

On Visual Walking-Remembering *Warmipura* – Among Women

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Abstract

The present essay is an extended conversation between the authors, on the critical literature of the experimental women's cinema and video and documentaries of Colombian female artists. The meaning of self, womanhood, and female artistic practices is in the focus of the conversation. Methodologically we approach this essay as *warmipura*, a female circle, or rather, as we propose, maternal space of kin and alliance-making with multiple others around and within us. It is the space of porous openness to the world, the community, co-working and co-knowing, all together the process of co-creating with multiple others both human and non-human. Openness to the other in self while seeing self in the other allows making new alliance, that in their turn open up the new worlds to explore, their potentialities. Experimental practice is seen as such maternal space, an *assemblage* using Deleuze-Guattarian term, of *bits of life*, adopting Smelik and Lykke's words. Largely informed by the feminist new materialism and posthumanism, the essay explores the alliances, intentionally, intuitively, and organically happening in the maternal space of *warmipura*. The present essay focuses on the vitality of fragments and allies in the process of disassembling self through and with the video practice.

Introduction: We

In Quechua *warmipura* means 'among women', the female community, togetherness of exchanging stories, the everyday knowledge and skills, the knowledge of generations about the world, family or crafts, passing them on. It is used here to name the experimental maternal space and practice — not as an isolating and isolated territory of conservation of traditions, but the porous openness to the world, the community, co-working and co-knowing, of 'bits of life'.¹ Life, as Smelik & Lykke unfold, is not a homogenous harmonious whole,

¹ Anneke Smelik and Nina Lykke, 'Bits of Life: An Introduction', in *Bits of Life: Feminism at the Intersections of Media, Bioscience, and Technology*, ed. by Anneke Smelik and Nina Lykke (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), pp. ix–xix.

but an ongoing dis-assemblage of different discourses and practices, the biological and technological, their manifestations across disciplines, while making alliances along the way.² These *bits of life*, Deleuze-Guattarian *disassemblages*, and Minh-ha's *fragmentations* are our methodology, our subject, partners in conversation, our kin. *Warmipura* is a support group, kin and alliance-making with multiple others around and within us. The present essay focuses on the vitality of fragments and allies in the process of disassembling self through and with the video practice.

Audio-visual is the object of study, subject for reflection but also the language of expression for each of the three authors of this essay. We want to share our artistic and technical experiences and expertise employing a collaborative duo (tri/multi)ethnographic methodology³ to discuss how visual forms and technics are part of our knowing the world, how different senses complement each other on this path and how they transform the visual expression. What unites us is our interest in memory and walking. We understand walking as artistic and research practice that enables *staying with the trouble*, in *crisis*, on the margins and in the minority, crucial for further deterritorialization and mutual transformation in and with the world.⁴

Our dialogue partners include theoretical works we turn to in the next section and works by Colombian female documentalists Marta Hincapié, Josephine Landertinger Forero, Andrea Said, Melisa Sánchez Hincapié, Luisa Sossa, and Clare Weiskopf.⁵ Their works share intimacy, explore different senses without limiting oneself to the canon. Using light and closeups, they aim at sharing the emotion, exploring their interplay with memory on the way of creating the fluid constantly changing knowledge. Without moralization or judgement, they explore relations between generations, family members, the victim and the

² Smelik and Lykke, ix.

³ Richard Sawyer and Joe Norris, *Duoethnography* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012).

⁴ Gill Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), pp. 105–106, 371; Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham: Duke UP, 2016), p. 3; Trinh Minh-ha and Jean-Paul Bourdier, *L'Autre marche (The Other Walk), Installation*. Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France, 19 June 2006–2009 (2012), <<http://trinhminh-ha.com/lautre-marche-the-other-walk/>> [accessed 10 November 2019]; Simon O'Sullivan, 'From Stuttering and Stammering to the Diagram: Towards a Minor Art Practice?', in *Minor Photography Connecting Deleuze and Guattari to Photography Theory*, ed. by Mieke Bleyen (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2012), pp. 3–16; Cornel West, 'The New Cultural Politics of Difference', in *Out There. Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*, ed. by Russell Ferguson (New York: MIT Press, 1995), pp. 19–38 (p. 20).

