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SUR O NO SUR / OPEN CALL
EDITION 1 / SUMMER 2024

Pocoapoco

pocoapocomx.org/sur-o-no-sur



Sur o No Sur is a proposal for collective learning

— an experiment in sharing and rethinking knowledge between us through guided practices, dialogues, and explorations. Modeled as three-week residency - learning programs held over the course of the summer, the program brings in a selection of visiting artists to act as guides and facilitators.

Sur o No Sur results from 8 years of residency programs that have welcomed participants from 6 continents, 50 countries and vastly different histories, fields, and experiences. We're grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from and share space with each of these people. Now we're collaboratively developing this experimental "school" to invite others to learn and practice alongside these inspiring and reflective artists as well as each other.

Sur or No Sur aims to offer a structured yet intuitive platform for artistic exchange and a space outside daily practices and/or traditional institutions to question and engage with the form in which we and/or our work can exist and evolve. The program values and prioritizes the non-traditional / traditional knowledge that stems from our own communities, histories and territories and offers time for experimental dialogue, learning, and making without defined expectation.

ABOUT / EDITION 1 / SUMMER 2024

Session One / June 3-21, 2024 :
A Story is Never Just a Story

Visiting Artists:
Megan Paulin / E. Medina / Gabriela Ortega

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Session Two / July 1-19, 2024 :
**Exploring a Collective Narrative,
Constructing a Collective Future**

Visiting Artists:
Sheetal Prajapati / Rennie Jones / Noam Keim

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CALENDAR

Sessions run for three weeks. In-person guided sessions with visiting artists will be held each morning (more or less 10:30 am-1:30 pm) Monday-Friday. These include but are not limited to, writing practices, conversational practices, excursions, artist talks, studio visits, films, and listening practices. Participants will have the afternoons to work on their own projects and/or respond to what was shared during the day. On Thursday evenings we will host group events related to the workshop topics. Lunch (the main meal) will be provided Monday - Friday, as well as bread and coffee in the morning. Saturday and Sunday are open.

For those staying at or through Pocoapoco, arrival is the Sunday prior to the program and departure is the Saturday following the program.

PARTICIPANTS

Sur o No Sur is open to participants of all fields, disciplines, locations, and ages (over 21). As with all of our programs, Sur o No Sur works to support and connect individuals, ideas, and practices catalyzing creative work, social discourse, and understanding. Through ongoing collaborations, we aim to continue to learn from and strengthen the network of artists and cultural and social workers that come together here.

FUNDING

The cost of participation in the three-week program is \$1200 USD. **This program fee includes daily lunch Monday - Friday as well as access to the Pocoapoco house but does not include lodging, transportation, or other personal expenses.**

Through funding support, we are able to offer scholarship fees for all national and local participants as well as a limited number of partial scholarships for international participants. International participants who would like to be considered for a scholarship should acknowledge this on the application form. For anyone interested in supporting this scholarship program through personal or community resources, we welcome tax-deductible donations through our site [here](#). We are also happy to provide letters

of support to any selected applicants who are requesting external funding to cover the costs of their participation.

The cost of the program is offered on sliding scale fees as follows:

International participants: \$1200 USD

National participants (Mexican nationals living in Mexico): \$5000 MXN

Local participants (Mexican nationals living in Oaxaca) \$1000 MXN

International participants scholarship: \$600 USD

A 50% non-refundable deposit is required to confirm participation.

HOUSING

For those who are interested in securing housing through Pocoapoco, we offer various housing options with sliding fees for program participants.

Housing in Pocoapoco:

Pochote apartment (single)

\$300 USD/ week (\$900 USD total)

Voladora apartment (single)

\$250 USD / week (\$750 USD total)

Cocinera room (single)

\$175 USD / week (\$525 USD total)

Guadalupe room (shared w/ shared bath)

\$90 / week (\$270 USD total)

Housing outside of Pocoapoco:

Necia Room 1 (single)

\$125/ week

Necia Room 2 (single)

\$125/ week

A 50% deposit is required to confirm housing.

