



# Echoes of empire: Contemporary Art and Colonial History

*Speakers*

**May 27, 2021**

Parallel workshops: contemporary art and colonial history in Bristol, Cape Town and Marseille



**Christelle Pellecuer** is the Founder and Creative Director at Razana Afrika. Christelle is also a makeup artist (for fashion, film and TV), writer and performer based in Bristol. Christelle's professional background also includes working in the education sector for over 15 years undertaking programme/project management roles with an international focus.

Christelle is also co-director of a small theatre company called Black Women Let Loose Theatre Company and they write, perform, produce and direct their own materials.



**Michael Jenkins** is a self-shooting, director, producer and writer of film and TV. He is extremely motivated to bring well-told and untold stories to as wide an audience as possible and believes passionately in the role of film as an engine for change and understanding. In 2015 he was the subject of a BBC Radio 4 documentary – '*Michael and the mummers*' – following him as he makes one of his films. He was recently voted among the 100 most influential people in Bristol in the BME power list 2018.

An award winning filmmaker he won Best Short film for 'Check the Label' at The Royal Television Society Awards 2018 and won two BBC Local Radio Gillard Awards for the Diversity and Community award categories. He launched the only black owned TV Production Company in the Southwest called *Blak Wave* in 2020. He is part of the BAFTA/BFI Network Crew 2020 and currently in post production on a short film he has written and directed called Pickney, funded by the BFI.



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Hailing from New Delhi (India), **Meghna Singh** is a visual artist and a researcher with a PhD in visual anthropology from the University of Cape Town. Working with mediums of video and installation, blurring boundaries between documentary and fiction, she creates immersive environments highlighting issues of 'humanism' through the tool of the imaginary. Specialising in the field of arts research and practice her work focuses on the theme of critical mobilities, migration and oceanic crossings. She is a post-doctoral fellow on the Horizon 2020 European Union project titled ECHOES (European Colonial Heritage Modalities in Entangled Cities).

She holds an M.A in Performance Studies from Central Saint Martins' College of Art and Design, University of Arts London, an M.A in Film and Video from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and a B.A in Politics from University of Delhi.

She was awarded a National Geographic Explorers Grant with co-director Simon Wood for the virtual reality installation art project titled Container linking historical slavery to modern day servitude. Meghna has exhibited widely around the world, published essays, presented papers and given talks on the theme of visual methodologies to explore migration.



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**Elvan Zabunyan**, contemporary art historian is professor at University Rennes 2 and art critic. For 20 years her work has focused on North American (and mainly African American) contemporary art history. Her research questions the reasons why some artistic productions are excluded from mainstream historiographies because of racial and gender discrimination. She explored the objects linked to feminist artistic theory and practice, first in the United States, then in Canada, in Europe, in Africa and in Asia. Desirous of affirming a history of art that is connected and without barriers, the subject of her research has naturally drawn her toward notions such as centers and peripheries, cultural displacement, scattered territories, the African diaspora, notions that have been associated with a need to unlock periodicity to understand the issues in colonial history and their impact on artistic and visual representations.

Her current project on cultural production and the memory of slavery is thought as a renewal of these research activities and wishes to investigate the routes for a global art history. Being the first art historian in France addressing these themes has allowed her to spread those unexplored issues in her teaching along with supervising thesis as well as contributing to national and international publications. She is the author of numerous articles in periodicals and essays in books and exhibition catalogues.

Her book *Black is A Color, a History of African American Contemporary Art* published in French (2004) and English (2005) won the research prize 2005 SAES/AFEA (Société des Anglicistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur – Society of English Linguistic Specialists in Higher Education)/ Association Francaise d'Etudes Américaines – French Association of American Studies). She was in 2016-2017 the co-director of the annual program of Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte in Paris centering on the plural decolonial perspectives of historiographies deconstructing the colonial hegemony of the Western world.



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Born in 1972 in Morocco, **Mohammed Laouli** lives and works between Rabat, Marseille and Stuttgart. His artistic vocabulary brings into play notions of postcolonialism, feminism, migration and culture. Through his works, which are as much video, sculpture, intervention in the public space as photography, he aims to underline the mechanisms of domination that apply to various places in society. In some of his works, political or social borders are tested, crossed and made explicit. From Rabat to Salé (his poor suburb), from one side of the Mediterranean to the other or elsewhere, he works to make visible the life experiences linked to exile or social exclusion. Mohammed Laouli starts from the reality that surrounds him to question the regimes of the powerful (French colonisation, the Moroccan monarchy, patriarchy), he focuses on popular cultures and their rituals to take account of the irony of a political situation that creates and builds on inequalities. Mohammed Laouli's work has been the subject of several solo exhibitions as well as group exhibitions, such as at the Centre photographique de Marseille (2021), the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid (2021), the Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum in Cologne (2021), the Franco-German Cultural Centre in Karlsruhe (2021), das weiße haus Studio in Vienna (2021), the Tate modern (2020), the Cube independent art room in Rabat (2019), the Dakar Biennial (2018), the Al Maaden Museum of Contemporary African Art in Marrakech (2018), the Kunstmuseum Mülheim (2017), the Carreau du Temple in Paris (2017), the ZKM in Karlsruhe (2013), the Marrakech Biennial (2014), the Mucem in Marseille (2014), the Bruges Cultural Centre (2013), the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (2012), the Centrale pour l'art contemporain in Brussels (2012).