⁵ Marta Hincapié, director, *Piel*, Documentary, Colombia (2006); Marta Hincapié, director, *Los demonios sueltos*, Documentary, Colombia (2010); Josephine Landertinger Forero, director, *Home – El país de la ilusión*. Documentary, Colombia, Portugal (2016); Andrea Said Camargo, director, *Looking for*, Documentary, Colombia (2012); Melisa Sánchez Hincapié, director, *Warmipura*, Documentary, Colombia (2014), *Elemental*, Fiction, Colombia (2015), <https://vimeo.com/116188301> [accessed 10 November 2019], *Carpe Diem*, Documentary, Colombia (2016), <https://vimeo.com/171328705> [accessed 10 November 2019], *Kairós*, Documentary, Colombia (2018), <https://vimeo.com/207853415>, [accessed 10 November 2019]; Luisa Sossa, director, *Inés. Recuerdos de una vida*, Documentary, Colombia (2013); Clare Weiskopf & N. van Hemelryck, directors, *Amazona*, Documentary, Colombia (2016).

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murderer, the role of women in the conflict, the meaning of the conventional truths, motherhood. Using a wide range of sources such as diaries, writings, conversations, observations, thoughts and again, emotions, they walk, fly, dance, run, float throughout their movies and invite the viewer to share the walk towards each one's Self as equal rather than as the led one. Documentaries explore the thin line between fiction and fact, imaginaries, and truth regimes.

Throughout this essay we revisit our own visual material directly in case of Bridget and behind the scenes as we discuss the women's experimental audio-visual practices in each-other's context, in women's circle. The essay is a memory walk that helps to understand and so to (co)-create⁶ the theory, practice and thought of the other and those of ours. We keep the narrative poetic language of conversation, intimately random as a resistance and deconstruction of the pre-established order in exploration of the multiplicities and potentialities. The essay is an explorative interplay of memories, experiences, thoughts and reflections, of 'I's in the entangled wholeness of 'We'.

... *women*...

Proverbs of different people reveal prejudice against women, both acceptance and denial of their wisdom and loyalty. They reflect the traditional place of a woman in the society, relations within female community but what is more important they speak about the socially conventional separation of the community to male and female, which is justified by the pre-given difference in the way of thinking, feeling, saying and seeing things. They also speak about the community and ties within it. Russian proverbs, for instance, underline the marginality of women, the general hardship and under-appreciation of women's work in the patriarchal society: 'Women's work is unseen' (*Бабыю работу не видно*), 'Women's happiness is like Indian summer — it is either short or not happening' (*Бабые счастье, что бабые лето — то коротко, то вовсе нету*), 'The women regret about it while the girls long for marriage' (*Бабы каются — девки замуж собираются*).

As we discuss the social imaginations on gender, Polina remembers:

I walk up the stairs. My hand is on the rails. I suddenly notice my hand. I am 24. I enjoy what I see: long, slender fingers. A silver ring is slightly big. Have I lost weight or is it a cold day? The thought jumps to sadness: I do not have a man to admire my slim hands while they are. I am wasted. — Fifteen years later, I still remember that thought and it strikes me: the fear of change, the fear of being alone, the fear of being alone without a man, the fear, fear, fear; the fear of the presence of self.

⁶ Trinh Minh-ha, 'The World as Foreign Land', in *When the Moon Waxes Red: Representation, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, ed. by Minh-Ha (New York: Routledge, 1991b), pp. 185–200 (p. 194).

It echoes the idea of the social educational and performative origin of the gender relations, often discussed in the critical feminism literature, its profound rootedness in the social order.⁷ Postmodern feminist thought emphasizes transcendence of the binary approach throughout the dominated Western thought and its inadequacy altogether.⁸ Alaimo & Heckman summarize, ‘that it is imperative [...] to deconstruct the dichotomy itself, to move to an understanding that does not rest on oppositions’.⁹ In its deconstruction of the binary world view and practices of looking as a tool of oppression, discrimination and violence, feminist thought¹⁰ is seen as a source of sensitivity to any form of oppression, as a space of ‘in-between-ness and flows’,¹¹ of ‘shared sensibilities which cross the boundaries of class, gender, race, etc. that could be fertile ground for the construction of empathy — ties that would promote recognition of common commitments, and serve as a base for solidarity and coalition’,¹² making kin or alliances with multiple others, which includes the materiality of the entangled and intra-active or mutually constitutive world,¹³ a space of vitality and *a mode of becoming*, ‘becoming-woman/other/animal/earth, under the impact of emergence of “Life” as a subject of political and ethical concern’,¹⁴ of alterity and fragmentation as ‘a way of living with differences without turning them into opposites, nor trying to assimilate them out of insecurity. [...] A way of living at the borders’.¹⁵

Female/women’s/feminist space then is understood here rather as a maternal space. We do not speak of the psychoanalytical all devouring mother compensating for her castration and Freudian binary principal of *either devour or being devoured* principle,¹⁶ of either with or without penis. Nor do we speak

⁷ Judith Butler, *Undoing gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 198–99; bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), pp. 5–6; Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 15; Laura Mulvey, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (New York: Oxford UP, 1999), pp. 833–44 (p. 834).

