

***AL LADO, AFUERA. // BESIDE, OUTSIDE.: THE PERFORMANCE OF SOLIDARITY
BETWEEN ARCHIVE AND REPERTOIRE IN GUATEMALA AND CANADA***

Zoë Heyn-Jones

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN VISUAL ARTS
YORK UNIVERSITY
TORONTO, ONTARIO

July 2018

© Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018

Abstract

My research-creation dissertation investigates the question 'how are human rights enacted/performed?' by examining solidarity activism in Guatemala and the hemispheric networks that enable it. The essay film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* (2018, 21:12 min.), a synthesis of interviews with contemporary activists¹ looks at human rights accompaniment—the process of situating oneself as an unarmed volunteer, assuming a physical presence alongside social activists who are victims of political threats, in order to dissuade violence, bear witness, and activate international solidarity networks. The performatic repertoire of accompaniment activism is explored upon the backdrop of the LAWG (Latin American Working Group)'s collection of solidarity documents (1965-1997) and a large wall drawing that maps my research on networks of solidarity activism, thereby contextualizing this little-known embodied activist practice and exploring entanglements between the material archive and the ephemeral repertoire.

Solidarity movement ephemera and a series of posters, created from graphic and textual elements of selected LAWG documents, highlight the material and historical foundation of today's accompaniment activism in Guatemala. By continuing to scan these documents in the gallery space as a durational performance throughout the exhibition, I highlight the labour performed in solidarity activism, and the 'change-of-state' from paper materials to digital files, thereby mirroring of the trajectory from pre-Internet campaigns of letter-writing, information bulletins, flyers and posters, etcetera to today's digital forms of solidarity mobilization, and the various temporalities of solidarity.

In transforming the collection from a material to a digital archive², I am creating an open source online repository of these crucial materials, as well as a gallery installation that highlights the aesthetics and materiality of pre-Internet solidarity activism, posing the question *how does the materiality of solidarity evidenced in the LAWG collection work in tandem with embodied performances of solidarity activism?*

¹ I have conducted participant-observation fieldwork with accompaniment volunteers at the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)'s head office in Guatemala City and with the international accompanier placement organization ACOGUATE in 2016.

² Inspired by Tania Bruguera's notion of Arte Útil (useful art).

Dedication

To the land defenders, accompaniers, solidarity workers, artists, activists, activists, scholars, thinkers and dreamers who perform the labour of environmental and social justice.

Acknowledgments

My deepest appreciation goes to the Guatemalan land defenders, artists, and organizers with whom I have had the privilege to work alongside, and to the international solidarity workers who accompany them and tirelessly demand justice. Thank you for welcoming me into your spaces.

Infinite thanks to my parents Miki Heyn and Bill Jones, and my sister Corinna Heyn-Jones for your support throughout this process—from having difficult conversations about land, sovereignty, history, and solidarity, to the encouragement and moral support to keep going; from crucial material resources to sustain myself throughout this journey (and make artwork!), to joyful times together in Walters Falls, San Francisco, Santiago Atitlán and all points between.

Muchísimas gracias a Octavio Castro Gallardo por tu infalible amabilidad, paciencia, amor y apoyo a través de este proceso. No podría haber sobrevivido sin tu positividad y aliento. Te amo.

(I begin by thanking my family, because, as Laura Levin notes (following Griselda Pollock), “it is standard practice among authors to leave their families to the end of the ‘Acknowledgements’ section” as though domestic support is a less valuable form of backing. I, too, wish to “make this domestic background visible”³ as a most sustaining relation of solidarity.)

I would like to offer my deepest gratitude to Dr. Janine Marchessault, Prof. Nell Tenhaaf, and Dr. Laura Levin for your unflagging intellectual and logistical guidance in navigating these academic and art worlds, and for doing so, always, with immense kindness, rigour, and consideration. Thank you to Prof. Barbara Balfour who, as Graduate Program Director, Visual Arts, went above and beyond to support my progress, and to Graduate Program Assistant Dawn Burns whose unparalleled work ethic and cheerfulness never fails to astound me. Photo printing master Lindsay Page in the Goldfarb Centre for Fine Arts Digital Photo Lab provided crucial advice and assistance in producing the material elements of the exhibition. Patrick Legris and Esther Kim in the Visual Arts Department worked magic in preparing the Special Projects Gallery for the exhibition, and I am so grateful. Warm thanks, also, to the AGYU (Art Gallery of York University) for structural support.

Deepest thanks to Terra Long and Eva Kolcze for your generosity in helping me figure out the moving-image components of this project, and for documenting the end results. Your talents and dexterity with film- and video-making are truly inspiring and I’m so grateful for your support—and willingness to embark on Site + Cycle adventures!

I would like to acknowledge the support of CERLAC (the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean) at York University. Dr. Carlota McAllister has supervised my Graduate Diploma progress, facilitated so many invaluable connections in Guatemala, and modelled a

³ Levin, Laura. *Performing Ground: Space, Camouflage, and the Art of Blending In*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. E-book. 17.

warmth, ethics and engagement in scholarship that is an inspiration. Camila Bonifaz works tirelessly to make CERLAC function every day, and does so with incredible grace, humour, and kindness. Dr. Liisa North and Caese Levo have been my intrepid guides to the LAWG (Latin American Working Group) collection, and I thank them immensely for their guidance and generosity with those invaluable materials. Through CERLAC I met Dr. Sara Koopman, whose encouragement and insights into accompaniment have been pivotal. Dr. Alan Durston has directed the Centre and facilitated many wonderful new developments since my engagement with CERLAC. I would especially like to acknowledge CERLAC's support through the Paavo and Aino Lukkari Human Rights Fellowship and Award, support that was absolutely instrumental in allowing me to undertake fieldwork in Guatemala and, therefore, for the successful completion of this project.

Likewise, I would like to acknowledge the support of the Nathanson Centre on Transnational Human Rights, Crime & Security at Osgoode Hall Law School. A Graduate Fellowship at the Nathanson Centre, and the support of York University's Provost Scholarship, have allowed me to see this project through, and for that I am immensely grateful and humbled.

Thank you to NISGUA for facilitating my awakening to the contemporary struggles facing Guatemalan communities. When I arrived in Guatemala City in 2015 to participate in the Rivers for Life delegation, my engagement was limited to exploring my family history there. Through two delegations and the experience of volunteering in NISGUA's Guatemala City office, my understanding of the *coyuntura* has expanded exponentially, and I have made lifelong friends and allies. Thank you Val Croft, Martha Schmitz, Ellen Moore, Megan Solis Whelan, Bridget Brehen, David Imhoff, and Becky Kaump. RaeAnn Swanson-Evans, Chris Shorne, and Karen Bryant shared the Rivers for Life delegation experience, and were excellent interlocutors and *compañeras*. And, of course, immense thanks and a debt of gratitude to the ACOGUATE accompaniers who shared meals, conversations, energy, and insights with me. Without your generosity of spirit this project could not have come to fruition.

My inarticulable gratitude and humility extends to the communities of Copal AA La Esperanza, Las Margaritas Copón, Cerro Verde, Mataquescuintla, and San Rafael Las Flores for welcoming us, sharing meals, walks, and stories, and for a hospitality that is truly life-affirming.

To Pam Cooley and Gaby Labelle, thank you for sharing your stories, photos, and time; for allowing me to be present for your reunion; and, of course, for your world-changing work.

Thank you to MISN (the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network) for your unflagging energy, wit, and performativity in working to resist Canadian imperialism and extractivism in Toronto and around the world.

And finally I must express a debt of gratitude and vast appreciation for all of my beautiful friends and colleagues in Toronto, Guatemala, Mexico and scattered points around the globe. From sharing our writing and artwork, to kitchen dance parties and impassioned conversations;

from earthquake scares and bike rides, to gallery strolls and mediterranean patio dinners and lake swims; from hand-processing film in buckets to standing side by side in protest of injustice, I am honoured to live and work beside you.

Table of Contents

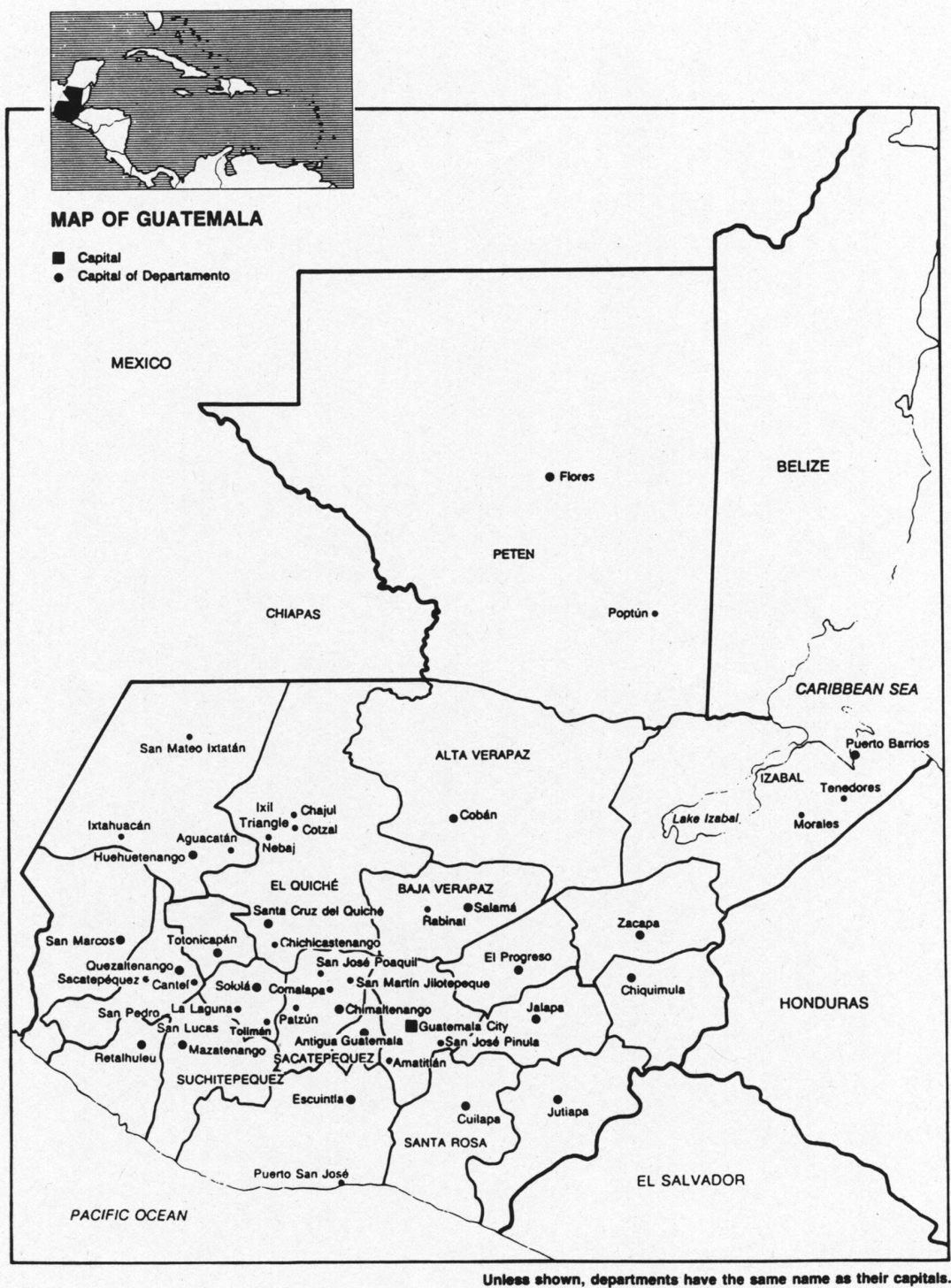
Abstract.....	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Figures	viii
List of Abbreviations.....	ix
Map of Guatemala.....	ix
Prologue: Three Performatic Moments of Witness.....	1
Paro Nacional.....	1
The Declaration of Independence of the Micronation of Musterre.....	5
<i>Asociación ilícita</i>	7
Introduction: From Political Depression to Creative Movement(s).....	10
Learning to Swim in Lake Atitlán.....	10
Standing Beside Histories of Guatemala.....	12
<i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside</i>	15
On Quitting: Coming to Accompaniment.....	18
Political Depression.....	23
Chapter One: Accompaniment - Solidarity and/as Performance.....	28
The Refugee Return and the Right to Be Accompanied.....	28
Defining Accompaniment.....	35
Rivers for Life.....	40
Performing Solidarity.....	45
Chapter Two: Making Spaces.....	52
Beside, Nearby, Outside.....	52
Making Space for Peace.....	60
Networked Bodies.....	66
<i>Escenario: Performative Installation</i>	71
Chapter Three: Activating the Archive(s): Materialities and Temporalities of Solidarity.....	79
Research-Creation between Archive and Repertoire.....	79
To Essay.....	81
Representational Gleaning, Network Mapping.....	89
Performing Labour: Maintenance Art/Work.....	97
Presence: To Be of Use?.....	104
Conclusion.....	108
From Another Place Between.....	108
A Return, A Reunion.....	110
Gathering in Uncertainty.....	113
Epilogue.....	117
Works Cited.....	120
Additional Bibliography (excluding Works Cited).....	126
APPENDIX A: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside</i>. Video.....	139
APPENDIX B: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside</i>. Video Credits.....	139
APPENDIX C: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside</i>. Script.....	140
APPENDIX D: Interview Questions.....	150

List of Figures

Figure 1: Paro Nacional, 20 September 2018. Photo by the author.....	4
Figure 2: Paro Nacional, 20 September 2018. Photo by the author.....	4
Figure 3: Misha Orlandini performing the “The Declaration of Independence of the Micronation of Musterre,” 23 September 2017, Palacio Nacional, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.....	6
Figure 4: <i>Pasaporte de la Micronación de Musterre</i> (Misha Orlandini, 2017).....	6
Figure 5: Regina José Galindo, <i>Asociación ilícita</i> , 23 September 2017, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.....	8
Figure 6: Jorge de León and collaborator, <i>Asociación ilícita</i> , 23 September 2017, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.....	9
Figure 7: Standing in front of my family’s home in Panajachel, Guatemala, 1986. Photo: Bill Jones.....	10
Figure 8: Lighting fires in my miniature wood stove with my sister and our neighbours, Panajachel, Guatemala, 1990. Photo: Bill Jones.....	11
Figures 9 - 11: Images from <i>When the People Lead</i> (Merran Smith & Michael Simpson, 1993).....	29
Figure 12: Vegetables, fruits, and medicinal plants in Copal AA La Esperanza, 2015. Photo: NISGUA.....	42
Figures 13 - 15: Images from <i>In the Company of Fear</i> (Velcrow Ripper, 1999).....	52
Figures 16 - 18: Images from <i>In the Company of Fear</i> (Velcrow Ripper, 1999).....	54
Figure 19: Posters created from LAWG Collection materials (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.....	74
Figure 20: Posters created from LAWG Collection materials (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.....	75
Figure 21: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.</i> installation view (initiated by Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.....	78
Figure 22: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.</i> video projection view (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.....	85
Figure 23: <i>al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.</i> video projection view (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.....	86
Figure 24: <i>Guatemala Vencerá</i> flyer.....	91
Figure 25: A snapshot of the <i>Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)</i> mind map (Coggle, 10 April 2018).....	93
Figures 26-28: <i>Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)</i> mind map (hand-drawn, Special Projects Gallery, July 2018). Photos: Eva Kolcze.....	94-95
Figure 29: <i>Workers 2</i> (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2017) Digital composite image, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.....	99
Figure 30: <i>Workers 1</i> (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2017) Digital composite image, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.....	99
Figure 31: Scanning of LAWG documents as durational performance (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photos: Eva Kolcze.....	102
Figure 32: Pam Cooley & Gaby Labelle c. 1985. Photographer unknown.....	112
Figure 33: Pam Cooley & Gaby Labelle, Mexico City, 27 February 2018. Photo by the author.....	112

List of Abbreviations

ACODET	Asociación de Comunidades en Defensa de la Vida y los Recursos Naturales/Association of Communities for Development and the Defense of Territory and Natural Resources
ACOGUATE	La Coordinación de Acompañamiento Internacional en Guatemala/International Accompaniment Coordination in Guatemala
AHPN	Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional/National Police Archive
BTS	Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network
CALDH	Centro Para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos/Centre for Human Rights Legal Action
CCPP	Comisiones Permanentes de Representantes de los Refugiados Guatemaltecos en México/Permanent Commissions of Guatemalan Refugees in Mexico
CDHAL	Comité Chrétien pour les Droits Humaines en Amérique Latine/Christian Committee for Human Rights in Latin America
CODECA	Comité de Desarrollo Campesino/Peasant Development Committee
CERLAC	Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPR	Comunidades de Población en Resistencia/Resistance Communities
CIRMA	Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica/Centre for Mesoamerican Research
CTF	Christian Task Force on Central America
ENAP	Escuela Nacional de Artes Plásticas/National Art School
GAM	Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo/Mutual Support Group for the Relatives of the Disappeared
GAP	Guatemala Accompaniment Project
ICCHRLA	Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America
LAWG	Latin American Working Group
NISGUA	Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala
OAS	Organization of American States
OISE	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
ODHAG	Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala/Archdiocesan Human Rights Office of the Catholic Church
PAC	Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil/Civil Defence Patrols
PAQG	Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala
PBI	Peace Brigades International
REMHI	Proyecto Interdiocesano de Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica de la Oficina de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de Guatemala/Recuperation of Historical Memory Project Report
SUCO/CUSO	Service universitaire canadien outre-mer/Canadian University Service Overseas
UAN	Central America Urgent Action Network
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
URNG	Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca/Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity
USAID	United States Agency for International Development



Source: *Democracy in Guatemala: A Dream Deferred*. Report of a Canadian NGO Delegation to Guatemala, May 1990. (Christian Task Force on Central America, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, CUSO, Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, Latin America Working Group, OXFAM-Canada)

Prologue: Three Performatic Moments of Witness

Paro Nacional

On 20 September 2017 Guatemala shut down. A *paro nacional*, a country-wide strike, was called as a response to a recent flare-up of endemic governmental corruption.¹ In the morning of the 20th I walked over to the Plaza de la Constitución, the main public square in front of the national palace, with a few friends from the Fundación Yaxs art centre where I was doing a residency. Eunice had spray painted the cerulean banners of the Guatemalan flag black and hung it upside down on its pole, slung over her shoulder. Geidy drank a strawberry *licuado* from a plastic bag with a straw as we walked. Sexta Avenida, the main pedestrian mall leading to the square, was buzzing with energy and vuvuzelas. San Carlos University students and *campesinos*, Maya community leaders and artists, curious city-dwellers and seasoned activists were all out on the streets in force. Vendors rallied too, providing the crowd with ice-cold water, noisemakers, snow-cones, flags, hats, cigarettes and snacks. By 11am the square in front of the palace was a sea of hand-made signs and flags waving under a sky of the same shade of blue. In the centre of the plaza, on a bed of pine needles and chrysanthemums, painted portraits of the 41 girls killed in

¹ When President Jimmy Morales, a former comedian who had run under the anti-corruption slogan “*ni corrupto, ni ladrón*” (“neither corrupt nor a thief”), declared Iván Velásquez, head of the UN-backed CICIG anti-corruption oversight body, ‘persona non grata’ and tried to have him expelled from the country in order that he halt the investigation into Morales’ campaign financing, the supreme court pushed back, overturning Morales’ declaration. Jimmy then took a different tactic, proposing a change to the penal code that, in essence, “would have reduced sentences for violation of laws governing campaign finance, money laundering, extortion, and many other crimes of corruption to merely paying a fine. Civil society organizations termed this a dangerous move backward in Guatemala’s progress towards democratic reform.” (Martin, María. “Guatemalans Confront Government Over Its Resistance to Fight Corruption.” 10 October 2017 <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/guatemalans-confront-government-over-its-resistance-fight-corruption-n805121> Accessed 15 February 2018.) This new law was passed in a secret late-night session, with the support of over a hundred deputies. Public outrage immediately ensued, with protestors mobilizing and surrounding the busses that were carrying the deputies away from the Palacio Nacional. This outrage was so strong that the deputies met again within a matter of hours to rescind their decision.

a fire at the Hogar Seguro Virgen de la Asunción children's' home on 8 March 2017 were placed in remembrance—of the girls themselves and of the states' complicity and inaction.²

The square continued to fill with people of all walks of life, many behind banners announcing the presence of their organizations or their towns: *presente!* A sign reading '*limpiemonos el congreso—fuera corruptos*'³ under unfurling rolls of toilet paper was merrily brandished about the crowd. Maya women in various traditional dress, some with babies in slings, CODECA flags hand-painted on white cotton fabric, all manner of handmade signs denouncing Jimmy and the corrupt deputies as non-grato themselves, as traitors, as *hijos de puta*, various *departamentos* naming the deputies from their region who had voted in favour of the corrupt law, some calling out specific local television networks for supporting corruption too. Army cadets in crisp starched-white shirts and wedge caps, in various postures of alertness or indifference, stood shoulder to shoulder in a perimeter around the palace, facing the crowd. Behind them, on the steps of the palace, various social actors and organizations were allotted their few moments to speak to the crowd: the Asociación de Periodistas de Guatemala (Guatemalan Journalists' Association), the Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala (Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages) with their signs in K'iche'. Photojournalists with press passes and giant lenses prowled the palace proscenium, documenting the scene. Army officials did too, pointing their cameras at the crowd. Pointing theirs back at the palace, a television news crew from the Guatevision network cordoned off an area in front of the palace to

²Cf. Goldman, Francisco. "The Story Behind the Fire That Killed Forty Teen-Age Girls in a Guatemalan Children's Home."

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-story-behind-the-fire-that-killed-forty-teen-age-girls-in-a-guatemalan-childrens-home> Accessed 28 February 2018

³ Loosely translated as 'Let's clean up the congress—get out, corrupt ones!'

broadcast. In front of me in the crowd, an older man in a baseball cap and shades struggled to hold and operate several vuvuzelas and handmade sign, a Guy Fawkes mask slung cavalierly on the back of his head, Janus-faced. Many protesters held goldenrod, roses, and gladiolas, in stems and bunches, in the same hands that held aloft Guatemalan flags. Some signs declared the need for electoral reform. One elderly man in a cowboy hat held a sign, lettering perfectly squared, straight, metered, that simply read: *‘exijamos la renuncia de Yimmy Morales y su gabinete por actos de corrupción y complicidad con el crimen organizado.’* We demand the resignation of Jimmy Morales and his cabinet for acts of corruption and complicity with organized crime.

Many protesters were clad in #RenunciaYa T-shirts, imbued with the energy of that movement that did manage, in 2015, to successfully demand the resignation of then-president Otto Pérez Molina and vice president Roxana Baldetti on similar corruption charges. Every Saturday from April until September of 2015, this same square was similarly filled and humming with the energy of resistance, as unprecedented numbers of citizens, organized on Facebook, peacefully gathered to demand an end to the endemic corruption of the state.⁴ This time, once again, tens of thousands of people from all over the country streamed into the Plaza de la Constitución to mobilize for the tenuous and hard-won democratic reforms initiated in 2015, in what some had termed the “Guatemalan Spring.” Green and red quetzal birds, some made with brightly-dyed feathers and some with tissue paper plumage, flew above the crowd. One sign proclaimed *‘somos un quetzal en vuelo, nadie nos detiene’*—we are a quetzal in flight, nobody can stop us.

⁴ Cf. Lakhani, Nina. “People-power and the ‘Guatemalan Spring.’”
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/09/people-power-guatemalan-spring-150903075327898.html>
 Accessed 28 February 2018



Figures 1 & 2: scenes from the Paro Nacional, 20 September 2017. Photos by the author.

The Declaration of Independence of the Micronation of Musterre

On 23 September 2017 the micronation of Musterre declared its independence. On the same palace steps, performance artist Misha Orlandini read aloud its Declaration of Independence. A few days earlier, as part of the La Valiente performance festival at Fundación Yaxs, Orlandini had exhibited a prototype of Musterre's passport: rich forest green faux-leather cover embossed with golden lettering, thick pages printed with delicate leaves, fields for information about the holder's species and nationality (Musterre, of course, recognizes all species of plants and animals as legal persons). On the 23rd, we gathered in the Portales, a small group of local artists, myself, some of Misha's family members, and a lawyer friend. Together we walked over to the Plaza de la Constitución, still littered with traces of the *paro nacional* a few days earlier. Misha changed into golden high heels, adjusted her moss corsage (spritzing it with water for its full effect) and climbed the palace steps to address the small crowd. Opening her black leather folder, she solemnly read aloud Musterre's Declaration of Independence:

Queridos ciudadanos,

[...] La búsqueda de una espacio-sistema donde estos valores puedan alzarse como bandera me ha llevado la creación de una micronación, MUSTERRE, como una acción político necesaria para la separación política de un ecosistema hostil y un espacio donde para el nuevos sueños pueden desenvolverse con dignidad y es por ello que:

MUSTERRE nace en este día como micronación.

Una utopia.

Una búsqueda.

*Una nueva comunidad [...]*⁵

Random passers-by gathered around her as she read, a handful of curious onlookers pausing briefly for a quizzical moment or two. When she finished, the leather folder and a pen were passed around. We all signed in witness as bruised grey clouds rolled in. The lawyer witnessed the document, another friend took photos. Some group shots were taken on the palace steps, and we retreated back into the dark cantina in the Portales to toast with huge steins of beer to Misha's birthday and the birth of Musterre.

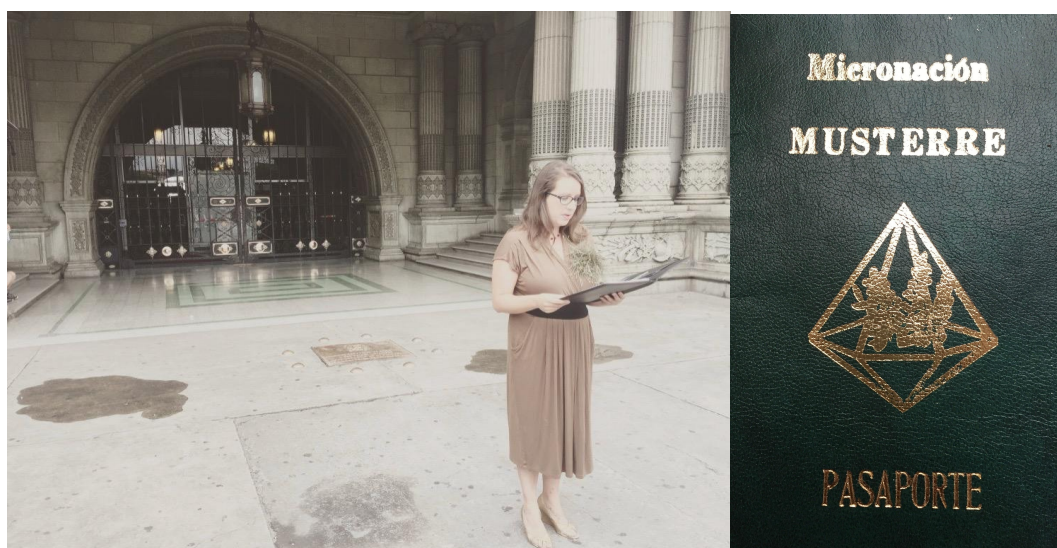


Figure 3: Misha Orlandini performs the “The Declaration of Independence of the Micronation of Musterre,” 23 September 2017, Palacio Nacional, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.

Figure 4: *Pasaporte de la Micronación de Musterre* (Misha Orlandini, 2017)

⁵ “Dear citizens,

[...] The search for a space-system where these values can rise as a flag has led me to create a micronation, MUSTERRE, as a necessary political action for the political separation of a hostile ecosystem and a space where new dreams can be created and unfold with dignity and that is why:

MUSTERRE was born on this day as micronation.

An utopia.

A search.

A new community [...]

Asociación ilícita

That afternoon at the Proyectos Ultravioleta art space Regina José Galindo and Jorge de León destroyed a handgun. Rushing from the celebration of Musterre and Misha's birthday, we arrived to see Galindo silhouetted in the back garden door of the cavernous space (a still-functioning woodmill), silently holding the gun in her right hand, her diminutive body frozen, her posture rigid, her gaze focused ahead at a point in an ether only she could perceive. The crowd gathered in a semicircle around her in a barely-breathing reverence for the ritual. After an undetermined length of time (temporality skewed by intent witnessing), she slowly walked over to a workbench in the centre of Proyectos Ultravioleta's vast workshop space. She removed the gun's magazine, and further disassembled it as much as possible before placing it in vice grips. Donning clear plastic safety goggles, she took a metal grinder and began slowly and methodically filing away the serial number on all parts of the weapon. de León and his sister then followed and, in a cascade of golden sparks, a cloud of acrid smoke, and the odor of hot metal, proceeded to grind the handgun down until it was rendered completely distorted and useless.

Several months before, Jorge's nephew had been murdered, dying from a gunshot wound. As a result, Jorge began to intervene artistically with weapons, removing bullets from the streets of Guatemala City, imagining each bullet as one life. Collaborating with Regina José Galindo, on the event of the opening of *El objetivo*,⁶ de León laboured to destroy one gun in a country

⁶ *El objetivo (The Objective)* (2017) was originally presented at documenta 14 in Kassel, Germany. In this iteration, Galindo stood in the middle of a closed room in Kassel, the sole way for viewers to see her was by looking down the barrel of a gun, in order to explore the fact that, "Germany ranks among the top five weapons manufacturers in the world. Much of the country's munitions profits come from the sale of G36 Heckler & Koch assault rifles, which are exported to conflict zones including the Americas. (Galindo notes it was such guns that killed the forty-three students of Ayotzinapa, Mexico, in the Iguala mass kidnapping.) While Galindo places herself in vulnerable situations, she is never a victim. Her vulnerability has a way of exposing our susceptibilities: When you look at her through a gunsight, will you feel the impulse to look away, intervene, or pull the trigger?" Hopkins, Candice. "Regina José Galindo." *documenta 14: Daybook*. London & New York: Prestel Verlag, 2017. n.p.

where almost 500 people are murdered, and more than two million bullets are sold, each month.⁷ As the artists worked to remove this one handgun from circulation, a typewritten note was passed around the crowd of silent onlookers. It read:

*Aquí no ha pasado nada
cualquiera puede tener un arma
cualquiera puede disparar
todo lo hecho
puede ser borrado*

Nothing has occurred here. Anyone can have a weapon. Anyone can shoot. Everything done can be erased.



Figure 5: Regina José Galindo, *Asociación ilícita*, 23 September 2017, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.

⁷Cazali, Rosina. “El arte contemporáneo, en Guatemala, saca armas de la calle.” *Nomada*. 25 September 2017. <https://nomada.gt/el-arte-contemporaneo-en-guatemala-saca-armas-de-la-calle/> Accessed 16 February 2018.



Figure 6: Jorge de León and collaborator, *Asociación ilícita*, 23 September 2017, Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City. Photo by the author.

I describe—and frequently return to—these three moments because they feel somehow replete (teeming, overflowing) with a performatic⁸ spirit that seems to permeate the Guatemala I have come to know. Of course, there are many Guatemalas. The ones I have encountered in my adult life are worlds in which artists and activists, land defenders and workers, citizens and *extranjeros* in solidarity, stand and move together, sometimes in unity and sometimes out of step, but always in a complex intersubjective choreography.

