

# THE NEVA INSTITUTE

2

THE PAPER EDITION  
ISSUE NUMBER 2  
WINTER 2021



On Hope





COVER: EL FUEGO VIVO DE LA CUMBIA VIVE EN NOSOTROS (THE VIVID FIRE OF CUMBIA LIVES WITHIN US) BY RAISA GALOFRE

Index

1	Ece Temelkuran	Hope and Faith	page 5
2	Markus Gabriel	Hope and Reason	page 6
3	Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung	Hope and Humanity	page 7
4	Cassie Thornton	Hope and Care	page 9
5	Lea Ypi	Hope and Agency	page 10
6	Juliet Jacques	Hope and Transformation	page 11
7	Ina-Maria Shikongo	Hope and Activism	page 13
8	Igor Levit	Hope and Music	page 14
9	Jamila Raqib	Hope and Resistance	page 15
10	Catriona McKinnon	Hope and Climate Justice	page 17
11	Christof Mauch	Slow Hope	page 18
12	Jonathan White	Hope and the Future	page 19
	Featured Authors		page 20
	Featured Artists		page 21
	Our Mission		page 22

A Message from the Founder

“Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.” This quote is often attributed to Martin Luther – and though I am not a religious person per se, these words strongly resonate with what I believe in. There is no doubt we are facing difficult times: the exponential growth of the global population, the destruction of our natural habitat and immoral economic systems constitute existential threats to humankind. In the face of such challenges, though, we have no choice but to act.

It was in this spirit of action that I established THE NEW INSTITUTE – a place that invites thinkers and practitioners from across the world to gather, develop ideas and craft solutions to the most urgent problems we face today.

In this mission, hope is a central element, a guiding principle that reminds us not to give in to pessimism, despair or to politics that aim to divide rather

than unite. Hope helps forge a path from the present to the future. As NEW INSTITUTE fellow Lea Ypi puts it in her interview here: “A vision of the future enables you to act in a certain way in the present, and by acting in a certain way in the present, you are already making that vision of the future happen.”

I am deeply humbled by the tasks that lie ahead of us. The COP26 meeting in Glasgow provided just a glimpse of optimism. We have little time to change the course of the world and to stay within bearable limits of global warming, according to the IPCC report. It is all the more important then that we look up, look ahead, and work together.

As Immanuel Kant put it, we have a duty to hope. Let’s follow up on it!

ERCK RICKMERS  
Founder

PHOTO: JELKA VON LANGEN

Hope is promise and practice. Hope is about agency and community, it is both private and political and has the potential to transform us and, in the process, the world. Hope is directed toward the future and opens up new horizons. Hope is a contradiction, a quiet revolution, a rallying cry.

THE NEW INSTITUTE

THE PAPER EDITION  
ISSUE NUMBER 2  
WINTER 2021

When we published the first Paper Edition in early 2021, THE NEW INSTITUTE had yet to welcome its first group of fellows. This fall, our initial cohort of fellows came to Hamburg, hosted in temporary quarters while the renovation of our physical home of THE NEW INSTITUTE, a set of nine classicist town houses, proceeded. It is set to open in 2022.

This second Paper Edition is a way to expand our cosmos. We are very much aware that there are many people out there doing incredible work. And for us, as both an Institute of Advanced Study and a platform for change, partnership with others is central. The purpose of this Paper Edition is to feature a multiplicity of voices - and to create a kaleidoscope of hope.

Because signs of hope come in many shapes and colours. Inspired by the global protests of Generation Z and Fridays for Future, the rise of those discriminated against for their race or gender, and discussions about alternative ways of living, working and doing business, we want to propose hope as a starting point for discussions about the future we seek to build. What are the sources of hope? What are the politics of hope? But also: is hope enough?

There is a long philosophical tradition of thinking about hope, starting with the myth of Pandora, which reflects on hope as something both dangerous and uplifting. Ernst Bloch elevated hope into a principle, giving it a poignant political perspective. Immanuel Kant posited a duty to hope – an idea picked up by NEW INSTITUTE fellow Lea Ypi as she connects hope to the concept of progress. Without hope, Ypi argues, there is no forward trajectory for humanity.

In this time of radical uncertainty, hope should be as radical as the challenges we face. The U.S. American philosopher Jonathan Lear made this point in his 2008 book *Radical Hope*, in which he describes how the Indigenous Crow Nation of North America leveraged hope to rebuild a culture and civilization from the ruins of destruction. As a sense of existential threat has worked its way from the past to the present, from the margins to the centers, this concept of radical hope has only gained meaning and momentum.

Rebellion has become a powerful option, and a possible response. Artist and activist Ina-Maria Shikongo talks about the fight for justice and for survival in her native Namibia, representing a fundamental challenge to hegemonic discourse. Curator Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung has selected artists that explore the concept of hope: Akinbode Akinbiyi’s images document the social reality of megacities, Raisa Galofre’s photographs explore questions of humanity, gender and transgression, and Sim Chi Yin investigates issues of migration, climate change and colonial history, to name just a few examples.

Hope here is the mirror of imagination. Hope is bound to agency. Hope creates humanity in the moment, in the making. It is not prescriptive - it is practical. Hope can be a point of renewal for an entire political philosophy and is connected to a sense of the future, as political theorist Jonathan White explains. Hope can be a tool for transformation, in the words of writer Juliet Jacques, and of care, as reflected in

the practice of artist and activist Cassie Thornton. Writer Ece Temelkuran, on the other hand, argues that faith is a more powerful political option than hope, which she calls an “emotional crutch”.

Hope, as the philosopher Markus Gabriel puts it, still “is a much better action-guiding model for humans than fear. We need places, even institutions, of hope. Maybe even a ministry of hope”. Academics Catriona McKinnon and Christof Mauch detail their concepts of climate justice and of what Mauch calls “slow hope”. And for pianist Igor Levit, hope is humanity itself. One thing becomes clear: hope isn’t something you have or you don’t have, hope is something you can practice, train, and work on - like a muscle. Just as John Dewey’s vision of democracy is something that you do, hope is something that requires action to become real.

As scholar Jamila Raqib puts it in her interview for this Paper Edition: “Hope is about people acting together and recognizing their own power. It is important to shake this feeling of powerlessness and hopelessness and instill in people the idea that through their action – what they do and what they refuse to do – they can change their societies or defend them.”

What do you think? What makes you hopeful? Please join us on this journey, because, truly, we are in this together.

GEORG DIEZ  
Editor-in-Chief

CHRISTOPH GOTTSCHALK  
CEO



VIEW FROM THE CONSTRUCTION SITE OF THE WARBURG ENSEMBLE

PHOTO: SABINE WIELMO





PORTRAIT OF A CARNIVAL DANCER DURING BARRANQUILLA'S CARNIVAL, COLOMBIA BY RAISA GALOFRE

# Faith Reason Humanity

## Beauty is the reason to act.

1

### Ece Temelkuran on Hope and Faith

**What is hope to you?** Hope is a code word that refers to a “reason to act”. After I published my book *How to Lose A Country*, people started to ask me if there is hope. I guess they want to know if there is still a reason to act, or if all is lost. The funny thing is: I don’t think anything in their lives would change depending on my answer. That is why I call hope an emotional crutch.

**You travelled the world, as an observer, and sometimes as a participant in upheaval: what events or experiences made you disenchanted with hope?** I am a storyteller. Journalism, my legitimate reason to be a vagabond, was my way of living in the stories. I was always an eye, a camera that didn’t stop recording. And as I travelled the world, I heard too many people ask me about hope. I told them that the rise of right-wing populism is a systemic problem and that no democracy is immune to it, and people were horrified. But when I told them that they have to act and that democracy should not be taken for granted, I became the killjoy.

*Faith is the only skill that we can depend on in this fight against the extinction of humankind.*

**Why is that?** We just don’t have a personal or passionate relationship to democracy. Not many people are willing to act. This is what happened in Turkey. It is not because we didn’t do what was necessary to overcome the challenges but, rather, that we did it too late and with too few people. Hope is the word that reminds me of this fact.

**In your recent book, *Together: 10 Choices for a Better Now*, you prefer to talk about faith instead of hope – why is that?** Hope is too fragile a word for our harsh times. Faith, in contrast, is an irrefutable concept. When you believe in something, your actions are shaped by that unshakable stance. Faith is the most magical and most formidable human skill – the only skill that we can depend on in this fight against the extinction of humankind, the planet and hope.

**People might have hope, but they seem to lack faith.** I agree, and fascism is the state of total loss of faith in humankind. That is why I repeat the word. We are on the verge of a systemic collapse. If we want to create the will to survive this collapse, we have to believe that there is something beyond this system.

**What is the difference between hope and faith in the context of revolution?** Revolution is too big a word. People use the word irresponsibly, forgetting the blood it contains and the deaths it requires. When you believe in revolution, you certainly need faith – a faith you can die for. Hope is the word for victims whereas faith is the word that makes personal sacrifice possible. But when you look at human history you see that after every revolution a system is built that, in its essence, is not much different from the previous one.

**What is the difference between hope and faith in the face of climate change?** The world is constantly telling us that humans are bad. But we have to have faith that humans can be better and more essential to this planet. We have to believe that we

deserve to exist as well. Hope is quite irrelevant when you look at the current situation from this perspective.

**You write: “Today’s political movements, the ones that are determined to set a new direction for humankind or are proposing an exit from our political and moral maze, should not neglect the people’s need for and ability to have faith.” Can you explain this?** We are living in an age where we are once again faced with a political movement that thrives on controlling and manipulating the politics of emotions and moral values. And progressives have nothing to say about emotions or morality. I understand the reasons. Emotions have a habit of getting out of hand, they are too elusive to discuss. But we progressives must have some sort of consensus, especially today when the progressive discourse is partitioned into questions of identity. It has been quite a long time since we have talked about human love, for instance. Our ability to have faith is something that we cannot dismiss, especially in a world where knowing is being replaced by believing.

**“Faith is the only word that can at once accommodate all those concepts that seem to be in pieces: self-esteem, confidence, trust.” Another quote of yours. Is faith part of a distinct political philosophy for our times?** I believe it is. I know it sounds dangerous for many progressives, but they’ll arrive there in the end. My thinking has been shaped by listening to many ordinary people around the world. Faith is the only word that holds water for times when there is a sense that all is lost. And today is one of those times.

**What you talk about sounds like what the philosopher Martin Hägglund calls “secular faith”. He goes back to Marx – you are a person of the left, what is your reference?** I grew up in a world defined by two piles of books. Marxist discourse and the deconstruction of that discourse. If you are secular and talking about the heartless world it is almost impossible to go back to Marx. But then we need to develop the core idea of giving a heart to the heartless world.

