

14 BIENAL
DE LA
HABANA

2021 / 2022

THEORETICAL
EVENT

THEORETICAL EVENT

PROGRAMA

16 _ 20

NOVEMBER, 2021

**Theater of the National Museum of Fine Arts
/YouTube Bienal de La Habana ***

*All virtual conferences will be broadcast
live at the MNBA Theater.

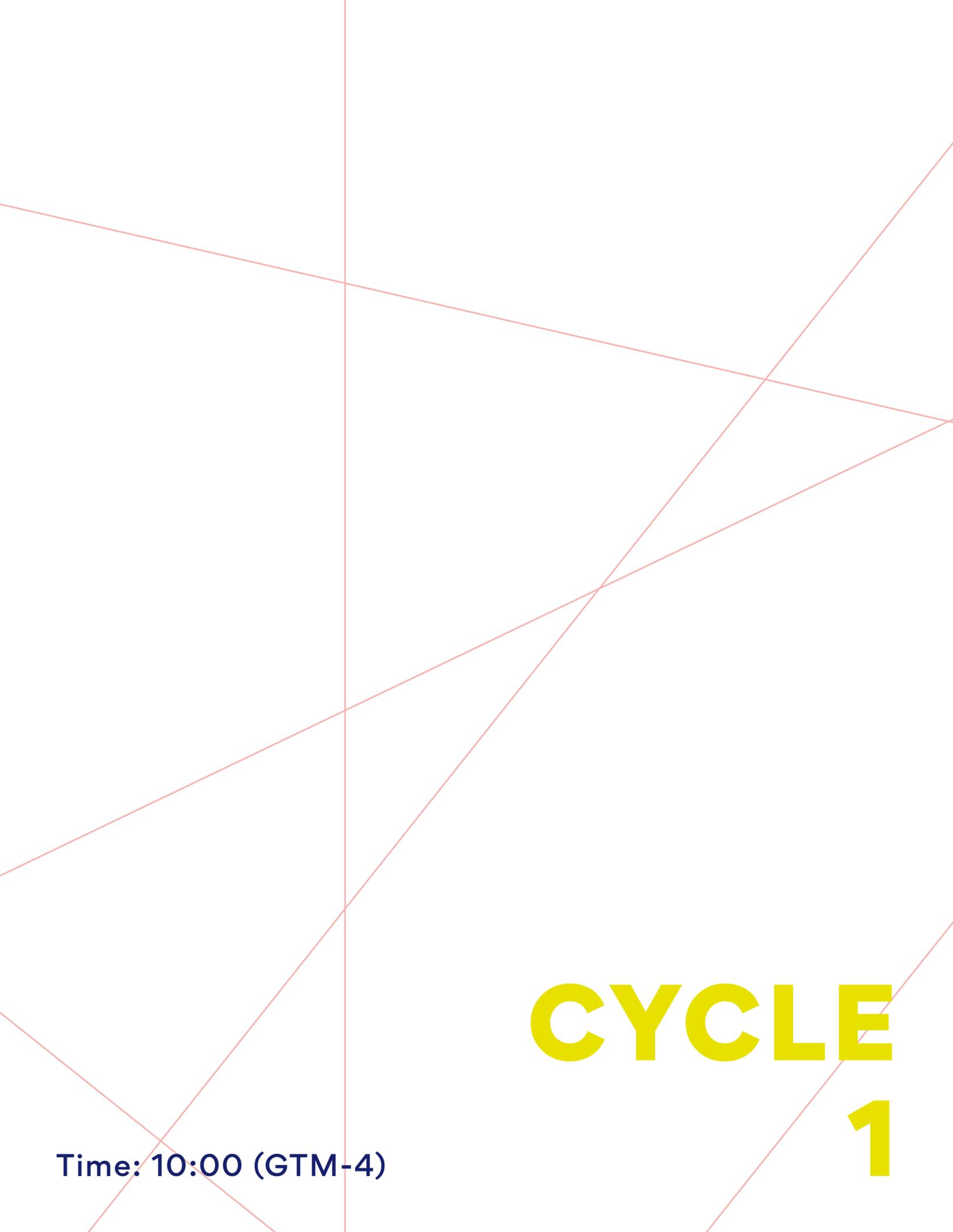
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NOVEMBER

**RETHINKING
EVERYTHING:
ART IN TIMES OF
CRISIS**

MODERATOR

Camila López



CYCLE 1

Time: 10:00 (GTM-4)

The biennials: a cyclical crisis?

It is not the first time that biennials find themselves in times of crisis. But what exactly is in crisis: the model or the capacity to produce discourses? The biennials of resistance or the hegemonic ones? More generally: is the crisis cyclical or perennial? Faced with an ossified and globalized ready-made, is it still possible to significantly crack the system as it was done in the 1980s? Considering the history of mega-exhibitions as a hyperbole subject to repeated contractions, and interweaving the histories of the biennials of resistance with the hegemonic ones, this paper proposes to analyze a selection of moments of crisis, and to define their characteristics and g-local reactions as well as their outcomes and their continuity (or intermittency).

