A Handbook of Feminist and Anti-Colonial Methods for Story-telling and Theorising Liberation

orary Social History Archives Katerina Teaiwa Diana Betanzos

Alex Martinis Roe

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Including contributions from
Alexandra Juhasz
Andre Ortega
Katerina Teaiwa
Amelia Wallin

And in dialogue with
ASKI Contemporary Social History Archives
Gladys Kalichini
Diana Betanzos

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Introduction

Amelia Wallin

This Handbook is published alongside Alex Martinis Roe's exhibition at La Trobe Art Institute, 'Storytelling Liberation,' transferring some of the knowledge created through the making of the exhibition into a book form. The project puts forth a set of transdisciplinary methods—to be taken up by anyone—that aid in the sharing and practicing of liberation politics. In addition to Alex, six scholar-practitioners are co-authors of the project: Pacific scholar, artist and activist Katerina Teaiwa of Banaban, I-Kiribati and African American heritage; the leading archive of the Greek Left, ASKI Contemporary Social History Archives; Zambian artist and art historian Gladys Kalichini; North American queer-feminist media producer, theorist and activist, Alexandra Juhasz; and Mexican feminist narrative practitioners and activists Andre Ortega and Diana Betanzos.

For Alex, who has long focused on networks of solidarity, sharing methods of doing history has the potential to contribute to liberation; building what she calls 'solidarity-in-difference' and creating alliances among different positionalities. Across five co-authored films, storytelling is, in turn, a form of resistance, ritual and inheritance. Presenting the methods shared from each author's specific practices, which include deep archival research, collective work and solidarity-building through narrative, 'Storytelling Liberation' resists the singularity of dominant narratives. Instead, the project listens and attends to the voices that exist outside of the hegemonic powers. As we witness a rise of anti-democratic, right wing and autocratic governments world-wide, the methods shared by this project, and the various struggles for liberation they document, take on new urgency.

Proposition for Storytelling as an anti-discipline in academia and the arts

Alex Martinis Roe
The exhibition project 'Storytelling Liberation' aims to model how an international alliance might be created through studying the methods and practices of those with whom we share purpose. The project focuses on storytelling methods with a specific purpose: telling stories about liberation politics. It asks, which of these methods could be shared with others and what alliances could this transmission generate?

The proposition I have attempted to test with this project is that 'storytelling' could become a new formation at the intersection of socially-engaged contemporary art, ethnographic film, visual anthropology, experimental historiography, oral history, and First Nations, anti-colonial and women's storytelling cultures. An anti-discipline of feminist and decolonial methods, 'storytelling' could once again become a gathering place for ways of learning about and telling stories from diverse contexts and cultures.

Why Storytelling?
I first came to the idea of gathering around 'storytelling' through my long engagement with consciousness-raising and other relational feminist practices, especially the practice of committing to each other. These are among the most fundamental and universal practices, upon which all other action and social transformation depends, and storytelling is central to them.[1] In recent years, through a practice of walking-with, I have learnt about the important place of storytelling in First Nations cultures. I believe that this proposition could contribute to making academia and the arts structurally more supportive of cultures that highly value the intergenerational transmission of collective knowledge through storytelling.

I have been thinking with Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt here as well about how storytelling creates collective memory and a 'common world' through the transmission of experience, which is essential for political plurality and generating collective responsibility for how we inherit

1 Alex Martinis Roe, *To Become Two: Propositions for Feminist Collective Practice* (Berlin: Archive Books, 2018).

the past and create the future.[2] At the moment, fake 'stories' are hot commodities as big tech market products such as Instagram Stories that promise to bring us closer, but in reality the effect is individualising and alienating. The common world that is created by storytelling is not something that can be bought and sold. It is tradition, a way of being together, which is about carrying knowledge, creating it and sharing it. That's why I am keen to defend the name 'storytelling.' True storytelling needs to be protected and nurtured. Part of this politics is the reaffirmation of 'storytelling' to name practices that contribute to the common world, as a way of countering its increasing commodification.

Process

Over the past several years, I have formed five collaborations with activists, scholars and artists from different disciplinary and geographic contexts. I have contributed to their research and projects, while filming their working process and interviewing them about it. Through this process, I have identified a key practical storytelling research method developed or used by each collaborator. With each collaborator, we made a film that helped their method become transversal: something that can be learned by others in different contexts. In four of the five collaborations we also co-taught workshops with students together, which was an important way to learn about how the research methods could be transmitted. Situating the methods in their genealogy—the place, culture and activist histories they come from—is essential for their journey to other contexts.

Collaboration is a form of organising. It's a way of creating networks and connecting different efforts together. It creates the opportunity to use the resources or the power in one place in order to make change in another. Considering the global scale of the threats our world is facing, we on the feminist, anti-colonial left must be international. How can we relate to one another and share tools when the starting point is difference and not sameness?

2 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Second Edition (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998) and Benjamin, Walter, "The Storyteller" in *Illuminations*, 1st ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968).

Art

Responding to my own context as an artist who also works in universities, I believe that the introduction of art as a discipline in the neoliberal university has fundamentally threatened the openness of practice that was protected in the art academies. At the same time, the introduction of 'art' within the domain of 'knowledge' can also be the potential ally of anti-colonial and transdisciplinary projects. The inclusion of 'artistic research' as a valid form of knowledge opens space in the university for other forms of learning that were excluded in the modern frame, such as Indigenous, feminist, and anti-colonial knowledges. While there are powerful examples of self-determined research and teaching institutes in Australian universities, such as the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development (University of Melbourne); Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research (University of Technology Sydney); Wominjeka Djeembana (Monash University); and Gabra Biik, Wurruwila Wutja (La Trobe University), the frame of anthropology, and the pervasive concept of objectivity, remains strong in the definition of 'knowledge' and in the very formats of academic publishing. Typically, knowledge about culture as an object of study has a higher value in the hierarchy of disciplines than cultural practices, which remain subordinate forms of knowledge. As my collaborator Katerina Teaiwa writes of her experience studying Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawai'i:

> Pedagogically and methodologically, interdisciplinarity was well woven through history, culture, politics, and Indigenous knowledges. But even as we were being told to 'decolonise our minds' and 'decolonise our knowledges' and 'decolonise our approaches,' I kept asking: then why are we doing all this in text, through reading and writing?... I found it difficult to reconcile being told to decolonise everything without the form being decolonised as well.[3]

3 Katerina Teaiwa, "Not Here for the Disciplines: Researching with and for the Pacific". Chapter. In *The Cambridge Guide to Mixed Methods Research for Theatre and Performance Studies*, edited by Tracy C. Davis and Paul Rae (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024) 272-273.

When I think about the climate crisis, and its interconnection with colonialism, extractive capitalism and the rise of new types of feudalism, I believe that one of the major changes necessary in our field is to re-question the art object and its commodity status. This would involve structurally valuing the process of art, using the concept of intangible cultural heritage to preserve the practice, process and context-specific evolution of culture through intergenerational embodied transfer. Ariella Aïsha Azoulay examines the colonial construction of 'art' as a transcendental universal category in modernity which persists in the format of the exchangeable art object.[4] Further, the detachment of the art object from the communities and relationships that produced and mediate it, enables extractivism to persist in Western culture. It is necessary that we depart from the mainstay structures of the artworld: the solo author in the isolated studio and detachment of the art object from contexts of production and those who encounter it.

Disciplines

As a species, we are facing existential threat from a host of super wicked problems, and we must do things differently if we are to survive and to live in justice. We cannot continue to operate on the basis that isolated radical pieces of research and teaching will make enough of a difference in time. We need new formations of knowledge and culture so that we can collectively address the issues now.