**“Hope was too weak a word to do the job”, you write, “only our inherent determination to create beauty can save us”. How does beauty help?** The idea of beauty came to me after I asked myself the question: how can I believe in humankind? As I dug deeper, the only thing that I could come up with, the indestructible seed of my faith in humankind, is our inherent determination to create beauty. It is only through admitting this feature of ours that we can restore our damaged faith in ourselves. It is only when we believe in ourselves, that we can act. Beauty therefore is the reason to act.

**You talk about “the line between poetry and the foggy realm of theology”. How do you stay clear of that foggy realm?** I don’t. I get in and try to get out intact in terms of my politics. It is only in that foggy realm that you see the essence of humankind. The essence that once created the gods.

**Can you complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** I am in pain.

*Ece Temelkuran is a novelist and essayist and a future fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE.*

VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS BY AKINBODE AKINBIYI





# We exist in a projection towards the future.

Markus Gabriel on Hope and Reason



LAGOS ISLAND, LAGOS BY AKINBODE AKINBIYI

**What is hope to you?** Hope is the imagination of a better future that ideally guides action in the present. Hope is a particular form of temporal extension of our current expectations into the future. And then we return to the present.

**Is hope real?** Hope can be very powerful. What we do as humans is always a reflection of how we think about ourselves. Humans are the kinds of animals who live in accordance with how we conceive of ourselves as individuals and as a collective. The various layers of identity, individual, collective and human, all exist in a projection towards the future. We will never do anything without imagining the alternative.

**What does this mean in the face of climate change? What can we hope for?** In order to solve the climate crisis, we need different narratives that extend well beyond the present moment. No person who is currently alive will see a relevant change in human behavior with respect to climate change. We will not see things getting better, which means that we need to extend our temporality to historical horizons, way beyond the existence of everyone who is currently alive.

**What is the relationship between hope and reason?** Hope is based on reason. Rationality, our emotions and our capacities for imagination are connected. Reason is not a cold exercise in our capacity to solve mathematical equations. Reason is not opposite to human, mental life. If it were, morality in response to the concerns of others would not exist.

**And what is the relationship between hope and knowledge?** Even though I am a philosopher, I think that knowledge in a certain sense is overestimated in discussions about our current climate crisis and other crises. We know all sorts of things, but that doesn't change anything. The fact that we know something is not as such action-guiding.

**Is philosophy a place to create hope?** I practice philosophy of the future, which is something that existed in the past. Feuerbach coined the phrase and Nietzsche took it over. We need a serious future-directed philosophy, a philosophy of change. I see myself philosophically in the traditions of Ernst Bloch and Schelling, on whom Bloch drew. Schelling was the first philosopher who – as early as the 1830s – told us that it is the future, not the present, that is the paradigm of time. I think this is the origin of a lot of philosophy of hope.

**There is the need, you say, for a quantum leap in philosophy. This happened with scientific knowledge and industrial production, but has not found its equivalent in thinking.** Absolutely. Philosophy has been looking backwards, as Hegel famously said of the owl of Minerva. This holds true from Aristotle to Hegel and beyond. We need a philosophy that is not afraid of the new. People suspect the fault lies in what is new. Philosophers are really scared of innovation, of novelty in general. I am the opposite. I am very happy with the idea that we need to achieve something new. It would be a quantum leap to think of philosophy as a value driven exploration of the future.

**Is the new always new?** Oh, no. I think the so-called Middle Ages were radically innovative, being radically exposed to constant disaster and so forth. Modern thinking is flat, right? We think that mere scientific progress will solve our issues. And whenever there's a perturbation, a virus, a pandemic or whatever, we get incredibly nervous because we thought that we had figured things out. But the repetition of the same is not going to lead to the kind of breakthroughs that we need, especially when it comes to the climate crisis.

**How does hope translate into action?** Hope is a much better action-guiding model for humans than fear. For the climate crisis, we need to create scenarios of hope. A lot of the irrationality in this current highly critical situation is precisely a consequence of a lack of hope. We need places, even institutions, of hope. Maybe even a ministry of hope.

**Hope as an essential part of a renewed democracy?** Indeed. Currently, the democratic public sphere is mostly driven by mutual critique, among parties or individuals. Critique is fine. We need critique. But critique doesn't solve any issues, it just points out which issues are not solved. We need a discourse of hope and friendship. What Derrida called a politics of friendship.

*We need places, even institutions, of hope. Maybe even a ministry of hope.*

**Do we need a new vocabulary for democracy?** That would be a good idea. It reminds me of what Jonathan Lear called "radical hope". Change happens if our collective imagination changes. Crucially, we must have the right hope for the right kind of change. And that means that hope and certain values need to go together. For this we need knowledge from different disciplines.

**Are the moral facts in your philosophical system connected to hope?** Hope should be in line with moral facts. We need an additional layer of normativity, and this comes from moral facts – some of which are obvious and some of which are more hidden. Take the Taliban, for example, who prohibit female children from attending school. So, if someone were to hope for the return of the Taliban, as has just occurred, this hope would not be in line with moral facts. And the discovery of hidden moral facts leads to an improvement of the structure of society.

**Could you finish this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** it concerns my family.

*Markus Gabriel is a philosopher and the director of the programme on "The Foundations of Value and Values" at THE NEW INSTITUTE.*

# We have gotten to a point where we have to think more holistically and work together again.

Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung on Hope and Humanity

**What is hope to you?** This question makes me think of a very good friend, the artist Leo Asemota. Every time he writes an email, it doesn't say "I hope you are doing well", but "I trust you are doing well". This shift from hope to trust is very powerful.

**What's the difference between trust and hope?** Trust is stronger, it's more affirmative than hope. It feels closer to turning something into reality. I do believe in hope though. But it's a complex concept. Who has the right to hope? Where lies the possibility of hoping? Overall, I'd say hope is a commodified concept: religion sells hope. Governments sell hope. But hope is also a personal condition. It's a state of mind. The impression of hope is different from the possession of hope.

**When you say commodification, is hope something you can own?** I don't know if you can own it, but you can sell it. Let me tell you a joke: a man visits the church, praying to God to make him win the lottery. He goes there one time, two times, three times. Finally, God says: if you really want me to help you win the lottery, you at least have to play the lottery. That's what the laws of the market are all about: supply and demand. You sell something because there's a buyer on the other side, right? Hope is on the market because people are asking for hope.

**In times of worldwide crises – who can even hope?** Those who have the privilege to anticipate, those who have the privilege to see beyond the threshold can hope. Those who can't might hope as well, but then religion steps in and helps them see beyond the horizon.

**You once said that it's a privilege to resign or to be pessimistic about the future.** I think I was talking about a conversation between Noam Chomsky and Harry Belafonte in the context of the election of Donald Trump. After more than an hour of lamentation, Harry Belafonte said—he doesn't have the privilege to be pessimistic. At over 90, he would go out there and fight. This went far beyond hope. It was about taking things into your hands. You cannot hope that people who have dehumanised you for more than 500 years will suddenly perceive you as a person through another, more human lens. The only thing you have to do is to actively work towards that change.

**How do we get there?** The process of rehumanisation goes far beyond hope, it's a combination of four things: fate, faith, love and an incredible desire to survive. It's fate that you happen to be here. It's the faith in something higher than just your own power, that you can call upon something to support you. It's the love for yourself and the other, it's the will to create better conditions for yourself and others. And it's the incredible desire to survive.

**It seems like a long way to go for humanity to internalise these values.** There's a gospel song that goes like this: "This is not my home. I'm just a passer-by." So, we need to save this earth for the next generation. In Cameroon, when somebody is born, they plant a tree. When somebody dies, they also plant a tree. Nature is deeply incorporated in their way of being.

**What can we learn from the past?** One thing is important to understand: we haven't left colonialism



TODOS LOS TIEMPOS EN UNO (ALL THE TIMES IN ONE) BY RAISA GALOFRE

behind, even though many people perceive it as a thing of the past. Let me give you an example: to pay its civil servants, the government of Cameroon needs to ask for money from France. Although France uses the Euro, the former colonies of France still use the Franc. They have to use a currency that is made in France, stored and controlled by French banks. In the future, we need to detach ourselves from this colonial structure. Otherwise, no progress can be made.

*The process of rehumanisation is a combination of fate, faith, love and an incredible desire to survive.*

**It boils down to economic imbalances.** The way our human condition is tied to economics is something we can perceive from different angles. The whole notion of modernity is closely tied to the creation of capital. And the creation of capital is all about dehumanisation. The moment people are taken from one side of the Atlantic Ocean to the other to work on plantations, human beings become a tool, an instrument of labor. They are no longer considered human.

**What can art contribute to rehumanise us?** I think artists can play a role like every other person. But there's something special about artists: they are familiar with the "business of imagination". The

possibility of imagining something, of creating utopias, creating fiction is at the core of artists' work. In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said said that it's not the nation that creates a novel, but a novel that creates the nation. There's something very powerful about imagination or fabulation, I really believe in the power of *Einbildungskraft*.

**You studied biochemistry and also worked in a laboratory before becoming a curator. What can the arts and sciences learn from each other?** I think they need to learn that they are not so far away from each other. Their separation is an outcome of Adam Smith's division of labor. In his book *The Wealth of Nations*, he laid the groundwork for the huge project of industrialisation: you cut down work into smaller parts, distribute the tasks and instead of someone overseeing the whole thing, everyone is responsible for one part of the process. In the capitalist system, that's very helpful, because you produce faster and you can exploit resources effectively. However, this also implies a division of disciplines. We have gotten to a point where we have to think more holistically and work together again.

**Can knowledge be a foundation for hope?** If you have control over your own knowledge, you have better tools at your disposal to craft your future, to shape your destiny. When you're in the last wagon of a train and there's somebody in the first wagon, there's a very low probability that you will reach the train station before that person. Which means: when you are struggling to catch up with someone else's knowledge, you're left behind.

**What kind of knowledge are you talking about?** Good question. The sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos wrote about epistemicide, meaning the destruction of knowledge systems. There is a place in Cameroon called Korup National Park with a diversity of medical plants that have been named after some German guy. But people have lost the knowledge about it. So, what is the common ground between that which has been imposed on us and that which we are supposed to know?

**A dissemination of knowledge, a plurality of knowledge could help us to look more hopefully into the future.** Indeed. There is a need for a multiplicity of voices because the singularity has failed us. It's like fog, it's like a unilateral monochromatic structure. People have seen through that smoke screen for a long time. It's what they call "Leitkultur" in Germany. We need to replace this monolithic culture, it's an artificial concept that has never really existed.

