

Las Golondrinas – Maya Saravia

1 – TT

(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

2 – HND / SLV / GTM

(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

3 – Kuduro - Dembow

(80 x 100) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

4 – Dino (Parque das Nações)

(45 x 70) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

- André (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Fábio (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Bruna (Rua Augusta)
- Dino (Parque das Nações)
- André (Praça Luís de Camões)

5 – Janine (Rua Augusta)

(45 x 150) Pintura e serigrafia sobre alumínio, 2018

6 – Esculturas

Dimensões variáveis, 2018

7 – Las Golondrinas

(90 x 35) Néon, 2018

8 – Melancolia Migrante

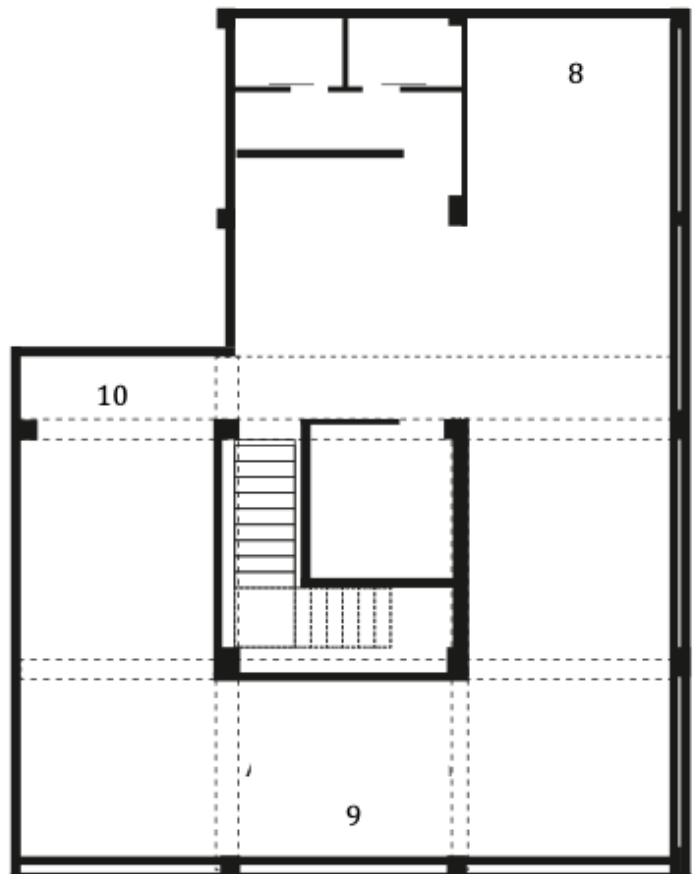
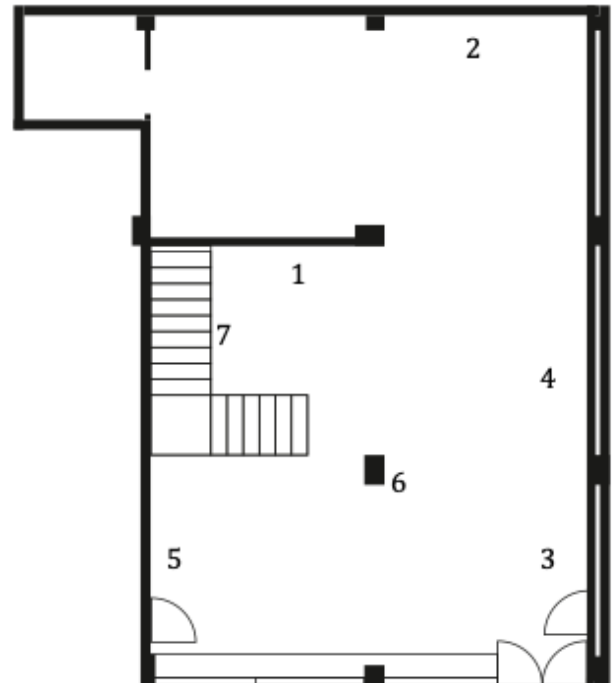
(80 x 35) Néon, 2018

9 – Vídeo

1 canal, cor, 2018

10 – Vídeo

1 canal, cor, 2018



About the works:

(1)

TT

This diagram depicts the routes of the Triangular Trade, a commerce scheme that took place between the 16th and 19th Centuries. Controlled mainly by the British empire, the scheme signified the pinnacle of merchant capitalism, by transferring raw materials and manufactured goods from one market to the other. The most poignant aspect about this scheme was the slave trade. It is estimated that about 12 million Africans were abducted, enslaved and brought over to America during this period.

The colonizing European empires created a scheme in which Africans would be brought to America, in a journey known as the Middle Passage, in which slaves would be shipped as cargo in dire conditions, crossing the Atlantic from West Africa. Many would die in the journey, which could last from 1 to 3 months. The slaves would endure many horrors within the ships. Women and children, who were kept on the decks, would often be brutalized. Men were kept under deck, with barely any space to move, no sanitation, no air and no light. It is known that in some cases, the ship commanders would bring the slaves on deck for an hour every morning, and force them to dance while in chains. This was a measure to keep them fit, and to prevent a riot.

When slaves arrived to America, they found the native populations, which in some cases would be enslaved or facing a genocide. The colonial period is the most traumatic era that our ancestors can remember. It signified the annulment of a way of life and relations between one another. Humans both sides of the Atlantic were forced to disassociate from their bodies, which no longer belonged to them as individuals, nor existed as part of a community, but were made merchandise, empty vessels for labour, for the sake of an alien empire.

