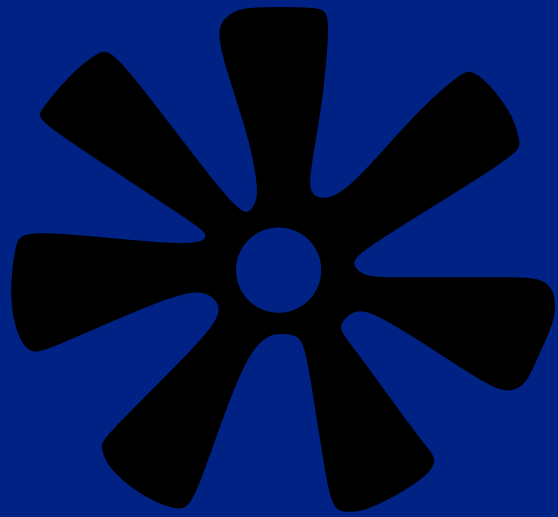




OMAR GABRIEL DEL NEVO
Portfolio



Omar Gabriel Delnevo (b. 1996, they/she) is a musician, multidisciplinary artist and cultural producer. Born from Jamaican-British and Italian parents, they grew up in Brazil, and successively in Italy. They trained in classical piano and composition at the G. Verdi Conservatory in Milan, and obtained an MA in Sound Design for Film at NFTS London. Weaving from their classical piano experience, their work integrates the attention to sound as an organic system and the interest in sonic complexity, to the critical fabulations of a queer black diasporic body. Stemming from both research work, craft, ancestral technologies and instinct, their practice is an intersection of music, sound art and body performance, blossoming into many other medias, such as dance, film, installation and visual. The unlearning of western academia and the successive transformative process have been two fundamental aspects of their practice to explore what emerges of our own histories as Afro-diasporic bodies in a Western dominated context such as that of experimental performative music. Their practice focuses on decolonial and contracolonial approaches, delving into matters of refraction of identity and memory, both personal and collective, to celebrate and critically engage their community.

Their curatorial and production work comes both from their research and their direct engagement with social and activists communities, more specifically POC and queer communities in Italy, Europe and Brazil. They collaborated with several art spaces and collectives, such as Archive Books and since 2022 has been co-producing Blackn[è]ss Fest, a festival dedicated to the Italian black and brown youth in Milan.

Nine-Night

Performance/Installation 50'

2025

[Link](#)