⁸ Following Diana Taylor, I use the word ‘performatic’ as the adjective for performance. The word ‘performative,’ while sometimes employed, has a specific linguistic meaning, following J.L. Austin, as an instance in which language becomes action, for example the declaration of ‘I do’ and ‘I now pronounce you...’ at a wedding. Cf. Taylor, Diana. *Performance*. Trans. Abigail Levine. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2016. 118-120; Austin, J.L. *How to Do Things with Words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Introduction: From Political Depression to Creative Movement(s)

Learning to Swim in Lake Atitlán

I mentioned a multitude of Guatemalas, and ones I have come to know in my adult life. This is because I knew iterations of this place as a child as well. In 1986, when I was four years old, my parents took six-month leaves of absences from their social work and childcare jobs and headed south. With the original destination of Yucatán, Mexico in mind, they soon found themselves compelled to continue south to Guatemala. Persuaded by the reports of other backpackers they crossed paths with, singing the praises of a land with a climate of ‘eternal spring’ and the richness of Mayan culture, my young family showed up in the small town of Panajachel on Lake Atitlán. Panajachel was then referred to—sometimes fondly, sometimes pejoratively—as ‘Gringotenango’ for the sheer numbers of ‘expats’ living in and around the town. In 1990, this time for a year, my family (now four of us, including my toddler sister) returned to Panajachel.



Figure 7: Standing in front of my family’s home in Panajachel, Guatemala, 1986. Photo: Bill Jones.

These short instances of living in Guatemala have had an enormous, indelible, and still-unfolding effect on my life. As a young child, I learned how to swim in Lake Atitlán, taught by the young Tz'utujil girls who would cross the lake by boat everyday from Santiago Atitlán to sell peanuts, their dusty shells heaped in baskets they carried on their tiny heads. I ran wild (by today's parenting standards, surely) with the kids from the neighbourhood, bloodying my knees learning how to ride a bike, coming home by dark, but with few other rules to abide by. I learned Spanish in public school, where I also learned deeply about difference. I lit tiny fires inside a miniature toy wood stove made from an oil can, the smell of the aromatic resinous *ocote* wood lingering in my hair. I took corn to be ground at the mill and made clumsy tortillas by hand, never mastering the rhythmic clapping with which the Guatemalan women and girls would produce their perfect circles.



Figure 8: Lighting fires in my miniature wood stove with my sister and our neighbours, Panajachel, Guatemala, 1990. Photo: Bill Jones.

I had known about the internal armed conflict when I was a child, but it was on the very outermost periphery of my consciousness. I remember overhearing the adults talking in

impassioned whispers after the 1990 uprising in Santiago Atitlán in which a skirmish between the town's residents and officials from the nearby military base ended in thirteen civilian deaths, and the subsequent removal of the military base.⁹ I remember asking my parents about the colourful political party logos hand-painted on boulders and buildings along the highway, and them telling me that there would be an election soon, and that, depending on the outcome, we might need to leave the country in a hurry. But, on the whole, I was fairly oblivious to the political scenario in which my family had inserted itself. I suppose I was preoccupied with riding bikes and swimming in the lake and negotiating the daily dramas of being a child. It is hard, now, to know what I remember and what I have internalized through the repetition of stories told.

Standing Beside Histories of Guatemala

I often wonder how much I understood—or can ever fully grasp—narratives¹⁰ of the nation-state of Guatemala. One such story goes: Spanish colonization placed all Maya groups equally at the bottom of the social scale as a pool of cheap labour. Slavery was abolished in 1544 when a law was implemented whereby Maya people were ‘distributed’ amongst the conquistadors and their descendants, not as slaves but as a ‘semi-free’ (and tax-paying) labour force on large plantations, known as *fincas*. Guatemala achieved political independence in 1821, but this did little to change the economic and social structure. The period of industrialization that

⁹ For a more detailed account of the uprising, see <http://www.santiagoatitlan.com/History/Uprising/uprisinge.html>

¹⁰ There is a multitude of stories; (hi)stories told by revolutionary guerrilla groups differ from those told by solidarity workers on the periphery, for example. As an artist, as a non-historian, as an *extranjera* that lived in proximity to the internal armed conflict as a child—I can only ever know inadequate and diaphanous fragments. Thanks to Drs. Carlota McAllister and Dot Tuer for their critical interrogation, emotional transparency, and citational guidance in dealing with these intertwining, complex, and sometimes contradictory histories as they relate to my project.

followed converted the ‘semi-free’ labour to waged labour, which in effect facilitated the opportunity for a very few *ladino*¹¹ families to become owners of the plantations and move up the socioeconomic scale to form the elite ruling class of Guatemala. In 1952, a democratically elected revolutionary government initiated the Agrarian Reform Law through which many large plantations were expropriated and redistributed to poor Mayans and *ladinos*.

Because this action affected powerful landowners in the United States, specifically the United Fruit Company, the U.S. government supported an invasion of Guatemala and, from 1954 to 1985, military dictatorships supported by the U.S. ruled Guatemala.¹² In 1960 the first guerrilla movement began. Throughout the ensuing 30 years of counter-insurgency war, anti-Indigenous racism ruled Guatemala—villages were destroyed, and thousands of people were killed, kidnapped, disappeared and tortured. Indigenous Maya people were the vast majority of victims.¹³ Negotiations between guerrillas and the government culminated in the signing of Peace Accords in 1996. Today, while Guatemala is relatively peaceful in comparison, there remains massive economic disparity, rampant anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, and the continued need for land reform.¹⁴ The last thirty years has seen an emergence of a Indigenous

¹¹ Non-Indigenous Guatemalans of Spanish/European descent. Cf. Casaús Arzú, Marta Elena. *Guatemala: Linaje y racismo*. Guatemala, Guatemala: F & G Editores, 2007.

¹² Cf. McCreery, David. “Land, Labor, and Community.” *The Guatemala Reader*. Greg Grandin, Deborah T. Levenson, & Elizabeth Oglesby, eds. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2011.

¹³ For early forays into this history as it unfolded, cf. Fried, Jonathan L. *Guatemala in Rebellion: Unfinished History*. New York: Grove Press, 1983.; Painter, James. *Guatemala: False Hope, False Freedom*. London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1987.; Montejo, Victor. *Testimony: Death of a Guatemalan Village* Victor Perera, trans. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1987.; Black, George in collaboration with Milton Jamail and Norma Stoltz Chinchilla. *Garrison Guatemala*. London: Zed Books in association with North American Congress on Latin America, 1984. These texts were circulating in the LAWG context, and were likely influential in the consciousness-raising of the nascent solidarity movement. Thanks to Dr. Dot Tuer for these recommended sources.

¹⁴ For discussions of post-Peace-Accords Guatemala Cf. McAllister, Carlota and Diane M. Nelson, eds. *War by Other Means: Aftermath in Post-Genocide Guatemala*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2013.; Sanford, Victoria. *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Maya movement for self-determination—Rigoberta Menchú, a K'iche' woman who survived the genocide that destroyed her family and community, and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, is probably the most widely recognized proponent of the movement.¹⁵ Although peace accords ended the 36-year-long internal armed conflict in 1996, today Guatemala is still searching for truth and reconciliation through the trial of former president Efraín Ríos Montt and the anti-corruption movements.¹⁶ Liisa North and Alan Simmons state,

Guatemala's history—from the Spanish conquest and colonization through the civil war that ended formally on 29 December 1996—has revolved around a repressive state based on the exclusionary control of the political process by a narrow elite, on violent repression of dissent, and on a racist exploitation of Maya peoples (still the majority of the national population). The terrible human rights abuses of the late 1970s and early 1980s, including the army's genocidal campaigns, are but extreme moments in that history. (North & Simmons 5)

Many Indigenous and non-Indigenous Guatemalans are currently battling the expansion of multinational (many Canadian-owned and operated) mining companies that continue to threaten their land and sovereignty, illustrating that this history of exclusionary control and violent

¹⁵ Menchú tells her own story in *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, ed. Ann Wright, trans. London & New York: Verso Books, 1984.; Diane M. Nelson explores Menchú as a pop-cultural figure, specifically jokes told about her and their socio-political implications in “Gendering the Ethnic-National Question: Rigoberta Menchú Jokes and the Out-Skirts of Fashioning Identity.” *A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. 170-205.; and Greg Grandin’s *Who Is Rigoberta Menchú?* (London & New York: Verso Books, 2011) deals with questions that arose in relation to Menchú’s memoir, including accusations regarding its veracity and authorship, and Menchú’s public persona in the ensuing years since its publication.

¹⁶ Cf. Garrard-Burnett, Virginia. *Terror in the land of the Holy Spirit: Guatemala under General Efraín Ríos Montt, 1982-1983*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
<https://trialinternational.org/latest-post/efrain-rios-montt/> Accessed 6 March 2018; As I edit this paper, Rios Montt died of a heart attack on 1 April 2018 at the age of 91. The search for justice, however, continues. Cf. statements from the AJR (Association for Justice and Reconciliation) <https://nisgua.org/ajr-statement-rios-montt-death> Accessed 10 April 2018

repression continues.¹⁷

Is this chronological, teleological state narrative is a necessary stop on the way towards understanding a more nuanced and rhizomatic history of the land now called Guatemala? I know that I will never be able to understand the complexity and richness of the histories of resistance and solidarity that are braided together with the official state narratives. And so I come to this work with the understanding that any sort of ‘mastery’ or ‘expertise’ is neither possible nor desired. I can never know the whole picture, and I can only ever acknowledge that my positionality is that of *standing beside* these histories.¹⁸

al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.

It is with a desire to acknowledge, highlight, and celebrate personal positionality (and embodied metaphor) that I begin this paper with a sketch of my story, and that this project is called *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*. The titular video is a synthesis of interviews with contemporary activists¹⁹ that looks at human rights accompaniment—the process of situating oneself as an unarmed volunteer, assuming a physical presence alongside social activists who are victims of political threats, in order to dissuade violence, bear witness, and activate international solidarity networks—through the lens of performance. The video is exhibited alongside posters

¹⁷ For a discussion of how the imperialism of Canadian foreign policy in Latin America and the ways in which this extractives imperative perpetuates systems and relationships of repression, cf. Gordon, Todd, and Jeffery R. Webber. *Blood of Extraction: Canadian Imperialism in Latin America*. Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2016.

¹⁸ See “Epilogue,” pg. 117 for further reflection.

¹⁹ My participant-observation fieldwork with accompaniment volunteers at the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NISGUA)’s head office in Guatemala City and with the international accompanier placement organization ACOGUATE in 2016 will be discussed further in Chapter 1.

created from the LAWG (Latin American Working Group)'s collection of solidarity documents (1965-1997), and a large wall drawing that maps my research on networks of solidarity activism, thereby contextualizing this little-known embodied activist practice and exploring entanglements between the material archive and the ephemeral repertoire. The exhibition of selected LAWG documents and related ephemera²⁰ highlight the material and historical foundation of today's accompaniment activism in Guatemala, with a focus on the genesis of accompaniment organizations and the ways in which solidarity networks across the Américas mobilized before—and in parallel to—the emergence of the Internet.

By continuing to scan these documents in the gallery space as a durational performance throughout the exhibition, I aimed to highlight the labour performed in solidarity activism, and the 'change of state' from paper materials to digital files. This mirrors the trajectory from pre-Internet campaigns of, for instance, letter-writing, information bulletins, flyers and posters, to today's digital forms of solidarity mobilization, and the various temporalities, ontologies, and presences of both solidarity and performance. In transforming the collection from a material to a digital archive, I am creating an open source online repository of these crucial materials, as well as a gallery installation that highlights the aesthetics²¹ and materiality of pre-Internet solidarity

²⁰ BTS co-founder and author of *Weaving Relationships: Canada-Guatemala Solidarity* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003) Kathryn Anderson lent me the Project A T-shirt and the posters announcing the Refugee Return from her personal archive. While I have never met Kathryn in person, we began corresponding over e-mail, put in touch through the network that the mind map wall drawing describes.

²¹ The term *aesthetic* appears from time to time throughout this project. I use the term to denote a particular set of principles underlying and guiding (consciously or not) the work of a particular entity (this could be an artist or artistic movement, but could also be extended to various other configurations, collectives, collectivities.) i.e. 'DIY aesthetics' as the perceived formal principles of a particular strain of do-it-yourself culture, like a punk scene or a grassroots solidarity collective. The way that I employ the term *aesthetics* could be read as 'visuality' - although, while the visual is certainly an important facet of, for instance, the LAWG documents, so too are the textures and smells of the paper and ink. Tactility, sounds, etc. exceed the visual, so I employ *aesthetic* in this context. The discussion of the philosophical tradition of *aesthetics*, as the study of the nature of art and beauty, through judgement and taste, is not of interest to me in the context of this project.

activism, posing the question *how does the materiality of solidarity evidenced in the LAWG collection work in tandem with embodied performances of solidarity activism?*

The *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project is therefore an interdisciplinary research-creation project that foregrounds performance as a vital way to understand human rights accompaniment; that aims to create a ‘stage’ upon which further embodied actions can unfold to both contextualize and complicate notions of solidarity; and that aims to be *of use*, somehow, by extending outside of the academic and art worlds. However, before I unpack the methodologies and intentions of the project, I must tell a bit more of my story in order that you might, perhaps, understand how I arrived here.

On Quitting: Coming to Accompaniment

While completing my MFA thesis, immersing myself in an attempt to understand my family's history on Guatemalan land, I gradually became increasingly unsettled and uncertain. Learning more about what had taken place in Guatemala, and what revolutionary resistance and international solidarity efforts had been active in response to the state violence and terror, I couldn't shake the question *what was my family doing there?* The more I tried to find some *meaning* in our presence there at that time, the more I was thwarted. My parents ended up there on a whim. It was beautiful and cheap to live. They immersed themselves in a community of expatriate²² hippies, carousing obliviously while a civil war—a *genocide*—raged all around them. How could they be so, at best, naive? How could they live in that context and not *do something* to try to help? I still struggle with these questions. They had found a way to stretch their meager Canadian dollars in paradisiacal surroundings; they had found a way to go from being poor in Canada to being relatively privileged, if only temporarily, in the Global South. Was that all it meant to them? Did they not feel any *responsibility*—as human beings confronted by the gravest injustices, or as Canadians, citizens of a country giving foreign aid to the murderous Guatemalan government and turning a blind eye to the atrocities that government was committing against its own people? How could I live with this as my family history, that of standing by and doing nothing in the face of injustice?

Engaged in a process of learning about the contemporary political context in Guatemala while struggling with my own personal experiences there, I began this PhD. I soon fell into the

²² This term causes me discomfort; the idea that some people can claim the (neutral or even revered) designation of 'expatriate' when they live outside of their country of origin, while others are deemed migrants, immigrants, or illegals means that this term's inherent privilege needs to be unpacked.

most profound depression I have yet experienced in my life, a life significantly marked by periods of deep depression and nearly-debilitating anxiety. For my entire adult life I had worked towards getting into a PhD program; all I had ever wanted was to become a professor. But once the first few weeks passed, the financial precarity without safety net, the bureaucratic minutiae and coursework that consumed me, and the feeling of *what now?* set in. Seeing the landscape of postsecondary education change so dramatically since my undergraduate days, noticing the erosion of the humanities and the rabid fetishization of the STEM subjects, witnessing a shift as students became ‘clients’ and professors and TAs become ‘service providers,’ and sensing a looming abyss of the (at best competitive) humanities job market waiting for me around the corner, I decided to quit.

In a particularly compelling and devastating account of quitting, Keguro Macharia recounts his story of “psychic health and academic production,” a story that attempts to make sense of why he resigned from a tenure track job at a major research university at the same time as he was completing a book manuscript for publication.²³ Describing the “persistent undoing” of his own deracination,²⁴ and the precarity of an academic community organized around what Lauren Berlant calls ‘cruel optimism,’ Macharia recounts deciding that it was impossible for him to continue to be part of academia as it currently exists. Most importantly, Macharia describes feeling that he was being poisoned—after a reticence to even confess it. He felt this in big and

²³ Macharia, Keguro. “On Quitting.” *The New Inquiry*, May 3, 2013. <https://thenewinquiry.com/on-quitting/>. Accessed 6 March 2018.

²⁴Deracination: “to be uprooted, to ‘lose’ race, to be unmoored.” A concept that he invokes in his dissertation, “Queer Natives: Race and Sexuality in the Black Atlantic” which “explores the relationship between deracination and queerness in the black Atlantic. Between 1885 and 1960, as pan-African politics spread across Africa, the United States, and the Caribbean, activists traveled extensively within and across national borders. This travel fostered anxieties that living away from home might corrupt one’s political allegiance. I use the term deracination to describe the complex process through which intimate contact, with foreign locations and bodies, ostensibly compromised political loyalties.” Ibid, n.p.

small ways: by the racialized micro-aggressions and institutional racism he faced daily; by “encounters [that] seemed too weighed down by history, treacle-thick,” and he felt something about himself changing. Exhausted by this psychic labor, he “began to ask whether it was possible to live outside of toxicity,” finally choosing to return to Nairobi.²⁵

As a white settler of European and unknown²⁶ lineage in Canada, I cannot purport to fathom the toxicity that Macharia encountered as a Black Queer academic living and working in the United States. However, I encountered a poisoning of my own, a toxicity stemming from a psyche prone to depression and anxiety encountering the extreme cognitive dissonance²⁷ and exploitative labour conditions of the contemporary university, in combination with a growing sense of futility in the face of unrelenting injustice.

A couple of weeks before I began the PhD, on 21 August 2013, there had been a chemical attack in Ghouta, Syria. Sarin gas had been deployed against civilians, killing hundreds—some estimating over 1,400—of adults and children.²⁸ Images of huge masses of dead bodies were being circulated on all news and social media. The global machinations of politics all of a sudden felt too heavy to bear; the injustices and the impunity too vast and too lethal. I questioned why I

²⁵ Macharia, though, admits the limitations of his departure, stating, “leaving the U.S. will not remove me from toxicity and exhaustion. At best, it will allow limited detoxification, perhaps provide me with some energy. Perhaps it will provide a space within which scabbing can begin, and, eventually, scars that will remain tender for way too long.” Ibid, n.p.

²⁶ My father was adopted and raised by a white British settler family in southern Ontario. He doesn’t know his birth family or ancestors; he has, based on phenotype, in various contexts, been assumed to be Indigenous, Latinx, of Mediterranean descent, etc.

²⁷ Examples of this cognitive dissonance include: working harder than ever but being simultaneously in more financial precarity than ever; being lauded for accomplishments and asked to participate in various panels, publications, etc. while being compensated only nominal honoraria (at best), or through the promise of future professional gain (“it’s good on your CV”); being considered ‘successful’ in some contexts while losing your already-precarious housing; etcetera.

²⁸ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23927399> Accessed 7 March 2018

had the ‘good fortune’ of having been born with the ‘winning lottery ticket’ of white privilege in Canada, while simultaneously living a daily reality of desperately grasping for basic subsistence. I felt immense guilt for having somehow, thus far, ‘gotten away with’ not having lived through disaster (though feeling it looming around every corner), coupled with the exhaustion of having grown up poor and never having been able to climb out of it, despite relative ‘success’ in academia. I felt a consuming responsibility to do something useful with the privilege I held, yet I simultaneously felt paralyzed by my actual economic and mental health realities. I struggle to articulate it even now; the exhaustion felt too much to overcome. I thought about ending my life, but I knew I could never bring myself to do that, as much as I wished, desperately, for a respite from the daily onslaughts of grief and anxiety.

It was around this time that I learned about human rights accompaniment, and the idea resonated with me. Leveraging my own body and life in the service of some greater good, especially in the Guatemalan context, felt like the right thing to do.²⁹ One particular struggle throughout my meandering academic path has been the question of being *of use*. What could my work contribute to the world? What was the wider social value of my academic or artistic output? Thinking through these questions (as I still perpetually do) among the entangled web of depression and anxiety that descended on me in the fall of 2013, I felt there was nothing I could do but quit the PhD to become an accompanier. Accompaniment might not solve the world’s

²⁹ This is, surely, naive. However, at that time, in that state of mind, it felt somehow appropriate. Subsequently, thinking critically about attempts to ‘do good,’ and their (sometimes unintended consequences) is what led me to this project. Cf. Mahrouse, Gada. “Questioning Efforts that Seek to ‘Do Good’: Insights from Transnational Solidarity Activism and Socially Responsible Tourism.” *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010. 169-190.

problems, but at least I could do something tangible with my life and my body to be of use to something outside of myself.³⁰

I began researching accompaniment with that singular fervour of desperation, feeling absolutely and maniacally compelled to offer myself in service of *something*. Through online meandering, I found the Oakland-based NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala) and applied for accompaniment training. They replied that, as a Canadian citizen, I was not eligible to work with them, but put me in touch with BTS (Breaking the Silence), their Canadian counterpart. I met with Val Croft, then a BTS coordinator, in Toronto where we had coffee and discussed accompaniment, her experiences, and BTS's history.³¹ At this point I was compelled by the premise of accompaniment: situating oneself as an unarmed volunteer, assuming a physical presence alongside social activists who are victims of political threats, in order to dissuade violence, bear witness, and activate international solidarity networks.

By the time I finally submitted my application to BTS, they were no longer accepting new volunteers. I was, of course, very disappointed, but by that time I had read and thought so much about accompaniment and solidarity activism—its philosophical implications, its complicated and perhaps vexed relationship with critical race feminisms, its embodied and

³⁰ Again, this might be read as naive, but in choosing solidarity work in the face of (political) depression, we might perhaps not only acknowledge but make a commitment to sit with the complications and discomforts that arise. I am grateful to Merle Davis for thinking through the discomforts of solidarity with me in several contexts.

³¹ BTS, like many other solidarity organizations I have encountered through this research, was born out of a Christian faith-based context. I have chosen not to focus on this aspect of solidarity for several reasons. While I do not hide or disavow references to faith-based communities and actors, neither do I focus on them. I do not come from a Christian tradition (or any other organized religion, for that matter), and therefore I lack specific reference points in this regard. I am aware that Christian traditions and institutions are implicated in much injustice in the Americas, from Conquest to residential schools. However, liberation theology's place in Latin/Central American history complicates any simplified demonization of Christianity. The immense complications of any analysis of faith-based actors in solidarity movements makes this outside the scope of this project. For Christian perspectives on accompaniment, cf. *Fellowship* 77.7 (Summer 2013); for a survey of religious traditions' conceptions of social justice, cf. Palmer, Michael D. and Stanley M. Burgess, eds. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice*. Chichester, West Sussex & Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

performed essence, its spatial aspects, its affective dimensions—that without being able to pinpoint an exact moment of realization, I knew that this had become my object of study, and that I was compelled to continue on a path of artistic research.

Political Depression

In *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Ann Cvetkovich describes ‘political depression’ as “the sense that customary forms of political response, including direct action and critical analysis, are no longer working either to change the world or to make us feel better” (20). In this transformative book, Cvetkovich poses the guiding question “how can we, as intellectuals and activists, acknowledge our own political disappointments and failures in a way that can be enabling? Where might hope be possible?” (20), and the ensuing discussion of political depression “emerge[s] from the necessity of finding ways to survive disappointment and to remind ourselves of the persistence of radical visions and ways of living” (31). *Depression: A Public Feeling* is instructive and heartening in so many ways; it is difficult to pull apart the strands of how this book has been influential to this specific project and to my life at its most general. Perhaps the most instructive aspect would be the idea that those things need not—*cannot*—be separated.

Writing this introduction has been extremely challenging: to my training in academia that has imprinted upon me the norms of remaining impersonal, formal, and impartial, and to an even deeper-seated preconception that talking publicly about depression—about *feelings* in general—

is just not acceptable.³² By sharing how I arrived at my research, my goal is to contribute to “depathologiz[ing] negative feelings so that they can be seen as a possible resource for political action rather than as its antithesis” (22). I also share my personal story, not because it is particularly exceptional but because I want to begin from a place of personal positionality, as terrifying as it might be to bare it to the world. I believe that rehearsing decolonial, feminist, and affect theories without attempting to reflect upon one’s own personal implications and complications is somehow disingenuous or, at least, hollow. I am also deeply inspired by Indigenous researchers like Margaret Kovach who highlight the need for introduction and prologue in relational work. Kovach begins *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts* by introducing herself, her lineage, where and by whom she was raised.³³ She does so purposefully, and tells the reader that, “in community, I would share this through talk, I would give enough information about my lineage and those who raised me for people to ‘ssess me out.’ People would nod; I would know they understand. It is different in writing” (3). In this written context, I am also inspired by Norman Denzin’s notion of the ‘mystory’ text, “simultaneously a personal mythology, a public story, a personal narrative, and a performance that critiques” (43), as well as Dot Tuer’s self-examination of personal positionality in her accounts of attempting to “understand where my location is, here, in this city; what my relationship is to both a local and global culture” (130) in the context of Toronto art worlds.

³² I echo Cvetkovich’s declaration that, “my uneasiness has taken a number of predictable forms: that the writing is not good enough, that even if the writing process was useful the product need not be published, that telling this story makes me embarrassingly vulnerable, that sharing my experience (including my ambivalence) constitutes an unseemly flaunting” (188)

³³ “*Tânisi*. Maggie, *nitisiyihkâson*, Kovach, *nitaspīyikasôn*. Hello, I am Maggie, I am Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux, my lineage stems from the traditional territories of the Plains Cree and Saulteaux peoples of the Great Plains. My relations are of the Pasqua and Okanese First Nations in southern Saskatchewan. I was raised within an adopted family on a small, rural Saskatchewan farm. I honour both these influences” (3)

Second-wave feminism popularized the adage that ‘the personal is political.’ Today we are witnessing this in exponential and unprecedented ways, from negotiating the intricacies of domestic labour in the home, to how we engage with social media platforms. Returning to Cvetkovich’s *Depression*, and the Public Feelings project from which it emerged, I am inspired and emboldened by the notion of “crafting new critical practices through attention to feelings as both subject and method” (29), the overt discussions of “the relation between the psychic and the social” (24), and her experiment of using memoir as research method, “a starting point and crucible for exploring [her] ideas about depression” (53). The book’s second half merges critical essay with memoir, and presents “the speculative hypothesis that the cause of depression is not biochemical imbalances but the long-term effects of racism and colonialism” (70). Cvetkovich refers to the

histories of genocide, slavery, and exclusion and oppression of immigrants that seep into our daily lives of segregation, often as invisible forces that structure comfort and privilege for some and lack of resources for others, inequities whose connections to the past frequently remain obscure. These are depressing conditions, indeed, ones that make depression seem not so much a medical or biochemical dysfunction as a very rational response to global conditions. (70-71)

The intervention of the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project is to explore one particular embodied response to these global conditions—human rights accompaniment—and the historical and contemporary networks and technological shifts that have created and sustained this embodied practice. The *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project does so through artistic research-creation practice informed by performance studies, affect theory, and critical race

feminism as theoretical lenses, and this paper contextualizes and expands upon these frameworks.

Chapter One examines the Refugee Return, in which primarily Maya communities in exile in Mexico during the internal armed conflict organized their return to Guatemala, and the subsequent emergence of human rights accompaniment in the country, situating accompaniment as a performance of embodied solidarity. In keeping with the notion of weaving memoir and the personal into critical scholarship, this chapter also explores my experience as a delegate with NISGUA's Rivers for Life delegation in 2015, with a particular focus on the power of hospitality and performance in solidarity activism. Chapter Two turns to spatial relations, thinking through Sara Koopman's feminist geographical notion of human right accompaniment as "making space for peace,"³⁴ and considering what kind of space the installation context of the project might create. Thinking through site specificity,³⁵ Chapter Two looks at the LAWG (Latin American Working Group) document collection that is housed at CERLAC (the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean) at York University, why this project engages with the collection, and what is at stake in the activation of these documents, in this place. Chapter Three explores how my research-creation practice is informed by Diana Taylor's notion of the intertwined nature of the archive and the repertoire, and explores how archives are activated in the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project. Through the essay film mode, the visualization of solidarity networks, and durational performance, the project highlights the labour performed in

³⁴Koopman, Sara. "Making Space for Peace: International Protective Accompaniment in Colombia." *Geographies of Peace*. Eds. Fiona McConnell, Philippa Williams and Nick Megoran. London: I.B. Taurus, 2014. 109-130.

³⁵ Here I am thinking as well of Tania Bruguera's notion of 'political-timing specificity' which she introduces as a counterpoint to site specificity, cf. Bruguera, Tania. "Political Timing." <http://www.taniabruquera.com/cms/511-0-Political+Timing.htm> Accessed 13 August 2018.; Bruguera, Tania. 8 August 2018. SOMA, Mexico City. Lecture.

solidarity activism, and explores the use-value of presence, both in art and accompaniment. The paper concludes by thinking through the relationality of both treaty and solidarity by considering uncertainty.

In *Depression: A Public Feeling*, Cvetkovich describes creativity, in relation to the blockage or impasse of depression, as “a form of movement, movement that maneuvers the mind inside or around an impasse, even if that movement sometimes seems backward or like a form of retreat. Spatialized in this way, creativity can describe forms of agency that take the form of literal movement and are thus more emotional or sensational or tactile” (63). Thinking about creativity and/as movement—movement that is embedded in the everyday actions of solving problems, having ideas, and making things—is therefore accessible to all, not only artists, not just through transcendent experiences. More space for creativity, and with it a higher tolerance for impasse, might be “the only route to new thinking and to the creation of stronger, more resilient communities that can do work in the world” (66). It is this creativity as movement, and the creativity of social movements, that animate this project.

Chapter One: Accompaniment - Solidarity and/as Performance

The Refugee Return and the Right to be Accompanied

*We continue the struggle so as to be able to return. We return so as to be able to continue the struggle.*³⁶

*We can return and demand our constitutional rights but we will not survive alone.*³⁷

A caravan of seventy-eight decommissioned school busses winds along mountainous roads dirt roads, dusty banana trees waving their leaves as the caravan passes by. Travelling through small towns, the busses slow their pace to a crawl. Despite freezing temperatures and considerable risk, thousands of *campesinos* line the roads to greet the caravan as it snakes through the countryside. Joyous marimba music plays and firecrackers are detonated in frenzied salute; the busses move so slowly because people are leaning out of every window, shaking hands with those lined up to greet them. Flags are waving; some festive onlookers wave blue plastic bags on sticks. People hold their hats in their hands, waving them jubilantly. The busses are adorned with hand-painted banners announcing the Return. The busses honk incessantly as they make their way through the crowds.

20 January 1993: the first 2,500 refugees are returning to Guatemala from Mexico, where they have been living in refugee camps in Chiapas, Yucatán, Campeche, and Quintana Roo for nearly a decade. They are accompanied by over one hundred international observers from Canada, Europe, and the Américas. Hymns are sung through loudspeakers. A small boy is lifted up to kiss another child through the open bus window. The Catholic Bishop of Quetzaltenango

³⁶ Guatemalan refugee motto, quoted in Anderson 73.