**Could you please complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** The question of hope is not personal to me because I personally don't know what hope is. Let me put this differently: it is a personal concern for me because it is about the future of my fellow human beings.

*Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung is a contemporary art curator. In 2023, he will become Director of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin.*



# Care Agency Transformation



SHADES OF PRIDE BY ANJEL (BORIS ANJE)

## A wish is a curse or a blessing for something formerly impossible.

4

### Cassie Thornton on Hope and Care

**What is hope to you?** Maybe this is weird, but I actually had to look up the word in the dictionary. I realised I don't use it very often. One of my favorite albums from when I was in school at the University of Wisconsin in Madison is *I Could Live in Hope* by Low. But even back then, in the early 2000s, I could not live in hope or anywhere near it. Who does hoping help?

**Maybe hoping doesn't help?** Reading those dictionary definitions, it struck me that to have hope is to have trust, or confidence, that things will be ok. I also looked up hope's antonyms: desperation and despair. They both are defined by lacking hope. So we are led to imagine that if you don't have trust or confidence, then you are desperate and despairing. But I think it is more complicated. As Ursula LeGuin says, "The only thing that makes life possible is permanent, intolerable uncertainty: not knowing what comes next."

**Do you see hope as a trap?** Frankly, I am hopeless, but I wish to be ready and useful when the unknown shows up. I think that having trust and confidence that things will be OK while, at the same time, most people in the world, most animals and plants are closer to death than life, is to live in denial of the actual dire state of things. There is something about declaring this abstract kind of hope that is a cheap moral gesture. It's a performance of care about our collective future, but if it is combined with the inability or unwillingness to actually do anything that jeopardises your own comfort.

**In your opinion, what potential was there in hope before we blew it?** To declare your hope is, in a way, to separate yourself from the web of life. Jason W. Moore, in *Capitalism in the Web of Life* maps very distinctly the ways that we as humans are a species that produces and is produced by our environment, and how even capitalism is dependent on all the life that it also threatens or kills. The moment you can see and feel your life and liberation bound in someone or something else, you know it. You can't live in hope while people and other living things are dying all around you. You can't live in hope when you live in a vastly unequal world. You can't live in hope when a leaky pipeline is installed in the body of water you drink out of.

**The unknown is that insight?** Well, magic happens, bitches. In *We Are 'Nature' Defending Itself*, radical artist-activists Isabelle Fremeaux and Jay Jordan relate how they abandoned the narcissism and doublespeak of the art world to join a powerful grassroots land defence movement in rural France. Their book documents how people from vastly different backgrounds can live together and struggle together alongside land and trees, even to the point of defying the full force of the French state and in contravention of the wishes of capitalism. I love this account of actively working with desire, will and wishes. For me it is a weapon against the disappointment of hope.

**What is the relationship between hope and wishes?** There is something about the way we use the term hope, as a verb, that is about giving up. When I tell someone that "I hope that things get better", I'm saying that it would be nice if this person's situation improved, but that I am not going to be putting any of my personal energy into it. If I sit on my couch and say "I hope that the COP26 results in a significant shift in world climate policy" it is a wistful, resigned statement that implies that I have



DER LIEGENDE (AFTER WALDEMAR GRZIMEK) BY RAISA GALOFRE

no power and no plan to influence the outcome. When a CEO of a toxic and globally influential company goes on and on about hope in the abstract, or tells us about his hopes for the climate, it's worse: it's a cynical, emotionally manipulative move because it actually denies the very real power he has.

*I wish to be ready and useful when the unknown shows up.*

**You use the term wishing also in "*The Hologram*", the feminist post-capitalist healthcare system you initiated during the pandemic.** Wishing here is part of the process of peer-to-peer care. At the conclusion of a session, after we ask someone about all the complex aspects of their life, we make a wish for them. What I learned from doing this work is that a wish has power because it is the opposite of hope. A wish is a curse or a blessing for something formerly impossible, coming from a person or people who are willing to make a demand of the universe for something better than is on offer. When I say that I wish that the billionaires went to space, I mean it. When I wished that your greedy Berlin landlord had his property expropriated and redistributed, it once seemed impossible.

**What else do you wish for?** There is a simple foundation of my artwork and activism: I wish that I could – and that we, collectively, could – build a bridge to connect two sides of a gap. The gap is between, on the one hand, what we believe in and value and, on the other, what we actually do with our time. We're all stuck in this gap. We can't get out of it individually, we have to find a way out together.

**What does that mean concretely?** I do not believe in property ownership, or that land should ever be treated as personal property. And yet, I am told I own a house and the land under it. Our whole lives are lived on top of a pile of compromises that we cannot feel proud of but also cannot avoid. I don't think anyone can change this alone. So I wish to be a part of a network or group of people who shift out of the habits we have been coerced into. I wish to feel like a useful part of a healthy society that doesn't neglect anyone. By wishing this for myself, I also wish this for you. I wish to feel connected to many other people and ways of doing this.

**Was this search for community and compassion the beginning of "*The Hologram*"?** I wish to see the use of "The Hologram" grow as a tool to support people who want to stop living in a pile of compromises, compromises that are making the world suck for most people. I think that "The Hologram" has the capacity to hold people accountable to themselves and their friends so they can begin to build a bridge between what they believe in and how they live their lives. It's not just about creating a framework to hold us to acting ethically. It's also about building the material relationships so that we can exit and refuse having to be complicit.

*Cassie Thornton is an artist and activist and is the "Feminist Economics Department".*



# The fact that something needs to be done means that something can be done.

5

Lea Ypi on Hope and Agency



A GENTE COMBINAMOS DE NÃO MORRER / US AGREED NOT TO DIE BY JOTA MOMBAÇA

**What is hope to you?** Hope is an attitude, somewhere between a desire and a belief; a desire for a certain outcome and a belief that the outcome will be favorable. Hope in the individual is a kind of passion.

**Is hope a good thing or a bad thing?** In the myth of Pandora, she opens the box and everything escapes: envy, anger, all passions basically. They are all out in the world. The one that stays in the box is hope. Does that mean that hope is something that needs to be kept from humans? That the ancient Greeks thought that hope is a bad thing? Or does it mean that it is actually a good thing? That it stays in the box because it is a mere promise of another world, of change, and that it should remain isolated from humans?

**The question is: is hope a revolutionary power or a force to protect the status quo?** We can think of negative hope, which we would call illusion. On the other hand, if humans should not have access to hope, it might be because it opens up different horizons for them. Overall, it seems that the Greeks thought hope was more of a bad thing. That thinking really changes with Christianity, with Augustine and Aquinas – they talk about hope as the comfort that comes from God. That turns hope into a good thing.

**Something that supports stability.** Exactly. In the Catholic dimension, hope is connected to salvation or the intervention of God, in a transcendent way, which separates hope from agency. I am more interested in the way in which Kant talks about hope because for him it is connected to the individual – something the individual needs to believe, a motivational set of attitudes that goes with their disposition to act in a certain way.

**What about hope as a collective force?** What we call hope on an individual level we call progress on a collective level. When we think about collective agency, we think about what possibilities there are for reason. In Kant's terms: the fact that you act in a certain way produces certain outcomes, and these outcomes confirm certain attitudes towards the future. What I like about Kant is that he talks about a duty to hope and a connection to hope as a rational

expectation that comes with a certain understanding of human agency.

**What is the connection between Kant and Marx in terms of hope?** I think of hope as the connection that bridges the idealistic Kantian tradition and the materialistic Marxist tradition. Hope is a way of inserting agency into expectations of the future, so it is not just a mechanism independent from human will. In connection to Marxism, hope allows us to think about the socialist tradition in a way that is centred on the subject as much as on the historical forces that transcend the subject – change that is not only driven by technology or natural evolution.

*All the decisions about climate change need to be grounded in the assumption that there is a possibility for agency.*

**Hope is Marx plus agency?** Marxism gives you a theory of what's wrong with the society in which you live and how you can make sense of change – the problem is that it offers only a diagnostic component, there is a lack of a prescriptive side to Marxism: what should you do? How should you overcome injustice? How should you overcome the status quo? Hope is a way of reconciling larger than human forces that lead to inaction with the necessity of remaining centered on the individual.

**Did Kant think about struggle, emancipation or an enemy when he was talking about hope?** Oh yes. He didn't name his enemy like Marx did. His problem was with evil. This connects his thought on hope to the theological tradition: you have human agency and you have free will, but you also know that this will can be corrupted by external circumstances – corrupted because of an innate tendency to evil. Kant says that we have good motives and bad motives, and they are always struggling

with each other and within each human being. The question is: what guarantees are there that the bad motive will not prevail over the good motive?

**Hope helps the good to prevail?** In Marx, as in Rousseau, you have empirical historical circumstances that exacerbate the evil tendencies: societies in which envy and competitive rivalry create particular historical and social forces that make humans act immorally. You need to enable humans to overcome these tendencies together. Kant called this the ethical community. The Marxist tradition reinterprets that to give you a more sociological story of class struggle. But the route is similar. And hope is important in both cases; it is connected to action motivated by a certain vision of the future.

**Hope creates a future?** A vision of the future enables you to act in a certain way in the present, and by acting in a certain way in the present, you are already making that vision of the future happen.

**Materialistic realities and moral visions battling it out?** The humanistic and the materialistic interpretation are both in Marx. It is a story about the social forces and a very strong moral story about what the human species is. One gives you an empirical description of capitalism, it's contradictions, and why we currently live under oppression. But when Marx says that capitalism is alienating, you need to have a conception of flourishing or of human nature in order to talk about the alienation of humans from that nature.

**Where is hope situated today?** Hope is partly connected to the question of progress. You need to identify, first of all, certain moral priorities vis-à-vis the political system in which you live. This level of analysis motivates a social and political critique of the system: to be able to see the gap between what you have and what you would like to have. On another level you need to look at the learning processes that help you establish movements in the present.

**How does climate change affect the concept of hope?** Climate change is a fundamental challenge and a catalyser for action. In some ways, it empowers you because you realise that it is about humanity – this is the subject here, it is the world as a whole, the unit of concern. Climate change is really good for mobilising, but only if you also realise the promises of engaging with nature and not thinking of yourself as a victim of nature. All the decisions about climate change need to be grounded in the assumption that there is a possibility for agency.

**The opposite of fatalism.** The fact that something needs to be done means that something can be done. It means it is in your power to do it. And if it is in your power to do it, then you can't be like a stone or a bird or like an animal. There is something to you that is fundamentally different from these other elements of nature. And that needs to be recovered to engage with nature in the right way. I think it is important to have a human centred perspective – because if you lose that, you lose the sense of freedom and perspective and agency. Then you actually can't do anything about nature either.