⁸ Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman, ‘Introduction: Emerging Models of Materiality in Feminist Theory’, in *Material Feminisms*, ed. by Stacey Alaimo and Susan Hekman (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), pp. 1–19; Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (Durham: duke University Press, 2007), pp. 59–66; Iris van der Tuin, *Generational Feminism* (Lanham: Lenxington Books, 2015).

⁹ Alaimo & Hekman, ‘Introduction’, p. 2.

¹⁰ Marita Sturken & Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

¹¹ Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2006), p. 78.

¹² bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 57.

¹³ Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*, p. 2; Barad, *Meeting the Universe*, p. 33.

¹⁴ Braidotti, p. 42.

¹⁵ Pratibha Parmar & Trinh Minh-ha, ‘Woman, Native, Other’, *Feminist Review*, 36 (1990), 65–74 (pp. 71–72).

¹⁶ Kristyn Gorton, *Theorising Desire: From Freud to Feminism to Film* (New York: Palgrave, 2008); Ulrike May, *Freud at Work: On the History of Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice, with an Analysis of Freud’s Patient Record Books* (New York: Routledge, 2018); Kaja Silverman, *The Acoustic Mirror. Theories of Representation and Difference* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988).

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about a mother ‘capable of super-human feats of altruism, putting aside her own grievances, doubts and worries for the sake of the child and all with a sunshine smile’,¹⁷ when the choice is either a masochistic self-sacrifice or be punished by the society and fate.¹⁸ Together with other feminist new materialist thinkers, Braidotti also warns against the neo-liberal feminist version of patriarchy — the *syndrome of the exceptional woman*, which only ‘fosters a new sense of isolation among women and hence new forms of vulnerability’.¹⁹ In her summary of the feminist cinematic ethics based on her profound revision of philosophy of Claire Denis, Emmanuel Levinas and Jean-Luc Nancy, Hole proposes that maternal pregnant body could be rather the metaphor of the on-going alterity, ‘an ongoing process of sharing out’, a space of mutual becoming, porous openness and dependence, ‘an opening and extension, rather than a boundary and enclosure’,²⁰ the space for the new sensorial possibilities: of listening rather than speaking, touching and feeling rather than watching and seeing. It challenges the dominant patriarchal narratives while being a materiality situated in the relations of power. It is the space of queerness that explores the alternatives in seeing, feeling, thinking from within the margins.²¹

From the feminist new materialist perspective, the world is seen as ‘a dynamic web of interconnections or hybrid contaminations, as a principle of radical non-purity’.²² It was well summarized in *Avengers: Infinity War* by Bruce Banner, the character impersonated by Marc Ruffalo: ‘Your mind is made up of a complex construct of overlays: J.a.R.V.I.S., Ultron, Tony, me, the Stone — all of them mixed together, all of them learning from one another’.²³ This is ‘the entanglement of material, bio-cultural and symbolic forces in the making of the subject’,²⁴ which goes beyond mere discourse and semantics in the binary when one is active and the other is passive, a repository, representation of someone’s desires, will or consciousness.²⁵ The proposed alternative to the above-mentioned binaries is a co-creating maternal force that operates on the premise of the ‘more egalitarian principles of interconnection, solidarity and teamwork’.²⁶ The maternal force focuses on presence rather than on lacking, of being self, ‘an

¹⁷ Emily White, ‘Hollywood’s Obsession with the Devouring Mother’, *Movie Metropolis*, blog entry, 22 July 2018, <<https://moviemetropolis.net/2018/07/22/hollywoods-obsession-with-the-devouring-mother>>, par. 6 [accessed 10 November 2019].

¹⁸ Frigga Haug, *Beyond Female Masochism. Memory-Work and Politics* (New York: Verso, 1992), p. 77; Smelik, pp. 13–14.

¹⁹ Braidotti, p. 45.