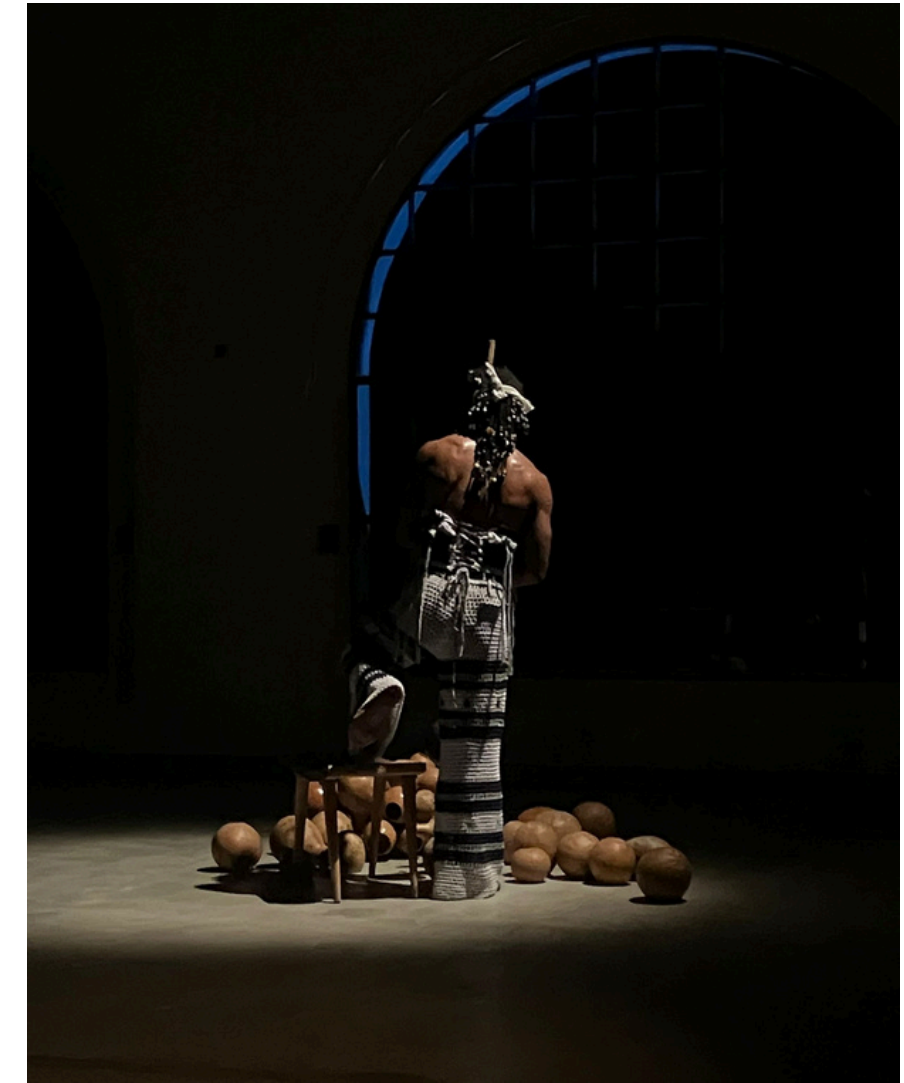




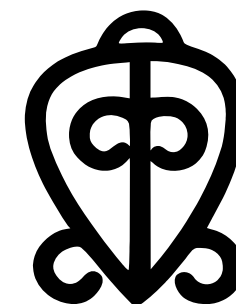
Nine-Night is a performance on love, ancestry and death, which sprouts from the musical encounter of three sound bodies, the performer, the piano and the berimbau. Nine-Night is a Caribbean funerary tradition, consisting of nine nights of mourning and celebrating the deceased before its burial. This tradition, originating from the Asante people, is a gathering to share memories, stories and affection to help say goodbye to the departed as they travel towards the afterlife. It is both a moment for the living and for the dead to be together. My Nine-Night is a celebration of my lived experience and my ancestry, but also of the collective experiences of diasporic bodies and of queer bodies. It is the exploration of the many streams that have poured into my life, both sonically and experientially. Treating the piano as a metaphorical basket I look into it to find the connections that make up my identity. That is the (p-)reparation of the piano. The possibility of multiplicity, the transcorporeal correspondence between instruments, bodies, elements, people.



The performance develops in nine acts, constant transformations that touch personal and collective facts, memories, stories, fabulations and dreams. A plethora of experiences the afro-atlantic diaspora pass through the work, from the nine night celebration, to capoeira, to the history of ackee, from the piano carriers of Recife, to voguing. It works through various medias in constant metamorphosis, from installation, to storytelling, to concert, poetry, video, dance. This work also contains a visual art piece, done in collaboration with Melissa Corti Díaz.



The need for this work came to me from the necessity to start a healing process with my own musical practice. The long and often traumatic experience of academic institutions where we learn and refine our practices leaves us with scars that often times come with a number of conflicts (both theoretical and practical) for diasporic subjectivities. What parts of your identity and sensibility are “allowed” or “tolerated” by the tradition of that practice? The Eurocentric musical paradigm has been a colonizing force, dictating forms and elements such as tonality, rhythmical patterns and instruments throughout music history. The piano has in many ways represented the pinnacle of this musical colonisation. Specifically, the history of piano music comes with a very loaded repertoire and timbric palette, and the instrument itself is a rigid musical fortress of tonality.



Credits

Creation, Production and Performance by Omar Gabriel

Creative Assistance by Heron Sena

Artwork by Melissa Corti Díaz and Omar Gabriel

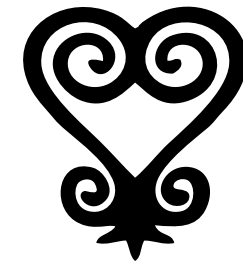
Scenography by Melissa Corti Díaz

Costume by Use.Agemo

Voiceover by Selam Tesfai

Special Thanks to Contramestre Toca, Mestre Cobra Mansa, Kamai Freire, Suelen Calonga, Beatrice Casiraghi

Co-Produced by Centrale Fies as part of the Agitu Ideo Gudeta Fellowship, in collaboration with Palazzo Grassi Venice and Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, with the support of Tanzfabrik Berlin.



(p)repaired piano

Body of research
2025

(p)repaired piano is a body of research that was born during the creation of Nine-Night and has several iterations. This body of work explores the various streams that lead from and to the repaired piano, a hybridised instrument, retuned not only physically, but in its foundation.

