

# NEW GEOGRAPHIES

## MONICA DE MIRANDA

Rooted in cross-cultural fertilisations, **New Geographies** a series of art work by Monica de Miranda pushes the boundaries of the conventional notions of place and nation. The work by Monica reflects on how globalisation is profoundly transforming our apprehension of the world, provoking new senses of identity and the creation of new territories. **New Geographies** explores the subsequent erosion of national identities and the advent of a new cosmopolitanism, embodied by the juxtaposition of a rich mix of communities in a contemporary urban metropolis, such as London.

New geographies re-defines classical cartography, where geography becomes a diary of life in constant flux .It reflects how globalisation is profoundly transforming our apprehension of the world and it is provoking a new experience of orientation and disorientation, and new senses of identity and space and therefore new territories and geographies. It investigates how the relationship between global and local is now associated with new connections between space and place, fixity and mobility, centre and periphery, 'real' and 'virtual' space, 'inside' and 'outside' and frontier and territory.

The various pieces exhibited offer a multi-faceted analysis of globalisation and how it affects our lives, at a micro - the local, the individual; and macro scale - sense of belonging to a community, a Nation.

Building on Monica's personal experience of globalisation, exploring her own narrative and the ones of her relatives, friends and fellow artists, New **Geographies** intends to re-contextualise the abstract issues of multiple identity, cultural hybridity, displacements and integration, by providing tangible evidence of the impact of these phenomena on an individual's environment: communications, creation of hybrid languages and customs, mixed relationships, regulation of migratory fluxes by national policies.

Questioning the assumption of fixed national identities, using multimedia, video and installation, **New Geographies** is a biographical account of Monica's multiple and personal encounters with globalisation and migration.

A time-based video, Tuning has been edited after Monica's journey across London, from South to North, and from East to West. The

accompanying audio track (edited by Adewale Itauna) is a mix of the various local, national and international radio stations the vehicle comes across, as a response to the diverse cultural landscapes it encounters during its journey in the city.

Reflecting on how the experience of “other” cultures is part of our everyday life in the city, *Tuning* is a poetic evocation of how we virtually navigate and travel around the world from within our comfortable homes and vehicles.

Produced as part of a participatory web-based project, **In The Back Of Our Hands**, features a collection of personal histories through the juxtaposition of geographical maps retracing the life journeys’ of a sample of culturally diverse people. This work examines the blurred national and transient identities, multiple places of belonging which characterise the second or third generations of migrant communities throughout the world.

**Biting Nations** is a recorded performance piece, in collaboration with Luna Montenegro, Aratxa Jonhson and Lisa Bradley. This work questions the assumption of fixed national identities and investigates one’s multiple notions of geographical belonging.

The **wedding series** emphasises Monica’s interest in participatory arts project, involving, among others, her family and friends. A real life performance (Monica got married in 2001, at the Brixton Registry Office as recorded in the video), the wedding series -“Remain to stay ...for all ever”, “Comic Relief” and “Wonders of the world” - sculpted busts and photographs) reflect on the social realities of globalisation, which then can affect one’s personal lifestyle, from relationships to tourism.

**New Geographies** reflects how in the global times we live in , led to the re-thinking of the meaning of ‘place’ as a consequence of the myriad of different people with diverse senses of place and belonging that habit the contemporary world city landscapes . Within the world urban centres geographies of borders- and fixed national margins, are being challenged and people cross frontiers and define new terrains of being outside their national and cultural boundaries .

**New Geographies** encourages speculations about the existence of a third space: a hybrid territory developing from trans-national encounters and cross-border dialogues embedded in the fabric of day-to-day life. Monica de Miranda’s art practice is like a journey of contested borders into the terrain of issues of place, identity and belonging. She explores these notions in relation to the changing places of people within the transforming geographies of contemporary nations.

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