Thinking in a situated way, thinking from indisciplin

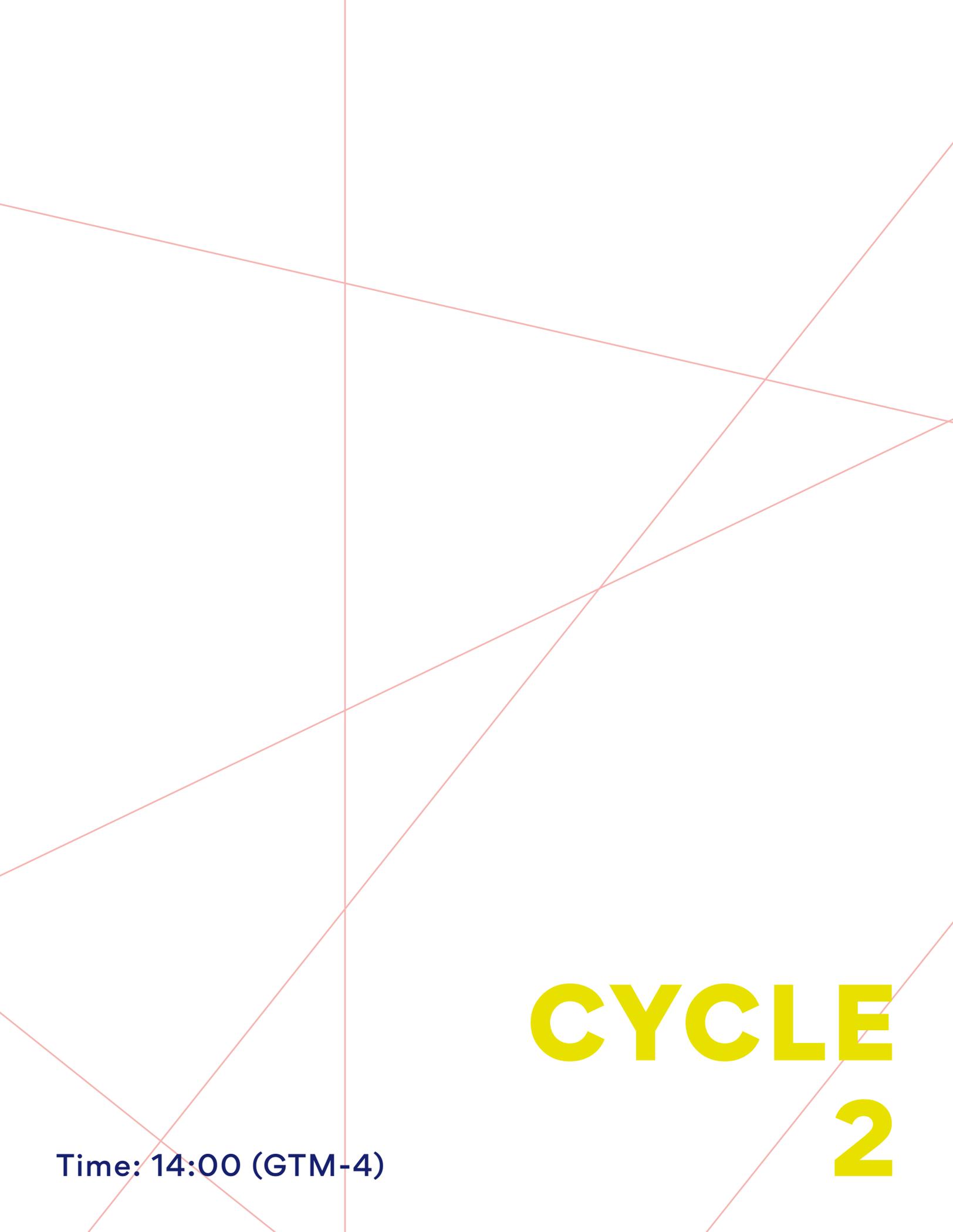
The logics of the international art system, which, as we know, in some ways function in a similar way to the logics of global capitalism, reinforcing unequal circuits and relations, deserve to be reviewed. From this premise, I will make a brief critical reading and I will propose some alternative positions, situated from the south from an (in)disciplined point of view.

Circus, archive, promenade, worldology: proposals of the Visayas Biennale and Singapore

The talk will revolve around the modes and procedures of biennial making from two Southeast Asian sites: the Visayas in the Philippines and Singapore, apropos of the Visayas Islands Visual Arts Exhibition and Conference (VIVA ExCon) and the Singapore Biennale (SB) respectively, identifying possible ways to complement or exceed the expectations of the biennale as a conglomerated exhibition that accumulates in one place. Through a reflection on VIVA Excon 2020 and SB 2019, it will explore how the biennale can rework itself under a seminar-festival scheme in which it frees itself from the framework of the large exhibition and engages with equivalent modes of gathering an inter-local rather than global audience.

The Dakar Biennial and the History of Art

The Dakar Biennale has established itself on the global event scene. It participates in the blurring of borders by serving as a vortex between various universes insofar as it is a space of connection between actors and ideas. This paper has two objectives. The first is to reconstruct the history of Dak'Art within the global geography of art. The second, to understand to what extent its next edition (19 May-21 June 2022) aims to build new knowledge that integrates African readings of the world, as well as those of other geographical and cultural areas, to forge shared tools that are likely to help us face contemporary challenges, as well as the renewed construction of meaning with a view to apprehending the complexity of the world.



CYCLE 2

Time: 14:00 (GTM-4)

(Cuba)

Havana Biennial: Past, Present and Future

The panel will review the course and projections of the Havana Biennial, which since 1984 has become an international benchmark for events dedicated to contemporary art. Artists from the countries of the so-called “global south” have exhibited their works in different aesthetic expressions, from crafts and popular morphologies to architecture, design, performance and the audiovisual universe. At the same time, it has served as a forum for critical reflection on contemporary issues in our and other regions. Especially during its last editions, the Biennial has expanded its exhibition venues to occupy a wide network of public spaces in the capital and other cities in Cuba, to the point of becoming a participatory universe, energizing the national art scene and confronting audiences from broad social sectors.

