

**GLOBAL FEMINISMS
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF
WOMEN'S ACTIVISM AND SCHOLARSHIP**

SITE: BRAZIL

**Transcript of Diane Lima
Interviewer: Marisol Fila**

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Diane Lima was born in 1986 in Mundo Novo, Bahia, Brazil and is an independent curator and creative director. She holds a Master of Arts in Communication and Semiotics from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP) and her work focuses on experimenting with multidisciplinary artistic and curatorial practices, developing collective learning devices with a focus on knowledge creation and production processes. In 2014, she founded the *NoBrasil* (InBrazil) platform, created the “Leave the Girl's Hair in the World” campaign (*campanha “Deixa o Cabelo da Menina no Mundo”*), and the *AfroTranscendence* project, an immersion program in creative processes to promote contemporary Afro-Brazilian culture. The project produced the short film *Tempo de Cura* (Healing Time) that was screened in several Brazilian film festivals. Between 2016 and 2017, Lima curated the *Vale do Silício African Film Festival*, created *A.Gentes*, an immersion program on racial issues for the employees of Itaú Cultural, in addition to being the curator -at the same institution- of *Diálogos Ausentes* (Absent Dialogues), a project that for a year and a half discussed the presence of black people in different areas. The project culminated with a homonymous exhibition in the cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In 2018 she was the curator of the *Valongo International Image Festival*, a member of the *Art Critics Group* of the CCSP – São Paulo Cultural Center, in addition to be a jury member on several selection and award commissions such as *Bravo Award!*, the award EDP in the Arts from the Tomie Ohtake institute and of Artsonica from Oi Futuro. Lima also collaborated for the Bravo! Magazine and in 2018 published a text in the Anthology *Afro-Atlantic Histories of the MASP - São Paulo Art Museum*.

Marisol Fila is a PhD Candidate in Spanish and Portuguese in Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. Her research explores articulations between black/diasporic and national identities in twenty-first-century digital and print press from São Paulo, Buenos Aires, and Lisbon. Marisol is also interested in Critical Pedagogy and Digital Humanities and in the ways in which technology and digital media can serve as a tool to share her research and work to a wider audience, but also to develop digital projects in partnership with Afro-descendant organizations across Portuguese and Spanish speaking countries.

Marisol Fila: Good afternoon, we are here with Diane Lima. Diane Lima was born in Mundo Novo, Bahia. She is a creative director and curator. She is the creator of the portal "In Brazil" (*No Brasil*) the Afrotranscendence project (*Projeto Afrotranscendence*), and the "Leave the Girl's Hair in the World" campaign (*campanha "Deixa o Cabelo da Menina no Mundo"*). She is also curator of the upcoming International Image Festival, Valongo ("Festival Internacional da Imagem, Valongo"). Nice to meet you, and thank you.

Diane Lima: Thank you, too.

MF: This interview will mainly discuss some issues related to your work and your personal experience. So I wanted to start by talking a little bit about your experience, your personal experience, your story and how you think you became involved, connected with your work.

DL: I come from a city called Mundo Novo, which is in the center of the state of Bahia, and I come from five generations of black women. I am the sixth of these women, born and raised in this city, located 300 kilometers away from Salvador.¹ So, having access to the information that these women have given me until now, which has been passed down until today, was fundamental for me to understand how certain knowledge could be crucial in constructing my identity. Two years ago my great-grandmother passed away at the age of 103. So I had access to a lot of information, I had access to a way of life, and a perspective that incorporated many points of view on being a woman, being a black woman, being a black Northeastern woman, being a black Bahian woman, being a black Brazilian woman.

So, first of all, I think that having lived in this house, which was provided mostly by women, gave me access to a kind of structure that allowed me to do the things I do today. In addition, this path of direct contact, for example, with my great-grandmother, my mother, my grandmother, also led me to an understanding of an artistic practice or a resistance practice that could incorporate a practice of struggle, you know? So, I really think that the possibility of existing was in a way amalgamated with this possibility of creation. Ever since then I've been tracing this path, with attention to my ancestry above everything, which is the center point for me. All my work, the ethics of my work is imbued with an ancestral perspective, a feminist perspective, because it has always pertained to women, always governed by women, always created by women.