³⁷ Project Accompaniment Report, 1994, p. 16; quoted in Anderson 89)

and 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú Tum greet the caravan. It is a spectacular return.³⁸



Figures 9 - 11: Images from *When the People Lead* (Merran Smith & Michael Simpson, 1993)

What had the Guatemalan refugees fled from? And what were they returning to? The short answer to both questions is: state violence. The mid-late 1970s had seen an increase in cooperative organizing among *campesinos* and the embryonic growth of an Indigenous Maya

³⁸ These scenes of the Refugee Return, and the international accompaniment that played a vital role, are documented in the video *When the People Lead* (Dir. Merran Smith & Michael Simpson, 1993) which forms a crucial part of my essay video *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*.

movement in Guatemala, with some Indigenous communities supporting the guerrilla insurgency. In 1979 the revolutionary Sandinista movement took power in Nicaragua, overthrowing the Somoza dynasty. In neighbouring El Salvador a parallel civil war escalated. These factors combined to threaten the elite of Guatemala; fearing a similar loss of power, the army reacted brutally, sparking another cycle of repression. No change-seeking sector of society was left unscathed; university students and faculty, journalists, labour union organizers, and clergy were all persecuted, with “death squads and the army kill[ing] one hundred to two hundred people each week” (Anderson 14).

Maya *campesinos*, however, were the army’s main target. While some members of these communities did collaborate, the majority had no relationship with the insurgency: “they were an unarmed civilian population, massacred under a regime of State terror and violence intended to wipe out large groups of the indigenous population” (14) through an eighteen-month-long scorched-earth campaign,³⁹ ostensibly in order to ‘neutralize’ the guerrilla forces.⁴⁰ From 1980–83 over one million people were displaced (of a total population of eight million), including 80 percent of the highland Maya population, many of whom were widows, who fled to Guatemala City or to work on coastal plantations. Thousands of families fled to the mountains, leading

³⁹ This scorched-earth strategy was introduced by US military advisors, modelled after tactics employed in Vietnam. These advisors “trained Guatemalan officers at institutions such as the School of the Americas, now located in Fort Benning, Georgia (recently renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation). ... Recently declassified CIA cables reveal US support for the massacres. In March 1999 then President Clinton visited Guatemala, where he apologized for US involvement: ‘It is important that I declare clearly that the support given to military and intelligence units implicated in acts of violence and extensive repression was an error we must not repeat’” (Anderson 15)

⁴⁰ Former president Efraín Ríos Montt, who presided over the worst of these atrocities (1982-1983) along with former president General Fernando Romeo Lucas García (1978-1982), and was later tried for genocide in both Guatemala and Spain, has referred to the scorched earth campaign as ‘draining the sea to catch the fish’ Carasik, Lauren. “The long arc of justice in Guatemala.” *Al Jazeera*.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/04/2013422115046800678.html>

semi-nomadic lives hiding from the military, gradually coming together to form resistance communities (CPRs). During this time, over four hundred villages were razed, and over one hundred thousand people were killed. Over one million people, mostly rural Indigenous Maya, were internally displaced, and approximately two hundred thousand crossed the border to take refuge in Mexico.⁴¹

Mexico was initially unprepared for the surge of refugees, sending thousands back across the border. However, after intense international criticism, the Mexican government granted the refugees temporary renewable visas and constructed refugee camps. Residents were provided with building supplies and basic rations of corn, beans, and rice, and “by 1983, the UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) had recognized forty-six thousand refugees in more than ninety refugee camps stretched out along the southern border of Chiapas” (21-22). Because many refugees had previously been active as member of agricultural cooperatives in Guatemala, they arrived with a high degree of political awareness and an even higher capacity for organizing. They constructed camps of community buildings and palm-thatched huts for individual families. They elected community leaders and “developed complex participatory decision-making processes” (22). They produced their own food where possible, raised pigs and chickens, and established weaving, shoemaking, and carpentry workshops.⁴²

⁴¹ Cf. Anderson (18) and North & Simmons (12-13) for accounts of this history. Also: Taylor, Clark. *Return of Guatemala's Refugees: Reweaving the Torn*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.; Stølen, Kristi Anne. *Guatemalans in the Aftermath of Violence: The Refugees' Return*. Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.; Crosby, Alison Diana.. *Re-imagining the Guatemalan Nation: A Feminist Action Research Perspective of Exile and Return*. Thesis. York University, 1995.

⁴²These projects were “supported by the Diocese, Guatemalan non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in exile in Mexico, organizations such as the Jesuit Refugee Service, and agencies such as the UNHCR and the Mexican Commission to Aid Refugees. Canadian churches and NGOs funded several projects” (Anderson 22)

Throughout the decade of exile, many individual Guatemalans did return from Mexico to their country of origin. However, this repatriation, encouraged by the Guatemalan army and the Mexican government, began with a stay in a so-called ‘re-education centre,’ where “the army indoctrinated the returning refugees, and captured internally displaced families, about their responsibilities to the military and the state” (27). They were then housed in ‘model villages’⁴³ alongside displaced persons captured by the army in military offensives, survivors of the scorched-earth tactics, and other repatriated refugees, all of whom were compelled by the army to construct these villages through forced labour. All men who were not in the army were made to serve in PACs, civil defence patrols, that were essentially extensions of the army, “village paramilitary units forced to police their own communities, often for twenty-four to forty-eight hour shifts... pervasive spies, used to control and inform on all elements of rural society even at the smallest community level” (26). The army often harassed or killed these repatriated refugees; the women were terrorized. They suffered many obstacles in reclaiming their lands, which had often been usurped by the army, or by other internally displaced people, in their absence.

The refugees in Mexico longed to return to their ancestral lands in Guatemala. However, as they learned of the fates of those who had repatriated, they became convinced that a *collective* return, of which they could negotiate the conditions with governments and NGOs involved, was crucial. They formed the CCPP, the Permanent Commissions of Guatemalan Refugees in Mexico, and as such organized their collective return, “a political process generated at the base by the refugees themselves, supported by international, nongovernmental refugee assistance agencies. It involved people who went back to their home villages or other chosen sites in highly

⁴³ Again, inspired by their US advisors, these were much like the “strategic hamlets” of Vietnam.

visible organized groups only after certain guarantees had been obtained from the Guatemalan government” (North & Simmons 6). Highly organized, the refugees defined the conditions for their return. One of those conditions was the right to be accompanied.

The presidents of the Central American nations met in August 1987 to reach an agreement to settle the military conflicts that had plagued the region, in some cases, for decades. Crucial to this Esquipulas II Peace Accord was an agreement to attend to each country’s refugee crisis. Upon learning of this, the Guatemalan refugees promptly wrote an open letter demanding that their position be taken into account when possible solutions to their situation were being discussed: “Without our participation no just solution is possible,” (Anderson 29) they asserted. Acute debate took place across all camps, with the refugees agreeing upon, and widely publicizing, the following conditions essential to their return:

The right to return home, voluntarily, in a collective and organized fashion;

The right to return to and take possession of their former lands;

The right of organization and freedom of association;

The right to life and integrity, both personal and of the community;

The right to freedom of movement both within the country and internationally; and

The right to be accompanied during the return by national and international groups.⁴⁴

The refugees in Guatemala had learned from the experience of Salvadoran refugees, whose return from Honduras had been facilitated—indeed, made possible—by international accompaniment, inviting returned Salvadoran refugees and the Jesuits involved in accompaniment coordination to consult with them in Mexico. These consultations cemented in

⁴⁴ In Anderson 29-30.

their minds “the political importance of the presence of internationals in these processes because they are the eyes, they are the ears of the world in the face of such a situation. The refugees decided that the right to accompaniment of their own choosing should be a condition for their return” (40). Accompaniment was painstakingly explained, discussed, and debated across the camps. The communities were not without concerns and doubts.⁴⁵

The prevalence of governmental deception and unfulfilled promises—unbuilt health clinics; building materials that never arrived; finding that the land they had been given was already occupied; pressure exerted to form civil patrols and/or to join the military—strengthened the refugees’ resolve to make their return visible. If the world was watching, they would be less likely to suffer these disappointments, or worse. “We decided that we were not going to return unnoticed,” (41) they declared.

⁴⁵ This was a time when there had been somewhat widespread fears of foreigners stealing babies in illegal adoptions, for instance. The refugees also feared outside intervention into their communities’ affairs. However, “when their leaders explained that accompaniers would be sent by groups who had demonstrated solidarity over many years and would be well trained, would speak Spanish, and would not intervene in internal decision-making, the refugees welcomed accompaniment” (Anderson 41).

Defining Accompaniment

Accompaniment is defined as supplement, complement, addition. In the context of human rights, though, what exactly do we mean by ‘accompaniment’? Accompaniment is the process of situating oneself as an unarmed volunteer, assuming a physical presence alongside social activists who are victims of political threats, in order to dissuade violence, bear witness, and activate international solidarity networks. The essential idea of accompaniment is that “foreign citizens use their ‘power’ as foreigners in an attempt to safeguard the security of individuals or groups at risk of harassment or persecution by their own state or an agent thereof” (Levitt 238). While the term ‘human rights observer’ is often used interchangeably, accompaniment does denote something more: accompaniment is “a practice that is done for or with a *person* or a *group*, it is not just a process” (238). For example, the United Nations might observe a refugee return, while accompaniers would be accompanying the *returnees* themselves. Accompaniment is therefore, in essence, *relational*.

Barry Levitt, in his chapter on “Theorizing Accompaniment,” asserts that the practice of accompaniment “is an important innovation in transnational and transsocietal relations, particularly in terms of the power afforded to individuals and nonstate actors” (238-239). While there is nothing new about solidarity activists from the North going to the South, he claims, it is “the institutional context in which accompaniers serve [that] renders this form of accompaniment rather unique” (239). By institutional context, Levitt refers to the “organizational structures of the NGOS and their relationships with each other, with the government, and with the returnees” (239).

Levitt's analysis of accompaniment is based in a political-scientific examination of the institutions of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that facilitate the practice. He explores three distinct models for understanding this institutional context: his first approach draws from neo-Marxist international relations theory, suggesting that these institutions, and the practice of accompaniment, hold the potential to radically transform structures of power. His second approach looks at what he terms the 'cynical views': a set of pragmatic critiques of accompaniment that posits the practice as "misplaced goodwill, as paternalism/imperialism, and as adventure tourism" (248), therefore claiming that accompaniment, and the NGOs that facilitate the practice, are ineffectual at best, and dangerous at worst. Finally, he suggests a third approach as a middle ground, looking at accompaniment NGOs through the rubric of development in order to situate them as "a form, albeit novel, of North-South development assistance. Although the focus of activity is not the redistribution of material resources, accompaniment nonetheless fits the paradigm of aid" (251).

Situating them as such, Levitt places accompaniment organizations, within the typology of NGOs proposed by David Korten,⁴⁶ as part of a nascent fourth generation of development organizations "based on a vision of social movements as the central actors in a development process that goes beyond simple economic growth to encompass issues such as human rights, gender, and the environment" (252). Levitt similarly places accompaniment institutions on Laura Macdonald's⁴⁷ spectrum of relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs based on

⁴⁶ Korten, David. *Getting to the Twenty-First Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1990.

⁴⁷ Macdonald, Laura. *Supporting Civil Society: Nongovernmental Assistance to Costa Rica and Nicaragua*. Diss. York University, 1992.

relative levels of interventionism. From the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) with its support for counterinsurgency strategies in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, to less blatantly interventionist relations of *paternalism*, and arm's length relationships characterized as *laissez-faire*, in which bureaucratic measures (cash flows, progress reports) are the only significant interactions between Northern and Southern organizations. Finally, Macdonald situates *accompaniment* as a fourth type of relationship characterized by the basis of “respect for control by the local agency and an attempt to provide non-monetary forms of support for the struggles of local groups and a deeper form of commitment to the processes of social change in the Third World” (70 quoted in Levitt 252-253).

After mapping institutional structures and policies of accompaniment NGOs in Guatemala, Levitt suggests that the first framework based on a neo-Gramscian approach to global social change is “overly optimistic about the capacity of these NGOs to struggle for change at the transnational level” (253). He believes that the second model, based on the criticisms of accompaniment in theory and in practice as misplaced goodwill, paternalism/imperialism, and adventure tourism, is excessively cynical and pessimistic. Finally, (in the great scholarly tradition of ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears’), he finds the third approach, based on theories of development NGOs, “to be the most appropriate of the three” (253).

Levitt’s “Theorizing Accompaniment” is instructive in its desire to situate this mode of political action within established discourses of international development—it exhibits one of relatively few attempts to theorize the practice of accompaniment; indeed, one of the things that drew me to focus on accompaniment is the dearth of scholarship on the topic. Levitt also questions the value of locating the practice of accompaniment theoretically, claiming that “it is in

the long-term interests of these organizations and the Guatemalan groups with whom they work to think about, and question, the wider implications of their work. The day-to-day pragmatic problem-solving with which these NGOs are occupied can potentially limit their capacity to step back and examine themselves” (239). Levitt admits that “a theoretical discussion of accompaniment may be the luxury of academia, [but] nevertheless hope[s] that it will be useful” (239). I echo this desire that, while perhaps emerging from academic and art worlds, my exploration of accompaniment might be of some use.⁴⁸

My approach in looking at accompaniment is through research-creation informed by performance studies, affect theory, and critical race feminisms. I am less concerned with the ontology of the institutions that facilitate accompaniment, and more interested in the various ways accompaniment is performed and what is at stake. My interest lies in the lived experience of embodied activism—what Natalie Kouri-Towe calls its *texture*—and how using the essay film, gallery installation, and performance might allow us to explore both the texture of human rights accompaniment, and the historical and contemporary networks and technological shifts that have created and sustained this embodied practice. In my initial research on accompaniment, I found the dearth of scholarship and cultural production on the the topic both frustrating and fascinating: *why* were more scholars and artists not interested in exploring this complicated and complex form of embodied and relational activism?

The most significant book-length study of accompaniment is Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren’s *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights* (1997), which explores protective accompaniment as a tool for mitigating political

⁴⁸ See Chapter Three for a discussion of *Arte Útil*, or useful art.

repression and human rights abuses. Mahony and Eguren are former PBI (Peace Brigade International) accompaniers, and as such, they draw on their personal experiences as well as those of other activists in El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Haiti, and Colombia to explore why and under what conditions protective accompaniment is likely to be effective, and, in doing so, advise future accompaniers of potential dilemmas and risks. The book's focus is on the development of accompaniment in Guatemala in the 1980s and early 1990s, and it is based on in-depth interviews with accompaniers, the accompanied, and Guatemalan heads of state during this period. *Unarmed Bodyguards*, although rather journalistic, does offer crucial insight into the principles (nonviolence, noninterference), objectives (deterrence, education, networking), and strategies (long- vs. short-term volunteers) of accompaniment. For me, the crucial intervention of the book is the naming of white privilege as central to the 'power' of accompaniment, describing accompanied Sri Lankans' assertion that their "protection was dependent on a 'white face'" (251), and an equally vital *elision*⁴⁹ is the fact that any significant discussion of gender is absent from their analysis. In a later article,⁵⁰ Mahony notes that "interestingly, many accompaniment organizations have found that a significant majority of those volunteering are women" (15), but does not take this line of inquiry further. It is this combination of

⁴⁹ In his review of *Unarmed Bodyguards*, Jonathan W. Warren notes the omission of the discussion of historical precedents of accompaniment in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, when "white accompanists in the southern U.S. proved a powerful weapon for inhibiting the violence of white paramilitary groups" (122). This case study of domestic accompaniment in the US Civil Rights Movement, while a fascinating subject for further research, is outside the scope of my investigation. Indeed, domestic accompaniment is not taken up in *Unarmed Bodyguards*; Warren's criticism of the book is that it focuses too intently on PBI and its contributions, to the detriment of a wider history. Warren notes, "important instances of domestic accompaniment, such as the non-Indian Brazilians who accompanied Brazilian Indians in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, are precluded from consideration as examples of accompaniment from which invaluable lessons could be learned" (122). Along this line, I would be very interested to explore this in the Canadian context in future research, looking at embodied solidarity in struggles for Indigenous sovereignty.

⁵⁰ Mahony, Liam. "The Accompaniment Model in Action." *Fellowship* 77.7 (Summer 2013): 12-16.

underdeveloped analysis of race and completely absent discussion of gender that has had the most significant impact on my research; discussions of the intersection of race and gender in accompaniment work were at the core of the interviews I did with contemporary companions in Guatemala in 2016, and thus are central to the essay video *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*. And it was through my first delegation experience in 2015—a delegation composed entirely of women, as both participants and facilitators—that I encountered this gendered aspect of solidarity work firsthand.

Rivers for Life

In March 2015 I was invited to join NISGUA's Rivers for Life delegation. Along with three other delegates—all women from the United States⁵¹—and NISGUA staff facilitators Ellen Moore, Megan Solis Whelan, and Bridget Brehen, I visited communities in resistance to the proposed Xalalá hydroelectric dam in the northern Ixcán region of Guatemala. After a brief orientation in Guatemala City, we set off on the two-day journey to the Ixcán. We stopped in Cobán, spending a night there and meeting with the People's Council of Tzututlán, a Q'eqchi Maya collective, who offered a deep analysis of how “the Xalalá dam fits within a larger, interlinked system of mega-development projects, designed and negotiated by state and corporate interests.”⁵²

⁵¹ The other members of the delegation included doctoral candidate, with a previous law degree, Karen Bryant; creative nonfiction writer Chris Shorne, who would later go on to do accompaniment work through NISGUA; and RaeAnn Swanson-Evans, who was about to embark upon doctoral studies focusing on Guatemalan history.

⁵² <https://nisgua.org/a-report-back-on-nisguas-rivers-for-life-delegation/>

The following day we set out in the van towards Copal AA La Esperanza. As we turned off the main highway the road became more and more uneven, riddled with potholes. I drew the journey on a strip of clear 16mm film, keeping my hand still and letting the road imprint itself on the celluloid. At a certain point the road became so muddy that the van could no longer pass; we climbed into the back of pick-up trucks and resumed the last leg of the journey standing, jostling along through the cloud forest on roads lined with cardamom plants.

When we reached Copal AA La Esperanza we were greeted with the utmost hospitality: ice-cold coconuts were immediately offered to quench our thirst—no small gesture considering the scarcity of electricity, and therefore refrigeration, in Copal AA. The community members welcomed us with an exhibition of vegetables, fruits, and medicinal plants painstakingly arranged on tables outside of the community hall and labelled with precise black lettering on slips of white paper: *güisquil*, *frijol*, *calabaza*, *malanga*. Soon after, we were given a tour of the vast food forest from which the community derived this sustenance, walking up and down the mountain sides in our muddy gumboots through the corn *milpa*, the beans, coffee, and cardamom, seamlessly integrated in the subtropical forest. Copal AA La Esperanza is a returned refugee community of about 130 families who were displaced in the 1980s by state violence during the internal armed conflict. After struggling to rebuild their community, these same families would again be displaced by the construction of the dam that would flood these lands with over 75 meters of water. We washed off the dust and sweat of the day with a swim in the Copón river before sharing dinner with the community over introductions and dialogue. As guests, we were given the largest, juiciest pieces of chicken in our bowls of stew.

That afternoon we met with community spokespeople and elders, members of ACODET, who came from approximately a dozen other affected communities along the Copón and Chixoy rivers. The meeting, translated between Spanish, Q'eqchi, and English, was an illustration of the consensus-based and community-wide decision making processes they employed; every person in attendance was given their turn to speak, introducing themselves and their communities, and elucidating the profound connections they hold with the land—and the equal depth of the devastation that would befall their communities should the Xalalá dam project go forward.

Participating in this delegation had a profound effect on my research. Meeting Víctor, his ACODET *compañeros*, and the members of the People's Council of Tzututlán and learning from their analysis of the *coyuntura*, the socio-political context, that shed light on the intricacies of the potential displacement of the communities by the dam—a dispossession that is not discrete, but rather a current chapter in the perpetual narrative of colonization; being welcomed by the communities, sharing meals with individual families throughout our time with them, being shown a hospitality that defies description, and witnessing the pride that these communities take in their lands; being guided through this landscape and this learning by young women who were so immensely knowledgeable, humble, and self-reflexive about the work they were doing—both its successes and its limitations; meeting and sharing the experience with the other delegates, all women, from a senior citizen to a young masters student, all of us engaged in these parallel germinations of consciousness.

Delegations have long been a crucial aspect of solidarity work. Kathryn Anderson describes delegations of Canadians visiting the refugee camps in Chiapas in the 1980s and 1990s before the Return, claiming, “face-to-face encounters enabled delegates to return home with an

in-depth understanding of the refugees' hopes, challenges, and plans, making them excellent advocates for the refugees in Canada" (39). Anderson describes the first delegation from the Maritimes to Guatemala:

That first delegation sowed seeds that bore much fruit. Delegates wrote newspaper articles and spoke to countless churches, classes, and community groups, an activity that has continued with every Maritimes delegate and accompanier. The Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network was formed. Within months the Network had established the Atlantic Urgent Action Network... BTS helped prepare a delegation of Maritimes First Nations people to the Five Hundred Years of Indigenous, Black, and Popular Resistance Continental Conference held in Guatemala in October 1991. There Indigenous and African-American peoples prepared their resistance to the celebration of Columbus's arrival in the Americas. (134-135)

In short, as solidarity worker Ann Godderis asserts, the experience of being a delegate "moves people from an inclination to do charity to an inclination to do justice work" (in Anderson 157).

As the Rivers for Life delegation and Víctor Caal Tzuy's preceding tour illustrate, speaking tours and delegations go hand-in-hand as complementary modes of engagement. Since many people lack the temporal, financial, physical, and/or emotional resources to do accompaniment work or to participate in a delegation, solidarity networks like NISGUA and BTS will invite their Guatemalan partners to speak in North America, sharing their work, their personal narratives, and their political analyses. Returned accompaniers often perform similar speaking engagements, relating their experiences and the need for further action. This has the effect of galvanizing support for their respective work, as "Canadians who hear first-hand

testimonies and analyses gain new insights and often move to a deeper level of involvement” (160). Essentially, speaking tours and delegations are opportunities for face-to-face meetings and the sharing of stories and testimony on various registers of formality. Both modes of engagement also involve sharing refreshments or meals, a form of hospitality that galvanizes the building of relationships, as participants debrief, share laughs and lighter discussions, offering moments of levity and companionship after the weighty issues and situations discussed. These fora open spaces for “human sharing, the human relationship that gives life.... It is also a sharing that is not based just on an economic relationship. Rather, it is a very direct, very human relationship ... not just a relationship on paper” (203).

Performing Solidarity

The building of relationships and the building of public awareness are intertwined in grassroots solidarity activism. Reaching new people is a perpetual task; moving beyond ‘preaching to the converted,’ expanding and strengthening the base, is crucial for the longevity and effectivity of solidarity movements. Gaining an audience for events like speaking tours is no easy feat. As Anderson questions, “how do you persuade Canadians to become interested in the reality of people in a distant country with a different culture? How do you persuade them to attend an event on genocide, torture, or human rights abuse, when they would prefer not to hear, especially if they have a sneaking suspicion that it might have something to do with their own lives?” (153). Gaining an audience is far from easy, and involving this audience in further solidarity efforts is even more challenging. Personal testimony is often the entry point for involvement and sustained commitment in solidarity activism:

By far the most effective means of involving new people is ‘personal testimony,’ through which family, friends, colleagues, community, and church groups are touched and challenged to new understandings and to action. Few are drawn into solidarity work through political analysis alone, no matter how relevant and articulate it may be. Analysis is utterly essential to effective solidarity work, but is rarely the best way to get new people involved. Slideshows and presentations by a visiting Guatemalan or a recently returned Canadian in the local church, community hall, or university campus have had a remarkable impact. A dozen people gathered around a kitchen table with cups of coffee (fairly traded!) has often had more influence and potential for long-term involvement than a large meeting where individuals make no personal contact with the speaker or sponsoring group. (153)

The vernacular performance of the slideshow, the public declaration of personal testimony, and the relational importance of sharing a cup of coffee—all of this illustrates the fundamental importance of performance, hospitality, and affect in building networks of solidarity. Kathryn Anderson describes how she initially became interested and involved in Canadian solidarity with Guatemala: as a delegate at a faith-based conference, she attended a coffeehouse in support of the Guatemala Refugee Project, a B.C.-based ecumenical group working to sponsor labour lawyers Marta Gloria de la Vega and Enrique Torres and their five children. She recalls how Guatemalan poet “Julia Esquivel read her poetry, placing before us searing images of violence, dreams, and visions of hope. Exiled members of drama troupe Teatro Vivo and musical group Kin Lalat made us laugh and weep as they expressed in song and mime Guatemalans’ suffering

and determination” (xviii). Later both Teatro Vivo and Kin Lalat performed in Montreal where she was then living:

After the performances, I met refugees living in Montreal whose affirmation of life, resilience, hope, and commitment drew me to them. I joined a newly formed solidarity group, the Support Committee for the People of Guatemala. We met regularly, communicating in English, French, and Spanish with translation, often into two languages. We met over potluck suppers, with guacamole, beans, and corn tortillas as common fare. We had many differences—linguistic, cultural, political, personal—but we survived, worked together, and became friends. We kept alive the reality of those who had been ‘disappeared’ by the Guatemalan army through monthly vigils in front of St. James United Church in downtown Montreal. We sent letters and petitions to the Canadian government urging Canada not to resume its aid to the Guatemalan government. We sent telegrams to the Guatemalan government and army protesting human rights violations. We spoke in churches, schools, universities and at Amnesty International meetings. We organized visits of Guatemalan political analysts, human rights workers, and another tour across Quebec of Kin Lalat. We held art displays and showed films. We fundraised for projects with displaced Mayas who were hiding in the mountains and jungles of Guatemala or had taken refuge in southern Mexico. (Anderson xviii)

This passage illustrates how crucial performance and creative expression are in solidarity work and the building of networks. Affective engagement, vital for sustained commitment, is deployed

through personal testimony and artistic practices. In the case of Kin Lalat and Teatro Vivo, cultural and linguistic barriers, too, were transcended through music, movement, and mime.

Role play, too, was a vital performance tactic employed in the training of human rights accompaniers. Pam Cooley, co-founder and former executive director of Project A (Project Accompaniment)⁵³ facilitated many training sessions for prospective accompaniers in which the primary objective was deepening their understanding and practice of nonviolence. These training sessions involved presentations, discussions, group exercises, and reflections in which participants expanded their knowledge of the role of accompaniment; the goals, policies, structure of Project A itself; and Guatemalan history, the Return process, and the current context. Perhaps the most crucial element of the training was “a series of complex role-plays that simulated stressful situations such as military roadblocks, intimidation, interrogation, abusive language, pushing and shoving of refugees or accompaniers, kidnapping, and machismo sexism. The element of surprise played a significant part” (50). Some role-plays included physical exertion over an extended period to prepare accompaniers for this aspect of their work. Group reflections took place after each role-play exercise in which participants shared their reactions to the roles they played, alternatively acting as accompanier, soldier, or refugee.⁵⁴ In these reflections, participants were asked to articulate and explore their fears, consider what other responses to each given scenario they might have had, and share their reactions. Once

⁵³ Project A, formed in 1992, was a coast-to-coast network of grassroots groups supporting the collective, organized return to Guatemala of Maya refugees. Project A, never intended as a permanent institution, but rather a response to the Return and a step in the evolution of solidarity work, fulfilled its mandate and dissolved in the late 1990s.

⁵⁴ The historical precedent, and the importance, of role play and simulation for nonviolence training in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement has been documented by photographer Eve Arnold in her series *Non-Violence* (1960). <http://pro.magnumphotos.com/Catalogue/Eve-Arnold/1960/USA-Virginia-Non-Violence-1960-NN161929.html> Accessed 18 March 2018.

participants explored scenarios through role play, they were given tangible advice, such as “when confronted by the army, stand with your hands open, not clenched [and] keep your arms open, not crossed over the chest, to non-verbally reduce the conflictive atmosphere; walk at the side of the group, not in the centre, to help ensure refugees’ safety; and enter a vehicle last and exit first, to reduce the risk of abductions” (50). This training method was not without criticism: “some trainers and participants questioned the need to act out violence in order to train accompaniers in non-violence... [c]ritics were concerned about the unnecessary reproduction of violence and the impact on individuals who may have suffered previous abuse or trauma” (51) As the war drew to a close and the situation became calmer, the emphasis on responding to potential violence was downplayed.

It is clear that performance tactics—from role-play in nonviolence training, to musical and theatrical tours as methods of consciousness-raising and intercultural exchange—are vital aspects of human rights accompaniment work and the wider solidarity activism that facilitates and contextualizes it. In *Unarmed Bodyguards*, Mahony and Eguren claim that, “the accompaniment volunteer is literally an embodiment of international human rights concern” (1), and we can imagine accompaniment as a practice not unlike the form of performance art that is also referred to as body art, live art, or action art, in that both artists and accompaniers use “their bodies to challenge regimes of power and social norms, placing the body front and center” (Taylor, 2016; 1) in their respective practices. As such, we can also look at accompaniment *itself* as a performance: it is both real and constructed, it is embodied, and it is a form of living and being-in-relation that is bracketed off from day-to-day life,⁵⁵ and that

⁵⁵ Although accompaniment is bracketed off from ‘regular’ life, much of accompaniment is very much living the day-to-day of meals and walks and conversations, as taken up in the essay film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*.

intervenes in society. Performance, like accompaniment, is “a doing, something done” (Diamond, in Taylor, *Performance* 7-8), and both performance and accompaniment can “be understood as *process*—as enactment, exertion, intervention and expenditure” (8). This is, I believe what Mahony and Eguren are gesturing towards when they assert that the accompanier is an embodiment of international human rights concern, when we imagine human rights a relational and performed process, rather than a static collection of entitlements. As Jean-Luc Nancy asserts, “rights enact an active freedom, creative not only of community but also, more radically, of freedom. Right is freedom creating itself indefinitely” (17). For Nancy, freedom is not a *thing*; it cannot be given or granted by governments. Freedom, in a state of constant becoming, can only be *performed*. Looking at human rights in general, and the specific “reiterated corporeal behaviour” (Taylor, *Performance* 26) of accompaniment, through the lens of performance in this way illustrates that performance is both “a practice and an epistemology, a creative doing, a methodological lens, a way of transmitting memory and identity, and a way of understanding the world” (39). Accompaniment is one example of the ‘doing’ of human rights, and reading it as performance is an attempt to understand this embodied action.

Accompaniment, too, is *performed*, as one performs the duties and roles of an accompanier: walking alongside returning refugees, escorting witnesses in a genocide trial from their home communities to the capital city to give testimony, eating meals with community members and relaying information, observing nonviolent protests at mine sites and, later, writing articles, blog posts, and letters about the actions. As an assemblage of performed gestures of solidarity, accompaniment functions much like other forms of performance, as they “operate as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through

reiterated actions” (Taylor, 2016; 25). Accompaniment is also evaluated by how well it *performs*: does it, in fact, provide security to local activists under threat of politically-motivated violence? How effective is this embodied activism, and how can we know? Does it effectively ‘make space for peace’? In the following chapter, I will explore this particular question through the work of Sara Koopman, looking at the spatial dimensions of both human rights accompaniment and the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside. project*.