The modern disciplines and industries of Western knowledge and culture are products of colonial capitalism. So many activists, academics and cultural workers would agree, these modern disciplines are not working, and we have thoroughly done the theoretical work of deconstructing them. Now it is time to reorganise the public resources of the university and cultural sector so that we can do knowledge and culture differently. This project is an attempt to answer the question: how?

4 Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* (London and New York: Verso, 2019), 58-63.

Organising

This repurposing of public resources could be organised with the same strategies as the social justice movements of the sixties and seventies and their long march through the institutions to form Women's Studies, Cultural Studies, Science Studies, Disability Studies, Black Studies and more, and recently First Nations-led Indigenous Studies and Trans Studies among others, which were all set up by grassroots activist movements. The inclusion of these fields of knowledge has presented a challenge to how institutions and industries of cultural production relate to minorities and has been an important modality of change. Under the pressure of the neoliberal university and cultural sector systems, however, many of these fields have become disconnected from their grassroots origins. While there is resistance within each of these fields, I am not aware of an available, highly-organised international movement that directly seeks to change the fundamental structure of the faculties, schools, disciplines and sub-disciplines, and so, binary habits of thought continue to cause damage as they are perpetuated by knowledge and its applications in every industry.

What we need is an organised, international network across both academic and cultural sectors that doesn't ask for adaptations to the given system but demands a repurposing of public resources away from market forces. It must do so with a clear proposal for what would replace the current structures. We need to debate and arrive at a replacement for the structural separation of the arts, the humanities, the social sciences, the natural sciences and its maintenance of the modern world order.

Alex Martinis Roe in conversation with Katerina Teaiwa, Alexandra Juhasz and Andre Ortega

My proposition to embrace storytelling as an anti-discipline in academia and the arts is a big statement, but I believe that as cultural workers and as academics, we have to organise. People regularly voice their dissatisfaction with their disciplines and the need for change, but we need to discuss what designs and methods can bring about this change. Alex, Katerina, Andre and I have come together to debate this proposition. I thought we could start off our conversation by grounding it in experience.

Andre, could tell us about your experience of being part of this project? Having seen the films made with the other collaborators, perhaps you have some reflections on how our collaboration fits within the broader project?

AO I think it was more than a year ago that I received an email from a Mexican friend that lives in the Netherlands introducing me to Alex, who was interested in collaborating with women around the world who were working with storytelling in order to nurture activist and social movements. I was very interested in this general description, and we started speaking. I told Alex how I am a narrative practitioner, and how I use narrative practices in activist, social and community settings, as a way of facilitating conversations with people in order for them to narrate or re-narrate their own stories in ways that make them stronger. I discussed a project called Cruz Rosa that I'm working on with Diana Betanzos, also from Mexico, from the peripheral areas of Mexico City. Cruz Rosa is an audio-visual documentary work, regarding the femicides that women face in Mexico every day. In this documentary, we integrate narrative practices as ways of collaborating and speaking together with other women that enables re-telling our stories from a place of dignity. Through our collaborative film with Alex, we devel-

oped a way of sharing how Diana and I use narrative practices: we shared our method of creating political-poetic documents that honour people's stories in their own words.

Taking into account the other women, artists, activists, and academics that are part of this exhibition, I was taking some notes about some words that resonate with the ethics and politics of narrative practices that are also very close to the interests of Storytelling Liberation. I'll read these words in a format of a political-poetic document:

Storytelling Liberation:
Liberation politics…
collaborating with those with whom we share purpose
collaboration as a form of organising

storytelling:
telling our stories from a place of dignity
resist through collective biographies
being able to look slowly
female freedom fighters
creating together with friends
creating together with long-life collaborators
celebrating interpersonal relationships…
these, are our liberation politics

storytelling as our form of organising

This political-poetic document expresses how I resonate with the work of Katerina and Alex Juhasz as well. It's really lovely how we can now practice speaking together with other women from very different contexts, in order to share our experience and then also strengthen our possibilities.

AMR Thank you so much, Andre. The words that you have selected, I see as a kind of poet-

ry, and at the same time it is also ‘a document.’ This practice that you have, this form of listening, is demonstrated in the film that we made together. That's a real gift for me. Thank you so much.

So, Katerina, Alex, do you want to say something about your experience of being part of this project?

AJ I'm thrilled to get to be in dialogue with these women that I've seen through your films. I understand that although each of us are really different practitioners—we work in different forms, we've been trained in different ways, we work in different countries—there are clear and important through lines which I think really are about a shared method. Many of the words Andre has already expressed, but for me I would add: collaboration, dialogue, collectivity, groundedness, and artistic research practice that's community-based and purpose-driven.

I make documentary, I have for most of my adult life, but I don't know that I've ever had I documentary directed towards me. However, Alex, because of our many previous conversations, I trusted that we came from a similar place and we would figure things out together. The conversation that we recorded was one thing, but the film that you made from it was something else. It was really beautiful to watch you listen to me and look at my work and pull some strands that are all quite true to me, but through your brain and through your vision. Those are the parts of the project that I want to reflect back to you as being important to me. And we're doing it right now as well, we’re continuing the conversation internationally with this group of people who are linked by you, but also by our individual work as feminists.

AMR Thank you, Alex. Katerina, what I wanted to ask you was, specifically, what is your perspective or your experience of modern disciplinary frames in the arts and academia? Perhaps you could reflect on your pertinent question as to why we're not decolonising the forms as well.

KT One of the things that's quite challenging for me is to start with concepts, methods, and abstractions before the story, and before the people, the place and the history. What we've been doing in the Pacific, forever, is actually starting with the story and what happened. So, we start with places, peoples, events, histories, dramas, politics, something that happened. And then this idea of abstraction, observation, documentation, and an articulation of methodology is what I find really difficult. This is because methodologically, what we're doing in most Indigenous cultures, and definitely in the Pacific, is an automatic and instant distillation, analysis and reflection in the telling of the story.

Storytelling is everything, it is the whole thing and in fact there's no separation between content and method and frame and approach. So, it's the taking apart of things in order to see what's going on, which is quite challenging for me.

It's been really good and really challenging for me to recognise that I've been in the academy, and I've become a Professor at the Australian National University by doing things the opposite of how we're trained. Whenever people would try to train me in Anthropology or History, or Cultural Studies, I had no idea what was going on, because it's very foreign and strange to me to start with concepts or colours or palettes. I'm used to being grounded in places and peoples and relationships and dramas and grief and happi-

ness and joy, and all of those things that we are told are different from formal proper knowledge production.

Stories are everything, and you can tell stories through words, but you can tell stories through dance, through song. I don't see borders and barriers and boundaries between all the genres, because that's how we were raised. I came here with some amazing Kiribati women who live here in Victoria, and we were telling ghost stories the whole entire way to this panel, because that is what we do, it's an everyday kind of thing.

What I loved about this project is it helped me articulate better what we're doing on an everyday basis, and how there are these other ways of being in the world that don't rely on that objectification, commodification, extraction and abstraction of something that is actually a very holistic, integrated way of being in the world, which gives you all those observational skills that you need because you are paying attention to multiple realms simultaneously. This is what it is like to be a Pacific person and to be Indigenous. It's like you have eight eyes, and those eight eyes are taking in all kinds of information, across time, space and place. AI is trying to do that for us, and I keep telling my students don't use the AI to do that, develop it yourself. That is a human way of being in the world. That's what I'm trying to teach my students and my daughters and my family, because these are life skills. Storytelling skills give you life skills.

AMR In a workshop I held with Katerina, the students really learned from this practice of looking slowly, and they were able to, as you say, learn to have eight eyes through that process. While the students couldn't go out and then start telling the

story themselves, because it's not their story to tell, they could start using the methods.

I'm curious to hear from Alex, what do you think of this proposition to find new anti-disciplinary formations through the process that I tested out with this project? That is, by studying the particular working methods of those with whom we share purpose, and finding what can be transversal, can we reimagine how academia and the arts could be organised?

