

# *Collectively Annotated Bibliography*

On Artistic Practices  
in the Expanded Field  
of Public Art



research by

**Visible Project**

Cittadellarte – Fondazione Pistoletto  
Fondazione Zegna

and

**Public Art Agency Sweden**

edited by

**Judith Wielander  
and Matteo Lucchetti**

Alternative  
Economies

Community-  
based

Decolonial  
Narratives

Environmental  
Issues

Feminisms

Impacting  
Mediascapes

Indigenous  
Rights

Labour  
Fights

Legal  
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Making  
Assemblies

Migrant  
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New  
Archives

Sustainable  
Urbanisation

Social  
Design

Rural  
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Struggles

Queer  
Cultures

Publishing  
Matters

Protest  
Forms

Performing  
Communities

Pedagogical  
Platforms

# *Preamble*

by Rebecka Katz Thor,  
Public Art Agency Sweden

At this moment, in the autumn of 2020, our shared public space is as contested as ever. As a consequence of the pandemic, citizens around the world are asked to keep a safe distance from each other, which alters our movements in the public sphere. And even more pressing, the passing of the summer bears with it a great responsibility to reflect on the demands made by the Black Lives Matter movement, questioning whether statues of former slave traders and colonisers should remain in the public domain. Art in the public sphere will, and should always, be discussed, assessed and reassessed.

This publication and digital platform are the result of a longstanding commitment by the Public Art Agency Sweden, as a governmental agency, to matters of knowledge production in terms of collective and critical work in the expanded

field of public art. Between 2018 and 2020, the Public Art Agency Sweden was commissioned to initiate and support a wider dissemination of knowledge of public art, as a part of the policy of ‘Designed Living Environment’ and urban and societal transformation. We have encouraged, commissioned and funded academic research, organised conferences and seminars, published an overview of academic research at Swedish universities and collaborated with artistic and curatorial education programmes to further the field – in order to establish and expand knowledge on the nature of public art, its processes and curatorial methods, as well as readings and reflections on existing and historical works.

In the spring of 2019, we invited *Visible* to edit an ‘annotated bibliography’, that is, a classic bibliography with brief explanations of the major themes of each book. Our aim was to broaden the scope and reach beyond solely Western academic publications, into other realms and expressions relevant to the field of public art on a global scale. What you have before you is the result of that commission – together with a digital platform available on *Visible*’s website and a physical library consisting of the books presented in this publication at the Public Art Agency Sweden’s headquarters in Stockholm.

The idea behind this commission was twofold: firstly, as stated above, we wanted to edit an overview of the knowledge of the extended

field of public art and provide a resource for its development. Secondly, we wanted to reconnect to a previous activity of the Public Art Agency Sweden, namely the *Informationscentrum* (Centre for Information) which ran from 1976 to 1996 and was a resource for art production, with an archive and a library open to the public. The actual physical library resulting from this commission will, in a similar manner, facilitate both academic and artistic research, as well as being a resource for artistic and curatorial commissions and collaborations. With this we hope to further develop strategies for knowledge production within and beyond the agency.

– Rebecka Katz Thor,  
Editor for In-Depth Materials and Reflection,  
Public Art Agency Sweden, October 2020

*Since 1937, Public Art Agency Sweden has explored and developed the interaction between contemporary art and public spaces. Through site-specific art, temporary interventions, urban development projects, discussions and publications we strive to contribute to the development of both contemporary art and public spaces.*

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8th Festival de Performance de Cali, 2011,  
by Helena Producciones, 1998—ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artists. (2011 Visible Award recipient)

# Collective Narratives for Urgent Transformations

by Matteo Lucchetti  
and Judith Wielander  
—Visible

‘Poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought.’

Audre Lorde

## The Commission

As curators of the *Visible* project,<sup>1</sup> we have been fascinated by the way in which long-term socially engaged art projects take form in their initial phases. What makes an artist, a curator or a collective decide to dedicate so much of their initiative, time and energy to give shape to a proposition for the collective good? When asked, they would often refer to reading as a source of inspiration for the alternative perspectives that their projects embodied. So, when the Public Art Agency Sweden commissioned us with compiling this annotated bibliography on the expanded field of public art, we didn’t have to look any further than to the translocal network of practitioners that we have established through *Visible* in the last ten years of work. The original commission was to draft a bibliography that could be closer to the evolving methodologies of artists and curators, in their attempt to transform





theoretical achievements into new spaces for action in the so-called expanded field of public art. In dialogue with the Public Art Agency, we problematised the notion of ‘public art’ as a category responding to a very Western perspective on art and public space, and we interpreted the expanded field as an interdisciplinary one, where many forms of knowledge and points of view could join.

This research mutated its procedures from the collaborative methodology through which the *Visible* project has been conceived, creating, every second year, forms of solidarity and support with the most current and interesting socially engaged artistic practices in

a global context, through a transnational, intergenerational, gender and racially diverse advisory board. We imagined a corpus of about 150 printed materials, composed of publications focusing on artistic practices in the expanded field of art with a public purpose. The selection of the texts reflects a decolonial perspective that takes into account the bias, privileges and power positions of those who wrote the dominant perspectives on art history so far. By acknowledging the ever-changing and multidisciplinary protagonists of such a field, this annotated bibliography aims at showing the interdependence of the several positions that animate the debate on the role of art in the public domain today.



The Concept

We decided to focus on the expanded field of public art as a territory to be investigated from the perspective of the financial crisis of 2007–08, as a symbolic event of the collapse of the globalisation of the economy and its repercussions on the lives of people worldwide. Many of the urgencies, problems and issues that artistic practices have been embracing in the public domain over the last ten years have to do with the consequences of such a crisis and, more broadly, with the effects of neoliberal politics that intertwine with the financialisation of the economy and its abstract disconnection to the exploited resources on the ground. With this in mind, the annotated bibliography focuses on the publications that emerged in the last ten years, as a way to analyse, document and critically reflect on the aftermath of such a crisis through the propositions of the artistic practices and the communities



around them. Environmental issues, indigenous rights, gentrifying processes, intensified migration movements, queer and racial struggles, are just some of the reoccurring urgencies that the artistic interventions in the public sphere are dealing with, and that show the entanglement of the different art scenes in a global context. As some themes emerged strongly in the last ten years of research, showing the global issues through which artistic practices are organising their work today, we decided to compile the bibliographic suggestions through these topics, therefore offering many different thematic entry points that open up to a dialogical space among the choices of the curators. Far from being a way of categorising in an encyclopaedic way the radical, non-normative pieces of literature presented here, we thought of these themes as a way to highlight the urgencies of our times, and the use of them as a tool to establish bridges towards researchers and scholars.



Trampoline House by Morten Goll and Tone Olaf Nielsen, 2009—ongoing. Courtesy of the artists. (2019 Visible Award shortlisted project)





Maliouba Initiative by Atelier Eric Van Hove,  
2016–ongoing. Courtesy of the artist.  
(2019 Visible Award longlisted project)

## The Research Procedures

The annotated bibliography is introduced by a conversation with a philosopher, an academic researcher and an independent curator to reflect on the meaning of creating a bibliography today, which informs and inspires artistic practices in the extended field of public art. The respondents are Gabi Ngcobo, curator, educator and founding member of the collaborative platforms NGO – Nothing Gets Organized (since 2016) and Centre for Historical Reenactments (CHR, 2010–14) in Johannesburg. Her curatorial practice deals with notions of decolonisation – looking for ways to transform normative understandings and definitions so as to reconfigure historical positions. Andrea Phillips, BALTIC Professor and Director of BxNU Research Institute, Northumbria University and BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, investigating the economic and social construction of publics within contemporary art, and Emanuele Coccia, writer, philosopher and Associate Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, whose work focuses on topics as broad as the history of European normativity, the philosophy of plants and images in the context of art, fashion and advertising.

We then invited ten curators and researchers from diverse backgrounds and contexts, who are part of the *Visible* advisory board's network, to share their research with us and compile a list of ten publications each, noting the reasons why they have suggested these titles as the most representative of the current debate on the present and future of art in the public domain. Each bibliographical note is supplemented with one or more quotes – some in their original language – as well as hyperlinks to the publishing houses or reviews, enabling the reader to explore topics addressed in the suggested books in more detail.

The following ten colleagues were invited to join us in collating a list of books that could represent a turning point in defining the current debate on the re-negotiations of what forms art in the public space can take: Miguel A. López (co-director and chief curator of TEOR/ética, a Central American and Caribbean contemporary art centre in San José), LU Pey-Yi (founding director of the MA Program on Critical and Curatorial Studies of Contemporary Art, National Taipei University of Education in Taipei), Julia Morandeira Arrizabalaga (co-director of the Escuelita CA2M, Madrid), Narawan Kyo Pathomvat

(founder and director of the Reading Room in Bangkok), the RAW Material Company (Marie Hélène Pereira, Dulcie Abrahams Altass, Fatima Sy and Tabara Korka Ndiaye – a transdisciplinary centre for art, knowledge and society in Dakar), Sheila Sheik (lecturer, convenor of the MA in Postcolonial Culture and Global Policy and the MPhil/ PhD in Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths University in London), Pelin Tan (sociologist, activist and architectural theorist, 2019–20 Recipient of the Keith Haring Fellowship in Art and Activism), Meenakshi Thirukode (writer, curator and director of New Media for the Bushwick Film Festival in New York), Joanna Warsza (curator in the fields of visual and performing arts, architecture and head of CuratorLab at Konstfack in Stockholm), Vivian Ziherl (curator, researcher, critic and founder of the not-for-profit foundation Frontier Imaginaries, working between Amsterdam and Brisbane).

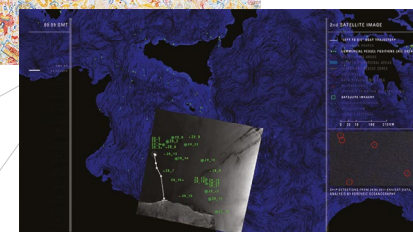
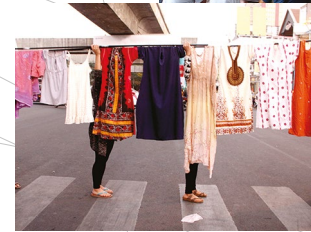
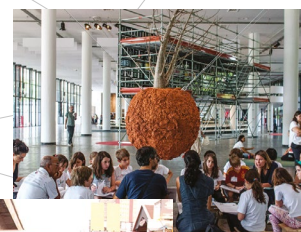
### A Reflection on Public Space in Pandemic Times

We started working on this research in 2019, and little did we know that in the early months of the following year a pandemic would have affected our lives so profoundly. So, when we formulated the questions to the three respondents we reflected on how the experience of different lockdowns at different latitudes and different governmental responses to the emergency were also symptoms of asymmetrical structures of privilege with consequently different conceptions of public space. Independent curator and artist Gabi Ngcobo, for instance, pointed out from her experience in Johannesburg, that ‘it is important to resist what the pandemic is seemingly inspiring: regionalisms that will force us back into engaging from a conceptual vacuum lacking in reflectivity, solidarity and cross-continental dialogues that are more urgent now than ever before’. We wanted therefore to problematise the Western construction of the public domain as a given, universally accepted concept, and rather suggest its existence in its translocal sense, operating via networks of dialogue and mutual support, where a multiplicity of uses and understandings are encompassed in a new formulation of such a concept. Italian philosopher Emanuele Coccia helped us in this effort, claiming that ‘the new public space is already transnational and translocal’, suggesting that ‘the idea of place will have to be abandoned in favour of migration’. He continues: ‘There is public domain only through and in the middle of a migration: there is a shared space only when two or more spaces, two or more places

can communicate. And what we call migration is only the bridge that allows one to humanely connect two realities geographically distant from each other. We should rewrite the political geography of the planet in this way: consider that a territory becomes political, it becomes public space only when it has been joined to other territories through migrations that have led the inhabitants of one to inhabit the other and vice versa, and make the two spaces culturally and politically inseparable.’ Perhaps this annotated bibliography represents a possible alliance that departs from the bookshelves of our living rooms while we are experiencing isolation and social distancing in the solitude of our homes. The bonds that this research visualises across book suggestions and urgencies of our times is already an extended field where art practices for the common good are planting new seeds.

- 1 *Visible* (by Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto and Fondazione Zegna) is a project that researches, produces and sustains socially engaged artistic practices in a global context. Curated since its start in 2010 by Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti, *Visible* looks at art projects that consider the social body as a potential for bringing about responsible transformation: artists who initiate long-term processes dealing with environmental issues, alternative economies, indigenous rights, new pedagogical models, migration and displacements, among the many other urgencies of our times. *Visible*'s name comes from the need to make visible the invisible artistic strategies that are being applied daily in creative acts towards the common good in society. *Visible* also alludes to how artists are able to change the framework, speed and scale through which we perceive visible reality, and expand our horizons regarding what we consider our reality to be and look like.









2019 Visible Award Temporary Parliament at the Salle du Conseil de Paris at the Hôtel de Ville.  
This was the 5<sup>th</sup> and last edition of Visible Award Public Jury in the form of a Temporary Parliament.  
Courtesy of the *Visible Project* and Lafayette Anticipations. Photo by Benoit Lorent.

# *Collectively Annotated Bibliography*

On Artistic Practices  
in the Expanded Field  
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to access the Visible  
projects' archive

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# Alternative Economies



*Hunger, Inc.* by Elia Nurvista, 2015.  
Courtesy of the artist.  
(2017 Visible Award shortlisted project)

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Sustainable Urbanisation   Social Design   Rural Politics   Racial Struggles   Queer Cultures   Publishing Matters   Protest Forms   Performing Communities   Pedagogical Platforms



ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *Against Meritocracy: Culture, Power and Myths of Mobility*

Author  
**Jo Littler**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2017**

**AP** Awards, such as Visible, are implicated in a structure of social ascendance based on privilege. 'Innate talent' is a founding myth of contemporary art. If we are to change the addiction to meritocracy that defines contemporary culture, we need to think about how we are gatekeepers and how we allow access to the spaces, economies and methods of cultural production.

'The first problem with the contemporary meaning of meritocracy is that it endorses a competitive, linear, hierarchical system in which by definition certain people must be left behind. The second problem is that the contemporary logic of meritocracy frequently (not always) assumes that talent and intelligence are innate: it depends on and a centralised conception of intellect and aptitude.

The third problem with the contemporary idea of meritocracy is that it ignores the fact that climbing the ladder is simply much harder some people than others.

The fourth key problem with the contemporary ideology of meritocracy is its uncritical valorisation of particular forms of status, in the hierarchical ranking of professions and status it endorses. The fifth key problem with the contemporary ideology of meritocracy, and the one which moves us into the territory of considering why it has such currency and power, is that it functions as an ideological myth to obscure and extend economic and social inequalities.'

ANNOTATED BY **JULIA MORANDEIRA ARRIZABALAGA**

## *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically*

Author  
**Chantal Mouffe**

Publisher  
**Verso**

Year  
**2013**

**JMA** When the neutralising consensus hailed by contemporary forms of social democracy has clearly failed in representing the pluralism of society and its demands, Mouffe's agonism seems more urgent than ever to re-animate politically the public sphere. In this publication she updates her project of returning the political to the heart of democracy by understanding it as an arena for productive conflictuality, in different dimensions (international politics, cosmopolitanism, Europe, etc.). She further devotes a chapter to artistic and cultural practices, which she regards as instrumental in the construction of a counter-hegemony. Agonistic artistic practices, she argues, mobilise affects and shape novel subjectivities against dominant powers, while seeking to reactivate the political in public space in alliance with other critical experiences – and this is why they should endeavour to dispute the institutional realm.

'In my opinion, those who work in the field of art and culture fall under the category of "organic intellectuals", to put it in Gramsci's terms.'

## *Les arts de la citoyenneté au Sénégal: Espaces contestés et civilités urbaines*

Authors  
**Mamadou Diouf,  
Rosalind Fredericks**

Publisher  
**Editions Karthala**

Year  
**2013**

**RMC** This book is a major contribution to the research on African cities. It identifies different socio-political, cultural and aesthetic sensibilities that were new at the time and which are brought into conversation with well-established practices in Senegalese society. Rich and diverse in forms, the practices analysed range from the technique of *suwër* (painting under glass) to Senegalese hip-hop, through a look at waste management and its actors. The negotiations and reconfigurations of urban and imagined spaces underpinned by the arrival of new young people complicates the analysis of African cities. The contributions have the merit of following this density by moving away from a certain analysis which would have struggled to grasp the workings of these arts of citizenship.

‘L’intérêt de l’approche des questions urbaines africaines en terme de communauté civique est de permettre de penser la superposition et les interaction entre les ressources précoloniales, coloniales et postcoloniales et d’évaluer en même temps comment les différentes ressources, ensemble ou séparément, sont sollicités de manière stratégique dans les processus de formation et de fragmentation des communautés politiques urbaines et de gestion des villes.’

## *‘The Author as Producer’ in Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Vol 2, Part 2, 1931–1934*

Author  
**Walter Benjamin**

Publisher  
**Harvard University  
Press**

Year  
**1999**

**AP** Walter Benjamin’s writing – and life story – has been with me from an early stage, initially as a school student through his writing on Brecht (wherein he coined the term ‘dialectics at a standstill’ to describe Brecht’s political methodology of playwriting and theatre direction) and then as a PhD student getting lost in *The Arcades Project*, a truly ‘poethical’ series of writings, to take up Ferreira da Silva’s term. But it is in ‘The Author as Producer’ that I find most connection to ongoing debates about the role of the artist and curator in contemporary politics, and a text I think of often in discussing the *Visible* project. The short text is a transcript of an address Benjamin gave to the Institute for the Study of Fascism in Paris in 1934, in which he contrasts an ‘autonomous’ artist with a ‘tendentious’ one.

→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

‘You will remember how Plato deals with poets in his ideal state: he banishes them from it in the public interest. He had a high conception of the power of poetry, but he believed it harmful, superfluous-in a perfect community, of course. The question of the poets right to exist has not often, since then, been posed with the same emphasis; but today it poses itself. Probably it is only seldom posed in this form, but it is more or less familiar to you all as the question of the autonomy of the poet, of his freedom to write whatever he pleases. You are not disposed to grant him this autonomy. You believe that the

present social situation compels him to decide in whose service he is to place his activity. The bourgeois writer of entertainment literature does not acknowledge this choice. You must prove to him that, without admitting it, he is working in the service of certain class interests. A more advanced type of writer does recognize this choice. His decision, made on the basis of class struggle, is to side with the proletariat. This puts an end to his autonomy. His activity is now decided by what is useful to the proletariat in the class struggle. Such writing is commonly called tendentious.’

ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *Capitalist Sorcery: Breaking the Spell*

Authors  
**Philippe Pignarre,  
Isabelle Stengers**

Publisher  
**Palgrave Macmillan**

Year  
**2007**

‘Neo-pagan witches have learned that in the first place the technique or the art, the craft that they call magic is not what has to be rediscovered, in the sense of an authentic secret. It is a matter of reclaiming, of reactivating. And it is also a matter of relaying the old knowledge that such an art forces one to pay attention, to protect oneself, that is to say in the first place and above all, not to think of oneself as sufficient unto oneself. They have learned (again) the necessity of casting the circle, of creating the closed space where the forces they have a vital need for can be convoked.’

**AP** The authors do this as part of their ongoing dismantling of the dominance of Western scientific rationality: ‘What makes people uncomfortable, what is difficult to accept is that witches are pragmatic, radically pragmatic: truly experimental technicians, experimenting with effects and consequences. We have the habit of looking behind; the technique for what would justify it or provide a guarantee but a guarantee against what?’ (p. 138).

The artist Emily Hesse and I are trying to think about what might constitute a ‘Witches Institution’ in an ongoing debate about the future of cultural institutions and their current dismal, politically submissive and hypocritical political structures. What would/could an institution run by alternative magic be? This question points to a radical future that necessitates brave attempts to change; I believe that *Visible* is doing this right now.

ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *Cornelius Cardew: A Life Unfinished*

Author  
**John Tilbury**

Publisher  
**Copula**

Year  
**2008**

**AP** Musician, organiser and writer John Tilbury is a pianist and multi-instrumentalist, whose work has been core to the development of live prepared instrumentation techniques and, perhaps most importantly, the insistence of an ethic (or politic) of collective music-making. He played alongside Cornelius Cardew until the latter’s death in 1981 and was involved in the development of AMM, the ‘cryptic acronym under which the group still performs’ (p. 283) and the Scratch Orchestra. This book is the most intimate and detailed analysis of Cardew’s life and works. But also, within, Tilbury’s own ethics of listening and responding shines through, alongside his uneasy relationship with Cardew’s fame on the European contemporary music circuit in the 1970s and 80s. Tilbury writes as an historian, a friend and, most importantly as a musician. Describing *Treatise*, the 193-page graphic music score Cardew wrote between 1963 and 1967 he says:

‘To “sight-read” through *Treatise* is an exhilarating experience ... for there is no time to think, to imagine – or rather action and imagination coalesce to defy notational control, however subtle and persuasive. Thus, and here reservations surface, sight-reading through *Treatise* the sound is created less on the basis of notation, more on the basis of the player’s previous

(playing) experience, the performance is thereby closer to improvisation. But as source material the past is always treacherous; it can turn the tables on the indulgent performer, hold him hostage; the bedrock of past experience is too easily accessible, too comforting, dissuades the performer from leaving the ground, from flying and discovering.’

For me, this is like a political manifesto.

ANNOTATED BY **MIGUEL A. LÓPEZ**

## *Dark Matter: Art and Politics in the Age of Enterprise Culture*

Author  
**Gregory Sholette**

Publisher  
**Pluto Pr**

Year  
**2011**

**ML** *Dark Matter* is a brilliant exploration of the genealogies of critical art and the political economy of the art world. The author addresses the dependency that exists between marginalised artists and art practices – what he calls the ‘dark matter’ – and the mainstream elite art, highlighting the possibilities of alternative and non-commercial creative work to intervene in the public and introduce other ways of think and discussing collectivism, ethics, the market, communication and technology.

‘Militant street theater, counterfeit corporations, interventionist research portals, knitting networks, pie throwers, ninjas, snake charmers, river rafters, amateur scientists – this emerging aesthetics of resistance may be no more than a minor art of attractions and marvels and tactics, a politics of sometimes overt and sometimes tepid acts of delinquency, or even bitter gestures of discontent, and yet their “gifts of resistance” must continue to impart an expectation.’

ANNOTATED BY **PELIN TAN**

## *Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era*

Authors  
**Giacomo D’Alisa,  
Federico Demaria,  
Giorgos Kallis**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2015**

**PT** I met the authors of *Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era* in 2013 on Ikaria Island in Greece in a Commons meeting workshop. They were involved in alternative economies, community economy and cooperativism in commoning practice. The book is structured like a lexicon of degrowth. The authors argue that degrowth signifies a society with a smaller metabolism that has different structures and serves new functions. The authors centre degrowth as an imaginary around the reproductive economy of care and new commons. After the editorial and introductory part, the book functions like a manual of concepts related to degrowth. I think the book would be very useful to socially engaged artists and collectives who are involved in cooperativism and alternative community economy.

‘Degrowth signifies, first and foremost, a critique of growth. It calls for the decolonization of public debate from the idiom of economism and for the abolishment of economic growth as a social objective. Beyond that, degrowth signifies also a desired direction, one in which societies will use fewer natural resources and will organize and live differently than today. “Sharing”, “simplicity”, “conviviality”, “care” and the “commons” are primary significations of what this society might look like.’

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects'* archive section related to this topic



*IsmaTV* by Zacharias Kunuk, 2008–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artist.  
(2017 Visible Award shortlisted project)

## Community- based

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ANNOTATED BY **LU PEI-YI**

## 與社會交往的藝術:香港台灣交流展 *Art as Social Interaction – Hong Kong/ Taiwan Exchange*

Author  
**Mali Wu**

Publisher  
台北:中華民國視覺藝術協會- **AVAT**

Year  
**2015**

**LPY** This publication is the catalogue of the *Art as Social Interaction – Hong Kong/Taiwan Exchange* exhibition that was shown in Hong Kong and Kaohsiung, Taiwan, in 2014. The exhibition featured the works of thirty artists and artist collectives from Taiwan and Hong Kong, which explored new ways of connecting art, society and the public in East Asian contexts. In contrast to an earlier emphasis on 'intervention' or 'participation', the term 'social interaction' aims to avoid the binary between art and society by highlighting their interactive relationship. The exhibition was divided into several sections that focused on the different approaches and functions of art in society: art as social movement, art as education, art as companionship, art as ecology, art as cultural preservation, art as social design and art as residency in community and space.

'Hong Kong may have only started to focus on the relationship between art and society in the last few years, but in Taiwan this approach has been in play for twenty years. Its development follows three coexisting routes: the first is community organizing, aiming to improve public space through the artist's creative vision. Another route is the contemporary conceptual art action interacting with society, showing pieces of previously unseen reality. A third route comes out of social activism...'

ANNOTATED BY **MATTEO LUCCHETTI**

## *A City Curating Reader: Performative Art in the City*

Authors  
**Joanna Warsza,  
Patricia Reed**

Publisher  
**Motto Books**

Year  
**2018**

**ML** Starting from the specific case study of *Public Art Munich 2018*, Patricia Reed and Joanna Warsza, the editors of *A City Curating Reader: Performative Art in the City*, put together a glossary that enumerates some of the key concepts behind the idea of 'city curating', which is the main proposition of this incredibly rich publication. Concepts borrowed from philosophers and theorists, such as 'structures of trust', 'commons', 'performativity', 'temporality and temporariness', 'marginality', help to draw a conceptual space within which artistic propositions can enter into a productive dialogue with the urban fabric and its logics.

'The American artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles has been, since 1975, an unsalaried artist-in-residence in the Sanitation Department of the city of New York. She opened her own office there in order to work more closely with those who clean the city and keep it alive. Why not go down this path and make space for city artists and curators, who will not only become city experts for short and exciting projects, but who will help shape, build, and sustain life in the city.'

'City curating and more deeply contextualized public art would be an exciting public service. It could become a process of mapping problems, issues, and needs, connecting artists and communities, without the sensation of emptiness after an artist has left. Public art of the city curating could bring the promise of being something more than art, breaking out of its bubble, countering the feeling of things changing for the worse. This means not only asking questions but being there shaping our ideas of politics and public life.'



ANNOTATED BY **JULIA MORANDEIRA ARRIZABALAGA**

## *Be Careful with Each Other So We Can Be Dangerous Together*

Author  
**Julia Morandeira  
Arrizabalaga**

Publisher  
**Self-published  
in Beta Local**

Year  
**2015**

**JMA** What affective economies are triggered by social artistic practices? What structures of support do they give rise to? What politics of care govern any aesthetic and political form of organisation or institutionality? Written in the heat of the debate around the so-called 'new institutionalisms', this collection of interviews and exchanges with artists, curators, political activists and neighbourhood associations tackles the role and place of affect and care – of a body, of a community, of a memory – in their work. Affective economies and care work are here understood in an expanded, porous, slippery and viscous way, away from moralising or individualised accounts but, rather, in their political, convoluted roughness. Throughout the book the question regarding forms of institutionality and organisation surfaces, raising the concern of building and imagining support structures that convey these affective and care economies.

‘We need to create, instill and live new forms of imagination that put in circulation other affective economies of care towards others. Look as a one-eyed person, collectivise shame, make transparent the baclava of collective struggle.’

ANNOTATED BY **MIGUEL A. LÓPEZ**

## *Experiences of the Common Good: inSite/Casa Gallina: A Project Immersed in a Neighborhood*

Author  
**Pablo Lafuente**

Publisher  
**InSite Casa Gallina  
(Howard Karno Books)**

Year  
**2018**

**ML** inSite/Casa Gallina is one of the most committed, experimental and dynamic collective undertakings created in the last decade in Latin America. Casa Gallina's activities responded to the demands and desires of the people who live in, occupy and in different ways use the Santa María la Ribera neighbourhood in Mexico City. *Experiences of the Common Good* presents a memory of this independent space since its foundation: their activities and collaborations, but also the names of individuals and collectives that worked with Casa Galina fostering new collective and social choreographies that had a meaningful impact on the way of life of the neighbours and local users.

‘We distrusted much of the “revolutionary mimicry” usually displayed by a lot of “socially committed” art. And how that outsourcing of the social by art has turned it into a museified representation of an expectation of change, emptied of its transformative potential. A sort of parodic staging within everyday conflict, without collective energy or personal rootedness in the risks or the socio-political convulsions of what is being referenced. Of course, that outsourcing of the social serves to “energize” that expectation of transgression that a lot of artistic works or curatorial intentions embody as a simulacrum.

A self-promoting, politically correct banner, in these “creative” times. As a team, that was our greatest concern. How could we initiate another chapter of inSite (with its global artistic halo) without faking a real anchoring in a neighborhood and guaranteeing that this rootedness would not turn into a cultural gentrification of the area? How could we tear it away from the spectacular of the contemporary scene and the statements of “otherness”, without being content with aesthetically enlivening a vulnerable environment or cloning, in museums, the story of a social friction that surpasses us and that perhaps we would never completely belong to?’

## *In the Swarm: Digital Prospects*

Author  
**Byung-Chul Han**

Publisher  
**The MIT Press**

Year  
**2017**

**JW** Byung-Chul Han puts Twitter revolutions and Facebook activism into question by arguing that digital communication is fomenting the disintegration of public space and community building practices, while slowly breaking up the possibility for real political action and significant political discourse. The hyperactive senders and receivers of this communication have become a digital swarm – not a mass, or a crowd, or a ‘multitude’, (Negri/Hardt) but a unit of isolated and fragmented individuals incapable of forming a ‘we’, incapable of calling dominant power relations into question, incapable of imagining radically new planetary alternatives because of an obsession with the present and the culture of the ephemeral.

‘The digital swarm does not constitute a mass because no soul – no spirit – dwells within it. The soul gathers and unites. In contrast, the digital swarm comprises isolated individuals. The mass is structured along different lines: its features cannot be traced back to individuals. But now, individuals are melting into a new unit; its members no longer have a profile of their own. For a crowd to emerge, a chance gathering of human beings is not enough. It takes a soul, a common spirit, to fuse people into a crowd. The digital swarm lacks the soul or spirit of the masses. Individuals who come together as a swarm do not develop a we. No harmony prevails – which is what welds the crowd together into an active entity. Unlike the crowd, the swarm demonstrates no internal coherence. It does not speak with a voice. The shitstorm lacks a voice, too. Accordingly, it is perceived as noise.’

‘Under the dictate of transparency, dissonant opinions or unusual ideas are not voiced in the first place. Hardly anything is ventured. The imperative of transparency produces a strong compulsion to conform. Like constant video surveillance, it gives rise to the feeling of being watched. Therein lies its panoptic effect. Ultimately, it comes to a Gleichschaltung of communication, the repetition of the same: Constant media observation has made it impossible for us [politicians] ever to discuss provocative or unpopular topics and positions openly in a confidential setting. You always have to count on somebody passing it on to the press.’

## *Local/Express: Asian American Arts and Community, 90s NYC*

Authors  
**Curtis Chin,  
Terry Hong,  
Parag Rajendra  
Khandhar**

Publisher  
**Asian American  
Literary Review**

Year  
**2013**

**MT** This collection of essays gives insight into the way Asian communities, including South Asian, were built in the United States during the 1990s and its political landscape. This book is important to me for various reasons, one being the fact that it includes most of the South Asian community that shaped my own politics while I lived, studied and worked in the United States in the early 2000s. It includes an essay on one of the first collectives I was a part of – SAWCC South Asian Women’s Creative Collective – written by one of my mentors, the artist Jaishri Abichandani.

