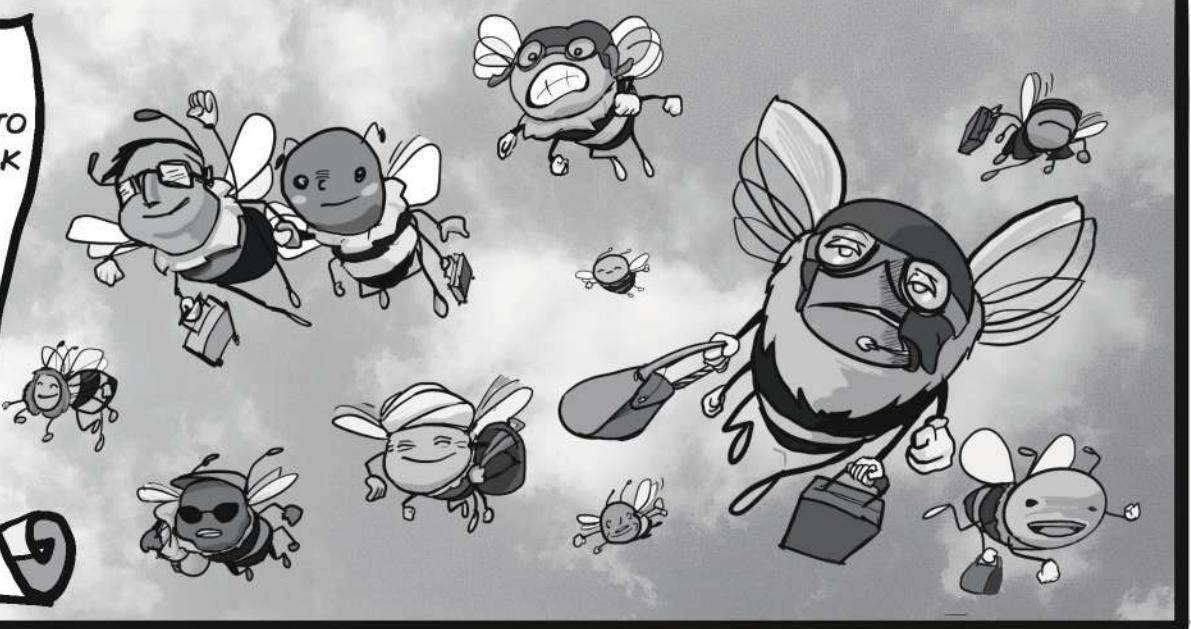


# REF-EXISTING!

**The Spirit Connecting the Peripheries**  
**An Intercultural and Interfaith Encounter**

BEES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD FLEW TO MEET AND TALK ABOUT THEIR AWAKENINGS, RESISTANCE, HEALING, AND SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF THE VIOLENCE SUFFERED IN THEIR PLACES OF ORIGIN.



NOT ALL OF THEM WERE ABLE TO ARRIVE, AND MANY WERE EVEN DETAINED BEFORE TAKING FLIGHT. HOWEVER, WITH SOME EFFORT AND DESPITE SOME CONFUSION, MANY STILL MANAGED TO COME TOGETHER.



## THIS IS THEIR STORY!

IT ALL BEGAN DURING THE LAST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 2025, AMID THE CHAOS LEADING UP TO THE 2026 WORLD CUP IN GUADALAJARA, JALISCO, MEXICO. FIVE OASES OF ENCOUNTER, DIALOGUE, AND HEALING SPRUNG WITHIN THE FACILITIES OF ITESO UNIVERSITY AND THE DISCALCED CARMELITE RETREAT CENTER.



FIVE TABLES THAT WERE THE GATHERING PLACE FOR PEOPLE WHO TRAVELED THOUSANDS OF MILES TO BE TOGETHER AT THIS EVENT OF RESISTANCE AND HOPE.