AJ I'm deeply considering what Katerina said, which is the opposite. But then again, when you hear something is the opposite, you understand that it's a mirror, and that it's really perhaps one thing. And I was very moved by Katerina's depiction of a holistic way of being in the world and making worlds, and that you don't distil out the threads.

I'm a community-based practitioner who does my work inside of a place with a community, typically with political or social or cultural goals. I'm supposed to be a 'regular academic,' but I break outside of the disciplinary boundaries to do that kind of community work. I have a PhD in Cinema Studies, but I make film in community, which again is like another sort of breakout, and I am always interested in thinking about method. So, to me that is holistic. When I am working in a particular setting with a group of people around a problem, I'm very eager to think about how that comes to be the method with that group of people around that particular goal that we want to transform. I'm always eager to make sense of how we're doing it and what we're doing, as much as why we're doing it and what it's about. You've all come together with a purpose, and you're hoping that something will come from it. Alex and

I talk a lot about that: what I hope comes from it is just from doing it, being together and doing it and being activated enough to want to do things together.

So, in any case, I'm provoked and interested by Katerina's perspective. I guess the only other thing I'd say to you, Alex, is that the project is beautiful. It carries its feelings with it, and all the portraits produce a kind of comfort, honesty, and hope. They each depict people who are working hard in their communities alongside the people they love. But could we transform all of the academy into that? You have these very grandiose conclusions for something that is very small and intimate, and I think that is part of your question. Is our hope that we rewrite all of academia so that it looks like the making of small videos across the world? Sure, but what might that actually look like?

In conclusion, when I think of methods, I believe that it's very important to do things that are small and local, that are of their place, time and people. And so I'm not sure I'm interested in grandiose claims about things that can transform 'everything.' I'm much more interested in small traces that communicate how we can save ourselves when all the rest of that bigness is bullshit. I don't know that I ascribe to bigness, but I would like the work that we do to saturate deeper into places where it could be of use.

AMR I appreciate your disinterest in grandiose claims. And I think it takes a lot of effort to think about what an anti-discipline would be. However, I think that an emphasis on process could be really useful overall. I got the idea of gathering around a term from the Haus der Kulturen der Welt (House of World Cultures) in Berlin, and the way that they had multi-year themat-

ics. For example, people gathered around their thematic of the Anthropocene in 2013-2014. I was influenced by the way that they created a concentrated, large community of intellectuals and artists from all different disciplines, debating and questioning that discourse and inventing new discourse and spreading it around and making it public. But by the end everyone was saying, 'oh, we're not using the term Anthropocene anymore.' This reflects the idea that we have to continually think about the frame within which we gather, collectively. I understand that it might be difficult to get all the scientists in the room with us, but maybe the scientists could actually have those conversations about the separation of knowledge in the faculties, too, in order to find ways of making change to the structures.

AJ We're living in late-stage capitalism, and it's destroying everything, and its logics are everywhere. It's very hard to be human beings who live and breathe for a moment outside of its logics, especially where I live in the United States. It's hard to imagine how we could convince everybody to think outside of capitalism. So again, I'm thinking we really have to do this in very small ways, because the domination of capitalism is so extraordinary in every realm of culture, and to our environment, and so, I'm really going to double down on finding our allies and bringing more people in. We live in a world where everything is about exchange value. And this is what your point about storytelling is, and about capital, and about bullshit plastic and tweets.

In a world of overabundant stories being sold to you in every form, and you can have as many as you want and indulge in them all the time, that's a consumption model. What we're talking about here

is process-based co-production of stories as forms of knowledge and transformation. What's interesting about social media is that you're also supposedly 'producing media.' That's how social media understands itself, but it's a lie. You are producing things, but you're producing them for capital, and it goes into the belly of the beast. It uses you to sell yourself, and to sell yourself to the highest bidder. That is not process-based in the way that we're talking about. Given that we can choose every story in the world, the point is to choose one, or two, or three and to do them together. It's the process of making the stories that matters, not the consumption of them, and not even spewing them out into the wild. It's spewing them locally with people who will learn from it and grow from it, and be delighted in that exchange. That's what's happening here on the screen and in the room that you're in.

AO We have all spoken about the importance of storytelling as a very ancient human practice. Ancient and contemporary, let's say. I was thinking about these three questions that I like to place whenever I think about stories. What is a story saying? Who is saying this story? And how is this story being told? Because I don't think we need to continue listening to 'all' of the stories that are being told nowadays.

But I'd like to return to this word that Alexandra just used, 'allies.' When you say feminist and anti-colonial method, then it has a political perspective, of course. If we keep in mind this political perspective while storytelling, we can pay attention to the effects a story has. For example, in cinema, a lot of films have recently been made about Mexico and regarding Mexican culture. And how is Mexico being portrayed from the perspective of a French

male white filmmaker? The effect that this story has in the actual lives of people is important. We can gather together with allies in order to talk about our bodies, our lives, our dramas, our needs, but also about our hopes, our tools, our dreams. It is very important to tell stories that contribute to hope in moments such as the ones we are facing.

KT Thank you. I'm so moved by what you both said. It's brilliant, because I feel like I can weave this back also to where we started, and your question to me about the forms of decolonisation. While you were both talking, there was this emphasis on methods, and the idea of literacies came to me. I tried to meditate on this idea of literacies many years ago. I was trying to figure out why me, as someone with a background in dance and the visual arts, would sit in an anthropology class, a sociology class, a philosophy class and be completely lost, and have no idea what was going on and why it was going on. And then once I went through uni and became trained in these other ways of knowing and being and doing, I come out the other end into Pacific Island studies with a very large basket of what I view as literacies. But in fact, my linguistic literacy is of the lowest level. I can't speak multiple languages, and I come from a family with people who can speak multiple languages. What I could do that was different, though, and what would put me in a state of confusion with my lecturers, was that I could read bodies, and I could feel things in my body, and relate to things on an embodied level that was very particular and different from what I thought other people around me were doing. It was a choreographic and an embodied and a visual literacy that I was told only works if you go to the art part of the

university. But I was like, no, I want to do this in politics. I want to do this in business, economics, all of that. Because I had this other tool basket of literacies, I had a way of decoding and understanding the world around me: place, people, movement. I kept thinking, why can't I harness this to do political analysis?

What's useful about stories and storytelling is you don't just tell stories with your words. You can tell stories through your hands; objects tell stories; architecture tells stories, canoes tell stories. If you expand your literacy of reading the world you can understand that those stories are coming, not just from humans, but from mountains, rivers, rocks. They're coming from buildings, nice fancy buildings, old dilapidated buildings. Stories are not just by the great storyteller, or that author who sold fifty million books. Stories are everywhere. That's the way I've always been in the world. I couldn't understand what they were teaching me in these classrooms, because it didn't match that far more diverse, inclusive way of taking in everything.

AMR One of my reasons for doing this project was because of the reality of teaching students who were having that experience.

RT Yes, neurodiverse, they call it!

AMR And also, First Nations art students who are practicing more than the modern Western frame of art and really their work is politics, law and medicine, too. The modern frame around art serves to control and corral that work and stop it from having the kind of social transformative impact that it might have. Because it's 'the arts,' it's understood as just a story, it's not politics. That was one of the main moti-

vations for me, seeing people having that experience and thinking we have to change this frame.