**Can you complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** I have a duty to be hopeful.

*Lea Ypi is a political philosopher and a fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE in the programme "The Future of Democracy".*

# I felt a huge sense of futility and existential despair as a teenager.

6

Juliet Jacques on Hope and Transformation

**What is hope to you?** Fleeting! Seriously though – it's a motivating force when a better world looks like it might be in reach, and a sustaining one in times like now, when things seem quite desperate and it's hard to know exactly what to hope for, let alone what might turn such hopes into social transformation.

**What does hope do to people?** Proverbially, it kills us. In some cases, it can completely distort our view of things, particularly relations between people, be those individual or collective. But it also nourishes and sustains us: it inspires us to philosophy, get involved in political movements, bring about reforms or revolutions, to write and make art, fall in love, start families and societies.

**Why should everyone hope for transgender equality?** On a basic level, a world in which trans people are treated with basic dignity, let alone given equal rights against discrimination and better healthcare, would be a kinder, more caring one. Trans liberation would open up more possibilities for gender expression for everyone. To dig deeper, it would encourage greater respect for bodily autonomy, with repercussions for rights to abortion and anti-racism movements. And in the UK at least, there will be no trans liberation without serious media reform – the state of our corporate media is the biggest problem with our politics, so that would be valuable for everyone.

**Can hope be deceiving, in political activism?** Absolutely! To give a personal example, I'd always been incredibly downbeat about British politics, thinking the UK an irredeemably reactionary nation. I joined Labour when Jeremy Corbyn became leader in 2015, but expected him to soon be forced to resign, deposed, or even killed, given what his MP's, let alone people from the military, were saying. But we had a snap election in 2017 where Labour did surprisingly well on a relatively left-leaning manifesto, and my friends and I thought victory was probable, even inevitable, in the next one, and we let ourselves dream of and plan for a socialist Britain.

**This did not happen.** We didn't quite register how successful the attempts to divide the party over Brexit had been until it was too late, nor how another two years of media attacks on the Labour left and its leaders had landed with the public. I had my anxieties about the 2019 election and was crushed by the heavy defeat that followed. But cynicism can be equally deceptive – as we regrouped, it was important to remember that more than ten million people had voted for that transformative manifesto in 2019, and that the social conditions that led so many younger people in particular to support that project hadn't gone away.

**What is your greatest hope? Is it manifested in your writing?** I felt a huge sense of futility and existential despair as a teenager, and came out of it wanting to create something that would make the world a better place than when I came into it. Vague, I know, and a bit later, as a student, I read writers who put their work at the service of revolution – Marx and Engels, Lenin, and other theorists, but also the German Expressionist playwrights, Soviet poets such as Vladimir Mayakovsky, and the French Surrealist writers. This made me want to change the world through writing, but a friend – also a writer – said that holding myself to this was a fast track to insanity.

**What has kept you sane?** I have refined my aims to fighting for better trans representation in media

and literature, and creating things that would hopefully make someone like the teenaged me feel less alone. Narrowing my horizons whilst remaining ambitious has helped me to avoid one of the greatest risks for a writer – being crushed by disappointment – and to cope with constantly having to push against people whose ideas of "a better world" come into conflict with mine.

*I have refined my aims to fighting for better trans representation in media and literature.*

**In July 2012, you underwent sex reassignment surgery - a process you chronicled with unflinching honesty in a national newspaper in England, and later compiled in *Trans: A Memoir*. Looking back on your column: how did it help you understand what you were going through?** It was a highly structured way of marshalling my thoughts about specific aspects of transition, whether they be the medical, procedural or social sides of it. The column had open comments – a community grew around it, including older people who reflected on their transitions and gave advice to me and others. Transitioning was often physically and psychologically punishing: the series offered a wonderful platform to turn some of those painful aspects into something positive, whilst still telling people who were afraid that the process was difficult, but negotiable.

**What events in history inspire hope in you?** This is a difficult question to answer from the radical left, as most revolutions have either ended in bloody defeat or even bloodier victory – like many, I find lots of beauty and inspiration in the Paris Com-

mune of 1871, but its defeat was impossibly brutal. So it tends to be trade union or activist victories, or just uprisings like the trans one at Compton's in San Francisco in 1966 or the Stonewall riots three years later, or the wave of insurrections in May '68. Demonstrations of solidarity between unions and more identity-based groups, such as Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners during the 1984-85 strike, inspire me, as does the huge protest against Section 28, the British law banning the "promotion" of homosexuality in schools in 1988. Cultural movements like Rock Against Racism, and displays of solidarity like the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War – which, again, feel like a hoary Old Left cliché by now, but are well worth remembering.

**What constitutes an inclusive language of hope?** I think aiming for universalism is fine, as long as the working class and people in the Global South, and minorities of sex, race and gender are included in the art and activism that will struggle to realise our hopes. It's important to be adaptable, more than anything – to avoid the sclerotic nature of long-standing left-wing institutions, as well as the traps of permanent constitutions that make it difficult to change with the times.

**Under what circumstances can we use the word "we" when we speak of hope?** Under many circumstances, I think, and certainly when involved with any collective political project. I think people can, and should, speak of "I" and "we" simultaneously – movements are made up of individuals with overlapping, if not always identical goals, and language can reflect that. If people want to opt out of the "we" that "we" use – well then, perhaps they're not on our side.

**Can you complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** I can't live without hope!

*Juliet Jacques is a writer, filmmaker and journalist.*

BURMESE SPRING BY SIM CHI YIN





# Activism

# Music

# Resistance

TUNGKUNG LANGIT BY KIRI DALENA



They call it “development”. It is not development. It is neocolonialism.

7

## Ina-Maria Shikongo on Hope and Activism

**What is hope to you?** Hope for me is justice. Justice for the past atrocities that have been committed against our people. Atrocities that are still continuing. Justice comes with accountability. For over 500 years, our continent has been plundered, our people have been used as slaves. Our people built the wealth of the Global North. And today, we are still seen as just monkeys. The noble house needs to acknowledge the atrocities that they've done to our people, like the German Herero genocide. They need to acknowledge that their corporations are still working in that mindset. For me, hope is really about getting to the roots of the problems of capitalism. The roots include the narrative that African people or Indigenous people are not as worthy as others.

**Can you tell me your story?** I was born an activist. I was born in a refugee camp. At the time there was apartheid in Namibia and my parents went into exile in Angola. From there, the rebellion against the South African Apartheid regime in Namibia started. My father was the chief of intelligence of SWAPO, the independence movement. He was a general. At the time of his death, when I was two years old, he was the acting commander.

**He was killed in battle?** It was in Southern Angola, he drove over a landmine. That's the official version.

**Was he assassinated?** I don't know. But at that time many generals were dying in car accidents.

**When was that?** He died in 1981.

**Is there something like hope for you in your father's death?** It doesn't give me hope. It just makes me angrier because I see that he died for nothing. He died so others could enrich themselves. What would give me hope is if the global leaders would say, okay, it's time that we stop exploiting these countries. It is time that we give Indigenous people the platform they deserve. Because we are not just monkeys living in the bush. We are people that have a connection to nature. What gives me hope is the climate movement that I am a part of because we are really trying to shape things. We are putting pressure on the government in our own country and elsewhere.

**How is activism, as you say, connected to your story?** I grew up in Angola in refugee camps and left for East Germany in 1985. We were a bunch of kids. Many children lost their parents. They didn't know what to do with the youngest ones. So they were sent away. Already in the camps, we were being trained, being told: down with capitalism, down with Botha, down with apartheid. This shaped me. I was taught from a young age that you need to fight for yourself. You need to fight for your people.

**What does your activism look like today?** I am part of Fridays for Future Windhoek. We are about ten volunteers. They are all students, I am the only mama. It's the kids that we engage with. There is hope in teaching other people how to be self-sustainable, in the possibility of thinking differently, in acting differently or shaping the future differently. We need climate justice.

**What is the reality of climate change in Namibia?** It's the wildfires, the persistent droughts, the rainfall patterns that have changed. Normally we would have a short rainy season in October. Then, in November and December, the rain starts. But now the rain starts in January. This affects our food security. The deserts are expanding. We have climate refugees fleeing the drought, also from Angola. The climate crisis is already here.

**What are the forces driving climate change in Namibia?** These are more the global effects. In the country, it is the continuous exploitation of places like the Kavango Basin where the Canadians started drilling for oil in a very ecologically sensitive area. Our country is ruled by the same rules that were used during apartheid. Namibia has 10 percent of the shares and the Canadians have 90 percent. This is neocolonialism. We are still not free. We have never had as much poverty in this country as we do today. Money is going missing every single day.

**And you say that these structures reproduce colonial structures of exploitation.** The Global North has to recognise that what they have done in the past was wrong and that things have to change. We also deserve a future. Right now, they are taking it all away from us. Their oil and gas projects, not only in Namibia. Tanzania is the same. Families are being displaced because of the Eastern pipeline, again with government support. They call it "development". It is not development. It is neocolonialism. They are causing ecocide and another potential genocide.

**How do you want to change that?** Decolonising is important because we don't want to live like people in the Global North. Sure, I love being there every now and then, it is super enriching when it comes to culture, new discoveries. But it doesn't mean that we all want to live in a brick house. It doesn't mean that we all want to be stressed, to get up at five o'clock in the morning to take the kids to school. This lifestyle has been imposed on our people by the colonialists and has become systemic.

*It's the wildfires, the persistent droughts, the rainfall patterns that have changed. The climate crisis is already here.*

**How do you see life in the Global North?** Everything is driven by capitalism. People have become so individualistic. You always have to buy everything. At least here I can put my seed in the ground and my food will grow. I can grow my trees. Here we have space. If you look at Namibia on the map, you can see that it's spacious. If you look at our yards, they are spacious. We have our own ways, we have our own traditions that have been rooted out thanks to colonialism. It is disguised as religion and development, based on narratives of hatred towards other people. There's no difference between development and Nazism for me: "let's get rid of us Indigenous people, we don't need these monkeys, let's burn down the Amazon forest".

**You are on your way to COP26 in Glasgow – what is your expectation? What do you hope for?** For me, it's not only about cutting emissions. My hope is that the leaders of the Global North realise that what they're doing in our country is still colonialism and that it has to change. I am hoping that for once global leaders will choose life over profit. I also want COP26 to realise that through their inaction they are responsible for the death of millions of people globally, especially the ones living in the Global South. When we talk about climate action, let's also talk about accountability. Let's sit down and say, okay, this is what you did – how are you going to make it better?

