



koko
mariano

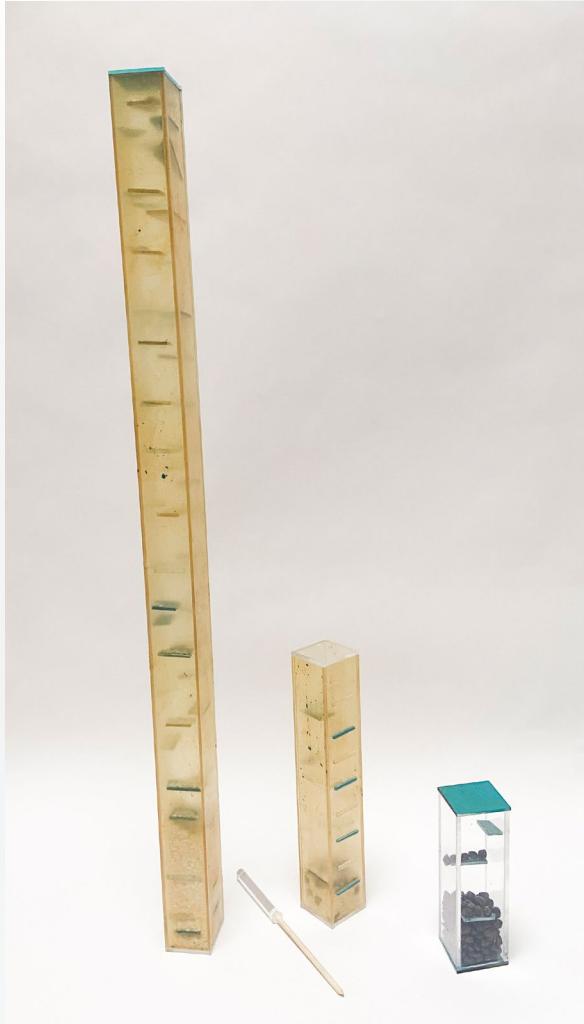
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mariano — Portfolio

instruments hand crafted from waste



This set of percussive instruments was crafted from found PVC pipes salvaged from urban planning and construction sites across Montréal. Recuperated directly from the street, the pipes were cut, sealed, and filled with tamarind seeds and rice—each combination creating its own distinct timbre and rhythm when shaken, struck, or rolled.

Part sound object, part intervention, the instruments reclaim synthetic waste as tools for sonic storytelling. By embedding organic materials within industrial forms, the project reflects on the layered textures of the city—its noise, its movement, its discarded futures. Urban Resonance invites listening to the built environment not only as a backdrop, but as an active collaborator in rhythm and ritual.



instruments hand crafted from waste



This ongoing project transforms discarded metal from construction sites across Montréal into handcrafted sonic instruments. By reclaiming industrial debris, the work explores the tension between urban development and the resonant potential of forgotten materials. The series includes two gongs and a hanging xylophone—each shaped and tuned by hand, carrying the marks and histories of the sites they came from.

Forged through improvisation and experimentation, these instruments are both sculptural and functional, evoking new forms of listening and re-use. Found Metal Instruments is a meditation on transformation, rhythm, and place—where waste becomes voice, and sound becomes a form of memory.





Mutualism (2023)
Multidisciplinary Performance & Collaboration

Mutualism is a live, multidisciplinary performance exploring interdependence, reciprocity, and embodied listening across sound, movement, and image. First performed at the 22nd Festival de la Imagen in Bogotá, Colombia (June 2023) (top photo), and later presented at How DO You Play With Earth at the Stewart Museum in Montréal (September 2023) (bottom photo), the piece shifts and adapts with each site—responding to local histories, ecologies, and acoustics.

The collaborative ensemble includes an electroacoustic composer, a visual artist, a dancer, and an acoustic artist, each contributing through improvisation and structured scores. Together, they form a living ecosystem of gesture, texture, and resonance—where no element leads, but all respond. Mutualism unfolds as a collective ritual of sensing and co-creation, proposing a model of art-making rooted in care, attunement, and shared agency.





Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2 (2024)
Multimedia Sound Performance – Komorebi, VAV Gallery

Performed as part of the group exhibition Komorebi at VAV Gallery in April 2024, Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2 continues an ongoing exploration of queer futurity through sound, performance, and ancestral resonance. This multimedia piece merges electroacoustic elements—custom-designed in music software—with hand crafted pre-colonial-inspired instruments, creating a layered sonic environment that moves between digital memory and embodied history.

Rooted in speculative worldbuilding, the performance acts as both a ritual and a proposal: an offering to a future shaped by remembering. Through sound, Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2 reaches back to pre-colonial wisdoms while imagining what queer, diasporic ancestry might look and sound like in worlds yet to come. The result is a deeply felt and evolving narrative of migration, transformation, and reverence.



A part of the performance can be seen on
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ijD7GIlJowv0>



Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2 (2024)

Multimedia Sound Performance – Centaur Gallery Theatre

In this iteration of Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2, performed at Centaur Gallery Theatre in 2024, the work expanded into a more theatrical and intimate setting. Blending electroacoustic soundscapes—crafted through custom music software—with handmade instruments inspired by pre-colonial Philippine traditions, the piece summoned a sonic ritual of queer memory and speculative futures.

This version culminated in the live reading of an original poem, anchoring the performance in voice and language. The poem served as both invocation and release, offering a moment of reflection, grief, and imagining. Through sound, rhythm, and spoken word, Lakba Ni Bakla: Part 2 bridged ancestral echoes with future visions, creating a space for listening, remembering, and becoming.



Video available on vimeo;
<https://vimeo.com/892683180>

Lakba Ni Bakla (2023)

Video Performance with Original Sound Composition & Metal Instruments

Lakba Ni Bakla is a video performance piece that weaves movement, sound, and myth-making into a ritual of becoming. The work features an original sound composition performed with hand-forged metal gongs—crafted from found materials on Montréal construction sites—as both score and ceremonial anchor.

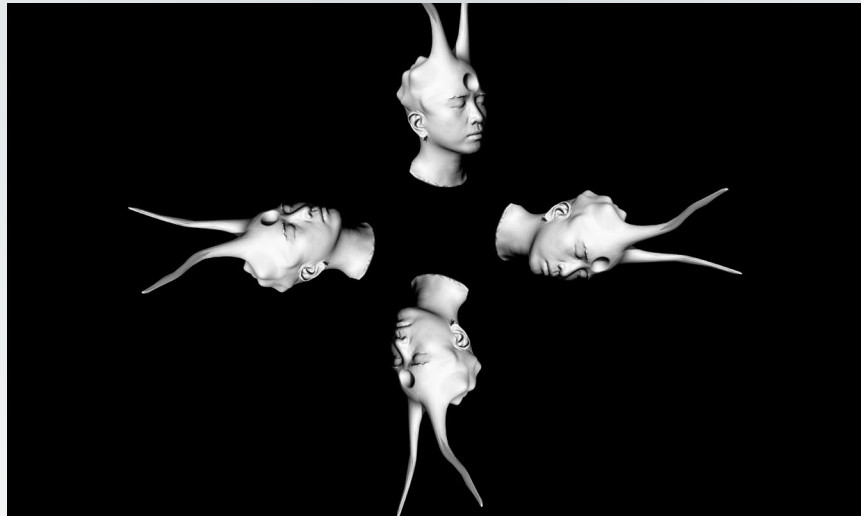
“Lakba,” meaning journey or passage in several Philippine languages, grounds the narrative in motion—across geographies, histories, and identities. Through embodied performance and sonic resonance, Lakba Ni Bakla traces the steps of a queer, diasporic spirit navigating futures shaped by memory, reclamation, and sound. The work honors bakla not as a fixed identity, but as a fluid force—shifting across time like echo, vibration, and steel.