AJ I was hoping to say one more thing, which was connected to what you said again, Katerina, about these literacies that you imagine are the expression of stories. I also believe that that is true of the expression of theory. I think it is human to theorise, and that is part of storytelling. But we have tended to understand theory as a set of disciplinary or academic or higher practices, and only some people are qualified. But a lot of what I do as an activist, educator, art maker is work with people to tell stories of their own experience, but also build an analysis of the world that is rooted in their own experience, but is more abstract and starts to name systems that they come from. I think that a lot of what I am interested in doing is crystallising connections, themes, structures from discrete and real experience of people that I work with. And that's what I understand theorising to be. You don't have to have studied it in college or anywhere, to be theorising the nature of your own existence and your problems, and who's to blame and how you could improve that. That's all theory.

AMR Andre, I'm sure you have something to say on that.

AO Maybe the problem is that what we have called 'theory' is the ability of meaning making or constructing sense about our own lives. The West has created a world in which theory is done in academic contexts. When Alex was just now speaking, I remembered Paolo Freire, and his liberation pedagogy proposal.[5] The liberation pedagogy did not take place inside a school, nor

5 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).

inside academia. The liberation pedagogy was a way of teaching people in rural contexts in Brazil how to read and write, and in that process being political about their own contexts and lives. I think all of this is very related to what you are questioning, Alex, about the disciplines that art has created, or academia has created, or science has created.

What Katerina has shared with us today is the fact that these abilities to do, feel and think, are human. Conversation as a practice that constructs a sense of the world, a sense about who we are, is an ancient human practice. Contemporary neoliberal-colonial-white contexts, such as Academia and Art—written with capital letters—have basically dispossessed people, in Spanish we say 'despojar,' from the opportunity of constructing our 'own meanings' about the world. We have also been dispossessed from the feeling that we are capable of creating in general. Songs, movements with our bodies, meaning making; we have been cut from all of these possibilities. This proposition of breaking the disciplines is a way of decolonising. It entails remembering who we are, remembering that we are beings that are part of earth, that are part of each other, that are part of life. We just need to remember.

AMR Thank you. Andre, that was a very beautiful way to conclude what I hoped we could talk about. When I was thinking of using the word storytelling, it was partly a kind of Derridean or deconstructionist strategy, this idea of occupying the subordinate term in the binary story-theory. I really do believe that storytelling is a form of theorising. The feminist knowledges and anti-colonial knowledges that I hold in the highest regard have all come from experience. They've all come from articulat-

ing experience first, which is a similar method to Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed, mentioned by Andre. A strategy that I think could be useful is to occupy 'story' rather than 'theory,' and to redress their separation through that gesture.

A Handbook of Feminist and Anti-Colonial Methods for Storytelling and Theorising Liberation

Looking Slowly, Starting from Place
Alex Martinis Roe with Katerina Teaiwa

Documents in colonial archives are emblems of violence. The organised and annotated material obscures self-determination and struggles for autonomy, instead underscoring the violent extraction of the materials, serving the logic of empire rather than the voices of the colonised. Another way of looking must be practiced.

Pacific scholar and activist Katerina Teaiwa studies the extraordinary volume of archival photographs of phosphate mining on the Pacific island of Banaba, held within libraries and state institutions in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand. These photographs were taken during eight-decades of phosphate mining across the twentieth century, which resulted in approximately twenty-two million tons of Banaban land being redistributed across Australia and New Zealand in the form of phosphate fertilisers. A joint Australian, New Zealand and British government mining company was responsible for the extensive mining that decimated the island of Banaba and displaced the entire Indigenous population.

Katerina has combined a number of research methods to develop her way of looking slowly and animating archival photographs. This includes dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster's approach to 'choreographing history,' which brings embodied historical knowledge into movement, and ethnographer George Marcus's proposition that cinematic montage provides a useful model for ethnographic writing that simultaneously analyses different systems that impact one another.[6] Katerina uses these approaches to look at archival images in a way that reconstructs what has been omitted and obscured. She does this in a Pacific way of 'seeing with eight eyes' or 'looking from many perspectives at once' to uncover the story of what happened to Banabans and their home. This approach draws on Carl Pao's art and visualisation of 'ki'i kupuna makawalu,' a method of seeing, thinking and knowing with multiple perspectives that resists Western single-point perspective.[7] Most importantly,

6 Susan Leigh Foster, *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2011) and Marcus, George E. "The Modernist Sensibility in Recent Ethnographic Writing and the Cinematic Metaphor of Montage." *Visual Anthropology Review* 6, no. 1 (1990): 2–12, https://doi.org/10.1525/

Katerina's methods are grounded in a Banaban way of knowing, starting from place and focused on the ancestral island.

Through this hybrid method of looking slowly from many perspectives and animating the photographs in her mind, Katerina focuses on details and irregularities, filling the archival gaps with her own knowledge and imagination. Using her knowledge of the land, she starts by expanding the scene of each photograph in her mind, so that she is looking beyond its borders. She starts from place to understand the situated experience and activities of each person, each tree depicted in the photograph. What were they doing just before the photograph was taken? What did they do immediately afterwards? What were they thinking and feeling? What could they smell? Then she thinks about the photographer; what was their relationship to the place and the people they photographed? How did they frame the photograph and why? She places each photograph in relation to those that come before and after.

When I was learning about Katerina's method, we went to the State Library of Victoria and looked at two collections of archival photographs she had not seen before. I asked Katerina to verbalise her thought process to better understand her method of looking. She focused on two photographs of women. One of those was a postcard which featured a photograph of an important elder Banaban woman, Nei Teinemakin, who is the only Banaban woman named in the entire colonial archive across all the state repositories. Katerina tells me that she has noticed the way Nei Teinemakin and other women disappear from the archive earlier than Banaban men. Katerina connects this with oral histories to undercover the way women defended the land and led the Banaban resistance to colonial mining. This is an example of the knowledge that Katerina has produced through her method of looking slowly, and paying attention to what is missing. This demonstrates what can be learned by looking between the photographs, beyond what is immediately apparent within the frame.

7 Tamaira, A. M., & Tamaira, A. M. (2022). "About the Art: Carl Franklin Ka'aila'au Pao's Ki'i Kupuna: 'O 'Aila'au (Ancestral Images: Forest Eater) Series." *Pacific Arts: The Journal of the Pacific Arts Associationvol 22, Iss 11018-4252*.

In an archive created and coded by a hegemonic power:

- Look slowly at the photographs in it.
- Think about the photographer. Who is taking the photograph? Is it staged? Where did the photographer set up and why?
- Expand the scene. What do you know or imagine about what lies beyond the frame?
- Look at the land. What do you notice about it?
- Animate each human and non-human figure in your mind. How do they feel? What can they see, smell, hear?
- Imagine before and after. What was each figure doing just before and just after the photograph was taken?
- Analyse details: things you understand and especially any anaomalies.
- Notice who and what is missing as you analyse who appears or does not appear across multiple photographs.
- Be ready to discover resistance that has been obfuscated.

► ANIMATE ARCHIVAL IMAGES IN YOUR MIND {IMAGINE BEFORE AND AFTER

Looking Slowly, Starting From Place

Collective Biography
Alex Martinis Roe with ASKI Contemporary Social History Archives

Dominant histories of social movements have been constructed from news media reports and the archives of military and political institutions. These kinds of records lend themselves to narratives structured by a focus on major events and analysis of institutional decisions and actions. In archival material of this kind, there is limited documentation of the different lived experiences of those who took part, how and why they came to participate, the social context of their participation and its affect on their lives afterwards. The vicissitudes of a life story consist of many small details that do not fit into the frames of relevance determined by common archival categories. They help us to understand the quality of experience, the relationships that were meaningful, the motivations that impacted the turn of events.

