

# Beatriz Cortez: Voids, Portals, and Moving Land



September 20, 2023  
7:00–8:00pm

The New School, Alvin Johnson/J.M. Kaplan Hall  
66 West 12th St, Room 404  
Co-presented by Parsons Fine Arts and the  
Vera List Center for Art and Politics

# Program

In this lecture, 2022–2024 Borderlands Fellow Beatriz Cortez charts the different ways in which her monumental sculpture *Ilopango, the Volcano that Left* counters ideas about permanence, portals, and multiple temporalities.

Currently on view at Storm King Art Center, the exhibition *Beatriz Cortez: The Volcano That Left* brings together new and recent large-scale sculptures by the El Salvador-born (1970), Los Angeles-based artist. Central to the exhibition is *Ilopango, the Volcano that Left* (2023), the speculative reconstruction of an ancient volcano that erupted in the sixth century C.E. in what is now El Salvador. Cortez considers the ash deposited by the eruption, an event known as Tierra Blanca Joven, as part of the sacred Mayan underworld. The artist imagines how the eruption's resulting migratory patterns reverberate across time, drawing connection to events such as the movement of the Maya or her own migration amid the Salvadoran Civil War in 1989, a catastrophe that displaced a million people. The volcano will be traveling up the Hudson River to EMPAC–Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute from October 27 through 29. For more information on the volcano's route and how to view its journey, please visit EMPAC's website at [www.empac.rpi.edu](http://www.empac.rpi.edu).

For the Parsons Fine Arts Visiting Artist Lecture, the artist engages with the conceptual content carried by movement and impermanence. In particular, Cortez discusses her plans for the journey of her sculpture on the Hudson River, a voyage across water, land, time, and tides.

# Artist Biography

Beatriz Cortez is a multidisciplinary artist based in Los Angeles and Davis, California. Her work explores simultaneity, life in different temporalities and versions of modernity, the untimely, and speculative imaginaries of the future. She has had numerous solo exhibitions and has participated in group exhibitions nationally and internationally. She has received numerous awards, including the Latinx Artist Fellowship (2023); California Studio Manetti Shrem Artist Residency at UC Davis (2022); Longenecker-Roth Artist Residency at UCSD (2021); Artadia Los Angeles Award (2020); Frieze LIFEWTR Inaugural Sculpture Prize (2019); Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant (2018); and California Community Foundation Fellowship for Visual Artists (2016), among others. Cortez holds an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts, and a doctorate from Arizona State University. She is faculty in the Studio Art Program at UC Davis.

Beatriz Cortez is a 2022–2024 Borderlands Fellow as part of the Vera List Center’s Focus Theme cycle *Correction*\*.

# About

Parsons Fine Arts offers an exciting immersion in the world of contemporary art. Our goal is to familiarize students with the means, the context and the interpretation of art through intensive instruction in the manifold techniques that contemporary creators have at their disposal.

The Parsons Fine Arts Visiting Artist Lecture (VAL) series invites prominent national and international contemporary artists to campus to present their practices and ideas. Artists from different backgrounds, generations and career trajectories share their work in a public lecture and engage with students' practices through one-on-one studio visits or workshops. The series offers a unique opportunity for students to gain insight from visiting artists, and pose questions regarding their process, research, challenges and ideas that emerge when a public encounters their work. Through these engagements, VAL facilitates a rigorous contemplation of each visiting artist's practice and the importance of their work to the field. The series exposes students to a range of approaches to the artists' lecture as they consider their own public presentations in the future.

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is a non-profit research center at The New School in New York. Through its dynamic interdisciplinary programs, conferences, artist fellowships, residencies, publications, and exhibitions, and publications, the VLC imagines and supports new forms of politically engaged art, research, public scholarship, and community around the world.

The 2022–2024 Vera List Center Focus Theme *Correction\** and the programs, fellowship projects, publications, and exhibitions dedicated to it explore the tension, discomfort, potential, and sociopolitical implications of “correction.”

For more information about our work, visit [www.veralistcenter.org](http://www.veralistcenter.org) where you can also find additional information, resource guides, and documentation of all events.

*Ilopango, the Volcano that Left* is co-commissioned by Storm King Art Center, EMPAC–Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School.

This Parsons Visiting Artist Lecture Series is part of the public programming for the commission and co-organized by Parsons Fine Arts and the Vera List Center. The sculpture was created in part during the artist's residency at Atelier Calder, Saché, France.

## VERA LIST CENTER FELLOWSHIPS

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 Borderlands Fellowship is a joint initiative of the Center for Imagination in the Borderlands (CIB) at Arizona State University and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics (VLC) at The New School. The Borderland Fellowships are biennial fellowships for two individual artists/scholars/thinkers that pair the distinct institutional resources of CIB in Tempe, Arizona, and the VLC in New York City in order to support research projects that help create communities across different geographical, cultural, and political landscapes engaging both sites. The fellowships focus on the relevance of place, thus seeking to support and apply an Indigenous lens to reflect on questions of borderlands.

