Somalia is and how consequently a digestible form, yet here we the complexity of the issue to crisis, have made an impact on years of continual migration and its ungovernability and its 40 these maps intend to demonstrate of safe and habitable regions. conveniently to the small pockets country, pinpointing them applicants are from the north the tests find that the Somali community; common results of wrongfully target the Somali community; unable to contest the results hinge on a couple of words and situations and how complex our birth; how we change and adapt accents say about our place of language analysis, the unable to contest the results for the analysis of their language/immigration authorities, met to the analysis of their language/organizations and a core group activists, refugee and art designers, artists, researchers, September 2012, a group over the 29th and 30th of. Accent correlate with the claim between this company kingdome. In most circumstances Switzerland, and the United Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Australia, Belgium, Germany, the made by thousands of people the validity of asylum claims have been using accent and authorities around the world since 2001 immigration.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editor/Contributors</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nataša Petrešin-Bachelez, Virginie Bobin and Bisi Silva</td>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatima El-Tayeb</td>
<td>Creolizing Europe</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Sheikh</td>
<td>None of the Above: From Hybridity to Hyphenation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouchra Ouizguen, Bianca Calvo and Ion Munduate, Katarina Zdjelar, and Lawrence Abu Hamdan</td>
<td>In the Fabric of the Voice: A Polyphonic Conversation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Flores</td>
<td>Bewitched Migrant</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruby onyinyechi amanze</td>
<td>“I Charge You to Leave This Body”</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapwani Kiwanga</td>
<td>Comprehensive Methodology in Ancestral Earth-Star Complexes: Lessons from Vela-Zimbabwe</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisi Silva</td>
<td>New Culture, A Review of Contemporary African Arts</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nana Oforiatta-Ayim</td>
<td>Cultural Encyclopedia</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurogeeta Das</td>
<td>Of Umbrella Terms and Definitions: Diversity Within a Framework?</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Tancons</td>
<td>Sailing the Ship of Fools: A Carnival Trilogy</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koki Tanaka</td>
<td>Precarious Tasks 7</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributors</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colophon</td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Throughout these last few issues of *Manifesta Journal* the question of how to genuinely engage in an act of “affective solidarity”, as feminist critic Clare Hemmings would put it, remains—and with it, the concern that the still-prevailing white Western consideration of “global others” too often slips from empathy to pity. In her critical essay on the European “other” that inaugurates *Future(s) of Co-habitation*, the seventeenth issue of *Manifesta Journal*, art historian Fatima El-Tayeb refers to Edouard Glissant and his renowned theory of creolization. In the poet’s writings, the Caribbean became a center of relational identities and situational communities exactly because of their inability to claim the “sacred roots” of these territories. This fact consequently excluded its inhabitants from a hegemonic world order in which both dominance and resistance were built on notions of sacred land. An origin that does not imply sacredness or authenticity is thus the point from which minoritarian resistance can be articulated. In order to arrive at this stage however, a different archive needs to be accessed: one based on the experiences of marginalized, silenced communities, without the usual dominating manifestations of Europeanness.

This active questioning of the overarching narratives of origin, rootedness and authenticity, as well as the prevalence of essentialist models (be they “European”, “Afropolitan”, or “post-black”) reverberates throughout the entire issue of this journal; in equal measure traversed by voices and bodies in diaspora and thus, necessarily, by the much debated concept of “hybridity”. In his own contribution, writer and curator Simon Sheikh brings forth Homi K. Bhabha’s germinal take on hybridity, undermining the positive, all-encompassing connotation that the term has symbolized in artistic, social and political language over the last few decades: “It is [thus] not a celebratory concept,” Sheikh writes, “as it has often been employed in biennial culture and major art events, but it is rather an ambivalent state of being in-between powers of authority, the authenticity of authorship, and the (im)possibility of cultural translation.”

Under the title “Future(s) of Co-habitation,” *Manifesta Journal* has invited international artists, curators and thinkers to investigate this state of in-between from a trans-historical and trans-geographical point of view, with an emphasis on hyphenation in the term itself as well as on critical assessment of the legacy of the concept of “hybridity”, its contemporary relevance in the field of arts and humanities, and in society at large. Instead of focusing on the term itself, the contributors to this issue convene alternative vocabularies and positions that pay a tribute to post-colonial theory and criticism, and recent debates in cultural theory, such as the current revisitation of “Afrofuturism” or of what some have called “cultural cannibalism”. The content assembled here forges a different language and opens up visions, possibilities and realities for the future(s) that we, and hopefully you, the readers, wish to co-inhabit.

---

In their conversation, the writers and film-makers Raimi Gbadamosi and John Akomfrah underline the hierarchizing effect of the concept of hybridity on a world in which a certain kind of encounter becomes idealized and, thus, reductive. “There is nowhere in which anyone exists in a pure state or an uncontaminated whole,” concludes the latter. His position resonates dramatically with the recent hardening of global policies towards migration that flourishes on the foul breeding grounds of populist and right-wing forms of nationalism, which withdraw into obsolete notions of the preservation of “organic identities”. In that context, discourses and worldwide events celebrating “indigenerity” raise doubts on the viability of such a term if employed in a generalized way—a risk that the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa has challenged in its recent exhibition Sakahan—International Indigenous Art, dissected here by the artist and theoretician Aurogeeta Das. The metaphor of contamination (a term employed by Akomfrah) is also useful when extolling the rejection of “allochtones” into a social body, and the step to a vocabulary of bewitchment, vampirization and haunting is quickly overcome. In Terre Thaemlitz’s film, Canto II, the stories of disillusioned Philippine migrants to Japan are interwoven with local myths of vampires whose bodies experience another, yet comparable form of disjunction, torn between their land and the necessity of pursuing the quest for blood and survival. Thaemlitz’s film is a parable that, according to writer Patrick Flores, highlights the occultation processes imposed on undesired bodies.

Voices are immaterial markers of displaced identities, bearers of accents and histories. Virginie Bobin’s polyphonic conversation with the choreographer Bouchra Ouziguen and the artists Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, Katarina Zdjelar and Lawrence Abu Hamdan stages different voices that resist control and bypass material borders. Bodies confined in space (or fixed identities) tend to turn to the realms of myth or, famously, to science-fiction, in order to project themselves in time. If the term Afrofuturism has recently been criticized for perpetuating the prefix “Afro”, it has also produced an inspiring platform that allows Black subjectivity to re-imagine and re-define itself through the prism of fantasy and the transcendental, as well as through technology, alternative identities, realities and histories that engage the past, rethink the present and anticipate the future. Artist ruby onyinyechi amanze thus acknowledges the spirit of Double Consciousness espoused by the sociologist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois, and pushes the definitions of the hybrid and conjures up an alter ego. By invoking, at times, the identity of an alien, she takes on multiple identities that allow her to morph across time and space. Artist Kapwani Kiwanga poses as a scholar in Ancestral Earth Studies from the School of Galactic Anthropology at the Afrogalactica Institute. She projects herself and the readers into a dystopian future, where the influence of Great Zimbabwe on other stellar civilizations proposes an allegory of geopolitical relations and the circulation of cultural influences.

Adriano Pedrosa’s conversation with the pioneering African-Brazilian artist and curator Emanuel Araújo provides a unique insight into a singular curatorial practice, which has over the past four decades confronted the racial complexities and tensions in the largest African diasporic community in the world. Araújo’s thematic concerns as well as his having set up the requisite institutional frameworks have highlighted the realized and, thus, reductive. “There is nowhere in which anyone exists in a pure state or an uncontaminated whole,” concludes the latter. His position resonates dramatically with the recent hardening of global policies towards migration that flourishes on the foul breeding grounds of populist and right-wing forms of nationalism, which withdraw into obsolete notions of the preservation of “organic identities”. In that context, discourses and worldwide events celebrating “indigenerity” raise doubts on the viability of such a term if employed in a generalized way—a risk that the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa has challenged in its recent exhibition Sakahan—International Indigenous Art, dissected here by the artist and theoretician Aurogeeta Das. The metaphor of contamination (a term employed by Akomfrah) is also useful when extolling the rejection of “allochtones” into a social body, and the step to a vocabulary of bewitchment, vampirization and haunting is quickly overcome. In Terre Thaemlitz’s film, Canto II, the stories of disillusioned Philippine migrants to Japan are interwoven with local myths of vampires whose bodies experience another, yet comparable form of disjunction, torn between their land and the necessity of pursuing the quest for blood and survival. Thaemlitz’s film is a parable that, according to writer Patrick Flores, highlights the occultation processes imposed on undesired bodies.

Voices are immaterial markers of displaced identities, bearers of accents and histories. Virginie Bobin’s polyphonic conversation with the choreographer Bouchra Ouziguen and the artists Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, Katarina Zdjelar and Lawrence Abu Hamdan stages different voices that resist control and bypass material borders. Bodies confined in space (or fixed identities) tend to turn to the realms of myth or, famously, to science-fiction, in order to project themselves in time. If the term Afrofuturism has recently been criticized for perpetuating the prefix “Afro”, it has also produced an inspiring platform that allows Black subjectivity to re-imagine and re-define itself through the prism of fantasy and the transcendental, as well as through technology, alternative identities, realities and histories that engage the past, rethink the present and anticipate the future. Artist ruby onyinyechi amanze thus acknowledges the spirit of Double Consciousness espoused by the sociologist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois, and pushes the definitions of the hybrid and conjures up an alter ego. By invoking, at times, the identity of an alien, she takes on multiple identities that allow her to morph across time and space. Artist Kapwani Kiwanga poses as a scholar in Ancestral Earth Studies from the School of Galactic Anthropology at the Afrogalactica Institute. She projects herself and the readers into a dystopian future, where the influence of Great Zimbabwe on other stellar civilizations proposes an allegory of geopolitical relations and the circulation of cultural influences.

Adriano Pedrosa’s conversation with the pioneering African-Brazilian artist and curator Emanuel Araújo provides a unique insight into a singular curatorial practice, which has over the past four decades confronted the racial complexities and tensions in the largest African diasporic community in the world. Araújo’s thematic concerns as well as his having set up the requisite institutional frameworks have highlighted the realized and, thus, reductive. “There is nowhere in which anyone exists in a pure state or an uncontaminated whole,” concludes the latter. His position resonates dramatically with the recent hardening of global policies towards migration that flourishes on the foul breeding grounds of populist and right-wing forms of nationalism, which withdraw into obsolete notions of the preservation of “organic identities”. In that context, discourses and worldwide events celebrating “indigenerity” raise doubts on the viability of such a term if employed in a generalized way—a risk that the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa has challenged in its recent exhibition Sakahan—International Indigenous Art, dissected here by the artist and theoretician Aurogeeta Das. The metaphor of contamination (a term employed by Akomfrah) is also useful when extolling the rejection of “allochtones” into a social body, and the step to a vocabulary of bewitchment, vampirization and haunting is quickly overcome. In Terre Thaemlitz’s film, Canto II, the stories of disillusioned Philippine migrants to Japan are interwoven with local myths of vampires whose bodies experience another, yet comparable form of disjunction, torn between their land and the necessity of pursuing the quest for blood and survival. Thaemlitz’s film is a parable that, according to writer Patrick Flores, highlights the occultation processes imposed on undesired bodies.

Voices are immaterial markers of displaced identities, bearers of accents and histories. Virginie Bobin’s polyphonic conversation with the choreographer Bouchra Ouziguen and the artists Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, Katarina Zdjelar and Lawrence Abu Hamdan stages different voices that resist control and bypass material borders. Bodies confined in space (or fixed identities) tend to turn to the realms of myth or, famously, to science-fiction, in order to project themselves in time. If the term Afrofuturism has recently been criticized for perpetuating the prefix “Afro”, it has also produced an inspiring platform that allows Black subjectivity to re-imagine and re-define itself through the prism of fantasy and the transcendental, as well as through technology, alternative identities, realities and histories that engage the past, rethink the present and anticipate the future. Artist ruby onyinyechi amanze thus acknowledges the spirit of Double Consciousness espoused by the sociologist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois, and pushes the definitions of the hybrid and conjures up an alter ego. By invoking, at times, the identity of an alien, she takes on multiple identities that allow her to morph across time and space. Artist Kapwani Kiwanga poses as a scholar in Ancestral Earth Studies from the School of Galactic Anthropology at the Afrogalactica Institute. She projects herself and the readers into a dystopian future, where the influence of Great Zimbabwe on other stellar civilizations proposes an allegory of geopolitical relations and the circulation of cultural influences.

Adriano Pedrosa's conversation with the pioneering African-Brazilian artist and curator Emanuel Araújo provides a unique insight into a singular curatorial practice, which has over the past four decades confronted the racial complexities and tensions in the largest African diasporic community in the world. Araújo's thematic concerns as well as his having set up the requisite institutional frameworks have highlighted the realized and, thus, reductive. “There is nowhere in which anyone exists in a pure state or an uncontaminated whole,” concludes the latter. His position resonates dramatically with the recent hardening of global policies towards migration that flourishes on the foul breeding grounds of populist and right-wing forms of nationalism, which withdraw into obsolete notions of the preservation of “organic identities”. In that context, discourses and worldwide events celebrating “indigenerity” raise doubts on the viability of such a term if employed in a generalized way—a risk that the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa has challenged in its recent exhibition Sakahan—International Indigenous Art, dissected here by the artist and theoretician Aurogeeta Das. The metaphor of contamination (a term employed by Akomfrah) is also useful when extolling the rejection of “allochtones” into a social body, and the step to a vocabulary of bewitchment, vampirization and haunting is quickly overcome. In Terre Thaemlitz’s film, Canto II, the stories of disillusioned Philippine migrants to Japan are interwoven with local myths of vampires whose bodies experience another, yet comparable form of disjunction, torn between their land and the necessity of pursuing the quest for blood and survival. Thaemlitz’s film is a parable that, according to writer Patrick Flores, highlights the occultation processes imposed on undesired bodies.

Voices are immaterial markers of displaced identities, bearers of accents and histories. Virginie Bobin’s polyphonic conversation with the choreographer Bouchra Ouziguen and the artists Blanca Calvo and Ion Munduate, Katarina Zdjelar and Lawrence Abu Hamdan stages different voices that resist control and bypass material borders. Bodies confined in space (or fixed identities) tend to turn to the realms of myth or, famously, to science-fiction, in order to project themselves in time. If the term Afrofuturism has recently been criticized for perpetuating the prefix “Afro”, it has also produced an inspiring platform that allows Black subjectivity to re-imagine and re-define itself through the prism of fantasy and the transcendental, as well as through technology, alternative identities, realities and histories that engage the past, rethink the present and anticipate the future. Artist ruby onyinyechi amanze thus acknowledges the spirit of Double Consciousness espoused by the sociologist and historian W. E. B. Du Bois, and pushes the definitions of the hybrid and conjures up an alter ego. By invoking, at times, the identity of an alien, she takes on multiple identities that allow her to morph across time and space. Artist Kapwani Kiwanga poses as a scholar in Ancestral Earth Studies from the School of Galactic Anthropology at the Afrogalactica Institute. She projects herself and the readers into a dystopian future, where the influence of Great Zimbabwe on other stellar civilizations proposes an allegory of geopolitical relations and the circulation of cultural influences.

Adriano Pedrosa’s conversation with the pioneering African-Brazilian artist and curator Emanuel Araújo provides a unique insight into a singular curatorial practice, which has over the past four decades
space. In a more discreet but no less powerful way, Japanese artist Koki Tanaka’s series of Precarious Tasks also propose individual or collective experiences that may intensify one’s apprehension of a context, thus proposing ways of building new communities and bonds — inventing co-habitation beyond social traumas. Together with these authors, ‘Future(s) of Co-habitation’ hopes to look beyond geographical boundaries, administrative borders and fixed identities by welcoming unconventional modes of existence, thinking, heterolingual expressions, resilient structures and science-fictional narratives. Our era is challenged by constant mobility and migrations where the forced geographical flexibility of the precarious worker is synchronous to the confinement of undesired migrants, and where Europe continues to struggle with acknowledging the consequences of the colonial past on its social, political and cultural fabric. If the futures of cohabitation that we hope for could be described in other words, they would no doubt take the form of verses by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish from his poem Edward Said: A Contrapuntal Reading (2007), whose verses we would like to open this new issue.

By traveling freely across cultures those in search of the human essence may find a space for all to sit... Here a margin advances. Or a centre retreats. Where East is not strictly east, and West is not strictly west, where identity is open onto plurality, not a fort or a trench.

(Translated by Mona Anis)
and East, the loss of colonial empires, and after 1990, another reordering, largely collapsing "Europe" into the European Union. The latter came to symbolize Europe's successful reformulation after the twentieth century crises of totalitarianism, confirming the continent's place as the center and gatekeeper of universal human rights. This narrative was affirmed by the self-congratulatory designation of the EU as the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, while it already seems to be falling apart at the edges.

The current economic collapse of parts of the European Union enhances an existing structural violence, with housing segregation, unemployment, incarceration, and the collapse of the public school system all disproportionally affecting racialized groups, in particular Muslim, black and Roma communities. The particular histories of colonialism, displacement, and migration in Europe have created intersections and overlaps between these three communities. The particular histories of colonialism, displacement, and migration in Europe have created intersections and overlaps between these three communities, who share spaces (housing projects, prisons, detention centers), cultures (see their key role in hip-hop music all across Europe), histories, and positionality (as not being properly European). These connections are suppressed in dominant (policy-producing) discourses that identify each group as deviant in particular ways.

Muslins appear as the internal threat posed by migration, the other that is already there but remains eternally foreign; whereas "Africans" (including black Europeans) represent the masses who are not yet here, pushing at the borders, the demographic (and racial) collapse threatening to overrun the European David (the prevalence of metatheses along these lines helps to normalize the extremely high death toll the EU migration regime produces on its external borders—about 5000 per year, complimented by a rapidly growing, and increasingly privatized, regime of mass incarceration of undocumented migrants). Roma peoples, finally, the quintessential European diaspora, are depicted as reflected in the centrality of "gypsies" to continental folklore. The discursive separation of these groups is symptomatic of the ways in which de facto intersections of communities of color—with each other and with white Europe—are negated within the ideology of colorblindness, which cannot allow for porous boundaries and instead has to continuously produce Europe's and the spaces of resistance that originate (in) an identity that some refer to as "diasporic queer of color". That is, their "queerness" in time and space, which is imposed rather than chosen, precisely because it is more pronounced for the current generation of Europeans of color, producing new strategies of resistance, which are often downplayed in culturalist discourses, namely that of Europeans of color. It foregrounds the latter's transgressive strategies of resistance, which are often downplayed in culturalist debates around Europe's "migration problem".

In my work, I have been interested in art and activism that aims at creating the conditions of "speakability" for minoritarian identities, art that works on historical reenactments, re-coining or re-using the Spanish diaspora, re-enactments of resistance, which originate (in) an identity that some refer to as "diasporic queer of color".


I shall only give one example here: the nationwide German activist group Kanak Attak, which was most active from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s, was built around not race but the common experience of being racialized. They refused the normalized ‘culture of dialogue’ in which racialized subjects were granted a voice only when not speaking as Germans. They staged interventions into public space (and time) that refused the logic of progressive secular time. This was reflected in their name: “Kanake”—a German term for “foreigners” (i.e. those perceived as not belonging, whether they are German or not) that has its roots in the nation’s colonial empire (a fact that those who use the term as an insult are usually unaware of). Germany’s colonial past has only recently been “rediscovered” by academia and the mainstream, and its historicization remains firmly enmeshed in a discourse that allows people to continue to perceive “race” as something only brought to the nation recently via non-white migrants. The colloquial use of “Kanake”, reflects a less-standardized temporality, one in which colonialism and the spatio-temporal order it has produced refuse to stay either outside of Europe or in the past. Kanak Attak’s intervention in this reality is the fore.

