

# RETHINKING THE SOUTH

03.03.–05.03.26

[ Symposium ]

## WITH ARTISTS AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS

Rethinking the South addresses the central issues of our time: the consequences of colonial history, life in increasingly densely populated cities and the effects of climate change. The three-day symposium invites participants to develop new perspectives on global interrelationships.

The event marks the conclusion of a three-year thematic residency programme initiated by the foundation KfW Stiftung in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia at Vila Sul (Brazil). Based in the region of Bahia and its strong Afro-diasporic influences, KfW Stiftung and Vila Sul designed a transcontinental residency programme that addressed questions of social coexistence. During the symposium in Frankfurt, artists, thinkers and indigenous activists discuss their work, experiences and research approaches in film and performance contributions as well as moderated discussions. How do different realities of life and forms of knowledge shape our understanding of the world?

With *Deji Akinpelu, Patti Anahory, Karla Claudio, Diego Crux, Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia, Nyancho NwaNri, Odun Orimolade, Lisa C Soto, Sao Sreymao, Huda Tayob*. With contributions from *Xohāhi Pataxó, Poa Pataxó* and *Uine Lopes*.

Accompanying the moderated panel discussions and artistic contributions, individual film works will be presented on all three days, including the documentary „Finding Lagos in Brazil“ by *Deji Akinpelu* and artistic film works by *Sao Sreymao, Karla Claudio* and *Lisa C Soto*.

### MODERATED BY

*Yvette Mutumba*, Co-Founder and Executive Director Contemporary And (C&)

### VILLA 102

Bockenheimer Landstr. 102  
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[www.kfw-stiftung.de](http://www.kfw-stiftung.de)

Individual formats of the programme will be documented and subsequently made available online on the KfW Stiftung's YouTube channel. The event will be held in English. Contributions in Portuguese will be translated simultaneously.

The symposium has been developed and organised by KfW Stiftung in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia.

Tuesday, 03.03.26

## CARTOGRAPHY OF THE OCEAN: MAPPING MEMORY AND KNOWLEDGE

*Patti Anahory, Uine Lopes, Odun Orimolade & Sao Sreymao*

- 15:00 Performance: *Odun Orimolade*  
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- 16:00 In Conversation: *Patti Anahory, Uine Lopes & Sao Sreymao*  
Ecological and Historical Knowledge Systems
- 17:00 Film presentations and get together

Over the course of time, the ocean has both connected and formed the void between continents and peoples. Covering over seventy percent of the planet's surface, the ocean holds much more than just plant and animal life. It is a keeper of memory and knowledge – historically, ecologically and spiritually. The first day of the symposium takes the ocean as a conceptual starting point. What can it tell us about the delicate balance between ecological and economical infrastructures?

### PERFORMANCE

Transdisciplinary artist and researcher Odun Orimolade is fascinated with space. In her practice, she explores human behavioural tendencies, orientation and interaction as mechanisms for navigation. Her performance centres around the theme of water and was further developed for the context of the symposium.

### ECOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

The panel conversation reveals the intertwined ecological and historical knowledge systems in place. Cross-disciplinary architect Patti Anahory and activist and leader of the Bananeiras community on Ilha de Maré, Salvador, Uine Lopes take an island's perspective, considering it as both a refugee and radical margin with complex alliances and dependencies to the environment and its inhabitants. Their conversation centres life around the islands of the Baía de Todos os Santos in Brazil and the role of the indigenous fisher and shellfish gatherers in the Bananeiras community. As an artist, Sao Sreymao explores the tensions between land, sea salt and sound. During her residency she connected her knowledge on Cambodian ecosystems with the landscape of Salvador to explore a transnational relationship between different geographical, ecological and political contexts.

Wednesday, 04.03.26

## THE CITY IS OUR HABITAT? FORMS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

*Huda Tayob, Deji Akinpelu, Lisa C Soto & Karla Claudio*

15:00 In Conversation: *Huda Tayob & Deji Akinpelu*  
Transnational Urban Structures

16:00 Artistic Impulse and Conversation:  
*Lisa C Soto & Karla Claudio*  
Ecologies as Social Infrastructures

17:00 Film presentations and get together

The second day of the symposium moves from the water to the land. From a colonial point of view, the city – in various shapes – is the predominantly assumed form of communal living, the system in which people and communities set up social infrastructures.

### TRANSNATIONAL URBAN STRUCTURES

In light of the social and ecological challenges facing cities worldwide, photographer and documentary filmmaker Deji Akinpelu addresses the city as a habitat, both historically and for the future. Architect and curator Huda Tayob focuses on speculative archives and alternative social concepts. In Salvador, she engaged with local researchers to examine urban uprisings and the history embedded in the materiality of the built environment. In conversation, Akinpelu and Tayob will share their insights on how alternative and speculative approaches can facilitate new architectural structures. A conversation on social change and urban innovation.