So what does it mean to live this kind of life, a reality where we did not talk about feminism but we lived from that perspective? This, for me, is central to my work today. "Diane, do you talk about feminism?" I'm not a feminist scholar. I venerate some women, I study feminism, for the sake of discourse and practice in the world, [so] my work is defined by a feminist grounding, right? Through a feminist vision. So, for example, when we are thinking about perspective in relation to curatorial practice in Valongo this year, women's perspective is part of the agenda, because I know this is the place of my voice, because I

¹ Salvador is the capital of Bahia, a state in northeastern Brazil. ("Salvador, Bahia." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salvador,_Bahia. 9/14/20).

have lived experiences that allow me to build certain wisdom and knowledge, through art. So I think that's a little bit of it.

MF: So, would you define yourself as a feminist?

DL: Absolutely. I am a feminist woman. And I think our biggest challenge as feminist women is to understand how we can move from discourse to practice. For example, this is what I see as our future, which is where we are heading, I see that by the increasing efforts trying to turn it into action, gestures, politics, public policies, structural changes. So I really believe there is a place for the representation of discourse, for visibility of discourse, but I also believe in practice, gesture, action. I think that the more we have women doing, performing, acting, producing knowledge through speech and these experiences, we will have a site of action that is more feminine, and therefore also more collective, that is more diversified in this regard.

MF: Absolutely. So would you say that, as perhaps we were saying earlier in our conversation, that you would define feminism not as a topic in itself, not as an object, but as a practice, as an experience?

DL: Yes, yes exactly. Because I think it would be very easy, if we take into account this moment when there is a lot of talk about it, and then I think about the media issues surrounding feminism in Brazil, then I think it is very easy to appropriate certain things, whatever they are, and transform them into a discourse, turn it into an aggregate market value and then not consider it as a practice. So I'm more interested in understanding how these studies, these references ... how this visibility around feminism can help me in my daily acts and actions, in my daily life. And, I think that in the end we are all learning. I am interested in this process. I am interested in this process within my own process of self-knowledge, but also within a process of creation. How is it that this knowledge can permeate, energize this process of creation, so that the fact that we came out into the world is not simply a topic [to be covered by the media], but rather it brings a point of view that respects the space for others to speak, right? It brings up ethical issues that I think are fundamental to me. And the discourse of feminism, feminist practice, studies of feminism are definitely fundamental for these acts to happen. [background noise, not clear]

MF: And you think, in this sense, this conception can also help to create a larger mobilization, and to reach a bigger public through this conception and maybe not put as a subject, as a fixed issue?

DL: I don't know if it can go any further but I think it will get deeper...

MF: Absolutely.

DL: I think that the discourse can circulate in many places, from television to various media outlets. But what's the point if we keep talking about something and turn it into something distant? Into something that does not touch us, right? We talk about it, we create a hashtag, but we don't act on it. I think this is a big problem that we face in national politics nowadays. And in my opinion, this is the symptom of the failure of politics. The failure of

politics as an act of doing something, transforming things into practice, so what I think is that I'm interested in depth.

MF: I agree, as an articulation between speech and practice....

DL: Articulation between speech and practice, yes, yes...

MF: Absolutely. Especially I think that because I am ... in my research, I'm very interested in digital media and the possibility that different digital platforms offer for greater visibility, a more extensive discussion. But at the same time I find that perhaps this possibility of being able to express oneself is not subsequently translated into practice, or an articulation that can develop over time.

