

at 10 this morning this book becomes an artefact.

THECONTAINERCOLLECTION is a phrase we came up with last june when faced with the crisis, what do we do after *landings*? this kind of problem is the DNA of the contemporary artist. the problem of what to do next is one we own.

> this big book is a calculation.

21 years ago > ivan and i realized that the existing art path could not sustain the temperature of our voices. so we took intellectual responsibility for our actions.

> everything has to start from **ZERO**.

> so this is where we are. it is important to live in the present. you will have to find your own explanation.

> the problem with memory is that unlike genes it can't be passed on. i want to join the chorus of artists who resist and speak out, who see their social role as the tangible work of today.

> surely one day you will recall that this dissemination started in a gymnasium.

> how do we acknowledge the special space in which we gather? it might appear to be just a gymnasium, but i'd like you to think about it as a laboratory of energy.

> the mangroves that surround this space are special to me. as a student **25 years ago** our ecology teacher **Father Leonard Dieckman**, SJ took our class into the swamp. this single action etched a lifelong concept in my mind that art and science are inseparable.

> the best idea of how things are revealed is when we take them into our hands and make actions that suit our endless plans.

> so these few minutes we are spending together is just an acknowledgement that art and the **art life lives in belize** within the space of motivation mixed with anxiety. the work in front of us is immense.

> on the evening news we hear names like noh mul and dugu? the post-modern pirates want even the remains. history is a menace. we fear to touch it because of its contamination with words whittled under the trees of strange fruit.

> last month the garifuna collective launched **AYÓ**. their recent canadian and u.s. tour and the shameful state support reminds us that our cultural consciousness is still infected with the most wretched characteristics of our past.

> just two weeks ago we launched for the first time the formal teaching of african and maya history at saint john's college high school.

> and what does this have to do with **THECONTAINERCOLLECTION**??????

> artists are warriors and if we are to fight we must be on the inside and the outside, in a simultaneous engagement. the confrontation of concepts and ideas is an on going enterprise.

> we would be liars if we came here today to declare that all is well in the area of our art and cultural negotiation. it is not.

- > we struggle with a policy of imperfection, always working with epoxy methods.
- > we are caught up in the net of fiction that praises the notion that we are a people of potential and talent. this is a fundamental mistake - a lazy, patronizing, self-serving way of thinking.
- > this book is a ballast. it will take time to read and absorb.
- > we artists and cultural fighters must realize that the fight is just beginning. we must be a counter weight to the indifference of the state. the state of power, the state of ignorance, the state of mind...
- > today we see such clear evidence that the sterile bureaucratic systems inherited and perpetuated are not yet ready for the 2nd decade of the 21st [XXI] century.
- > we must radically shift our attitudes toward cultural work.
- > if you ask me what am i doing???
- > i tell you = the silence is over.

yasser musa