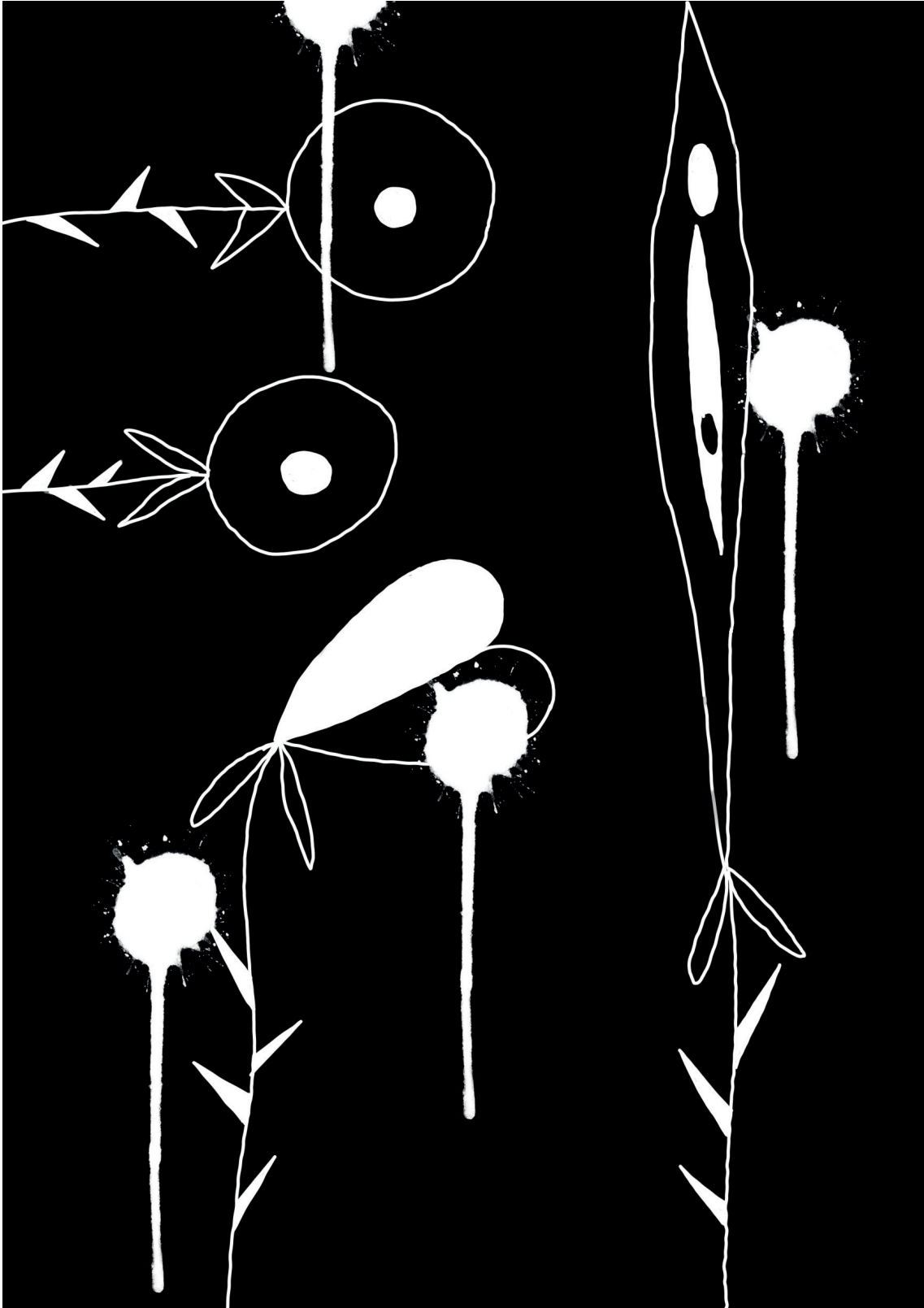


static

thoughts and research from global dis:connect

issue # 4.1



MAGAZINE

static

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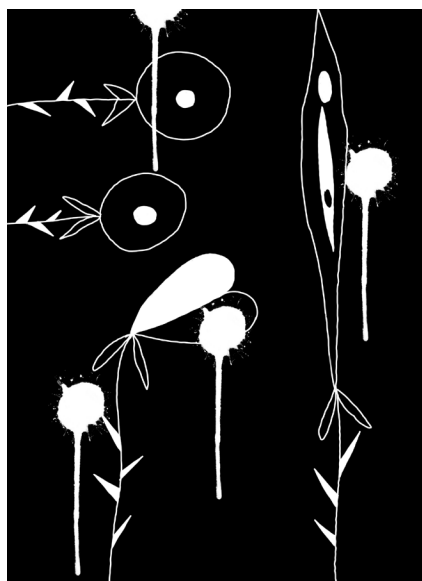
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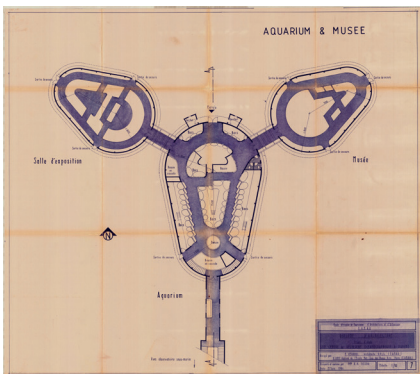


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editorial

Christopher Balme

The cover image on the current issue of *static* derives from a zine created during last year's summer school at gd:c devoted to the topic of cultural infrastructure. Zines are self-made, DIY, non-commercial publications often associated with oppositional groups but also with fan groups, hence fanzines. The word derives from maga-zine, but zines have little in common with the glossy, often expensive publications displayed in bookstores and supermarkets. According to Google's AI they serve as 'a democratic medium for expression' on account of their low cost and distribution outside government control or commercial-capitalist distribution.

In some ways we could define *static* itself as a kind of zine, existing as it does in the less frequented byways of the digital distribution networks. The zine reproduced in this issue of *static* was edited by a participant from Russia, who led a workshop within the summer school devoted to 'zine-making', and was entitled *Exploring the Uncanny*. In the context of today's Russia, zines are examples of dissident expression, existing outside state control. Within the huge spectrum of possibilities subsumed under the term 'cultural infrastructure', which can range from spectacular iconic architecture – the Sydney Opera House and the Guggenheim Bilbao to small bookshops and galleries – zines occupy an almost imperceptible niche on the borderline of the infrastructural, in fact a challenge to the definitional limits of the term.

All the articles in this issue relate in some way to cultural infrastructure, which may be as much testimony to the generous



You can also find **static**
online at:
<https://static.ub.uni-muenchen.de>

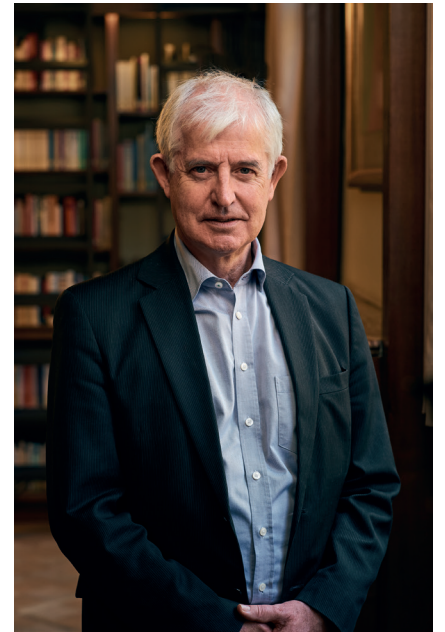


elasticity of the term itself as to the equally flexible editorial selection criteria.

The zine showcases a medium that actual dissidents in Russia use to give each other hope and keep themselves sane. In Fabienne Liptay's discussion of Senegalese film-maker's Mati Diop's two Atlantique films, we learn that the first iteration of the material, Atlantiques, was a 15-minute short, shot by Diop herself on low-grain video (mini-DV) and thus the filmic equivalent of a zine. Claudia Cendales Paredes's introduction to the German art historian and gallerist Godula Buchholz informs us that she promoted South American art through her Galerie Buchholz in Munich by following her father's model of a bookstore-gallery. Such establishments, no matter how small, still belong on any map of cultural infrastructure. The latter plays a central role in a double or even triple sense in Peter Seeland's report on a workshop held at gd:c and the Architekturmuseum of the Technical University of Munich, examining African schools of architecture in the 1950s to 1980s. The workshop took place in the Pavillon 333 – an exhibition space in the centre of Munich built by students to showcase art and design. Schools of architecture themselves provide cultural infrastructure training for the next generation of builders of infrastructure. Finally, the gd:c artist fellow, Işıl Eğrikavuk, provides a relaxing coda in her celebration of 'dormancy'. In an academic culture 'that celebrates speed, output and accumulation, choosing to slow down is a quiet act of rebellion. Dormancy is resistance to timelines that don't fit our bodies, to institutional rhythms that forget we are made of cycles, not straight lines'. Perhaps this is the artist's prerogative.

These articles show that gd:c is itself an experiment in connecting scholars from around the globe, creators from diverse media, and very different but consonant biographies. We disconnect people from their routines and familiar environments to connect them with each other.

Christopher Balme,
November 2025



Correction

In the previous issue of static, #3.2, the front matter neglected to indicate that Hanni Geiger and Tom Menger were the guest editors of the special section on 'Mediterranean absences'. Sorry Hanni & Tom!

Fig. 01
Christopher Balme (Photo: Lambert Strehlke)

Zines as cultural infrastructure.

A workshop at the 2024 global dis:connect summer school

Nikolai Brandes

Punk, feminism, skateboarding, environmentalism, graffiti, queer culture: anyone who wanted to stay informed about social controversies, events and news from the underground scenes in the 1980s or 1990s could hardly do without zines. In many parts of the world, zines – DIY magazines produced by independent collectives on photocopiers and mimeographs – were a central communications medium in dissident scenes. They enabled dialogue on issues that were rarely covered in the mainstream media, received no public funding or were actively excluded from culture and its infrastructures, such as television, museums and movie theatres. The circulation of zines connected people with similar interests across cities and national borders. Zines helped to overcome political, spatial and social isolation.¹

When Moscow-based Dasha Sotnikova proposed holding a zine workshop at our 2024 global dis:connect summer school, we organisers were instantly intrigued. Our intention was to approach cultural infrastructures broadly and ask that they react to geopolitical disentanglements and exclusions in global flows of capital and cultural trends.²

1 On zines as explicitly transnational media, see, for example, Babara Dynda, 'Queering Sexual and Gender Citizenship in (Anarcho-)Feminist Zines in Post-Socialist Poland', *Journal of History* 57, no. 3 (2022).

2 My fellow organisers included Christopher Balme, Hanni Geiger, Nic Leonhardt and Tom Menger. For more on this event, see https://www.globaldisconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CFP_gdc_summer_school_2024.pdf.

We were interested in transformations of existing cultural platforms and the emergence of new infrastructures. Zines immediately appealed to us as an exciting subject.³

Dasha's point of departure is her own experience in Russia. One might immediately think of the history of samizdat literature; that is, small-scale, grassroots publications used in the Soviet Union to circulate banned and deviant texts, including translations from abroad. Yes, Dasha is indeed interested in these historical references.⁴

Still, the current global revival of zines is more than just an aesthetic phenomenon that satisfies a demand for analogue, collective work with genuine, tactile results. Zines continue to break down barriers and give space to subversive, unwanted, surprising voices. In her introductory presentation, Dasha showed what zine-making means for Russia's cultural underground, for communication with imprisoned dissidents and for exchange with nonconformists throughout the country.

Our homemade zine was therefore about more than just creating an appealing product, a collective work process or experimenting with free-form text. Rather, the workshop was itself an exercise in building independent infrastructures with the simplest of means. (The shopping list Dasha sent me before the workshop included paper, black pens, needle and thread.) We not only learned about the Russian present, but also prepared ourselves for the not-so-unthinkable changes in our own environment. The directives from Bavarian authorities and universities to use gendered language and avoid more recent, inclusive terms in official publications and correspondence indicate how fragile freedom of speech can be, even in Germany.

Here we share excerpts from the zine we compiled on the last day of our summer school under Dasha's guidance. We would like to thank all participants who agreed to publish their contributions and contributed to the process. Special thanks go to Tamara Zhukova, olya chermashentseva and A.,⁵ who contributed to this zine from Moscow. We would also like to alert readers to the fact that some contributions touch on violence and rape. Please use discretion as to what's right for you.

3 Some starting points for thinking about zines as infrastructure can be found in Maggie Matich, Elizabeth Parsons and Rachel Ashman, 'Zine Infrastructures as Forms of Organizing within Feminist Social Movements', *Gender, Work & Organization* 31, no. 3 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12970>.

4 For more on the continuity of alternative print media in Russian-speaking countries, see A.S. Metelkov, 'Alternative Book Publishing in Russia: from a Lubok to a Zine', *Book. Reading. Media* 2, no. 4 (2024) <https://doi.org/10.20913/BRM-2-4-1>.

5 The single-letter pseudonyms in are to protect the organisations and individuals involved from persecution.

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From alienation to solidarity: communes and zines as new forms of underground cultural infrastructure

Dasha Sotnikova

THE RIGHT TO SPEAK

The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine was (and remains) a mind-changing tragedy for many in the Russian opposition, including independent publishers and artists.

As literature has always been a valuable cultural medium for Russophone culture, it could not help but respond to the invasion with the tools at its disposal.

At the time, the literary agenda was fully dedicated to covering the tragedy, and no cultural or symbolic space remained in the underground artistic community for their artworks that tried to reflect on events sensitively. More importantly, after the initial affective artistic expressions and subsequent repression had transpired, the Russophone literary community had to reckon with their right to create their art in Russian – the official language of aggressor state.

After continuous silence, we realised that, as artists, we can't keep silent as long as we're still alive, so we recalled the experience of dissident artists who managed to preserve underground culture even under past Soviet totalitarianism.

(IR)RELEVANT INSPIRATION

In the history of uncensored Soviet-era poetry, some underground cultural societies have united creators from very different fields. An outstanding example is the Moscow Conceptualist artistic movement founded by Ilya Kabakov, Viktor Pivovarov and Dmitry Alexandrovich Prigov. They experimented with postmodern combinations of pop-art, performance and visual poetry, problematising Soviet realism and the meaning of art itself.

Beyond Conceptualist literature, samizdat was a unique cultural medium and alternative mode of expression for underground authors, such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn; Boris Pasternak; Mikhail Aizenberg; Elena Shvarts; Chuvashian poet Gennadii Aigi; the progenitors of barracks poetry, which revealed the horror of Soviet poverty; Yan Satunovsky; Igor Kholin; Genrikh Sapgir and dozens of others. Their texts would never be officially published in the Soviet Union, although their multicultural heritage significantly shaped modern Russophone art.

With these impressive forbears in mind, we began to imagine ways of preserving underground culture. However, the current political situation differs much from that in the Soviet Union in two key respects. First is the escalation of Russian fascism, for which we too are responsible. Second, how cultural infrastructure works in Russia has changed greatly.

Anarchist poetry against imperialist narratives

In response to the first challenge, we sought to critically rethink the influence of so-called 'classical' Russian literature, its core figures and narratives. Government agencies have carefully curated this canon, gradually amplifying the imperialistic propaganda. The results of our critical reflection needed to be presented in new literary texts and literary critique.

We address the second challenge of cultural infrastructure by creating new underground venues and forms of textual representation.

Currently, as the right and possibility of preserving Russophone underground culture is seriously imperilled, poetry connected to anarchist currents is a cultural space where independent minds can still continue the tradition of dissident art, reflect on their personal responsibility for the ongoing violence of the Russian government and support its victims.

And here, as in the gd:c summer school, I wish to share the ideas and findings of my friends – artists whose bravery I admire and who inspire me to struggle for peace and freedom.

Literary strategies to address xenophobia

One of the main trends of modern uncensored and unconventional Russophone poetry is a desire for intermediality and multilingualism. And it is more than a literary fad. The scariest consequence of the authoritarian regime suffered by ordinary residents is (self-) isolation, which (artificially) feeds xenophobia and exacerbates isolation. The only way to overcome it is to find the Other in oneself and to break the artificial boundary between friend and foe. That is why young poets and artists from Russia and Belarus, despite political persecution, work collectively and combine cinematic, poetic and artistic elements to overcome the isolation of a particular cultural field.

In such conditions, the lack of cultural infrastructure is especially acute.

Where do we exist?

Safe spaces for mutually enriching dialogue among professional creators, investigators and people interested in modern culture; problematising governmental policy; and searching cooperatively for ways to express political opinions are vitally important functions of non-governmental cultural infrastructure, especially in authoritarian regimes. Although activism under the oppression of arbitrary state violence seems almost impossible, artistic practice remains one mode of struggle for personal identity and against those for whom any identity seems to be dangerous.