The activists used video, performance, posters, billboards, flyers and other vernacular forms in order to escape the institutionalized mechanisms of racelessness that are designed to silence positionalities beyond the white / Christian European vs. migrant dichotomy. As “Kanak TV,” they produced a series of videos that are designed to silence positionalities beyond the white / Christian European vs. migrant dichotomy. These videos reflect the group’s poetics of relation, or in Cathy Cohen’s terms, “a politics where one’s relation to power, and not some externally imposed law, makes the difference.”

Since the dogma of racelessness is centrally built on silencing: the masking certain identities, processes, and structures unspeakable, I have explored a number of alternative languages, all circumventing the mandate to silence by making specifically European taboos around race speakable. (see Kanak Attak, starting with the group’s name, which redefines what is speakable by whom in German). These sonic, performative, and visual languages use the haunting presence of repressed histories to map an alternative spatio-temporal European landscape, building Glissant’s poetics of relation, or in Cathy Cohen’s terms, “a politics where one’s relation to power, and not some homogenized identity, is privileged in determining one’s political comrades.”3 In the process they destabilize naturalized understandings of time and space that work in the interest of particular groups, thereby recovering “impossible alternatives”. In short, to riff on Audre Lorde, they are “the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought.”4


It is significant that the productive capacities of this Third Space have a colonial or postcolonial provenance. For a willingness to descend into that alien territory—where I will lead you—may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of emancipation may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exotism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity. To that end we should remember that it is the ‘inter’—the cutting edge of translation and negation, the in-between-space—that carries the meaning of culture.1 Homi K. Bhabha

States are certain loci of power, but the state is not all there is of power. The state is not always the nation-state. We have, for instance, non-national states, and we have security states that actively contest the national basis of the state. So, already the nation-state can be dissociated from the term ‘nation’ and the two can be cobbled together through a hyphen, but does work the hyphen do? Does the hyphen finesse the relation that needs to be done? Does it mark a certain soldiering that has taken place historically? Does it suggest a falsity at the heart of the relation?2 Judith Butler


6. Although it has now been exported to most parts of the globe, the idea of the international biennial, as a competition of cultural superiority, as well as mobility, is a Historically a Eurocentric concept, originating from the Venice Biennial. This western notion of an international, hegemonic artistic production is only the most general form of the biennial, and other, local forms have also been established. For further elaboration, see: Simon Sheikh. 2011. What is Biennalization?, Humboldt 156 (104).
stylization, capitalization and, internationalization, which nonetheless cohere under a single principle of inscription, that of interpellation. Interpellation is, of course, a key term for the theorist, who employed it in his essay “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” to describe how subjects are ideologically produced. In this text, Althusser famously distinguishes between two forms of state apparatuses: the repressive and the ideological, with the first category belonging to the public realm, with its mechanisms of power and control, such as the police force and the courts, and the second belonging to the private realm, with its discrete features such as communication and culture. It is not my place to reiterate the critique of cultural institutions as ideological, but rather to focus on the notion of interpellation, and how it, according to Althusser, “recruits” and “transforms” the subject it hails. The biennial is thus the apparatus, the particular way that situates the individual, such as in the example of a police officer shouting “Hey, you!”—indeed both someone, and everyone, in the crowd is concerned, as subjects of this particular relation of power, in this particular state (in both senses of the word).

Indeed, if a biennial is such an ideational state apparatus, and its mode of address can be seen as one of interpellation, it is so of several individuals transformed into subjects and recruited for its cause; audiences, artists, organizers, and so on. All of them are biennialized, and thus brought into a specific relation not simply to power, but entangled within the three aforementioned elements: stylization, internationalization, meaning that they are more than national, that they are extra-national, so to say, and finally, capitalization, indicating their entanglement in the global flows of capital and thus their status as commodities. This also means that the subjects circulating in this system, be they subjects as in artists and curators, or as in subject matter or themes, are fundamentally exchangeable and inter-changeable. It is not the specific subject or specificity of a practice that is important, but rather that each one can be compared and thus replaced as objects in commodity exchange, and, moreover, that each one must constantly be interchanged to keep circulation and thus production in place and in play.

As an apparatus, the international biennial is crucial in the understanding of the subject production of the contemporary artist, and can be seen as the crystallization of how the subject is recognized and becomes, precisely, inter-national. That is, it can also be seen as a matrix for subjects to be seen as international, generative, productive and subjective in a more general, political sense. Surely, the production of contemporary art cannot be viewed as unalienated labor, but rather as precarious, as one of the harbinger of precariousness as a condition of labor; indeed even self-precarization as the willed production of subjectivity—stylist, international, and capitalist. Moreover, as an apparatus, the international biennial is indicative of how surplus is produced, or perhaps more precisely, imagined to be produced: through creativity, innovation, entertainment, tourism, speculation, monopoly rents, and so on. It is also an inscription of power. On the one hand, an international artist is so

"recruits" and "transforms" the subject it hails. The biennial is thus the apparatus, the particular way that situates the individual, such as in the example of a police officer shouting “Hey, you!”—indeed both someone, and everyone, in the crowd is concerned, as subjects of this particular relation of power, in this particular state (in both senses of the word).

Indeed, if a biennial is such an ideational state apparatus, and its mode of address can be seen as one of interpellation, it is so of several individuals transformed into subjects and recruited for its cause; audiences, artists, organizers, and so on. All of them are biennialized, and thus brought into a specific relation not simply to power, but entangled within the three aforementioned elements: stylization, internationalization, meaning that they are more than national, that they are extra-national, so to say, and finally, capitalization, indicating their entanglement in the global flows of capital and thus their status as commodities. This also means that the subjects circulating in this system, be they subjects as in artists and curators, or as in subject matter or themes, are fundamentally exchangeable and inter-changeable. It is not the specific subject or specificity of a practice that is important, but rather that each one can be compared and thus replaced as objects in commodity exchange, and, moreover, that each one must constantly be interchanged to keep circulation and thus production in place and in play.

As an apparatus, the international biennial is crucial in the understanding of the subject production of the contemporary artist, and can be seen as the crystallization of how the subject is recognized and becomes, precisely, inter-national. That is, it can also be seen as a matrix for subjects to be seen as international, generative, productive and subjective in a more general, political sense. Surely, the production of contemporary art cannot be viewed as unalienated labor, but rather as precarious, as one of the harbinger of precariousness as a condition of labor; indeed even self-precarization as the willed production of subjectivity—stylist, international, and capitalist. Moreover, as an apparatus, the international biennial is indicative of how surplus is produced, or perhaps more precisely, imagined to be produced: through creativity, innovation, entertainment, tourism, speculation, monopoly rents, and so on. It is also an inscription of power. On the one hand, an international artist is so
and where we may move, associate, work, and speak.9 Hyphenation as identity thus implies an irresolvable undecidability on the part of the subject, since the terms, or states of being, that are being hyphenated are unclear and in flux, and since, more importantly, that the very decision of hyphenation, of inclusion and exclusion, of identification or annihilation, happens elsewhere. It is imposed and enforced from the outside. It is not the result of a willful subject production of fussy cultural hybridity, as is so often clanocked by the cultural industry and the art system.

Moreover, this notion of hyphenation strongly implies interpellation: how the designations of any identity are provided from outside the subject. You are born as a citizen of this or that nation, or not—this is not a matter of choice, creativity or will, but an interpellation from state power. As it spreads geographically, the biennial form becomes not only more repetitive and similar, but also fortifies. As it becomes identified with the international biennial form, its effects expand, and indeed, from supra-national power, which decides your status and belonging. It is, of course, possible to be a member of a nation that does not exist, that is virtual and trans-national, or, poignantly, to be a member of a nation-state with which one does not identify, and which one wants to revise, revolutionize, destroy or simply leave. Hyphenation in terms of designated and designating subjects thus implies linguistics, jurisdictions, identities, and not creativity and multicultural hybridity. Indeed, as the chosen example of identification, representation and interpellation, the international biennial confirms that we are not witnessing a proliferation of multi-culture in terms of difference and contestation, but rather what we are not witnessing a proliferation of multi-culture in terms of designated and designating subjects thus in general—not just in its optimistic forms, whether in terms of emancipation or commodification, depending on ideology, but also in terms of the indignity of being hyphenated, of being designated, even with the best of intentions. A wonderful illustration of this can be found in a drawing by Adrian Tomine, published in the New Yorker in 2007. Twelve frames are depicted, each one with an individual placed at a desk, filling out a piece of paper, presumably an administrative form of some sort. They seem to be of various ethnicities, but their facial expressions tell us nothing about how they are filling in the blanks, if it at all. Rather, the caption reads, beautifully, None of the Above. This indicates a multiplicity of choices, but that none of them apply, that the people in the image are hyphenated to such a degree that (self) designation in this form becomes impossible. If obviously not irrelevant: “They are made to fill out the form, which is interpellated, and they may have to tick the box of that which does not fit: the unrepresentable. Might this, in the current global political situation, makes them truly democratic?”

Should we reject hyphenation, and no longer let ourselves be identified as both this and that, and as inter-national? As attractive as this non-ideantitarian exodus might sound, it is hardly possible if interpellation already hails us from outside, and from the side of power. Rather, perhaps, we could try to embrace hyphenation, and do so through its additivity—adding so many possible and impossible designations that the whole endeavor becomes absurd and short-circuits the making of meaning. Hundreds of categories could be hyphenated. Or we could focus on the possible impossibility of joining the two words on each side of the hyphen. Instead of being inter-national, we would say: I am black-white, young-old, abled-disabled, man-woman, gay-straight, citizen-denizen, worker-employer, and the like. As hyphenated subjects, we are not only split subjects in a psychoanalytical sense, but also endlessly identified, named and categorized, expanded and compartmentalized. We are, in the words of Alexander Düttmann, presupposed, whether this presupposition in any way fits or not.10 There is a category for everyone within the law, even if that category places us outside the law, or in some uncertain in-between state of exception.

As mentioned, the figure of the contemporary artist can here be viewed as a sign of political subjectivity

Virginie Bobin: Bouchra, your last dance piece, Ha!, composed in collaboration with three “Aitas”\(^2\), begins in pitch darkness. Slowly, white moving shapes emerge from obscurity, accompanied by rhythmic breaths and vocal sounds that progressively turn into series of cries and shouts, while the lights go up and the bodies appear in a form of trance.\(^3\) This first part seems to last for quite a long time, and produces a very strong effect on the spectator, who is caught into a sort of sonic hypnosis during which hearing overcomes other senses. The repetition of cries, and the alteration of the dancers’ voices provokes a form of disidentification, as if the voices had detached themselves from the bodies and acquired their own life and volume, or rather, as if they were a pure product of movement instead of a thinking process aimed at generating language. How did you and the dancers think of the role of the voice in Ha!, first as regards choreography, and then as regards the representation of madness, or again, finally, as regards the inadequacy to social norms that you explore in the piece?

Bouchra Ouizguen: Voice is experienced, sensed as being, being there; in movement. The balancing of our heads are the voices that inhabit ourselves, soothe us and overtake us. From this loss looms meaning, and movement. Losing one’s body; losing one’s voice. Abandon as madness. Ritual as support. Repetition, because everything has been done. It doesn’t matter. A form of depth emerges from lightness; a cry arises from a nod. We don’t know who is who anymore, who directs who—we don’t care! We are at heart. They burn us.

V.B.: Later on in the play, the dancers start laughing inextinguishably, almost monstrously. Their laugh is foreign to any sense of joy: it has become a pure sound. Yet, as it is eructed by these women on stage, while they perform movements that they had primarily observed on men’s bodies (alcoholics, lunatics, beggars) in the streets of Morocco, this laugh also carries provocation, insolence, or even forms of resistance. The fabric of this laugh manufactures a form of hybridity between an inside (the body, the stage) and an outside (the street); between madness and its representation, between norms and their construction, between genders. Your voices deceive conventions and the spectator’s projections. Was this what you were seeking?

B.O.: YES. We are multiple, We are alcohols, We are the lunatic, the beggar. Not a representation of them.

\(^2\) Traditional cabaret dancers and singers in Morocco.

\(^3\) A trailer announcing the piece at the 2013 Juli Dans Festival in Amsterdam is available here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7b2YEEg1HQ (Accessed online November 2013).
confirmation that we are not actually in the here and now, but that we move along, we translate, we transfer, and we transport ourselves continually. Deleuze begins his work *The Logic of Sense* by saying that, “The here and now lies in the simultaneity of becoming, whose characteristic it is to elude the present. Insofar as it eludes the present, becoming does not tolerate the separation or distinction of before and after, of past and future.” Consequently, in regard to the intention of the term translation, the idea is to activate a strategy, which within its own movement would select the elements, in turn recomposing it, and thereby creating from a very substance the embryo or the future base for work. Hence the need to dislocate certain elements implicit in the development of any performance: sound, voice, image and representation. It is and has been the goal of this process to recognize and open up new workspaces in full continuity with the interval that exists in the process of translation. Indeed the development of the radio programs with performances, conferences, concerts and workshops is based on the articulation of the work, the camera mainly focuses on and draws attention to and while the client is promised to gain her natural voice, that is, a voice which is released of its existing socio-cultural markers and constraints. The piece circles in the time and space of the vocal attribution. Oscillating between voices and never arriving at the desired destination, Stimme focuses on a liminal voice; a voice between culture and nature, something in between the material and corporeal act of producing voice, and the social process of receiving voice. Camera and editing work capture this tuning, which by cutting through the reverse that enfolds in front of the camera, and by localizing the field of vision and sonic experience. They focus on visualizing the crafting of voice, thus mainly committing to the hand the work of the coach who manipulates the body of her client as if it were a musical instrument. I use filming and editing as a writing device and not as a representation. The coaching hands firstly locate the voice in the body of her client, than instruct it, lead it, hold it. The hand work of the coach is akin to that of a conductor. They lead to as yet uninhibited zones of client’s bodies, they unblock pathways, they give push, then guide and bring the voice out. Hands make the contact with the client’s voices and give an access to the unreachable interior. We follow the way voice inhabits the body, the way it moves, awaken, twists parts of the body, and we hear the way the same body lies in the voice. On instances, the coach’s hands do the work of her client’s bodies and therefore appear as an extension; a prosthetic. Each body part has its own sound, which needs to be tuned. Thus hands become, in certain instances, a hearing aid of the coach, like an extra pair of ears that examine and adjust the sound of the voice. The camera is complicit to this act of processing the voice, as it is predicated precisely through an interplay between the client, the coach, the gaze of the camera and the sound. Yet, the camera lens, the sound, and the editing are not simply there to produce knowledge, nor are they there to serve as a commentary to an ideological apparatus. They co-produce a form of thinking, which is both guided by and which guides this tuning operation, it is both passive and active. Sometimes I would like to think of the role of the camera as a sort of intern in a physician’s practice—partly assisting and contributing to the activities, partly observing and internalizing the skills, and yet always running the risk of messing things up and therefore making apparent the prescribed relation between the physician and the patient.

V.B. The coaching session that we are witnessing in Stimme aims at helping women to recover their “natural”, “inner” voices, to tune into them. According to some studies, women socially acquire a higher-pitched voice than the one they originally have, thus inducing positions of weakness and dependency towards men, who in contrast are dotted with a lower-pitched voice, whose registers are associated with power and authority, notably in a professional context. “You don’t speak with your voice”, says the coach several times. Does a voice belong to us? Is there such thing as an original, natural voice, hidden under the layers of culture and social construct?

Katarina Zdjelar: The piece considers when our voice becomes our personal property. Where does the voice begin and where does it end? Who is speaking when we speak, and who is entitled to speak? For that I have followed the sessions of voice modulation, during which the client is promised to gain her natural voice, that is, a voice which is released of its existing socio-cultural markers and constraints. The piece circles in the time and space of the vocal attribution. Oscillating between voices and never arriving at the desired destination, Stimme focuses on a liminal voice; a voice between culture and nature, something in between the material and corporeal act of producing voice, and the social process of receiving voice. Camera and editing work capture this tuning, which by cutting through the reverse that enfolds in front of the camera, and by localizing the field of vision and sonic experience. They focus on visualizing the crafting of voice, thus mainly committing to the hand the work of the coach who manipulates the body of her client as if it were a musical instrument. I use filming and editing as a writing device and not as a representation. The coaching hands firstly locate the voice in the body of her client, than instruct it, lead it, hold it. The hand work of the coach is akin to that of a conductor. They lead to as yet uninhibited zones of client’s bodies, they unblock pathways, they give push, then guide and bring the voice out. Hands make the contact with the client’s voices and give an access to the unreachable interior. We follow the way voice inhabits the body, the way it moves, awakens, twists parts of the body, and we hear the way the same body lies in the voice. On instances, the coach’s hands do the work of her client’s bodies and therefore appear as an extension; a prosthetic. Each body part has its own sound, which needs to be tuned. Thus hands become, in certain instances, a hearing aid of the coach, like an extra pair of ears that examine and adjust the sound of the voice. The camera is complicit to this act of processing the voice, as it is predicated precisely through an interplay between the client, the coach, the gaze of the camera and the sound. Yet, the camera lens, the sound, and the editing are not simply there to produce knowledge, nor are they there to serve as a commentary to an ideological apparatus. They co-produce a form of thinking, which is both guided by and which guides this tuning operation, it is both passive and active. Sometimes I would like to think of the role of the camera as a sort of intern in a physician’s practice—partly assisting and contributing to the activities, partly observing and internalizing the skills, and yet always running the risk of messing things up and therefore making apparent the prescribed relation between the physician and the patient.

V.B. The coaching session that we are witnessing in Stimme aims at helping women to recover their “natural”, “inner” voices, to tune into them. According to some studies, women socially acquire a higher-pitched voice than the one they originally have, thus inducing positions of weakness and dependency towards men, who in contrast are dotted with a lower-pitched voice, whose registers are associated with power and authority, notably in a professional context. “You don’t speak with your voice”, says the coach several times. Does a voice belong to us? Is there such thing as an original, natural voice, hidden under the layers of culture and social construct?
K.Z.: What we witness in Stimme is the manufacturing of natural voice, the hard labour of producing natural sound. A contradiction in terms. We are situated in the middle of the power struggle fought on the battleground of language and voice, with all of its entrenched and enfolding history. Prior to the triumph of metaphysics, voice was in direct relation with thought, while thought was a corporeal affair, situated in the respiratory organs and connected with alimentation. Thinking was done with the lungs and not the brain. Therefore it was not surprising that the thinness of the voice was related to the lack of lungs and consequently lack of contemplative competence. Aristotle used to use voice pitch as a tool to differentiate men from the elderly, castrato, children and women. He related authority with low-pitched voices and therefore (functional) testicles and removed the power from all other members of society, justifying it with the high pitch of their voice, which served as an evidence of their inferiority. Is it then safe to assume that here, thinking happens in the testicles and that by lowering the pitch of one’s voice, one may also develop a degree of virility? The first publicly known example of voice modulation is Margaret Thatcher, who recognized the need to lower the pitch of her voice to gain authority and to sustain political power. The current application of this method is mainly reserved for women who aim at leading (business) positions, promising them social and economic mobility. It has been said that once one begins to speak with one’s own voice, the entire body resonates. A particular kind of presence is roused through the voice, and a sense of totality and completion is achieved. It is difficult to tell if there is a voice without all its historical, cultural and social underpinnings—mostly because its destination is speech. But if there is such a voice, can we actually do things with it? Is that voice operational? And what remains when all markers are removed? Is there voice beyond representation and can voice be heard without its markers?

