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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

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International Women's Week 2026: Resistance, Reclamation and Solidarity

Wednesday 4th March, 1.00pm to 7.30pm

York St John University

Creative Centre (with hybrid elements)

YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY

**Discussing
Decolonisation**

EVENT SERIES



International Women's Week 2026: Resistance, Reclamation and Solidarity

Welcome to York St John University, and to this half-day symposium as part of York International Women's Week 2026.

The symposium will explore everyday forms of resistance, reclamation and solidarity practiced by women and their communities in territories across the Americas and globally.

You can find details of all sessions — including speaker bios, project outlines, formats and timings — within this programme.

We hope you enjoy the day!



Programme

1.00pm - 2.00pm	Keynote talk with Dr Carolina Machado Oliveira , independent documentary filmmaker and Senior Lecturer at Bournemouth University (in-person and hybrid via Zoom)	Creative Centre 101
2.00pm - 2.15pm	Comfort break and registrations	Creative Centre Atrium
2.15pm - 2.30pm	Welcome and introductions from symposium co-organisers	Creative Centre Atrium
2.30pm - 4.30pm	Powerlands film screening (in-person only), followed by online Q&A with the Director, Ivey-Camille Manybeads Tso and co-producer Jordan Flaherty (hybrid via Zoom)	Creative Centre Auditorium
4.30pm - 4.45pm	Comfort break	
4.45pm - 5.45pm	Live panel discussion with land defenders based in Mexico, co-hosted with Alexia Lizarraga Quintero, Climate Fellowship Manager at Amos Trust (hybrid via Zoom)	Creative Centre Auditorium
5.45pm - 6.00pm	Comfort break	
6.00pm - 6.45pm	Interview with Professor Katy Jenkins , Principal Investigator on Northumbria's RECLAMA research project: Harnessing Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Heritage (in-person only)	Creative Centre Auditorium
6.45pm - 7.30pm	Creative exhibition featuring photography, artworks and short films from the RECLAMA project, shared by the Colectivo Mujeres de Asfalto, in Ecuador. Food and refreshments provided (in-person only)	Creative Centre Atrium





Speaker bios and contributions

Session 1, Keynote:

Dr Carolina Machado Oliveira is a Senior Lecturer in Factual Media at Bournemouth University and a practice-based researcher working across documentary, socio-environmental communication and intercultural media. Her work focuses on collaborative media practices with Indigenous communities in Latin America, exploring how film and participatory communication can support cultural preservation, language revitalisation and climate justice. She has over 17 years of experience as a filmmaker and impact-driven media producer, directing projects for international organisations including Red Bull Media House, Amazon Watch and Survival International.

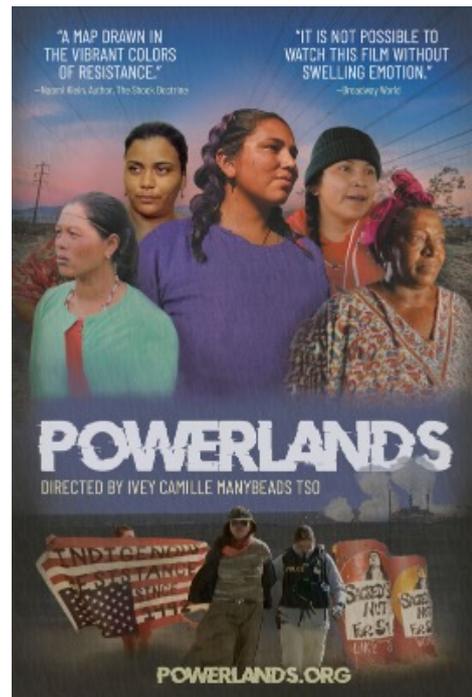
Carolina's keynote will introduce her research on participatory media and socio-environmental educommunication in Indigenous territories in Brazil. The work examines how Indigenous journalists and filmmakers use digital media and audiovisual storytelling to strengthen climate activism, document environmental threats, and defend territorial rights, with a focus on co-designed training initiatives and communication strategies that support cultural preservation and public visibility.