After the war began, a few free and safe places remained for creators to maintain dialogue with poets and artists inside and outside Russia and to organise underground anti-war charity events and conferences. The venues were diverse: independent bookshops, theatres, cultural centres, libraries, galleries, pubs, university lecture halls. But now most of them are closed or under governmental control.

However, the poetic flow has produced its own forms of free expression.

Artist communes

One format consists of performances followed by conceptual video artworks in the modern communes. They are produced by young people who continue to oppose the regime through art practices. Such performances mostly aim to raise money for political prisoners and refugees.

In such structures, poetic and political values are often united, meaning solidarity, cooperation, horizontal connections and overcoming anthropocentrism.

K is one such structure.¹ It is an independent cooperative that unites manufacturers, anarchist/libertarian thinkers and artists who refuse to collaborate with the government and corporate marketplaces. Their primary aim is to connect autonomous professionals to underground societies. All members take important decisions about the manufacturing process collectively and voluntarily choose their roles in it.

Their principal aim is to attract donations to support non-commercial initiatives, such as venues for underground art festivals, activist projects, human rights organisations and crisis centres. Beyond this, they also try to preserve the independent underground initiatives that do still exist in modern Russia.

In addition to their active manufacturing process, K's residents contribute to the development of underground cultural processes, including writing and filmmaking. Apart from providing a free platform for cultural events, including poetry readings, book launches, performances and so on, they have set up a publishing house that prints modern anarchist/libertarian zines as well as poetry books and cinema journals. Its founders claim that samizdat as a form of cultural infrastructure is valuable and necessary in authoritarian regimes; it is also the medium with the greatest artistic freedom and independence. It inspires artistic experiments and innovations with its bravery. For example, European black-metal and dungeon-synth fanzines as well as American libertarian science fiction and anarchist samizdat fascinate with their unique designs and unexpected content.

The cheaper, the freer

However, for samizdat production no publishing house is needed, as long as the authors can manage with the simplest materials and publication facilities. Samizdat zines have become one of the most accessible forms of cultural infrastructure, where diverse cultural, social and political narratives come together. Zines are becoming another venue for artistic dialogue and reflection.

One example is *Burning*, a poetry zine by modern poet, videographer and performer M. The zine is based on a poetic cycle directly connected with current political events in Eastern Europe. The latter addresses the issue of breaking with one's parents because of radically different political views. One of the author's touchstone books about this problem is *Powers of Horror*

¹ The single-letter pseudonyms are to protect the organisations and individuals involved from persecution.

by Julia Kristeva.² Its key metaphor, which significantly influenced the zine, refers to the milk foam that children in Soviet pioneer camps had to eat with hot milk, although most found it disgusting. Kristeva compares the act of vomiting this foam to emancipation from parental desire, which means obtaining subjectivity. The zine probes childhood as an uncomfortable and unsafe space, despite the kitsch view of childhood as a carefree paradise. All in all, the zine is about catastrophe, in the face of which all the opposition members are equal. That is why the zine aims to transcend the deification of the author, whose putatively privileged vantage point might let them communicate some special truth to the readers. This idea is expressed through the format of zine and its content.

The zine consists of six poems and imitates the design of an official document. This design reflects the feeling of being swallowed by violent governmental machine, where a person's life and death are determined by a signature on senseless paper, such as a draft card. The images, digitally composed and edited, contain simulated mugshots of the authors' friends.

The layout was printed on a risograph, which is how the cheapest issues are produced. This technical decision helped to stylise the zine according to the author's aim of self-elimination. Apart from the great number of artefacts, such as erased faces and torn paper, left by the risograph, the author used the simplest font available: Times New Roman. Finally, the design communicates the eerie feeling that children in Soviet (and modern) Russian kindergartens and schools experience.

Samizdat zines are normally limited to print runs of 100 copies and distributed through independent bookshops (that is, those that sell uncensored literature) and social networks.

Common sensitive topics, the desire to express one's genuine political views and the cheapest publication process unite modern dissident poetry culture with Soviet samizdat culture.

These projects and processes are important to me, although there are other valuable issues and performances beyond such manifestations of modern Russian dissident culture. Obviously, local resistance to the repressive policy of the fascist government may not make much difference on a global scale, but it does affect interpersonal relations. Modern underground culture lets us preserve the solidarity that the state's authoritarian violence seeks to take from us.

However, all these intentions are insufficient without transitional resonance, and I'm eager to maintain connections with artists

2 Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

from different cultural backgrounds who share similar aims.
Xenophobia and alienation are not national problems, so we need
sincerity and courage to face them all together.

We believe that the world shifts each time we choose solidarity
instead of fear and open dialog instead of violence.

Bibliography

Kristeva, Julia. Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection. Translated by Leon
Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.



zine:

exploring the uncanny

what am I here?

I am the first humans' saliva

split up with time under the needle
of creator

and a fruit has overgrown

with flesh again, unwittingly

allowing me inside his composition

although the sin has been committed

there is still no wisdom being occurred

no matter how much my parents eat —

if the smell obtains flower which to name parent —

I am in that place of the eternity where the wave meets
wave only face to face

—

everyone will stay one, naked and
unconscious

I am that word where sight is cradle of everything
being revealed by him

for the choice

before his appearance

what am I here?

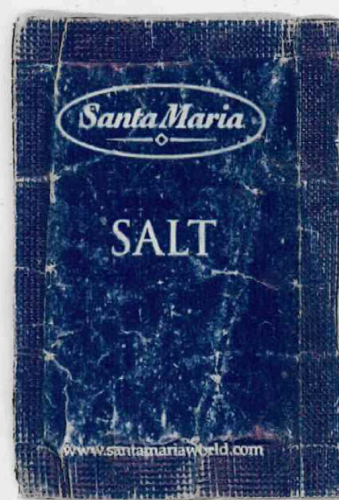
I am the ladder tipped over by jacob

a rail occurred to become in the eyes of time

what am I if not to remember about the god
everything that could without his touch

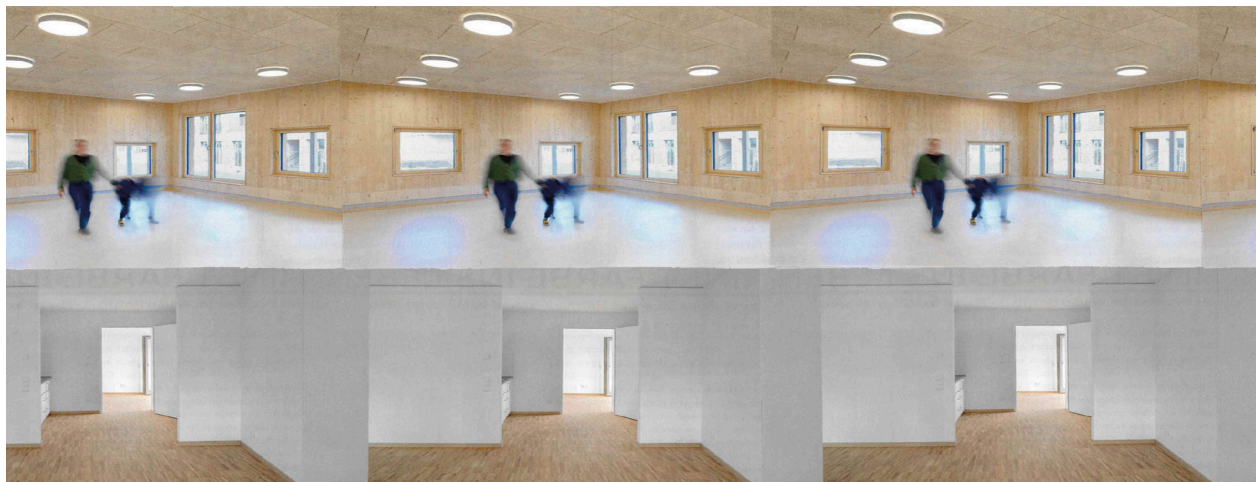
a person who has not been disturbed by being shot in
his face





CONVENIENCE





anna gonchar

LABYRINTH OF EMPTINESS

sterile light

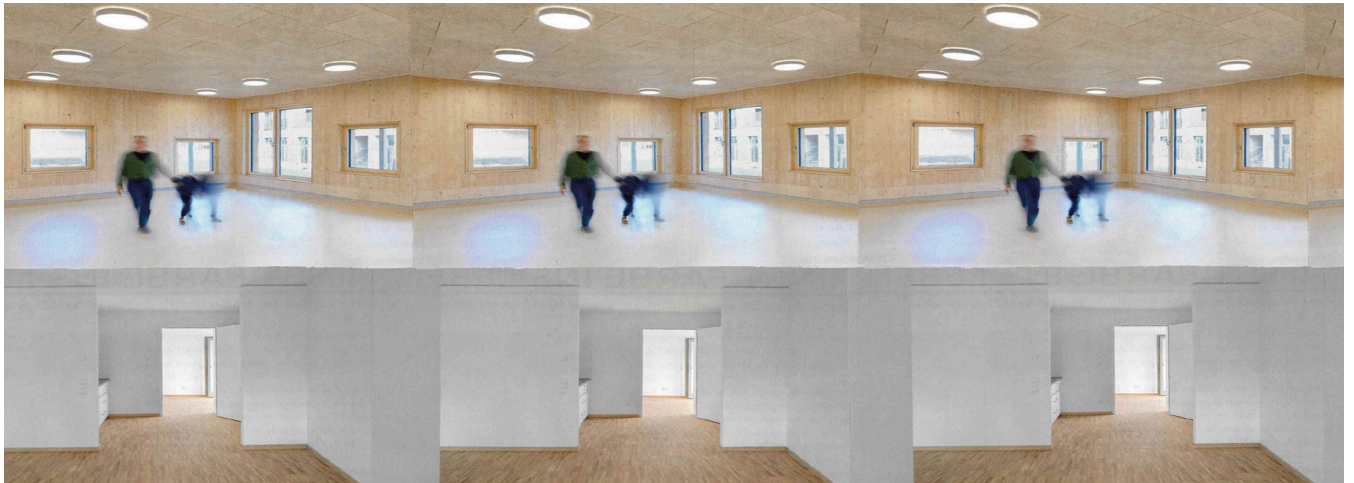
reproduced voids

butting sound

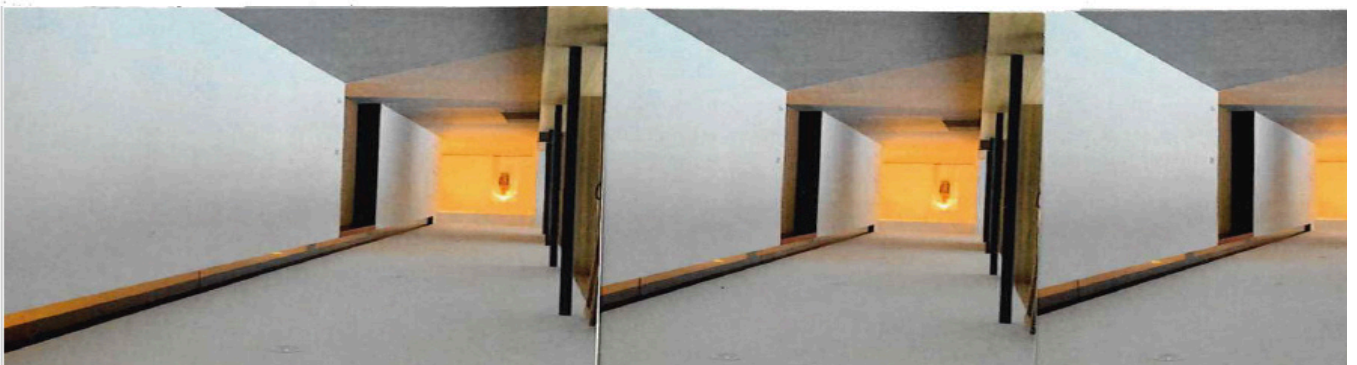
there are no exits in
solitary eternity. A space
consisting of deserted corridors.

Is it my echo?

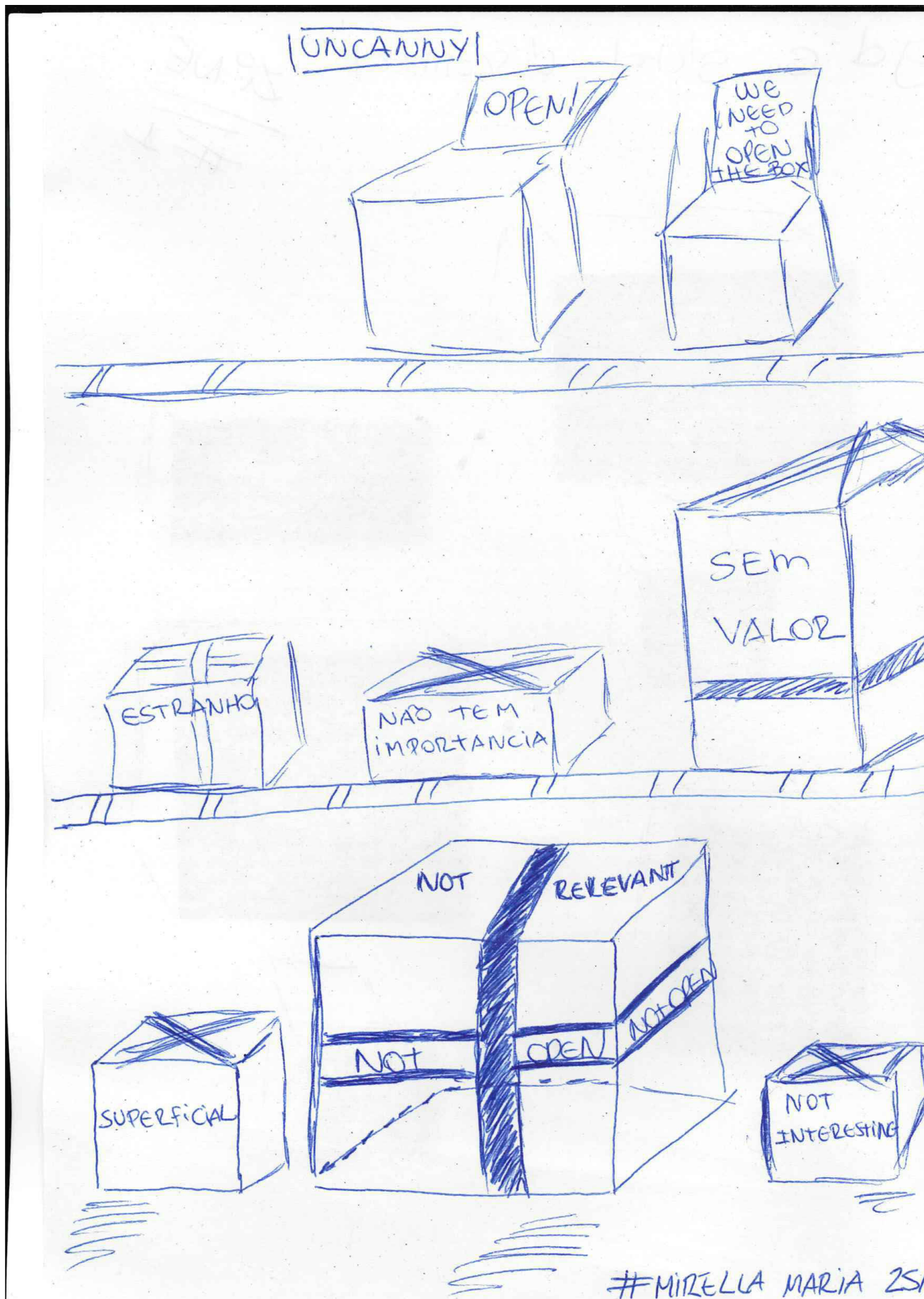




Running through a door.
Running through a door.
Running through a door.
Running through a door.
Running through a door.
Running through a door.
When will I wake up?



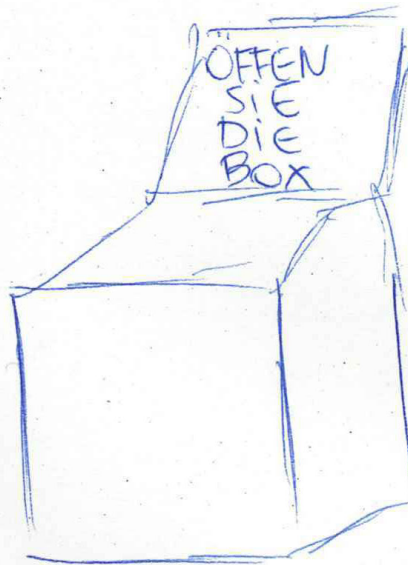
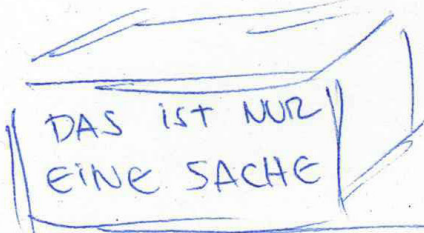
mirella maria



UNCANNY



WE NEED TO OPEN
THE BOX STOP WITH
VIOLENCE, JUDGMENTS,
PREJUDICES



PRECISAMOS SAIR DA
CAIXA, DA SUPERFICIALIDADE
DO SIGNIFICADO

For me, the clown mask is the
Forever situated in between humor &
the mask's grotesque facial expression.
Also in real life, people put on masks.
We are all clowns in one way or another.

embodiment of the uncanny.
horror, laughing & crying,
haunts me in my dreams.
I put on masks. And so,
no other.

