

Kággaba: Masks, Media and People in Community Life

Intention

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The intention of a work of art can be perceived as an act of communication. As artists, we are looking for new challenges and a paradigm, to bring artistic expression into the chosen subject (Leavy, 2019, p. 22). The method of a/r/cography, which is used in arts-based research, explores the potential beyond the boundaries of theory because this form of research discovers a whole new place of discovery of what already exists (Leavy, 2019, p. 37) and thus creates the possibility of bringing something aesthetically into sight that was (previously) out of sight (Leavy, 2019, p. 46).

Framed by a continual process of questioning, living my inquiry allowed me to explore the relations between theory a practice, presence and absence, the visual and the textual, the visible and the invisible, the finite and the infinite, the permanent and the impermanent, and the beautiful and the grotesque ultimately allowing my artistic, theoretical, and educational interests to be challenged so that as a practitioner, I not only worked but I also thrived in uncertainty and ambiguity. (Leavy, 2019, p. 46).

Artistic disciplines can be combined in various ways. Art thus becomes a means of self-knowledge (Leavy, 2019, p. 29). The method of a/r/cography containing the activities of making, learning, knowing and teaching, or from the point of view of the personality of artist, researcher and teacher, transforms ideas into practice (Leavy, 2019, p. 37).

Creating my own masks

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Analogies are a basic form of abstract representation that helps viewers translate meaning by being shown an idea that is recognizable. (Sullivan, 2009, p. 98).

Shikwakala

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The analogy of the masks as an artefact or vessel is representing the thoughts of the ancestors of the Kággaba community, but such an artefact can represent an imprint and a source of our own ancestors as well.

Influence of Our Ancestors:

<https://fromtheheartoftheworld.wordpress.com/2023/03/09/28-2-2023-2/>

The mask can be also suitable as an analogy for the medium of photography. The photograph also contains the quality of the instrument which conveys to the viewer an experience that he did not personally participate in, being distorted and dependent on the photographer and the instrument, but it also conveys information about reality and represents the essence of an event that has already happened, so that it is not forgotten, or so that the viewer can connect with it in the present and enter the past as if walking through a teleport gate.

Gonawindua, movie

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The idea of the artefact is an experience through an installation containing components related to thematic areas and encouraging further interaction via an online website where each viewer can start their own self-discovery under the guidance of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta communities.

I'd rather be in a dark silence than, Ania Catherine & Dejha Ti

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The purpose of the installation is to provide the viewer a space for reflection where the artist acts as an mediator or imaginary bridge between two different cultures and offers several subjects, which are artistically processed, for thought. The viewer can then work with these themes according to his own initiative on his way to self-discovery. The viewer is offered to literally enter the world of Kággaba. As this project will continue even after the creation of the artefact, the viewer will have an unique opportunity to follow the further development of the project literally online.

The concept is based on transforming Kággaba cosmology into materiality that will be represented by the artefact. The artefact represents space in which the story of Kággaba will be told. But the viewer will be slowly revealing the story of Kággaba as well as the artist of this project will reveal a path how to tell and share the Kággaba story during the research.

Kággaba: Media, People in Community Life and Masks, The Story of the Indigenous Communities in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta

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The artefact will follow the topic of the masks. The masks will be generated from the photographic portraits of Kággaba people and transformed in 3D object. After they will be installed, illuminated by spotlights and covered with a white cloth, the kind used to cover things during apartment renovations, so that no one is allowed to look at them. The Kággaba people say that their masks currently placed in several museums must not be displayed as exhibition artefacts in a museum because it is believed that they might absorb the toxicity of the museum visitors and should be returned to their place of origin.

The Story of Kággaba Masks in Berlin

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The space around the artefacts can be also guarded by a laser security system that will start a piercing sound if someone tries to reveal the secret how the masks look like and for instance lift the cover and take a look at the masks. This is meant as a symbol of secrets that should never be revealed, and at the same time represents the respect for sacred objects. For Kággaba, the topic of the masks is very special and little talked about.

In Focus: Masks and Myths of the Kággaba, History

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We know that the Kággaba people never invite outsiders to their community rituals and ceremonies. It is also not allowed to photograph such events, and little is said about them. We only know that it is believed that the masks are created by spirits and represent a connection to different spheres of reality. During special rituals the highest spiritual leaders wear the masks and within a dance that lasts for several days without stopping communicate with the spirits and ancestors (Gil Gil, 2023). I decided to respect the rule of secrecy and use the theme of the masks as a medium for developing thoughts about media and narrative, how to provide a message related to the Kággaba culture but also open the topic of importance of spirituality in our lives and the topic of artefacts in museums that have been obtained by ambiguous circumstances.

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References

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