

## **Carolina Alfradique Leite**

*Laboratoire d'Études et de Recherches sur les Logiques Contemporaines de la Philosophie (LLCP) at Université Vincennes-Saint-Denis (PARIS VIII), France*

## **[meta]estratos**

“Quel mouvement, quel élan nous entraîne hors des strates [métastrates]?”<sup>1</sup>

[meta]estratos is an independent institute dedicated to research, education, and creative practices revolving around the concepts of Landscapes and Medium, approached through a transdisciplinary, libertarian, and ecological perspective. Our research work unfolds in a continuous exchange between concrete observations of the territory where [meta]estratos is based, theoretical abstraction, and the implementation of experimental practices, always with the overarching goal of collective emancipatory transformation.

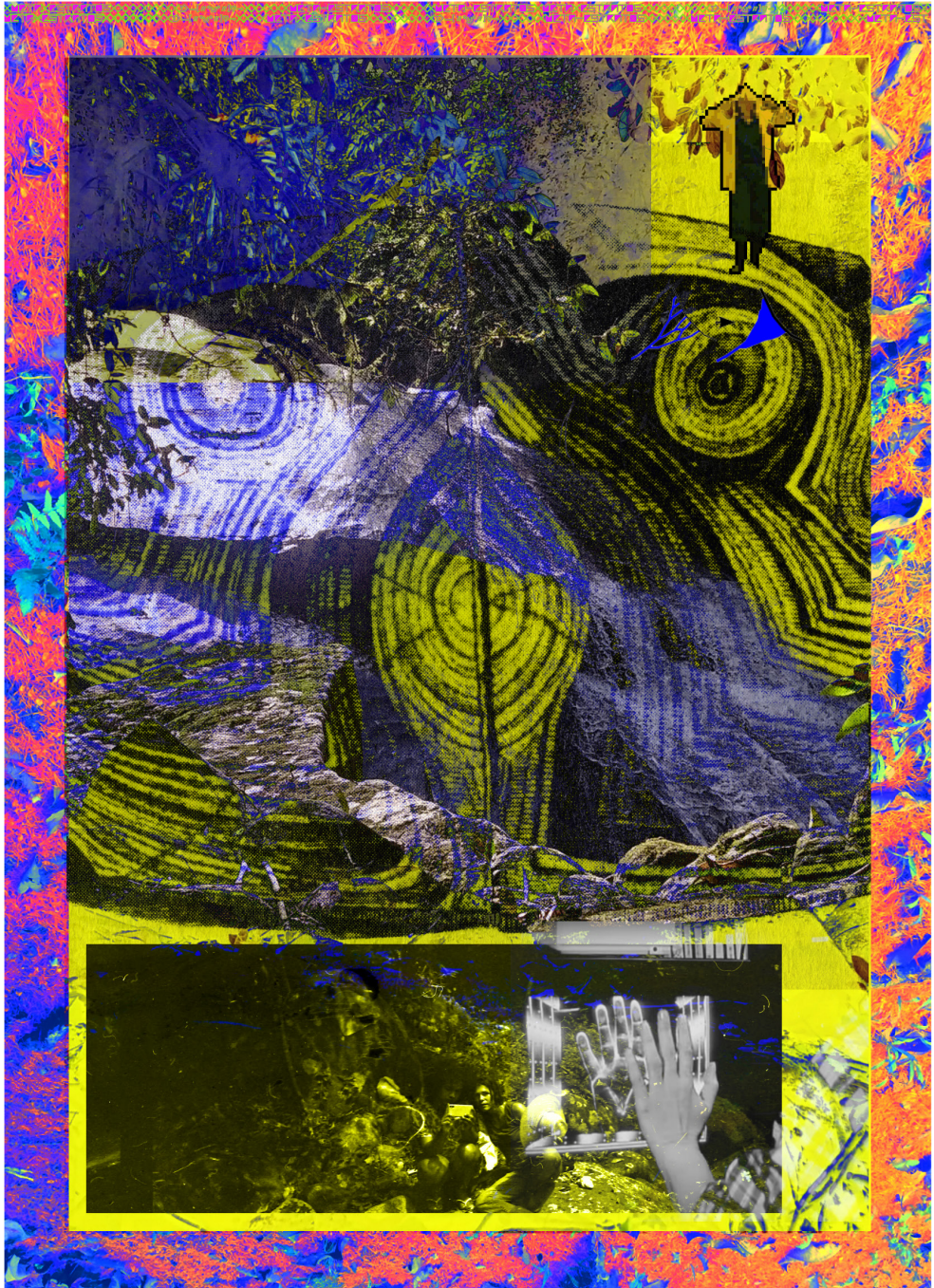
The landscapes that make up the territory of [meta]estratos include domestication, hunting, camouflage, a park, etc. We are located in the rural area of the historic city of Paraty (Brazil), within a farm featuring 40 hectares of preserved Atlantic forest and 10 hectares of agroforestry, in accordance with permaculture principles.