In 2024 I connected with Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI), which is the leading archive of the Greek political left, and learned of their role in a research project called 'WIRE - Women in the Resistance.'[8] As archival custodians, the staff of ASKI undertake public history projects that activate their archives of the Greek Resistance in WWII and after. WIRE brought them into collaboration with historians, cultural institutions and sister archives in Spain, Italy and Poland. WIRE focusses on the significant role of women in the Resistance, its transnational character and the non-violent actions that were essential to it. WIRE redresses nationalist historicisations of the brigades as primarily a history of armed, male Resistance, which overlook, for example, the fact that in Greece half the recorded members of Resistance organisations were women, and the importance of the dangerous, yet non-violent contributions of female information couriers who traversed national borders.

The main research method used in the WIRE project is the writing of over sixty life stories of women who were active in the Resistance. The historians, educators and archivists chose women from

8 *WIRE – Women in Resistance: Reshaping the Narratives on Female Resistance in Europe*, Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI), accessed June 3, 2025, https://aski.gr/wire/.

diverse backgrounds, whose lives were sufficiently documented, and who had participated in different, characteristic ways, so that they could represent the spectrum of positions in what was a mass movement. Studying these sixty biographies enables an understanding of the diversity and commonality of women's contributions and experiences in the Resistance, which drastically changed the social position of women in Europe and created the conditions for the Women's Liberation movements that followed in the 1970s. 'There is not one history of women in the Resistance,' states ASKI archivist Anastasia Kapola, explaining how their method of collective biography emphasises the multiplicity of experiences.

A key component of the WIRE project was the 'Memory Route,' a year-long collaborative project with forty history students from Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain who travelled to each other's countries, and experimented with making the research into public history formats. I became involved with their process at ASKI; the students made podcasts about the lives of women who were active in the Resistance with the help of historians and archivists from each country. I was struck by the impact studying and narrating these women's life stories had on these students. Luca Reineke, one of the students stated,

> Now there are very few Resistance fighters left alive. Now is a time when memory is becoming history and we can feel emotionally less close to it. For me, it wasn't just archival work, it wasn't just studying the more political, military, economic dimensions of Resistance. It was about the history of people. It was about getting to know their lives as if they were almost people our age, or fathers, mothers or grandmothers.

Thomais Zisi, another of the students said,

> When you are the narrator of a story, you communicate with the story. It becomes more vivid. It's not just a story, you are… in touch with it.

Alice Moschino, also a participating student, said,

> What I hope to do with this podcast is to reach as many people as possible, even outside of universities, so that we can re-write history and re-write memory, not just in the minds of researchers and professionals, but also in the minds of young people, also outside university and of course in the minds of young women who tomorrow will fight with us.

The passion, commitment and personal sense of kinship felt by these students with the female Resistance fighters they studied shows how important and powerful biography can be for the continuity and survival of international anti-fascist solidarity. In this time when the fascist right is once again rising, telling multiple life stories collectively is a form of inter-generational transmission of social history, political commitment, hope and strength.

The life stories in the WIRE project stand in for the many whose lives remain in the shadows, undocumented. Collective biography is not the production of heroes or heroines. Rather these life stories transmit the profound vulnerability of each life, the enormity of personal choices and actions that make up a mass movement, and show each participant's capacity to contribute to major events through their commitment to the collective effort.

To create continuity for a related political movement, when telling stories about a past social movement:

- Select participants in the movement from diverse social backgrounds and who participated in the movement in different, but characteristic ways.
- Interview surviving family members and anyone who knew them, and recover all traces of their lives that can be found in official and unofficial archives, including their own testimonies, if any, written or oral.
- Write their life stories in a narrative format that is accessible to a general public.
- Engage a group from a younger generation who did not know the subjects of the study to read the life stories and study the archival materials used to write the life stories.
- Give the younger generation resources to create public history formats together, where they collectively narrate the biographies.


▶ GATHER MANY
LIFE STORIES
TELL THEM
COLLECTIVELY
● MAKE KIN
WITH THOSE
WHO CAME
BEFORE
Collective
Biography

Re-Authoring Narratives

Alex Martinis Roe with Andre Ortega and Diana Betanzos

How social movements are reported, documented and narrated has a direct impact on participants and their collective strength. Activists are often focussed on social problems that directly affect them and most often the dominant ways these problems are made public constructs those affected as victims. This undermines people's capacity to participate in resistance by weakening the narratives they have about themselves. For this reason, it is necessary for social movements to autonomously theorise and tell stories about the issues affecting them and publicly document the way they are resisting oppressive power structures. When I met Mexican narrative practitioners and activists Andre Ortega and Diana Betanzos, I started learning about the remarkable power of narrative practice for this purpose.

Narrative practice, generally known as narrative therapy, is a collaborative, community-based approach that considers everyone experts in their own lives and makes space for meaning making in people's own terms. It challenges dominant models of psychology and community work, which may not sufficiently account for social and cultural contexts. First developed in the 1980s by Michael White (Australia) and David Epston (New Zealand), narrative practice is influenced by Indigenous cosmologies and post-structuralist, feminist, queer and anti-colonial ideas. By developing alternative, collective, political, and strength-based narratives, people can re-authour their sense of self and community in ways that affirm their values and give a central space to their hopes. The approach emphasises respect, curiosity, and using local language to affirm people's values towards self-determination.

Andre and Diana use narrative practices to collaborate with the movement against femicide on the periphery of Mexico City, especially in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, and to create solidarity and momentum in this struggle. They build cultures of resistance and care through choosing which questions

they ask, listening carefully and retelling stories in ways that make women stronger, while emphasising the importance in speaking from place. To demonstrate this way of working with people, Andre and Diana shared with me their working process on a film they are making called Cruz Rosa about large, wooden crosses, painted pink, that anti-femicide activists have erected to mark sites in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl where women have been murdered. They filmed an interview with leading activist Irinea Buendía on the edge of Bordo de Xochiaca, a canal where the bodies of many murdered girls and women have been found and where she and her network have erected three large crosses. Andre asks Irinea,

> Doña Irinea, we have been talking about you as an activist and human rights defender. If this cross asks for justice and what it reminds us of is that the authorities are negligent. If we could imagine that this cross could dream, what would it dream for women and girls of Mexico? What would this cross dream of for us?

Doña Irinea replies,

> A life without violence for girls and for teenage girls, young girls and women and the elderly, because elderly women are also murdered. A life without violence. A life in peace. But there can be no peace as long as there is no justice.

As part of her narrative practice, Andre has developed a particular way of creating political, poetic, collective documents that derive from these re-authored narratives. Listening carefully, she takes notes on the specific language people use to describe their tools, abilities, intentions, values, dreams, hopes and desires and the way they name and envision their resistance as well as other responses to social violence. She composes these into succinct prose that can be used in various formats, including poetry, songs, voice-over for films, soundscapes and collages to re-narrate the importance of diverse struggles.

I asked Andre and Diana to demonstrate this method, and to do so, Andre interviewed Diana, asking her to describe the practices of anti-femicide women activists in her community. Being born in Ciudad Nezahualcóyolt, Diana speaks about how they 'narrate life from within life' and always start their actions from a position of closeness with each other's experience. She speaks about the importance of the practice of being present and 'accompanying' each other.

Andre asks Diana,

> 'If you could think of concrete images that show everything we have been talking about including strength, love, bravery, justice, resistance, struggle and tenderness that women activists in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl give life to, which images do you see?'