DL: Yes, yes. This is interesting because I see that this expansion of feminism, the feminist movement in Brazil is spreading more and more and I'm curious to know what the impact will be, what the effects of this will be in the near future. Five years from now, what changes will have happened? In what ways will all this talk have actually paved the path for emancipation, or brought about freedom? How will it have brought about structural transformations for women who have been raped, for children who have been robbed of opportunity and potential for growth, health? How will these discourses have impacted mental health issues? How will they have influenced labor relations and practices, the organization of labor, business structures? So this is what I, in this phase, I am always trying to understand, get involved with, and contribute to.

MF: Absolutely. And speaking of your work with different projects, how did you start? How did it develop?

DL: Yes. I think, I always talk about that. The "Let the Girl's Hair in the World" campaign is one of the first initiatives I undertook when I arrived in São Paulo four years ago.² And this campaign is an updated version of the childhood I had, and of the privilege that I had to have a woman at home who always spoke up, from her perspective of emancipation and her attempt to take a critical and political stance, even though she lived in a remote town. She was always modelling acts of empowerment at home. So when I was little, everyone wanted to do my hair, and my mother would say: if this girl wants to wear her hair down, let's leave the girl's hair in the world. So that's where it came from, and all my work experience is linked to this ancestry, to these women. My work reaches back to these women, it is devoted to these women. I don't do anything on my own. I have five women around me, who are always in some way a reference and inspiration for what I do. From the beginning, that, for me, was a defining feature of this campaign.

Then I created *In Brazil*, which was a platform. *In Brazil* still exists but it is no longer active as a platform. But it was a platform that aimed to bring together and create an open dialogue among and with people who were thinking about Brazilian diversity through

² São Paulo (English: Saint Paul) is Brazil's wealthiest and one of its most populated states. Its capital city, also named São Paulo, is a large and powerful economic center. ("São Paulo." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A3o_Paulo. 9/14/20).

creativity. So, it was a platform that lasted for three years. We produced content on the Internet. *In Brazil* happened at a time when the internet was just starting to become more popular, when social networks were not like today's social networks, and it was great to be able to connect with these people on a national level because that was exactly what I wanted to do. When I lived in Salvador, the only thing I could think about was that I need to find people who think like me. I need to be in dialogue with these people, I need to meet them, I need to make sure I'm not going crazy alone. And then, as I was searching, something told me that this place was possible, this place existed, and that it was possible to find these people. And so ... I also attribute this strength, this intuition, to the women in my house. Above all, the structural possibility of having come to São Paulo, above all having been able to build these relationships from here. Then, when the internet emerged, and its effects were felt especially in relation to the market – the issue of [data] capture, right? -- with neoliberal effects on content, I began to be a little afraid about what it would mean, from this place where I was building this collective thinking, to put this at the disposal of certain structures that I didn't believe in, and so that's when the platform ended. Because I understand that I need to find these people in person, and no longer mediated by anything other than in person.

The research that *In Brazil* brought to my attention during this time also led me to perceive some things. I came to understand the effect and impact of things [such as], why were some bodies present and some absent? When we had built working relationships, why did the market always reject certain bodies? What were the excuses regarding the aesthetics? What was good, what was not good? What was beautiful, what was not beautiful? What was valid, what was not valid? *In Brazil* made it possible for me to see certain things and from this diagnostic, let's say, I came up with the idea to create *Afrotranscendência* [*Afrotranscendence, AfroT*].

And since this program put into action a creative process focusing on Afro-Brazilian culture, it led me to understand that behind the diversity discourse there was something that in Brazil we hear a lot: the myth of racial democracy. It very harmful when we fall into romanticism about diversity, because yes, the diversity agenda is very important, but in Brazil in particular, diversity has always been used as a way to whiten black bodies. So if for the past fifty years, there has been an attempt to whiten through race mixture, then it is therefore difficult to think of diversity as a discourse first. So at this moment, I would say that my place as a black woman is more urgent than ever, that it needs to come first and be articulated prior to everything else. So AfroT comes from this place, from this possibility of engaging in politics through the gesture of creation, from thinking about artistic practices through resistance practices, from [perceiving how] this world can connect and, most of all, from thinking about how to establish a conversation between ancestry and contemporaneity. How these time frames are paired, how the past, present and future are part of the same moment. So AfroT was an attempt to think about what would have happened if the knowledge of my house had been present in school, what would have happened if this knowledge had been present in books, and what the impact of this would have been on the collective, not only on my life, but on the collective.