²⁰ Kristin L. Hole, *Towards a Feminist Cinematic Ethics. Claire Denis, Emmanuel Levinas and Jean-Luc Nancy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p. 127.

²¹ Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Ex-Cinema. From a Theory of Experimental Film and Video* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

²² Braidotti, p. 57.

²³ *Avengers: Infinity War* (Anthony Russo, 2018).

²⁴ Braidotti, p. 37.

²⁵ Silverman, p. 133; Smelik, *And the Mirror Cracked*, p. 10.

²⁶ Braidotti, p. 45.

active, signifying force; an agent in its own terms'.²⁷ It is the Deleuze-Guattarian space of possibility, potentiality, hope and alliance in the journey of the ever-becoming-other subjectivity.

Experimental: Assembling 'Bits of Life'

As an alternative art field, experimental together with avant-garde and counter-cinema and video becomes women's natural ally, and, as various scholars mention, women excel in this art form.²⁸ In her detailed analysis of the feminist cinema, Malone speaks of various tendencies, strategies or voices of the female cinema, which concern both the plot as the form and media in the deconstruction of the power relations: social and cultural commentary, revealing stereotypes and hierarchies, transforming routine to art, intimate and caring view, an exploring instead of voyeuristic camera, no judging, reflection on one's own identity without the necessity of being validated by a male character. While Malone suggests that the best support to women in film is to watch movies made by women,²⁹ it is clear for all the authors writing about 'the female gaze' that it is never based on 'the narrow view of gender'³⁰ without considering the complex structure of the world we live in and the patriarchal order that forms its truth regimes. Referring to Braidotti, Smelik stresses that "the female subject" is by no means a monolithic category.³¹ Neither are the cinema, filming techniques nor a spectator, emphasizes Bolton.³² Video itself is symbolic, cultural and a material category, as feminist cinema theorists argue.³³ It requires consideration of multiple complex relations and affects towards deconstruction of the form and media, beyond representational and binary based psychoanalysis, beyond the opposition of *the gazing* and *the gazed* towards further inclusion of media, spectator, the author herself,³⁴ towards multiple new alliances, whether with

²⁷ Alaimo and Hekman, 'Introduction', p. 12.

²⁸ *Women's Experimental Cinema. Critical Frameworks*, ed. by Robin Blaetz (Durham: Duke UP, 2007); Alicia Malone, *The Female Gaze. Essential Movies Made by Women* (Coral Gables, FL: Mango Publishers, 2018); Janet McCabe, *Feminist Film Studies. Writing the Woman Into the Cinema* (London: Wallflower, 2004); Patricia White, *Women's Cinema, World Cinema: Projecting Contemporary Feminisms* (Durham: Duke UP, 2015).

²⁹ Malone, p. 13.

³⁰ Ivi, p. 12.

³¹ Smelik, *And the Mirror Cracked*, p. 32.

³² Lucy Bolton, *Film and Female Consciousness: Irigaray, Cinema and Thinking Women* (New York: Palgrave, 2011), p. 8.

³³ Shohini Chaudhuri, *Feminist Film Theorists: Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Teresa de Lauretis, Barbara Creed* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

³⁴ Anneke Smelik, 'Feminist Film Theory', in *The Cinema Book*, ed. by Pam Cook (London: BFI, 2007), pp. 491–505; Nancy N. Chen & Trinh Minh-ha, "Speaking Nearby": A Conversation with Trinh T. Minh-Ha', *Visual Anthropology Review*, 8.1 (1992), 82–91; Trinh Minh-ha, 'All-Owning Spectatorship', *Quar. Rev. of Film & Video*, 13.1-3 (1991), 189–204; Trinh Minh-ha, 'Painting with Music: A Performance Across Cultures', *Discourse*, 18.3 (1996), 3–19.

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nature, a colleague or a family member, body, objects around us, camera, sound, archives or the found footage.

Various scholars spoke of ‘the paradox of the unrepresentability of the feminine’.³⁵ It is not enough for a woman ‘to become who they are’³⁶ but to rather deconstruct the meaning of a woman, critically revise it to prevent further inequalities and discrimination from taking place, to become the Deleuze-Guattarian minority. White characterizes minor cinema as practice of ‘resistance to totalizing narratives of the world system’.³⁷ Colombian female filmmaker Catalina Mesa said in an interview, ‘I can’t speak from the position of gender. I would invent things’.³⁸ Yet, she does speak here about certain ‘female energy’ that circles her body together with the male one and is responsible for ‘the receptivity, dialogue and cocreation, considering the other in the moment of creating’. Another Colombian filmmaker, Natalia Orozco, in the same interview sharing her experience of directing a movie, spoke of dialogue, not trying to demonstrate you have it all figured out but co-creating. From this perspective, we speak of experimental as a space of exploring, the practice of critical revision, deconstruction, deterritorialization, queering and co-creation or the maternal space.