*Ina-Maria Shikongo is an artist and activist.*



# The sole reason why people create art is self-understanding.

Igor Levit on Hope and Music



VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS BY AKINBODE AKINBIYI

**What is hope to you?** People are hope. That's what I want to believe in. I don't have anything else to believe in other than people.

**What's the role of hope in art?** Hope is any humane emotion, any possible gesture, any possible feeling or thought at the epicentre of every piece of art. The sole reason why people create art is self-understanding: why you feel what you feel, why you live.

**This could also be emptiness, nothing, a void.** I don't think that in music the idea of a void is a possibility. You hear something, period. If you are listening, something happens. You are in the middle of something, evolving, moving, changing.

**Is music different in that sense than other forms of art?** It probably is. The composer Ferruccio Busoni called it "sonorous air". Music is immaterial, it is absolutely endless because there are no limitations to our feelings.

**If music is something that connects you with yourself, can it also make you take action?** It can strengthen you. It can bring people together. When we make music or hear music, we create an atmosphere of hope. But once it's over, there's silence, literal silence, and the responsibility lies on us.

**Can art work as activism?** Absolutely. If you combine sound with words, you create a song, and a song can become an ideological statement, a political statement. I am not sure that purely instrumen-

tal music can become ideological. But take Frederic Rzewski and his composition "The People United Will Never Be Defeated!", based on a revolutionary song. In Rzewski's version, this is an activist tool.

**What connects you to this tradition of political music – including Black music, spirituals, the blues?** Well, this is also in some way true for certain pieces by someone like Beethoven. His opera *Fidelio*, and the *Eroica* symphony, these were clearly aimed against the political societal establishment. And Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* is one of the most anti-capitalist pieces of music there is. Of course, Wagner is a highly complicated topic – but there has never been a single musician with the political and artistic relevance and influence of Richard Wagner.

**You just saw the Rolling Stones in concert for the first time – how was that?** It was a lifelong dream of mine to see one of their performances. What touched me most has to do with hope and sincerity. Keith Richards stood on stage and said: "Boy, it is great to be with you." It was not a PR gag. It was not an Instagram post. It was heartfelt. They are just happy to be together. And it really felt like a communion. The fact that a human being or a group of human beings can create this sincere togetherness gives me hope.

**What is the role of the artist today in a world characterised by massive transformation?** What Nina Simone said decades ago: "An artist's duty is to reflect the times."

**How do you get from reflection to action?** I'm a musician. I make music. I live a complicated life. I have played in circumstances which may sometimes go against my political beliefs. But the world is a messy place. What I can do is to create connections with certain pieces. I can create a certain contact. I can contextualise music. But once I stop playing the piano, I am a human being out there in this world. And yes, I am an activist, both online and especially offline. This goes hand in hand.

**You also campaigned for the Green party in the recent German election.** I joined them a couple of years ago. They helped me a great deal when I was under threat from the far-right. But I am a very critical member. When, during the refugee crisis and then the Euro crisis, a great part of Germany, part of the media and many political parties began to resent certain ethnic groups and European countries– the Greens did not change their position. I really honor that.

*If you combine sound with words, you create a song, and a song can become an ideological statement, a political statement.*

**Behind the scenes, you talk to politicians from almost all parties: are you actually less of an activist and more of a diplomat?** It's possible I have become one. I have learned that there is a big difference between an adversary and an enemy. There are people, certain journalists, certain politicians, with whom I disagree on practically all issues. But I would never cut ties with them because you need to stay in conversation. And there are people who defend political ideas which endanger my life. I do not talk to them. They are my enemies.

**Is this how change happens – that you work with people, not against people?** Again, the world is a messy place, and all we can do is stand in the mud and take one step after the other, one step after the other. I do not believe in the idea that a new day has arrived. I do not believe in the idea that we are fucked. I think both ideas are pseudo-religious B.S. That's not how the world works. I just try to be a good mensch. And to step-by-step adapt to the reality and change the direction of where this world is going. And this doesn't work without conversation.

**Can you complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** because this is all I have in my life to believe in.

*Igor Levit is a pianist and a future fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE.*

# I think it is time to escalate.

Jamila Raqib on Hope and Resistance

**What is hope to you?** Hope is about people acting together and recognising their own power. It is important to shake this feeling of powerlessness and hopelessness and instill in people the idea that through their action – what they do and what they refuse to do – they can change their societies or defend them.

**What is necessary to start a movement?** To start a movement, you need the perception that there is dissatisfaction and anger at particular policies or particular leaders – and you need people who spontaneously spill out into the streets. The more complicated question is how to sustain a movement – technology and social media have reduced the cost of organising, people can call for protests and get tens of thousands of protesters into the street. But those protesters may not know why they're there, what they're doing and how to actually stay the course or how to deal with repression.

**What is your answer?** You need to build institutions and networks – people who have experience working together in some form. I just did a webinar on Afghanistan, where I was born. One of the main grounds for realistic hope is that the past 20 years – as terrible as this period has been – has also seen the establishment of hundreds and hundreds of various types of networks: not just NGOs, but sports associations, arts groups, community groups, reading clubs, gardening clubs. This constitutes social power that can be converted into political power.

**We seem to live in a moment of movements – see Black Lives Matter or Fridays for Future. Which movements do you consider successful?** These movements focus heavily on raising awareness of the problems and on disruptive tactics – there is a crisis and doing nothing is not an option. Often people say: if only the world knew. But

we actually have a lot of information about the injustices in our own societies and around the world. And we do see displays of dissatisfaction and anger. The more complicated question then becomes: do we think we can do anything about it? The creation of alternatives is the really difficult part.

**How do movements fail?** Opponents of nonviolent resistance movements have become much better at withstanding these kinds of protests. Their goal is not necessarily even a crackdown – sometimes it is enough to just wait them out, so people get bored, they get cold, they have to go back to work, to their families. It is really unwise for a movement to depend just on symbolic protests and street protests – I think there's a basic lack of literacy globally on how change happens.

*People are desperate for action that is more effective than just these momentary displays of power, like blocking traffic.*

**Why is that?** Part of it is that we often don't know our own history. People are actually quite eager for that information. And there are not a lot of available resources that are easy to grasp, and easy to apply. We recognise with our work this major gap in infrastructure and education on nonviolent action. We tend to focus on the sacrifice. We tend to focus on bravery. But these are political calculations people are making. This is why history, research

and knowledge are so important for people who are struggling today. They are often reinventing the wheel. The cost of doing resistance is very high. We can reduce that cost by giving people some basic guidelines and lessons.

**How can the climate crisis help build effective movements?** The challenge is different, and this has to do with the dichotomy of fear and hope. Hope without information is not very sustainable. And fear without the recognition of the problem is not very empowering and mobilising. It is important to see that change can happen incrementally. It is not about avoiding the whole climate crisis all at once, it is about people beginning to feel that what they do has an impact.

**What kind of impact could that be?** Impact can look very different in different contexts. It's not always a school strike, as remarkable as all of these actions are. But it might be that we are not taking full advantage of this opportunity, of the mass awareness of how severe the problem is – without also saying what people can do about it. Information alone can be demobilising. The only way to inspire effective action is to lay out some positive hope for the future. Gandhi was obviously brilliant at this. He presented the struggle as very long-term, as about the empowerment of Indian society.

**After building awareness – what is the next step for the climate movement?** I think it is time to escalate. Enough people are aware – now they are looking for something to do. People are desperate for action that is more effective than just these momentary displays of power, like blocking traffic in different cities around the world, things like that. What is needed is an analysis of what allows these harmful policies to be possible. And then the question is: how can we, through citizen action, make these harmful policies more costly?

**What would make this possible?** The best examples of climate defense globally have taken place where communities are mobilised to defend their own communities. They use civil disobedience to disrupt the operations of energy companies that are operating in their areas. This is effective because it cuts into their profits. You need to understand power – and the sources of power available to our opponents.

**How does power work?** I think that people are under no illusions to the fact that their political systems are unjust. They recognise that something needs to happen, even if they don't have the capacity to do it yet. There was this faith that the system was somehow self-correcting. But the system, all of our systems, whether they are dictatorships or democracies or something in between, are only as robust and functioning as our capacity to defend them.

**Can you finish this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** Because my earliest thoughts have to do with violence and oppression and powerlessness in Afghanistan, the sense that I am completely helpless in the face of all the things happening to me and my family. I was not by any means a pacifist. I was someone who believed in the fundamental rights of people and their responsibility to resist injustice against their community. So finding out that you could do it without the destructiveness of war and violence was a powerful and profound moment.

*Jamila Raqib is the Executive Director of the Albert Einstein Institution, Boston.*



# Climate Justice Slow Hope The Future

SHIFTING SANDS BY SIM CHI YIN



The ecological crisis is forcing us to think in a more expansive and creative way.

## Catriona McKinnon on Hope and Climate Justice

**What is hope to you?** Hope sits in the space between uncertainty and possibility. When you are hopeful about an outcome, you believe this outcome could be a future state of the world – even if it is unlikely to come about. I would describe myself in that sense as a hopeful pessimist.

**What is the relationship between hope and justice?** Hope is fundamental to justice. When you think justice is impossible to achieve, you replace hope with despair. This can lead to a severe debilitation of the will, to apathy and a lack of resistance towards injustice and the forces that bring it about.

**What is climate justice?** Climate justice shines a spotlight on the fact that climate change does not affect all people equally. We are often invited to think about climate change as a shared problem, but the reality is that some will suffer far more than others: namely the world’s poorest people, women, and Indigenous people. Future people are also in danger. Climate justice focuses on the unequal spread of climate impact vulnerabilities, and asks those of us with the greatest resilience, power, and advantage to carry the brunt of the burdens of action on climate change.

**How is climate justice different from other challenges to justice?** Climate change forces us to think about just how poor our political institutions and our political traditions are with respect to considering the long-term future and the interests of people and other living things. It is particularly hard for young people – we lack a sense of intergenerational justice.

**How could political institutions be better equipped to react to climate change?** Various proposals are starting to come out of political philosophy and climate ethics – such as the idea of an ombudsman for future generations. We also need to make sure that corporate interests and profit do not influence politics in the way they do now. Unfortunately, the U.S. decision assigning personhood to corporations and granting corporations constitutionally protected rights to freedom of speech was a huge setback to swift action on climate change.

*We need to reconnect with nature in ways that enable us to see that the natural world is our home rather than a resource to be exploited.*

**There are attempts to establish personhood for non-human actors like oceans or rivers.** In 2017, the Whanganui River in New Zealand became the first river in the world to be considered a legal person and thus to possess legally enforceable rights. There is now a whole movement around these ideas that has its roots in deep-green ecophilosophy. But there are also voices questioning whether simply adapting this legal framework and extending rights to non-human nature is the right way forward – or if we instead need to overturn the existing conceptual framework and start anew with respect to the way in which we relate to nature.