V.B.: Lawrence, last May at the Whitechapel in London, you talked about a new policy established in 2001 in the United Kingdom to test the accent of undocumented asylum seekers in order to verify that they actually come from that places that they affirm they do. You then told the story of a man who was born in Jenin, Palestine, before being displaced through several countries and ending in London where he acquired a strong local accent. How do these two stories relate to your exploration of voice as a bearer of national identity, legal borders and the politics of mobility? Furthermore, can this inscription be undermined by what Mladen Dolar calls “the spectral autonomy of the voice, this zone of indeterminacy... a principle of division... at the intersection between the inner and the outer,” the body of the speaker and the world around him?

Lawrence Abu Hamdan: The story of the accent analysis of asylum seekers can be seen very much as a technical and legal instantation of the Dolar’s psychoanalytical reading of the division of the voice. Forensic linguist Helen Fraser says that we “need to clearly separate linguistic data from potentially biasing background [information] on the applicant’s story.” Clearly in this expression of objectivity we see how linguists want to auscultate the accent and go beyond the potentially traumatic and pathetic “story” of a person’s flight; preferring to find in their speech another type of testimony. However, my argument is that for adept forensic listeners, this accent object (linguistic data) should also be heard as a ‘story’ in itself, one that could reveal an account that is just as traumatic. In other words—for listeners who are not content with drawing a border around a single phonetic article—the accent should be understood as a biography of migration, as an irregular and itinerant concoction of contagiously accumulated voices, rather than an immediately distinguishable sound that avows its unshakable roots neatly within the confines of a nation state. In the clear distinction between biographical data and linguistic data, we see how the voice policy is used as a practice that does not seek to excavate the life of an accent, but merely revives the virtual impossibility of locating its place of birth. Finally, the amplification of these paralinguistic elements of testimony produces a division of the voice, which in turn establishes two witnesses within one voice. One witness speaks on behalf of language and the other witness speaks on behalf of what Dolar would call phone (speech-sound). Often the testimony provided by each of these two voices is corroborated by the other, but the two can also betray themselves in the same gesture. An internal betrayal between language and body; between subject and object; fiction and fact; truth and lie. This betrayal exists in a single human utterance in which the self gives itself away. This splitting of the voice into two selves, or into two witnesses, can also be seen as an extension of the well-established legal principle of Testis uni, testis nullus, which translates to ‘one witness, no witness’, and which means that the testimony provided by any one person in court is to be disregarded unless corroborated by the testimony of at least one other individual. The law, it seems, requires a certain doubling of testimony, and this doubling extends even as far as the singular witness. In the eyes of the law, the testimony of the single witness—be it that of the suspect, or of the victim—has to be split into language and its bodily conduit, for it to be considered testimony at all.


BRIDGES COMMUNITY CENTER

V.B.: Indeed it does. Yet on the other hand, one could argue that the intrinsic unreliability of the voice opens up a space of resistance. In a society of control where movement is monitored by standardized protocols and technological tools with questionable scientific value, one’s voice can turn into a deadly enemy. One could be prevented from obtaining asylum, for instance. This is partly due to our growing reliance on prosthesis to listen: computers, recorders, and lie detectors, which perform a process of hearing whereby human interpretation cedes its power to the oppressive infallibility of machines. Might we close this discussion on the political agency of voice by reclaiming the political agency of listening?

L.A.H.: My project is titled Aural Contract, for exactly the reasons you suggest. The project intends to produce a body of material that allows us to move away from the predominant political rhetoric of “giving voice” and “speaking out” in favor of listening and the political agency of audition. To shift from the oral contract to an aural one, which is to take more seriously our political participation and the relationships between listening subjects—as opposed to speaking subjects. My work tries to amplify the proclamation that we now live in an era in which the conditions of testimony have insidiously shifted; one in which the diminishing agency of words is being drowned out by the law’s amplification of accents, inflections, reflections, impediments and prosody. This shift in listening shows an emerging phenology of the voice—yet we must shift with it by extending the idea of “free speech” to encompass the sonic quality of speech itself. Now it seems that the battle for free speech is no longer about fighting to speak freely but about fighting for the control over the very conditions through which we are being heard.

To find ways in which we can fight for these conditions and thereby reclaim the political agency of listening, we need not look further than forensic listening itself. The political agency of forensic listening is at the moment occupied by regimes of control. Yet if we occupy these techniques and learn from them, we can possibly reclaim their radicality. During my 2010 interview with the forensic linguist Peter French, he admitted that “Last week, a colleague and I spent three working days listening to one word from a police interview tape.” Statements like this were exemplary of French’s radical approach to both listening and the theoretical paradigms that surround sound production. Unlike many sound theorists who focus on sound’s ephemeral and immaterial qualities, French’s approach was markedly material. The dominant contemporary school of audio culture is heavily influenced by Don Ihde’s 1976 text, Listening and Voice: A Phenomenology of Sound, which puts forward the impossibility of fundamentally grasping sound. The continuing prevalence of this school of thought is further demonstrated in Frances Dyson’s 2009 book, Sounding New Media, who states in her introduction: “As Don Ihde and Christian Metz pointed out decades ago, ‘a’ sound is always multi-sensed, always heterogeneous, being neither visible or tangible; sound is never quite an object, never a full guarantor of knowledge.” Yet French’s formulation renders sound dissectible, replicable, physical and corporeal in its object quality. The intensity at which French listens is actually the basis that enables his radical approach to sound. The audio object reveals a large amount of information about its production and its form: the space in which it was recorded, the machine that recorded it, and the ability to pinpoint an accent to a specific location—as well as the ability to glean the age, health and ethnicity of a voice.

Occupying a radical and affective means of listening would be, for me, a step towards reclaiming the political agency of listening. Yet as with all cases of legal, social and ethnic profiling, French walks a thin ethical line. Ironically what allows him to maintain his credibility in a time were law enforcement increasingly reaches out to forensic linguistics in odious forms of surveillance and profiling that target huge swathes of the population, is his ability to listen thoroughly. French understands the limits of what can be detected through the voice, and in doing so does not exploit the law’s increasing demands for the empty promises of forensic science, which are so often accompanied by ignorance of its practical capacities. Today, forensic listening is applied on such a scale that law enforcement agencies and the security services cannot often afford the expert listening services of people like Dr. French. Hence, frighteningly, we are entering a time where there is both an excessive demand for the governance of the voice, and yet our means...
“Since 2001, immigration authorities around the world have been using accent and language tests to determine the validity of asylum claims made by thousands of people without identity documents in Australia, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In most circumstances a private Swedish company is contracted and during a phone interview between the company and the asylum seeker the claimant’s voice is analyzed to assess whether the voice and accent correlate with the claim of national origin. On the 29th and 30th of September 2012, a group consisting of linguists, graphic designer Janna Ullrich, researchers, activists, refugee and art organizations and a core group of Somali asylum seekers, who had each been rejected by the Dutch immigration authorities because of the analysis of their language/dialect or accent, met to discuss the controversial use of language analysis to determine the origin of asylum seekers.”

The project was commissioned by Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory in collaboration with Stichting LC8.
CONVERSATION

A conversation around Afro Brazil

Adriano Pedrosa

The numbers alone are undeniable: with sixty percent of its population comprised of blacks and pardos, Brazil is the second most populous African country, after Nigeria. According to the most updated research on slavevoyages.org, a total of 3,800,000 Africans were brought to Brazil, which is more than ten times the number of arrivals to the United States (350,000), and which is even greater than the number of Portuguese who set foot in the country to colonize it (2,256,000, according to IBGE, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística). Brazil became home to about forty percent of the Africans in almost four centuries of slave trade to the Americas, the largest dislocation of people in the modern era. With a different type of colonization than the United States, where the colonizer would move with his family to occupy the territory and there was little mixed breeding, Brazil’s male Portuguese colonizer often came on his own, and thus our mestizo histories began in the sixteenth century, with the blending of African, Amerindian and European ethnic groups.

The presence of Africa in popular Brazilian culture is immense if not dominating, and all things typically Brazilian have deep African roots: from carnival to samba, from candomblé (Afro Brazilian religion) to feijoada (the national dish), from capoeira to football (which was imported by whites but only became masterfully Brazilian when blacks were allowed to play it), from the figure of the Baiana to Iemanjá. Underlying the powerful, sprawling and polyphonic African presence lies what is arguably the most important process in Brazilian history—slavery (Brazil was the last country to abolish it in the Americas, in 1888). Yet such profound, long lasting histories cannot veil the prejudices of color that still pervade much of Brazil, not so much through a loud, vocal racism, but through a silent one—one that ignores, forgets, puts aside and silences more than outspokenly rejects, refuses or repudiates. Again the numbers are undeniable, and as criminality, violence, poverty, exclusion and invisibility in the media and in government increase, our mestizo skin darkens.

In this context, the professional trajectory of artist, curator and museum director Emanoel Araújo is a pioneering and solitary one. For more than four decades, Araújo, who was born in 1940 in Santo Amaro da Purificação in the northeastern state of Bahia, near Salvador, the capital of Afro Brazil, has researched, written, collected, exhibited and produced artworks around Afro Brazil. Araújo’s deep knowledge and experience with our African histories would perhaps not have been so forceful if it weren’t for his vociferous and at times polemic character. A maverick, he was director of Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo for ten years, rescuing it from a deplorable state, guiding it through an award-winning renovation made by Paulo Mendes da Rocha (who won the Pritzker and the Mies thereafter), and pushing it to become what is today the country’s most successful museum. Araújo’s groundbreaking exhibitions A Mão Afro Brasileira (The Afro Brazilian Hand, Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, 1987) and Negro de Corpo e Alma (Black in Body and Soul, Mostra do Redescobrimento, 2000) gathered a colossal amount of material, much of which has been extended or has found its way into the collections of Museu Afro Brasil, in São Paulo. The museum is a dense fabric woven with loaded threads of material culture of diverse sorts: from modern to contemporary art, from colonial to nineteenth century objects, Brazilian, African or foreign, photographs and documents, costumes and jewelry, religious objects of different beliefs, all abundantly exhibited and accompanied by explanatory and contextual texts. None of this would be there if were not for Araújo.

Adriano Pedrosa: Tell us how your experience and practice as an artist brought you to curating exhibitions, collections and museums.

Emanoel Araújo: I first worked at the Museu Regional de Feira de Santana (Regional Museum of Feira de Santana) in Bahia, created by the Brazilian media mogul, Assis Chateaubriand (1892–1968) as part of his regional museum project, which opened in 1967. The museum was mounted by Chateaubriand’s media conglomerate, Diários Associados. It held the “leather civilisation” artefacts from Feira de Santana, which is the gateway to the hinterland. There was also a collection of Brazilian art, assembled by Odorico Tavares (1912–1980), who was the director of Diários Associados in Bahia, as well as by Chateaubriand himself, through his friendship with artists such as Djanira (1914–1979) and Emiliano Di Cavalcanti (1897–1976). I was setting the museum up, working on the museography with the architects, whilst simultaneously working as an artist. 1

1 Translator’s note: “Leather civilization” refers to the leather clothing worn by Brazilian cowboys in the northeastern hinterland, and to hides and tanning in general, which were an integral part of the cattle herding economy and culture.
A.P.: What is your educational background?

E.A.: I studied Fine Art at the Federal University at Bahia in Salvador, the state capital. But I didn’t finish my degree because I started working professionally. In 1965 I exhibited at the Bonobo Gallery in Rio de Janeiro and the Astreia Gallery in São Paulo, which were the most important galleries in Brazil at the time. In 1963, I worked with Lina Bo, the Italian-born Brazilian modernist architect, on the Civilização do Nordeste (Civilization of the Northeast) exhibition at the Museu de Arte Moderna of Bahia (MAM-BA). In 1972, I went to the United States at the invitation of the US State Department, and visited art museums from coast to coast—American, Chinese, European and African American art—and I had the good fortune to meet curators who showed me the museums and their storage spaces.

A.P.: Were you invited there as an artist or as a museum professional?

E.A.: As an artist. There were no museum professionals in Brazil then. In 1981 I was appointed director of the Museu de Arte da Bahia (Bahia Museum of Art, MAB), in Salvador, where I stayed until 1983.

A.P.: Is that how your curating career got started?

E.A.: Yes. I was also involved in remodelling and transforming the museum, because that was one of the conditions I’d set with the then-Governor of Bahia, Antônio Carlos Magalhães (1927–2007) for returning to Bahia from São Paulo. It was hard, but I formed a team to restore paintings, porcelain and furnishings, and created a museum in the current building in Vitória Palace, based on the perspective of design and decorative art. It was an eclectic museum—with paintings, porcelain, furnishings, religious images, jewellery—like the museums found in several Brazilian states, such as Bahia, Pernambuco, and Ceará. The remodelling process took a year, and when it was finished, I left. During that period, I organised some major exhibitions: the 400th anniversary of the Benedictine Monastery, the Bahia School of Painting, and in 1982, the África Bahia África exhibition.

A.P.: What was that exhibition like?

E.A.: I included performances in the opening programme, such as Filhos de Gandy, the biggest afọxé (street Candomblé group) in Bahia’s Carnival, and an Afro-Brazilian dance group. Fifteen hundred people were at the opening, viewing photographs by the Franco-Brazilian photographer and ethnologist, Pierre Verger (1902–1996) and items from Candomblé among others. It was only later, in 1987, that I developed the theme in the A Mão Afro Brasileira, Significado da Contribuição Artística e Histórica (The Afro-Brazilian Hand: The Significance of its Artistic and Historic Contribution) at the Museu de Arte Moderna of São Paulo (MAM-SP), along with its director, Aparício Basilio da Silva (1936–1992).

A.P.: Tell us about the project at the MAM-SP, and about some of your first trips to Africa.

E.A.: The project began in Senegal. The first time I went to Africa was in 1976, with the art critic and historian from Pernambuco, Brazil, Roberto Pontual (1939–1992), as part of the Black Arts Festival in Nigeria. Then at the Second FESTAC (World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture) in Lagos, in 1977, I showed some enormous reliefs in an exhibition organised by Clarival Prado Valadares, the Bahian art critic (1918–1983). It was pandemonium getting them there. Pontual wrote an essay about them, ‘A raiz localizadora’ (‘The Locallising Root’)—it was under those circumstances that I met a Brazilian called Mister da Silva, who lived there.

A.P.: A descendant of Brazilians, of the formerly enslaved people who returned from Nigeria in the nineteenth century?

E.A.: That’s right. But he didn’t speak Portuguese and he didn’t know anything about Brazil. For him, Brazil was an abstraction. He owned a travel agency, Da Silva Travel. We became friends and I arranged a trip to Osogbo, the land of Osun, with a group—the Bahian writer Gumercindo da Rocha Dorea, Roberto Pontual, and Cleusa (d. 1997 later Iyalorisa of Gantois), the daughter of Menininha do Gantois, one of Brazil’s most famous Iyalorisa and an Omolosun (Maria Escolástica da Conceição Nazaré, 1894–1986). We went to see the Osun River in Osogbo, travelling through Ife and Ibadan, and there I had the great surprise of meeting Susanne Wenger (1915–2009).

A.P.: Yes, the Austrian artist. I saw her work recently in the catalogue for The Short Century by Okwui Enwezor. Was she an interesting person?

E.A.: Extremely. I wrote an article about that trip. In the middle

José Sarney. It was there that the idea of
there in 1987, sent to a conference in Dakar by the Brazilian President
African slaves, my idea of Africa was of a very remote thing. I returned
Purificação, a town of sugar plantations where there had been many
United States and England. Although I was a son of Santo Amaro da
knew about his ancestry, and that was it.
Silva, who didn’t have the faintest idea of what Brazil was about. He
the Africans didn’t know anything about us. Take the travel agent Da
that Bahia was closest. We didn’t know anything about Africa, just as
wrong, your roots are in Bahia, not here.” But what I meant to say was
he knew about his ancestry, and that was it.

A.P.: Did you go there with the expectation of reconnecting with
Africa?

E.A.: No. In fact, I got into an argument with Gilberto Gil, the Bahian
singer / songwriter and former Minister of Culture of Brazil, who was
there with Caetano Veloso, another Bahian singer / songwriter. He
asked me what I was doing in Africa. I said: “I’ve come to see Africa.”
And he said, “I’ve come to find my roots.” So then I replied, “You’re
wrong, your roots are in Bahia, not here.” But what I meant to say was
that Bahia was closest. We didn’t know anything about Africa, just as
the Africans didn’t know anything about us. Take the travel agent Da
Silva, who didn’t have the faintest idea of what Brazil was about. He
knew about his ancestry, and that was it.

A.P.: Had you visited Europe by that time?

E.A.: Yes. In 1972 I went to Italy and Austria, and then I went to the
United States and England. Although I was a son of Santo Amaro da
Purificação, a town of sugar plantations where there had been many
African slaves, my idea of Africa was of a very remote thing. I returned
there in 1987 sent to a conference in Dakar by the Brazilian President
José Sarney. It was there that the idea of A Mão África Brasileira was
born. Whilst visiting the Island of Gorée, the Institut Fondamental
d’Afrique Noire Museum (IFAN), a chaperone from a school saw us
and told the students, “Look, they are our cousins from the other side
of the Atlantic.”

A.P.: What was the research for that exhibition like?

E.A.: It was all done in six months. It was insane.

A.P.: But there was a vast amount of material; it must have required
a great deal of research, a lot of time.

E.A.: Six months. Luckily there were things I already knew about,
and had kept, collected. The research for África Bahia África was also
very helpful to me.

A.P.: The book is impressive—a truly pioneering study. I was
looking at the sections you established in it: “Baroque and Rococo,”
“Nineteenth Century,” “African Heritage in Popular Art,” “Modern and
Contemporary Art,” and then “Multiple Contributions,” which are
music, literature, cuisine.

E.A.: I started out with the Baroque because that is the period
with the greatest emphasis on that issue, involving Mestre Valentim

of the forest, some large terracotta sculptures came into view. She
produced a highly European version of the cult of Osun. They were
large monuments, five to six meters high, completely surrealistic.

A.P.: What got you interested in this subject?

E.A.: I had studied Manuel Querino, the Bahian art historian,
ethnographer, and Black vindicationist (1851–1923), who was a
pioneer when it came to Black and Bahian artists. He wrote about
religious art, food, and Africans as colonisers. Another important
scholar on the subject was Marieta Alves, one of the few historians
who provided information about the person’s background and colour.
Although I refused to mention skin colour, I still think about it as
the basis and starting point. When I curated the exhibition on the
Timóteo brothers, for example, that was what interested me.4 That,
and the discovery of these extraordinary nineteenth-century painters
from Rio de Janeiro, Estevão Silva (1844–1891), Antônio Rafael Pinto
Bandeira (1863–1896), and Firmino Monteiro (1855–1888).

A.P.: Then there is the issue of the pardo—the Brazilian term for
‘mixed-race’ or ‘brown’, used in the census, which can refer to
African or Amerindian ancestry. If there is something African about
every mixed-race or pardo person, then they also have an African
hand. But tell me, if all Brazilians are mixed-race, could the museum
also be a Museu do Brasil?

E.A.: It is indeed called the Museu Afro Brasil. It isn’t the Museu Afro
Brasileiro (Afro-Brazilian Museum), because I created the concept
so we could discuss African, mestizo, Brazilian issues, including
other peoples who are also Brazilian—people of Italian and Japanese
descent. Sometimes people call it the Museu Afro Brasilero, but
that changes the concept completely, because this is not a ghetto
museum.