‘Fueled by the activism in the Clinton era, NYC was a hotbed of ideas and movements for progressive South Asian Americans in the 1990s. We had the Guerilla Girls and Godzilla in our backyards, Desh Pardesh, the festival for South Asian Arts, Culture and Politics in Toronto, and the Black and Asian movement in London challenging the norms and generating new ways of looking at ourselves. Arts and Activism were firmly intertwined, with artists collaborating and producing works across disciplines and racial divides.

The Asian American Artists Workshop (AAWW), the located in the basement on St. Marks in the East Village, was one such incubator and nexus for activity – a safe space for writers and artists alike to create culture and self-define multiple identities. Several organizations were born at this time, including SAWCC, which has been housed by AAWW for our 16 year history.’



Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

*Let's Colonise* by Kader Attia, 2016–ongoing.  
Photo by Alix Hugonnier. Courtesy of the artist.  
(2019 Visible Award longlisted project)



# *Decolonial Narratives*

New Archives  
Migrant Movements  
Making Assemblies  
Legal Loopholing  
Labour Fights  
Indigenous Rights  
Impacting Mediascapes  
Feminisms  
Environmental Issues  
Decolonial Narratives  
Community-based  
Alternative Economies

Sustainable Urbanisation  
Social Design  
Rural Politics  
Racial Struggles  
Queer Cultures  
Publishing Matters  
Protest Forms  
Performing Communities  
Pedagogical Platforms



## *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization*

**Author**  
**Chen Kuan-Hsing**

**Publisher**  
**Duke University Press**

**Year**  
**2010**

**NKP** One of the perennial challenges for Asian scholars and practitioners particularly in the Social Sciences and Humanities is how to avoid being excessively dependent on Western theories, references and frameworks. In this book, Kuan-Hsing Chen proposes a 'decolonization, deimperialisation and de-cold war' of the old colonial framework. He formulates an Asia-centric and regional 'inter-referencing' as an alternative mapping methodology and points of reference in knowledge production in Asia. Chen himself cited numerous works by Asian scholars and writers, particularly Parta Chatterjee and Mizoguchi Yuzo (the book's bibliography is a fine resource to discover Asian thinkers). *Asia as Method* has been an influential and contentious book that still invokes both praise and criticism in diverse disciplines.

'The potential of Asia as method is this: using the idea of Asia as an imaginary anchoring point, societies in Asia can become each other's points of reference, so that the understanding of the self may be transformed, and subjectivity rebuilt. On this basis, the diverse historical experiences and rich social practices of Asia may be mobilized to provide alternative horizons and perspectives. is method of engagement, I believe, has the potential to advance a different understanding of world history.'

## *BAT: Bridging Art + Text – Volume I, Volume II, Volume III*

**Authors**  
**Michelle Eistrup,  
Annemari Brogaard  
Clausen**

**Publisher**  
**Hurricane Publishing**

**Year**  
**2017**

**BG** One afternoon, while I was working in CAMP's office, Frederikke Hansen, co-founder, co-director and curator of CAMP, pointed at the three books of the *BAT* series lying on a shelf and said: 'You should definitely read those'. I did read them, and I choose to include *BAT* in my bibliography because I consider it an endless source of inspiration. I met the chief author several times, since she was one of the five artists presented in *Threshold(s)*, and she talked to me about the publication and its making with so much passion that I thought 'okay, people need to know about this', and that's my little contribution in this respect. From the intro: 'It provides knowledge and new visual imagery to current identities through the rich potential, culturally and aesthetically, of contemporary art and writing. The publication celebrates the many layers embedded in each artwork, while the texts indicate the vast amount of knowledge out there. The reader is handed a great volume of artworks and texts to create an open and reflective approach to the many aspects and influences that affect the artistic practice of each of the selected artists. It is for the reader to follow different trajectories through the publication, as the texts relate to history, politics, aesthetics and personal accounts. The reader can be led by her or his curiosity, adding different perspectives, interconnections and intimate stories along her or his journey through the publication. The first volume speaks of the connections between art, performance and religion; the second volume deals with racism as well as the omission of voice and identity; the third volume gathers artists and writers who actively critique history and its influence on present times.'

'The slaves walked on their bare feet though two hundred years of Danish history without leaving any other trace than the bit of information we find in the school textbook about

Denmark being the first country to abolish the slave trade. Thousands of men, women and children. And one sentence to tell it all. And the claim is also wrong.'

# *Cinemas of the Mozambican Revolution: Anti-Colonialism, Independence and Internationalism in Filmmaking, 1968–1991*

Author  
**Ros Gray**

Publisher  
**Boydell and Brewer**

Year  
**2020**

**SS** In Azoulay's *Potential History*, key moments across time and space that had previously for the large part been overlooked are taken as potentialities that demand to be attended to through the mode of 'rehearsal'. In some senses, Ros Gray's *Cinemas of the Mozambican Revolution* makes a similar move, albeit through a different vocabulary. As with Garland Mahler's caveat of not wishing for a wholesale retrieval of the Tricontinental in a triumphalist and romanticised embrace, Gray's book is far from a mere idealization of the period and is attentive to the frictions and contradictions therein, especially where the films in question's afterlives are concerned. But the main thrust of her reading is one of the revolutionary potential of the cinemas of the period. In 1976, Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, the 'Mozambique Liberation Front'), which had led the armed struggle for independence against Portuguese colonial rule and had in 1975 formed a government, set up the Instituto Nacional de Cinema ('National Institute of Cinema', INC).  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'*Cinemas of the Mozambican Revolution: Anti-colonialism, Independence and Internationalism in Filmmaking, 1968–1991* is motivated by the desire to understand what was singular about the experiment with the moving image that began in Mozambique during

the armed struggle for independence, when foreign filmmakers were invited to make films that would break what Eduardo Mondlane, first President of Frelimo, called the "curtain of silence" that hid the reality of Portuguese colonialism from the rest of the world.'

# *Colonial and Postcolonial Prostitution*

Author  
**La Colonie**

Publisher  
**La Découverte/  
La Colonie éditions**

Year  
**2019**

**SS** The bi-lingual edited collection *Colonial and Postcolonial Prostitution*, the first book to appear from La Colonie éditions in 2019, distributed via French publishing house La Découverte, sets out to bring to light the lasting, systemic links between colonisation and prostitution through a reading of the French colonial and neo-colonial regulation of bodies – in particular female, poor, 'subaltern' or 'othered' (e.g., in the words of the media, 'Muslim' or 'Arab') – and the historical continuum in the treatment of prostitution, historically and nowadays, vis-à-vis state racism. Departing from the historian Christelle Traud's work, in particular her 2003 book *La prostitution coloniale. Algérie, Tunisie, Maroc, 1830–1962*, the book assembles a range of voices, from political scientist Françoise Vergès, writer Arno Bertina and journalist Hélène Azera, to artist and founder of La Colonie, Kader Attia, along with artists Pascale Obolo and Souad El Maysour, and a commentary on the cinema of Nabil Ayouch.  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'Why is La Colonie extending its activities through this first book? Because to fit into the ergonomics of a publication the anticolonial laboratory of discussion on all the wounds of the colonial past that haunt our society from the inside, from its psyche to its politics, is to invent an official form of counter-narrative that is necessary to balance the forces of our world. To reproduce, in the form of an object that can be read, looked at, that can teach us about our rights, about our History, and that will remain as the trace

of a possible repair, a subject that deliberately lacks visibility in the psycho-political space of our society, it is to act against the recycling and dissolution in contemporary amnesia of the inequalities that weaken us all. [...] The main goal of this publication and of the project that gave birth to it, La Colonie éditions, is not only to extend, beyond the debates and our activities, the issues raised, but also to provide the public with tools to face and anticipate the unacknowledged and unexpected aspects of these issues.'

# *La Culture, ses objets-témoins et l'action muséologique: Sémiotique d'un objet-témoin: Le masque kanaga des Dogons de Sanga*

Author  
**Ousmane Sow Huchard**

Publisher  
**Le Nègre international**

Year  
**2010**

**RMC** Ousmane Sow Huchard, known as Soleya Mama, is one of the few people who still remember Senegal's artistic history from its independence to the present day. His book *La Culture, ses objets-témoins et l'action muséologique* [Culture, its Witness-objects and the Museological Action] resumes his professional career – he is an anthropologist, museologist, musicologist and art critic who fought for museum studies to be rethought from the point of view of our cultural, social and religious history – and edifies us on the way with how this history was constructed as well as the political, geopolitical and economic issues that conditioned it. This book is considered an important reference work for those wanting to find out more about what those years were like in Senegal. Moreover, and in addition to the fact that his fondness for the poet-president is, so to speak, tangible in reading these memoirs, the fact that archival elements are reproduced here (letters, speeches, transcripts of radio messages, as well as photographs, etc.) makes it a reliable measuring instrument for us all.

‘Il s’agit pour nous de montrer, à nouveau, que la culture, depuis l’émergence de la pensée conceptuelle et symbolique, est au cœur de toute expérience humaine, donc sociale ; qu’elle est le moteur de tout processus cognitif et de conceptualisation ; qu’elle est au centre de la dynamique sociale qui, elle, est le moteur de toute activité économique, politique, religieuse etc.’

# *Decolonizing Appearance*

Author  
**CAMP/Center for Art on Migration Politics**

Publisher  
**CAMP/Center for Art on Migration Politics**

Year  
**2018**

**BG** The curatorial concept of CAMP was conceived by its two founders as divided into two pathways: the first one lasted from 2015 to 2017, with the title *Migration Politics*, the second one from 2018 to 2020 with the name *State of Integration: Artistic Analyses of the Challenges of Coexistence*. *Decolonizing Appearance* was the first exhibition of the second round. Co-curated by the visual culture theorist and professor at NYU Nicholas Mirzoeff, ‘this large group exhibition aimed at examining what appearance is, how it is used to classify, separate and rule human beings on a hierarchical scale, and how we can challenge this regime. How do the colonised and the coloniser appear to each other? What happen when appearance is decolonised? Appearing is a social event, a common encounter between myself and those to whom I appear: because it is a social event, appearance is regulated by the state; even in terms of the body, appearance is not a fact but a process of social and legal judgment. The exhibition explored how appearance in all senses – legal, political, personal – still determines the possibilities of life within the colonial framework of classifying/separating/aestheticizing, and it works on what it would mean to decolonise that appearance. Viewers are invited to think and act on how to produce worlds where no one is illegal, where Black lives matter, where no one has to use #metoo.’

‘People inevitably appear to each other unequally because history does not disappear.’

## *Fréquence Painthon*

Authors  
**Maya El Zanaty,  
Cheikha Loum,  
Mamadou Diallo**

Publisher  
**Nownow Papers**

Year  
**2018**

**RMC** This slim publication is an anthology of rumours, love letters, poems and visual essays that trace the life of the Médina, one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Senegal's capital of Dakar. Created by the French in 1914 in an act of segregation, the Médina is today renowned for its strong community and activist spirit, verging on the rebellious at times. *Fréquence Painthon* allows readers a glimpse into the idiosyncrasies of this part of the city, not least through its homage to the eponymous breakfast sandwich that is a staple of daily life here and that becomes a symbol of the habits and interactions which sustain the fluidity of public and private life in Dakar.

‘Par fréquence, nous  
signifions la multiplicité  
des urbanités qui  
coexistent dans cette ville.’

## *A Genealogy of Tropical Architecture: Colonial Networks, Nature and Technoscience*

Author  
**Jiat-Hwee Chang**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2016**

**NKP** *A Genealogy of Tropical Architecture* sets out to challenge a common practice of ‘traditional architectural historiography’ by radically contextualising the history of an architectural style and effectively transforming the usually vague and apolitical term of ‘tropical architecture’ into a politically charged discourse that reveals the asymmetrical power relations of colonialism and the intricate network of imperial power. By engaging with postcolonial critique and the Foucauldian power-knowledge concept of ‘genealogy’ (a ‘history of the present’), Jiat-Hwee Chang explores the overlooked issues of how environmental technologies and the technoscientific knowledges and practices of tropical architecture are linked to various disciplines, from military technologies, medical theories, cultural assumptions and sanitary practices during the colonial time, to contemporary climatic design, tropical building science and institutionalised hegemonic norm in tropical architectural development.

‘The tropics are not just a physical geography defined as the zone bounded by the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, or characterized by hot climatic conditions, they are also an “imaginative geography” that was, in the mode of Saidian Orientalism, constructed as an otherness to European civilization. “Tropicality” – an environmental otherness deeply entwined with other social, cultural, political, racial and gender alterities.’

## *The Life of Plants*

Author  
**Emanuele Coccia**

Publisher  
**Polity Press**

Year  
**2019**

**ML** What if the change we are looking for in society could come from the radical perspective of looking at the world through the 'eyes' of plants? The Italian philosopher Emanuele Coccia takes us on a very original and personal journey through the metaphysics of mixture as a series of lessons to learn from plants and their way of being in the world. Acknowledged as the beings that make possible the atmosphere in which our life exists, plants are analysed for their way of teaching us unexpected things about other ways of being in the world. For instance, observing how their body is 'anatomically germinated' to explain how having roots means to have a second body that automatically mirrors, in reverse, everything the first body does. What if we could re-think migration and our idea of so-called cultural roots from the point of view of plants, imagining them as a way of being tied to the earth, rather than being attached to the transitory nature of culture?

'It is not only the most elementary movement of any human body, it is also the first and the simplest of the acts of living beings—its paradigm, its transcendental form. Breath is, quite simply, the first name of being in the world. Intellection is breath: the idea, the concept, and what we, ever since scholasticism, call an intentional species are all portions of the world in the spirit, before the word, design, or action may restore to the cosmos these intensities. Sight is breath: it is to welcome light, the colors of the world, it is to have the force of letting oneself be pierced by its beauty, of choosing a portion and a portion only, of creating a form, of initiating a life starting from what we have extracted from the continuum of the world.'

'To perceive the world in depth means to be touched and penetrated by it to the point of being changed and modified by it.'

## *Mapping South: Journeys in South-South Cultural Relation*

Author  
**Anthony Gardner**

Publisher  
**The South Project, Inc.  
(Asia Art Archive)**

Year  
**2013**

**LPY** *Mapping South* is the outcome of an ambitious exploration of the idea of the South that took place over the course of almost ten years as part of the South Project, initiated by Anthony Gardner in Melbourne, Australia in 2003. The South Project comprised a series of artist residences, workshops and exchanges that were held in Melbourne (2004), Wellington (2005), Santiago (2006), Johannesburg (2007), then Melbourne (2008) again and Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2009). Divided into four themes – Navigating South, Crafting South – Living South, Whose South Where? and Translating South, this publication presents the notion of the South not as a fixed geographic entity or a geo-economic category but as a distinctive mode of inquiry that addresses the complex entanglements of history and geography, in order to open up new ways of understanding contemporary transcultural relations.

'The South is itself a mode of questioning that, while it draws of these entanglements between history, geography, movement and desire, seeks new ways of perceiving transcultural relation today. In this sense, the South is both analytic and catalytic.'

## *Die Mauerbilder des Papisto Boy in Dakar*

Authors  
**Leonore Mau,  
Hubert Fichte**

Publisher  
**Qumran**

Year  
**1980**

**RMC** Within this small photo box one finds one of the only photographic archives of the large-scale murals painted by the late Senegalese artist Papisto Boy. Using whatever materials he could find, or allowing tourists to photograph his murals in exchange for paints, Papisto Boy spent three decades covering the wall of a fish factory with images drawn from popular culture, ancient history, religion, myth or his own daily life. Papisto wanted the workers walking past the wall to enjoy and learn from the fruits of his labours, which he updated frequently, replacing faces and words washed away by the annual rains. Known widely as Senegal's first graffiti artist, these photos are an important snapshot of Papisto Boy's talent, as well as syncretic reference points of the Senegalese culture of the era.

‘When will Senegalese socialism find a few walls for its most important painter and his incantations?’

## *Permanent Temporariness*

Authors  
**Sandi Hilal,  
Alessandro Petti**

Publisher  
**Art and Theory  
Publishing**

Year  
**2018**

**ML** Through the use of a glossary, the Italian-Palestinian collective looks back on almost twenty years of artistic practice aimed at decolonising the gaze through which we look at the world. Fourteen concepts, including hospitality, participation, profanation, heritage and decolonisation itself, go under scrutiny through texts penned by the artists as well as Charles Esche, Okwui Enwezor and Eyal Weizman, while revealing themselves as stepping stones in the evolution of Hilal and Petti's work.

‘The right of return is thus the quintessential aspect of decolonization. The right of return is the right to the urban, to a condition of heterogeneity and multiplicity that may already distinguish the sites of origin. The right of return is the right to mobility, to move freely across the region and to live in more than one space at once.’

## Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism

**Author**  
**Ariella Aïsha Azoulay**

**Publisher**  
**Verso**

**Year**  
**2019**

**SS** Historically, processes of decolonisation and subsequent nation-building have often entailed leaders of the newly independent state aligning themselves with a Western-style conception of democracy, human rights and sovereignty. Jump forward to the present moment and the residual coloniality of power and being is evident across both the former colonies and colonial metropolises. In this global context (an often 'unbearable imperial condition'), Ariella Aïsha Azoulay's *Potential History: Unlearning Imperialism* is a rallying cry to 'unlearn' the political tenets and concepts of (neo-)imperial rule and to reconfigure an alternative origin for the discourse of rights. 'Progress' is shown to always occur at the expense of some, and 'conditions the way world history is organised, archived, articulated and represented' (p. 11).  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'Since the late eighteenth century, with the institutionalization of modern citizenship and the differentiation of people around the globe along racial axis separating citizens from noncitizens, the category of the citizen has become one of the most elementary components of the imperial condition. But it may also be one of the bases for overcoming this condition. This book is deliberately written from the position of a citizen, necessarily also a citizen-perpetrator, who is committed to the task of reclaiming a nondifferential, worldly form of cocitizenship situated in a shared world in need of repair. At the heart of this project lies an attempt to regenerate a discourse of

rights from the ground of imperial violence as a reparative process of undoing the sedimented differences through which this violence is reproduced. Claiming the right not to be made a perpetrator is, was, and should again be a constitutive right of any political formation and guarantor of a substantial form of reparations. It is essential not only for any configuration of cocitizenship, but also for undoing the violence invested in objects, methods, and procedures so rights could be redistributed and their inscription in objects actualized. This book imagines and presents these rights as constitutive elements of civil alliances and worldly sovereignty.'

## S.A.P.E.

**Author**  
**Héctor Mediavilla**

**Publisher**  
**Editions Intervalles**

**Year**  
**2013**

**RMC** The S.A.P.E. or la Société des Ambianceurs et Personnes Elegantes [the Society of Atmosphere-Setters and Elegant People] is considered by its followers as a way of life, or even a cult. Hector Mediavilla bears witness to this through the lens of his camera. However, beyond history and what the S.A.P.E. summons from the colonial past, this series of photographs illustrates in a very beautiful way what links the former colonies to the Afro-descendants, namely, resilience: a common capacity to transcend traumas and survive them. Resilience is what allows the followers of S.A.P.E. to turn an element that evokes a painful past for many, humiliating for some and shameful for others, into a suspended moment in the heart of the 'slums', which describe the spaces where the poorest segments of our population live. A joyful procession of classy dandies fully embodying their role in the city, gradually shedding the dense and dark cloud of the human condition to open up new horizons to their fellows.

'La sape, c'est bien "une certaine forme de combat contre les circonstances difficiles de la vie". [...] Se saper, c'est une manière de défier personnellement la morosité, de s'autoriser le rêve, dans un contexte qui ne le permet généralement pas.'



## *Sovereign Words: Indigenous Art, Curation And Criticism*

Author  
**Katya García Antón**

Publisher  
**OCA/Valiz**

Year  
**2018**

**SS** *Sovereign Words: Indigenous Art, Curation and Criticism*, published by the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) together with Dutch independent publisher Valiz, makes a significant contribution to the current debate on art and curatorial practices in public space for a number of reasons. As a ‘reader’ that gathers together indigenous voices from around the world to engage with the contemporary challenges faced by artists and cultural workers with respect to ‘indigeneity’, the publication is long overdue and sets an important precedent. All the more important is the fact that *Sovereign Words* is published by OCA, which takes pains to acknowledge the Sámi people as the Indigenous people of the Fennoscandian region (including Finland, Norway and Sweden) and has in recent years consistently worked with Sámi artists and addressed issues of colonial consumption in relation to Indigenous artistic practice. While many publications are dedicated to the question of the ‘Global South’ (see also Garland Mahler), OCA’s programming demonstrates the necessity of including ‘perspectives from the North’ within post-and decolonial studies, as well as critical Indigenous studies.  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

“This publication challenges cultural workers (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to engage meaningfully and ethically with the histories, presents and futures of Indigenous cultures, arts and thoughts, and to consider the ricocheting effects that this engagement will inevitably have on international canonical perspectives. What will the new histories of the arts of Indigenous practitioners look, feel and sound like? How will novel methodologies of word/voice-crafting be constituted to empower the Indigenous discourses of

the future? Is it sufficient to widen the hegemonic and Modernist art-historical canon through the politics of inclusion? Is this expansion a new colonial model for Indigenous practices, or is it fostering the cosmopolitan kind of thinking that Indigenous communities have always shared? To whom does the much talked-of “Indigenous Turn” belong? And does it represent a project of introspection and revision in the face of today’s ecocidal, genocidal and existential crises? Will such a project nevertheless re-assert a hegemonic structure?”

## *TUPILAKOSAURUS – An Incomplete(able) Survey of Pia Arke’s Artistic Work and Research*

Author  
**Kuratorisk Aktion**

Publisher  
**Kuratorisk Aktion**

Year  
**2012**

**BG** The inclusion of this book in the bibliography is my loving tribute to two amazing women and curators: Frederikke Hansen and Tone Olaf Nielsen, long-time collaborators in the collective Kuratorisk Aktion. Among many other things, Nielsen is the founder and co-director of Trampoline House (the refugee community centre hosting CAMP), and Hansen is co-founder, co-director and curator of CAMP. The massive book *TUPILAKOSAURUS* is the result of a decade-long research project carried out by both of them, and it constitutes the first survey in print of the seminal work of the Greenlandic-Danish visual artist and thinker Pia Arke (1958–2007), who is also among the artists presented in *Threshold(s)*. Arke’s work is a precious witness to Danish colonialism in Greenland and what that meant for Greenlanders. Her starting point was the silence surrounding Denmark’s colonial presence in her native land: at a young age, she decided to devote her professional life to breaking that silence. The reading of this massive survey takes time and commitment, but it gives back so much.

‘In my delayed and unfinished settlement of accounts with colonial history I include a lot of stories that family and friends opened up for me, a confused cluster of memories attached to and released by these photographs taken in Scoresbysund (her hometown) and spread for the north wind. I make the history of colonialism part of my history in the only way I know, namely by taking it personally.’

*The Jealous One* (video still), 2017,  
by Karrabing Film Collective, 2015–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artists.  
(2015 Visible Award recipient)



# *Environmental Issues*

Scan the QR code  
to access the *Visible  
Projects* archive  
section related to  
this topic

New Archives  
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## *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*

Authors  
**Anna Lowenhaupt  
Tsing,  
Heather Anne  
Swanson,  
Elaine Gan,  
Nils Bubandt**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2017**

**PT** *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet* demonstrates that...

‘... we must share space with the ghostly contours of a stone, the radioactivity of a fingerprint, the eggs of a horseshoe crab, a wild bat pollinator, an absent wildflower in a meadow, a lichen on a tombstone, a tomato growing in an abandoned car tire. It is these shared spaces, or what we call haunted landscapes, that relentlessly trouble the narratives of Progress, and urge us to radically imagine worlds that are possible because they are already here.’

This book is a valuable contribution to socially engaged art formulating a critical imagination for the future of the Anthropocene.

## *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*

Author  
**Kathryn Yusoff**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2019**

**PT** From different ongoing Anthropocene discussions and theories, this short book drives a clear argument and claim about the relation between racism, colonialism and the effects of the Anthropocene. Anthropocene is highly gendered. Yusoff’s arguments are vital to understanding the terms and stages of the Anthropocene, especially in terms of indigenous studies and landscapes. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* has clear arguments that may help art practices on decolonisation in various indigenous territories that strongly relate to non-human worlds.

‘The very “matter” of territorial impulse that materially comprised the Anthropocene is anti-Blackness; it is racialized matter that delivers the Anthropocene as a geological event into the world, through mining, plantations, railroads, labor and energy.’

## *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary*

Author  
**James Graham**

Publisher  
**Lars Müller Publisher**

Year  
**2016**

**PT** How do architectural elements play a part in planetary imaginaries under the Anthropocene? This book includes authors and architects, theories and practitioners that open up the debate through field research and architectural speculation. The book has an interesting organisation of content with four main sections 'Earth', 'Political Ecologies', 'Corporealities' and 'Enclosures' approaching the discourse through climate injustice, control and biosecurity, material effect, posthumanism discourse and case studies. The book aims to present spatial cases and discourses on the Anthropocene and climate injustice through architectural infrastructure, knowledge, materiality and scale. *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary* can be a useful source for socially engaged art practices and debates that deal with climate injustice and field research on more-than-human worlds.

‘... by recognizing the plural “climates” that humans have constructed and instrumentalized for various ends, they show us that the relationships between people and the built and natural environments are limited only by our imaginations.’

## *Decolonizing Extinction: The Work of Care in Orangutan Rehabilitation*

Author  
**Juno Salazar Parreñas**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2018**

**NKP** In one of her conversations, Juno Salazar Parreñas said that ‘I wrote my book with many audiences in mind: conservationists who perhaps have never questioned the premises of their goals, feminists who wouldn’t necessarily think that the threat of species extinction could be a feminist issue, readers who would not on their own be able to link the past to the present, and people who are often desensitised to the world around them.’ Indeed, *Decolonizing Extinction* is a book that encourages the reader to question and rethink the issues surrounding extinction and conservation ranging from labour and care, climate and the Anthropocene, human and non-human relations, to decolonial and autonomy, and feminism and sexual violence – all this through a case study of an orangutan wildlife centre in Sarawak – in order to find new norms and practices to share this planet with ‘non-human others’.

‘... decolonizing extinction requires a fundamental reorientation toward others, especially non-human others, in which we accept the risk of living together, even when others’ lives pose dangers to our own.’

## *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology*

Author  
**T.J. Demos**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2016**

**ML** Art historian T.J. Demos repurposes recent art history by interweaving the chronicles of socially engaged artistic practices with environmental activism and political ecology. Departing from well-known pioneering names such as the Harrisons and Bonnie Sherk, the author describes the entanglement of art and ecology through the perspectives of indigenous communities, denouncing the very Western gaze that informed the UN's understanding of ecology, one that rarely acknowledges 'post-colonial concerns and the inequality between so-called post-industrial nations and those in the Global South'. The book unfolds around the urgencies that global warming is causing and offers an incredible array of examples of artists who engage in long-term projects, such as Amy Balkin, Superflex and Pedro Reyes. Many of the featured projects are also part of the *Visible* network, like the projects by Maria Thereza Alves and Mabe Bethônico.

'The choice is (still) ours to make. In no way should art be exempt from the imperative to confront this choice. Indeed, the cultural sphere should fight to recognize the value of its creative resources in constructing a different form of life, decolonizing nature within and beyond the human, even while we recognize that art as such offers no automatic or guaranteed redemption. The practices that have brought together aesthetics, ethics, and political ecology allow us to glimpse the beauty of living otherwise.'

## *Entangled Life: How Fungi Make Our Worlds, Change Our Minds, and Shape Our Futures*

Author  
**Merlin Sheldrake**

Publisher  
**Random House**

Year  
**2020**

**JW** Fungal networks can be tiny ephemeral puffs that live on little specks of dust or sprawl over ten square kilometres, weighing hundreds of tonnes, and reach the age of between two and eight thousand years. We are rarely able to see them, but they are inside us and all around us. Merlin Sheldrake is a biologist with the radical imagination of a poet. Sheldrake reveals how this wonderful mycorrhizal world and our entanglement/conspiracy with it could shift our understanding of living together. These extraordinary and sophisticated organisms put into question our concepts of individuality and intelligence and prompt us to think in new ways about what it means for organisms to 'solve problems', 'communicate', 'make decisions', 'learn' and 'remember'.

'A number of organisms with extreme tolerances have been sent into orbit, from bacterial spores to free-living algae, to rock-dwelling fungi, to tardigrades – microscopic animals known as "water bears". Some can survive if shielded from the damaging effects of solar radiation. But few, apart from a handful of lichen species, are able to survive in full space

conditions, drenched in unfiltered cosmic rays. So remarkable are these lichens' abilities that they have become model life forms for astrobiological research, ideal organisms "to discern", as one researcher writes, "the limits and limitations of terrestrial life".

It isn't the first time lichens have helped humans to fathom the limits of life as we know it. Lichens are living riddles. Since the nineteenth century, they have provoked fierce debate about what constitutes an autonomous individual. The closer we get to lichens, the stranger they seem. To this day, lichens confuse our concept of identity and force us to question where one organism stops and another begins.'

## *The Great Derangement and the Unthinkable*

Author  
**Amitav Ghosh**

Publisher  
**Penguin Books**

Year  
**2016**

**PT** Ghosh usually writes fiction, but *The Great Derangement and the Unthinkable* is a non-fiction book that primarily discusses the effect of climate change on our everyday lives. The author's fictional works deal mostly with relational territories, labour and narratives across planetary existences, while this book focuses on the question of the unthinkable, which I believe is an important aspect to bring to the question of how we imagine the future. The book is centred on a past event, the author's memory of a tornado that struck New Delhi in 1978, which he describes as 'a species of visual contact, of beholding and being beheld'. This pivotal emotional event for him forces us to think of the improbable/improbability of climate change. This book on the Anthropocene has the simplest imaginative discussion of all the Anthropocene books mentioned. It develops speculative imagination in critically tackling concepts such as improbability.

'Only much later did I realize that the tornado's eye had passed directly over me. It seemed to me that there was something eerily apt about that metaphor: what had happened at that moment was strangely like a species of visual contact, of beholding and being beheld.'

## *The Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More Than Human Worlds*

Author  
**Maria Puig de  
la Bellacasa**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2014**

**PT** The book brings forward the practice and concept of Care by situating it in an organism such as soil. Beside a human-centric approach the author is defining Care through its agencies, materialities and practicalities in its processing in the more-than-human worlds. Care not in an exploitative form but through a feminist politics within multi-temporality ethics is at the centre of the book. The author aims to include a temporal dimension of care that evolves like 'living soil'. This book is very valuable for socially engaged art practices that situate themselves in a more-than-human world and cultivation-related care practices.

'... relations of thinking and knowing require care and affect how we care. In tune with a non-normative approach to care as a speculative ethics, the grounds of this premise are ontological rather than moral or epistemological: not only relations involve care, care is relational per se.'