So, AfroT emerged from these two questions, and it was transformed into this great space and this time. Which is something I always say. It is necessary for us to create a space in time. A space where we can talk about certain things, where we can create resources and structures to start a dialogue with these bodies that are considered ancestral, with their traumas, their experiences, their particularities. Acts of violation, all of them weigh heavily, all of them have an effect on these bodies in the present. So the discussion about space was very much connected with all of that. And time? How do we turn back time? What is the archive? What is the repertoire of our body? What is this memory? How can we incorporate these memories, how can we see the world with a critical eye and with these counter-narratives in mind? From this place. Paying attention to these ... to this body-memory. To this body-time.

So, AfroT's idea was to bring people together, including teachers and masters, leaders, older people, people who possess knowledge, along with the people who are in Brazil today looking at their surroundings and opening this dialogue. We selected twenty people from all over Brazil and they spent four days together exchanging knowledge, sharing knowledge and creating something in the end that is part of this process. So it's a project that has taken me to many places, that has allowed me to get to know a lot of people. I think it was one of the best experiences I've ever had, from the point of view of understanding myself, and also understanding where I am, what I do.

And we're trying to give it life and make it work in other places, because I think it is a big cauldron that can be alive elsewhere as people pass through it and take it elsewhere, and transform it in their streets, their communities, their homes. I am always thinking that our homes are the biggest producers of knowledge. So, our homes are the epicenters of a process of creation. We need to go back home, right? Our stories are not in books, they are not in libraries, they are in our homes. They are in our mothers, our grandmothers, our uncles, our sons and daughters. So how is this oral relationship, this circular relationship, how has it been able to resist over time, and also to produce knowledge about us, and by us.

MF: And how it is possible for you through this new production of knowledge to generate a new archive, a counter-archive, or counter-memory, right?

DL: Yes. I think it's a challenge because after all we are talking about historical inscription, so creating procedures to inscribe oneself in history is already a struggle for power, it is already a kind of power structure, right? Who can write themselves? Who can legitimate, what are the places where this production of knowledge is made legitimate? So I think it's a challenge that the project poses over the long term. I really believe that we are always talking about education. For a long time I had great fear of using that word, because I couldn't be an educator for anybody. I would instead occupy my place, which is a place of passage, a place where I am a conduit for collective learning, where I am also learning. So today, with a little more distance, I understand the project as an educational project, a project that requires structure and I envision doing this in the next few years. My great wish is to create a school. I would love to be able to base this on an educational project for the schools, which I have been developing, but I need to gather a lot of tools, a lot of experience to make it happen, so ...

MF: And do you think the dissemination of the end products of each AfroT can contribute to the construction of a new archive? Because that's also how I got to AfroT and the different productions ... through having access on the internet, watching the videos ...

DL: Yes ... with this very much in mind, in our first year we created a web-series -- I'm talking about 2015, which was a year when video production on the internet, from the perspective of black people or about black people, was extremely limited. So you didn't find high-quality or in-depth interviews, due to the lack of access. So in 2015 we had our web series. It is available on the AfroT website. In 2016 we made the movie, *Healing Time* (*Tempo de Cura*). So we always had this concern with documenting and recording and making it go further. I think this is central to us. Access, visibility.

MF: And could you say anything more about the title of ...

DL: Healing Time.

MF: That...

