

This work was created as a visual conclusion for the María Lugones Decolonial Summer School 2021 after a Zoom lecture with el maestro Jean Casimir teaching us from Haiti.

Many people still don't know or forget but Haiti was the epicentral place for the first slave revolution resulting in the successful insurrection by self-liberated slaves against the French colonial rule.

This short film was born from the encounter of several circumstances that occurred through my laptop, if you want, my Pandora's Box. If I close my eyes, and I think about the events one of the most special things that enter into my mind and my body is the resonance of Jean Casimir's voice next to the cackle of a rooster in Haiti. (In Spanish "cacareo"; is an onomatopoeia, has sound)

Soon I realized that the rooster, "le coq," is precisely the symbol of the French nation. One of the invading countries of Haiti together with Spain.

This animal is considered as a symbol of nation not only in France, in many countries and cultures, the rooster is symbol of masculinity, vigor, power, fertility, or war. It becomes the symbol of Gaul and the Gauls as a consequence of a play on words since the Latin term "gallus" means at the same time rooster and Gallic.

The rooster does not only appear in Western iconography and memory. In China, the country of origin of this animal, the rooster is considered the main symbol of the Yang element as a carrier of many advantages. Male main bird, bird of glory, with multiple meanings. He is the messenger of the dawn, the Sun, and the symbol of spiritual rebirth. It is also the symbolic animal of the Twelve Terrestrial Branches (Eastern Zodiac) and in the astrological sense - it corresponds to October when in ancient China preparations for war were made.

For Christianity, it represents a particularly symbolic force in several respects, which explains why it frequently and proudly crowns the tips of church spiers. One of the readings that the rooster has in Christian iconography is as a representation of the resurrection of Christ because they are the first to receive the sunrise.

The rooster was also a symbol of the preacher, who awakens the sleepy.

On the other hand, it is inevitable to connect this animal with its use in cockfighting.

Naturally, roosters can be territorial and very violent. They also have a characteristic social system due to a hierarchical order that develops when they are only one week old. At seven weeks, it is already established that there is a dominant male, who dominates over all the others. The hens, however,

have an independent hierarchical order and do not enter the dominance of males.

The oldest cockfighting seems to be in Asia. In China, they were already celebrated 2500 years ago and it is possible that 1000 years before in India. In Ancient Rome they were used to acquire courage. Cockfighting was already present in the pre-colonial Philippines (Ma-i). This practice was brought after to America (Abya Yala) by the Spanish colonizers.

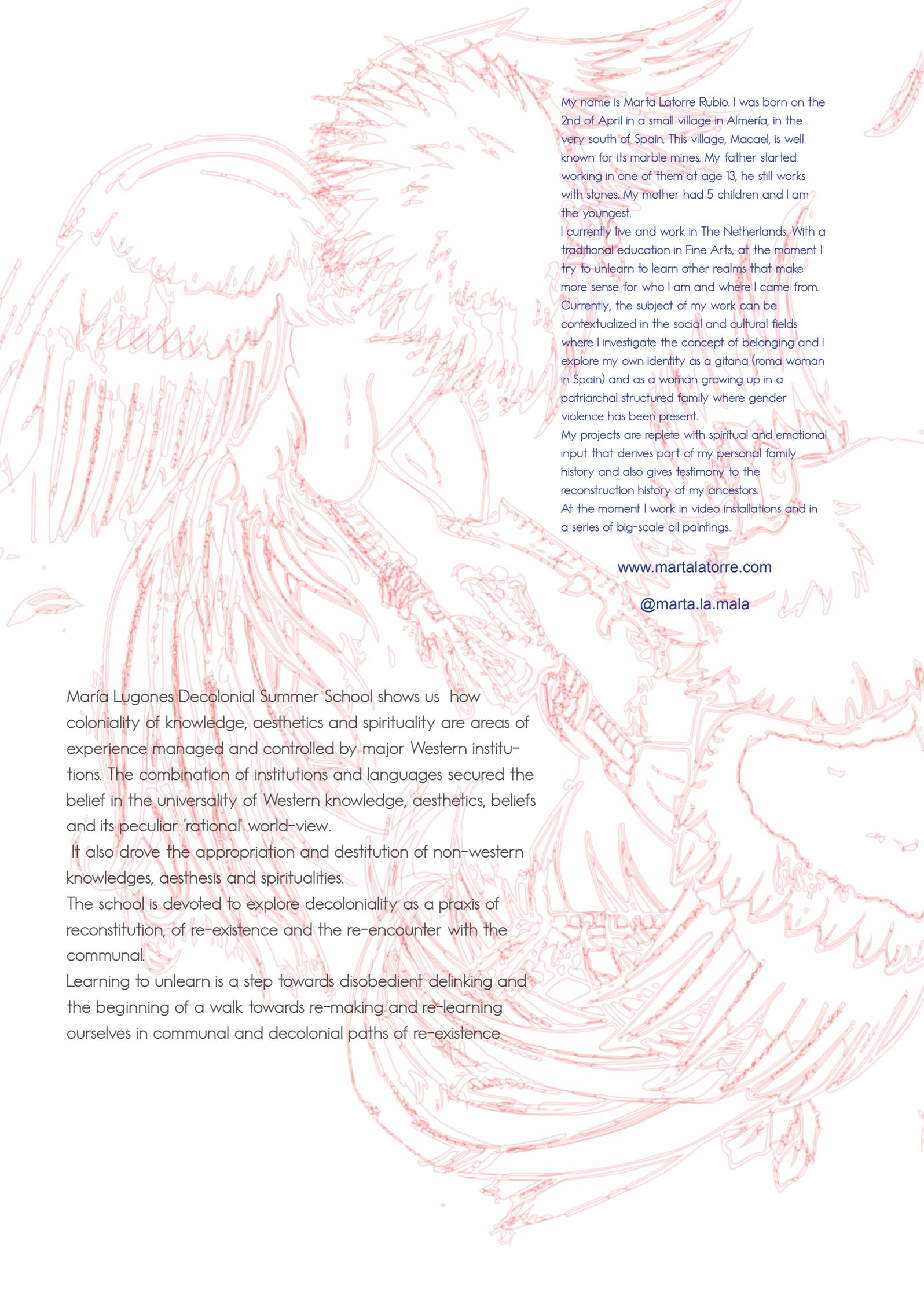
Approaching the XVI century, the high amount of domestic animals that were embarked in the fleet is known, destined for the Spanish settlers, not only for their future maintenance but also to introduce the Spanish species that prevailed against the autochthonous ones, resulting in the contagion of diseases that caused thousands of deaths among the indigenous population as the disappearance of numerous species.

