

Grito transhemisférico: remediación de Juracán // Transhemispheric Call: Hurricane Remediation

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70733/q0agsbltm6r9>

Luis Berrios-Negrón

Abstract

The following sound work is a debriefing of the public event “Hurricane Remediation” that was presented by the authors at the UmArts/VR Hurricanes and Scaffoldings conference of 2024. The soundwork begins with “El Cacique”, a conch shell piece by master Puerto Rican musician Dr. William Cepeda Román performed with his students in Loiza, Puerto Rico.^[1] The parallel conch shell call and ensuing voices are set to a background recording titled “Morning sounds from Rio Maricao Forest Nature Reserve, Puerto Rico”, a biosphere that was hit particularly hard by Category 5 hurricanes Irma and María (September 5 & 19, 2017, respectively). The recording is by conservation biologist Omar Monzón Carmona,^[2] and in it, birds such as the Puerto Rican Vireo (*Vireo latimeri*), Spindalis (*Spindalis portoricensis*), Woodpecker (*Melanerpes portoricensis*), Parrot (*Amazona vittata*), and the Bananaquit (*Coereba flaveola*), among others, can be heard, or are mentioned during the soundwork by the authors. The voices are from the conference participants: marine biologist Juliann Rosado Pagán, curator Raquel Torres Arzola, and artists Karla Claudio and Luis Berrios Negrón (the latter as producer of the conference event, of this text and the soundwork).

In all, the work is set to reenact and review the breathless transhemispheric call and presentations performed at “Hurricane Remediation” during the conference. This becomes a backdrop to the way in which we want to position the word “hurricane”, which in English is drawn originally from *Juracán*—a force shared between the mythological triad of Guabancex, a high divinity of the Indigenous Taínos who lived across the Caribbean—a civilisation almost-eradicated during the early years of the invasion of the Americas (1492-ca. 1530). As it is common with many words, “hurricane” is loosely used by Western languages without reference to its ancestry or Indigenous context to represent the powerful, reoccurring storms specific to the Atlantic Ocean, as an analogy to impending doom. In the case of our role in the conference, we looked to re-position *Juracán* specifically in decolonial contrast to Nora Khan’s loose use of the word in her “Towards a Poetics...” essay that inspires the eponymous conference.^[3] We challenge Khan and the conference to consider “hurricane”, not as “a most sublime metaphor” to prop up the plausible cataclysm of AI—or the future of the visual arts through artistic research—but as a force and divinity with far broader values that, through more careful consideration, may aid in better engaging environmental co-inhabitancy, as well as challenging the long-drawn void of colonial memory that continues to drive the hemispheric injustices of global warming. That is to say that “hurricane” is more than just an example of Western “symbolic language”. It is an ancestral and thermodynamic portal embodying

the still deeply unresolved, unjust scars of colonial trauma. With that in our minds and between our bodies, we play this soundwork to ask the question: *sublime to whom?*

Sounds can not be played in PDF documents. Follow the link to listen the source.

[Link to source](#)

Luis Berrios Negrón, William Cepeda Román, Karla Claudio, Omar Monzón Carmona, Juliann Rosado Pagán, and Raquel Torres Arzola



Figure 1. Carlos Raquel Rivera, *Huracán del norte*, 1955, linoleum, collection of the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña

Grito transhemisférico: remediación de Juracán // Transhemispheric Call: Hurricane Remediation, 20min.

*William Cepeda Román (WCR), Juliann Rosado Pagán (JRP), Luis Berrios Negrón (LBN), Karla Claudio (KC), Raquel Torres Arzola (RTA).

Bios:

William Cepeda Román

William Cepeda Román is a Jazz Artist, Innovator, Composer, Trombonist, Educator, Producer, and Conch Shell musician. In 2013, Cepeda was bestowed an Honorary Doctorate from the Berklee College of Music. The same year the Puerto Rico Heineken Jazz Festival was dedicated in his honor. Cepeda was born and raised in Loíza,

