

memorial, dispossession, and fraught memory culture

a performance lecture by artist and musician **Erik DeLuca**
Associate Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Art (and a UVA grad alum)

Friday March 24, 3:30. Old Cabell Hall rm 107. Free and open to the public.
Sponsored by UVA Department of Music

Stolpersteine are shiny brass stones set into existing brick walkways. The German artist, Gunther Demnig installs stolpersteine to mark the last place a Jewish person lived freely before the Holocaust. A unique, decentralized memorial, today there are over 90,000 stolpersteine across Europe. Last October, I gave a speech in front of my family's dispossessed house for their stolpersteine laying ceremony. My speech is a reflective commemoration and also a critique of fraught memory culture. This performance lecture is a poetic representation of my speech (live words and music integrated with video).



This is about the activity of reparations within a never-ending field of brokenness. Critically aware of the tendency for self-victimhood to morph into a spectacle, I'll comment on how fraught memory culture can be. The performance will end in an open discussion about acts of dispossession that are facilitated by imperial technologies that mediate and organize (such as sound recording apparatus). I am reminded by philosopher Olúfẹ̀mi Táíwò that reparations are not just a tool to recall past harms but also "central to the expansive project of building a more just world." So how can we remake this and other contexts of reparations to fix local systems of inequity on a networked, worldmaking scale?