The core idea for it comes from the encounter of two sonic trajectories in my life. The piano, which has been my central and main voice throughout my formation and first articulations, and the berimbau, which was submerged in my childhood memories and has reemerged recently through the practice of capoeira. These two instruments have the most different stories and intents but share the same materials and principles: wood and metal strings, struck by a hit. I imagined them in a transcorporeal correspondence, the piano a vessel for the spirit of the berimbau. This transcorporeal exploration is both sonic and visual, using different materials to transform the piano from a mechanical machine to find both its past and its future, the elements (the wood, the metal, the textiles) and the possibilities of its (p-)reparation. The aim is to bend the piano like the stick of a berimbau, to arm it, to tune it to your own position, to reappropriate and queer it.





Within this exploration, many interesting openings unravel. The experience of the Koromanti pieces, some musical moments of the enslaved Afro-Jamaicans of the 17th century, that were transcribed in Western notation. Trying to bring these pieces to life again gives us a glimpse of what it means to work through diasporic layers, what is lost in translation and how we can reconnect to it. The figures of the piano carriers in Recife, which were the people in charge of moving the slave owners piano on their head, whilst they sang and made rhythms. The experience of Julius Eastman in the 70s American avant-garde music scene. Capoeira and Vogue, two ancestral technologies that have been catalyst movements for black and queer liberation. All of these coexist as interconnections between my personal experience, the collective and the ancestral.



This body of work has many outcomes, past, present and future, starting from performance, to an EP, audio-visual pieces, installations, lectures, visual artworks.

Some of the past iterations of repaired piano have been in the form of performance at Palazzo Grassi Venice and at the Museo del Risorgimento, curated by Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, as a sonic lecture at Tanzfabrik Berlin, as a seminar at IUAV Venice.



Encantarias

Interactive Performance w/ Heron Sena
2024



"Encantarias" is a collaborative offering, a sensorial exploration that sprouts from the will to honour the diasporic bodies that have carved, inspired and crossed our paths. The work is born from the encounter of Heron Sana's Traumaturgies and Omar Gabriel's sound practice. The connection to the senses is a direct and instinctual one which allows us to connect to a knowledge that is deeply inscribed in our bodies. Our eyes, our guides and compass in the world, is often the sense that obscures all others. We move and think through our vision, allowing our feelings to be determined by it. What can we allow ourselves to remember if we let go of the solid ground of our gaze? What do we find when we sink into our ears, our nose, our tongue, feet, hands, gravity, silence, joy, uncertainty? Using sound as a canal to re-immerge ourselves in our physical senses, the performance is shaped by the audience's interaction with the performers and their response to smells, tastes, touch and soundscapes. Rhythm comes as an emanation of the energy of the interaction, of a divine connection. The performance is a shared walk into our senses, an exercise of hapticality, to reconnect with our bodies and allow them to be honoured.



Encantadas are spiritual entities of the Amazon Forest, often spirits of special people who crossed directly from the material to the spiritual world, without passing through physical death. The performance is dedicated to feminine, transfeminine and non-binary bodies, specifically that of diasporic, black and indigenous women, who exist and resist around us. It is a dive into the discover of our own enchanted existence to discover the intimate connection we have with Nature. Sensoriality becomes the direct instinctual channel that leads us to the Encantadas, to recall us to our complexity of our histories, to imagine time as an infinite spiral of being. The performance is based on the idea of Tramaturgies, where the dramaturgy becomes an intricate rhizomatic web of interactions between bodies, environment and cosmology.





Encantarias had several iterations including for Mezekere Festival 2024 at the Volkskundemuseum of Wien and at SAVVY Contemporary in Berlin.



