

Rocio Marano

:

MATRIA  
Motherland

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# Rocio Marano

## MATRIA Motherland

Choreography, Dance, Music:

ROCIO MARANO

Costume:

FEDERICO LUZ

Dance, Music:

ÁNGELA MUÑOZ

Platforms:

SANTIAGO DOLIJAN

Mentors:

ANA KAVALIS (Berlin)  
residency at Out of the Box  
AMANDA PIÑA (Vienna)  
residency at nadalokal  
MICHELLE MOURA (Berlin)

*Matria* imagines a history that is not represented in colonial, hegemonic narratives. In an exploration of Malambo, the resistance dance of the gauchos, known today in Argentina mainly as a solo competition between men, the performance dismantles the disciplinary and patriarchal aspect of the dance and moves towards a dance of rebellion. In the crossover between traditional and contemporary dance, the standard of Western aesthetics is challenged to create space for other dance ontologies.

*Matria* is created within the concept of decolonial aestheSis that proposes a shift of attention toward the senses, meanings and epistemologies of Latin America and the Global South, which have been oppressed and made invisible by the hegemonic standards imposed by modernity/coloniality in its constant attempt to monopolize and homogenize culture and knowledge.

Dedicated to the resistance of the Global South,  
especially the region of Wallmapu.

ÁNGELA MUÑOZ MARTÍNEZ is a Spanish dancer and performer based in Berlin. After completing her classical dance studies at the conservatory of Seville, she graduated with a BA Honors in Contemporary Dance from The Place, London Contemporary Dance School. During her studies of the MA Performing Practice and Visual Culture (University of Castilla La Mancha/Museo Reina Sofía), she researched the act of listening and developed work based on the technique of Deep Listening in relation to movement. Since then, she has been involved in interdisciplinary artworks with artists such as Esthel Vogrig in Mexico, Daria Fain in New York, Inmaculada Jiménez in Spain, and Jule Flierl and Alexandre Achour in Germany, and has participated as a guest artist with Damaged Goods /Meg Stuart and Claire Vivianne Sobottke. She is also a self-taught musician and an active member of the music groups Nunofyrbeeswax, Hypnodrone Ensemble, and Vrouw!. She has recorded and toured extensively through Europe and the US.

ROCIO MARANO, born and raised in Mar del Plata, Argentina has been living in Berlin since 2014. She trained in physical theatre, martial arts and contemporary dance via an independent trajectory. Parallel to her training, she studied at the Escola Superior d'Art i Disseny de las Islas Baleares, Spain. Later she continued her studies at Area Centro de Dansa y Creació Barcelona, and she recently graduated from the Inter-University Dance Centre HZT in Berlin with an MA in Choreography. During the pandemic, she completed a distance learning diploma in Ecofeminism at the University of Buenos Aires. Rocio Marano is attracted by the movement that is generated in the popular terrain of the collective and whose norms extend beyond contemporary dance, hence her exploration of Krump, Malambo, Contact Improvisation and yawning, where the oppression of bodies is transmuted into dance and a kinesic exchange takes place between the conscious and the unconscious. She has worked with Tino Sehgal, Christopher Winkler, Juha Marsalo, Barbara Berti, Lea Kieffer, among others. She received the danceweb grant in 2016 under the mentorship of Tino Sehgal.

# MATRIA

By Rocio Marano

No pasa inadvertido  
colonizado está el ser  
hay que ver para creer  
que más allá de la historia  
y a pesar de la memoria  
la barbarie se hace ver

*It does not go unnoticed  
colonised is the being  
you have to see to believe  
that beyond history  
and in spite of memory  
barbarism makes itself seen*

Y cada cual a su paso  
mostrando desobediencia  
con muchísima paciencia  
amarra sabiduría  
que pa' arte y curaduría  
no hace falta saber ciencia

*And each one at their own pace  
shows disobedience  
and with much patience  
collects wisdom  
that for art and curatorship  
no science is needed*

Limita bien su prudencia  
porque al trote ella teje  
la separación no protege  
las divisiones no animan  
solo la vida escatiman  
y así nos sacan de eje

*She limits her prudence well  
because at a trot she weaves  
separation does not protect  
divisions do not encourage  
they narrow down life  
and throw us out of axis*

En las llanuras encuentras  
al payador perseguido  
que es un gaucho y cautivo  
usa un estilo sureño  
aunque parece pequeño  
le saca a todo partido

*On the plains you find  
the persecuted payador  
who is a gaucho and captive  
he wears a southern style  
though he looks small  
he makes the most of everything*

sin deseo reprimido  
y con un paso bien lento  
yo te pido desde adentro  
que seas audiencia bien culta  
mira el arte de mi vulva  
escucha bien el lamento