and is known as a cultural icon of Puerto Rico with a passion for artistic excellence, authenticity, and advocacy for research and comprehensive documentation of Puerto Rican music, dance and culture, a passion that has earned him multiple awards, grants, and recognitions including being a four-time Grammy nominee and composer. In 1992, he revolutionized Latin music with the introduction of Afro-Rican Jazz, an innovative blend of traditional Puerto Rican roots, folk, dance, progressive jazz, and world music. His ensemble has toured the world and performed at such prestigious jazz festivals as Montreux, North Sea, and Tabarka and performing arts venues and clubs. A protégé of the Dizzy Gillespie, Cepeda was a member of the United Nations Orchestra. Also, he has traveled the world and performed with many jazz artists, such as Lester Bowie, Miriam Makeba, and Slide Hampton & the Jazz Masters, among many others. He is equally known in the Latin music scene and has performed with such legendary figures as Tito Puente, Paquito D'Rivera, Arturo Sandoval, Eddie Palmieri, Celia Cruz, Marc Anthony, and Ruben Blades. In addition to his jazz and world music repertoire, Cepeda's oeuvre includes Bomba Sinfónica, a full-length orchestral work for a symphony, opera, choir, and soloists. Cepeda continues to compose and develop new projects in Puerto Rico and beyond.

Karla Claudio

Karla Claudio (they/she) is a Boricua visual artist, documentary filmmaker and educator based in Lajas, Puerto Rico. They lead an arts and ecology itinerant lab called La Recolecta dedicated to ethnobotanical research on local wild flora for food, medicine and craft. They collect and share this knowledge through community workshops, zines and documentaries. Their last short film "La nueva ola de añil / The New Indigo Wave" (2024) was an official selection at the 2025 Tribeca Film Festival, 2025 Santa Fe International Film Festival, and featured in Season 8 of PBS POV Shorts. Their short films about Taíno potter Alice Chéveres and her family la masa (2021), piedra viva, piedra muerta (2021), and la reseña de Cuquito (2021) were featured in the group exhibition *El momento del yagrumo* at the Puerto Rico Museum of Contemporary Art in 2021. Their videos and experiments with natural pigments and dyes have been featured at the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, Design Museum of Miramar, Kadist San Francisco, Tenerife Espacio de las Artes, among others. They are currently producing their first feature film, Matininó, a hybrid documentary directed by Gabriela Arp and supported by Topic Studios, Doc Society, Sundance Film Institute and Ford Foundation. They were recently selected as a 2024 Sundance Latinx Fellow. Recently, in June 2025, they participated in a two-month artist residency at the Vila Sur Goethe-Institut at Salvador de Bahía, Brazil.

Omar Monzón Carmona

Omar Monzón Carmona serves as the Conservation and Biodiversity Specialist at Para la Naturaleza, where he leads biodiversity assessments and the planning processes for protected areas. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in Natural Resources Management from Ana G. Méndez University, as well as a Graduate Certificate in Protected Area Management from the University of Montana. Widely recognized as one of Puerto Rico's top field biologists, Omar possesses extensive expertise in the identification of vascular plants, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and multiple groups of invertebrates. He is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), contributing to global discussions on conservation and protected area management.

Juliann Rosado Pagán

Juliann M. Rosado Pagán is a marine biologist and environmental planner from Puerto Rico. She studied coastal marine biology at the University of Puerto Rico, Humacao Campus under Prof.-Dr. Alida Ortiz Sotomayor. She

finished her master's degree in environmental planning from Ana G. Méndez University, Cupey Campus, specializing in ecotourism development strategies for a subregion in the north coast of Puerto Rico. Juliann has dedicated her professional career working with the conservation of birds and sea turtles in Puerto Rico. Also, Juliann has served for the last 14 years the nonprofit nongovernmental agency Para la Naturaleza as an Environmental Interpreter and Reforestation Planning Coordinator, committed to connecting people with nature conservation. Juliann has a great passion for environmental education and citizen science, while birding across Puerto Rico's forests and coasts.