## VERA LIST CENTER FELLOWS

2022–2024	2018–2020	2007–2008	2000
Matti Aikio	dean erdmann	Marjetica Potrč	Wendy T. Ewald
Carmen Amengual	Helene Kazan		Danny Hoch
Aleksei Borisionok	2015–2017	2006–2007	Olu Oguibe
Beatriz Cortez	Lawrence Abu Hamdan	Andrea Geyer	
Fox Maxy	Casey Gollan	Sharon Hayes	1999
Omar Mismar	& Victoria Sobel	Ashley Hunt	Susan Hapgood
Larissa Nez		Katya Sander	Kobena Mercer
Anna Martine Whitehead	2013–2015	David Thorne	Edward Rothstein
	Jill Magid	2004–2005	Elisabeth Sussman
	Alexander Provan	Walid Raad	
2020–2022		2002	1997–1998
Carolina Caycedo	2011–2013	Jonathan Weinberg	Lorraine O’Grady
Etcétera	Bouchra Khalili		
Maria Hupfield	Joshua Simon		1997
Adelita Husni Bey		2001	Silvana Paternostro
Rasheedah Phillips/Black Quantum Futurism	2009–2011	Margarita Gutman	
	Robert Sember	Wendy Perron	1995
	Lin + Lam	Leslie Prosterman	Sarah Rothenberg
			1993
			Maurice Berger

# Notes

All programs and events of the Vera List Center are free for all to attend, physically and virtually. Public programs are recorded and shared on our website, Vimeo page, and The New School YouTube page. Our online events feature automated captions and ASL (American Sign Language) interpretation.

If you have specific accommodation questions or needs for future programs, please contact us at least five days prior to the program at [vlc@newschool.edu](mailto:vlc@newschool.edu).

The Fall 2023 programs of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics are generously supported by members of the Vera List Center Board, members of Vera's List, other individual donors, and the following institutional donors:

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts  
The Boris Lurie Art Foundation and the Schaina and  
Josephina Lurje Memorial Foundation  
The Dayton Foundation  
The Ford Foundation  
The Kettering Fund  
Mellon Foundation  
The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation  
and Pryor Cashman LLP.

We also acknowledge the support of The New School, our academic home.

For video documentation of this lecture, visit [www.veralistcenter.org](http://www.veralistcenter.org) where you can also find additional information, resource guides, and documentation of all events.

## UPCOMING

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### BOOK LAUNCH

## Breaking Protocol

Sunday, October 8, 2023, 3–4:30 pm EDT  
Artbook @ MoMA PS1

The launch of 2020–2022 VLC Borderlands Fellow Maria Hupfield’s artist book *Breaking Protocol* (co-published by Inventory Press and the VLC) reunites Hupfield with poet Natalie Diaz in a joint performance that builds on their longstanding artistic exchange. They are joined in dialogue by Thomas (T.) Lax.

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### FORUM

## VLC Forum 2023: Correction\*

October 12–14, 2023  
Online and in person at The New School

The VLC Forum 2023 celebrates the Aboriginal urban artist collective proppaNOW, recipient of the Vera List Center’s 2022–2024 Jane Lombard Prize for Art and Social Justice, as well as the Jane Lombard Fellows, finalists for the prize: the Pan-African Another Roadmap Africa Cluster (ARAC), Colectivo Cherani from Mexico, KUNCI Study Forum & Collective from Indonesia, and from Palestine Khalil Rabah.

farid rakun of the Jakarta-based collective ruangrupa and knowledge-sharing platform Gudskul, delivers the keynote lecture. Other speakers include Natalie Ball, Fawz Kabra, M. Carmen Lane, Wanda Nanibush, Alan Michelson, Pablo José Ramírez, Sarah Rifky, and more. Over the course of three days, through an exhibition, workshops, conversations, and a community dinner and karaoke party with DJ set by ARAC member Christian Nyampeta, the Forum convenes artists and collectives working in community and advancing social justice across the world through collaborative practices. For the full schedule, visit [www.veralistcenter.org](http://www.veralistcenter.org).

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### EXHIBITION

## proppaNOW: There Goes the Neighbourhood!

October 9–November 5, 2023  
Aronson Galleries, Parsons School of Design, Sheila C. Johnson Design Center  
Opening reception + exhibition walkthrough: 5:30–6:30 pm EDT, October 13, 2023

*proppaNOW: There Goes the Neighbourhood!*, an exhibition and screening program featuring members Vernon Ah Kee, Tony Albert, Richard Bell, Megan Cope, Jennifer Herd, the late Laurie Nilsen, and Warraba Weatherall, anchors the VLC Forum and marks the first institutional presentation of the collective in the Western hemisphere, twenty years after their founding in Brisbane, Australia. The exhibition highlights their unwavering commitment to pushing for greater visibility for Aboriginal struggles and rights.

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