

## «CONVERSAS DIVERSAS»

### FOURTH EPISODE: «COLLABORATIONS, ETHICS AND SYSTEMIC VIOLENCE»

KNOWBOTIQ:

CHRISTIAN HUEBLER (CH)

YVONNE WILHELM (YW)

MAPA TEATRO:

XIMENA VARGAS (XV)

ROLF ABDERHALDEN (RA)

**VIDEO:** This kind of passive-aggressive attitude embedded in a collective imaginational gold. This kind of passive-aggressive attitude embedded in a collective imaginational gold. An ignorance militant, aggressive, not to be intimidated. An ignorance that is active, dynamic, that refuses to go quietly. Not at all confined to the illiterate and uneducated. But propagated at the highest levels of the land. Indeed, presenting itself embellishing as knowledge.

**RA:** We were very much looking forward to meet you in Zurich. You both, Christian and Yvonne, [???] spectacle.

**CH:** Yeah, we should have met already this summer. We would have met already in the spectacle. This was the plan I think that our projects somehow would come together.

**XV:** In a parallel world, that happened.

**CH:** Yeah.

**RA:** And we were very much looking forward to meet you because the work you're doing, particularly this work, around goals but connecting Switzerland in

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such a subtle, deep and refined connection. We were really really very much looking forward to have to know more about your work.

**CH:** Our question was, how does this change the mentality of a country? If you are after something from centuries ago, and on the other hand, you don't want to show or talk about it. This must change your body somehow. So, we become also interested in the relationship of the material and the bodies. These bodies who live in this country. And this includes also us. What does the body know about gold? What does my body know, Yvonne's body? Therefore, we developed our project [???] and after long 2 years of research and speaking with all kinds of people here who already did research to develop a kind of psychic refinery of gold. And refining the bodies to be ready to speak about all dimensions of gold, and to speak also about the FARC guerilla, and the narcotraffic in Colombia, and about the mercury which is brought from Switzerland to Colombia. And to speak about racial violence.

**YW:** And how are you dealing with that situation that we as artists want to raise some questions about politics, economics and ecological problems, but we are still in a kind of situation where we have connection mostly of two people of the same living conditions in the same class and the same status as us.

**RA:** This has always been for us a very complex question. How you relate to these places and to the people you meet when you try, when you want to find out, if not answers, but at least more complex reflections on these questions that we are making ourselves. At the beginning, it is always very difficult ethically, very difficult, to know where to stand and how to really meet people in a horizontal level, and the questions are not just benefiting your projects.

**XV:** And I will say, I would like to say something. It's not just the relationship with the people, it's also the relationship with the places, with the environment and I guess...

**RA:** Yeah.

**XV:** ...it's also trying to be part of something bigger as humans.

**VIDEO:** Due to the attraction and obsession the isolated people have with screws and nuts, they constantly dismantle engines found in abandoned cocaine labs in the jungle, or in the machinery left behind by illegal gold extraction. They take apart what is left of fallen light planes and their communication systems, only to take all the screws and nuts they can find.

**RA:** For this project, we met a man, a very interesting guy, in the food market, where he was selling small objects, reproductions, fake objects of gold, but at the same time, this guy, now almost 80 years old, started to tell us a lot of stories about the time he was just searching for the national treasures of gold in different parts of the land in Colombia, in the former, in the ancient cemeteries, Indigenous cemeteries, where he took out all these objects. So, with this man, we started a very strong dialogue and a very close relationship full of what we call the affects of this encounter. And from these affects, we made all this what we call ethno-fiction with this object of the isolated communities in the Amazon area.

**XV:** In the other hand, I would like to say that these Indigenous people, these isolated communities, they're isolated because they at some point had some contact with an occidental, "conquestors", even with Portuguese or Spanish people, and they decide to be out of those systems and go very very inside of the Amazon. So I think it was quite interesting for us trying to think about how to talk about someone that don't want to be seen and don't want to make contact with us.

**YW:** I like very much for your video that you have this long long long time to look at the man who prepares or this fetichizing of the material, and it takes time that you go in, it's a kind of a meditation. And we made with our short video on psychotropics gold, it's also a kind of addressing the perception but in the opposite, with very overwhelming rhythm and artificial objects, but it's the same, it's addressing the way of perception and to make sense for the position that it's not only to telling, it's not only the word who can explain, it's also to address the psychic and activate the brain perception with the topic.

**VIDEO:** The communities are generally at the mercy of government, and of the discretion of multinational companies. To whom the government granted the right to pursue extractive activity in and around the land that the communities generally consider their own? On and on, on and on. Like this for a while.

**XV:** Yeah. To me it's quite interesting how this kind of shapeless object brings the possibility to introduce the body into your work and it's, yeah, it's kind of a network, it's kind of a resume, it's kind of a mycelium, it's something that the nature, that the environment brings us in order to rethink us as a body, as a collective, as a small community and I find this quite interesting. It also makes me think how this relationship is the only thing that has the power to put us in such environments you're exploring.

**CH:** Yeah. And as you said, the world is mad and we must defend our right to be mad as artists, and to be crazy, and it's important for us to become really mad. So that's why we must defend our potential to be across the logics to always become straighter and more professional and faster by creating these defenses to be slow and to hesitate, and to tell very crazy stories which are very complicated which nobody can understand. So, I think this is maybe a prime to fight for.

**XV:** Hm, yeah. And you said something that it's quite important to me, it's productivity. We need to fight productivity, we need to find other ways to be in the world, and do things that are not... maybe don't need to be useful, but they're quite important not only to us as artists, but for the people in general. We need to nourish our souls with art. And it's not related to productivity. And that's quite important to remind when walking with technology, for example. Because technology is so close to productivity and the idea to take the technology and use it for something that it's nothing. Yeah, it makes a lot of sense to me.