DL: Actually, the title, Healing Time, comes much from the experience we had together. After the four days, the testimonies of the 20 people who attended were that they had gone through a healing process, approaching that healing process. Achille Mbembe has a phrase that I really like, when he says that, "in the practices of resignification, there is the possibility of a healing practice.³ You remove, fracture, break stereotypes, re-signify images, words, and concepts, so in this act of the ... between signified and signifier, in this change, there is a practice of healing. And I think that's technically what AfroT does. We work not in the place of destruction but in the place of creation. So if we could be something beyond race, what would we be? We can never stop looking at the scars that the process of racialization of these bodies brought as an effect. But what am I beyond race? That is the question I ask myself. So it is understandable that there is, as there has been for me, a process of liberation, a process of transformation, and therefore of healing. You can at least see the wounds. At least you can see that they are present here in our bodies, and that this body carries the memory, and that this body is resisting and somehow losing its spontaneity over time because of that. So we are looking for spontaneities, we are looking for what is beyond freedom. So ... *Healing Time* comes out of this. And specifically time is something I've been looking into, also in my university research project. I studied in the Semiotics and Communications Program (*Comunicação e Semiótica*) and in my research I find a relationship between time, temporality, which is something that I've been working on in relation to the past, the present and the future, and time from a semiotic perspective, in other words, a bodily perspective. The semiotic subject, then, why is time important in this process of producing meaning and signification? Because time is a category of

³ Joseph-Achille Mbembe is a political theorist, professor, and philosopher from Cameroon. Mbembe specializes in African history and politics; his published works include *La naissance du maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun* and *On the Postcolony*. ("Achille Mbembe." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achille_Mbembe. 9/14/20).

aesthesia. Aesthesia, the production of art, when we say that art touched me or impacted me, that film touched me, impacted me, that music took me away, we are talking about a procedure, we are talking about something that is this ability to feel. That sensibility is where art begins. And this sensitivity is linked to aesthesia. Regarding aesthesia specifically, it is said that when aesthesia happens, it opens a “not here” and a “not now.” So there is a matter of time, of the time that stops, that throws me up high, that I suspend, and from there I resemanticize, I resignify things. So it was this relationship among [different] times that I was able to create that is called “black time.”

MF: How interesting ... have you read Michelle M. Wright? She is an academic in the United States, she has one ... she has two books, the last one is *Physics of Blackness*, in which she talks about a phenomenology of blackness.⁴

DL: Cool. I will look for it.

MF: Yes, it's very interesting because she also talks about this time issue. Time ... there is a chronological time but there is also a time of the--

DL: Of the individual.

MF: Exactly. Then the individual will also react according to the time and space where the individual is.

DL: Yes ... Incredible, I will look for it.

MF: And going back ...well, no. One more question. Regarding now the Festival of the Image, the Valongo?

DL: The festival is being a very interesting process, above all because it's a festival, in which the big challenge, the big question I ask myself is what changes when a black woman with all these places of speech thinks through the curatorship of a festival? What perspectives does this open? What kind of visibility is part of it? What practices are introduced? So I think what we have been discussing with the team is that we have a festival that will happen on October 12, 13 and 14, 2018, in Santos, São Paulo, but we have a process that is under construction, and that is the festival that has already begun.⁵ So the festival, it has already begun in the sense that we are exchanging this knowledge, that we are placing ourselves in relation to the territory, and then, we are coming to understand that there are four central points that run through the curation this year. The first is in relation to this territory, so what is it that this territory, which is a territory full of stories, full of temporal layers, says about the present? We talk about a historical region, the largest port in Latin America. It

⁴ In *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology* (2015), Michelle M. Wright explores the social construction of Blackness and the effects of Middle Passage epistemology. (Wright, Michelle M. "Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology." Google Books. https://books.google.com/books/about/Physics_of_Blackness.html?id=IzB0DwAAQBAJ&source=kp_book_description. 9/14/20).