# Nature Isn't Real

Author  
**Timothy Morton**

Publisher  
**Soundcloud**

Year  
**2016**

**JW** 'Nature Isn't Real' is a lecture given by Timothy Morton deep among the tall trees of Parc Duden in Brussels on the evening of 6 September 2016. The event was part of *Nature – A Night School* organised by aleppo.eu as part of the *Jardin Essentiel* festival (2016 Parckdesign). In 2014, the word 'Anthropocene' was inducted into the Oxford English Dictionary. Jan Zalasiewicz, the chair of the working group within the International Commission on Stratigraphy, the official keeper of geological time, said at the time, that the new epoch 'sets a different trajectory for the Earth system' and we are only now 'realising the scale and permanence of the change'. Nature as an anthropocentrically scaled concept – where nature is always elsewhere, underneath (human) appearances, in the genes, under the street, over yonder in the mountains, just around that corner, over there in the forest – doesn't work anymore. Morton advocates through his concepts of 'dark ecology' that the much-feared catastrophe has, in fact, already occurred, and is out of control. Morton invites us to wake up and face the fact that we never stood apart, but have always been thoroughly in symbiosis, dismissing who is the 'host and which is the parasite'. Only the deconstruction of the agrilogistical system and its coercive relations with non-humans will allow us to change our relation to the planet and also encourage a less coercive one between humans. In order to bring this about, Morton suggests we drop the concept of 'Nature' once and for all.

'Nature is automatic anxiety trying to cover itself over. Anxiety is when things do not appear exactly as they seem to be: something is "wrong" but this wrongness cannot be located anywhere. Agrilogistical functioning smoothenes out this wrongness, treating it as an anomaly rather than as a default condition. And nature's nation must be the smoothest of all.'

'Anthropocentric phenomenology is precisely this "elsewhere-ing" of the non-human. The paradox is that as agricultural civilization version 9.0 (or what have you) now covers most of Earth's surface and its agriculture as such – let alone industry – is responsible for an alarmingly large proportion of global warming gases, most humans now intuit that there is no such thing as elsewhere.'

# Peace with the Earth: Tracing Agricultural Memory, Refiguring Practice

Author  
**Åsa Sonjasdotter**

Publisher  
**Anagram Books**

Year  
**2020**

**SS** In 1940, Swedish suffragettes and peace activists Elisabeth Tamm and Elin Wägner published a pamphlet entitled 'Peace with the Earth' (Fred med Jorden). As artist Åsa Sonjasdotter writes, their sharp analysis of industrial farming, which contests the increasingly absolute narratives of both landowners and sovereign states at the time, 'predicted many of the issues that have become apparent today, including soil erosion, water scarcity, as well as food and stress related issues' (p. 16). The introductory chapter is included at the end of Sonjasdotter's book, which borrows and extends the original title and responds to Tamm and Wägner's earlier call. Further to this, an English translation of the entire pamphlet will be published by Archive Books. Through a practice that combines plant breeding and artistic research and that is rooted in long-term processes of cultivation and unearthing embodied histories from the perspective of the vegetal, Sonjasdotter has for many years been drawing attention to the inter-species collaboration between plants and humans and the evolving knowledges and cultures of breeding techniques that are harboured within plant materials and manifest themselves in the qualities of given varieties.  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'When documents of different historical forms of cultivation in this region are assembled together, connections between agriculture, land extraction, and violence become tangible. Long-term nutrient extraction brought about depletion, which increased the demand for more farmland in Europe as well as overseas.

The demand has not stopped. Instead, it has escalated in ways that cause irreversible damage to habitats and people. [...] Cultivating these [ancient or sidelined] crops is one way to reconnect to the deep memory stored in the living landscape and to begin the process of refiguring how to live in peace with the land.'



# Politics of Food

Authors  
**Dani Burrows,  
Aaron Cezar**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2019**

**JW** Since 2013, the Delfina Foundation has invited a large number of artists and thinkers to explore and discuss food production, consumption and distribution with them. The residents have conducted this investigation with attentive regard to current political debates on migration, gender, climate emergency, colonial violence, labour rights and social injustice. The practice of sharing meals became a ‘classroom’ where ideas and strategies could be shared and networks for future collaborations could be built. The book does not have the ambition of being a comprehensive survey of artists and practitioners working with food-related issues, but, rather, it wants to shed light on a growing movement where radical imagination, solidarity and translocal situated knowledge could generate more sustainable food politics.

‘Imagine a fantastic voyage from Norway to Istanbul in an old wooden sailing boat built for arctic voyaging; This boat is carrying an ingeniously crafted mini-boat, like a chalice containing a mere handful of old wheat and rye seeds found in a museum in St. Petersburg in Russia and in the roof beams off sauna in Northern Norway. These seeds are jewels. The disproportion in size between the small “chalice” and the mother vessel carrying it symbolises this preciousness, as does the very idea of a prolonged voyage using sail and wind as the means of propulsion.’

‘... and thoughtful shopping of the twenty-first century. Yet the sixth extinction and the rise of authoritarianism are unlikely to be solved easily. We ought not to delude ourselves that everything can stay the same, or that if we only buy fair-trade food and stop using plastic bags, everything will be ok. It won’t. If there’s any hope that a decent and dignified future lies ahead for the working majority of humans, it can only lie in a full and systemic transformation approach to the way we eat, live, love and work together. It may feel like a daunting task, but the joys of deep change are far more enduring than the frisson of virtuousness that comes from local kale salad in a ham bag.’

# Politics of Plants: Preliminary Questions

Authors  
**Zheng Bo,  
Natasha Myers**

Publisher  
**Soundcloud**

Year  
**2020**

**JW** Natasha Myers’s formulation of ‘involution’ favours a coevolution of organisms that act not on competitive pressures but on affective relations. This perspective roots us in the Planthropocene, calling to change the terms of encounter, to make allies with these green beings, conceive them as partners. Referring to Timothy Choy, we must learn not just how to collaborate, but how to conspire with the plants. Bo Zeng in conversation with Natasha Myers radically imagines how this change of perspective could challenge the rearrangement of the political sphere in its agonistic dimension, so that plants can get space in the discourse, letting us discover ways of existence that we are not aware of and lead us to joint decision-making processes on the future.

‘If every political decision that we make – to stick a shovel in the ground, or dig up something or change how the land is being used, or build something here or tear something down there – every single one of those decisions that we make around our private properties and enclosures, they all have consequences for plant life. We are not talking about a kind of representative democracy where there will be a place at the table for the trees, but there will be a place at the table in the Planthropocene for the people who know those trees, for the people whose land it is who can speak for those trees. That’s the shift, I like to think. Plants have their people that are in relationship with them... who can speak up for the plants.’

‘... we must relinquish control and abandon the notion that we hold domain over these green beings. We must get to know plants intimately and on their terms (Myers, in press b). And so, we need a planthropology (Myers, 2015b) to document the affective ecologies taking shape between plants and people, to learn to listen to their demands for unpaved land and, as Maria Puig de la Bellacasa (2015) reminds us, for a time outside of the rhythms of capitalist extraction. We need to tap into their desire for forms of life that are not for us. To do this, we must learn to vegetalize our all-too-human sensorium (Myers, 2014), and as Carla Hustak and I (2012) have argued elsewhere, learn how to involve ourselves with plants. We must reconstitute what Anna Tsing (2015) might call a planet fit for “collaborative survival”. If not, their undoing will truly be our undoing.’



## *Sowing Somankidi Coura: A Generative Archive*

Authors  
**Raphaël Grisey,  
Bouba Touré**

Publisher  
**Archive Books**

Year  
**2020**

**JW** In 1965, at the age of 17, Touré left the newly founded republic of Mali, and travelled to the capital of its former colonizer, France, to work in the car industry, underpaid and with an unsustainable number of working hours. After purchasing a small Kodak Retinette, he started to document the precarious working and living conditions of migrant workers and their struggles. In 1975/76 he and several members of the independent Association Culturel des Travailleurs Africains (Cultural Association of African Workers) decided to engage in farming in the region of Haute-Marne. In 1977, Touré along with fourteen former activist migrant workers founded the agricultural cooperative Somankidi Coura on the shore of the Senegal River. They decided to propose an alternative way of thinking and subsistence agriculture (une agriculture vivrière/ouvrier) meant to provide alimentary self-sufficiency. Somankidi Coura has and is driven by a strong socialist ideal of self-sustainment, inter-dependence and connectedness. Today, the cooperative is run by around five hundred people representing an extraordinary example of agriculture as a site of resistance, including cooperatives that generate healthy rural self-organised communities. The local school building houses Touré's photographic archive of Somankidi Coura's development throughout the decades, to inspire other communities in building new planetary alternatives based on practices of soil care. *Sowing Somankidi Coura: A Generative Archive* is a long-term research endeavour by the French artist Raphaël Grisey in collaboration with Bouba Touré and other co-founders of the cooperative around the permacultures and archives of Somankidi Coura.

“This theatre play traces my life in the village and my life as a migrant. What are the reasons that push young Africans to quit their environment? They are identical for all the youth

from Senegal, Mali, Mauritania or from the Senegal river banks. This theatre play hasn't been written in order to accuse anybody. But simply in order to inform to better react.”

## *The Third Text, Numbers 151–152 March–May 2018, ‘The Wretched Earth: Botanical Conflicts and Artistic Interventions’*

Authors  
**Ros Gray,  
Shela Sheikh**

Publisher  
**Third Text**

Year  
**2018**

**JW** On October 21, after 42 hours of negotiations during the rise of the second wave of the pandemic crisis, the EU reached an agreement on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for the period 2023–2027. Most of the farming subsidies (390,000 million euros) will continue to be allocated ‘according to hectare’, backing away from the already moderate goals to urgently combat the ecological, climate and farming crises. How are we to resist the perpetuation of such neocolonial and neoliberal systems of agricultural production and environmental politics, the blindness towards the state of devastation and the ‘wretchedness’ (recalling Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1968) of the earth in all its multiple forms? How to shed light on forms of struggles and counter-movements of marginalised indigenous and local bodies of knowledge that have and are developing different visions of coexistence and ‘world making’ practices based on ‘soil care’ and the inclusion of ‘earth beings’ as actors in political assemblies (Mariasol de la Cadena)?  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

“The phrase “wretched earth” signals our ongoing engagement with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist writers such as Fanon, but also the need to go beyond their reconfigured humanism to think about the multiple human and non-human cohabitations that constitute the soil and, more broadly, our more-than-human commons.”

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects*' archive section related to this topic

*I Never Ask For It* by Jasmeen Pathreja, part of *Blank Noise*, 2003—ongoing. Courtesy of the artist. (2019 Visible Award recipient)



## *Feminisms*

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based

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## *AWA: la revue de la femme noire*

Author  
**AWA: an online archive  
of African magazines**

**RMC** Digitized in 2018 by IFAN, the Fundamental Institute of Black Africa – Cheikh Anto Diop, *AWA: la revue de la femme noire* was an independent magazine produced in Dakar, Senegal, between 1964 and 1973 by a network of African women. Unique in its kind, *AWA* was the showcase for an emerging wave of thought and reflections produced mainly by African women in the wake of the African independences. With political essays, poems and topics related to fashion and well-being, the magazine, far from making any claims, offered to bear witness to an era when women could tell their stories and formulate their visions of the world. Its digitisation provides us with the opportunity to go back to a time far from our own but with many resonances to today, both in the relevance of the intellectual proposal and in the similarities with the subjects covered.

‘ «AWA» n’a pas la prétention d’être une révélation; son ambition sera comblée lorsqu’à travers ses pages des échanges pourront se faire qui concerneront toutes les femmes ... «AWA» se propose d’être simplement une raison de nous rencontrer, de nous retrouver pour mieux nous connaître, nous femmes d’Afrique, femmes du monde entier.’

## *Decolonization and Feminisms in Global Teaching and Learning*

Authors  
**Sara Jong,  
Rosalba Icaza,  
Olivia U. Rutazibwa**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2018**

**JW** ‘The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy’, bell hooks affirmed in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1994). The collection of essays in *Decolonization and Feminisms in Global Teaching and Learning* definitively call for the creation of radical and liberating spaces in the academy and beyond. The decolonisation of universities has to go through the re-examination of how knowledge is produced and taught. It is only strengthened when connected to feminist thought and critical queer and gender perspectives open to its own decolonisation. Another precious resource are the manifestos related to ongoing political struggles that are interspersed between the chapters. Drawn up by activists around the globe, they generate a strong relationship between political action and reflection in praxis.

‘Since the political struggles that feminist and decolonial thought emerges from cannot be fixed in interdisciplinary boxes, they have both embraced trans- and interdisciplinary modes of engagement. As Trinh Minha states, interdisciplinarity is not a simple adding of different disciplines together, but instead “it is to create in sharing a field, that belongs to no one, not even those who create it (1991) and, in so doing, it questions the notions of specialisation, expertise, professionalism, and discipline. The academy is considered a site, which can nourish but also stifle critical thought and reproduce dominant frameworks as well as colonial patriarchal oppressions.”’

‘ ... the horizon of possibilities that are imposed on us female academics from the “South” and “educated” by the academia of core countries in the geo-politics of knowledge ... Condemned to deny our origin in relationship to those “other” woman, for many of us to be *desraizada* (unrooted) became a sign of emancipation and freedom.’

*‘Gender in Southeast Asian Art Histories’  
in Southeast of Now:  
Directions in Contemporary  
and Modern Art in Asia, vol. 3, no. 1*

Authors  
**Yvonne Low,  
Roger Nelson,  
Clare Veal**

Publisher  
**NUS Press Singapore**

Year  
**2019**

**NKP** *Southeast of Now* is a biannual publication focusing on writings on contemporary and modern art from the Southeast Asian region (south of China, east of India). Launched in 2017 by a group of young art historians, scholars and curators working in the region, each volume of the journal presents different topics such as the archive, movement, modernity/modernism, pedagogy, etc. I chose to recommend the *Southeast of Now* issue on ‘Gender in Southeast Asian Art Histories’ as it is a subject that does not seem to have been explored in-depth as much as other topics in the series. The volume aims beyond discourses on ‘women’s art’ and ‘women artists’ by including representation and aesthetics and other manifestations of gender and sexual difference in artistic practices and cultural formations in Southeast Asia, with writings by Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez and Patrick D. Flores, and a special focus on the women artists’ initiative Womanifesto (1997–2008) in Thailand.

‘[I]n a supremely ambivalent gesture, the future Buddha leaves behind the many subaltern women who literally deny his princely existence to seek a new transcendent state. Is this a protofeminist act or simply another in the apparently limitless reinventions of phallocentrism? Women are, to begin with, so many foils – the condition of possibility for this model man to surpass himself in obtaining perfection.’

*Living a Feminist Life*

Author  
**Sara Ahmed**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2017**

**MT** I came to theory via my life experiences. Sara Ahmed’s *Living a Feminist Life* gave me the words to understand my subjecthood, my positionality and re-iterated what I had considered to be an articulation of my practice – particularly the recognition of the self as Feminist Killjoy, as well as moments such as the Feminist Snap.

‘So much energy is involved in the struggle not to be compromised by an existence. But as I have noted throughout this book, claiming the figure of the killjoy, saying in this situation or that “I am her” can be energizing; there is something about her, a sense of vitality, perhaps, a sense of rebelliousness and mischief, perhaps naughtiness, even, which might be why and how killjoys keep circulating, keep proliferating; she seems to be popping up everywhere. As I said in an earlier chapter, if we pick her up, she picks up.’



ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *See Red Women's Workshop: Feminist Posters 1974–1990*

Authors  
**See Red members**

Publisher  
**Four Corners**

Year  
**2016**

**AP** I grew up in the makeshift world of 1980s self-organised feminist and anti-racist politics in the UK. I was dimly aware of the more activist end of image generation for the movement, but it was only later that I encountered the extraordinary history of a networked activist determinant of image production, often in the form of posters, banners, leaflets and t-shirts made in, often women-only, workshops. The facilities were free to use as long as costs of materials were covered, often set up in squats and collective housing basements. This book is a fantastic archive of posters made by the See Red women's collective between 1974 and 1990. This history leaks across contemporary art, with many now-famous artists having been involved in the movement, which has recently been celebrated in an exhibition at the Hackney Museum and Library in London.

'It was a very busy time on the left. However, while women were involved and active within various organisations and campaigns, and were attending meetings and rallies to do with housing, work, education and low pay, these meetings were still very or totally male dominated. The left wing at that time, both the radical and mainstream branches, didn't take the Women's Liberation Movement seriously nor recognise that it would become a major part of people's struggles across the world. Women's issues were seen as a waste of time, frivolous and diversionary, and were often purposefully misrepresented by the left as well as the right wing. We found ourselves marginalised within these campaigns and were expected to stay in the background, keep quiet and make the tea.'

ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *'Toward a Black Feminist Poethics: The Quest(ion) of Blackness Toward the End of the World' in The Black Scholar, 44:2*

Author  
**Denise Ferreira da Silva**

Publisher  
**Taylor & Francis, Ltd.**

Year  
**2018**

**AP** I'm currently writing about the production of inequality within contemporary art, in acknowledgement of what Denise Ferreira da Silva in this essay calls its 'colonial (juridic, economic, symbolic) architectures' (p. 84). What da Silva does here is extraordinary and politically critical for our times, in that she articulates Black Feminist Poethics as a mode of living and thinking which apprehends and moves beyond the categories of slavery (financial, based within timelines dedicated to and by a power of the concept of history and difference), towards a space of being that enables Blackness to move beyond the way slavery is predetermined. She follows C.L.R. James's demand that 'the task of black studies is the dismantling of Western thought'.

'Would the poet's intention emancipate the Category of Blackness from the scientific and historical ways of knowing that produced it in the first place, which is also the Black Feminist Critical worksite?'

Would Blackness emancipated from science and history wonder about another praxis and wander the World, with the ethical mandate of opening up other ways of knowing and doing?'

For me, this call to the absolute unpicking of the bonds of the capitalist slave narrative of Black history, written through capital accumulation, as an essential and only way of re-ontologising Black being, is particularly resonant in the current climate of Black Lives Matter and the demand that cultural institutions are reformulated. Taking da Silva's thinking on board, we need to understand that exhibiting the subject of Blackness is not enough (for it re-treads that same path of capital accumulation produced through slavery) but instead we need a total rethink of the temporal-spatial structures of what we serve to display and cherish in the name of poethics. This is very relevant to *Visible*.

*Understanding how Kurdish women are transferring agricultural knowledge about local seeds to the next generations from ecofeminist perspective:  
A case study of Doski cucumber*

Author  
**Rubar Güngör Tekbaş**

Publisher  
**METU-Middle East Technical School**

Year  
**2020**

**JW** The 1990s evacuation of Kurdish villages in the Doski Valley seems to be one of the most important reasons behind the disappearance of the Doski cucumber seed, which is an endemic species and grows in the Doski region of Hakkâri's Yüksekova district, locally called 'Doski cucumber'. Based on this local seed, Rubar Güngör Tekbaş's master's thesis for the graduate school of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University (Department of Gender and Woman Studies) investigates from an ecofeminist perspective how women are transferring their traditional knowledge to the next generation and also identifies the possible reasons behind the loss of local seeds and traditional knowledge, having an impact on women's loss of knowledge.

'Kurdish women were making a clear distinction between seeds based on "origins", by calling their local seeds as "Kurdish seeds" and corporate seeds as "State Seeds" or "Turkish Seeds".'

*A Conversation with  
Emanuele Coccia*

by Visible – Judith Wielander  
and Matteo Lucchetti

**Visible – Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti**  
**What is the public domain today?**

From the perspective of your own research and practice, what is the public domain today, also in the light of the current coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent limitations, with the creation of new states of exception and future altered scenarios?

**Emanuele Coccia** The advent of the coronavirus has determined once and for all the end of the city and urban space as a cognitive, technical and physical paradigm to think the public domain. It is because of the Greek model that we believe that public space should be thought in terms of the city, to the point that politics – the name for the public domain – derives from the Greek word *polis* meaning 'city'. Well, all this has now become impossible. The new public domain is inseparable from domestic space: it's from our homes where we've been 'locked down' that we have to excavate. But there is something more. What we experienced was extremely new. Confined in our homes we have transformed those virtual corridors that are social media – Facebook, Instagram, Zoom – that in our former lives served above all to make less distinct real spaces and times, into huge living rooms where we can free our emotional and intellectual lives.



Suddenly secondary instruments of communication, dedicated above all to private entertainment, have become the theatres of our entire political and cultural life: museums, galleries, television, concert halls, shops, universities, discos, everything has moved into this space, and for this very reason everything has taken the same, identical form. Through an epidemiological accident, the deep unity that binds any cultural, political and affective manifestation in a given society has become visible. The physical, rhetorical and architectural divide that separated a concert from a lecture, a private conversation from a public statement has disappeared. The symbolic and emotional forms can coincide and show that they are all expressions of the same reality. For one moment, we can really understand what public domain means: it is a space where no distinction between art, politics, physiology and entertainment is physically and metaphysically possible.

It is this identity and this impossibility to separate not only one's own life from that of others but also all the dimensions that constitute a life that must characterise the new public space. It's not the city anymore, it's not the houses anymore, it's not necessarily social media. The public domain will be only those gestures that allow this inseparability to be produced.

**JW | ML      Where do you look for new genealogies?**

While assembly and daily spaces of exchange are depicted through images of empty and deserted places where human activities have been frozen in time, where do we look for new places and areas of collective research? Have you recently come across any new genealogies that are being written about that develop beyond neo-liberal, Eurocentric, patriarchal structures and challenge them by fostering socially transformative scenarios?

**EC** I think that rather than finding alternative genealogies, we should get rid of the idea of genealogy. It is not the geographical origin or the gender that makes a genealogy negative. Every genealogy, even the matrilineal one, even the

non-European one, even the non-Eurocentric one, is a structure that leads to the closure of freedom and possibilities. There is no point in replacing the father with the mother, Europe with Africa. It is useless, especially because in reality there is no pure genealogy: we are all bastards and what is thought of as a pure line is always a form of hybridisation. Everything has been generated by hybridisation and mixing, so it is certainly not the fault of genealogy if we find ourselves in a difficult situation. It's never Daddy's or Mommy's fault if we're sick. The problem is what to do now, how to get out, not who generated us, the territory we come from.

The community and life in general must no longer be built on genealogy: the error of the family but also of the nation was this. We will have to imagine communities that are nongenealogical and non-territorial, capable of claiming neither territorial nor human origin. And precisely because the future will be genealogical, we must not look around or dig into the past to be inspired, we must build and experience the affinities with whoever we meet along the way.

Everything can be used, everything is useful. Nothing can be excluded. And any future meeting could be the decisive one. Here we don't have to worry about genealogies but about the strength of future encounters.

**JW | ML      What are the new formats, languages and narrations?**

The promiscuous and intersectional way of composing this annotated bibliography by the invited practitioners is symptomatic of the non-academic approach to public space and its logics. The choices catalyse the social issues and urgencies in a place of contamination and political innovation, pushing knowledge production systems to be more collective, diverse and inclusive. How do you think this new hybridization can reshape the formats, language and storytelling around the extended field of public art?

**EC** The climatic, biological but also technological transformation of the planet has altered everything and has above all radically changed the way culture can and must exist. Until a few years ago, the world was a vast space of objects and things in which knowledge was a very rare element. For this reason, knowledge meant grouping together different ideas in the same space or mind and the act of knowledge production coincided with the creation of an archive – physical in the case of libraries and living in the case of scholars. Now, with the birth of digital space, the relationship between physical and cognitive space has been reversed: the space of knowledge, the space of archives is now infinitely larger than real space. This is the case in general, but also for individual objects. Social media are proof of this: for a single life, the archive of a day runs the risk of being larger than the day itself. This is precisely why the act of knowledge production can no longer consist in the construction of archives, but must rather occur in their deconstruction. It is necessary to tear objects from the archives and combine them in the space outside the archive. It is necessary to produce contiguity not foreseen by the archives. And it is also necessary to free virtual spaces from the obligation to record only what happens in 'real' life.

The question of the new language, the new formats of the new narratives, is therefore no longer a purely rhetorical question. It is a question of how archives can be forced, how archives can be transformed into dreams. Every night, in fact, the experience of each one of us is turned upside down, reassembled, recombined with absolutely imaginary elements. This is what prevents us from considering ourselves as archives and making experience, memory and archive coincide. Half of the things we see, feel, touch, smell, etc., half of our experiences take place in our dreams and cannot be traced back to an archive or a form of memory. This is what art has to do: not to substitute itself for inquiry, not to want to write history and genealogy. On the contrary, it must prevent our lives from being traceable back to history. It has to tear down the archives, the real and the digital ones. It has to be our form of a collective, public dream.

Translocality has emerged as the interconnectedness of processes that happen in and between different localities. Artistic processes in the public sphere resulted as enduring, open and non-linear processes, which produce close interrelations between different places and people. As a result of globalisation, translocal networks made visible interdependence and the need for new forms of empathy across borders and geographical limitations. Can we see in these new networks and alliances a way to question and rework public space in a civic sense?

**EC** The new public space is already transnational and translocal. The idea of place will have to be abandoned in favour of migration. There is public domain only through and in the middle of a migration: there is a shared space only when two or more spaces, two or more places can communicate. And what we call migration is only the bridge that allows one to humanly connect two realities geographically distant from each other. We should rewrite the political geography of the planet in this way: consider that a territory becomes political, it becomes public space only when it has been joined to other territories through migrations that have led the inhabitants of one to inhabit the other and vice versa, and make the two spaces culturally and politically inseparable.

From this point of view, the other living species must also be involved. All living species migrate and it is only thanks to the migration of thousands of species that our own biological life is possible. In this case too, instead of dreaming of the closing of ecological frontiers, it will be necessary to imagine that ecosystems are born only thanks to and through migration, the conjunction of land and living things that have never been encountered before.

JW | ML

## Museum as a public space of care

When the museum became a domain of the State, and its collections public, the objects and artefacts were turned into a repository of common knowledge, and its narrations a common story to which people could belong. But the real publicness of its premises was rarely achieved. A symbolic and highly interesting case is when, in 1945, Malmö Museum opened its doors to host refugees from the Second World War who had fled from all over Europe to Sweden. In this case, the museum not only responded to a socio-political crisis, acting like a common good but the act also implied that culture, and specifically the visual arts, were there to respond to a basic need, including food and shelter from the cold. Can we learn from such an experience today – imagining the museum as an organic part of what we define as public space, and its premises as a space of care?

### Visionary ideas for today

Given the reflections shared so far in this conversation, and inspired by this speculative artistic reading of the museum of the future, can you share some visionary ideas on how art could engage with the public sphere today?

**EC** My answer to the last two questions is the following.

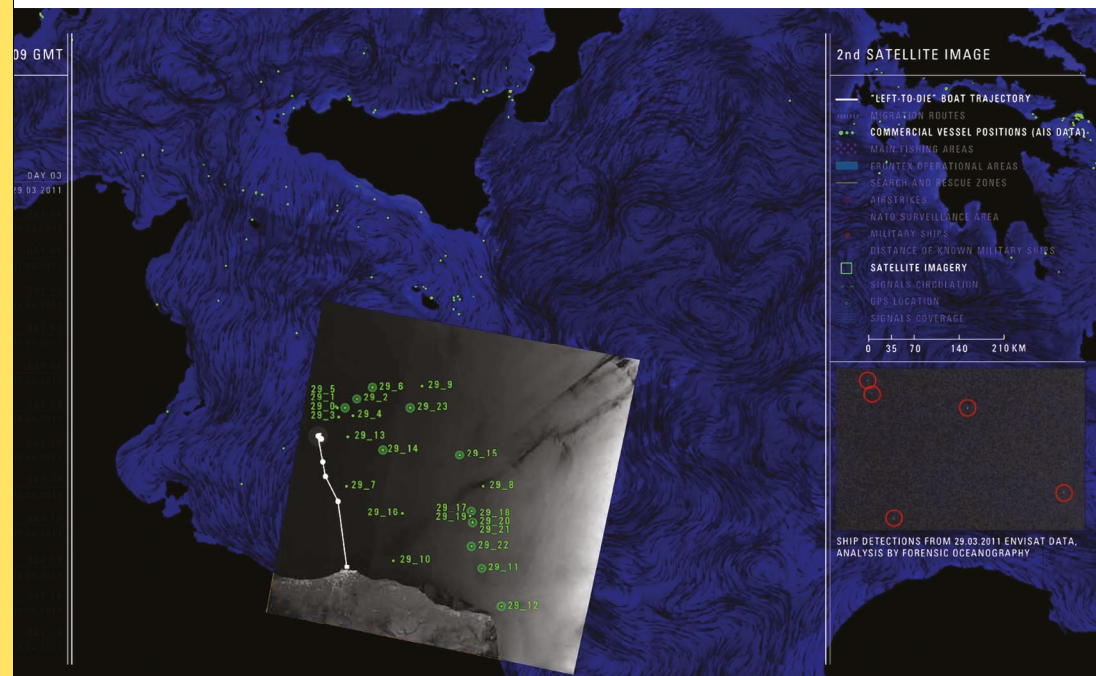
The new public space can only be formed from the museum, which will have to transform itself and become not only a place where society collects its most precious artefacts, but the place where a political community invents, builds and preserves the world. It must be the museum much more than universities and schools, because what we need to know is often an object that we ourselves make; and vice versa, what we build is also, and above all, something we build so that we can know it. Making and knowing are no longer separate. The object to know does not exist before its construction. And construction is itself the object to be learned.

The museum will therefore be the school of those who do not stop building the world they live in and living in a world that does not pre-exist their construction. Now, building the world will not and can no longer be the prerogative of humans, but must involve all species: the world is an artefact produced by hundreds of thousands of living species. The museum should be the meeting and exchange space for all species, the place where every form of life tries to borrow its own identity from that of others and build the world together in a different way.

*The Left-to-Die Boat* (video still), 2012, by Forensic Oceanography, (Lorenzo Pezzani and Charles Heller), 2011–ongoing. Courtesy of the artists. (2015 Visible Award longlisted project)

# Impacting Mediascapes

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic



## *NANG Magazine*

Author  
**NANG Magazine**

Publisher  
**Cinemasias Editions**

Year  
**2021**

**NKP** *NANG* is a biannual 10-issue print-only magazine dealing with cinema and cinema culture in the Asian world, with each issue devoted to a specific theme and chosen together with a guest editor(s). The project is a response to the lack of 'English language print magazines entirely dedicated to cinema and cinema culture from this region', despite the increasing popularity and recognition of Asian cinema internationally. The magazine focuses on producing various forms of collaborative content like interviews, illustrations, film-inspired short stories and screenplay excerpts by independent filmmakers and other creative practitioners whose work relates to the moving image, with some issues addressing more socio-political topics, for example the issues on migration and manifestos. These ten little books will certainly be an interesting time capsule of some segments and communities in Asian independent cinema during this decade.

'The intention is to shed light on an area of filmmaking that is both mysterious and marginalized, especially in regards to cinema in Asia.'

## *Propaganda Art in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Author  
**Jonas Staal**

Publisher  
**The MIT Press**

Year  
**2019**

**ML** This substantial and long-term research by Jonas Staal on the relationship between art and propaganda unfolds in this book with historical depth and providing navigational tools to understand the manipulative powers of the mediascape in times of post-truth. *Propaganda Art in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* also offers a precious contribution to the study of socially engaged practices in chapter four 'Popular Realism', where Staal defines the categories of assemblism, embedded art and organizational art, to analyse the common ground and connect the strategies of artists like Chto Delat, Tania Bruguera and Ahmet Öğüt, to name a few. This reading comes from a practitioner who shared projects and ideas with his peers, making this book an invaluable contribution to the debate on how socially engaged art can contribute by giving shape to radically different realities against the manipulative forces that build our mediascape today.

