



Violeta Esperanza

Celia Vara

Artist Statement

To watch the video, visit: <http://vimeo.com/violetaesperanza> and
<http://vimeo.com/60551161>

Patriarchy leaves marks, cracks, and scars on the body and soul of women.

As we walk to freedom we need a great deal of feminism and hope, signified by my project's title, Violet Hope – "VIOLETA ESPERANZA." In this journey of personal growth we must provide symbolic images to nourish the path. We also need to believe that networking and community can create change and that images and art can function as a political tool.

This project is an ethnographic exploration and a personal feminist genealogy—incorporating data on customs, beliefs, myths, histories, languages—of the female collective imagination that we inherit or create.

From there it is possible to draw new symbols and forge new roads.

This project uses *Mediobiografía*, an interdisciplinary methodology developed by Virginia Villaplana Ruiz, to create stories and artistic narrations from personal digital archives. *Mediobiografía* is an experimental concept that questions the "technology of memory" as a deposit and a way to magnify images and their narration (Villaplana).

The performance is a never-ending weaving of green and violet, representing hope and confidence in feminist ideals. It never dies so long as the next generation continues. It is an allegory of freedom and the paths we walk every day to our emancipation.

We shed our skins, creating empowering networks. We entangle and disentangle, weaving paths towards our future. We create meeting places, bridges, and ties. The piece considers symbolic images such as the woman in white, the sea, the spiral form, and unfolding wings.

"Violeta Esperanza" is a looped video performance: a knitting of green (hope color) and violet (feminist color). The woman is knitting a piece that was knitted before by generations of other women and will be knitted by the next ones, representing feminist struggle as something that gets passed on from generation to generation. This is a piece that draws on the notion of feminist legacy and the path (that the bi-color knit piece represents) we traverse as a community. This path, represented by the knitted piece, takes a spiral form to remind us of its different trajectories. The spiral shape represents different women's generations passing over and over through the same points but from other perspectives. The wings symbolize freedom: feminism

gives us freedom and the possibility to unfold those wings. But this is not an easy path to travel. We knit carefully but we find holes in this path, knots that need to be untangled, yarns that hook our feet, people who we lose along the path. But together, we continue to knit the hope of a feminist community.

This imagery comes from my own story as a woman who grew up under patriarchy with romantic love myths. This work comes from images of myself being a child (1982) dressed as a princess (as a symbol of the gender stereotypes) in the same place where the video performance was made: a cape in my origin town. This place bears several memories: a space where I grew up, where I lived love, where I mourned, etc. I have a love relationship with this place: the color, sound, texture of the sea, stones, etc. This is the place/space I belong to. The music is a mantra that rocks the soul. This is a work full of mourning, sadness, loss, ... but at the same time full of hope, magic and wishful thinking about a world with equality and fair relations.

Works Cited

Villaplana Ruiz, Virginia. "Memoria Colectiva y Mediabiografía como Transformación de los Relatos Culturales." *Arte y Políticas de Identidad* 3 (2010): 87-102.

CELIA VARA is a feminist psychologist and visual artist. She has been working as a psychologist in a pioneering centre in Spain with gender based violence. She has participated in numerous research programs and projects on international cooperation, feminism and art in Europe, Canada and the Caribbean. In 2013, her master's thesis, *Early Feminist Video Art in Spain (1970-1980): History and State of Affairs*, won the 1st Prize – Award in Gender and Research at Jaume I University in Spain. She has been a practising visual artist since 2005 and has had international artist residencies and collective and solo shows in Spain, Canada, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. She is an active member of a feminist collective that does research on patriarchal strongholds on the human psyche. She is a member of Feminist Media Studio (<http://feministmediastudio.ca>) and Hexagram (Centre for Research Creation in Media Arts and Technologies). Her research interests are feminist media and culture, and her current project centers on the transnational dimensions of feminist video, collectives and activism across the Spanish-speaking world, focusing specifically on the ties between Spain and Latin America.



Filmed by Alexandra Rodes



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