

## The Virus Manifesto

The Virus Manifesto is an interspecies political calling towards a reality infected by the virus. A calling to take the transformative power of crisis and build a virus-consciousness that can help us create new ways of worldmaking premised on systems of survival, care and solidarity. The need to politicize the virus has become imperative since returning to a sense of normalcy is now increasingly impossible. The virus manifesto, therefore, not only hopes to provide a counter-narrative to the way in which the COVID-19 crisis has been characterized, but more importantly, it wants to insist on the need to construct a sustainable and reliable culture of care. The manifesto is not a theorization on the event of a crisis, but a call to make caring for others our most radical political act, so that declaring ourselves in solidarity also means emerging from this pandemic with a renewed notion of our humanness, one that transcends the obsolescent ideas of *Man*.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the virus manifesto resists and condemns the racist rhetoric surrounding the COVID19 pandemic to underscore that viruses as part of the origin of life can challenge us, but ultimately also provide us with the possibility of our continuity on the earth.

1. We have all been infected by the virus, whether physically or mentally or both. We must now build a life towards a new virus-humanity. *A Vimanity*.

2. Our vimanity isn't defined by the white all-abled bodied Vitruvian man. Instead, our cyborg bodies –part human, part virus –part screen, are vulnerable, immovable, fragmented, aged bodies.

3. As a *Vimanity* we have inherited the intelligence of the virus. Thanks to this intelligence we are now smarter at survival and adaptation; stronger, resilient, and possibly very dangerous.

4. Staying at home makes no one immune to the injustices carried over those who *a-cuerpan* the virus: the ones who lack proper housing; to those whose livelihood depends on their mobility. To those whose work and services are primordial for the sustainability of our life as a community.<sup>2</sup>

5. We build our vimanity defined by pain, failing organs, and infected systems. Risk unites us, vulnerability defines us.

6. Since vulnerability is not shared equally across the board, our vimanity will not try to succumb to crisis through sacrifice. Workable is no longer at the heart of our viman bodies's functionality.

7. Our newly formed vimanity has given us a countervisuality -a contestatory vision against the systematic inequalities that our current social order upholds as normal and even desirable. However, our vimanity defined by vulnerability and care will not survive nor thrive from the dispossession of others, from discrimination nor individualization.

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<sup>1</sup> Sylvia Winter. Wynter, Sylvia. 2003 "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," CR: The New Centennial Review, 3 (3).

<sup>2</sup> *Acuerpar* means to put one's body, this is different from embodying.

8. Our vimanity resists the instrumentalization of fear. We will not fear contagion for it can only infect us with solidarity, resilience and endurance.

9. The virus brings us a new sense of corporeality: smaller, unpredictable and transmittable. We are gifted with a corporeal consciousness that can no longer be subsumed under the disembodied Cartesian ontology nor its virtual reality.

10. As an assemblage of vimans we will not be stopped, sequestered or contained. Our capacity to self-direct, self organize and be autonomous is imperative. No one or nothing may restrict our mobility. No one will enage or imprison our vimanity.<sup>3</sup>

11. As a vimanity we have also gained the enhanced capacity to feel. With millions of hypersensitive transmitters we feel as our own the pain of others. We connect through suffering, loss and sickness.

12. Our greatest virus-power lies in our capacity to quickly infect others. We replicate by inserting a virus-logic capable of modifying people, institutions and ideologies; It contaminates uninfected or cleansed humans with the urgency to help build a heterogeneous and intersectional *Vimanity*. The virus constantly intersects and infects the immunized biopolitical body.

13. As an assemblage of virus-oganisms our priority is a culture of care, of health and of togetherness. With the virus we will resist the necropolitical state and its biopolitics; It will challenge the naturalization of a state of exception.

14. As a vimanity we retain the memory and strength that indigenous peoples, migrants, afro-descendants, and other at risk communities have developed over time to resist, grow and flourish. Survival is our most powerful skill.

15. In an assemblage-like capacity to organize, our vimanity has the power to create and expand networks of support. We will strengthen the communities that we have built, and renew our strive towards collectivity.

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<sup>3</sup> Jane Bennet describes an assemblage as “living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within. They have uneven topographies, because some of the points at which the various affects and bodies cross paths are more heavily trafficked than others, and so power is not distributed equally across its surface. Assemblages are not governed by any central head: no one materiality or type of material has sufficient competence to determine consistently the trajectory or impact of the group. The effects generated by an assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in that their ability to make something happen (a newly infected materialism, a blackout, a hurricane, a war on terror) is distinct from the sum of the vital forcé of each materiality considered alone. Such member and proto-member of the assemblage has a certain vital Force, but there is also an effectivity proper to the grouping as such: an agency of the assemblage. For more on this see, Jane Bennet, *Vibrant Matter. A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 24.

16. The nature of our virus-organism is one of constant movement and spilling over, the virus-organism assemblage cannot help but resist isolation and individuation. Its survival and thriving capacities depend on its necessity to live inside or alongside others.

17. As a virus-organism we are now genetically designed to crash the algorithmic logic that determines our sense of reality. Like a computer virus we are the glitch that, when executed can affect the system that made us automated, synchronized, and disciplined. We are unpredictable both in our offense as well as our defense. We are the virus-organism that made the world stop, and we will not be stopped.

18. As virus-organism we have the capacity to mutate endlessly, we transform and shake our surroundings. We will transform towards a world where vilians can live and flourish in solidarity with other-than vilian beings.

19. Having blurred the lines between private and public, inside and outside our viliant pushed open all boundaries. Contact and contagion are now inseparable.

20. Goodbyes, last words, I love you. Everyday is a ritual of passing. Everyday is a night of mourning.

In memory of those we lost their life during this pandemic, those who are the victims of persecution, police brutality or government neglect. Those whose toxic COVID rhetoric has made them even more vulnerable to aggression, discrimination, exclusion and dispossession than before. We declare ourselves in solidarity with all those who *a-cuerpan* the virus, and to those who are now also facing increasing risks due to encroaching neoliberal violence and precarisation.