



## Artist Residencies & Conflict Areas

### June 24-25, 2011 - Goethe-Institut Wyoming Building

### 5 East 3rd Street, New York, NY 10003

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 24 (7pm-9pm)

A panel moderated by Todd Lester (freeDimensional & the Creative Resistance Fund) with:

- Elizabeth Grady (Bronx Museum, SmArt Power)
- Steven Rand (Apex Art)
- Pamela Auchincloss (Artist Pension Trust)
- Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento (Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts)
- William Cleveland (director, Center for the Study of Art and Community and author, 'Between Grace and Fear: The Role of the Art in a Time of Change' and 'Art & Upheaval: Artists on the Worlds Frontlines')

Panelists will address the following questions:

- \*Who defines conflict, and to what extent does it fall prey to Western narratives (e.g. development, humanitarian assistance) that justify intervention?
- \*Can there be standards for visiting artists' relationships with host communities?
- \*What happens after the residency is over? Does an 'art for art sake' approach work in 'conflict areas'?
- \*Mobility: Who has the permission to go where in the world?
- \*Can programming or accepting an art residency be a political act?
- \*What can we learn from mobile and site specific residency models as tactical approaches to space precarity?

*This event is initiated by Residency Unlimited, and jointly organized by Residency Unlimited, freeDimensional & the Creative Resistance Fund, and independent researcher Gaby Ron. The program is supported by the Goethe-Institut New York.*

**Friday & Saturday, June 24/25: A two-day event hosted at the Goethe-Institut Wyoming Building (5 East 3rd Street).** The discussion engages artists, independent arts organizations, residency programmers and community initiatives on specific areas and conceptions of conflict. Issues for discussion will include mobility, community outreach, and exchange of knowledge through the broadly-interpreted artist residency model.

On **Friday** the panel examines the topic of art residencies & conflict areas from a broad perspective, and on **Saturday** the format allows participants and audience members to "zoom in" on the topic using five mini-case studies about identifying conflict in a given community context, an area of growth that the artist residency sector must embark upon in order for the social practice of artist residents to be relevant to the communities in which artist residencies are accommodated. This is immediately followed by questions/observations from the moderators, after which the discussants (project leaders) form a panel to answer questions from the floor about the cases and/or questions about projects held by audience members.

While the format is not intended as a dichotomy, some of the participants fall into the category of 'senders' (Bronx Museum, Apex Art), supporting artists' residencies around the world, and others as 'receivers' (Guapamacátaro residency; Corona, Queens; post-earthquake Haiti), communities that host artists and incorporate them into sensitive processes critical to the community's health, safety and recovery from hardship.

#### SATURDAY, JUNE 25 (12-4pm)

- **12-2pm Session begins with the presentation of the following 5 mini case speakers:**
- Tania Bruguera (artist/organizer, Immigrant Movement International)
- Alicia Marvan (artist/founder, Guapamacátaro - Interdisciplinary Residency in Art and Ecology in Michoacán, Mexico)
- KT Tierney (artist, Konbit Shelter)
- Carlos Motta (artist, We Who Feel Differently)
- Todd Lester (founder, freeDimensional & the Creative Resistance Fund)

- **2-4pm Moderators Bill Cleveland and Gaby Ron** ask questions and share observations of differences/commonalities among the mini cases. Break-out sessions are encouraged if time permits.

Descriptions of case studies/projects:

\* **Immigrant Movement International** is a long-term art project in the form of an artist-initiated socio-political movement. Tania Bruguera is spending a year operating a flexible community space in the multinational and transnational neighborhood of Corona, Queens, which will serve as the movement's headquarters. Engaging both local and international communities, as well as working with social service organizations, elected officials, and artists focused on immigration reform, Bruguera will examine growing concerns about the political representation and conditions facing immigrants. [immigrant-movement.us](http://immigrant-movement.us)

\* **Guapamacátaro** has had to alter the format and timing of its residency program in Michoacán due to narco-violence, having to worry about real safety as well as artist residents' perceptions of the War on Drugs. [guapamacataro.org](http://guapamacataro.org)

\* **Konbit Shelter** is a sustainable building project with the objective of sharing knowledge and resources through the creation of homes and community spaces in post earthquake Haiti. We are a group of artists, builders, architects and engineers who after the Jan 2010 earthquake asked ourselves how we could use our skills and resources to directly assist another community in a time of crisis. [konbitshelter.org](http://konbitshelter.org)