Chapter Two: Making Spaces

Beside, Nearby, Outside

Two caucasian women ride alongside members of a displaced Colombian community in a jeep. This community has been living in a local town's sports arena after having been dispossessed of their lands by armed actors. With the help of international NGOs, they have created an agricultural project where they can harvest some of the food they are accustomed to growing in their home community. The agricultural project is in a remote and isolated rural area; fearing violence as they work their crops, they are accompanied. Once they arrive, they walk single-file through the tall corn stalks and banana trees. The two women, clad in white shirts announcing their affiliation with PBI, walk behind them through the field. While the community members tend to the crop, the women spread a yellow blanket under a banana tree. In time-lapse, we see them shifting positions but remaining relatively stationary as they pass the time writing, talking, smoking, their satellite phone always at the ready.



Figures 13 - 15: Images from *In the Company of Fear* (Velcrow Ripper, 1999)

Two foreign men, similarly clad in white PBI T-shirts, ride aboard a brightly-painted bus, the red and yellow vehicle jostling along a muddy and pothole-riddled country road through verdant green jungle. This road to the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in North-West Colombia, we are told, is notoriously dangerous; of the fifty members of the community who have been killed, many have been killed along this road. Just last week another community member was killed on this stretch. The community has declared itself neutral: it will not harbour armed actors, nor will it provide information, food, or logistics to any of the factions. They have pulled themselves out of the conflict, asserting that the conflict is not theirs, not something they want to be involved in. They have built a nonviolent space as their survival mechanism. One of the PBI accompaniers tells us that the accompaniers themselves have never met a military or paramilitary checkpoint, even though, apparently, they are very frequently on this road. The armed actors are well aware of PBIs presence, and they do not want to be seen.

These two sequences from Velcrow Ripper's 1999 documentary *In the Company of Fear* gesture towards variations on the spatial dimensions of human rights accompaniment, and the ways in which space is created and performed. Communities at risk of political violence carve out spaces of nonviolence and sustenance, and these spaces are buttressed through the presence of international accompaniment. Accompaniment itself contains within it disagreements about how bodies should enact this space: should accompaniers sit within the circle in a community meeting, or sit outside? Should accompaniers help the community with their daily tasks, or should they remain apart, as we witness in the sequence above in which the women remain separate from the workers in the field. Is it appropriate for accompaniers to attend certain community events? When there is a march or protest, where should they place themselves?

Accompaniment is a complex choreography of bodies within political spaces.⁵⁶ The fundamental position in this choreography, I argue, is that of *beside*.



Figures 16 - 18: Images from *In the Company of Fear* (Velcrow Ripper, 1999)

In her work on the texture of the Queer Palestine solidarity movement, Natalie Kouri-Towe invokes Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s articulation of *beside*, which “comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations” (Sedgwick 8, in Kouri-Towe 25). In Kouri-Towe’s analysis, Sedgwick’s proposition of ‘beside’ offers an “alternative to a model that calls for our liberation through inclusion into the neoliberal order, [and] invites us to articulate agency and change alongside the dominant order of neoliberalism” thereby “reshaping the very borders of the inclusion/exclusion binary” (25). For Kouri-Towe, oppositional politics too often hinges upon the repression/liberation binary, which “narrow[s] our ability to conceive of agency that is not reactive” (25). Indeed, focusing on the often-elusive attainment of liberation and moments of unequivocal revolution can lead to activist burnout and disenchantment, and the waning or death of social movements. The problem of binary thinking, Kouri-Towe asserts, “is not simply an intellectual concern, but primarily a

⁵⁶ This choreography, and the visibility or invisibility it engenders, is taken up in the essay film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*.

concern about how to mobilize transformational politics under the conditions of neoliberalism” (24). How might we “re-imagine the victories of social movements as those points of unsettling disruption in the status quo, rather than the achievement of some form of liberation” (32)?

Kouri-Towe invokes Sedgwick’s work on the middle ranges of agency that “offer space for effectual creativity and change” (Sedgwick 13, in Kouri-Towe 25); turning our attention to the “more mundane victories of social movements” (25). These mundane victories form the everyday texture of solidarity activism. Human rights accompaniment, I argue, exists in the spaces of ‘beside’ and in the middle ranges of agency. Walking alongside social activists, attending community meetings, having meals, chatting, riding busses, writing articles and blog posts, sitting silently in court proceedings—the vast majority of the experience of accompaniment can be said to be mundane, even boring. Attuning ourselves to this texture, to different temporalities in these distinct spaces, is to celebrate the everyday of activism. This valourization can lead to the sustainability and longevity of social movements themselves, and to more robust and nuanced analyses of these movements. In short, “to consider the texture of activism is to consider the ethics of solidarity in practice: its productive and transformative possibilities simultaneous to its limits” (23).

How might we, then, consider the ethics of making creative work *about* solidarity? What spaces or positions might we inhabit in research-creation praxis? As a creative researcher with foundational training in anthropology and cinema studies, I have long looked to Trinh T. Minh-Ha’s work—written and filmic—as enlivening and illuminating. In *Reassemblage* (1982), for instance, we see fleeting images from Senegal, images to which Trinh refuses to assign meaning

through traditional ethnographic documentary voice-over. Instead, the film includes almost no narration, sometimes music, sometimes silences. In one of her few voice-over utterances, Trinh states, "I do not intend to speak about/Just speak nearby." For Trinh, speaking nearby is

a speaking that does not objectify, does not point to an object as if it is distant from the speaking subject or absent from the speaking place. A speaking that reflects on itself and can come very close to a subject without, however, seizing or claiming it. A speaking in brief, whose closures are only moments of transition opening up to other possible moments of transition... To say therefore that one prefers not to speak about but rather to speak nearby, is a great challenge. Because actually, this is not just a technique or a statement to be made verbally. It is an attitude in life, a way of positioning oneself in relation to the world. (Trinh in Chen 87)

Speaking nearby is not just a verbalization, but a manner of orienting one's entire body in space—physical and discursive—and this being-in-relation that Trinh describes in her praxis could also be describing the philosophy and performance of accompaniment: presence, noninterference, mutuality.⁵⁷ This attitude and way of positioning oneself that Trinh describes has long resonated with me. In my research-creation work, I have attempted to inhabit this position of speaking *nearby*—rather than speaking *for* or *about*—Guatemala by approaching my experiences there through the entry points of family, memory, and domestic ethnography in *Domestic Product* (2013); by exploring how my body moves through space in *Atitlán* (2015);

⁵⁷ Of course, while accompaniment might strive for 'noninterference' in concrete ways that I describe in this paper and in the video *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.*, there is no *true* 'noninterference' or 'neutrality'—the presence of the accompanier always changes the context (whether or not that is immediately palpable or apparent), and accompaniment activists are certainly not 'neutral' in the face of the injustices they seek to mitigate.

and, now, by exploring human rights accompaniment and the performance of solidarity in *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside*. (2018).

My intention, in looking at accompaniment, is not to exalt the practice as an impeccable form of embodied solidarity (such a thing does not exist!), nor to condemn it as unequivocally perpetuating structures of white supremacy and unjust North-South relations (although certainly it can be read as such!). By volunteering alongside solidarity workers in a participant-observation context in NISGUA's Guatemala City office, and by conducting interviews with contemporary companions, I was seeking a deeper understanding of the complexities and contradictions embedded in the practice of accompaniment, and how companions conceive of their work. One of my biggest concerns was that, by focussing on this one side of the accompaniment relationship, my project might be read as recentering whiteness and positioning the companioner as the central protagonist in a heroic narrative. This is not my intention. My initial intent was to also interview Guatemalan human rights workers and land defenders who had been accompanied, in order to better understand both sides of the accompaniment relationship. I quickly realized that this was not feasible in the timeframe I had to conduct this research. Due to security concerns, access to these individuals is quite limited—relationships of trust must be developed, and these relationship take time to cultivate and nurture; certainly more than my six months of fieldwork would allow for. Equally important is a consideration of exactly what the 'ask' is and what the research will be used for. Communities, particularly Indigenous communities, in Guatemala are very familiar with academic researchers coming to extract knowledge from them, only to leave and never return. Indeed,

many activists in the popular movement rightfully question how the research of First World academics can make any difference to their political work. Many are also concerned that the time and human resources asked or expected of them by researchers will take away from their own political work. The women's organizations share in the general distrust of foreigners, a distrust that is not to be equated with dislike. It is rather a political posture that is rational in an environment of oppression and repression, where the political stakes are not winning or losing an election but rather living or being killed. (Blacklock & Crosby 57)

It was with these concerns in mind that I opted to focus my research on the companions themselves, and to explore accompaniment as performed solidarity. Thinking of solidarity as performed allows us to explore the complex terrain of embodied activism, from the intersections of race and gender that bodies perform and how that creates space(s), to the valence of the word 'performed' defined as put on, false, disingenuous, pretend. This is a facet of the 'performance' of solidarity that this project aims to explore as well. How do 'safety pin solidarity'⁵⁸ and 'virtue signaling,'⁵⁹ for instance, perform in opposition to the actor's stated or presumed intention? When is solidarity 'true' as opposed to 'performed' in this sense? Looking at the multiple valences and facets of performance can open up a space to have these conversations, as

⁵⁸ Cf. D'Oyley, Demetria Lucas. "Come On, White People: We Need More Than Safety Pins to Make Us Feel Safe". *The Root*. 14 November 2016. Website. <https://www.theroot.com/come-on-white-people-we-need-more-than-safety-pins-to-1790857724> Accessed 21 March 2018; Hawkins, Derek. "Safety pins: Solidarity symbol or emblem of 'white guilt'?" *The Washington Post*. 15 November 2016. Website. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/11/15/safety-pins-solidarity-symbol-or-emblem-of-white-guilt/?utm_term=.fea6f8cb604b Accessed 21 March 2018.

⁵⁹ Virtue signalling is the practice of publicly expressing opinions or sentiments intended to demonstrate one's good character or the moral correctness of one's position. Cf. Shariadmadari, David. "'Virtue-signalling' – the putdown that has passed its sell-by date." *The Guardian*. N.d. Website. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jan/20/virtue-signalling-putdown-passed-sell-by-date> Accessed 21 March 2018.

potentially uncomfortable as they might be, as “discomfort produced through creative practice can apprehend the ways in which settler comfort has perpetuated colonial agendas of settler privilege” (Decter & Taunton 38). In approaching solidarity from a critical settler positionality, I aim to engage in “advancing a decolonizing imperative” (39) while acknowledging that this statement of commitment towards settler decolonization... is a privileged declaration insofar as we, along with other settler academics, artists, curators and activists, have chosen to engage in these conversations, whereas for many individuals of Indigenous ancestry it is part of a politics of *survivance*.⁶⁰ Further, while knowing that it is crucial for settler individuals and collectives to make their decolonizing work visible, we recognize the danger of a settler focus occupying space in a manner that reinscribes colonial logics.

(39)

As settlers, our privilege allows us to choose to engage—or not—in discussions and actions of decolonization. I share with Decter and Taunton the imperative to engage in the work of settler decolonization while simultaneously acknowledging “concerns about settler colonial discourse, which has the potential to *take up* space rather than *contribute* in solidarity to Indigenous decolonization processes” (37). Thinking through these concerns is very much aligned with thinking through the practice of accompaniment and what kinds of space it creates and holds.

⁶⁰ Italics in the original text; the term *survivance* was popularized, in the context of Indigenous studies, by Anishinaabe cultural theorist Gerald Vizenor in *Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994. Vizenor clarifies: “Survivance is an active sense of presence the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy and victimry” (vii)

Making Space for Peace

In “Making Space for Peace: International Protective Accompaniment in Colombia,” Sara Koopman examines how accompaniment functions spatially from the standpoint of feminist geography. Koopman states, “in conflict zones some bodies are more likely to be attacked than others. Certain outsiders, for example, tend to be left alone by armed actors. Accompaniment is a grassroots peacebuilding strategy that uses privilege by putting internationals who are less at risk—literally—next to locals who are under threat because of their work for peace and justice” (75). Koopman acknowledges that accompaniers are sometimes referred to as ‘unarmed bodyguards’ and ‘human shields,’ but rejects these terms. The term ‘human shield’ is rejected by accompaniers and by Koopman for its conflation with those who have not *chosen* the role: civilians used by armed actors as a buffer. Aside from agency, the term is eschewed for spatial and relational reasons: ‘shields’ also “implies accompaniers are standing in front of the accompanied rather than walking beside them, as companions” (75).

‘Making space for peace’ is both the slogan of Peace Brigades International and Koopman’s analysis of what accompaniment does and how it works. However, as she notes, this can be interpreted in a variety of ways, dependent upon conceptions of ‘space’ and of ‘peace’: imagining space as an abstract void and peace as a (neo)liberal absence of conflict that facilitates open markets versus “space as relational and peace as multiple, positive, and always in the making” (85). The ‘making’ in PBI’s slogan is also variable and can be seen as simply clearing away threats of physical violence, as opposed to “using different practices, productions and performances of space to reference chains of connection. The latter ‘makes’ relational space in a shared struggle to shape space again and again such that it allows for ever more full and

dignified lives. That is, for more positive peace(s)” (85-86).

Much like how Jean-Luc Nancy conceives of rights as perpetually being created, Koopman sees peace as “a socio-spatial relation that is always made and made again” (86) rather than a static end-point. She asserts that “peace(s) are shaped by the spaces and times through which they are made, as they too shape those spaces. Peace is always situated—it is made in some *way* but also *somewhere* for some *people*” (86). In short, like Nancy’s notion of ‘rights,’ peace is a site-specific relational performance, never completed, always enacted, always present in its ‘doing,’ never done. Accompaniment can create (temporary) pockets of peace by performing certain relations of power in space. This is congruent with notions of space as relational in feminist geography. Following Judith Butler’s assertion that “gender is always a doing, although not by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed” (Butler 25), Gillian Rose claims that “space is also a doing... it does not pre-exist its doing, and... its doing is the articulation of relational performances” (Rose 248).

By leveraging their international presence—performing the privilege of passport and (perhaps) phenotype—accompaniers change the “configuration of power in the space, particularly by networking to power in and from other spaces” (Koopman 83). In her analysis of the performance of space, Gillian Rose claims that space is “the articulation of collisions between discourse, fantasy and corporeality” (247). While her analysis is based in part on Teresa de Lauretis’ articulations of lesbian fantasy life, I would like to suggest that in the case of human rights accompaniment, the ‘fantasy’ in the triad might be a fantasy of a world free of violence, and a positive peace in which not only is there a lack of violence, but in which the conditions exist for self-determination and sovereignty for all. This utopian vision of social justice is

perhaps the fantasy that animates the discourse and embodied performance of solidarity.

Rose believes that “space is a performance of power and we are all its performers” (249) and therefore, as we interpret space critically we must not renounce this, but rather “work towards its realignment in particular contexts” (249). Accompaniment does just that as it performs rights and creates spaces for peace(s). A great deal of how this performance functions is through an intricate oscillation between visibility and invisibility. In the courtroom, for instance, when accompaniers observe legal proceedings in Guatemala, the costume of the *chaleco*⁶¹ is donned immediately before entering, and removed before exiting. This space is firmly bracketed, with its protocols and repertoires of behaviour and codes of visibility. However, even in that space, a negotiation takes place—one accompanier told me, “you want to be visible but not too visible.” This negotiation of visibility is where the material culture of props and costumes interacts with repertoires of behaviour; with a physical negotiation of space. Entering the courtroom, accompaniers might seat themselves in the back rather than the front, avoiding being photographed by the press (who have a tendency to make claims of foreign interference in the judicial system). Sometimes it might be difficult to find a spot to sit in the courtroom. There may be, on one side, many Indigenous communities who have come to support the witnesses, and on the other, for instance, military officers and their families. Literally embodying impartiality and noninterference, accompaniers attempt to balance where they sit in the space of the courtroom. Likewise, they use their posture to visualize a serious and respectful, yet benevolent and neutral,

⁶¹The utilitarian vest that is worn to mark accompaniers as belonging to a certain organization, as being present in a particular capacity. Specific shades and hues, words, acronyms, and symbols embroidered or printed, a visual language of the international labour of concern.

attentiveness.⁶²

This intricate choreography of (in)visibility and neutrality is reminiscent of Kathryn Anderson's assertion that "accompaniment requires... a willingness to be in the background" (179). In this way, accompaniers can be said to be performing the background, embodying a form of camouflage. As Laura Levin notes in *Performing Ground: Space, Camouflage, and the Art of Blending In*,

camouflage is a visual and physical negotiation with one's environment...[that] need not involve the total disappearance of a body into a space or precise mirroring of surroundings. Instead, it implies a process of performative correspondence: embedding oneself, or becoming embedded, in the surrounding environment through the physical and visual stylization of the body. (28)

When accompaniment takes place in a public space (a courtroom, travel on public transportation, marches and protests) an intricate interplay of visibility and invisibility takes place: the presence of the accompaniers must be notable in order to be effective, but the positionality of noninterference—of *beside*—must be simultaneously asserted and maintained. Like taking the position of *beside*, like attending to the middle ranges, looking at accompaniment as performance can work against binary thinking, and much like the performances Levin explores in *Performing Ground*, can "illuminate ways in which figure and ground, visible and invisible, are chiasmically linked" (47).

Following Luce Irigaray, Levin considers women's relationship to space. Women are denied a position from which to speak while simultaneously being relegated to spatial

⁶² This description of accompaniment in the courtroom is synthesized from conversations I had with ACOGUATE accompaniers during my time in Guatemala in 2016.

immanence: “Woman cannot take ‘(a) place’ since she has been made synonymous with ‘the place’ itself. She is the disavowed ground that makes male self-figuration possible” (52). In short, as Irigaray suggests, “*women are place and simultaneously lack (a) place*” (53). In the context of a discussion of the complicated ethics of solidarity that accompaniment in Guatemala foment, I am interested in exploring the ways in which the gendered body enacts space. The film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside* takes up this line of inquiry that the literature on accompaniment eludes. The film’s second section, *GÉNERO // GENDER*, explores the gendered domestic spaces of hospitality in which vital exchanges of accompaniment take place, and the various ‘assemblages of privilege’ inherent in ‘being a woman, being a foreign woman, being a foreign woman with white skin,’ and the spatial relations that these assemblages enact. I discuss, for instance, entry into the kitchen versus addressing a crowd in a public arena and the privilege of access bestowed by the gendered body that companions might put to use in performing space(s).

Laura Levin notes that, “while ‘performing ground’ is sometimes a feminized act, it is certainly not particular to women ... Non-white, lower class, and queer persons, among others, have always occupied the invisible background, and, in fact, the presence of white women’s bodies can, in several contexts, also make those bodies disappear” (65). In the context of human rights accompaniment in Guatemala, it is crucial to acknowledge the entanglements of gender and race in the performance of space(s), and ways in which the presence of white women’s bodies might contribute to the discursive disappearance of Guatemalan women.

In the film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside* I explore the notion of the companioner’s body as a prosthetic, a tool for extending and amplifying the bodies of local activists. I believe

this is a generative metaphor through which to think about how accompaniment is performed. However, this analysis must be tempered with a critical awareness of how race figures into such a discussion. A productive counterpoint to the notion of the accompanier-as-prosthetic is Diane M. Nelson's exploration of how Guatemalan women themselves can be read as prosthetics. In "Stumped Identities: Body Image, Bodies Politic, and the Mujer Maya as Prosthetic," Nelson describes how the "prosthetic makes up for something missing, it covers over an opening, [and] overcomes a lack of presence" and she argues that

for the Guatemalan nation-state the *mujer Maya* overcomes the missing Mayan representation in the recent peace process and, like a peg leg, supports the nation's limping political economy. For the Mayan cultural rights movement, which must prove itself appropriate to modernity while retaining the tradition that legitimates it, 'she' fills in this impossible divide. The *mujer Maya* also serves to support first world anthropology trying to be in solidarity with building peace and strengthening Mayan rights while being 'feminist.' (314)

Nelson suggests that the identifications of nation, ethnicity, and gender are themselves like wounded bodies that rely on the imagined discursive/symbolic construct of the *mujer Maya*, the Mayan woman, to support them. Indeed, corporeal metaphors abound in Nelson's work on Guatemala⁶³, and in this article she asserts that "Guatemala's image is a wounded body" (315). Thinking of the *mujer Maya* as prosthetic that provides crucial support for this wounded body, Nelson discusses the trope of "Woman as the ground or site on which national, ethnic, modern,

⁶³ This article comes out of a larger project on the relations of the Guatemalan state to the Mayan cultural rights movement entitled *A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.)

and traditional bodies politic are constructed” (317), much in keeping with Levin’s discussions of ‘performing ground.’

We might consider both how “the *mujer Maya* as prosthetic sustains and moves nation, ethnicity, modernity, feminism while she is moved by them” (319) and how the (gendered) bodies of accompaniers similarly, and sometimes simultaneously, function as prosthetics, “foreign element[s] that reconstruct that which cannot stand up on its own, at once propping up and extending its host. The prosthesis is always structural, establishing the place it appears to be added to” (Wigley 9, in Nelson 319). The wounded body politic of Guatemala relies upon both Mayan women and international accompaniers in complex, complicated, and often intertwined ways. These bodies, themselves, are networked.

Networked Bodies

Following Judith Butler, Diana Taylor points out that “no one mobilizes a claim to move and assemble freely without moving and assembling together with others... As bodies we are ‘networked’—connected, extended into our surrounding environment” (Taylor, *Performance* 129). Looking at human rights accompaniment, we can see how bodies function in intricate networks to perform solidarity. The chain of connections and the networked space of accompaniment make clear that indeed, “bodies are never one but (at least) two because they should always be thought of in terms of relations between” (Rose 252).

While whiteness does play a role in the practice and function of accompaniment, it is complicated and it is not the only factor. In fact, Sara Koopman describes how impoverished accompaniment can be when accompaniers “get seduced into thinking that their bodies alone

provide protection, particularly if their bodies stick out as different” (80), rather than engaging in robust risk analysis and the strengthening of the chains of connections that are equally integral to accompaniment’s effectiveness. Activating a chain of networked bodies to mobilize transnational solidarity actions is as crucial to accompaniment’s function as the signalling of difference performed by the accompanier’s body.

Risk assessment is performed before every new instance of accompaniment. If the risk is perceived to be high, chains of connection might be activated in advance. As Koopman describes in the Colombia-U.S. context:

If it is high risk some groups fax a letter to the Colombian General in the area letting them know they will be coming through. They carry a copy of that letter to show at checkpoints, and often they have the mobile phone number of the general to call if there is a problem. Accompaniers get that number by meeting with the general. Often they get that meeting by having the US embassy call the general and, if necessary, they get the US embassy to make that call by having a member of the US Congress call the embassy and ask them to do that. They get the Member of Congress to make that call by getting their constituents to call them, and they get constituents to make those calls by sending letters, action alerts, speaking tours and generally through grassroots organizing in the USA.

The more calls and letters accompaniers can generate from the USA, the more protection they can provide in Colombia. A lot of the practices and performances of accompaniers on the ground in Colombia—like vest uniforms with multiple languages on them—are aimed at reminding armed actors of the power of that chain of connections behind them.

(80)

In the context of Guatemala, the political actors might differ, but the processes remain more or less the same. An accompanier's phenotype (more often than not, whiteness) and costume (for instance, the *chaleco* or the white PBI T-shirt) might visibly mark them as outsiders, and this might initially deter violence against the local activists they are accompanying. However, for accompaniment to be effective in the medium or long term, the physical markers of difference must be backed by a robust chain of networked bodies. While generals and ambassadors are links in such chains, the vast majority of the links are grassroots activists and the chain is built over time and strengthened by 'ordinary' actions rather than moments of crisis. The groundwork laid by these social actors is what I describe in the previous chapter—performances, lectures, speaking tours, and delegations that do the work of consciousness-raising so that people are more likely to understand, care, and take action when they do receive a bulletin, email or letter asking them to do so. As Koopman describes,

This sort of groundwork has been done for years by the solidarity movement in North America, which has built a culture of connection to struggles across Latin America, as well as national policies, paradigms and institutions that they can draw on... The work of accompaniment may seem dramatic—'putting bodies on the line,' getting ambassadors to call generals—but it relies, through these chains, on more ordinary actions elsewhere, from a church dinner to an email or a phone call. (84)

These ordinary actions are, cumulatively, what Natalie Kouri-Towe might refer to as the *texture* of solidarity; the small moments of rupture with the status quo that we must recognize and valorize, taking place perpetually and steadfastly beside the binary of oppression/liberation.

How are these micro-actions—phone calls, letter-writing campaigns, marches, protests—coordinated? How does the grassroots base of concerned individual citizens in Canada, for instance, link to the NGOs and companions working on the ground in Guatemala? The Urgent Action Network (UAN) is an illustration of what links these various social actors across space (and time). Created by the BC-based CTF (Christian Task Force on Central America) in 1986, the Central America Urgent Action Network (UAN) was the way in which bodies were networked in order to “mobilize an immediate response when crises occurred” (Anderson 161). In 1990, in partnership with two Montreal groups,⁶⁴ a Canada-wide UAN was established, and BTS established an Atlantic network in 1991.⁶⁵

Writing Urgent Actions is what connects most Canadians involved in solidarity work, both those with long-term involvement and those newly active. Anderson describes the Urgent Actions:

Most appeals concern abuses arising from political repression and militarization or violations of humanitarian law. An Urgent Action often asks that a letter be sent the government and/or Armed Forces of the country in question. Individuals may also be asked to urge Canadian and occasionally UN or US government officials to monitor and pressure the government involved or make changes in their own policy toward that country. For example, members have been encouraged to question Canada’s aid policy, its support for the Central American peace process or refugee policy. Many letters have been

⁶⁴ The Social Justice Committee and the Comité Chrétien pour les Droits Humaines en Amérique Latine (Christian Committee for Human Rights in Latin America)

⁶⁵ Cf. Anderson 161-164 for a detailed history and a description of the governmental policy and funding changes brought about through letter-writing campaigns in the Canadian context.

sent asking Canada to take a stronger stance on human rights in Guatemala, as well as at UN and other international meetings. (161-162)

The process is activated when a Central American group or international NGO sends an appeal by e-mail or fax. A solidarity group in Canada (such as the CTF or the SJC) immediately prepares an Urgent Action, which includes “an incident description, the likely cause of the violation, who may be responsible, and suggested actions. Necessary mailing and e-mail addresses and fax and phone numbers are listed” (165). The Urgent Action often includes information not readily accessible through the media, such as a brief political analysis from a partner organization that contextualizes the incident, and

provide[s] historical background, socio-economic trends, updates from human rights groups, or reports on Canada’s stance. Excerpts from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners, the UN Convention on Children’s Rights, or Central American Peace and Refugee Accords have been included. (165)

While individuals receive Urgent Actions directly, many also serve as point people who then circulate the requests to their networks in solidarity, student, church, or union groups, networking more social actors/bodies.

Kathryn Anderson notes that UA’s ask writers to send personal rather than form letters, and that therefore “letter writing becomes part of an educational process when individuals compose their own letters. They must think about the issues, which leads to a deepened understanding and often a discovery of the links between specific abuses and the violation of economic, social, and cultural rights” (165-166). This fundamental aspect of solidarity work—

the writing of letters that serves to strengthen the chain of networked bodies—has generated a collection of material documents, from the letters themselves, to faxed Urgent Actions, cover sheets and telegrams, that—along with various networks’ printed newsletters; posters and flyers for film screenings, performances, lectures, and actions; newspaper clippings and delegation reports—forms the contents of the LAWG (Latin America Working Group) collection. This material ephemera can be read as a physical archive that works in tandem with the performed repertoire of human rights accompaniment. Following Diana Taylor’s groundbreaking work on the intertwined archive and repertoire—and how they work together to transmit cultural memory—the following chapter will explore how this archive of material ephemera can itself be performed. However, before I turn to this convergence of archive and repertoire, I would like to explore another spatial dimension of the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project, asking what kinds of spaces might be created and enacted in the gallery space itself.

Escenario: Performative Installation

The *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project is anchored by the titular essay film that explores the performance of human rights accompaniment through a synthesis of interviews conducted with accompaniers in Guatemala in 2016 and archival footage, from solidarity actions to home movies. I would like to conclude my discussion of the spatial dimensions of solidarity by looking at the context in which the film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* is being exhibited, in the Special Projects Gallery at York University, surrounded by posters created from selected LAWG documents and a large wall drawing that maps my research into solidarity networks between Guatemala and Canada.

One overarching concern of the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project is the question *how to we visualize solidarity?* If solidarity is a relational performance of space, a community of feeling and purpose, an affective engagement with responsibility, how can we represent visually something so naturally ephemeral? Does solidarity, like other types of live performance, disappear as it comes into being, leaving only documentation in its wake? One interview question that I posed to the companions I spoke with was: *if you could take one photograph or shoot one scene that would represent accompaniment, what would it look like?* A selfish question, I freely admitted, as I struggled with how to pair images with the ideas we were discussing.

When I returned to Toronto after conducting these interviews, I fortuitously discovered the Latin America Working Group (LAWG) collection, housed at CERLAC (the Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean) at York University. Based in Toronto, LAWG worked on Canada and Latin America solidarity research and action for more than thirty years, from 1966 until the late 1990s. Despite being a small non-governmental organization with limited resources, LAWG had a robust and powerful membership from academia, labour unions, and churches that carried out extensive research, analysis, education, and lobbying. LAWG was “a powerhouse of analysis of events up and down the Americas, of social movements, Canadian corporate impacts, foreign aid, political initiatives and Canadian government policy, as well as a catalyst for solidarity linkages with many struggles in Latin America.”⁶⁶ Because of this expertise, “LAWG’s analysis, research, and educational work became vital to the development of solidarity work” (Anderson 118) and the group developed links with activists across the country

⁶⁶ <https://lawghaycamino.wordpress.com/> Accessed 23 March 2018

and groups from the Canadian Labour Congress and CUSO, to the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace and the United Church of Canada.

Exploring the Guatemala-Canada materials within the LAWG collection at CERLAC, I discovered this wealth of visual materials that not only illustrated but also, and more importantly, *contextualized* practices of solidarity. The discovery of these materials has, in effect, set me on a path of working backwards: beginning by exploring contemporary accompaniment, I have come to explore the roots of the practice in the Guatemalan Refugee Return of the 1990s, which has, in turn, led me backwards to exploring the genesis of Latin American solidarity actions and organizations in Canada.

The decision to exhibit the essay film among posters created from selected LAWG materials stems from my desire to contextualize the practice of accompaniment and the importance of performance in Guatemala-Canada solidarity movements. It is equally based on a desire to foreground site specificity: rather than explore the performance and philosophy of accompaniment in the abstract, I would like to make direct connections with this collection of materials housed on the York campus—a collection which contains ephemera directly related to Toronto-based solidarity with Guatemala: flyers advertising Rigoberta Menchú Tum’s 1987 lecture at OISE (the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto), posters advertising Teatro Vivo’s performance of *Ixok: Life of a Mayan Woman in Guatemala* at The Studio Theatre, newspaper articles on accompaniment and local artists’ engagement with Guatemala in Toronto newspapers,⁶⁷ and a wealth of other fascinating traces.

⁶⁷ Cf. Sweet, Lois. “They Become Human Shields to Save Lives.” *Toronto Star* 7 February 1986, n.p.; Scotton, Lindsay. “Brush Strokes of Torture.” *Toronto Star* 19 May 1984, M1.



Figure 19: Posters created from LAWG Collection materials (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.