**What could such a new framework look like?** One problem with assigning rights to nature is that rights are held against other rights-holders within a legalistic framework. That’s not a good model for how we ought to relate to nature. We need to reconnect with nature in ways that enable us to see that the natural world is our home rather than a resource to be exploited. On the other hand, we are running out of time. Perhaps the urgency of the ecological crisis means we should make the most of those frameworks to protect what is left.

**If hope is an emotion and laws are the outcome of rational processes – is there a way to combine these two areas, to overcome the dualistic worldview and to create climate justice?** Hope is not enough. We need to supplement hope with an array of other ways of relating to one another. Anger certainly has a role, as do frustration and courage. And solidarity is a very important dimension – solidarity with nature. The ecological crisis is forcing us to think in a more expansive and creative way. Climate justice should utilise the laws we have to find routes out of the climate crisis, while encouraging new visions for living lightly on the Earth.

**Should academics become more activist?** I am not an activist, mainly because of my personality. I am pretty introverted and I just would not be very good at it. Academics certainly face sets of difficult choices. Many are scared to death about what they know about the ecological crisis and want to shout from the rooftops about it, and to use the authority they have as scientists. But there is a real risk of them undermining that authority by getting into the arena of activism.

**You are working on a political theory of climate change – what are the elements of this theory?** We ought to add to the fight against climate change the moral ideals that are embedded in international criminal law. I propose a new criminal offense called “postericide” – committed by conduct which puts the human race at risk of extinction. I argue that certain agents are vicariously liable for the conduct of large collectives – such as corporations – that impose this risk on us. International criminal law addresses conduct that “shocks the moral conscience” of humankind. The postericidal conduct we see around us in the Anthropocene has this character.

**What steps could be taken to make “postericide” a real criminal offense?** I’m not sure that’s the real prize. International criminal law notoriously lacks teeth with respect to the prosecution and punishment of heinous wrongdoers. The real value of international criminal law is the expression of fundamental ideals that bind the human community together. For example, although most architects of genocide do not come to trial at the International Criminal Court, the “bucket” of conduct captured by the concept of genocide has entered our moral consciousness; that is for the best, I think. The crime of postericide could capture the public moral imagination in a similar way.

**Where do you see allies in this struggle?** Young people, no question. This is part of what makes hope so important: if the young lose hope, we are all lost. In terms of academic work, it has become cliché to say that we have to work across the traditional disciplinary boundaries. I think philosophers are very well placed to lead in this respect because they address the questions about the ecological crisis that everyone cares about.

**Could you finish this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** I am a person living within the ecological crisis. I think this should be personal for everyone. This is not happening externally to us. This is happening within our lives.

*Catriona McKinnon is a political theorist at the University of Exeter.*



# We need stories that show how visions of a better world have become reality.

## Christof Mauch on Slow Hope

**What is hope to you?** Hope is the opposite of despair. Hope is not naive, it includes serious critical perspectives. Hope is a transformative power. In the course of history, hope has changed minds and worlds.

**You have established the term “slow hope” in response to the concept of “slow violence” developed by Rob Nixon. How do the two relate to each other?** They work with opposing trajectories. Nixon has shown us that we, specifically in the Global North, have caused environmental destruction through exploitative practices – oil spills, toxic drifts and, more generally, through an externalisation of our responsibility. Excessive consumption, export of toxic waste and the like have contributed to the violations around the globe. This development and the violence that comes with it are not sudden. It works gradually, slowly. It is often invisible. And it hits especially the most vulnerable communities – humans and also other creatures and environments.

**And slow hope? Why does it need to be slow?** I don't believe in grand, solutionist promises or a radical turnaround of our economic system. And I don't believe in engineering miracles. Will we be saved quickly by vast programs to electrify hundreds of millions of cars? By carbon capture or geo-engineering? By cold fusion or by human migration to another planet? Relying solely on the techno approach that provoked our current environmental disaster seems counterintuitive. If the goals are too abstract, they will leave most of us behind in frustration. It is important to see that change can occur in many places, on many levels.

**What is the relationship between the individual and the collective regarding climate change – and how can hope help in this context?** I believe that the focus on individuals is highly problematic. It implies that individuals are to blame and suggests that individuals can get us out of the climate crisis. We must always keep in mind that very few big corporations are responsible for global emissions and for plastic pollution. Having said that: hopeful nar-

ratives are needed as an antidote to stories of imminent collapse. Hope helps us to get out of a collective paralysis. Ultimately hopefulness can lead from new mindsets to collective action - and yes, to action of a type that big corporations won't dare to ignore.

**Can you explain the power of narratives in the context of climate change?** For a long time we believed that arguments could create better worlds. We believed in “the unforced force of the better argument” that Jürgen Habermas has called for. In recent years we realised that sensible arguments may not be the most forceful ones. Richard Rorty has pointed out that “speaking differently” is more important than “arguing well” when it comes to bringing about change.

*Ecological change may well come slowly, but we must never be slow in working towards change.*

**What kind of stories can produce change?** We need a language and we need stories that show how visions of a better world have become reality, and therefore have provided overpowering hope – not overnight, but slowly and sometimes invisibly and often despite great setbacks.

**Can you think of specific stories? Can you give examples of stories that give you hope?** One of my favorite examples is the architect who turned a university in Taipei into an ecological campus; his students are doing the same thing now in different parts of the world. I like the story of London, a city known for its fog which was actually smog. London has effectively reduced emissions from traffic through the introduction of a Congestion Charge Zone and an Ultra Low Emission Zone. I like how restraint and rotational fishing, combined with

overfishing of predators, has stimulated the quick recovery of octopus populations.

**What is the relationship between innovation and tradition in your concept of “slow hope”?** It certainly helps if we can go back to past realities, to traditions and to practices that were less destructive than our current practices. The “slow food” movement can serve as an example. Going back to local traditions was key to success. But the related business models, marketing and global communication are all new and some of them innovative. History doesn't repeat itself. Going back does not work. But identifying the strength of traditions and reinventing them can be a powerful force.

**What are sources of “slow hope”?** I believe, among many things, that ideas, understandings - or traditions if you will - from the global periphery have a great potential to help us.

**Like philosophies that put wellbeing in the centre?** Yes, exactly. Indigenous ideas of Mother Earth (Pachamama) or of living well (Sumak kawsay or buen vivir) put emphasis on social and ecological values rather than on economic ones. I am also thinking of GNH, Gross National Happiness, a counter-concept to the capitalist measure of GDP. This Buddhist-inspired and truly subversive idea calls for happiness instead of material wealth as a measure of wellbeing. I see hope in the fact that a concept that originated in Bhutan some 50 years ago has been adopted by other countries.

**What are unlikely alliances that can produce change – and how?** I think some alliances with the more-than-human world can produce change. It may seem obscure, but look at the role of earthworms for instance. They are some of our best allies. Earthworms have over thousands of years created the very basis on which our agriculture and livelihoods rest. Without their labor we would not have enough humus and topsoil. Moreover, earthworms are actors against runoff and flooding because they make the groundwater permeable. If we work with earthworms instead of killing them off with chemical fertilizer, they will be great allies. We need to ecologise and “earth-imize” our thinking.

**Who are the actors of change and slow hope within our society?** I would not underestimate the humanities. They are always seen as useless and unproductive. But the humanities in general have given us visions of our potential as humans. Teachers, curators, theater makers, composers, philosophers, novelists, journalists have shown us outlines of better worlds - beyond the dominant worlds of production, consumption and capital accumulation.

**Do you see pitfalls in the concept of slow hope?** If we don't recognise the enormous gap between our visions and goals and the measures that bring about change, we can be easily frustrated. Also, slow could be misunderstood to suggest that there is no urgency. Ecological change may well come slowly, but we must never be slow in working towards change.

**Can you finish this sentence: for me this is personal because –** I worry about our increasingly self-destructive world, about the future of my sons and about the prospect of friends in vulnerable parts of the world whose existence is getting more precarious day by day.

*Christof Mauch is Director of the Rachel Carson Center, Munich.*

SHIFTING SANDS BY SIM CHI YIN



# Every revolution seems impossible the night before it happens.

## Jonathan White on Hope and the Future



BE HUMAN BY ANJEL (BORIS ANJUE)

**What is hope to you?** Hope is a belief in some kind of better future without the certainty that it will materialise. Hope is something almost assertive. It has to be. We often think of it as an emotion, as an extension of your feelings about something. But in fact, it is often much more of a cognitive act – you decide you are going to see the glimpse of possibilities. Hope gives you reasons for optimism, even when emotionally you don't feel particularly hopeful.

**How is hope connected to the concept of the future?** There are different kinds of hope that we project into the future: the activist hope that involves trying to make something happen, a hope that shades into something different, less about agency and more mythical, a projection of a narrative into the future. This kind of hope is about ideals, you have no real sense of what might happen between now and then. It is sometimes very hard to trace a line between these dots.

**What happens when a perspective of the future is lost?** We need hope as citizens to have a sense of control – this is why we tend to focus on the things that are nearer to us. But we also need these far-away things, idealistic motivations, especially in politics: ideas like equality, justice, liberty. Joining a political party is, or should be, a matter of both: a long-term idea with a concrete commitment.

**Do you see a lack of a sense of future in present day democracies?** This began already in the middle of the 20th century, with the meaning of atomic weapons and the idea of possible sudden endings. The question was less: what kind of future do we want? But more: do we have a future? This kind of thinking went into abeyance with the end of the Cold War – and it came back, in a different form, in the early 21st century. Now it is less the fear of a sudden end but the fear of a future which is simply a continuation of the present.

**Less the loss of future and more the lack of alternative futures?** This is connected to certain

critiques of neoliberalism – that we can imagine the end of the world but not the end of capitalism. And it is connected to the idiom of climate change which is not about an imminent end. Humans will continue – but which humans? The world will continue – but with us? We are ill-equipped to face these kinds of questions because we are in the habit of expecting little but the continuation of the same.

**Does democracy depend on the promise of a better future?** When we think about political parties, party democracy, all the kinds of collectives that people join – these generally presuppose an idea of a better future, either as something new or as the restoration of a better past. And they often imply a long timescale. They demand commitment in the face of inertia and setbacks. You could say that democracy is not just about what you are pursuing, but about how you make sense of the obstacles you encounter along the way. The project of an egalitarian society is inevitably long-term, probably indefinite.