'But since the first modern propaganda bureau, which manifested in a modern, imperialist democracy, covert propagandas have shaped our world in forms and ways that we still cannot fully grasp. Our lack of understanding is one of the core reasons that such forms of propaganda remain effective, not just as resonances of our past but as continuously operational in our present.'

'Emancipatory propaganda art precisely exemplifies this most powerful human competence and awareness, whereby we learn that we can become more than the systems that script and direct us, where we can recognize how we can collectively author this world anew, where we can work to make a world.'



Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

*Teguingrafías* by Daniel Godínez Nivón, 2010—ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artist. (2019 Visible Award longlisted project)



# Indigenous Rights

New Archives  
Migrant Movements  
Making Assemblies  
Legal Loopholing  
Labour Fights  
Indigenous Rights  
Impacting Mediascapes  
Feminisms  
Environmental Issues  
Decolonial Narratives  
Community-based  
Alternative Economies

Sustainable Urbanisation  
Social Design  
Rural Politics  
Racial Struggles  
Queer Cultures  
Publishing Matters  
Protest Forms  
Performing Communities  
Pedagogical Platforms



## *Bell's Theorem: Aboriginal Art, It's a White Thing!*

Author  
**Richard Bell**

Publisher  
**The Koori History  
Website Project**

Year  
**2003**

**VZ** The infamous and incendiary essay *Bell's Theorem: Aboriginal Art, It's a White Thing!* was originally written to accompany an artwork and prize entry into the 20<sup>th</sup> Telstra National Aboriginal Arts Award. It was a shattering of orthodoxy. The award had previously been reserved for 'authentic' Indigenous art, framed in ethnographic terms. Then, in 2003, Richard Bell's *Scientia e Metaphysica (Bell's Theorem)*, or 'Aboriginal Art, It's a White Thing' took the prize with a repudiation of its very terms. It was a work that either had to win, or be banned. The text offers a polemical and mock art-historical analysis of 'Aboriginal Art', with the argument that as an industry and anointed artistic genre it is a White-determined artefact. While the essay speaks to a particular historical moment, it remains a vital critique and a seriously good read.

'It is now approaching the fourth decade of Art Centres and they have spawned a new tribe of people called BINTs (been in the Northern Territory). It must be said, though that the largest tribe in Australia is the Lyarmee who get their name from their ability to tell very convincing lies – especially to themselves. There is emerging, as we speak, a tribe of honorary Bints known as the Bookee (because they learn everything about Aboriginals from books and fully fledged Bints). The Bookee rarely, if ever, deign their presence upon the Aboriginal People about whom they have become recently expert.'

## *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism*

Author  
**Elizabeth A. Povinelli**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2016**

**VZ** *Geontologies* takes aim at the very root of liberal consciousness, and strikes hard. The book is the culmination of over three decades of work as an embedded and obligated member of the Karrabing Film Collective and Emmiyengal community. What anthropology historically tries to fix and observe as 'cultural object', Povinelli situates as 'analytics'. From there she mixes anecdotal storytelling, real-life legal cases and artistic projects with a deft grasp of European philosophy, in attempting to offer tools by which to unravel the grip of settler governance, colonial violence and their collective deadening of the spirit. In terms of contemporary critical theory, the conceptual problems and philosophical arguments are staggeringly large. In the experiences of the contemporary Emmiyengal world, they are the day to day conditions of life.

'As we stretch the local across these seeping transits we need not scale up to the Human or the global, but we cannot remain in the local. We can only remain hereish.'

# On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis

Authors  
**Walter D. Mignolo,  
Catherine E. Walsh**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2018**

**BG** During the endless days of the Italian lockdown, while I was working on my PhD proposal on post-genocide Rwandan art practices, I came across Walter D. Mignolo and his colleagues and their decolonial theories. I remember reading *On Decoloniality* in a few days, then I started to be curious about many other writings available online. A couple of months later, I was admitted as one of the participants in the Decolonial Summer School 2020 held by Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers on behalf of the University College Roosevelt in collaboration with the Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven (if it had not been for the pandemic – which forced us to meet online – we would have spent two weeks at the museum). Here you have an extract from what I wrote: ‘The second thing I learnt is that I am a white Western person, living in a (white) Western country. Until quite recently, I did not know the fundamental importance of collocating myself within the world. But now that I do, as a white Western person I believe that the issue is not about being part of the ‘whiteness’ but about being unaware of it, which means to be blind’. I consider this book to be a real milestone for the urgency of breaking free from the Eurocentric standard filling our lives.

‘For the decolonial thought, Modernity is an essentially or exclusively European phenomenon. In these lectures, I will argue that modernity is, in fact, a European phenomenon but one constituted in a dialectical relation with a non-European alterity that is its ultimate content. Modernity appears when Europe affirms itself as the “center” of a World History that it inaugurates; the “periphery” that surrounds this center is consequently part of its self-definition.’

# The Rainbow Serpent

Author  
**Dick Roughsea**

Publisher  
**Australian Children’s  
Classics – Harper  
Collins**

Year  
**1975**

**VZ** In terms of curriculum from a non-Indigenous perspective, *The Rainbow Serpent* can hardly be omitted. Through at least the 1990s, Indigenous stories and experiences were entirely absent from the mainstream primary school curriculum in Australia. National and local histories were a matter of colonial explorers and prosaic local inventions such as the ‘stump jump plough’. However, at least in Queensland, nestled somewhere in almost every children’s library was a copy of *The Rainbow Serpent*. The book’s author, Goobalathaldin Dick Roughsey (1924–1985), was born in coastal country in the Gulf of Carpentaria and lived a traditional lifestyle in his early childhood. At the age of eight, he was taken to a Presbyterian mission and partially separated from his family. Later in life, and in dialogue with the airline pilot Percy Trezise, Goobalathaldin developed an innovative artistic practice painting both on bark and in oil on canvas. His best-known works form *The Rainbow Serpent*, which tells the founding Lardil story of a vengeful creator spirit with vivid and indelible images. First published in 1975, the book remains an important first encounter with Indigenous Australian culture for many thousands of children and families.

‘Two young men, the Bil-bil  
or Rainbow Lorikeet brothers,  
Came running in looking for  
shelter, but no-one had room.’

## *Red Skin, White Masks*

Author  
**Glen Sean Coulthard**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2014**

**VZ** Ever been tempted to consider specific claims of Indigenous rights in the light of either Marxist or Fanonian critique? In that case, this is the book for you. Indigenous (Yellowknives Dene) scholar Glen Coulthard closely examines the unfolding of sovereignty projects in Canada and particularly surrounding the Dene nation. With a keen eye, he teases through the knots encountered by First Nations communities from the 1970s forward, as settler legal and business frameworks wrestled with the fundamentally radical terms of Indigenous sovereignty. Through one arc of analysis in dialogue with Marx, the fundamentally economic basis of Indigenous sovereignty is traced – refuting a narrowly ‘cultural’ basis of Indigenous rights. Through a parallel arc of analysis in dialogue with Marx, the indisputably social, psychological and aesthetic basis of Indigenous rights is also upheld as integral to a politics of ‘Resurgence’.

‘I argue instead that instead of ushering in an era of peaceful coexistence grounded on the ideal of reciprocity or mutual recognition, the politics of recognition in its contemporary liberal form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend.’

## *Sovereign Words: Indigenous Art, Curation and Criticism*

Author  
**Katya García Antón**

Publisher  
**OCA/Valiz**

Year  
**2018**

**VZ** What are the commonalities across Indigenous experience, political struggle and artistic practice trans-regionally? What sovereign Indigenous projects find ground across the national spaces known as ‘Taiwan’, ‘Australia’, ‘Finland’, ‘Bangladesh’, ‘Samoa’ or ‘Canada’, to name a few? The anthology *Sovereign Words* makes a stride towards potentials of Indigenous dialogues across continents. The sixteen contributions emerge from the *Critical Writing Ensembles* workshop supported by OCA at the 2018 Dakar Art Summit. They vary between historical surveys, critical reflections and first-hand artistic practice. Santosh Kumar Das reflects upon the art history of Madhubani art that developed a popular market as early as the 1960s, whilst David Garneau’s essay ‘Can I Get a Witness’ expounds the problems of Indigenous art in the White gaze. Biung Ismahasan reflects on the spatial and haptic issues of curating Taiwanese contemporary art while Léuli Māzyār Luna’i Eshrāghi also reflects upon the limits of Eurocentric display and advances *Tautuanaga’o fa’āliga ata* as a concept that better suits Samoan practice where health, healing, responsible governance and illumination must be accounted for in the presentation of visual material.

‘Indigenous is an emerging category that extends and adapts First Peoples’ ways of knowing and being into the contemporary moment and into spaces beyond our home territories.’

# *Theft Is Property!*

## *Dispossession and Critical Theory*

Author  
**Robert Nichols**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2020**

**VZ** Robert Nichols's *Theft is Property* does the work of explicating the confounding gaps, paradoxes and convenient impossibilities by which settler colonial violence does its day-to-day work. This book is not specific to artistic practice per se. However, its political analysis is highly useful in comprehending the institutional structures amid which contemporary art is often bound up – particularly so in European and White Anglophone contexts. The titular essay 'Theft Is Property!' is an indispensable resource. It places radical European 18<sup>th</sup> century critiques of property alongside critiques made by Indigenous authors, and breathtakingly demonstrates the shortcomings of some of the most heralded European emancipatory efforts.

‘Namely, colonization entails the large-scale transfer of land that simultaneously recodes the object of exchange in question such that it appears retrospectively to be a form of theft in the ordinary sense. It is thus not (only) about the transfer of property, but the transformation into property.’

# *The White Possessive:*

## *Property, Power and Indigenous Sovereignty*

Author  
**Aileen Moreton-Robinson**

Publisher  
**University of Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2015**

**VZ** *The White Possessive* is a collection of essays that reads with the cohesive strength of the best of monographs. The cumulative weight of its texts inveigh against the fundamentally racist formation of the European property form. With this publication, Quandamooka scholar Aileen Moreton Robinson is an unmissable reference when it comes to the critique of liberalism, colonial governance and the double binds of European political theory. The book opens with a crisp summation of the arguments: ‘The problem with white people is that they think and behave like they own everything’ (Dennis Benjamin Moreton, 2005). Its chapters address the legal conditions surrounding Captain Cook’s claims to Australia and evidence of the Indigenous economies of title that he transgressed, analysis of the white figurations of Indigenous culture in a major land-rights case, and an in-depth discussion of artist Vernon Ah Kee’s Venice Biennale artwork *cant chant*.

‘The problem with white people is that they think and behave like they own everything.’

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# Labour Fights

*Undercover Worker* by Luke Ching, 2007–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artist. (2019 Visible Award shortlisted project)



Alternative Economies  
Community-based  
Decolonial Narratives  
Environmental Issues  
Feminisms  
Impacting Mediascapes  
Indigenous Rights  
Labour Fights  
Legal Loopholing  
Making Assemblies  
Migrant Movements  
New Archives

Sustainable Urbanisation  
Social Design  
Rural Politics  
Racial Struggles  
Queer Cultures  
Publishing Matters  
Protest Forms  
Performing Communities  
Pedagogical Platforms

## Industria Publication June 2020

Author  
**Industria**

Publisher  
**Self-published  
by industria**

Year  
**2020**

**SS** During the ‘unkind times’ of lockdown in the UK earlier this year (which of course may return at any moment) when for many the nausea, strained eyes and general alienating discombobulation of life seemingly permanently on screen were beginning to kick in with force, receiving a copy of this small, exquisitely handmade edition in the post was akin to, in the words of the editorial collective, ‘[being held] gently while at a distance’ (p. 3). With the support of a grant through Black Dogs, the pamphlet, which features specially commissioned texts by Carole Wright and Cecilia Wee, and a commissioned artwork for a wildflower seed packet by Jade Monserrat, was self-published by industria, ‘an artist-run network, seeking to re-politicise the “art world” through working groups that scrutinise institutions and infrastructures in order to imagine and build towards new social universes.’ The main text, penned by the industria collective, addressed to ‘Dear friends, colleagues, comrades, co-conspirators’ and dated 25 May 2020, explicitly embodies the epistolary form of transmission that is inherent in all forms of publishing but that is afforded greater speed and flexibility through DIY practices compared with the long lead-in time of traditional publishing house routes.

→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

‘[H]ow do we enact a pause or a break from “business as usual”, when normality has been so fundamentally disrupted in ways beyond our control? [...] Institutions becoming more online could permanently open things up to those of us whose “normal” necessarily more closely resembles life in lockdown. [...] Our industry

already (intentionally) confuses the boundary between labour and leisure time, and our now always-online world with no transition between spaces has muddled this even further. [...] Without real space, it is even harder to draw boundaries between the disparate elements of our multifaceted “portfolio” existences.’

## Re-Enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons

Author  
**Silvia Federici**

Publisher  
**PM Press**

Year  
**2018**

**PT** In *Re-Enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*, Federici discusses the practice and concept of commons within diverse geographical contexts such as Africa and Latin America in order to highlight women’s movements. It brings to the fore the effort of women’s solidarity movements from various cases that debate and struggle for the commons. The book also includes discussions on reproductive work, affective labour and the transformation of everyday life that influences the way of commoning and understanding the term commons better. This book is a collection of cases of feminist struggles and other essays in which Federici discusses feminist approaches and their contribution to the commons. The book may greatly contribute to the debate and practice of socially engaged art practices that are operating in female spaces.

“Thanks to these studies and artistic contributions we now recognize that primitive accumulation is not a one-time historical event confined to the origins of capitalism, as the point of departure of “accumulation proper.” It is a phenomenon constitutive of capitalist relations at all times, eternally recurrent, “part of the continuous process of capitalist accumulation” and “always contemporaneous with its expansion”.

This does not mean that primitive accumulation can be “normalized” or that we should underplay the importance of those moments in history – the times of clearances, wars, imperial drives “when great masses of men are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence and hurled onto the labor market as free, unprotected and right-less proletarians”.



Scan the QR code  
to access the *Visible  
Projects* archive  
section related to  
this topic

*Collectivize Facebook (study)* by Jonas Staal and Jan Fermon, 2020—ongoing.  
Image by Remco van Bladel, Paul Kuipers and Jonas Staal. Courtesy of the artists and  
HAU Hebbel am Ufer, Berlin. (Jonas Staal was 2015 Visible Award shortlisted artist)



# Legal Loopholing

Alternative  
Economies  
Community-  
based  
Decolonial  
Narratives  
Environmental  
Issues  
Feminisms  
Impacting  
Mediascapes  
Indigenous  
Rights  
Labour  
Fights  
Legal  
Loopholing  
Making  
Assemblies  
Migrant  
Movements  
New  
Archives

Sustainable  
Urbanisation  
Social  
Design  
Rural  
Politics  
Racial  
Struggles  
Queer  
Cultures  
Publishing  
Matters  
Protest  
Forms  
Performing  
Communities  
Pedagogical  
Platforms

## *Forensic Architecture: Design as Investigation*

Author  
**Forensic Architecture**

Publisher  
**Röhsska Museum  
of Design and Craft**

Year  
**2020**

**BG** I discovered the existence of Forensic Architecture while I was working in CAMP/Center for Art on Migration Politics, Copenhagen. At the time I was drafting my MA thesis in Visual Arts which focused on CAMP itself and other realities linked to what we call 'socially engaged art'. Of all the things that I found in CAMP exhibition catalogues, the work of Forensic Architecture was one of the most impressive to me. Based at Goldsmiths University London, the team is constituted by architects, software developers, journalists, artists, lawyers, filmmakers and researchers who seek to supply counter forensic evidence to ongoing or concluded human rights cases. Just before the Covid-19 pandemic, I was in Gothenburg to meet an artist and a dear friend of mine and we decided to visit the exhibition *Forensic Architecture: Design as Investigation* together. Housed in Röhsska Museum of Design and Craft, the exhibition showed three different projects, explained in detail by using 3D-modelling, audio analysis, data mining and software development. Honestly, I have to say that it was one of the most engaging exhibitions I have ever visited. Strongly believing in the power of interdisciplinarity, I propose Forensic Architecture as a challenging and inspiring example to follow.

‘At a time of geopolitical tensions, institutionalized violence, and digital surveillance, in what ways can contemporary design support cases involving human rights violations?’

## *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*

Author  
**Forensic Architecture**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press &  
Forensic Architecture**

Year  
**2014**

**JMA** Sitting on a highly productive and critical juncture between expanded architecture, visual arts and social justice activism, Forensic Architecture has redefined the practice of interdisciplinary research and its agency like few others before it. This volume excavates the origins of the term *forensis* (Latin for ‘pertaining to the forum’ and the root of the term forensics) through different case studies and texts which investigate the violation of human rights, political struggles or environmental violence in different geographies. The result is a novel and complex articulation of the notion of public truth as a ‘common project under continuous construction’, and the consolidation of a new lexicon that re-imagines the meaning of evidence, ruins, remote sensing or jurisdiction.

‘Material forms can thus only reflect history in fragments and ruins, and suggest uncertain, discontinuous, and lacunar interpretations. But although we can never know the past as a conclusive, transparent fact mechanically etched into materiality, we should avoid the temptation of an anti-universalist perspective which regards truth simply as inherently relative, contingent, multiple, or nonexistent, and instead view truth as a common project under continuous construction.’

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic



*Mujawara/The Tree School* by Campus in Camps and Contrafile, 2014–2015. Courtesy of the artists. (2015 Visible Award shortlisted project)

# Making Assemblies

Sustainable Urbanisation

Social Design

Rural Politics

Racial Struggles

Queer Cultures

Publishing Matters

Protest Forms

Performing Communities

Pedagogical Platforms

New Archives

Migrant Movements

Making Assemblies

Legal Loopholing

Labour Fights

Indigenous Rights

Impacting Mediascapes

Feminisms

Environmental Issues

Decolonial Narratives

Community-based

Alternative Economies

# *Art in Context: Learning from the Field – Conversation with and between art and cultural practitioners*

Authors  
**Herman Bashiron Mendolicchio, Susanne Bosch**

Publisher  
**Goethe-Institute**

Year  
**2017**

**LPY** This book is structured around a set of conversations between arts and cultural practitioners and was inspired by peer-to-peer discussions, exchanges and encounters in the field. Supported by the Goethe Institute, this publication introduces twenty-one artistic statements from practitioners in the field of participatory art in Myanmar, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong and China. In contrast to art in a white cube setting, the significance of the works of these artists stems from the distinctive context within which they are embedded, and their site-specific, collaborative and participatory engagement with the contemporary environment. Given the relative paucity of research on public art in Southeast Asia and the significant role of artists and artist-run initiatives in redefining public space in the region, this publication offers new pathways and possibilities for further research in the field.

‘How much do colonial and war relations between our countries of origin play out in our current relationships as peers? And to make it more complex, what about identities that come from bi-national backgrounds – the combinations of the accidental and oriental worlds, or experiences in multi-national realities through relationships or residences? What about the mishmash of philosophical, religious, cultural and political approaches? How about inclusion and exclusion through language – in our case, English, as a common denominator? How are we united and/or separated through our identifiers?’

# *Common Space: The City as Commons*

Author  
**Stavros Stavrides**

Publisher  
**Zed Books**

Year  
**2016**

**PT** The notion of the commons/commoning has become a very vital point of discussion in activism, social sciences and socially engaged art practices. As socially engaged art practices in urban spaces might be useful in contributing to commoning practices and debating commons in collective spaces, many methodologies arise from art. Therefore, this book is useful to read with regard to the art practice of commons. My long-time colleague Stavros argues that commoning practices are relational and open-ended; and negotiation is a vital part. Furthermore, as he follows his experiences of commoning practices in the urban struggle of Greece and in Latin America, he contributes to the debate by bringing concrete cases to the fore and writing through his experienced practice of commoning.

‘Collective memory can become an important target as well as a means of commoning. The most obvious aspect of this relation is the power that collective memory has to give form and content to events in the past which the members of a community recognize as their common past.’



## *Dewey for Artists*

Author  
**Mary Jane Jacob**

Publisher  
**The University of Chicago Press**

Year  
**2018**

**ML** Mary Jane Jacob is an international key figure in the socially engaged art scene, and with this book she analyses the figure of John Dewey and the influence of his work on thinking about art as a way to influence society. By discussing the practices of artists such as Tania Bruguera, Trampoline House, Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski, to name a few, she is able to retrace the seeds that Dewey disseminated in his work. The man that, by the 1960s, famously affirmed that ‘art is not the thing but the experience’ is praised for his ability to see in the artistic practices the possibility to enact progressive democratic values through the participation of citizens and the idea that democracy is alive only when daily creative acts breathe new life into it.

“The art of democracy – for it is a creative way of life we make and keep making – is driven by what we care about. Social institutions had to continue to extend rights and keep freedom alive. And while citizens grew in individual agency, they needed to remain responsible to democratic values and create a caring culture. Democracy is not “based upon the traditional ideas which make the individual and the state ready-made entities in themselves,” but rather democracy “is but a name for the fact that human nature is developed only when its elements take part in directing things which are common, things for the sake of which men and women form groups – families, industrial companies, governments, churches, scientific associations and so on.””

‘Art is a way we practice democracy. Democracy can be practiced as an art. Thus, art and democracy were a lot alike to Dewey. Both are embodied, lived practices. Both are creative processes. Both have an aesthetic dimension and, therefore, in our experience of them lies the potential for our transformation. The philosopher also believed that art has the ability to help us develop into better citizens, because art catalyzes change, helping us as well as society to grow and remain vital. Thus, the appreciation of art has a moral and political dimension.’

## *Empty Stages, Crowded Flats: Performativity as Curatorial Strategy*

Authors  
**Florian Malzacher, Joanna Warsza**

Publisher  
**Alexander Verlag Berlin**

Year  
**2017**

**JW** During its impressive career over the last decades the term ‘performative’ has developed many parallel, sometimes opposing meanings in the humanities, philosophy, anthropology, arts and economics, leading up to a ‘performative turn’. When we propose to apply this notion in the context of curating, we follow Austin’s and Judith Butler’s belief in the performative capacity to implement and transform reality with words and actions – as ‘reality-making’ – but we also emphasise the colloquial notion of the performative as ‘theatre-like’. Considering those two strands as interdependent agents we investigate an array of situations from choreographed exhibitions, immaterial museums, theatres of negotiation and discursive marathons, to subversive public art projects and inquire how curating itself has become staged, dramatised or choreographed to produce new forms of publicness. One of the case studies from the book is Le Théâtre des Négociations – a political, diplomatic, scientific, pedagogical and artistic experiment that took place in May 2015 at Nanterre-Amandiers. Le Théâtre des Négociations was conceived by SPEAP (Programme d’expérimentation en art politique de Sciences Po) and Bruno Latour, the make-it-work-team at SciencePo, and implemented by Philippe Quesne and raumlaborberlin. Two hundred students from all over the world took part in a simulation of the international conference of parties on climate change, the COP21, in front of an audience for five days.

‘A drama is going on.  
There is not a better place  
than a theater to tackle it.’

ANNOTATED BY **ANDREA PHILLIPS**

## *Engineers of the Imagination: The Welfare State Handbook*

Authors  
**Tony Coult,  
Baz Kershaw**

Publisher  
**Methuen**

Year  
**1983**

**AP** I first experienced the work of the theatre collective Welfare State International whilst at school in the 1980s; their work became a blueprint for lots of the work we made on the undergraduate Theatre Studies course at Dartington College of Arts, Devon. The company was a loose band of hippy ideologues with a deep commitment to rural intergenerational celebration and protest; as Tony Coult says in the introduction to this book, '[t]his long-term research-and-practice seeks to re-establish, away from the conventional building-based middlebrow/middle-class theatre, the popular traditions of the working class, such a Carnival, the Feast of Fools, the fairground, the mummers' plays, that vein of subversion as entertainment that runs through so much folk theatre and song.' (p.1) Writing before the 1999 re-publication of *The Welfare State Handbook*, Baz Kershaw adds:

'Now, in 1990, we must open up the argument by noting that the central paradoxes of Welfare State's best work crystallise all that is positively dangerous in the company's creative practice, in that they suggest an impossible mission caught in a web

of self-contradictions and vicious circles. In the company's policy statements they are usually signalled by the yoking together of unlikely bedfellows: pathological optimists, civic magicians, holy fools, engineers of the imagination.'

Some of these qualities are still reflected in the contemporary practices of those artists' groups supported through the *Visible* project. However, what is most inspirational about this publication, rather than its historical analysis, is the fact that it is a handbook: it gives away patterns and formulas for making large-scale sculptures, moving buildings, costume designs, etc. This act of radical sharing is, in my view, missing from most contemporary practice.

ANNOTATED BY **JOANNA WARSZA**

## *Future Publics (The Rest Can and Should Be Done by the People): A Critical Reader in Contemporary Art*

Authors  
**Maria Hlavajova,  
Ranjit Hoskote**

Publisher  
**Valiz/BAK**

Year  
**2015**

**JW** *Future Publics* is a reader nourished by how the Occupy movements influenced the world. It speaks about the re-energised modes of assemblies, the collective organization, constructions of social value and cultural meaning, the strategising of solidarities across class, region, ethnicity and ideological affiliation. Ariella Azoulay, Bassam el Baroni and David Graeber, among others, unpack concepts such as rebel citizenry, orgnets, cultural users, stateless states and devolutionary platforms, expanding on the future publics and counter-publics.

'To cultural theorist Edward Said's formulation of "imperialism was the theory, colonialism the practice" should be added "sovereign differential citizenship" as historiography and vantage point when dealing with any political category related to a form of ruling that divides the governed population into groups and rules them differentially.'



# *The Nightmare of Participation (Crossbench Practice as a Mode of Criticality)*

Author  
**Markus Miessen**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2011**

**JMA** For all of us involved with collective practices in pedagogical and cultural settings, the critique of the use and abuse of the term ‘participation’ came as a much-needed caution at a moment of institutional community-philia and co-option fuelled by ‘turns’. Miessen undoes the uncritical mode of consensus and inclusivity underlying this candid and romantic form of participation that has been generalised in the larger cultural and public sphere. Instead, he argues for a responsibility-based conflictual participation of ‘crossbench practitioners’ who enter a field of practice uncalled and uninvited: as unruly vectors shaking the self-indulgence of many collaborative disciplines.

‘Sometimes, all-inclusive democracy has to be avoided at all costs.’

# *Migrant Movements*

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

*CareForce* by Marisa Morán Jahn (Studio REV-) with the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), 2011–ongoing. Courtesy of the artist. (2010 Visible Award shortlisted project)



# Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture

Author  
**Gaiutra Bahadur**

Publisher  
**University of  
Chicago Press**

Year  
**2013**

**MT** *Coolie Woman* is a personal journey for Gaiutra Bahadur, and an important one if we are to discuss histories of slavery and indentured labour. The book is the author's quest to find out details of her great-grandmother's story – a woman who was sent to work on the plantations in Africa, when slavery was abolished. The book is about the stories that come from what is recorded but also what's missing.

'It is hard, in these glimpses, to escape the angle of sexual exploitation by figures of all ranks and races. In these archives of misconduct, the women appear resisting advances. Or, giving in to them. Or – in the eyes of many ship officials – courting them. But the records also provide other views of the women: on the deathbeds, giving birth, losing children, going mad, being driven to suicide, engaged in infanticide, rejecting or being rejected by shipboard husbands, demanding that husbands prove themselves, stowing away, crying, cursing, possibly in love and clearly in anguish. Admittedly, the reports present psyches aboard ship at their most awry, since they typically only mentioned a migrant when something had gone wrong.'

# from the mountains to the valleys, from the deserts to the seas: journeys of historical uncertainty – A solo exhibition by Tiffany Chung

Author  
**CAMP/Center for Art  
on Migration Politics**

Publisher  
**CAMP/Center for Art  
on Migration Politics**

Year  
**2015**

**BG** *from the mountains to the valleys, from the deserts to the seas: journeys of historical uncertainty – A solo exhibition by Tiffany Chung* was the second exhibition hosted by CAMP/ Centre for Art on Migration Politics, at the end of 2015. Co-curated by Chung, a well-known Vietnamese-American multimedia artist, the show presented a series of works exploring different aspects of the politics of displacement and flight. From the catalogue: 'With a glass installation of mass migrating animals, a lightbox installation about the destructive powers of war, and a new series of cartographic drawings mapping areas of conflict and disaster, internally displaced persons, and migration routes, Chung unpacks the many causes and effects of displacement and helps us understand the current refugee crisis' (p 4). It can be said that Chung's practice revolves around the act of remapping. In this respect, she states: 'The impossibility of accurately creating definite borders or cartographic representations of most places remains a crucial objective in my remapping of countries that were traumatised by war, human destruction, or natural disaster. My maps examine how the geographic boundaries of many countries and cities are continuously being changes, shifted and erased' (p. 6).

'What will the future hold for people fleeing war, poverty, or natural disasters? One of the emerging trends is the fact that borders are back. This will restrain people in need and create new social and political spaces of suffering and marginalization.'

## *The Migrant's Time: Rethinking Art History and Diaspora*

Author  
**Saloni Mathur**

Publisher  
**Clark Art Institute  
for Clark Studies in  
the Visual Arts**

Year  
**2011**

**BG** I consider this book to be part of my starting point with regard to socially engaged art. Although it dates back ten years and is consequently far from 'moving with the times', I think it constitutes one of the building blocks of my guideline. From the intro:

'In the last few years, not only has the theme of migration increasingly emerged as a dominant subject matter of art, but the varied mobilities of our contemporary world have radically reshaped art's conditions of production, reception and display. In the fourteen essays composing the volume, the notion of migration resonates with a variety of other categories and concepts that float around discussions of culture that are international in spirit: diaspora, exile, globalization, hybridity, migration, mobility, multiculturalism, transnationalism, the nomad. The book seeks to critically explore the increasing universality of the conditions of global migration and interdependence, and examine the relationships of art practice, art history and art criticism to this normative reality, past and present. How have experiences of migration and mobility found expression in the artistic and critical practices of the visual arts, and how do we grasp the new cultural assemblage generated by the conditions of relentless human mobility in the present?'

'The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of

appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral or impersonal language, but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word and make it one's own.'

## *The Silent University: Towards a Transversal Pedagogy*

Authors  
**Florian Malzacher,  
Pelin Tan,  
Ahmet Ögüt**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2016**

**PT** This is the first book on the practice of the Silent University, which is a fictive pedagogical platform initiated by artist Ahmet Ögüt in 2013. The book consists of several chapters by invited authors, reports by the Silent University branch of their continuation as well as failures. The book aims to bring discussion of how pedagogy as an artistic methodology could provide debates on public space, commons, co-existence and racism under the global migration crisis. Furthermore, the book discusses methods of socially engaged art and its role in creating modalities of co-existence in society. The authors also attempt to write a manifesto of transversal pedagogy as an artistic provocation beyond borders and institutions.

'... the term collaboration can become an ambiguous one due to conflict in the relationship with a hosting institution. Whenever an SU platform (such as a conference, meeting, research room, open course session) needs to be set up within a host institution, the whole negotiation process not only questions the role of SU but that of the host institution itself in terms of the guest/host relationship, the institution's identity, the ethics of diverse audience participation, legal contracts, and institutional policy. In this process, the host institution needs to re-examine its own institutional nature and to decide whether it wants to be a part of the social affect as a transforming instituting practice or to continue to remain a neoliberal bureaucratic instrument of culture.'