*without repressed desire  
and with a very slow step  
I ask you from within  
to be a well educated audience  
look at the art of my vulva  
listen to this lament*

Si te sentís excluido  
aún no conoces los ritmos  
conoces el gran abismo  
entre los grupos sociales  
ve a conocer matriarcales  
deja neoliberalismo

*if you feel excluded  
and you don't know the rhythms  
you still know the great gulf  
between social groups  
go and meet matriarchal  
leave neo-liberalism behind*

Gaucho bastardo mestizo  
hecho de lucha y de abajo  
a ver si lo sacan de cuajo  
por no ser civilizado  
con acento a través  
eso es lo que ami me atrajo

*Gaucho, bastard, mestizo  
made of struggle and from below  
let's see if they take him out by the scruff of the neck  
for not being a civilised man  
with an accent  
that's what attracted me*

MATRIA

Aunque su nombre detesta  
el conocimiento es salvaje  
el progreso lleva traje  
con el fin de dominar  
habrá que aprender a bailar  
antes tomarse ese viaje

*although his name is detested  
knowledge is wild  
progress wears a suit  
in order to dominate  
We will have to learn to dance  
before taking that journey*

este miedo es asfixiante  
el extractivismo es violento  
no sean tan angurriento  
que las montañas perduren  
blancos porfa maduren  
dejen ya este momento

*this fear is suffocating  
the extractivism is violent  
don't be so greedy  
let the mountains endure  
whites please grow up  
let this moment go*

colectividad en la tierra  
de la vida no nos priven  
las especies conviven  
y se sumen a la fiesta  
dejen legalidad impuesta  
que los cuerpos se activen

*collectivity on earth  
do not deprive us of life  
the species live together  
and join the party  
leave the imposed legality  
the bodies become active*

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las diferencias son claras  
la manifestación es aguda  
con una presencia bien ruda  
un tranquilo semblante  
y aunque su paso es errante  
su potencia desnuda

*the differences are clear  
the manifestation is sharp  
with a very rough presence  
a calm countenance  
and although his pace is wandering  
he bares his power*

la economía se quiebra  
los volcanes emanan  
llamas ardientes de lava  
en océanos y mares  
y plástico a muchares  
la producción nos esclava

*the economy cracks  
volcanoes emanate  
fiery flames of lava  
in oceans and seas  
and plastic by the thousands  
production enslaves us*

ROCIO MARANO

Civilización ésta vean  
a dónde nos ha llevado  
bolsa de supermercado  
y un iphone en el bolsillo  
no conocemos el brillo  
del agua en el verde prado

*Look at this civilisation  
where it has led us  
grocery bag  
and an iphone in our pocket  
we don't know the sparkle  
of water in the green meadow*

# From Patria to Matria

By Rocio Marano  
and Rodrigo Garcia Alves

The space-time of *Matria* represents a crisis of heteropatriarchal systems and their binaries, and it proposes the use of multiple terms and states. To connect with *Matria* we have to rely on the 'partnership of memory' to quote the Chilean scholar Natalia Toledo Jofré. This is a space that comprises personal and collective memory at the same time, a mixed memory.

*Matria* is an imagined, alternative space where the marginalized are sheltered and that connects with the vast plains of the Pampas, the solitude of the desert, the climate and life of the territories of Pulmapu (now known as the national states of Argentina and Chile). It invites the audience to participate in a series of human and non-human embodiments belonging to these lands.

The gauchos are invoked by this work as the icon par excellence of Argentine culture. These highly skilled horsemen represent a heroic figure for the regions in which they live and are celebrated in folklore and national literature. But it has not always been like this. Gauchos have been vilified, colonised and even after being glorified are still referred to as an inferior group in society. *Matria* invokes the gauchos, not through a literal representation, but by projecting them into a future where the tradition is not subjugated to a peripheral and minor narrative. A translation of this culture is expanded into Matria's imagined collective time-space. There is as much tradition as future there.

Malambo, with its music and dance, supports this choreographic research that through the presence of the performers opens up the social frontiers of this artistic expression for the different bodies that can perform it today. Rocio Marano and Angela Muñoz occupy Malambo's spaces of resistance and appropriate its codes to share its percussive power through the Zapateos and the beats of the Bombo Legüero and Boleadoras.

