

# Gina Osteloh & Latipa (née Michelle Dizon)

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Gina: Ok! We are merged with the recording service!

[Laughter.]

Gina: I think that question – I was thinking about that when Hồng-Ân asked us and then now I'm feeling it, and you're feeling it. And it's like, why does the recording give us pause?

[Laughter.]

Gina: I think for me, knowing that what we share which has a lot of history in both public and cooperative work but also very personal, and then knowing that it's going to be very public.

[Laughter.]

Latipa: Yeah.

Gina: And then I get conscious of, "Oh am I using professional words?"

[Laughter.]

Latipa: Totally.

So maybe this isn't... because I want to think about it like as being tangential, like my insecurity or my protectiveness or my vulnerability or something like that. Maybe it's actually a lot deeper. Maybe it's actually like something constitutive about what it means to make the attempt to have quote unquote, "Real, intimate conversations enter a public sphere." Maybe this isn't some aside, maybe it's the actual kind of tarrying with the idea of publicness? Which, I think what we're saying right now with all of our hesitation is it's not a safe space. It's a violent space. It's a hurtful space. It's something that we don't enter into without our armor, whatever that armor looks like.

Gina: Did you say our armor?

Latipa: Our armor.

Gina: Our armor. Yeah, wow. We don't enter the public space without our armor. There is deep seated memory and expectation that the public is a violent space.

It is not a safe space.

Latipa: Perhaps, and maybe, I mean... If we're both feeling this hesitation, maybe it's helpful to talk about where that comes from for us, how that is.

Gina: Yeah.

Latipa: Class and racialized and gendered. I guess that that kind of relates to the prompt, right?

Gina: Absolutely. I'm always thinking about how do our backgrounds – of class, who we are, gender, our experiences of race and racialization – how do those play into our fears, hesitations of the public?

Latipa: Yeah, and also I think the project is called *We Listen Nearby*.

Gina: Mm-hmm. Which I love.

Latipa: Speaking nearby. So within this kind of reflection of this recording that we're kind of doing right now, there are a lot of politics of what it means to speak and what it means to listen. And in the kind of bodies, and through the kind of histories that we have which, I think for both of us has been a journey. It's been a journey to get to the place of having the capacity to speak.

Gina: Absolutely. Oh my goodness, yes. The politics of speaking. It opens up so many layers of personal family history to current academic contexts.

Latipa: Yeah, it opens up the family stuff, it opens up who we were as we entered school and all of those different kind of years and encounters whether it's with an institution or with friends or it's a kind of cultural sphere. Until the present moment of both of us becoming visual artists, and then teachers. It's quite a trajectory actually.

Gina: Absolutely. I think of the ability to connect deep or sincere thoughts with words.

Latipa: Yeah.

Gina: And just having that ability nurtured or fostered. It was something that I had to learn quite late. I first thought of you for the project because of your clarity in speech.

[Laughter.]

Gina: And that was actually one of the first times I met you. It was at a Doug Aitken lecture at UCLA.

Yeah. Yeah. It's impossible for me to quote what you said because that was back in, probably 2005 or something or 2006 and you asked him something about the racialization of the black male body in his videos and I remember him responding with, "I can work with anyone I want to work with." But your question was just the most clear and concise

question. Very brief and concise and to the point, so I was like, “Who is that?” And then later we met in person.

[Laughter]

Latipa: I don't know if you've told me that story before. That's great. Yeah I think I was still a first year MFA student at that time and I remember that moment as being a moment where, in public spheres, I felt like I was continually seeing, kind of, the whiteness, the whiteness that passes in all of these situations. And finding myself emboldened to call it out in public spaces – in that specific lecture but also other contexts within the arts and academia. I just remember how frustrated I was.

Gina: Yeah.

Latipa: Both with that kind of normalcy that passed within the context, but the amount of energy I took from my body and my being to bring forward in those spaces.

Gina: It is an incredible amount of energy.

Latipa: Yeah and it's something that you can't... You're in a kind of double negative. You have to keep doing it but you can't keep doing it. It's so exhausting.

