

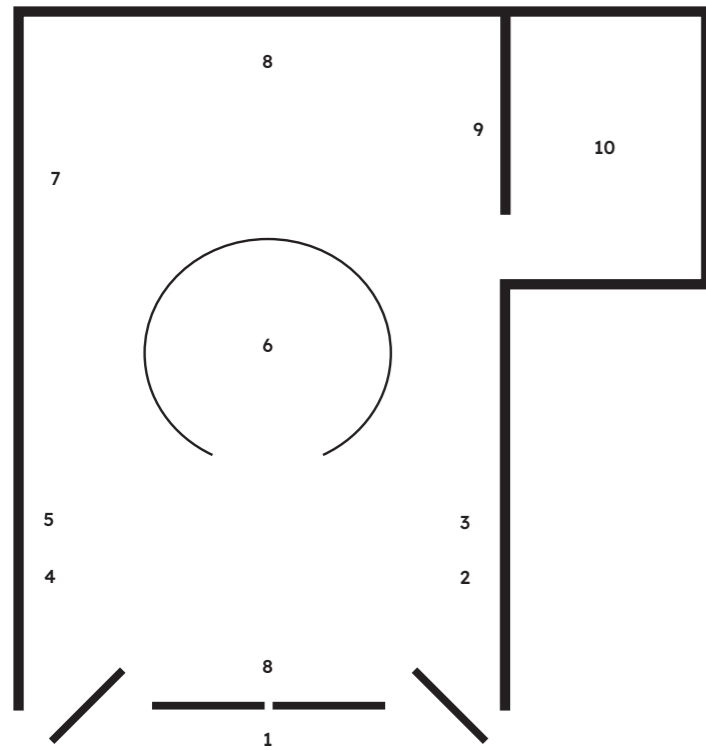
22<sup>may</sup> – 29<sup>aug</sup>

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EXHIBITION

# We build our language with rocks<sup>1</sup>

CARA LAVADA  
Carla Filipe  
Coletivo NÖIA  
Joana Franco  
Paula Mota  
Curated by vaga



1 **CARA LAVADA**  
*Atlas Açórico*, 2026  
Acrylic paint  
628x71 cm

2 **Paula Mota**  
*As alegrias da fajã do Ouvidor*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas mounted on a foam board frame  
Diameter: 112 cm

3 **Paula Mota**  
*Arthur sonha com o regresso à calheta*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas mounted on a foam board frame  
Diameter: 112 cm

4 **Paula Mota**  
*O amor entre eles não foi passageiro*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas mounted on a foam board frame  
Diameter: 112 cm

5 **Paula Mota**  
*Em cada diadema coroado pelo mar*, 2026  
Acrylic on canvas mounted on a foam board frame  
Diameter: 112 cm

6 **Coletivo NÖIA**  
*topologia para uma escuta pós-orgânica*, 2026  
Fabric, metal, volcanic rock, invasive plants, contact microphones  
Variable dimensions

7 **Mota Amaral speaks at a rally in support of self-government for the Azores, Praça Gonçalo Velho, Ponta Delgada, November 17, 1975**  
BPARPD, Archive JBMA, doc. 1821/13.1

*Letter sent by Natália Correia to Mota Amaral regarding the Anthem of the Azores, August 7, 1980*  
BPARPD, Archive JBMA, doc. 235.2.2

*Official version of the Azores Anthem, Official Journal, April 1979*  
BPARPD, Archive JBMA, doc. 235.2.3

*Suggested lyrics for the Azores Anthem by Natália Correia, 1980*  
BPARPD, Archive JBMA, doc. 235.2.5

*Anthem of the Azores – Voice of Natália Correia, August 7, 1980*  
Audio, 3'50"  
Office of the President of the Regional Government of the Azores/Catalog of Collective Archives- Azores Archival Heritage

8 **Carla Filipe**  
*As esposas e mulheres (mulher anônima) de um corpo político ausente sob uma artificialidade de um corpo presente*, 2022  
Digital print, latex and fabric  
200x135 cm  
Arquipélago — Contemporary Arts Center Collection

9 **ruangrupa**  
*Siasat: A Short Tactical Guide for Artist-Run Initiatives*, 2011  
Publication, original version (English) and translation (Portuguese)

10 **Joana Franco**  
*a minha terceira perna e um braço*, 2026  
Wood, cotton, pigment, staples, screws, video, (13'56'")  
Variable dimensions

**Building language with rocks with what weighs heavy, with what remains, with transatlantic kisses**

**It's loosening the tongue and relearning how to be periphery**

In archipelagos, language is formed by the friction between isolation and circulation. Each island, each place, each town produces its own accent — not only in speech, but in the way it makes use of time, in the way it views the horizon, or learns to live with distance. The accent becomes a way of relating to the place; a way for the place to inhabit the language.

Autonomy may begin there: in the ability to develop one's own expression starting from the place one inhabits.

There are forms of knowledge that emerge only from this situated experience. Ways of perceiving the world shaped by proximity to the territory, by attention to its rhythms, vulnerabilities, and transformations. In the face of globalization's homogenizing tendency, place endures as a lived reality: something that is felt, traversed, inherited, and continuously negotiated. In the text *A inteligência do lugar*<sup>2</sup>, Carlos A. Cuperto recalls the idea that places are neither neutral backdrops nor mere settings against which life unfolds. Places shape perception, memory, behavior, and imagination. They think with us. They hold forms of knowledge that are difficult to translate into a universal language: knowledge embodied in gestures, scales, habits, and ways of moving and living together.

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Office of the President of the Regional Government of the Azores

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Against the modern fantasy of self-sufficiency, Donna Haraway<sup>4</sup> reminds us that nothing exists in isolation. All life forms emerge through relationships, interdependence, and coexistence. Perhaps autonomy is not about separating oneself from the world, but developing ways to remain open to it without disappearing.

