



# A COMMON GROUND

Queens Museum  
Flushing Meadows–Corona Park  
July 18, 2019



# A COMMON GROUND

## QUEENS MUSEUM

Curated by Susanne Ewerlöf for  
Curatorial Program for Research

# SCHEDULE

## **3-3.30 pm**

Video performance: Paula Urbano (SE) - Collect the (un)connected and (re)connect the Uncollected (2015-2019).

## **3.30-4 pm**

Video screening: Selma Selman (BA), Runo Lagomarsino (SE), Fikret Atay (TR/SE), Katarina Pirak Sikku (SE/Sapmi) and Linda Karin Larsen (NO).

## **4-5 pm**

Panel talk: Linda Karin Larsen, Selma Selman, Paula Urbano and Carmen Ferreyra (AR/US), Founding Director of Curatorial Program for Research. Moderated by Susanne Ewerlöf.

## **5-5.30 pm**

Performance: Liv Strand (SE) - A Walk in the Park (2019)  
Gather at the Queens Museum's entrance to the park.

# FOREWORD

Shared lands and disputed territories; the concept of nation is connected to peoples will to comply with the places where they reside. Centuries of colonialism and wars have formed a world where everyone is not content with who rules where and makes certain lands impossible to inhabit. According to Benedict Anderson the nation is an imagined community, but it also constitutes a concrete reality as most states are formulated around some idea of a nation – or many under one flag. Groups and subjects may feel belonging to, challenge or feel indifferent to the country they inhabit. Nationalism is a site for struggles of various kinds, played out in battlefields as well as museums.

As this text is being formulated media is reporting that Donald Trump is flexing the US government's muscles by bringing in a vivid display of the country's military force during the celebration of 4:th of July, an unprecedented occurrence. A sign not only that the president has drastic ideas of how to display the pride of the US but also that the imagined community is being used and reformulated in new ways in our time, as always.

A Common Ground is an afternoon of events when artists, many from the Nordic realm, points towards some of the complexities intertwined with the hegemonic idea, to divide the world into entities that are nations, nation states or territories where one people, or class, rule over others. Videos and performances are either made for this specific occasion or is selected to shed a light on atrocities throughout time in the name of nation or territory.

A Common Ground is a part in the more extensive workshop; The Trans-Atlantic Meeting on Nationalism(s) that will engage 19 artists during three days in New York in July 2019. This group, most living either in the Nordic Countries or US, represents different perspectives and has come together to share and create knowledge around these complex issues. The historical background to the concept of nations as well as decolonizing strategies will be discussed during lectures and workshops and while experiencing artworks among the group. The intent is to build relationships while revising what it means to be a colonizer, indigenous or a migrant and navigate a world of places.

Susanne Ewerlöf

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## PAULA URBANO

Paula Urbano applies an intersubjective perspective in her work. With an interest in postcolonial theory and philosophy her art concerns themes as identity in relation to migration and location. Starting from a subjective perspective Urbano's work shifts from micro to macro level in her investigations of a state of mind; of existential uncertainty. Urbano work is often presented in video installations and/or photography.

Urbano born and based in Stockholm 1980 holds a Master in Fine Arts from Konstfack, the University of Arts, Crafts & Design and she is based in Stockholm. She did her Post Master in Architecture at RIA, Stockholm and artistic development work KU at RIA 2015-17. Urbano has exhibited her work at MAC Quinta Normal in Santiago de Chile, at galeria Arcimboldo in Buenos Aires and had solo shows all around Sweden in Museums such as Museum Anna Nordlander, Eskilstuna Konstmuseum, Kristianstad Art Gallery.

## SELMA SELMAN

Selma Selman comes from Bosnia and Herzegovina and is of Romani origin. Her work embodies the struggles of her own life as well as her community, employing a plethora of media such as performance, painting, photography and video installations.

Selman defines herself as an artist of Roma origins, and not a Romani artist, a subtle, yet critical distinction in her work. Her aim is to break down the prejudice which essentializes her community to the lowest common denominator denying them the right to self expression. Selman utilizes her personal background as a lens through which she can understand the universal human condition and its idiosyncrasies.

She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2014 from Banja Luka University's Department of Painting. She is currently pursuing her MFA at Syracuse University where she is also teaching art. Selma is a founder of the organization "Mars To School"/ "Go The Heck To

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School" whose aim is to empowering girls all around the world who faced the ostracization from the society and poverty. She is as well a Co-founder of project for popularisation of contemporary art in Bosnia and Herzegovina 'APARTMAN'.