A DIVERSE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, MADE UP OF PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD, KOCHURANI ABRAHAM FROM INDIA, MÜMBI KIGUTHA FROM KENYA, SIMON AIHIOKHAJ FROM NIGERIA, TERESA FORCADES FROM CATALONIA, JUAN CARLOS LA PUENTE FROM PERU, WITH ELIAS GONZALEZ AND CARLOS MENDOZA FROM MEXICO, BROUGHT TOGETHER PEOPLE WHO ARE RESISTING AND RE-EXISTING FROM THEIR OWN CAUSES AND THEIR OWN STRUGGLES.



WHILE THESE RESERVOIRS OF STORIES WERE BEING FORMED, ARCADIA TRUEHEART INVITED PARTICIPANTS TO CREATE A "MULTI-AUTHORED" PAINTING, WHERE THE HANDS OF SEVERAL PEOPLE TRANSFORMED CANVAS AND PIGMENT INTO A COLLECTIVE WORK.



THEN CAME THE OPENING...



"FAREM LA REVOLUCIÓN I LA TORNAREM A FER!" (WE WILL MAKE THE REVOLUTION AND WE WILL MAKE IT AGAIN!), SANG LIDIA PUJOL FROM BARCELONA.

LATER...



I INVITE YOU TO "DESES COMBRAR."

LUIS ENRIQUE GONZÁLEZ

THE INSTALLATION "DESES COMBRAR" WAS SIMILAR TO WAY OF THE CROSS WALKED BY JESUS CHRIST, WITH THE DIFFERENT STATIONS REPRESENTING THE PATH TRAVELED BY FAMILIES IN SEARCH OF THEIR MISSING LOVED ONES.



THE CEMENT PLASTER UNDER WHICH PORTRAITS OF LOVED ONES WERE HIDDEN, FELL UNDER THE FORCE OF SPATULAS, HANDS, AND EVEN FINGERNAILS, AND REVEALED A METAPHOR FOR PAIN BUT ALSO FOR HOPE.

THE INAUGURATION CONCLUDED WITH THIS, BUT RE-EXISTE WAS JUST BEGINNING.

THE DAWN OF THE FIRST DAY BEGAN UNDER THE 1959 TREE AT ITESO UNIVERSITY.



FROM MALAYSIA, THE POWER OF ANGÉLICA SUIMIN AWAKENED THE SPIRITS OF THE MEXICAN EARTH WITH HIMALAYAN SALT AND GRAINS OF RICE.



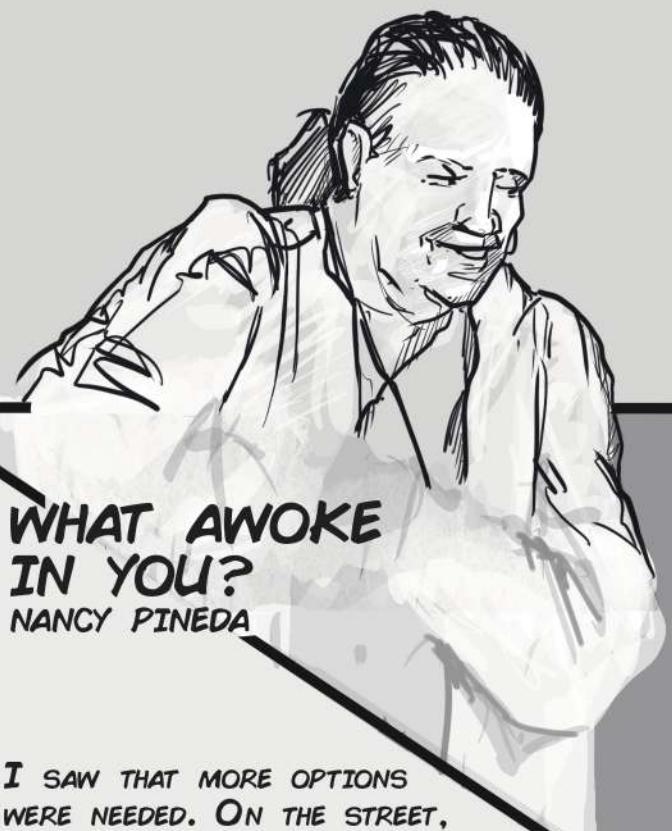
THEN, THE PRESENCE OF MUMBI BROUGHT US, THROUGH THE WORDS OF JUDITH ESPINOZA, AN INVITATION TO "AWAKEN"...