\* **We Who Feel Differently** (2011) by Carlos Motta is a database documentary addresses this question of sexual difference and other critical issues of contemporary queer culture. We Who Feel Differently attempts to reclaim a queer "We" that values difference over sameness, a "We" that resists assimilation, and a "We" that embraces difference as a critical opportunity to construct a socially just world. [wewhofeeldifferently.info](http://wewhofeeldifferently.info)

\* **Border Statements** is a community arts initiative and artist residency in Ruili City, Yunnan province, on the China-Burma (Myanmar) border, which uses arts and cultural programs to counteract the adverse effects of the Golden Triangle drug trade, human trafficking and HIV/AIDS on ethnic minority youth. Launched in 2007 by Zero Capital Arts, the project relies on a network of international and local artists, educators, volunteers, and businesses to provide artists, culture-bearers, community members, students and youth with opportunities to collaborate and develop strategies for cultural preservation. Zero Capital and freeDimensional are partnering on a Regional Triage Team approach for using the Border Statements network to provide support to culture-workers in distress in Yunnan and the broader region. [freedimensional.org/2011/06/border-statements-the-regional-triage-team-model/](http://freedimensional.org/2011/06/border-statements-the-regional-triage-team-model/)

*In addition, author Bill Cleveland will bring 10 copies of each publication 'Between Grace and Fear: The Role of the Art in a Time of Change' and 'Art & Upheaval: Artists on the Worlds Frontlines' and make himself available for book signings on Friday and Saturday. And independent researcher Gaby Ron is preparing topical video and text material that will be made available to the public throughout the event.*

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## Research platform agenda and contributors:

This research process initially began during 2009 when Gaby Ron was working on her M.A thesis project titled 'Art Residency in Areas of Conflict'. This thesis was created for the Creative Practice for Narrative Environments Program in Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London.

The research focused on different existing models using the art residency mechanism as a tool to generate artistic dialogue and healing points in various areas of conflict.

The areas of conflict researched range from regions such as the Middle East, where racial and religious differences limit the exchange of ideas and make cross-cultural connections difficult, sometimes impossible, to the tensions of displacement from a public housing estate in the UK.

In order to fully examine these issues, Gaby produced a series of interviews documented by text, video and images with selected residencies from USA, UK, EU and The Middle East.

After the thesis project was complete Gaby moved on to construct the research platform for this event. Throughout the past year she surveyed various organizations and projects that facilitate and demonstrate the principles established during her thesis project. During this process Gaby examined these organizations' networking systems, operational structures, physical environment and general involvement with the community.

The online platform presents the following cases and examples:

Gohar Dashti, Serra Ozhan Yuksel, Visiting Art, Leo Fitzmaurice, Neville Gabie, The Mamuta Project, Joanna Choukeir, The Jessie Cohen Project, The Delfina Foundation (London, UK), Townhouse Gallery (Cairo, Egypt), Apartment Project Residency (Istanbul, Turkey), The Market Estate Pilot Residency, Round Table on Intricate Mobility in Artists Residencies, Coletivo CAÇAMBA (São Paulo, Brazil), and the site-specific residency creation of artist, Lino Hellings (Netherlands).

### About freeDimensional

freeDimensional is based on the belief that creative expression fuels social justice movements. freeDimensional works with the global arts community to identify and redistribute resources, and support meaningful relationships between art spaces and activists. We do this by acting as an intermediary (connecting arts spaces and human rights organizations), as an incentivizer (providing seed money), and as an information and resource hub (providing web resources and case documentation). freeDimensional delivers programs and services as a way to demonstrate and share a concrete, specific approach that will guide others to adopt new perspectives and approaches at the intersection of social justice and the arts. [www.freedimensional.org](http://www.freedimensional.org)