## LINDA KARIN LARSEN

Linda Karin Larsen received her BFA from the Oslo Academy of Fine Art in 2013 and her MFA at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 2019. Her artistic practice is derived from the scattered pieces of her combined experience of growing up in both West Africa, and Norway. Her focus has been on the extraction industries in these two regions, and the link between exploitation of nature and racism. Over the past year she has entered a collaboration with her alter ego Linda Lazer, a sound and performance artist whose work conveys the emotions about being the other, being alien, about the experience of floating in the middle ground between two worlds.

By combining sculptures with music, performance and video, the collaboration seeks out to create new ways of seeing and imagining the materials and the other in an alternative state.

## RUNO LAGOMARSINO

Recent solo exhibitions include We are each other's air, Francisca Minini, Milan, Italy (2019) Concentrations 61: Runo Lagomarsino, EntreMundos, Dallas Museum of Art Dallas, (2018), La Neblina, Galeria Avenida da Índia, Lisbon (2018).

His work has been exhibited in group shows such as: BRAZIL. Knife in the Flesh, PAC, Milan, (2018), A Universal History of Infamy, LACMA, Los Angeles, (2017), Prospect.4: The Lotus in Spite of the Swamp, Prospect New Orleans, (2017), Under the Same Sun, Guggenheim New York (2014). Really useful knowledge, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2014); He has participate in the 56th Venice Biennale (2015); The 30th São Paulo Biennial (2013) and 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011).

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## LIV STRAND

Art for Liv Strand is a practice for physical materials to think with along with language. Language as one communicative source meeting spatial and performance processes, forming suggestions. She's some on-going collaborations that function as capacities for negotiation, concerning ways of doing together, and the topology of hierarchies.

Liv Strand has exhibited at Nikolaj Kunsthall in Copenhagen, Krognoshuset in Lund, in several galleries in Oslo and for instance at Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, Germany. Liv Strand is based in Stockholm and has a Master degree in Fine Arts from The Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm.

## KATARINA PIRAK SIKKU

Katarina Pirak Sikku concerns herself with memory and the legacy of the Sámi - an indigenous people of Northern Europe. She has challenged the image of the "good" Swedish state by for instance acknowledged the misdeeds committed towards the Sámi by the Racial Biological institute. She works with installation, photography, drawing and video. She has exhibited at Bildmuseet Umeå and Moderna Museet among others, she studied at the Art Academy in Umeå.

## FIKRET ATAY

Fikret Atay very often highlights the tensions that rises from the gaps between the powerful and the non-powerful. His works deal on the surface with political and economic causes of dissent, while actually pointing on hidden metaphysical voids. He is part of a minority of international successful artists of Kurdish descent, who chose to stay and produce in the Southeast of Turkey, far away from the centers of the Art scene, for many years.

Finally, he left his hometown Batman in 2017 to settle to Örebro in Sweden, 200 Kilometers West of Stockholm. On the surface his

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works deal with political and economic causes of dissent, while actually pointing on hidden metaphysical voids. His work has been shown in international museums and art centers, including Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Tate Modern, London, UK; Pinchuk Art Center, Kiev, Ukraine; Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA; New Museum, New York; MoMA PS1, New York, USA.

## SUSANNE EWERLÖF

Susanne Ewerlöf is based in Stockholm, currently the curator working with audience development, exhibitions and public programs at Fullersta Gård Art Centre. Her recent independent projects have had a focus on Memory, Cultural Heritage and Identity. She enjoys bringing artists together for conversations around difficult topics to share knowledge and perspectives.

Previously she was the Project Manager of the Curatorial Program for Research - Baltic Sea 2017 (Estonia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) and the founder, director and board member of Verkstad konsthall in Norrköping until 2016. She was the curator and producer of Norrköping Art Museum's centennial exhibition *Acting in the City* (2013). Also she is taking part in the MRes Curatorial/Knowledge Programme at Goldsmiths University part time.

# WORKS



**Paula Urbano**

## Collect the (un)connected and (re)connect the Uncollected (2017-2019)

Collect the (un)connected and (re)connect the Uncollected is an ongoing artistic research project that revolves around an archeological hypothesis that Paula Urbano originally comes from Scandinavia and that her ancestors were present in the geographical region called Sweden already during the bronze age. With archeological artifacts from the Swedish History Museum and recently published research, the artist tells an alternative story of origin that states: I come from here originally, and here are my proofs.