# Traces of Trauma: Cambodian Visual Culture and National Identity in the Aftermath of Genocide

Author  
**Boreth Ly**

Publisher  
**University of Hawaii Press**

Year  
**2019**

**NKP** The 'traces of trauma' in the book title signify the different ways in which Cambodian artists and cultural producers have created traces, i.e. through art and visual culture – which include contemporary art, film, poetry, pop music and court dance – after the traumatic events of the civil war, the US bombing and the Khmer Rouge genocide. In contrast to the use of art by the Khmer Rouge regime as a propagandistic and surveilling tool, artists reclaim art as a way to understand and mediate trauma, memory, morality, resistance and recuperation. Boreth Ly attempts to consider 'epistemological ways of understanding trauma, visibility and body' through works of Cambodian and Cambodian diasporic artists and thinkers – from the films of Rithy Panh and the photography of Vandy Rattana, to the poetry of Saith Peou and the writings of Khmer psychiatrist Chhim Sothea.

'In the case of Cambodia, arts and visual culture cannot provide complete redemption or psychological closure after genocide, but they can certainly help to open up a forum for an extremely difficult dialogue about issues of trauma, betrayal, conflict, reconciliation, forgiveness, and aporia.'

# We shout and shout, but no one listens: Art from conflict zones

Author  
**CAMP/Center for Art on Migration Politics**

Publisher  
**CAMP/Center for Art on Migration Politics**

Year  
**2017**

**BG** Taking as my starting point the catalogue of the exhibition *We shout and shout, but no one listens: Art from conflict zones*, I want to pay tribute to CAMP/ Centre for Art on Migration Politics, which just closed after five years of stunning activity. I will directly quote from its official website: 'CAMP was a non-profit exhibition space for art discussing questions of displacement, migration, immigration and asylum. The centre was operative from 2015 to 2020 and was located in Trampoline House, an independent community centre in Copenhagen that provides refugees, asylum seekers and ethnic minority Danes in Denmark with a place of support, community and purpose. CAMP produced exhibitions, events, publications and education programs about migration and the questions these phenomena gives rise to today.' Being part of this environment gave me the possibility to meet and work with people from all over the world, and with artists and curators who proved to be inspiring practitioners and human beings. The point of departure of *We shout and shout, but no one listens: Art from conflict zones* was a number of ongoing and recent conflicts (at the time of the exhibition, in 2017) ignored by the international community, and it presented installations, photography, painting, readymades, collages and performance works examining war from the perspective of those trapped in or fleeing from zones of conflict. Among the external contributions to the catalogue, we find a piece from the American philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler, who coined the word 'grievability':

'We might think of war as dividing populations into those who are grievable and those we are not. An ungrievable life is one that cannot be mourned because it has never lived, that is, it has never counted as a life at all.'

We can see the division of the globe into grievable and ungrievable lives from the perspective of those who wage war in order to defend the lives of certain communities, and to defend them against the lives of others, even if it means taking those latter lives.'



Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects*' archive section related to this topic



*White Crane Films Resistance Archive* by Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, 1991–ongoing. Courtesy of the artists. (2015 Visible Award longlisted project)

## New Archives

Sustainable  
Urbanisation

Social  
Design

Rural  
Politics

Racial  
Struggles

Queer  
Cultures

Publishing  
Matters

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Decolonial  
Narratives

Community-  
based

Alternative  
Economies

## *AIDS Anarchive*

Author  
**Equipo re**

Publisher  
**San Sebastian:  
Tabakalera and  
Donostia / San  
Sebastian European  
Capital of Culture**

Year  
**2017**

**JMA** This research undertaken by the collective Equipo re looks at the AIDS crisis not just as a medical epidemic, but as a radical visual, affective and economic paradigm shift that went hand in hand with the consolidation of the neoliberal regime and the process of globalisation. Through exhibition, events and this publication it compiles and activates by means of a rich archive of cultural production in relation to HIV originated outside of the hegemonic geo-political sphere (USA and Central Europe). From a natural-cultural perspective the project explores the mediascape of fear (of contact and contagion), the cultural dimension of death or the discourse on health and the sick body that were solidly articulated during those years and which are violently re-erupting today.

‘Disease reveals the disjunction between an autonomous body and the mind as a place from which you relate your body with the social sphere and yourself, where the, let’s call it, internal body causes itself to disfunction, altering its processes without acknowledging them.’

## *Artist-to-Artist: Independent Art Festivals in Chiang Mai 1992-98: Exhibition Histories Vol. 9*

Author  
**David Teh**

Publisher  
**Afterall Books**

Year  
**2018**

**LPY** As part of the Exhibition Histories series published by Afterall, this book presents a critical examination of the landmark alternative public art and culture festival Chiang Mai Social Installation (1992–98). Initiated by artists, the projects or works in this series of festivals were mostly performance-based, site-specific and attuned to the socio-political contexts of its time. The term ‘social installation’ not only provides a framework for understanding the diverse artistic articulations of political dissent in the 1990s in Chiang Mai, it also offers an expanded notion of art and its publics. It is timely to revisit such experimental festivals in order to reflect on the ways in which the ecologies of art may exist outside the ambit of the market and consumer culture.

‘Self-organizing platforms like CMSI (Chiang Mai Social Installation) may not have laid explicit claim to premodern or pre-national models; and perhaps their initiators did not ultimately escape the professional and discursive orbit of the nation. But they did manage to communicate local experience to a much larger world, finding palpable sympathies and even solidarities, artist to artist, outside the order of national representation. They were thus able to articulate and renew a fundamental promise of contemporary art, even if they could not fulfill it – that despite the unkept promises of the modern, art might still be a vehicle of progressive social and aesthetic transformation.’

## *Beyond Entropy Angola*

**13<sup>th</sup> International  
Architecture exhibition  
Venice Biennale**

Year  
**2012**

**RMC** There is a social component in the *métier* of the architect that makes a big difference when thinking about how to design a space in a way that respects the sense of community embedded in our cultures. *Beyond Entropy* has become an important project and container when thinking about the roles of the curator and the artist in reimagining our spaces of living and encounters. The city of Luanda being the main protagonist, one of our main interests is to understand how through different artistic endeavours a cohort of architects, artists and curators have succeeded in bringing artistic practice to the core of designing the city.

‘No building can contain a universal multiplicity of spaces, possibilities, and objects. When a building tends towards the encyclopaedic, it becomes a city. Just the city includes multiple conditions in the coherence of form – even though it is an urban, conflict-ridden form.’

## *Curating as Anti-Racist Practice*

Authors  
**Natalie Bayer,  
Belinda  
Kazeem-Kamiński,  
Nora Sternfeld**

Publisher  
**Aalto ARTS Books**

Year  
**2018**

**JW** In the lunch break of Nora Sternfeld’s curatorial seminar at Aalto University in Helsinki, we came to one possible blunt definition of a curator as somebody who is an activist and a policeman at the same time (there are of course many more curatorial types in the vastness of the profession). We were both, however, interested in a curatorial profile that sees art as part of a larger picture of socially engaged causes and uses the power, the tools and the privileges of the profession to institute some of them. Nora Sternfeld is one such curator who aims to disrupt discrimination and related conditions of injustice, creating cracks in the heteronormative, classic and sometimes racist status quo embodied in the world and in ourselves. *Curating as Anti-Racist Practice* is a handy structural toolbox for how to practice the profession in a non-hegemonic, decolonial and transversal way.

‘For curating to be anti-racist, however, it first needs to consider both subjectivity and process of subjectivation, and needs to ensure multiperspectivity. It is crucial to explore and question all narratives and exhibits of an exhibition along different line of inquiry. Whose history is being told? Whose perspective is been privileged? What kind of images

are presented? Who reads these images and how? How have the exhibits been generated?

How are the texts created? Do the narratives and images empower groups that have hitherto been either underrepresented or represented in a way that objectifies them? While these are essentially the very same questions that have – for a long time already – been guiding the discussions about “history from below” as well as feminist and postcolonial historiography, it seems that they keep being actively forgotten.’

# L'école des mutants #2 : Ruines et Futurs

Authors  
**Stéphane  
Verlet-Bottéro,  
Hamedine Kane**

Year  
**2019**

**RMC** One part of a wider project that also includes exhibitions and community assemblies, *Ruines et Futurs* brings together reflections and testimonies around the site of the abandoned Université du Futur Africain in the Diamniadio region of Senegal. Situated just outside of the capital, Diamniadio and its neighbouring communes are today positioned as the ground upon which an African city of the future will arise – the Dubai of Africa – despite the soil being irrigation land suited to agriculture, historically the green lung of the nearby city. The texts and images are an intersection at which histories and futures of space, education, self-determination and earth meet.

‘Pour indemniser un fruitier, on évalue simplement la quantité de fruits produits par l’année. C’est la fin du monde, ça.’

# Public Sphere by Performance

Authors  
**Bojana Cvejić,  
Ana Vujanović**

Publisher  
**b\_books**

Year  
**2012**

**JW** How is ideology moving our collective body? What is the performance of the public sphere? How to think critically about the term ‘public’ as a potential participative democratic audience and how to act politically with our bodies? This book is a well informed journey through political theory, performance studies, social choreography, the public sphere and its discontents in the neoliberal society with a special focus on the Yugoslavian legacy, a region that the authors stem from. It also comes with a film by a third member of the collective Walking Theory. The film deals with the question of how ideology performed itself in public space through mass performances. The author collected and analysed film and video footage from the period of Yugoslavia (1945–2000), focusing on state performances (youth work actions, May Day parades, celebrations of the Youth Day, etc.) as well as counter-demonstrations (‘68, student and civic demonstrations in the ‘90s, 5<sup>th</sup> October revolution, etc.). Going back through the images, the film traces how communist ideology was gradually exhausted through the changing relations between the people, ideology and the state.

‘What was the role of the public? Did it effectuate changes? Moreover, even if it has had political and social effects, we are inclined to repeat John Dewey’s question: was this public aware of the consequences of its actions? Did the citizen who euphorically hailed Milosevic in Gazimestan in 1989 want civil wars? Did the citizens of Belgrade and Serbia on October 5, 2000, know, when they thought they were choosing democracy, that they were also asking for capitalism? What did we ask for when we, as a public, arose in protest?’

And how does this correspond to what we got in return, supporting or opposing the one or the other political actor on the public scene? Some of these questions are answered through the cases we study and visually document in this book. Our goal is not to resolve political dilemmas related to the murky circumstances of Yugoslav history, but to offer conceptual analyses as well as tools to those who feel similarly unqualified or politically disabled and stultified, tools they may implement to critically envisage civil action in their own respective contexts.’



## *Saturday Night Thriller y otros escritos, 1998–2013*

Author  
**Giuseppe Campuzano**

Publisher  
**Estruendomudo**

Year  
**2013**

**ML** This book collects the writings by late drag queen and philosopher Giuseppe Campuzano (Lima, 1969–2013) who created the ephemeral project Museo Travesti del Perú [Transvestite Museum of Peru]. Founded in 2004, the museum was an attempt at a queer counter-reading and promiscuous intersectional thinking of history, one that collected objects, images, texts, documents and appropriate artworks in order to propose actions, stagings and publications that would fracture the heterosexual spatio-temporality and the dominant models of production of bodies. The book presents a wide array of Campuzano's writings, including fictions, essays on transgender human rights, collages, pamphlets, texts around the Transvestite Museum and three interviews with the author.

‘El Museo Travesti no pretende determinar qu. es travesti y que no para plasmar una identidad inamovible, sino trasladar el/la travesti desde la periferia hasta el núcleo de la discusión para as., desde su circunstancia, hacer visible su tradición histórica y repensar la historia peruana. Ello sólo es posible en la medida en que el discurso ya no se hace “desde afuera”, sino desde la propia experiencia, “desde dentro”. También se muestra que el intento por categorizar a todos los seres humanos como hombres o mujeres plantea problemas no sólo para travestis sino también para otras personas. El Museo también se propone replantear conceptos, incluidos el de “museo” y el de “travesti”. La figura del travesti deja de ser un tab. o una imagen estereotipada porque

se aborda al travesti real, desde el ejercicio del trabajo sexual hasta el ritual de las fiestas patronales. La colonia, la religión o la academia son instituciones y conceptos que también se replantean, en la medida en que se revisa el papel que históricamente han jugado en la reproducción o transformación de las identidades y de las sexualidades, y en el surgimiento y valoración de otras alternativas. Por ejemplo, se plantea que las personas travestis han logrado superar la marginación de la institución católica participando activamente de la religiosidad popular, espacio social que resulta relevante para reconceptualizar la religión y la fe como rasgos de la identidad peruana y herramienta de empoderamiento para sus comunidades.’

## *Wild Australia: Meston's Wild Australia Show 1892–1893*

Authors  
**Michael Aird,  
Mandana Mapar,  
Paul Memmott**

Publisher  
**University of  
Queensland  
Anthropology Museum**

Year  
**2015**

**VZ** This slender volume deftly pinpoints the precise historical nexus of raw colonial expropriation and the aesthetics of ethnographic display in Queensland, Australia. Co-edited by Indigenous historians Michael Aird, Paul Memmott and Mandana Mapar, *Wild Australia* brings together the surviving images of the eponymous ethnographic show that toured the east coast in 1892/93. In an unsurprising historical twist, the self-taught ethnographer Archibald Meston, who produced the show, also became the self-appointed state ‘Protector’ of Aboriginal People during the infamous period of ‘The Act’. In 1897, shortly following the show, the ‘Protection of Aborigines and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act’ was introduced as a regulatory suite that created an extreme and punitive reserves system throughout Queensland. The portraits and staged postcard dioramas capture the piercing strength and self-possession among the show’s Indigenous men and women, such as Yungkwa and Amirrtha – young men whose names Aird and co-editor Paul Memmot decipher from the photograph’s notes but whose familial and country ties remain unknown.

‘I have been fortunate to be able to locate over one hundred and twenty different photographs of the Wild Australia performers. These images form an important historical document.’

# Word?Word!Word?

Issa Samb

and the Undecipherable Form

Author  
**Koyo Kouoh**

Publisher  
**Office for Contemporary  
Art Norway &  
Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2013**

**RMC** The figure of eminent artist Issa Samb and his practice through the Laboratoire Agit'Art are enough to understand the complexities of public and private spaces in Senegal. Through the work done in his courtyard at 17 rue Jules Ferry in Dakar, Samb staged different situations that would allow the viewer (we can't talk about visitors as his private courtyard was considered a public space, a space for the community, a space for the allies) to navigate between different objects which work as hints to get a sense of the narratives that are told, performed or revived. Being sensitive to the notion of time is very important in understanding the profundity of the work done by Samb and the Laboratoire Agit'art.

'Entering Issa Samb's courtyard in the spring of 2010 was a strange journey, one on which we had to keep reminding ourselves not to hold our breath; our pace, which was only interrupted by the crunch of leaves beneath cautious soles, like a prayer murmured while counting a visionary rosary before each Station of the Cross, forever seeping from ramshackle partitions and walls.'

# Museum as a Public Space of Care \*

Gabi Ngcobo

In the recent years, South Africa has witnessed the rise of private 'museums', which include the Zeitz MoCCA and the Norval Art Foundation, both in Cape Town, as well as the Javett Art Center – UP, located on the grounds of the University of Pretoria (UP) as well as The Joburg Contemporary Art Foundation (JCAF) and more are rumoured to open, sooner or later. This signals a new wave of institutions, all with founding collections that have been developed over decades. It is also a sign that philanthropists, who have previously supported state museums, are now funding their own initiatives, which places institutions in further distress as government support for state museums is limited and stretched.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) is one such museum among many others in cities across the country. Founded in 1910 and opened to the public in 1915, JAG's history, architecture and location reflect the dreams of empire in the ways that it mimics the spatial dynamics of most historical European museums. Looking at postcards from its earliest period one can discern how the ideals that shaped European cultural foundations were imported and implanted in the colonies. For the founders and patrons of such institutions, liberation from colonial domination was as undesirable as it was unthinkable as an event.

This unthinkability/undesirability was enacted in legislation that ensured that for generations to come Africans would struggle to dislodge themselves from the generational economic depravation that stood in the way of the re-imagining of our own futures. In these postcards and images produced around this time, white people can be seen in their Victorian garments strolling around Joubert Park, the area where JAG is located. The park's proximity to the gallery is reflective of almost every museum and other cultural institutions (such as theatres) built in colonial Africa. As different waves of independence, beginning with Ghana in 1957, started manifesting, these cultural sites were guarded with the same principles of their founding and, until very recently were administered largely by white personnel.

Independence ushered in the freer movement of black people living in cities into places where they were previously not allowed or didn't feel welcome, such as inside museums of any kind. These parks and other public parts often bore instructive signage about what was not permitted of black bodies. In South Africa, as we have seen in many archival photographs taken during the apartheid regime, park benches as well as many public amenities were marked 'Europeans Only'. For example, an iconic photograph taken by Peter Magubane documents a familiar scene of a black nanny looking after a white child. The child sits on a bench marked 'Europeans Only' whilst the nanny sits behind on a bench demarcated for black nannies. In many of these parks, there were no benches reserved for black people to speak of, for an idle black body often led to its criminalization.

Tolerated in so far as a person was rendering service towards the comfort of the small white population, a black body was otherwise 'out of place' in the cities. In order to discourage inactive black bodies, the colonial government and the apartheid state passed legislation that was meant to control and police the movement of Africans in cities. Unless a black person was under some form of employment, they could not, by law, be in the cities. Routine inspections in which police demanded passes, the documents that were to be signed by white employers as proof of employment, were the order of the day. The absence of this document would lead to the deportation of people to the 'homelands'.

The public domain in a South African and other post-colonial contexts is, as a result, still very much a site of contestation. In March 2020 the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service ramped up what it referred to as 'the loitering law' in attempts to control the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Trinidadian artist Christopher Cozier recognized this as one of the 'colonial laws that conveniently linger' but now enacted by a supposedly independent state. Similarly, in 2014 when I was in Kampala, Uganda, to conduct a curatorial workshop that would culminate in an event corresponding with the Bayimba Music Festival held annually at the grounds of the Kampala Theatre, I was struck by signs placed over the grass areas reading 'NO IDLING'. Our intervention during the festival became a direct response to these signs. We set up a tent and on the grass area and named it a 'Know Go Zone'. Twenty single mattresses covered in fabrics bought at the fabric market were placed around the area encouraging people to not only engage with other activities happening inside the tent but to also rest if they needed to. The mattresses were always occupied by festivalgoers who were either waiting for a specific band to perform, bored or overwhelmed by the funfair around the weekend-long festival.

Today's Joubert Park is strikingly different from the one we see in archival images of its 'heydays'. The area is now occupied by street photographers, preachers, people performing magic tricks, street vendors, impromptu Maskandi music performances, urban gardeners, as well as many unemployed citizens and undocumented immigrants from other parts of Africa. Over the years JAG, which does not charge an entry fee, has become a popular site for street photographers who often entice their clients to pose with artworks inside the gallery, the most popular being the courtyard occupied by large-scale sculptural works. Ironically, the Johannesburg South African Police Services (SAPS) have unofficially made JAG their headquarters where they often use its toilets as change or refreshing rooms. The gallery is one of many locations in the city where undocumented immigrants are rounded up, arrested and sent to the infamous Lindela Repatriation Centre, a detention centre for undocumented migrants.

Because of its location, which has become a site of 'terror' for both tourists and locals who find the hustle and bustle around JAG anxiety inducing, the visitor numbers are often low. It is therefore not uncommon to encounter young couples making out inside the galleries of JAG, as they have recognized the site as one where they can have some kind of privacy in an otherwise overpopulated city whose inhabitants still hold conservative views around public displays of affection. Here the museum space takes on a variety of functions beyond the serious or casual engagements with its exhibitions and related programs. The museum as a public space of care thus takes on a convoluted meaning. The continuous administering of African foreign nationals' bodies by the post-apartheid state that takes place in its grounds is one that is difficult to counteract as, essentially, both JAG and the Johannesburg SAPS are departments of the city of Johannesburg. JAG has over the years attempted to embrace and/or critique these realities within its programming but these are often subjected to the voyeuristic gaze of the 'educated' publics and inspire no action, protest or resistance from the art publics that still engage with JAG.

The question of what constitutes the public domain today, from where I sit, cannot yet be answered or can best be addressed through reading of public outrage and media reports on the violent enforcing of government lockdown regulations. This reading is necessary in order to highlight how these have magnified the stark inequalities that are the fabric of South African society. The government's failed attempt to shelter and provide for the homeless population is evidenced by an increased number of the down-and-out that stand at traffic lights, where they go 'to perform their non-being', hoping for some form of help from motorists. For these beings, the legal order is not – and cannot be – enforced because to enforce it would expose the state's inability to assist those who have nowhere to 'lock themselves down'.

Other events include the death of black citizens such as Collins Khosa, Sibusiso Amos, Petrus Miggels, Adane Emmanuel and others at the hands of the army and the police deployed to enforce the government's Covid-19 regulations. Events leading to Khosa's death are important to highlight here. Khosa died in

April 2020 after being assaulted for 'violating lockdown rules' inside the yard of his own home in Alexandra Township. An investigation by the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) board of inquiry found that its members could not be held responsible for Khosa's death. After much lobbying and issuing and signing of two petitions, the Khosa family and their neighbours won a high court application for orders against security forces, a win that ensures that the government and its security wings will be held responsible against the standards of the South African constitution for how they behave – even during restrictions aimed at controlling the spread of Covid-19.

Alexandra Township is a densely populated, mostly poor area of Johannesburg located near the upper-class suburb of Sandton. Among other Covid-19 regulations, the state issued a ban on the sale and purchase of alcohol and tobacco products. Khosa was found with a half-drunk beer in his yard and one beer in his fridge. The state did not prohibit the drinking of alcohol in people's private residences. Indeed, after the announcement of the ban, many of us stocked up on alcohol, which we consumed in the privacy of our own homes, as Khosa was doing. What is public and what is private in an area such as Alexandra compared to those of affluent areas like Sandton is starkly different.<sup>1</sup> For millions of people living in informal settlements the basic means for ensuring the control of the spread of any disease does not exist. Everything is semi-public; how people cook, bath, sleep and raise their children. In this environment and many similar ones, all these basic human activities can never be completely private. Often, these communities depend on each other's support for basic human needs, privacy being one of them. During the early days of the national lockdown, a woman living in Diepsloot, a similar densely populated informal settlement, was interviewed by a local news channel inside her small windowless shack, which she shares with three children, two of them teenagers. In order to bath, she has to send the children outside until she is done, if it is raining or too cold, the children are sent to a neighbour.

1

See a 2015 contribution I made on a photographic series by Sabelo Mlangeni focused on Alexander and Sandton.  
<https://artreview.com/october-2014-feature-art-in-context-i-gabi-ngcobo/>



In urban areas such as these, including those within the city, there has never been nor can there be places where outdoor human activity is frozen in time. In Yeoville or Hillbrow, for example, apartments are most likely to be shared by different families and individuals who each pay and occupy one room, including the lounge, with the kitchen and bathroom being the only communal spaces. In these areas, safety and mental health requires people to be outside rather than inside. Media reports on policing in these areas produced violent images that proved that the logic of the state and the conditions it has ignored over the years are in conflict, leading to the deaths of citizens at the hands of the police and the army as well as the arrests of thousands.

In the area where our collective space NGO–Nothing Gets Organised is located, it has been ‘business as usual’ since the national state of disaster was declared. The area is one of the citywide hubs for sex workers whose main clientele are mini-bus taxi drivers. The precarity of sex workers, a state criminalised activity, became even starker. No attempts were made to ensure the safety of the women working the streets. No food parcels, sanitisers or masks were delivered by government agencies because the nature of the women’s trade qualifies them as non-beings.

In September 2018, there was a police-interrupted hijacking attempt of our space NGO. The hijacking of buildings for the drug and sex trade (which often go together) has, over the years, been a troubling issue for property owners in the city. This necessitated my colleagues and I to conduct random drive through of the area near our building during which we observed the usual daily exchanges, now including substances like tobacco and alcohol, whose sale, as mentioned above, was banned by the government. During level five of the national lockdown, mini-bus taxis were only allowed to operate between 5 am and 10 am, and again from 4 pm to 8 pm, in order to assist in the transportation of essential workers. With street food traders prohibited from operating and most of the services taxi drivers rely on remaining shut, more human activity and interaction was located in areas like these. It becomes a challenge, if not impossible, to imagine how many art

institutions still under lock-down will be able to resume activities under an extremely and even more strained economy. How many will survive, how many will have to shut down?

Independent practitioners like me have had to face the reality that we ‘fall outside the current legislation’, as Minister of Labour Thulas Nxese announced a few month ago, of getting any government assistance. Independent or self-organised spaces that operate outside but in conversation with formal art institutions have been left bare. For NGO, a platform that functions as a space to reflect on shifting and uneasy entanglements, where processes of self-organising – those that do not imply structure, tangibility, context or form can be rehearsed, this time may indeed be what Arundhati Roy characterised as ‘a portal, a gateway between one world, and the next – we can walk through lightly, with little luggage ready to imagine another world and ready to fight for it’. Our work has always been in conversation with the local alongside and in collaboration with international spaces that think alike. It is important to resist what the pandemic is seemingly inspiring: regionalisms that will force us back into engaging from a conceptual vacuum lacking in reflectivity, solidarity and cross-continental dialogues that are more urgent now than ever before.

\* Gabi Ngcobo decided to answer the questions from Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti in the form of a text.



# *Pedagogical Platforms*

*Silent University* by Ahmet Öğüt, 2012–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artist. (2013 Visible Award recipient)

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

我們從未參與：  
第八屆深圳雕塑雙年展  
*The 8<sup>th</sup> Schenzhen Sculpture Biennale:  
We Have Never Participated*

Author  
**Marko Daniel**

Publisher  
廣州：嶺南美術出版社

Year  
**2018**

**LPY** This publication is the exhibition catalogue of the 8<sup>th</sup> Schenzhen Sculpture Biennale: *We Have Never Participated*, that took place at OCAT Shenzhen in 2014. This exhibition coined the term ‘post-participation’ in the wake of the increased salience and focus on notions of process and participation as key to understanding contemporary art in the West. However, as suggested by the title of the Biennale, the artistic context in China is defined by the absence of historical traditions of participatory art. The significance of this catalogue lies not only in its documentation of the works featured in the exhibition but also in its inclusion of key essays by international scholars, such as Boris Groys and Shannon Jackson; essays by Zheng Bo and Su Wei that introduced recent artistic development in China; and LU Pei-Yi’s essay entitled ‘We are Participating: Taiwan Context’, which directly addressed the Sunflower Student Movement that took place in Taiwan in the Spring 2014.

‘The term post-participation has thus been coined to draw attention not so much to the disappearance of participatory practice but to the fact that it is widely accepted as a given, and has become part of the toolset of contemporary art.’

*Agítese antes de usar:  
Desplazamientos sociales, artísticos  
y educativos en América Latina*

Authors  
**Renata Cervetto,  
Miguel A. Lopez**

Publisher  
**TEOR/éTica  
and MALBA**

Year  
**2016**

**ML** This book is a co-edition of Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires – MALBA, Argentina, and TEOR/éTica, Costa Rica. It brings together reflections, art experiences and pedagogical and curatorial projects that have emerged in the last two decades in Latin America. From critical mediation strategies to self-organised and collaborative learning practices, the texts collected here explore the social function of education and its possibilities to redefine the public scope of art as well as to activate renewed forms of political activism.

‘Desde los años 90, en América Latina han surgido una serie de reflexiones e iniciativas que han actualizado las preguntas sobre las posibilidades que tiene la educación de cuestionar las complejas relaciones de poder

en el campo del arte. Ese proceso ha implicado una reconsideración de la dimensión política de la práctica educativa frente a nuevos marcos culturales presentes desde aquella década, como la implementación de reformas económicas neoliberales, la velocidad de los cambios tecnológicos y los medios de comunicación, la

transformación de los sistemas de producción laboral y los efectos de la globalización. Bajo este contexto, lo educativo empezó a ser visto nuevamente como una oportunidad para ingresar autorreflexivamente a las estructuras del arte, no solo como una manera de impugnar el sistema establecido de jerarquías en la producción de conocimiento dentro de las instituciones culturales, sino también como una forma de movilizar experiencias de cambio social a mayor escala.’

## *Àsikò: On the Future of Artistic and Curatorial Pedagogies in Africa*

Authors  
**Bisi Silva,  
Stephanie Baptist**

Publisher  
**Centre for  
Contemporary Art,  
Lagos**

Year  
**2017**

**GN** *Àsikò* is the result of an itinerant annual pedagogical programme for artists and curators initiated by the late curator Bisi Silva, promoting the movement of artistic and curatorial knowledge on the African continent. The first two programmes took place in Lagos, Nigeria, in 2010 and 2012 and from 2013 moved to Accra/Kumasi, Dakar, Maputo, ending in Addis Ababa in 2016. The book documents how its participants and faculty spent five weeks in each city, as well as their interventions into pedagogical models that are based on research-on-the-move and how these methods created interactive social spaces. Visiting, critically discussing and responding to postcolonial public monuments in each city as one of the ways of thinking through what it means to be 'postcolonial' is impressively articulated in the book by some of the *Àsikò* participants.

'As a consequence of such a powerful set of dislocations, the eleven artists and three curators created a final project that summarised the radical spirit of *Àsikò*. This group exhibition, entitled "28 days in Maputo", addressed the city's multiple textures in experimental mediums and was presented in one of the historical buildings that mark Mozambique's troubled colonial past: the "Fortaleza de Maputo", a fortress where our lives as creative individuals became forever entangled in a radical, deep learning experiment called *Àsikò*.'

## *Playgrounds: Reinventing the Square*

Authors  
**Lars Bang Larsen,  
Rodrigo Pérez de Arce**

Publisher  
**Museo Nacional Centro  
de Arte Reina Sofía**

Year  
**2014**

**ML** *Playgrounds: Reinventing the Square* accompanied the eponymous exhibition presented at Reina Sofia Museum in 2014. It collects various essays and artworks around the political aspects of play and its possibilities to reinvent democracy, economy, public space, labour, citizenship and utopia. The curators and authors reclaim the figure of the *homo ludens*, the transgressive dimension of carnival, communal goods and free time in opposition to the time of consumption, and a different model of organising society against labour systems based on exploitation and capitalist logics.

'During carnival (undoubtedly one of the cultural elements in which play takes on its most transgressive form), the roles and moral values that underpin a community are radically subverted in a cathartic ritual that paradoxically ensures the continuation of the status quo. The disruptive potential of play as a dress rehearsal for life is neutralized by means of a planned ritual scenario that stages (and nothing more) the transvaluation of all values. Nonetheless, as an already institutionalized, irreverent expression of the people, carnival already harbors – and,

as Mikhail Bakhtin argued, has harbored since its ancient and multiple origins – a transgressive unconscious that goes beyond the comical and farcical, and slips into the sphere of the political through the interstices of play and festivity. The "carnivalization" of some contemporary art and of social uprisings simply confirms play and the spaces of play as catalysts for the wishes of majorities whose voices had been smothered, and of minorities silenced by nature.'