A.P.: What about Negro de Corpo e Alma (Black in Body and Soul,
which was one of the twelve exhibitions in the Brazil 500 anos: Mostra
do redescobrimento (Brazil 500 years: Rediscovery Exhibit) in 2000,
and whose catalogue is the largest?

E.A.: I wanted to take a look at the imagery of Johann Moritz
Rugendas (1802–1858), of Jean-Baptiste Debret (1758–1848), and
others, to include it in the process. Lasar Segall (1891–1957), José
Pancetti (1902–1958), and Cândido Portinari (1903–1962) were also

4 Artur Timóteo da Costa (1882–1932) and João Timóteo da Costa (1879–1932), both
painters from Rio de Janeiro.
Alberto da Costa e Silva, the Brazilian diplomat and scholar of African history, writes in *Um rio chamado Atlântico* (A River Called the Atlantic, 2003), that something of the slave has remained in all of us Brazilians; a comment that the anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro (1922–1997) has also made to some extent, in his 1995 book, *O povo brasileiro, a formação e o sentido do Brasil* (The Brazilian People: The Formation and Direction of Brazil).

Costa e Silva would like that to be so, but it is not true. Or I should say, I think it is true, but people won’t admit it. Otherwise Brazil wouldn’t be the prejudiced country that it is. When you watch Brazilian TV, it looks like we’re in Sweden, with no Black people. The main television network in Brazil, Rede Globo, only puts Blacks in the worst roles, and actors accept that because they have no alternative.

Do you think that is changing? Isn’t the Museu Afro playing a role in that regard?

A.P.: No. The museum is just nine years old, and Brazil moves very slowly. The Brazilian art world is prejudiced. When I was appointed director of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo in 1992, people said, “What, a Black, a Bahian?” And I’d say, “Not just Black but homosexual, too.”

A.P.: But today everyone knows that Paulo Mendes da Rocha’s remodelling of Pinacoteca is a turning point in the museum’s history. Don’t you think things have improved in the last thirty to forty years?

E.A.: They’re worse. There is still a great deal of prejudice, but it is a silent thing. Brazil is silent. It’s perverse. For Brazil, Africa does not exist.

A.P.: But the fact that this museum exists is important. Even if it is just nine years old.

E.A.: When I arrived at the Pinacoteca in 1992, I started out my administration with a project to remodel the museum; making the São Paulo public aware that the museum was in a disgraceful state. For me, this museum is an investment in the future, a tribute to my past.

A.P.: To the Africa that is within us! Did you organise Afro-Brazilian exhibitions at the Pinacoteca?

E.A.: In 1993 I organised *Vozes da diáspora* (Voices of the Diaspora), and then in 1994, *Herdeiros da noite: Fragmentos do imaginário negro* (Heirs of the Night: Fragments of the Black Imaginary), and in 2001 a retrospective of Rubem Valentim (1922–1991), called *O artista da luz* (The Artist of Light), curated by Bené Fonteles. I also brought works by Black artists into the collection, and acquired works Hélio Oiticica and Willys de Castro and expanded the museum’s sculpture collection.

A.P.: What was it like to create the Museu Afro Brasil in 2003, occupying this large building in Ibirapuera Park in São Paulo?

E.A.: Marta Suplicy, who was the mayor of São Paulo from 2001–2005, and who is currently the Minister of Culture, had thought about setting up an Afro-Brazilian museum but she didn’t know how to get started or with which collection. The secretary of culture asked me if I would put my collection on loan. So then a group was formed to develop that concept; they debated the museum—anthropologists, sociologists, and I don’t know what else. I said, I’m not falling into your trap. I applied the idea of the Afro-Brazilian hand.

A.P.: There are Amerindian objects here as well.

E.A.: It is a matter of indigenous art, because the Africans always saw the Amerindians as the gods of the land. So much so that every Candomblé temple in Bahia has its Caboclo. It is the Caboclos that make the orixás (the Afro-Brazilian divinities) of that land, it is the Caboclo that gives them significance. Almost every Candomblé temple—though Ilê Axé Opo Afonjá is a notable exception—every mãe de santo, the high priestess, worships the Caboclos, which is a way of honouring that heritage. That is why, here at the Museu Afro, our exhibition begins with the Caboclo, with the Amerindian. That history is very complex, but it is also very clear: it is possible to read it, but you must want to do so.

A.P.: Do you think Brazil is a Western country?

---

5 Amerindian divinity, but also the word for a person of mixed Amerindian and European descent.

---

E.A.: Yes and no. There is so much here that has yet to be discovered.

A.P.: It seems to me that anthropophagy as was promoted in the 1928 Manifesto Antropófago by Oswald de Andrade (1890–1954), is an incomplete project, because it was too focused on the cannibalisation of European references—on Léger, on constructivism—and could have devoured other ancestries, the African and Amerindian, which would replenish its energy.

E.A.: That was the mistake of the 1924 Manifesto da Poesia, Pau Brasil, and the 1922 Semana de Arte Moderna (the Modern Art Week, São Paulo). That Week was organised by elitists, and just one individual, the writer and critic from São Paulo Mario de Andrade (1893–1945), who had a Brazilian outlook.

A.P.: Tarsila do Amaral, the painter from São Paulo (1886–1973), came from an elite family, but her paintings... Do you think A negra (The Black Woman, 1923) is perverse?

E.A.: I think it is extremely perverse. She transfigures the image of the Black woman with prototypes of perversity, accentuating features, the breasts, the mouth. Portinari is perverse too. The only one who escapes that somewhat is Segall.

A.P.: Segall, a Lithuanian immigrant, paints himself as a Black man, a mestizo.

E.A.: Indeed. The illustrations he did for Jorge de Lima (1895–1953), for the 1947 Poemas Negros (Black Poems), show that he understands Brazil, even better than the Brazilians. Indeed, to understand Brazil, you need to be a foreigner. During Brazil's first 500 years, ever since Caramuru Diogo Álvares Correia (1475–1557) and his wife Catarina Paraguaçu (a Tupinambá Indian, Bahia, 1495–1583), Pernambuco and the Dutch, there has been a long, complex history, a mélange. We held the exhibition of the Bijago of Guinea Bissau (A arte dos povos da Guiné Bissau, The Art of the Peoples of Guinea Bissau, Museu Afro Brasil, 2008) and discovered that the first Africans who arrived in what is now the northern Brazilian state of Maranhão were the Bijago, who planted rice in Maranhão, because they grew that crop in their homelands. But no one knows that.

A.P.: There is tremendous ignorance. Do you think Portinari’s O mestiço (The Mestizo, 1934) is perverse too?

E.A.: No, I don’t.

A.P.: O mestiço is a dignified portrayal.

E.A.: Yes, it is. But Portinari is much better than Tarsila in that regard.

A.P.: What about Christiano Júnior, the Portuguese photographer (1832–1902)? He treats slaves with dignity.

E.A.: He portrays them naturally, although those are studio photos, and we don’t know if he added something to them. The fact is that they are important. Militão Augusto de Azevedo, the photographer from Rio de Janeiro (1837–1905) is even more important, because he shows that there was a Black society in the late nineteenth century whose members had the power to have themselves photographed. There is a great deal that is still hidden. Both of them are important, as records of Brazil...

A.P.: We need to know more.

E.A.: But there is no money for research. The universities are not investigating that area.

A.P.: But that gap between academia and the general public, it seems to me that museums could bridge that, particularly when it comes to visual history.

E.A.: It is unlikely. The Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia of the Universidade de São Paulo doesn’t do it. There is a dichotomy between traditional African art and contemporary African art, which does not reach these shores.

A.P.: But one day it will.

E.A.: One day we’ll no longer be alive! And Brazil will become white, following that theory of whitening. The university could play a fundamental role if it weren’t so eugenic. As you will see, dealing with this issue in Brazil is a complex matter. I’m not discouraged because I...
committed to my skin colour, and I have to move forward. But I think it is all extremely difficult. And I’m an optimist, I’m stubborn, I go all the way.

A.P.: Do you think there could be exchanges and residencies, for example, between Brazilian and African artists? Rosângela Rennó and Paulo Nazaré have been to Africa. I tell people that there is nineteenth-century Brazilian architecture there and they don’t believe me.

E.A.: We are doing that. They also hold a Carnival in Porto Novo, the Brazilian community there. Except that they are entirely neglected. I want to give them money so they can keep that association going. They have a lovely Roman Catholic mass, which is given in Portuguese. The extraordinary thing is that there is still a Brazilian community there after 200 years. There are Brazilian families there in Benin, there are lots of Regos, Sousas, Oliveiras. It’s incredible that all that is still in existence, alive. That connection is what is missing. It seems very remote, but it is not. It is very close. The level of ignorance in Brazil is astounding.

Soulnessless is announced on Terre Thaemlitz’s website as the WORLD’S LONGEST ALBUM IN HISTORY & WORLD’S FIRST FULL LENGTH MP3 ALBUM. It includes thirty-two hours of audio materials, eighty minutes of video materials, 150 pages of text, and is distributed through a 16GB microSDHC card by Comatonse Recordings, Thaemlitz’s label. According to its author, as published on the website, “Soulnessless could be summarized as an attempted deconstruction of soul music. More precisely, a deconstruction of notions of spirituality, meditation, superstition, and religiosity perpetuated through audio marketplaces that insist upon judging audio in relation to ‘authenticity’ and ‘soul.’ And like Lovebomb/愛の爆弾, this album approaches its central theme from a variety of vectors—in this case, the various tenuous points of connection being gender, electronic audio production and spirituality.” A complex, restless endeavor with multiple ramifications and a viral distribution scheme that defeats the all-digital, Soulnessless performs and displaces multiple ranges of critical hybridity. For this issue, we have chosen to address, through the sensitive words of Patrick Duarte, the chosen specific question of disjunction and haunting that is at play in “Canto II.”

Read more at http://www.comatonse.com/writings/2012_soulnessless.html

The Editors

A telling scene in the work of Terre Thaemlitz’s “Canto II — Traffic with the Devil” of the Soulnessless project gathers the mileage of drifters, and at the same time, frames a catachresis. The deported Philippine worker flies home on board a plane and upon descent, the country is glimpsed through the window. The vessel and the voyager, who does not appear on screen though is indirectly present as the one peering into or even the one hovering alongside the aircraft, condense as winged figures that intercut with an excerpt of a popular horror film depicting the flight of the manananggal. The latter is the viscera sucker of local lower mythology whose body splits at the waist so that the torso can morph into a bat and search for prey until daybreak when it must return to its truncated corpus. In this relay of images, the Philippine migrant, earlier alienated from native land, is severed from work in Japan and comes back to the tropical archipelago, the vampire, on the other hand, roams the realm for fetus and reunites with human life and limb with only the waxing moon as witness. For this enigmatic body not to cohere any longer, salt must be poured into the fissure—this thing out of joint.
The film runs like an allegory of documentation even as it eludes the typical language of the documentary. It turns to text (instructions, billboards, quotations) that cuts across the image and barely resorts to sound. In doing so, it sustains the tension between documentation and disappearance. This is the first moment of the thesis: that the legal regime of immigration in Japan and its apparatus of surveillance have rendered those without official documentation ghostly, a condition to be replicated within the undocumented self who verisimilarly experiences haunting. This is the structure of feeling of migrancy: bewitching, prone to the phantasmatic. The reinscription of this haunting across public and private sites threatens the norms that govern aliens and their rights to settle. The horror—and the terror—stems from this ubiquity as well as from the agency of the manananggal, the alluring woman/predator (played in the film by a dusky soft-porn star) or the heroic overseas Filipino worker, to inhabit both domestic and civic spaces. Thus, intense surveillance becomes necessary to ensure both intense dematerialization and the dissipation of intense proximities. It is at the intersection of folklore and film that this subjectivity is harnessed, technologies that are conveniently instrumentalized by the rituals of the state and the artifice of representation, but also keen to spin mutations, as evidenced by the plural versions of myth and the multiple sequels of the film *Shake, Rattle, & Roll* (1984) from which certain sequences are culled.

The second moment comes in the comparison between the material situation of the Philippine worker and a character in folklore, which becomes visible, or visual, through the cinema. Otherwise, it would remain merely oral in the same way that the worker would remain occult. This presence in the cinema complicates the absence of the worker, who is rearticulated through theory, statistics, and montage. The abovementioned popular film trilogy proves to be a salient point of comparison. This procedure of comparison is inherently spectral because it tempts equivalence, an enchantment of affinities, or of semblances, as the Philippine National Hero Jose Rizal would phrase it in his 1887 novel *Noli Me Tangere*. This is largely brought about by a trick of the eye or *malikmata*, which conjures double, quick-change, polytropic vision.

---

1. The most reprised horror film in Philippine cinema, with fourteen sequels to date, was first released through Athena Productions in 1984 but since 1990 has been produced by Regal Entertainment, a dominant production in the 1980s in the Philippines. It is structured as a trilogy, with multiple personnel and without common thematic and stylistic orientation. Except for one, all titles opened on Christmas Day for the Metro Manila Film Festival.

2. It was originally written in Spanish in Berlin. The title is translated as *Touch Me Not*, a phrase pronounced by Jesus in the Gospel of St. John. It is also known in some translations as *The Social Cancer* and *The Lost Eden*. It speaks of colonial life in the Philippines under Spanish rule. It was influential in shaping the Philippine Revolution in 1896, the year Rizal was executed.
This is a story about aliens, ghosts and hybrid creatures.

Ada was a cultural misfit who carried around in her pocket several identities. The term “alien” is often used by people who find it difficult to interact with anyone who appears to exist in a space unknown to them; a space outside of their static reality. Harriet described the foreign plant sprouting outside of her home as invasive. A “non-native” species. For this reason, she found it beautiful.

Perhaps this is our story also. Invasive, non-native, beautiful in a seeming strangeness.

Where are you from?
Nowhere.
How can you be from nowhere?
I am from everywhere, so I am from nowhere.
That doesn’t make any sense.
Neither do I, but there are many of us.

All of Ada’s life was one ongoing movement; never sleeping in one place long enough to call it home. In the formative years, this was difficult and isolating territory to linger in; constantly losing people, meeting new ones, constantly explaining why she knew nothing of the land. But along the way she met others; transient, kindred hybrids who flirted between borders and assumed no singular identity. The reasons for their being were as varied as they were. Choice, circumstance, adventure, curiosity, necessity, desperation, freedom, escape, boredom, angst, work, play… She understood these creatures, and finally felt as if she belonged. Not in a physical place, because one was as good as any other, but surrounded by others who, by their lack of cultural uniformity, formed a new country where being many things all at once was the norm.

In the final passages of the film, the bewitched migrants finally appear, albeit somewhat in a blur, with the hardcore politics of globality ending in soft focus. They are sheer, speaking of stress and arrest, comfort and freedom, detention, insecurity, trauma. The hazy image and sound forces the viewer to strain in order to figure out what is transpiring, and to discern in the elliptical testimony the repetition of the split: “pronounced, announced, the witch accounts for this splitting within one. It names the foreign within oneself as the effect of an alien force hidden under the guise of one’s neighbors…” It is this visceral experience of migrants acting out their biopolitics that feeds into the experience of the viscera of the witch/worker heaving, stirring, roiling (fleshed out amusingly through Third World prosthetics)—that sanguine time when lives are lain bare and the salt of the earth finally changes its state.

The third moment may be gleaned in the anthropological project of the filmmaker when he visits the town of the deportees in Davao, south of Manila in the island of Mindanao. There, he tries to investigate the hauntings, a process that is corrupted by informants who have misled his ethnographic subjects into believing their interviews would give them visas to Japan. In this situation, the documentation falls apart but its allegory thickens because it finally implicates the spectacle or palabas that is contrived so that things could properly “appear” for the sake of another chance at flight. The fact that the interviewees had concealed negative conditions in Japan just so that they could return to their zone of ghostliness means that they have internalized this haunting as a tactic of survival or diskarte. At this point, the fulcrum shifts: the torso of the dismembered worker transfers to Japan, the land of the rising sun, thus confounding further the spectrality of both ethnic subjectivity and global migration. It might be instructive to invoke Jacques Derrida at this point to make sense of this constellation: that the cinema is a fray of phantoms and that these phantoms are “vectors of an affective engagement with the visceral implications of the factory, the plantation, the market, the mine.” This, finally, is the traffic of affective labor, which because Legion, is diabolical: bedeviling.

“"I charge you to leave this body”¹

rub onyinyechi amanze

rub onyinyechi amanze, but the halo of our kind will protect our duality, 2013.
Pencil, ink, photo transfer, metallic pigment, 11 x 17 inches.


5 James Siegel, Naming the Witch (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 220.
We are hybrids of that place we grew up, the language that Mom speaks, the country in which we once spent a decade before relocating to the next (quite unlike the first), to perhaps partner with a fellow hybrid and debate at dinner where to eventually raise the multilingual children.

Children suffer if you keep uprooting them.
That’s what you said.
But maybe the children will be okay?
You can’t listen to everybody,
But some people are just so loud.

Looking for more, Ada ran. Ran away home.
Where is home?
I really wish you would stop asking me that.

To that place where she was born, but of which, she knew so little. It was there that she became an alien, because everyone else seemed the same. Despite the discomfort, there was an inherent sense of authenticity. Of belonging, if only in her head. If you feel as though you have a right to be somewhere, then you do.
No one can take that from you.
Remember that, Ada.

I will.

Are you still an alien when everyone around you is also an alien? No, you are only an alien when you are “thrown against a sharp” homogenous background.
You are always a hybrid, but alien only sometimes.
What of ghosts?
Ghosts are coming.

So many of us go through this world straddling space. It is not necessarily about being uprooted, although for some, “roots” are as abstract as aliens. Yet even within any semblance of belonging, however temporary or permanent, there is always an underlying angst for somewhere/something else. The here and now tend not to suffice because there is more.
There is always more.
We know this because we are comprised of so much...

A hybrid is slightly different from an alien. It moves in space and transcends boundaries more easily than an alien. To its advantage it is equipped with what biologists would call hybrid vigor; pulling strength from multiple, heteroclite sources.

---

1  Inspired by Glenn Ligon’s (b. 1960), Untitled (I Feel Most Colored When I Am Thrown Against a Sharp White Background) (1990), Oil stick, gesso and graphite on wood.
Suddenly it ended and Ada returned to her other home with her perspective in flux. Her eyeballs had grown large. They held more light, and saw more magic—because one cannot move around and yet remain the same. Hybrids have this thing about compartmentalization; the ability to separate all the parts they adopt. There is room for you to stay and amalgamate with me, maybe because one day I will leave.

Now she floats in between these spaces, suffering daily from hallucinations. At one point, some of her only existed in theory. Going “home” solidified these abstractions, upsetting the balance of everything she thought she knew. In the blink she is here, whenever that may be. In the next blink her mind has gone to that other place, the one that became real.

Learning to fly was the most necessary skill to acquire. To be okay at living in between, it was imperative that she remain light, leaving as gentle of a mark on the surface for fear it might crumble beneath her. This is how she became a ghost. Always a hybrid. Sometimes an alien. Borders are just pencil lines.

How can you divide something that is fluid (space)?

The whole world is mine.
what we’re saying is that one wave is “aesthetically or politically inferior to the other.” In other words it’s very difficult to hang on to the sense of development and process and resist the temptation to also have this hierarchy of value. It is the hierarchy of value that I dispute where it is implied.

