

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics presents Adelita Husni Bey's **These Conditions**, an exhibition and pedagogical film set at the Brooklyn Army Terminal. As the culmination of Husni Bey's research as a

2020–2022 Vera List Center Fellow into the current pandemic and its aftermath from a larger, historical and artistic framework, this project includes the artist's first site-specific and most ambitious pedagogical environment.

February 8–April 8, 2022

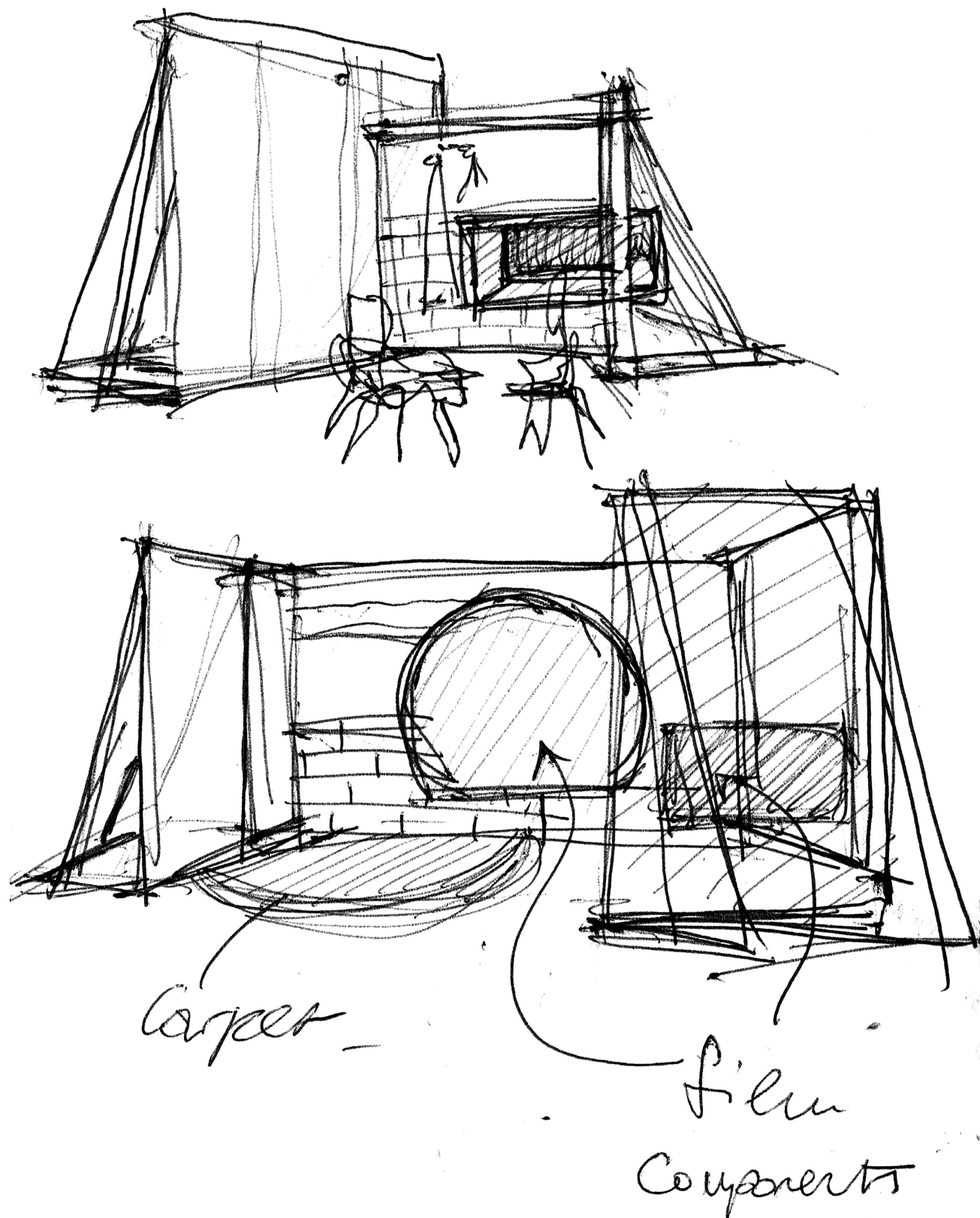
These Conditions

Adelita Husni Bey

VERA LIST CENTER *for* ART *and* POLITICS
BROOKLYN ARMY TERMINAL

The exhibition takes cues from historical pandemic protocols, such as recent government guidelines that define necessary workers, the sixteenth-century ***Epidemiologia Sive Tractatus de Peste*** for the containment of the plague in Alghero/Sardinia, and mutual aid protocols employed at the height of the AIDS crisis. **These Conditions** hosts a group of individuals who have had to work in person during the pandemic to reflect on their experience and develop characters, scenes, and performative sketches

that express the relationship between pandemics and social change. Through a weekly workshop held over the course of two months, a core group of participants is led sequentially through three distinct spaces in an ad hoc structure: an empty room with the sonic features of a hospital, a waiting room, and a domestic space. A hybrid between a pedagogical space and a film set, the structure is altered and activated through the workshop's discursive and movement-based activities.