York University is situated in the area known as Tkaronto/Toronto, on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, the Anishinabek nation, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. Tkaronto/Toronto is now home to many Indigenous peoples from across the globe. This territory is subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region. This is the context in which the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project takes place, and as such, I believe it is crucial to explore the question of ‘*whose traditional land are we on?*’ that Celia Haig-Brown implores us to ask when considering decolonizing diaspora. I contend that asking this question is equally crucial when exploring solidarity movements. For this reason, I include, exhibited as photographic prints, materials from the LAWG collection that highlight North American First Nations solidarity efforts with Guatemalan communities, from a letter from the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in support of the 1992 National Day of Support for the People of Guatemala,

to a report issued by members of the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council on their 1983 Central American Fact-Finding Trip. While the history of North American First Nations solidarity work in Latin America is outside the scope of this project, exploring these materials discovered in the LAWG collection has inspired a potential new trajectory for my research,⁶⁸ while contributing to situate my project on this land.



Figure 20: Posters created from LAWG Collection materials (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.

By making visible these materials gleaned from the LAWG collection as photographic prints in the gallery space, I aim to contextualize the practice of human rights accompaniment in Guatemala by illustrating other aspects of solidarity work that make this practice possible. Exhibiting these materials argues for the intertwined nature of the performed repertoire of accompaniment and the material archive. It also activates the gallery space as a site in which further performances and discussions can take place; the *escenario* upon which the durational performance of document scanning will take place (discussed in the following chapter).

⁶⁸ Along similar lines, I am fascinated by the mention of human rights companions being present in “First Nations territory in North America” (Koopman 86; Endnote 3); exploring accompaniment in this context would be a compelling future project.

Escenario in Spanish literally translates as ‘stage.’ I use this term for the environment of the gallery space that enfolds the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside* project in order to invoke Diana Taylor’s notion of the *scenario*: scenarios are “repertoires of cultural imaginings” (*The Archive and the Repertoire* 31), “meaning-making paradigms that structure social environments, behaviors, and potential outcomes” (28) by providing a framework that “predates the script and allows for many possible ‘endings’” (28). Taylor’s scenario is “simultaneously *setup* and *action*” and scenarios “frame and activate social dramas” (29). Taylor believes, “using scenario as a paradigm for understanding social structures and behaviors might allow us to draw from the repertoire as well as the archive” (29).

Similarly, by using the term *escenario*, I want to describe an installation-as-stage that serves not as a passive space for quiet visual contemplation, but a simultaneously physical and social space in which both archive and repertoire can be activated. Here I am inspired by Sámi artist Joar Nango’s *European Everything* project that was initiated for documenta 14 in Athens, Greece and Kassel, Germany.⁶⁹ The stage, “crafted from the materials and techniques of Indigenous peoples from around the world and made to be mobile” (Hopkins n.p.) was built in collaboration with Sámi, Roma, and Greek craftspeople as the artist travelled to Athens and then Kassel. In both cities, the stage was then activated by other artists and the publics. Improvisation was embedded in the piece, from improvisational performances to the vernacular mode of construction, using discarded materials and highlighting the resourcefulness of, for instance, the seminomadic Sámi reindeer herders “continually creating things anew from the scraps and refuse of dominant society... [as] a necessity and the very means of survival” (n.p.).

⁶⁹ Documentation available at “Joar Nango: European Everything (2017) / Documenta 14 Athens.” VernissageTV. Published 10 April 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gZ56AvHq6k

Joar Nango's *European Everything* is illustrative of what Angelika Nollert calls 'performative installation,' work that "defines itself as a synthesis of art event and artwork, of presence and representation, of immateriality and materiality" (4). Nollert refers to the link between ephemeral performativity and static installation, and claims that "artists work in this grey area in order to intertwine different levels of presence, temporality, space and experience" (8). While Nollert's classification of performative installation might be problematized,⁷⁰ I employ (and enjoy) the formulation because it evokes a spatial context in which the material and ephemeral are given equal validity; in which the archive and the repertoire work hand in hand. In Nollert's view, performative installation "unites within itself presence and representation, ephemeral and static elements, event and duration and immateriality and materiality. The direct effect and the indirect work enter into a synthesis" (12-13). In the following chapter I will explore how the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside* project—the titular essay film, the assemblage of posters, the mind map wall drawing, and the durational performance of document scanning—enter into such a synthesis as an "examination of the medialisation and the materiality of performative acts" (90).

⁷⁰ For instance, her claim that "installations are always three-dimensional, they relate to the space surrounding them and evoke a spatial experience. Here they differ from sculpture—even if sculptures can themselves form part of an installation—in that they form a relationship with something" (11) would likely be called into question by, for instance, theorists and historians of sculpture.



Figure 21: *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* installation view (initiated by Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photo: Eva Kolcze.

Chapter Three: Activating the Archive(s): Materialities and Temporalities of Solidarity

Research-Creation between Archive and Repertoire

In researching my MFA thesis project *Domestic Product* (2013), I first encountered Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Duke University Press, 2003). This encounter was a sort of 'conversion moment' that ignited my interest in thinking of how we do politics—and everyday life—through the lens of performance. While my background in documentary film studies and anthropology had brought me into contact with various notions of social and cultural performances, it was Taylor's analysis of the interplay between material archives and ephemeral embodied repertoires as existing "in a constant state of interaction" (21) that animated my emergent research-creation practice. According to Taylor, the archive and the repertoire "have always been important sources of information, both exceeding the limitations of the other... They usually work in tandem and they work alongside other systems of transmission" (21), such as the digital and the visual.

Employing performance as methodological lens and way of knowing—as "embodied praxis and episteme" (17)—allows Taylor to focus her analysis on "the methodological implications of revalorizing expressive, embodied culture" (16). This, in turn, she believes, has the effect of challenging "the preponderance of writing in Western epistemologies" (16) that has prevailed since Conquest. The notion that written culture "seemed easier to control than embodied culture" (17) relegated "nonverbal practices—such as dance, ritual, and cooking, to name a few—that long served to preserve a sense of communal identity and memory" to a subordinate position, no longer "considered valid forms of knowledge" (18). "Part of what performance and performance studies allows us to *do*," Taylor claims, "is to take seriously the

repertoire of embodied practices as an important system of knowing and transmitting knowledge” (26). This has the effect of questioning the scriptocentrism that has allowed language and writing “to stand for *meaning* itself” (25), and this challenging of scriptocentrism has deep implications for decolonizing practices and the (re)assessment of creative research as producing valid ‘knowledge’ within the academic context—both crucial facets of my research-creation praxis.

The rift does not lie between the verbal and the nonverbal. Rather, for Taylor, it lies “between the archive of supposedly enduring materials (i.e. texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e. spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)” (19). The archive “sustains power,” composed of “items supposedly resistant to change” (19). She cautions us, however, of the myths attending the archive, such as the notion that it is “unmediated, that objects located there might mean something outside the framing of the archival impetus itself. What makes an object archival is the process whereby it is selected, classified, and presented for analysis. Another myth is that the archive resists change, corruptibility, and political manipulation” (19).

The repertoire, on the other hand, “enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge” (20). This, Taylor notes, “requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by ‘being there,’ being part of the transmission” (20). The repertoire “both keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning” (20), and therefore “allows for an alternative perspective on historical processes of transnational

contact” (20). Taylor states, “embodied memory, because it is live, exceeds the archive’s ability to capture it” (20), but she cautions against assuming that the repertoire always provides an “anti-hegemonic challenge,” since “performance belongs to the strong as well as the weak...The modes of storing and transmitting knowledge are many and mixed and embodied performances have often contributed to the maintenance of a repressive social order” (22). Instead, we should remember, “the repertoire, like the archive, is mediated” (21).

This nuanced analysis that transcends the ‘hegemonic archive = bad’ versus ‘emancipatory performance = good’ formulation has widened my thinking and research-creation praxis to, instead, consider *scenarios*. This is the context in which I have chosen to explore human rights accompaniment as one particular *scenario* of solidarity, a scenario in which embodied repertoires of action intricately interact with archives like the LAWG collection and the audio-visual materials activated in the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project.

To Essay

In 2016 I conducted fieldwork in Guatemala City for six months. Through my previous involvement as a delegate on NISGUA’s 2015 Rivers for Life delegation, I secured a volunteer position in their Guatemala City office. In my time in the NISGUA office, I wrote blog posts, did research for grant applications, and, most importantly, organized their digital photo archive that was spread over several computers and hard drives, with many duplicates and files-within-files-within-files.

NISGUA's office is a room in a house shared with the other international organizations that form ACOGUATE, the umbrella organization that oversees accompaniment in Guatemala. Through my periodic visits to the house, generally being present, and the mundane activities of, for instance, preparing my lunch in the kitchen and bringing my bike inside, I got to know several international accompaniers: P. and S. from PAQG (Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala), K. from Collectif Guatemala (France), and L. from Peace Watch Switzerland. These young women, along with NISGUA's accompaniment coordinator M. who I became close with during my time in Guatemala, became my interview subjects, collaborators, and friends.

Through casual conversation, I told them about my project and invited them to participate in informal interviews about their experiences of accompaniment and their views on the ideologies behind the practice. While I did prepare a set of questions (see Appendix C: Interview Questions) and go through the process of university ethics approval, the resulting conversations were less governed by formal academic social science paradigms, and more inflected with friendship and hospitality. Because having these conversations in public spaces like coffee shops or parks posed a security threat to the women and to the larger project of accompaniment, and because they longed for a change of scenery (many of them both lived and worked in the ACOGUATE house and therefore relished a visit to mine), we conducted the interviews at my apartment. In order to show my gratitude for their participation (and because I had few friends in the city and therefore similarly relished having guests), I would make a meal to share during our conversations, usually my *plato típico* of a huge salad with lots of fresh veggies, cilantro, and eggs from the market and pastries from the vegetarian restaurant up the street.

We talked about how each person found themselves doing solidarity and accompaniment work in Guatemala; we discussed how white privilege operates in the practice of accompaniment; we talked about citizenship and how to leverage the tools of the state (passports, embassies) in tandem with grassroots networks; we speculated as to why it was overwhelmingly women doing this work. These conversations form the basis of the essay video *al lado, afuera.* // *beside, outside.* We also talked about my decision to make an essay video, rather than a more ‘traditional’ documentary anchored by talking-head interviews. They agreed that it would be more visually compelling to use archival footage; that the talking-head interview documentary would perhaps be a less vital format. They indulged my admittedly-selfish questions about the visualization of solidarity and accompaniment, describing to me their imagined photographs or film scenes that would represent the practice of accompaniment for them. And they commiserated when I described my difficulties in finding and accessing archival films at San Carlos University, CIRMA, and the ENAP, Guatemala’s national art school.

Why use the essay video⁷¹ form? Aside from simply an eschewing of ‘traditional’ documentary form for the sake of it, what other factors were at play in this formal/generic choice? One reason I opted out of the use of talking-head interviews was concern for the security of my collaborators. While it was unlikely that any violence would befall them, or that the accompaniment project would be compromised if they agreed to have their interviews videotaped, I was still unwilling to take that risk. I have also long been intrigued with the essay

⁷¹ I use the terms ‘essay film’ and ‘essay video’ interchangeably; this references the traditional cinematic essay which used celluloid before the advent of video, as well as the contemporary digital video essay. My particular project is a hybrid, in that it uses a mixture of digitally scanned analogue and videotape materials and, while it is being presented as a digital file in this context, it might be finished as a 16mm film print one day (if budget allows). All of this is to say that the ontology of analogue film versus digital video is outside the scope of this paper, and, for our purposes here, the terms ‘essay film’ and ‘essay video’ refer to moving-image essays without a nod to medium-specificity.

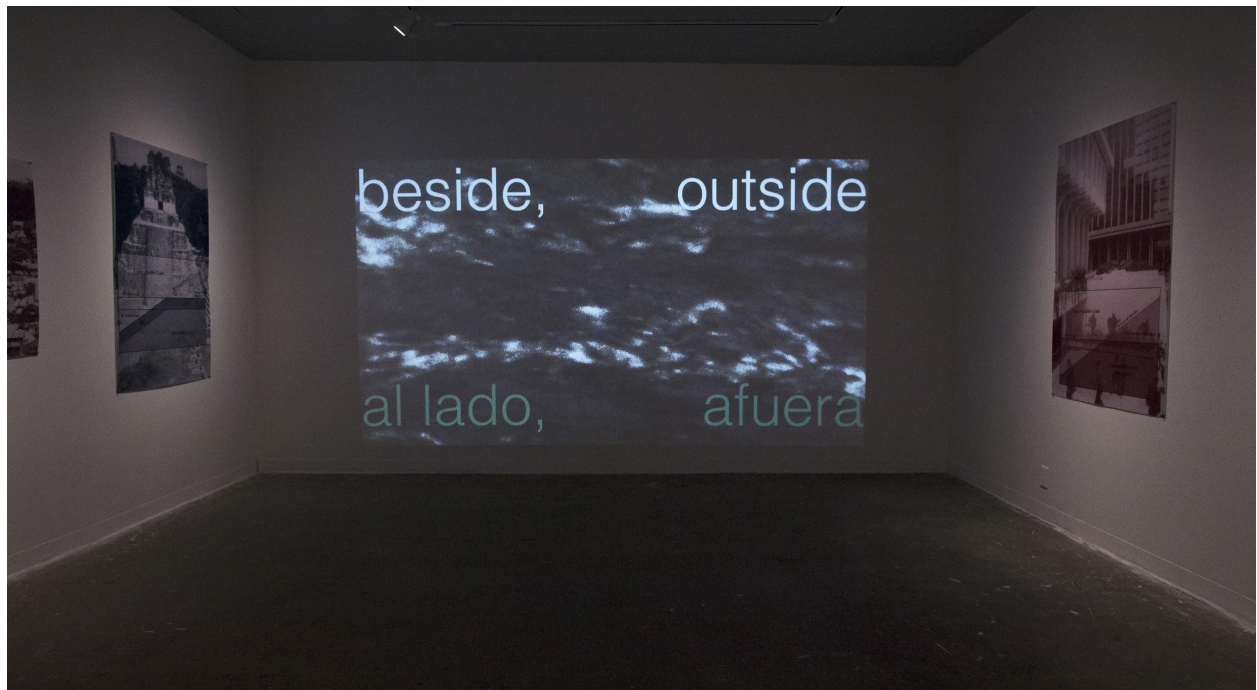
film as a particular form of experimental documentary. The essay film itself inhabits a position of ‘beside,’ situated in a space of generic liminality, somewhere between documentary and video art, alongside literary traditions and in the realm of experimental cinema. Essay films are perhaps “too experimental, self-reflexive and subjective” to be documentary, while, “for an art video they stand out for being socially involved or explicitly political” (Biemann 8). The ambivalent position of the moving-image essay as *beside* and *outside* of more rigid generic categories is what draws me to the form. The essay film is an “odd ‘strangling’ that refuses to behave properly within the designated categories... [and] its strength lies in the quality of the mediator and communicator between differential cultural spaces” (8), making it an ideal tool to navigate between activist, artistic, and academic contexts.

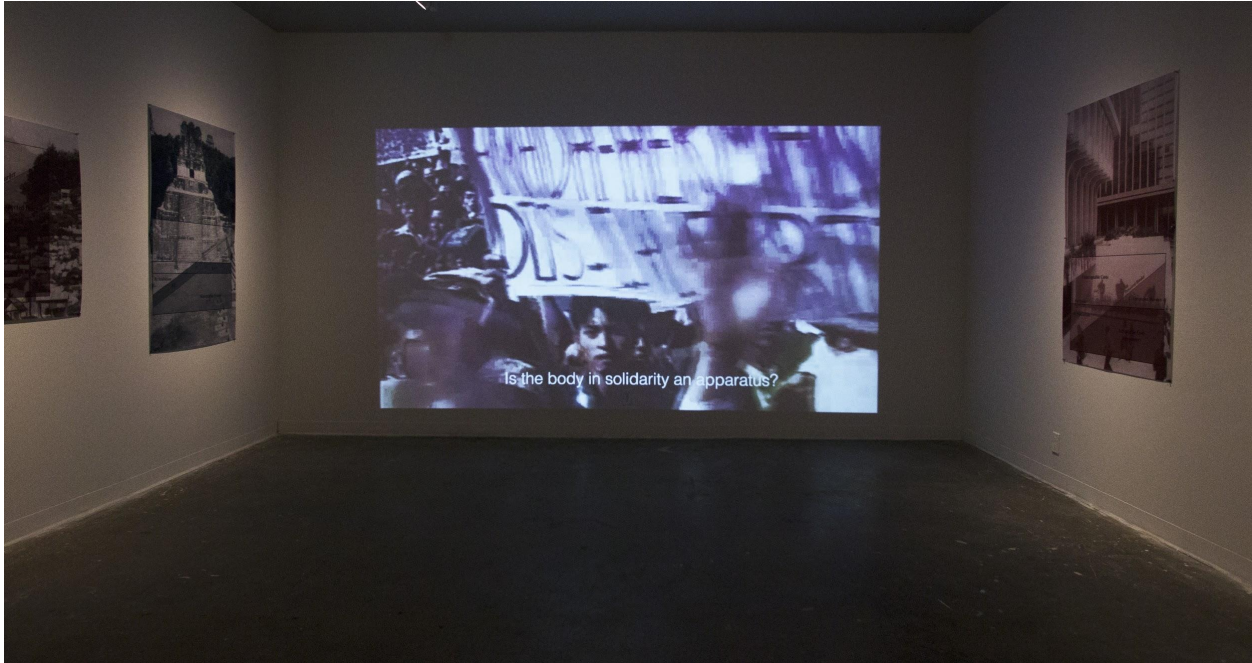
In his text “Video-Essayism: On the Theory-Practice of the Transitional,” Jörg Huber describes the video essay, a form that emphasizes

- the relations between text and image, between discursivity and perception;
- the fact that these relations cannot be organized unambiguously (into ‘image = apprehension’ and ‘text = discursivity’);
- the subjective positioning of any utterance and/or perception, and thus
- its directionality or perspective character, and hence
- the significance of authorship as a process of positioning;
- the significance of perception and thus of mediation between apprehension and cognition;
- reflection as an integral part of the method and the approach, and thus
- their process character and interminability;

- the preliminary character of claims and arguments, and thus
 - the performative quality of thinking, writing and imaging;
 - the experimental quality of cognition and perception, playing with terms and images, venturing inventions, making unconventional transfers;
 - the commitment to what it engages in while simultaneously insisting on distance.
- (Huber 93)

I quote this passage at length because it so eloquently elucidates some of the crucial aspects of the essay film mode that resonate with me in my research-creation practice. Following Huber's conceptualizing of the essay video, the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project is rooted in the essay film as a method that acknowledges and productively mobilizes its ambiguity, personal positionality, reflection, processual nature, performatic character, and experimental quality.





Figures 22 & 23: *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* video projection view (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photos: Eva Kolcze.

In contextualizing her essay video *Performing the Border* (1999), an exploration of the transnational liminality of the U.S.-Mexico border, Ursula Biemann describes the essay film mode's dexterity in dealing with "processes [that] are increasingly abstract and unrepresentable and couldn't be captured by documentary practices alone" (85), paying particular interest to "the spatial idea of this field of connections and associations created in the artistic form of the essay, which extends the meaning of a particular place beyond its documentable reality" (85). Biemann claims that, in the spatial and discursive fields of *Performing the Border*, the "essayist geography and the transnational geography converge" (85) and both are revealed to be artificial constructs. Like Biemann's exploration of the ways in which the movement of bodies creates and enacts the border, my essay film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* similarly attempts to represent the

relations and performances of solidarity in human rights accompaniment, embodied repertoires that are equally challenging to represent through traditional documentary means.

The essay film “problematizes binary categories of representation, and often self-reflexively offers its own film criticism. Like its ancestor, the written essay,⁷² it poaches across disciplinary borders, transgresses conceptual and formal norms, and does not follow a clear narrative trajectory. The essay film is rebus-like and hybrid, recalling the operation of memory and dreamwork” (Alter 12). Indeed, redefining representational assumptions, troubling genre boundaries, and embracing an “anti-aesthetic status” (Corrigan 4) make the essay film difficult to categorize and theorize, while simultaneously giving the form its power as a “productively inventive” (4) mode that straddles “fiction and nonfiction, news reports and confessional autobiography, documentaries and experimental film” (4). Essayistic practices “undo and redo film form, visual perspectives, public geographies, temporal organizations, and notions of truth and judgment within the complexity of experience” (4).

Much of the literature on the essay film describes its liminal status, and focuses on what it is *not*. Corrigan’s formulation of the essay film, however, describes it succinctly as “(1) a testing of expressive subjectivity through (2) experiential encounters in a public arena, (3) the product of which becomes the figuration of thinking or thought as a cinematic address and a spectatorial response” (30). The notion of the essay—literary or filmic—as a ‘testing’ makes it especially productive for research-creation and the public thinking-through of the politics of solidarity. Indeed, essays are imbued with a “provisional and explorative nature as ‘attempts,’

⁷² Alter’s text, and Timothy Corrigan’s *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, after Marker* (Oxford University Press, 2011) work to situate the essay film in a lineage of literary tradition, from Montaigne to Lukacs and Adorno. While this is an important line of inquiry, it is outside the scope of my project.

‘tries,’ or ‘tests’” (13). The essay film *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* resides in this zone of indeterminacy and revels in the notion of ‘essay’ as a verb, enacting and performing its public grappling with political questions.

Corrigan believes that “the essayistic almost invariably practices, regardless of the subject matter, a distinctive form of politics, a politics quite different from the ideological and political strategies of narrative fiction films or conventional documentaries. ... a politics whose core is ideological instability” (33). This instability is particularly productive for exploring the performance of solidarity, an equally unstable politics that must grapple with questions of privilege, publics, and postures that are constantly shifting and remaking themselves. As Corrigan asserts, “the activity of essayistic thinking...[is] the testing of ideas” (33). Self-reflexively testing political ideas in the public domain allows the essay film to act as a laboratory for formal and ideological experimentation, making the form perfectly suited to the pursuit of research-creation. This notion of testing also allows for uncertainty and for failure as a possible outcome, consequences of experimentation that are often disavowed but that can be extremely fruitful.

Theorists of the essay film often invoke film critic Edward Small’s notion of ‘direct theory,’⁷³ the idea that “written film theory, while well developed, is fundamentally flawed since words and written texts are by their very nature inadequate to theorize the constituents of a medium that is audio-visual by its very nature. In other words... Small believes that a theory of film should be a film” (Alter 13). For Alter, direct theory manifests in “productions that are essayistic in nature and that take *critique* as the fundamental force” (13). Similarly, Jörg Huber

⁷³ Cf. Edward S. Small, *Direct Theory: Experimental Film/Video as Major Genre* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994.

claims that “any theory production that deals with visual culture must itself also be understood as a formative process with an explicitly aesthetic quality and meaning” (92). This, again, points to the necessity and vitality of research-creation. In the case of the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project, my desire to investigate the visual culture of solidarity brought with it the impetus to use visual modes of research. Huber claims that employing the essay video “places theory in a mutual relation to the visual arts” (92) and that “these performative transfers between theory and aesthetic practice constitute the core of the video essayist project” (93).

Representational Gleaning, Network Mapping

During my time in Guatemala in 2016, and again in the fall of 2017, I searched for archival film, video, and photographs that I hoped would form the visual track of the essay film. I explored many angles to try to locate and gain access to archival visuals, with little success. I simultaneously searched online for access to Canadian archival news broadcasts about the Refugee Return and subsequent solidarity actions—an equally fruitless search. Many emails to the CBC, for instance, went unanswered.⁷⁴ The search for lens-based archival materials is what initially led me to the LAWG collection at CERLAC, although I quickly discovered that the two boxes that hold their Guatemala-related materials contain only paper ephemera. However, in my initial exploration of these materials, I found a flyer announcing *Guatemala Vencerá*, a 25-minute-long 35mm slide and audio tape collection produced by DEC Films. I was immediately intrigued, having previously used 35mm slides, sound collage, and live narration in my research-

⁷⁴ The lack of Canadian media coverage of the Guatemalan Refugee Return, and of political events in Central America in general, is a rich subject for future inquiry. Through personal correspondence, I have learned that Dr. Catherine Nolin has unpublished research on this issue, but what exactly that research concludes, or why it remains unpublished, is unknown to me at the time of writing.

creation work, and being fascinated by the use of these slide-&-tape packages for consciousness-raising in activist circles before the ubiquity of VHS and DVD technologies. What, exactly, did *Guatemala Vencerá* contain? Who produced it, and with what aim? Who watched it and where did it circulate?

I asked Dr. Liisa North and LAWG collection coordinator Caese Levo, my intrepid guides to the collection, if they knew of *Guatemala Vencerá* or where I might be able to access it. While they didn't recall it specifically, Liisa pointed me towards the York University Library's Sound and Moving Image Library, recounting that any such audio-visual materials found in the LAWG collection would have been deposited there. I immediately went to the SMIL to inquire; the librarian looked up the title and various configurations of keywords, and found nothing, explaining that it might be in uncatalogued basement storage. Disappointed but still determined, I asked Liisa if she knew of anyone I could contact who might know of the *Guatemala Vencerá* collection or DEC Films. Liisa put me in touch with a handful of people, from former graduate student advisees who had worked on/in Guatemala and had done accompaniment, to representatives of NGOs like Inter Pares and Kairos. In reaching out to these individuals, I received the contact information of other key activists, artists, and scholars to contact. While I have still yet to find *Guatemala Vencerá* at the time of this writing, I have instead begun to formulate a different visualization of solidarity through this web of correspondence.

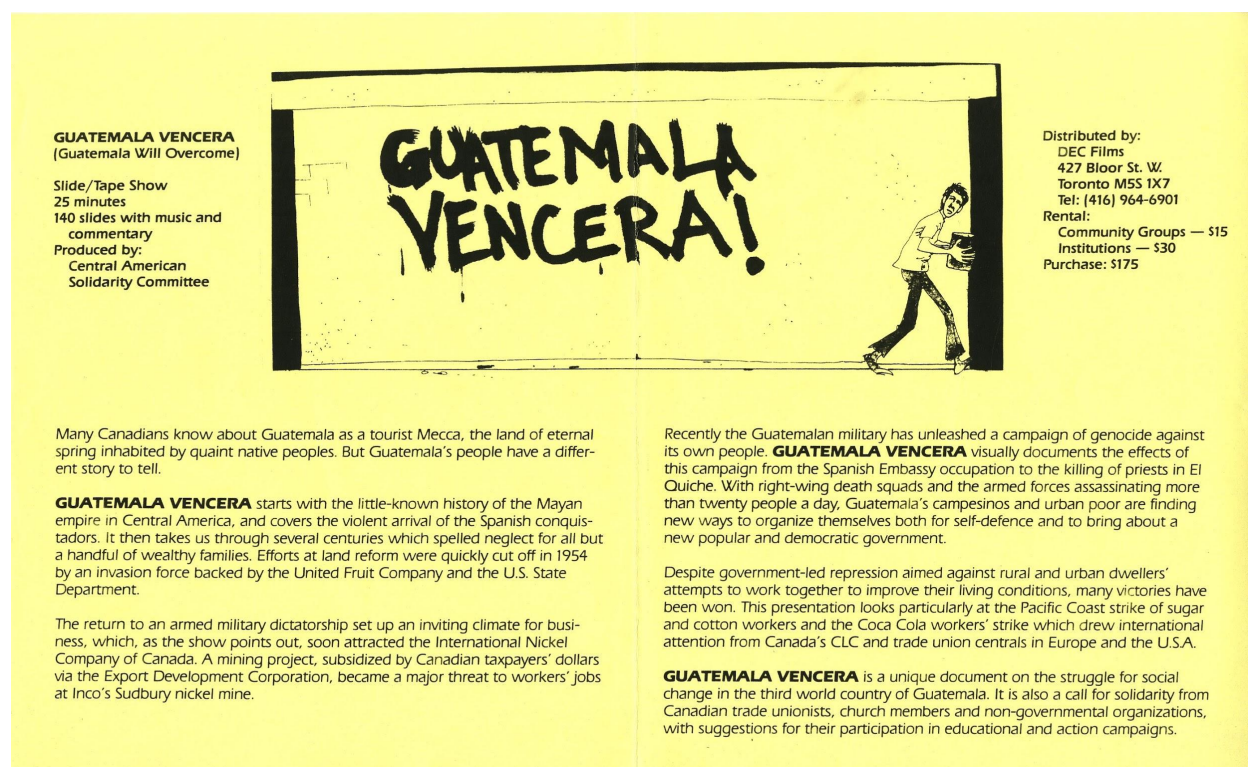


Figure 24: *Guatemala Vencerá* flyer

As I was pointed towards more and more individuals who were instrumental in the Canada-Guatemala solidarity movement, I realized that I needed a method to organize the network that was taking shape. Having encountered digital mind mapping software in another context, I began experimenting with Coggle as a way to keep track of the names and contact information that I was gathering, and from whom I had gotten them. Quickly, however, I realized that the map itself was a compelling and effective visualization of solidarity—insofar as it acted as a frozen snapshot of a moment of my personal and idiosyncratic research process. Throughout this project, I have been asking the questions *what does solidarity look like?* And *how can we visualize something so inherently relational, affective, and ephemeral?* Through corresponding with people, and organizing the resultant web of social relations that slowly emerged from these

correspondences, I unintentionally encountered a visualization—albeit in a different form and format—that I had been searching for.

This mind map of social relations therefore took a prominent space in the gallery, alongside the essay film and the posters created from the LAWG materials. *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* exists digitally through the Coggle platform allowing it to be continuously expanded and supplemented with links to other webpages, and most importantly, to be shared with collaborators. When the mind map grew and took on a visually compelling form, I began sharing it with people as I corresponded with them. Some of them, like Pam Cooley, co-founder and former Executive Director of Project Accompaniment, for instance, offered great insight into the structure of the map's 'branches' and who needed to be included that I had yet to contact. In this way, the mind map *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)*—much like the network(s) of solidarity it represents and organizes—is constantly in flux, forever reshaping and creating itself anew, always already incomplete and therefore containing within it infinite potential for expansion.