"THERE COMES A MOMENT IN EVERYONE'S LIFE WHEN SOMETHING CHANGES, NOT OUTSIDE, BUT INSIDE. AMIDST THE NOISE, THE FEAR, WHAT ONE IS [...] AMIDST EVERYTHING, A VOICE EMERGES THAT SAYS: ENOUGH! YOU DRY YOUR TEARS, BREATHE IN, AND BEGIN TO SEE THE LIGHT [...] YOU WAKE UP, STOP CHASING PERFECTION, AND BEGIN TO SEEK AUTHENTICITY."

# AWAKENINGS

THE AWAKENINGS WE EVOKED THROUGH THE POEM "AWAKENING" IN MŪMBI'S VOICE OCCURRED THROUGH VARIOUS SPIRITUAL AND CREATIVE FORCES RANGING FROM SOCIAL CAUSES TO MUSIC AND THEATER.



**WHAT AWOKE  
IN YOU?**  
NANCY PINEDA

I SAW THAT MORE OPTIONS WERE NEEDED. ON THE STREET, YOU ONLY LEARN WHAT OTHERS TELL YOU, AND SOMETIMES NOT EVERYTHING IS GOOD. SO I SOUGHT TO GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE SOMETHING BETTER THROUGH HIP-HOP CULTURE.

GEOVANNI NÁJERA,  
COLLECTIVE #259.



I BEGAN WORKING WITH DOMESTIC WORKERS ON ISSUES OF MIGRATION FROM A POSITION OF ANTI-RACIST FEMINISM.

SOFIA PINEDA.

I AM A DOCTOR, AND THERE CAME A TIME WHEN BIOLOGY WAS NO LONGER ENOUGH FOR ME.

LAURA RUBIO.



I BRING THEATER TO PRISONS SO THAT, THROUGH IT, THE CONCRETE WALLS THAT ENCLOSE MANY CAN BE OVERCOME WITH LIMITS TO BE SURPASSED THROUGH ACTING AND CATHARSIS.

PAOLO BILLI

MIRACULOUSLY,  
I ENDED UP SINGING.

LÍDIA PUJOL.

THE FIVE OASES OF HEALING ADDRESSED THIS QUESTION. EACH PERSON, BASED ON THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES, HAD AWAKENED TO RESIST AND HELP OTHERS RESIST VIOLENCE AND HORROR IN ITS MANY FORMS.

# AND THEN... ART.



AFTER MAKING PRESENT ON OUR HEARTS WHAT AWAKENED US IN THE PAST, WE MOVED ON TO INHABIT A MOMENT IN THE PRESENT THROUGH EXPRESSION AND CREATIVITY, PHYSICALITY, DANCE, SONG, AND LAUGHTER... WEAVING NEW BONDS OF MEMORY AND COMMUNITY THROUGH THREADS AND THE ENERGY OF MOVEMENT.

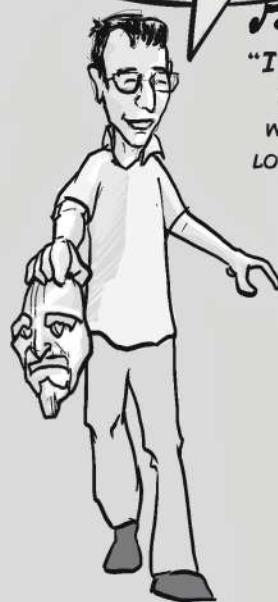
## SINGING AND EXPRESSION



## AND TUNANTADA (TRADITIONAL DANCE FROM JAUJA, PERU)

WE ALL WEAR A MASK  
SO THAT SOCIETY WILL  
ACCEPT US.  
JAVIER BLANCAS

"I WILL SEARCH  
FOR A NEW  
WORLD WHERE  
LOVE REIGNS..."