Session 2, Film screening with director/producer Q&A:

Powerlands is a feature-length documentary film, produced in 2022 (US) and directed by young Navajo filmmaker, Ivey-Camille Manybeads Tso. It is the winner of multiple awards, including the prestigious 2022 Rigoberta Menchú Grand Prize. The film is in seven languages, including several Indigenous languages rarely captured on film, e.g. Diné, Wayuu, Visayan, Blaan and Zapotec, and is available with English, Spanish or French subtitles.
Running time: 75 minutes, 16x9

Synopsis: Ivey-Camille Manybeads Tso follows the trail of extractive industries that have exploited the land where she was born. She travels to the La Guajira region in rural Colombia, the Tampakán region of the Philippines, the Tehuantepec Isthmus of Mexico, and the protests at Standing Rock. In each case, she meets Indigenous women leading the struggle against the same corporations that are causing displacement and environmental catastrophe in her own home. Inspired by these women, Ivey-Camille brings home the lessons from these struggles to the Navajo Nation.



Ivey-Camille Manybeads Tso is an award-winning queer Navajo filmmaker. She started making films at the age of 9 and, at the age of 13, made the award-winning fiction film, *In the Footsteps of Yellow Woman*, based on the true story of her great-great-great grandmother, who lived through the Navajo Long Walk of 1864-1868.

At the age of 19, Ivey-Camille began work on *Powerlands*, her first feature. The film follows Ivey Camille as she investigates the displacement of Indigenous people across the globe, and the environmental devastation caused by the same chemical companies that have exploited the land where she was born. On this personal and political journey, she learns from Indigenous activists across three continents.



Jordan Flaherty is an award-winning journalist, producer and author. He has produced dozens of hours of film and television, as well as short and long-form documentaries, whilst reporting in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, and writing two books based on his reporting. He began his producing career with the independent feature film *Chocolate Babies*, which was recently added to the Criterion Collection, and worked on the 2022 production of *Powerlands* with Ivey-Camille.



Session 3, Live panel discussion with Amos Trust Climate Fellows in Mexico (via Zoom):

Alexia Lizarraga Quintero is the Climate Fellowship Manager at Amos Trust, a small creative human rights organisation committed to challenging injustice, building hope and creating positive change. For the past few years, Alexia and colleagues have been exploring the importance of women-led and (eco) feminist models of leadership in relation to climate breakdown and climate action globally.

Running since 2024/25, the Amos **Climate Fellowship** aims to support female climate activists across the Global South by building solidarity, strengthening their network, amplifying their voices, and financially supporting the participants in the work they are doing in their communities as they pursue climate justice. The Fellowship is now in its third year, supporting a new cohort of land defenders based in Mexico and Central America.

You can find more information about the projects and biographies of the three women we will be speaking with on 4th March at the end of this document.



Session 4 & 5, Interview and exhibition of creative outputs from RECLAMA research project:

Katy Jenkins is Professor of Global Development and co-Director of the Centre for Global Development at Northumbria University. Her research explores women's activism and community organising in contexts of conflict and extractivism, with a focus on participatory and creative methods, working in partnership with grassroots organisations. She was principal investigator on the **RECLAMA research project** (Harnessing Afro-Ecuadorian Women's Heritage), funded by the British Academy.

Working in partnership with the Mujeres de Asfalto Collective and a group of peer researchers in Esmeraldas, Ecuador, the RECLAMA project aimed to make visible Afro-Ecuadorian women's knowledges and harness these to promote more peaceful and sustainable development. Over four years, the project produced a variety of creative outputs celebrating Black & Afro women's knowledges, focusing on spirituality, aesthetics, gastronomy and medicinal plants.

A selection of these creative outputs will be exhibited as part of this event.



Meet the Amos Trust Climate Fellows for 2025/26

1. Valiana Alejandra Aguilar Hernández is originally from Sinanché, Yucatán, Mexico. A Maya campesina, fermenter, and guardian of melipona bees, she chooses to remain in her community as an act of resistance against the forced displacement that affects coastal peoples.