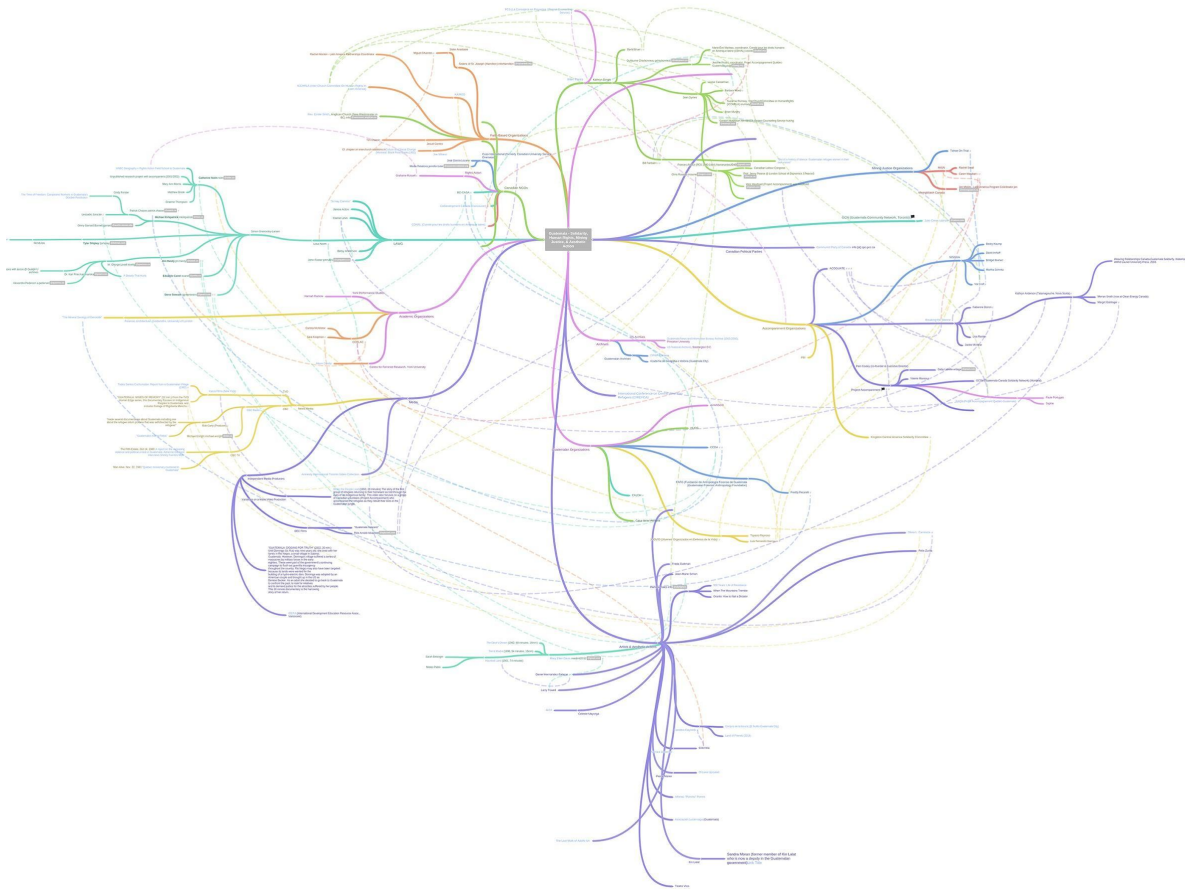
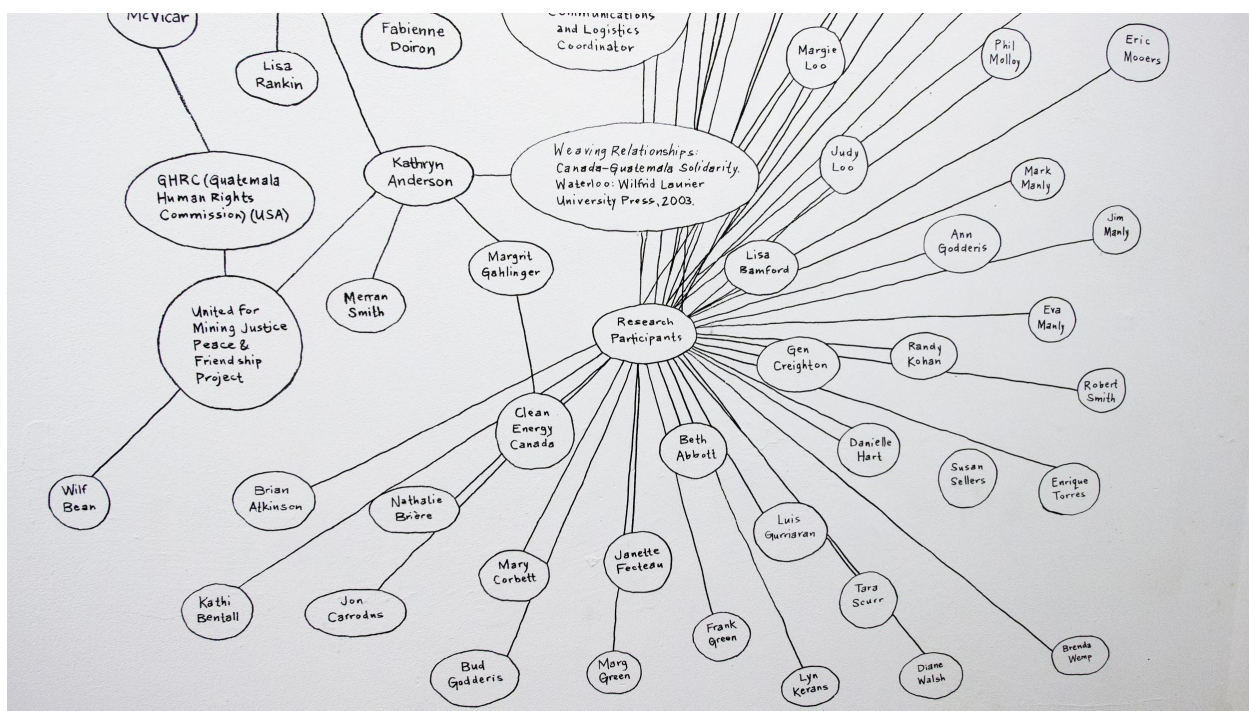
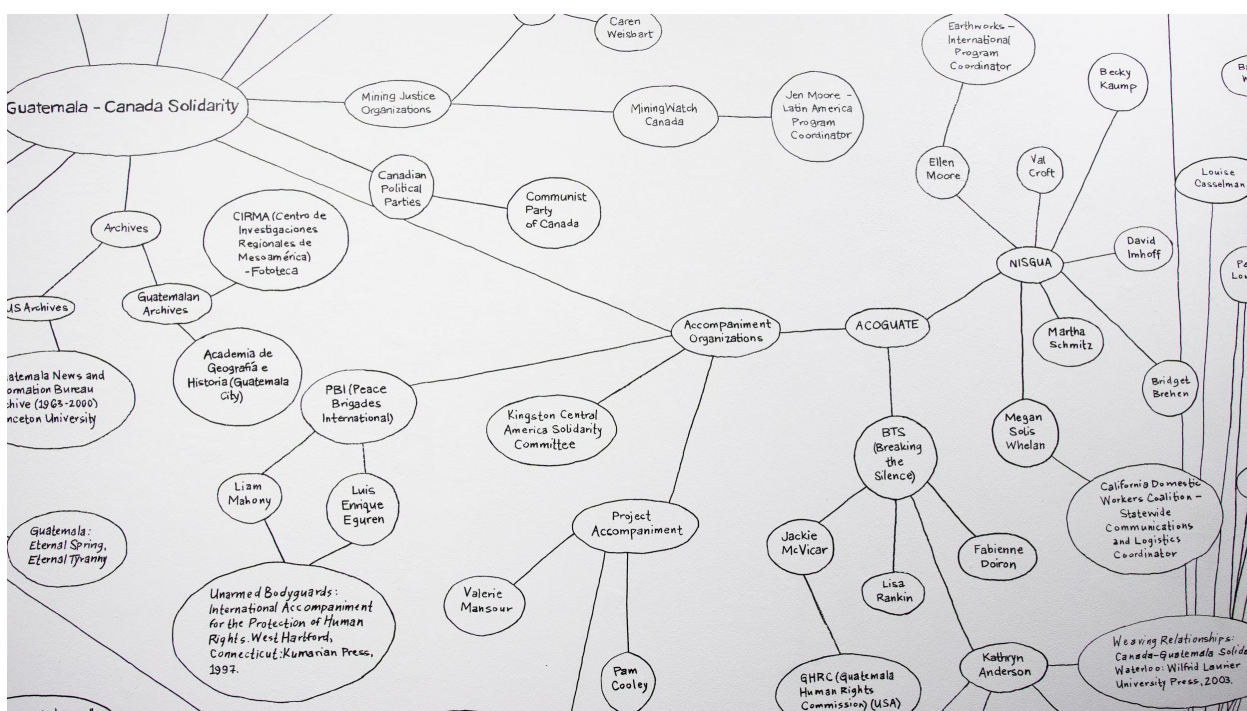


Figure 25: A snapshot of the *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map (Coggle, 10 April 2018)





Figures 26-28: *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map (hand-drawn, Special Projects Gallery, July 2018). Photos: Eva Kolcze.

This networked knowledge of the digital mind map, its positioning in visual art contexts, and its potential as a form of ‘visual activism’ is inspired by the *Networks of Dispossession* (2013 - ongoing) project, initiated by Burak Arikan, that uses the open source Graph Commons software to map “relations of capital and power in Turkey.”⁷⁵ In “What Is Visual Activism?” Deena Chalabi takes up how the inherently collective activities of knowledge production and interpretation manifest in the *Networks of Dispossession* project’s collaborative method, asserting that *Networks of Dispossession* works to “enhance understanding around networks and, in turn, to build collective systems ‘as a form of art and political resistance’ to capital’s extraction of value from knowledge and information” (33). Using Graph Commons as a platform for

⁷⁵ <https://burak-arikan.com/networks-of-dispossession/> Accessed 3 April 2018.

creating visual representations of connections, the project has drawn “investigative journalists, activists, organizational analysts, art curators, and researchers” (33) into mapping the privatization of media networks in Turkey. Chalabi claims that, “as the notion of public space is contested physically and rethought in the age of the internet, more questions emerge about how publics should be created, convened, and educated,” and that the *Networks of Dispossession* project “asks us to consider the implications of constructing a public through internet-based information and relationships, as well as the role we each can play in making power relations more visible and knowledge more public” (34).

While my *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map shares with the *Networks of Dispossession* project a collaborative and processual character, it exists in the gallery space not as an interactive touch-screen or a digital projection, but rather as a wall drawing that, in effect, freezes a snapshot of the network in one particular moment in time. By drawing the network by hand, another temporality is inserted into the gallery space: an intentional slowness that occurs when tracing the mind map by hand. This slow labour of inscribing the network directly onto the architecture of the gallery space is a way of performing a gesture of acknowledgement and reverence for the untold hours of labour performed by these—and infinite other unknown—social actors. This facet of my *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map, as presented in the Special Projects Gallery as a hand-drawn network, is inspired, too, by Andrea Geyer’s *Revolt, They Said!* (2012 - ongoing) project. *Revolt, They Said!* is a “colossal mapping of the relationships of love and labor of the three women founders of The Museum of Modern Art in 1929—Lillie P. Bliss, Abby A. Rockefeller, and Mary Q. Sullivan” and has recorded a network of over 850 women and organizations who “have

shaped the American cultural art landscape as we have come to know it today.”⁷⁶ The project challenges “the lack of recognition of women’s work in the story of the modernist movement during the 1920s and 1930s in New York City and beyond,”⁷⁷ and, through the painstaking labour of hand-drawing these intertwined networks, *Revolt, They Said!* honours this history and its inherent labour. My *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map similarly works to illustrate, explore, and celebrate the little-known and still-unfolding history of hemispheric networks of solidarity, and the labour performed therein.

Performing Labour: Maintenance Art/Work

The *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map inscribes networks of solidarity actors—and the labour of drawing—into the gallery space itself. Another form of labour that I continuously perform throughout the exhibition is the scanning of LAWG documents as a durational performance. This scanning work is deeply inspired by and references the Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional (AHPN), Guatemala’s National Police Archive, a thriving and internationally-recognized human rights project that has, since 2005, been working to clean, file, digitize and upload onto a secure server the over 80 million documents discovered onsite. As I have explored elsewhere,⁷⁸ following an explosion at the Mariscal Zavala military

⁷⁶ Vargas Cervantes, Susana. “Revolt, they say!” <http://www.andreageyer.info/revolttheysaid/vargas.html> Accessed 3 April 2018. n.p.

⁷⁷ <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1568> Accessed 3 April 2018.

⁷⁸ Cf. Heyn-Jones, Zoë. “Performing the *Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional*: Walking through Guatemala’s National Police Archive.” *PUBLIC: Art/Culture/Ideas*. 57. [Forthcoming] and conference paper/presentation Heyn-Jones, Zoë. “Performing the *Archivo Histórico de la Policía Nacional*: Walking through Guatemala’s National Police Archive.” *The Politics of Memory: Victimization, Violence and Contested Narratives of the Past - Fifth Annual Conference of the Dialogues on Historical Justice and Memory Network*. Columbia University, New York. 3-5 December 2015.

base in Guatemala City in June 2005, an investigation uncovered approximately 80 million documents dating from 1881 to 1997—the archives of the National Police, the largest collection of secret state documents as yet uncovered in Latin American history. Since the accidental discovery of the documents in the sprawling abandoned warehouse (and former detention centre), these documents outlining the surveillance, criminalization, disappearance, torture, and execution of political dissidents during the country’s 36-year-long internal armed conflict are being meticulously cleaned, archived, scanned, and uploaded.⁷⁹

After our visit to the communities of Copal AA La Esperanza and Las Margaritas Copón during NISGUA’s 2015 Rivers for Life delegation, we returned to Guatemala City to follow our Ixcán trip with advocacy at the U.S. Embassy, and to meet with community press, human rights, and environmental defence groups. We also visited the AHPN—my first visit of what would turn out to be many, and the beginning of my ongoing engagement and fascination with the project. Some of my previous work on the AHPN has focused on the way the guided tour ‘performs’ the architecture of the building in order to recount its narrative, and that of the internal armed conflict itself. One striking aspect of the AHPN project and the guided tour is the foregrounding of *labour*: as the tour takes us through the vast labyrinthine building, we meet various teams of staff as they perform facets of the archival process, from removing staples, paper clips, and other harmful metals from the documents, to the sorting, labelling, and bundling of these papers. One of the most engrossing forms of labour to observe was the *scanning*: down an immense corridor, workers sat at desks, side-by-side, equipped with state-of-the-art scanners, slowly and

⁷⁹ Cf. Kirsten Weld’s *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala* (Duke University Press, 2014) for a detailed ethnographic-historical account of the AHPN project.

methodically digitizing the documents and uploading them, in real time, to a secure server housed at the University of Texas in Austin.



Figure 29: *Workers 2* (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2017)



Figure 30: *Workers 1* (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2017)

I became enthralled with this process, thinking about the change of state from paper documents to digital files, and how this digitization allowed the documents to circulate and live in several places at once; what mechanical reproduction has meant in art historical contexts and how, in the context of the AHPN, it means something completely different. While the ‘original’

document may be said to have an ‘aura’ (and can, in some cases, contain forensic evidence like fingerprints), it is the digitization and uploading of the documents that provides some security for their longevity and utility in a political context like Guatemala, where the threat of the project being shut down, vandalized, or worse, is an ever-present concern. The documents’ circulation, and the public’s ability to search the database for traces of their missing or murdered family members, has expanded the reach of the project internationally and made it invaluable in the search for restorative justice, as the documents are being used with greater and greater frequency as evidence in criminal and civil trials, as well as being used by scholars in a wide array of disciplines to elucidate untold histories of Guatemala.⁸⁰

Shortly after I first encountered the LAWG document collection in my search for archival films and photographs, I began scanning its contents. Initially I didn’t have a particular focus in mind, I was simply drawn to this activity as a way to invoke a slow contemplation of the documents’ content and materiality, rather than the accelerated flipping-through that is so easy to succumb to as a busy researcher. When I slowed down—I, too, had to remove and replace staples and other binding, and similarly care for the documents—I began to notice how visually compelling the documents themselves were, and how they foregrounded the pre-Internet mechanisms of solidarity that were prevalent in the 1960s to the 1990s. The materiality of solidarity, in the case of the LAWG collection, is evident in the letters, faxes, newspaper clippings, flyers and posters, delegation reports, mailing lists, grassroots solidarity organizations’ mailed bulletins—these forms of communication that have now, for the most part, been supplanted by e-bulletins, videos, e-mail-writing campaigns, online petitions, and the like. The

⁸⁰ Weld, *Paper Cadavers*.

change-of-state initiated by the scanning and digitizing of these documents itself mirrors this trajectory. As Project Accompaniment co-founder Pam Cooley noted in an interview,⁸¹ the Canada-Guatemala solidarity network grew at pace with the emergence of the Internet itself and its online tools and spaces; solidarity workers did not eschew this emergent technology, but rather embraced these developing communications networks and used them in their practices—Canadian solidarity with Guatemala “literally grew with the Internet.”⁸²

Scanning the LAWG documents has been an important way for me to experience them as material, as well as informational, objects. The action of scanning took on an almost ritualistic quality; I began to feel like spending time with the documents in this way was allowing me to care for them, and to acknowledge their worth in a gesture at once pragmatic and reverent. The scanning allowed me to enter into a slower temporality and to contemplate the histories that emerged from the material in a different manner than I would by simply reading an academic text, for instance. Pragmatically, in scanning the documents, I began creating a digital repository of the LAWG materials. While I initially thought of using the digital files to create a visual artwork for this exhibition, I quickly realized that they must also be shared and made accessible. Scanning the documents and creating a digital home for them online became another way of caring for and helping to maintain the collection.

⁸¹ Interview with Pam Cooley and Gaby Labelle, Mexico City, 27 February 2018.

⁸² Ibid.



Figure 31: Scanning of LAWG documents as durational performance (Zoë Heyn-Jones, 2018). Photos: Eva Kolcze.

The process of scanning, as made visible in the Special Projects Gallery throughout the exhibition as a durational performance, foregrounds the labour performed in the digitization and uploading processes. By extension (and reflected in the documents themselves), my labour in the gallery space complements and acknowledges the unpaid (and often gendered) labour of solidarity. In this way, framing this labour as itself a performance, I am gesturing towards a particular type of durational performance: maintenance art-work. Here I am thinking in particular of the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, whose “Manifesto for Maintenance Art - Proposal for an exhibition ‘CARE’” (1969) and her subsequent performances called for a reassessment of the (largely unseen) maintenance work that takes place in in public, institutional, private, and domestic contexts, and the resultant breakdown of the barriers between what we call ‘work’ and what we call ‘art(work).’ In her 1969 manifesto-proposal, Ukeles asserts,

I am an artist. I am a woman. I am a wife. I am a mother. (Random order).

I do a hell of a lot of washing, cleaning, cooking, renewing, supporting, preserving, etc.

Also, (up to now separately) I “do” Art.

Now, I will simply do these maintenance everyday things, and flush them up to consciousness, exhibit them, as Art. I will live in the museum as I customarily do at home with my husband and my baby, for the duration of the exhibition. (Right? or if you don’t want me around at night I would come in every day) and do all these things as public Art activities: I will sweep and wax the floors, dust everything, wash the walls (i.e. “floor paintings, dust works, soap-sculpture, wall-paintings”) cook, invite people to eat, make agglomerations and dispositions of all functional refuse.

The exhibition area might look ‘empty’ of art, but it will be maintained in full public view.

MY WORKING WILL BE THE WORK (Ukeles 7)

In her performances at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut in which she washed the gallery’s front steps (*Hartford Wash: Washing Tracks, Maintenance Outside* [1973]) and took care of the museum’s keys (*The Keeping of the Keys* [1973]), for instance, Ukeles made visible the often-unseen maintenance labour that usually takes place after hours. Ukeles’ performance of maintenance labour draws attention to how women’s labour, and the labour of maintenance workers (often lower-income/working class people of colour), functions to invisibly sustain (art)

institutions.⁸³ By making visible the scanning of the LAWG documents as a durational⁸⁴ performance, I similarly intend to gesture towards the many types of unseen—and often gendered and racialized—labour that sustains networks of solidarity. From helping to ‘maintain’ the LAWG collection by scanning, uploading, and making accessible its contents, to the many micro-actions inherent in Urgent Action campaigns (letter-writing, calling one’s MP, passing along the UA to other networks) and the embodied repertoires of activism (accompaniment, attending and organizing protests, rallies, and consciousness-raising performances) that are documented in its pages, solidarity requires *labour*. How this labour is performed, where, and by whom are key concerns of the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project.

Presence: To Be of Use?

Being present in the gallery space as I continuously scan the LAWG documents as a durational performance throughout the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* exhibition also tactically invokes discussions of presence that have taken place within both performance art histories and theories of human rights accompaniment. In “‘The Artist is Present’: Artistic Re-

⁸³ For analyses of Ukeles’ work as institutional and labour critique Cf. Kwon, Miwon. “In Appreciation of Invisible Work: Mierle Laderman Ukeles and the Maintenance of the ‘White Cube’” *Documents* 10 (Fall 1997): 15-18. & Molesworth, Helen. “Work Stoppages: Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ Theory of Labor Value.” *Documents* 10 (Fall 1997): 19-22.; and as a performance of ground/environment, cf. Levin, Laura. *Performing Ground: Space, Camouflage, and the Art of Blending In*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. E-book. 223-236.

⁸⁴ I use this term for its descriptive value and its art historical context, as well as its links to politics, as Diana Taylor emphasizes: “The term ‘durational’ can also help us to understand certain forms of explicit ongoing political resistance. There are many examples. Hunger strikes are an excruciating example of ‘durational’ performance of noncompliance by those who have lost control over everything except their bodies. Every Thursday afternoon since the late 1970s, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo have marched counterclockwise around the obelisk of Argentina’s central square, wearing white kerchiefs and holding the photographs of their disappeared children. They have long struggled to make visible the dictatorship’s crimes against humanity. They have left an indelible mark, not just on the plaza, but also in the awareness of the Argentinian people. The word ‘performance’ does not suggest that their actions are not ‘real’ or have long-term consequences. It means that the mothers have used their bodies and their march ritualistically as a way of making political ‘disappearances’ visible, nameable” (Taylor, *Performance* 25).

enactments and the Impossibility of Presence,” Amelia Jones explores philosophical notions of ‘presence’—or the impossibility thereof—and reenactment in Marina Abramović’s 2010 retrospective *The Artist is Present* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Discussing the ‘paradox’ of presence, Jones claims

‘Presence’ as commonly understood is a state that entails the unmediated co-extensivity in time and place of what I perceive and myself; it promises a transparency to an observer of what ‘is’ at the very moment at which it takes place. But the event, the performance, by combining materiality and durationality (its enacting of the body as always already escaping into the past) points to the fact that there is no ‘presence’ as such. [...] This paradox haunts performance studies and other discourses (such as art history) seeking to find ways to historicize and theorize—to exhibit and sell—live performance art. (Jones 18)

By exploring notions and paradoxes of presence in live art contexts, Jones asks us to consider “[w]hat does this putting in proximity of artist and viewer mean? And, more philosophically speaking, do we know what we mean when we claim someone is ‘present’? And, finally, what are the ideological implications for such claims of presence?” (20). This resonates with the questions I have been asking about accompaniment as a performance of embodied activism premised on physical presence.

NISGUA’s bulletin article “The Power of Presence” recounts that, Since 1981, members of the NISGUA network have stood alongside [...] human rights defenders, amplifying their voices and showing cross-border solidarity in the struggle for social and global transformation. In recent decades, a physical presence through

international accompaniment has been used as a tool to dissuade the threats against human rights defenders and open up political space for them to continue their work. (1)

“The Power of Presence” quotes former UN High Commissioner for Refugees Paula Worby who asserts that “an international presence could provide visibility, outside eyes and access to information” (2) for contemporary land defenders and social activists. She also harkens back to the Refugee Return (as discussed in Chapter One), claiming that, “the sophistication of refugee organizing was knowing that international presence was their leverage once inside the country and wanting to capitalize on the power of an international complaint. Accompaniment was part of an effort not to lose that leverage, while creating strategic alliances” (2).

We can see how presence is unequivocally central to the history, strategy, and contemporary functioning of accompaniment. However, presence here is not without paradoxes and controversies as well—we can think back to the discussion of how companions negotiate visibility and invisibility in various contexts, and how the presence of internationals is often vilified in the Guatemalan press for having undue influence on local politics, thereby necessitating the very strategic negotiation of such (in)visibility. And the effectivity of companions’ presence as a deterrent for violence is the question at the very core of the practice, as an unknowable, unmeasurable effect. How *useful* is their presence?

Thinking of accompaniment as a performance (and considering the questions posed by Amelia Jones as to the presence of the artist in live art) invokes the notion of *Arte Útil*, or useful art. *Arte Útil* is a set of criteria, a premise for socially responsible art-work, an online archive of projects, and independent non-institutional curricula instigated by Cuban artist Tania Bruguera. Bruguera has proposed that *Arte Útil* projects should:

- 1) Propose new uses for art within society
- 2) Use artistic thinking to challenge the field within which it operates
- 3) Respond to current urgencies
- 4) Operate on a 1:1 scale
- 5) Replace authors with initiators and spectators with users
- 6) Have practical, beneficial outcomes for its users
- 7) Pursue sustainability
- 8) Re-establish aesthetics as a system of transformation⁸⁵

It is through this rubric of *Arte Útil* that we might think of accompaniment as a performance art-work that puts presence to *use*.

To be of use: the questions of what *use* one's presence in the world could be, of what *use* creative work could be for social justice—these are the questions with which I began thinking through accompaniment, first as the only conceivable way to respond to political depression other than self-annihilation; then, as a fascinating phenomenon, a performance of solidarity that warrants greater consideration. Accompaniment performs presence as responsibility:⁸⁶ as NISGUA writes in “The Power of Presence,” “our accompaniment work is our recognition of the interconnected nature of global oppression; as people living in the global north, we have a responsibility to prioritize and amplify the voices of those most impacted by injustice” (1).

⁸⁵ <http://www.arte-util.org/about/colophon/> accessed 4 July 2016

⁸⁶ Responsibility: another slippery concept. What responsibilities does the position of *beside* carry with it? How are ‘responsibilities’ hailed, activated, and enacted in and through art/research practices?

Conclusion

From Another Place Between

I am writing this in Mexico City; a place so vast and with so many microcosms within it that it feels a universe away from both Toronto and Guatemala. Mexico City, the largest metropolis in our hemisphere, a 1:1 map of itself,⁸⁷ a place I found myself in by life's twists and turns and that I now call home—as much as any place is home to me now. Mexico City is both a universe unto itself and a vital hub that connects infinite nodes; the energy that flows through this place is tangibly felt in the body, like when you rub your palms together vigorously and then hold them a couple inches apart in a humming stillness.

Yesterday a caravan of Central American migrants protested at the U.S. embassy here in Mexico City. The caravan has drawn immense ire in the United States, many fearing this 'army' of migrants that 'marches' towards the U.S.-Mexico border. Xenophobe-in-Chief Donald Trump, presumably influenced by his unofficial policy advisors at Fox News, has denounced the caravan, and has deployed the National Guard to the border until his wall can be built to stop the hordes. Despite the hysterical rhetoric surrounding this caravan at the present moment, it has actually been taking place annually for fifteen years, organized by Pueblo Sin Fronteras, a U.S.-based NGO. The caravan, called Via Crucis Migrantes, or Migrants' Way of the Cross, has travelled northwards during *Semana Santa*, holy week, the final week of Lent as commemorated

⁸⁷ "From the air, perhaps because it is such a predominantly flat city and almost all the roofs are flat and because so much of it is brown, Mexico City looks like a map of itself, drawn on a scale of 1:1, as in the Borges story "The Exactitude of Science," which refers to "a Map of the Empire that was of the same Scale as the Empire and that coincided with it point for point" (11). Goldman, Francisco. *The Interior Circuit: A Mexico City Chronicle*. New York: Grove Atlantic, 2015.

by Christians, echoing Easter processions throughout Latin America that reenact Jesus' persecution, burial, and resurrection.⁸⁸

Here in Mexico City, the caravan has reportedly dispersed.⁸⁹ Some claim that this dissolution is due to Trump's rhetoric and the compliance of Mexican officials. Others recognize that the Pueblo Sin Fronteras caravan has always disbanded in Mexico, with some migrants opting to seek refuge here, and others moving northwards to the U.S. and Canada, always marching together for safety and as a political gesture to raise awareness for the issues facing Central American refugees.⁹⁰ Mexico (City) is, once again, shown to be not separate from Central American struggles or solidarity efforts, but central to their movements.

As Catherine Nolin notes in her study of diasporic Guatemalan communities in Canada, "exile outside Guatemala for survivors and family members of victims tied to union and student activism activity often began in Mexico City before leading people to Canada" (275) during the internal armed conflict. While I relocated here for my year of dissertation completion for many reasons, not least of which is happenstance, I have felt that I am in the right place to do this work. Between Canada and Guatemala there are a multitude of spatial positions, but none, I think, as significant as Mexico City.

⁸⁸ <http://www.pueblosinfronteras.org/viacrucis.html> Accessed 8 April 2018.

⁸⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2018/04/07/world/americas/ap-lt-mexico-migrant-caravan.html> Accessed 8 April 2018.

⁹⁰ Hondurans are particularly numerous in this year's caravan, as they flee political violence in the aftermath of the fraudulent reelection of Juan Orlando Hernandez; an election that the Organization of American States (OAS) has deemed fraudulent, yet that the U.S.A. and Canada have both supported. Kinosian, Sarah. "US recognizes re-election of Honduras president despite fraud allegations." *The Guardian*. 22 December 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/22/us-recognizes-re-election-of-honduras-president-despite-calls-for-a-new-vote> Accessed 13 August 2018.

A Return, A Reunion

After sending out a slew of emails to contacts suggested by other figures on the *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map, I received a message, out of the blue, from Pam Cooley, co-founder and former executive director of Project Accompaniment, the Canadian grassroots network that was instrumental in accompanying the Refugee Return. Initially planning to meet for a casual coffee, we ended up talking for over three hours. Pam shared photos with me, and insights from her time with Project A, and reflected on coming back to Mexico after many years, referring to this return as “coming full circle.”⁹¹

Pam recounted being a teenager in Halifax, Nova Scotia and turning on the TV at random to see *Choices of the Heart*, a made-for-TV-movie about Jean Donovan, a young lay missionary who was murdered in El Salvador. After seeing the film, Pam walked around, stunned, wondering how she could continue going about her life in Halifax knowing what she had learned about what was happening in Central America. She eventually managed to put it out of her head. A year later, however, she turned on the TV only to see the same film playing, and this time couldn't ignore the feeling that she had to do *something*. As soon as she graduated from Dalhousie University, she went to Vancouver to meet with the CTF (Christian Task Force on Central America) an NGO that was doing liberation theology-based solidarity work in Central America. Three months later, in 1985, she found herself working in a refugee camp in Guatemala.

Over the course of almost a decade working with the CTF, Cooley developed relationships with the Guatemalan refugee community in Mexico, and founded Project A as a

⁹¹ Interview with Pam Cooley & Gaby Labelle, 27 February 2018.

response to the accompaniment that was requested as the refugees prepared to return home. Now, over thirty years later, Pam is the executive director of the international Car Sharing Association and found herself in Mexico City to meet with city officials and start-ups alike to strategize shared mobility solutions.

Returning to Mexico City for the first time in decades, Pam reached out to Gaby Labelle, another crucial figure in the history of Canada-Guatemala solidarity efforts. Gaby, based in Mexico City and working with SUCO/CUSO's refugee program since 1982, was the person who greeted Pam when she arrived in Mexico on her first trip to the refugee camps. Pam described Gaby as absolutely instrumental to the solidarity movement: "she was *pivotal* in terms of knowing who to talk to, when, and why."⁹² Pam gestured nodes and lines on the table before us as we drank our coffee: "here's Guatemala, here's Gaby, and here's everybody else, in North America and in particular Canada. Everything went through her. She was pivotal in changing the world."⁹³ Leading up to the Return, and during, Gaby would set up meetings with Guatemalans in exile, NGOs, and various groups who were in Mexico City at the time, and would host accompaniers on their way to southern Mexico and Guatemala. It was through these meetings, and the communication facilitated by Gaby as these social actors passed through Mexico City, that crucial information was shared and disseminated.