The Angels

"The first thing I see is the subtle, constant vibration of the air around me; it is terribly stiflingly hot.

Everything is like yellow, like the pine slats that my Dad used to make. And they are pine slats, with little black spots. They are thin, and they squeak when you step on them. I slowly look around. I myself am slow, heavy, tired. The first thing I notice is that the room I'm standing in has no windows. No door.

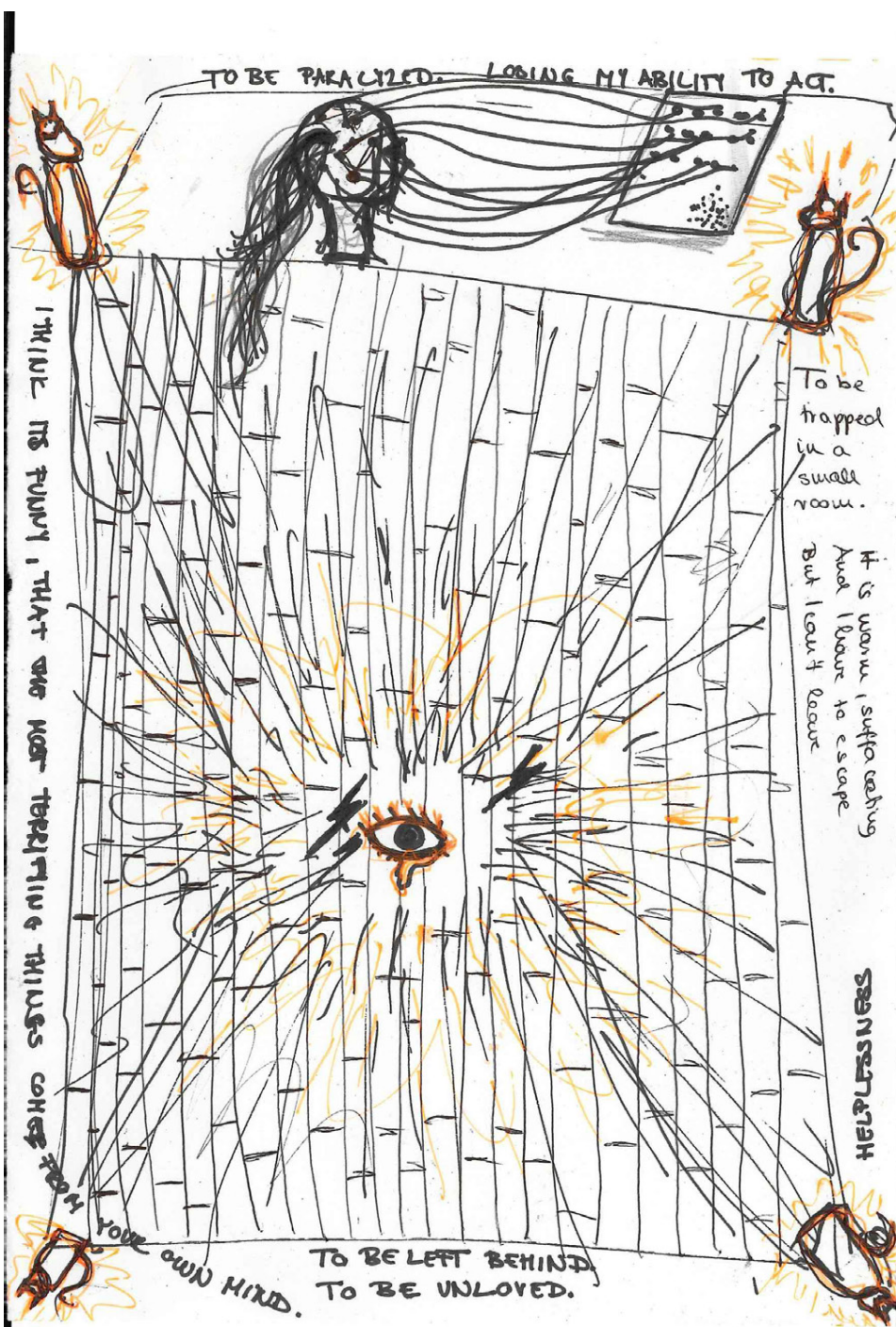
It's not a room, it's a box. I'm standing in the geometric centre of a box the size of a room.

It is hot, very hot, like in a sauna. I'm small, because I'm a child, that's why I can fit. **There's no source of the light, I don't know where it comes from.** I cough, I can feel that my mouth is very dry as I bite my lip. That's when I decide to get out of the room, break the wall if I have to, but I'll get out of here somehow.

I look around again to make sure there really is no door. There isn't. In the corner, there is a statue of a huge, carved wooden cat, facing the middle of the room. It resembles African tribal statues. The cat is looking at me. I quickly turn away. In the opposite corner sits a cat like this one. There is one in the third and one in the fourth corner as well.

They all stand stiffly, all staring at me. I'd start to walk out, but I know if I break even one board, it's over.

Maybe they'll come alive to the Soviet.

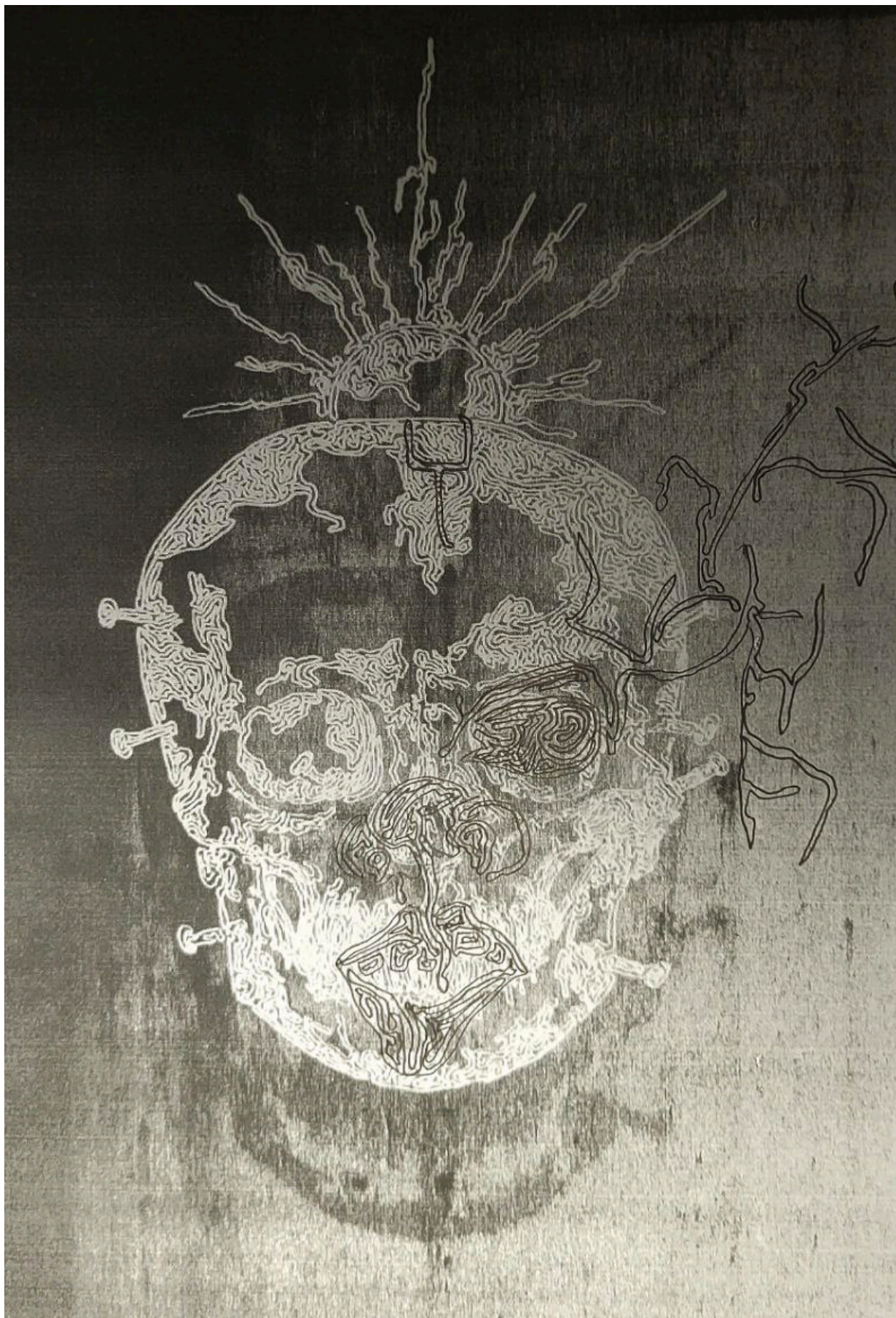


X

W 1-1 1E 1\1
1-1 0 1\1 0 1N
T 0 12 1\1 S
T 0 C 0 10 1E

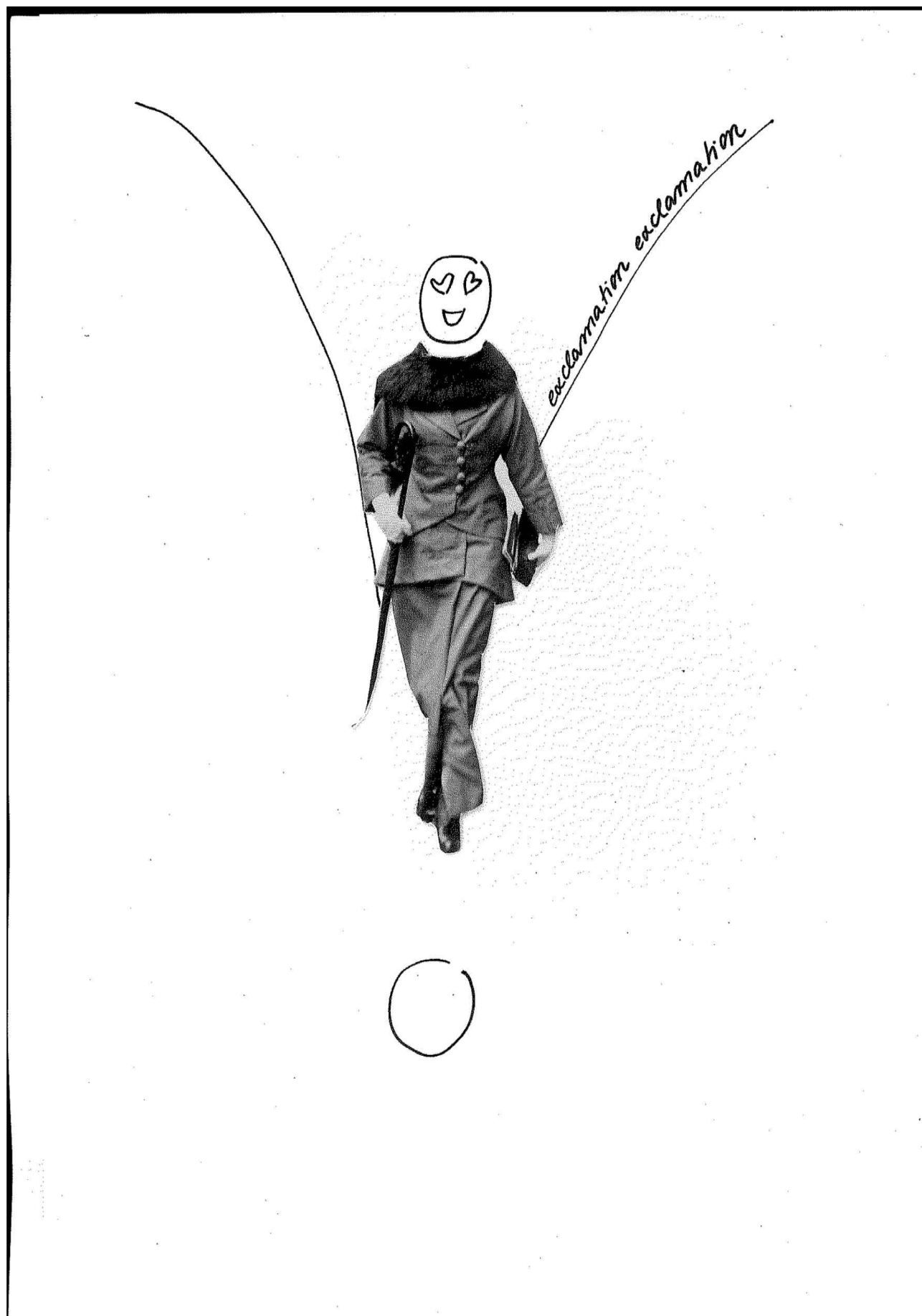


A.



findout periodwarning
floatingeyes straightfeeticedhollow
detectedthtoughclearthroughhollow
ununfilledby byselfselfdisgusting nowordformlost
skinnonexistent structure
self hollowfilled hiredfacesexlost
justfoundwinterreise deathundescribed
noncoloured inbetweenscared
sacredsaint nongod formlesssnowglowingicedway
findout nonself selffuglyinbetween
inexconfrontation nonperiod nonexistent selfdiscover
inbetween formofthedeath
scaredsacred findout bothsidessharped
hereiam inwinterreise icedclaysound

maria van bömmel





clare
to

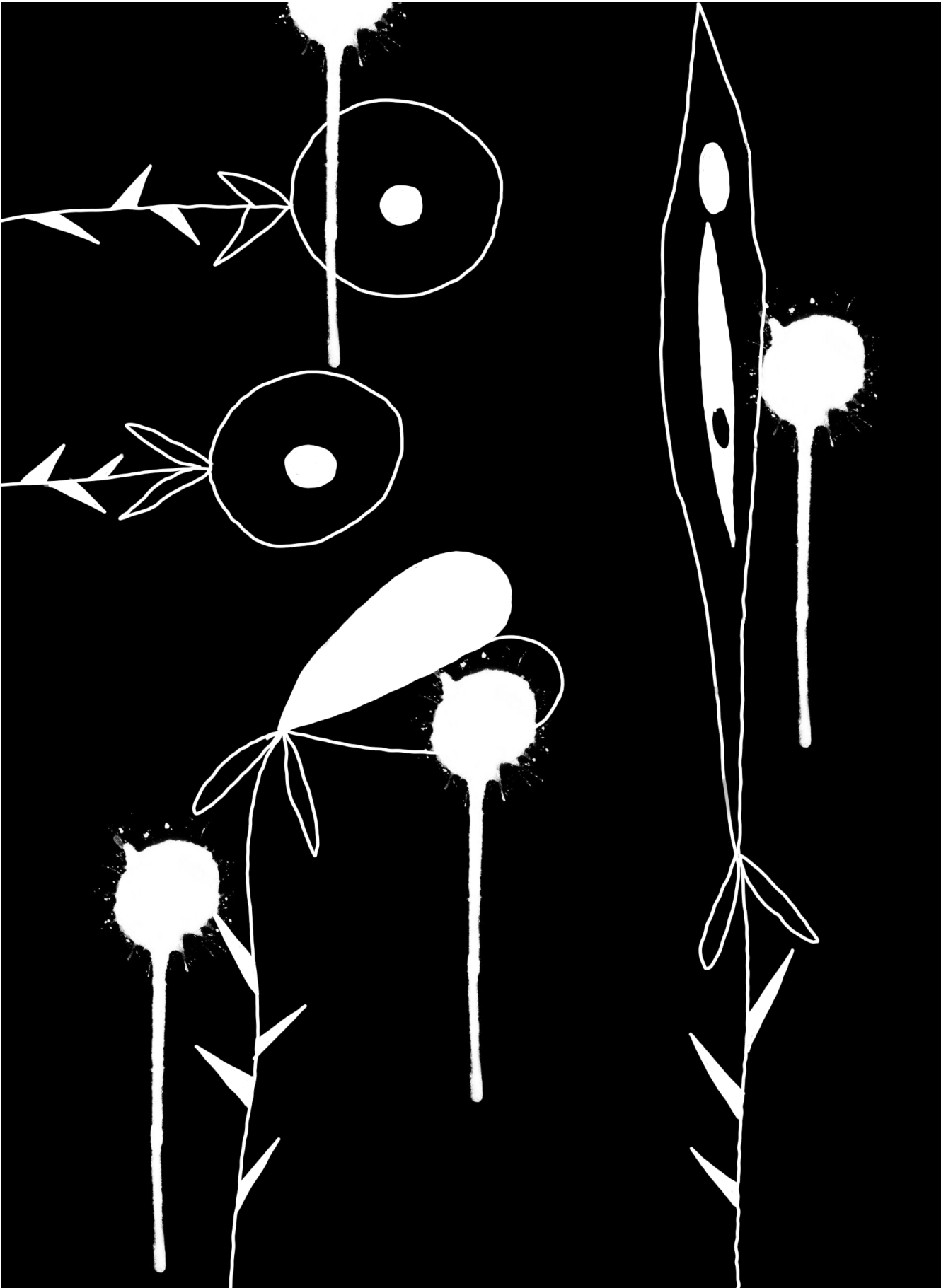
nuances ? maybe
complex
How us
discontextual
vision
challenge
together engage
learn each share
Why I will listen.
abstract ques
complicate
vision
manipulation

every poem is read in one breathe it is needed to fill
the lungs with as much air as it is possible

we are having sex and i tell you that when i was 12 i
had a dream where my father was raping me you
asked how he looked like when he was young or old i
said that he looked old it seemed being a cut on the
background the father who is doing oscillatory
motions and on the foreground my legs i woke up in
the children's camp in the darkness of the room and
light of the corridor i woke up in that posture from the
dream

you kissed me and we continued having sex i
remember the room background behind him it was
blue and green curtains they were greener than the
curtains in my nursery but it seems like it was there
that time he was there why did i say that he was
raping me? it is strange that you have a dream about
sex with the old father or i said the first thing which i
felt when remembered about this dream

we finished having sex and you got upset that i didn't
come again but we have forgotten about it i draw you
are on a concert and i am thinking about my father
from the dream of a person which was so similar to
my father those were glasses of my father wrinkles
and eyes through the glasses of my father i felt cosy