Walking

Bridget: I define myself as a walking artist — while moving my body becomes a means of creating art. As I move through space, my senses interact with the environment; touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste, all contribute to designing my walk experience.

I put walking first. I walk through the city and the urban landscape searching for new passageways and unknown paths, focusing on architectural elements, signs, noises and spaces. I like to explore and reveal the urban landscape in a way that reconnects us with the ground. Urban landscapes obliterate the horizon, creating an effect of constant immediacy and sudden surprise, cutting us off from a deeper sense of belonging and memory. The concrete surface that the urban walker glides over, suffocates the earth underneath. In the city, we are often deprived of a sensual connection with the soil. I have made artwork in urban areas. Yet, the main core of my art practice deals with the interrelationship between nature, memory and walking and cannot thrive in the urban landscape.

³⁵ McCabe, p. 68.

³⁶ Bolton, p. 38.

³⁷ White, *Women’s Cinema*, p. 13.

³⁸ María Antonia Giraldo Rojas, ‘Las mujeres en el cine colombiano’, *El Colombiano* (2018) <<https://www.elcolombiano.com/cultura/cine/las-mujeres-en-el-cine-colombiano-GE9251899>> [accessed 10 November 2019].

Polina: For me walking is not something prior to art, but art itself. It is breathing and touching the invisible matter. I admire people who walk as if dancing and speak as if singing. As I wrote once, walking makes you 'feel your inner breeze of the morning air, listen to your inner talk of the birds and trees and explore this forest of thoughts and images'.³⁹ There is a lot of imagination in walking. It wakes you up and leads you through the multiverse — the multitude of the parallel and intersecting worlds. It is not the melancholic memory of a lonely walker, walking is a constant co-creation of the memories-essences of those worlds with everything and everyone you touch, see, move with, breathe in and with.

Bridget:

It is a bodily connection. The cycle of my own body influences the way I perceive the natural revolution of various elements surrounding me. The rhythm of the seasons and of the sun, the pull, the flow, the strength, the rhythm of the moon and the tides, have all inspired the way my body moves along the paths in my walking art.

My works have taken place along the coastal path, as I photograph and film various images of the sea's pulling motion. I articulate images of vast empty beaches with close-ups of the remnants of high tides, pieces of fishing nets, seaweed, and lines of gravel. In the video *D'une plage l'autre* (*From One Beach, to Another*), whilst walking, I convey memories of the daytime play along the shoreline. The video is full of nostalgia, perhaps that of a young mother, who was once a child and who questions precious time, simple moments that slip away just like the tide clears the beach, returning whatever it desires.

Polina: Walking whilst aking memories is the practice of making the in-between space of dismantling and becoming. It is rhythmic like the tides. Those rhythms rather than divide mark the lines of disassemblage.

Bridget: In *D'une plage l'autre*, we are caught in between: two beaches at two separate moments — day and night —, two tides — high and low —, two realities — child and adult. My pico-projector implies a strong bright light and surrounding darkness —, a mysterious and unusual lighting on an ocean beach which evokes a dreamy surrealistic ambiance, a definite interval in space and time.

³⁹ Polina Golovátina-Mora, *Photography and Notes*, <<http://www.golovatinamora.info/>> [accessed 10 November 2019].

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Polina:

Walking along the seashore I silently talk to the sea. When my admiration reaches a certain point, I feel the sea's speech: I encounter a shell of the most interesting shape or colour, a piece of amber, or a piece of ceramics with borders and ornaments transformed by the time-movement of the water-sand-air-salt-something else and the material of ceramics-enamel-paint inter/intra-action. Am I part of this now? What do I share? I wonder what material could better evoke empathy to the sea: the sound, the drum rhythm, a flow dance, classic or modern then? a piece of purl-wise knitting, painting or a stone panel? What image would be more appropriate for the sea as a living being?