EL  
ARGENTINO



EL  
CHUTO



EL  
HUATRILA



LA  
JAUJINA



LA  
SICAINA



EL  
ESPAÑOL



# FIRST HARVEST

IN THE FIRST HARVEST, WE TAKE BEES AS A SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE: TINY BEINGS THAT RECOVER AGAINST ALL ODDS AND, AS WE WILL SEE LATER, ARE ALSO THE NAME OF THE PACIFIST COLLECTIVE IN ACTEAL, CHIAPAS, WHICH HAS BEEN FIGHTING FOR INDIGENOUS RIGHTS FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS, PRESERVING THE MEMORY OF THE MASSACRE THAT TOOK PLACE ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 22, 1997.



## WAX AND HONEY

IN THE RITUAL, WE RECEIVED THE WARMTH OF WAX AND THE SWEETNESS OF HONEY, THUS CLOSING THIS FIRST CYCLE OF SISTERHOOD THAT GERMINATED WITH UNPRECEDENTED STRENGTH.

THE RITUAL OF THE FOUR DIRECTIONS BEGAN THE FOLLOWING DAY, IN WHICH CECELIA FIRETHUNDER OF THE LAKOTA PEOPLE TAUGHT US THAT SYMBOLS SPEAK OF WHO WE ARE, AND WE CAN TREASURE THEM THROUGH OBJECTS THAT GIVE US ANCHORAGE, IDENTITY, ROOTS, AND SPIRITUALITY.

“EACH OF YOU EXPERIENCED SOMETHING VERY ANCIENT THAT YOU STILL CARRY WITHIN YOU.”  
CECELIA FIRETHUNDER



“IN MY CASE, THE ROCK SYMBOLIZES MOTHER EARTH...”



“... AND THE KNIFE, PROTECTION.”



EAST-YELLOW: THE DIRECTION OF THE EAGLE REPRESENTING ENLIGHTENMENT, THE BIRTH OF THE SUN.

SOUTH-RED: THE DIRECTION OF BLOOD, THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE OF THE GRANDMOTHER.

WEST-BLACK: THE DIRECTION OF INNOCENCE, THE BEAR, THE HIDING OF THE SUN.

NORTH-WHITE: THE DIRECTION OF RESISTANCE, LEADERSHIP, COLD, SNOW, STRONG WINDS.

# HEALING

TO GO FROM BEING VICTIMS  
TO BEING SURVIVORS.

TO GIVE WAY TO THE FOLLOWING OASES OF EXCHANGE AND REFLECTION,  
Kochurani Abraham read a passage from the prophet Ezekiel, with  
the metaphor of the river as an element of change, leading us to  
pause and reflect on the processes that could heal us from the  
violence we had awakened to.

I RAISED MY VOICE SO THAT PEOPLE WITHOUT  
RESOURCES WOULD HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES, AND I  
BEGAN TEACHING CLASSES IN MY BROTHER'S  
APARTMENT.  
SABINA RIFAT

I USED CHOREOGRAPHY  
AND DANCE TO HEAL.  
ANSON SAMUEL

HEALING CAN COME THROUGH FOOD.  
NICHOLAS HERNÁNDEZ

I ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT  
GOD WAS ANGRY WITH ME  
UNTIL, THROUGH THE LOVE  
OF MY FAMILY, I BEGAN  
TO HEAL.  
ADELARD KANANIRA

HEALING CAN COME THROUGH  
TELLING YOUR STORY.  
SIMON AIHIOKHAI

HEALING CAN COME FROM  
TRANSFORMING SPACES OF PAIN  
INTO SOMETHING GOOD.  
VERÓNICA ROSAS



WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE  
THROUGH ART, THROUGH FAITH,  
BEYOND WORDS?

WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

"YOU WILL LEARN THAT NO MATTER HOW MANY  
PIECES YOUR HEART BREAKS INTO, THE WORLD  
WILL NOT STOP FOR YOU TO FIX IT."