Gina: Absolutely. That brings me to something that we may have touched upon in a previous conversation but... well multiple questions. I'm thinking about how what we're talking about, in many ways, is our life's work. In our art, in our teaching, in our way of being in the world, but then how do we find sustenance? How do we continue? How do we find, create self-care?

Latipa: I think that that really comes with understanding that a critique of dominant structures is part of the work but not all the work. To put myself at ease, for my own spirit, but I think also in terms of building alternative futures to focus on what we want, the things that we do need and to work incrementally to build all of these things.

I think that was part of the impetus behind a platform like *at land's edge*, a kind of grass roots pedagogical initiative run by women and queers of color, which provided a kind of fellowship program for artists of color who didn't necessarily have access to institutions, art education. We also try to provide a kind of discursive space for the kind of conversations that we needed.

So I think for me it's precisely that question of how do we keep going? In the kind of urgency to also expand my practice, in ways that there's a part of me that really needs the solitude and really needs that kind of engagement with text, with video, writing. That kind of very quiet work. But there's another part of me that really needs collaboration and building and this kind of holding hands and leaping together into something unknown, with the intent to build the futures that we want.

Gina: Yeah.

**Latipa:** So I think another big part of the project is really strengthening communities, which we've seen certainly, in the kinds of mutual aid endeavors since Covid began. But there's a way in which we understand, very clearly – we've always understood in our lives, I think that it's not a matter of the State coming in to provide for all. But more clearly than ever, since the pandemic, I think it becomes almost common sense. Everyone understands helping your neighbor is a good thing.

**Gina:** Absolutely.

**Latipa:** Coming up with those networks when it's something that the state couldn't come in to provide. It's common sense.

**Gina:** Absolutely. And I felt that so much when I was living in LA, and was able to participate in *at land's edge*, and our women of color critique group that met on Sundays with brunch and food. It was such a... Even though I was teaching an insane adjunct schedule, driving over 500 miles a week but there was this nourishment with the food that we brought together. We always had an abundance of food. We wouldn't exactly plan everything that we were bringing but we always had an overabundance of food.

**Latipa:** Yeah.

**Gina:** That was a wonderful group.

**Latipa:** There was something that, as a group we could understand that we all needed that space. That we could have these conversations with other women of color on projects that we were in the middle of – in anticipation of those projects entering the world, right?

**Gina:** Yes! Yes, work in progress, not polished, not finished, even just sharing ideas. It was quite an intergenerational group too.

I think I'm thinking of our family histories too, our parents, my mother being an immigrant from the Philippines. This incredible pressure to assimilate into the system and – it's impossible to unpack all of it, but with my mother immigrating from the Philippines and not consciously, of course – my mother has never studied race theory or the history of race in America but her really needing to assimilate and to fit in with whiteness and also misogyny in a way. I'm speaking with so much love for my mother, it's complicated but the desire to assimilate maybe brought a lot of erasure with it. Somewhere in there it's related to speaking and listening.

**Latipa:** And related to memory and forgetting. I think that the kind of insidious inheritances we hold as children of immigrants, which is precisely what you described, that kind of desire to assimilate and to kind of put whiteness up on a pedestal, so much so that one could forget, or deliberately chooses to forget, where one comes from or how one lived. And that desire is so strong that it lives in the way in which our parents parented, right?

**Gina:** Yeah.

**Latipa:** I think about things like change because I feel like my own family, there was almost this unconscious desire for whiteness and all of its attributes when I was young. A lot of that has shifted over the years and I don't know... I mean for example, I distinctly remember when I was, I think in grad school already and I forget which... I can't remember if I was in grad school or undergrad but there was some immigration bill and I remember distinctly how-

**Gina:** Latipa are you there? Uh oh. Latipa, our recording may have been interrupted. Are you there? I'm going to call back. Okay, pausing recording.

**Gina:** We are connected. Hello? Hi, Latipa!

**Latipa:** Hi, Gina.

**Gina:** I think your voice is even more clear now, at least on my side.

**Latipa:** Oh, excellent.

**Gina:** Yeah. I think we were talking about our mothers, and your mother, this incredible pressure, violence to assimilate into American culture at the time was, still is, but it was really, the dominant culture, is, was, very white. So there was this unconscious forgetting, perhaps, the repression of memories. Is that how you said it?