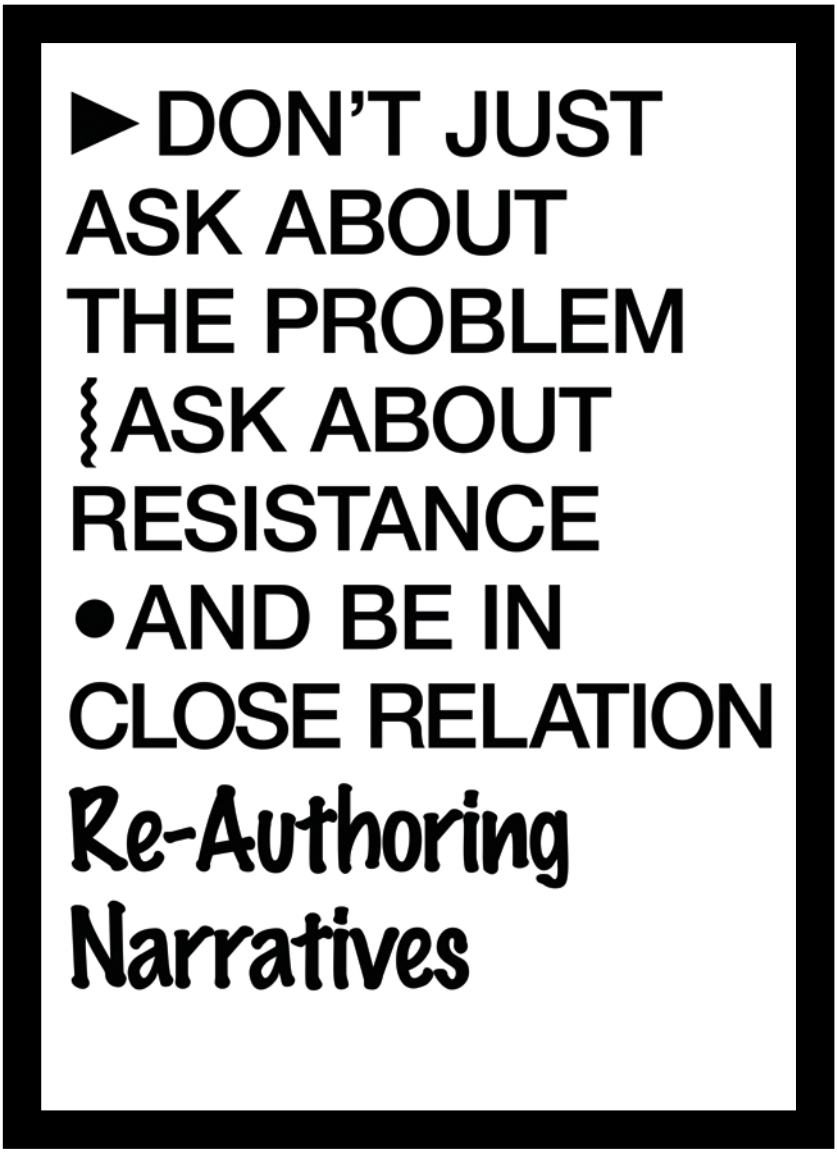
One of the images that Diana sees is Doña Irinea walking towards and standing in front of the pink crosses along the bank of Bordo de Xochiaca canal where they asked her to 'tell us about her daughter, Mariana.' Andre's document of the interview with Diana is as follows:

Facing structural violence.
Facing femicidal violence.
Speaking out from this geographic place.
Facing the dominant narratives that spectacularise death.
Knowing that we are not alone, knowing that we are woven together.
We want to tell the story behind the pink crosses in these territories.
From the territories I live in.
Starting from the relationships we weave in collectivity.
Finding ways to narrate that our resistance and struggle for life are from within life.
This is our fight for justice.
Involving bravery and tenderness.
We remember you Doña Irinea walking with your cane.

Through this complicated terrain.
Standing strong in front of the pink crosses next to you.
To tell us about your daughter Mariana.
We remember the Teddy Bear from the cross.
That they wove to mark the femicide of a four year old girl.
We are alive in the memory.
Today, we weave pink crosses.
With pink thread.
In this way we centre life.

To make a social movement stronger, create self-determined documents through an autonomous process of re-authoring narratives and make them public:

- Start from being close to people's experience: accompany them as they navigate experiences that result from the social issues in question.
- From this position of close relation, record interviews with them where the questions you ask invite them to 'narrate life from within life' and to talk about their resistance.
- Listen carefully for the specific local language used to describe experiences, values, hopes and dreams.
- Retell these narratives in a way that builds on this language as evidence of desire, capacity and self-determination.
- Disseminate these narratives to make both the narrators and others with similar experiences stronger.


► DON'T JUST ASK ABOUT THE PROBLEM
{ ASK ABOUT RESISTANCE
• AND BE IN CLOSE RELATION
Re-Authoring Narratives

Media as Process

Alex Martinis Roe with Alexandra Juhasz

Activist media has the function of disseminating information and perspectives not published by mainstream media and otherwise unavailable. Activist media also acknowledges and affirms the autonomous care work of communities, their resistance and their ability to do something about the problems they face. What is less often recognised, is the transformative power of the collaborative process of making activist media and how as a format for action, it fosters political relationships across time and space.

As I got to know film scholar, activist and media maker Alexandra Juhasz, I felt a strong resonance with the way she emphasises making media as activist process. In the 1990s she organised collectives such as Women's AIDS Video Enterprise (WAVE) and learned through experience that making intersectional feminist media is a process of political collaboration that can educate, affirm and organise communities and generates relationships that go beyond the frame of projects and into life.

Studying Alex's archive of videos and VHS tapes transferred to digital, one such relationship stood out to me, the life-long friendship and collaboration between her and Juanita Mohammed Szczepanski, who was an original member of WAVE along with Alex. One of my favourite things that Alex says is, 'Press record as an excuse.' Alex and Juanita shared the value of using easily accessible media as an excuse to facilitate political inter-personal relationships, and through this process, foster long-term feminist collaborations across race and class.

Alex tells me that WAVE and other community video projects proliferated in New York City in the early 1990s because affordable video cameras, known as camcorders, first became widely available. Alex was key in documenting New York City's feminist film and video history, particularly through her documentary 'Women of Vision: 18 Histories in Feminist Film and Video.' In a 1994 meeting that was

recorded on VHS as research for this documentary, Juanita says,

> There should be acknowledgement of the difference between video and film, because the people who are getting into video now are in many ways quite different from the people before. There is much less money. There's people who, they don't think they are feminist people. They don't think they are professional people. They don't want to learn about theory. They just want to go out there and make videos. And those people, a lot of them, they make one video, which is not distributed, because they don't know how to get it distributed. They are more insecure. They haven't had learning. Now that video is so cheap, there are going to be so many people, women making videos, that aren't going to be going to school that will not find out about these kinds of places. And they're not able to go out and look for these places. We have to go to them.

Juanita's reference to 'theory' in her statement is more specifically a critique of the way post-structuralist film theory had troubled the illusion of transparency used in mainstream cinema to produce a sense of reality which served to suspend critical thinking about the nature of its representations, confirming essentialist stereotypes. At the time, this created an elite film culture that believed these ideas precluded any thoroughgoing criticality in realist documentary. Alex has theorised how this kind of theory was at odds with the need for activist media to be made with a purpose that should define its form. She explains how if a project has the purpose of educating people about a particular topic with limited funds, documentary may be the most appropriate form. Alex argues that in activist media, realism is not about 'duping people,' because those participating in its construction are fully aware that they are constructing themselves for an audience and the purpose of realism was to foreground subjectivity, challenge dominant narratives, and make marginalised voices public through

9 Alexandra Juhasz, 'They said we were trying to show reality – all I want to show is my video': The politics of the realist feminist documentary, *Screen*, Volume 35, Issue 2, Summer 1994, Pages 171–190, https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/35.2.171

personal and political storytelling.[9] What Alex and her collaborators do to situate this realism is to mark process. For example, Alex is interested in strategies like showing the listener in the frame, to contextualise and make visible the relationship.