Haptic Library

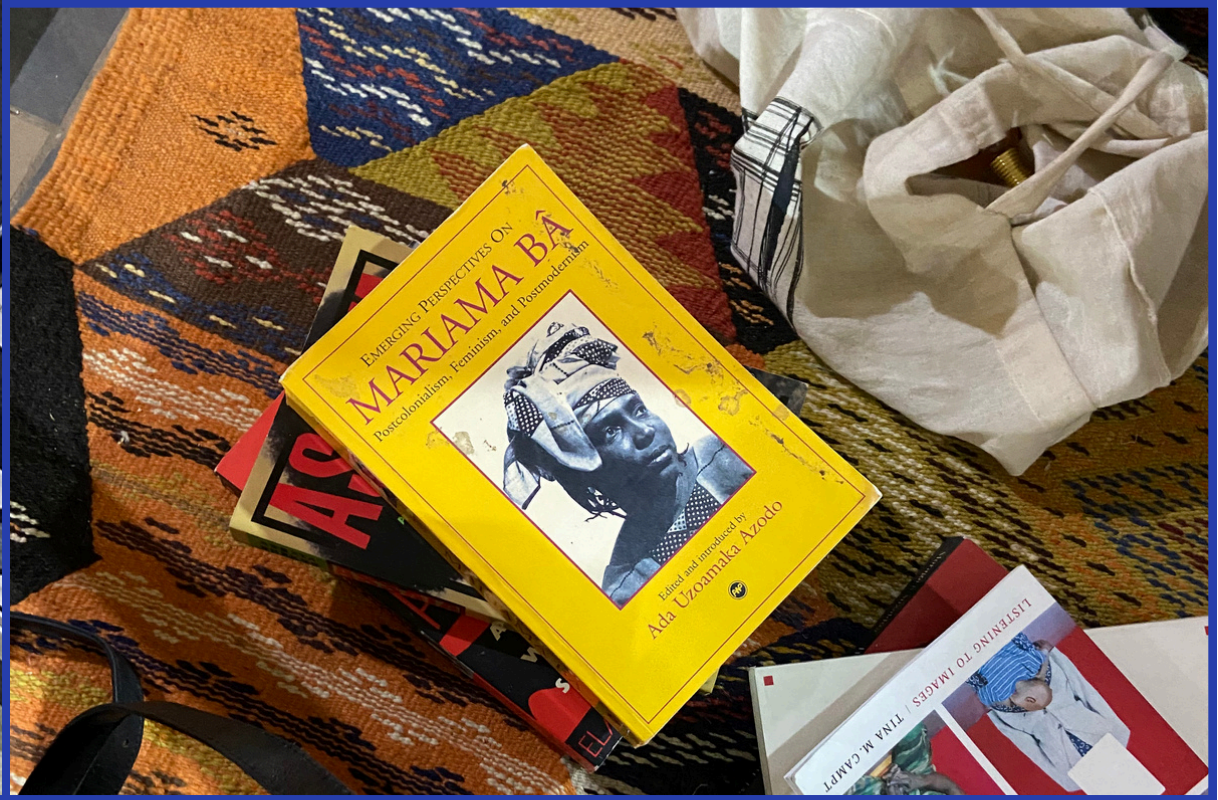
Body of research and curatorial w/ Archive Books

2023



Using readings, textiles, and music as multi-sensorial mediums for archiving and (dis)seminating narratives and knowledges, the Haptic Library is an attempt to focus beyond the printed book and the western dominant sense of sight towards the sense of touch, inviting us to relate to knowledge from a plurality of materialities and modes of thought—involving carpets, fabrics, sonicities, and printed media.

More specifically, the multiple trajectories of the sound library form an interconnected constellation of sound traditions and imaginaries. The haptic library follows some of these threads, not in order to exhaust such directions but to explore their possible connections. If we imagine it as a loom threading materials and researches together, we can see it grow not from a singular linear row but a multitude of them, a collective carpet woven by the encounters of its iterations. This musical carpet we present here carries sonic memories back and forth two continents. The weaves are created by its continuous remodulations and re-imaginings where any of these pieces is a starting knot to explore the threads. Each one constitutes a different entrance point into the map, all of them connecting through, with no clear beginning or end.





The Haptic Library had two iterations, first with Bamako Biennial Encounters then at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in the context of the exhibition O Quilombismo.



like an infinite vortex

Performance w/Leila Bencharnia and Wissal Houbabi
2022

Like an infinite vortex is a sonic activation, a blues to orality, violence and precariousness. How do we recognise violence, interrogate it, hear it? There is no silence, no consent, no control. We live immersed in sound, nothing is ours. Orality: time has engulfed its memory, the stratagem is not what, but to remember how. To sing a blues, to sing precariousness is to hear and to heal from violence we endure.

This performance was conceived as part of SAVVY Contemporary's public program for Oscar Murillo's A storm is Blowing from Paradise exhibition at Scuola Grande della Misericordia of Venice.





soundskin

Performance w/Leila Bencharnia
2021/2022

soundskin is an on-going musical duo by me and Moroccan sound artist Leila Bencharnia. It is an improvisational music performance that practices listening through materials and gestuality as a way of finding sonic junctures between the different landscapes that constitute our personal histories. Listening through an instrument's body reverberation, how it's voice reacts to, through and with us. How do you find a way to riverberate through listening? How do you interact with all the layers of sound that coexist in our perception? How do you untie from an instrument's technique formalities and approach an instrument instinctively?