### ECOLOGIES AS SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURES

Ecosystems are constantly being marginalised by urban structures. What would change if we recognised ecologies as integral structures or even the predominant part of every habitat? Documentary filmmaker, artist and educator Karla Claudio explores the complex interrelationships between wild plants and human habitats through cultural, medicinal and agricultural connections. Visual artist Lisa C Soto searches for the stories and knowledge revealed by the importation of foreign plants to new environments through trading routes. Using imaginary and real cartography as methods, she follows the transnational and cross-continental history of slavery throughout centuries. For the symposium, Soto will perform a poem accompanied by the screening of her film “Yo, como la gameleira”.

Thursday, 05.03.26

## RETHINKING THE SOUTH – FORMS OF GLOBAL COLLABORATION

*Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia, Nyancho NwaNri, Xohãhi Pataxó & Poa Pataxó*

- 18:00 Performance: *Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia*  
Kpégodoé, Bridging Worlds
- 18:30 In Conversation: Goethe-Institut & KfW Stiftung  
Rethinking the South
- 19:00 Film Screening and Conversation: *Xohãhi Pataxó,*  
*Nyancho NwaNri & Poa Pataxó*  
Forms of Collaboration – Partnerships in local context
- 20:00 Film presentations and get together

At the end of the three-day symposium, enriched by the diverse ideas and research contributions of the previous days, the discussion once again focuses on the conceptualisation of the ‘South’: What and who does it refer to? Is the academic process of ‘rethinking’ even effective in this context? What forms of action are necessary for a change in perspective?

### KPÉGODOÉ, BRIDGING WORLDS

In his work, Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia explores spirituality, materiality and the relationships between ritual, body and territory. His practice is centred on forging connections between people, places and the energies that they embody. Makouvia’s performance invites exchange. Originally conceived during his residency in Salvador, he has further developed it for the symposium.

### RETHINKING THE SOUTH

The foundation KfW Stiftung and the Goethe-Institut discuss concepts of hospitality, residency programmes and institutional forms of international collaboration. How can local structures be successfully developed within the context of a global network? With Friederike Möschel (Head of Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia), Dr. Katharina Ruckteschell-Katte (Head of the department Culture and Education at the Goethe-Institut e.V.) and Daniela Leykam (Programme Manager Arts & Culture, KfW Stiftung)

### FORMS OF COLLABORATION – PARTNERSHIPS IN LOCAL CONTEXT

Xohãhi Pataxó presents an excerpt from his film project “Naô Xohã” (Warrior Spirit) and talks about collaborations between globally active artists and local communities. In conversation with artist, documentarian and researcher Nyancho NwaNri, and Poa Pataxó, they reflect on the processes of local networking in the context of international residency programmes.



PIAÇOCA





## RESIDENCY PROGRAMME

“Rethinking the South - Repensando Sul”  
2023–2025, Vila Sul, Goethe-Institut  
Salvador-Bahia, Brazil

Over a period of three years, the foundation KfW Stiftung, in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia, awarded four scholarships in various disciplines at Villa Sul in Salvador, Brazil. Each year, the focus centred on a central theme: in 2023, everything revolved around the question of “Postcolonial Presence” and the Afro-Brazilian past, present and future. In the following years, the thematic attention first shifted to aspects of urban spaces and urban development (“The Sustainable City,” 2024) and finally to the climate crisis (“Recognised Limits,” 2025).

The international artists and cultural professionals worked in Salvador for two months at a time. They got to know the city and its unique social, political and ecological history. The residency programme took a global look at the shaping of our coexistence, starting from the residency location of Salvador. As Brazil’s first capital and once the most important port of entry for

enslaved people brought from the African continent, the city is a symbolic place of postcolonial history and urban transformation processes: What future are we designing in the face of colonial continuities, urban densification and increasingly noticeable climate impacts? And what role do artistic perspectives play in thinking new ways beyond recognised boundaries?

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Postcolonial Presence (2023): *Diego Crux, Caroline Gueye, Odun Orimolade, Lisa C Soto*

The Sustainable City (2024): *Deji Akinpelu, Patti Anahory, Huda Tayob*

Recognised Limits (2025): *Karla Claudio, Kokou Ferdinand Makouvia, Nyancho NwaNri, Sao Sreymao*

1 Sao Sreymao, The Breath-Through the Sea, 2025, Zwei-Kanal Filminstallation, 10 Min., 10 Sec. © Sao Sreymao  
2 © Goethe-Institut Salvador-Bahia  
3 Lisa C Soto, Yo, como la gameleira, 2023, Film, 4 Min., 42 Sec. © Lisa C Soto