**Latipa:** Yeah, I mean, I think that for our parents' generation, I mean, there was a willful desire, a willful desire to assimilate. But I think that the difference is that assimilation would be realized through us, their children, by virtue of how well we spoke the language or our social mobility, or married to whiteness.

So I think that desire is not one that just came when they stepped on US soil, because I mean, for my mother, the desire to come to the United States was, she calls it the biggest dream of her life when she was in the Philippines. She did anything and everything she could to make it here, against all odds. So, it's so deeply embedded in the colonial history of the Philippines, even under Spain, moving into the United States.

So these details of my childhood, which I look back on and understand as the quirks of my family. When I put it in the larger historical trajectory, I understand that McDonald's being my father's favorite food has a history. Just like our fridge always being stocked with Coke and Diet Coke has a history of all of these exchanges and dominations made possible through that colonial history.

So yeah, it's no accident that you and I have spent the better part of our adult lives trying to unpack all of that and understand it, but also to I think, intervene in it through our practice.

**Gina:** Oh yeah, absolutely. I can really relate to the arc that you described, especially with your mother's dream of coming to the United States, starting very early as a child in the Philippines. I think of my mother's history as a child in World War II, she was four. It was really

American soldiers that did indeed kick out the Japanese soldiers who had burned down their house, who had caused them to live in hiding for several years.

The soldiers were known as Joe, the American soldiers were known as Joe. But then my mother's ticket, if you will, to leave the Philippines was religion and the Catholic religion. She was able to join a Catholic convent in Guatemala. That was her first ticket out of the Philippines.

Latipa: Your mother, was she in the convent? Was she a nun?

Gina: She was, yes, she was studying to become a nun and she discovered incredible classism within the Belgian convent. She didn't have enough money to eat. So she was teaching in Guatemala and the nuns made fun of her and told her that she wasn't serious about becoming a nun because she was teaching outside of the convent. She got so fed up with it that she found another Catholic sponsor in Texas, a very wealthy woman who I'm named after. Her name was Regina. But my name is just Gina. But she sponsored my mom to come live with her to clean her house and then my mom could live cheaply there.

She had already gotten her master's degree in Cebu, but it didn't quite transfer, her master's in education. So she lived with this woman, helped take care of her house, and was able to re-get her master's degree at a Catholic university there and met my father in the graduate program in San Antonio at Saint Theresa's College. Those legacies of colonialism, American presence in the Philippines and also Catholicism are such incredible forces that have shaped our mothers.

Latipa: Absolutely. I didn't know the full story of your mother's migration, quite extraordinary.

Gina: It is. For her, she was taking a lot of risks, and in many ways it was the unknown that she was stepping into.

Latipa: Yeah. Yeah. It's kind of an interesting juxtaposition because your mom escaping through the convent, is like a foil for my mom because well my mom was able to migrate because she met my dad. He was Filipino too, but had gained US citizenship because he had worked on US military bases in Okinawa as a librarian just after the second World War.

So my father was considerably older than my mother and my mother had always described all of this to me without any romanticism, very point blank. "I wanted to get to the US. So I worked in a hotel because that's where I knew I would be able to meet a foreigner." That was the story of their relationship that she offered to me since I can remember. So that kind of pragmatism was always, and that kind of potentiality always hinged upon beauty.

Another story that she has always been very proud of, because my family on my mother's side, her father was from China even though her mother was indigenous to Mindanao, to Cotabato they never got papers because papers are a part of the colonial regime. So there's a way in which, because they had a Chinese father, they were never, even though they were born in the Philippines, they were never seen as Filipino until they got naturalization, Philippine naturalization. Which my mother was only able to pursue when she was in her

early 20s in Manila, she says because she was sexy. Usually to move anything like papers in the Philippines, you have to have money to bribe. But the way she always put it was, she was sexy and she flirted. So she was able to move all the papers for her family, naturalize as Filipino even though they were all born there and that formed the condition for her to be able to migrate, then she could get her passport. And then eventually formed the basis for all of the petitions to take place for the rest of my family to be able to migrate.