For her, the land is not just a stretch of soil, but the space where memory, history, and community bonds are safeguarded. It is where roots and ways of life are woven together. The land is also a place of care and resistance, sustaining identity and dignity. To defend it is to defend life itself, the balance with nature, and the possibility of a future for the next generations.

For Valiana, climate justice means recognising that the ecological crisis does not affect everyone equally. Those who have least harmed the Earth — Indigenous peoples, rural communities, women, and children — are often those who suffer the most. Climate justice is about creating the social, political, and economic conditions that allow young people to remain in and defend their land, while remembering that caring for life cannot depend on economic interests or borders. It is also an act of dignity and profound love: to heal our relationship with Mother Earth, to defend the water, the air, and the forests, and to ensure that future generations may walk this world with hope. To speak of climate justice is to speak of balance, respect, and shared responsibility — where life is always at the centre.

Project: Gathering of Mayan Women from the Yucatán Peninsula in Agroecology for Food Justice

In Sinanché, Yucatán, Maya peasant women face the effects of an imposed agroindustrial model that displaces traditional food systems, harms community health, and silences their knowledge and leadership. These women are central to food production and cultural knowledge, yet their voices are often excluded from decision-making on food and land.

This project will bring together 25 Maya peasant women from 9 Indigenous collectives in a regional



“Each day that I inhabit these ancestral lands, they whisper to me that we must resist, that the Earth can heal if we find the ways to regenerate both the soil and our history in the present.”

Valiana Aguilar

Instagram: [valiana_aguilar](#)

Location: Sinanché, Yucatán, Mexico

gathering focused on agroecology and food justice. Through workshops, exchanges, and collaborative activities, the women will strengthen their skills, recover ancestral knowledge, and build a supportive network that promotes collective action for food sovereignty and climate justice.

By generating their own narratives, documenting traditional practices, and consolidating regional networks, the women will reclaim their role in defending land, life, and dignified food. This work fosters visibility, coordination, and advocacy from an Indigenous and feminist perspective, empowering Maya peasant women to lead change in their communities and strengthen long-term food justice in the Yucatán Peninsula.

Meet the Amos Trust Climate Fellows for 2025/26

2. Frida Rocha, also known as Free, is a non-binary person who has lived in Xochimilco since childhood. They are also marked by the experience of inhabiting their young “woman” self within the chinampa context — rooted in autonomy and walking alongside the original peoples of this territory in resistance to the expanding city.

For them, territory is where life begins and is reproduced — a space of reciprocity and mutual transformation between all beings. It is constantly defended against systems of power that reduce it to a resource or commodity, yet it remains fertile ground where diversity thrives.

Frida understands climate justice as a struggle that must be walked. It means rejecting false solutions like greenwashing, stopping destructive megaprojects, and recognising the structural roots of the crisis — capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy — whose impacts fall disproportionately on those most historically marginalised.

Project: Building Networks for Food Sovereignty among Women and Gender-Diverse Chinamperas in Xochimilco

In Xochimilco, Mexico City, the chinampas—ancient, floating agricultural gardens unique in the world—have been cultivated for centuries by local communities. Chinamperas are the women and gender-diverse people who work these gardens, planting, harvesting, and transforming food while maintaining traditional knowledge and practices. These gardens are not only a source of food but also living spaces where memory, culture, and community bonds thrive. Today, the chinampas face pressures from land grabbing, urbanisation, predatory tourism, and government projects imposed without community consultation, while the knowledge and practices of chinamperas are increasingly folklorised and commodified.

This project brings together nine young women and gender-diverse chinamperas in Xochimilco, strengthening networks of mutual support. By weaving together collective practices, narratives, and agroecological knowledge, the project fosters food sovereignty and autonomy, while resisting extractivism and defending local ways of life.



“The land would say that we are diversifying forms of existence, that we must keep weaving ourselves together across our many collectivities, and that we should never stop nourishing ourselves with what we plant and dream — because that is the key to sustaining each other.”