**R.G.:** I think you are voicing some of my discontent quite clearly, because a hierarchy is implied, and a hierarchy to a certain extent is stated. I understand that each wave, so to speak, acquires greater agency through the length of time that one is within this post-colonial space. Each generation acquires greater confidence. As I pointed out before your mooting, those hierarchies lead to problems. It means that a particular set of individuals can never quite reach this point of satisfaction, and one would expect that the next generation of artists after Ofili, they (artists of Ofili’s generation) are going to be the ones being pointed to. I think this is problematic. These are the kinds of problems that for me are built-in with issues of hybridity that I have written about. Pointing out that hybridity, as an idea, has had its moment, and I think one could look back in history—and you’ve already sort of alluded to history—as it allows us to think about change in a particular way, over a length of time so we’re not necessarily a singular set of people bringing about change. It happens because change has to happen, to a certain extent. There is a way “the wave” and “hybridity” merge together in a subtle fashion; that the longer the time the ‘colonial’ spends in the mother country (to use those rather overloaded terms) the more they acquire an ability to speak. That, I think, is one of the lingering problems, for me amongst others, and we will get to the others about questions of hybridity in just a moment. The reason why I am linking the two is that one cannot but see that it is longevity that allows the fourth wave to emerge.

**J.A.:** I don’t share your disquiet with the notion of hybridity. I understand why that disquiet is there because I’ve tried over the last decade or so to not align my thinking directly with what one might call the “theorists of hybridity.” If there is a problem with hybridity, it is that for me, it participates in this hierarchisation of the world in which a certain kind of encounter is elevated above others and made into the equivalent of a sort of holy union. If you take the West African coast, it is clear to me looking across that coast that one cannot understand it without some resort to the notion of the hybrid. These are hybrid spaces in which Akans are mixing with Ga people. My name, for instance, is supposed to be Ga but it only means something in Akan, and is completely meaningless in Ga. In other words, the notion that somehow certain parts of the world are foreign to the hybrid seems to me to be wrong. I think what we have had all along are overlapping definitions of the hybrid. There is nowhere in which anyone exists in a pure state, as a kind of uncontaminated whole. So for me, the problem is not the concept but rather the overly prescriptive and—dare I say it—enthusiastically Hegelian manner in which it is deployed to speak of a metropolitan cosmopolitanism.

What I am more interested in is the notion of the hyphen. How hyphens come about: that seems to me to be much more suggestive, and it seems to escape some of the raciological trappings of hybridity. It is those raciological trappings that I can sense that you have a certain discomfort with. I do too but I don’t share them because I don’t believe quite as much in the explanatory power of hybridity as maybe I did twenty years ago.

---

*R.G.:* You see the hyphen is fascinating. When I think of the place where the hyphen is used the most, in the United States, it still carries a particular code of entitlement and power. Some people do not have to hyphenate themselves, others do. And so, yes, while the hyphen provides an alternative to the hybrid, it also points to the fact that you are what you attach yourself to. The hyphen in this case does become a form of attachment, rather than it being about ownership. I share with you the opinion that the question of race, to do with hybridity, is one that bothered me the most. It is however interesting to listen to you speak about the western coast of Africa and the idea of the hybrid. I’ll get back to you about that. But the thing is, when the hybrid is evoked the most often, it is when the West African coast—just to stick to one part of Africa—finds itself in contact with the Western world. That is, when hybridity is actually evoked, otherwise people talk about syncretism for instance, or probably just an easier term to use with regards to the way that cultures come into contact with each other and new things emerge. It is syncretic rather than it being hybridized. As I said, I would get back to the issue of West Africa, I agree with you, there is this thing about different parts of that coast just simply exist and people come into contact and things seem easy. Recently, I was with a group of people from Sierra Leone who have Yoruba names. These are just their names, that’s what it is. I met someone from Ghana who
thought I was Ghanaian because my name is Gbadamosi and I just see it as a Yoruba name. But he said: No, there are lots of Gbadamosis in Ghana. I think that is about human existence. It is very difficult for me not to engage with hierarchies when we start discussing the hybrid because somebody has to declare this form, this new accepted form, as being hybrid, and that bothers me.

J.A.: I've turned circles around this notion of the hybrid, since the 1980s. If we remove it from the field of identity politics for the moment and apply it to the question of aesthetics, the question of hybridity has been very important for us. It implies that we have necessarily had to swear allegiance, for instance, to the existing set of genres and modes of address and cultural practices which were available to us. People would endlessly ask me. Do you make art or cinema? Are you doing documentaries or feature films? Where is the place of the historical in these works, which clearly flirt with notions of historicity, but which also seamlessly attempt to weave them with fictional scenarios?

I would routinely say that we have a kind of agnostic relationship to a number of these genres. I can't swear full allegiance. Let's say, to the documentary because most of the documentaries in its origins—because the modes of address that it sets up—have not been flattering to people of African descent. I have no reason, unlike some of my European counterparts, to feel that the history of the documentary is one that I feel kinship with. We all know and we've talked over the years about Apartheidism of some of the early founders, D.W. Griffiths and so on. My point is this: since the history of the forms that I work with are already 'contaminated', an appeal to the hybrid becomes both the defining gesture as well as the conditions of existence of one's engagement with those forms. One of the ways in which one tries to see through the impasse is by working with what used to be called a 'recombinant aesthetic', whereby every element from these available narratives and genres was drawn upon, without swearing wholesale allegiance to them. Now it seems to me that in that sort of context, the notion of hybridity has a use because it connotes a certain descriptive accuracy when it is applied. My problem with it is when it begins to migrate from that space and into the field of identity, and particularly into the field of identity formation. I disagree with the deploying of hybridity essentially for what Paul Gilroy calls "raciological purposes". I don't want to completely let go of the notion of the hybrid, I just want to limit the areas of its use and the values that one ascribes to it. The reason why I say that I am much more interested in the hyphen is that I don't want to put the cart before the horse. Both terms are trying to understand patterns across the post-World War planet and we need to turn our attentions to how to do that without them becoming the problem that you are describing. What would you be happy with?

R.G.: If I just latch on to the "Afropolitan", I understand the desire to coin the term, but what is wrong in this instance is almost a contradiction in terms, and I'll explain what I mean by that. It's not that we did not have states for hundred, thousands of years; it is not that knowledge was not being transferred. It's not that there has not been active engagement with trade that comes out of the city. Somehow, however, in order to define the possibility of a metropolis in Africa it has to be redefined. Otherwise it becomes difficult for this place to be imagined as being this thriving energetic situation. Language also becomes very important. I am presented by a city that brands itself, it trades on the term. I would have to check on this properly, but something along the lines of "a world class city in Africa"—you can see the problem already. So I think that these terms are helpful in alerting people to the fact that this, the African metropolis, is not strange, it is not different, there is nothing new in thriving African cities, it is just that you don't see it. Perhaps an anecdote will help. I had a show in Glasgow called Shrine, which was about Fela Kuti, well, Fela and Cohunu Griffiths and so on. And a woman came to me and said "Oh this is really good, people are beginning to listen to him," and I said to her, "But, well, Madam you know there are over a 150 million people in Nigeria alone, so what do you mean by 'people'?" We then got into this discussion. For her, she was slightly perplexed, and she felt I was being offensive by stating the obvious back to her, but the reality for me was I couldn't understand what she'd meant by "people". The same thing emerges with terms like "Afropolitan", as if we're describing notions of the hybrid, being seen and recognized outside of one's own capacity. So you ask me what would work on me? Without me sounding too blunt: how about "original creation"? People simply do what they do, and recognize that individuals have the capacity to come into contact with influences and out of that produce something new. Not necessarily the genius prize, because I don't usually ascribe to the notion of the genius, but it is possible for things to emerge because people are to some extent those term, creative. People do things. We see things, we reject them, we say that one thing is not going to work for me, but this other will. It's like the question of language—lucky enough to have been taught Yoruba as a child, sometimes there are moments when I think there is a much better word in Yoruba for a situation, one that would work, that would be appropriate right now. Is that going to be deemed some kind of hybrid experience? Or just that I have access to other forms of knowledge, to other forms of thinking?

J.A.: You know, those of us involved in the afrofuturist debate feel partly responsible for the coming of the afropolitan. I want to try and
Nola Hopkinson for instance, points out that the creative abilities recently, and it’s interesting being here in South Africa. Someone like R.G.: other, it tells you something about both. believe in that co-mingling. I believe in the idea that if you force two of trespassing into territories in which one would otherwise not go. I suppose to be historical. It was a provocative way of allowing that form apply and in some ways, better describe certain conditions that are supposed to be historical. It was a provocative way of allowing that form of trespassing into territories in which one would otherwise not go. I believe in that co-mingling. I believe in the idea that if you force two words or two concepts or categories to collide or converse with each other, it tells you something about both.

R.G.: No, of course not!

The recombinant ethic there was to try and force two sets of seemingly mutually exclusive categories to talk to each other, and in the process, yield something new. The prize was that one gets to re-read questions of science fiction through the lens of race. In the process, one gets to re-read and re-transcribe notions of futurity. The implication of that, however, is the change that happens to the substance of the debate about what race constitutes the past and the future. Coining the term allowed one, for instance, to work across a temporal line that questioned which came first. We were able to say, as Greg Tate would, that when you look for instance at the slave sublime, the modes of existence that slavery threw up, certain narrative scenarios emerge: here is a narrative in which people are forcibly removed, relocated somewhere, and they now have to exist in this strange and foreign land and make their way through it. Greg always asked, what could be more fitting for a science fiction scenario then that? Once you turn to the genre, the futurist genre of science fiction, one finds echoes that apply and in some ways, better describe certain conditions that are supposed to be historical. It was a provocative way of allowing that form of trespassing into territories in which one would otherwise not go. I believe in that co-mingling. I believe in the idea that if you force two words or two concepts or categories to collide or converse with each other, it tells you something about both.

J.A.: The recombinant ethic there was to try and force two sets of seemingly mutually exclusive categories to talk to each other, and in the process, yield something new. The prize was that one gets to re-read questions of science fiction through the lens of race. In the process, one gets to re-read and re-transcribe notions of futurity. The implication of that, however, is the change that happens to the substance of the debate about what race constitutes the past and the future. Coining the term allowed one, for instance, to work across a temporal line that questioned which came first. We were able to say, as Greg Tate would, that when you look for instance at the slave sublime, the modes of existence that slavery threw up, certain narrative scenarios emerge: here is a narrative in which people are forcibly removed, relocated somewhere, and they now have to exist in this strange and foreign land and make their way through it. Greg always asked, what could be more fitting for a science fiction scenario then that? Once you turn to the genre, the futurist genre of science fiction, one finds echoes that apply and in some ways, better describe certain conditions that are supposed to be historical. It was a provocative way of allowing that form of trespassing into territories in which one would otherwise not go. I believe in that co-mingling. I believe in the idea that if you force two words or two concepts or categories to collide or converse with each other, it tells you something about both.

R.G.: Yes, but you see, I’ve been doing some work on Afrofuturism recently, and it’s interesting being here in South Africa. Someone like Nola Hopkinson for instance, points out that the creative abilities surrounding storytelling and envisioning different dimensions and all of those things have always existed. That perhaps it is not as peculiar to existence, to the Afro-, to the African existence, as one necessarily imagines. Then someone like Fagunwa, for instance, who wrote The Forest of a Thousand Demons—to read that book now is to know that people have always been aware of a particular type of travel that exists in the imagination. Out of this contact with these alien and alienated bodies, something else emerges. You know, Amos Tutuola also does a similar thing. Certainly, science fiction as a form, which is almost always seen as the domain of the white spotty male... it’s supposed to be a geek in his or her bedroom, totally anti-social. Certainly it comes into collision with another type of existence, and out of that, comes Afrofuturism. I think Afrofuturism as an idea is really important. I think it’s very useful. I think it does help to explain the inexplicable. If anything, it is a form of escape from a type of containment. The escape comes from saying: “Well actually, there are other possibilities. If this world doesn’t work, then there’s another one, somewhere. Not the religious sort of other world, but other dimensions where I can function.”

J.A.: In the early 1990’s, when it became clear that there was a cluster of concerns both in literature, in music and so on, that one could bring together to formulate a kind of Afrofuturist manifesto, what was very clear was that first and foremost, this was about trying to privilege forms of African address that are unpopular, non-traditional and not non-diegetic. In other words, this was a way of bringing Marcel Griaule’s Conversations with Ogotemmeli, African cosmological musings together with Sun Ra’s music, with Amos Tutuola’s novels, via a detour through Detroit Techno music. Basically, non-traditional, not-popular forms of black performative address. Very quickly, Afrofuturism became linked to them and I think unfortunately, it became overly linked with the notion of science fiction. Black science fiction was a part of that, and Afrofuturism told you something about the ways in which science fiction could be commandeered to speak other truths. Yet it was certainly not a sub-genre of science fiction, as it became for many people. The reason for that is to do with this protean possibility, when you force an untidy conjunction between these two categories. It was never wholly a futurist debate around questions of fictions; scientific or otherwise. It was really an attempt to pull together a lot more, both a sonic, cultural archeology of artifact and of sensibilities that were just beyond the pale. The kind of stuff that questioned what the borders and boundaries of what one could call “black culture” or “African culture.” This was supposed to introduce the notion of the porous into those categories and force them to take on the itinerant, the outlaw, the troubador manifests and ideas. I still believe that this is what happens when these protein possibilities are at their best. If you force two categories together in that way, it does begin to have a certain subversive value for forms of practice.

So, what is the connection with identity? Well, there are ethical implications in those forms of practice bricolage which can then become a discussion about identity. Yet only as what I would call “the second question”. Too often that second question finds a way of inserting itself as the first.
R.G.: I do want to look at this questionable, tentative identity. This is of considerable interest to me. I’ll use a very recent example. I went to the first national conference on albinism in South Africa. I was with government officials and “activists” who were saying that people with albinism were fundamentally disabled from the moment they are born, and a host of other things. I just wanted to wrap up what I think is an issue of alternative identities, as suddenly I was forced into a position which is almost alien to the discussion we are having now. A situation where the person, their identity, their structure, everything they assume about themselves has to be reconfigured to fit into another’s desired paradigm. I am using this example as a probe, as to what you might envision to be an “alternative identity”, considering the existing complex understandings and relationships that you recognize in the making of artwork, and in discussing it. In engaging the world, whether we like it or not, we are able to, and made to, speak from a pre-defined platform of our own or others’s making.

J.A.: I’m really glad you raise this question and I’m very, very happy to have done this with you, Raimi. We should do it more often. To sum up, this is what I would say: we’ve got to coexist in narratives and they do have overlaps and affinities but there are clearly two narratives that are preoccupied with their own unique, self-contained questions. If you were to push me even further, what I would say is this: Over the years there has been a way in which identity has been attached to the work I’ve done. People have tried to link it to the question of identity politics in various ways. I’m against that use of the term to describe the work, for the very simple reason that it closes off all the things I am trying to explore. I’m instead interested in a politics of identity; I’m interested in probing the limits of beings, the limits of identities or even how identities come into being because I don’t accept that they are natural, biological, or otherwise. I know that those “eternal categories” play into the formation but I don’t want to give them the entire responsibility. Which then means that the work is invariably about how someone could say to me, “Well, you’re a black person.” What does that mean? When did this come into being? Because I remember not being black! I remember being Negro, Coloured, African and all sorts of not-so-flattering descriptions! I’m trying to understand the traffic between these moments of naming, all of which have appeared “natural” and “universal” at their inauguration. We could have this conversation, no doubt ‘till we die, because we are interested in the same things, though we come at them differently. So I thank you very much and hope to speak to you again soon.

R.G.: Thank you, too.
It is a widely accepted hypothesis that rank-based social organisation in the Milky Way galaxy first developed in the Vela star region shortly before its supernova transformation.

The Vela civilisation, which took its name from the abovementioned stellar mass, has received a large amount of scholarly attention because of its stratified social structure. However, the civilisation of Great Zimbabwe, the other half of Vela’s earth-star complex, has often been neglected in such analyses. Such omissions have done a disservice to our understandings of this early age and have entrenched a methodological bias that disregards earth civilisations in the fields of archaeology.

Records state that the religious leadership of the defunct Vela civilisation unsuccessfully attempted to arrest the nearby star’s advancement toward a supernova state. Failing to avert this cataclysmic threat, the population began to hold the priestly caste in contempt. The burgeoning political elite seized the opportunity to consolidate their leadership and galvanise class stratification.

During this period of social reform, exchange between the complex’s stellar (Vela) and terrestrial (Great Zimbabwe) units increased considerably. Amid emissary visits to their earthly confederates, Vela’s new leadership shaped their ideas of rank distinction. Evidence of this ideological shift is found in the emergence of human-bird symbolism in Vela high society. Hitherto found exclusively in Great Zimbabwe, this imagery was employed to represent royalty in its African context. The rising galactic gentry used analogous emblems to distinguish their group.

Chronicler Okul Equiano travelled to Vela before the supernova’s implosion and wrote of bird symbolism amongst Vela’s secret societies. This document was long thought to be a hoax in academic circles as no material evidence of such symbolism was found in earlier Vela periods. However, recent findings from x-ray archaeological surveys beg one to reconsider Equiano’s account as a legitimate archive; it is even, perhaps, one of the last records of this bygone civilisation during its Accretion Age.

Comparative analyses of eight soapstone bird carvings from Late Iron Age Great Zimbabwe and similar artefacts from Vela affirm that Vela culture was directly influenced by Zimbabwean aesthetic and social concepts.

1 Otari Cruz. “Vela bird hybrids”. In Interstellar Archeology 183 (00), 134–142.
The conical structure of Great Zimbabwe's Great Enclosure was also built at the time of increased contact between stellar and terrestrial communities. Richard Wade, archaeologist-astronomer of the twenty-first century at Mkwe Ridge Observatory in South Africa, conjectured that this stone structure was built in the Shashe-Limpopo basin to mark the position of the progressively brightening Vela star as it went supernova.

As I argue elsewhere, one must consider this structure not as an astronomical instrument, as Wade has suggested, but as a politically motivated construction. It was, in fact, a monument erected to mark the end of the Vela-Zimbabwe complex, thereby commemorating the beginning of new societal orders both on earth and in space. The act of monumental commemoration, although rare in stellar communities, is a reoccurring practice amongst earth societies.

Whether it be the conical structure of Zimbabwe’s Great Enclosure or bird relics from Vela’s secret societies, studies of ancient Vela civilisation cannot fully be appreciated if the terrestrial component of its earth-star complex is not adequately considered. The same holds true for all other earth-star social complexes, past or present. The Vela-Zimbabwe case clearly illustrates that the role of terrestrial civilisations ought not be downplayed; for it may create blind spots in our galactic heritage.

Speaking Truth to Power: Censorship and Critical Creativity in South Africa

I have been away from South Africa for the last two years and every time I visit, some new artistic / cultural venture has emerged. While government funding for individual artists remains as sparse as ever, new private galleries and artistic enterprises, as well as individual or collective initiatives are challenging the discipline of visual arts. Even while structural racial inequalities exist in every field in South Africa, including the arts, these are exciting times to be living and working as an artist in South Africa with what is possibly the largest number of opportunities we have ever seen in our history.

Interestingly, in recent years, visual arts productions have courted controversy and generated some of the—occasional—public discourse that there is on race-gender-class-sexuality representation. Some of these include the public criticism of the use of blackface in the "transgressive" works of Afrikaner artist Anton Kannemeyer by curator Khewzi Gule (2010) and in the subsequent responses defending Kannemeyer’s modus operandi. Brett Murray’s Spear painting of President Jacob Zuma with his penis exposed, which elicited public protests and death threats, and resulted in the defacing of the work in a Johannesburg gallery (2012); and more recently, artist Ayanda Mabulu’s painting, Yakhal’inkomo (Black Man’s Cry), which features Zuma trampling on the head of a Marikana miner, which was removed before the opening of the 2013 Joburg Art Fair. Much of this follows on the heels of a very public spat between political satiric cartoonist Zapiro (Jonathan Shapiro) and Zuma, who tried to sue the cartoonist for defamation for his representation of the president, pants open, approaching a Black lady justice being held down by other Black political allies (the case was later dropped in 2012).