Our range of activities encompasses a diverse array of initiatives, spanning from artistic residencies, radio broadcasts, and publications to socio-environmental education and exhibitions. [meta]estratos is constructed through a plurality of transnational and transdisciplinary voices, thereby reflecting the diversity and richness of perspectives that contribute to our development.

Carolina Alfradique, Luciana Araujo, Vincent Pouydesseau, Thais Simoni, Viviana Lipuma, Florencia Dansilio, Jefferson Manhaes, Azizi Cypriano, Karin Harumi, Natalia Capelini, Manuel Rodriguez, Esteban Anavitarte, Katrina Brannon, Beatriz Toledo, Juruna Mallon, Diego Cavedon.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2: mille plateaux*: (Paris: Les éditions de Minuit, 1980), 628.



[Manifeste], photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

*Reading the landscape, starting with the stones – She says*

Nature does not constitute a common given for all forms of life, just as culture is not a distinctive element between humans and non-humans. Nature-culture manifests as a complex work shaped by a multispecies community<sup>2</sup>. Emphasizing this realization distances us from the risk of being carried away by a kind of fantasy around an extra-natural (untouchable, wild) nature, which has served more to erase the existence of non-capitalistic relationships with the environment and to establish a kind of green neo-colonialism. It is fundamental to conceive nature from the ruins of the contemporary system of endless exploitation, learning to identify what emerges and persists despite its destruction, as well as to articulate concrete forms of existence and dwellings in the context of the Capitalocene.<sup>3</sup> “Environmental thinking has always been an exercise in scalar understanding. How much is too much, and when is enough enough?”<sup>4</sup>

*Living figures and stone figures seem to participate in the same action – She observes*

Natural landscapes retain, nonetheless, a dimension remaining foreign to our regimes of meaning. They elude the logic of our positive research, they telescope it and guide us towards an impure, cacophonous, and mobile origin. In this regard, the notion of protection must not distance itself from those of destruction and creation. One must begin by desiring the vertigo and opacity specific to interspecific intimacies in order to learn about the living’s non-repressive, non-paternalistic dimension and its unintentional character. “And what is the ending of no beginnings, middles, and meanings?”<sup>5</sup>

*We begin to connect to the nervous system of the Earth, now becoming an image. Can we be as beautiful as an image?*

There is not a singular solution to ecological problems, but rather concrete ways of dwelling where more inclusive perspectives of thinking and healing<sup>6</sup> can emerge. Archipelagic thoughts that lead to conceiving the elusive totality of the world-chaos, and that understand a fundamental multiplicity, opposing systemic paradigms and any form of universality<sup>7</sup>. These approaches evoke operations such as imagination, dreaming, and *fabulation*, allowing us to shape the multispecies commons as a projective space, the concentrated expression of affections, a true work of art. “What do non-human beings have to tell us about planetary history?”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Anna L. Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Alenda Chang, *Playing Nature – Ecology in Video Games* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), 70.

<sup>5</sup> John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 139.

<sup>6</sup> In French: *penser/panser*. Malcom Ferdinand, *Une écologie décoloniale – Penser l'écologie depuis le monde caribéen*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2019), 24-28.

<sup>7</sup> Édouard Glissant, *Poétique IV: Le traité du Tout-Monde* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 31.

<sup>8</sup> Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, *Quando o sol aqui não mais brilhar: a falência da negritude* (São Paulo: N-1 edições, 2022), 33.



