

Remembering Elandria C. Williams

by Beyond Development collective

With deep sadness, grief, and heavy hearts, we learn of the passing of our friend, sister, and colleague, Elandria Williams.

Their untimely departure created an immediate feeling of sorrow, emptiness, and profound loss. Those who knew Elandria as we knew them would remember how they carried with them the urgency of the moment. Elandria kept us real and grounded, infused with the ideals of justice. And if we happened to disagree, Elandria would gently hold our hands and ground us even more. Memories of them, of their wisdom, their fierceness and tireless organizing, their impact in so many communities across the globe, take away some of that feeling of emptiness.

During a week-long seminar, Elandria would interrupt and take us all outside to soak up some sun, to breathe, to follow them for an impromptu yoga session. Elandria would sing, vibrating power, truth, and grace. Elandria would constantly decolonize language.

“What do you mean by ‘nature’?”

Elandria would remind us that race plays out in every aspect of our life.

“I want us to have some other conversations that actually put ‘real’ at the center! and if that’s not what you know, fine sit back and let other people who have this reality bring it, because the people I am trying to build an alternative solidarity economy for, are people who don’t have an economy now!”

They're swept away, locked up, and murdered every day."

Elandria reminded us about the necessity to understand people's material conditions before getting too caught up in imagining alternatives. Elandria never talked about themselves but always about their community.

Elandria constantly fought and acted to create spaces and processes of learning and solidarity. Their sincerity in asking questions that matter move us to appreciate that rootedness, reexistence, restoration, and reimagination are not empty words or frameworks but values to live by every day. Their many expressions of love and empathy would shake your world's perspective to reflect more strategically on how our movements and communities could change the world with "beautiful" solutions. Their words still resonate today even as Elandria have transitioned to join the ancestors. Their work and their impact despite the many health challenges are uplifting.

Elandria were bigger than life, a constant reminder of what is possible and more despite dealing with health challenges all their life. In the [recent piece](#), Elandria asked,

"Amid our twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racism, we're building virtual gathering, grief, conference and educational spaces. Can we learn from this to create hybrid spaces that allow access for all?"

Elandria appealed to shift our perspectives, our minds and hearts into a different consciousness and a place of care, compassion, and genuine inclusion.

Elandria would want us to remember them not in sadness but in love, grounded power, and uplifting energy.

Dear beloved Elandria, we will remain inspired by your long-life career work as an educator, activist, and organizer from

the South. We salute and admire your courage in the face of the many health challenges. We will miss you, Elandria. May you rest in power and eternal love.



A COVID time doodle dedicated to Elandria by Ashish Kothari

David Fig, South Africa

Mary Ann Manahan, Philippines

Mabrouka M'Barek, Tunisia/US

Karin Gabbert, Germany

Ferdinand Muggenthaler, Ecuador

Ashish Kothari, India

Vinod Koshti, India

Raphael Hoetmer, Perú

Giorgos Velegarakis, Greece

Miriam Lang, Ecuador

Beatriz Rodriguez-Labajos, Barcelona/USA

Ansar Jasim, Iraq/Germany

Madhuresh Kumar, India

Ibrahima Thiam, Senegal

Mauro Castro, Barcelona

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