

Ritual Domestiko (*Domestic ritual*)

Rossana Mercado Rojas

Co-creation w/ Angélica Chávez Cáceres

Abstract

Ritual domestiko is an ongoing performative artistic experimentation built with the purpose of curating/curing and be cured by using feminist practices and methodologies of collective work, (self) care and the possibilities of social media. RD proposes the possibility of healing (curator-healer) between pairs by performing daily rituals materialized in the daily publication in social media addressing what happens to us in each of our contexts. RD was born from the long friendship and artistic practice shared by Angélica Chávez-Cáceres and Rossana Mercado-Rojas, a long-standing relationship and in turn look for strategies to continue supporting each other and create/find new languages to curate "heal" each other despite and in response to the current situation of geographical distance.

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The project is based on a practice of sisterhood, care and support among peers. Thus focusing the healing or community care to the complicity and intimacy of the relationship of two, of pairs, friends or sisters. We can add that from an Andean vision (indigenous cosmovision) duality and complementarity, between "contrary" concepts or ideas, are fundamental for the understanding of the world and the interrelation amongst all the elements. In turn, the complementarity and duality opens up the possibility of multiple conjunctions among the complementary elements, this happens with gender, world of the living and the dead, etc.

Ritual Doméstiko was born from the long friendship and artistic practice shared by Angélica Chávez-Cáceres and Rossana Mercado-Rojas, a long-standing relationship that has led them to undertake various projects like Hysterix and Punku; and in turn look for strategies to continue supporting each other and create / find new languages to curate "heal" each other despite and in response to the current situation of geographical distance between Lima and Stockholm. More specifically as they are in the middle of the health and economic crisis caused by Covid 19 in the two countries where they are residents currently. The project also reflects on strategies of convergence, closeness, accompaniment and intimacy in situations like- family, friend - separations as a result of migration. This context also calls into question the issue of continuity of artistic production and exposure. The project proposes a listening / broadcasting relationship in a context of exchange affection as performative artistic creation.

Based on the domestic ritual, each one thinks about her present, and story tells her own context, which allows us to have a reading of the different "presents" with which people live in different socio-geographic spaces especially and more critically during this pandemic where the borders of nation states have been closed to people who were born in certain places but they have remained open for those who have always had freedom of movement.

At the same time, the project involves "uploading" a daily/weekly/monthly story, knowing that this voice will be heard and expected daily, on the other side of the screen. This is how we ritualize this daily existence in constant flux with the purpose of practicing resilience.

On ritualization

We ritualize our daily life: when every day we receive a message from our partner and we create and send a "message" to our counterpart. These messages are emissions that are not necessarily essential or narrative of the day, but extractions that correspond to some part of the present we have lived. The ritual is dual since it is about doing / saying and receiving / listening.

It is also part of the ritual to display these emissions on social media, in order to position a joint voice, twinned to feel strong, to heal, to process uncertainty and high levels of vulnerability that we face in this crisis. Exposing and reflecting on our daily lives we embrace fear and portray it to tame it to a certain extent.

About public exposure / social media and survival methods

In Ritual domestiko, the everyday takes on the "public" space as it is exhibited to be viewed and listened to in social media. It implies a documentation and a cartography of our daily life, at the same time it is a political position to be showing evidence of our existence. It is important to note that this becoming-public meant to take a jump into other glances, confront and face the public eye, which adds difficulty to the process because it generates tensions.

Exhibiting the intimate sphere requires courage, which makes us rethink the insecurities and self-questioning from our situation as racialized female non-Europeans artists accustomed to overtaking on spaces and roles that have historically been hostile to us, not only from our artistic practice but also and above all in our daily situations. These insecurities have been exacerbated by the economic and labor crisis unleashed by the pandemic, taking a toll on our mental health and emotional stability, as it has done with millions of people in the world. It puts precariousness in the foreground as never before by an endurance test, literally of survival. This situation is generating a situation of collective trauma that crosses boundaries between social distancing, isolation and death.

Fear and the urge to survive are transforming our routines. Our ways of facing these transformations are rooted in rebel confrontation against the enormous monster of the pandemic. The ritual Domestiko demands courage, strength and persistence, it is intimate and at the same time it will be public, because it puts vulnerability in public, fear in the foreground looking for solutions and strategies to heal. Previously, as companions and active members of Hysterix collective¹ we have experienced and trained our courage, by throwing ourselves to the streets with minimal resources and without a pre-designed plan, willing to go wherever with anyone, with the promise to forget about the vulnerability of our own lives, in an act of resilience and rebellion that allows us to survive. Thus, with these rituals, too, we give ourselves strength to materialize our claim and demand to have a voice, to demonstrate our existence.