(W. SHAKESPEARE)  
JAVIER BLANCAS



WE CANNOT ACHIEVE ANYTHING IF WE  
CONTINUE TO FEEL LIKE VICTIMS.

NICHOLAS HERNANDEZ



"YOU WAKE UP TO THE  
TRUTH THAT NO ONE IS  
COMING TO SAVE YOU [...]  
THE LIFE YOU DREAM OF  
BEGINS WITH YOU."

(JUDITH ESPINOZA)  
MUMBI KIGUTA



"EVIL HAS NO ABSOLUTE EXPLANATION IN THEOLOGY. HOWEVER,  
THERE ARE THOSE WHO RELATE THE SOUND OF נַחַשׁ (NAHASH),  
THE HEBREW WORD FOR "SNAKE," TO THE SH...SH...SH OF THE  
SESEO. A SHHHH, WHICH WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO THE NOISE OF  
CONSCIOUSNESS, WHICH IN TURN WOULD REFER TO A SIGN OF FREE  
WILL FROM WHICH, PROBABLY, EVIL WOULD COME."



HEALING BELONGS TO ALL  
OF US, BUT IT BEGINS  
FROM WITHIN, FROM THE  
INTIMATE.

OLIVIA

# HEALING AND RESISTANCE CAN ALSO COME THROUGH ART

AND THAT WAS DEMONSTRATED THROUGH...

## POETRY

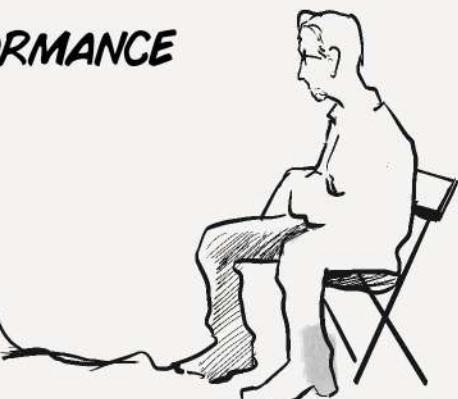
"LITTLE FISH TICKLE  
[THE RIVER'S]  
BELLY."

LISTEN TO  
THIS, FOLKS...



## THE PERFORMANCE

I AM  
WATER... YOU  
ARE ME. DO YOU  
MIND?



## AND THE MUSIC

"WE ARE SHADOW,  
WE ARE LIGHT,  
WE ARE HEADS, WE ARE TAILS...  
WE ARE AN ECHO  
IN ETERNITY!"

## THIS IS PSYCHOLEXIA!

"RELEASING EMOTIONS  
THROUGH MY INSTINCTS...  
AND IF YOU WANT, I'LL  
PAINT THEM FOR YOU."

FEEL!



"I LET  
MYSELF GO  
AND MY  
VOICE  
FELL."



# WHEN THE... **SECOND HARVEST** ARRIVED

A LITTLE HOUSE CAME TO US.



THE LITTLE HOUSE REPRESENTS THE CHAPEL OF THE VILLAGE OF ACTEAL AND SERVES AS A REMINDER OF WHAT HAPPENED IN SOUTHERN MEXICO, IN THE STATE OF CHIAPAS, ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 22, 1997, WHEN AN ARMED GROUP SHOT AT THE PACIFIST COLLECTIVE "LAS ABEJAS DE ACTEAL" (THE BEES OF ACTEAL) FOR ALLEGED LINKS TO THE ZAPATISTA ARMY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION. IN THE CHAPEL OF THIS COMMUNITY, THE PARAMILITARY SQUAD LEFT 45 VICTIMS THAT NIGHT. "MORE THAN TWO DECADES HAVE PASSED... AND THE BEES CHERISH THEIR MEMORIES."

(<http://acteal.blogspot/p/la-masacre-de-acteal.html>)

"LAS PINTAS" DAM, MUNICIPALITY OF "EL SALTO"



IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN A TOWN ORIGINALLY CALLED JUANACATLÁN, BACK IN 1943, WHEN THEY BUILT THE FACTORY AND TWO DRAINAGE SYSTEMS THAT WE CALLED "THE SHITHOLES." SHORTLY AFTER, THEY ALSO BUILT THE THERMOELECTRIC PLANT, AN INDUSTRIAL DRAINAGE SYSTEM... AND THE CANTINA.

