It was a resonant gesture, when US-based Brazilian percussionist Cyro Baptista included a self-composed piece named “Anthropofagia” on his 2008 album *Banquet of the Spirits*. Summoning the cultural cannibalism of Oswald de Andrade’s 1928 “Manifesto antropófago,” and placing himself within a lineage of Brazilian musicians both in Brazil and in the United States who have forthrightly invoked an anthropophagic aesthetic, “Anthropofagia” has Baptista intoning an articulative experimentalism, ravenously hybrid and incorporative: “We ate the American constitution, we ate the French revolution, Jimi Hendrix, Shakespeare, Voltaire, Baudelaire, Donald Trump, JFK, George Bush, John Coltrane, Charlie Parker…”

Baptista came to the US from São Paulo in 1980 to attend classes at the Creative Music Studio, one of the epicenters of post-1960s musical experimentalism in the US. At the Studio, Baptista worked with Naná Vasconcelos, another Brazilian percussionist/composer who had already made his own experimental interventions into the US music scene, continuing on the path set by Brazil-born percussionists such as Airto Moreira, Guilherme Franco, and Dom Um Romão, decisive architects of formative jazz fusion recordings by Miles Davis, Weather Report, Return to Forever, and Keith Jarrett in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Not even in Andrade’s “Manifesto” was anthropophagy just one thing and given the torsional dynamics at play in diasporic communities, Brazilian musicians living in the US have creatively multiplied the dimensions of an experimental anthropophagic aesthetic. This paper tracks those multiplying creativities. Recent accounts of musical experimentalism in the United States such as Benjamin Piekut’s *Experimentalism Otherwise* (2010) and George Lewis’s *A Power Stronger than Themselves* (2008) have proposed a widening ambit for experimental music and I follow in their vein, recognizing, as Lewis puts it “a multicultural, multietnic base for experimentalism.”

The history I present projects backwards and forwards from the late 1960s/early 1970s, a period more or less midway between my two outer-limit examples: Carmen Miranda’s arrival to the US in 1939 and Baptista’s 2008 recording of “Anthropofagia.” My starting location for the presentation of this 70-year-long history is 250 Bowery on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. It was there in the apartment of Rubens Gerchman that a host of Brazilian experimental visual artists such as Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark, and Glauber Rocha lived for brief periods between 1968 and 1972, precisely when Tropicália’s anthropophagic aesthetic was insinuating itself into the most brutal period of the military dictatorship in Brazil. Gerchman’s 1972 film *Triunfo Hermético* serves as a crucial locus point: with music by Airto Moreira in collaboration with the vocalist Flora Purim and bassist Stanley Clarke, the film and its soundtrack represent an unconcealing of the links between, on the one hand, the experimental jazz fusion that Airto helped instigate in his collaborations with Miles Davis and Wayne Shorter and, on the other, the visual anthropophagy that places Gerchman and his colleagues within a long of history of Brazilian experimental art (which itself might be seen to commence during artist Anna Malfatti’s time in New York City during the period between 1915 and 1917).

Suely Rolnik has written of an “anthropophagic cultural micropolitics” that inheres in “a continuous process of singularization, resulting from the composition of
particles of numberless devoured Others.” Following Rolnik, this paper tracks a form of experimentalism that is, above all, *articulative*. In the performances I consider, all sorts of entities are brought together: styles, genres, instruments, bodies, histories, sounds, symbols. A number of pre-digestive, taxonomic moves also enter in—categorization, separation, distillation—each crucial to the micropolitics of performance that I treat here.

For Rolnik, anthropophagy is a response to “the process of hybridization brought by successive waves of immigration, which has always defined [Brazil’s] experience.” Here, though, the “waves of immigration” that figure in Rolnik’s anthropophagic theory are not those that brought large numbers of immigrants to Brazil but those that saw increasing numbers of Brazilians come to the US during the decades following the United States Congress’s enactment of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. A critical argument here is that the demographic changes precipitated by the 1965 Act prompted the creation of new experimentalisms, and that Brazilian musicians living and working in the US played a vital role in the creation of these.