Atlantique:s – on global dis:connection in Mati Diop’s films

Fabienne Liptay



Mati Diop’s short film *Atlantiques* (2009) is a visual poem about the ‘oceanic time-lag’¹ experienced through migration. Relating to Senegal’s *migrations piroguières* in 2005 and 2006, when thousands of young Africans left their homes to embark on often-

1 Dora Budor, ‘Oceanic Time-Lag: On Mati Diop’s *Atlantiques*’, *MOUSSE Magazine*, Mousse Publishing 2020, <https://www.moussemagazine.it/magazine/mati-diop-dora-budor-2020/4> February 2025. On this point, see also Dennis Lim, ‘Crossing Over’, *Film Comment*, *Film at Lincoln Center*, 1 July 2019, <https://www.filmcomment.com/article/crossing-over/5> February 2025; Olajide Salawu, ‘The Method of Abjection in Mati Diop’s “Atlantiques”’, *Third Text: Critical Perspectives on Art and Culture* online (8 June 2020), <http://www.thirdtext.org/salawu-atlantiques>, <http://www.thirdtext.org/salawu-atlantiques>; Gigi Adair, ‘The Spirit of Migrancy: Mati Diop’s *Atlantique*’, *Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature* 46, no. 1 (2022) <https://doi.org/10.4148/2334-4415.2208>.

Fig. 1
***Atlantiques*, Mati Diop, 2009, 16 mins.,
film still, trigon-film.**

deadly voyages to Spain, the film tells the stories of these men, interweaving the lived experiences of the protagonists from Dakar with the ghostly recollections of the dead. Speaking about ‘the most burning desire to throw oneself into the sea’² – a quote drawn from the accounts of survivors of the 1816 shipwreck of the *Medusa* on the way to Senegal (which inspired Théodore Géricault’s painting *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1819) – these ghost stories blur the lines between documentary and fiction to create an oneiric nocturnal imaginary of migration and exile. Mati Diop returns to these stories ten years later in her debut feature film *Atlantique* (2019), which looks to the ocean both as a mythological and political space from the perspective of the women who were left behind in Dakar. The almost eponymous titling of the films blurs the understanding of their relationship in terms of both identity and difference. In my commentary on the short film *Atlantiques* and the feature film *Atlantique*, I would like to share some thoughts and observations about how the disjunctive relations constructed within and between these films – their manifold doublings and splits – can be seen as a genuine contribution to a political aesthetics of global dis:connection.

Atlantiques, the 15-minute short, shot by Diop herself on low-grain video (mini-DV), begins with the dark enigmatic image of turning cogs, rusty as if drawn from the sea. They resemble a reel-to-reel tape recorder playing the voice of a man who recounts his experience of encountering death on his passage over the ocean in a pirogue. The voice seems to be speaking from beyond, the man’s body absent from the image, leaving us uncertain whether he survived the ‘Siram’, the giant wave that hit the boat. The film ends with equally enigmatic images, now bright and glaring, giving an interior view of a system of rotating lenses in the lantern of a lighthouse, which flood the darkness with bright flashes of light before slowly fading at dawn. The rotation of the lenses echoes the turning movement of the tape recorder at the beginning of the film. This scene was likely filmed at the Mamelles Lighthouse in Dakar, sitting on a hill overlooking the Atlantic Ocean at the westernmost tip of Africa. While it was built under French colonial rule in 1864 as a landmark of imperial control of the region, the film lends the lighthouse a transformative visual presence. Like a nocturnal dream machine, it seems to return the fears and hopes that guide the journey on the pirogue, captured in the phrase ‘Barcelona or death’ (Barça ou Barsakh) that has become a common expression in Senegal, originally coined by the migrants.³

2 That is, ‘le plus ardent désir de se jeter à la mer’. Alexandre Corréard and Henri Savigny, *Naufrage de la frégate La Méduse, faisant partie de l’expédition du Sénégal, en 1816* (Paris: Corréard Libraire, 1821), 124.

3 See, for example, Stefano degli Uberti, ‘Victims of their Fantasies or Heroes for a Day? Media Representations, Local History and Daily Narratives on Boat Migrations from Senegal’, *Cahiers d’études africaines* 54, no. 213-214 (2014) <https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesafriques.17599>.



Framed by the images and sounds of returns that open and close the film are scenes of three young Senegalese men, friends sitting on the beach around a fire, the sparks faintly illuminating the dark and grainy images, while they discuss the perils of migrating to Europe to escape the miseries of life in Africa. The scenes are staged but at the same time documentary, the scripted dialogues based on the recollections of the protagonists (one of which is Mati Diop's cousin) who use their real names. One of the men, Serigne (Serigne Seck) has taken the risk of leaving on a pirogue, recounting his experience, his two friends inquiring about his reasons for leaving. Has Serigne returned from his journey alive, after having been deported or as a ghost after dying at sea? The dialogue gives evidence for both interpretations, just as the opening scenes with his recorded voice. The scenes around the campfire on the beach are interspersed with images of mourning women, a mother and a sister, as well as a close-up of the gravestones of men who died at sea, among them Serigne's gravestone bearing the date of his death. Do these scenes of mourning and memorial precede or follow the friends' meeting at the beach? The film's temporal experience is one of haunting, of a time out-of-joint that Derrida described in *Specters of Marx* as 'a disjointed now that always risks maintaining nothing together in the assured conjunction of some context whose border would still be determinable'⁴ and that has since become a recurring concept in postcolonial thought, figuring in the many ghost stories that have emanated from it.

Regarding the state of migration in contemporary films, among them Diop's *Atlantique*, Ekow Eshun speaks of a 'liquid Africa', a political aesthetics of both renewal and remembrance that finds its expression, among other motifs, in images of the sea. 'From its title onward, the sea is the gravitational force that shapes lives and events in the Dakar-set *Atlantics*. (...) As the camera lingers

4 Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamut (New York: Routledge, 1994), 1.

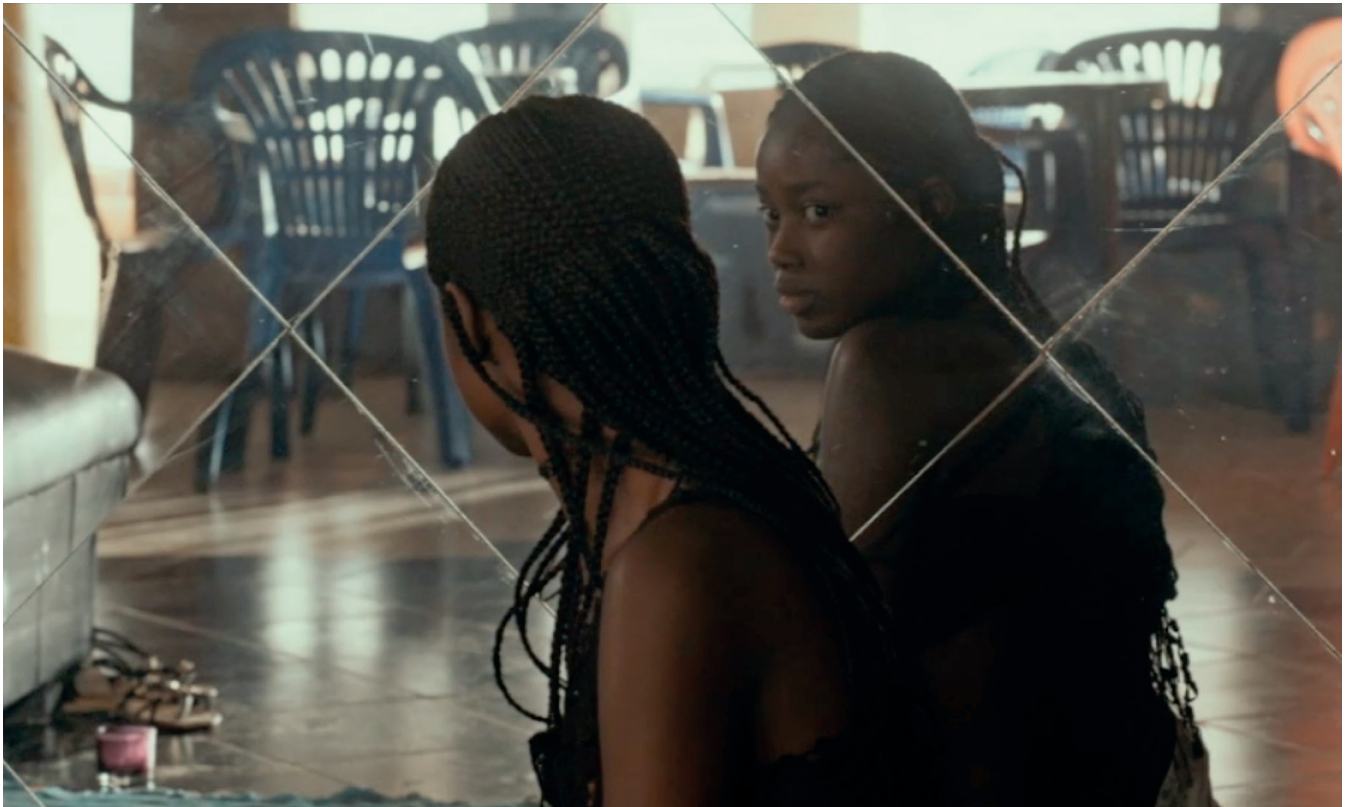
Fig. 2
Atlantique, Mati Diop, 2019, 104 mins.,
film still, MUBI.

again over its surface, we contemplate the water as a repository of countless stories of desire and departure, loss and mourning', allowing the 'film's transition from drama told in the tradition of European realism to a hauntological fable replete with ominous occurrences: mysterious fires and gesturings to the mythic and mystic, chiefly through the figure of the djinn, an Islamic spirit that is able to take the form of humans or animals'.⁵

Atlantique, Mati Diop's feature debut that followed her short film ten years later in 2019, spells out the haunting presence of ghosts, verging on the genre of zombie films infused with West African tales of spiritual possession. Here, the dead men return from the sea, inhabiting the bodies of the women at night to call for justice, for being paid the wages they had been denied after months of work on a construction site. Yet, an aesthetics of dis:connectivity expressing the state of migration is not simply achieved in terms of representation or narrative, however fragmented and ambiguous. Rather, it manifests itself in the multiple disjunctures, the frictions and folds, the absences and missing links that structure the films in both their internal relations as well as their relations to each other. In light of the feature film, Diop's short film has frequently been discussed as a precursor, the experiment from which the later film could emerge. What escapes such conventional consideration is the spectral logic itself, the disjointed time of the present that renders the relation between both films more complicated than that of a simple succession or development.

On the level of the plot, the film tells the story of young lovers, Ada (Mama Sané) and Suleiman (Ibrahima Traoré), who are separated from the first moment they appear on screen: a train cuts between them, raising dust, as they meet in the streets of Dakar, hindering them from coming together. Later at the beach, they are separated even in their embrace: she does not dare to tell him that her parents have arranged for her to soon marry a wealthy businessman; he does not dare tell her that he will be leaving in a pirogue later that night. 'You're just watching the ocean – you're not even looking at me,' she complains. He departs without saying goodbye. The film stays in Dakar with Ada and the other women; we don't get to see anything of the men's departure or their fatal journey across the sea, not even the stranded boat that is said to have been found by Spanish fishermen and might have been theirs. What is absent or disappears from the scene, what becomes unavailable for representation, returns in the film's atmosphere – an atmosphere full of sandy heat, humidity and sea spray, of granite dust, smog and orange haze, polluted with the promises of cosmopolitan progress and haunted by

5 Ekow Eshun, 'A Liquid Africa: Fluidity as Practice and Aesthetics in Diasporadical Trilogía', *liquid blackness: journal of aesthetics and black studies* 5, no. 1 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1215/26923874-8932595>.



the colonial past.⁶ As Diop has stated in interviews, many of the film's scenes were shot at the site of the 1944 Thiaroye massacre by French forces of West African soldiers who had fought for the French army, following their demand for equal pensions, which is echoed in the worker's demand for payment in *Atlantique*. Here, spectrality is also heavily evoked by the films' cinematography, the dark and grainy images, shot with a highly light sensitive 35mm camera (VariCam 35) that renders tangible the invisibilities of migration as a remnant of colonisation. 'The men who died at sea,' as the film's cinematographer Claire Mathon states, 'return via the (sweating) bodies of young girls.'⁷

Mati Diop, as a French-Senegalese director, has created such disjunctive dialogue between films before, with her short *A Thousand Suns* (*Mille soleils*, 2013), in which she relates to the Senegalese film classic *Touki Bouki* (1973), directed by her uncle Djibril Diop Mambéty.⁸ *A Thousand Suns* was made for the 40th anniversary of *Touki Bouki*, staged around an open-air screening

6 See Lindsay Turner, 'In the Atmosphere: In Mati Diop's *Atlantics*, every breath takes in the evaporated substance of history', *The Yale Review* Summer 2020 (1 June 2020).

7 Claire Mathon, 'Claire Mathon, AFC, discusses her work on Mati Diop's film "Atlantics"', *AFC, Association Française des directrices et directeurs de la photographie Cinématographique* 2019, <https://www.afcinema.com/Claire-Mathon-AFC-discusses-her-work-on-Mati-Diop-s-film-Atlantique.html?lang=fr>.

8 On this film, see for example James S. Williams, 'A Thousand Suns: Traversing the Archive and Transforming Documentary in Mati Diop's *Mille Soleils*', *Film Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (2016); Melissa Anderson, 'Family Ties', *Artforum*, 19 January 2015, <https://www.artforum.com/columns/melissa-anderson-on-mati-diops-a-thousand-suns-222788/>.

Fig. 3
Atlantique, Mati Diop, 2019, 104 mins., film still, MUBI.

of the celebrated film in Dakar by night in the presence of its lead actor Magaye Niang, 40 years after having played Mory, the film's young rebellious protagonist who, at the last minute, decides not to take the ship to Paris with his girlfriend, returning to cattle herding in a repetition of the film's opening scene. *A Thousand Suns* is particularly interested in the coincidence that the actor, just as the character he played, never left Dakar. The opening sequence of the film shows this character, now an elderly man, still herding zebus like he did in the former film. Inscribing the lived time of the actor's body into the fictional character, collapsing and multiplying fictional and documentary layers, the film creates a fractured temporality, in which the man seems to be endlessly returning, visibly aging, yet displaced from progression in time. What has happened in the 40 years since *Touki Bouki*, the actor is asked at the screening. Shrouded in the blue light of projection, he remains silent with his mouth agape. The plural of the film's title *A Thousand Suns* reverberates this disjuncture of time, while the film lends an aesthetics to the philosophical concept of spectrality through the many shifts and splits between different visual and narrative registers, genres and materialities.

The sight of zebus crossing the street returns in *Atlantique*, recalling once again the opening and closing scene in *Touki Bouki* that had already refigured in *A Thousand Suns*. This time they appear even more untimely, crossing the urban building site where a futuristic tower, the only digitally rendered object in the film, is being constructed in the real-estate development area of the city of Dakar, reminiscent of the unrealised project for a multi-million-dollar luxury tower hotel that Senegal's former president Abdoulaye Wade wanted to build together with Gaddafi as a symbol of their shared vision of Africa. Against this vision of economic development and progress in global capitalism, the film sets an alternative future—a future that, in Derrida's words, is rendered possible through 'disjunction, interruption, the heterogenous'.⁹ 'One does not know if the expectation prepares the coming of the future-to-come or if it recalls the repetition of the same, of the same thing as ghost. [...] It is a proper characteristic of the specter, if there is any, that no one can be sure if by returning it testifies to a living past or to a living future, for the revenant may already mark the promised return of the specter of living being'.¹⁰ It is this 'future-to-come' (*l'avenir*) that is announced in the final scene of the film, in which Ada, after her reunion with the ghost of Suleiman, reflects on her memories as prophecies. Flipping the perspective, the camera now looks at Ada from beyond the refracted mirror in the beach bar, that site of spectral returns where the dead men's images appeared, while she speaks the closing lines: 'Ada, to whom the future belongs. I am Ada'.