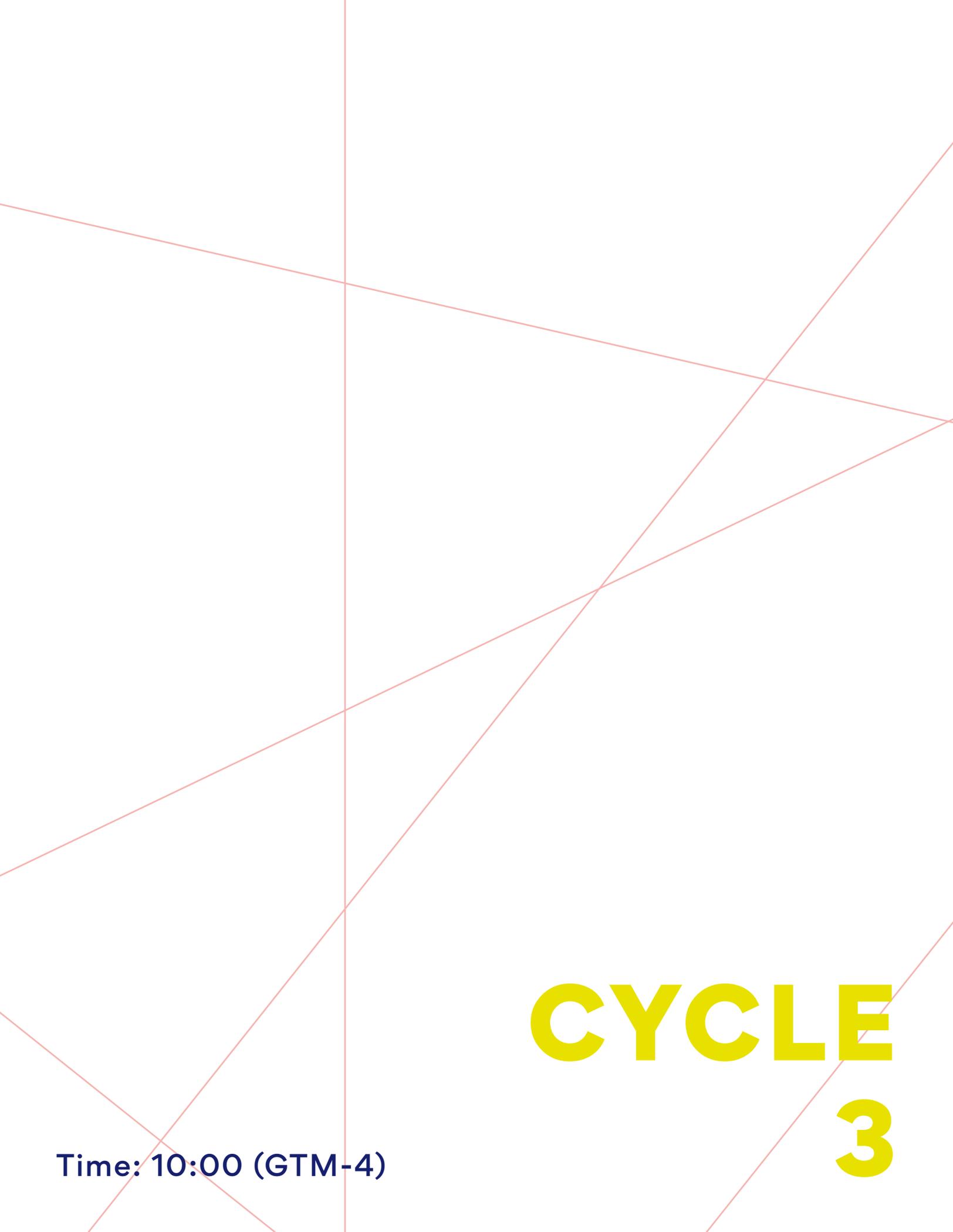
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NOVEMBER

**FUTURE AND
CONTEMPORANEITY**

MODERATOR

Barbara Beatriz Laffita Menocal



CYCLE 3

Time: 10:00 (GTM-4)

Our self-interested reading of the world

The thought of Plato and Aristotle marked the development of artistic creation centered on a sensorial and individualistic direction. Collective action opened up practices in workshops (Antiquity), guilds (Middle Ages) and academies (Renaissance), but individual experience predominated until the Paris Commune, the first link between artists and social and political organizations. The Impressionists, who painted reality by analyzing new ways of representing light, anticipated, in community, the findings of Gestalt and showed that unconnected parts give rise to unitary visual organizations. Later in the 20th century, thinking in common was incorporated, which constructs the unity of a collective and transdisciplinary concept. After surrealism, this mode became an almost daily practice in art and was strengthened in the anti-repressive resistances, in which each individual merges into the group and the group merges into the action of the militant artistic group.

The nature of our nature; reflections on life in times of blockchain

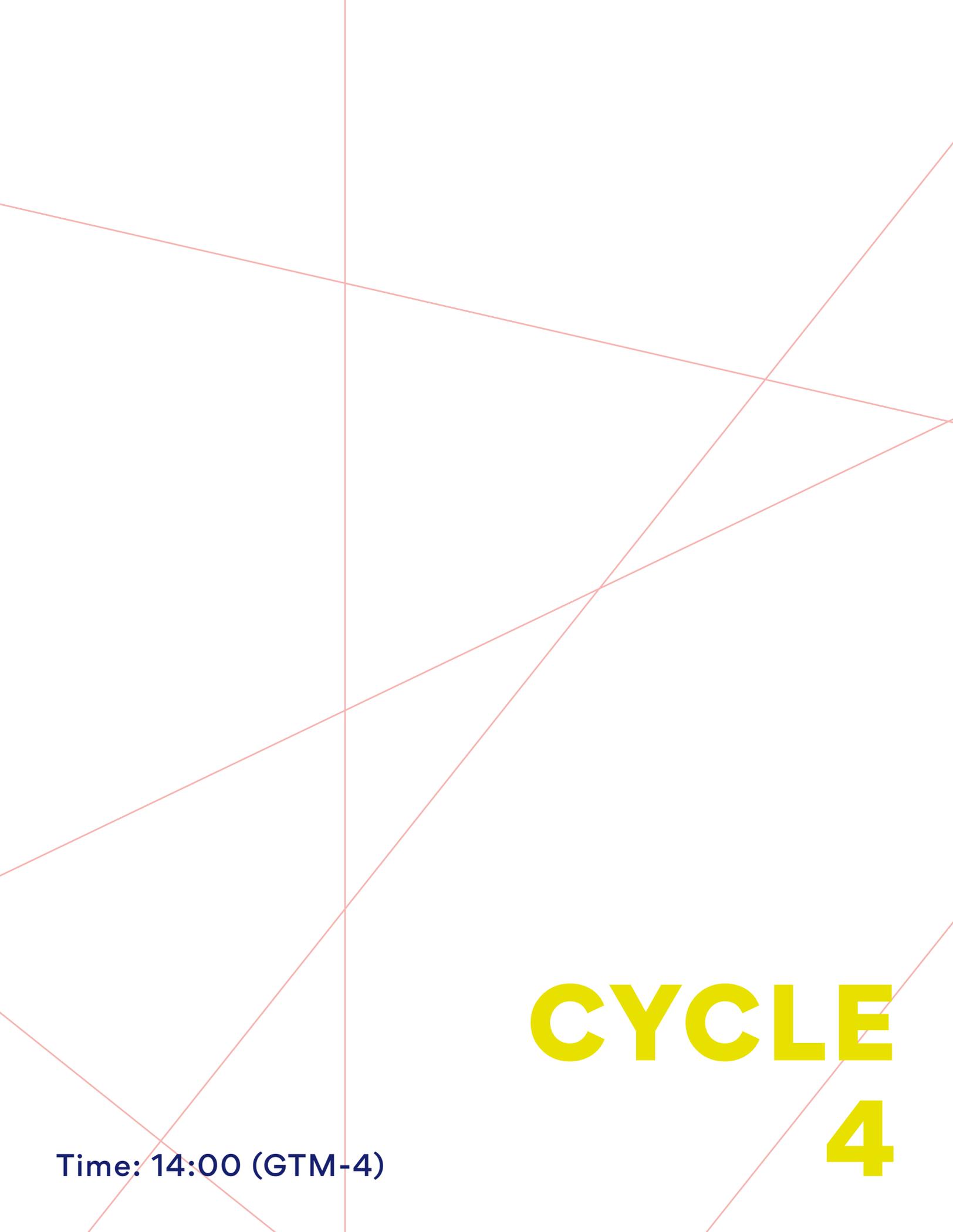
Nature follows the rules of biological evolution with eternal times compared to the human scale; humanity applies cultural evolution, whose times are approaching exponential, with dizzying changes. Art reflects them, from unique works to the era of digitalization, when originality begins to be lost. Until a new technology bursts in: the blockchain, which makes it possible to disseminate information in a decentralized way in thousands of computers and interconnect it, making it reliable and invulnerable. This makes it possible, through the NFT, to guarantee originality, authorship, ownership... And here nature shows us how, consciously or unconsciously, we copy it. The blockchain is similar to our own body. Will we be repeatable by cloning or with digital gadgets? Will we be able to capture our DNA in a NFT and be digital forever? Will the whole universe be a kind of blockchain? Will we be individual beings or will we be part of a universal whole with an unknown common goal?