That was basically the story of my childhood, how it was possible to get everyone from my mom's family over to the States from the Philippines. That's the way in which access and mobility was always hinging upon beauty and sexuality for my mom. That was her only capital.

All of this became very perplexing for me when I think it was maybe seven or so years ago, maybe 10 years ago, where I don't know, I think I was in some image archive and some online image archive, it was Artstor actually. I was looking for images from the Philippines and I happened upon some American photojournalist's image of women working as prostitutes in and around Subic and Olongapo possibly in the late '70s. The images were of women in front of walls full of pornography. It was just like a woman's portrait but the background behind her was a wall of pornography. It was only by seeing that image that I remembered that there was an image like that in my mom's photo album. I asked my mom about it and all she could say was, "I don't know."

Gina: Wow.

Latipa: So there's this silence or refusal or forgetting, or there's this part of the history that I've never been told, but just putting pieces together I can sense exist. I think it's something that I'll never be able to fully grasp and that she's never going to be able to fully tell me. But that I need to explore. I think I need to explore through writing to kind of mine that silence and these little pieces of evidence here and there.

I guess, just to have a clear sense of why things have been the way they've been. Why I am the way I am, why she is the way she is. But this is the depth of, yeah, I think this push and pull between memory and forgetting. In order to survive you forget. But it's not like everything's disappeared. It's not like we as a next generation don't feel that forgetting really palpably.

Gina: Absolutely.

Latipa: Of course all of this is so urgent for me having small children now, and thinking about the inheritance of different traumas and what gets passed on and what should absolutely not be passed on.

Gina: It's phenomenal how your memory was triggered by this searching this, what do you call it, slowly looking through various photo archives.

Latipa: It is, right? I've done quite a bit of work on archives in recent years, in colonial archives, but she never got to the depth of what this particular flash means. I think that's the work,

I guess, but there's something about the depth of the intimacy of it. I've always known this image in my mom's photo album, but I just never thought about that background. You never thought about it. It was just there. But after seeing that image in the archive, I was like, why the hell does my mom in this picture have a white woman's ass in the air?

Gina: Right. Wow. So intense and so violent.

Latipa: Yeah. Yeah. But it's also, like how, I mean it's survival.

Gina: Yes, absolutely.

Latipa: It's what so many women have to go through to survive. What year was it? When I was doing all the research for *Perpetual Peace*, which eventually became a different piece, I was interviewing women who had worked as prostitutes around the former US bases. One of the first things that they were very clear about is, "We don't call ourselves sex workers. We call ourselves women who have entered into prostitution," in part to, I think, signal that if they had a choice they would have done things very differently. But that was the only option.

Gina: It's important to note the choice in naming oneself.

Latipa: Right. But between our mom's stories it's kind of like the virgin and the whore, the prostitute. Which doesn't even start to mention all of the healthcare workers, which I'm sure fill both of our families.

Gina: Absolutely. Absolutely. A good number of nurses, my cousins and my aunties. Latipa, it's so wonderful to hear your voice.

Latipa: Yes. It's wonderful to reconnect. It's been too long.

Gina: Yeah. I wonder if maybe we can talk one more time?

Latipa: Sounds good.

Gina: Yeah. Maybe we can, in our next conversation talk a little bit about Trinh T. Minh-ha.

Latipa: Oh, yes!

Gina: And her work.

Latipa: Okay.

....

Gina: Our last conversation we started to think the initial prompt from Hồng-Ân's wonderful invitation to participate in thinking about artists, Asian-American artists that might be in conversation with, influenced by, Trinh T. Minh-ha's work. Of all people, and

Hồng-Ân thought of you first in wanting to pair us. Thinking of you, and your practice, and your work, and in your relationship with Trinh T. Minh-ha, I was wondering if you could ... I know it could take so very long, but try to start to speak about that? I love that invitation to “speak nearby.” That was something that was so influential for me too, just from Trinh T. Minh-ha’s film, *Reassemblage*, how to speak nearby and not speak at, not to speak for, but to listen nearby, to speak nearby. Did you study with Trinh T. Minh-ha at Berkeley?