Bakla 3033 is a speculative design project envisioning a queer ancestor from the future—part spirit, part machine. Created through 3D modeling, this figure embodies futurity, resilience, and diasporic imagination. Designed to function as a projector, the rendered form can be used to cast a spinning hologram, blurring the lines between body, memory, and light.

Drawing from the layered histories of the bakla identity in the Philippines, the work projects queerness not only as survival, but as sacred technology. Bakla 3033 stands as a portal—an ancestral figure reimagined for the future, vibrating across time, gender, and digital form.





This experimental coaster is crafted from a biodegradable materials made by combining expired coffee grounds with gelatin, giving new life to discarded materials. A found leaf is embedded within the surface, suspended in the amber-toned matrix as a quiet reflection of nature's cycles. Each piece is unique in texture, shape, and botanical detail—fusing organic waste with ephemeral design. Made at the Open Grange residency January 2022.

A bioplastic lamp names "Tulip" made from recycled satin fabric and gelatin. An experiment on the properties of satin and gelatin and how it would react with the heat of the lamp. It is one of a kind. Made in Montreal June 2021.



materiality - biocomposite



Formed from discarded fabrics, this bowl reimagines textile waste as sculptural form. Scraps are cut, layered, and fused using glycerine to mold a flexible yet sturdy vessel. The textures and colors of the repurposed cloth remain visible, preserving the story of their past lives. This object sits between softness and structure—an exploration of memory, material transformation, and sustainable craft. Made at the Open Grange residency January 2022.

Made from a blend of dried orange peels and cornstarch, this biocomposite tealight holder transforms everyday food waste into a warm, tactile object. The citrus texture is subtly preserved, and when lit, the holder emits a soft, amber glow—recalling the warmth and scent of its organic origins. Lightweight yet sturdy, it offers a gentle intersection of sustainability, scent memory, and slow design. Made in Montreal June 2021.



materiality - experimental packaging



This sculptural soap reimagines personal care as a sustainable design object. Cast in glycerine using a custom mold designed in 3D software and 3D printed, the form eliminates the need for traditional packaging. Each piece is both a functional soap and a standalone object—designed to be held, used, and eventually dissolved. By merging digital fabrication with biodegradable material, the work proposes a closed-loop alternative to disposable packaging, where the product is the packaging, and nothing is left behind.



materiality - garments



Uni-Form (2019)

This capsule collection reclaims deadstock fabric as a site for reinvention and slow fashion. Each piece was thoughtfully constructed from surplus textiles—once discarded, now revived into layered garments that speak to both restraint and expression. The collection explores form, movement, and material memory, weaving together sustainability with a tactile, contemporary aesthetic. Featured in *Bullet Magazine* (Los Angeles, 2019), the work challenges fast fashion by celebrating scarcity as a space for creative abundance.





Girls on the Grass (2019)

Girls on the Grass is a small-batch series of embroidered caps made in Los Angeles in 2019, rooted in the principles of slow fashion and intimate production. Each cap was made to order, featuring hand-drawn embroidery—no two exactly alike. The title evokes a moment of softness and ease, a quiet rebellion against mass production. By centering uniqueness, care, and locality, the series offered wearers a personal connection to their garments—something gentle, made just for them.



