

Alan & Ariana Present *The Kindred Tour: Race, Grief, & Liberation*

Biographies

Alan Pelaez Lopez (@MigrantScribble), is an interdisciplinary writer, visual artist, and theorist from Oaxaca, México. In their poetic and visual work, Alan investigates the realities of undocumented migrants in the United States, the radical potential of Black futures, and the trans* imagination. They are the author of *Intergalactic Travels: poems from a fugitive alien* (The Operating System, 2020), a finalist for the International Latino Book Award, and *to love and mourn in the age of displacement* (Nomadic Press, 2020). Their writing is published in *Teen Vogue*, *Refinery29*, *The Andy Warhol Museum*, *Best American Experimental Writing*, and others. When they are not writing, Alan spends much of their time organizing with queer and trans migrants impacted by prisons and detention, sending out letters to loved ones, and making phonecalls to Oaxaca.

Ariana Brown is a queer Black Mexican American poet from San Antonio, TX, now based in Houston. She is the author of the poetry collections *We Are Owed*. (Grieveland, 2021) and *Sana Sana* (Game Over Books, 2020). Ariana's work investigates queer Black personhood in Mexican American spaces, Black relationality and girlhood, loneliness, and care. She holds a B.A. in African Diaspora Studies and Mexican American Studies, an M.F.A. in Poetry, and is pursuing an M.S. in Library and Information Science. A 2014 national collegiate poetry slam champion, Ariana has also recorded a digital poetry EP titled *LET US BE ENOUGH*, available on Bandcamp. She has been writing, performing, and teaching poetry for over ten years, and owes much of her practice to Black performance communities led by Black women poets from the South. Follow her work online at www.arianabrown.com and on Twitter & Instagram @ArianaThePoet.

Poetry Readings with Live Dialogue

1hr 30 minutes (10 min intros, 25 mins Ariana, 25 mins Alan, 30 min Q&A)

Kindred Spirits: on Race, Loneliness, and Migration

Ariana Brown and Alan Pelaez Lopez's joint poetry reading explores the history of enslaved Black people in the U.S. and Mexico, loneliness, and migration while centering articulations, demands, and visions of Black freedom in our contemporary moment. Pelaez Lopez will share work from a manuscript-in-progress that envisions a Black future free of nation-states, and Brown will read from her debut collection committed to a Black consciousness that doesn't leave anyone in the Americas behind. Intimate question and answer sessions will follow the readings.

Panel Conversations for the Interdisciplinary Humanities

1hr (5 min intro, 15 min Alan, 15 min Ariana, 10 min Alan + Ariana in conversation, 15 min public Q&A)

Against Nations: A Panel on Black Futures from an Afro-Mexican Framework

In this panel conversation, Alan Pelaez Lopez and Ariana Brown will speak on the role of imagining liberated Black futures through the framework of nations, race, and gender. Each scholar-artist will present on the difficulties they face in imagining futures as Black people who must negotiate Mexican and United States nationalism, and the possibilities that open up when they betray their perspective countries to think of a transnational Black politic. After the presentations, a moderator from the invited institution will respond to Alan and Ariana's work and the three will engage in a firechat conversation.

We Need to Talk About Grief: Race, Gender, and Family

Formerly undocumented migrant, Alan Pelaez Lopez, and San Antonio-raised poet, Ariana Brown, explore the relationship they have with grief as it relates to forced migration and family separation through the lenses of race, gender, and family. Questions that this hybrid roundtable conversation addresses are the following: How do the material conditions of Blackness produce grief? What is the role of cisheteronormativity in the lives of Black, queer, and Black queer communities? And, what does it mean to have access to a safety that is not conditional or predicated on the state, the nuclear family, or the law?

Alan - Artist Talks

(1 hour: 30-40 min talk, 20-30 min q&a)

Art as Civil Disobedience: Taking Our Stories Back

Artists are often taken-for-granted contributors to social movements. In this art talk, Alan Pelaez Lopez will share their experience as a young undocumented, Black queer organizer in the migrant justice movement. They'll talk about the ethics of storytelling, why stories matter, and the dangers that exist when allies become surrogate storytellers for communities they are not a part of. This art talk features Pelaez Lopez's artistic contributions to various social movements while also highlighting five currently and formerly undocumented Black migrant artists.

Demanding Better Care: On Community Organizing, Accountability, & Future-Making

In this artist talk, Alan Pelaez Lopez writes to Ms. Marsha P. Johnson in the hopes that the writing can offer the activist, now ancestor, care. In writing to Ms. Marsha P. Johnson, Alan Pelaez Lopez weaves their story as an artist and organizer to explore moments where they needed care but did not know how to ask for it. In centering the lessons that Black, transgender, migrant organizers have taught them in conjunction with Ms. Marsha P. Johnson, Pelaez Lopez's art-talk serves as a manifesto of how to think with (and about) accountability and futures where trans Black migrants no longer live in the absence of care but in excess of care.

Ariana - Artist Talks

(1 hour: 30-40 min talk, 20-30 min q&a)

Taking Care of Black Girls When the World Won't

In this artist talk, Ariana Brown describes finding her way to poetry in 2009 and using it as a tool for personal and communal care. Ariana will contextualize her work within Black performance traditions and rituals, particularly in local slam poetry communities in Texas. Drawing on her lived experience as a queer Black Mexican American and her research in African Diaspora Studies and Mexican American Studies, Ariana will trace her attempts to recover Black girlhood not just for herself, but for other Black girls too. Combining storytelling, poems, and dialogue, this artist talk is an opportunity to hear from Ariana directly about how her identities and politics shape her writing.

We Are Owed: Language and Liberation

In this artist talk, Ariana Brown considers how cis-heteropatriarchy and white supremacy inform the construction of cultural and national identities. Using poems and research from her new book, *We Are Owed*, Brown interrogates the accepted origin stories of Mexican and Mexican American identities, focusing on histories of Black relationality and resistance in Texas and Mexico. Combining storytelling, poems, and dialogue, this artist talk emphasizes Brown's lived experiences growing up in Texas as a Black Mexican American and links them to the larger project of anti-Blackness within Texas and Mexico.

Writing Workshops - Alan & Ariana

(1hr 30 minutes)

We Are Owed

This workshop serves as a meditative space where writers dialogue with the changes they wish to see in the dominant culture so that easier and better worlds can be actualized. As a group, we will discuss the work of trans, Black filmmaker and writer Tourmaline while also developing pieces about what we are owed as individuals and what we're willing to give up. In doing this work, we begin to build a toolbox for the future and the present.

Collective Scream: Coping During COVID-19

Our lives are forever changed by the upheaval, grief, and violence caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the virus continues to evolve, it is important we speak and connect with one another about how we are navigating everyday life. This gentle and generative workshop asks participants to simply document what their lives have been like since the virus surfaced in 2019 in the form of list poems and rants. Brown and Pelaez Lopez will provide guided prompts and discussion with the hopes of finding relief and release. Ideal for participants of all backgrounds.

Building Alternative Worlds

As a group, we will discuss the work of trans Kichwa-Kañari writer, Sonia Guiñansaca, and queer Korean-American writer, Franny Choi, poets who are committed to thinking of disaster and possibility. Through a guided conversation about hope and hopelessness, Alan and Ariana will guide participants through a process of developing speculative (poetry or prose) pieces that address the end of one world and the beginning of a new one. This is an excellent workshop for first-time writers.