Soundskin is a cycle of performances that explore these themes through the encounter of two sound worlds, Morocco and the Afro-diasporic.

Soundskin has had two main iterations, first at SAVVY Contemporary in 2021, then for Spazio Griot at Mattatoio in Rome in 2022.



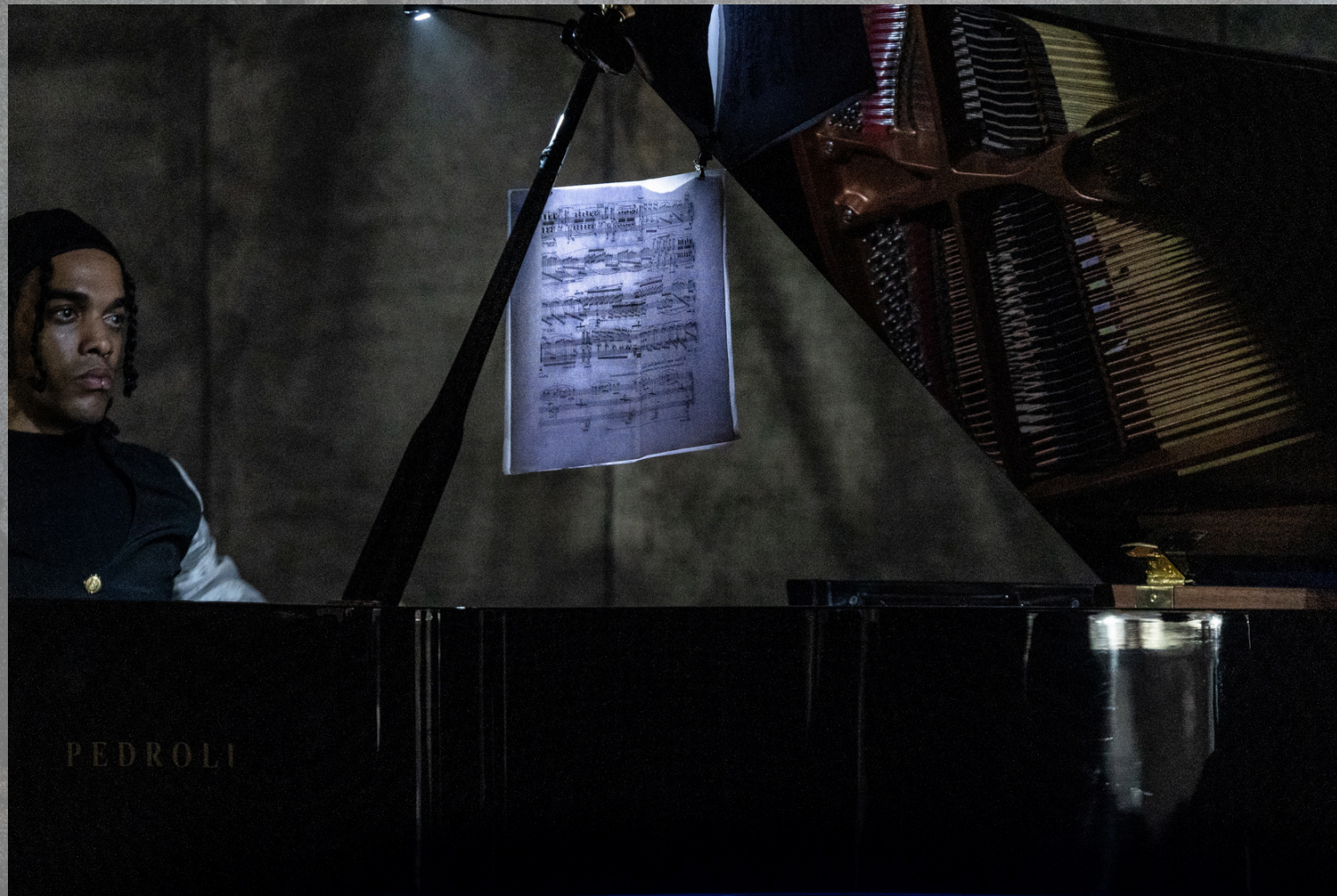


Listening Session for Piano SPRINT21

Piano Performance

2021

[Link](#)



Piano performance for SPRINT Fundraiser 2021
Music by Schumann , Scriabin , Messiaen , Crumb.

