



PRESS RELEASE
23 November 2022

24 and 25 November 2022, 7 pm, Hall 2, Tickets: 9/4,50 Euro

The Humboldt Experiment: On Slavery

Humboldt research meets contemporary art: In this lecture series, entitled *The Humboldt Experiment*, Brazilian director Mirah Laline stages a series of performance lectures centred around the life and work of Alexander von Humboldt. Artists come together with researchers from the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften to make Alexander von Humboldt's scientific legacy a truly sensory experience. The focus of the performance on 24 and 25 November is *on Slavery*. Mirah Laline, author Uriara Maciel and Humboldt expert Tobias Kraft (BBAW) develop a lecture-performance that reveals structures of power and exploitation that persist until today.

It is people with a European background who are first remembered when it comes to the struggle for freedom and against enslavement. One of them is Alexander von Humboldt. Based on his notes and observations on slavery in Latin America, director Mirah Laline, author Uriara Maciel and Humboldt expert Tobias Kraft (BBAW) develop a lecture-performance that reveals structures of power and exploitation that persist until today. Scientist Tobias Kraft provides insights into Humboldt's writings, his analytical approach on slavery and also his friendly relations with slaveholders. The artistic team consisting of the performers Txepetite and Thiago Rosa, the video artists Kathleen Kunath and Zé de Paiva, and the set designer Andreina Vieira dos Santos gives a name and a voice to the Latin American fighters against slavery and enslaved, who are negated in the European canon. In this second lecture-performance of the Humboldt Experiment, Mirah Laline and her team explore how privilege, inequality, and colonial structures continue to define our everyday lives today.

The lecture-performance will take place in German and English and will be simultaneously translated.

The Humboldt Experiment is a six-part series of lecture-performances organized by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss in cooperation with the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Biographies

Tobias Kraft holds a PhD in Romance studies and has been working at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities since 2015. Together with his team, he is developing the edition *humboldt*, a digital and printed edition of the travel manuscripts and estate writings on Humboldt's great voyages of exploration in America and Asia. Since 2019, he is also the director of the *Proyecto Humboldt Digital* (ProHD), an international cooperation with locations in Berlin and Havana for digital cultural research and advanced training in the digital humanities.

Mirah Laline studied directing at the Federal University in Porto Alegre (Southern Brazil). In 2013 she completed her bachelor's degree with the essay *Theater as Poetic Guerilla Struggle* and the site-specific street theater *Transpiro!*. In 2015, a DAAD scholarship took her to Berlin to join the directing department of the Hochschule für Schauspielkunst Ernst Busch Berlin.

In 2011 she founded the theater company ATO CIA.CÊNICA and won several awards for her productions of *Der Hässliche* by Marius von Mayenburg, the Brazilian premiere of Sasha Marianna Salzmann's *Muttersprache. Mameloschn* as well as for *Pátria Estrangeira / Fremde Heimat* (a co-production between the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, the Goethe-Institut Porto Alegre and ATO CIA.CÊNICA funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation).

In 2021 Mirah Laline developed the theater project *Juntos/ Bî Hevra* at the Galerie im Körnerpark (Berlin) as an actress, dramaturge and director. The theater production is an atmospheric Kurdish-Brazilian wedding celebration that knits a web of migration and family stories. At the Humboldt Forum, she stages the series *The Humboldt Experiment* – six encounters between science and art.

Uriara Maciel is a Human Rights defensor, Theater Director, Actress and activist of the feminist movement, specifically focused on migration and – as a black brazilian woman – on black women movements. Another front of political activism that is present in its daily life is the support to the LGBTTTQI + community, with which she develops cooperation projects in Brazil and in Europe. She is an actress, producer and cultural dynamist, working in the Theater of the Oppressed, for more than 17 years.

Living in German since 2015, she became a member of the Madalena International Network (Theater of the Oppressed Women), Coletiva Anastácia Berlin (Theater of the Oppressed Black Women), Collective Kakalaques (Theater of Latin American Migrant Women in Germany) with whom she directed 2 Forum Theater Plays, *TV Las Estreladas* in 2017 and *A not so human Story* in 2021, and founded the Marielle's Collective (Migrant Women Theater Collective in The Netherlands).

Maciel directed beside Mirah Laline and Sergio Etchichury the Theater project *JUNTOS/ Bî-HEVRA*. For Ballhaus Naunynstraße she worked as Director Assistant to *Carving Out Community, Junctions and Mermory of Dislocation*.

One building, four partners: The Humboldt Forum is a collaboration between the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss; the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz for collections from the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for the Humboldt Lab; and the Stadtmuseum Berlin for the Berlin exhibition.

Tickets and Programme: humboldtforum.org

Press images: humboldtforum.org/en/press

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