NOW, THE RIVER HAS BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY CUT OFF. THE RIVER IS NO LONGER A RIVER, IT IS A SERIES OF DAMS... FIRST THE FISH WE ATE DIED, AND THEN EVERYTHING ELSE. PERVERSE INTELLIGENCE ARRIVED... THAT IS, BRILLIANT MINDS THAT HAVE TURNED A NATURAL PARADISE INTO AN ENVIRONMENTAL HELLSCAPE.

**ENRIQUE ENCIZO.**

"UN SALTO DE VIDA" ASSOCIATION

<http://unsaltodevida.wordpress.com>



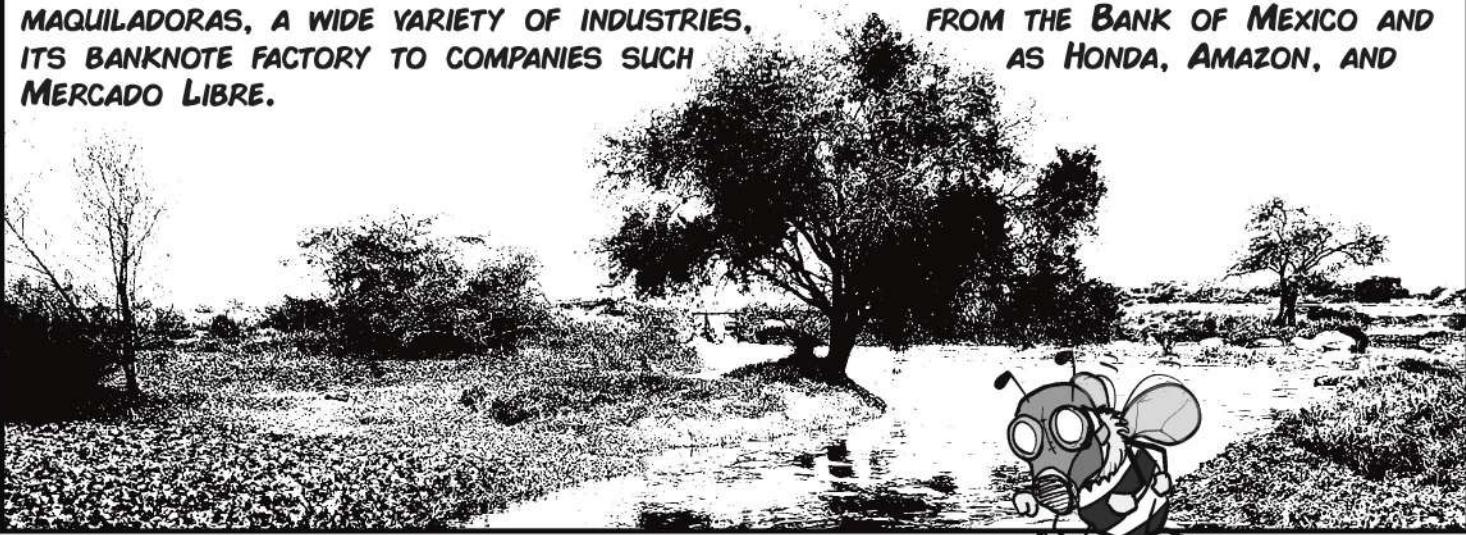
EL HUMEDAL DEL AHOGADO (THE DROWNED WETLAND) MUNICIPALITIES OF EL SALTO AND TLAJOMULCO, JALISCO.



WHEN I WAS A CHILD,  
I ATE RADISHES FROM A  
SMALL ISLAND  
WITHOUT KNOWING  
WHAT THEY CONTAINED.  
LATER, WE LEARNED ABOUT  
HEAVY METAL CONTAMINATION  
AND ALL THAT.

