



Pérez Art Museum Miami  
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**Pérez Art Museum Miami**  
**Nefandus: Colonial Sexual Alterity and Histories for the Future**

**PROGRAM**

**10-10:15am**

**Introduction: María Elena Ortiz, Pablo Bedoya and Carlos Motta**

**Session 1:**

**Transcontinental dialogues on colonial sexualities and gender**

**10:15-10:45 am**

**Joseph Massad “Colonialism, Sexuality, Religion, and Culture: The Case of the Arab world and Islam”**

This presentation focuses on the process through which European colonial modernity (and later its US subsidiary) produced the category of sexuality as a subset of culture and religion, and placed them in a comparative grid between White Christian Europe and a Brown Muslim Orient since the 19th century. Massad will review how the hetero-homo binary became the new dyad of the sexual in discussions of civilizational, cultural, and religious worth during European high colonialism and current US imperial rhetoric, for both European colonial (and American imperial) anthropologists and officials and for colonized Arab elites, including Arab intellectuals. Massad will speak on the issue of how Muslims and Africans today have become the target of sexual rights missionaries and European and US condemnation for not adhering to the hetero/homo binary.

**10:45-11:15 am**

**Anjali Arondekar “Itinerant Sex: Passages through Portuguese India”**

Histories of sexuality routinely mediate past(s) through archival forms of paucity, disenfranchisement and marginality. Sexuality is rescued from the detritus of hegemonic histories of colonialism and nationalism and placed within more reparative narratives of reform and rights. This talk engages the emergence of a *devadasi* collectivity in Portuguese India to raise two key questions: What if we are to shift our attention from the reading of sexuality as loss to understanding it as a site of radical abundance? What happens if we abandon the historical language of search and rescue and focus instead on a history of sexuality that paradoxically foregrounds both its iterancy and its ethical substance?

**11:15-11:45 am**

**Carlos Motta “Histories for the Future”**

In this performative lecture entitled, *Histories for the Future*, Carlos Motta reflects on the lives of Luis Delgado, Martina Parra and Nour, three of the characters in his films *Shipwreck* (2014) and *Deseos / انت رغب* (2015), whose stories are known in the present only because of their unfortunate encounters with colonial repression on the basis of their sexuality and gender, and





Ultimately, they were being categorized as legal “cases” in the archive. Using fiction, speculation and poetic license, this performative lecture considers these characters’ subjectivities and intricate life experiences as individuals who attempt to define their stories in their own terms.

### **Bathroom break**

**12-1pm**

**Arondekar, Massad and Motta**

**Moderator: Pablo Bedoya**

**1-2pm Break for lunch**

**Session 2:**

**Power, Justice, Sexuality and Coloniality in the Americas**

**2-2:30pm**

**Fernanda Molina**

**“Hegemonic Judicial Discourses and Dissident Sexualities: Peruvian Sodomites and the Administration of Justice (16th-17th Centuries)”**

Studying the sexual experiences of men and women of the past presents one of the most difficult conceptual and methodological challenges in the field of history. The difficulties derive not just from the scarcity of information but also from the nature of the testimonies that allow us to approach those experiences.

In the case of what are called the “colonial sodomites,” the documents produced by the administration of justice—especially those involving “criminal” acts—have been one of the most-used sources for research, given that they afford us a window onto a series of behaviors considered transgressive, dark, and unspeakable that would otherwise not have been visible. Still, these documents present a series of problems, stemming from their very context of production; that is, they represent mechanisms of social control aimed at disciplining those sexualities considered dissident.

Given that scenario, this presentation proposes not just to reflect on the dilemmas presented by criminal documentation but also to suggest possible ways of approaching the documents that will allow us to utilize this type of source as a window onto the personal, sexual, and affective experiences of the colonial sodomites.

**2:30-3pm**

**Pablo Bedoya**

**“Anomalous Sexualities, Social Disciplining, and Honor in the Late-Colonial Period in the New Kingdom of Granada”**

There have been notably few studies of sodomy in the colonial period in the New Kingdom of Granada, and the advances that have occurred in that area have mainly taken a perspective that privileges the relationship between desire and repression. This presentation, then, is a reading of the functioning of the mechanisms of social regulation and disciplining of anomalous sexualities. It seeks to understand the social fabric and the ways justice was administered that underlay the forms of social tolerance that can be identified in several trials for the crime of sodomy held during the Bourbon reform period in the New Kingdom of Granada.





**3-3:30pm**

**Pete Sigal**

**“Colonial Archives and Indigenous Sexual Pleasures”**

As individuals in the modern Western world gaze upon those deemed different from themselves, they create notions of sexual pleasure and disgust based on colonial models. In the 16th century Spanish conquerors and clerics expressed great revulsion at the bodies of Nahua and Maya priests, defamed because of their bloodthirsty ways and unkempt, nearly nude appearances, wearing only loincloths, with blood staining their bodies and hair. They deemed these priests “perverted” and “unnatural” based upon their blood lust. They became the epitome of the savage other. At the same time, the conquerors and other Spaniards expressed great desire for the sexual pleasures offered by naked native women in Mesoamerica, the Caribbean, and the Amazon. British colonists continued this tradition in the Americas and beyond (feigning disgust, for example, at the Hottentot Venus, a woman from an indigenous southern African society, placed on display primarily because of her giant buttocks). When scholars reach into the archives to explore indigenous bodies and practices, they must recognize the processes of colonial violence involved in creating and remembering what we call indigenous *sexuality*. This paper, focusing primarily on the indigenous populations of Mesoamerica, will explore multiple sites of violence in which indigenous practices came to be re-formulated as European and Western categories of sin and sexuality.

**Bathroom break**

**3:45-4:45pm**

**Bedoya, Molina and Sigal**

**Moderator: Carlos Motta**

**Bathroom break**

**5-6pm**

**General Debate**

**Moderators: Anjali Arondekar and Pete Sigal**

**6-7:30pm**

**Closing Reception**