ANNOTATED BY **MIGUEL A. LÓPEZ**

## *Talking to Action: Art, Pedagogy and Activism in the Americas*

Authors  
**Bill Kelley Jr.,  
Rebecca Zamora**

Publisher  
**University of  
Chicago Press**

Year  
**2017**

**ML** *Talking to Action* accompanied the eponymous exhibition curated by Kelley and Zamora in the context of the *Pacific Standard Time: Los Angeles / Latin America* project in 2017. It collects critical essays and documentation of socially engaged practices and collaborative community-based art practices developed across the Americas. The editors highlighted practices not included in the traditional gallery and museum narratives, which were often creating interdisciplinary dialogues, working in public space and creating intersections of art, activism, grassroots organisations and social science.

‘From its inception, *Talking to Action: Art, Pedagogy, and Activism* in the Americas was meant to focus on dialogically-driven, community-based art making across the Americas. Given the quick growth and academicization of the field that we call social practice in the United States over the last decade, I was determined to say something about the intellectual and methodological roots of these practices that were not simply anchored in northern-transatlantic thinking. Thus, *Talking to Action* was a research project that was born of a need to redirect the legacies of the past. Given this alternate mapping, it only made sense to begin with the idea that we’re attempting to learn something and that this learning should take the form of a dialogue.’

ANNOTATED BY **NARAWAN KYO PATHOMVAT**

## *A Third University Is Possible*

Author  
**la paperson**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2017**

**NKP** *A Third University is Possible* offers a refreshing theoretical framework and interpretation of the issues of university education, decolonisation and activism. The writer, la paperson (K. Wayne Yang), proposes that a university ‘is an assemblage of machines and not a monolithic institution’ that has colonial history and purposes, yet it can also be subverted to produce decolonising subjects. Taking inspiration from Third Cinema and Black filmmaking assemblages, worlding theory and Deleuzian posthumanism, the book explores decolonial ‘possibilities’ in various indigenous and black schools and colleges in the US, Kenya and India and presents the seminal idea of ‘scyborg’ which is a ‘decolonising agent of technological subversion’ operating within the Third University itself in order to break down the ideological machine.

‘... school is an assemblage of machines and not a monolithic institution, its machinery is always being subverted toward decolonizing purposes.’

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

*The School of Narrative Dance (Venice Parade)* by Marinella Senatore, 2012–ongoing. Courtesy of the artist. (Public parade curated by the Visible project within the framework of *The Night Art made the Future Visible – The Creative Time Summit: The Curriculum* at the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale)



# Performing Communities

## *Afrotopia*

Author  
**Felwine Sarr**

Publisher  
**University of  
Minnesota Press**

Year  
**2019**

**JW** *Afrotopia* is a visionary, affirmative, transversal read that re-energises the public sphere situated on the African continent.

‘When I was writing “Afrotopia” my aim was for it to develop a kind of reflection that unfolds across the disciplines of economics, politics, and realms of the social and the psychological, one that is interdisciplinary and transversal. But at the same time I wanted to write in a language that is not esoteric, but accessible to everyone. (...) I wanted to rehabilitate the notion of utopia: The term “utopia” comes from “ou-topos” and designates a place that is not in existence, one could also say: that is not there yet. But just because something does not exist yet does not mean that it can’t exist sometime in the future. If you are not satisfied with our present, then you can begin to create a utopia, and then start to transform it into reality in the course of history. My basic idea is that the future is open. That she remains open to all of us. And that it is the task of Africans to think and formulate their own future and to find their own metaphors for it. But in no case, however: to inscribe this future in a teleology that is already given, for example, the modern age, the prevailing development paradigms or anything alike. So far, Africa has always been the object of discourse by others. Now it’s about to dream this utopia in Africa itself, to design Africa ourselves, to think, and to act for ourselves.’

## *Chale Wote Festival (Accra, Ghana)*

Year  
**2018**

**RMC** Walking in the streets of JamesTown in Accra gives a particular feeling. A feeling of walking into a book, into a space where something happened before, a space where we can feel past vibrations. The walls are covered by fading paintings telling different narratives which are today superimposed by new paintings, writings, adverts etc. Jamestown is turned into a space for encounters, intervention and dialogue. The Chale Wote festival constitutes one of the most important festivals on the African continent that strives to revive memory and past history through performance arts. The body is put in relation with the city and its community in interesting ways.

‘While the main pedestrian route of Chale Wote turns into a vibrant street party for two days, there are numerous detours that open up the history of Jamestown. Walking becomes the evocative mechanism for shedding light on this history and for igniting public space.’



## *Elements of Vogue: A Case Study in Radical Performance*

Authors  
**Sabel Gavaldòn,  
Manuel Segade**

Publisher  
**CA2M Centro de Arte  
Dos de Mayo, Madrid**

Year  
**2020**

**JMA** *Elements of Vogue* – both the exhibition and this accompanying publication – approaches voguing as a case study of radical performance: that is as a political choreography in which blackness, queerness and cultural gestures are put to dance together, undoing normative identities and inventing novel ways of living together, one pose at a time. Taking LGBTQI+ practices of reading and shading as the articulating forces, this reader-cum-shader enacts a cross-reading of seminal texts and artworks, punctuated by a myriad of quotes authored by anyone from Cornel West to Whitney Houston. Altogether, it aims to trace a possible and always unstable genealogy of the black queer social and political body, and its aesthetic-social potential; literally throwing shade on any authoritative interpretation.

‘By historically dense queer gesture, I mean a gesture whose significance and connotative queer force is dense with antinormative meanings.’

## *Museum of Contemporary African Art*

Author  
**Meschac Gaba**

Publisher  
**Tate Publishing**

Year  
**2013**

**RMC** *Museum of Contemporary African Art* is the catalogue of the eponymous exhibition that was presented at Tate Modern in 2013 by artist Meschac Gaba. We could also have started this note by saying that it was an artwork in itself, since the artist deployed a museum infrastructure at the very heart of Tate’s museum display. In fact, not being able to project himself within these walls, he made sure that the space adapted to his needs rather than settling for denying his own reality. This echoes the feeling of evolving inside a culture that is not one’s own, while still wishing to find one’s place within it. It also echoes the fact that art history, in many respects, makes invisible the bodies that could be described as ‘unsanctioned’. Museums as places of display often echo this negation. However, and since Meschac Gaba has shone in one of the places of conceptual legitimization which defines what we commonly call ‘contemporary art’, the door is today truly open to us.

Gaba on the *Museum of Contemporary African Art*: ‘I needed a space for my work, because this did not exist.’  
‘My museum has no walls.’  
It is ‘not a model... it’s only a question.’



ANNOTATED BY **MEENAKSHI THIRUKODE**

## *Performance and the Political: Power and Pleasure in Contemporary Kerala*

Author  
**Ameet Parameswaran**

Publisher  
**Orient BlackSwan**

Year  
**2017**

**MT** This book is focused on the political landscape of Kerala – including its turn to neo-liberalism. Via performance practices that are located in the region, Parameswaran weaves a narrative around popular politics and its connections to cultural traditions. He uses specific affects so to speak – vision, voice, gesture, machinic and animal as anchors, and looks to theatre, mimicry, satire, oral performances and cinema to draw a really rich set of arguments around what encompasses the performative outside of Western notions of performance practice.

‘The present study undertakes a selective exploration of what (Jon) McKenzie would call the paradigm of “cultural performance”, whereby he marks how performance became an object of study with the formation of Performance Studies as a discipline... While engaging with the globality of performance regime, here I depart from McKenzie’s general theory of performance which categorically marks the substitution of the disciplinary regime by the performance regime. Instead I open up the category of cultural performance as one that has an ontology which is conceptualised in the region, thereby foregrounding how performance offers a distinct lens to understand the political in the contemporary. Organised under

five distinct modes of presentation – vision, voice, gesture, machinic and the animal – I analyse a series of mainstream cultural performances in Kerala across different genres, like theatre, poetry recitals, kathaprasangam (a popular form of storytelling that emerged in the 1920s in Kerala) and mimics parade. I highlight how performance is at the heart of the workings of the new modality of power, and following different strategies, how these cultural performances foreground what it is to perform, and therefore what it is to live in the contemporary. This book posits performance as a critical site of enquiry to unravel the sensory and affective contours in the transformation of the region into a neoliberal regime.’

ANNOTATED BY **JOANNA WARSZA**

## *Performative Democracy*

Author  
**Elżbieta Matynia**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2009**

**JW** From the author:

‘My questions were: What does it take for societal hope to emerge and be sustained? What are the necessary conditions for the enacting of democracy by citizens in hopeless circumstances – that is, under and despite autocratic regimes, but also in the old, well-consolidated democracies that began to reveal their illiberal temptations? What I call performative democracy is exactly this kind of phenomenon that constitutes the early stages of a democratic project or that supplies strategies to keep a well-established democracy vibrant.’

While the Warsaw court debated a possible legalisation of the Solidarność trade union in the 1980s, A.R. members climbed onto the roof opposite the courthouse and unrolled a long banner mirroring the inscription on the court building. The group delivered a message back to the judiciary body underlining that the street can also have its say – an artistic action inspired and turned into a street protest.

## *Public Intimacy: Art and Other Ordinary Acts in South Africa*

Authors  
**Betti-Sue Hertz,  
Frank Smigiel,  
Dominic Willsdon**

Publisher  
**SFMOMA Publishing**

Year  
**2014**

**GN** Although *Public Intimacy* is a publication that accompanied the eponymous exhibition, it has an impressively long shelf life beyond the event. It features a range of texts and images that highlight the intensity of public encounters in contemporary South Africa and how artists and other cultural producers respond to this. The book taps into a larger field of responses to everyday life. Re-reading some of the texts from this publication makes evident most of the reasons why government regulations on 'social distancing' to prevent the spread of Covid-19 are near impossible to follow in a country with, as the curators observe, 'quite dramatic and frightening contrasts between rich, mostly poor and an evolving middle class.'

*'Public Intimacy* proposes a broad array of manifestations and functions of intimacy as an artistic theme in South Africa. It places intimacies on the human body, on the built environment, and within visual culture as forms of circulation of meaning and values. In the exhibition, intimacy becomes both an instrument of resistance and a coping mechanism in and after an era of extensive political and social repression.'

## *Redefining Publics, Artists, and Urban Spaces: The Case of Made in Musina, South Africa, in: City & Society, vol. 30, no. 1 – Special Issue: Urban Public Art: Geographies of Co-Production*

Author  
**Pauline Guinard**

Publisher  
**Anthrosource**

Year  
**2018**

**RMC** The *Made in Musina* project was a proposal by the South African artists Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi and Rangoato Hlasane for the programme entitled *Reasons to Live in a Small Town* initiated by the Network for Visual Arts in South Africa. The goal of the project was to create links between the artists themselves and the local population of Musina. The project was also a means of facilitating social cohesion between the different groups living in the town. Because of the plurality of identities of which it is composed Musina has indeed often been the scene of conflicts between the black and white populations of South Africa as well as the Zimbabwean community, which was formed mainly after mass immigration following the crisis experienced by Zimbabwe during the 2008 elections. This article enables us to grasp not only the socio-political and economic implications of arts programmes developed in the public space in South Africa but also the difficulties that the actors encounter in putting them into practice.

*'In a context that is as racially, socially, and spatially divided as that of Musina and its region, the mere attempt made by Nkosi and Hlasane to gather the different artists living in the area, even for a meeting, was a challenge.'*

## *Singularities: Dance in the Age of Performance*

Author  
**André Lepecki**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2016**

**JMA** In this publication, Lepecki examines dance and performance at a time of rampant neoliberalism and the financialisation governing our lives. Examining how the movement of bodies is instrumental in this regime, he coins two terms: 'choreo-policing' (the policing of the circulation of bodies in the public sphere, and the imposition of somatic forms of control and obedience) and 'choreo-politics' (the kinetics of the political, understood as a choreography of freedom). From there he delves into a series of critical singularities (those traits that prove impossible to capture or objectify) of dance and performance; a set of vectors and conditions which allow us to unleash the political urgency and potential of these practices.

'Dance's most significant singularity is its capacity for gathering and articulating the set of defining problems in neoliberal production of subjectivity as it produces counter-moves and counter-discourses. Because the singularity that transforms spaces of circulation into spaces of freedom and of moving political potentialities has a specific name: the dancer.'

## *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*

Author  
**Shannon Jackson**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2011**

**JW** Ever since the artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles established a non-salaried position at the Sanitation Department of the City of New York in late 1970s, the question of how art, life, social practice and labour are interconnected and how they can be reciprocal and interdependent has perhaps become one of the most important subjects of our era. Using examples of performance, visual art, activism and public art – from Ukeles, through Rimini Protokoll, to Paul Chan's staging of plays in New Orleans after hurricane Katrina – *Social Works* deals with social art practices relating to welfare, urban planning and globalisation, as well as their relation to class, gender, race and labour.

'An awareness of the interdependency can yield both innovative aesthetic forms and an innovative social form.'

Scan the QR code  
to access the *Visible*  
Projects' archive  
section related to  
this topic

*Putin Zatsad, 2021*, by Pussy Riot, 2007—ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artists. (2019 Visible Award longlisted project)

# Protest Forms



New Archives  
Migrant Movements  
Making Assemblies  
Legal Loopholing  
Labour Fights  
Indigenous Rights  
Impacting Mediascapes  
Feminisms  
Environmental Issues  
Decolonial Narratives  
Community-based  
Alternative Economies

Sustainable Urbanisation  
Social Design  
Rural Politics  
Racial Struggles  
Queer Cultures  
Publishing Matters  
Protest Forms  
Performing Communities  
Pedagogical Platforms



# *Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa*

Authors  
**Catherine Boulle,  
Jay Pather**

Publisher  
**Wits University Press**

Year  
**2017**

**GN** *Acts of Transgression* is a collection of fifteen critical essays and visual records that though connected to the annual ICA Live Art Festival that takes place in Cape Town, does not function in any way as its catalogue. Through selected artists' projects from this and other platforms, the authors probe the notion of 'live arts' in the rapidly shifting landscape of contemporary South African society. The works of twenty-five artists and collectives analysed in this publication reflect, in various ways, the evolving language of performative protest. Labelled as the country's twelfth official language, protest is approached in its nuanced forms, focusing on live acts performed in public spaces in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Makhanda and other places. Public activations of the queer archive are one among many issues addressed. Also of interest is how historical sites have been used as a backdrop to pose questions about the present and about the future of their positioning.

'In South Africa, live art is born of extremity. Its syncretic form has evolved in response to rapidly changing social climates, colonial imposition, cultural fragmentation and politics upheaval; its affective tenor of excess and irrationality embodies the unpredictability of crisis. It proffers a new language that resists the narratives of certainty and linearity through which a neocolonial agenda has been perpetuated (even if sometimes inadvertently) in this country, reflecting – without seeking to resolve – the inscrutability and urgency of states of socio-political flux.'

# *Annihilation of Caste*

Author  
**Bhimrao Ramji  
Ambedkar**

Publisher  
**Verso Books**

Year  
**2016**

**MT** An Ambedkarite politics is essential to imagining what India should be, given that the country is pretty much a fascist state at the moment. During the resistance movement that was instigated by police violence on students of Jamia Millia University, we saw the very core of the Anti-CAA movement, as it's called, rooted in the preservation of our constitutional rights – the constitution was drafted by Ambedkar. Political activists like Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad, have been famously photographed during the movement holding the constitution in their hands. The public imagination and the occupation of space symbolically has never been seen before in a country like India, which is still deeply casteist and classist.

'There is no doubt, in my opinion, that unless you change your social order you can achieve little by way of progress. You cannot mobilise the community either for defence or for offence. You cannot build anything on the foundations of caste. You cannot build up a nation, you cannot build up a morality. Anything that you will build on the foundations of caste will crack, and will never be whole.'

# Asia's Unknown Uprisings, Volume 1: South Korean Social Movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Author  
**George Katsiaficas**

Publisher  
**PM Press**

Year  
**2012**

**NKP** The two volumes of *Asia's Unknown Uprisings* provide comprehensive history and analysis of mass uprisings in ten Asian countries, focusing particularly on the second half of the twentieth century, and attempt to place them in a global narrative and context – from the uprisings of 1968 to those in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. In the current political climate of the region, where mass protests have been a regular occurrence and solidarity among Asian protesters and activists has been greatly developed (thanks to social media and other online tools), these books offer a relevant comparative background, sociopolitical theory and detailed examples of critical actions and struggles against social, political and economic oppressions that contemporary protesters, activists and scholars can further build on.

‘One of the problems with a nationalist construction of history is that it refutes in advance the idea that human beings in various places might actually be more closely tied to each other than they are to their own “countrymen,” that ordinary people’s aspirations and dreams, their conscious and unconscious desires and needs, might be more similar to each other’s than to those of their nations’ elites.’

# Asia's Unknown Uprisings, Volume 2: People Power in the Philippines, Burma, Tibet, China, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand and Indonesia 1947–2009

Author  
**George Katsiaficas**

Publisher  
**PM Press**

Year  
**2013**

‘Directly democratic forms of decision-making and militant popular resistance are intimately woven together in these liberators movements. The conscious spontaneity and self-directed actions of hundreds of thousands – sometimes millions – of people, is nourished by communities of struggle. People’s self-organization is confined within a grammar of autonomy, solidarity, and decommodification. Histories of struggles on various continents and in different countries may seem juxtaposed across unbridgeable divides, but they nonetheless hang together in these qualities and in the connections forged by people as they struggle for peace and justice.’

## *Conflictual Aesthetics: Artistic Activism and the Public Sphere*

Author  
**Oliver Marchart**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2019**

**JW** *Conflictual Aesthetics* dwells on art practices connected to a political movement rather than art institutions. Oliver Marchart, a non-academic academic, employs political theory as opposed to art theory to read contemporary art, public art and the public sphere. Using accessible language, he traces the relations between art and activism, the political and the conflictual, and introduces the notions of 'biennales of resistance', 'counter-hegemonic curator' and 'pre-enactment'. The latter is an inspiring inversion of 're-enactment'. His favourite example of such a rehearsal of the political is an action by Public Movement, which created a temporary public sphere in 2011 in Tel Aviv by dancing and obstructing the circulation of traffic, ahead of Occupy Movement. The book is a refreshing read, illuminating what is in fact public in public art.

‘A public sphere opens  
when the routines,  
institutions and identities  
of our social world are  
touched by antagonism,  
which can be performed  
by peaceful dancing.’

## 創意空間-東亞藝術與空間抗爭 *Creative Space – Art and Spatial Resistance in East Asia*

Author  
**Yuk Hui**

Publisher  
**Roundtable  
Synergy Books**

Year  
**2014**

**LPY** The contributors in this publication are artists and theorists from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea etc., exploring the politics of space in East Asian cities. The recent upsurge and intensification of the forces of neoliberal capital has given rise to the increasing use of art and design as an instrument of gentrification. This publication serves as a document of their research findings, and suggests what roles art could play as both a critical social practice and site of resistance. Significantly it offers a detailed account of how artists are involved in acts of spatial resistance by creatively remaking space and by establishing connections between various forms of spatial politics across East Asia.

「在這場戰爭中,藝術的角色是怎樣?我們可以在這些空間理論中學習到什麼?藝術怎樣將我們導向關懷的系統,也即是如何重新找到對這個世界的感知以及自身的感受?而同時藝術又怎樣做為一種反抗和抗爭,甚至一種意識型態?」

ANNOTATED BY **MATTEO LUCCHETTI**

## *Fight-Specific Isola: Art, Architecture, Activism and the Future of the City*

Authors  
**Various authors**

Publisher  
**Archive Books**

Year  
**2013**

**ML** This incredibly rich book bears witness to the decades-long fight of the Isola neighbourhood in Milan against gentrification, across community art experiences and politically organised actions under the collective name of Isola Art Centre. The presence of artists in this experience helped the daily laboratory that each time invented different formats and words to deal with and describe the ongoing struggles against neo-liberal politics and their predatory consequences on the neighbourhood's real estate and social fabric. Words such as 'dirty cube' or 'fight-specificity' helped define the complexity of tactics and strategies that Bert Theis and many other collaborators enacted to bridge their artistic practices with the civic actions of hundreds of citizens, continually reinventing novel discursive systems through which to unfold a new imaginary of the neighbourhood and its futures.

'We originally coined the term fight-specific art to describe forms of art related to our urban fight. Our work focused on the Isola district has undoubtedly been site-specific. But the decision of siding with the movement and supporting the alternatives suggested by citizens, of fighting against the neo-liberal policies promoted by the political leaders and building speculation, made it necessary to extend the site-specific concept to the new fight-specific one.'

'The dirty cube concept is strictly connected to the platform concept, a form of open organization allowing artists, activists, curators, theorists, individuals, different persons and collectives to freely carry out their own proposals and projects in a fight-specific frame. The platform is not a collective having defined members: collectives have joined the platform either sporadically or over the long term. Neither is it an "artist-run-space". As a matter of fact, there is no director or curator who has the last word on the program or the projects to be carried out. Decision-making is horizontal and rhizomatic.'

ANNOTATED BY **MIGUEL A. LÓPEZ**

## *Fray: Art and Textile Politics*

Author  
**Julia Bryan-Wilson**

Publisher  
**University of Chicago Press**

Year  
**2017**

**ML** *Fray: Art and Textile Politics* presents a brilliant account on the multiple intersections of textile and activism from a feminist perspective. Julia Bryan Wilson departs from her own biography and the memory of her feminist mother wearing a 'Ladies' Sewing Circle and Terrorist Society' t-shirt, to construct a genealogy of amateur and professional, feminist and queer creative practices that reclaim the political agency of fibre, textiles, knots, tapestries and quilts.

'Amateur textile craft in the main falls outside the scope of contemporary art, which is increasingly comfortable with assessing the exceptionalism of self-trained or "outsider artists" such as Judith Scott (evermore folded into the apparatus of auction houses and art magazines) but is less able to critically account for the tremendous amount of making generated by those termed, in a telling phrase that equates amateurism with non remunerative textile politics leisure time, "Sunday makers."

In recent decades, textiles have provided a unique challenge to these divisions as more self-trained crafters are absorbed into the art market; the traveling exhibits and coffee table books featuring the African American quilters of the rural Alabama hamlet Gee's Bend are a signature example. Yet such instances expose some of the fault lines of fine art/non-fine art dynamics, bringing to the fore extraordinarily fraught questions about race, cultural appropriation, valuation, and class disparity.'



## *Global aCtIVISm: Art and Conflict in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Author  
**Peter Weibel**

Publisher  
**The MIT Press**

Year  
**2015**

**LPY** This publication was produced in conjunction with the Global aCtIVISm exhibition at the ZKM that took place from December 2013 to March 2014. The title *Global aCtIVISm* takes the capitalised letters to form the Latin word *civis* to emphasise the power of citizens. Both the exhibition and the accompanying publication documented politically inspired art – global art practices that draw attention to grievances and demand the transformation of existing conditions through serial actions, demonstrations and performances across a diverse range of public spaces. The publication is divided into five main themes: Activism and the Citizen, Public and Private Sphere, How to Do Activism, Tactical, Social and Global Media and ‘Artivism’ – Art and Activism.

‘... we are now seeing a new kind of social action emerging, a “performative democracy” centered around the global citizen. The global citizen recognizes the existential threats to, and interests of, all of humanity that are not contained by national borders. This new type of citizen addresses both local problems as well as global ones. Global activism is then constituted on the basis of a “global citizenship”...’

## *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*

Author  
**Rebecca Solnit**

Publisher  
**Haymarket Books**

Year  
**2015**

**ML** This is the kind of book one is always going back to, or at least whenever hope drains out, and we see our political and cultural efforts not really having an impact in the greater logic of things. Solnit writes from the perspective of her activism, putting together a series of historical case studies that oblige us to reassess our judgement on grassroots activism’s achievements. Spanning from the American civil rights movement to Occupy Wall Street, the book takes us on a journey through the rise of protest forms across the world in the last seventy years, and their ability to invent new forms of representation, often also thanks to the contribution of artistic movements, groups and individuals. What is easily dismissed as inconsequential and of little importance here is highlighted as an alternative look at recent history, from the side of those who filled squares, streets and other demonstration spots, in order to imagine and demand a better world collectively.

‘The activists who deny their own power and possibility likewise choose to shake off their sense of obligation: if they are doomed to lose, they don’t have to do very much except situate themselves as beautiful losers or at least virtuous ones.’

# *Kontrpubliczności ludowe i feministyczne: Wczesna “Solidarność” i Czarne Protesty*

Author  
**Ewa Majewska**

Publisher  
**Książka i prasa**

Year  
**2018**

**JW** *People's and Feminist Counterpublics: Early 'Solidarność' and the Feminist Black Protests* offers a passionate take on an early 'Solidarność' movement (1980–81) and the feminist Black Protests in Poland (2016–18). Both of those social movements inspire contemporary debates concerning the public sphere and the agency of counterpublics. Majewska notes that many lamentations about the crises of publicness still omit women and the working classes – groups and subjectivities fundamental to the revival of the theory and practice of the public sphere, the practice of contestation, resistance and social change. Majewska also introduces her concept of weak resistance, a socialist feminist response to the hegemonic, heroic and masculine visions of political agency.

“The non-hegemonic, weak agency is that which is making history in the shadows and margins, excluded from the classical political theory as practiced in Europe. The agency of the oppressed, marginalized and excluded, was at the core of Walter Benjamin’s idea of “weak messianism”.

In my book I argue that such is the agency of the counterpublics, making the political and the history in the context of productive and reproductive labour, and thus undermining the public/private division. Additionally I also expand the concepts of counterpublics, in the versions offered by Alexander Kluge and Oscar Negt (Proletarian counterpublics, 1988) and Nancy Fraser (feminist and subaltern counterpublics, 1991).’

# *Limitless: Contemporary Art in Mexico City*

Authors  
**Edgar Hernández,  
Inbal Miller**

Publisher  
**RM Publishing**

Year  
**2013**

**ML** *Limitless: Contemporary Art in Mexico City* presents a rigorous revision of a decade of transformation in Mexico’s contemporary art scene, between 2000 and 2010. The editors collected documentation that shows how a number of artists went beyond the museum and gallery to occupy public spaces and amplify their forms of communication. The book explores the role of participation, dialogue and collaboration in these ephemeral actions developed by around 135 artists and collectives, which made an impact in the understanding and doing of politics in Mexican art.

‘Even when museum/gallery transgression ceased being a novelty in Mexican artists’ practice, we can consider it a tendency that reached a consolidation point in the 2000s; one that operated alongside a search on the part of contemporary artists that itself formed part of their dialogue and confrontation with public space. As an eyewitness to those practices, I always had the sensation that because they were not being documented in a schematized fashion – even as digital photography made documentation ever easier – most of these works would end up lost and that only a few would manage to transcend their moment, as had happened with independent spaces of the 1990s whose legacy of creations and actions was perpetuated more at the level of anecdote than by any critical review thereof.’

ANNOTATED BY JULIA MORANDEIRA ARRIZABALAGA

## *Losing the Human Form: A Seismic Image of the 1980s in Latin America*

Author  
**Southern  
Conceptualisms  
Network**

Publisher  
**MNCARS - Museo  
Nacional Centro de  
Arte Reina Sofía**

Year  
**2012**

**JMA** *Losing the Human Form* surveys the period spanning from 1973 (Pinochet's coup) to 1994 (Zapatista uprising) in different Latin American countries. It's a period defined by the systematisation of violence and death (be it state-sanctioned in military dictatorships or from internal wars) and by the collective radical experiences of subversion, resistance and expression that emerged in response. In the face of the current neoliberalisation and acute fascistisation of the public sphere, revising this project becomes telling of how the 1970s and 1980s constituted a laboratory for subjection forms that are nowadays normalised (dispossession, debtocracy, extractivism, being disposable, etc.). But on the other hand, *Losing the Human Form* displays a vast repertoire of artistic and cultural actions, open to appropriation and aimed to counter repression; a series of strategies and actions all defined by a shared precarity and fierce radicality.

‘The hallmark of the political art of the 1980s is that it owes its existence to defeat. This all-too-rarely noted point is nevertheless central: it sets it apart from any artistic action or political image produced in the preceding decades, which aspired to play a role in the process of revolution and liberation.’

ANNOTATED BY LU PEI-YI

## 革命的做法:從 318 太陽花看公民 運動的創造性 *The Methodology of Revolution: Evaluating the Creativity of Citizen Movements from March 18 Sunflower Movement*

Author  
**Chihiro Minato**

Publisher  
台北:心靈工  
坊 - **Psy Garden**

Year  
**2015**

**LPY** In this book, the Japanese artist and scholar Chihiro Minato documents the visual and material culture of the Sunflower Student Movement in Taiwan (2014). The first part, ‘The Voice of Our Time’, introduces the student movement and highlights its connections to other protests around the world. The second part, ‘The Methodology of Revolution’, is divided into twenty-one sections with a spatial layout that highlights the various forms of artistic creativity such as Black Box, Parliament, Sunflower, body, configuration and so on. The significance of this book lies in its efforts to offer a conceptual framework for understanding the role of art in the Sunflower student movement and to assess the value of art's contribution to this historically significant protest movement in Taiwan.

「太陽花運動在保護 (care) 民主主義的同時,也為他者設想,兩者不可分離。... 每個人都動員自己擅長的事情、精通知識,以及特殊的技能,只要是做得到的事,就動手去做。這種人類的「多工(多重任務處理)」現象,就誕生在『佔領』這種特殊狀況之中。」

*No Protest without Fantasy*

Authors  
**Jenifer Evans,  
 Nida Ghouse,  
 Malak Helmy**

Publisher  
**Metropole Cairo**

Year  
**2012**

**MT** *No Protest without Fantasy* is the second in a small series of publications by Emotional Architecture, a project by Nida Ghouse and Malak Helmy initiated in Cairo in 2012. 'No Fantasy without Protest' is the title of chapter four in *The Haunting of Sylvia Plath* by Jacqueline Rose.

'Each of us plays a part in this tale of terror and desire. Yet rarely do we lay bare the emotions driving our most political actions. The truth is, no one is an observer on the sidelines.'

*Policing the Crisis: Mugging,  
the State and Law and Order*

Authors  
**Stuart Hall,  
 Chas Critcher,  
 Tony Jefferson,  
 John Clarke,  
 Brian Roberts**

Publisher  
**Macmillan Press**

Year  
**1978**

**AP** Clearly, primary and secondary education in the UK continues to form the basis of the embedding of inequality. Even though the appearance of the British state changed after the Second World War, most radically by the arrival of many people from the former colonies, invited to work after the destruction of land and labour wrought by the war (people seeking the promise of new lives), the class and racialised system of discrimination persisted. Stuart Hall, arriving through a colonial scholarship system from Jamaica to Oxford in 1951, following his degree, worked in South London as a supply teacher in a comprehensive ('Secondary Modern') school where he taught those children deemed to be 'failing'. He described his experience of the complexity of race and class, the misrecognitions of authority and privilege. This experience formed an important strand of his thinking and writing. In 1964 he joined the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, becoming its director in 1968. In 1978 he co-authored *Policing the Crisis*, a conjunctural analysis of the arrest and imprisonment of three school-age Black boys after an unwitnessed mugging in Handsworth, Birmingham.  
 → (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'It is above all the school and the education system which has the principal function of "skilling" the different sectors of the working class selectively, and assigning blacks to their rough positions in the hierarchy of occupations. It is the education system which reproduces the wage-earner with the class-structured division of labour, distributes the cultural skills roughly appropriate to each sector within the technical division of labour, and attempts to construct that collective cultural identity and disposition appropriate

to the positions of subordination and secondariness for which the majority are destined ... In relation to black youth, the education system has served effectively to depress the general opportunities for employment and education advancement, and has therefore resulted in 'reproducing' the young black worker as labour at the lower end of employment, production and skill ... The "cultural capital" of this black sector is constantly expropriated, often unwittingly, through its practical devaluation.'