HUMBERTO  
CASTILLO  
"UN SALTO DE VIDA"  
ASSOCIATION

THE THING IS, THIS AREA IS HOME TO THE CITY'S INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR. THERE ARE MAQUILADORAS, A WIDE VARIETY OF INDUSTRIES, FROM THE BANK OF MEXICO AND ITS BANKNOTE FACTORY TO COMPANIES SUCH AS HONDA, AMAZON, AND MERCADO LIBRE.



FOR ALL THESE REASONS, IT IS IRONICALLY KNOWN AS "MEXICAN SILICON VALLEY." HERE, THIS INDUSTRY HAS CAUSED DEFICIENCIES IN CHILDREN'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT DUE TO THE POLLUTION IT GENERATES.

IN ADDITION TO OTHER SOCIAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS MIGRATION MANIPULATED BY FALSE PROMISES OF GOOD JOBS, WHICH CAUSES URBAN SPRAWL AND SLUMS TO GROW.

WE MUST FIGHT TO RAISE AWARENESS  
OF THE ECOLOGICAL DISASTER  
POLICIES IN THE AREA, AS MEXICO  
SELLS GUADALAJARA TO THE WORLD AS  
AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHER  
COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW.



**SOFÍA ENCISO**  
"UN SALTO DE VIDA" ASSOCIATION

### EL SALTO, JAL. MEXICO

THIS WATERFALL WAS ONCE A RECREATIONAL SITE WHERE RESIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES COULD SPEND THEIR FREE TIME, STRENGTHENING BONDS AND CREATING MEMORIES. BUT TODAY IT HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A REGULATING RESERVOIR FOR THE CITY'S DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND A DUMPING GROUND FOR INDUSTRIAL WASTE.



# EMBODYING

IN THE MORNING, THIS JOURNEY BEGAN ITS EPILOGUE, WHEN THE TIME CAME TO GATHER ALL THE EXPERIENCES WE HAD LIVED, IN THE PAST AND MORE RECENTLY. BUT WE DID SO NOT ONLY INDIVIDUALLY, BUT COMMUNALLY, IN KOINONIA AND THROUGH POWERFUL ACTS SUCH AS SILENCE, LULLABIES, OR MOVEMENT.



