

# EXORCISM = LIBERATION

Duration: 5:41 min

CONCEIVED, WRITTEN AND DIRECTED  
Yanira Castro

AUDIO DESIGN  
Erica Ricketts

AUDIO PERFORMANCES  
Melissa DuPrey

BOMBA  
Michael Rodríguez

AUDIO DESCRIPTION  
Andrew Chapman

We begin within the heat and energy of people in protest. It is Puerto Rico and the demonstrators are loudly and steadily chanting all around us.

PROTESTERS  
“El pueblo unido jamás será vencido.”

In tandem and overlapping are protests and chants from downtown NYC.

PROTESTERS  
“Ain’t no power like the power of the people, cause the power of the people don’t stop.”

*Our* march forward and onward is led by a demonstrator who joins us as the sounds of the demonstration recede to the background. Her voice is both playfully familial and duty bound with a strong sense of purpose aimed at a following. All along, in the background, a Bomba Yuba is emerging, the drums coming in stronger as she speaks.

DEMONSTRATOR  
Make a fist.  
Make a fist.

Did you hesitate?  
Mmhmm.  
Make a fist.

Look around.  
Who is here?  
Are they making a fist?

Is it hanging by their side? Pressed against their chest.

If there is a person making a fist, hold your fist up to them.  
Maybe the fist is an acknowledgment.  
Are they listening to this?

It’s weird right?  
But for the purposes of this ride,  
Just take a breath and try it.

Hold up your fist. And listen.

With a flourish of rattle and drumming, the Demonstrator picks up a megaphone. Her voice through the megaphone makes the next announcement with even more strength and focus. The drums, horns, ululations, shouts, and the many chanting voices of demonstration continue around her while we have paused in place to watch and listen. It coalesces into the percussive clanging of a cacerolazo.

DEMONSTRATOR  
This is what the Treaty of Paris of 1898 says and it is still true:

“The civil rights and political status of the native inhabitants of the territories hereby ceded to the United States shall be determined by Congress.”

This is why you need your fist.

It is extraordinarily plain.

“The civil rights and political status of the native inhabitants are to be *determined* by congress.”

Still true: No self-determination for native inhabitants.

The flourish of percussion builds and then immediately falls silent. The Demonstrator is here, no megaphone, only a seething directive.

DEMONSTRATOR  
Squeeze your fist.

The percussion of the demonstration is back as soon as it died out and The Demonstrator speaks to us squarely with determination - painting a *very* clear picture.

DEMONSTRATOR  
Imagine this:  
Congress, a big boulder of a body. Like one of those boulders pulled across continents by glaciers and signing treaties about native inhabitants with no native inhabitants.

CONgress: a boulder for a tomb.  
Determining a grave  
sealing the opening of the tomb of empire.

The megaphone is back and The Demonstrator is once again compelling and directing us as we march forward, along with the demonstration.

DEMONSTRATOR  
You need your fist.

Squeeze it hard, knuckles like the cordillera central,  
a mountain range is your fist  
Your fist is an island, volcanic  
Erupt. Rise up and erupt.

Can't move the boulder of CONgress?  
Find a way around it. Your fist is a tool.

The megaphone is gone. The sounds of demonstration remain - air horns and drums. The Demonstrator's direction is full of volume and urgency as she calls us to action.

DEMONSTRATOR  
Now, Imagine a spoon in your fist and dig a tunnel.  
Chisel around the boulder of Congress spoonfuls at a time.  
Scrape.  
Scrape. Scrape.  
Dig.  
Scrape.  
Dig. Scrape.  
Around and underneath. Working unseen.  
Unknown. In the middle of the night, unwatched  
We dig tunnels for freedom.

The demonstration sounds come to a halt. We are in a percussion circle with drums and shakers, the Bomba Yuba returns. The

Demonstrator has lost none of her vigor or volume with her next inquiries.

DEMONSTRATOR

Are you represented?

What would you do for self-determination?

What would you do with *your* self-determination?

What would you do for all to be free?

The percussion picks up speed and our demonstrator becomes more - a Conjurer. The Conjurer's next invocation is overlapped and amplified with reverb. Her voice ripples out past the circle and into the future.

CONJURER

Guam. Puerto Rico. US Virgin Islands. American Samoa. Northern Mariana Islands.

All the occupations.

Fuera!

Begone

Give place

Deliver

Return

Que se vaya!

Palestine. Congo. Hawaii. Turtle Island.

All the occupations. Bebe el veneno tú mismo.

Fuera!

Begone

Give place

Give way

Return

Que se vaya!

The Conjurer redirects her voice straight forward and down from the volume of the previous shout. Are her eyes closed as if in final prayer? The control she maintains over her breath commands the words she speaks to life with every exhale.

CONJURER

Open your fist. Open your fist. Raise palms. Holiness in your hands. Holiness in resistance. Your hands are sacred.

Still the sea, the wind, and the storm

Remove all the snares and assaults (claves are struck once to punctuate)

May they exit (claves are struck again)

And may we dwell in peace (final clave)

The final words of The Conjurer leave us spellbound. The climactic pandemonium of the Bomba Yuba builds and holds us - together, accountable to The Conjurer's message - until, with a final beat, all is silent.

■