1. The Joburg Art Fair has concluded its fifth edition, and the Cape Town Art Fair has concluded its first. South Africa now has its own pavilion at the Venice Biennale while ever-cradling the hope of a resurrection of the Joburg Biennale. Art South Africa, the country’s leading art publication, is turning its head towards the rest of Africa and opening minds to the wealth of history and talent on the continent. The Mail and Guardian newspaper has created an online platform focusing exclusively on women, and the second year of the Mbokodo Women in Arts Award has recognised the immense creativity and legacy of South African women cultural producers. South African artists feature globally, winning loads of awards along the way. The Mail and Guardian newspaper has created an online platform focusing exclusively on women, and the second year of the Mbokodo Women in Arts Award has recognised the immense creativity and legacy of South African women cultural producers. South African artists feature globally, winning loads of awards along the way.


3. This refers to the miner's strike at the Lonmin Mining Company in Marikana, South Africa, in 2012. Protests in which the miners were demanding increased wages turned into a violent confrontation with the armed national police force, which resulted in the death of over forty-four miners. Increasing evidence in the subsequent legal hearing shows that policemen likely instigated the violence and in some cases, even executed the miners while they were restrained.

4. This text employs South African racial categories: White, Black, Indian. Coloured. “Black” signifies indigenous African ethnicities, while “Black” is used to denote the previously disadvantaged groups of Black, Indian, Coloured and Chinese (and instead of the term “non-white”).

5. Ex-African National Congress (ANC) Youth League President Julius Malema, ANC Secretary-
All of these cases point to problems of representation in post-apartheid South Africa, and necessarily highlight the intersectionality of categories of race-gender-class-sexuality. For instance, Kannemeyer’s use of blackface is seen by critics as that of a privileged White cultural producer utilising demeaning racial stereotypes of underclass Black African natives to critique fellow White Afrikaners. For me, the humour in his parodies can only be had if one disregards the bodies of his Black characters as props in his endeavour to expose White paranoia, and then aligns oneself with the gaze of the White characters, the White audience, and the producer.4 Murray’s controversy presented a unique case when the coding of visual artworks within the safety of the white cube was deemed offensive and disrespectful when forced into the wider culture.

At some point in the discussions elicited by these different cases has emerged the rhetoric of “freedom of speech” (which is equated with the ability to criticise whomever, however) being under attack currently in South Africa. This “freedom of speech” rallying cry has, to a certain extent, been racialized in that there is a persistent claim by White artists that they are not only being silenced, but victimized.5 Such perspectives align with what Critical Whiteness Studies scholar Melissa Steyn has called a resistant “White Talk” in South Africa, as White South Africans have to negotiate the change from apartheid privilege to post-apartheid redress.6 Characteristics of this “White Talk” include a pessimistic view on Black / African governance, the stacking up of negative tropes of the living conditions of Africa, the idea that Whites are disproportionately affected as a community by criminality, corruption and black economic empowerment policies, as well as the belief that when they criticise such issues they are standing up for more universal conditions which all liberal minds would agree with. Much of this exemplifies a spirit of victimhood that is persistent in “White Talk”.7

However, criticisms of the artwork of Zapiro, Kannemeyer and Murray have not tried to silence the critique of these artists directed at Black / African governance (which are often conflated), but rather, have tried to question the choice of iconography by the artists. This choice, which

General Gwede Mantashe (with a speech bubble that says “Go for it Boss”, South African Communist Party President Blade Nzimande and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) chairperson ZwelileZwelenkama .

6 In my current PhD research on postcolonial strategies of masquerading in South Africa I elaborate on this critique of Kannemeyer’s use of satiric parody in his Pappa in Africa (2010) book.

7 Ever since apartheid, the South African visual arts field has been dominated by White producers, gallerists, writers, “critics”, historians, collectors and other mediators. White visual artists are unaccustomed to being challenged on their perspectives and aesthetic considerations by Black intellectuals and artists.


9 The South African 2011 Census found that Black-headed households earned on average an annual income of R60 000 while White-headed households earned per annum an average of R365 000, and that White men still maintain the most privileged economic spaces (highest level of education, the best jobs and the highest salaries).

the artists present as natural representations of the addressed issues, often pathologizes Blacks, Africans and Africa. In Kannemeyer’s work, African governance is visually associated with the dictatorships of Idi Amin Dada and Robert Mugabe, and corruption is racialized as Black greed, which is evidenced in numerous references to “Black Fat-Cats” and Black Economic Empowerment. Both Murray and Zapiro have vehemently defended their right to activate colonial racial stereotypes of rampant Black animalistic sexuality in the Spear and Rape of Lady Justice cartoons. While we do “get” parody, metaphor and allusion, the question remains as to why White male cultural producers would choose to reduce important questions regarding the country’s problems (the ruling tripartite alliance, populist politics, the dearth of credible political opposition, mismanagement, corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, sustainability and the growing gap of rich and poor in capitalist democracy amidst blatant police repression, to name a few) to just one person and his genitals.8 When that person is a Black individual, heading up a black majority government in a black majority country that is steeped in a history of racial segregation and the denigration of blackness, it is not only necessary to interrogate the appropriateness and naturalness which attends elected representations in a post-apartheid, postcolonial context, but also to point to the silences surrounding this

8 None of these problems are particular to South Africa or the African continent. They are all problems that various governments have faced throughout history, and they manifest themselves in a multitude of ways in postmodern democracies. It is however important to note that critiques of these issues take into account their particularities in South Africa.

Ayanda Mabulu, Yakhal’inkomo (Black Man’s Cry), 2013. Oil on canvas. 250 x 350cm. Courtesy of Commune 1 Gallery.
All of the artworks discussed above circulate not simply as objects of commercial art, but are given currency locally and globally by an inherent criticality that we invest in visual artworks. In doing so, I like to think of artists not simply as “creatives”, but as creative intellectuals with a duty within the larger commoditized fields of visual arts, popular culture and global visual representations to “speak truth to power”, and thereby break down “the stereotypes and reductive categories that are so limiting to human thought and communication” (Edward Said).

It is not often enough that as an artist one is able to be involved in national debates on identity and representation. As bell hooks aptly reminds us, this is not the task of any one group:

Creating new and different representations of blackness should not be seen as the sole responsibility of black artists, however. Ostensibly, any artist whose politics lead him or her to oppose imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, white supremacy, and the everyday racism that abounds in all our lives would endeavour to create images that do not perpetuate and sustain domination and exploitation. The fact that progressive non-black artists who make films, especially experimental work, challenge themselves around this issue is vital to the formation of a cultural climate in which different images can be introduced.

Present-day South Africa presents such an opportunity and it is therefore not one to be taken up without serious consideration of our roles as cultural producers and visual makers.

11 Ayanda Mabulu’s Yakhal’inkomo (Black Man’s Cry) which showcases President Zuma’s dogs attacking a miner and him stepping on another miner—referring to the 2012 Marikana mining strike in which least forty-four miners were gunned down by the South African police—was taken off the display before opening night. With headlines decrying censorship, it took a certain amount of time to realize that it was actually the organizers of the Art Fair themselves who had felt uncomfortable with the work and had thus decided to self-censor. Subsequently, veteran South African photographer David Goldblatt, in solidarity with Mabulu, decided to take down his exhibition of works, prompting a rethinking of the act by the organizers. Mabulu’s work was reinstated the day after the opening, and the directors admitted that they had not considered the full implications of their initial decision. Where Zuma and the ANC have been unable to use the legal system to impose censorship, private individuals with economic interests are now doing so. Mabulu’s work did not merit censorship, but, I believe, the irresponsible use of Black stereotypes by artists such as Kannemeyer, Murray and Zapiro have created the present climate of racial tension around representation.


One of the lingering consequences of the failure of the postcolonial state is the inadequate investment in the development of education. With the rise of authoritarian and dictatorial regimes from the late 1970s to the late 1990s, the frontline attack was on academia and any form of intellectual life. The plethora of journals, magazines and reviews that were propelled by the euphoria of the independence period were soon to be consigned to obsolescence. Nonetheless, a few have been able to reinvent themselves, outside of the continent. Some of the well known pan-African titles—which focused on art, culture, politics and society—included Drum Magazine, Black Orpheus and Transition, and they complemented the scholarship that was coming out of the dynamic University presses from across the continent at the time.

My discovery of New Culture: A Review of Contemporary African Arts highlights the informational vacuum that exists with regards to critical endeavors in the past. Until Janet Stanley, Chief Librarian at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, offered to provide the library of the CCA, Lagos with copies of the publication, I was not aware of the existence of the review. Only eleven issues underline its brief existence over a fifteen-month period in the late 1970s. During this period in Nigeria a handful of defunct magazines stood out for their focus on the arts, such as Nigeria Magazine and Uso: Nigerian Journal of Art. New Culture: A Review of Contemporary African Art placed a particularly strong emphasis on the visual arts. It started with an illustrious editorial team that consisted of important artists based both on the continent and elsewhere as part of the diaspora, such as the American sculptor Melvin Edwards, the London based artist Taiwo Jegede, and Nigerian artists such as Demas Nwoko (founder) and Uche Okeke, who were subsequently joined by Ola Oloidi, the art historian and professor at the University of Nigeria.

1 Volume 1, no. 1, November 1978, through Volume 1, no. 11, October 1979.
2 Drum Magazine (initially called African Drum) was started in South Africa in 1951 by Bob Crisp and Jim Bailey. It was a lifestyle magazine that targeted the Black population. However it became popular for its coverage of township life under apartheid in the 1950s and 1960s. Black Orpheus was founded in 1957 in Nigeria by German expatriate Ulli Beier as a journal of African and Afro-American literature. Transition: A Journal of Arts, Culture and Society was started in Kampala, Uganda in 1963 by Rajat Neogy as a platform for East African intellectuals.
4 Nigeria Magazine may be the longest running arts and culture magazine in Africa. It was founded in the 1930s and the final volume was in 1990.
5 USO: Nigerian Journal of Art came out sporadically, only managing to release three publications in three Volumes (one edition per year) between December 1997 and December 2001.
The review delved into many such issues such as identity, colonialism, post-colonialism, as well as history and tradition as they came to highlighting the new African reality, and the way these were engaged by the artists in their work. The key section of the review focused on the aesthetics of African Art and Culture, which propounded a return to the study of traditional art—which the founder, artist, architecture, poet and writer, Demas Nwoko (1935–) considered to be the ‘only one art stylistic idiom... valid to the African and the Blacks of African descent the world over, its origin being the too well-known form of traditional African arts, a form that was created and nurtured to maturity by African people themselves, with a history that dates beyond 2000 years.” In espousing a return to the past he also acknowledged the need for “a new aesthetic position relevant to our time.”6 To achieve these objectives, the reviewers covered the arts across the continent. The drawings by Sudanese artist Ibrahim El Salahi (1930–) that were featured in the May 1979 issue are such an example, as they reached out to the diaspora. The eleven editions are filled with reviews and essays, in addition to containing a vibrant children’s section that makes palpable the dynamism of the cultural and creative sector of the period. The exhibition review I found to be the most illuminating was that of Theresa Luck-Akinwale (1934–),7 one of the few trained female artists in Nigeria who still remains inadequately represented in the history of Nigerian Art. As such, the eleven editions constitute an indispensable archive of our cultural life in a context where such information remains difficult to find.

6 New Culture Magazine (November 1978), 1.

We create ourselves through language yet what we say at one moment can at any other be overturned.

Does this disrupt a constancy of being or reflect inherent changeability? Is language confirmation or distortion?

In the Akan language, knowledge was constituted anew with each retelling; elasticity of silence as important as authority of sound.

Then came Definity and language filled the spaces of silences.

History as an affirmation of collective memory.

History as the constructed projection of the future. I will be, because I am, and was.

History as a narrative of subjugation and disruption: Pre-Colonial, Colonial, Post-Colonial

The Definity of Language in the spaces of silence.

Geographies massed by land and boundaries.

Geographies separated through histories of language and becoming.

Geographies reduced by language to one or other Story: Hopeless Scar, Rising Renaissance.

The Authority of Sound, not the elasticity of silence.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as narratives of histories flowing in and out.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as mapper of continuities and disruption.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as collector of remnants.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as re-interpreter of language.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as re-examiner of boundaries.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as act of recreation.

The Cultural Encyclopedia as act of beginning and not end.

How does theory flow into practice?

How does knowledge make itself felt?

How does language approximate what cannot be spoken?

How are foundations earth and not cement?

The Cultural Encyclopaedia is a fifty-four volume Encyclopaedia that traces cultural trajectories in each of the fifty-four countries of the African continent, on subjects ranging from Art and Archaeology; Philosophy and Science; Drama, Theatre and Film; Politics, Sociology and Anthropology; Music and Literature; Mathematics and Economics; and Design, Fashion and Architecture. For now, the paradigm is that of country, though it is possible this will be overhauled. Every six months, a new Encyclopaedia—with entries ranging from classical to contemporary oratures, literatures, and art forms, to alternative mathematical models—will be distributed to schools and higher education institutions; excerpted on radio, television; in magazines, newspapers; and via mobile phones. The first volume, GHANA, will be launched at Da’art 2014. The printed versions will consist of: selections of essays from published and unpublished manuscripts, theses, and essays by leading thinkers from each country, chosen by a team of editors. The online versions consist of: conversations, portraits, writings on contemporary cultural output, and a database of links to the complete research. Throughout the process, workshops, seminars, and talks will discuss and explore expression, methodology, process, implications, implementation, co-operation and collaboration.

http://anoghana.org/cultural-encyclopaedia.
Inside, Immediately Outside

The impression that Jonathas de Andrade’s exhibition at Kunsthalle Lissabon begins or expands outside depends on one’s physical location: on the stairs of the building where the art space occupies an apartment, or on the street, if one looks up at one of the gallery’s windows. The ambiguity of borders defining an inside and an outside is first perceived spatially, via one’s own itinerary in, through and out of the exhibition space.

Making reference to an existing institution, the Museu do Homem do Nordeste in Brazil, de Andrade’s posters explore the possibility of creating an imaginary visual identity for the museum. Through this process, they open a literal, multilayered space to question not only how the museum historically participated in the construction of specific representations of the ‘Man of the Northeast’, but also how it could hypothetically choose to represent itself today as an institution. Who is the ‘Man of the Northeast’ in the museum’s name? Who could he possibly represent? Who articulates this representation?

Vânia Brayer observes that the Museu do Homem do Nordeste, a museum of anthropology and history created in Recife in 1979, is associated with Gilberto Freyre’s museological ideas and is historically linked to his engagement with the preservation of regional culture.\(^1\)

---


2 The museum, linked to the Fundación Joaquim Nabuco, results from the union of the Museum of Anthropology of the Institute Joaquim Nabuco (1961–1979), the Museum of Sugar (1963–1977) and the Museum of Regional Ethnography, “popular art” and “cottage industry” (www.fundaj.gov.br/geral/didoc/gf-ddc-ijn.pdf). September 23, 2013). The Museum of Anthropology of the Instituto was finally created in 1961 and in 1979 the gathering of three museums (see note 2, above) gave rise to the Museu do Homem do Nordeste whose varied collections include photographs, objects related to the sugar industry and slavery, domestic objects, tiles, works of visual art, ex-voto, objects associated to the Afro-Brazilian religion and the Candomblé, craft, Indian objects, and related material. The exhibition of long duration was inaugurated in 2008, and was titled “Nordeste: Territórios Plurais, Culturas e Direitos Coletivos” (“Northeast: Plural and Cultural Territories, and Collective Rights”). It opened a space for questioning regional identity, and made space for difference, complexity and reciprocity in its museological discourse. Vânia Brayer

---


4 Although the Museu do Homem do Nordeste was created in 1979, its conception and development by sociologist and writer Gilberto Freyre, as well as other contributors, has an extensive history whose main lines I can only sketch in this context. As underlined by Freyre in his text, “Que é museu do homem? Um exemplo: O Museu do Homem do Nordeste brasileiro” (see note 3), as early as 1924 he promoted, in a newspaper article, the foundation of regional socio-anthropological museums in Brazil. These museums should document, in the author’s view, the everyday life and culture of regional populations in Brazil, and specific local industries such as sugar production. At that particular time Freyre, as an intellectual based in Recife, engaged in regionalist debates on the preservation of Northeastern local culture and traditions within the national context (see Durval Muniz de Albuquerque Júnior, trans. Laurence Hallewell, 2004). Freyre’s position in favor of safeguarding and valuing Northeastern cultural traditions is affirmed, along with the idea of the institution of regional museums in the context of his Regionalist Manifesto. Dated 1936 and strongly defending a regionalist perspective, it contains a specific remark on the desire for museums that display not only traditional historic objects but everyday local objects, popular creations and local productions, and more specifically, a remark on the desire for a regional museum. When, in 1948, as a federal deputy, Freyre proposed the creation of the Instituto Joaquim Nabuco in Recife, the project included the creation of a museum of regional ethnography, “popular art” and the cottage industry. [www.fundaj.gov.br/geral/didoc/gf-ddc-ijn.pdf] September 23, 2013). The Museum of Anthropology of the Instituto was finally created in 1961 and in 1979 the gathering of three museums (see note 2, above) gave rise to the Museu do Homem do Nordeste whose varied collections include photographs, objects related to the sugar industry and slavery, domestic objects, tiles, works of visual art, ex-voto, objects associated to the Afro-Brazilian religion and the Candomblé, craft, Indian objects, and related material. The exhibition of long duration was inaugurated in 2008, and was titled “Nordeste: Territórios Plurais, Culturas e Direitos Coletivos” (“Northeast: Plural and Cultural Territories, and Collective Rights”). It opened a space for questioning regional identity, and made space for difference, complexity and reciprocity in its museological discourse. Vânia Brayer
upon this set of histories and representations, de Andrade’s project invites the public to temporarily occupy an ambiguous and shifting position. One is not inside the Museu do Homem do Nordeste, but one is not completely outside of it either. The artist’s work engages with the symbolic space associated with its name and history.

**Distance and Proximity**

Instead of obliterating stereotypes, Jonathas de Andrade’s project sets them in motion. The posters juxtapose the museum’s name to photographs of a variety of male participants in different poses and locations, performing everyday activities. As a consequence, they ironically de-universalize the word “man” and reduce it to a marker of masculinity. How have these “men” come to participate in the project? The methodologies adopted by the artist in the making of the work are disclosed by a set of framed newspapers pages and the projection of slides on which he took note of his interactions with potential participants. Ethnographic writing, in the form of field notes, is ambiguously convened by these texts. Their accurate listing of dates and places, in addition to their descriptive writing style suggest a distant positioning, possibly framed by a scientific perspective. At the same time, the announcements in the newspapers, which are meant to find “candidates” for the photographs in the posters, draw on some of the features stereotypically associated to men of the Northeast: a strong moreno, a worker, someone who works with his hands, a descendant of slaves.


5 “[…] What I really want,” said de Andrade in an interview, “is to dive into this stereotype and implode it from the inside”. Trans. mine. “[…] o que eu quero mesmo é mergulhar nesse estereótipo e implodi-lo a partir de dentro”. In José Marmeleira. June 28, 2013. “Corpos que deslizam num museu clandestino”. In Ípsilon, O Público, 12.