Any speculation whatever

A “network culture” leaves no room for rest, concentration, contemplation, creation and experimentation; knowledge is instrumentalized and produces homogenized thought patterns. The emerging planet is shaped by globalized-cognitive capitalism, in which verticalist and prospective perspectives are reduced to horizontalist frameworks. Speculative thinking and activity, however, could acquire the status of new subjects, in our contemporary condition so marked by the vacuum of certainty, the dominance of finance capital, and the resurgence of utopianism in the absence of revolution. The presentation will address how we might engage in tasks of consideration, revelation, and speculation to arrive at new prospective knowledges, narratives, scenarios, and modes of imagination that might provide novel approaches to the social and planetary urgencies that beset humanity.

In the future, everyone will be anonymous for 15 minutes

Anonymity can be a matter of integrity and a tool for ensuring a rich variety of viewpoints. When someone, for example, exhibited his first international retrospective in Stockholm (1968), the catalogue read: "In the future everyone will be world famous for fifteen minutes", and the rise of social media may have turned this prophecy into a dystopian fact. If the quote had been anonymous it would be there along with other anonymous things; but it is anchored in something. And that constitutes the worst kind of abstraction and politicization of discourse: it invites people to take a position for or against, rather than simply caring about or not caring about the issue at hand. My contribution will be an animated film that presents an interview with an anonymous collective that might be participating in the Biennial discussing notions of anonymity, the desire to be discreet and to see things as they are.



CYCLE 4

Time: 14:00 (GTM-4)

Future Design

In Designing the Future, we try to design new narratives for the 21st century that bring together and develop social responsibility and personal freedom, which cannot be squeezed into the antagonism of “freedom or socialism”. A proposal for free socialism and social freedom in a biosphere consciousness far beyond the previous categories of political thought.

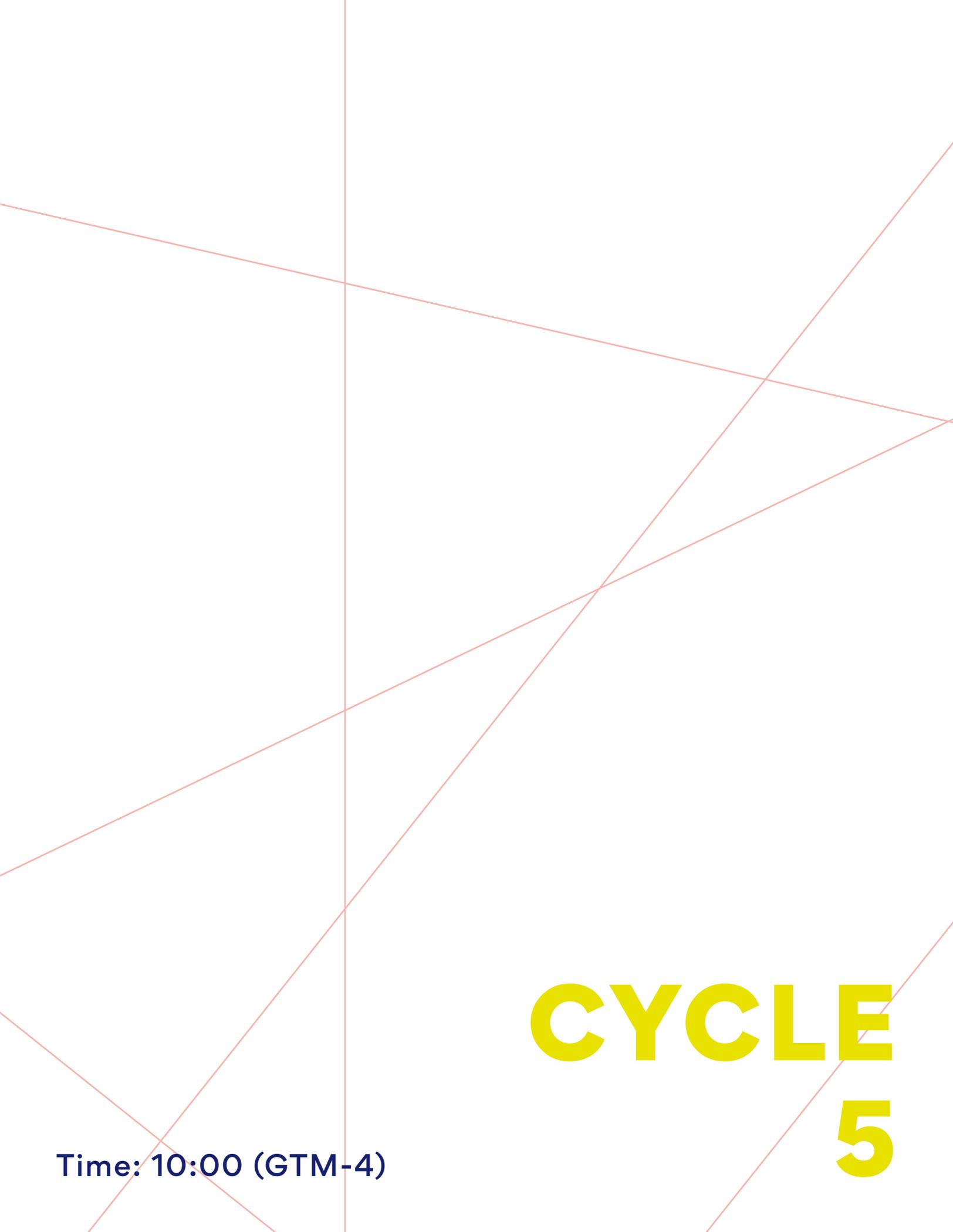
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NOVEMBER