**At the same time, democracy is about the present, about getting things done.** Democracy is promise and process, true – the notion of proceduralised democracy, not just democracy as a general ethos. If you believe in institutions, you believe in procedures. But how do you cope with the fact that sometimes you will be frustrated that the wrong people win elections? Traditionally the answer for modern democracy has been to say that we can hope for mistakes to be corrected. Ideas of toleration have a lot to do with the notion that there is sufficient time for mistakes to happen, for the public to get it wrong, for the wrong people to be empowered, for people to behave badly.

*The project of an egalitarian society is inevitably long-term, probably indefinite.*

**Hope is a promise of change that promotes stability?** This is how capitalism works in a lot of ways, by appealing to the long term: “don't judge us yet”. Don't judge the system now because wealth hasn't trickled down yet. The attempt to use the far future to compensate for the inadequacies of the present. The claim that the future is where the rationality of the system emerges.

**If we feel that time is running out, how can we use this impatience constructively?** Democracy requires patience. But ultimately, we need to recapture some sense of time – because without urgency there is no agency. It is easy to let things pass when you think you have that abundance of time. Sometimes we need to feel that there is no time left in order to act.

**And this is where we are now?** We have a sense of being at a fork in the road. This happens periodically in history, such as with the dualism of the 20th century: socialism or barbarism. These questions crop up in every crisis. What is distinctive about the present situation is that there are multiple sources of anxiety: we may not want to reduce our diagnosis of climate change to capitalism alone. We also face technological change, artificial intelligence, and nuclear weapons. The crisis of the moment is not reducible to one stimulus.

**Do you see revolutionary constellations today that remind you of constellations in the past? Are we living in a revolutionary moment?** Every revolution seems impossible the night before it happens. The revolution is an event exactly because it is surprising, because it stands out from the passage of time, because it completely confounds your expectations. In thinking about the present, I find the idea of the spiral of silence relevant: everyone thinks that everyone else is apathetic. And then suddenly they realise they're not. Suddenly everyone understands that something they thought just they themselves were thinking was actually something shared by many people.

**Climate change creates another dynamic, a sense of urgency – what is the role of hope in times of emergency?** A characteristic of emergencies is the desire to restore some kind of status quo ante. Emergency thinking is in that respect quite conservative. Which is also why governments often want us to think in terms of emergencies rather than crises – a crisis implies the notion that things are unsustainable, that we need to do things very differently. A lot of the things that we have faced in the last decade were presented to us as emergencies and governed as emergencies, requiring fast and decisive action by the government for restorative goals – to make sure that the banking system still works for example. The danger with emergencies is that hope is reduced to a desire for restoration, for breathing-space.

**Hope gone wrong.** Hope can of course be abused. It can be co-opted by those who want to maintain things as they are, because you can make people hopeful simply to return to the past, to calm the markets, to be able to drink in pubs. These are all sentiments I share at some level. The place for a more critical kind of hope is in keeping alive a sense of volatility and shaping it in a direction that's progressive.

**Can you complete this sentence: for me, this is personal because –** I'm bad at hoping and depend on others for much of it.

*Jonathan White is a political theorist and a fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE in the programme “The Future of Democracy”.*



# Featured Authors



**PAGE 5 ECE TEMELKURAN** is a novelist and political commentator whose work explores issues that are controversial in Turkey, such as the Kurdish and Armenian struggles and freedom of expression. Born in a political family and educated as a lawyer, Temelkuran began her journalism career in 1993. She was fired in 2011 for criticising the Turkish government and subsequently forced into exile. Temelkuran has written novels and numerous non-fiction books, most recently *Together: 10 Choices for a Better Now*. She lives in Croatia and will be a fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE beginning in Spring 2022.



**PAGE 10 LEA YPI** is a political philosopher whose research centres on issues of global justice, normative political theory and the philosophy of the Enlightenment. As a prominent left-wing voice in Europe, she specialises in Kant and Marx. Ypi's latest book *Free*, a political memoir about growing up in communist Albania and about the transition to liberalism, was published in October 2021 to broad public acclaim. At THE NEW INSTITUTE, Ypi is a fellow in the programme "The Future of Democracy".



**PAGE 15 JAMILA RAQIB** specialises in the study and practice of strategic nonviolent action. As the current executive director of the Albert Einstein Institution in Boston, Raqib used to work closely with its founder and the world's foremost scholar of the field, the late Gene Sharp. Raqib is the Director's Fellow at MIT Media Lab, where she is developing a learning platform that helps groups prepare strategic plans supporting the defense of their civil and political rights.



**PAGE 6 MARKUS GABRIEL** is an internationally acclaimed philosopher of the New Realism school of thought. At the age of 29, he became Germany's youngest philosophy professor. He holds the Chair for Epistemology, Modern and Contemporary Philosophy at the University of Bonn where he is also the Director of the International Centre for Philosophy. His publications include studies of German philosopher Schelling, skepticism in German Idealism, the Philosophy of Mind and most recently a concept for Enlightenment in dark times. At THE NEW INSTITUTE, he is director of the programme "The Foundations of Value and Values".



**PAGE 11 JULIET JACQUES** is a writer, filmmaker and journalist whose practice explores the themes of literature, film, art, music, politics, gender, sexuality and football. She is best known for her work on the transgender experience, published as a series of columns in *The Guardian* in 2011 and 2012 and later as the book *TRANS: A MEMOIR*. She has also hosted a radio programme on art and taught a course on queer fiction.



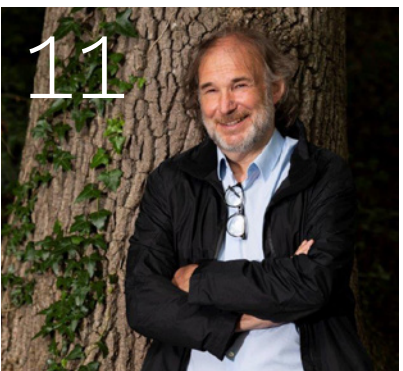
**PAGE 17 CATRIONA MCKINNON** is a political theorist who studies climate justice and climate ethics. With a focus on contemporary liberal political philosophy and the theory and practice of toleration, her work tackles the question of what, regarding the climate crisis, we owe to future generations. While most of McKinnon's work lies in political philosophy, she is increasingly transitioning to transdisciplinary work on climate justice with the goal of better informing climate policy.



**PAGE 7 BONAVENTURE SOH BEJENG NDIKUNG** is an independent curator, author and biotechnologist. He is the founder and artistic director of SAVVY Contemporary in Berlin, a discursive platform that seeks to negotiate notions of the West and Non-West. At the centre of his work lies a deep concern for epistemological diversity. For his service to the city, Ndikung also received the Order of Merit of the State of Berlin. He is a professor in the Spatial Strategies MA program at the Weißensee Academy of Art in Berlin. In 2023, he will take on the role of Director at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) in Berlin.



**PAGE 13 INA-MARIA SHIKONGO** is a climate justice activist and artist. She was born in Angola, grew up in former East Germany, and studied in Namibia and France. As an active member of Fridays For Future, Shikongo is fighting against the extraction of fossil fuels and calling for systemic change in politics, economics and everything in between. Shikongo also runs a project that trains grassroots organisations and communities throughout Namibia in the basics of fashion design.



**PAGE 18 CHRISTOF MAUCH** is a historian with a strong focus on nature and the environment. He studied philosophy, history, literature, and protestant theology and has taught in Beijing, Edmonton, Kolkata, Vienna, Washington, D.C., and Warsaw. A member of several academic boards and committees, Mauch founded the Rachel Carson Center for Environment & Society at Germany's Ludwig Maximilian University – one of the largest international research centres for the environmental humanities and social sciences.



**PAGE 9 CASSIE THORNTON** is an artist and activist who refers to herself as a feminist economist. Her work aims to redefine healthcare in the context of capitalism. Thornton developed "The Hologram", a collective peer-to-peer health practice in which three people (a triangle) are invited to listen and ask questions of a fourth person (the hologram). One triangle member asks questions about social health, another about physical health, and the last one about mental/emotional health. "The Hologram" includes a structured protocol for distributing care virally, to ensure that everyone who gives care is cared for.



**PAGE 14 IGOR LEVIT** is a pianist who connects his art with the social events happening around him. He has produced recordings of Bach, Beethoven, Rzewski, Stevenson and Shostakovich that have won him rave reviews. His *Hauskonzerte*, live streamed concerts from his living room during the Covid pandemic, were viewed by hundreds of thousand viewers across the world. A vocal critic of the far-right, racism and social injustice, Levit is a future fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE.



**PAGE 19 JONATHAN WHITE** is a political scientist whose interests lie in political sociology and political theory. His areas of expertise are contemporary European democracy and EU integration. In his work, he explores a number of themes including political engagement and public opinion, models of citizenship under conditions of transnational integration, and the nature of social bonds. At THE NEW INSTITUTE, White is a fellow in the programme "The Future of Democracy", where he is working on a project about the relationship between democracy, time, and ideas about the future.

# Featured Artists



**COVER / PAGES 4,7,9 RAISA GALOFRE** Raisa Galofre's work challenges Western narratives around gender and identity, offering an alternative perspective that embraces the "clash, mixture and encounter of opposites", as she describes it. Her photographic series *Daughters of the Muntu: A Pluriverse* – parts of which we feature in this issue – delves into the multilayered history and life of Muntu Americanas in the contemporary Colombian Caribbean region. Based on Manuel Zapata Olivella's novel *Changó, el Gran Putas*, Galofre's series explores the interrelatedness of human beings whose existence is deeply grounded in a continuous, ongoing communication with nature and other beings. In her series *Aus Hand und Stein*, a photograph from which, titled *Der Liegende*, we include here, Galofre asks how historical narratives would change if the narrators came from the Global South. For this work, she collects archival texts and images from which a non-linear and imaginative storyline evolves, revealing how different perspectives can shape history in different ways.



**PAGES 8, 19 ANJEL (BORIS ANJE)** Against the colorful and radiant backdrop of his paintings, Anjel (born Boris Anje) is celebrated for his depictions of contemporary African dandies. His subjects' outfits, decorated with famous brand names, reflect both consumerist culture and African symbolism. As Anjel himself once described it: "I want to give value to the Black body. ... I'm trying to give some kind of attention, some kind of attraction, to the person of colour." During his studies at the Institute of Fine Arts Founban in Cameroon, Anjel was an artist in residence at Les Ateliers Sahn in Brazzaville, Congo, where he encountered "sapeur culture," a subculture characterised by the wearing of colourful clothing as a means of protest. Through the present day, it has become an important part of African heritage, and women have increasingly become part of the movement too.



