



JMA Matriarchive In Resistance

INES Intersectional Expanded System

Curatorial project by Yohanna M Roa

‘JMA Matriarchive in Resistance’ inaugurates the Spring ‘22 WhiteBox exhibition schedule in New York City. I would be honored were you to agree and participate in this project—in a manner that suits your thinking—particularly in regards to one of the more succinct curatorial items such as "Provoking the Matriarchive". In 1975 Josefina Mena received a letter from her friend Keith addressing the difficulty of presenting and getting acceptance in the London scientific context of a resolved research project about alternative technologies, successfully developed under the tutelage of the then new—post dictatorship— Portuguese socialist government following the Carnation Revolution. Thus, allow me to invite you to read the attached materiel and if it excites your whims, please respond to this letter from the very present; taking into account your own personal life context, express your point of view. E-mail me your answer, BEFORE March 13, 2022 in a Word file or if preferred, mail a handwritten 8.5” by 11” letter to: WhiteBox, 9 Avenue B, New York, NY 10009. Text should contain between 575 and 1700 words. Your response will be included digitally or graphically, as you prefer, forming part of the exhibition alongside the original letter (see attachment).

For more information, visit Matriarchive in Resistance. Below, find some general information and kindly, let me know asap if it piques your curiosity enough to decide to participate. With any inquiries, feel free to write me back.

Sincerely,

Yohanna M Roa, Curator

General Information

The matriarchive is a place where memories and bodies can become undisciplined and function as an organic network and as a matrix capable of producing and developing relationships and experiences. Through the manipulation of art, memory is transformed into flesh, body and a living experience. JMA Matriarchive in Resistance is an exhibition that focuses on the re-materialization of memories that converge in the archive created by architect, professor Josefina

Mena Abraham, in collaboration with a wide group of artists and social activists working jointly, back in the day, in England, Portugal, South America and Africa. The project for the WhiteBox exhibition is an intersectional ‘dispositif’—a sort of an anthropotechnical scheme—where the artists, the matriarchive and the community intersect in the present tense and time embodying memories and stories that help reveal the processes of resistance against social injustices, in particular the exclusion of the non-masculine, heteronormed. In this exhibition, the bodies become a sieve that from the present sifts through, builds on, and constitutes the past allowing for expanding the use of memory in the writing processes of history.

The JMA is a documentary collection preserved over five decades by the Mexican architect of Lebanese origin, Josefina Mena Abraham. Between 1967 and 1976 she supported various social movements in England, Portugal, Africa and South America. Upon graduating in 1965 as an architect from the Tecnológico de Monterrey University, she traveled to Paris to study at the Sorbonne (under Claude Lévi-Strauss). In 1967 she moved to London and lived there until mid-1974, during which time she made sporadic trips to Ireland, various places in Europe and South America. Inspired by the Socialist Carnation Revolution ending Salazar’s 48 years of brutal dictatorship, in late 1974 she moved to Portugal where she worked for two years. When the Portuguese colonies gained independence, she traveled to Cape Verde to work for six months, finally returning to Mexico in December of the same year. During this period, she amassed and kept the 1750 documents that constitute the archive: photographs, super 8, audiovisuals composed of slides and audios on magnetic tapes, cassettes, posters, newspaper clippings, publications, acetates, flyers, posters, architectural plans, letters, minutes, a radio transmitter, a singular skirt, and a great number of collages.

Her pioneering work was transdisciplinary linking art and architecture, science and community work. In the many projects developed during that incisive period of time, a vast group of collaborators included, among others, Gustav Metzger, Cecilia Vicuña, Kowen Wesing, Maurice Frederick Wilkins (1962 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine) and the Alternative Technologies Group AKA Radical Technologies.



WHITEBOX 

JMA Matriarchive In Resistance

Letter to JMA from Keith.

Name: Carta a JMA por Keith. Letter to JMA by Keith

Autor: Keith

Date: 1975

Related countries: Portugal, England.

Language: English

Dim: 21,5cmX30cm

pages: 2

Print Type: Typewriter. / Manuscript.

Observations: a) COWLING & MACBRIDE 21 Flodden Road Camberwell
London SE5 9LH (01) 274 3045.

b) Partners: K.A. Cowling AA Dipl., S.F.S.H. Mac Bride AA
Dipl. VAT N° 233 9052 75.

c) The sender's name is handwritten with permanent blue marker.

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COWLING & MACBRIDE 21 Flodden Road Camberwell London SE5 9LH (01) 274 3045

Dear Josefina,

In case you have not heard already we are all safely back in Ingly and having told the story of our three weeks in Portugal perhaps a hundred times we are getting down to work on our return visit.

I scribbled away in my notebook all the way home hoping that I might be able to find an outlet for a couple of articles somewhere on the basis of what we have learned about the portuguese situation (mostly from you) but I am already finding that I can't fit today's news from Famalicao into the theoretical framework that I thought I had developed..... What the fuck is happening? It's impossible to make any sense out of the reports in the bourgeois press, and left wing publications in Britain and America (and probably everywhere else as well) are crying out for some real information. So, while I fully realise that your triple personality life probably leaves you little time for such niceties as letter writing, a few words of explanation of current events would be most gratefully received.

England is in the throws of an unprecedented heat wave at the moment, and it must be pretty well as hot here as it is in Lisbon. When we arrived back we found that Bruce had been working on a solar collector here at the church and its impressive output of hot water has made us realise that the collectors that we built in the bairro were probably not very efficient. Bruce's flat plat is about twice the size of the one we made and is built from two radiator panels. It has an output of about a dozen really generous showers a day and the water is too hot to put your hand under without first mixing in some cold.

I'm ashamed to say that we are at least partly responsible for the steady stream of revolutionary tourists heading in your direction. Apparently while we were away your address was given to Chris Pallis, a doctor and founder of the political tendency to which I used to belong (Solidarity). Now I find that Allan Cambell, draft resister, ~~and~~ computer freak and apparently an old friend of yours is intending to head for Lisbon. Also Helen Sachs, south african ex AA student who claims to know you is on her way. We are warning all these people that you lead a pretty busy life and not to expect too much so if any (or all) of them get to be a drag you could legitimately tell them

PTO

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to piss off.

What else now? Graham sends his love and says could we have a print of the drawings when you get time. Bob says sorry but we seem to have brought the remains of Lucas' plumbing fittings back with us. Also, he has the thirty pounds he borrowed off you and if you would like it straight away could you let us know and we will send it. Otherwise we will hold on to it until we return or you come here.

Sorry about the officious headed notepaper, its all I can find around the place at present.

Anyway best wishes for now and I hope we will see you again soon.

Meantime.. Love Keith

JMA Matrialhive. 0007-Carta