⁹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 44-45.

¹⁰ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 123.



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Fig. 4
Atlantique, Mati Diop, 2019, 104 mins., film still, MUBI.

Between Bogotá and Munich: Godula Buchholz and South American art in Germany

Claudia Cendales Paredes

The German art historian and gallerist Godula Buchholz (*1935) lived and worked in Bogotá, Colombia from 1951 until 1963, before returning to Germany where she has resided ever since. Her work as an art historian and gallery owner between two regions (Colombia/South America and Germany/Europe) features connectivities and dis:connectivities. As a young German immigrant in Colombia, initially dis:connected from her new country, she was able to connect with artists, institutions and intellectual networks in South America and Europe, thus promoting cultural exchange between them. After returning to Germany in 1963 and founding her pioneering gallery in 1965, she was able to benefit from these experiences and connections. However, having to start over, given that she hadn't been living there for long, and deciding to dedicate herself to promoting South American art, which was little known in the West German art scene, she found herself dis:connected again. Still, she was able to manage the tensions inherent in dis:connectivity and establish her work, playing a key role in the presentation and consolidation of South American art and artists in Germany.

This article focuses on her work in Colombia and later in Germany, particularly from 1965, when she founded the Galerie Buchholz in Munich, until 1977.¹ It sheds light on her role in promoting cultural



Fig. 1
Godula Buchholz in Bogotá, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Zentralarchiv, IV-NL Buchholz 24.

¹ The gallery existed until 2015 in Munich and elsewhere. 'Godula Buchholz: 1965-2015 Galerie Buchholz', 2021, accessed 15 May 2025, <https://www.werkraum-buchholz.com/die-galerie.html>.

exchange between South America and Germany and as a pioneering art historian and female gallery owner in Munich.

Godula Buchholz's work at the Librería Buchholz in Bogotá

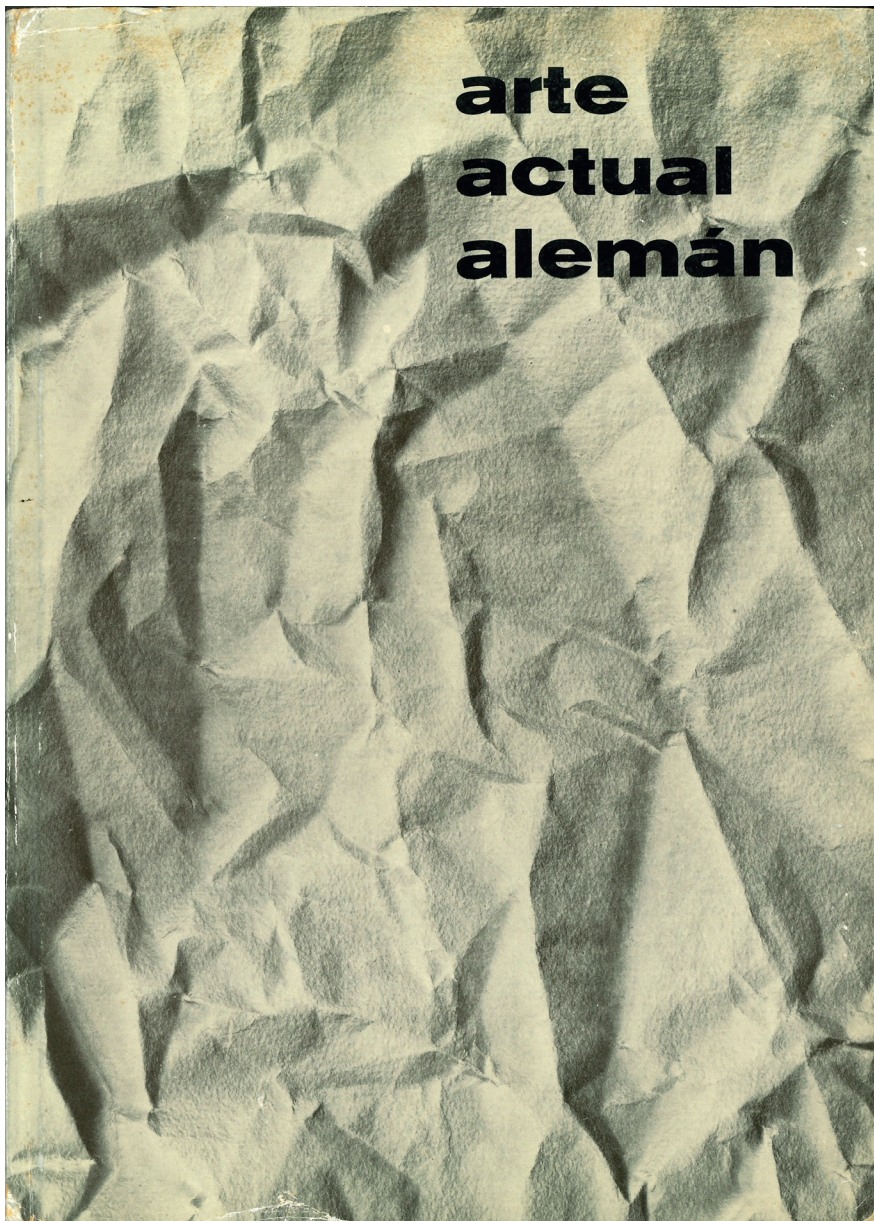
In 1951, Godula Buchholz emigrated with her family to Bogotá, Colombia, where her father, the bookseller and art dealer Karl Buchholz (1901-1992), founded the Librería Buchholz, which existed until 1992.² The Librería Buchholz followed the model of a bookstore-gallery, as Karl had also opened in Berlin, Madrid and Lisbon, and became a hub for the intellectual and German-speaking community in the city (fig. 1).

Godula studied art history in Paris between 1955 and 1958. She then returned to Bogotá and worked at the bookstore, where she organised numerous art exhibitions from 1958.³ The Librería's exhibitions focused on Colombian artists, like Alejandro Obregón, as well as German artists living in Colombia, such as Guillermo Wiedemann and Kurt Levy. It also featured mostly graphic works of some European artists, like Pablo Picasso. Moreover, she presented some group exhibitions of modern German art, such as *Arte Gráfico Alemán Contemporáneo* (1958) and *Arte Gráfico Abstracto Alemán* (1959).⁴ As the South American public's first exposure to some German artists, the travelling exhibition *Arte Actual Alemán*, presented in 1960 in Caracas, Lima and Bogotá aroused great interest and was important for her career. It displayed 137 paintings and 44 sculptures assembled for Karl Buchholz by the Deutsche Künstlerbund in Berlin. In 1962 *Arte Actual Alemán* was also presented in Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Santiago de Chile, accompanied by Godula Buchholz (fig. 2). During the exhibition, she visited some of the artists based there. Thus, she put together a new exhibition, *Pinturas suramericanas hoy*, which she completed with more works from artists in Peru, Venezuela and Colombia and was presented in late 1962 in Bogotá and Caracas. This exhibition inspired a new travelling exhibition entitled *Südamerikanische Malerei der Gegenwart*, which marked her return to Germany in 1963.

2 Godula Buchholz, *Karl Buchholz Buch- und Kunsthändler im 20. Jahrhundert – Sein Leben und seine Buchhandlungen und Galerien* Berlin, New York, Bukarest, Lissabon, Madrid, Bogotá (Cologne: DuMont, 2005), 190.

3 Buchholz, *Karl Buchholz*, 195, 99.

4 Buchholz, *Karl Buchholz*, 202.



Galerie Buchholz München 1965-1977: exhibiting South American art in Germany

Südamerikanische Malerei der Gegenwart was presented between 1963 and 1964 in four German cities, Berlin, Bonn, Baden-Baden and Pforzheim, and surveyed contemporary trends in eight South American countries for the first time in Germany. Buchholz selected 28 young artists who had helped develop painting in South America from approximately 1958 to 1960, such as Fernando Botero and Rómulo Macció (fig. 3).⁵ While the exhibition was running at the Staatliche Kunsthalle in Baden-Baden, Buchholz met the director Dietrich Mahlow (1920-2013), who offered her a job

⁵ *Südamerikanische Malerei der Gegenwart*, ed. Städtische Kunstsammlungen Bonn (Bonn: Haus der Städtischen Kunstsammlungen, 1963).

Fig. 2
Cover of the exhibition catalogue
Arte Actual Alemán in Buenos Aires,
Montevideo, Santiago de Chile, 1962,
SMB-ZA, IV-NL Buchholz 33.



Fig. 3
 Cover of the exhibition catalogue
*Südamerikanische Malerei der
 Gegenwart*, SMB-ZA, IV-NL Buchholz
 33.

as an assistant curator, and she worked there from 1963 to 1965.⁶ After deciding to open her own gallery in Germany, but having long lived elsewhere and unsure of where to locate it, she followed Mahlow's recommendation and decided on Munich, despite being unfamiliar with the city or its art scene. She found a suitable space on a mezzanine floor at Maximilianstraße 29, and she opened the Galerie Buchholz in 1965 (fig. 4).⁷ It was probably the best place

6 Godula Buchholz, 'Questions about the life and work of Godula Buchholz and the Galerie Buchholz, Munich', interview by Claudia Cendales Paredes, 15 February & 11 May 2025. She participated in exhibitions like *Illustrationen* in 1964. See *Illustrationen*, ed. Godula Buchholz and Dietrich Mahlow (Baden-Baden: Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, 1964).

7 Buchholz, interview.



for a gallery, as by the 1960s there were already several galleries located in Maximilianstraße, one of Munich's grand boulevards.⁸

The Galerie Buchholz specialised in contemporary South American art, especially during its first five years.⁹ It also presented works by contemporary Spanish, Portuguese and German artists, and exhibited painting, sculpture, as well as graphic works and drawings. From the mid-1970s, it became more international.¹⁰ The gallery's first exhibition was *Malerei aus Südamerika* in 1965, which featured the works of five painters from Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, including Fernando Botero, Fernando Szyszlo and the French artist Fernand Léger with graphic works.¹¹ In the exhibition catalogue, Godula alluded to the connection to the Librería in Bogotá, but despite profiting from its support and advice, she made her own decisions regarding her gallery in Munich.¹²

8 These galleries collaborated to promote themselves in the Interessengemeinschaft Galerien Maximilianstraße and from the beginning of the 1970s they organised annual joint exhibitions. The Galerie Buchholz participated in *Handzeichnungen* in 1976. See *Handzeichnungen: Gemeinsame Ausstellung der Galerien in der Maximilianstrasse München*, ed. Jörg Schellmann, Jürgen Weihrauch, and Hartmut Stöcker (Munich, 1976).

9 Buchholz, *Karl Buchholz*, 223.

10 Buchholz, interview.

11 *Malerei aus Südamerika* (Munich: Galerie Buchholz, 1965).

12 Buchholz, interview.

Fig. 4
Galerie Buchholz in Munich, ca. 1972,
Godula Buchholz archive, Munich.

In 1965 she also organised other exhibitions in the Galerie Buchholz, including *Graphik aus Südamerika* (14.9.-23.10.1965) and in subsequent years several individual and group exhibitions on South American artists.¹³

When Godula founded the Galerie Buchholz in Munich in 1965, 20th-century art from Latin America was neither very popular nor very present in Munich and greater West Germany.¹⁴ Although some of the artists she presented had already exhibited in Germany before, such as Jesús Rafael Soto, Julio Le Parc and Sergio de Camargo, others were nearly unknown in Germany, such as Fernando Botero and Edgar Negret. In the introduction to *Women Art Dealers Creating Markets for Modern Art 1940–1990*, Véronique Chagnon-Burke refers to female gallerists, especially those operating before the 1970s, as pioneers – serious entrepreneurs who carved out spaces for themselves in a male-dominated art world. They worked as small business owners when there were few women in positions of power, and they took risks, exploring both new tastes and territories.¹⁵ Although this book does not cover Godula Buchholz, that description fit her well, as she decided to explore new tastes and new territories first in Colombia, presenting German art, but especially in Germany, presenting South American art in her own gallery.

Like other female gallery owners interested in emerging and overlooked art and managing artists' early careers, Buchholz contributed greatly to Fernando Botero's renown in Germany and Europe, as she, Botero and other sources have acknowledged.¹⁶ As she described in a recent interview, establishing her gallery and introducing artists like Botero required much practical work, such as importing the works from South America and elsewhere to Germany, and employing different strategies to popularise the unfamiliar artists, as evidenced by Botero's promotion. In the early 1960s, Buchholz discovered Botero's work at an exhibition during her stay in Bogotá. She included him in exhibitions in South America, like *Pinturas suramericanas hoy*, and in Germany, like *Südamerikanische Malerei der Gegenwart*, as mentioned above. After opening her gallery in Munich, she visited him in New York and represented him for a few years.¹⁷ Prior to 1977, she

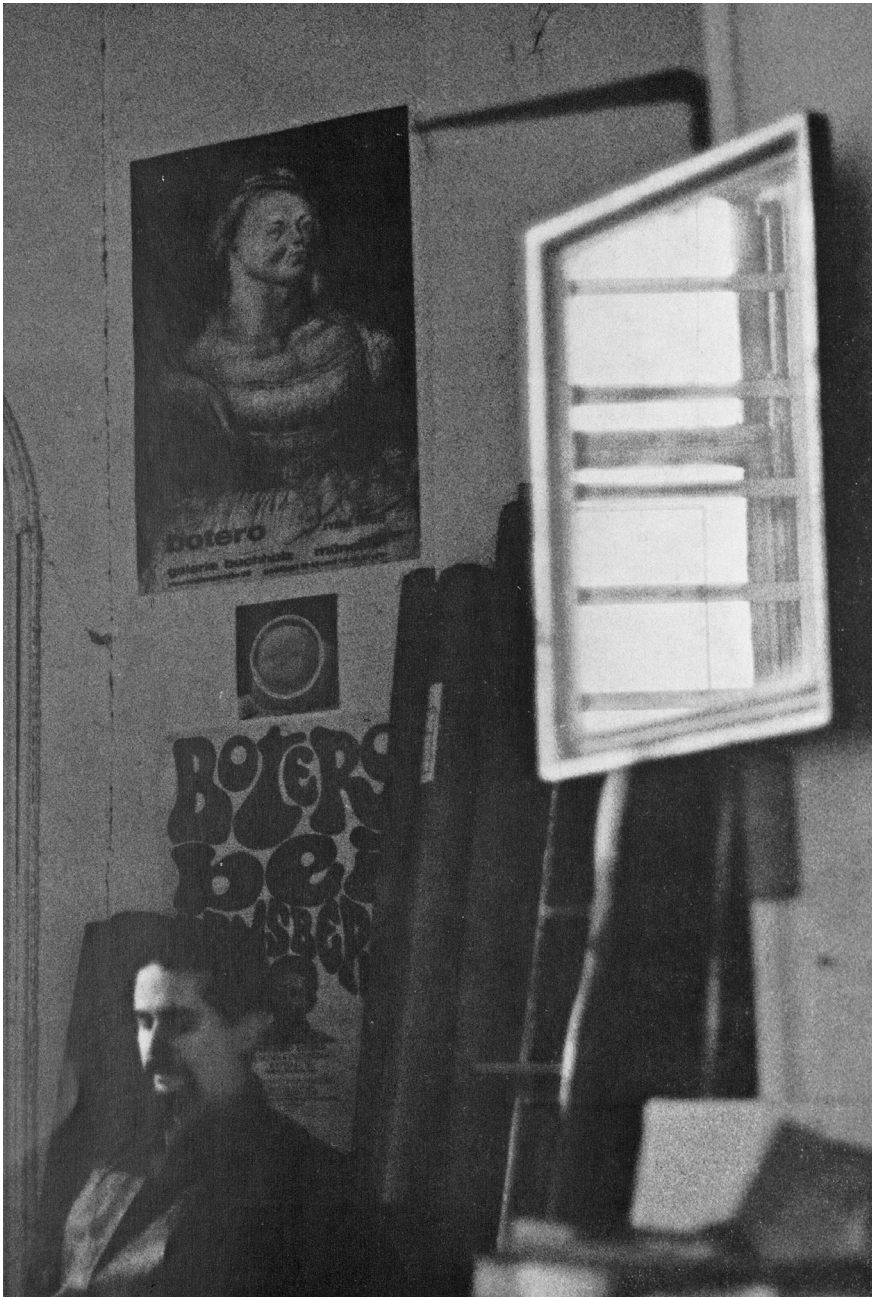
¹³ See the list of the exhibitions held there in 'Godula Buchholz'.

