



Estudio Nuboso seed project 2014

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ESTUDIO NUBOSO

Estudio Nuboso is a creative platform that facilitates multi-disciplinary projects for ecological and cultural awareness in Panama. It is a constellation of individuals and organizations that believe in combining the power of art and its processes with other disciplines to raise awareness and be proactive in our interdependence with nature, communities and the landscape.

Through residencies and workshops in different locations in Panama, Estudio Nuboso brings together practitioners of various disciplines to exchange ideas, establish networks and launch initiatives with host communities, addressing the social and environmental challenges of today.

SUELO is our seed project that will take place in San Lorenzo, Veraguas, Panama in January 2014

Our main objectives are:

- * to facilitate time and space for exchange, collaboration & research along the intersections of the natural sciences and social sciences, the arts, education, body-based practices, social innovation & entrepreneurship.

- * strengthen the network of people interested in shifting our role and relationship to land, community, and the world towards more fair and sustainable paths.

- * to develop innovative means for sharing knowledge through art, publications, audiovisual projects, symposia and participatory events that promote experiential learning, critical thinking and creative human potential.

- * to create bridges between rural and urban, local and global.



Panama has one of the worst erosion and soil decay problems in Latin America, with a process of slow, growing degradation in almost all of its watersheds, soils and water sources. This leads to desertification and the loss of productive capacity, with a significant social impact on populations that live from agriculture.

-National Environment Authority (ANAM) in 2000

Proyecto SUELO seeks to bring attention to the theme of soil, earth, land and ground from various perspectives on an open, creative platform. It is an invitation to changemakers in Panama to exchange questions, processes and strategies for reconnecting with our ground.



What are we all becoming in the transformations of the twenty-first century? How can we co-evolve with the territories we live on, rather than recklessly destroying them? To find out the answers, each of us needs to learn to listen to each other, and to pay attention to the ground beneath our feet. Typically, the arts, the physical science and the social sciences remain apart, as though in separate worlds. Here is a chance to overcome those gaps.

- Brian Holmes



THE LOCATION

SaLo is a property on the Pacific coast of Veraguas, deeply embedded in the nature that surrounds it. The site emerged from the ocean depths some 70 million years ago, which makes it one of the oldest rock formations in Panama.

It is an open and flexible structure, with solar power and water collection systems, designed around the hearth, kitchen and common space.



It is a live space in constant dialogue with the elements. Upon arrival you feel at once grounded and ready to fly with inspiration.



The nearest communities are: El Arrimadero and Madre Vieja, where most people live off the land and the ocean – cattle, fishing and tourism. Also nearby are the islands Gobernadora, Cébaco and Coiba National Park.



“I think the most astounding thing about SaLo is the connection with nature that you absolutely can’t avoid succumbing to... When you’re there you find very quickly that you’re sucked into the natural rhythm - the ocean below and stretching out as far as you can see, the forest, the monkeys, raptors overhead”

- Patrick Dillon



RESIDENCY / EXPERIENTIAL EXCHANGE

January 10-17th, 2014 in SaLo

A weeklong exchange platform facilitated by members of Estudio Nuboso & guests, artist Claire Pentecost and researcher Brian Holmes

*ECOLOGY & ARTISTIC PRACTICE
GEOLOGY // EARTH CONNECTION
AGRICULTURE // COMPOSTING
EDUCATION // ECOTOURISM
LAND VALUE & TERRITORY*

The multidisciplinary residency is an immersive experience in a place of high bio-cultural value for Panama. It is an opportunity for members of rural and urban communities to start up a conversation about the human-soil connection.

It is designed to connect with nature, to meet ideas, new perspectives and tangible projects; to generate and transfer knowledge and articulate the value and potential of a place.

A group of local and guest experts will use San Lorenzo as a case study to address the theme of soil.



Each person will bring their own project and questions to the field, while guiding the group through an experience. These experiences will be processed in group dynamics, brainstorming, discussions and actions.

I have known structured, multidisciplinary engagements to generate new questions, ideas and understanding; and that making a concerted study of a particular place unlocks doors to transformative knowledge. Knowledge shared is knowledge multiplied.

- Claire Pentecost



PARTICIPATION

Our multidisciplinary programs are open to changemakers in Panama, in the fields of the natural and social sciences, the arts, agriculture, design, education, wellbeing, ecotourism, entrepreneurship, and more.

In this pilot phase, the selection has been mostly by invitation. Along with our crowd funding campaign we are launching an open call for two more participants.