*Matria* works with repetition and rhythm, and puts its spectators in a state of trance. The proposed collective body leaves a mist of dust behind, intoxicating our vision. We are absorbed by silhouettes, horns, ponytails and hooves; and a more-than-human world opens up to us with bones and ancestry exposed. One can see hybrids of humans and horses, amazons, dance contestants, devilish figures, cowboys and pop artists who could be playing in a music video. The performance invites us, through its circularity, rhythmicity and narratives of resistance, to question our patriarchal imaginary and revisit notions of tradition and contemporaneity by building on an anti-colonial manifesto with intentions that seek to experiment with a sustainable future.

*Matria* invites the folkloric into the contemporary art context without assuming a hierarchy between them. It approaches the folkloric by recognizing the power it has far away from theaters and galleries and trusting its authority to stir in decoloniality in the European artistic context.

The piece brings a future in itself, through a choreography that intends to challenge, not only the colonial past, but the fated future of modern ideals. The time proposed by *Matria* belongs to a cosmology alien to the Western dominant world. Past, present and future coexist in the same instant.

It is a dance of rebellion that addresses the neo-colonialist extractivism that is mining the lands to its guts. The embodiments of the land by the gauchos and Malambo have always shared an intrinsic fight, resisting domination. *Matria* aims to carry out this struggle by addressing the current land exploitation that causes unprecedented ecocide and the impact that imperialist power continues to have on people living on the peripheries of cities in the Global South.

MATRIA

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ROCIO MARANO

## ARTISTIC ELEMENTS OF MALAMBO

**RHYTHM:** In ancestral cultures, the collective beating of the feet on the ground reveals the interconnection of the community with the earth. However, by exploring the sound-body dimension of Malambo practices, other elements emerge: the ways of using rhythmic cells, the methods of transmitting and learning the Zapateo, Bombo Legüero and Boleadoras or the ways of interpreting certain "historical events" recovered in their choreographic narratives. The drumsticks evoke the sound of a waterfall in crescendo. It is an ancestral melody recalling the cold Argentinian nights spent around a warming fire.

**TIMBRE:** The Malambo dancers have a remarkable awareness of the timbral intention of the Zapateos, present not only in the onomatopoeias that they select to account for the differences they wish to achieve in their rhythmic sequences, but also in the parts of the foot that they use differently for this purpose: toe, heel, sole, etc. It is important to point out that the timbre aspect even makes it possible to endow the rhythmic sequences of the Mudanzas with a certain melody. This reference to the timbral aspect as a structural part of the musical construction and the use of onomatopoeia as a resource is also a quality shared with other music of Afro-American tradition.

**Sound-body DIMENSION:** Far from considering Malambo exclusively as a dance, there are performative narratives in which music and dance form an indissoluble unity. This is given by the process of co-production between the dancer and the musician, where the percussionist is often also a dancer and the dancer is also a percussionist. This constant dialogue between the two is also a characteristic of several Afro-American dance/music expressions.

**MUDANZA:** In the Malambo dance, a phrase of movements that is danced along with the metric of the music is called Mudanza. Since in the performance *Matria* we do not find accompanying music in its original traditional version, the fixed forms are replaced by certain patterns and qualities, which are also composition strategies used in the contemporary context. These other Mudanzas or driving forces search for a transformation, activation and transgression of the performative elements of the Malambo, which is normally perceived to be stereotypically masculine, compliant with its heroic patriarchal character.

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This essay was written by Rocio Marano and Rodrigo Garcia Alves for Out of the Box #1. Alves is a Berlin based choreographer and researcher originally from Brazil. He develops collaborative works which explore ideas of Latina queerness, visible and invisible knowledge from the Global South, and collage as a choreographic method. Studio Disorder is the exchange platform he founded in 2013.

The experimental performance series Out of the Box, organized by MMpraxis and CAA Berlin in collaboration with HOTO - home to artists, provides a platform for Berlin-based emerging choreographers to adapt existing stage works to a gallery space. Each edition offers a short residency and a mentoring program in which the artists receive support from a mentor of their choice.

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The MMpraxis curatorial platform organizes exhibitions and events at the intersection of performing and visual arts with a focus on choreography, time-based media, and performance art.

[www.mmpraxis.com](http://www.mmpraxis.com)

The Contemporary Arts Alliance Berlin (CAA Berlin) is a private platform for the promotion of contemporary culture in Berlin. It supports young artists from the fields of visual arts, theater, music and dance both financially and in practical matters.

<http://caa-berlin.org>

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HOTO - home to artists is an exhibition space and an independent residency project that focuses on the promotion of contemporary artists. During the residency, the space is left to the artists to take possession of, develop in, and to translate this experience into their work.

<https://hotoart.de>

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