Halfway through my conversation with Pam, Gaby arrived. After a moment of speechlessness upon seeing her old friend and *compañera* for the first time in so many years, Pam exclaimed "Oh my God!" as they hugged and cried and laughed. Witnessing this reunion,

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

meeting these women who were the founders of the accompaniment movement, made me similarly emotional. As I shared my project with them and we looked at the *Untitled (Canada-Guatemala Solidarity Networks)* mind map together, as Pam showed us her photographs from her days with Project A and the two women shared anecdotes—both light-hearted and deadly serious—of their recollections of this time, the affect was strong, palpable, electric.



Figure 32: Pam Cooley & Gaby Labelle c. 1985. Photographer unknown.



Figure 33: Pam Cooley & Gaby Labelle, Mexico City, 27 February 2018. Photo by the author.

During our conversation, Pam described other projects she has worked on between founding Project A and her current incarnation as a shared mobility innovator. She spent twenty years working in the downtown East Side of Vancouver as a community organizer in the poorest neighbourhood in Canada, and here she initiated the Beyond Borders project in which the women's group she was working with collected clothes and made drawings for Guatemalan women in refugee camps in Mexico. These groups—primarily Indigenous street-involved women in Vancouver and Guatemalan refugees—seemingly disparate, had suffered the effects of being dislocated and dispossessed from their homes, and thus had shared experience in different cultural contexts. It was through creative practices and the everyday textures of solidarity that Pam's work had supported this exchange.

In addition to her work on shared mobility, Pam is currently a consultant, working with Mi'kmaq communities and the provincial government of Nova Scotia on issues related to land rights and reconciliation. How settler society in Canada can truly (re)concile with Indigenous nations, and how Indigenous nations, arrivants, and settlers can move into the future, together, on these lands, is imbued with uncertainty; “nobody knows what that will look like,” she admits.

Gathering in Uncertainty

This paper has endeavoured to illuminate the *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* project, using personal narrative braided together with critical theory to contextualize human rights accompaniment, and to imagine accompaniment as performance. I have explored spaces created and positionalities inhabited, how bodies are networked in solidarity activism, and how various temporalities manifest in this activism and in these spaces. I have used the essay film,

installation, durational performance and text as methods with which to explore the performance of solidarity between Guatemala and Canada, thinking of this performance as a field in which material archives and repertoires of behaviour work in tandem.

The impetus for this work is my desire to experiment with decolonizing strategies in research-creation practices. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang have famously cautioned us about the use of decolonization as metaphor⁹⁴, and the ways in which the careless use of the term—without the *actual rematriation of land to Indigenous nations*—can serve to uphold settler moves to innocence. However, I am interested in whether and how we might, perhaps, use art practice(s) in the service of decolonization. In “Decolonization, Reconciliation, and the Extra-Rational Potential of the Arts,” cheyanne turions asserts her belief that

aesthetic forms make important contributions to the broad project of decolonization, a belief that hinges on the conviction that exhibition spaces are civic spaces, and that artistic and curatorial practices are political gestures. Encounters with contemporary culture... constitute important contributions to the production of civic space, inciting the potential to change the way we live. (n.p.)

I concur, and by convening a public in the gallery space, I aim to highlight its function as civic space, and to initiate a particular form of gathering therein, asserting that, “as a decolonizing strategy, the act of gathering is significant in igniting the sharing of ideas and of potentially new and difficult knowledges across settler and Indigenous divides” (Decter & Taunton 37). The discussions that take place when we gather might be challenging. It is possible that there may be discord; it might be uncomfortable. This potential discomfort, however, might be my

⁹⁴ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1.1 (2012): 5.

responsibility—as the initiator of the project, and as a settler on Indigenous land. I am ready to explore Decter and Taunton’s hypothesis that, “a productive relationship with discomfort produced through creative practice can apprehend the ways in which settler comfort has perpetuated colonial agendas of settler privilege, occupation and Indigenous oppression” (38).

We, a collective of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike, in this place called Canada, are Treaty People; we all “are implicated in the colonial project that is Canada” (35). We are also implicated in Canada’s relation to the rest of the hemisphere; as watersheds extend throughout the land, indifferent to nation-state borders, so too are our bodies networked across these boundaries. Exploring Canada-Guatemala networks and the embodied performance of solidarity leads me back here to Canada; as Pam Cooley described to me how her experiences working with Guatemalan refugees during the internal armed conflict and the Refugee Return led her to see Indigenous sovereignty here, too. “Settlers in occupied Indigenous territories have an ethical and political obligation to hold up our end of the nation-to-nation dialogue,” asserts Francisco-Fernando Granados, who proposes “that the personal transformation of settlers and our sustained engagement as allies to Indigenous people within the political process requires a productive undoing of the privileges of citizenship” (n.p.). Looking at accompaniment is but one way to explore the privileges of citizenship. Their undoing remains uncertain.

Uncertainty is at the core of accompaniment, of solidarity, of creative practice. One cannot be certain that their presence will deter violence, that it will be of use. Spaces—discursive, physical, otherwise—can be radically unstable. As Pam Cooley says of reconciliation: “nobody knows what that will look like.” Initiating an exhibition in the public gallery space, I am adding another layer of uncertainty onto the already-uncertain practice of research-creation. I do

so to contribute, somehow, to nudging forward an epistemological shift “towards a stance of settler uncertainty and openness, as a starting point to imagine and practice otherwise” (Mackey 126). Talking about solidarity together, we explore relationship, relationally. As Eva Mackey believes, “one way to begin to decolonize is to learn to conceptualize and experience treaty-making as a verb” (141), and this hinges upon “an historical and ongoing, exploratory and often uncertain process of building relationships... In other words, we need to think about how ‘we treaty,’ and how to behave responsibly if ‘we treaty together’ or ‘make treaty’ together” (141). Treaty relationships, like relationships of hemispheric solidarity, are relational and interactive, and are “by their nature *uncertain*: they require seeing, listening, and responding creatively to an ‘other’ who is autonomous and also connected to us” (141). Treaty, like solidarity, “is a participatory verb” (141).

Epilogue:

14 August 2018

Mexico City

Today I met José Luis Granados Ceja in the Glorieta de Insurgentes, the plaza within the roundabout where Avenida Insurgentes meets Avenida Chapultepec. In this frenzied hub where people stream from subway to metrobus and traffic ceaselessly, relentlessly flows.

I was put in touch with José Luis, an independent journalist, through the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network. He had contacted the group looking for someone to interview on Canadian mining interests in Mexico. I wrote to him to say that I also currently live in CDMX and would love to get involved with mining justice and solidarity work here, and, while I'm no expert on Canadian extractivism's connections to Mexico, I certainly need to learn more and centre my research here on this land.

He invited me to join him at a march of communities in resistance to the new airport, the NAICM (Nuevo Aeropuerto Internacional de la Ciudad de México). This new airport, located in neighbouring Mexico State and in the works in various capacities since 2001—successfully resisted in previous iterations by the FPDT, the Frente de Pueblos en Defensa de la Tierra (Peoples' Front in Defense of the Earth)—is displacing people from their lands, contaminating groundwater and drying up aquifers, and razing entire mountains for its construction.

Construction began on the new airport in 2015, and it is currently slated to go forward, but with Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO)'s recent presidential election, there is renewed hope (in a multitude of contexts) for change and for the wills of social movements to rejuvenate Mexican democracy. The FPDT and other affected communities lead the march this morning

from the Glorieta de Insurgentes, stopping massive amounts of traffic down the bustling avenue, ending at the office of the president-elect.

Struggling with writing this epilogue. At a loss how, exactly, to reflect on the experience of manifesting the exhibition component of this project—seemingly out of thin air, and equally developed from five-plus-years of research. Labour in the never-ending extreme heat wave, plaster dust, the particular way a wall drawing has of acquainting one with the wall in close-up, ladder feeling like an extension of one's limbs—the toll the process of installing and defending took on my body and mind, still recovering. The process of deinstalling, and how quickly that came on the heels of opening the project; the strange and unforeseen pleasure I felt in covering the wall drawing with the white paint roller; the unfinished nature of the project, all the more apparent. Coming to campus for the first time in many months to begin the install on the 102nd day of the CUPE 3903 strike. Spending countless hours, all hours of the day, in the photo printing studio and the Special Projects Gallery on the ghost-town-deserted campus. Having the exhibition coalesce into a physical form—and having that form hold so many conversations and interactions that held within *them* so many unforeseen affective configurations: deep sadnesses of histories, bruises pressed. Messy affect of responsibility, futility. Frustration of rehearsal, wheels spinning. Vast untranslatable gaps, holes, fissures; intergenerational, political-timing-specificities.

Deinstalling. I've sat with the experience of manifesting this project in its physical form, only to have it recede immediately, like a wave, for the past few weeks. What can I say about that strange, delirious time of accelerated production; how strange the form of the project (not

final, but one iteration) was to me—how seeing work emerge in three-plus-dimensions always exceeds one’s ability to imagine that coming-into-being, that natality, even when it has been long overdetermined. Like waves: every crash on the beach leaving the sand in a new temporary composition.

Attending the rally against the new airport in Mexico City this morning, I was thinking about how to end this paper. Within the protest were echoes and traces of this project I’m thinking about. Or maybe I am just more finely attuned to them; I see a multitude of Mexicos, unstable iterations of this place. I stand and walk *beside*, wary of positions of ‘mastery’ or ‘expertise,’ refusing them. I stand and walk *beside*, but with the knowledge that it is not a ‘neutral’ positionality. These, too, are revolutionary histories in the making; there is no neutrality, no innocence narratives.

There is another position; a variation on *beside*. A commitment that is at once ardent and heartfelt, and simultaneously insistent on distance. It is uncomfortable footwork; a choreography, a contortion. I hope the discomfort inherent might be productive.

Works Cited

- Alter, Nora M. "Memory Essays." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 12-23.
- Anderson, Kathryn. *Weaving Relationships: Canada-Guatemala Solidarity*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003.
- Arikan, Burak et al. *Networks of Dispossession*. Custom software, touchscreen, digital print, dimensions variable. 2013 - ongoing.
- Austin, J.L. *How to Do Things with Words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Biemann, Ursula. "The Video Essay in the Digital Age." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 8-11.
- . "Performing Borders: The Transnational Video." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 83-91.
- Black, George, Milton Jamail and Norma Stoltz Chinchilla. *Garrison Guatemala*. London: Zed Books in association with North American Congress on Latin America, 1984.
- Blacklock, Cathy and Alison Crosby. "The Sounds of Silence: Feminist Research across Time in Guatemala." *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*. Eds. Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2004. 45-72.
- Blümlinger, Christa. "Harun Farocki . . . The Art of the Possible." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 99-111.
- Bonner, Hannah Adair. "From White Guilt to White Responsibility." *Ministry Matters*. 30 June 2015.
<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/6153/from-white-guilt-to-white-responsibility>
 Accessed 9 July 2016.
- Bruguera, Tania. "Political Timing."
<http://www.taniabruquera.com/cms/511-0-Political+Timing.htm> Accessed 13 August 2018.
- . 8 August 2018. SOMA, Mexico City. Lecture.

- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Casaús Arzú, Marta Elena. *Guatemala: Linaje y racismo*. Guatemala, Guatemala: F & G Editores, 2007.
- Cazali, Rosina. "El arte contemporáneo, en Guatemala, saca armas de la calle." *Nomada*. 25 September 2017.
<https://nomada.gt/el-arte-contemporaneo-en-guatemala-saca-armas-de-la-calle/> Accessed 16 February 2018.
- Chalabi, Deena. "What Is Visual Activism?" *Journal of Visual Culture* 15.1 (April 2016): 32-34.
- Chen, Nancy N. "'Speaking Nearby': A Conversation with Trinh T. Minh-Ha." *Visual Anthropology Review* 8.1 (Spring 1992): 82-91.
- Corrigan, Timothy. *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, after Marker*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Crosby, Alison Diana. *Re-imagining the Guatemalan Nation: A Feminist Action Research Perspective of Exile and Return*. Thesis. York University, 1995.
- Cvetkovich, Ann. *Depression: A Public Feeling*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2012.
- Denzin, Norman K. *Performance Ethnography: Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Culture*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003.
- Fried, Jonathan L. *Guatemala in Rebellion: Unfinished History*. New York: Grove Press, 1983.
- Garrard-Burnett, Virginia. *Terror in the land of the Holy Spirit: Guatemala under General Efraín Ríos Montt, 1982-1983*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Goldman, Francisco. "The Story Behind the Fire That Killed Forty Teen-Age Girls in a Guatemalan Children's Home."
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-story-behind-the-fire-that-killed-forty-teen-age-girls-in-a-guatemalan-childrens-home> Accessed 28 February 2018
- Granados, Francisco-Fernando. "We Immigrants, We Refugees, We Citizens, We Settlers" *voz à voz* <http://www.vozavoz.ca/feature/francisco-fernando-granados> Accessed 19 March 2018.

- Grandin, Greg. *Who Is Rigoberta Menchú?* London & New York: Verso Books, 2011.
- Haig-Brown, Celia. "Decolonizing Diaspora: Whose Traditional Land are We On?" *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry* 1.1 (2009): 4-12.
- Hopkins, Candice. "Regina José Galindo." *documenta 14: Daybook*. London & New York: Prestel Verlag, 2017. N.p.
- . "Joar Nango." *documenta 14: Daybook*. London & New York: Prestel Verlag, 2017. N.p.
- Huber, Jörg. "Video-Essayism: On the Theory-Practice of the Transitional." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 92-97.
- In the Company of Fear* Dir. Velcrow Ripper. Prod. Jill Sharpe & Reel Myth Productions, 1999. Video.
- Jones, Amelia. "'The Artist is Present': Artistic Re-enactments and the Impossibility of Presence." *TDR* 55.1 (Spring 2011): 16-45.
- July, Miranda. *The First Bad Man*. New York: Scribner, 2015.
- Koopman, Sara. "Making Space for Peace: International Protective Accompaniment in Colombia." *Geographies of Peace*. Eds. Fiona McConnell, Philippa Williams and Nick Megoran. London: I.B. Taurus, 2014. 75-88. Ebook.
- Korten, David. *Getting to the Twenty-First Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1990.
- Kouri-Towe, Natalie. "Textured Activism: Affect Theory and Transformational Politics in Transnational Queer Palestine-Solidarity Activism." *Atlantis* 37, no. 1 (2015): 23–34.
- Kovach, Margaret. *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations and Contexts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.
- Kulchyski, Peter. *Aboriginal Rights are Not Human Rights: In Defense of Indigenous Struggles*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2013.
- Lakhani, Nina. "People-power and the 'Guatemalan Spring.'" <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/09/people-power-guatemalan-spring-150903075327898.html> Accessed 28 February 2018

- Levitt, Barry. "Theorizing Accompaniment." *Journeys of Fear: Refugee Return and National Transformation in Guatemala*. Alan Simmons and Liisa North, eds. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999: 237-254.
- Levin, Laura. *Performing Ground: Space, Camouflage, and the Art of Blending In*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Ebook.
- Macdonald, Laura. *Supporting Civil Society: Nongovernmental Assistance to Costa Rica and Nicaragua*. Diss. York University, 1992.
- Mackey, Eva. *Unsettled Relations: Uncertainty, Land and Settler Decolonization*. Blackpoint, NS & Winnipeg: Fernwood Press, 2016.
- Mahony, Liam & Luis Enrique Eguren. *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights*. West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1997.
- Mahony, Liam. "The Accompaniment Model in Action." *Fellowship 77.7* (Summer 2013): 12-16.
- Martin, María. "Guatemalans Confront Government Over Its Resistance to Fight Corruption." 10 October 2017
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/guatemalans-confront-government-over-its-resistance-fight-corruption-n805121> Accessed 16 February 2018
- Menchú Tum, Rigoberta. *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*. Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, ed. Ann Wright, trans. London & New York: Verso Books, 1984.
- Montejo, Victor. *Testimony: Death of a Guatemalan Village* Victor Perera, trans. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1987.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. "On Human Rights: Two Simple Remarks." Costas Douzinas and C. A. Gearty, eds. *The Meanings of Rights: The Philosophy and Social Theory of Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 15-20.
- Nango, Joar. *European Everything*. Installation and performance. Athens Conservatoire (Odeion), Athens. 2017.
- Nelson, Diane M. "Stumped Identities: Body Image, Bodies Politic, and the Mujer Maya as Prosthetic." *Cultural Anthropology* 16.3 (August 2001): 314-353.
- . *A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

- NISGUA. "The Power of Presence: Reflections from more than 20 years providing international accompaniment to threatened human rights defenders in Guatemala." March 2015. <http://nisgua.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/R83.pdf> Accessed 6 April 2018.
- Nolin, Catherine. "Spatializing the Immobility of Guatemalan Transnationalism in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 29.57/58: 2004. 267-288.
- Nollert, Angelika, ed. Claire Cahm, trans. *Performative Installation*. Ghent, Belgium: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 2003.
- North, Liisa L. and Alan B. Simmons. "Fear and Hope: Return and Transformation in Historical Perspective." *Journeys of Fear: Refugee Return and National Transformation in Guatemala*. Eds. Liisa L. North and Alan B. Simmons. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. 3-27.
- Painter, James. *Guatemala: False Hope, False Freedom*. London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1987.
- Palmer, Michael D. and Stanley M. Burgess, eds. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice*. Chichester, West Sussex & Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Performing the Border*. Dir. Ursula Biemann. 1999. Video.
- Reassemblage*. Dir. Trinh T. Minh-Ha. Women Make Movies, 1982. Film.
- Rose, Gillian. "Performing Space." *Human Geography Today*. Eds. D. Massey, J. Allen and P. Sarre. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1999. 247-259.
- Sanford, Victoria. *Buried Secrets: Truth and Human Rights in Guatemala*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Stølen, Kristi Anne. *Guatemalans in the Aftermath of Violence: The Refugees' Return*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.
- Taylor, Clark. *Return of Guatemala's Refugees: Reweaving the Torn*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.

Taylor, Diana. *Performance*. Trans. Abigail Levine. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2016.

---. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2003.

Tuck, Eve & K. Wayne Yang. "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1.1 (2012): 1-40.

Tuer, Dot. "Cultures of Conquest/Culture in Context." *Mining the Media Archive: Essays on Art, Technology, and Cultural Resistance*. Toronto: YYY Books, 2006. 129-142.

turions, cheyanne. "Decolonization, Reconciliation, and the Extra-Rational Potential of the Arts." *Arts Everywhere*, March 23, 2016. <http://artseverywhere.ca/2016/03/23/1218/>. Accessed 7 April 2016.

Ukeles, Mierle Laderman. "Maintenance Art Activity (1973)." *Documents* 10 (Fall 1997): 5-14.

Verwoert, Jan. "Double Viewing: The Significance of the 'Pictorial Turn' to the Critical Use of Visual Media in Video Art." *Stuff It: The Video Essay in the Digital Age*. Ed. Ursula Biemann. Vienna & New York: Springer: 2003. 24-33.

Warren, Jonathan W. "Book Review: *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights*. By Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren." *Human Rights Review* 1.4 (2000): 121-122.

Weld, Kirsten. *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2014.

When the People Lead Dir. Merran Smith, Michael Simpson. Prod. Variations on a Wave & Canadian International Development Agency, 1993. Video.

Additional Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor W. "The Essay as Form." *Notes to Literature Vol. 1*. Rolf Tiedemann, ed. Shierry Weber Nicholsen, Trans. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. 3-23.

---. "Commitment." *New Left Review* 87-88 (Sep/Dec 1974): 75-89.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.

---. "We Refugees." *Symposium*, 49:2 (1995: Summer) 114-119.

Ahmed, Sara. "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism." *Borderlands e-journal* 3:2 (2004)
http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no2_2004/ahmed_declarations.htm Accessed 5 November 2017

---. "A Phenomenology of Whiteness." *Feminist Theory* 8:2 (2007): 149-168.

Alcoff, Linda. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Cultural Critique* Winter 1991-1992. 5-32.

Alter, Nora M. "The Political Im/perceptible in the Essay Film: Farocki's *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*." *New German Critique* 68 (Spring - Summer 1996): 165-192.

Álvarez, Iván Villarrea. "Self-Portrait as Essay Film." *Documenting Cityscapes: Urban Change in Contemporary Non-Fiction Film*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. 128-152.

Andreopoulos, George, Zehra F. Kabasakal Arat, & Peter Juviler, eds. *Non-State Actors in the Human Rights Universe*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, Inc., 2006.

Anzaldua, Gloria & Cherrie Moraga, eds. *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. 2nd ed. Latham, NY: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983.

Arendt, Hannah. "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man." *Human Rights: An Anthropological Reader*. Mark Goodale, ed. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. 32-57.

---. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.

Arsela, Murat, Barbara Hogenboom, & Lorenzo Pellegrinia. "The Extractive Imperative in Latin America." *The Extractive Industries and Society* 3 (2016): 880-887.

- Azoulay, Ariella. "Archive." Trans. Tal Haran. *Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon*. <http://www.politicalconcepts.org/issue1/archive/> Accessed 20 November 2017.
- Barthes, Roland, and Stephen Heath. *Image, Music, Text*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.
- Bassnett, Sarah. "Archive and Affect in Contemporary Photography." *Photography & Culture* 2:3 (November 2009): 241-252.
- Baxter, K., Ortega López, H., Serig, D., & Sullivan, G. "The Necessity of Studio Art as a Site and Source for Dissertation Research." *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 27:1 (2008) 4–18.
- Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Bhattacharya, Kakali. "Negotiating Shuttling Between Transnational Experiences: A De/colonizing Approach to Performance Ethnography." *Qualitative Inquiry* 15:6 (July 2009): 1061-1083.
- Birringer, Johannes. "Video Art/Performance: A Border Theory." *Performing Arts Journal* 13:3 (September 1991): 54-84.
- Bishop, Claire. *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. London & New York: Verso Books, 2012.
- . "Participation and Spectacle: Where Are We Now?" Lecture for Creative Time's Living as Form, Cooper Union, New York, May 2011.
- . *Installation Art: A Critical History*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Black, Hannah. "The Identity Artist and the Identity Critic." *Artforum* 54.10 (Summer 2016). 338-339.
- Blunt, Gwilym David. "Is There a Human Right to Resistance?" *Human Rights Quarterly* 39 (2017) 860–881
- Borradori, Giovanna. "Tiny Sparks of Contingency: On the Aesthetics of Human Rights." *Philosophical Dimensions of Human Rights: Some Contemporary Views*. Claudio Corradetti, ed. London & New York: Springer, 2012. 157-172.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. *Relational Aesthetics*. Trans. Simon Pleasance, Fronza Woods, & Mathieu Copeland. Dijon: Les presses du réel, 2009.

- Bruguera, Tania. "Reflexions on Arte Útil (Useful Art)." <http://www.taniabruquera.com/cms/592-0-Reflexions+on+Arte+til+Useful+Art.htm> Accessed 26 January 2018.
- Butler, Judith. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London & New York: Verso Books, 2009.
- Butler, Sarah. "Performance, Art, and Ethnography." *FQS: Forum Qualitative Social Research* 9.2 Art. 34 (May 2008): 1-11.
- Byrne, John. "Social Autonomy and the Use Value of Art." *Afterall* 42 (Autumn-Winter 2016) 61-69.
- Calhoun, Craig. 2002. "Imagining Solidarity: Cosmopolitanism, Constitutional Patriotism, and the Public Sphere." *Public Culture* 14 (1): 147-171.
- Chapman, Owen & Kim Sawchuk. "Research-Creation: Intervention, Analysis and 'Family Resemblances.'" *Canadian Journal of Communication*. 37:1 (2012) 1-26.
- Conquergood, Dwight. "Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research." *The Drama Review* 174.2 (2002): 145-156.
- Cornejo, Kency. "Indigeneity and Decolonial Seeing in Contemporary Art of Guatemala." *FUSE* 36.4 (Fall 2013): 24-31.
- Cornthassel, Jeff & Cindy Holder. "Who's Sorry Now? Government Apologies, Truth Commissions, and Indigenous Self-Determination in Australia, Canada, Guatemala, and Peru." *Human Rights Review*. 9. 465-489.
- Cousins, Peter. "Faith and Accompaniment: A Christian Response." *Fellowship* 77.7 (Summer 2013): 27-29.
- Crosby, Alison. "To Whom Shall the Nation Belong? The Gender and Ethnic Dimensions of Refugee Return and Struggles for Peace in Guatemala." In Alan Simmons and Liisa North (eds), *Journeys of Fear: Refugee Return and National Transformation in Guatemala*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1999: 176-195.
- Carla, Cruz. *Practicing Solidarity*. London: Common Practice, 2016.
- Davis, Tracy C. *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

- De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
- Decter, Leah & Carla Taunton. "Addressing the Settler Problem: Strategies of Settler Responsibility and Decolonization." *FUSE* 36.4 (Fall 2013): 32-39.
- Dembour, Marie-Bénédicte. "What Are Human Rights? Four Schools of Thought." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 32:1 (February 2010) 1-20.
- Deneault, Alain, William Sacher, Catherine Browne, Fred A. Reed, and Robin Philpot. *Imperial Canada Inc: Legal Haven of Choice for the World's Mining Industries*. Vancouver, B.C: Talonbooks, 2012.
- Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Eric Prenowitz, trans. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Dewey, John. *Art as Experience*. New York: Capricorn Books, 1958.
- Dillon, Elizabeth Maddock. *New World Drama: The Performative Commons in the Atlantic World, 1649-1849*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Dougherty, Michael L. "The Global Gold Mining Industry, Junior Firms, and Civil Society Resistance in Guatemala." *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol 30, No. 4, pp. 403-418, 2011.
- Douzinas, Costas, and C. A. Gearty. "Introduction." *The Meanings of Rights: The Philosophy and Social Theory of Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 1-7.
- Duchamp, Marcel. "The Creative Act." Session on the Creative Act, Convention of the American Federation of Arts, Houston, Texas, April 1957.
- Dunn, Peter and Loraine Leeson. "The Aesthetics of Collaboration" *Art Journal* 56:1 (Spring 1997), 26-37.
- Eisner, Elliot. "Art and Knowledge." *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc. 2017. 3-13.
- Elmer, Greg. "Collaboration-Led Research." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37:1 (March 2012): 189-92.
- Elsaesser, Thomas, ed. *Harun Farocki: Working on the Sight-Lines*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004.

- Elwes, Catherine. *Installation and the Moving Image*. London: Wallflower Press, 2015.
- Enwezor, Okwui. *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*. New York: International Center of Photography, 2007.
- Esche, Charles, ed. *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader*. London: Tate Publishing, 2007.
- “Escuela de Arte Útil: A Proto-Institution Implementing Performance as Usefulness” *Art & Education*.
<http://www.artandeducation.net/schoolwatch/158874/escuela-de-arte-til-a-proto-institution-implementing-performance-as-usefulness>.
 Accessed December 19, 2017.
- Foster, Hal. “The Artist as Ethnographer.” *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. London & Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996. 171-204.
- Fox Piven, Frances. “Reflections on Scholarship and Activism.” *Antipode* 42:4 (2010) 806–810.
- Fregoso, Rosa-Linda. “Witnessing and the Poetics of Corporeality.” *Kalfou* 1:1 (2009). 8-20.
- Fusco, Coco. *Corpus Delecti: Performance Art of the Americas*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Garneau, David. “Imaginary Spaces of Conciliation and Reconciliation: Art, Curation, and Healing.” *Arts of Engagement: Taking Aesthetic Action In and Beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, eds. Dylan Robinson & Keavy Martin. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016. 21-42.
- . “Extra-Rational Aesthetic Action and Cultural Decolonization,” *FUSE* 36.4 (Fall 2013): 15-16.
- Gell, Alfred. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Gielen, Pascal and Niels Van Tomme, eds. *Aesthetic Justice: Intersecting Artistic and Moral Perspectives*. Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015.
- Giles, Wenona, and Hyndman, Jennifer, eds. *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre, 1956.

- Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2017.
- . "Inverted Visuality: Against the Flow of Extractivism." *Journal of Visual Culture* 15.1 (April 2016): 29-31.
- Gómez-Peña, Guillermo. *Ethno-Techno: Writings on Performance, Activism, and Pedagogy*. Ed. Elaine Peña. New York & London: Routledge, 2005.
- González, Jennifer. "Autotopographies." *Prosthetic Territories: Politics and Hypertechnologies*. Gabriel Brahm Jr. and Mark Driscoll, eds. Boulder, San Francisco & Oxford: Westview Press, 1995. 133-150.
- Goodale, Mark. "Introduction to 'Anthropology and Human Rights in a New Key.'" *American Anthropologist* 108: 1 (March 2006) 1-8.
- Gordon, Todd, and Jeffery R. Webber. *Blood of Extraction: Canadian Imperialism in Latin America*. Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2016.
- Grandin, Greg. *The Blood of Guatemala: A History of Race and Nation*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Groys, Boris. *Art Power*. Cambridge & London: The MIT Press, 2008.
- Hall, Gary. *Digitize This Book! The Politics of New Media, or Why We Need Open Access Now*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Hall, Stuart. "Constituting an archive." *Third Text* 15:54 (2001) 89-92.
- Hardt, Michael. "Affective Labor." *boundary 2* 26:2 (Summer 1999) 89-100.
- Helguera, Pablo. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011.
- Heller, Roanna. "Becoming an Artist-Ethnographer." *Visualizing Anthropology*. Eds. Anna Grimshaw & Amanda Ravetz. Bristol, UK & Portland, OR, USA: Intellect, 2005. 133-141.
- Hemmings, Clare. "Affective Solidarity: Feminist Reflexivity and Political Transformation." *Feminist Theory* 13, no. 2 (August 1, 2012): 147-61.

- herbst, steirischer and Florian Malzacher, eds. *Truth is Concrete: A Handbook for Artistic Strategies in Real Politics*. Anne Faucheret, Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Kira Kirsch, Andreas R. Peternell, and Johanna Rainer, coeds. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014.
- Hiller, Susan. "An Artist Looks at Ethnographic Exhibitions." *The Provisional Texture of Reality: Selected Talks and Texts, 1977-2007*. Ed. Alexandra Kokoli. JRP Ringier & Les Presses du reel: Zurich & Dijon, 2008.
- Husain, Amin, Nicholas Mirzoeff, Nitasha Dhillon and A Joan Saab (for the Militant Research Collective). "How to See Palestine." *Journal of Visual Culture* 15.1 (April 2016): 42-44.
- Ishay, Micheline R. *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era*. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: The University of California Press, 2008.
- Iles, Chrissie. "Between the Still and Moving Image." *Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art, 1964-1977*. Exhibition Catalogue. New York: Whitney Museum, 2000. 32-69.
- Istok, Rado, ed. *Decolonising Archives*. L'internationale Books, 2016. Ebook.
- Jackson, Shannon. *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2011.
- James, Stephen Andrew. *Universal Human Rights: Origins and Development*. Law and Society (New York, N.Y.). New York: LFB Scholarly Pub., 2007.
- Jelinek, Alana. *This is Not Art: Activism and Other 'Not-Art.'* London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013.
- Jennings, Gabrielle, and Kate Mondloch, eds. *Abstract Video: The Moving Image in Contemporary Art*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015.
- Johnson, Mark. "Embodied Knowing Through Art." *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*. Eds. Michael Biggs & Henrik Karlsson. London & New York: Routledge, 2011. 141-151.
- Jolivet te, Andrew J. *Research Justice: Methodologies for Social Change*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2015.
- Jones, David Houston. *Installation Art and the Practices of Archivalism*. New York : Routledge, 2016.