[Study Group], photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

Our study group's work commenced in October 2022, and three modules – focused on the concept of [domestication] – have been completed.

[Domesticating, Civilizing] from October to December 2022 [Domesticating: Perspective, Mediation, Scale] from April to May 2023 [Toward a Counter-History of Domestication] from November to December 2023.

By giving paramount importance to this concept, our goal is to challenge the frequent naturalization of non-human landscapes. [Domestication] is thus considered both a figure that composes natural landscapes and a set of techniques contributing to their shaping. Throughout our meetings, we implemented a hybrid working method, intertwining theoretical readings, critical analyses, and artistic experiments. Fragments of the discussed texts served as catalysts for poetic production. Collectively, we have developed an archipelago of ideas, references, images, sounds, and fabulations that constitute a collective archive and will serve as a starting point for future projects at [meta]estratos.



[**Dérives Residency**], photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

Dérives are deviations from the course, points of escape, strolls, and creative traversals through the landscapes – their fragments, formal qualities, and conceptual aspects – of the territory where [meta]estratos is based. The residencies have been conceived as a punctual contribution to our research, linking individual projects with the research developed by [meta]estratos. Thus, any project to be realized in our spaces aims to establish a dialogue with the activities carried out by [meta]estratos, seeking to respond, unfold, and amplify the questions collectively raised by its members and collaborators.

Navigation sonore à la lisière des frontières du parc de la Bocaina, interactive platform, video, film, 2022

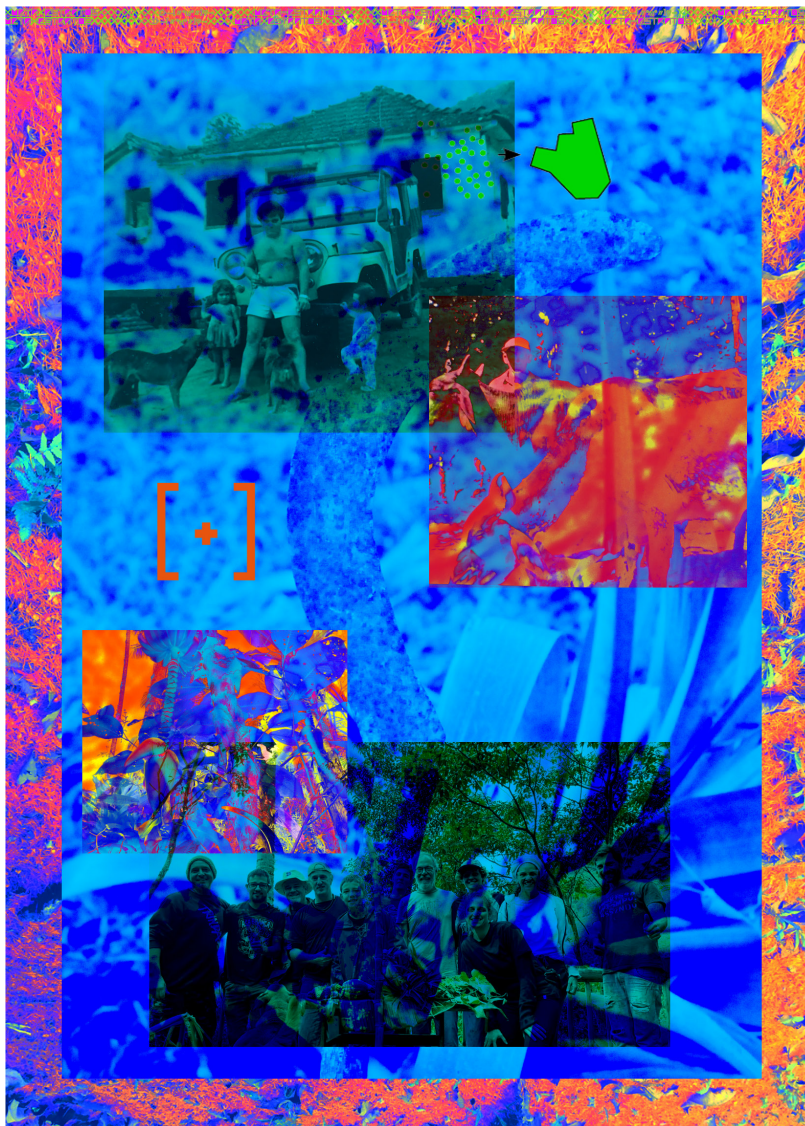
Author: Matière Revue. Collaboration: [meta]estratos. Supported by: Institut Français