7 These are some of the words used by the artist in the announcements. Trans. by the author.

The formulation of the announcements is, I suspect, also meant to instill doubt. One particular message does not mention the museum’s poster but an anthropological research project that seeks men for an archive of nude photographs. The distance implied by the subjective position produced by the field notes is destabilized here, inferring an emotional or even a sexual proximity. An article by José Marmeleira on the exhibition suggests “a sexual ambiguity”.

8 This palpable effect is produced, in my view, by the spatial interplay of photographs in which male bodies—dressed entirely or only partially, facing towards or away from the camera—are portrayed in a variety of positions ranging from distant to close proximity, from the whole to the fragment. Similarly, close proximity to the stereotype (operated through processes of selection and (self-) identification) appears to compromise the identity of the “Man of the Northeast” as the product of an “anthropological imagination,” thus engendering both visual heterogeneity and spatial dissemination.

**Negotiating with a Legacy**

Rather than shaping a plural or more inclusive image for the ‘Man of the Northeast’, the artist’s project primarily confronts the very strategies of representation of cultural identity embedded in museum practices. Visually juxtaposing the name of the Museu do Homem do Nordeste itself to heterogeneous images of masculinity, and symbolically mobilizing it in an art space located in a different geographical and cultural context, effectively dislocates the museum. The institution is thus rethought of as a place where representations and identities are negotiated through a multiplicity of perspectives involving various degrees of reciprocity. This “contact zone” to use James Clifford’s terminology, is crossed by a complex net of relations that engage, among other factors, specific historical legacies and power geometries associated, for instance, with class and gender.


Jonathas de Andrade’s take on regional stereotypes cannot be dissociated from the participants’s identification with some of the features of the representation, but also from the way that the men imagine they are interpreting regional identity when posing for the camera. “I seek a worker capable of representing the Northeast [...],” says one of the announcements. “He imagines himself in the museum’s poster taking care of closing a burst pipe,” writes the artist in one of the slides. The possibility for the public to intervene in the material configuration of the exhibition adds another layer of complexity to this dialogic process. A simple display system allows for changes in the positions of the posters. Some of them, selected from stacks laying on supports placed on the floor, will eventually replace others, and the slides can be placed on the overhead projector in whatever configuration best suits their reading.

The role of the Museum of Anthropology at the Instituto Joaquim Nabuco, which would in 1979 become part of the Museu do Homem do Nordeste, was described by Freyre in 1960 as being “[... ] a synthesis of rural life of the rural North of Brazil or of the culture—culture in the sociologic or anthropologic sense—of the region thus characterized.”

Jonathas de Andrade’s negotiation with the historical and cultural legacy of the museum involves the creation of zones of tension between this imagined synthesis of regional identity and the material processes of the making of representations, which is always a conflicted and multiple one. If the first supposes an idealized position, the second engages entanglement, ambiguity and close contact.

Post-scriptum: On Translating and Writing, from Lisbon

I recall seeing works by Jonathas de Andrade on display in various cities throughout the occidental world: in New York, at the New Museum’s 2012 Triennial, in Lisbon, and in Venice for the Future Generation Art Prize at the 2013 Biennial. It strikes me how strongly these works relate to their context of production and to specific historical material. The diary of Ressaca Tropical (2009), found in the trash in Recife and the heterogeneous photographs to which it is associated, is one example; the 1970s educational posters in Educação para adultos (2010) that were used by the artist’s mother when she was a teacher, is another. The works travel relatively easily considering their geographical, historical and cultural rootedness. It is as if their complex structure somehow prepared them for it, as it is multilayered and often inhabited by tensions and ambiguities.

The ways in which cultural decontextualization may negatively affect the articulation of the meaning of an artwork were the subject of an article by Nelly Richard, who commented on Latin American art in an international context in the mid-1990s. Envisioning this process of transplanting as a form of intercultural “translation”, and the
Of Umbrella Terms and Definitions: Diversity Within a Framework?

Aurogeeta Das

Sakahàn is an ambitious exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada (NGC), which opened on May 17 and closed on September 2, 2013, and was conceived of as the first of the NGC’s planned quinquennial surveys of international indigenous art. The scope of this article will not permit discussion of the artworks featured in the show, so I will instead attempt to assess and place Sakahàn within the narrative of exhibition histories.

In theory, a curatorial selection process for a themed exhibition might deliberate on what is to be included, but in practice, it often begins by determining what to exclude from within a broad framework. Sakahàn’s principal concept is the “indigenous”, a term that is most frequently understood to mean “original inhabitants native to a land”. Notwithstanding the fact that the non-indigenous are rarely identified as such, those excluded at Sakahàn were metropolitan artists of non-indigenous descent. Sakahàn also excludes rural and folk artists who in some instances may share enmeshed histories with indigenous artists, such as India’s Kalighat and Bengali paata (scroll) artists whose art shares a genealogy with that made by the indigenous Santal peoples. When an exhibition focuses on indigeneity, the curatorial process is potentially contentious because it must necessarily negotiate issues of race, identity and tangled histories. Each presents its own conceptual challenges. These complexities multiply when the term “indigenous” applies to “art”, itself a much debated and progressively ambiguous term, referring to bewilderingly varied objects and practices that engage with distinct concepts and make use of wide-ranging media.

Traditionally, the inclusion of indigenous cultural objects and practices within Establishment or White Cube museum and gallery spaces has been problematic because of the seemingly oppositional approaches of Western...
Sakahàn features over 150 artworks by more than eighty indigenous artists originally from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Finland, Greenland, Guatemala, India, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Taiwan and the United States. According to the NGC, it is “the largest ever global survey of contemporary indigenous art.” This is a claim that does not appear to be overly far-fetched but it nevertheless raises questions, particularly due to the use of the word “global”—a word that is much bandied about of late, being that it is divergently interpreted and that it continues to elicit mixed responses.

Sakahàn may be critiqued for the omission of African and Middle Eastern indigenous artists: for example, the Berbers were not represented. The exception is Wangechi Mutu, a Kikuyu artist originally from Kenya, who lives and works in New York. One would hope that the next quinquennial will rectify such glaring omissions.

However, Sakahàn curators Greg Hill, Christine Lalonde and Candice Hopkins self-reflexively apologise for having neglected Africa, clarifying that the first of the planned quinquennial shows could not possibly do justice to indigenous artists from all continents. The curatorial trio felt that a superficial inclusion would be disrespectful and that they would prefer to wait until they have developed the necessary knowledge and expertise required to select indigenous artists from regions they currently do not specialise in. Given Sakahàn’s not insignificant reliance on curatorial advisors from a number of countries, one may wonder why the same model could not be adopted for Africa. At any rate, this is perhaps why—despite the NGC’s claim—the curatorial trio refrained from using the word “global” in the exhibition title, instead choosing to qualify the term “indigenous” with “international.” As Errington has pointed out in her essay, “Globalizing Art History”, terms like “worldwide”, “international” and “global” do not mean quite the same thing.

3. Conceptions of art and aesthetics and the discipline of anthropology. The latter has traditionally found it easier to accord them value. Curators trained in the accepted methodologies of Western art history have for a long time found it difficult to incorporate into museum and gallery displays the very function for which indigenous material objects are often created. If the function was to be revealed through modes of display, “contemporary” art curators often worried about cultural objects being interpreted through an anthropological lens. Therefore, when two terms such as “indigenous” and “art” are brought together, one must question not only whether the above-mentioned dividing line has been successfully ruptured, but also consequently, whether or not the extraordinary breadth of objects and practices that may be included under their combined ambit justifies the use of these umbrella terms. As I do not examine Sakahàn’s artworks and modes of display here, I propose to tackle the latter question.

4. Arts of the Arctic, an early programme of five travelling exhibitions of indigenous art from Alaska, Canada, Greenland, Russia and Sápmi, was held between 1984 and 1995. With participation in Sakahàn triggering her memory of participating in Arts of the Arctic, Ingunn Utsi recalled how the earlier exhibitions’s production, planning and implementation taxed the personal resources of organisers. Some may regard Arts of the Arctic as being, on a smaller scale, a precursor to exhibitions like Sakahàn. Despite the existence of the Sámi Art Museum in Norway, perhaps what distinguishes Sakahàn and other large-scale exhibitions is not just their more expansive international scope but also the extent of the institutional support these receive when compared to earlier efforts.

considered with reference to those who may request "Scheduled Tribe" status. These are geographical isolation often caused by inhospitable environments; poor sanitation, health and literacy; social backwardness; a closed economy and a distinctive culture, language and religion.

Problems that are common among tribal people in India are demands for agricultural reforms; environmental concerns; rights to the use of natural resources and political rights, especially those that relate to autonomy and finally, timidity of contact. One might say that many—if not all—of these problems are shared by indigenous peoples the world over to a greater or lesser degree. Indeed, several of the artworks in Sakahàn engage explicitly with indigenous peoples’ distinctive cultures, languages and religions; environmental concerns; rights to the use of natural resources; political rights, and additionally, violence, which is often caused by struggles against oppressors. Given the diverse interpretations of indigeneity that different governments have adopted, perhaps the Sakahàn curators’s decision to address the definitional challenge by focusing only on those artists who identify themselves as "indigenous", was a wise one. The reason Bengali patua artists were not included in the show was indeed because they do not identify themselves as indigenous even if others may do so occasionally. Nevertheless, since their art touches upon indigeneity, it may well be worth including such artists in future exhibitions. The Sakahàn curators seem open to considering such a move. Conversely, the question of whether all art made by indigenous peoples counts as indigenous art begs to be asked. While self-definition may prove to be a better basis than others, and one that to a certain extent sidesteps the inevitable minefield of race and identity politics,

The use of the word “global” in occidental museums increasingly appears to take into account the general perception that the prominent shows they have assembled thus far have had a primarily Euro-American focus. Undoubtedly, with changing and uncertain economies, such institutions are now under pressure to demonstrate a global relevance for their temporary exhibitions. Apart from the participation of artists originating from sixteen different nations, some Sakahàn artists may be called “global” citizens in that they have moved around and may be based in more than one major metropolis at the same time. Maria Thereza Alves, for example, is a Kaingang and Guarani artist originally from Brazil who now lives in Rome and Berlin, much like the Cherokee artist Jimmie Durham, who admittedly has well-recognised claims to international recognition; Mestiza artist Teresa Margolles lives in Madrid and Mexico City; the late Jangarh Singh Shyam, a Gond artist born in Pattangarh village in India, died in Tokamachi, Japan. The country of residence for several other Sakahàn artists differs from their country of birth. Does this mobility make them global/international artists? Or should it be the global/international relevance of their artworks that should determine whether they may be qualified as such?

Leaving aside the difficulties of deciding who qualifies as an international artist is the task of determining who may call him/herself an indigenous person. One could, for instance, follow national governments’s definitions of indigenous peoples. In Australia, the three criteria for determining who may lay claim to indigenous identity are descent (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander), self-identification and community acceptance. In India, rather than a clear-cut definition, certain characteristics are broadly reference to “global” art history and art historians, similar questions may be asked within the specialised arena of curatorial practices in major museums.
it does give rise to inclusions that some artists and visitors may argue with. Sakahàn artist Nadia Myre, for example, averred that she would not necessarily consider Mestiza artist Teresa Margolles as indigenous. The Australian government and the Aboriginal people themselves emphasise that skin colour is not a factor for consideration in determining who may lay claim to indigenous identity. Despite this, indigenous artist Janelle Evans informed me at a Paris conference on contemporary art and indigenous identity (which followed on from Sakahàn),\(^7\) that there are some who dubiously regard Sakahàn artist Danie Mellor’s claim to being an indigenous artist. This skepticism may be based on his light skin tone and is apparently exacerbated by his non-possession of government-recognised ID. Note that the decision to apply for this ID, which would allow an aboriginal person to apply for government funding for their work, is optional and entirely personal.

Skeptics will find that the Sakahàn catalogue states not only the country of origin and the country of residence for each artist, but also the name of their tribe(s). Mellor, for example, is (self)-identified as Mamu, Ngaanj and Ngagen. The listing of individual tribes is a politically strategic decision that is aimed at resisting colonial definitions and terms. It also, just as importantly, resists homogenisation and reminds us of the many individual tribes that make up indigenous plurality. Favouring the U.N.’s use of the word “indigenous” over other less inclusive terms, Lalonde quotes David Garneau in the show’s catalogue:

> “Political correctness is not the issue. The issue is the U.N.’s use of the word “indigenous” over other less inclusive terms. It also, just as importantly, resists homogenisation and reminds us of the many individual tribes that make up indigenous plurality.”

In this sense, the curators show a keen awareness of the entrenched divisions between art and anthropology, between perceptions of the dominant Settlers or Colonisers of the indigenous “others”, and the indigenous peoples themselves.\(^6\) The only clearly non-indigenous person included in the show is Dutch artist John Noestheden, who collaborates with Canadian Inuit artist Shuvmiyi Ashoona. His participation raises the question of whether or not a non-indigenous person can create indigenous art. What is important is that Sakahàn appears to have invigorated existing discussions on what constitutes indigeneity.\(^7\) Indeed, as Lalonde asserts, the term indigenous should be viewed as a constantly evolving one. Neither the discussions nor the exhibition itself provide definitive answers, but that they give rise to revitalised debate is a sign of the exhibition’s relevance in Canada and elsewhere.

Given the increasing awareness of visitors and artists of the above-mentioned pressure on major museums to “up the ante” vis-à-vis global perspectives in their shows, curators are now also obliged to demonstrate a long-term commitment to diversity. Several Sakahàn artists questioned the basement location of the Inuit gallery in the newly re-opened National Gallery of Canada. Given the awareness of visitors and artists of the above-mentioned pressure on major museums to “up the ante” vis-à-vis global perspectives in their shows, curators are now also obliged to demonstrate a long-term commitment to diversity. Several Sakahàn artists questioned the basement location of the Inuit gallery in the newly re-opened National Gallery of Canada.
NGC’s permanent display, shrewdly wondering whether this somewhat marginal position reflected the NGC’s broader policy towards Indigenous art and whether, therefore, Sakahàn was merely about fulfilling a diversity quota in the short-term. The full programme of events, including educational activities and the curators’s own enthusiastic plans for quinquennial global exhibitions of Indigenous art indicate that such cynicism may be misplaced. In this instance, it will be interesting to observe how the NGC develops upon the impetus gained at Sakahàn. In her essay, “Placing Aboriginal Art at the National Gallery of Canada”, Whitelaw traces the history of the inclusion of Indigenous art at the NGC, which she dates back to the late eighties, when the NGC began to show the works of First Nations artists. Although this inclusion came relatively late, considering the significant Indigenous population in the country, it was nevertheless more robust in comparison to countries like India, for example, where Indigenous art is still often relegated to “crafts” institutions—a situation that is admittedly changing.

The NGC’s symposium, which accompanied the opening week of the exhibition saw spirited participation by visitors and artists alike. Speakers included Diana Nemiroff, who mentioned both the NGC’s Land, Spirit and Power, which she curated with Robert Houle and Charlotte Townsend-Gault (NGC, Ottawa, 1992) and Centre Pompidou’s Magiciens de la terre (Jean Hubert Martin, Paris, 1989); the latter, she felt, was a “starting point” for shows such as Sakahàn. Indeed, I would propose that the practice of having a large team of international advisors may well have started—or been cemented—with Magiciens de la terre. Barring smaller solo shows like the NGC’s Norval Morrisseau: Shaman, Artist (Greg Hill et al, 2006), what is perhaps most pertinent about Sakahàn is how radically its treatment of Indigenous art differs from previous large-scale international shows that have featured Indigenous cultural objects. While MOMA’s Primitivism (William Rubin, New York, 1984) did not even bother to name the Indigenous artists whose creations were regarded as mere inspirational fodder to Western modernists, Magiciens de la terre exoticised Indigenous artists and clearly set them apart from modern Western artists, problematically implying through the selection process and the modes of display that non-Western artists were solely Indigenous, engaged with distinct subjects that did not relate to those that Western modernists grappled with. Consequently, and despite Jean Hubert Martin’s intentions to express the contrary, they were not portrayed as “contemporary” as artists from the so-called established centres of art.

In contrast, Land, Spirit, Power celebrated the richness of art by First Nations people in Canada, but notwithstanding the appropriateness of the subject, the scope of the show was nevertheless limited by focussing it on a theme that has somewhat distorted and exoticized interpretations 11.

It is pertinent to emphasise here that MOMA’s Primitivism; Pompidou’s Magiciens de la terre; the NGC’s Land, Spirit, Power; and Sakahàn do not all necessarily use the term “Indigenous art”. MOMA, not surprisingly—given the title of the exhibition—used “primitive” and “tribal”. Although Jean Hubert Martin sought to avoid the term “art” and “artist” altogether, and hence used “magician”, the exhibition material did use both “tribe” and “aboriginal”. Land, Spirit, Power, on the other hand, used “First Nations art”, and art by artists “of native ancestry”. Others frequently use the terms “aboriginal” or “native”. Another exhibition, one that I have not discussed here (Histoires de Voir, Paris: Fondation Cartier, 2012) uses the term “naïve” with reference to interpretations of some of the show’s artworks, which include Indigenous art from India. Indigenous now seems to be emerging as a strong replacement for all these terms, revising earlier connotations of previously used words and ones that is viewed as politically more effective and more global in its dimensions. However, while there may be changes in the practices and objects that demand scrutiny (especially, perhaps, with regards to media and these influence terminology in some instances, it is predominantly the viewer’s interpretations that have caused changes in the terms used. In other words, changes in terminology appear to have occurred more because of SHRIs and continuums in the context of reception (display and critique), rather than in the context of production.

10. Anne Whitelaw. 2006. “Placing Aboriginal Art at the National Gallery of Canada” In Canadian Journal of Communication 31 (1). However, Lalonde mentions in the Sakahàn catalogue that the NGC started collecting First Nations sculptures in the 1950s. Whether these were shown soon after acquisition is unclear but it does put into question Whitelaw’s identification of the NGC’s earliest acquisitions of Indigenous art.
in the popular imaginary. Further, it suffered from what previous and future exhibitions would continue to battle against: How to promote and disseminate a thus-far oppressed peoples, or in this instance, their marginalized art, whilst simultaneously trying to integrate it into a broader mainstream? The difficulties of according respect and value to diverse practices and objects by particular groups without falling victim to the tendency to essentialize or homogenize their narratives are commonly faced by advocates of indigenous arts.

Gayatri Spivak’s theory of “strategic essentialism”, which has since been disavowed but not entirely rejected by the writer herself, was touched upon in Jolene Rickard’s essay in the Sakahàn catalogue. In principle, Spivak’s concept refers to the practice of groups (ethnic groups for example) adopting a position of solidarity for a brief period, despite internal differences, for the purpose of strengthening their voice for advancing social action. Despite Spivak’s own reservations about the term being misused and misappropriated by others, this concept may be key with reference to Sakahàn, because one of the questions that was raised by visitors and participating artists alike was about the merits and demerits of “pigeonholing” indigenous artists in the distinct category of “indigeneity”. However, as Greg Hill pointed out, such limitations appear to be highlighted only when issues of ethnicity or race are involved, whereas other subject-based shows do not appear to be regarded as being in any way constrained on the basis of a thematic framework.