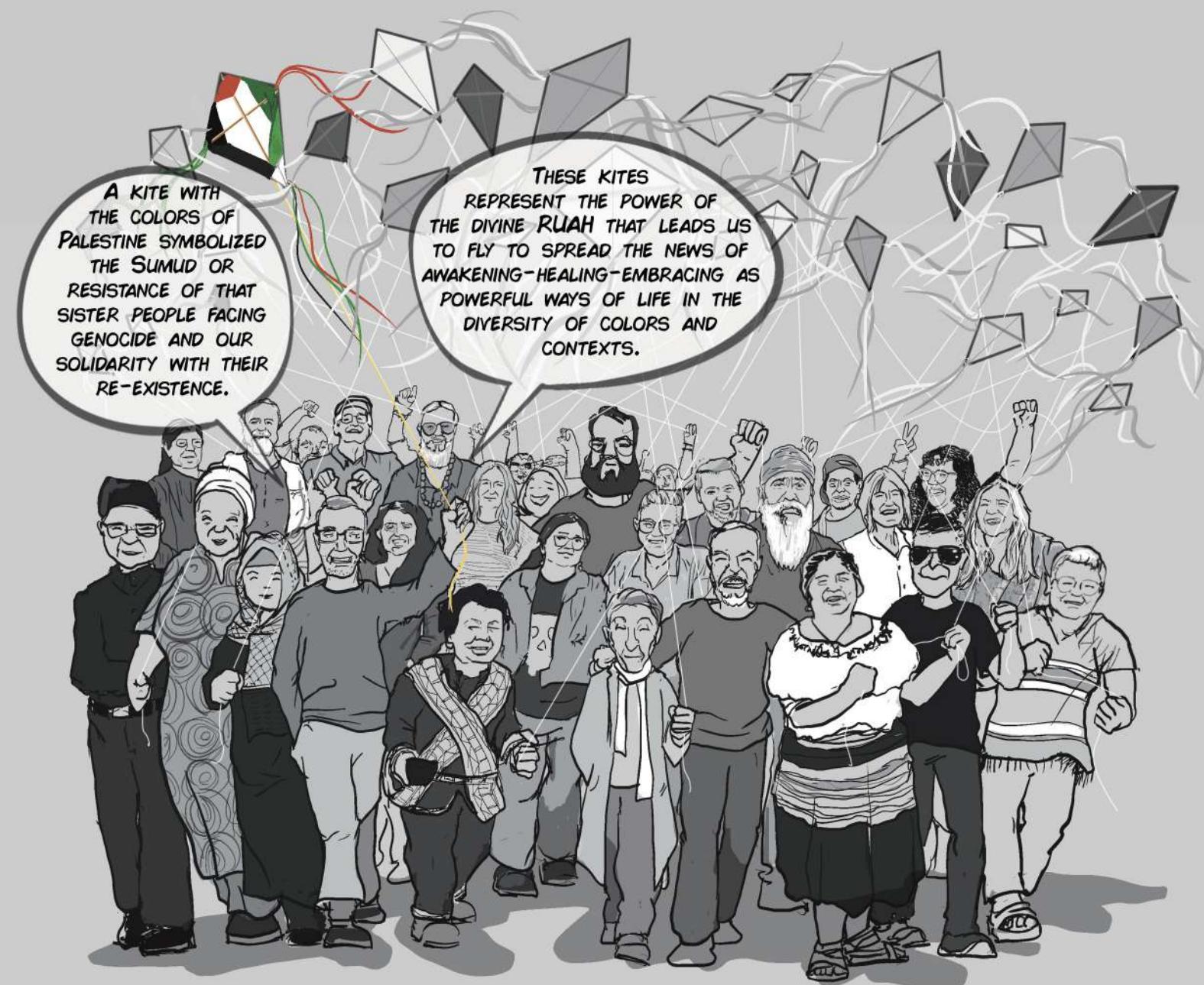
IN ADDITION TO SILENCE AS A STATE OF EQUALITY, WHERE NO ONE IS MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, LULLABIES REFER TO A PRE-LANGUAGE WHERE WE ARE ALL EQUAL.

FINALLY,  
"YOU CAN COUNT ON ME"  
WAS SAID THROUGH DANCE.



## EPILOGUE: "THE FLIGHT OF THE PICUCHAS"

THANKS TO A INVITATION FROM THE SEMILLERO DE VIDA GROUP, BEFORE SAYING "SEE YOU LATER" WE BUILT PAPALOTES (MEXICO) OR PICUCHAS (EL SALVADOR). EACH ARTIFACT, WITH ITS DELICATE ARCHITECTURE OF PAPER AND WIRE, EMBODIED IN COLOR AND SYMBOL THE EXPERIENCES, WISDOM, AND SOLIDARITY THAT GERMINATED DURING RE-EXISTIR.



"IN ADDITION TO THE FLIGHT OF THE BEES, KITES ARE LIKE THE DREAMS OF THOSE OF US WHO LIVE DOWN HERE. ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT FLY, WE LAUNCH THE KITE WITH THE ALREADY POLLINATED MESSAGES TO ACCOMPANY THE BEES ON THEIR CONTINUOUS JOURNEY. BECAUSE IT IS NOT THAT THE EFFORT ENDS WITH RE-EXISTE, BUT RATHER THAT WE RETURN TO OUR PLACES OF ORIGIN FILLED WITH EXPERIENCES, WISDOM... EVEN SOLIDARITY. THIS HELPS US TO DREAM, WITH OUR FEET FIRMLY PLANTED ON THE GROUND, TO LAUNCH PROPOSALS AND DREAM AND ACCOMPANY EACH OTHER FROM AFAR."

LAUREL POTTER.

**GUADALAJARA, JAL. MEXICO**  
**SEPTEMBER 2025**

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