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VISITING ARTISTS

Megan Paulin (she/her) is an Indigenous artist from Turtle Island (Canada) of Mi'kmaq and Polish descent. She works as a multi-disciplinary artist with a focus on community arts and intergenerational art-making with Indigenous theatre and storytelling, including sounds, movement, projections, and video, as well as large-scale sculpture and puppet making. She also works in academic research around Indigenous methodologies and decolonization in writing and the arts. She is part of an ensemble called Aanmitaagzi (which translates to he/she speaks) that hosts live performative events based on traditional and contemporary Indigenous storytelling. She acts as the lead artist for the installation component, however all members work across disciplines co-creating with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members of all ages.

E. Medina (he/him) is a first-generation Mexican-American electronic music composer, educator, and chocolatier. His work uses a combination of field recordings, spoken word, acoustic instrumentation, and analog synthesizers. His work has been featured in various albums, book releases, literary readings, and live painting sessions. He recently performed in an improvised ensemble for the 2023 [RE]Happening Festival at the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center. E. is the founder of Voltage Flow, a mobile artist residency that provides participants access and education in the field of modular synthesis. He is also the Head Chocolatier for French Broad Chocolate in Asheville, NC, where he uses his creative exercises for product development, production, and management.

Gabriela Ortega (she/her) is an award-winning writer/director and actor from the Dominican Republic whose work lives within the intersection of fiction and poetry, aiming to draw cultural bridges that lead to the Caribbean through intersectionality, duality, and ancestral memory. She is a 2023 Sundance screenwriting fellow, a 2022 Sundance interdisciplinary fellow, and a 2022-2023 Academy of Motion Pictures fellow. Her short film *Huella* was an official selection of the 2022 Sundance Film Festival and is being turned into a feature film. Her latest film, *Beautiful, FL* will premiere on Disney+ in 2023, and her first film, "PAPI" is available to stream on HBO and HBO Max.

Sheetal Prajapati (she/her) is an educator, artist and advisor who works across media including cotton, text, and performance exploring themes of identity, intimacy, and ritual. She is the founder of arts and cultural advising agency, Lohar Projects, focusing on public engagement, artist support and development, and organizational planning for change or growth. Sheetal has taught in various MFA programs including the School of Visual Arts NY. Prior to Lohar Projects, she spent 16 years in full-time roles developing public programming, outreach, and artist-centered initiatives at organizations such as Pioneer Works, MOMA (NY) and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. You can learn more at sheetalprajapati.com.

Rennie Jones (they/ them) is an artist, architect, and environmentalist based in New York City. Rennie's sculptural ceramics explore the tension between self-identification and the external appearance of the body, centering queer pleasure to challenge conventional relationships between gender & anatomy. Rennie spent ten years as an architect and urban designer working in climate adaptation and resilience, where they helped communities analyze the risks of flooding and extreme heat and develop plans to mitigate those risks. They hold an MArch from Princeton University and are pursuing a Master of Environmental Management at Yale School of the Environment where they are focusing on international climate policy and climate displacement.

noam keim (they/them) is a trauma worker, medicine maker and flâneur currently living on Lenape land. Born a settler of Occupied Palestine, raised in the cobblestoned streets of Mulhouse in France, noam writes non-fiction that interrogates memory, the trauma of erasure and what is lost through migration. Their lyrical essays turn to the flora and fauna to make sense of a world fragmented by colonialism and racial capitalism. Their writing has been supported by fellowships from Lambda Literary, Tin House, Sewanee Writers' Conference, Periplus and more. Their first essay collection *The Land is Holy* comes out on May 28th, 2024, at Radix Media. Follow their work on IG or Twitter @thelandisholy.