¹⁴ See the brief description in Michael Nungesser, 'Moderne Kunst aus Lateinamerika: Rezeptionsbericht zur Lage in Deutschland', in *De orbis Hispani linguis litteris historia moribus: Festschrift für Dietrich Briesemeister zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Axel Schönberger and Klaus Zimmermann, vol. 2, (Domus: Frankfurt, 1994), 1804-05.

¹⁵ Véronique Chagnon-Burke, 'Introduction: women art dealers: creating markets for modern art, 1940-90', in *Women Art Dealers Creating Markets for Modern Art, 1940-1990*, ed. Véronique Chagnon-Burke and Caterina Toschi (London: Bloomsbury, 2024), 1.

¹⁶ Buchholz, interview; Gottfried Sello, 'Botero-Ausstellung in Baden-Baden Paradies der Dicken', *Die Zeit*, 3 April 1970; Heinrich Wigand Petzet, 'Botero Ausstellung in Baden-Baden – Feist und reglos: gequollener Kuchenteig', *National-Zeitung Basel* (Basel), 14 April 1970; Chagnon-Burke, 'Introduction', 1.

¹⁷ Buchholz, interview.



organised, supported and participated in numerous exhibitions about him at her gallery and elsewhere in Germany,¹⁸ such as two 1966 exhibitions, one at the Galerie Buchholz in Munich and Botero's first solo exhibition in a European museum at the Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, which she curated.¹⁹ She also collaborated with other galleries and museums, contacting them and offering them works, as when she contacted the Galerie Brusberg in Hanover to promote Botero. When German and South American art magazines and newspapers reported on the exhibitions and the growing appreciation for the artists she featured, she collaborated with some of them, providing information and photographs. She also edited catalogues of

¹⁸ See the list of the exhibitions in 'Godula Buchholz'.

¹⁹ 'Godula Buchholz'; *Fernando Botero*, (Munich: Galerie Buchholz, 1966).

Fig. 5
Fernando Botero in his studio,
photograph by Godula Buchholz,
Godula Buchholz archive, Munich.

the exhibitions presented at her gallery, featuring photographs, sometimes her own.²⁰ From 1970, she began editing art books, starting with a book related to a travelling exhibition of Botero (fig. 5).²¹ She also participated in art fairs, such as International Kunstmesse Basel and the Kölner Kunstmarkt,²² where in 1968 she was one of the few female gallery owners to be present with her gallery.²³

In 1976, Godula Buchholz stated in an article that, of the South American artists the gallery had supported, Botero was the first to achieve international recognition.²⁴ While the interest his work generated in Germany was an important factor, Godula's work supporting and promoting paved the way.

Managing connectivities and dis:connectivities

Godula Buchholz is almost completely unknown in Colombia, despite having played an important role working with her father at the Librería Buchholz, whose relevance in the cultural sphere of 20th-century Colombia is widely acknowledged. After her return to Germany, Godula Buchholz did pioneering work as a woman gallery owner at the Galerie Buchholz in Munich, which has not yet been recognised.

A few years ago, when researching South American art networks with West Germany in the post-war period, I came into contact with her work, initially through her father's archive in Berlin. Through further research and interviews with her, I discovered her important work in the promotion of modern art and cultural exchange between Germany and South America, topics that are part of my research focus. I found an affinity with her and wanted to learn more about her work. This paper gives a brief overview of some preliminary results of my research on her and her work, especially about the connectivities and dis:connectivities between two regions and interests.

20 Buchholz, interview.

21 *Fernando Botero*; 'Godula Buchholz'.

22 Bernhard Rohe, 'Der Kölner Kunstmarkt', *Das Kunstwerk* XXI, no. 11-12 (1968).

23 See the photograph of the participants in 'Kunstmarkt Köln '68', *Aachener Nachrichten* (Aachen), 14 November 1968; Buchholz, interview.

24 Godula Buchholz, 'Galerie Buchholz', *Das Kunstwerk* XXI, no. 5-6 (1974).

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A pillow for collective dormancy

Işıl Eğrikavuk

I arrived at global dis:connect as an artist fellow in the fall of 2025. Being an artist and academic, I often find myself operating between these two worlds: one is more open to process, play and experimentation, and the other is usually more precise and well-planned. While I had already been asked – and had sent off – by mid-summer the title of the presentation I was to give at gd:c in November, I was not sure what exactly I would want to present to my colleagues in Munich. Should I have continued my ongoing garden project, which I had been running with my students at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK) for the last four years, or should I have used the limited time available to enter a new domain and work on something else?

First, a little background on my practice: I am an artist with a background in performance art and community art practices. My work often involves collaborations with various groups of people – artists and non-artists – as well as my students. I have also been teaching art for almost twenty years, the last eight of which have been in Berlin. As a member of UdK's teaching faculty, I started a garden project in 2021 together with my students, called the other garden.

the other garden resulted from several personal and collective experiences. First, I am the only non-European instructor in my faculty and sometimes find myself on the wrong side of the language barrier. Second, there is a lack of diversity and inclusivity programs for newcomers like me. Finally, our building lacks a café or social space for the students and staff.

After battling some bureaucracy, we set up the garden, where my students and I are growing non-native wild plants (weeds), which are othered in the anthropocentric plant hierarchy. It soon became both a garden behind our faculty building located on Mierendorffstraße and a classroom and community space for us. There, we began to hold our classes, organise artist talks, cook, eat, experiment with art and talk about otherness – both within and among humans as well as non-human beings. In only a few years, this little area has become a much larger community than I imagined, with now over a hundred students who have experienced being part of it.

Yet, when I arrived in Munich, I did not know what a green city I would find, nor was I exactly aware of the location of gd:c. Walking in the mornings from the English Garden to my office, looking outside from my desk during the day onto the Maximilian Park, I felt surrounded by a much larger green environment and was able to take more time to notice its changes day by day. One of my initial ideas was to see if I could start another garden, perhaps in the backyard of the gd:c building. But soon after arriving in Munich, I realised that there would neither be enough time nor the right moment during my six-month stay in the city.

I also noticed that it was already October, and the turn of the season was obvious in the city's flora. The weather was starting to get chilly; trees were shedding their leaves, and the colors were turning crimson, then yellow and brown. There was a sense of slowing down and stillness, almost like the preparation we humans do before going to bed: getting rid of heavy clothes, cleaning up and getting ready to quiet down. It was clearly not the right time to start a garden.

I began to spend longer moments just observing the park's edge from my desk, tracing the slow color changes of the trees. Jenny Odell calls this kind of attentiveness 'doing nothing': not idleness, but radical presence. 'To do nothing is to hold yourself still', she writes, 'so that you can perceive what is actually there'.¹ In those moments, I was not inactive. I was practicing a different form of engagement, like the trees, one that did not seek to produce or prove, but simply to be.

Wintering

Around the same time, I started reading *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* by Katherine May.² It was inspiring to read both May's personal story of wintering in life as a metaphor for difficult times, as well as her research on strategies

1 Jenny Odell, *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy* (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2019), 11.

2 Katherine May, *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2020).



and rituals of coping with cold weather in other geographies and of her own experiments with it, especially with the cold sea in winter. May discovered swimming, or cold dipping, as a way of making peace with the harshness of the winter. This ongoing experiment generated its own community of like-minded friends and new acquaintances who celebrated the winter instead of recoiling from it.

We were not necessarily in the winter months yet, but we were moving toward them. The trees were clearly preparing for their own wintering cycle, recognising their need for rest and retreat. It was the human-made homes, offices and buildings that separated us from this both by protecting us from the coming cold and by disconnecting us from what was happening around us. The daily rhythm of looking at computer screens, preparing another paper or talk and the self-induced pressure to write was constant. Academia does not have time for wintering. We were used to – and even willing – to continue producing without making time for rest.

Fig. 1
**A g d : c autumn (Işıl Eğrikavuk,
November 2024)**



But what if resting, I thought, just like dormancy in the plant world, is not absence but a different kind of presence: a quiet form of survival, preparation and transformation? As Robin Wall Kimmerer suggests in *Braiding Sweetgrass*, plants model a wisdom of rest and regeneration, teaching us to honour cycles and recognise the value of dormancy.³ In the garden, dormancy is never a failure or inactivity. It is a pause that makes growth possible, it is a surrender to the season that honours time, energy and environmental rhythm. Trees do not resist winter; they embrace it, slowing their metabolism, conserving energy, drawing inward. Their apparent stillness holds unseen labor, the storing of sugars, the thickening of bark, the quiet preparation for what's to come. In contrast, the institutional calendar asks us to bypass these organic pauses, rather to produce in all seasons as if the soil never needed to remain uncultivated. But perhaps, like the trees, we humans too need seasons of dormancy. Not to disappear, but to process, to

Fig. 2 – 5
An experiment in photography and research (Işıl Eğrikavuk, November 2024)

3 Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013).

replenish, to wait with intention. In that sense, wintering is not just metaphor, it's an ecological imperative.

A Common Dormancy Experience

With those thoughts in mind, I started to imagine a collective experience of dormancy – or rather, an invitation to it. A cultural motif appeared in my thoughts, originating from my country, Turkey, where newlyweds are presented with a two-person pillow upon marriage. There is also a saying that reflects the object: *Bir yastıkta kocayın*, which means 'May you age on the same pillow together'. I began sketching what a pillow for my academic community might be like. A tall pillow of several meters, where we could rest our heads together for a moment and doze off in the building where we work. How could we connect to one another while disconnecting from our work?

I started toying with the idea. First, I took a German-size pillow from the house where I was staying. German pillows are notorious among foreigners for their size – usually 80x80 cm. I went outside into our garden and began to fill it with fallen leaves from the horse chestnut trees. I wanted to put dried leaves in this pillow to create some form of commonality between our tree-kin and our dormancy experiences. To sleep while being accompanied by living organisms – to be closer to the outside, beyond our walls.

After making my first pillow and filling it with leaves, I started photographing myself in the office building, sleeping in different places: at my desk, on the stairs, in the kitchen, under the Einstein painting in our foyer...

By mid-November, as my talk was approaching, I decided to really make a giant pillow, which I could fill together with my colleagues as a performance. After some searching, I found a Turkish tailor who agreed to sew my two-meter-long pillow from old bed linens. Together we made the pillow.

On the next page you can see images from our collective pillow-filling and leaf-picking performance, which we executed at the end of my talk and to which I invited my colleagues and guests. Before we did that, I showed them a video of myself sleeping on my first pillow in the gd:c backyard, for which I also wrote this text:

Dear you,

Good morning. Good night. Good morning. Wake up. Are you awake?

How did you sleep last night? Was it a deep sleep, or did you wake up in the middle of the night?

Do you dream? What was your last dream?



Fig. 6 – 9

**A Collective Dormancy Experience,
performance by Işıl Eğrikavuk and
participants, gd:c, (Işıl Eğrikavuk,
November 2024)**

The leaves are falling down. I can see them falling one by one from the window of my office.

Sometimes I hear machines collecting the leaves, making the streets all clean and tidy for us humans.

When I went foraging a few weeks ago, our guide told us that dropping their leaves is like emptying their guts for the trees. They become lighter and calmer, ready to rest.

We have a maple tree here in the garden, and a couple of beech trees.

My plant-identifying app tells me we have a Turkish hazelnut, but I don't believe its 58% accuracy.

It stands on its own, and I mostly worry about it being alone.

I keep waking up in the middle of the night these days.

Between 4–6 a.m. is a half-dormant time for my body.

I try to meditate, but can't fall back asleep. On those days, my eyes close and my head becomes heavy – sometimes hard to carry.

What's a garden when it is dormant?

When life simply shifts underground and we, the outsiders, can't see much happening?

What happens when the work of being a plant becomes invisible – its activity slowing down, yet continuing in other forms?

What happens when a tree is quietly resting? Is resting a detour, when one is paused, storing for the next day, month, or coming season?

Dear you, do you ever feel dormant?

When was your last dormancy?

Dear you, do you want a rest?

What if we rested together – communally, like trees?

Dear you, can we connect with one another through being dormant, with our different forms, bodies, and lengths of rest?

Dormancy as Resistance

To be dormant is not to disappear. It is to resist the demand to constantly produce, to perform alertness, to stay visible. In a world and an academy that celebrates speed, output and accumulation, choosing to slow down is a quiet act of rebellion. Dormancy is resistance to timelines that don't fit our bodies, to institutional rhythms that forget we are made of cycles, not straight lines. Like the plants in our garden, like the trees outside the gd:c offices, we too need time to retreat, to shed, to lie fallow. The giant pillow we filled together was not only a resting place; it was a proposition, a shared pause, an embodied refusal. A collective reminder that rest, disconnectivity and absence is presence. It is care. It is preparation. It is political.

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A workshop on an unwritten history: decolonising architectural education in Africa

Peter Seeland

As a discipline, architecture is just starting to face critical post-colonial discourses in its treatment of its own history as well as in current challenges of material, ecological and social practices on global and local scales.

These challenges pervaded African schools of architecture in the 1950s to 1980s, as they were often founded for the sake of political decolonisation, and they continue to influence built environments, architectural knowledge and schooling. With their goals of decolonising architecture and urban planning through economic independence, cultural diversity and local, unsuppressed knowledge, these schools are ripe for research. The Munich workshop, hosted by the Käte Hamburger Research Centre global dis: connect (gd:c) and the Architekturmuseum of the Technical University of Munich, sought to catalyse such research, focussing on the decolonial effects of the schools from their inceptions to the present.

The workshop took place in the Pavillon 333 – an exhibition space in the centre of Munich built by students to showcase art and design.¹ The structure itself challenges established manners of architectural knowledge production and classical hierarchies in universities, and its designers sought to develop architecture as a tool for dealing with (de)colonisation.² Therefore, the location and the workshop were in dialogue with each other.

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- 1 'About 333', Department of Architecture | TUM School of Engineering and Design, accessed 16 May 2025, <https://www.pavillon333.de/en/ueber-333/>.
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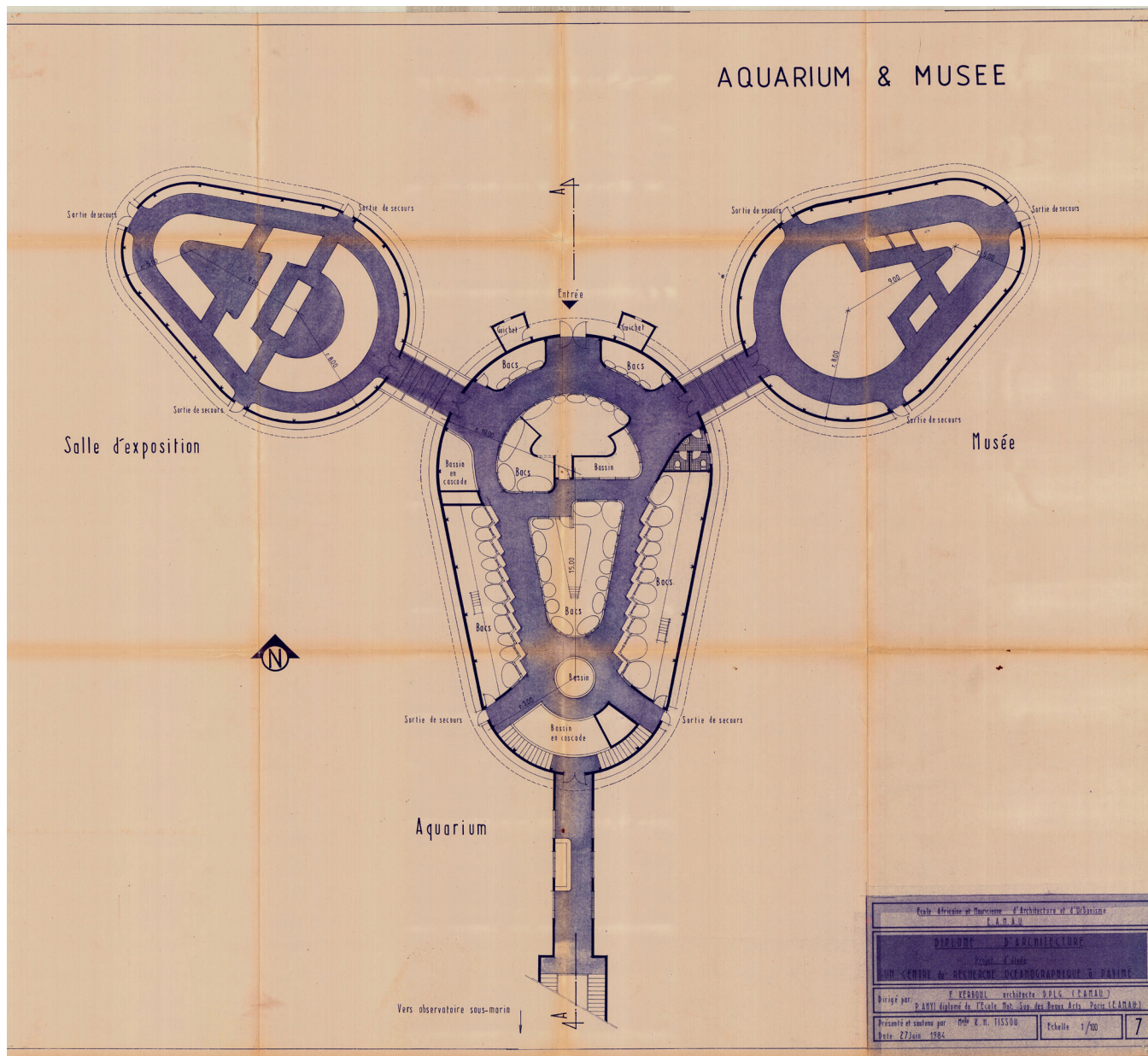


Fig. 1
Excerpt from the thesis of K.H. Tissou,
the first female architecture student
at EAMAU Lomé, 1984. Image: EAMAU.