Bridget:

As I walk, my whole being is attuned to the meshwork of nature. Each footstep resonates throughout my whole body, the touch of my soles interacting with my sight and my hearing. Colours, forms, light, sound, temperature evolve as I make my way through nature. I question. How can I show the everchanging landscape around my moving body in a work of art? What do I search for when I make art as I move along? What do we learn from our wayfaring practices? And how is my camera employed as a tool to unveil the landscape's secrets? I am filled with awe whilst I wander. I feel my belonging to the universal interplay that takes place around and throughout my walking body. I feel that this same landscape acts as a receptacle.

Photographic interface punctuates my walk, each individual image belonging to the whole like a series of strides along the path. Moving image, whether it be an experimental video practice, projecting images whilst walking or recreating a space for ambulation via installation-projection⁴⁰ help me tell the story of our common with nature, to share our collective memory.

Polina:

The artwork that walking inspires is not the mere repetition or the reproduction of the walk. It is the other bodily experience, the other walk. As Trinh Minh-ha and Jean-Paul Bourdier argued with their installation *L'Autre marche* (The Other Walk), it is a learning practice 'how to walk anew'⁴¹ in the multispecies assemblage of multiple selves and multiple others.

Bridget:

During the art residency in the French Pyrenees, I met eight individuals who were willing to walk with me for the artwork *Drift with Me* I had in mind. I

⁴⁰ Bridget Sheridan, Installations-Projections, *Marcher Créer* <<https://www.bridgetsheridan.com/>> [accessed 10 November 2019].

⁴¹ Minh-ha & Bourdier, *L'Autre marche*, Phase III.

would move through my 'fixed spatial field', using the words of Guy Debord,⁴² in order to understand the psychogeographical articulations of the place.

Each walk was unique and meant something different for each of my participants. For the projection, I invited them to choose a manual activity that they could link to their walk and perform it while I was projecting our filmed walk on their hands. I wanted to show the mesh of the hands and the feet, following the Tim Ingold's idea of the strong relationship between the movement of the hands, that of the mind and that of the feet whilst walking.

During the projection, my eight walkers began to drift within their own walk. Projecting the video of the walk on their hands created a special relationship between the landscape and their manual work. One woman, the potter, found herself creating bowls which seemed more magically organic. Trees would pop into her bowls whilst the video of the walk would accompany the sensual movement of her fingers on the clay. Bright green grass would highlight the wheel and her skin as she gave life to the bowls. The other participant, whose hand ran along the paper while she wrote a tale, had the impression she was walking in water.

The projection on the hands was re-materializing the walk as I filmed and projected, then re-filmed and re-projected in the exhibition room. The installation was an immersive experience for the viewer-'sensor' as Weber suggests.⁴³ The smell of the earth, the swaying movement of the eight videos, the sounds would all work together recollecting the movement of bodies walking. The uncanny interplay of light, colours and shadows transports *the sensor* into a different spacetime.

Polina:

As in Deleuzian image-movement and image-time,⁴⁴ where every body, every surface produce ever new and different event in a constantly evolving multidimensional film.

Bridget:

I had another open-air installation in the same village. I chose part of the path that led up to the fields. In a space resembling a tunnel, I installed eight felt tents. In each shelter, I projected a video walk. I attached the structures to the lowest branches, pegged the material into the earth and then hung eight pico-projectors from the top of the tents so that the video image was cast on the surface of the path. I noticed that the children were particularly curious to look into each tent and

⁴² Guy Debord, *Theory of the Dérive* (UBUWeb papers, 1956), <<http://tbook.constantvzw.org/wp-content/deriveddebord.pdf>> [accessed 10 November 2019].

⁴³ Pascale Weber, *Le corps à l'épreuve de l'installation-projection* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

⁴⁴ Gill Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Gill Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

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discover what was inside. Each child would make their way along the path, crouch down and peer into each tent for a substantial amount of time. Was it the small illuminations inside the tent, the magic lanterns that would arouse their curiosity? I do believe the *Drift with Me* den-like space of this dark path and the choice of these small felt structures both created a small haven space along the path.