It is in this sense that Édouard Glissant<sup>4</sup> proposes thinking of identity not as a single, fixed root, but as a relationship: something that is transformed through encounter, drift and exchange. The archipelago arises, then, not as a metaphor for isolation, but as a model of coexistence of singularities. A space where difference does not disappear in the relationship — it becomes more complex through it. The ocean, like language, never separates completely. It carries bodies, ruins, fantasies, goods, affection, and violence. It bridges what seems distant and destabilizes any fixed notion of a center.

From insular oral traditions, reactivated archives, sonic ecosystems, popular imaginaries, bodies in dialogue, and tools for collective organization, We build our language with rocks brings together practices in which territory, memory, and relationships are in a state of constant transformation. The works combine forms of listening, resistance, and desire, proposing different ways of inhabiting the archipelago and remaining connected to the world.

In 2026, the fiftieth anniversary of the Azores’ political and administrative autonomy, perhaps the question is not merely to celebrate an achieved status, but to realize that certain languages no longer serve us — and to identify which ones we still need to build. What forms of autonomy might emerge from the intelligence embedded in places, from the relationships these places maintain with one another, and from the ways of listening capable of transforming the territory?

*The sea breeze is the certainty of a future.*

1. Adapted from the original title by Édouard Glissant, *I build my language with rocks*.
2. Carlos A. Cuperto, *A inteligência do lugar — do colapso global à vida local*, Lisboa, 2026
3. Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.
4. Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la Relation*, Paris: Gallimard, 1990.

### *Language*

Drawing on popular expressions and music, improvised slogans, proverbial sayings, rumors, and island myths, **CARA LAVADA** creates a mural that functions simultaneously as a cartographic manifesto, a mental map, an oral archive, and an archipelagic glossary. The drawings and phrases accumulate in the space like fragments of collective thought: echoes of oral tradition, humor, survival, melancholy, and self-mythology. Between graffiti, popular poetry, and political imagination, the mural constructs an ecology of language where different voices, rhythms, and contradictions coexist without settling into a single narrative. Grounded in geography, archive, and affect, the work proposes a speculative map that points toward the construction of peripheral epistemologies and forms of autonomy sustained by geographical and human collaboration.

### *Memory*

The collection of documents on display, from Ponta Delgada Regional Library and Archives’ and the Office of the President of the Regional Government of the Azores, brings together photographs, correspondence, proposals for the Anthem of the Azores, and other materials related to the process of consolidating the region’s political and administrative autonomy. These historical documents reveal autonomy as a process of collective imagination, negotiation, and narrative construction. Among them, the exchange of correspondence between Natália Correia and João Bosco Mota Amaral regarding the creation of the Anthem of the Azores stands out, in which writing emerges simultaneously as a political gesture, a symbolic exercise, and a dispute over the ways of representing and imagining the territory.

Using archive images associated with the demonstrations that took place in São Miguel in the aftermath of the 1974 revolution, **Carla Filipe** engages in an exercise of appropriation, displacement, and reimagination of the visual memory of Azorean autonomy. By replacing the faces of men in the photographs with those of women, the artist questions the historical exclusion of women from the political sphere, public representation, and social agency. Through flags, street posters, and performative gestures, the work reclaims languages associated with collective struggle to re-inscribe other presences, narratives, and possibilities of belonging.

### *Ecosystem*

The installation by **Coletivo NÓIA** creates a sensitive biome where sounds, vibrations, and presences emerge through touch. Incorporating lichen native to the Azores suspended from cables, a *Gunnera tinctoria* — a species considered invasive in the region — and hybrid structures blending

the organic and the industrial, the piece functions as a listening system that reacts to proximity and the movement between bodies, environment, and matter. Against a backdrop of organic and natural sounds, touch triggers more industrial and technological reverberations, bringing the installation closer to a collective choir in constant transformation. Inspired by the branches of a weeping willow, the piece explores forms of relationship, coexistence, and interdependence between nature, technology, and the body.

### *Imaginaries*

These paintings by **Paula Mota** draw on Azorean traditions, reclaiming their ornamental, emotional, and devotional dimensions to shift them toward other forms of intimacy and representation. Instead of traditional holy cards, we see couples, bodies, romances, and images drawn from small popular books, vernacular visual culture, and melodramatic imaginaries. Between limpets, barnacles, pebbles, decorative patterns, and natural elements, the paintings gather references and affections without a fixed hierarchy, creating small visual ecosystems where memory, desire, fantasy, and territory intertwine. Each work functions as a relational microcosm: simultaneously popular, excessive, and intimate.

### *Body*

**Joana Franco** explores the unstable space between the individual body and the collective body. Physical fragments draw near, support one another, or divert from one another, creating temporary forms of balance, tension, and coexistence. The recurring image of a “third leg” runs through the works as a simultaneous possibility of support, resistance, and limitation, evoking a body in constant negotiation with others, with space, and with itself. Between vulnerability, agency, and interdependence, the pieces approach a body that bends, repeats, and retracts, where touching, crossing, and remaining close become forms of mutual presence — “I give you what you give me; this is who we are.”

### *Collaboration*

Developed by the Indonesian collective **ruangrupa**, *Siasat: A Short Tactical Guide for Artist-Run Initiatives* brings together strategies, experiences, and tools for the creation and sustainability of artist-run spaces. Conceived as a survival manual, it proposes alternative forms of organization based on collaboration, resource sharing, and collective autonomy. Presented here in a Portuguese translation made specifically for the exhibition, the publication functions simultaneously as an archive, a practical tool, and an invitation to build more horizontal and relational cultural infrastructures.