form and atmospheres, inhabits the incommensurable, weaves emotion, thought, rationality, irrationality, creates rather than reproduces, shapes ecologies rather than libraries.



Johann Sander's work meanders at the intersection of anthropology, urban environments, and narrativity. His research explores spatial and sensory experience and the role of storytelling in urban environments.

For a few years, Johann Sander hosted a radio show on anthropology, slowness and field recording on Radio IDA in Tallinn, Estonia.



Nicole Marchesseau's artistic and research practices explore spaces of process, method, and materiality. Her solo and multimedia collaborative artistic work has been featured in North America and overseas. Publications have ranged from topics exploring Surrealism and music to Jandek to the liminal spaces of Toronto's Do-It-Yourself music scene. She has taught at Western and McMaster Universities and is currently working towards a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology at York University, where she also completed a doctorate in music.



Pablo Rincón Díaz is a filmmaker and sound designer from Bogotá, Colombia. His work is characterized by integrating artistic and community-based practices for social transformation through non-fiction media, and his artistic interests navigate the possibilities of audiovisual media as a tool for memory and representation, and the possibility to evoke other worlds and ways of living through metaphors. He is currently based in Toronto, pursuing an MFA in the Documentary Media program at Toronto Metropolitan University.

