

Editorial



In this issue of *e-flux journal*, Carolina Caycedo explains that so many climate activists in South America are murdered by the state that their friends and families have coined a new term for this loss: the dead aren't killed so much as they are "sown," like seeds. Their legacies are a source of abundant energy and knowledge to be used in continuing struggles against the collusion of extractive corporations and necropolitical states. But Caycedo points out that such a conversion of the meaning of death into a continuing source of strength is also a delicate matter, since it demands a certain political and poetic sophistication, as well as a richness of spirit willing to understand and practice a unity between human life and the earth underneath our feet.

Harvesting the radiant energy of the sun for human needs might initially seem like a less delicate matter. But Elizabeth A. Povinelli considers how the sun's incomprehensible power can still be converted ideologically by rendering all its unharnessed energy as wasted productivity – "the singular manifestation of settler-capital disavowal." In the toxic homecoming of liberal capitalism, according to Povinelli, what scorches us will be what cools us.

Also in this issue, the Organ of the Autonomous Sciences reports on attempts in Scandinavia to fuse neofascism and twentieth-century avant-garde aesthetic strategies. Citing an obnoxious faction of "artists suffering from extreme self-adulation" who were expelled from the Situationist International, today's version exploits the avant-garde's radical contrarianism to pander to spectacle and deliberately target immigrant communities with the "post-shame" nihilist irony of the global alt-right movement.

In an essay that, like Caycedo's and Povinelli's, was originally commissioned for our

summer issue on food and agriculture, Genaro Amaro Altamirano speaks of land, water, and soil as being on par with human beings. In “Where Will Our Food Come From?” he gives an account of a community and a museum’s effort to renew the transmission of agricultural knowledge and practice for surviving what is to come.

Lithuanian Holocaust scholar Saulius Sužiedėlis draws up a detailed portrait of Jonas Mekas’s activities as a young artist living under German and Soviet regimes before leaving Lithuania, putting to rest the allegations against Mekas that surfaced just prior to his death.

In an essay written just before his participation in this year’s documenta fifteen, the artist Richard Bell warns against the immanence and political strength of Indigenous art dissolving into a market, land, and world brokered by imperialist whiteness. Bell’s piece is a continuation of his famous 2002 essay “Bell’s Theorem: Aboriginal Art – It’s a White Thing!,” which reads Western art and aesthetic appetites for Aboriginal art as an index for larger colonial machinations.

In the first of a two-part essay, scholar Su Wei uses emotion as a key to understanding the complex and often contradictory demands that Chinese artists contended with in the decades following the country’s 1949 revolution. Placing personal feelings in the service of nation-building in a tumultuous and radically forward-looking period meant also drawing from the same feelings to create socialist-realist works. Such works expressed strength and vision at a time when – not unlike today – their artists felt great uncertainty.

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