# WORKS



**Selma Selman**

## Do not Look into Gypsy Eyes (2013)

"Don't Look into Gypsy Eyes" is a mantra of the hyper-sexualized "Roma" woman. A Roma woman is considered to be exotic, sexy while simultaneously being too dangerous, too "dirty", and too desirable.

A Roma woman's eyes will seduce you, put a spell on you, and curse you. This work is based on visualizing and negating the stereotypes and prejudices enforced upon Romani women.

# WORKS



**Katarina Pirak Sikku**  
**Miessávrrre (2019)**

A short glimpse of a winter landscape, hills in the background and view of a river before the camera is lowered below the water surface. Watching the ice from below is a strange sensation, an uncanny feeling that is heightened by the eerie sound that accompanies the image from the deep. The camera captures some wooden poles and metal structures under the water. It is a glimpse of the inlet to a power station in Lule River, not far from Katarina Pirak Sikku's home town Jokkmokk.

To a viewer the video doesn't reveal much but the artist manages to express the deep sadness that she and many others feel about the fact that the land in this area have been flooded and people who used to live in the village Miessávrrre were forced to relocate. The plant is a huge provider of power for all of Sweden. Sápmi, the Sami land, that stretches over Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, has not yet been acknowledged as a colony by the Swedish state.

# WORKS



**Runo Lagomarsino**

## **More Delicate than the Historians' are the Map-Makers' Colors (2012-2013)**

Video documentation of an action carried out in San Jerónimo Park in Seville. On the occasion of the Seville Expo 1992, which celebrated the five-hundredth anniversary of the so-called discovery of America, the Russian artist Zurab Tsereteli created an almost thirty-two-meter-high monument in bronze depicting Christopher Columbus. Titled *The Birth of a New Man*, but better known as "The Egg of Columbus," since it portrays him standing inside an enormous egg, the monument allegorizes the story of how Columbus, having been told that discovering the Americas was no great accomplishment, challenged his critics by making an egg stand on its tip.

In 2012 Lagomarsino bought twelve eggs at a supermarket in Buenos Aires and illegally carried them to Seville. For each part of the journey he packed them carefully, to make sure they would not break. There, he met up with his father, who lives in Spain, having exiled from Argentina in 1976. Together they threw the eggs at the monument, in this way giving them back to the "conquistador" – an action at once pathetic and glorious.

# WORKS



**Fikret Atay**

## The Flood (2018)

The video starts with close-ups of faces. Several people are looking far away towards a horizon. Orange life vests appear. The set up seems familiar. Suddenly the camera moves upwards picturing out of a bird view perspective. The boat appears. The Flood is the title of the latest work by Fikret Atay.

The artist delivers a statement together with his work: "Globalization seems to melt the borders between countries while creating new boundaries. The most common way of escape has always been the sea. I wanted to discuss with immigrants, who leave their war-torn countries in search of safety and peace somewhere else. They cross borders, they try to reach Europe on overloaded boats and many people die on the way. The sea, instead of opening the gates of heaven, turns out to be hell."

# WORKS



**Linda Karin Larsen**

## Towards a New Consciousness (2018)

In this video, the artist's brother is seen performing Kung Fu, or Black Fu, in the patterns of four different animals: crane, snake, monkey and tiger. These motions are used as a way to connect to the animal within the human and introduces new perspectives on ways of using the body.

It is also an act of resistance, in several situations, he has had to use the knowledge of these movements to defend himself from physical attacks from neo nazis. In the background water is flowing, supporting the image of his black body. Water representing the unified presence of his disparate ancestors. Our grandmother on one side was born from the river and her husband came from the ocean. Our grandmother on the other side was born on an island surrounded by sea. Water is what connects our different cultural backgrounds, both personally, historically and geographically.

# WORKS



**Liv Strand**

## A Walk in the Park (2019)

A performance work in the form of a guided walk passing through the Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens. Moving along the green, grey and brown surfaces, taking layers of construction and change as it's theme.

A Walk in the Park is an encounter with a physical location and some adjacent approaches. What kind of connections can a walk in the park spark off?

# COLOPHON

**A Common Ground** is a part of *CPR 2019: Navigating the (art) World*, our seventh residency program and first residency program dedicated to artists that will take place in New York City from July 8 – 19, 2019. Hosted by local institutions, artists and independent curators, the program gathers a cohort of up to fifteen local and international artists.

