

(A ser traducida al español)

Somewhere on the road to finding political traction  
I realized:

That art is inextricably implicated  
with the extractive and excluding logic  
of capitalism.

That there is no left and no right; they are  
all manifestations of political ideologies  
which replicate the systems that uphold  
white supremacy and colonial dispossession.

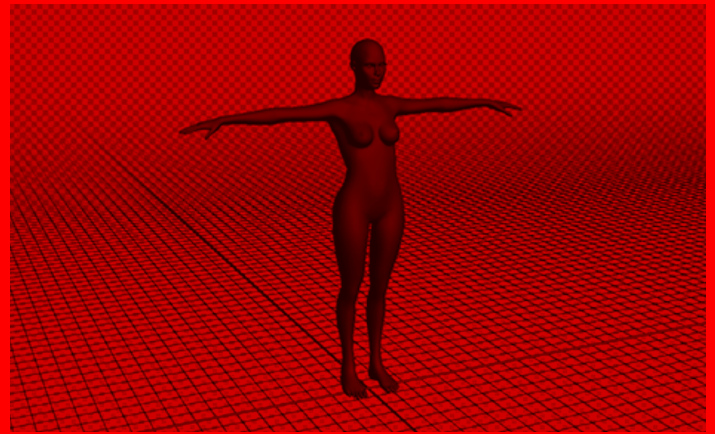
That socialism may not be possible, but it  
is perfected in illusion by “share” economies,  
“woke” politics, and the short term-rewards  
of self-promotion.

That the structure of contemporary  
incarceration in the U.S. replicates  
itself as the dominant form of sanctioned  
violence and bodily control—perversely  
naturalizing the social asymmetry  
of power.

That shifting poles of political thought  
—shifting because they are not  
synthetic truths everywhere and for  
everyone—produce nostalgic delusions  
of change forcing us into ineffective  
political centers that paralyze and limit.

These proteinaceous webs of power, violence,  
bodies, race, and money that define our  
contemporary moment are blinding in their  
complexity and paralyzing in their effects.  
Their reach is not limited to the prison or the  
border, nor can it be reduced to the gnarled  
relations between state and citizen or—in our  
soon-to-be-realized post-nation-state condition  
—between the corporate state and laborer.  
Instead, this putrid order is not only linked to but  
constitutive of, and perpetuated by, the structuring  
logic of many institutions, among them the library,  
school, hospital, asylum, church, zoo, and, most  
notably for the field of art, the museum.

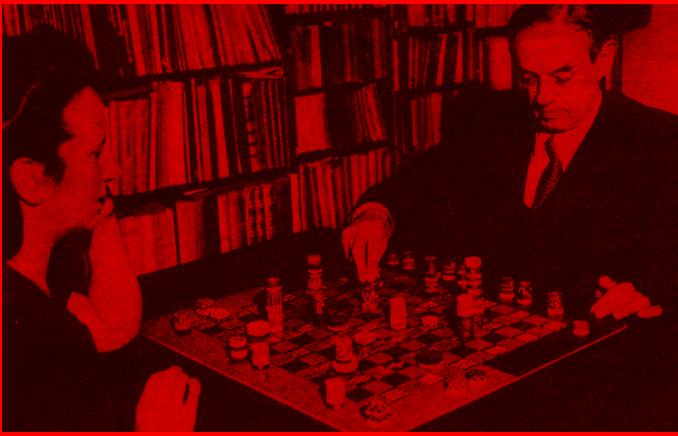
The intricate rehearsing, mapping, and  
diagnosing of this complex transinstitutional



landscape is dizzying. Even more vertiginous,  
however, is attempting to imagine what could be  
said or done to disentangle, unhinge, and dismantle  
this adaptive system of oppression. Though the  
age-old concern with art’s role or ability to intervene  
in these matters echoes still, its formulation is  
bogged down with an emphasis on capacities  
and solution finding; predetermining the failure  
of criticality to restructure and thereby proving  
the system’s ability to self-discipline. As you can  
see the zero sum checks its mate at every turn.

Images, and specifically film, animation, VR,  
AR and gaming technologies, supply us with the  
imaginary necessary to remember the beginning  
of the world and to envision the end of it with such  
Michael Bay bombast that we struggle to imagine  
them happening in any other way. Criticality and  
theory have had a similar effect on diagnosing and  
predicting the implications of neoliberal shifts and  
new world orders with their dispossession of bodies  
and lands in tow. So, if watching the news, seeing  
art, going to the movies, going to the bank, walking  
the streets, surviving precarity have the familiar  
feeling of watching a car crash in slow motion: it’s  
because the limits of our imagination have met  
the limits of theoretical propositions.

This is not only a content production problem,  
but a structural and a technical one. The current  
power of computation allows for the construction  
and distribution of innumerable simulations that  
become convenient to perceive the world but  
only respond to their own design and training  
logics. Hundreds of hours of videos are uploaded  
to YouTube every minute and there are far more  
images made by machines and for machines than  
by humans and for humans. These preconceived  
versions of the world, are reinforced in inscrutable  
algorithms that challenge understanding in the  
obscurity of distributed networks and global



computing systems. This tightening feedback loop—between images, knowledge, and lived experience—is not merely a concern for today, but for the way in which pre-imagined futures are in an endless financialized exchange with the present; a loop that all but guarantees the endurance of inequality, detention, and violence enacted upon racialized and marginalized bodies. It appears, then, that despite our best efforts that a crisis of imagination is abound.

So, what knowledges can or should art be allied with, and with what networks must it begin to collaborate in order to work at every bend in reconfiguring these future-presents? The 2019 edition of *Materia Abierta* will re-animate and re-engage with the ideas behind Xul Solar's "universal club," the Pan Klub (or *Pan Klu* as it was originally written). Xul Solar (1887–1963) was a painter, musician, writer, linguist and inventor of languages and religions whose work aspired toward a more expansive understanding of the world—toward connecting with other cosmologies. He founded the Pan Klub in his home as a "collective seance" of minds, ideas, and languages and as a quasi mystical order that Solar entrusted to carry his ideas and visions forward into the future. The idea of this *Klub* would be to realize—not just serve as—a bridge between the world that is manifested and that which has yet to emerge, unseen, and occulted (knowledges, cosmologies, and futures). Despite the blind spots of racism, xenophobia, sexism, and anti-indigenous sentiment of Xul Solar's time—blind spots which despite his expansive aims still seeped into Solar's own thinking, mysticism, and work—the Pan Klub is a useful framework from which to convene on this crisis of imagination of the moment. At the very least the framework is useful in considering the blind spots culture produces in its own supposedly

progressive and liberal claims and to transform some of Solar's expansive thinking for our own cultural purposes.

The responsibility of institutions in the formation of cultural narratives and imaginaries takes on new meaning in a country like Mexico where it is not possible to separate the flows of power from corruption and organized crime. Nor can one forget the enduring influence of U.S. American and European configurations of power on the Latin American unconscious. That is why the program aims to engage with Mexico's current political transition, where new spaces for politicality and different symbolic significations are sought, in order to ask how privilege affects cultural and knowledge production in excluding diverse participations. In this vein it is pertinent to seek and listen to the way local knowledges contribute perspectives to disarm such entanglements and the varied ways in which lived realities impinge on artistic production to do more than "represent."

Natalia Zuluaga

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