Random as intimate

Melisa Sánchez, *Elemental*: the sound of the jackhammer is overwhelming. Close up: a person opens their eyes. Next shot: their necklace, back to the eyes, the face looks tense. Asphalt, pavement tiles, pavement tiles with grass. Is it the resilience of life or the destruction for the sterile order of the concrete? A side camera, the person looks aside. Workers are repairing the road. Camera shows yellow sign on the engine: danger. Person's hands in the form of the cradle hold a little green plant with some soil. Water drips through their hands on asphalt. Camera jumps from one image to another creating the sense of irritation and panic. A wall with the Pachamama stencil graffiti. A person closes their eyes and opens them slower as if in disbelief of awakening. Forest. Camera shows more of the person and creates the sensation of breathing. The person looks around wondering where to plant the little sapling. Water is dripping but now to the different fertile soil. Camera shows leaves. The person is lying on the soil in the foetus position, which produces the sensation of peace and recharging. The sapling is planted; the person lies naked around it as if in mutual rebirth. Their hair is entangled with the pine needles and grass, camera shows their skin with its imperfections, fingers and toes and then as if expanding, switches to the tree bark, lichen and moss. A person lies on the bottom of the forest. Camera retreats showing more of the forest with the person being its part.

The nature appears in *Elemental* not as an escape or as all devouring monster but as a nourish mother, a space of mutual growth and co-creation, a space of birth of Self-in. Melisa's experimental videos share the philosophy of the collective K-minantes (*Walkers*), she belonged to: filming while walking.⁴⁵ They explore the intra-action of everyday details, thoughts, memories, sounds, light and colours as the video proceeds as if questioning *how can one show such dynamic entities as memory and identity of the moving body in a work of art?* Melisa creates the in-between space with her focus on the details of the swirling elements, bodies and things. Two videos, *Kairós* and *Carpe Diem* complement each other. Description to *Kairós* says: 'New change of colour; it is a space open to randomness. A trip directly to the centre, being a passenger (her) of the rain (deluge) which is just starting. The river of colours warns its contents against its flow'. Kairos is another concept of time, that unlike a sequential chronology

⁴⁵ K-minantes colectivo, Official web-page, *Inicio* (2012) <<https://kaminantesfilms.wixsite.com/k-minantescolectivo>> [accessed 10 November 2019].

means a propitious, opportune moment for action; a significant cut, a prevalent importance of a fragment over the oppressing hierarchy of the invented whole: ‘A strange mystification: a book all the more total for being fragmented’.⁴⁶ The description to video *Carpe diem* invites to ‘love, recover, fly, live, travel, be the light, be reborn’.

Both videos are a dance of light, colour, smoke, hands and feet. This dance is fluid, plastic, random, yet enough to make sense and provoke thought. Melisa explores the possibility of matter, of filming. It is not a voyeuristic but curious and sincere gaze. Not the gaze at the other with no voice, but at one’s self — at the other within self as Trinh Minh-ha suggests — with an intention to find the unknown in the allegedly all known. Fragments are not the background or a substitute, but forces of *the found footage*, an invitation, the incentive to deconstruct. Fragments seem random, they dance, introduce, frame, facilitate, explore and accompany the artist in their quest in the films by Marta Hincapié, Josephine Landertinger Forero, Andrea Said, Melisa Sánchez Hincapié, Luisa Sossa, and Clare Weiskopf. Nature is an active participant in the selected films and often becomes the found footage for the memory as in *Los demonios* by Marta Hincapié, *Home* by Josephine Landertinger Forero and *Inés* by Luisa Sossa. It is the natural ally of a woman⁴⁷ as a queer space of queerness.

Camera is another ally and companion. In Marta Hincapié’s video *Piel (Skin)*, three participants share the ‘treasures’ of their bodies. With increasing confidence, they use a small camera and extreme closeups to explore their bodies. They are the stories of pain. One man shares the story of the pain of bodybuilding, the other man shares the pain of tattoo-making, the female modelling for an artist shares the pain of a scar in her lower abdomen. In a strong and provocative way, Marta Hincapié draws attention to the silent suffering of the fragile female body and multiple faces of violence against woman: ‘This scar brought me back my life. In exchange, I can’t give life to anyone else. [She frowns in pain of reliving the memory or maybe of sharing her thoughts]. It is a weight of a mountain. It grows with going up until you find the strength to climb it’. She hides her face in her naked knees. She cries silently. The bodybuilder triumphantly poses in a spiky costume of a gladiator warrior. The tattoo man thanks his tattoo artist with a brotherly handshake. A woman continues posing naked for a male artist. The growing voice of a female singing an opera aria increases the effect of the three stories of pain and strength.

Making kins is simultaneously the process and the result. Found footage is an essentially intimate process as it requires opening-up to the unknown. So is the sound-image desynchronization, which is recognized as a strategy for deconstructing the male gaze in the female cinema.⁴⁸ It is not a scopophilic

⁴⁶ Deleuze & Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 6.