Latipa: I did, and as we’re into this, I don’t know where to begin-

Gina: Exactly, because I-

Latipa: ... to talk about Minh-ha, because I don’t know. The relationship for me is so expansive. It’s been 20 years of my life. I first met her as an undergrad at Berkeley. I was in one of her graduate seminars as an undergrad, and that was probably 1998, 1999.

Gina: Wow.

Latipa: We’re in 2020, and we’ve been in touch since then. She was my main mentor for graduate school, was my dissertation advisor, and has supported me for the last 20 years with all of those different professional activities. There’s that side of things for me, but then there’s also just the singularity of what she has done in her practice, in her writing, in her film-making, in her art making, which is truly unparalleled. So when I think about Minh-ha, it’s like, all of that comes up at once and I don’t know where to begin to talk about her.

Gina: It’s a very expansive amount of time, and a relationship we can’t describe in words. All of the things and all of the people that we’ve encountered... When you talk about that expansive time from the late ‘90s to now we’re in 2020, I think of key people, it’s really people who guided me, who influenced me, who invited me to participate. Being in San Francisco, I was working at the California College of the Arts, and I was a staff member. I wasn’t enrolled as a staff member. I sat in a graduate seminar with Tammy Rae Carland and she was so influential. She said, “You should go to graduate school, and I’ll write a letter for you. You should go to UC Irvine.” I said, “Okay.” I got into UC Irvine, and I went.

Being at UC Irvine, in Los Angeles, I met you. I was going to UC Irvine with David Kelley and met his partner Patty Chang. I met Sarita Echavez See, and Sarita See invited me to participate in so many conversations around art, around consciousness, around identity. Lucy San Pablo Burns invited me to participate in ethnic study conferences. I think, in those days, I was able to develop just a certain consciousness, a language around my work. It’s really the people that shape us in so many powerful ways, that are quite difficult to summarize it in words. I remember when we did the interview [for KCET Artbound], the video that we did by the LA river. It was you and me sitting next to the LA river together.

[Laughter]

Gina: Then they convinced... it was the film crew from KCET TV. They were so on board. You know what I mean?

**Latipa:** Yeah.

**Gina:** They had a dolly, tracking across the LA river, and then they got it into this prohibitive zone – was that the LA harbor or the Long Beach?

**Latipa:** No, we were in Long Beach.

**Gina:** It was the Port of Long Beach. Standing there together, looking at the Pacific, with this film crew.

[Laughter]

**Latipa:** We were their experimental film. They got to break out all of their toys.

[Laughter]

**Gina:** That's right, the panning dolly, the single shot, the track. They really wanted to experiment. That was awesome. Oh, my goodness.

**Latipa:** When you're talking about all of the network of folks who you've been in touch with, who have influenced you, who have made things possible, I think about that in two different ways. On the one hand, this is our own community. It's also part of the invisible labor of pedagogy, but all of the parts that are really deep in just seeing someone's humanity, someone's potentiality, and giving that space or encouragement to grow. I think, coming back to Minh-ha, what was so extraordinary about her as a mentor is precisely this space of difference. She always upheld or made possible in the relationship, because I think when you're talking about mentoring relationships, and I've seen them or even experienced them in the past where there's some identity or legacy that-

**Gina:** Agenda?

**Latipa:** Agenda, or a kind of appropriation that someone wants to maintain in that relationship. "You're my student, and you do work like this because I taught it to you, or because I have this legacy. Then, I went on to teach at this place, where you were at." That kind of energy, which is quite toxic.

**Gina:** It is.

**Latipa:** I think in the arts, it lives quite rampantly in educational settings. I think that Minh-ha, I'm thinking one of the words that really comes to my mind when I think about her example is integrity. I feel like she does absolutely everything in her life with the utmost integrity, and with this truly expanded consciousness. You see it so clearly in her work, in her films, in her writing, where she never gets bogged down by the discursive parameters that have been set by power. Or, never gets bogged down by the grammars of visuality that define filmmaking. She is free, and that freedom to trespass across all of these different limits that supposedly exist. That's something that I feel like she has really instilled in me, and also I know this for a fact, in all of her mentoring, having spoken to others who have

had close relationships with her as students, and that wisdom is invaluable for a young person entering into cultural production. It's an understanding that there's space for you, and there's space for the difference that you have in your practice. Obviously, I think that all of that is so deeply political at this time.