# *Public Matters: Debatten & Dokumente aus dem Skulptur Projekte Archiv*

Authors  
**Hermann Arnhold,  
Ursula Frohne,  
Marianne Wagner**

Publisher  
**Verlag Walther König**

Year  
**2019**

**JW** It feels like this book weighs approximately five kilos, but it's worth the effort of carrying it around! It is the first comprehensive take on the archives of Skulptur Projekte Münster, a public art event that has taken place in the West German city of Münster every 10 years since 1977. It has established itself as the barometer of a decade of mostly European and North American public art, and has developed many great projects as well as blind spots. The archive includes sketches, plans, concepts, unrealised proposals, models, protocols, essays, professional studies, statements and interviews amassed over the past forty years and shows the evolution of the European understanding of context-responsive or site-specific art and its relation to participation, democracy and counterpublic.

'Publicity and participation are the basis of any democracy and an open society. They determine the positioning and development of an unusual exhibition format: the Skulptur Projekte in Münster. The publication PUBLIC MATTERS bundles the results of a three-year research in Skulptur Projekte Archiv. With essays, case studies, statements and conversations as well as a wealth of previously unpublished material, PUBLIC MATTERS opens up perspectives on one of the internationally most important archive collections on art in public space and reflects on the relevance of aesthetic and curatorial practices for the emergence of publicity.'

# *The Routledge Companion to Art in the Public Realm*

Authors  
**Cameron Cartiere,  
Leon Tan**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2020**

**LPY** *The Routledge Companion to Art in the Public Realm* is an upcoming anthology that brings together contributions from across a wide range of disciplines with a view to addressing a significant lacuna in the field of public art and social practice. The book is organised around four distinct topics: activation, social justice, memory and identity and ecology.

'... art as protest is not merely a form of symbolic dissent within the art world. Instead, it acts as a platform or vehicle for certain values, and is a new form of social practice that potentially engender social and political change. It also highlights an individual's right to live and their concerns surrounding social justice. Art as protest not only creates a space for public discussion but also performs democracy within the society.'



# Selected Political Writings: The Great Moving Right Show and Other Essays

**Author**  
**Stuart Hall**

**MT** From *State and Society*, 'The State: Socialism's Old Caretaker':

**Publisher**  
**Duke University Press**

**Year**  
**2016**

'Democracy is not, of course, a formal matter of electoral politics or constitutionalism. It is the real passage of power to the powerless, the empowerment of the excluded. The state cannot do this for the powerless, though it can enable it to happen. They have to do it for themselves, by finding the forms in which they can take on the control over an increasingly complex society. Certainly, it does not happen all at once, through one centre – by simply 'smashing the state', as the sort of socialist thinking which is fixated on the state would have it. It has to happen across a multiplicity of sites in social life, on many different fronts, including, of course, the state itself, whose tendency to concentrate power is precisely what constitutes it as a barrier to socialism. Gramsci advanced the profound idea that hegemony is not constituted only by the state, but in the multiple centres of civil society. It follows that an alternative conception of socialism must embrace this struggle to democratise power across all the centres of social activity – in private as well as public life, in personal associations as well as in compulsory obligations, in the family and the neighbourhood and the nursery and the shopping centre as well as in the public office or at the point of production. If the struggle for socialism in modern societies is a war of positions – different places from which we can all begin the reconstruction of society for which the state is only the anachronistic caretaker.'

# Space Invaders: Artistic-Political Interventions in a Disputed Territory: Lavapiés (1997–2004)

**Author**  
**Jesús Carrillo**

**Publisher**  
**Brumaria**

**Year**  
**2017**

**JMA** *Space Invaders* surveys the late 1990s early 2000s in the Madrid district of Lavapiés, a time in which the neighbourhood witnessed the confrontation between financial and urban speculative interests and a dense fabric of neighbourly solidarity and organisation. In this struggle for a life worth living and the critical claim for public space, artistic action emerged as central territory, carried out by a network – the Red Lavapiés – which gathered the collectives, spaces, associations and squats present in the neighbourhood; an operating figure, that of the network, that Carrillo opposes to the traditional artist. Since then, evictions and rents have escalated, and the collaborative public art discourses have been appropriated by the cultural institutions (it is important to note that the Reina Sofia Museum, La Casa Encendida and Tabacalera are all located in Lavapiés). The publication shows, nonetheless, how these fights and apparent failures served as an experimental ground for new political imaginaries, which paved the way for the so-called 'new municipalities'.

'I am reclaiming the network as an agent distanced from the traditional artist.'



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section related to  
this topic

*Lavorare con Lentezza*, 2016, by Cooperativa Cráter Invertido, 2012–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artists. (2015 Visible Award shortlisted project)



# *Publishing Matters*

New  
Archives

Migrant  
Movements

Making  
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Legal  
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Rights

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Forms

Performing  
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Pedagogical  
Platforms



# Awakened

(*Il Re di Bangkok*/ตาสว่าง)

Authors  
**Claudio Sopranzetti,**  
**Sara Fabbri,**  
**Chiara Natalucci**

Publisher  
**add editore/**  
**Reading Italy**

Year  
**2019**

**NKP** Though there have been countless academic and journalistic books written about aspects of uncertainty and violence in contemporary Thai politics in the past decade, the topic is rarely touched upon in fiction writing, and even less so in graphic novels – possibly making *Awakened* the first of its kind. Written and published in Italian in 2019 and translated into Thai in 2020, it will be available in English next year. The book scrutinises the social, political and ideological crisis in Thailand through the tragic story of a motorcycle taxi driver in Bangkok (one of the writers, Claudio Sopranzetti's, PhD thesis deals with the role that Thai motorcycle taxi drivers play in daily life and their particular importance in the political protests of 2010). Self-censorship in the form of blocks of redacted text appears several times throughout the Thai version of the book, clearly to edit out references to the Thai monarchy (uncensored in the Italian version). This is a clear indication of the precarious situation and limited freedom of expression in a country that still has one of the most severe *lèse-majesté* laws in the world.

‘He was blinded by a single bullet lodged in his skull, but he gained a new sight from the very same bullet. And when he awakened to the new sight, he saw that the country in which he lived was covered in darkness. There was no escape, no refuge, and no justice. There was no place for his faith. Everything that he once laid eyes on was but an illusion.’

# Herramienta Generosa

vols. 1, 2 and 3

Author  
**Michy Marxuach**

Publisher  
**Beta-Local**

Year  
**2019**

**ML** *Herramienta Generosa* is a periodical published by Beta-Local in Puerto Rico. This series brings together a number of materials and contributions associated with the various public events organised by this independent art space. Their collective work and public activities encourage other methodologies to think about new pedagogical paradigms, utopia, communication, knowledge production, movement, politics and public space.

‘¿Qué estructuras creamos y cuáles derrumbamos? ¿Qué espacios apoyamos y cuáles inventamos para desempacar significados, para rescatar y plantear momentos de urgencia? ¿Cómo construir canales compartidos de aprendizaje donde puedan coexistir múltiples historias? Si nos presentamos como interlocutores vivos, ¿seremos capaces de establecer relaciones también con la materia inerte, con las historias ausentes? Entonces será cuando podremos desarticular posiciones deliberadas, dejando en la sombra rastros de nuestra construcción, u de este modo, re-articular perspectivas múltiples desde los aprendizajes vividos.’

# Seismography of Struggles – Towards a Global History of Critical and Cultural Journals

**Author**  
**Zahia Rahmani**

**Publisher**  
**INHA**

**Year**  
**2018**

**JW** *Seismography of Struggles – Towards a Global History of Critical and Cultural Journals* is an ambitious research project and narrative display developed by Zahia Rahmani and the Globalisation programme that she is directing at the Institut national d’histoire de l’art (INHA) in Paris. It’s an inventory of more or less 400 non-European critical and cultural journals produced in the wake of revolutionary movements at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century up to the watershed year of 1989. It provides insights into a broad history of modernity that includes antislavery movements in Haiti, communism in Tehran, Négritude in London and anarchism in Algiers, demonstrating and, above all, allowing us to re-assess the intellectual, artistic and political dynamics that were exercised at the heart of colonial empires. Hopefully a database dedicated to these reviews will be freely accessible.

“Thus *Seismography of Struggles* helps to see, read and understand a particular writing of the history of the world. It was not carried out in the margins or the periphery as has been said, but over a very wide territorial distance. The journals exhibited come from all continents with the exception of perhaps Europe. What this history teaches us is about the long continuum of struggles which were undertaken for more than two centuries against the Western world, its colonial models and its goals. This was an ongoing struggle. More than one voluntary participant grew tired. But it was necessary and conducive. Most importantly, the fight was extremely innovative due to the nature

of those against whom this struggle was and still is waged: the madness of slavery and the persistence of its colonial matrix.”

“That is to say, through journals such as *Souffles* in Morocco (published from the 1960s to the 1970s), or those born from the effervescence of a pan-Arab capital such as Beirut, with its two concomitant journals *Shi’ir* (ca. 1950s to the 1960s), and *Hiwar* (ca. 1960s), to which Lebanese, Iraqi, and Palestinian intellectuals contributed, and in which poems by Badr Shakir al-Sayyab, who inspired free prose in the Arabic language, could be found side by side with translations of T. S. Eliot’s poems into Arabic.”

# un Magazine, 12.1 ‘The Unbearable Hotness of Decolonisation’

**Authors**  
**Neika Lehman,  
Maddee Clark**

**Publisher**  
**Un Projects Inc.**

**Year**  
**2018**

**VZ** This special issue of the long-running *un Magazine* marks just part of a wave of resurgent Indigenous and anticolonial thought and artistic practice in Australia in recent years. The contributions range across poetry, ficto-criticism, interviews and essays with vivid purpose and immediacy. The transcript of a multimedia conference presentation of the Ara Iritija archive by Rene Kulita is published together with audience dialogue, lists of colonial landowners and proprietors sit alongside photographic artworks by Julie Gough, and Genevieve Greives speaks personally and autobiographically of urban-based Indigenous practice. The contributions are resolutely affirmative, at the same time as they are framed in cutting criticality. Decolonisation is ‘so hot right now’. But what does that really mean? As co-editor Neika Lehman notes in the opening editorial:

‘Here’s my real concern: what’s going to be the next big fad? What happens after this?’

# *What Is a World?: On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*

Author  
**Pheng Cheah**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2016**

**NKP** World literature is usually a generic and apolitical term for non-Euro-American literature, but in this book Pheng Cheah reconsiders this problematic and 'normalised' term and injects a political determination into rebuilding these new pluralistic 'worlds' through postcolonial literature. The author shows that the 'reworlding' of the world in postcolonial literature results in rebuilding and generating alternative space-time – cartographies and temporalities – to counter the hegemonic colonial narrative and capitalist globalisation. Through novels from the Caribbean, South Asia and the Philippines, various postcolonial sites and urgent issues are explored – from environmental movements, ecotourism and humanitarian aid, to military and economic neocolonialism.

'Understanding world literature in terms of literature's connection to worlding and the coming of time points to immanent resources for resisting capitalist globalization. Capitalist accumulation needs and takes time. Capital is augmented by rational technologies and calculations that appropriate and manage time for the maximal extraction of surplus value. But capital can neither give itself time nor destroy it and, moreover, does not want to destroy it. This means that an irreducible principle of real messianic hope is always structural to capitalist globalization. The persistence of time is infrastructural to capital and cannot be destroyed. As an enactment of the opening of worlds by the coming of time, world literature points to something that will always exceed and disrupt capital.'

# *A Conversation with Andrea Phillips*

## by Visible – Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti

**Visible – Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti**  
**What is the public domain today?**

From the perspective of your own research and practice, what is the public domain today, also in the light of the current coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent limitations, with the creation of new states of exception and future altered scenarios?

**Andrea Phillips** The public domain is a 'colonial (juridic, economic, symbolic) architecture[s]', to quote Denise Ferreira da Silva<sup>1</sup>. To call it this is not new, although I am applying da Silva's words from the field of what she calls 'Black feminist poethics' in ways that add to the urgent necessity for its denouncement (referencing Hegel, da Silva states that to be Black is to be 'an other of the subject'<sup>2</sup>; Hegel and his ascendants produce the public domain's reliability as a space/time to be occupied by 'the subject' explicitly; the architecture of the European city is built upon the appearance of such a subject).

- 1 Denise Ferreira da Silva, 'Toward a Black Feminist Poethics: The Quest(ion) of Blackness Toward the End of the World' in *The Black Scholar*, 44:2 (2018) p. 84.
- 2 Da Silva, *ibid.*, p. 90.



In this sense, the state of exception is the public domain (in a strange warp of Schmitt and Agamben). The public domain so famously demanded by Habermas for its purported discursive freedom is not free; or, is only free for the consecrated subject. The dialectic of public-private produced by the political concept of the public domain (with its museums and galleries, coffee shops and concert halls...) is not only regulative (as Wendy Brown would have it) but violent as a double negative: those who are not subjects (which may also include the non-human) are not banned from the private and the public domain, but they can only exist there as object.

I don't think the coronavirus makes much difference to this, except in the sense that the evacuation of so-called public space makes visible through negation those exclusions I describe here. In a warped twist, Northern Europe's sudden sentimental embrace of the 'public' facilities it has stripped bare over the past five decades (for instance, in the UK, the NHS) is already dissolving in the face of pervasive support for reprivatization. Back to normality...

#### **JW | ML      Where do you look for new genealogies?**

While assembly and daily spaces of exchange are depicted through images of empty and deserted places where human activities have been frozen in time, where do we look for new places and areas of collective research? Have you recently come across any new genealogies that are being written about that develop beyond neo-liberal, Eurocentric, patriarchal structures and challenge them by fostering socially transformative scenarios?

**AP** I think those of us with cultural power need to be careful of naming new genealogies. It is not up to us. Especially in the field of visual culture, once a 'new genealogy' is named it becomes a biennial thematic. This terrifies me. So instead I will offer an old genealogy to which I and my friends are returning with guarded respect (and because it is where our practices started as artists and theatre-makers; it is where our politics formed); the UK's

community arts movement. This developed formally (though with many antecedents) in the post-war period where small amounts of state support allowed it to exist.

In contradiction to the UK government's recent idea of supporting 'Creative People and Places' through Arts Council funding (something most people find deeply condescending), community arts understood itself at its height as a 'movement' that supported in a pragmatic way people's imaginative and practical needs. It was an openly political movement that championed collective authorship over visibility, and nurtured humility and companionability over reputational value as the principle values of leadership. In terms of concepts of public space, the community art exploded such a notion within the post-war landscape. From summer play schemes in bombed out urban sites, through rural community music festivals, to disused churches, shared short-life housing, empty warehouses, urban and rural streets, tents on hippy country estates, hospitals and village hall cinemas, prisons and television studios, spaces used for community arts were pragmatic, ideological, unexpected and ad-hoc, often accommodated amidst the provision of other services.

Importantly, this is a history that happens in Europe, but is not Eurocentric. It certainly had forms of patriarchy embedded within it, but it was also certainly socially transformative.

#### **JW | ML      What are the new formats, languages and narrations?**

The promiscuous and intersectional way of composing this annotated bibliography by the invited practitioners is symptomatic of the non-academic approach to public space and its logics. The choices catalyse the social issues and urgencies in a place of contamination and political innovation, pushing knowledge production systems to be more collective, diverse and inclusive. How do you think this new hybridisation can reshape the formats, language and storytelling around the extended field of public art?

**AP** I'm afraid I'm an academic and love the way that so-called 'academic knowledge' allows me to think and act more deeply, more carefully and more thoroughly. I am also committed to free public teaching at a higher level and attempt to do this within the regulations of the university where I am currently employed. Having taught in Northern European art schools all my life, I am becoming far less committed to art education. I am afraid of art schools that produce deeply competitive museum-ready professionals with egos to match. I oppose the financialisation of education which must be understood as both direct and indirect. There are brilliant things going on in universities – in education, in law, in critical management, in politics – and I try to learn from these practices of thought.

Until its privatisation in the West, people who worked in universities often worked collaboratively. Stuart Hall exemplified this, as did the Centre for Cultural Studies that he joined early in its formation at Birmingham University. Hall rarely authored anything on his own – he wrote and worked collaboratively. He also worked, after gaining his PhD, as a state school teacher. I think we should all do this.

I am very committed to storytelling. I agree with the sentiment of the question that storytelling can open up, translate and spread ideas about acts and ideas from one territory to another, from one form to another. Perhaps here the coronavirus has produced an interesting situation where those of us lucky enough not to have been affected directly either physically or emotionally by the pandemic, have learned to exist through hearsay and forms of rapid mythism in interesting ways.

#### **JW | ML**      **Interconnectedness and interdependence**

Translocality has emerged as the interconnectedness of processes that happen in and between different localities. Artistic processes in the public sphere resulted as enduring, open and non-linear processes, which produce close interrelations between different places and people. As a result of globalisation, translocal networks

made visible interdependence and the need for new forms of empathy across borders and geographical limitations. Can we see in these new networks and alliances a way to question and rework public space in a civic sense?

**AP** Yes, but it may not be artists and curators who are best placed to facilitate this. Certainly, artists and curators should not be leading such reworking. Now we need to listen.

#### **JW | ML**      **Museum as a public space of care**

When the museum became a domain of the State, and its collections public, the objects and artefacts were turned into a repository of common knowledge, and its narrations a common story to which people could belong. But the real publicness of its premises was rarely achieved. A symbolic and highly interesting case is when, in 1945, Malmö Museum opened its doors to house refugees from the Second World War who had fled from all over Europe to Sweden. In this case, the museum not only responded to a socio-political crisis, acting like a common good but the act also implied that culture, and specifically the visual arts, were there to respond to a basic need including food and shelter from the cold. Can we learn from such an experience today – imagining the museum as an organic part of what we define as public space, and its premises as a space of care?

**AP** OK, some problems with this statement:  
1. Are museums really the domains of the State in any way other than what Margaret Thatcher called 'Statecraft'? I don't think they are, except nominally, even in Sweden. I refer to my earlier remarks on the public domain and ask: who is the subject and who is the object of the museum?  
2. Queens Museum, NYC, is currently operating one of its largest spaces as a food distribution centre during the covid-19 pandemic. This is an excellent pragmatic response, given that

most other New York museums and galleries are just wringing their hands and 'identifying'. However, this is the exception, and will only exist until the return of exhibition circulation.

3. I have used my public platforms, often, to suggest that my local mega-museum, Tate Modern, should be reutilised more beneficially as a community centre and short-life social housing facility. But not as a 'socially engaged' commission; rather as a transformative commitment. It is interesting to think about who the useful workers currently employed by Tate might be in such a situation: certainly the cooks, cleaners, technicians and economists would be needed.

#### JW | ML Visionary ideas for today

In the publication *Visible: where art leaves its own field and becomes visible as part of something else* (2010), curator Anna Colin presented the artistic project *Museum Futures: Distributed* by Neil Cummings and Marysia Lewandowska. It takes the shape of a film and a transcript, based on eighteen months of research and interviews with all key employees of Moderna Museet in Stockholm, from director to maintenance staff. In the film, Ms Chan from the 'Asian Multitude network' is in dialogue with Ayan Lindquist, the museum executive, on her trajectories in cultural governance. By then, June 2058, the art market and the art institution have divorced once and for all. Commercial galleries have become 'a competing meshwork of global auction franchises', while 'public/private museum hybrids' and other nodal cultural entities, in addition to their engagement with so-called 'art-artefacts', 'exhibitionary practice' and 'embedded co-production' have been dedicating their time to activities as varied as cooperating 'on a draft amendment to Article 39 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights' or distributing 'regenerative medical technologies'.

Given the reflections shared so far in this conversation, and inspired by this speculative artistic reading of the museum of the future, can you share some visionary ideas on how art could engage with the public sphere today?

**AP** I love this film. But it is already a prehistory of the future that feels like archaeology. Personally, I don't believe in 'visionary ideas'! I think they are part of the problem. Cedric Price, in 1972, said: 'A superb design is the provision of free milk to school children.'<sup>3</sup> I agree.

3 Cedric Price, 'On safety pins and other magnificent designs', *Pegasus*, spring 1972, p. 51.

→  
Giuseppe Campuzano passed away in 2013, the year he was nominated for the Visible Award. The following year *Visible* organized his first European presentation, at Erg Gallery in Brussels, of his long term project *Museo Travesti del Perú*, curated by Miguel A. López. In 2014, this work became the leading image of the Belgian Gay Pride.

# Queer Cultures

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible* Projects' archive section related to this topic



*Carnet. Photographs for ID Document, 2011, by Giuseppe Campuzano. Makeup by Germain Machuca. Photo by Claudia Alva. Courtesy of Giuseppe Campuzano's Archive.*

## *The Against Nature Journal* #1 Summer

Authors  
**Aimar Arriola,**  
**Grégory Castéra**

Publisher  
**Council Publishing**

Year  
**2020**

**ML** Initiated in 2014 as a commission by the NGO Legal Agenda and arts organisation Ashkal Alwan in Beirut, *The Against Nature Journal* explores ‘crime against nature’ laws and their legacies in order to foster dialogue on sexual and reproductive rights and rethink nature anew. Six years in the making and workshopped through symposiums, meetings, exhibitions and many other forms of knowledge production, this magazine sees the light featuring an incredible series of texts penned by queer activists, lawyers, theologians, journalists, researchers and many other experts. This is not only a magazine that creates an unprecedented insight into the relationship between colonial penal codes and the current violation of human rights across the globe, it is also thought as a tool for many individuals and organisations that are concerned with such topics and are actively operating in the fields of law, activism, social sciences and the arts. In fact, 1,500 free copies have been distributed towards these subjects, imagining this magazine as an actual aid to their struggles.

‘Over the millenia, the authority of nature has been enlisted in support of many causes: to justify and to condemn nature slavery, to praise breastfeeding and to blame masturbation, to elevate the aesthetic of the sublime over the beautiful, and to undergrid ethics by appeal to instinct or evolution.’

‘Living in a society based on a secular legal system with a religious imprint, we are subject to the concept and figure of “nature.” It is used to criminalize individuals for non-reproductive sexual orientations, gender identities, and ways of being. This affects primarily LGBTQI+ communities, but it extends beyond them too. The legal language to support such criminalization often stems from colonial legal codes: the Napoleonic Penal Code, for example, and various other British texts.’

## *Axis Mundo:* *Queer Networks in Chicano L.A.*

Authors  
**C. Ondine Chavoya,**  
**David Evans Frantz**

Publisher  
**Prestel and**  
**DelMonico Books**

Year  
**2017**

**ML** This catalogue accompanied one of the best – if not the best – exhibitions organised within the framework of the *Pacific Standard Time: Los Angeles / Latin American (PST:LA/LA)* project developed by the Getty Foundation in 2017. *Axis Mundo* collects a number of essays, documentation and unpublished materials around the queer Chicana/o artists in Los Angeles from the 1960s to the 1980s. The editors depart from the work of artist and activist Mundo Meza in order to highlight a large scene and generation of experimental artists, collectives and music bands, whose practices brilliantly and bravely intersected various forms of social and political struggle.

‘This period witnessed tumultuous and inspiring political activism around identity and social justice, including the emergence of the Chicano civil rights, women’s, and gay liberation movements, as well as, later, the political activism of the AIDS epidemic. This was also a period of tremendous growth and experimentation in the visual arts, especially in Southern California, which saw the rise of numerous art schools, the establishment of many of the region’s core cultural institutions, and the founding of numerous alternative art spaces that supported Chicana/o, feminist, and queer cultural producers.’



# Countersexual Manifesto

Author  
**Paul B. Preciado**

Publisher  
**Columbia University Press**

Year  
**2018**

**ML** This pivotal book, in its latest English version, represents one of the crucial efforts in deconstructing the ‘supposedly biological foundations of the heterocentric regime’. Departing from an anecdote about the Marquis de Sade and his use of a dildo both as a sex toy and a case for his writing in prison, Preciado introduces the idea that sexuality is something we can fabricate. This text swings between pop culture and theory to inspire a call to action in rethinking our ways in which sexuality responds to a performativity of our need to emancipate our bodies from the given norms.

‘The lesson we learn from the survival of Sade’s most challenging text is not only that hollow dildos can be useful pens for hiding secrets or that any dildo can eventually contain a book but also that a book can operate like a dildo by becoming a technique for fabricating sexuality. Like a dildo, a book is a sexual body’s assisted cultural technology of modification. In this sense, this book, too, is a dildo. A dildo-book and a book about dildos that aims to modify the subject who might use it.’

‘The feminist and queer theories of the fin-du-siècle could be described as a coming to terms with the hypermasculinity, white supremacy, and heterocentrism of central European psychoanalytic theories of sexuality. Drawing on the steps that feminist and queer theories took against psychoanalytic norms, the texts and exercises included in this manifesto could be understood as a counterclinic of queer and trans sexualities.’

# Unbecoming

Authors  
**Eric Michaels, Paul Foss**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**1997**

**VZ** Often an outsider has keener insight into a society’s fundamental structures than many of those raised in its midst. Eric Michaels was an American who died in Australia in 1988, where he counts among the AIDS dead. Working as an ethnographer in the Yuendumu community, he witnessed the emergence of the 1970s and 1980s market for Aboriginal art, and is counted among its keenest observers and critics. Essays such as ‘Bad Aboriginal Art’ remain indispensable in their unflinching view of the contradictions and colonial neurosis of white Australian attitudes to Indigenous art production. *Unbecoming* is Michaels’s AIDS diary. From his Brisbane hospital bed Michaels casts a dispassionate and often disgusted eye across the Australian Bicentennial celebration, queer cultures at the colonial crossroads, and the strange habits of second-hand furniture salesmen. Particularly memorable is a Foucauldian take on the Australian ‘tidiness’ discourse and historical erasure – from the grime beneath his hospital table in the infectious diseases ward to white-painted rocks at Yuendumu.

‘Ruined, ruined, what a bugger of a day! Everything was going to get done at once: QuAC cleaner, and carpet people, installing the ceiling fan. And Lee, dear Lee, was to coordinate all this, and that was crucial, because as you know, dear diary, I cannot deal with Brisbane people directly without getting into horrible fights.’

# Unruly Visions: The Aesthetic Practices of Queer Diaspora

Author  
**Gayatri Gopinath**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2018**

**MT** In my continued interest in archives, and erased or lost histories, Gopinath's book was an expansion on those ideas, including a look at regionally specific archives. How do we understand affect, image, pasts, narrations that aren't only of the word? It also provides an opportunity to think through the idea of 'gaze' differently. Her notion of 'queer relationality' is an important 'landscape' in the making – where queer diaspora allows us to see those proximities more clearly.

'An exquisite meditation on diasporic loss and longing, *Lose Your Mother* (Saidiya Hartman) is not a triumphal return to origins; the diasporic sensibility that emerges from the text is marked by the impossibility of return as well as, for the most part, commonality or affiliation. Throughout much of Hartman's narrative, there is an unbridgeable distance between her and those she encounters in Ghana. "The rupture was the story", she writes, not the hope of re-creating lineage and familial genealogy. The effect of diaspora in Hartman's text, is that of irredeemable loss, failure, defeat, alienation and disappointment; it is these forms of negative affect that saturate the text, and where Hartman herself as narrator resides. Speaking of the numerous African American tourists who travel to Ghana to view slavery's ruins, she writes, "Did the rich ones suffer from nostalgia? Did I? Was longing or melancholy what defined the tribe of the Middle Passage?"'



## Racial Struggles

*Slave Rebellion Reenactment* by Dread Scott,  
2013–2019. Courtesy of the artist.  
(2015 Visible Award longlisted project)

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## *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*

Author  
**Cedric Robinson**

Publisher  
**University of North Carolina Press**

Year  
**1983**

**AP** Avery Gordon introduced me to this book, having taught with Robinson at UC Santa Barbara until his retirement from the Centre for Black Studies Research. It was to become a crucial resource for me: as someone brought up in the Western Marxian tradition, I needed this corrective from Robinson: that Marx profoundly misread the history of oppression and thus the possibility of revolution as a white, Western concern and tradition. The book ‘attempts to map the historical and intellectual contours of the encounter of Marxism and Black radicalism, two programmes for revolutionary change’ (p. 1). It does this through a systematic reading of the long tail of Black intellectual and activist struggle.

‘For those African men and women whose lives were interrupted by enslavement and transportation, it was reasonable to expect that they would attempt, and in some way realize, the re-creation of their lives. It was not, however, an understanding of the Europeans that preserved those Africans in the grasp of slavers, planters, merchants, and colonizers. Rather, it was the ability to conserve

their native consciousness of the world from alien intrusion, the ability to imaginatively re-create a precedent metaphysics while being subjected to enslavement, racial domination, and oppression. This was the raw material of the Black radical tradition, the values, ideas, conceptions, and constructions of reality from which resistance was manufactured.’

Such an understanding is influenced by W. E. B. Du Bois’s understanding of ‘double consciousness’ as both a tactic and a resistance. It can also be patently felt in the writings of Octavia Butler, who imaginatively recreates a ‘prelife’ of slavery through a futurism that will not take the substrate of historical reasoning from white history. I know many of the artists whose work has been acknowledged by *Visible* both belong and desire to emancipate this consciousness of power of alternate histories and contexts.

## *Une écologie décoloniale: Penser l’écologie depuis le monde caribéen*

Author  
**Malcom Ferdinand**

Publisher  
**Seuil**

Year  
**2019**

**SS** It is becoming increasingly apparent that ‘one cannot be anti-racist without being an ecologist today, and vice versa.’ Such is one of the underlying premises of Malcom Ferdinand’s 2019 book (appearing in English translation with Polity Press in the of autumn 2020), which forcefully calls for the politicisation and decolonisation of the practice and study of ecology and the recognition that climate crisis is bound up with histories and persistent traces of colonisation, and the acknowledgement that environmental justice is intimately linked to decolonial and anti-racist struggles across the world, both historically and nowadays. Thinking ‘public space’ here in terms of spaces of environmental activism or institutionalised positions of environmental stewardship and advocacy, many have lamented the whiteness of the green movement and the fact that racialised persons are still conceived as what sociologist Nirmal Puwar names ‘space invaders’: deviants from the ‘somatic norm’, bodies that ‘are marked out as trespassers, who are, in accordance with how both spaces and bodies are imagined (politically, historically and conceptually), circumscribed as being “out of place”.

→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

‘To the environmental urgency of limiting global warming and putting a stop to the destruction of Earth’s ecosystems, I add some equal urgencies: of a global redistribution of wealth and social justice; of the decolonial task of recognizing a worthy place in the world for the peoples of

First Nations, the formerly colonized and racialized people; and of equal social and political consideration of women, especially racialized women from former European colonies. Yes, ecology is above all an issue of justice. The ecological crisis is a crisis of justice.’

# From #BLACKLIVESMATTER to Black Liberation

Author  
**Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor**

Publisher  
**Haymarket**

Year  
**2016**

**AP** Taylor is one of the clearest Black political writers that have helped me historicise the Black Lives Matter movement. Her words are clear and ring sharply against the continual brutality evidenced in the US and the UK this summer and beyond. Importantly, she refuses to divide the struggle for Black liberation from the stratification of class. Perhaps even more poignantly, this book was published in 2016, at the end of Obama's second term and before the election of Trump; thus, it faces backwards and forwards; it historicises and is prefigurative.