Session One / June 3-21
A Story is Never Just a Story

Similarly to growing seeds, if a person properly nurtures a story, it will continue to live and, in return, will reveal things about life itself. It becomes a practice of reciprocity. -Megan Paulin

During this session participants together with the guiding artists will explore the many ways and resources that can be used to tell a story. By understanding how place and lineage inform the stories we tell, how we can utilize our environment to support those narratives, and the many forms in which these can be shared, the group will question traditional notions of storytelling and together learn new ways of crafting stories that impact the present and future of our communities.

Week One: Megan Paulin
aadizookewinini = storyteller / June 3-7

By exploring the themes around Indigenous food sovereignty, self-governance, and our relationship to food through storytelling, we are able to track environmental changes, and at the same time participate in community building, climate change mitigation, and decolonization.

Through a series of practices that include printmaking, storytelling, and seed saving participants will take part in a series of workshops that allow them to engage in a cross-discipline, line blurring, multi-arts exploration of storytelling, food, and its connection to culture, memory, community-building, and place.

Visiting Artists:
Megan Paulin / E. Medina / Gabriela Ortega

Week Two: *E. Medina*
Hidden World/Secret Corner: Nurturing and Expanding Creativity and Craft / June 10-14

The goal of this week is to repair and reinvigorate the relationship to our own creativity, artistry, and craft. By using field recordings, deep listening, and the sharing of knowledge, participants will undertake a set of exercises that will help introduce joy, discipline, and concentration to their artistic workflow. Through personal and collaborative practices using sound and field recordings, the group will learn how to work and incorporate their immediate environment into their work. Participants will also have the opportunity to discuss and share their experiences with impostor syndrome, creative blocks, and how to overcome those insecurities to tell their stories.

Week Three: Gabriela Ortega
We All Have a Story to Tell, We All Have the Power to Write History/ June 17-21

During the last week of the session, participants will work with Gabriela to transform and create personal stories and find the right form that fits into their own practice, integrating what was learned in the previous workshops. By decentralizing the book as the main medium where these exist, the group will explore through writing, performance, video, and sound ways to shape and weave together narratives to tell stories from a personal perspective.

Session Two / July 1-19
**Exploring a Collective Narrative,
Constructing a Collective Future**

As people living in a world disfigured by colonialism, globalization and forced migration, we are often limited in our access to our personal histories. How do we tie ourselves to our lineages with only crumbs of information?

The second session focuses on how knowledge is inherited, passed down, and shared. Each artist explores how knowledge informed by our collective and individual experiences and the capacity these elements have in helping us shape our futures.

Week One: Sheetal Prajapati /
The Meaning in Making / July 1-5

This week's practices will focus on how making is a critical part of building and sustaining narratives within families, communities, and ourselves. Participants will approach ritual practices as a form of storytelling, questioning how our past informs our present and what it means to take and offer.

Thinking of the hand as both a tool and an extension of our own ancestry, this session will explore writing, cooking, craft, and ritual as practices that link the past and present within the participants as makers and as a community of learners together.

Visiting Artists:
Sheetal Prajapati / Rennie Jones / Noam Keim

Week Two: Rennie Jones
Creating our Collective Future: Artmaking in the Era of
Climate Change / July 8-12

This session asks: what can art do in the face of climate change? Does artmaking need to be action-oriented? Through group discussions, individual sketch sessions, technical hand-building workshops, group field trips, and collective art practices, we will explore the relationship between artmaking and the environment. The session will draw on the themes of Climate Futurism to allow participants to analyze possibilities for collective action and consider their role as artists in imagining a sustainable future.

Week Three: Noam Keim
Reclaiming the Archive / July 15-19

During this week, Noam will guide participants to use what they learned in the previous workshops and integrate it by developing a methodology that melds past and future. By taking Land as the starting point to build personal histories, participants will practice together how to trust their bodies and faded memories and see the gaps as opportunities rather than erasures. Through walks, writing practices, shared readings, and conversations, the group will explore what the unknown can teach us about ourselves.