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Contemporary art and the colonial past: discussion panel

## Bristol



**Stacey Oliko** is a multidisciplinary artist and founder of AmakaDesigns, her freelance digital design sub-brand. Graduating in graphic design from UWE in 2017, she has been named one of Bristol's Most Influential Women and Creatives under 24 in 2017, 2019 and 2021, she confronts neo-colonialism and advocates for more representation in a way that is powerful and multifaceted. Stacey is the co-founder of No Boundaries, a platform dedicated to showcasing the underrepresented. She stepped on to the scene with her graduate project 'I Am Melanin'; celebrating the beauty of black women through film, photography and graphic design. She is innovative and adaptable in her practice. Stacey is also featured artist and board member of Rising Arts Agency. Stacey is currently the Creative Diversity Coordinator at Channel 4.



**Marine Schütz** is from Marseille. She studied in a fine art school for five years before shifting to art history studies. In 2015 she submitted her Ph.D on contemporary art history entitled "Between the lines. Illustration, prints and graphic practices in Pop Art (1950-1975)" (Aix-Marseille University). Her research explored the works of Andy Warhol, David Hockney, Roy Lichtenstein and Claes Oldenburg and their relationships with drawing, counterculture and mass culture. Her book will be made public thanks to the publication of her work at Presses du Réel Editions.

From 2009 to 2013, she has been a research officer at Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (Paris). In 2016-2017, she has worked working as a grant recipient for the German Center for Art History, Paris where she studied the topic of postcolonial pop in French art, in the 1960s. She has taught in several universities in Paris, Grenoble and Lyon. She has earned grants from the TERRA Foundation for American Art and the Getty Library.



# Echoes of empire: art contemporain et histoire coloniale

*Présentation*

**May 28, 2021**

Contemporary art and the colonial past: discussion panel

**Marseille**



**Dalila Mahdjoub** graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon in 1994. She was born in Montbéliard in 1969 and lives and works in Marseille. She has participated in numerous exhibitions, including *143 rue du désert* (La Compagnie, Marseille, 2019); *Cycle Algérie-France, la voix des objets* (Mucem, Marseille, 2019); *Des traces coloniales aux expressions plurielles* (Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris, 2020); *L'eau textile* (La Manufacture, Roubaix, 2016); *Made in Algeria and J'aime les panoramas* (Mucem, Marseille, 2015- 2016); *Frontières* (Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris, 2014). She has also co-directed numerous artistic projects in the public space with the artist Martine Derain, notably *D'un seuil à l'autre, une petite archéologie au seuil d'une résidence sociale Sonacotra (Adoma)* in the Belsunce district of Marseille (2004-2007) or *En Palestine, il n'y a pas de petites résistances*, an ephemeral intervention on the bus tickets of a company between Ramallah and Jerusalem, Palestine (1998).



**Monique Kerman** is Associate Professor of African Art History and Visual Culture at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA, USA. She received her PhD from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies in 2009. Her articles have appeared in *Africa and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art*, *n.paradoxa*, and *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture*. She is the author of *Contemporary British Artists of African Descent and the Unburdening of a Generation* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).



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*Présentation des intervenants*

**May 28, 2021**

Contemporary art and the colonial past: discussion panel

**Cape Town**



**Sikhumbuzo Makandula** is a Cape Town based visual and performance artist, he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art degree from Rhodes University. He holds a Master of Arts in Public Spheres and Performance studies from University Cape Town. His first solo exhibition was titled *In Search of A Nation* in 2016 was at Njelele Art Station, Harare, Zimbabwe. In 2017 he had a second solo exhibition titled *Ubuzwe* at Room gallery, Johannesburg. Group exhibitions Makandula participated in includes, *Art and Cosmology* at Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, *Analogue Eye Video Art* at the Wiener Festwochen in Vienna, *My Collection* at Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts, New York, *1:54 Art Fair*, New York, *!Kauru: Towards Intersections* at UNISA Art Gallery, Pretoria and *Museum Africa* Johannesburg, *Looking After Freedom* at Michaelis Galleries, *Harbored* at Cape Art Fair, *Joburg Art Fair*, *That Art Fair*, *Infecting the City Festival* and *Live Art Festival*, Cape Town.



**Thania Petersen** is a multi-disciplinary artist who uses photography, performance and installation to address the intricacies and complexities of her identity in contemporary South Africa.

Petersen's reference points sit largely in Islam and in creating awareness about its religious, cultural and traditional practices. She attempts to unpack contemporary trends of Islamophobia through her analysis of the continuing impact of colonialism, European and American imperialism, and the increasing influence of right-wing ideologies. Threads in her work include the history of colonialist imperialism in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, as well as the social and cultural impact of westernised consumer culture. Her work is also informed by her Cape Malay heritage, and the practice of Sufi Islamic religious ceremonies.

Petersen is represented in various public and private collections including The Smithsonian African Art Museum, The Iziko South African National Gallery, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art, The TropenMuseum Amsterdam, The Oscar Niemeyer Museum Brazil, The Kilbourne Collection, The Jochen Zeitz Collection and The Norval Museum Collection



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**Cape Town**



**Khanyisile Mbongwa** is a Cape Town based independent curator, award winning artist and sociologist, who works with public space, interdisciplinary and performative practices unpacking socio-political, economic and racial; gender-queer and historical-contemporary complexities and nuances of the everyday.

In 2018 she took up a curatorial research residency CAT.Cologne, Germany focusing on the public sphere, immigration laws and public policies. As a result curated BLUEPRINT: Where There's Nowhere To Go, Where Is Home?

She is the former Executive Director for Handspring Trust, has worked with Norval Foundation as Adjunct Curator and with Cape Town Carnival as Curatorial Consultant & Social Development Advisor.

Mbongwa was the Chief Curator of the Stellenbosch Triennale 2020.