Frida Rocha (Free)

Instagram: floresenelagua

Location: Xochimilco, Mexico City, Mexico

Through workshops, storytelling sessions, and audiovisual capsules shared on social media and in the community, participants will identify shared needs, exchange strategies, and build long-term networks for collaboration. The project also develops practical marketing and distribution strategies, ensuring that agroecological foods remain in the territory, accessible to the community rather than privileging historically advantaged populations. By consolidating this network, the project empowers chinamperas to sustain their work, defend their land, and promote food justice in Xochimilco and neighbouring communities.

Meet the Amos Trust Climate Fellows for 2025/26

3. Belinda Guadalupe Camarena Vazquez was born in Atotonilco el Alto, Jalisco, and has lived in Aguascalientes for more than 15 years. She is a woman, teacher, critical lawyer, and ecofeminist, with a passion for photography that captures our surroundings.

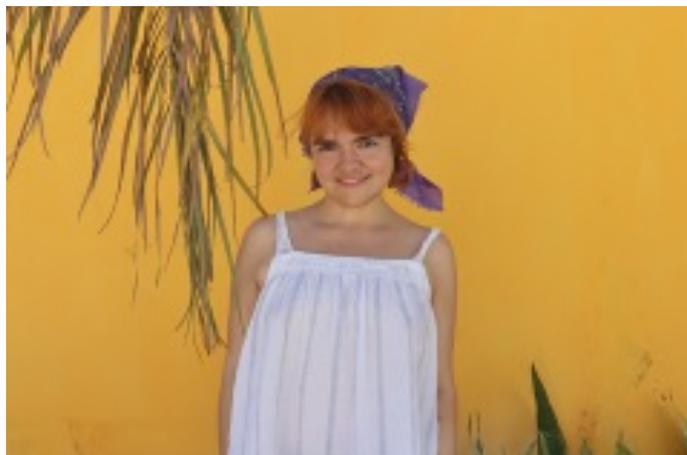
For Belinda, the land is a way of inhabiting everyday life — encompassing material, geographic, and temporal spaces. It is what allows us to connect with all forms of life, human and non-human. Our bodies are territories, our neighborhoods are territories, and our relationships and emotions are territories too.

For Belinda, climate justice is the commitment to transform our lives and surroundings. It is acting as if we are capable of defending every land and every form of life. The simpler and more everyday her actions for justice, the more powerful they become.

Project: Violence in advocacy spaces: how can we defend ourselves when we are women human rights defenders?

In Aguascalientes and across Mexico, women who defend land, the environment, and life often face multiple forms of violence within the very advocacy spaces where they work — including psychological abuse, harassment, and exclusion — frequently at the hands of male peers or people in positions of power. While women defenders are skilled at recognising harm done to the land, it can be much harder to identify and address the violence directed at their own bodies.

This project will equip women human rights defenders with tools to recognise, confront, and transform the violence they experience in mixed-gender resistance spaces. At its core is the development of a practical, collaborative guide — available in both digital and printed formats — that uses legal, artistic, and participatory defence methodologies to strengthen women's self-defence, self-care, and leadership.



“If my land could speak, it would say that I do my best to sustain and defend it within a system that exploits and objectifies it in many ways. It would say that I use teaching to create mutual care, so that through shared awareness, we can cohabit and co-defend our lands.”

Belinda Camarena

Instagram: @Belicamarena

Location: Aguascalientes, Mexico

Through a 10-session workshop, eight women defenders will work with the guide to explore power dynamics, reclaim their right to be protected, and build confidence in navigating legal systems using more accessible and empathetic language. The process will also include creating an artistic piece as a collective act of healing and resistance.

By fostering horizontal, non-hierarchical spaces and weaving networks of ecofeminist care, the project seeks to ensure that women who defend land and life are also defended and cared for — so that no one is forced to abandon the struggle due to violence.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK



Resistance, Reclamation
and Solidarity

4 MARCH
2026



13:00 - 19:30
GMT
Free Entry

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