Cockfights, like bullfights, take place within a circle which is also called the arena ("ruedo" in Spanish). The fight is won by the one who leaves the opponent disabled to continue fighting. The roosters that leave the ring because they do not want to fight are called "low caste" and are automatically sacrificed.

From my eyes, Jean Casimir's class was a metaphor for the struggle between two voices. One, the cackling of the animal rooster - France / Spain - the echo of coloniality that seems to be always present, that mutates and camouflages itself. The other; the reverberation of maestro Jean Casimir, the voice of the resistance, oral history, the example of Haiti for the rest of the world.

The video that you can see here, is somehow a way to give shape to what I think and how I felt. All these thoughts appear in the film as allegories:

- The circle on the floor made of sugar evokes the cane plantations in Haiti.
- Two men (feet) who mutate and have grown spurs to fight. One could be France and the other, Spain. Colonial powers.
- Spurs that look a look like bull horns. Violence.
- White hands full of gold and wealth with obvious references to the Catholic Church. Stealing and spoliation.
- Hands that provoke, prick and alter the environment. Phallic fingers.
- Suffering and Masculinity to the rhythm of "Pasodoble", the musical genre of bullfighting that owes its origin to a military march. Extremely popular in Spain still today and soundtrack of this film.
- Patriarchy and been locked in a gloomy and grotesque circle.



My name is María Latorre Rubio. I was born on the 2nd of April in a small village in Almería, in the very south of Spain. This village, Macael, is well known for its marble mines. My father started working in one of them at age 13, he still works with stones. My mother had 5 children and I am the youngest.

I currently live and work in The Netherlands. With a traditional education in Fine Arts, at the moment I try to unlearn to learn other realms that make more sense for who I am and where I came from. Currently, the subject of my work can be contextualized in the social and cultural fields where I investigate the concept of belonging and I explore my own identity as a gitana (roma woman in Spain) and as a woman growing up in a patriarchal structured family where gender violence has been present.

My projects are replete with spiritual and emotional input that derives part of my personal family history and also gives testimony to the reconstruction history of my ancestors.

At the moment I work in video installations and in a series of big-scale oil paintings.

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María Lugones Decolonial Summer School shows us how coloniality of knowledge, aesthetics and spirituality are areas of experience managed and controlled by major Western institutions. The combination of institutions and languages secured the belief in the universality of Western knowledge, aesthetics, beliefs and its peculiar 'rational' world-view.

It also drove the appropriation and destitution of non-western knowledges, aesthesis and spiritualities.

The school is devoted to explore decoloniality as a praxis of reconstitution, of re-existence and the re-encounter with the communal.

Learning to unlearn is a step towards disobedient delinking and the beginning of a walk towards re-making and re-learning ourselves in communal and decolonial paths of re-existence.