⁵ Santos is a municipality of São Paulo. The majority of Santos is on the island São Vicente. ("Santos, São Paulo." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santos_S%C3%A3o_Paulo. 9/14/20).

was once the largest center of economic production, centered on coffee. That was also for a long time the largest economic resource in the country. There is a large power structure built in this place. This structure is in these walls, in the streets, in everything. It's in the slums. This was also a place of escape routes, important escape routes in the abolitionist period. So there are some *quilombos* [runaway slave communities] nearby. The creation of some territories, some neighborhoods, from the remains of a *Quilombola* [residents of a quilombo], so it is a place that has many possibilities for dialogue, that is open to diverse discussions of the present.

So, one point is the territory and the other point is to discuss images. What can an image do, what is an image for, who can see and be seen? We have been creating images of each other that violate ... that are fictional images, that are images that create stereotypes, so we are looking at this a lot. We are also thinking about what these other bodies say, in view of a hegemonic decentralization of power, power to speak, power to say, power to see. What do these other bodies say, all the other bodies, which are not bodies of white supremacy or a hegemony of power? So we are concerned and interested in listening to and understanding these bodies.

And in the end we will conceptualize the Valongo, in terms of image, perspective, and politics. In political terms. This year in Brazil is an election year.⁶ In October, the festival will happen in the middle of this election. So what can the festival do as a platform for democratic struggle? This is the big issue today, and all citizens need to be involved. All Brazilian states need to be involved, right? What can the festival do about these democratic issues? Can a festival act within a micropolitical field to affect macro-politics? How can we be a platform for discussion, reflection and debate? So we are also preparing for this moment, understanding that we have our ... our ... our potential to reach out ... we have our difficulties, we have our borders, but if we can do something, one thing, what is it? So the festival requires us to think a little about that, and also at the international level, related to artists, thinkers, and people who are interested in really rethinking what ... what is our role at this moment, right? What are we here for, where are we?

MF: Continuing with the political issue, but returning to feminism. How do you see feminist academic production in relation to social movements or activism?

DL: I think that above all, by thinking about black movements. Black movements over the years, over the decades. Thought and reflection, criticism, intellectuality, they have always been a substratum, they have always been a platform for artistic actions, for the action of movement and vice versa.

And so I think we have to be everywhere. I don't think it's about a binary, or a yes or no. I think we live in a fragmented world. The black body is a body that carries duplicity in its

⁶ Jair Bolsonaro of the Social Liberal Party defeated Fernando Haddad of the Worker's Party in the 2018 Brazil presidential election. ("2018 Brazilian general election." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018_Brazilian_general_election. 9/14/20).

essence. This double consciousness that Du Bois talks about.⁷ Gayl Jones, an African-American writer, she talks about it, how we need to invent new words, create words from new words.⁸ So I think you have to be involved in everything, I think you always have to be referencing different places of speech. We need to be occupying different spaces and it's not about whether one or the other is better. Rather, it is about what we can do and how we can do it, to contribute to the collective.

MF: Absolutely. Like Grada Kilomba, she also talks about new languages...⁹

DL: Exactly.

MF: From new languages...

DL: Exactly. Exactly. Grada talks a lot about performing knowledge. So is it possible to be exclusively in academics? How can we do this translation? So I am very interested in the possibility of performing this knowledge. To bring it to the sensory level, and the arts is a vehicle for this.

MF: And in your own work you think you can try to find this

DL: Yes, yes.

MF: Relationship. Theory and practice.

DL: Theory and practice. Exactly. I think it's the big challenge, right? Our big challenge.

MF: And in relation to the feminist movement in general in Brazil today, as you see it ... we already talked a little about that and for me too, when I arrived here a few weeks ago it was very surprising that there is such visibility for black women activists, feminists, that I had not seen in my previous trips. So how do you see the current situation?

DL: I think it's a big win. Especially because there is production of knowledge that comes from a lived experience, it is big, a big breakthrough, right? You have black women protagonists, black women who are able to look at their individuality, their subjectivity, guiding these questions no longer from the place of the object, but from the place of the subject. I think this is the great contribution of black feminism in Brazil today. The

⁷ W.E.B Du Bois outlined the concept of double consciousness in his 1897 publication *The Souls of Black Folk*. Double consciousness is the psychological conflict experienced by oppressed groups in which the oppressed individual sees themselves through their own eyes as well as those of the oppressive society. Du Bois originally used double consciousness to describe the experience of Black individuals in post-slavery America, but the concept has since been applied to other marginalized groups. ("Double consciousness." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double_consciousness. 9/14/20).