Using techniques borrowed from autodrama, radical theater methodologies, and political education, the workshop explores how historical pandemics are often followed by periods of unrest that catalyze drastic changes, such as the **Peasants' Revolt of 1381** in England, the **gravedigger rebellion in Italy** in 1631, and the current wave of strikes across the United States. Within the pedagogical film set, a selection of films and posters from **DIVA TV** and **ACT UP** showcase the artistic and activist responses to the ongoing AIDS crisis. **The Annex at the Brooklyn Army Terminal**, which was built during the **1918 Flu Pandemic** as a military supply base and is today a major manufacturing hub as well as a **COVID testing and vaccination site**, serves as the pedagogical set's entry point into both current and historical pandemics. Drawing poetic resonances between these events and spaces, the exhibition evokes historical insurrections to express their relationship to the ongoing social transformations resulting from our present conditions.

Part of the workshop will be recorded and edited into a short experimental film, which will premiere at the **Vera List Center at The New School** in fall 2022 before traveling as a film installation to **Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea** (Turin, Italy). Two works developed last year are also on view: **On Necessary Work** (2021) and **Cronaca del Tempo Ripetuto (A chronicle of histories repeating)**, 2021).

The public study group **On Necessary Work** accompanies the exhibition. It focuses on the concept of "necessary work" as it undergirds and normalizes capitalist production in crisis, following a Marxist feminist understanding of reproductive labor, and is presented in partnership with the **Victorian College of the Arts at The University of Melbourne**. **School of Tomorrow: From the Open Plan to the Tele-classroom**, part of the public program held within the pedagogical environment—and seminar ten of the **Vera List Center's As for Protocols** series—is convened on **March 21** with **Video School**, a roving pedagogical platform. Additional public programs are announced on the **Vera List Center** website, veralistcenter.org.

***On Necessary Work*, 2021**

HD video, Zoom, and mobile phone footage, 32:44 min

Workshop framework: Adelita Husni Bey

Workshop participants and footage: Cady Chaplin, Ninna Ingeborg Christiansen, Falguni Dave, Jannie Elisabeth Asta Hvilsted, Petra Poulsen, Kristen Perez, Consuelo Vargas, Rikke Wiwe

1st camera: Christina Chalmers

2nd camera: Søs Bech Ladefoged

Editing: Adelita Husni Bey

Original compositions and percussion: Timothy Daisy

Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Laveronica

Commissioned by Kunsten, Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg, Denmark



Adelita Husni Bey, ***On Necessary Work*** (2021), video stills

Over six weeks in the spring of 2021, **Husni Bey** led a group of Danish and US unionized healthcare workers through an online film workshop centered around their experience of worsening labor conditions, masked and mythologized as a sacrifice, during the pandemic. The healthcare workers were asked to film their workplaces, their scrubs and work gear, and to arrange and balance

objects significant to them, following specific protocols intended to develop conversations. The resulting film, ***On Necessary Work***, was entirely shot on Zoom, through the healthcare workers' perspectives, highlighting their role in sustaining life within a system of crushing exploitation, while finding resolve in their organizing efforts and each other.

Cronaca del Tempo Ripetuto, 2021

Immersive sound installation, 5.1 audio, 38 min

Workshop framework and editing: Adelita Husni Bey

Production manager: Martina Marolda

Mixdown: Giulio Iozzi

Instrumental improvisation: Simone Dei, Asia

Guarguaglini, Gabriele Gazzei, Alessandro Garaffi,

Alessio Torriti, Caterina Guarguaglini, Gabriele

Signorini, Francesco Rosetti and Carla D'Autilia

(OCRA, Orchestra da Camera di Radicondoli)

Voices: Rosella Pristerà, Francesca Delogu,

Moreno Montomoli, Rosalba Calò, Samira Patrizia

Formisano (Associazione Culturale Teatrale Rabèl)

Courtesy of the artist and Galleria Laveronica.

