

2018 Engaging Artists Projects

2017-18 Engaging Artists Fellows **Bryan Rodriguez Cambana** and **Vanessa Teran Collantes** receive project support for upcoming work with incarcerated youth at Rikers Island, and on the diaspora of Andean indigenous cosmology and the Kichwa language.



Vanessa Teran Collantes, Images from *Runa Nawi* (2017-2018)



“While deciding on the tone, language, place and message of our story, we will be imagining the *transformation* of the jail into something equally as tangible. By providing moments where our actual voices can change deliberately, we will exercise a range of sensibilities and characters that open us up to and reconfigure who we might or could be.”

— Bryan Rodriguez Cambana, 2018 grantee

Bryan Rodriguez Cambana

Public Art (\$4000)

Through Creative Arts Team programming initiatives at Rikers Island, Bryan Rodriguez Cambana will work with incarcerated youth awaiting trial. Utilizing what is available in their facilities, Rodriguez and the youth will write, direct and perform an audio play. They will compose sonic-landscapes and fictions reflective of the surreal circumstances of being confined,

Vanessa Teran Collantes

Research & Development in Social Practice (\$1000)

The project, titled, Runa Ñawi (Runa Eye) will be a collective-driven laboratory in the Andean diaspora communities of New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. Together participants will use photography to explore themes of Andean indigenous cosmology and the endangered Kichwa language as a tool for storytelling about



watched, and waiting. The play will be split into four acts, later pressed onto translucent vinyls packaged in custom-made, collectively-designed box sets.

The play, will be dispersed (as vinyls) among four DJs who would be mixing each act into trademark Afro-diasporic sounds live. These sets will be performed at separate times; for the youth during “in-house” sessions, for their family members as well as for a curated audience of cultural producers of color. The practice of these cultural producers is particularly relevant to the project’s objective of materializing a dialogue about freedom in/and fantasy. This work is a continuation of arts programs about hip-hop culture that Rodriguez is currently teaching at Rikers to youth (18-21) who are stuck in the criminal justice system. During weekly sessions, they speak about the evolution of hip-hop and its politics, indulging in its music, fashion, and iconography.

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life here in the US—that include personal stories and documentation of the community’s Raymis (celebrations).

Teran and the collective will work in collaboration with the Taytas (the elders) to learn about various cosmological traditions. The collective welcomes a diverse group in regards to age, gender, and knowledge on photography, language, and cosmology—to share stories and skills.

To reach a larger public, the project will circulate via an Instagram account where the Kichwa language is activated through hashtags and social media as a learning device.

Over the next year, the collective will hold 8-10 workshops, most of them in the Bronx, New York, but also satellite weekend workshops in New Jersey and Massachusetts.

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