

TERRA NOVA

Rachel Monosov, Shinji Murakami, Terrence Musekiwa, Yapci Ramos,
Justin Orvis Steimer

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New York, NY, April 14, 2017: In 2016, the CTG Collective landed on the island of Newfoundland, Canada, one of the windiest places on Earth. The voyage gave birth to Terra Nova, a group exhibition at Catinca Tabacaru Gallery, New York, with artists Rachel Monosov (Israel), Terrence Musekiwa (Zimbabwe), Yapci Ramos (Spain) & Justin Orvis Steimer (USA).

Excerpts from the journal of Catinca Tabacaru

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Sometimes when you go to have a conversation, you don't start with the subject of interest. More often you begin with the pleasantries, followed by those topics burning in front of you.

Terra Nova was like this when we first arrived.

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The locals are intimately aware of their ancestors' sins and tell stories of the brutal behavior that is so far from their own peaceful ways.

"You know Catinca, it seems this journey will be more political than a scientific study of The Wind," whispers Terrence whose own homeland was raped and pillaged by the English. "How can we ignore these murders?" he continues.

"Well Terrence, this happened hundreds of years ago," I answered, "I don't know how relevant it still is."

"Oh, Catinca... things like these are always relevant.

I reckon this young CTGian is right about that.

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We engaged in a long meandering about how we look at a landscape:

"This is the most beautiful tree!"

"This is the most beautiful island!"

"I want it to be mine."

The visuals came to life as Rachel and Yapci started framing pieces of Terra Nova's nature with yellow rope, and photographing both the process and result of this possession. Like the English took land from the Bioptics; like the Israelis, Rachel's compatriots, did and continue to take from the Palestinians; and the Spanish took Yapci's land of Canary Islands; here too, the two CTGians are interested in taking – the crossing of a territory that is not one's own.

It occurred to me as well that what had started as "A Project for the Wind," may, or more correctly, must evolve into something else in order to be authentic to the place we now stand.

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"Do you think it is interesting?" Terrence asks me as he collects hundreds of shells off the slim piece of land that appears during low tide to connect the land our second cottage is on to a densely forested island a few hundred meters across the ocean inlet.

“I think it’s interesting because it’s you making it.” I answer. I can see the skepticism in his glance and a slight decrease in the fervor with which he is picking up the shells.

“What do you mean? He asks as doubt creeps in around what he thought would be a fascinating work.

“Well, it wouldn’t be interesting if Justin or Yapci did this work because they grew up around oceans filled with shells. But, for you Terrence, this is the first time you’ve seen the ocean. That is why it’s interesting, because we get to see this world through your eyes.”

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Justin doodles on the book pages he has made from local stone. They fit beautifully together, like the puzzle of life. I love watching him take on a new material and translating all our good energy into shape and color.

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We’re getting into the groove of it now. Everyone’s projects are moving forward and there are plans for permanent installations on the islands surrounding us.

About CTG Collective: Co-founded in 2015 by Catinca Tabacaru, Rachel Monosov, and Justin Orvis Steimer, the Collective is powered by freedom, love, and creativity. Its mission is to explore the hu(wo)man experience through boundless configurations of art. Its first project was to create a traveling art residency, which took the group to Zimbabwe in 2015 and established roots that gave birth to two gallery presentations and one museum exhibition thus far. Members of the collective will be presenting work at the 57th Venice Biennial this coming May.