The robust programming offers daily visits to artist studios and local arts institutions, and it is complemented by readings about socio-political history, arts, and culture.

## Curatorial Program for Research (CPR)

[www.curatorialprogram.org](http://www.curatorialprogram.org)

[info@curatorialprogram.org](mailto:info@curatorialprogram.org)

OUR MISSION / With fully-funded research programs and continuous elevating platforms, CPR creates a socially-conscious network of emerging curators and artists that connect with art scenes in burgeoning cities around the globe.

OUR VISION / To foster the next generation of curators and artists that have equal access to knowledge in order to successfully network and collaborate with international art scenes.

Since being founded in 2015 by Carmen Ferreyra CPR has organized fully-funded programs for Curators in various parts of the world.

The workshop The Trans-Atlantic Meeting on Nationalism(s) and the event A Common Ground has been made possible through the support of the following partners:

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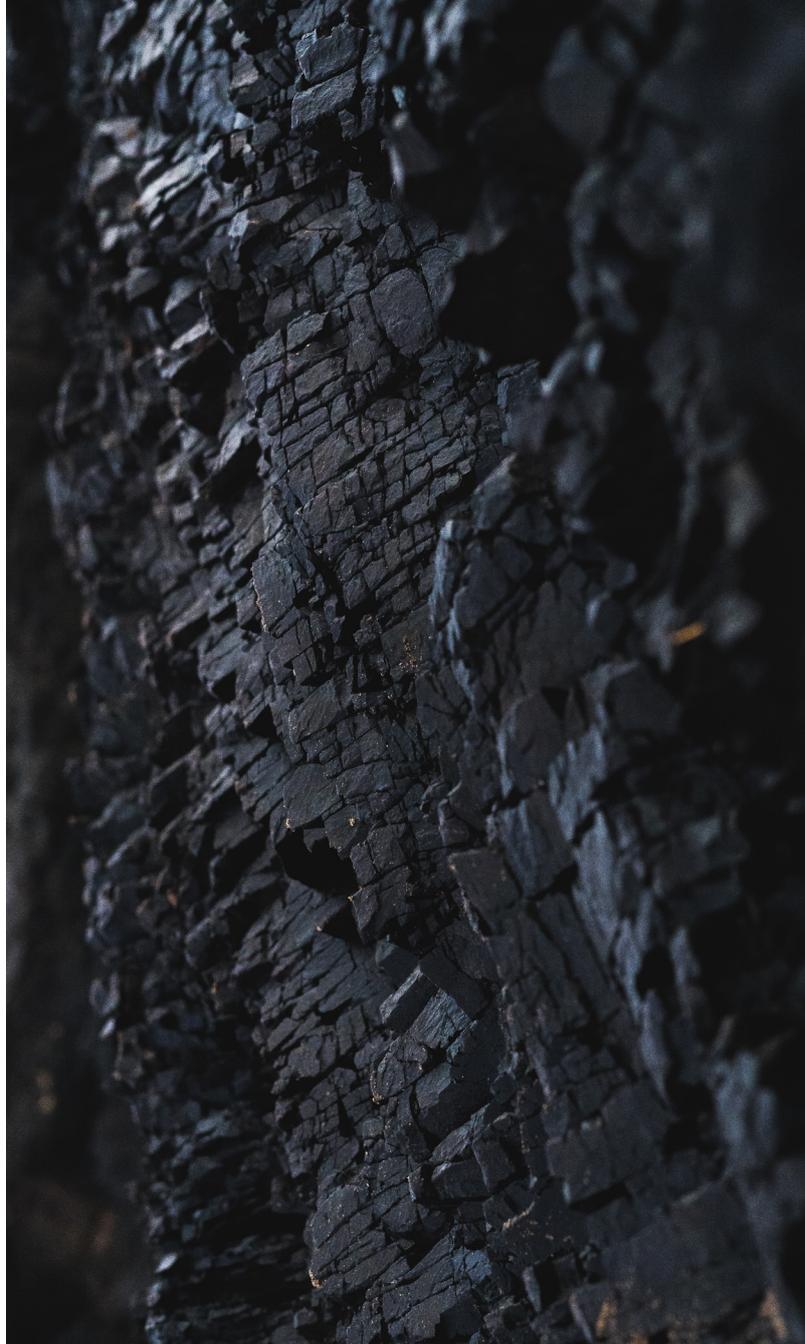
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