**THINKING OUTSIDE
THE FRAME:
DECOLONIZATION
AS AN ACT OF
LIBERATION**

MODERATOR

Gabriela Ramos



CYCLE 5

Time: 10:00 (GTM-4)

Activism in the nature of the everyday. Confluences between the artification of our habitat and the ethics of bioartivism

In the reading of the intermedial projects “Herbario silvestre de América del Sur en tiempos de neoliberalismo”, “Namiki 7.8” and “RespirO Namiki” we will expose the conceptual bases, the strategies of collaborative production and the aesthetics of the formats that nourish the tensions of the intermedial practices to promote the disarticulation of the hegemonic order.

Latin American artists enchanting the future

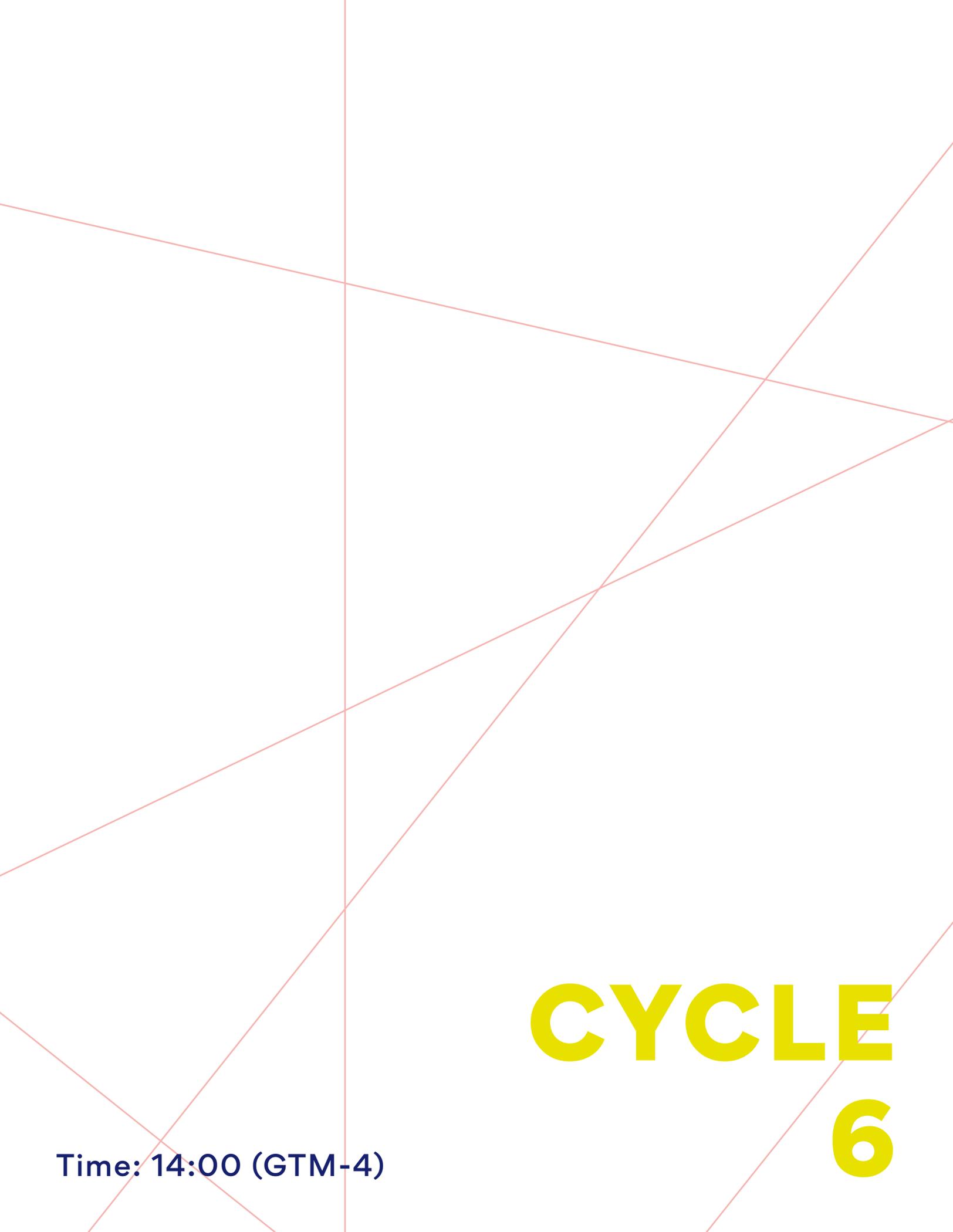
A review will be made of works by Latin American artists who ponder at the intersections between the arts, sciences and technologies, taking these disciplines from a viewpoint that overflows the conceptual limits imposed by modern Western culture. Projects by artists such as Sandra De Berduccy (Bolivia), Nicole L'Huillier (Chile), Interespecific collective (Mexico), Gynepunk collective (Chile-Mexico), Constanza Piña (Chile-Mexico), Azucena Losana and Carolina Andreeti (Argentina) will be described and analyzed. From a feminist perspective, they approach technology from the appropriation, the use of obsolete technologies and the research of ancestral knowledge, focusing their work on the construction of imaginaries to inhabit other possible futures.