Applicants must have a great interest in engaging with people of other



walks of life, to widen their horizons. They should enjoy dialogue and action, even proposing solutions. It is recommended they be in good physical shape and be willing to venture into the unknown.

The participation of local residents (the experts on the area) is essential for the shared knowledge to be relevant and beneficial to the place and its inhabitants.

Selection is based on a CV and letter of interest, the latter being of most importance in the application.





ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THIS SEED/PILOT PROJECT

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER amongst participants during the residency.

ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP with the communities in San Lorenzo, Veraguas.

SHARING of techniques such as composting and gardening; ceramics and building with soil; local cooking; thoughts on land-use and territory.

SUPPORT of sustainable development projects in the community

DOCUMENTATION AND OUTREACH through creation of short videos, a publication and a symposium in Panama City

DEVELOP A MODEL which can be implemented in other locations in Panama

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

As well as the transfer amongst the communities of participants, which will be powerful in itself, we will create replicas of the experience in the following formats to share with the world.

PUBLICATION

We will produce a publication with writings and images from participants and guest contributors. This booklet will bear witness to the co-existence of possible approaches to the theme of SOIL and will be available online and in print.

SYMPOSIUM/WORKSHOPS

At the end of the Residency week, we will hold a symposium and workshops in Panama City, with Festival Abierto and Fundación Gunn Hill.

AUDIOVISUAL

A series of short videos for online distribution, will capture and share this first experience. Sound, visual art and installation experiments will be welcome in the future.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2014

January 10-17, 2104: SUELO Residency in SaLo

January 18-19, 2014 Symposium in Panama City

February and March: - Launch videos and booklet

- Assessment and planning for Estudio Nuboso follow-up



OUR GUEST FACILITATORS AND THEIR THOUGHTS ON SOIL

Claire Pentecost

Despite its importance in everything we depend on, the quality of water, food, and atmosphere, soil is still very poorly understood. Until recently, scientists generally treated the underground as a “black box” where, quite simply, decomposition takes place. But today we are witnessing an exponential advance in interest and understanding of this once distant plane, the earth’s fragile crust, whose microscopic inhabitants make all other life possible. At the same time it’s increasingly clear that soil is as endangered as the rest of earth’s ecosystem...

Claire’s work proposes artistic practice as a research practice. She engages a variety of strategies: collaboration, research, teaching, field work, writing, lecturing, drawing, installation and photography in an ongoing investigation and interrogation of the institutional structures that organize and order knowledge.

Regarding content, Pentecost has long addressed the boundary between the natural and the artificial, focusing in recent years on food, agriculture and bio-engineering.

In 2012 Pentecost was a presenting artist at DOCUMENTA(13) in Kassel, Germany, with a multi-layered installation about the value of soil. She places particular emphasis on composting as a method for recovering soil health. In the Chicago area, she collaborates with The Compass, recently initiating a series of public hearings on the activities of the Monsanto Corporation.

Individually and collaboratively, she has exhibited and lectured in many countries. She is represented by Higher Pictures gallery in New York and is a Professor in the Department of Photography at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

www.clairepentecost.org



In Claire Pentecost’s piece in DOCUMENTA(13) the idea that earth is worth gold is very clearly stated. That it is a limited resource, rescueable to some degree through techniques such as composting, but that it is of utmost importance to value it as we value our present currency.



worm cabinet with audio



vertical vegetable garden



currency proposal, the Soil-Erg



Brian Holmes

Since 2005, in collaboration with Claire Pentecost and many others, I have been carrying out a mobile research project called Continental Drift, which is dedicated to exploring the relations between economic flows and existential territories – literally, the ground under our feet. This project uses literary and artistic means to ask timely questions. How do ordinary people adapt to incessant geopolitical transformations? How can artists and intellectuals gain the autonomy and agency they need to make a positive contribution?

Brian is a Chicago-based art and cultural critic and essayist, involved with issues of globalization and social change over the last twenty years. Born in San Francisco, he did his doctoral studies in Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of California at Berkeley. He was the English editor of publications for the art exhibition DOCUMENTA X in 1997, then got involved in the counter-globalization movements and col-

laborated with activist-artists such as Ne Pas Plier, Bureau d'Études, Makrolab and Hackitectura.

In Chicago he works with a collective of artists and researchers known as The Compass, dedicated to exploring the Midwest Radical Cultural Corridor (www.midwest-compass.org). Over the past fifteen years Holmes has been an essayist writing in English, French, and Spanish for a large number of web venues, artists' publications, exhibition catalogues, magazines and journals. He lectures frequently in museums, universities and self-organized spaces across Europe and the Americas, teaches an art theory course at the University of Illinois at Chicago and has recurrently been a guest lecturer at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

brianholmes.wordpress.com

Continental Drift

through the Pampa



Brian leading a group in El Levante, Argentina



SUELO GUESTS

Their contributions will appear in the residency, symposium and/or booklet.