Music, dance, rituals and spiritual beliefs were forbidden in some cases. Catholicism and the inquisition abolished indigenous spiritual practices, as they were deemed heretic. Slave masters would ban Africans from using drums, as they could use them to communicate from one group to another. Dance was a dangerous practice, as it empowered the people who performed them, such was the case of Capoeira in Brazil.

The scheme was operative for over four centuries, creating great wealth for the Europeans, and establishing the colonial modes of production that would dictate the development of the countries well after the colonial period was finalized.

(2)

HND / SLV / GTM

In October 12, 2018, a group of Honduran citizens decided to migrate together to the United States. They left their towns and made their way by foot, crossing Guatemala and Mexico aiming to reach the American border.

This scheme depicts the migration route of four different caravans until November 4th:

- Caravan #1, the thickest line, shows the route of the largest group, around 4,500 people, who left San Pedro Sula in Honduras on October 12th, crossed the border to Guatemala through Tecún Humán, and over to Mexico via Chiapas.
- Caravan #2, departed from Guatemala on October 21st, and arrived in Chiapas with about 1,500 people.
- Caravan #3 composed by around 2,500 individuals, left El Salvador on October 28th, and reached Chiapas, Mexico.
- Caravan #4 left El Salvador on October 30th, and reached Chiapas with about 1,500 people.

The Migrant Caravan, as it was coined by the media, is comprised men, woman and children, who seek a better future, work, and an escape from violence.

(3)

Kuduro - Dembow

The story of the people of the Americas, whether indigenous, or sons of the African diaspora, has been the story of resistance and resilience. Our music is a reflection of this.

African drums are central to the development of music after the colonial period. Much like the indigenous wind instruments and evocative rhythms and the military marches that originated in the Ottoman Empire, brought to America with the military marching bands. The history of music is the history of migration, of labour and of need. Musicians would travel along the trade routes, bring new rhythms and new instruments to new places, and create new sounds that would pollinate every music scene.

This scheme is not based on any factual information. It is a reflection of my own understanding of the development of music rhythms in the former colonies, and their relation to contemporary African music. Relevant places like Cuba and New Orleans had a close relationship since the 19th Century, musicians would travel back and forth, creating a cesspool of innovation which resulted in the creation of Jazz. The Blues, a style that emerged in the cotton belt, moved to the industrial north following a migration pattern of African-American workers looking for work and to escape the violence and racism of the deep south. Cities like Chicago and Detroit became industrial hotbeds of creativity, becoming the birthplaces of Techno and House music.

Meanwhile in the Caribbean, Calypso is born in Trinidad, created by slaves who recreated Kaiso, an Angolan rhythm that is the origin of all Caribbean music to follow. Soca, Mento, Reggae, Rocksteady, etc. New technologies, like the 303 and the 808 facilitated the creation of music through synthesized sound. By the 1980s, Techno is born in Detroit, influenced by everything that came before it. Disco, Funk, Krautrock, AfroFuturism, alien sounds unheard of until then, that were not produced by any instrument, but were completely electronic. The disembodied nature of this music allowed its expansion around the globe. The possibilities quickly infected creators in Africa and the Caribbean. Kuduro, Coupé Decalé, AfroHouse, Changa Tuki, Reggaeton, Technobrega, Funk Carioca and Dembow are some of the most popular styles.

(4) e (5)

Notated dances:

(4)

Dino (Parque das Nações)

- André (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Fábio (Praça Luís de Camões)
- Bruna (Rua Augusta)
- Dino (Parque das Nações)
- André (Praça Luís de Camões)

(5)

Janine (Rua Augusta) - Díptico

In the summer of 2018 I met several dancers who work in Lisbon. I was immediately attracted to the music scene and the dances performed in the street. I had the opportunity to approach two groups: Sankofa Black Gold, who perform daily in Rua Augusta, and Walkin' Dance, who perform in Chiado. I also met Dino Luk, an Angolan Kuduro dancer.

Sankofa Black Gold is a cultural association located in Amadora. There, Dina Sankofa, a dancer herself, works with the youths, preparing trips, activities and also dancing. The group performs a challenging routine, where you can find viral steps like the Wara Wara and the Shaku Shaku, as well as their own creations. Janine Fernandes, Dina's daughter, is the leader of the group, and Bruna one of the youngest members. I notated a small part of their routines, performed on August 21st.

Walking a small distance to Chiado, I found Walking Dance. They perform different styles: hip hop, breakdance, krump, popping and some heart stopping acrobatics. There I met André Gomes and Fabio Silva, who gave me one minute of dance and shared their life stories with me on August 22nd, in Praça Luis de Camoes. Both SBG and Walkin' Dance are comprised of second generation immigrants who describe their practice as a way to elevate the spirit, to escape rough realities and to make a living doing what they love.

Following the steps of Sankofa, I found Dino Luk, a kuduro dancer from Angola, who arrived in Lisbon 6 years ago. He has danced with a group, but he is currently single, and working in collaboration with different dancers. Dino shared two minutes of dance with me, on August 29th on Parque das Nações.

(9) e (10)

Video:

(9)

Horizontal video

This video contains the soundtrack of the exhibition. The mix was created in collaboration with Dominican reggaeton producer Tunin Slow, who is a friend and shares studio with me in Madrid. The video works as a collage of images and text. It contains images from music clips, documentaries, news and instagram dances. The texts that appear in the video are from documentaries that don't necessarily match the images, lyrics and my personal thoughts. This idea of montage comes from the experience of disrupted attention, as we are recreating a bar, and the installation aims to break attention to different points, but mostly to create an environment for people to relate to one another.

(10)

Vertical video

Dances performed in Lisbon by Sankofa Black Gold, Walkin' Dance and Dino Luk.