Indigenous art as a field of anti-colonial reflection: Contemporary Mapuche art, ten years on

The proposal is framed within the current discussion on indigenous art in Latin America. It seeks to vindicate this production as a prolific space for anti-colonial discussion, taking into consideration that colonialism, as a model of domination, is still in force for indigenous peoples and that, in recent years, it has become even more evident due to the political, economic and health crises. The aim is to expose a plausible relationship between contemporary indigenous art and decolonizing thought, which emanates from the reflection made by these same collectives through a broad reading of the “contemporaneity” of their peoples and their own indigenous identity, expressed from a critical and heterogeneous perspective.

Denied Identities: Heritage Destruction and Cultural Deconstruction in Contemporary Iraq

The talk will explore Iraqi heritage, its role in the formation of modern identities, destruction and present reconstruction, as negotiated by contemporary artists. It therefore also reviews the largely forgotten destruction of Iraqi visual identity and the various current preservation efforts.



CYCLE 6

Time: 14:00 (GTM-4)

In Search of Feelings: How Contemporary Socialist Expression Alludes to Reality

Marxism has a long tradition of engagement with art and culture, with the need to understand aesthetic forms over time and to develop a form that is authentic to the working class and peasantry. Our tradition has moved from embracing popular art and culture to the attempt to produce socialist realism and the search for the future through our artistic practice. At the heart of the Marxist attempt to forge new cultural forms is the pursuit of feeling. This talk will address art and culture at a time when the working class and peasantry face great challenges, and at a time when we seek to ground our struggles in a vision of socialism.

Coloniality and modernity

Although it might seem to be a problem that has been overcome, coloniality and colonialism are still very much present in today's world. The so-called developing nations are subjected to a permanent process of renewal of the structures of domination, not only material, but also expressed in a wide variety of more or less subtle mechanisms that seek to reproduce colonial structures in consciousness and normalize them. The cultural industries play an essential role in this process. A critical understanding of these mechanisms is the only way to overcome them.

Notes from an (anti-post-des-colonial) traveller

From the imaginaries of the Other conceived, thought, designed as a monster to its domestication, that is, from the initial hunt to the (guarded) security of the fair; but also from the rebellion and the seizure of the tools with which the dominator operates to our present, what questions to ask of the exhibition?

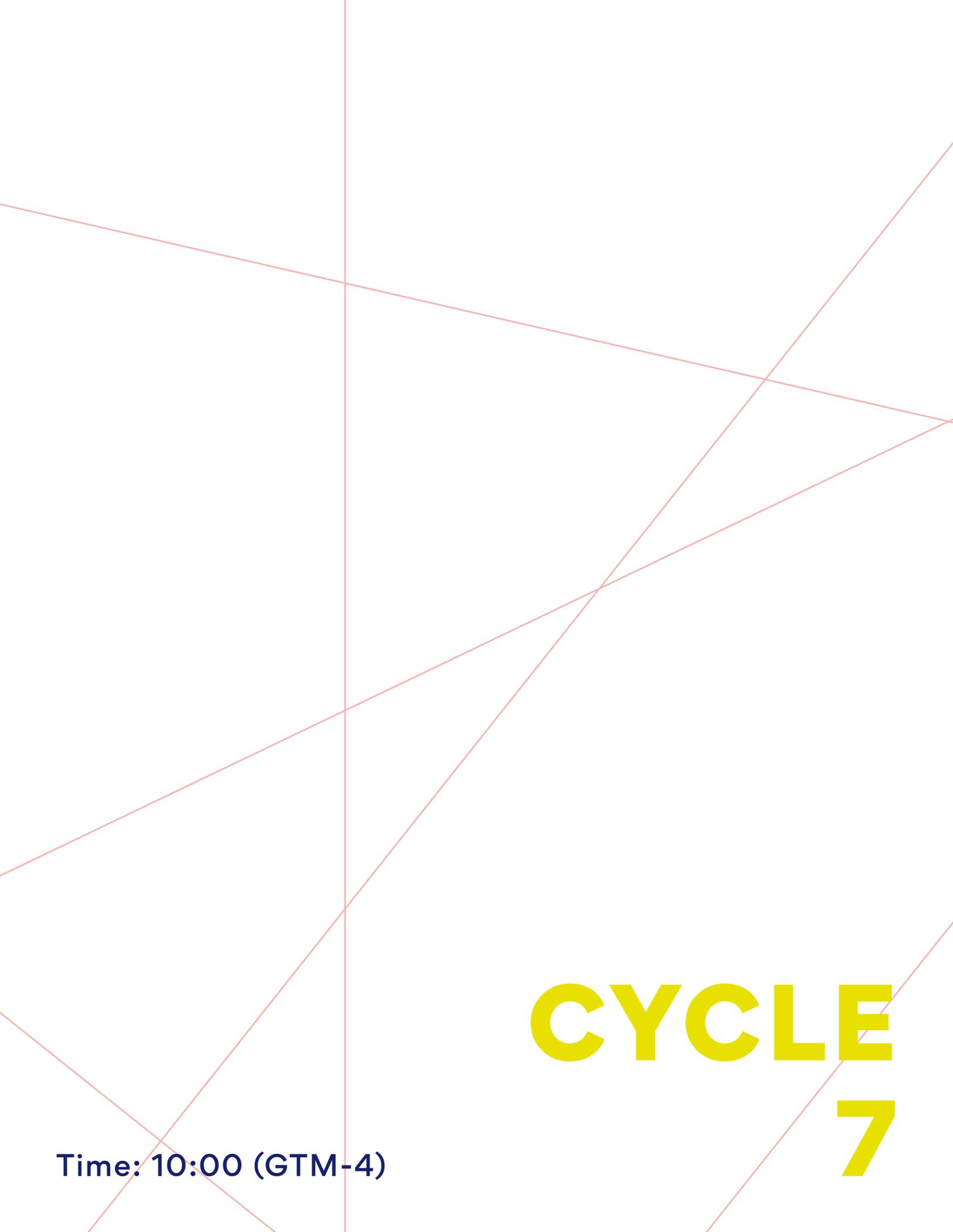
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NOVEMBER

**BACK TO A POSSIBLE
FUTURE: ECOLOGY
AND SUSTAINABILITY**

MODERATOR

Yanet Oviedo



CYCLE 7

Time: 10:00 (GTM-4)