Rather than regard the term “indigenous” as a limiting label, the co-curators of the show have chosen to celebrate the richness of diverse indigenous cultures. The myriad perspectives, media and approaches adopted by the artists in the show testify that the effort is not only well-intentioned but to a large extent successful. Certainly, the artists of the show were pleased to be participating in it, despite the questions they raised. One of these was hybridity. At a roundtable during the symposium, Sakahàn artists were asked about whether they felt the concept of hybridity was relevant to the exhibition. Whether regarded as a critique of essentialism or as a cultural by-product of globalisation, unresolved debates about the term may have led to Samoan artist Shigeyuki Kihara’s dismissal of it; a wariness that seemed to be endorsed by her colleagues. Kihara felt that comparing indigeneity to hybridity was meaningless and offensive, and that it may even refer to the political inefficacy of the term. What emerges from both the show and the artist’s own outspoken articulations is how much more complex and specific indigeneity is—historically, culturally, politically and racially—than could possibly be explained away by hybridity, itself prone to essentialist stances. Instead, and despite the umbrella terms used in the show’s title, the artworks seem to defy categorisation. While Sakahàn’s use of umbrella terms continues to sit uncomfortably with long-term goals to integrate (not homogenize) indigenous art into a broader mainstream, it is this defiance of pigeonholing that the show expresses, and which turns it into a landmark show. Sakahàn means “to light the fire” in Algonquin. In the catalogue, Greg Hill positions himself in 2038, as if he were looking back at how Sakahàn will have lit the fire for future quinquennial exhibitions. While some of his ambitions seem undesirable (such as wanting the show to achieve biennial-type status), other contemplations are pertinent. He situates “indigenous” as a term and concept in diverse political and historical contexts, teasing out the specifics of how they developed in relation to colonial experiences. What is most useful is his reminder that the term “indigenous” must remain mutable, both as a term and for the meanings it connotes. The rest of us must wait to see how future quinquennial shows planned at the NGC will explore both the possibilities and challenges of that plasticity.


capitalism is the madness of our times, might we no

on the horizon? Was Carnival reborn in colonial

first locus of a world turned upside down with the

to sailors and slaves and other destitute persons

might be sunk. What if Carnival was born at sea

into deep oceans of oblivion where fools and slaves

of otherness, were celebrated on distant seas and

Fools and carnivals, rites of Othering and festivals

Levare (or

and slaves cut through. How many nautical miles

i.e. the Equator—a ritual of the Middle Passage as

by a costumed Neptune upon crossing the “line”,

ships consisting in a pagan baptism conducted

as was unleashed on slave ships? Was

was the same folly let loose on the Ship of Fools

as it was unleashed on slave ships? Was Le Passage
de la Ligne—a traditional ritual on board European

ships consisting in a pagan baptism conducted by a
costumed Neptune upon crossing the “line”,
e.g. the Equator—a ritual of the Middle Passage as

well? On the line or in the middle, lives of sailors

and slaves cut through. How many nautical miles

and imaginary tales between the Stultifera Navis

(or “Ship of Fools”, the Latin translation of Das

Narrenschiff) and the Carrus Navalis (or “Chariot of

the Sea”, the alternative Latin etymology to Carne

Levare “Farewell to the Flesh” for Carnival)? Ships of

Fools and carnivals, rites of Othering and festivals of

otherness, were celebrated on distant seas and

into deep oceans of oblivion where fools and slaves

might be sunk. What if Carnival was born at sea
to sailors and slaves and other destitute persons

rather than on land? Wasn’t the ship one of the

first locus of a world turned upside down with the

threat of capsizing and specter of revolt always

on the horizon? Was Carnival reborn in colonial

America after having thrived in feudal Europe? If
capitalism is the madness of our times, might we no

longer wonder why Carnival emerges anew in these

nefarious decades of greed? To anti-corporate

capitalism activist group, Reclaim the Street’s 1999

declaration of "Carnival Against Capitalism", I bring
to bear Eric Williams’ 1944 study on capitalism

and slavery in the book of the same title. 2 For if

slavery is at the root of capitalism, Carnival is a

counter to both, historically—as Williams, the first

Prime Minister of independent Trinidad and Tobago

otherwise known as a “Carnival Country” failed to

account—and symbolically—as Reclaim the Street

successfully staged in the City of London during the

G8 summit. As I have suggested before, Carnival is

the missing link between Capitalism and Slavery and

it is worth reiterating that Carnival, Capitalism and

Slavery is a triadic historical, cultural and political

combination worthy of continued investigation.

So what if Carnival, like the Ship of Fools of old,

set sails toward uncharted territories, and called at

previously inhabited locales only to make landfill in

otherwise strangely familiar landscapes?

This carnivalscape tentatively periodizes a first

carnival phase in Europe, during the Middle Ages,

fueled by servitude and feudalism and, a second

phase in the Americas, powered by colonization and

slavery. It identifies a third phase as a return to

Europe through a process of retro-colonization,

whereby colonial subjects (in the late 1950s) and

soon-to-be-independent Caribbean populations

(with the independences of the early 1960s)

migrated to the former colonial center (London) and

its satellites (i.e. New York, and Toronto)

throughout the first half of the 20th century. These

movements gave rise to the Harlem Carnival

in New York in the mid-1940s (ancestor of the

present-time Brooklyn Labor Day Parade), the

Notting Hill Carnival in London in the late 1950s

and Caribana in Toronto, among other diasporic

carnivals (in this context, carnivals of the Caribbean
diaspora in North America and Europe.) This

periodization ponders a subset of this third phase,
or a fourth phase of its own, with the emergence,
in the late 1970s and early 1980s, of immigrant

and multicultural carnivals in the Nordic countries,
(e.g. Sweden), following the migration of Latin

American political refugees. If this carnivalscape

charts a periodization of carnival according to the

power dynamics of European colonization and its

aftermath, however, the art historical alternative it

presents goes beyond historical and geographical

boundaries, and the counter-curatorial model it

offers knows no creative confines.

Sailing the Ship of Fools: A Carnival Trilogy

pursues this longstanding investigation into the

modernity of Carnival, the contemporary uses of

the carnivalesque and the topicality of both Carnival

and the carnivalesque as performances of protest

and demonstrations of dissent, artistic practice and

interventionist action. This trilogy of carnival

projects is the pendant to an ongoing reflection

on Carnival’s many turns (as delineated above).

It provides the basis for a re-reading of Carnival

history starting from Modern times, and a re-writing of

Carnival theory after the Russian literary critic

Mikhail Bakhtin (author of the reference volume for

the theory of the carnivalesque, Rabelais and His

World?) and the Brazilian anthropologist Roberto

Da Matta (author of the landmark title, Carnivals,

Rogues and Heroes). 4 It also proposes an alternative

genealogy of performance practices beyond the

European avant-gardes of the last century, and

an experimentation with display methodologies

outside of the exhibitionary complex (as presented

below). As a whole, it considers a radically different

desertion of history of performance that leads not to the

theatre stage or the gallery space but to the streets, with its

marches, processions, parades and demonstrations.

A history of performance that addresses not the

few but the many, in keeping with the turbulent

increase of global citizen’s access to and re-

creation of public space.

https://independent.academia.edu/ClaireTancons


2  Eric Williams, Capitalism and Slavery: 1944


4  Roberto Da Matta, Carnival, Rogues and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma (1979), 1991 for the first English translation (Notre Dame (IN): University of Notre Dame Press).
SPRING
September 5, 2008 / May 18 Democratic Square and Geumnamro

7th Gwangju Biennale

SPRING was inspired by the May 1980 Democratic Uprising or Korean Spring and analogized into the fountain, or indeed spring, of the May 18 Democratic Square around which it took place on September 5, 2008, on the opening day of the 7th Gwangju Biennale. A ninety-minute mass public processional performance of around 200 participants and countless members of a mostly local public with a sprinkling of international audience, it was also fueled by the unlikely combination of the Spirit of May and the resistant ethos of the modern carnivals and other public rituals of the Americas, from Trinidad to Brazil, and a hint of New Orleans and the French Caribbean.

Public assembled around the May 18 Democratic Square, watching in awe and surprise the spectacle of the first performances. Photo: Akiko Ota.

Karyn Olivier, Grey Hope. Photo: Akiko Ota.

Marlon Griffith, RUNAWAY / REACTION. Photo: Akiko Ota.

Mario Benjamin, Le Banquet. Photo: Akiko Ota.


MAP Office (Laurent Gutierrez & Valérie Portefaix), The Final Battle. Photo: Cheolong Mo. Courtesy of Gwangju Biennale Foundation.

SPRING, final view around the May 18 Democratic Square. Photo: Cheolong Mo, Gwangju Biennale Foundation.
A Walk into the Night  
May 2, 2009 / Company Gardens  

CAPE 09  

The outcome of an ongoing dialogue with artist Marlon Griffith, A Walk into the Night performed a ritual return of black and Coloured populations once displaced by Apartheid-era Forced Removals, and extended an invitation to all current residents to join into the city center of Cape Town. A night walk whose title was inspired by a novel by Alex La Guma, it took place in the Company Gardens of colonial memory, on May 2, 2009, the opening day of CAPE09, the second (and last) Cape Town Biennial. The masquerading traditions of the Cape Town Carnival, a New Year’s tradition from the city’s Coloured population, underwent a radical transformation through Griffith’s designs and display: performance participants, hidden behind screens, projected shadow images, eschewing prevalent associations between skin color and race.
Precarious Tasks #7: Try to keep conscious about a specific social issue, in this case “anti-nuke,” for as long as possible while you are wearing yellow color.

**Year:** 2013

**Form:** Collective acts

**Artist's Notes:**

Since the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, hundreds of thousands of Japanese have participated in protests against the use of nuclear energy. Even though more than two years have passed, the protests continue to take place every Friday in front of the Prime Minister’s Residence and National Diet Building in Tokyo. Of course, even if we wanted to do so, it would be difficult to participate in every protest each Friday. We have our lives, our everyday jobs. Yet I wonder if there is some way for us to participate in the protests whilst maintaining our lives.

Since I live in LA, I cannot participate in the Friday protests in Tokyo. I feel too distant. However, in 2012, as the anti-nuclear movement was gaining momentum, a leading artist and thinker based in Tokyo, Kenjiro Okazaki, tweeted the following proposal. He wrote, “Even if you can’t join the protests on site, in simply wearing a yellow T-shirt, no matter where you are, you can show that you are protesting.” (As in Germany, yellow is the symbolic color of the anti-nuclear movement in Japan.) This idea could be a key for continuing to participate in the protests whilst remaining committed to our responsibilities, no matter where we may be. Keeping conscious of this idea in our everyday routines is critical to this proposal. If we are conscious that we are participating in the protests, then the everyday itself could become a political action.

To promote such an everyday consciousness, I’d like to introduce a historical artwork. One of the most influential artists in post-war Japanese art, Jiro Takamatsu (1936-1998) was interested in how we could keep fresh eyes in our daily routines. One of his instruction pieces, Remarks (1974), is a proposal for liberating both the body and mind from daily routine. I will reuse Takamatsu’s universal idea in order to update and connect the political moment of Japan in the 1960s and 1970s to the current state of political awareness in Japan.

———

Friday, August 30, 2013 at 5 p.m. in Nakameguro, Tokyo

I prepared yellow cloth, scissors, safety pins and drinks on a table in the gallery space. In a gesture against electricity dependence / nuclear power, I also turned off the lighting and air conditioning, providing instead candles and paper fans. Printed on a wall was Takamatsu’s instruction piece Remarks 5 with my own instructions added to it.1

The day was extremely hot, around 97°F/36°C. Participants came and went throughout the day and night. They cut the yellow cloth as they liked and they wore it. Some participants didn’t touch the yellow cloth at all, which suggests that there were a number of different interests. Some came to observe the gesture against nuclear power, some came to observe a historical artwork and its reinterpretation, and some came to observe other audience members’ reactions to the work. Some were just passing by. Other participants sat and talked, some stayed for a bit and then went out into the city. However, all the participants—as well as all the people in Tokyo that day—perspired a lot. Divided across different positions, we nevertheless experience the same bodily responses. The project ran until midnight, but because of the heat I had to lay down for an hour’s rest. Having embarked upon a political action and reconsideration of art history, the bodily response of sweating was ultimately what remained.

This project is an extended project from the Japanese Pavilion at Venice Biennale, 2013.
http://2013.veneziaibiennale-japanpavilion.jp

---

1 Jiro Takamatsu, REMARKS 5 (1974): Try to repeat the content of a specific consciousness as many times as possible. I have added the following above Takamatsu’s instruction: Try to keep conscious about a specific social issue, in this case “anti-nuke,” as long as possible while you are wearing yellow color.
Jiro TAKAMATSU
REMARK 5 (1974)

Try to repeat the content of a specific consciousness as many times as possible.

Note 1: As far as they remain true to the spirit of the Remark, any number of conditions may be added, by anyone.
Note 2: The experience described in the Remark may be acted out by anyone, at any time, in any place, under any circumstances.
Note 3: Either one, or more than one, participant may act out the experience. The Remarks offer no conditions to mutual relationships that may arise among plural participants.
Note 4: Any object(s) may be used in acting out the experience.
Note 5: In the strict sense, it is impossible to repeat the content of a specific consciousness exactly, but it is possible to make an effort to do so. In terms of time, cyclic similarity is an integral part of the experience. Since precision is unattainable, however, the attempt should be the participant(s)’s goal. Physical measurements by clocks and other things are, therefore, unnecessary. Similarly, where time unrelated to the experience is involved, such time must be considered as outside the experience and cannot be included in the cycle.
Note 6: The content of consciousness to be repeated must be determined by the participant(s). The Participant(s) may receive instructions relevant to the Remark from another party.
Note 7: The Remark sets no conditions to bodily movements.
Note 8: The interpretations of these sentences and those of the problems that might arise from the things left unsaid, depend ultimately upon the participant(s)’s judgment.

*Above English translation from original Japanese text is as-is of Takamatsu's unpublished material. Which is published later in his book “Sekai Kakudai Keikaku,” (Project for Expanding the World) 2003 after he passed away.
Contributors

London-based artist Lawrence Abu Hamdan’s recent solo shows include: The Freedom Of Speech itself (2012) at Showroom, London, The Whole Truth (2012) at Casco, Utrecht and Tape Echo 2013 at Beirut in Cairo. Abu Hamdan is one of the four artists comprising the group Model Court and is a PhD candidate and lecturer at Goldsmiths College.

John Akomfrah is a director, writer and theorist who creates documentaries, feature films and exhibitions. He was a founding figure in the influential cine-cultural group Black Audio Film Collective and set up Smoking Dogs Films in 1999.

Ruby Oninyechi Amanze is a Brooklyn-based artist of Nigerian birth and British upbringing. She holds a BFA from Tyler School of Art, Temple University and an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and is a 2012-2013 Fulbright Scholar with a focus on drawing.

Nana Oforiatta-Ayim is a writer, filmmaker and cultural historian. She has an MA in African Art History and is completing a PhD in African Art and curatorial practice. She is the author of Echo: The Whole Truth (2012) and has been teaching a curatorial seminar at IUAV University, Venice and she is the recipient of the 2012 Emily Hall Tremaine Exhibition Award.

Katarina Zdjelar (www.katarina-zdjelar.net) is an artist based in Rotterdam and Belgrade.

Virginie Bobin is Associate Editor of Manifesta Journal; Assistant Curator at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam; and an independent curator and writer currently working on projects in New York and The Hague.

Blanca Calvo and Jon Munduate are choreographers, who in 1998 conceived Augaptaoan: a project concerned with the emerging practices that situate themselves between the choreography and visual arts. www.mugatxoan.org.

Trained in printmaking, Aurogerta Das did her PhD on muggus, southern Indian floor-drawings (University of Westminster, 2012). Her funded research on indigenous arts was conducted under the aegis of INHA, Paris while she was the CREAM Visiting Research Fellow at Westminster. She is a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Hertfordshire.

Fatima El-Tayeb teaches at the University of California, San Diego. She is the author of European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postcolonial Europe (University of Minnesota Press, 2011) as well as of numerous articles on the interactions of race, gender, sexuality, and nation. Before moving to the U.S., she lived in Germany and the Netherlands, where she was active in black feminist, migrant, and queer of color organizations.

Patrick D. Flores is Professor of Art Studies at the Department of Art Studies at the University of the Philippines and Curator of the Vargas Museum in Manila. He is Adjunct Curator at the National Art Gallery, Singapore. He has published works on Asian Art and curatorial practice.

Raimi Gbadamosi is a contemporary British conceptual artist, writer and curator who received his Doctorate in Fine Art from the Slade School of Fine Art, London. He is currently professor in Fine Art, Wits School of Fine Arts, Johannesburg.

Sharlene Khan is a South African visual artist, currently based in London and engaged in a PhD in Arts, exploring the concept of “postcolonial masquerading”.

Kapwani Kiwanga studied Anthropology and Comparative Religions at McGill University. She has been an artist-in-residence in Paris, Eindhoven and Dakar and has exhibited in many locations internationally including Paris, Glasgow, Almeria and London. Her film and video works have been nominated for two BAFTAs and have received awards at international film festivals.

Giulia Lamoni is a Post-doctoral Fellow at the Instituto de História da Arte of the Universidade Nova in Lisbon, Portugal. Her research project, which focuses on feminist perspectives on Portuguese and Brazilian contemporary art, is financed by the Fundação para Ciência e Tecnologia (Portugal).

Bouchra Ouziquen is a performer and choreographer born in Morocco and trained in France. Since 2007, Ouziquen has been a co-organizer of the annual festival Recontres Chorégraphiques in Marrakech.

Adriano Pedrosa is an independent curator and writer based in São Paulo. He was co-curator of the 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011) and is director of Programa Independente da Escola São Paulo (PIESP).

Dr. Simon Sheikh is a curator and theorist who lives in Berlin and London. He is Reader in Art and Programme Director of MFA Curating at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is a correspondent for Springerin, Vienna, and a columnist for e-flux Journal, New York. A collection of his essays is forthcoming from b_books.

Bisi Silva is an independent curator and the founder/director of Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos (CCA, Lagos) which opened in December 2007. She curated the Dakar Biennale in Senegal in 2006 and co-curated The Progress of Love, a transcontinental collaboration across three venues in Nigeria and America from Oct 2012 – Jan 2013. Since 2011 she has been the curatorial advisor for Tiwani Contemporary, London.

Koki Tanaka. Artist. For further information, visit a website: www.kktkik.com
fleeing from conflict and famine. Somalians were particularly affected by the complexity of the issue, as their way of speaking. Usually both peoples way of life as well as their language analysis, the history of Somalia, these maps intend to demonstrate conveniently to the small pockets of applicants from the north in particular. Such accent tests of migration.

September 2012, a group of specialists working in the organizations and a core group of linguists, graphic designers, artists, researchers, consisting of the Dutch Office for Art, Design and Theory in collaboration with Lawrence Abu Hamdan and the army service.

The asylum seekers, who are from the north and the south of the country.

During the meeting was called because we feel that these accent tests are becoming increasingly unjust and unable to contest the results hinge on a couple of words and competing scripts.

The analysis of their language/official status of their native language, the Latin script, (standard Somali) Somali has been the declared.

Back and a truce was declared. In 1974, soldiers and lost Ogaden, igniting a annexation of the state of the republic of Somalia. The southern and central Mozambique was an area that had been occupied by the South African army. The UN declared the area.

By the civil wars, humanitarian aid had not had a governmental or economic infrastructure.

March 1991, the southern government since and has not had a state of the republic. In January 1991, the south to north. And causing mass displacement, and human rights organizations, education and cultural rights, and causing mass population movement (SOM). The war in Somalia.

In 1995, American aid was removed causing a mass outbreak of famine once more, largely in the north of the country. Governmental or economic infrastructure.

In 2011, the worst famine was recorded in the United Nations Somalia. The worst famine was recorded in 2011, the worst famine was recorded.

Mortality had risen threefold in a few months. The mortality rate was more than 7 times as high as the maximum capacity of the camps was 90,000. The worst famine was recorded in 2011, the worst famine was recorded.