In September 2022, [meta]estratos hosted the French artistic collective Matière Revue for the realization of the sonorous navigation project at the edges of the internal and external borders of Bocaina National Park – one of the largest reserves of Mata Atlântica, adjacent to the [meta]estratos site. This project was commissioned by the French Institute (IF) and gave rise to several works, including an interactive platform (exhibited on the collective’s site), a video (broadcast by Sesc and on the Homeostasis Lab site), and a film currently in the editing phase.

Sei que o mistério subsiste além das águas, video, photo, film, 2023

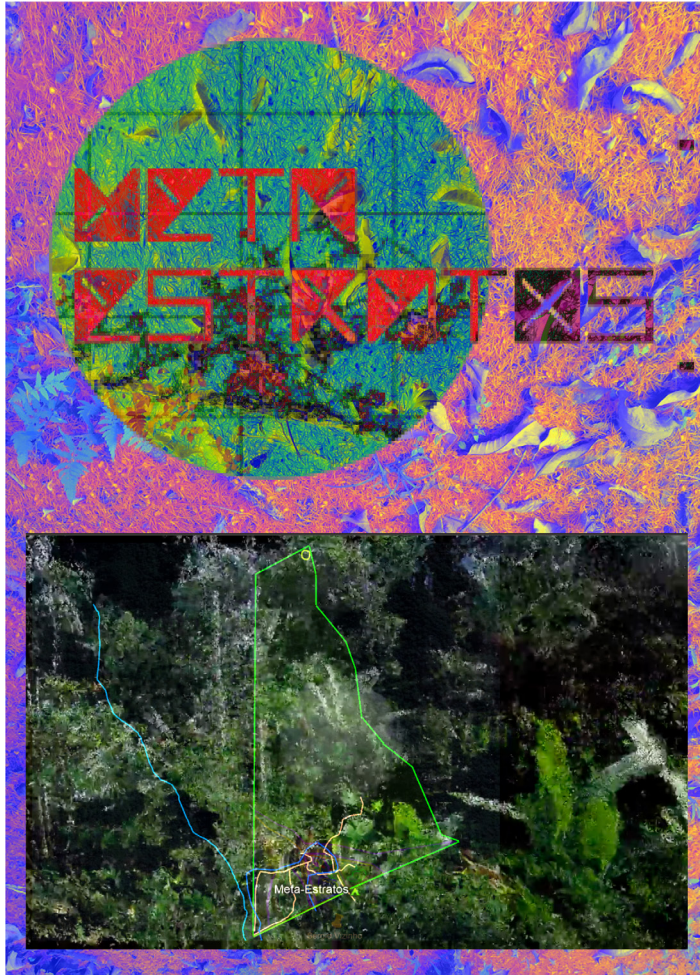
Director: Azizi Cypriano. Starring: Agui Berenice, Thais Ayomide. Cinematography: Luciana Araujo, Lucas Magalhães. Sound: Anti Ribeiro, Gabriela Soares. Editing: Lucas Magalhães, Loren Minzú. Color: Marcos Reis. Production and collaboration: [meta]estratos. Supported by: Odé cultural, Estudio Saa.

For this residency with the artist Azizi Cypriano, we produced photos and videos to enrich two of his works: a video exhibited at Sesc as part of the exhibition titled “Um oceano para lavar as mãos” (An ocean to wash one’s hands), and a film titled “Além das águas” (Beyond the Waters), premiered at the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Zózimo Bulbul Black Cinema.



