

YOU'RE INVITED TO
THE PARTY!



LOCATION: CARE AND LOVE
TIME: THE EDGE OF EXTINCTION

AFTER BILLIONS OF YEARS OF HISTORY, WE MAY BE CELEBRATING ONE OF THE LAST BIRTHDAYS OF THIS ANCIENT LANDSCAPE

DRAINED BY COLONIAL AND EXPLOITATIVE PRACTICES TO WET OTHER LANDS THAT FEED THE DAIRY INDUSTRY.

THROUGH A LIVE-ACTION ROLE-PLAYING GAME, WE AIM TO BRING THE POSITIONS OF THIS CONFLICT TO THE TABLE.

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN OUR PARTY AS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING GUESTS.

THE FARMER

You were born in Cuatro Ciénegas, a town founded in 1800.

Your family has been living there for 5 generations, and they got the land in the 1930's

You are a small scale farmer who grows alfalfa to sell it to the local cow farms that provide milk to LALA, the biggest milk corporation in the world.

Your lands are outside of the Natural Reserve area.

Through the Seca Salada Canal, made in the early 1900's the Cuatro Ciénegas wetlands provide your lands with the water needed for your alfalfa fields

The canal system drains 90% of the wetlands water out of the ecosystem.

THE SCIENTIST

You are a Mexican-born scientist specializing in evolutionary and microbial ecology who has been conducting research in the Cuatro Ciénegas region for over 20 years. Through collaborative research, you have discovered that this oasis in the desert not only contains information about the origin of life and ancient seas, it also has great similarity with the water that formed the oceans during the Precambrian era. It is stored in an underground watershed that comes to the surface through a spring and allows a variety of endemic species to live. You fought corporations and small farmers to conserve the water as nearby agricultural practices led to its desiccation. Your work resulted in possibilities for biotechnology patents, and following the Nagoya protocol, you have to bring awareness to the local community as the legitimate owners of this genetic information.

Now you have shifted your focus on to using the microbes of Cuatro Ciénegas to heal the seashores.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

You read about Cuatro Ciénegas 5 years ago and learned that the ecosystem is at risk due to harmful agricultural practices. Since then, you have delved deeper into scientific research on the topic. You are an advocate of the more-than-human beings and the recognition of their status as indigenous communities. Since local communities were settled in these areas only 200 years ago, while bacteria have lived there for 2.5 billion years, you consider the more-than-human beings to be the rightful owners of the land and are in favor of the eviction of the people and stricter protection policies. Specifically in this context, where pre-colonial nomadic indigenous communities have been displaced and disbanded. You are against any biotechnology that displaces and exploits these unique and ancient creatures from their ecosystem, and you believe that any patents made from their genetic information, as well as any financial consequences, should go to conservation projects, rather than to the local human communities.

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Witness studio by Merve Bedir

'Birthday Greetings to a Landscape'
Design Academy Eindhoven. Masters Collaborative Project.
THIRST