The many recorded realist moments of Alex and Juanita's life-long collaboration fold into one another, with each one referring to previous ones. The most recent is included in a film by Alex called 'Please Hold' (2024), in which she revisits her relationship with Juanita on tape, and includes a recording Juanita asked her make as she was dying. Alex says,

> I'm not done with my conversation with Juanita. I'm not done with what I can learn from her, her specific voice, our specific connection. That connection goes over decades. We know each other so well. There are things that have been articulated and forgotten. There are things that still need to be articulated. There are things that weren't articulated that become articulated. It's in process and it gets and deeper and deeper and richer and richer to the point where she trusts but also needs me to honour her self in her death.

The practice of revisiting recorded material, keeping the archive alive, is part of the relational process of activist media making. Relationships are formed by making media together and they are kept alive through reuse and redistribution. Through recordings, Juanita and Alex's process has now become part of the way Alex and I relate to each other. What emerges is a genealogy of relationships that each stem from one another. Foregrounding and prioritising media as a relational process creates networks that are brought together by shared purpose and sustained by relational bonds.

- Press record as an excuse: Use media available to you as an excuse to facilitate political inter-personal processes.
- Collaborate: Use media to work together, to create solidarity, to connect with each other, to make alliances. Use media to facilitate political relationships over time and space.
- Don't be afraid of realism: form needs to be responsive to process.
- Have the listener in the frame: and/or other forms that mark process.
- Revisit: (among other modes of revisiting) as media in an activist archive become obsolete, create new tools for discursive engagement.


▶ USE MEDIA
TO ORGANISE
{ CREATE
POLITICAL
RELATIONSHIPS
● PRESS
RECORD AS AN
EXCUSE
Media as
Process

Mnemonic Rituals

Alex Martinis Roe with Gladys Kalichini

Monuments, memorials and permanent exhibitions are dominant forms of public memory that often exclude minor histories and positionalities. Zambian artist and art historian Gladys Kalichini is interested in alternative practices of memorialisation. Motivated to redress the shortage of state-led public commemoration for women who contributed to the independence of Zambia and Zimbabwe from British colonial rule, Gladys seeks to liberate their memory from the confines of the official and traditional archive. Through extensive research, Gladys has discovered links between revolutionary organisations such as the Women's Leagues and contemporary women's church groups. The women in these church groups regularly honour their female forebears, including those who fought for independence, through collective ritual practices, such as making clothing, washing feet and hands, singing, dancing and cooking.

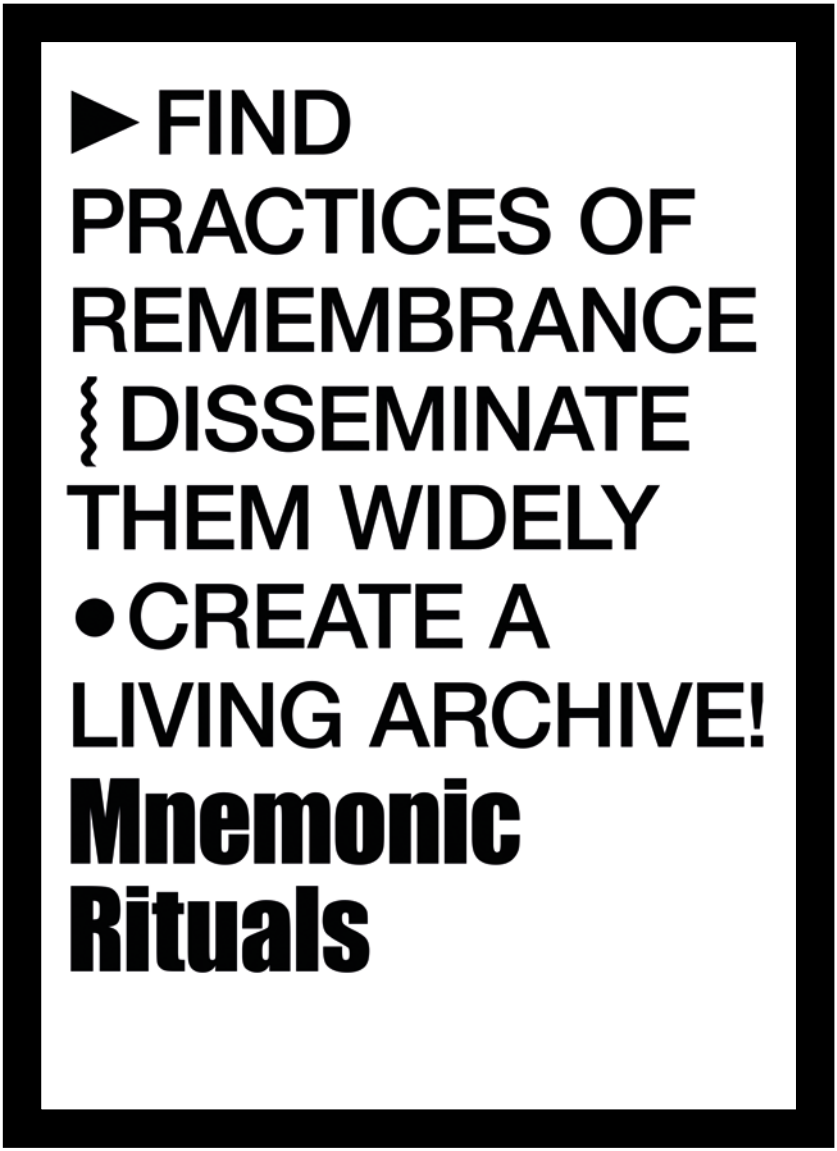
The names and stories of female freedom fighters are whispered and remembered, but there is no written record, no material trace or representation. Gladys's work teaches us that hidden histories may already be regularly commemorated, even if they are ignored or silenced by hegemonic powers. Their invisibility constitutes a form of resistance against the reign of the visual and its dominant mechanisms of power. Widening subject-status to those who have been excluded using the same patriarchal formats of public memory, such as monuments and statues, maintains the structural violence of hero worship. Many of the actions of female freedom fighters have been unspectacular, therefore elevating them to hero-status elides what we can learn from their contributions. The work of these female freedom fighters reminds us that it is collective effort and especially care work that empowers people to rise up and dismantle an oppressive system. Valuing isolated, spectacular actions over the collective care work performed by these women serves

to undermine a collective new order and pattern it in the same mould.

Intangible cultural heritage offers an alternative understanding of public memory that has a fundamentally different logic. It values the process of remembering and cultural preservation through embodied transmission. The collective mnemonic rituals that the women's church groups in Zambia and Zimbabwe practice to remember female freedom fighters are a more appropriate format for the remembrance of these stories than the patriarchal monuments to independence in Lusaka and Harare that are fashioned in the colonial tradition. Gladys has created her own rituals, based on those of the women's church groups, which she performs in a wide variety of international contexts to explicitly remember female freedom fighters, bringing people from outside the communities that habitually practice these rituals into contact with these memories, disseminating them more widely.

If you want to make a hidden history more widely accessible and ensure its preservation without the transformation of natural materials into a static object, consider the following questions:

- Is this 'hidden history' in fact already ritually commemorated by a particular community in a way that is not visible to publics outside of it?
- Are there already practices of intangible cultural heritage that offer radical/more appropriate formats for public memory you could learn from?
- How might you foster intangible cultural heritage through practices that link what is already practiced with communities that do not already remember this 'hidden history?'