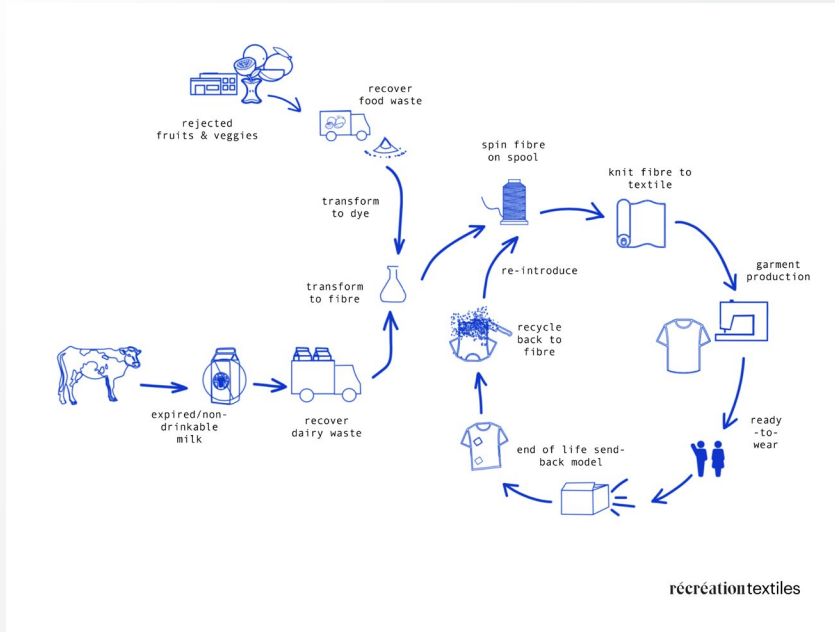
materiality - natural dye garment



This garment is a foldable poncho made from organic cotton, coated with beeswax for water resistance and dyed using red cabbage and rusted nails—a natural process that yields unpredictable, living patterns. Inspired by pre-colonial sun protectors from the Philippines, the piece borrows its folding technique from traditional West African fan structures, blending multiple ancestral practices into a single wearable form. Designed for adaptability and rooted in slow, sustainable craft, the poncho unfolds not only as a garment, but as a gesture of cultural convergence—honoring memory, mobility, and the elements. Made in Montreal, 2023



materiality - circular fashion experiment



Recreation Textile was a 2019-2021 research-driven project in Montreal, Canada exploring the transformation of expired skim milk into a protein-based fiber. In collaboration with chemist Dr. Maritza Volel and designer Natasha Thomas, the project aimed to reimagine waste streams as sources for sustainable material innovation. Working across disciplines, we developed a circular economy model involving local food suppliers, waste management partners, and material labs to create a closed-loop process.

While the project gained momentum and conceptual clarity, financial limitations halted our ability to move toward garment prototyping. Still, Recreation Textile stands as a proof of concept for biodesign as a tool for systemic change—merging science, craft, and community toward a more regenerative fashion future.





Untitled Bakla (2023)
Scroll Installation – VAV Gallery, Montréal

Untitled Bakla is a print media installation exhibited at the VAV Gallery in 2023. Taking the form of a scroll, the piece is composed of parchment paper, butcher paper, found wood, and fragments of recycled red PVC plastic—each material chosen for its associations with impermanence, labor, and urban excess.

The scroll format evokes both archival and ceremonial objects, unrolling a nonlinear narrative of bakla identity that resists categorization. Layered, marked, and assembled with care, the piece becomes a tactile record—part document, part offering. By combining natural and synthetic materials, Untitled Bakla reflects on the entanglement of body, history, and environment, proposing a form that is neither fixed nor finished, but continuously unfolding.



Re-membering (2023)

Curated for Art Matters Festival – 24th Anniversary Edition

Re-membering marked my curatorial debut as part of the 24th edition of the Art Matters Festival in 2024. This multidisciplinary exhibition brought together works in textiles, painting, video, 3D rendering, and sculpture, each unraveling personal and collective meditations on the theme of home—what it means to remember it, reconstruct it, and carry it across time and distance.

The title Re-membering gestures toward the act of piecing together—of recalling through fragments, materials, and gestures. Home, in this context, was not fixed or singular, but layered and shifting: a memory woven into cloth, embedded in code, projected on a screen, or held within form. The exhibition created a space for artists to explore dislocation, diaspora, and rootedness, inviting viewers to feel, question, and reimagine how we carry our homes within us.