**[Nursery]**, photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

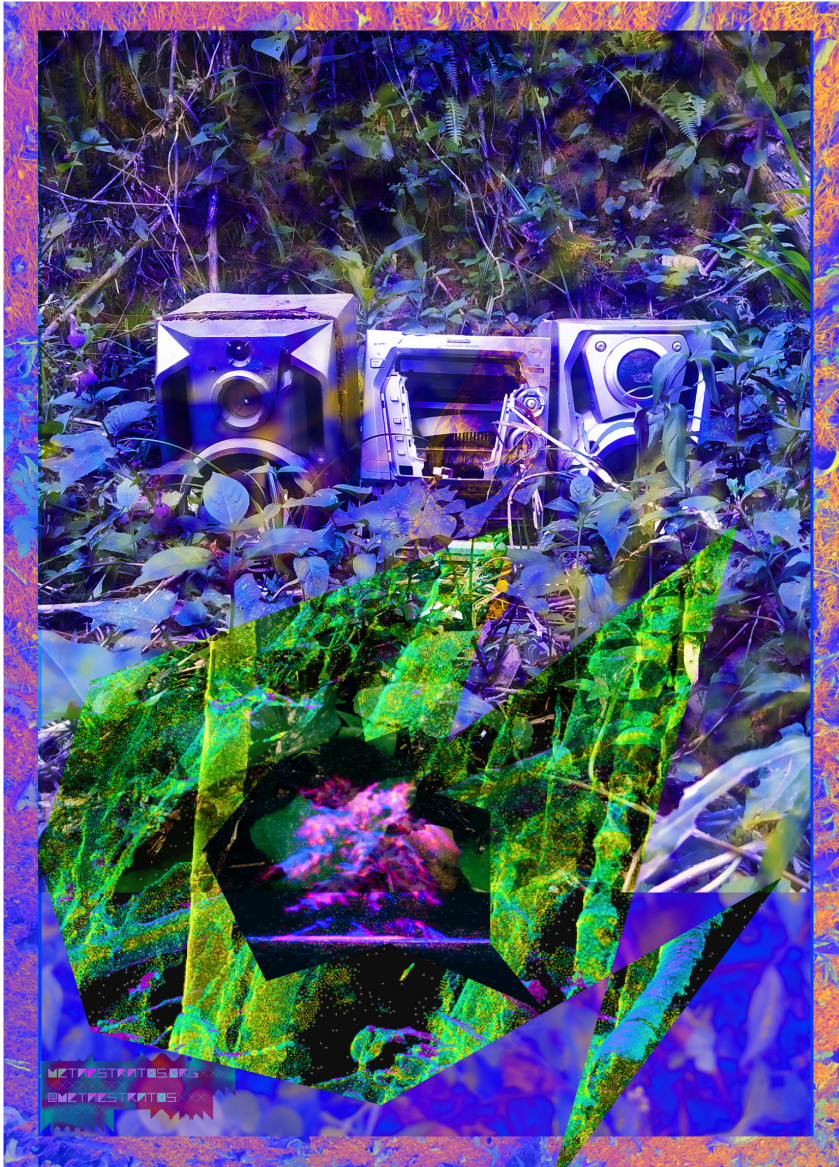
Our gallery serves as an interface intertwining artistic works, historical archives, and scientific materials. It presents itself as an exhibition space, both virtual and on-site, where we make elements from the institute's collection available to the public, while experimenting with innovative curatorial methods. The material integrated into our collection does not follow a hierarchical organization. On the contrary, we deliberately seek to provoke confusion/contamination regarding the origins and meanings of these elements during their exhibition.



[**Gallery: Confused Assembly of Objects**], photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

We regularly organize self-managed meetings with local farmers belonging to the agroecological association “Caminhos do ouro”. Each gathering takes place on the property of one of the participants and serves as a space for sharing knowledge, exchanging seeds, collective planning, communal cultivation, etc. We work together for the perpetuation of the richness of the genetic and cultural heritage of the Mata Atlântica and the development of equitable forms of production and consumption.





[**Forest Parabolic Radio**], photomontage made by [meta]estratos, January 2024.

Our radio is composed of the following programs:

- 1 >> Narratives on Landscapes: narrations of events experienced, observed, or heard by the inhabitants of the region.
- 2 >> Pioneer Sections: educational program for children on ecological themes.
- 3 >> Metallic Forest: broadcasting of soundscapes created by the flora and fauna of the institute's territory.