Cronaca del Tempo Ripetuto (A chronicle of histories repeating, 2021) was produced in the village of Radicondoli in Tuscany on the occasion of **Una Boccata d'Arte 2021**, a project created by the **Elpis Foundation** in collaboration with **Galleria Continua**.

Cronaca del Tempo Ripetuto is a 5.1 Dolby surround sound piece, developed between May and June 2021 through a workshop with **OCRA (Chamber Orchestra of Radicondoli, Tuscany)**, a self-run collective of young musicians without a conductor. The workshop, grounded

in the work of composer **Pauline Oliveros** and sound art collective **Ultra-red**, alternated instrument-based improvisational exercises with reflections on the experience of the pandemic and the role of sound. The group recorded live “sound-maps” of their town as well as images drawn from archival research on the plague, such as children playing on rooftops after access to the streets was barred. **Rabèl**, a local theater company, voiced contemporary lockdown protocols, which the groups were subjected to, and local plague protocols dating from 1631.

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accompanies the piece and includes transcriptions of the voices of the participants, as well as information on the particular exercises used to structure the improvisations, operating as a guide for the five movements.

Adelita Husni Bey's ***These Conditions*** is a 2020–2022 Vera List Center Fellowship-commissioned project and has been supported through research assistance, production grants, and curatorial support by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics as part of its ***As for Protocols*** focus theme. It is curated by **Eriola Pira** and **Carin Kuoni** with curatorial assistance by **Camila Palomino**. The project is also supported by the **Italian Council** (10th edition, 2021), a program to promote Italian contemporary art in the world by the **Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture**. Additional support has been provided by the **Brooklyn Army Terminal**

(New York City Economic Development Corporation). Special thanks to **Catherine Gund, DIVA TV, and ACT UP**.

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Design: Other Means

Fabrication and installation: Silovsky Studios LLC

Audio-visual: A-Sections

Architecture: Ari Group Inc

Editing: Re'al Christian and Eriola Pira

Set design assistant: Nora Treatbaby

Research assistant: Aryana Elizabeth Ghazi Hessami

Workshop and film assistant: Ash Moniz

Adelita Husni Bey is an artist and pedagogue invested in anarcho-collectivism, theater, and critical legal studies. She organizes workshops and produces publications, broadcasts, and exhibition work using non-competitive pedagogical models through the framework of contemporary art. Involving activists, architects, jurists, schoolchildren, spoken-word poets, actors, urbanists, physical therapists, students, and teachers, her work consists of making sites in which to practice collectively. Her work was part of the Italian pavilion at the **57th Venice Biennale**, Venice, 2017, and her most recent solo exhibition was **Maktspill**, Kunsthall Bergen, 2020. She has participated in **Trainings for the Not Yet**, BAK, Utrecht, 2020, **Being: New Photography 2018**, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2018; **Dreamlands**, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2016; **The Eighth Climate**, 11th Gwangju Biennale, 2015; **Really Useful Knowledge**, Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid, 2014. She is a **2020–2022 Vera List Center Fellow**.

The **Brooklyn Army Terminal** is the premier affordable hub for modern industrial businesses, entrepreneurs, and working families in NYC. Located on the Sunset Park waterfront in Brooklyn, **BAT** provides manufacturers with the tools and space they need to grow and succeed. The **Brooklyn Army Terminal** is home to over 100 companies in a wide array of industries, from precision manufacturing to eco-friendly furniture design, art studios, and chocolatiers.

The **Vera List Center for Art and Politics** is a research center and a public forum for art, culture, and politics. It was established at **The New School** in 1992—a time of rousing debates about freedom of speech, identity politics, and society's investment in the arts. A pioneer in the field, the center is a nonprofit that serves a critical mission: to foster a vibrant and diverse community of artists, scholars, and policymakers who take creative, intellectual, and political risks to bring about positive change.

Vera List Center Fellowships support the development and presentation of ambitious art and research projects by national and international emerging artists, writers, scholars, and activists. Since 1994, the **VLC Fellowship program** has supported outstanding individuals at key moments in their early- and mid-careers, especially those who are members of underrepresented communities in the art world and those who would otherwise struggle to find support because of the experimental, political, and/or research-intensive nature of their work. The appointments provide the **VLC Fellows** with the opportunity to draw from the curatorial, academic, and professional resources of the **Vera List Center** and **The New School**. As commissions, the resulting fellowship projects are presented to the public through the **Vera List Center's** interdisciplinary public programs and institutional networks.

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**Exhibition open to the public:
Saturdays and Sundays, 12–6 pm**

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