¹ Hysterix (Peru, 2012) is a female artist collective Hysterix (Peru) with a focus on interdisciplinary interventions in the public sphere.

On mutual support, Heal-each other

Taking care of others is a practice that puts aside the patriarchal capitalist model which mainly separates, individualizes, prioritizes and promotes competition and exploitation. Our proposal adheres to a network structure, which questions productivity, hierarchy and promotes interchange and mutual support. A network structure that accepts and it incorporates the falls and relapses that are necessary for its survival. That is why the project promotes the action of listening and sheltering each other.

When sheltering (each)other we also learn to shelter ourselves, an unknown and costly action for souls with trauma. Sheltering others and allowing oneself to be sheltered is an exercise in de-individualizing the trauma, welcoming it, sharing it. As in an ancient ritual we look at it face to face. We believe in this method to overcome or cope with moments of crisis.

When preparing the message, the day acquires value and meaning, "it is not lost" is valid because it exists and is heard by one another and deserves our own gaze. The day is rescued from its insignificance. On the other hand, during this exchange in flux, when the messages stop being emitted / received we learn to understand the silences and... wait. However, the ritual continues. The breaks are incorporated as part of our own rhythm.

About the method

We part from the ritualistic action: the ritual that contemplates the reflection of artistic practice and self-care which will be the seed to extract methods and strategies that can be systematized and transmitted to those who are going through a critical situation, victims of situations of violence in its different forms and / or is in a precarious situation. The visibility of the everyday, the domestic, the home and what to do daily, as well as the care of another are practices rooted in feminisms, especially feminisms from the south, decolonial feminisms, it is thus that our initial, primal and nuclear target group are women, especially women in a precarious situation. From there, the proposal is open to anyone who is passing through or requires to start a survival process.

About cross-border positioning

The recent crises - not only that of the covid - have exacerbated problems that have sharply divided the lives of one another. In some countries like Peru, the situation has led to a long quarantine that has highlighted long-standing problems such as high unemployment rates, a very high level informal self-employment, lack of access to drinking water, access to adequate housing, access to green areas, massive contamination of the air and food, precarious health system and of life in general. Quarantine has involved the physical separation of people and their beloved ones, at the same time isolation has in turn changed daily routines and resistance processes, the use of public spaces, as well as the impossibility of saying goodbye to the deceased with rituals traditional to group accompaniment and grief in group, family (in a broad sense), etc.

On the other hand, at a global level, we are facing the closing of borders of some countries, and the free transit of others; to the isolation of a population group called at risk from the month of March. Public health and housing services, support have protected some by allowing them to live life almost without variation, and on the contrary, another population

group has been completely ignored even in the statistics, creating intra-national, intra-district borders between the well-being and freedom of some against precariousness of others. Lives, their worth and their rights, have been much more divided during this crisis, and these abysses between them are intersected by the concepts of nation-state, national borders and segregation rooted in differences of class, race, gender, capacitism and, crudely, the contempt for the elderly. Thus, Ritual Domestico maintains its cross-border status by proposing a kind of rhizomatic map, without borders, which is drawn on mutual healings and interpersonal relationships.

On the dissemination (exhibition, workshops, website, mobilization, trips, etc.)

Ritual Domestiko started from the exploration of the scope of our artistic practices and reflection on our own survival methods, therefore we propose the realization of collective conversations, guided and process based exchanges

In this process the artists “heal” each other, contextualizing, reflecting and complementing the practice and work of each other. This sample also functions as a window from which to critically reflect on the different / similar situations between different cities where the artists live. At the same time we will carry out conversations and physical and virtual meetings where we will dialogue about the process and methodology, adding the interventions or reflections that we obtain in these exchanges. Finally one ambition is to make a publication in the form of a femzine, easy to replicate and that can be low cost to get reprinted where it is of interest, thus seeking that the material is accessible to whoever requires it, opening the possibilities of diffusion.

The videos, photos, contextualization, curatorships multilanguage, as well as the conversations and the femzine will be shown digitally and at the space remaining as evidence of our project, of our resistance methodology, of our work and healing process, as well as the contribution of everyone who join us in this domestic rituals without borders.

Key terms: everyday life as a political tool, ritualization of everyday life, domesticity as a political space, sorority and support network, art experimentation, transdisciplinary, process, decolonial practices, feminist practices, decolonial feminism, cross-border practices.