Curatorship as a device for addressing the ecosocial crisis

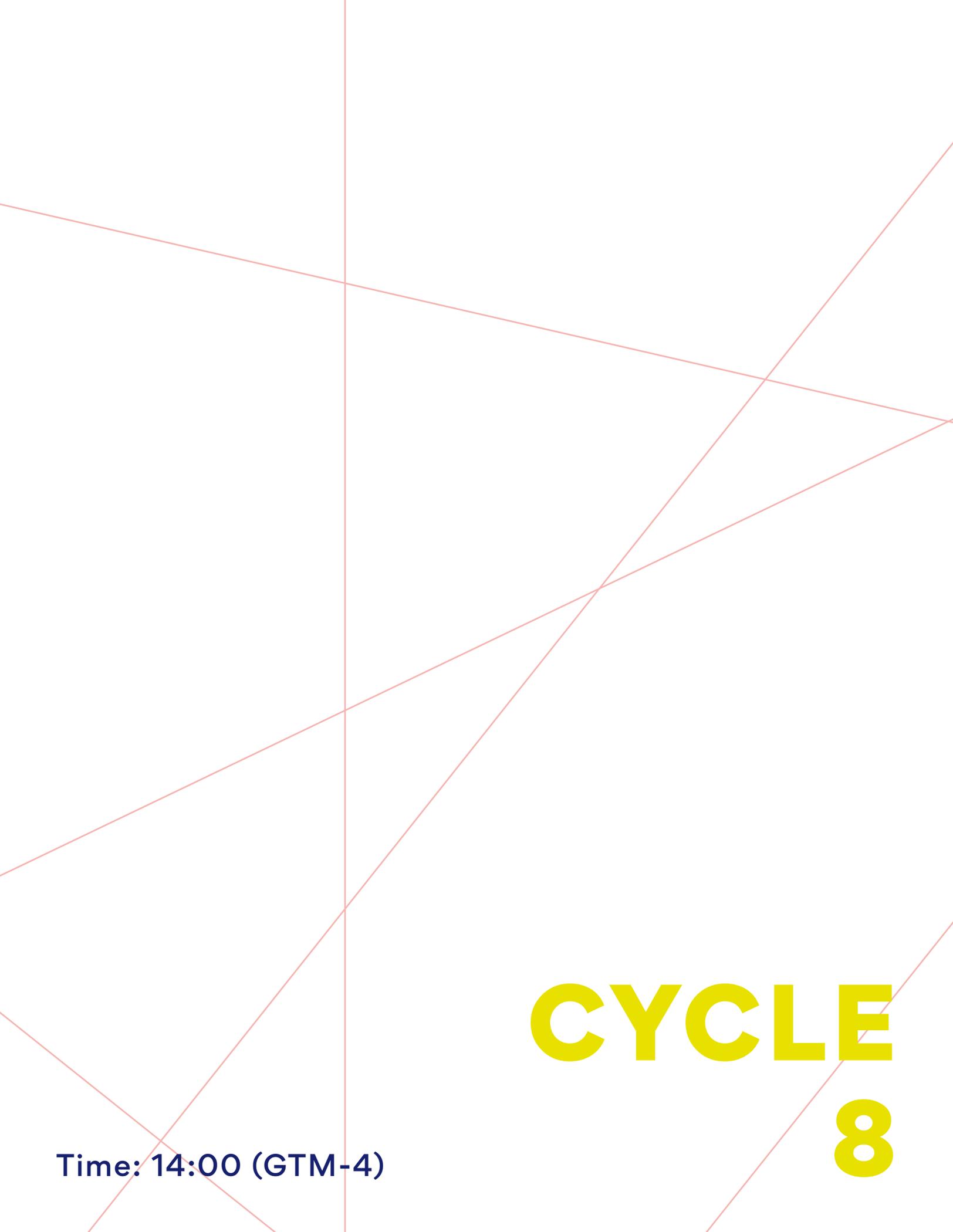
The proposal is based on understanding curatorship as a critical practice of an expanded character (a device for thinking and rethinking positions, putting the very systems of thought in crisis and facing the climate and ecosocial crisis), as well as a space for formulating new contents and suggesting a new paradigm that we suspect should be based on post-humanist postulates, decolonial practices and an ecofeminist vision. It proposes to approach sustainability as a way of operating and constructing critical-practical knowledge, and, likewise, to think of art and curatorship as the speculative space par excellence, which, together with its capacity to produce reality, takes on a scope that makes it a pillar for undertaking the shift towards another possible world. The discourse appeals to a change in the narratives, in which the questions that are asked must go hand in hand with a systemic vision that proposes alternatives, solutions and a proactive attitude.

Creativity and aesthetics for times of decadence crisis and socio-ecological transitions.

The decline of the techno-industrial society is a reality that has already begun and in the paper I will introduce the main keys that announce it. In the face of this, two paths open up: the BAU dynamic to force the limits, and the degrowth proposals that seek an orderly transition under the protection of the new paradigm of sustainability. We will review the probabilities of the course of events in the coming decades based on prospective theory, as well as the most plausible models of transitions and collapses. I will address the place of creativity and aesthetics - the cultural configuration of a new cosmovision - as a revolutionary project and I will try to unravel the principles of an ecological aesthetics that is situated at the antipodes of that which characterized industrial society with its postmodern epigones. I will not ignore the confluence of the aesthetics of collapse and I will point out other possible drifts towards dystopian societies that will have to be dealt with in the face of the rise of totalitarianisms that usually accompany major systemic crises.

Reflections on the Anthropocene

The Neolithic revolution, with the beginning of agriculture and animal husbandry in the Fertile Crescent, brought the first and most significant impacts of humanity on the planet's nature. Almost diachronically, in other places on Earth, other cultures began, independently, to carry out similar actions. From 1750, with the Industrial Revolution, the impact of our species on the natural environment became more evident and ascending, allowing Homo Sapiens to become a "geological factor" of change, which at present threatens to alter the natural climatic cycles (mainly through the emission of carbon dioxide), with unpredictable and perhaps catastrophic socio-ecological consequences. For all these reasons, we call for sanity and rationality in the use of natural resources and a change of attitude towards the natural processes that have shaped life on our planet.