### About the Goethe-Institut New York

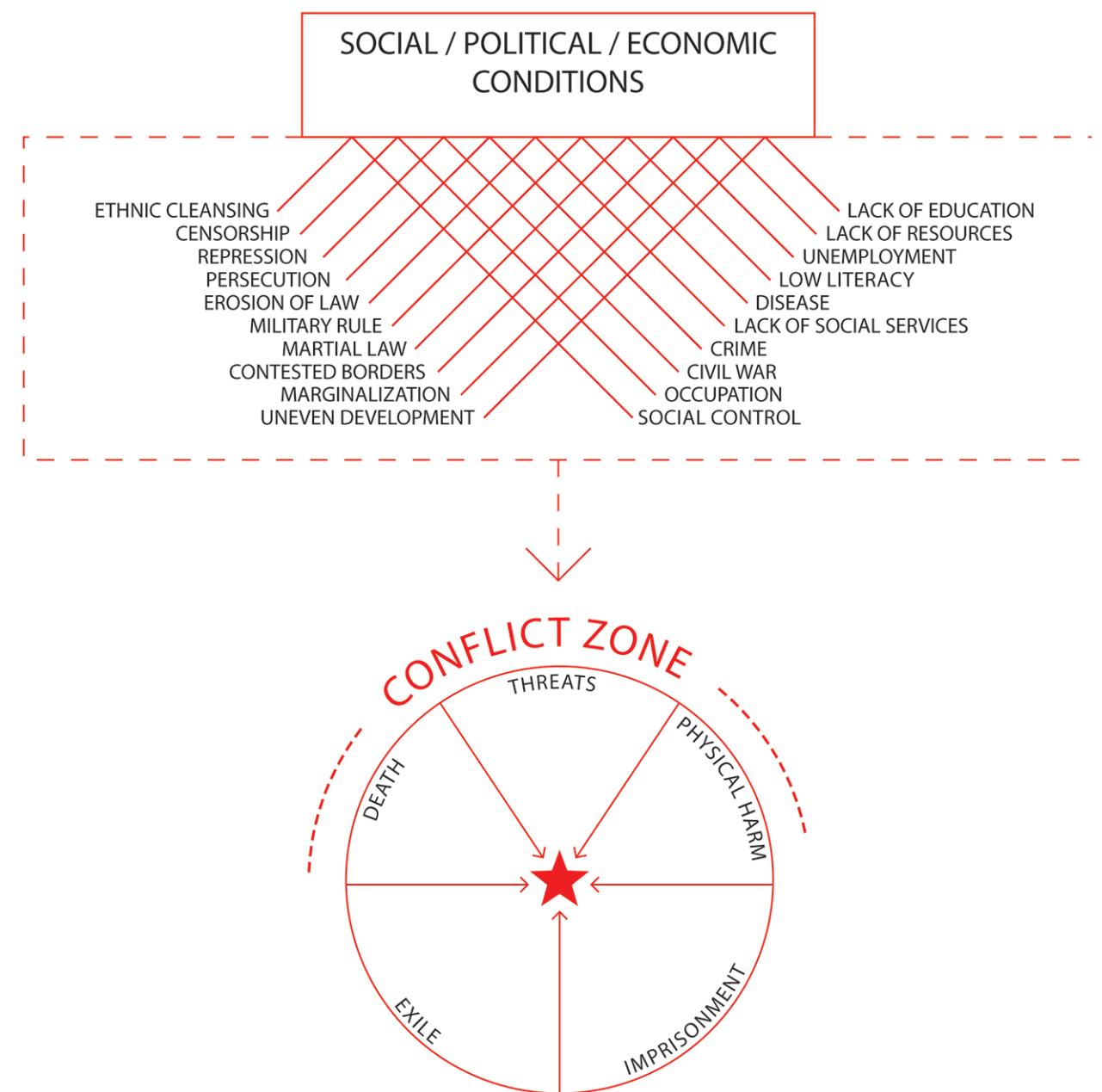
The Goethe-Institut New York is a branch of the Federal Republic of Germany's global cultural institute, established to promote the study of German and German culture abroad, encourage international cultural exchange, and provide information on Germany's culture, society, and politics. The Goethe-Institut Wyoming Building, its event space, is a cultural venue in the heart of New York's vibrant downtown arts scene. For more information visit: [www.goethe.de/newyork](http://www.goethe.de/newyork)

### About Residency Unlimited

Residency Unlimited explores innovative art residency formats and fosters customised residencies to support and advance the practices of local and international artists and curators. We operate across multiple platforms and communities, we foster collaborative partnerships and tap into multifaceted resources locally and internationally. We further our investigations online by disseminating critical information on the evolving field of art residency. We believe in the transformational potential of residencies on creative development and their impact on the communities in which they exist. [www.residencyunlimited.org](http://www.residencyunlimited.org)

## IDENTIFYING CONFLICT

CAUSES —> SYMPTOMS —> RESULT



## VISUALIZATION OF ARTIST IN DANGER