After being welcomed by Christopher Balme and Andres Lepik, the participants heard Nikolai Brandes's opening address, where he emphasised the crucial role of African faculty in architectural history and the ethical need to overcome marginalisation in the canon. The workshop was deliberately conceived to counter such marginalisation through discourse and learning.

The first paper by Abdé Batchati from the Technical University of Berlin treated *Power, Pedagogy, and the Myth of Neutrality in Architectural Education. A Decolonising Critique and Imagining Futures for Architectural and Spatial Education*. Batchati showed how the Western canon predominates in global architecture education and how this affects hierarchies of knowledge in a (post)colonial context. Consistent with the overarching theme of how to learn and teach about space fairly beyond the university, Batchati was attempting to reinvent a less hierarchical pedagogy, invoking the research of Sara Ahmed, Grada Kilomba and

the Matri-Architecture Project.³ Further, Batchati shared her experiences with these issues in her own curation and research in the context of Matri-Architecture.

Nikolai Brandes followed Batchati with a talk on *Schools of Architecture in Africa. Mapping a Field of Research*. Brandes outlined the history African schools of architecture and the emergence of independent national schools with reference to the schools in Lomé, Togo, and Maputo, Mozambique, founded in the 1970s and 1980s. They engage in several of the same topics, such as training local students, ambivalence towards the rediscovery of African traditions, searching for African identities and decolonising the urban to take a more central position. Nikolai discussed these issues vividly, especially the role of the rural in localising African architecture.

Elio Trusiani from the University of Camerino closed the initial panel with a paper on *The Historical Experience of the Faculty of Architecture in Maputo*. Trusiani traced the history of Italian engagement in Maputo using the example of the Faculdade de Arquitectura e Planeamento Físico, which was founded in 1986. Since Trusiani spent several years there, he reported from first-hand experience how Italian and Mozambican students and teachers developed new forms of architectural education together.

Nancy Demerdash from Detroit's College for Creative Studies opened the second panel with her thoughts on *La Formation de L'Architecte. American Interventionism, Interdisciplinary, and Development in Postcolonial Tunisian Architecture Curricula*. She described the tension between traditional indigenous approaches and modern-Western teaching methods in 1950s French Tunisia and how architecture served as an instrument of French socialisation and politicisation, especially in the early years of the American Architecture Schools in Tunisia. Further, she traced the growing recognition of indigenous knowledge and a more social and technical focus, which led to a more inclusive idea of architecture during the American intervention.

Lund University's Erik Sigge presented a paper on *Negotiating Epistemological Grounds for Architecture Education. The Ethio-Swedish Institute of Building Technology in Addis Ababa, 1954-1973*. Sigge understands the history of architectural education in the institute, which grew into the School of Addis Abba, in the broader frame of Swedish intervention in Ethiopia. Here Western knowledge is transferred to Ethiopia, and local knowledge is reframed in Western categories. But in the case of the institute, he also diagnosed a special method of synthesising traditional local techniques and Western-modern ideas through an ethos of open

3 'matri-archi(tecture)', matri-archi(tecture), accessed 16 May 2026, <https://www.matri-archi.ch/>.

expertise. Contemporary bamboo architecture is but one example. In this case, architectural education serves as a foundation for greater self-sufficiency.

Mark Olweny of Auburn University and the Uganda Martyrs University discussed *Africanisation of Architectural Education. Postcolonial Opportunities, Trajectories, and Missteps* in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. Starting with the Mulungushi Club as decolonisation thinktank, he described how the club's manifestos led to massive changes in architectural knowledge production to include female and indigenous architects in Uganda. A focus on engineering and a lack of humanities along with a mainly male faculty and student body diverted attention from social perspectives and underrepresented discourses on postcolonialism and equality. The discussion highlighted the lack of such knowledge in publications and archives.

The panel closed with a visit to the *Trees, Time, Architecture!* exhibition curated by Kristina Pujkilovic in the Architekturmuseum of the Technical University of Munich. The exhibition rendered the entanglement of architecture, globalisation and climate crises in of (post)colonial discourse obvious.

That evening, Brian Valente-Quinn of the University of Colorado Boulder and gd:c introduced Nzinga Mboup as the keynote speaker with her talk on *Bioclimatic Design in Senegal. Lessons from the École d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme de Dakar and the Work of Worofila*.

Mboup reflected on her past and how it led her to research, teach and practice architecture in Senegal. Taking Worofila Street in Dakar as an example, she pointed out the importance of traditional architecture and the collective interest in it. The African climate serves as starting point for Senegalese architecture, as it meets local needs with natural materials and passive designs. Unlike Western architectural ideas, such techniques yield effective and sustainable buildings of earth, clay and sand as traditional natural resources. Their cooling properties are ideal for the African heat, and they can help democratise architectural knowledge. But publishing such knowledge remains crucial for its development and propagation.

Panel 3 dealt with *Transforming Institutions*, starting with Kuukuwa Manful from the University of Michigan discussing *The Formalisation and Unformalisation of Architectural Training in the Gold Coast and Ghana*. He opened with a 1706 print of Elmina Castle, which, as a fortress of the British colonisers, represented political and economic power and repression in Ghana. Further, she described the history of architectural education in Ghana not as linear development but as diverse processes of 'unformalisation' in reaction to the Western formalisation focused on a formal engineering approach. 'Unformalisation' means

returning to traditional knowledge, methods and architectural training.

Lisa André, a member of the chair of unlearning in Munich, continued the theme with *Learning to Unlearn Architecture. The Chair of Unlearning as a Critical Student Practice*. First, she pointed out the discriminatory potential of architecture as a built manifestation of society and the urgent need to face this problem. André's main question is: who do we design architecture for? The chair of unlearning searches for answers. As an educational and activist programme, it challenges knowledge, hierarchies, universalised standards and privileges in architecture training. Unlearning colonial suppression and discrimination are how the chair teaches anti-colonial theory.

The final discussion reinforced that the history of African architectural education remains to be written. So, the workshop shed light on the African architecture schools' history and served also as an experiment probing relations between history and the present. The workshop seems therefore like a starting point for further research and engagement digging deeper in the still marginalized subject.

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**Follo-
wing
fellows**

Alumnus but not forgotten: (he's back!): Siddharth Pandey



As the first fellow to return to gd:c for a second term, what were you working on during your first stay with us?

My first project at the gd:c explored the notion of dis:connectivity in the Indian Himalayas, particular in Himachal Pradesh. Taking current ecological degradation and uneven mountain development as its starting point, the project attended to how a swiftly disappearing way of highland life offered a different understanding of landscape and culture in the past. Focusing on

Fig. 01
Siddharth Pandey

everyday aesthetics and life from the precolonial and colonial eras, I initiated a conversation spanning architecture, music, folklore and dwelling rituals that testified to sophisticated regard for ecology. In short, I interpreted dis:connectivity in terms of a deracination characterising the present-day Himalayas and connectivity in terms of an environmentally attuned relationship to the mountains.

How has your research evolved since then, and how did your previous stay at gd:c contribute to its evolution?

Highland cultures, aesthetics and interdisciplinarity continue to guide my research. The Himalayas, after all, are so vast that, even while focusing on only one region, you continue to find new aspects to think about. I cherish this ability to be moved by so-called ‘familiar’ terrain, for it keeps me wedded to creative spatial engagement and critical appreciation of lived geographies.

My current project builds upon my previous experiences at gd:c and develops the (sub)discipline of Himalayan humanities. While the study of water-bodies (rivers, seas and oceans) has been a staple of global history research for over a decade, mountains have eluded that level of scrutiny. Of course, some sparse arenas (journals and academic/ popular platforms) do forward a cultural approach to the study of mountain regions.

A humanities-oriented approach to the study of mountains reflects a shift from their predominant geopolitical treatment. While these two prisms shouldn’t be divested from the humanities, there is also value in the experiential, socio-cultural and aesthetic aspects of mountain life. I remain committed to studying the deep links between nature and culture (given that natural geography plays an overwhelming role in the day-to-day human culture of the highlands). But over the years, my work has acquired a more philosophical bent. The dynamism of the centre’s numerous projects (helmed by fellows, postdocs and the whole team) has opened new avenues of thought and practice, while also honing my scholarly sensibilities.

What intellectual stimulation — book, article, exhibition, performance — have you encountered recently that particularly impressed you?

Earlier this year, I read Robert Macfarlane’s *Is a River Alive?*, and that work has stayed with me for its eloquence, vision and formal experimentation. Macfarlane is a professor of English and geohumanities at Cambridge and is the pre-eminent writer on landscape and nature of our times. I have been reading him for over a decade, and he has repeatedly stunned me with his understanding of the relationship between ‘landscape and the human heart’.

Is a River Alive? takes the titular question as the book’s fundamental research-drive and navigates the swiftly developing

concept of 'rights of nature' over several journeys across different continents. In lush, living prose, Macfarlane narrates his travels along and across water-bodies in Ecuador, India, Canada and England, dwelling on the language of the natural world and its 'aliveness'. As poetic as it is political, the book brilliantly balances perception with non-human personhood, while also transforming into a compelling testament to writerly craft and rigorous commitment.

What song would you choose as the soundtrack for your time at gd:c?

Ah, that's a tough one! I can never select only one soundtrack for my time here, simply because I love variation. Almost every day, I let my playlist hover among Ludovico Einaudi, Enya, AR Rehman and other composers from the East and West. As a musician, I am often struck by the contiguities and correspondences between different tunes, sometimes across cultures, which also influences my compositions on the keyboard and piano (my keyboard has accompanied me during both my Munich stays, and that allows me to practice my own soundtracks every now and then).

Having grown up listening to Himachali folk songs sung by my mother, mountain melodies constitute my core aural memory, and I find myself returning to them. But speaking of soundtracks and Munich, I must further acknowledge the sheer joy whenever I come across the Ukrainian Lisniak band playing enthusiastically in Marienplatz. These street performers are as brilliant as any well-recognised musicians, and they never fail to enliven the marvellous city centre. Since Lisniak was also around during my first gd:c stay, I treat it as a fundamental musical anchor of my German life.

Given the choice of anyone, dead, alive, or even a fictional character, who would you most want to host as a dinner guest?

It would have to be William Morris! He was a polymath who has long inspired me with the endless ways he realised the richness of life. Inhabiting an age where, for all its emphasis on interdisciplinarity, we continue to be siloed in our approaches, it is instructive to recall people and periods who embodied the opposite. Morris, along with his teacher John Ruskin, spearheaded the Arts and Crafts movement, which critiqued the Industrial movement and provided a mesmerically creative and ethical orientation towards everyday living. And for such an orientation to matter, Morris himself saw through – and practiced – the links that make the world a beautiful place to live in. A designer, poet, novelist, architect and eco-socialist, Morris championed a way of life where labour and leisure, hand and head, nature and culture, beauty and the everyday weren't treated as binaries but as mutually constitutive. His vision is desperately required for the disconnected world we live in, and it would be wonderful to summon his ghost for a long, winding discussion.

Fellow travel- lers 2024 — 2025

Claudia Cendales Paredes



Claudia Cendales Paredes studied art history at LMU Munich and earned her PhD from the TU Berlin. She has worked as a lecturer of art history, an independent researcher and curator in Bogotá, and she has held fellowships at the documenta archiv in Kassel and at the Leibniz University in Hannover, among others. Her research interests include garden history, modern art and the intersection of migration, exile and art from the late-19th to the mid-20th century.

At global dis:connect, Claudia worked on case studies of European, mostly German-speaking, artists and intellectuals who arrived in Bogotá in the first half of the 20th century. That city, unlike other South American destinations, did not receive many migrants and was not very open or attractive to immigrants. Her project addressed their work and experiences, analysing the relations between places considered as detours and hegemonic historiographical narratives from a decolonial approach.

The fellows on pages 80-83 have already completed their stays with us, and we miss them. Those listed on pages 84-87 are just getting started.

Christof Dejung



Christof Dejung is professor of modern history at the University of Bern, Switzerland. Before coming to Bern, he held temporary professorships in Freiburg, Constance, Basel and the FU Berlin, and he was a Marie Curie Fellow at the University of Cambridge (2013-2015). His expertise includes European history, global history and social and economic history. He authored *Commodity Trading, Globalization and the Colonial World* (2018), and he co-edited *The Global Bourgeoisie* (2019) and a recent special issue of the *Historical Journal on Global Social History*.

At global dis:connect, Christof worked on a monograph on the relationship between German anthropology and folklore studies between the 1850s and the 1930s. In the late-19th century, many anthropologists expounded the similarities of 'primitive' societies in colonial and European rural peripheries as a matter of fact. The consensus, however, became challenged after the turn of the century, when domestic traditions became the foundation of regional and national identities. Colonial cultures remained to be considered peoples without history by contemporary scholars, whereas European folk culture was integrated into a regional historical framework. The project thus analysed inventions of tradition by European social historians and the othering of non-European civilisations as studied by global historians and postcolonial scholars.

Elizabeth DeLoughrey



Elizabeth DeLoughrey is a professor at UCLA. She authored *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Literatures* and *Allegories of the Anthropocene* and co-edited *Caribbean Literature and the Environment: Between Nature and Culture; Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment; and Global Ecologies and the Environmental Humanities: Postcolonial Approaches* in addition to numerous journal issues on critical ocean, island and militarism studies. Her scholarship has been supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Fulbright New Zealand, the Rachel Carson Center and the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

During her fellowship at the gd:c, Elizabeth worked on a book entitled *Submarine Futures: Cold War Aesthetics and its Afterlives*, which examines the deep seas as a vital frontier for Cold War militarism and a cultural and aesthetic space for contemporary art from the global South. More specifically, she will be writing about the International Seabed Authority and its configuration of deep-sea polymetallic nodules as figures of non-life, placing these discourses in conversation with indigenous ontologies of the ocean and its inhabitants.

Aglaya Glebova



Aglaya Glebova is an associate professor in the History of Art department at UC Berkeley. Her research focuses on European and Soviet modern art. She authored *Aleksandr Rodchenko: Photography in the Time of Stalin*, which received the Modernist Studies Association's 2023 First Book Prize. Her research has been supported by the Berlin Prize of the American Academy in Berlin, the University of California President's Fellowship in the Humanities, the Canadian Center for Architecture and the ACLS, among others.

At global dis:connect, Aglaya worked on a monograph on how energy was represented in the socialist world, in particular the Soviet Union, as it intersected with the imaginary of the human body and anxieties about that body's limited energies. During her fellowship, she explored how the emergence of new materials and technologies (electrification, car manufacturing, stainless-steel production, off-shore drilling) were understood, revealing how the socialist body and the socialist environment should look and function.



Nadia von Maltzahn



Nadia is the principal investigator of the ERC-funded project *Lebanon's Art World at Home and Abroad: Trajectories of artists and artworks in/from Lebanon since 1943* (LAWHA), based at the Orient-Institut Beirut. Her publications treat cultural politics, artistic practices and the circulation of knowledge, including *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: Politics of Taste Making*, co-edited with Monique Bellan (2018), and *The Syria-Iran Axis: Cultural Diplomacy and International Relations in the Middle East* (2013/2015). She holds a DPhil in modern Middle Eastern studies from St Antony's College, Oxford.

LAWHA examined the forces that have shaped the emergence of a professional field of art in Lebanon in local, regional and global contexts. At gd:c, Nadia worked on a book on LAWHA's main research questions. Since the project relates context and artistic production at home and abroad, the question of connections and ruptures between these poles is an integral part of the analysis. By studying the nuances of artists' migratory trajectories, networks and creation, she is analysing rather than presuming links and connections, paying close attention to the experiences of artists.

Malgorzata Mirga-Tas



The work of Romani artist, educator, and activist Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (b. 1978, Zakopane) addresses anti-Roma stereotypes and engages in building an affirmative iconography of Roma communities. Her art depicts everyday life: relationships, alliances, and shared activities. Mirga-Tas's vibrant textile collages are created from materials and fabrics collected from family and friends, imbuing them with a life of their own and a corresponding immediacy. Textiles made of curtains, jewellery, shirts, and sheets are sewn together to form 'microcarriers' of history, with the resulting images revising macro perspectives. Her vibrant works offer a rare opportunity to see the Roma on their own terms, both as a contemporary community and as a people with a rich heritage.