Raquel Torres Arzola

Raquel Torres Arzola is an artist, independent curator, and community-driven project manager dedicated to researching and promoting the ancestral and contemporary connections between art, culture, gender, and ecology. She is skilled in conceptualizing, developing, managing, and producing art exhibitions and public education events across Puerto Rico's academic and cultural sectors. With extensive experience in fostering collaborations between private and public institutions, she is also an art writer, cultural lecturer, and researcher with deep knowledge of Puerto Rican and Caribbean history, complemented by international experience as a guest editor and peer reviewer for both independent and institutional programs. Raquel served as the Curator for Public Education for the Triennial of San Juan and the Museum of Art of Puerto Rico, is a member of the Las Casas de la Selva forest community, and spent nearly two years as Outreach Organizer for the women-led reclaimed timber organization Puerto Rico Hardwoods, Inc., where she successfully secured a major business development grant. Currently, she is collaborating with Arte-Suelo-Ser, Inc. to secure funding for an empowerment-through-education program that supports disadvantaged and marginalized communities in co-designing and developing urban forests as part of climate resilience activism.

Footnotes

1. Cepeda Román, William. *El Cacique*. Performed by Melodía Taína y el Coro de Caracoles de Loíza with students, age 12-20 (Conchshell Choir of Loíza, Puerto Rico) (Courtesy of the artist, 2025) [mp3].
2. Monzón Carmona, Omar. *Morning Sounds from Río Maricao Forest Nature Reserve, Puerto Rico* www.paralanaturaleza.org [sound recording] (Soundcloud, 2020), <https://soundcloud.com/soundsfromyourpark/morning-sounds-in-a-puerto-rican-forest-rio-maricao-natural-protected-area-maricao-puerto-rico>, accessed 2025-06-30.
3. Khan, Nora N. "Towards a Poetics of Artificial Superintelligence". *after us*. 2015-09-25. URL: <https://medium.com/after-us/towards-a-poetics-of-artificial-superintelligence-ebff11d2d249> (Accessed 2025-06-30).

References

Bear, C. "Building Resilience and Community in Puerto Rico". *National Trust for Historic Preservation*.

2017-11-22. URL: <https://savingplaces.org/stories/building-resilience-and-community-in-puerto-rico#.WiQa5CMrly4>.Bonilla, Yarimar and LeBrón, Marisol (eds.). *Aftershocks of Disaster: Puerto Rico Before and After the Storm*. London: Haymarket Books. 2019.Centro de Periodismo Investigativo. El Tesoro de una Científica Rebelde. 2015-02. URL: <https://periodismoinvestigativo.com/2015/02/el-tesoro-de-una-cientifica-rebelde/>.Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth (Les damnés de la terre)*. Paris: François Maspero. 1961.Feng, Y. et al. "Rapid Remote Sensing Assessment of Impacts from Hurricane Maria on Forests of Puerto Rico". *PeerJ Preprints* 6. 2018. e26597.Klein, Naomi. *The Battle for Paradise: Puerto Rico Takes on the Disaster Capitalists*. Chicago: Haymarket Books. 2018.Pané, Ramón. *Relación acerca de las antigüedades de los indios. Circa 1498*. Translated and edited as: Pané, Ramón. *An Account of the Antiquities of the Indians: Chronicles of the New World Encounter*. José—Juan Arrom (ed.). Susan C. Griswold (translator). Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 1999.Para la Naturaleza. "Para la Naturaleza Joins #GivingTuesday to Help in the Restoration of Puerto Rico". 2017-11-17. URL: <https://www.paralanaturaleza.org/en/para-la-naturaleza-joins-givingtuesday-to-help-in-the-restoration-of-puerto-rico-2/>.Para la Naturaleza. "Para la Naturaleza Takes Its Wood Rescue Efforts throughout the Island". 2018-03-12. URL: <https://www.paralanaturaleza.org/en/para-la-naturaleza-sends-its-wood-rescue-efforts-throughout-the-island/>.Quijano, Aníbal. "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America". *Nepantla: Views from South* 1. no. 3. 2000. pp. 533–580.Robiou—Lamarche, Sebastián. *Taínos y caribes: Las culturas aborígenes antillanas*. San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Punto y Coma. 2003.Roqué de Duprey, Ana. *Botánica Antillana*. Unpublished manuscript. ca. early 1900s.Schwartz, Stuart B. *Mar de tormentas: Una historia de los huracanes en el Gran Caribe desde Colón hasta María*. Aurora Lauzardo Ugarte (translator). San Juan, PR: Ediciones Callejón. 2018.Seafarers International Union. "TOTE Maritime Supporting Puerto Rico Relief". 2017-11-16. URL: <https://www.seafarers.org/tote-maritime-supporting-puerto-rico-relief-3/>.