Gina: That sounds tremendously freeing. I wish I could enroll in classes with Minh-ha.

Latipa: She just retired.

Gina: Oh she did? Good to know.

Latipa: Yeah. I just attended her Zoom-

Gina: Retirement?

Latipa: ... retirement party!

[Laughter]

Gina: Well, there's her work in books and writing.

Latipa: Yep.

Gina: Congratulations, Trinh T. Minh-ha, on retiring!

Latipa: Tell me. What are some really important encounters, or I don't know how to say it, lessons that you've gained from different folks in your path?

Gina: I think, one ... It wasn't a single lesson, but being invited to speak about my work in public, again, with Sarita See and Lucy San Pablo Burns. Speaking didn't come to me, I had to work on speech a lot, connecting thought with word. It was a little bit delayed for me as a child, and having that confidence to be invited to speak in public helped me perform the confidence and the neurological connections between thought and speech in a very concise manner. Having to speak and write about my work, I think helped me gain [more perspective] in my work as well. Lucy has been working on a book with a writer named Christine Balance called *California Dreaming*, and just the opportunity to even to write a small, mini chapter helped me to gain clarity in voice and word, and back into my work, which I hadn't expected.

Prior to me moving to Los Angeles, I had given more emphasis to the visual, having these spaces where I was invited to write, invited to speak, were incredibly transformative in ways I probably can't articulate fully right now.

Latipa: That's interesting. You had already made the work, but there was something about having to put it into words that was really important for you.

Gina: Absolutely. I didn't realize it at the time how important it was.

**Latipa:** When you were able to put it into words, what were those words? What were some of the key ideas that you were even surprised by? That you didn't know when you were making it.

**Gina:** Right, right. I think it was the process of really making the connection between form and content, and creating. I had written an artist statement a couple years ago, and was asked to reflect upon the past 10 years or decade of my work. I was like, "Oh, my goodness. I've been making "shapes of refusal." I've been making forms that resist being fixed, in terms of a narrow, preconceived notion of identity. For me it started with a photograph when I was turning my head away from the camera, and I became infatuated with this shape of hair or the head in the middle of the picture plane. It looked like this strange hole, or almost like a void in the middle of the picture. It also helps me see the room constructions that I've been making as not just units that held a body, but these spaces of possibility, of portals to perhaps spaces that we hadn't imagined before.

Just writing about my work, I started to see the body as a force that creates space. I started to ask, "What does it look like for a woman's body to completely occupy space?" That was a recent journey through writing.

**Latipa:** I like that. That's so productive: "shapes of refusal." That's a really productive term to organize your practice around. It puts all of the performativity of a lot of your practice, the kinds of sets and stages, it puts it into perspective for me, that idea of shapes of refusal. There's a way in which the set or the stage, which you so intricately make in many of your projects, is both speaking to that which you're refusing and making space for something of the new proposition that you're offering.

**Gina:** I like how you said that. I'm glad we're recording! That was really clear.

[Laughter]

**Latipa:** It's true. We make work because we don't know. We don't know, and if we did know, and if we did have words for it, we wouldn't need to make it.

**Gina:** Thank you for saying that. Thank you for stating that we make work about things we don't know, because we have questions.

**Latipa:** How have you been understanding yourself in this political moment that we're living in? And by yourself, I am kind of bringing in our past conversations about where we come from and how we grew up, how we are perceived by others, how our body marks us in the world, but also what choices we've made in terms of how we live our lives and what we think is important, and what we want to do. How do you see your being, or your project ahead, given where we are in the world right now?

**Gina:** In so many ways, I feel this urgency to connect with my students, especially my undergrad students, and their urgency...There's a class that I teach, and I'm not teaching it this semester, but it's a GE Photo I course, and it's such a dynamic place to discuss and to envision images, and the power of images, and a person's agency, an artist's agency. The

class really involves students from all over the university, not just art students. And going through this transformative process, where we deconstruct images, we learn how media is constructed. The reason why I think of things at work, it's because maybe it's a place where I have some type of facilitated engagement with the community.