⁴⁷ Alaimo & Hekman, ‘Introduction’, p. 12.

⁴⁸ Silverman, pp. 141-142, 163-168; Trinh Minh-ha, ‘Documentary Is/Not a Name’, *October* 52

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exhibitionism⁴⁹ between the artist and the spectator, but the invitation to co-create, think together, an initiation of a conversation between multiple 'I's in *We*.

In *Amazona*, Clare asks her mother why she thinks Clare does this video. Her mother answers: 'To win a prize'. Clare chuckles. It sounds cynical, it also reveals love and confidence despite the years of separation and absence of the conventional mother-daughter self-sacrifice and masochism. Clare deletes the scenes of her mom's concert, which redirects the potential reading of the film as such masochism to the journey of searching for the other in self, finding strength in making alliances, learning to walk anew. She finishes the film showing her new-born. Her voice over comments the importance of making this film: to be able to continue with her life on the brink of becoming a mother, with her life as an artist.

Similar comments-clarifications are made in Landertinger Forero's *Home*, Said Camargo's *Looking for* and Sossa's *Inés*. Mother as the most intimate other appears in these movies. She is not idealized. For example, in *Amazona*, a mother assists the labour of her cat, her only intimate companion as she calls it. Then she takes the newborn kittens to a herpetarium and watches the python eats them. A moment in passing has a powerful symbolic reference as if questioning is it that devouring mother-monster?

The videos are mostly shot in the women's circle and about women. They explore their past, try to understand their actions. They are full of love and compassion. This exploration reveals social stereotypes and prejudices against women, that mothers themselves are not free of. By the end of the film, the artists and their mothers or other female relatives become closer and develop the necessary separation distance, together yet separate in their mutual and individual entangled complexity. The genre of documentary emphasizes the open-ended nature of this quest. The closure is a fragment in the lives of the authors, their participants, and the spectators. There are other forms of seeing the film, as the present meaning has been made in the assemblage of the postproduction.

Conclusions

There are different ways of being a mother. Care and loving attention, Karen Barad speaks about as the basis for our knowledge in, of and with the world,⁵⁰ enable our kin-making with elements, plants, animals, camera, film, people, family, passers-by, colleagues, audience, one's own body, memories, imaginations, own's own children, the other in self, self. In *warmipura*, the extended women's circle,

(1990), 76-98 (p. 80); An van. Dienderen, 'Indirect Flow Through Passages: Trinh T. Minh-ha's Art Practice', *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context, and Enquiry*, 23 (2010), 90-97 (pp. 91-92).

⁴⁹ Mulvey, pp. 835-36.

⁵⁰ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. x-xi.

that this text embodies, we explored how women facilitate such knowledge and reach out to multiple allies with their artistic practices.

I (Ana, Bridget, Polina) am a woman. I (Ana, Bridget, Polina) share the experiences, memories, emotions, feelings and thoughts shared and discussed in the essay. They are then of women. I see other women feeling them too. I see some men also do. I recognize other beings reach in similar ways. That is enough of a confirmation for me. Critical and at times deconstructive reflection over our personal artistic, scholarly and life practices in each other's multiple contexts helped understanding those of the others and so co-create.

The alliances contest the idea of authorship. We believe authorship is an echo of the patriarchal system and contemporary critical literature calls for its revision. From the position of feminist new materialism that largely informed this essay, the main concern is not the authorship, but relations, affects that accompany the process of creation and the voices the openness enables.

All the practices discussed or kept in mind are the journey of exploring Self in the world while making alliances on the way with multiple others, whether human or non-human: relatives, friends, random passers-by, animals, plants, air, sound, camera, music, thoughts and memories. It is the journey of deconstructing the memories, social imaginaries of a woman, being a woman, a mother, a daughter, an artist, a female artist, of a film, filming and spectatorship. As a space of alliance, the process of deconstruction was both intentional, intuitive and organic, happening in the maternal space of *warmipura*. Plasticity and fluidity of these practices transform walking into dancing, talking into listening. As in any dancing, sexual gaze is inevitable as we are speaking about the living bodies with hormones and desires. Yet, there is an a-sexual gaze of admiration of the body's beauty and of its possibilities and potentialities that the unity with the matter can provide. Their openness to the other in self while seeing self in the other allows making new alliance, that in their turn open up the new worlds to explore.