'Racism in the United States has never been just about abusing Black and Brown people just for the sake of doing so. It has always been a means by which the most powerful white men in the country have justified their rule, made their money, and kept the rest of us at bay. To that end, racism, capitalism and class rule have always been tangled together in such a way that it is impossible to imagine one without the other. Can there be Black liberation in the United States as the country is currently constituted? No. Capitalism is contingent on the absence of freedom and liberation for Black people and anyone else who does not directly benefit from its economic disorder... Building the struggles against racism, police violence, poverty, hunger, and all of the ways in which oppression and exploitation express themselves is critical to people's basic survival in this society. But it is also within those struggles for the basic rights of existence that people learn how to struggle, how to strategize, and build movements and organisations.'

# From the Tricontinental to the Global South: Race, Radicalism, and Transnational Solidarity

Author  
**Anne Garland Mahler**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2018**

**SS** Published in 2018, Anne Garland Mahler's *From the Tricontinental to the Global South* is a compelling historical narrative that seeks to read the legacies of the Tricontinental, a Cold-War transnational, anti-imperial struggle for racial justice, in the context of contemporary social movements, in particular in the USA. While the references at the time the publication was written were events such as the 2014 restoration of relations between the USA and Cuba, and the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, following the police murder of Michael Brown the same year, the book speaks to the current surge in the global reach and internationalist impulse of Black Lives Matter following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020.  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'While it was consistently hypocritically silent on racial inequities within Cuba, the Tricontinental played a pivotal role in generating international solidarity with the U.S. civil rights movement as well as with the antiapartheid struggle in South Africa, and its vision of global resistance was shaped by its foundations in black internationalist thought and by the close involvement of African American and Afro-Latinx activists. *From the Tricontinental to the Global South* analyzes the expansive cultural production of the Tricontinental and traces the circulation and influence of its discourse in related radical texts from the Americas, including Third Cinema, Cuban revolutionary film,

the Nuyorican movement, writings by Black Power and Puerto Rican Young Lords activists, as well as works from contemporary social movements such as the World Social Forum and Black Lives Matter. Through this tracing, this book identifies a set of Tricontinentalist texts, referring to any cultural product that engages explicitly with the aesthetics and especially the discourse of Tricontinentalism, meaning it reflects a deterritorialized vision of imperial power and a recognition of imperialism and racial oppression as interlinked, often using a racial signifier of color to abstractly refer to a broadly conceived transracial political collectivity.'

# *Tavia Nyong'o in Conversation with Luke Willis Thompson in Social Text Online Journal*

Publisher  
**Social Text Online  
Journal**

Year  
**2015**

**GN** This contribution is an edited transcript of an email interview centred around *eventually they introduced me to people I immediately recognised would take me out anyway*, a work by Willis Thompson for the 3<sup>rd</sup> New Museum Triennial. The work entails an invitation to a museum visitor to follow a black person/performer on choreographed routes in selected New York City boroughs. The email format of the conversation between Nyong'o and the artist avoids a descriptive language of the work itself. The correspondence between the two reads like a performative act, one in which readers are invited to do what the performance piece instructs participants to do, to follow, be led into a known unknown.

‘The afterlife of this work is constituted for me then, not just by the kinds of disruptions to it that police or the city provided, nor by the ongoing crises to which it refers, but by the fact that the experience couldn’t be corroborated

or confirmed with others. I’m sure almost no one saw the same work, in the same time, as anyone else.

It was this decision to make a work that stays in the dark, in the kind of occult space of street life, and intimately, between a single performer and a winnowed audience, that I hoped would bring the performance into a unique condition in which questions of its status as an artwork or not, and variables in terms of its level of visibility, would have no bearing on its potential for power.’

# *Threshold(s)*

Author  
**CAMP/Center for Art  
on Migration Politics**

Publisher  
**CAMP/Center for Art  
on Migration Politics**

Year  
**2021**

**BG** *Threshold(s)* was the last exhibition hosted by CAMP before its closure, and I am particularly fond of this show since I actively took part in its making and development day by day. Guest-curated by the Malmö-based art historian Temi Odumosu, the exhibition wanted to investigate what happens when asylum seekers and migrants are granted residence and we must co-exist. Odumosu gathered works by five women artists, whose identities are ‘in the middle’, thus they currently live in Scandinavia but they were born in other parts of the world: Michelle Eistrup (Jamaican/Danish), Luanda Carneiro Jacoel (Brazilian/Norwegian), Yong Sun Gullach (Korean/Danish), Pia Arke (Greenlandic/Danish), Saba Bereket Persson (Ethiopian/Swedish). According to the curator, these women are ‘post-memorial artists committed to processing colonial legacies and their residual affects/effects, by bearing the personal, collective and cultural trauma of those who came before’ (p. 7).

‘A threshold is a bridge,  
and it produces a sixth  
sense of something  
more, something beyond.  
Through these inspiring  
artistic practices, I invite  
you to continue to explore  
the politics and poetics  
of relation.’



# Unfixed: Photography and the Decolonial Imagination in West Africa

Author  
**Jennifer Bajorek**

Publisher  
**Duke University Press**

Year  
**2020**

**SS** In Jennifer Bajorek's *Unfixed: Photography and the Decolonial Imagination in West Africa*, once again the focus is on decolonisation and the role of the imagination (see Azoulay, Ferdinand), internationalism and global liberation movements (see Garland Mahler, Gray), as well as attending to the proleptic import of a particular political imagination produced in part through photography. The object of analysis in this case is the relationship between photography and decolonial political imagination in Francophone West Africa in the years immediately leading up to and following independence from French colonial rule (1960), with a particular focus on Senegal and Benin. This moment of decolonisation coincided with the rapid development of photography both in West Africa and globally. Combining close formal analysis of photographs (the book is generously illustrated) with detailed archival research and extensive interviews, in conversation with contemporary theories of photography, the book explores genres such as studio portraiture, ID cards and documentary images.  
→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

‘Each chapter puts photographs from west African archives and collections associated with the independence generation into dialogue with stories shared, and knowledge produced, in interviews I did with west African photographers, their descendants, and other collectors and keepers of photographs in order to illustrate the multitude of ways that urban west Africans were using expanded access to the medium in this moment.

I argue and try to show that photographers, their subjects, and their publics used photography to express new experiences, to reshape public and political discourse, and to facilitate new conversations, relays, and exchanges – with people living right next door to them and all over the world – both on the eve of independence and in the post-independence years.’

# Rural Politics

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible* Projects' archive section related to this topic

*Carved to Flow* (Akwa Ibom region in Nigeria) by Otobong Nkanga, 2017–ongoing. Courtesy of the artist. (2019 Visible Award shortlisted project)



## *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*

Author  
**James C. Scott**

Publisher  
**Yale University Press**

Year  
**2017**

**PT** James C. Scott, one of the most important scholars of anarchism and agrarian societies, examines urban spaces, economies and the founding of states through the means of production and dissemination of non-human elements such as crops. It is important to understand the production of spaces not only through the existence of societies or agricultural communities but also through agricultural production or means that influence slavery, exchange and other forms of organisation of urbanism. Scott gives a detailed analysis of Ancient Mesopotamian cities, which is very inspiring and helpful in understanding the role of grain in ancient global urbanism as well as the destruction of cities. The book provides historical facts on colonialism and slavery through the dissemination and means of production of grain that may provide a good source of information for artists who are working with grain and within the practice of farming both in urban and rural spaces.

‘How were we also domesticated by the domus, by our confinement, by crowding, by our different patterns of physical activity and social organization? Finally, by comparing the life world of agriculture-strapped as it is to the metronome of a major cereal grain-with the life world of the hunter-gatherer, I make the case that the life of farming is comparatively far narrower experientially and, in both a cultural and a ritual sense, more impoverished.’

## *Dark Emu: Aboriginal Australia and the Birth of Agriculture*

Author  
**Bruce Pascoe**

Publisher  
**Magabala Books**

Year  
**2014**

**VZ** Sometimes a book is a movement. That is the case with Pascoe’s *Dark Emu*. First published in 2014, it is now into its twenty-fifth reprint. After a fumbled right-wing attempt to discredit the author in early 2020, the uptake of this book shows no signs of slowing at the time of writing. The book opens with an astrological image. The Dark Emu of the title is Biame, a Spirit Emu visible as a dark shape in the Milky Way. Pascoe points out that whereas the European tradition is to stare at the stars, the Indigenous way is to recognise the spaces between them. From here he goes on to expound a vast retinue of Indigenous agricultural and socio-political technologies that have been and largely remain unseen by the settler-colonial or modern European mind. The book is inseparable from praxis, and earlier this year Pascoe led a harvest of mandadyan nalluk grain, in a project developed with a community near Mallacoota. Just as important for many were the photos that also circulated in early 2020 of Pascoe clad in volunteer firefighter gear as terrible infernos raged and the national leadership left for Hawa’ii.

‘Baiaame, the creator Spirit Emu, left the earth after its creation to reside as a dark shape in the Milky Way. The emu is inextricably linked with the wide grasslands of Australia, the landscape managed by Aboriginals. The fate of the emu, people, and grain are locked in step because, for Aboriginal people the economy and the spirit are inseparable. Europeans stare at the stars, but Aboriginal people also see the spaces between where the Spirit Emu resides.’

# Sakiya: Art | Science | Agriculture, vol. 01

Author  
**Sakiya**

Publisher  
**Sakiya**

Year  
**2019**

**SS** The publication *Sakiya: Art | Science | Agriculture* serves as a document to and resource for a unique practice of engaging and (re-)activating a very particular kind of public. This is the first volume in a series of self-published materials by Sakiya, an academy and international residency programme located on a hillside in the village of Ein Qiniya, Ramallah, Palestine. Founded by architect Sahar Qawasmi and artist Nida Sinnokrot, Sakiya promotes visual art, ecological preservation, sustainable agriculture and food justice, combining an emphasis on cultural heritage with contemporary artistic and ecological practices. The bilingual publication, in English and Arabic, comprises an overview of Sakiya's genesis and vision and of the political geography in which it is located (that of the Israeli settler colonisation of Palestine, the centrality of cultivation practices therein, the neoliberal speculative development strangling Ramallah, and the legal proprietary status of land in areas A, B and C of Palestine); a speculative, multi-species writing exercise by 2019 fellows Marleen Boschen and Charles Prior; a re-print of Silvia Federici and George Caffentzis's 'Commons Against and Beyond Capitalism'; an interview with Sinnokrot on the topic of 'rewilding pedagogy'; an excerpt from the 'Common Ground' course reading list; an excerpt from an agroecological study of Sakiya by Omar Imseeh Tesdell; residency profiles (Samia Halaby, Yara Bamieh and Dina Amro); several recipes; and lavish photo-documentation of the site, numerous events (including projects by students from the UK, USA and Palestine), and artistic works both displayed and produced at Ein Qiniya.

→ (to read the full note please visit the *Visible* project website)

'By grafting local agrarian traditions of self-sufficiency with contemporary art and ecological practices, we seek

to create a new narrative around our relationship to land, knowledge-production, and the commons.'



## Social Design

*Ecoart Uganda* by Ruganzu Bruno Tusingwire, 2010–ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artist. (2015 Visible Award shortlisted project)

Scan the QR code to access the *Visible* Projects' archive section related to this topic

## *Not Now! Now!* *Chronopolitics, Art & Research*

Author  
**Renate Lorenz**

Publisher  
**Sternberg Press**

Year  
**2014**

**JMA** In a time of hyperproductivity and much-needed historiographical revision, the notion of chronopolitics (or how every form of subjectification articulates a particular temporality with specific politics to it) has proven incredibly powerful in reconsidering the temporal order in which art practice, labour and research are inscribed; but, also, the ones they produce, challenge or disrupt. This publication takes its cue from Elizabeth Freeman's queer perspective of time in *Time Binds* (Duke University Press, 2010) to incorporate black and postcolonial critiques of time and modernity in order to trace how certain artistic practices contest and prompt alternatives to the hegemonic organisation of temporal experience – be it intimate, social or historical – by minor gestures such as citing, stuttering, disruption or deferral.

‘What I am doing in my work is not returning to anything, but rather speaking from an understanding of public and from an understanding of my own public relations as composed of and through multiple temporalities that are held together in a singular moment.’

## *Radical Pedagogies*

Authors  
**Beatriz Colomina,  
Ignacio Galán,  
Evangelos Kotsioris,  
Anna-Maria Meister**

Publisher  
**MIT Press**

Year  
**2020**

**PT** *Radical Pedagogies* is the outcome of a long-lasting collaborative research project by Beatriz Colomina with her PhD students Ignacio G. Galán, Evangelos Kotsioris and Anna-Maria Meister. The book consists of many pedagogical experiments from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from various geographies and cities, focussing primarily on the architecture field, and including a critical stand against architectural and other types of normative education within modernity. The experimental design pedagogies are either in an institution, or outside of an institution, or experiment as a temporary short-term gathering and many other forms run by architects, teachers and scholars. The case studies present a global mapping. The book also includes many interesting pedagogical experiments about alternative pedagogies with critical content, as well as presenting itself as an interesting archival case project. As an entangled archival work, this project may inspire socially engaged art practices that formulate themselves as pedagogical practice, as well as archival projects.

‘Radical Pedagogies is a collaborative history project that explores a series of pedagogical experiments that played a crucial role in shaping architectural discourse and practice in the second half of the twentieth century. As a challenge to normative thinking, they questioned, redefined, and reshaped the postwar field of architecture.

They are radical in the literal meaning stemming from the Latin radix (root), as they question the basis of architecture. These new modes of teaching shook foundations and disturbed assumptions, rather than reinforcing and disseminating them. They operated as small endeavors, sometimes on the fringes of institutions, but had long-lasting impact.’



Scan the QR code to access the *Visible Projects* archive section related to this topic

*Brigada Puerta de Tierra* by Jesús 'Bubu' Negrón and Luis Agosto-Leduc, 2015—ongoing.  
Courtesy of the artists. (2017 Visible Award recipient)



## Sustainable Urbanisation

Sustainable Urbanisation

Social Design

Rural Politics

Racial Struggles

Queer Cultures

Publishing Matters

Protest Forms

Performing Communities

Pedagogical Platforms

New Archives

Migrant Movements

Making Assemblies

Legal Loopholing

Labour Fights

Indigenous Rights

Impacting Mediascapes

Feminisms

Environmental Issues

Decolonial Narratives

Community-based

Alternative Economies



# *Art and the City: Worlding the Discussion through a Critical Artspace*

Authors  
**Jason Luger,  
Julie Ren**

Publisher  
**Routledge**

Year  
**2017**

**LPY** This anthology explores the relationship between art and the city in the context of an increasingly globalised and interconnected world defined by a network of flows, circulation and exchange (of people, culture and capital). It seeks to deepen our understanding of the role of contemporary art in shaping the landscape of protest across various globalised urban environments through the idea of a 'critical artspace' that functions as a lens through which the political exigencies of art and urban space may be viewed. This book comprises fifteen essays and is categorised into three sections: 1) Alternative imaginations; 2) transformative processes; 3) public(s), participation and representation. Significantly, the book includes three essays that focus on the 2014 Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong, a historically significant event that inspired the publication of this book.

““Worlding the critical artspace” serves here as an introduction to begin shifting our desire from the definitive, final explanation towards considering the many multiple ways these practices can be interpreted as disruptions – in terms of how we understand both art and the city.”

# *Notes on How to Irritate a Group of Committed Artists: Politics of Emotions at the Ghetto Biennale in Port-au-Prince*

Author  
**David Frohnafel**

Year  
**2019**

**GN** David Frohnafel, whose PhD research focus was the art scene of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, provides a reading and critique of the Ghetto Biennale, founded in 2009, for which he was assistant curator and co-curator for the second and third editions. The biennale takes place in the neighbourhood between Grande Rue and Rue du Magasin de L'Etat in downtown Port-au-Prince, where artists affiliated with the Atis Rezistans collective, the co-founders of the biennale, live and work. Whilst British artist and curator Leah Gordon, another co-founder, has described the event as a 'curated social situation', Frohnafel argues that the biennale is part of a 'prolonged process of urban poverty tourism' marred by power structures that often leave the Haitian artists disgruntled. Though remaining critical of the event, Frohnafel asserts, 'the biggest strength of this biennale project is indeed the production of a space where inter-klas tension and conflict become possible.'

“Traditionally the neighborhood between Grande Rue and Rue du Magasin de L'Etat was a place where artisanal craftwork for the Marché en Fer (Iron Market) in Port-au-Prince was produced. Today the neighborhood mainly produces craftwork for wider Caribbean tourist economies in Panama, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, or Puerto Rico. Many families began to settle between these workshops

and small warehouses, renting small houses made out of corrugated metal. In the last sixteen years, the inhabitants of this neighborhood re-invented the area as a destination for adventurous art tourists and adapted to its new visitors with an affinity for contemporary art. This development occurred parallel to the interest of Haitian and traveling curators in the assemblages and sculptures of the group Atis Rezistans.’





## Fundamental Readings on Socially Engaged Art 2000–2011

The following is a short list of books that contributed to sparking debate and research on socially engaged art in the early 2000s. These books provide publics that are not familiar with the discourse on socially engaged artistic practices with background literature. This personal selection of books, appearing in order of publication, also reflects and pays homage to the early steps in the critical analysis of art projects that challenge the existence of art in the social sphere.

- Tom Finkelpearl (ed.), *Dialogues in Public Art*, MIT Press, 2001
- Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, 2004
- Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, MIT Press, 2004
- Claire Bishop (ed.), *Participation, Documents of Contemporary Art*, Thames & Hudson, 2006
- Will Bradley and Charles Esche, *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader*, Tate Publishing in association with Afterall, 2007
- Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette (eds.), *Collectivism after Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination after 1945*, University of Minnesota Press, 2007
- Johanna Billing, Maria Lind and Lars Nilsson (eds.), *Taking the Matter Into Common Hands: On Contemporary Art and Collaborative Practices*, Black Dog Publishing, 2007
- Angelika Bartscher and Judith Wielander (eds.), *Visible: When Art Leaves Its Own Field and Becomes Visible as Part of Something Else*, Sternberg Press, 2010
- Nato Thompson (ed.), *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991–2011*, MIT Press, 2011
- Pablo Helguera, *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*, Jorge Pinto Books, 2011
- Ute Meta Bauer (ed.), *A Dynamic Equilibrium: In Pursuit of Public Terrain*, Howard Karno Books, 2007
- Claire Doherty and Paul O' Neill (eds.), *Locating the Producers: Durational Approaches to Public Art*, Valiz/Antennae Series, 2011



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Emanuele Coccia** is Associate Professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. Starting from studies on Averroes and Averroism, his research turned to the ontological status of images and their regulatory power, and to the investigation of the nature of living beings. He has published numerous books (translated into various languages) on the topic, including *Sensible Life*, which analyses sensitivity as a complementary – rather than opposite – ability to rational thinking, *The Good in Things: Advertising as a Moral Discourse*, and the most recent and best-known *Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Mixture*, which has been translated into ten languages.

**Beatrice Galluzzo** is an independent curator, cultural mediator and art historian, whose research mostly focuses on the existing relation between contemporary art and migration politics. After attaining a BA in Art History and an MA in Visual Arts, she will be completing her PhD at the department of African Studies at the University of Sussex (UK) starting in September 2021, with a research project on post-genocide Rwandan Art practices. In 2019 she collaborated with CAMP/Centre for Art on Migration Politics (Copenhagen, DK).

**Rebecka Katz Thor** is Editor for In-Depth Material and Reflection at the Public Art Agency Sweden. She has a PhD in Aesthetics from Södertörn University, Sweden. Her dissertation *Beyond the Witness – Holocaust Representation and the Testimony of Images* investigates the image-as-witness in three films made of archival materials. She is active as a researcher, critic, lecturer, writer and teacher in aesthetics and art theory. She has an MA from the New School for Social Research, New York, and has worked as a researcher at the Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht.

**Miguel A. López** is a writer and researcher as well as being Co-Director and Chief Curator of TEOR/éTica in San José, Costa Rica. His work investigates collaborative dynamics and feminist re-articulations of art and culture in recent decades. He has published in periodicals such as *Artforum*, *Afterall*, *ramona*, *e-flux journal*, *Art in America*, *Art Journal*, *Manifesta Journal*, among others. He recently curated *Cecilia Vicuña*, a retrospective exhibition at Witte de With in Rotterdam (2019) and MUAC-UNAM, Mexico City (2020), as well as the exhibition *Victoria Cabezas and Priscilla Monge: Give Me What You Ask For* at the Americas Society, New York (2019). In 2016 he was recipient of the Independent Vision Curatorial Award from ICI (Independent Curators International), New York.

**LU Pei-Yi** is a curator, researcher and art critic. Her research interests are the theory and practice of contemporary art curation, off-site art (artistic practice outside museums) and art museum issues. *Contemporary Art Curating in Taiwan* (1992–2012), a research-based book edited by her, was nominated for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Award of Art China for ‘Publication of the Year’. She was an associate curator of the 8<sup>th</sup> Shenzhen Sculpture Biennale *We Have not Participated* (2014); and co-curator of the 5<sup>th</sup> Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition *Negative Horizon* (2016) at Hong-gah Museum. She is currently Head of the MA Programme on Critical and Curatorial Studies of Contemporary Art, National Taipei University of Education.

**Matteo Lucchetti** is a curator, art historian and writer. His main curatorial interests are focused on artistic practices that redefine the role of art and the artist in society. His curatorial projects include *Sammy Balaji: Other Tales* at Lunds Konsthall and Kunsthall Aarhus (2020); *Marinella Senatore: Piazza Universale / Social Stages* at Queens Museum, New York (2017); *De Rerum Rurale*, the 16<sup>th</sup> Rome Quadriennale (2016) and *Enacting Populism in its Mediæscape* at the Kadist Art Foundation, Paris (2012). Since 2010 he has been curating the *Visible* project with Judith Wielander. He served as Curator of Exhibitions and Public Programs at BAK, Utrecht, from 2017 to 2018. He has lectured as a guest professor at HISK in Gent and the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam and contributed to magazines such as *Mousse Magazine*, *Manifesta Journal* and *Art Agenda*.

**Julia Morandeira Arrizabalaga** is a researcher and curator. She is based in Madrid where she co-directs with Manuel Segade the *escuelita* at the Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo–CA2M, a research organism operating as the digestive system of the institution. *escuelita* is devoted to collective study and experimental research, serving as a laboratory in which to speculate and test the centre’s future programming. Her curatorial projects include *Poetics of the Sign and Détour*, MACBA (2017); *ATLAS of the ruins OF EUROPE*, CentroCentro Madrid (2016) and *Canibalia*, Kadist Paris (2015). She is also a mediator for the ConComitentes project in Spain.

**Gabi Ngcobo** has been engaged in collaborative artistic, curatorial and educational projects in South Africa and internationally since the early 2000s. She is a founding member of the Johannesburg-based collaborative platforms NGO – Nothing Gets Organised and Centre for Historical Reenactments, 2010–14. In recent years Ngcobo has curated the 10<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2018)

and co-curated the 32<sup>nd</sup> Biennale de São Paulo (2016). In Cape Town she has worked at the Iziko South African National Gallery and at the Cape Africa Platform where she co-curated the Cape07 Biennale in 2007. Since 2011 she has been teaching at the Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. She currently lives and works in Johannesburg.

**Narawan Kyo Pathomvat** is the founder and director of a contemporary art library and non-profit platform, The Reading Room, Bangkok, which aims to produce and disseminate knowledge and to create critical dialogue and discussion among people from diverse fields of knowledge ranging from art, literature and film to socio-political issues that are relevant to contemporary society. The Reading Room is a contemporary art library and archive of over 1,000 items, containing two distinct resource sections: a contemporary Thai art archive and art reference books from all over the world. The Reading Room regularly organises and hosts events such as talks, screenings and workshops.

**Andrea Phillips** is BALTIC Professor and Director of BxNU Research Institute, Northumbria University & BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art. Andrea lectures and writes about the economic and social construction of public value within contemporary art, the manipulation of forms of participation and the potential of forms of political, architectural and social reorganisation within artistic and curatorial culture. Her forthcoming book *Contemporary Art and the Production of Inequality* will bring together discussions on the politics of public administration and management with recent analyses of arts institutions, alongside debates on value (public and private) informed by research into the political functions of the art market and personal experience of organizing, lobbying and governing contemporary arts institutions and arts education institutions. Phillips lives and works in London.

**RAW Material Company** is a centre for art, knowledge and society in Dakar. It is an initiative involved with curatorial practice, artistic education, residencies, knowledge production and archiving of theory and criticism on art. The programme is trans-disciplinary and is equally informed by literature, film, architecture, politics, fashion, cuisine and diaspora. The RAW Material Company also includes the Raw Gallery, a 100-square-meter exhibition space, and the Raw Residency, which provides accommodation for international artists, curators and authors specialising in photography, video and art in public space. For this research we were in dialogue with RAW Material Company members Marie Hélène Pereira, Dulcie Abrahams Altass, Fatima Bintou Rassoul Sy and Tabara Korka Ndiaye.

**Shela Sheikh** is Lecturer in the Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, where she convenes the MA Postcolonial Culture and Global Policy. Her current research addresses environmentalism through a decolonial lens, with a focus on artistic practices and forms of witnessing between the human, technological and environmental. A recent multi-platform research project around colonialism, botany and the politics of the planting includes 'The Wretched Earth: Botanical Conflicts and Artistic Interventions', a special issue of *Third Text* co-edited with Ros Gray (vol. 32, issues 2–3, 2018), and numerous workshops and talks on the topic with artists, filmmakers and environmentalists. Together with Wood Roberdeau, she chairs the Goldsmiths Critical Ecologies Research Stream.

**Pelin Tan** is a sociologist, art historian and researcher on transversal methodology, alternative pedagogies and conflict territories. Tan has been an Associate Professor of Architecture at Mardin Artuklu University, Mardin, Turkey (2013–2018), and a visiting Associate Professor at the University of Cyprus, Nicosia (2018); Hong Kong Polytechnic University (2016); Hong Kong Design Trust (2016–2017); and The Japan Foundation, Tokyo (2012). She is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Arts, Design and Social Research, Boston (2020–2021), and a member of the curatorial board of IBA Stuttgart 2027. She also served as a guest curator for the I-DEA archival project at Matera 2019, European Capital of Culture, Italy. Tan was named the Keith Haring Fellow in Art and Activism at Bard College in the USA.

**Meenakshi Thirukode** is a writer, researcher and a 2016–17 FICA Inlaks Goldsmiths scholar at the M.Res program in Curatorial/Knowledge at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her areas of research include the role of culture and collectivity in the sub-continent within the realm of a trans-nomadic, transient network of individuals and institutions. Her recent projects include organising the *Here, There and Everywhere* conference at MAC Birmingham, UK, as part of the India–UK 70 years celebration, and *Out of Turn, Being Together Otherwise*, exploring performance art histories in collaboration with Asia Art Archive (AAA) at Serendipity Arts Festival, Goa, India. Her chapter 'Towards a Public of the Otherwise', will be published in the Routledge Companion Series for Art in the Public Realm in 2020.

**Judith Wielander** is an independent curator based in Brussels and Lecce. Her main curatorial research focuses on the intersection of Art and Social Engagement. She was a curator at Cittadellarte – Fondazione Pistoletto from 2002 to 2010. Her subsequent exhibition projects include the film trilogy *Cabaret Crusades*, which she initiated and developed in 2010 with Wael Shawky and of

which she produced the first film *The Horror Show File*, as well as co-curating the Belgian Pavilion at the 14<sup>th</sup> International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 2014 and Le Jardin Essential – Parckdesign 2016, in Brussels. Currently, she is developing the programme *Expanding Academy* at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp with the artist Nico Docks. Since 2010, Judith Wielander has also been the co-curator of the *Visible* project together with Matteo Lucchetti.

**Joanna Warsza** is Programme Director of CuratorLab at Konstfack–University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, and an interdependent curator and editor interested in how art functions politically and socially outside the white cube. She was the Artistic Director of Public Art Munich 2018, curator of the Georgian Pavilion at the 55<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale and associate curator of the 7<sup>th</sup> Berlin Biennale. She is the editor of several books and currently preparing, together with Övül Ö. Durmusoglu, the third edition of the Autostrada Biennale in Kosovo for the summer of 2021. Originally from Warsaw, Warsza lives in Berlin.

**Vivian Zihlerl** is a critic, curator and researcher of contemporary art. From 2016 to 2019 she was the founder and director of the art and research foundation Frontier Imaginaries that staged internationally mobile thematic editions through exhibitions, art commissions and symposium projects together with programme partners including Columbia University, e-flux Projects, the Institute of Modern Art (Brisbane), the QUT Art Museum and the Van Abbemuseum, amongst others. She was curator of the Jerusalem Show VIII (2016) with the Al Ma'mal Foundation and as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Qalandiya International, was nominated for the ICI Independent Vision Curatorial Award (2016). Zihlerl is a PhD candidate in Curatorial Practice at Monash University, Melbourne. She is currently Research and Programme Manager at the Formerly Known As Witte de With in Rotterdam.

## THE COMMISSIONERS

**Visible** is a project by Cittadellarte–Fondazione Pistoletto and Fondazione Zegna that researches, produces and sustains socially engaged artistic practices in a global context. Curated since its start in 2010 by Judith Wielander and Matteo Lucchetti, *Visible* is interested in art projects that consider the social body as a potential for bringing about responsible transformation: artists who initiate long-term processes dealing with environmental issues, alternative economies, indigenous rights, new pedagogical models, migration and displacements, among the many other urgencies of our times. *Visible's* name comes from the need to make visible the invisible artistic strategies that are applying their creative acts towards the common good in society every day. *Visible* also alludes to how artists are able to change the frames, speeds and scales through which we perceive visible reality, and expand our horizons of what we consider our reality to be and look like. → [visibleproject.org](http://visibleproject.org)

**The Public Art Agency Sweden** is a governmental agency that produces public art. Founded in 1937 under the Ministry of Culture, the mission and work of the Public Art Agency have followed developments in society and adapted to changes ensuring that the art that is produced reflects the present day. Contemporary art is about more than just objects – it is about experiences, social interactions and critical and creative practices. In a similar way, public space consists of more than just streets and squares – it consists to an equal degree of social and mental public spaces. These are the spaces that arise when we meet one another, exchange ideas and express our feelings. This web of complex and dynamic situations is the Public Art Agency Sweden's natural arena. → [publicartagencySweden.com](http://publicartagencySweden.com)



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Marie-Nour Héchaïmé

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Public Art Agency Sweden,  
Hälsingegatan 45, 11331 Stockholm, Sweden  
publicartagencySweden.com

*Visible*, a project by

Cittadellarte–Fondazione Pistoletto,  
via Serralunga 27, 13900 Biella, Italy  
cittadellarte.it  
Fondazione Zegna  
via Marconi 23, 13835 Trivero, Italy  
fondazionezegna.org

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‘Perhaps this annotated bibliography represents a possible alliance that departs from the bookshelves of our living rooms while we are experiencing isolation and social distancing in the solitude of our homes. The bonds that this research visualises across book suggestions and urgencies of our times is already an extended field where art practices for the common good are planting new seeds.’

— Matteo Lucchetti and Judith Wielander, the editors

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