With my colleagues, and it being a university, it's a tremendously inspiring but also challenging effort to officially adopt anti-racist pedagogy and to learn together. But I think the underlying question in terms of my being, and it's a question that I'm really trying practice and to gain more language around, is how to be an active listener, how to share an environment of slow, close listening with each other. I feel that in both the public and the personal, so deeply, and they're not separate. I really yearn for a space of close listening.

**Latipa:** That's beautiful. That's beautiful. People often think about listening as a passive endeavor, but it's actually the most ethical and active thing you can do. It's openness to another, which was precisely what gets so lost in the quick pace of an everyday life, or even in the most intimate of relationships, or in larger community circumstances. I hear how that practice of listening is really expansive call for ethics, for community, for healing.

**Gina:** I feel like in your being, Latipa, I feel like in your being, you have consistently extended, offered... you just are the most close listener.

**Latipa:** Thanks. I will hold that in my heart, and I hopefully can practice it better. I know some people in my life don't think I'm the best listener.

[Laughter]

**Gina:** I have an image right now of sitting in a circle, at one of our *at land's edge* meetings, and the window light because it was a storefront with our community gallery space, and sharing food together.

**Latipa:** We would rent that space for \$20 bucks an hour, so we would just get it for three hours a week.

[Laughter]

**Gina:** What has been on your mind? What have you been feeling in terms of your being in the world, where we stand right now?

**Latipa:** I think very similar to you, urgency, profound urgency. I think the way that's expressing itself in my work, is collaborative projects. So one of the projects that I'm working on with a colleague, Setsu Shigematsu, is a film about prison and police abolition. It's the second film of a first series that she already made, called *Visions of Abolition*. I think it was a decade ago. We're working on abolition through the lens of police violence, immigrant detention, and trans and queer issues. And we're expanding that for next year as well, so that's one project.

Then, another project that I was invited onto, and I'm quite excited about, is a film about

the repatriation of the bones of ancestors from tribes that are not recognized by the United States government. The project is part of a larger UC initiative, called Carrying Our Ancestors Home. I'm really eager to learn, and whatever skills I have to that collaborative project. I told you about this other one that I'm involved in right now, Seed Knowledge, which is an open source knowledge sharing platform. Really thinking about how and if things keep going the way they're going, knowledge or the idea of how we learn something, it's going to become less and less diverse at the university level if there's only the top universities that exist with massive online platforms, where women studies is only taught by 20 different professors, in these massive online platforms. Then the kinds of diversity of knowledges that exists, can become more and more narrow, kind of like the way Monsanto controls seeds, where that biodiversity becomes more and more narrow in the interest of profit really.

Seed Knowledge is really thinking as a platform about in the very long-term future how to keep the diversity of knowledges alive, if in fact we're headed for that kind of fate, given, perhaps soon to be obsolescence of the university system as we know it.

Yeah. I feel the fire under my ass just to make work, but by whatever means necessary. I think that the other project that I'm really trying to get off the ground now, is I'm trying to make a film about environmental activists in the Philippines, and the conditions they face. The Philippines is the most dangerous place in the country to be a land defender, just like it's one of the most dangerous places to be a journalist. Given that circumstance, I'm really thinking about how to make a film that can bring that to some kind of global consciousness. All of this stuff, for me, it's been really helpful to begin to develop this lab, The Memory Resistance Laboratory, as a hub for anti-racist, de-colonial, feminists of color, artistic research, and to really, I think, break away from any idea of myself really, as a solipsistic individual producer. And to see that if there are skills that I have they can be put very intentionally into movement work. I feel the urgency for me is that - I just see that as the path forward for myself right now.

Gina: That's so generative to hear.  
Thank you.

Latipa: Thank you, Gina. It's so lovely to reconnect, and to get a sense of where we're both at right now. I'm really glad this project brought us together - again. I hope that we can continue...

Gina: Let's continue.

Latipa: ... our phone calls.

Gina: Let's continue! I would love that. I send big hugs.