Débora Rivera

is an environmental engineer and yoga instructor. She is founder of Mi Abasto, a project that promotes urban gardening and consumption of local products in Panama. She is interested and active in topics around food sovereignty and safety, transgenic and organic agriculture.

Jorge Ventocilla

is a biologist and writer from Panama and Peru. He has worked extensively in communication for biological and cultural diversity. He facilitates alternative cultural and artistic events in rural and urban areas, including the nearby islands of Cébaco and Gobernadora. Eternal learner of ecological conservation and defense of territory, he is also a communications associate of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (where he worked for 25 years.)

Emma Sayer

is an ecosystem ecologist. With the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, she focused on the importance of litter fall in tropical forest nutrient cycling; release of carbon by priming effects in tropical forest soils; microbial diversity in agricultural grasslands. She is one of the organisers of 'Sex and Bugs and Rock 'n Roll', which aims to promote ecology at music festivals.

Pauline Desbats

is a Bordeaux - Berlin based artist turned craftswoman. She manages a company that focuses on the use of raw materials (clay, gypsum, lime) "Hyle // Subtle Matters" collaborates since 2008 with architecture agencies, artists, illustrators, photographers, cultural collectives art associations, doctors, musicians, wood engineers, farmers and other ecology activists & communities.



ESTUDIO NUBOSO TEAM

These individuals are part of the planning, facilitation and/or advisory team.

Patrick Dillon

is an architect, planner, designer and owner of SaLo. In 1999 he founded ENSITU, S.A., (ESSA) an architecture and planning firm. Since 2008, Dillon represents the Sociedad Panameña de Arquitectos e Ingenieros (SPIA) in the Board of Planning for the Districts of Soná and Mariato, in the Province of Veraguas, in western Panama. He is also Vice-President and Secretary of the Fundación Colegio de la Tierra and godfather to the Festival Abierto.

Paola Reyes

is a sociologist whose research work focuses on social and economic globalization issues, specifically concerning the adverse effects of multinational corporations on sustainable social development. She currently works in Corporate Social Responsibility issues for an international non-profit organization with Panamanian private sector partners.

Nyasha Warren

is a Panamanian educator with a special interest in curriculum design and informal education theory and practice as it applies to a variety of settings. She is currently a Resource Specialist in the Learning Support Program at the International School of Panama.

Emily Zhukov

is an artist and educator. Born in Minnesota, USA, she has been living and working in Panama since 1994. Emily currently teaches art at Florida State University and the International School of Panama. She exhibits her work both locally and internationally.

Mariana Núñez Haugland

is a creative consultant with over 20 years of experience in the visual communications field. She serves as idea generator and brainstorming facilitator for a wide range of institutions, businesses and NGO's.



Anne Dillon

is a a thoroughly modern woman of the tropics, a sculptor and creator. Anne currently dedicates her talents to Fundación Gunn Hill Panamá, establishing the first creative center for the Arts & Sustainability in Panama, to be known as EcoStudio Las Cruces.

Rosamond Pope-Meyer

is a Panamanian Nutritional Therapist, educator and sustainable farming advocate. She is the founder of bodyandsoil.org, a website dedicated to exploring soil-regenerating food production, nutrient-dense diets, and food system transparency.

Sebastián Icaza

is a sculptor, photographer, ceramic and glass artist, with a multidisciplinary studio background and a strong connection to environmental causes. He has been researching Panamanian clay & ceramics traditions.

Jennifer Spector

is a writer from New York City living and working in Panama since 1998. She founded “Limoncillo” a restaurant which pioneered the local, fresh concept in Panama City between 1999-2010. She is currently studying viticulture and is working on a poetry collection.

Rose Marie Cromwell

is a photographic and social practice artist. She has published and exhibited her artwork internationally, and is also a founder and director of Cambio Creativo, a grassroots educational platform based in Coco Solo, Panama.

Ela Spalding

is a Panamanian cultural mobilizer, performer & visual artist, founder of Estudio Nuboso. She is fascinated by humans’ relationship to their environment, creativity, collectivity and its transformative potential in daily life.



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Fundahrte
Festival Abierto
Fundación Gunn Hill
Cambio Creativo
Summer of Soil

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