⁸ Gayl Jones is a Black American author from Lexington, Kentucky. Her novels include *Corregidora*, *Eva's Man*, and *The Healing*. ("Gayl Jones." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gayl_Jones. 9/14/20).

⁹ Grada Kilomba is an artist, psychologist, and writer from Lisbon, Portugal. Her work explores topics such as gender, race, and post-colonialism. ("Grada Kilomba." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grada_Kilomba. 9/14/20).

possibility of moving from being an object to being a subject, a subject of their history, writing their history. So, that is the fundamental importance of Djamila Ribeiro as this great exponent today in Brazil, but also of other women who have always been feminists, right?¹⁰ They always had, and needed, that urgency, that demand, and because of their ability to bring their perspective as women, at different times, in other times, and also to resist the oppressions of those times. So, I also wonder a lot about the fact that the production of knowledge happens in this process of access to space. As a result of occupying a place where I know what happens there, I know from experience, that is, from producing knowledge about it, from the experience with it. I will always be interested in creating these bridges between contemporary women and women from the past.

MF: And how do you think it might evolve in the future?

DL: ...

MF: What happens today.

DL: Me, I think I can tell by what I want to happen. I hope that we will be able to dialogue more and more, between generations, intersectionally, bringing different agendas, because it is impossible to talk from just one place. But my biggest wish is indeed that we can turn feminist discourses into practice. Into life practices. I think if we can do that there will be daily transformations, there will be collective and profound transformations in the long run. I think this is what I will try to do for my daughter, my daughter's daughter and the generations to come. I think maybe this is a way of thinking, a long-term feminism, a feminism of the future.

MF: And in your particular work, are you related to other groups, activists, intellectuals, both here in Brazil and in other countries?

DL: Discussions about internationalization or the global diaspora have begun to take shape. Next year [2019] I will do an artistic residency in Munich, in Vila Valverde, which is an artistic residence in the Munich city hall.¹¹ I'll be there with Mario Lopes, who is a curator who invited me to create AfroTrascendence there.¹² The idea is that we will be able to bring together a group of artists from Brazil to dialogue with other points of view, and with other Afro-diasporic perspectives from Germany. And that also gives us an opportunity to dialogue with other groups, right? With others ... to bring up other discussions, so I am now focused on that, but I'm also very interested in Latin America in general, where I want to get closer, where I want to dialogue, and to understand the Afro-Latina perspective.

¹⁰ Djamila Taís Ribeiro dos Santos is a Brazilian journalist, philosopher, and feminist and anti-racist activist. She is the author of *A Short Anti-racist Handbook* and a contributor to the publications *Carta Capital* and *Folha de S.Paulo*. ("Djamila Ribeiro." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Djamila_Ribeiro. 9/14/20).

¹¹ Munich is the capital of Bavaria and Germany's third-largest city. ("Munich." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Munich>. 9/14/20).

¹² Mario Lopes is a choreographer, art curator, and cultural coordinator. He works with Plataforma PLUS and *veiculoSUR*. (Vicini, Lorena. "Displacement as Choreography." Contemporary and América Latina. <https://amlatina.contemporaryand.com/editorial/plusafrot/>. 9/14/20).

MF: Absolutely. It's because ... I always think, I don't know if it's for language reasons alone, but it turns out there's a separation between ...

DL: Separation, yes. Brazil and the rest of Latin America.

MF: And even between a South America and the rest of Latin America, right?

DL: Absolutely.

MF: You see ... I'm from Argentina. I think Argentines may not identify with a Colombian for example, or a Mexican. There are very regional contexts.