**PAGES 5, 6, 14 AKINBODE AKINBIYI** Akinbode Akinbiyi is a wanderer. On his walks through cities such as Berlin, Lagos and Johannesburg, Akinbiyi closely observes and documents social realities of the streets. In the ongoing series *Lagos: All Roads*, a piece of which we feature in this edition, Akinbiyi portrays the many faces of Africa's largest metropolis, depicting an almost unimaginable sprawl of dense urban activity. Akinbiyi grew up in London and Lagos, and has lived and worked in Berlin for more than 25 years now. Today, he finds himself on a search for "fragments of this lost innocence" that accompanied his childhood in Lagos. The two images made on Victoria Island and shown in this Paper Edition are part of another ongoing series, titled *Sea Never Dry*. It's an indepth look at humans' relationship with the coastline, the delicate border between land and sea. As Akinbiyi describes it, it explores "our intimate longing back to the primary element of our birth, the embodied trauma of the centuries of sea travel, vessels plying waterways in a search for new lands, new environments to conquer and subjugate."



**PAGE 10 JOTA MOMBAÇA** As they describe themselves, Jota Mombaça is a "non-binary bicha" (pejorative Brazilian slang used for gay men), and a "mutant" whose personality is in constant flux. In their work, the interdisciplinary artist researches and performs the relationships between monstrosity and humanity, queer studies, anti-coloniality and the redistribution of violence. Sound and the visualisation of words play an integral role in their work, which takes place in an open performative process. *A Gente Combinamos De Não Morrer / Us Agreed Not To Die* is a performance that deals with the ongoing struggles of Black and trans people – their resistance expressed in a will to survive and in the fight for their rights. During the performance, Mombaça manufactures knives made out of materials such as glass, wood and red shoelaces and simultaneously reads out texts from various sources, reclaiming the voices and memories of writers who have been silenced.



**PAGES 11, 16, 18, SIM CHI YIN** Sim Chi Yin's photographic work lays bare the monumental challenges our planet faces, and simultaneously provides personal accounts of human existence by uniting intimate storytelling with documentary photography. Her research-based practice encompasses moving image, archival interventions and text-based performances. The ongoing project *Shifting Sands*, parts of which are presented in this issue, grew out of an interest in the history and society of her home country Singapore, which is the world's largest importer of sand per capita. Sand is one of the world's most used resources, and its global depletion has serious environmental and social impacts. The second work shown in this Paper Edition is part of the photographic series *Burmese Spring*. It documents the air of optimism that filled the streets in Myanmar in 2012 when Nobel Prize Winner Aung San Suu Kyi headed the opposition. To Chi Yin, this moment was the "embodiment of all the hope that many Burmese [had]", revealing both the resilience and fragility of a hopeful nation desperately longing for better times to come.



**PAGE 12, 15 KIRI DALENA** Social injustice and inequality are at the heart of Kiri Dalena's work as a visual artist, filmmaker and activist. Dalena is actively involved in the struggle for human rights amidst state persecution in the Philippines. When in early 2012 a hurricane aggressively hit her mother's hometown in Iligan, Philippines, it caused an immense flooding. Clean cut logs and uprooted trees were swept down from the mountains, rivers destroyed entire communities, humans and animals were washed to the sea. This devastating catastrophe led to a significant turn in Dalena's work, inspiring her to reflect deeply on how to find a more compassionate form of participating in and simultaneously documenting people's stories through filmmaking. In the video work *Tungkung Langit*, Dalena follows the life of two children after they have tragically lost their family in the hurricane. In the process of creating this work, Dalena began to experience the possibilities and very limits of filmmaking.

# Image Credits

**Cover** Raisa Galofre, *El fuego vivo de la cumbia vive en nosotros (The vivid fire of Cumbia lives within us)*, from the series *Daughters of the Muntu: A Pluriverse*, 2015 – ongoing, © Raisa Galofre

**p. 4** Raisa Galofre, *Portrait of a Carnival Dancer during Barranquilla's Carnival, Colombia*, from the series *Daughters of the Muntu: A Pluriverse*, 2015 – ongoing © Raisa Galofre

**p. 5** Akinbode Akinbiyi, *Bar Beach, Victoria Island, Lagos*, 2004, from the series *Sea Never Dry*, Courtesy: The artist

**p. 6** Akinbode Akinbiyi, *Lagos Island, Lagos*, 2004, from the series *Lagos: All Roads*, Courtesy: The artist

**p. 7** Raisa Galofre, *Todos los tiempos en uno (All the times in one)*, from the Series *Daughters of the Muntu: A Pluriverse*, 2015 – ongoing, © Raisa Galofre

**p. 8** Anjel (Boris Anje), *Shades of Pride*, 2020, Acrylic on canvas, 140 x 110cm, Courtesy of the artist and OOA Gallery

**p. 9** Raisa Galofre, *Der Liegende (after Waldemar Grzimek)*, from the series *Aus Hand und Stein (From Hands and Stones)*, 2015 – 2016, © Raisa Galofre

**p. 10** Jota Mombaça, *A Gente Combinamos De Não Morrer / Us Agreed Not To Die*, Performance, Object, 2018-ongoing

**p. 11** Sim Chi Yin, *Burmese Spring*, 2012, © Sim Chi Yin

**p. 12** Kiri Dalena, *Tungkung Langit*, 2012, video, color, sound, 20'35", Courtesy: Kiri Dalena, Camera: John Javellana

**p. 14** Akinbode Akinbiyi, *Bar Beach, Victoria Island, Lagos*, 2006, from the series *Sea Never Dry*, Courtesy: The artist

**p. 15** Kiri Dalena, *Tungkung Langit*, 2012, video, color, sound, 20' 35", Courtesy: Kiri Dalena, Camera: John Javellana

**p. 16** Sim Chi Yin, *Shifting Sands*, Malaysia, 2017 – ongoing, © Sim Chi Yin

**p. 18** Sim Chi Yin, *Shifting Sands*, Singapore, 2017 – ongoing, © Sim Chi Yin

**p. 19** Anjel, *Be human*, 2020, Acrylic and posca on canvas, 160x130 cm, Courtesy of the artist



THE NEW INSTITUTE is an Institute of Advanced Study and a platform for change. Our mission is to imagine and develop visions for fundamentally reconfigured societies. We seek to close the gap between insight and action by bringing together academics and practitioners from different disciplines to share in rigorous analysis of today's most critical social, economic, and ecological issues - and then to act upon that analysis. We combine academic rigour and innovative practice to inspire, promote and implement societal change. We provide a caring, committed and creative environment and serve as a facilitator for the hopeful.

# Join us on our Mission

Our goal is to create real change: a few ways to join us on this mission are by becoming a fellow, or simply by following our progress online or via our regular newsletter. Have other ideas for meaningful projects? Feel free to email us with questions and suggestions.

### Our Programmes

We invite fellows to live and work together in Hamburg at the Warburg Ensemble, the physical home of THE NEW INSTITUTE opening in the spring of 2022. Our fellowship programmes address the most urgent questions of our time at the intersections of ecology, economy, democracy and the human condition. Our five programmes so far, each framed as a series of fundamental questions, include:

**THE FOUNDATIONS OF VALUE AND VALUES** explores the potential of a sustainable value system for the 21st century. Our ambition is to inspire action, create impact, and drive change, requiring a change of mindsets and behaviours from the individual to the public sphere. The context of our post Covid-19 world presents challenges and opportunities for reimagining a value-driven society that seeks to address the crises and complexities of the present and the future.

**THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY** addresses the current challenges and failures of the democratic system and aims to find ways to strengthen participation. The goal is to imagine the reconfiguration of democracy to fit for purpose and the capacity to evolve.

**ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION** combines thinking about human wellbeing, planetary boundaries and diverse modes of value creation as constitutive elements of an economic system. We explore what it will take to turn unsustainable growth patterns into solutions for future-proof prosperity.

**THE NEW HANSE** aims to support the city of Hamburg in its endeavour to become the European capital of a green, digital transformation. We work to identify pilot projects and showcase the potential for a data-driven and citizen-centred future.

**VOICES FROM THE PAST – LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE** seeks to understand how change happens by interviewing key actors in historical situations – from the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 to the reunification of Germany in 1989 to the ecological movement. Our ambition is to foster a growing archive of historical transformations.



AN EVENING LECTURE AT THE NEW INSTITUTE

### Our Team

We are a growing team and seek to attract talent and high-profile academics from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. We aim to work with artists, activists, media, governments and businesses who we see as essential partners for realising change. Wilhelm Krull is Founding Director, Christoph Gottschalk is CEO, and the current Programme Directors include Francesca Bria, Markus Gabriel, Christoph Möllers and Dennis Snower. Our first cohort of fellows includes Christoph Horn, Anna Katsman, María Inés Plaza Lazo, Philip Manow, Jan-Werner Müller, Corine Pelluchon, Christian Stöcker, Ingo Venzke, Jonathan White, and Lea Ypi. We look forward to welcoming more fellows starting in 2022 with the completion of our home, the Warburg Ensemble.

### Our Home

Hamburg, Germany's second largest city, is vibrant, rich in history and tradition and holds a keen eye towards the future. Located close to the North Sea, the city is connected to the water in many ways – the harbour is an essential part of its identity, waterways and bridges are omnipresent, the centre of the city is set around a large lake. Hamburg is where the home of THE NEW INSTITUTE will be. The Warburg Ensemble, a unique series of nine connected town houses from the 19th century, lies in the centre of Hamburg and will provide a physical space for Institute fellows to live, work and engage with each other and the wider public. Impact is the goal, cooperation is the means, and we aim to create a place that fosters both insight and action in the most meaningful way. The Warburg Ensemble is currently under construction and will open in the spring of 2022.

THE NEW  
INSTITUTE

THE PAPER EDITION  
ISSUE NUMBER 2  
WINTER 2021

**FOUNDER**  
Erck Rickmers

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
Christoph Gottschalk  
Anke Hennings  
Wilhelm Krull

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Georg Diez

**EDITORIAL TEAM**  
Ferya Ilyas  
Antonia Lagemann  
María Inés Plaza Lazo

**DESIGN**  
Triboro

**ART**  
Bonaventure Soh  
Bejeng Ndikung,  
Antonia Lagemann

**PRINTING**  
Pöge Druck

This magazine  
has been printed on  
FSC-certified  
recycled paper in  
Germany.

www.thenew.institute  
info@thenew.institute  
Große Theaterstraße 1  
20354 Hamburg  
Germany



MOELLERS © JELKA VON LANGEN, ALL OTHER PHOTOS © SABINE VIELMO



Visit our future home





THE NEW  
INSTITUTE

Hamburg is  
our home.

The world is  
our habitat.

The future is  
our concern.



The future home of THE NEW INSTITUTE.