Mirga-Tas's portrayals adopt the perspective of 'minority feminism', consciously advocating for women's strength while acknowledging the artist's cultural roots. She was the official Polish representative at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022, the first Roma artist to represent any country. She graduated from the Faculty of Sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow in 2004.

Renaud Morieux



Renaud Morieux is a professor of European history at the University of Cambridge, and a fellow of Pembroke College. His research specialises in transnational history, with a particular focus on Britain, France and their oceanic empires. In 2019 he published *The Society of Prisoners: Anglo-French Wars and Incarceration in the Eighteenth Century*. He also recently co-edited *Ordering the Oceans, Ordering the World: Law, Violence, and European Empires* with Jeppe Mulich.

Between the 1780s and the 1820s, the Indian Ocean became one of the principal theatres of the global war waged by European imperial states, which also involved powerful regional actors. This project analysed the forced migrations of alleged sympathisers of the French Revolution between three main sites - French Reunion, Danish Tranquebar, and English-occupied Pondicherry - and some secondary ones - including Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, and St Helena. This research shed light on the transformations of European oceanic empires and examined the effects of transitions of sovereignty on governmentality and colonial societies at this critical juncture.

Frances Steel



Frances is an associate professor of history at the University of Otago. She has published widely on colonial networks, oceanic mobilities and transnational labour cultures in the Pacific, with a particular focus on the age of steam. Her books include *Oceania under Steam: Sea Transport and the Cultures of Colonialism* and the co-authored *Colonialism and Male Domestic Service across the Asia Pacific*. She also edited *New Zealand and the Sea: Historical Perspectives*. Her research has been supported by the Australian Research Council and the National Library of Australia.

During her fellowship Frances examined the history of refrigeration and its application to food trades in the colonial Pacific. Frozen meat and dairy exports to Britain underpinned the transformation of New Zealand (and a lesser extent Australia) as the 'empire's farm'. This project reorients the focus from dominant South-to-North exchanges to consider how manufactured cold shaped settler colonial engagements with the island Pacific, including in controlling climate and changing patterns of production and consumption.

Brian Valente-Quinn



Brian Valente-Quinn is an associate professor of francophone African studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. His research focuses on theatre and performance in the francophone world, especially in West Africa and France. His publications include *Senegalese Stagecraft: Decolonizing Theater-Making in Francophone Africa* as well as an interdisciplinary range of scholarly articles on francophone African literature and performance. In the 2023-2024 academic year, Brian was a Fulbright scholar at the Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Brian's research project explored francophone theatre artists' local and transnational responses to the rise of extremism in multiple forms and trajectories across the francophone world. The interdisciplinary project considers aesthetic interventions as well as the effects of cultural policies and colonial and postcolonial histories to explore the possibilities and limits of the stage as a tool for preventing radicalisation.

Wojciech Szymanski



Wojciech Szymański is an art historian and critic, independent curator and assistant professor at the University of Warsaw. He has authored *The Argonauts: Postminimalism and Art After Modernism: Eva Hesse – Felix Gonzalez-Torres – Roni Horn – Derek Jarman* and several dozen articles and edited numerous exhibition catalogues along with the journal *Ikonotheke*. Wojciech has led a number of Polish and international research projects and Małgorzata Mirga-Tas's exhibition *Re-enchanting the World* in the Polish Pavilion at the 59th Biennale Arte in Venice (2022).

Edouard Manet's lost painting *Les Bohémiens* (1862) provides an insight into the relationship between non-Roma artists or bohemians and members of Roma communities in the second half of the 19th century. The first aim of the project was to investigate the relationships between Roma subjects and non-Roma artists in Paris to restore the visibility and identity of the Roma in relation to contemporary Munich-based art. The second issue is the Roma and Sinti Holocaust. The overarching goal is to look at Roma-non-Roma relations in Munich in the first half of the 20th century, when anti-Roma politics and discrimination grew, ultimately leading to their extermination.

Fellow travel-

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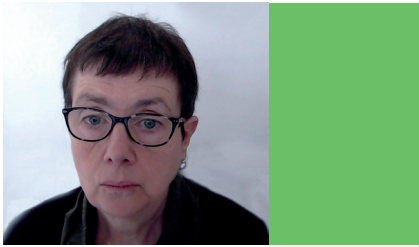
Hadeel Abdelhameed



Hadeel Abdelhameed is a critical-theatre scholar and historian of SWANA countries. Her intellectual interest is theatre development as a mode of governance in Iraq. She worked as a senior research fellow and lecturer at Monash University, the University of Melbourne and the University of Baghdad. She has published in the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and the *Journal of Contemporary Iraq and the Arab World*. As a fellow at gd:c, Hadeel is working on a monograph that examines how the confluence of global and transregional intellectual and artistic thought combined with state-building projects to form the glocal, Iraqi theatre-maker-citizen.

Developing Theatre in Iraq outlines an innovative, empirically informed and theoretically driven conceptual model: the provisional glocal, Iraqi theatre-maker-subject. This model captures the transnational history of Iraqi theatre, which has been determined by three major political and economic discourses: global and regional intellectual movements since the late-19th century, oil wealth since the early 20th century, and the creative economy since 2003. Grounded in governmentality theory, the book examines how the rise and fall of the glocal theatre-maker embodies the dispersed values of theatre in the educational and cultural policies designed to govern Iraq.

Katy Deepwell



Katy Deepwell is an art critic based in London. She is the founder and editor of KT press and *n.paradoxa: international feminist art journal*. She was a professor of contemporary art, theory and criticism at Middlesex University. She edited or authored over 10 books, including *Conversations on Art, Artworks and Feminism, Feminist Art Activisms and Artivisms* and a special issue of *Arts*.

Her project is an issue-based political analysis of the problematics of feminist art criticism, where the focus is on transnational and transgenerational feminisms. This is a story of interruptions, absences, detours and aporia. World-systems theories of capital accumulation (e.g. Maria Mies and Immanuel Wallerstein) help to describe the diverse locations of feminism around the globe over the last 60 years. The aim is to rethink how feminisms operate as a geo-culture beyond borders and as a travelling concept.

Carlo De Nuzzo



Carlo is currently a research fellow at Sciences Po. His research interests include political violence and radicalism; the far right and neofascism; political terrorism in post-war Europe; the history of extremist ideologies, social movements, and the history of citizenship. He also teaches a course entitled *The Far Right in Europe* at the Nancy campus of Sciences Po. He holds a PhD in political science from Sciences Po. Previously, he worked as a temporary lecturer and researcher at the University of Lille and as a teaching assistant at Sciences Po and the Università degli Studi di Milano.

As a fellow at global dis:connect, Carlo is developing a project that explores how far-right intellectual circles developed transnational networks through the personal connections of militants, the circulation of ideas and the analysis of events, from the 1980s to 2020 in Europe. This is a strongly interdisciplinary project that arises from integrating theories and methodologies from comparative politics and transnational history.

Filipe Dos Reis



Filipe dos Reis is an assistant professor in the Department of International Relations and International Organization at the University of Groningen. Before joining IRIO, he worked at the University of Erfurt, where he also earned his PhD. His current research focuses on the history, theory and politics of international law, imperial Germany and maps. He has published widely on these topics and has co-edited two volumes: *The Politics of Translation in International Relations* and *Mapping, Connectivity and the Making of European Empires*.

At global dis:connect, Filipe is developing a project on phantom geographical features on 19th-century maps – a period when people considered themselves accurate and scientific. How was it possible that fictive mountain ranges and oceans appear on maps of that time? What kind of politics of knowledge was involved? What were the connective and disconnective effects of these phantom phenomena and how were they embedded in broader imaginaries about nature and society of the time? The project brings together discussions on global history and dis:connectivity, mapping and the sociology of knowledge.



Harald Fischer-Tiné



Harald Fischer-Tiné is a professor of modern global history at ETH Zürich. Before joining ETH, he was an assistant professor for extra-European history at Jacobs University Bremen. He earned his PhD from the University of Heidelberg in 2000. His research interests include global and transnational history, the history of knowledge and the social and cultural history of 19th and 20th-century South Asia. His most recent research monograph is *The YMCA in Late Colonial India: Modernization, Philanthropy and American Soft Power in South Asia*.

The project provides a fresh perspective on the transregional and transcultural history of the bicycle. Studying the symbolic and material significance of the bicycle on the Indian subcontinent complicates narratives that glorify Western techno-modernity in the Global South. The enhanced mobility provided by the new vehicle triggered fierce contestation and controversy around imperialism and decolonisation. The four case studies illuminate key moments in the first 100 years of cycling history in South Asia and reveal the cultural meanings of the new technology in non-Western cultural and political constellations.

Toby Yuen-Gen Liang



Toby Liang is an associate professor at Academia Sinica, Taiwan's national academy of sciences. He specialises in Mediterranean history and studies northwest Africa in European cartography. He authored *Family and Empire: The Fernández de Córdoba and the Spanish Realm* and has co-edited three collections of essays. Liang has (co-)founded the Spain-North Africa Project, The Medieval Globe and other academic organisations. He has lived in Taiwan, Syria, Spain and the USA.

Northwest Africa is absent in scholarship on the Age of Exploration. Toby's project restores the area's role as an intermediary between Europe, the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. By analysing maps and texts from the 14th to 18th centuries, he is investigating how conceptualisations of northwest Africa were dis:connective. The phenomena of blank space, adjacent to absence, silence and erasure, loom large, and he is developing a methodology to understand blanks, particularly how they shaped epistemological developments in European encounters with the world and others.

Siddharth Pandey



Siddharth Pandey is a writer, artist and cultural critic from Himachal Pradesh. He has a PhD in literary and materiality studies from Cambridge. As an interdisciplinary academic, he has held numerous research fellowships at Yale, the Paul Mellon Centre and the LMU. His first book *Fossil* (2021) was a finalist for the 2022 Banff Mountain Literature Awards. His photographic work has been commissioned by the Victoria and Albert Museum and Oriental Museum (Durham), among others. He contributes regularly to several popular and academic platforms.

Siddharth's project develops a new materialist framework to study the Indian Himalayas. Starting from the Western Himalayas, he is scrutinising the affective registers and vitalist concepts of this landscape. The vitalism of new materialism is grounded in a regard for movement and process, which forces us to think about human and non-human entities in perpetually alive, relational and fluid terms. This fluid perspective helps us open the landscape creatively, such that the corporeal and incorporeal, the aesthetic and the political constantly shade into each other.

Ulinka Rublack



Ulinka Rublack is a professor of early modern history at the University of Cambridge and fellow of St John's College and the British Academy. Born in Tübingen, she studied history, art history, and sociology in Hamburg and Cambridge. Her award-winning books include *The Astronomer & the Witch*, *Dürer's Lost Masterpiece* and *Dressing Up*. She has held fellowships in Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin and Harvard and published widely on the reformation and cultural identity.

What role has fashion played through history? How has it shaped societies and influenced how people have expressed their identities? This is one of the most intriguing historical questions. Accelerated forces of economic and technological development – through cities, rural areas and globally – alongside state formation, urbanisation and profound artistic, religious and social transformations intertwined with new forms of knowledge and information, emerging sensibilities, ideas and compelling narratives about what defines a society.

Azadeh Sharifi



Azadeh Sharifi is a theatre and performance scholar who holds the chair for the theory and history of theatre at the Berlin University of the Arts. She has previously held visiting professorships at the Free University of Berlin, the University of Toronto and the Berlin University of the Arts. Her research focuses on postcolonial and postmigrant theatre and its history, contemporary performance art, and decolonial and activist practices in theatrical spaces. She is currently working on her second monograph, *Theatre in Post-Migrant Germany: Performing Race, Migration and Coloniality Since 1945*.

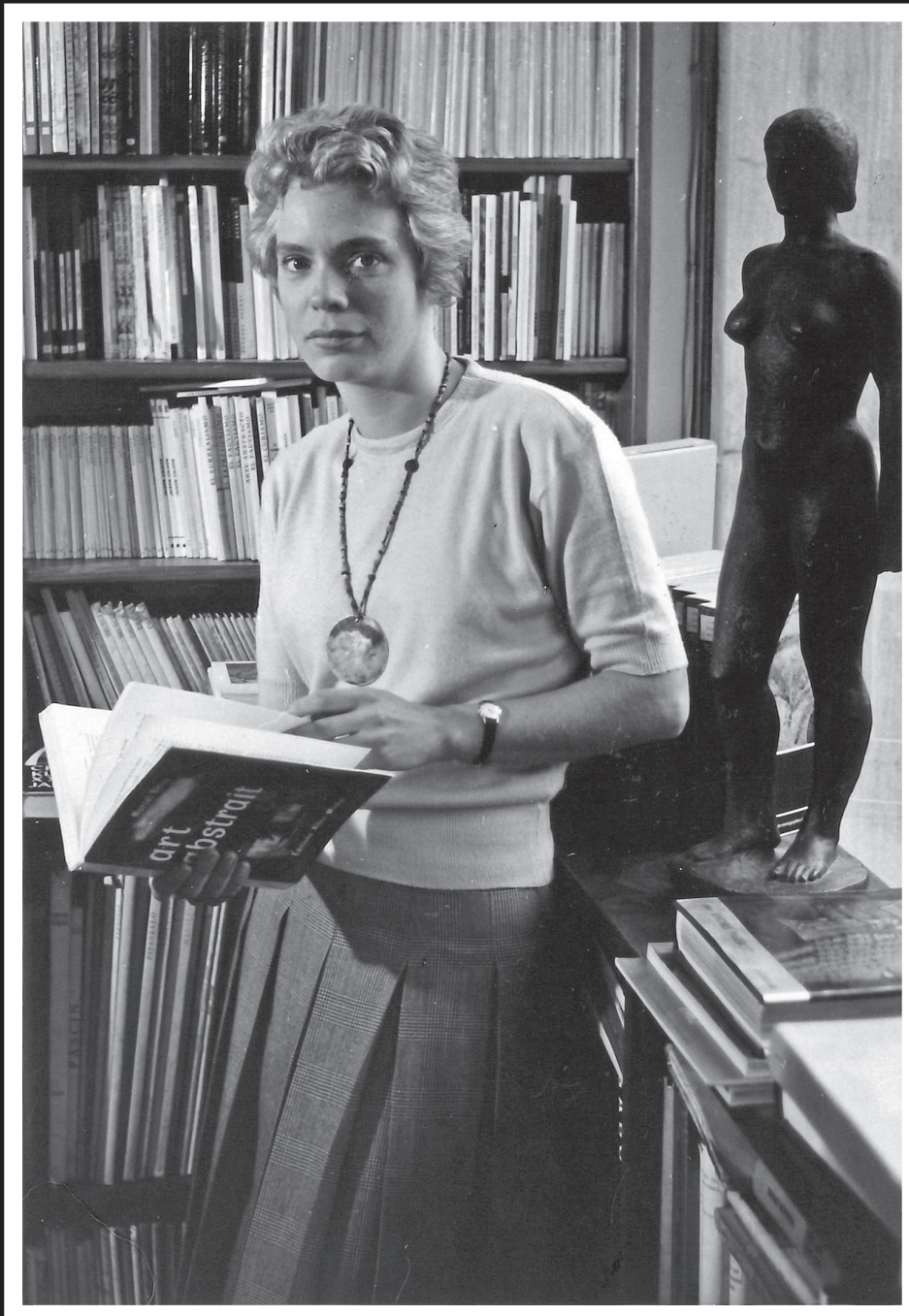
This project explores the artistic genealogies and aesthetics of the work of the two theatre groups, the *Türkisches Ensemble am Berliner Schaubühne am Halleschen Ufer* (1979-84) and the *Teatro Lautaro/ Volksbühne Rostock* (1974-81), and their reciprocal relation to Brecht's reception in their countries of origin as well as in East and West Germany. The project focuses on their aesthetic and theoretical contribution to a transnational reception of Brecht and aims to make the artists and their work visible and accessible for the field of performance studies.

Sarah E.K. Smith



Sarah E.K. Smith is an associate professor and Canada Research Chair in Art, Culture and Global Relations at Western University. Her research addresses cultural diplomacy and museums, and she maintains an active curatorial practice focused on contemporary art. Her recent publications include the monograph *Trading on Art: Cultural Diplomacy and Free Trade in North America* and the collection *Museum Diplomacy: How Cultural Institutions Shape Global Engagement*. She co-founded the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative and is a member of the International Cultural Relations Research Alliance.

As a fellow at global dis:connect, Sarah is working on a monograph addressing the growth of diaspora museums as an institutional subsector in North America. Sarah's project examines how diaspora communities are increasingly establishing new museums to shape discussions of their identity, heritage and migration journeys. Her research aims to understand how diaspora communities mobilise museums to advance heritage narratives, with a focus on global dis:connection, institutional critiques and cultural diplomacy.



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