DL: Yes, yes. We have a political history of fragmentation, of separation, and of always identifying ourselves as being from the periphery in relation to the center. It's either the United States and North America or it is Europe, which puts us far away from all the culture around us, right? I think this is the big question in South America, in Latin America. This detachment strategically created from politics. From macro politics, right?

MF: And besides your work, do you think the current feminist movement, the black feminist movement, is related to other movements or organizations from other countries in Latin America or the United States?

DL: Yes, I think that more and more women who are leading these movements are seeking to open global dialogues. Also because I think it is in this transit that we can also exchange knowledge and relate to one another. In Bahia for example, there are many centers of feminist studies, there is, for example, the Odara Institute, which has for some time been working on different fronts on the condition of black women.¹³ The UFRB (Federal University of the Recôncavo of Bahia)¹⁴ is also a seedbed of intellectual production, hosting women such as Angela Davis,¹⁵ for example, who recently came to UFRB and has been coming for some time to Bahia. So, I think that there is something within the feminist movement of black women, something that is central to me and that has been debated a lot due to artistic practices in general: how can a private collective produce strategies of resistance that even with a great deal of visibility some times are unsuccessful? I speak of a resistance practice that is secular. For example, in Afro-Brazilian artistic manifestations there are double meanings, there is dialogism, you find figures of speech that come to serve as war tactics. That is, in Brazilian capoeira I pretend to dance, but I'm actually fighting,

¹³ The Black Women's Institute (ODARA) is a Brazilian feminist organization. Their goal is to overcome Black women's oppression on individual and systemic levels. ("Odara Instituto Da Mulher Negra (Odara Institute of Black Women - ODARA.)" Devex. <https://www.devex.com/organizations/odara-instituto-da-mulher-negra-odara-institute-of-black-women-odara-65619>. 9/14/20).

¹⁴ The Federal University of the Recôncavo da Bahia's main campus is located in Bahia's municipality Cruz das Almas. The University also has campuses in several other municipalities of Bahia. ("Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_University_of_Rec%C3%B4ncavo_da_Bahia. 9/14/20).

¹⁵ Angela Davis is a prominent American activist and author. She has published many books on feminism, race, class, and prison abolition. ("Angela Davis." Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Davis. 9/14/20).

right?¹⁶ And so, this ability to appear to conform, to be two things at once, this capacity for contradiction, it is a strategy that will make bodies stay alive during that time, right? So I see a lot, and every time I talk to older women who are doing things and who are feminists, I learn a little more about these tactics. It always seems to me that there is insight to be gained and a little deeper look at how these resistance practices can be constituted in the present. So in that sense I think that in the present the feminist movement has been contributing a lot.

MF: One last question. What do you think are the meeting points and mismatches between the black feminist movement and the white feminist movement or the more traditional feminist movement?

DL: Yes. I think there is the issue of power structures, power struggles. For a long time, black women were subordinated to white women. And every women's agenda, every opportunity that had to do with women were snapped up, led by white women. I think the breaking point came about because at a certain point, black women took their place to speak, to lead, and I think there is this shock, right? Especially since we cannot forget that whiteness, whether through men or women, exerted its power for a long time. And white women were central to this. In colonial practices, in creating a specific place for black people, in issues related to objectification, in transforming this body into an exploited body, into a black body, into currency. So I think we need to move toward a place where all these actions must be revisited and seen. I think this is the big area of dissent today. How can we manage these conflicts, right? And no longer be this artifact of the white man, no longer be the artifact of patriarchy. Grada Kilomba talks a lot about this, right? To no longer be the artifact of the white man, that is what we want. So I think this is the big issue.

MF: Would you like to add anything?

DL: No, I think that's it.

MF: Thank you so much!

DL: Thank you.

¹⁶ Capoeira is a martial art that draws on aspects of dance, acrobatics, and music. Capoeira originated in enslaved African communities in Brazil and is now protected by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage. ("Capoeira." Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capoeira>. 9/14/20).