- Juris, Jeffrey S. and Alex Khasnabish, eds. *Insurgent Encounters: Transnational Activism, Ethnography, and the Political*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2013.
- Kaul, Susanne, and David Kim, eds. *Imagining Human Rights*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2017.
- Kaye, Nick. *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place, and Documentation*. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Keenan, Thomas. "Or Are We Human Beings?" *e-flux Architecture*.
<http://www.e-flux.com/architecture/superhumanity/68719/or-are-we-human-beings/>
 Accessed 23 February 2017.
- Kester, Grant H. *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Koopman, Sara. *Making Space for Peace: International Protective Accompaniment in Colombia*. Dissertation. University of British Columbia, 2012.
- Kulchyski, Peter Keith. *Aboriginal Rights Are Not Human Rights: In Defence of Indigenous Struggles*. Semaphore Series. Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2013.
- Lacy, Suzanne. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. Seattle, Wash: Bay Press, 1995.
- Lichtenfels, Peter and John Rouse, eds. *Performance, Politics and Activism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Lilja, Mona. "Dangerous Bodies, Matter and Motions: Public Assemblies and Embodied Resistance." *Journal of Political Power* (2017): 1-11.
- Lippard, Lucy R. *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: New Press, 1997.
- Lopate, Phillip. "In Search of the Centaur: The Essay-Film." *The Threepenny Review*, 48 (Winter 1992), 19-22.
- Loveless, Natalie. *Research-Creation and Social Justice*, n.d.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwfoAXjWCdo>. Accessed 1 December 2017.
- . "Practice in the Flesh of Theory: Art, Research, and the Fine Arts PhD." *Canadian Journal of Communication*. 37:1 (2012) 93-108.
- Madison, D. Soyini.. *Acts of Activism: Human Rights as Radical Performance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

- . *Critical Ethnography: Methods, Ethics, and Performance*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005.
- Magnat, Virginie. "Can Research Become Ceremony? Performance Ethnography and Indigenous Epistemologies." *Canadian Theatre Review* 151 (Summer 2012): 30-36.
- . "Conducting Embodied Research at the Intersection of Performance Studies, Experimental Ethnography and Indigenous Methodologies." *Anthropologica: Canadian Anthropology Society Journal* 53.2 (2011): 213-227.
- Mahrouse, Gada. *Conflicted Commitments: Race, Privilege, and Power in Transnational Solidarity Activism*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.
- Mignolo, Walter D. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Mirzoeff, Nicholas. "The Right to Look." *Critical Inquiry* 37:3 (Spring 2011): 473-496.
- Mitchell, W.J.T. "How to Make Art with a Jackhammer: A Conversation with Tania Bruguera." *Afterall* 42 (Autumn-Winter 2016) 48-60.
- Mitchell, W. J. T., Bernard E. Harcourt, and Michael Taussig. *Occupy: Three Inquiries in Disobedience*. University of Chicago Press, 2013.
- Modernity-Coloniality Working Group of the Transnational Decolonial Institute. "Decolonial Aesthetics." *FUSE* 36.4 (Fall 2013): 10.
- Mohanty, Chandra. *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. New Delhi: Zubaan, 2003.
- Morris, William. "The Socialist Ideal: Art." *New Review*, January 1891.
- Mouffe, Chantal. "Artistic Activism and Agonistic Spaces." *Art & Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts, and Methods* 1:2 (Summer 2007) 1-5.
- . "Politics, Democratic Action, and Solidarity." *Inquiry* 38, no. 1 & 2 (1995): 99-108.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Being Singular Plural*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- Nelson, Diane M. *Who Counts?: The Mathematics of Death and Life After Genocide*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.

- O'Neill, Paul & Claire Doherty, eds. *Locating the Producers: Durational Approaches to Public Art*. Amsterdam: Valiz, 2011.
- Palmer, Michael D. and Stanley M. Burgess, eds. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Social Justice*. Chichester, West Sussex & Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.
- Patman, Robert G. *Universal Human Rights?* Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire [England]: Macmillan Press, 2000.
- Pérez-Ratton, Virginia. "Performance and Action Work in Central America, 1960-2000: A Political and Aesthetic Choice." *Arte ≠ Vida: Actions by Artists of the Americas 1960-2000*. New York: El Museo del Barrio, 2008. 204-213.
- Pink, Sarah. "Re-thinking Contemporary Activism: From Community to Emplaced Sociality." *Ethnos* 73:2 (June 2008): 163–188.
- Pitarch, Pedro, Shannon Speed, and Xochtl Leyva Solano, eds. *Human Rights in the Maya Region: Global Politics, Cultural Contentions, and Moral Engagements*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2008.
- Pollock, Della. "Marking New Directions in Performance Ethnography." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 26.4 (October 2006) 325-329.
- Power, Margaret and Julie A. Charlip. "Introduction: On Solidarity." *Latin American Perspectives*, 36:6 (November 2009) 3-9.
- Rancière, Jacques. "Contemporary Art and the Politics of Aesthetics." *Communities of Sense: Rethinking Aesthetics and Politics*. Beth Hinderliter, William Kaizen, Vered Maimon, Jaleh Mansoor, & Seth McCormick, eds. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2009. 31-50.
- Rangan, Pooja. *Immediations: The Humanitarian Impulse in Documentary*. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2017.
- Rascaroli, Laura. "Performance in and on the Essay film. Jean-Luc Godard plays Jean-Luc Godard in *Notre musique* (2004)." *Studies in French Cinema* 9:1 (2009)
- Razack, Sherene, Malinda Sharon Smith, and Sunera Thobani, eds. *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010.
- Roach, Joseph. "Theatre Studies/Cultural Studies/Performance Studies: The Three Unities." *Teaching Performance Studies*. Eds. Nathan Sucky and Cynthia Wimmer. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2002.

- Rodgers, Tara. "How Art and Research Inform One Another, or Choose Your Own Adventure." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37:1 (March 2012): 155–61.
- Ross, Christine. *The Past Is the Present; It's the Future Too: The Temporal Turn in Contemporary Art*. New York : Continuum, 2012.
- Ruskin, John. "The relation of art to use." *Lectures on Art Delivered before the University of Oxford in Hilary Term*, 1870.
- Rutten, Kris, An van. Dienderen & Ronald Soetaert. "Revisiting The Ethnographic Turn in Contemporary Art." *Critical Arts* 27:5 (2013): 459-473.
- Schechner, Richard. *Performed Imaginaries*. London & New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Schneider, Arnd and Christopher Wright, eds. *Between Art and Anthropology: Contemporary Ethnographic Practice*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010.
- Schneider, Arnd. "Uneasy Relationships: Contemporary Artists and Anthropology." *Journal of Material Culture* 1:2 (1996), 183-210.
- . "The Art Diviners" *Anthropology Today* 9:2 (1993), 3-9.
- Scholz, Sally J. "Political Solidarity and Violent Resistance." *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 38: 1 (Spring 2007) 38–52.
- . *Political Solidarity*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008.
- Sekula, Allan. "Reading an Archive: Photography between Labour and Capital." *The Photography Reader*. Ed. Liz Wells. New York & London: Routledge, 2003. 443-452.
- Simon, Nina. *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, Calif: Museum 2.0, 2010.
- Simpson, Leanne. *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011.
- . Simpson, Leanne. *Islands of Decolonial Love: Stories & Songs*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2013.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. London & New York: Zed Books, 2012.

- Smith, Liza. "Accompaniment: The Service of Protection." *Fellowship* 77.7 (Summer 2013): 3-4.
- Speed, Shannon. "At the Crossroads of Human Rights and Anthropology: Toward a Critically Engaged Activist Research." *American Anthropologist* 108. 1 (Mar., 2006): 66-76.
- Spinner-Halev, Jeff. "Democracy, Solidarity and Post-Nationalism." *Political Studies* 56, no. 3 (October 1, 2008): 604-28.
- Thompson, Nato. *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*. 1st ed. New York, N.Y: Creative Time, 2012.
- Tello, Verónica. *Counter-Memorial Aesthetics: Refugee Histories and the Politics of Contemporary Art*. New York : Bloomsbury, 2016.
- The Think Tank that has yet to be named, ed. 'Community' in Question: Conversations on Art, Activism, and Community Think Tank Reader Vol. IV
<http://www.wearethethinktank.org/2009/04/reader-4/>
 Accessed 1 December 2017.
- Thoreau, Henry David. "Civil Disobedience" *The Anarchist Reader*. George Woodcock, ed. Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd./Fontana Paperbacks, 1977.
- "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," n.d.
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.
- "United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights," n.d.
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf.
- Wagner, Anne M. "Performance, Video, and the Rhetoric of Presence." *October* 91 (Winter 2000): 59-80.
- Weibel, Peter, ed. *Global Activism: Art and Conflict in the 21st Century*. Karlsruhe, Germany: ZKM, Center for Art and Media, 2015.
- Weizman, Eyal. "Introduction: Forensis." *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*. Forensic Architecture Project, eds. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014. 9-32.
- Wesseling, Janneke, ed. *See it Again, Say it Again: The Artist as Researcher*. Amsterdam: Valiz, 2011.

- Wickstrom, Maurya. *Performance in the Blockades of Neoliberalism: Thinking the Political Anew*. Studies in International Performance. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Willis, Paul & Mats Trondman. "Manifesto for Ethnography." *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 2:3 (2002): 394-402.
- Wilson, Mick. "Autonomy, Agonism, and Activist Art: An Interview with Grant Kester." *Art Journal* 66:3 (Fall 2007)106-118.
- Wright, Stephen. *Toward a Lexicon of Usership*. Eindhoven, NL: Van Abbemuseum, 2013.
- Zeffiro, Andrea. "Practice Makes Almost Perfect: A Methodological Reflection." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37:1 (March 2012): 179–87.

Appendix A: *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* Video

Link: <https://vimeo.com/275283684>

Password: beside

Appendix B: *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside.* Video Credits

Directed by Zoë Heyn-Jones

Editing by Zoë Heyn-Jones, Terra Long, & Eva Kolcze

Sound design by Zoë Heyn-Jones & Terra Long

Found footage (in order of appearance):

Keepers of the Wampum Prod. Onondaga Nation Council of Chiefs, 1974. Video.

When the People Lead Dir. Merran Smith, Michael Simpson. Prod. Variations on a Wave
& Canadian International Development Agency, 1993. Video.

Senses of Man. 1965. Educational Film.

The Sexually Mature Adult. Prod. John Wiley & Sons. 1973. Educational Film.

The Skin as a Sense Organ. 1975. Educational Film.

Wings to Guatemala. Prod. Pan Am. Dir. Jean Oser. Written by Robert Hertzberg.
c1950. Travelogue Film.

Vamos a Guatemala. Prod. International Film Bureau Inc. & Pan American Union. 1956.

Under the Gun: Democracy in Guatemala. Prod. Icarus Films (New York, NY). Camera,
Burleigh Wartes; editor, Marcello Navarro F.; music, Leslie Steinweiss,
1987.

Guatemala 1968. Camera: James Mondloch, PhD. 1968.

“Rios Montt Trial.” *Democracy Now!* 19 April 19 2013. Television.

The Man Behind the Badge: The Case of the Priceless Passport. Prod. Bernard J.
Prockter. 1955. Television.

In the Company of Fear Dir. Velcrow Ripper. Prod. Jill Sharpe & Reel Myth
Productions, 1999. Video.

Still Photographs:

Accompanier photos: Pam Cooley, personal archive.

CPR community portraits: NISGUA photo archive, photographer unknown.

Additional Super 8 footage by Zoë Heyn-Jones

Much gratitude: NISGUA | ACOGUATE | Terra Long | Eva Kolcze | friends at LIFT, in particular TJ Ediger | Karl Reinsalu | Justine McCloskey | Celeste Mayorga Urbina | AMPD (School of the Arts, Performance, Media & Design), York University | Janine Marchessault | Nell Tenhaaf | Laura Levin | Carlota McAllister | Dot Tuer | CERLAC | Nathanson Centre on Transnational Human Rights, Crime & Security, Osgoode Hall Law School | Octavio Castro Gallardo | Miki Heyn | Bill Jones | Corinna Heyn-Jones | Pam Cooley | Gaby Labelle | MISN (the Mining Injustice Solidarity Network)

Appendix C: *al lado, afuera. // beside, outside. Script*

PREFACIO: ECUACIONES // PREFACE: EQUATIONS

“Treaty is a participatory verb” the way that accompaniment is a performance. The self bounded by the social; both real and constructed, rehearsed, reiterated, always becoming.

Tratado es un verbo participativo de la forma en que el acompañamiento es un performance. El yo limitado por lo social; tanto real como construido, ensayado, reiterado, siempre convirtiéndose.

You are one; you were once two. Two gametes fused into one zygote. You, one, came from the two. You, one, zygote, conjoined twin, lover, disciple, double.

Eres una; alguna vez fuiste dos. Dos gametos fusionados en un cigoto. Tú, una, viniste de los dos. Tú, una, cigoto, gemelos unidos, amante, discípulo, doble.

Another equation: how do we measure that which has not occurred? How can we quantify an absence?

Otra ecuación: ¿cómo medimos lo que no ha ocurrido? ¿Cómo podemos cuantificar una ausencia?

INTRODUCCIÓN: RETORNO // INTRODUCTION: RETURN

Comenzó con un retorno.

It began with a return.

Doscientos mil refugiados guatemaltecos viviendo en campamentos a tres kilómetros de distancia de la frontera con México en Chiapas.

Two hundred thousand Guatemalan refugees living in camps three kilometers from the Mexican border in Chiapas.

Esa línea, la frontera, al mismo tiempo real y construida la línea dibujada.

That line, the border, at the same time real and constructed; the performed line.

Esta vez, la línea dibujada sirvió para estos migrantes, los mantuvo seguros.

This time, this performed line served these migrants; kept them safe.

Pronto, sin embargo, quisieron regresar a sus tierras tradicionales y solicitaron acompañamiento de la comunidad internacional.

Soon, though, they wanted to return to their traditional lands and requested accompaniment from the international community.

Décadas más tarde esta relación sigue;

Decades later this relationship continues;

¿Es el cuerpo de la solidaridad un aparato? ¿Una prótesis?

Is the body in solidarity an apparatus? A prosthetic?

¿Cuyos cuerpos incitan a la violencia y cuyos cuerpos la disuaden? ¿Quién cuenta?

Whose bodies incite violence and whose bodies deter it? Who counts?

An accompanier once told me about a Guatemalan village who, during the Conflict, took apart their communal marimba before seeking refuge in Mexico, each person taking one piece with them.

Un acompañante me contó una vez acerca de un pueblo guatemalteco que, durante el Conflicto, desmanteló su marimba comunal antes de buscar refugio en México, y cada persona tomó una pieza.

PIEL // SKIN

Skin wants to touch and be touched. It is, after all, the body's largest organ. *Organon*, from the Greek: tool, instrument. The membrane through which we experience the world, the organ by which the world experiences us.

La piel quiere tocar y ser tocada. Después de todo, es el órgano más grande del cuerpo. *Organon*, griego: herramienta, instrumento. La membrana a través de la cual experimentamos el mundo. La piel es el órgano mediante el cual el mundo nos experimenta.

Skin is visibility. It is legibility. It writes us into expectations, it indexes us as threats or saviours. It often stands for privilege or its absence. Entry or restriction, affordance or hindrance. Skin has been nothing less than the topography on which life and death are mapped.

La piel es visibilidad. Es legibilidad. Nos describe dentro de expectativas, nos cataloga como amenazas o salvadores. A menudo nos otorga privilegios o nos los quita. Entrada o restricción, acceso u obstáculo. La piel no ha sido nada menos que la topografía sobre la que se dibujan la vida y la muerte.

Skin envelopes the physicality of accompaniment as completely as those bodies who enact it.

La piel envuelve la forma física de su acompañante, tan completamente como aquellos cuerpos que la representan.

Acting as a network of fibreoptic cables might, conduits of information. Skin, encircling these conduits as the protective casing of cables does.

Actuando como una red de cables de fibra óptica, conductos de información. La piel, rodeando estos conductos como lo hace la cubierta de protección de los cables.

While privilege clings as tightly skin, it is in fact communal. We must gather around the table and ask how we will use what is rightfully communal property.

A pesar de que el privilegio se aferra como piel bien apretada, es de hecho comunal. Debemos reunirnos alrededor de la mesa, y preguntar cómo vamos a utilizar lo que es por derecho propiedad comunal.

The table is where meals are served and around which conversation takes place and hospitality is extended.

La mesa es donde se sirven comidas, alrededor de la cual tiene lugar la conversación y donde la hospitalidad se extiende.

Lots of sweet black coffee.

Mucho café dulce y negro.

GÉNERO // GENDER

Who sets the table, who brews the coffee, who sweeps up the crumbs once the meal has ended?

¿Quién pone la mesa, elabora el café, que barre las migajas una vez que la comida ha terminado?

Who makes the tortillas but who, then, often disappears into the shadows of the kitchen before the conversations take place.

¿Qué las hacen tortillas, pero que a menudo, también desaparecen en las sombras de la cocina antes de que las conversaciones tengan lugar?

The performance of gender is inextricable from the political body of the accompaniment volunteer. The majority of people who do accompaniment work are women.

La actuación del género es inseparable del cuerpo político en el acompañamiento voluntario. La mayoría de las personas que hacen el trabajo de acompañamiento son mujeres.

Being a woman, being a foreign woman, being a foreign woman with white skin - different assemblages of privilege, different spatial relations.

Ser mujer, ser extranjera, ser una mujer extranjera con la piel blanca - diferentes conjuntos de privilegios, diferentes relaciones espaciales.

Social dynamics within different accompaniment scenarios: having a meal with a family, the husband or the men at the table might speak to you about politics in a way that they wouldn't speak to their wife or female family members; the women might not sit down and eat with you because they're cooking and serving, so your time or opportunity to talk with them is limited. There might be shyness, or jealousy, hostility or longing to speak.

La dinámica social dentro de los diferentes escenarios de acompañamiento: tener una comida con una familia, donde el marido o los hombres de la mesa puedan hablar contigo acerca de política, de una manera que no hablarían con su esposa o mujeres de la familia; las mujeres no se pueden sentarse y comer contigo porque están cocinando y sirviendo, así que tu tiempo o la oportunidad de hablar con ellas es limitado. Puede haber timidez, celos, hostilidad o deseo de hablar.

Nonintervention. The commitment to standing beside - but standing *aside*.

No intervención. El compromiso de levantarse a un lado de - pero estando *aparte*.

Acting neutrally: not attending political rallies, standing outside of demonstrations and marches, avoiding being photographed by the press - an intricate oscillation between visibility and invisibility.

Actuando con neutralidad: no asistiendo a reuniones políticas, estando de pie fuera de las manifestaciones y marchas, evitando ser fotografiados por la prensa - una intrincada oscilación entre visibilidad e invisibilidad.

When so much of accompaniment relies on relationship-building, trust, and communication, perhaps feminine people have more of a necessary affective stamina?

Cuando gran parte del acompañamiento se basa en la construcción de relaciones, la confianza y la comunicación, entonces quizá las personas femeninas tienen más resistencia afectiva de la necesaria.

Affect is also a tool; a way of measuring efficacy. While we can't measure what has not occurred, what violence has been deterred, we can instead ask members of the community: 'do you feel safer?'

El afecto es también una herramienta; una forma de medir la eficacia. Aunque no podemos medir lo que no ha ocurrido, lo que la violencia ha estado disuadido, podemos preguntar a los miembros de la comunidad: "¿Se siente más seguros?"

ACCESORIOS Y ENSAYOS // PROPS & REHEARSALS

The courtroom is a stage, the costume of the *chaleco*, the utilitarian vest, that is worn to mark accompaniers as belonging to a certain organization, is donned immediately before entering, and removed before exiting.

El juzgado es un escenario, el disfraz del chaleco, que es usado para marcar a los acompañantes como pertenecientes a una determinada organización, se coloca inmediatamente antes de entrar, y se retira antes de salir.

Entering the courtroom, accompaniers might seat themselves in the back rather than the front, avoiding being photographed by the press (who have a tendency to make claims of foreign interference in the judicial system).

Entrando al juzgado, los acompañantes podrían sentarse en la parte trasera en lugar del frente, evitando ser fotografiados por la prensa (que tiene una tendencia a hacer afirmaciones de interferencia extranjera en el sistema judicial).

Sometimes it might be difficult to find a spot to sit. On one side, there may be Indigenous communities who have come to support the witnesses, and on the other, military officers and their families.

A veces puede ser difícil encontrar un lugar para sentarse en el tribunal. Por un lado, puede haber comunidades indígenas que han venido a apoyar a los testigos y por el otro, oficiales militares y sus familias.

Literally embodying impartiality and noninterference, accompaniers attempt to balance where they sit in the space of the courtroom. You want to be visible but not too visible.

Literalmente abrazando la imparcialidad y la no interferencia, los acompañantes intentan equilibrar el espacio donde se sientan en la sala. Quieres ser visible pero no demasiado.

Like the *chaleco* and the repertoire of behaviours and postures that accompany it, the passport is an artifact of the material culture of citizenship, a tool that carries pragmatic and symbolic weight. A physical tool that serves to access the immaterial: relationships and networks.

Al igual que el chaleco y el repertorio de comportamientos y posturas que lo acompañan, el pasaporte es un artefacto de la cultura material de la ciudadanía, una herramienta que tiene un peso pragmático y simbólico. Una herramienta física que sirve para acceder a lo inmaterial: relaciones y redes.

Citizens from the global north - privileged by plunder, carrying responsibility imposed by governments over which they have little control, seeking ways to use the benefits of the lottery of citizenship against the system itself.

Ciudadanos del Norte, privilegiados por el saqueo, llevando la responsabilidad impuesta por los gobiernos sobre los que tienen poco control, buscando maneras de utilizar los beneficios de la lotería de la ciudadanía en contra del propio sistema.

A few physical objects, prompts for action, potentialities. How do we deploy them?

Unos objetos físicos, estimulan a la acción y las capacidades ¿Cómo desplegarlos?

Solidarity: an assemblage of gestures and rehearsals.

Solidaridad: un conjunto de gestos y ensayos.

Accompaniers receive training sessions, a few intensive days of history and theory. Role play scenarios.

Los acompañantes reciben sesiones de formación, unos días intensos de historia y teoría. Escenarios de juegos de rol.

The body might be apt to react in self-defense when confronted with violence. Nonviolence requires rehearsal, rewriting the body's synapses, its fight-or-flight instinct.

El cuerpo debería ser apto para reaccionar en defensa propia cuando se enfrenta a la violencia. La no violencia requiere ensayo, la reescritura de las sinapsis del cuerpo, su instinto de lucha o huida.

Scenario: we are on a bus. A police officer boards the bus and tells the person being accompanied to get off the bus, and tells us, the accompanier, to stay on the bus. What do we do? Do we try to go with him? The police officer shows his weapon - how do we react?

Escenario: estamos en un autobús. Un oficial de policía aborda el autobús y le dice a la persona que está siendo acompañada que baje del autobús, también nos dice, el acompañante, que se mantenga en el autobús ¿Qué hacemos? ¿Tratamos de ir con él? El oficial de policía muestra su arma. ¿Cómo reaccionamos?

PRÓTESIS // PROSTHETICS

In Guatemala, community radio extends bodies, networks them.

En Guatemala, la radio comunitaria extiende cuerpos y los conecta.

It reinvigorates Indigenous languages and connects remote communities.

Revitaliza las lenguas indígenas y conecta comunidades remotas.

Right-wing governments have made the unauthorized use of the radio spectrum illegal.

Los gobiernos de derecha han ilegalizado el uso no autorizado del espectro de radio.

The movement fights for the democratization of the airwaves, asserting that freedom of expression is a human right, and that Indigenous peoples have a right to their own media.

El movimiento lucha por la democratización de las ondas, afirmando que la libertad de expresión es un derecho humano, y que los pueblos indígenas tienen derecho a sus propios medios.

Community radio producers have been threatened with incarceration, violence, and the confiscation of their equipment.

Los productores de radio comunitaria han sido amenazados con el encarcelamiento, la violencia y la confiscación de sus equipos.

They call for domestic and international solidarity.

Exigen solidaridad nacional e internacional.

Accompaniers have been placed with them.

Acompañantes han sido colocados con ellos.

CONCLUSIÓN: TRATADO // CONCLUSION: TREATY

The Covenant Chain treaty, recorded in the Two Row Wampum, or Guswentwas made between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch in 1613 on the land which is now called New York State.

El tratado Pacto Cadena fue hecho entre la Confederación Iroquesa y los holandeses en 1613, en la tierra que ahora se llama el estado de Nueva York.

This agreement was recorded in the Two Row Wampum or Guswentha, a white shell belt with two purple rows that signify two vessels travelling down the same river together.

Este acuerdo se registró en el *Two Row Wampum*, o *Guswentha*, un cinturón de concha blanca con dos filas de color púrpura, las que significan dos buques que viajan juntos por el mismo río.

A birch bark canoe and a ship, side by side, each holding its laws, customs, ways.

Una canoa de corteza de abedul y un barco, lado a lado, cada uno con sus leyes, costumbres y maneras.

The two rows of purple beads are bound together by the white.

Las dos filas de granos púrpuras están unidos por el blanco.

This object - the wampum - is not static, not a relic or an artifact.

Este objeto - el *wampum* - no es estático, no es una reliquia, ni un artefacto.

It asks to be taken into our hands at regular intervals to be polished and cared for.

Pide ser tenido en nuestras manos a intervalos regulares para ser pulido y cuidado.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Por favor h blame de ti. (Nombre, edad, nacionalidad, profesional, educativo, fondo, etc.)

Please tell me about yourself. (Name, age, nationality, profession, educational, background, etc.)

 C mo se enter  de acompa amiento?

How did you learn about accompaniment?

 Qu  organizaci n est  trabajando?  Cu l es su comprensi n de la historia de esta organizaci n?

What organization are you working with? What is your understanding of the history of this organization?

 Qu  significa el acompa amiento a usted?  C mo se define el acompa amiento de los derechos humanos?  C mo funciona?

What does accompaniment mean to you? How do you define human rights accompaniment?

How does it work?

Por favor describa su vida d a a d a como acompa ante?  C mo es un d a "t pico"?

Please describe your day-to-day life as an accompanier? What does a ‘typical’ day look like?

Lo que llev  a participar en el acompa amiento de los derechos humanos? En concreto en el contexto de Guatemala?

What lead you to participate in human rights accompaniment? Specifically in the context of Guatemala?

 Ha participado en el acompa amiento de los derechos humanos en otras regiones? Si es as ,  C mo sus experiencias en otros contextos pol ticos sido diferente?  C mo han sido similares?

Have you participated in human rights accompaniment in other regions? If so, how have your experiences in other geopolitical contexts been different? How have they been similar?

 En qu  tipo de formaci n particip  antes de comenzar su trabajo como acompa ante?

What type of training did you participate in before beginning your work as an accompanier?

 Cu l es la relaci n de su pa s de origen con Estado de Guatemala?

What is your country of origin’s relationship with the Guatemalan state?

¿Qué es lo que usted percibe es la importancia de la nacionalidad en el funcionamiento de acompañamiento?

What do you perceive is the importance of nationality in the functioning of accompaniment?

Una gran parte de los acompañantes son mujeres. ¿Por qué crees que es? Cómo afecta el género las relaciones desarrolladas a través de acompañamiento? ¿Si es así, cómo? Si no es así, ¿por qué cree que es así?

A great deal of accompaniers are women. Why do you think that is? Does gender play a role in the relationships developed through accompaniment? If so, how? If not, why do you think that is?

¿Cree que el acompañamiento es una estrategia exitosa para la disuasión de la violencia?

Do you think accompaniment is a successful strategy for the deterrence of violence?

Ha sido testigo de actos de violencia o amenazas mientras trabajaba como acompañante? ¿Cómo respondió? ¿Cuál fue el resultado?

Have you witnessed acts of violence or threats while working as an accompanier? How did you respond? What was the outcome?

¿Cómo se mide la eficacia de acompañamiento de los derechos humanos?

How do you measure the effectiveness of human rights accompaniment?

¿En qué consiste el acompañamiento? ¿Qué trabajos/funciones realiza?

What does accompaniment entail? What jobs/roles do you perform?

¿Cómo se utiliza su cuerpo en el acompañamiento de los derechos humanos?

How do you use your body in human rights accompaniment?

Sara Koopman ha descrito accos en Colombia vistiendo camisetas blancas y el uso de una bandera blanca para marcar a sí mismos como acompañantes. ¿Ha utilizado trajes o accesorios en su trabajo de acompañamiento?

Sara Koopman has described accos in Colombia wearing white T-shirts and using a white flag to mark themselves as accompaniers. Have you used ‘costumes’ or ‘props’ in your accompaniment work?

Se ha observado que la mayoría de los acompañantes son blancos. ¿Cómo afecta la raza/origen

étnico acompañamiento de los derechos humanos? Es el privilegio blanco inherente a las relaciones de acompañamiento? Qué acompañamiento reproducen las estructuras de fuerza/ relaciones raciales existentes?

It has been noted that the majority of companions are white. How does race/ethnicity affect human rights accompaniment? Is white privilege inherent in accompaniment relationships? Does accompaniment reproduce existing racialized power structures/relations?

¿Ha experimentado o presenciado posicionamiento racializada en el trabajo de solidaridad? Es decir, las personas racializadas asumir diferentes roles debido a su raza?

Have you experienced/witnessed racialized positioning in solidarity work? I.e. differently racialized people taking on different roles due to their race?

Puede ser el acompañamiento (sin darse cuenta) perjudiciales para las comunidades / actores sociales que tiene intención de ayudar?

Can accompaniment be (inadvertently) harmful to those communities/social actors it intends to help?

¿Cómo se ve acompañamiento? ¿Cómo se visualiza?

What does accompaniment look like? How is it visualized?

Si tuviera que tomar una fotografía o grabar una escena que representaría el acompañamiento de los derechos humanos, lo que se vería?

If you had to take one photograph or record one scene that would represent human rights accompaniment, what would it look like?

¿Cómo se define la solidaridad? ¿Cuál es la relación entre las ideas de solidaridad y la práctica de acompañamiento?

How do you define solidarity? What is the relationship between ideas of solidarity and the practice of accompaniment?

¿Cómo podemos trabajar hacia la descolonización de la solidaridad?

How can we work towards decolonizing solidarity?

¿Qué se siente al hacer el trabajo de acompañamiento?

What does it feel like to do accompaniment work?

¿Qué tipo de relaciones con el tiempo depender de acompañamiento?

What kinds of relationship to time does accompaniment rely on/develop?

El acompañamiento ha sido descrita como "hacer espacio para la paz." ¿Cómo se define la paz?

¿Cómo función de acompañamiento para crear el espacio (s)? ¿Cómo se ve este espacio como (es decir, ¿cómo visualizarlo?)

Accompaniment has been described as “making space for peace.” How do you define peace?

How does accompaniment function to create space(s)? What does this space look like (i.e. how would you visualize it?)