CYCLE 8

Time: 14:00 (GTM-4)

Juan Carlos Rodríguez
Raydel Hernández Iglesias
Alain Cabrera Fernández
(Cuba)
Arturo Macías Barrios
(México)

Pharmacy: back to earth

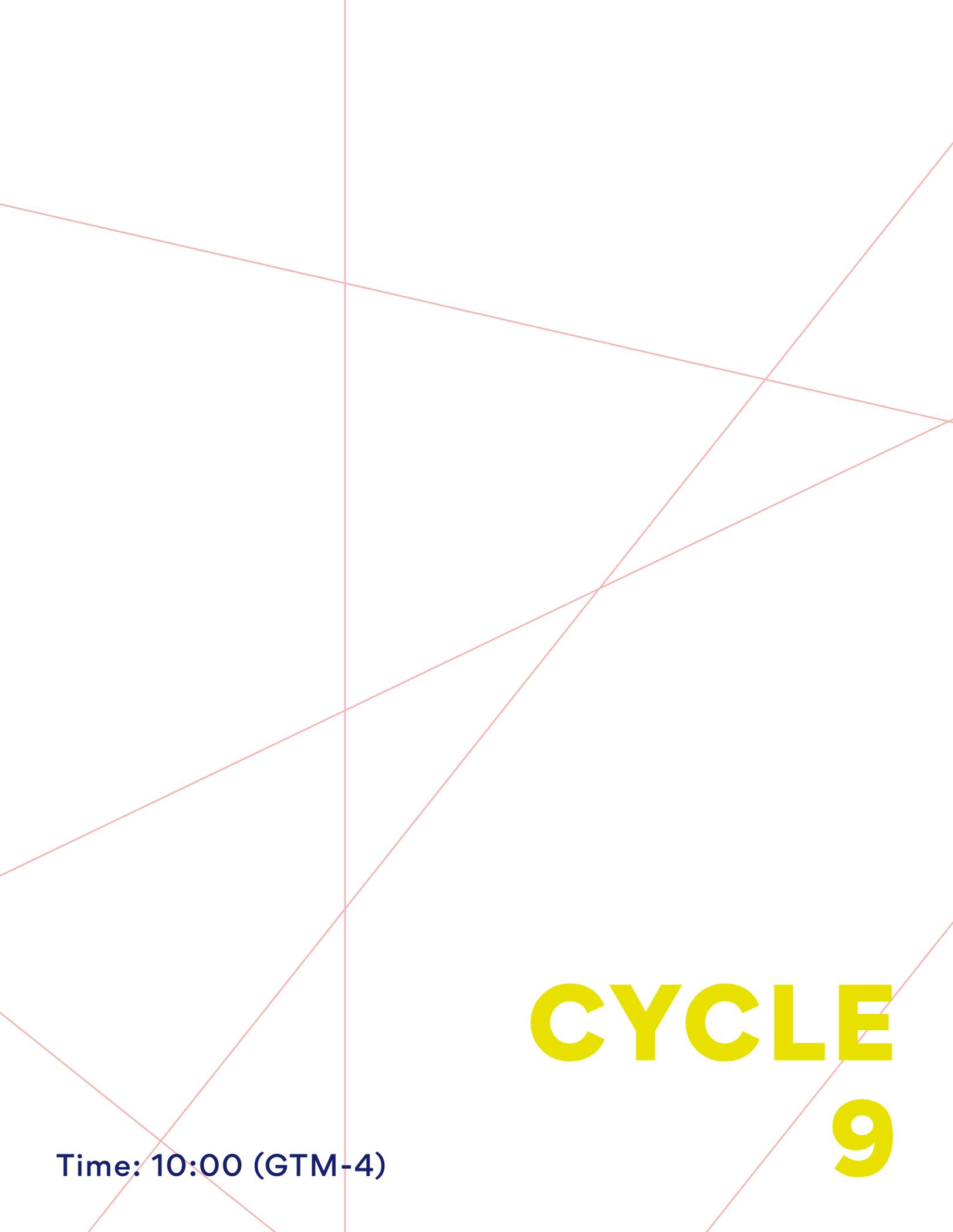
The panel will talk about Farmacia as an artistic-pedagogical project with the ideal of reintegrating the human being to the earth, based on the telluric memory as a substrate of the imaginary and in art as a healing process; how this conception is manifested in its pedagogical structure from a system that is born in the telluric and culminates in the poetic, and its projection for the 14 Bienal de La Habana under the curatorial thesis that in its evolution defines Farmacia: back to the earth.

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NOVEMBER

**SHARED
EXPERIENCES**

MODERATOR

Sandra García



CYCLE 9

Time: 10:00 (GTM-4)

Monica Narula
Shuddhabrata Sengupta,
Jeebesh Bagchi
(India)

Hungry for Time. An Invitation to Epistemic Disobedience with Raqs Media Collective

In the historic setting of the Aula and Painting Gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Raqs Media Collective is currently presenting an exhibition that apprehends time from the perspective of hunger and desire. The eleven scenes into which the exhibition is divided bring together works of art from the Academy's historical collections and relate them to contemporary art, including works commissioned especially for the exhibition. During the conference, the collective will discuss the ideas surrounding the exhibition, highlighting the need for epistemic disobedience (Walter D. Mignolo) in the way we perceive and actualize the dialogue with historical collections.

Art as a form of action

In the conference I propose a journey through some of the most significant projects of my career to reflect on how art can contribute to the transformation of the world. Because today more than ever it is essential to know how our thinking is constructed, how our desires are focused and how art can be an instrument of transformative action.

Sweet sorrow

Art has to be the engine of profound changes in economics, politics and science, including old themes that have resurfaced in recent years, such as feminism (under the hashtag MeToo), anti-racism (now called BLM) and environmentalism (Fridays for Future, or simply, FFF). These changes to save, not our planet - because the Earth will outlive us by many millions of years - but us, and the way we live, have to be based on equality and even open self-determination of the genders, representation with voice and vote for all parts of the spectrum of our societies, access to power and democratic freedom of expression for all.

The Narratives of Existence for a Sustainable World in the Times of Untimeliness

Suddenly everyone's time has changed. Social schizophrenia has come to a screeching halt. Perhaps the most obvious example is that for the first time the applause for football clubs and their stars has mutated to health personnel, hitherto ignored or underestimated in much of the world. For the first time also, in the "first world" where footballers are millionaires, many have realized that doctors, nurses and scientists are a greater good and that their salaries are miserable. The construction of narratives of everyday life without make-up, heroic misfortune and solidarity vs. lack of solidarity, three fused and unthinkable axes for neoliberal corporatism, have gained visibility. And once again, women manage crises as places of paths and memory... We are in the presence of new challenges to the sustainability of life.