► FIND
PRACTICES OF
REMEMBRANCE
⦚ DISSEMINATE
THEM WIDELY
● CREATE A
LIVING ARCHIVE!
Mnemonic
Rituals

Storytelling Liberation Temporary Library

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Biographies

Alex Martinis Roe is an artist researching genealogies of feminist political practices of difference through film installation, publications and dialogic events. Recently she has exhibited at Villa Romana, Florence (2025), Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Arizona (2025), Mimosa House, London (2024); Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (solo, 2021–22); Seoul Museum of Art (2021–2022); Albertinum Museum, Dresden (2020–2021); GfZK – Museum of Contemporary Art, Leipzig (solo, 2018), Frac Lorraine, Metz (2018). Her project 'To Become Two' (2014–2018) was co-commissioned as a series of solo exhibitions by If I Can't Dance (Amsterdam), Casco Art Institute (Utrecht), The Showroom (London) and ar/ge kunst (Bolzano) and has also been exhibited in full at Badischer Kunstverein (Karlsruhe), Samstag Museum (Adelaide) and Taxispalais – Kunsthalle Tirol (Innsbruck). In 2018, 'To Become Two' was presented at Centre George Pompidou, she was the recipient of the Future oF Europe Art Prize, and Archive Books published her monograph 'To Become Two: Propositions for Feminist Collective Practice.' Alex was a fellow (2013–2016) of the University of the Arts Berlin and holds a PhD from Monash University, Australia. She is Senior Lecturer in Art and Head of Drawing and Printmaking at the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne.

Katerina Teaiwa is a Professor of Pacific Studies in the Gender, Media and Cultural Studies program, School of Culture, History and Language, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University. She has a PhD in Anthropology, a Master's in Pacific Islands Studies, and a Bachelor of Science. She also has a background in contemporary Pacific dance and was co-founder of the Oceania Dance Theatre at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji with the late Seiuli Allan Alo. She writes and speaks regularly on Pacific regionalism, the arts, issues of historical and environmental justice, climate change, cultural policy, indigeneity, diaspora, displacement, colonial resistance, and rep-

resentations of Pacific peoples. Katerina is author of ‘Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba.’ She is currently touring her research-based multimedia exhibition ‘Project Banaba’ commissioned by Carriageworks and curated by Yuki Kihara in 2017. Katerina’s film work has also been shown at Para Site in Hong Kong and at the 2022 Kathmandu Triennale. Katerina was born and raised in Fiji and is of Banaban, I- Kiribati (Tabiteuean) and African American descent.

ASKI Contemporary Social History Archives is the leading Greek archival institution for the history of political and social movements, with a particular emphasis on the history of the Greek Left. Founded in 1992 as a non-profit organisation and located in the center of Athens, ASKI holds the most comprehensive collection of archives relating to Greek social history. ASKI present related public history projects and activities such as publications, workshops and conferences, radio programs, historical walking tours that enrich historical awareness and the collective memory of social, political and ethnic groups.

Andre Ortega is based in Mexico and inhabits feminist territories. She studied psychology, has a master’s degree in women’s and gender studies and is currently a PHD candidate. Since 2011, Andre has worked as an expert narrative practitioner, which is the place from which she works with individuals, groups, communities and territories. As a narrative practitioner, Andre has developed diverse ways of doing group work that go beyond therapy generating creative approaches to collaboration with community and activist contexts. At the same time, she has developed other approaches to documenting stories from a place of dignity through what she names ‘poetic-political documents’ made in artistic, musical and audiovisual formats. Andre values her position as a brown woman from the Global South and is currently developing a unique learning programme in order to share narrative practices from ‘the other’ perspective. She is also currently working on the

co-authored audiovisual work Cruz Rosa with Diana Betanzos.

Diana Betanzos is a body researcher and dance and somatic movement facilitator. She accompanies children, older adults and victims of violence as a 'person who walks with' and is a specialist in narrative practices and community work. Based in Mexico, her practice has developed around re-thinking the lives of bodies and territories in peripheral geographies, by recognising the multiple actions related to the defence and care of life, exploring various languages such as radio, writing, photography, performance and audiovisual formats. Diana is currently working on Cruz Rosa, an audiovisual work co-authored with Andre Ortega about femicides in peripheral geographies of México City.

Alexandra Juhasz is Distinguished Professor of Film at Brooklyn College, CUNY. She teaches, makes and studies committed media practices that contribute to political change and individual and community growth. She has a PhD in Cinema Studies from NYU and is the author of 'AIDS TV' (Duke, 1995), 'Women of Vision: Histories in Feminist Media' (Minnesota, 2001), 'F is for Phony: Fake Documentary and Truth's Undoing' with Jesse Lerner (Minnesota, 2005), 'Learning from YouTube' (MIT Press, 2011), 'The Blackwell Companion on Contemporary Documentary' with Alisa Lebow (2016), with Yvonne Welbon, 'Sisters in the Life: 25 Years of Out African-American Lesbian Filmmaking' (Duke 2018), 'AIDS and the Distribution of Crises with Jih-Fei Cheng and Nishant Shah' (Duke 2020), and 'Really Fake with Nishant Shah' (U MN Press, 2021). She is the producer of educational videotapes on feminist issues from AIDS to teen pregnancy and the feature films 'The Watermelon Woman' (Cheryl Dunye, 1997) and 'The Owls' (Dunye, 2010).

Gladys Kalichini is a contemporary visual artist and researcher from Lusaka, Zambia. Her work centres around concepts associated with history and memory and examines complexities with regard to the

representation of women within larger, dominant and nationalist histories. Her work focusses on atypical absences and blind spots, and performing acts of remembering female historical figures such as women freedom fighters. Her multimedia artworks recover lost, repressed and forgotten histories and draw on social practices that surround death and commemoration to create alternate memorial spaces. Gladys' work has been exhibited internationally at institutions such as Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town; KFW Stiftung, Frankfurt; Kunstmuseum Wolfburg; Bamako Biennale Mali; SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin; Johannesburg Art Gallery and National Gallery, Zambia. She holds a PhD in Art History and Visual Culture from Rhodes University, South Africa and is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Goethe University, Frankfurt.

Amelia Wallin is Senior Curator at La Trobe Art Institute. Here, she leads the artistic direction, produces residency programs and cares for the University's collections. Wallin was formerly Director of West Space, where she spearheaded the organisation's relocation and new artistic direction, and initiated innovative cross-organisational programming including Disorganising (with Liquid Architecture and Bus Projects) and The Region (with RMIT, Para Site, Western Front and Enjoy Contemporary). Formerly based in New York, Wallin worked earlier as a Curatorial Fellow at Performa and completed her graduate studies at the Centre for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. She is a Senior Research Associate at the Australian National University, and she has worked as a teaching associate within the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Monash University, where she is completing a practice-led PhD.

Vela Arbutina is an interdisciplinary artist and designer, through her practice she observes societies by looking at structures, hierarchies, classes, rules, norms, standards, restrictions, problems, infrastructures, methods of communication, methods of production and technology. Vela was born in

Switzerland, and studied at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London and the Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. She has been collaborating with institutions such as BKVB Netherlands, BAK Bundesamt für Kultur Schweiz, Bundeskunsthalle Bonn, Cabaret Voltaire Zurich, De Appel Amsterdam, Kraupa Tuscany Berlin, Ludlow 38, Kunsthall Oslo, Kunsthaus Baselland, Marciano Art Foundation, NGBK Berlin, PICA Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, Program Berlin, Societe Berlin, Silberkuppe Berlin, Swiss Institute amongst others. She has redesigned 'Girls Like Us' Magazine, collaborated with artists including Alex Martinis Roe, Adam Szymczyk, Anna Uddenberg, and Lisette Smiths.

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This project is produced as part of Alex Martinis Roe's project 'Storytelling Liberation' (2023-2025) in collaboration with Katerina Teaiwa, ASKI Contemporary Social History Archives, Gladys Kalichini, Alexandra Juhasz, Andre Ortega and Diana Betanzos. The project also includes an exhibition of five film installations, an edition of screenprints, a temporary library, and a public programme which was first presented by La Trobe Art Institute in 2025.

A Handbook of Feminist and Anti-Colonial Methods for Storytelling and Theorising Liberation
Alex Martinis Roe

With contributions from Alexandra Juhasz, Andre Ortega, Katerina Teaiwa and Amelia Wallin

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